

Anaphoric reference to quantifying expressions in Swedish

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Both (1) and (2) say that some undefined, small number of students went to the lecture, but the sentences differ in what type of quantifier is used: *Några* ('some') is a positive (upward entailing) quantifier, while *få* ('few') is a negative (downward entailing) quantifier (Peters and Westerstähl, 2006).

- (1) Några studenter gick på föreläsningen.
some students went to the-lecture
- (2) Få studenter gick på föreläsningen.
few students went to the-lecture

When referring back to 'the students' in (1) and (2), a difference in which students are referred to can be detected. (1) is naturally followed by (3), which talks about the students attending the lecture (the reference set), while (2) is naturally followed by (4), which talks about the students *not* attending the lecture (the complement set) (e.g. Moxey and Sanford, 1987). Whereas (3) can also follow (2) (although not as easily as (4)), (4) is only acceptable following (2).

- (3) De tyckte den var väldigt intressant.
they thought it was very interesting
- (4) De stannade hemma i stället.
they stayed home instead

Anaphoric reference to quantifiers has been investigated extensively and we know that upward/downward entailment is one factor that influences set-reference in English (see e.g. Moxey and Sanford, 1987; Sanford et al., 1996; Paterson et al., 1998; Moxey et al., 2001; Moxey, 2006; Filik et al., 2011). However, to our knowledge there are no investigations of set-reference in Swedish. As quantifiers do not always behave the same across languages (Nouwen, 2010; Tsai et al., 2014), we investigated this issue for Swedish in a semantic plausibility study where we tested whether quantified expressions gave rise to reference set or complement set interpretations.

The material was manipulated along two dimensions: positive vs negative quantifier (*några* vs *få* in (5)), and refset vs compset targeting disambiguating adjective (*duktiga* vs *dåliga* in (5)). The quantifiers included were: *några* ('some'), *få* ('few'), *många* ('many'), *inte många* ('not many'), *alla* ('all'), *inga* ('no'), *nästan alla* ('almost all'), *inte alla* ('not all').

- (5) Några/Få studenter skrev bra på tentan igår och att de var så duktiga/dåliga
some/few students wrote well on exam yesterday and that they were so good/bad
förbryllade professorn.
confused the-professor

The results were that positive quantifiers with anaphoric reference to the compset were judged as anomalous, and negative quantifiers with anaphoric reference to the refset were judged as anomalous, although there was more variation with regard to the negative ones. As expected, these results are in line with previous studies.

Referenser

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