Explaining the distribution of Russian *nibud'* indefinites

Pasha Astafiev

pastafev760@gmail.com

Typology of Morphosyntactic Parameters

9 October 2025

Intro

- Russian *nibud'* indefinites: a standard example of **scopally non-specific indefinites** (Dahl 1970, Haspelmath 1997, Farkas & Brasoveanu 2020)

- They have a **restricted distribution**:

(1)   a.   *Maša   pročitala   kakuju-nibud'   stat'ju.
          Masha   read   which-NIBUD'   article
          intended: 'Masha read an article.'

     b.   Každyj student   pročital   kakuju-nibud'   stat'ju.
          each   student   read   which-NIBUD'   article
          'Each student read an article.'

- **The question**: what explains the restricted distribution of *nibud'*?

Intro

- **Previous works**: *nibud'* indefinites must be in the scope of an extensional/intensional distributive quantifier (Yanovich 2005, Pereltsvaig 2008, Aloni & Degano 2022, Degano 2025b a.o.)

- **Problems**:
    - undergeneration: disjunction, polar and alternative questions
    - overgeneration: factives

- This work: a **novel «hybrid» approach**, which states that *nibud'* encodes two requirements:
    - an **anaphoric inaccessibility requirement**, formalized as a postsupposition in a two-dimensional dynamic semantics
    - a **local positive polarity requirement**

- The novel approach is predictive and solves the problems mentioned above

Outline

1. Basic facts

2. Previous approaches and their problems

3. Anaphoric inaccessibility requirement

4. Positive polarity requirement

5. Conclusion

Distribution of *nibud'* indefinites

- In episodic sentences, *nibud'* indefinites are ungrammatical:

  (2) *Maša pročitala kakuju-nibud' stat'ju.
      Masha read which-NIBUD' article
      intended: 'Masha read an article.'

- The addition of a singular indefinite (3a) or a collective quantifier (3b) makes no difference:

  (3) a. *Odin student pročital kakuju-nibud' stat'ju.
         INDF student read which-NIBUD' article
         intended: 'Some student read an article.'

      b. *Vse studenty sobralis' v kakoj-nibud' auditorii.
         all students gathered in which-NIBUD' classroom
         intended: 'All the students gathered in some classroom.'

Distribution of *nibud'* indefinites

- *Nibud'* indefinites are grammatical in the scope of distributive nominal quantifiers (4a), adverbs of quantification (4b), and modals (4c):

(4) a. Každyj student pročital kakuju-nibud' stat'ju.
   each student read which-NIBUD' article
   'Each student read an article.'

   b. Po večeram ja inogda / vsegda čitaju kakuju-nibud' knigu.
   in evenings I sometimes / always read which-NIBUD' book
   'In the evenings I sometimes / always read a book.'

   c. Ty možeš' / dolžna vzjat' kakuju-nibud' kartu.
   you can / must pick which-NIBUD' card
   'You can / must pick a card.'

Distribution of *nibud'* indefinites

- *Nibud'* is also grammatical in conditional antecedents and consequents:

(5) a. Esli by ty počitala kakuju-nibud' interesnuju knigu, tebe by
      if SUBJ you read   which-NIBUD' interesting book for.you SUBJ
        ne bylo tak grustno.
        not it.was that sad
        'If you read a book, you would't feel so sad.'

    b. Esli by mne bylo   nečego delat', ja by počital kakuju-nibud'
      if SUBJ me there.was nothing to.do I SUBJ read   which-NIBUD'
        interesnuju knigu.
        interesting book
        'If I had nothing to do, I would read an interesting book.'

Distribution of *nibud'* indefinites

- Other environments where *nibud'* indefinites are OK include future tense sentences (6a) and imperatives (6b):

(6) a. Večerom   ja počitaju kakuju-nibud' knigu.
      in.evening I   will.read which-NIBUD' book
      'In the evening I will read a book.'

   b. Počitaj   kakuju-nibud' knigu!
      read.IMP which-NIBUD' book
      'Read a book!'

General remarks

- *Nibud'* indefinites are grammatical only in the presence of an appropriate licensing operator

- When grammatical, they must take narrow scope wrt their licensor
  - see Martí & Ionin 2019 for experimental evidence

- We are thus dealing with a clear case of **scopal non-specificity** (Farkas & Brasoveanu 2020)

Apparent generalization

- The data we have seen so far suggest the following generalization:

  (7) **Generalization:** *Nibud'* indefinites are felicitous only if they appear in the scope of an operator having the semantics of a distributive quantifier.

- Indeed:
  - the case of distributive nominal quantifiers is clear
  - adverbs of quantification are standardly analyzed in terms of (distributive) quantification over situations
  - modals are standardly analyzed in terms of (distributive) quantification over possible worlds
  - conditionals, the future "tense", and imperatives can also be analyzed in terms of modal quantification (cf. Kratzer 2012, Cariani 2021, Kaufmann 2012)

Nibud' as a marker of covariation

- One way to guarantee that an indefinite is in the scope of a distributive quantifier is to state that it requires covariation, in the following sense:

  (8) **Covariation requirement:** *Nibud'* indefinites introduce a variable subject to an evaluation constraint that requires it to possibly covary relative to some other variable bound by a quantifier over individuals, situations, or possible worlds. (cf. Farkas 2021: 396)

- This approach has been explicitly defended by Pereltsvaig 2008, Brasoveanu & Farkas 2011, and Farkas 2021

- Related approaches:
  - Yanovich 2005: *nibud'* indefinites denote pre-Skolemized choice functions with an extra argument bound by a quantifier (see also Onea & Geist 2011)
  - Aloni & Degano 2022, Degano 2025b: *nibud'* requires variation relative to the values of the designated world variable (formalization in team semantics; the predictions are very similar to those of covariation)

Problems: undergeneration

- Declarative disjunction seems to license *nibud'*:

  (9) Maša sejčas ili spit, ili čitaet kakuju-nibud' knigu.
       Masha now or is.sleeping or is.reading which-NIBUD' book
       'Masha is either sleeping or reading a book.'

- This is a problem: disjunction is not typically seen as a quantificational operator binding a variable in its scope, so there is no variable to covary with

- Possible answer: declarative disjunction is interpreted as conjunction of epistemic possibilities (Zimmermann 2000)

Problems: undergeneration

- Polar and alternative questions clearly license *nibud'*:

  (10) a. Maša   sejčas čitaet   kakuju-nibud' knigu?
          Masha now   is.reading which-NIBUD'   book
          'Is Masha now reading a book?'

       b. Maša   sejčas spit   ili čitaet   kakuju-nibud' knigu?
          Masha now   is.sleeping or   is.reading which-NIBUD'   book
          'Is Masha sleeping or reading a book?'

- There are a few theories of question semantics (Roelofsen 2019), most of which take questions to denote sets of classical propositions

- In any case, it seems hard to see polar or alternative questions as necessarily involving distributive quantification

Problems: overgeneration

- Attitude predicates are standardly analyzed in terms of (distributive) quantification over possible worlds (since Hintikka 1969)

- Under the covariation-based approach, this leads us to expect all attitude verbs to license *nibud'*

- In fact, however, factivity plays a role: certain non-factive predicates license *nibud'*, while factives do not

(11) a. Ja dumaju, čto Maša podarit mne kakuju-nibud' knigu.
   I think that Masha will.give me which-NIBUD' book
   'I think that Masha will give me a book.'

b. Ja xoču, čtoby Maša podarila mne kakuju-nibud' knigu.
   I want that.SUBJ Masha gave me which-NIBUD' book
   'I want Masha to give me a book.'

c. *Ja znaju / rada, čto Maša podarila mne kakuju-nibud' knigu.
   I know / am.glad that Masha gave me which-NIBUD' book
   intended: 'I know / am glad that Masha gave me a book.'

Idea in a nutshell

- Indefinites which take narrow scope with respect to a certain operator *O* often fail to remain anaphorically accessible outside the scope of *O* (Karttunen 1976)

- The following examples are telling: in each case the follow-up sentence is infelicitous if the indefinite takes narrow scope

  (12) a. Each student bought a^x book. #It$_x$ is very interesting.

  b. You may buy a^x book. #It$_x$ is very interesting.

  c. I want to buy a^x book. #It$_x$ is very interesting.

  d. If you read a^x book, you wouldn't be so sad. #It$_x$ is very interesting.

  e. Masha is either sleeping or reading a^x book. #It$_x$ is very interesting.

  f. Is Masha now reading a^x book? #It$_x$ is very interesting.

Idea in a nutshell

- Recall now that the environments in (12) license *nibud'* indefinites

- Not surprisingly, anaphora to *nibud'* indefinites in subsequent indicative sentences is normally impossible:

(13) a. Každyj student pročital kakuju-nibud'^{x} stat'ju.
          each student read which-NIBUD' article
          'Each student read an article.'

   b. #Mne ona$_x$ pokazalas' očen' strannoj.
          to.me it seemed very weird
          'I found it very weird.'

Idea in a nutshell

- I propose that the grammaticality of *nibud'* indefinites depends on their anaphoric accessibility:

  (14) **Anaphoric inaccessibility requirement:** *Nibud'* indefinites must occur in an environment which makes them anaphorically inaccessible.

- Our preliminary definition of anaphoric inaccessibility:

  (15) An indefinite is **anaphorically inaccessible** in an environment *E* if it cannot be referred back to by a personal pronoun immediately after the content of *E* has been processed.

- Thanks to "immediately", we need not worry about quantificational or modal subordination (Roberts 1987, Brasoveanu 2006)

Formalization in dynamic semantics

- The account is easy to make formally explicit using the tools of **dynamic semantics** (Heim 1982, Groenendijk & Stokhof 1991)

  - although in principle, it's perfectly compatible with any other approach to anaphoric accessibility (e.g. situation semantics, Elbourne 2005)

- Dynamic semantics models sentence meanings as **context change potentials**, i.e. functions from contexts to contexts

- We will concentrate on modeling singular anaphora for the moment (following Groenendijk & Stokhof 1991, Groenendijk et al. 1996 a.o.)

- Our contexts must minimally provide the information about the familiar **discourse referents** (Karttunen 1976), and we will employ partial assignments for this purpose (Dekker 1996)

 (16) A **context** C is a set of partial variable assignments having the same domain **dom**(C).

Formalization in dynamic semantics

- Basic updates:

  (17) **Dynamic predication**

  $$C[\![P(x_1,...,x_n)]\!] = \begin{cases} \{g \in C \mid \langle g(x_1),...,g(x_n) \rangle \in I(P)\} & x_1,...,x_n \in \mathbf{dom}(C) \\ \text{undefined} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

  (18) **Dref introduction**

  a. $C[\![[x]]\!] = \begin{cases} \{g \mid \exists h \in C : g \geq_x h\} & x \notin \mathbf{dom}(C) \\ \text{undefined} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$

  b. $g \geq_x h$ iff $\mathbf{dom}(g) = \mathbf{dom}(h) \cup \{x\}$ and $\forall y \in \mathbf{dom}(h) : h(y) = g(y)$

- Update sequencing:

  (19) **Dynamic conjunction**

  $C[\![\phi ; \psi]\!] = C[\![\phi]\!][\![\psi]\!]$

Formalization in dynamic semantics

- Here is how we define anaphoric inaccessibility in our dynamic semantics:

  (20) **Anaphoric inaccessibility (formal):** Let ϕ be an environment of the context change potential type.
       An indefinite occurring in ϕ and introducing a variable x is **anaphorically inaccessible** outside of ϕ iff for any context C s.t. $C[\![\phi]\!]$ is defined and $x \notin \mathbf{dom}(C)$: $x \notin \mathbf{dom}(C[\![\phi]\!])$.

Examples

- An episodic sentence:

  (21) a. *Kakoj-nibud'^{x} student prišel.
          which-NIBUD' student came
          intended: 'Some student came.'

  b. $[x]$; STUDENT(x) ; CAME(x)

- The dref x remains accessible, so we correctly predict ungrammaticality

Examples

- Now consider the scope of a distributive universal quantifier:

  (22) a. Každyj^y student pročital kakuju-nibud'^{x} stat'ju.
  each student read which-NIBUD' article
  'Each student read an article.'

  b. **EVERY**^{y}(STUDENT(y))($[x]$; ARTICLE(x); READ(y, x))

- Universal quantification is externally static, i.e. dref introduction in its scope has no effect on the resulting context:

  (23) $C[\![\mathbf{EVERY}^x(\phi)(\psi)]\!] = \{g \in C \mid \forall h \in \{g\}[\![[x]]\!][\![\phi]\!] : \{h\}[\![\psi]\!] \neq \varnothing\}$

- Therefore, we correctly predict *nibud'* to be felicitous

Compositional implementation

- We can implement the analysis compositionally by analyzing *nibud'* as introducing a discourse referent and performing the **inaccessibility test**

- The inaccessibility test is defined as follows:

$$(24) \quad C[\![\mathbf{N}_x]\!] = \begin{cases} C & x \notin \mathbf{dom}(C) \\ \text{undefined} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$
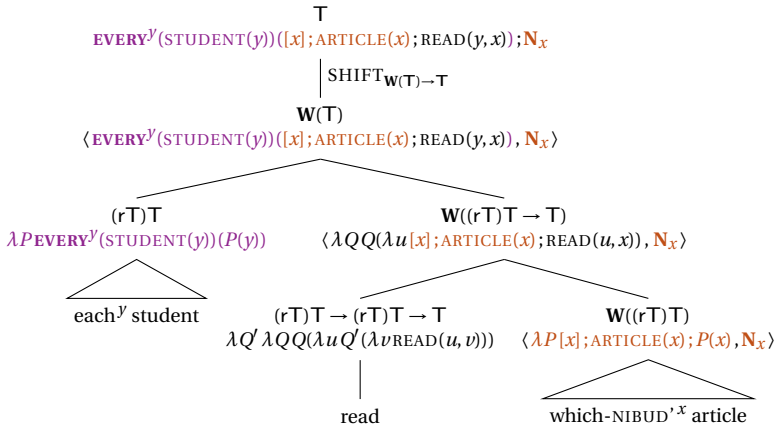
- This test must be a **postsupposition** (Brasoveanu 2013, Charlow 2021): it must be evaluated after dref introduction

- Besides, to avoid undefinedness, dref introduction and the inaccessibility test must be able to take different scope

Compositional implementation

- The scopal properties of the inaccessibility test encoded by *nibud'* are essentially unconstrained (e.g. it should be able to scope above disjunction and conditionals)

- For this reason, we will use a multi-dimensional semantics for postsuppositions (rather than higher-order quantification; cf. the discussion in Charlow 2021)

- To handle multi-dimensionality, we can employ the techniques described in Bumford & Charlow 2025

- Our types include: r for drefs, T for CCPs, and functional types

- In addition, we have a functorial type constructor **W**: **W**(α) pairs an object of type α with a CCP

- The basic compositional operation is functional application

- A special type-shifter transforms a **W**(T) type object into the dynamic conjunction of its first and second elements

Compositional implementation

- An illustration:

$$\mathsf{T}$$
$$\textbf{EVERY}^y(\text{STUDENT}(y))([x]\,;\text{ARTICLE}(x)\,;\text{READ}(y,x))\,;\mathbf{N}_x$$

$$\Big|\, \text{SHIFT}_{\mathbf{W}(\mathsf{T})\to\mathsf{T}}$$

$$\mathbf{W}(\mathsf{T})$$
$$\langle\,\textbf{EVERY}^y(\text{STUDENT}(y))([x]\,;\text{ARTICLE}(x)\,;\text{READ}(y,x))\,,\,\mathbf{N}_x\,\rangle$$

$$(\mathsf{r}\mathsf{T})\mathsf{T} \qquad\qquad\qquad \mathbf{W}((\mathsf{r}\mathsf{T})\mathsf{T}\to\mathsf{T})$$
$$\lambda P\,\textbf{EVERY}^y(\text{STUDENT}(y))(P(y)) \qquad \langle\,\lambda Q Q(\lambda u\,[x]\,;\text{ARTICLE}(x)\,;\text{READ}(u,x))\,,\,\mathbf{N}_x\,\rangle$$

each^y student

$$(\mathsf{r}\mathsf{T})\mathsf{T}\to(\mathsf{r}\mathsf{T})\mathsf{T}\to\mathsf{T} \qquad\qquad \mathbf{W}((\mathsf{r}\mathsf{T})\mathsf{T})$$
$$\lambda Q'\,\lambda Q Q(\lambda u\,Q'(\lambda v\,\text{READ}(u,v))) \qquad \langle\,\lambda P\,[x]\,;\text{ARTICLE}(x)\,;P(x)\,,\,\mathbf{N}_x\,\rangle$$

read   which-NIBUD'^{x} article

Results

- To extend our formal account to other operators, we only need to specify their CCPs in a way that correctly predicts the accessibility of indefinites in their scope

- Generally, we replicate the good predictions of the covariation-based approach
    - episodic sentences, incl. those with singular indefinites and collective quantifiers, don't make indefinites inaccessible ⇒ *nibud'* is ungrammatical
    - distributive quantifiers, adverbs of quantification, modals, conditionals, imperatives etc. do make indefinites inaccessible (Karttunen 1976, Groenendijk & Stokhof 1991, Groenendijk et al. 1996 a.o.) ⇒ *nibud'* is grammatical

- However, we also solve its problems!
    - disjunction makes indefinites inaccessible (exception: Stone disjunctions, Stone 1992) ⇒ *nibud'* is grammatical
    - polar and alternative questions make indefinites inaccessible (Roelofsen & Dotlačil 2023) ⇒ *nibud'* is grammatical
    - factives don't make indefinites inaccessible (Karttunen 1976, Elliott & Sudo 2020) ⇒ *nibud'* is ungrammatical

The challenge of plural anaphora

- Extensional distributive quantifiers block singular anaphora from their scope

- However, plural anaphora is possible (van den Berg 1996, Brasoveanu 2006)

  (25) a. Každyj student pročital kakuju-nibud'^{x} stat'ju.
       each student read which-NIBUD' article
       'Each student read an article.'

  b. Mne oni$_x$ pokazalisj očen' interesnymi.
     to.me they seemed very interesting
     'I found them very interesting.'

- This seems to be a problem for our account

- Note that we cannot simply connect the grammaticality of *nibud'* to the licensing of singular anaphora: this will lead to problems with plural *nibud'* indefinites (they would be predicted to always be grammatical; in reality, there doesn't seem to be any difference between singular and plural *nibud'* indefinites)

The challenge of plural anaphora

- Solution: distinguishing between domain plurality and evaluation plurality (Brasoveanu 2008)

- In fact, the needed theoretical machinery has been already introduced in Henderson 2014, and we can simply adopt his system

- Formal details are complicated, however, so we won't discuss them today (see Appendix)

Interim summary

- The anaphoric inaccessibility-based approach to *nibud'* replicates the good predictions of the covariation-based approach

- At the same time, it doesn't run into its undergeneration and overgeneration problems (with disjunction, questions, and factives)

Nibud' and negation

- A well-known fact: clausemate negation doesn't license *nibud'*

- This is problematic, because negation, of course, does make indefinites anaphorically inaccessible

  (26) * Maše kto-nibud' ne pomog.
         Mary who-NIBUD' not helped
         intended: 'Nobody helped Masha.'

- Superordinate negation doesn't make *nibud'* ungrammatical:

  (27) Ja ne dumaju, čto Maše kto-nibud' pomog.
        I not think that Masha who-NIBUD' helped
        'I don't think that someone helped Masha.'

Nibud' and negation

- Interestingly, narrow scope wrt negation becomes available if negation itself is in the scope of another NPI-licensing operator:

(28) a. Esli nam kto-nibud'   ne pomožet, my pogibnem.
          If   us   who-NIBUD' not will.help we will.die
          'If someone doesn't help us, we'll die.' (OK ¬ > ∃)

      b. Ja ne verju, čto Maša ne spravilas' s   kakim-nibud'
          I   not believe that Masha not coped   with which-NIBUD'
          zadaniem.
          task
          'I don't believe that Masha didn't solve some problem.' (OK ¬ > ∃)

Nibud' indefinites are local PPIs

- Overall, *nibud'* indefinites manifest the behavior of local (i.e. *some*-type) PPIs (Szabolcsi 2004): anti-licensing by clausemate negation and rescuing
    - the term "local" is due to Spector 2014

- This doesn't follow from our anaphoric inaccessibility requirement, so we must stipulate an additional positive polarity requirement:

  (29) **Positive polarity requirement:** *Nibud'* indefinites must not occur in the immediate scope of a clausemate anti-additive operator which is itself not in the scope of a downward-entailing operator.

- I have nothing to say about how positive polarity requirement can be derived here (see Szabolcsi 2004, Nicolae 2012, Homer 2020 a.o.)

Nibud' indefinites are local PPIs

- Our approach thus becomes "hybrid":

  (30) **Hybrid approach to *nibud'*:** *Nibud'* indefinites encode the anaphoric inaccessibility requirement and the positive polarity requirement and are grammatical only if both of them are satisfied.

- Not particularly elegant, but not impossible either (cf. van der Wouden 1997, Spector 2012 on "bipolar" items)

- Remarkably, the interplay between anaphoric inaccessibility and positive polarity can help us explain some otherwise mysterious facts, thus supporting the hybrid approach we advocate

The interplay between anaphoric inaccessibility and positive polarity

- Firstly, Paducheva 2015 noticed that *nibud'* are not as bad under superordinate negation

- We straightforwardly predict this, because superordinate negation makes indefinites in its scope anaphorically inaccessible and doesn't anti-license local PPIs

(31) ?Eto nepravda, čto Maše kto-nibud' pomog.
      it not.true   that Masha who-NIBUD' helped
      'It's not true that somebody helped Masha.'

The interplay between anaphoric inaccessibility and positive polarity

- Secondly, *nibud'* is licensed in the scope of clausemate negation under emotive factives

- This puzzling fact is also explained by our account!

- Szabolcsi 2004 showed that negation under emotive factives creates a PPI rescuing environment; and negation makes indefinites anaphorically inaccessible

- Thus, we correctly predict *nibud'* to be fine

  (32) Žal', čto Maša *(ne) pozvala kogo-nibud' na pomošč'.
        pity that Masha not called who-NIBUD' for help
        'It's a pity that Masha didn't call somebody for help.'

Final remark: can inaccessibility be evaluated locally?

- We proposed earlier that anaphoric inaccessibility can be evaluated locally

- Could we say instead that it must be evaluated at the sentence level?

- Data from double negation suggest that our local formulation is justified

- Double negation fails to make indefinites inaccessible (Krahmer & Muskens 1995), yet (33) is not as bad

  (33)   ?Eto nepravda, čto Maša ne pozvala kogo-nibud' na pomošč'.
           it   not.true   that Masha not called who-NIBUD' for help
         'It's not true that Masha didn't call somebody for help.' (¬ > ¬ > ∃)

Recap

- The covariation-based account of *nibud'* indefinites is problematic

- *Nibud'* indefinites probably mark anaphoric inaccessibility rather than covariation

- The inaccessibility requirement can be formalized as a postsupposition within a two-dimensional dynamic semantics

- In addition to anaphoric inaccessibility, *nibud'* indefinites encode a local positive polarity requirement

- The proposed hybrid approach to *nibud'* has a pretty good empirical coverage

Discussion

- Why anaphoric inaccessibility rather than absence of existential entailment? (cf. Giannakidou 1998)

  - anaphoric inaccessibility works better for nominal quantifiers

- Do other indefinites encode a kind of an anaphoric inaccessibility requirement?

  - Kuhn 2022 proposed that NCIs encode a similar requirement

  - what is different in the account of Kuhn 2022: locality matters; evaluation plural indefinites count as anaphorically accessible

  - a problem with modals

Discussion

- Our two-dimensional treatment of postsuppositions is different from the approaches advocated in Charlow 2021 and Kuhn 2022

  - postsuppositions discussed by Charlow and Kuhn come with locality constraints on evaluation

  - the opposite is true for the inaccessibility test we proposed for *nibud'*

  - are there any postsuppositions which pattern with the one encoded by *nibud'*?

  - see also Lauer 2012, Degano 2025a for postsuppositional approaches to marked indefinites

Remaining problems

- Our analysis predicts that all non-factive attitudes license *nibud'* in their complement

- Unfortunately, this is not the case: some non-factive attitude predicates (e.g. 'say', 'dream') don't license *nibud'*

(34) a. *Maša skazala, čto kto-nibud' ukral ee košelek.
    Masha said   that who-NIBUD' stole her purse
    intended: 'Masha said that someone stole her purse.'

 b. *Maše prisnilos', čto kto-nibud' ukral ee košelek.
    Masha dreamed that who-NIBUD' stole her purse
    intended: 'Masha dreamed that someone stole her purse.'

- I must leave this problem to future research

THANK YOU!

References I

Aloni, M. & M. Degano. 2022. (Non-)specificity across languages: constancy, variation, v-variation. In *Proceedings of SALT 32*, 185–205. https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v1i0.5337.

van den Berg, M. 1996. *Some aspects of the internal structure of discourse. The dynamics of nominal anaphora*. University of Amsterdam dissertation.

Brasoveanu, A. 2006. *Structured nominal and modal reference*. Rutgers University dissertation.

Brasoveanu, A. 2008. Donkey pluralities. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 2. 129–209. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-008-9035-0.

Brasoveanu, A. 2013. Modified numerals as post-suppositions. *Journal of Semantics* 30. 155–209. https://doi.org/10.1093/jos/ffs003.

Brasoveanu, A. & D. Farkas. 2011. How indefinites choose their scope. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 34. 1–55. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-011-9092-7.

Bumford, D. & S. Charlow. 2025. Effect-driven interpretation. https://arxiv.org/abs/2504.00316.

Cariani, F. 2021. *The modal future*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108668514.

Charlow, S. 2021. Post-suppositions and semantic theory. https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/003243.

Dahl, Ö. 1970. Some notes on indefinites. *Language* 46(1). 33–41.

Degano, M. 2025a. A dynamic team semantics for marked indefinites. To appear in *Proceedings of TbiLLC 2023*.

References II

Degano, M. 2025b. Non-specific and dependent indefinites: when -nibud' meets po. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 29*, 370–385. https://doi.org/10.18148/sub/2025.v29.1218.

Dekker, P. 1996. The values of variables in dynamic semantics. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 19. 211–257.

Elbourne, P. 2005. *Situations and individuals*. The MIT Press.

Elliott, P. & Y. Sudo. 2020. Generalised crossover. In *Proceedings of SALT 30*, 396–408. https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v30i0.4841.

Farkas, D. 2021. Multiple event readings with dependent indefinites. In P. Cabredo Hofherr & J. Doetjes (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of grammatical number*, 381–403. Oxford University Press.

Farkas, D. & A. Brasoveanu. 2020. Kinds of (non)specificity. In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Semantics*. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118788516.sem037.

Giannakidou, A. 1998. *Polarity sensitivity as (non)veridical dependency*. John Benjamins.

Groenendijk, J. & M. Stokhof. 1991. Dynamic predicate logic. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 14. 39–100.

Groenendijk, J., M. Stokhof & F. Veltman. 1996. Coreference and modality. In S. Lappin (ed.), *Handbook of contemporary semantic theory*, 179–216.

Haspelmath, M. 1997. *Indefinite pronouns*. Oxford University Press.

Heim, I. 1982. *The semantics of definite and indefinite noun phrases*. UMass Amherst dissertation.

Henderson, R. 2014. Dependent indefinites and their post-suppositions. *Semantics & Pragmatics* 7(6). https://doi.org/10.3765/sp.7.6.

References III

Hintikka, J. 1969. Semantics for propositional attitudes. In J. W. Davis, D. J. Hockney & W. K. Wilson (eds.), *Philosophical logic*, 21–45. Dordrecht: Reidel.

Homer, V. 2020. Domains of polarity items. *Journal of Semantics* 38(1). 1–48. https://doi.org/10.1093/jos/ffaa006.

Karttunen, L. 1976. Discourse referents. In J. McCawley (ed.), *Syntax and semantics: Notes from the linguistic underground*, vol. 7, 363–386. New York: Academic Press.

Kaufmann, M. 2012. *Interpreting imperatives*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2269-9.

Krahmer, E. & R. Muskens. 1995. Negation and disjunction in Discourse Representation Theory. *Journal of Semantics* 13. 357–376.

Kratzer, A. 2012. *Modals and conditionals: New and revised perspectives*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199234684.001.0001.

Kuhn, J. 2022. The dynamics of negative concord. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 45. 153–198. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-020-09318-3.

Lauer, S. 2012. Some news about 'irgend-' and 'algún'. Ms.

Martí, L. & T. Ionin. 2019. Wide scope indefinites in Russian: an experimental investigation. *Glossa* 4(4). https://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.612.

Nicolae, A. C. 2012. Positive polarity items. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 16*, 475–488. https://ojs.ub.uni-konstanz.de/sub/index.php/sub/article/view/441.

References IV

Onea, E. & L. Geist. 2011. Indefinite determiners and the pragmatics of referential anchoring. *International Review of Pragmatics* 3. 194–227.

Paducheva, E. V. 2015. Nereferentnye mestoimenija na -nibud'. In *Materials for a corpus-based description of Russian grammar*. `http://rusgram.ru/`.

Pereltsvaig, A. 2008. Russian *nibud'*-series as markers of co-variation. In *Proceedings of WCCFL 27*, 370–378.

Roberts, C. 1987. *Modal subordination, anaphora, and distributivity*. UMass Amherst dissertation.

Roelofsen, F. 2019. Semantic theories of questions. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. Oxford University Press. `https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.504`.

Roelofsen, F. & J. Dotlačil. 2023. Dynamic inquisitive semantics. *Theoretical Linguistics* 49. 1–91. `https://doi.org/10.1515/tl-2023-2001`.

Spector, B. 2012. Being simultaneously an NPI and a PPI: a bipolar item in French. *Snippets* 25. 21–22.

Spector, B. 2014. Global positive polarity items and obligatory exhaustivity. *Semantics & Pragmatics* 7(11). `https://doi.org/10.3765/sp.7.11`.

Stone, M. 1992. *Or* and anaphora. In *Proceedings of SALT 2*, 367–385.

Szabolcsi, A. 2004. Positive polarity – negative polarity. *NLLT* 22(2). 409–452. `https://doi.org/10.1023/b:nala.0000015791.00288.43`.

van der Wouden, T. 1997. *Negative contexts: Collocation, polarity and multiple negation*. Routledge.

References V

Yanovich, I. 2005. Choice-functional series of indefinite pronouns and Hamblin semantics. In *Proceedings of SALT 15*, 309–326. https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v15i0.2921.

Zehr, J. & F. Schwarz. 2018. PennController for Internet Based Experiments (IBEX). https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/MD832.

Zimmermann, T. E. 2000. Free choice disjunction and epistemic possibility. *Natural Language Semantics* 8. 255–290. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011255819284.

Plural anaphora: formal details

- We follow Brasoveanu 2008 in assuming a difference between domain plurality and evaluation plurality and Henderson 2014 in implementing this idea

- Some core assumptions:
  - a context is a set of sets of assignments
  - assignments are total functions mapping variables to individuals
  - individuals may be atomic or non-atomic
  - special "dummy" individual $\star$
  - all assignments in a context map all unfamiliar variables to $\star$

Plural anaphora: formal details

- Some core definitions:

  (35) a. $C[\![P(x_1, ..., x_n)]\!] = \{G \in C \mid \forall g \in G : \langle g(x_1), ..., g(x_n) \rangle \in I(P)\}$,

     defined if $\forall G \in C, g \in G : g(x_1) \neq \star \wedge ... \wedge g(x_n) \neq \star$

  b. $C[\![[x]]\!] = \left\{ G \mid \exists H \in C : \begin{array}{l} \forall g \in G : \exists h \in H : g[x]h \\ \forall h \in H : \exists g \in G : g[x]h \end{array} \right\}$,

     defined if $\forall G \in C, g \in G : g(x) = \star$

  c. $C[\![\mathbf{ONE}(x)]\!] = \{G \in C \mid \{g(x) \mid g \in G\} \text{ is a singleton}\}$

  d. $C[\![\mathbf{SG}(x)]\!] = \{G \in C \mid \bigoplus \{g(x) \mid g \in G\} \text{ is atomic}\}$

  e. $C[\![\mathbf{PL}(x)]\!] = \{G \in C \mid \bigoplus \{g(x) \mid g \in G\} \text{ is non-atomic}\}$

  f. $C[\![\mathbf{N}_x]\!] = C$,

     defined if $\neg \forall G \in C : \{g(x) \mid g \in G\} \text{ is a singleton } \{d\} \text{ where } d \neq \star$

- The translations for singular and plural *nibud'* indefinites:

  (36) a. [which-NIBUD'^{x} article] $\rightsquigarrow \langle \lambda P. [x] ; \mathbf{ONE}(x) ; \mathbf{SG}(x) ; \text{ARTICLE}(x) ; P(x) , \mathbf{N}_x \rangle$

  b. [which-NIBUD'^{x} articles] $\rightsquigarrow$

     $\langle \lambda P. [x] ; \mathbf{ONE}(x) ; \mathbf{PL}(x) ; \text{ARTICLE}(x) ; P(x) , \mathbf{N}_x \rangle$

Controlled judgments

- Judgments about the acceptability of *nibud'* indefinites are often hard

- Besides, even unlicensed *nibud'* indefinites can be acceptable in certain contexts (covert modalization? cf. Paducheva 2015)

  (37) A: Čto   kupila Maša?
            what bought Masha
            'What did Masha buy?'

       B: (?) Kakuju-nibud' knigu.
               which-NIBUD'   book
           'A book (I guess).'

- For these reasons, I decided to test the acceptability of *nibud'* indefinites in different environments (out of the blue contexts)
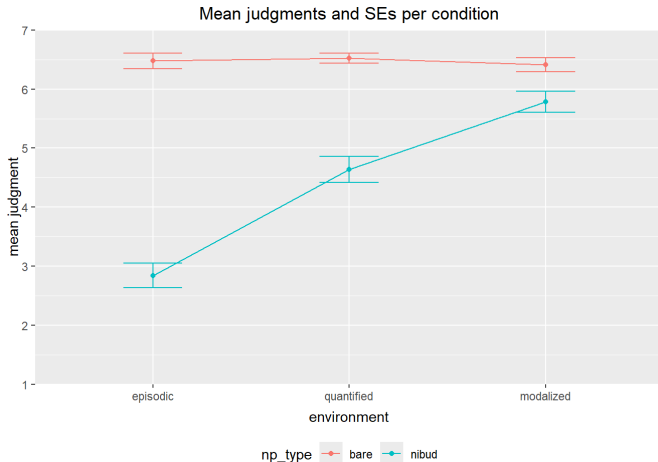
Controlled judgments

- 2 × 3 design: {bare, *nibud'*} indefinite NPs in {episodic, quantified, modalized} sentences

  (38)   a.   Masha solved (which-NIBUD') task.

          b.   Every competition participant solved (which-NIBUD') task.

          c.   Katja must solve (which-NIBUD') task.

- 2 × 3 × 6 = 36 target sentences overall; 6 Latin square groups

- Acceptability judgment task, 7-point Likert scale

- Implementation using PCIbex (Zehr & Schwarz 2018)

- 90 participants recruited via Yandex.Tasks

- Each participant saw 2 training sentences and 6 randomly ordered target sentences mixed with 12 fillers

Controlled judgments

- Results suggest a three-way contrast between episodic, quantified and modalized sentences:

Mean judgments and SEs per condition

Controlled judgments

- The three-way contrast is surprising and, of course, problematic for our account

- Interestingly, I think that an explanation based on anaphoric (in)accessibility is possible

- Recall that extensional quantifiers differ from intensional operators in that only the former license plural anaphora to indefinites in their scope

- This might be the factor that reduces the acceptability of *nibud'* indefinites in this environment

- More data will be needed to test this, however