

Coordinated on the context: Discourse salience, exclusivity, mirativity, precisification, and intensification in Marathi

Abstract Several Indo-Aryan languages, including Bangla, Gujarati, Hindi, and Marathi contain a discourse clitic whose uses overlap with those of English particles like exclusives *only/just*, intensifiers *really/totally*, precisifiers *right/exactly/absolutely*, anaphoric *indeed/that very*, and scalar additive *even* without corresponding perfectly to any of them. This paper offers an analysis of the varied and seemingly disparate uses of this particle, focusing on the Marathi variant =*ts*. I claim that =*ts* conventionally signals that interlocutors are in mutual agreement that the proposition denoted by the prejacent is uniquely salient among alternatives in the current question. That is, =*ts* conveys that the proposition expressed by the prejacent offers a **schelling point** (or focal point) for the interlocutors to coordinate on. Most effects associated with =*ts* are shown to arise as a consequence of pragmatic reasoning about the position of the prejacent with respect to the contextually given ordering on the current question. In addition to offering a unified analysis for Marathi =*ts* and its functional cognates in Indo-Aryan, this new perspective can open the door to a better understanding of why exclusivity, mirativity, precisification, and intensification might cluster together in languages.

Keywords: Discourse Particles, Formal Pragmatics, Current Question, Indo-Aryan, Exclusives, Miratives, Precisifiers, Intensifiers

1 Introduction

Marathi contains a chameleon-like enclitic discourse particle =*ts* (with an allomorph =*əts* in post-consonantal contexts). Depending on contextual conditions, the presence of =*ts* in declarative clauses may give rise to a range of inferences that include those associated with exclusives (1a, 1b), precisifiers, (1c), intensifiers (1d), mirativity marking (1e), clefts, expectation confirmation (1f) and scalar additives (1g).

- (1) a. CONTEXT: Last week, twenty girls attended the meeting Sp had organized but yesterday...

dəha=ts mulī mīṭing=la a-lyat
ten=c girl.F.PL.NOM meeting=DAT/ACC come-PERF.3.F.PL

Yesterday, *only/just* ten girls came to the meeting.

↪ *No more than ten girls came to the meeting.*

- b. CONTEXT: Sp told Anu to visit the cities of both Pune and Mumbai. But...

Anu **punya=la=ts** ge-lī
Anu.F.SG.NOM Pune.OBL=DAT/ACC=c go-PERF.F.SG

She went *only/just* to Pune.

↪ *Anu went nowhere other than Pune.*

- c. CONTEXT: Sp tells Ad about the power situation after an earthquake.

səgl̩ya=ts b^hag-at-lī vīḌ ge-lī
every.OBL=c area-LOC-F.SG power.F.SG.NOM go-PERF.F.SG

They lost power in *absolutely* every neighborhood.

↪ *The claim does not exclude any neighborhood in the context.*

- d. CONTEXT: Sp tells Ad about a new restaurant.

ti^hlə ɕevəŋ **p^har=əts** tsəvdar ah-e
there.from food.N.SG.NOM very=c tasty be-PRES.3.SG

The food there is *really* very tasty.

↪ *The standard for tastiness is boosted at the context.*

- e. CONTEXT: Sp tells Ad about how angry their friend got about a sexist remark from a colleague.

ti=ne tya=la **t^həppəd=əts** mar-lī
she=ERG he.OBL=DAT/ACC slap.F.SG.NOM=c strike-PERF.F.SG

She *just* gave him a slap.

↪ *The slapping deviated sharply from what was contextually expected.*

- f. CONTEXT: Ad wants to know if Sp has made dinner; they had discussed making pasta beforehand.

hoy, mi aḌ **paṣṭa=ts** bənəv-la ah-e
Yes I.NOM today pasta.M.SG.NOM=c make-PERF.M.SG be-PRES.3.SG

Yes, I have made pasta *indeed*.

↪ *The pasta making perfectly matches what was contextually expected.*

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- g. CONTEXT: Sp tells Ad that Bilal did not invite his colleagues to his wedding, not even his assistant, Nita.

Bilal=ne **Nīta=la=ts** bolav-lə nahī, bakī
Bilal=ERG Nita=DAT/ACC=c invite-PERF.N.SG NEG other
lokan=tsə soḍ
people.OBL.PL=N.SG.GEN leave.IMP

Bilal didn't invite *even* Nītā, let alone other people.

↪ *Nita was most expected to be a wedding invitee in the context.*

To the best of my knowledge, the clustering of effects of the sort associated with =ts has not been identified and investigated in unified fashion for any known discourse marker in Germanic, Romance, or any other language. Moreover, genetically related modern languages like Bangla, Gujarati, Hindi, and Punjabi contain functional counterparts which almost perfectly parallel the distribution and interpretation of Marathi =ts.¹ The presence of functional cognates across Indo-Aryan points to the possibility that the particular clustering of discourse effects in Marathi =ts's profile is part of an inherited grammatical core from an older proto-system. This stability in the clustering of uses across related languages (and potentially across time) makes it even more likely that it arises from a single core of conventionalized pragmatic meaning in interaction with specific contextual conditions. The goal of this paper is to offer a unified analysis of Marathi =ts that explicates this interaction between conventional and contextual meaning.

I will claim here that the discourse function of Marathi =ts in declarative clauses is uniformly to indicate that the speaker takes the prejacent's interpretation to correspond to the unique mutually salient propositional alternative in the current question (CQ_c). The mutually perceived salience of the proposition denoted by the prejacent may be rooted in the localized beliefs and expectations of particular interlocutors at a given utterance context, as in (1f). Alternately, it may emerge from some intrinsic property that lends mutually recognizable prominence to the prejacent proposition (for instance, its unexpectedness or noteworthiness), as in (1e) and (1g). Finally, for a prejacent whose intended interpretation is under-determined at a given context, the relevant notion is that of a mutually salient interpretation. In the absence of contextual cues, interlocutors must coordinate on a shared interpretation for any prejacent with under-specified interpretation and the role of =ts is to facilitate such coordination by presupposing a unique mutually salient interpretation. The examples in (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d) are subsumable under this category.²

1 Of these, only the facts of Hindi =hi have been described in some detail (Bhatt 1994, Varma 2006, Bajaj 2016) and will be discussed comparatively as appropriate.

2 The literature on contextual usage conditions of gradable adjectives examines how the need for the speaker and the hearer to coordinate on mutually shared contextual standards leads to the selection

More generally, *=ts* signals that interlocutors are in mutual agreement that the proposition denoted by the prejacent is uniquely salient – it stands out among alternative answers. This amounts to a signal that the interlocutors are coordinated with each other with respect to crucial aspects of the structure and content of the current question. For instance, they might be expected to be coordinated on what the addressee “really” wants to know in asking the question (e.g. 1f), or what the scalar structure of the question is (e.g. 1e), or what level of precision the alternatives are intended to be interpreted (e.g. 1c). From this perspective, *=ts* conveys that the proposition expressed by the prejacent offers a **schelling point** (or focal point) among alternative answers for the interlocutors to coordinate on. As Schelling (1960) notes, the prominence of such a point in any domain is not necessarily a definite solution; it is heavily context-dependent, varying by time, place and the people involved.

People can often concert their intentions or expectations with others if each knows that the other is trying to do the same. Most situations – perhaps every situation for people who are practiced at this kind of game – provide some clue for coordinating behavior, some focal point for each person’s expectation of what the other expects him to expect to be expected to do. Finding the key, or rather finding a key – any key that is mutually recognized as the key becomes the key – may depend on imagination more than on logic; it may depend on analogy, precedent, accidental arrangement, symmetry, aesthetic or geometric configuration, casuistic reasoning, and who the parties are and what they know about each other. (Schelling 1960: 57)

This type of flexibility means that although Marathi *=ts* (and Hindi *=hi*) pre-suppose coordination on the salience of a particular propositional alternative in the current question, the “how” and the “why” of its salience is a contextually varying matter. The rest of the paper explicates in detail how the analysis outlined here can make sense of the range of uses observed with *=ts*. In §2, I organize the core set of empirical facts in need of explanation. Given that these facts have never been presented before, I offer as complete a description as necessary. In §3, I present the analysis together with descriptions of how it accounts for the uses from §2. In §4, I briefly document further uses and contrasts that are covered by the analysis but which justify independent future investigation. §5 concludes.

of salient values for such standards (scalar endpoints for adjectives based on closed scales and non-endpoint but extreme values for relative adjectives based on open scales (Kennedy 2007, Potts 2008, Franke 2012). We will see here that the pressure for such coordination can additionally also have precisificatory and exhaustifying effects depending on the nature of the predicate.

2 The empirical profile of =ts

Given the wide range of contexts in which =ts is felicitous in declarative utterances and the wide range of inferences that it may license, the descriptions in §2.1 and §2.2 focus on minimally different contexts that yield clear contrasts with respect to the felicity of =ts. It is the property that distinguishes the infelicitous contexts from the felicitous ones that will allow us to move towards a more unified explanation for the full range of uses. These are discussed later in §2.3. All judgements reported are the author’s native judgements corroborated with two other native speakers. In order to ensure that intuitions about the subtle contrasts that I report here are maximally confirmable, I also provide corresponding translations in Hindi (without glosses) so that Hindi speakers can determine for themselves whether they agree with my judgements regarding the (in)felicity of the Hindi clitic =hi in those very contexts.

2.1 Mutual salience based on prior knowledge

Focus signals the presence of alternatives that are relevant in interpretation of linguistic content (Rooth 1992, Krifka 2008, Zimmermann & Onea 2011). The alternatives made available through focus may be employed in different ways, depending on the goals of discourse participants and surrounding discourse context. Following Zimmermann & Onea (2011) (who in turn build on the functional-typological literature), we can observe the pragmatic use of focus alternatives at least in contexts where *new information* is expected (in answers to questions), *correction* is provided, one among a salient previously introduced set of alternatives is *selected*, and when elements of the alternative set are *contrasted* with each other. In each of these contexts, we see that although =ts may cliticize to a focused constituent, this is felicitous only when the alternative offered as the answer is assumed to be already salient to both interlocutors.

2.1.1 New information focus

=ts is infelicitous in an answer to a wh-question unless the answer is mutually recognized as being salient in the context. =ts thus does not correspond to new-information focus simpliciter but may be cliticized to the constituent that provides new information in certain circumstances. Consider the contrast between the two contexts in (2), with the relevant Marathi sentence in (2c). =ts is perfectly felicitous (though optional) in Context-1, where there is a salient alternative based on commonly shared experience and this alternative is expressed by Bilal’s response. =ts is infelicitous in Bilal’s response given Context-2, where there is no commonly

assumed expectation that the prejacent be true. The Hindi counterpart, which has the same felicity profile, is in (2d).

- (2) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Bilal was at work late last night and Anu wants to know how he got back home. It is commonly known that Niśa usually drops Bilal off when they have to stay late at the office.
A: Who drove you home last night?
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Bilal was at work late last night and Anu wants to know how he got back home.
A: Who drove you home last night?
- c. B: **Niśa=ne=ts** mə=la soq-lə
Niśa=ERG=c I.OBL=DAT/ACC leave-PERF.N.SG
Niśa dropped me off.
- d. Hindi: **Niśa=ne=hi** muḏʰe tʃʰoḏa

2.1.2 Corrective focus

=ts is also infelicitous in corrections unless the answer corresponding to the prejacent is mutually recognized as being salient in the context. (3) shows that =ts does not correspond to corrective focus but it may be cliticized to the constituent that provides the correction to a previously offered alternative under certain circumstances. In Context-1, given Niśa's status as the default cook, Bilal's correction in (3c) offers an alternative that is already contextually salient – the use of =ts is felicitous. In Context-2, Bilal's correction of Anu's claim does not offer an already salient answer, given that there is no common expectation that Niśa be tonight's cook. (3c) is infelicitous in this context.

- (3) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Niśa usually cooks for everyone and it is commonly known that she is the default cook. Bilal had told Anu that he would cook dinner tonight. But he got too busy and Niśa ended up cooking as usual. Anu does not know this and tells her friend:
A: You know, Bilal cooked this delicious meal.
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Bilal usually cooks for everyone and it is commonly known that he is the default cook. But it was Niśa who cooked tonight. Anu is unaware of this change, assumes that Bilal cooked as usual, and tells her friend:

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A: Bilal cooked this delicious meal.

- c. B: nahi-nahi, **Niśa=ne=ts** ɖɛvəŋ bəɳəv-lə
No-no Niśa=ERG=c meal.N.SG.NOM make-PERF.N.SG
No-no, Niśa made the meal.
- d. Hindi: **Niśa=ne=hi** k^hana bənaya

2.1.3 Selective focus

=ts is also infelicitous in contexts where the answer constituent is selected from a restricted set of previously mentioned alternatives, unless the answer is mutually recognized as being independently salient in the context. At Context-1, given the discussion between Anu and Bilal, Anu's answer can be understood as offering a priorly salient alternative – (4c) is felicitous at this context. At Context-2, Anu's answer is expected to be either Nagpur or Mumbai but there is no commonly known preference for either answer – (4c) is infelicitous here.

- (4) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Anu had told Bilal that she offered to pay for a trip for Anu's daughter to any city in Maharashtra. Her daughter was debating between Nagpur and Mumbai. Anu and Bilal have had a prior discussion about why Nagpur would be more interesting for her given its location.
B: So which of the two did she finally decide on?
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Anu had told Bilal that she offered to pay for a trip for Anu's daughter to any city in the state of Maharashtra. Her daughter had been debating between Nagpur and Mumbai.
B: So which of the two did she finally decide on?
- c. A: ti=ne **nagpur=la=ts** ɖa-ytsə t^həɳəv-lə
She.ERG Nagpur.OBL=DAT/ACC=c go-INF.N.SG decide-PERF.N.SG
She decided to go to Nagpur.
- d. Hindi: us=ne **nagpur=hi** ʈuna

2.1.4 Contrastive focus

=ts is also infelicitous in contrastive statements unless the alternative offered by the prejacent is recognized as independently being mutually salient in the context. Relative to Context-1, given common knowledge about Deepa's schedule, Bilal's

use of *=ts* in (5c) indicates that the true answer to part of Anu's question is the commonly expected answer. At Context-2, Bilal contrasts the location of Niśa and Deepa, but there is no shared knowledge about the location of either, making (5c) infelicitous.

- (5) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Anu and Bilal are visiting Niśa's house but Anu cannot see either Niśa or her cousin Deepa. They both know that Deepa is supposed to be teaching at school around this time but Anu is uncertain.
A: Where are Niśa and Deepa?
B: Niśa is out shopping, and...
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Anu and Bilal are visiting Niśa's house but Anu cannot see either Niśa or her cousin Deepa and has no idea where they are.
A: Where are Niśa and Deepa?
B: Niśa is out shopping, and...
- c. Deepa **falet=əts** ah-e
Deepa school.LOC=c be-PRES.3.SG
Deepa is at the school.
- d. Hindi: Deepa **skul=mẽ=hi** he

2.1.5 Marking an answer as mutually salient

To summarize the data so far, the felicity of *=ts* depends on whether the alternative corresponding to the prejacent is understood to be mutually salient for both interlocutors at the utterance context. The effect of *=ts* is to convey that the answerer is providing that privileged answer that the questioner has reason to expect the answerer to provide. In only the CONTEXT-1 descriptions above, the prejacent is salient because of priorly known shared information about patterns of behavior (2a, 3a, 5a) or priorly known shared interlocutor preferences (4a). This makes the use of *=ts* felicitous, regardless of the pragmatic function of focus at that context.

It is not immediately obvious how to square this use of *=ts* to mark an answer as mutually salient to the interlocutors at the utterance context with the range of effects observed in (1), which included exclusivity, precisification, intensification, mirativity, and scalar additivity. These effects are described in §2.3. But before that, in §2.2, I will describe a class of slightly different uses from those in §2.1, in which the speaker draws the addressee's attention to an entity before offering the prejacent with *=ts* as the answer.

2.2 Mutual salience by explicit coordination

2.2.1 Individual-denoting demonstrative expressions

=ts cliticizes to individual-denoting demonstratives in pronominal or complex determiner phrases, and the effect is similar to that associated with *that very NP* or clefts in English. In Context-1, given a shared perceptually accessible context, Anu wants to know which individual satisfies the description *Bilal's sister*. Bilal draws her attention to a specific individual in their shared perceptual field and then asserts that that (now salient) individual is his sister. The sentence with =ts in (6c) is felicitous at this context. In Context-2, Anu has exactly the same question but structures her inquiry differently; she asks whether a specific individual wearing the green sari satisfies the description *Bilal's sister*. Bilal corrects her, draws her attention to a different individual who is actually his sister and offers the preajcent as the answer in (6c). Crucially, =ts is infelicitous at this context. The difference between (6a) and (6b) is that there is no other salient alternative at the context in (6a), while there is a clear competing alternative answer at the context in (6b), introduced by the polar question asked by Anu.

- (6) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Anu has never met Bilal's sister and wants to be introduced to her at a party.
 A: Bilal, where/which woman is your sister?
 B: Do you see that tall woman in the sky-blue dress?
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Anu has never met Bilal's sister and wants to be introduced to her at a party.
 A: Bilal, is your sister the one wearing the green sari?
 B: [Looks at where she is pointing] No, do you see that tall woman in the sky-blue dress?
- c. **tī=ts** maḍ^hī bəhīṇ ah-e
 She=*c* my.F.SG.NOM sister.F.SG.NOM be-PRES.3.SG
 It is that woman that is my sister.
- d. Hindi: **və=hi** meri bəhen hē

(7) offers similar minimally differing contexts where the referent (Deepa's mother's wedding sari) is in the shared knowledge of the interlocutors but not within their shared perceptual field at the time of utterance. =ts is felicitous when there is no competing alternative answer introduced through a prior discourse move (Context-1

in 7a), but infelicitous when a different answer has been highlighted by a polar question (Context-2 in 7b).

- (7) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Anu wants to know Deepa's attire at a party the night before and asks her friend Niśa.
 A: What was Deepa wearing at the party last night?
 N: You have seen her mother's wedding sari, right?
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Anu wants to know Deepa's attire at a party the night before and asks her friend Niśa.
 A: Did Deepa wear the green sari her sister gave her to the party?
 N: No. You have seen her mother's wedding sari, right?
- c. ti=ne **ti=ts** saḍi g^hat-li hot-i
 she=ERG that=c sari.F.SG.NOM wear-PERF.F.SG PST-F.SG
 She was wearing *that* very sari.
- d. Hindi: us=ne **və=hi** sari pehēni t^{hi}

The (in)felicity judgements associated with the context-sentence pairings in (6) and (7) reveal that the felicitous use of =ts depends on whether the prejacent can be taken to be the unique mutually salient alternative in the current question. Even if the speaker draws attention to a discourse referent and thereby makes the alternative offered by the prejacent salient, if the preceding discourse contains a competing false alternative, this competitor prevents the prejacent from being construed as uniquely mutually salient.

2.2.2 Vague demonstratives and precisification

When =ts cliticizes to vague demonstrative expressions (*here, there, now, then, this-much, that-much, like-this, like-that*), it is necessary that there be a mutually salient referent for the demonstrative in the linguistic or utterance context, just as in (6) and (7). However, there is sometimes an added precisificational effect like the one that *right* or *exactly* might have with vague expressions in English.³ In (8a), =ts attaches to the spatial demonstrative *there*; in (8b), to the temporal demonstrative *then*; in

³ Note that *right* or *exactly* are usually analyzed as slack-regulators. But cliticizing =ts to referential expressions like *at three o'clock*, *in Berlin*, measure expressions like *6 inches*, or numerals like *500* does not give rise to the slack-regulating effect of the sort discussed in Lasersohn (1999) and Lauer (2012). =ts is thus not a conventional device to regulate slack or loose talk. It only seems to (often) have a precisifying effect when used with vague expressions.

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(8c), to a manner demonstrative *like-that*; and in (8d), to an amount demonstrative, *that-much*.⁴

- (8) a. CONTEXT: Bilal tells Anu where an accident he witnessed took place.
B: Do you know that little tea shop near the Ganesh temple?

tith^he=ts ha əpəg^hat g^həḍ-la
there=*c* this.M.SG.NOM accident.M.SG.NOM occur-PERF.M.SG

It was *right* there that the accident occurred.

Hindi: **və=hĩ=pər** əpəg^hat g^həṭa

- b. CONTEXT: Niśa tells Bilal about her daughter getting hurt.
N: We were just heading out to see a movie last evening, and...

tev^hā=ts ti ḍinya=vərun pəḍ-li
Then=*c* she.NOM stairs.OBL=from.on fall-PERF.F.SG

Exactly then, she fell down the stairs.

Hindi: **təb=hi** vo siṭi=pər=se gir gəyi

- c. CONTEXT: Anu got a perfect score on a competitive exam.
B: How did you manage it?
A: It was simple...

khan.əkəḍemi=ne saṅgit-lə ah-e **təsa=ts**
Khan.academy=ERG say-PERF.N.SG PRES-3.SG like.that.M.SG.NOM=*c*
əb^hyas ke-la mi
study.M.SG.NOM do-PERF.M.SG I.ERG

I studied *exactly* the way KA said to.

Hindi: ...mə̃=ne **vəse=hi** pəḍ^hai ki

- d. CONTEXT: Anu is trying out Bilal's recipe for a rice and lentil dish.
A: How much rice should I put in?
B: Measure carefully...

ḍitke māsūr əs-tīl
as.much.M.PL.NOM lentils.M.PL.NOM be-MOD.3.PL
titka=ts tandūl ghe
that.much.M.SG.NOM=*c* rice.M.SG.NOM take.IMP

⁴ The uses of the vague demonstratives discussed here are all anaphoric uses, but =ts can also cliticize to the proximal and distal series of these demonstratives when they are used deictically.

Take *exactly* as much rice as the lentils.

Hindi: ...**utna=hi** t̪avəɭ lena

Note that the precisifying effect observed with =*ts* cliticized to vague demonstratives is over and above the requirement that the prejacent be mutually salient to the interlocutors (similar to the facts in §2.2.1).

2.3 Achieving mutual salience by reference to scalar endpoints

§2.1 and §2.2 show us that =*ts* can be used in contexts where the salience of an alternative answer is rooted in the interlocutors' beliefs about each other's beliefs and preferences. In §2.2.1, we see that the speaker can draw on information that is accessible (perceptually or otherwise) to their addressee in order to make their answer mutually salient as long as there is no other contextually salient competing alternative. And in §2.2.2, we observe that when the speaker uses vague expressions to refer to these salient entities (spatial regions, times, manner, quantities), there is an added precisifying effect.

In the class of cases discussed so far, the salience of the answer proposition is discourse sensitive, emerging because the interlocutors' expectations, preferences, and/or prior discourse moves allow them to be coordinated on a unique alternative at the relevant stage of the discourse. I label this constraint associated with the felicitous use of =*ts* the **discourse-sensitive mutual salience** constraint.

- (9) **Discourse-sensitive mutual salience constraint:** =*ts* is felicitous if its prejacent offers the unique mutually salient answer to the current question given the shared beliefs and/or preferences of the interlocutors including those indicated by prior discourse moves. If felicitous, =*ts* must cliticize to the answer constituent in the prejacent.

In this section I show that exclusivity, precisification, and intensification as well as mirativity and scalar additive-like effects of =*ts* involve **scale-sensitive mutual salience**. These effects arise when the prejacent is presupposed to be located at some salient position in an ordered question – a scalar endpoint. These effects also seem to arise in contexts where the **discourse-sensitive mutual salience** constraint is not met – i.e. when there is no mutually salient proposition determined by shared beliefs, preferences, or prior discourse moves. In several contexts where scale-sensitive effects arise, an appropriate modification of interlocutor assumptions can dampen these effects and make the “discourse-sensitive mutual salience” effect more prominent.

I will argue that this broad interpretational pattern supports an analysis of =*ts* in which it uniformly signals that the prejacent offers the unique mutually salient answer to the current question. Here is how the reasoning goes:

- (10) a. If this analysis is correct, then, even in the absence of shared beliefs, expectations, or preferences about the identity of the unique mutually salient answer, the use of =*ts* in declarative utterances should conventionally imply that the speaker's contribution is to be interpreted by the addressee as the unique mutually salient answer to the current question.
- b. This means that the speaker expects the unique proposition denoted by =*ts*'s prejacent to be contextually determinable by the addressee by virtue of its salience.
- c. Therefore, when salience is not obviously established in the discourse context, the cooperative speaker should use =*ts* with a prejacent only to communicate a proposition that is obviously more salient than its alternatives on some scale of values.⁵ Propositions located at scalar endpoints are maximally salient and minimize the chance of referential confusion (Potts 2008, Franke 2012).
- i. When =*ts*'s prejacent is compatible with multiple interpretations at the context (due to presence of vague predicates, imprecision, or lack of explicit exhaustification marking, for instance), the speaker should use the prejacent to communicate its most precise or strictest interpretation – a scalar endpoint with respect to the informativity of the prejacent.
- ii. When =*ts*'s prejacent is taken to have a single invariant interpretation, the speaker should use the prejacent to communicate a proposition that is obviously more salient than its alternatives on the scale of unexpectedness or noteworthiness – a scalar endpoint as well.
- d. Exclusivity, precisification, and intensification amount to an interpretation of the prejacent that is semantically stricter than alternative interpretations.
- e. Mirativity and scalar additivity entail that the prejacent is located at a salient position along a scale of alternative propositions ranked by noteworthiness, likelihood, or unexpectedness.
- f. The availability of these otherwise disparate effects *taken together with* =*ts*'s use for marking discourse-sensitive mutual salience, supports the analysis of =*ts* as a conventional signal of the mutual salience of the answer denoted by the prejacent.

Below, I describe in detail the properties of each scale-sensitive effect associated with =*ts*, and (when possible) identify the contextual conditions under which it can be over-ridden by discourse-sensitive salience.

⁵ Likewise, the cooperative addressee should recognize this intention and use the appropriate interpretation strategy.

2.3.1 Exclusive-like uses of =ts

There are two types of readings observed with a dedicated exclusive like *only* – the *complement exclusion* reading and the *scalar* or *rank-order* reading. Intuitively, on the complement exclusion reading, what is conveyed is that *nothing other than* what is entailed by the prejacent is true while in a rank-order reading, the sentence conveys that *nothing more than* the prejacent is true, where the prejacent is placed on a contextually determined scale that orders propositions by rank. The discourse function of exclusives, at least in English, is partly mirative; they convey that the strongest true answer to the current question is surprisingly weak.

Marathi =ts can have an exclusive-like effect in terms of ruling out all stronger alternatives and giving rise to a “weaker-than-expected” mirative effect. But the latter effect can be easily suppressed by modifying the context slightly.⁶ Consider the contrast in the contexts of (11a) and (11b) and the available inferences for the same sentence. In (11a), Anu challenges stronger expectations that Bilal might have regarding how elaborate the meal was by using =ts. In (11b), Anu references their shared knowledge of Bilal’s preferences regarding what Anu should make, which makes the proposition *Anu made pulav* mutually salient. In the context presented in (11b), =ts does not give rise to the inference that what Anu made for dinner fell short of expectations. Rather, it conveys that there is a perfect match between Bilal’s preferences and Anu’s actions. The upper-bounding effect is very weak and Anu can easily follow up on her contribution in (11b) with: “*and I also made some raita and curry to complete the meal.*”

- (11) a. CONTEXT-1: Anu had invited a friend for dinner and Bilal is excited to know more about the food she cooked.

B: So what did you make for dinner?

A: I kept it simple...

mi **pulav=əts** bən-əv-la

I. ERG spiced.rice.M.SG.NOM=c become-CAUS-PERF.M.SG

I made *only* Pulāv (a spiced rice dish). (Hindi: *məne pulav=hi bənaya.*)

↪ *Anu made nothing other than Pulav.* upper-bounding effect

↪ *The dinner was expected to contain more items.* mirative effect

⁶ Marathi also has dedicated exclusives *p^həktə* and *keṽəʃ* with upper-bounding meaning like *only*. These are free particles that may occur in a prejacent with or without =ts. See Bhatt (1994), Bajaj (2016) for discussion of similar patterns of co-occurrence with Hindi exclusives and =hi. I will not explore these interactions here for reasons of space.

- b. CONTEXT-2: Anu had invited a friend for dinner and Bilal wants to know more about it. He had suggested to Anu that she make Pulav for the event because it is her signature dish.

B: So what did you make for dinner?

A: I did exactly what you suggested...

mi **pulav=əts** bən-əv-la

I. ERG spiced.rice.M.SG.NOM=c become-CAUS-PERF.M.SG

I made Pulāv (a spiced rice dish). (H: *məne pulav=hi bənaya.*)

? ~ Anu made nothing other than Pulav. upper-bounding effect

↗ The dinner was expected to contain more items. no mirative effect

A similar contrast can be constructed with alternatives ordered on a numerical scale, as seen in (12). In (12a), Anu challenges the stronger expectation in the context arising from attendance facts from the previous week and the effect is similar to that of *only*. In (12b), Bilal freely offers a guess about the number of attendees, which makes the prejacent proposition mutually salient. Here =ts is better translated as *exactly*, conveying a match between expectations and facts. In (12c), the facts of the meeting and of the discourse are modified a little so that we can see that the relative number of attendees has no bearing on =ts's felicity and the upper-bounding inference it gives rise to. It is very difficult to cancel the upper-bounding inference when =ts associates with numeral expressions but I take this to be a fact about numeral interpretations more generally.

- (12) a. CONTEXT-1: Last week, twenty girls attended the zoom meeting Anu had organized and Bilal wants to know about this week's meeting.

B: How many girls showed up at your meeting yesterday?

A: The turnout was a little lower...

dəha=ts mulī mīṭiṅ=la a-l-yat

ten=ts girl.F.PL.NOM meeting=DAT/ACC come-PERF-3.F.PL

There were *only* ten girls at the meeting. (H: *kəl dəs=hi ləṭkiyā ayi t^hi.*)

~ There were no more than ten girls. upper-bounding effect

~ More attendees were expected. mirative effect

- b. CONTEXT-2: Last week, twenty girls attended the zoom meeting Anu had organized and Bilal wants to know about this week's meeting.

B: I saw you had a meeting yesterday. How many girls came? Ten or so?

A: You are right...

dəha=ts mulī mīṭiṅ=la a-l-yat

ten=ts girl.F.PL.NOM meeting=DAT/ACC come-PERF-3.F.PL

There were *exactly* ten girls at the meeting. (H: *kəl dəs=hi ləṭkiyā ayi t^hi.*)
 ~> *There were no more than ten girls.* upper-bounding effect
 ↗> *More attendees were expected.* mirative effect

- c. CONTEXT-3: Last week, twenty girls attended the zoom meeting Anu had organized and Anu tells Bilal the meeting yesterday also went really well.
 A: How many girls do you think attended the meeting yesterday?
 B: I am not sure. Thirty?
 A: You are exactly right...

tis=əts mulī mīṭing=la a-l-yat
 thirty=ts girl.F.PL.NOM meeting=DAT/ACC come-PERF-3.F.PL

There were thirty girls at the meeting . (H: *kəl tis=hi ləṭkiyā ayi t^hi.*)
 ~> *There were exactly thirty girls.* upper-bounding effect
 ↗> *More attendees were expected.* mirative effect

Finally, we consider the rank-order use of =ts, where the mirative effect may also disappear through an appropriate modification of the context. In (13a), Bilal's utterance challenges a stronger preference of Niśa's that Anu be highly placed in the Indian bureaucracy so that she has the power to help in obtaining sensitive documents. In (13b), Bilal indicates his awareness that Niśa wants to contact someone with non-permanent ties to the Ministry. In such a context of shared knowledge of preferences, the mirative inference does not arise. Rather, (13b) conveys that there is a perfect match between Niśa's preferences and Anu's position in the Ministry.

- (13) a. CONTEXT-1: Niśa is asking Bilal if anyone senior enough might be able to help Niśa get some sensitive documents from the Ministry of Education for her investigation.

N: What about Anu? Is Anu highly placed in the bureaucracy?
 B: Not really...

ti tit^he tēmpərərī=ts ah-e
 she.NOM there temporary=c be-PRES.3.SG

She is *only* a temporary worker there. (H: *vo tēmpərərī=hi hε*)
 ~> *She has no more stable position.* upper-bounding effect
 ~> *She was expected to have a higher rank.* mirative effect

- b. CONTEXT-2: Niśa is asking Bilal if anyone might be able to help Niśa get some sensitive documents from the Ministry of Education for her investigation. Niśa had indicated before that she would prefer someone who doesn't have permanent ties with the ministry in case there is backlash.

Marathi =ts

N: What about Anu? Is she in a permanent position?

B: Not at all. She would be perfect!

ti tit^he **tempərəri=ts** ah-e
she.NOM there temporary=c be-PRES.3.SG

She is a temporary worker there (like you want!). (H: *vo tempərəri=hi hε*)

\rightsquigarrow *She has no more stable position.* upper-bounding effect

↗ *She was expected to have a higher rank.* mirative effect

What emerges from this pattern of context-dependent inferences in (11), (12), and (13) is that while $=ts$ may often give rise to the upper-bounding effect, the mirative “lower-than-expected” inference only arises if the context does not make the proposition denoted by the prejacent mutually salient. We will account for both the mirative and the upper-bounding effect in §3.2.2.

2.3.2 Precisifying uses of =ts

The precisifying use of *=ts* is observed in affirmative universal and negated existential declaratives. As noted in Lahiri (1995, 1998) and elsewhere, negative clauses in Hindi (and many other Indo-Aryan languages) are built out of weak indefinites/Q-words and sentential negation marking. *=ts* may attach to the universal Q-det (14a) or to the indefinites (14b or 14c).⁷ The effect of *=ts* in these cases is to convey that all imprecise, loose interpretations of the quantifier expressions are ruled out. In other words, *=ts* serves to raise the standard of precision to the highest level at the context.

- (14) a. CONTEXT: Anu and Bilal just heard news about a recent earthquake.

A: Do you know what the power situation was like?

B: It was pretty bad...

səɡljā=ts b^haga=t-lī vidz ge-lī
all.OBL=c area.OBL=LOC-F.SG power.F.SG.NOM go-PERF.F.SG

They lost power *absolutely* everywhere. (H: səb=**hi** ilakō=mē rofni tʃəli
gəyi)

7 It is worth pointing out that Marathi and Hindi diverge in this respect. Hindi =*hi*, unlike Marathi =*ts*, does not visibly cliticize to indefinites. Domain widening involves the use of an additive clitic *b^{hi}*, a phenomenon analyzed first in Lahiri (1995). But several indefinite expressions occurring in the scope of negation have a form that has the =*hi* clitic already incorporated in them (e.g. *kəhī* ‘somewhere’, *kəb^{hi}* ‘sometime’, *koi* ‘someone’ *kisi* ‘someone.OBL’).

- b. CONTEXT: Anu and Bilal just heard news about a recent earthquake.

A: Do you know what the power situation was like?

B: It was pretty bad...

ku^he=ts vid̪ nəvhti
anywhere=c power.F.SG.NOM NEG.PST.F.SG

There was no power anywhere *at all*. (H: *kəhĩ=b^hi rofni nəhi t^hi*)

- c. CONTEXT: Anu was expecting several friends to visit her on her birthday.

B: So who all came?

A: I am a little disappointed...

koŋi=ts a-lə nahĩ
anyone=c come-PERF.N.SG NEG

Absolutely noone showed up. (H: *koi=b^hi nəhi aya*)

The effect of =*ts* here is similar to that of English *absolutely* that was observed by Horn (1972) to only attach to expressions that constitute endpoints of Horn scales (e.g. *Absolutely {everyone/noone/#someone/#most people/#seven people} attended the meeting.*). An account of these uses will be given in §3.2.3. Besides its use in universal and negative existential claims, =*ts* also gives rise to a precisificational effect with necessity modals, universal Q-adverbs, and in negative declaratives.⁸

2.3.3 Intensifier-like uses of =*ts*

In its intensifier-like uses, =*ts* cliticizes to vague determiners like *many*, *much*, intensifiers like *very* and the effect is that the quantified/modified predicate gets interpreted at a boosted standard relative to its non-=*ts* counterpart. In (15a), =*ts* attaches to the vague determiner *k^hup* ‘much, a lot’ and conveys that the amount that counts as a lot of rain is higher than what might have been construed in the context. In (15b), =*ts* attaches to the degree modifier *p^har* ‘very’ and has a standard-boosting effect above and beyond that of the modifier (an effect translatable as *really very ADJ*).

⁸ I have already noted in §2.2.2 that =*ts* cannot be used like a slack-regulator with expressions like *3 o'clock* or *Berlin*. Another set of interactions to consider would be those with maximum-standard adjectives (Kennedy & McNally (2005)) like *empty*, *invisible*, *complete*. Such adjectives have been analyzed as making reference to standards that are scalar endpoints and they combine felicitously with endpoint modifiers like *absolutely* giving rise to precisified interpretations. But the Marathi equivalents of these adjectives, in combination with =*ts*, do not reliably give rise to the precisificatory effect. These uses either convey that the speaker takes the property predication to be obvious in the context or that the prejacent proposition is mutually salient to interlocutors due to shared prior beliefs and expectations. See discussion with relative adjectives in §2.3.3.

Marathi =ts

- (15) a. CONTEXT: Anu asks Bilal what the weather has been like in Mumbai.

B: It has been pretty bad...

kal **k^hup=əts** paus pəɖ-la
Yesterday, much=c rain.M.SG.NOM fall-PERF.M.SG

Yesterday it *really* rained a lot. (H: kəl bəhut=hi barif hui)

- b. CONTEXT: Bilal tried a new Indian restaurant in Columbus and Anu wants to know more about it.

A: What is the food there like?

B: I was impressed...

tit^hlə ɖevəŋ **p^har=əts** tsəvdar ah-e
there.from.N.SG.NOM food.N.SG.NOM very=c tasty be-PRES.3.SG

The food there is *really* very tasty. (H: k^hana bəhut=hi svadiʃt hɛ)

When =ts cliticizes directly to a gradable predicate, there is no direct standard-boosting effect; the effect is better translated using adverbs like *totally*. Using (16a) Bilal conveys that there should be no question of whether the sweater counts as beautiful – it is beautiful no matter the standard. Same with (16b).

- (16) a. CONTEXT: Anu made a woolen sweater for Niśa and shows it to Bilal.

A: Bilal, do you think it is pretty enough as a gift?

B: Yes...

ha sweʃər **sundər=əts** ah-e
this.M.SG.NOM sweater.M.SG.NOM beautiful=c be-PRES.3.SG

This sweater is *totally* beautiful. (H: ye sweʃər sundər=hi hɛ)

- b. CONTEXT: Anu is bothered by something inappropriate her colleague said.

A: Why would he even say that?

B: Let it go...

to **gadhəv=əts** ah-e
He.NOM donkey.N.SG.NOM=c be-PRES.3.SG

He is *totally* a donkey (i.e. totally dumb). (H: vo gəɖ^ha=hi hɛ)

When cliticized directly to gradable (both evaluative and non-evaluative) predicates as in (16), the sentence that =ts occurs in often conveys the speaker's subjective assessment of the facts. But the function of =ts is not to present this assessment as merely subjective; it additionally implies that regardless of how the extension of the

relevant predicates is calculated, the subject referent is a member of the property denoted by the predicate. In other words, the prejacent is true on (even) the strictest interpretation. The effect of this is to pragmatically raise the contextual standard relative to which the extension of the gradable predicates is determined – which is standardly claimed to be the semantic function of intensifiers.⁹

2.3.4 Mirative uses of =ts

In its mirative uses, =ts is used to convey that the proposition denoted by its prejacent is surprising and deviates sharply from contextual expectations. This is similar to some uses of *just* as can be seen in (17). In (17a), Anu conveys that her daughter inviting the whole class exceeded what she had expected. In (17a), Anu conveys that the colleague's response to problematic behavior exceeded what Anu had expected.¹⁰

- (17) a. CONTEXT: Anu had given her daughter permission to invite a few friends for her birthday party.

B: So how many friends did she invite?

A: It was crazy...

ti=ne akk^hya vɔrga=la=ts bolav-lə

she=ERG entire class.N.SG.OBL-DAT=c invite-PERF.N.SG

She *just* invited the whole class! (H: *us=ne pure klas=ko=hi bulaya!*)

↪ *The number of invitees was much higher than contextually expected.*

- b. CONTEXT: Anu tells Bilal about how angry their friend got about a sexist remark from a colleague.

A: She was so mad...

ti=ne tya=la t^həppəd=əts mar-lī

she=ERG he.OBL=DAT/ACC slap.F.SG.NOM=c strike-PERF.F.SG

⁹ There is some similarity in this reasoning with the proposal in Beltrama & Bochnak (2015) where it is argued based on Italian and Washo data that intensificatory effects may arise via universal quantification over contextual parameters affecting interpretation of relevant context-sensitive expressions that an intensifier composes with. My claim for Marathi will be that an intensificatory effect may arise from a broad felicity condition that the prejacent denote a mutually salient proposition for all interlocutors, with scalar endpoints or extreme values for contextual standards being naturally salient.

¹⁰ Although I do not provide the relevant contextual modulations in detail here, it is easily possible to construct contexts where the Marathi sentences in (17a) and (17b) can convey that the prejacent is something that both interlocutors take to be mutually salient on the basis of shared beliefs and expectations/preferences. In such cases, the felicity of =ts arises from satisfaction of the discourse-sensitive mutual salience constraint given in (9) and not because the answer can be understood to constitute a scalar endpoint.

Marathi =ts

She *just* gave him a slap. (H: *us-ne us=ko tãta=hi ləgaya!*)
 ~> *The slapping was a more extreme response than contextually expected.*

There are two things that characterize what I am descriptively labeling as mirative uses with =ts. First, these uses involve deviation from expectations in the upward direction, i.e. the prejacent is understood to describe a state of affairs that is *beyond* what was expected, not *less than* what was expected. Mirativity that involves a “lower-than-expected” inference does also obtain with =ts and was already discussed in §2.3.1.

Second, in questions that involve answers that make reference to numerical/quantity scales, =ts can be used to convey that a number or quantity is surprisingly high *only* when the lexical expression used is independently interpretable as a salient quantity on the relevant scale of values. So with respect to (17a), suppose Anu’s daughter’s classroom has 50 children. Then, at the utterance context, saying that her daughter invited the whole class is equivalent to saying that she invited her 50 classmates. But, crucially, Anu cannot answer Bilal’s question saying “*She invited her 50=ts classmates!*” instead of (17a).¹¹ To the extent that I can see, this has nothing to do with the interpretation of round vs. non-round numerals – round numerals are not seen as more salient locations on the scale of numerical values as the example shows. What is required is a way to construe the prejacent as a natural endpoint on a scale of values. The minimally different formulation in (18a) illustrates this. If the prejacent explicitly conveys that the answer corresponds to a natural scalar endpoint (the maximum number of potential invitees in the context have been actually invited), the use of =ts is felicitous. (18b) provides another example to illustrate this empirical pattern. In (18b.i), the reference is to a whole crate and Anu’s answer is felicitous with =ts. In (18b.ii), the prejacent explicitly uses the expression *sixty mangoes* and =ts fails to be felicitous.¹²

(18) a. CONTEXT: Anu had given her daughter permission to invite a few friends for her birthday party.

B: So how many friends did she invite?

A: It was crazy. There are fifty kids in her class.

ti=ne pənnas-tʃya-pənnas **mulan=na=ts** bolav-lə
 she=ERG fifty-of-fifty child.N.PL.OBL/DAT=c invite-PERF.N.SG

11 Such a response would typically lead to the complement exclusion reading (*only 50 classmates*) or be felicitous if Anu and Bilal had discussed their expectations beforehand and it was mutually salient between them based on this discussion that the daughter would end up inviting 50 classmates. In this latter case, =ts’s felicity would be due to (9).

12 There could be contexts in which such infelicity might be overridden with sufficiently large numbers but the asymmetry is still worth noting.

She *just* invited all fifty! (H: *us-ne pəʈfas-ke-pəʈfas bəʈʈfō=ko=hi bulaya*)

- b. CONTEXT: Anu had asked a mango seller to send her 2 dozen mangoes when they came in season. It is commonly known that one crate of mangoes contains sixty mangoes.

B: So has he sent you the mangoes?

A: Oh yes! But I am surprised...

- i. *tya=ne akk^hi peṭi=ts paṭ^həv-li*
 he=ERG whole crate.F.SG.NOM=c send-PERF.F.SG
 He *just* sent a whole crate! (H: *us-ne puri peṭi=hi b^heḍi*)

- ii. *#tya=ne saṭ^h=əts paṭ^həv-let*
 he=ERG sixty.M.PL.NOM=c send-PERF.M.PL
 He *just* sent sixty! (H: *#us-ne saṭ^h=hi b^heḍe*)

2.3.5 Scalar additive-like uses of =ts

Bhatt (1994) observes that Hindi =*hi* often has an *only*-like reading in non-negated clauses. However, in negative declaratives, an additional *even*-like reading emerges. This reading is also available with Marathi =*ts*, as illustrated with the examples in (19a) and (19b). In (19a), the proposition that Bilal did not invite Nita is understood to be least likely at the context. In (19b), the proposition that Deepa does not know Hindi at utterance time is understood to be least likely at the context.¹³

- (19) a. CONTEXT: Deepa wants to know more about Bilal's recent wedding. It is commonly known that Nita is Bilal's best friend at the office.

D: So did he invite his entire office?

A: No...

Bilal=ne Nita=la=ts bolav-lə nahi, baki
 Bilal=ERG Nita=DAT/ACC=c invite-PERF.N.SG NEG other
lokan=tsə soḍ
 people.OBL.PL=N.SG.GEN leave.IMP

Bilal didn't invite *even* Nita, (H: *Bilal=ne Nita=ko=hi nəhi bulaya!*)
 let alone other people.

¹³ This is expected if one takes =*ts* to make its conventional contribution outside the scope of negation as Karttunen & Peters (1979) suggest for the reverse implication associated with English *even* in negative clauses. Bhatt (1994) suggests that the even-like reading comes about when Hindi =*hi* is in the scope of negation but it is unclear to me that this is the right scopal relation. Intuitively, what Hindi =*hi* and Marathi =*ts* seem to comment on is the unexpectedness or unlikelihood of proposition denoted by the negative declarative.

Marathi =ts

↪ *Nita was least expected among Bilal's colleagues to not be invited.*

- b. CONTEXT: Anu and Bilal are discussing Deepa's plan to do linguistic fieldwork in a remote area where the contact language is Bhojpuri and the target language is Sadari.

A: Does Deepa have the linguistic expertise to do this fieldwork?

B: Not at all...

ti=la əɖzun **Hindi=ts** ye-t nahī
she.OBL=DAT/ACC yet Hindi=c come-IMPF NEG

She doesn't know *even* Hindi yet. (H: *us=ko Hindi=hi nəhi ati!*)

↪ *Not knowing Hindi is less likely than not knowing any of the other languages.*

Two things are to be noted regarding this scalar additive-like effect associated with Marathi =ts. These also extend to the observations made for Hindi in [Bhatt \(1994\)](#) and [Bajaj \(2016\)](#). First, appropriate context modulation can easily wipe out the *even*-like effect and convey only that the prejacent proposition is something that both interlocutors take to be mutually salient on the basis of shared beliefs and expectations/preferences. In such cases, the felicity of =ts arises from satisfaction of the discourse-sensitive mutual salience constraint given in (9) and not because the answer can be understood to constitute a scalar endpoint. To make this clear, the relevant minimally different contexts are given in (20).

- (20) a. CONTEXT: Deepa wants to know more about Bilal's wedding. She knows that he deliberately didn't invite one of his colleagues but doesn't know which one. Anu and Deepa know that Bilal really does not like Nita.

D: So which colleague did he not invite? Nita, I am guessing.

A: Yes, you are right...

Bilal=ne **Nita=la=ts** bolav-lə nahi
Bilal=ERG Nita=DAT/ACC=c invite-PERF.N.SG NEG

It was Nita that Bilal didn't invite. (H: *Bilal=ne Nita=ko=hi nəhi bulaya*).

↪ *Nita was least expected among Bilal's colleagues to not be invited.*

- b. CONTEXT: Anu and Bilal are discussing Deepa's plan to do comparative ethnographic research in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Deepa needs to be fluent in Hindi, Bangla, and Nepali. Anu knows that Deepa has been learning two of the three needed languages.

A: So which language does she not know well yet? It is Hindi, right?

B: Yes, you are correct...

ti=la **Hindi=ts** ye-t nahī
 she.OBL=DAT/ACC Hindi=c come-IMPF NEG

It is Hindi that she does not know. (H: *us=ko Hindi=hi nāhi atī*)
 ↗ *Not knowing Hindi is less likely than not knowing any of the other languages.*

Second, it is impossible to get the scalar additive-like effect if the alternative propositions are also ordered by entailment. For brevity, I provide only the relevant English context-sentence pairings and the unglossed Hindi translations. In (21a) the alternatives {...Deepa didn't read one paper, Deepa didn't read two papers, Deepa didn't read three papers} are ordered by entailment but neither Marathi =*ts* nor Hindi =*hi* can be used felicitously to convey that the prejacent is less likely than most alternatives. In (21b), the alternatives would be {...The doorway is not 6 feet tall, The doorway is not 7 feet tall, The doorway is not 8 feet tall} and similarly ordered by entailment. English *even* is of course felicitous in both contexts.¹⁴

- (21) a. CONTEXT: Deepa was supposed to read three papers for a class discussion.
 A: So how many were you able to read?
 D: You know, I was so busy...
 I didn't read *even* one. (H: #*mē=ne ek=hi pepər nāhi pəṭʰa*)
- b. CONTEXT: Deepa and Anu are discussing a door-opening for which they need to buy a curtain.
 A: So do we need an 8 foot long curtain?
 D: That's too long!
 The opening isn't *even* six feet. (H: #*dərvaḍa ʃʰe-fuṭ=hi ləm̐ba nāhi hē*)

The unavailability of the scalar additive-like effect when entailment-based scales are involved is connected to the constraint on numerical/quantity scales discussed in §2.3.4. There we saw that in answers that make reference to numerical/quantity scales, =*ts* can be used to convey that a number or quantity is surprisingly high only when the lexical expression used is independently interpretable as a salient quantity on the relevant scale of values. Here we see that numerical/quantity expressions, even when used to construct less and more likely alternatives, do not by themselves provide the sort of salience that =*ts* is sensitive to. More generally, =*ts* does not seem to involve a notion of comparative salience. For =*ts* to be felicitous, it is not sufficient that the prejacent is more unlikely/surprising/noteworthy than some of its alternatives. It appears that =*ts*'s felicity depends on whether the proposition its prejacent is taken to denote is construable as *absolutely uniquely salient*.

¹⁴ In both cases, the dedicated additive clitics (Marathi =*pəṇ* and Hindi *bʰi*) would be needed express the *even*-like meaning.

2.4 Summary

This section laid out the distribution of =ts, starting from one of its key functions – to signal that the prejacent offers that unique (true) answer to the current question that is already recognized as being mutually salient on the basis of shared beliefs/expectations (§2.1). In §2.2, we considered uses in which the unique (true) answer is rendered salient in the context through explicit coordination. In such cases, the speaker first establishes that the interlocutors are jointly attending to the same referent (makes this referent mutually salient) before providing the answer.

Any unified analysis of Marathi =ts (or Hindi =hi, for that matter) must reconcile these discourse-sensitive uses with the exclusive, precisifying, intensifying, mirative, and scalar-additive uses. In §2.3 I outlined how such unification might be approached. The proposal is to take =ts to conventionally convey that the prejacent offers the unique mutually salient answer to the current question – a **schelling point** that the interlocutors can coordinate on. The key idea is that when shared interlocutor beliefs/expectations do not provide a mutually salient unique proposition, the speaker and the addressee must rely on a mutual understanding of *how* and *why* the prejacent can be construed as uniquely salient in order for communication to be successful. In other words, the addressee must have “go-to” strategies for coordinating with the speaker on the intended interpretation of the prejacent and/or its location on a scale of alternatives.¹⁵ Exhaustification, precisification, and intensification emerge as effects of pragmatic reasoning: what proposition should the addressee optimally take a semantically under-specified prejacent to denote when the prejacent has been tagged by the speaker as standing out or being uniquely mutually salient among alternatives?

Mirative and scalar-additive effects come about when the addressee must reason about *why* a prejacent with contextually invariant interpretation has been tagged as uniquely mutually salient. These uses do not involve comparison among alternative interpretations of a semantically under-specified prejacent. The prejacent is taken to denote a determinate proposition and the salience of this proposition has to do with whether it uniquely stands out relative to its alternatives. Absolute referential salience is not an easy notion to formally characterize. But it is minimally expected that a speaker who presupposes the mutual salience of the proposition they contribute should only do so if they are confident that the addressee will also find it uniquely salient. In other words, the proposition should not merely be more unlikely or surprising than some of its contextually constructed alternatives, but it should also correspond to an extreme value on the scale of unlikely or noteworthiness. Thus, the pressure to ensure interlocutor agreement on mutual salience leads to a pressure

¹⁵ The individual in speaker role is of course expected to be aware of these strategies and use them in interpretation in their addressee role.

to use $=_ts$ only to communicate extreme values in the absence of contextual support. In §3, I offer an explication of these ideas.

3 Analysis

Assume that each context c is associated with a body of information INFO_c characterizing the joint, mutually agreed upon public commitments of all interlocutors at c . INFO_c can be construed as a set of propositions or the set of worlds yielded by their intersection (the context set). Each context c also provides a question CQ_c (i.e. a set of answers) and a contextually determined ranking over the alternative answers \leq_c . We assume a set of worlds W , a set of propositions $\text{Prop} \subseteq \wp(W)$, and a set of questions $\text{Ques} \subseteq \wp(\text{Prop})$, such that the conditions in (22) hold.

- (22) a. $\forall Q \in \text{Ques} : \forall p, p' \in Q : p \subseteq p' \vee p \not\subseteq p'$
 The alternatives in any question may be overlapping, disjoint, or one proposition may be contained in another.¹⁶
- b. $\forall Q \in \text{Ques} : \cup\{p \mid p \in Q\} = \cap \text{INFO}_c$
 The alternatives in any question form a cover over the common ground INFO_c at a context c (defined in 23) .

- (23) A context is a tuple $\langle \text{INFO}_c, \text{CQ}_c, \leq_c \rangle$, such that
- a. $\text{INFO}_c \subseteq W$
 - b. $\text{CQ}_c \in \text{Ques}$
 - c. \leq_c is a contextually determined ordering on CQ_c s.t.
 - i. $\forall p \in \text{CQ}_c : p \leq_c p$ (Reflexive)
 - ii. $\forall p, p', p'' \in \text{CQ}_c : [p \leq_c p' \wedge p' \leq_c p''] \rightarrow p \leq_c p''$ (Transitive)
 - iii. $\forall p, p' \in \text{CQ}_c : p <_c p' \leftrightarrow [p \leq_c p' \wedge p' \not\leq_c p]$ (Strict ordering)

According to (23c), the alternatives in the CQ_c are ordered from weak to strong by a contextually given ordering. This is taken to be a preorder i.e. a reflexive (23c.i) and transitive (23c.ii) binary relation on the CQ_c .

In work on discourse particles and discourse marking strategies more generally, the “stronger than” ordering \leq_c is often entailment/informativity based where $p \leq_c p'$

¹⁶ This is obviously a weak condition that corresponds to the way that alternatives are construed in Beaver & Clark (2008), Coppock & Beaver (2014). This construal of possible answers to a question contrasts with Groenendijk & Stokhof (1984), where a question is formally modeled as a partition that divides a set of worlds into some number of mutually exclusive alternatives. It also contrasts with the view in Inquisitive Semantics (e.g. Ciardelli et al. (2019)), which allows alternatives in an issue to be overlapping or disjoint (sets of information states) but does not allow one alternative to be contained in another.

indicates that p entails or is informationally stronger than p' . Pragmatically determined orderings corresponding to rank-order, likelihood, or newsworthiness are also invoked in analyses involving exclusive *just* and scalar additive *even*. =ts seems to be sensitive to both entailment-based and pragmatically determined orderings. But from the class of cases from §2.1, we see that it may also be licensed by mutual salience based on interlocutor knowledge and expectations/preferences. The analysis proposed here therefore takes *mutual salience* (or equivalently Schelling point status) to be the unifying feature of =ts's conventional contribution, deriving inferences about informative strength, location in rank orders, and high unlikelyhood/newsworthiness from it.

3.1 The lexical entry for =ts

=ts makes no at-issue contribution but simply imposes a felicity condition on the contexts in which it occurs. The lexical entry given in (24) specifies that =ts is felicitous at a context c iff the contextual interpretation of its prejacent $\llbracket S \rrbracket^c$ is a SCHelling point among the alternatives in the CQ_c .

- (24) $\llbracket =ts(S) \rrbracket^c$ is defined iff
 $\exists! p : p = \llbracket S \rrbracket^c \wedge SCH(p, CQ_c, \leq_c)$
 If defined,
 $\llbracket =ts(S) \rrbracket^c = p$

A =ts-using speaker presupposes that the alternative p they convey by uttering the prejacent S at c is uniquely mutually salient among the ordered alternatives in the CQ_c . Such a speaker must be confident in the addressee's ability at the context to uniquely recover p given S , using pragmatic reasoning. In case the speaker's utterance requires the addressee to resolve values for contextual variables in order to infer the speaker-intended meaning, =ts conveys that there is a unique mutually salient resolution. In utterances that do not involve context-sensitive interpretation, the speaker must presuppose that the interlocutors are coordinated on the structure of the ordered CQ_c and specifically the position of p relative to the contextually given ordering \leq_c .¹⁷

In (25) I propose three classes of contextual conditions in which interlocutor coordination on a unique alternative might be expected to obtain: p is construable as a minimal element of the ordered CQ_c ; p is construable as a maximal element of the

¹⁷ It is reasonable to assume a Bayesian pragmatic model such as the Rational Speech Act framework, where speakers and listeners rely on probabilistic models of each other's production and interpretation both in choosing utterances and making interpretive decisions. Articulating such an analysis for an expression like =ts, that offers explicit lexical packaging to address the issue of interlocutor coordination, would be the logical next step, but beyond the scope of this paper.

ordered CQ_c ; the common ground entails that the speaker and the addressee of c are uniquely attending to p as an answer to CQ_c .¹⁸

(25) $SCH(p, CQ_c, \leq_c) \leftrightarrow$

- a. $p \in \mathbf{Minimal}(CQ_c, \leq_c) \wedge \exists p' \in CQ_c : p' <_c p$ OR
No alternative in the CQ_c is strictly weaker than p on the contextually given ordering \leq_c and CQ_c contains strictly stronger alternatives.
- b. $p \in \mathbf{Maximal}(CQ_c, \leq_c) \wedge \exists p' \in CQ_c : p <_c p'$ OR
No alternative in the CQ_c is strictly stronger than p on the contextually given ordering \leq_c and CQ_c contains strictly weaker alternatives.
- c. $INFO_c \subseteq \lambda w. ATT(Sp_c, Ad_c, p, CQ_c)(w)$
 $INFO_c$ entails the proposition that the Speaker and the Addressee are jointly attending uniquely to p as an answer to CQ_c .

The conditions in (25) offer salient points of reference in the ordered CQ_c that enable interlocutors to coordinate on the intended interpretation of the prejacent S at c . In other words, if c does not already provide a salient alternative that interlocutors are attending to given their shared expectations/beliefs, (i.e. if (25c) does not hold), the speaker's use of $=ts$ guides the addressee towards an interpretation of the prejacent that occupies the lowest or highest position in the ordered question. The idea is that scalar endpoints are salient at any context and can always be recruited in determining the interpretation of an under-specified prejacent. In such cases, the $=ts$ -using speaker must also presuppose that the interlocutors are fully coordinated on $\langle CQ_c, \leq_c \rangle$. It is only against this presupposition that a proposition can be salient by virtue of corresponding to a scalar endpoint of the ordered CQ_c .

3.2 Accounting for $=ts$'s uses

3.2.1 Accounting for discourse-sensitive mutual salience uses

In §2.1 and §2.2 we saw that $=ts$ can be used in contexts where the salience of an alternative answer is rooted in the interlocutors' beliefs about each other's beliefs. There were also examples in which the speaker draws on information that is accessible (perceptually or otherwise) to their addressee in order to make their

¹⁸ I do not further define the relation ATT here; it is intended to capture the fact that propositional discourse referents may often be the object of joint interlocutor attention. The point here is that being the object of joint interlocutor attention is only one of the ways in which a proposition may emerge as a schelling point. In other cases, the determination of the schelling point alternative requires additional pragmatic reasoning on part of the addressee.

answer mutually salient as long as there is no other contextually salient competing alternative. These cases were taken to involve **discourse-sensitive mutual salience** with the relevant condition on =ts's felicity given in (9).

The lexical entry proposed in (24), together with the construal of salience as in (25c), straightforwardly accounts for this set of uses. =ts is infelicitous if there is no unique alternative in the CQ_c that the interlocutors are jointly attending to in the discourse context. But =ts is felicitous whenever there is such a mutually salient alternative – as seen in the contrasting examples in (2), (3), (4) and (5). =ts is also infelicitous when the context provides multiple alternatives that compete for salience, as seen in the contrasting felicity of the =ts marked answer in response to contrasting contexts in (6) and (7). The former of these is repeated here for convenience in (26).

- (26) a. ✓ CONTEXT-1: Anu has never met Bilal's sister and wants to be introduced to her at a party.
 A: Bilal, where/which woman is your sister?
 B: Do you see that tall woman in the sky-blue dress?
- b. × CONTEXT-2: Anu has never met Bilal's sister and wants to be introduced to her at a party.
 A: Bilal, is your sister the one wearing the green sari?
 B: [Looks at where she is pointing] No, do you see that tall woman in the sky-blue dress?
- c. **tī=ts** maḍ^hī bəhīṇ ah-e
 that.F.SG.NOM=c my.F.SG.NOM sister.F.SG.NOM be-PRES.3.SG
 It is that woman that is my sister.
- d. Hindi: **və=hi** meri bēhen hē

In §2.2.2, it was observed that when =ts occurs with vague demonstrative expressions (*there, then, like-that, that-much* etc.) there is an added precisifying effect similar to that contributed by *right*. One of the examples in (8) is repeated in (27) for convenience.

- (27) CONTEXT: Bilal tells Anu where an accident he witnessed took place.
 B: Do you know that little tea shop near the Ganesh temple?

tī^he=ts ha əpəḡ^hat ḡ^həd-la
 there=c this.M.SG.NOM accident.M.SG.NOM occur-PERF.M.SG

It was *right* there that the accident occurred.

Hindi: **və=hĩ=pər** əpəg^hat g^həʈa

On the analysis proposed here, this effect should come about because of =*ts*'s presupposition that there is a unique mutually salient proposition denoted by the prejacent. When the prejacent is not vague (like *Niśa drove the speaker home*), this proposition is determinate. But if the prejacent contains a vague indexical (like *The accident occurred **there***), the context is compatible with multiple potential interpretations of the prejacent. The use of =*ts* guides the addressee towards the interpretation in which the vague demonstrative *ti^he* ‘there’ receives the spatially strictest interpretation. This interpretation asymmetrically entails all other interpretations of the prejacent and is a maximal element in the CQ_c. The addressee who is expected to recover the unique mutually salient proposition denoted by the prejacent will therefore opt for this interpretation – which satisfies salience by the condition in (25b). Thus, in this class of cases, the precisifying effect comes about as a pragmatic effect of the pressure to choose the most salient interpretation of a prejacent containing a vague indexical expression.¹⁹

3.2.2 Accounting for exclusive-like uses

In §2.3.1, we saw that the use of =*ts* can sometimes give rise to an exclusive-like effect where the prejacent is understood to be the strongest true alternative in the CQ_c and there is a mirative effect that the prejacent is “weaker-than-expected.” The relevant examples are in (11a) and (12a), repeated here in (28).

- (28) a. CONTEXT: Anu had invited a friend for dinner and Bilal is excited to know more about the food she cooked.
 B: So what did you make for dinner?
 A: I kept it simple...

mi **pulav=əts** bən-əv-la
 I. ERG spiced.rice.M.SG.NOM=c become-CAUS-PERF.M.SG

¹⁹ One might ask why the addressee does not opt for the proposition with the spatially laxest interpretation of the indexical in this case (which would be a minimal element of the CQ_c). The reasoning militating against this interpretation is based on Gricean manner: If the speaker has used the more complex =*ts*-ful expression rather than the less complex =*ts*-less expression, they must have some reason for doing so. If they had intended to convey the proposition with the laxest interpretation of the indexical, there would have been no reason to use =*ts*, since any contextually possible interpretation of the prejacent would entail this proposition. The reason they used =*ts* must therefore be so that the interlocutors coordinate on the proposition corresponding to the indexical's strictest interpretation. This is an instance of a mandatory manner implicature of the kind that Lauer (2014) calls a “Needs a Reason” (NaR) implicature.

Marathi =ts

I made *only* Pulāv (a spiced rice dish). (H: *mēne pulav=hi bānaya.*)
 ~> *Anu made nothing other than Pulav.* upper-bounding effect
 ~> *The dinner was expected to contain more items.* mirative effect

b. CONTEXT: Last week, twenty girls attended the zoom meeting Anu had organized and Bilal wants to know about this week's meeting.

B: How many girls showed up at your meeting yesterday?

A: The turnout was a little lower...

dəha=ts mulī mīṭing=la a-l-yat
 ten=ts girl.F.PL.NOM meeting=DAT/ACC come-PERF-3.F.PL

There were *only* ten girls at the meeting. (H: *kəl dəs=hi ləṭkiyā ayi tʰi.*)

~> *There were no more than ten girls.* upper-bounding effect
 ~> *More attendees were expected.* mirative effect

This effect should come about because =ts conventionally encodes that there is a unique proposition contextually denoted by the prejacent, that is salient wrt the ordered CQ_c. How does the exclusive-like effect arise? Here is my suggestion: (25a) states that a proposition *p* may be salient relative to an ordered CQ_c if it is a minimal element of the CQ_c. If the set of propositional alternatives in the CQ_c is restricted to those that are no weaker than the prejacent, then it is possible for the prejacent to denote a minimal element in the CQ_c. =ts's presence in the exclusive-like uses thus indicates a lower-bounded restriction on the structure of alternatives in the CQ_c – no alternative in the CQ_c can be strictly weaker than the prejacent.²⁰

For instance with (28a), the use of =ts indicates that there is unique proposition denoted by *Anu made Pulav* that is a minimal element of the CQ_c. Notice that the prejacent *Anu made Pulav* – and its Marathi or Hindi counterparts – are compatible with both non-exhaustive and exhaustive interpretations. In a context where Anu could have made Pulav, Raita, or Chicken in any combination, the prejacent potentially denotes five distinct propositions ordered by entailment as in (29f-29g).

- (29) a. {*w* | Anu made Pulav and possibly other things in *w*}
 b. {*w* | Anu made Pulav and nothing else in *w*}
 c. {*w* | Anu made Pulav+Raita in *w*}
 d. {*w* | Anu made Pulav+Chicken in *w*}
 e. {*w* | Anu made Pulav+Raita+Chicken in *w*}

²⁰ Krifka (2000)'s analysis of the aspectual particles *still* and *already* invokes such an alternative-restricting function for these as well.

- f. $29a \supset 29b, 29c, 29d, 29e$
- g. $29c, 29d \supset 29e$

At such a context, the addressee faces uncertainty with respect to determining which proposition is contextually denoted by the prejacent *Anu made Pulav*.²¹ The use of $=ts$ guides them to the weakest interpretation (29a), which is asymmetrically entailed by the interpretations in (29b), (29c), (29d), and (29e) and is also a minimal element in the ordered CQ_c . (29a) thus satisfies the felicity condition of $=ts$. The prejacent is construed as a minimal element in the CQ_c ; i.e. the CQ_c is restricted to containing only no-weaker alternatives. This gives rise to the mirative “lower-than-expected” effect.²²

What still remains to be explained is the upper-bounding effect that makes $=ts$ resemble an exclusive in these contexts.²³ There is a straightforward pragmatic account of this. A speaker that presupposes the mutual salience of the contextually intended interpretation p of the prejacent S by virtue of it being a minimal element of the CQ_c and asserts S intending to convey that lower-bounded interpretation p , must have reason to do so. Specifically, by asserting S rather than any strictly stronger S' , the speaker conveys that they are in no position to assert any stronger S' at c by Quality. The speaker cannot be assumed to be ignorant – ignorance is incompatible with explicitly presupposing the existence of a unique mutually salient proposition, and asserting it as true. Ruling out ignorance, we get the exhaustive, upper-bounded inference – the speaker believes that no S' stronger than S is true at c .

Due to space constraints, I do not discuss how to derive $=ts$ ’s rank-order reading illustrated in (13a) but the reasoning is similar. The use of $=ts$ conveys that the contextually intended interpretation of the prejacent is a minimal element of the CQ_c . The alternatives in the CQ_c are ordered by rank and this gives rise to the mirative

21 Uncertainty is less likely with answers to questions like *Who opened the door for Anu?* or *What car did Anu drive to the party?*. Such questions are heavily biased towards being interpreted as single-match questions and the issue of exhaustive vs. non-exhaustive interpretation of answers does not arise in the same way. In answers to such questions, $=ts$ is typically licensed only if the prejacent satisfies discourse-sensitive mutual salience.

22 One might ask why the addressee does not opt for the strongest interpretation of the prejacent, which would be (29e) – salient by virtue of being a maximal element of the CQ_c . The reasoning militating against this interpretation is based on Gricean Quantity: If the speaker wanted to convey the strongest proposition denotable by the prejacent at the context, they should have explicitly uttered the stronger sentence to enable coordination. They did not do so and therefore, they must have used $=ts$ so that the interlocutors coordinate on the proposition corresponding to the prejacent’s weakest interpretation.

23 In many analyses of exclusives, they are taken to conventionally encode maximality. For instance Beaver & Clark (2008) take *only* to assert that the prejacent is the strongest true alternative. I have neither encoded such information in the entry for $=ts$ nor derived the upper bounding effect by reference to strongest **true** propositions. The diversity of uses that need to be accounted for with $=ts$ guarantee that lexically encoding such information will lead to problems elsewhere, preventing a unified analysis.

effect. It is expected that the speaker will assert the strongest assertable alternative at any context. The use of =ts to signal the prejacent proposition's salience by virtue of being a minimal element in the CQ_c while asserting the prejacent, gives rise to the inference that no higher-ranked proposition is assertable by Quality.

3.2.3 Accounting for precisifying uses

In §2.3.2, we observed that =ts gives rise to a precisifying effect in affirmative universal (*They lost power everywhere*) and negated existential (*There was no power anywhere*) declaratives (examples in (14)). =ts's use rules out imprecise, loose interpretations of the quantificational determiners and the prejacent is interpreted maximally precisely at the context. Remember that this use of =ts was likened to the use of English *absolutely*, which only attaches to expressions that constitute endpoints of Horn scales. The lexical entry for =ts provided in (24) naturally predicts the distribution of =ts in universal and negated existential statements since such statements already denote maximal elements of the alternative answers in quantity questions such as *How many/much of the Ps are Q?* or *How many/much of the Ps are not Q?* respectively.

Given that universal and negated existential statements already denote scalar maxima in the CQ_c , what purpose does =ts serve? The purpose of =ts is to make salient those propositional alternatives in the CQ_c that may vary not only with respect to what proportion of the Ps are taken to be Q broadly speaking, but also by how precisely the lexical expressions that express this proportion are to be interpreted. In other words, the speaker, in increasing the complexity of their utterance by using =ts, signals that they care to distinguish between interpretations of the prejacent at higher vs. lower standards of precision (Lauer 2012, Klecha 2014). By focusing attention on more vs. less precise alternatives and presupposing that one of these is uniquely mutually salient to the interlocutors, the speaker indicates that the interlocutors are coordinated with respect to the standard of precision at the context. Such coordination can only lead to a shift to higher standards – which is what precisification is. This precisifying effect of =ts obtains when propositions that are rendered salient by virtue of corresponding to scalar endpoints can be interpreted imprecisely – which imprecision is pragmatically ruled out by the use of =ts. This correctly predicts that the distribution of =ts does not overlap with the slack-regulating uses of *exactly* and *precisely*. Pragmatic precisification effected by endpoint oriented salience can be extended to accounting for the use of =ts with necessity modals (*must, have to, cannot, may not*), universal Q-adverbs (*always, never*), and in negative declaratives as well. But this is left for future work.

3.2.4 Accounting for intensifier-like uses

In §2.3.3, it was shown that when $=ts$ cliticizes to vague determiners like *many*, *much* (e.g. *a lot of* $=ts$ *rain fell*), or intensifiers like *very* (e.g. *The food is very* $=ts$ *tasty*), the quantified/modified predicate gets interpreted at a boosted standard relative to its non- $=ts$ counterpart. It was also observed there that when $=ts$ cliticizes directly to a gradable predicate (e.g. *the sweater is beautiful* $=ts$), the effect is similar to that obtained through the use of adverbs like *totally* or *definitely*. Notice that unlike in the precisifying cases (§3.2.3), these uses do not involve answers that are located at scalar endpoints but they do require coordination of the interlocutors with respect to determining the extensions of the main predicates such as ‘a lot of rain’ (15a) or ‘very tasty’ in (15b) or ‘beautiful’ in (16a).

Let us consider the effect with bare gradable adjectival predicates. We adopt a standard degree semantics in which adjectives denote relations between individuals and degrees (Kennedy & McNally (2005), Kennedy (2007) a.o.). In order to account for the interpretation of adjectives in their positive form, a silent morpheme *POS* is posited (30c) that binds the value of the degree argument to a contextual parameter θ_A^c that corresponds to the “standard” value for the adjectival property at a given context. The idea is that when adjectives are used in their positive form (e.g. (30a)), the sentence asserts that the subject referent has the adjectival property to a degree that exceeds this contextually given standard value.

- (30) a. The sweater is beautiful.
 b. $\llbracket beautiful \rrbracket^c = \lambda d_{beautiful} \lambda x [\mu_{beautiful}(x) > d_{beautiful}]$
 c. $\llbracket POS \rrbracket^c = \lambda A \lambda x. \mu_A(x) > \theta_A^c$
 d. $\llbracket POS(beautiful) \rrbracket^c = \lambda x. \mu_{beautiful}(x) > \theta_{beautiful}^c$
 e. $\llbracket POS(beautiful)(the.sweater) \rrbracket^c = \mu_{beautiful}(\mathbf{the\ sweater}) > \theta_{beautiful}^c$

It is clear that in such uses, determining which precise proposition the sentence expresses depends on pragmatic inference about what the standard value for a given adjectival property is at the relevant context. At any context c in which a sentence S containing a vague relative adjective is produced, the addressee faces uncertainty with respect to determining which proposition p is denoted by S at c . On the analysis provided here, $=ts$ ’s function is to convey that the contextually intended interpretation of the preadjacent is mutually salient. In the case of relative adjectives, this amounts to a signal that the interlocutors are coordinated with respect to the value of the contextually provided standard for the adjective, since it is this value that determines the proposition expressed at the context. The use of $=ts$, by introducing the possibility of non-coordinated values for the standard, guides the addressee towards assuming a value that is more extreme or higher than what they

might have assumed otherwise, in an effort to ensure interlocutor agreement on what is mutually salient.²⁴

A more complete analysis of the role of =ts in facilitating such coordination would likely need to rely on a probabilistic pragmatic model to predict context-sensitive interpretations such as that introduced by [Lassiter & Goodman \(2013\)](#) to account for adjective interpretation. I leave this for further exploration. The intensificatory effect with modified predicates like *a lot of=ts rain* and *very=ts tasty* can be accounted for using similar reasoning. In both classes of use, =ts guides the addressee towards assuming more extreme values for the contextually provided variables in an effort to coordinate, which yields intensification.

3.2.5 Accounting for mirative uses

In §2.3.4, we saw that =ts can be used to convey that the proposition denoted by its prejacent is surprising and deviates sharply from contextual expectations. Specifically, the prejacent is understood to describe a state of affairs that exceeds (rather than falls short of) contextual expectations. A second observation was that if the set of alternative answers is ordered along a numerical or quantity scale, =ts can be used to convey that the quantity referenced in the prejacent exceeds expectations *only if* the quantity expression is independently interpretable as a scalar endpoint. I will reproduce the felicitous and infelicitous examples in English below to remind the reader of the contrasts in (17) and (18).

- (31) a. CONTEXT: Anu had given her daughter permission to invite a few friends for her birthday party. There are fifty kids in her daughter's classroom.
 B: So how many friends did she invite?
 A: It was crazy.
She invited the whole class=ts! (17a); felicitous with =ts
#She invited fifty kids=ts! infelicitous with =ts
 A': It was crazy. There are fifty kids in her class.
She invited fifty-of-fifty kids=ts! (18a); felicitous with =ts

²⁴ It is clear that choosing a lower value for the contextual standard would be ruled out by Gricean manner: If the speaker has used the more complex =ts-ful expression rather than the less complex =ts-less expression, they must have some reason for doing so. If they had intended to convey a proposition determined by a lower value for the standard than assumed by the addressee, there would have been no reason to use =ts, since the speaker's interpretation would already entail this proposition. The reason they used =ts must therefore be so that the interlocutors coordinate on the proposition corresponding to extreme values for the contextual standard. This is another instance of [Lauer \(2014\)](#)'s "Needs a Reason" (NaR) implicature.

- b. CONTEXT: Anu had asked a mango seller to send her 2 dozen mangoes when they came in season. It is commonly known that one crate of mangoes contains sixty mangoes.
 B: So has he sent you the mangoes?
 A: Oh yes! But I am surprised...
He sent me a whole crate=ts! (18b.i); felicitous with =ts
#He sent me sixty=ts! (18b.ii); infelicitous with =ts

Note that the prejacent in these uses denote context-invariant propositions – there are no variable values to be fixed contextually. =ts signals that the speaker takes the prejacent to be uniquely mutually salient for the interlocutors. At such a context, the addressee faces uncertainty with respect to determining why the prejacent proposition is taken to be a schelling point by the speaker. The addressee reasons that the speaker must assume a particular ordering on the CQ_c such that the prejacent stands out among alternatives relative to this contextually given ordering. In other words, =ts gives the signal that the interlocutors are coordinated on the structure of the ordered CQ_c , triggering pragmatic reasoning regarding this structure. So, in mirative uses, =ts guides the addressee towards construing the prejacent as a maximal element in the CQ_c where the contextually given ordering \leq_c corresponds to noteworthiness or unexpectedness.²⁵

If this is on the right track, then we can also make sense of why =ts is infelicitous with noteworthiness/unexpectedness orderings that rely on numerical or quantity based scales. =ts's felicity condition requires the contextually relevant scale of values to be closed – otherwise it makes no sense to constrain reference to a salient scalar endpoint. The addressee reasons that the prejacent proposition corresponds to a maximal element on such a closed scale of values. Numerical/quantity scales are open and invoke quantity-based lexical alternatives that do not naturally lend themselves to an ordering with maximal elements. Simply put, it is unclear why *fifty kids* or *sixty mangoes* should be the precise quantities corresponding to maximally noteworthy/unexpected propositions in contrast to higher quantities such as *sixty kids* or *seventy mangoes*. Quantity expressions such as *the whole class* or *a whole crate* on the other hand are more naturally construable on a closed scale with relevant alternative quantities like *half the class* or *a quarter of a crate* being clearly ordered below the maximum.²⁶

To summarize, the mirative effect of =ts can only arise in contexts where the addressee can effectively reason about the speaker's construal of the CQ_c , such that the prejacent is construed as a schelling point by virtue of being a maximal element

²⁵ Parallely, when the addressee reasons that the prejacent must be a minimal element among alternatives ordered by noteworthiness, we get rank-order readings associated with =ts.

²⁶ In fact, the use of the expression *whole* in the prejacent in (17a) and (18b.i) makes these lower ordered alternatives salient.

Marathi =ts

of the CQ_c on the contextually given noteworthiness/unexpectedness based ordering \leq_c .

3.2.6 Accounting for scalar-additive uses

The scalar additive-like effect of =ts, described in §2.3.5, obtains when =ts contains negation in its scope (i.e. when the prejacent is a negative declarative).²⁷ This is also one of main effects described for Hindi =hi by Bhatt (1994) and Bajaj (2016). The Marathi example (19b) is repeated in (32).

- (32) CONTEXT: Anu and Bilal are discussing Deepa's plan to do linguistic fieldwork in a remote area where the contact language is Bhojpuri and the target language is Sadari.

A: Does Deepa have the linguistic expertise to do this fieldwork?

B: Not at all...

ti=la əɖʊn **Hindi=ts** ye-t nahī
she.OBL=DAT/ACC yet Hindi=c come-IMPF NEG

She doesn't know *even* Hindi yet. (H:us=ko Hindi=hi nəhi ati!)
~>Not knowing Hindi is less likely than not knowing any of the other languages.

Remember also from the examples in (21), repeated here in (33) that it is impossible to get this effect if the alternative propositions are ordered by entailment, a restriction not present with *even*.

- (33) a. CONTEXT: Deepa (like everyone in the class) was supposed to read three papers for a class discussion.

A: So how many were you able to read?

D: You know, I was so busy...

I didn't read *even* one. (H: #mẽ=ne ek=hi pepər nəhi pəɽʰa)

- b. CONTEXT: Deepa and Anu are discussing a doorway for which they need to buy a curtain.

A: So do we need an 8 foot long curtain?

D: That's too long!

The doorway isn't *even* six feet. (H: #dərvaɖa tʃʰe-fuɽ=hi ləmba nəhi hɛ)

²⁷ To be clear, there are affirmative clauses in Marathi/Hindi that contain =ts/hi which are most naturally translated using *even*. But these are subsumable under the mirative uses accounted for in §3.2.5 and so I do not discuss them separately here.

We can straightforwardly make sense of the distribution in (32) if we take the CQ_c to correspond to the interrogative *Which languages does Deepa not know?* The use of $=ts$ triggers reasoning about the ordered CQ_c and guides the addressee towards construing the prejacent as a maximal element where the contextually given ordering \leq_c corresponds to unlikelihood. The addressee reasons that if the speaker has signaled the prejacent to be a schelling point among the alternatives, then they must likely take alternatives in the assumed CQ_c to be ordered by unlikelihood. On this ordering, the proposition that Deepa does not know Hindi is construable as a maximal element, given that it is the least likely proposition among alternatives.

This also allows us to make sense of why $=ts$ is infelicitous if some of the alternative propositions are ordered by entailment as in (33). $=ts$'s felicity condition requires that the prejacent be a schelling point among alternatives, which in many cases turns out to be a maximal or minimal element of the ordered CQ_c . In a context like (33a), the prejacent *Deepa did not read one paper* corresponds to neither the minimal nor the maximal element among the alternatives.²⁸ Similarly, in a context like (33b), it is unclear how the prejacent might be construed as a maximal or minimal element on a likelihood scale – the doorway not being six feet does not uniquely stand out in comparison to, say, the doorway not being five feet or seven feet. More generally, a likelihood-based ordering which is derived from lexical alternatives to numerical/quantity expressions in the prejacent does not lend itself to providing salient scalar endpoints that the speaker and the addressee can easily coordinate on at a context. The infelicity of $=ts$ with such uses follows.

3.3 Summary

This section offered an analysis of $=ts$ that takes it to signal that its prejacent is a schelling point among the alternatives in the CQ_c . When a propositional alternative is already the object of joint interlocutor attention at the context, $=ts$ is felicitous. When a specific alternative is not already mutually salient, the felicity of $=ts$ depends on the addressee's ability to reason about the source of the mutual salience of the prejacent proposition. Such reasoning may be in service of determining the intended interpretation of an under-specified prejacent or determining the structure of the ordered CQ_c , recovering the contextually given ordering assumed by the speaker. Exclusive-like effects, precisification, and intensification correspond to the former sort of reasoning while mirativity and scalar additivity effects arise from the latter. A range of further empirical facts about the (in)felicity of $=ts$ can be made (partial) sense of once we assume that it uniformly signals that its prejacent denotation is a schelling point among alternatives in the CQ_c . I briefly document some of these facts

²⁸ The maximal (least likely) element would be *Deepa did not read zero papers* and the minimal (most likely) element would be *Deepa did not read three papers*.

in the domain of declarative clauses in §4. The goal is to introduce these phenomena as part of the empirical landscape for Marathi =ts (and Hindi =hi) that any unified analysis must seek to explain.

4 More contexts of (in)felicitous use

4.1 The utterance context can always be coordinated on

There is a strong asymmetry between the acceptability of =ts in prejacent containing elements that signal proximity or coincidence with the utterance context and those that signal distance. Consider the contrast between (34b) and (34c) uttered at a context where there is no priorly salient expectation about the location of Niśa. In (34b), we see that the proximal spatial demonstrative, an indexical that resolves to the location of the utterance, and other similar expressions are perfectly felicitous without discourse support. In contrast, (34c) shows that the distal demonstrative and expressions conveying distance from the utterance location are infelicitous without discourse support. (34d) and (34e) illustrate the same contrast for Hindi.

- (34) a. CONTEXT: Anu has no idea where Niśa is and asks Bilal about her.
A: Where is Niśa?

- b. B: Niśa **it^he=ts / dzəvəɭ=əts / aspas=əts** ah-e
Niśa.NOM here=c / nearby=c / around.here=c be-PRES.3.SG
Niśa is *right* here / *just* close by / *just* around here.

- c. #B: Niśa **tit^he=ts / dur=əts** ah-e
Niśa.NOM there=c / far.away=c be-PRES.3.SG
Niśa is *right* there / *just* far away.

- d. Hindi: Niśa **yəhĩ / nəɖɖɪk=hi / aspas=hi** hɛ

- e. Hindi: #Niśa **vəhĩ / dur=hi** hɛ

In (35), the same pattern is found in the temporal domain. =ts is felicitous with *atta* ‘now’ without discourse support as in (35b) but infelicitous with *tev^hā* ‘then’ (35c) without an antecedent. The Hindi counterparts are in (35d) and (35e).

- (35) a. CONTEXT: Anu has no idea when Niśa left the house and asks Bilal.
A: When did Niśa leave?

- b. B: Niśa **atta=ts** ge-li
Niśa.NOM now=c go-PERF.F.SG

Niśa left *right* now.

- c. #B: Niśa **tev^hã=ts** ge-li
 Niśa.NOM then=*c* go-PERF.F.SG
 Niśa went *right* then.
- d. Hindi: Niśa **əb=hi** gəyi
- e. Hindi: #Niśa **təb=hi** gəyi

This distribution falls out naturally from the assumption that =*ts* signals the mutual salience of the alternative denoted by the prejacent. If the value of indexical elements in the answer constituent resolves to entities that are by definition salient to interlocutors – e.g. utterance place and time – the prejacent is rendered mutually salient. But when the resolution of an indexical depends on more specific contextual information, the use of =*ts* is infelicitous in the absence of discourse support.

4.2 Temporal effects with =*ts*: already and only

When used with temporal frame adverbials, the effect of =*ts* is determined by contextual expectations. In these uses, the prejacent is understood to answer a question of the sort *when did eventuality e occur?*. =*ts* attaches to the answer constituent in the prejacent and conveys that the time at which *e* occurred is earlier or later than the contextually expected set of intervals. Consider the context in (36a) and Bilal’s responses. In (36b), Bilal thinks he has spent more than enough time in Mumbai to show Deepa around. The use of =*ts* signals that the prejacent proposition *Bilal came on Monday* is mutually salient by virtue of being a maximal element among the alternatives with respect to an “earlier than” ordering.²⁹ In (36c), on the other hand, Bilal thinks he has not had enough time to get to know downtown Mumbai. The use of =*ts* signals that the prejacent proposition *Bilal came on Monday* is mutually salient by virtue of being a minimal element among the alternatives with respect to an “earlier than” ordering. In both cases, Bilal’s prior utterance conveys his high/low confidence in achieving the goal at hand, and thus guides the addressee towards inferring the position of the prejacent in the ordered CQ_c appropriately. (36d) contains the Hindi counterpart sentence, which has exactly the same inference profile in the context.

²⁹ Krifka (2000) takes *already* to conventionally signal that the prejacent is a maximal element among alternatives as does Zimmermann (2018) in his generalized analysis of German *schon*. Here, the *already*-like effect is a result of pragmatic reasoning about the position of the prejacent in the ordered question, not attributed to conventionalized content.

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- (36) a. CONTEXT: It is Wednesday. Bilal has come to Mumbai for a conference and runs into Deepa, who has just arrived for the same conference. Deepa wants to see downtown Mumbai and wonders if Bilal knows enough to show her around.

- b. B: Sure! I can show you around. I know the downtown well now.

Mi **somvari=ts** alo

I.NOM Monday.LOC=c come-PERF.M.SG

I came on Monday *already*.

↪ Bilal's arrival happened earlier than Deepa might have expected.

- c. B: You know, I don't really know anything about downtown Mumbai.

Mi **somvari=ts** alo

I.NOM Monday.LOC=c come-PERF.M.SG

I *only* came on Monday.

↪ Bilal's arrival happened later than Deepa might have expected.

- d. Hindi: mē(=to) **pərso=hi** aya

4.3 =ts with additives

Additives are standardly understood to conventionally signal that a salient proposition (the antecedent) that constitutes a partial answer to the CQ_c is in the common ground. For instance, at the context in (37a), it is already in the pre-utterance common ground that Deepa ordered Biryani. The additive in Bilal's utterance in (37b) signals that the CQ_c corresponding to *Who ordered Biryani?* has been partially answered.

- (37) a. CONTEXT: Anu, Bilal, and Deepa have ordered food at an Indian food-cart and are waiting while it is prepared. Deepa tells Bilal that she is getting Biryani. Bilal responds:

- b. Anu=ne=pəŋ **biryani=ts** mag-əv-li

Anu=ERG=ADD biryani.NOM=c ask-CAUS-PERF.M.SG

Anu also ordered biryani (same as Deepa!).

- c. Hindi: Anu=ne=b^{hi} **biryani=hi** mənḡgayi

What purpose does *=ts* (which is perfectly felicitous but not obligatory) serve in (37b)? One could say that *=ts* is licensed here because it marks the discourse-sensitive salience of the prejacent proposition *Anu ordered Biryani* in the question *Did Anu order Biryani?*, which is a sub-question of the CQ_c *Who ordered Biryani?*.

But the interaction between additives and *=ts* is more intricate and depends crucially on the availability of salient propositional alternatives determined by the *=ts*-host among which the prejacent stands out as uniquely salient. Consider the context in (38a), that contrasts minimally with the context in (37a) – there is nothing besides Biryani that could potentially be ordered by anyone here. The CQ_c is best expressible as: *Who has (already) ordered their Biryani?*. Bilal can use the additive in his response in (38b) but *=ts* is totally infelicitous. Same with Hindi (38c).

- (38) a. CONTEXT: Anu, Bilal, and Deepa are standing at a Biryani foodcart that sells nothing else. Deepa tells Bilal that she already ordered her Biryani. Bilal responds:
- b. Anu=ne=pəŋ #biryani=*ts* mag-əv-li
 Anu=ERG=ADD biryani.NOM=*c* ask-CAUS-PERF.M.SG
 Anu also ordered biryani (same as Deepa!).
- c. Hindi: Anu=ne=b^{hi} #biryani=*hi* məŋgayi

The prejacent *Anu has ordered Biryani* has discourse-sensitive salience at the context in (38a) similar to (37a). But it appears to be that the absence of alternatives to *Biryani* at the context of (38a) makes *=ts* infelicitous. These contrasts indicate that a satisfactory analysis for the additive-*=ts* interaction would need to make reference to complex strategies of inquiry (Büring 2003, Roberts 1996 [2012]) signaled by contrastive topics (corresponding to additive hosts) and foci (*=ts*-hosts). The idea to develop in the future would be that in uses with additives, *=ts* signals discourse-sensitive salience in a constituent question like *What did Anu order?* which is a sub-question of a complex strategy like *Who ordered what?*.

4.4 *=ts* in contexts with imperfectly aligned interests

An expression that signals that interlocutors are coordinated with respect to the salience of the prejacent in the CQ_c is well-suited for use in aligned contexts – when cooperative interlocutors have similar interests regarding how the CQ_c is resolved. It is interesting then that *=ts* can be used to “inflict” the mutual salience of the prejacent on a resisting interlocutor. Consider the context in (39a) where Deepa and Anu cannot possibly come to a shared perspective on how the CQ_c *Who started the fight?* is to be resolved. Anu’s response to Deepa in (39b) signals that the prejacent

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Deepa started the fight is an answer that *both* interlocutors can coordinate on by virtue of its mutual salience – it is obvious in the discourse context!

- (39) a. CONTEXT: Deepa and Anu have gotten into a heated argument and cannot agree on whose fault it is.
D: Anu, you started the fight.
A: Deepa, now don't twist facts...

- b. **tu=ts** b^haŋdəŋ suru ke-lə-s
You.ERG=c fight.NOM.N.SG start do-PERF.N.SG-2.SG
It was YOU who started the fight!

- c. Hindi: **tum=hi=ne** ləɾai juru ki

The effect of =ts in unaligned contexts in general is that the speaker appears to be forcing consensus on the interlocutors in their bid to admit the proposition they convey to the common ground.

A less coercive effect obtains in less polarized contexts than (39), specifically those in which interlocutors are jointly trying to resolve a question and multiple competing alternative answers have been proposed by different interlocutors (e.g. *Where did John go on vacation – Glacier, Yellowstone, or Acadia?*; *He went to Yellowstone=ts* OR *Which national park is the most beautiful – Glacier, Yellowstone, or Acadia?*; *Yellowstone=ts is the most beautiful*). In such contexts, =ts conveys both conviction of the speaker and their desire to persuade their interlocutors. Working out the precise dynamics of such interactions in context must be left for future research.

5 Concluding remarks

The goal throughout has been to demonstrate that Marathi =ts squarely addresses the issue of interlocutor coordination in discourse. It is a dedicated device to signal coordination with respect to crucial components of the context – the shared common ground, the nature and structure of the question that is taken up at the relevant stage of discourse, and/or the resolution of contextual variables. =ts conveys the existence of a schelling point that is available for coordination in the resolution of the salient question. As Schelling notes: “A prime characteristic of most of these “solutions” to the problems, that is, of the clues or coordinators or focal points, is some kind of prominence or conspicuousness. But it is a prominence that depends on time and place and who the people are” (Schelling 1960: 125). The diverse uses of =ts observed and accounted for above are very much a mixed bag. In each use, =ts signals “prominence” of the preadjacent, but this prominence or salience depends on

fixing variable values in coordinated ways – a process in which interlocutors may often be successful, but not always.

If this treatment of *=ts* is on the right track, then we expect to find, across languages, lexicalized discourse-managing strategies that explicitly signal that coordination is expected at the context. It is possible that just like *=ts*, which is functionally a pan-Indo-Aryan phenomenon, we will find genetically unrelated languages in which functions like discourse-salience, exclusivity, mirativity, precisification, and intensification are clustered together in the same lexical item. We also might find lexical items that exhibit interesting subsets of these uses. I note here the commonality between English *just* and Marathi *=ts*. The functions of *just* include exclusivity, mirativity, precisification, and intensification but there does not seem to be an obvious use in which it marks discourse-sensitive salience. On the other hand, expressions like *that/the very P* and *indeed* seem to have uses that presuppose discourse-based interlocutor coordination on salient answers.

Finally, I do want to point out an obviously parallel lexical item in English that presupposes coordination in much the same way as Marathi *=ts* does – the definite determiner *the*. The felicity of *the* depends on the interlocutors being able to coordinate at the context on a referent that uniquely satisfies the description provided by the predicative material. This coordination may depend on familiarity, preceding linguistic context, global contextual assumptions, construal of situations in ways designed to guarantee uniqueness and other such conditions. It might be possible to simply say that the definite determiner presupposes the existence of a schelling point among the set of individuals denoted by the predicate. Or one could say that Marathi *=ts* conveys that there is a definite true answer among the set of answers denoted by the current question.

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