Singular Bare Interrogatives: a Case for Higher Order Quantification, a Weak Singular and Strong Plural.

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In languages like Greek, Hungarian, Farsi, or Spanish (Maldonado, 2020; Elliott et al., 2020), monomorphemic interrogative phrases ('bare interrogatives') inflect for number and allow for plural answers when they are singular. Maldonado 2020 shows that this poses a challenge to the analysis of number marking in interrogatives presented in Dayal 1996, where plural interrogatives range over atomic and non-atomic individuals (are 'weak'), while their singular counterparts range over atomic individuals only (are 'strong'): Dayal's analysis overgenerates uniqueness inferences for singular bare interrogatives and undergenerates antiuniqueness inferences for their plural counterparts. Focusing on Spanish, this talk assesses two strategies to avoid these shortcomings. It shows that both strategies face challenges, but argues that components from each strategy are needed.

Maldonado (2020) proposes that singular bare interrogatives are weak and their plural counterparts strong. This proposal captures the lack of uniqueness of singular forms, but, based on Xiang 2016, we show that it inherits from Dayal's setup the overgeneration of uniqueness inferences for plural bare interrogatives combining with collective predicates. Overgeneration of uniqueness inferences can be restricted if bare interrogatives range over generalized quantifiers (Xiang, 2016), as proposed in Elliott & Sauerland 2019 and Elliott et al. 2020. Unlike Maldonado, Elliott & Sauerland 2019 and Elliott et al. 2020 assume a strong singular and a weak plural analysis. We show that these assumptions undergenerate cumulative interpretations and also collective interpretations with predicates that range over atomic and non-atomic individuals, and that they overgenerate interpretations for *quiénes* that do not convey antiuniqueness. In response, we propose that plural bare interrogatives are strong (they range over generalized conjunctions and disjunctions formed out of non-atomic individuals), and their singular counterpart are weak (they range over conjunctions and disjunctions of both atomic and non-atomic individuals), in line with Maldonado 2020.

References

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