

## **Alternative comparison in underspecified degree operators**

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This talk proposes a novel unified semantic theory to account for the recurrent cross-linguistic ambiguities between comparison, additivity, and continuation (CAC) meanings. The theory has two key components:

- i. A semantic reanalysis of CAC meanings based on comparisons between alternatives (i.e. semantic entities of the same type). I will show that all three meanings can be characterized as comparisons between alternatives on structurally derived measurement dimensions. This reanalysis will help establish inherent logical connections between CAC meanings.
- ii. A decompositional analysis of lexical items expressing CAC meanings (CAC operators) using Distributed Morphology. The analysis leverages the logical connections we have established in CAC meanings to derive the crosslinguistic ambiguities, as a result of underspecification in the morphosyntactic realization of feature bundles.

This work builds upon and extends the work of Thomas (2018), which was the first to propose a unified account of CAC ambiguities. While adopting some key insights from Thomas's approach, this paper adopts a fundamentally different semantic analysis, which demonstrates that CAC ambiguities can be explained without introducing scale segments into the semantic ontology. I will argue that the approach adopted in this paper offers several additional advantages: it better captures the context sensitivity of additive comparatives; it allows for more flexible scale associations, which is particularly useful in deriving non-temporal continuative readings.