

LIN6049

Advanced semantics: puzzles in meaning

2024-2025

Luisa Martí

Week 8

Today

General feedback on puzzle 3

Bare nouns, part 2

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General feedback on puzzle 3

Bare nouns, part 2: incorporated nouns

General feedback on puzzle 3

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(1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine

(2) A bus crashed on the M25. **The driver** was texting

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-discuss the problems that these examples raise

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- discuss the problems that these examples raise
- propose a solution

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- discuss the problems that these examples raise
- propose a solution
- consider the German equivalents

General feedback on puzzle 3

- (1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine
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Discussing the problems the examples raise

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Discussing the problems the examples raise: what if *the* was weak in (1) and (2)?

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Discussing the problems the examples raise: what if *the* was weak in (1) and (2)? What if *the* was strong in (1) and (2)? What if it was one in one example and the other in the other? What would follow from each possibility? And would that be a good thing?

General feedback on puzzle 3

'Def_w NP VP'

Presupposition: $|\{x: x \text{ is an NP in } s\}| = 1$

Assertion: $\{x: x \text{ is an NP in } s\} \cap \{x: x \text{ VPs in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

→ requirement on previous non-linguistic context, previous assumption of NP uniqueness

→ existential assertion + presupposition of NP uniqueness

→ can lead to presupposition failure

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General feedback on puzzle 3

- (1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine
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Proposing a solution: if you think it's weak *the* but there's an issue, what can be done to fix that problem? What can be added to the semantics, or to the syntax?

General feedback on puzzle 3

(1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine

(2) A bus crashed on the M25. **The driver** was texting

Proposing a solution: if you think it's strong *the* but there's an issue, what can be done to fix that problem? What can be added to the semantics, or to the syntax?

General feedback on puzzle 3

(1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine

(2) A bus crashed on the M25. **The driver** was texting

Proposing a solution: be explicit, thorough, say how things would work

General feedback on puzzle 3

(1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine

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Consider the German equivalents:

General feedback on puzzle 3

(1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine

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Consider the German equivalents: which *the* appears in the German equivalents?

General feedback on puzzle 3

(1) Fred tried a new restaurant last night. **The salmon** was divine

(2) A bus crashed on the M25. **The driver** was texting

Consider the German equivalents: which *the* appears in the German equivalents? What does that mean for your solution?

Bare nouns, part 2

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Bare nouns are not born equal. We know that from Atara Imere and Akan already

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But also: Pohnpeian (Oceanic, Micronesia), Mapudungun (isolate, Chile and Argentina), Hopi (Uto-Aztecan, Arizona), Mokilese (Oceanic, Micronesian), Frisian (Germanic, Netherlands and Germany),...

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But also: Pohnpeian (Oceanic, Micronesia), Mapudungun (isolate, Chile and Argentina), Hopi (Uto-Aztecan, Arizona), Mokilese (Oceanic, Micronesian), Frisian (Germanic, Netherlands and Germany),...

A different kind of bare noun: incorporated nouns.
Special morphosyntax and special semantics

Incorporated nouns

Incorporated nouns

(1) Pohnpeian

I	pahn	perek-i	lohs-o
1SG	FUTURE	unroll-TR	mat-DEM

‘I will unroll that mat’

Incorporated nouns

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(2) Pohnpeian

I	pahn	perek-los
1SG	FUTURE	unroll-mat

‘I will unroll a mat/mats’

Incorporated nouns

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‘I will unroll a mat/mats’

(3) Pohnpeian

*I pahn perek-**los-o**

Incorporated nouns

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1SG	FUTURE	unroll-TR	mat-DEM
'I will unroll that mat'			

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I	pahn	perek- los
1SG	FUTURE	unroll-mat
'I will unroll a mat/mats'		

(3) Pohnpeian

*I pahn perek-**los-o**

(4) Pohnpeian

*I pahn perek-**lohs**

Incorporated nouns

(5) Mapudungun

Ngilla-fi-ñ ti waka

buy-3OBJ-IND.1SUBJ the cow

‘I bought the cow’

Incorporated nouns

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Ngilla-**fi**-ñ ti waka

buy-**3OBJ**-IND.1SUBJ the cow

‘I bought the cow’

(6) Mapudungun

Ngilla-waka-n

buy-cow-IND.1SUBJ

‘I bought a cow’

Incorporated nouns

(5) Mapudungun

Ngilla-**fi**-ñ ti waka

buy-**3OBJ**-IND.1SUBJ the cow

‘I bought the cow’

(6) Mapudungun

Ngilla-waka-n

buy-cow-IND.1SUBJ

‘I bought a cow’

(7) Mapudungun

*Ngilla-waka-**fi**-n/ñ

Incorporated nouns

(8) Hopi

Pas nu' pu' wuko-taqa-t
past 1sg then big-man-ACC
'I killed a big male sheep this time'

kaneelo-t niina
sheep-ACC kill

Incorporated nouns

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Pas nu' pu' wuko-taqa-t
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Pas	nu'	pu'	wuko-taqa-t	kaneelo-t	niina
past	1SG	then	big-man-ACC	sheep-ACC	kill
'I killed a big male sheep this time'					

(9) Hopi

Itam	taavok	kanel-nina-ya
1PL	yesterday	sheep-kill-1PL.SUBJ
'We killed a sheep yesterday'		

Incorporated nouns

(10) Mokilese

Ngoah **kohkoa** **oaring**-kai

1SG grind coconut-DEM

‘I am grinding these coconuts’

Incorporated nouns

(10) Mokilese

Ngoah **kohkoa** **oaring**-kai

1SG grind coconut-DEM

‘I am grinding these coconuts’

(11) Mokilese

Ngoah **ko** **oaring**

1SG grind coconut

‘I am coconut-grinding’

Incorporated nouns

(12) Frisian

Wy	wolle	de	messen	slypje
1PL	want	the	knives	sharpen

‘We want to sharpen the knives’

(13) Frisian

Wy	wolle	messe-slypje
1PL	want	knife-sharpen

‘We want to sharpen knives’

Incorporated nouns

Bare nouns in these languages are unlike the bare nouns we've seen before

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Argument #1: morphosyntax

Incorporated nouns

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Argument #1: morphosyntax

Argument #2: semantics

Incorporated nouns: morphosyntax

Incorporated nouns often have a special morphosyntax compared to unincorporated nouns in the same language:

Incorporated nouns: morphosyntax

Incorporated nouns often have a special morphosyntax compared to unincorporated nouns in the same language:

- word order
- Case marking/agreement
- phonology (of verb, of incorporated noun)
- accompanying elements (demonstratives, ...)

Incorporated nouns: semantics

Incorporated nouns have a special semantics:

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Incorporated nouns have a special semantics:

- indefinite
- narrow scope with respect to negation
- number neutral
- name-worthy, typical activities

Incorporated nouns: semantics

Incorporated nouns have a special semantics:

- indefinite**

- narrow scope with respect to negation**

- number neutral**

- name-worthy, typical activities**

Incorporated nouns: indefiniteness

(2) Pohnpeian

I	pahn	perek- los
1SG	FUTURE	unroll-mat

‘I will unroll a mat/mats’

(11) Mokilese

Ngoah	ko	oaring
1SG	grind	coconut

‘I am coconut-grinding’

Incorporated nouns: indefiniteness

(13) Frisian

Wy wolle **messe**-slypje

1PL want knife-sharpen

‘We want to sharpen knives’

Incorporated nouns: indefiniteness

(2):

$\{x: x \text{ is a mat in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{I will unroll } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(11):

$\{x: x \text{ is a coconut in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{I am grinding } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(13):

$\{x: x \text{ is a knife in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{we want to sharpen } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

(14) Frisian

Hja sille net te snoek-fangen

3PL will not to pike-catch

‘They are not going to catch any pikes’

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

Lola did not see dogs:

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option A

$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola did not see } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option A

$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola did not see } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$



Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option A

$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola did not see } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$



Option B

$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola saw } x \text{ in } s\} = \emptyset$



Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option A

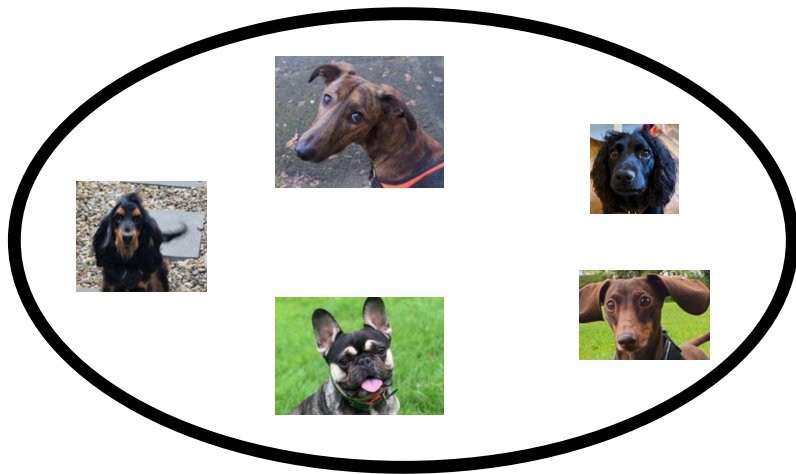
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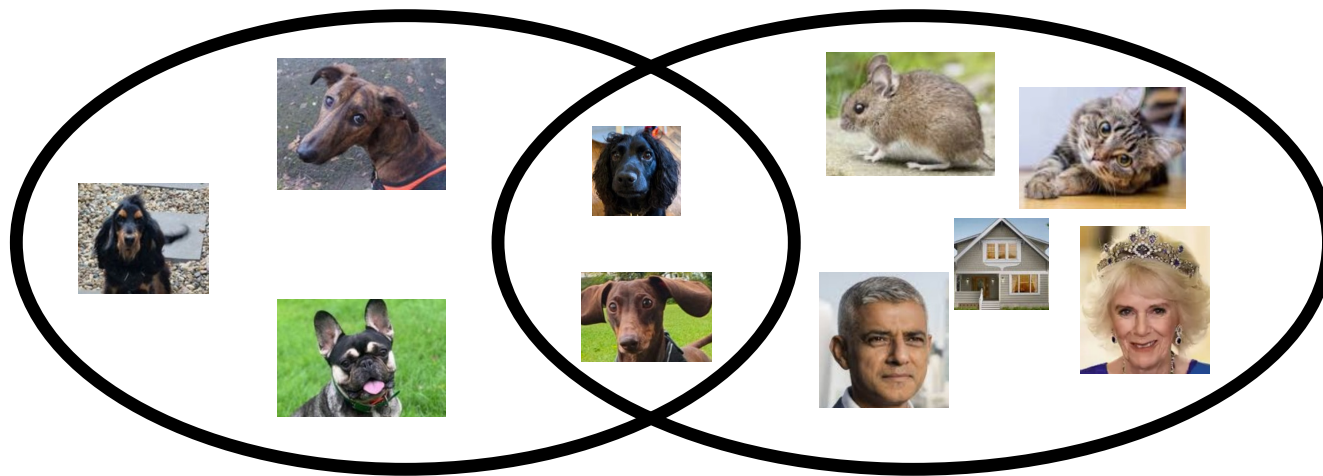
set of dogs in s

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

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set of dogs in s

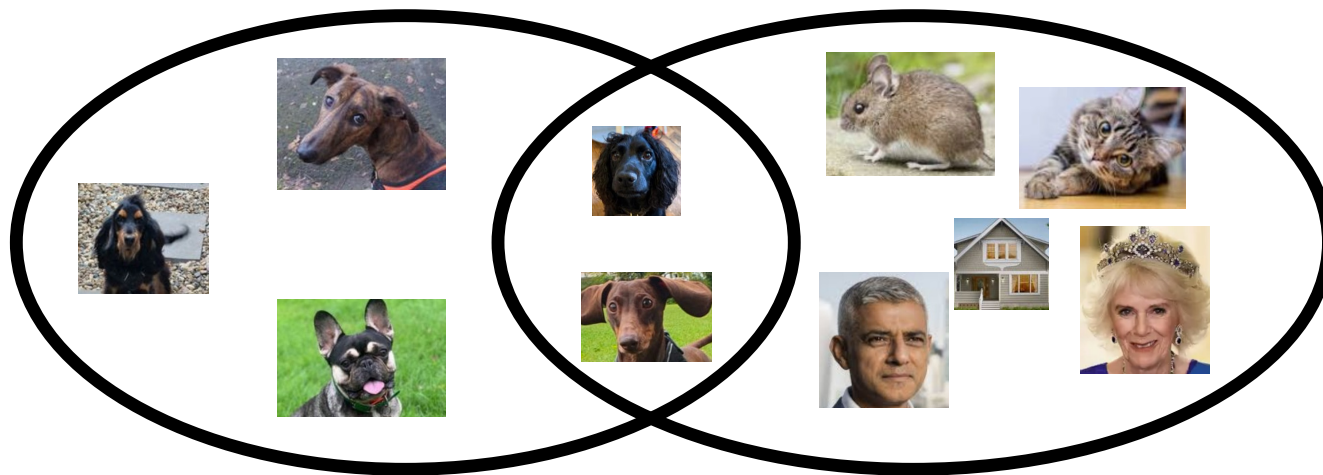
set of entities Lola did not see in s

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

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set of dogs in s

set of entities Lola did not see in s

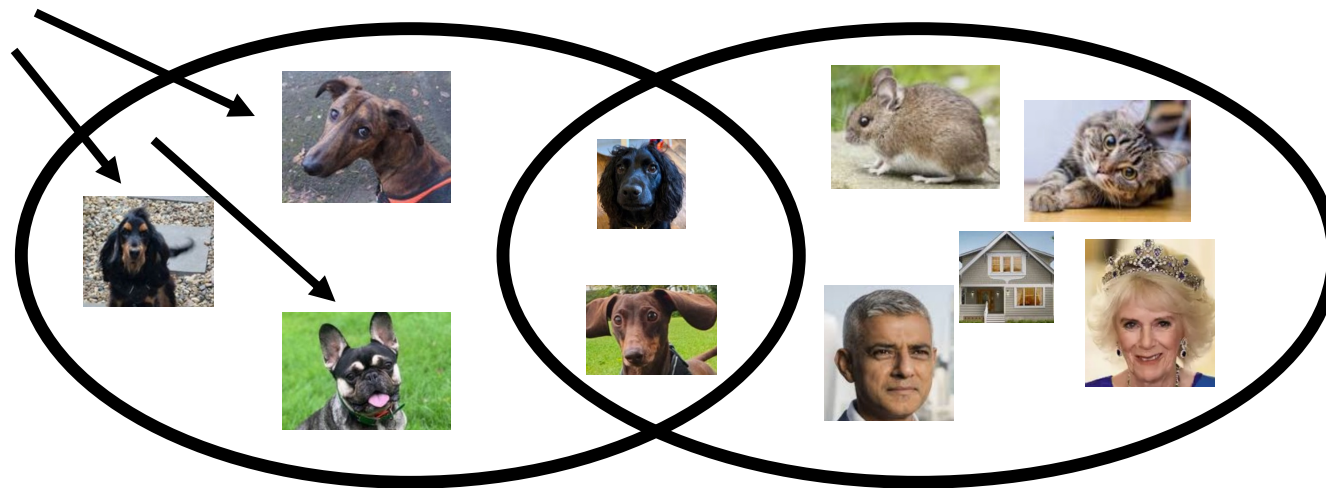
compatible with Lola
having seen dogs!

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option A

$$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola did not see } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$$



set of dogs in s

set of entities Lola did not see in s

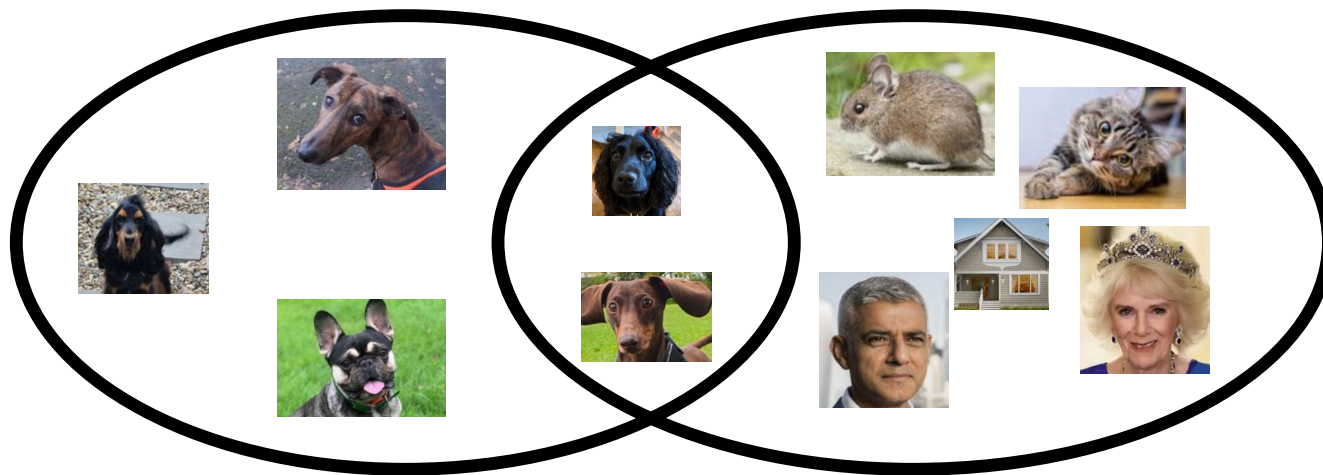
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set of dogs in s

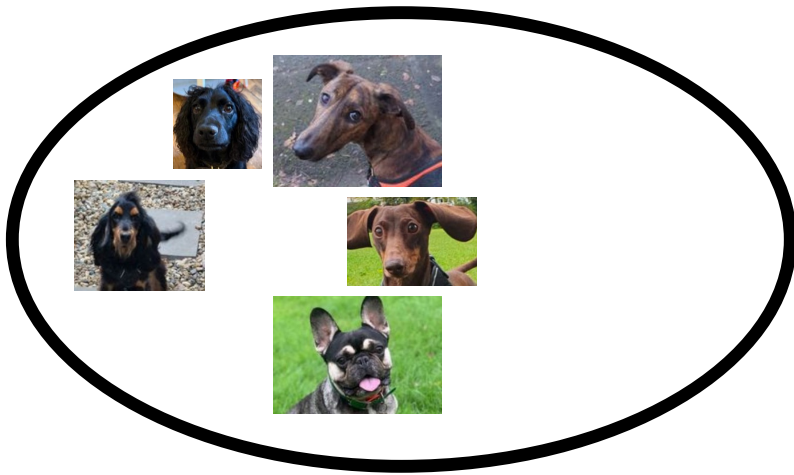
set of entities Lola did not see in s

compatible with Lola
having seen dogs!

“there are dogs that
Lola did not see”

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

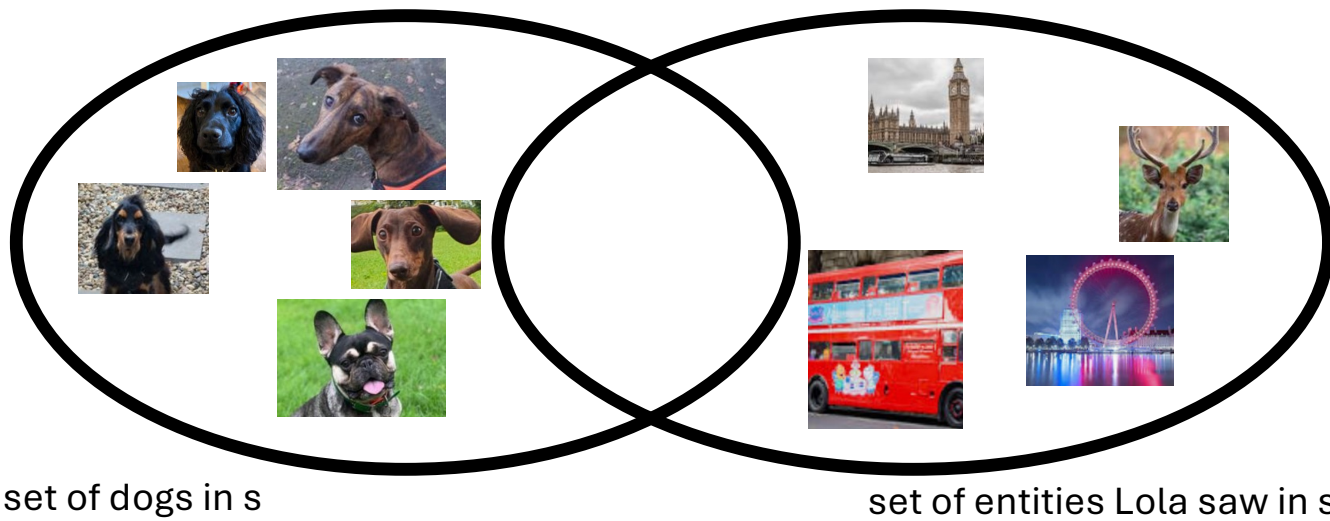
*Lola did **not** see dogs:*



set of dogs in s

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

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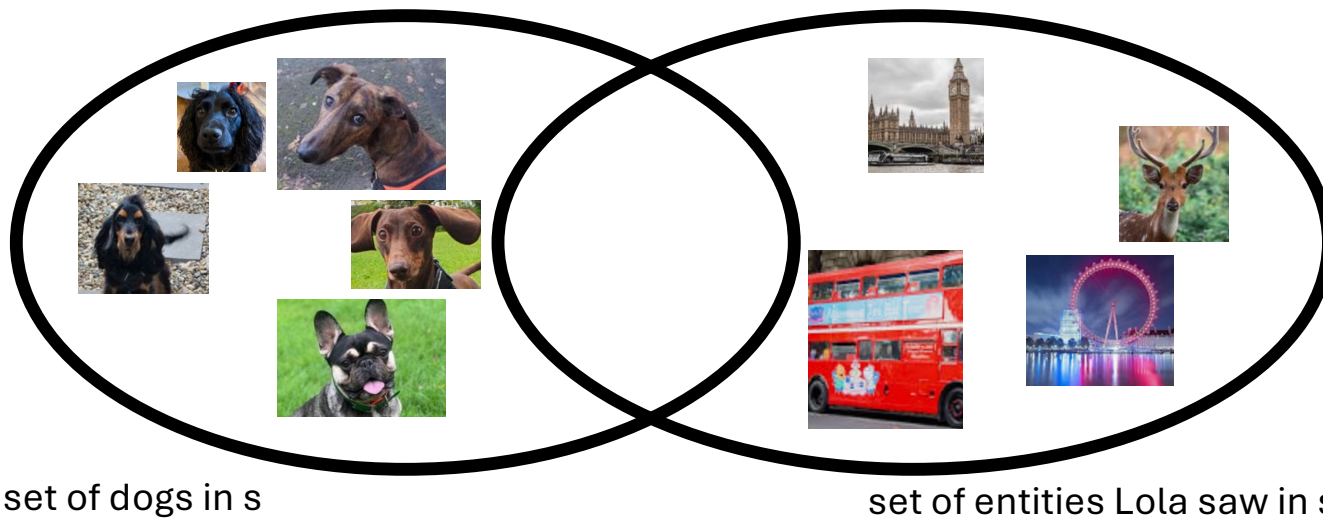


Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option B

$$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola saw } x \text{ in } s\} = \emptyset$$

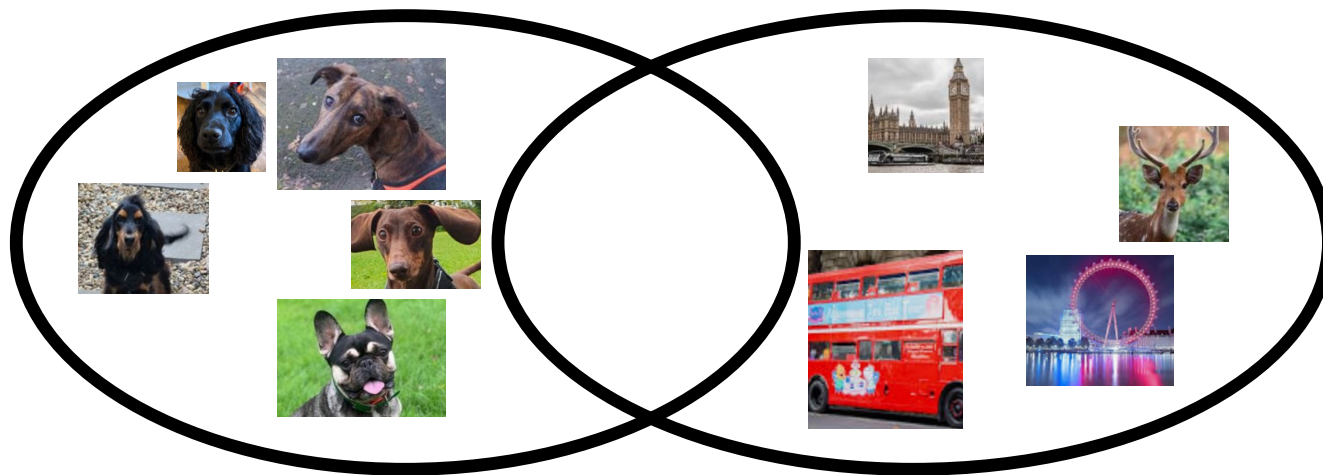


Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option B

$$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola saw } x \text{ in } s\} = \emptyset$$



set of dogs in s

set of entities Lola saw in s

incompatible with Lola
having seen dogs!

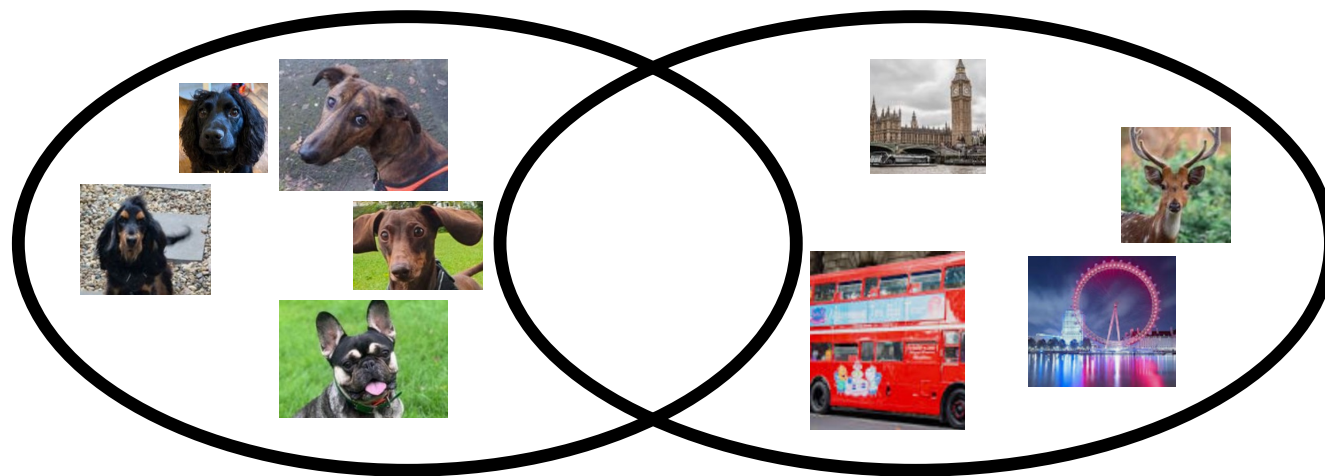
“there are no dogs that
Lola saw”

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option B: narrow scope wrt negation

$$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola saw } x \text{ in } s\} = \emptyset$$



set of dogs in s

set of entities Lola saw in s

incompatible with Lola
having seen dogs!

“there are no dogs that
Lola saw”

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

*Lola did **not** see dogs:*

Option A: wide scope wrt negation

$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola did not see } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$
“there are dogs that Lola didn’t see”

Option B: narrow scope wrt negation

$\{x: x \text{ is a dog in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{Lola saw } x \text{ in } s\} = \emptyset$
“there are no dogs that Lola saw”

Incorporated nouns: narrow scope

Incorporated nouns only take narrow scope

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Incorporated nouns only take narrow scope

That's different from the scope of other types of bare nouns

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Incorporated nouns only take narrow scope

That's different from the scope of other types of bare nouns

Let's go back to Atara Imere

Non-incorporated nouns: wide scope

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(15) Atara Imere

Marie	molonawa	kee te-riko
	wash	NEG SG-shirt

‘Maria didn’t wash a shirt/there is a shirt Maria didn’t wash’

Non-incorporated nouns: wide scope

(15) Atara Imere

Marie	molonawa	kee te-riko
	wash	NEG SG-shirt

‘Maria didn’t wash a shirt/there is a shirt Maria didn’t wash’

compatible with Marie
having washed her blue
shirt but not her red one

Non-incorporated nouns: wide scope

(16) Atara Imere

Te-tama s'-eekata kee

SG-child NEG-laugh NEG

'A child didn't laugh/there is a child who didn't
laugh/the child didn't laugh'

compatible with some
child(ren) having laughed

Non-incorporated nouns: wide scope

(17) St'át'imcets

Cw7aoz kws áz'-en-as

NEG NOMLZ buy-TR-3ERG

ti sta'úqwaz'-a kws Sophie

DET fish-DET NOMLZ

'Sophie didn't buy a fish/there is a fish Sophie
didn't buy'

compatible with Sophie
having bought some fish

Syntax of incorporated nouns

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So bare nouns that are incorporated are different, morphosyntactically and semantically, from bare nouns that are not incorporated

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One way to cash out this difference is to say that incorporated nouns are NPs, while non-incorporated ones are DPs

Syntax of incorporated nouns

So bare nouns that are incorporated are different, morphosyntactically and semantically, from bare nouns that are not incorporated

One way to cash out this difference is to say that incorporated nouns are NPs, while non-incorporated ones are DPs

It would then be D that makes wide scope possible

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

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(2) Pohnpeian

I	pahn	perek- los
1SG	FUTURE	unroll-mat

‘I will unroll a mat/mats’

(11) Mokilese

Ngoah	ko	oaring
1SG	grind	coconut

‘I am coconut-grinding’

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(2) Pohnpeian

I pahn perek-**los**
1SG FUTURE unroll-mat
'I will unroll a mat/mats'

one or more mats; ok if
engaged in mat-unrolling
but only achieved half of
an unrolling

(11) Mokilese

Ngoah **ko** **oaring**
1SG grind coconut
'I am coconut-grinding'

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(2) Pohnpeian

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(11) Mokilese

Ngoah **ko** **oaring**
1SG grind coconut
'I am coconut-grinding'

one or more coconuts; ok
if I have half a coconut that
I am grinding!

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(13) Frisian

Wy wolle **messe**-slypje

1PL want knife-sharpen

‘We want to sharpen knives’

one or more knives; ok if all we
want is to sharpen part of a
single knife

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(2):

$\{x: x \text{ is a mat in } s\} \cap \{x: I \text{ unroll } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(11):

$\{x: x \text{ is a coconut in } s\} \cap \{x: I \text{ grind } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(13):

$\{x: x \text{ is a knife in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{we want to sharpen } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(2):

$\{x: x \text{ is a mat in } s\} \cap \{x: I \text{ unroll } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

this semantics
does not predict
number neutrality!

(11):

$\{x: x \text{ is a coconut in } s\} \cap \{x: I \text{ grind } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(13):

$\{x: x \text{ is a knife in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{we want to sharpen } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(2): $\{x: x \text{ is a mat in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{I unroll } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

whole mats only wholly unrolled entities only

(11):

$$\{x: x \text{ is a coconut in } s\} \cap \{x: I \text{ grind } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$$

(13):

$$\{x: x \text{ is a knife in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{we want to sharpen } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$$

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(2): whole mats only
↙ wholly unrolled
entities only
↙
 $\{x: x \text{ is a mat in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{I unroll } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(11): whole coconuts only
↙ whole entities
ground by me only
↙
 $\{x: x \text{ is a coconut in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{I grind } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

(13):
 $\{x: x \text{ is a knife in } s\} \cap \{x: \text{we want to sharpen } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(11):

$$\{x: x \text{ is a coconut in } s\} \cap \{x: I \text{ grind } x \text{ in } s\} \neq \emptyset$$

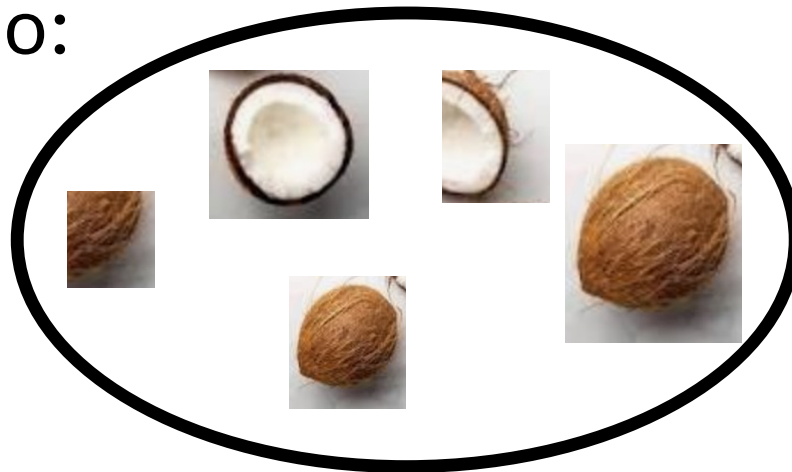
We could think of these sets as containing parts of entities too:

Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

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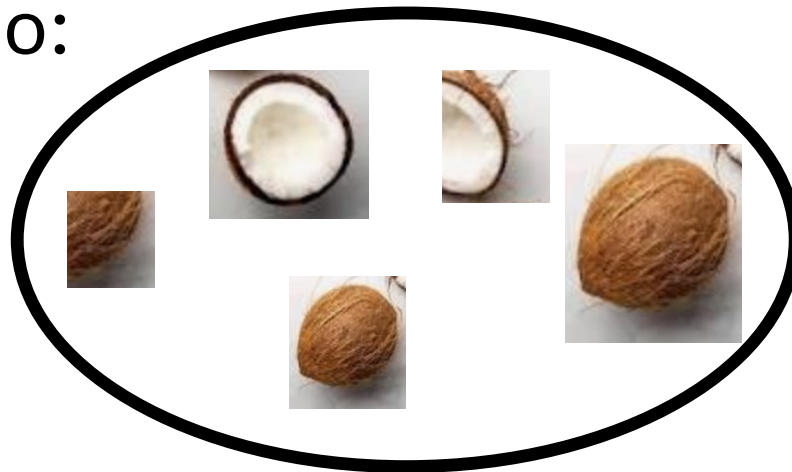


Incorporated nouns: number neutrality

(11):

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We could think of these sets as containing parts of entities too:



though we might get into trouble if we thought that the noun *coconut* always denotes this type of set .
See Puzzle 5 for more!