



Expressing Ignorance or indifference

Maria Aloni – ILLC

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The article presents a formal analysis in the framework of bi-directional optimality theory of the ignorance and indifference implicatures conveyed by the use of indefinite expressions or disjunctions. Ignorance is expressed by standard means of epistemic logic. To express indifference we use Groenendijk and Stokhof's question meanings. To derive implicatures Grice's conversational maxims are taken as violable constraints used to select optimal candidates out of a set of alternative sentence-context pairs. Intuitively, if a sentence-context pair (f, C) is optimal, a speaker in C can utter f with a minimal violation of the conversational maxims. The implicatures of an utterance of f are then defined as the sentences which are entailed by any optimal context for f (but not by f itself). Modal implicatures of disjunctions and indefinites will follow, but also scalar implicatures and exhaustification.