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Mendia, Jon Ander (U Düsseldorf)

**Title:** Characterizing generics and epistemic commitments

**Abstract:** Characterizing generic statements (CGs) express generalizations over a set of entities/situations. We focus on the following question: can we provide a unified semantics for all CGs? A unified analysis faces two main challenges: (i) the variable status of their exceptions (sometimes CGs sanction them (2a), some prohibit them (2b), some 'integrate' them (2c)); (ii) their intensionality (some CGs may express what is merely possible and never realized (2c), or a matter of some stipulation or rule (2b)).

(2) a. John smokes after dinner

a. Triangles have three sides

b. Mosquitoes carry malaria [fact: only 1% do]

c. This machine crushes oranges [said of an unused machine].

We address this question from a new point of view: the stance that a cognitive agent A has on the exceptions to the generically predicated property P. We argue that A's stance on exceptions to P systematically correlates (i) with different types of CGs (Rules & Regularizations vs. Inductive CGs; Carlson 1995), and (ii) with different natural language expressions (Q-Adverbs, affixes, i.a.) signaling the type of CG a sentence expresses. Our main evidence comes from dedicated generic markers attested in a number of languages (e.g. Filip to appear), focusing on the Czech verb suffix VA. We submit that the generic-VA is a morphological marker of inductive generalizations, and, due to its specific lexical semantic properties, it only allows two epistemic attitudes wrt. to exceptions: either A knows for certain that a generalization P has exceptions (hence is not R&R), or A is ignorant about whether P has no exceptions. If this hypothesis is right, then this would seem to suggest that we need to recognize different subtypes of CGs, which in turn provides new independent support for claims (Pelletier 2009, i.a.) that a unified semantic analysis might not be viable.