



SEMANTICS OF A PARTICULAR TYPE OF INDEFINITE PRONOUN : CASE STUDY OF BANGLA NEGATIVE POLARITY ITEMS

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In this article, I discuss the logic of distributional restriction in a group of Bangla Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) that share the morphology with indefinites. NPIs are seen as expressions that occur under the c-command of negation or in the semantic scope of negation (von Stechow, 1999). NPIs are common and exist across most languages [Haspelmath (1997) refers to examples from forty languages]. NPIs can be atomic, like *any* (10a) or complex like *lift a finger* (10b).

1. a. I didn't buy any new lens.
- b. Sonia didn't lift a finger to help me.

NPIs could be of different syntactic categories: like, DPs *any pen* (11a), adverbs *yet* (11b), indefinite pronouns *kichu-i* 'anything' (Bangla, 11c), prepositions *until* (11d), adjective 'efkatafronti' 'rejectable' (Greek, 11e), (modal) verbs *xriazete* 'need' (Greek, 11f), NPI focus particle *-o* 'even' (Bangla, 11g), minimizers *a shred* (11h) etc. But, as van der Wouden (1994) observes, not all members of some special syntactic categories are NPIs.

Bangla too offers various kinds of NPIs like many other languages:

- Minimizers followed by enclitic *o*. Like: *EkTa-o*, *Ekjon-o*, *EkTu-o*
- Adverbs like *moteo*, *Ekdomeo* etc.
- Verbs like *poche*, *marae*, *gheshe* etc.
- Indefinites: *konoN*, *kichu*, *keu*, *kothao*, *kOkhono*.
- Indefinites followed by enclitic *i*. Like: *kichui*, *keui*, *kothaoi*, *kOkhono*.

- Indefinite determiner *kono* followed by N+i / N+o. Like: *konomach-i, kono din-o*
- Indefinites with gemination :*kicchu, kotthao, kOkkhono*

This article focuses only on the last four types of NPIs which share the morphology with indefinites.

Structure of Bangla NPIs

Another closely related language from the same Indo-Aryan language family, Hindi employs enclitic *-bhii*(1) which is similar to Bangla *-o* to generate both NPIs and FCIs. But for NPIs Bangla employs *-o*, only with minimizers and the indefinite determiner, which is *kono* followed by a noun (2). Other than these there are three other groups :

- These indefinites look exactly like plain indefinites but should occupy a preverbal position to get an interpretation and distribution like NPIs.(3)
- Enclitic *-i* gets attached to the indefinites (4).
- Stressed indefinites which in some of the cases change its shape. *keu* and *kono* it does not change its shape but rest of the group deploys gemination to mark stress. (5)

1. ek-bhii	‘any,even one’	ek	‘one’
koi-bhii	‘anyone, an (count)’	koi	‘someone’
kuch-bhii	‘anything, any (mass)’	kuch	‘something, a little’
zaraa-bhii	‘even a little’	zaraa	‘a little’
kabhii-bhii	‘anytime, ever’	kabhii	‘sometime’
kahiiN-bhii	‘anywhere’	kahiiN	‘somewhere’ (Lahiri 98: 58)

2. Ekta-o	‘any,even one’	Ekta	‘one-cla’
Ekjon-o	‘anyone, even one person’	Ekjon	‘one-cla’
Ektu-o	‘even a little’	Ektu	‘one-cla’

kono N-o	‘indfdet-noun-focus’		
(kono din-o)	‘indfdet-day-focus’		‘ever’)

3. kono N	‘indfdet-noun’	‘noN/someN’
keu	‘indf’	‘noone/someone’
kothao	‘indf’	‘nowhere/somewhere’

	kOkhono	‘indf’	‘never/sometime’
	kichu	‘indf’	‘nothing/something’
4.	kono N-i	‘indfdet-noun-f’	‘noN’
	keu-i	‘indf-f’	‘noone’
	kothao-i	‘indf-f’	‘nowhere’
	kOkhono-i	‘indf-f’	‘never’
	kichu-i	‘indf-f’	‘nothing’
5.	kicchu	‘indf-emp’	‘nothing’
	kotthao	‘indf-emp’	‘nowhere’
	kOkkhono	‘indf-emp’	‘never’
	keu	‘indf-f’	‘noone’
	kono N	‘indfdet-noun-f’	‘noN’

In this article I deal only with the last three groups since it shares its morphology with indefinites.

Why Interrogative + –i(even) and not Interrogative + –o (also/even)?

In Hindi NPIs, *bhii* (also/even) is attached to the indefinites as well as to the minimizers (*ek/zaraa*) (1). In Bangla the corresponding particle for *bhii* will be the clitic *–o* (also/even). Clitic *–o* gets attached to the minimizers as in 2 and yields NPI. The indefinite set mostly produces NPIs by adding another clitic *–i*. There could be a structural constraint behind the fact that clitic *–o* cannot get attached to the indefinite series.

Bangla indefinites are built onto the corresponding interrogative by the addition of a suffix *–o*.

6.	Interrogative (k word)	Indefinite (k-o word)
	kon (which)	kono (some/any)
	ke (who)	keu (someone)
	ki (what)	kichu (something)
	kOkhon (when)	kOkhono (sometime)
	kothay (where)	kothao (somewhere)

Dasgupta (1980) argues that this *-o* is different from the focus *-o*, in his terminology the indefinite forming *-o* is different from the emphazier *-o*.

- i. One word cannot accommodate more than one emphazier. Example (4) shows that emphatictic *-i* gets attached to to the indefinites. If indefinites already carries emphatic *-o* then it contradicts the rule (Dasgupta, 1980,p. 252)
- ii. In contrast to the emphazier the indefinite forming *-o* can alternate with both *w* and *u* as in *kew* and *kichhu*. Bangla allows allomorphy between *o* and *w*. But alteration between high and low shape is morphologically conditioned.
- iii. Unlike an emphazier and similar to case-marking the indefinite forming *-o* induces occurrence of special allomorphs of the stem it is suffixed to. As in *kichu* (some) from *ki* (what), like *kiSe* (by what) from *ki* (what).
- iv. An emphazier in the process of encliticization always follows case making, like: *probal-ke-o* (probal-acc-emp). The indefinite forming *-o* either precedes or follows the case marking, like: *kar-u-r* or *kar-o* (what-gen-emp).
- v. When the emphazier gets attached to CVC words the V becomes a long vowel, like *paap-i* (siner) from *pap*. But indefinite forming *-o* does not show similar patterns. *kon* does not become *koono* after *ading-o*.
- vi. Dasgupta (1980) argues that same emphaziers can occur in pair *-i -i,-o -o* like *Ram-o jabe Syam-o jabe* (both Ram and Syam will go). But the indefinite forming *-o* cannot occupy in pair similar to the emphaziers. *kauke dekhini kichu dekhini* does not mean 'I saw neither anyone nor anything', it refer to a parasitic sequence where it refers 'I saw no one I saw nothing'.
- vii. Special plural formed by reduplication can be seen both in the interrogative category as well as the indefinite category with *-o*, like *ki ki?(what-pl)*, *kichu kichu*, (something-pl). In general these plural interrogatives cannot take emphaziers, as in *ki ki jiniS-i ba kinle?* (what things indeed you buy?) but it cannot have a form like *ki-i ki-i*.
- viii. Generally emphaziers cannot get attached to determiner but indefinite forming *-o* does, *kono* from *kon*.

There could be two possibilities, either the emphaziser –o is different from the indefinite forming –o or both are same (or atleast derivable). Dasgupta (1980) argues in favour of the first possibility. The second possibility could be fesiitated through the following arguments.

Bangla phonetics does not restrict structures like o-o. As in

O-o erokom?

s/he-also/even like this?

‘Even she is like this?’

So it is not phonological reason that it preventing an indefinite with –o to allow emphaziser –o.

If morpho-syntax is playing the main role then we have to follow argument no iv. where Dasgupta(1980) claims that emphatic marking –o is clitic but indefinite forming –o is not since the indefinite forming –o precede case marking. As clitics operate in the outer peripheri it has to follow case marking, plural marking etc. However in the case of Bangla this test may not be a relevant one for determining clitics as Bangla case (similar to Hindi) (see Bhat) can be analyzed as ad position. So the morpho-syntactic rule does not seem to be the determining factor here.

If the deciding factor is morpho-semantics then it is possible that both a –o s have a basic shared semantics but it cannot co-exist.

This question is not so pertinentt to this article because this is not the only strategy employed by Bangla to mark indefinite NPIs. Hence I will move on keeping both the possiblities open.**Association with Focus**

Chowdhury (2010) shows that Bangla executes contrastive focus in three ways that are discussed below in the sub-sections below. Surprisingly Bangla NPIs are also formed using exactly these three strategies. They are the following:

Positional Focus Marking

In Bangla positional focus marking is marked at an immediate pre-verbal position. This strategy is mostly excuted for correcting sentences, hence this could be called corrective focus.

Chowdhury (2010) demonstrates that this focus applies for subject, DO, IO as well for adverbs.

Mach-Ta naki ragu kheyechē?

Fish-cla evid. Ragu eat-pfv-pres.3

‘Did Ragu eat the fish?’

na, mach-Ta **moku** kheyechē. (subject)

No fish-cla Moku eat-pfv-pres.3

‘No, Moku has eaten the fish.’

*na, mach-Ta kheyechē **moku**.

No, fish-cla eat-pfv-pres.3 Moku

‘No, Moku ha eaten the fish.’

Syamol biriyani kheyechē?

Shyamol biriyani eat-pfv-pres.3

‘Has Shyamol eaten biriyani?’

12. na, syamol **macher-jhol** kheyechē. (Object)

No, Shyamol fish-gen-curry eat-pfv-pres.3

‘No, Shyamol has eaten fish curry.’

#na, syamol kheyechē **macher-jhol**.

No, Shyamol eat-pfv-pres.3 eat-pfv-pres.3

‘No, Shyamol has eaten fish curry.’

tumi ki kal aSbe?

You Q tomorrow come-fut.3

‘Will you come tomorrow?’

na, ami **porSu** aSbo. (adverb)

No, I day-after-tomorrow come-fut.1

‘No I will come day after tomorrow.’

*na, ami aSbo porSu.

No, I come-fut.1 day-after-tomorrow

‘No I will come day after tomorrow.’

Bangla NPIs also shows a similar pattern. Unmarked indefinites occupy the pre-verbal position and get interpreted as NPIs.

keu aSeni.

Someone come-pres.3-neg-pfv

‘Nobody came.’

***keu** eseche.

Someone come-pfv-pres.3

eseche keu. dEkho niche giye.

Come-pfv-pres.3 someone see-imp below go-nonfin

‘Somebody has come. Go downstairs and check.’

Keu is possible because here *keu* gets interpreted as simple indefinite but in the pre-(finite) verbal position it gets an exhaustive interpretation, which makes it an NPI. Similar patterns can be observed in other indefinites also.

ami **kothao**jabo na.

I somewhere go-fut.1 neg

‘I will not go anywhere.’

*ami **kothao**jabo.

I somewhere go-fut.1

ami jabo kothao berate. ekhono thik korini

I go-fut.1 somewhere travel-inf yet decide do-pres.1-neg-pfv

kothay jawa jay. (some)

where go-ger go-pres.3

‘I will travel some place. I have not decided where I can go.’

ami bhabchi kothao berate jabo. (:some)

I think-prog-pres.1 somewhere travel-inf go-fut.1

‘I am thinking, I would travel somewhere.’

Morphological Focus Marking

Contrastive focus is marked in Bangla by enclitic –i. In the dominal domain –i can get attached to any constituent but in the verbal domain it has restricted distribution pattern.

Nominal domain

Minu mach-i bhalobaSe.

Minu fish-F love-pres.3

‘Minu loves only fish.’ Contrasting alternatives: milk, chicken, rice, catfood etc.

(du-to iliS)-i radhiS.

Two-cla Ilish-F cook-subj

‘(I suggest) you cook both of the Ilishes.’ Contrastive alternatives: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 etc.

du-bhabe (iliS)-i radhiS.

Two-way (Ilish)-F cook-subj

‘Cook in both of the ways.’ Contrastive alternatives: rui, katla, chitol, tEngra etc.

ekta-i iliS kato.

One-cla-F Ilish cut-imp

‘Cut only one Ilish.’ Contrastive alternatives: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 etc.

iliS ta bhalo-i chilo.

Ilish-cla good-F was

‘The Ilish was good.’

Contrastive alternatives: bad, half bad etc.

iliS ta fridge-er bhetore-i ache.

Ilish-cla fridge-gen inside-F is

The Ilish is inside the fridge.’

Contrastive alternatives: outside, on top etc.

Sob-i maya.

All-F illusion

‘Eveything is illusion.’

iliS-ta khub-i bhalo.

Ilish-cla very-F good

‘The Ilish is very good.’

keu-i aSeni.

Somebody-F come-pres.3-neg-pfv

‘Nobody came.’

Verbal domain

Past

*kal Sondhebelay minu mach kheyechilo-i.

tomorrow evening-loc Minu fish eat-pfv-past.3-F

‘Yesterday evening Minu had eaten fish.’

*goto soptahe minu mach khacchilo-i.

last week-loc Minu fish eat-prog-past.3-F

*‘Minu was eating fish last week.’

Minu age mach kheto-i.

Minu before fish eat-habit-past.3-F

*‘Minu used to eat fish earlier.’

Present

diner bela ami department e thaki-i.

day-gen time I department-loc be-pres.1-F

‘I stay in the department during daytime.’

*minu mach khache-i.

Minu fish eat-prog-pres.3-F

*‘Minu is eating fish.’

*minu sara sokal ghure beriyeche-i.

Minu entire morning circle-nonfin travel-pfv-pres.3-F

‘Minu has been roaming around the entire morning.’

Future

13. ei borSay ami iliS khabo-i.

this monsoon-loc I Ilish eat-fut.1-F

‘I will definitely eat Ilish in this monsoon.’

Complex predicate

ranna-i koro.

Cooking-F do-pres.2

‘You only cook.’ Contrastive alternatives: other works

ranna koro-i.

cooking do-pres.2-F

tumi khey-i jeo.

You eat-nonfin-F go-subj

‘(I suggest) You go after eating.’

*tumi khey jeo-i.

you eat-nonfin go-subj-F

Adverb

ami jore-i haTi.

I quickly-F walk-pres.1

‘I only walk quickly.’

Contrastive alternatives: slow, medium

In the verbal domain the distribution of –i is relatively complex than its distribution in the nominal domain. When -i gets attached to the verbs then neither it shows exhaustiveness nor it poses itself in the opposition of other contrastive alternatives but exhibits some kind of emphasis. Only the nominal counterpart of a complex predicate and adverbs demonstrate the exhaustive and contrastive interpretation when it gets attached to –i.

In the nominal domain there is hardly any distributional restrictions for –i. the enclitic can get attached to any constituent in the nominal domain except only one position reported by Chowdhury (2010), which is a pre-nominal adjective position.

*ami lal-i jamaTa porbo.

I red-F dress-cla wear-fut.1

‘I will wear the dress.’

When enclitic –i gets attached to any constituent in the nominal domain it evokes exhaustive interpretation. In most of the cases this exhaustive interpretation leads to a contrastive

interpretations with other relivent alternatives. When contrastive interpretations get available then these gets an added interpretation as ‘only’ as we see in examples 1-6. But in the case of quantifiers, when –i gets attached it exhaust the set and no alternatives are available to contrast, so the ‘only’ inerpretation is missing in these type of constructions as we see in example from 7 to 9. Thus here the function of –i is like emphatic. For all the constituents in the nominal domain the function of –i can be seen like following:

$X + i = \text{step 1 exhaust } X$

Step 2 contrast with other available alternatives (which gives it ‘only’ like interpretation)

If other alternatives are not available (ex: quantifier) then the ‘only’ interpretation does not imerge.

Lets consider the following examples:

ami **iliS-i** khabo.

khub-i kOSTo peyeche.

In 59 when –i gets attached to *iliS* it exhause the set. The alternatives to *iliS* could be other fishes like *ru*, *katla*, *chitol*, *tEngra* etc. Since these alternatives are available so this sentence get interpreted as ‘I will only eat *iliS* (not *ru*, *katla*, etc)

In 60 when enclitic –i gets attached then it exhaust the set *khub* without leaving any contrastive alternatives available so –i gets only an emphatic interpretation.

Chowdhury (2010) argues that in the case of quantifiers there is a restriction regarding the exhaustive interpretation generated by –i. The prima facie interpretations in these cases are purely emphatic. In this analysis I am also arguing that when –i gets attached to quantifiers the interpretation it generaates is purely emphatic in nature. Though I argue that it is not due to lack exhaustive interpretation but is lack of availability of contrastive alternatives. Another test in favour of my analysis would be the interplay between adverb *Sudhu* (only) with –i.

ami *Sudhu* *iliS-i* khabo.

I only *Ilish-F* eat-fut.1

‘I will only eat Ilish.’

*haspatal e Sudhu suruchi khub-i kOSTo peyeche.

Hospital-loc only Suruchi very-F pain get-pfv-pres.3

*‘Suruchi suffered a lot only in the hospital.’

Sudhu can co-exist with all kinds of constructions other than quantifiers. In 61 –i exhaust the set *iliS* and *Sudhu* marks the contrast with other available alternatives. In 62 –i exhaust the set *khubbut* due to unavailability of alternatives *Sudhu* cannot mark any contrast.

When enclitic –i gets attached to indefinites it also behaves exactly the same as quantifiers. It exhausts the set of all available alternatives, generates an emphatic interpretation, does not get ‘only’ interpretation and cannot be modified by *Sudhu*.

ami kichu-i khaini.

I something-F eat-pres.1-neg-pfv

‘I have not eaten anything.’

kotho-i jete ichhe kore na.

somewhere-F go-inf wish do-pres.3 neg

‘I don’t feel like going anywhere.’

kono din-i ami bajar kori na.

some day-F I market do-pres.1 neg

‘I don’t do shopping any day.’

kOkhono-i ami gaan Sikhini.

Sometime-F I song learn-pres.1-neg-pfv

‘I have never learned singing.’

keu-i ajkal khoj ney na.

someone-F nowafays enquiry take-pres.3 neg

‘Nobody inquires (about me) these days.’

Contrastive Stress on Focused Constituent

Similar to English and many other languages Bangla also marks focus by stress. Placement of stress could be on any constituent.

Did you buy iliS?

No I bought **cingri**.

Some of the quantifiers have special forms like *sob-sobbai*, *koto-kotto*, *boro-boddo* to mark stress. Similarly indefinites also has geminate forms to mark stress, like *kichu-kichhu*, *kothao-kotthao*, *kOkhono-kOkkhono*.

14. kicchu korar nei.

Something-F do-ger-gen neg-be-pres

‘There is nothing to be done.’

kOkkhono aSbe na amar bari.

Sometime-F come-fut neg my house

‘Never come to my house.’

kotthao niye jabo na tomay.

Somewhere-F take-nonfin go-fut.1 neg you-dat

‘I will not tae you anywhere.’

Though *kono* and *keu* doesnot have any geminated form. Probably the reason behind this is that *kono* occupies determiner position and *keu* occupies subject position. They mark focus by stress placement.

KONO mach khai na ami.

Some fish eat-pres.1 neg I

‘I do not eat any fish.’

15. KEU kotha rakheni.

Someone promise keep-pres.3-neg-pfv

‘Nobody kept promise.’

Other than these three forms there is one more structure left, which shares its morphology with indefinites and work as an NPI.

In this section I argue that indefinite NPIs are nothing but focused indefinites. The three major groups of indefinite NPIs exhibit contrastive focus. Now in the next section I try to figure out if all these four types of indefinite NPIs has similar distribution.

Contexts

Clause-mate negation: Licensing by clause mate negation is the most important and common requirement of NPIs in any language. NPIs should appear freely in the scope negation. Syntacticians in the begging showed that in English, NPIs should be under the c-command of negation but Uribe-Etxebarria 95, Ladusaw 79 has shown that the actual requirement in English is more complex.

I didn’t see anyone.

koi bhii nehi aya.

Anyone not came

‘Nobody came.’

O papus dhen idhe KANENA apo ta egonia tu.

The grandpa not saw.3sg any.emp from the grandchildren his.

‘Grandpa didn’t see any of his grandchildren.’ (Giannakidou 1998)

keu-i/keu aSeni.

Any-f/any come-prs/pst-prf-neg.

‘Nobody came.’

kono mach-i minur bhalo lage na.

any fish-f minu-gen good feel.pre neg

‘Minu does not like any fish.’

kono din-o ami tomar mukh dekhbo na.

any day-f I your face see-fut na.

‘I won’t see you ever.’

kothao-i jawar ichhe nei.

Anywhere-f go-gen wish neg.

‘I don’t feel like going anywhere.’

amar e bepare kicchu korar nei.

I-gen this matter anything-f do-gen neg

‘I cannot do anything in this matter.’

kOkhono-i/kOkkhono aSbo na.

anytime-f/emp come-fut neg

‘I will never come.’

Lahiri (1998) shows that unlike English, Hindi NPI can get licensed in subject position as in 84.

Bangla indefinite NPIs can also get interpretation in subject position (86).

Before cause: Before clause is supposed to be a licenser for Hindi (Lahiri,1998), English, Greek (Giannakidou,1998) etc.

kisii ke bhii ane se pehle ram ghar chala gaya.

Anyone-acc coming before Ram home went.

‘Ram went home before anyone came.’

O papus pethane prin na dhi KANENA apo ta egonia tu

The grandpa died.3sg before subj see.3sg any from the grandchildren his

‘Greandpa died before seeing any of his grandchildren.’ (Giannakidou 1998)

karor-i aSar age uma cole galo.

Anyone-gen-f come-nfn-gen before uma walk-nfn go-pst.

‘Uma left before anyone came.’

In Bangla indefinite NPIs can be interpreted in before clause as in 99 but it is not a preferred usage. Mostly instead of 99 speakers will chose to say 100. The difference between 99 and 100 is very less. Only the focus particle is attached to age ‘before’, leaving the indefinite unfocused.

karor aSar age-i uma cole galo.

Anyone-gen come-nfn-gen before-f uma walk-nfn go-pst.

‘Uma left before anyone came.’

Without clause: Bangla indefinite NPIs cannot get licensed by without clause unlike Greek emphatic NPIs.

*robike chara amar kichute-i colbe.

Robi-acc without I-gen something-loc-F move-fut.3

Interrogative: Hindi and English NPIs are licensed by yes-no questions as well as constituent questions. Greek emphatic NPIs cannot co-exist with interrogatives. Bangla indefinite NPIs can get interpretation in Y-N questions if and only if the speaker knows that the answer is negative.

Did Uma see anyone in the kitchen?

tumhe kuch bhii pasand ayi kya? (Lahiri 1998)

You anything like Q

‘Did you like anything?’

Ei briSti te keu-i ki aSbe?

This rain-loc anyone-f Q come-fut

‘Will anybody at all come in this rain?’

Ei briSti te ki kOthao berono sOmbhob?

This rain-loc Q anywhere-f go-fut possible

‘Is it possible to go out anywhere in this rain?’

Indefinite NPIs cannot get their interpretation other than these three contexts of which before-clause and the inherently negative y-n questions has very limited occurrence with these NPIs. The most rampant use is its co-existence with clause mate negation.

Conditional:

jodi kono din-o amay mone pore, Ekta phone koro.

If anyday-f I-loc remember, one-cla phone do-fut.

‘If you ever remember me call.’

Hindi and English NPIs are compatible with lot of contexts, so do Greek non-emphatic NPIs. They can get licensed in contexts like polar question, restrictions of universal, conditional, adversative predicate, generic, monotone decreasing, possibility modal, future, imperative etc. Hindi and English NPIs shares its morphology with FCIs but Greek non-emphatic NPIs does not.

Whereas Bangla indefinite NPIs like Greek emphatics get licensed in very few contexts. Bangla NPIs especially has more limited distribution. As we see in the earlier section, these NPIs doesnot even get licensed in without or before clause unlike Greek emphatics. As it turns out Bangla indefinite NPIs need negation of some sort as their licenser either a overt clause-mate negation or a covert negation (like questions with underlying negation).

Bangla NPIs and Non-Veridicality

all-F came-neg

protteke aSbena. \neg distributive \forall

each(person) come-fut.3-neg

keu aSbena. $\neg > \exists$

somebody-F come-fut.3 neg

keu-i aSeni. $\forall > \neg$

somebody-F came.3.neg

In 96 the universal quantifier comes under the scope of negation that is why we get two interpretations of 96. Which is 96a and 96b.

96 a. Not everyone came.

96b. Some people came.

The availability of the second interpretation indicates that the universal quantifier is getting scope under negation. Sentence (97) also gets similar ambiguity pattern like (96). Sentences like 98 always comes under the scope of negation which yields the NPI reading (see Article 2). The only exceptional case is focussed indefinites. They always scope over the negation. As the last section shows they are strong NPIs atleast according to their distributive pattern. The problem arises with these focused NPIs because according to the definition of NPI, negation should scope over the NPIs. At this point De Morgan's law of quantifier equivalence becomes relevant, which says the following.

De Morgan's law of Quantifer equivalence :

$$\neg \exists x P(x) \leftrightarrow \forall x \neg P(x)$$

This is why it is so hard to distinguish between the interpretation of negated indefinite and a focussed indefinite.

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