Who *else* but Sarah?*

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Given the intriguing patterns that *else* presents for co-reference, it is perhaps not surprising that discussion of *else* has been largely concerned with how it can be accommodated (or not) within current versions of binding theory. Accordingly, the meaning of *else*, independent of its relation to binding theory, has received less attention in the literature.

In this paper, I propose that *else* introduces two distinct types of meaning along the at-issue/not-at-issue divide (Potts 2005). First, *else* triggers the presupposition that there is a contextually salient witness, represented as $\vec{w}$, in the discourse context. Second, that witness is removed from the domain of elements of the quantificational element it modifiers (following comments in Hand 1987, Isac and Reiss 2004, and Zwart 2010). The basic proposal is summarized in (3) below:

(3)   X else

    a. *At-issue effect:* removes a witness $\vec{w}$ from the domain D of X.

    b. *Not-at-issue effect:* triggers the presupposition that a contextually salient witness $\vec{w}$ is accessible in the discourse.

After briefly presenting the syntactic distribution of *else*, I provide justification for the claim that *else* requires a contextually salient witness. I then show that the effect is best captured as a presupposition trigger with an additive component, much like the particle *too*, by showing that it passes the classical tests for presuppositions. Finally, I conclude by showing that *else* expresses a modification of the implicit quantificational domain by providing a witness which is removed from that domain, in a way similar, but not reducible to, exceptive phrases.

1   Syntax of X *else*

As noted by many others, *else* may only appear with bare quantificational expressions that form a head. These quantifiers can be composite (*someone*) or simplex, provided that they do not take an overt restrictor NP (*who*).[1] For convenience, let us call this class of quantificational expressions *X else*. Quantificational expressions that are syntactically composed of distinct phrasal units are banned from *X else*. Examples in (4) illustrate the contrast:

(4)   a. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Someone} \\ \text{Everyone} \\ \text{Nobody} \\ \text{Anyone} \\ \text{Who} \end{array} \right\}$ *else* laugh(ed) at her joke?

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[1]We might also include *few else*, *much else*, and possibly the more archaic *none else* in this list, although each seems to require a specialized context. Other combinations appear to be idiosyncratic: *somehow else* is not permitted, and *elsewhere* may be substituted for *somewhere else* (Culicover and Jackendoff 1995, fn. 9). There are also numerous idioms involving *else*, such as *all else being equal*, *above all else*, *little else*, etc. And, of course, *else* appears on its own, as a kind of connective, as in *Eat your dinner, else no TV* (Isac and Reiss 2004). All such cases are set aside here.

b. * $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Some} \\ \text{Every} \\ \text{No} \\ \text{Any} \\ \text{Which} \end{array} \right\}$ (*else*) linguist (*else*) laugh(ed) at her joke?

Culicover and Jackendoff (1995) capture the distribution with (5a), which needs to be supplemented with *wh*-elements (5b) to fill out the paradigm:[2]

(5) a. $X_{[-wh]}$ *else* = {*some/every/any/no*} + {*one/thing/body/place/where*} + *else*

   b. $X_{[+wh]}$ *else* = {*who/what/why/when/how*} (+*ever*) + *else*

I will make no assumptions regarding the phrase structure of *X else* for present purposes. However, whatever the syntax of *X else* ultimately is, semantically the expression *X* must be a Mostowski quantifier – a quantifier of type $\langle 1 \rangle$ which maps from a universe of elements *M* to some subset $Q \subseteq M$ for which the predication holds. We will make use of this fact directly in developing a semantics for *else* that restricts the quantificational domain *M* to a subset $M - \{\overrightarrow{w}\}$, where $\overrightarrow{w}$ is a witness in *M* for the predication in question.

2   Semantics of *else*

The essential claim is that *else* provides the discourse with a witness, which is removed from the domain *M* of the bare quantifier that *else* modifies. We define a *witness set* as (6) below, where *conservativity* is simply the property that the truth of the quantificational statement depends only on the elements within the restrictor set *A* (also known as the *lives on* property; see Barwise and Cooper 1981 and Partee, Ter Meulen, and Wall 1990). Let *D* be the denotation for a determiner in universe of discourse *E*, *A* the denotation for a restrictor NP, so that *D(A)* is the denotation of a quantifier, and *B* the denotation for a predicative VP. We may think of *D* as a relation between the sets *A* and *B* as in Generalized Quantifier Theory (Barwise and Cooper 1981).

(6) **Witness set:** A witness set of a conservative quantifier $D_E(A, B)$ is any $W \subseteq A$ such that $D_E(W, B)$.

From (6), it is straightforward to define a witness $\overrightarrow{w}$ as an element in W:

(7) **Witness:** Let a witness $\overrightarrow{w}$ be some element or sequence of elements in a witness set *W*.

For example, if the universe of discourse is $E = \{a, b, c\}$, *a* is a witness for the statement *Someone laughed* only if *a laughed* is true; if both *a* and *b* laughed, then the sequence *a, b* can serve as a witness. In general, the witness set *W* is any subset from the restrictor *A* for which the predication *B* holds true, and a witness $\overrightarrow{w}$ for *D(A, B)* is just some element in *W*.

In what follows, I first defend the view that *else* presupposes some witness $\overrightarrow{w}$. I then provide a sketch of a semantics in which $\overrightarrow{w}$ is removed from the domain of quantification for the quantificational expression they modify. A basic case is provided below, where the

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[2]I gloss over gaps such as *whyever else*, which is banned, presumably by an independent restriction on *whyever. Thanks to Carson Schütze for raising the issue.

semicolon ';' indicates that the expression on the left is a presupposition to the expression on the right.

(8)   Someone else laughed, too.
$\overrightarrow{w} \in M.\ laughed(\overrightarrow{w});\ \exists x \in (M - \{\overrightarrow{w}\}).\ laughed(x)$

Here, the context – whatever it may be – must have at least two individuals who laugh: the witness and another individual. However another reading of (9) exists in which the *else* can be construed as denying that the witness in fact laughs.

(9)   No, someone else laughed.
$\overrightarrow{w} \in M.\ \neg laughed(\overrightarrow{w});\ \exists x \in (M - \{\overrightarrow{w}\}).\ laughed(x)$

I'll call these two readings *inclusive* and *exclusive*, respectively, and present more detailed observations in §2.3.[3] I concentrate on the *exclusive* reading until then. I now turn to justifying the basic idea that *else* contributes a witness.

2.1   Else *provides a witness*

The claim that *else* contributes a witness is supported by the intuition that (10a) indicates that Sarah laughed at one or more individuals, in contrast to the variant without *else* (10b).

(10)   a.   Sarah laughed at nobody else.
       b.   Sarah laughed at nobody.

A parallel case can be constructed for questions as in (11). As before, the addition of *else* seems to imply ($\Rightarrow$) that Sarah does want something to eat, though what precisely is left unspecified. The difference can be clearly seen in the interpretation of *Nothing* as a reply. In the first case, Sarah wants nothing besides what *else* refers to, for example cookies; in the second, she wants nothing at all, not even cookies. To be more precise, *what else* in (11a) presupposes that Sarah does indeed want something to eat, and *nothing* ranges over a subset of the quantificational domain that excludes that witness. In contrast, (11b) there is no such presupposition, and so *nothing* ranges over the entire domain.

(11)   a.   i.   What else does Sarah want to eat?
            ii. Nothing.
                 $\Rightarrow$ Sarah wants something to eat.
       b.   i.   What does Sarah want to eat?
            ii. Nothing.
                 $\Rightarrow$ Sarah doesn't want anything to eat.

Thus, *else* alters the basic entailment patterns of the quantificational head it modifies. Without *else*, the statement *Somebody baked Sarah cookies this week* is a blantant contradiction in (12); with *else*, it is an entailment.

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[3]Isac and Reiss (2004) call the *inclusive* reading *additive*. I will avoid that term in order to prevent any confusion surrounding the observation that *else* is similar to the additive particle *too*.

(12)   a.   Nobody baked Sarah cookies this week.
           ⇏ Somebody baked Sarah cookies this week.

     b.   Nobody *else* baked Sarah cookies this week.
           ⇒ Somebody baked Sarah cookies this week.

This entailment may be denied when *else* is used metalinguistically (Horn 1985, 1989); such denials are licensed only when the statement has been asserted in prior discourse context, and is further uttered with a contradiction contour marked by the ˘ diacritic (Liberman and Sag 1974).

(13)   a.   What else does Sarah want to eat?

     b.   She doesn't want something ˘ ELSE; in fact, she doesn't want anything at all!

In many respects, *else* seems to be strongly linked to previous discourse, paralleling d-linked phrases like *which* that are strongly linked with entities previously mentioned (Pesetsky 1987).

(14)   a.   [A few linguists]$_i$ walked into the room. [Which one]$_{j \sqsubset i}$ was Sarah?

     b.   [A few linguists]$_i$ walked into the room. [Who else]$_{j \not\sqsubseteq i}$ was coming?

However, the discourse requirements of *else* can be easily accommodated should previous discourse fail to provide an appropriate reference set.

(15)   [Mutters to himself upon seeing an unfamiliar pair of shoes in the kitchen:] Someone else is here …

(16)   [Upon entering a crowded elevator:] If anyone else gets in here, we'll break the damn thing!

(17)   [As the last person on Earth:] I wish someone else, anyone else, were here.

As shown above, *else* can be interpreted with respect to the speaker, either as an individual (15) or as part of a collective, e.g., the inhabitants of a crowded elevator (16). Under an attitude predicate like *wish* (17) or in the antecedent to a conditional (16), *else* may receive an entirely non-specific reading, in that the speaker need not have a particular individual in mind. Such uses show that *else* may be easily understood as *exophoric*, referring to an individual outside of the text, as well as *endophoric* (14). In either case, *else* provides a witness; what differs is whether the identity may be inferred on the basis of the text directly.

Something similar might be said regarding the anaphoricity of the additive particle *too*, which again may be endophoric (18a) or exophoric (18b), as discussed in Kripke (2009) among many others.

(18)   a.   If Herb comes, the boss will come, too.

     b.   [Seeing someone yawn at a boring lecture:] I'm bored, too.

Though certainly not identical, the elements *else* and *too* parallel each other in many respects. I now show that *else*, like *too*, is a presupposition trigger.

2.2   Else *as presupposition trigger*

We've seen evidence above that *else* indicates the existence of a salient witness in the discourse context. In this section, I show that *else* patterns with presuppositions on all the major diagnostics: *else* may be backgrounded, it is difficult to deny, it passes presupposition holes, but not presupposition plugs.

There is much support for the idea that an utterance presents more than one type of meaningful content. In addition to the regular semantic content – i.e., *what is said* in Grice's (1975) terms and *at-issue* content in Potts' (2005), other kinds of content may be presupposed or implicated, collectively determined as *not-at-issue*. Examples of presuppositions may be be found in (19) below, where CAPS mark focus prominence.

(19)   a.   Sarah stopped laughing.
             ⇒ Sarah was laughing previously
        b.   Sarah talked to the king of France.
             ⇒ There exists a king of France
        c.   Sarah talked to ZOE, too.
             ⇒ Sarah talked to someone besides Zoe, e.g., Audie.

The first piece of evidence in favor of a presuppositional analysis is that the witness can easily be backgrounded in common ground. Here, the previous context explicitly introduced a visitor, Wyatt, who is the understood witness for *else* in the following sentence.

(20)   Wyatt visited Sarah this week. Someone else visited last week.

Second, presuppositions are notoriously awkward to deny, which is what makes their rhetorical use so powerful, if at times insidious. To take a well-worn example, the predicate *quit smoking* presupposes that the subject, Sarah, smoked at some point in the past (21A). A denial like (21B) fails to address the presupposition itself. Instead, (21B) targets the main assertion – that Sarah has quit smoking.

(21)   A.   Sarah quit smoking.

        B.   No, she didn't.

Special care must be taken to target a presupposition. In (22), speaker B must provide a complete rejoinder in order to deny the presupposed content.

(22)   A.   Sarah quit smoking.

        B.   You're wrong: she's never smoked.

A similar pattern holds for *else*: speaker A's utterance presupposes that someone laughed, which is not easily denied (23B.i). Only when speaker B explicitly contradicts the presupposition can the presupposition be denied (23B.ii).[4]

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[4]On a related note, *else* also passes the more controversial 'Hey, wait a minute test' (Shanon 1976), though I do not take such objections to necessarily diagnose what's being challenged as a presupposition, following Potts (to appear).

(1)   a.   Someone else laughed.
       b.   Wait a minute, someone laughed?

(23)   A. Someone else laughed.

      B.   i. No, they didn't.

          ii. You're wrong: nobody laughed.

The form of the denial is informative. Just as (22B) used the temporal adverbial *never* to address Sarah's supposed smoking habit, (23B.ii) address the presupposition with a quantifier *nobody* that is incompatible with the presupposed witness. If speaker B were to try to deny the presupposition with a pronominal, as in *You're wrong: he didn't laugh*, the result is markedly odd.

Further, presuppositions survive in environments where *at-issue* content may not, a phenomenon often called projection (e.g., Simons, Tonhauser, Beaver, and Roberts 2010). That is, presuppositions are insensitive to the entailment-cancelling effect of certain expressions or syntactic environments, also known as presupposition *holes* (Karttunen 1973), canonically including negation (b), questions (c), epistemic modals (d), and the antecendent of a conditional (e), none of which eliminate the presupposition that there is a king of France (a).

(24)   Example modeled after Cherchia and McConnell-Ginet (1990:28)

    a. The present king of France lives in Claremont.

    b. It is not the case that the present queen of France lives in Claremont.

    c. Does the present king of France live in Claremont?

    d. It's possible that the present king of France lives in Claremont.

    e. If the present king of France lives in Claremont, he has probably met Sarah.

As shown by the minimal pairs below, only when *else* is added to *anyone* or *someone* does the presupposition of a contextually salient witness project.

(25)   *Negation*

    a. Sarah didn't visit with anyone today.
       $\not\Rightarrow$ Sarah visited with someone today.

    b. Sarah didn't visit with anyone else today.
       $\Rightarrow$ Sarah visited with someone today.

(26)   *Questions*

    a. Did anyone visit Sarah?
       $\not\Rightarrow$ Someone visited Sarah.

    b. Did anyone else visit Sarah?
       $\Rightarrow$ Someone visited Sarah.

(27)   *Epistemic modal*

    a. It's possible that Sarah visited with someone today.
       $\not\Rightarrow$ Sarah visited with someone today.

    b. It's possible that Sarah visited with someone else today.
       $\Rightarrow$ Sarah visited with someone today.

(28)   *Antecedent of conditional*

    a. If someone visits Sarah, give them some of that cake.
       ⇒ Someone visited Sarah.

    b. If someone else visits Sarah, give them some of that cake.
       ⇒ Someone visited Sarah.

Finally, *else* patterns with presuppositions with respect to *plugs*: predicates, such as verbs of saying, that prevent the presupposition from projecting (Karttunen 1973). As shown in (29), the presupposition of *quit* does not project out of the complement past *said*. That is, the sentence does not presuppose that Sarah ever smoked.

(29)   Rachel and Kimberly said that Sarah quit smoking.
    ⇏ Sarah smoked in the past

The situation is similar for *else*, though somewhat more complex. *Else* is so easy to accommodate that its behavior is often obscured. In (30), we can either cancel the implication that else refers to an individual besides Sarah (a), or the implication that there is even a witness at all (b).

(30)   a. Sarah said that someone else ate the cookies, when in fact it was her.
       ⇏ Someone besides Sarah ate the cookies

    b. Sarah said that someone else ate the cookies, when in fact no one ate them.
       ⇏ Someone ate the cookies

In the final section, I note the semantic connection between *else* and exceptive phrases, which both modify the quantificational domain of the determiner with which appear.

2.3 Else *and exceptives*

I conclude with the observation that *else* is fully compatible with, and indeed closely related to, so-called exceptive phrases (von Fintel 1993; Hoeksema 1995; Moltmann 1995; Zuber 1998; Peters and Westerstahl 2006) as in (31) below.

(31)   a. Nobody (else) except/besides/but Sarah is napping.

    b. Besides/except Sarah, nobody (else) is napping.

The connection is a promising one, for many authors have pursued an analysis in which the NP (*Sarah*) in the exceptive phrase is excluded from the quantificational domain of, e.g., *nobody*. For example, on von Fintel's (1993) approach, the exceptive connective *but* consists of two conditions: domain subtraction and uniqueness. The domain subtraction condition is simply a rendering of the intuitive at-issue meaning we have supposed all along, namely that the relevant domain excludes the witness $\overrightarrow{w}$. The central difference here is that the identity of the witness is given explicitly.

(32)   *For some determiner D, a restrictor A, an NP C , and nuclear scope P for D:*

$$\text{D A } [\![\text{ but }]\!] \text{ C P} = \text{True} \Leftrightarrow \underbrace{P \in D(A - C)}_{\text{Domain subtraction}} \wedge \underbrace{\forall S\,(P \in D(A - S) \rightarrow C \subseteq S)}_{\textit{Uniqueness}}$$

The uniqueness condition ensures that the exception set C consists just of exceptions to the quantified statement. Together, the two conditions guarantee that all and only elements of C are exceptions. This seems correct for bare universals, in that *else* provides all the witnesses (for either inclusive or exclusive interpretations).

(33) a. Everyone else drank coffee.

b. Nobody else drank coffee.

c. Did anyone else drink coffee?

However, given the context of A's utterance, B does not commit to just two unique coffee drinkers in the office; there may be many more.

(34) A. Looks like you're the only coffee drinker in the office.

B. Someone else must drink coffee around here.

If von Fintel's (1993) analysis is correct (though see Moltmann 1995 and Peters and Wester-stahl 2006 for counter proposals), the semantic effect of *else* is weaker than the semantic effect of exceptive phrases.

Keenan (1996) and Zuber (1998) treat the effects of exceptive phrases as (co-)intersective, depending on the determiner D it modifies. The relevant properties are defined below, where X' is the set complement of X and E is the universe of discourse.

(35) D is *intersective* iff for all $A, A', B, B' \subseteq E$, if $A \cap B = A' \cap B'$, then $D(A)(B) = D(A')(B')$

(36) D is *co-intersective* iff for all $A, A', B, B' \subseteq E$, if $A - B = A' - B'$, then $D(A)(B) = D(A')(B')$

To illustrate with Keenan's (1996) analysis, in which exceptive determiners are simplified to complex determiners, applying *NO ONE BUT SARAH* to the VP denotation *LAUGHED* yields a singleton set containing just *Sarah*. In contrast, *EVERYONE BUT SARAH* is treated as co-intersective, as it depends just on *PERSON − LAUGHED*.

(37) a. No one but Sarah laughed.
(*NO ONE BUT SARAH*)(*LAUGHED*) = 1 iff *PERSON* $\cap$ *LAUGHED* = {*Sarah*}
People who laughed *include* only Sarah.

b. Everyone but Sarah laughed.
(*EVERYONE BUT SARAH*)(*LAUGHED*) = 1 iff *PERSON − LAUGHED* = {*Sarah*}
People who laughed *exclude* only Sarah.

The relation to *else* would seem straightforward: simply replace the NP *Sarah* with the witness $\vec{w}$ to produce a comparable effect.

(38) a. No one else laughed.
(*NO ONE BUT* $\vec{w}$)(*LAUGHED*) = 1 iff *PERSON* $\cap$ *LAUGHED* = {$\vec{w}$}
People who laughed *include* only the witness.

b. Everyone else laughed.
(*EVERYONE BUT* $\vec{w}$)(*LAUGHED*) = 1 iff *PERSON − LAUGHED* = {$\vec{w}$}
People who laughed *exclude* only the witness.

Another way of putting the possible connection is that an exceptive phrase seems to make the witness explicit, whereas *else* leaves it implicit.

Unfortunately, there are several problems with such a reduction. The first is that exceptive phrases and *else* can co-occur, and the effects are not entirely vacuous. To illustrate, there are two readings of (39). In one, *Sarah* is identified with the witness; in the other, both an implicit witness from the context and Sarah are exceptions to the universal statement.

(39)   Everyone else except Sarah thought the performance was amazing.

Such distinctions are subtle, but may be considerably sharpened by concrete contexts.[5] For example, suppose that (40–41) are uttered in a situation in which Sarah is a member of a panel of judges at a dance performance. Judge 2 has conferred with the other judges, but Judge 1 has not. In the first reading, the witness is identified as Sarah through a cataphoric relation to the exceptive phrase (40), so that the witness to *else* is the individual named in the exceptive phrase, that is, Sarah, and no other.

(40)   *Judge 1:* Wasn't that performance great?

          Judge 2: Definitely; everyone else except Sarah thought it was amazing.
          Sarah is the only exception among judges

In the second reading, the witness is identified as an individual from previous discourse or implicitly understood, so that the semantic effect of the exceptive adds another exception to *everyone* (41).

(41)   *Judge 1:* Did anyone actually like the performance?

          Judge 2: Well, I did, and everyone else except Sarah thought it was amazing.
          Sarah and Judge 1 are exceptions

Both Sarah and Judge 1 are now excepted from the universal statement. Although this reading may be degraded with respect to the first, it improves with an appositive rendering of the exceptive: *Everyone else, well, except Sarah I suppose, thought it was amazing.*

As noted elsewhere, different contexts suggest different quantificational domains for *everyone* (Barwise and Perry 1983; Kratzer 2014). One of remaining challenges is to determine just how the domains in the above cases are computed. Let the contextually relevant domain of quantification D_J be set of judges at the event in question. The quantificational unit *everyone* ranges over D_J, and so the domain of *everyone else* is simply D_J with the witness removed: $D_J - \{\overrightarrow{w}\}$, or in our case $D_J - \{\text{Judge 1}\}$. We could imagine two ways to capture the fact that in (41) Sarah is another exception. First, the witness to *else* is updated to the sequence *Judge 1, Sarah* through cataphora, so that the final quantificational domain of *everyone else except Sarah* is $D_J - \{\text{Judge 1, Sarah}\}$. Alternatively, the effect of the exceptive could be understood independently of *else*, so that the domain is computed in two steps: first, remove Judge 1 from D_J through our semantics for *else*, and then remove Sarah through the semantics of the exceptive. Of course, the results are truth conditionally equivalent, even if they are achieved through slightly different mechanisms.

Another argument against a reduction like (38) is the fact that it appears to be too strong. As mentioned, *else* can be either *inclusive* or *exclusive*, and the classification is sensitive to

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[5]Thanks to Ivano Caponigro for suggesting these scenarios.

the context. Imagine the following conversations as taking place while driving along the 10 into Los Angeles.

(42)   *Inclusive*

       A nervous passenger: Why are you speeding?

       A confident driver: Everyone else is speeding, I'm just keeping pace with traffic.

(43)   *Exclusive*

       An impatient passenger: Why don't you speed up?

       A nervous driver: Everyone else is speeding, I'm scared to go any faster.

As it stands, (38) would only account for the *exclusive* reading. Such cases further illustrate the subtle ways in which the relation between the quantificational element and *else* depends on discourse context.

While we do not have a compositional analysis for *else* when it appears with a bare quantifier, we have succeeded in providing a few core properties that must be addressed in a more complete analysis.

Conclusion

I presented evidence that *else* consists of two independent parts, targeting two dimensions of meaning. At the not-at-issue level, *else* presupposes the existence of a contextually salient witness, which is recoverable through various types of anaphoric relations, similar to the additive particle *too*. The at-issue content is analogous, in some respects, to a quantified exceptive phrase in that they both remove an element from the quantificational domain. Still, whatever its empirical value, this paper leaves a great deal unsaid in understanding the compositional semantics of *else*; it has only shown that there is much (else) to do.

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Affiliation

Jesse A. Harris
Department of Linguistics
University of California, Los Angeles
jharris@humnet.ucla.edu