

Everything and Nothing – Giorgio Sbardolini (University of Amsterdam)

Negative Polarity Items, such as English "any" and "ever" and similar words across languages, express logically defective quantifiers. Specifically, NPIs are not harmonious. The well-known grammatical restrictions on NPIs are accounted for by the Harmony Hypothesis in combination with a version of the Logicality of Language Hypothesis: disharmony implies triviality, and triviality is prevented by grammatical restrictions. The resulting account delivers elegant predictions about the behavior of "any" and other NPIs, as well as correct interpretations in a variety of constructions.