

The Thought Uniqueness Hypothesis

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A bare categorial grammar holds great appeal as a theory of human cognition, but it requires an additional mechanism to expressively rich enough. The concrete addition we investigate is that of variables and lambda-operators binding these variables, but we believe other will have the same effect. Namely the addition increases expressive power at a cost -- for any expressible proposition there exist infinitely many representations capturing it. We hypothesize that cognitive system prevents this ambiguity of representation, and instead blocks all but the simplest representation by some measure -- the Thought Uniqueness Hypothesis (TUH). We argue that the TUH can explain binding economy, scope economy (Fox 2000) as well restrictions on type flexibility (Heim 2017, Hirsch 2016, 2017). The TUH is similar to Meyer's (2013, 2015) Efficiency condition on LF-representation and current accounts of exhaustification, but on our view a condition of the cognitive system.