

Everyone except possibly Ann

Clemens Mayr & Ekaterina Vostrikova (University of Göttingen)

This paper deals with the interaction of modals and exceptives, as in (1). The meaning of (1) has three components, familiar from the literature on exceptives, with *possibly* only modifying the exception component (Moltmann 1995, García Álvarez 2008): (i) Quantification: Every student who is not Ann passed; (ii) Containment: Ann is a student; (iii) Exception: It is possible that Ann did not pass.

(1) *Every student passed except, possibly, Ann.*

Two kinds of syntactic analyses have been entertained for exceptives: (i) a phrasal one (von Stechow 1993, 1994, Hirsch 2016, Crnič 2021) and a clausal one (Vostrikova 2021). Vostrikova (2021) argues that *possibly* only occurs with clausal exceptives. Here we argue that at least cases like (2) using a collective predicate call for a different approach. We propose a novel analysis based on the idea of exception as set subtraction (Hoeksema 1983, von Stechow 1994) with exhaustification (Gajewski 2013, Hirsch 2016, Crnič 2021), where the modal *nevertheless* takes a propositional argument. The idea in a nutshell is that (2) is to be analyzed as the conjunction of *All the students minus Ann gathered* and *Possibly Exh [all the students minus Ann gathered]*.

(2) *All the students gathered except, possibly, Ann.*