THE DOMAINS OF SPECIFICITY

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The term "specificity" is used to distinguish certain indefinite noun phrases from a prototypical indefinite noun phrase. A specific indefinite noun phrase shows a behavior more similar to definite noun phrases; it is prototypically a referential expression, shows wide scope, is presuppositional, indicates discourse prominence, or expresses combinations of these aspects. In this talk I focus on the properties of the domains according to which we interprete such indefinite noun phrases. This includes the question whether the notion of specificity is sentence bound or discourse bound. Second I discuss the interaction of different types of domains such as epistemic and scopal domains, Third I investigate combinations of different aspects of specificity and fourth I present cross-linguistic data for different types of grammatical encodings.