

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

**A unified account of distributive NPs,
for-adverbials, and measure constructions**

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Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 1 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Introduction

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 2 / 42

Introduction ●○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Constructions analyzed in this talk

- **Distributively interpreted NPs**
 - Three boys hiccupped.
 - Each man wore a green tie.
- **for-adverbials**
 - run for fifty minutes vs. *run to the store for fifty minutes
 - run for five miles vs. *run to the store for five miles
- **Measure constructions**
 - five pounds of books vs. *five pounds of book
 - five inches of snow vs. *five degrees Celsius of snow

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 3 / 42

Introduction ●○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Goals of this talk

- Analyze all constructions as instances of **distributivity**
- Increase explanatory adequacy by reducing the overall size of the grammar
- Increase descriptive adequacy for each construction by capitalizing on insights gained from the other ones
- Increase empirical testing ground for any theory that explains aspects of one of these phenomena

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 4 / 42

Introduction ●●○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Outline

- 1 Upgrade Schwarzschild (1996) for events and sums
 - Use QR as a lingua franca rather than Lasersohn (1998)
 - Clarify the role of contextual covers
- 2 Show that it extends naturally to *for*-adverbials
 - Intuition: “John ran for three hours” ≈ “Always during three hours John ran”
(cf. Dowty, 1979; Moltmann, 1991)
- 3 Extend it to measure constructions
 - Intuition: “three liters of water” :: “three hours of running”
(cf. Krifka, 1998; Schwarzschild, 2006)

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 5 / 42

Introduction ●●○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

for-adverbials as distributive quantifiers
(Vendler, 1957; Verkuyl, 1972; Dowty, 1979; Moltmann, 1991; Krifka, 1998)

Temporal *for*-adverbials are incompatible with telic predicates

Example

John ran for three hours	<i>atelic</i>
# John ran a mile for three hours	<i>telic</i>

Explanation (Dowty, 1979): *for*-adverbials are like universal quantifiers – for Dowty, over the moments of *three hours*.

Paraphrase with a quantifier

John ran at each moment of three hours
John ran a mile at each moment of three hours

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 6 / 42

Introduction ●○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Quantification over moments is too strong

(Dowty, 1979; Hinrichs, 1985; Moltmann, 1991)

The minimal-parts problem (Dowty, 1979)
The couple waltzed for an hour.

- *waltz* apparently not required by *for an hour* to be true at intervals < 3 steps
- Dowty (1979) already notes the problem. Many ad-hoc solutions since then (e.g. Hinrichs, 1985; Moltmann, 1991).

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 7 / 42

Introduction ●○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Quantification over individuals is also too strong

Example (Gillon, 1987)
 Rodgers, Hammerstein and Hart wrote musicals.

Distributive: Each one wrote musicals individually.

- Not true

Collective: The three collaborated to write musicals.

- Not true

Intermediate: They paired up to write musicals.

- True:
 - Rodgers and Hammerstein together wrote *Oklahoma*
 - Rodgers and Hart together wrote *On Your Toes*

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 8 / 42

Introduction ●○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Claim: Minimal-parts effect = intermediate reading

Minimal-parts problem
The couple waltzed for an hour.

Distributive: At each moment, the couple waltzed.

- Impossible – ruled out by the verb *waltz*

Collective: There was one long waltzing with no waltzing parts

- Ruled out by *for an hour* (and also by the verb semantics)

Intermediate: Subintervals of the hour were runtimes of waltzing subevents

- Possible

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 9 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Implementation

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 10 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ●○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

Covers: a tool to capture intermediate readings

Gillon (1987); Schwarzschild (1996)

A set *Cov* **covers** a set *S* iff *Cov* is a set of (possibly overlapping) subsets of *S* such that each member of *S* is also contained in at least one of the subsets.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 11 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ●○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

We can also – and will – use extended covers

A cover of *S*
 (also an extended cover of *S*)

An extended cover of *S*

I call a set *P* an **extended cover** of *S* to say that a subset of *P* covers *S*. This includes the case that *P* itself covers *S*.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 12 / 42

Introduction Implementation Harvesting Measure constructions References
 oooooo oooooo Harvesting Measure constructions References

Intermediate distributivity with contextual covers

Schwarzschild (1991, 1996)

Example
 Rodgers, Hammerstein and Hart wrote musicals.

$\forall y[(y \in \llbracket Cov \rrbracket] \wedge y \subseteq \{rr, oh, lh\}) \rightarrow y \in \llbracket \text{write musicals} \rrbracket]$

which is true in the real world if *Cov* is as in the previous picture.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 13 / 42

Introduction Implementation Harvesting Measure constructions References
 oooooo oooooo Harvesting Measure constructions References

Translating covers into a mereological framework

Heim (1994); Link (1997); Lasersohn (1998)

- A set *Cov* covers *S* iff *S* is the sum of the entities in *Cov*.
- *P* is an extended cover of *S* iff $S \in *P$. (see Vaillatte, 2001)

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 14 / 42

Introduction Implementation Harvesting Measure constructions References
 oooooo oooooo Harvesting Measure constructions References

Implementation using Link's star operator

(Heim, 1994)

John hired Rodgers, Hammerstein and Hart.

e — individual
t — truth value

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 15 / 42

Introduction Implementation Harvesting Measure constructions References
 oooooo oooooo Harvesting Measure constructions References

Combining covers with a Neo-Davidsonian framework

Proposed amendment: Switch to the cumulativity operator **

- $\langle X, E \rangle \in **R$ holds just in case *X* is a sum of individuals that stand in relation *R* to a set of events whose sum is *E*

** is motivated from cumulative readings:

Example: 600 firms own 5000 computers

$\exists X \text{ 600-firms}(X) \wedge \exists Y \text{ 5000-computers}(Y) \wedge \langle X, Y \rangle \in **\text{own}$

(Gillon, 1987; Heim, 1994; Sternefeld, 1998; Beck and Sauerland, 2000; Beck, 2001)

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 16 / 42

Introduction Implementation Harvesting Measure constructions References
 oooooo oooooo Harvesting Measure constructions References

Almost anything under the stars is a cover

Theorem: Reasoning under the stars

Suppose that for any choice of $x_1 \dots x_k \dots x_n$, it holds that $R(x_1 \dots x_k \dots x_n) \rightarrow C(x_k)$.
 Then $*^n R(x_1 \dots x_k \dots x_n) \rightarrow *C(x_k)$.

A few consequences:

- If $X \in *P$ and $P \rightarrow Q$ then $X \in *Q$.
- If $\langle E, \llbracket NP \rrbracket \rangle \in **\lambda e \lambda x (x \in \llbracket Cov \rrbracket] \wedge \dots$, then $\llbracket Cov \rrbracket]$ is an extended cover of $\llbracket NP \rrbracket]$. This is true no matter what $\llbracket Cov \rrbracket]$ denotes!

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 17 / 42

Introduction Implementation Harvesting Measure constructions References
 oooooo oooooo Harvesting Measure constructions References

Covers as restrictions on thematic roles

John hired Rodgers, Hammerstein and Hart.

e — individual
v — event
t — truth value

$\lambda x \lambda e. th(e) = x \wedge Cov(x)$

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 18 / 42

The resulting reading is as expected

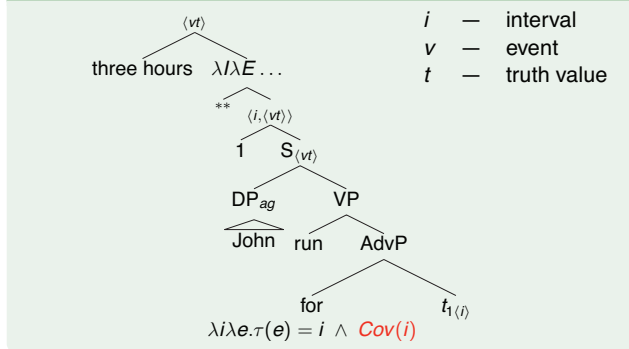
Example: John hired Rodgers, Hammerstein and Hart.
 $\exists E \langle E, rr \oplus os \oplus lh \rangle \in$
 $**\lambda e \lambda y (hiring(e) \wedge ag(e) = j \wedge th(e) = y \wedge y \in \llbracket Cov \rrbracket)$

- John hired every part of the sum $rr \oplus os \oplus lh$ that is also a member of $\llbracket Cov \rrbracket$
- $\llbracket Cov \rrbracket$ is an extended cover of $rr \oplus os \oplus lh$, i.e. each of them is in at least one cell of $\llbracket Cov \rrbracket$

We don't need to give contextual covers special status in the grammar. They are just contextual restrictions on thematic roles, or on copies that have been left stranded under $**$.

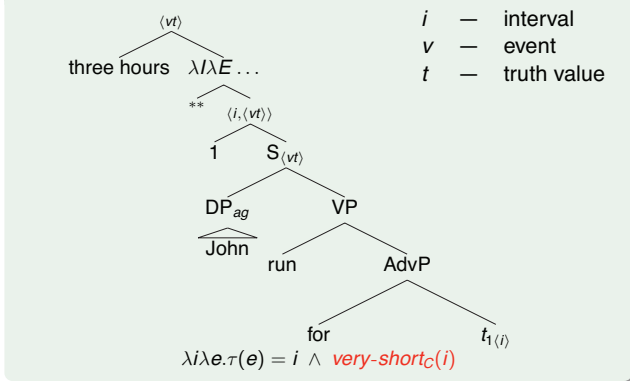
Adverbial distributivity is just like the nominal one . . .

John ran for three hours.



... except that the cover on for is lexicalized.

John ran for three hours.



The resulting reading

Claim
for has a vague meaning component that denotes very short intervals. What counts as very short is context dependent.

John ran for three hours.
 $\exists E \exists I \text{three-hours}(I) \wedge \langle E, I \rangle \in$
 $**\lambda e \lambda i (\text{very-short}_C(i) \wedge \text{run}(e) \wedge ag(e) = john \wedge \tau(e) = i)$

- There is a three-hour long interval I
 - Every **very short** subinterval of I is the runtime of a running event e by John
 - The sum of all these subintervals is equal to I
- Remember that covers have no special status in the system. "very short" is just a part of the meaning of *for*.

Harvesting

Harvesting

Problem: *for*-adverbials allow for gaps

Frequentative readings of *for* (Partee, p.c. in Vlach (1993))
 Mary slept for a week. (almost continuously)
 Mary slept in the attic for a week. (allows for breaks)

- Problem: Interruptions are allowed, unexpected if quantification is really over all subintervals.
- Ad-hoc solutions:
 - Hinrichs (1985) essentially implements covers
 - Vlach (1993) posits a silent frequency adverbial

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ●○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Solution: Domain of *for* is pragmatically restricted

Pragmatic restriction (von Fintel, 1994)

Mary always slept. *(almost continuously)*
 Mary always slept in the attic. *(allows for breaks)*

- Solution: restrictor of quantifiers is anaphoric on the discourse context (e.g. von Fintel, 1994)

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 24 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ●○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Problem: *for*-adverbials are focus sensitive

MacDonald and Ürögdi (2009)

Focus restricts *for*

For a week, Mary took John to the MOVIES.
 For a week, Mary took JOHN to the movies.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 25 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ●○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Solution: *for*-adverbials are like adverbial quantifiers

for-adverbials behave exactly as expected:

Focus restricts *for*

Last week, Mary always took John to the MOVIES.
 Last week, Mary always took JOHN to the movies.

- Solution: von Fintel (1994) has a general solution that derives focus sensitivity and pragmatic sensitivity from discourse-context anaphoricity

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 26 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ●○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Problem: Overlapping events lead to ambiguity

Krifka (1998)

- *John and Mary sang for four hours* is true in these two scenarios:

Occupy-the-room scenario

Hour 1	Hour 2	Hour 3	Hour 4
John's singing		Mary's singing	

Paid-by-the-hour scenario

Hour 1	Hour 2	Hour 3
John's singing		Mary's singing

- Ad-hoc solution (Krifka, 1998): the function that maps events to their duration in hours is underdefined when it comes to sums of events.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 27 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ●○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

The related phenomenon goes by two names

Event/object related readings (Krifka, 1992)

Last year, 4000 ships passed through the lock.

- If some ship passed through the lock twice ...
 - **Reading 1** : it is counted only once.
 - **Reading 2** : it is counted twice.

Proportion ambiguity (e.g. Partee, 1984; Kadmon, 1987)

Usually, if a farmer owns a donkey, he beats it.

- If some farmer has two donkeys ...
 - **Reading 1** : he is counted only once.
 - **Reading 2** : he is counted twice.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 28 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ●○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Solution: Any account that works for mass nouns

Example

John and Mary sang for four hours.

- If, during some time interval, John sang and Mary sang ...
 - **Reading 1 (occupy the room)** : it is counted only once.
 - **Reading 2 (paid by the hour)** : it is counted twice.

- Solution: Any account general enough to deal with mass quantification, e.g. Doetjes and Honcoop (1997).

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 29 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○●○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Problem: Mixed bounded/unbounded predicates

Example
John pushed carts to the store for fifty minutes.
John pushed carts to the store for fifty meters.

- Problem: *for an hour* and *for a mile* have different distributions. Unexpected if they only test for homogeneity as in (Krifka, 1998; Kratzer, 2007)

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 30 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○●○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Solution: Distributivity is relativized to one dimension

Example
John pushed carts to the store for fifty minutes.
John pushed carts to the store for fifty meters.

Parallel example
Each of the farmers rounded up donkeys.
Farmers rounded up each of the donkeys.

- Solution (Champollion, 2009): They distribute only along time vs. space, just as *each of the N* does (agent vs. theme).
- This falls out of the mechanism described without any changes.

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 31 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○●○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

How the minimal pair is explained

Judgment to be predicted
John pushed carts to the store for fifty minutes.

- Cover contains very short time intervals
- For each of them there is an event of pushing carts to the store

extent along path = 50m
time = 50 minutes

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 32 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○●○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

How the minimal pair is explained

Judgment to be predicted
John pushed carts to the store for fifty meters.

- Cover contains very short extents along the path
- For most of them there is **no** event of pushing carts to the store

extent along path = 50m
time = 50 minutes

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 32 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○●○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References

Measure constructions

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 33 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○●○ Measure constructions ●○○○○○○○ References

Measure constructions

Krifka (1998); Schwarzschild (2006)

Require mass nouns or plurals
three liters of water
three pounds of grapes

*three liters of (a) bottle of water
*three pounds of baby

Minimal-parts problem : *300 pounds of furniture*

Idea:

- Mass : Count :: Atelic : Telic (Mourelatos, 1978)
- three hours of running \approx three liters of water

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 34 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○●○○○○○○○ References

Plugging measure constructions into the framework

three liters of water

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 35 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○●○○○○○○○ References

The resulting reading

three liters of water

$$\lambda X \exists I [three-liters(I) \wedge \langle I, X \rangle \in$$

$$** \lambda I' \lambda X' [very-small_C(I') \wedge water(X') \wedge volume(X') = I']]$$

True of any X such that . . .

- There is a three-liter interval I
- which can be divided into very small parts
- Each part is the volume of some quantity of water
- All of these quantities form X

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 36 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○●○○○○○○○ References

Problem: Monotonicity requirement

Krifka (1998); Schwarzschild (2006)

Some measure functions are unacceptable:

Example

three liters of water	<i>volume</i>
*thirty degrees Celsius of water	<i>temperature</i>
*three miles per hour of water	<i>speed</i>

Same constraint as in *for*-adverbials:

Example

drive for three hours	<i>duration</i>
drive for three miles	<i>distance</i>
*drive for three miles per hour	<i>speed</i>

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 37 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○●○○○○○○○ References

Previous work

Previous insight (Krifka, 1998; Schwarzschild, 2006): Every proper part of a given quantity of X has a smaller volume, but not a smaller temperature than the whole.

- Modeled by an ad-hoc “monotonicity requirement” on *of*.
- This is too strong:
 - *three inches of snow covered the fields*
 - \neq *less than three inches of snow covered field 1*

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 38 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○●○○○○○○○ References

A new perspective: Monotonicity as distributivity

*thirty degrees Celsius of water

$$\lambda X \exists I [thirty-degrees-Celsius(I) \wedge \langle I, X \rangle \in$$

$$** \lambda I' \lambda X' [very-small_C(I') \wedge water(X') \wedge temperature(X') = I']]$$

- Entails that each part of the three-degree-Celsius interval I is the temperature of some quantity of water
- Could rule out by world knowledge: if X is water, then any parts of X always have (more or less) the same temperature as X.
- Could also claim that temperature intervals don't have parts

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 39 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○●○○○○○○○ References

Distributivity is relativized to one dimension

three inches of snow

$$\lambda X \exists I [three-inches(I) \wedge \langle I, X \rangle \in$$

$$** \lambda I' \lambda X' [very-small_C(I') \wedge snow(X') \wedge height(X') = I']]$$

- Entails that each part of the three-inch interval I is the height of some quantity of snow. All the snow together forms X.
- Does *not* entail that each part of X has a smaller height than X itself.
- Same solution as for *push carts to the store for fifty minutes*

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 40 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○● References ○○○○○○

Summary: Overall results

Distributivity explains:

- the atelicity requirement of *for*-adverbials
- the monotonicity constraint on measure constructions
- the fact that they are checked along only one dimension

Covers (= intermediate distributivity) explain:

- the minimal parts problems for verbs like *waltz*
- and in measure constructions for nouns like *furniture*

Previous theories carry over to explain:

- focus sensitivity and frequentative readings of *for*
- the proportion ambiguity in *for*

Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 41 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○● References ○○○○○○

The End

Thank you!

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Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 42 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

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Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 42 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

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Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 42 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

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Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 42 / 42

Introduction ○○○○○○ Implementation ○○○○○○○○○ Harvesting ○○○○○○○○○ Measure constructions ○○○○○○○○ References ○○○○○○

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Lucas Champollion (Penn / PARC) Distributivity across constructions September 29, 2009 42 / 42