

## On the Syntax and Semantics of Special Quantifiers

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Quantifiers like *something*, *everything*, *nothing*, *several things* as well as pronouns like *that* and *what* ('special quantifiers' for short) have the exceptional ability of being able to replace nonreferential complements of various sorts without giving rise to substitution problems, as is illustrated for clausal complements of attitude verbs below:

- (1) a. John claims that he won.  
c. John claims something / that / what Mary claims  
b. ??? John claims a proposition / some entity / some content / some thing / it.

Special quantifiers are not only able to replace other nonreferential complements (such as predicative complements of copula verbs, complements of intensional transitives, direct quotes as complements of verbs of speaking). They are also able to replace definite and bare plural and mass DPs in extensional contexts.

- (2) John ate two things, the beans and the rice / beans and rice.

Various philosophers have taken such phenomena to show that special quantifiers are substitutional quantifiers or genuine higher-order / plural / mass quantifiers. I will discuss a range of generalizations that pose serious difficulties for such views and that motivate the Nominalization Theory of such quantifiers and pronouns, namely on which they range over entities that would also be semantic values of suitable nominalizations (e.g. 'claims' in (1b)). The Nominalization Theory faces the challenge, though, of providing a compositional semantic analysis. I will explore a novel syntactic and semantic analysis of special quantifiers within the Nominalization Theory on which *-thing* as a light noun (in Kayne's sense) plays a central role.