Intensifier readings of result clauses containing emphatic NPIs in Romanian

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In this talk, we will look at the interpretations of result clauses with emphatic negative polarity items (emphNPI) in Romanian as in (1a), (1b), and (2). In all three examples, the result clause can have an intensification function, i.e. be taken as pointing to the high degree that holds of the matrix predicate.

(1) E o aglomerație pe străzi, în timpul grevei, `There is a crowd in the streets during the strike …'
a. … de nu <u>se vede la un pas</u>
     that not REFL see within a step `… that one cannot see a step ahead.'
   High degree reading: `There is a huge crowd in the streets during the strike.'

b. … de nu <u>se vede om cu om</u>.
   that not REFL see person with person `... that one cannot see the closest person.'
   High degree reading: `There is a huge crowd in the streets during the strike.'

(2) De ziua lui, Ion e fericit de nu-<u>și mai încape în piele</u>.
on birthday.the his Ion is happy that not-REFL anymore fit in skin
`On his birthday, Ion is very happy.' (lit.: On his birthday, Ion is so happy that he doesn't fit in his skin anymore.)

We need to distinguish three types of emphatic NPIs.
Type 1: emphatic NPIs that are are only occasionally used in result clauses and act as intensifiers, see (1a);
Type 2: emphatic NPIs that require a result relation, being bound to the result construction, see (1b);
Type 3: emphatic NPIs that express nothing but intensification, see (3).

The basic intuition underlying this presentation, also expressed in Hoeksema & Napoli (to appear), is that emphatic statements inside a result clause can trigger a high degree interpretation (in the case of Type 1 and Type 2). In addition, there are some lexicalized expressions that only encode such a high degree reading (Type 3).

We will assume a semantics of result clauses a proposed in Meier (2003) and augment this with a treatment of emphatic expressions, based on the pragmatic theory of NPIs of Krifka (1995), Eckardt (2005) and others. We will provide a representational, constraint-based rendering of these theories in which we show how we can derive the semantic properties of Romanian result clauses with emphatic NPIs from the interaction of the lexical specifications of the result complementizer *de* and the emphatic NPIs.

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