## Assignment 9 (due Tuesday, May 1 in class)

**I.** *Few* **vs.** *A Few*

In this problem, you will determine whether there are any semantic differences between the closely-related quantificational determiners *few* and *a few:*

(1)    Few students left.                    (2)    A few students left.

**A.** For both *few* and *a few*, determine whether the NP in sentences of the form [Det NP] VP is an upward-entailing or downward-entailing environment. Provide any necessary test sentences/discussion to support your conclusions.

**B.** For both *few* and *a few*, determine whether the VP in sentences of the form [Det NP] VP is an upward-entailing or downward-entailing environment. Provide any necessary test sentences/discussion to support your conclusions.

**C.** Now consider the following sentences, in which *few* and *a few* occur with the negative polarity items (NPI) *ever*. Which of these sentences sound acceptable to you? Which ones sound unacceptable?

(3)    Few tourists who **ever** visit the Taj Mahal leave without taking a picture.

(4)    A few tourists who **ever** visit the Taj Mahal leave without taking a picture.

(5)    Few climbers **ever** reach the top of Mount Everest.

(6)    A few climbers **ever** reach the top of Mount Everest.

**D.** Compare your results from Parts A and B with those from Part C. Taken together, do they support our hypothesis from last week's lectures concerning the distribution of negative polarity items? Explain your answer.

**II. Aspectual Classes of Verb Phrases**

For each of the following eight verb phrases:

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|---|---|
| *ride a bicycle,* | *contain valuable equipment,* |
| *knit a sweater,* | *get promoted,* |
| *want a BMW,* | *eat an apple,* |
| *be born,* | *discuss current events* |

first determine whether the VP is stative or eventive. If the VP is eventive, then determine whether it is an activity, or whether it describes a bounded event. If the VP describes a bounded event, then determine whether it is an accomplishment or an achievement. Each of your conclusions should be supported with the results of **at least one** of the tests that we discussed in class for distinguishing amongst members of the different aspectual classes.