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Title: Unbelievably and Incredibly, *Impossibly* Is Not Negative

Abstract: This paper addresses two puzzles raised by the veridicality of "impossibly" as a sentential adverb. A sentence such as "Impossibly, John is in NY" implies the prejacent p . This is prima facie non-compositional, since p is intuitively incompatible with "it is impossible that p ." Similar non-compositional veridical effects arise with "incredibly/unbelievably p " and "I can't believe p ".

A second puzzle concerns a lexical gap. In many logical domains, English lexicalizes negative universal concepts (e.g., *no*, *nor*, *never*, *neither*). However, English lacks an epistemic modal adverb meaning 'not possibly', since *impossibly* does not have this function.

I propose an account within a multilateral extension of update semantics together with neglect-zero (Aloni 2022). I argue that the update with an operator corresponding to 'not possibly' systematically collapses, yielding contradiction or undefinedness, whereas "it is impossible that p " does not collapse. This failure of update triggers a manner implicature, which may become conventionalized: "*impossibly* p " is interpreted to express a change in the speaker's doxastic state, parallel to speaker-oriented adverbs. This analysis accounts for both puzzles: the non-compositional meaning arises from update collapse, and the lexical gap follows because such an epistemic modal adverb would systematically fail to yield a coherent update.