INTRODUCTION

Corpus studies of spontaneous speech suggest that grammaticality is gradient (Wasow 2008), contra a widespread assumption. Experiments with the English dative alternation (Bresnan 2007) further suggest that the same probabilistic factors that influence production also influence judgment and are thus arguably part of competence.

The dative studies, however, were based largely on categorical predictors. In contrast, predictive models of English complement clause (CC) and relative clause (RC) ‘that’-optionality (Jaeger 2006; Jaeger in press) have as their most significant factors the predictability of embedding, given verb (CC) or head noun (RC) factors—that are highly gradient. Establishing that these measures are involved in judgment could provide evidence that such fine-grained probabilistic knowledge is part of linguistic competence.

RESULTS

RC ‘that’-inclusion, forced-choice task

Participants successfully place probability bins in line with corpus-model predictions

Comparing Tasks

Judgments significantly correlate with corpus predictions in ALL experiments

Comparing Participants

Lab v. Turk, R = 0.60***

100-point CC

100-point RC

Traditional and crow-sourced results highly correlate

Structural Similarity

Factors underlying judgment, production correlate significantly

SUMMARY

The same probabilistic factors are involved in both judgment and production...

Evidence for “Numbers in the Grammar”

SELECTED REFERENCES


