

Acceptability Judgements On Contrastive Dialogues Involving Ellipsis

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Language of the presentation

English

Keywords

Pilot study, Contrastive Fragments, Acceptability Judgement Tasks

Abstract (for oral presentation)

This pioneering study explores the factors that influence how native speakers perceive fragments in dialogues involving contrastive focus in German. The auditory and written dialogues differentiated in whether the fragmentary answer included lexical words, namely nouns denoting human referents, or functional words, specifically prepositions. They also varied in whether contrasting words were emphasised or not. A total of 100 participants were asked to rate the fragmentary answers in the dialogues using a 7-point Likert scale to assess their naturalness. This study hypothesised that (1) auditory dialogues will be perceived as more natural compared to their written counterparts, (2) dialogues featuring either prosodically or orthographically emphasised contrasting words will receive higher ratings than those without emphasis, and (3) dialogues incorporating lexical fragments will receive higher naturalness ratings than those containing functional fragments. The results align with the hypotheses, as auditorily presented dialogues bearing pitch accent on the contrasting words receive the highest ratings. However, in contrast to the final hypothesis, dialogues incorporating prepositions as functional fragments were perceived as more natural than those containing lexical contrasting words. These findings shed light on the complex interplay of acceptability ratings, ellipsis processing intricacies, and the identification of correlate-remnant pairings. In this manner, the study not only lays the groundwork for future research using acceptability judgement tasks but also enhances the understanding of language comprehension processes.

Motivation

As I investigate elliptical structures using acceptability judgment tasks in my PhD project, this conference is the perfect opportunity for me to present the pilot study for the PhD project, receive feedback to the study, and network with fellow students. I am looking forward to participating in workshops and learning more about current research topics.