

THE ANATOMY OF A COMPARATIVE ILLUSION: APPENDICES

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This document contains the materials of the appendices published in our *Journal of Semantics* paper. They are included in this repository for ease of reference. Note that the instructions for Experiment 1 in this document were the same for our preliminary Experiments 1a-c, described in a report included in this repository.

Appendix A. Instructions for acceptability tasks (Experiments 1 and 2)

The following instructions were provided to participants in both Experiments 1 and 2. The scalar values indicated following the example sentences were circled on a sample 1-7 scale.

Welcome to the experiment!

In this experiment, you will read many sentences. For each sentence, please rate the sentence based on whether you think it is an acceptable sentence (6 or 7) or an impossible/unacceptable sentence (1 or 2). Some sentences may not sound completely impossible, while also not being completely acceptable—in these cases, use the more intermediate ratings (3-5).

Note, however, that you are not being asked to judge whether the sentence is plausible or not (i.e. it would require ‘too strange’ a context to make the sentence plausible); rather, you are only being asked to judge whether the sentence sounds like possible English or not. For example, (a) below describes a likely scenario, but most English speakers find it unacceptable (in contrast to (b)). Sentence (c) describes an unlikely scenario, yet given the proper situation, you could write/speak (c) without any problem.

- a. The children decorated the sparkling ornaments onto the tree. [2/7]
- b. The children decorated the tree with sparkling ornaments. [7/7]
- c. The purple elephant played chess with the balding porcupines. [7/7]

You are also not being asked to judge whether the sentence is acceptable according to grammatical rules you may have learned in school—only whether the sentence sounds natural and good. For example, people often say that it’s ‘bad’ to end a sentence with a preposition like *with*, however most English speakers find (d) below to be a perfectly fine sentence (in contrast to (e)).

- d. I know who Julie saw Mary with. [7/7]

e. I know who Julie saw Mary and.

[2/7]

As you work through the sentences on the following pages, please keep in mind that each sentence is different, and you may feel very differently towards two sentences which at first seem superficially similar. In that respect, judge each sentence individually, and not in comparison with other sentences you have read.

Appendix B. Experiment 1 conditions

Tabular version of the item schematic from Experiment 1 (Figure ??). The factor REPEATABILITY was manipulated between items, the other factors were manipulated within items. The factor SUBJECT INCLUSION was counterbalanced across the illusion conditions; these sample items represents ‘inclusion not possible’ items.

Sentence	COMP.	QUANT.	ELLIP.	REPEAT.
More girls ate pizza than the boy did.	illusion	more	ellipsis	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than the boy ate yogurt.	illusion	more	no ellip.	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than boys did.	control	more	ellipsis	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than boys ate yogurt.	control	more	no ellip.	repeatable
Fewer girls ate pizza than the boy did.	illusion	fewer	ellipsis	repeatable
Fewer girls ate pizza than the boy ate yogurt.	illusion	fewer	no ellip.	repeatable
Fewer girls ate pizza than boys did.	control	fewer	ellipsis	repeatable
Fewer girls ate pizza than boys ate yogurt.	control	fewer	no ellip.	repeatable
More girls graduated H.S. than the boy did.	illusion	more	ellipsis	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than the boy ate yogurt.	illusion	more	no ellip.	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than boys did.	control	more	ellipsis	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than boys ate yogurt.	control	more	no ellip.	nonrep.
Fewer girls graduated H.S. than the boy did.	illusion	fewer	ellipsis	nonrep.
Fewer girls graduated H.S. than the boy ate yogurt.	illusion	fewer	no ellip.	nonrep.
Fewer girls graduated H.S. than boys did.	control	fewer	ellipsis	nonrep.
Fewer girls graduated H.S. than boys ate yogurt.	control	fewer	no ellip.	nonrep.

Appendix C. Experiment 2 conditions

Tabular version of the item schematic from Experiment 2 (Figure ??). The factor REPEATABILITY was manipulated between items, and SUBJECT TYPE was manipulated within items.

Sentence	Person	Sort	Number	REPEAT.
More girls ate pizza than I did.	1st	pronoun	singular	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than we did.	1st	pronoun	plural	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than the boy did.	3rd	definite	singular	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than the boys did.	3rd	definite	plural	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than he did.	3rd	pronoun	singular	repeatable
More girls ate pizza than boys did.	control NP		plural	repeatable
More girls graduated H.S. than I did.	1st	pronoun	singular	nonrep.

More girls graduated H.S. than we did.	1st	pronoun	plural	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than the boy did.	3rd	definite	singular	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than the boys did.	3rd	definite	plural	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than he did.	3rd	pronoun	singular	nonrep.
More girls graduated H.S. than boys did.	control NP		plural	nonrep.

Appendix D. Instructions for sentence recall task

In the recall task, participants were told by the experimenter that the task is a memory task. We're interested in how well they can recall sentences aloud, after an intermediate task designed to make this more difficult. Following this verbal instruction, participants read the following instructions on the screen. They then had 6 practice trials while the experimenter remained to answer any questions they had.

At the start of each trial, you will see a cross +, followed by ##### and a SENTENCE. At the end of the sentence, you will see %%%%, followed by a LIST of five words, and #####.

You will see a CAPITALIZED word. Press J if this word was in the LIST, press F if this word was not in the LIST.

Immediately afterwards, recall the SENTENCE aloud. When you are finished speaking, press ENTER.

Then you may take a brief break, or go immediately to the next trial.

This will be clearer in a moment. Press SPACEBAR for some practice.

Appendix E. Sample items from Experiment 3

Tabular version of the item schematic from Experiment 3 (Figure 9). There were two types of items (ASPECT and ITEM), and the factors COMPARATIVE and REPEATABILITY were manipulated within item. '...' abbreviates an initial adverbial phrase. Here 'W&P' abbreviates *War & Peace*; none of our items contained abbreviations.

Sentence	item type	COMP	REPEAT.
... more young people continued reading W&P than the old man did.	aspect	illusion	repeatable
... more young people continued reading W&P than old men did.	aspect	control	repeatable
... more young people began reading W&P than the old man did.	aspect	illusion	nonrep.
... more young people began reading W&P than old men did.	aspect	control	nonrep.
... more girls wrote a charming haiku than the boy did.	object	illusion	repeatable
... more girls wrote a charming haiku than boys did.	object	control	repeatable
... more girls wrote their first haiku than the boy did.	object	illusion	nonrep.
... more girls wrote their first haiku than boys did.	object	control	nonrep.