

TWO INDIRECT QUESTION CONSTRUCTIONS IN RUSSIAN: ACCEPTABILITY JUDGMENTS

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RUSSIAN

Indo-European>Slavic>East

150 million speakers (2012)

Why?

- Feasibility
- Research gap

INDIRECT QUESTION CONSTRUCTIONS

On prid^j-ot
He come-3SG.PRS
He will come.

Ja sprəsi-l-ə prid^j-ot li on
I ask-PST-FEM come-3SG.PRS Q he.
I asked whether he will come.

Ja sprəsi-l-ə jesli on prid^j-ot
I ask-PST-FEM if he come-3SG.PRS
I asked whether he will come.

ACCEPTABILITY JUDGMENT STUDIES

Method of linguistic knowledge elicitation

The task: to judge if a given structure is grammatical

Judgment tasks (Plonsky, 2019):

- stimuli modality: written or oral
- structures: isolated or in context
- response condition: timed or untimed
- additions: confidence rating; response basis

THE PRESENT STUDY

1. Corpus Pre-Study

Does the *jesli* construction exist in the corpora?

2. Experiment (including pilot)

Is there a difference between speakers of different ages and status (heritage/native) in acceptability of each type of the indirect question construction?

CORPUS PRE-STUDY

1. Russian National Corpus
(<http://ruscorpora.ru/>)
2. ruTenTen: Corpus of the Russian Web
(<https://www.sketchengine.eu/rutenten-russian-corpus>)
3. RLC – Russian Learning Corpus
(<http://web-corpora.net/RLC>)
4. Stories of dreams and other oral speech corpora
(Kibrik et al., 2009)

CORPUS PRE-STUDY

Table 1. Number of indirect question constructions with ‘jesli’ found in different corpora using a search query ‘jesli’ and using a search query ‘jesli’ together with specified context (sprosit’ – to ask, pomnit’ – to remember, znat’ – to know, soobshit’ – to inform, proverit’ – to check, zabıt’ – to forget, utochnit’ – to specify)

corpus	query – ‘jesli’	specified context
Russian National Corpus (main) (http://ruscorpora.ru/)	0 of 200	2 of 100
Russian National Corpus (spoken) (http://ruscorpora.ru/)	0 of 200	2 of 74
Russian Web 2011 (ruTenTen11) (https://www.sketchengine.eu/rutenten-russian-corpus)	0 of 200	21 of 214
Russian Learning Corpus (http://web-corpora.net/RLC)	0 of 200	35 of 40

CORPUS PRE-STUDY

sprosit' - to ask

pomnit' - to remember

znat' - to know

soobshit' - to inform

proverit' - to check

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CORPUS PRE-STUDY

izvin-i	ne	pomnj-u	jesli	ti	uze
forgive-IMP	NEG	remember-1SG.PRS	if	you	already

gəvəri-l-ə

say-PST-FEM

Sorry, I don't remember whether you've said it already.

(2004.03. 31 10: 58. [Nashi deti: Malishi do goda (forum) (2004)]. Russian National Corpus.
url: <http://ruscorpora.ru/>)

EXPERIMENT

Independent variables:

- age (younger vs older)
- speaker status (heritage vs non-heritage)
- *li* vs. *jesli* construction

Dependent variable:

- acceptability judgement

PARTICIPANTS

- Aim: $n=40$, $n=10$ per group
- Native speakers recruited in Moscow
- Heritage speakers recruited in New York
- Aiming for a gap between the age groups
- Excluding linguists
- Russian dominant (entry questionnaire)

Previously on "Li vs Eslı" ...

PARTICIPANTS

Distribution of participants						
Heritageness	Age group	N	Female	Mean age	Age range	Mean education years
no	old	5	3	50.8	42-74	16.3
no	young	15	12	22.3	18-31	15.6
yes	old	12	5	50.2	42-69	18.1
yes	young	5	1	24.4	20-29	13.9

PARTICIPANTS

Heritage speakers length of residency in the US				
age_group	count	mean	min	max
old	12	22	10	39
young	5	11.6	4	22

PARTICIPANTS

Languages known by participants

heritage-ness	age group	count	french	ukrainian	chinese	italian	japanese	hebrew	german	georgian
no	old	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
no	young	15	2	0	1	0	1	0	3	0
yes	old	12	4	2	1	0	0	1	2	1
yes	young	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

STIMULI



LI

Ja sprəsi-l-a prid^j-ot li on
I ask-PST-FEM come-3SG.PRS q he
I asked whether he will come.



ESLI

Ja sprəsi-l-ə jesli on pridj-ot
I ask-PST-FEM if he come-3SG.PRS
I asked whether he will come.

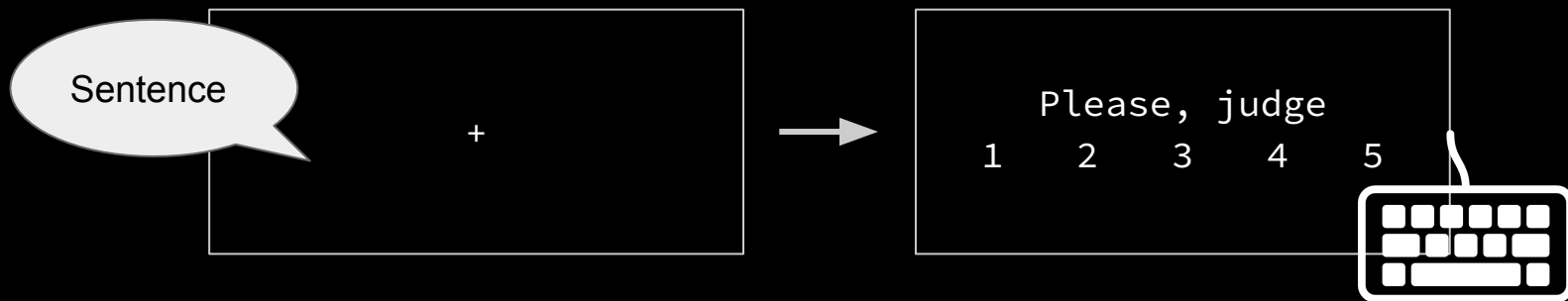


DISTRACTOR

Ja bud-u rad-a jesli on prid^j-ot
I be-1SG.FUT glad-SG.FEM if he come-3SG.FUT
I will be glad if he comes.

MATERIALS

- ★ Software: OpenSesame
- ★ Stimuli: audio (native speaker of standard Russian)
- ★ Response collection: keyboard numbers
- ★ Likert scale (1-5)
- ★ Instructions: written (Rus) + clarification by experimenters



PROCEDURE

- ★ Informed consent
- ★ Questionnaire: LEAP-Q (Marian, Blumenfeld, & Kaushanskaya, 2007)
- ★ Instructions on screen
- ★ Practice trials = 3 (1 per condition)
- ★ Task clarification
- ★ Experimental trials
 - 2 pseudorandomized lists
 - 9 stimuli per condition
- ★ Timed response
- ★ Informal post-interview

ANALYSIS

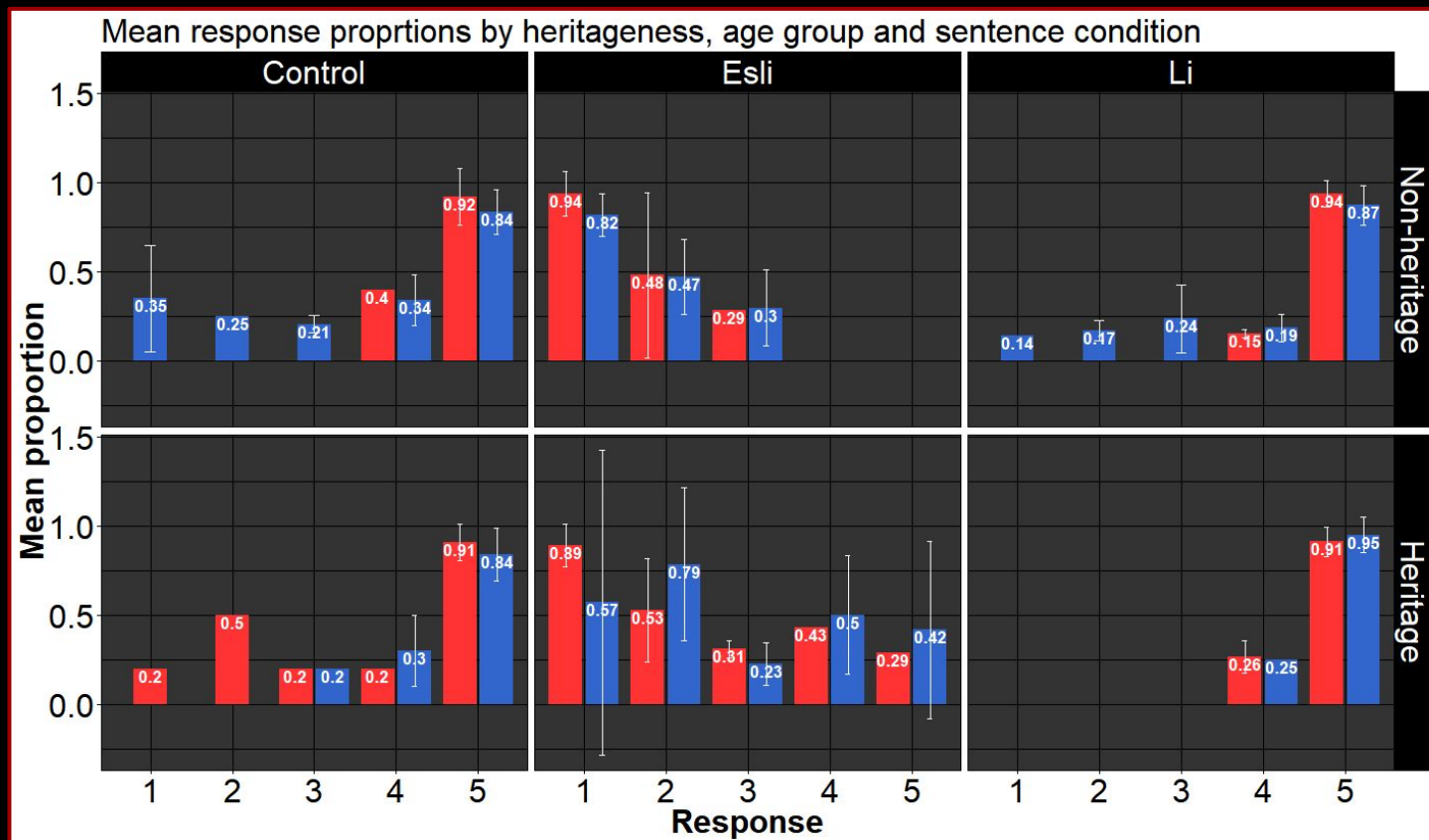
R (R Core Team, 2017)

Implicit vs explicit knowledge response

- up to 20% from median (Loewen, 2009)

=> cut off by RTs

ANALYSIS



ANALYSIS

Ordinal logistic regression with random effects

Fixed effects: condition, age group, heritageness

Random effects: participant, item ID

```
mod <- clmm(response ~ condition * age_group * heritageness +  
              (1|subj_id) + (1|coding), data, Hess=T)
```

RESULTS

The ordinal logistic regression model results

Fixed effects	Response			
	β	SE	z	p
Absolutely unacceptable Mostly unacceptable	-6.79	1.029	-6.6	< .001***
Mostly unacceptable Indefinite	-4.84	.995	-4.86	< .001***
Indefinite Mostly acceptable	-.4	.979	-4.08	< .001***
Mostly acceptable Absolutely acceptable	-2.88	.962	-2.99	< .01**

The ordinal logistic regression model results

Fixed effects	Response			
	β	SE	z	p
Condition (esli)	-8.44	1.03	-8.17	< .001***
Condition (li)	.258	1.09	.237	.813
Age group (young)	-1.2	1.08	-1.13	.264
Heritageness (yes)	-.367	1.12	-.327	.744
Condition (esli) x Age group (young)	1.74	1.06	1.64	.101
Condition (li) x Age group (young)	.580	1.2	.482	.630
Condition (esli) x Heritageness (yes)	1.4	1.1	1.27	.205
Condition (li) x Heritageness (yes)	.108	1.28	.085	.933
Age group (young) x Heritageness (yes)	.495	1.47	.338	.735
Condition (eslli) x Age group (young) x Heritageness (yes)	1.647	1.4	1.17	.241
Condition (li) x Age group (young) x Heritageness (yes)	.250	1.67	.150	.881

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

DISCUSSION: BEFORE

What are the factors influencing the difference in grammaticality judgments?

How to measure language proficiency? Origin of heritage speakers?

What about other possible languages?

Can we conclude anything about the influence of English?

What are your thoughts??

SUMMARY

So far, no factors influence the grammaticality judgements.

Speaker proficiency was self-evaluated. Origin of heritage speakers was uniform, with most being from Moscow.

Other possible languages were noted, effect is yet to be checked.

English does not seem to have an effect on grammaticality judgment, but the experiment is still being carried out on more participants.

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Mean responses by heritageness, age group and sentence condition
(RT corrected data)

