PRE-CogSci 2013 Submission 11

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Paper 11	
Title:	The utility of vagueness: does it lie elsewhere?
Submission	
Author keywords:	vagueness references to objects by cardinality number–use and selection
EasyChair keyphrases:	main effect (180), selection task (180), response time (120), number avoidance (100), valid target (70), vague instruction (70), faster response (60), vagueness advantage (60), planned contrast (50), alternative explanation (50), standard definition (50), borderline case aspect (47), matching task instruction (47), crisp instruction (40), crisp comparison (40), vague expression (40), van deemter (40), vague term (40), vague matching (40), vague reference (40), matching task (40)
Abstract:	The classic Keefe and Smith (1996) gives what we shall call the standard definition of vagueness: `vague predicates have borderline cases, have fuzzy boundaries, and are susceptible to Sorites paradoxes'. Existing empirical work on vagueness has not so far manipulated it in a way that meets this definition. We present the latest experiment in a series that is designed to tease apart the influences of vagueness from the other influences that vague terms bring with them when compared to crisp alternatives.
Time:	May 19, 12:15 GMT

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Reviews

Review 2	
Overall evaluation:	**3**: (borderline)
Reviewer's confidence:	**4**: (high)

Additional scores

Does the paper address the topic of the workshop (Production of Referring Expressions)?:	**2**: (somewhat)
Does the paper explicitly address the link between empirical and computational approaches?:	**2**: (somewhat)
To a reasonably well-informed reader, is it clear what was done and why?:	**2**: (somewhat)
Is the methodology sound?:	**3**: (definitely)
Do you think this paper works best as an oral presentation or poster? (Please judge this independently of whether you think the paper should be accepted or not.):	**1**: (poster)

Review

Review:	This paper describes a planned experiment on the interpretation of referring expressions involving vague terms. For the first time, the experimental materials distinguish fairly between a number of factors that typically coincide in interpreting vague language: vague language is approximate and has borderline cases, vague language typically invites people to resolve reference by comparing objects rather than matching descriptive properties, and vague language often gives abstract, qualitative information rather than quantitative information. The experiments contrast vague and precise descriptions of numerical quantities in constrained arrays. Unfortunately the experiments have not been done at the time of submission, so it's not clear what contribution the paper will really make (for example if the authors' hypotheses do not pan out). More generally, while there is a good theoretical discussion of the

	possible connections between meaning, understanding and generation in cases of vagueness, the experiments don't bear on the issue directly, so the longer paper will have to develop the ideas further in engaging with the themes of the workshop. That said, I'm optimistic the authors can come through on both issues.

Review 1	
Overall evaluation:	**4**: (accept)
Reviewer's confidence:	**3**: (medium)
Additional scores	
Does the paper address the topic of the workshop (Production of Referring Expressions)?:	**3**: (definitely)
Does the paper explicitly address the link between empirical and computational approaches?:	**3**: (definitely)
To a reasonably well–informed reader, is it clear what was done and why?:	**2**: (somewhat)
Is the methodology sound?:	**2**: (somewhat)
Do you think this paper works best as an oral presentation or poster? (Please judge this independently of whether you think the paper should be accepted or not.):	**2**: (oral presentation)
Review	
	In general, I think the idea of vagueness is understudied in referring expression research (just as there is a darth of research with respect to underspecification).

| Review: | After introducing the concept of vagueness and discussing several operationalisations of vagueness with the notions of crisps versus vague, two phenomena that influence vagueness are introduced: numner-use and selection process. Number-use refers to whether a number is used in a referring expression ("the six dots" versus "a few dots". the selection process is either a matching process (where a stimulus is matched to a description/instruction) or a comparison process (where stimuli are compared to one another and the best one is chosen.

In a factorial design, vagueness (vage versus crisp) is combined with the two levels of slection process (matching versus comparing). Both factors are expected to have a (main) effect on response times with faster response times for vague and comparison instructions.

Unfortunately, there are no results yet, which makes it harder to give a complete assessment of the work and the quality of the work. Nevertheless, the abstract is sufficiently interesting to be considered for inclusion at the workshop.

Signed,
Martijn Goudbeek |

Review 3

Overall evaluation:	3: (borderline)
Reviewer's confidence:	2: (low)
	Additional scores
Does the paper address the topic of the workshop (Production of Referring Expressions)?:	2: (somewhat)
Does the paper explicitly address the link between empirical and computational approaches?:	3: (definitely)
To a reasonably well-informed reader, is it clear what was done and why?:	3: (definitely)
Is the methodology sound?:	3: (definitely)
Do you think this paper works best as an oral presentation or poster? (Please judge this independently of whether you think the paper should be accepted or not.):	1: (poster)
	Review
Review:	This was a very interesting abstract that was hard to rate because 1) it focused on a comprehension experiment only and 2) the study was incomplete.
However, the information that was available suggests this study is being well run and that it will yield interesting results.
I know the abstract only allowed limited details but I would be interested to hear more about this study and about the method as it seems that there are in fact several factors that would affect performance beyond

those mentioned in the abstract.