

Overview of PP-attachment ambiguities

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Introduction

- What a garden path is, and how (the garden-path/Construal theory of) parsing works.
- The PP-attachment ambiguity this paper is concerned with
- The intuitive observation that interrogative versions of these PP-attachment garden paths are less difficult to parse or recover from.

Background

- Prosody can effect parsing
 - Kjelgaard and Speer (1999),
- Prosody in silent reading
 - Fodor’s (2002) Implicit Prosody Hypothesis
- The prosody of questions vs. declaratives
 - Hedberg, Sosa, and Görgülü (2017)
- The details of how the parse of PP-attachment ambiguities leads to a garden path.

Predictions

Question for Di: these are the hypothesis I wrote before running the study, but they are not all really answered by the data I got. Is it dishonest to omit or revise them for this paper?

Hypothesis 1 High attachment of PP2 is prosodically marked by a prosodic break between PP1 and and PP2.

Hypothesis 2 A first reading of a GP sentence will exhibit less natural prosody (more hesitation at and after the disambiguating region) than: * A first reading of a non-GP sentence. * A second reading of a GP sentence.

Hypothesis 3 A first reading of a garden-path sentence will more often be produced with prosodic structure that represents an implausible or ungrammatical parse of the string (low attachment of PP2), whereas a previewed reading sentence will more often be pronounced with the prosodic structure that represents the intended parse (high attachment of PP2).

Hypothesis 4 A first reading of a declarative GP sentence will exhibit less natural prosody (more hesitation at and after the disambiguating region) and be more likely to be produced with prosodic structure that represents an implausible or ungrammatical parse of the string than a cold reading of an interrogative GP sentence.

Methodology

- Recruitment
- Location
- Equipment and software
- Procedure
- Materials
- Groups of participants and versions of experiment
- IRT measurement
- Prosodic judgements

Results

- Data treatment
- Prosodic judgements
- IRT
- Delay comparison
- Demographic data and self-reported reading habits

Discussion

- Are the hypothesis supported?
- Behavioral correlate?
- Explaining the intuition
- Confounds
- Areas for further study

Conclusion

- Behavioral correlate of the intuition still might exist in IRT, but it remains to be fully supported (more data). Other possibilities exist (eye-tracking, ERP).
- An explanation for the intuition still in the air, but the data seem to lean towards a non-prosodic account. Prosody-controlled embedded question work is the best next step.
- Other interesting findings:
 - Interrogativity has a robust impact on IRT.
 - Garden path condition has a robust impact on prosodic pattern.

Appendices

A. Experimental Items B. Filler items C. Instructions to participants D. Instructions to research assistant on providing prosodic judgements

References

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