Agreement Attraction in Turkish

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- slides
- abstract
- thesis pdf
- graphs
- code

Agreement Attraction

(1) The **key** **was** rusty.

Agreement Attraction

(2) *The **key** **were** rusty.

(Wagers et al., 2009)

Agreement Attraction

(3) *The **key** to the *cabinets* **were** rusty.

Agreement Attraction   [Empirical Findings]

PP > RC Attraction

Morpho-phonology

Linear Distance Effects

Syntactic Distance Effects

Grammaticality Asymmetry

Distributivity Effects
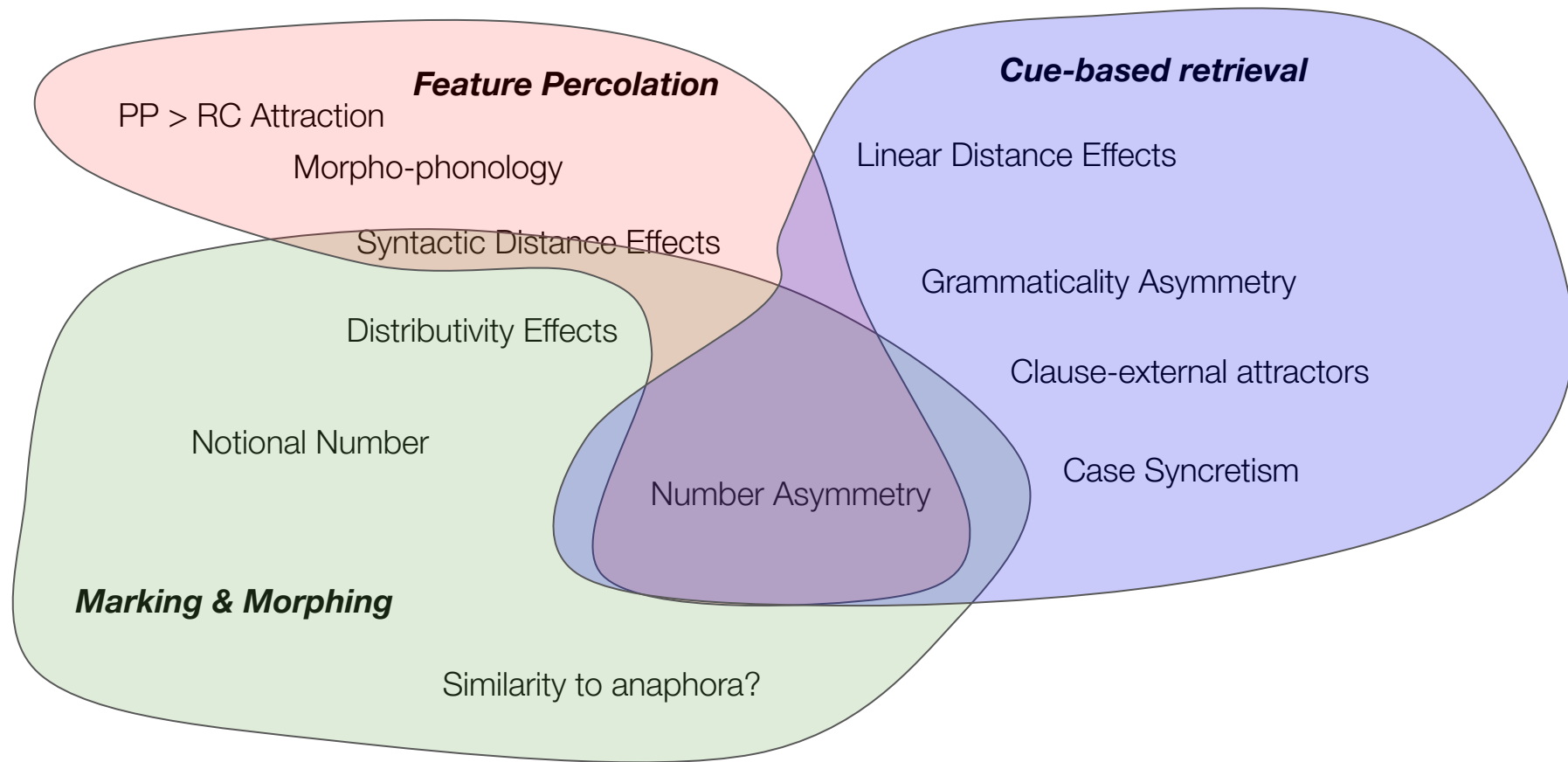
Clause-external attractors

Notional Number

Number Asymmetry

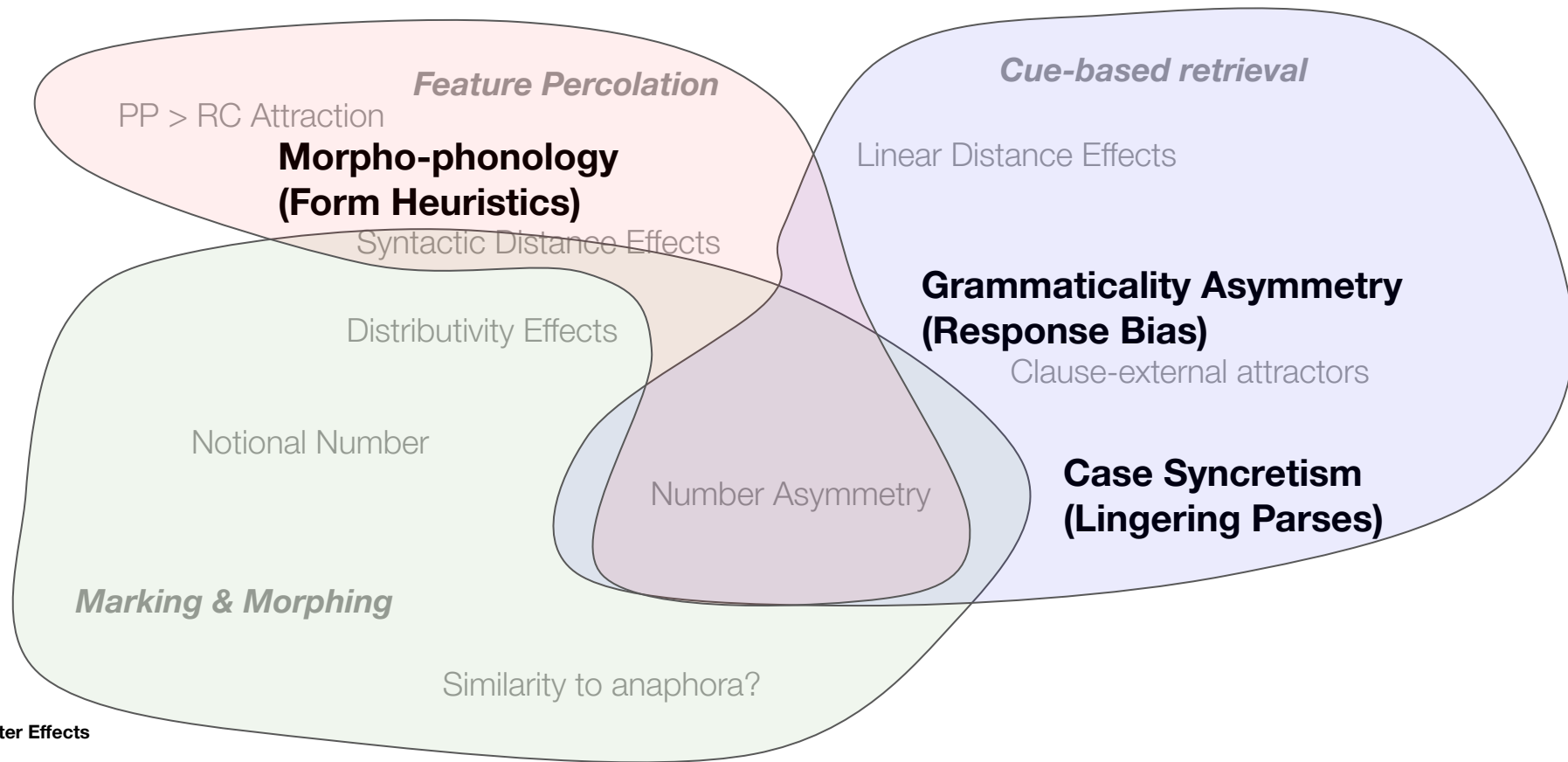Case Syncretism

Similarity to anaphora?

Agreement Attraction [Empirical Findings]

Feature Percolation

PP > RC Attraction

Morpho-phonology

Syntactic Distance Effects

Distributivity Effects

Notional Number

Marking & Morphing

Number Asymmetry

Similarity to anaphora?

Cue-based retrieval

Linear Distance Effects

Grammaticality Asymmetry

Clause-external attractors

Case Syncretism

Agreement Attraction

(Lago et al., 2019)

Agreement Attraction   **[Turkish]**

(4) a. * [*Teknisyen-ler-in*   eğitmen-i]   olağanüstü   hızlı   koş-tu-lar.

   technician-PL-GEN   instructor-POSS   extraordinarily   fast   run-PST-PL

   *The instructor of *the technicians* run_{PL} extraordinarily fast.

   b. * *Teknisyenin* eğitmeni olağanüstü hızlı koştular.

   c.   *Teknisyenlerin* eğitmeni olağanüstü hızlı koştu.

   d.   *Teknisyenin* eğitmeni olağanüstü hızlı koştu.

(Lago et al., 2019)

Agreement Attraction **[Turkish]**

(4) a. * [*Teknisyen-ler-in* eğitmen-i] olağanüstü hızlı koş-tu-lar.
   technician-PL-GEN instructor-POSS extraordinarily fast run-PST-PL

   *The instructor of *the technicians* run$_{PL}$ extraordinarily fast.

b. * *Teknisyenin* eğitmeni olağanüstü hızlı koştular.

c. *Teknisyenlerin* eğitmeni olağanüstü hızlı koştu.

d. *Teknisyenin* eğitmeni olağanüstü hızlı koştu.

➔ Increased acceptability of ungrammatical sentences with plural *attractors*

(Lago et al., 2019)

Experiment 1: Case Syncretism

!   All head nouns were locally ambiguous

Experiment 1: Case Syncretism

! All head nouns were locally ambiguous

(5) a. *Teknisyen-ler-in*   eğitmen-i
        technician-PL-GEN   instructor-POSS/ACC

Experiment 1: Case Syncretism

! All head nouns were locally ambiguous

(5) a. *Teknisyen-ler-in*   eğitmen-i
       technician-PL-GEN   instructor-POSS/ACC

   b. [*Teknisyen-ler-in*   eğitmen-i]   olağanüstü   hızlı   koş-tu.
          technician-PL-GEN   instructor-POSS   extraordinarily   fast   run-PST
       The instructor of *the technicians* run extraordinarily fast.

   c. [Teknisyen-ler-in   eğitmen-i   gör-düğ-ün-ü]   bil-iyor-um.
          technician-PL-GEN   instructor-ACC   see-NMLZ-POSS-ACC   know-IMPF-1SG
                                I   know   that   the   technician   saw   the   instructor.

Lingering effects of an erroneous parse

(Ferreria, 2003; Staub, 2007)

[Hypothesis]

Lingering effects of an erroneous parse

↓

NP2's reduced association with subjecthood

(Ferreria, 2003; Staub, 2007)

Experiment 1: Case Syncretism

Our Goal: Replicate Lago et al.'s findings with disambiguated (vowel-ending) head nouns.

- Speeded Acceptability Judgment, N = 118

- Within-subject factors: *Verb x Attractor number*

(6) a. * [*Milyoner-ler-in*   terzi-si]   tamamen   gereksizce   kov-ul-du-lar.
                      millionaire-PL-GEN   tailor-POSS   completely   without_reason
fire-PASS-PST-PL
              *The tailor of *the millionaires* were fired for no reason at all.

   b.   * *Milyonerin* terzisi tamamen gereksizce kovuldular.

   c.   *Milyonerlerin* terzisi tamamen gereksizce kovuldu.

   d.   *Milyonerin* terzisi tamamen gereksizce kovuldu.

Experiment 1: Case Syncretism

(Cousineau, 2005; Morey, 2008)

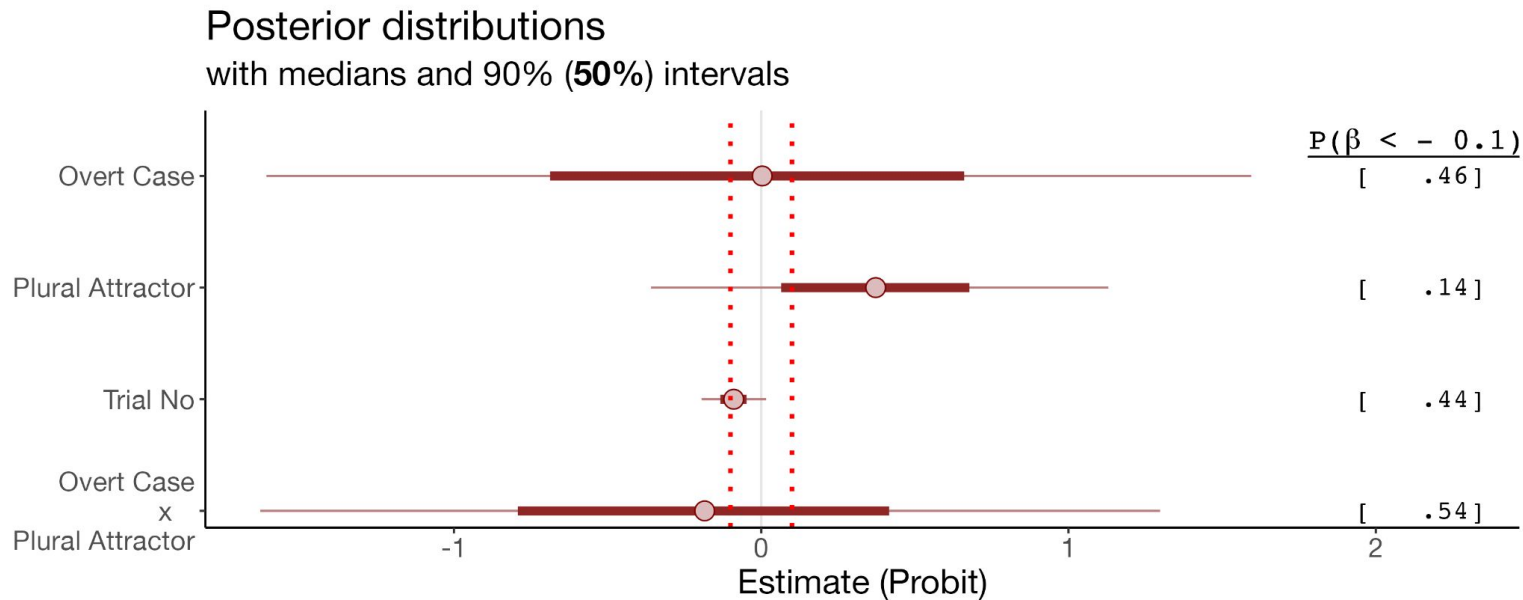# Experiment 1: Case Syncretism

(Cousineau, 2005; Morey, 2008)
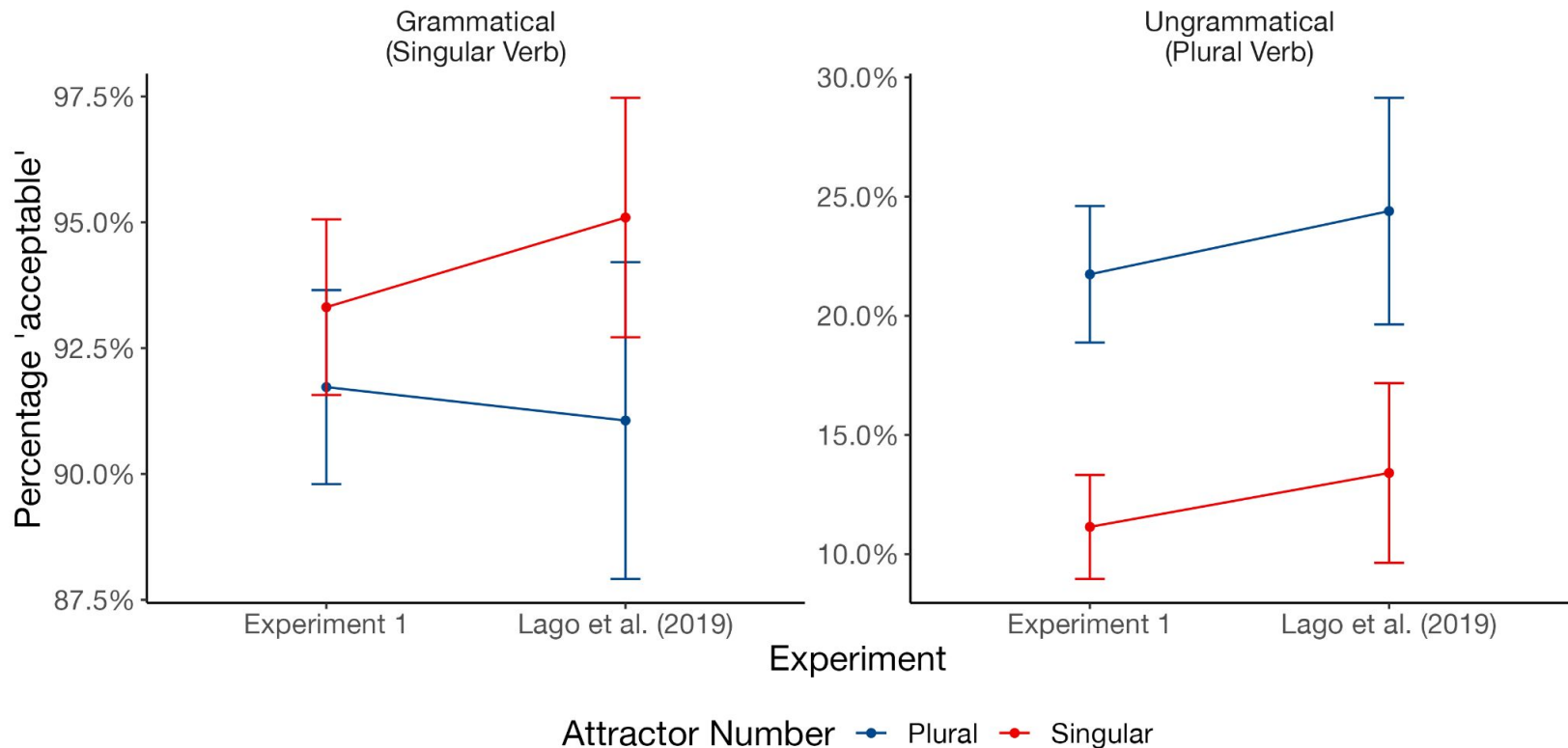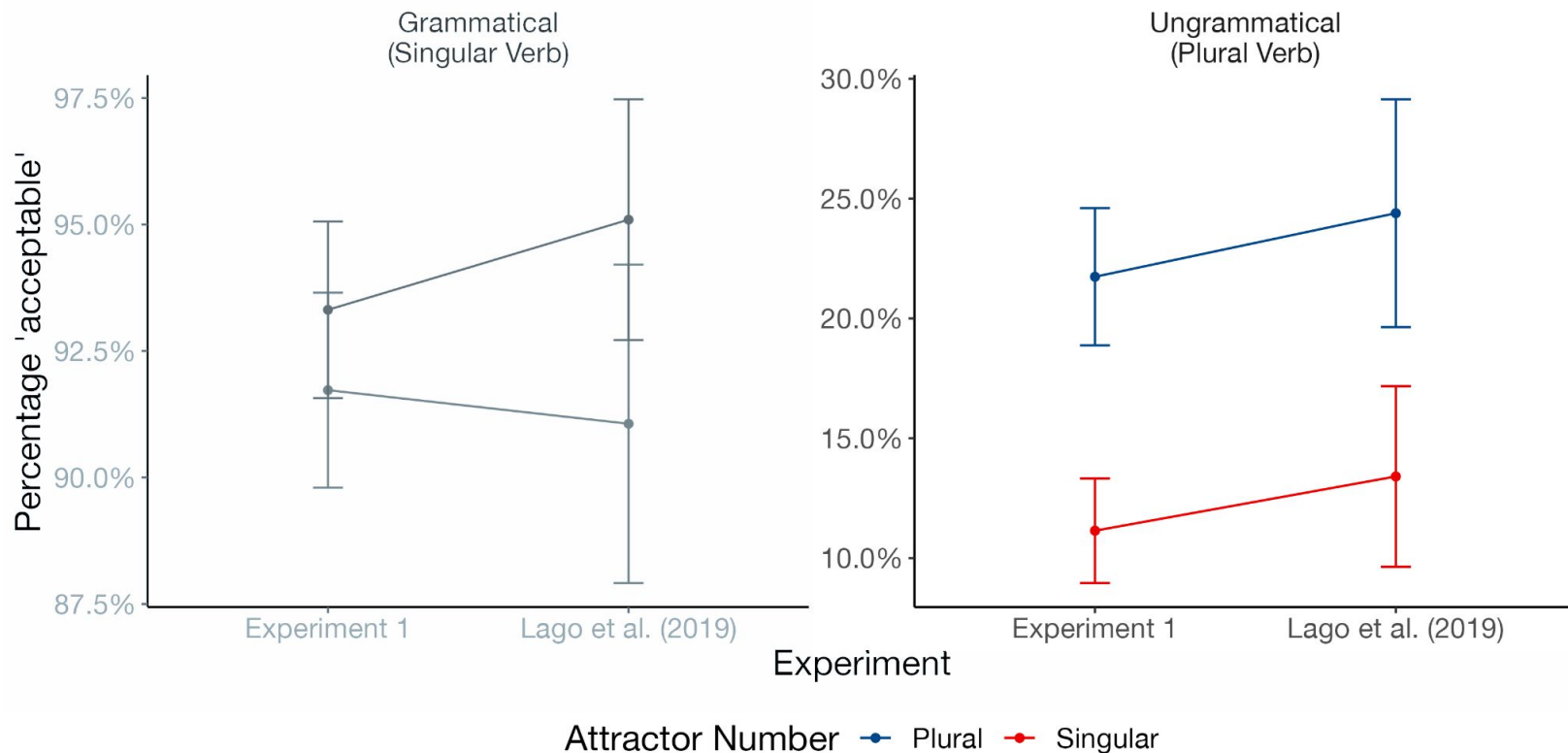
Experiment 1: Case Syncretism   **[Modeling]**

- Fit a maximal Bayesian GLM to 'yes' responses to **ungrammatical** sentences

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

P(β < − 0.1)

Overt Case	[.46]
Plural Attractor	[.14]
Trial No	[.44]
Overt Case x Plural Attractor	[.54]

Estimate (Probit)

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

P(β < - 0.1)

Overt Case	[.46]
Plural Attractor	[.14]
Trial No	[.44]
Overt Case x Plural Attractor	[.54]

Estimate (Probit)

➔   Disambiguating case did not impact responses in ungrammatical sentences

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

∴   Lingering parses do not affect agreement attraction

∴   Case cues do not play a role in agreement attraction

∴   Turkish agreement attraction is not due to case syncretism

Experiment 2A: Form Heuristics

Experiment 2A: Form Heuristics

! Unlike other languages, Turkish has matching **plural** markings

(7)　　*[Milyoner-**ler**-in　　terzi-si]　　tamamen　　gereksizce　　kov-ul-du-**lar**.

　　　　　　millionaire-PL-GEN　tailor-POSS　completely　without_reason　fire-PASS-PST-PL

　　　*The tailor of the millionaires were fired for no reason at all.

Participants use heuristics to make informed guesses

(Copeland & Radvansky, 2001; Ferreria, 2003)

Participants use heuristics to make informed guesses

Task-specific response strategy based on form

Experiment 2A: Form Heuristics [Method]

Our Goal: Rule out form-driven processing strategy with phi-unrelated plural marking as an attractor

- Speeded Acceptability Judgment, N = 80

- Within-subject factors: *Verb x Attractor number*

(6) a. * [*Tut-tuk-lar-ı* aşçı] mutfak-ta sürekli zıpla-dı-lar.
     hire-NMLZ-PL-POSS cook kitchen-LOC non_stop jump-PST-PL
     *The cook *that (they) hired*$_{PL}$ jumped$_{PL}$ in the kitchen non-stop.

   b. * *Tuttuğu* aşçı mutfakta sürekli zıpladılar.

   c. *Tuttukları* aşçı mutfakta sürekli zıpladı.

   d. *Tuttuğu* aşçı mutfakta sürekli zıpladı.

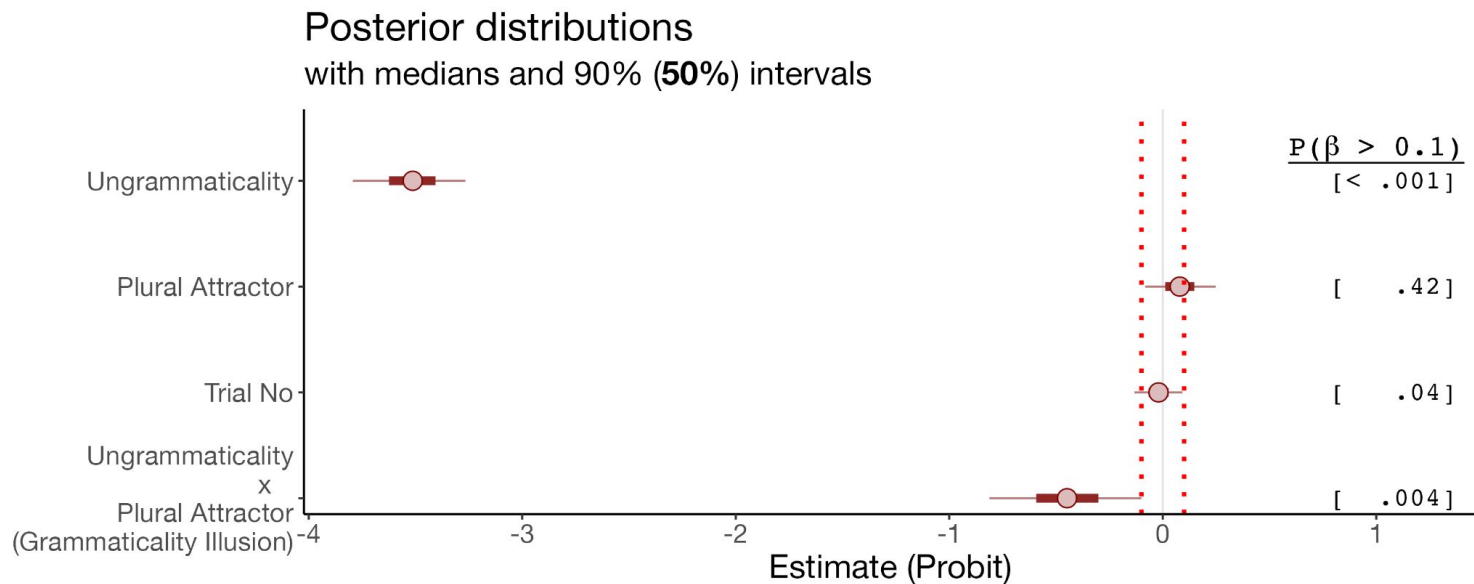(Cousineau, 2005; Morey, 2008)

(Cousineau, 2005; Morey, 2008)
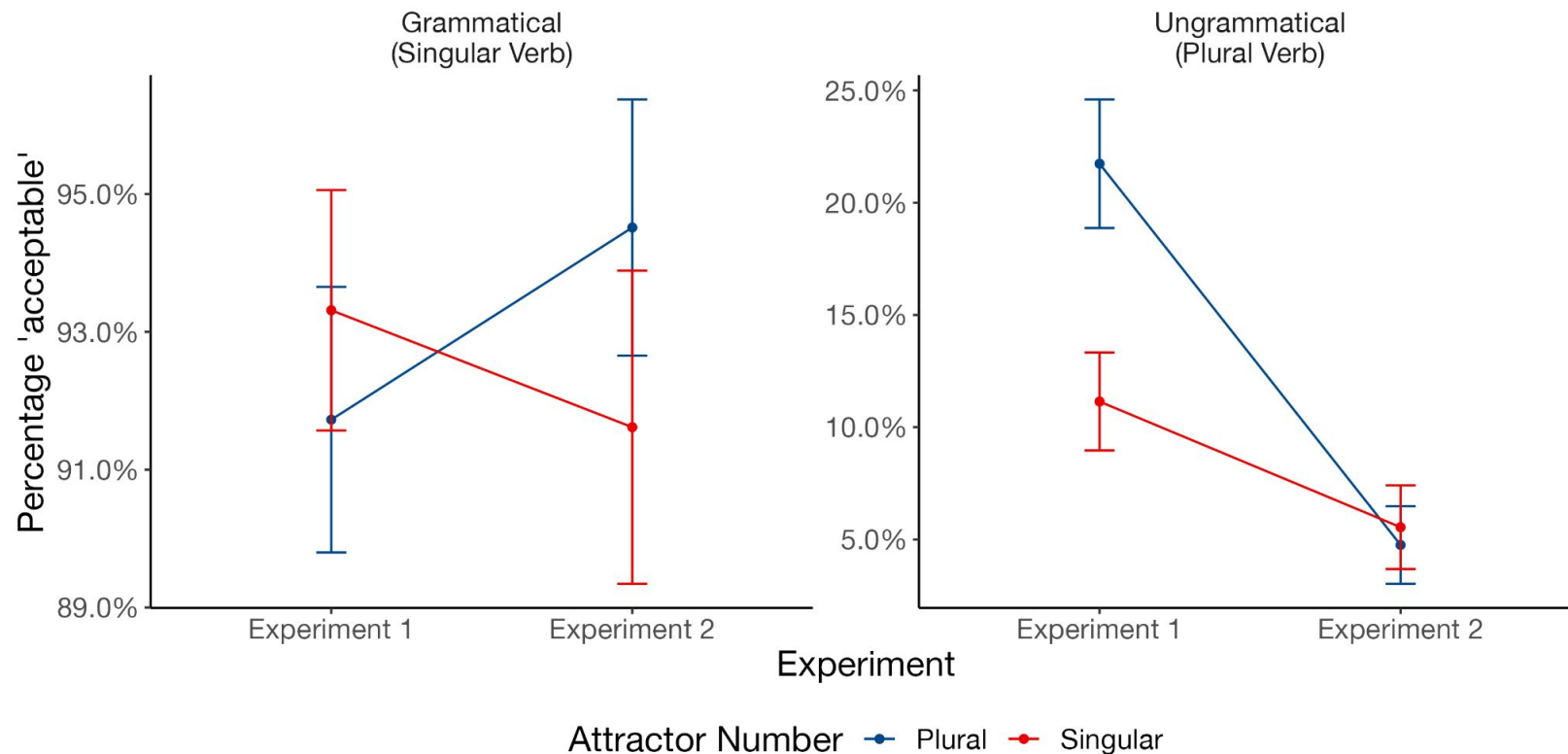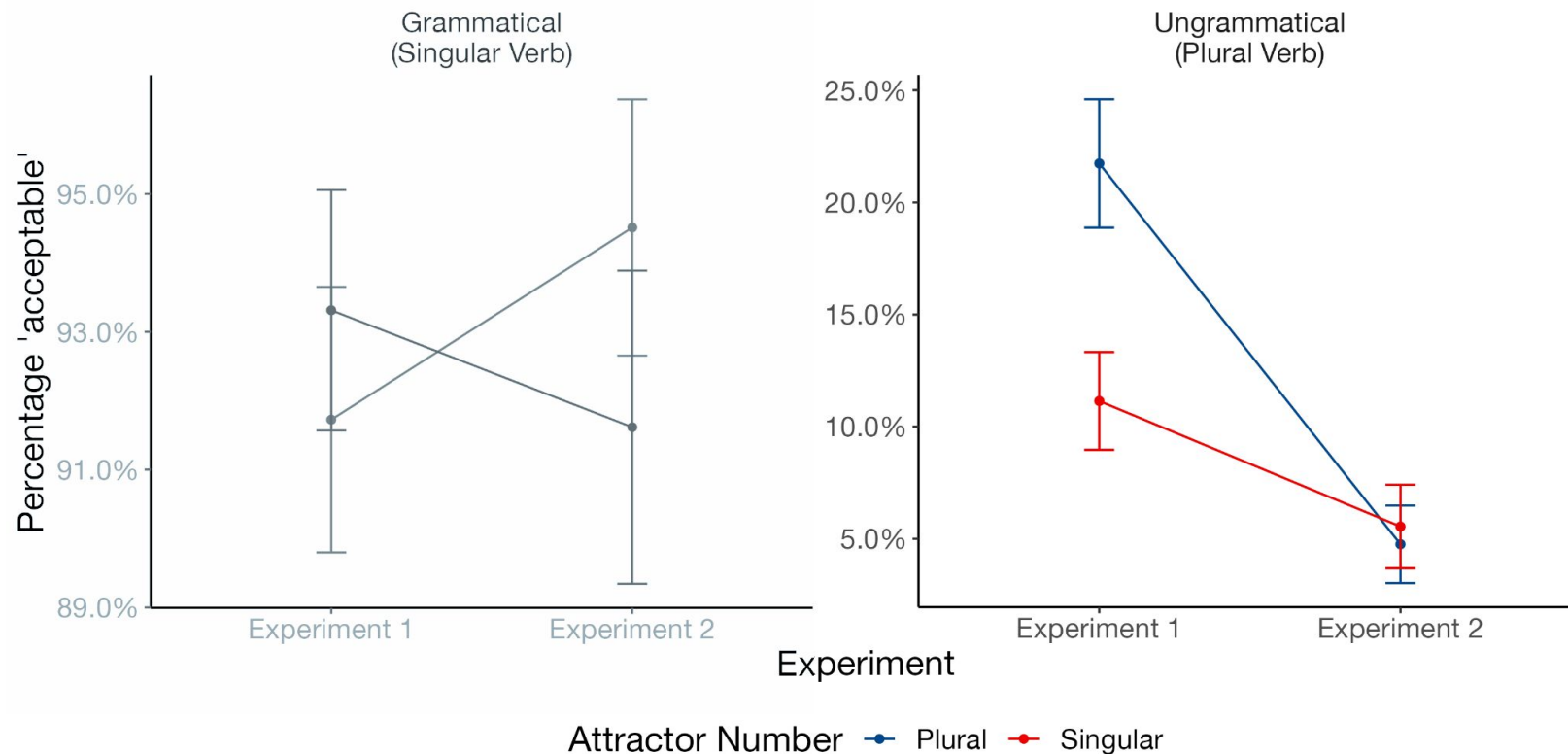
Experiment 2A: Form Heuristics   **[Modelling]**
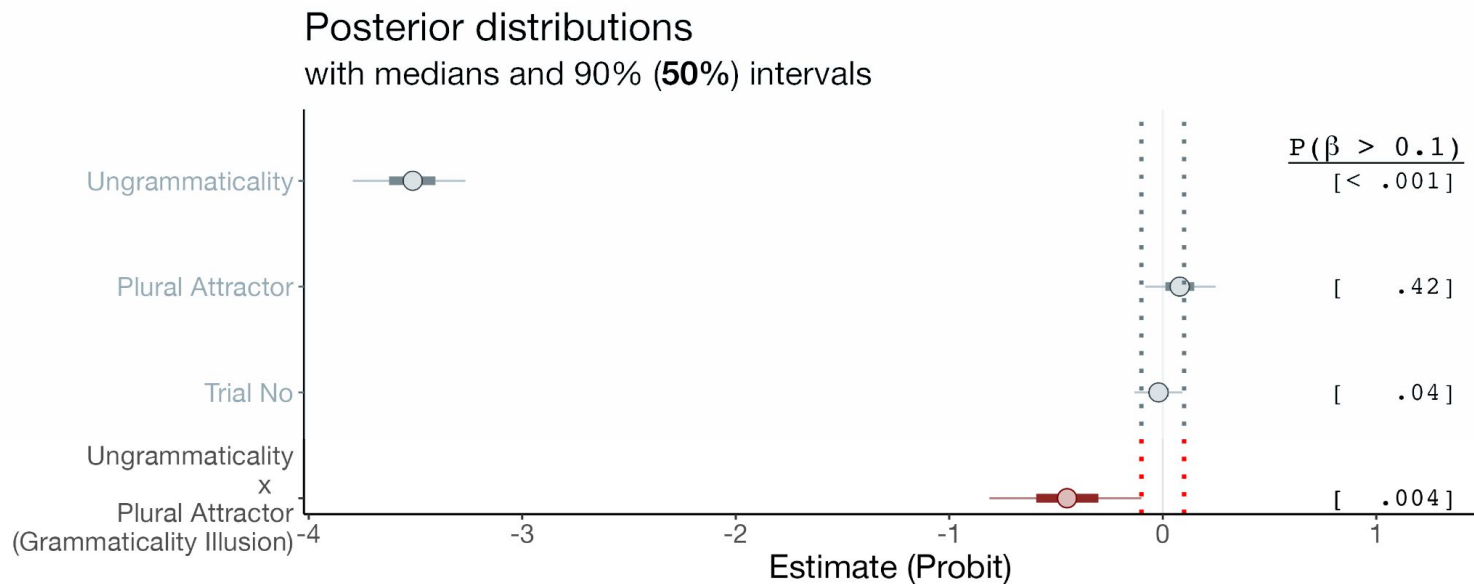
- Fit a maximal Bayesian GLM to 'yes' responses to all experimental sentences

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

P(β > 0.1)

Ungrammaticality — [< .001]

Plural Attractor — [.42]

Trial No — [.04]

Ungrammaticality x Plural Attractor (Grammaticality Illusion) — [.004]

Estimate (Probit)

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

➔   Verbal attractors did not increase 'yes' responses in ungrammatical sentences

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

∴ It is not surface strings that comprehenders use looking for.

∴ Attraction occurs at the abstract feature level.

Experiment 2B: Form Heuristics

! Experiment 2A Assumption:
  Participants correlate prior **plural** marking with grammaticality

! Not enough plural agreement to prime this bias.

Experiment 2B: Form Heuristics [Method]

Our Goal: Replicate Experiment 2A
with additional nominal attractor
conditions

- Speeded Acceptability Judgment,
  N = 95

- Within-subject factors:
  Verb x Attractor number x Attractor Type

(7) a.   [*Milyoner-ler/∅-in*   terzi-si]   tamamen   gereksizce   kov-ul-du-lar/∅.
         millionaire-PL/SG-GEN   tailor-POSS   completely   without_reason   fire-PASS-PST-PL/SG
         The tailor of *the millionaire(s)* was/were fired for no reason at all.

   b.   [*Tut-tuk-lar/∅-ı*   aşçı]   mutfak-ta   sürekli   zıpla-dı-lar/∅.
         hire-NMLZ-PL/SG-POSS   cook   kitchen-LOC   non_stop   jump-PST-PL/SG
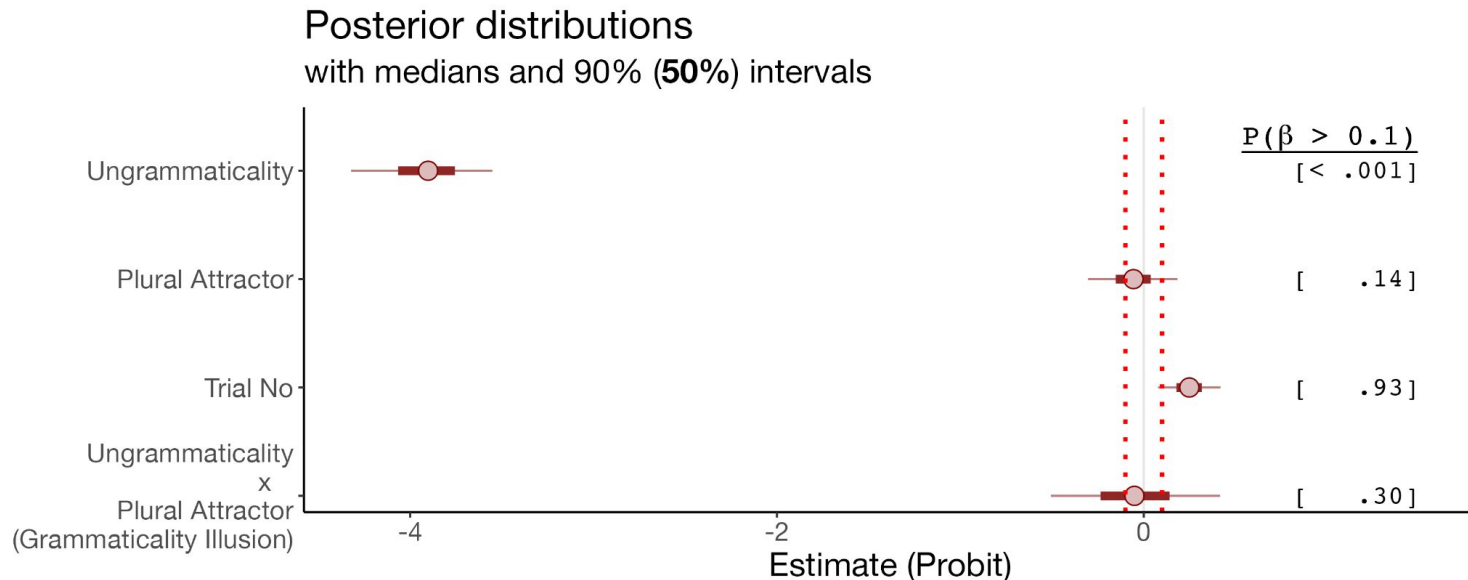   The cook *that (they) hired*PL/SG jumpedPL/SG in the kitchen non-stop.

(Cousineau, 2005; Morey, 2008)
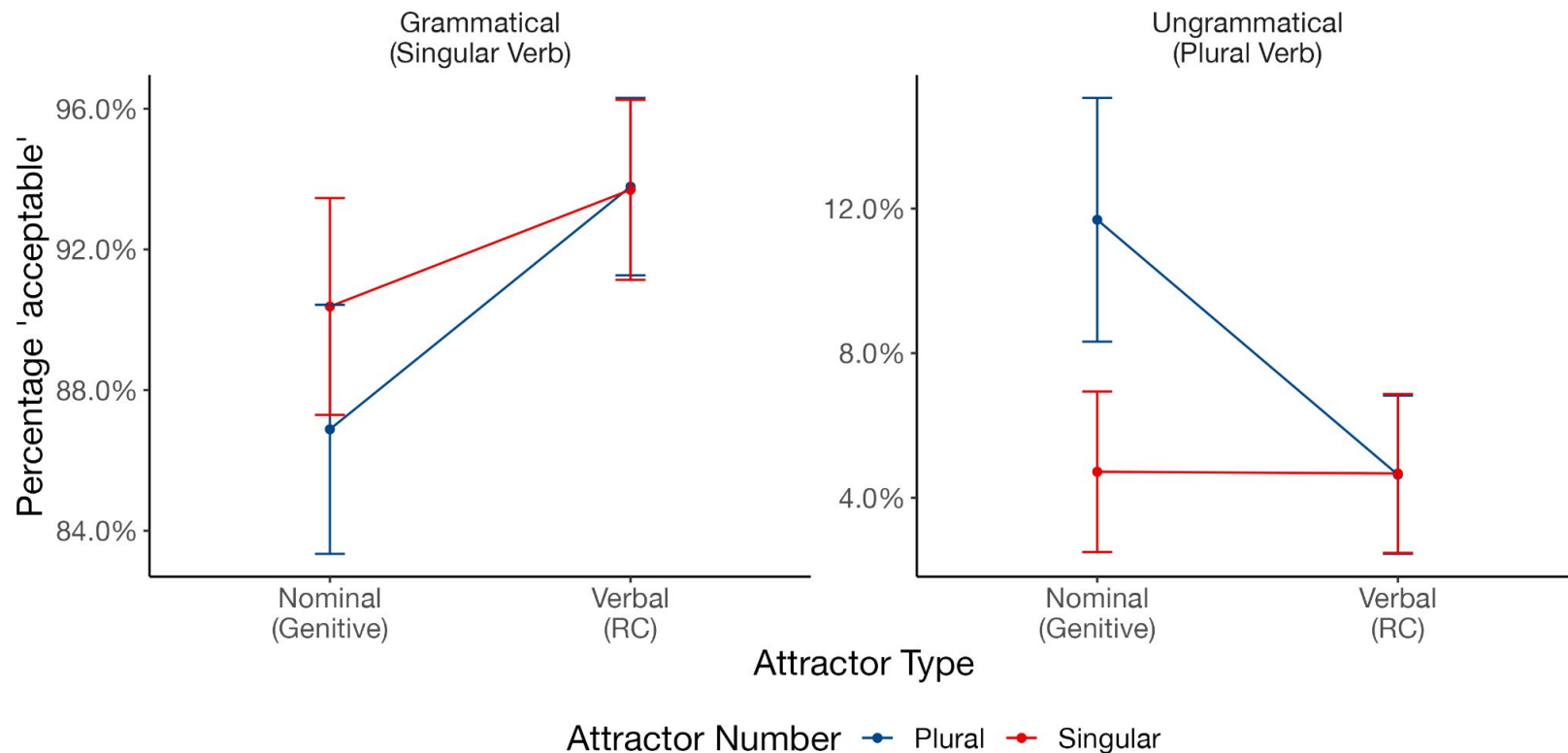
- Fit a maximal Bayesian GLM to 'yes' responses to **RC** sentences

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

➔ Verbal attractors did not increase 'yes' responses in ungrammatical sentences

➔ We verified Experiment 2A results

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry

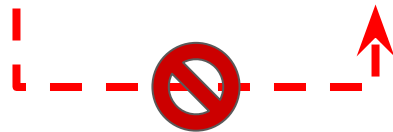**Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry**

*The key to the *cabinets* were rusty.

The key to the *cabinets* was rusty.

(Wagers et al., 2009)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry

*The key to the *cabinets* were rusty.

The key to the *cabinets* was rusty.

(Wagers et al., 2009)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry

*The **key** to the *cabinets* **were** rusty.

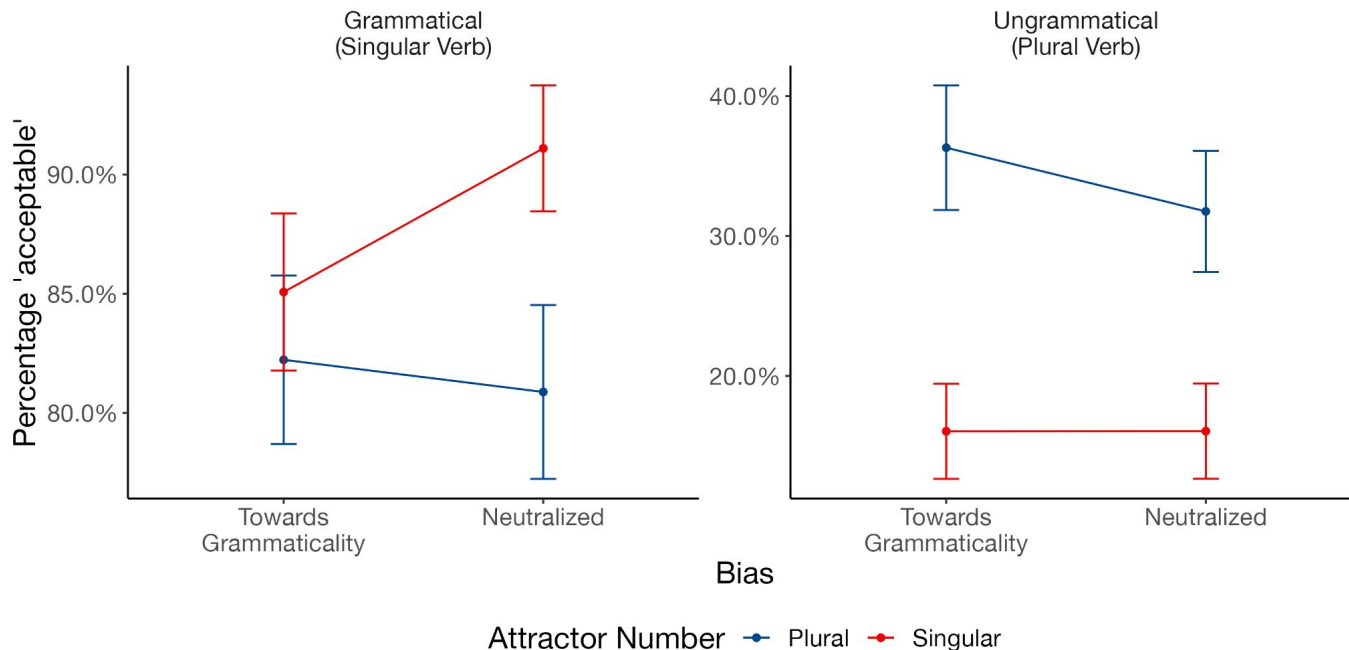The **key** to the *cabinets* **was** rusty.

Retrieval accounts ✅

Representational accounts ❌

(Bock et al., 1991; Eberhard et al., 2005; Wagers et al., 2009)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry   **[Bias]**

- Hammerly et al.: Grammaticality asymmetry due to response bias

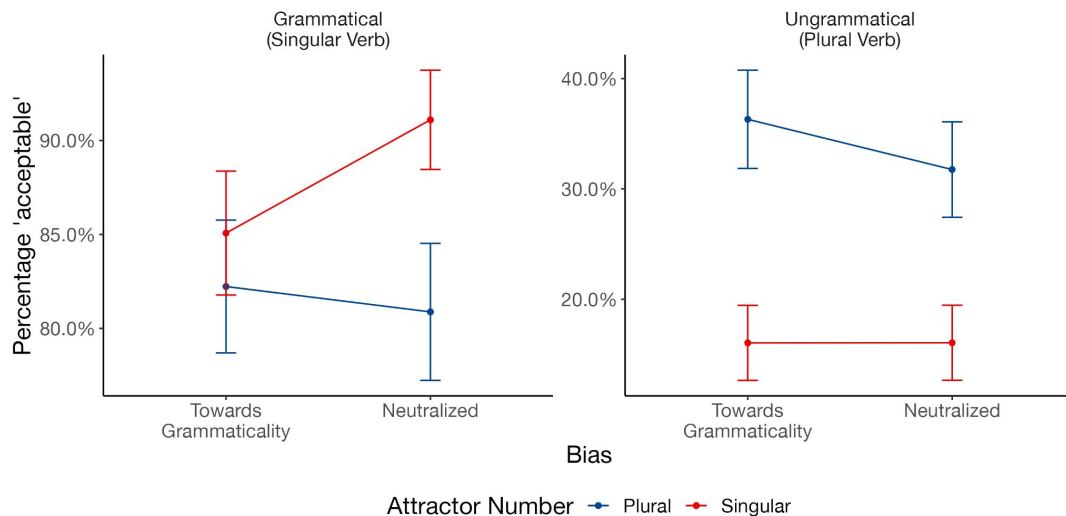- Hammerly et al.: People have *a priori* grammaticality bias

(Cousineau, 2005; Macmillan & Creelman, 2005; Morey, 2008)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry

[Bias]

- Equation:

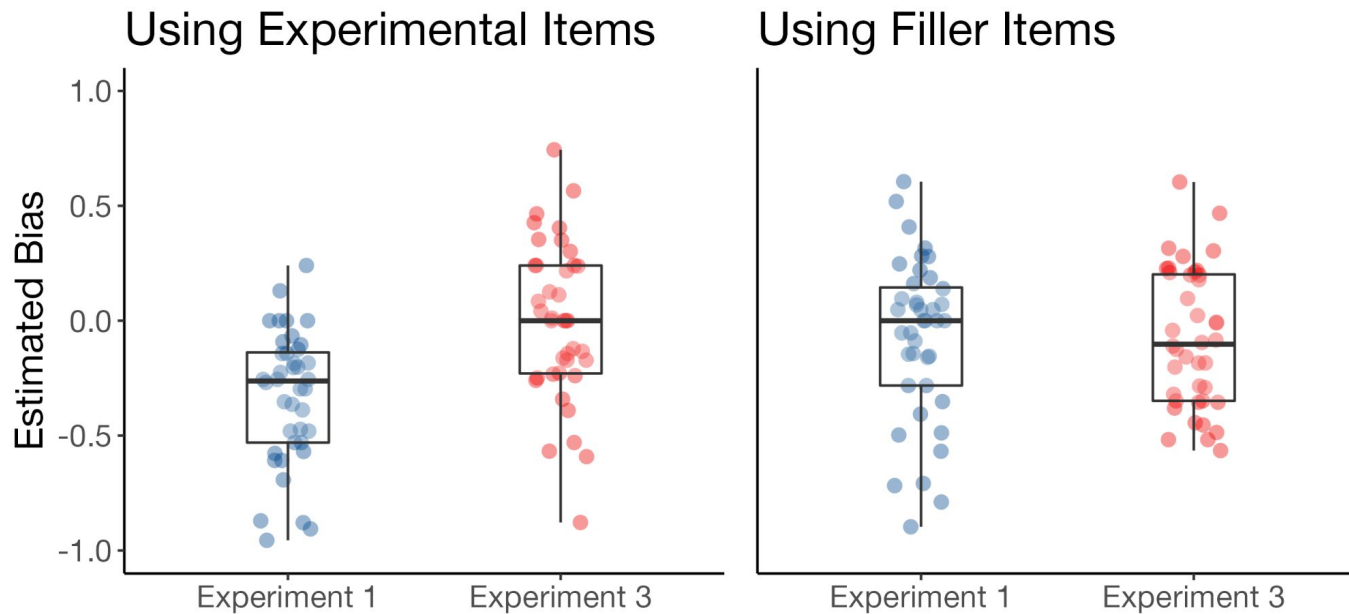$$- \frac{Z(\textit{Hit Rate}) + Z(\textit{False Alarms})}{2}$$

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry

- Bias Estimates of the participants:

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry   **[Method]**
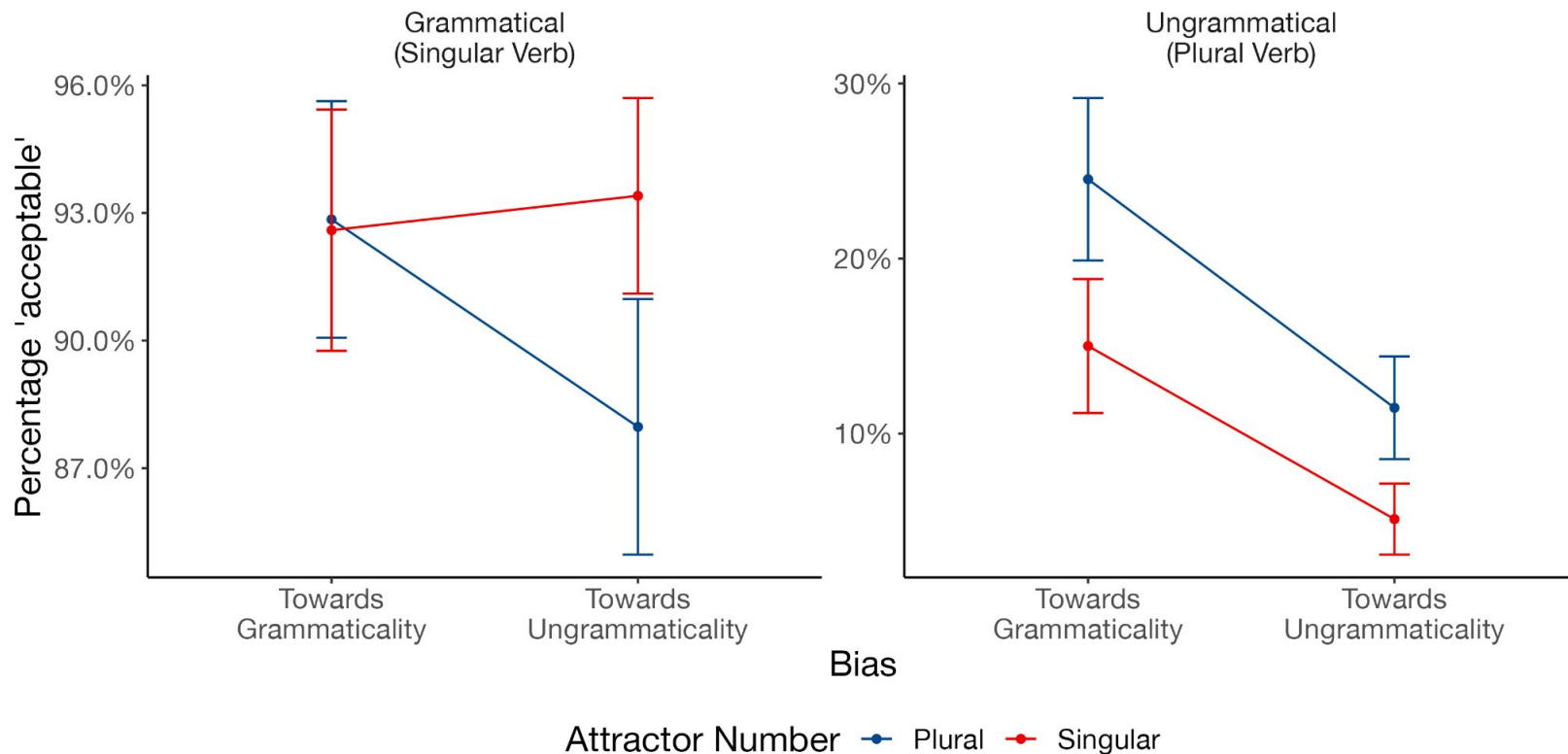
Our Goal: Replicate Hammerly et al.'s findings in another language with another construction

- Speeded Acceptability Judgment, N = 114

- Within-subject factors: *Verb x Attractor number*

- Between-subject factor: *Bias*

(10) a. * [*Milyoner-ler-in*   terzi-si]   tamamen   gereksizce   kov-ul-du-lar.
          millionaire-PL-GEN   tailor-POSS   completely   without_reason   fire-PASS-PST-PL
          The tailor of *the millionaires* were fired for no reason at all.

   b. * *Milyonerin* terzisi tamamen gereksizce kovuldular.

   c.   *Milyonerlerin* terzisi tamamen gereksizce kovuldu.

   d.   *Milyonerin* terzisi tamamen gereksizce kovuldu.
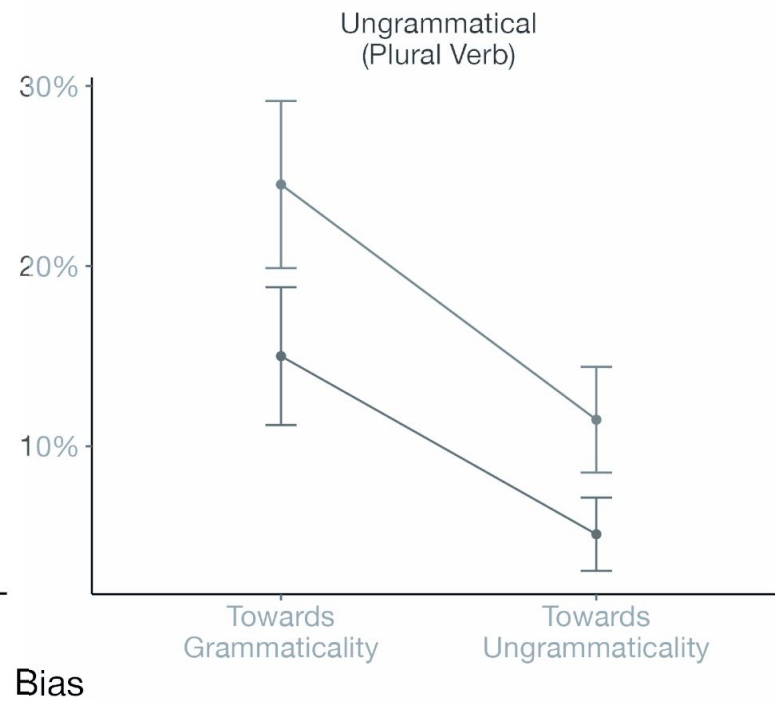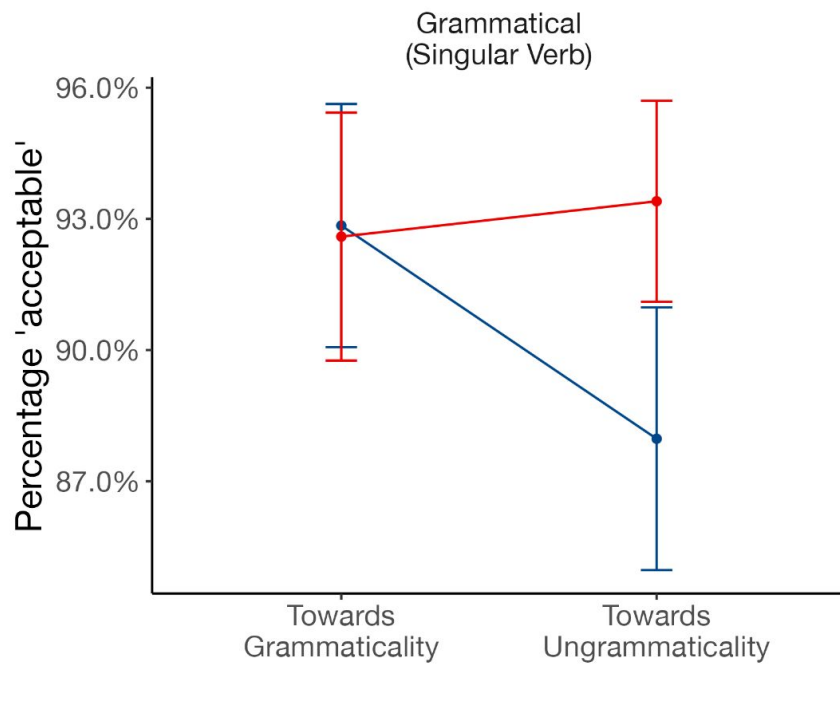
Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry　　[Results]

(Cousineau, 2005; Macmillan & Creelman, 2005; Morey, 2008)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry

(Cousineau, 2005; Macmillan & Creelman, 2005; Morey, 2008)

Experiment 3: Grammaticality Asymmetry   **[Modeling]**

- Fit a maximal Bayesian GLM to 'yes' responses to **grammatical** sentences

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

P(β < −0.1)

Ungram. Bias	[.69]
Plural Attractor	[.82]
Trial No	[.01]
Ungram. Bias x Plural Attractor	[.88]

Estimate (Probit)
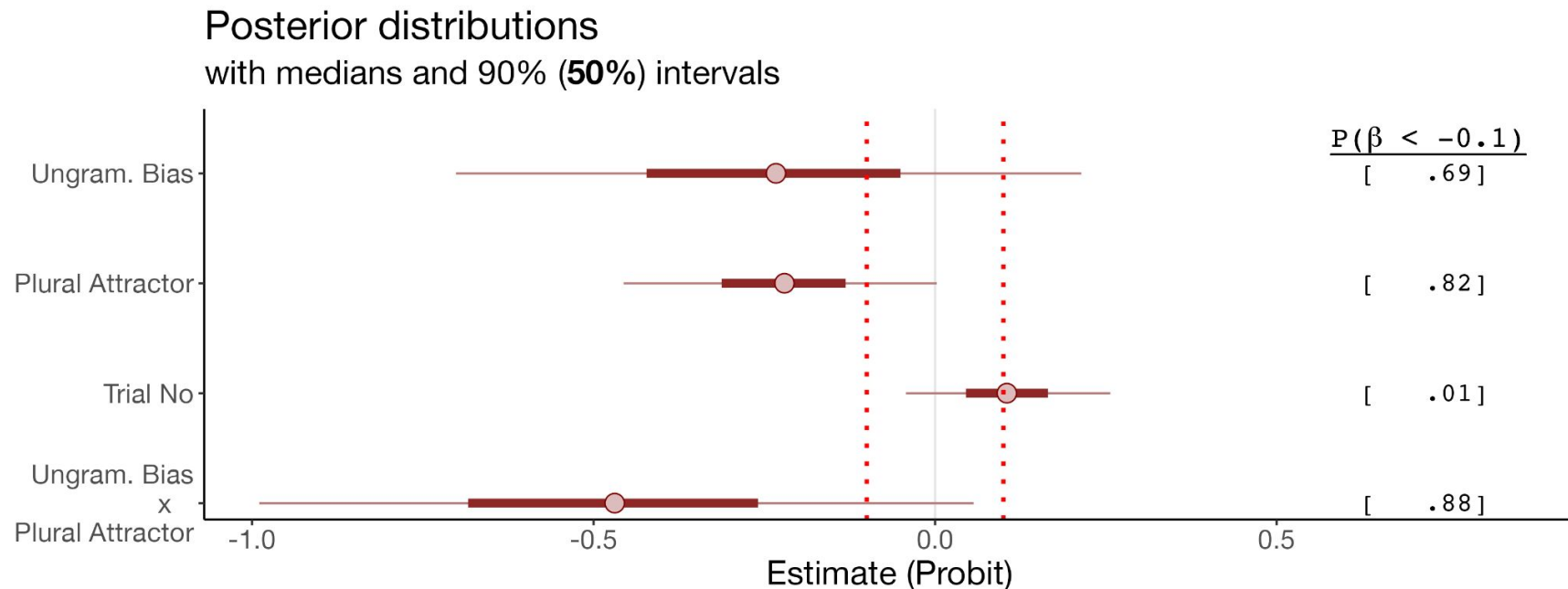
➔ The effect of plural attractor is more pronounced in people with ungrammaticality bias in grammatical sentences

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

∴ We were able to replicate theoretically significant findings of Hammerly et al. (2019).

∴ Grammaticality asymmetry is due to response bias

Conclusion

➔ Case ambiguity does not play a role in attraction

➔ The attraction process is not driven by form

➔ Non-linguistics phenomenon, like bias, may impact attraction

Conclusion

	Predictions		
Phenomenon	Retrieval	Representational	Our Findings
Overt Case	✅	❌	❌
Form-Advantage	✅	❌	❌
Response Bias	❌	✅	✅

Thank you!

Selected References

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Lago, S., Gracanin-Yuksek, M., Şafak, D. F., Demir, O., Kırkıcı, B., & Felser, C. (2019). Straight from the horse's mouth: Agreement attraction effects with Turkish possessors [Journal Article]. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism*, *9*(3), 398–426. doi: https://doi.org/ 10.1075/lab.17019.lag

Macmillan, N. A., & Creelman, C. D. (2004). *Detection theory: A user's guide*. Psychology press.

Morey, R. D., et al. (2008). Confidence intervals from normalized data: A correction to cousineau (2005). *Reason*, *4*(2), 61–64.

Nicenboim, B., & Vasishth, S. (2016). Statistical methods for linguistic research: Foundational Ideas—Part II. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, *10*(11), 591-613.

Staub, A. (2007). The return of the repressed: Abandoned parses facilitate syntactic reanalysis. *Journal of memory and language*, *57*(2), 299-323.

Wagers, M. W., Lau, E. F., & Phillips, C. (2009). Agreement attraction in comprehension: Representations and processes. *Journal of Memory and Language*, *61*(2), 206-237.

Appendix A: Experiment 4

Participants create a formal context due to NP1-NP2 relation

Possible formal readings license spurious *-lar*s

(Copeland & Radvansky, 2001; Ferreria, 2003)
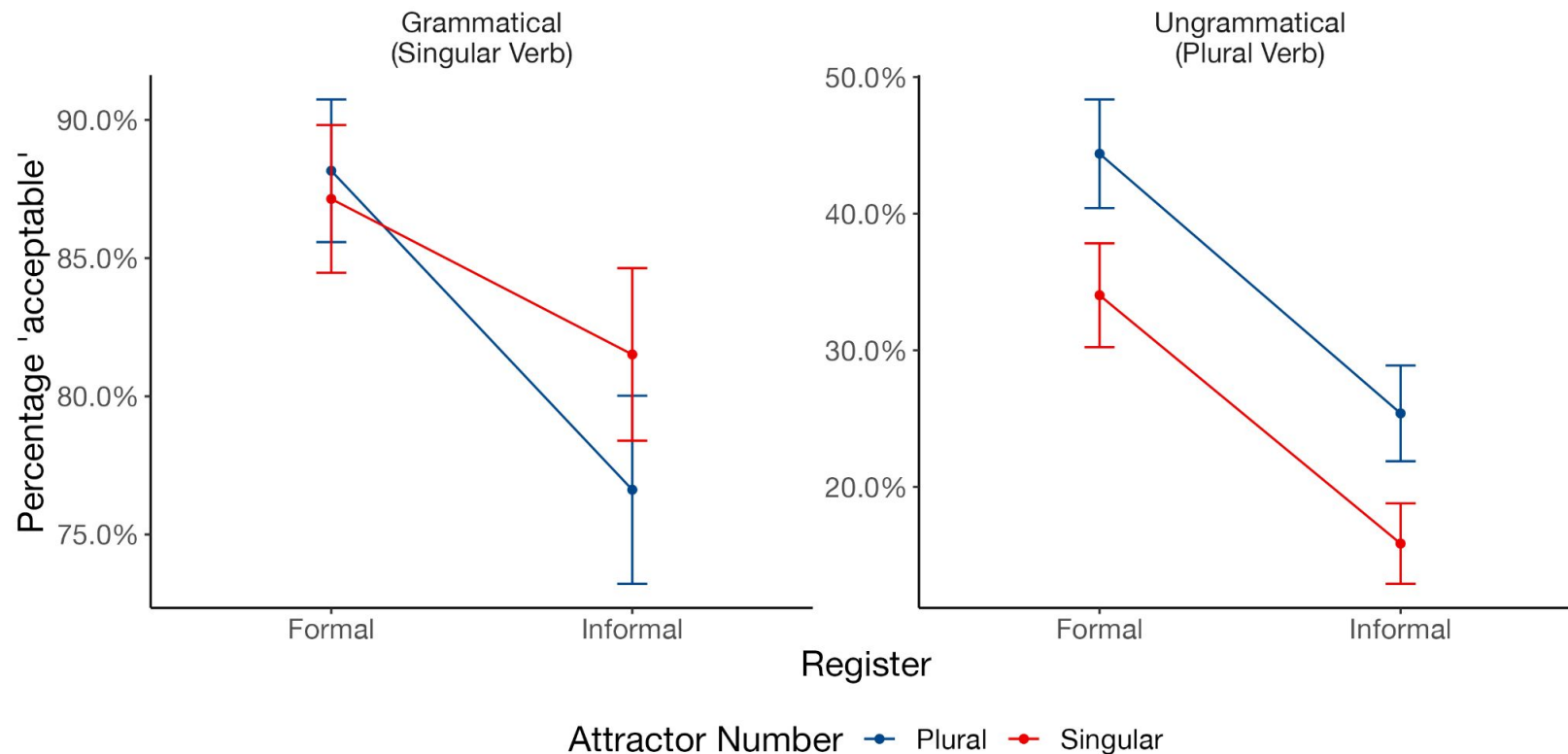
Experiment 4: Register

Our Goal: Rule out a possible formal reading with the use of a post-verbal slang

- Speeded Acceptability Judgment, N = 174

- Within-subject factors:
  Verb x Attractor number x Register

(11) a. [*Milyoner-ler/∅-in*   terzi-si]   tamamen   gereksizce   kov-ul-du-lar/∅,   efendim.

millionaire-*PL/SG-GEN* tailor-POSS   completely   without_reason   fire-PASS-PST-PL/SG   sir

Sir, the tailor of *the millionaire(s)* was/were fired for no reason at all.

b. [*Milyoner-ler/∅-in*   terzi-si]   tamamen   gereksizce   kov-ul-du-lar/∅   lan.

millionaire-*PL/SG-GEN* tailor-POSS   completely   without_reason   fire-PASS-PST-PL/SG   yo

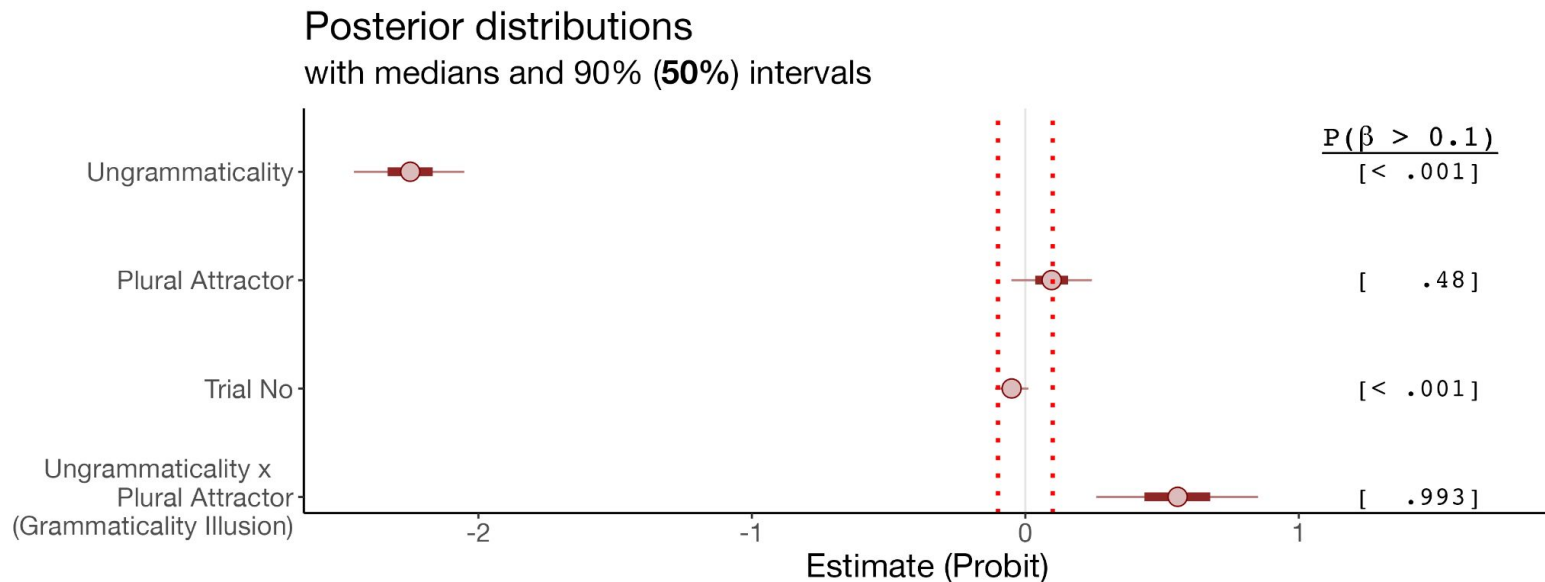Yo, the tailor of *the millionaire(s)* was/were fired for no reason at all.

(Cousineau, 2005; Morey, 2008)

Experiment 4: Register [Modeling]

- Fit a maximal Bayesian GLM to 'yes' responses to **informal** sentences

Posterior distributions
with medians and 90% (**50%**) intervals

➔ A clear interaction between ungrammaticality and attractor number.

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)

Appendix B: Bias Meta-Analysis

- Fit a maximal Bayesian GLM to 'yes' responses to **grammatical** sentences

(Gelman & Hill, 2007; Barr et al., 2013; Nicenboim & Vasishth, 2016; Kruschke, 2018)