

# Current issues in sentence processing

Taught by Shravan Vasishth

October 20, 2015

## 1 The basic stuff

- The course runs from 21 Oct to 16th Dec 2015.
- Day: Wednesdays
- Time: 10:25-12:50PM
- Place: Tokyo University, Building 8, Room 315

We have a total of 9 classes.

## 2 Goals of this course

We will be looking at some current issues relating to the cue-based retrieval theory and predictive processes in sentence comprehension.

## 3 Papers to be covered

There will be one further paper by Shota Momma et al, which does not yet exist but is being prepared in Maryland as we speak.

Note that I sometimes tend to go off on a tangent and discuss related studies, so don't be surprised if we don't get to discuss all the papers on the list. The list below is only suggestive.

1. Oct 21: Introduction
2. Oct 28: [1]
3. Nov 4: [2], [3]
4. Nov 11: [4], [5]
5. Nov 18: [6], [7], [8]
6. Nov 25: [9], [10]
7. Dec 2: [11], [12]
8. Dec 9: Momma paper (to be provided)
9. Dec 16: Closing discussion

The papers will be made available from the course page. There are other related readings, which I can release on demand.

## 4 Grading

Grading will be based on a short report (2-3 pages at most) on one or more of the papers discussed in the course. The report can be in Japanese, German, French, English, or Hindi. Extra credit will be given for original ideas/proposals in the summary, and for class participation. If you come up with a new experiment design that attempts to resolve an open question, then you are very likely to get a high score.

## 5 In the classroom

- As a general rule, please do not chat with each other while I am talking or while we are discussing something in class.
- I expect active participation, which means asking questions and discussing the various issues that come up.
- Please **do not** use cell phones or computers to chat, message or call anyone, and do not check your email or send or receive SMSes. In some cases people may have to keep their phone on due to a sick child or something like that; in that case, please get permission from me before start of class.
- Please come to class on time so that we can start punctually at 10:25AM.

## References

- [1] Felix Engelmann, Lena A Jäger, and Shravan Vasishth. The determinants of retrieval interference in dependency resolution: Review and computational modeling. submitted to JML, 2015.
- [2] Matthew J Traxler. Trends in syntactic parsing: anticipation, bayesian estimation, and good-enough parsing. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 18(11):605–611, 2014.
- [3] Roger P. Levy and Frank Keller. Expectation and locality effects in German verb-final structures. 68(2):199–222, Feb 2013.
- [4] Tal Linzen and T Florian Jaeger. Uncertainty and expectation in sentence processing: Evidence from subcategorization distributions. *Cognitive Science*, 2015.
- [5] Lena Jäger, Zhong Chen, Qiang Li, Chien-Jer Charles Lin, and Shravan Vasishth. The subject-relative advantage in Chinese: Evidence for expectation-based processing. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 2015.
- [6] Shravan Vasishth, Katja Suckow, Richard L. Lewis, and Sabine Kern. Short-term forgetting in sentence comprehension: Crosslinguistic evidence from head-final structures. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 25(4):533–567, 2011.
- [7] Stefan L. Frank, Thijs Trompenaars, and Shravan Vasishth. Cross-linguistic differences in processing double-embedded relative clauses: Working-memory constraints or language statistics? 2015, accepted pending minor revisions.
- [8] Markus Bader and Jana Häussler. An interference account of the missing-vp effect. *Name: Frontiers in Psychology*, 6:766, 2015.
- [9] Akira Omaki, Ellen F Lau, Imogen Davidson White, Myles L Dakan, Aaron Apple, and Colin Phillips. Hyper-active gap filling. *Frontiers in psychology*, 6, 2015.
- [10] Shota Momma, Robert Slevc, and Colin Phillips. The timing of verb selection in japanese sentence production. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory and Cognition*.
- [11] Wing-Yee Chow and Colin Phillips. No semantic illusions in the “semantic p600” phenomenon: Erp evidence from mandarin chinese. *brain research*, 1506:76–93, 2013.

- [12] Wing-Yee Chow, Cybelle Smith, Ellen Lau, Colin Phillips, and Chandler House. A ‘bag-of-arguments’ mechanism for initial verb predictions.