The interaction between competence and performance in building (un-)grammatical structures

'Deviant' or 'grammatically marked' linguistic structures in language use present problems for theoretical modeling. Formal theories have tried to find explanations based on the nature of the linguistic system respectively the language competence and their complexity (e.g. competing modules) or even competing constraints within the modules (cf. the rankings assumed in optimality theory). Recent work increasingly focuses on linguistic performance and related cognitive factors, like processing/parsing memory, pragmatics and the options motivating the violation or manipulation of rules by reinterpretation and/or analogy. Haider (2011) distinguishes grammaticality and acceptability as two primarily independent levels of judging linguistic structures. He discusses the IPP-repair (?*Hoffe, geholfen haben zu können.*) and the 'genug'-repair (?*ein gut genuges Beispiel*) among other cases where grammatical constraints are weakened only for the sake of factors of performance. Similarly, Öhl & Falk (2011) discuss the placement of verbal particles (e.g. ?*An fing das Stück um 20h. - *An hat das Stück um 20h gefangen*). J.A. Hawkins (2009 and earlier) pointed to the role of performance for information structural serialisation in a typological framework. Multiple constituents in the German Prefield, PP-Extraction, omitted correlatives and unembedded dependent clauses constitute further relevant phenomena potentially involving the (sometimes problematic) interaction of competence and performance. The questions to address are: What constrains, licenses, and/or triggers rule violation? How can the relation between competence and performance be adequately modelled and how is the variability in performance to be integrated in a theory of grammar?

Literatur

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