MINDS: Comparing Comparatives

CTEL23 – Exam Paper

Peter Katballe-Kristensen

22/2/2024

Intro

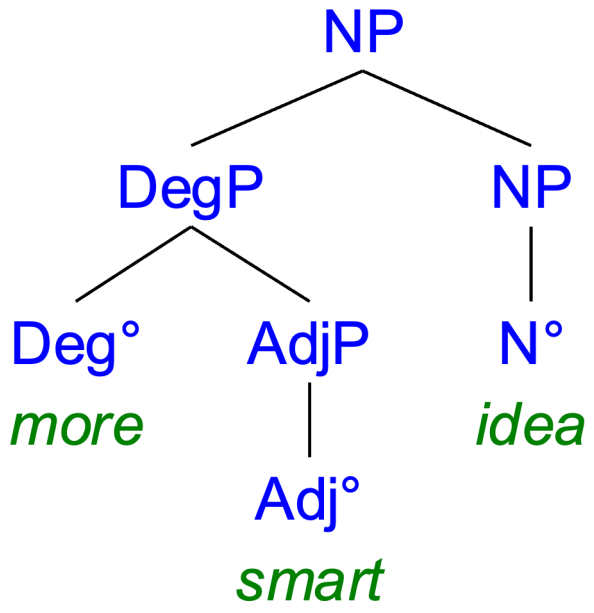
- Empirical study – Changing topics.
- How did I find this subject?
- Hypothesis?

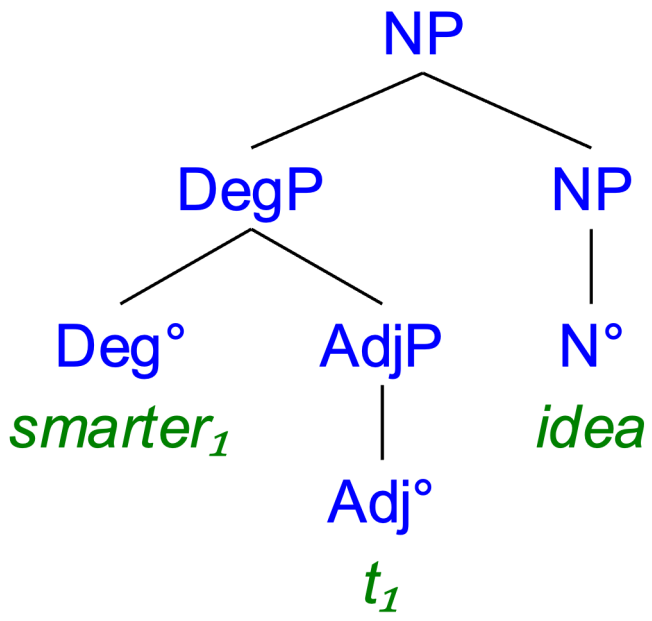
Adjective or Degree Phrases?

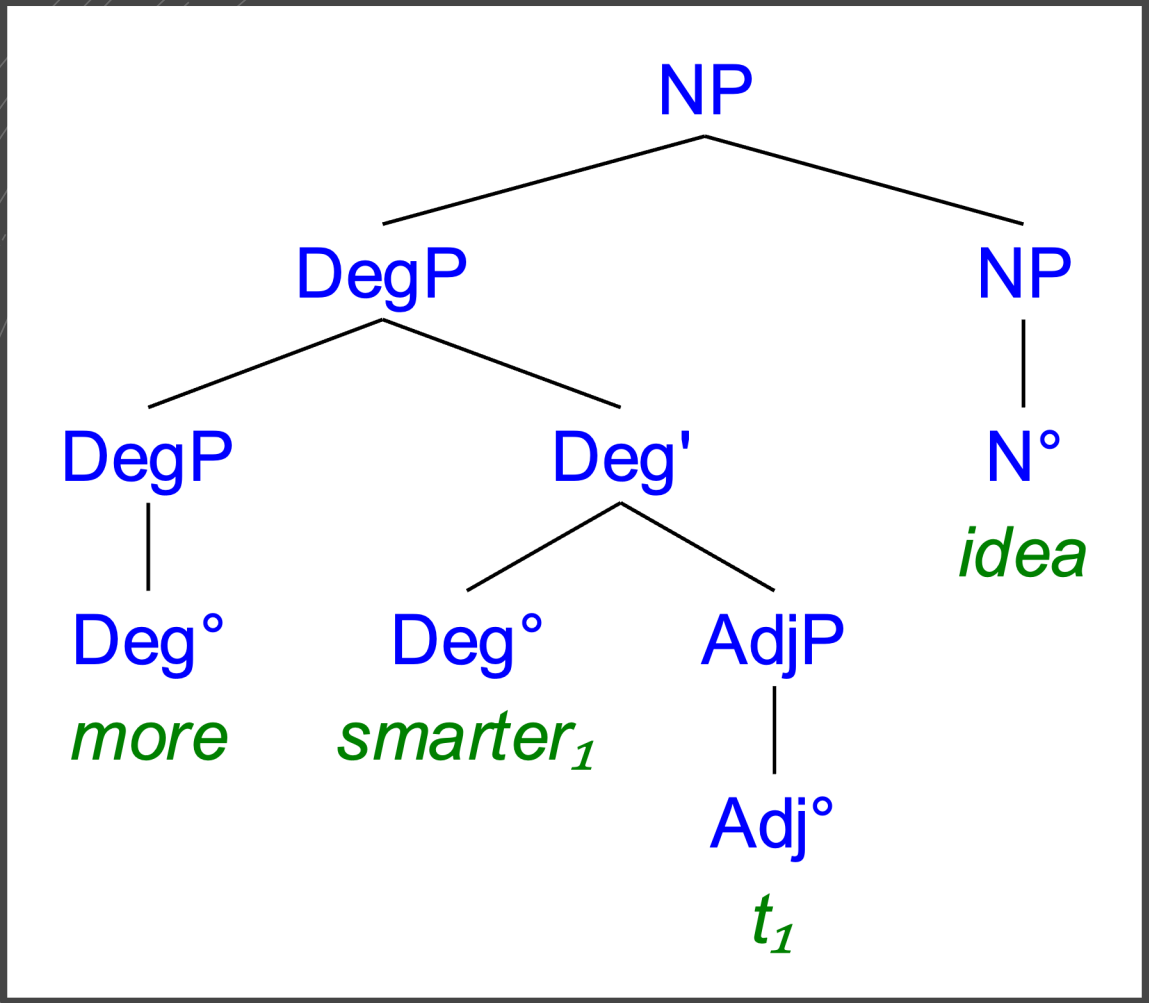
- *Degree* as the 'characteristic property' of adjectives (Zwarts 1992)

Functional element(s) on top of the adjective

- Degree Phrase
- Quantifier Phrase?
- Questions raised by this
  - Double comparison? (Seuter 1973)
    - John is more taller than Bill than Peter
  - Comparative Concord?
  - *Than*-phrases (Corver 2005, Christensen 2016)


NP
DegP
NP
Deg°
AdjP
N°
more
idea
Adj°
smart

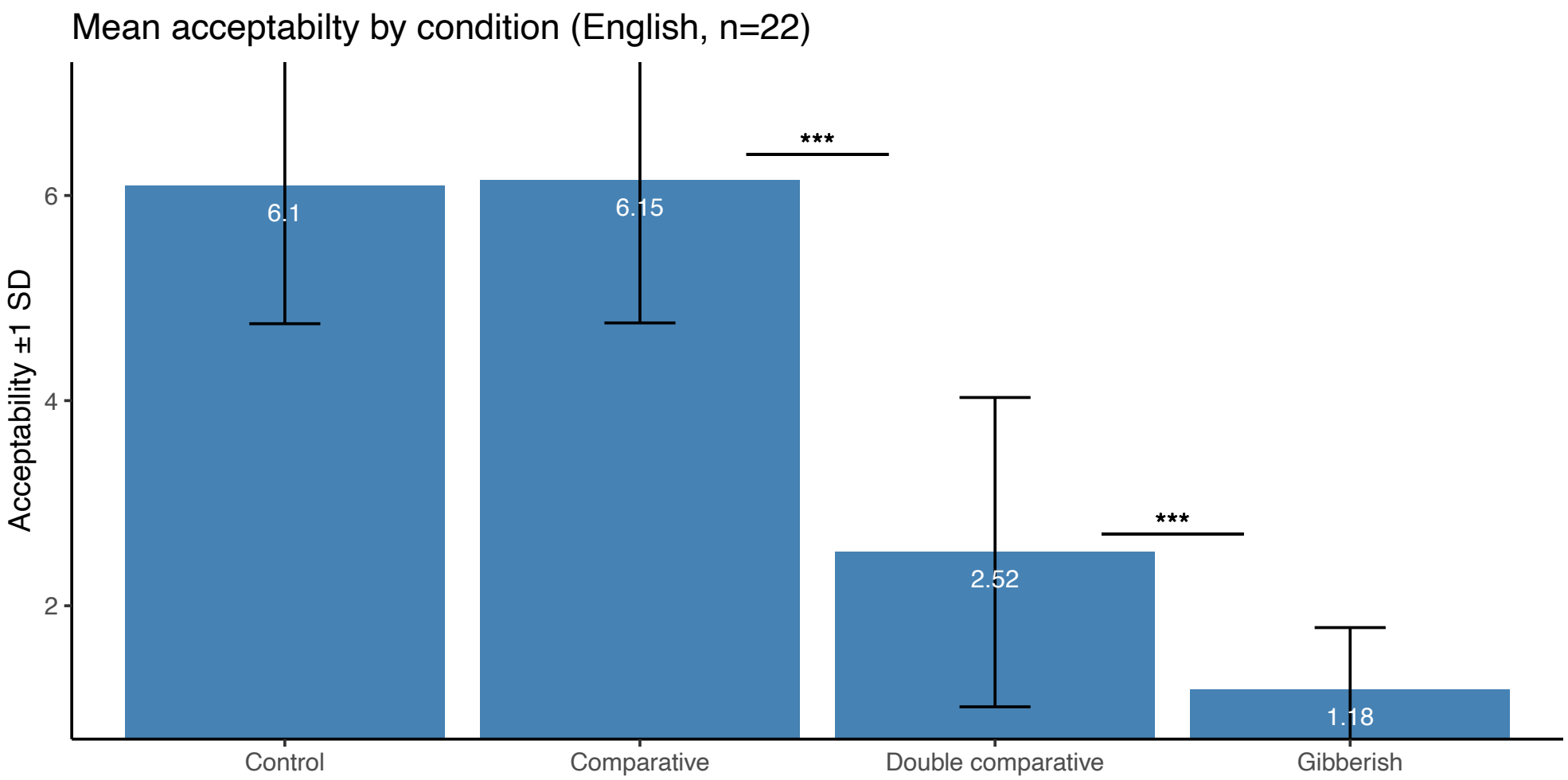

NP
DegP
NP
Deg°
AdjP
N°
smarter1
idea
Adj°
t1

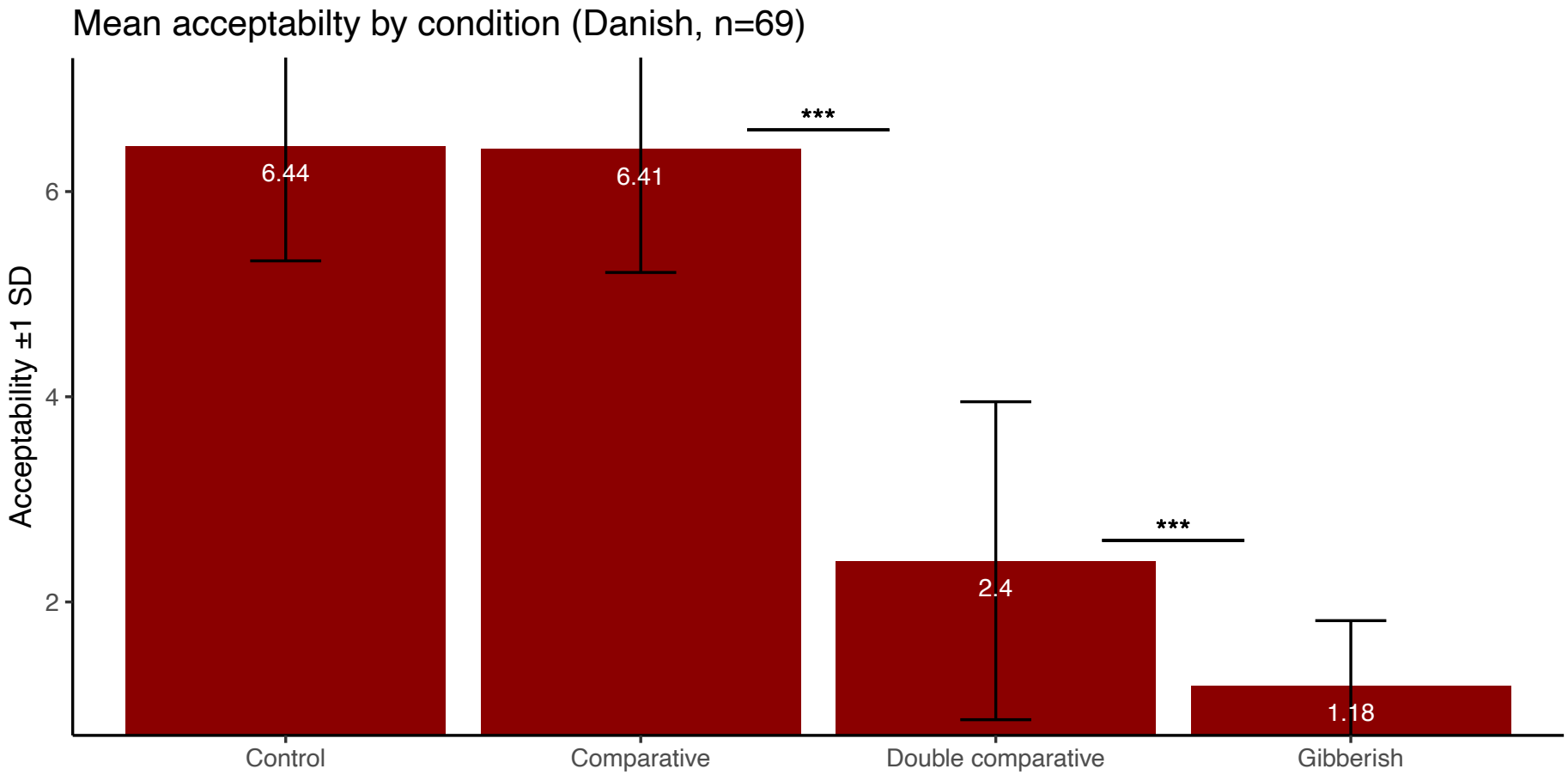

NP
DegP
NP
DegP
Deg'
N°
idea
Deg°
more
Deg°
smarter1
AdjP
Adj°
t1

My study

- Acceptability study
  - ”normal”
  - Comparative
  - Double comparative
  - Gibberish
  - Setting up the study
  - Results
    - People did NOT care for it.


THIS IS WHERE I SHOW
ALL THE RESPONDENTS
WHO LIKED DOUBLE COMPARATIVE
IF I FOUND ANY
imgflip.com


Mean acceptabilty by condition (English, n=22)
Acceptability ±1 SD
6
4
2
6.1
6.15
2.52
1.18
***
***
Control
Comparative
Double comparative
Gibberish


Mean acceptabilty by condition (Danish, n=69)
Acceptability ±1 SD
6
4
2
6.44
6.41
2.4
1.18
***
***
Control
Comparative
Double comparative
Gibberish

Challenges for my study

Mistakes I made when setting up the study

Comments from participants

Future research

- Targeting speakers of specific dialects.
- Double licensing
- Double superlative
- Double synthetic comparatives
  - *Fasterer, betterer, strongerer*

Questions, Feelings and Ideas?

References

Bresnan, Joan W. 1973. "Syntax of the Comparative Clause Construction in English." *Linguistic Inquiry* 4 (3): 275–343. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4177775.

Corver, Norbert. 2005. "Double comparatives and the comparative criterion." *Recherches linguistiques de Vincennes*, no. 34 (December): 165–90. http://journals.openedition.org/rlv/1387

Seuren, Pieter Albertus Maria. 1973. "The Comparative." In *Generative Grammar in Europe*, edited by Ferenc Kiefer and Nicolas Ruwet, 528-564. Dordrecht: Reidel Publishing Company.

Zwarts, Joost. 1992. *X'-Syntax – X'-Semantics: On the Interpretation of Functional and Lexical Heads.* Utrecht: Onderzoekinstituut voor Taal en Spraak, Utrecht University.