Second and Foreign Language Data

• Data analysis
• What data analysis does not reveal
• Data collection
• Replication
• Issues in data analysis
• What is acquisition?

Data Analysis

• What does data analysis involve?
  – Treating learners' language as if it were a new foreign language
  – Examining carefully the writing or speech of second language learners
  – Trying to discover the patterns in their language
  – Not assuming that learners are using the same patterns as native speakers

Data Set I: Plurals

When do these learners use –s to mark plural nouns?

Why do these learners sometimes use –s and sometimes use zero on plural nouns?

Data Set II: Verb + -ing

When do these learners add –ing to verbs?

What else do they add to the base form of the verb?

Why do these learners sometimes add –ing and sometimes use the base form of the verb?
Second and Foreign Language Data

- Data analysis
- What data analysis does not reveal
- Data collection
- Replication
- Issues in data analysis
- What is acquisition?

What data analysis does not reveal

- Is the data spoken or written?
- Is the data from a single person or is it pooled?
- Do the learners have the same L1?
- Do the learners have the same proficiency in English?
- What is the linguistic environment of the form?
- How was the data elicited?
- What was the social context?
- How often did the learner produce this form?

Second and Foreign Language Data

- Data analysis
- What data analysis does not reveal
- Data collection
- Replication
- Issues in data analysis
- What is acquisition?

Data Collection

Qualitative Paradigm
- Observation
- Subjective
- “Insider” perspective
- Process oriented
- Holistic
- Case studies

Quantitative Paradigm
- Experimentation
- Objective
- “Outsider” perspective
- Outcome oriented
- Particularistic
- Generalizable

Data Collection

Longitudinal studies … focus on the development of a few learners over a period of time.

Cross-sectional studies … focus on learners’ knowledge at a single point in time.

Data Collection

- Task 1: Are these sentences correct in English?
  
  – John is travelling to New York tomorrow.
  – John is seeing better now.

- Grammaticality judgment of sentences presented in isolation
Data Collection

- Task 2: Is Jane’s last sentence correct in English?
  
  Mary: I need to send a package to my mother in a hurry.
  Jane: Where does she live?
  Mary: In New York.
  Jane: Oh, in that case John can take it. John is traveling to New York tomorrow.

- Grammaticality judgment of sentences presented in context

Data Collection

- Task 3: Are these sentences correct in English?
  - The ship sailed to Miami tomorrow.
  - The ship is sailing to Miami tomorrow.
  - The ship will sail to Miami tomorrow.
  - The ship sails to Miami tomorrow.
  - The ship has sailed to Miami tomorrow.

- Grammaticality judgment of isolated sentences presented in groups

Data Collection

- Task 4: Using the verb sail, write as long a sentence as possible using the progressive form of the verb: sailing.

- Written production of an isolated sentence.

Data Collection

- The story “Tornado in Tampa” was spoken by a native speaker of Japanese, who had lived in the United States for 28 years at the time of taping. She was simply asked to tell a story.

- What interlanguage rule is the speaker using to mark past time with a verb in the past tense?

- How would you investigate learners' expressions of past time with a controlled elicitation method?

Data Collection

- Language tests

- Tests from psychology
Data Collection

- Language tests
- Tests from psychology
- Acceptability judgments

They were prepared the tickets.

Correct Incorrect Not sure

Data Collection

- Three different kinds of acceptability judgment tests
  1. Absolute judgments:
     • “This sentence is correct.”
     • “This sentence is incorrect.”
     • “I don’t know.”
  2. Comparative judgments:
     • “This sentence is more acceptable than that one.”
  3. Ranking:
     • “Sentence A is more acceptable than sentence B, and sentence B is more acceptable than sentence C.”

Data Collection

- Compare grammaticality judgments with judgments of cuteness. What kind of judgments are these?
  1. He’s cute.
  2. Derek is cuter than Andrew.
  3. He’s a dawg!
  4. Mark’s the cutest, then Derek, and then Andrew.

Data Collection

- Workbook Problem 1.1: Acceptability Judgments
  
  - Part One
    – Compare two sentences. Which is more acceptable?
  
  - Part Two
    – Make absolute judgments. Is the sentence correct English or not?
  
  - Part Three
    – Rank six sentences in order of acceptability.

Second and Foreign Language Data

✓ Data analysis
✓ What data analysis does not reveal
✓ Data collection
  • Replication
  • Issues in data analysis
  • What is acquisition?

Replication

“The essence of the scientific method involves observations that can be repeated and verified by others.”
Second and Foreign Language Data

- Data analysis
- What data analysis does not reveal
- Data collection
- Replication
  - Issues in data analysis
  - What is acquisition?

Issues in Data Analysis

- How do we measure L2 development?
- Does IL development mean moving toward a target L2?
- In analyzing interlanguage, do we count errors of overgeneralization?

What is Acquisition?

"It is not just the point at which something is acquired that is of interest, but it is also important to consider the stages that a learner goes through in acquiring a particular form."

Second and Foreign Language Data

- Data analysis
- What data analysis does not reveal
- Data collection
- Replication
- Issues in data analysis
  - What is acquisition?

Second and Foreign Language Data

- If you were to design an SLA study to investigate each of the following topics, what would be an appropriate methodology? Why would it be appropriate?
  - English articles
  - The structure of tense/aspect
  - Text organizational structure
  - A comparison of the effectiveness of native and nonnative teachers
  - Fluency