Lab 3 write-up
Lab 4 instruction

Ling499a Spring 2009
Plan

• Mid-term grades: This weekend!
• Next Thursday: Class cancelled (I’ll be in france)
• Paper Presentations: Shannon, Erica, faisal and michael
• Lab 3 write-up (more below)
• Lab 4 (more below)
• Final paper presentation & write-up
Lab 3

• Data collection: Keep posting time slots until you get two people! (till 1st week of May)
• I’ll send you the group data this weekend
• Analyze data and write it up – due April 16th (next Thursday)
Lab 3 analysis & write-up

• Data analysis:
  – Use pivot table to make a table of average RTs (row: conditions; column: regions)
  – Make a line graph out of it

• Write up (2-pages):
  – 1\textsuperscript{st} page: a one-page description of the goal, method, findings and discussion of your findings (follow the guideline for lab1 write-up)
  – 2\textsuperscript{nd} page should have a) a sample item w/ 4 conditions, b) your graph, and c) references
Lab 4

• Design a detective story task to investigate children’s interpretation of long-distance wh-questions:

• Target sentence:
  The Snail told Smurf when the troll said he ate pizza
Why care about long distance questions?

- Thornton & Crain (Brian’s presentation);
- de Villiers & Roeper (Sherrod’s presentation)
  - Wh-scope marking in child English?

When did the boy say how he hurt himself?

- Adult-like answer:
- Child answer:
- Cf. ungrammatical answer:
Alternative explanation

When did the boy say how he hurt himself?

• Maybe children’s memory capacity is severely limited

• When there are two clauses with two wh-phrases, they can only retain the most recently heard clause (i.e., how he hurt himself)
Ambiguous one

When did the boy say that he hurt himself?

• Ambiguous:
  – Upstairs: the boy said something yesterday
  – Downstairs: the boy hurt himself yesterday

• De Villiers et al (1990): younger kids prefer downstairs; older kids prefer upstairs
Ambiguous one

When did the boy say that he hurt himself?

• Question: Can they have the upstairs reading at all? Perhaps not, if their memory system is limited

• De Villiers et al’s task only reflects a preference; we need a different task to test whether a certain interpretation is entertained by kids or not
Your task for Lab 4

• Design a material on your own (but I encourage you to discuss with your classmates)
• Focus on describing the logic of the experimental method and design
• Provide detailed information and reasoning about one item with all the relevant conditions
  ➔ This is supposed to be a good practice for your final paper!
• Lab 4 write-up due 4/28 (Tuesday)
• Some hints below
Goro & Akiba’s “eating contest” design

• He didn’t eat an apple or a cake
  – English: He ate neither
  – Japanese: He ate an apple or a cake, but the speaker doesn’t know which one

• Kids:
  – English-speaking kids: “Neither” reading (adult-like)
  – Japanese kids: “Neither” reading (English-adult-like!)

• Their eating contest design can be adapted to our experiment too (for your report, see G&A’s “experiment” section for how to describe your method)
For Tuesday

• Read & summarize Savage et al’s paper on priming of passive sentences (shannon presents)