

Recoverability of deletion in agrammatic production: the omission of prepositions

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Abstract

It is widely accepted that omission/substitution of function words is direct evidence of an agrammatic brain damage. In this study – a sequel to Lonzi & Luzzatti (1995) – we follow the view that the production of agrammatic patients is subject to a constraint named ‘Telegraph’ by Pesetsky (1998) that is present in the pronunciation system of normal grammars: “Do not pronounce function words”. We propose that this constraint, though re-ranked higher in agrammatic production with respect to its position in normal grammars, is still regularly subject to the condition of Recoverability of deletion. The results of two different tasks concerning prepositions – a completion and a grammaticality judgment task – given to 4 stabilized agrammatic patients comply with this view.

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