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“Wobbly” /a/ in BCMS

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1. The phenomenon

BCMS words ending in /-CaC/

Regular:

pojas → pojasa 'belt'

korak → koraka 'step'

obad → obada 'gadfly'

“Wobbly” /a/:

vrisak → vris**ka** 'scream'

vepar → ve**pra** 'boar'

režanj → re**žnja** 'slice'

Ambiguous:

Katar → Katara/Kat**ra** 'Qatar'

batak → bataka/bat**ka** 'chicken thigh'

1. The phenomenon

Cluster-final consonants (C₂) in actual vocabulary

Well-attested: /v/, /c/, /k/, /m/, /n/, /nj/, /r/, /t/

Not attested at all: /b/, /d/, /ž/, /z/, /p/, /č/, /f/, /h/, /dž/, /š/

The research question:

Do speakers have the fine-grained knowledge of consonants allowed in the C₂ position of clusters that get disrupted by the wobbly /a/?

larav vs larab

2. Experimental design

Independent variable:

Attestedness of C₂ in actual words

Dependent variable:

Acceptability of the deletion of /a/

Hypothesis:

Items with an attested C₂ (larav) will exhibit the phenomenon more often than those with a non-attested C₂ (larab)

3. Methodology

Materials: nonce words

- Items were generated in the model /CVCCa/
- Phonotactically impossible items were excluded, as were odd-sounding ones and those that resembled existing words
- Two rounds of verification experiments were conducted with native speakers

3. Methodology

Verification experiment:

How acceptable is this word in your language?

| Item | Acceptable | Somewhat degraded | Degraded | Heavily degraded | Unacceptable |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| dožva | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Click this button to continue

3. Methodology

Second experiment: Materials

- 9 pairs of attested C_2 and non-attested C_2 stimuli, matched by their score in the verification experiment, starting from the best-scoring items
- 18 fillers: 12 sanity checks, 6 neutral
- 2 training items

3. Methodology

Participants & Procedure

- 44 native speakers of BCMS

Ako postoji 1 čaljad, postoje i

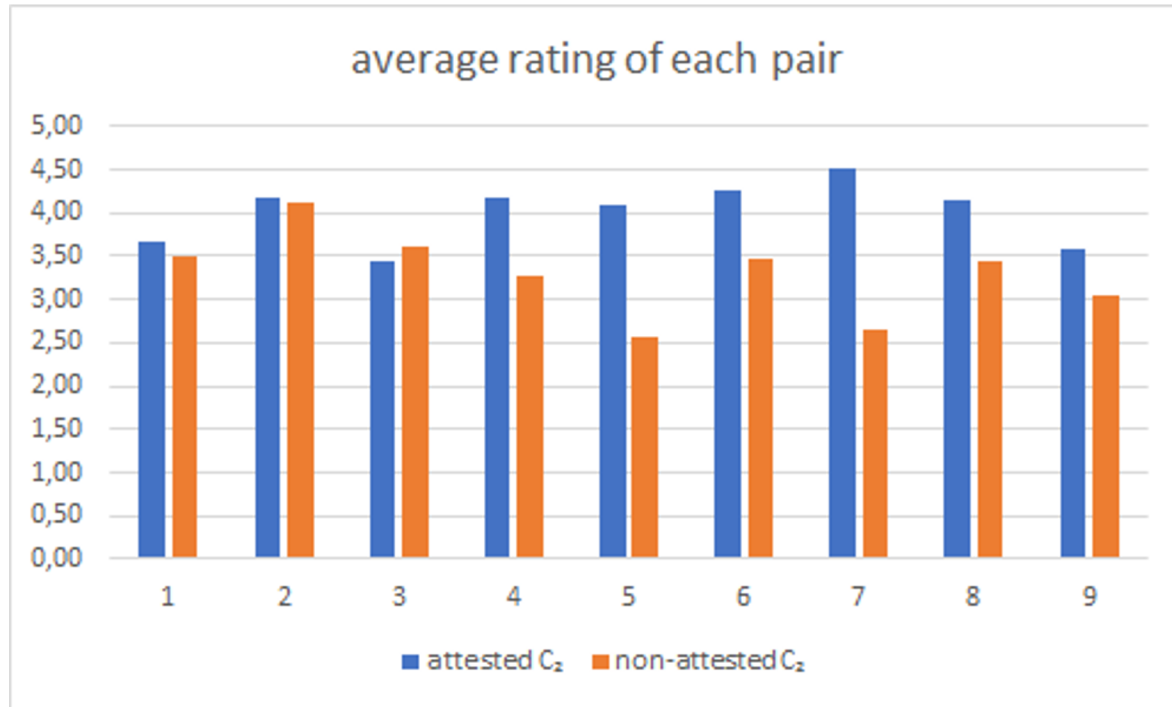
| Item | Unacceptable | Heavily degraded | Degraded | Somewhat degraded | Acceptable |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 čaljda | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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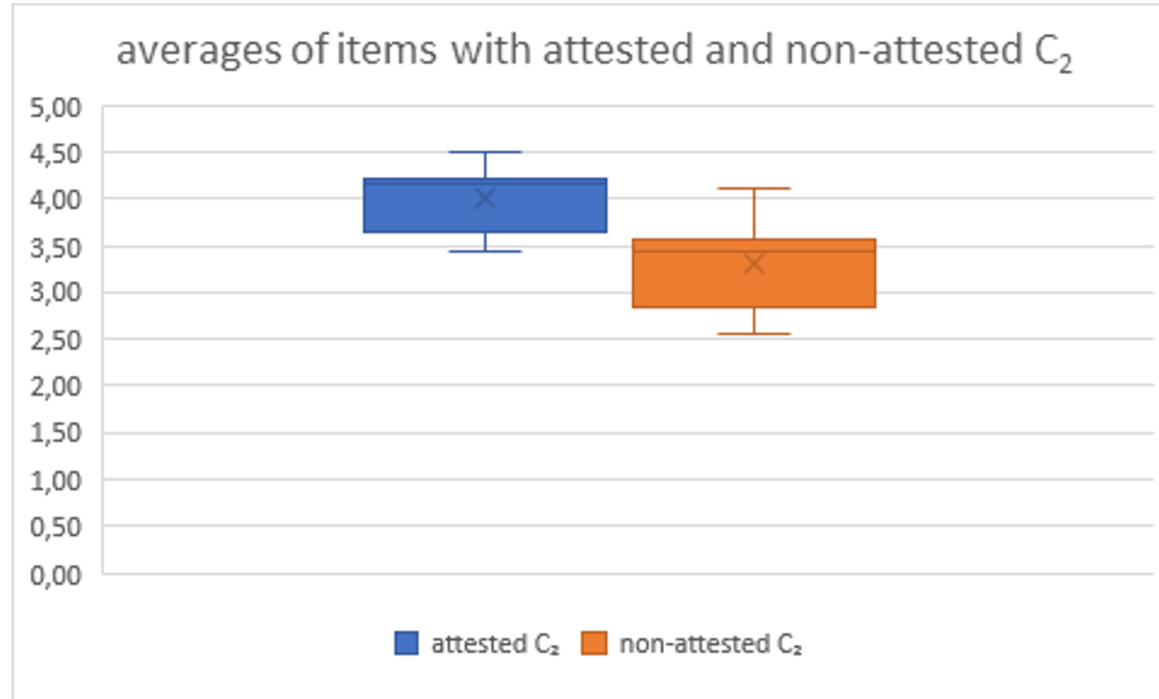
4. Results

- 7 dubious responses excluded
(more than 3 errors on the 12 SC or more than 15 min for completion)
- Average rating per stimulus and per participant calculated
- Wilcoxon signed-rank test run
- Statistically significant difference between attested and non-attested C₂

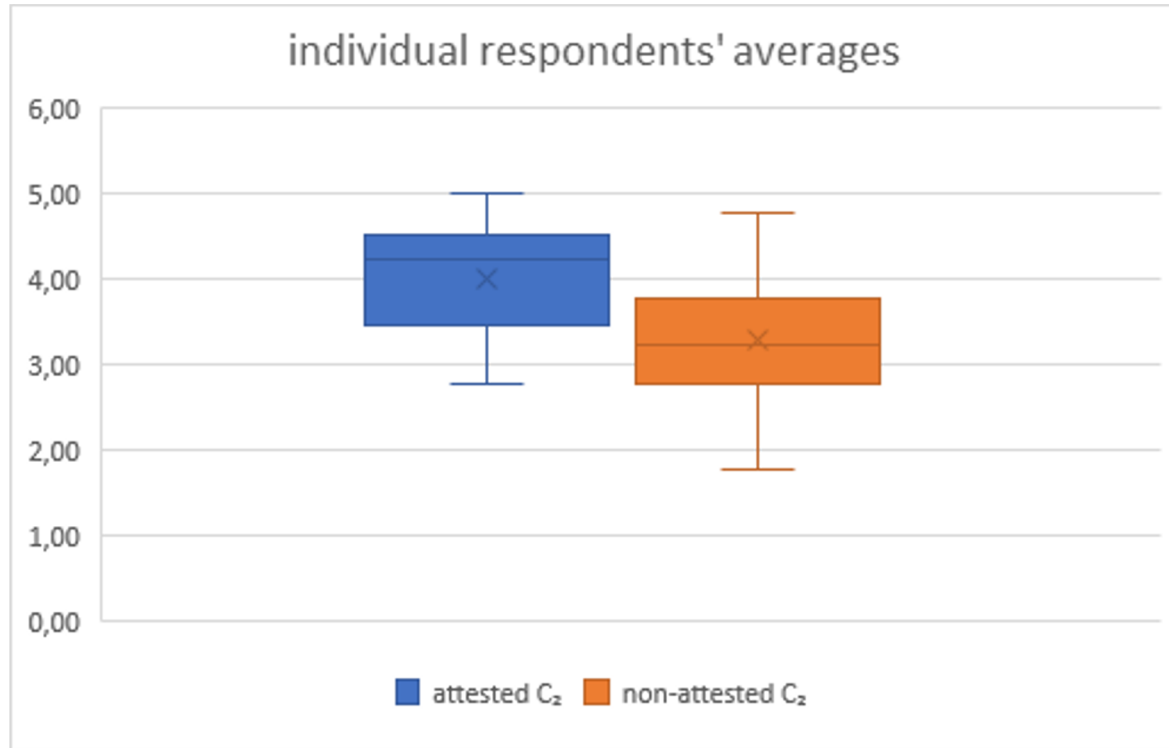
4. Results: Avr. grouped by pair



4. Results: Avr. grouped by stimulus



4. Results: Avr. grouped by participant



5. Conclusions

- General hypothesis confirmed
- But surprisingly high results of non-attested C₂ items
- Ideas for future research
 - Including more factors (regional differences, age, more phonological environments)
 - Different types of experiments (multiple choice, elicited production)

Hvala :)

QUESTIONS?
SUGGESTIONS?
COMMENTS?

