
Strategic use of English quantifiers in the reporting of quantitative information

Vinicius Macuch Silva^{*1}, Alexandra Lorson¹, and Bodo Winter¹

¹University of Birmingham – United Kingdom

Abstract

We investigate how quantifiers can be used strategically. We report two experiments focused on how English speakers describe quantitative information when framing their descriptions either positively or negatively without lying. We present analyses focused on how participants modulate their usage of quantifiers. In Experiment 1, a forced-choice task, we focus on the usage of *none*, *some*, *most*, and *all*. In Experiment 2, a free production task, we annotate participants' responses for different types of numerical expressions. In both experiments, we find that as the difficulty in producing truthful descriptions increases, so does the likelihood of informationally weaker expressions being used.

Keywords: quantifiers, strategic communication, production

*Speaker