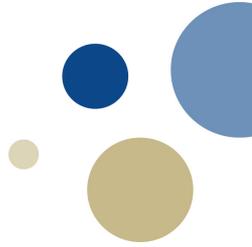




NTNU – Trondheim
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology



Singular generic noun phrases in L3 Norwegian

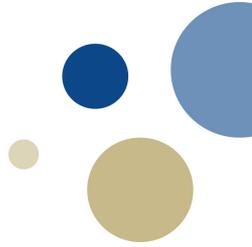
Marta Velnić, Roumyana Slabakova, and
Anne Dahl
Poznan Linguistics meeting
13.09.2023



ADIM

Genericity

- Generic meanings are universal
- No languages have a specific linguistic marker for marking genericity (Carlson & Pelletier, 1995)
- Languages use readily available forms that also have other meanings
- The distinction between existential and generic meaning is disambiguated by context
- Previous studies have shown that the acquisition of genericity is prone to cross-linguistic effects in the L2 (Ionin, Montrul, Kim, et al., 2011; Snape, 2013; Snape et al., 2013) and in the L3 (Ionin, Montrul, & Santos, 2011; Ionin et al., 2015).



Types of genericity

Kind

- denote an individual as a member of a species

Kaninen kom til
Storbritannia på 1000-
tallet

Rabbit-the came to Great
Britain in the 11th century

Characterising

- generalize over the prototypical representative of a class

En sjiraff har lilla
tunge.

A giraffe has purple tongue

Type-denoting

- abstract entity (unlike tokens which refer to an individual) or an instance.
- non-referential

Det er sunt å ha
hund.

It is healthy to have dog.

(Borthen, 2003)

(Carlson & Pelletier, 1995)

(Halmøy, 2016)

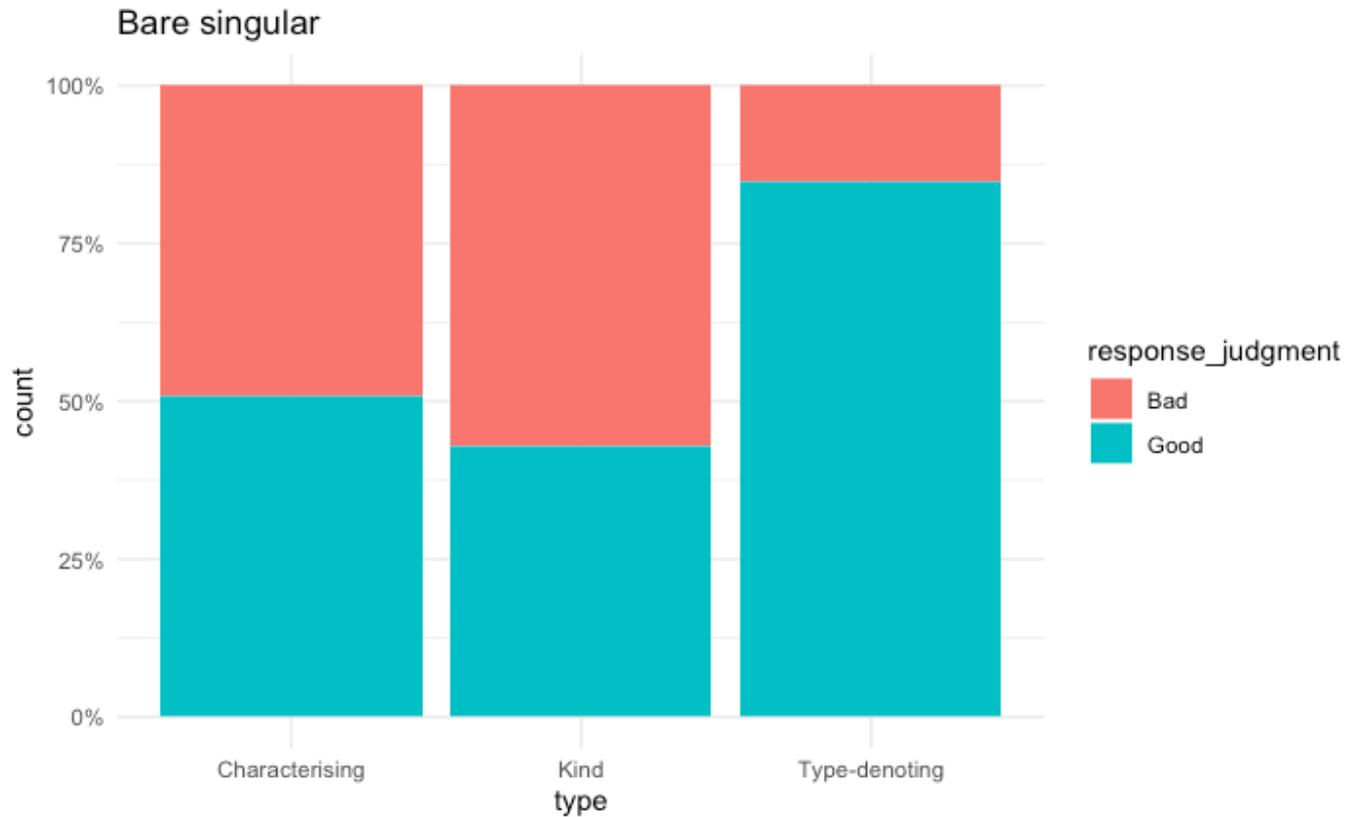
Genericity marking across the 3 languages

		Def. sg.	Indef. sg.	Bare sg.
Polish L1	Kind			✓
	Characterizing			✓
	Type-denoting			✓
English L2	Kind	✓	#	
	Characterizing	✓	✓	
	Type-denoting	#	✓	
Norwegian L3	Kind	✓	#	✓
	Characterizing	✓	✓	✓
	Type-denoting	#	~	✓
		N=E≠P	N=E≠P	N=P≠E

Genericity marking across the 3 languages

		Def. sg.	Indef. sg.	Bare sg.
Polish L1	Kind			✓
	Characterizing			✓
	Type-denoting			✓
English L2	Kind	✓	#	
	Characterizing	✓	✓	
	Type-denoting	#	✓	
Norwegian L3	Kind	✓	#	✓
	Characterizing	✓	✓	✓
	Type-denoting	#	~	✓
		N=E≠P	N=E≠P	N=P≠E

Gradient Norwegian control judgments



Bare sg.



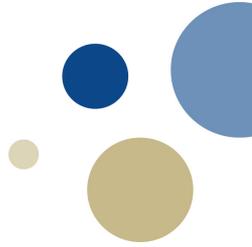
Predictions

- Norwegian shows similarities to both Polish (L1) and English (L2) in the form to meaning mapping of generic expressions
 1. Polish speakers can benefit from both of their languages to master genericity in Norwegian
 2. If there is CLI from the L1 we will see an overgeneralisation of acceptance of the bare singular in characterising and kind conditions
 3. In case of CLI from the L2, the bare form should be accepted sporadically, and the indefinite form overgeneralised in type-denoting conditions

Participants

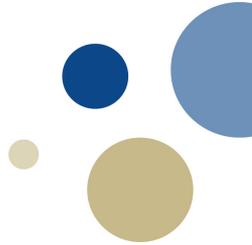
- L1 Pol – L2 Eng – L3 Nor – living in Norway (n=27)
- L1 Pol – L2 Eng – L3 Nor – living in Poland (n=26)

- L1 Eng – L2 Nor – living in Norway (n=39)
- L1 Nor (n=33)



The task

- Timed acceptability judgment task (AJT) with a preceding context
- Designed in OpenSesame Web and distributed through JATOS
- The task was a part of a bigger study (second of three tasks)



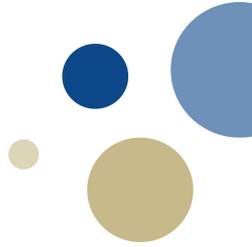
Test items

- Testing 3 forms: Def_sg, Indef_sg, B_sg
- 3 lists, 2 blocks
- The participant saw all the contexts but with only one of the three tested forms
- 48 targets +28 fillers

Generic	Kind	Charactering	Type-denoting
	Elefantfuglen er utryddet.	Tigeren liker å svømme.	Det er sunt å ha hunden.
Non-generic	Specific	Existential	Type-denoting
	Tigeren lekte med et garnnøste.	Elefantfuglen gjemmer seg i det høye gresset.	Jeg fått meg hunden.

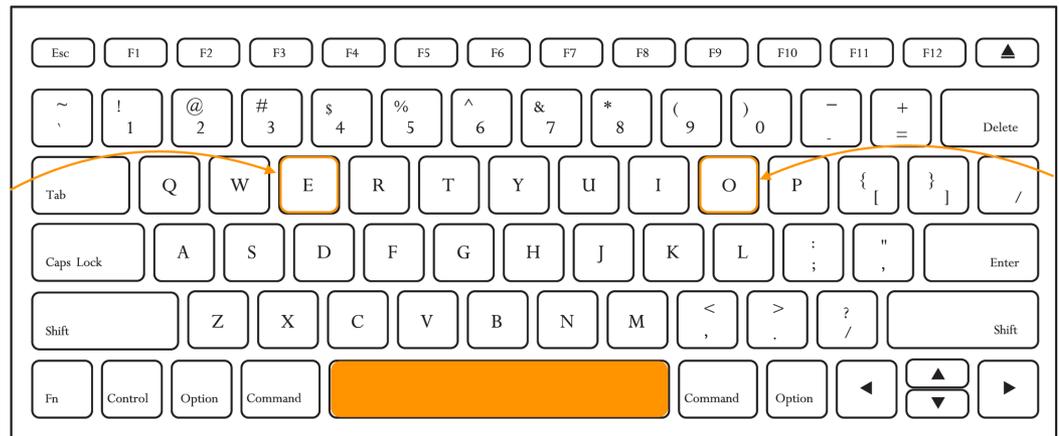
Fillers

- Grammatical vs. ungrammatical
- V2 violation
- The two versions of the same item appeared in different blocks



Procedure

- Fixation point 500ms in the middle of the screen
- Then the context appeared
- The participants were instructed to press the space bar once they have read the context.
- Then the target sentence appeared together with Good/Bad at the bottom of the screen
- We start measuring RTs from when the target sentence appears
- E for Good, O for Bad



AJT- layout

I biologitimen snakker vi om opprinnelsen til forskjellige typer frukt og grønnsaker.
Jeg har akkurat lært at

potet kommer fra Amerika.

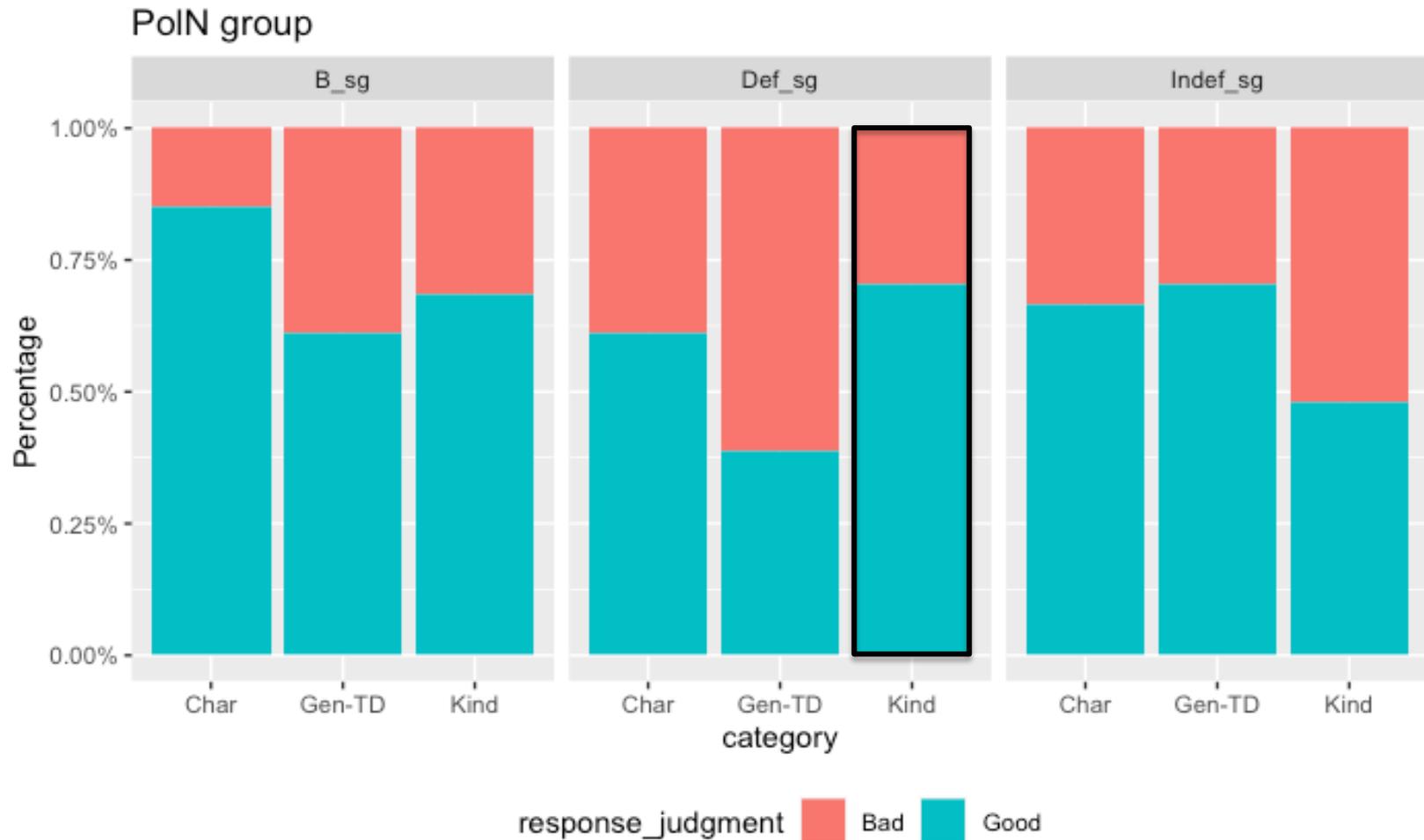
God

Dårlig

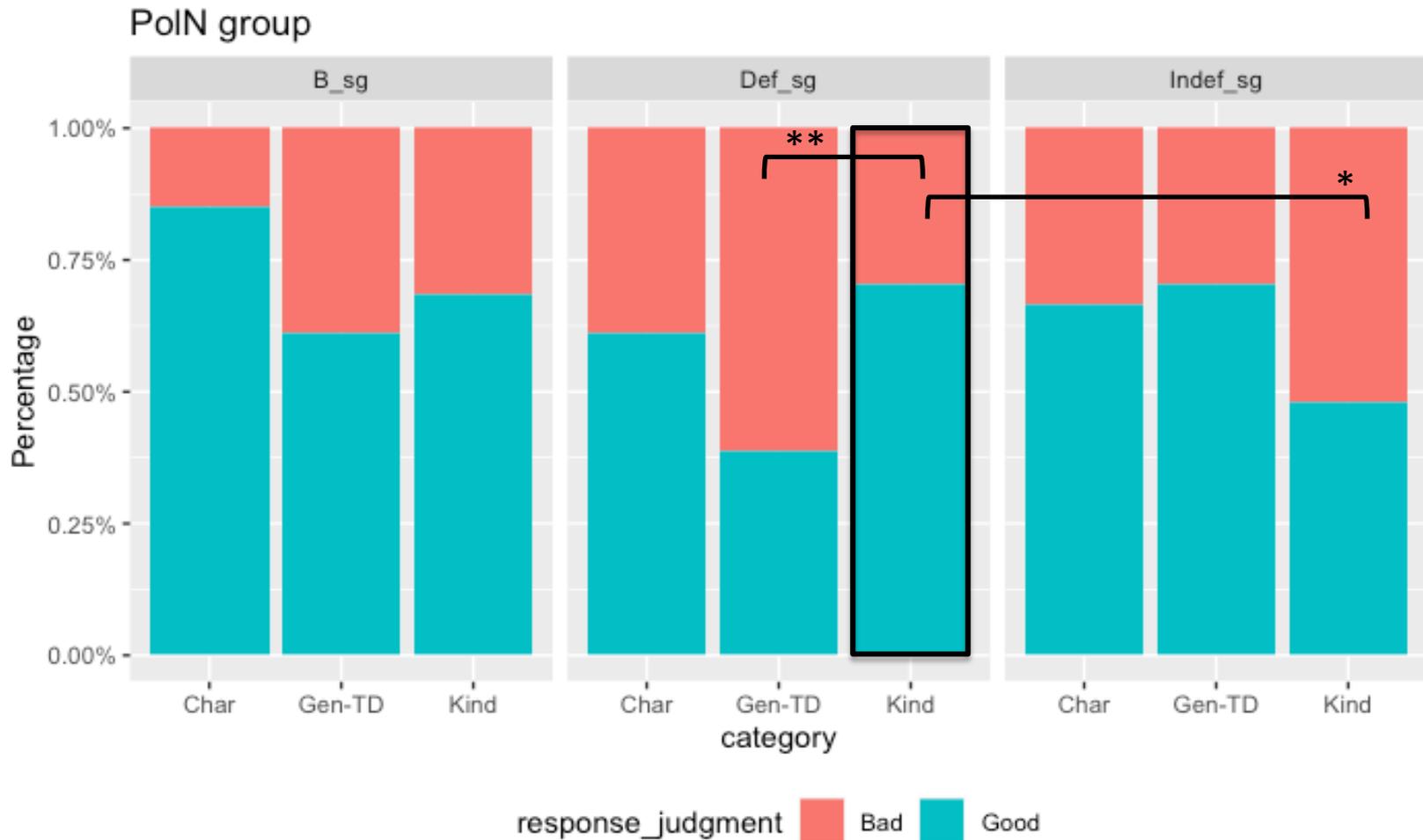
Results

- First, we checked the Fillers to notice if grammaticality had an effect
- No difference between groups for the grammatical fillers.
- Both Polish groups accept the ungrammatical fillers more than the controls.
- Possible proficiency issues?
- An additional test showed that PoIP accepted items with V2-violations significantly more than PoIN.

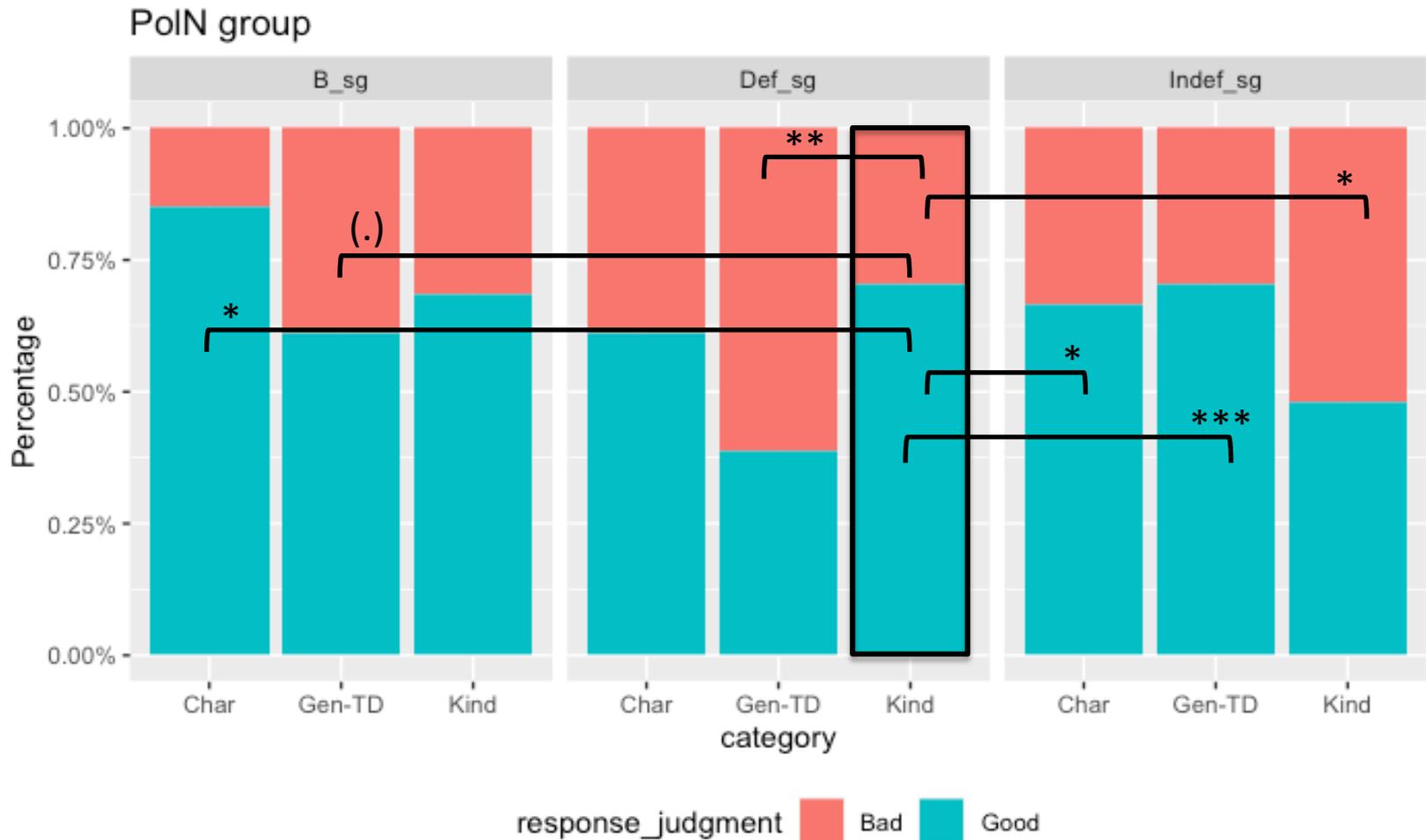
Results- PoIN



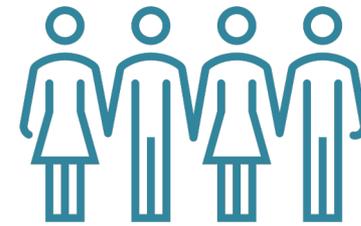
Results- PoIN



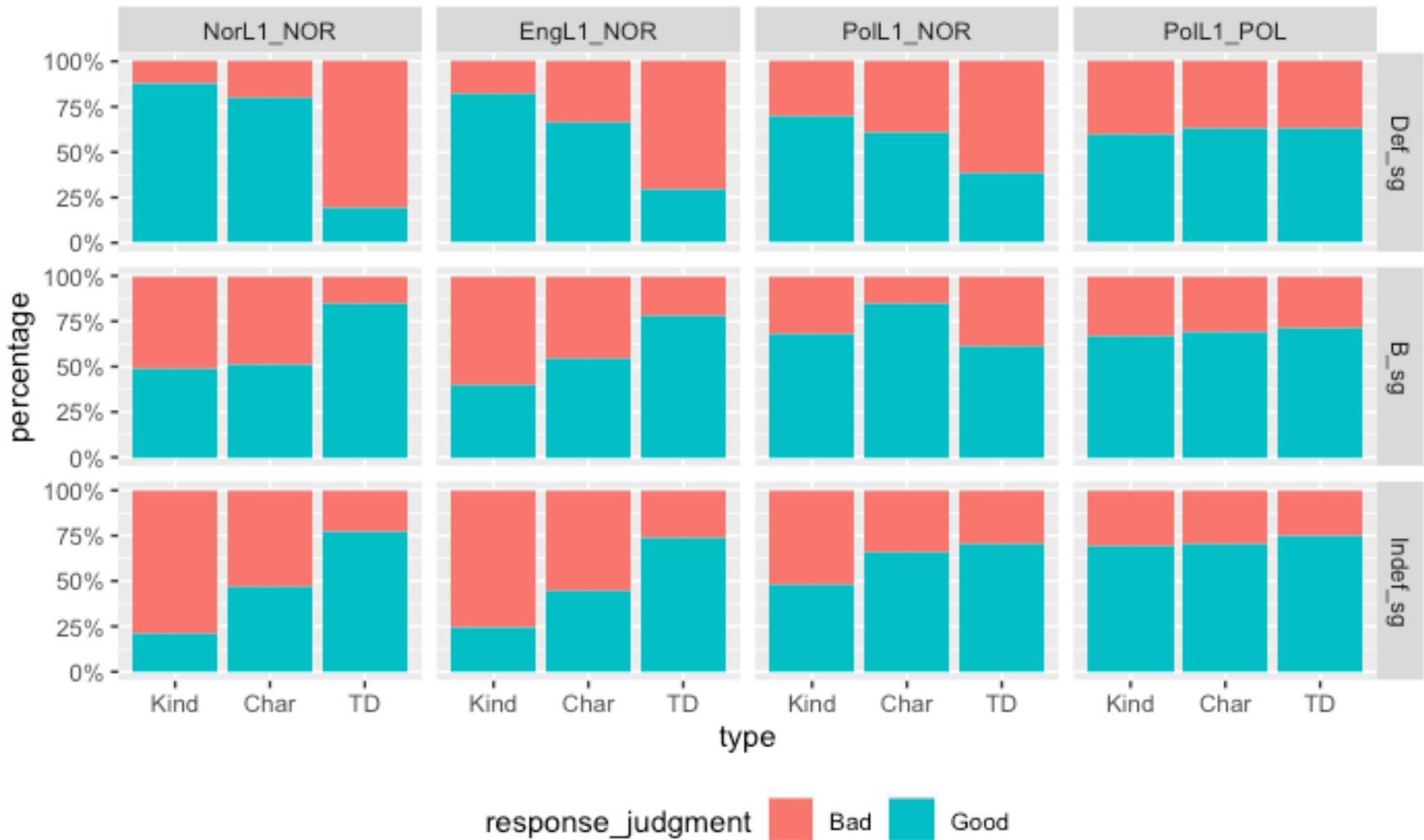
Results- PoIN



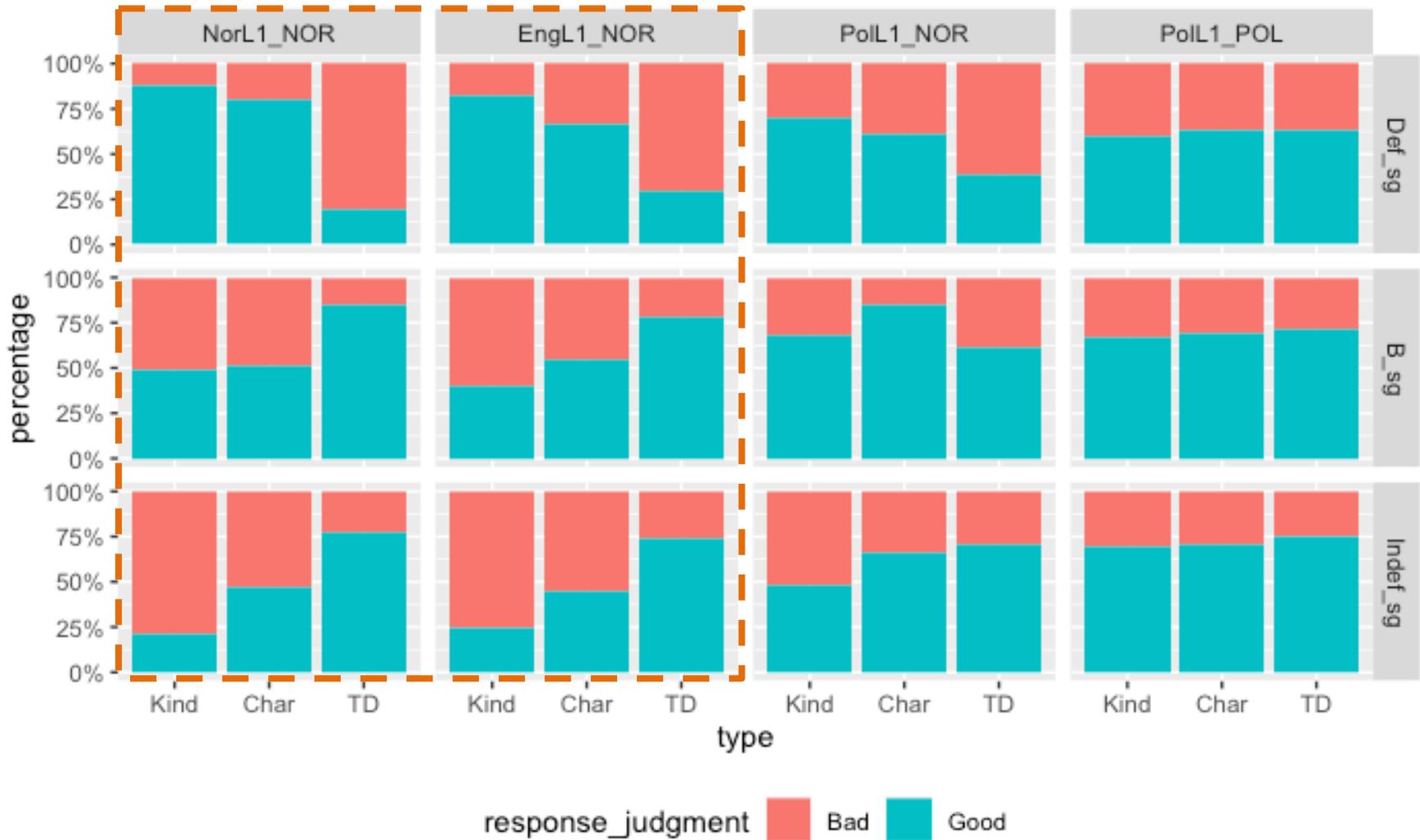
Results-PoIP



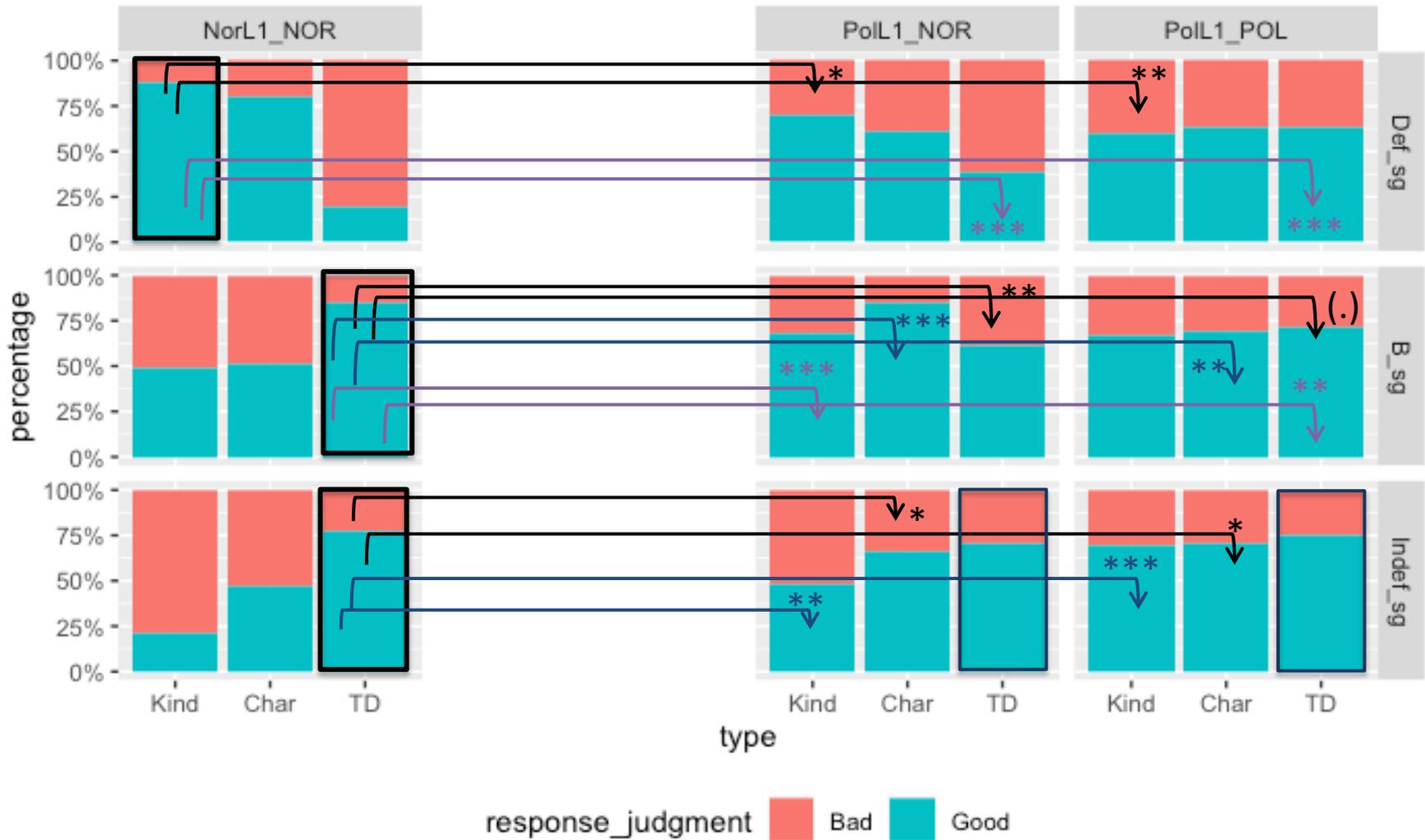
Results- group differences



Results- group differences

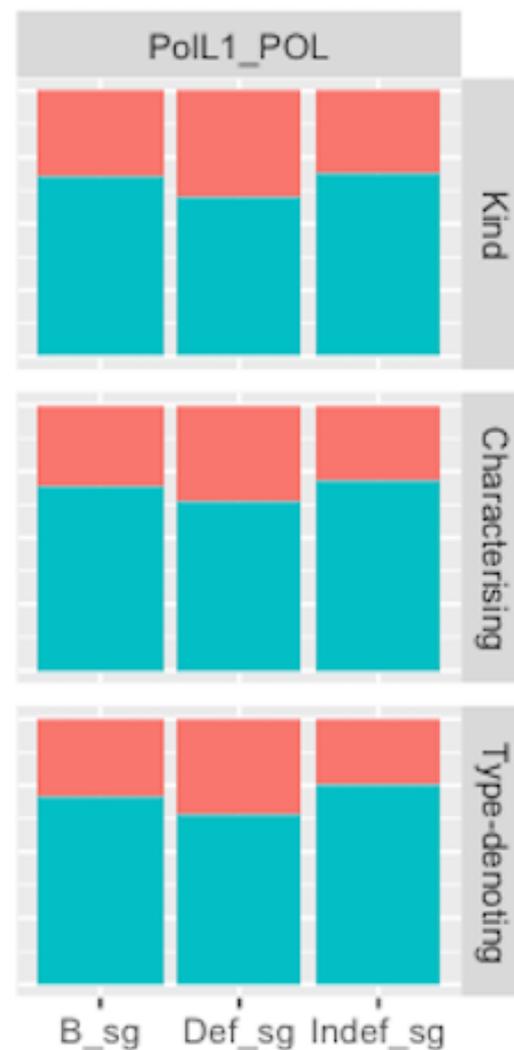


Results- group differences



Remarks

- The PolP group does not seem to make any distinction in judgments based on form and condition
- Perhaps they simply have not grasped the subtle marking of genericity expression in Norwegian
- Their accuracy in the fillers was lower than PolN group



Discussion

- Did we find an overgeneralisation of the bare form?
 - Yes, the bare form is more strongly accepted in the PolN group. In the comparison with natives there is statistical evidence that suggests an over acceptance of this form.
- Were the definite and indefinite form used distinctively?
 - The PolN group differentiated between the use of definite and indefinite forms. PolP did not.
- Was there an overuse of the indefinite form in type-denoting generic conditions?
 - No

Conclusion

- English group pairs with Norwegian natives: is English **beneficial** or are they simply more **proficient**?
- PoLP do not have significant differences in judgments across the generic conditions: **they have not acquired the semantic differences yet**
- PoLN are sensitive to the semantic distinctions, but there is still some overuse of the bare form
- **CLI from L1**
- But! We need to look more closely at their English to see if CLI from English is possible.

Questions?



Selected references

- Borthen, K. (2003). *Norwegian bare singulars*. Det historisk-filosofiske fakultet.
- Carlson, G. N., & Pelletier, F. J. (1995). *The generic book*. University of Chicago Press.
- Halmøy, M. (2016). The Norwegian Nominal System. In *The Norwegian Nominal System*. De Gruyter Mouton.
- Ionin, T., Montrul, S., Kim, J.-H., & Philippov, V. (2011). Genericity distinctions and the interpretation of determiners in second language acquisition. *Language Acquisition*, 18(4), 242-280.
- Ionin, T., Montrul, S., & Santos, H. (2011). Transfer in L2 and L3 acquisition of generic interpretation. *BULD 35 Proceedings*.
- Snape, N. (2013). Japanese and Spanish adult learners of English: L2 acquisition of generic reference. *Studies in Language Sciences: Journal of the Japanese Society for Language Sciences*, 12, 70-94.
- Snape, N., Mayo, M. d. P. G., & Guşrel, A. (2013). L1 transfer in article selection for generic reference by Spanish, Turkish and Japanese L2 learners. *International Journal of English Studies*, 13(1), 1-28.