Psycholinguistics Past Tense 1

English Past Tense

Traditional Characterization: A Rule Plus Exceptions

- 1. General Rule: verb + /-ed/
- 2. Memorized Exceptions: sing \rightarrow sang, bring \rightarrow brought, \dots
- 3. Blocking Principle: more specific (2) blocks (1).

Acquisition

- 1. Children initially memorize forms.
- 2. Children learn and overapply rule.
- 3. Children learn exceptions that block the rule.