

What does the DLT predict will be the more complex structure when the RCs modify an NP in object position of a sentence, as in (3c) and (3d)? That is, which structure should be more complex to process? (Hint: consider ambiguity.) Explain your reasoning in detail.

c. Chinese object extraction, modifying the object NP “official”
doctor met [tycoon invite t_i comp] official_i
‘The doctor met the official who the tycoon invited.’

d. Chinese subject extraction, modifying the object NP “official”
doctor met [t_i invite tycoon comp] official_i
‘The doctor met the official who invited the tycoon.’

4. (5 points) What does the information flow account in Gibson, Desmet et al. (2001) predict will be easier to process: a subject pronoun or an object pronoun, as in (4b) and (4c):

a. Context sentence. John entered the classroom.

b. The TA said hello to him.

c. He said hello to the TA.

Explain your reasoning.

5. (5 points) Provide a Gricean analysis of the following two interactions:

a. Context: Mary is cold. She sees an open window beside John, and she says to John “It’s cold in here” in order to get John to close the window.

b. A mother and father are discussing the behavior of their son, Billy:

Mother: Billy got in trouble at school today.

Father: Well, boys will be boys.

6. (5 points) Describe the predictions of the principle of parsimony (in the referential theory) on the following four sentence structures:

a. VP attachments:

The men painted the doors with new brushes before the festival.

The men painted only doors with new brushes before the festival.

b. NP attachments

The men painted the doors with large cracks before the festival

The men painted only doors with large cracks before the festival

7. (5 points) Murray & Liversedge (1994) examined the processing of the MV/RR ambiguity in referential contexts like the following:

a. Context: One guest vs. two guests in the context

Two people were discussing the food that had been prepared at the barbecue. One was guest that enjoyed meat and the other was a caterer / guest who was a vegetarian.

b. Target

RR: The guest (who was) grilled the steak said it tasted nice.

They found that there was no significant effect of context in initial reading time measures. That is, the ambiguity effect in the one guest context was not reduced in the two-guest context.

Does this result go against the predictions of the principle of referential support (in the referential theory)? If so, why? If not, why? How can we reconcile this result with the principle of referential support?

8. (5 points) Which of the following sentences is likely to be more complex in a null context? Why?

- a. The comet, which the astronomer discovered with binoculars, was the largest known comet of its kind.
- b. The comet that the astronomer discovered with binoculars was the largest known comet of its kind.

Suppose you placed each of the above sentences in a supportive context, as in (c) and (d):

- c. Context for sentence (8a):
An astronomer discovered a comet and an asteroid in similar orbits.
- d. Context for sentence (8b):
An astronomer discovered a comet with binoculars and another with the telephoto lens of his camera.

Now which of sentences (8a) and (8b) is likely to be more complex, and why?

9. (5 points) What do the following theories predict will be the preferred interpretation of the pronoun “him” in each of the following sentences?

Theories to consider: Centering; Parallel preference; causal inferencing; Kehler’s coherence-based pronoun resolution theory.

- a. Nathan disliked Alan and similarly Nicole hated him.
- b. Nathan punched Alan and so Nicole hated him.
- c. Nathan disliked Alan but in contrast, Nicole liked him.

10. (10 points)

Provide an analysis of the coherence structure of the following brief passage (from The New York Times, Oct. 22, 2002), using the clause structure provided. In order to provide the coherence structure, please draw directed links between the numbers below, each directed link indicating a coherence relation (similar to the example in class).

- 1. A Moroccan accused of helping the Sept. 11 hijackers faced a German court on Tuesday in the first trial of an attack suspect,
- 2. admitting
- 3. he had arms training in Afghanistan
- 4. but saying
- 5. he opposed violence.

- 6. Mounir El Motassadeq,
- 7. a student,
- 8. is charged with more than 3,000 counts of aiding and abetting murder
- 9. and with belonging to the Islamist cell in Hamburg that led the attacks 13 months ago.

- 10. The 28-year-old electrical engineering student told the court that
- 11. as a Muslim he opposed violence
- 12. but conceded
- 13. he had known Mohammed Atta.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

11. (5 points) What kind of an event-related potential (ERP) waveform would you expect for the comparison between (11a) and (11b) at the point of processing the verb “visit”? Why?

- a. Which doctor did the man visit on Tuesday?
- b. Which apple did the man visit on Tuesday?

What ERP pattern would you expect if the verb “visit” were replaced by the verb “eat”?