Not All Pronouns are Resolved Rapidly Online
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Experiment 1
Visual world paradigm (Tobiaschitz et al., 1996).
Task: Listen to stories while viewing scenes containing the mentioned characters.
Eye movements recorded (Tobi system).
Experimenter-object (subject-biased) verbs: confuse, frighten, scare, surprise.
Experimenter-subject (object-biased) verbs: admire, like, love, hate.

Result: Faster resolution for experimenter-object verb sentences (replicating previous findings).

Experiment 2
Are experiencer-object verb sentences resolved more quickly?
or
Are they resolving to 1st-mention easier?

Design:
Use passive sentences instead of active.
"D.W. is liked by Doris very much, because she is such a nice girl. Can you point to her?"

Result: 1) Resolving to 1st-mention does not make experiencer-subject verb sentences fast.
2) Experimenter-object verb sentences fast even when resolving to 2nd-mention.

Experiment 3
Implicit Consequentiality (Stewart, Melhorn & Sanford, 1988).
Object(s)-biased: "Because Sally, frightens Mary’s she is really gonna..." subject-biased: "Because Sally, likes Mary’s she is really gonna..."

Inference refers to effect not to cause.

Result: 1) Slow for both verb types.
2) No strong bias for experiencer-object verbs.
Seems to be due to tense.

Conclusions:
- Pronoun resolution is not always fast.
- Not even to the 1st-mention.
- Rapid resolution in implicit causality may depend on causal semantics for the verb.
- Experimenter object verbs encode cause → fast resolution of implicit causality.
- Experimenter-subject verbs don’t encode cause → slow resolution? (see Prevosti, 1991)??
- Experimenter-object verbs are easy to process → fast resolution.
- Experimenter-subject verbs are hard to process → slow resolution?

Future directions:
- Test implicit consequentially in past tense.
- Test other subject-biased implicit causality verbs.
- Test other object-biased implicit causality verbs (e.g., judgment verbs).

References: