Introduction

How do we interpret anaphoric expressions?

A fixture in anaphoric expressions: reduced anaphors refer to the topic.\[6\]

Recent cross-linguistic studies: stimulus is selected as antecedent in psych-verbs, regardless of pronoun form (full or $\emptyset$):\[2,3,4,5\]

- stimulus-experiencer verbs: Sally frightened Mary because (she) . . . .
- experiencer-stimulus verbs: Sally feared Mary because (she) . . . .

But, a limitation:
- not a within-language, within-verb, and/or within-task comparison; or
- the findings based on production.

Pro-drop languages: $\emptyset$ refers to the subject, full pronoun acts as a topic shifter.

A previous hypothesis: subject bias for reduced anaphors disappears in psych verbs. There is an experiencer bias, instead (c.f., cross-linguistic findings).

- But, a limitation:
  - Not experimentally tested, based on intuition.
  - Experimenters were animate & stimulus was inanimate in the examples.

Study

Aim

- To systematically test which referent (i.e., stimulus or experiencer) is selected as the antecedent of an ambiguous pronoun in Turkish psych verbs.
- To test the effect of anaphoric form (full vs. $\emptyset$).

Procedure

- Two rating studies modeled on Hartshorne & Snedeker (2013).
- Participants read 24 sentences with ambiguous anaphors in two conditions: stimulus-experiencer and experiencer-stimulus verbs.
- Sentences were conjoined with ‘because’.
- The main clause (with SOV order) had two referents with (+) human and (+) female features.
- The conjoined clause had an ambiguous anaphor (Study-1: full-pronoun; Study-2: $\emptyset$-pronoun).
- The sentences ended with a non-word adjectival predicate (dakmuk).
- Participants were asked to choose the referent of the non-word adjective.

Test items

Stimulus-experiencer:

1. Bahar Ceren’i çok büyükül-yor çünkü (o) son derece dakmuk. Bahar Ceren-Acc a lot dazzle-Prog because (she) extremely dakmuk ‘Bahar dazzles Ceren a lot because she is extremely dax.’

Who is dakmuk?

Bahar Ceren

Experiencer-stimulus:

2. Bahar Ceren’i çok arzulu-yor çünkü (o) son derece dakmuk. Bahar Ceren-Acc a lot desire-Prog because (she) extremely dakmuk ‘Bahar desires Ceren a lot because she is extremely dax.’

Who is dakmuk?

Bahar Ceren

Predictions

- If stimulus bias (a la cross-linguistic studies):
  - object should be selected in the experiencer-stimulus verbs,
  - subject should be selected in the stimulus-experiencer verbs.

- If experiencer bias (a la Turan, 1998):
  - subject should be selected in experiencer-stimulus verbs,
  - object should be selected in stimulus-experiencer verbs.

- If the full pronoun acts as a topic shifter also in psych-verbs:
  - object should be selected in full pronoun sentences,
  - subject should be selected in zero-pronoun sentences,
  - regardless of the verb type.

Discussion

- The anaphor was not resolved towards the experiencer
  - when the referents were controlled for animacy,
  - perhaps because the sentences appeared in a causal structure.

- Stimulus-experiencer verbs were strongly biased towards the stimulus
  - regardless of form,
  - corroborating with a cross-linguistic tendency.

- However,
  - anaphoric form had a significant effect on experiencer-stimulus verbs,\[7,8\]
  - experiencer-stimulus verbs were more malleable,
  - this pattern challenges all current theories of anaphora.

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