

Active cataphor resolution skips some positions

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BACKGROUND

- Encountering a cataphor triggers **active** expectation for an antecedent [1].
(1) After **she** went to the store, **the girl** **the boy** **Gender-Mismatch Effect (GMME)**
- Why? Two ideas:**
 - Interpret pronoun as quickly as possible** ("**Diagnostic Locality**" [2]):
 - Parser posits coreference with linearly closest NP.
 - Anticipation of prominent referent** ("**Targeted Prediction**" [3]):
 - Parser posits coreference with main subject NP because:
 - Subject NPs are predictable (all clauses have them)
 - Subjects are prominent (pronouns prefer prominent antecedents)
- Active resolution at **Main Subject** in (1) does not distinguish hypotheses.
 - Subject is both *linearly closest* and *most prominent position* for an antecedent.

Key finding ▶ Active search for cataphors targets **prominent** positions over **linearly close** positions, consistent with **Targeted Prediction**.

OUR STUDY: DISSOCIATING LINEAR ORDER AND PROMINENCE IN CATAPHOR SEARCH

- Cataphor in preposed adjunct and NAME as First NP in main clause.
 - First NP:** NAME was either **Main Subject** or **Possessor**.
 - Gender Match:** cataphor either **match** or **mismatch** NAME
- Expect GMME at NAME in Main Subject Position
- Key question:** Do we see GMME at NAME when it is a possessor?
 - ▶ **Diagnostic Locality** predicts **GMME**
 - ▶ **Targeted Prediction** predicts **NO GMME**

Completion task norming:

While a parent drove him to school, Christopher's _____
- **100% possessive continuations**

REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

[1] van Gompel & Liversedge. 2003. *JEP:LMC*. [2] Aoshima et al. 2004. *JML*. [3] Kush & Dillon. 2021. *JML*.
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EXPERIMENT 1 (N_{SUBJ}=93, N_{ITEM}=24)

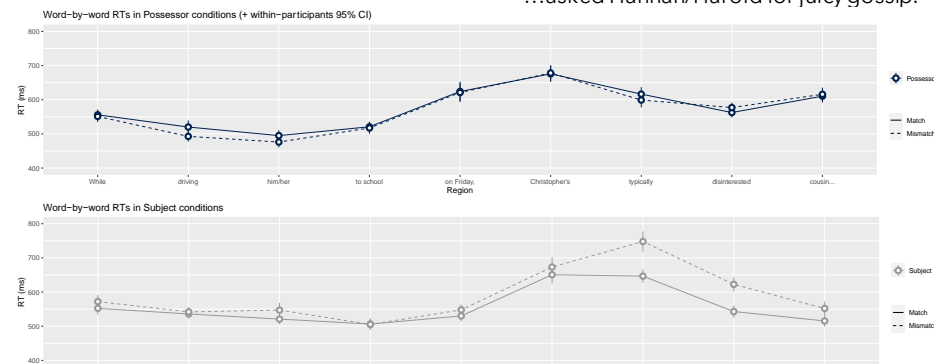
Main Subject

While a parent drove **her** to school on Friday, **Christopher** typically ...
While a parent drove **him** to school on Friday, **Christopher** typically ...

Possessor

While driving **her** to school on Friday, **Christopher's** typically disinterested cousin ...
While driving **him** to school on Friday, **Christopher's** typically disinterested cousin ...

...asked Hannah/Harold for juicy gossip.



EXPERIMENT 2 (N_{SUBJ}=70, N_{ITEM}=24)

Main Subject

While a parent drove **her** to school on Friday, **Christopher** typically ...
While a parent drove **him** to school on Friday, **Christopher** typically ...

Possessor

While a parent drove **her** to school on Friday, **Christopher's** typically ...
While a parent drove **him** to school on Friday, **Christopher's** typically ...

