

There is reconstruction for Condition C in English questions

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Condition C reconstruction

- Theoretically foundational (Barss 1986, Heycock 1995, Fox 1999, Takahashi & Hulseley 2009, i.a.)

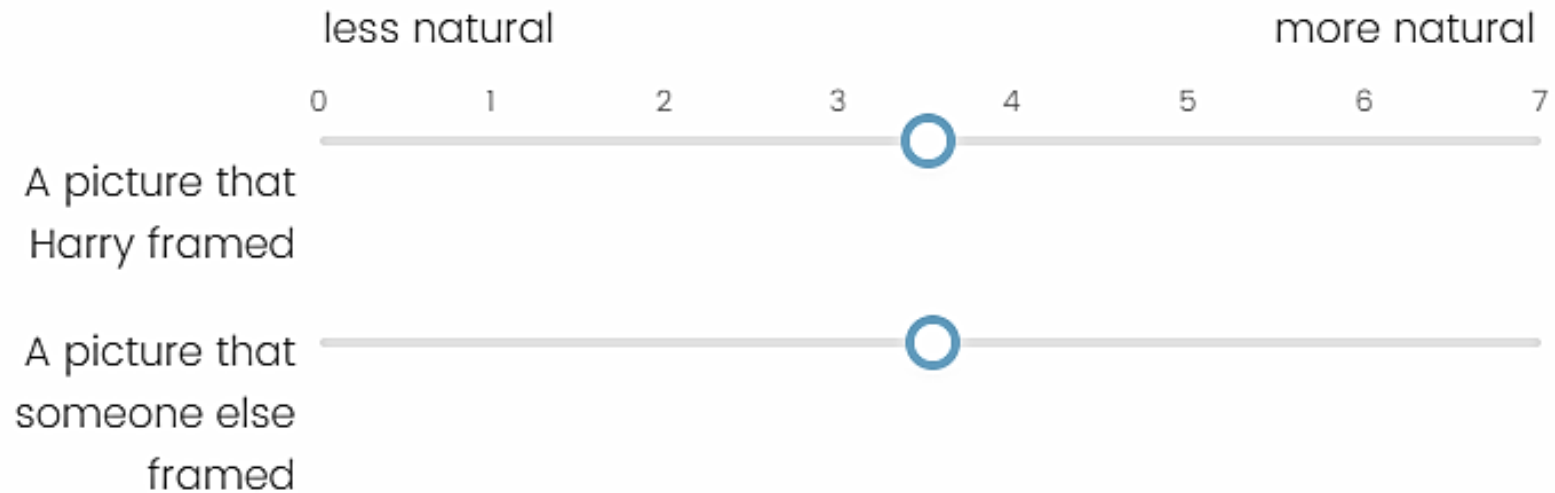
- (0)
- a. *He_i framed the picture of Harry_i.
 - b. (*)Which picture of Harry_i did he_i frame *t* ?
 - c. (*)Which picture of Harry_i did Meghan say he_i framed *t* ?

- Empirically questioned in recent experimental work (1b) (Bruening & Al-Khalaf 2019), especially at a distance (1c) (Adger et al. 2017)
- A formal, large-scale acceptability rating experiment
- There is Condition C reconstruction in English questions (1b,c)

Task

"Which picture of Harry did he frame?"

What is this asking about?



Design

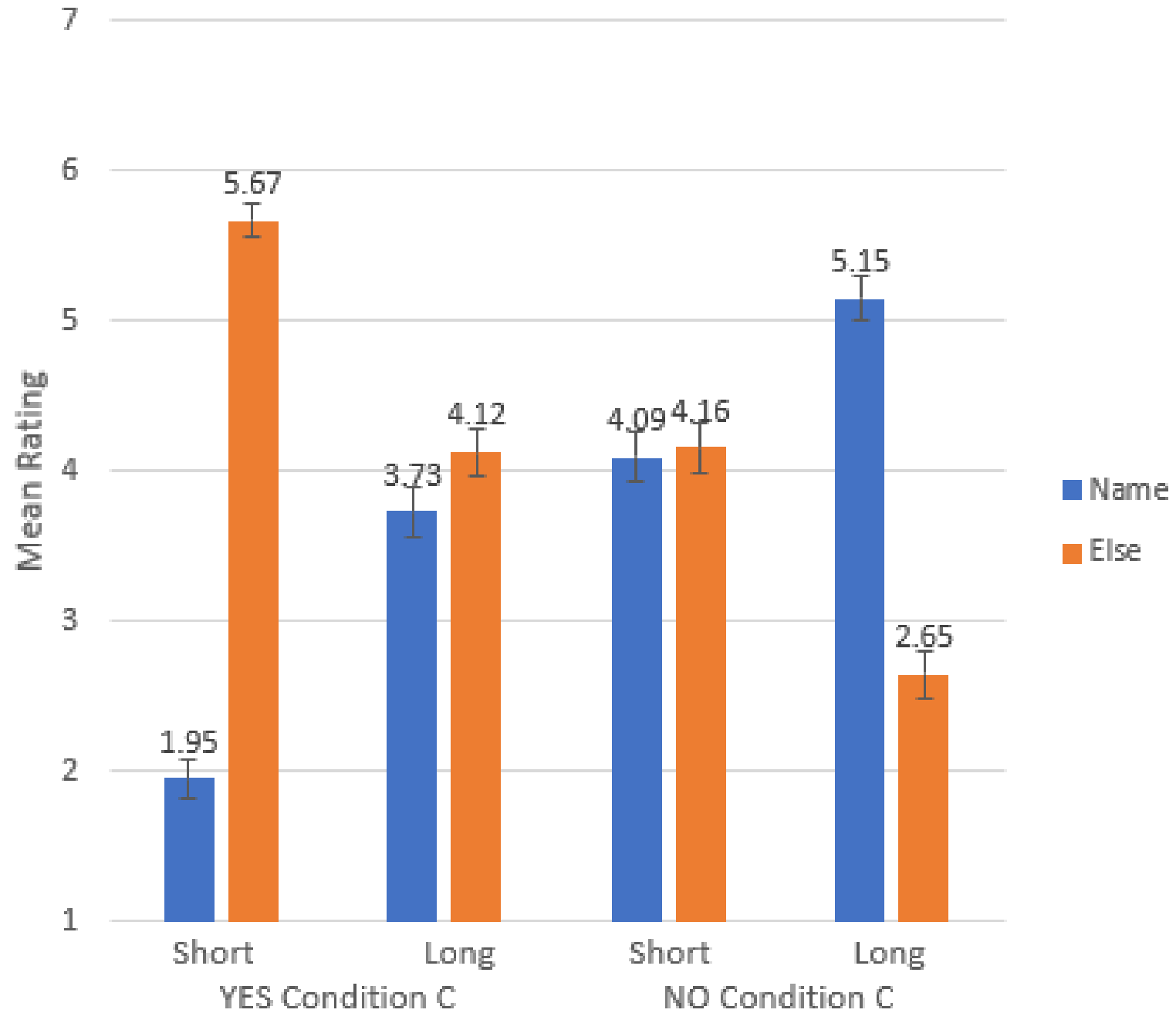
(I) Condition C	(II) Distance	Item + (III) Response – NAME / ELSE
YES	SHORT	(1) [Which picture of Harry] did he frame <i>t</i> ? A picture that Harry / someone else framed.
	LONG	(2) [Which picture of Harry] did Meghan say he framed <i>t</i> ? A picture that Harry / someone else framed.
No	SHORT	(3) [Which picture of Harry] <i>t</i> made him laugh? A picture that made Harry / someone else laugh.
	LONG	(4) [Which picture of Harry] <i>t</i> made Meghan say he has good taste? A picture that suggests Harry / someone else has good taste.

Analysis

- Items: 12 sets, Latin square design, four lists
- $n = 223$, mixed effects models
- Baselines:

GOOD	(5) [Which statue] did Flo say she bought t ? A statue that Flo bought. A statue that someone else bought.	NAME 6.29 ELSE 1.94
BAD	(6) [Which statue] did he say Carol made Gary sell t ? A statue that Gary was speaking about. A statue that someone else was speaking about.	NAME 1.61 ELSE 5.79

Results



Comparison I: N and Task

- Number of participants, statistical power
 - 223 vs. 53/91/89 (Adger et al. 2017), 75/75/70 (Bruening & Al-Khalaf 2019)
- Task probed referential possibilities; cf. Georgi et al. (2018), German
- Adger et al. (2017): coreference possible, Yes or No?
 - Direct task encourages shallow processing
 - 'Else' option not salient
- Bruening & Al-Khalaf (2019): coreference with Name1 or Name2?
 - Referential preferences in complex sentences

Comparison II: Accent

- ‘Eavesdropping’ context, no special accent on the pronoun
- Georgi et al. (2018): no Condition C reconstruction with German strong demonstrative pronouns
- Yoshida et al. (2019): stripping, where ellipsis precludes accent:

(7) A: Her_i friends reported that the manager wrote to John.

B: No, [to Mary_i]_j ~~her_i friends reported that the manager wrote t_j.~~

(8) A: She_i reported that the manager wrote to John.

B: *No, [to Mary_i]_j ~~she_i reported that the manager wrote t_j.~~

Conclusion

- Condition C reconstruction with preposed DPs in English is experimentally observable, even at a distance
- Validates the theoretical literature that relies on its existence

References

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