

ABSTRACT

Metaphor comprehension models such as that of Giora [19, 17] account for a general view of metaphor processing by attributing a priority to the saliency of the linguistic expressions. The hypothesis is that metaphorical interpretation of a base term is accessed initially if it connotes the salient meaning of that term. In contrast, cognitively taxing models [11, 3] attribute priority to contextual fit from the initial reading processes suggesting that metaphorical interpretation of a base term can be accessed given the sufficient prior discourse context. Typically, models of metaphor comprehension aim to explain how prior linguistic context affects the mapping between the base and the target terms while ignoring the role of perspective taking. Thus, in this thesis, it is aimed to answer whether the processing of a metaphor is different when the addressee is naive to the context of the metaphor use compared to when the addressee knows about the context of the metaphor. Therefore, an eye-tracking experiment, which allows dissociating between early and later processing stages of metaphor comprehension, was conducted to show whether different contextual factors influence the time it takes to process novel metaphors. The analyses of regression path durations suggest that supportive context facilitates processing of the metaphorical expressions but only when the addressee is aware of such context. The results reveal the importance of perspective taking in real-time metaphor comprehension.