
Prominence relations between individual and propositional referents

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Abstract

We investigate the generally assumed, but as-of-yet untested hypothesis that there is a relationship between the discourse prominence of larger units (e.g., clauses/propositions) and that of the smaller units contained within them (e.g., individual referents). In two German anaphor resolution experiments, we manipulate prominence relations at the clause/propositional level, testing effects on the prominence of individual subject referents in the first experiment, and effects on the prominence of the propositions themselves in the second. Results indicate that the hypothesis that individual constituents ‘inherit’ prominence from the larger unit in which they are contained seems to hold.

Keywords: Prominence, Anaphora resolution, Propositional anaphora

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