Abstract

The parsing strategy used in English could be non-universal. Since Chinese is one of the most widely used languages and it differs much from English, it is worth studying the Chinese parsing. The present study included three one-way within-subject design experiments, with the two sentence conditions as IV and the average reading time per character as DV. They were carried out to examine the mechanisms of pronoun assignment in Chinese and the effect of context. Experiment 1 showed that readers had a preference to regard the first possible antecedent as the anaphor of the target pronoun. Experiment 2 and 3 showed that the first referencing phenomenon would be canceled out by the presence of an additional contextual information in front of the pronoun, regardless whether the semantic information of the context favoured first referencing or second referencing. Implications and suggestions are discussed.