

Experimental Studies of Free Indirect Discourse
Block IV: Empirical Evidence for FID
Effects—what else could be investigated?

Thomas Weskott

CRC Textstrukturen
Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen

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`thomas.weskott@gmail.com`

- So far, we have seen a number of (quasi-) experimental results having to do with FID, or, in a broader sense, with perspective-taking.
- Part of them were measured on-line; but so far, we have seen no on-line effects of FID in the strict sense.
- List of reported effects:
 - Bray (2007), Exp.2: effect of FID on judgment of the text as exhibiting “dual voice”
 - Kotovych et al. (2011), Exp.3: effect of FID on “transparency”
 - Cohen & Kaiser (2012): effect of FID on anaphor resolution preferences; correlation with mental rotation abilities
 - László (1986): no on-line effect of perspectivisation on reading times; off-line effects in recall and imagery task

- O'Brien & Albrecht (1992), Exp.3: on-line effect of identificational *instruction* on sentence reading times
 - Weskott et al. (2012): you'll hear about that tomorrow; but I have to admit here already that we didn't find on-line effects, either.
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- So it seems that the effects of FID proper elude on-line measurement.
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- This could have several reasons.

- For one, the effect could just really not be there, or too small to be detected. That is, the on-line processing of a stretch of discourse is not influenced *measurably* by the presence of FID, although the resulting representation shows some differential properties (off-line).
- We could be using the wrong methods—self-paced reading may simply not be sensitive enough to capture the effect. Would eye-tracking during reading, or ERP be an alternative? Both methods have a high temporal resolution and might be able to detect differences that are blurred by the self-paced reading procedure.
- Downsides of both methods:
 - lab time is expensive;

- huge technical effort;
- procedure is cumbersome for participants (electrode cap, recalibration, etc.)
- Most importantly: both presuppose an exact prediction about the time course of the effect, and presuppose an exact control of the input at the point of measurement (i.e., lexical material (ideally) has to be identical at the point of measurement)
- Alternative methods? What about the whole *grounded/embodied cognition* line of research? Couldn't the investigation of FID piggy-back on that?
- Susanna Salem's Dissertation project: replication of the findings of Brunyé et al. (2009), plus FID manipulation.

- Brunyé et al. (*PsychScience*, 2009), Exp.1: stimuli of the type
'[I/you/he] [am/are/is] slicing the tomato'
followed by picture verification task
(matching/non-matching).
- Exp.2 had stimuli of the type:
'[I/you/he] [am/are/is] a 30-year-old deli employee. [I/you/he]
[am/are/is] making a vegetable wrap. Right now, [I/you/he]
[am/are/is] slicing the tomato.'

- Picture stimuli:



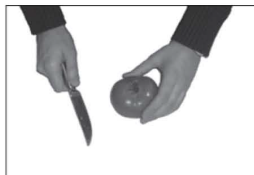
Internal/Performing



Internal/Non-Performing



External/Performing



External/Non-Performing

Fig. 1. Sample images (internal/external and performing/not performing) corresponding to Event Description 1 (slicing the tomato). Internal images were shot from a first-person perspective. external images were shot from a third-person perspective.

- Results

Perspectives and Embodiment

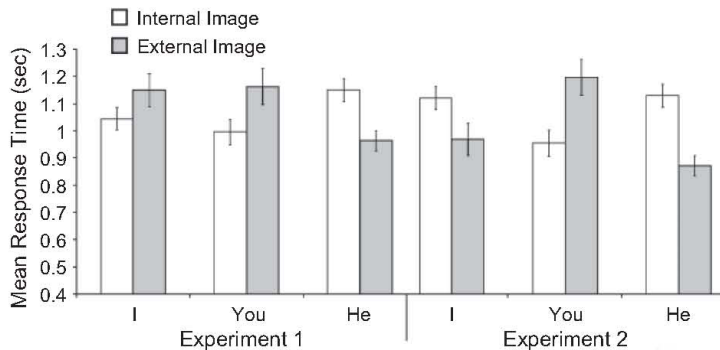


Fig. 2. Mean response times in Experiments 1 and 2, as a function of pronoun type (*I*, *you*, *he*) and image-verification type (internal, external). Internal images were shot from a first-person perspective; external images were shot from a third-person perspective. Error bars show standard errors.

- Susanna is planning to add an FID condition that should—per hypothesis—modulate the mental simulation effect. (E.g., the 3rd person condition could show a reduced verification latency for the internal image in the +FID as compared to the neutral condition; this would speak in favor of FID as a trigger for shifted-origo and/or identification).

- Further possibilities to use mental simulation effects? Claus & Dalati (2011; talk at AMLaP), self-paced knob-turning experiment; mental simulation effect for gapped verb in stimuli of the form

'John opens a juice bottle and Jim ▼ a lemonade bottle.'

('▼' is the point where the effect of knob-turning direction appeared).

- Could FID boost that effect, too?
- How about other effects of FID? Identification: someone suggested measuring skin resistance.

Q: How would you go about designing such a study?

- Further possibilities of testing FID: how about testing cues for the *ending* of a passage to be construed as FID? That is, applying the battery of tests (dual voice, identification, attribution, shifted origo, anaphor resolution, memory effects) to the “inverse” phenomenon? To the best of my knowledge, nobody has ever done that so far.
- Further reasons for the failure to find (on-line) FID effects:
- We could be using the wrong FID cues—maybe the ones tested so far have too low a cue validity, or cue validity varies too much across texts/participants (recall Frank’s class this morning—differences between film students and of literary science; Exp.3 with stronger effect due to rereading).

- How could we control for these differences? Use more sophisticated sampling techniques; control for literary experience (Frank mentioned the author recognition test (ART) by Stanovich & West (1989); the score on that test could be used as a covariate (much in the same way as Cohen & Kaiser used spatial abilities as a correlate of FID sensitivity)
- Generally: correlative studies using individual variables might be combined with hypothesis-testing methods; there are statistic procedures (ANCOVA, LMMs) that allow us to make use of covariates in explaining variance.
- A further problem: reading literary text might involve a higher degree of rereading than other genres. We could control for that—how?

- Frank also mentioned the problem of *ecological validity*: that would be violated if we would control for IVs in the lab that interact with our DV in everyday life. That's important to keep in mind (cf. rereading).
- Which other types of evidence could we recruit to learn about the processing and representation of FID?

- What other types of—possibly non-experimental—evidence could there be? How about Peggy's PhD project? Rainer's? Franziska's? Annika's?

- Any other suggestions, comments, questions, complaints?

Thank you!

Slides are online under
<http://weskott.textstrukturen.uni-goettingen.de/>