

BRIEF RESEARCH REPORT

**Resumptive elements aid comprehension of object
relative clauses: evidence from Persian***

RAMIN RAHMANY AND HAMIDEH MAREFAT

University of Tehran

AND

EVAN KIDD

Australian National University

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigated the role of resumption in the interpretation of object relative clauses (RCs) in Persian-speaking children. Sixty-four ($N=64$) children aged 3;2–6;0 ($M=4;8$) completed a referent selection task that tested their comprehension of subject RCs, gapped object RCs, and object RCs containing either a resumptive pronoun or an object clitic. The results showed that the presence of a resumptive element (pronoun or clitic) had a facilitative effect on children's processing of object RCs. In both cases object RCs with resumptive elements were interpreted more accurately than gapped subject and object RCs, suggesting that resumptive elements ease processing burden in syntactically complex contexts because they provide local cues to thematic role assignment.

INTRODUCTION

Relative clauses (RCs) have been studied extensively in developmental and adult psycholinguistics (Gibson, 1998; Kidd, 2011). A common theme in

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