Coming in, or going out?

Measuring the effect of discourse factors on perspective prominence

Carolyn Jane Anderson
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Perspective Prominence for *come*

- Two experiments exploring how discourse factors affect the prominence of perspective holders for *come*

- Factors:
  - Definiteness
  - Subjecthood
  - Topicality
  - First mention

- Conclusion: both *global* and *local* prominence play a role in determining the perspective holder for *come*
Global Prominence

Anderson (1983): named individuals are more likely to be referred to in narrative continuations*

Garrod (1988): psych predicates are more likely to be interpreted according to the first mentioned individual’s perspective*

Hinterwimmer (2019): the first mentioned individual in a narrative is a better FID protagonist+

Meuser (2020): named individuals are more likely to be FID protagonists†

† Experimental, not significant  * Experimental, significant result  + Theoretical
Local Prominence

Kaiser & Lee (2017a,b): **PPTs** prefer **experiencers** as their judge *

Kaiser (2020): **PPTs** prefer the **source of information** as their judge *

Kaiser (2020): **PPTs** and **reflexives** prefer **subjects** as their judge *

Hinterwimmer (2019): individuals who are **sentient wrt the eventuality introduced in the preceding sentence** are good **FID protagonists** +

Meuser (2020): **subjects** are more likely to be **FID protagonists** †

† Experimental, not significant  
* Experimental, significant result  
+ Theoretical
Perspectival Motion Verbs

*Come* requires the **perspective holder** to be located at the destination of motion.

Listener Perspective

Speaker Perspective
Definite: Dave purchased a sofa for the set of the new play.
Indefinite: One of the stage managers purchased a sofa for the set of the new play.

A Subject: He got a 10% discount on it from a salesclerk.
B Subject: A salesclerk gave him a 10% discount on it.

A Perspective: When he ___ to deliver it, he got free tickets for the show.
B Perspective: When he to ___ to pick it up, he gave him free tickets for the show.

Prediction: In the A Perspective condition, ‘come’ will be used most in the Definite+A Subject condition.
Experiment 1 Results

![Box plot showing participant mean across different conditions.](image)
Experiment 2 Design

Mention: Since petsitters can be very expensive, Virginia relied on her neighbors.
Theme: Since petsitters can be very expensive, many people rely on their neighbors.

A Subject: Virginia asked Eric to take care of her cat during her week-long vacation.
B Subject: Eric offered to take care of Virginia's cat during her week-long vacation.

A Perspective: The day before she left, he ______ by to pick up her keys.
B Perspective: The day before she left, she ______ by to drop off her keys.

Prediction: In the A Perspective condition, ‘come’ will be used most in the Mention+A Subject condition.
Experiment 2 Results

![Bar chart showing participant means for different conditions: Theme, Subj. A, Theme, Subj. B, Mention, Subj. A, Mention, Subj. B. Each condition has two bars representing perspectives A and B.](image)
Bonus Material
Local and Global Prominence Feed Each Other

subjecthood  topicality

definiteness  pronominalization

sentient wrt to eventualities

discourse coherence

first mention
Subject’s Perspective is Eliminated

I am coming to the bank.