

## The Impact of Syntactic Priming on Language Learners' Perception of Relative Clauses

**Authors :** Kaine Gulozer

**Abstract :** Listening comprehension in a foreign language context has been a constant challenge for Turkish speakers of English. Syntactic priming (SP) of relative clauses might affect the perception of subsequent sentences of identical structure and this could have an impact on the listening comprehension of second or foreign language learners. There has been little attempt to investigate the syntactic priming of English subject relative clauses and object relative clauses in relation to perception for the learners of English in Turkish context. This study investigates SP effects on low-proficiency EFL learners' production of English relative clauses. Both qualitative and quantitative method along with a pre-test and post-test tasks were adopted, recruiting 62 EFL learners to receive a six-week listening instruction on relative clauses. Testing instruments for language production included the two tasks: (1) the visual- cued presentation and recall and (2) the auditory-cued presentation and recall. Students' listening comprehension in task 1 and 2 were recorded and transcribed. Fifteen of the participants were also interviewed. The results of the dependent samples t-test analyses revealed that SP had a significant effect on the overall perception of relative clauses.

**Keywords :** listening comprehension, relative clauses, structural priming, syntactic persistence, syntactic priming

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