

The influence of credibility in the representation of conditionals, tested by two tasks: choosing and evaluating situations.

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Abstract: The influence of credibility in the representation of conditionals, tested by two tasks: choosing and evaluating situations.

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Does the relationship established in a conditional influence its representation? Colloquial sentences such as "if a person climb many steps, s/he will be tired" may be more credible and probable than others such as "if a person climbs a few steps, s/he will be tired". The aim of this study is to try to evaluate whether the plausibility of the relation expressed in a conditional influences its comprehension. Participants were shown two kinds of conditionals with four situations in which the antecedent and the consequent could be affirmed or negated. In one task, participants had to choose the situation consistent with the meaning of the conditional. In the other task, they had to evaluate the semantic consistency of each of the four situations. The results for the two tasks show differences in the influence of the content in the representation of the conditional. These results are discussed according to the main theoretical models.