

“There is more to prime than meets the eye.”

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(Co-authored paper with Petar Milin, Dusica Filipovic-Durdevic, and Peter Hendrix)

The role of orthographic, morphological and semantic similarity in the masked priming paradigm was investigated in a study of the processing of case-inflected nouns in Serbian. A self-paced sentence reading experiment, combined with masked primes for target words, followed by a control experiment with words presented in isolation, revealed that at the short prime duration of 50 ms, effects of semantic similarity and effects of morphological paradigmatics are present, in addition to the standardly observed effects of orthographic similarity. The experimental results were modelled successfully by combining the compound cue theory of Ratcliff and McKoon (1988) with a discriminative learning model using the equilibrium equations of the Rescorla-Wagner model (Danks, 2003). Results argue against generative models of morphology critically assuming sparse lexicons (Halle & Marantz, 1993; Pinker, 1997). Results also challenge the hypothesis that the early stages of visual information uptake are dominated exclusively by morpho-orthographic processing (Rastle & Davise, 2008). Conversely, Word and Paradigm morphology (Blevins, 2003) is supported, as well as exemplar-based models of linguistic processing (Daelemans & Bosch, 2005) and the Bayesian Reader model (Norris & Kinoshita, 2008).