

## An ERP Examination of a Pragmatic Repeated Name Penalty

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We used event-related potentials (ERPs) to investigate whether pragmatic cues could modulate the facilitation effects of lexical repetition in discourse. Participants were presented with short discourse scenarios: Sentence 1 introduced two characters; Sentence 2 linked one of these characters to a specific entity (“Chloe bought some hamburgers”); Sentence 3 either referred to this character or to a different character (“She” or “Nick”), followed by the word “also,” and then either the same entity (“purchased hamburgers”) or a new entity (“purchased chicken”). The results demonstrated that readers quickly used both lexical and pragmatic information during comprehension. Specifically, (1) repeated entities (“hamburgers”) evoked smaller N400s than did new entities (“chicken”) and (2) when comparing the repeated entity conditions, infelicitous entities (“hamburgers” in “She also purchased hamburgers”) evoked a larger N400 than did felicitous entities (“hamburgers” in “Nick also purchased hamburgers”), providing evidence for a pragmatic repeated name penalty.