

## INTRA-SENTENTIAL REFERENTIAL BEHAVIOUR OF GERMAN DEMONSTRATIVES

Umesh Patil, Peter Bosch, Lea Penning (University of Osnabrück, Germany)

Experimental and corpus research has demonstrated that personal pronouns (PPros) have a slight preference towards the subject antecedent in German, whereas demonstrative pronouns (DPros) from the *der* paradigm have a clear preference towards the object antecedent (the *subject avoidance hypothesis*, Bosch et.al. 2007, Kaiser 2010). Due to the assumption that German DPros are R-expressions and can not be bound syntactically (Wiltschko 1999), research in the past has focused on the contrast between the two types of pronouns only in inter-sentential configurations – the potential antecedents appeared in the preceding sentence. Moreover, German demonstratives have only been considered from the *der* paradigm, not from the *dieser* paradigm. The latter is intuitively, and by occurrence frequency, associated with a formal language register, while the *der* demonstratives are associated with the informal language register (Bosch et.al. 2003, Weinert 2007).

To extend the previous results and following up recent challenges to the view that DPros cannot be bound (Hinterwimmer, in print), in the current work, we contrast the behaviour of PPros and DPros in an intra-sentential configuration where the pronoun is syntactically bound by its potential antecedent. We also contrast the behaviour of two types of DPro paradigms (*der* vs. *dieser*). We compare both these contrasts across formal and informal registers. We employ the forced choice methodology with three alternatives – one pronoun of each forms and a ‘neither of the two’ option. Participants (n=88) were shown sentences as in (1), and they had to select one of the three options (e.g., *er*, *der* and *weder noch* [neither]). The two pronouns provided in the options had the same gender, and the subject and object of the sentence had different genders, which ensured that the intended antecedent was unambiguous and participants had to decide which pronoun suits better for that antecedent; both masculine and feminine pronouns were tested. Participants were told that parts of the sentences they were presented had been lost and they had to choose the suitable option such that the sentence sounded stylistically consistent. At the beginning of the experiment, participants were shown a paragraph that was either a formal or an informal text, and this served as an example of stylistic consistency. Effectively, the within participants factors in the design were *type of the pronoun* (at a time two out of the three – *er*, *der* and *dieser*) and the *grammatical role of the antecedent* (subj. vs. obj.). The *register* (formal vs. informal) was a between participant factor.

(1) *Die Richterin informierte den Staatsanwalt, dass [(er/der/-weder noch-) / (er/dieser/-weder noch-) / (dieser/der/-weder noch-)] einen weiteren Fall annehmen müsse.*

“The judge informed the prosecutor that [er/der/-neither- ] must take on another case.”

Based on the results of the earlier studies and native speakers’ intuitions about the register suitability for the *der* and *dieser* paradigms, we expected the following: (i) the DPros are chosen more often for object antecedents than for subject antecedents in the *er* vs. *der* contrasts, (ii) a similar pattern for the *dieser* paradigm in the *er* vs. *dieser* contrasts, (iii) the effect of *der* demonstratives is stronger in the informal register, while the effect of *dieser* demonstratives is stronger in the formal register, (iv) the PPros do not show a very strong tendency towards either of the antecedents, (v) in the *der* vs. *dieser* contrasts, *der* paradigm pronouns are preferred in the informal register and *dieser* paradigm pronouns are preferred in the formal register, and (vi) based on Hinterwimmer (in print), binding of DPros should in principle be possible, though more easily by objects than by subjects. The results confirmed predictions (ii), (iv), (v), and (vi), and partially confirmed (iii). All the expected effects were found mainly for the *dieser* paradigm; the *der* paradigm DPros were rarely chosen, except in the contrast with *dieser* in the informal register.

In sum, in an intra-sentential configuration where the pronoun is syntactically bound by the antecedent, German demonstratives in the *dieser* paradigm largely, but not entirely, avoid the subject antecedent, while the demonstratives in the *der* paradigm are seldom used for either subject or object antecedent. The *dieser* demonstratives are preferred in the formal register while the *der* demonstratives are preferred in the informal register, for both subject and object antecedents. PPros do not show a strong tendency towards either antecedent.