

C07 WP3 Exp1 Personal and demonstrative pronouns in ditransitives (#21280)

Created: 03/25/2019 02:29 AM (PT)

Public: 05/20/2021 02:05 AM (PT)

Author(s)

Clare Patterson (University of Cologne) - cpatters@uni-koeln.de

Petra B. Schumacher (University of Cologne) - petra.schumacher@uni-koeln.de

1) Have any data been collected for this study already?

No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?

To test the resolution preferences of German personal and demonstrative pronouns (er, der and dieser) in ditransitive constructions, when three potential antecedents are available. Items consist of two sentences each. The first sentence contains a ditransitive construction, that is, three-argument constructions containing an agent or source (NP1), a proto-recipient (NP2) and a theme (NP3). The second sentence begins with a pronoun (er/der/dieser) referring to one of the three NPs and describes a state or event relating to that referent.

Predictions

- NP1ref conditions: We expect that the personal pronoun er is the most suitable pronoun for referring to the NP1. Both der and dieser should elicit lower scores in this condition because they tend to avoid reference to prominent referents. This should lead to significantly higher scores for er compared to both der and dieser.
- NP2ref conditions: NP2 is intermediate between NP1 and NP3 with respect to thematic role prominence. Given previous evidence that er is somewhat flexible in its reference, we expect it to receive high ratings in this condition (though possibly not as high as in the NP1ref conditions). Based on previous findings it is difficult to predict how well the demonstrative pronouns will be rated here. If the pronoun der has a proto-patient preference, then it should score highly in this condition. If, on the other hand, der avoids reference to more prominent referents, it should receive lower ratings (given that the NP2 as a proto-recipient shares some agentive features). In contrast to Zifonun et al who claim that dieser is reserved for the last-mentioned antecedent, and following instead findings from Özden (2016) and Lange (2016), we predict that the NP2 is a possible referent for dieser, which should lead to high scores for dieser in this condition. Additional predictions can be made on the basis of animacy: der may prefer reference to animate entities and dieser to inanimates. If this is the case, then der should receive higher scores in this condition than dieser.
- NP3ref conditions: The NP3 has the lowest prominence in terms of thematic role hierarchy; it is also last-mentioned, and inanimate. Therefore both der and dieser should receive high scores in this condition. If animacy also plays a role, then dieser should receive higher scores in this condition than der. If er is truly flexible in its reference it should also receive high scores; however, if er prefers a higher-prominence antecedent the scores for er will be significantly lower here than scores for der and dieser.

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.

Participants will be asked to rate how good each scenario (item) sounds from a scale of 1=sehr seltsam ("very strange") to 7=perfekt ("perfect").

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?

Two three-level factors are fully crossed in order to create nine conditions. The factor Pronoun manipulates which pronoun type is presented: er/der/dieser. (In half the items the pronouns are masculine, and the remaining items have feminine pronouns (sie/die/diese)). The factor Referent manipulates which NP the pronoun refers to (NP1, NP2 or NP3). The 36 items are distributed across 9 lists in a Latin-square design; each participant is assigned to one list. Participants therefore see each of the 36 items in one condition only, and see 4 items per condition.

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.

Ratings (1-7) for each item (including fillers) from each participant will be converted to z-scores. Participants' z-scores for the experimental items will be analysed using a series of linear mixed-effects models. As the predictions relate primarily to the reference forms for each NP separately, and because there are slight differences in the materials between NP1ref, NP2ref and NP3ref conditions, a separate model will be run for each level of Referent (NP1ref, NP2ref and NP3ref). The model will contain the fixed factor Pronoun (er; der; dieser) and random intercepts for participant and item; the inclusion of random slopes for pronoun will be determined using the rePCA function in the package RePsychLing (Baayen et al 2015).

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.

Mean z-scores for the implausible/unnatural fillers will be compared with those from the normal fillers to ensure that they receive lower ratings, as a sanity check for the task. This will be tested using a linear mixed-effects model with a fixed effect of filler type (normal, implausible) and random intercepts for participant and item. Additionally, each participant's mean z-score for the two filler types will be compared, and any participant whose scores for implausible fillers are higher than scores for the normal fillers will be excluded. Only adult native German speakers will be included. Participants who do not complete the task will be excluded. Participants who disclose language-related disorders will be excluded.

7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.

We aim to have 54 participants (6 per list). Data from 60 participants will be collected, to allow for exclusions.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)

The main comparisons should be between the different referential forms within each Referent condition, since this is where we have maximum comparability. However, there are good reasons for exploring scores across the three Referent conditions:

- To explore the flexibility of reference of er, compare scores for er across NP1ref, NP2ref and NP3ref conditions
- To compare the scores for both demonstrative pronouns in the lower prominence (NP2ref and NP3ref) conditions, since previous claims are contradictory or unclear here

To explore the reference preferences for er across the three pronoun types, a model containing the fixed factor Referent will be run on the er conditions. For the demonstrative pronouns, a model containing the fixed factors Pronoun (der; dieser) and Referent (NP1ref, NP2ref and NP3ref) will be run on the der and dieser conditions. Random intercepts and slopes as described in the main analysis.