
German demonstrative pronouns in contrast

Derya Cokal*¹, Robert Voigt , and Klaus Von Heusinger

¹University of Cologne – Germany

Abstract

German has two demonstrative pronouns, the short form (e.g., *der*) and the long form (e.g., *dieser*). Previous studies have shown that in their anaphoric use, they contrast with the personal pronoun (*er*) in that they refer to less prominent antecedents. How contrast affects the meaning/function of *der* and *dieser* has not been examined in online reading. We predicted that the use of the short form (*der*) and its antecedent selection additionally depends on contrast. Our eye-tracking reading experiment results suggest that the processing of the demonstrative *der* in a context with contrast is faster than in a no-contrast context.

Keywords: pronouns, demonstratives, German, eyetracking reading, *der*, *dieser*

*Speaker