

On German D-Pronouns as Anti-Logophoric: Limiting a Competition-Based Account

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German D-Pronouns

- The German pronominal system offers an alternative form to the regular personal pronoun, which differs morphologically in a prefixed *d-*, e.g. *er* ('he') vs *der*:

(1) Patrick_P wollte mit Florian_F Tennis spielen,
P. wanted with F. tennis play

aber { **er**_{P/(?)F} / **der**_{#P/F} } war erkältet.
but he_P he_D was had-a-cold

'Patrick_P wanted to play tennis with Florian_F
but **he(PPro_{P/(?)F}/DPro_{#P/F})** had a cold.'

- while the *p*-pronoun can in principle refer to either antecedent, the *d*-pronoun shows a strong object bias

Patel-Grosz & Grosz (2017)

- PG&G argue that *d*-pronouns differ from *p*-pronouns in being structurally more complex, while their semantic difference is negligible

- the distribution of *d*-pronouns and their pragmatic effects then get derived by appealing to the (simplified) economy principle below:

(2) Minimize DP!
Don't use a more complex structure (≈in terms of nodes), unless its use serves a purpose.

- PG&G discuss three areas where (2) applies:

1. emotivity 2. disambiguation 3. register-shift

- an illustration of 1. is shown below; see (1) above for 2.

(3) Gestern hatte Paul eine gute Idee.
yesterday had P. a good idea
'Yesterday Paul had a good idea.'

a. {**Er** / **Der**} beschloss, Maria einzuladen.
he_P he_D decided M. to-invite
'**He(PPro/??DPro)** decided to invite Maria.'

b. {**Er** / **Der**} ist einfach clever!
he_P he_D is simply clever
'**He(PPro/DPro)** is just clever!'

- ❖ BUT WHY DO D-PRONOUNS HAVE THE EFFECTS IN 1.-3?!

D-pronouns are anti-logophoric!†

D-pronouns licensed *de re*, but not *de se* (cf. epithets)

(4) **De Se Context:** *d-pro in (6) unacceptable!*
Marie finds an old manuscript of hers, which she is impressed by, and says: "I'm a genius!"

(5) **De Re Context:** *d-pro in (6) acceptable!*
Marie finds an old manuscript, which she is impressed by, but does not realize it is her own. She says: "Whoever wrote this is a genius!"

(6) Marie glaubt, dass { **sie** / **die** } ein Genie ist.
M. believes that she_P she_D a genius is
'Mary believes that **she(PPro/DPro)** is a genius.'

D-pronouns licensed by overt Perspective-phrases

(7) Patrick kommt aus Wien.
P. comes from Vienna
'Patrick is from Vienna.'
a. {**Er** / **Der**} mag Semantik.
he_P he_D likes semantics
'**He(PPro/??DPro)** likes semantics.'
b. {**Er** / **Der**} mag Semantik, laut Florian.
he_P he_D likes semantics, according-to F.
'**He(PPro/DPro)** likes semantics, according to Florian.'

D-pronouns blocked in Free Indirect Discourse

(8) Es war Winter. Linus schaute auf Stephis Foto.
it was winter L. looked at S.'s picture
{**Er** / **Der**} würde sie heute heiraten.
he_P he_D would she today marry
'It was winter. Linus looked at Stephi's picture.
He(PPro/#DPro) would marry her today.'

(9) Damals war Winter. Linus hatte auf Stephis Foto
then was winter L. had at S.'s picture
geschaut. {**Er** / **Der**} hat sie an dem Tag geheiratet.
looked he_P he_D has she at the day married
'Back then was winter. Linus had looked at Stephi's picture. **He(PPro/DPro)** married her that day.'

- D-PRONOUNS CARRY PERSPECTIVAL PROPERTIES!

Deriving PG&G's Pragmatic Factors

- If we adopt a view on which *d*-pronouns are anti-logophoric (= cannot co-refer with the perspective center), given the data in (4)-(9), we can explain PG&G's pragmatic factors in 1.-3.:

1. *d*-pronouns express emotivity because they indicate that their referent is not the perspective center, rendering the perspective of the speaker more salient!
2. *d*-pronouns disambiguate because they are more restrictive in their referential properties!
3. *d*-pronouns are less formal because a speech situation necessarily contains a speaker and renders her salient, while written language renders the author invisible

Sentence Exclamations

- Surprisingly, there are contexts that require the use of a *d*-pronoun and render a *p*-pronoun infelicitous:

(10) (Trump wants more immigrants from Norway.)
{**#Er** / **Der**} hat sie doch nicht mehr alle!
he_P he_D has them PART not more all
'**He(#PPro/DPro)** is out of his mind!'

- these data suggest that an account of competition between forms is still needed, for instance by assuming that sentence exclamations convey marked meanings that require the use of marked forms (cf. Davis & Potts 2010)

Dialectal Variation

- It seems that Southern varieties of German do not accept the *d*-pronoun in (6) regardless of context
- this could be due to the fact that these varieties offer a clitic as a third option, suggesting that the properties of a depend on the language's "cut" (cf. Patel-Grosz to appear)

References

DAVIS & POTTS 2010, AC • HINTERWIMMER & BOSCH 2018, *Pronouns in Embedded Contexts*
• PATEL-GROSZ & GROSZ 2017, LI • PATEL-GROSZ TO APPEAR, L&P

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