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## The interaction of syntactic and prosodic cues on clausal prominence and reference resolution

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The prominence status of referents in a discourse seems influenced by subordination: in configurations with a main clause and a subordinate clause, cf. (1a), the second clause-subject is subsequently less frequently pronominalized than when the second clause is also a main clause, cf. (1b) (e.g., Miltsakaki, 2011). We argue that this is the result of the relative prominence of the propositions, for which syntactic subordination is but one cue. Another is the type of prosodic boundary separating the clauses. We investigate how syntactic and prosodic cues direct the interpretation of clauses in complex causal sentences as more or less integrated, which in turn affects the accessibility of the referents contained within each clause.

145 German native speakers heard audio recordings of mini-discourses containing two subject referents of the same gender. Discourses consisted of a main clause followed either by a subordinate clause (causal *weil* + verb-final, (1a)), or a main clause (causal *denn* and V2, (1b)). The interclausal prosodic boundary was also manipulated: as a rise (H%) or fall (L%). A following third clause contained an ambiguous pronoun as subject of a nonce verb. Participants were asked which of the two subject referents the pronoun referred to (2x2, forced-choice).

- (1) Nadja hat vegane Burger gekauft  $\begin{cases} H\% \\ L\% \end{cases}$   
*Nadja has vegan burgers bought*  
a. weil Sabine kein Fleisch isst. Sie *daupte*. [main-sub]  
*because Sabine no meat eats. She dauped*  
b. denn Sabine isst kein Fleisch. Sie *daupte*. [main-main]  
*because Sabine eats no meat. She dauped*

More ambiguous pronouns were expected to be resolved to the first clause-subject in the main-sub condition (1a) than the main-main condition (2b), since main clauses are more prominent than subordinate clauses (e.g., Miltsakaki, 2011). An interaction effect obtained such that in the main-sub condition, H% effected higher resolution for the first referent than L%, while in the main-main condition, this trend was reversed. This complicates the picture of the role of prosodic boundaries for integration in the literature (cf. e.g. Sanfelici et al., 2020).

**References:** • Miltsakaki, E. 2011. Not all subjects are born equal: A look at complex sentence structure. In E. Gibson & N. J. Perlmutter (eds.), *The processing and acquisition of reference*, 355–380. Cambridge: The MIT Press. • Sanfelici, E., C. Féry & P. Schulz. 2020. What verb-final and V2 have in common: evidence from the prosody of German restrictive relative clauses in adults and children. *Zeitschrift für Sprachwissenschaft* 39(2). 201–230.