

A prosodic production study of the German response particles *ja*, *nein* and *doch* YesNo2 (Cologne)

Previous research on the German response particles *ja*, *nein* and *doch* (Claus, Meijer, Repp & Krifka 2017) has revealed that the acceptability of *ja* and *nein* as affirming answers to negative assertions – see (1a-b) – shows great inter-speaker variability. A majority of speakers (60-70%) judges *ja* to be more acceptable than *nein*. A minority judges *nein* to be more acceptable than *ja*, or finds both particles equally acceptable. For rejections of negative assertions – see (1d-f) – or for responses to positive assertions – see (2) – acceptability ratings are much more homogenous.

- (1) A: Peter schnarcht nicht.
- a. B: %Ja. (= Peter schnarcht nicht)
 - b. B: %Nein. (= Peter schnarcht nicht)
 - c. B: #Doch. (= Peter schnarcht nicht)
 - d. B: #Ja. (= Peter schnarcht)
 - e. B: ?Nein. (= Peter schnarcht)
 - f. B: Doch. (= Peter schnarcht)

- (2) A: Peter schnarcht.
- a. B: Ja. (= Peter schnarcht)
 - b. B: Nein. (= Peter schnarcht nicht)
 - c. B: # Doch.

In our poster presentation we will discuss an upcoming experiment exploring potential sources of the inter-individual variation. Claus et al. (2007) suggested that the variation *inter alia* might be due to individually different grammars, which on the one hand might lead to the preference for *ja* vs. *nein*, respectively, and on the other hand might be responsible for similar acceptability judgements for *ja* and *nein* in some speakers. In the latter case, speakers might take into account what they know other speakers do to express affirmation, rather than what they would do themselves. However, a previous forced choice reading experiment by Frühauf, Claus, Repp, Meijer & Krifka (2017) suggests that even when given the choice to pick the most fitting response particles, German speakers show inter-individual variation.

To explore this issue further, another factor that might play a role for the acceptability/choice of response particle needs to be explored: intonation. Speakers might use a different prosody when they use an affirming *nein* vs. a rejecting *nein*, that is prosody might have a disambiguating function. All the previous studies used written stimuli and written responses. In the upcoming experiment, speakers will orally produce their choice of response particle in reaction to auditory stimuli in a dialogue situation. The responses will be analyzed on the one hand for the choice of particle and on the other hand for the prosodic properties of the particle in affirming vs. rejecting responses.