German pronouns show distinct referential biases:

Der Kunde kauft den Tisch.
The customer buys the table.

Er/Der befindet sich an der Warenausgabe.
He is at the wrapping counter.

Referential biases (a):
PPro (‘Er’) → Topic antecedent
Dpro (‘Der’) → Focus antecedent

Research Questions
What if semantic subcategorization conflicts with these referential biases?
- Which cognitive mechanisms compensate for referential conflicts?
- Convergence of participants’ brain activity and behavioural responses?

19 Participants read 120 short discourses (30 per condition) while the EEG was recorded.
They rated the understandability of each discourse.

Referential Conflicts Boost Working Memory Load
Converging Evidence from Behavioural and Brain-Imaging Methods

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References