

LANGUAGE IN SOCIAL INTERACTION 2

LISI 2 – 2025

8:45

Introduction: Current Trends in Research
on Language in Social Interaction

**Alexander Haselow &
Elzbieta Adamczyk**

Bergische Universität Wuppertal

9:00 **KEYNOTE**

Continua of (In)Subordination in Social
Interaction: The Case of French *si* 'if'-
Clauses

Simona Pekarek Doehler
Université de Neuchâtel

10:00

How Construction Grammar Benefits
from an Interactional Perspective:
Raised Eyebrows and Stance-Related
Uses of *Tell me about it*

Claudia Lehmann
Kathol. Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt

10:30

Embodied Linguistic Resources in
French Interaction: The Case of 'tu vois'
(you see) and 'tu sais' (you know)

Loulou Kosmala
Université Paris-Est Créteil

11:00 **COFFEE**

11:30

Final *aber* ('but') in Spoken German – Its
Functions and Grammaticalization
Potential

Nadine Proske & Mojenn Schubert
*Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache,
Mannheim*

12:00

Lexical Intonation, Syntactic Position, and
Social Interaction

Patricia Noel
Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

12:30 **LUNCH**

14:00

Shortcuts through the Shared Semantic
Network: How Participants Build on Inter-
actionally Established Common Ground
to Draw Argumentative Inferences

Oliver Spiess
Universität Basel

14:30 **KEYNOTE**

Honorific Pronouns in Middle English: A
Socio-Pragmatic Perspective

Olga Timofeeva
Universität Zürich

15:30 **COFFEE**

16:00

Cross-cultural (Im)Politeness and Altered
Speech Acts in Polish, German and
English: Contradiction and Disagreement
in 17th and 18th century Normative
Multilingual Grammars

Matylda Włodarczyk
Adam Mickiewicz University

16:30

Investigating Hybrid Speech Acts in
Historical Discourse

Julian Häde & Johannes Lässig
Bergische Universität Wuppertal

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Book of Abstracts

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KEYNOTE I**Continua of (in)subordination in social interaction: the case of French *si* 'if'-clauses**

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The past decade has seen a burgeoning interest in insubordination and related phenomena across a wide range of languages (e.g., papers in Evans & Watanabe 2016, Beijering et al. 2019). In his seminal article, Evans (2007: 367) defines insubordination as “the conventionalized main-clause use of what, on prima facie grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses”. Typical examples are what some refer to as ‘free-standing’ *because*- or *if*- clauses. The currently flourishing interest in the issue is symptomatic of the revised understanding of grammar as flexible and adaptive that characterizes different realms of usage-based linguistics. In this paper I seek to address, from a distinctly interactional perspective, two currently much debated issues: degrees of (in)subordination and the functional motivations of insubordination.

I take French *si* ‘if’-clauses as an exemplary case to reflect on how questions about the structures of a language can be fruitfully addressed by considering the conversational actions that speakers accomplish by means of these structures in the course of social interaction (cf. Pekarek Doehler & Horacher, in press). Based on analyses of video-recorded mundane interactions using the methodological apparatus of Interactional Linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen

& Selting 2018) and multimodal Conversation Analysis, I argue that an interactional perspective has the potential (a) to shed light on interactional motivations for the formal implementation of ‘if’-clauses, (b) to deepen our understanding of the workings of insubordination, and (c) to open a window onto continua of (in)subordination. Over all, the results show how different degrees of autonomy are related to different discourse/interactional functions of (in)subordinate clauses, as well as to their formal on-line emergence in interaction, as materializing for instance in co-construction or incremental composition of syntactic trajectories. The findings provide elements in response to Evans & Watanabe’s (2016: 5) interrogation: “Can we best model the development of insubordination if we replace speaker-based models of syntax with dyad-based models (speaker and addressee)”?

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How Construction Grammar benefits from an interactional perspective: raised eyebrows and stance-related uses of *Tell me about it*

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Multimodality is a hot topic in usage-based, constructional approaches to language (Nikiforidou & Fried, 2025). In particular, the debate regarding whether constructions (i.e., form-meaning pairings) and the constructicon (i.e., the network of constructions) are multimodal has gained momentum over the past decade (Zima, 2025). This debate often revolves around frequency observations—specifically, whether a given grammatical construction recurs with a non-verbal feature frequently enough to be considered one constructional unit. A good candidate for a multimodal construction from a frequency-centered approach is research on the stance-related use of *Tell me about it* (TMAI); Lehmann (2025) shows that TMAI correlates statistically significantly with a slower speech tempo, gaze aversion, raised eyebrows, a smile, and head movement, concluding that TMAI is a multimodal construction.

However, stance-taking is inherently embedded in social interaction (Du Bois, 2007). Therefore, this talk will address the extent to which multimodal features associated with TMAI, specifically raised eyebrows, contribute to stance-taking. A sequential analysis of stance-related uses of TMAI, both with and without the speaker raising their eyebrows, will be conducted. Based on this, it is argued that speakers raise their eyebrows to mark:

- a) an element as prominent, and
- b) alignment with the stance taken by their interlocutor in the prior utterance.

In doing so, the talk also highlights the value of an interactional perspective combined with usage-based construction grammar and discusses points of convergence.

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Embodied linguistic resources in French interaction: The case of 'tu vois' ('you see') and 'tu sais' ('you know')

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The present study aims to compare the interactional uses of the pragmatic markers *tu vois* ('you see') and *tu sais* ('you know') in French semi-spontaneous interactions, examining their sequential, intonational, and visual-gestural features. Previous research has shown that these markers have undergone processes of grammaticalization (Bolly, 2010, Schneider, 2007, Mondada, 2004), shifting from their original lexical meaning to primarily discourse and interpersonal orientations. *Tu vois* is frequently used as a discourse marker for topic management (Mondada, 2004) or to elicit a response from recipients, (Stoenica & Fiedler, 2021) while *tu sais* tends to function as an epistemic device, securing alignment and stance-taking (Fiedler, 2020). When it comes to multimodal features, Stoenica & Fiedler (2021) and Skogmyr Marian (2023) have shown that turn-final *tu vois* tend to be accompanied by rising intonation and mutual gaze in stance-taking contexts. Other studies conducted on English *you know* (Chen & Adolphs, 2023, Kosmala, 2024) have also shown a tight relationship between 'you know' and co-occurring gestures, especially pragmatic ones.

Drawing on a video-recorded corpus of spoken French, this study analyzes six 20-minute dyadic exchanges between 12 French university students interacting freely on various topics (university, films, TV shows, literature etc.). The data yielded 77 occurrences of *tu*

vois and 36 occurrences of *tu sais* across different TCU positions (turn-initial, medial, and final). Following previous work (Stoenica & Fiedler, 2021, Skogmyr Marian, 2023, Mondada, 2004, Kosmala, 2024) this study is based on a careful observation of *tu vois* and *tu sais* and their corresponding intonational as well as visual-gestural features (gaze and gestures) in different interactional activities. Combining quantitative findings (overall frequency, position and multimodal features) and qualitative analyses of data fragments, I compare the interactional uses of these two markers across several contexts, and show that the different multimodal parameters of *tu sais* and *tu vois* (visual-gestural and intonational) further contribute to the understanding of these embodied linguistic markers as key resources for interaction.

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Final *aber* ('but') in spoken German – Its functions and grammaticalization potential

Nadine Proske & Mojenn Schubert
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It has been observed that German *aber* ('but') may function as a (turn-)final element with a 'hanging implication' (Haselow 2015, Imo 2011), as has been described in more detail for semantically equivalent conjunctions in other languages (e.g., Koivisto 2025, Mulder & Thompson 2008). While Lanwer (2025) finds that final *aber* does not systematically make turn transition expectable, our study shows that *aber* is strongly conventionalized as a (turn-)final element and beginning to grammaticalize.

Based on a collection of 71 cases from the corpus FOLK (The teaching and research corpus of spoken German; <https://agd.ids-mannheim.de/folk.shtml>) and using the methods of Interactional Linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting 2018), we describe the overarching function of all uses of final *aber* as backgrounding the preceding clause and linking back to something that was said or inferred earlier in the same or another turn. Cases with a clear 'antecedent' can be described as a reduced version of a three-part concessive pattern (cf. Koivisto 2015). The 'antecedent' is not always propositional, *aber* also frequently creates a (meta-)pragmatic back-link. In the EXTRACT below, TN asks DO to give an example of how he coaches his employees to formulate concrete goals (lines 01 and 03). He ends his turn with a concession ('an employee's name is unimportant', line 04) that is followed by final *aber*, which marks the concession as not relevant for uptake. By linking back to the request, it also marks this request as still relevant for uptake. This is also how DO treats TN's turn: he produces an example (line 06 and beyond).

EXTRACT (FOLK_E_00174_SE_01_T_01, c705-716)

01 TN	nenn_se ma_n BEIspiel. [...]	'Can you give an example?'
02 TN	was is_n ZIEL, und wie sind sie da konkret VORgegangen.	'What is a goal and exactly how did you proceed?'
03	SCHILdern_se vielleicht ma so EIne situation-	'Maybe you can describe one concrete situation.'
04	n mitarbeitername is ja UNwichtig aber- 'hh	'An employee's name is unimportant, but.'
05	(0.36)	
06 DO	ja; also (0.43) ähm (0.22) beVOR ich irgendwo mit nem mitarbeiter REINgegangen bin, hab ich gefragt was WOLLN wir da heute.	'Yes, well, um, before I went in somewhere with an employee, I asked them: What do we want there today?'

We will show that the 'antecedents' of *aber* cover a broad spectrum from 'verbalized immediately before' to 'verbalized several turns before' or 'not verbalized at all'. In the majority of cases, interlocutors have to do some inferential work. We will also discuss the prosodic

design of *aber* and the preceding clause as well as multimodal aspects accompanying its production and reception. Prosodically, *aber* mostly forms an intonation phrase with the preceding clause and has level intonation.

Multimodally, there are a couple of recurrent bodily actions with which interlocutors underline the (potential) interactional completeness of turns ending with *aber*, such as shoulder shrugs and nods. There are thus recurrent “multimodal assemblies” (Pekarek Doehler et al. 2021) that indicate conventionalization, even though the bodily actions are far from obligatory. We will conclude that the ‘hanging implication’ use of German *aber* is beginning to grammaticalize into a backgrounding and turn-yielding particle.

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Lexical intonation, syntactic position, and social interaction

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Lexical change is a social phenomenon. Trivially, both speakers and hearers have to agree in applying a new code. What is more, entirely new patterns can conventionalise on the basis of interaction. This talk demonstrates that lexical intonation has emerged in the German lexicon as a consequence of social interaction. Lexical intonation in Standard German, i.e., pitch patterns related to German words, is a disputed subject. On the one hand, German is not a tone language (e.g., Hyman 2001); on the other hand, the tonal patterns of a subset of interjections, calls, and particles are particularly salient (e.g., Ehlich 1986). Frozen pitch patterns evolve under specific syntactic conditions; the sentence peripheries lend themselves for the evolution of

intonational patterns in interaction, since they allow for single word intonation phrases.

A corpus phonological study and a perception test on *hallo* “hello” serve to present the encoding of intonational minimal pairs as well as their decoding. Since lexical intonation is assumed here to be contrastive, the argument presented rests on minimal pairs and is discussed through the example of *hallo* as a greeting particle (1) vs. *hallo* as a discourse particle, more precisely as a sentence particle typically used by younger people (2).

- (1) Hallo, jetzt aber schön, dass ich dich hör.
(FOLK_E_00422_SE_01_T_01_DF_01_c2)
‘hallo it’s good to hear you’
- (2) Hallo, ich kann ja selbst meinen Katzen nichts angewöhnen?
(FOLK_E_00347_SE_01_T_02_DF_01_c454)
‘hallo I can't even get my cats into the habit’

Figure 1 shows two clear examples of pitch contours linked to the respective function. The greeting particle shows falling intonation, while the sentence particle shows rising intonation.

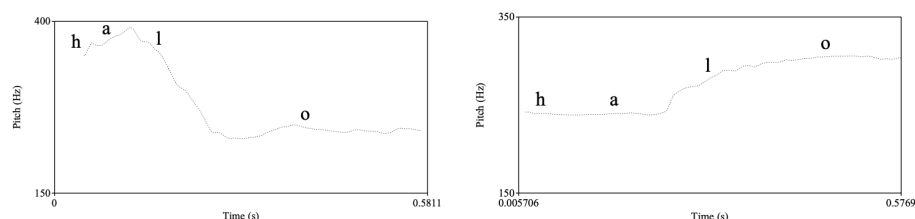


Figure 1: Greeting particle hallo (left) and sentence particle hallo (right) (Praat graphics)

Based on the *Database of Spoken German*, two empirical studies on the prosodic encoding and decoding of *hallo* were conducted. In order to retrieve the intonation contours of both sentence particle *hallo* and greeting particle *hallo*, 21 target words retrieved from the *Datenbank für Gesprochenes Deutsch* were analysed. The correlation between the median values of the vowels [a] and [o] was calculated with respect to particle type and turned out to be significant.

The concrete question to be answered in a subsequent perception test was whether in fact the prosodic encoding alone suffices for decoding the two functions, i.e., whether prosody alone can be used by recipients for the categorial classification of *hallo*. 27 test subjects (age: 14–79; gender: 70% female, 26% male, 4% diverse; native tongue: German, mostly from the south of Germany) were asked to rate on an interval scale whether the target stimulus presented as an audio file was a greeting, probably a greeting, probably not a greeting, or not a greeting.

The statistical analysis reveals that the groups differ significantly from each other in both context and no-context environments. The general questions targeted are how frozen intonation patterns related to words come into existence in discourse and whether they should be regarded as part of the Standard German lexicon. The present study suggests that 1) salient frozen pitch patterns of classes of words result from their syntactic position linked to social interaction and that 2) intonation is part of the German lexicon. Lexical intonation in Standard German is particularly salient with words from the domain of exclamative mode that occur in the sentence peripheries. Exclamative mode as well as the systematic use of sentence peripheries are unthinkable without social interaction.

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Shortcuts through the shared semantic network: How participants build on interactionally established common ground to draw argumentative inferences

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Oral argumentation is an excellent site to study the establishment and coordination of interactionally shared cognition, since explicit negotiations of knowledge and epistemic relations (i.e., of «who knows best»; Sidnell 2012: 304) are highly frequent in such settings: arguments must be built on common ground in order to be accepted by the other participants (Rigotti & Greco 2019: 210–214).

One useful cognitive-linguistic approach for making visible the knowledge implicitly presupposed in language use is *frame semantics* (Fillmore 1982). However, applications of frame semantics to talk-in-interaction have been rare so far, which may be due to strong reservations of interactional approaches toward cognitive-linguistic concepts (Deppermann 2012: 747–748).

However, this paper argues that *token frames* representing the level of structures that are *actually realized* and *jointly established* in conversation (Busse 2012: 624) are well suited for the description of interactional meaning: early frame-semantic notions already emphasized that such token frames are not rigid structures, but that they are dynamically evoked and modified during language use (Minsky 1988: 196). In the present paper, one conversation from a corpus of 180 argumentative discussions between elementary schoolchildren aged 7–12 is used to show how they build on interactionally established common ground to draw argumentative inferences.

First, a conversation-analytical *sequential analysis* (Schegloff 2007) is applied to reconstruct and annotate the elements of the semantic frames and their relations to which the interactants explicitly orient themselves. Then, these annotations are used to quantify patterns of elements that are frequently evoked together in conversation. Finally, qualitative post-analyses illustrate how interactants can draw on such already evoked patterns by using ‘shortcuts’ through the semantic network; a process which displays the coupling of interacting minds: since some structures can already be considered activated, interactants can leave more and more elements implicit and draw argumentative inferences without verbalizing them explicitly.

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Keynote II

Honorific pronouns in Middle English: A socio-pragmatic perspective

Olga Timofeeva

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This paper examines the emergence and expansion of honorific pronouns in Middle English through the lens of historical pragmatics and sociolinguistics. While it is commonly assumed that the use of V forms (*ye/you* with a singular referent) in Middle English was influenced by French (Finkenstaedt 1963, Helmbrecht 2004), this study explores how these forms evolved within the dynamics of social interaction rather than as a direct result of external borrowing. By approaching honorific pronouns from an interaction-based

perspective, this paper offers new insights into the role of social interaction in historical language change.

Drawing on a diachronic corpus of interactive passages from Middle English and Anglo-Norman poetic texts, this research investigates how the pragmatic shift of *ye* from addressing royalty to encompassing other types of social and interactional superiors and, eventually, also equals and social inferiors reflects processes of conversational interaction (Timofeeva 2025 fc). The analysis considers how the T/V pronouns functioned in turn-taking, response elicitation, and speech acts such as requests, shaping their spread and multifunctionality in discourse.

Crucially, this study also situates honorific *ye* within broader patterns of pragmatization and language change. Rather than being passively adopted from French, the expansion of *ye* appears to have been actively shaped by interactional pressures, with speakers adapting to evolving norms of politeness and social hierarchy. While Middle English reflects some developments in French, it ultimately forms a distinct system where interactional dynamics play a greater role than social stratification (Jucker 2006, 2020). Moreover, this system does not emerge from a single instance of French influence but rather from multiple waves of contact throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, each contributing to its ongoing evolution as speakers and writers continuously adapted to shifting social and genre-related norms.

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Cross-cultural (im)politeness and altered speech acts in Polish, German and English: Contradiction and disagreement in 17th and 18th century normative multilingual grammars

Matylda Włodarczyk

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Not only (im)politeness research, but also speech act theory have been among the most robust frameworks in contemporary and historical pragmatics. Although the empirical scope of speech act studies has broadened significantly over the last decade, research using historical material in languages other than English remains modest. Similarly, interfaces between speech acts and (im)politeness have not been fully explored, especially cross-culturally.

The project focuses on speech acts of contradiction and disagreement in multilingual normative reference works (multilingual dictionaries, foreign language grammars, dialogues, textbooks) that include Polish,

German and/or English (17th and 18th). The study explores the relationship between conventionalised expressions and specific speech act functions in represented interaction. The methodology relies on a mixed-method approach employed in contrastive pragmatics and follows the steps proposed in House and Kádár (2021: 160). The reference works, on top of word lists and normative accounts of grammatical issues, also cover genres constructed discursively as business or service encounters, banter, casual conversation, etc. for which politeness considerations are of utmost relevance.

Speech acts of contradiction and disagreement are approached with the notion of 'speech-act anchoredness', i.e. those uses of a conventionalised expression in which the default associated function of an expression is realised, and 'altered speech-acts' in which the function is not realised (House and Kádár 2021). The relevant conventionalised expressions are extracted from contemporary normative sources (e.g. multilingual dictionaries; e.g. Trotz 1764). Then, their uses in the analysed material are categorised with a view to their speech act-indicating items with the aid of a finite and interactional typology of speech acts. In some cases, general or specialised historical databases (e.g. the newspaper section of *CRISPA* for Polish) are used as reference corpora.

The study will contribute to the extension of the empirical database for cross-cultural historical speech act studies and conventionalisation of speech act types. Methodologically, the paper tests the new theoretical approaches to speech acts (i.e. the concept of 'altered speech acts'), confirms their applicability to historical data in different linguacultures and pursues potential sociocultural explanations which have so far not been complete.

The paper offers a closer focus on one of the less commonly studied languages included in reference works devoted to German and English grammar, i.e. Polish. The perspective concerning three linguacultures offers an added value to the cross-cultural pragmatics perspective. Finally, the anchored and altered speech act framework as a novel approach enriches the methodological background historical (im)politeness studies.

Selected primary sources

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Investigating hybrid speech acts in historical discourse

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Traditionally, speech acts have been classified as belonging to one of the five global types, first established by Austin and subsequently refined by Searle. In the spirit of Klein (1981) and Morgan (2016), we propose that utterances should be viewed as expressing multiple illocutionary points with approximately equal force from a SAT perspective to do justice to the immense complexity of human interaction. We will call these plurifunctional utterances *hybrids*. In theory, one could derive illocutionary points corresponding to all five global SA types from each utterance in a decontextualized setting, rendering each utterance a hypothetical hybrid (cf. Schulz von Thun 2019). While hypothetically conceivable, in actual everyday language, not all five points are intended with the same force by a speaker. This bears the question as to how to identify the actually intended illocutionary points of any given utterance.

Interactionalist views suppose that uptake constitutes the illocutionary point and thus the type of speech act. This is also the tacit assumption underlying the next-turn proof procedure (Sacks, Schlegloff & Jefferson 1974; Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008). Both methodological concerns peculiar to diachronic research and philosophical issues that affect the constitution theory of uptake (McDonald 2021) raise doubts about the role of the next-turn proof procedure in historical speech act analysis: Firstly, the procedure itself is not applicable to large portions of data from the earlier periods of

English, which do not come in dialogic form (even if taken in its broadest sense). Secondly, a hearer's reacting turn, where it has survived, might be the result of erroneous inferences to the speaker's intention and can therefore not be taken as a reliable guide to the original illocutionary point(s).

For the above reasons, we suggest that, if no next-turn is present, all hypothetical illocutionary points are to be weighed against the communicative setting and that none of them are to be disregarded solely on the basis of a next-turn, where such is available. This will often yield multiple plausible illocutionary points in a hybrid speech act pattern. As a consequence, historical speech act analysis has to rely heavily on the form and the reconstructable communicative setting of an utterance. We will illustrate this approach by examining WHOEVER-CURSES and THREATS, both of which are hybrid speech act types united by a common directive element, but they do not generally prompt a response.

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