Laurenz Kornfeld

Syntactic Complexity of Sanctioning Turns Across European Languages

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In this presentation I show first results from an ongoing study about syntactic complexity of sanctioning turns in spoken language. This study is part of a larger project on sanctioning of misconduct in social interaction in different European languages (English, German, Italian and Polish). For the study I use video recordings of different everyday settings (family breakfasts, board game interactions and car rides) with three or four participants. These data come from the Parallel European Corpus of Informal Interaction (Kornfeld/Küttner/Zinken 2023; Küttner et al. submitted).

I focus on sanctioning turns with more than one turn-constructional unit (see among others for TCUs: Sacks/Schegloff/Jefferson 1974; Clayman 2013). The study asks how often TCUs are linked to each other in the different languages, for what function, and how language diversity enters into this. Note that complex sanctioning turns do not always come as complex sentences. Consider the following example (1):

1. PECII\_DE\_20160703\_ 1421593:

01 DAD: dieter

02 (1.3)

03 ich möchte frühstücken

*I would like to have breakfast*

04 hör bidde auf an meinem stuhl rumzuklettern

*please stop climbing my chair*

By contrast, in the next example (2) we can see that Susanne links the second part (line 02) with a “weil” (engl. because) to the first part of the utterance (see e.g. Scheutz 2001 on *weil* in spoken German):

1. PECII\_DE\_Brkfst\_20161025\_ 1573431:

01 SUS: und das ist jetzt unfair

*and that is now unfair*

02 **weil** Timon jetzt schon was hatte und ich noch nicht

*because Timon now already had something and I haven't*

The presented study explores complex sanctioning turns cross-linguistically, asking how they are formulated and when speakers link elements of a sanctioning syntactically. The study examines how frequently different elements of a sanctioning attempt are syntactically linked, and whether there are specific contexts for such syntactic complexity.

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# Contact information

**Laurenz Kornfeld**

Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache

kornfeld@ids-mannheim.de