

LMU Workshop "Variation and Idiosyncrasy in
Germanic and Romance"
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**From idiosyncrasies to marked
variants to (general) rules**

The Pomerano of Brazil

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Structure of my Talk

- (1) The last of Eastern Pomeranians
- (2) The research project *PesquiPom*
- (3) A phonetic idiosyncrasy
- (4) Marked phonetic variants
- (5) A syntactic idiosyncrasy
- (6) A new, rather general syntactic rule
- (7) Conclusions

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Structure of my Talk

- (1) The last of Eastern Pomeranians

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Eastern Pomerania

"In reality, Eastern Pomeranian is now rapidly disappearing in Germany. If one wants to study it, one has to go to Brazil to hear the dialect in its original pure form." (Granzow 1975: 93–94; translation by G.K.)





Structure of my Talk

- (2) The research project *PesquiPom*

Research Project

Verbal Syntax of German Varieties in the Americas

- Translations of 46/61 English, Spanish, or Portuguese stimulus sentences by 827 speakers of (Low) German varieties in North and South America
- 321 Mennonites (http://agd.ids-mannheim.de/MEND_extern.shtml)
- 24 speakers of Hunsrückish
- 482 Pomeranians

PesquiPom

<https://uni-freiburg.de/germanistik/pesquipom/>

- Translations of 46/61 English, Spanish, or Portuguese stimulus sentences by 827 speakers of (Low) German varieties in North and South America
- 321 Mennonites
- 24 speakers of Hunsrückish
- 482 Pomeranians
 - 24 hours of recordings of free conversations in Pomerano
 - 3 hours in Pomeranian from Wisconsin
 - 3 hours in the local variety of High German from Pomerode, SC
 - Pomerano: 147 from RS
 - Pomerano: 123 from ES
 - Pomerano: 84 from RO
 - Pomerano: 53 from SC
 - Pomeranian: 15 from Wisconsin, EUA
 - High German: 60 from SC

Why is it interesting to study Pomerano?

- The Pomeranians in Brazil are the last active speakers of Eastern Pomeranian dialects in the world!
- One may travel to Brazil for research... 😊
- Pomerano, which in three of the four communities in Brazil is not roofed by Standard/High German, represents – with its almost boundless, yet not rule-less, variation – a rarely studied language type, a language type that, both today and in the history of human languages, represents the (vast) majority of languages.

translating in Sao Lourenço do Sul, RS...

- <17> Se ele realmente matou o homem, ninguém pode ajudar ele
- Wen dai dai kerl wirklich doudmåkt hât kae kan em helpa
- <21> Ele não vem porque não tem tempo
- Dai kan ni kooman wege hai hât kain tijd
- <15> Se ele tiver que vender a casa agora, ele vai ficar muito triste
- Wen't dai dai huus nu forköipa mut dai waard seir traurig
- <27> Eu vou dar uma nota boa para ele, porque ele leu o livro
- Ik geew em gaue note wege dai hât dai bui- bauk lesa
- <3> Não ves que eu estou acendendo a luz?
- Süüst ni wat ik dai lamp ansteeka da?

Structure of my Talk

- (3) A phonetic idiosyncrasy

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Palatalization

- <51> Onde ele poderia ter pago as dívidas dele?
 - *Where could he have payed his debts?*
- Wou t^üün hai dai (0.7) dívidas betåld häwa
- <12> Se ele fizer o tema, ele pode comer sorvete.
 - *If he does his homework, he can have some ice cream.*
- Den hai dai teme måkt hät dan t^üan hai (1.4) dai (0.4) sorvetsch (0.6) eeta

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Palatalization

- <25> Ele está chorando porque ele tem que comer salada todos os dias.
 - *He is crying, because he has to eat salad every day.*
- Hai hült dâwegen hai mut (1.6) **d**ansa dag dai salade comiere- (0.8) eeta
- <41> Todos os domingos eu faço um bolo.
 - *Every Sunday I bake a cake.*
- **D**ansa (0.4) sündags dau ik aina bolo mǎka

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Palatalization

- This informant is 15 years old and speaks Portuguese better than Pomerano, but her Pomerano isn't terribly bad.
- The speaker frequently uses [k] and [g], both at the beginning and end of words.
- Duu häst **k**aine (2,2) **c**arro- (1,2) auto (0,5) forwegen duu häst **k**ai gild
- **I**k häf dai (0,7) bau**k** fuuna (0,8) wat **i**k de (0,6) **k**iner **g**eewt hä
- The palatalization in **t**üün, **t**an und **d**ansa only occurs with this informant.
- It therefore appears to be a informant- and lexeme-specific phenomenon. However, the deviating pronunciation is consistent; that is, {küün} occurs exclusively as **t**üün (8x), {kan} occurs exclusively as **t**an (3x), and {gansa} occurs exclusively as **d**ansa (3x).

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Structure of my Talk

- (4) Marked phonetic variants

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Alternation of Sonorants ($l \approx r$)

- <26> Ele precisa de óculos porque ele não consegue enxergar o quadro negro
 - *He needs glasses, because he can't see the blackboard*
- Hai **bl**uukt (0.4) ou- o- o- ougaglääser- [...]
- Hai- hai **br**uukt ougaglääser den hai ka nie- [...]
- Hai **br**uukt ougaglääser porque hai ka ni dai [...]
- [...]
- Hai **bl**uukt ougaglääser den hai ka dai quadro ni saian [...]

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Alternation of Sonorants (l ≈ r)

- A well-known alternation
- in Spanish *hom**bre** / hom**ble***
[‘man’]
- in Portuguese ***C**laudia / **C**raudia*
*pro**ble**ma / po**bre**ma*
- Portuguese / Spanish ***p**raia / **p**laya* *ob**r**igaçã**o** / ob**l**igaci**o**n*
[‘beach’] [‘obligation’]

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Alternation of Sonorants (l ≈ n)

- <44> Eu achei as chaves esta manhã
 - *I have found the keys this morning*
- Ik häf dai s**l**oide**l**s hüüt morge fuuna
- Ik hä dai s**n**oide**l**s fuunga hüt morge
- Ik hä dai s**l**oiden**n** fuunga hüüt morge
- I- ik hä hüüt morge dai s**n**öiden**n**s fuuna

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Alternation of Sonorants (l ≈ n)

- A well-known alternation
- Kaufmann & Duran (2022: 265): “*In the Sichuanese varieties, [n] and [l] can, in general, be exchanged freely.*”
- in Spanish Antonio de Nebrija came from Lebrija
- Portuguese / Spanisch /aranja / naranja

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Structure of my Talk

- (5) A syntactic idiosyncrasy

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Complement Clauses with a Modal Verb as Complementizer

- <1> Não é bom que ele compre o carro.
 - *It's not good that he is buying the car.*
- Is nich gut **soll** sie des Auto gekauft **hat**
- <6> Não sabes que ele teria que aprender inglês?
 - *Don't you know that he should learn English?*
- Weißt du nich **soll** der (0.3) Englisch (0.7) (ä:h) sprechen s- lernen **soll**
- <3> Não ves que eu estou acendendo a luz?
 - *Don't you see that I am turning on the light?*
- Siehst du nich **soll** ich des: Licht anmachen **tu**
- <2> O João não acha que tu conheces bem os ~~teus~~ amigos.
 - *John doesn't think that you know your friends well.*
- (ä:h) (0.5) Der Joao de:r- (0.5) der find **solls** du deine- (0.2) deine Kollegen nich: richtig kennen **tust**

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Structure of my Talk

- (6) A new, rather general syntactic rule

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Complement Clauses without a Complementizer

- Standard German
- English: *I think (that) he gave a great presentation*
- Ich finde, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat
- Ich finde, ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten
- Ich finde nicht, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat
negated matrix clause > strongly integrated complement clause
- *Ich finde nicht, ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten
- English: *I regret that he gave a presentation*
- Ich bereue es, daß er einen Vortrag gehalten hat
factive verb > strongly integrated complement clause
- *Ich bereue es, ø er hat einen Vortrag gehalten

strongly integrated complement clauses cannot be V2-clauses

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Complement Clauses without a Complementizer

- <3> Não ves que eu estou acendendo a luz?
• *Don't you see that I am turning on the light?*
- Süüst duu ni dat ik dai lampe anstecke dau
- Süüst duu ni dat ik dai lamp ansteck

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Complement Clauses without a Complementizer

- <3> Não ves que eu estou acendendo a luz?
 - *Don't you see that I am turning on the light?*
- Däist ni saia ø ik dau dai licht anmåka
- Süüst duu ni ø ik måk dat licht an

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Complement Clauses without a Complementizer

- <3> Não ves que eu estou acendendo a luz?
 - *Don't you see that I am turning on the light?*
- Süüst duu ni ø ik dai lamp anstecka dau
- <<disruption caused by motorcyclists>>
- Däist duu ni saia ø ik dai lamp anstecka dau
- <3> Não ves que eu estou acendendo a luz?
- Süüst duu ni ø ik dai lamp anstecka dau

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Complement Clauses without a Complementizer

- <7> O Pedro está convencido que ele entendeu o livro.
 - *Peter is convinced that he has understood the book.*
- Pedro is [0.3] convencido Ø hai det I- bauk [0.8] [ä:h] gaut leirt hät
- <<disruption caused by music>>
- Pedro is convencido [0.5] Ø hai det livro gaut leest hät

133 tokens by 59 informants in 3,085 complement clauses (4.3%)

13 tokens from RS / 71 tokens from ES / 48 tokens from RO / 1 token from SC

Kaufmann, Göz (in print). 'Between lazy verbs and structural abundance: Complementizer deletion in Pomerano' in: Speyer, Augustin (ed.). *Syntax aus Saarbrücker Sicht 7: Beiträge der SaRDiS-Tagung zur Dialektsyntax*. Stuttgart: Steiner.

Analysis II (only the crucial informants)

- **unmarked variant** Ich finde, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat (n=213)
- **marked variant I** (- Ich finde, Ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten (n=183)
- **marked variant II** (- Ich finde, Ø er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat (n=133)

matrix verb to know	-question +negation	+question -negation	+question +negation	-question -negation
n				
unmarked variant (+dat / VEnd)				
marked variant I (-dat / VEnd)				
marked variant II (-dat / VEnd)				

Analysis II (only the crucial informants)

- **unmarked variant** (+dat/V Ich finde, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat
- **marked variant I** (-dat/V2) Ich finde, ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten
- **marked variant II** (-dat/VE Ich finde, ø er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat

matrix verb to know	-question +negation	+question -negation	+question +negation	-question -negation
n	89	7	43	30
unmarked variant (+dat / VEnd)	50 (56.2%)	6 (85.7%)	21 (48.8%)	15 (50%)
marked variant I (-dat / VEnd)				
marked variant II (-dat / VEnd)				

Analysis II (only the crucial informants)

- **unmarked variant** (+dat/V Ich finde, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat
- **marked variant I** (-dat/V2) Ich finde, ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten
- **marked variant II** (-dat/VE Ich finde, ø er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat

matrix verb to know	-question +negation	+question -negation	+question +negation	-question -negation
n	89	7	43	30
non-negated declarative clause: weak integration favors marked variant I				
marked variant I (-dat / VEnd)	17 (19.1%)	0	19 (44.2%)	13 (43.3%)
marked variant II (-dat / VEnd)	22 (24.7%)	1 (14,3%)	3 (7%)	2 (6.7%)
negated declarative clause: strong integration favors marked variant II				

Analysis II (only the crucial informants)

- **unmarked variant** (+dat/V Ich finde, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat
- **marked variant I** (-dat/V2 Ich finde, ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten
- **marked variant II** (-dat/VE Ich finde, ø er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat

matrix clause -question/-negation	to be sure	to know	to say	to think
n				
unmarked variant (+dat / VEnd)				
marked variant I (-dat / VEnd)				
marked variant II (-dat / VEnd)				

Analysis II (only the crucial informants)

- **unmarked variant** (+dat/V Ich finde, daß er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat
- **marked variant I** (-dat/V2 Ich finde, ø er hat einen tollen Vortrag gehalten
- **marked variant II** (-dat/VE Ich finde, ø er einen tollen Vortrag gehalten hat

matrix clause -question/-negation	to be sure	to know	to say	to think
n	non-factive verbs: weak integration favors marked variant I			
unmarked variant (+dat / VEnd)	13 (41.9%)	15 (50%)	5 (13.5%)	1 (2.2%)
marked variant I (-dat / VEnd)	11 (35.5%)	13 (43.3%)	32 (86.5%)	43 (95.6%)
marked variant II (-dat / VEnd)	7 (22.6%)	2 (6.7%)	0	1 (2.2%)
factive verbs: strong integration favors unmarked var. and marked var. II				

Structure of my Talk

- (7) Conclusions

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Conclusions

- In general, the speakers of Pomerano follow the same rules found in other (Low) German varieties and/or in other languages.
- Being so, we should not rule out the possibility that they also follow rules when similar phenomena are not found in other (Low) German varieties.
- Some Pomeranians in Brazil just don't seem to like complementizers!
- Dropping the complementizer, the degree of clausal integration seems to determine whether the finite verb can move (**marked variant I**) or has to remain clause-finally (**marked variant II**), likely due to insufficient structure in the highly integrated clause (no CP domain).
- **Varieties such as Pomerano should be studied much more frequently!**

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References

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Thank you very much for your attention!

Muito obrigado pela atenção!