

While adverbs, particles, conjunctions and discourse markers are rather well-studied from a *dialogical* point of view, other inflectable categories still need to be opened up as a field of study for a "theory of *linguistic praxis*" (Linell 2009b: 280) which takes the impact of dialogical language use on language structure into consideration. In particular, prepositions have not yet been analyzed as a word class with a dialogical bias. Even though many studies have focused on the rise of new German prepositions and prepositional functions within the past years and decades,⁵ concrete conditions and requirements of situated talk-in-interaction rarely play an integral role. Hence, it is the objective of this study to show that prepositions can be analyzed as crucial discourse-structuring devices. The example which will be taken here is the preposition *mit* ('with'), which, apart from its canonical functions, can be used in spoken conversation to tie topically related stretches of talk together. Since such instances of *mit* cannot be analyzed in terms of adding a certain context to one of the canonical types of *mit*, they represent a dialogical construction in its own right which is not only bound to syntactic positions but to sequential positions, aspects of turn-taking and certain communicative practices as well.⁶

2. Forms and functions of *mit*_{tying} + NP in German everyday talk-in-interaction

The German preposition *mit* ('with') has a wide range of functions, especially if it is not part of a fixed verb-particle combination such as "abrechnen mit" ('to settle up with'). Its canonical non-attributive instances are usually classified as *comitative* ("Ich ging **mit meiner Nachbarin** ins Kino." 'I went to the cinema (together) with my neighbor.'), *temporal* ("**Mit 18 Jahren** begann ich zu studieren." 'At the age of 18 I started to study.'), *instrumental* ("Ich zerstörte die Wand **mit einem Hammer**." 'I smashed the wall with a hammer.') and *modal* ("Du solltest die Entscheidung **mit Sorgfalt** treffen." 'You should make the decision with care.'). Furthermore, *mit* can signal relationships such as "*affiliation/part-whole*" ("Er fiel **mit dem Gesicht** auf den Boden." 'He fell to the floor on his face.') or "*identification*" ("**Mit dem Oetker-Konzern** entstand einer der größten Nahrungsmittelhersteller Europas." 'The Oetker

⁵ Cf. Di Meola (2000), for example, who offers a very comprehensive study of German prepositions from a grammaticalization point of view.

⁶ This study is based on the analysis of 134 examples of *mit* from spoken talk-in-interaction which are taken from the "linguistischen Audio-Datenbank (lAuDa)" in Münster and the "Archiv für gesprochenes Deutsch (AGD)" in Mannheim. The examples in this study are transcribed following the "Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem (Gat) 2" (Selting et al. 2009 and Barth-Weingarten/Couper-Kuhlen 2011; see also section 5). The transcript lines always start with 1; relevant context information will be given in the text.

group emerged as one of the largest food producers in Europe.').⁷ This classification holds true for the majority of attributive instances with *mit* as well. Hence, one can distinguish between *comitative* ("unsere Fahrt **mit den Eltern**" 'our journey with the parents'), *temporal* ("der **mit bald zwei Jahrzehnten** hochbetagte Wallach" 'the gelding with its old age of nearly two decades'),⁸ *instrumental* ("die Brandbekämpfung **mit chemischen Stoffen**" 'the fire-fighting with chemical substances'), *modal* ("das Fahren **mit hoher Geschwindigkeit**" 'the driving with high speed'), "*affiliation/part-whole*" ("der Aufprall **mit dem Kopf** auf dem Boden" 'the collision with the head on the floor') and "*identificational*" ("die **mit Dieter Bohlen** prominent besetzte Jury" 'the jury prominently staffed with Dieter Bohlen') attributes with *mit*.⁹

In German everyday talk-in-interaction, however, *mit* can also be used in a further way: It can take a nominal phrase as its complement which, in the given context, functions as a "*metapragmatic index*" (Silverstein 1993) and refers back to a *topical antecedent* (a discourse topic which is considered to be intersubjectively accessible by the speaker) in order to establish it as a part of the context for adjacent turn-constructive units (cf. sections 2.1 and 2.2).¹⁰ I will refer to such tying instances of *mit* by means of "*mit_{tying} + NP*". Since the tying instances of *mit* cannot be explained compositionally in terms of adding a certain context and an indexical topical keyword to one of the canonical types of *mit*, they can be classified as constructs of a construction in its own right (see section 3.). This construction can be characterized as a *dialogical construction* inasmuch as it cannot be sufficiently described in terms of semantic, morphological and syntactic features which completely abstract from dialogue-constituting aspects such as sequential positions and communicative practices.

Just like their canonical counterparts, the instances of *mit_{tying} + NP* can be subdivided into attributive and non-attributive occurrences. Since the functions and meanings of *mit* manifest themselves more clearly in a non-modifying syntactic environment, the non-attributive *mit_{tying} + NP* will be addressed first. They can be found in the left (2.1.1) and the right periphery of turn-constructive units (2.1.2) or integrated into a turn-constructive unit (2.1.3).

⁷ See Zifonun/Hoffmann/Strecker (1997, III: 2135ff) and Hilpert (2009). The last example is taken from Hilpert (2009: 30).

⁸ This example is taken from Hilpert (2009: 33), but it is classified here as a temporal attribute.

⁹ Cf. Droop (1977), Teubert (1979), Lehmus (1983), Lauterbach (1993: 126ff) and Schierholz (2001, 2004) with regard to prepositional attributes in German.

¹⁰ Thus, *mit_{tying} + NP* is comparable to "the topicalizer/cleft construction *was X betrifft*" which is mentioned in Auer (1996: 299). See also Goodwin (1995: 127) with regard to "prospective indexicals" and Chafe (2003) concerning "topic navigation".

2.1 Non-attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP

2.1.1 Non-attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP in the left periphery

Non-attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP in the pre-front field of a subsequent turn-constructional unit are usually prefaced by conjunctions such as "und" ('and') or "aber" ('but'):

Example (1) Concert

- 1 H: °h pAssen_se AUF.
 just wait
- 2 DA is wieder AUserverkauft.
 it will be sold out again
- 3 (0.3)
 pause
- 4 LAchen wOllen_se;
 they want to laugh
- 5 aber ERNste sachen wollen_se nich hören.
 but they don't want to hear serious things
- 6 (1.5)
 pause
- 7 G: na wOlln_wa HOFFen.
 well let's hope
- 8 dAss es SO wird.
 that it will be that way
- 9 H: Aber SIcher.
 you bet
- 10 → °h Aber **mit dem konzERT**?
 but regarding the concert
- 11 → dAs WEISS ich ja nich.
 I don't know
- 12 → ob DAS klappt.
 if that will work
- 13 (1.0)
 pause
- 14 °h also MEI:ne bekannten sind begEistert.
 well my friends are enthusiastic
- 15 (.)
 short pause
- 16 die sonst NICHT hingehen in die brOnshalle.
 those who usually don't go to the Bronshalle

(Source: Archiv für Gesprochenes Deutsch, Interaction PF026)

Example (1) is taken from a conversation between Helga (H) and Gerd (G), who are talking about cultural events in Emden.¹¹ In the preceding course of their conversation, Helga and Gerd talked about a recent symphony concert (which was not successful and did not attract much attention) and an upcoming concert in the "Bronshalle".¹² After that, Helga and Gerd changed the topic and talked about the theatre in Emden and one of the pieces which is going to be enacted there, the comédie-ballet "The imaginary invalid" by Molière.

The excerpt starts at a point when "The imaginary invalid" is still the conversational subject: Helga expects "The imaginary invalid" to be successful in Emden because "LAchen wOllen_se; aber ERNste sachen wollen_se nich hÖren." ('they want to laugh but they don't want to hear serious things', cf. lines 1-6). After Helga and Gerd agreed that they wish Molière's "The imaginary invalid" to be successful (lines 7-9), she returns to the topic of the upcoming concert, i.e. she re-establishes a topic which has been talked about in the preceding course of talk but which is not the local conversational business-at-hand anymore (lines 10-17). Thus, Helga deals with three conversational tasks at this point of the conversation:

- (i) She closes or at least suspends the local topic (= the theatre in Emden with a focus on the upcoming piece "The imaginary invalid").
- (ii) She explicitly establishes a "new" topic (= the upcoming concert).
- (iii) She marks the "new" topic as intersubjectively accessible.

Helga accomplishes these three tasks by means of the turn-constructive unit "Aber mit dem konzERT?" ('but regarding the concert') in line (10), which is followed by the complement-taking main-clause "=dAs WEISS ich ja nich. ob DAS klAppt." ('I don't know if that will work') in lines (11-12). "Aber mit dem konzERT?" ('but regarding the concert') – a topical "*misplacement marker*" (Schegloff/Sacks 1973) which indicates that the topic change takes place in a sequential position in which it is not necessarily expectable for the addressee – can be classified as a *hanging-topic*¹³: It occupies a position in the pre-front field¹⁴ of the subse-

¹¹ Emden is a town in Lower Saxony ("Niedersachsen"), a federal state in northwestern Germany.

¹² The "Bronshalle" is a festival hall in Emden.

¹³ See Altmann (1981: 48ff) for a brief summary of the basic features of hanging-topics in German. Cf. Ochs/Schieffelin (1976), Duranti/Ochs (1979), Altmann (1981) and Selting (1993) concerning left dislocation and hanging-topics in English, Italian and German. It would also be possible to analyze the prepositional phrase in line 10 as a left-dislocated attribute to the correlative pronoun "dAs" in line 11, but I prefer to classify it as a hanging-topic due to its pragmatic salience and independence.

quent syntagma, it is prosodically independent, and the subsequent syntagma does not contain an anaphoric pronoun which refers to the hanging-topic as its antecedent.¹⁵ Furthermore, it is initiated by the adversative conjunction "Aber" ('but'), that marks a contrastive caesura with regard to the preceding turn-constructive unit(s). Note that canonical prepositional phrases with *mit* (i.e. instrumental, modal, temporal etc. adverbials), in contrast, usually cannot occupy the pre-front field in terms of a hanging-topic.

The prepositional phrase "mit dem konZERT?" ('regarding the concert') does not only differ from canonical prepositional phrases with *mit* for syntactic and prosodic reasons, but semantically and pragmatically as well. First, this can be shown *retrospectively* (sequentially backward-pointing) with regard to the complement of "mit", which, in the given context, is not a symbolic part of a proposition but functions as an *indexical topical keyword* (or "conversational deictic" 'Gesprächsdeiktikum') that marks a prior stretch of talk in Helga's and Gerd's conversation as its *topical antecedent*.¹⁶ This makes it possible for Helga to employ the hanging-topic as a "*tying rule*" in the sense of Sacks. Sacks (1964-1972/2005, I: 322) defines tying rules as

a means by which one piece of conversation is tied to another. If conversation simply consisted of A-B-A-B in alternation, then one might, for example, be perfectly well able to disorder all the parts, as long as the alternation is preserved, and still have a recognizable conversation, or even the same conversation. What these "tying rules" do is radically restrict that possibility, and provide for very local control over the relationship between utterances.

Sacks shows that conversational tying can be accomplished by means of repetitions, or "*locational tying techniques*" as he calls them (see Sacks 1964-1972/2005, I: 722ff).¹⁷ Locational tying techniques have the advantage that they allow for "*skip-tying*" (Sacks 1964-1972/2005, I: 734), i.e. they can tie two distant stretches of discourse together while skipping utterances between them. This is exactly what is happening in example (1): The complement "konZERT" ('concert') – a "thematic" lexeme with a high recognition value which has often been used in the preceding course of talk – makes it possible to connect a preceding stretch of talk (the topical antecedent) to the local context even though there are several turns in between.

¹⁴ In German, declarative non-dependent sentences are topologically defined by the position of the finite and non-finite parts of the verb which separate the *front field* (position before the finite verb), the *middle field* (position between the finite and non-finite parts of the verb) and the *end field* (position after the non-finite parts of the verb). The pre-front field is positioned before the front field. It can be occupied by conjunctions, discourse markers (see Auer 1996) and hanging-topics (Altmann 1981).

¹⁵ Note that the semantic features of this construction reveal that the pronoun "dAs" is not used as a deictic but as a correlate which projects the subsequent syntagma.

¹⁶ The notions "retrospective" and "prospective" are used here in the sense of Lenk (1998: 52). See also Goodwin (2006).

¹⁷ See also Tannen (1989), Aitchison (1994), Anward (2005) and Du Bois (2010) as concerns the communicative functions of repetitions in language use.

Secondly, the prepositional phrase "mit dem konzERT?" ('regarding the concert') does not have a phrasal or a clausal scope, but a wider scope from a *prospective* (sequentially forward-pointing) point of view: Since Helga establishes the topical antecedent as an integral part of the topical presuppositions of subsequent speech acts, the prepositional phrase functions as a *pragmatic operator* with a pragmatically driven scope that is not tied to syntactical boundaries.¹⁸ This operator is part of a *self-initiation of topic talk*: Helga establishes the topical antecedent in order to carry on with topic-related talk herself. Canonical prepositional phrases with *mit*, in contrast, specify the verb or at most their syntactic host-clause as a whole, but not a complex sequence of speech acts.

Example (1) shows that *mit*_{tying} + NP in the pre-front field is structurally and semantically different from the canonical uses of the preposition *mit*. It is both *context shaped* (i.e. "built in response to the frameworks of intelligibility and action" created by prior utterances) and *context renewing* (i.e. providing "the contextual point of departure for the action(s) that will follow"; see Heritage 1984: 242; Goodwin 2006: 443). Hence, it can be characterized as a dialogical "*inter-act*" in the sense of Linell (2001).¹⁹ In example (1), this inter-act is being used as a means to self-initiate topic talk, but there are also examples in which *mit*_{tying} + NP *other-initiates topic talk*. In these cases, the turn-constructural unit after the hanging-topic is a question or an invitation to talk followed by turn-taking:

Example (2) Educational curricula

- 1 B: es IST (--) im allgemeinen (--) dOch zu sagen,
 in general it can be said
- 2 dass die schüler nach: (.) KURzer zEIt,=
 that the pupils after a short while
- 3 vielleicht EINem mOnat; (.)
 a month maybe
- 4 der neuen schule gAnz_äh geWACHsen sind?=
 are able to cope with the new school
- 5 und AUffällige lücken (--) geschlOssen haben.
 and filled remarkable knowledge gaps
- 6 → H: °h und **mit den schULPLÄ:nen.**
 and regarding the educational curricula
- 7 → °h gelten DIEse für eine längere zEIt?

¹⁸ Bückler (i.Pr.) suggests calling such a scope an "adlocutionary scope". See also Fiehler/Barden/Elstermann/Kraft (2004) concerning "Operator-Skopus-Strukturen" ('operator-scope-structures') in German spoken interaction and Imo's (2010a) study of "Mein Problem ist/mein Thema ist".

¹⁹ See Linell (2001: 207): "The elementary unit of communication, whether we take this to be an idea unit or turn at talk, is intrinsically sequentially positioned and related to its outsides, the prior units and the projected next ones [...] In other words, if we look at this kind of unit as an act, it is clearly an 'inter-act' (using a back formation from 'interaction', Linell & Marková 1993)."

do they hold for a longer period of time

8 → oder_äh finden häufig ÄNderungen solcher schUlpläne statt?
or are there many revisions of these educational curricula

9 B: °h die SCHULpläne werden in der regel in einem\ regleMENT
the educational curricula are usually scheduled by regulations

10 der einzelnen schulen festgelegt,
of the particular schools

(Source: Archiv für Gesprochenes Deutsch, Interaction PF397)

In this example, Herbert (H) talks with Bernd (B), a teacher, about Bernd's job. After Bernd told Herbert that pupils usually do not need much time to get used to a new school (lines 1-5), Herbert changes the topic and asks Bernd for information concerning the educational curricula which structure the teaching in school (see lines 6-8).

Just like in example (1), the new topic is being introduced by means of a hanging-topic which is initiated by a conjunction ("und" 'and') and which features an indexical topical keyword ("den schUIPLÄ:nen." 'the educational curricula') as the complement of a prepositional phrase with *mit* (see line 6).²⁰ Sequentially and topically, example (2) is slightly different in comparison to example (1), though. First, the accessibility of the new topic is not linked to a preceding stretch of talk (Herbert and Bernd did not talk about educational curricula before, at least not in the data available) but is based on pragmatic inferences in combination with contextual knowledge and world knowledge: Since Herbert knows that Bernd is a teacher, he can assume that the topic "educational curricula" is accessible to him. Secondly, Herbert does not carry on with topic-related talk himself but invites Bernd to talk by means of an alternative question (cf. lines 7-8). Accordingly, the hanging-topic with "mit" in line (6) can be classified as a means to other-initiate topic talk which is pre-structured by the pragmatic scope of the operator in the pre-front field.

In examples (1) and (2), the prepositional hanging-topics with *mit*_{tying} + NP are employed for *mid-scale* or *large-scale topic tying*: They are used when a topic is regarded to be accessible to the addressee but

(a) has not been opened up before or has already been closed explicitly (= large-scale topic tying), or

²⁰ In example (2), the referent of the hanging-topic is taken up in the subsequent clause by a coreferential pronoun. However, since the turn-constructive units in lines (6) and (7) are separated prosodically (they both feature a focus accent and they are both embraced by an initial inbreath on the left and an independent final pitch movement on the right), the turn-constructive unit in line (6) can be classified as a hanging-topic.

(b) has been opened up before but is not being dealt with in the preceding turn-constructural unit(s) (= mid-scale topic tying).²¹

The reason seems to be that the explicit establishment of an accessible topic – especially in the pre-front field as a syntactically and pragmatically prominent position²² – makes sense primarily when the topic is "misplaced" inasmuch as it cannot necessarily be considered to be "active" or the local conversational business-at-hand.

However, hanging-topics with *mit*_{tying} + NP can also be used for *small-scale topic tying*, i.e. with regard to a topic which has not been closed yet and is also being dealt with in the preceding turn-constructural units. One such context is the use of *mit*_{tying} + NP as a means to compete for the floor in order to express disagreement; cf. the following example, which is taken from the German TV cooking show "Lanz kocht!":

Example (3) Salad

- 1 S: ALso?=
 well
- 2 =dIr SCHMECKter.
 you like it
- 3 L: ja SEHR gUt.=
 yes very good
- 4 =SEHR gUt.
 very good
- 5 S: und DAzu gibts_en kartOffelsalat?
 and additionally we're going to have a potato salad
- 6 (das) is ein kartOffel VOgerlsalat,
 that's a potato and field salad
- 7 was ja auch (.) tYpisch ÖSterreichisch is,
 which is typically Austrian actually
- 8 L: SUper.
 great
- 9 S: °h u:nd beim FELdsalat müssen wa sAgn,
 and concerning field salad we have to say
- 10 der fELdsalat hat von dem vitamin CE her,
 field salad has, in respect of vitamin C,
- 11 DOPpelt so vIEl?
 twice as much
- 12 °h als JEder kOpfsalat.=
 as any garden salad

²¹ Hence, they have characteristics of "second-level discourse markers" (see Siepmann 2003: 266): "[T]ypically, second-level discourse markers, hereafter SLDMs, are restricted medium frequency collocations composed of two or more printed words and having a definably pragmatic function. They act as single units establishing local linkage between adjacent elements, sequences or text segments and/or global linkage between text segments further apart."

²² Note that constituents of all kinds can evolve into discourse markers with a large pragmatic scope in the pre-front field due to its syntactic and pragmatic prominence (see Auer 1996; Auer/Günthner 2005).

13 L: Aber KOMM.
but come on

14 S: sEhr viel [BETakarotine?]
a lot of beta-carotene

15 → L: [aber **mit mit**] **dem saLAT**,=
but regarding the salad

16 → =ich hab NEUlich wieder\ eine_eine stUdie äh_äh gehört,
I heard of a study recently again

17 → oder das erGEBnis einer stUdie,
or of the results of a study

18 → da KAM im grUnde raus,
basically, the results say

19 → dass\ salAt is einfach nur für karNICKel.
that salad is just something for rabbits

20 S: NEIN.=
no

21 =Is a SCHMARRN.=
that's nonsense

22 [=Is DAS.]
is that

23 L: [DOCH.]
yes

24 S: JA.=
yes

25 =Aber==
but

26 L: [=da is nix DRIN,]
there is nothing in it

27 A: [()]
(not understandable stretch of talk)

28 L: da is nix DRIN,
there is nothing in it

(Source: Example from Beate Weidner)

The host of the cooking show, Markus Lanz (L), talks with Alfons Schuhbeck (S), a cook who is a regular guest on "Lanz kocht!", about the meal Schuhbeck is currently preparing. After Lanz has confirmed that he enjoys Schuhbeck's meal (lines 1-4), Schuhbeck comments on the side dish, a kind of Austrian potato salad (cf. lines 5-8), and he takes the view that field salad is healthier in comparison to garden salad due to its wealth of vitamins (lines 9-12), but Lanz, the host of the show, indicates upcoming disagreement (line 13). Since Schuhbeck keeps on talking (line 14), Lanz interrupts him by means of an overlapped hanging-topic with *mit* in order to refer to the results of a study which differ from Schuhbeck's point of view since they indicate that salad is not very healthy at all because "there is nothing in it" (cf. lines 15-28).

This point of view – which is also held by Andreas Studer (A), another guest cook – does not convince Schuhbeck, though (cf. lines 20-22).

In this example, the prepositional hanging-topic "[aber mIt mIt] dem saLAT," ('but regarding the salad') in line (15) is used as a means for small-scale topic tying: Its topical antecedent is a part of the local conversational business-at-hand which is not only accessible but even active at the time of Lanz's turn. Thus, it actually does not need to be reactivated, but the prepositional hanging-topic makes it possible for Lanz to indicate the topical relevance (or relatedness) of his turn in the exposed initial position that gets overlapped (Jefferson 2004) while holding back dissent until he has successfully occupied the turn.

Another context in which prepositional hanging-topics with *mit*_{tying} + NP can be employed for small-scale topic tying are list-like topical structures in the preceding turn(s).²³ It can be useful, then, to tie follow-up turn-constructional units explicitly to one of the preceding list items:

Example (4) Baking

- 1 W: tirOler hut NÄ:hen.
 sew a Tyrolean hat
- 2 JEdEr bewohner soll EInen hut anfertigen.
 every resident ought to make a hat
- 3 C: [ph:::]
 phhh
- 4 W: <<while other discourse participants are talking simultaneously>
 [WEIter.]
 furthermore
- 5 (-)
 pause
- 6 am dOnnerstag wird um ZEHN uhr ein hau den lukas in den garten
 gehoben.>
 on Thursday at ten o'clock a strength tester will be carried into the garden
- 7 °h BUCHstaben backen.
 (inbreath) bake letters
- 8 den teig für buchstaben (.) könnt ihr nach dem beidigen²⁴ re-
 zept, =
 you can [prepare] the batter for the letters (pause) in accordance with the enclosed recipe
- 9 ham wir HIER?
 [which] we have here
- 10 (0.5) zubereiten.
 pause [...]
- 11 C: ph:::
 phhhh
- 12 S: ()

²³ See Jefferson (1991) and Selting (2004) with regard to the interactional accomplishment of lists in spoken conversation.

²⁴ Probably an unclear pronunciation of "beiliegenden" ('enclosed').

(incomprehensible stretch of talk)

13 W: BUCHsta:ben müssen ungefähr in der große vierzig,
letters ought to be [shaped] about the size of forty

14 auf ACHTnzwanzig zentimeter geformt werden.
on twenty-eight centimeters [...]

15 S: hm,
hm

16 es is aber nicht so LEICHT.=
but that's not so easy

17 =also äh [von DAher,]
well eh hence

18 W: [ja.]
yes

19 → S: grad **mit dem BACken**.
especially regarding the baking

20 → ich glaub [dAs:] gibt die MEISTen probleme.
I think that will cause the most problems

21 W: [ja.]
yes

22 → S: weil das bricht ausnANder,
because that breaks apart

23 → oda du muss was [()]
or you have to (incomprehensible stretch of talk)

24 W: [()] lAUgen,
(incomprehensible stretch of talk) [made] lye

25 lAUgengebäck gemacht?
lye bread [...]

(Source: linguistische Audio Datenbank (lAuDa), Interaction 25)

This excerpt is taken from the German adaption of the TV reality show "Big Brother", which films a group of people who live together in a large isolated house and have to do certain tasks every week. Walter (W), Christian (C) and Stefanie (S) are talking here about the tasks they have to do this week, and Walter reads out a list they have received from the "Big Brother" organizers: The housemates have to sew Tyrolean hats (lines 1-2), use a strength tester (line 6) and bake letters (lines 7-14). After Walter read out the list (accompanied by several commentaries by the other discourse participants), Stefanie expresses her opinion that it won't be easy for them to complete these tasks (cf. lines 16-17). Stefanie finishes her turn-constructional unit in line (17) by means of the "topic-tag" "von DAher," ('hence'), a frequent construction in spoken German talk-in-interaction which marks the topical and argumentative coherence and completeness of the turn-so-far by signaling that a conclusive continuation

well dunno
 11 ja.=das Is am SAMStag.
well it's on Saturday
 12 aber das sind NICH dA-
but that ain't
 13 WEISS nIch,=
dunno
 14 =das geht dann [von SAMStag irgendwie elf-]
it goes from Saturday somewhat eleven
 15 S: [aber_wieso==SAMStag Is doch-]
but what's the matter, on Saturday the stress will be
 16 äh_is doch [stress wieder vorbei erstmal.]
eh the stress will be over for the moment
 17 A: [°hhh]
(deep inbreath)
 18 hhh° JA.
(deep outbreath) yes
 19 ja.=ja.ja.=
yes yes yes
 20 → ja.=ich bin auch SO: frOh,
well I'm so glad as well
 21 → dass ich das jEtzt geREgelt hab?=
that I managed it/that now
 22 → =mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da.
regarding the shitty history stuff there
 23 (1.2)
(pause)
 24 S: nur noch EIN thEma.
just one more subject
 25 dU SCHWEIN.
you pig
 26 A: JA.
yes
 27 VOLL.
indeed

(Source: linguistische Audio Datenbank (lAuDa), Interaction 161)

First, the two friends Andrea (A) and Sandra (S) talk about the question of whether they like champagne or not (lines 1-9). This question is a sub-topic of a conversation about a promotional film which will be shot on Saturday. After Andrea closed the champagne side sequence (Jefferson 1972) and returned to the issue of the promotional film as the main topic (see lines 10-11), she produces two anacolutha (cf. lines 12-14). Sandra's reaction to these disfluencies in Andrea's turn indicates that she perceives them as a display of concern: She emphasizes that the stress will be over after Saturday (lines 15-16); note that Andrea has agreed to partici-

pate in the promotional film, but she and Sandra also have to prepare for an upcoming presentation and a test. Andrea, in return, agrees with Sandra by means of a series of agreement tokens and breathing (lines 18-19). Then she emphasizes that she finally managed to do "something" (note that the anaphoric/deictic pronoun "das" 'it/that' in line 21 is referentially vague) and immediately carries on with the turn-constructive unit "mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da" ('regarding the shitty history stuff there', line 22) in order to provide further information which specifies the topical background of her preceding turn-constructive unit. After a notable pause of over one second (line 23), Sabine takes over the turn and underlines that there is not much work left (line 24).²⁶ Then Andrea agrees emphatically by means of "JA" ('yes') in combination with the affirmative intensifier "VOLL." ('indeed').²⁷

The turn-constructive unit "mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da" ('regarding the shitty history stuff there', line 22) ties the preceding turn-constructive unit back to the issue of the upcoming presentation (the presentation has to deal with a historical issue) – a topic Andrea and Sandra did not talk about in the preceding course of talk²⁸ but which is well known to Sandra since she has to prepare the presentation together with Andrea. Syntactically and prosodically, "mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da" in line (22) is realized after a point of possible syntactic and prosodic completion: The sentence brace has been closed, all argument positions are filled and the turn-constructive unit has its own focus accent and a terminal pitch movement. There is no inter-turn gap, though, which might be treated as a transition relevance place by Sandra. Since Andrea neither carries on talking herself nor motivates Sandra to talk with regard to the topical antecedent, "mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da" cannot be analyzed as a dislocated constituent in the left periphery of the subsequent turn-constructive unit which is meant to initiate topic talk. It can however be classified as a dependent turn-constructive unit, namely an "insertable" (Couper-Kuhlen/Ono 2007), which has its "canonical" position in the middle field of the preceding turn-constructive unit as an attributive modifier: "das ↔ mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da" ('that ↔ with the shitty history stuff there').²⁹

²⁶ It is not clear if the address term "Schwein" ('pig', line 25) is a means for teasing or an allusion to the German idiomatic expression "Glücksschwein" ('lucky pig'; in Germany, pigs are known as a symbol for good luck). Cf. Eisenberg (1986), Miller (1986), Drew (1987) and Günthner (2000a: 155ff) as regards teasing in everyday conversation.

²⁷ See Imo (2011) concerning post-positioned intensifiers in spoken German talk-in-interaction.

²⁸ At least as far as it has been recorded.

²⁹ Note that "mit dem schEIss geSCHICHTSkram da" cannot be classified as a retrospective paradigmatic replacement of "das" (i.e. a "replacement" in the sense of Couper-Kuhlen/Ono 2007: 515) since "das" is a direct object which cannot be replaced by a prepositional phrase. See also Droop (1977), Teubert (1979), Lehmus (1983), Lauterbach (1993: 126ff) and Schierholz (2001), amongst others, for a comprehensive discussion of the methodological problem of identifying prepositional attributes. Droop, Teubert, Lehmus, Lauterbach and

2.1.3 Integrated non-attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP

Non-attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP which are syntactically and prosodically fully integrated are rare in my data. I will discuss just one example here:

Example (6) Rechargeable battery and slippers

- 1 J: <<smile voice; Sabrina is laughing> die SCHLA:Ppen hEr?
give the slippers to me
- 2 Und das AKku.
and the rechargeable battery
- 3 aber GANZ schnEll;>
and be quick about it
- 4 [°hhh ?hhh°] °h
(deep inbreath, deep outbreath, inbreath)
- 5 S: [<<innocent voice> ich HAB das nich hIEr drin.>]
I don't have it in here
- 6 (0.6)
(pause)
- 7 J: HÄH?
heh
- 8 S: ich HAB das [nich hIEr.]
I don't have it in here
- 9 → J: [mi (m) AK_AKku?]
regarding the rechargeable battery
- 10 (.)
(pause)
- 11 → J: KRIEstE Ärger.=ne,
you will get into trouble
- 12 S: mIt WEM?
with whom
- 13 → J: **mit den sch**\ <<all> ja.=mim Akku krieste von DEn(en) ärger?
regarding the s(lippers) well regarding the rechargeable battery you will get into trouble with them
- 14 → [und **mitn schlAppen** kries mit MIR ärger.> ((laughs briefly))]
and regarding the slippers you will get into trouble with me
- 15 S: [laughing]
(laughing)

Schierholz, however, do not discuss spoken examples and thus do not recognize the problem of "dislocated possible attributes" in the right periphery of turn-constructural units.

16 (1.5)
 (pause)
 17 ?: ()
 (incomprehensible stretch of talk)
 18 S: KALT?
 cold
 19 GANZ [kAlt.]
 very cold
 20 J: [hm.]
 hm

(Source: linguistische Audio Datenbank (lAuDa), Interaction 2)

Just like example (4), this excerpt is taken from the German adaption of the TV reality show "Big Brother". Jürgen (J) suspects Sabrina (S) to have hidden a pair of slippers and a rechargeable battery which he wants back (lines 1-4). The interaction is playful and humorous, though; both participants smile and laugh while they talk. Since Sabrina pretends to be innocent (lines 5-8), Jürgen announces that she will get into trouble regarding the rechargeable battery (lines 9-11). Sabrina, however, still pretends to be innocent by asking "mIt WEM?" ('with whom', line 12). Hence, Jürgen repeats that concerning the rechargeable battery, she will get into trouble with "them" (= other housemates) while concerning the slippers, she will get into trouble with him (lines 13-14). After that, Jürgen and Sabrina enter into some sort of "pot hitting" game: Jürgen starts to search for the rechargeable battery and the slippers while Sabrina indicates by means of "cold" and "very cold" that Jürgen is not searching in the right place (lines 18-20).

The instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP in lines (9), (13) and (14) are structurally and prosodically fully integrated and occupy the front field. However, they are neither a canonical part of the propositional content nor are they subcategorized by the verb. Instead, the complete "host speech acts" are within their scopes as they point back to a certain conversational issue in the prior context (two missing articles of daily use) by means of the complements "rechargeable battery" and "slippers" (note that Jürgen by no means wants to say that the trouble he talks about will involve the "instrumental" use of the battery and the slippers). From a sequential point of view, the instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP are means for small-scale topic tying since Jürgen and Sabrina talked about this issue immediately before. The small-scale topic tying is triggered by the list-like topical structure of the preceding turn (see example 4 in section 2.1.1, too): On a sub-topical level, the issue of the rechargeable battery needs to be distinguished from the issue of the slippers since Jürgen expects that Sabrina will get into trouble with different persons concerning each issue (see lines 13-14). Furthermore, example (6) resembles example (5)

inasmuch as *mit*_{tying} + NP does not initiate a multi-unit stretch of talk which presupposes the topical antecedent. Its scope as a pragmatic operator remains restricted to the host turn-constructional unit instead.

2.2 Attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP

The preceding examples all featured non-attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP in spoken talk-in-interaction. However, *mit*_{tying} + NP can also be used as an attributive modifier of an abstract noun (for example, "Sache" 'matter' or "Ding" 'thing')³⁰ or a pronoun. This type of *mit*_{tying} + NP has already been mentioned by Droop (1977: 215f).³¹ Droop does not take the indexical character of the *mit*-complement into consideration, though – just like their non-attributive counterparts, the attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP are first and foremost a means to establish a topical antecedent as a part of the local context for adjacent turn-constructional units. They have to be, in fact, because otherwise it would be impossible to assign a referent to the abstract modificand. For example, "dAs hab ich eben nich: ERNST gemeint?" ('I was not serious about that') in line (6) would be opaque without "mit den äh liedern" ('concerning the eh songs'):

Example (7) Songs

- 1 B: wie_wie groß is mariettas PARTytauglichkeit so,
 how how big is Marietta's capability to party
- 2 A: ?: WAHNSinnich.
 incredibly
- 3 marietta is Echt_n PARTylöwe.=
 Marietta really is a party animal
- 4 [=FIND Ich?]
 I think
- 5 M: [((laughs))]
 (laughs)
- 6 → A: [deshalb also **dAs mit den äh liedern** hab ich eben

³⁰ Since these nouns are very abstract, they are not prototypical "Rektionssubstantive" (nominal heads which govern the preposition of its attribute) such as "Einladung zu einer Feier" ('invitation to a party'). See Schierholz (2001) for a recent discussion of prepositional attributes in German.

³¹ Droop considers this type different from other patterns such as the "Merkmal-'mit'" ('feature-'mit', for example "der Mann mit dem Hut" 'the man with the hat'). Teubert (1979: 159) cites Droop's example "die Geschichte mit Klaus" ('the story/matter with Klaus') and paraphrases it in terms of "die Geschichte, in der Klaus vorkommt" ('the story/matter in which Klaus occurs'). Teubert's paraphrase and his analysis show that he does not consider the indexical character of the *mit*-complement either.

- nich: ERNST gemeint?]
thus well I was not serious about that concerning the eh songs
- 7 M: [(laughs, °hhh)
]
(laughs, deep inbreath)
- 8 A: weil ich hab marietta nur SINGen [und] tAnzen und sonstwas se-
 hen?
since I have always seen Marietta singing and dancing and whatever
- 9 M: [hh°]
(deep outbreath)

(Source: linguistische Audio Datenbank (lAuDa), Interaction 95)

This example is taken from a TV conversation between the German journalists and friends Anne Will (A) and Marietta Slomka (M) with Reinhold Beckmann (B), the host of the German TV talk show "Beckmann". After Beckmann asked Anne Will if Marietta Slomka is capable of partying (line 1), Anne Will emphasizes that, in her opinion, Marietta Slomka is a real "PARtylöwe" ('party animal', lines 2-4). She is acknowledged by Marietta Slomka by means of laughter (line 5), and then she relates to one of her prior claims by means of the complex nominal phrase "dAs mit den äh liedern" ('that with the eh songs') in order to reassess this claim as "not serious" (lines 6-8).

Syntactically, the nominal phrase "dAs mit den äh liedern" ('that concerning the eh songs') fills the position of the direct object which is required by the verb "meinen" ('mean'). This shows that the attributive affiliation with a modificand makes it possible for *mit_{tying}* + NP to be part of a projection of a verb. Regarding its functions and its sequential embedding, "dAs mit den äh liedern" is a means for mid-scale topic tying and the self-initiation of topic talk: In the preceding course of talk, Anne Will had claimed that she would know more carnival songs than Marietta Slomka, but now she picks her claim up again in order to relativize it.

At first view, this might look like the kind of topic tying which occurs in the previous examples, but there is an important difference: Note that the non-attributive instances of *mit_{tying}* + NP in section (2.1) did not metapragmatically deal with speech-act-related characteristics of the topical antecedent (its validity claims, informational value, appropriateness or argumentative weight, for example) but established it as an explicated part of the presupposed "background" of the local interaction; in example (7), in contrast, a certain speech act is being picked up as the topical antecedent in order to reassess its validity claims. This is characteristic for the other attributive instances of *mit_{tying}* + NP in my data as well – they refer to a certain piece of *talk* (as a speech act) or *information* as the topical antecedent in order to deal with its characteristics. This can be part of a problematization sequence such as a correction, a defense, a justification or an apology:

Example (8) History of art

1 S: JA:;=wIr sind hier bei (.) dAs (.) SOFA,
well here we are with "Das Sofa"

2 <<all> und NEben mir sitzt herr ulrich wEIgel,
and Mister Ulrich Weigel is sitting beside me

3 wie wir gerAde schon im portrait geHÖRT haben,>
as we just have heard in the portrait

4 halLO,=hErr wEIgel,
hello Mister Weigel

5 schön dass sie heute Abend geKOMmen [sind?]
nice that you came here tonight

6 W: [JA:.]
yeah

7 gÜten Abend;=
good evening

8 =frau DI donAto; °h
Miss Di Donato

9 S: °h gÜten Abend,
(inbreath) good evening

10 (0.5)
(pause)

11 ÄHM,
ehm

12 JA;=EIn kleiner FEHler hat sich eingeschlichen;
well a little mistake slipped in

13 wir wf\ <<all> WISSen durch das kUrzportrait,
we know due to the short portrait

14 dass sie wissenschaftlicher MITarbeiter sind,>=
that you are a lecturer

15 =am Institut für SPORtwissenschaften,=
at the department of sports science

16 =hIEr in MÜNster,
here in Münster

17 → °h Aber **das mit der KUNSTgeschichte** stimmt nicht so ganz genau.
(inbreath) but that concerning the history of art is not really correct

18 °h DENN (.) sIE haben n? anach ihrem abitur n:icht kunstge-
schichte,
(inbreath) since you didn't [study] history of art after your A-Levels

19 sondern kunsterZIEHUNG [studiert.]
but art education

(Source: linguistische Audio Datenbank (IAuDa), Interaction 29)

After Sarah (S), the host of the talk show, and her guest Ulrich Weigel (W) heard a short portrait of Weigel for the "overhearing audience" (Hutchby 2006), Sarah welcomes the audience

and her guest (lines 1-9). Then she initiates a dispreferred repair³² with regard to one of the claims in the portrait (note that the pause, the particles "ÄHM," and "JA;," the explicit notification of a repair and the repetition of correct information in lines 10-16 significantly delay the actual repair starting in line 17): Weigel is a lecturer at the department of sports science, but he did not study history of art but art education (cf. lines 12-19). Sarah makes use of an attributive instance of *mit*_{tying} + NP in line (17) in order to locate the reparandum (= the wrong claim that Weigel studied history of art) precisely in the context. The attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP is a part of the nominal subject of the clause, and it helps to establish a concrete speech act as a topical antecedent which needs to be corrected.

The examples (1-8) indicate that attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP tend to establish the topical antecedent as *an accessible piece of talk (usually a certain speech act) or information to deal with on a metapragmatic level (for example, correcting or modifying)* (in such cases, the antecedent is not only a topical antecedent but a "speech act antecedent") while the non-attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP tend to establish the topical antecedent as *an explicated topical presupposition of (or "topical frame" for) local speech acts*. This observation can be linked to the lexical features of the modified (pro)noun and to the question of whether the topical antecedent is being established as a part of the predicate or not:

- (i) Modificands such as "Sache" ('matter'), "Ding" ('thing') and "das" ('that') indicate a high degree of "identifiability" and categorical "boundedness" of their referents. Ascribing these features to a topical antecedent makes it easier to deal with it as a concrete piece of talk or information which can be reassessed or modified on a metapragmatic level.
- (ii) In order to reassess or modify a concrete piece of talk or information, it is necessary to place it within the predicate in terms of an argument of the verb which becomes affected and specified by its semantics.³³ However, only the attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP can establish a topical antecedent non-anaphorically in the predicate as a part of a constituent with a verb-driven thematic role. The non-attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP, in contrast, can only indirectly establish its topical antecedents as a part of the predicate, namely by means of a dislocated instance of *mit*_{tying} + NP and an integrated phoric pro-form in the predicate.

3. A usage-based model of *mit*_{tying} + NP as a construction

³² See Pomerantz (1984), Auer/Uhmann (1982) and Kotthoff (1993) as regards preference in talk-in-interaction. The concept of conversational repair has been introduced by Schegloff/Jefferson/Sacks (1977).

³³ Cf. Hopper's (1979: 240) observation that "[t]he verb is the location of new, narrative-advancing information."

Up to this point, it has been shown how non-attributive and attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} are used to tie the local context to a topical antecedent. This section aims to show that *mit*_{tying} + NP can be analyzed by means of two constructions in the sense of a *usage-based approach to Construction Grammar*.

3.1 Construction Grammar from a usage-based point of view

In a series of seminal studies, Fillmore, Goldberg, Croft and other advocates of Construction Grammar (CxG) argue that the primary units of the linguistic competence are surface-near *constructions* rather than atomic units and abstract autonomous rules (see Fillmore 1988, Fillmore/Kay/Catherine O'Connor 1988, Goldberg 1995, 2006 and Croft 2001, amongst others). Constructions are considered to be entrenched symbolic pairings of *form* (at least phonology, but usually morphology and syntax as well) and *meaning* (typically both semantic and pragmatic meaning aspects) which can differ with regard to internal complexity and specification and which are created and shaped by actual language use. Most of the branches of Construction Grammar are strictly usage-based (cf. Langacker 2000, Barlow/Kemmer 2000, Bybee/Hopper 2001 and Tomasello 2003, for example) and reject the distinction between autonomous structure- and rule-based parts of grammar (substantially brought about by an innate universal grammar) on the one hand and the lexicon (as the host of all idiosyncrasies in a certain language) on the other. Instead, language is seen as constantly emerging within and through the actual use of symbolic pairings of form and meaning.³⁴

Recent usage-based studies in Construction Grammar have shown that the use of constructions as "constructs" (Fried/Östman 2005: 18) in everyday talk-in-interaction is both complex and context-driven since it strongly interacts with sequential positions, genres and sometimes also social registers (cf. Selting/Kern 2009). For example, Günthner (2010, 2011a) notes that "dense constructions" are particularly common in conversational narrative genres, while Imo (2010a) considers German "mein Problem ist/mein Thema ist" ('my problem is/my topic is') to be a conventionalized means to initiate topic talk in German radio phone-ins. Such studies reveal that constructions can emerge in virtually every "ecological niche" of language use – such "niches" being sequential positions, genres and other socio-linguistic constellations of all kinds – as the result of specific communicative conditions and particularities which character-

³⁴ Bucker (2012) is a further recent example of a usage-based approach to Construction Grammar.

ize these "niches". Due to this, it is by no means unlikely that there are still many patterns in talk-in-interaction which have not been recognized yet as corresponding to entrenched pairings of form and meaning.³⁵ In my opinion, one of these patterns is *mit*_{tying} + NP. However, in order to avoid a naïve exemplar-based approach with a behavioristic bias, not every pattern of language use should directly be identified with a construction (see Bückler in print). It needs to be shown instead that the degree of structural and functional "autonomy" a certain pattern of language use has is really high enough to justify the postulation of a cognitively entrenched construction.

3.2 A construction model of *mit*_{tying} + NP

For our discussion of the question of whether the instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP correspond to one construction (or even more constructions) or not, it needs to be considered that we came across two patterns of *mit*_{tying} + NP in the data which have slightly different structural and functional properties. The following two tables summarize the typical features of these patterns:

Table (1) Pattern I (typical non-attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP)

Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP is placed in the pre-front field of a subsequent turn-constructive unit (hanging-topic or left-dislocation), in the end field of a preceding turn-constructive unit (for example, as an "insertable") or even syntactically integrated (front field or middle field) into a host turn-constructive unit - <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP is neither subcategorized by a verb nor a part of a constituent which is projected by a verb - The complement of <i>mit</i>_{tying} is a noun which is marked as definite
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The complement of <i>mit</i>_{tying} is not a canonical symbolic part of the propositional content of the subsequent, preceding or host turn-constructive unit but rather an index (or topical keyword) - <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP does not have a phrasal or a clausal scope but is a pragmatic operator with a pragmatically driven (and hence potentially far-reaching) scope - Retrospective: The complement of <i>mit</i>_{tying} points (back) to a topical antecedent which is considered to be intersubjectively accessible - Prospective: <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP establishes the topical antecedent as an explicated topical presupposition of (or "topical frame" for) local speech acts

Table (2) Pattern II (typical attributive *mit*_{tying} + NP)

³⁵ See Birkner (2006), Imo (2007), Günthner (2009) and Bückler (2009) with regard to further examples of constructions which had not been discussed as entrenched form-meaning pairings before.

Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP is an attributive modifier of a nominal phrase as its modificand - The modificand of <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP is both subcategorized by a verb and syntactically integrated into the front or middle field of the host turn-constructive unit - The complement of <i>mit</i>_{tying} is a noun which is marked as definite
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The modificand of <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP denotes an abstract concept - The complement of <i>mit</i>_{tying} is not a canonical symbolic part of the propositional content of the host turn-constructive unit but rather an index (or topical keyword) - The scope of <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP is subordinated to the scope of its modificand - Retrospective: Together, <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP and its modificand point (back) to a topical antecedent which is considered to be intersubjectively accessible - Prospective: Together, <i>mit</i>_{tying} + NP and its modificand establish the topical antecedent as an accessible piece of talk (a certain speech act) or information to deal with on a metapragmatic level (for example, correcting or modifying)

As one can see, the main differences between these two patterns affect the syntactic position of *mit*_{tying} + NP and the question of whether the topical antecedent is being established as an explicated topical presupposition or metapragmatically assessed as a certain piece of talk or information (in such cases, it is not only a topical antecedent but a fully-fledged speech act antecedent). As far as I can see, these differences can be explained compositionally by the integration of *mit*_{tying} + NP into a nominal phrase with an abstract head (see section 2.2). Hence, only *one mit*_{tying} + NP-construction needs to be assumed which can be used either as a non-attributive constituent or as an attributive modifier.

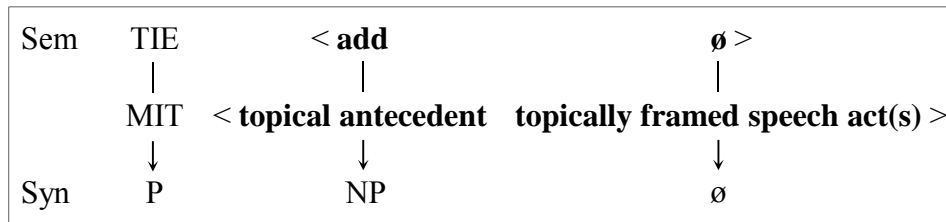
Structurally, the *mit*_{tying} + NP-construction³⁶ has the unmarked architecture of a typical German prepositional phrase. Concerning its constructional meaning, *mit*_{tying} indicates a tying relation between a topical antecedent (the respective noun bearing the construction-inherent thematic role "add(endum)") and one or more speech acts which are topically "framed" by the antecedent; since it is not possible to specify the categorical status and the thematic role of these speech acts, both positions are marked with "ø".³⁷ All in all, the *mit*_{tying} + NP-construction can be schematically modeled as follows:³⁸

Figure (1) A simple model of the *mit*_{tying} + NP-construction

³⁶ Bühlig/House (2007: 349ff) classify "extraposed prepositional phrases" (for example, "In doing this, ...", "In fact, ...") as "linking constructions" within a "systemic-functional" and "functional-pragmatic" approach. Since I analyze *mit*_{tying} + NP by means of tying in the sense of Sacks in this study and since I follow a usage-based approach to Construction Grammar, I will speak of *mit*_{tying} + NP as a tying construction instead.

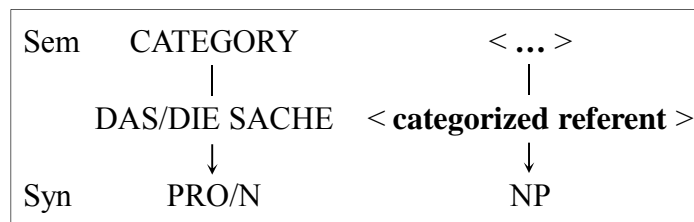
³⁷ The "tying operation" could be a bleached and pragmaticalized remnant of a modal or "identificational" meaning which does not work at the propositional level alone anymore but affects the speech act level now. This is only a hypothesis, however.

³⁸ The description basically follows Goldberg (1995: 50ff). The first tier of the construction comprises its basic semantics together with its thematic roles, the second tier comprises its participant roles (roles which are associated with the "frame" of the construction in the sense of Fillmore's 1977, 1978 frame semantics) and the third tier comprises the categorical representations corresponding to the thematic roles and participant roles. While Goldberg specifies grammatical functions such as "subject" or "object" on the syntactic tier, I restrict myself to the categorical level (in terms of phrasal categories such as "P" or "NP").



If we assume that the typical modificand of the *mit*_{tying} + NP-construction is cognitively entrenched, too (this is reasonable due to its regular co-occurrence with the *mit*_{tying} + NP-construction), it can be modeled as a surface-near construction with the regular structural architecture of a German nominal phrase specified by a small paradigm of abstract heads such as "das" ('that') or "die Sache" ('the matter'). Semantically, this modificand-construction indicates that the referent at stake is a somehow "delimitable" and "identifiable" member of a category (the points "..." in the following description mark an unspecified open slot which is filled by a value allocated by a superordinated constituent):

Figure (2) A simple model of the modificand-construction



Since the *mit*_{tying} + NP-construction (figure 1) is specialized on *identifying* or *localizing* a topical antecedent while the modificand-construction (figure 2) provides for *categorizing* a topical antecedent on a very abstract or basic level (in terms of indicating that it is an "object" with a high degree of "identifiability" and categorical "boundedness"), both constructions taken together provide a convenient cognitive resource for the interactional establishment of a certain piece of talk or information as a speech act antecedent to deal with on a metapragmatic level (see section 2.2).

4. Summary and conclusions

In this study, it has been shown that not all prepositional instances of *mit* in spoken German talk-in-interaction can be classified as instantiations of the canonical comitative, temporal, instrumental, modal, "affiliating" or "identifying" preposition *mit*. Instead, the preposition *mit* can also be used together with a nominal complement that, in the given context, refers back to

a topical antecedent which is considered to be intersubjectively accessible and which is being established as a topical context for adjacent turn-constructive units. A topical antecedent of such instances of *mit_{tying}* + NP can either be a preceding stretch of topic talk within the actual conversation or shared contextual, situational and encyclopedic knowledge.

Concerning the sequential distance between instances of *mit_{tying}* + NP and their topical antecedents, it has been possible to distinguish between small-scale topic tying (the topic is both accessible and active), mid-scale topic tying (the topic is accessible, but not necessarily active anymore) and large-scale topic tying (the topic is accessible, but definitely not active since it has either not been opened yet or it has already been closed). While the main reason for mid-scale and large-scale topic tying is the (re-)activation of a topical antecedent which is "misplaced" inasmuch as it is neither active (anymore) nor expectable, this cannot be the primary reason for small-scale topic tying since it affects a topical antecedent which is still active. Instead, small-scale topic tying by means of *mit_{tying}* + NP can be employed as a resource to compete for the floor (*mit_{tying}* + NP in the pre-front field allows the indication of topical relevance within overlap while more important parts of the turn can be held back until the turn is occupied successfully) or to accomplish a list-like topical structure (it allows adjacent turn-constructive units to be tied to exactly one list item as the relevant topical antecedent).

Furthermore, this study has shown that *mit_{tying}* + NP can be combined with initial conjunctions and particles such as "und" ('and'), "aber" ('but') or "gerade" ('especially'). With regard to such co-occurring functional items, the position in the pre-front field proves to be useful since it makes it possible to integrate *mit_{tying}* + NP into the scope of a preceding conjunction while the follow-up turn-constructive unit is excluded.³⁹ By this means, the topical antecedent of *mit_{tying}* + NP can be marked exclusively as a local caesura (for example, "aber"), continuation (for example, "und") or focus (for example, "gerade") with regard to prior turns while the subsequent speech act does not need to have the same relation to the context. This shows that co-occurring conjunctions and particles strongly interact with the syntactic position of *mit_{tying}* + NP and efficiently integrate it into its sequential and contextual position.

Finally, it has become obvious that *mit_{tying}* + NP does not only tie its local context to a certain topical antecedent (in terms of a retrospective operation) but also pre-structures the subsequent course of conversation in a characteristic way: Used attributively, it helps to establish the topical antecedent as a concrete conversational action (i.e. not only as a topical antecedent but as a fully-fledged speech act antecedent) to deal with on a metapragmatic level, while its

³⁹ If *mit_{tying}* + NP would be in the front field of a host turn-constructive unit, the scope of a conjunction would not only include *mit_{tying}* + NP but the whole turn-constructive unit.

non-attributive instances establish the topical antecedent as an explicated topical presupposition of (or "topical frame" for) local speech acts in order to localize them within the overall topical organization of the conversation.

Since the non-attributive and attributive instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP differ from the canonical prepositional types of *mit* both structurally and functionally, they do not only belong to systematic patterns of language use but can also be regarded as constructs of a cognitively entrenched construction in the sense of Construction Grammar. This construction can be characterized as a *dialogical construction* for two reasons:⁴⁰

- (i) Since it is a discourse-structuring resource, its features cannot be sufficiently reconstructed by means of semantic, morphological and syntactic features which completely abstract from dialogue-constituting aspects. Instead, its constructional frame contains one position which refers to conversational actions in order to integrate them coherently into the overall topical structure of talk-in-interaction (see section 3.2).
- (ii) Its instantiations (constructs) are neither completely pre-structured by nor completely independent from their local contexts. Instead, they are "dynamic construals" (Linell 2006) which emerge as flexible local phenomena that not only perfectly fit into "real coherent sequences of sense-making in talk (or text)" (Linell 2009a: 106) but are also major reasons for cohesion and coherence themselves.

The complex, tight and dynamic interplay between situation-transcending constructional features on the one hand and situational conditions on the other demands a linguistic approach that treats *mit*_{tying} + NP both as a cognitively entrenched constructional unit and an "interactional achievement" in the sense of Schegloff (1982: 75), i.e. "as something 'produced' over time, incrementally accomplished, rather than naturally born out of the speaker's forehead". Especially its nature as an "interactional achievement" makes it necessary to stick to empirical data consistently and to treat instances of *mit*_{tying} + NP as phenomena which demand "a grammatical analysis rooted in an understanding of all the factors underlying the use of language to accomplish social work among real people interacting with each other in real time" (Hopper/Thompson 2008: 118). For this reason, *mit*_{tying} + NP is a genuine object of study for a dialogical grammar which not only analyzes its "inner syntax" but also takes its "outer syntax"

⁴⁰ See also Günthner (2012: 42), who emphasizes that "und zwar" ('namely') is closely related to the dialogic organization of German spoken talk-in-interaction when it is being used to reactivate prior stretches of talk.

(i.e. antecedent and subsequent structures as well as characteristically co-occurring elements) into account (see Linell 2006: 165).⁴¹

5. Transcription conventions

The examples cited in this study are transcribed according to the standards set out in the "Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem 2" (GAT 2; cf. Selting et al. 2009 and Barth-Weingarten/Couper-Kuhlen 2011 for an English translation). The following list comprises only those transcription conventions which occur in the samples:

Table (3) Selective list of transcription conventions following GAT 2

(i) Sequential features	
[]	Two or more pairs of brackets mark a temporal overlap among turns produced by two or more speakers
=	The equal sign marks the end and the beginning of two intonation units which follow each other without an intervening gap ("latching")
(ii) Pauses	
(1.8)	Time specifications enclosed in parentheses indicate a timed pause measured in seconds and deciseconds
(.)	A period enclosed in parentheses indicates a micropause of less than 0.25 seconds
(-)	One or more hyphens enclosed in parentheses indicate a pause ranging from 0.25 to 0.75 seconds (the length of the pause is indicated by using one, two or three hyphens)
(iii) Pitch contour and pitch change	
,	A comma indicates a slightly rising pitch contour at the end of an intonation unit
?	A question mark indicates a rising pitch contour at the end of an intonation unit
;	A semicolon indicates a slightly falling pitch contour at the end of an intonation unit
.	A period indicates a falling pitch contour at the end of an intonation unit
-	A hyphen indicates a neither rising nor falling pitch contour at the end of an intonation unit
(iv) Accentuation and volume	
GRANDfather	Capitalization of a syllable indicates that the syllable carries the primary accent within the respective intonation unit
grAndfather	Capitalization of the nucleus of a syllable indicates that the syllable carries the secondary accent within the respective intonation unit
(v) Further conventions	
°h	A degree sign followed by an "h" indicates an audible inhalation of breath (the length of

⁴¹ See also Auer (2000, 2005, 2007), Günthner (2011b), Linell (2009b) and Du Bois (2010). Hartung (1987: 109) postulated the need for a "Dialog-Grammatik" in the 1980s already.

	the inhalation is indicated by using one, two or three "h's")
h°	An "h" followed by a degree sign indicates an audible exhalation of breath (the length of the exhalation is indicated by using one, two or three "h's")
:	Colon(s) indicate a sustained enunciation of a syllable (the length of the sustained syllable is indicated by using one, two or three colons)
<< operator > scope >	Greater than/less than signs are used to define an operator which is valid for a stretch of talk within its scope; the operator "dim", for example, indicates a voice which is continuously turning down ("diminuendo")
–	An underscore character indicates two turn-constructive units which follow each other without an intervening gap within an intonation unit
→	Vertical arrows indicate important lines in the transcript

6. Bibliography

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