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northern Europe: Innovative variants of
V2 in Germany, Norway and Sweden**

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Urban vernaculars in contemporary northern Europe: Innovative variants of V2 in Germany, Norway and Sweden

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Introduction

It has been relatively clear over the last years that multilingual settings support new linguistic variation and the emergence of new linguistic patterns. Contemporary urban vernaculars have emerged among adolescents in multilingual settings in large cities throughout Europe. In this paper, we use the label contemporary urban vernaculars (see Rampton, in press), as it is problematic to label youth vernaculars using a technical term such as ‘ethnolect’ or a lay term such as *straattaal* (‘street language’).¹ These labels essentialize groups and their language use, obscure speakers’ styling practices and suggest systematic linguistic differences that reflect a pre-existing social category such as youth or ethnicity (*cf.* Jaspers 2008: 85, 87; Cornips and De Rooij 2013; Cornips, Jaspers and De Rooij, in press).

This paper addresses one of the structural characteristics that has been pointed to in the descriptions of contemporary urban vernaculars across Europe, namely deviations from the syntactic verb second (V2) constraint in Germanic languages. Several studies have revealed that this feature – although widespread among learners of Germanic languages as a second language – cannot be seen solely as an L2-feature in the language of youths in contemporary multilingual urban settings. In several studies, both simultaneous and early successive bilingual child acquirers and speakers without second-language speaking backgrounds have been found to use this feature in their everyday language (Dirim and Auer 2004; Keim 2007a, 2007b; Ganuza 2008a, 2008b, 2010; Wiese 2009; Opsahl 2009a; Opsahl and Nistov 2010).

We address the question of whether the multilingual settings that serve as a backdrop for (emergent) contemporary urban vernaculars provide contexts not only with loosened syntactic restrictions (that is new linguistic variation) *per se*, but also provide a context where – as a consequence of softer grammatical restrictions (Sorace 2005) – information-structural preferences may be realized in novel ways. We contend that the deviations from the V2 constraint found in contemporary urban vernaculars across Europe is not a matter of free syntactic variation or incomplete language acquisition, but rather forms an integral part of the grammar of the mentioned vernaculars.²

We begin with a short presentation of the speech communities from which our data is drawn. Afterwards, for potential readers with limited knowledge of the V2 feature in Germanic languages, a short overview of the phenomenon is presented. We then present data from the respective vernaculars that illustrate new word order patterns within declarative sentences. In the analysis section we reveal our findings and analyses with respect to V2 deviations and their relation to novel realizations of information-structural preferences in Norwegian, Swedish, German and Dutch.

¹ Considering the multilingual/multiethnic situation in these speech communities the term ‘multiethnolect’ has been coined (see e.g. Clyne 2000; Quist 2000, 2008; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008; Freywald *et al.* 2011). While this term avoids the establishing of correlations between language use and individual ethnicities, it still might involve problems in that it correlates the use of particular linguistic practices with the social category of ethnicity.

² The development of this grammatical feature might be part of larger processes of ongoing language change. For some brief speculations on developmental processes see below.

Contemporary Urban Vernaculars in Norway, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands: Data Collection Procedures

Norway

Before the UPUS-project (*Utviklingsprosesser i urbane språkmiljø* – ‘developmental processes in urban linguistic settings’) began in 2006, little research on contemporary urban vernaculars had been done in Norway apart from descriptions of loan words from immigrant languages (see Aasheim 1995; Drange 2002). The sociodemographics of the time pointed however to the fact that one would be likely to find what was often termed ‘multiethnolects’ – such as those already described in neighbouring Scandinavian countries – in Oslo.³ The fact that new ways of speaking Norwegian had emerged in multiethnic neighbourhoods (at least as far as new lexical items were concerned) was already well established in the media discourse when the UPUS-project began, and the label ‘Kebab Norwegian’ was frequently used. This label has far less resonance in the youth groups visited, and the young speakers themselves tend not to label their speech styles (‘just the way we speak’) or to connect it to the name of their local community (Aarsæther 2010). The UPUS research group chose to refer to the new urban linguistic practices as ‘multiethnolectal speech styles’.

Data were collected in two city districts where the immigrant population is higher than the average: in the inner-city district of Gamle Oslo (Old Oslo), where immigrants comprise 36 % of the population, and in the suburban city district of Søndre Nordstrand (Southern Nordstrand), where immigrants comprise 48 % of the population. A majority of people with immigrant background in these two areas have their origins in Asia, Africa, South and Latin-America and Turkey.⁴ Most of the young people in the study report that they have friends whose family backgrounds originate in more than one of these parts of the world.

The findings of the UPUS project revealed that the Norwegian spoken among adolescents in multiethnic areas in Oslo has several characteristic lexical, phonological, morpho-syntactic and pragmatic features, and forms part of complex stylistic repertoires in the adolescents’ everyday identity, work and linguistic practices (Svendsen and Røyneland 2008; Opsahl 2009a, 2009b; Aarsæther 2010; Brunstad, Røyneland and Opsahl 2010; Opsahl and Nistov 2010; Nistov and Opsahl, in press; Madsen and Svendsen, in press). Most importantly, the studies revealed that multiethnolectal speech styles are not restricted to speakers with migrant background. As is the case of Germany (see below), the linguistic repertoire of speakers in multiethnic areas in Oslo covers a variety of registers, including in-group and out-group informal speech, bilingual registers containing code-mixing, stylized variants of (the notion of) the standard language, traditional urban vernaculars, and new urban vernacular speech styles themselves.

The Norwegian examples drawn upon in this paper are based on a sample of data from the UPUS/Oslo corpus. The corpus consists of video-recorded peer conversations and interviews, which took place at youth clubs in the adolescents’ neighbourhoods. No adult researchers were present during the recording. The data are made available through an Internet-based interface – where transcripts and audio and video files are linked together – developed by Tekstlaboratoriet (‘The Text Laboratory’) at the University of Oslo. For the following analysis, data from twenty-two of the fifty-six adolescents who participated in the study are included. The adolescents have varied parental backgrounds, but they were all born and raised in Norway. A total of 194 cases of deviations from the so-called V2 constraint are obtained from the data. As is also the case in the Swedish data (see below), most of the

³ By 1 January 2011 the immigrant population in Oslo was 28.4 %, that is, 170,000 of close to 600,000 inhabitants.

⁴ http://www.ssb.no/innvbef_en/arkiv/tab-2011-04-28-11-en.html (last accessed 11 August 2012).

examples of XSV ('X' = (non-subject) sentence-initial element, 'S' = Subject, 'V' = finite Verb) were found in the peer conversations.

Sweden

In Sweden, studies of linguistic practices among youths in multilingual settings were first carried out in the mid 1980s by the language researcher Ulla-Britt Kotsinas (e.g. 1994, 1998). Kotsinas focused primarily on the language use of a group of youths in the multilingual suburb of Rinkeby in Stockholm. She began to refer to their way of speaking Swedish as *rinkebysvenska* ('Rinkeby Swedish'), a term that has since been widely dispersed and is often used to refer to ways of speaking Swedish among youths in any multilingual setting in Sweden, and/or sometimes even to refer to Swedish spoken by anyone with an immigrant background (e.g. Fraurud and Bijvoet 2004). In more recent research, the label Rinkeby Swedish is often avoided, as it carries negative connotations. Rather, more general labels are used, such as 'multiethnic youth language' or 'suburban slang' (e.g. Bijvoet and Fraurud 2006), although these labels may be equally problematic for the reasons mentioned in the introduction (see above).

Kotsinas (e.g. 1994, 1998) described certain linguistic features that she found typical of the Swedish spoken by some of the youths in Rinkeby. Among other things she mentioned the youths' frequent 'replacement of the inverted word order by SV order in sentences with a short temporal or locative adverbial' (Kotsinas 1998: 137). The intention of the extensive research project *Language and Language Use Among Adolescents in Multilingual Urban Settings*⁵ (the SUF project), which began in 2002, is to describe, analyze and compare ways of speaking Swedish among adolescents in several multilingual areas in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, and to provide multidimensional perspectives on the language practices of youths in contemporary multilingual urban settings in Sweden (e.g. Boyd 2010; Boyd, Walker and Hoffman, in press; Ekberg, Opsahl and Wiese, in press). In total, 222 adolescents from eight upper secondary schools participated in the SUF-project, and data was gathered from a number of settings (interviews, self-recordings, group conversations, movie retellings, oral presentations and written essays, as well as elicited oral and written data). The participants represented a wide range of linguistic backgrounds, and included youths who grew up in monolingual Swedish family settings as well as youths from bilingual families. Some of the bilingual participants began to learn Swedish from birth or an early age, whereas others began as late as eight to ten years of age.

The SUF project data has been analyzed in relation to several grammatical aspects (e.g. Tingsell 2007; Ganuza 2008a, 2008b, 2010; Ekberg 2010), phonology (e.g. Bodén 2010), lexicon (Prentice 2010) and discourse (Svensson 2009). There are also studies within the SUF project that have primarily focused on youths' identity work (Almér 2011; Werndin, in press). Similar to the German and Norwegian findings reported in this section, the SUF project data includes a wide variety of ways of speaking Swedish. The studies based on the SUF corpus display an enormous amount of variation; there are no simple correlations to be found between the use of certain linguistic characteristics and participants' linguistic backgrounds. However, the use of XSV, for example, has been shown to be more frequent in the language of adolescents who have grown up in a multilingual setting and/or who report that they have many friends with a multilingual background. The use of XSV is however not necessarily related to the speakers' status as second-language speakers of Swedish (e.g. Ganuza 2008a, 2008b, 2010). Examples of XSV were found in the everyday language of both monolingual Swedish-speaking youths and of bilingual youths who began to learn Swedish at an early age.

⁵ Financed by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation.

The syntactic analyses and examples drawn upon in this paper are based on a sub-sample of data from the SUF corpus. It includes data from thirty-four participants, in peer conversations, a retelling task and a written essay. The participants produced a total of 218 sentences that deviate from the so-called V2-constraint.⁶ Most of the examples of XSV were found in recordings of peer conversations, either in self-recordings or in recorded group conversations in the schools between peers from the same class. Very few examples of XSV were found in the written essays (Ganuza 2008a, 2008b, 2010). Only six of the participants in the sub-sample produced no examples of XSV in the contexts discussed here.

Germany

In Germany, new linguistic practices have emerged among adolescents in multiethnic urban areas of larger cities (such as Berlin, Mannheim, Frankfurt/Main, Hamburg) during the last decades. These practices can be subsumed under the category *Kiezdeutsch* (literally ‘hood German’, Wiese 2009). This label makes use of the northern German word *Kiez* (‘neighbourhood’), which is informally used to refer to individual quarters of towns and cities, particularly in Berlin. The locals in the respective neighbourhoods are usually very proud of their *Kiez*; the term carries a very positive connotation. Speakers of *Kiezdeutsch* are predominantly youths whose parents or grandparents have immigrated to Germany. These speakers have usually grown up in a bilingual environment. Apart from the majority language, German, the languages involved range from Turkish, Kurdish, Persian and Arabic to Bosnian, Croatian and Polish, among others. A fundamental aspect of *Kiezdeutsch* is that monolingual speakers of German also refer to themselves as speakers of *Kiezdeutsch*. Most importantly, specific linguistic characteristics that can be found in this urban vernacular are not tied to specific linguistic backgrounds (Wiese 2009; Freywald, Mayr, Özçelik and Wiese 2011). The linguistic repertoire of *Kiezdeutsch* speakers includes not only the majority language (plus a particular family language if bilingual), but also a variety of registers within these languages, including in-group and out-group informal speech, bilingual registers containing code-switching or code-mixing, formal, standard-like variants of German, and even stylized variants of, for example, the local dialect or of *Kiezdeutsch* itself (cf. e.g., Keim 2007a, 2007b; Freywald, Mayr, Schalowski and Wiese 2010).

Various studies on *Kiezdeutsch* – or *Kanak Sprak* (‘wog language’) (Zaimoğlu 1995; Füglein 2000; Deppermann 2007), *Ghettodeutsch* (‘ghetto German’) (Keim 2004) or *Türkendeutsch* (‘Turks’ German’) (Androutsopoulos 2001; Kern and Selting 2006), as it is also called in the literature (terms that however indicate a certain amount of bias and are often used in a derogatory manner in everyday language) – describe convergent linguistic features of this way of speaking in regard to the lexical level, as well as the grammatical domain's phonology, inflectional morphology, syntax and semantics (see e.g. Füglein 2000; Auer 2003; Dirim and Auer 2004; Wiese 2006, 2009, 2011; Kern and Selting 2009; Jannedy, Weirich and Brunner 2011).

The following analyses rest upon and result from investigations conducted within the *Kiezdeutsch* project⁷ at the University of Potsdam, where the *KiezDeutsch Korpus* (KiDKo) is currently being built up (see Wiese, Freywald, Schalowski and Mayr 2012). The *KiezDeutsch Korpus* compiles data of spontaneous speech in multiethnic neighbourhoods, based on self-recordings of adolescents from Berlin-Kreuzberg (seventeen anchor speakers, aged fourteen to seventeen, approximately 228,000 tokens). It is complemented by a corresponding sample

⁶ This figure does not include examples of *kanske_S_V* ‘maybe_S_V’, which are well-known exceptions to the V2 constraint in standard and regionalized varieties of Swedish (e.g. SAG 1999; see also fn. 10).

⁷ The project with the current title “The KiezDeutsch Korpus. Analyses at the Periphery” (PI: Heike Wiese) is part of the Collaborative Research Centre “Information Structure” (SFB 632) at the University of Potsdam, Humboldt-University Berlin and Free University Berlin, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

of self-recordings made by adolescents from a monoethnic neighbourhood (Berlin-Hellersdorf) with comparable socioeconomic indicators (six anchor speakers, aged fifteen to sixteen, approximately 105,000 tokens).⁸ The anchor speakers recorded informal conversations with their peers during leisure time with no researchers or other adults present. The recordings were conducted in 2008. Transcription conventions follow for the most part the transcription system GAT 2; capitalizations in the examples below mark accents (see Selting *et al.* 2009 for details, including a list of transcription symbols). A manual search in KiDKo revealed fifty-five instances of XSV order.⁹

The Netherlands

Urban vernacular speech has been examined in the larger cities in the culturally- and politically-dominant western part of the Netherlands. The studies undertaken are small compared to those done in Germany, Norway and Sweden. For Dutch, the data from three case studies have been examined. First, eight mutual friends in the Utrecht neighbourhood Lombok and Transvaal, all in their early twenties, were interviewed in a bilateral setting between the interviewer (the researcher) and the adolescent. Only in one setting did two friends interview each other. The friends have different language backgrounds: four speak Moroccan Arabic/Berber/Dutch, three speak Turkish/Dutch and one Surinamese (Hindi)/Dutch. The interviews were all recorded between 1998 and 2001 (approximately 8 hours) in the local youth centre (Cornips 2002). Second, four male adolescents of Surinamese, Creole descent between the ages of fifteen and eighteen were recorded in 2002 in the Rotterdam neighbourhood Feijenoord. The fieldworker made contact with these youngsters through friends. The young people allowed the fieldworker to interview them and to hang out with them and their group of friends for four months. From the hours spent with these youngsters, the fieldworker recorded approximately two hours out ‘in the street’ (Cornips and De Rooij 2013). Third, twelve youngsters between the ages of eighteen and twenty were selected by means of the classical Labovian methodology, and divided into three groups according to their language backgrounds (Hinskens 2011). This variable is based on three values: Dutch (n=4), Moroccan Arabic/Berber/Dutch (n=4) and Turkish/Dutch (n=4). Pairs of speakers who did not necessarily know each other but who belonged to the same cell according to ‘ethnicity’ (in-group and out-group conversations) were recorded. The recordings took place at their schools in Amsterdam and Nijmegen. From this third case study, ten minutes of each conversation have been transcribed.

New word order patterns in contemporary urban vernaculars

The V2 feature in modern Germanic

The respective standard languages considered here all display the so-called verb second constraint (V2), which means that exactly one constituent precedes the finite verb in

⁸ For further details see http://www.sfb632.uni-potsdam.de/projects_b6eng.html (last accessed 11 August 2012).

⁹ This search was conducted in two steps. First, a random sample of thirty declarative sentences was manually searched for XSV structures for each anchor speaker. For those that produced any instances of XSV, the entire recordings were searched. Second, based on the results of the first step, a search of the entire corpus was carried out covering only the adverbs *danach*, *nachher* (both ‘afterwards’) and *gestern* (‘yesterday’), which were repeatedly produced in XSV structures by several speakers. For technical reasons, exhaustive quantitative syntactic analyses are not yet feasible.

declarative clauses.¹⁰ In this paper, V2 should be taken as a neutral description with regard to the various theoretical instantiations of this phenomenon.¹¹ Most commonly, the first position of the clause is occupied by the subject, followed by the finite verb (see (1a-4a)). However, the first position is not restricted to subjects in any of the four languages described here. It can host a variety of constituents, such as objects, adverbials and even verbal phrases. The only requirement is that only one constituent precedes the finite verb. Thus, whenever a declarative clause begins with something other than the subject, the subject must follow the finite verb, as in (1b-4b).

- (1) a. Jeg *var* på kino i går. [Standard Norwegian]
 I was at cinema yesterday
 b. I går *var* jeg på kino. (*I går jeg *var* på kino)
- (2) a. Jag *var* på bio igår. [Standard Swedish]
 I was at cinema yesterday
 b. Igår *var* jag på bio. (*Igår jag *var* på bio.)
- (3) a. Ich *war* gestern im Kino. [Standard German]
 I was yesterday at_the cinema
 b. Gestern *war* ich im Kino. (*Gestern ich *war* im Kino.)
- (4) a. Ik *was* gisteren in de bioscoop. [Standard Dutch]
 I was yesterday at the cinema
 b. Gisteren *was* ik in de bioscoop. (*Gisteren ik *was* in de bioscoop.)

The following sections give an overview of newly-developed word order patterns within the left sentence periphery in Germanic-based urban vernaculars throughout Europe. Some urban vernaculars show deviations from this usually very strict constraint whereas other languages, such as Dutch, do so rarely (for a discussion, see below). We examine the ways in which these patterns might be influenced by information-structural factors, or, in other words, to what extent different urban vernaculars make use of newly-available syntactic means in order to mark the information-structural status of phrases.

Deviations from V2 in contemporary urban vernaculars: Norwegian, Swedish and German

With the exception of Wiese (2006, 2009) and Kern and Selting (2006, 2009), syntactic phenomena have played only a minor role in studies on urban vernaculars in Germany. In Sweden and Norway, however, the syntactic characteristics of contemporary urban vernaculars have played a central role in descriptions made thus far (Ganuza 2008, 2010;

¹⁰ This is also the case for the other Germanic languages, except English (see e.g. Haider and Prinzhorn 1986; Wechsler 1991; König and van der Auwera 1994; and in particular Vikner 1995). In all four languages under consideration there is however a limited number of previously known exceptions to the V2 constraint, such as left dislocation constructions (which – unlike the structures discussed in this paper – require a resumptive element, e.g. a pronoun or the respective cognates of the No. *så* ‘so’), and sentences with fronted *kanske/kanskje* ‘maybe’ in Swedish and Norwegian (cf. Sw. *då kanske han ser det*, lit. ‘then maybe he sees it’; see also fn. 6 above). These constructions are, however, not dealt with in this paper.

¹¹ In Standard German, it is almost a consensus that a root clause is a CP and that the finite verb lands in C after having undergone movement through T and AGR, if one implements the SplitInfl account in which I is split into AGR and TNS (see e.g. Grewendorf 1995; Schwartz and Vikner 1996). However, Zwart (1997) has proposed for Dutch that movement to C is variable in root clauses and that the finite verb moves up to spec-C, via AGR and TNS, in root clauses with inversion only, but stays below C, namely in spec-AGR, in root clauses with a straight order.

Opsahl 2009a; Opsahl and Nistov 2010). The same holds for urban vernaculars in Dutch, in particular with respect to grammatical gender-related phenomena in the adnominal domain, word order in embedded clauses and the use of the auxiliary *gaan* (Cornips 2002, 2005, 2008; El Aissati, Boumans, Cornips, Dorleijn and Nortier 2005).¹² A syntactic pattern that is addressed not only by these papers but that is repeatedly mentioned in the literature on Norwegian, Swedish and German urban vernaculars is the pre-positioning of material in front of an otherwise ‘normal’ verb second declarative clause, i.e. an XSV order, see (5a-c):

- (5) a. nå de *får* betale [Norwegian]
 now they get pay
 ‘Now they have to pay.’
 (Opsahl 2009a: 133)
- b. då alla *börja(de)* hata henne [Swedish]
 then everyone started hate her
 ‘Then everyone started hating her.’
 (Ganuza 2008: 53)
- c. dAnn; (.) wir *sind* geGANgn; = sie war AUCH da; [German]
 then we are gone she was also there
 ‘Then we left, she has been there, too.’
 (Kern and Selting 2006: 248)

As the languages in question are verb second languages, the pattern in (5) is highly unexpected. As shown above, main clauses normally do not allow for more than one constituent preceding the finite verb. In contemporary urban vernaculars, however, this restriction seems to be less robust, and the questions arise (i) as to whether we are dealing with a genuine and general violability of the V2 constraint in these vernaculars or whether we see here a clearly delimitable construction (that can be filled with varying lexical material), and (ii) the functional motivation behind it. To answer these questions, we will first take a closer look at the structure of this word order pattern, and will then examine the functional contribution of this syntactic construction from an information-structural point of view.

The typical appearance of what appears to be a violation of the V2 constraint in the Norwegian, Swedish and German data is the order ‘adverbial – subject – finite verb’ (AdvSV), as in example (5) above. Further examples are given in (6) and (7) (the finite verb is in italics, capitals mark accent):

- (6) a. I dag hun *lagde* somalisk mat [Norwegian]
 today she made Somali food
 ‘Today she made Somali food.’
 (UPUS corpus, Lukas)
- b. GEStern isch *war* KUdamm [German]
 yesterday I was K.
 ‘Yesterday I was at the Ku’damm.’ [= short for Kurfürstendamm, a street in Berlin]
 (KiDKo, transcript MuH9WT)¹³

¹² As is the case with the thorough code-switching studies of Dutch/Turkish in Tilburg and Dutch/Moroccan-Arabic in Utrecht by Backus (1996) and Boumans (1998), respectively.

¹³ The abbreviations used to identify speakers consist of four parts: neighbourhood of speaker, speaker number, sex of speaker, and family language of speaker. The abbreviation in (1) indicates a speaker who lives in a multiethnic neighbourhood (Mu, as opposed to Mo = monoethnic neighbourhood), who has the number H9, who

- (7) a. Etterpå den dør (.) Etterpå henne *anmelder* dem [Norwegian]
 afterwards it dies afterwards her reports them
 ‘Afterwards it dies. Afterwards she makes a formal complaint.’
 (UPUS corpus, Michael)
- b. å sen dom *börjar* DRICKA den [Swedish]
 and then they start drink it
 ‘And then they start drinking it.’
 (SUF corpus, Cornelia (P47)¹⁴, group conv.)
- c. danAch wir *warn* auf KLO;= wei:ßt du? [German]
 afterwards we were on loo know you
 ‘Afterwards, we went to the loo, you know.’
 (Kern and Selting 2006: 248)

The overall picture points to a systematic pattern: the elements that precede the finite verb show a rather coherent behaviour in respect to their syntactic functions, their semantics and their discourse pragmatics across the languages considered here.

A pattern arises in relation to syntactic categories and functions: the constituent that directly precedes the finite verb is, as far as we can see, almost without exception the subject (this is the case in all cases of XSV attested in Norwegian, in 217 of the 218 examples in Swedish, and in 51 of the 55 examples in German). These subject constituents are in most cases pronominal. Full subject Determiner Phrases (DPs) are comparatively rare; in the Norwegian data, for instance, 170 of the 194 subjects examined are pronominal. The same pattern emerges in the Swedish data, where 191 of the 218 examples contain a pronominal subject, and also in the German examples where 41 of 51 subjects have the form of a pronoun. Hence, we are dealing with subjects that consist of little phonetic material and are virtually always unaccented.

The very first position of AdvSV clauses is invariably filled by adverbials.¹⁵ They occur as Prepositional Phrases (PPs) (see (8)), as DPs (9) and even as Complementizer Phrases (CPs) (10), but most often they have the form of simple adverbs ((5)–(7) above and (11)):

- (8) a. [med limewire] [det] *tar* én to dager [Norwegian]
 with Limewire it takes one two days
 ‘Using Limewire it takes one or two days.’
 (UPUS corpus, Lars)
- b. Ey [efter matchen] [du] *ska* krama henne OKEJ [Swedish]
 hey after game_the you will hug her okay
 ‘Hey, after the game you will hug her OKAY.’
 (SUF corpus, Izhar (P19), self-recording)

is female (W, as opposed to M = male), and whose family language is Turkish (T, as opposed to D = German, A = Arabic, K = Kurdish).

¹⁴ The code used to identify speakers in the SUF-corpus contains information about the school attended by the speaker (Stockholm schools are B, K and L, Gothenburg schools are P and S, and Malmö schools are C, D and E) and speaker number (which also identifies the sex of the speaker: 1-24 are male speakers, and 25-46 are female speakers).

¹⁵ It should be noted that the results for German partly rest upon a search that takes into consideration only preselected adverbs, and thus might be slightly biased (see also fn. 9 above).

- c. [ab JETZ] [ich] *krieg* immer ZWANzig euro . [German]
 from now I get always twenty euros
 ‘From now on, I get always twenty euros.’
 (KiDKo, transcript MuH17MA)
- (9) [Jedes jahr] (.) [isch=sch] *kauf* mir bei DEISCHmann . [German]
 every year I buy me at D.’s
 ‘Every year I buy [shoes] at Deichmann’s.’ [= German footwear store]
 (KiDKo, transcript MuH9WT)
- (10) a. [Hvis man er på skolen] [man] *skal* lære [Norwegian]
 if one is at school one shall learn
 ‘If you are in school, you are supposed to learn.’
 (UPUS corpus, Samir)
- b. [om ni undra(r) vem hon e] [ni] *kan* åka ti(II) XXX [Swedish]
 if you wonder who she is you can go to XXX
 ‘If you wonder who she is, you can go to XXX.’ [= name of place in Gothenburg]
 (SUF corpus, Karim (P11), free group conv.)
- c. [wenn der mann dis HÖRT] [er] *wird* sagen o mein GOTT . UNverschämt .
 if the man this hears he will say o my god insolent
 ‘If the man hears this, he will say, oh my God, how insolent!’
 (KiDKo, transcript MuH9WT) [German]
- (11) a. [Egentlig] [jeg] *syns* det er bra på en måte [Norwegian]
 actually I find it is good on a way
 ‘Actually I think it is good in a way.’
 (UPUS corpus, Suna)
- b. [Nu] [ingen] *kan* terra mej längre [Swedish]
 now nobody can terrorize me longer
 ‘Now nobody can terrorize me any longer.’
 (SUF corpus, Åsa (L37), free group conv.)
- c. [danach] [er] *sagt* zu O. , geh mal WEG . [German]
 afterwards he says to O. go PTCL away
 ‘Afterwards, he says to O. [= name], go away.’
 (KiDKo, transcript MuH9WT)

In regard to semantics, the vast majority of adverbials in first position have temporal meaning, for example *gestern* (Ge.), *i går* (No., Sw.) (‘yesterday’); *jetzt* (Ge.), *nå* (No.), *nu* (Sw.) (‘now’); *danach* (Ge.), *etterpå* (No.) (‘afterwards’); and *jedes Jahr* (Ge.) (‘every year’). Further temporal adverbials attested are *i dag* (No.) (‘today’); *dann* (Ge.) (‘then’); *nachher* (Ge.) (‘afterwards’), among others. In addition, a comparatively large number of conditional adverbials can be found, whereas local, modal and causal adverbials are less frequent. In the Swedish data, examples of XSV most commonly begin with the connective adverb (*å*) *sen* (‘(and) then’) (95 of 218, i.e. 43.6 %) (Ganuza 2008a: 97-98; Ganuza 2010: 38), a pattern also very common in the German corpus.

The case of Dutch

In Dutch, too, the violation of the V2 constraint is the order ‘adverbial – subject – finite verb’, as illustrated in (12) below. This order is however very rare in all three case aforementioned studies. In this respect it differs crucially from the spontaneous speech of adult L2 learners of Dutch, who are claimed in the literature to produce this order (Appel and Muysken 1987: 91), and recently-migrated Turkish- and Moroccan-speaking children in the beginning of the 1980s (Appel 1984; see also Schwartz and Sprouse 2000):

- (12) En dan hij gaat weg [Dutch]
and then/afterwards he goes away
(Appel 1984)

The corpora of the three examined case studies of Dutch show only three tokens of V2 violations. One is the adverbial *toen* (‘then’), which requires V2 in Standard Dutch.¹⁶ The other two tokens contain the adverb *daarom* (‘that’s why’). All examples are presented below:

- (13) a. toen we hadden eerst twee autos
then we had first two cars
‘Then, we first had two cars (and later only one).’
(Utrecht/TCULT corpus, Badir; 1 out of 20 tokens of potential ‘then-S-V’)
- b. daarom ik heb dat probleem niet
that’s why I have that problem not
‘That’s why I don’t have that problem.’
(Utrecht/TCULT: Badir)
- c. daarom Nederland is niet echt meer van eh
that’s why the Netherlands is not really more like eh
‘That’s why The Netherlands is no longer more like eh ...’
(Adam-Nijmegen/etnolects project: Hassan, see Lukassen 2011)

It is important to point out that the AdvSV order is not the one that shows up when youths in Dutch multilingual urban settings are stereotyped linguistically (Nortier 2001). This provides more evidence that this order is not available in Dutch. In Swedish, however, this order is strongly associated with ways of speaking among youths in multilingual urban settings, and is apparent in media discussions and in literary representations of contemporary urban Swedish vernaculars (e.g. Källström 2006, 2010). In Germany, the AdvSV pattern is associated with youth speech in multilingual urban settings as well, both in stylized variants/imitations used by various comedians (Kotthoff 2010) and to some extent in the media. The same can be said of the situation in Norway (although it has not been systematically analyzed).

¹⁶ Utterances that show a long silence or hesitation, such as ‘uhhh’, as illustrated in (i), or restarts, as in (ii), are not analyzed as violations:

- (i) en dan uhh ik denk dat ik verder ga (Hassan, Utrecht corpus)
and then uhh I think that I further go
‘And then, uhh, I think I’ll go on.’
- (ii) toen ja ik heb [//] word snel ziek (Hassan, Utrecht corpus)
then yes I have become fast ill
‘Then, yes, I became ill very fast.’

How then to account for the fact that there does not seem to be a structural pattern of V2 violation in Dutch? There are three factors to consider. First, the almost complete absence of V2 violations may indicate that Dutch is a stricter V2-language than are German, Norwegian and Swedish. A second factor may simply be the size of the corpora, since the Dutch corpus is considerably smaller than the German, Swedish and Norwegian corpora. Finally, one must consider methodology. It might be the case that interview settings in Utrecht and classical Labovian in- and out-group settings in Amsterdam/Nijmegen are not the optimal settings in which to elicit V2 deviations, as the peer group conversations in Germany, Sweden and Norway do. The Rotterdam corpus was however collected through participant observation and recordings of peer-group conversations with no adults present. Thus, from a methodological perspective, it is difficult to account for why the four Surinamese-Dutch-speaking youngsters do not show V2 violations. Seen together, it seems to be the case that Dutch does not allow loosened grammatical restrictions in respect to the XSV order.

A functional interpretation in terms of discourse pragmatics

In order to find motivation for the emergence of AdvSV constructions, it is worth taking into account the information structure of the utterance. It is well known that speakers give their utterances an informational relief by separating focal from background information, new information from familiar facts and so on. An utterance can thus usually be divided into topic (= what the sentence is about; typically referring to already-introduced or inferable entities) and comment (= what is said about the topic; this domain consists of or contains the focused element(s), i.e. new information).¹⁷ As Wiese (2007, 2009) first argued for Kiezdeutsch, AdvSV structures follow a rather consistent information-structural pattern, which can be specified as sequence of frame setter plus topic to the left of the finite verb. The examples attested in the Norwegian, Swedish and – by now extended – German data confirm this analysis: the information-structural status of the preverbal subject phrase is always that of a topic. The kind of topic can be even more specifically described as that of a familiarity topic, which means that it refers to discourse referents that have been mentioned in the previous context, or that are generally known (this corresponds perfectly to the fact that the topic is mostly pronominal in form)¹⁸.

The left-most adverbial in an AdvSV constructions fulfils the function of providing an interpretational frame or anchor for the following statement, first, in terms of time, place, condition (in the case of adverbials meaning ‘from now on’, ‘yesterday’, ‘every year’, ‘if you are in school’ and so on), or second, more abstractly, in terms of discourse linking (as is the case in certain uses of the equivalents of ‘then’ and ‘afterwards’). The usage of adverbials in the first function correlates with the notion of frame setters, whose basic function is ‘to limit the applicability of the main predication to a certain restricted domain’ (Chafe 1976: 50). Used in this way, adverbials are no longer directly event-related (Maienborn 2001: 191); rather, they carry discourse pragmatic functions. In cases like (14) (as well as (6), (8b,c) and (9)), the adverbial at the beginning of the sentence limits the validity of the statement to a specified temporal domain (implying a contrast to other time periods for which the uttered statement does not hold):

¹⁷ We follow the definition of ‘topic’ given in Reinhart (1981) – adopted and further developed by Lambrecht (1994), Jacobs (2001) and Krifka (2008), among others – who metaphorically describes the topic-comment structure as a kind of file card system. The topic indicates the entry under which the information given in the comment should be stored.

¹⁸ Given information – as conveyed by familiarity topics – is prosodically not prominent, and is typically represented by anaphoric expressions such as pronouns, clitics or definite phrases (see Krifka 2008: 262-264).

- (14) [ab JETZ] [ich] *krieg* immer ZWANzig euro . [German]
 from now I get always twenty euros
 ‘From now on, I get always 20 euros.’
 (KiDKo, transcript MuH17MA)

The second function of fronted adverbials covers usages as contextualizers. Serializing adverbials with the meaning ‘then’/‘afterwards’, as in (7) and (11c), appear as discourse-structuring elements, which subdivide a larger stretch of discourse into smaller units (which can still be larger than sentences) and arrange them in an easily-processible linear order. Naturally, the ordering of events within a narrative resembles the ordering of the narrated events in reality. Adverbials that express the chronological order of events might therefore function simultaneously as serializers with respect to the pure textual structure of a narration (Schalowski, in press). Examples from German and Swedish are given in (15) and (16), respectively:

- (15) isch hab gestern geSEhen, bei NETlock, was sie geSCHRIEben haben.
 I have yesterday seen on netlock what they written have
 isch MEINte nur so, achso dein ERNST?
 I meant only so oh your earnest
danach sie fängt an zu schrein. isch meinte zu ihr
 then she starts on to shout I meant to her
 SCHREI nisch so. und so JA,
 shout not so and so yes
 und *dann* sie sagt so, isch schrei SO wie isch will.
 and then she says so I shout so like I want
 ‘Yesterday, I’ve seen on netlock what they’ve written. I only said, oh, are you serious? Afterwards, she started shouting. I said to her, don’t shout at me, and stuff, yeah, and then, she said, I’ll shout if I want to!’
 (KiDKo, transcript: MuH9WT)
- (16) så dom kutar upp för dom här spa+¹⁹ vagnarna # å *sen* så du vet dom kutar dom
 kutar å allting å *sen* dom tittar ner å *sen* dom ser att dom e på väg upp dom hära #
 zombies eller va dom är # å *sen* eh # ah å *sen* de e du vet hon kollar upp hon börjar
 skrika å du vet han kommer efter han ba VAD # *sen* står de en kille där me såhär
 skydd å allting han står såhär # han å du vet hon blev rädd att han va en av dom
 han ba ah men kom kom # hon ba du vet såhär han ba knacka på första dörren # så
 han släppte för väg dom å *så* stod han kvar *så* slog han på dom här som kom
 [so they run up on these spa+ shopping carts # *and then* you know they run they run
 and everything *and then* they look down *and then* they see that they’re on their way
 up these # zombies or whatever # *and then* eh # yeah *and then* there’s you know
 she looks up she starts screaming and you know he comes after he’s just like
 WHAT # *then* there’s a guy there with protection and everything he stands there #
 he and you know she got scared that he was one of those he just but come come #
 she just you know he just knocks on the first door # so he lets them through *and*
then he remains there *and then* he hits these that came]
 [Swedish, SUF corpus, Bushra (K28) (Ganuza, 2008a: 120)]

Both frame setters and (familiarity) topics generally tend to occupy a position as far left as possible (Molnár 1993: 178; Erteschik-Shir 2007: 105). Likewise, discourse linkers must be

¹⁹ Key to transcript: + = self-interruption, # = short pause, capital letters = emphasis.

in front of the sentence or discourse unit they link to a previous item. In Germanic V2 languages, however, the possibility of marking these discourse pragmatic functions by syntactic means, namely by placing the respective elements at the left edge of a sentence, is strictly limited by the verb second rule. Here, the newly-developed word order options in the German, Norwegian and Swedish urban vernaculars allow a more liberal realization of information-structural strategies, for it is feasible to have more than one constituent in front of the verb in order to mark their pragmatic function(s) syntactically (see also Wiese 2009; Wiese *et al.* 2009).²⁰

Conclusion

In this paper, we addressed a syntactic pattern that has been identified in several descriptions of Germanic contemporary urban vernaculars across Europe. In these vernaculars, a word order pattern has developed that does not obey the V2 constraint in declarative sentences, a constraint that is strict in the respective standard languages. What can instead be found is a serialization type with *two* constituents preceding the finite verb (XSV order).

Using data from natural speech in Norwegian, Swedish, German and Dutch, we have provided comparative descriptions and analyses of this pattern, thus going beyond the studies on individual languages available thus far. The comparative approach revealed striking parallels between Norwegian, Swedish and German urban vernaculars in regard to both structural shape and usage of the XSV pattern.²¹ It became apparent that XSV typically occurs in peer conversations – instances of XSV are remarkably rare or even entirely absent in interviews and written texts (Opsahl and Nistov 2010; Ganuza 2008a, 2010; Freywald *et al.* 2010). As to the categorical status of the two constituents in front of the finite verb, there is a confinement to ‘adverbial plus subject’ observable across all languages considered here; the pattern has therefore been labelled AdvSV. The motivation for the occurrence of AdvSV lies in discourse pragmatics. The prefinite subject predominantly represents a familiarity topic (reflected in the fact that it mainly assumes pronominal form). The adverbial that can be placed in front of the subject and the finite verb situates an event temporally (or, less often, locally and modally), or expresses a condition under which the uttered proposition holds – that is, it functions as a frame setter. At the same time, it helps structure the (narrative) discourse, the most common adverbials being the respective equivalents of the cohesive elements ‘then’, ‘afterwards’, ‘after this’. Apart from these clearly defined functional domains, the standard-like V2 pattern does not dwindle in general in the contemporary urban vernaculars studied here, but remains a regularly-occurring pattern in declarative sentences. Considering this scenario on a large scale, one is perhaps reminded of the process of the loss of V2 during the Middle English period. As for example Los (2009) points out, during the course of losing V2, i.e. of establishing strict SVO order, the preverbal position is less and less often filled by deictic, inversion-causing adverbials but rather becomes increasingly confined to subjects. After the loss of V2, pragmatically less prominent, preverbal elements must have the form of the subject, their function being that of ‘unmarked discourse linking’. Preposed non-subject constituents, however, are interpreted as ‘marked themes’ and serve – in the case of adverbials – as a means of text cohesion (see Los 2009; for another detailed study of this transitional process see e.g. Kemenade and Westergaard 2012). Whether we are

²⁰ For a broader discussion of how linguistic modules and subsystems interact with extralinguistic domains (such as the general hierarchization of information) and how the expression of extralinguistic concepts must be formally adjusted to the grammatical possibilities available in a particular language, see for instance Jackendoff (1997, 2002), Culicover and Jackendoff (2005), Wiese (2003, 2004) and Wiese *et al.* (2009).

²¹ For a similar cross-linguistic approach to parallel developments of a grammatical phenomenon, namely the functionalization of comparative/deictic particles, see Ekberg, Opsahl and Wiese, this vol.

witnessing the beginnings of a similar development in the urban vernaculars considered in this paper, remains however a matter of pure speculation at this stage of research. To study syntactic developments of this kind thoroughly, detailed long-term investigations are needed. So at this point, we must leave this open question for future research.

Only very few examples of AdvSV could be found in Dutch, which must be considered an exception in this respect. As long as no further data sets are available, Dutch provides some evidence that the observed novel syntactic ways of realizing information-structural preferences might be applicable only when grammatical restrictions are loosened. If this condition is not fulfilled, as is the case in Dutch, AdvSV may not occur.

Taken together, the emergence of AdvSV is not a matter of random syntactic variation or incomplete language acquisition, but rather follows a systematic, delimitable pattern. What we observe is the emergence of a structural option that is not a reflex of dropping the V2 constraint in general, but is confined to the order ‘adverbial – (pronominal) subject – finite verb’. As we have shown, this restriction is clearly motivated by information-structural grounds: by using the AdvSV structure, both frame-setting and topical constituents are enabled to appear at the left edge of the sentence, that is, on the left of the finite verb. Leaving Dutch aside, the languages investigated – Norwegian, Swedish and German – behave in strikingly similar ways with regard to AdvSV order, in both structural and (discourse-) functional respects.

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