Bavarian discourse particles - at the syntax pragmatics interface

Sonja Thoma
University of British Columbia

Abstract: Discourse particles are said to express speaker attitude (Weydt 1969, among many others). Discourse particles in Miesbach Bavarian can be shown to have not only speaker, but also addressee orientation. This orientation is reflected in syntax, i.e. in the ordering restrictions that can be observed. The main point I argue for in this paper, however, is that discourse particles are not optional, modificational elements, as claimed in the literature (Zimmermann 2011 and references therein), but are obligatory, once context is taken into consideration. When the proposition has to connect to a discourse context, this connection (GROUNDING) happens via the left peripheral projection GroundP, comprised of GroundSpeakerP and GroundAddresseeP (cf. Speas & Tenny 2003).

1 Introduction

Miesbach Bavarian\(^1\) is rich in modal, or pragmatic particles, aka discourse particles (DPRTs). DPRTs, as the name suggests, are predominantly a spoken language, discourse phenomenon. DPRTs are used by interlocutors for common ground management (Krifka 2008). That is, they are not truth conditional elements, or enrich a proposition with lexical meaning (Weydt 1969; Zimmermann 2011, among many others); their main function is to allow utterances to be GROUNDED in the context, by establishing an appropriate transition between the proposition and the context (cf. Davis 2011; Karagjosova 2011). This will be shown in detail this paper. DPRTs appear void of autosemantic, lexical content, a characteristic that makes them notoriously hard to translate. I argue here that DPRTs do have a core semantic meaning. This meaning, however, is not lexically accessible, but rather, the DPRT core meaning SPECIFIES the way the proposition connects to the context, via speaker or addressee. Each is represented in a syntactic projection, GroundSpeakerP and GroundAddresseeP respectively. Almost all DPRTs in Miesbach Bavarian have lexical counterparts, i.e they are polyfunctional. The non DPRT functions can be manifold, and range from focus sensitive (bloß ‘only, bare’), temporal (jetz ‘now’), to conjunctional (denn ‘because’). Cross-linguistically, DPRTs are thought to associate with the C layer of the clause, since they are peripheral elements in many languages (e.g. Japanese, Davis 2011; Cantonese, Lam 2013, etc). The C layer is assumed to encode discourse level information (Rizzi 1997). Miesbach Bavarian DPRTs, although fulfilling the same discourse function as peripheral DPRTs do in other languages, do not appear overtly in the C domain. They are syntactically integrated, which means they appear after the finite verb in C\(^c\). Yet despite the low syntactic position, Bavarian DPRTs scope over the proposition. One other, often cited criterion for DPRTs is their optionality (e.g. Weydt 1969; Thurmair 1989; Zimmermann 2004, 2011). That is, DPRTs are not considered “grammatical” elements, in the sense that they constitute obligatory syntactic building blocks. They are generally viewed as optional, modificational elements. This is illustrated in the following;

\(^1\) All data come from the author’s field work on the Middle Bavarian dialect spoken south of Munich, in the Miesbach county. The claims made in this paper are valid for this dialect, but I strongly suspect that they are transferrable to other German varieties as well. This is an empirical issue, however, and will have to be verified.

In proceedings of Northwest Linguistics Conference 29,
University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics 38,
example (1) shows an utterance without a DPRT, and (2) an instance of a DPRT “modified” sentence, both of which are grammatical in these context-less instances.

(1) I konn di vasteh
    I can you understand
    ‘I can understand you.’

(2) I konn di fei vasteh
    I can you DPRT understand
    ‘I can understand you and you seem to think I can’t.’

The main claim of this paper is that DPRTs are not modificational, and thereby optional. Once the context is taken into consideration, DPRTs are an integral part of GROUNDING a proposition in a discourse context. A definition of GROUNDING is as follows.

(3) GROUNDING\textsubscript{inct} : Grounding is the fundamental, moment-by-moment conversational process by which speaker and addressee are constantly establishing mutual understanding. (Bavelas et al. 2012)

I claim that DPRTs have to be considered obligatory grammatical elements (cf. Diewald 2011), which relate the proposition to the either speaker or hearer ground, both of which are represented syntactically as abstract arguments in SpecGround\textsubscript{SP} and SpecGround\textsubscript{AP} respectively. Looking beyond the level of a (context-less) utterance, at small stretches of discourse, it can be observed that DPRT expresses a relation between the proposition $p$ and either the speaker or addressee. Example (4) and (5) illustrate the phenomenon. Italics give the approximate contribution of the DPRT in each example.

(4) Context: Andal and Michi both know about Friday's party
    Andal: De Feia am Freidog hams obgsogt
        ‘Friday’s party got cancelled.’
    Michi: I muass *eh korrigian
        I have to *DPRT grade
        ‘I have to grade and this was true of me before.’

(5) Context: I’m in the beergarden, speaking Bavarian with my friends. One of my friends is gossiping in English about a stranger next to me, with the assumption that she doesn’t understand English. She turns to him and says:
    Stranger: I konn di (*fei) vasteh
        I can you (*DPRT) understand
        ‘You seem to think I can’t, but I can understand you.’

Each of the responses in (4) and (5) is infelicitous without the respective DPRTs, *eh in (4) and *fei in (5). This data set shows several points, all of which will be addressed in detail in this paper. First, it can be seen that DPRTs are not homogenous in their orientation. *Eh in (4) expresses something about the speaker and his/her knowledge (this was true of me before), whereas *fei in (5) expresses something about the addressee and his/her knowledge (You seem to think I can’t). Secondly, the data show that DPRTs are obligatory elements. Each response is infelicitous without the DPRT. I analyse them as grammatical elements, which GROUND the proposition $p$ in the context.
C. C here serves as a cover term for speaker and addressee grounds, which I show are syntactically represented as Ground_S and Ground_A respectively.

In Section 2.1, I give some basic background on the syntax of Miesbach Bavarian, and the particular model of grammar I adopt in this paper in Section 2.2.

2 Syntactic background

The Miesbach Bavarian dialect under investigation here is a dialectal variant of Middle Bavarian. It is spoken in the Miesbach county, south of Munich. In many core respects, the clausal syntax of Bavarian and its dialects is the same as described for standard German (Weiss 1998). Most important is the verb second (V2) constraint of German, which also holds for Bavarian and all its variants. In the following I show the basic considerations of V2 in Section 2.1, and then introduce the specific model of grammar I adopt for my analysis in Section 2.2.

2.1 The syntax of Bavarian

DPRTs in Bavarian, as in other German dialects, are syntactically integrated. Syntactic integration refers to the phenomenon that DPRTs do not appear at the periphery, as one may expect from discourse oriented material (cf. Rizzi 1997), but after the finite verb. Bavarian, as a Germanic language, moves the verb from its base position in Vº to second position, referred to as V2. In any V2 language, this higher position is generally assumed to be Cº (6). DPRTs always appear after the verb in Cº, here referred to as syntactic integration.

(6) DPRTs are syntactically integrated

One constituent of type XP can appear before the verb in declarative clauses (7). This is often the subject, but can be any XP, giving rise to the impression of free word order around the verb in second position. In clause types other than declarative, it is assumed that SpecCP is either left unoccupied (in Y/N questions, exclamatives, imperatives), or filled with a wh-phrase (in wh-questions). In subordinate clauses, Cº hosts a complementizer, and the verb stays in base position, i.e. in Vº (8).

(7) [CP De Martina [c fahrt [de Martina—mi’m Radl fahrt]]]
    DET Martina drive with DET bicycle

‘Martina rides a bike.’
In Section 3.2 I show in more detail the base position of DPRTs. I show evidence that their post-V2 position is high, above IP. This is where they can scope at the propositional level. From that position, DPRTs relate the temporally and aspectually anchored proposition, i.e. \( p \), to the discourse context \( C \).

2.2 The syntax of syntactic heads

In this paper I assume a version of the universal base (e.g. Cinque 1997), which posits a universal hierarchical ordering of linguistic expressions. I diverge, however, from the traditional cartographic research framework, in that I do not assume a cascade of functional projections, each associated with very specific semantic content. Rather, I follow Ritter & Wiltschko (to appear) and Wiltschko (in prep) who propose that the substantive content associated with functional heads is subject to language individual parametric variation. The picture that emerges posits some basic functional projections for the verbal and nominal domains, each associated with intrinsic grammatical functions (9).

(9) \[
\text{[Comp [Inf] [Aspect [v]]]]} \\
\text{[Kase [Det [Phi [n]]]]}
\]

\[
\text{linking} \quad \text{anchoring} \quad \text{classifying} \quad \text{lexicalizing}
\]

The linguistic objects which merge in these functional projections are language specific, and give rise to typological differences. Wiltschko (in prep) proposes that a universal categorizer \( \kappa \) constrains the construction of language-specific categories (10). That is, categories are not considered syntactic primitives.

(10) 

\[
\text{kP} \\
\text{arg} \\
\text{k} \\
\text{[ucoin]} \\
\text{arg}
\]

Each of these universal projections can be filled by language-specific content. The categorizer \( k \) relates two arguments via an intrinsic coincidence feature \([\text{coin}]\) (Hale 1986). \([\text{coin}]\) must be valued by substantive content. This difference in content gives rise to cross-linguistic differences, e.g. in the anchoring function of INFL. Anchoring in INFL can occur via tense/time (English), via person (Blackfoot) or via location (Halq’eméylem) (Ritter& Wiltschko, to appear).

Another variable giving rise to differences is the valuation of the \([\text{coin}]\) feature. It may either proceed via internal merge, or via external merge. This basic mechanism, different types of merge, and valuation via varying substantive content, accounts for the cross-linguistic variation and differences that can be observed cross-linguistically in the construction of categories.
In the following I show how the syntax of Bavarian DPRTs is accounted for with this model of grammar. In Section 4.1 I show that adverb DPRT ordering establishes their base position at IP. From there, DPRTs value the [coin] feature on Ground₃P or Ground₄P, via their substantive content Section 4.2. Recall that all DPRTs are polyfunctional, and derived from linguistic objects with lexical content. The two projections Ground₃P and Ground₄P (cf. Speas & Tenny 2003) are proposed as the outmost, leftmost layers of the clause, and function as GROUNDING projections. They connect, or rather, GROUND a proposition in C.

I begin, however, by showing the empirically motivated necessity to distinguish DPRTs as addressee oriented Section 3.1 and speaker oriented Section 3.2. In Section 3.3 I motivate the proposal to introduce the syntactic projections Ground₃P and Ground₄P.

3 Speaker and addressee orientation for DPRTs

DPRTs as a function class are assumed to express speaker attitude (Weydt 1969). In the following I show evidence that DPRTs are not homogenous with regard to their orientation. DPRTs have either speaker or addressee orientation. I begin with showing addressee orientation of fei. Eh lacks addressee orientation, and associates with speaker. Both speaker and addressee are claimed to be represented in the projections Ground₃P and Ground₄P, which together form the outmost left peripheral layer Ground₃P.

3.1 Fei is addressee-oriented

The particle fei is ubiquitous in Bavarian, and as all other DPRTs, difficult to translate or paraphrase. In the following I show that fei is addressee-oriented, and explicitly expresses the speaker’s belief that addressee doesn’t know p. The proposition uttered by the speaker is not one of the propositions in the addressee’s ground. Thus fei marks p as not being part of the addressee’s set of beliefs², in the speaker’s eyes. The following shows an approximate paraphrase for fei.

(11) fei ≈ *I believe that p is not in your set of beliefs (I believe you don’t know p)*

*Fei* expresses the speaker’s take on the knowledge of the addressee concerning p. *Fei* points out explicitly that the speaker thinks the addressee does not know p. An utterance of fei α with propositional content p is used in order to express the speaker’s assumption that the addressee does not know p, and instructs the addressee to accept p as part of his or her ground: *I am asserting p, since judging from your behaviour/question/comment you don’t seem to think p* (Thoma 2009). This proposed meaning is is consistent with speaker judgements, which report fei to add emphasis to the proposition. (12) shows a scenario which illustrates a context in which fei is used.

(12) Scene: Martl and Alex hang out and chit-chat. Alex starts setting the table for 2.

→ Alex implicitly invites Martl/assumes Martl has time for dinner by setting for 2.

Martl: I hob fei koa Zeit (zum Essen)
I have DPRT NEG.DET time (to eat)
‘I don’t have time (to eat) and I believe you don’t know this.’

² The set of beliefs is the abstract argument for declaratives. In the case of non-declarative clause types, the abstract argument is different. For e.g. imperatives it would correspond to a “To-Do-List” (Portner 2007), for a wh-interrogative the set of questions, and for an exclamative, the set of surprises (cf. Burton et al 2012).
Addressee orientation can be shown with a variety of tests; *fei* is infelicitous when the addressee knows *p*, in scenarios when the speaker talks to nobody in particular, i.e. in “self-talk”, and finally, *fei* is bad in the context of a question tag.

The following scenario shows that *fei* cannot be used when the addressee knows about the proposition, since it explicitly encodes that the addressee doesn’t know *p*.

(13) Scene: Martl and Alex chitchat. Martl tells Alex he doesn’t have time to stick around for dinner. Alex later on sets the dinner table for 2.

→ Alex knows Martl doesn’t have time

Martl: *I hob *fei koa Zeit (zum Essn)
I have DPRT NEG.DET time (to eat)

Intended: ‘I don’t have time (to eat) and I believe you don’t know this.’

The speaker reacts to his friend’s actions (setting the table for two) with a *fei*-marked assertion, which can be paraphrased with ‘I think you don’t realize that I don’t have time’. Martl’s use of *fei* points out to Alex that Martl thinks *p* (=I don’t have time) is not in Alex’ ground. The scenario above has the premise that addressee does know that Martl doesn’t have time for dinner. With this premise, *fei* is not suitable.

In a scenario where the speaker is the same as the addressee, that is, in self-talk scenarios, *fei* is also infelicitous. This is expected, since it can be reasonably assumed that a speaker knows about his or her own knowledge. Example (14) illustrates such a scenario, and shows that the addressee oriented *fei* is bad.

(14) Scene: Alex promises to do a big chore before leaving on vacation, and leaves the room.

Martl muttering to himself (Martl = Adressee)

*Dofia *hod’*a *fei* koa Zeit
that.for has.he DPRT NEG.DET time

Intended: ‘He doesn’t have time for this and I believe you don’t know.’

Finally, I show in (15) that *fei* is not compatible with a question tag. Question tags, as the name suggests, question the proposition, or part thereof. If speakers use a tag, such as *oda* (lit: ‘or’), they explicitly question whether the addressee knows *p*. This is incompatible with the function of *fei*, which expresses that the speaker knows that the addressee does not know *p*.

(15) Alex promises to do a big chore before leaving on vacation, and leaves the room. Martl tells his friend:

Dofia *hod’a *fei koa Zeit, *oda?
that.for has.he DPRT NEG.DET time or

Intended: ‘He doesn’t have time for this, does he? I believe you don’t know *p*.’

I showed above that *fei* is addressee-oriented. Since it expresses that *p* is not in the addressee ground, that is, the addressee doesn’t know *p*, it is not compatible in contexts where the addressee knows *p* (13). It also isn’t licit in self-talk scenarios, where the addressee is the speaker him/herself (14). Finally, *fei* cannot co-occur with question tags that specifically question the addressee’s knowledge (15).
3.2 *Eh* is speaker-oriented

In the following, I show that the DPRT *eh* is licit in all of the scenarios shown above for *fei*. *Eh* does not involve any knowledge the speaker may have about the addressee’s beliefs. It is licit in self-talk, and can be used with addresssee oriented question tags. I conclude that *eh* is speaker-oriented. A basic paraphrase which renders the approximate contribution of *eh* is in (16).

(16) *eh* ≈ *p* is on *my* set of beliefs now, and *p* was in *my* set of beliefs before (*I knew this already*)

A first piece of evidence shows that for the use of *eh*, the addressee knowledge is irrelevant (17). This is shown by the follow-ups that are possible for Martl’s utterance. Example (17a) asserts that Tina already knows *p*, whereas (17b) questions whether Tina already knew *p*.

(17) Alex promises to do a chore for Tina before leaving on vacation, and leaves the room. Martl tells Tina:

\[
\text{Dea hod } \text{eh} \quad \text{ko} \quad \text{Zeit}
\]

He has DPRT NEG.DET time

‘He doesn’t have time and I knew this already.’

a. ...Aber des woasst ja. ‘But you know that.’
b. ...Host des ned gwusst? ‘Didn’t you know that?’

Both follow-ups make an opposite claim about the addressee’s set of beliefs; in (17a), the speaker claims that addressee knows *p*, in (17b) the speaker questions the addressee’s belief, i.e. shows that the speaker is not sure what the addressee believes. Both continuations are good with *eh*, showing that *eh* does not make reference to the addressee’s knowledge.

Example (36) shows a self-talk scenario. *Eh* is felicitous here. Compare this with the illicit addresssee oriented *fei* (12).

(18) Alex promises to do a big chore before leaving on vacation, and leaves the room

Martl muttering to himself (Martl = Adressee):

\[
\text{Dofia hod’a } \text{eh} \quad \text{ko} \quad \text{Zeit, oda?}
\]

that.for has.he DPRT NEG.DET time or

‘He doesn’t have time for this anyways(* = I knew this already*), does he?’

In a scenario like above, the speaker is addressing him/herself. Under the proposal that *eh* expresses addressee knowledge, grammaticality is expected.

Lastly, I show that *eh* is compatible with a question tag. Remember that question tags express the speaker’s uncertainty about *p* with respect to what the addressee believes about *p*. This compatibility suggests that *eh* is not relating to the addressee, but to the speaker.

(19) Alex promises to do a big chore before leaving on vacation, and leaves the room. Martl tells his friend:

\[
\text{Dofia hod’a } \text{eh} \quad \text{ko} \quad \text{Zeit, oda?}
\]

that.for has.he DPRT NEG.DET time or

‘He doesn’t have time for this anyways( = I knew this already), does he?’
Summing up this section, I showed that *fei* is addressee-oriented, whereas *eh* lacks addressee orientation, and is speaker-oriented. The table below summarizes the tests applied to establish this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Addressee knowledge relevant</th>
<th>Self talk scenarios</th>
<th>Co-occurrence w/ tags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>fei</em></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>eh</em></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Speaker and addressee in syntax

The difference in orientation, established above, could be taken to be encoded in the lexical entry for each DPRT. In the following I argue that lexical encoding cannot be the source for the differing orientations, but that a syntactic projection, representing addressee and speaker respectively, is the source of variation. Evidence comes from ordering restrictions.

It has been independently proposed that an additional syntactic layer in/above the C domain is needed to account for a variety of natural language phenomena. Speas & Tenny (2003), Gunlogson (2003) and Davis (2011) all independently arrive at the conclusion, that speaker and/or addressee are syntactically encoded in the left periphery. DPRTs are additional evidence to support this claim (Burton, Thoma & Wiltschko 2012 for English; Lam 2013 for Cantonese). I adopt the proposals made previously, and show that the syntactic representation of speaker and addressee is as in (21) (cf. Speas & Tenny 2003).

Evidence for the proposed tree comes from ordering restriction observable with DPRTs. DPRTs in general, and also specifically the particles under investigation here, can co-occur. If they do so, they have to appear in a fixed linear order (22). I take this to be due to the fact that each particle associates with a respective head (addressee for *fei*, speaker for *eh*). The rigid ordering would be unexpected under the hypothesis that variation in orientation is lexically encoded in the DPRTs themselves. In addition, recall that most DPRTs are polyfunctional and all (even the
monofunctional ones) derive from lexical material. The lexical hypothesis would have to posit a variety of lexical entries, one for each of the different functions. Since speaker and addressee representations already have been proposed to be independently necessary, the current proposal is a more economical option.

Witness below that the DPRT order fei » eh is licit, whereas eh cannot be ordered before fei. I take this to be a reflection of the hierarchical ordering of GroundₐP and GroundₛP in the left periphery.

(22) Scene: Alex was running chores all day, when he is home, he realizes he needs chocolate for the cake he is planning on baking.

Alex: Mei, so a Scheiß- letz muass I nomoi fuat!
‘Goodness, how crappy, now I gotta go out again’

Martl: Da Hansi geht fei eh zum Eikaffä (*eh » fei)
DET Hansi goes fei eh to.DET shopping
‘Hansi is going shopping. I already knew this, you don’t seem to know.’

In line with proposals that posit speaker and addressee representation in syntax, I proposed GroundₐP and GroundₛP as distinct heads in the left periphery. I showed that the specific order in which fei and eh can co-occur provides evidence that GroundₐP is hierarchically higher than GroundₛP (see also Lam 2013 for evidence from Cantonese DPRTs).

4 DPRTs relate p to C

I have shown above that fei and eh differ with their respective orientations. To formalize this insight, I make use of anchoring as proposed by Wiltschko (in prep). This anchoring function of a specific head, given its individual substantive content, relates two arguments via the coincidence function (cf. Hale 1986). Under this proposal, fei marks p as non-coinciding with the abstract discourse argument that represents the addressee ground, in SpecGroundₐP. The particle eh marks coincidence of p with the abstract argument representing speaker ground, in SpecGroundₛP. Both projections form the GROUNDING layer GroundP, which connects the utterance to the context C. In this section I show how exactly DPRTs fulfill this GROUNDING function of p in C. I begin by showing that the string linear order of DPRTs, after the finite verb, is hierarchically above IP. Then I show that from this position of merge, the substantive content of each DPRT values [coin] on GroundₛP and GroundₐP respectively.

4.1 DPRTs at IP

Recall that DPRTs have propositional scope, but that they appear syntactically integrated, that is they appear after the finite verb in C°. DPRTs can occur as far low as vP (23). The brackets show the potential positions for fei.

(23) I hob (fei) am Hansi (fei) den Hundata (fei) gem
I have (fei) DET Hansi (fei) DET $100 (fei) given
‘I gave Hansi the $100. I believe you don’t know this.’

Since Bavarian, as other varieties of German, is a scrambling language, arguments can be displaced from their base positions. This can and blur the picture, and make the identification of base positions
of arguments and adjuncts (cf. Frey & Pittner 1998) very challenging. That is, in (23) it is not clear what moves: the DPRT fei, or the arguments am Hansi and den Hundata. It is often claimed in the literature that DPRTs merge at the vP boundary (Diesing 1992; Bayer 2008; Bayer & Obenauer 2011). Others propose that DPRTs are merged as specifiers of functional projections in the IP domain (Grosz 2005; Coniglio 2007). In the following I want to show that DPRTs are merged above IP. This is the position from where they can scope over the proposition p. This is an otherwise mysterious property, given that they do not appear at the clause boundary (syntactic integration). There is a relative ordering of DPRTs at their IP position, which I take, as shown in a previous section, the reflection of their differing orientation; speaker-oriented DPRTs are lower, addressee-oriented DPRTs are higher. Evidence for the high IP position of DPRTs comes from adverbs, and relative ordering with adverbs.

Frey & Pittner (1998), Pittner (1999) and Pittner (2004) establish that adverbs occupy five base positions in syntax. They show that sentence adverbs (SADV) are the highest adverbs. The complex series of tests they employ establish that SADV dominate the base positions of all arguments as well as all other adverbs. In effect, they are at the IP boundary. The following shows the adverbial hierarchy as proposed by Frey & Pittner (1998).

(24) SADV veridicalADV [[vpEvent propertyADV ,vpEvent anchoringADV (temporal/ local/ mannerADV [process orientedADV])]]

The following data show that addressee-oriented fei has to dominate SADVs such as leider ‘unfortunately’ (25–26), whereas speaker-oriented eh can occur lower than the SADVs. Eh still has to dominate veridical adverbs, such as bestimmt ‘surely’ (26–27).

(25) I muass *leider fei in’d Uni  → SADV
    I must *unfortunately fei in.DET Uni
    ‘Unfortunately I gotta go to Uni. I believe you don’t know this.’
    cf. I muass fei leider in’d Uni

(26) I muass *bestimmt fei in’d Uni → veridicalADV
    I must *surely DPRT in. DET Uni
    ‘Surely I gotta go to Uni. You didn’t seem to know.’
    cf. I muass fei bestimmt in’d Uni

(27) I muass leider eh in’d Uni → speakerADV
    I must unfortunately DPRT in. DET Uni
    ‘Unfortunately I gotta go to Uni anyways.’
    cf. I muass *eh leider in’d Uni

(28) I muass bestimmt eh in’d Uni → veridicalADV
    I must surely DPRT in. DET Uni
    ‘Surely I gotta go to Uni anyways.’
    cf. I muass *eh bestimmt in’d Uni

The order we see established is fei » speakerADV » eh » veridical adverbs. This hierarchical ordering with adverbials confirms the previously established relative ordering of fei and eh among each other. Fei is higher than eh. Furthermore, since SADVs, are situated at the IP boundary (Frey
& Pittner 1998; Pittner 1999; Pittner 2004), the data (25–28) establish that DPRTs are merged minimally at the IP boundary. That is, DPRTs take propositional scope because they are situated at the propositional level, at IP.

In the following section I show how fei and eh establish the link between p and C via their substantive content.

4.2 DPRTs value [coin] via substantive content

DPRTs are generally assumed to be void of autolexical meaning. This difficulty in establishing a lexical meaning for the DPRTs can be seen in the slightly awkward paraphrases, and translation difficulties. It is not the absence of lexical meaning for each particle, but the position and, due to that, the function the particles fulfil, which is accountable for the semantically bleached readings. Recall that DPRTs are polyfunctional. That is, each DPRT has a fully lexical counterpart, which is used in different syntactic contexts than the DPRT. This can be understood as ‘grammaticalization’ in the sense of Roberts & Roussou (2003), in that linguistic objects can undergo reanalysis, upward and leftward along the syntactic spine. In most cases of DPRTs, the lower syntactic context, i.e. the ‘lexical’ context is still available (e.g. as focus sensitive adverb, adverbial, etc). In very few cases that context becomes unavailable after upward reanalysis\(^3\); the polyfunctional item is now monofunctional\(^4\).

It was previously shown that eh is speaker-oriented, whereas fei is addressee-oriented. The question that arises now is how this relationship between speaker, addressee and p is established. The answer lies in the syntax of functional heads. On a simplified, abstract level, a syntactic head establishes a relationship between two arguments (29).

(29)

![Diagram of syntactic head]

Wiltschko (in prep) argues that this abstract categorizing head \(\kappa\) constrains the construction of language specific categories. The two arguments are related via an intrinsic coincidence feature [coin], which must be valued by substantive content (Ritter & Wiltschko, to appear). Under my current analysis, the abstract heads are Ground\(_S\) and Ground\(_A\). The arguments related by the heads are \(p\) and the abstract discourse arguments in SpecGround\(_S\) and SpecGround\(_A\) respectively. Valuation of the coincidence feature [ucoin] on speaker and addressee occurs via the substantive content of the DPRTs.

---

\(^3\) I assume that this could be due to blocking

\(^4\) Very few monofunctional DPRTs exist. The only two I have found in my research are halt and fei.
4.2.1 The substantive content of *eh*

In the following I argue that *eh* values speaker as [+coin], via its substantive content ‘before’. The DPRT *eh* derives from the temporal adverb *eh*, or *ehe* (Hentschel 1986), meaning ‘earlier, before’. I argue that the lexical meaning of *eh*, although not directly accessible, is transparent. This has the effect that *p* is presented as true, before the speaker uttered *p* (30). Valuation of Ground₃ as [+coin] has the effect that *p* and the abstract discourse argument in SpecGround₅ coincide. This abstract argument can be understood as the speaker’s set of beliefs (=speaker ground), all the propositions the speaker entertains. The relation of *p* to the speaker ground, i.e. the speaker’s set of beliefs is established as being ‘earlier’; *p* is part of the speaker ground, and was part of it before the speaker uttered *p*. Thus *eh* is SPECIFICATIONAL, i.e. it specifies the way the proposition relates to the speaker. The result is a meaning component akin to English ‘anyways’ (although *eh* cannot always be rendered with that translation).

\[(30)\]

```
  GroundsP
     |__________________________|
    |                           |
  Speaker                      Grounds
     |__________________________|
        |                        |
    Grounds                     S
     |                        |
   [+coin]                      
      
  eh
```

4.2.2 The substantive content of *fei*

In this section I argue that *fei* values [coin] on Ground₄ as [-coin]. The DPRT *fei* is derived from the focusing adverb *fein*, meaning ‘exactly, very’ (DWDS, accessed Jul 13). The final nasal is dropped for the DPRT, but nasalization still appears on the diphthong, which can be seen as evidence for its underlying presence. The relation of *p* to addressee is established as ‘exactly’. Valuation as [-coin] has the effect that *p* does not coincide with the addressee ground. In other words, the addressee doesn’t know *p*, according to the speaker.

\[(31)\]

```
  GroundsAP
     |__________________________|
    |                           |
  Addressee                     GroundA
     |__________________________|
        |                        |
    GroundA                     S
     |                        |
   [-coin]                      
      
  fei
```

*Fei* and *eh* connect the utterance to the context, via the discourse oriented projections Ground₃P and Ground₄AP. Such a proposal that associates DPRTs with syntactic heads, predicts that DPRTs are in fact obligatory. I show that this is the case in contexts where a link to discourse has to be established. The next section shows how this prediction is borne out.
5 DPRTs as obligatory grammatical items

DPRTs are widely seen as optional elements, a reason why they often are analyzed as syntactic modifiers (Zimmermann 2004, 2011) or specifiers (Grosz 2005; Coniglio 2007, 2009). I claim, however, that DPRTs are crucial in establishing a specifying relationship between p and C, via their substantive content. Whenever this relationship to C has to be established, DPRTs are obligatory. In addition, I claimed above that DPRTs associate with syntactic heads, Ground\(\delta\) and Ground\(\lambda\), respectively. This predicts that DPRTs are obligatory, as would be expected from linguistic objects which associate with heads.

Communication between two (or more) interlocutors does not occur in a contextless vacuum. If we do look at a contextless utterance such as (32–33), it can be observed that the DPRTs are indeed optional, that is, they express some additional information (i.e. the specification relation mentioned above), but do not seem crucial for the grammaticality of the sentence.

(32) I hob koa Zeit
   I have NEG.DET time
   ‘I don’t have time’

(33) I hob fei koa Zeit
   I have DPRT NEG.DET time
   ‘I don’t have time I believe you don’t know this.’

DPRTs establish a link beyond the propositional content of an utterance, and the temporal/aspectual relations expressed in that utterance. Just as IP provides temporal/aspectual anchoring for vP, I argue that GroundP provides discourse anchoring (which I call Grounding) for IP\(^5\), via the discourse participants addressee and speaker. As soon as this link to discourse participants has to be established, DPRTs are an obligatory means of establishing that relation\(^6\). The following scenarios illustrate this point. The explanatory paraphrases in italics spell out the way each DPRT relates to C.

(34) Dinner scene: Alex puts out an elaborate spread for dinner for two without uttering an invitation, while chatting with Martl about other things. Martl has other plans, and finally realizes the extra plate is intended for him. Martl says:

   I hob fei*/eh/*ø koa Zeit (zum essn)
   I have DPRT*/eh/ø NEG.DET time (to eat)
   ‘I don’t have time (to eat).’

---

\(^5\) I do assume that CP, the linking layer, occurs between IP and GroundP. I abstract away from this for reasons of exposition, but the (in)famous clause type restriction for DPRTs is part of the connection to CP. That is, DPRTs are highly restricted in which clause type they can occur in. I assume that CP is responsible for the content of the abstract argument in GroundP: it is a set of beliefs for declaratives, question set in interrogatives, to do list in imperatives, etc. Details of implementations are currently part of my dissertation work (Thoma in prep).

\(^6\) DPRTs are not the only means to establish this relation, e.g. intonation (presumably also a peripheral phenomenon, cf. Davis 2011) can fulfil the same function.
Judging from your behaviour you think that I have time for dinner: but I don’t have time for dinner and I believe you don’t know this.

This example establishes a link between the implicit invitation made by Alex by setting the table for two. Martl’s actual plans, i.e what the speaker assumes the addressee knows, is, mapped up with what the speaker knows. This is the function of the DPRT fei in this scenario, it values GroundA as [-coin] and establishes that p is not in the addressee ground. Observe that crucially, in this specific scenario, Martl’s utterance is not grammatical without fei.

Next, witness a different discourse premise. This time, only the sentence with the particle eh is grammatical.

(35) Chat scene: Alex is bumping into his best friend Martl on the street. He apologizes that he can’t stay and chat with him. Martl responds:

I hob eh/fei/o koa Zeit (zum ratschn)
I have DPRT/DPRT/ø NEG.DET time (to chat)
‘It doesn’t matter, I don’t have time to chat anyways.’

Given that you feel bad for not chatting, don’t worry, I don’t have time either and this was true for me before I bumped into you

Here eh values GroundS as [+coin], and establishes that p is in the speaker ground, and was in the speaker ground before.

Finally, the following scenario shows a premise where none of the two DPRTs, eh nor fei, can be used7.

(36) Party scene: Alex and Martl run into each other on the street.

Alex: Hey, are you coming to the department party on Friday?
Martl: I hob fei/eh/ø koa Zeit (zum feian)
I have DPRT/DPRT/ø NEG.DET time (to.DET party)
‘I don’t have time (to party).’

The substantive content of both eh and fei, and the way each of them value [coin] on the respective heads is incompatible with the given scenario. In this instance, none of the DPRTs can be used.

The complementary distribution of the DPRTs/ø in the different scenarios is evidence for the obligatoriness of the DPRTs. The table below summarizes.

---

7 Other DPRTs, which may express a different relation of p to Ground_S and Ground_A can be used here, such as e.g. doch. See (39) for details.
Summary & Outlook

In this paper, I showed that the DPRTs *eh* and *fei* in Miesbach Bavarian only appear to be optional elements, and only appear so in contextless utterances. I showed that once discourse context is taken into consideration, DPRTs serve the purpose of connecting the utterance to C. The data support the idea that DPRTs establish a SPECIFICATIONAL relationship between the proposition *p* and the context, by GROUNDING *p* via the speaker or addressee. The substantive content of each particle specifies the relationship (e.g. time, manner, degree), whereas the coincidence feature, intrinsic to all syntactic categories (Wiltschko in prep) specifies whether *p* is or is not part of speaker or addressee ground.

I also showed that DPRTs vary in their orientation; *eh* is speaker-oriented, whereas *fei* is addressee-oriented, with speaker/addressee being represented in two separate syntactic layers, Ground₃P and Ground₄P. I established that the possible linear order of DPRTs is a reflection of the hierarchical order of the projections they associate with. That is, Ground₄P dominates Ground₃P. Lastly, adverb DPRT ordering established that *fei* and *eh* are merged high at the IP boundary.

The system I proposed in this paper allows a basic typology of DPRTs in Bavarian German along four variables, namely speaker orientation, addressee orientation, and valuation of [coin] as [-coin] or [+coin]. The picture that emerges can be summarized as in (38).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dinner Scene</th>
<th>Chat Scene</th>
<th>Party Scene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>fei</em></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>🆕</td>
<td>🆕</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>eh</em></td>
<td>🆕</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>🆕</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(38)

The squares marked by ? are subject to empirical investigation, but I want to suggest here that the DPRT *doch* is addressee-oriented, and values addressee as [+coin]. Preliminary research shows that *doch* can be felicitously uttered in many of the *fei* contexts. *Doch* “is used to express the speaker’s assumption that the addressee is not aware of *p*. For instance, the addressee may have (temporarily) forgotten about *p*, or she may think *p* false” (Zimmermann 2007; cf. Lindner 1991).

At a first glance, this description of *doch* is very similar to the proposed meaning of *fei*: ‘I believe that you don’t know about *p*’. A crucial difference lies in the assumed knowledge state of the addressee with regard to *p*. I propose that *doch* is an addressee-oriented DPRT, which explicitly expresses the speaker’s belief that addressee is aware of *p*, via its substantive content ‘affimative’
(Hentschel 1986; Zeevat & Karagjosova 2007). *Doch* values *addressee* as [+coin]. This ‘reminding’ function of *doch* (Zimmermann 2007; Gast 2008) can be understood under the proposed analysis that *p* is marked as coinciding with the Ground. The following scenario introduced previously as (12), here repeated as (39) illustrates this point. *Doch* is felicitous when the addressee knows of the state of affairs expressed in the proposition; *fei* is not.

(39) Scene: Martl and Alex chitchat. Martl tells Alex he doesn’t have time to stick around for dinner. Alex later on sets the dinner table for two. Alex knows Martl doesn’t have time.

Martl: I *hob* *fei/doch* koa Zeit (zum Essn)
I have *DPRT/DPRT* NEG.DET time (to eat)
‘I don’t have time (to eat). *I believe you don’t know this*/OK I believe you know this.’

The proposed system allows an empirical investigation of Miesbach Bavarian DPRTs. Variation can be understood due to differences in substantive content, which, despite being bleached, is transparent and can in many cases be understood via its core meaning. This reflects the insight among many researchers that DPRTs, albeit not lexically contentful in this function, show a close relationship to the non-DPRT, lexical counterparts that the majority of DPRTs have. That is, DPRTs are not completely semantically bleached. Rather, the semantic content of a DPRT is accessible indirectly, via the type of relation it expresses between speaker, addressee, and C.

It is a welcome result of the proposed system, to be able to analyze DPRTs, which to date seem to elude formal syntactic analysis (with very exceptions Bayer & Obenauer 2011; Bayer 2012; Coniglio 2009), in a principled and empirically grounded way.

References


