Broken expectations in interaction - a conversational linguistic approach to discourse expectations

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In my poster I would like to present possibilities and potentials for the analysis of discourse expectations (cf. Schiffrin 2005), based on a conversational linguistic analysis perspective (cf. Deppermann 2018). For this, I would like to qualitatively analyze authentic spoken data. For example, interactively visible breaks in expectations in everyday interactions offer a promising approach to the primary mental phenomenon of "expectation". In such moments of conversation, what usually remains hidden in cognition becomes "visible". One of the particles used in German to articulate certain breaks in expectations is hä. It assumes the function and topological position of a pragmatic marker (Frazer 1999). They usually stand syntactically in the peripheral position and have metacommunicative functions, which are both prospective and retrospective (Auer 2001). I would like to illustrate this below using a real discussion example (DGD2 - IDS Mannheim), where some young people play the game "werewolf". In the excerpt, the participants try to make a binding statement to one of the players TU, that he is not a werewolf, which he denies:

Conversation example: werewolf

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0339    TU →    ich bin_s diesma wirklich nich
                I'm not really there this time
0340            (0.42)
0341    XX      °hh
0342    NL →    hä dies[mal ]
                hä this[time]
0343    KW           [dies]mal
                     [this] time
0344            ((allg. Gelächter, 4.83s))
                ((general laughter, 4.83s))
0345    KW      tom
0346    TU      hä aber ihr wisst doch wie ich spiele
                hä but you know how I play
0347            wenn ich werwolf bin
                when I'm a werewolf
0348            dann würd ich die ganze zeit hier so grinsen
                then I'd be smiling like that all the time
0349    TP      [((lacht, 1.12s))]
                [((laughs, 1.12s))]
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As you can see in line 0342, the implication resulting from the word choice of TU "this time" in line 0339 contradicts the expectations of NL. With the statement "I'm really not there this time" TU presupposes that he was often a werewolf in the past games, which obviously NL didn't expect. We can see from the example that this is not a conventional discourse expectation, as is the case with conditional relevance in pair sequences (e.g. question-answer sequences (Schegloff 2007)). This is rather a break of a contextually established expectation in the context of a joint project (Clark 1996).

The research and teaching corpus for spoken German (Folk) of IDS Mannheim were used as the corpus basis. The following questions will be dealt in my poster: How are expectation breaks in interaction indicated? Which forms/types of expectation become visible in interactions? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a linguistic approach to expectations in interaction?

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