Grammatical innovation in multiethnic urban Europe:
New linguistic practices among adolescents

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Abstract

This paper discusses a phenomenon that has recently been observed in areas with a large migrant population in European cities: the rise of new linguistic practices among adolescents in multiethnic contexts. The main grammatical characteristics that have been described for these new natural forms are (1) phonological/phonetic and lexical influences from migrant languages and (2) morpho-syntactic reductions and simplifications. In this paper, I show that from a grammatical point of view, morpho-syntactic reductions are only part of the story. Using ‘Kiezdeutsch’ as an example, I discuss several phenomena that provide evidence for linguistic productivity and show how they evolve from a specific interplay of grammatical and syntactic features that is typical for contact languages: grammatical reductions go hand-in-hand with productive elaborations that display a systematicity that can lead to the emergence of new constructions, indicating the innovative grammatical power of these multilingual adolescents.

Keywords: Multilingualism; Youth language; Kiezdeutsch; Contact language; Light verbs; Bare NPs

1. Introduction: new linguistic practices in multiethnic urban Europe

Over the last decade, new linguistic practices in adolescent communication have been described for several European countries, with instances such as straattaal ‘street language’ in the Netherlands, the Arkivsbysvenska ‘Arkivby-swanish’ in Sweden, the kopenhavnse multikanal ‘Copenhagen multilingual’ in Denmark (cf. Quist, 2000), and Kiezdeutsch ‘neighbourhood language/hood language’ in Germany. These newcomers show typical characteristics of youth languages: they are spoken by young adolescents and are mostly restricted to in-group situations. A feature that distinguishes them from other youth languages is that they are typically found in multiethnic and multilingual settings of urban neighbourhoods with large migrant populations.4

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4 The relation to recent immigration — and to second language acquisition — also distinguishes these youth languages from varieties like African American English (cf. Labov, 1972).

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To (adress & faxnr):
Franz Monika Schmidt
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From:
Franz Hinkebusch

Message
As promised. Hope it all comes through. Cepily.

Best!

[Signature]

[Signature]
Such neighbourhoods are often characterised by one dominant migrant ethnicity, but this is never the only one, and children and adolescents from a variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, including the majority (non-migrant) one, come together in the course of shared activities in the street and when attending school. Some of the major migrant languages involved in these neighbourhoods are Turkish, Kurdish, and Arabic, which find themselves accompanied for example by Sranan in the case of streeet in the Netherlands, Greek for Rinkobyssvenska in Sweden, and Urdu and Serbo-Croatian for the kroshetsvansk multietnolek in Denmark (in each of these cases, however, these are not the only migrant languages involved).

An important basis for the emergence of these linguistic practices among adolescents are ethnolcets,\(^5\) in particular those that develop within the dominant ethnicity or ethnicities, but in such a context one also finds forms of untrained second language acquisition that arise in the course of new immigration or new exposure to the country’s majority language as a result of school or kindergarten attendance. While children who do not have an immigrant background will grow up with the country’s majority language spoken at home, children of migrant descent will often speak their parents’ heritage language with family members as well as friends and neighbours, and some might not speak the majority language fluently when entering school. What is important for the understanding of these linguistic practices is that all of these groups of speakers contribute to their development: these new varieties or styles often occur in ethnically mixed groups encompassing speakers of migrant and non-migrant backgrounds; they form multiethnolcets in the sense of Quist (2000, 2008).

This yields a multilingual setting that supports the rise of a new class of linguistic practices which, as I am going to show, involve some interesting grammatical developments that are typical of contact varieties. In particular, using the example of Kiezkdeutsch, I am going to argue that these multiethnolcets are not only characterised by grammatical reductions, but can also develop new, productive linguistic patterns on their own.

For the investigation of their grammatical characteristics it is important to distinguish linguistic practices in multilingual environments from their stylised counterparts. Ethnolcet-based varieties can spread to speakers of other ethnic backgrounds, including native speakers of the majority languages, not only via contact situations, but also in stylised form, comparable to Mock Spanish and Mock Ebonics in the US. Such stylised forms can be diffused via mass media, for instance in the context of comedy shows (cf. Keim and Androutsopoulos, 2000; Androutsopoulos, 2001; Auer, 2003; Kothoff, 2004), they are often understood as joking imitations of migrant registers and frequently involve negative social stereotyping. Accordingly, they are restricted to non-immigrant groups (or in any case to other migrant backgrounds than the one that is mocked) and are not used towards speakers with the migrant background(s) in question. Examples for such stylised forms are Murks (Moroccan-Turkish) in the Netherlands, a stylised counterpart of streeet (cf. Nortier, 2000, 2001), Stylised Asian English in the UK (cf. Rampton, 1995), Mock Rinkoby Swedish in Sweden (cf. Stroud, 2004), and the pouric uses of Copenhagen multiethnolct described in Quist and Jørgensen (2007). In Germany, the term Kanak Sprak is used for both stylised and non-stylised forms.

The term Kanak Sprak first became popular through political novels and interview collections by Zaimoglu (e.g., Zaimoglu, 1995). It is based on reclaiming the initially pejorative, xenophile term ‘Kanak’ within political movements of second- and third-generation immigrants of mostly Turkish origin. While it is used in some sociolinguistic investigations as well as in popular accounts of this multiethnolct, it does not seem to be common among its adolescent speakers, who usually talk about krass reden ‘tough/cool talk’, or refer to their language as Kiezkdeutsch or Kiezsprache ‘hood German’ /‘hood language’ (cf. Wiese, 2006). I will follow this terminology and use ‘Kiezkdeutsch’ for the non-stylised variant in this paper.

This term does not carry the pejorative connotations of ‘Kanak Sprak’ (cf. Androutsopoulos, 2007 on language ideology aspects of this), and it also emphasises that this variant belongs to a “Kiez”, a ‘hood, it belongs to informal, everyday communication in a (multiethnic) neighbourhood. In these informal settings, Kiezkdeutsch is the appropriate choice in conversations among young people, while standard German would sound out of place, cf. the following response of a 13-year-old girl from Neukölln, a multiethnic neighbourhood of Berlin, in an interview we conducted there:

(1) “How do you like it when somebody speaks standard German here?”

“Well, he thinks he is someone special, he is kind of uptight [laughs]. For instance, we speak totally normal German, you know, like in the ghetto, so to speak, and he comes and thinks he is better than us.”

Finally, the term "Kiezdeutsch" does not imply a restriction to the ethnic (migrant or non-migrant) background of its speakers: In contrast to their stylised counterparts, non-stylised variants spread as a result of direct contacts and are used in multiethnic contexts independently of the speaker’s ethnic background. This means that adolescents of the majority ethnicity are involved in the emergence of such multiethnolects as well, and the use of this youth language is not an indicator of ethnic background. The following quote illustrates this; it is taken from an interview on Kiezdeutsch we conducted with the director of “Tiger Kreuzberg”, a video series that plays with stereotypes about adolescents in Kreuzberg and is created by two young Berliners of Turkish origin, Murat Unal (actor) and Serkan Cetinkaya (director), who grew up in Kreuzberg and Wedding, two multiethnic neighbourhoods of Berlin:

(2) “When you look how many Germans in Kreuzberg do not speak German anymore, that is, they speak this Kiezdeutsch, so that, when you do not see them, you think there are Turks or Arabs speaking, but then you turn around, and they are totally normal German kids, then you notice, really amazing, how this has developed.”

Rather than indicating negative stereotyping, non-stylised variants of multiethnolects signal group identity and can serve to indicate a speaker’s association with the street culture in a multiethnic neighbourhood, an aspect that is evident from names that translate as ‘street language’ (straatentaal) or ‘hood language’ (Kiezdeutsch) that speakers use for these varieties.6 It is such non-stylised variants that I will focus on in this paper.

An important point to keep in mind is that such multiethnolects are not the only varieties at their speakers’ disposal. Their speakers’ linguistic repertoire might also include a minority language and, more often than not, the country’s majority language, whether as a first or as a second language: as has been pointed out for the different youth varieties discussed here, a considerable number of their speakers do speak the majority language fluently. As a result, grammatical reductions as well as innovations do not occur consistently across speakers and speech events; they reflect a tendency within a multiethnic variant rather than a stable feature, and the extent to which characteristics of such a multiethnolect are employed can vary within a single conversation. Given this variability, and the diversity of the linguistic repertoires of its speakers, one might want to avoid calling these linguistic practices or styles ‘(multiethno-)lects’ or ‘varieties’ altogether. In what follows, however, I will use the term ‘variety’ to emphasise the fact that I concentrate on linguistic phenomena on the grammatical level that are characteristic for these multiethnolects.

This implies that such characteristics are characteristics of a multiethnolect, that is, they are typical for linguistic practices of adolescents in a multiethnic neighbourhood, they are recognised by speakers and distinguish them from others. For the case of Kiezdeutsch, such a view of multiethnolects as a variety gets support from an acceptability study we did in Berlin (Freywald et al., 2008). For this study, we chose sentences that reflected core features that have consistently been reported for Kiezdeutsch in the literature (cf. the overview in section 2: lack of determiners, inflectional deviations, lack of prepositions and articles in local expressions, lack of copula, lexical borrowings from Turkish and Arabic). These “Kiezdeutsch” sentences were complemented by two other kinds of stimuli: “standard” sentences that showed no deviation from standard German, and “false” sentences that involved random grammatical deviations, such as major constituents missing, wrong word order, wrong constituent combinations.

The sentences were recorded as a mixed set and presented to young people (15–17 years old) from schools in two different kinds of neighbourhoods: on the one hand, a multiethnic neighbourhood where over 84% of the pupils have a non-German home language and 25.3% of under 18 year olds living in the area do not hold a German citizenship, and on the other hand, a monoethnic neighbourhood with comparable social indicators (similar unemployment rate, similar percentage of households receiving social benefits), but less than 5% of the pupils with a non-German home language and only 1.7% of the population under 18 years with a foreign citizenship.7 Adolescents from the multiethnic neighbourhood who took part in the study were from a number of ethnic backgrounds including German, with Turkish in the majority; participants from the monoethnic neighbourhood were all of German background. In the study, they were asked to listen to the sentences one by one, and give their opinion on them: “We would like to know how you speak in every-day life. We will play some sentences to you and want to know your opinion on them. When you hear a

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6 In a similar vein, Kullmeyer and Klein (2003) report that adolescents in Mannheim, Germany, also use the name ‘Stadtteilssprache’ (district/local language).
7 Figures from the Berlin Senate for Education, Science, and Research (School Administration), and the Berlin Senate’s Administration for City Development (Demographic Monitoring).
sentence that you or your friends might say so too, say "yes". If you think the sentence sounds strange or wrong, say "no"."

A statistical analysis of responses revealed two interesting patterns: (1) There were no significant differences between participants from mono- and multiethnic neighbourhoods with respect to "standard" and "false" sentences, but highly significant differences for their responses to "Kiezdeutsch" sentences, which were accepted more than twice as often in the multiethnic neighbourhood (59% vs. 25%). (2) There were no significant differences in the multiethnic neighbourhood between participants with different languages of origin, and in particular not for German vs. migrant background, and highly significant differences between participants from the monoethnic neighbourhood and non-migrant participants from the multiethnic neighbourhood with respect to the "Kiezdeutsch" sentences (not "false" and "standard" sentences), that is, adolescents with a German background coming from the multiethnic neighbourhood patterned with their migrant peers, rather than with German-background adolescents from the monoethnic neighbourhood.

We hence found a clear distinction between participants from mono- and multiethnic neighbourhoods that goes across ethnic boundaries and applies to linguistic samples with grammatical features found in Kiezdeutsch, but not to standard German samples or random deviations. These results support a view of Kiezdeutsch as a variety with grammatical characteristics that reflect, if not strict rules (given the variability of these multiethnotects), so at least tendencies that mark it as a multiethnotect and distinguish it from other varieties or dialects.

In what follows I will first illustrate the central linguistic characteristics that these multiethnotects share across countries and languages (section 2). Against this background, I will then focus on one example, namely Kiezdeutsch, in order to demonstrate the linguistic productivity of such a multiethnotect (section 3). To this end I concentrate on grammatical features, investigating morpho-syntactic and semantic, rather than sociolinguistic, phenomena. I provide evidence for two kinds of development: the emergence of new particles, and the emergence of new, syntactically complex constructions. I argue that such developments support a view of these multiethnotects as being not randomly reduced forms of standard varieties, but rather varieties that form productive grammatical systems by themselves and show patterns of morpho-syntactic economy typical for contact languages. Given this background, I discuss whether such contact varieties might support the emergence of ethnotect-based urban dialects similar to those found in the United States (section 4).

2. Linguistic characteristics of adolescents' multiethnotects

Although multiethnotects emerged independently among adolescents in different European countries, they show overall similarities suggesting that their development reflects a unified phenomenon. In particular, two central characteristics have been reported that distinguish them from the respective majority languages as well as from other youth languages: first, transfers from home languages of the different migrant populations resulting in phonetic–phonological changes and the introduction of new lexical material and short routines, and second, grammatical reductions affecting the morphological, semantic, and syntactic level. In what follows, I illustrate these characteristics with examples from the four multiethnotects mentioned above, from the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany.

2.1. Transfers from migrant languages

Transfers from migrant languages can affect the phonetic level and lead to articulatory changes like the introduction of trilled /r/ in Rinskebysvenska (Kotsinas, 1998) and coronalisation of /l/ in Kiezdeutsch (cf. Dirim and Auer, 2004: ch. 6). On the lexical level, they support the integration of words and short routines.

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8 Mann–Whitney’s U = 235, Z = 1.998, p = 0.0472 for “false” sentences, U = 243, Z = 1.371, p = 0.170 for “standard” sentences.
9 Mann–Whitney’s U = 43.5, Z = 4.884, p = 0.000 for “Kiezdeutsch” sentences.
10 Comparison of different languages of origin, responses for all sentences: Kruskal–Wallis χ²(6) = 6.508, p = 0.164. Comparison of German vs. migrant background, responses for all sentences: Mann–Whitney’s U = 55, Z = 0.9, p = 0.368, for “Kiezdeutsch” sentences: U = 62.5, Z = 0.506, p = 0.613.
11 Comparison for “Kiezdeutsch” sentences: Mann–Whitney’s U = 6, Z = 3.335, p = 0.001; for “false” sentences: Mann–Whitney’s U = 54, Z = 0.000, p = 1.000; for “standard” sentences: Mann–Whitney’s U = 48, Z = 0.835, p = 0.404.
Integrated routines often have the status of ritualised insults or threats, e.g. Turkish Hadi, lan! ‘Come on, man!’ (also used to mean ‘Get lost, man!’) in Rinkebyvenska (cf. Kotsinas, 1988:136), Arabic wallah billa ‘I swear / in God’s name’ in københavnsk multietnolet (cf. Quist, 2000:157), or Turkish Sicir, lan! ‘Fuck off, man!’ in Kiezdeutsch. Note that these transfers occur in the monolingual, Swedish/Danish/German-dominant mode of speaking; such incorporations are not only used by speakers coming from the respective linguistic background (Turkish, Arabic), but across ethnicities, and by speakers with and without migrant background alike (cf. also Dirim and Auer, 2004).

Lexical integrations occur in different semantic fields, including syntactically non-integrated nominal address forms, comparable to ‘man’ in vernacular English in constructions like ‘Where are you from, man?’ These integrations sometimes have a pejorative status in the source language, like Turkish lan ‘man/guy’. The examples under (3) illustrate lexical integrations (marked by bold case) for the four examples discussed here:

(3a) hoeveel dukus? (straatvla, Appel 1999:39)
how much/money ‘bucks’
‘How many bucks?’

(3b) welke sma?
which girl
‘What/which girl?’

(3c) har du para lan? (Rinkebyvenska, Kotsinas 2001:151)
have you money
‘Do you have money, man?’

(3d) har du ikke set de der kru (københavnsk multietnolet, Quist 2000:156)
have you not seen she there
‘Have you not seen that girl there?’

(3e) du bist doof, lan. (Kiezdeutsch, Dirim & Auer 2004: 130)
you are stupid
‘You are stupid, man.’

2.2. Grammatical reductions

Compared to the respective standard varieties, multietnolects show a number of reductions on the morphological and syntactic level. Two important points to keep in mind in connection with this, though, are, firstly, that these multietnolects are informal, spoken variants, and hence their point of reference will not be so much the standard variety in question, but rather other informal variants, local vernaculars, and so on. Secondly, as mentioned above, because these youth varieties or styles are still very variable, the grammatical reductions one can observe reflect tendencies rather than stable features.

2.2.1. Syntactic level: word order deviations

In the syntactic domain, a salient feature is word order deviations from standard usage as well as deletions in the domain of functional categories. For Rinkebyvenska, københavnsk multietnolet and Kiezdeutsch alike, the occurrence of preserved SV order has been reported for declarative main clauses with initial adverbial phrases in contrast to the standard word order in the respective majority languages (Kotsinas, 1988; Auer, 2003; Dirim and Auer, 2004:ch.6.2.1; Quist, 2008), cf. (4) (verbs are marked in bold):

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12 “wallah” is an emphasising particle (from wa-‘allah), “billa” is derived from bi ‘ism ‘allah, “in God’s name”.
Klezdeutsch, reported in Füglein (2000) (italic expressions in square brackets indicate elements that would usually be overt in German, but are absent in Klezdeutsch):

(6) auf einmal hab ich [einen] schock bekommen. (Kern & Setzing 2006: 250)
  at once have I [a] shock received
  ‘Suddenly, I got shocked.’

(7) und dann kam die mutter rein, und then came the mother in
  [man/er] kann da im zimmer nicht mal rauchen.
  [one/he] can there in the room not even smoke
  can [you] you IMAGINE yes
  ‘And then, the mother came in; (one/he) is not even allowed to smoke in that room. You can imagine this, can’t you?’

(8a) ja, ich [bin] aus Wedding. (Wiese 2006: 257)
  yes I [am] from Wedding
  ‘Yes, I am from Wedding (= inner-city district in Berlin).’

(8b) München ist weit weg, oder. (Füglein 2000: 89)
  Munich is far away
  ‘Munich is far, man.’

2.2.4. Mere simplification?

Taken together, these phenomena suggest a picture of these multiethnolects as morpho-syntactically reduced versions of the respective majority languages. This is generally the view one finds in the public discussion of these multiethnolects, where this is often regarded as an educational problem and can lead to strong opposition against these varieties and their speakers. The following quotes from Germany illustrate this (quotes in (9) are taken from newspapers, quotes in (10) are from an interview series on youth language in multiethnic neighbourhoods we conducted with people approached in the street in Berlin-Mitte, the historical city center):

(9a) “Kanak Sprak” ignores the Duden [grammatical reference book for German], and it does not mind raping the grammar.”

(9b) “A strange, Duden-incompatible gutter staccato”
  (Berliner Morgenpost, September 2, 2001, “Voll fett krass”)

(9c) “More and more German adolescents tend to simplify the German language as well.”
  (Fokus Schule 5/2007; „Red ich Deutsch oder was?“, quoting a German sociolinguist on effects of Klezdeutsch on non-migrant youth)

(10a) “They speak in shreds, the syntax is simplified. That contributes to the deterioration of the German language.”
  (primary school teacher from Wedding, a multiethnic neighbourhood of Berlin, 54 years old)

(10b) “I wonder where they get this from. I find it irritating if Germans speak like that as well; Turks might not know any better, although they could try harder.”
  (archivist, 29 years old)

(10c) “I find it unpleasant, lazy, primitive, sounds aggressive and undermining, grammatically incorrect, condensed.”
  (student, 23 years old)

14 Older is a South German variety of Alter ‘old man’.
Apart from the strikingly negative, even aggressive attitudes that become apparent towards these linguistic practices (cf. also Stroud, 2004 on similar language ideological aspects in the public discussion in Swedish), there seems to be some kind of consensus that these multiethnolects are grammatically reduced, simplified versions of the majority languages. Judging from the phenomena discussed so far, there seems to be some linguistic support for this as well. Indeed, while lexical transfers from migrant languages have been characterised as expanding elements of multiethnic youth varieties (cf. Quist, 2000), the analysis of grammatical features has so far focused on phenomena of linguistic simplification and reduction (cf. also Kotsinas, 1988:136: "The variety seems to contain simplifying features, mostly grammatical, but also elaborating ones, mostly lexical"). Morpho-syntactic characteristics of these multiethnolects have usually been described by lists of omissions and reductions (e.g. Kotsinas, 2001:150; Dirim and Auer, 2004:207; Quist, 2008:47), sometimes characterised as "errors" (Androutsopoulos, 2001:7), and summarised as deviations that "concern difficult (i.e. highly marked) systems, such as those determining gender, agreement, preposition use and word order" (Kotsinas, 1998:136) and are based on grammatical "simplifications" (Kotsinas, 1998:137; Klein and Androutsopoulos, 2000:2).

The general picture one gets from this is that, while on the level of its speakers, the use of a multiethnolect reflects a strategic choice, rather than a lack of competence in the standard variety, on the level of the grammatical system the morpho-syntactic features that characterise it indicate a reduction. This grammatical reduction is not as pronounced as the one found in untaught second language acquisition – in particular in the 'basic variety' typical of earlier acquisitional stages (cf. Klein and Perdue, 1997) – but it is at least reminiscent of it.

However, these youth varieties are not forms of second language acquisition themselves. While one finds different instances of untaught second language acquisition in their contexts (as described above, as a result of new immigration or new exposure to the majority language in kindergarten or school), these varieties do not have the respective majority languages as their target. Rather, as mentioned earlier, a lot of speakers can switch between standard and multiethnolect: crucially, these youth languages encompass speakers with migrant background as well as those without (that is, native speakers of the majority language), and among those with migrant background, quite a few will have had early exposure to the respective majority language and speak it fluently.

This indicates that these multiethnolects, rather than reflecting acquisitional stages on the way to a target standard language, are in fact target languages themselves: they are contact varieties acquired by adolescents in the multiethnic contexts of urban neighbourhoods with a large migrant population, where they can serve as a marker of local identity in a multilingual setting. Given their status as youth languages, this can lead to developments where children switch from more standard language use to Kiezdeutsch when they become older and want to be part of the local youth culture (cf. also Kotsinas, 1992:57 on the Swedish case: "The fact that some of the deviant features in 'immigrant' varieties, such as incorrect word order and certain intonation patterns, seem to occur more often in adolescent varieties than in the speech of pre-school children, could, in fact, signify an emerging common group identity") – a development that might be seen rather negative by school teachers, as illustrated by the following quote from an interview with a primary school teacher in Berlin-Kreuzberg:

"It is such a shame that when they get older, they start speaking like this. For instance, A. [a pupil at that school] spoke very good German, and now that she is in 6th grade [i.e., 12 years], she starts speaking awfully, and makes all those grammatical mistakes."

In the following section, I show that a view of multiethnolects as target varieties in their own right, rather than language use that reflects "grammatical mistakes", is supported by productive linguistic patterns that lead to grammatical elaborations that are based on morpho-syntactic reductions and interact with them, suggesting that reductions alone are not the whole picture. Rather than being just simplified varieties, these multiethnolects are characterised by a grammatical creativity that supports the emergence of new, productive constructions. For the example of Kiezdeutsch, I describe the rise of such new constructions, and in particular the rise of constructions that are typical for contact languages: the emergence of new particles, and the emergence of pragmatically supported complex constructions.
3. Linguistic innovation in adolescents' multilinguals: the example of Kiezdeutsch

While descriptions of adolescents' multilinguals so far have focused on grammatical simplifications, a first review of the examples for such simplifications suggests, as indicated above, that there might be more going on than just grammatical reduction. In order to get a better idea of the grammatical developments and their structure, a study was conducted that investigated such a multilingual, namely Kiezdeutsch, from a primarily grammatical, rather than sociolinguistic, point of view.

3.1. The study

This study can be regarded as a pilot study into the grammar of adolescents' multilinguals. Starting from the working hypothesis that adolescents' multilinguals are characterised not just by mere simplification, but also by linguistic innovation, we collected data for a grammatical analysis of selected phenomena. Accordingly, while sociolinguistic factors were taken into account, the focus of the empirical work was on grammatical features. For this purpose, we compiled three sample corpora from young people's conversations in multiethnic neighbourhoods of Berlin:

- spontaneous speech samples obtained by listening in to communications in public places, e.g. at street corners, on the bus, in shopping centers; about 1300 utterances;
- informal, conversation-like recordings conducted with groups of adolescents in youth clubs or in the street; about 4 h;
- self-recordings of a 17-year-old of Kurdish-Arabic descent (Iraq) born in Germany, of every-day conversations with his friends; about 5 h.

Whereas this data does not offer an adequate empirical basis to provide quantitative answers to questions about the prevalence of linguistic phenomena, it is sufficient to ground the grammatical analyses that we are interested in here. The data was collected in Kreuzberg, Neukölln, and Wedding, three inner-city districts with a large migrant population of mostly Middle-Eastern (Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish, and Persian) descent. Given that we are investigating multilinguals whose speakers come from different ethnic backgrounds and encompass migrant as well as non-migrant adolescents, we did not restrict ourselves to a particular ethnic background and included speakers of non-migrant German descent as well.

While the analysis of the speech data focused on grammatical features, it did not only take into account possible deviations from standard German, but included informal, spoken variants of German. From this analysis, two types of phenomena surfaced that most prominently indicate the linguistic productivity that complement functional reductions on the morpho-syntactic side in Kiezdeutsch: (1) the rise of new complex constructions based on the use of bare NPs and (2) the emergence of new uninflected elements, particles that fulfil grammatical-pragmatic functions.

3.2. Local expressions with bare NPs

As illustrated above (cf. (6) and (7) in section 2.2.3), we find constructions in Kiezdeutsch that lack determiners compared to standard German, including some with bare NPs without an article. While prima facie this might look like a simple case of grammatical reduction in Kiezdeutsch (and has usually been interpreted as such), a closer look shows that the occurrence of such bare NPs is part of more complex syntactic phenomena. Two kinds of constructions are particularly interesting in this respect: local expressions based on bare NPs, and pragmatically supported light verb constructions employing bare NPs. The present section deals with local expressions, while section 3.3 makes the case for a new kind of light verb construction in Kiezdeutsch.

Local expressions in German are typically formed by prepositional phrases consisting of a preposition and its complement, a full noun phrase including an article, similar as in English. In Kiezdeutsch, however, we also find constructions like those in (11), where a bare NP makes up the local expression (italic expressions in square brackets indicate the elements that would usually be overt in German):
(11a) gehst du heute auch [zum] viktoriapark?  
go you today also [to.the] Viktoria park  
‘Will you also go to the Viktoria park today?’

(11b) ich bin [in der] schule.  
I am [in the] school.  
‘I am at school.’

(11c) morgen ich geh [zum] arbeitsamt. (= (4c) in 2.2.1 above)  
tomorrow I go [to.the] job centre  
‘Tomorrow, I will go to the job center.’

(11d) wollen wir nicht [in den] kiez gehen?  
want we not [into.the] ‘hood go  
‘Shall we not go to the ‘hood?’

This kind of construction is highly salient in the public perception of Kiezdeutsch, to the point that one now finds T-shirts with prints like “Ich geh Realschule”, “I go middle school”, that are worn as a sign of local pride in multiethnic neighbourhoods. In our data, it seems to be fairly common as well: in our Kiezdeutsch corpora, on average 11% of the local expressions were realised by bare NPs.

In the public discussion of Kiezdeutsch, this use of bare NPs is frequently quoted as evidence that Kiezdeutsch speakers do not master German properly, but only speak a ‘broken’ version of it. However, a closer look at spoken, informal German shows that we are not looking at an isolated phenomenon of Kiezdeutsch here. Rather, we find a very similar usage of bare NPs as local expressions in informal speech outside Kiezdeutsch as well, with the only difference that this usage seems to be restricted to a certain semantic field, namely to expressions for public transport stops.

We conducted a survey of this phenomenon, where adults in different areas of Berlin (notably including those with a low migrant population) were approached in the street and asked for directions to destinations that (a) were far enough away to make the use of public transportation necessary and (b) were located so that the correct route would include at least one subway or bus change. In 124 out of 200 answers, that is, in nearly two thirds of the cases, bare NPs referring to public transport stops were used as local expressions.15 (12) gives some examples (italic expressions in square brackets again indicate the expected overt elements):

(12a) da fahren Sie bis [zur] Friedrichstraße  
PART go you until [to.the] Friedrich street  
‘You have to go to Friedrichstraße, then.’

(12b) da müssen Sie [am] Jakob-Kaiser-Platz umsteigen  
PART must you [at.the] Jakob-Kaiser-Square change  
‘You have to change at Jakob-Kaiser-Square, then.’

(12c) nein, wir sind noch [am] Wannsee  
no we are still [at.the] Wann. lake  
‘No, we are still at Wannsee.’

Against this background, the Kiezdeutsch data does not so much point to ‘broken German’, but rather to a variant that makes use of the options that the grammatical system of German offers, options that are realised in other spoken

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15 Brauer et al. (2007).
variants as well, albeit in a more restricted way. What happens in Kiezdeutsch, then, can be regarded as an elaboration, a broader application of patterns we find in other spoken variants, rather than a random reduction of standard German grammar.

The following section supports this view by adding evidence for the development of a new kind of light verb construction (short: LVC) in Kiezdeutsch, which – unlike LVCs in standard German – is highly productive here. As I will show, its interpretation substantially relies on pragmatic support, a phenomenon that contributes to our view of Kiezdeutsch as a contact language in multiethnic and multilingual settings.

3.3. Pragmatically supported light verb constructions in Kiezdeutsch

Pragmatically supported light verb constructions are a second kind of context for bare NPs in Kiezdeutsch that points to grammatical innovation rather than reduction. In this section, I will first describe the phenomenon in Kiezdeutsch, then discuss the pattern of LVCs we commonly find in German as well as those emerging in different cases of language contact, and will then demonstrate how the constructions we find in Kiezdeutsch can be characterised as an instantiation of LVC patterns that makes productive use of the linguistic economy they offer.

3.3.1. Bare NPs in the context of bleached verbs

This second instance of bare NPs is illustrated by (13), a ritualised threat that is often quoted in public discussions of Kiezdeutsch, where it is regarded as evidence for a reduced grammatical command of German:

(13) ich mach dich Messer.
I make you ACC knife
‘I’ll knife you.’

Again, this occurrence of bare NPs deviates from standard German usage. And again, closer inspection reveals an interesting, systematic grammatical development, rather than random reduction. In this case, the relevant expression has to consider is not just the bare NP, but also involves the verb: what we find here is bare non-subject NPs that occur with high-frequency verbs like machen ‘to make/do’, haben ‘to have’, and sein ‘to be’, and these verbs do not retain their full lexical content in these constructions, but are semantically bleached.

Similar constructions with determinerless NPs and semantically bleached, generalised verbs have also been reported for the Swedish counterpart of Kiezdeutsch, Rinkoysvenska: (14) gives two examples taken from Kotsinas (1998:136); (15)–(17) illustrate the phenomenon in Kiezdeutsch: of these, (16c) and (17a), like (13), are ritualised threats, while the other examples are spontaneous creations.

(14a) min farbror gick militär.
my uncle went military
‘My uncle joined the military / became a soldier.’

(14b) göra sång
make song
‘sing’ (standard Swedish: sjunga)

(15) mačatu rote ampla.
make you ACC red traffic light
‘You are crossing at the red light.’

16 At present, it is not clear what the regional distribution of bare NPs referring to public transport stops is. While our study concentrated on informal language use in Berlin (as a point of reference for our Kiezdeutsch samples from Berlin), I would expect this to be a more widespread phenomenon in colloquial German, though.

17 The verb is lacking the infinitival suffix –er here (and, similarly, in (15)), which is common for 1so verb forms in spoken colloquial German (that is, it is common outside Kiezdeutsch as well).
(16a) hastu _ U-bahn? - nee, ich hab fahrrad
    have.youCL subway no I haveCL bike
    'Do you take the subway? No, I have a bike.'

(16b) dann ahm hamwa _ ziemlich lange auseinandersetzung gehabt
    then ahm have.2CL rather long conflict had
    'Then we had a rather long conflict.' (Cindark 2004:308)

(16c) hast du _ problem?
    have you problem
    'Do you have a problem?'

(17a) was guckstu _ bin ich kino?
    what look.youCL am I cinema
    'Why are you looking at me? Am I a movie?'

(17b) ich bin _ sonderschule.
    I am special.needs-school
    I go to a special-needs school.

(17c) wir sind jetzt _ neues thema.
    we are now new topic
    'We (have started / are at) a new topic now.'

As the examples illustrate, what we are seeing here is not just a case of bare, determinerless NPs. Rather, the morpho-syntactic reduction of the NP interacts with a semantic reduction of the verbs: the NPs appear in VPs with a semantically bleached head. For instance, *Ampel machen* 'to make traffic light' does not mean to create/make a traffic light here, but indicates an action that involves a traffic light. *U-Bahn haben* 'to have subway' does not refer to the possession of a subway, but to an event that involves a subway, and *Wir sind neues Thema* 'we are new topic' does not subsume the group identified by "we" under a new topic: they are not a new topic, but rather take part in an event that involves a new topic.

What is more, the NPs are closely connected with this bleached verbal head, on the syntactic as well as on the semantic level. The bare NP appears in penultimate position, that is, directly to the left of the head position in the VP, and as the examples show, NP and verb together establish a new argument structure that differs from the one we find when the verb occurs as a full lexical verb. For instance in (13), *Messer 'knife' and the head machen 'to make/do' together select the accusative object *dich 'you' and assign the role of patient to it. In contrast to this, in its occurrence as a full verb, *machen* by itself subcategorizes a dative as well as an accusative object and assigns two theta-roles, namely recipient and result, respectively. (18) illustrates this contrast:

(18a) Ich mach dich Messer.  *Messer machen*: DP\_ACC\_polarity\_.

(18b) Ich mach dir einen Schal.  *machen*: DP\_EX\_recipient\_ DP\_ACC\_result\_.
    (= I make you\_ACC\_ a scarf\_ACC\_; 'I make a scarf for you')

\(^{18}\) Note that German is V-final, that is, in its base position, the verb is in a final position, which would be directly behind the bare NPs in our sample sentences.
This change in argument structure is a typical feature of LVCs.\textsuperscript{19} And indeed, these Kiezdeutsch constructions show some close parallels to the LVCs we commonly find in German.\textsuperscript{20}

### 3.3.2. Light verb constructions in German

LVCs in German – or, as they are usually described in German grammar, “function verb constructions” (Funktionsverbe\textsuperscript{21}) – are characterised by a semantically bleached verb whose primary function is to indicate an aktionsart, and a morpho-syntactically reduced NP (or a preposition with an NP-complement) that provides the main lexical content. As (19) illustrates, we find cases where different light verbs can be combined with the same NP, leading to minimal pairs or triads that differ with respect to their aktionsart:

(19a) *Angst haben* : to be afraid (lit. ‘to have fear’) \(\Rightarrow\) durative/stative

(19b) *Angst bekommen* : to become afraid (lit. ‘to get fear’) \(\Rightarrow\) inchoative

(19c) *Angst machen* : to frighten (lit. ‘to make fear’) \(\Rightarrow\) causative

The NP typically shows characteristics of morpho-syntactic reduction like missing or invariant number marking and missing or invariant determiner. It is usually headed by an abstract and often deverbal noun, to the extent that the LVC can be in a paradigmatic relation to one with a simple verb (but might include a change in argument structure), as in *Angst machen* vs. *Angstigen* ‘to frighten’.

These LVCs have three main effects within the linguistic system. First, on the pragmatic level, the availability of different light verbs for the same NP allows a differentiation of event perspectives. Second, with respect to topological features, in V2-sentences with LVCs the element that provides the main lexical content, namely the NP in this case, stands in a final and therefore more salient position.

The third, and for us the interesting point, is true not only for German, but for LVCs in general: light verbs constitute analytical constructions where the NP does the bulk of the semantic work, while the verb is mainly responsible for the syntactic side. Accordingly, in a translation, say, from German to English, the combination of noun and verb in an LVC will often be replaced by a denominal verb, for instance English *to frighten* for standard German *Angst machen* (lit. “to make fear”, see (19c), or English *I’ll knife you* for Kiezdeutsch *Ich mach dich Messer* (see (13)).

In a division of labour that cuts across the syntax-semantics boundary, the NP in LVCs is reduced morpho-syntactically, but contributes the main conceptual meaning, while the verb is reduced semantically, but licenses the predication; it carries morpho-syntactic features like tense, mood, and/or aspect and supports the morpho-syntactic agreement with the subject (depending on what is required in the language in question). Table 1 summarises this pattern.

### 3.3.3. Linguistic economy: light verb constructions in language contact

This division of labour leads to linguistically economic constructions where the NP can be treated morpho-syntactically as a black box that is integrated into grammatical structures by the verb. This economy is further supported by the fact that light verbs typically come from a small class whose elements are highly frequent and hence have salient, and therefore more accessible inflection patterns.

This linguistic economy supports the emergence of LVCs in different kinds of language contact, and in particular in contexts where expressions from one language are integrated into the grammatical system of another language. LVCs bring about the economic grammatical integration of such expressions in diachronic language contact, e.g.

\textsuperscript{19} It is not important for our discussion whether we account for the argument structure of LVCs by an argument transfer from noun to light verb, or assume that verb and noun establish the argument structure together (cf. Grimshaw and Mester, 1988 vs. Butt, 1995; Butt and Guéde, 2001). The crucial point is that, unlike in its occurrence as a full lexical verb, the verb in a LVC does not establish the argument structure by itself, and does not select the subordinate nominal as a full object to which it assigns a 0-role. Collier and Juckerhoff (2005, ch. 6.3) account for this by a representation where the verb does not license an independent semantic representation, but rather is semantically unified with the nominal, such that verb and nominal form a complex predicate with a shared grammatical function tier.

\textsuperscript{20} Cf. Wiese (2006) for a detailed discussion of the Kiezdeutsch construction “Ich mach dich Messer” as an LVC.

\textsuperscript{21} The discussion of light verb or ‘function verb’ constructions has a long tradition in accounts of German grammar, cf. von Polenz (1963), Helbig (1979), Heidolph et al. (1981), and Zifkowsi et al. (1997).
Table 1
The division of labour in light verb constructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morpho-syntactic</th>
<th>Light verbs: Predication</th>
<th>NP's Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreeement</td>
<td>tense/mood/apect</td>
<td>very/much reduced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in the case of loan words, as well as in language contact on the level of individual speakers, for instance in code switching.

In the first case, LVCs allow a language to combine a non-native noun with a native verb that does all the morphosyntactic work, while the non-native noun itself does not need to be inflected at all. This economical technique of integrating loan words is common in two languages that are also found in the context of Kiezdeutsch, namely Turkish and Persian—a phenomenon that might further support the emulation and elaboration of the light verb pattern in Kiezdeutsch.22

In Turkish, the inchoative or causative light verbs emetek and yapmak ‘to do/make’ are combined with non-native nouns that are often of English (or Latin, etc. via English), French, or Arabic origin. (20) gives some examples:

(20a) kontrol emetek: to control (lit.: ‘to do control’)  
(20b) telefon emetek: to phone/to call (lit.: ‘to do telephone’)  
(20c) davet emetek: to invite (lit.: ‘to do invitation’)

Similar constructions can be found in Persian with inchoative or causative kardan ‘to make/do’, inchoative zadon ‘to hit’, and some other verbs, as illustrated in (21) and (22). Here, LVCs are often used to integrate the large number of Arabic-origin nouns that entered Persian, cf. (21a) and (22a). However, as (21b) and (22b) show, the LVC pattern is still active in modern Persian, where it can support the integration of non-native nouns of English origin.23

(21a) feir kardan: to think (lit.: ‘to do thought’)  
(21b) kl’k kardan: to click (with a computer mouse) (lit.: ‘to do click’)  
(22a) haqt zadon: to speak (lit.: ‘to hit letter’)  
(22b) email zadon: to email/to send an email (lit.: ‘to hit email’)  

In these cases, LVCs support the efficient morpho-syntactic integration of expressions that come from a different grammatical system where they might be subject to complex inflection patterns (as e.g. in the case of Arabic nouns). Not surprisingly, then, a comparable strategy can be found in contexts of individual language contact where expressions enter another grammatical system. An example is cases of code switching where single words are integrated into a sentence from another language.24 (23) illustrates this with an example where an English word is integrated into Hindi (Ritchie and Bhatia, 1998) and one where a Dutch word is integrated into a Turkish sentence:

Note, though, that given the multilingual status of Kiezdeutsch, this does not imply that we are dealing with primarily contact-induced change here. As a variety of German, Kiezdeutsch is integrated into the spectrum of German grammar, and as we have seen in the previous section, LVCs are part of this. The existence of LVCs in Turkish and Persian might further support their use in Kiezdeutsch, but is certainly not a central factor. The reason why I discuss these LVCs here is to show how the division of labour we find in LVCs supports their use in language contact (in this case, the integration of foreign material)

22 Cf. Amsrup et al. (2000) for evidence for kl’k kardan and email zadon.
23 Sometimes a change that affects only a single word is not regarded as code switching (cf. Grumper, 1992). For the present discussion, the relevant point is that an expression is integrated into another grammatical system, while we can leave aside the decision whether this phenomenon falls under the concept of code switching in a narrow sense.
(Boeschoten and Verhoeven, 1985, integrated words are printed in bold; for Dutch-Turkish code switching cf. also Backus, 1996:ch. 4 and 5):

(23a)furun kiken yapiyorlar\textit{(code switching Turkish/Dutch)}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{photo look do.pres.3pfl}
\end{itemize}

"They are showing photos / a photo."

(23b)merii patnii saari\textit{ choose karegi} (code switching Hindi/English)
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{my wife sari choose do.fut.3sg}
\end{itemize}

"My wife will choose a sari."

In these examples, the integrated expressions are verbs, rather than nouns.\textsuperscript{23} One might hence argue that what we see here are serial verbs, rather than LVCs. However, the parallels to LVCs are obvious: the head (the light verb in LVCs, the native verb in (23)) is fully inflected, but semantically bleached, while its immediate complement (the noun in LVCs, the non-native verb in (23)) contributes the main semantic content, but is treated as something like a black box morpho-syntactically and does not undergo inflection.

Hence, again, the grammatical integration of an expression from another linguistic system is realised by way of an analytical construction, where the native verb is responsible for morpho-syntactic features, but does not contribute much in the way of semantics, while the noun or the non-native verb provides the lexical meaning, but can avoid inflection. It is this division of labour that supports Kiezdeutsch constructions like the ones with machen ‘to do/make’, haben ‘to have’, and sein ‘to be’ in (13)–(17): we can regard the constructions with bare NPs and bleached verbs that we found in Kiezdeutsch as an economical means of grammatical integration that results from the emulation and elaboration of a pattern provided by LVCs.

3.3.4. The elaboration of the light verb pattern in Kiezdeutsch

Kiezdeutsch does not just comply with the light verb pattern found in German in general, but elaborates it: while LVCs are usually lexicalised in German, they are highly productive synchronically in Kiezdeutsch (this does not exclude instances of lexicalisation, of course, as shown by the ritualised threats in (13) and (17a)). This productive construction has the following characteristics:

1. Morpho-syntactic reduction of the NP: The NPs in these constructions are bare, with no determiners for overt gender and case marking.
2. Lexical and semantic reduction of the involved verbs: Verbs inflect fully, but come from a small class of very frequent elements and are semantically bleached.
3. Pragmatic support of the interpretation: Contextual information is usually crucial for the interpretation.

The first two features indicate the division of labour that is central for LVCs in general. The third feature, though, the necessary pragmatic support, is characteristic for light verbs in Kiezdeutsch only. Given the semantic bleaching of its verbal head, the meaning of LVCs can be underspecified to a degree that the interpretation cannot be derived by semantic composition alone, that is, the semantic contribution of the constituents is not sufficient to determine the meaning of the whole construction. This does not cause a problem where LVCs are lexicalised, which fixes their meaning. In Kiezdeutsch, however, this is not an option, since LVCs are highly productive. In lieu of lexicalisation, Kiezdeutsch therefore employs pragmatic support for its LVCs: the interpretation relies on information from the linguistic and non-linguistic context. An example from our list above where this is particularly pronounced, is (14a) which I repeat here for convenience:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{(14a) machet du rote empel.}
\item \textit{make NOM you NOM red traffic.light} ‘You are crossing at the red light.’
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{23} Cf. Backus (1996:p. 238), though, who calls the infinitive in a construction like (23b) a "verbal noun".
The meaning of this construction becomes clear from the situation in which it was uttered: two young men were standing on the sidewalk of a busy street at a traffic light, one started crossing the street while the light was still red, and the other shouted the sentence in (14a) (before following him through the traffic). Given this context, one can deduce that _rote Ampel machen_ 'to make red traffic light' here means 'to cross at a red light'.

Without any context, however, one would be hard pressed to arrive at this interpretation: the semantics of the constituents 'make' and 'red traffic light' certainly motivates the interpretation 'to cross at a red light', but it is not sufficient to determine it. In principle, it could support a number of other interpretations as well, e.g. 'to make a traffic light go red', 'to imitate a red traffic light', 'to climb up a traffic light while it is red'. As a light verb, _machen_ 'make' first and foremost specifies a certain aktionsart - or aktionsarten, in this case: inchoative or causative - and this alone is not enough to identify an event, given the information 'red traffic light' that is provided by the NP.

Usually, in German LVCs this kind of underspecification is less radical since the nouns in these constructions are mostly deverbal and therefore relate to a verbal predicate, which supports the identification of an event; only a small minority of LVCs involve concrete nouns. But this is exactly what makes Kiezdeutsch LVCs so interesting: they systematically and productively involve concrete nouns, and these concrete nouns identify players in an event, rather than an action (or state, etc.) as supported by verbal predicates.

We can account for the derivation of interpretations in Kiezdeutsch LVCs by a semantic representation for the light verb that specifies an aktionsart (or aktionsarten), but apart from that provides only a general semantic frame that integrates the nominal's semantic representation into an event structure. (24) sketches this:

\[
\lambda x \left[ \lambda u (a \text{ INST} (F(x) ; CR(x,e)) ) \right]
\]

\[
\text{[N]}
\]

\[
\text{Inchoative/causative: machen} \quad \text{'to make'}
\]

\[
\text{Durative: haben, sein} \quad \text{'to have', 'to be'}
\]

In this representation, \(x\) identifies the nominal's semantic contribution, \(a\) indicates the argument structure of the central predicate \(F\); \(e\) is a variable over events, \(\text{INST}\) is an instantiation function that maps a proposition onto an event, and the colon stands for an asymmetric connector 'such that' that indicates that the left constituent is restricted by the right one (cf. Bierwisch, 1988). \(CR\) is a two-place predicate 'central role' between an event and a central player in this event: 'CR(x,e)' reads 'The entity \(x\) plays a central role in the event \(e\).'</n>

The predicate \(F\) is marked as inchoative or causative in the case of _machen_ 'to make', and as durative in the case of _haben_ 'to have' and _sein_ 'to be'. \(F\) is further specified by the nominal contribution \(x\) and the corresponding argument structure \(a\).\(^{26}\) This, however, is not sufficient to determine the interpretation. In order to accomplish this, the construction needs pragmatic support. Drawing on information from the linguistic and non-linguistic context, the predicates \(F\) for the LVCs in our examples from above can then be specified as follows:

(13a') _Messer machen_: affect (inch/caus) ('to knife'; lit.: 'to make/do knife')
(14a') _rote Ampel machen_: move (inch) ('to cross at a red light'; lit.: 'to make/do red light')
(16') _U-Bahn / Fahrrad haben_: disposal (dur) ('to take the subway/have a bike'; lit.: 'to have subway/bike')
(17a') _Kino sein_: subsumption (dur) ('to be a movie'; lit.: 'to be cinema')
(17b') _Sonderschule sein_: affiliation (dur) ('to go to a special-needs school'; lit.: 'to be special-needs school')
(17c') _neues Thema sein_: association (dur) ('to have started / be at a new topic'; lit.: 'to be new topic')

As these examples illustrate, the contribution of contextual information for a radically underspecified semantic representation makes it possible for Kiezdeutsch to use the light verb pattern that is available in German (as well as in

\(^{26}\) This can be regarded as an instance of semantic co-occurrence in the sense of Pustejovsky (1995).
Turkish and Persian) for a productive new construction. Hence, again we find in Kiezdeutsch not just the lack of something, in this case, say, the lack of determiners in the NPs involved here, but evidence for grammatical innovation: an elaboration of an existing pattern that renders it synchronically productive.

The following section adds to this picture with evidence for novel constructions in Kiezdeutsch that draw on new particles that fulfill grammatical-pragmatic functions.

3.4. New particles in Kiezdeutsch

Two examples for new, emerging particles in Kiezdeutsch are musst and lasstma, two elements that go back to complex expressions, parts of phrases frozen into single uninfluenced expressions. Both musst and lasstma stand in sentence-initial position and are combined with infinitive constructions. Their pragmatic function is to introduce directives: musst is speaker-exclusive and indicates a suggestion to the hearer ("You should do p."/"You have to do p in order to achieve your goal."); while lasstma is speaker-inclusive and introduces a proposal for an action performed by speaker and hearer(s) ("Let us do p."). This semantic-pragmatic contribution and their distribution with infinitive constructions, related to features of the expressions these particles are derived from: musst goes back to musst du 'must you', while lasstma is related to lasst uns mal 'let us mp', where mp indicates the modal particle mal that contributes politeness features by reducing the request's force.

Let us have a closer look at the two particles and their relation to comparable constructions in other German variants in turn. (25) gives some examples for constructions with musst:

(25a) musst du doppelstunde fahren.
MUSTU double-hour drive

'You should take a double lesson (at driving school).'

(25b) musst du lampe reinmachen.
MUSTU lamp in-purclean

'You have to put a lamp in.'

(25c) musst du mit dein fuß. musst so machen.
do with your foot MUSTU this-way do

'Do it with your foot. You have to do it this way.'

Reflecting its derivation from a modal verb and its pronominal subject, musst is combined with infinitive constructions, that is, constructions consisting of a verbal head and its complements and modifiers, e.g. direct objects like Doppelstunde or Lampe in (25a) and (25b), or adverbials like so in (25c). As is the rule in German, complements and modifiers precede the infinitive verb (VP is right-headed in German), and the verb is marked as an infinitive by suffixation with -en, as in fahr-en, reinmachen-en, and mach-en in our examples. Like its English counterpart must, the German modal verb müssen (with must as the 2nd form) is a raising verb, which accounts for the effect that there is no overt subject in this infinitive construction.

The development of musst as a particle in these constructions draws on two features that prima facie deviate from German grammar: (1) the merging of the inflected verb's (musst) and its pronominal subject (du) and (2) the sentence-initial position of the verb (musst), suggesting a V1 pattern, rather than the expected V2 pattern as a basis; cf. (25a'), the standard German V2 counterpart of (25a):

(25a') Du musst eine Doppelstunde fahren.
you must a double-hour drive

(V2 in standard German)

However, in spoken colloquial German, one finds in addition to the main V2 pattern also some V1 constructions in declarative sentences. These V1 constructions are often the result of 'zero topics' or front field ellipsis, that is, the ellipsis of phrases, in particular pronominal objects, in the sentence-initial topic position (cf. Fries, 1988; Cardinaletti, 1990). Given the V2 pattern of German, the full, non-elliptical counterpart would be OVS, leading to an order V–S for
the elliptical construction, cf. (26). This ordering can also account for the elisionisation of the pronoun: if a pronominal subject follows its verb (e.g. in full declaratives with a non-subject in the front field, or in yes/no-questions), it tends to be elisionised in spoken, colloquial German. 27

what is with the the wine [de] must you still fetch_boy.
German)

‘How about the wine?’ – ‘You still have to get it.’

In addition, V1 declaratives can also be non-elliptical, providing further support for a V–S order as the basis for mussst. In colloquial spoken language, we find V1 declaratives with a sentence-initial verb followed by a criticised pronominal subject, where no obligatory constituent is missing, cf. (27): 28

(27) hammer was andres ausgemacht. (Auer 1993)
Have-wag what/something different arranged (V1 in spoken German)
‘We arranged something different.

Judging from the evidence available so far, the occurrence of V1 declaratives is quite common in Kiezdeutsch. Dirim and Auer (2004:207) mention V1 declaratives as a characteristic feature, and in our corpora, on average 18% of the declaratives are V1, and a quarter of them are non-elliptical, cf. the examples in (28):

(28a) hastu keinen penis.
Have-you no penis
‘You do not have a penis.’

(28b) gibt’s kein platz, bleib mal draußen.
Gives-it no place stay MP outside
‘There is no space. Stay outside.’ 29

(28c) schießt auf den tor.
shoot-you on the goal
‘You shoot at the goal.’

In spoken German, V1 constructions like (27) support text coherence and have V2 counterparts with sentence-initial adverbs like da ‘there’ or dann ‘then’ preceding the verb, as illustrated by the context for (27) (as given in Auer, 1993:213), and its V2 counterpart in (27'):

(27) meistens auf der fahrt zu irgendwie ham paar angerufen,
hammer was andres ausgemacht.
‘More often than not, on the journey somehow someone called,
and then we arranged something else.’

(27') Dann hammer was andres ausgemacht.
then have-wag what/something different arranged
‘Then we arranged something different.’

This suggests that such V1 constructions might go back to sentences with regular V2 patterns where a sentence-initial adverb is deleted. However, note that these adverbs do not form obligatory constituents; the relation to V2 sentences hence does not force an interpretation of the V1 constructions as elliptical. What is more, there is one type of

27 See Abraham (1995) on elisionisation of pronominal subjects in Wackernagel position in German.
29 The construction ‘Es gibt x.’ (lit. ‘It gives x.’, where x is a direct object) is the German counterpart for English ‘There is x.’.
V1 declarative, which is common in colloquial spoken German and can be found in different dialects, is clearly non-elliptical; it frequently occurs as the first utterance in a conversation and hence does not suggest sentence-initial adverbs that support text coherence. It is in this type of V1 declarative that we find the kind of properties that would support the development of an element like *musst* as a particle.

As Simon (1998) showed, this V1 declarative construction has the following characteristics: (1) the verb is a modal verb, (2) the subject is a pronoun or clitic on the verb, (3) the subject is a pronoun or clitic on the verb, (4) the subject is a pronoun or clitic on the verb, (5) this direct object has usually some kind of a calming/placating status, something that is underlined by the occurrence of modal particles that reduce the force of the statement. (29a) gives examples from Bavarian (29a); from Simon, 1998) and spoken (standard) German (29b); from Lehmann, 1991); *fei* and *halt* are modal particles that contribute to the calming/placating status of these directives.

(29a) **musst** fei net traurig sai. / kinnans fei no sitzbleib.  
**must-you-INF** MP not sad **can-you-INF** MP still seated-remain

‘Don’t be sad. / You do not have to worry.’ / ‘You can remain seated some more.’

(29b) **musst** halt noch mal hingehlen.  
**must-you-INF** MP (once)-again there-go

‘You will just have to go there again.’

Constructions with *musst* in Kiezdeutsch comply with the first four features listed above, but not with the restriction formulated in the fifth point; while they do occur in directives, these directives seem not to be restricted to the calming/placating subtype, and accordingly, we do not find a prevalence of modal particles comparable to *fei* and *halt* above. This suggests that the development of *musst* in Kiezdeutsch is not directly influenced by the construction illustrated in (29), but based on reinterpretation and generalisation, that is, on the elaboration of a pattern found in German in general: Spoken German follows the pattern of sentence-initial modal verbs like *musst* ‘must’ with cliticised pronouns of address like -u (from du ‘you’), leading to a form *musst* in directive utterances of a calming/placating kind. A reinterpretation of this ‘verb + clitic’ construction as a single, uninflected element yields the particle *musst* in Kiezdeutsch, which is then generalised to directives without the restriction to the calming/placating subtype.

If this analysis of *musst* as a particle is correct, then one would expect that, as a result of the reinterpretation, the expression would lose the number feature that the initially cliticised pronoun provided (du ‘you’ is a second person singular pronoun), and hence that constructions with *musst* could be used not only to one hearer, but towards groups of hearers as well. And this is in fact what seems to happen: in our data, we found also cases where the addressee of *musst* was a group. (30a) gives an example: this utterance was used in the context of a conversation that took place in the bus; the speaker addressed a group of three whom he advised to get off the bus through the back doors:

(30a) **musst** hinten aussteigen.  
**musst** in.the.back get.out

‘You have to get out at the back.’

This usage hence points to a reinterpretation of the modal verb and its subject as a particle. Given this reinterpretation, the resulting construction as a whole then lacks a finite verb and an overt subject; it consists of the particle *musst* followed by a non-finite phrase, that is, a phrase that is headed by an infinitive verb and accordingly does not contain a subject. This, however, does not make these constructions grammatical outliers in German. Rather, this Kiezdeutsch construction fits well into the general pattern for German directives, which is dominated by non-finite verb constructions: projections of infinitive verbs without subjects are commonly used for commands. (31) gives two examples (in addition, comparable constructions are possible with a perfect participle, which yields another non-finite option):

(31) **Infinitive constructions in directive speech acts:**

Bei Gefahr Schiebe einschlagen. / Nicht auf die Straße laufen!  
**at danger** break **at danger** break  
‘In case of emergency, break the glass.’ / ‘Do not run into the street!’
This kind of construction provides a syntactic pattern for sentences in directive utterances that further supports the development of *muss-tu* constructions in Kiezdeutsch: when *muss-tu* takes on the function of a particle, it introduces sentences that closely resemble those in (31): they do not have an overt subject, and their lexical head is an infinitive verb preceded by its complements and modifiers.

The usage of *muss-tu* as a particle is hence not just a sign of grammatical reduction in this multiethnolect. Rather, it is an innovation that makes a lot of sense from the point of view of the grammatical system: it fits into an existing pattern of infinitives in directive speech acts in German. By employing a sentence-initial particle as a marker of this speech act, the *muss-tu* construction elaborates this pattern. This elaboration can then serve as the starting point of a new subsystem, and this is what makes the emergence of *lass-ta* interesting, the other directive particle mentioned at the beginning of this section.

As described above, *lass-ta* can be regarded as an inclusive counterpart of *muss-tu*: whereas *muss-tu* introduces suggestions to the hearer(s), *lass-ta* introduces propositions for actions performed by the speaker as well as the hearer(s). Like *muss-tu*, the particle *lass-ta* stands in a sentence-initial position and is followed by an infinitive construction without an overt subject, cf. (32):

(32a) **lass-ta Moritzplatz aussteigen.**

LASS-ta Moritz-square get.out

'Let us get out at Moritzplatz [= a subway stop in Berlin-Kreuzberg].'

(32b) **sie sagt: "lass-ta treffen."**

she says LASS-ta meet

'She said: "Let us meet."

This form fits very well into the new subsystem established by *muss-tu*, following its pattern of 'particle + infinitive verb phrase' in directive speech acts. At the same time, its development in Kiezdeutsch has some interesting new characteristics. As mentioned above, *lass-ta* is derived from a verbal stem *lass* 'let', as used in VI imperatives, together with a modal particle *mal* that contributes to politeness features by weakening a request; in colloquial spoken language, *mal* can lose its coda and is reduced to *m-

However, usually, a serialisation of the form of *lass* - *mal(l*) appears only in proposals intended for the hearer (excluding the speaker), while speaker-inclusive requests would involve a pronominal object *uns* 'us', just as in English ('Let us...'). Unlike lexical NPs, this pronoun will stand between the sentence-initial verb *lass* and the modal particle *mal*, as illustrated in (32a') (where the 1st pronominal object *uns* precedes *mal*) vs. (32a'') (where the pronominal object likewise precedes *mal*, but the lexical NP object follows *mal*):

(32a') **Lass uns mal aussteigen.**

let us MP get.out

'Let us get out.'

(32a'') **Lass sie mal aussteigen.**

Lass MP die Frau get.out

'Let her get out.'

In Kiezdeutch, however, we find that pronouns can often be dropped, as illustrated in (7). This suggests that the basis for the emergence of *lass-ta* as a particle are reduced constructions of the kind 'Lass ma(l) p' in Kiezdeutsch (where *p* is the projection of an infinitive verb). From this perspective, the development of *lass-ta* goes one step further than that of *muss-tu*: it builds on a construction that is not found in the spoken standard variety, but is by itself already characteristic of Kiezdeutch. By doing so, it ultimately contributes to a new subsystem for directives that also includes *muss-tu*: a subsystem characterised, so far, by directive particles that not only fulfil a similar pragmatic function, but also share salient metrical/phonological features — both are bisyllabic, trochaic expressions — as well as syntactic ones — they appear in sentence-initial position preceding an infinitive verb construction. This suggests that what we see here is not just the emergence of new lexical elements, in this case particles, but at the same time leads to the emergence of new syntactically complex constructions.
The deviations from standard German that can be observed in Kiezdeutsch hence do not result from a simplification that leads to mere grammatical reduction, but rather they suggest a systematic development, an interaction of grammar and pragmatics that can lead to the emergence of new grammatical forms. The characteristics of this interaction reflect the status of Kiezdeutsch as a variety that emerges in multiethnic and multilingual contexts: morpho-syntactic reduction in combination with pragmatic support as we saw it in Kiezdeutsch LVCs, together with the rise of particles, points to systematic features of contact languages.

4. Conclusions

In this paper, I have discussed new linguistic practices that emerged among adolescents in multiethnic areas of European cities over the last decades. Instances of these multiethnolects have been reported in e.g. from Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany. Two main linguistic characteristics have been described for them: (1) lexical and phonological/phonetic transfers from migrant languages, and (2) grammatical reductions on the morphological and syntactic level. Focusing on the second aspect, the aim of this paper was to show that from a grammatical point of view, reductions are only part of the story: morpho-syntactic reductions go hand-in-hand with productive elaborations of grammatical structures that indicate the linguistic productivity, the innovative grammatical power of these multiethnolects.

Using Kiezdeutsch from Germany as an example, I showed that a closer look at the grammatical system of such a multiethnolect reveals not just deficits or simplifications in comparison with the country's majority language – e.g. a lack of morpho-syntactic feature marking – but rather a range of grammatical innovations. I presented evidence for such innovations on the level of individual elements, where we saw the rise of new particles that fulfill grammatical-pragmatic functions, as well as on the level of syntactically complex constructions, where we saw the emergence of a new kind of directive that is instigated by such particles, the extended use of nominal local expressions, and a new kind of pragmatically supported light verb constructions.

Such developments support a view of multiethnolects not as merely reduced, simplified forms of standard varieties, but rather as emerging varieties that form productive grammatical systems by themselves. At the same time, they involve patterns of grammatical economy that are typical for contact languages: phenomena like the development of particles with a grammatical-pragmatic function, the productivity of constructions with bare, determinerless NPs, and the reliance on pragmatic support indicate that the emergence of new forms interacts with morpho-syntactic reductions, as is also known from the development of creoles. Taken together, this suggests that in multiethnolects like Kiezdeutsch we see the rise of a new kind of contact languages originating in European youth cultures.

Taking this train of thought one step further, should we expect the emergence of new urban dialects in the future that draw on these multiethnic linguistic practices? This would mean that the new linguistic phenomena that emerged here would have to lose their reliance on pragmatic support (in those cases where it is otherwise crucial, e.g. Kiezdeutsch LVCs) and enter local varieties. Ethnolect-based urban dialects have been described for instance for New York State, where the local dialect was influenced by the ethnolects of German and Polish immigrants (cf. Wölck, 2002). This had effects on the phonetic/phonological level (e.g. in the so-called 'Buffalo Vowel Shuffle', cf. Pagliuca and Mowrey, 1979), but also on the level of verbal tense/aspect features, as illustrated by the use of the perfect in the utterance cited in (33):

(33) "I have lived in New York five years, now my home is Buffalo." (Wölck 2002:161)

Is this a possible development for Kiezdeutsch and its European counterparts? Could they have a similar impact on the majority language as the German and Polish ethnolects that led to the urban dialect in New York State? An important feature that distinguishes the varieties we discussed here from those ethnolects is the fact that Kiezdeutsch and its counterparts are youth languages, they are linguistic practices related to youth culture. They might be recognised by adults and might to some degree be familiar to them, but, at least at present, they seem not to be spoken by adults, which curtails their possible influence on a general dialect. In favour of such an influence, however, is the widespread knowledge of these varieties and in particular the fact that they are not confined to children (and

If we think of creolisation in connection with Kiezdeutsch, the parallels are in particular to 'abrupt creoles' or creoloids, given that Kiezdeutsch is not acquired as a first language (cf. for instance Mühlhäusler, 1986; Thomason, 2001 on creolisation of this kind, which differs from pidgins in leading to a more stable and standardised grammatical system).
grandchildren) of immigrants. As pointed out in section 1, in particular in neighbourhoods with a large migrant population, these varieties are used — in their non-stylised form — by adolescents from migrant and non-migrant backgrounds alike. As these speakers grow up, traces of these multilingual youth languages and their grammatical innovations might be preserved in their local dialects.

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Appendix A. Abbreviations/Glosses

The following abbreviations are used for glosses in this paper: comm, common gender; neut, neuter; masc, masculine; fem, feminine; sg, singular; pl, plural; 1/2/3, 1st/2nd/3rd person; r, respect; nom, nominative; acc, accusative; dat, dative; cl, clitic; mp, modal particle; demo, demonstrative; int, infinitive; pres, present; fut, future.

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