



“ich mag so wasserpfeifeladen”*

The interaction of grammar and information structure in Kiezdeutsch

*I like so_{particle} shisha shop

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Hypothesis:

novel usages of „so“ in Kiezdeutsch:

taking over functions of
determiners

► grammar

strategy to mark focus

► information structure

Outline

1. What is “Kiezdeutsch”?
2. [*so* XP] in Kiezdeutsch:
 1. the phenomenon
 2. unsatisfactory explanations
 - comparison particle
 - intensity marker
 - hedging
 - type-token article
3. Our proposition: [*so* XP] is a new strategy to mark focus



- Distribution: urban areas with a large migrant population (Berlin: Neukölln, Kreuzberg, Wedding)
- multiethnolect
- used also by speakers without migration background
- Status:
 - youth language (Androutsopoulos 2005, Kotsinas 1992, Kallmeyer 2001)
 - contact language (Clyne 2000, Löffler 2005)





► “Kiezdeutsch” ► the phenomenon ► unsatisfactory approaches ► new strategy: focus ► Conclusion



Characteristics of Kiezdeutsch, found also in similar varieties in Europe:

New lexical items:

Welke **sma?**
which girl

[Straattaal]

Omission of inflections and auxiliary verbs:

Ja **skriva** kontratt
I [have] sign[ed] [a] contract

[Rinkebysvenska]

Adv-SVO word order (instead of V2):

normalt man **går** på ungdomsskolen
normally you attend the youth.club

[C. multiethnolect]

(cf. Nortier 2006, Kotsinas 2001, Quist 2005,)



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Se: (hm) ja

[hm] yes

Ay: und DU

and YOU

Se: du **ich bring decke pommes**

you I bring blanket fries

Ay: JA=immer bring isch was immer ja:

YES=always bring I something always PART

Se: du brings pappsachen also **tellabella**

you bring paper.ware that.is plates.bates

Tu: isch wohne hier isch hab keine lust bis(dof)hinzugehn

I live here I have no ???? until.there.go

Se: hallo **lass dann da treffen** wenn wir gehen=wa

hello let then there meet when we go PART

Tu: ubahn ubann

subway subway

Ay: okeh: lass dann hier irgendwo treffen

okay let then here somewhere meet

Se: **lass hier irgendwo treffen** dann gehen wir zusammen dahin

let here somewhere meet then go we together there

?: okeh

okay

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Kiezdeutsch:



new constructions, based on

- grammatical reduction
- expanding patterns

from standard or colloquial varieties of German!

(cf. Wiese 2006)

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Examples (1) – (4) for [so NP]:

(1) ich mag **so** wasserpfeifeladen
I like so_{such??} shisha-shop

(2) da gibts **so** billard-raum
there is so_{such?} snooker.room

(3) ich bin mehr **so** naturtyp für natur dorf
I am more so_{???} nature.type for nature village

(4) da gibts **so** Hermannstraße und Wittenau
there is so_{???} Hermannstraße and Wittenau





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so = comparison particle?

- ▶ **first case:** ‘Prototypical’ function of *so*, like in standard German (cf. Thurmair 2001)

(5) für mich is ja nich **so** schlimm wie für sie
for me is PART not as bad as for her



- ▶ **second case:** no comparison context!

(2) da gibts **so** billard-raum
there is so snooker.room





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so = intensity marker?

- ▶ **first case:** As in standard/colloquial German (cf. Auer 2007)

(6) ich hab halt nich **so** große erfahrung damit
I have PART not so_{that} big experience with.it ✓

- ▶ **second case:** *so* cannot get the main accent!

(3) ich bin mehr **so** naturtyp für natur dorf
I am more so nature.type for nature village ✗



so = hedging strategy?

(cf. Androutsopoulos 1998)

► **first case:** As in colloquial German:

(7) also ich steh auf nich auf rappen un **so**
well I like [prep] not [prep] rapping and so



► **second case:** the nouns following *so* cannot get a “fuzzy” interpretation

(4) da gibts **so** Hermannstraße und Wittenau
there is so Hermannstraße and Wittenau





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A type-token article?

(cf. Hole/Klumpp 2000, Weinreich 1993)

▶ **first case:** like in colloquial German:

(8) der hat **son** lied über ausländer geschrieben
he has so_{such.a} song about foreigners written



▶ **second case:** no inflection, no stress

(1) ich mag **so** ∅ wasserpfeifeladen
I like so shisha-shop





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To summarize:

previous explanations alone are unsatisfactory
for examples (1)-(4)!

Our proposition:

**[so XP] is a new grammatical pattern to
mark focus in Kiezdeutsch!**

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Definition of focus (Krifka 2006:6):

“Focus indicates the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of linguistic expressions.”

Strategies in German to mark focus

A: was ist deine muttersprache?
what is your native.language?

Word order:

B: meine muttersprache ist [arabisch] **FOCUS**
my native.language is arabic

Stress + word order:

B: meine muttersprache ist [arAbisch] **FOCUS**

Focus sensitive particles + word order:

B: meine muttersprache ist [nur arabisch] **FOCUS**
my native.language is only arabic

Other languages: “focus-only” particles

- *like* in colloquial North American English

(cf. Meehan 1991)

She’s **like** really pregnant.

- *bara/ba’* in Swedish youth language?

(cf. Erman & Kotsinas 1994)

Du e **ba’** språkforskare

You are only a.linguist’

[so XP] = focus particle?

(1) ich mag **so** wasserpfeifeladen



I like so_{FOC} shisha-shop

(2) da gibts **so** billard-raum



there is so_{FOC} snooker.room

(3) ich bin mehr **so** naturtyp für natur dorf



I am more so_{FOC} nature.type for nature village

(4) da gibts **so** Hermannstraße und Wittenau



there is so_{FOC} Hermannstraße and Wittenau

- [so PP]

ich höre alpha gun

I listen.to alpha gun

weil er [**so** aus schöneberg]_{PP} kommt.

because he so from schöneberg comes

- [so AP]

die hübschesten fraun kommn von den schweden

the prettiest women come from the swedes

also ich mein [**so** blond **so**]_{ADJ}

well I mean so blonde so

[so XP] as a “focus-only” particle in Kiezdeutsch:

A. also ist die muttersprache für dich
so is the native.language for you --

B. **arabisch** wobei ich sie ja selber nich perfekt kann
arabic although I it_{ACC PART} myself not perfectly can.speak

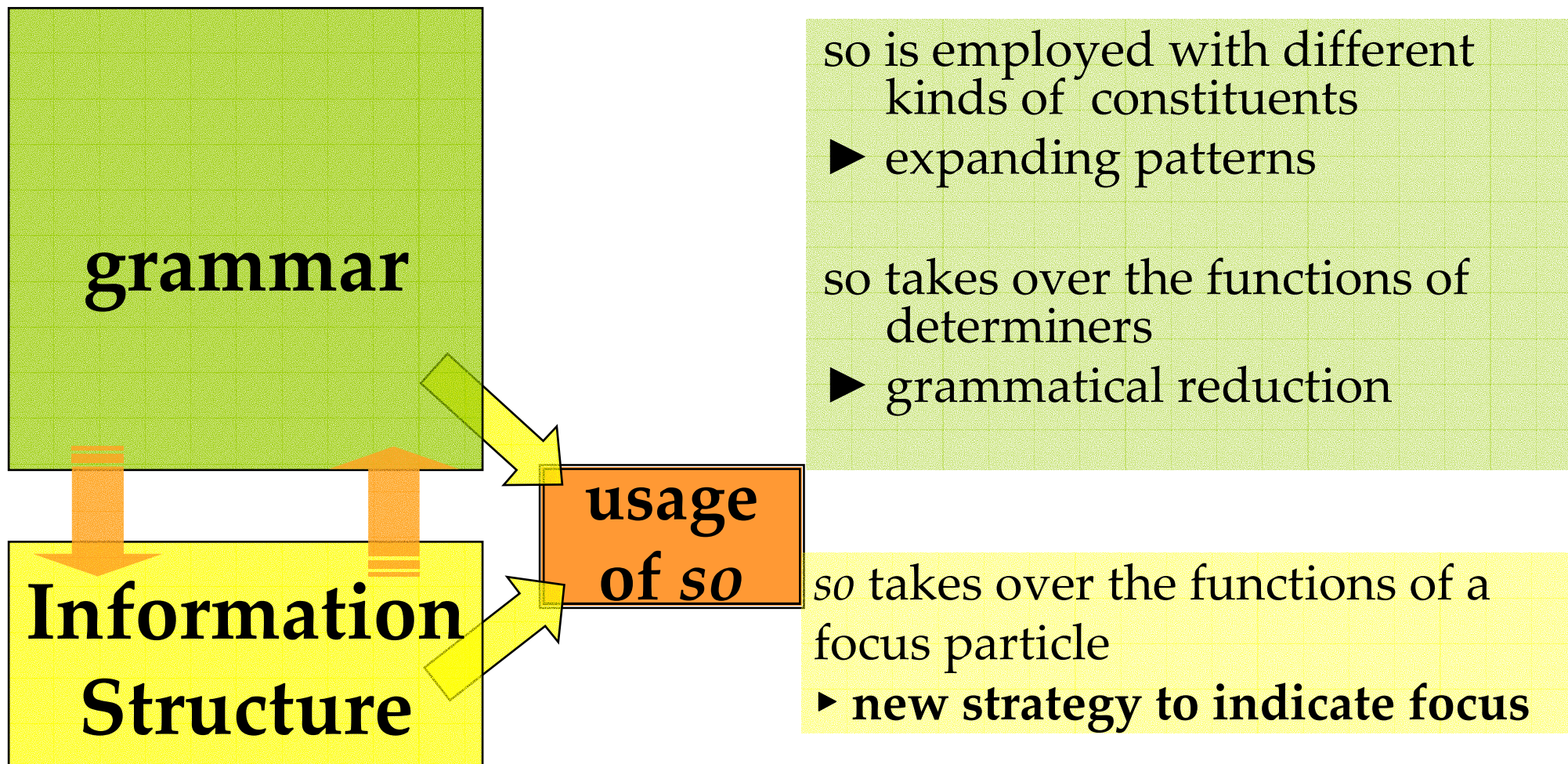
isch mein weil isch bin ja hier geboren
I mean because I am_{PART} here born

isch hab ja mehr **so deutsch so**
I have_{PART} more so german so

zu hause red isch mehr deutsch als arabisch
at home speak I more german than arabic

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Conclusion:



More data needed: SFB 632, Potsdam University



www.kiezdeutsch.de

handout & slides:

www.kiezdeutsch.de/jugendsprache2008

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