
Reported Speech Techniques in the Language Use of Non-Native Speakers of German

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This paper examines how non-native speakers of German report on past events and how their techniques are different from those of native speakers. In particular, I would like to show how non-natives can not only repeat what was said previously, but also perform it at the same time, that is, produce a so-called enactment¹. There have been studies in the past analyzing the enactment phenomenon used by native speakers of German (Vlatten; Golato), but no investigation has been carried out into the corresponding techniques used by non-natives. Examining this aspect of reported speech can be fruitful, because it may enable us to detect certain stages of pragmatic development and interlanguage phenomena with non-native speakers. These speakers, just like natives, have the aspiration to use apparent strategies when quoting formerly uttered speech, but may not apply the same techniques as native speakers. Being learners of German as a foreign language, they are familiar with the rules and possibilities used to render reported speech in German, and they are likely to be aware of the fact that there are other, probably even more expressive methods as well, which are put to use in everyday conversation, but not taught explicitly in language classes. The question is thus what techniques they tend to rely on to express themselves as clearly as possible, and how these techniques stand in comparison with those used by native speakers.

Non-native speakers' reporting techniques include some innovations that they may apply when enacting direct discourse through performance. Such a performance usually has an enhanced dramatic effect compared to indirect discourse. However, native and non-native speakers may use different methods to create this effect.

Direct Discourse in General and the Enactment Phenomenon in German

An essential part of conversation is reported speech or reported discourse, where several possibilities are available for quoting something that was said before. Coulmas notes that “we produce a word or words

of the same type as the ones uttered by the quoted speaker" (12).² Thus, by "reported speech" I refer to methods speakers use when quoting or retelling something that was said previously by themselves or other speakers. The basic types of reported discourse are direct and indirect speech (Kammerzell & Peust 291-93). Based on which type the speaker decides to choose, different pragmatic concerns come to play an important role and this results in different grammar forms, intonation patterns, hearer reactions, etc. However, no matter how different the means are, reported discourse seems to be a universal phenomenon in languages of the world.³

Direct speech, since very often preferred to indirect speech in most languages, is said to be more expressive. It "requires the reporter-speaker to act out the role of the reported speaker" and so it is "the most common mode of expression at the peak of oral narrative" (Li 40). It is a strategy less complex than indirect speech, since it "involves reproducing or mimicking the speech of the reported speaker, whereas indirect speech involves rephrasing or paraphrasing" (Li 40). Obviously, mimicking is simpler than paraphrasing, being an innate ability in all human beings and available "from the onset of first language acquisition" (Li 40), hence its frequent occurrence in most languages for interactional purposes. Furthermore, direct speech is more suitable to evoke the reported speech situation, because no changes in deixis need to be made; the words (and possibly the gestures) of the quoted speaker are supposed to be exactly the ones originally uttered. In indirect speech, however, the current speech situation is decisive, and the quote is looked upon from the reporter's point of view. Indirect speech "shows (any) adaptations of deictic and pragmatic elements to the embedding context," while direct speech does not (Kammerzell & Peust 293). Reported speech (direct as well as indirect) is usually introduced by a quotative. A quotative, by definition, is "the term we use to refer to any verb or expression which introduces any reported speech, either direct speech or inner monologue" (Blyth, Recktenwald & Wang 225). Verbs of saying are the most common quotatives (e.g. "he said," she claimed" etc.).

Golato (Vlatten) has done extensive research on the role of reported discourse and self-quotations in German. Her work has led to discoveries formerly not described. She examines the forms and functions of reported discourse in German conversations and claims that it is more than just a grammatical topic: it is an interactional and social phenomenon ("Quotatives" 47; "Self-quotation" 49). She quotes Schegloff, Ochs and Thompson, who stated that "grammar is inherently interactional" (Schegloff & al. 38). Golato shows how "social interaction

can organize grammar” and how this may lead to linguistic innovations (“Grammar” 51). Such an innovation is the relatively new German quotative “und ich so/und er so,” which corresponds to American English “and I’m like/and he’s like” (“Und ich so”; “Self-quotation” 40-41) and is used to turn the quotation into a performance or enactment (“Quotatives” 52; “Grammar” 40). Besides this performative quotative, Golato also examines cases of providing information to which the participants of the conversation do not have direct access (“Grammar” 31), rendering the speaker’s own past decisions by way of self-quotations (“Grammar” 43) and demonstrating a statement of the speaker through claim-backing (Grammar 47). She concludes that particular forms are used for these particular interactional functions (“Self-quotation” 49), among which the most commonly accepted form of indirect speech in German, the subjunctive I (Konjunktiv I), is not prevalent (“Grammar” 30). Much more widespread are: the subjunctive II (Konjunktiv II) in reported discourse in answer to information elicitation (“Grammar” 32-39) (even though subjunctive II is the typical mood for hypothetical sentences, not for reported speech); “und ich so/und er so” for enactments; hypothetical speech or summoning witnesses for claim-backing (“Grammar” 47-49); and using the German present perfect tense with the quotative while using the present tense for the actual quote itself for rendering past decisions.

Golato claims that “und ich so” and “und er so” occur in storytelling situations “to convey the punch line or materials contributing to the climax of the story” and that they seem to “mark for the recipients of the story when important and noteworthy events are to follow” (“Quotatives” 52). To draw attention to these punchlines, speakers make use of the enactment. Golato points out the dominance of the “ich” and “er” forms in German, referring to the prevalent occurrence of the masculine gender with the third person, but not the feminine (“Und ich so” 42), which nevertheless does not mean that these forms should be excluded. She also found that while “and I’m like/and he’s like” *can* introduce an enactment, “und ich so/und er so” *always* introduces such an enactment (“Quotatives” 111). It also has a particular format: quotative+pause+quotation+unquote,⁴ followed by appreciation or interpretation on the hearer’s behalf (“Und ich so” 40).

The aim of this study is to see whether non-native speakers tend to apply the same or similar methods for quotations: Is their use of the subjunctive limited or more extensive? If they do use it, which one occurs more: Subjunctive I or II? Do they use “und ich so/und er so”? If they do, does it have the same format as with native speakers? If not,

what other methods do they come up with to make their quotations more dramatic? How common is the enactment phenomenon and how is it introduced? When the non-natives report on past decisions or other outstanding past events, do they also introduce it by using the quotative in the present perfect, or are they inclined to vary it with other tenses, first of all with the simple past?

My pre-study assumptions, based on experiences about the language use of higher level non-native speakers of German, had been the following: I did expect examples of enactments, but not an extensive usage of “und ich so/und er so.” Instead, I counted on the frequent occurrence of verbs of saying as quotatives (“sagen,” “meinen”), used possibly not only in the present perfect, but also in the simple past. I did not expect extensive usage of the subjunctive I, rather the subjunctive II; however, not with enactments. The open-ended question was how non-natives replace “und ich so/und er so” to reach the dramatic effect thereof without using this actual quotative itself.

Data and Methodology

For this study, I video- and audiotaped one and a half hours of naturally occurring spontaneous German conversation produced by fluent non-native speakers in a casual setting.⁵ For all of these speakers, German is a second language, and they have been learning and actively using it for at least 10 years. Many of them are also teaching German as a second language. All of them live in an environment where they are surrounded by German native speakers on a daily basis. They are thus all familiar with the ways through which native speakers express reported speech, including “und ich so/und er so.” Their first language varies from American English through Russian and Ukrainian to Hungarian. The data were collected in the spring of 2005. The relevant turns were then transcribed in accordance with the transcription methods of Conversation Analysis (CA). CA thus provides the main theoretical background for my research, and it is the most appropriate methodology for the analysis of talk in interaction. It is an empirical methodology which studies naturally occurring conversation in real-life situations to detect what kind of structures are underlying interaction. CA researchers use spontaneous audio- and videotaped conversation as data.

Data Analysis

In this section, the major findings of my study are presented and compared with the language use of native speakers. Four segments of the conversation are included to illustrate native – non-native differences and similarities in quotation techniques with an enactment. An outline of the findings is as follows:

- 1) Just like native speakers, non-natives avoided the usage of the subjunctive I. However, in contrast to natives, their usage of the subjunctive II was not significant either.
- 2) Non-natives did perform enactments, none of which was introduced by “und ich so/und er so.” Instead, non-natives rendered their enactment more vivid by
 - a) using a present tense quotative, even if the reported events were narrated in a past tense (see Segment 1)
 - b) using innovative quotatives (i.e., ones not described before in previous studies) (see Segments 3 and 4).
- 3) As follows from 2) a), while native speakers resorted to the present perfect with the quotative, this was not the only choice for non-natives, who also made use of the present as well as the simple past tense with their quotatives – a tendency that has not been found characteristic for natives. In any case, a common feature of native and non-native usage of reported speech is the dominance of the present perfect tense with the quotative (see Segment 2).

During the one and a half hours of recorded conversation, the non-native speakers used both direct and indirect speech and performed several enactments. The reported discourse mostly consisted of the retellings of former events and what was uttered in those situations by either the reporter or another person. Other reported situations included hypothetical ones⁶ and the telling of jokes. Since in these situations no real quotations took place (i.e., the utterances reported upon were never actually uttered, even though they could possibly be spoken at any time

by any undefined speaker), I did not include these in my analysis. Therefore, the data processed in this study are solely made up of quotations where the reported utterance was in fact spoken at a certain point in the past.

The instances of direct speech used by the non-native speakers greatly outweighed the instances of indirect speech. The usage of the subjunctive I and II was not significant. More than half of the direct speech quotations were accompanied by a performance/enactment. These enactments, just like the ones produced by native speakers, were usually preceded by a short pause, which the reporter used to adapt his/her intonation and body position into the reported person's. The quotatives used to introduce the reported speech sequence (including both direct and indirect speech) were the verbs *sagen*, *meinen*, *erzählen*, *fragen*, *hören*, *betonen* as well as innovative ones (see Segments 3 and 4), which have not been described in previous studies about native speakers.

The tense of verbal quotatives varied. In a great majority of the cases, the present perfect was used. The present tense and the simple past occurred about an equal number of times, but were much less preferred. This stands in contrast to Golato's findings, where she states that the typical verb tense for the quotative is the present perfect, although the quoted material is rendered in the present tense ("Self-quotation" 50). Golato found only one instance of a present tense quotative, and she explains it with the possibility that the events reported upon are still in process ("Self-quotation" 62). The quotative can be used in the present tense in English (Wolfson 19), and, as my data revealed, non-native speakers have the tendency to resort to it as well. Using the historical present to talk about past events for the purposes of visualisation of the speaker's experiences is a common method in German as well as English narration (see e.g. Golato "Self-quotation"; Tannen; Wolfson). And even though it does not seem to be prevalent in native speakers' language use, it did occur in non-native conversation. This may be L1 influence: using the quotative in the present tense is a common phenomenon of conversational language use in English as well as Ukrainian, Russian and Hungarian.

However, using the present tense with the quotative does not seem to be a random choice for these non-native speakers, since in 7 cases out of 8 it was followed by an enactment.⁷ This in my interpretation means that we see here a technique used by non-natives to make their enactment more vivid and accessible to their audience – that is, to achieve the same purpose as native speakers with "und ich so/und er so."

The following data segment includes a present tense quotative in the retelling of a past event. Speaker T is telling the other speakers about a Low German course he is teaching in the US, and how a little boy went up to him privately and greeted him in Low German in all sincerity. The comic feature of this situation is accentuated by the speaker switching from the simple past to the present tense with the quotative in line 07. This is followed by an enactment of the boy's utterance (which is obvious from the reporter's change in facial gestures) in line 08:

Segment 1

- 01 T: und (0.5) ich geh immer von raum zu raum und guck
 02 was ähm (.) wie alle auskommen, und ähm (.) ich da
 03 ins zimmer rein und die kinder haben so fleißig
 04 gesungen
 05 L, S: [(laughter)
 06 T: [plattdeutsch das war echt witzig. Und da kam ein
 07 junge zu mir (.) und und meint zu mir auf
 08 T: plattdeutsch (.) ↑na, wie geht's denn.
 09 L, S: (laughter)
 10 L: [da:s ist so sü:ß
 11 T: [(platt also das hat mich)
 12 L: das ist aber so nett

The enactment is preceded by a short pause. The reporter gets back to "being himself" after the quoted material by returning to his original intonation. The hearers react to the funny story by laughing and uttering an assessment of the cute situation in lines 09, 10 and 12. These are all general features of enactments.

Even though quotatives were used by non-natives in the present tense as well as in the simple past, the dominant verb tense for the quotative was still the present perfect. This is similar to the language use of native speakers, who, however, do not tend to vary the tense. After a quotative in the present perfect, the non-natives used indirect and direct speech on approximately the same number of occasions. Most direct speech quotations were followed by an enactment. The approximately even distribution of the present and present perfect tense with the quotative suggests to me that non-natives tend to resort to these tenses

to make their performance livelier. Golato's findings that the quotative in the present perfect is used by native speakers with troubles-tellings ("Grammar" 43) is not relevant with non-natives, since my subjects used them extensively with storytellings and their climaxes.

The segment that should illustrate an example of the quotative in the present perfect describes a situation, in which a non-native speaker (L) was made aware of the fact that an expression she tends to use in German is actually quite old-fashioned. This was new information for her, and she talks about how a native speaker informed her about this. The native speaker (Hans), so tells L, emphasized emphatically, yet in a friendly way, that the expression is not used any more. The quotative in the present perfect is in line 05, followed by the quotation itself in lines 05-06 and 08.

Data Analysis

- 01 L: hans hat schon ähm (1.0) ich (2.0) ((chews)) ich
 02 ma:g EIN jeder.
 02 S: mhm
 04 L: und da da also (.) statt alle ein jeder zu sagen,
 05 aber das da hat hans gemeint,(0.7) das ist so: wie
 06 [goethe
 07 S: [(laughter)
 08 L: das sagt man nicht [mehr=und dann habe ich aber
 09 N: [(laughter)
 10 L: gesagt es geht [()
 11 T: [das hab ich aber immer noch nicht
 12 kapiert. (0.1) was [hast du?
 13 L: [dass man (.) statt alle (.) zu
 14 sagen=sag ich EIN jeder.
 15 T: ah so
 16 L: und das ist schon veraltet.

Notable is that the pause preceding the quote (in line 05 is relatively long, while the speaker takes hardly any time to get back to her recent role in the conversation. "Das sagt man nicht mehr" is still part of the quote, but "und dann habe ich aber gesagt es geht" is not, yet the two are in latch with no pause in between. The lack of a pause between the quote and the unquote is quite uncharacteristic; speakers usually

insert a pause while they readjust their original intonation/pitch (which they used before the quote). The hearers' appreciation, expressed by sympathetic laughter, is present, and so is a further reaction in the form of a repair initiation on behalf of one of the hearers, who did not completely understand the story and asks for further clarification (lines 11-12).

The non-native speakers in my study produced occurrences of verbal quotatives which have not been found typical in native German conversation. One of these was "das Argument von ihr war," the other one "betont er." Both were followed by an enactment. The purpose again is most possibly to achieve an expressive force with an unusual quotative.⁸

As mentioned above, the non-native speakers in this study did not produce the German quotative "und ich so/und er so," but they came up with similarly expressive structures as quotatives to introduce an enactment. These quotatives have not been recorded and described previously, that is why I call them "innovative." Their common characteristics are that they are relatively short and more expressive than a verb of saying would be, so they are suitable to enhance the dramatic effect. They resemble "und ich so/und er so" insofar as most of them are fragment-like with no conjugated verb. These included the following: "am Ende war ich schon" (the only quotative with an actually conjugated verb), "und dann (name of a person)," "und dann manchmal," "und da." These quotatives were uttered by three different speakers with three different L1.⁹ Just like "und ich so/und er so," most of these quotatives were also followed by a short pause, then the performed quoted utterance and finally the unquote. The hearers' appreciation or interpretation of the reported speech segment was present in all but one situation. In the one situation where it was absent, the speaker did not finish her turn after the unquote but went on to retell the rest of the story, while the audience was listening attentively. This case shows that such an unusual quotative does not necessarily introduce the punchline or climax of a story, but rather anything that the speaker would like to emphasize.¹⁰

The quotes following such innovative quotatives were also similar to the ones following "und ich so/und er so" in the respect that each one of them was presented in direct discourse and no subjunctive forms appeared (on the similar characteristics of "und ich so"/"und er so" see "Grammar" 41).

Segment 3 gives an example of such an innovative quotative. Speaker L talks about an exam of hers and how exhausted she became

towards the end. To emphasize her growing weariness and exasperation, she inserts an enactment into her report, introduced by the innovative quotative “am Ende war ich schon” (line 04), a fragment-like structure used as a quotative, just like “und ich so/und er so” (in contrast to which, however, it contains a conjugated verb). The quote is introduced by a short pause and followed by an unquote and the hearers’ reaction, which make it similar to the quotative used by native speakers. The speaker herself offers an opinion on the situation in her unquote (lines 08-09).

Segment 3

- 01 L: und sie hat auch immer epochenfragen [gestellt.
 02 S: [mhm
 03 L: und zum beispiel sturm und drang hab ich nicht so
 04 [sehr ähm ähm=am ende war ich schon
 05 S: [hihi

L covers her face with her left hand, deeper voice

- 06 L: (.) oh mein gott lass mich [()
 07 S: [hahaha
 08 L: weiß es nicht, ich kanns nicht, (.) aber die waren
 09 echt sehr nett.
 10 S: mhm:

The unusual quotative used in this segment does accomplish its goals insofar as it describes the mental state of the speaker and functions as an introducer for a self-quotation at the same time. It definitely underlines the dramatic effect of the enactment more than it would be possible with e.g. “am Ende habe ich gesagt.” I would argue that this structure came into being under either L1 influence, or maybe the influence of American English “in the end I was already like...,” with “like” getting lost in the transfer process. It is also possible that the speaker had the German structure “am Ende war ich so” at the back of her mind and used parts of it to construct her turn.

Three quotatives used by two different speakers show striking similarities to both one another as well as to “und ich so”/“und er so.” They are “und dann (name of a person),” “und dann manchmal,” and

“und da.” All three of them are short and fragment-like without a finite verb (which is very uncharacteristic of a German sentence), introduced by “und” (which refers to the fact that the speakers wish to continue their turn) and they include an adverb. They have a dynamic effect due to their shortness; putting two or three words with only one or two syllables next to each other creates a short, but powerful string of words. Due to their unusual structure, these quotatives draw more attention to the fact that something noteworthy, surprising or funny is coming up than a more general quotative, like a verb of saying could do.

“Und da” is present in segment 4. Speaker L is talking about inviting Germans to her elementary German language class. Her students did not speak a lot of German at that time, but they tried to ask the questions they were already familiar with, and the result was quite comic. The quotative “und da” appears in line 04.

Segment 4

- 01 L: meine studenten wars=waren süß als (.) als du da
 02 warst in meiner stunde (.) ich hab einmal in
 03 hundertvier hans und noch drei vier leute (.) zur
 04 stunde gebracht=und da (.) okay, noch einige fragen
 05 stellen, und [und er hat
 06 H: stimmt=da waren (.) oliver und wer
 07 war noch da [sophie war dabei
 08 L: [ä:h ja: und (.) wer war noch da?
 09 (0.3) inge war auch noch da. (1.0) [ja? (0.3)
 10 H: [kann sein
 11 L: (0.3) u:nd (.) und dann stefan auch.
 12 H: ja. genau.
 13 L: u: und dann haben sie solche sachen gefragt
 14 °was ist dein lieblingsobst?° und
 15 [wenn einundzwanzig (.) jährige leute:
 16 H,S:[(laughter)
 17 L: vierundzwanzigjährige leute über solche sachen
 18 fragen=ist schon süß. also-

The quotative in line 04 is followed by a short pause, during which the speaker takes on her role in the reported situation and reproduces her own sentence that triggered the merriness of the

situation, referred to in lines 13 and 14. The co-participants of the conversation signal their amusement with the funny nature of the situation by laughing, whereas the speaker herself offers an explicit evaluation of it in lines 15, 17 and 18. Thus the short but dramatic “und da,” having awakened the hearers’ curiosity, contributes to the enhanced dramatic effect of the comic situation retold.

As seen in segments 3 and 4, non-native speakers use innovative quotatives as well to draw special attention to the reported speech sequence. These quotatives seem to be similar to “und ich so/und er so” in structure and effect. The general feature of these innovative quotatives is that, similarly to “und ich so/und er so,” they enable a simple quote to be turned into an enactment with a more expressive force. The enhanced dramatic effect renders the speaker’s presentation more accessible for the hearers, who can thus identify with the surprising, striking or funny nature of the quoted material more than it would be possible without the enactment and the extra emphasis put on it by the innovative quotative.

A question remains why non-natives did not use one single “und ich so/und er so” during this conversation, even though it would have been pragmatically appropriate, and the speakers are familiar with it. A possible explanation may be that although these speakers are aware of the existence of this German quotative, they have not internalized it yet, or only to the extent of storing the formula in their mind and creating similar structures, such as the ones seen above.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have examined what techniques a small group of fluent non-native speakers of German used in the course of a casual conversation to make their enactments of reported speech sequences more dramatic. My data revealed that non-natives, just like native speakers, do not use the subjunctive and prefer direct to indirect discourse. I have also found that non-native speakers tend to vary the verb tense of the quotative: even though they mostly use the present perfect, they make use of the present and the simple past tense as well. They did not produce the fairly recent German quotative “und ich so/und er so,” but found other techniques to make their enactment more vivid and impressive. On the one hand, they used a quotative in the present or the present perfect to introduce such performances, on

the other, they came up with innovative quotatives themselves, which most of the time showed striking similarities to “und ich so/und er so.”

Based on these results, my conclusion is that these fluent non-native speakers are at a level of speaking German where they realize the pragmatic need of applying methods to emphasize what they are reporting on, and they follow patterns similar to those applied by native speakers. This entails that they rely more on their pragmatic experience of communicating in German rather than utilize the techniques taught in language classes (that is, the subjunctive I and II). By doing so, they do reach their interactional goal, that is, they succeed in making their enactments more dramatic. Utterances with traditional reported speech methods like the subjunctive I and II would have been correct in their conversation, but could not have produced the same impressive effect. In the case of the non-native speakers in this study, another influence may have been the daily interaction they have with native speakers. Although the quotatives used are innovative, they are not unnatural-sounding. This means that these superior-level speakers of German have not only the aspiration but also the ability to be pragmatically expressive. Thus, their German language conversation turns out to be pragmatically more successful than that of a speaker who has an excellent command of grammar, but does not flavor his conversational turns by using anything else except textbook rules.

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Notes

- ¹ By performance/enactment I refer to signs that make it clear that the reporter is placing himself or herself in the role of the original speaker (who may well be himself or herself in the case of self-quotations). This is made clear by signs like changes in pitch or intonation, gestures, facial expressions, shifts in body positions, etc.
 - ² However, we have to be careful. Tannen remarks that the term “reported speech” is a misnomer and prefers to use the term “constructed dialogue,” since most of the reported lines were probably not actually spoken (“Constructed Dialogue” 311).
 - ³ Even though it is worth mentioning that while direct speech is universal, indirect speech is not. There are some languages without indirect speech. For some studies on reported speech in different languages, see e.g. Fónagy, Haberland, Haßler, Kammerzell & Peust, Kiefer, Li, Sakita and Tannen.
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- ⁴ An unquote is used to mark the end of the quoted speech. It usually includes a change in intonation, pitch or body position and follows the quote after a short pause on behalf of the speaker. See also Golato “Und ich so” 47-48.
- ⁵ These one and a half hours were the first data collected in my project on examining reported speech methods of non-native speakers of German. The recordings that followed (approximately 12 hours altogether) confirmed that the findings presented in this paper are by no means exceptional or unusual, but rather typical of non-natives’ use of German.
- ⁶ An example for hypothetical speech in my data is for example the following utterance: “Weil man dann meinen kann: <<He, das stand doch im Text>>.” This utterance is hypothetical in the sense that it has never actually been said, but could potentially be.
- ⁷ The eighth instance was one where the reported speech sequence was a general, universal statement in self-quotation (“und dann sage ich, okay, so ein Paradox”).
- ⁸ For studies on such uncommon, but semantically possible quotatives in some languages see Kiefer and Fónagy.
- ⁹ There was one utterance by a third speaker with yet another L1, where due to cutoffs it is difficult to determine whether a fragment that could be a quotative actually is one, or whether it is L1 transfer from American English: „und ich war so – bis da war ich ziemlich fertig und dann sagt’ ich <<Nö>>.”
- ¹⁰ While I completely agree with Golato’s claim that “und ich so” and “und er so” occur in storytelling situations, based on my own recent observations of German everyday conversation I would not say that it is used in all of the cases “to convey the punchline or materials contributing to the climax of the story” and that they seem to “mark for the recipients of the story when important and noteworthy events are to follow” (“Quotatives” 52). Based on my (unfortunately unrecorded) observations, “und ich so/und er so” tend to become used extensively without consideration to any particular punchline or climax, becoming ever more similar to American English “and I’m like/and he’s like.” This also seems to be the explanation for why I do not necessarily agree with another claim of hers, namely that “speakers seem to have the undivided attention of their audience and the audience is expected to react to the story, either by making a statement or (most of the time) by laughing” (89). – Probably because of the general spreading of “und ich so”/“und er so” in everyday conversation, this no longer seems to be the case, with the audience not necessarily reacting to every single “und ich so/und er so.”
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