Prosodic features of ethnolects: On some syntactic and prosodic structures of Turkish-German in conversation

On the basis of our data from telephone and face-to-face conversations between adolescent girls and young women of ethnic Turkish background who live in Berlin, we will describe some characteristic structures of the ethnic style of speaking that is called 'Türkendeutsch', 'Türkenslang', 'Kanak sprak' or the like. In our data, this style of speaking is not deployed throughout the speakers' conversations, but only in particular turns and turn-constructional units. The utterances most typical of this style exhibit specific combinations of syntactic and prosodic features that are never found in Standard or regionalized varieties of German. Among the structures recurrently found are specific kinds of pre- and post-positioned constituents before and after their 'host' sentences, the separation of turn-constructional units into very short prosodic units, the deployment of both lexical stress as well as utterance accentuation as a resource for stylistic variation, and the constitution of particular rhythmic patterns. In our talk, we will discuss some of these structures and show how they are used as a resource to achieve particular tasks in conversational interaction.