Anne Breitbarth
Syntax, prosody, and discourse function of V>2 in spoken German

German is a V2 language, apart from a small number of exceptions that lead to superficial later positioning of the finite verb (V>2), which are compatible with the underlying V2-property. In the more recent literature, however, a number of V>2 orders are identified that are not easily reconcilable with a V2-syntax, such as inversionless V2-clauses preceded by a central adverbial. Such Adv–S–V_{fin}-orders were first described for multi-ethnolectal urban varieties (Kiezdeutsch) but have since also been observed in the spoken interaction of monolingual speakers of German. In this talk, I take a closer look at the prosody of these patterns in attested speech data from intended Standard German. It is shown that the lack of inversion, together with a continuative prosody, is used to support the realisation of the discourse function of the initial adjuncts. The left-peripheral adverbial serves to anchor the following proposition, and either contrast it with another proposition available in the discourse or add to it. The prosodic encoding serves as a floor-holding device signalling the intention of the speaker to keep their turn. I will briefly broach the question of whether these Adv–S–V_{fin}-orders are the continuation of an old pattern which, being restricted to spoken language, has long stayed under the radar, or whether this is a new phenomenon currently evolving in the language.