

## Extraclausal Structures in Amish Varieties of Pennsylvania Dutch

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This talk focuses on the syntax of varieties of Pennsylvania Dutch (Pennsylvania German) spoken by Old Order Amish sectarians in the U.S. Midwest. Pennsylvania Dutch is a North American language that emerged through the immigration of German-speaking immigrants, mainly from the southeastern Palatinate region of central-western Germany (Vorderpfalz), to Greater Pennsylvania in the 18th century. The great majority of the earliest immigrants were of the Lutheran or German Reformed confessions; a very small minority were members of various Anabaptist and Pietist sects, including Mennonites and Amish. Today, however, the most conservative descendants of these colonial era sectarians, members of the Old Order Mennonite and Old Order Amish churches, are the only speakers of Pennsylvania Dutch to maintain the language and use it actively, side-by-side with English. A high birth rate coupled with a low attrition rate assures the future of Pennsylvania Dutch into the foreseeable future.

Despite long-standing and intensive Pennsylvania Dutch-English bilingualism, the basic syntactic structures of the former language have remained largely impervious to influence from the latter. In this presentation I will identify salient patterns associated with the left and right peripheries of main and subordinate clauses in Midwestern Amish varieties of Pennsylvania Dutch. The data are drawn from interviews made with sectarians from across several Midwestern states, which are contained in the North American German Dialect Archive of the Max Kade Institute at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The picture that will emerge is one consistent with what is found in many spoken varieties, including European German varieties. Clauses themselves are typically quite compact, yet interspersed between them are a number of elements that are semantically closely connected to clause-internal constituents. In this talk I will explore semantic and prosodic patterns that allow us to identify certain elements as pre-clausal and others as post-clausal and consider whether they might properly be considered the result of dislocation processes. An important larger goal of the talk is to underscore how syntax in naturally occurring speech can differ quite substantially from its counterpart in written (prescriptive) standard varieties, especially in the European context.