

What's Unique in Bavarian Syntax?

Thoughts on the Occasion of a Performance of Bach's St Matthew Passion

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1. Background

Johann Sebastian Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (*Matthäus-Passion*), BWV 244, is one of the highlights of German and European music. It was first performed on 11 April 1727 in Leipzig's St. Thomas Church. The text is based on chapters 26 and 27 of the gospel of St. Matthew in the translation by Martin Luther (1483-1546) as well as on texts for arias and chorales by Christian Friedrich Henrici (alias Picander) (1700-1764); several stanzas of the chorales are by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676). It is possible that even Bach (1685-1750) himself made some changes in the text.

According to what can be recovered about these gentlemen, none of them had ever lived in Southern Germany nor had any significant touch with Southern German or Austro-Bavarian dialects. Thus, the language in the *St Matthew Passion* is at best influenced by Eastern Middle German dialects such as Thuringian, Upper Saxonian, perhaps also Erzgebirgisch etc.

On Good Friday, April 14, 2017, I had a chance to hear another performance of Bach's master piece. While listening to this composition is so totally absorbing that one forgets everything else, this time I was nevertheless paying more attention to details of the text than on previous occasions. In the course of this, I detected various constructions that struck me as highly familiar from my native dialect, Bavarian. This inspired my thinking which later on developed into the present chapter.

2. Goal

I want to discuss five construction types that can be found in the text of the *St Matthew Passion* but are usually taken to be typical for the Southern German dialects Bavarian, Austro-Bavarian and to a certain extent also Alemannic: Long *wh*-movement, pleonastic negation, the lack of *zu*-infinitives, the lack of adjectival inflection and the apparent absence of the *ge*- participle. I will close with a sixth construction type, one that is to my knowledge, not found in any other German variety and seems to be exceedingly rare in the languages of the world. Conclusions follow in section 5.

3. The constructions in comparison

3.1 Long *wh*-movement

Bavarian is known to be rather permissive in allowing long *wh*-movement.¹

- (1) Wiavui moanst-n, dass an Hans sei neier AUDI g'kost hod?
how.much think.you-PART that the Hans his new AUDI cost has
“How expensive do you think that John’s new AUDI was?”

Fanselow, Kliegl & Schlesewsky (2005) find in an empirical investigation that [s]peakers of German who grew up in Bavaria clearly differ from their compatriots raised in Brandenburg [near Berlin, JB]. *Long wh-movement is a construction that Bavarians use with ease [...] Brandenburgians refrain from using it: more than a third of the participants completely avoided using the construction, half of them did not use it more than once.*

My own experience with grammaticality judgements in the German South Western region, where Alemannic is spoken, also suggests that long *wh*-movement is a rather disfavored construction. In an experimental study involving sentential infinitives, Bayer & Braun (2016) found that among primarily Alemannic speakers, this trend holds even for *wh*-extraction from extraposed sentential infinitives, a construction that has so far been taken to be more liberal in this respect. One can easily come to the conclusion that long *wh*-movement is a trade-mark of the Bavarian dialect. However, relevant examples are also found in Bach’s *St Matthew Passion*.

- (2) Wo willst du, dass wir dir bereiten das Osterlamm zu Essen?
where want you that we you.DAT prepare the easter.lamb to eat
„Where do you want us to prepare the Easter Lamb for you?“

At another place, Pilate asks the people:

- (3) Welchen wollt ihr unter diesen zweien, den ich euch soll losgeben?
which want you under these two who.ACC I you.DAT should free.give
„Who of the two do you want me to release?“

This example is rather exceptional as it uses *den* as a resumptive. But it is not the usual case of resumption; rather *den* initiates a relative clause. In Luther’s translation in Matthew XXVII, regular long *wh*-extraction is found again:

¹ As a warning, I will not be totally consistent in my notation. I will use my own style of transcribing (my idiolectal variant of) Bavarian but leave the transcriptions by other authors unchanged. The same goes for historical sources.

- (4) Vnd da sie versamlet waren / sprach Pilatus zu jnen / Welchen wolt jr /
and as they assembled were spoke Pilate to them which want you
 das ich euch los gebe / Barrabam / oder Jhesum / von dem gesagt wird /
that I you.DAT free give Barrabas or Jesus of who said is
 Er sey Christus?
he be.SUBJ Christ

“And as they had gathered, Pilate spoke to them: Which one do you want that I release to you, Barrabas or Jesus, of who it is said that he is Christ?”

These examples show quite clearly that long *wh*-movement is unlikely to be a unique trademark of Bavarian. The text of Bach’s *St Matthew Passion* can hardly have been influenced by Bavarian.

This suspicion is confirmed by Hermann Paul’s collection of examples which he used to refer to as “Satzverschlingungen” (sentence intertwinings) in Paul 1920 vol IV, 319ff. Paul’s examples come from a garden variety of authors among who we find Johann Gottfried Herder, Heinrich von Kleist and Theodor Storm, all of who had no attested relation to Bavarian or other southern dialects. Thus, the rejection of long *wh*-movement that Fanselow et al. observe may have its source in normativity rather than in particular dialects. Quite plausibly, the linguistic norms of prescriptive grammar are less influential in Bavarian than in northern regions. In the language of the *St Matthew Passion*, of course, such norms had no place yet.

3.2 Pleonastic negation

Bavarian is known for its affluence of markers of negation. A famous example from Ludwig Thoma’s *Jozef Filsers Briefwexel* (“Joseph Filser’s Correspondence”) is the following:

- (5) Libe Mari, ich bin froh, das ich **keine Rede nicht** halden brauch
dear Mary I am glad that I no speech not hold need
 “Dear Mary, I’m glad not to be obliged to give a speech”

Thoma’s literary intention here is to make fun of the writer’s low level of education which is also reflected in various orthographic mistakes. There is a negative quantifier, *keine Rede*, and the regular negator *nicht*. In Standard German, the presence of a second carrier of negation would induce the familiar logical cancellation of negation, resulting in the meaning “I’m glad I have to hold every speech”. As my translation indicates, however, in Bavarian there is negative concord. The negative quantifier seems to be in the specifier of a negation phrase headed by *nicht* where it undergoes spec-head agreement and deletes the negation on *keine*.²

² See Bayer (1990), Weiß (2002); in fact, there is no upper limit to the number of negative quantifiers.

In Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, the following example is found with exactly the same structure:

- (6) Da ist **kein Trost**, **kein Helfer nicht**
there is no consolation no helper not
„There is neither consolation nor help“

This should not be surprising because negative concord is known from various German dialects. Here is an example from Berlin.

- (7) Aus die Stube raus kommt **keener nicht!**
from the room out comes nobody not
“Nobody will leave the room!”

At present, this form of pleonastic negation, which happens to be standard in various Romance and Slavonic languages, is stigmatized as substandard in normative German. It is clearly a historical residue that was still present in Early New High German (roughly 1350 until 1650), which includes the time of Martin Luther. ENHG covered also the eastern middle German region around Wittenberg, Erfurt and Leipzig. Thus, pleonastic negation certainly had its place in what one may call the “standard language” of the time. Thus, associating this form of pleonastic negation with Bavarian in any closer sense would be unjustified.

3.3 Infinitives

As Merkle (1975: 43f) notes, the infinitival morpheme *zu* (“to”) of the German standard language, plays close to no role in Bavarian. As a lexical element it appears only as the pro-clitic form *z'* or in the contracted form *zum* (or *zun*).

- (8) Gibt's heid nix **z'essn?**
gives-it today nothing to-eat
„Don't we get something to eat today?“

As Bayer & Brandner (2004) show in a study of Alemannic and Bavarian infinitives, constructions with the clitic *z'* are constrained in various ways. Alternatives are to use a bare infinitive or a nominalization or the contracted form *zum* that is composed of the preposition *zu* and the definite dative article *dem* which heads the verbal noun, see Bayer (1993).

- (9) a. Huif-ma an Hof **kian!**
help-me the yard sweep
“Help me sweep the yard!”

- b. Dann hod-a **s'woana** oog'fangt
then has-he the-crying started
 „The he started to cry“
- c. Dann hod-a **zum** woana oog'fangd
then has-he to.the crying started
 „The he started to cry“

The question is what to do with sentential infinitives in adverbial clauses and in control constructions. Here, Bavarian resorts to finite clauses as the following examples show.

- (10) a. Statt **dass-a arwad** hockt-a im Wirtshaus
instead that-he works sits-he in.the pub
 „Instead of working he sits in the pub“
- b. Du muasst rena, **dass-d an Zug dawischst**
you must run that-you the train catch
 „You must run in order to catch the train“
- c. Er hod g'schaud, **dass-a aus'm Haus nauskummd**
he has looked that-he out'the house out.gets
 „He tried to get out of the house“

The adverbial clause in (10a) is a finite CP with the complementizer *dass* embedded under the preposition-like element *statt* („instead“). (10b) is a purpose clause. Its semantic role is not lexically indicated; it seems to be inferred from the context provided by the matrix clause. In the standard language, both clauses would be expressed with *zu*-infinitives: *statt zu arbeiten, um den Zug zu erwischen*. In the same way, the control construction in (10c) would be expressed by a *zu*-infinitive: *Er hat versucht aus dem Haus zu kommen* („He tried to get out of the house“).

Again, these properties of the infinitival syntax and clause structure in general cannot be confined to the Bavarian dialect. We find exact parallels in Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. The following is a top example in which a finite purpose clause and a finite control clause appear side by side.

- (11) Und da sie ihn verspottet hatten, zogen sie ihm den Mantel aus und
and as they him mocked have pulled they him.DAT the cloak out and
 zogen ihm seine Kleider an und führten ihn hin, **dass sie ihn kreuzigten.**
pulled him.DAT his clothes on and lead him away that they him crucified
 Und indem sie hinausgingen, funden sie einen Menschen von Kyrene
and as they out.went found they a person from Kyrene
 mit Namen Simon; den zwungen sie, **dass er ihm das Kreuz trug.**
with name Simon him forced they that he him.DAT the cross carried
 „And when they had mocked him, they took off his cloak, and dressed him with his
 clothes, and led him away in order to crucify him. And as they went out, they found a
 man from Cyrene named Simon, whom they compelled to carry him the cross“

The Bavarian purpose clause in (10b) corresponds to the finite purpose clause *dass sie ihn kreuzigten*. The Bavarian example of subject control in (10c) corresponds to the example of object control *dass er ihm das Kreuz trug*. The message is again that Bavarian shows earlier stages of German in which the syntax of infinitival constructions has not arrived yet at the uniform picture that is observed today in the modern Germanic languages with rather stable *zu/to/te* or Skandinavian *att/at/að/å*. The construction is typical for Bavarian only in the sense that Bavarian is a conservative spoken language that retains and reflects earlier stages of a more general diachronic development.

3.4 Adjectival inflection

If we ignore certain frozen expression like *auf gut Glück* (“at chance”), *klein Erna* (“little Erna”), *gut Ding* („good thing“) etc., it is a rule of modern Standard German that the preverbal adjective inflects for person, gender, number and case. Not so in Bavarian, where the adjective’s inflection in singular definite descriptions, at least in nominative and accusative case, is optional, see Merkle (1975: 166ff).³

- (12) a. da gschroamaulad(e) Nachbar
the shout.mouthed(AGR) neighbour
 „the bawling neighbour“
- b. de gscheggerd(e) Kuah
the chequered(AGR) cow
 „the spotted cow“

³ See also Rowley (1991) for the north-eastern region of Bavaria.

- c. des oid(e) Wei
 the old(AGR) woman
 „the old woman“

Again, this feature too is not confined to Bavarian. In Bach’s *St Matthew Passion*, example (13) can be observed.

- (13) Und Joseph nahm den Leib und wickelte ihn in **ein rein** Leinwand
 and Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen
 und legte ihn in sein **eigen neu** Grab.
 and put it in his own new grave
 „And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in clean linen, and laid it in his own new tomb“

Modern German would only permit *in eine reine Leinwand* and *in sein eigenes neues Grab*. In one of the cases in (13), the determiner and adjective’s inflection is suppressed also in an indefinite DP. The text leaves both determiner and adjective uninflected.

This similarity between Bavarian and the language of Bach’s *St Matthew Passion* may at first sight be surprising, but in fact it should not be surprising. Alexandra Rehn has shown in her 2018 dissertation, see Rehn (2018), that uninflected adjectives were a wide-spread phenomenon in the history of German, and that especially in Alemannic the restrictions are even less severe than Merkle suggests for Bavarian. Rehn’s following examples show that Alemannic has uninflected adjectives in indefinite DPs just as in (13) and – quite remarkably – even uninflected adjectives in indefinite elliptic DPs as the dialogue in (14b) shows.

- (14) a. a kloi Kätzle
 a little cat.DIM
 “a little kitten”
- b. A: Was für a Dasch dät dir g’falla?
 what for a bag does-SUBJ you.DAT please
 B: A roat wär schee.
 a red were.SUBJ nice
 “What kind of bag would please you? – A red one would be nice.”

Note that both the adjectives *kloi* as well as *roat* lack inflection. Inflected alternatives, in these cases *kloi-s* and *roat-e*, are fine but inflection is truly optional. The lack of adjectival inflection in the elliptical example in (14b) is remarkable. In Standard German, the non-inflecting

color adjectives *lila* (“purple”) and *rosa* (“pink”) would resort to inserting an epenthetic *n* in order to spell out the inflectional morpheme. Speaking about shirts, one would have to use an elliptical sentence by using *Ich möchte ein lila-n-es* (“I want a purple-n-AGR”) instead of **Ich möchte ein lila*. According to Schirmunski (1962), besides dropping the inflection on a pre-nominal adjective there is a lot of variation regarding the realization of the inflectional endings in general in the dialects of German. Thus, the lack of pre-nominal adjectival inflection that was noticed in Merkle (1975) is clearly not a defining property of Bavarian.

3.5 The past participle

In Standard German, the past participle is typically a form with the prefix *ge-*: *Gesungen* (“sung”), *gespielt* (“played”), *getanzt* (“danced”), *gelacht* (“laughed”) etc. If the verb is a so-called prefix verb, a verb with an inseparable prefix, there is already a prefix, and as a consequence, no *ge-* is used: *Verspielt* (“gambled away”), not **vergespielt*, *zerschlagen* (“smashed”), not **zergeschlagen*, *betrogen* (“betrayed”), not **begetrogen* etc. When the verb comes along with a separable particle, the particle usually being a preposition that gets stranded in verb-first/verb-second movement, *ge-* intervenes between particle and verb stem: *aufgemacht* (“opened”), *abgeholt* (“picked up”), *nachgeäfft* (“mimicked”) etc. and not **aufmacht*, **abholt*, **nachäfft*. Observe now that in Bavarian *ge-* seems to be missing in some instances (see (15a,b)) but seems to be present in others in the form of a velar stop (see (15c,d)):

- (15) a. Er is ned kumma
he is not come
 „He didn’t come“
- b. Er hod plauderd
he has talked
 „He has talked“
- c. Er hod g^hlachd
he has laughed
 „He laughed“
- d. Er hod-se g^hfiachd
he has-REF feared
 „He was scared“

The rule behind this distribution of the data is straightforward: The prefix *ge-* is weakened in such a way that the vowel is lost. Then there is regressive place assimilation between the remaining segment /g/ and the onset of the verbal stem. This turns *g+kumma* into [kumma],

g+plauderd into [*plauderd*]. However, if the onset of the verb stem is a liquid as in (15c) or a fricative as in (15d), no place assimilation is possible, and the result is phonetically a consonant cluster.⁴ For particle verbs, the pattern is fully regularly as seen in *afkaffd* (auf+ge+kauft, „bought“) *afbassd* (auf+ge+passt „payed-attention“) on one hand and *afgmachd* (auf+ge+macht, „opened“), *afgsagd* (auf+ge+sagt, „recited“) on the other.

Observe now that we also find a past participle which appears to have lost the *ge*-prefix in Bach’s *St Matthew Passion*. Jesus asks Judas:

- (16) Mein Freund, warum bist du kommen?
 My friend why are you come
 „My friend why did you come?“

It is interesting to see that the language of the *St Matthew Passion* is still distinct from what we see in Bavarian though. Although there seems to be a process of weakening and ultimately losing *ge*-, the formation of the consonant clusters as we see them in Bavarian and in other dialects appears to be adopted only with caution. One finds cluster onsets as in (17b) next to the unreduced form in (17a).⁵

- (17) a. [...], so **geschehe** dein Wille
 ... *thus happen.SUBJ your will*
 “thus thy will be done”
- b. Was mein Gott will, das **g’sch eh** allzeit
what my god wants this happen.SUBJ all.time
 „What my god wants, this let happen any time“

Although in Bavarian and Alemannic schwa-deletion is obligatory also in nouns like *Gsicht*, *Gfui*, *Gwicht* instead of *Gesicht* („face“), *Gefühl* („sensation“), *Gewicht* („weight“), nominals seem to be more resistant in the language of the *St. Matthew Passion*. We find *Gelegenheit* („opportunity“) and not *Glegenheit*, *Gewächs* („plant“) and not *Gwächs* etc. One may see this as a stylistic restriction. Nevertheless, the process is there and must not be taken to be limited to the southern dialects.⁶

⁴ It is occasionally not trivial to find out whether a complex onset is primitive or derived via an old *ge*- prefixation. In *Gebirge* („mountains“), there is no **Birge* but nevertheless the stem seems to be the free morpheme *Berg*. So it is not entirely clear why in the dialect it is, to my knowledge, not *Birg* but rather the fully spelled-out form *Gebirg*.

⁵ I haven’t controlled whether the vowel elision was a result of the meter as dictated by Bach’s composition.

⁶ The following examples with *geben* (from *g’geben*) instead of the standard *gegeben* are from written internet chats from North Rhine Westphalia, which is west middle German.

(i) Er hat mir schnell einen Termin **geben**
he has me.DAT quickly an appointment given

4. What is left of “typical” Bavarian syntax?

We have seen so far that various features of German grammar that are commonly seen as “typical Bavarian” turn out to be more wide-spread and can also be found in areas that have or had little to no contact with Bavarian. The leitmotif here was the language of Johann Sebastian Bach’s *St Matthew Passion*. Our list of phenomena could, of course, have been expanded, and the result would be the same. This may have been one of the reasons why over many decades dialect research was dominated by phonology, morphology and the lexicon, the classical places in which variation is found, while syntax played a rather minor role. A radical conclusion would be that there is simply no dialect syntax. Such a conclusion would, however, be premature. Here is a reason why.

There is a syntactic phenomenon that I have so far not found anywhere outside Bavarian, neither in other German varieties nor in related closely Germanic languages such as Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, Yiddish, Afrikaans. The construction has a certain resemblance with *wh*-movement to the left of an overt complementizer which gives rise to the well-known DOUBLY-FILLED-COMP phenomenon. An example of this is given in (18).

- (18) D’Resl kon da song [CP **um wiavui** **Uhr** [C’ **dass** [TP wieder a Zug gehd]]]
the-Therese can you.DAT tell at how.much clock that again a train goes
„Therese can tell you a what time there will be another train“

SpecCP and the C-position are lexically filled simultaneously. In the construction I am aiming at, the difference is that the moved element is not a *wh*-phrase but rather an arbitrary referential XP. This XP has topic qualities, and its referent must come from a set of potentially contrastable entities.⁷ Consider the following examples, the first three of which are from internet sources, the fourth one from a humorous translation of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* into Bavarian.

<https://www.anwalt.de/thiele/bewertungen.php> 27-01-2019

- (ii) Der [...] hat mir Schmerzmittel **geben**, und mich entlassen
this.one has me.DAT pain killers given and me released
https://www.klinikbewertungen.de/klinik-forum/erfahrung-mit-johanna-etienne-krankenhaus-neuss?fac_id=ortho&bew_order=2 27-01-201

⁷ This excludes, for instance, speaker oriented adverb such as *leider* (“unfortunately”), *wahrscheinlich* (“perhaps”) etc. but admits adverbs such as adverbs of time, place and manner etc., i.e. adverbs that can serve as topics.

- (19) a. **Den wenn** ich seh', vergeht mir der Appetit!
him.ACC when I see disappears me.DAT the appetite
 "Once I see him, my appetite is gone!"
<https://theaterverlag-arno-boas.de/wp-content/uploads/klosterkind-50.pdf>
 26-01-2018
- b. **Der wenn** da ist, der ist heiß wie Fritten-Fett
he when here is he is hot like french.fry-fat
 "When he is here, he is hot like the oil for French Fries"
https://www.transfermarkt.de/sergegnabry/thread/forum/10/thread_id/1928684/lesenswerteBeitraege/1 26-01-2018
- c. **Ein Hund wenn** bellt, will er was sagen, ...
a dog when barks wants he something say
 "If a dog barks, it wants to say something"
<http://sontheim-brenz.de/images/nachrichtenblatt/KW%2051-53-2015%20-%201-2016.pdf>
- d. **Dees wanns**da iwalegsd, do kimsd bfeigrod ins Schleidan
this when.2SG.you.DAT consider there come.you directly in.the skid
 "If you consider this, you go directly into a skid"
 Merkle (1975: 121; Hamlet translation)

In all these cases, the first NP/DP has been A-bar-moved to the specifier of *wenn/wann* from its A-position in TP. The construction, which by the way works also with the complementizers *dass, ob, bai* (from *sobald* "as") and *wia* ("as"), has a number of interesting properties. First, movement to SpecCP adds an emphatic flavor. This is the reason why it is known since Bayer (2001) under the name EMPHATIC TOPICALIZATION (ET). Second, perhaps as a consequence of the fact that emphasis is a root phenomenon, the entire CP has to move to the left of the main clause. It should be noted that this constraint does not hold for interrogative complements like (18). Third, leaving the CP in the post-verbal domain as in **Mir vergeht der Appetit, den wenn ich seh'* leads to sharp ungrammaticality. Fourth, the pragmatic use conditions show a certain overlap with hanging topic as in *Den, wenn ich den sehe ...* but the Bavarian ET-construction does not show a resumptive; it shows a gap. Fifth, the antecedent of this gap must be in SpecCP as demonstrated by various tests and last not least by prosody. While in the hanging topic construction there is a prosodic break between the topic and the following clause, no such break is observed in the ET construction.⁸ Sixth, the ET construction gives rise to the licensing of a parasitic gap as shown in (20a). The structure must be as in (20c) because filling the second SpecCP with *dann* as in (20b) instead of filling it with an empty operator leads to sharp ungrammaticality.

⁸ The origin of ET must be related to the origin of the familiar and wide-spread DOUBLY-FILLED COMP phenomenon as seen in (18), see Bayer (1984) and much following work.

- (20) a. Den wenn ich seh', erschlag' ich⁹
him when I see kill I
 "When I see him, I will kill him"
- b. *Den wenn ich seh', dann erschlag' ich
him when I see then kill I
- c. [CP Den₁ [C' wenn [TP ich t₁ seh']]] [CP OP₁ [C' erschlag' [ich pg₁ erschlag]]]

As one can verify immediately, if in (20c) OP is replaced by *dann* ("then"), the pg lacks its antecedent. The only way out would be to replace the pg by a pronoun: *Den wenn ich seh', dann erschlag' ich ihn*, which is, of course, grammatical. This is the analysis proposed in Bayer (2001); it follows the structure proposed for parasitic gap constructions in Contreras (1984) and Chomsky (1986).

The Bavarian ET construction has been investigated by Felix (1985), Bayer (1984; 1988; 2001), Lutz (1997; 2001; 2014), and Grewendorf (2014). From a comparative point of view, it is surprising that it is truly unique among the Germanic languages and dialects, unlike the phenomena we discussed in section 3. Bayer & Dasgupta (2016) find certain parallels between ET in Bavarian and a similar construction in Bangla (alias Bengali) which also triggers obligatory fronting of the entire CP.¹⁰ It would enhance our understanding of ET if more languages could be traced down which have this property, and which could reveal more about the forces that condition emphatic XP-movement to the specifier of a complementizer.

5. Conclusion

My considerations in this contribution may at some point have come across like a lamento that many of the properties of Bavarian syntax are not unique to Bavarian and can in fact be found in other languages or dialects such as the Eastern Middle German of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. Let me assure the reader that this would be a completely wrong impression. As a follower of the Chomskyan hypothesis of a biologically rooted Universal Grammar, the properties we find in a certain natural language should turn out to be present or "pop up" in other natural languages as well. To find long *wh*-movement, pleonastic negation, the lack of *zu*-infinitives, the lack of adjectival inflection and the morpho-phonological variation in the past participle also in other dialects is just what we expect according to UG. From this point of view, it is rather the Bavarian ET-construction that should worry the universalist. Why should ET be such a rare phenomenon? Why should it be uniquely present in Bavarian? Most languages have complementizers, and many languages have A-bar movement to the left edge of the CP-phase. So all the ingredients are there. Why should only the Bavarian dialect use this

⁹ Properly pronounced, this would come out as *Den wenn-e siech daschloch-e*.

¹⁰ Even a rough overview of the Bangla data would go beyond the scope of the present article. Therefore I can only recommend to the interested readers to take a look at Bayer and Dasgupta (2016).

potential to move a referential XP to the specifier of an overt complementizer? From the viewpoint of the Chomskyan concept of UG, I think this is a good question. It links the apparent idiosyncrasy of a German dialect to the big questions of comparative syntax and UG.

Dear Mitsunobu, this little exercise with its unanswered question at the end is devoted to you. It would reach its ultimate goal if you see it as a motivation to take some time and relax for a while to listen to the incredible music that carries the text under investigation.

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