The Contribution of Sentence Position:
The Word *also* in Spoken German[*]

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Abstract

The German word *also*, similar to English *so*, is traditionally considered to be a sentence adverb with a consecutive meaning, i.e. it indicates that the propositional content of the clause containing it is some kind of consequence of what has previously been said. As a sentence adverb, *also* has its place within the core of the German sentence, since this is the proper place for an adverb to occur in German. The sentence core offers two proper positions for adverbs: the so-called front field and the middle field. In spoken German, however, *also* often occurs in sentence-initial position, outside the sentence itself. In this paper, I will use excerpts of German conversations to discuss and illustrate the importance of the sentence positions and the discourse positions for the functions of *also* on the basis of some German conversations.

1 The Position of Sentence Adverbs in German

The German word *also*, similar to English *so,* is traditionally considered to be a sentence adverb. In spoken modern German its most frequent use is as a discourse particle. The two word classes are associated with different positions within the German sentence, and these are associated with different functions. In order to understand the discussion of functions and sentence positions in the following analysis of *also*, it is necessary to be familiar with the German sentence positions and their status.

The position of a word within the German sentence is important, as the sentence position is often used as a classification criterion for determining word classes. The word classes are, in turn, ascribed certain typical functions. If the same word form can occur in positions that are typical of different word classes, the problem arises whether this is a case of homonymy, i.e. two words with the same form but different functions, or whether this is actually just one

word — and how are the functions of this word affected by the different positions?

The German sentence is often described as consisting of sentence fields that hold the elements of the clause. These sentence fields are defined in relation to the two German verbal positions, as seen in table (1) below, the first verbal position being at the beginning of a sentence and the second verbal position at the end. In an assertive clause, the first verbal position is preceded by the so-called front field. Between the two verbal positions is the middle field, and after the second verbal position there might be an end field:

(1)   SCHEMATIC ILLUSTRATION OF A GERMAN ASSERTIVE CLAUSE:

front field	1st verbal position	middle field	2nd verbal position	end field

Also, roughly corresponding to English *so*, is traditionally described as a sentence adverb. According to Auer, this is its original use (Auer 1996: 317). As a sentence adverb, it has its position in the core sentence fields: either in the front field or in the middle field, as seen in the constructed examples (2a) and (2b), respectively. Both of these positions are compatible with the word class *adverb*, and with respect to word class functions, the choice between the two positions is free:[1]

(2)   a.   **Also** bin   ich mit dem Bus gefahren, um   dahin zu   kommen.
           Also *have I   with the bus gone,   in order there to   get.*
           'So, I took the bus in order to get there.'

      b.   Ich bin **also** mit   dem Bus gefahren, um   dahin zu   kommen.
           I   have also *with the   bus gone,   in order there to   get*.
           'So, I took the bus in order to get there.'

The front field usually holds only one syntactic constituent at a time. If there are two constituents in front of the first verbal position, the first one is described as being in the pre-front field. *Also* is often used in this position in spoken German, as in (3):

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[1] In some approaches, *also* in the middle field position is considered to be a so-called *modal particle*, whereas other approaches, including Auer (1996), consider middle field *also* to be a sentence adverb. As this paper is concerned with an empirical study of the functional differences between the within-sentence *also* and the outside-sentence *also*, the terminological question of its middle-field status is of minor importance here.

(3)   **Also** jedenfalls hatte mir Naumburg so gut   gefallen, und daß ich dann
also *anyway   had   me Naumburg so much pleased, and that I   then*
beschloß...
decided...
'So, anyway, I had liked Naumburg so much, and that I then
decided…'

Table (4) shows the sentence from example (3) with respect to the sentence
fields:

(4)   SENTENCE (3) IN A SCHEMATIC ILLUSTRATION OF THE SENTENCE
FIELDS:

pre-front field	front-field	1st **verbal position**	middle field	2nd **verbal position**	end field
Also	jedenfalls	hatte	mir Naumburg so gut	gefallen	und daß ich dann beschloß...
So	*anyway*	*had*	*me Naumburg so much*	*pleased*	*and that I then decided...*

According to a strict definition of adverbials, *also* can no longer be considered
a sentence adverb when it occurs outside the traditional sentence fields. The
concern of this paper is to examine if and how the functions of *also* change
according to its position inside or outside the core sentence fields. This is done
by a comparison of the pre-front field and the middle field position.[2]

2   Grammaticalization: From Adverb to Particle?

Auer argues that the pre-front field is a grammaticalization position. In this
position, *also* has gone from being a sentence adverb to being a discourse
particle (Auer 1996: 313). Auer calls this development the 'grammar-to-
interaction cline', since the items taking part in this kind of development
change from being items involved in the structuring of sentences into being
items concerned with the structuring of discourse. The development process
for *also* is shown in (5) below: in the inner sentence fields, *also* is a sentence
adverb lexeme (*also*$_1$). It then gains access to the pre-front field, where it
where it with time changes into a discourse marker, i.e. into a new lexeme

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[2] Here, only the sentence-internal position in the middle field can be taken into consideration,
since there is no occurrence of *also* in the front field in the material used for the analysis
(which is presented in section 3.1).

(*also₂*) (Auer (1996: 313). In (5) below the functions of *also* as described by Auer (1996) are mapped onto the sentence positions in which they occur:

(5)   *The grammar-to-interaction cline:*
        the inner sentence fields   the pre-front field   the pre-front field
        also₁ = sentence adverb –> *also* – function(s)? –> *also₂* = discourse marker

The question mark after *function(s)* in (5) above indicates that I am not sure that an *also* with adverbial meaning and function could not appear in the pre-front field. Auer, however, seems sure that it cannot.

According to Auer (1996: 317), *also* as a sentence adverb indicates 'some kind of consequence of what has been previously said', whereas the discourse particle *also* is a pure text-structuring device. Auer concludes that the pre-front-field *also* (i) is semantically bleached; (ii) takes on pragmatic meaning from the surrounding context; and (iii) has text-structuring functions (Auer 1996: 317-318). The discourse particle *also* can function as a repair marker, a pre-closing token, a 'semantically unspecific opening for a turn or a move', and a hesitation marker (Auer 1996: 317-318).

Auer considers it impossible for the discourse particle *also* to move into the sentence frame without changing back into the adverb *also*: 'Positionally, adverbial usage in the inner sentence frame and pre-front field usage exclude each other' (Auer 1996: 318; see also Auer 1997: 86, n. 14). Thus, according to Auer's suggestion there is a clear division of functions and meanings of *also* according to its sentential position.

Thim-Mabrey (1985, 1988) also ascribes a unique contribution of the pre-front field to the interpretation of an expression in that position: the expression acquires a meta-communicative function (Thim-Mabrey 1988: 53). For sentence adverbs such as *also*, she claims that they are not meta-communicative in themselves but only have this function in the pre-front field (Thim-Mabrey 1988: 55). The meta-communicative function, however, is not in contrast with the consecutive meaning of *also*; in fact, the consecutive meaning is a precondition in Thim-Mabrey's model. Thim-Mabrey is only concerned with those instances of pre-front-field *also* that display a consecutive meaning along with the meta-communicative function (Thim-Mabrey 1985: 32-33) — that is, instances that do not exist according to Auer.

The 'adverbial' meaning of *also* Thim-Mabrey defines as paraphrasable by 'consequently'. This definition fits rather well with Auer's meaning description of the adverb *also* as indicating a consecutive relationship. On the other hand, Thim-Mabrey does not give any explanation at all for the occurrences of semantically bleached pre-front field *also*, although she does recognize their existence; she simply rules them out of her study (Thim-Mabrey 1985: 33).

Thus, both kinds of *also* — adverbial and non-adverbial — seem to occur in the pre-front field, and Auer and Thim-Mabrey have chosen to concentrate

on diametrically opposite kinds. This leads us to the question of what kinds of functions *also* actually fulfils in the pre-front field, and whether these functions are or are not compatible with a consecutive meaning interpretation.

3   An Empirical Analysis of *also* in Spoken German

In the empirical analysis presented in this section, I will examine whether the occurrences of *also* in my material support the analysis of *also* given by Auer or the one given by Thim-Mabrey. In order to do this I compare the pre-front-field *also* to the middle-field *also*.[3] The following two questions serve as the basis for the investigation:

- What functions and meanings does the pre-front-field *also* have?

- Is there a significant difference between the functions and meanings of the pre-front-field *also* and the middle-field *also*?

3.1   The Material

The material for this study, which was ordered from the German Language Archives in Mannheim, Germany, consists of two conversations between native speakers of German.[4] The topics are partly predetermined but the participants treat them rather freely. In total, the conversations consist of about two hours of talk. Because of space limitations, I will only be able to present a few illustrative examples from the material. For an explanation of the transcription signs, see the appendix.

3.2   Functions and Meanings in the Pre-front Field

When working with the empirical material, I considered not only the sentence position (pre-front field versus middle field), but also the sequential environment or discourse position — that is, whether the pre-front field was in a turn-medial or turn-initial position. In the turn-medial position, *also* is the first word uttered by the same speaker in a new utterance. In turn-initial position, *also* is the very first word uttered by a new speaker. I will call the former occurrences within-turn pre-front fields and the latter turn-initial pre-front fields, in order to keep them clearly separate. I then investigated the pre-front fields from the point of view of their discourse position: do the functions

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[3] I could not consider the front-field position, since *also* did not occur in this position in the examined material.

[4] The conversations, BR001B and BR006A, were ordered from the corpus Biographical and Travel Stories from the German Language Archives at the Institute for the German Language (Institut für deutsche Sprache) in Mannheim, Germany.

of *also* in the pre-front field vary with respect to the discourse position, or is it of no consequence if the pre-front field is turn-initial or turn-medial?

3.2.1   The Within-turn Pre-front Field

In the within-turn pre-front field, *also* can have different, and sometimes combined, functions. It often has the following functions:

- it marks the return to a previous topic that has been temporarily lost (text-structuring level);

- it restates something already obvious or inferable from the previous conversation (propositional level).

In example (6), Barbara has given evidence against Thomas's claim that the demonstrations in Leipzig were peaceful. After Barbara finishes her story, Thomas defends his position. *Also* in (6j) prefaces the restatement of his position. It can also be seen as a restriction to his restatement in (6h): there was no violence, or at least he had not seen any:

(6)   BR006A: *Thomas has claimed that there was no violence at the demonstrations in Leipzig. Barbara has told a story that shows the opposite. Thomas is now restating his position:*

    a. Thomas: Also- ich <u>bin</u> dann in den <u>Wochen</u> da<u>nach</u> / also- (.) bestimmt <u>vier</u>-, <u>fünf</u>-, <u>sechs</u>mal bin ich 'ner <u>jeden</u>, äh – wann war das immer, dienstags wohl, (.) nee mon- ((tiefe Stimme))

    b. Gisela: =<u>mon</u>tags ne[e.]

    c. Thomas: [oder] [war 's mon[tags?]   ]

    d. Barbara: [(…)   ]

    e. Gisela: [(War das nich   ] immer diese) Montagsdemo?

    f. Thomas: Ja, montags. Ja. ((lachend))

    g. Gisela: ((lacht))

    h. Thomas: Ha, is schon schon wieder vor- ((lachend, verzweifelt)) ((lacht kurz)). Ja. Bin ich also dann dabei gewesen noch 'n paar Wochen, und da war <u>NIE</u> was mit Gewalt.

    i. jemand   hm.

    j. Thomas: **Also** ich hab's jedenfalls nie was gesehn, ich hab immer nur gesehen, daß es gewaltfrei abgegangen is un- und da is ooch nie was randaliert worden oder was umgeschmissen worden,

    a. Thomas: *also* I was then in the weeks afterwards / *also* (.) <u>four</u>, <u>five</u>, <u>six</u> times I was there every eh – when was that always, Tuesdays right, (.) no Mon- ((deep voice))

    b. Gisela: =<u>Mon</u>days [right.]

    c. Thomas: [or   ] [was it Mon[days?]   ]
    d. Barbara: [(…)   ]
    e. Gisela: [(Wasn't it   ] always this) Monday-
          Demonstration?
    f. Thomas: Yes, Mondays. Yes. ((laughingly))
    g. Gisela: ((laughs))
    h. Thomas: *Ha*, is already over- ((laughingly, desperately)) ((laughs shortly)). Yes.
          So, I was then there yet a couple of weeks, and there was <u>never</u> anything
          with violence.
    i. someone: hm.
    j. Thomas: ***Also***, anyway, I never saw anything, I only just saw, that it passed off
          peacefully an- and nothing was ever vandalized or overthrown,

In example (6), *also* prefaces an instance of topic continuation: in (6h) Thomas has already completed his argument with the very emphatic statement that there was no violence at the demonstrations. This could be seen as the end of his argument, but in his *also*-prefaced utterance in (6j), Thomas picks up the previous topic once more, continuing it for a little while longer.

It is difficult to say what difference *also* actually makes to Thomas's utterance in (6j). Cases like this have probably contributed to Auer's conclusion that *also* just takes on pragmatic functions from the environment and has no function or meaning of its own. This impression is especially conspicuous given that the function of *also* in (6) seems to have very little to do with marking a consecutive relationship between statements, as the adverbial *also* is supposed to do. Instead, the function *also* in (6) is thematic: in the case of a restatement/return, it shows topic continuation, marking the 'red thread' in the thematic continuity; and in the case of a restriction of previous statements, it just marks thematic relevance. I believe, however, that the notion of continuity and the notion of consequence are somehow related, and I do not want to exclude the possibility that even in cases like example (6) *also* has a meaning of its own.

Some instances of *also* in the within-turn pre-front field seem to have an adverbial function, though: in example (7) below, *also* can be interpreted as indicating that the following utterance is a conclusion or consequence of the previous utterance/sentence (i.e. it functions on the propositional level of the utterances):

(7)   BR001B: *Dirk is telling his friends about his walk through the woods on his way to Freyburg:*
     Dirk: und (1 Sek) <u>kam</u> dann aber irgendwann an- (.) an die <u>kleine</u>
            <u>saale</u>. ((atmet ein)) (.) das erzäh- zählte ich vorhin ja schon
            also es wär (.) jetzt doppelt, ((atmet tief ein)) aber d- <u>da</u> hats
            mir jedenfalls <u>sehr</u> gut gefallen,

     Dirk: and (1 sec) <u>came</u> then anyway at some time to - (.) to the <u>small</u> <u>saale</u>
            river. ((inhales)) (.) that I tol- told you before already ***also*** it would (.)

now be double, ((inhales deeply)) but anyway th- there I liked it very
much,

3.2.2 The Turn-initial Pre-front Field

In example (8), *also* prefaces objections: one of the interaction partners, Dirk,
states that weepy emotions are feminine (turns a-m). Thomas and Gisela
object to this in lines (8n) and (8o):

(8)   BR001B: *Dirk has told his friends about how touched he felt on his
       way to visit Nietzsche's grave:*
       a. Thomas: des is schon fast schnulzig
       b. Gisela: ((lacht, während Thomas versucht, noch etwas zu sagen))
       c. Dirk: ((spricht während Gisela lacht:)) jaja! ((lacht))
       d. Dirk, Gis: ((lachen))
       e. Dirk: das war ich aber ((lacht)) manchmal. ((leise, lachend))
       f. VIELE: ((lachen))
       g. Dirk: des MACHT nichts, aber ((lacht)) manchmal. ((lacht)) hab
                        ich etwas=
       h. Gisela: ((lacht, während Dirk spricht))
       i. Dirk: =feminine empfindungen, ((atmet ein)) und ((lachend)) (.)
                        ((sagt etwas, aber wird von Gisela unterbrochen))
       j. Gisela: was für welche?
       k. Dirk?:   ((versucht etwas zu sagen, aber wird von Gisela
                        unterbrochen))
       l. Gisela: feminine?
       m. Dirk: j-ja.
       n. Thomas: **also** darüber läßt sich ja [streiten.   schnulzig!]
       o. Gisela: [**also** das find ich ja nu allerhand.]
       p. Thomas: ((sagt etwas Unhörbares))
       q. Gisela: jahaha! jahaha! ((lacht))
       r. Th, Dirk: ((lachen laut))

       a. Thomas: that is almost weepy
       b. Gisela: ((laughs while Thomas tries to say something more))
       c. Dirk: ((talks while Gisela laughs:)) yes yes! ((laughs))
       d. Dirk, Gis: ((laugh))
       e. Dirk: but I was that ((laughs)) sometimes. ((low, laughingly))
       f. VIELE: ((laugh))
       g. Dirk: it doesn't matter, but ((laughs)) sometimes. ((laughs)) I have
                         somewhat=
       h. Gisela: ((laughs while Dirk talks))
       i. Dirk: =feminine emotions, ((inhales)) and ((laughingly)) (.) ((says something
                         but is interrupted by Gisela))
       j. Gisela: what kind?
       k. Dirk?:   ((tries to say something, but is interrupted by Gisela))

l. Gisela: feminine?
m. Dirk: yes.
n. Thomas: ***also*** that can be [discussed. weepy!]
o. Gisela: [***also*** that's the limit.]
p. Thomas: ((says something unhearable))
q. Gisela: yehehes! yehehes! ((laughs))
r. Th, Dirk: ((laugh loud))

In example (8), Thomas and Gisela object to Dirk's *claiming* that weepy emotions are feminine. They do *not* object to the fact that weepy emotions are feminine, which would be the interpretation of *also* on the propositional level: 'Weepy emotions are feminine, and as a consequence of that you can discuss them.' Instead, Thomas and Gisela want to question this very claim before the statement becomes conversational history and is more difficult to question. The objections are relevant as some kind of meta-communicative reaction to Dirk's claiming that weepy emotions are feminine and are therefore probably placed on the speech act level: 'you claim that weepy emotions are feminine, and as a consequence of that I have to say this: that can be discussed'.[5] The objections can in this way still be considered consequences of the previous interaction, although they cannot be described on the propositional level. From this perspective, which is in line with the suggestion made by Diewald and Fischer (1998) and Fischer (2000), the consecutive meaning of *also* would still be intact, but it would refer to a different domain than in the propositional use.

There are also examples of functions found in the within-turn pre-front fields and in the turn-initial pre-front fields, namely functions of topical coherence and drawing conclusions from what has previously been said. Since space is limited, I will only give an example of a turn-initial pre-front field *also* with a function on the propositional level — that is, marking that the following utterance draws a conclusion from what has previously been said:

(9) BR006A: *Gisela has just asked Thomas if the participants in the demonstrations against the GDR regime in autumn 1989 were mainly students:*

a. Thomas: [Nee also-] / ich hatte den Eindruck 'nen ganz gemischtes Publikum.
b. Gisela: Ja. Mm.
c. Thomas: =((atmet ein))
              (1,5 Sek)
d. Thomas: Also ich glaub nich, daß die Studenten da äh 'ne besondere Rolle gespielt haben, (.) die hatten äh meistens / Bedenken wegen ihrem Studienplatz,

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[5] Actually, the paraphrase offered here is quite consistent with Thim-Mabrey's suggestions (1988: 63), but this paraphrase approach itself requires further discussion, which is beyond the scope of the present study.

  d. Gisela: Mm.
  e. Thomas: zu dem Zeitpunkt [noch.]
  f. Gisela: [Mm.]
               (1,5 Sek)
  g. Gisela: **Also** es waren nich so sehr diese Montags-eh(.)-gottesdienst-
               besucher, (.) die da warn.
               (1,5 Sek)
  h. Thomas: Na die [Gottes]dienstbesucher, das das sin ja ooch no- äh=
  i. Gisela: [(…)]
  j. Thomas: =((Schnalzer)) normale Leute gewesen, es sin ja nich [best-]

  a. Thomas: [No *also*-] / I had the impression of a very mixed audience.
  b. Gisela: Yes. Mm.
  c. Thomas: =((inhales))
               (1,5 sec)
  d. Thomas: *Also* I don't think that the students were an important part there, (.) they
               usually had eh / apprehensions about losing their right to study,
  d. Gisela: Mm.
  e. Thomas: at this time [still.]
  f. Gisela: [Mm.]
               (1,5 sec)
  g. Gisela: *Also* it weren't that much these Monday-eh(.)–service participants, (.)
               who were there.
               (1,5 sec)
  h. Thomas: Well the [service] participants, that was also eh=
  i. Gisela: [(…)]
  j. Thomas: =((clicking his tongue)) normal people, it weren't any [spec-]

In example (9), Thomas says that the students did not make up a large part of the demonstration participants (9a-e). From that Gisela concludes that the demonstration participants then were people other than the participants at the Tuesday evening religious service (9g). She comes to this conclusion because she believes that the service participants were mainly students. This also becomes evident in her utterance in (9g). It turns out that her conclusion is based on false premises: the service participants were not mainly students (9h-j).

3.2.3 Results of the Analysis of the Pre-front Field

The pre-front field contains both the text-structuring kind of *also* observed by Auer (1996, 1997) and the conclusion-marking kind (propositional level) examined by Thim-Mabrey (1985, 1988). Objections, however, are found only in the turn-initial pre-front field, probably because there is no speaker change in the within-turn pre-front fields. It would be rather strange for a speaker to object to something that she herself has just said. She can restrict it, modify it, maybe even take it back — but she can't object to herself. In this first pilot study, I did not find any instances of *also* on the speech-act level in the within-

turn pre-front field, but I would not exclude this possibility on the basis of such a limited study as this one.

It has also turned out that the functions of *also* are sometimes difficult to identify and to keep separate. The functions seem to form a continuum rather than being clearly defined. The contribution of the sequential position may also be a continual one rather than involving clearly separate functions — that is, involving tendencies rather than an absolute division of functions. However, exactly what functions the turn-initial pre-front field and the within-turn pre-front field tend to have must be determined on the basis of a more extensive study.

The element *also* could still be described as indicating a consecutive relationship in many of its pragmatic functions, but not always a consecutive relationship on the propositional level (cf. Schiffrin 1987; Sweetser 1990; Diewald and Fischer 1998; Fischer 2000). The suggestion was also made that there is some kind of affinity between the notion of consequence and the more general notion of continuation.

3.3   How 'Adverbial' is the Middle-field *also*?

Auer and Thim-Mabrey define the 'adverbial' *also* as indicating that the utterance containing it is some kind of conclusion drawn from what has previously been said. They seem to agree on this definition of 'adverbialness' for *also*. In the material, there are occurrences of this kind of *also* in the middle field, as one might expect given the grammatical tradition in which adverbs should occur in the inner sentence fields:

(10)   BR006A: *Thomas has previously said that he went to his first demonstration with a friend, in order to make sure that the friend did not go to the front line and get herself into trouble. Thomas made sure that they stayed back. Barbara now tells about her first demonstration, were she went with a friend, who made sure that they did get to the front line:*

    a. Barbara: =Also man hätte dort (n-) und ich war da mit 'nem Freund, der- der konnte gar nicht dicht genug   [ran,] das war **also** genau=

    b. Gisela: [m.]

    c. Barbara: =umgekehrt, ((lachend:))   [((atmet ein)) und ich   ] hatte=

    d. Gisela: [((lacht))   ]

    e. Barbara: =fürchterliche Angst ja,

    a. Barbara: =*Also* you could there- (n-) and I was there with a friend, he- he just couldn't get close [enough,   ] that was ***also*** exactly=

b. Gisela: [m.   ]
c. Barbara: =the other way round, ((laughingly:))   [((inhales)) and I]
                was=
d. Gisela: [((laughs))   ]
e. Barbara: =terribly afraid, right,

In (10a-b), Barbara concludes that 'it was exactly the other way around': Thomas kept his enthusiastic friend back, whereas Barbara was dragged to the front line by her enthusiastic friend.

Middle-field *also* is, however, often reminiscent of pre-front-field *also*, and especially of within-turn pre-front-field *also*. Example (11) below can be compared to the pre-front field *also* in example (6) above: *also* has a text-structuring function, as it marks the return to and the repeating of a topic that has been temporarily lost:

(11) BR006A: *Thomas is returning to the main topic 'violence at the demonstrations':*
   a. Thomas: Also- ich <u>bin</u> dann in den <u>Wochen</u> da<u>nach</u> / also- (.)
                bestimmt <u>vier</u>-, <u>fünf</u>-, <u>sechs</u>mal bin ich 'ner <u>jeden</u>, äh –
                wann war das immer, dienstags wohl, (.) nee mon- ((tiefe
                Stimme))
   b. Gisela: =<u>mon</u>tags ne[e.]
   c. Thomas: [oder] [war 's mon[tags?]   ]
   d. Barbara: [(….)   ]
   e. Gisela: [(War das nich   ] immer
                diese) Montagsdemo?
   f. Thomas: Ja, montags. Ja. ((lachend))
   g. Gisela: ((lacht))
   h. Thomas: Ha, is schon schon wieder vor- ((lachend, verzweifelt))
                ((lacht kurz)). Ja. Bin ich **also** dann dabei gewesen noch 'n
                paar Wochen, und da war <u>NIE</u> was mit Gewalt.

   a. Thomas: *also* I was then in the weeks afterwards / *also* (.) <u>four</u>, <u>five</u>, <u>six</u> times I
                was there every eh – when was that always, Tuesdays right, (.) no
                Mon- ((deep voice))
   b. Gisela: =<u>Mon</u>days [right.]
   c. Thomas: [or   ] [was it Mon[days?]   ]
   d. Barbara: [(…)   ]
   e. Gisela: [(Wasn't it   ] always this) Monday
                demonstration?
   f. Thomas: Yes, Mondays. Yes. ((laughingly))
   g. Gisela: ((laughs))
   h. Thomas: *Ha*, is already over- ((laughingly, desperately)) ((laughs shortly)). Yes. I
                was ***also*** then there another couple of weeks, and there was <u>NEVER</u>
                anything with violence.

In (11a) Thomas is about to continue his story (or argument) when he suddenly stops, asking himself what day the demonstrations actually took place. Gisela helps him (11b), and they agree that this was on Mondays (11f). After this side sequence, Thomas comments that this is already over (11h), before he returns to the previous topic and activity (story or argument) (also in (11h)). The return to the temporarily interrupted topic and activity is made by a middle-field-*also* utterance. In cases like this one, it is difficult to say what difference it makes whether *also* is in the pre-front field or not. It does not, however, seem to be very 'adverbial' in the sense defined by Auer and Thim-Mabrey.

4   Conclusions

In this study I investigated the functions of *also* in the pre-front field and the middle field. It turned out that the functions presented here could appear in both the pre-front field and the middle field. The only function that could not appear in the middle-field was *also* as used in objections. This was at least partly attributed to the nature of the act of objecting: there has to be a change of speakers. Therefore, this function could only be found in the turn-initial pre-front field. When prefacing objections, *also* was determined to refer to the speech-act level. The function of *also* could still be seen as indicating a consecutive relationship: the objection is a consequence of a statement by the previous speaker (ex. (8)).

In text-structuring functions (on the thematic level), the adverbial meaning of *also* could also be seen as intact, given the proposal that there is a relation between the semantic notion of consequence and that of continuation. This was supported by the observation that not only pre-front-field *also* (as in example (6)) but also middle-field *also* (as in example (11)) was able to have text-structuring functions, even though the middle field is traditionally seen as the stereotypical adverb position, and the adverb meaning of *also* was (as noted in section 2.1) described by Auer (1996, 1996) and Thim-Mabrey (1985) as involving a propositional function.

Perhaps there are no clearly delimited functional contributions of each sentence position in the German sentence. Instead, we can assume a continuum of functions where different parts of the continuum are associated with particular prototypical syntactical positions, thereby accounting for the use of adverbial *also* as a consecutive marker on the propositional level. A more extensive study of the functions and meanings of *also* is needed to prove whether this is the case.

It is nevertheless clear that *also* in the middle field is not a straightforward consecutive, as Auer and Thim-Mabrey claim. To return to Auer, the adverbial usage in the inner sentence frame and the pre-front field usage do *not*

positionally exclude each other (cf. Auer 1996: 318; section 2 above). Thim-Mabrey, on the other hand, would probably exclude from her model all instances of *also* in the inner sentence frame that could not be paraphrased with 'consequently', but she fails to explain the relationship between the different meanings and functions of *also*.

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Appendix

TRANSCRIPTION INVENTORY:

((laughs))   meta-comment, description of what happens
(…)   unintelligible speech
(was)   uncertain interpretation
(.) short pause
(1,5 sec)   measured pause
/   tone boundary without specification of intonation
,   tone boundary, short pause, progressive intonation
.   tone boundary, short pause, terminal intonation
?   tone boundary, short pause, rising intonation
=   at end of line: is continued without break on the next line of the same speaker;
=   at beginning of line: either a continued turn by a previous speaker, or a new speaker starts to speak immediately after the previous speaker, without a pause between the two speakers
an- interrupted word
<u>and</u> stressed word
<u>AND</u>   very much stressed word
[and]   square brackets=
[yes]   =show the extensions of overlapping speech