Apokoinou in Swedish talk-in-interaction

A family of methods for grammatical construction and the resolving of local communicative projects

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This thesis investigates apokoinou in Swedish talk-in-interaction. In contrast to the traditions of normative grammar and theoretically based approaches to language, where apokoinou and related phenomena have been excluded from grammatical description altogether or been treated as the products of various kinds of mistakes, apokoinou is here re-specified as a highly functional grammatical resource and method to accomplish local communicative projects in talk.

Apokoinou utterances are formally defined as the products of a construction method, where a segment that is final in a first possibly complete syntactic segment (the pivot) is retro-constructed as initial in a following second syntactic segment. The extension of the pivot segment is made by way of a doubling of syntactic constituents from the pre-pivot segment and with a prosodic design that integrates the whole utterance. From a strict and normative sentence-perspective, this doubling renders the final phase of the whole utterance as incoherent with the initial phase.

Apokoinou utterances are not incoherent for participants, but a family of methods to accomplish two consecutive actions within one utterance. The second action can change perspective on some local topical aspect, confirm or insist on some local topic or action, close and demarcate a local project, and resume turns or skip-connect to pending local communicative projects after interstitial activities. These are all recipient designed local communicative projects in the sense of being designed to fit within the ongoing wider communicative context and they are often interactionally achieved in and through minimal sequences.

These results have implications for grammatical theory. Among these are that grammar must be seen as conditions on dynamic constructional processes, not only as static and fixed structures, and that grammar is organized on a local level rather than on a maximally general level. Apokoinou should also be included in a grammar of Swedish conversational language as one of the grammatical resources available for participants in Swedish talk.