

Heidelberger Datensitzungen



Donnerstag, 21. August 2025, 16:15 - 17:45 Uhr (Zoom)

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Product request for over-the-counter medication in German pharmacies (Produktwünsche bei der Selbstmedikation in deutschen Apotheken)

In Germany, pharmacy sales staff are required by regulation to provide consultation before dispensing any prescription or over-the-counter medication (see ApoBetrO § 20, subsection (1)-(2)). When dispensing over-the-counter medication, official guidelines organize this consultation into three main activities: 1) asking, in which the staff requests information of the customer as for whom the treatment is intended (as customers regularly pick up medication for, e.g., children and partners) and the specific complaint; 2) deciding, in which the pharmacy staff determines whether treatment with over-the-counter medication is sufficient and, if so, which medication would be appropriate, and 3) informing, in which the pharmacy staff offers information as to the dosage, application, storage, and disposal of the medication (see Bundesapothekerkammer, 2023). While guidelines generally encourage staff to actively involve customers “in the conversation” (Bundesapothekerkammer, 2023, p. 3, own translation), the guidelines largely treat customers as recipients of the consultation; possible customer contributions (besides the answers to questions) remain largely unmentioned (see Bundesapothekerkammer, 2023). Furthermore, although these guidelines are generally known among pharmaceutical staff, prior observational studies have found staff generally do not follow them (see Seiberth et al., 2022; Moritz et al., 2021). There is to date no research analyzing requests for over-the-counter medication in pharmacies in situ.

In this data session, we will analyze a collection of video-recorded and transcribed requests for over-the-counter medication and other non-prescription products from sales encounters between customers and pharmacists in a community pharmacy in northwest Germany. The following research questions will guide our data session

- 1) How do customers design their requests for over-the-counter medication and medical products?
- 2) How do pharmacists conduct their consultations? E.g., how do pharmacists request information from customers? How do they recommend products? How do they inform as to proper use of the product?
- 3) How do pharmacists adapt their consultations to a customer’s specific request?

The extracts for this data session are taken from a corpus of 41 video-recorded sales encounters in the same pharmacy. Data are in German and transcribed according to the GAT 2 conventions for basic transcripts, with notation borrowed from the conventions for fine transcripts to capture features tempo and volume (Selting et al., 2011). Multimodal features of the interaction are transcribed according to Mondada's conventions for multimodal transcripts (Mondada, 2022).

The language for the data session will be German.

Works cited

- Bundesapothekerkammer. (2023). Information und Beratung des Patienten bei der Abgabe von Arzneimitteln—Selbstmedikation. Bundesapothekerkammer. https://www.abda.de/fileadmin/user_upload/assets/Praktische_Hilfen/Leitlinien/Selbstmedikation/LL_Info_Beratung_SM_Kommentar.pdf
- Mondada, L. (2022). Conventions for multimodal transcription. Lorenza Mondada. https://www.lorenzamondada.net/_files/ugd/ba0dbb_3978d2a34cf44376adb7a341975d23aa.pdf
- Moritz, K., Seiberth, J., Herrmann, N., Bertsche, T. & Schiek, S. (2021). Are evidence-based criteria addressed during counseling on over-the-counter products? An observational study in community pharmacies. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 104, 2824–2829.
- Seiberth, J., Moritz, K., Herrmann, N., Bertsche, T. & Schiek, S. (2022). What influences the information exchange during self-medication consultations in community pharmacies? A non-participant observation study. *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, 18, 2444–2456.
- Selting, M., Auer, P., Barth-Weingarten, D., Bergmann, J., Bergmann, P., Birkner, K., Couper-Kuhlen, E., Deppermann, A., Gilles, P., Günthner, S., Hartung, M., Kern, F., Mertzlufft, C., Meyer, C., Morek, M., Oberzaucher, F., Peters, J., Quasthoff, U., Schütte, W., ... Uhmann, S. (2011). A system for transcribing talk-in-interaction: GAT 2. *Gesprächsforschung*, 12, 1–51.

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