

**Linguistics Research Seminar Series 2008**  
**Monday, August 25 at 11.00 am**  
**Linguistics seminar Room - W5C221**

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**“The use of Pragmatic Devices by German Non-Native Speakers of English: eh, like, or something like that”**

Mastering the pragmatic norms of another language is one of the greatest challenges to non-native speakers. One particularly difficult aspect of pragmatic conventions is the appropriate use of pragmatic devices such as like, you know, I think, and or something like that which have been found to serve a number of important textual and interactive functions in discourse. This paper reports on a study on the use of such devices by non-native speakers in cross-cultural conversations in terms of frequency and function. In particular, the study examines the use of the English pragmatic devices like, eh and General Extenders (and things like that, or something like that) by German non-native speakers of English (GNNSE) in interactions with native speakers of New Zealand English (NSNZE). The results are compared with the use of these forms in conversations between NSNZE and the use of close equivalent forms in German by the same GNNSE. The analysis is based on a corpus of approximately 18 ½ hours of dyadic conversations or about 224,338 words of transcription.