

# Encyclopaedia of German Diatheses

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## Preface

[0.1] Errors and omission are unavoidable in scientific writing. They are the writer's equivalent of statistical Type I and Type II errors, respectively. And just as with statistical data, I have worked hard to keep all errors and omission to a minimum in relation to the number of justified statements and judgements. Still, I need to start with a major disclaimer: this book is a work in progress. The current version undoubtedly contains numerous errors, omissions, inaccuracies and wrong generalisations. I can say this with certainty because I have been changing, adding and deleting details up to the last moment before publication of the current version of this book. And I do not expect it to stop here. Actually, the work-in-progress status is intended to be taken quite literally: I plan to update and revise this book regularly in the future. Any progress can be followed online at [github.com/cysouw/diathesis](https://github.com/cysouw/diathesis). I welcome any suggestions for improvement, which can be submitted as an 'issue' on that website, or, even better, as a 'pull request' including proposed changes and corrections.

[0.2] This book is about German grammar, but the book is written in English. These two decisions have a purely personal background. First, the idea to write about German grammar arose in the context of me teaching German grammar at the Philipps-University in Marburg. Actually, the diversity of diathesis could, and should, be investigated in the same depth in other language besides German. Second, the book is written in English first and foremost because I personally feel more comfortable writing in English than in German. Also, I think that the current approach to diathesis is also of interest to readers that do not care too much about all minute details of German grammar. And for the readers that are interested in those details of the German language, I assume that they both have a working knowledge of English (so they can read this text) and of German (so they can understand the German examples). For that reason I decided to omit any interlinear glossing of the examples. Most examples are simple enough to be understood even with just an approximate understanding of German. Adding interlinear glossing throughout would be an enormous undertaking, which I think is not worthwhile given the intended readership.

[0.3] This book is written in Pandoc Markdown. Markdown ([commonmark.org](https://commonmark.org)) allows for clean and readable raw text, while Pandoc ([pandoc.org](https://pandoc.org)) provides easy transformations of the text into beautiful output, for example in formats like XeLaTeX/PDF or HTML. I have used various extensions for Pandoc ('filters' in Pandoc-parlance), for example to format and number linguistic examples. More information on these filters can be found on the GitHub webpage mentioned above.

[0.4] The many lists, examples and subsections of this book make it almost a serialised database, and I have included many cross references to connect related parts throughout. To read the resulting hypertext I would urge the reader to try out an electronic version, either PDF or HTML. I personally have become really enamoured with the HTML version as it allows for easy searching and for quick forward-and-backward jumping through the text using our already internalised muscle-memory from web browsing. Also, the advances in CSS-styling are progressed to such an extend that the layout of HTML is almost approaching LaTeX sophistication, while adding a responsive/adaptive design (Marcotte 2010). The HTML version of this book is prepared as a single standalone file that can be used offline. This file will be opened in a web browser, even when the file is saved locally. It just uses the web browser as a text-rendering engine.

[0.5] Many thanks to Martin Haspelmath, Simon Kasper, Annika Besser, and especially to Jens Fleischhauer for extremely helpful comments and detailed suggestions. Of the many students that have participated in my lectures and seminars (and had to endure my work-in-progress) I would like to explicitly thank Dennis Beitel, Franziska Beyer, Patricia Bier, Katja

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# Chapter 1

## Setting the scene

### 1.1 The daunting diversity of diathesis

[1.1] The quintessential example of German diathesis, found in virtually every grammatical description of German, is the *werden+Partizip* passive construction (1.1 a). A central characteristic of this construction is that the state-of-affairs as described by this passive is fundamentally the same as in the corresponding active (1.1 b), though the sentence structure differs between the two expressions.

- (1.1) a. Das Gemälde wird (von einem Künstler) gemalt.  
b. Der Künstler malt ein Gemälde.

[1.2] This approach to diathesis, viz. different grammatical sentence structures that express approximately the same state-of-affairs, is applicable to a large number of grammatical phenomena in German. For example, some verbs allow for passive-like constructions without any *werden* auxiliary, often called ‘anticausative’ (1.2 a). Other verbs allow for an alternation between a case-marked accusative and a prepositional phrase, often called ‘antipassive’ (1.2 b). Further, there exist many different kinds of diathesis marked by a reflexive pronoun *sich* (1.2 c) or marked by preverbs like *ent-* (1.2 d). Many auxiliary-like construction beyond the *werden+Infinitiv* passive also show diathesis, e.g. *sein+zu-Infinitiv* (1.2 e).<sup>1</sup>

- (1.2) a. Der Doktor heilt den Schmerz.  
Der Schmerz heilt (durch den Doktor).  
b. Der Jäger schießt den Bären.  
Der Jäger schießt auf den Bären.  
c. Der Lehrer beklagt den Lärm.  
Der Lehrer beklagt sich über den Lärm.  
d. Der Kandidat stammt aus einem Adelsgeschlecht.  
Der Kandidat entstammt einem Adelsgeschlecht  
e. Der Ermittler löst den Fall.  
Der Fall ist (für den Ermittler) leicht zu lösen.

[1.3]

---

<sup>1</sup>Many examples in this book contain masculine nouns, not because of laziness on my behalf, but because their definite articles overtly show the different German cases (*der, des, dem, den*). Notwithstanding this grammatical preference, I will try to use examples with as much diversity as possible throughout this book.

All in all, there are about 250 different German diatheses described in this book, some highly productive, some only attested for a handful of verbs. The main goal of this book is to present this wealth of grammatical possibility in a unified manner, while at the same time attempting to classify and organise this diversity. I will make no attempt to fit all these constructional possibilities of the German language into any specific grammatical framework, although the collection of diatheses presented here might be taken as a modelling-challenge for your favourite grammatical theory.

It might come as a surprise that there are so many different diatheses in German, but my impression is that German is no exception among the world's languages in this respect. I expect that all languages have a wealth of different ways in which to construe a sentence around a lexical predicate. In a sense, diatheses allow for the expression of different perspectives on the event described, something that is arguably a common desire of any language user. [1.4]

## 1.2 Defining diathesis

A diathesis is defined here as special kind of alternation between two different clause constructions. To properly define the notion 'diathesis', I will first define 'alternation' in general. Next, the definition of 'clause alternation' will be built on that basis. Finally, a diathesis will then be defined as special kind of clause alternation. A few crucial concepts that are used in the following definitions will be discussed in more detail in subsequent sections. [1.5]

An ALTERNATION (or simply 'grammatical marking') is defined as follows: [1.6]

- An alternation consist of two different linguistic constructions, i.e. there are two alternants.
- The lexical root (or possibly larger linguistic entity) does not change in the alternation, i.e. there is some fundamental linguistic material in both alternants that remains the same.
- Typically, the difference between these alternants is overtly indicated by the presence of some grammatical linguistic elements.
- Typically, the overt marking introduces a direction into the alternation, i.e. one alternant consists of less/shorter/zero linguistic elements ('less marked') and one consists of more/longer/overt linguistic material ('more marked'). In some cases, the direction of the alternation remains undecidable, i.e. the alternation is equipollent.
- The set of roots (or possibly larger linguistic entities) to which the alternation applies form an empirical linguistic class. Such an empirical class often has a semantic/functional interpretation, but not necessarily so.

Alternations are the basis of all grammatical analysis.<sup>2</sup> They include for example: [1.7]

- i. morphological oppositions, like singular *Haus* 'house' vs. plural *Häuser* 'houses'.

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<sup>2</sup>There is an interesting, almost philosophical, issue here that I will not delve into, namely whether the basis of grammatical analysis are the constructions themselves (cf. construction grammar) or the alternations between constructions. The statement in the main text should indeed be taken as a proposal that alternations are the more crucial entities. An alternation is the equivalent in morphosyntax of a phonological minimal pair. Alternation are also useful in the practice of grammatical description. For example, the meaning/function of a construction is often hard to describe in full, while the meaning/function of an alternation can simply be described by the difference in meaning between the alternants. Only the crucial aspect that is added by an alternation needs to be captured – a task which is already difficult enough though. Similar intuitions about the importance of alternations have lead to the development of transformations (Harris 1957).

- ii. oppositions of grammatical forms, like synthetic present *er schläft* ‘he sleeps’ vs. analytic perfect *er hat geschlafen* ‘he has slept’
- iii. different sentence constructions attested with specific verbs, like transitive *Ich verkaufe das Buch* ‘I sell the book’ vs. reflexive anticausative with obligatory adverbial *Das Buch verkauft sich gut* ‘the book is selling well’ (see Section 9.5.2).

[1.8] Based on the definition of an alternation, a **CLAUSE ALTERNATION** is defined as follows:

- In a clause alternation both alternants are monoclausal, i.e. both alternants contain a single main predicate. For German, the definitional property of monoclausality will be a phenomenon called ‘coherence’ (see Section 1.3.1).
- In both alternants, the main predicate consists of the same lexeme, i.e. both contain the same verb and the meaning of the lexical verb does not (substantially) change between the alternants (see Section 1.3.2).
- The lexical roles of the verb do not change between the alternants. Lexical roles are an inherent part of the meaning of a verb and alternations do not change them. Note, however, that there might be new roles introduced or some roles might be left unexpressed (see Section 1.3.3).
- The meaning/function of the whole clause changes between the alternants. This functional difference is the whole point of having a clause alternation in the first place (see Section 1.3.5).
- A specific clause alternation is only applicable to a restricted set of verbs. The list of applicable verbs constitutes the domain of application of the alternation. Any semantic/syntactic characterisation of these applicable verbs should be seen as a summary of the domain of application, not its definition (see Section 1.3.4).

[1.9] Clause alternations are widespread when auxiliaries are introduced, like modal *müssen* ‘have to’ (1.3 a), see Section 11.4.7. However, clause alternations are attested with many more different kinds of marking, like the verb particle *auf* marking completeness of the action (1.3 b), see Section 6.7.8, or the somewhat mysterious ‘free’ reflexive *sich* with verbs like *ansehen* ‘look at’ (1.3 c), see Section 7.4.4. Arguably, the special word order in German subordinate clauses (viz. the finite verb occurs clause-final) can also be considered to be a clause alternation (1.3 d).

- (1.3)    a. Er erledigt seine Hausaufgaben.  
               Er muss seine Hausaufgaben erledigen.
- b. Ich esse den Apfel.  
               Ich esse den Apfel auf.
- c. Er hat das Haus angesehen.  
               Er hat sich das Haus angesehen.
- d. Er erledigt seine Hausaufgaben.  
               Ich hoffe, dass er seine Hausaufgaben erledigt.

[1.10] Based on the notion of a clause alternation, a **DIATHESIS** (sometimes also known as ‘valency alternation’) is defined as follows:

- A diathesis is a clause alternation in which at least one of the lexical roles is overtly marked differently between the clausal alternants, i.e. at least one of the roles is remapped to a different grammatical expression. In other words, a diathesis is a clause alternation with a co-occurring role-marking alternation (see Section 2.4).

- Remapped roles do not substantially change their meaning, i.e. ‘who does what to whom’ does not change. However, the details of the relation between the main predicate and the remapped roles can (and normally will) change. There will be slight changes in meaning, e.g. aspects like the role’s influence on the action, or its affectedness by the predicate, might change. As an extreme case, the remapping of a role can consist in the addition of a completely new role or in the complete removal of an existing role (see Section 2.2).
- As is true for all alternations, a diathesis has a direction from a formally ‘less marked’ to a ‘more marked’ alternant. However, in some special instances a diathesis can show no other overt marking than the change in marking of the reframed roles itself. This will be called a covert (or equipollent, or bare) diathesis. The different forms of marking of diatheses are the basic organisational structure of this book (see Section 2.3).
- As a practical restriction, I will only consider diatheses in which one alternant is a basic clause with a single finite verb. In principle, when there is a diathesis between a basic clause and structure A, and another diathesis between a basic clause and Structure B, then there is also a diathesis between structures A and B. However, such diatheses are not included here. It is a major goal of this book to present a precise description of the mappings between basic clauses and all attested diatheses (see Section 2.7).

The prototypical example of a diathesis is the *werden+Partizip* passive (1.4a), see Section 10.5.16. In both clause alternants the same state of affairs is described, but the marking of the participants is different. However, the diversity of diatheses in German is enormous as this book attempts to show. There are, for example, covert diatheses (i.e. diatheses without any marking on the verb) like the infamous anticausative in (1.4b), see Section 5.5.5, or antipassives marked with a reflexive pronoun as shown in (1.4c), see Section 7.7.4. [1.11]

- (1.4) a. Der Schreiner lackiert den Tisch.  
           Der Tisch wurde von dem Schreiner lackiert.
- b. Ich koche den Kaffee.  
           Der Kaffee kocht.
- c. Der Fahrradfahrer fürchtet den Anstieg.  
           Der Fahrradfahrer fürchtet sich vor dem Anstieg.

Hidden in these succinct definitions there are various intricate grammatical concepts that need some more discussion in subsequent sections. The most general notions are discussed directly below, while the specific discussion of the analysis and classification of different kinds of diathesis is postponed for the next chapter. [1.12]

## 1.3 Definitional details

### 1.3.1 Monoclausality and coherence

Diatheses are defined here as alternations between single clauses with the same main verb. However, a single clause in German can sometimes consist of multiple verb forms. It is crucial to strictly distinguish between situations in which a multi-verb construction is monoclausal and when it is not. The basis of the definition of monoclausality in German is a concept called (syntactic) COHERENCE (*Kohärenz*). [1.13]

[1.14]



To define monoclausality, the crucial characteristic of German syntax is that the finite verb is moved to the end of the sentence in a subordinate clause. I will regularly use the dummy main sentence *Es ist bekannt, dass...* ‘it is known that’ to force a subordinate construction. The position of the finite verb in the subordinate clause can be used to identify the boundary of the clause: everything that can occur before the finite verb belongs within the clause; everything that has to come after the finite verb belongs to a different clause. For example, the simple sentence (1.5 a) will turn into (1.5 b) as a subordinate clause, with the finite verb at the end; (1.5 c) with constituents after the finite verb is not possible. So the whole sentence in (1.5 a) is a single clause.

- (1.5) a. Ich gehe morgen nach Hause.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass ich morgen nach Hause gehe.  
 c. \* Es ist bekannt, dass ich gehe morgen nach Hause.

[1.15] Constructions with such a pattern will be called (syntactically) COHERENT, following Bech (1955); see also Kiss (1995) for a more in-depth and more extensive discussion of the concept ‘coherence’. This usage of the term ‘coherence’ is slightly confusing, because coherence is used here as a technical term from the syntactic literature on German, completely independent of the pragmatic usage of ‘coherence’ as contextual connection. Syntactically coherent constructions are considered to be MONOCLAUSAL. Exactly the same syntactic coherence is attested in auxiliary constructions with participles (1.6) and infinitives (1.7). Such constructions are also monoclausal.

- (1.6) a. Ich habe gestern ein Haus gekauft.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass ich gestern ein Haus gekauft habe.  
 c. \* Es ist bekannt, dass ich gestern gekauft habe ein Haus.
- (1.7) a. Ich will morgen ein Haus kaufen.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass ich morgen ein Haus kaufen will.  
 c. \* Es ist bekannt, dass ich morgen kaufen will ein Haus.

[1.16] Constructions with *zu* and infinitive are sometimes coherent, e.g. (1.8) with the finite verb *geben* ‘to give’, and sometimes non-coherent, e.g. (1.9) with the finite verb *behaupten* ‘to claim’. The coherent construction in (1.8 a) is thus monoclausal, while the non-coherent construction in (1.9 a) consists of two clauses. In some intermediate cases both orders are possible, as shown with the finite verb *helfen* ‘to help’ in (1.10).

- (1.8) a. Der Protest gibt ihr zu denken.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass der Protest ihr zu denken gibt.  
 c. \* Es ist bekannt, dass der Protest gibt ihr zu denken.
- (1.9) a. Der Sportler behauptet den Wettkampf zu gewinnen.  
 b. \* Es ist bekannt, dass der Sportler den Wettkampf zu gewinnen behauptet.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass der Sportler behauptet den Wettkampf zu gewinnen.
- (1.10) a. Ich helfe dir den Koffer zu tragen.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass ich dir helfe den Koffer zu tragen.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass ich dir den Koffer zu tragen helfe.

[1.17]

All diatheses listed in this book are monoclausal. Besides trying to list all German diatheses, I will also list all non-diathetical clause alternation, i.e. monoclausal alternations without any change in role-marking (these are always listed in the .4 section of each data chapter). This book can thus also be read as a listing of all German monoclausal constructions, with or without role remapping. Somewhat unexpectedly, the number of alternations with role remapping (i.e. diathesis) is much larger than the number of monoclausal alternations without changes in role marking (i.e. alternations without diatheses).

Maybe surprisingly, when the above definition of monoclausality is strictly followed, then there appear to be dozens of verbs that can be used as the finite ‘auxiliary’ in a coherent multi-verb construction. When used as finite auxiliaries, these verbs are more or less strongly grammaticalised, i.e. they shed much of their lexical meaning when used in multi-verb constructions. Such grammaticalised verbs are classified into different groups and referred to by many different names in the German grammatical literature, e.g. *Hilfsverb*, *Kopulaverb*, *Modalverb*, *Modalitätsverb*, *Halbmodalverb* (Eisenberg 2006a), *Nebenverb* (Engel 1996: 406), *Funktionsverb* (Polenz 1963 cited in Kamber 2008: 34), *Strukturverb* (Weber 2005), or *Stützverb* (Seelbach 1991 cited in Kamber 2008: 34). I will not pursue the question here how to classify these verbs into different kinds. I will simply refer to the whole group of these ‘auxiliary’ verbs as **LIGHT VERBS**.<sup>3</sup> [1.18]

All light verbs that will be discussed in this book are shown here in alphabetical order in (1.11), though note that not all of them are involved in diathesis. A few of the verbs listed below are only attested in monoclausal alternation without diathesis. [1.19]

(1.11) German verbs that can be used as light verbs

*aussehen, bekommen, bleiben, brauchen, bringen, drohen, dürfen, erscheinen, fahren, finden, fühlen, geben, gehen, gehören, gelten, glauben, haben, halten, heißen, helfen, hören, kommen, kriegen, können, lassen, legen, lehren, lernen, liegen, machen, mögen, müssen, nehmen, pflegen, riechen, scheinen, schicken, sehen, sein, setzen, sollen, spüren, stehen, suchen, tun, vermögen, versprechen, verstehen, werden, wirken, wissen, wollen*

### 1.3.2 Grammaticalisation of lexical meaning

A difficult problem is the question whether it is really the same verb that is used in two alternating constructions of a diathesis. For example, the verb *trinken* ‘to drink’ is a regular transitive verb, but when used intransitively, *er trinkt* ‘he drinks’, it has a clear implication that his drinking includes too much alcohol, so it might be better translated as ‘he is an alcoholic’. In this case, this intransitive interpretation is probably best analysed as a conventional implicature, because the alcoholism aspect of the meaning can be suppressed given the right context. [1.20]

In general, when the same lexical verb is used in different alternating constructions, then there is (of course) a difference in meaning between the two occurrences. However, ideally this difference is completely induced by the respective constructions and not by the lexical verb itself. Yet, it is extremely common for the combination of a lexical verb with the surrounding construction to grammaticalise into a new meaning. For example, the verb *auftreten* means something like ‘to act’ as an intransitive, but *to kick open* as a transitive. [1.21]

<sup>3</sup>The same English term ‘light verb’ has recently also been used as a translation of the German *Funktionsverb* (Fleischhauer & Gamerschlag 2019; Fleischhauer 2021). Actually, both uses of this term are more specific instances of the overarching term. The *Funktionsverb* can be specified as a ‘light verb with a nominal main predicate’. In contrast, in this book the term ‘light verb’ is used for a ‘light verb with a verbal main predicate’.

Both meanings originate from the meaning ‘to step on something (by foot)’. Likewise, historical processes can lead to current homophony of two different lexemes. This appears to be the case for example with the verb *abhauen*, which is a transitive verb meaning ‘cut of’ (e.g. *Er hat den Ast abgehauen*). However, it has attained another usage during the course of the 20th century as an intransitive verb meaning ‘run away’ (e.g. *Er ist abgehauen*), probably based on a southern German dialectal meaning of *hauen* ‘to go, to walk’ (Pfeiffer 1993).<sup>4</sup>

[1.22] In between those extremes (i.e. conventional implicature as in *trinken* and different lexicalisation as in *aufreten* and *abhauen*) there exist various intermediate phenomena. For example, the verb *hängen* ‘to hang’ can be used as a regular intransitive verb with a location, like *Er hängt an einem Seil* ‘He dangles to a rope’, but the specific combination with the preposition *an* can also have a special reading of ‘being emotionally attached to something’, like in *Er hängt an seinem Teddy* ‘He is (emotionally) attached to his Teddy’. In this case it seems most appropriate to interpret the combination *hängen an* as a separate lexicalisation, though the path of the conventional implicature can still be intuitively grasped.

[1.23] As with all grammaticalisation processes, it is often difficult to decide where to draw the line on the continuum between conventional implicature, metaphorical extension (*trinken*) and contextual lexicalisation (*hängen an*) or completely different lexicalisation (*aufreten*, *abhauen*). I tend to be rather lenient in allowing slightly different meanings to be included as the ‘same’ verb, but will exclude clear examples of the latter two types on the continuum as separate lexicalisations of homophonous elements.

### 1.3.3 Lexeme-specific lexical roles

[1.24] A crucial aspect of diathesis is that the lexical roles of a specific verb do not change, only the grammatical encoding of the roles changes. For example, the verb *füllen* ‘to fill’ occurs in various monoclausal constructions (1.12), but the roles of (i) ‘filler’, (ii) ‘filled container’ and (iii) ‘filling substance’ are always the same. The different grammatical forms that are used to express these roles are added as subscripts to each sentence in the examples below.

- (1.12) a. Ich<sub>i: NOM</sub> fülle den Topf<sub>ii: ACC</sub> (mit Reis<sub>iii: PREP</sub>).  
 b. Ich<sub>i: NOM</sub> fülle den Reis<sub>iii: ACC</sub> in den Topf<sub>ii: PREP</sub>.  
 c. Der Reis<sub>iii: NOM</sub> füllt (mir<sub>i: DAT</sub>) den Magen<sub>ii: ACC</sub>.  
 d. Der Blumentopf<sub>ii: NOM</sub> füllt sich (mit Wurzeln<sub>iii: PREP</sub>).

[1.25] Already from this example it becomes clear that it is often really difficult, if not impossible, to attach a specific valency to a verb. Given that most (and possibly all) German lexemes show some kind of diathesis, I reject the traditional notion of a fixed valency belonging to a specific verb (see Section 2.2 for a more extensive discussion). Alternatively, I propose that it is possible to list all LEXEME-SPECIFIC ROLES (or equivalently LEXICAL ROLES) as a fixed characteristic of each lexical verb. The following criteria will be used to determine the lexical roles of a verb:

[1.26] First, each role that is case-marked in at least one clause-alternant is a lexeme-specific role. In the example of *füllen* in (1.12), each of the three roles is marked as nominative, accusative or dative in at least one of the alternants, so all three roles are lexeme-specific. Various exceptions and stipulations to this criterion are discussed in Section 5.2.

[1.27] Second, all obligatory prepositional phrases are lexeme-specific roles. Such prepositional phrases, that cannot be left out, are not very widespread in German and mostly designate a location. Some verbs always expect such a location-role (1.13 a,b), see e.g. Section 6.3.3 and

<sup>4</sup>Entry *hauen* at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/etymwb/hauen>, accessed 12 December 2018

Section 7.3.4, but more widespread are resultative diatheses that introduce an obligatory local role (1.13 c,d), see e.g. Section 6.8.7.

- (1.13) a. Der Stuhl befindet sich im Wohnzimmer  
 b. \*Der Stuhl befindet sich.  
 c. Ich wasche den Fleck aus meiner Hose..  
 d. \*Ich wasche den Fleck.

Third, there is a large class of lexeme-specific prepositional phrases that I will call GOVERNED PREPOSITIONS, like *arbeiten an* ‘to work on’ (1.14 a). These prepositional phrases are not obligatorily present (1.14 b). The intuition behind governed prepositions is that these prepositions are lexically determined by the verb and often strongly grammaticalised both semantically and structurally. Semantically, the preposition *an* with the verb *arbeiten* ‘to work’ (1.14 a) is strongly bleached with none of its local ‘touching’ meaning remaining. Syntactically, the prepositional phrase in *arbeiten an* can be filled with a complement clause of the form *daran, dass...* (1.14 c). This syntactic criterion will be used as the main characteristic to identify governed prepositions. Various exceptions and stipulations to this criterion are discussed in Section 6.2. [1.28]

- (1.14) a. Ich arbeite an meinem Buch.  
 b. Ich arbeite hart.  
 c. Ich arbeite daran, dass das Buch fertig wird.

Under this approach, there are a few lexical roles that appear to be very widespread, up to the point of seemingly being universally applicable to all verbs. If that would be the case, then it would defeat the idea of lexeme-specific roles. However, on closer inspection my impression is that there are no roles that apply to all verbs. The closest contender is, arguably, the role of causer, which can be introduced to almost any German verb by using the *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis (1.15), see Section 11.6.2. However, there is a small group of verbs that do not allow for this diathesis, like *gefallen* ‘to like’ (1.16). This shows that even virtually universal roles are still lexically determined. [1.29]

- (1.15) a. Der Student arbeitet an einer Aufgabe.  
 b. Der Professor lässt den Student an einer Aufgabe arbeiten.  
 (1.16) a. Dein Haarschnitt gefällt mir.  
 b. \*Er lässt mir seinen Haarschnitt gefallen.

Such lexeme-specific roles are called ‘verb-specific semantic roles’ in Van Valin (2004) and ‘microroles’ in Hartmann et al. (2014). The obvious next step (as discussed in both these papers) is to cluster such microroles into clusters of semantic/thematic mesoroles, i.e. widespread roles like ‘agent’, ‘patients’, ‘experiencer’ etc. Such semantic roles are used constantly in contemporary linguistics, but they are surprisingly ill-defined. For example, given a random German verb like *füllen* as exemplified at the start of this section: what should be its semantic roles, and what criteria should be used to determine this? Hartmann et al. (2014) and Cysouw (2014) use cross-linguistic data to approach this question. However, such an approach does not allow for language-specific definitions, which is the problem in the current example of German. [1.30]

My proposal for a language-specific determination of semantic mesoroles is to use the applicability of diatheses as a criterion. For example, a ‘German patients’ might be defined [1.31]

as those lexical roles that are changed from accusative to nominative in the *werden* passive diathesis. Note that this definition is not supposed to satisfy all intuitions that surround the notion ‘patients’ in linguistics. Quite to the contrary, the proposal is to *define* a semantic role like ‘patients’ on the basis of attested diatheses (and adapt any intuitions to that definition). Even more general: a semantic role should probably can be defined by a combination of multiple applicable diatheses. The research project to determine suitable combinations of diatheses to define semantic roles will not be pursued here but left for follow-up investigations.

### 1.3.4 Domain of application and verb classes

[1.32] A widespread assumption in linguistic analysis is that most alternations (including diatheses) have a sensible domain of application. This is the idea that there is some rationale, often a kind of semantic characterisation, explaining which roots allow for a specific kind of linguistic marking (e.g. only transitive verbs allow for a *werden* passive).<sup>5</sup> Although I also believe that many alternations, including diatheses, mostly behave sensibly, I would also warn not to expect too much regular (semantic) generalisations hidden in grammatical structure. Many grammatical regularities have unexpected exceptions, be it because of haphazard diachronic change or through creative analogical extension. Even stronger, some grammatical marking appears to be almost completely without (semantic) rationale, like the assignment of plural allomorphy in German. If that can happen in morphology, it can also happen in syntax.

[1.33] As a practical approach to the domain of application of a specific alternation (say, which verbs allow for the *werden* passive, or the reflexive anticausative, etc.), I propose to always first enumerate as much examples as possible. In other words, first empirically establish a verb class of those verbs that happen to be attested. In this book, I will not be satisfied with four or five cases that suggest a neat semantic coherence for a specific diathesis, but list as many as possible further examples, idiosyncratic as they may be. Only after such a formal listing of the domain of application (which ideally needs much more corpus research than I have been able to perform here) is it possible to investigate the presence of any (semantic) rationale. In many cases there might be a partial rationale, but it is just as likely (and just as interesting) to have to conclude that there apparently is none.

[1.34] Taking this principle one step further, I propose to *define* the domain of application as the concrete listing of all examples. Any (semantic) characterisation is then always a post-hoc generalisation, not a definition. This radically lexicalist interpretation is the approach that I will follow in this book. For each diathesis I will list as many as possible example verbs that take part in the diatheses (for some I will reverse the approach and list verbs that are not part of the domain of application). These lexical lists (i.e. the empirical verb classes) are the definition of the domain of application. For some diatheses, I will speculate about semantic generalisations, but I consider these generalisations always to be secondary to the concrete listing of examples. Semantic generalisations are never causal explanations.

[1.35] This principle of the definition by listing even holds for questions of productivity. For example, when somebody would propose a nonce-verb like *flurchten* to be a new verb for the German language in an experimental setting, then its meaning is partially defined by stating what kind of diatheses it can take part in. Depending on how such a new verb is

<sup>5</sup>For example, compare the infamous sentence on the first page of Levin (1993: 1) “the behavior of a verb, particularly with respect to the expression and interpretation of its arguments, is to a large extent determined by its meaning.” However, Levin’s work in practice uses form to establish classes, not meaning. This approach is followed here.

contextualised, the following construction might or might not be judged grammatical. The choices that will be made influence the meaning of the verb.

- (1.17) a. Ich flurchte den X.  
 b. Ich flurchte an den X.  
 c. Ich flurchte mich vor den X.  
 d. Der X flurchtet.  
 e. Der X flurchtet sich.

### 1.3.5 Functional analysis

Intimately connected to the domain of application (i.e. which verbs allow for which diathesis) is the question as to the meaning/function of a specific diathesis. In essence, this question asks for a description of the difference between the meaning of the two alternants of a diathesis. For example, what is the difference between the transitive (1.18 a) and the corresponding reflexive anticausative (1.18 b), see Section 7.5.2. Although this might seem obvious for some diatheses, it turns out to be extremely difficult to give a concise description of such differences for most diatheses, and I will mostly refrain from trying to provide such descriptions. Each diathesis is actually its own research project, preferably investigated using predictive corpus analysis (cf. the large literature on the English dative alternation, for German see e.g. De Vaere, De Cuypere & Willems 2018). [1.36]

- (1.18) a. Ich schließe die Tür.  
 b. Die Tür schließt sich.

There are two empirical pieces of information that are crucial for such a functional analysis of a diathesis. The first key datapoint is the actual lists of verbs that allow for a specific diathesis (i.e. the verb class as defined by a diathesis, see the previous Section 1.3.4). The second important consideration is any restriction on the kind of nominals that can be used to fill the roles of a diathesis (i.e. nominal classes as defined by a diathesis). Both these classes can be established empirically by collecting and analysing a corpus of examples for a specific diathesis. [1.37]

The problem of a functional description for a diathesis becomes even more difficult with the realisation that there are many dozens of diatheses, often highly similar to each other. For example, it is really difficult (cf. Schäfer 2007; Kurogo 2016) to characterise the difference between the reflexive anticausative above in (1.18) and the unmarked anticausative in (1.19), see Section 5.5.5. [1.38]

- (1.19) a. Ich koche den Kaffee.  
 b. Der Kaffee kocht.  
 c. \*Der Kaffee kocht sich.

The problem of providing a concise functional description for a grammatical construction is not restricted to diatheses. For example, clause alternations that do not have any role-remapping are (by definition) not diathesis, but they are still discussed in the .4 sections of each chapter (they will be called ‘epithesis’) and are also in need of a functional description. An example is the phenomenon of ‘free’ reflexives (1.20), see Section 7.4.4. Although there is no role-remapping in this alternation (and thus no diathesis), it turns out to be really difficult to describe the difference between (1.20 a) and (1.20 b). All clause alternations, with [1.39]

or without role-remapping, are in need of a functional analysis, and most such analyses will involve substantial research.

- (1.20) a. Ich habe das Haus angesehen.  
b. Ich habe mir das Haus angesehen.

## 1.4 Method

[1.40] Methodologically, I see the approach in this book as an attempt to unify grammatical research with lexicographic research, two aspects of linguistics that are often considered to be separate inquiries. In contrast to such a separation, I would like to propose a view of linguistics that might be called GRAMMAR OF THE LEXICON (cf. Levin 1993: 2-4, but one might just as well include all of construction grammar here). In this approach, each grammatical phenomenon should always be linked to individual occurrences, either types (lexicon) or tokens (corpus). It is my experience from compiling the current compendium of diatheses that identifying and characterising a specific structure is really just ‘step one’ of grammatical research. Only by trying to find more examples, with different lexemes and in different contexts, it becomes clear how prominent and varying a grammatical structure really is.

[1.41] As as rule-of-thumb, I propose the 10-IN-10-RULE as ‘step two’ of grammatical research. If you think that a particular construction is widespread, or maybe typical for a specific class of words (e.g. typical for ‘intransitives’), then take 10 minutes to search for examples, either in your own intuitions or in one of the many online databases or corpora. Resources like the *Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (DWDS), the various online offerings of the *Institut für Deutsche Sprache* (IDS), or just a Google ‘exact search’ are really just a click away and completely rejuvenate linguistic research. If you are not able to list 10 examples in 10 minutes, then go back to the drawing board and reconsider your intuitions.

[1.42] Such a quick-and-dirty 10-minute survey of course still only represents a preliminary step. It is this level of detail that I have aimed for in this book. Each sub-subsection about an individual diathesis lists lexemes that can be used in this diathesis, and includes examples of the diathesis, either from my own intuitions or from any of the above mentioned databases. I plan to fine-tune these lists in future revisions of this book, but the real research is only yet to come. Next steps would be the in-depth investigation of individual diathesis by sampling examples in corpora and formulating predictive parameters to explain their usage. For example, De Vaere *et al.* (2018) investigate the dative antipassive (see Section 6.7.11) for just a single lexeme *geben*. As there are hundreds of diatheses and hundreds of verbs listed in this book, this shows that there are tens of thousands of similar such research projects just waiting to be tackled.

## 1.5 Previous research

[1.43] The current attempt to present an all-encompassing survey of German diatheses builds on a rich scholarly tradition (with many scholarly precursors to be cited in appropriate places throughout this work). A comparable and highly influential survey of diathesis for English is Levin (1993), followed by a similar attempt for German by Sauerland (1994). A recent cross-linguistic survey of valency and diathesis in this tradition is edited by Malchukov & Comrie (2015), which also includes data on German (Haspelmath & Baumann 2013). Independent of Levin’s work, there is a long tradition in the German grammatical literature to investigate diathesis, e.g. as ‘*Konversenverhältnis der Aktanten*’ (Eroms 1980: 24; cf. Heringer 1968). An

early attempt at a survey of various diatheses is presented by Höhle (1978). Basic summaries of German diathesis in the context of valency can be found in Eroms (2000: Ch. 10) or Ágel (2000: Ch. 6). There also are a few monographs about specific German diatheses (e.g. Leirbukt 1997; Holl 2010; Jäger 2013) and recently some corpus studies into the effect of specific diatheses on individual verbs have appeared (De Vaere, De Cuypere & Willems 2018; Imo 2018; Dux 2020: Ch. 6).

Diathesis is of course closely linked to the concept of valency, so the groundbreaking valency dictionary for German by Helbig and Schenkel (1983) deserves mentioning. They identify the problem that certain verbs can be used in different constructions, but diatheses are not investigated consistently in their dictionary. Another highly influential valency dictionary for German, edited by Schumacher (1986; also the precursor Engel & Schumacher 1978), discusses passive diatheses for all verb. I see the current survey of German diatheses as a first step in extending such valency dictionaries into even more all-encompassing dictionaries that discuss all possible clause constructions for each verb. [1.44]

## 1.6 Structure of this book

The structure of this book is somewhat unusual for a scholarly monograph. It is not a narrative with a painless beginning, a sturdy middle and a satisfying conclusion. Rather, this book is open ended, and it does not have a gratifying closure at the end. That is by design. It is an encyclopaedia after all. [1.45]

The book consists of three different parts. First, Chapter 1 and 2 discuss the major theoretical considerations that guide the collection and organisation of the data. This is the part to read for insights into the nature of diathesis and sundry topics. Second, Chapter 3 and 4 are the closest that this book has to offer in the way of a conclusion. Each of these chapters present an astonishingly long list of grammatical constructions, summarising major linguistic structures as identified in the rest of the book. These summaries are intended to be a quick entry into the actual German language data, with ample cross-references to the following encyclopaedia. Finally, Chapter 5 to 13 make up the actual encyclopaedia, with separate sub-subsections about individual phenomena. Each of these sub-subsections is a fragment of a research project, sometimes mundane, but often full of surprising avenues for future research. [1.46]

Going through the chapters in more detail, this first chapter summarised the basic definitional properties of diathesis. The next Chapter 2 describes in detail how diatheses are analysed and classified. Chapter 3 presents a summary of the about 80 major German diatheses and proposes German names for those structures. As a small extra, Chapter 4 summarises all about 40 non-diathetical structures and provides an unconventional approach to the analysis of verbal categories of German. Chapters 5 to 13 are the core part of this book. These chapter are database-like texts, discussing each clause structure separately. All of these chapters have exactly the same internal structure. Sometimes certain sections are empty, because there is no grammatical structure in that category. However, the headers of those empty sections have been preserved for the sake of parallel numbering across chapters. The following structure is used in all data chapters: [1.47]

- Section X.1 is a concise introduction into the kind of diatheses discussed.
- Section X.2 is a detailed discussion of the grammatical definitions.
- Section X.3 lists examples that look like a diathesis, but there is no alternation.
- Section X.4 lists alternation with the relevant structure, but there is no diathesis.
- Section X.5 lists diatheses with subject demotion.



- Section X.6 lists diatheses with subject promotion.
- Section X.7 lists diatheses with object demotion.
- Section X.8 lists diatheses with object promotion.
- Section X.9 lists symmetrical diatheses that do not fit into the above categories.

[1.48] In these data chapters, each diathesis has its own sub-subsection with an unique section header that can be used as a name to refer to the diathesis (e.g. Section 10.5.16 on the *werden+Partizip* passive). Many of these unique names are quite boring, but hopefully descriptively useful for future reference. Individual verbs (often with concrete examples) are listed with each diathesis to show the extend of its applicability. Neither these lists of verbs nor the examples are intended to be exhaustive in any way. They should be seen as a first step towards more in-depth research into individual diatheses or into the different constructional possibilities that exist for individual verbs.



## Chapter 2

# The structure of a diathesis

### 2.1 Terminology

[2.1] In their cross-linguistic survey of diathesis, Zuñiga & Kittilä (2019) distinguish between the terms ‘diathesis’, ‘diathetical operation’, ‘grammatical voice’ and ‘transitivity’. I completely subscribe to these conceptual distinctions. However, throughout this book I have decided to simplify the terminology and basically use the term ‘diathesis’ for all four concepts. Still, the concepts VALENCY (Section 2.2), VOICE (Section 2.3), and DIATHETICAL OPERATION (Section 2.4) are central in the analysis of the structure of a diathesis and will be discussed extensively in this chapter. Two new concepts are introduced as well, namely STACKING (Section 2.5) and CHAINING (Section 2.6). Finally, I will present an extensive discussion about NAMING diatheses (Section 2.7).

[2.2] A diathesis (as defined here) is an alternation between two clausal construction. To be more precise, this is what is called a ‘diathetical operation’ in Zuñiga & Kittilä (2019: 4), see Section 2.4. Each of the alternants show a different mapping of (grammatical) expressions onto (semantic) roles. Individually, each such mapping between expressions and roles is called a ‘diathesis’ in Zuñiga & Kittilä (2019: 4). However, because I will only consider diathetical operations between an unmarked basic clause and a marked alternant, I have decided to simplify the terminology in this book. Both the alternation itself (Zuñiga & Kittilä’s ‘diathetical operation’, e.g. ‘causativisation’) and the derived alternant (Zuñiga & Kittilä’s ‘diathesis’, e.g. ‘causative’) will be referred to here simply as a DIATHESIS, from Greek *διάθεσις* ‘placement in order, (re)arrangement’.

[2.3] A side-effect of this approach is that ‘active’ is not a diathesis, but simply the unmarked counterpart of a diathetical operation. Even stronger, I will refrain from using the term ‘active’ because it immediately conjures up ‘passive’ as its antithesis. This opposition is too much of an oversimplification as ‘passive’ is just one of the hundreds of possible diatheses. Also, the ‘active’ does not necessarily describes an action, so content-wise this term is also ill-fitting. As an alternative, I will use the term BASIC CLAUSE as the unmarked base of comparison for all clause alternations. A basic clause is a clause with a single (finite) verb from, either in the German *Präsens* or *Präteritum* tense.<sup>1</sup> All other verb forms, including the *Perfekt* and the other traditional German tense-aspect distinctions, are all DERIVED CLAUSES, i.e. the result of some kind of clause alternations. A clause alternation without diathesis will be called EPITHESIS, from Greek *ἐπίθεσις* ‘placement upon, imposition’. Epithesis is grammat-

<sup>1</sup>Strictly speaking, a basic clause can also be a clause with a single finite verb form in the *Konjunktiv I* or *Konjunktiv II*. However, because these are rather rare nowadays I have hidden this option in this footnote.

ical marking ‘on top of’ a basic clause.<sup>2</sup> A summary of all major epithetical constructions will be presented in the next Chapter 4.

The actual linguistic marking of the diathesis (for example by verbal morphology or auxiliaries) is called ‘grammatical voice’ in Zuñiga & Kittilä (2019: 4). In this book, each diathesis is defined as a combination of a (re-)mapping of roles and a specific kind of linguistic marking of the main predicate. So again, this extra terminological distinction is not necessary. The formal expression (‘grammatical voice’) is simply a definitional part of each diathesis here. The different kinds of grammatical voice in German are used in this book as a major organisational characteristic for the separation of the data chapters (see Section 2.3). [2.4]

The term ‘transitivity’ (Zuñiga & Kittilä 2019: 3; following Hopper & Thompson 1980) describes a (recurrent) connection between a diathetical operation and semantic effects on the meaning of the clause. For example, when an accusative argument is remapped onto a prepositional phrase, this often implies less involvement of the argument. The details of such semantic effects of each of the diatheses in this book is a fascinating topic, for which I unfortunately can only offer limited insights throughout. In practice, I assume that each diathesis as described here has some kind of semantic effect, but the details of these effect need much more detailed research that has to be provided by subsequent work. [2.5]

Finally, I prefer to use the term ‘diathesis’ over the frequently attested term ‘valency alternation’, because there are many diatheses in which the valency does not change between the alternants. For example, in (2.1) both sentences have the same valency with a nominative, accusative and prepositional phrase. However, there is a clear diathesis, though arguably there is no change in (basic) valency. Strictly speaking, valency alternations are a subset of all diatheses. [2.6]

- (2.1) a. Ich schmiere Salbe auf die Wunde.  
b. Ich beschmiere die Wunde mit Salbe.

## 2.2 Valency

### 2.2.1 Utterance valency and lexical roles

Valency is traditionally interpreted as a fixed constructional characteristic of a lexical verb, e.g. the verb *geben* ‘to give’ is said to be ditransitive.<sup>3</sup> A central thesis of this book is that this conception of valency is misguided. Individual verbs can (and normally will) be used in many different constructions with different valency (i.e. most verbs show some kind of diathesis). Consider for example the verb *wehen* ‘to blow’. Such ‘weather’ verbs are often considered to have zero valency, which in German is characterised by an obligatory *es* pronoun (2.2 a). However, the same verb can just as well be used as an intransitive (2.2 b,c), as a transitive with an accusative object (2.2 d), or even as a ditransitive with a dative and accusative object (2.2 e). Note that the prepositional phrase in (2.2 c,d,e) cannot be left out, and its obligatory presence might be used to argue for argument-status of these prepositional [2.7]

<sup>2</sup>There appears to be a rare alternative usage to the term ‘epithesis’ in linguistics to indicate the addition of a sound to the end of the word, i.e. a special kind of epenthesis, see for example <http://www.websters1913.com/words/Epithesis>.

<sup>3</sup>I will consider predicative adjectives also as verbs, e.g. *bewusst sein* ‘to be aware’, *einig sein* ‘to agree’ or *ähnlich sein* ‘to resemble’. In German, predicative adjectives use the copula *sein*, so in many other grammatical analyses such predicates have a special status. In contrast, they will simply be treated as a single (though multiword) verb here.

phrases. The example in (2.2 e) then will be an example of the verb *wehen* with a valency of four.

- (2.2) a. Heute weht es.  
 b. Gestern wehte kein Lüftchen.  
 c. Der Rosenduft weht ins Zimmer.  
 d. Der Sturm weht den Schnee von den Dächern.  
 e. Der Fahrtwind weht mir die Mütze vom Kopf.

[2.8] There is a recurrent tendency in the literature to try and reduce such variation to a single valency per verb (viz. its ‘real’ or ‘underlying’ valency), and various strategies are employed to arrive at such a prototypical valency (see e.g. Welke 2011: Ch. 9 for a survey). That will not be the approach taken here. Instead, valency is proposed to be a characteristic of a specific utterance, not of a specific verb. So, the examples in (2.2) can simply be assigned an UTTERANCE VALENCY from zero (11.43 a) to four (2.2 e) even though they all use the same lexeme *wehen* as their main verb.

[2.9] As a replacement of the traditional lexeme-specific notion of valency (e.g. *geben* is ditransitive), I propose to use the notion of lexeme-specific LEXICAL ROLES (e.g. *geben* has lexical roles ‘giver’, ‘givee’, ‘given object’, etc.). Lexical roles are participants that are treated as an argument of utterance valency in at least one of the possible diatheses of a verb (see the next section for the complete definition of such arguments). Looking back at the examples in (2.2 e), the following lexical roles of *wehen* ‘to blow’ can be established:

- i. BLOWER: the blowing air, *Fahrtwind* ‘headwind’.
- ii. BLOWEE: Object moved by the blowing air, *Mütze* ‘cap’.
- iii. BLOWING DIRECTION: Direction of movement induced by the blowing air, *vom Kopf* ‘off the head’.
- iv. BLOWING LOCATION POSSESSOR: Possessor of the locational object, in (2.2 e) the dative *mir* ‘my’. This role is necessarily the possessor of the location *Kopf* ‘head’ where the blowing is taking place.

[2.10] Additionally, it is of course possible to define a notion of LEXEME VALENCY, but this has to be a much more complex construct. For example, lexeme valency can be defined as the collection of all attested utterance valencies for a specific lexeme. To be precise, this lexeme valency also has to include an indexation of the lexical roles across all arguments. This addition is important to distinguish between, for example, the lexical valency of *kochen* ‘to cook’ (2.3) and *essen* ‘to eat’ (2.4). Both can occur with a transitive and intransitive utterance valency, but the lexical roles that can be used in the intransitive differ. Specifically, the patient-role ‘eaten object’ of *essen* cannot be used as nominative subject in the intransitive (2.4 c), which is different from *kochen* (2.3 c). In effect, these verbs have a different lexeme valency.

- (2.3) a. Der Chef kocht den Fond.  
 b. Der Chef kocht immer noch.  
 c. Der Fond kocht immer noch.
- (2.4) a. Der Chef isst den Fond.  
 b. Der Chef isst immer noch.  
 c. \* Der Fond isst immer noch.

### 2.2.2 Arguments of utterance valency

The lexical roles of a specific verb are defined as those participants that are treated as an argument in at least one of the possible utterance valencies of this verb. So, to identify lexical roles, a strict definition of the arguments of utterance valency is needed. The following kinds of arguments are identified. First, all case marked noun phrase constituents are arguments, with a few exceptions that will be discussed in Section 5.2. Basically, case marked arguments (2.5 a) can be questioned by question pronouns *wer* or *was*, including their case forms *wem*, *wen* and *wessen* (2.5 b,c). Further, they can be pronominalized by personal pronouns (2.5 d) or indefinite pronouns (*irgend*)*jemand* or (*irgend*)*etwas* (2.5 e). [2.11]

- (2.5) a. Der Löwe sieht einen Vogel.  
 b. Wer sieht einen Vogel?  
 c. Was sieht der Löwe?  
 d. Er sieht ihn.  
 e. Jemand sieht etwas.

Second, prepositional phrases (2.6 a) are arguments of an utterance when they can be replaced by a complement clause of the form *da(r)+preposition, dass...* (2.6 b). All details of the difficult question when to treat such governed prepositional phrases as arguments are discussed in Section 6.2. [2.12]

- (2.6) a. Der Weltreisende wartet auf einen Zug.  
 b. Der Weltreisende wartet darauf, dass ein Zug kommt.

Third, there exist obligatory prepositional phrases, though they are not very widespread in German and mostly designate a location. Some verbs always expect such a location-role, like *sich befinden* ‘to be located somewhere’ (2.7 a,b), see e.g. Section 6.3.3, but more widespread are resultative diatheses that introduce an obligatory local role, like with *brechen* ‘to break’ (2.7 c,d), see e.g. Section 6.8.7. The example in (2.7 c) crucially shows that arguments should be determined as part of the clause structure, not the lexeme structure. It is perfectly possible to use the verb *brechen* without a prepositional phrase (2.7 e), but then there needs to be a different lexical role in the accusative. [2.13]

- (2.7) a. Der Stuhl befindet sich im Wohnzimmer  
 b. \*Der Stuhl befindet sich.  
 c. Ich breche ein Loch in den Felsen.  
 d. \*Ich breche ein Loch.  
 e. Ich breche den Felsen.

Finally, all complement clauses are arguments (2.8 a,b). Complement clauses can be questioned by *was* (2.8 c) and pronominalised by a definite pronoun *es* (2.8 d) or an indefinite pronoun (*irgend*)*etwas* (2.8 e). Complement clauses are thus syntactically highly similar to case marked noun phrases. Caution should be taken when interpreting pronominalised examples like (2.8 d,e), because it is not immediately obvious whether the pronouns are replacing a case-marked noun phrase or a complement clause. For example, with the verb *hoffen* [2.14]

(2.8e) it is not possible to replace the pronoun *es* with a noun phrase, though a governed prepositional phrase with *auf* is possible (2.8f).

- (2.8) a. Er hofft, dass er rechtzeitig kommt.  
 b. Er hofft rechtzeitig zu kommen.  
 c. Was hofft er?  
 d. Er hofft es.  
 e. \* Er hofft eine gute Note.  
 f. Er hofft auf eine gute Note.

### 2.2.3 *es* Arguments

[2.15] A further kind of utterance-valency argument can be instantiated by *es*, the 3rd person nominative/accusative pronoun in the neuter gender. There are various uses of this pronoun that have to be distinguished. The most obvious use the pronouns *es* is for anaphoric reference (PHORIC *es*). The next two uses do not have argument-status (viz. CORRELATIVE and POSITION-SIMULATING *es*). Most interestingly in the current context, the fourth usage of *es* does not have anaphoric reference, but will still be counted as an argument (viz. VALENCY-SIMULATING *es*).

[2.16] First, *es* can be used for anaphoric reference to neuter nouns, typically with gender agreement as shown in (2.9). There are many variants of such PHORIC usage, extensively discussed by Czicza (2014: Ch. 2).

- (2.9) Das Mädchen weint.  
 Ich tröste es.

[2.17] Second, another kind of referential *es* occurs with some non-finite complement clauses. By definition, a complement clause replaces an argument (2.10 a), but in some cases a pronoun *es* remains in place of the original argument, side by side with the complement clause (2.10 b). This is known as a CORRELATIVE *es* (Czicza 2014: 79ff.).

- (2.10) a. Ich vergesse [meine Aufgaben]. Ich vergesse [schnell zu laufen].  
 b. Ich hasse [meine Aufgaben]. Ich hasse es [schnell zu laufen].

[2.18] Third, the pronoun *es* is also used to fill the first sentence position in front of the finite verb ('Vorfeld' in German grammatical terminology), because there is a strong regularity in German that this position cannot be left empty (except in imperatives and in yes/no questions). Word order is rather flexible in German, and it is often possible to have no lexical content in the Vorfeld. In such sentences, the pronoun *es* has to be used to fill the Vorfeld, as shown in (2.11 b). This is known as a POSITION-SIMULATING *es* (Czicza 2014: 115).

- (2.11) a. Ein Mädchen weint.  
 b. Es weint ein Mädchen.

[2.19] Finally, there are also constructions that obligatorily include the pronoun *es* in the sentence as part of the valency of the utterance. The main reason for such an *es* is that there is a strong regularity in German that a nominative subject has to be present in each sentence (with very few exceptions, see below). Note that 'subject' is defined here for German as the nominative noun phrase that shows agreement with the finite verb. When there is no

subject available, then the pronoun *es* is used to fill this gap. This is known as a VALENCY-SIMULATING *es* (Czicza 2014: 115). In the analysis of diatheses in this book, such valency-simulating *es* is not always explicitly noted. Any clause without an nominative argument induces a valency-simulating *es* (with very few exceptions, as noted below).

In constructions with a valency-simulating *es*, as exemplified in (2.12 a,b), the pronoun *es* can occur in the Vorfeld (2.12 a), seemingly parallel to the position-simulating usage (2.11 a). However, when another constituent is placed in the Vorfeld, this obligatory *es* in (2.12 a) cannot be removed, but has to occur elsewhere in the sentence, typically immediately after the finite verb (2.12 b).

- (2.12) a. Es stinkt hier sehr.  
b. Hier stinkt es sehr.

In a very limited set of constructions, a valency-simulating *es* is left out, resulting in sentences without any formal nominative subject (2.13). Most of these cases are historical idiosyncrasies, except for the impersonal passive (2.13 d), see Section 10.5.1.

- (2.13) a. Heute ist mir kalt.  
b. Dem Arzt graut vor Blut.  
c. Mir liegt viel an deiner Anwesenheit.  
d. Jetzt wird geschlafen!

There are also a few rare cases in which there is a valency-simulating *es* in what appears to be an accusative case (2.14).

- (2.14) a. Ich habe es auf ihn abgesehen. (see Section 6.3.5)  
b. Wir haben es gut. (see Section 9.7.3)

## 2.2.4 Adjuncts

Adjuncts, the counterparts of arguments, are phrases that are not specifically induced by the main verb of a clause. Typically, such adjuncts are adverbial prepositional phrases, see Section 6.2.2. Just like with arguments, adjunct status should not be linked to a lexical verb itself, but to the clause construction in which it is used. For example, the verb *tanzen* ‘to dance’ is typically considered to be an intransitive verb with optional (adjunct) locational prepositional phrases (2.15 a,b). However, there is a crucial difference between the two locations in these two examples, see Section 6.8.2. The static location *im Saal* ‘in the hall’ (2.15 a) remains optional in the perfect (with auxiliary *haben*), see (2.15 c,d), while the dynamic location *in den Saal* ‘into the hall’ becomes obligatory in the perfect (with auxiliary *sein*), see (2.15 e,f). So, the obligatory location in (2.15 e) is an utterance argument (and as a consequence, the role of ‘path’ is a lexical role of such verbs of movement like *tanzen*).

- (2.15) a. Ich tanze (im Saal).  
b. Ich tanze (durch den Saal).  
c. Ich habe im Saal getanzt.  
d. Ich habe getanzt.  
e. Ich bin durch den Saal getanzt.  
f. \*Ich bin getanzt.



Adjuncts are, by definition, optionally present, so there is a natural connection to zero expression. A central problem here is whether there is a crucial distinction between constructions in which a participant is obligatorily absent (i.e. impossible to express) vs. optionally absent (i.e. possibly not expressed). In most diatheses that involve absence, the whole point is that there is an alternation between absence and presence of a lexical role (e.g. in all drop and addition diatheses). The problematic cases are differences like passive vs. anticausative, which by definition are distinguished by possibility vs. impossibility for the agent to be expressed. This difference is highly volatile (i.e. it often differs from lexeme to lexeme whether it is possible or just dispreferred for an agent to be expressed).

## 2.3 Voice

[2.25] The formal linguistic marking of a diathesis, for example by verbal morphology or auxiliaries, is called **GRAMMATICAL VOICE** (following Zúñiga & Kittilä 2019: 4). The different kinds of grammatical voice in German are the basic organisational framework of this book. Each chapter discusses a specific kind of grammatical voice, listing all diatheses using that marking. The nine main chapters can be grouped into four kinds of grammatical voices:

- zero-marked ‘covert’ diatheses (Chapters 5, 6)
- diatheses marked by reflexive pronouns (Chapter 7)
- diatheses marked by adverbials or preverbs (Chapters 8, 9)
- diatheses marked by light-verb constructions (Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13)

[2.26] The first two chapters deal with diatheses that are not overtly marked as such, i.e. they deal with ‘covert’ diatheses. Because there is no marking on either of the two alternants, it is often difficult to discern a direction in such equipollent alternations. In Chapter 5 I will discuss diatheses that only differ in the marking of case, for example unmarked anticausatives like (2.16). Chapter 6 deals with unmarked diatheses in which at least one of the alternants is a prepositional phrase, for example unmarked antipassive like (2.17).

- (2.16) a. Er verbrennt den Tisch.  
b. Der Tisch verbrennt.

- (2.17) a. Ich schlürfe meinen Tee.  
b. Ich schlürfe an meinem Tee.

[2.27] The contribution of reflexive pronouns for the marking of diathesis is discussed in Chapter 7. A central claim in this chapter is that ‘self inflicting’ reflexive reference (2.18) does not count as diathesis in German. In contrast, there are various constructions in German that use reflexive pronouns without such ‘self inflicting’ reflexive reference, like the antipassive in (2.19). In such diatheses the presence of a reflexive pronoun is the actual marking of the diathesis, it is not signalling that subject and object are the same participant. An important generalisation about diatheses with reflexive pronouns is that they are always demotions.

- (2.18) a. Ich wasche das Auto.  
b. Ich wasche mich.

- (2.19) a. Ich fürchte den Tod.  
b. Ich fürchte mich vor den Tod.

[2.28]

In Chapter 8 I will turn to preverbs, i.e. verbal prefixes that in German grammar are known as *Verbpräfixe* and *Verbpartikeln*. Grammatically, these are different kinds of prefixes, but from the perspective of diathesis they appear to function rather similar. The most widespread diathesis marked by such preverbs is an applicative, like with *be-* in (2.20). Because of the bound morphological structure, these diatheses show a strong tendency to grammaticalise into a large variety of different kinds of diatheses. A central generalisation of the diatheses discussed in this chapter is that the resulting sentence structures after diathesis are mostly transitive (esp. nominative+accusative).

- (2.20) a. Ich steige auf den Berg.  
b. Ich besteige den Berg.

Closely related to preverbs are resultative adverbials that induce diathesis, like the applicative with *leer* in (2.21). There exist also diatheses induced by depictive adverbials, like the reflexive anticausative with *gut* in (2.22). Although these two kinds of adverbials, resultative vs. depictive, occur in rather different kinds of diathesis, for convenience both phenomena are combined into a single chapter on adverbially marked diatheses in Chapter 9. [2.29]

- (2.21) a. Ich habe in dem Teich gefischt.  
b. Ich habe den Teich leergefischt.

- (2.22) a. Ich fahre den Lastwagen.  
b. Der Lastwagen fährt sich gut.

A large number of diatheses use light verbs in combination with a non-finite form of the lexical verb. A somewhat surprising insight is that light-verb diatheses always involve a role-change of the nominative subject. I distinguish four different kinds of light verb constructions, to be discussed in four different chapters. Chapter 10 discusses light verb construction with participles, like the infamous *werden+Partizip* passive (2.23). [2.30]

- (2.23) a. Ich habe einen Brief geschrieben.  
b. Der Brief wurde geschrieben.

The next three chapters describe different combinations of light verbs with lexical verbs in the infinitive. Chapter 11 discusses light verbs with straight infinitives, like the *lassen+Infinitiv* causative (2.24). [2.31]

- (2.24) a. Ich wasche meine Kleider.  
b. Sie lässt mich meine Kleider waschen.

Chapter 12 investigates light verbs with *zu* plus an infinitive, like the *sein+zu-Infinitiv* passive (2.25). The combination of *zu* with an infinitive is arguably completely grammaticalised and is simply considered here as yet another non-finite verb form of German, alongside *Partizip* and *Infinitiv*. I propose to call it the *zu-Infinitiv*. [2.32]

- (2.25) a. Ich führe einen Hund an der Leine.  
b. Ein Hund ist an der Leine zu führen.

Finally, Chapter 13 looks at the combinations of prepositions, article and an infinitive, like the *halten+am-Infinitiv* causative (2.27). In such constructions, the preposition and article are obligatorily fused (*an+dem>am*) and this fused combination cannot be separated from [2.33]

the infinitive. Such completely grammaticalised constructions appear to be rather recent in German and are often considered substandard. Only a few of such combinations pass all the tests for complete grammaticalisation. When all tests apply, then I consider the combination of preposition+article+infinitive to be yet another non-finite verb form of German, alongside *Partizip*, *Infinitiv* and *zu-Infinitiv*. I propose to call it the *Präpositionsinfinitiv*.

- (2.26) a. Das Feuer brennt.  
b. Der Wind hält das Feuer am Brennen.

## 2.4 Diathetical operations

### 2.4.1 Abbreviations used

[2.34] A diathetical operation is a change that happens to the marking of the participants in a diathesis. One of the central definitional properties of a diathesis is that the coding of at least one of the participants has to change, for example a participant erstwhile coded with an accusative turns into a prepositional phrase. Because the role of the participant remains the same (again, by definition), such a change amounts to the mapping of a role onto a different grammatical form. I will call this process **ROLE-REMAPING**.

[2.35] In the analysis of diathetical operations in this book I will use the following abbreviations, as summarised in Figure 2.1. First, **GRAMMATICAL EXPRESSIONS**, i.e. actual grammatical forms as identified in traditional German grammar, are abbreviated with single letters, shown at the right side of the figure. For case-marked noun phrases I will use the easily recognisable capital letters ‘NADG’ for nominative, accusative, dative and genitive respectively. As argued earlier (see Section 2.2.2) there are also prepositional phrases that express lexically-determined roles. These will also be abbreviated with capital letters: ‘L’ for obligatory locations and ‘P’ for governed prepositional phrases.

[2.36] Lower-cased letters are used for non-argument participants in the clause: ‘p’ for non-governed prepositional phrases and ‘g’ for adnominal genitives. Adnominal genitives become relevant because in some diatheses a newly introduced participant is inherently the possessor of another participant (see paragraph 2.127 on page 45). Absence of a specific role will be indicated by a ‘–’ dash. Lower-cased ‘a’ and ‘d’ are only used in Section 7.4 to indicate accusative and dative reflexive pronouns in referential usage. As described in much detail in that chapter, it is important to distinguish between reflexive pronouns in German that refer to a lexical role (i.e. ‘referential’ or ‘real’ reflexive constructions) and reflexive pronouns that mark a diathesis without referring to a separate role themselves. Those latter reflexive pronouns, that are not marking any role, are not abbreviated by lowercased ‘a’ or ‘d’.

[2.37] Besides single-letter abbreviations I will also use capitalised three-letter abbreviations for a more abstract level of analysis. As summarised at the left side of Figure 2.1, the grammatical expressions are grouped into sets of **GRAMMATICAL MACROROLES**, mostly along familiar lines. However, it is crucial to realise that these macroroles are defined here as a superset of specifically German grammatical expressions. There is no abstract metalinguistic definition assumed. The current grouping is not necessarily the best or most optimal grouping, but this grouping has emerged to be useful to organise the large diversity of diatheses in this book.

[2.38]

Grammatical Macroroles		Grammatical Expressions		
Arguments	Subject	<b>SBJ</b>	<b>N</b>	Nominative Subject
	Cased Objects	<b>OBJ</b>	<b>A</b>	Accusative Object
			<b>D</b>	Dative Object
			<b>G</b>	Genitive Object
	Objects	<b>PBJ</b>	<b>P</b>	Governed Preposition
			<b>L</b>	Obligatory Location
	Reflexive Objects		<b>a</b>	Accusative Referential Reflexive Pronoun
			<b>d</b>	Dative Referential Reflexive Pronoun
Adjuncts	Expressed	<b>ADJ</b>	<b>p</b>	Non-governed Preposition
			<b>g</b>	Adnominal Genitive
	Unexpressed	<b>Ø</b>	<b>–</b>	Zero

Figure 2.1: Abbreviations used to describe role-remapping

The notion SUBJECT (SBJ) is used for governed nominative phrases that show agreement with the finite verb.<sup>4</sup> The other case-marked governed phrases are combined as CASED OBJECTS (OBJ). The cased objects together with the PREPOSITIONAL OBJECTS (PBJ) form a superclass of objects. Non-governed phrases are separated in OVERTLY EXPRESSED ADJUNCTS (ADJ) and unexpressed roles ZERO (Ø). Although I will use this five-way distinction throughout this book (SBJ, OBJ, PBJ, ADJ, Ø), the five steps are not equidistant. The macroroles OBJ and PBJ are rather closely related, and likewise are ADJ and Ø intimately linked. Collapsing these pairs results in the traditional subject-object-adjunct distinction.

There are some indications that the group of cased objects (OBJ) might be fruitfully separated into CORE (accusative) and NON-CORE (dative/genitive). This would simplify the analysis of, for example, case change in object chains (Section 2.7.5), the antipassive hierarchy (Section 6.7) and the case-marking of the reflexive pronoun (Section 7.3). However, in the majority of diatheses all three cases seem to behave as a uniform group, so I did not consistently pursue this separation. [2.39]

It is imperative to realise that the macroroles are defined in a language-specific way for German grammar as groupings of language-specific German expressions (e.g. ADJ is defined as being either a non-governed prepositional phrase or an adnominal genitive). The names that are used (e.g. ‘object’ or ‘adjunct’) deliberately conjure up general cross-linguistic asso- [2.40]

<sup>4</sup>There are various other nominatively-marked phrases in German grammar which are not included under this heading, e.g. the nominative in nominal or equational predication like *der Täter* in *Er ist der Täter*.

ciations, but it remains to be seen whether similar definitions as used here are also useful for other languages. I will refrain from any cross-linguistic speculation in this context here.

## 2.4.2 Remapping of roles

[2.41] Using the abbreviations as summarised in Figure 2.1 I will organise and categorise the role-remapping of all diatheses in various levels of abstraction. These different categorisations inform the practical organisation of each chapter.

[2.42] **LEVEL 1: DIATHESIS.** Each diathesis is summarised in its own sub-subsection. The establishment of an individual diathesis is not always obvious, and each diathesis in this book is already an conscious categorisation (which could be wrong). It has actually been a voyage of discovery in the preparation of this book to decide when to consider a set of examples to be a single diathesis. Very often erstwhile single diatheses turned out to be better analysed by a split into various different diatheses. Although I am rather confident in the quality of the current decisions, I expect that further refinements are necessary in the future.

[2.43] **LEVEL 2: REMAPPING PATTERN.** The role-remapping of each diathesis is analysed using the single-letter abbreviations (NADGPLpgad-) from Figure 2.1. A remapping is specified as an ordered listing of grammatical expressions for roles, both before and after the diathesis. For example, [NA | -N] is a diathesis that involves two roles that are marked 'NA' before the diathesis and '-N' after the diathesis. Because there are many diatheses with this same pattern, this characterisation is already an (implicit) classification.

[2.44] **LEVEL 3: LOCAL GROUP.** Groups of diatheses with similar semantics within each chapter are grouped together as a local group. These groups are rather ad-hoc and mainly represent a convenience-summary to streamline the presentation. Local groups are unnumbered subsections, indicated graphically with dashes around the name of the local group.

[2.45] **LEVEL 4: MACROROLE PATTERN.** The remapping of each local group is structurally analysed in terms of the three-letter macroroles (SBJ, OBJ, PBJ, ADJ,  $\emptyset$ ) from Figure 2.1. For example, the remapping from above [NA | -N] includes both a change from N to zero (i.e.  $\text{SBJ} \succ \emptyset$ ) and a change from A to N (i.e.  $\text{OBJ} \succ \text{SBJ}$ ). These two macrorole changes can be combined into a single macrorole patter [OBJ  $\succ$  SBJ  $\succ$   $\emptyset$ ].

[2.46] **LEVEL 5: PROMOTION/DEMOTION.** On the most abstract level, all diatheses are separated into chapter-subsections of either demotion or promotion (with only very few diatheses being symmetrical exchanges). Basically, each remapping is evaluated on the macrorole hierarchy (2.27) with role-remapping upwards being promotion and role-remapping downward being demotion. Note that there is a crucial additional criterion necessary, because the majority of diatheses consist of chains of two coinciding remappings (see Section 2.6 on the notion of 'chains'). In such remappings, the largest jump on the macrorole hierarchy defines a diathesis as being demotion or promotion. When both jumps are equally large, then the diathesis is SYMMETRICAL.

### (2.27) Macrorole Hierarchy

SBJ  $\gg$  OBJ  $\gg$  PBJ  $\gg$  ADJ  $\gg$   $\emptyset$

[2.47] For example, the diathesis in (2.28) will be analysed as a REMAPPING PATTERN [NA | -N], see Section 7.5.2. This should be read as follows: there is an alternation between a clause with 'NA' arguments (nominative, accusative) and a clause with only 'N' marking (nominative). The relative order of these letters is crucial, as the order of the roles remains fixed in this notation, e.g. the second letter on the left 'A' (accusative) corresponds to the second letter on the right 'N' (nominative). The '-' dash on the right indicates that the corresponding 'N' on the left is not expressed. Note that the actual linear arrangement of the letters is flexible,

as long as both sides of the alternation remain in the same order, i.e.  $[AN | N-]$  would be the same remapping pattern as  $[NA | -N]$ . The pattern  $[NA | -N]$  is an implicit categorisation, because there are many other diatheses that have exactly the same pattern (see e.g. Sections 5.5.5, 9.5.2, 10.5.17).

- (2.28) a. Ich schließe die Tür.  
b. Die Tür schließt sich.

Although there is a reflexive pronoun in (2.28 b), this pronoun is not included with a lower-cased ‘a’ in the remapping pattern  $[NA | -N]$ , because this reflexive pronoun does not refer to a separate role. The verb *schließen* ‘to close’ implies at least two different roles, the ‘closer’ and the ‘closed object’, expressed as nominative and accusative in (2.28 a), respectively. In (2.28 b) only the role of ‘closed object’ is expressed as nominative. The reflexive pronoun does not refer to any other role. [2.48]

I interpret the reflexive pronoun in (2.28) as a marker of the diathesis itself (see Chapter 7 for an extensive discussion), so there is an overt direction in the markedness from (2.28 a) to (2.28 b). The vertical bar ‘|’ in the middle of the remapping pattern  $[NA | -N]$  implies this direction in markedness from left to right, i.e. left side describes the unmarked alternant and the right side the marked alternant. Reordering the remapping pattern would result in a completely reversed diathesis  $[-N | NA]$ . [2.49]

The diathesis in (2.28) is one of various examples of a LOCAL GROUP called ‘reflexive antipassive’. Other diatheses in this group include examples like (2.29) with an additional governed preposition, analysed with the remapping pattern  $[NAP | -NP]$ , see Section 7.5.5. All diatheses in this local group have the same MACROROLE PATTERN, namely  $[OBJ \succ SBJ \succ \emptyset]$ , i.e. a cased object is turned into nominative subject, which is turned into zero (i.e. unexpressed). [2.50]

This diathesis is a combination of two different remappings  $[OBJ \succ SBJ]$  and  $[SBJ \succ \emptyset]$ , with the first being a promotion on the macrorole hierarchy and the second a demotion. However, because the second remapping  $[SBJ \succ \emptyset]$  is a larger jump on the hierarchy, the complete combination is categorised as a DEMOTION. [2.51]

- (2.29) a. Das Lied erinnert den Mann an den Krieg.  
b. Der Mann erinnert sich an den Krieg.

So, in summary, the role-remapping in the diathesis (2.29) is categorised as:

[2.52]

1. DIATHESIS: reflexive antipassive+governed preposition
2. REMAPPING PATTERN:  $[NAP | -NP]$
3. LOCAL GROUP: reflexive antipassive
4. MACROROLE PATTERN:  $[OBJ \succ SBJ \succ \emptyset]$
5. PROMOTION/DEMOTION: demotion

## 2.5 Stacking

### 2.5.1 Combining diatheses

Different diatheses can be applied one after the other, forming STACKS of diatheses. The term ‘stacking’ is introduced here explicitly in opposition to ‘subordinating’. Subordination leads to non-coherent multi-clause constructions, while stacks always remain coherent and thus monoclausal. [2.53]

[2.54]

Stacked diatheses can lead to convoluted role-remappings. A beautiful example of such stacking of diatheses is given by Dixon (2014: 252) for the Amazonian language Paumari. Here, the root *noki-* ‘to see’ is transparently related to the meaning ‘to show’ through a series of derivational diatheses, viz. *noki-* ‘to see’, *noki-a-* ‘to be visible’, *na-noki-a-* ‘to become visible’, and finally *na-noki-a-hi-* ‘to make become visible’ i.e. ‘to show’.

[2.55] German does not have that many morphologically bound mechanisms for diathesis, though there are incidental examples that come close. For example, the verb *liegen* ‘to lie’ changes with ablaut to *legen* ‘to lay’ (see Section 5.6.3), which in turn can take a preverb to form *be-legen* ‘to cover’ (see Section 8.9.1). However, when the perspective is broadened beyond bound morphology and all different kinds of German diatheses are considered, then it turns out that stacking of diatheses is extremely widespread.

[2.56] In many cases, the different steps in a stack can be easily disentangled by carefully observing the formal marking of the diathesis. For example, the construction in (2.30 c) includes both a preverb *be-* and a reflexive pronoun *sich* and it turns out that these are applied in turn to make a stack of two diatheses. Starting with the verb *antworten* ‘to answer’ with a governed preposition *auf* (2.30 a), the applicative preverb *be-* changes the prepositional phrase to an accusative (2.30 b), see Section 8.8.10. Subsequently, the reflexive anticausative turns the accusative into a nominative and drops the nominative agent (2.30 c), see Section 7.5.2.

- (2.30) a. Der Lehrer antwortet auf deine Frage.  
 b. Der Lehrer beantwortet deine Frage.  
 c. Deine Frage beantwortet sich von selbst.

[2.57] Diatheses are applied one after the other, i.e. the order of the diatheses in a stack is of crucial importance in most cases (unordered stacks exist, but are unusual, see Section 2.6.4). Basically, a stack is just a list of clause alternations applied one after the other. Semantically this means that each subsequent clause alternation has scope over the previous one. This can for example be written down using a symbol like  $+\>$  to indicate the additive (+) and sequential (>) nature of the combination. The stack above can then be analysed as: (2.30 c) = (2.30 a)  $+\>$  *be-* applicative  $+\>$  reflexive anticausative. This notation leads to concise analyses, as for example shown in (7.17) for the difference between (2.31 a) and (2.31 b).

- (2.31) a. Der Lehrer hat die Aufgabe lösen wollen.  
           = Der Lehrer löst die Aufgabe  
            $+\>$  *wollen* modal (see Section 11.4.7)  
            $+\>$  *haben* perfect (see Section 10.4.1)  
 b. Der Lehrer will die Aufgabe gelöst haben.  
           = Irgendjemand löst die Aufgabe für den Lehrer.  
            $+\>$  benefactive dative (see Section 6.8.9)  
            $+\>$  *haben* dative passive (see Section 10.5.22)  
            $+\>$  *wollen* modal (see Section 11.4.7)

[2.58] With unmarked (‘covert’) diatheses such stacks can sometimes be tricky to tease apart. As an example, consider the arguably somewhat artificially constructed example in (2.32) using the verb *schneiden* ‘to cut’. It starts off in (2.32 a) as a basic transitive construction with a nominative and accusative argument. Yet, after various twists and turns it ends up on (2.32 f) with a nominative, an accusatives, a dative and an obligatory locational prepositional phrase,

while the original agent *Arzt* is not even expressed.

- (2.32) a. Der Arzt schneidet den Nagel des Patienten.  
 b. Der Arzt schneidet in den Nagel des Patienten.  
 c. Der Arzt schneidet dem Patienten in den Nagel.  
 d. Der Arzt schneidet dem Patienten einen Schlitz in den Nagel.  
 e. Der Arzt schneidet dem Patienten einen Schlitz in den Nagel mit dem Fräser.  
 f. Der Fräser schneidet dem Patienten einen Schlitz in den Nagel.

Teasing this stack apart, there are five different diatheses, concurrently showing that the verb *schneiden* has at least five different lexeme-specific roles. As defined in Section 1.3.3, each role that appears as a case-marked constituent in at least one diathesis is a lexeme-specific role, and all of the following participants are case-marked in the stack of diatheses (2.32): [2.59]

- the cutter *Arzt* ‘physician’
- the cut object *Nagel* ‘nail’
- the possessor of the cut object *Patient* ‘patient’
- the result of the cutting *Schlitz* ‘groove, slit’
- the instrument doing the cutting *Fräser* ‘milling cutter’

The five diatheses (and the corresponding role-remappings) are the following: [2.60]

- (2.32b), *in* antipassive: changing the cut object *Nagel* from accusative to prepositional object, see Section 6.7.8.4.
- (2.32c), possessor raising: changing the possessor of the cut object *Patient* from adnominal genitive into dative, see Section 6.8.11.
- (2.32d), resultative: adding a new accusative object *Schlitz* as the result of the cutting, see Section 6.8.7.
- (2.32e), adjunct addition: adding an optional instrument *Fräser*, see Section 6.2.4.
- (2.32f), instrument anticausative: turning the instrument *Fräser* from prepositional phrase to nominative, see Section 6.5.5.

## 2.5.2 Fixed stacks

There are a few examples of diatheses that look like stacks of two diatheses, but on closer inspection it turns out that the intermediate construction does not exist. A few major examples of such FIXED STACKS are exemplified below. [2.61]

There is an infamous anticausative diathesis that needs a reflexive pronoun, which is attested for a large, but restricted group of verbs like *schließen* ‘to close’ (2.33a,b), see Section 7.5.2. A completely different group of verbs also has an anticausative diathesis with a reflexive pronoun, but only with an additional evaluative adverbial. This is for example attested with *verkaufen* ‘to sell’ (2.33c,d), see Section 9.5.2. In this case, the diathesis is marked by both the reflexive pronoun and the presence of an adverbial, and neither is possible without the other. Such a combination of two obligatorily co-occurring formal marking [2.62]



strategies is called a **FIXED STACK**.

- (2.33) a. Ich schließe die Tür.  
 b. Die Tür schließt sich.  
 c. Ich verkaufe das Buch.  
 d. Das Buch verkauft sich gut.

[2.63] Various diatheses between a bare verb, like *fassen* ‘to grasp’ (2.34 a), and a preverb-alternant, like *befassen* ‘to be concerned with’ (2.34 b), additionally need a reflexive pronoun, see Section 8.7.4. So here we have a fixed stack of a reflexive pronoun and a preverb together that mark the diathesis.

- (2.34) a. Ich fasse einen Entschluss.  
 b. Ich befasse mich mit dem Entschluss.

[2.64] Also some light verb alternations show fixed stacks. For example, there is a very wide-spread causative diathesis using the light verb *lassen* with an infinitive (2.35 b), see Section 11.6.2. Additionally, the combination of *lassen+Infinitiv* and a reflexive pronoun leads to an anticausative alternation (2.35 c), which does not make sense as being derived from the causative (2.35 b). It seems better to consider the combination of *lassen+Infinitiv+Reflexiv* as a fixed stack, see Section 11.5.4.

- (2.35) a. Der Schüler löst die Aufgabe.  
 b. Der Lehrer lässt den Schüler die Aufgabe lösen.  
 c. Diese Aufgabe lässt sich lösen.

## 2.6 Chaining

### 2.6.1 Isolated diatheses

[2.65] Many diatheses just remap a single role. Such sole diatheses are called **ISOLATED DIATHESES** here. However, there are also many diatheses in which more than one role is remapped. I distinguish the following kinds of role-remappings, of which only the first two are frequently attested.

- **ISOLATED DIATHESIS**: Only one role changes its formal marking.
- **CHAINED DIATHESIS**: Two roles change their formal marking, forming a chain in which one role changes its form from X to Y, while the other role changes its form from Y to Z. This results in a chain  $[X \succ Y \succ Z]$ .
- **MULTI-CHAINED DIATHESIS**: More than two roles change their formal marking, forming a longer chain of connected changes.
- **DISJUNCT DIATHESIS**: Two (or more) roles change their formal marking, with no overlap between marking.

### 2.6.2 Chained diatheses

[2.66] When two roles are remapped by a single diathesis it is surprisingly frequent for them to be chained. In a **CHAINED DIATHESIS** the resulting form of one remapping is the start of the second. This can be conceptualised as a ‘push’ chain in which one remapping induces

another. A reason for the prevalence of such chains might be that German grammar strongly disprefers multiple constituents of the same kind (e.g. two accusatives) in the same clause.

Chained diatheses typically occur when the nominative subject is involved in the diathesis. There can only be a single nominative subject in a German clause, and it is highly unusual to have a sentence without a nominative subject. This implies that any diathesis involving the nominative subject typically includes two remappings, namely one from something else to nominative and a second remapping of the erstwhile nominative to something else. [2.67]

A prototypical example of a chained diathesis involving the nominative subject is the *werden* passive (2.36). Here, the erstwhile accusative *Kuchen* ‘cake’ is turned into a nominative, while the erstwhile nominative *Lehrling* ‘apprentice’ is removed (or optionally retained as a *von* prepositional phrase). So, we have a chain consisting of the role-remappings [OBJ > SBJ] and [SBJ > ADJ]. [2.68]

(2.36) [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ]

- a. Der Lehrling backt den Kuchen.
- b. Der Kuchen wird gebacken (von dem Lehrling).

Diatheses without involvement of the nominative subject are more flexible, in that both isolated and chained diatheses are common. A typical example of a chained diathesis is a full applicative induced by the preverb *be-* (2.37). In this example, a prepositional phrase *für ihre Freundin* ‘for her friend’ is remapped to an accusative [ADJ > OBJ] while the erstwhile accusative *Essen* ‘food’ is turned into a prepositional phrase [OBJ > ADJ]. [2.69]

(2.37) [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ]

- a. Sie kocht kubanisches Essen für ihre Freundin.
- b. Sie bekocht ihre Freundin mit kubanischem Essen.

Among chained diatheses there is a group of frequently recurring remapping patterns. Because of their frequency, it is highly useful to give them specific names. Such names are widespread in the literature, e.g. anticausative for [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] or passive for [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ]. A survey of the various names used in this book will be pursued in Section 2.7. [2.70]

### 2.6.3 Multi-chained diatheses

MULTI-CHAINED DIATHESES consist of combinations of more than two role-remappings that occur in a sequence. This occurs frequently as the result of a stack of multiple diatheses, but only very rarely in a single diathesis. As an example arising from a stack of multiple diatheses consider taking a verb like *lesen* ‘to read’ (2.38 a) and applying a stack of two diatheses (2.38 b,c). This leads to a chain of three role-remappings. First, the preverb diathesis with *vor-* (2.38 b) leads to the addition of a dative argument *dem Jungen*, i.e. a role-remapping [Ø > OBJ], see Section 8.8.9. On top of that, the *bekommen* dative passive (2.38 c) promotes this dative to subject and removes the original subject, i.e. a role-remapping [OBJ > SBJ > Ø], see Section 10.5.21. Combined, these two diatheses lead to a role-remapping [Ø > OBJ > SBJ > Ø]. [2.71]

(2.38) [Ø > OBJ > SBJ > Ø]

- a. Der Vater hat ein Buch gelesen.
- b. Der Vater hat dem Jungen ein Buch vorgelesen.
- c. Der Junge bekommt ein Buch vorgelesen.

Such multi-chained diatheses resulting from diathesis-stacking are widespread. However, I know of only two diatheses with a multi-chain that cannot be decomposed into a stack of separate diatheses. Both these ‘fixed’ multi-chain diatheses appear to occur with just a few idiosyncratic verbs, so this phenomenon really seems to be dispreferred in German.

[2.73] First, the preverb diathesis from *erben* ‘to inherit’ to *enterben* ‘to disinherit’ (2.39), see Section 8.6.13, contains three linked role-remappings for (i) the originator of the inheritance *Vater* ‘father’ [ADJ > SBJ], (ii) the receiver of the inheritance *Junge* ‘boy’ [SBJ > OBJ] and (iii) the inheritance *Schreibtisch* ‘desk’ [OBJ > Ø].

(2.39) [ADJ > SBJ > OBJ > Ø]

- a. Der Junge erbt den Schreibtisch von seinem Vater.
- b. Sein Vater enterbt den Jungen.

[2.74] Second, the verb *schmecken* ‘to taste’ (2.40), see Section 6.5.6, allows for two different constructions with three linked role-remappings for (i) the tasted substance *Pfefferminze* ‘peppermint’ [OBJ > ADJ], (ii) the tasted dish *Suppe* ‘soup’ [ADJ > SBJ] and (iii) the taster *Koch* ‘cook’ [SBJ > Ø].

(2.40) [OBJ > ADJ > SBJ > Ø]

- a. Der Koch schmeckt die Pfefferminze in der Suppe.
- b. Die Suppe schmeckt nach Pfefferminze

## 2.6.4 Disjunct diatheses

[2.75] DISJUNCT DIATHESES consist of a combination of multiple role-remappings that are not linked to each other. Just as with the multi-chained diatheses from the previous section, disjunct diatheses regularly occur as the result of stacking of diatheses. In contrast, they are very rare in individual diatheses.

[2.76] When multiple diatheses are stacked, i.e. when they are applied sequentially on top of each other, they are sometimes structurally independent (and thus unordered). For example, the verb *waschen* ‘to wash’ (2.41 a) can be used in a resultative construction (2.41 b) in which the role of washee *Hemd* ‘shirt’ is turned from an accusative into a location [OBJ > PBJ] and a new accusative object is introduced for the role of the result *Fleck* ‘stain’ [Ø > OBJ], see Section 6.8.7. Independent of this chained diathesis, the possessor of the object *Nachbar* ‘neighbour’ can be raised to genitive (2.41 c), see Section 6.8.12.

(2.41) [Ø > OBJ > PBJ + ADJ > OBJ]

- a. Ich wasche das Hemd des Nachbarn.
- b. Ich wasche den Fleck aus dem Hemd des Nachbarn.
- c. Ich wasche dem Nachbarn den Fleck aus dem Hemd.

[2.77] There are only a few incidental examples of such disjunct diatheses without stacking. The following four examples all only occur with a very limited number of verbs. First, the verb *deuten* can be used both to mean ‘interpret’ (2.42 a) and ‘forebode’ (2.42 b) with a rather

transparent connection between the two. However, the role-remappings are quite complex, see Section 6.5.11.

- (2.42)  $[\emptyset \triangleright \text{PBJ} + \text{OBJ} \triangleright \text{SBJ} \triangleright \emptyset]$
- a. Ich deute den Traum.
  - b. Der Traum deutet auf nichts Gutes.

Second, some preverbs lead to disjunct diatheses, like with *schweigen* ‘to remain silent’ <sup>[2.78]</sup> and *verschweigen* ‘to conceal’ (2.43), see Section 8.8.17.

- (2.43)  $[\text{ADJ} \triangleright \text{OBJ} + \text{PBJ} \triangleright \text{OBJ}]$
- a. Ich schweige zu dir über meinen Besuch.
  - b. Ich verschweige dir meinen Besuch.

Further examples are resultatives for a few verbs of naming like *schimpfen* ‘to scold’ (2.44), <sup>[2.79]</sup> see Section 6.8.8. The disjunct diathesis in (2.45) is less clear, as it might be better analysed as a stack, see Section 6.5.3.

- (2.44)  $[\emptyset \triangleright \text{OBJ} + \text{ADJ} \triangleright \text{OBJ}]$
- a. Sie schimpft auf mich.
  - b. Sie schimpft mich einen Narren

- (2.45)  $[\emptyset \triangleright \text{OBJ} + \text{SBJ} \triangleright \text{ADJ}]$
- a. Der Sommer ist kalt.
  - b. Mir ist kalt im Sommer.

The only somewhat more widespread disjunct diathesis is the resultative construction that can arise with some apparently intransitive verbs like *schwitzen* ‘to sweat’ (2.46). This diathesis introduces two roles at once: a result *Fleck* ‘stain’ and an obligatory location *Hemd* ‘shirt’, see Section 6.8.4. <sup>[2.80]</sup>

- (2.46)  $[\emptyset \triangleright \text{OBJ} + \emptyset \triangleright \text{PBJ}]$
- a. Ich schwitze.
  - b. Ich schwitze einen Fleck in mein Hemd.

## 2.7 Naming

### 2.7.1 Names for macrorole patterns

Throughout the introductory chapters, I have used various names for diatheses, like passive, antipassive, applicative or causative. These names have a long history in the typological grammatical literature (cf. Mel’čuk 1993; Wunderlich 1993; Wunderlich 2015; Dixon & Aikhenvald 2000; Dixon 2014; Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey 2004; Kulikov 2011; Malchukov 2015: 96ff.; Zúñiga & Kittilä 2019). Although I have been using these terms as if their meaning is clear, this is often far from the case. Many different terms and definitions have been proposed in the literature, and different terms have at times been used for the same phenomena. For example, the original proposal for the term ‘antipassive’ is already 50 years old (Silverstein 1972: 395), but the same phenomenon is also known as deaccusative (Geniušė 1987: 94) or antiapplicative (Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey 2004: 1132; Scheibl 2006: <sup>[2.81]</sup>

371). Reversely, antipassive is also attested referring to a slightly different phenomenon of the drop of an object (Scheibl 2006: 372-373).

[2.82] In this section I will describe in more detail how these names are used and defined in the current book about German diatheses. The names for diatheses will here always refer to a macrorole pattern, i.e. to the highly abstract classification of a diathesis in terms of SBJ, OBJ, etc. as defined in Section 2.4.2. For example, the term ‘anticausative’ will be used as a name for the macrorole pattern [OBJ › SBJ › Ø]. Such macrorole patterns are strictly defined here in a language-specific way for German, so care should be taken when applying the same names to different languages.

[2.83] One widespread term that I will avoid is the term ‘middle’ (and likewise the Latinate equivalent term ‘medium’). This term for a diathesis is already attested as *μεσότης* in the oldest known Greek grammatical text, the *τέχνη γραμματική* of Dionysius Thrax, and it has become a mainstay in the grammatical literature ever since.<sup>5</sup> The phenomena that are called ‘middle’ in the literature are highly variable, and there is no consensus about what kind of diathesis this term is supposed to designate, other than something that is neither active nor passive (see Zúñiga & Kittilä 2019: 168-177 for a thorough summary of the complex philological history of the term middle/medium). Such a broad and ill-defined term is not useful for a detailed analysis of the large variety of attested role-remappings in German.

[2.84] The discussion about the different names for macrorole patterns will be split into four parts. First, the next two sections will present names for diatheses involving the nominative subject. Subsequent sections will discuss diatheses not involving the subject. In both discussions, a central distinction will be made between isolated diatheses and chained diatheses (cf. Section 2.6).

## 2.7.2 Isolated subject diatheses

[2.85] Isolated diatheses that involve a nominative subject are not widespread in German. The most widespread kind is the drop of the subject [SBJ › Ø], i.e. the complete removal of the role marked as nominative subject without any further accompanying role-remapping or reintroduction of a new subject. This is typically attested with intransitive verbs: after removing the single available role, there is no other role introduced to fill the structural subject position. Semantically, such diatheses put the focus on the activity as described by the verb itself, so I propose to call them VERBATIVE diatheses.<sup>6</sup> Note that there is a strong tendency for every German sentence to formally have a nominative subject with verb agreement. Consequently, such verbative diatheses almost always result in the presence of a valency-simulating nominative pronoun *es* (see Section 2.2.3).

[2.86] A VERBATIVE diathesis is attested with verbs like *stinken* ‘to stink’ (2.47), see Section 5.5.1. In a sentence like *es stinkt* the pronoun *es* can of course simply be an anaphor, like in (2.47 b). In such a sentence, the role of ‘stinker’ is still present and there is no diathesis at all. However, in other contexts (2.47 c) the verb *stinken* is used without implied subject. This is typ-

<sup>5</sup>Thrax writes: *διαθέσεις εἰσὶ τρεῖς, ἐνέργεια, πάθος, μεσότης* ‘there are three diatheses, active, passive and middle’ (Uhlir 1883: 48).

<sup>6</sup>Unfortunately, there is another use of the term *Verbativ* in the German grammatical tradition, which originates in the work of Engel (e.g. Engel 1996: 198, 251, 347). Engel’s concept is completely different from my concept here. We just happened to stumble upon the same neologism.

ically attested in contexts in which some odour is attested, but the originator is not known.

- (2.47) VERBATIVE [SBJ > Ø]  
 a. Der Müll stinkt.  
 b. Das schmutzige Tuch, es stinkt!  
 c. Hier stinkt es.

Another example of a verbative diathesis is illustrated with the verb *leben* ‘to live’ (2.48), see Section 9.5.1. Many such intransitive verbs can be used without a subject in a habitual sense, but this is only possible with an obligatory adverbial qualification like *gut* (2.48 b,c). [2.87]

- (2.48) VERBATIVE [SBJ > Ø]  
 a. Ich lebe in diesem Haus.  
 b. In diesem Haus lebt es sich gut.  
 c. \* In diesem Haus lebt es sich.

Also the so-called impersonal passive consisting of *werden*+*Partizip* (2.49), see Section 10.5.1, is an example of a verbative diathesis, in this case even without any valency-simulating *es*. [2.88]

- (2.49) VERBATIVE [SBJ > Ø]  
 a. Die Jungs tanzen hier.  
 b. Hier wird getanzt.  
 c. \* Hier wird es getanzt.

A different kind of isolated subject diathesis is subject demotion of the nominative subject to a prepositional phrase. An example is the *geben*+*zu-Infinitiv* (2.50), see Section 12.5.4. In this diathesis, the subject is demoted to an optional non-governed prepositional phrase [SBJ > ADJ]. The demotion is the only role-remapping that is happening in this diathesis, so I propose to call such a diathesis a DEMOTIVE. [2.89]

- (2.50) DEMOTIVE [SBJ > ADJ]  
 a. Wir gewinnen einen Preis.  
 b. es gibt (für uns) einen Preis zu gewinnen.

The other isolated subject diatheses are only attested in incidental examples in German, like a subject demotion to a governed preposition [SBJ > PBJ] with *fehlen* shown in (2.51), see Section 6.5.2. [2.90]

- (2.51) DEMOTIVE [SBJ > PBJ]  
 a. Das Geld fehlt ihm.  
 b. Ihm fehlt es an Geld.

Isolated SUBJECT ADDITION [Ø > SBJ] is very rare in German, partly because it would need an unmarked construction without any subject to start off with. A possible example is the addition of a subject that seems possible with some weather verbs like *donnern* ‘to thunder’ (2.52), see Section 5.6.1. [2.91]

- (2.52) SUBJECT ADDITION [Ø > SBJ]  
 a. Es donnert.  
 b. Die Motoren donnerten.

### 2.7.3 Chained subject diatheses

[2.92] Chained diatheses that involve the nominative subject are widespread in German (in contrast to the infrequent occurrence of isolated diatheses as discussed previously). Figure 2.2 presents an overview of the different terms that I will use for these diatheses. The bold-faced terms are used for widely attested diatheses, while the other kinds of diatheses are only incidentally found. There is currently no evidence in German for the existence of the remappings that are left empty in the figure. There appears to be a preference for various kinds of demotion (i.e. the upper right corner of the figure), which fits nicely with the known typological preference of German for anticausative constructions (Haspelmath 1993: 101; Nichols, Peterson & Barnes 2004: 189).

	To Cased Object [ ... > SBJ > OBJ ]	To Governed Preposition [ ... > SBJ > PBJ ]	To Adjunct [ ... > SBJ > ADJ ]	To Unexpressed [ ... > SBJ > Ø ]
From Cased Object [ OBJ > SBJ > ... ]	<b>Inversive</b> [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ]	<b>Conversive</b> [ OBJ > SBJ > PBJ ]	<b>Passive</b> [ OBJ > SBJ > ADJ ]	<b>Anticausative</b> [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ]
From Governed Preposition [ PBJ > SBJ > ... ]	<b>Reversed Conversive</b> [ PBJ > SBJ > OBJ ]	<b>Preposition Inversive</b> [ PBJ > SBJ > PBJ ]	[ PBJ > SBJ > ADJ ]	<b>Fabricative</b> [ PBJ > SBJ > Ø ]
From Adjunct [ ADJ > SBJ > ... ]	<b>Reversed Passive</b> [ ADJ > SBJ > OBJ ]	[ ADJ > SBJ > PBJ ]	<b>Adjunct Commutative</b> [ ADJ > SBJ > ADJ ]	<b>Conciliative</b> [ ADJ > SBJ > Ø ]
From Unexpressed [ Ø > SBJ > ... ]	<b>Novative</b> [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ]	<b>Novative extended Demotion</b> [ Ø > SBJ > PBJ ]	<b>Novative extreme Demotion</b> [ Ø > SBJ > ADJ ]	<b>Commutative</b> [ Ø > SBJ > Ø ]

Figure 2.2: Names for chained macro-role remappings involving the subject

[2.93] The upper right triangle of Figure 2.2 are demotions, the lower left triangle are promotions, and the diagonal are examples of symmetrical diatheses. I will discuss all types in this order.

#### 2.7.3.1 Demotions

[2.94] The most extreme kind of demotion is an ANTICAUSATIVE [OBJ > SBJ > Ø]. The typical characteristic of an anticausative is the complete removal of the nominative subject that is the causer of the action/state of the clause. Filling the syntactic gap, a case-marked argument (typically the accusative) is promoted to subject. This is a widespread kind of diathesis. An example is the reflexive anticausative with verb like *schliessen* ‘to close’ (2.53), see Section 7.5.2.

- (2.53) ANTICAUSATIVE [OBJ > SBJ > Ø]
- Ich schließe die Tür.
  - Die Tür schließt sich (von alleine).

[2.95] Very similar to an anticausative is the PASSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ]. The main difference between the two (a distinction which is often difficult to delimit) is that for a passive the original subject is still implied and can optionally be overtly expressed (2.54). In contrast,

for an anticausative the original subject is completely removed and a phrase like *by itself* can typically be added. As an example of a passive diathesis in (2.54) is the *bekommen Rezipientenpassiv* in which a dative is promoted to subject Section 10.5.21

- (2.54) PASSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ]
- Ihr Freund kocht ihr eine Suppe.
  - Sie bekommt von ihrem Freund eine Suppe gekocht.

A CONVERSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > PBJ] looks similar to a passive, except that the prepositional phrase is a lexically governed preposition, so it has a more object-like grammatical status. [2.96]  
An example is the verb *empören* ‘to appall’ (2.55 a) with the reflexive diathesis *sich empören über* ‘to be outraged about’ (2.55 b,c), see Section 7.5.7. The term conversive is adapted from Kulikov (2011: 380).

- (2.55) CONVERSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > PBJ]
- Der Preis empört den Kunden.
  - Der Kunde empört sich über den Preis.
  - Der Kunde empört sich darüber, dass der Preis schon wieder gestiegen ist.

For the next diathesis, I propose the term FABRICATIVE [PBJ > SBJ > Ø] based on Lat. *fabrica* [2.97]  
‘plan, trick, workmanship’. This term is used for a diathesis in German in which a fabricated product can be expressed either as a governed prepositional phrase or as a nominative subject. This diathesis occurs for example with various verbs of emotional interactions like *überraschen* ‘to surprise’ (2.56 a), see Section 6.5.7. To understand this diathesis, a distinction is needed between the role of the ‘fabricator’ (here: *Lehrer*, ‘teacher’) and the role of the ‘fabricated product’, which induces the emotion (here: *Aufgabe*, ‘assignment’). The *mit* prepositional phrase that expresses the fabricated product in (2.56 a) is a governed preposition (2.56 c). The diathesis promotes this fabricated product to nominative subject and the fabricator is removed from the expression (2.56 b). The experiencer in the accusative *mich* remains unchanged.

- (2.56) FABRICATIVE [PBJ > SBJ > Ø]
- Der Lehrer überrascht mich mit seiner Aufgabe.
  - Die Aufgabe überrascht mich.
  - Der Lehrer überrascht mich damit, dass er die Aufgabe schon korrigiert hat.

A similar kind of diathesis is called here a CONCILIATIVE [ADJ > SBJ > Ø] based on Lat. *conciliator* [2.98]  
‘intermediary, mediator’. In a conciliative an external object (typically an instrument) is promoted to subject (2.57), see Section 6.5.5. The conciliative and fabricative in German both regularly use a prepositional phrase with *mit*, but the grammatical status is clearly different. The *mit* phrase in a conciliative is an optional adjunct (2.57), while the *mit* phrase in a fabricative is a governed preposition (2.56). This grammatical difference is paralleled by a functional difference in the role that is promoted to subject: a conciliative concerns a (typically tangible) instrument that is used by an agent, while a fabricative promotes a (typically intangible) creation that is produced by the agent.

- (2.57) CONCILIATIVE [ADJ > SBJ > Ø]
- Der Doktor heilt die Wunde mit einer Salbe.
  - Die Salbe heilt die Wunde.



## 2.7.3.2 Promotions

[2.99] The most widespread promotion to subject attested in German is the diathesis with role-remapping [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ], called NOVATIVE here (based on Lat. *novare* ‘renew, refresh, change’). This role-remapping is best known as ‘causative’, but this semantic characterisation does not hold for all examples of this diathesis. Various other novative diatheses exist in which the new nominative is not a causer but an experiencer, opinionator or a permission giver.

[2.100] Semantically, the most widespread kind of novative adds a new causer to the construction, like with the diatheses between *brennen* ‘to burn (intransitive)’ and *verbrennen* ‘to burn (transitive)’ (2.58), see Section 8.6.1. Such a diathesis is aptly called a CAUSATIVE.

(2.58) CAUSATIVE NOVATIVE [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]

- a. Der Tisch brennt.
- b. Ich verbrenne den Tisch.

[2.101] The *sehen+Infinitiv* diathesis (2.59), see Section 11.6.6, adds a new nominative subject and the old nominative is turned into an accusative. This diathesis is thus structurally an example of a novative [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]. However, the newly added nominative is not a causer. The new role is better described as an experiencer, so this diathesis can semantically be called an EXPERIENTIVE. Similar constructions are also attested with light-verbs *hören*, *fühlen*, and *spüren*.

(2.59) EXPERIENTIVE NOVATIVE [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]

- a. Der Junge putzt den Tisch.
- b. Ich sehe den Jungen den Tisch putzen.

[2.102] The *finden+Partizip* diathesis (2.60), see Section 10.6.4 also adds a new nominative subject while the old nominative is turned into an accusative. The role of the new nominative is best characterised as somebody having an opinion, so this diathesis can semantically be called an OPINIATIVE. The main verb is typically a patientive intransitive predicate like *scheitern*, ‘to fail’, see Section 10.2.6. Similar constructions also exist with light verbs *wissen*, *sehen* and *glauben*.

(2.60) OPINIATIVE NOVATIVE [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]

- a. Das Projekt scheitert.
- b. Ich finde das Projekt gescheitert.

[2.103] The *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis (2.61), see Section 11.6.2 is also structurally a novative [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]. This diathesis has multiple possible interpretations, among them also a causative reading (2.61). However, in the example in (2.62) the newly added nominative is allowing the action to happen, not causing it, so this diathesis can semantically be called a PERMISSIVE. This second interpretation typically happens with agentive intransitive predicates like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’, see Section 10.2.6. However, note that in both examples

the other interpretation is also possible, albeit only in specially crafted contexts.

- (2.61) CAUSATIVE NOVATIVE [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]  
 a. Der Junge schläft ein.  
 b. Ich lasse den Jungen einschlafen.  
 (= Ich Sorge dafür, dass der Junge einschläft.)
- (2.62) PERMISSIVE NOVATIVE [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]  
 a. Der Junge schläft.  
 b. Ich lasse den Jungen schlafen.  
 (= Ich erlaube, dass der Junge weiter schläft.)

Finally, the *lehren/helfen+Infinitiv* diathesis (2.63), see Section 11.6.12, is a novative in which the role of the new subject is more of an assistant than a real causative. Therefore it is called here an ASSISTIVE novative. Note that both *lehren* and *helfen* can also be used with *zu-Infinitiv*, but then the constructions are not coherent, so those constructions are not included among the diatheses. [2.104]

- (2.63) ASSISTIVE NOVATIVE [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ]  
 a. Der Sohn faltet die Wäsche.  
 b. Der Vater lehrt seinem Sohn die Wäsche falten.

The NOVATIVE WITH EXTENDED DEMOTION [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{PBJ}$ ] is extremely rare in German. The name is adapted from Kulikov (2011: 388) to denote a diathesis in which the demotion accompanying the novative is not just [ $\text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ] but [ $\text{SBJ} \succ \text{PBJ}$ ]. The diathesis between *freuen* ‘to be pleased’ and *erfreuen* ‘to please’ (2.64) might be an example because *mit* is a governed preposition (2.64c), see Section 8.6.10. [2.105]

- (2.64) NOVATIVE WITH EXTENDED DEMOTION [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{PBJ}$ ]  
 a. Das Geschenk freut mich.  
 b. Er erfreut mich mit einem Geschenk.  
 c. Er erfreut mich damit, dass er mich besucht.

Slightly more widespread, a NOVATIVE WITH EXTREME DEMOTION [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{ADJ}$ ] is a novative diathesis that almost completely removes the erstwhile subject. This is attested in an interesting group of constructions using light verbs like *finden* with a participle and a transitive main verb like *aufheben* ‘to preserve’ (2.65), see Section 10.6.8. With this diathesis, there is a new opiniator introduced, just like with the opinative above (see paragraph 2.102 on page 39). However, the erstwhile nominative subject is now demoted to an optional prepositional phrase. [2.106]

- (2.65) NOVATIVE WITH EXTREME DEMOTION [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{ADJ}$ ]  
 a. Das Archiv hebt den Nachlass auf.  
 b. Ich finde den Nachlass (im Archiv) gut aufgehoben.

The remaining types of promotions are rare. A REVERSED PASSIVE [ $\text{ADJ} \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ] demotes the subject to object and at the same time promotes a new subject from an erstwhile adjunct role. An example in German is the diathesis from *erben* ‘to inherit’ to *enterben* ‘to disinherit’ (2.66 a,b), see Section 8.6.13. This is semantically very close to a causative [ $\emptyset \succ \text{SBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ], in [2.107]

which the newly introduced causer can sometimes be expressed as an adjunct (2.66 c,d). This affinity between a reversed passive and a causative is reminiscent of the affinity between a passive and an anticausative. In both pairs, the difference amounts to a switch between the closely related macro-role of an optional adjunct (ADJ) and being completely unexpressed ( $\emptyset$ ).

(2.66) REVERSED PASSIVE [ADJ > SBJ > OBJ]

- a. Ich erbe den Schreibtisch von meinem Vater.
- b. Mein Vater enterbt mich.
- c. Der Wettkampf endet (durch den Gong).
- d. Der Gong beendet den Wettkampf.

[2.108] Finally, a REVERSED CONVERSIVE [PBJ > SBJ > OBJ] differs from a reversed passive in that the prepositional phrase is a lexically governed preposition, as can be identified by a possible *da+preposition*, *dass...* paraphrase. This is for example attested for the diatheses between *staunen über* ‘to marvel’ and *erstaunen* ‘to amaze’ (2.67), see Section 8.6.11.

(2.67) REVERSED CONVERSIVE [PBJ > SBJ > OBJ]

- a. Ich staune über deine Arbeit.
- b. Deine Arbeit erstaunt mich.
- c. Ich staune darüber, dass du schon fertig bist.

### 2.7.3.3 Symmetrical subject diatheses

[2.109] Completely symmetrical diatheses involving the subject are rare in German. A perfectly symmetrical INVERSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ] is a diathesis that switches subject and object. This term is proposed by Malchukov (2015: 99-100) in reminiscence of the so-called ‘inverse’ marking found in Algonquian languages. An inersive diathesis is designated as a “symmetric conversive” by Kulikov (2011: 380). An example of an inersive is the diathesis between *wundern* ‘to puzzle’ and *bewundern* ‘to admire’ (2.68), see Section 8.9.8.

(2.68) INVERSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ]

- a. Dein Verhalten wundert mich.
- b. Ich bewundere dein Verhalten.

[2.110] Much more widespread in German are diatheses in which a nominative/accusative construction is inverted into a dative/nominative construction. This is for example attested for the *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis (2.69), see Section 12.9.1. Because dative and accusative are both classified here as OBJ, this counts as an inersive diathesis. However, when a separation between core (accusative) and non-core (dative/genitive) case would be pursued (see paragraph 2.39 on page 26), then this diathesis would be an example of demotion. There are two remappings, namely down from SBJ to NON-CORE-OBJ and up from CORE-OBJ to SBJ. When non-core is taken as being lower on the macrorole hierarchy (2.27) then the biggest jump is the jump down, which is the definition of demotion (see Section 2.4.2). Instead

of adding a completely new set of categories I propose to simply split INVERSIVE into two subtypes and call this phenomenon DEMOTED INVERSIVE.

- (2.69) DEMOTED INVERSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ]
- a. Ich räume den letzten Schrank ein.
  - b. Dieser letzte Schrank bleibt mir noch einzuräumen.

The opposite PROMOTED INVERSIVE promotes a dative/genitive into a nominative subject, and demotes the erstwhile nominative to an accusative. This is illustrated with the *haben+Infinitiv* diathesis in (2.70), see Section 11.9.2. [2.111]

- (2.70) PROMOTED INVERSIVE [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ]
- a. Ein Tropfen hängt ihm an der Nase.
  - b. Er hat einen Tropfen an der Nase hängen.

At the other extreme, a COMMUTATIVE [ $\emptyset$  > SBJ >  $\emptyset$ ] completely removes the old subject and introduces a completely new role as subject. I propose this term on the basis of Lat. *commutare* ‘exchange, replace’. A German example of such a diathesis is the *geben+Partizip* construction (2.71), see Section 10.9.3 [2.112]

- (2.71) COMMUTATIVE [ $\emptyset$  > SBJ >  $\emptyset$ ]
- a. Irgendjemand verliert den Ring.
  - b. Ich gebe den Ring verloren.

The two other symmetrical diatheses in between the two extremes are even rarer. A PREPOSITION INVERSIVE [PBJ > SBJ > PBJ] is similar to an inersive, but the exchange is with a governed preposition. This is arguably attested in the diathesis between *strahlen* ‘to shine’ and *erstrahlen* ‘to gleam’ (2.72), see Section 8.9.9. [2.113]

- (2.72) PREPOSITION INVERSIVE [PBJ > SBJ > PBJ]
- a. Die Sonne strahlt auf das Haus.
  - b. Das Haus erstrahlt in der Sonne.

Finally, an example of an ADJUNCT COMMUTATIVE [ADJ > SBJ > ADJ] is possibly attested with the verb *wimmeln* ‘to swarm’ (2.100), see Section 6.9.1. [2.114]

- (2.73) ADJUNCT COMMUTATIVE [ADJ > SBJ > ADJ]
- a. Die Kinder wimmeln auf den Platz.
  - b. Der Platz wimmelt von Kindern.

#### 2.7.4 Isolated object diatheses

The situation with object diatheses is reversed from the previously discussed subject diatheses. With object diatheses, isolated diatheses are much more widespread and they occur with a wide variety of role-remappings, see Figure 2.3. In contrast, chained diatheses are less widespread and can mostly be analysed as a combination of multiple isolated diatheses. [2.115]

The top right diatheses in Figure 2.3 are demotions, while the bottom left ones are promotions. The bottom right is completely empty because these remappings are not diatheses anymore, but simply optional marking. There is a strong tendency for object demotions to [2.116]

be either unmarked or marked by reflexive pronouns in German, while the object promotions are typically marked by preverbs or obligatory adverbs. The exception to this generalisation are the so-called locative and delocative diatheses. With those, promotions (locatives) are formally unmarked, while demotions (delocatives) are marked by preverbs or obligatory adverbs. I have currently no explanation for this rather clear markedness pattern.

	To Cased Object [ ... > OBJ ]	To Governed Preposition [ ... > PBJ ]	To Adjunct [ ... > ADJ ]	To Unexpressed [ ... > Ø ]
From Cased Object [ OBJ > ... ]	<b>Case Change</b> [ OBJ > OBJ ]	<b>Governed Antipassive</b> [ OBJ > PBJ ]	<b>Antipassive</b> [ OBJ > ADJ ]	<b>Deobjective</b> [ OBJ > Ø ]
From Governed Preposition [ PBJ > ... ]	<b>Governed Applicative</b> [ PBJ > OBJ ]	<b>Preposition Change</b> [ PBJ > PBJ ]	[ PBJ > ADJ ]	<b>Delocative</b> [ PBJ > Ø ]
From Adjunct [ ADJ > ... ]	<b>Applicative</b> [ ADJ > OBJ ]	[ ADJ > PBJ ]	<b>Adjunct Change</b> [ ADJ > ADJ ]	
From Unexpressed [ Ø > ... ]	<b>Objective</b> [ Ø > OBJ ]	<b>Locative</b> [ Ø > PBJ ]		

Figure 2.3: Names for isolated remappings without involvement of the subject

[2.117] I will discuss the different role-remappings from Figure 2.3 in four subsections. First, I will look at the various kinds of applicatives and antipassives (mid left and mid top), then at the objectives and deobjectives (top right and left bottom), followed by locative and delocative diatheses (mid bottom and mid right), and finally at the symmetrical exchanges (on the diagonal).

#### 2.7.4.1 Applicatives & antipassives

[2.118] Applicatives and antipassives are very similar, though reversed. **APPLICATIVES** [ADJ > OBJ] change a prepositional phrase into a case-marked phrase, while **ANTIPASSIVES** [OBJ > ADJ] convert a case-marked phrase into a prepositional phrase. Given this affinity, instead of ‘antipassive’ it might be better to call such remappings ‘antiapplicative’ (e.g. Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey 2004: 1132) or ‘deapplicative’ (in line with the other names below).

[2.119] By removing or adding an object, applicatives and antipassives regularly change the transitivity of the sentence. However, because case marking in German is nominative/accusative aligned, changes in transitivity are not reflected in the marking of the subject. This is crucially different from languages with ergatively aligned case marking, in which antipassives also include a change in the marking of the subject, namely from ergative to absolutive. Terminologically, these two situations might be distinguished by using the term ‘deapplicative’ for nominative/accusative languages and reserve ‘antipassive’ for ergative/absolutive languages. I decided against that distinction and the term ‘antipassive’ will be used throughout in this book with this explicit caveat.

[2.120]

Applicatives occur frequently with the addition of a preverb, like in the alternation between *steigen auf* ‘to climb’ and *besteigen* ‘to mount’ (7.88), see Section 8.8.10.

- (2.74) APPLICATIVE [ADJ > OBJ]
- a. Sie steigt auf den Berg.
  - b. Sie besteigt den Berg.

Antipassives in German are often unmarked (see further below), but an example of an antipassive with a clear markedness direction is the alternation between *treffen* ‘to meet’ and reflexive *sich treffen mit* ‘to meet with’ (2.75), see Section 7.7.3. [2.121]

- (2.75) ANTIPASSIVE [OBJ > ADJ]
- a. Ich treffe dich.
  - b. Ich treffe mich mit dir.

The object of applicatives and antipassives is typically an accusative, but datives can also be targeted. An example of a dative applicative is the alternation between *stammen aus* ‘to hail from’ and *entstammen* ‘to be descended from’ (2.76), see Section 8.8.15. An example of a dative antipassive is the covert alternation of *berichten* ‘to report’ (2.77), see Section 6.7.11. [2.122]

- (2.76) DATIVE APPLICATIVE [ADJ > OBJ]
- a. Ich stamme aus einem Adelsgeschlecht.
  - b. Ich entstamme einem Adelsgeschlecht

- (2.77) DATIVE ANTIPASSIVE [OBJ > ADJ]
- a. Er berichtet dem Vorstand alles.
  - b. Er berichtet alles an den Vorstand.

In the discussion of diatheses in this book I consistently distinguish GOVERNED APPLICATIVES [PBJ > OBJ] and GOVERNED ANTIPASSIVES [OBJ > PBJ] when the prepositional phrase is a governed preposition. An example of a governed applicative is the diathesis between *arbeiten an* ‘to work on’ (with a governed preposition *an*) and *bearbeiten* ‘to edit, adapt’ (2.78), see Section 8.8.11. An example of a governed antipassive is the diathesis between *beklagen* ‘to lament’ and *sich beklagen* ‘to complain’ (with a governed preposition *über*) (2.79), see Section 7.7.4. However, the differentiation between the governed and non-governed applicative/antipassive does not currently allow for any promising semantic or structural generalisations, so this differentiation might grammatically be unnecessary. [2.123]

- (2.78) GOVERNED APPLICATIVE [PBJ > OBJ]
- a. Ich arbeite an dem Text.  
Ich arbeite daran, dass der Text fertig wird.
  - b. Ich bearbeite den Text.

- (2.79) GOVERNED ANTIPASSIVES [OBJ > PBJ]
- a. Ich beklage den Lärm.  
Ich beklage mich über den Lärm.
  - b. Ich beklage mich darüber, dass es so laut ist.

There are a many diatheses with a role-remapping between adjunct and object that do not have any overt indication of a direction. Without explicit marking it is difficult to decide whether such diatheses are cases of (applicative) promotion [ADJ > OBJ] or (antipassive) demotion [OBJ > ADJ]. For the sake of organisation in this book I classify such covert alternations on the basis of (debatable) semantic intuitions.

[2.125] Most covert diatheses with an alternation between prepositional phrases and case-marked arguments are classified here as ANTIPASSIVE, like in the alternation between *schießen auf* ‘to aim at’ and *schießen* ‘to shoot’ (2.80 a), see Section 6.7.8. This is also widespread with datives (2.80 b), see Section 6.7.11. In such examples, I judge the case-marking to be more basic than the prepositional phrase.

(2.80) COVERT ANTIPASSIVE [OBJ > ADJ]

- a. Ich schieße den Bären.  
Ich schieße auf den Bären.
- b. Ich schreibe dir einen Brief.  
Ich schreibe einen Brief an dich.

[2.126] In contrast, there is a widespread alternation between datives and *für* prepositional phrases (2.81) that I classify as an APPLICATIVE, see Section 6.8.9. In this example the dative seems to be the derived construction.

(2.81) COVERT APPLICATIVE (BENEFACTOR RAISING) [ADJ > OBJ]

- a. Er kocht eine Suppe für mich.
- b. Er kocht mir eine Suppe.

[2.127] There is a further kind of covert diathesis with a dative object, conventionally called POSSESSOR RAISING. In such diatheses there is an alternation between a possessor (typically expressed as an adnominal genitive) and a dative (2.82). The dative can alternate with the possessor of a nominative subject (see Section 5.8.3), an accusative object (see Section 5.8.4) or a location (see Section 6.8.11). Following widespread convention, I classify these diatheses as promotion [ADJ > OBJ]

(2.82) COVERT APPLICATIVE (POSSESSOR RAISING) [ADJ > OBJ]

- a. Er schneidet meine Haare.
- b. Er schneidet mir die Haare.

[2.128] These two covert kinds of dative applicative (viz. benefactor and possessor applicative) are semantically and structurally clearly distinct. The datives that show a possessive alternation (2.82) are semantically experiencers. In contrast, datives that alternate with *für* prepositional phrases (2.81) are semantically benefactors. In especially crafted context it is possible to evoke either reading for the same sentence, (2.83).

- (2.83) a. ? Ich schneide dir (zuliebe) in den (meinen) Finger.  
(= Ich schneide für dich in meinen Finger.)
- b. Ich schneide dir in den (deinen) Finger.  
(= Ich schneide in deinen Finger.)

## 2.7.4.2 Objectives &amp; deobjectives

A DEOBJECTIVE DIATHESIS [OBJ > ∅] is a diathesis that drops an object, i.e. a role cannot be expressed anymore (the term is taken from Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey 2004: 1131). A deobjective drop is illustrated in (2.84) with an alternation from *kaufen* ‘to buy’ to *einkaufen* ‘to shop’, see Section 8.7.2 for an extensive discussion. [2.129]

- (2.84) DEOBJECTIVE [OBJ > ∅]
- a. Ich habe gestern ein Buch gekauft.
  - b. Ich habe gestern eingekauft.

A special variant of a deobjective occurs with verbs that apply to the body, like *verbrennen* ‘to burn’ (2.85). In such constructions, a reflexive pronoun is necessary. This diathesis is called ENDOREFLEXIVE (Haspelmath 1987: 27–28), see Section 7.7.1 for an extensive discussion. [2.130]

- (2.85) DEOBJECTIVE (ENDOREFLEXIVE) [OBJ > ∅]
- a. Er verbrennt das Buch.
  - b. Er verbrennt sich.

An OBJECTIVE DIATHESIS [∅ > OBJ] is a diathesis that adds a new object, i.e. a completely new role is introduced in the form of an object. An example of an overtly marked object addition is the alternation from *zaubern* ‘to perform magic’ to *verzaubern* ‘to enchant’ (2.86). Additions are frequently attested with preverbs like *ver-*, see Section 8.8.1. [2.131]

- (2.86) OBJECTIVE [∅ > OBJ]
- a. Sie zaubert.
  - b. Sie verzaubert mich.

A semantically special subgroup of object additions are RESULTATIVES. A resultative diathesis adds an object that is the result of performing the activity described by the predicate.<sup>7</sup> An overtly marked resultative is illustrated in (2.87) with the diathesis between *arbeiten* ‘to work’ and the inherent reflexive *sich etwas erarbeiten* ‘to acquire something through work’, see Section 8.8.5. The result of the work is added as an object in (2.87 b). [2.132]

- (2.87) OBJECTIVE (RESULTATIVE) [∅ > OBJ]
- a. Ich arbeite.
  - b. Ich erarbeite mir ein Vermögen.  
(= Ich arbeite, und das Resultat ist, dass ich ein Vermögen besitze.)

Objectives and deobjectives are frequently attested without any overt marking (cf. ambitransitive/labile verbs), and in such ‘covert’ diatheses it is difficult to establish a direction. As already noted in the previous section, for the sake of organisation in this book I classify such covert alternations on the basis of (often debatable) semantic intuitions. For example, the verb *stören* ‘to disturb’ (2.88) can be used both with and without an accusative object, see Section 5.7.1. This is classified here as a deobjective diathesis. Such unmarked object drops [2.133]

<sup>7</sup>Confusingly, the term “resultative” is also used in the literature with an aspectual meaning, namely to indicate a special kind of state induced as the result of performing the predicate (e.g. Nedjalkov 1988).



are also attested with datives, see Section 5.7.4, and with governed prepositions, see Section 6.7. The dropping of an object is also often possible to put the focus on the action itself, but then it is typically used with an adverbial, see Section 9.7.1 for an extensive discussion.

- (2.88) COVERT DEOBJECTIVE [OBJ > Ø]  
 a. Du störst die Veranstaltung.  
 b. Du störst.

[2.134] In contrast, the verb *stottern* ‘to stutter’ is classified here as an example of object addition (2.89), although there is no formal differentiation from the previous example with object drop (2.88). The intuition is that *stottern* is basically intransitive (and any object is thus added), while *stören* is basically transitive (and any missing object is thus dropped). Correlated with this proposed difference is the fact that covert object addition with *stottern* has a resultative interpretation (2.89 b). However, it remains to be seen whether there is really a difference between these two kinds of verbs (see Section 5.8.1 for an extensive discussion).

- (2.89) COVERT OBJECTIVE (RESULTATIVE) [Ø > OBJ]  
 a. Er stotterte.  
 b. Er stotterte eine Entschuldigung.  
 (= Er stotterte, und das Resultat ist eine Entschuldigung.)

#### 2.7.4.3 Locatives & delocatives

[2.135] A LOCATIVE DIATHESIS [Ø > PBJ] is a diatheses that adds an obligatory locational phrase PBJ to the clause.<sup>8</sup> For example, the transitive *befehlen* ‘to order’ marks the ordered person as an accusative (2.90 a). With an (directional) locative phrase *an die Front* ‘to the frontline’ the sentence gets a caused-motion or resultative reading (2.90 b), see Section 6.8.5.

- (2.90) LOCATIVE (CAUSED MOTION) [Ø > PBJ]  
 a. Ich befehle eine Armee.  
 b. Ich befehle die Armee an die Front.  
 (= Ich befehle, und dadurch geht die Armee an die Front.)

[2.136] Even more noteworthy, such a locative diathesis is also possible with many intransitive verbs like *schwitzen* ‘to sweat’ (2.91 a). With such verbs, a locative diathesis not only adds a location, like *in mein Hemd* ‘in my shirt’, but also an resultative accusative object, like *einen Fleck* ‘a stain’ (2.91 b), see Section 6.8.4.

- (2.91) LOCATIVE (RESULTATIVE) [Ø > PBJ, Ø > OBJ]  
 a. Ich schwitze.  
 b. Ich schwitze einen Fleck in mein Hemd.  
 (= Ich schwitze, und dadurch ist ein Fleck in meinem Hemd.)

[2.137] The reversal of a locative diathesis is a DELOCATIVE DIATHESIS [PBJ > Ø]. In such a diathesis an obligatory location loses its obligatory status. An example of such a diathesis is shown in (2.92) with the alternation between *stecken* ‘to put into’ and *verstecken* ‘to hide’. The verb *stecken* needs an obligatory location (2.92 a,b). Such an obligatory location is classified

<sup>8</sup>There is no connection between a locative diathesis and a locative case. Both terms simply use the word *locative* to describe the fact that the marking of location is concerned.

here as a prepositional object PBJ (see Section 2.2.2). The situation is different with the verb *verstecken*. With this verb the location is an optional adjunct and can be left out (see Section 8.7.11 for an extensive discussion).

- (2.92) DELOCATIVE [PBJ > Ø]
- a. Ich stecke das Geschenk in den Schrank.
  - b. \*Ich stecke das Geschenk.
  - c. Ich verstecke das Geschenk in dem Schrank.
  - d. Ich verstecke das Geschenk.

#### 2.7.4.4 Symmetrical object diatheses

Symmetrical object diatheses are rare in German. A CASE CHANGE [OBJ > OBJ] is illustrated in (2.93) by the alternation between *folgen* ‘to follow’ (with dative) and *verfolgen* ‘to chase’ (with accusative), see Section 8.9.5. [2.138]

- (2.93) CASE CHANGE [OBJ > OBJ]
- a. Ich folge dem Auto.
  - b. Ich verfolge das Auto.

A GOVERNED PREPOSITION CHANGE [PBJ > PBJ] does occur in German, but such diatheses have not been explicitly collected in this book. Possible examples are *arbeiten an* ‘to work on’ (2.94 a) changing into *sich durcharbeiten* ‘to work through’ (2.94 b) or *sorgen für* ‘take care of’ (2.94 c) changing into *sich sorgen um* ‘to worry about’ (2.94 d). [2.139]

- (2.94) GOVERNED PREPOSITION CHANGE [PBJ > PBJ]
- a. Er arbeitet an den Daten.
  - b. Er arbeitet sich durch die Daten.
  - c. Er sorgt für seine Mutter.
  - d. Er sorgt sich um seine Mutter.

An ADJUNCT CHANGE [ADJ > ADJ] is, according to the definitions, not a diathesis at all, as adjuncts are not lexically specific. However, the change between a possessor *dein* ‘your’ (2.95 a) and a non-governed prepositional phrase *von dir* ‘from you’ (2.95 b) can be seen as a borderline examples, see Section 6.9.3. [2.140]

- (2.95) ADJUNCT CHANGE [ADJ > ADJ]
- a. Ich erwarte dein Geschenk.
  - b. Ich erwarte ein Geschenk von dir.

#### 2.7.5 Chained object diathesis

Chains of object diatheses (i.e. chains with the object in the middle of the chain) can always be interpreted as a combination of two isolated (‘single’) diatheses from the previous section. However, not all theoretically possible combinations are attested (see Figure 2.4). The pattern of which chains are attested is clearly not-random, though I do not have an insightful rationale for the distribution as shown in the figure. [2.141]

	To Cased Object [ ... > OBJ > OBJ ]	To Governed Preposition [ ... > OBJ > PBJ ]	To Adjunct [ ... > OBJ > ADJ ]	To Unexpressed [ ... > OBJ > Ø ]
From Cased Object [ OBJ > OBJ > ... ]	Double Case Change [ OBJ > OBJ > OBJ ]		<b>Antipassive + Case Change</b> [ OBJ > OBJ > ADJ ]	
From Governed Preposition [ PBJ > OBJ > ... ]			gov. Applicative + Antipassive [ PBJ > OBJ > ADJ ]	<b>gov. Applicative + Deobjective</b> [ PBJ > OBJ > Ø ]
From Adjunct [ ADJ > OBJ > ... ]	<b>Applicative + Case Change</b> [ ADJ > OBJ > OBJ ]	Applicative + gov. Antipassive [ ADJ > OBJ > PBJ ]	<b>Applicative + Antipassive</b> [ ADJ > OBJ > ADJ ]	
From Unexpressed [ Ø > OBJ > ... ]		<b>gov. Antipassive + Objective</b> [ Ø > OBJ > PBJ ]		

Figure 2.4: Attested chains of object diathesis

## 2.7.5.1 Chained applicatives

[2.142] The patterns in the center of the figure are the most frequent chains with an object, called collectively FULL APPLICATIVE [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ]. These diatheses are combinations of an applicative promotion [ADJ > OBJ] and an antipassive demotion [OBJ > ADJ]. A typical example is the diathesis between *werfen* ‘to throw’ and *bewerfen* ‘to throw at’ (2.96), see Section 8.9.1. In such examples a prepositional phrase turns into an accusative, and the erstwhile accusative into a prepositional phrase.

(2.96) APPLICATIVE+ANTIPASSIVE [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ]

- Ich werfe Dreck auf dich.
- Ich bewerfe dich mit Dreck.

[2.143] The prepositional phrase of the applicative is in some examples a governed preposition, e.g. with *zwingen* ‘to force’ (2.98 a,b). This chain is thus a remapping of the form [PBJ > OBJ > ADJ], but I will still call this a full applicative (see Section 8.9.3).

(2.97) GOVERNED APPLICATIVE+ANTIPASSIVE [PBJ > OBJ > ADJ]

- Er zwingt ihn zu einem Geständnis.
- Er zwingt ihn dazu, ein Geständnis abzulegen.
- Er erzwingt ein Geständnis von ihm.

[2.144] A special case of a full applicative is illustrated here with the verb *bewundern* ‘to admire’ (2.98), see Section 6.8.13. This verb (and others like it) show a combination of a possessor raising applicative [ADJ > OBJ] and a governed antipassive [OBJ > PBJ] leading to a full applicative chain [ADJ > OBJ > PBJ].

(2.98) POSSESSOR RAISING APPLICATIVE+GOVERNED ANTIPASSIVE [ADJ > OBJ > PBJ]

- Ich bewundere seine Ehrlichkeit.
- Ich bewundere ihn für seine Ehrlichkeit.
- Ich bewundere ihn dafür, dass er ehrlich ist.

## 2.7.5.2 Chained objectives &amp; deobjectives

At the extreme right and bottom of Figure 2.4 are chains that involve the addition or drop of a lexical role. An objective [ $\emptyset \succ \text{OBJ}$ ] is typically chained with an antipassive [ $\text{OBJ} \succ \text{PBJ}/\text{ADJ}$ ], resulting in a chain [ $\emptyset \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \text{PBJ}$ ]. This is attested in the resultative object addition illustrated here with the verb *schneiden* ‘to cut’ (10.39), see Section 6.8.7. A new object, that is the result of the cutting, is introduced, while the old object is turned into a prepositional phrase (2.99 a,b). This prepositional phrase cannot be left out (2.99 c), so it is classified here as an obligatory location (PBJ). [2.145]

(2.99) ANTIPASSIVE+OBJECTIVE (RESULTATIVE) [ $\emptyset \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \text{PBJ}$ ]

- a. Ich schneide das Brot.
- b. Ich schneide ein Loch in das Brot.
- c. ? Ich schneide ein Loch

The reversed chain [ $\text{PBJ} \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \emptyset$ ] is illustrated in (2.100) with the diathesis between the verb *klopfen* and *ausklopfen* ‘to pound’, see Section 8.7.12. The verb *klopfen* takes an accusative that expressed the result of the pounding (*Staub*). The pounded object (*Mantel*) that produces the result is expressed as an obligatory locational phrase (2.100 a,b). The antiresultative *ausklopfen* (2.100 c) drops the result (*Staub*) and promotes the pounded object (*Mantel*) to accusative. [2.146]

(2.100) APPLICATIVE+DEOBJECTIVE (ANTIRESULTATIVE) [ $\text{PBJ} \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \emptyset$ ]

- a. Ich klopfe den Staub von meinem Mantel.
- b. \* Ich klopfe den Staub.
- c. Ich klopfe meinen Mantel aus.

## 2.7.5.3 Chained case changes

Finally, there are a few chains involving a change of case at the top and the left of Figure 2.4. Note that a case change of dative/genitive to accusative can be seen as a promotion (and the reverse as a demotion, cf. paragraph 2.39 on page 26), but that perspective will not be followed here. [2.147]

Example (2.101) shows a combination of a dative-to-accusative case change with an antipassive, resulting in a chain [ $\text{OBJ} \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \text{ADJ}$ ]. The verb *schenken* ‘to gift’ takes a recipient in the dative and a patient in the accusative, while the derived *beschenken* ‘to gift’ turns the accusative into a prepositional phrase (i.e. antipassive) and changes the dative *dir* into an accusative *dich* (see Section 8.7.8). [2.148]

(2.101) ANTIPASSIVE+CASE CHANGE [ $\text{OBJ} \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \text{ADJ}$ ]

- a. Ich schenke dir ein Buch.
- b. Ich beschenke dich mit einem Buch.

The reverse situation, i.e. a chain [ $\text{ADJ} \succ \text{OBJ} \succ \text{OBJ}$ ], is attested with the diathesis between *drängen* ‘to urge’ and the derived *aufdrängen* ‘to impose’ (2.102), see Section 8.8.14. In this [2.149]

example a prepositional phrase changes into an accusative (i.e. applicative), while the accusative *dich* changes to dative *dir*.

(2.102) APPLICATIVE+CASE CHANGE [ADJ > OBJ > OBJ]

- a. Ich dränge dich zu einem Abo.
- b. Ich dränge dir ein Abo auf.

[2.150] Finally, an incidental diathesis is attested with the verb *rauben* ‘to rob’ (2.103), see Section 8.9.7. When this verb is changed to *berauben* ‘to rob’ then two case changes happen simultaneously: first a dative-to-accusative change (*dich* becomes *dir*) and second an accusative-to-genitive change (*das Buch* becomes *des Buches*). This is thus an example of a remapping pattern [OBJ > OBJ > OBJ]. However, note that the chain dative-to-accusative-to-genitive suggests a combination of promotion and demotion, alike to a full applicative.

(2.103) DOUBLE CASE CHANGE [OBJ > OBJ > OBJ]

- a. Ich raube dir das Buch.
- b. Ich beraube dich des Buches.



## Chapter 3

# Summary of major diatheses

### 3.1 German names for German grammar

[3.1] Among all 250+ diatheses that are distinguished in this survey there are some major ones that are frequently attested and can be used with very many different verbs. In contrast, there are also many diatheses that only occur in very specific situations or might otherwise be considered to be exceptions or incidental instances. The major diatheses that are of central importance to the grammatical structure of German will be summarised in this chapter. Such a summary would normally be presented at the end of a book, but because of the often long-winding data-driven details of the subsequent descriptive chapters, I decided to present this summary here at the end of the introductory deliberations. Take it as a quick appetiser of things to come, with ample links to the actual discussion in later chapters. This chapter also provides a sketch of how diathesis could be approached in practical grammars of the German language.

[3.2] To reiterate the basic premise of this book: in the chapters 5 to 13 I aim to present a complete list of all coherent, and thus monoclausal, clause structures in German (cf. Section 1.3.1 on defining monoclausality). All in all, in those chapters there are more than 250 separate sub-subsections that describe (often minor) variations of monoclausal structures. This diversity is condensed into about 120 major clause alternations as summarised here. Of those, about 80 are diatheses (i.e. clause alternations with role-remapping, discussed in this chapter), while only about 40 are epitheses (i.e. clause alternations without any change in role marking, discussed in the next chapter). So, diathesis ('voice marking') is a much more diverse grammatical phenomenon than epithesis ('tense-aspect-mood' marking). All these counts should be taken with some leeway, because a lot depends on individual decisions about splitting or lumping structures into groups (e.g. how many *lassen+Infinitiv* constructions are counted separately, cf Section 11.2.5). Although the analysis of German clause alternations might look cleaner when lumping structures into larger groups, that would not reduce the attested diversity, it would only hide the variation at the cost of larger within-group complexity.

[3.3] Besides providing a basic summary, I also propose German names (sometimes based on Latinate terms) for all 120 major derived monoclausal sentence structures. Using suitable names is a central aspect of (scientific) communication. In grammar, names are like instruments that allow us to abstract away from individual details and manipulate classes of utterances that show a specific abstract structure. However, naming is hard and can also lead to miscommunication. When re-using available terminology, the terms are easily recognised

and remembered, but they carry the weight of history. Even when detailed definitions are given (as I have tried to do throughout this book), unintended interpretations of previous usage inevitably seep through. In contrast, inventing new names introduces more precision, but the downside is often cumbersome terms that are difficult to remember.

In naming diatheses in this book I have tried to strike a balance between precise naming and good readability. For the English names in the detailed discussions in the coming chapters, I have decided in favour of precision. Each phenomenon is newly named with often long descriptive and unique names. In contrast, for the German names in this chapter I try to reuse available terminology as much as possible. When necessary, I propose new names that attempt to evoke a functional description like *Reziprokativ* or *Erlebnispassiv*. However, the semantic characterisation has not been the main focus of this book, so it might become necessary to rename diatheses in the future once more detailed investigations have been performed. In some cases I have not been able to find a suitable semantic characterisation. For those diatheses I have resorted to using formal characteristics in the name, always written as separate words, like *Reflexiv Erlebnispassiv* [3.4]

In this chapter, the diatheses are organised in sections according to the grammatical macro-role remapping patterns as introduced in Section 2.7. The different diatheses in each section are thus functionally highly similar, but they are structurally different. Inversely, there are various diatheses that structurally highly similar, but are nonetheless repeated in separate sections under different names. This is necessary because superficially identical diathesis can have rather different structural repercussions depending on the verb to which it is applied. This happens for examples with different instantiations of the *sein+Partizip* or the *lassen+sich+Infinitiv* constructions. [3.5]

Before diving into the daunting diversity of German diathesis, a short note on German names for different clause types is in order (summarised in Table 3.1). The distinction between sentence (German: SATZ) and clause (German: TEILSATZ) is customary made in the German grammatical literature when a precise description is needed. However, the term *Satz* is often used as a shorthand for both. Subdividing clauses, there is of course a basic distinction between main clause (German: HAUPTSATZ, more precise would be SELBSTÄNDIGER TEILSATZ) and subordinate clause (German: NEBENSATZ or alternatively UNTERGEORDNETER TEILSATZ). [3.6]

Yet, a central thesis of this book is that there is a further subdivision for both main and subordinate clauses into three different kinds of clauses (see Section 2.1). First, a ‘basic clause’ is a clause with a single finite verb form in the *Präsens* or *Präteritum*. For German I propose the term BASISSATZ, or, to be more precise, GRUNDLEGENDER TEILSATZ. Second, an ‘epithesis’ is a clause alternant without role-remapping. For German I propose either the German neologism ÜBERSATZ or the Greek-inspired EPITHESE, or, to be more precise, ERWEITERTER TEILSATZ. Finally, a diathesis is a clause with role-remapping. For German I propose the German neologism WECHSELSATZ or the Greek-inspired DIATHESE, or, to be more precise, UMGESTELLTER TEILSATZ. [3.7]

Table 3.1: German terminology for clause types

English Term	German Term	Short German Term
Main clause	<i>Selbständiger Teilsatz</i>	<i>Hauptsatz</i>
Subordinate clause	<i>Untergeordneter Teilsatz</i>	<i>Nebensatz</i>
Basic clause	<i>Grundlegender Teilsatz</i>	<i>Basissatz</i>
Epithesis	<i>Erweiterter Teilsatz</i>	<i>Übersatz (Epithese)</i>



English Term	German Term	Short German Term
Diathesis	<i>Umgestellter Teilsatz</i>	<i>Wechselsatz (Diathese)</i>

## 3.2 Verbative diatheses [SBJ > Ø]

[3.8] A VERBATIVE is a diathesis that completely removes the role marked as nominative subject without introducing a new subject. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.2, specifically starting at paragraph 2.85 on page 35.

### 3.2.1 *Verbativ*

[3.9] The unmarked VERBATIV (full discussion in Section 5.5.1 and subsequent sections) is typically found with dispersion verbs like *stinken* ‘to stink’, *klingseln* ‘to ring’ or *krachen* ‘to crunch’ (3.1 a). These verbs allow for a construction without explicit nominative subject when describing a general situation with unknown cause. An obligatory valency-simulating pronoun *es* is used as a replacement of the nominative subject (3.1 b).

- (3.1) a. Der Müll stinkt.  
b. Hier stinkt es aber.

### 3.2.2 *Wertungsverbativ*

[3.10] The WERTUNGSVERBATIV (full discussion in Section 9.5.1) similarly replaces the nominative subject by a valency-simulating *es*. Additionally, this diathesis obligatorily needs a reflexive pronoun and an adverbial phrase describing an evaluation, like *gut* ‘fine’ or *angenehm* ‘pleasantly’. The *Wertungsverbativ* is typically used with agentive intransitive verbs like *leben* ‘to live’ or *tanzen* ‘to dance’ and describes a habitual situation. This diathesis is closely related to the WERTUNGSANTIKAUSATIV for transitive verbs (see Section 3.6.4).

- (3.2) a. Wir leben in diesem Haus.  
b. Hier lebt es sich gut.

### 3.2.3 *Unpersönliches Vorgangspassiv (werden+Partizip)*

[3.11] The UNPERSÖNLICHER VORGANGSPASSIV is a construction consisting of the light verb *werden* with a participle of an intransitive verb (full discussion in Section 10.5.1). Only AGENTIVE (‘unergative’) intransitive verbs like *tanzen* ‘to dance’ (3.3) or *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ allow for this construction without any nominative subject (not even a valency-simulating *es* is needed). The name ‘passive’ is rather unfitting for this diathesis, but it is retained here because of widespread usage. This construction is closely related to the VORGANGSPASSIV for transitive verbs (see Section 3.7.1).

- (3.3) a. Die Jungs tanzen.  
b. Jetzt wird getanzt!

### 3.2.4 *Unpersönliches Möglichkeitspassiv (lassen+sich+Infinitiv)*

The UNPERSÖNLICHER MÖGLICHKEITSPASSIV consists of the light verb *lassen* with the infinitive of an intransitive verb (full discussion in Section 11.5.1). This construction obligatory includes a reflexive pronoun and an evaluating adverbial expression like *gut* ‘fine’. A valency-simulating pronoun *es* appears to be optional. Similar to the previous diathesis, this diathesis also seems to be restricted to agentive intransitive verbs like *arbeiten* ‘to work’ (3.4). Likewise, the name ‘passive’ is ill-fitting here, but it is used because of the parallelism to the previous diathesis. This construction is closely related to the MÖGLICHKEITSPASSIV for transitive verbs (see Section 3.7.2). [3.12]

- (3.4) a. Ich arbeite zuhause.  
b. Zuhause lässt (es) sich gut arbeiten.

### 3.2.5 *Unpersönliches Modalpassiv (sein+zu-Infinitiv)*

The UNPERSÖNLICHER MODALPASSIV (full discussion in Section 12.5.1 and subsequent sections) consists of a light verb *sein* with *zu* and an infinitive. It is found with incidental intransitive verbs, but more typically with verbs with a dative argument (but no accusative) like *helfen* ‘to help’ or *trauen* ‘to trust’ (3.5). In this diathesis the nominative subject is dropped and cannot be retained in any other form. There is also no valency-simulating *es* present. The name ‘passive’ is actually besides the point for this diathesis, but it is used here because this construction is closely related to the MODALPASSIV (see Section 3.7.3). [3.13]

- (3.5) a. Ich traue ihm nicht.  
b. Ihm ist nicht zu trauen.

## 3.3 Demotive diatheses [SBJ > ADJ]

A DEMOTIVE is a diathesis that removes the role marked as nominative subject, though this role can still optionally be expressed as a prepositional phrase. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.2, specifically starting at paragraph 2.89 on page 36. [3.14]

### 3.3.1 *Notwendigkeitsdemotiv (gelten+zu-Infinitiv)*

The NOTWENDIGKEITSDEMOTIV (full discussion in Section 12.5.5) uses a subjectless light verb *gelten* with *zu* and an infinitive (3.6). The removed nominative subject is replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es*, so the light verb *gelten* is always in the third person singular, resulting in fixed expressions *es gilt*. The removed subject can optionally be retained with a *für* prepositional phrase. Any other argument is simply preserved, like the accusative *den Koffer* ‘the suitcase’ in the example below. This construction semantically invokes some kind of (self-)assignment that should be fulfilled, i.e. a modal-like ‘must’ meaning. [3.15]

- (3.6) a. Wir verlieren den Koffer nicht.  
b. Jetzt gilt es (für uns) den Koffer nicht zu verlieren.

### 3.3.2 Intransitiver Notwendigkeitsdemotiv (*heißen+Infinitiv*)

[3.16] The INTRANSITIVER NOTWENDIGKEITSDEMOTIV (full discussion in Section 11.5.3) consists of the verb *heißen* with an infinitive. The meaning of this constructions is very close to the previous *Notwendigkeitsdemotiv* construction (see Section 3.3.1). The removed nominative subject is replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es*, so the light verb *heißen* is always in the third person singular, resulting in fixed expressions *es heißt*. The removed subject can optionally be retained with a *für* prepositional phrase. However, different from *gelten+Infinitiv*, the construction *heißen+Infinitiv* can only be applied to intransitive verbs. Note that there also exists a completely separate causative usage of *heißen+Infinitiv*, but this *Agentivkausativ* appears to be rather old-fashioned (see Section 3.10.5).

- (3.7) a. Er redet weiter.  
b. Dann heißt es für ihn weiter reden.

### 3.3.3 Möglichkeitsdemotiv (*geben+zu-Infinitiv*)

[3.17] The MÖGLICHKEITSDEMOTIV (full discussion in Section 12.5.4) uses a subjectless light verbs *geben* with *zu* and an infinitive (3.8). The removed nominative subject is replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es*, so the light verbs are always in the third person singular, resulting in fixed expressions *es gibt*. The removed subject can optionally be retained with a *für* prepositional phrase, though this is less frequent compared to the *gelten+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis (see Section 3.3.1). Any other argument is simply preserved, like the accusative *den Koffer* ‘the suitcase’ in the example below. The *Möglichkeitsdemotiv* semantically invokes an option that is available to the original subject, i.e. a modal-like ‘can’ meaning. The construction *geben+zu-Infinitiv* is also used in a semantically and structurally quite different diathesis, namely the *Auftragskausativ* (see Section 3.10.7).

- (3.8) a. Wir kaufen den Koffer.  
b. In dem Laden gibt es den Koffer <sup>?</sup>(für uns) zu kaufen.

## 3.4 Conciliative diatheses [ADJ > SBJ > Ø]

[3.18] A CONCILIATIVE is a diathesis that completely removes the role marked as subject and promotes an instrument to be the new subject. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.1, specifically starting at paragraph 2.98 on page 38.

### 3.4.1 Instrumentsubjektivierung

[3.19] The INSTRUMENTSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (full discussion in Section 6.5.4 and subsequent sections) promotes an instrument to nominative subject. For example, the instrument *Schlüssel* ‘key’ of the verb *öffnen* ‘to open’ is expressed with a *mit* prepositional phrase in (3.9 a). Alternatively, it can be expressed with a nominative as in (3.9 b). In that construction, the original agent cannot be expressed anymore. This diathesis looks very similar to the *Kreationssubjektivierung* (see Section 3.5.1), but there are crucial semantic and structural differences (discussed below).

- (3.9) a. Ich öffne die Tür mit dem Schlüssel.  
b. Der Schlüssel öffnet die Tür.

### 3.5 Fabricative diatheses [PBJ > SBJ > Ø]

A FABRICATIVE is a diathesis that completely removes the role marked as subject and promotes an fabricated entity to be the new subject. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.1, specifically starting at paragraph 2.97 on page 38. [3.20]

#### 3.5.1 *Kreationssubjektivierung*

The KREATIONSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (full discussion in Section 6.5.7) on first notice looks very similar to the previous *Instrumentsubjektivierung*. In both diatheses a *mit* prepositional phrase is promoted to nominative subject. However, with a verb like *überraschen* ‘to surprise’ (3.10) the noun in the prepositional phrase, *Aufgabe* ‘task’, does not represent an instrument, but a fabrication by the subject of the sentence, *Lehrer* ‘teacher’. This semantic difference is paralleled by a structural difference, namely that the *mit* prepositional phrase is a governed preposition (3.10 c). Note that the verbs that allow for a *Kreationssubjektivierung* show a substantial overlap with the verbs that allow for the REFLEXIV ERLEBNISPASSIV (see Section 3.8.2), though the two groups are not identical. [3.21]

- (3.10) a. Der Lehrer überrascht mich mit der Aufgabe.  
 b. Die Aufgabe überrascht mich.  
 c. Der Lehrer überrascht mich damit, dass er die Aufgabe schon korrigiert hat.

#### 3.5.2 *Auslöserssubjektivierung (sein+zum-Infinitiv)*

The AUSLÖSERSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (full discussion in Section 13.5.1) is constructed with the light verb *sein* with a *zum-Infinitiv*. This diathesis can be applied to verbs of emotion with a governed preposition describing the trigger of the emotion. For example, *heulen* ‘to whine’ (3.11 a) uses the governed preposition *über* to describe the trigger, here *Schaden* ‘damage’ (3.11 b). The result of the diathesis is that the trigger of the emotion is promoted to nominative subject (3.11 c). The original subject, i.e. the perceiver of the emotion, cannot be expressed anymore. [3.22]

- (3.11) a. Ich heule über den Schaden.  
 b. Ich heule darüber, dass der Schaden so groß ist.  
 c. Der Schaden ist zum Heulen.

### 3.6 Anticausative diatheses [OBJ > SBJ > Ø]

An ANTICAUSATIVE is a diathesis that completely removes the role marked as subject and promotes an object to be the new subject. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.1, specifically starting at paragraph 2.94 on page 37. [3.23]

#### 3.6.1 *Antikausativ*

The unmarked ANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 5.5.5 and subsequent sections) is attested with verbs like *öffnen* ‘to open’ or *kochen* ‘to cook’. These verbs occur both as transitive (3.12 a) and intransitive (3.12 b) without any further grammatical marking. Crucially, the object of the transitive is the subject of the intransitive. Because this diathesis is unmarked, there is no formal indication of a direction. So, this diathesis could just as [3.24]

well be interpreted as a causative. However, there is a formal difference between verbs that allow for both a *haben* and *sein* in the intransitive (3.12 c,d) and those that only allow for a *sein* in the intransitive. There seems to be an interesting semantic correlate to this formal difference in that the verbs that allow for both *haben* and *sein* seem primarily transitive. Consequentially this group is called ANTIKAUSATIV (this section), while the second group with only *sein* is called KAUSATIV (see Section 3.10.1).

- (3.12) a. Der Mitarbeiter öffnet den Laden.  
 b. Der Laden öffnet gleich.  
 c. Der Laden hat geöffnet.  
 d. Der Laden ist geöffnet.

### 3.6.2 Ortsantikausativ

[3.25] The ORTSANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 6.5.10) is similar to the previous unmarked ANTIKAUSATIV. Verbs like *kleben* ‘to glue, to stick’ or *klappen* ‘to fold’ occur both as transitive and intransitive (3.13 a,b) with the object of the transitive being the subject of the intransitive. Likewise, the intransitive is possible with both *haben* and *sein* (3.13 c,d). The only difference is the obligatory presence of a location. Note that there is also a parallel ORTSKAUSATIV (see Section 3.10.2).

- (3.13) a. Ich habe den Zettel an die Wand geklebt.  
 b. Der Zettel klebt an der Wand.  
 c. Der Zettel hat an der Wand geklebt.  
 d. Der Zettel ist an die Wand geklebt.

### 3.6.3 Reflexiv Antikausativ

[3.26] The REFLEXIV ANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 7.5.2 and subsequent sections) is attested with verbs like *entscheiden* ‘to decide’ or *beschränken* ‘to limit’. Again, these verbs occur both as transitive and intransitive with the transitive object being the subject of the intransitive (3.14 a,b). However, with these verbs the intransitive needs an obligatory reflexive pronoun (3.14 b). The intransitive with reflexive pronoun typically takes *haben* in the perfect (3.14 c). The intransitive perfect with *sein* (3.14 d) can now clearly be identified as a ZUSTANDSPASSIV of the transitive (see Section 3.7.4).

- (3.14) a. Der Richter entscheidet den Fall.  
 b. Der Fall entscheidet sich.  
 c. Der Fall hat sich entschieden.  
 d. Der Fall ist entschieden.

### 3.6.4 Wertungsantikausativ

[3.27] The WERTUNGSANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 9.5.2 and subsequent sections) is possible with many straightforward transitive verbs, like with *verkaufen* ‘to sell’ or *lesen* ‘to read’ (3.15 a). The anticausative intransitive obligatorily needs a reflexive pronoun, and additionally an obligatory manner adverbial is needed (3.15 b). Just like the previous anticausatives, the intransitive occurs both with *haben* and *sein* in the perfect. However, *haben* is clearly used with the reflexive anticausative construction with obligatory adverbial (3.15 c),

while *sein* is used with the ZUSTANDSPASSIV (see Section 3.7.4) of the original transitive, without reflexive pronoun or obligatory adverbial evaluation (3.15 d).

- (3.15) a. Ich verkaufe das Buch.  
 b. Das Buch verkauft sich gut.  
 c. Das Buch hat sich gut verkauft.  
 d. Das Buch ist verkauft.

### 3.6.5 *Kontinuativantikausativ (bleiben+Partizip)*

The KONTINUATIVANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.10) is closely related to the *sein-Zustandspassiv* (see Section 3.7.4), but now the light verb *bleiben* is used with a participle (3.16). Both *sein* and *bleiben* are known as auxiliaries (KOPULAVERBEN) in German grammar, so this parallel construction is not unexpected. However, not all verbs can be equally used in both constructions. For example, verbs like *drucken* ‘to print’ or *waschen* ‘to wash’ are fine with the *sein-Zustandspassiv* but not with the *bleiben-Kontinuativantikausativ*. Also the retention of the original agent as a prepositional phrase seems to be impossible here, so this diathesis is classified as an anticausative (3.16 b). This anticausative is only attested with transitive verbs. The same *bleiben+Partizip* construction can be used with intransitive verbs, but then it does not induce a diathesis and will be called PERFEKTKONTINUATIV (see Section 4.3.8). [3.28]

- (3.16) a. Der Pförtner schließt die Tür.  
 b. Die Tür bleibt \*(von dem Pförtner) geschlossen.

### 3.6.6 *Inferenzantikausativ (scheinen/erscheinen+Partizip)*

The INFERENZANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.11) is constructed with one of the light verbs *scheinen* or *erscheinen* with a participle of a transitive verb (3.17). This construction expresses an evidential inference by the speaker that something is the case. The retention of the original agent as a prepositional phrase seems to be mostly not possible (3.17 b), so this diathesis is classified as an anticausative here. With intransitive verbs this construction does not show any diathesis and will be called PERFEKTINFERENZ (see Section 4.6.2). [3.29]

- (3.17) a. Der Pförtner schließt die Tür.  
 b. Die Tür scheint \*(von dem Pförtner) geschlossen.

### 3.6.7 *Sinnesantikausativ (aussehen/wirken+Partizip)*

The SINNESANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.12) uses the light verbs *aussehen* or *wirken* together with a participle of a transitive verb to form an anticausative diathesis (3.18). This construction expresses that the speaker has sensory evidence about the state of affairs. The retention of the original subject is very rare, though it might be possible with verbs describing a mental state, like *entspannen* ‘to relax’ (3.18 b). With intransitive [3.30]

verbs this construction does not show any diathesis and will be called SINNESEVIDENZ (see Section 4.6.3).

- (3.18) a. Die Renovierung verändert den Bahnhof.  
Der Bahnhof sieht \*(von der Renovierung) verändert aus.  
b. Die Stille entspannt ihn.  
Er wirkt ?(von der Stille) entspannt.

### 3.6.8 Präsentativantikausativ (geben/zeigen+sich+Partizip)

[3.31] The PRÄSENTATIVANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.13) uses the light verb *geben* with a participle and an obligatory reflexive pronoun. It expresses a conscious performance to appear in a certain way by the erstwhile accusative. The original nominative cannot be retained. The light verb *zeigen* can be used alternatively to *geben*. Any difference between these two light verbs needs more investigation.

- (3.19) a. Die Stille entspannt ihn.  
b. Er gibt sich \*(durch die Stille) entspannt.

### 3.6.9 Erwartungsantikausativ (stehen+zu-Infinitiv)

[3.32] The ERWARTUNGSANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 12.5.6) uses a light verb *stehen* with *zu* and an infinitive. The original accusative object is promoted to subject and the erstwhile nominative subject cannot be retained, so this clearly is an anticausative diathesis. However, examples with an explicitly accusative noun phrase as in (3.20 a) are actually rare. Typically, this diathesis is found with cognitive predicates expressing an expectation, like *befürchten* ‘to fear’, with a *dass* complement clause (3.20 b). Functionally, this complement clause has the same status as an accusative object. Note that complement clauses typically come towards the end of the sentence in German, and then the first position of the sentence often has to be filled with a position-simulating pronoun *es* (which is removed when the first position is filled otherwise).

- (3.20) a. Ich befürchte einen weiteren Beschäftigungsabbau.  
Ein weiterer Beschäftigungsabbau steht zu befürchten.  
b. Ich befürchte, dass er zu spät kommen wird.  
Es steht zu befürchten, dass er zu spät kommen wird.

### 3.6.10 Unmöglichkeitantikausativ (gehen+zu-Infinitiv)

[3.33] The UNMÖGLICHKEITSANTIKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 12.5.7) uses a light verb *gehen* with *zu* and an infinitive. This anticausative diathesis is typical for an informal register, but written examples can be found going back to the 19th century. The construction is typically used with an additional negation (3.21 b), though in contemporary online writing it is also attested without negation (3.21 c). Because of the negation, the typical usage of the *Unmöglichkeitantikausativ* is to express the impossibility to change something.

- (3.21) a. Ich lösche die Datei.  
b. Die Datei geht nicht zu löschen.  
c. Die Datei geht zu löschen.

### 3.7 Passive diatheses [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ]

A PASSIVE is a diathesis that removes the role marked as subject and promotes an object to be the new subject. The erstwhile subject can optionally be expressed as a prepositional phrase. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.1, specifically starting at paragraph 2.95 on page 37. [3.34]

#### 3.7.1 Vorgangspassiv (*werden+Partizip*)

The VORGANGSPASSIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.16) is the infamous diathesis consisting of a light verb *werden* with a participle. Passives are very similar to anticausatives in that the transitive object is turned into the intransitive subject (3.22). The special characteristic of a passive is that the transitive subject can be optionally retained, typically as a prepositional *von* or *durch* phrase. However, note that this prepositional phrase is normally not used. The same *werden+Partizip* construction leads to a different diathesis with intransitive verbs, namely the *unpersönlicher Passiv* (see Section 3.2.3). [3.35]

- (3.22) a. Ich verkaufe den Schrank.  
b. Der Schrank wird verkauft (von mir).

#### 3.7.2 Möglichkeitspassiv (*lassen+sich+Infinitiv*)

The MÖGLICHKEITSPASSIV (full discussion in Section 11.5.4) consists of the light verb *lassen* with infinitive and an obligatory reflexive pronoun (3.23). The agent can be retained as a *von* prepositional phrase, so this diathesis is a passive. The same construction applied to intransitive verbs leads to a different diathesis, namely the *unpersönlicher Möglichkeitspassiv* (see Section 3.2.4). [3.36]

- (3.23) a. Der Pförtner schließt die Tür.  
b. Die Tür lässt sich schließen (von dem Pförtner).

#### 3.7.3 Modalpassiv (*sein+zu-Infinitiv*)

The MODALPASSIV (full discussion in Section 12.5.8) is constructed using the light verb *sein* with *zu* and an infinitive. When applied to transitive verbs like *führen* ‘to lead’ (3.24 a) or *lösen* ‘to solve’ (3.24 b) this diathesis promotes the accusative to nominative subject. The erstwhile nominative subject can be retained as a prepositional phrase. This diathesis has two different interpretations. It can indicate either an deontic modality (‘must’) as in (3.24 a) or an ability (‘can’) as in (3.24 b). Note that the subject retention with the preposition *für* is only possible in the ability-interpretation. The closely related *unpersönlicher Modalpassiv* is used with intransitives and only allows for the deontic interpretation (see Section 3.2.5). [3.37]

- (3.24) a. Der Besitzer führt den Hund an der Leine.  
Hunde sind an der Leine zu führen (von ihren Besitzern).  
b. Die Schüler lösen die Aufgabe.  
Die Aufgabe ist (für die Schüler) leicht zu lösen.



### 3.7.4 Zustandspassiv (*sein+Partizip*)

[3.38] The ZUSTANDSPASSIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.17) consists of a light verb *sein* with a participle (3.25). Although this diathesis is traditionally called ‘passive’ in German grammar, the status of the retained agent is problematic and appears to be strongly dependent on the verb (3.25 b,c). It might thus be better to consider this diathesis to be an anticausative. However, because of the long tradition I hold on to the term *Zustandspassiv* and the analysis of it being a passive. The closely-related *sein+Partizip* ERLEBNISPASSIV (see Section 3.8.1) retains the subject with a governed preposition. Also the *sein+Partizip* PERFEKT as attested with some intransitive verbs is arguably the same construction, though applied to different verbs (see Section 4.3.2).

- (3.25) a. Ich verkaufe den Schrank.  
 b. Der Schrank ist <sup>?</sup>(von mir) verkauft.  
 c. Der Schrank ist <sup>!</sup>(vom Schreiner) gebaut.

### 3.7.5 Normpassiv (*gehören+Partizip*)

[3.39] The NORMPASSIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.18) consists of the light verb *gehören* with a participle. It is only attested with verbs with accusative objects, like *bestrafen* ‘to punish’ (3.26). The diathesis expresses that the main verb ought to be applied to the object. The original subject can optionally be retained as a prepositional phrase.

- (3.26) a. Der Schiedsrichter bestraft den Spieler.  
 b. Der Spieler gehört bestraft (durch den Schiedsrichter)

### 3.7.6 Rezipientenpassiv (*bekommen/kriegen/erhalten+Partizip*)

[3.40] The REZIPIENTENPASSIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.21) has become a mainstay in the German grammatical literature. It consists of the light verb *bekommen* with a participle (alternatively, the light verbs *kriegen* or *erhalten* can be used). With this diathesis, a dative recipient is turned into the nominative subject. Again, the erstwhile nominative can be retained as a prepositional phrase, though it mostly is not used (as with all passives). Note that the same construction can also be used in a different ‘achievement’ interpretation without diathesis, called *Effektiv* here (see Section 4.5.6).

- (3.27) a. Der Friseur schneidet mir die Haare.  
 b. Ich bekomme die Haare geschnitten (vom Friseur).

### 3.7.7 Pertinenzpassiv (*haben+Partizip*)

[3.41] The PERTINENZPASSIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.22) is a special construction because it looks identical to the *haben Prozessperfekt* (see Section 4.3.1), often even being ambiguous among the two interpretations. However, the *Pertinenzpassiv* is functionally much closer to the *Rezipientenpassiv*. The new nominative subject *der Minister* ‘the minister’ (3.28 b) is the (dative) experiencer/benefactor of the cutting (3.28 a). The original agent of the cutting *Friseur* ‘barber’ can only be retained with difficulty, so this diathesis looks closer to an anticausative. However, there is a well-known effect that this *Pertinenzpassiv* becomes much more common when stacked with a modal auxiliary like *wollen* ‘to want’ (3.28 c). In such a stack, the original agent can clearly be retained.

The designation *pertinenz* refers to the fact that the new subject is necessarily the possessor of the accusative object *Haare*, ‘hair’. Such inherent possessors turn up in various diatheses, and all instances will be designated with the qualifier *pertinenz*. The most famous one is the PERTINENZDATIV (see Section 3.12.4), but there are various others, like the PERTINENZINVERSIV (see Section 3.9.2) and the ORTSPERTINENZINVERSIV (see Section 3.9.3). [3.42]

- (3.28) a. Der Friseur schneidet dem Minister die Haare.  
 b. Der Minister hat die Haare geschnitten <sup>?</sup>(durch den Friseur).  
 c. Der Minister will die Haare vom Friseur geschnitten haben.

### 3.7.8 Permissivpassiv (*lassen+sich+Infinitiv*)

The PERMISSIVPASSIV (full discussion in Section 11.5.7) is constructed with the light verb *lassen* with an infinitive and an obligatory reflexive pronoun. Similar to the *Rezipientenpassiv*, when applied to a ditransitive clause with an accusative and a dative the original dative is turned into a new nominative subject (but now with a dative reflexive pronoun), like with *schenken* ‘to gift’ (3.29). Semantically, there is a permissive modality introduced. This is a rather different from diatheses with *lassen+sich+Infinitiv* discussed earlier (see Section 3.2.4 and 3.7.2). However, there is a close link to the PERMISSIVINVERSIV with transitive verbs (see Section 3.9.4). The permissive reading is also reminiscent of the *lassen+Infinitiv* PERMISSIVKAUSATIV (see Section 3.10.4). [3.43]

- (3.29) a. Der Verkäufer schenkt mir den Rechner.  
 b. Ich lasse mir den Rechner schenken (von dem Verkäufer).

## 3.8 Conversive diatheses [OBJ > SBJ > PBJ]

A CONVERSIVE is a diathesis that removes the role marked as subject and promotes an object to be the new subject. The erstwhile subject can optionally be expressed as a governed prepositional phrase. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.1, specifically starting at paragraph 2.96 on page 38. [3.44]

### 3.8.1 Erlebnispassiv (*sein+Partizip*)

The ERLEBNISPASSIV (full discussion in Section 10.5.23) is constructed with the light verb *sein* and a participle. The form of this diathesis is identical to the *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 3.7.4), but there is a crucial difference in the remapping of the original nominative. Verbs that take a *Zustandspassiv*, like *öffnen* ‘to open’ only allow for the retention of the nominative with a *von* prepositional phrase, and only in special circumstances. In contrast, the verbs that take the *Erlebnispassiv* can regularly retain the agent with a governed preposition. For example, with the verb *verärgern* ‘to displease’ the original nominative can be expressed with an *über* prepositional phrase (3.30b), which is a governed preposition (3.30c). Verbs that take the *Erlebnispassiv* are typically verbs that express an experience. [3.45]

- (3.30) a. Die Nachricht verärgert mich.  
 b. Ich bin verärgert über die Nachricht.  
 c. Ich bin verärgert darüber, dass die Nachricht verbreitet wurde.  
 d. \* Ich verärgere mich über die Nachricht.

### 3.8.2 Reflexiv Erlebnispassiv

[3.46] The REFLEXIV ERLEBNISPASSIV (full discussion in Section 7.5.7) is a diathesis in which a verb, like *empören* ‘to appall’ (3.31 a), can be used both with and without a reflexive pronoun. The effect of adding the reflexive pronoun is a remapping of the accusative to nominative and demoting the erstwhile nominative to a prepositional phrase (3.31 b). The prepositional phrase is a governed preposition (3.31 c). The verbs that allow this diathesis are typically verbs that express an experience. This diathesis is functionally rather similar to the previous *Erlebnispassiv* (see Section 3.8.1) and there are even many verbs that allow for both diatheses, like *empören* (3.31 d). However, not all verbs allow for both diatheses, like *verärgern* (3.30 d).

- (3.31) a. Der Preis empört den Kunden.  
 b. Der Kunde empört sich über den Preis.  
 c. Der Kunde empört sich darüber, dass der Preis schon wieder gestiegen ist.  
 d. Der Kunde ist empört über den Preis.

## 3.9 Inversive diatheses [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ]

[3.47] An INVERSIVE is a diathesis that switches subject and object. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.3, specifically starting at paragraph 2.109 on page 41.

### 3.9.1 Restinversiv (*bleiben+zu-Infinitiv*)

[3.48] The RESTINVERSIV (full discussion in Section 12.9.1) uses the light verb *bleiben* with *zu* and an infinitive. This diathesis reverses the expression of the subject and object roles, in that the accusative is promoted to a nominative, while the original nominative is demoted to an (optional) dative. Because the demotion is ‘larger’ than the promotion this can be called a DEMOTED INVERSIVE. Semantically, this diathesis expresses that (some part of) the patient is still left over to be applied to the verb.

- (3.32) a. Ich räume den letzten Schrank ein.  
 b. Dieser letzte Schrank bleibt (mir) noch einzuräumen.

### 3.9.2 Pertinenzinversiv (*haben+am-Infinitiv*)

[3.49] The PERTINENZINVERSIV (full discussion in Section 13.9.1) is constructed with the light verb *haben* with an *am-Infinitiv*. This diathesis also reverses the expression of the subject and object roles, though in the different direction from the previous *Restinversiv* (see Section 3.9.1). In this diathesis the dative is promoted to nominative, while the nominative is demoted to accusative (3.33). Because the promotion is ‘larger’ than the demotion this can be called a PROMOTED INVERSIVE.

[3.50] Further, the dative *dem Mieter* ‘tenant’ is necessarily the possessor (*pertinenz*) of the nominative *die Wohnung* ‘apartment’, so it is a *Pertinenzdativ* (see Section 3.12.4). Both in form and meaning this diathesis is strongly connected to the ensuing ORTSPERTINENZINVERSIV (see Section 3.9.3), in which the dative is the possessor of the obligatory location.

- (3.33) a. Dem Mieter brennt die Wohnung.  
 b. Der Mieter hat die Wohnung am Brennen.

### 3.9.3 *Ortspertinenzinversiv (haben+Infinitiv)*

The ORTSPERTINENZINVERSIV (full discussion in Section 11.9.2) is closely related to the previous *Pertinenzinversiv* (see Section 3.9.2). Again, a dative is promoted to nominative, while the nominative is demoted to accusative. Also in both diatheses, the participant expressed by the dative is necessarily the possessor (*pertinenz*) of another participant. The difference is that with the current *Ortspertinenzinversiv* this other participant is an obligatory location, e.g. *an der Nase* ‘on the nose’ in (3.34). The dative in this diathesis is thus an *Ortspertinenzdativ* (see Section 3.12.5). An further curious difference to the otherwise highly similar *Pertinenzinversiv* in (3.33 b) is that the infinitive *hängen* does not allow for the preposition *am* in this construction (3.34 c).

- (3.34) a. Ein Tropfen hängt ihm an der Nase.  
 b. Er hat einen Tropfen an der Nase hängen.  
 c. \* Er hat einen Tropfen an der Nase am Hängen.

### 3.9.4 *Permissivinversiv (lassen+sich+Infinitiv)*

The PERMISSIVINVERSIV (full discussion in Section 11.9.1) is yet another diathesis using the construction *lassen* with obligatory reflexive and infinitive, this time used with verbs that take a dative, but no accusative like *schmecken* ‘to taste’ (3.35). The current diathesis appears to be particularly close to the *Permissivpassiv* (see Section 3.7.8). In both diatheses a dative is promoted to nominative with an obligatory reflexive pronoun. Differently though, in this diathesis the original nominative *es* demoted to accusative (compared to an optional prepositional phrase in the *Permissivpassiv*). Both diatheses add a causative/permissive meaning to the clause, reminiscent of the *lassen+Infinitiv* causative (see Section 3.10.4).

- (3.35) a. Der Kuchen schmeckt mir.  
 b. Ich lasse mir den Kuchen schmecken.

## 3.10 Novative diatheses [Ø > SBJ > OBJ]

A NOVATIVE is a diathesis that introduces a new subject, while demoting the erstwhile subject to an object. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.2, specifically starting at paragraph 2.99 on page 39.

### 3.10.1 *Kausativ*

The unmarked KAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 5.6.2) is found with verbs like *schmelzen* ‘to melt’, *trocknen* ‘to dry’ or *zerbrechen* ‘break’ (3.36 a,b). These verbs both occur as intransitive and as transitive with the intransitive subject being the object of the transitive. The new nominative subject of the transitive is a causer. Because this alternation is unmarked, it is not immediately clear whether such a diathesis is an examples of a *Kausativ* or an *Antikausativ*. There are various indications pointing in the direction of causation (see full discussion). As a formal characteristic for the identification of this category I propose to look at the auxiliaries of the intransitive perfect: anticausatives allow for both *haben* and *sein* (see Section 3.6.1), while causatives only allow for *sein* (3.36 c,d). Various umlaut-

causatives like *fallen/fällen* and *biegen/beugen* also belong in this category (full discussion in Section 5.6.3).

- (3.36) a. Der Krug zerbricht.  
 b. Der Junge zerbricht den Krug.  
 c. Der Krug ist zerbrochen.  
 d. \* Der Krug hat zerbrochen.

### 3.10.2 *Ortskausativ*

[3.55] The ORTSKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 6.6.1) is similar to the previous *Kausativ* (see Section 3.10.1), only that verbs like *stürzen* ‘to fall/topple’ (3.37 a,b) obligatory need a location (especially in the caused transitive). Just like the previous *Kausativ*, the current *Ortskausativ* only allows for an intransitive perfect with *sein* (3.37 c,d). There is a parallel *Ortsantikausativ* in which the intransitive allows for both a *sein* and a *haben* perfect (see Section 3.6.2). Various umlaut-causatives like *liegen/legen* ‘to lie/to lay’ and *sitzen/setzen* ‘to sit/to put’ also belong in this category (full discussion in Section 6.6.2).

- (3.37) a. Der Elefant stürzt ins Wasser.  
 b. Ich stürze den Elefanten ins Wasser.  
 c. Der Elefant ist ins Wasser gestürzt.  
 d. \* Der Elefant hat ins Wasser gestürzt.

### 3.10.3 *Präverb Kausativ*

[3.56] The PRÄVERB KAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 8.6.1 and subsequent sections) overtly marks the causative by a preverb (3.38), i.e. either by a verb prefix (e.g. *enden/beenden* ‘to end’) or by a verb particle (e.g. *bruzeln/anbruzeln* ‘to sizzle/to fry’). Preverbs are also frequently used with adjectival stems forming a causative transitive verb, e.g. *matt/ermatten* ‘lacklustre/to tire’ or *fähig/befähigen* ‘capable/to enable’ (full discussion in Section 8.6.3).

- (3.38) a. Der Wettkampf endet.  
 b. Ich beende den Wettkampf.

### 3.10.4 *Permissivkausativ (lassen+Infinitiv)*

[3.57] The PERMISSIVKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 11.6.2) consists of the light verb *lassen* with an infinitive. This diathesis is widely acknowledged in German grammar. It is often simply called a *Kausativ* but this construction has actually at least two different interpretations, namely a causative (3.39 c) and a permissive (3.39 d). It is widely used in German and there are only few verbs that do not allow for this diathesis (e.g. *gefallen* ‘to like’ or *interessieren* ‘to interest’ cannot be used).

- (3.39) a. Ich wasche die Kleider.  
 b. Sie lässt mich die Kleider waschen.  
 c. (= Sie verursacht, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)  
 d. (= Sie erlaubt, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)

### 3.10.5 Agentivkausativ (*machen/heißen+Infinitiv*)

The AGENTIVKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 11.6.4) is probably the most pure causative of all the various novative diatheses. It uses the light verb *machen* ‘to make’ and adds a causer (7.83 a). It is not in widespread use and often sounds like an English calque, though it is probably an old Germanic construction. A highly similar construction uses the light verb *heißen* (3.40 b), though this is old-fashioned (full discussion in Section 11.6.5). [3.58]

- (3.40) a. Ich weine.  
Deine Späße machen mich weinen.  
b. Er kniete nieder.  
Der Henker hieß ihn niederknien.

### 3.10.6 Direktivkausativ (*schicken+Infinitiv*)

The DIREKTIVKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 11.6.3) is a novative in which the new subject gives orders rather than directly causing something to happen. This diathesis is constructed with the light verb *schicken* with an infinitive. The meaning of the construction is rather close to the full lexical meaning of *schicken* ‘to send’. However, this construction is coherent, and thus monoclausal (3.41 c). [3.59]

- (3.41) a. Er schläft  
b. Ich schicke ihn schlafen.  
c. Es ist bekannt, dass ich ihn schlafen schicke.

### 3.10.7 Auftragskausativ (*geben+zu-Infinitiv*)

The AUFTRAGSKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 12.6.1) adds a causer by using the light verb *geben* with a *zu-Infinitiv*. In this diathesis the erstwhile subject becomes a dative (not an accusative). In many examples of this diathesis the meaning of this diathesis is very close to the meaning of the lexical verb *geben* ‘to give’. For example with the verb *trinken* ‘to drink’ (3.42 a) the construction allows both for a literal interpretation ‘he gives X to Y for drinking’ and for a causative interpretation ‘he causes Y to drink X’. The light-verb status of *geben* (with a causative interpretation) is more clearly exemplified with verbs that take clausal complements, like *bedenken* ‘to consider’ (3.42 b). This construction is coherent, and thus monoclausal (3.42 c), so, whatever the precise semantic interpretation, this is structurally clearly a diathesis. Complicating things even more, the *geben+zu-Infinitiv* construction is also used for a semantically and structurally quite different diathesis, namely the *Möglichkeitsdemotiv* (see Section 3.3.3). [3.60]

- (3.42) a. Das Kind trinkt Milch.  
Er gibt dem Kind Milch zu trinken.  
b. Ich bedenke, dass es schon spät ist.  
Er gibt mir zu bedenken, dass es schon spät ist.  
c. Es ist bekannt, dass er dem Kind Milch zu trinken gibt.  
Es ist bekannt, dass er mir zu bedenken gibt, dass es schon spät ist.

### 3.10.8 *Kontinuitätskausativ (halten+am-Infinitiv)*

[3.61] The KONTINUITÄTSKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 13.6.1) uses the light verb *halten* with an *am-Infinitiv*. This diathesis adds a causer to an intransitive verb. It is typically used with the verb *laufen* ‘to run’ (3.43 a), but it is also attested with other agentive intransitive verbs. However, the subject of the intransitive is typically an inanimate object, like *Laden* ‘shop’ in (3.43 a). Additionally, verbs describing heat production like *brennen* ‘to burn’ (3.43 b) are frequently attested with this diathesis. The *halten+am-Infinitiv* diathesis expresses that a process is kept ongoing by the added causer. The light verb *halten* is also used in the related *Kausativkontinuativ* epithesis (see Section 4.3.10).

- (3.43) a. Der Laden läuft.  
Er hält den Laden am Laufen.  
b. Das Feuer brennt.  
Der Wind hält das Feuer am Brennen.

### 3.10.9 *Perzeptiv (sehen/hören/fühlen/spüren+Infinitiv)*

[3.62] The PERZEPTIV (full discussion in Section 11.6.6 and subsequent sections) is a novative that consists of one of the verbs of sensation *sehen/hören/fühlen/spüren* with an infinitive. The new nominative is an observer/experiencer of the main verb. The erstwhile nominative is turned into an accusative. This diathesis sometimes results in a double accusative construction, viz. when there already was an accusative present (3.44 a,b). This diathesis can be used with all verbs that can be experienced as an observer. Note that these verbs of perception can also be used with an explicit *dass* complement clause (3.44 c), but such constructions are not coherent, and thus there is no diatheses in these constructions.

- (3.44) a. Der Bäcker backt einen Kuchen.  
b. Ich sehe den Bäcker einen Kuchen backen.  
c. Ich sehe, dass der Bäcker einen Kuchen backt.

### 3.10.10 *Opiniativ (wissen/glauben/sehen/finden+Partizip)*

[3.63] The OPINIATIV (full discussion in Section 10.6 and subsequent sections) is constructed with one of the light verbs *wissen/glauben/sehen/finden* with a participle. Applied to an patientive intransitive verb like *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ it adds an opinionator who believes with more or less certainty (depending on the light verb that is used) whether the *einschlafen* has occurred or not. The original nominative is changed into an accusative.

- (3.45) a. Der Säugling schläft ein.  
b. Sie glaubt den Säugling eingeschlafen.  
(= Sie glaubt, dass der Säugling eingeschlafen ist.)

## 3.11 Novative-with-demotion diatheses [ $\emptyset$ > SBJ > ADJ]

[3.64] A NOVATIVE WITH DEMOTION is a diathesis that introduces a new subject, while demoting the erstwhile subject to a prepositional phrase. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.3.2, specifically starting at paragraph 2.105 on page 40.

### 3.11.1 *Transitiv Opiniativ (wissen/glauben/sehen/finden+Partizip)*

The TRANSITIV OPINIATIV (full discussion in Section 10.6.5 and subsequent sections) is the same construction as the previous *Opiniativ* (see Section 3.10.10) but applied to transitive verbs. I have included this as a separate diathesis because with transitive verbs it shows a rather different role-remapping as with intransitive verbs. When used with a transitive verb like *aufheben* ‘to preserve’ (3.46 a) the erstwhile nominative *Archiv* ‘archive’ is demoted to a prepositional adjunct or completely left out (3.46 b). The accusative *Nachlass* ‘inheritance’ remains unchanged. [3.65]

- (3.46) a. Das Archiv hebt den Nachlass gut auf.  
 b. Sie weiß den Nachlass (im Archiv) gut aufgehoben.  
 (= Sie weiß, dass der Nachlass (im Archiv) gut aufgehoben ist.)

This *Transitiv Opiniativ* can of course easily be united with the previous *Opiniativ* into a single diathesis by noticing, for example, that both can be rephrased with a complement clause with *sein* and a participle, compare (3.45 b) and (3.46 b). However, when both *Opiniativ* diatheses are united, this implies that the *sein-Perfekt* in (3.45 b), see Section 4.3.2, and the *Zustandspassiv* in (3.46 b), see Section 3.7.4, have to be united as well (there is a perfect parallelism here). Now, there is nothing speaking against both these unifications, but exactly the unification of *sein-Perfekt* and *Zustandspassiv* has been rather controversially discussed in the German grammatical literature (see Section 10.2.7 for a discussion). So either both are unified, or both are separated. Because I have separated the *Zustandspassiv* and the *sein-Perfekt* in this summary, I consequently also separate the two *Opiniativ* diatheses. [3.66]

### 3.11.2 *Passivkausativ (lassen+Infinitiv)*

The PASSIVKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 11.6.1) can be seen as a variant of the *Permissivkausativ* (see Section 3.10.4). Both use the *lassen+Infinitiv* construction to add a new causer to the sentence. Additionally, in a *Passivkausativ* (3.47 b) the original nominative is demoted to a prepositional phrase (or it is left out completely). For a complete discussion of all different *lassen+Infinitiv* diatheses, see Section 11.2.5. [3.67]

- (3.47) a. Die Wäscherei reinigt den Teppich.  
 b. Der neue Besitzer lässt den Teppich (von der Wäscherei) reinigen.

## 3.12 Applicative diatheses [ADJ > OBJ]

An APPLICATIVE is a diathesis in which a prepositional phrase is promoted to an object. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.4.1. Applicatives in German are typically marked by a preverb or an adverb, though possessor and benefactor datives are also included under this heading. [3.68]

### 3.12.1 *Präverb Akkusativ Applikativ*

The PRÄVERB AKKUSATIV APPLIKATIV (full discussion in Section 8.8.10 and subsequent sections) is a diathesis in which a prepositional phrase of an intransitive verb is turned into an accusative through the addition of a preverb. For example, the alternation from *steigen* to *besteigen* ‘to climb’ additionally induces a change from a preposition phrase with *auf* [3.69]



to an accusative (3.48 a,b). There is a wide variety in preverbs (both *Verbpräfixe* and *Verbpartikel*) and a wide variety of prepositions that show such a diathesis. This diathesis is also attested with governed prepositions, for example with *an* as used with the verb *arbeiten* ‘to work’ (3.48 c). The prepositional phrase turns into an accusative with *erarbeiten* ‘to work something out’ (full discussion in Section 8.8.11). A closely related diathesis called *Präverb Vollapplikativ* is attested with transitive verbs (see Section 3.18.2).

- (3.48) a. Ich steige auf den Berg.  
 b. Ich besteige den Berg.  
 c. Ich arbeite an einem Plan.  
     Ich arbeite daran, den Plan zu verbessern.  
 d. Ich erarbeite einen Plan.

### 3.12.2 *Adverb Akkusativ Applikativ*

[3.70] The ADVERB AKKUSATIV APPLIKATIV (full discussion in Section 9.8.2) is also an alternation that turns a prepositional phrase into an accusative, though in this instance the diathesis is induced by a resultative adverbial, like *leer* ‘empty’ or *gesund* ‘healthy’. When used with an intransitive verb like *fischen* ‘to fish’ (3.49 a) the prepositional phrase is turned into an accusative. The effect of this diathesis is that the new accusative *Teich* ‘pond’ is in the state described by the adverbial *leer* ‘empty’ as a result of the verbal action *fischen* ‘to fish’ (3.49 b). This diathesis is also attested with governed prepositions, for example with the verb *beten für* ‘to pray for’ (3.49 c,d). A closely related *Adverb Vollapplikativ* diathesis is attested with transitive verbs (see Section 3.18.3).

- (3.49) a. Ich fische im Teich.  
 b. Ich fische den Teich leer.  
     (= Ich fische, und dadurch ist der Teich leer.)  
 c. Ich bete für den Kranken.  
     Ich bete dafür, dass der Kranke gesund wird.  
 d. Ich bete den Kranken gesund.

### 3.12.3 *Präverb Dativ Applikativ*

[3.71] The PRÄVERB DATIV APPLIKATIV (full discussion in Section 8.8.15 and subsequent sections) is an alternation in which the prepositional phrase is turned into a dative (as opposed to an accusative as in the previous diatheses). Although the prepositions in this diathesis are often strongly lexicalised, like *stammen aus* ‘originate from’ (3.50 a), they do never allow for the *daraus, dass...* reformulation that is considered definitional here for them to be governed prepositions (3.50 c).

- (3.50) a. Ich stamme aus einem Adelsgeschlecht.  
 b. Ich entstamme einem Adelsgeschlecht.  
 c. \* Ich stamme daraus, dass ich dort geboren bin.

### 3.12.4 *Pertinenzdativ*

[3.72]

The **PERTINENZDATIV** (full discussion in Section 5.8.3 and subsequent sections) is a dative that is inherently the possessor of another lexical role. The term *Pertinenz* (from lat. *pertinere* ‘to belong to’) was proposed by Polenz (1969: 160ff.)<sup>1</sup> for this phenomenon and for the closely connected *Ortspertinenzdativ*, as discussed in the next section. I have extended the usage of this term to various other diatheses that involve a possessor of another role, see *Pertinenzpassiv* (Section 3.7.7), *Pertinenzinversiv* (Section 3.9.2) and *Pertinenzakkusativ* (Section 3.18.4). The *Pertinenzdativ* is attested both for the possessor of a nominative subject of intransitives (3.51 a), see Section 5.8.3, and for the possessor of the accusative object of transitives (3.51 b), see Section 5.8.4. As for any *Pertinenz*-relation, it is crucial that the dative is necessarily the possessor of another lexical role. The term ‘possessor raising’ is also often found in the literature to describe this phenomenon.

- (3.51) a. Meine Hände zittern.  
Mir zittern die Hände.  
b. Ich schneide seine Haare.  
Ich schneide ihm die Haare.

### 3.12.5 *Ortspertinenzdativ*

The **ORTSPERTINENZDATIV** (full discussion in Section 6.8.11 and subsequent sections) is closely connected to the previous *Pertinenzdativ* (Section 3.12.4). The dative in (3.52) is likewise obligatorily a possessor of another lexical role, though in this diathesis this other role is an obligatory location. For example, the verb *hängen*, ‘to hang’ (3.52 a) necessarily needs a location where the hanging is taking place. The possessor of this location can be replaced by a dative. Besides being an inherent argument of a verb, the obligatory location can also be introduced by a resultative diathesis (e.g. Section 3.16.3). For example, the verb *wehen* ‘to blow (of wind)’ can be used resultatively with an obligatory location *in mein Gesicht* ‘in my face’. The possessor of this location can subsequently be turned into a dative (3.52 b).

- (3.52) a. Das Hemd hing aus seiner Hose.  
Das Hemd hing ihm aus der Hose.  
b. Es weht.  
Der Wind weht die Blätter in mein Gesicht.  
Der Wind weht mir die Blätter ins Gesicht.

### 3.12.6 *Benefaktivdativ*

The **BENEFAKTIVDATIV** (full discussion in Section 6.8.9) is a dative that alternates with a *für* prepositional phrase describing the benefactor of an action. For example with the verb *kochen* ‘to cook’ the beneficiary of the cooking can be expressed with a *für* prepositional phrase (3.53 a) or with a dative (3.53 b). Not all beneficiary *für* phrases can be turned into a dative. The *Benefaktivdativ* is only attested with transitive verbs. With intransitives like

<sup>1</sup>In proposing the term *pertinenz* Polenz was inspired by work by Isačenko using the term in the context of inalienable possession.

*arbeiten* ‘to work’ a *für* beneficiary is possible (3.53 c), but a benefactor dative is not (3.53 d).

- (3.53) a. Ich koche eine Suppe für dich.  
 b. Ich koche dir eine Suppe.  
 c. Ich arbeite für dich.  
 d. \* Ich arbeite dir.

### 3.12.7 Beurteilerdativ

[3.75] The BEURTEILERDATIV (full discussion in Section 6.8.10) is a dative that expresses an evaluator of an action. Such a dative can only be added together with an evaluation in the form of an adverbial phrase with *zu* ‘too much’ (3.54 a) or *genug* ‘enough’ (3.54 b) and a gradable adjective like *schnell* ‘quick’ or *warm* ‘warm’.

- (3.54) a. Paul fuhr zu schnell (für den Geschmack von seiner Mutter).  
 Paul fuhr seiner Mutter zu schnell.  
 b. Das Zimmer war warm genug (für seinen Geschmack).  
 Das Zimmer war ihm warm genug.

## 3.13 Antipassive diatheses [OBJ > ADJ]

[3.76] An ANTIPASSIVE is a diathesis in which an object is demoted to a prepositional phrase. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.4.1. Antipassives in German are typically unmarked or marked by a reflexive pronoun.

### 3.13.1 Akkusativ Antipassiv

[3.77] The unmarked AKKUSATIV ANTIPASSIV (full discussion in Section 6.7.8 and subsequent sections) is a diathesis in which an accusative argument alternates with a prepositional phrase. This typically occurs without any overt marking other than the antipassive alternation itself. For example, the verb *schießen* ‘to shoot’ can be used both with an accusative and with an *auf* prepositional phrase (3.55 a). The semantic effect of this diathesis is that the object is less affected when marked as a prepositional phrase. In some instances, like with *glauben an* ‘to believe in’ (3.55 b) the prepositional phrase is a governed preposition (see Section 6.7.12).

- (3.55) a. Ich schieße den Bären.  
 Ich schieße auf den Bären.  
 b. Ich glaube deine Aussage.  
 Ich glaube an deine Aussage.  
 Ich glaube daran, dass deine Aussage stimmt.

### 3.13.2 Reflexiv Akkusativ Antipassiv

[3.78] The REFLEXIV AKKUSATIV ANTIPASSIV (full discussion in Section 7.7.4) is an accusative antipassive in which additionally a reflexive pronoun is added. For example, the verb *beklagen* ‘to lament’ (3.56) has a lamented object-role *Lärm* ‘noise’ that is expressed either as an accusative (3.56 a) or as a prepositional phrase with *über* (3.56 b). The reflexive pronoun in

(3.56 b) is not a self-inflicting reflexive, i.e. the lamenting is not about oneself. These reflexive antipassives always have governed prepositional phrases (6.20 c).

- (3.56) a. Ich beklage den Lärm.  
 b. Ich beklage mich über den Lärm.  
 c. Ich beklage mich darüber, dass es so laut ist

### 3.13.3 *Dativ Antipassiv*

The unmarked DATIV ANTIPASSIV (full discussion in Section 6.7.10 and subsequent sections) <sup>[3.79]</sup> is a diathesis in which a dative argument alternates with a prepositional phrase. In a few instances this is attested with a dative without accusative, like with *entfliehen* ‘to escape’ (3.57 a). However, this diathesis is more widespread with verbs like *berichten* ‘to report’ (3.57 b) that allow for both an accusative and a dative argument.

- (3.57) a. Er entflieht dem Gefängnis.  
 Er entflieht aus dem Gefängnis.  
 b. Er berichtet dem Vorstand die Ergebnisse der Untersuchung.  
 Er berichtet die Ergebnisse an den Vorstand.

### 3.13.4 *Präverb Dativ Antipassiv*

The PRÄVERB DATIV ANTIPASSIV (full discussion in Section 8.7.7) is a diathesis in which a <sup>[3.80]</sup> preverb induces the demotion of a dative argument. For example, *schenken* ‘to gift’ (3.58 a) has a dative recipient, while *verschenken* ‘to give away’ (3.58 b) has no dative anymore. The dative can be retained as a prepositional phrase, but it is typically omitted. Such antipassives marked by a preverb mainly occur with verbs that take both a dative and an accusative argument.

- (3.58) a. Ich schenke dem Kindergarten meine Bücher.  
 b. Ich verschenke meine Bücher (an den Kindergarten).

### 3.13.5 *Reziprokativ*

The REZIPROKATIV (full discussion in Section 7.7.3) is a special kind of antipassive in which <sup>[3.81]</sup> an accusative is replaced by a *mit* prepositional phrase and additionally a reflexive pronoun is added, as shown for the verb *treffen* ‘to meet’ in (3.59). This reflexive pronoun does not have self-inflicting reference, i.e. the meeting is not with oneself. Semantically this diathesis is found with verbs that can be construed as either reciprocal or non-reciprocal. For example, the verb *treffen* ‘to meet’ can be used without reflexive pronoun (3.59 a) meaning something like ‘to bump into someone’, while with a reflexive pronoun the meaning is clearly reciprocal ‘to meet’ (3.59 b).

- (3.59) a. Ich treffe dich.  
 b. Ich treffe mich mit dir.

## 3.14 Objective diatheses [ $\emptyset$ > OBJ]

An OBJECTIVE is a diathesis in which a new object is added. For details on the definition see <sup>[3.82]</sup> Section 2.7.4.2, specifically starting at paragraph 2.131 on page 46.

### 3.14.1 *Resultatakkusativ*

[3.83] The unmarked RESULTATAKKUSATIV (full discussion in Section 5.8.1) is highly similar to the OPTIONALER AKKUSATIV diathesis (Section 3.15.1). In both diatheses, the same verb can be used with and without an accusative argument (a phenomenon often called ‘labile’ or ‘ambitransitive’). The special characteristics of the verbs in this section, like *laufen* ‘to walk, to run’ (3.60), is that they are (a) basically intransitive and (b) the accusative represents the result of the intransitive action. The difference between such an unmarked added accusative (*Resultatakkusativ*, this section) and an unmarked dropped accusative (*Optionaler Akkusativ*, Section 3.15.1) is arguably small, and it remains to be seen whether this separation can be backed up by further distinguishing grammatical characteristics.

- (3.60) a. Er läuft.  
b. Er läuft den Marathon.

### 3.14.2 *Präverb Akkusativ*

[3.84] The PRÄVERB AKKUSATIV (full discussion in Section 8.8.1 and subsequent sections) is a diathesis in which the addition of a preverb leads to an additional accusative argument. For example, the diathesis from *zaubern* ‘to perform magic’ to *verzaubern* ‘to enchant’ (3.61) adds a completely new role in the accusative.

- (3.61) a. Sie zaubert.  
b. Sie verzaubert mich.

### 3.14.3 *Präverb Reflexiv Akkusativ*

[3.85] The PRÄVERB REFLEXIV AKKUSATIV (full discussion in Section 8.8.5) is a special variant of an objective diathesis in that the addition of the preverb leads to a new accusative argument, but also includes an obligatory reflexive pronoun. The new accusative role is semantically the result of the action of the main verb, which is actually similar to the *Resultatakkusativ* (Section 3.14.1) and different from the *Präverb Akkusativ* (Section 3.14.2). For example, the diathesis from *tanzen* ‘to dance’ to *antanzten* ‘to incur from dancing’ (3.62) adds the incur-rence *Muskelkater* ‘sore muscles’ and a dative reflexive pronoun *mir*.

- (3.62) a. Ich habe gestern viel getanzt.  
b. Ich habe mir gestern einen Muskelkater angetanzt.

### 3.14.4 *Präverb Dativ*

[3.86] The PRÄVERB DATIV (full discussion in Section 8.8.8 and subsequent sections) is similar to the previous *Präverb Akkusativ* in that the addition of the preverb also induces a new role, in this diathesis marked with a dative case. This diathesis is attested both with intransitive verbs like *gehen* ‘to walk’ when derived into preverbal *entgehen* ‘to evade’ (3.63 a) and with transitive verbs like *lesen* ‘to read’ when derived into preverbal *vorlesen* ‘to read out’ (3.63 b).

- (3.63) a. Ich gehe (nach Hause).  
Ich entgehe dem Urteil.  
b. Ich lese ein Buch.  
Ich lese dir ein Buch vor.

### 3.15 Deobjective diatheses [OBJ > Ø]

A DEOBJECTIVE is a diathesis in which an object is removed. For details on the definition see [3.87]  
Section 2.7.4.2.

#### 3.15.1 *Optionaler Akkusativ*

An unmarked OPTIONALER AKKUSATIV (full discussion in Section 5.7.1) is a diathesis in which [3.88]  
an accusative object can be left out without any further change in the construction (often discussed under the heading of ‘ambitransitive’ or ‘labile’ verbs). This is for example attested with the verb *stören* ‘to disturb’ (3.64). However, various different kinds of ‘labile’ verbs have to be distinguished and not all belong in the current category. First, when the accusative object of a verb allows for an *Akkusativ Antipassiv* diathesis (Section 3.13.1), then this argument can also be dropped. However, such antipassives should not also be included here. Second, in some examples the drop of an accusative is induced by an adverbial, which leads to an action-oriented focus, discussed below as the *Aktionsfokus* diathesis (Section 3.15.3). Verbs with such a diathesis should not also be included here. Finally, there is also a highly similar RESULTATAKKUSATIV diathesis (Section 3.14.1) that should be distinguished. Once all those diatheses are separated, there turn out to be relatively few truly labile verbs with an *Optionaler Akkusativ*, mainly verbs that can be interpreted both as something one can do as well as something one can be.

- (3.64) a. Du störst die Veranstaltung.  
b. Du störst.

#### 3.15.2 *Optionaler Dativ*

The unmarked OPTIONALER DATIV, i.e. the dropping of a dative argument without any further change in the construction, is both attested with nominative-dative verbs like *entkommen* ‘to get away’ (3.65 a), full discussion in Section 5.7.4, and with nominative-accusative-dative verbs like *erzählen* ‘to tell’ (3.65 b), full discussion in Section 5.7.5. Like with *Optionaler Akkusativ* (Section 3.15.1), datives that allow for a dative antipassive (Section 3.13.3) should not also be included here. [3.89]

- (3.65) a. Er entkommt seinem Feind.  
Er entkommt.  
b. Ich erzähle dir eine Geschichte.  
Ich erzähle eine Geschichte.

#### 3.15.3 *Aktionsfokus*

The AKTIONSFOKUS (full discussion in Section 9.7.1) is another diathesis in which object arguments can be left out to put the focus on the action of the verb itself, but only when also adding an adverbial to the sentence. For example, a transitive verb like *sehen* ‘to see’ (3.66 a) cannot be used without an object (3.66 b). The occurrence of dropped objects is only possible in combination with an adverbial specification (3.66 c). The effect of such a diathesis is that the focus of the utterance is put on the manner in which the action is performed. [3.90]

- (3.66) a. Ich sehe das Haus.  
b. \*Ich sehe.  
c. Ich sehe gut.

### 3.15.4 *Endoreflexiv*

[3.91] The *Endoreflexiv* (full discussion in Section 7.7.1 and subsequent sections) is a special kind of object drop in which a reflexive pronoun is added. Such a diathesis looks superficially very similar to a regular self-inflicting reflexive (Section 4.7.3), but there is a crucial semantic difference. In a self-inflicting reflexive (e.g. ‘he washes himself’) the agent is doing something to him/herself. In contrast, an *Endoreflexiv* describes an action that is performed *with* the body of the agent, not *to* the body of the agent. For example, the verb *äußern* ‘to remark’ (3.67 a) can be used with a reflexive pronoun and without accusative object in the meaning of ‘to express oneself’ (3.67 b).

- (3.67) a. Er äußert sein Bedauern über den Fall.  
b. Er äußert sich über den Fall.

### 3.15.5 *Präverb Endoreflexiv*

[3.92] The PRÄVERB ENDOREFLEXIV (full discussion in Section 8.7.1) is similar to the previous *Endoreflexiv* (Section 3.15.4) but with the addition of a preverb. For example, the verb *wählen* ‘to choose/to dial’ shows a diathesis with *sich verwählen* ‘to misdial’ (3.68 a) in which the accusative object is dropped. There are also a few very special endoreflexive verbs in which an adverbial is necessary instead of a preverb, for example *fühlen* ‘to feel’ (3.68 b), see Section 9.7.2.

- (3.68) a. Er wählt die falsche Nummer.  
Er verwählt sich.  
b. Ich fühle den Schmerz.  
Ich fühle mich gut.

## 3.16 Locative diatheses [ $\emptyset$ > PBJ]

[3.93] A LOCATIVE DIATHESES is a diathesis in which an obligatory locational phrase is added to the clause. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.4.3. Note that there is no direct grammatical connection between a locative *diathesis* and a locative *case*. Both terms simply use the same modifier because both are somehow related to the marking of location.

### 3.16.1 *Bewegungsart*

[3.94] The BEWEGUNGSART diathesis (full discussion in Section 6.8.2 and subsequent sections) is a diathesis that is specifically attested with verbs of movement like *tanzen* ‘to dance’ (3.69). In some contexts, movement verbs take an obligatory locational phrase. This obligatory location coincides with the choice of auxiliary in the perfect, i.e. *haben* or *sein*. There is a crucial difference between these two options in that with *sein* in the perfect there is an additional directional phrase necessary (3.69 c,d).

[3.95] Semantically, this construction expresses primarily a movement, here *durch den Garten* ‘through the garden’, in which the main lexical verb *tanzen* ‘to dance’ designates what kind of movement is performed. In a sense, the main lexical verb functions more like an adverbial designation in such constructions, i.e. *sich tanzend bewegen* ‘to move in a dancing manner’.

The same construction can also be used with non-movement verbs, but then an additional reflexive pronoun is necessary (see Section 3.16.2).

- (3.69) a. Ich habe im Garten getanzt.  
 b. Ich habe getanzt.  
 c. Ich bin durch den Garten getanzt.  
 (= Ich habe mich tanzend durch den Garten bewegt.)  
 d. \*Ich bin getanzt.

### 3.16.2 *Reflexiv Bewegungsart*

The REFLEXIV BEWEGUNGSART diathesis (full discussion in Section 7.8.1) is the same diathesis as the non-reflexive *Bewegungsart* diathesis in Section 3.16.1 but with an additional reflexive pronoun. This extra reflexive pronoun has to be added for non-movement verbs like *zittern* ‘to shiver’ (3.70 a,b). With the reflexive pronoun there needs to be an obligatory movement phrase (3.70 c). Semantically, this construction describes an movement (‘going to the playoffs’) that is achieved (metaphorically) by performing the intransitive verb (i.e. by shivering). [3.96]

- (3.70) a. Das Kind zittert (vor Kälte).  
 b. Die Mannschaft zitterte sich in die Playoffs.  
 c. \*Die Mannschaft zittert sich.

### 3.16.3 *Verursachte Bewegung*

The VERURSACHTE BEWEGUNG diathesis is attested in two variants. With intransitive verbs (full discussion in Section 6.8.4 and subsequent sections) like *schwitzen* ‘to sweat’ (3.71 a) this diathesis adds both an accusative and an obligatory location. Semantically, this diathesis expresses that the verb causes the movement of the new accusative object role to be in the location. With transitive verbs (full discussion in Section 6.8.5) like *befehlen* ‘to command’ the effect is similar, though there is no new accusative added. With an added location the semantic effect is that the verb causes the accusative object to move to the location (3.71 b). [3.97]

- (3.71) a. Ich schwitze.  
 Ich schwitze einen Fleck in mein Hemd.  
 (= Ich schwitze, und dadurch entsteht ein Fleck in meinem Hemd.)  
 b. Ich befehle eine Armee.  
 Ich befehle die Armee an die Front.  
 (= Ich befehle, und dadurch geht die Armee an die Front.)

### 3.16.4 *Ergänzende Wirkung*

The ERGÄNZENDE WIRKUNG diathesis (full discussion in Section 6.8.6) expresses the result of performing the main verb. For example, a transitive verb like *machen* ‘to make’ can either take an object that is made, e.g. *Aufgaben* ‘tasks’ (3.72 a), or it can be used in a special construction (3.72 b) with an object, like *Wiese* ‘meadow’, that is changed into something else, like *Garten* ‘garden’, by performing the action. The term *Ergänzende Wirkung* originated [3.98]



in the influential educational grammatical work of Karl Ferdinand Becker (1833: 81) almost 200 years ago, but never caught on in the German grammatical tradition.

- (3.72) a. Er macht seine Aufgaben.  
 b. Er macht die Wiese zu einem Garten.  
 (= Er macht etwas, und dadurch wird die Wiese zu einem Garten.)

### 3.17 Delocative diatheses [PB] > Ø]

[3.99] A DELOCATIVE DIATHESES is a diathesis in which an obligatory locational phrase is made optional and is regularly completely removed from the clause. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.4.3, specifically starting at paragraph 2.137 on page 47.

#### 3.17.1 Präverb Delokativ

[3.100] The PRÄVERB DELOKATIV (full discussion in Section 8.7.9 and subsequent sections) is a diathesis in which an obligatory location loses its obligatoriness by adding a preverb. For example, the diathesis between *steigen aus* and *aussteigen* ‘to get out’ (3.73) shows a small but crucial difference in that the prepositional phrase *aus dem Auto* loses its obligatory status.

- (3.73) a. Der Mann steigt aus dem Auto.  
 b. \*Der Mann steigt.  
 c. Der Mann steigt (aus dem Auto) aus.  
 d. Der Mann steigt aus.

#### 3.17.2 Adverb Delokativ

[3.101] The ADVERB DELOKATIV (full discussion in Section 9.7.4 and subsequent sections) is a parallel diathesis to the previous *Präverb Delokativ* (Section 3.17.1). Instead of adding a preverb, this diathesis adds an obligatory resultative adverb, like *los(e)* ‘loose’. The diathesis between *binden* ‘to tie’ and *losbinden* ‘to untie’ removes the obligatory status of the locative prepositional phrase.

- (3.74) a. Ich binde den Hund an die Leine.  
 b. \*Ich binde den Hund.  
 c. Ich binde den Hund (von der Leine) los.  
 d. Ich binde den Hund los.

### 3.18 Chained applicative diatheses [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ]

[3.102] A CHAINED APPLICATIVE is a diathesis in which an adjunct is promoted to object, while at the same time an existing object is demoted to adjunct. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.5.1.

### 3.18.1 *Vollapplikativ*

The unmarked VOLLAPPLIKATIV (full discussion in Section 6.9.2) is an extended version of an applicative. More precise, it is a combination of an applicative and a subsequent antipassive. For example, the verb *füllen* ‘to fill’ has two object roles: (i) the filled object *Flasche* ‘bottle’ and (ii) the filling substance *Schnaps* ‘liquor’. Both roles alternate between a prepositional phrase and an accusative (3.75 a,b). There appears to be an asymmetry in that the filling substance cannot be used as an accusative without mentioning the filled object (3.75 c), while the reverse is possible (3.75 d). [3.103]

This asymmetry is also attested in the closely related *Präverb Vollapplikativ* (see the next Section 3.18.2). The construction with the filled object as accusative (3.75 b,d) is similar to the preverbal *befüllen*. The asymmetry indicates that this diathesis is basically an unmarked applicative (cf. Section 3.12.1), but applied to transitive verbs. The applicative changes a prepositional phrase into an accusative and, as a consequence, any accusative already present is demoted like an antipassive. [3.104]

- (3.75) a. Er füllt den Schnaps in die Flasche.  
 b. Er füllt die Flasche mit Schnaps.  
 c. \* Er füllt den Schnaps.  
 d. Er füllt die Flasche.

### 3.18.2 *Präverb Vollapplikativ*

The PRÄVERB VOLLAPPLIKATIV (full discussion in Section 8.9.1) is similar to the previous unmarked *Vollapplikativ* in that it combines an applicative and an antipassive diathesis. Noteworthy, there appear to be only two antipassive strategies, using the prepositions *mit* and *in*, respectively. For example, with the diathesis from *schreiben* ‘to write’ to *beschreiben* ‘to write on’ (3.76 a) the written text *Buchstaben* ‘letters’ changes from an accusative to a *mit* prepositional phrase. Differently, with the diathesis from *graben* ‘to dig’ to *begraben* ‘to bury’ (3.76 b) the dug entity *Loch* ‘hole’ changes from an accusative to an *in* prepositional phrase. Both these prepositional phrases can be left unexpressed. [3.105]

In contrast to the few antipassive options, there is a wide variety of applicative strategies attested, i.e. many different prepositions can be promoted to accusative (see Section 8.9.1 for all known examples). This asymmetry indicates that any *Vollapplikativ* is basically an applicative, which is applied to verbs that already have an accusative argument. The German language disprefers multiple arguments in the same case, so the erstwhile accusative is demoted when another role is promoted to accusative. [3.106]

- (3.76) a. Ich schreibe Buchstaben auf das Papier.  
 Ich beschreibe das Papier (mit Buchstaben).  
 b. Ich grabe ein Loch für meinen Hund.  
 Ich begrabe meinen Hund (im Loch).

### 3.18.3 *Adverb Vollapplikativ*

The ADVERB VOLLAPPLIKATIV (full discussion in Section 9.9.1) is closely related to the previous *Präverb Vollapplikativ* (see Section 3.18.2), though marked with an adverb instead of a preverb. It mainly seems to occur with the adverb *voll* ‘full’ (3.77 a), for example turning the verb *pumpen* ‘to pump’ into *vollpumpen* ‘to pump full’. Just as in the previous *Vollapplikativ* diatheses, the role *Luft* ‘air’ will be demoted to a *mit* prepositional phrase (or can be left out [3.107]

completely). With the antonymous adverb *leer* ‘empty’ (3.77 b) the erstwhile object cannot be retained as a prepositional phrase, see Section 9.7.8.

- (3.77) a. Ich pumpe Luft in den Reifen.  
 Ich pumpe den Reifen voll (mit Luft).  
 b. Ich pumpe das Wasser aus dem Keller.  
 Ich pumpe den Keller leer.

### 3.18.4 *Pertinenzakkusativ*

[3.108] The PERTINENZAKKUSATIV (full discussion in Section 6.8.13) is an accusative that alternates with a possessor of another accusative. A verb like *bewundern* ‘to admire’ marks the admired thing, e.g. *Ehrlichkeit* ‘honesty’ as an accusative (3.78 a). After the diathesis, the possessor of this accusative *seine* ‘his’ is raised to accusative *ihn* ‘him’ (3.78 b), at the same time demoting the admired thing to a governed prepositional object with *für* (3.78 c).

- (3.78) a. Ich bewundere seine Ehrlichkeit.  
 b. Ich bewundere ihn für seine Ehrlichkeit.  
 c. Ich bewundere ihn dafür, dass er ehrlich ist.

## 3.19 Chained objective diatheses [ $\emptyset$ > OBJ > PB]]

[3.109] A CHAINED OBJECTIVE is a diathesis in which a new object is introduced, while at the same time an existing object is demoted to an obligatory location phrase. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.5.2.

### 3.19.1 *Resultativ*

[3.110] The unmarked RESULTATIV (full discussion in Section 6.8.7 and subsequent sections) is a chained diathesis. A new accusative object is introduced (‘objective’) and the erstwhile object is demoted to a prepositional phrase (‘antipassive’). However, these two remappings are tightly intertwined and have to occur together. Semantically, the effect of this diathesis is to focus on the result of an action. This diathesis is highly similar to the *Verursachte Bewegung* diathesis (Section 3.16.3), but the remapping of roles is crucially different as there is no chained remapping in the latter.

[3.111] This construction is typically used to express that something is removed as a result of an action. An example is shown in (3.79) with the verb *waschen* ‘to wash’. This verb can be used with an accusative argument describing the role of the washee, here *Hose* ‘trousers’ (3.79 a). Alternatively, a different role can be marked with an accusative, namely the result of the washing, here *Fleck* ‘stain’ (3.79 b). In this usage, a location *aus meiner Hose* ‘from my trousers’ is obligatory present in the sentence (3.79 c). This obligatory location represents the washee.

- (3.79) a. Ich wasche meine Hose.  
 b. Ich wasche den Fleck aus meiner Hose.  
 c. \* Ich wasche den Fleck.

### 3.20 Chained deobjective diatheses [PBJ > OBJ > Ø]

A CHAINED DEOBJECTIVE is a diathesis in which an obligatory location phrase is promoted to object, while at the same time an existing object is removed. For details on the definition see Section 2.7.5.2. [3.112]

#### 3.20.1 *Präverb Antiresultativ*

The PRÄVERB ANTIRESLTATIV (full discussion in Section 8.7.12) is the reverse of the previous *Resultativ* (Section 3.19.1). Verbs like *klopfen* ‘to pound’ (3.80 a) take an accusative result, here *Staub* ‘dust’, and also an obligatory prepositional location from which the result originates, here *von meinem Mantel* ‘from my coat’ (3.80 b). With a preverb *ausklopfen* ‘to pound (thoroughly)’ (3.80 c) the accusative result is dropped (‘deobjective’) and the originating prepositional object is turned into a new accusative role (‘applicative’). However, these two remappings are tightly intertwined and can only be used together. Semantically, there is a close connection to the *Präverb Delokativ* diathesis (Section 3.17.1), though there is no chained remapping in the latter. [3.113]

- (3.80) a. Ich klopfe den Staub von meinem Mantel.  
 b. \*Ich klopfe den Staub.  
 c. Ich klopfe meinen Mantel aus.

## Chapter 4

# Summary of major epitheses

### 4.1 Verbal categories reconsidered

[4.1] Browse any grammatical description of verbal categories in German and terms like *Plusquamperfekt* (4.1 a) or *Futur II* (4.1 b) will surely pass by. There is nothing wrong with those terms, but they just describe very specific combinations of verbal markers that are mostly transparently interpretable (e.g. *Plusquamperfekt* is simply a perfekt with past-tense finite verb). In contrast, there are many basic verbal constructions that are only sparingly discussed in German grammars, if at all. The *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* habitual (4.1 c) or the *sein+Infinitiv* absentive (4.1 d) are probably the most well-known among those, but they are still not widely acknowledged in general grammars of German.

- (4.1) a. Wer hatte dir die Adresse gegeben?  
b. Dann wird man Ihnen die Adresse gegeben haben.  
c. Sie pflegt Sonntags auszuschlafen.  
d. Ich bin einkaufen.

[4.2] As a case in point, the Duden grammar spends 20 pages on details of tense marking (2009: 496-516), while only a few select additional verbal constructions are discussed in just four pages (2009: 848-852) and some incidental reference scattered throughout. This chapter can be read as an attempt at a complete survey of all those remaining German verbal categories, besides tense.

[4.3] This chapter arose as a byproduct of the main goal of this book, namely listing all German diatheses. To clearly delimit what counts as a diathesis, I also collected constructions that are structurally similar to diatheses, but that did not involve any role remapping. These structures are called EPITHESES and are listed in-full in the respective X.4 sections of the following data chapters. This chapter summarises and organises the major epitheses that I have been able to find. I will also propose Latinate-German names for all of these constructions.

[4.4] Quickly recapitulated, an EPITHESES is a monoclausal construction in which the lexical roles are not remapped in comparison to a basic clause (= a clause with just a single finite lexical verb form). For example, a basic clause with the finite verb *erzählen* ‘to tell’ (4.2 a) might have the roles of ‘teller’ (*Großvater*, in the nominative), ‘tellee’ (*Enkelin*, in the dative) and ‘story told’ (*Witz*, in the accusative). A construction like *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* is an epithesis because when applied to *erzählen* all these roles remain encoded in exactly the

same grammatical form (4.2b). Additionally, this construction is monoclausal because the finite *pfl egte* is placed at the end of a subordinate clause (i.e. the clause is coherent, see Section 1.3.1).

- (4.2) a. Der Großvater erzählt seiner Enkelin einen Witz.  
 b. Der Großvater pflegte seiner Enkelin einen Witz zu erzählen.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass der Großvater seiner Enkelin einen Witz zu erzählen pflegte.

The constructions listed in this chapter are not haphazardly collected out of some infinite pool of possible analytical combinations of German verb forms. Quite to the contrary, the constructions listed here are claimed to be an exhaustive list of all epithetical German verb forms. Only a few rare and/or old-fashioned constructions are left out from this summary (but they can still be found in the following data chapters). The list of major epitheses in this chapter is quite long (about 40 constructions), but manageable. Any 1000-plus-page grammar could easily add a few pages listing them all (or at least the most commonly attested ones). The number of epitheses is also quite a bit less than the number of major diatheses presented in the previous chapter (about 80 constructions). This indicates that from a purely grammatical perspective, diathesis is about a two-times more elaborate topic than epithesis. [4.5]

## 4.2 Classifying epitheses

The epitheses listed in this chapter map out all grammaticalised verbal categories of the German language. However, it is crucial to realise that not every lexical verb can be combined with each of these constructions. Just as with diatheses, each epithesis has a limited domain of applicability, i.e. each epithesis has a specific set of verbs to which it can be applied (cf. Section 1.3.4). It is a very worthwhile future endeavour to specify these domains in more detail than I have been able to do here. Additionally, this restricted applicability means that one cannot simply take a random lexical verb and paradigmatically list all different epithetical forms for this verb, like traditional grammars like to do with tense forms. Quite to the contrary, it becomes a matter of lexicographic research to determine for each individual verb which epitheses are possible. [4.6]

Epitheses mostly express a rather clear semantic content, but they are not obligatorily used to express that content. For example, the *pflegen+Infinitiv* epithesis, as mentioned above, expresses an habitual aspect. However, this construction is far from the only way to express an habitual aspect in German. Habitual aspect will typically be expressed by a simple present tense verb with an adverbial phrase expressing the habitual recurrence, like *regelmäßig* ‘regularly’ or a concrete timeframe with *jeden*, like *jeden Morgen* ‘every morning’. So, the characterisation of *pflegen+Infinitiv* as an habitual verb form is actually only part of the story. What needs to be added in future research is a more detailed description of the kind of contexts in which this construction is actually used, in contrast to other options to express an habitual that are available to the speaker. [4.7]

This desideratum holds for all epitheses discussed here: it is necessary to specify what determines their usage. A famous case in point here is the *werden+Infinitiv* construction, which is called *Futur* in the German grammatical tradition (see Section 11.4.9). This construction can indeed express events in the future, so the name *Futur* is not wrong. However, future events are much more commonly expressed with a simple present tense verb form. So, a more detailed characterisation of the *werden+Infinitiv* is necessary to explain when it is actually used to express events in the future. [4.8]

[4.9] The epithetical constructions listed in this chapter are basically organised along the lines of the TAME categorisation (tense-aspect-modality-evidentiality). This subdivision is not always clear-cut, it is more of a continuum. This means that the placement of a specific construction in one or the other group is more a matter of practical convenience than of strict definitional categorisation.

[4.10] TENSE will almost not be mentioned here, mainly because it does not play an important role in German epithesis. The discussion of ASPECT is separated into two kinds: temporal aspect (Section 4.3) and spatial aspect (Section 4.4). MODALITY includes the well-described modal verbs, but also some other less-widely discussed modal constructions (Section 4.5). EVIDENTIALITY deals with the marking evidence that the speaker has for a statement. This turns out to be a very useful category for the analysis of various German epithetical constructions (Section 4.6).

[4.11] Additionally, I have added a section with epithetical constructions that are functionally alike to a diathesis, but there is not formal remapping of roles. These constructions are on the boundary between epithesis and diathesis. Structurally they are clearly epithetic, because there is no role-remapping. Yet, these constructions express a change in the relation between the participants and the lexical verb, so functionally they belong in the realm of diathesis. For lack of a better term I will call such constructions DIATHETICAL EPITHESES (Section 4.7).

## 4.3 Temporal aspect

[4.12] The grammatical marking of aspect is commonly defined as linguistic expressions that specify the ‘internal temporal constituency of a situation’ (Comrie 1976: 3). In this sense, the title of this section, TEMPORAL ASPECT, might appear to be tautological. However, this designation is used here in opposition to a different set of categories that also specify the spatial constituency of a situation, SPATIAL ASPECT, described in the next Section 4.4. Temporal aspect in German includes a surprisingly large number of continuative expressions, alongside constructions for cross-linguistically widespread habitual and progressive aspects.

### 4.3.1 *Prozessperfekt (haben+Partizip)*

[4.13] The PROZESSPERFEKT (full discussion in Section 10.4.1 and subsequent sections) is proposed here as a specific name for the *haben+Partizip* construction (4.3). In the German grammatical tradition, the perfect is normally described as a verb form taking either *haben* or *sein*, depending on the lexical verb. However, there turn out to be surprisingly many verbs that allow for both, with a clear distinction in meaning (see Section 10.4.3). For that reason, I propose to use different names for both constructions. Note that the name *Perfekt* is developing into a misnomer, as the *haben+Partizip* appears to be taking over the function of past marking in contemporary German.

- (4.3) a. Das Kind schläft.  
b. Das Kind hat geschlafen.

### 4.3.2 *Zustandsperfekt (sein+Partizip)*

[4.14]

The ZUSTANDSPERFEKT (full discussion in Section 10.4.2 and subsequent sections) is proposed here as a name for the *sein+Partizip* epithesis (4.4). The first part of this name (*Zustand*) is explicitly intended to be reminiscent of the *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 3.7.4), because both construction are formally identical. The only difference is that they are applied to different verbs (and consequently have a different effect on the marking of the roles). The second part of the name (*Perfekt*) alludes to the traditional analysis of *sein* being an allomorph of the perfect auxiliary (alongside *haben*, see Section 4.3.1). However, because *sein* and *haben* are not in complementary distribution I propose to name them separately.

- (4.4) a. Das Kind schläft ein.  
b. Das Kind ist eingeschlafen.

### 4.3.3 *Habitativ (pflegen+zu-Infinitiv)*

The HABITUATIV (full discussion in Section 12.4.1) is an aspectual category that expresses an activity that is performed regularly as a habit. Such an aspect is widespread among the world's language and in German it can be expressed by using a light verb *pflegen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.5 a,b). The verb *pflegen* has a lexical meaning 'to nurse, to maintain', but in this construction this meaning has changed to a grammatical marker of aspect. This grammaticalisation has not only happened semantically, but also structurally. The *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* construction is clearly monoclausal, as can be seen by the final position of the finite verb when used as a subordinate clause (4.5 c). An archaic and nowadays mostly ironical alternative to *pflegen* is to use the light verb *belieben* (full discussion in Section 12.4.2). [4.15]

- (4.5) a. Sie lacht laut.  
b. Sie pflegt laut zu lachen.  
c. Es ist bekannt, dass sie laut zu lachen pflegte.

### 4.3.4 *Progressiv (sein+am-Infinitiv)*

The PROGRESSIV (full discussion in Section 13.4.1) consists of *sein* with the prepositional *am-Infinitiv*. In this construction the infinitive is clearly a nominalised form of the verb, so it is regularly (though not universally) written with a capital letter in German orthography (4.6). The *sein+am-Infinitiv* expresses a progressive aspect, though its usage is frowned upon in a formal written register and a simple *Präsens* is preferred, possibly using adverbs for disambiguation of the aspectual structure. In spoken language the *sein+am-Infinitiv* appears to be pervasive, though. [4.16]

- (4.6) a. Das Kind jammert.  
b. Das Kind ist am Jammern.

### 4.3.5 *Mutativprogressiv (sein+im-Infinitiv)*

The MUTATIVPROGRESSIV (full discussion in Section 13.4.2) is a variant of the *Progressiv* (see Section 4.3.4), using the preposition *im* instead of *am*. The *sein+im-Infinitiv* is much less frequent than the *am* progressive. However, the available examples suggest a clear semantic [4.17]



characterisation. The *im* progressive is typically used with verbs that either describe an ongoing process of increase (4.7 a) or an ongoing process of decrease (4.7 b).

- (4.7) a. Die eigene Fahrerflotte entsteht.  
Die eigene Fahrerflotte ist im Entstehen  
b. Die Schwellung klingt ab.  
Die Schwellung ist im Abklingen.

#### 4.3.6 *Kontinuativprogressiv (bleiben+am-Infinitiv)*

[4.18] The KONTINUATIVPROGRESSIV (full discussion in Section 13.4.3) is the first of various continuative constructions that use the light verb *bleiben*. Parallel to the *sein* progressive (see Section 4.3.4), the *Progressivkontinuativ* (4.8) uses *bleiben* with the *am-Infinitiv* to express that an event is ongoing (progressive) and remains ongoing (continuative).

- (4.8) a. Er lebt.  
b. Er bleibt am Leben.

#### 4.3.7 *Zustandskontinuativ (bleiben+Infinitiv)*

[4.19] The ZUSTANDSKONTINUATIV (full discussion in Section 11.4.2) is constructed with *bleiben* and an infinitive. It expresses that a state is continuing. This construction is frequently used with state verbs like *stehen* ‘to stand’, *liegen* ‘to lie’, *sitzen* ‘to sit’, etc. (4.9 a,b). These combinations are so prominent that their infinitives are usually written as single words in German orthography, i.e. *stehenbleiben*, *liegenbleiben*, *sitzenbleiben*. These constructions are often even listed as single verbs in German dictionaries. Yet, there is no grammatical reason to give these combinations a special status compared to other constructions of *bleiben+Infinitiv* that are usually separated by a space, like for example *wohnen bleiben* ‘to remain living somewhere’ (4.9 c).

- (4.9) a. Er liegt im Bett.  
b. Er bleibt im Bett liegen.  
c. Er bleibt in München wohnen.

#### 4.3.8 *Perfektkontinuativ (bleiben+Partizip)*

[4.20] The PERFEKTKONTINUATIV (full discussion in Section 10.4.11) is constructed with *bleiben* and a participle. Only participles of intransitive verbs can be used in this construction. Additionally, applicable verbs need to have a *sein* perfect (see Section 4.3.2) and should describe a potentially reversible event, like *verschwinden* ‘to vanish’ (4.10). When used with transitive verbs this construction results in an anticausative diathesis, here called the *Kontinuativantikausativ* (see Section 3.6.5).

- (4.10) a. Der Schlüssel verschwindet.  
b. Der Schlüssel bleibt verschwunden.

### 4.3.9 *Permissivkontinuativ (lassen+Partizip)*

The PERMISSIVKONTINUATIV (full discussion in Section 10.4.13) uses the light verb *lassen* [4.21] with a participle (4.11). The name establishes a connection to the *Permissivkausativ* (constructed with an infinitive, see Section 3.10.4), while highlighting the fact that semantically this construction is a continuative. It expresses the permission of the subject for a transitive action to continue.

- (4.11) a. Ich schalte den Fernseher ein.  
b. Ich lasse den Fernseher eingeschaltet.

### 4.3.10 *Kausativkontinuativ (halten+Partizip)*

The KAUSATIVKONTINUATIV (full discussion in Section 10.4.12) uses the light verb *halten* [4.22] with a participle (4.12). It expresses an explicit action by the subject to keep an perfective state ongoing. The light verb *halten* is also used in the related *Kontinuitätskausativ* (see Section 3.10.8).

- (4.12) a. Ich schließe die Tür.  
b. Ich halte die Tür geschlossen.

## 4.4 Spatial aspect

The grammatical marking of SPATIAL ASPECT expresses a change in the spatial constituency of an event. In German, there are few ‘pure’ examples of such spatial aspect, like the *Absentiv*. However, most categories described in this section actually combine spatial and temporal aspects. The light verb *gehen* and *kommen* are used here in a few different, but highly similar constructions. [4.23]

### 4.4.1 *Absentiv (sein+Infinitiv)*

The ABSENTIV (full discussion in Section 11.4.3) uses *sein* with an infinitive (4.13 b). This construction is a kind of progressiv with the additional twist that the nominative participant is absent because s/he is pursuing the activity as described by the verb. An absentive is commonly classified as a kind of aspect. However, different from most aspectual categories it is not the temporal structure of the event that is crucial here, but the spatial structure. [4.24]

- (4.13) a. Ich besuche meinen Freund.  
b. Ich bin meinen Freund besuchen.

### 4.4.2 *Abitiv (gehen/fahren+Infinitiv)*

The ABITIV (from Lat. *abire* ‘to depart’, full discussion in Section 11.4.4) consists of the light verbs *gehen* or *fahren* together with an infinitive (4.14). This construction express that the subject is leaving to pursue the activity as described by the verb. It is closely related to the *Absentiv* (see Section 4.4.1). [4.25]

- (4.14) a. Ich besuche meinen Freund.  
b. Ich gehe/fahre meinen Freund besuchen.

### 4.4.3 *Aditiv (kommen+Infinitiv)*

[4.26] The ADITIV (from Lat. *adire* ‘to approach’, full discussion in Section 11.4.5) consists of the light verb *kommen* with an infinitive (4.15). It conveys that the subject is approaching to pursue an activity, i.e. the reversal of the *Abitiv* (see Section 4.4.2).

- (4.15) a. Ich besuche meinen Freund.  
b. Ich komme meinen Freund besuchen.

### 4.4.4 *Absentivfrequentativ (sein+beim-Infinitiv)*

[4.27] The ABSENTIVFREQUENTATIV (full discussion in Section 13.4.4) is a variant of the *Absentiv* (see Section 4.4.1). It also uses the verb *sein*, but now with a *beim-Infinitiv* (4.16). It still expresses that the subject is not present (absentive), but there is an extra semantic aspect added, namely that the activity is performed regularly or habitually (frequentative).

[4.28] Parallel to the previous *Absentiv*, *Abitiv* and *Aditiv* there also exist frequentative variants of all these three constructions using different prepositions in each, namely *sein beim*, *gehen/fahren zum* and *kommen vom* (discussed subsequently).

- (4.16) a. Ich arbeite.  
b. Ich bin beim Arbeiten.

### 4.4.5 *Abitivfrequentativ (gehen/fahren+zum-Infinitiv)*

[4.29] The ABITIVFREQUENTATIV (full discussion in Section 13.4.5) uses *gehen/fahren*, just like the *Abitiv* (see Section 4.4.2), but now with a *zum-Infinitiv* (4.17). It expresses a movement away (abitive) to pursue an activity that is frequently or habitually performed (frequentative).

- (4.17) a. Sie schwimmt.  
b. Sie geht zum Schwimmen.

### 4.4.6 *Aditivfrequentativ (kommen+vom-Infinitiv)*

[4.30] The ADITIVFREQUENTATIV (full discussion in Section 13.4.6) uses *kommen* with a *vom-Infinitiv* (4.18) to express the reversal of the *Abitivfrequentativ* (see Section 4.4.5). It conveys a movement approaching a point of reference (aditive) coming from an activity that is frequently or habitually performed (frequentative).

[4.31] Note that the preposition used with *kommen* is *vom*. There exists also a construction using *kommen* with *zum*, but that one has completely different semantics (see Section 4.4.8).

- (4.18) a. Er ist einkaufen.  
b. Er kommt vom Einkaufen.

### 4.4.7 *Aditivprogressiv (kommen+(an-)+Partizip)*

[4.32] The ADITIVPROGRESSIV (full discussion in Section 10.4.10) expresses both a temporal aspect (progressive) and a spatial aspect (aditive). It uses the light verb *kommen* with a participle (4.19a) to convey that the subject is approaching while performing a specific kind of movement. A frequent variant uses a participle with the prefix *an-*, even when the finite verb

with this prefix does not exist. For example, the verb *anrennen* does not exist, only the participle *angerannt* exist in the construction with the light verb *kommen* (4.19b). Note that there does not exist any symmetrically opposing abitive construction with *gehen*.

- (4.19) a. Die Kinder laufen herbei.  
           Die Kinder kommen herbeigelaufen.  
       b. Die Kinder rennen.  
           Die Kinder kommen angerannt.

#### 4.4.8 *Bewegungsende (kommen+zum-Infinitiv)*

The BEWEGUNGSENDE (full discussion in Section 13.4.7) again uses the light verb *kommen* to express a spatial aspect, this time with a *zum-Infinitiv* (4.20). However, in contrast the previous uses of *kommen*, this construction does not express an approaching movement. The *kommen+zum-Infinitiv* indicates that a movement has come to an end. There does not exist any symmetrically opposing construction with *gehen*. [4.33]

- (4.20) a. Das Auto steht vor der Ampel.  
       b. Das Auto kommt vor der Ampel zum Stehen.

### 4.5 Modality

The grammatical marking of MODALITY expresses a personal stance of the speaker towards the state-of-affairs. In grammars of European languages it is commonly discussed in the context of modal verbs, like *können*, *müssen* or *dürfen*. However, German has various other monoclausal structures to express modality. This includes some categories from the less-trodden paths of grammatical description like the trinity of *Kogativ* ‘to intend’, *Konativ* ‘to try’ and *Effektiv* ‘to succeed’. [4.34]

#### 4.5.1 *Modalverben*

The MODALVERBEN (full discussion in Section 11.4.7) are *dürfen*, *können*, *mögen*, *müssen*, *sollen* and *wollen*. These light verbs are combined with an infinitive (4.21 a). Functionally, the light verbs *brauchen* (4.21 b), see Section 11.4.8, and *werden* (4.21 c), see Section 11.4.9, should probably also be included in this group. Especially the status of *werden+Infinitiv* is widely discussed in the German grammatical literature. It is traditionally analysed as a marker of future tense, but future reference in German is mostly expressed without it. A modal meaning of expectation and/or presumption seems to be a more suitable analysis. [4.35]

- (4.21) a. Ich baue ein Haus.  
           Ich will ein Haus bauen.  
       b. Du brauchst nicht kommen.  
       c. Ich werde ein Haus bauen.

#### 4.5.2 *Obligativ (haben/brauchen+zu-Infinitiv)*

The OBLIGATIV (full discussion in Section 12.4.5) consist of the light verb *haben* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.22 a). This construction is closely related to the English *to have to* construction, both in form and meaning. This epithesis expresses an obligation to perform an activity [4.36]

(i.e. similar to modal *müssen*). The German construction is clearly monoclausal, because the finite verb is positioned at the end of the clause in subordinate position (4.22 b).

- (4.22) a. Die Schüler lösen die Aufgaben.  
           Die Schüler haben die Aufgaben zu lösen.  
       b. Es ist bekannt, dass die Schüler die Aufgaben zu lösen haben.

[4.37] A related construction uses the light verb *brauchen* ‘to need’ (full discussion in Section 12.4.6). When *brauchen* is used with a *zu-Infinitiv* a negative element (4.23 a) or a particle like *nur* or *bloß* (4.23 b) has to be present. This construction is monoclausal (4.23 c). Note that *brauchen* can also be used with a bare infinitive without *zu* without any obvious change in meaning (see Section 4.5.1). The meaning of this construction is similar to English *need not*. It expresses ‘not be obliged’, but often it is quite close to ‘should not’ or even ‘ought not’.

- (4.23) a. Du brauchst nicht zu schreien.  
           b. Du brauchst nur zu rufen.  
           c. Es ist bekannt, dass du nur (zu) rufen brauchst.

#### 4.5.3 *Abilitiv (wissen/verstehen+zu-Infinitiv)*

[4.38] The ABILITIV (full discussion in Section 12.4.3) uses the verb *wissen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.24 a) in a coherent monoclausal construction (4.24 b). The independent lexical verb *wissen* means ‘to know’, but in this construction it expresses the ability to perform an action (i.e. similar to modal *können*). Instead of *wissen* it is also possible to use the verb *verstehen*. Likewise, the verb *verstehen* has a lexical meaning, namely ‘to understand’, but in a construction with *zu-Infinitiv* it is grammaticalised to express ability. There is no obvious difference between *wissen* and *verstehen* when used in this construction. A more formal variant exists with the light verb *vermögen* (full discussion in Section 12.4.4).

- (4.24) a. Der Lehrer begeistert die Schüler.  
           Der Lehrer weiß/versteht die Schüler zu begeistern.  
       b. Es ist bekannt, dass der Lehrer die Schüler zu begeistern weiß/versteht.

#### 4.5.4 *Kogitativ (denken+zu-Infinitiv)*

[4.39] The KOGITATIV (from Lat. *cogitare* ‘to consider, to intend’, full discussion in Section 12.4.9) uses the verb *denken* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.25 a). In this old-fashioned or maybe just slightly poetic construction the verb *denken* has lost its lexical meaning ‘to think’. Instead, it expresses an intention to perform a certain action (i.e. similar to modal *wollen*). In this light-verb usage it is coherent (4.25 b). In its lexical meaning ‘to think’ it is not coherent (4.25 c).

- (4.25) a. Ich überrasche ihn.  
           Ich denke ihn zu überraschen.  
       b. Es ist bekannt, dass ich ihn zu überraschen denke.  
       c. Er denkt mich überraschen zu können.  
           Es ist bekannt, dass er denkt, mich überraschen zu können.

### 4.5.5 *Konativ (suchen+zu-Infinitiv)*

The KONATIV (from Lat. *conor* ‘to try’, full discussion in Section 12.4.8) is a category that expresses an attempt at an activity. In German it can be expressed with *suchen+zu-Infinitiv* (4.26 a). In this construction, the meaning of *suchen* is similar to *versuchen* ‘to try’ and not to the lexical meaning of *suchen* ‘to search’. In the meaning of ‘to try’ the construction is coherent (4.26 b), while the semantically similar *versuchen* does not result in a coherent construction (4.26 c). [4.40]

- (4.26) a. Er hilft ihr.  
           Er suchte ihr zu helfen.  
       b. Es ist bekannt, dass er ihr zu helfen suchte.  
       c. Es ist bekannt, dass er versuchte, ihr zu helfen.

### 4.5.6 *Effektiv (bekommen/kriegen+Partizip)*

The aspired outcome when intending something (see Section 4.5.4) or when trying something (see Section 4.5.5) is to achieve something. This achievement can be expressed with the EFFEKTIV (from Lat. *effectus* ‘accomplishment’, full discussion in Section 10.4.14), consisting of the light verbs *bekommen* or *kriegen* with a participle (4.27 a). The same construction is also used for the *Rezipientenpassiv* (see Section 3.7.6). It is even possible to construct ambiguous sentences that can both have an *Effektiv* and a *Rezipientenpassiv* interpretation (4.27 b). [4.41]

- (4.27) a. Der Eigentümer vermietet die Wohnung nicht.  
           Der Eigentümer kriegt die Wohnung nicht vermietet.  
       b. Der Zahnarzt kriegt den Zahn gezogen.  
           (*Effektiv* = Der Zahnarzt schafft es, den Zahn zu ziehen.)  
           (*Rezipientenpassiv* = Dem Zahnarzt wird der Zahn gezogen.)

### 4.5.7 *Fortunativ (haben+gut/leicht+Infinitiv)*

The FORTUNATIV (from Lat. *fortunatus* ‘blessed, lucky’, full discussion in Section 11.4.6) consists of *haben* with an infinitive verb and an obligatory adverbial. The adverbial is almost always *leicht* ‘easy’ (4.28 a) or *gut* ‘well’ (4.28 b). This construction expresses that the subject is in a fortunate situation to perform the action described by the verb. It is only possible with intransitive verbs. [4.42]

- (4.28) a. Er lacht.  
           Er hat gut lachen.  
       b. Er redet.  
           Er hat leicht reden.

## 4.6 Evidentiality

The grammatical marking of EVIDENTIALITY is a linguistic structure by which the speaker indicates the evidence for the stated utterance. It has been observed in languages all over the world. In German, grammaticalised evidentials exist in various variants. As for the German names for these categories, I propose to distinguish between *Inferenz* for inferential evidentials and *Evidenz* for direct evidentials. [4.43]

### 4.6.1 Imperfektinferenz (*scheinen+zu-Infinitiv*)

[4.44] The marking of IMPERFEKTINFERENZ (full discussion in Section 12.4.10) is expressed by the verb *scheinen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.29 a). This construction conveys an inferential evidential, in which the speaker expresses some confidence in the stated event based on a deduction from available information. There is also a closely related *Perfektinferenz* as discussed in the next Section 4.6.2. The main difference between the two is the perfectivity of the verb. By using the *zu-Infinitiv* the construction is marked as imperfect. The verb *scheinen* has various further uses, among them a lexical meaning expressing ‘to shine’. Crucially, in its evidential usage with a *zu-Infinitiv* this construction is coherently monoclausal (4.29 b).

- (4.29) a. Der Plan scheitert.  
           Der Plan scheint zu scheitern.  
       b. Es ist bekannt, dass der Plan zu scheitern scheint.

### 4.6.2 Perfektinferenz (*scheinen/erscheinen+Partizip*)

[4.45] The marking of PERFEKTINFERENZ (full discussion in Section 10.4.15) consists of the verbs *scheinen* or *erscheinen* with a participle of an intransitive verb (4.30 a). Typical agentive intransitive verbs like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ do not allow for this construction (4.30 b). Similar to the previous *Imperfektinferenz* (see Section 4.6.1) it expresses an inferential evidential, in which the speaker indicates confidence in the state-of-affairs based on a deduction from available information. By using the participle the event is marked as perfective. When used with a transitive verb the *(er)scheinen+Partizip* construction leads to an anticausative diathesis called *Inferenzantikausativ* (see Section 3.6.6).

- (4.30) a. Der Plan scheitert.  
           Der Plan scheint gescheitert.  
       b. \* Das Kind scheint geschlafen.

### 4.6.3 Sinnesevidenz (*aussehen/wirken+Partizip*)

[4.46] SINNESEVIDENZ (full discussion in Section 10.4.16) is marked by the verbs *aussehen* or *wirken* with a participle of an intransitive verb (4.31). Typical agentive intransitive verbs like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ do not allow for this construction (4.31 b). This structure expresses that the speaker has first-hand knowledge based on sensory evidence that the state-of-affairs holds. When used with a transitive verb this construction results in an anticausative diathesis called *Sinnesantikausativ* (see Section 3.6.7).

- (4.31) a. Er schläft aus.  
           Er wirkt ausgeschlafen.  
       b. \* Er wirkt geschlafen.

### 4.6.4 Negative Wertungsevidenz (*drohen+zu-Infinitiv*)

[4.47] The marking of NEGATIVE WERTUNGSEVIDENZ (full discussion in Section 12.4.11) consists of the verb *drohen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.32 a). This construction conveys that the speaker of the utterance has direct evidence for the proposition, while implying a negative evaluation from the speaker’s point of view. When used as a speech-act verb *drohen* means ‘to threaten’ and can also be used with a *zu-Infinitiv*. However, only in its evidential usage

will *drohen+zu-Infinitiv* construct coherently (4.32 b). The meaning of ‘to threaten’ does not result in a coherent construction (4.32 c).

- (4.32) a. Das Wetter droht schlecht zu werden.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass das Wetter schlecht zu werden droht.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass er droht, das Licht auszuschalten.

#### 4.6.5 Positive Wertungsevidenz (*versprechen+zu-Infinitiv*)

The marking of POSITIVE WERTUNGSEVIDENZ (full discussion in Section 12.4.11) is composed of the verb *versprechen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.33 a). Similar to the previous construction with *drohen*, the verb *versprechen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* also expresses a direct evidential, though now with a positive evaluation. When used as a speech-act verb *versprechen* means ‘to promise’ and is commonly used with a *zu-Infinitiv*. However, only in its evidential usage will *versprechen+zu-Infinitiv* construct coherently (4.33 b). The meaning of ‘to promise’ does not result in coherent constructions (4.33 c). [4.48]

- (4.33) a. Das Wetter verspricht gut zu werden.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass das Wetter gut zu werden verspricht.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass er verspricht, das Licht auszuschalten.

### 4.7 Diathetical epithesis

By definition (see Section 1.2), diathesis has to include changes to the grammatical marking of the participants. The alternations described in this section do not show any change in the marking of the participants, so, again by definition, they are classified as examples of epithesis. However, functionally these constructions are close to diatheses in that the relation between the participants and the verb is changed in some way. For lack of a better term I call such a construction a DIATHETICAL EPITHESES. [4.49]

#### 4.7.1 Verborgener Zustandskausativ (*kommen+zu-Infinitiv*)

Covert causatives exists in two variants. The first kind, VERBORGENER ZUSTANDSKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 12.4.12), uses the light verb *kommen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.34 a,b). This construction conveys that there is some unexpressed force or agent that has caused a state to be reached. It can only used with intransitive state verbs like *stehen* and is obligatorily coherent (4.34 c). [4.50]

- (4.34) a. Sie stand neben mir.  
 b. Sie kam neben mir zu stehen.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass sie neben mir zu stehen kam.

#### 4.7.2 Verborgener Rezipientenkausativ (*bekommen/kriegen+zu-Infinitiv*)

The VERBORGENER REZIPIENTENKAUSATIV (full discussion in Section 12.4.13) uses the light verbs *bekommen* or *kriegen* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (4.35 a,b). Like with *kommen* (see Section 4.7.1), there is an unnamed force or agent that causes the situation to come about. The light verb *bekommen/kriegen* is typically combined with a transitive verb of sensation, like *sehen* ‘to see’, or consumption, like *essen* ‘to eat’. By using this covert causative [4.51]



construction, the nominative subject is semantically depicted as an experiencer of the verb. The centrality of the experiencer role is reminiscent of the *Rezipientenpassiv* (see Section 3.7.6). However, in this construction there is no role-remapping, so it is not a diathesis.

- (4.35) a. Die Schüler sehen einen Film.  
 b. Die Schüler bekommen/kriegen einen Film zu sehen.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass die Schüler einen Film zu sehen bekommen/kriegen.

### 4.7.3 *Selbstbezogener Reflexiv*

[4.52] The SELBSTBEZOGENER REFLEXIV (full discussion in Section 7.4.5 and subsequent sections) is marked with a reflexive pronoun and can optionally be reinforced by adding *selbst*. This construction is traditionally simply called *Reflexiv* in German grammar (and beyond). However, reflexive pronouns have a bewildering number of different functions, including many diatheses, so a more precise naming is necessary (see Chapter 7 for an extensive discussion). Crucially, the marking of roles do not change in a *Selbstbezogener Reflexiv*, so there is no diathesis.

[4.53] The *Selbstbezogener Reflexiv* can be identified by the following characteristics:

- (i) There is a reflexive pronoun in the sentence that can be negated and stressed.
- (ii) The pronoun *selbst* can optionally be added.
- (iii) The roles of the verb do not change, i.e. (4.36 b) still contains the roles of ‘washer’ and ‘washee’.
- (iv) The reflexive pronoun references an object role (here ‘washee’).
- (v) The participant who takes the role of subject (here ‘washer’) is identical to the participant that is encoded by the reflexive pronoun.

- (4.36) a. Der Vater wäscht das Kind.  
 b. Der Vater wäscht sich (selbst).

### 4.7.4 *Reziprok*

[4.54] The REZIPROK (full discussion in Section 7.4.14 and subsequent sections) often looks similar to the *Selbstbezogener Reflexiv*. However, there are various characteristics that clearly distinguish the two. The *Reziprok* can be identified by the following characteristics:

- (i) There is a reflexive pronoun or *einander* in the sentence.
- (ii) When there is a reflexive pronoun, then *gegenseitig* can optionally be added; *selbst* is not possible.
- (iii) The roles of the verb do not change, i.e. (4.37 b) still contains the roles of ‘crosser’ and ‘crossee’.
- (iv) The subject is obligatorily plural, as it references the participants of both roles simultaneously.
- (v) The reflexive pronoun/*einander* marks that both participants take both roles simultaneously.

- (4.37) a. Die Straßen kreuzen den Fluss.  
 b. Die Straßen kreuzen sich (gegenseitig).

### 4.7.5 *Freier Reflexiv*

The FREIER REFLEXIV (full discussion in Section 7.4.1 and subsequent sections) is a somewhat mysterious alternation in German in which a reflexive pronoun can be added without any obvious change in meaning. For example, the verb *ansehen* ‘to look at’ can be used both with reflexive pronoun (4.38 a) and without reflexive pronoun (4.38 b). The difference between these expressions needs more investigation, but intuitively there appears to be a slight difference in the affectedness of the subject-participant. [4.55]

- (4.38) a. Ich habe mir das Haus angesehen.  
b. Ich habe das Haus angesehen.

### 4.7.6 *Resultativer Reflexiv*

The RESULTATIVER REFLEXIV (full discussion in Section 9.4.1) is an alternation that can be used with a subset of all intransitive verbs, for example with *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ (4.39 a). By adding a reflexive pronoun and an adverbial, like *gesund* ‘healthy’ (4.39 b), the sentence expresses that the subject participant achieves a state (expressed by the adverbial) by performing an action (expressed by the verb). In other words, (4.39 b) means approximately ‘By sleeping I will become healthy’. [4.56]

- (4.39) a. Ich schlafe.  
b. Ich schlafe mich gesund.  
(= Durch zu schlafen werde ich gesund.)

## 4.8 Summary of recurrent light verbs

The light verbs listed in Table 4.1 occur in more than one derived clause construction. Shown in the table is whether these constructions induce epithesis (E) or diathesis (D). The ordering of the rows and columns in the table reflects an approximate top-left to bottom-right cline of the frequency of diathesis. More research is needed to establish whether there is any deeper insights to be gained from this distribution. [4.57]

Table 4.1: Summary of light verbs that occur in more than one derived clause construction (D = diathesis, E = epithesis)

	<i>Partizip</i>	<i>zu-Infinitiv</i>	<i>Infinitiv</i>	<i>Präpositionsinfinitiv</i>
<i>haben</i>	D+E	E	D+E	D
<i>sein</i>	D+E	D	E	D+E
<i>bleiben</i>	D+E	D	E	E
<i>gehen</i>	D	D	E	E
<i>geben</i>	D	D	-	-
<i>sehen</i>	D	-	D	-
<i>werden</i>	D	-	E	-
<i>scheinen</i>	D+E	E	-	-
<i>bekommen</i>	D+E	E	-	-
<i>wissen</i>	D	E	-	-
<i>halten</i>	E	-	-	D
<i>lassen</i>	E	E	D	-

	<i>Partizip</i>	<i>zu-Infinitiv</i>	<i>Infinitiv</i>	<i>Präpositionsinfinitiv</i>
<i>kommen</i>	E	E	E	E



## Chapter 5

# Case-marking alternations

### 5.1 Introduction

[5.1] Diathesis typically involves variation in the marking of case as governed by the verb, including alternations between case marked arguments and adpositional phrases. The notion of ‘flagging’ was (re)introduced in Haspelmath (2005: 2) as a cover term to capture the intuition that case marking and adpositional marking express very similar functions in linguistic marking. The first two data chapters in this book discuss exactly those kind of marking, viz. case and adpositional marking as governed by a verb. This chapter discusses diatheses involving case-marked constituents, and the next chapter focusses on governed prepositional constituents.

[5.2] All diatheses in this chapter are COVERT diatheses. Covert case-marking diatheses are characterised by (a) one and the same verb that can be used with different case-marked roles and, crucially, (b) there is no additional overt morphosyntactic marking of the different constructions. Such alternations include, for example, possessor raising like (5.1 a) or anticausative alternations like (5.1 b).

- (5.1) a. Ich schneide seine Haare.  
      Ich schneide ihm die Haare.  
      b. Die Sonne verbrennt den Rasen.  
          Der Rasen verbrennt.

[5.3] The crucial (and somewhat problematic) aspect of such alternations is that there is no formal indication of the presence of a diathesis, except for the marking of the arguments themselves. The prototypical diathesis (as defined Section 1.2) includes some overt linguistic marking that indicates that a diathesis has taken place (i.e. some affix, particle, light verb, or other morphosyntactic means). And indeed, all diatheses that will be discussed in subsequent chapters will be of that kind. In contrast, the diatheses discussed in this chapter and the next chapter are ‘covert’ alternations, or ‘zero marked’ alternations, in that there is no other indication of a diathesis, except for the marking of the arguments themselves (Zúñiga & Kittilä 2019 introduce the term ‘covert’ diathesis for this). The problem with such covert diatheses is that there is no overt directionality in the alternation – there is no way to distinguish between a base form and a derived form. Both alternants have an equal status as far as the morphosyntax is concerned. Still, I have attempted to infer a direction based on parallels to other diatheses.

[5.4]

The unmarked nature of covert diatheses implies that there is some slight redundancy and fuzziness in presentation. This redundancy arises because, for example, when a verb occurs in four different constructions, then there are logically six different alternations (viz. 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 2-3, 2-4, 3-4). I have nonetheless decided to approach the descriptive organisation in this chapter from the perspective of such pairwise alternations, because (i) it highlights the possible connections attested between constructions, and (ii) very many verbs appear only to occur in just one or two alternations anyway (with only a smaller subset of verbs appearing across many different constructions).

There are seven local groups of diatheses that seem prominent enough to be given a German name. I propose the following names for these: [5.5]

- [SBJ > Ø] VERBATIV (see Section 5.5.1 ff.)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] ANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 5.5.5 ff.)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] KAUSATIV (see Section 5.6.2 ff.)
- [Ø > OBJ] RESULTATAKKUSATIV (see Section 5.8.1)
- [ADJ > OBJ] PERTINENZDATIV (see Section 5.8.3 ff.)
- [OBJ > Ø] OPTIONALER AKKUSATIV (see Section 5.7.1 ff.)
- [OBJ > Ø] OPTIONALER DATIV (see Section 5.7.4 ff.)

## 5.2 Delimiting case-marked arguments

### 5.2.1 Identifying case marking

The German case marking system is rather straightforward. Noun phrases in German occur in one of four case forms. There are various syncretisms in the case paradigm, which conceal the identity of the case in many sentences. For this reason, I will attempt to use first/second person singular pronouns or masculine singular nouns in constructed examples. These forms can easily be unambiguously identified, as shown in Table 5.1. [5.6]

Table 5.1: German marking of case

Case	1st	2nd	3rd Masc.	Masc. noun
Nominative	<i>ich</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>er</i>	<i>der Tisch</i>
Genitive	<i>meiner</i>	<i>deiner</i>	<i>seiner</i>	<i>des Tisches</i>
Dative	<i>mir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>ihm</i>	<i>dem Tisch</i>
Accusative	<i>mich</i>	<i>dich</i>	<i>ihn</i>	<i>den Tisch</i>

Basically, almost all case-marked constituents are governed arguments. Yet, there are a few situations (to be discussed in detail below) in which overtly case-marked constituents are not arguments (or, alternatively, a very special type of arguments): quantified objects (5.2 a), named objects (5.2 b), cognate objects (5.2 c), lexicalised noun-verb combinations (5.2 d) and adnominal constituents (5.2 e). [5.7]

- (5.2) a. Er schläft [den ganzen Tag].  
 b. Er nennt mich [einen Egoisten].  
 c. Er hat [einen gesunden Schlaf] geschlafen.  
 d. Er stirbt [einen qualvollen Tod].  
 e. Ich beschuldige den Verdächtigten [des Diebstahls] von weiteren Gegenständen.

### 5.2.2 Quantified object

[5.8] A special kind of constituent is a quantified object (cf. “Mensuralergänzung”, Eroms 2000: 203-204), exemplified in (5.3 a-e). Quantified objects are overtly marked accusative objects that often contain numerals, like in (5.3 d) or (5.3 e), in which *einen* is not an article, but the numeral *one*. Except for numerals, the quantification can also be instantiated by adjectives, e.g. *ganzen* ‘complete’ in (5.3 a), indefinites, e.g. *jeden* ‘each’ in (5.3 b), or measure phrases, e.g. *zu laut* ‘too noisy’ in (5.3 c).

- (5.3) a. Er schläft den ganzen Tag. (*wie lange?* ‘how long’)  
 b. Er fällt jeden Tag. (*wann?* ‘when’)  
 c. Er hustet einen Tick zu laut. (*wie?* ‘how’)  
 d. Er ist drei mal gefallen. (*wie oft?* ‘how often’)  
 e. Er steigt einen Stock höher. (*wo?* ‘where’)

[5.9] These quantified constituents are not governed arguments. First, they can easily be left out (all verbs in the examples are typical intransitive verbs). Second, and more importantly, they cannot be replaced by a pronoun nor be questioned by a question pronoun (viz. *wen/was*). Instead, they are questioned by adverbial interrogative words as listed at the examples above, indicating that the quantified constituents are adverbial phrases, not arguments. Still, there are a few verbs that obligatorily need such a quantified object, like *kosten* ‘to cost’ or *dauern* ‘to last’. With those verbs quantified constituents can be considered to be arguments. These verbs will be discussed in Section 5.3.9.

### 5.2.3 Named objects

[5.10] A special group of verbs can be used to performatively name persons or things. As proper names, such arguments are arguably without case in standard German (5.4 a), but with regular nouns these phrases are clearly accusatives (5.4 b). The result of such accusatively marked names are constructions with two accusative arguments. These arguments are normally questioned by the manner interrogative *wie* ‘how’, though in some situations *was* ‘what’ seems possible (5.4 c). The small group of verbs like *nennen* ‘to name’ that obligatorily takes such arguments will be discussed in Section 5.3.10.

- (5.4) a. Ich nenne dich [Lukas].  
 b. Ich nenne dich [einen Egoisten].  
 c. Was nennst du dein Eigen?

### 5.2.4 Cognate objects

[5.11] There is a special construction available for many verbs to add an object that is a nominalisation of the verb itself, exemplified here in (5.5 a,b).

- (5.5) a. Er hat einen gesunden Schlaf geschlafen.  
 b. Er hat viele Träume geträumt.

[5.12] This construction is known as a ‘cognate object’ construction (e.g. Levin 1993: 95-96), because the object is etymologically related to the verb. In many cases, this cognate object is simply a zero nominalisation (conversion) of the verb stem (e.g. *schlafen* – *der Schlaf*, ‘to

sleep - the sleep'), but in some cases different nominalisations like the infinitive are used (e.g. *lächeln* - *das Lächeln*, 'to smile - the smile').

Examples like (5.5 a,b) seem to suggest that intransitive verbs like *schlafen* 'to sleep' and *träumen* 'to dream' allow for accusative arguments. However, besides these cognate objects there are no other accusative arguments allowed with these verbs. Further, such cognate objects seem to be theoretically possible for all verbs, though often quite some imagination is needed to find a suitable context to use verb and nominalised verb together. Because of their special status, such cognate object nominalisations are not counted as regular arguments here. [5.13]

### 5.2.5 Lexicalised noun-verb combinations

There is a common pattern in German in which nouns are combined with a verb, like *eislaufen* 'ice skating'. Such constructions are highly reminiscent of the typologically widespread process of noun incorporation. However, in German such noun incorporation only occurs with individual lexeme combinations, so they are probably better interpreted as grammaticalised noun-verb collocations (Eisenberg 2006b: 339ff; Gallmann 1999). For a survey of different kinds of noun incorporation see Berik & Gehrke (2015). Using their terminology, the German constructions might be analysed as 'pseudo' incorporation. [5.14]

Most such combinations are written as separate words in German orthography, e.g. *Wache stehen* 'stand guard', so they might look like nominal arguments. However, they normally do not allow for any determiners or modifiers (7.43 a). Only very few fixed combinations allow for an adjective (5.6 b) and/or a determiner (5.6 c). [5.15]

- (5.6) a. Er hat (\*das) Blut gehustet.  
 b. Er hat bittere Tränen geweint.  
 c. Er stirbt einen qualvollen Tod.

The typical examples like *Blut* 'blood' in (5.6 a) do not show much indication of case-marking. It is clearly not a genitive (because then it should have been *Blutes*), but nominative, dative or accusative are all possible. The few examples with determiners and/or adjectives seem to indicate that these constituents are accusatives. However, even in undoubtedly accusative examples like (5.6 c) the accusative is not an argument, because it is strange (if not completely ungrammatical) to pronominalise (5.7 a) or question (5.7 b) this accusative. Also, the accusative seems unusable as an answer to a manner question (5.7 c). Just like cognate objects, such nouns in lexicalised noun-verb combinations are not counted as arguments here. [5.16]

- (5.7) a. \*Er stirbt es.  
 b. \*Was ist er gestorben?  
 c. Wie ist er gestorben? ? Einen qualvollen Tod.

### 5.2.6 Adnominal case-marked constituents

Semantically, adnominal constituents are easily identified as modifiers inside a noun phrase. However, there is no formal difference between adnominal and sentential case-marked constituents, leading possibly to ambiguous sentences like (5.8 a). In this sentence, both the accusative constituent for the accuser *den Verdächtigen* and the genitive constituent for the accusation *des Diebstahls* can be read as arguments being governed by the verb *beschuldigen* 'to accuse' (5.8 b). Alternatively, these two constituents can be interpreted as a single [5.17]



complex noun phrase, as can be seen by the possibility to add a further constituent describing a different accusation (5.8 c). Adnominal constituents are (obviously) not counted as arguments here.

- (5.8) a. Ich beschuldige den Verdächtigten des Diebstahls.  
 b. Ich beschuldige [den Verdächtigten] vor Gericht [des Diebstahls].  
 c. Ich beschuldige [den Verdächtigten des Diebstahls] von weiteren Gegenständen.

### 5.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

[5.18] Before delving into the actual alternations, I will first present an inventory of verbs that do not show alternation as far as flagging is concerned. These verbs can, and many will, occur in other diatheses as discussed in subsequent chapters, but for the alternations discussed in this chapter (on case-marked arguments) and the next chapter (on prepositional arguments) these verbs are invariable. The most interesting insight from building this collection is that it is not easy at all to find verbs that do not allow for at least some kind of flagging variation.

#### — Regular case-marked arguments—

##### 5.3.1 [ – ] No arguments

[5.19] Some verbs do not need any argument at all, not even a nominative subject. These include the well-known weather verbs like *schneien* ‘to snow’ (5.9 a). However, most weather verb actually allow for some nominative subjects as well (5.9 b), see Section 5.6.1, or accusative arguments (5.9 c), see Section 5.8.2. There do not seem to be any verbs that only allow for a constructions without any arguments.

- (5.9) a. Heute schneit es.  
 b. Die Granaten regneten auf uns.  
 c. Gestern hat es riesengroße Körner gehagelt.

##### 5.3.2 [ N ] Nominative

[5.20] Some verbs only allow a nominative argument, which necessarily also shows agreement with the finite verb. Such verbs are traditionally called ‘intransitive’. The verbs discussed in this section are strictly intransitive, in that they do not allow for any other case marked arguments or governed prepositions (see Section 6.2). Intransitive verbs, of course, allow for additional non-governed prepositional phrases, e.g. locational (5.10 a) or temporal phrases (5.10 b), instrumental/comitative phrases with *mit* (5.10 c,d), or beneficiary/goal phrases with *für* (5.10 e,f).

- (5.10) a. Er reist immer in die Berge.  
 b. Er reist immer am Wochenende.  
 c. Er reist immer mit seinem Koffer.  
 d. Er reist immer mit seinem Freund.  
 e. Er reist immer für seinen Chef.  
 f. Er reist immer für seine Arbeit.

[5.21]

An attempt has been made below to classify the examples of strictly intransitive verbs into broad semantic categories. However, these categories are in no way intended as definitional for the kind of verbs allowed in this class. Yet, the semantic categories attested give a good indication of the kind of verbs that tend to be strictly intransitive. Note that this list is in no way intended to be exhaustive, but only illustrative.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.22]

- Movement: *ankommen, ausgehen, eintreffen, rasen (schnell bewegen), reisen, untergehen, verreisen, verschwinden, schlendern, spazieren*
- Bodily Functions: *niesen, pinkeln, brechen (übergeben), husten*
- Sleeping: *aufstehen, aufwachen, einschlafen*
- Living: *ausziehen, einziehen, umziehen, wegziehen*
- Natural Process: *ertrinken, scheinen, sprießen, wachsen, schrumpfen*
- Noun incorporation: *fernsehen, Autofahren, seiltanzen, bergsteigen, kopfrechnen, notlanden, brustschwimmen, bruchrechnen, eislaufen, kopfstehen, probefahren, radfahren, windsurfen*
- Others: *desertieren, enden, hupen, klingen*

#### Notes

[5.23]

Some of the ‘living’ verbs allow for accusative arguments in non-living related meanings, like *ausziehen* ‘to undress’ (5.11 a), *einziehen* ‘to build’ (5.11 b), *aufziehen* ‘to build’ (5.11 c) or *wegziehen* ‘to pull away’ (5.11 d).

[5.24]

- (5.11) a. Ich ziehe meine Hose aus.  
 b. Ich ziehe eine Wand ein.  
 c. Ich ziehe die Zugbrücke auf.  
 d. Ich ziehe die Karre weg.

### 5.3.3 [ NA ] Nominative+accusative

The verbs in this class are strict transitives: they need a nominative subject argument and an additional accusative argument. Further arguments are not allowed, and no governed prepositions are allowed either. It turns out that this group is not very large, because very many verbs allow for dative arguments (traditionally called ‘free’ datives) or alternations with governed prepositions. For example, an apparently typical transitive verb like *bauen* ‘to build’ allows for a dative to mark the beneficiary of the building, as in *Ich baue dir ein Haus* ‘I will build a house for you’ (see Section 6.8.9). Conversely, there are also many apparently typical transitive verbs that can just as well be used without accusative object, including well-known ambitransitive verbs like *essen* ‘to eat’ (see Section 5.7.1). All such verbs are discussed in their respective sections. Still, even with all such verbs removed, the current set of ‘pure’ transitive verbs can easily be extended and the current listing is not at all intended to be complete.

[5.25]

The number of monomorphemic ‘strictly’ transitive verbs seems to be very limited. Preverbs (see Chapter 8) regularly induce an applicative alternation and subsequently often lexicalise, leading to transitive verbs (5.12 a,b).

[5.26]

- (5.12) a. Ich schreite über den Teppich.  
 b. Ich schreite den Teppich ab.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.27]

[5.28] I could not find any obvious semantic categorisation of these verbs, so they are simply presented in alphabetical order here.

- Monomorphemic: *bilden, brauchen, finden, freuen, grüßen, kennen, kriegen, merken, mögen, pflegen, tanken, wecken*
- With preverbs: *abmessen, abschreiten, abwiegen, angehen, ansehen, ansetzen, begrüßen, beängstigen, behalten, bekommen, beruhigen, beschäftigen, darstellen, entschuldigen, erreichen, umfassen, unterbrechen, verachten, verletzen, verschwenden, zerreißen, zerstören*

#### [5.29] Further Examples

- Die Schüler bilden eine Klasse.
- Ich brauche einen Kaffee.
- Der frische Kaffee freut mich.
- Ich merke den Fehler zu spät.
- Ich trenne die Gruppe.
- Ich entschuldige dich (bei der Chorprobe).
- Ich setze das Messer an.
- Ich messe den Abstand ab.
- Ich schreite den roten Teppich ab.
- Ich wiege den Reis ab.
- Ich tanke Benzin.

### 5.3.4 [ ND ] Nominative+dative

[5.30] The verbs in this class need both a nominative subject and a dative argument, like with *trauen* ‘to trust’ (5.13 a). Both arguments are obligatory and cannot be dropped (except in extremely marked meta-linguistic contexts) and no other case-marked arguments or governed prepositions are possible. A noteworthy subset of such nominative+dative verbs are verbs like *unterlaufen* ‘to occur’ (5.13 b), for which a human participants can only occur in the dative. Yet, there does not appear to be any structural difference between verbs with (typically) human participants in the nominative, like *trauen*, and verbs with (typically) human participants in the dative, like *unterlaufen*.

- (5.13) a. Ich traue der Sache nicht.  
b. Mir unterläuft ein Fehler.

[5.31] There are more nominative+dative verbs in which the dative is not obligatory. Those verbs will be discussed in subsequent section. Some of those verbs allow for the dative to be completely dropped (see Section 5.7.4) and a few allow for the dative to be replaced by a prepositional phrase (see Section 6.7.10) or by a possessor (see Section 5.8.3).

#### [5.32] Attested Verbs

- Human participant only possible as dative: *bleiben, einfallen, entgehen, gefallen, gehören, gelten, glücken, einfallen, liegen (Begabung haben), missfallen, unterlaufen, widerfahren, zufallen, zustoßen*
- Possible human participant in the nominative: *ähneln, angehören, begegnen, beipflichten, entgegen kommen, entsprechen, gegenüber treten, glauben (vertrauen), gleichen, imponieren, nacheifern, schaden, stehen, trauen, unterliegen, unterstehen, verfallen, zureden, zuneigen*

**Further Examples**

[5.33]

- Ich gehöre der Gruppe an.
- Ich begegne einer Überraschung.
- Ich bin dem Konservatismus zugeneigt.
- Ich unterstehe einer Behörde.
- Ich unterliege dem Gegner. ('besiegt werden')
- Die Mode unterliegt dem Zwang der Zeit. ('bestimmt werden')
- Ich glaube dir.
- Der Notausgang entspricht den Vorschriften.
- Die Stadt glich einem Trümmerfeld.
- Die Feuchtigkeit schadete den Möbeln.
- Mir gefällt das Buch.
- Mir fällt eine Lösung ein.
- Mir unterläuft ein Fehler.
- Mir widerfährt ein Unrecht.
- Diese Geister galten mir.
- Ein Unglück ist mir zugestoßen.
- Die Aufgabe ist mir zugefallen.

**Notes**

[5.34]

The following verbs also exist as intransitive 'only nominative' verbs (see Section 5.3.2), but in a clearly different lexical meanings. [5.35]

- (5.14) a. Mir bleibt nur harte Arbeit. Ich bleibe noch eben.  
 b. Mir gehört die Schreibmaschine. Die Schreibmaschine gehört auf den Tisch.  
 c. Mir liegt diese Sportart. Ich liege am Boden  
 d. Mir steht der Mantel. Ich stehe um die Ecke.  
 e. Der Journalist verfiel dem Alkohol. Das Haus verfiel.

**5.3.5 [ NG ] Nominative+genitive**

There are a few verbs in German that have a genitive argument. These verbs are slowly disappearing from the German language, and many of the verbs that are still around are considered old-fashioned. It is only out of an aim for completeness that these verbs are listed here, as they do not play an important role anymore in the current German language. The verbs listed here need a genitive argument and there seems to be no possibility for alternations with other case or adpositional marking. [5.36]

**Attested Verbs**

[5.37]

- *entraten, entübrigen, ermangeln, gedenken, harren, walten*

**Further Examples**

[5.38]

- Ich muss leider seiner Mitarbeit entraten. ('verzichten')
- Die Methode entübrigt des Putzens.
- Der Versuch ermangelt jeglicher Vernunft.
- Ich gedenke der Toten.
- Er harrete seines Schicksals.
- Er waltet seines Amtes.

### 5.3.6 [ NAD ] Nominative+accusative+dative

[5.39] This class consists of the classical ditransitive verbs with an obligatory nominative, accusative and dative argument. It turns out to be extremely hard to find good examples of verbs that always, or at least in the large majority of its uses, overtly shows all three arguments. Most apparent ditransitive verbs, like *geben* ‘to give’, easily allow for the dative to be dropped or replaced by a prepositional phrase (for the verb *geben*, see De Vaere, De Cuypere & Willems 2018 for an in-depth study). The few remaining obligatorily ditransitive verbs seem to be semantically more specialised verbs, in which a very specific meaning is forcing the overt marking of all three roles, in contrast to the more broader semantic range of a verb like *geben*.

#### [5.40] Attested Verbs

- *abgewöhnen, benehmen, bescheren, schulden, überlassen, verdanken, vorsagen, widmen, zutrauen, schenken*

#### [5.41] Further Examples

- Wir müssen ihm die Unpünktlichkeit abgewöhnen.
- Der Schreck benimmt ihm den Atem.
- Das Konzert beschert ihm ein Comeback.
- Ich schulde dir eine Antwort.
- ich überlasse dir das Fahrrad.
- Ich sage dir die Antwort vor.
- Ich widme dir das Buch.
- Ich traue dir die Reise zu.
- Ich schenke dir das Auto.

### 5.3.7 [ NAG ] Nominative+accusative+genitive

[5.42] There are also verbs that allow nominative, accusative and genitive, but those verbs often have a possible alternation dropping the genitive (see Section 5.7.8). In a few cases, the genitive argument seems to be in a process of replacement by an accusative (see Sections 5.9.5, 5.9.6). I have only found a single verb that obligatorily needs a case-marked nominative, accusative and genitive arguments, viz. *bezichtigen* ‘to accuse’ (5.15).

- (5.15) a. Ich bezichtige dich des Diebstahls.  
 b. \*Ich bezichtige dich.  
 c. \*Ich bezichtige des Diebstahls.

#### [5.43] Attested Verbs

- *bezichtigen*

### 5.3.8 [ NAA ] Nominative+accusative+accusative

[5.44] There are a few verbs that allow for two accusative objects, like with *lehren* (5.16 a) or *abfragen* (5.16 b). However, all of these verbs also allow for other constructions, either dropping

one of the accusative arguments (see Section 5.7.2) or allowing an alternation between an accusative and a dative (see Section 5.9.4). There do not seem to be any verbs that obligatorily need two accusative objects.

- (5.16) a. Er lehrt mich den Trick.  
b. Er fragt mich den Stoff ab.

Double accusatives further appear with quantified objects (5.17 a), see Section 5.3.9, and with named objects (5.17 b), see Section 5.3.10. Also these verbs regularly allow for one of the accusatives to be dropped (5.17 c,d). [5.45]

- (5.17) a. Das Buch kostet mich keinen Pfennig.  
b. Ich nenne dich einen Egoisten.  
c. Das Buch kostet viel.  
d. Er nennt den Namen des Kindes.

In summary, there are only few verbs in German with double accusatives. In general, there seems to be a strong generalisation that the German language disprefers verbs that govern multiple noun phrases in the same case. However, there are a few diatheses that result in multiple accusatives in the same clause (see Section 11.2.3). [5.46]

## — Adverbial case-marked arguments —

### 5.3.9 [ NA ] Nominative+quantified object

A special kind of arguments are quantified objects (cf. “Mensuralergänzung”, Eroms 2000: 203-204), exemplified in (5.18 a-e). Quantified objects are overtly marked accusative objects that often contain numerals (like in (5.18 d) or (5.18 e), in which *einen* is not an article, but the numeral one). Except for numerals, the quantification can also be instantiated by adjectives (like *ganzen* in (5.18 a)), indefinites (like *jeden* in (5.18 b)) or measure phrases (like *zu laut* in (5.18 c)). [5.47]

- (5.18) a. Er schläft den ganzen Tag. (*wie lange?* ‘how long’)  
b. Er fällt jeden Tag. (*wann?* ‘when’)  
c. Er hustet einen Tick zu laut. (*wie?* ‘how’)  
d. Er ist drei mal gefallen. (*wie oft?* ‘how often’)  
e. Er steigt einen Stock höher. (*wo?* ‘where’)

These quantified constituents are mostly not arguments. First, they can easily be left out (all verbs in the examples above are typical intransitive verbs). Second, and more importantly, they cannot be replaced by a pronoun, nor be questioned by a question pronoun (viz. *wen/was*). Instead, they are questioned by adverbial interrogative words as listed at the examples above, indicating that the quantified constituents are adverbial phrases, not governed arguments. [5.48]

Yet, there is a special class of verbs that appear to obligatorily need such a quantified object, like *kosten* ‘to cost’ (5.19 a), called MEASURE STATIVE DIMENSIONAL VERBS in Gamerschlag (2014: 318). These objects are interrogated by *wie viel?* ‘how much’ (though interrogation with *was* ‘what’ seems also possible with some of them). Though debatable, I tend to classify these accusative constituents as arguments. Whatever the interpretation, when they are arguments or not, there is in either case something special with these verbs. [5.49]

[5.50] A further argument to consider these accusative constituents as something special is that these verbs cannot be passivised, just like typical intransitive verbs (5.19 a). Even with non-quantified objects, these verbs still prohibit passivisation (5.19 b).

- (5.19) a. Die Aussage kostet sie den Wahlsieg.  
b. Ich bin der Herausforderung gewachsen.

[5.51] An exception to this rule blocking passivisation for quantified objects are the verbs *verdienen* and *zahlen*. They can be used with quantified objects (5.20 b) and with non-quantified objects (5.20 a), similarly to *kosten* above. However, with these verbs passivisation is possible (5.20 c,d), so these verbs are considered to be taking regular accusative objects.

- (5.20) a. Er verdient 50 Euro. Er verdient den Nobelpreis.  
b. Er zahlt (mir) 50 Euro. Er zahlt (mir) die Miete.  
c. Praktisch der gesamte Umsatz wird mit Werbung verdient.  
d. Die Miete wird monatlich gezahlt.

#### [5.52] Attested Verbs

- Quantity: *enthalten, fassen* ('*Fassungsvermögen haben*'), *kosten, rechnen, sparen, vorrücken, wachsen, wiegen, zunehmen*
- Quantity of time: *dauern*

#### [5.53] Further Examples

- Der Laster wiegt einen Zentner.  
Wieviel/was wiegt der Laster?
- Der Tisch kostet ein Jahresgehalt.  
Wieviel/was kostet der Tisch?
- Der Knochen wächst einen Millimeter pro Tag.  
Wieviel/\*was wächst der Knochen?
- Ich rechne eine Flasche Wein pro Person.  
Wieviel/?was rechnest du pro Person?
- Er hat zehn Kilo zugenommen.  
Wieviel/\*was hat er zugenommen?
- Sie dürfen [...] den eigenen Spielstein ein Feld vorrücken.<sup>1</sup>

### 5.3.10 [ NAA ] Nominative+accusative+named object

[5.54] A special group of verbs can be used to performatively name persons or things. As proper names, such arguments are arguably without case in standard German (5.21 a), but with regular nouns these phrases are clearly accusatives (5.21 b). The effect are constructions with two accusative arguments. These arguments are normally questioned by the manner interrogative *wie* 'how', though in some situations *was* 'what' seems possible (5.21 c).

- (5.21) a. Ich nenne dich [Lukas].  
b. Ich nenne dich [einen Egoisten].  
c. Was nennst du dein Eigen?

[5.55]

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<sup>1</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 15.01.2000.

The name in such naming constructions cannot be passivised (5.22 a,b), which also indicates that these accusative arguments have a special status in the grammar of the German language.

- (5.22) a. Du wirst einen Egoisten genannt.  
b. \* Ein Egoist wird dich genannt.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.56]

- *heißen, nennen, schelten, schimpfen, schmähen, taufen*

#### Further Examples

[5.57]

- UN-Beamte und internationale Medien heißen den 59-Jährigen weniger schmeichelfhaft einen »Psychopathen« oder »Afrikas Miloevi«.<sup>2</sup>
- Er nennt den Gründer der Sowjetunion einen Verräter.<sup>3</sup>
- Sie schelten den A380 schon vor dem ersten Linienflug einen Dinosaurier.<sup>4</sup>
- Konservative schimpfen den Präsidenten schon einen Sozialisten.<sup>5</sup>

## 5.4 Alternations without diathesis

This section is empty. It is only added here for the numbering to be parallel across chapters. By definition, alternations without diathesis do not exist for covert alternations as discussed in this chapter. In other chapters this section will be well represented by many examples. [5.58]

## 5.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

### — [ SBJ > Ø ] — *Verbativ*

#### 5.5.1 [ N | – ] Nominative drop

In German it is typically not possible to have a sentence in which the nominative subject is dropped. For the few verbs that allow the nominative subject to be absent, a valency-simulating pronoun *es* has to be inserted (see Section 2.2.3 for more details on this pronoun). For example, with some intransitive ‘dispersion’ verbs like *stinken* ‘to stink’ (5.23 a) it is possible to leave out the origin of the dispersion (5.23 b) to indicate the effect without knowledge of the cause. [5.59]

- (5.23) a. Der Müll stinkt.  
b. Hier stinkt es aber.

For ‘weather’ verbs like *wehen* ‘to be windy’ (5.24) it is arguably not a nominative that is dropped, but a nominative that is optionally added. I will discuss such additions separately [5.60]

<sup>2</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 24.05.2007, Nr. 22.

<sup>3</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 31.10.2017 online.

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 06.10.2005, Nr. 41.

<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 30.04.2009, Nr. 19.



(see Section 5.6.1). However, there does not appear to be a clear overt grammatical distinction between a verb like *stinken* that allows for an optional nominative drop and a verb like *wehen* an optional nominative addition.

- (5.24) a. Es weht.  
b. Der Wind weht.

[5.61] **Attested Verbs**

- Dispersion Verbs: *abkühlen, blühen, dampfen, duften, klingeln, knistern, krachen, riechen, spriessen, stinken*

[5.62] **Further Examples**

- Der Nachbar klingelt an der Tür.  
An der Tür klingelt es.
- Der Müll riecht.  
Hier riecht es unangenehm.
- Das Wasser kühlt ab.  
Morgen kühlt es ab.
- Das Kochen klappt noch nicht so gut.  
Jetzt klappt es.

### 5.5.2 [ NA | -A ] Nominative drop+accusative

[5.63] A few further apparently dropped nominatives are discussed here for completeness sake. They appear to be highly idiosyncratic. Both examples allow for the nominative to be dropped, but an accusative argument is obligatory present and cannot be dropped. The first example is the drop of the nominative with the verb *geben* when used in the meaning of 'to produce' (5.25). Note that there is close connection to another diathesis with a light verb *geben* (see Section 12.5.4). The second example of a nominative drop with a retained object is with the verb *brauchen* 'to need' (5.26).

- (5.25) a. Die Trauben geben dieses Jahr einen guten Wein.  
b. Dieses Jahr gibt es einen guten Wein.
- (5.26) a. Ich brauche euch alle.  
b. Es braucht euch alle im Kampf gegen die Diktatur.

[5.64] **Attested Verbs**

- *brauchen, geben*

[5.65] **Further Examples**

- Der Verkäufer gibt den Lutscher gratis dazu.  
Den Lutscher gibt es gratis dazu.

### 5.5.3 [ ND | -D ] Nominative drop+dative

Very exceptionally a verb with a nominative and a dative allows for the nominative to be dropped and replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es* (5.27 a,b). In contrast, in most sentences with a pronoun *es* and a dative the pronoun *es* is either phoric (5.28 a) or position-simulating (5.28 b), both of which do not count as the drop of an argument (cf. Section 2.2.3). [5.66]

- (5.27) a. Das Buch gefällt mir.  
b. Hier gefällt es mir gar nicht.
- (5.28) a. Es galt mir.  
b. Es ist mir ein Unfall widerfahren.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.67]

- *gefallen*

### 5.5.4 [ NG | -G ] Nominative drop+genitive

A few verbs with nominative and genitive arguments allow the nominative to be dropped, but the genitive to be retained, like with *bedürfen* ‘to require’ (5.29) and *entbehren* ‘to do without’ (5.30). [5.68]

- (5.29) a. Der Kranke bedarf der Ruhe.  
b. Hier bedarf es körperlicher Kraft.
- (5.30) a. Der Vorwurf entbehrt jeglichen Beweises.  
b. Insofern entbehrt es jeglichen Beweises.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.69]

- *bedürfen, entbehren*

## — [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] — *Antikausativ*

### 5.5.5 [ NA | -N ] *haben* Anticausative

A typical anticausative verb allows for both a transitive (5.31 a) and an intransitive construction (5.31 b), in which the intransitive nominative is the same participant as the transitive accusative. This is attested in German with verbs like *kochen* ‘to cook’ (5.31). However, because this diathesis is formally unmarked it is difficult to decide whether this should be classified as an anticausative or as a causative (cf. Scheibl 2006: 355). [5.70]

Whatever the ultimate best analysis will be, it is important to realise that there are two different classes of verbs in German. With verbs like *kochen* the perfect of the intransitive exist both with auxiliaries *haben* (5.31 c) and *sein* (5.31 d). In contrast, with verbs like *zerbrechen* ‘to break’ the intransitive perfect only allows for *sein* (see Section 5.6.2 for an extensive discussion). These two classes of verbs should be distinguished and I propose to consider the *kochen*-class as an anticausative (this section) and the *zerbrechen*-class as a causative (see Section 5.6.2). [5.71]

[5.72]

Semantically, the intransitive *haben* construction in (5.31 c) seems to be the regular perfect of the intransitive (5.31 b). The *sein* construction in (5.31 d) is probably best analysed as the *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 10.5.17) of the transitive (5.31 a).

- (5.31) a. Ich koche den Kaffee.  
 b. Der Kaffee kocht.  
 c. Der Kaffee hat gekocht.  
 d. Der Kaffee ist gekocht.

[5.73] **Attested Verbs**

- *abnehmen, abreißen, abstoßen, anfangen, anhalten, aufmachen, backen, baden, beginnen, bewegen, braten, bremsen, duschen, fliegen, kochen, landen, läuten, öffnen, rauchen, schließen, spielen (eines Tonträgers), starten, stoppen, umdrehen, umgeben, wiegen, zählen, zünden*

[5.74] **Further Examples**

- Er landet das Flugzeug.  
 Das Flugzeug hat gelandet.  
 Das Flugzeug ist gelandet.
- Ich habe die Bombe gezündet.  
 Die Bombe hat gezündet.  
 Die Bombe ist gezündet.
- Der Mitarbeiter öffnet den Laden/macht den Laden auf.  
 Der Laden hat geöffnet/aufgemacht.  
 Der Laden ist geöffnet/aufgemacht.
- Ich rauche eine Zigarette.  
 Das Feuer hat geraucht.  
 Die Zigarette ist geraucht.
- Ich beginne einen Streit.  
 Der Streit hat begonnen.  
 Der Krieg ist begonnen.
- Ich wiege den Patienten vor und nach der Behandlung.  
 Der Patient hat 50 Kilo gewogen.  
 Der Patient ist schon gewogen.
- Ich habe das Werk angefangen.  
 Der Film hat angefangen.  
 Das Werk ist angefangen, aber nicht vollendet.
- Er zählt mich zu den Menschen.  
 Ich habe zu den Menschen gezählt.  
 Die Tage sind gezählt.
- Ich habe das Boot umgedreht.  
 Das Boot hat vor dem Hafen umgedreht.  
 Das Boot ist umgedreht.
- Ich habe das Boot abgestoßen.  
 Die Fähre hat abgestoßen. Das Boot ist abgestoßen.<sup>6</sup>
- Ich habe die Platte gespielt.  
 Die Platte hat gespielt. Die Platte ist gespielt.

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: <https://www.dwds.de/wb/abstoßen>, accessed on 25 March 2022.

**Notes**

A causative reading seems to be available with *duschen* ‘to take a shower’ (5.32 a). With an accusative this verb means ‘to give something else a shower’ (5.32 b). However, both intransitive perfect auxiliaries *haben* and *sein* are possible (5.32 c,d), so I classify this alternation here with the anticausatives. A parallel situation arises with *baden* ‘to bathe’.

- (5.32) a. Ich dusche.  
 b. Ich dusche den Elefanten.  
 c. Ich habe geduscht.  
 d. Der Elefant ist geduscht.

The verb *abnehmen* is possibly better analysed as two different lexemes, either with the meaning ‘to take away’ (5.33 a) or ‘to reduce’ (5.33 b).

- (5.33) a. Ich habe (dir) den Ausweis abgenommen.  
 Der Ausweis ist (dir) abgenommen.  
 b. Der Regen hat abgenommen.

Similarly, the verb *anhalten* has two different meanings. In the meaning ‘to stop’ this verb can clearly be used both transitively and intransitively with a *haben* perfect (5.34 a). However, the *sein* Zustandspassiv is not possible (5.34 b). The lexeme *anhalten* has another meaning, viz. ‘to admonish’ which does allow the *sein* Zustandspassiv (5.34 c), but not for an intransitive *haben* perfect.

- (5.34) a. Ich habe den Bus angehalten.  
 Der Bus hat angehalten.  
 b. \*Der Bus ist angehalten.  
 c. Ich habe meinen Sohn angehalten, pünktlich zu sein.  
 Mein Sohn ist angehalten, pünktlich zu sein.

### 5.5.6 [ NAD | –ND ] *haben* Anticausative+dative

The verb *anhängen* literally (but not commonly) means ‘attach to’ (5.35 a). However, more widespread is the metaphorical extension with a meaning of ‘to put a burden on somebody’ with the ‘somebody’ encoded in the dative case (5.35 b). In this meaning it can be used intransitively as well (5.35 c) and the dative cannot be dropped (5.35 d). Note that there is variation in the form of the participle (*angehängt* vs. *angehangen*), which is a vestige of causative morphology (see paragraph 6.87 on page 150). Also note that the auxiliary *sein* does not seem to be possible in the intransitive (5.35 e), so this verb does not align with other vestiges of causative morphology in German (see Section 5.6.3).

- (5.35) a. Das ist der Titel einer Abhandlung, die er dem “ABC der Anschauung” angehängt hat.<sup>7</sup>  
 b. Ich habe meinem Widersacher einen Prozess angehängt.  
 c. Er hat einer Illusion angehangen.  
 d. \*Ich habe angehangen.  
 e. \*Er ist einer Illusion angehangen.

**Attested Verbs**

- *anhängen*

<sup>7</sup> DWDS: Blättner, Fritz: Geschichte der Pädagogik, Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer 1961 [1951], S. 202.

## 5.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

– [  $\emptyset$  > SBJ ] –

### 5.6.1 [ – | N ] Weather agents

[5.81] With some weather verbs like *wehen* ‘to be windy’ it seems to be semantically rather obvious that the addition of an agent (5.36 b) is an extension of a basically avalent verb (5.36 a). However, formally there is no difference between an unmarked ‘nominative addition’ as discussed in this section and an unmarked ‘nominative drop’ as discussed in Section 5.5.1. One possible avenue to distinguish these two classes is to consider the range of possible nominative agents. For verbs like *wehen* there appears to be only a small closed class of options for the nominative.

- (5.36) a. Es weht.  
b. Der Wind weht.

[5.82] Such additions of an agent like with *wehen* appear to be rare. It is crucial to distinguish agent-like subjects that are the originators of the phenomenon expressed by the verb, like *Wind* ‘wind’ in (5.36 b), from patient-like subjects that are propelled by the phenomenon, like *Blätter* ‘leaves’ (5.37 a). These patient-like nominatives can be easily identified because a location phrase is necessary (5.37 b). These constructions are discussed in Section 6.8.3. Another diathesis adding arguments to weather verbs is the addition of objects, discussed in Section 5.8.2.

- (5.37) a. Die Blätter wehen durch die Luft.  
b. \* Die Blätter wehen.

#### [5.83] Attested Verbs

- *dunkeln, regnen, stürmen, tauen, wehen*

#### [5.84] Further Examples

- Der Regen regnet täglich.
- Das Wetter stürmt.
- Der Schnee taut.
- Der Abend dunkelt.

– [  $\emptyset$  > SBJ > OBJ ] – *Kausativ*

### 5.6.2 [ –N | NA ] *sein* Causative

[5.85] A typical causative verb like *zerbrechen* ‘to break’ allows for both an intransitive (5.38 a) and a transitive construction (5.38 d), in which the participant in the intransitive nominative (here *Krug* ‘jar’) is the same as the participant in the transitive accusative.

- (5.38) a. Der Krug zerbricht.  
b. Der Krug ist zerbrochen.  
c. \* Der Krug hat zerbrochen.  
d. Der Junge zerbricht den Krug.

[5.86]

The crucial characteristic of the causative verbs discussed in this section is that they only allow for a perfect with *sein* in the intransitive (5.38 b,c). This differentiates these verbs from verbs like *kochen* ‘to cook’ that allow for both *haben* and *sein* in the intransitive perfekt (5.39). I propose to analyse the verbs like *zerbrechen* with only *sein* in the intransitive as CAUSATIVES (this section), while verbs like *kochen* with both *haben* and *sein* in the intransitive are classified as ANTICAUSATIVES (see Section 5.5.5).

- (5.39) a. Der Kaffee kocht.  
 b. Der Kaffee ist gekocht.  
 c. Der Kaffee hat gekocht.  
 d. Der Junge kocht den Kaffee.

Note that the intransitive perfekt with *sein* is strongly reminiscent of an anticausative construction known in German linguistics as the *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 10.5.17). However, that construction is available for a much larger group of predicates like *bauen* ‘to build’ (5.40). Crucially different from *zerbrechen*, a verb like *bauen* does not allow for the anticausative to occur in the present tense (5.40 a). The resulting three classes of verbs can be distinguished by comparing the grammaticality judgements of the four constructions listed here for the verbs *zerbrechen* (5.38), *kochen* (5.39) and *bauen* (5.40). [5.87]

- (5.40) a. \* Das Haus baut.  
 b. Das Haus ist gebaut.  
 c. \* Das Haus hat gebaut.  
 d. Der Junge baut ein Haus.

Although there is no overt derivational direction in German between an unmarked anticausative like *kochen* and an unmarked causative like *zerbrechen*, there are a few indications substantiating this analysis. First, many verbs with only *sein* in the intransitive have preverbs like *zer-* and such preverbal derivations are typically causatives, resulting in transitive constructions (see Chapter 8 on preverbal diatheses). Crucially, almost all verbs in the current causative class are attested both with and without preverb with often only minimal differences in meaning, e.g. compare *brechen* ‘to break in’ (5.41) with *zerbrechen* ‘to break’ in (5.39). [5.88]

- (5.41) a. Der Stock bricht.  
 b. Ich breche den Stock.  
 c. Der Stock ist gebrochen.  
 d. \* Der Stock hat gebrochen.

Second, there are very many (though not exclusively) verbs denoting natural process in this class, like *altern* ‘to age’ or *verderben* ‘to rot’, which can be argued semantically to be basically intransitive. [5.89]

#### Attested Verbs [5.90]

- Verbs with preverb variants: *biegen* (*einbiegen*), *bleichen* (*erbleichen*, *verbleichen*), *bräunen* (*anbräunen*), *brechen* (*abbrechen*, *zerbrechen*), *brennen* (*abbrennen*, *niederbrennen*, *verbrennen*), *fahren* (*überfahren*), *fliegen* (*einfliegen*), *frieren* (*einfrieren*), *klappen* (*aufklappen*, *zuklappen*), *knicken* (*abknicken*, *einknicken*), *reißen* (*abreißen*, *einreißen*, *zerreißen*), *rollen* (*ausrollen*), *staunen* (*erstaunen*), *stürzen* (*umstürzen*), *tauen* (*auftauen*), *treten* (*antreten*, *wegtreten*), *trocknen* (*austrocknen*), *wirbeln* (*aufwirbeln*)

- Preverbal verbs from adjectival roots: *abkühlen, ermatten, verrohen, abstumpfen*
- Preverbal verbs from nominal roots: *erzürnen, verdunsten, zersplittern*
- Others: *altern, ersticken, ertrinken, fliehen, heilen, reifen, verderben, verqualmen, vorrücken, zuschneien*

[5.91] **Further Examples**

- Die Regierung stürzt/ist gestürzt.  
Die Streitkräfte stürzen die Regierung.
- Der Zug fährt/ist gefahren.  
Er fährt das Auto nach Hause.
- Der Mast knickt/ist geknickt.  
Die Welle knickt den Mast des Bootes.
- Der Schnee taut/ist getaut.  
Der Lava taut das Eis.
- Die Eiswürfel schmelzen/sind geschmolzen.  
Die Arbeiter schmelzen 26,31 Tonnen Stahl je Stunde.
- Die deutsche Gesellschaft altert/ist gealtert.  
Der Kummer altert sie.
- Die Papiere verbrennen/sind verbrannt.  
Er verbrennt die Papiere.
- Die Luft kühlt ab durch den Regen. Die Luft ist durch den Regen abgekühlt.  
Der Regen kühlt die Luft ab.
- Der Stamm knickt ein/ist eingeknickt.  
Der Sturm knickt die Äste und Stämme ein.
- Das Dorf brennt bis auf die Grundmauern nieder. Das Dorf ist niedergebrannt.  
Die Soldaten brennen das Dorf nieder.
- ich trete an. Ich bin zum Dienst angetreten.  
Ich trete den Urlaub an.
- Er erzürnte sehr über die Nachricht. Er ist erzürnt.  
Die Rede erzürnt mich.
- Wir fahren über (mit der Fähre). Wir sind übergefahren.  
Die Fähre fährt uns über.
- Die Wunde heilt. Die Wunde ist geheilt.  
Der Doktor heilt die Wunde.
- Die Zigarren verqualmen den Raum.  
Der Raum verqualmt.

[5.92] **Notes**

[5.93] The verbs *zuschneien* ‘to be blocked by snow’ (5.42 a) and *reifen* ‘to mature’ (5.42 b) only appear to be possible as transitives with weather agents (see Section 5.6.1).

- (5.42) a. Der Garten ist zugeschneit. Der Garten schneit zu.  
Der Schnee hat den Garten zugeschneit.
- b. Die Frucht reift. Die Frucht ist gereift.  
Die Sonne hat die Frucht gereift.

[5.94] The verb *fliehen* ‘to flee’ can be used transitively, but this seems to be unusual (5.43 a). The intransitive and transitive uses of *wegtreten* seem to be rather far apart semantically,

meaning ‘to step away’ vs. ‘to kick away’ (5.43 b).

- (5.43) a. Er floh vor dem Feind.  
Er floh ihren Blick.  
b. Ich bin (von der Tür) weggetreten.  
Ich habe den Ball weggetreten.

### 5.6.3 [ -N | NA ] *Umlaut Causative*

Originally based on a Germanic suffix *-jan*, which turned into an umlaut, some verbs have an intransitive (e.g. *fallen* ‘to fall’) and a transitive causative (e.g. *fällen* ‘to fell’) only separated by a vowel-quality difference (5.44). [5.95]

- (5.44) a. Der Baum ist gefallen.  
b. Ich habe den Baum gefällt.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.96]

- *biegen/beugen, fallen/fällen, saugen/säugen, sinken/senken, springen/sprengen*

#### Further Examples

[5.97]

- Das Schiff sinkt.  
Ich senke die Fahne.
- Der Hund springt.  
Ich sprengte das Gebäude.
- Das Kind saugt.  
Die Mutter säugt das Kind.

### 5.6.4 [ -N | NA ] *Umlaut Adjectival causative*

The process to make a causative with the suffix *-jan* also applied to adjectival predicates. [5.98]  
There are still a few remnants of such pairs found in contemporary German, in which the old suffix is retained as an umlaut (5.45). More cases are available with additional preverbs, see Section 8.6.3.

- (5.45) a. Die Kiste ist schwarz.  
b. Ich schwärze den Text.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.99]

- *voll/füllen, glatt/glätten, hart/härten, kurz/kürzen, schwarz/schwärzen, warm/wärmen*

## — [ OBJ > SBJ ] —

### 5.6.5 [ A | N ] *Accusative-to-nominative promotion*

Some verbs with experiencer subjects needed an accusative subject in older stages of German (cf. Nübling et al. 2006: 103-104), but these verbs either were completely lost, like *dürsten* ‘to be thirsty’ (5.46 a), or the accusative tends to be replaced by a nominative, like [5.100]



with *frieren* ‘to be cold’ (5.46 b,c). The verb *frieren* with a human experiencer is currently in the middle of this transition, allowing for both constructions.

- (5.46) a. Mich düstet.  
b. Mich friert.  
c. Ich friere.

[5.101] **Attested Verbs**

- *frieren*

## 5.7 Diatheses with object demotion

[5.102] This section concerns those alternation in which a non-nominative case-marked argument can be removed or demoted. When considered in this direction (e.g. ‘an accusative is removed/demoted’), then such alternation are known as antipassives. Conversely, when this same alternation is considered in reverse (e.g. ‘an accusative is added/promoted’) then such alternations are known as applicatives. Because this chapter deals with unmarked ‘covert’ alternations, there is no structural difference between these two situations. It is more like two different ways to look at the same phenomenon. Still, I have tried to classify diathesis into either of these two options based on (debatable) semantic arguments and parallels to other diatheses with overt derivations.

### – [ OBJ > Ø ] – *Optionaler Akkusativ*

#### 5.7.1 [ NA | N– ] Accusative drop

[5.103] Drops, or covert antipassives, i.e. the removal of an accusative object, is a well-known phenomenon under the name of ambitransitive or labile verbs, exemplified here with *stören* ‘to interrupt’ (5.47).

- (5.47) a. Du störst die Veranstaltung.  
b. Du störst.

[5.104] This phenomenon is typically exemplified with the verb *essen* ‘to eat’ (5.48 a,b). However, *essen* will not be considered an example of a strict accusative drop here, because the object can also be turned into a prepositional phrase (5.48 c). All such prepositional antipassives also allow a bare antipassive expression, so they will not be repeated here (see Section 6.7.8).

- (5.48) a. Ich esse einen Apfel.  
b. Ich esse.  
c. Ich esse von dem Apfel.

[5.105] Also, there are verbs with an accusative and a dative argument (5.49 a) that allow both to be dropped (5.49 b,c). These are also discussed elsewhere and will not be repeated here as examples of an accusative drop (see Section 6.7.11).

- (5.49) a. Ich backe dir einen Kuchen.  
b. Ich backe einen Kuchen.  
c. Ich backe.

[5.106]

Similarly, dropping of an accusative argument is very widespread when focus is placed on the action itself. In such contexts the addition of an adverbial construction is necessary (5.50). Such verbs do not belong to the present group of accusative drop verbs (see Section 9.7.1).

- (5.50) a. Ich sehe das Haus.  
 b. ? Ich sehe.  
 c. Ich sehe gut.

What is left over is just an apparently small group of transitive verbs that allow for the accusative to be dropped – and not allow for a (free) dative, nor for a prepositional antipassive. These verbs are formally similar to verbs that allow for an accusative to be added (see Section 5.8.1). The only difference between adding or removing an accusative is an (admittedly rather vague) semantic intuition about whether the intransitive or the transitive meaning is more ‘basic’.

#### Attested Verbs

- *angreifen, feiern, nerven, regieren, stören, studieren, wählen*

#### Further Examples

- Er regiert das Land.  
 Die Vernunft regiert hier.
- Er studiert den Fahrplan.  
 Er studiert von früh bis abends.
- Der deutsche Staatssekretär nervt den malischen Minister.  
 Du nervst.

### 5.7.2 [ NAA | NA– ] Accusative drop+accusative

Most verbs that allow for two accusative arguments allow for one of these arguments to be dropped (5.51 a,b). In some situations even both can be dropped (5.51 c).

- (5.51) a. Er lehrt mich den Trick.  
 b. Er lehrt den Koran.  
 c. Er lehrt an einer Hochschule.

Double accusatives also regularly appear with quantified objects (5.52 a), see Section 5.3.9, and named objects (5.52 b), see Section 5.3.10. Also these verbs regularly allow for one of the accusatives to be dropped (5.52 c,d).

- (5.52) a. Das Buch kostet mich keinen Pfennig.  
 b. Ich nenne dich einen Egoisten.  
 c. Das Buch kostet viel.  
 d. Er nennt den Namen des Kindes.

#### Attested Verbs

- *abfragen, lehren*

#### Further Examples

- Die alte Dame fragt den Schüler Englischvokabeln ab.<sup>8</sup>

[5.114] **Notes**

[5.115] The verb *unterrichten* ‘to instruct’ also allows for two different accusative objects, either referring to the recipient of the teaching (5.53 a) or the object of the teaching (5.53 b). However, these two accusative objects do not seem to occur together easily. When the recipient is in the accusative, the object of teaching typically is encoded as a prepositional phrase (5.53 c). When the object is in the accusative, the recipient is normally not expressed. Interestingly, both these accusative objects can be passivised (5.53 d,e). Note that the verb *unterrichten* can also mean ‘to notify’. However, that meaning has slightly different roles and is not discussed here.

- (5.53) a. Ich unterrichte dich.  
 b. Ich unterrichte den Koran.  
 c. Ich unterrichte dich im Koran.  
 d. Du wirst (von mir) unterrichtet.  
 e. Der Koran wird (von mir) unterrichtet.

### 5.7.3 [ NAD | N–D ] Accusative drop+dative

[5.116] This is the pattern as attested with the verb *danken* ‘to thank’ as exemplified in (5.54 a-c). The accusative can be left out, but only when the dative is retained. The dative cannot be dropped. This seems to be very rare. There seems to be a generalisation that the accusative can normally not be dropped before also a governed dative is dropped (see also Section 6.7). From informal discussion, it appears that the sentence in (5.54 a) is rejected by many German speakers, but it is clearly attested.<sup>9</sup>

- (5.54) a. Ich danke dem Arzt mein Leben.<sup>10</sup>  
 b. Ich danke dem Arzt.  
 c. \*Ich danke mein Leben.

[5.117] This pattern of *danken* might have arisen out of a confusion of *danken* with *verdanken*. The verb *danken* allows for a governed preposition *für* instead of the accusative (5.55 a). In contrast, *verdanken* needs an accusative and a dative (5.55 b-d).

- (5.55) a. Ich danke dir für mein Leben.  
 b. Ich verdanke dir mein Leben.  
 c. \*Ich verdanke dir.  
 d. \*Ich verdanke mein Leben.

[5.118] **Attested Verbs**

- *danken*

<sup>8</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 19.11.2009, Nr. 48.

<sup>9</sup>cf. <https://www.dwds.de/wb/danken>.

<sup>10</sup>Adapted from DWDS dictionary at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/danken>, accessed 5 April 2022.

## – [ OBJ > Ø ] – *Optionaler Dativ*

### 5.7.4 [ ND | N– ] Dative drop

Verbs that take a dative, but do not allow for an accusative, are well attested, though not very frequent in German. Some of those verbs do not allow the dative to be dropped (see Section 5.3.4) and a few allow for the dative to be replaced by a prepositional phrase (see Section 6.7.10) or by a possessor (see Section 5.8.3). [5.119]

In this section only those verbs are listed for which the only alternative for the dative is a complete drop, like *entkommen* ‘to escape’ (5.56 a). A few of the verbs in this class only allow for inanimate subjects, like *gelingen* ‘to succeed’ (5.56 b). [5.120]

- (5.56) a. Er entkommt (seinem Feind).  
b. Die Torte gelingt (mir).

#### Attested Verbs

[5.121]

- Obligatory inanimate subject: *beiliegen, bevorstehen, einleuchten, gelingen, geschehen, passieren, schmecken, sitzen (passen)*
- Possibly animate subject: *auffallen, beitreten, entkommen, entwischen, erscheinen, fehlen, folgen, gratulieren, helfen, unterliegen, weglaufen, zuhören, zulaufen*

#### Further Examples

[5.122]

- Ihre Fehler fallen (mir) auf.
- Das Formular liegt (dem Schreiben) bei.
- Ich trete (dem Verein) bei.
- Das Spiel steht (mir) bevor.
- Zwei Unterschriften fehlen (mir).
- Der Hund folgt (mir).
- Der Unfall geschieht (mir).
- Er gratuliert (mir).
- Er hilft (mir).
- Der Pudding schmeckt (mir).
- Er läuft (mir) weg.
- Ich höre (dir) zu.
- Die Katze ist (mir) zugelaufen.
- Der Mantel sitzt (mir) gut.

### 5.7.5 [ NAD | NA– ] Dative drop+accusative

Ditransitive verbs like *verbieten* ‘to prohibit’ (5.57 a-c), that allow for the dative but not the accusative to be dropped, are common. Semantically, this diathesis seems to be restricted to performative verbs, typically of verbal nature. [5.123]

- (5.57) a. Ich verbiete dir das Rauchen.  
b. \*Ich verbiete dir.  
c. Ich verbiete das Rauchen.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.124]

- Verbal performatives: *aussprechen, befehlen, beschreiben, beweisen, bieten, empfehlen, erlauben, erzählen, gestehen, gestatten, mitteilen, nahelegen, nennen, verbieten, verraten, verschreiben, versprechen, verweigern, vorschlagen, vorschreiben, wünschen*
- Non-verbal performatives: *reichen, vorführen, vormachen, zahlen*

## [5.125] Further Examples

- Ich spreche (dir) den Dank aller Kollegen aus.
- Ich erzähle (dir) eine Geschichte.
- Ich nenne (dir) den Namen.
- Ich verbiete (dir) das Rauchen.
- Ich verschreibe (dir) die Cortisontabletten.
- Der Chef versprach (mir) eine Lösung.
- Der Dompteur führt (mir) eine gemischte Raubtiergruppe vor.
- Ich mache (dir) die Tanzschritte vor.
- Die Gesetze schreiben (dir) eine solche Überprüfung vor.
- Ich wünsche (dir) ein schönes Leben.
- Ich befehle (dir) Gehorsamkeit.
- Ich schlage (dir) ein Kompromiss vor.
- Ich beweise (dir) meine Unschuld.
- Ich lege dir den Rücktritt nahe.  
Das Foto legt seine Schuld nahe.

## [5.126] Notes

[5.127] The verb *nahelegen* is used without dative in combination with an inanimate subject (5.58 a), but with dative in case of an animate subject (5.58 b).

- (5.58) a. Das Foto hat seine Verwicklung in das Doping-System nahegelegt.  
b. Der Trainer hat ihm das Doping nahegelegt.

## 5.7.6 [ NAD | N-- ] Dative drop+accusative drop

[5.128] Although it is not impossible, it seems to be rather unusual for ‘real’ ditransitive verbs like *vorlesen* ‘to read aloud’ (5.59 a) to allow for either the accusative (5.59 b) or the dative (5.59 c) to be dropped.

- (5.59) a. Ich lese dir ein Buch vor.  
b. Ich lese dir vor.  
c. Ich lese ein Buch vor.

## [5.129] Attested Verbs

- *vorlesen*

## 5.7.7 [ NG | N- ] Genitive drop

[5.130] This theoretically possible diathesis is listed here only for completeness sake, as there do not seem to be any genuine examples attested in contemporary German. Genitive arguments without accusative are extremely unusual. They appear to be vanishing from the German language (see Section 5.3.5). Also genitive antipassive are practically unattested (see Section 6.7.14). Genitive arguments with an additional accusative argument seem to be slightly more common (see Section 5.7.8 and 6.7.15)

### 5.7.8 [ NAG | NA– ] Genitive drop+accusative

Given that there are already very few verbs with genitive arguments in German, it is no surprise that there appear to be only a handful of genitive ditransitives, i.e. verbs that can occur with nominative, accusative and genitive arguments. On closer inspection, almost all such verbs allow for alternative constructions in which the genitive argument is changed (for the single known exception, see Section 5.3.7). The verbs listed in the current class allow for the complete drop of the genitive argument, like with *würdigen* ‘to dignify’ (5.60). Some further verbs with genitive and accusative arguments allow for a *von* prepositional phrase instead of a genitive (see Section 6.7.15). [5.131]

- (5.60) a. Er würdigte den Vorschlag einer eingehenden Prüfung.  
 b. Er würdigt den Vorschlag.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.132]

- *anklagen, belehren, berauben, besinnen, überführen, würdigen*

#### Further Examples

[5.133]

- Ich klage dich des Diebstahls an.  
 Ich klage dich an.
- Ich belehre dich eines Besseren.  
 Ich belehre dich.
- Ich überführe den Mörder eines Verbrechens.  
 Ich werde den Mörder überführen.
- Ich beraube dich deiner Rechte.  
 Er beraubt dich.

## 5.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

In this chapter, I have tried to separate between the demotion of an object (antipassive or drop, see Section 5.7) and the promotion of an accusative (applicative or addition, this section). However, for ‘covert’ diatheses I cannot find any substantive difference between these phenomena, except for a faint semantic impression that covert applicatives do not imply an accusative object (but allow it), while bare antipassive imply an accusative object (but allow it to be dropped). It remains a clear desideratum to put this intuitive differentiation on stricter grammatical footing. [5.134]

### – [ Ø > OBJ ] – *Resultatakkusativ*

#### 5.8.1 [ N– | NA ] Accusative addition

There are various kinds of objects that can be added to apparent intransitives with a resultative meaning. For example: a competitive entity in sports (5.61 a), the result of an action [5.135]

(5.61 b), the name of the result of an action (5.61 c) and possibly many other (5.61 d,e).

- (5.61) a. Er ist/hat den Marathon gelaufen.  
 b. Er ist/hat den Salto gesprungen.  
 c. Er hat den Tango getanzt.  
 d. Er hat den Staub geatmet.  
 e. Er hat den Tatort geschaut.

[5.136] A similar phenomenon is attested with ‘manner of speaking’ verbs like *stottern* ‘to stutter’ (5.62 a). Such verbs can take an accusative object with a meaning like ‘to utter something in a stuttering manner’ (5.62 b). Note that by adding a possessed prepositional phrase (5.62 c), see Section 6.8.4, it is even possible to use a possessor-dative alternation (13.16 d), see Section 6.8.12, leading to an apparently ‘intransitive’ verb with a dative, accusative and a non-droppable locational argument.

- (5.62) a. Er stotterte vor Aufregung  
 b. Er stotterte eine Entschuldigung.  
 c. Ich flüsterte die Lösung in sein Ohr.  
 d. Ich flüsterte ihm die Lösung ins Ohr.

[5.137] These verbs are formally similar to verbs that allow for an accusative to be dropped (see Section 5.7.1). The only difference between these two classes is a (rather vague) semantic intuition about whether the intransitive or the transitive meaning is more ‘basic’. As a rule-of-thumb the verbs in this section have an object that is the result of the action as described by the verb (hence the German name RESULTATAKKUSATIV). Whether this is a useful separation has to be determined by future research.

[5.138] **Attested Verbs**

- *atmen, fliehen, hetzen, laufen, leben, schauen, schwimmen, singen, spielen, springen, tanzen*
- Manner-of-speaking: *brüllen, flüstern, grölen, johlen, murmeln, schreien, stottern*

[5.139] **Further Examples**

- Er hat die 400 Meter geschwommen.
- Er hat ein Lied gesungen.
- Er hat einen Walzer gespielt.
- Ich lebe die Freiheit.
- Die Fans grölen die Hymne.
- Das Publikum johlte Beifall.
- Ich flüstere die Lösung (in sein Ohr).
- Er murmelt die Antwort (in seinen Bart).
- Ich brüllte die Antwort.
- Er floh ihren Blick.

## 5.8.2 [ – | A ] Weather resultative

[5.140]

A few of the verbs that allow for the nominative to be absent (see Section 5.6.1) can have an accusative object without a nominative, although this possibility seems to be strongly limited to weather phenomena (5.63 a) and is often used metaphorically (5.63 b).

- (5.63) a. Gestern hat es riesengroße Körner gehagelt.  
 b. Im Jahre 1932 hagelte es einen Schauer neuer Gesetze.  
 Es schneit Absagen.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.141]

- Weather verbs: *schneien, hageln, regnen*

#### Further Examples

[5.142]

- Es schneit.  
 Gestern hat es dicke Flocken geschneit.
- Es regnet.  
 Gestern hat es nur einzelne Tropfen geregnet.

### – [ ADJ > OBJ ] – *Pertinenzdativ*

#### 5.8.3 [ Ng | ND ] Possessor-of-nominative to dative experiencer

For some verbs, the dative is an alternative expression of the possessor of the nominative (5.64 a,b). The participant is crucially the same person in these two expressions, as can be seen by the possibility of (5.64 c) but the impossibility of (5.64 d). [5.143]

- (5.64) a. Mir brennen die Füße.  
 b. Meine Füße brennen.  
 c. Meine Füße brennen mir.  
 d. \* Meine Füße brennen dir.

#### Attested Verbs

[5.144]

- bodily sensations: *bluten, brennen, frieren, drücken, jucken, klopfen, rasen (Emotion), schmerzen, schwellen, stechen, tränen, zittern, wachsen, weh tun*
- natural processes: *anbrennen, blühen, brechen, rosten, stinken, überkochen, verblühen, verfaulen, verrosten, verwelken, zufrieren, rauchen*
- Others: *langen*

#### Further Examples

[5.145]

- Meine Füße brennen. Mir brennen die Füße.
- Meine Nase friert. Mir friert die Nase.
- Mein Kopf juckt. Mir juckt der Kopf.
- Mein Bein schmerzt. Mir schmerzt das Bein.
- Meine Augen tränen. Mir tränen die Augen.
- Meine Hände zittern. Mir zittern die Hände.
- Mein Bein tut weh. Mir tut das Bein weh.
- Meine Blumen blühen. Mir blühen die Blumen.
- Mein Zaun rostet. Mir rostet der Zaun.



- Meine Socken stinken. Mir stinken die Socken.
- Meine Schuhe drücken. Mir drücken die Schuhe.
- Mein Herz klopft. Mir klopft das Herz.
- Mein Kopf rast. Mir rast der Kopf.
- Meine Füße schwellen. Mir schwellen die Füße.
- Mein Herz blutet. Mir blutet das Herz.
- Mein Gehalt langt nicht. Mir langt das Gehalt nicht.
- Mein Krug bricht. Mir bricht der Krug.
- Mein Kopf raucht. Mir raucht der Kopf.
- Mein Bart wächst. Mir wächst der Bart.

[5.146] **Notes**

[5.147] Coreference (i.e. ‘reflexive double marking’) is possible (5.65 a), but in the third person this does not lead to a reflexive pronoun *sich* (5.65 b,c):

- (5.65) a. Mir stinken meine Socken.  
 b. Ihm stinken seine Socken.  
 c. \*Sich stinken seine Socken.

[5.148] It might seem that bare causative verbs like *abbrennen*, see Section 5.6.2, also allow for this alternation (5.66 a,b). However, there is no necessary coreference between the dative and the possessor in these cases (5.66 c). This characteristic is crucial for distinguishing different classes of verbs.

- (5.66) a. Das Haus brennt mir ab.  
 b. Mein Haus brennt ab.  
 c. Mein Haus brennt dir ab.

#### 5.8.4 [ NAg | NAD ] Possessor-of-accusative to dative experiencer

[5.149] A widespread dative alternation is the so-called possessor-to-dative raising. Specifically, with some ditransitive datives the dative can be reformulated as the possessor of the accusative (6.50 a,b).

- (5.67) a. Ich schneide ihm die Haare.  
 b. Ich schneide seine Haare.

[5.150] This alternation occurs with all verbs with the *von* and *für* dative antipassive (see Section 6.7.11). Additionally, there are many verbs in the realm of destruction and repair that allow for this diathesis.

[5.151] For some verbs there is a possible ambiguity of the datives, like in (5.68 a) and (5.69 a). There is a difference between the interpretation as a *für* benefactive alternant ‘on your behalf’ (5.68 b), (5.69 b), see Section 6.8.9, and the interpretation as a possessive alternant

(5.68 c), (5.69 c), as discussed in this section.

- (5.68) a. Ich koche dir die Suppe.  
 b. Ich koche die Suppe für dich.  
 (Das ist mein Plan, vielleicht kriegst du die Suppe aber nie)  
 c. Ich koche deine Suppe.  
 (d.h. Die Suppe, die du bestellt hast)
- (5.69) a. Ich beantworte dir die Frage.  
 b. Ich beantworte die Frage für dich.  
 (weil du willst, dass ich das mache)  
 c. Ich beantworte deine Frage.  
 (d.h. die Frage, die du gestellt hast)

#### Attested Verbs

[5.152]

- Body tending: *heilen, kämmen, kratzen, küssen, maniküren, rasieren, streicheln, verbinden*
- Injure: *auskugeln, brechen, verdrehen, verrenken, zerquetschen*
- Destruction: *amputieren, beenden, beschädigen, kündigen, ruinieren, schneiden, unterbrechen, versalzen, zerbrechen, zerknittern, zertreten*
- Repair: *aktualisieren, korrigieren, reparieren*
- Others: *ausstellen, beantworten, dressieren, packen*

#### Further Examples

[5.153]

- Ich beschädige dir das Auto.  
 Ich beschädige dein Auto.
- Ich versalze dir die Suppe.  
 Ich versalze deine Suppe.
- Ich habe mir das Bein gebrochen.  
 Ich habe mein Bein gebrochen.
- Ich ruiniere dir die Feier.  
 Ich ruiniere deine Feier.
- Ich beende/kündige dir den Vertrag.  
 Ich beende/kündige deinen Vertrag.

## 5.9 Symmetrical diatheses

— [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 5.9.1 [ NA | AN ] Accusative/accusative inverse

The verb *erwarten* ‘to expect’ has an exceptional valency alternation in that the accusative and nominative arguments can be reversed with a very similar meaning (5.70 a,b). There is a slight difference in meaning between ‘to expect’ (5.70 a) and ‘to be imminent’ (5.70 b).

- (5.70) a. Er erwartet einen Test.  
 b. Der Test erwartet ihn.

[5.155]

This alternation is possibly best interpreted as the effect of two different metaphorical extensions of *warten* ‘to wait for’. The first extension is from ‘to wait for’ (5.71 a) to ‘to expect’ (5.71 b). The second usage of *warten* is typically found with inanimate subjects, meaning roughly ‘to be ready for the object’s arrival’ (5.71 c). In this second meaning the metaphorical extension leads to the meaning ‘to be imminent’ (5.71 d).

- (5.71) a. Ich warte auf den Test.  
 b. Ich erwarte den Test.  
 c. Zuhause wartet ein Geschenk auf dich.  
 d. Ein Geschenk erwartet dich.

[5.156] **Attested Verbs**

- *erwarten*

### 5.9.2 [ NA | DN ] Accusative/dative inersive

[5.157] The verb *nutzen* either means ‘to use’ (5.72 a) or ‘to benefit’ (5.72 b) with almost reversed argument marking.

- (5.72) a. Der Arbeiter nutzt den Hebel.  
 b. Der Hebel nutzt dem Arbeiter wenig.

[5.158] I know of only a few verbs with this very special passive-like diathesis. There are a few more cases of this alternation with reflexive marking see Section 7.9.1. Note that the alternant with the dative (5.72 b) needs a very special adverbial, typically *nichts*, *was*, or *wenig* (i.e. negative polarity).

[5.159] **Attested Verbs**

- *nutzen, schmecken*

[5.160] **Further Examples**

- Ich schmecke den Knoblauch nicht.  
 Knoblauch schmeckt mir nicht.

### — [ OBJ > OBJ ] —

[5.161] Some verbs allow for the same role being expressed with different case marking. These seem to be all incidental cases, mostly verbs in the midst of a diachronic change.

### 5.9.3 [ A | D ] Accusative-to-dative

[5.162] A few experiencer verbs with an original accusative argument are currently considered rather old-fashioned in German (5.73 a). Instead of the original accusative sometimes they are attested with a dative (5.73 b). Note that some of these verbs also have a governed preposition (5.73 c) and a reflexive alternation (5.73 d), see also Section 7.6.1.

- (5.73) a. Mich graut.  
 b. Mir graut.  
 c. Mich ekelt vor dem Spinat.  
 d. Ich eke mich vor dem Essen.

[5.163] **Attested Verbs**

- *ekeln, grauen, gruseln, schauern, schwindeln*

#### 5.9.4 [ NAA | NAD ] Accusative-to-dative+accusative

A few of the verbs that allow for two accusative objects appear to disambiguate this situation by optionally changing one of the accusative arguments to a dative (5.74 a,b). [5.164]

- (5.74) a. Er lehrt mich den Trick.  
b. Er lehrt mir den Trick.

##### Attested Verbs

[5.165]

- *kosten, lehren, nennen*

##### Further Examples

[5.166]

- Ich nenne dich einen Egoisten.  
Ich nenne dir drei Möglichkeiten.
- Das Buch kostet mich keinen Pfennig.  
Das wird mir noch viel kosten.

##### Notes

[5.167]

The verb *nennen* seems to have a rather clear semantic difference between ‘to name’ (with two accusative arguments) and ‘to mention’ (with an accusative and a dative argument). [5.168]

#### 5.9.5 [ NG | NA ] Genitive-to-accusative

The verb *achten* ‘to watch for, to respect’ has an old-fashioned alternative possibility to take a genitive argument, but only as a negative polarity element. Most examples have an explicit negation, but examples with *niemand* ‘nobody’ or *gering* ‘a bit’ are also attested (see examples below). The more widespread usage is with an accusative argument (also without negation). [5.169]

- (5.75) a. Man achtete unser nicht.<sup>11</sup>  
b. Man achtete uns nicht.

##### Attested Verbs

[5.170]

- *achten*

##### Further Examples

[5.171]

- Es ist gut zu Markte zu gehen bei ihnen, denn sie achten des Reichtums und Goldbesitzes gar gering.<sup>12</sup>
- Niemand achtete des gähnenden Abgrundes.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: <https://www.dwds.de/wb/achten>, accessed 14 April 2022.

<sup>12</sup>DWDS: Perutz, Leo: Die dritte Kugel, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 1988 [1915], S. 36.

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: May, Karl: Winnetou IV, Berlin: Neues Leben 1993 [1910], S. 435.

### 5.9.6 [ NGA | NAD ] Genitive-to-accusative+accusative-to-dative

[5.172] The verb *versichern* ‘to assure’ appears to be a combination of the previous two alternations. The apparently older usage with accusative and genitive (5.76 a) exists with an alternative construction with dative and accusative (5.76 b). This ‘double swap’ was possible because most sentences with *versichern* have a subordinate clause instead of a clear genitive/accusative (5.76 c,d). The theoretical intermediate stages (with genitive/dative or double accusative) are unattested (5.76 e,f).

- (5.76) a. Ich versichere dich meines Vertrauens.  
 b. Ich versichere dir mein Vertrauen.  
 c. Ich versichere dich, dass ich dir vertraue.  
 d. Ich versichere dir, dass ich dir vertraue.  
 e. \* Ich versichere dich mein Vertrauen.  
 f. \* Ich versichere dir meines Vertrauens.

#### [5.173] Attested Verbs

- *versichern*



## Chapter 6

# Prepositional alternations

### 6.1 Introduction

[6.1] Prepositional phrases play a crucial role in many diatheses throughout this book. This chapter catalogues only the covert ('unmarked') alternations that involve a change in pure flagging, i.e. between case-marked constituents and prepositional phrases. Many more such diatheses will be discussed in subsequent chapters, but those alternations display additional overt marking, like reflexive pronouns, verb prefixes, or light verbs.

[6.2] As surveyed in this chapter, there are many different covert alternations that involve prepositions, like antipassives (6.1 a), see Section 6.7.8, anticausatives (6.1 b), see Section 6.5.4, applicatives (6.1 c), see Section 6.9.2, and many more.

- (6.1) a. Ich schlürfe meinen Tee.  
Ich schlürfe an meinem Tee.
- b. Er quietscht mit den Reifen.  
Die Reifen quietschen.
- c. Er füllt Schnaps in die Flasche.  
Er füllt die Flasche mit Schnaps.

[6.3] There are also various alternations that necessarily involve obligatory local prepositional phrases, like causatives (6.2 a), see Section 6.5.10, resultatives (6.2 b), see Section 6.8.4, and raised possessors (6.2 c) see Section 6.8.11.

- (6.2) a. Der Pullover hängt im Schrank.  
Ich hänge den Pullover in den Schrank.
- b. Der Wind weht.  
Der Wind weht die Blätter durch die Luft.
- c. Er schaut über meine Schulter.  
Er schaut mir über die Schulter.

[6.4] Prepositional phrases in German are partly governed arguments and partly non-governed adverbial phrases. This distinction is not overtly marked and leads to recurrent ambiguity, e.g. between *warten auf* 'to wait for something' and *warten auf* 'to wait while being on

top of something’ (12.43). It is of central importance to clearly delimit governed from non-governed prepositions, as discussed extensively in Section 6.2.

(6.3) Der König wartet auf seinem alten Thron auf seinen neuen Thron.

There are fifteen local groups of diatheses that seem prominent enough to be given a German name. I propose the following names for these: [6.5]

- [ADJ > SBJ > Ø] INSTRUMENTSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (see Section 6.5.4 ff.)
- [PBJ > SBJ > Ø] KREATIONSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (see Section 6.5.7 ff.)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] ORTSANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 6.5.10)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] ORTSKAUSATIV (see Section 6.6.1 ff.)
- [Ø > PBJ] BEWEGUNGSART (see Section 6.8.2 ff.)
- [Ø > PBJ] VERURSACHTE BEWEGUNG (see Section 6.8.4 ff.)
- [Ø > PBJ] ERGÄNZENDE WIRKUNG (see Section 6.8.6)
- [Ø > OBJ > PBJ] RESULTATIV (see Section 6.8.7)
- [ADJ > OBJ] BENEFAKTIVDATIV (see Section 6.8.9)
- [ADJ > OBJ] BEURTEILERDATIV (see Section 6.8.10)
- [ADJ > OBJ] ORTSPERTINENZDATIV (see Section 6.8.11 ff.)
- [ADJ > OBJ > PBJ] PERTINENZAKKUSATIV (see Section 6.8.13)
- [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ] VOLLAPPLIKATIV (see Section 6.9.2)
- [OBJ > ADJ] AKKUSATIV ANTIPASSIV (see Section 6.7.8 ff.)
- [OBJ > ADJ] DATIV ANTIPASSIV (see Section 6.7.10 ff.)

## 6.2 Delimiting governed prepositional phrases

### 6.2.1 Identifying governed prepositions

As a general rule (with only few exceptions, see below) I propose to define prepositional phrases as lexically governed arguments when they allow for a paraphrase of the form *da-PREPOSITION*, *dass* CLAUSE (cf. Engelen 1986: 110-112). For example, the verb *warten* ‘to await’ has a possible governed preposition *auf* designating the object that is waited for (6.4a). In this reading, (6.4a) can be paraphrased by (11.26b) with a *darauf*, *dass* subordinate clause. This combination *warten auf* can best be considered a fixed collocation, to be translated into English as ‘waiting for’. However, the preposition *auf* can also have its adverbial local meaning ‘on top of’ (6.4c). This leads to another interpretation in which the prepositional phrase is not a governed preposition but an adverbial phrase with a local meaning, paraphrased in (6.4d). These two readings can even be combined (6.4e), with an interesting difference in case marking between the two prepositional phrases. [6.6]

- (6.4) a. Der König wartet auf seinen neuen Thron.  
 b. Der König wartet darauf, dass sein neuer Thron kommt.  
 c. Der König wartet auf seinem alten Thron.  
 d. Der König wartet, während er auf seinem alten Thron sitzt.  
 e. Der König wartet auf seinem alten Thron auf seinen neuen Thron.

[6.7]



The possibility of a *da+Präposition*, *dass* paraphrase for governed prepositional phrases has a parallel in question-constructions with *wo(r)+Preposition* (6.5 a). In contrast, the local interpretation of a prepositional phrase is questioned with a bare question word *wo* (6.5 b).

- (6.5) a. Worauf wartet der König?  
b. Wo wartet der König?

[6.8] Some prepositional phrases without the option of a *da+Präposition*, *dass* paraphrase still have a special status as an argument-like role of a verb, namely when they can be substituted by a case-marked constituent. This is typical for antipassive alternations like (6.6 a), in which the accusative role *den Bären* can alternatively be expressed by a prepositional phrase *auf den Bären* with a difference in affectedness of the object, see Section 6.7.8. In this situation the prepositional phrase cannot be replaced by a *darauf*, *dass* phrase, so it is not a governed preposition. However, because of the alternation with a case marked constituent, this participant (viz. *Bär*) is still an argument. Not all prepositional phrases allow such an alternation, notably most local expressions do not (6.6 b). However, there are also some distinctly local expressions that still allow for an antipassive alternation (6.6 c). In general, the semantic content is not a suitable definition of argument status.

- (6.6) a. Ich schieße auf den Bären.  
Ich schieße den Bären.  
b. Ich sitze auf dem Stuhl.  
\* Ich sitze den Stuhl.  
c. Ich reite auf dem Pferd.  
Ich reite das Pferd.

## 6.2.2 Identifying non-governed prepositions

[6.9] Non-governed prepositional phrases are typically adverbial phrases, describing either a local (6.7 a), temporal (6.7 b), manner (6.7 c) or purpose/causal (6.7 d) situation. In some contexts, such adverbial prepositional phrases do not have an article after the preposition, like in *gegen Abend* ‘early evening’, *aus Gold* ‘golden’, or *mit größter Sorgfalt* ‘carefully’.

- (6.7) a. Ich arbeite in dem Arbeitszimmer.  
b. Ich arbeite vor dem Frühstück.  
c. Ich arbeite aus Leidenschaft.  
d. Ich arbeite wegen des Regens.

[6.10] Adverbial non-governed prepositional phrases can easily be identified by considering (i) how this information can be questioned and (ii) by which proforms or adverbs the information can be replaced (6.8). However, there are various special considerations to be discussed in the following section. Specifically, a few prepositional phrases allow for the question/replacement tests listed below (so the tests suggest they are non-governed), but they also allow for a *da+Präposition*, *dass* paraphrase (so the test suggests they are governed). This happens with purposive *für*, see Section 6.2.5, and causal *von/durch*, see Section 6.2.6.

It seems to make most sense to consider these to be non-governed adverbial phrases.

- (6.8) Identifying non-governed prepositional phrases
- a. Local prepositional phrases:  
are questioned by *wo/wohin/woher?* ‘where’,  
are replaceable by proforms *hier/da/dort* ‘here/there’,  
are replaceable by local adverbs like *zuhause* ‘at home’ or *draußen* ‘outside’.
  - b. Temporal prepositional phrases:  
are questioned by *wann?* ‘when’,  
are replaceable by proforms *dann/damals* ‘then’,  
are replaceable by temporal adverbs like *gestern* ‘yesterday’ or *morgen* ‘tomorrow’.
  - c. Manner prepositional phrases:  
are questioned by *wie?* ‘how’,  
are replaceable by proforms *so* ‘thus’,  
are replaceable by manner adverbs like *schnell* ‘quickly’ or *viel* ‘a lot’.
  - d. Purpose/cause prepositional phrases:  
are questioned by *warum?* ‘why’,  
are replaceable by proforms *deshalb/darum* ‘therefore’.

### 6.2.3 Locational prepositional phrases

As a general rule, locational prepositional phrases are not governed by a verb. However, there are a few verbs that obligatory need a local preposition (6.9), see Section 6.3.4 and 7.3.4. [6.11]

- (6.9) a. Er steckt den Zettel in die Tasche.  
b. \* Er steckt den Zettel.  
c. Ich befinde mich in dem Haus.  
d. \* Ich befinde mich.

Less common are verbs that obligatory need a local preposition (6.10 a,b) that alternatively can be exchanged for a temporal one (6.10 c). [6.12]

- (6.10) a. Der Unfall ereignete sich an der Kreuzung.  
b. \* Der Unfall ereignete sich.  
c. Der Unfall ereignete sich vor Sonnenuntergang.

Some locations become obligatory through diatheses, for example with datives that are introduced by raising possessors (6.11), see Section 6.8.11, or dynamic ‘manner-of movement’ prepositional phrases (6.12), see Section 6.8.2. [6.13]

- (6.11) a. Der Ball fällt (auf dem Boden).  
b. Der Ball fällt dem Spieler vor die Füße.  
c. \* Der Ball fällt dem Spieler.

- (6.12) a. Ich habe (in dem Garten) getanzt.  
b. Ich bin durch den Garten getanzt.  
c. \* Ich bin getanzt.

### 6.2.4 Comitative/instrumental *mit* and *ohne*

[6.14] The prepositions *mit* ‘with’ and its negative counterpart *ohne* ‘without’ have a special status in German. With human participants they have a COMITATIVE interpretation (6.13), These are questioned with *mit wem*. With non-human participants an INSTRUMENTAL reading is provoked (6.14). These are questioned with *womit*. Except for this different interrogative, the comitative interpretation can also be identified by the possibility to add *zusammen*, which is not possible in the instrumental reading.

- (6.13) a. Ich arbeite mit meinem Freund.  
       b. Mit wem arbeitest du?  
       c. Ich arbeite zusammen mit meinem Freund.
- (6.14) a. Ich arbeite mit einem Hammer.  
       b. Womit arbeitest du?  
       c. \*Ich arbeite zusammen mit einem Hammer.

[6.15] Both of these reading are non-governed prepositional phrases because the *damit, dass* periphrasis is not possible (6.15). Another characteristic of such non-governed *mit* is that it can be replaced by the negative *ohne*, of course with a negated meaning (6.16).

- (6.15) a. \*Ich arbeite damit, dass er hilft.  
       b. \*Ich arbeite damit, dass es funktioniert.
- (6.16) a. Ich arbeite ohne meinen Freund.  
       b. Ich arbeite ohne einen Hammer.

[6.16] The non-governed comitative and instrumental interpretation of *mit* can be added to practically every verb, given a sensible context. In those contexts, the comitative and instrumental roles are not lexical roles, in the sense that they describe a role that is not specific for the main verb of the sentence. However, many verbs have a *mit* prepositional phrase that expresses a lexeme-specific role. With those verbs the *mit* phrase is an argument. This occurs in the following situations (with some verbs allowing for multiple options):

- Verbs, like *kämpfen* ‘to fight’ (6.17 a), for which the *mit* prepositional phrase is a governed preposition, i.e. it can be replaced by a *damit, dass* complement clause and it is difficult to drop, see Sections 6.3.1, 6.5.7, 6.7.12 and with reflexive pronouns in Section 7.5.7.
- Verbs, like *überraschen* ‘to surprise’ (6.17 b), for which the *mit* prepositional phrase shows an alternation with a nominative subject, see Sections 6.5.5, 6.5.4, 6.5.7 and with reflexive pronouns in Section 7.5.7.
- Verbs, like *füllen* ‘to fill’ (6.17 c), for which the *mit* prepositional phrase shows an alternation with an accusative object, see Sections 6.7.12, 6.7.8.5, 6.7.8.6, 6.9.2, with reflexive pronouns in Section 7.7.3 and with preverbs in Sections 8.7.8, 8.8.10, 8.9.1
- Verbs, like *einigen* ‘to agree’ (6.17 d), for which the *mit* prepositional phrase expresses a lexical-specific reciprocal role as indicated by the option to use *miteinander*, see Section 6.3.6, 6.7.8.6 and with reflexive pronouns in Section 7.3.3, 7.7.3.

- (6.17) a. Ich kämpfe mit der Krankheit.  
Ich kämpfe damit, dass ich krank bin.
- b. Du überrascht mich mit dem Geschenk.  
Das Geschenk überrascht mich.
- c. Er füllt die Flasche mit Schnaps.  
Er füllt den Schnaps in die Flasche.
- d. Ich einige mich mit dir.  
Wir einigen uns miteinander.

### 6.2.5 Purposive/beneficiary *für*

The preposition *für* has a BENEFICIARY reading with human participants and a more general PURPOSIVE interpretation with non-human participants. Beneficiary *für* often appears in alternation with a dative (6.18 a,b), see Section 6.7.11. However, a beneficiary *für* is possible with many more verbs as an adverbial phrase (6.18 c), with such a dative alternation being impossible (6.18 d). [6.17]

- (6.18) a. Ich kaufe ein Buch für dich.
- b. Ich kaufe dir ein Buch.
- c. Ich arbeite für dich.
- d. \* Ich arbeite dir

Adverbial purposive *für* can be used with almost all verbs and can be identified by the possibility to be paraphrased by an *um zu-Infinitiv* phrase (6.19 a,b). In this usage, it is also possible to use the paraphrase *dafür, dass* (6.19 c). This is an obvious exception to the claim that this paraphrase identifies governed prepositions. [6.18]

- (6.19) a. Ich arbeite für ein besseres Leben.
- b. Ich arbeite um ein besseres Leben zu bekommen.
- c. Ich arbeite dafür, dass ich ein besseres Leben bekomme.

### 6.2.6 Causal *durch* and *von*

The preposition *durch*, roughly meaning ‘through’ in its spatial meaning (6.20 a), has a wide-spread adverbial usage describing a CAUSE (6.20 b). In this non-governed adverbial usage it is often still possible to use the paraphrase *dadurch, dass* (6.20 c). Together with purposive *für* from the previous section, this is a second exception to the claim that this *da*-paraphrase is an indication of governed usage. [6.19]

- (6.20) a. Ich laufe durch den Regen.
- b. Ich verspäte mich durch den Regen.
- c. Ich verspäte mich dadurch, dass es regnet.

The preposition *von*, roughly meaning ‘from’ in its spatial meaning (6.21 a), can also be used for a cause (6.21 b). In this non-governed causal usage it is likewise possible to use the [6.20]

paraphrase *davon, dass* (6.21 c). This is the third (and last) exception to the test that the *da*-paraphrase is an indication of governed usage.

- (6.21) a. Sie kommt von dem Arzt.  
 b. Sie erwachte von dem Regen.  
 c. Sie erwachte davon, dass es regnete.

[6.21] This causal *durch* and *von* are also found in passives (6.22 a) as a way to express the demoted agent. Actually, this usage of *von* and *durch* in passives can be seen as an instance of a regular causal usage (6.22) and might thus not be an integral part of the passive construction (see Section 10.5.16 on the *werden* passive).

- (6.22) a. Der Sturm zerstörte das Haus.  
 b. Das Haus wurde zerstört durch den Sturm.  
 c. Das Haus wurde dadurch zerstört, dass es vernachlässigt wurde.

### 6.2.7 Adnominal prepositional phrases

[6.22] Prepositional phrases can of course also be used adnominally, i.e. they modify another noun phrase. In such situations they are not governed by the verb. In some rare examples there is potential ambiguity between a governed and an adnominal prepositional phrase (6.23 a,b).

- (6.23) a. In seinem Korb knabbert [der Hund] [an der Leine].  
 b. In seinem Korb knabbert [der Hund an der Leine].

## 6.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

[6.23] There are a few verbs that necessarily need a governed preposition. The number of such obligatory verb-preposition combinations is surprisingly small in German. Most governed prepositional phrases can easily be dropped or show other alternations (as discussed in the remainder of this chapter). Most verbs that obligatorily occur together with a preposition have developed a special meaning for the verb+preposition combination, like *kommen auf* 'to conceive' vs. *kommen* 'to come' (6.24 a,b) and *brechen mit* 'to cease relations' vs. *brechen* 'to break' (6.24 c,d)

- (6.24) a. Ich komme nicht auf die Lösung.  
 b. Ich komme gleich nach Hause.  
 c. Er bricht mit seiner Vergangenheit.  
 d. Er bricht das Brot.

[6.24] Only very few verbs seem to have an obligatory preposition and no other meaning without the preposition, like *appellieren* 'to appeal' (6.25 a,b) and *gewöhnen* 'to accustom' (6.25 c,d).

- (6.25) a. Er appelliert an dein Gewissen.  
 b. \*Er appelliert.  
 c. Er gewöhnt seinen Sohn an den Geschmack.  
 d. \*Er gewöhnt seinen Sohn.

### 6.3.1 [ NP ] Governed preposition

This section summarises verbs that obligatorily need a governed preposition. Some examples, like *bauen* ‘to build’ (6.26 a) have multiple meanings. When they are listed here, then the claim is that the usage with a preposition induces a different lexical meaning, like *bauen auf* ‘to count on’ (6.26 b). This preposition is a governed preposition (6.26 c). [6.25]

- (6.26) a. Ich baue ein Haus.  
 b. Ich baue auf deine Unterstützung.  
 c. Ich baue darauf, dass du mich unterstützt.

Not all collocations of verbs with a preposition are governed phrases. For example, *stehen vor* (6.27 a) and *stehen zu* (6.27 b) are governed, while *stehen zur Diskussion* (6.27 c) is not. [6.26]

- (6.27) a. Die Firma stand vor der Übergabe an einen Manager.  
 Der Planet Krypton steht kurz davor, zu explodieren.  
 b. Ich stehe zu meiner Zusage.  
 Ich stehe dazu, daß wir nicht statistikorientiert arbeiten.<sup>1</sup>  
 c. Das Problem steht zur Diskussion.  
 \* Das Problem steht dazu, daß ...

#### Attested Verbs

[6.27]

- an : *appellieren*
- auf : *achten (aufpassen), bauen, bestehen, hoffen, kommen, vertrauen*
- aus : *bestehen*
- bei : *bleiben*
- für : *sprechen*
- mit : *brechen (sich abwenden), kämpfen, spielen*
- über : *handeln*
- von : *handeln, kommen*
- vor : *stehen*
- zu : *neigen, passen, stehen*

#### Further Examples

[6.28]

- Ich bestehe auf eine Hochzeit.
- Ich achte auf die Kinder.
- Sie bleibt bei ihrer Überzeugung.
- Mein Körper besteht aus Knochen.
- Die Verhältnisse sprechen für ein baldiges Ende.
- Der Schaden kam von dem Sturm.
- Ich kämpfe mit der Krankheit.
- Ich spiele mit dem Gedanken.
- Sie bricht mit ihrer Familie.
- Die Farbe passt zu dir.

#### Notes

[6.29]

[6.30]

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<sup>1</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 05.11.1996.

The combination *handeln Über* is attested (6.28 a), but infrequent. *handeln von* seems to be preferred (6.28 b).

- (6.28) a. Ihre Texte handeln über Dinge, die sie jetzt beschäftigen.<sup>2</sup>  
 b. Das Buch handelt von der Vergangenheit.

### 6.3.2 [ NAP ] Governed preposition+accusative

[6.31] Some verbs, like *erinnern* ‘to remind’ (6.29), combine a governed preposition with an accusative argument.

- (6.29) a. Ich erinnere dich an den Termin.  
 b. Ich erinnere dich daran, dass du einen Termin hast.

#### [6.32] Attested Verbs

- an : *erinnern, gewöhnen, wenden*
- über : *aufklären*
- für : *ausgeben (bezeichnen)*
- mit : *begründen*

#### [6.33] Further Examples

- Er gewöhnt seinen Sohn an den Geschmack.
- Er hat viel Arbeit an das Haus gewandt.<sup>3</sup>
- Er hat mich über die Lage aufgeklärt.
- Sie gab ihren Sohn für einen Künstler aus.
- Ich begründe meine schlechte Leistung mit einer Krankheit.

### 6.3.3 [ NL ] Obligatory local preposition

[6.34] Some verbs appear to have an obligatory locational argument, like *wohnen* ‘to live’ (6.30), cf. the classes ‘Extent’ and ‘Location’ in Gamerschlag (2014: 319-321).

- (6.30) a. Sie wohnt in Berlin.  
 b. \* Sie wohnt.

#### [6.35] Attested Verbs

- *entspringen, münden, spielen (zutragen), wohnen, übernachten, zeigen*

#### [6.36] Further Examples

- Der Wegweiser zeigt nach Norden.
- Der Fluss entspringt aus den Bergen.
- Der Rhein mündet in die Nordsee.
- Der Film spielt in Italien.

<sup>2</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 21.12.2005, Nr. 51.

<sup>3</sup>Attested at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/wenden>, accessed 18 April 2022.

### 6.3.4 [ NAL ] Obligatory local preposition+accusative

The most obvious verbs in this class are historical ablaut causatives like *legen* ‘to lay, to put down’ (6.31 b) of posture verbs like *liegen* ‘to lie’ (6.31 a). More examples are attested with obligatory reflexive pronoun, see Section 7.3.4. [6.37]

- (6.31) a. Der Hund liegt im Korb.  
b. Er legt den Hund in den Korb.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.38]

- Verbs with ablaut causatives: *legen, setzen, stellen*
- Verbs forcing something away: *drängen, scheuchen, schütten, treiben*
- Others: *verbringen*

#### Further Examples

[6.39]

- Ich stecke einen Schatz in ein Versteck.
- Ich scheuche die Mücken aus dem Haus.
- Ich rücke die Stühle zur Seite.
- Ich treibe die Kühe auf die Wiese.
- Ich dränge ihn in die Ecke.
- Ich verbringe meine Ferien in Italien.

### 6.3.5 [ NP ] Accusative *es*+governed preposition

The verb *belassen bei* ‘to rest a matter with’ (6.32) appears to have an obligatorily empty accusative pronoun *es*. Such non-phoric pronouns *es* mostly appears as a fall-back mechanism for missing subjects (see Section 2.2.3). However, with this verb it is used for a missing object. It does not seem to be possible to use any phoric object with this verb. [6.40]

- (6.32) a. Die Polizistin belässt es bei einer Verwarnung.  
b. Die Polizistin belässt es dabei, mich zu verwarnen.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.41]

- auf : *absehen*
- bei : *belassen*

#### Further Examples

[6.42]

- Ich habe es auf ihn abgesehen.
- Ich belasse es bei einer Warnung.

### 6.3.6 [ Np ] Bare reciprocal *mit*

A few verbs have a special obligatory reciprocal role marked with the preposition *mit* (cf. [6.43] Wiemer & Nedjalkov 2007: 497), e.g. *kooperieren* ‘to cooperate’ (6.33 a), which can normally not be used with a singular subject without the *mit* phrase (6.33 b). Such verbs can be identified by the alternative formulation with a plural subject and the reciprocal marker



*miteinander* (6.33 c), but not with *sich* (6.33 d). It is possible to add an additional comitative prepositional phrase *zusammen mit*, but not as an alternative for the reciprocal role (6.33 e).

- (6.33) a. Karl kooperiert mit Anna.  
 b. \*Karl kooperiert.  
 c. Karl und Anna kooperieren miteinander.  
 d. \*Karl und Anna kooperieren sich.  
 e. Karl kooperiert mit Anna [zusammen mit seinem Freund].

[6.44] **Attested Verbs**

- *anstoßen (zuprosten), debattieren, diskutieren, fechten, kämpfen, kommunizieren, konkurrieren, kooperieren, korrespondieren, ringen, rivalisieren, spielen, streiten, unterhandeln, verhandeln, wetteifern*

[6.45] **Further Examples**

- Karl debattiert mit Anna.  
Karl und Anna debattieren miteinander.
- Karl streitet mit Anna.  
Karl und Anna streiten miteinander.
- Karl hat mit seinem Freund angestoßen.  
Karl und sein Freund haben miteinander angestoßen.

## 6.4 Alternations without diathesis

[6.46] This section is empty. It is only added here for the numbering to be parallel across chapters. By definition, alternations without diathesis do not exist for covert alternations as discussed in this chapter. In other chapters this section will be well represented by many examples.

## 6.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

— [ SBJ > Ø ] —

### 6.5.1 [ NP | -P ] Nominative drop+governed preposition

[6.47] With verbs like *abhängen von* ‘depend on’ the nominative can be dropped, and a valency-simulating pronoun *es* is inserted (6.34 a,b). This pronoun *es* is not referential with verbs like this. For an apparently similar verb like *zeugen von* ‘to be evidence of’ this is different (6.34 c,d): with this verb the pronoun *es* can only be interpreted referentially (‘phoric’), so it does not belong in this class.

- (6.34) a. Mein Leben hängt von dir ab.  
 b. Jetzt hängt es ganz von dir ab.  
 c. Das Resultat zeugt von deinem Einsatz.  
 d. Es zeugt von deinem Einsatz.

[6.48] **Attested Verbs**

- von : *abhängen, wimmeln*
- zu : *kommen*
- an : *hapern*
- bei : *hapern*

### Further Examples

[6.49]

- Der Platz wimmelt von Kindern.  
Hier wimmelt es von Kindern.
- Ich komme zu einem harmlosen Ergebnis.  
Gestern kam es zu einem Streit.

### Notes

[6.50]

Some dictionaries list *hapern an* ‘to be lacking’ as having obligatory *es* (6.35 a). However, in corpora there are various examples with a nominative subject (6.35 b,c). [6.51]

- (6.35) a. Es hapert an der Versorgung.<sup>4</sup>  
 b. Denn der Vergleich hapert immer.<sup>5</sup>  
 c. Eine mögliche Wiedergeburt der Grünen [...] hapert an drei Stellen.<sup>6</sup>  
 d. Nur bei den Bässen hapert der Nachschub.<sup>7</sup>

— [ SBJ > ADJ ] —

### 6.5.2 [ ND | pD ] Nominative demotion+dative

Incidental verbs with nominative and dative arguments allow the nominative to be changed into a prepositional phrase with *an*, while at the same time the dative will be retained, like with *fehlen* ‘to lack’ (6.36 a,b). The result is a construction without nominative, so a pronoun *es* is inserted. [6.52]

- (6.36) a. Das Geld fehlt ihm.  
 b. Ihm fehlt es an Geld.

### Attested Verbs

[6.53]

- an: *fehlen, mangeln*

### Further Examples

[6.54]

- Leider mangelt ihm jeglicher Stolz.  
Ihm mangelt es an Stolz.

<sup>4</sup>Attested at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/hapern>, accessed 23 April 2022.

<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 29.12.2010, Nr. 52.

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 26.03.2001.

<sup>7</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 19.03.1993, Nr. 12.

### 6.5.3 [ N- | pD ] Nominative demotion+dative addition

[6.55] Some verbs take a nominative argument with non-sentient arguments (6.37 a), but a dative experiencer can only be used with the nominative demoted (6.37 b). This only seems to occur with predicative constructions with copula *sein*. Maybe this diathesis is better analysed as a stack of two separate changes: a dropping of the nominative and an addition of the dative, with (6.37 c) being an intermediate construction.

- (6.37) a. Der Sommer ist kalt.  
 b. Mir ist kalt (im Sommer).  
 c. Es ist kalt (im Sommer).

#### [6.56] Attested Verbs

- *kalt sein, langweilig sein, zum Heulen sein*

#### [6.57] Further Examples

- Mir ist zum Heulen im Sommer.  
 Der Sommer ist zum Heulen.
- Mir ist langweilig im Sommer.  
 Der Sommer ist langweilig.

## – [ ADJ > SBJ > Ø ] – *Instrumentsubjektivierung*

### 6.5.4 [ Np | -N ] Intransitive conciliative

[6.58] A CONCILIATIVE (from Lat. *conciliator*, ‘intermediary/mediator’) is a diathesis in which an instrument-like artefact is promoted to nominative subject. This instrument is an intermediate that is used by an agent to reach a certain goal. For intransitive verbs a (non-governed) prepositional constituent alternates with a nominative subject (6.38 a,b).

- (6.38) a. Er klappert mit der Tür.  
 b. Die Tür klappert.

[6.59] With some verbs the old nominative can be retained as genitive possessor of the new nominative (6.39 b). Because of this possessor, the alternation is referred to by Levin (1993: 77) as “Possessor Subject”. However, the old nominative and genitive possessor need not be the same participant (6.39 c), so this should not be seen as a definitional characteristic. The possessor (if present) in turn can show an alternation with a dative for some verbs (6.39 d), see Section 5.8.3.

- (6.39) a. Ich passe in den Anzug.  
 b. Mein Anzug passt.  
 c. Ich passe in deinen Anzug.  
 d. Mir passt der Anzug.

#### [6.60] Attested Verbs

- mit : (Noise production) *klappern, klingeln, quietschen, rasseln, rattern*
- an : *zunehmen*

- in : *passen*

#### Further Examples

[6.61]

- Er quietscht mit den Reifen.  
Die Reifen quietschen.
- Er rasselt mit den Ketten.  
Die Ketten rasseln.
- Wir ratterten mit dem Bus ins Inselinnere.  
Der Bus ratterte ins Inselinnere.
- Der Sturm nimmt an Stärke zu.  
Die Stärke des Sturmes nimmt zu.

### 6.5.5 [ NpA | –NA ] Transitive conciliative

This diathesis removes the agent and promotes the *mit* instrument to a nominative (6.40 a,b). [6.62] The accusative argument remains unchanged. With some verbs the original nominative can be retained as possessor of the new nominative. However, just like with the previous alternation, this characteristic is not definitional for this diathesis.

- (6.40) a. Der Doktor heilt die Wunde mit einer Salbe.  
b. Die Salbe des Doktors heilt die Wunde.

The instrumental *mit* phrase is a real non-governed instrument, i.e. an inanimate artefact [6.63] that is used by the agent to achieve a certain goal. A further structural argument for the status as instrument is that the preposition *mit* can be replaced by *ohne*. This defines the differentiation between this diathesis and a fabricative (see Section 6.5.7). In a fabricative, the *mit* phrase (i) is a governed preposition, i.e. it can be replaced by a sentence starting with *damit*, *dass*, (ii) designates something that the agent has fabricated, and (iii) cannot be replaced by *ohne*.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.64]

- Instruments of destruction: *mahlen, schneiden, zerbrechen, zerschneiden, zerstören*
- Instruments of killing and healing: *ersticken, heilen, töten, umbringen*
- Instruments of physical action: *beladen, füllen, öffnen, schließen*
- Instruments of adornment: *anleuchten, bedecken, gliedern, schmücken, verschmutzen, verstopfen*

#### Further Examples

[6.65]

- Ich treffe den Nagel mit einem Hammer.  
Der Hammer trifft einen Nagel.
- Ich öffne die Tür mit dem Schlüssel.  
Der Schlüssel öffnet die Tür.
- Ich zerstöre das Gebäude mit einer Bombe.  
Meine Bombe zerstört das Gebäude.
- Ich fülle meinen Magen mit Reis.  
Der Reis füllt meinen Magen.
- Ich schmücke den Baum mit Kugeln.  
Die Kugeln schmücken den Baum.

- Ich verstopfe den Durchfluss mit Steinen.  
Die Steine verstopfen den Durchfluss.
- Ich verschmutze die Küche mit dem Sand unter meinen Schuhen.  
Der Sand verschmutzt die Küche.
- Der Mörder erstickt den Mann mit einem Kissen.  
Das Kissen erstickt den Mann.
- Der Mörder tötet den Mann mit einem Messer.  
Das Messer tötet den Mann.
- Du leuchtest mich an mit der Lampe.  
Die Lampe leuchtet mich an.
- Ich bedecke den Tisch mit einem Tuch.  
Das Tuch bedeckt den Tisch.
- Ich mahle die Kaffeebohnen mit der Maschine.  
Die Maschine mahlt die Kaffeebohnen.
- Ich gliedere den Garten mit Baumreihen.  
Baumreihen gliedern den Garten.

[6.66] **Notes**

[6.67] Not all instruments allow for this diathesis (6.41). This difference suggests that there are at least two different kinds of ‘instruments’ (cf. Hooste 2018).

- (6.41) a. Ich belade den Laster mit einem Kran.  
b. Der Kran belädt den Laster.  
c. Ich belade den Laster mit meinen Händen.  
d. \* Meine Hände beladen den Laster.

**6.5.6 [ NpA | –Np ] Ingredient conciliative**

[6.68] This alternation takes a (non-governed) prepositional phrase and turns it into a nominative. However, different from the previous anticausatives, the original nominative agent cannot be retained, and the original accusative is transformed into a prepositional phrase with *nach*.

- (6.42) a. Ich schmecke Pfefferminze in der Suppe.  
b. Die Suppe schmeckt nach Pfefferminze.

[6.69] **Attested Verbs**

- *riechen, schmecken*

[6.70] **Further Examples**

- Ich rieche Blume im Parfüm.  
Der Parfüm riecht nach Blume.

**– [ PBJ > SBJ > Ø ] – Kreationssubjektivierung****6.5.7 [ NPA | –NA ] Transitive fabricative**

[6.71]

A FABRICATIVE (from Lat *fabrica*, ‘plan, trick, workmanship’) is a diathesis that superficially looks very similar to a conciliative (Section 6.5.4) because in both diatheses a *mit* prepositional phrase is promoted to nominative subject. The central difference is that in a fabricative diathesis the *mit* prepositional phrase is a governed preposition. This structural difference has a parallel semantic difference in that the fabricative *mit* phrase is an object that is produced by the agent.

This diathesis occurs (among others) with verbs of emotional interactions like *überraschen* ‘to surprise’ (6.43 a). To understand this diathesis, a distinction is needed between the role of the ‘fabricator’, who produces the thing that evokes the emotion (here: *Lehrer*, ‘teacher’) and the role of the ‘fabricated product’, which induces the emotion (here: *Aufgabe*, ‘assignment’). The fabricator can be expressed with an adnominal genitive (‘possessor’) of the product (6.43 a,b). The *mit* prepositional phrase expressing the fabricated product in (6.43 a) is a governed preposition (8.104 c). As a result of the diathesis, the fabricated product is promoted to nominative subject and the fabricator is removed from the expression (6.43 a,b). The experiencer in the accusative *mich* remains unchanged.

- (6.43) a. Der Lehrer überrascht mich mit seiner Aufgabe.  
 b. Die Aufgabe (des Lehrers) überrascht mich.  
 c. Der Lehrer überrascht mich damit, dass er die Aufgabe schon korrigiert hat.

There is a large overlap (but also an interesting difference) between the verbs that allow for this diathesis and the verbs that allow for a reflexive variant (6.44 c), see Section 7.5.7. Some verbs, like *ärgern* ‘to irritate’ in (6.44) allow for both diatheses, but other verbs only take part in one or the other diathesis.

- (6.44) a. Du ärgerst mich mit deinen Witzen.  
 b. Deine Witze ärgern mich.  
 c. Ich ärgere mich über deine Witze.

#### Attested Verbs

- Verbs of emotional interaction: *ärgern, belustigen, begeistern, empören, erfreuen, erheitern, erschrecken, erstaunen, stören, trösten, überraschen, unterhalten, verblüffen, verwirren, quälen*
- Verbs of relaxation: *beruhigen, entspannen*
- Verbs of influence: *beschäftigen, bewirken*
- Verbs of proof: *bestätigen, beweisen, erklären, rechtfertigen*

#### Further Examples

- Die Späße des Komikers belustigten das Publikum.  
Der Komiker belustigte das Publikum mit seinen Späßen.
- Der Blumenstrauß erfreut den Mann.  
Ich erfreue den Mann mit einem Blumenstrauß.
- Deine Aussagen verwirren mich.  
Ich verwirre dich mit meinen Aussagen.
- Der Lärm des Zuges ärgert mich.  
Der Zug ärgert mich mit seinem Lärm.
- Deine Witze beschäftigen/entspannen mich.  
Du beschäftigst/entspannst mich mit deinen Witzen.

- Der Brief des Entführers erschreckt mich.  
Der Entführer erschreckt mich mit einem Brief.
- Der Brief beweist/bestätigt/erklärt/rechtfertigt meine Unschuld.  
Ich beweise/bestätige/erkläre/rechtfertige meine Unschuld mit dem Brief.

[6.76] **Notes**

[6.77] For a detailed discussion of the verb *erschrecken* and possible morphophonological differences between the two alternants, see Plank & Lahiri (Plank & Lahiri 2015: 29-31).

**6.5.8 [ NP | -N ] Intransitive fabricative**

[6.78] The verb *drängen* ‘to urge’ (6.45) shows a special diathesis which is a variant of the previous fabricative. In this case, the role expressed with the governed preposition *auf* (6.45 a,b) is turned into a nominative with a meaning of ‘to be urgent’ (6.45 c).

- (6.45) a. Ich dränge auf eine Änderung.  
b. Ich dränge darauf, dass die Regelung geändert wird.  
c. Die Änderung drängt.

[6.79] **Attested Verbs**

- *drängen*

**6.5.9 [ NPD | -ND ] Fabricative+dative**

[6.80] The verb *drohen* ‘to threaten’ (6.46) exhibits a fabricative diathesis with an additional dative argument. The governed preposition *mit* (6.46 a,b) can be turned into a nominative (6.46 c).

- (6.46) a. Er droht mir mit Entlassung.  
b. Er droht mir damit, dass ich entlassen werde.  
c. Die Entlassung droht mir.

[6.81] **Attested Verbs**

- *drohen*

**— [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] — Ortsantikausativ****6.5.10 [ NAL | -NL ] *haben* Anticausative+location**

[6.82] Some verbs allow for both an intransitive stative location (6.47 a) and caused location (6.47 b) construction. I analyse these verbs as anticausatives (cf. Section 5.5.5 for a similar diathesis without an obligatory locational phrase).

- (6.47) a. Ich hänge den Pullover in den Schrank.  
b. Der Pullover hängt im Schrank.

[6.83]

These verbs use a *haben* perfect both in the intransitive and transitive usage (6.48 a,b). The *Zustandspassiv* of the transitive is also possible, leading to another intransitive construction with the auxiliary *sein* (6.48 c).

- (6.48) a. Ich habe den Teller an den Tisch geklebt.  
 b. Der Teller hat am Tisch geklebt.  
 c. Der Teller ist am Tisch geklebt.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.84]

- *hängen, klappen, kleben, lehnen, stecken, treiben*

#### Further Examples

[6.85]

- Ich habe das Buch in meine Tasche gesteckt.  
 Das Buch steckt in meiner Tasche.
- Ich klebe den Zettel an die Tür.  
 Der Zettel klebt an der Tür.
- Ich lehne den Besen an den Zaun.  
 Der Besen lehnt am Zaun.
- Ich stecke den Brief in den Briefkasten.  
 Der Brief steckt im Briefkasten.
- Ich treibe ihn aus dem Haus.  
 Er treibt im Wasser.
- Er klappt den Sitz nach hinten.  
 Der Sitz klappt nach hinten. Der Sitz ist nach hinten geklappt.

#### Notes

[6.86]

The verb *hängen* still shows the difference between transitive causative and intransitive stative usage through different forms of the past *hing* vs. *hängte* (6.49 a,b) and the participle *gehangen* vs. *gehängt* (6.49 c,d). Many speakers of German do not appear to have clear intuitions about any difference between these two inflectional alternatives anymore (see also Plank & Lahiri 2015: 32-33).

[6.87]

- (6.49) a. Der Pullover hing im Schrank.  
 b. ? Ich hängte den Pullover in den Schrank.  
 c. Der Pullover hat im Schrank gehangen.  
 d. Ich habe den Pullover in den Schrank gehängt.

### 6.5.11 [ NA- | -NP ] Anticausative+preposition addition

The verb *deuten* (6.50) shows a special diathesis in which the accusative is turned into a nominative, but only with an additional obligatory *auf* prepositional phrase (6.50 a,b). The preposition *auf* is a governed preposition (6.50 b,c). Although clearly related, these two uses of *deuten* are semantically already quite far apart, meaning approximately ‘to interpret’ (6.50 a) vs. ‘to forebode’ (6.50 b).

[6.88]

- (6.50) a. Ich deute den Traum.  
 b. Der Traum deutet auf nichts Gutes.  
 c. Der Traum deutet darauf, dass morgen alles wieder gut sein wird.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.89]

- *deuten*



## 6.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

– [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] – *Ortskausativ*

### 6.6.1 [ –NL | NAL ] *sein* Causative+location

[6.90] Though superficially similar to the *haben* anticausatives (see Section 6.5.10), the verbs in this section are different in that they only have the option of a *sein* perfect for the intransitive (6.51 a,b). The transitive causative diathesis takes *haben* in the perfect (6.51 c).

- (6.51) a. Der Elefant ist ins Wasser gestürzt.  
 b. \*Der Elefant hat ins Wasser gestürzt.  
 c. Ich habe den Elefanten ins Wasser gestürzt.

[6.91] This alternation is strongly reminiscent of the *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 10.5.17), but there is a crucial difference in that with *stürzen* ‘to plunge’ both the transitive (6.52 a,b) and the intransitive (6.52 c,d) can occur in the present tense. This is crucially different from regular transitive verbs with a *Zustandspassiv*, like *putzen* ‘to clean’ (6.53), for which an intransitive present is not possible (6.53 d).

- (6.52) a. Ich habe den Elefanten ins Wasser gestürzt.  
 b. Ich stürze den Elefanten ins Wasser.  
 c. Der Elefant ist ins Wasser gestürzt.  
 d. Der Elefant stürzt ins Wasser.

- (6.53) a. Ich habe den Tisch geputzt.  
 b. Ich putze den Tisch.  
 c. Der Tisch ist geputzt.  
 d. \*Der Tisch putzt.

#### [6.92] Attested Verbs

- *fahren, hetzen, rücken, stürzen, ziehen*

#### [6.93] Further Examples

- Der Hund ist durch den Wald gehetzt.  
 Der Hund hat den Hasen durch den Wald gehetzt.
- Ich rücke den Tisch zur Seite.  
 Die Soldaten rücken in die Kaserne.<sup>8</sup>
- Das hohe Gehalt zieht ihn nach Australien.  
 Er zieht nach Australien.
- Er hat uns nach Hause gefahren.  
 Wir sind nach Hause gefahren.

#### [6.94] Notes

[6.95] The alternation with the verb *rücken* ‘to move over’ and *ziehen* ‘to pull’ are rather idiosyncratic. Possibly, these alternations constructions are better seen as different verbs.

<sup>8</sup> Attested on <https://www.dwds.de/wb/rücken>, accessed 23 April 2022.

### 6.6.2 [ -NL | NAL ] *Umlaut* Causative+location

Vestiges of the old Germanic causative suffix *-jan* can still be found in some verb pairs in contemporary German, as illustrated with the pair *liegen/legen* ‘to lie/to lay’ (6.54). The verbs in this section obligatorily need a location. Similar causative verb pairs without obligatory location are discussed in Section 5.6.3. [6.96]

- (6.54) a. Der Hund liegt in dem Korb.  
b. Ich lege den Hund in den Korb.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.97]

- *liegen/legen, schwimmen/schwemmen, sitzen/setzen, stehen/stellen*

#### Further Examples

[6.98]

- Das Pferd schwimmt im Fluss.  
Er schwemmte die Pferde im Fluss.<sup>9</sup>

## 6.7 Diatheses with object demotion

There are two different kinds of object demotions that involve prepositional phrases. First, there are many verbs with governed prepositions (6.55 a,b) that allow for the governed prepositional phrase to be dropped (6.55 c). [6.99]

- (6.55) a. Ich träume von dir.  
b. Ich träume davon, dass ich dich treffe.  
c. Ich träume.

Second, there are prepositional antipassives in which a case-marked argument alternates with a prepositional phrase (6.56 a,b). Note that with antipassives this prepositional phrase cannot be reformulated with a *da+preposition*, *dass* phrase (6.56 c). [6.100]

- (6.56) a. Ich schieße den Bären.  
b. Ich schieße auf den Bären.  
c. \*Ich schieße darauf, dass der Bär kommt.

There are just a few deobjective ‘drop’-alternations that are missing, and these missing alternations suggest an interesting generalisation. Missing are the alternations [NAP | N-P], [NPD | N-D] and (from the previous chapter) [NAD | N-D]. These apparently dispreferred alternations suggest that a dative argument has to be dropped before a governed preposition can be dropped, and likewise, a governed preposition has to be dropped before an accusative argument can be dropped, i.e. there is a deobjective hierarchy (6.57 a). [6.101]

- (6.57) Deobjective hierarchy: dative > preposition > accusative

A similar generalisation can be made for antipassives. If a verb has various case marked objects, then dative and genitive objects can have an antipassive alternation. In contrast, an accusative can only have antipassive alternation when there are no genitive or dative [6.102]

<sup>9</sup> Attested on <https://www.dwds.de/wb/schwemmen>, accessed 23 April 2022.

arguments. Note that the drop hierarchy and the antipassive hierarchy are not contradictory, but there is currently insufficient evidence to claim that they are the same hierarchy.

(6.58) Antipassive hierarchy: dative/genitive > accusative

[6.103] Some verbs allow for both a dative and an accusative antipassive. There appears to be recurrent restrictions on the co-occurrence of accusative and dative prepositional alternations, with attested patterns as shown for *schießen* ‘to shoot’ in (6.59 a-f) and *schreiben* ‘to write’ (6.59 a-f). The generalisation seems to be (i) that the accusative cannot be demoted into a preposition when there is still a dative around and (ii) dative and accusative can only be both demoted to a preposition if one of the prepositions is *für* (this is a further indication that the *für*-to-dative diatheses are better analysed as promotions, see Section 6.8.9).

- (6.59) a. Ich schieße dir den Bären. [NAD]  
 b. Ich schieße für dich. [N-P]  
 c. Ich schieße auf den Bären. [NP-]  
 d. Ich schieße den Bären für dich. [NAP]  
 e. \*Ich schieße dir auf den Bären. [NPD]  
 f. Ich schieße für dich auf den Bären. [NPP]
- (6.60) a. Ich schreibe dir den Brief. [NAD]  
 b. Ich schreibe an dich. [N-P]  
 c. Ich schreibe an dem Brief. [NP-]  
 d. Ich schreibe den Brief an dich. [NAP]  
 e. \*Ich schreibe dir an dem Brief. [NPD]  
 f. \*Ich schreibe an dich an dem Brief. [NPP]

— [ PBJ > Ø ] —

### 6.7.1 [ NP | N- ] Governed preposition drop

[6.104] Governed prepositions that can be dropped are frequent. There are even various verbs that allow for different governed prepositions, like *sprechen über* and *sprechen von* in (6.61 a,b).

- (6.61) a. Die Leute sprechen über die Wahl.  
 Die Leute sprechen darüber, dass es einen neuen Präsidenten gibt.  
 b. Der Reporter spricht von einem historischen Ereignis.  
 Der Reporter spricht davon, dass es ein historisches Ereignis ist.

[6.105] **Attested Verbs**

- über : (Object of control) *siegen, triumphieren*
- über : (Content of report) *lügen, reden, sprechen, schweigen*
- über : (Content of cognitive process) *denken, meditieren, nachdenken*
- über : (Object of emotional reaction) *klagen, lachen, schimpfen, staunen, streiten, weinen*
- von : (Content of report) *reden, sprechen*
- von : (Content of cognitive process) *träumen*
- auf : (Object of expectation) *drängen, hoffen, rechnen, verzichten, warten*

- auf : (Object of emotional reaction) *schimpfen*
- nach : (Object of smell/taste) *duften, riechen, stinken, schnüffeln, schmecken*
- vor : (Object of emotional reaction) *platzen, rasen (Emotion), schreien*
- an : *arbeiten, denken, scheitern, sterben, teilnehmen, zweifeln*
- um : *streiten*

#### Further Examples

[6.106]

- Ich rede über die Angelegenheit.
- Ich spreche von den Plänen.
- Ich rede von den Plänen.
- Ich träume von Ferien.
- Ich höre von den Plänen.
- Ich nehme an der Feier teil.
- Ich sterbe an einer Grippe.
- Ich zweifle an meinen Fähigkeiten.
- Ich dränge auf eine Feier.
- Ich hoffe auf deine Feier.
- Ich rechne auf dich.
- Ich verzichte auf eine Feier.
- Ich warte auf eine Feier.
- Ich schimpfe auf dich.
- Der Müll stinkt nach Fisch.
- Ich streite um meine Freiheit.
- Ich rase vor Begeisterung.  
Mein Kopf rast.
- Ich platze vor Neugier.  
Der Ballon platzt.

#### 6.7.2 [ NAP | NA– ] Governed preposition drop+accusative

Some verbs allow for the governed preposition to be dropped, but not the accusative argument (6.62 a-c). [6.107]

- (6.62) a. Ich bereite dich auf die Klausur vor.  
 b. Ich bereite dich vor.  
 c. \* Ich bereite auf die Klausur vor.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.108]

- über : *behaupten, herrschen, erfahren*
- an : *beteiligen, erkennen, hindern, rächen*
- zu : *treffen*
- auf : *vorbereiten*
- von : *unterscheiden, verlangen*

#### Further Examples

[6.109]

- Ich behaupte das Gegenteil über die Angelegenheit.
- Ich hindere dich am Essen.
- Ich beteilige dich an dem Gewinn.

- Ich erkenne dich an dem Geruch.
- Ich räche das Verbrechen an dir.
- Ich bereite dich auf die Klausur vor.
- Ich treffe dich zu einem Glas Wein.
- Ich unterscheide A von B.
- Ich verlange Gehorsamkeit von dir.
- Ich erfahre Neuigkeiten über die Versammlung.
- Es herrscht Übereinstimmung über die Frage.

### 6.7.3 [ NL | N- ] Location preposition drop

[6.110] A special variant of a dropped preposition of is the removal of an obligatory locational phrase. The verb *steigen* ‘to mount’ has an obligatory locational phrase with an agentive subject (6.63 a,b). The analysis that the subject is agentive is reinforced by the impossibility for the participle to be used attributively without the locational phrase (6.63 c,d), cf. Section 10.2.3.

- (6.63) a. Der Mann steigt aus dem Auto.  
 b. \* Der Mann steigt.  
 c. Der aus dem Auto gestiegene Mann [...].  
 d. \* Der gestiegene Mann [...].

[6.111] Though crucially, the verb *steigen* can also be used without a locational phrase in the meaning ‘to rise’ (6.64 a) with various inanimate subjects.<sup>10</sup> In such uses the participle can be used attributively (6.64 b).

- (6.64) a. Die Temperatur steigt.  
 b. Die gestiegene Temperatur [...].

[6.112] The verbs that allow for such a diathesis have a clear difference in meaning between the two uses, one more agentive and the other more patientive (cf. Section 10.2.6).

- *eilen*: ‘to hurry’ vs. ‘to be urgent’
- *laufen*: ‘to walk’ vs. ‘to be in progress’
- *steigen*: ‘to mount’ vs. ‘to rise’
- *stehen*: ‘to stand’ vs. ‘to be stopped’
- *ziehen*: ‘to pull’ vs ‘to brew’

#### [6.113] Attested Verbs

- *eilen, laufen, steigen, stehen, ziehen*

#### [6.114] Further Examples

- Ich ziehe am Seil.  
Der Tee zieht.
- Ich stehe in der Wohnung.  
Die Uhr steht.
- Ich bin nach Hause gelaufen.  
Das Spiel ist gelaufen.
- Ich eile nach Hause. Der Brief eilt.

<sup>10</sup>I thank Jens Fleischhauer for this observation.

#### 6.7.4 [ NAL | NA– ] Location preposition drop+accusative

The verb *durchziehen* needs a location phrase when used in the meaning ‘to pull through’ (6.65 a), but not when it is used in the meaning ‘to see through’ (6.65 b). [6.115]

- (6.65) a. Ich habe den Faden durch das Nadelöhr durchgezogen.  
 b. ? Ich habe den Faden durchgezogen.  
 c. Ich habe die Reform durchgezogen.

##### Attested Verbs

[6.116]

- *durchziehen*

#### – [ OBJ > Ø ] –

#### 6.7.5 [ NAP | N–P ] Accusative drop+governed preposition

Different from the previous alternation, these verbs allow for both the preposition and the accusative to be dropped (6.66 a-c). [6.117]

- (6.66) a. Ich warne dich vor den Gefahren.  
 b. Ich warne dich.  
 c. Ich warne vor den Gefahren.

##### Attested Verbs

[6.118]

- über : (Content of report) *erzählen, hören, informieren, schreiben*
- von : (Origin of report) *erfahren, hören*
- vor : (Protection) *schützen, warnen*

##### Further Examples

[6.119]

- Ich informiere (die Anwesenden) über die Angelegenheit.
- Ich erzähle (die Geschichte) über die Angelegenheit.
- Ich schütze (die Menschheit) vor den Gefahren.
- Ich warne (dich) vor den Gefahren.

#### 6.7.6 [ NDP | N–P ] Dative drop+governed preposition

With a dative argument, some verbs allow for the dative to be dropped, but the preposition to be retained (6.67 a-c). This is the opposite structure as attested with accusative drop, as discussed above. [6.120]

- (6.67) a. Ich rate dir zum Verkauf.  
 b. \* Ich rate dir.  
 c. Ich rate zum Verkauf.

##### Attested Verbs

[6.121]

- zu : *raten*
- über : *berichten, erzählen*
- von : *berichten, erzählen*

##### Further Examples

[6.122]

- Ich berichte/erzähle (dir) über die Angelegenheit.
- Ich berichte/erzähle (dir) von der Versammlung.

### 6.7.7 [ NDP | N-- ] Dative drop+governed preposition drop

[6.123] Some verbs allow for both the dative and the preposition to be dropped, though mostly not both at the same time (6.68). Also note that the dative appears to be always the possessor of the referent in the prepositional phrase, so these drops might alternatively be analysed as a stack of two different diatheses, viz. a possessor raising [NP- | NPG | NPD] and a preposition drop [NPD | N-D].

- (6.68) a. Ich gratuliere dir zu deinem Geburtstag.  
 b. Ich gratuliere dir.  
 c. Ich gratuliere zu deinem Geburtstag.  
 d. ? Ich gratuliere.

#### [6.124] Attested Verbs

- zu : *gratulieren*
- bei : *zuschauen*
- für : *danken*
- auf : *antworten*

#### [6.125] Further Examples

- Ich gratuliere (dir) zu deinem Geburtstag.
- Ich schaue (dir) zu beim Kochen.
- Er dankt (mir) für den Wein.
- Er antwortet (dir) auf deine Frage.

### — [ OBJ > ADJ ] — *Akkusativ Antipassiv*

### 6.7.8 [ NA | Np ] Accusative antipassive

[6.126] A commonly occurring diathesis in German is an ANTIPASSIVE, in which an accusative object can be reformulated as a prepositional phrase. In such alternations, the construction with the prepositional phrase typically indicates a less transitive situation, e.g. one in which the object is less affected (6.69a) or the action only partially completed (6.69b). Note that this alternation does not work in the other direction, i.e. when a verb occurs with a prepositional phrase, then it is mostly not the case that it can be used with the same referent as an accusative (6.69c).

- (6.69) a. Ich schieße den Bären.  
           Ich schieße auf den Bären.  
 b. Ich baue ein Haus.  
       Ich baue an einem Haus.  
 c. Ich sitze auf dem Stuhl.  
     \* Ich sitze den Stuhl.

[6.127] There appear to be only a small selection of prepositions that can be used in such alternations, which will be discussed in turn in subsequent subsections.

- an : Partially completed action and/or bodily contact with object
- auf : Action in the direction of object or object as musical instrument

- aus : Object of reading
- in : Partially completed action inside object
- mit : Object as instrument or reciprocal activity
- nach : Less affected object of action in the direction of object
- von : Partial usage of object
- über : Object of control, communication, or cognitive content
- zu : Direction

It is important to realise that many verbs allow for more than one of these alternations, depending on the reading of the verb/object combination, illustrated here with the verb *spielen*, ‘to play’ (6.70 a,b). With the same verb, there might even be readings that do not allow for any prepositional alternation (6.70 c-e). [6.128]

- (6.70) a. Er spielt die Geige.  
           Er spielt auf der Geige.
- b. Er spielt den letzten Akt.  
           Er spielt in dem letzten Akt.
- c. Er spielt Billard.
- d. Er spielt einen Walzer.
- e. Er spielt den Narren.

Some verbs, like *beklagen* ‘to complain’ (6.71), additionally take a reflexive pronoun with an antipassive alternation (see Section 7.7.4). It is an open question why some verbs need such an additional reflexive pronoun in an antipassive diathesis. [6.129]

- (6.71) a. Ich beklage den Lärm.
- b. Ich beklage mich über den Lärm.

An antipassive diathesis has to be distinguished from differential object marking. With differential object marking (DOM) the marking of the object is determined by the object itself, typically by animacy. For example, the German verb *beißen* ‘to bite’ takes an accusative object with animate objects (6.72 a), while inanimate object need a prepositional phrase (6.72 b). Similar effect are attested with *zwicken* ‘to pinch’, *schlagen* ‘to hit’, *treten* ‘to kick’ and possibly *kratzen* ‘to scratch’ (Fleischhauer 2018). It seems to be a promising avenue of research to explain differential object marking as the result of a grammaticalised antipassive diathesis. [6.130]

- (6.72) a. Der Hund biss den Jungen.  
           ? Der Hund biss in den Jungen.
- b. Der Hund biss in den Knochen.  
           \* Der Hund biss den Knochen.

#### 6.7.8.1 *an* Antipassive

Accusative objects that alternate with an *an* prepositional phrase indicate partially completed actions, like with *bauen an* ‘to be busy building’ (6.73 a) and is also typically used [6.131]



when there is bodily contact to the object, like with *schlecken an* ‘to lick’ (6.73 b).

- (6.73) a. Ich baue ein Haus.  
           Ich baue an einem Haus.  
       b. Ich schlecke mein Eis.  
           Ich schlecke an meinem Eis.

[6.132] **Attested Verbs**

- Bodily contact: *fühlen, knabbern, kratzen, lutschen, riechen, saugen, schnüffeln, schlecken, schlürfen, schnuppern, stoßen, üben, ziehen, zupfen*
- Partial object construction: *basteln, bauen, graben, malen, nähen, stricken, schreiben*
- Gain/Loss: *gewinnen, verdienen, verlieren*

[6.133] **Further Examples**

- Ich knabbere meinen Keks.  
       Ich knabbere an meinem Keks.
- Ich schlürfe meinen Tee.  
       Ich schlürfe an meinem Tee.
- Ich fühle deinen heißen Kopf.  
       Ich fühle an deinem heißen Kopf.
- Ich rieche die Blume.  
       Ich rieche an der Blume.
- Ich zupfe die Saite.  
       Ich zupfe an einer Saite
- Ich male ein Bild.  
       Ich male an einem Bild.
- Ich schreibe einen Roman.  
       Ich schreibe an einem Roman.
- Ich grabe ein Loch.  
       Ich grabe an einem Loch.
- Wir schnuppern den guten Bratenduft.  
       Der Hund schnuppert an den Abfällen.

[6.134] **Notes**

[6.135] The verb *kratzen* ‘to scratch’ appears to lose the possibility to be used with an accusative inanimate object. Examples with an accusative like (6.74 a) are only attested in older German texts and sound strange in current German. It sounds much better with a dative possessor (6.74 b), see Section 5.8.4. With animate objects an accusative seems to be still possible (6.74 c), so this verb appears to be developing in the direction of showing differential object marking. With inanimate objects a prepositional phrase with *an* is preferred (6.74 d).

- (6.74) a. Er kratzte den Kopf.<sup>11</sup>  
       b. Ich kratze mir den Kopf.  
       c. Die Katze kratzt mich.  
       d. Die Katze kratzt an der Tür.

[6.136]

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: Hauptmann, Gerhart: *Der Narr in Christo Emanuel Quint*, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1962(1910), S. 318.

For the verb *verdienen* ‘to earn’ it is unclear whether these two uses should maybe better be categorised as different meanings (6.75 a,b).

- (6.75) a. Er verdient den Nobelpreis.  
b. Er verdient an dem Geschäft

Note the absence of a determiner in the following examples (6.76).

[6.137]

- (6.76) a. Ich gewinne Sicherheit.  
Ich gewinne an Sicherheit.  
b. Wir verlieren Höhe.  
Wir verlieren an Höhe.

### 6.7.8.2 *auf* Antipassive

Accusative objects that alternate with an *auf* prepositional phrase indicate partially affected objects, either with actions on top of an object, like with *reiten* ‘to ride’ (6.77 a), or with a finished action in the direction of an object, like with *schießen* ‘to shoot’ (6.77 b). Also verbs denoting the playing of musical instruments, like *blasen* ‘to blow’ (6.77 c), show this alternation.

[6.138]

- (6.77) a. Er reitet das Pferd.  
Er reitet auf dem Pferd.  
b. Ich schieße den Bären.  
Ich schieße auf den Bären.  
c. Ich blase die Trompete.  
Ich blase auf der Trompete.

### Attested Verbs

[6.139]

- Action on top of Object: *reiten*
- Contact: *jagen, kauen, schießen, treten*
- Playing musical instruments: *blasen, schlagen, spielen, üben*
- Personal interaction: *hören, sprechen, treffen (begegnen)*

### Further Examples

[6.140]

- Ich schlage die Trommel.  
Ich schlage auf die Trommel.
- Ich spiele Klavier.  
Ich spiele auf dem Klavier.
- Ich kaue mein Brot.  
Ich kaue auf meinem Brot.
- Ich treffe Anna.  
Ich treffe auf Anna.

### Notes

[6.141]

[6.142]

The following verbs show considerable semantic shift in this alternation: *hören* ‘to hear’ vs. ‘to obey’ (6.78 a), *achten* ‘to respect’ vs. ‘to look after’ (6.78 b) and *sprechen* ‘be able to speak a foreign language’ vs. ‘to speak in a foreign language’ (6.78 c).

- (6.78) a. Ich habe sie gehört.  
           Ich habe auf sie gehört.  
       b. Ich achte dich.  
           Ich achte auf dich. c Ich spreche Englisch.  
           Ich spreche auf Englisch.

#### 6.7.8.3 *aus* Antipassive

[6.143] This alternation seems to be typical for objects of reading, like *vorlesen* ‘to read aloud’ (6.79).

- (6.79) a. Ich lese das Buch vor.  
       b. Ich lese aus dem Buch vor.

#### [6.144] Attested Verbs

- *lesen, vorlesen, zitieren*

#### 6.7.8.4 *in* Antipassive

[6.145] Accusative objects that alternate with an *in* prepositional phrase seem to be rather uncommon. It only occurs when the action includes an aspect of occurring inside of an object. The prepositional alternate indicates partial completion of the action, like with *lesen* ‘to read’ (6.80).

- (6.80) a. Ich lese das Buch.  
       b. Ich lese in dem Buch.

#### [6.146] Attested Verbs

- *bestehen (Erfolg haben), entscheiden, lesen, gewinnen, korrigieren, schneiden, spielen, stürmen (wild bewegen), treffen (Ziel)*

#### [6.147] Further Examples

- Ich bestehe die Prüfung.  
   Ich bestehe in der Prüfung.
- Ich gewinne das Spiel.  
   Ich gewinne in dem Spiel.
- Ich treffe das Tor.  
   Ich treffe in das Tor.
- Er spielt den letzten Akt.  
   Er spielt in dem letzten Akt.
- Ich korrigiere die Arbeit.  
   Ich korrigiere in der Arbeit.
- Ich entscheide den Fall.  
   Ich entscheide in dem Fall.
- Ich schneide meinen Finger.  
   Ich schneide in meinen Finger.
- Die Soldaten stürmen das Kastell.  
   Sie stürmen in den Saal.

### 6.7.8.5 *mit* Instrumental antipassive

Accusative objects that alternate with a *mit* prepositional phrase indicate partially affected objects, typically those that can be construed as an instrument, like with *schießen* ‘to shoot’ (6.81 a), or an instrument of transport, like with *fliegen* ‘to fly’ (6.81 b). [6.148]

- (6.81) a. Ich schieße eine Kugel.  
           Ich schieße mit einer Kugel.  
       b. Ich fliege das Flugzeug.  
           Ich fliege mit dem Flugzeug.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.149]

- Instrument: *handeln, schießen, werfen*
- Instrument of transport: *fahren, fliegen, rangieren, segeln*

#### Further Examples

[6.150]

- Ich werfe den Dreck.  
   Ich werfe mit Dreck.
- Ich handele Aktien.  
   Ich handele mit Aktien.
- Ich rangiere den Wagen.  
   Ich rangiere mit dem Wagen.
- Er segelt eine Jolle.  
   Er segelt mit einer Jolle
- Er fährt einen Laster.  
   Er fährt mit seinem Laster in die Berge.

### 6.7.8.6 *mit* Reciprocal antipassive

A very small group of verbs show an antipassive in which the *mit* prepositional phrase is a reciprocal role, like with *sprechen* ‘to speak’ (6.82). This role can be identified by the possibility to add *miteinander* (cf. Section 6.3.6 for verbs with a similar role, but without the antipassive alternation). [6.151]

- (6.82) a. Ich spreche den Abteilungsleiter.  
       b. Ich spreche mit dem Abteilungsleiter.  
       c. Der Abteilungsleiter und ich sprechen miteinander.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.152]

- *sprechen*

### 6.7.8.7 *nach* Antipassive

Accusative objects that alternate with a *nach* prepositional phrase indicate an uncompleted purposeful action in the direction of an object (cf. Proost 2009), like with *suchen* ‘to search’ (6.83). [6.153]

- (6.83) a. Ich suche den Ring.  
       b. Ich suche nach dem Ring.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.154]

- Attempted action towards: *fühlen, greifen, schlagen, rufen, sehen, suchen, treten*
- Object of hunting: *angeln, fischen, jagen*

[6.155] **Further Examples**

- Ich sehe dich.  
Ich sehe nach dir.
- Ich trete den Ball.  
Ich trete nach dem Ball.
- Ich rufe dich.  
Ich rufe nach dir.
- Er fühlt seine Brieftasche.  
Er fühlt nach seiner Brieftasche.

### 6.7.8.8 von Antipassive

[6.156] Accusative objects that alternate with a *von* prepositional phrase occur typically with consumption verbs, indicating that the consumption is only partially completed, like with *essen* 'to eat' (6.84 a). Also actions that designate a transaction of an (part of an) object, like with *stehlen* 'to steal' (6.84 b). In some contexts the verbs *wissen* 'to know' (6.84 c) and *hören* 'to hear' (6.84 d) also show this alternation.

- (6.84) a. Ich esse einen Apfel.  
Ich esse von dem Apfel.
- b. Ich stehle die Blumen.  
Ich stehle von den Blumen.
- c. Ich weiß deine Telefonnummer.  
Ich weiß von dem Schmuck, der gestohlen wurde.
- d. Ich höre den Kampf in der Ferne.  
Ich höre von dem Kampf in den Nachrichten.

[6.157] **Attested Verbs**

- Eat a part of: *essen, fressen, naschen, kosten, knabbern, probieren, trinken, versuchen*
- Know a part of: *hören, verstehen, wissen*
- Hand over a part of: *anbieten, aushändigen, besorgen, bringen, geben, liefern, schicken, schenken, senden, überreichen, überweisen, verkaufen*
- Take away a part of: *abknöpfen, abnehmen, ausspannen, enteignen, entfernen, entleihen, entlehnen, entnehmen, entwenden, entziehen, klauen, nehmen, rauben, stehlen, wegnehmen*

[6.158] **Further Examples**

- Ich nasche ein paar Beeren.  
Ich nasche von den Beeren.
- Ich koste den Wein.  
Ich koste von dem Wein.
- Ich trinke den Wein.  
Ich trinke von dem Wein.
- Ich kaufe Trauben.  
Ich kaufe von den Trauben.

- Ich verstehe Chemie gut.  
Ich verstehe viel von Chemie.
- Er probiert/versucht die Torte.  
Er probiert/versucht von der Torte.

#### 6.7.8.9 *über* Antipassive

The *über* antipassive is used with some verbs of control, like *bestimmen* ‘to decide’ (6.85). [6.159]

- (6.85) a. Ich bestimme die Reihenfolge.  
b. Ich bestimme über die Reihenfolge.

##### Attested Verbs [6.160]

- Object of control: *bestimmen, entscheiden, verfügen*
- Object of cognitive process: *reflektieren*
- Object of communication: *diskutieren*

##### Further Examples [6.161]

- Wir diskutieren das Vorschlag.  
Wir diskutieren über den Vorschlag.
- Diese Schlacht entschied den Ausgang des Krieges.  
Dieser Augenblick entschied über das ganze Leben<sup>12</sup>

##### Notes [6.162]

The verb *verfügen* has two rather different meanings in the antipassive diathesis, viz. ‘to mandate’ with an accusative (6.86 a) and ‘to have control over’ with a prepositional phrase (6.86 b) [6.163]

- (6.86) a. Ich verfüge einen Einreisestopp.  
b. Ich verfüge über viel Geld.

#### 6.7.8.10 *zu* Antipassive

The antipassive variant with *zu* is somewhat troublesome as all examples known to me are quite idiosyncratic, like *finden* ‘to find’ (6.87). Maybe it is better to consider these diatheses as separate lexicalised constructions. However, I think the examples listed here are interesting enough to consider this as a possible diathesis. [6.164]

- (6.87) a. Sie findet ihn.  
b. Sie konnte blind und taub sein, aber sie fand zu ihm.<sup>13</sup>

##### Attested Verbs [6.165]

- *halten, werden, finden*

##### Further Examples [6.166]

- Ich halte dich.  
Ich halte zu dir.
- Ich werde später Bäcker.  
Ich werde noch zum Bäcker.

<sup>12</sup>Attested at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/entscheiden>, accessed 27 April 2022.

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: Kopetzky, Steffen: Grand Tour, Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn 2002, S. 239.

### 6.7.9 [ NLA | NLp ] Accusative antipassive+location

[6.167] With some verbs, like *drücken* ‘to press’ (6.88 a), a locative prepositional phrase is obligatorily present. The accusative instrument *Finger* ‘finger’ can be changed to an optional *mit* prepositional phrase (6.88 b), but the location cannot be removed (6.88 c). A similar situation occurs with *stoßen* ‘to jab’ (6.89), though the *mit* instrument cannot (easily) be removed in this case either.

- (6.88) a. Er drückt seinen Finger auf den Knopf.  
 b. Er drückt auf den Knopf (mit seinem Finger).  
 c. \* Er drückt den Finger.
- (6.89) a. Er stößt das Messer in die Wunde.  
 b. Er stößt in die Wunde mit dem Messer.  
 c. \* Er stößt das Messer.

#### [6.168] Attested Verbs

- *drücken, stoßen*

### — [ OBJ > ADJ ] — *Dativ Antipassiv*

#### 6.7.10 [ ND | Np ] Dative antipassive

[6.169] It seems to be somewhat unusual for verbs with dative but without accusative to allow for a prepositional expression of the dative, like with *entfliehen* ‘to flee’ (6.90). There are just a handful of cases with the prepositions as listed below. The meaning of these prepositional phrases seem to be very close to the locational meaning (e.g. *aus* is used for arguments moving out of something, etc.). Note that such a dative antipassive is much more common with verbs that also have an accusative argument (see Section 6.7.11).

- (6.90) a. Ich entfliehe dem Gefängnis.  
 b. Ich entfliehe aus dem Gefängnis.

#### [6.170] Attested Verbs

- *aus* : (movement out of) *entkommen, entfliehen, entschlüpfen, entspringen, entweichen*
- *für* : (on behalf of) *bedeuten, bevorstehen, bleiben*
- *auf* : *folgen*
- *zu* : (belonging to) *dienen, gehören, passen*
- *über* : *gebieten*
- *vor* : (movement away from) *fliehen, flüchten, weichen*

#### [6.171] Further Examples

- Die Demonstranten wichen der Polizei.  
 Und er wich vor keiner Drohung, keiner Gewalt.<sup>14</sup>
- Der Hut passt ihm.  
 Der Hut passt zu ihm.

<sup>14</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.05.1981, Nr. 21.

- Unsere Arbeit dient dem Fortschritt.  
Unsere Arbeit dient zur Meinungsbildung.
- Ich gebiete dir.  
Ich gebiete über dich.
- Er bedeutet mir viel.  
Er bedeutet viel für mich.
- Das Examen steht mir bevor.  
Das Examen steht für mich bevor.
- Es blieben dem Bergsteiger noch zwei Schokoriegel.  
Da sie zu spät kamen, blieben für sie nur die hinteren Bänke
- Ich folge dem Einbrecher.  
Sonnenschein folgt auf Regen.
- Ich vertraue ihm.  
Ich vertraue auf seine Ehrlichkeit.
- Die Bürger flohen dem Krieg.  
Sie flohen vor dem Krieg.
- Der schnellfüßige Käfer ist lichtscheu und flieht dem Geräusch.<sup>15</sup>

### 6.7.11 [ NAD | NAp ] Dative antipassive+accusative

With an additional accusative argument it is widespread for dative arguments to have an alternative expression in the form of a prepositional phrase. However, it is rather difficult to characterise the semantic difference between two such alternating expressions (cf. (De Vaere, De Cuyper & Willems 2018) for an investigation for the verb *geben* and the large literature on the English dative alternation). There are only a few monosyllabic prepositions that can be used for this alternation:

- an : Moving towards
- von : Removing from
- vor : Hiding from
- zu : Moving towards

#### 6.7.11.1 *an* Ditransitive dative alternation

The replacement of a dative with an *an* prepositional phrase is a common alternation (cf. Adler 2011). For a detailed analysis of this alternation with the verb *geben*, see De Vaere et al. (2018). In all cases there is some kind of giving of the accusative object to the dative object implied.

##### Attested Verbs

- Giving object to dative: *abgeben, abtreten, anbieten, anvertrauen, aushändigen, borgen, geben, leihen, liefern, schicken, schenken, senden, spenden, übergeben, überreichen, überweisen, vergeben, vererben, verkaufen, vermachen, vermieten*
- Giving message to dative: *berichten, erklären, erteilen, faxen, mailen, schreiben, vorlegen, vorstellen*
- Others: *anpassen*

##### Further Examples

<sup>15</sup>DWDS: Die Landfrau, 12.09.1925



- Er berichtet dem Vorstand alles.  
Er berichtet alles an den Vorstand.
- Ich schicke meiner Mutter Blumen.  
Ich schicke Blumen an meine Mutter.
- Ich schreibe dir einen Brief.  
Ich schreibe einen Brief an dich.
- Er verkaufte dem Kunden das Auto.  
Er verkaufte das Auto an den Kunden.
- Ich passe die Hose deinem Bein an.  
Ich passe die Hose an dein Bein an.

[6.176] **Notes**[6.177] Various verbs in this class also allow for a *zu* dative alternation (see below).**6.7.11.2 von Ditransitive dative alternation**[6.178] The *von* dative antipassive is typically used with verbs that express a removal of an accusative object from the dative object, like with *klauen* ‘to steel’ (6.91).

- (6.91) a. Ich klaue dir die Blumen.  
b. Ich klaue die Blumen von dir.

[6.179] **Attested Verbs**

- Removing object from dative: *abknöpfen, abnehmen, ausspannen, borgen, enteignen, entfernen, entleihen, entleihen, entnehmen, entwenden, klauen, nehmen, rauben, stehlen, wegnehmen*

**6.7.11.3 vor Ditransitive dative alternation**[6.180] The *vor* dative antipassive is typically used with verbs expressing an action that hides the accusative object from the dative object, like with *verschweigen* ‘to conceal’ (6.92).

- (6.92) a. Ich verschweige dir das Geheimnis.  
b. Ich verschweige das Geheimnis vor dir.

[6.181] **Attested Verbs**

- Hiding object from dative: *verbergen, verheimlichen, verschweigen*

**6.7.11.4 zu Ditransitive dative alternation**[6.182] The *zu* dative antipassive is typically used with verbs expressing the movement of the accusative object to the dative object, like with *bringen* ‘to bring’ (6.93).

- (6.93) a. Ich bringe dir die Waren.  
b. Ich bringe die Waren zu dir.

[6.183] **Attested Verbs**

- Moving object towards dative: *besorgen, bringen, liefern, schicken, schleudern, senden, werfen*

- Imaginary object moving towards dative: *sagen, zuordnen*

#### Further Examples

[6.184]

- Ich liefere dir die Waren.  
Ich liefere die Waren zu dir.
- Ich sage dir einen Satz.  
Ich sage einen Satz zu dir.
- Ich ordne das Verb einer Gruppe zu.  
Ich ordne das Verb zu einer Gruppe zu.

— [ OBJ > PBJ ] —

#### 6.7.12 [ NA | NP ] Accusative governed antipassive

The verb *beginnen* ‘to begin’ illustrates an accusative antipassive (6.94 a,b). Different from the previously discussed accusative antipassives (see Section 6.7.8), in this example the *mit* prepositional phrase is a governed preposition (6.94 c). All verbs in this section have antipassives with governed prepositions. Note that the verb *beginnen* also shows a different, completely independent, anticausative diathesis (see Section 5.5.5) in which the accusative is promoted to nominative (6.94 d).

- (6.94) a. Ich beginne die Arbeit.  
b. Ich beginne mit der Arbeit.  
c. Ich beginne damit, dass ich die Stifte ordne.  
d. Die Arbeit beginnt.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.186]

- mit : *anfangen, beginnen, rechnen, zögern*
- an : *glauben (für Wahr halten), leiden*
- nach : *verlangen*
- für : *büßen, garantieren, leben*

#### Further Examples

[6.187]

- Ich fange mein Studium an.  
Ich fange mit meinem Studium an.
- Ich rechne eine Flasche Wein pro Person.  
Ich rechne mit einer Flasche Wein pro Person
- Ich zögere mit den Maßnahmen.  
Ich zögere damit, Maßnahmen zu ergreifen.
- Ich büße meine Missetat.  
Ich büße für meine Missetat.
- Ich garantiere den Erfolg.  
Ich garantiere für den Erfolg.
- Ich lebe meinen Beruf.  
Ich lebe für meinen Beruf.
- Ich glaube deine Aussage.  
Ich glaube an deiner Aussage.

[6.188] **Notes**[6.189] Note the absence of a determiner for the accusative with *leiden* ‘to suffer’ (6.95).

- (6.95) a. Ich leide große Schmerzen.  
 b. Ich leide an einer Krankheit.

**6.7.13 [ ND | NP ] Dative governed antipassive**[6.190] The verb *vertrauen* ‘to trust’ (6.96) is currently the only known example of a verb showing a dative antipassive with a governed preposition.

- (6.96) a. Ich vertraue dir.  
 b. Ich vertraue auf dich.  
 c. Ich vertraue darauf, dass du die Arbeit machst.

[6.191] **Attested Verbs**

- auf : *vertrauen*

**6.7.14 [ NG | NP ] Genitive governed antipassive**[6.192] Some old-fashioned genitive arguments can be replaced by a governed preposition. Yet, this seems to be highly unusual for genitives without accusatives. The only known case is *denken* ‘to remember’ (6.97 a,b). Note that the prepositional phrase is governed (6.97 c).

- (6.97) a. Ich denke der vergangenen Jahre.  
 b. Ich denke an die vergangenen Jahre.  
 c. Ich denke daran, dass ich Milch kaufen muss.

[6.193] **Attested Verbs**

- an : *denken*

**6.7.15 [ NAG | NAP ] Genitive governed antipassive+accusative**[6.194] The genitive ditransitives in this group allow for an alternative formulation of the genitive argument as a prepositional phrase with *von*. Given a suitable context, such prepositional phrases can in most cases be left out.[6.195] As genitive arguments are generally disappearing in German, many verbs in this section are also losing the possibility to occur with a genitive, leaving the antipassive alternant as the only option. For example, the verb *erinnern* ‘to remind’ could be used with a genitive until ±1850 (6.98 a). Today, the prepositional *an* antipassive seems to be only possibility (6.98 b). Note that the prepositions with the verbs in this section are governed prepositions (6.98 c).

- (6.98) a. Ich erinnere dich des Versprechens.  
 b. Ich erinnere dich an das Versprechen.  
 c. Ich erinnere dich daran, dass du Milch kaufen sollst.

[6.196] **Attested Verbs**

- Separate from: *befreien*, *entbinden*, *entheben*, *verweisen*

#### Further Examples

[6.197]

- Ich entbinde dich deiner Pflicht.  
Ich entbinde dich von deiner Pflicht.
- Ich enthebe dich deines Amtes.  
Ich enthebe dich von deinem Amt.
- Ich verweise dich des Spielfeldes.  
Ich verweise dich von dem Spielfeld.
- Ich befreie dich des Regenten.  
Ich befreie dich von dem Regenten.

#### Notes

[6.198]

The verb *entbinden* can be used as an intransitive verb with a meaning of ‘to give birth’. However, in the meaning ‘to absolve’ as discussed here it seems not to be possible to completely drop the genitive or *von* phrase. This also seems to hold for *entheben* ‘to depose’ and *verweisen* ‘to expel’. The usage of *befreien* ‘to free’ with a genitive seems to have been lost in the 19th Century (6.99).

[6.199]

(6.99) Das allgemeine Völkerrecht befreit die Person des feindlichen Regenten.<sup>16</sup>

## 6.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

— [ Ø > OBJ ] —

### 6.8.1 [ -P | DP ] Dative addition+governed preposition

This alternation allows for either a dative to be present or not with verbs that have no nominative argument, but with a governed preposition, like *liegen an* ‘to depend on’. Consequently, a valency-simulating pronoun *es* is present in all alternants.

[6.200]

- (6.100) a. Es liegt am Geld.  
b. Es liegt mir viel am Geld.  
c. Es liegt mir daran, dass du es erfährst.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.201]

- auf : *ankommen*
- um : *gehen*
- an : *fehlen*, *liegen*

#### Further Examples

[6.202]

- Es kommt auf die Eleganz an.  
Mir kommt es auf die Eleganz an.
- Es geht um ihre Identität.  
Den Polen geht es um ihre Identität.
- Es fehlt an Geld.  
Ihm fehlt es an Geld.

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Klüber, Johann Ludwig: Europäisches Völkerrecht. Bd. 2. Stuttgart, 1821.

– [ Ø > PBJ ] – *Bewegungsart*

## 6.8.2 [ N– | NL ] Manner-of-movement

[6.203] Many movement verbs, like *tanzen* ‘to dance’ (6.101), allow for the following two kinds of constructions. First, a regular intransitive construction expressing the movement with an optional location (6.101 a) and, second, a construction with an obligatory local prepositional phrase in which the movement verb expresses the manner of movement (6.101 b). Syntactically, there is a crucial difference between these two constructions in that the perfect auxiliary changes between *haben* (6.101 a) and *sein* (6.101 b). The local prepositional phrase cannot be left out in the perfect construction with *sein* (6.101 c).

- (6.101) a. Ich habe (in dem Garten) getanzt.  
 b. Ich bin durch den Garten getanzt.  
 (= Ich habe mich tanzend durch den Garten bewegt.)  
 c. \*Ich bin getanzt.

[6.204] This alternation is typically used to explain the difference between using a dative or an accusative with the so-called *Wechselpräpositionen* like *in* or *auf*. For example, the verb *klettern* ‘to climb’ can be used with *auf*+dative (6.102 a) and with *auf*+accusative (6.102 b). With the dative the action takes place at the location (‘climbing while being on top of the mountain’). In contrast, with the accusative there is a movement that changes location (‘climbing with the goal to reach the mountain’). However, syntactically there is much more going on than simply a difference in case marking. As proposed here, there is actually a diathesis between using the verb *klettern* (i) to describe an activity with perfect auxiliary *haben* and an optional location phrase (6.102 a) and (ii) to describe a manner of movement with a perfect auxiliary *sein* and an obligatory location phrase (6.102 b).

- (6.102) a. Ich kletterte auf dem Berg.  
 Ich habe gestern (auf dem Berg) geklettert.  
 b. Ich kletterte auf den Berg.  
 Ich bin gestern \*(auf den Berg) geklettert.

[6.205] A similar diathesis exists with non-movement verbs, like *schwitzen* ‘to sweat’ (6.103). However, with such verbs an additional reflexive pronoun is necessary (see Section 7.8.1).

- (6.103) a. Die Köche schwitzen.  
 b. Die herumwieselnden Köche schwitzen sich durch verschiedene Runden.<sup>17</sup>

[6.206] **Attested Verbs**

- *irren, klettern, kriechen, schleichen, schlingern, schwanken, schweben, stampfen, tanzen, wackeln*

[6.207] **Further Examples**

- Ich habe gestampft.  
 Ich bin durch den Garten gestampft/geschwankt/getanzt.
- Der Pinguin hat mit dem Kopf gewackelt.  
 Der Pinguin ist durch meine Beine gewackelt.

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.04.2016 (online).

### 6.8.3 [ -- | NL ] Weather-like manner-of-movement

Many weather verbs like *wehen* ‘to blow’ (6.104) allow for a nominative subject that is moving in a weather-like manner, often induced by a weather phenomenon. In such constructions the locational phrase seems obligatory. [6.208]

- (6.104) a. Es weht.  
b. Die Blätter wehen durch die Luft.

There appears to be a slight semantic difference between examples in which the nominative subject is a patient-like argument of the weather phenomenon, like in (6.104), and examples in which an action is performed in a way reminiscent of the weather phenomenon, like in (6.105). [6.209]

- (6.105) a. Es stürmt.  
b. Sie stürmten in den Saal.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.210]

- *blitzen, donnern, hageln, regnen, stürmen, wehen*

#### Further Examples

[6.211]

- Die Bomben hagelten auf die Stadt.
- Seine Zähne blitzten in der Sonne.
- Die Motoren donnerten durch die Stadt.

### — [ Ø > PBJ ] — *Verursachte Bewegung*

In the analysis of resultative constructions, there is a recurrent suggestion in the literature to distinguish between ‘cause to go’ and ‘cause to become’ semantics (e.g. (McIntyre 2003: 120)). I will use the designation ‘forced movement’ for the former and names like ‘action result’ or ‘performative result’ for the latter here. [6.212]

### 6.8.4 [ N-- | NAL ] Intransitive forced movement

With some apparently intransitive verbs there exist special constructions with an accusative argument and an obligatorily present prepositional phrase. For example, the verb *klopfen* ‘to knock’ is regularly used as an intransitive (6.106 a) possibly with an *an* prepositional phrase (6.106 b). Accusative arguments are normally not possible, except for a very few special nouns related to music (6.106 c). [6.213]

However, the verb *klopfen* is very regularly used in construction like (6.106 d) with an accusative and a prepositional phrase. Both have to occur together, as leaving out either the prepositional phrase (6.106 e) or the accusative (6.106 f) is not possible. This prepositional phrase is a locative and not a governed argument, because it cannot be replaced by a *davon*, *dass* phrase. [6.214]

The meaning of this special construction (6.106 d) is also special. The meaning is something like: by doing the action of the intransitive verb, nominative causes accusative to move in the direction described by the prepositional phrase (6.106 g), cf. Goldberg’s (2006: 73) famous example *She sneezed the foam off the cappuccino*. [6.215]

[6.216]

Note that with possessor raising (see Section 6.8.12) it is even possible to add an additional dative argument, leading to an ‘intransitive’ verb *klopfen* with an obligatory dative, accusative and prepositional argument (6.106 h). This dative can also be turned into a reflexive (6.106 i).

- (6.106) a. Das Herz klopft ganz regelmäßig.  
 b. Er klopft an der Tür.  
 c. Er klopft den Takt.  
 d. Er klopft den Schnee von seinen Schuhen.  
 e. \* Er klopft den Schnee.  
 f. \* Er klopft von seinen Schuhen.  
 g. Durch klopfen sorgte er dafür, dass der Schnee von seinen Schuhen ging.  
 h. Er klopft mir den Schnee von den (meinen) Schuhen.  
 i. Er klopft sich den Schnee von den Schuhen.

[6.217] This construction is closely related to adjectival resultative secondary predicates as in (6.107), see also Section 9.2.3.

- (6.107) Er klopft den Aschenbecher leer.

#### [6.218] Attested Verbs

- Bodily Action: *heulen, husten, klopfen, pusten, pumpen, spucken, stampfen*
- Bodily Process: *schlafen, schwitzen*
- Weather Verbs: *regnen, wehen*
- Others: *graben (aus), klingeln, schwindeln*

#### [6.219] Further Examples

- Er klopft den Schnee von seinen Schuhen.
- Der Wind weht die Blätter durch die Luft.
- Ich huste dir meine Schwindsucht ins Gesicht.
- Der Sturm regnete den Schmutz von den Dächern.
- Sie pustet den Staub vom Tisch.
- Er spuckte die Kirschkerne ins Gras.
- Ich schlafe den Rausch aus meinem Kopf.
- Ich schwitze einen Fleck in mein Hemd.
- Er klingelt mich aus dem Bett.
- Er schwindelt ihn auf die Liste.
- Sie gräbt die Kartoffeln aus dem Boden.
- Das Herz pumpt das Blut durch den Körper.
- Das allgemeine politische Klima weht den Illegalen ins Gesicht.<sup>18</sup>
- Der Zeitgeist weht den üblichen Akustikschrott in die Besucherohren.<sup>19</sup>
- Die frische Brise kämmt die Palmen und weht den Flugsand auf die Promenade.<sup>20</sup>
- Man rückt und rutscht nicht dauernd auf seinem Stuhl hin und her, man vermeidet es, die anderen Besucher mit seinen langen Beinen zu behelligen, oder hustet den in der nächsten Reihe Sitzenden nicht ungeniert in den Nacken.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 30.07.2010 (online).

<sup>19</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.03.1996 (online).

<sup>20</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.05.1990 (online).

<sup>21</sup>DWDS: Oheim, Gertrud: Einmaleins des guten Tons, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann 1957, S. 296

- Ich huste den letzten Bissen Leberkäse auf den Rasen.<sup>22</sup>
- Man taute in der Sauna seine durchfrorenen Glieder auf und schwitzte den Schmutz aus den Poren.<sup>23</sup>
- Der Meister war da, stampfte den Schnee von den Schuhen.<sup>24</sup>

**Notes**

This construction is also found in fixed (metaphorical) expressions (6.108).

[6.220]

[6.221]

- (6.108) a. Er trinkt seine Freunde unter den Tisch.  
 b. Er spielt den Gegner an die Wand.  
 c. Der Student im vierten Stock schläft mal wieder ein Loch in den Tag.<sup>25</sup>

**6.8.5 [ NA– | NAL ] Transitive forced movement**

Similar to intransitive resultatives (see Section 6.8.4), some transitive verbs like *befehlen* ‘to order’ (6.109a) alternate with a forced movement construction (6.109b,c). Note that there is a slightly different construction (without diathesis) with a dative after the preposition *an* (6.109d). In this example the prepositional phrase simply expresses the location in which the action is taking place, or it is an adnominal phrase. In both interpretations there is no valency alternation.

[6.222]

- (6.109) a. Ich befehle eine Armee.  
 b. Ich befehle die Armee an die Front.  
 c. Ich befehle, und das Resultat ist: die Armee ist an der Front.  
 d. Ich befehle die Armee an der Front.  
 (= Ich befehle die Armee, während ich an der Front bin.)  
 (= Ich befehle die Armee, die an der Front ist.)

**Attested Verbs**

[6.223]

- *befehlen, dirigieren, graben, hetzen, jagen, peitschen, schneiden, ziehen*

**Further Examples**

[6.224]

- Ich dirigiere das Orchester.  
 Ich dirigiere den Wagen zum Bahnhof
- Der Bauer hat den Pflug gezogen.  
 Ich habe den Faden durch das Nadelöhr gezogen.
- Ich jage den Hund.  
 Ich jage den Hund aus dem Zimmer.
- Ich hetze den Hund.  
 Ich hetze den Hund auf dich.
- Ich grabe ein Loch.  
 Die Skifahrer gruben Spuren in den Schnee.
- Ich schneide meine Nägel.  
 Ich schneide den Apfel in Stücke.
- Der Kutscher peitschte das Pferd.  
 Ein Tornado peitscht Tausende von Haien aus dem Meer.

<sup>22</sup>DWDS: Lehner, Angela: Vater Unser, Berlin: Hanser 2019

<sup>23</sup>DWDS: Fresenius, Hanna: Sauna, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 1987, S. 15

<sup>24</sup>DWDS: Weismantel, Leo: Die höllische Trinität, Berlin: Union-Verlag 1966, S. 54

<sup>25</sup>Attested online at [https://universal\\_lexikon.de-academic.com/232141/Ein\\_Loch\\_in\\_den\\_Tag\\_schlafen](https://universal_lexikon.de-academic.com/232141/Ein_Loch_in_den_Tag_schlafen), accessed 25 Juli 2022.



– [ Ø > PBJ ] – *Ergänzende Wirkung*

## 6.8.6 [ NA– | NAP ] Performative result

[6.225] A slightly different variant of a resultative constructions is found with various performative verbs that take a regular accusative, like *machen* ‘to make/create’ (6.110 a). As an alternative structure, these verbs also allow for a construction with an accusative and a prepositional phrase (6.110 b). Note that the prepositional phrase cannot be left out in these constructions. The meaning of such constructions is parallel to the previous resultatives in that the performative verb causes the result. Such constructions were named quite aptly “Ergänzende Wirkung” all the way back in the influential educational grammatical work of Karl Ferdinand Becker (1833: 81) almost 200 years ago.

- (6.110) a. Er macht die Aufgaben.  
 b. Er macht die Wiese zu einem Garten.  
 (= Er macht etwas, und das Ergebnis ist: Die Wiese ist ein Garten.)

[6.226] **Attested Verbs**

- zu : *erklären, machen*
- für : *halten, erklären*
- als : *ansehen, benennen, betrachten, bezeichnen, empfinden, empfehlen, vorschlagen, wünschen*

[6.227] **Further Examples**

- Sie erklärte das Problem.  
 Sie erklärte die Behauptung für eine Lüge.
- Ich betrachte dich.  
 Ich betrachte dich als einen Freund.
- Ich sehe dich an.  
 Ich sehe dich als einen Freund an.
- Ich schlage einen Kompromiss vor.  
 Er schlug den Abgeordneten Kai Wegner als Generalsekretär vor.<sup>26</sup>
- Ich empfehle diese Kandidatin.  
 Andrea Fischer empfahl sich den Delegierten als Politikerin.<sup>27</sup>

[6.228] **Notes**

[6.229] For some verbs there appears to be a rather clear lexicalisation of the meaning of the verb between the two alternants, i.e. it is questionable, whether the alternant should still be considered to be the same verb with *halten*, meaning either ‘to hold’ or ‘to consider’ (6.111 a) and *erklären*, meaning either ‘to explain’ or ‘to declare’ (6.111 b).

- (6.111) a. Ich halte das Schwert.  
 Ich halte dich für einen Scharlatan.  
 b. Sie erklärte die Lösung.  
 Sie erklärte den Kandidaten zum Geschäftsführer.

[6.230]

<sup>26</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 26.05.2003.

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 19.01.2002.

The verb *wünschen* ‘to wish’ can be used in a construction with *als* (6.112 a) and it was possible with *zu* (6.112 b). However, both options seem to be much more common with an additional reflexive pronoun (6.112 c,d).

- (6.112) a. Kaum etwas wünscht die Fraktionsspitze mehr als Ruhe an der fraktionsinternen Gesundheitsfront.<sup>28</sup>  
 b. Ihre Majestät wünscht den Freiherrn von Stein zum Rathgeber des Königs?<sup>29</sup>  
 c. Nur 36 Prozent wünschen sich den SPD-Parteichef als Kanzler.<sup>30</sup>  
 d. Dr. Malan wünschte sich den vierundsiebzigjährigen Meneer Havenga zum Nachfolger.<sup>31</sup>

### – [ Ø > OBJ > PBJ ] – *Resultativ*

#### 6.8.7 [ NA– | NLA ] Action result

This alternation occurs with some transitive verbs like *waschen* ‘to wash’ (6.113 a,b), cf. the *wipe* alternation in English from Levin (1993: 53). Note that the accusatives at both sides of the alternation do not refer to the same roles. The original accusative *Hose* ‘trousers’ (6.113 a) is recast as a location (6.113 b), which is obligatory (6.113 c). A new accusative *Fleck* ‘stain’ is introduced as the result of the action. Typically the result is actually the removal of something, like *Fleck* ‘stain’ in (6.113). [6.231]

- (6.113) a. Ich wasche meine Hose.  
 b. Ich wasche den Fleck aus meiner Hose.  
     (= Durch das Waschen meiner Hose Sorge ich dafür, dass der Fleck heraus kommt.)  
 c. \* Ich wasche den Fleck.

These verbs also allow for a subsequent alternation (6.114 a,b), namely to raise a possessor from the prepositional phrase to a dative (see Section 6.8.12). [6.232]

- (6.114) a. Er kämmt deine Haare.  
 b. Er kämmt die Läuse aus deinen Haaren.  
 c. Er kämmt dir die Läuse aus den Haaren.

#### Attested Verbs

- *brechen, bügeln, erwarten, filtern, kämmen, polieren, schneiden, waschen, wischen*
- [6.233]

#### Further Examples

- Er polierte die Gabel.  
   Er polierte den Fleck von der Gabel.
- Er filterte das Wasser.  
   Er filterte den Schmutz aus dem Wasser.
- Er wischte den Tisch.  
   Er wischte das Wasser von dem Tisch.

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 25.11.2004.

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Alexis, Willibald: Ruhe ist die erste Bürgerpflicht oder Vor fünfzig Jahren. Bd. 5. Berlin, 1852.

<sup>30</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 09.03.2016 (online).

<sup>31</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.12.1954, Nr. 50.

- Ich schneide den Teppich.  
Ich schneide ein Loch in den Teppich.
- Ich bügle das Hemd.  
Ich bügle die Falten aus dem Hemd.
- Ich breche den Felsen.  
Ich breche einen Durchgang in den Felsen.

### 6.8.8 [ Np- | NAA ] Naming result

[6.235] This alternation appears as a parallel to the double accusative of *nennen* ‘to name’ (see Section 5.3.10) for other naming verbs.

- (6.115) a. Sie schimpft auf mich.  
b. Sie schimpft mich einen Narren

#### [6.236] Attested Verbs

- *schimpfen, fluchen*

#### [6.237] Further Examples

- Er sitzt immer am selben Platz bei Bier und Schnaps, flucht mich einen Tagedieb, einen Affen, Bananenfresser, einen, der schon längstens in eine Arbeitserziehungsanstalt gehöre.<sup>32</sup>

### — [ ADJ > OBJ ] — *Benefaktivdativ*

### 6.8.9 [ NAp | NAD ] *für* Benefactive dative

[6.238] The alternation of a dative with a *für* prepositional phrase is very widespread (6.116 a,b). It can be used with verbs that can be performed on behalf of somebody else (i.e. BENEFACTIVE, sometimes called DATIVUS COMMODI). In German grammar it is sometimes referred to as a ‘free dative’ because it can be easily dropped completely. As Eisenberg (2006a: 298) remarks, such datives are widespread, but cannot be used with all verbs and are thus a phenomenon that can be used for the sub-classification of verbs. Also note that this diathesis should be strongly differentiated from other ‘free datives’, specifically possessor datives (see especially Section 5.8.4, but also 6.8.11)

- (6.116) a. Ich koche dir eine Suppe.  
b. Ich koche eine Suppe für dich.

[6.239] Note that it is almost always possible to add a *für* benefactive phrase to a sentence (6.117 a), but these do not always have a dative alternant (6.117 b). With transitive verbs it turns out not so easy to find good examples where this alternation is impossible, because with

<sup>32</sup> Attested online at <http://www.gruppe-4-w.de/forum/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=2047#p19030>, accessed 29 Juli 2019.

most verbs datives seem to be possible though often only with some creative freedom, e.g. (6.117 c-e). Only those verbs that clearly allow for both alternatives are of interest here.

- (6.117) a. Ich arbeite für den Chef.  
 b. \*Ich arbeite dem Chef.  
 c. Ich gewinne das Geld für dich.  
 d. ?Ich gewinne dir das Geld.  
 e. Gib mir eine Waffe und ich gewinne dir jeden Krieg.<sup>33</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[6.240]

- Holding object: *abholen, halten, holen, mitnehmen, tragen*
- Object production: *aufzeichnen, ausstellen, bauen, beschaffen, besorgen, brechen, einblenden, erobern, garantieren, graben, kaufen, malen, mieten, suchen*
- Object manipulation: *abbrechen, abreißen, aktualisieren, anhalten, aufstellen, einbauen, korrigieren, kürzen, messen, öffnen, reparieren, schließen, stimmen, stoppen, versperren, zukleben*
- Food production: *angeln, fischen, jagen, kauen, schießen, töten*
- Household tending: *aufwärmen, ausbessern, bleichen, erneuern, backen, bügeln, gießen, kochen, nähen, ordnen, packen, pflegen, putzen, reinigen, reparieren, waschen, wischen*

#### Further Examples

[6.241]

- Ich stelle dir einen Pass aus.  
 Ich stelle für dich einen Pass aus.
- Ich halte dir den Kaffee.  
 Ich halte den Kaffee für dich.
- Er stimmt mir den Kontrabass.  
 Er stimmt den Kontrabass für mich.<sup>34</sup>
- Ich töte dir den Hasen.  
 Ich töte den Hasen für dich.
- Ich garantiere dir den Erfolg.  
 Ich garantiere den Erfolg für dich.

### — [ ADJ > OBJ ] — *Beurteilerdativ*

#### 6.8.10 [ Np | ND ] *für deinen Geschmack* Judgement dative

A dative can be introduced together with an obligatory *zu/genug* phrase in the interpretation of an evaluator *für den Geschmack von* (also known as *dativus iudicantis*, e.g. Hole 2014: 6-7, 172-176). It is typically used with intransitive verbs (6.118 a), though transitive construction seem possible (6.118 b). More research is needed to establish any restrictions for the kind of

<sup>33</sup>Attested online at <http://www.kriegssinfonie.ch/2018/08/paradox/>, accessed 10 January 2019.

<sup>34</sup>The verb *stimmen* here means 'to tune an instrument', a different meaning from *stimmen* 'to vote' that does not allow for this diathesis.

verbs with which this dative can be used.

- (6.118) a. Paul fuhr zu schnell für den Geschmack von seiner Mutter.  
Paul fuhr seiner Mutter zu schnell.  
b. Der Student beantwortete die Frage nicht schnell genug für den Geschmack der Professorin.  
Der Student beantwortete der Professorin die Frage nicht schnell genug.

[6.243] **Further Examples**

- Der Zug kommt dir zu früh an.  
Der Zug kommt zu früh an für deinen Geschmack.
- Ich lüge dir zu viel.  
Ich lüge zu viel für deinen Geschmack.

– [ ADJ > OBJ ] – *Ortspertinenzdativ*

**6.8.11 [ NLg | NLD ] Possessor-of-location to dative experiencer**

[6.244] Some datives can be expressed alternatively as a possessor inside a prepositional phrase. This happens with some verbs that can be used intransitively (6.119a) or with a dative (6.119b). However, this dative cannot be used without an additional prepositional phrase (6.119c). In these cases, the dative can be alternatively expressed as the possessor of the prepositional object (6.119d).

- (6.119) a. Der Affe saß ruhig.  
b. Der Affe saß ihm auf der Schulter.  
c. \* Der Affe saß ihm ruhig.  
d. Der Affe saß auf seiner Schulter.

[6.245] **Attested Verbs**

- Bodily Contact: *beißen, boxen, fallen, klopfen, laufen, schauen, stechen, steigen, zwicken*
- Position: *hängen, liegen, stehen, stecken, sitzen*

[6.246] **Further Examples**

- Der Regen läuft mir in die Schuhe.  
Der Regen läuft in meine Schuhe.
- Das Wasser steht mir bis zum Bauch.  
Das Wasser steht bis zu meinem Bauch.
- Er schaut mir über die Schulter.  
Er schaut über meine Schulter
- Das Hemd hing ihm aus der Hose.  
Das Hemd hing aus seiner Hose.
- Ich steige dir auf die Füße.  
Ich steige auf deine Füße.
- Ich falle dir vor die Füße.  
Ich falle vor deine Füßen.
- Ich klopfe dir auf die Schulter.  
Ich klopfe auf deine Schulter.

- Die Biene sticht mir in den Arm.  
Die Biene sticht in meinen Arm.
- Ich zwicke dir in die Wange.  
Ich zwicke in deine Wange.

**Notes**

The verb *beißen* ‘to bite’ can be used transitively with an animate accusative argument (6.120 a), or with the dative alternation (6.120 b), leading to two different options to encode the object of the biting, cf. accusative *ihn* (6.120 a) with dative *ihm* (6.120 b). [6.247]  
[6.248]

- (6.120) a. Der Hund hat ihn gebissen.  
Der Hund hat *ihn* ins Bein gebissen.
- b. Der Hund hat in sein Bein gebissen.  
Der Hund hat *ihm* ins Bein gebissen.

### 6.8.12 [ NALg | NALD ] Possessor-of-location to dative experimenter+accusative

Similar to the previous alternation, the verbs in this group also alternate the possessor of the prepositional phrase with a dative. However, differently from the previous group, these verbs also have an accusative argument. These verbs are either causative alternants of the verbs from the previous group or verbs that allow for a resultative alternation (see Section 6.8.4). [6.249]

- (6.121) a. Ich lege den Brief auf deinen Schreibtisch.  
b. Ich lege dir den Brief auf den Schreibtisch.

**Attested Verbs**

- Causative position verbs: *hängen, häufen, kleben, klopfen, lehnen, legen, stellen, stecken, setzen*
- Bodily actions: *flüstern, husten, spucken*
- Transitive caused location: *brechen, bügeln, erwarten, filtern, jagen, kämmen, polieren, schneiden, waschen, wischen*

**Further Examples**

- Ich setze das Kind auf deinen Schoß.  
Ich setze dir das Kind auf den Schoß.
- Ich hänge den Pullover in deinen Schrank.  
Ich hänge dir den Pullover in den Schrank.
- Ich klebe einen Zettel auf deine Tür.  
Ich klebe dir einen Zettel auf die Tür.
- Ich lehne den Besen an deinen Zaun.  
Ich lehne dir den Besen an den Zaun.
- Ich klopfe den Schnee von deinem Mantel.  
Ich klopfe dir den Schnee von dem Mantel.
- Ich huste meine Schwindsucht in dein Gesicht.  
Ich huste dir meine Schwindsucht ins Gesicht.
- Ich spucke den Kern in deine Suppe.  
Ich spucke dir den Kern in die Suppe.

- Er poliert den Fleck von deiner Gabel.  
Er poliert dir den Fleck von der Gabel.
- Er filtert den Schmutz aus deinem Wasser.  
Er filtert dir den Schmutz aus dem Wasser.
- Er wischt das Wasser von deinem Tisch.  
Er wischte dir das Wasser von dem Tisch.
- Er kämmt die Läuse aus deinen Haaren.  
Er kämmt dir die Läuse aus den Haaren.
- Ich schneide ein Loch in deinen Teppich.  
Ich schneide dir ein Loch in den Teppich.
- Ich bügle die Falten aus deinem Hemd.  
Ich bügle dir die Falten aus dem Hemd.
- Ich breche eine Tür in deine Wand.  
Ich breche dir eine Tür in die Wand.
- Ich wasche den Fleck aus deiner Hose.  
Ich wasche dir den Fleck aus der Hose.
- Er flüstert den Code in mein Ohr.  
Er flüstert mir den Code ins Ohr.
- Er häufte mir das ganze Kleingeld in die Hand.<sup>35</sup>

[6.252] **Notes**

[6.253] This construction is frequently used metaphorically (6.122).

- (6.122) a. Er fragt mir ein Loch in den Bauch.  
b. Ich jage dir den Anwalt auf den Hals.

— [ ADJ > OBJ > PBJ ] — *Pertinenzakkusativ***6.8.13 [ NAg | NPA ] Possessor-of-accusative applicative**

[6.254] This alternation is the German equivalents of the “Possessor Object” alternation in English from Levin (1993: 73). The possessor of an accusative becomes an accusative and the erstwhile accusative is demoted to a prepositional phrase. The preposition (typically *für*) appears to be a governed preposition.

- (6.123) a. Ich bewundere seine Ehrlichkeit.  
b. Ich bewundere ihn für/wegen seine/r Ehrlichkeit.  
c. Ich bewundere ihn dafür, dass er ehrlich ist.

[6.255] **Attested Verbs**

- Emotional stance: *achten (Respekt), bewundern, feiern, lieben, loben, hassen, unterstützen, verurteilen*

[6.256] **Further Examples**

- Ich lobe den Schüler für seinen Fleiß.  
Ich lobe den Fleiß des Schülers.
- Ich entschuldige den Dieb für seine Tat.  
Ich entschuldige die Tat des Diebes.
- Die Delegierten feiern ihn für sein Nein zum Irak-Krieg.  
Die Delegierten feiern sein Nein zum Irak-Krieg.

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<sup>35</sup>DWDS: Böll, Wort 133.

## 6.9 Symmetrical diatheses

— [ ADJ > SBJ > ADJ ] —

### 6.9.1 [ Np | pN ] Commutative

The verb *wimmeln* ‘to swarm/teem’ (6.124) has two different constructional possibilities that seem structurally completely reversed without any overt marking. [6.257]

- (6.124) a. Die Kinder wimmeln auf den Platz.  
b. Der Platz wimmelt von Kindern.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.258]

- *wimmeln*

— [ ADJ > OBJ > ADJ ] — *Vollapplikativ*

### 6.9.2 [ NAp | NpA ] Full applicative

In German, full applicatives are typically attested with verbal prefixes like *be-* (6.125 a) or verbal particles like *ein-* (6.125 b), see Section 8.8. In such alternations, the role that is marked with the accusative case changes. An accusatively marked argument is typically more affected than a prepositional object, so changing which role is marked in the accusative also changes the perspective of the action (similar to what happens with antipassives, see Section 6.7.8). [6.259]

- (6.125) a. Ich werfe Dreck auf dich.  
Ich bewerfe dich mit Dreck.  
b. Ich wickle das Tuch um den Arm.  
Ich wickle den Arm in dem Tuch ein.

With a few verbs this alternation is attested without a verbal prefix or particle. In most cases this includes an optional *mit* instrument that alternates with an accusative object (6.126 a-c), cf. the English ‘spray/load’ alternation from Levin (1993: 50-51). This instrument alternation is closely related to the *mit* antipassive (see Section 6.7.8.5). In addition to the *mit* antipassive, in this diathesis another accusative alternates with a locative preposition that is obligatorily present (6.126 c,d). [6.260]

- (6.126) a. Er füllt die Flasche mit Schnaps.  
b. Er füllt die Flasche.  
c. Er füllt den Schnaps in die Flasche.  
d. \* Er füllt den Schnaps.

Some verbs of cutting and breaking allow for an exchange of the objects to be dissected and the parts that are the result of the dissection (6.127 a,b). These verbs seem to be verbs that can occur both with and without the prefix *zer-* (6.127 b,c). Any prepositional phrases are non-governed prepositions. [6.261]

- (6.127) a. Ich schneide Streifen (aus dem Blatt Papier).  
b. Ich schneide das Blatt Papier (zu Streifen).  
c. Ich zerschneide das Blatt Papier.

#### Attested Verbs

[6.262]



- filling: *füllen, gießen, stopfen*
- dissection: *brechen, hacken, sägen, schneiden*
- others: *schießen, vergleichen*

## [6.263] Further Examples

- Er stopft Federn in die Kissen.  
Er stopft die Kissen (mit Federn).
- Er gießt Wasser auf die Blumen.  
Er gießt die Blumen (mit Wasser).
- Ich breche Stücke aus der Wand.  
Ich breche die Wand in Stücke.
- Ich säge Bretter aus dem Baum.  
Ich säge den Baum zu Brettern.

## [6.264] Notes

[6.265] For the verb *schießen* ‘to shoot’ this alternation (6.128 a,b) is possible better analysed as a combination of two accusative antipassives. It is also possible to express both roles as prepositional phrases (6.128 c). This is not possible with the other verbs in this group.

- (6.128) a. Ich schieße eine Kugel auf den Bären.  
b. Ich schieße den Bären mit einer Kugel.  
c. Ich schieße mit einer Kugel auf den Bären

[6.266] The verb *vergleichen* ‘to compare’ allows for the flipping of roles (6.129 a,b). This alternation is slightly different from the other verbs in this class as there is no location involved.

- (6.129) a. Er vergleicht mich mit einem Affen.  
b. Er vergleicht einen Affen mit mir.

— [ ADJ > ADJ ] —

### 6.9.3 [ NAg | NAp ] Possessor-of-accusative to preposition

[6.267] Another ‘raised’ possessor is the alternation in which the possessor of an accusative can be expressed alternatively with a prepositional phrase (6.130 a,b). This is called an “Attribute Object Alternation” in Levin (1993: 74).

- (6.130) a. Ich bewundere seine Ehrlichkeit.  
b. Ich bewundere die Ehrlichkeit bei ihm.

## [6.268] Attested Verbs

- *bekämpfen, bemerken, bewundern, erwarten*

## [6.269] Further Examples

- Ich bemerke bei ihm eine Langeweile.  
Ich bemerke seine Langeweile.
- Ich bekämpfe bei ihm den Schmerz.  
Ich bekämpfe seinen Schmerz.
- Ich erwarte von dir einen Besuch.  
Ich erwarte deinen Besuch.



## Chapter 7

# Reflexive pronoun alternations

### 7.1 Introduction

[7.1] In German, reflexive pronouns are easily identified in the third person as *sich*. One of the functions of reflexive pronouns is to indicate reflexive reference, i.e. to mark the identity of two different roles of the verb. But reflexive pronouns have many other functions in German. When using the grammatical term ‘reflexive’ a distinction has to be made between self-inflicting REFLEXIVE REFERENCE and other uses of REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS.

[7.2] Reflexive reference is typically illustrated with a verb like *waschen* ‘to wash’ (7.1 a). This verb has two roles, the ‘washer’ and the ‘washee’. Crucially, with self-inflicting reflexive reference using *sich* (7.1 b) these two different roles are still expressed in the sentence. The reflexive pronoun *sich* in (7.1 b) only indicates that the two roles are performed by the same participant, opposing it *ihn* to (7.1 a) in which the two roles are performed by different participants. With the reflexive pronoun in (7.1 b), both roles are still overtly present, so there is no reduction of the valency and there is no grammatical remapping of roles, and thus there is no diathesis here in German.

- (7.1) a. Er wäscht ihn.  
b. Er wäscht sich.

[7.3] From a typological perspective, there is arguably a difference in this respect between languages with a reflexive pronoun strategy, like German, and languages that use a verbal derivation technique for marking self-inflicting reflexive reference (cf. Dixon 2014: 172ff.). For such languages with a derivational strategy, the verb is being marked as ‘self-inflicting’ and one role is completely dropped. In such languages, it is better to analyse self-inflicting reflexive reference as a kind of diathesis.

[7.4] In German, the reflexive pronoun is also used in many other constructions, and most of those show some kind of diathesis, for example an ANTICAUSATIVE *sich* in (7.2 a), see Section 7.5.2 or an ANTIPASSIVE *sich* in (7.2 b), see Section 7.7.4. In these examples, the reflexive pronoun *sich* is not filling any role, but is marking a valency alternation. There is a long tradition to call such constructions MIDDLE or MEDIUM. However, there turn out to be very many different kinds of ‘middle’ alternations, so I prefer to be more precise in separating and naming them here in this chapter (see also Kunze 1997). To prevent confusion, I will

simply not use the term ‘middle’ at all.

- (7.2) a. Ich schließe den Schrank.  
Der Schrank schließt sich.  
b. Ich beklage den Lärm.  
Ich beklage mich über den Lärm.

There exist various verbs that do not have a reflexive alternation, but they always obligatorily need a reflexive pronoun, for example *sich verspäten* ‘to be late’ (7.3 a) and *sich aneignen* ‘to appropriate’ (7.3 b). Such obligatorily reflexive verbs are astonishingly common, as discussed in Section 7.3. [7.5]

- (7.3) a. Die S-Bahn hat sich wieder einmal verspätet.  
b. Ich habe mir eine neue Sprache angeeignet.

In this chapter, only diatheses are discussed that exclusively differ as to the addition of a reflexive pronoun. There are actually even more diatheses involving reflexive pronouns that will be discussed in subsequent chapters. In those diatheses there is more than one morphosyntactic change. For example, with some verbs the addition of a preverb also induces the addition of a reflexive pronouns (7.4 a), see Section 8.7.10. There is also the famous German anticausative diatheses that combines a reflexive pronoun with a manner adverbial (7.4 b), see Section 9.5.2. Also widely discussed in German grammar is the combination of a reflexive pronoun with the light verb *lassen* (7.4 c), see Section 11.5.4. Less widely discussed are diatheses that combine a reflexive pronoun with light verbs like *geben* (7.4 d), see Section 10.5.13. [7.6]

- (7.4) a. Der Hund ist nach Hause gelaufen.  
Der Hund hat sich im Wald verlaufen.  
b. Ich verkaufe das Buch.  
Das Buch verkauft sich gut.  
c. Ich schließe den Schrank.  
Der Schrank lässt sich schließen.  
d. Er schlug seine Mitbewerber.  
Seine Mitbewerber geben sich geschlagen.

Amidst the large variety of diatheses with reflexive pronouns, there are a few generalisations that stand out: [7.7]

- Diatheses with reflexive pronouns are valency-reducing alternations (main counterexamples in Section 7.8.1, idiosyncratic counterexamples in Section 7.6.1).
- Diatheses with reflexive pronouns exclusively use the accusative reflexive pronoun, never the dative (idiosyncratic counterexamples in Section 7.9.3, and there is a productive dative pattern with *lassen*, see Section 11.5.7).
- For obligatory reflexive verbs, dative reflexive pronouns are only possible when an accusative argument is present (idiosyncratic counterexamples in Section 7.3.7).
- For self-inflicting reflexive reference, dative reflexive pronouns are only possible when an accusative argument is present (counterexamples in Section 7.4.6 and 7.4.12).

There are six diatheses in this chapter that seem prominent enough to be given a German name. I propose the following names for these: [7.8]

- [OBJ > Ø] ENDOREFLEXIV (see Section 7.7.1 ff.)
- [OBJ > ADJ] REZIPROKATIV (see Section 7.7.3)
- [OBJ > PBJ] REFLEXIV AKKUSATIV ANTIPASSIV (see Section 7.7.4)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] REFLEXIV ANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 7.5.2 ff.)
- [OBJ > SBJ > PBJ] REFLEXIV ERLEBNISPASSIV (see Section 7.5.7)
- [Ø > PBJ] REFLEXIV BEWEGUNGSART (see Section 7.8.1)

[7.9] As noted above, there are many more prominent diatheses that involve a reflexive pronoun, but these are fixed stacks together with other marking (preverbs, adverbials or light verbs). They will be discussed in later chapters. For convenience, the main reflexive fixed stacks are listed here with reference to their full discussion:

- [OBJ > Ø] PRÄVERB ENDOREFLEXIV (see Section 8.7.1)
- [SBJ > Ø] WERTUNGSVERBATIV (see Section 9.5.1)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] PRÄSENTATIVANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 10.5.13)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] MÖGLICHKEITSSPASSIV (see Section 11.5.4)
- [Ø > OBJ] PRÄVERB REFLEXIV AKKUSATIV (see Section 8.8.5 ff.)

## 7.2 Characteristics of reflexive pronouns

### 7.2.1 Identifying reflexive pronouns

[7.10] In most situations, the German reflexive pronouns are identical to the regular pronouns as shown in Table 7.1. Only in the 3rd person there exists a special reflexive pronoun *sich*, both for the singular and the plural. For this reason, I will illustrate reflexive constructions mostly using 3rd person masculine nouns or pronouns with the overtly reflexive pronoun *sich*. As a shorthand, I will often use the word *sich* as a technical term in the meaning ‘reflexive pronoun’.

Table 7.1: German reflexive pronouns

Case	1 Sing.	2 Sing.	3 Sing.	1 Plur.	2 Plur.	3 Plur.
Dative	<i>mir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<b><i>sich</i></b>	<i>uns</i>	<i>euch</i>	<b><i>sich</i></b>
Accusative	<i>mich</i>	<i>dich</i>	<b><i>sich</i></b>	<i>uns</i>	<i>euch</i>	<b><i>sich</i></b>

[7.11] In contrast, the difference between a dative and an accusative reflexive pronoun is only visible in the 1st and 2nd person singular, so to show the case marking I will use examples with such subjects. In general, the accusative *sich* is much more common than the dative *sich*. There seems to be a very strong tendency (though not without exceptions) for the dative reflexive pronoun only to be possible when there is a further accusative argument present in the sentence. Further, the dative reflexive pronoun does not occur in any of the diatheses discussed in this chapter. All non-self-inflicting uses of *sich* are in the accusative.

### 7.2.2 Coreference always with nominative

[7.12]

The pronoun *sich* always refers to the nominative subject (7.5 a), except in some situations embedded inside another diathesis (7.5 b) or light-verb construction.

- (7.5) a. Ich wasche mich.  
 b. Er lässt mich mich waschen.  
 c. Laß mich mich an dir ergetzen.<sup>1</sup>

With light-verb constructions, intended coreference with the nominative subject cannot be marked with *sich* anymore. For example, (7.6 a) is ambiguous in that the pronoun *ihn* could both be coreferential with the nominative *er* or not. The intended meaning of the reflexive *sich* in (7.6 b) is an attempt to force a coreferential reading, which seems impossible to me. [7.13]

- (7.6) a. Er lässt mich ihn waschen.  
 b. \* Er lässt mich sich waschen.

There are a few verbs that seem to allow for coreference with a non-nominative argument (cf. Duden-Grammatik 2009: 273-274). These are very unusual, with (7.7 b) being strange, though not impossible. Example (7.8) clearly shows the problematic status of such reflexive pronouns. The word order in (7.8 a) only leaves the possibility of *sich* referring to the nominative subject. In contrast, the unusual word order in (7.8 b) makes it difficult to interpret the sentence, with both referential options of *sich* being possible: *sich* can refer here both to the nominative *sie* and to the dative *ihrem Freund*. [7.14]

- (7.7) a. Ich habe ihn über den Zustand aufgeklärt.  
 b. ? Ich habe ihn über sich aufgeklärt.  
 (7.8) a. Sie zeigt sich ihrem Freund.  
 b. ? Sie zeigt ihrem Freund sich selbst.

### 7.2.3 Coreference without reflexive pronoun

The reflexive pronoun *sich* undoubtedly plays a role in disambiguating reference in the third person. However, ambiguity remains with genitives (7.9 a), which do not have a lexicalised reflexive pronoun in German. As a result, (7.9 a) can both be interpreted as disjoined reference (7.9 b) and as coreference (7.9 c). [7.15]

- (7.9) a. Er wäscht seine Haare.  
 b. Er wäscht ihm die Haare.  
 c. Er wäscht sich die Haare.

Genitive arguments are vanishing from the German language, so it is difficult to find examples of a proper genitive argument coreferent with the nominative subject. An old-fashioned sounding example is given in (7.10). [7.16]

- (7.10) Ich erinnere mich meiner, wie ich, Dich liebend.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>DWDS: Tucholsky, Kurt: Zwischen den Schlachten. In: Kurt Tucholsky, Werke - Briefe - Materialien, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2000 [1919].

<sup>2</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 09.06.1961, Nr. 24.

### 7.2.4 Double coreference

[7.17] As already seen in the previous example (7.10), three coreferents are also possible (7.11 a). With both an accusative and a dative coreferent (7.11 b) things get really interesting in the third person, as both will turn into *sich*, leading to a confusing sequence of two *sich* reflexive pronouns (7.11 c).

- (7.11) a. Morgen putze ich mir meine Schuhe.  
 b. Ich schreibe Gedichte, weil ich mich mir selbst erklären will.  
 c. Sie will sich sich selbst erklären.

## 7.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

[7.18] A small group of verbs obligatorily needs a reflexive pronoun coreferencing the nominative subject. Very probably, such verbs originally also allowed constructions without this obligatory coreferencing *sich* pronoun, but for some reason that usage without *sich* got out-of-use. In various cases this ongoing development can be observed in current German. For example, coreferent usage with *bemühen* 'to bother' (7.12 a) or *beziehen* 'to relate to' (10.21 a) appear to be more frequent compared to their non-coreferencing usage in (7.12 b,c) and (7.13 b), respectively.

- (7.12) a. Ich bemühe mich.  
 b. ? Ich bemühe dich.  
 c. Leider kann ich es nicht ganz auswendig, sonst brauchte ich dich nicht zu bemühen.<sup>3</sup>
- (7.13) a. Ich beziehe mich auf das Gespräch.  
 b. Er bezieht die Verdächtigung auf sein ungewöhnliches Benehmen.

[7.19] Among the verbs with obligatory *sich*, the following valency patterns are commonly attested:

- Nominative+accusative *sich* (Section 7.3.1)
- Nominative+accusative *sich*+governed preposition (Section 7.3.2)
- Nominative+accusative *sich*+genitive (Section 7.3.6)
- Nominative+dative *sich*+accusative (Section 7.3.8)

[7.20] In contrast, verbs with the following valency patterns are unattested, or only attested rarely in special collocations:

- Nominative+dative *sich* (Section 7.3.7)
- Nominative+dative *sich*+governed preposition (no known examples)
- Nominative+dative *sich*+genitive (no known examples)
- Nominative+accusative *sich*+dative (Section 7.3.5)

[7.21] Comparing these two groups, the generalisation can be formulated that obligatory dative *sich* is only possible when there is an accusative argument present and an obligatory accusative *sich* is not possible with a dative argument present.

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<sup>3</sup>DWDS: E. Strauß Spiegel 45.

## – Obligatory accusative reflexive pronouns –

### 7.3.1 [ N ] Obligatory accusative reflexive

Various verbs describing behaviour, like *verirren* ‘to get lost’ (7.14), need an obligatory reflexive pronoun. [7.22]

(7.14) Vier Wanderer haben sich im Gebirge verirrt.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.23]

- Behaviour: *abmühen, abrackern, abstrampeln, aufführen, aufrappeln, beeilen, benehmen, betrinken, besaufen, bücken, daranmachen, davonstehlen, durchlavieren, durchmögeln, durchwursteln, echauffieren, einigeln, erhängen, ermannen, fortbilden, gedulden, herausreden, hervortun, hinauswagen, sputen*
- (Erratic) behaviour with *ver-*: *verfahren, verhalten, verhaspeln, verirren, verkalkulieren, verlaufen, verplappern, verschreiben (falsch schreiben), verspäten, verspekulieren, versprechen (falsch sprechen), verrennen, vertun, verwählen, verzählen*
- Body process: *akklimatisieren, erkälten, räuspern, verkühlen, übergeben, wohlfühlen*
- Natural process: *abregnen, anfinden, bauchen, behaaren, bewahrheiten, bewölken, eintrüben, entspinnen, ereignen, herauskristallisieren, jähren, rentieren, verästeln, verfärben, verpuppen, verzweigen, zutragen*

#### Further Examples

[7.24]

- Die Autofahrer, die im Stau stehen, müssen sich gedulden.
- Die S-Bahn hat sich wieder einmal verspätet.
- Die Wolken haben sich abgereget.
- Die Segel bauchen sich im Winde.
- Auf der A8 hat sich ein Unfall ereignet.
- Die neugeborenen Katzen behaaren sich allmählich.<sup>4</sup>

### 7.3.2 [ NP ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+governed preposition

A widespread phenomenon are verbs with an obligatory accusative *sich* with a governed preposition (see Section 6.2 on defining governed prepositions), like *entschließen zu* ‘to decide’ (7.15 a,b). The verbs are listed below according to the preposition they govern. [7.25]

- (7.15) a. Ich entschlief mich zu einer Reise.  
b. Ich entschlief mich dazu, eine Reise zu machen.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.26]

- *an* : *anpirschen, anschmiegen, beteiligen, festbeißen, halten*
- *auf* : *beziehen, freuen, konzentrieren, verlassen*
- *durch* : *äussern*
- *für* : *aussprechen, bedanken, eignen, entschuldigen, revanchieren, schämen*
- *gegen* : *sträuben, verschwören*
- *in* : *einfühlen, einhören, einkuscheln, einleben, einlesen, fügen, hineindenken, hineinversetzen, schicken (fügen), vergucken, verlieben, versuchen*

<sup>4</sup>dwds dictionary, attested online at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/behhaaren>, accessed 27 Juli 2022.



- *mit* : *abfinden, abgeben, abmühen, abquälen, auskennen, beeilen, befassen, begnügen, behelfen, beschäftigen, schwertun, zufriedengeben*
- *nach* : *erkundigen, sehnen, umsehen*
- *über* : *beschweren, einig sein, erkundigen, ereifern, kaputtlachen, mokieren*
- *um* : *balgen, bemühen, bewerben, mühen*
- *von* : *drücken, erholen, lossagen*
- *vor* : *schämen, verbeugen, verneigen*
- *zu* : *bequemen, eignen, entscheiden, entschließen, gesellen, versteigen*

[7.27] **Further Examples**

- Das Parlament befasst sich mit dem neuen Gesetz.
- Ich erhole mich von der Anstrengung.
- Der Tourist erkundigt sich bei der Information nach dem Weg.
- Er fügte sich in sein Schicksal.
- Die Studenten sträuben sich gegen die Erhöhung der Studiengebühren.
- Das Brett eignet sich nicht zu/für diese Arbeit.
- Er versuchte sich in dieser Rolle.
- Ich habe mich mit der Arbeit abgequält.
- Ich beuge mich an die Arbeit
- Ich beeile mich mit dem Brief.
- Ich halte mich an die Abmachungen.
- Die Krankheit äußert sich durch den Ausschlag.
- Mit dieser Aufgabe tue ich mich schwer.
- Erst auf Medienanfragen bequemte sie sich zu einer Antwort.<sup>5</sup>

[7.28] **Notes**

[7.29] The verb *sich verlassen* 'to rely on' (7.16 a) has a completely different meaning from *verlassen ohne sich*, which means 'to leave' (7.16 b).

- (7.16) a. Ich verlasse mich auf dich.  
b. Ich verlasse dich.

[7.30] The verb *aussprechen* 'to pronounce' (7.17 a) has a rather different meaning from *sich aussprechen*, which can mean 'to argue for' with a preposition *für* (7.17 b) or 'speak about disagreements' with a comitative *mit* (7.17 c)

- (7.17) a. Ich spreche die Worte aus.  
b. Ich spreche mich für Erneuerungen aus.  
c. Ich spreche mich mit dir aus.

[7.31] Although they are clearly cognates, the verb *abgeben* 'to give away' (7.18 a) has a rather different meaning from *sich abgeben mit* 'to mess around' (7.18 b). Likewise, *drücken* 'to encumber' (7.18 c) is semantically rather far away from the cognate *sich drücken vor* 'to duck out of something' (7.18 d).

- (7.18) a. Ich habe den Brief abgegeben.  
b. Ich habe mich mit ihm abgegeben.  
c. Sorgen drücken mich.  
d. Ich drücke mich vor der Gefahr.

[7.32]

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<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 17.11.2010, Nr. 46.

The verb *sich schicken* ‘to acquiesce’ is an old-fashioned meaning of *schicken* ‘to send’. Another usage of the same verb stem typically occurs with *es* and negative polarity, *es schickt sich nicht* meaning ‘to be not suitable’.

### 7.3.3 [ Np ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+mit (*Reciproca tantum*)

A special group of verbs in this class are verbs with an reciprocal *mit* preposition, like with *einigen* ‘to reach an agreement’ in (7.19). On first notice, the *mit* phrase might look like a comitative argument as used with *betrinken* ‘to get drunk’ in (7.20). However, as shown by the grammaticality judgements in those two examples, the *mit* phrases with both verbs have different characteristics. [7.33]

Just like comitative phrases, reciprocal *mit* phrases are not governed prepositions, compare (7.19b) and (7.20b), see also Section 6.2.4. However, different from comitative phrases, reciprocal *mit* phrases do not allow for the addition of *zusammen* (7.19c), nor can *with* be replaced by *ohne* (7.19d). The addition of *zusammen* and the replacement with *ohne* is possible with comitative *mit* (7.20c,d). [7.34]

- (7.19) a. Ich habe mich mit meinem Nachbarn geeinigt.  
 b. \* Ich habe mich damit geeinigt, dass der Nachbar geht.  
 c. \* Ich habe mich zusammen mit meinem Nachbarn geeinigt.  
 d. \* Ich habe mich ohne meinen Nachbarn geeignet.
- (7.20) a. Ich habe mich mit meinem Nachbarn betrunken.  
 b. \* Ich habe mich damit betrunken, dass der Nachbar geht.  
 c. Ich habe mich zusammen mit meinem Nachbarn betrunken.  
 d. Ich habe mich ohne meinen Nachbar betrunken.

Verbs with reciprocal *mit* are sometimes called ‘real’ reciprocals (or *RECIPROCA TANTUM*, Wiemer & Nedjalkov 2007: 467-468) because they can be considered to be inherently reciprocal, although they still can have a singular subject (see Section 7.4.14 for the reciprocal constructions with plural subjects). [7.35]

There are many verbs with the prefix *ver-* in this class. Interestingly, many are derived from nominal stems, e.g. *sich verbrüdern* ‘to fraternise’ is derived from the noun *Bruder* ‘brother’, see Section 8.6.4. [7.36]

#### Attested Verbs

- Obtain agreement: *alliiieren, anfreunden, aussprechen, beratschlagen, bereden, einigen, solidarisieren, unterhalten (sprechen), verabreden, verbrüdern, verbünden, verklemmen, verloben, verschwören, vertragen*
- Obtain disagreement: *anlegen, duellieren, überwerfen, verfeinden, verkrachen*

#### Further Examples

- Sie hat sich mit ihrem Mann überworfen.
- Ich lege mich mit ihm an. (‘Ich streite mit ihm’)
- Das große rechte Speichenrad meines Wagens verklemmte sich mit dem linken des Nachbarwagens.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 14.08.1958, Nr. 33.

[7.39] **Notes**

[7.40] Various reciprocal *mit* verbs also exist without reflexive pronoun, but only in a different lexical meaning, e.g. *vertragen* means ‘to tolerate something inanimate’ without a reflexive pronoun, but ‘to get along with a human’ with a reflexive pronoun.

**7.3.4 [ NL ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+local preposition**

[7.41] A few verbs with obligatory *sich* additionally need an obligatory local prepositional phrase, like *sich befinden* ‘to be located’ (7.21).

- (7.21) a. Das Rathaus befindet sich am Marktplatz.  
b. \* Das Rathaus befindet sich.

[7.42] **Attested Verbs**

- *aalen, ansiedeln, anstellen, aufhalten (befinden), befinden, begeben, einfressen, einschleichen, ergießen, fläzen, niederlassen, scheren, suhlen, umsehen, verkriechen, verschanzen, zubewegen, zurechtfinden*

[7.43] **Further Examples**

- Ich halte mich in der Vestibule auf.
- Ich aale mich in der Sonne.
- Der Schmutz hatte sich tief in die bröckligen Wände eingefressen.
- Er schert sich nach Hause.

[7.44] **Notes**

[7.45] The obligatory reflexive verb *sich aufhalten* ‘to be located’ is possibly distantly related in meaning to the non-reflexive verb *aufhalten* ‘to stop something’ discussed in Section 7.5.7.

**7.3.5 [ ND ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+dative**

[7.46] This pattern with an obligatory accusative reflexive with a dative is exceedingly rare. The attested example appear somewhat old-fashioned, like *sich hingeben* ‘to indulge oneself’ (7.22). There are a few more verbs in which the dative is optional (see Section 7.3.10). Semantically, these verbs are closely related to the verbs showing a dative passive diathesis (see Section 7.9.1).

- (7.22) Ich hab mich der Aufgabe hingegeben.

[7.47] **Attested Verbs**

- *anschließen, beugen (fügen), fügen, hingeben (eifrig widmen), unterwerfen, widersetzen, zugesellen*

[7.48] **Further Examples**

- Europa beugt sich dem Willen der USA.
- Ich widersetze mich dem Befehl.
- Ich werde mich deinem Vorschlag anschließen.
- In Scharen gesellt sie sich häufig dem Hausgeflügel zu.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> DWDS: Natzmer, Gert von: Tierstaaten und Tiergesellschaften, Berlin: Safari-Verl. 1967, S. 209.

### 7.3.6 [ NG ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+genitive

Accusative *sich* combined with an obligatory genitive argument is clearly attested, although all these uses are rather old-fashioned, like with *sich entledigen* ‘to ditch’ (7.23). [7.49]

(7.23) Ich entledige mich meines Gegners.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.50]

- *bedienen, befleißigen, bemächtigen, bemüßigen, berauben, entäußern, enthalten, entledigen, entsinnen, erfreuen, erwehren*

#### Further Examples

[7.51]

- Ich habe mich des Sparens befleißigt.
- Ich habe mich der Herrschaft bemächtigt.
- Ich habe mich des Alkohols enthalten.
- Ich habe mich dieser Methode bedient.
- Ich erfreue mich bester Gesundheit.

### — Obligatory dative reflexive pronouns —

### 7.3.7 [ N ] Obligatory dative reflexive

It is exceedingly rare to have a dative *sich* without other arguments. A possible example is the (arguably lexicalised) collocation *sich Mühe geben* ‘to make an effort’ (7.24 a). Also, the verb *behelfen* ‘to manage’ is apparently becoming acceptable with a dative reflexive pronoun in online communication (Strecker 2017). [7.52]

- (7.24) a. Ich gebe mir Mühe.  
b. Ich behelfe mich (mir).

#### Attested Verbs

[7.53]

- *behelfen, Mühe geben*

### 7.3.8 [ NA ] Obligatory dative reflexive+accusative

A dative *sich* with an obligatory accusative appear to be reasonably frequent. Note that the meaning of almost all these verbs include some kind of (cognitive) appropriation, like with *vorstellen* ‘to image’ (7.25 a). The prefix *er-* occurs recurrently with the meaning ‘to appropriate something successfully’, like with *erspielen* ‘to win by playing’ (7.25 b). [7.54]

- (7.25) a. Ich stelle mir das Ergebnis vor.  
b. Ich erspiele mir einen Gewinn.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.55]

- Appropriation verbs: *aneignen, anmaßen, ertanzen, ergeigen, erkämpfen, ermalen, ersingen, erspielen, langen*
- Verbs of cognitive appropriation: *abgewöhnen, abquälen (erarbeiten), aneignen, angewöhnen, ausdenken, denken, einbilden, merken, vorstellen (denken)*
- Others: *verbitten, vornehmen*

## [7.56] Further Examples

- Ich denke mir das Ergebnis aus.
- Er langte sich ein Glas.<sup>8</sup>
- Ich muss mir jede Zeile abquälen.

## [7.57] Notes

[7.58] The verb *denken* only occurs in this structure in the rather old-fashioned usage with the meaning ‘to imagine’ (7.26).

(7.26) Ich denke mir den Vorgang in folgender Weise.<sup>9</sup>

[7.59] The verb *merken* only occurs in this structure in the meaning ‘to remember’ (7.27 a), and not in the usage of *bemerken* (7.27 b) or *anmerken* (7.27 c).

- (7.27) a. Ich merke mir deine Telefonnummer.  
 b. Ich (be)merke seine Absicht.  
 c. Du darfst dir das nicht (an)merken lassen.

[7.60] The verb *vorstellen* also has two rather different meanings. In this construction with an obligatory dative *sich* it means ‘to imagine’ (7.28 a). The other meaning ‘to introduce’ (7.28 b,c) has a possible accusative reflexive (see Section 7.4.5).

- (7.28) a. Ich stelle mir den Konsul vor.  
 b. Ich stelle mich dem Konsul vor.  
 c. Ich stelle dich dem Konsul vor.

[7.61] The verb *abquälen* has two rather different meanings. Only the meaning ‘to work hard for something’ (7.29 a) shows this construction with an obligatory dative *sich*.

- (7.29) a. Ich muss mir jede Zeile abquälen. (‘erarbeiten’)  
 b. Ich habe mich mit der Arbeit abgequält. (‘plagen’)

## — Diatheses of obligatory reflexive verbs —

[7.62] Verbs with obligatory *sich* can be seen as just regular lexicalised verbs, which in turn are applicable to any of the alternations discussed in the previous two chapters. Curiously, such alternations seem to be rather rare. The attested cases will be discussed in this section. Arguably, these diatheses belong together with the diatheses from the previous two chapters

## 7.3.9 [ NP | –P ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+nominative drop

[7.63] The collocation *sich drehen um* ‘to concern’ can be used both with a regular nominative subject (7.30 a) and without (7.30 b). This usage of this verb is clearly metaphorically derived

<sup>8</sup>DWDS attested at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/langen>, accessed 28 July 2022.

<sup>9</sup>DWDS: Weismann, August: *Das Keimplasma. Eine Theorie der Vererbung*. Jena, 1892.

from the local meaning ‘to revolve around’ (7.30 c), but in that usage the dropping of the nominative is not possible. This diathesis is the same as the drop described in Section 6.5.1.

- (7.30) a. Der Streit dreht sich um das 1998 erworbene Firmengelände.  
 b. In diesem Streit dreht es sich um das 1998 erworbene Firmengelände.  
 c. Der Mond dreht sich um die Erde.  
 d. \* Bei dem Mond dreht es sich um die Erde.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.64]

- *drehen*

### 7.3.10 [ ND | N- ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+dative drop

A small group of obligatorily intransitive *sich* verbs allow for a dative to be dropped, like with *ergeben* ‘to capitulate’ (7.31). This diathesis is the same as the drop described in Section 5.7.4 but with an additional reflexive pronoun in both alternants. The verbs in this class establish some further examples of the unusual situation of an accusative *sich* with a dative argument (see also Section 7.3.5).

[7.65]

- (7.31) a. Die Rebellen ergeben sich.  
 b. Die Rebellen ergeben sich der Polizei.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.66]

- Subordinate: *ergeben, fügen*
- Oppose: *emanzipieren, widersetzen*

#### Further Examples

[7.67]

- Er widersetzte sich.  
 Er widersetzte sich dem Vater.
- Er fügte sich (trotz vieler Bedenken).  
 Er fügte sich dem Willen seines Vaters.

#### Notes

[7.68]

The verb *ergeben* ‘to capitulate’ is different from the prepositional passive *ergeben* ‘to result in’. The meaning *ergeben* ‘to capitulate’ used to allow a regular (non-reflexive) accusative argument with a meaning similar to modern *übergeben* ‘turn over’ (7.32). In contemporary German this is not possible anymore.

[7.69]

- (7.32) Ich ergebe ihn der süßen Gnade unsers Herrn Jesu Christi.<sup>10</sup>

### 7.3.11 [ ND | NP ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+dative antipassive

[7.70]

<sup>10</sup>DWDS: Scriver, Christian: Das Verlohrne und wiedergefundene Schöfflein. Magdeburg, 1672.

In some of the verbs with an accusative *sich* and dative argument (7.33 a), the dative can be replaced by a (governed) prepositional phrase (7.33 b,c). This diathesis is the same as described in Section 6.7.10 for verbs without reflexive marking.

- (7.33) a. Ich füge mich dem Gesetz.  
 b. Ich füge mich in mein Schicksal.  
 c. Die machistische Gesellschaft hat sich nicht geändert und die meisten Frauen fügen sich darin.<sup>11</sup>

[7.71] **Attested Verbs**

- Submission: *anbiedern, anschmeicheln, beugen, fügen*

[7.72] **Further Examples**

- Ich beuge mich seinem Willen.  
 Ich beuge mich vor seinem Willen.
- Ich füge mich deinem Willen.  
 Ich füge mich nach deinem Willen.
- Er hatte sich (bei) ihm angebiedert.
- [...] wie sich die politische Klasse (bei) der fußballbegeisterten Masse anzuschmeicheln versucht.<sup>12</sup>

### 7.3.12 [ NG | NP ] Obligatory accusative reflexive+genitive antipassive

[7.73] Some obligatorily *sich* verbs with a genitive argument allow for the genitive argument to be replaced by a (governed) prepositional phrase, like with *erinnern* 'to remember' (7.34 a,b), just like the antipassives in Section 6.7.15.

- (7.34) a. Ich erinnere dich des Versprechens. (until ±1850 with genitive)  
 b. Ich erinnere dich an das Versprechen.

[7.74] Most of these constructions with a genitive are old-fashioned or even completely out of use, like with *denken* 'to commemorate' (7.35). Note that these prepositional phrases all seem to be governed prepositions (7.35 c)

- (7.35) a. Ich denke der vergangenen Jahre.  
 b. Ich denke an die vergangenen Jahre.  
 c. Ich denke daran, dass du morgen Geburtstag hast.

[7.75] **Attested Verbs**

- *über* : *erfreuen, freuen, schämen, vergewissern*
- *mit* : *brüsten*
- *auf* : *besinnen*
- *zu* : *erreisen, erfrechen*

[7.76] **Further Examples**

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.11.2013, Nr. 44.

<sup>12</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.07.2010, Nr. 27.

- Ich schäme mich meines Vergehens.  
Ich schäme mich für mein Vergehen.
- Sie brüstet sich ihrer Vergangenheit.  
Sie brüstet sich mit ihrem großen Freundeskreis.
- Ich besinne mich eines Besseren.  
Das Volk muss sich auf seine Kraft besinnen.
- Sie besann sich ihrer Aufgabe.  
Sie besann sich auf ihre Aufgabe.
- Er erfrechte sich der Beleidigung des Vaters.  
Er erfrechte sich zu einer solchen Beleidigung.
- Er erdreistet sich der Lüge.  
Mit welchem Ziel denn hätten wir uns dazu erdreisten können?<sup>13</sup>
- Sie hat sich seiner Zuverlässigkeit vergewissert.  
Sie hat sich über seine Zuverlässigkeit vergewissert.

## 7.4 Alternations without diathesis

There are three different kinds of alternations involving reflexive pronouns that do not involve any changing of roles (i.e. there is no diathesis). The well-known reflexive constructions (Section 7.4.5ff.) and reciprocal constructions (Section 7.4.14ff.) are among them. Less widely acknowledged, there are also some verbs that allow for a ‘free’ reflexive pronoun, to which I will turn first. [7.77]

### — Free reflexive pronouns —

Some verbs allow for both a construction with and without *sich*, but there is no difference in the valency between these two constructions. The difference in meaning between the two alternants is small and is in need for more in-depth study in all cases presented below. Note also that for these verbs a ‘free’ dative reflexive pronoun only occurs when a full accusative argument is present. [7.78]

This alternation is almost completely ignored in the German grammatical literature. An early discussion of the phenomenon is found in Stötzel (1970: 174-177) and a short note is presented in Wiemer & Nadjalkov (2007: 498). It is also possible that the occurrence of a ‘free’ reflexive is a dialectal phenomenon, see e.g. the apparent extension of reflexive usage in Austrian German as observed in Ziegler (2010). [7.79]

### 7.4.1 [ N | N ] Free accusative reflexive

The semantic difference between these two alternants of the verbs in this group deserves further investigation. The verb *knien* ‘to kneel’ in (7.36) suggests that there might be a difference in dynamics: the construction without reflexive pronoun is more typical for a state, while the construction with reflexive pronoun is used typically to describe a change of state. However, this difference does not seem to hold for all examples. The reflexive pronoun [7.80]

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.09.1977, Nr. 39.



clearly is not part of a reflexive construction as the verb is intransitive (7.36 c).

- (7.36) a. Er kniet auf dem Kissen.  
 b. Er kniet sich auf das Kissen.  
 c. \* Er kniet ihn auf das Kissen.

[7.81] Covert anticausatives, like with  *duschen*  ‘to shower’ (see Section 5.5.5), might seem to have a ‘free’ reflexive (7.37 a,b). However, the construction with  *sich*  in (7.37 b) is just a self-inflicting reflexive of the transitive (7.37 c).

- (7.37) a. Ich habe geduscht.  
 b. Ich habe mich geduscht.  
 c. Ich habe den Elefanten geduscht.

[7.82] Similarly, reflexive anticausatives, like  *abkühlen*  ‘to cool’ (see Section 7.5.2), might seem to have a ‘free’ reflexive (7.38 a). However, the two possibilities are clearly distinguished by a different perfect auxiliary (7.38 b). Also a transitive variant is possible (7.38 c). This all indicates that a verb like  *abkühlen*  is a reflexive anticausative, and the intransitive construction without  *sich*  is an anticausative of the transitive (see Section 10.5.17).

- (7.38) a. Die Luft kühlt (sich) ab.  
 b. Die Luft ist abgekühlt.  
     Die Luft hat sich abgekühlt.  
 c. Der Regen hat die Luft abgekühlt.

#### [7.83] Attested Verbs

- *ausruhen, ausschlafen, drehen, erbrechen, halten (Zustand), hinknien, irren, knien, lohnen*

#### [7.84] Further Examples

- Ich ruhe aus.  
     Ich ruhe mich aus.
- Ich habe geirrt.  
     Ich habe mich geirrt.
- Ich habe hingekniet.  
     Ich habe mich hingekniet.
- Er hat ausgeschlafen.  
     Er hat sich ausgeschlafen.
- Der Kranke hat mehrmals erbrochen.  
     Der Betrunkene hat sich erbrochen.
- Die Arbeit lohnt.  
     Die Arbeit lohnt sich.
- Geheimnisse halten sich lange.<sup>14</sup>  
     Denn Bronzeskulpturen halten lange.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 06.05.1995.

<sup>15</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 26.11.1994.

**Notes**

The verb *ausruhen* ‘to rest’ until very recently was commonly used without *sich*, but this is slightly awkward in contemporary German (7.39 a). Constructions without *sich* are still widespread in non-finite and subordinate uses (7.39 b-d). [7.85]

- (7.39) a. ? Sie ruht aus.  
 b. Sie blieb stehen um auszuruhen.  
 c. Sie musste ausruhen.  
 d. Ich sehe, dass sie ausruht. [7.86]

The verb *irren* ‘to be wrong’ without reflexive pronoun also seems to be old-fashioned (7.40). [7.87]

- (7.40) Es irrt der Mensch so lang er strebt.<sup>16</sup>

The verb *drehen* ‘to turn’ is an interesting case that needs more research. It can be used transitively (7.41 a) and with a reflexive anticausative diathesis (7.41 b), see Section 7.5.2. However, there are also various contexts in which the anticausative can be used without a reflexive (7.41 c). In my experience, many German speakers consider such examples without reflexive to be wrong, but they are clearly attested. Something similar happens with *hinknien* ‘to kneel down’ (7.41 d) [7.88]

- (7.41) a. Ich drehe die Kurbel.  
 b. Die Räder drehen sich wieder.<sup>17</sup>  
 c. Die beiden Räder drehen dann gleichmäßig.<sup>18</sup>  
 d. Jedes Mal, wenn man etwas Böses gemacht hatte, musste man für eine gewisse Zeit auf eine Bank hinknien.<sup>19</sup>

**7.4.2 [ NP | NP ] Free accusative reflexive+governed preposition**

Although there is definitively a different ‘feel’ between *streiten* ‘to quarrel’ with and without *sich* (7.42), the difference is difficult to pin down. The sentence without *sich* seems to be more static, describing a fixed situation (7.42 a), while the variant with *sich* is more dynamic (7.42 b). However, whether this is not an accurate description of the (fine) difference between these alternants for all verbs listed below. [7.89]

- (7.42) a. Ich streite mit dir um die Wurst.  
 b. Ich streite mich mit dir um die Wurst.

Covert causatives (see Section 6.5.10 and 6.6.1) might seem to have a ‘free’ *sich*, like with *stürzen* ‘to tumble’ (7.43 a,b). However, this is not the case, because the construction with *sich* (7.43 b) is just the self-inflicting reflexive construction of the transitive (7.43 c). [7.90]

- (7.43) a. Ich stürze ins Wasser.  
 b. Ich stürze mich ins Wasser.  
 c. Ich stürze den Elefanten ins Wasser.

**Attested Verbs**

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Goethe, Faust: Prolog 317.

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 09.02.2011 (online).

<sup>18</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.01.2016, Nr. 02.

<sup>19</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 01.06.2001. [7.91]

- Verbs of quarrel: *balgen, boxen, raufen, streiten, zanken*
- Others: *abwechseln, beraten, entscheiden, erstaunen, sorgen, überlappen*

[7.92] **Further Examples**

- Ich bin über das IOC baff erstaunt.<sup>20</sup>  
[Er] erstaunt sich über den langen Anreiseweg.<sup>21</sup>
- Ein Großteil der Norweger entscheidet für einen solchen Stromtarif.<sup>22</sup>  
Ich entscheide mich für den Angriff.
- M.P. boxt sich mit einem alten Weggefährten.<sup>23</sup>
- Die Zone überlappt mit dem eigenen Überwachungsgürtel.<sup>24</sup>  
Die Zone überlappt sich mit schon lange bestehenden Luftüberwachungsgebieten Japans.<sup>25</sup>

[7.93] **Notes**

[7.94] The verb *sorgen* has a different meaning in the two alternants: without reflexive it means ‘to take care of’ (7.44 a) and with reflexive ‘to worry’ (7.44 b). The verb also changes preposition with the addition of *sich* (7.44 a,b). Both prepositions are governed prepositions (7.44 c,d). Such an alternation between different governed prepositions might be considered a whole new class of diatheses not yet consequently acknowledged in this study.

- (7.44) a. Er sorgt für seine Mutter.  
b. Er sorgt sich um seine Mutter.  
c. Er sorgt dafür, dass es seiner Mutter gut geht.  
d. Er sorgt sich darum, dass es seiner Mutter gut geht.

**7.4.3 [ ND | ND ] Free accusative reflexive+dative**

[7.95] The verb *zuneigen* ‘to tend towards’ (7.45) is the only known example of a free reflexive with an additional dative argument.

- (7.45) a. Ich neige dieser Ansicht seit Langem zu.  
b. Später hat er sich dem Sozialismus zugeneigt.<sup>26</sup>

[7.96] **Attested Verbs**

- *zuneigen*

**7.4.4 [ NA | NA ] Free dative reflexive+accusative**

[7.97] So-called ‘free’ benefactive datives (7.46 a,b) are widespread in German (see Section 6.8.9). Such a dative can in most cases also be used reflexively (7.46 c). Comparing (7.46 a) with

<sup>20</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.11.2017 (online).

<sup>21</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.10.1985, Nr. 43.

<sup>22</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 11.09.2012, Nr. 37.

<sup>23</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 24.10.1997, Nr. 44.

<sup>24</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.12.2013, Nr. 50.

<sup>25</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 03.12.2013 (online).

<sup>26</sup>Attested online at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/zuneigen>, accessed 2 August 2022.

(7.46 c) seems to suggest a free reflexive *sich* in the dative. However, this example is just a combination of a benefactive dative and the regular self-inflicting reflexive usage.

- (7.46) a. Ich habe ein Haus gebaut.  
 b. Ich habe ihm (= für ihn) ein Haus gebaut.  
 c. Ich habe mir ein Haus gebaut.

In contrast, the verb *ansehen* ‘observe’ also allows for a construction with and without reflexive pronoun (7.47 a,c), but it is not possible to use a non-coreferential dative (7.47 b). Such verbs are much less common and will be listed here. All these verbs currently known to me have preverbs, with *er-* being particularly frequent (see Chapter 8).

- (7.47) a. Ich habe das Haus angesehen.  
 b. \* Ich habe ihm das Haus angesehen.  
 c. Ich habe mir das Haus angesehen.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.99]

- *anhören, ansehen, ausdenken, erbetteln, erdenken, erhandeln, erkämpfen, erschwimmen, ersehnen, ersparen (Geld), erspielen, erwandern, überlegen, verdienen, wünschen*

#### Further Examples

[7.100]

- Ich verdiene ein Vermögen mit Werbung.  
 Ich verdiene mir ein Vermögen mit Werbung.
- Ich höre die Musik an.  
 Ich höre mir deinen Vorschlag an.
- Er überlegte die Wirkung.  
 Er überlegte sich eine Lösung.
- Die Mannschaft hat den Sieg erspielt.  
 Die Mannschaft hat sich den Sieg erspielt
- Ich erhandle ein Vorrecht.  
 Ich erhandle mir ein Vorrecht.
- Die USA wünschen ein europäisches Fluggastdaten-Register.<sup>27</sup>  
 Ich wünsche mir ein Fahrrad.
- Könnte ja sein, dass gerade niemand etwas Neues erdenkt und erfindet.<sup>28</sup>  
 Das genügt den Theoretikern jedoch, sich vier Arten von schwarzen Löchern zu erdenken.<sup>29</sup>
- Schwerkranken ersehnen solche Botschaften.<sup>30</sup>  
 Sie ersehnen sich menschlich zugewandte und gerechte Gesten der Erkenntnis.<sup>31</sup>
- Das erste EM-Gold für die Gastgeber erschwamm Adam Peaty.<sup>32</sup>  
 Zumindest Völker erschwimmt sich jährlich einen fünfstelligen Betrag.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.09.2015 (online).

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.09.2017, Nr. 37.

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.08.1971, Nr. 35.

<sup>30</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.04.2017, Nr. 10.

<sup>31</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 19.03.1999.

<sup>32</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 17.05.2016 (online).

<sup>33</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 16.03.2000.

- Er erwanderte seine neue Heimat.<sup>34</sup>  
Sie erwandert sich die Atlantikküste.<sup>35</sup>
- Die Armee hat den Sieg erkämpft.  
Der Sportler hat sich den ersten Platz erkämpft.

[7.101] **Notes**

[7.102] The verb *ausdenken* ‘to contrive’ without reflexive pronoun appears to be old-fashioned (7.48).

(7.48) Da dachte er eine List aus.<sup>36</sup>

[7.103] The verb *ersparen* ‘to save money’ has a free reflexive (7.49 a,b). The same verb can also mean ‘to spare somebody something’. In that meaning it takes dative and accusative arguments (7.49 c).

- (7.49) a. Er hat viel von seinem Verdienst erspart.<sup>37</sup>  
b. Ich habe mir etwas erspart.<sup>38</sup>  
c. Er hat mir jede Menge Arbeit erspart.

## — Self-inflicted reflexive alternations —

[7.104] To test for the presence of the self-inflicting reflexive construction, there are various syntactic characteristics to look out for. First, it is always possible to add the intensifier *selbst* to the reflexive pronoun (7.50 a). Further, the pronoun *sich* can be negated (7.50 b) and stressed (7.50 c). These characteristics do not hold for any of the diatheses marked by *sich* as discussed later in this chapter.

- (7.50) a. Er sieht sich (selbst).  
b. Er sieht nicht sich selbst.  
c. Er sieht nur sich selbst.

## 7.4.5 [ NA | Na ] Self-inflicting accusative reflexive

[7.105] This construction is often seen as the prototypical self-inflicting reflexive: a transitive verb with a nominative and an accusative argument allows for the accusative to be replaced by a reflexive pronoun, indicating that the action is performed on the nominative subject itself (7.51 a,b). This alternation is possible for very many verbs that can have both an animate nominative and accusative argument.

- (7.51) a. Ich wasche das Auto.  
b. Ich wasche mich (selbst).

[7.106]

<sup>34</sup>DWDS: Zeit Magazin, 20.09.2012, Nr. 39.

<sup>35</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 24.05.2007, Nr. 22.

<sup>36</sup>DWDS: Grimm *Simeliberg*.

<sup>37</sup>Attested online at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/ersparen>, accessed 29 July 2022.

<sup>38</sup>Attested online at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/ersparen>, accessed 29 July 2022.

The list of verbs presented here can easily be extended with more examples. However, care has to be taken not to include verbs with highly similar antipassive alternations (see Section 7.7.4) like with *fürchten* ‘to fear’ (7.52 a,b) or anticausative alternations (see Section 7.5.2) like with *freuen* ‘to be happy’ (7.52 c,d).

- (7.52) a. Er fürchtet den Ausgang des Verfahrens.  
 b. Er fürchtet sich vor dem Ausgang des Verfahrens.  
 c. Dein Erfolg freut ihn.  
 d. Er freut sich über deinen Erfolg

The crucial difference between a self-inflicting reflexive construction and these other alternations is that with self-inflicting reflexives the argument is simply replaced by the reflexive pronoun, or, in other words, the reflexive pronoun *sich* itself is the argument. So, with verbs like *waschen* ‘to wash’ in (7.51 a,b) above, there is both an agent (the ‘washer’) and a patient (the ‘washee’) of the verb. These two roles can be filled by one and the same participant, as marked by the reflexive pronoun. This is not the case with antipassive and anticausative in (7.52 b,d). This can be seen by the possibility to retain the original argument as a prepositional phrase in these cases. The pronoun *sich* does not replace any argument here (for more discussion about these alternations, see the respective sections below). [7.107]

#### Attested Verbs

[7.108]

- Emotions: *hassen, kennen, loben, mögen, rühmen, verachten*
- Bodily care: *abmessen, abwiegen, anziehen, ausziehen, baden, bürsten, duschen, kämmen, kratzen, pflegen, rasieren, schminken, verletzen, waschen, wiegen*
- Body position: *aufrichten, beugen, hinlegen, hinsetzen, hinstellen, strecken, stoßen, umdrehen, wenden*
- Perception: *ansehen, fühlen, hören, sehen*
- Work: *beschäftigen, bewerben, vorstellen*
- Others: *aufhängen, erschießen, schützen*

#### Further Examples

[7.109]

- Ich bewerbe den Wein bei den Kunden.  
 Der Student bewirbt sich (selbst) bei vielen Universitäten.
- Er hat den Teilnehmer hingesetzt/hingelegt/hingestellt.  
 Sie hat sich (selbst) hingesetzt/hingelegt/hingestellt.
- Ich schütze die Menschheit vor den Gefahren.  
 Ich schütze mich (selbst) vor den Gefahren.

#### Notes

[7.110]

The verb *stoßen* ‘to push’ has an interesting change in preferred prepositional adjunct between non-reflexive (7.53 a) and reflexive usage (7.53 b), in accordance to the change in verb semantics. Pushing something else will normally result in a movement, e.g. into or out of somewhere. Conversely, pushing oneself will typically be against something. The *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 10.5.17) again changes the direction of movement and accordingly the preposition (7.53 c). However, these conventional implicatures can be overridden by a [7.111]

suitable context (7.53 d,e).

- (7.53) a. Er stößt mich in den Teich.  
 b. Ich stoße mich am Tisch.  
 c. Ich bin auf ihn gestoßen.  
 d. Er stößt mich an die Wand.  
 e. Ich stosse mich in die Tiefe meiner Finsternis, um meine Finsternis zu erkennen<sup>39</sup>

#### 7.4.6 [ ND | Nd ] Self-inflicting dative reflexive

[7.112] Verbs with a dative argument can be used reflexively, although such usage often has a rather poetic or humorous touch to it (7.54 a-c). The verbs listed here can surely be extended when (even) more poetic freedom is allowed. However, this construction does not appear to be very frequent.

- (7.54) a. Ich begegne mir selbst mit größter Achtung.  
 b. Ich antworte mir dann mal selber.  
 c. Ich gleiche mir nicht einen Augenblick.<sup>40</sup>

##### [7.113] Attested Verbs

- *antworten, begegnen, gefallen, gleichen, helfen, missfallen, schaden, etc.*

##### [7.114] Further Examples

- Ich gefalle dir.  
 Ich gefalle mir.
- Ich schade dir.  
 Ich schade mir.
- Ich helfe dir.  
 Ich helfe mir.

#### 7.4.7 [ NP | Np ] Self-inflicting prepositional reflexive

[7.115] Self-inflicting *sich* is widespread in governed prepositional phrases (7.55 a,b). Probably, all governed prepositional phrases that can have a human participant allow for such a reflexive pronouns. Note that the accusative vs. dative case of the reflexive pronoun is governed by the preposition.

- (7.55) a. Karl kämpft mit dem Hund.  
 b. Karl kämpft mit sich.
- (7.56) a. Ich spreche von dir.  
 b. Ich spreche von mir.  
 c. Er spricht von sich.

##### [7.116] Attested Verbs

- *kämpfen, sprechen, etc.*

<sup>39</sup> Attested online at <http://bluemountain.princeton.edu/bluemtn/?a=d&d=bmtnabg19231201-01.2.2&>, accessed 10 January 2019.

<sup>40</sup> DWDS: Goethe: Schertz, List und Rache. Note that the accusative *einen Augenblick* is not a governed argument, but a temporal quantified object, see Section 5.3.9.

### 7.4.8 [ NAD | NAd ] Self-inflicting dative reflexive+accusative

For ditransitive verbs that allow for a nominative, accusative and dative argument it is extremely common to allow for a self-inflicting reflexive pronoun in the dative, like with *schenken* ‘to gift’ (7.57 a,b). Only an illustrative selection of such verbs are listed in this section. [7.117]

- (7.57) a. Ich schenke ihm eine Tafel Schokolade.  
b. Ich schenke mir (selbst) eine Tafel Schokolade.

With verbs that allow for the possessor-of-accusative dative alternation (‘possessor datives’, see Section 5.8.4) this dative reflexive can lead to sentences with three coreferent words, like with *putzen* ‘to clean’ (7.58 a) or *zerbrechen* ‘to break’ (7.58 b). [7.118]

- (7.58) a. Ich putze mir meine Schuhe.  
b. Er versalzt sich seine Suppe.

There is also a crucial opposition between an accusative (7.59 c) and dative reflexive (7.59 d) in such examples. This opposition is attested with verbs like *waschen* that allow both for an animate accusative (7.59 a) and for the possessor-of-accusative dative alternation (7.59 b). Both the accusative and the dative argument can be replaced by a reflexive pronoun. Care has to be taken not to confuse these two alternations in the third person, because the same pronoun *sich* is used for both accusative (7.59 e) and dative (7.59 f). [7.119]

- (7.59) a. Ich wasche dich.  
b. Ich wasche dir den Rücken.  
c. Ich wasche mich.  
d. Ich wasche mir den Rücken.  
e. Er wäscht sich. (= accusative *sich*)  
f. Er wäscht sich den Rücken. (= dative *sich*)

#### Attested Verbs

[7.120]

- Granting: *beweisen, erlauben, gestatten, gönnen, verbieten, verschreiben, versprechen, wünschen*
- Giving: *geben, kaufen, holen, schenken, schicken, senden, 'überlegen, 'überwerfen*
- Messaging: *erklären, erzählen, mailen, sagen, schreiben*
- Others: *einprägen*
- Verbs with *für* benefactive dative alternation (see Section 6.8.9, e.g. *backen, putzen*)
- Verbs with possessor-of-accusative dative alternation (see Section 5.8.4, e.g. *versalzen, zerbrechen*)

#### Further Examples

[7.121]

- Ich gestatte mir noch einen Keks.
- Ich sage es mir immer wieder.
- Ich präge mir diese Lektion ein.
- Ich habe mir eine Decke übergelegt/übergeworfen.
- Ich drücke mir den Hörer ans Ohr.
- Ich putze mir meine Schuhe.



### 7.4.9 [ NAD | NaD ] Self-inflicting accusative reflexive+dative

[7.122] In contrast to the previous dative reflexive construction, it is possible, but uncommon for ditransitive verbs to allow for an accusative reflexive, like with *unterordnen* ‘to subordinate’ (7.60 a,b). The verbs listed below are surely not all that allow for this construction, but it is a rather restricted phenomenon and there do not seem to be very many more verbs of this kind. Note the close similarity of these verbs to verbs with a ditransitive anticausative reflexives in Section 7.5.3, which are easily confused.

- (7.60) a. Ich ordne meine Pläne deinen Wünschen unter.  
b. Ich ordne mich dem Kollektiv unter.

[7.123] In specific contexts, some ditransitive verbs allow for either a dative reflexive (7.61 a) or an accusative reflexive (7.61 b), or even both (7.61 c). Theoretically, this should lead to a quite astonishing constructions with two times *sich* in the third person (7.61 d), which seem to be mostly incomprehensible. However, note the attested example in (7.61 e).

- (7.61) a. Ich erkläre es mir so.  
b. Ich erkläre mich dir.  
c. Ich schreibe Gedichte, denn ich will mich mir selbst erklären.  
d. Es ist bekannt, dass sie sich sich selbst erklären will.  
e. Objektivität und eigenständiges Weltbewußtsein erlangt der Mensch nicht dadurch, daß er seinen Willen zum Handeln aufgibt und seine Wertungen suspendiert, sondern dadurch, daß er sich sich selbst gegenüberstellt und prüft.<sup>41</sup>

[7.124] Many of these verbs seem to have a rather special meaning with a reflexive pronoun. They also seem to be close to the verbs with an endoreflexive diathesis (see Section 7.7.1).

#### [7.125] Attested Verbs

- Subordinate: *anpassen, anschließen, aufdrängen, hingeben, unterordnen, unterwerfen, verschreiben, weihen, widmen, zuneigen*
- Oppose: *entgegensetzen, entgegenstellen, gegenüberstellen, verweigern*
- Disclose: *anschließen, anvertrauen, aussetzen, erklären, präsentieren, vorstellen (präsentieren), zeigen*

#### [7.126] Further Examples

- Das Land gibt seine besten Männer dem Kriege hin.  
Ich gebe mich dem Geliebten hin.
- Ich wende dem Nachbar den Rücken zu.  
Ich wende mich dem Nachbar zu.
- Ich habe dich der Gefahr ausgesetzt.  
Ich setze mich einer Gefahr aus.
- Er zeigte dem Boten den Brief.  
Er zeigte sich dem Boten.
- Ich passe den Bürgersteig dem Plan an.  
Ich passe mich dem Plan an.

<sup>41</sup>DWDS: Mannheim, Karl: Ideologie und Utopie, Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann 1929, S. 43.

- Er setzte dem Unglück etwas hingegen.  
Er setzte sich dem Unglück entgegen.
- Er hatte seinen Kopf ihr zugeneigt.  
Er hatte sich ihr in Liebe zugeneigt.
- Ich stelle ihr meine Lebensauffassung entgegen.  
Ich stelle mich dem Streben entgegen.
- Er hat der alten Interpretation eine neue Wendung entgegengesetzt.  
Er hat sich der traditionellen Interpretation entgegengesetzt.
- Ich verschreibe dir die Medikamente.  
Ich verschreibe mich dem Teufel.
- Er widmet den heutigen Tag der Arbeit.  
Er widmet sich der Arbeit.
- Ich schließe der Schule ein Internat an.  
Ich schließe mich dem Trauerzug an.
- Ich verweigere ihm die Einreise.  
Ich verweigere mich ihm.

#### Notes

The verb *vorstellen* has two different meanings. In this alternation it means ‘to introduce’ (7.62 a,b). The other meaning ‘to imagine’ (7.62 c) has an obligatory dative reflexive (see Section 7.3.8). [7.127] [7.128]

- (7.62) a. Ich stelle ihn dem Konsul vor.  
b. Ich stelle mich dem Konsul vor.  
c. Ich stelle mir den Konsul vor.

#### 7.4.10 [ NAG | NaG ] Self-inflicting accusative reflexive+genitive

Genitive arguments are rare overall, so consequently there are also only very few examples of reflexive alternations, like with *bezichtigen* ‘to accuse’ (7.63). Note that it does not seem to be possible for the genitive argument to be reflexive. [7.129]

- (7.63) a. Er bezichtigt mich des Mordes.  
b. Ich bezichtigte mich erfundener phantastischer Staatsverbrechen.

#### Attested Verbs

- *bezichtigen*, etc. [7.130]

#### 7.4.11 [ NAP | NAp ] Self-inflicting preposition reflexive+accusative

Just for completeness sake, reflexive pronouns are possible inside prepositional arguments with verbs that also take an accusative argument, like *hinstellen* ‘to put down’ (7.64). [7.131]

- (7.64) a. Er hat einen Topf neben ihm hingestellt.  
b. Er hat einen Topf neben sich hingestellt.

#### Attested Verbs

- *hinstellen*, etc. [7.132]

### 7.4.12 [ NLD | NLd ] Self-inflicting dative reflexive+location

[7.133] Dative experiencers stemming from possessor raising (see Section 6.8.11) can also be self-inflicting (7.65 a,b), leading to possible dative reflexive pronouns with an obligatory location phrase, like with *klopfen* ‘to pound’ (7.65 c,d).

- (7.65) a. Ich klopfe dir auf die Schulter.  
 b. Ich klopfe mir auf die Schulter.  
 c. Er klopft sich auf die Schulter.  
 d. \* Er klopft sich.

#### [7.134] Attested Verbs

- *klopfen*, etc.

### 7.4.13 [ NALD | NALd ] Self-inflicting dative reflexive+accusative+location

[7.135] The verbs in this section are intransitive verbs (7.66 a) that allow for both a resultative construction (7.66 b), see Section 6.8.4 and a possessor-to-dative alternation (7.66 c), see Section 6.8.12, leading possibly to a dative reflexive *sich* pronoun (7.66 d).

[7.136] Although this diathesis does appear to be a regular stack of different diatheses, the intermediate resultative construction (7.66 b) seems odd. Also, the resultative diathesis appears to be frequently taking an *aus* prepositional phrase, though there does not seem to be any syntactic reason for this preference. In summary, there appears to be something idiomatic going on in this construction warranting more research.

- (7.66) a. Ich heule.  
 b. ? Ich heule die Augen aus meinem Kopf.  
 c. Ich heule mir die Augen aus dem Kopf.  
 d. Das Kind heult sich die Augen aus dem Kopf.

#### [7.137] Attested Verbs

- *heulen, husten, jagen rempeln, schreien, tanzen, trinken*, etc.

#### [7.138] Further Examples

- Unkontrollierbar von einer Seite zur anderen schaukelte das Kleinkind und heulte sich die Augen aus dem Kopf, als Rupa Joshi den Raum betrat.<sup>42</sup>
- Sven Hannawald schreit sich die Seele aus dem Leib.<sup>43</sup>
- An einem Abend in Davos sitzt ein Amerikaner chinesischer Herkunft in einem dunklen Pub und trinkt sich die Sorgen von der Seele.<sup>44</sup>
- Er jagte sich den ganzen Scheiß in den Arm.<sup>45</sup>
- Sie tanzen/schreien sich die Seele aus dem Leib.
- Sie rempeln sich die Pakete aus der Hand.
- Er trank sich den Stress aus dem Körper.
- Er hustet sich die Seele aus dem Leib.

<sup>42</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 11.05.2015, Nr. 19.

<sup>43</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.01.2018 (online).

<sup>44</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.01.2017 (online).

<sup>45</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 01.03.1997.

### — Reciprocal alternations —

The pronoun *sich* also has a potential reciprocal reading in which two participants perform an action mutually, like with *anfeuern* ‘to encourage’ (7.67). An extensive discussion of this phenomenon in German can be found in Wiemer & Nadjalkov (2007). [7.139]

- (7.67) a. Karl feuert Anna an.  
 b. Karl und Anna feuern sich (gegenseitig) an.  
 c. Karl und Anna feuern einander an.

Such a reciprocal construction necessarily needs a plural subject and can be identified by the possibility to add *gegenseitig* (7.67 b). There is an older construction to express reciprocity in German by using *einander* (7.67 c) instead of *sich gegenseitig* (see Wiemer & Nadjalkov 2007: 478ff. for an in depth discussion). This construction with *einander* typically does not use *sich*, though the combination *sich [...] miteinander* is possible, but very rare (Wiemer & Nadjalkov 2007: 476-477). Note that reciprocity inside a prepositional phrase can only be expressed by using *einander* (Wiemer & Nadjalkov 2007: 482-485). [7.140]

#### 7.4.14 [ NA | Na ] Accusative reciprocal

The most typical reciprocal construction arises from a regular transitive verb with a human object, like *achten* ‘to respect’ (7.68 a). Such a reciprocal construction is called ‘canonical’ by Wiemer & Nadjalkov (2007: 468-470). Almost all such verbs are in principle ambiguous between a reciprocal and a reflexive reading. The intended reciprocal reading can be forced by adding *gegenseitig* (7.68 c). Some verbs, like *achten*, seem to prefer a reciprocal reading. Such verbs typically do not allow for a singular subject (7.68 b) and *gegenseitig* seems superfluous here (7.68 c). [7.141]

- (7.68) a. Karl achtet Anna.  
 b. ? Karl achtet sich.  
 c. Karl und Anna achten sich (gegenseitig).

Other verbs, like *pflügen* ‘to care for’ (7.69 a), prefer a reflexive reading, so a singular subject is fine (7.69 b) and *gegenseitig* is necessary to get a reciprocal reading (7.69 c). [7.142]

- (7.69) a. Karl pflegt Anna.  
 b. Karl pflegt sich.  
 c. Karl und Anna pflegen sich gegenseitig.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.143]

- *achten, anfeuern, begrüßen, bekämpfen, belügen, bemerken, beruhigen, beschäftigen, brauchen, erwarten, finden, grüßen, glauben, hassen, hören, kennen, kreuzen, lieben, loben, mögen, pflegen, prügeln, schlagen, sehen, stören, suchen, treffen, treten, verachten, verdächtigen, verstehen, vertragen, wecken*, etc.

#### Further Examples

[7.144]

- Der Weg kreuzt die Landstraße.  
 Die Straßen kreuzen sich.

- Karl glaubt Anna.  
Karl und Anna glauben sich.

[7.145] **Notes**

[7.146] The verb *beschäftigen* is used here in the meaning of ‘to employ’ (7.70 a) not ‘to engage’ (7.70 b).

- (7.70) a. Karl und Anna beschäftigen sich gegenseitig in ihren jeweiligen Firmen.  
b. Karl und Anna beschäftigen sich miteinander.

**7.4.15 [ NAG | NaG ] Accusative reciprocal+genitive**

[7.147] Just for completeness sake, let it be noted that there are also accusative reciprocal constructions with a further genitive argument, like with *anklagen* ‘to accuse’ (7.71). In contrast, accusative reciprocals with an additional dative argument are not attested; only the reverse, see Section 7.4.18.

- (7.71) a. Karl klagt Anna des Diebstahls an.  
b. Karl und Anna klagen sich (gegenseitig) des Diebstahls an.

[7.148] **Attested Verbs**

- *anklagen*, etc.

**7.4.16 [ NAP | NaP ] Accusative reciprocal+preposition**

[7.149] Likewise, accusative reciprocals with a governed preposition are also possible, like with *vorbereiten auf* ‘to prepare for’ (7.72).

- (7.72) a. Karl bereitet Anna auf den Auftritt vor.  
b. Karl und Anna bereiten sich (gegenseitig) auf den Auftritt vor.

[7.150] **Attested Verbs**

- *vorbereiten*, etc.

**7.4.17 [ ND | Nd ] Dative reciprocal**

[7.151] Because a reciprocal is necessary plural subject, the difference between an accusative or dative reciprocal *sich* is never visible. Although there are verbs with dative arguments that can be used reciprocally, this cannot occur in the 1st or 2nd person singular, which are the only circumstances in which a difference between dative and accusative is overtly marked. There seems to be only a limited set of dative verbs that allow for a reciprocal construction, though the preverb *zu-* rather productively results in new examples (Wiemer & Nedjalkov 2007: 470).

- (7.73) a. Karl vertraut dem Jungen.  
b. Karl und der Junge vertrauen sich (gegenseitig).  
c. Wir vertrauen uns (gegenseitig).

[7.152] **Attested Verbs**

- *ähneln, antworten, beistehen, begegnen, danken, entgegen kommen, entgegen, entsprechen, folgen, gefallen, gegenüber treten, gleichen, gratulieren, helfen, imponieren, missfallen, nacheifern, schaden, vertrauen*
- with preverb *zu*: *zuarbeiten, zuhören, zulachen, zulächeln, zunicken, zuprosten, zusehen, zuschauen, zustimmen, zutrinken, zuwinken, zuzwinkern*

#### Further Examples

[7.153]

- Ich stehe dir bei.  
Wir stehen uns bei.
- Ich lache dir zu.  
Wir lachen uns zu.

### 7.4.18 [ NAD | NAd ] Dative reciprocal+accusative

Verbs with a dative and an accusative argument typically have a human dative argument, like with *schenken* ‘to gift’ (9.4). With such verbs a dative reflexive *sich* can both have a reciprocal reading (7.74 b) and a reflexive reading (7.74 c). [7.154]

- (7.74) a. Karl schenkt seinem Freund einen Kuchen.  
b. Karl und sein Freund schenken sich gegenseitig einen Kuchen.  
c. Karl und sein Freund schenken sich selbst einen Kuchen.

There also are ditransitive verbs with an accusative reflexive, like *entziehen* ‘to withdraw’ (7.75), see Section 7.4.9. However, with such verbs a reciprocal reading seems to be impossible. So, there do not seem to be ditransitive verbs with an accusative reciprocal. [7.155]

- (7.75) a. Karl entzieht Anna das Wort.  
b. Karl und Anna entziehen sich (selbst) der Verfolgung.  
c. \*Karl und Anna entziehen sich gegenseitig der Verfolgung.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.156]

- *schenken, backen*, etc.

#### Further Examples

[7.157]

- Karl backt dem Jungen einen Kuchen.  
Karl und der Junge backen sich (gegenseitig) einen Kuchen.

### 7.4.19 [ Np | Np ] *einander* preposition reciprocal

Reciprocal construction can be marked both by *sich* (*gegenseitig*) or *einander*. However, when the reciprocal argument is inside a prepositional phrase then only *einander* is possible. For example, the verb *warten auf* ‘to wait for’ (7.76 a) can be used reciprocally by combining *auf* with *einander*, which is written as one word *aufeinander* in German orthography (7.76 b). [7.158]

- (7.76) a. Karl wartet auf Anna.  
b. Karl und Anna warten aufeinander.

[7.159]

It is possible to combine *sich* with a preposition and *einander*, but only with verbs that already require *sich* like *sich einigen mit* ‘to reach an agreement’ (7.77).

- (7.77) a. Karl einigt sich mit Anna.  
b. Karl und Anna einigen sich miteinander.

[7.160] **Attested Verbs**

- Possibly all verbs with a human participant inside a prepositional phrase, both governed and non-governed: e.g. *warten auf*, *zugehen auf*, *sich einigen mit*, *sich verlieben in*, *sich trennen von*, etc.

[7.161] **Further Examples**

- Karl geht auf Anna zu.  
Karl und Anna gehen aufeinander zu.
- Karl verliebt sich in Anna.  
Karl und Anna verlieben sich ineinander.
- Karl trennt sich von Anna.  
Karl und Anna trennen sich voneinander.

## 7.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

— [ SBJ > Ø ] —

### 7.5.1 [ NP | -P ] Reflexive nominative drop

[7.162] This idiosyncratic diathesis with the verb *handeln* ‘to treat of’ (7.78 a,b) drops the nominative and consequently a non-phoric *es* is inserted. Note that the preposition changes from *von* to *um*, but they are both governed prepositions (7.78 c,d).

- (7.78) a. Das Buch handelt von Linguistik.  
b. Bei diesem Buch handelt es sich um ein Linguistikbuch.  
c. Das Buch handelt davon, dass er eine Weltreise macht.  
d. In diesem Buch handelt es sich darum, dass er eine Weltreise macht.

[7.163] **Attested Verbs**

- *handeln*

[7.164] **Further Examples**

- In beiden Fällen handelt es sich um Briefromane.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup>DWDS: Schwanitz, Dietrich: Bildung, Frankfurt a. M.: Eichborn 1999, S. 17.

– [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] – *Reflexiv Antikausativ*

7.5.2 [ NA | –N ] Reflexive anticausative

A widespread phenomenon is the use of reflexive pronouns to mark an anticausative diathesis. For example, when a reflexive pronoun is used with a verb like *schließen* ‘to close’ (7.79 a) then it does not have a self-inflicting meaning. This can be shown by the impossibility to add *selbst* (7.79 b). This reflexive pronoun induces an ‘invisible hand’ reading, expressing that the event happened by itself. This can be shown by the sensibility of adding a phrase like *von alleine* ‘by itself’ (7.79 c). The pronoun *sich* is always in the accusative in this diathesis. This alternation appears to be more frequent in the perfect (7.79 d), because then there is no focus on the action, but on the resulting state. [7.165]

- (7.79) a. Ich schließe die Tür.  
Die Tür schließt sich.  
b. \*Die Tür schließt sich selbst.  
c. Die Tür schließt sich von alleine.  
d. Die Tür hat sich von alleine geschlossen.

A *durch* phrase seems sometimes possible to retain the agent, showing a similarity to a passive diathesis (Zifonun 2003: 72). However, this only seems to be possible in special contexts (7.80 a,b). Most verbs with a reflexive anticausative do not allow for a retention of the subject (7.80 c,d). [7.166]

- (7.80) a. Der Preisverfall erhöhte den Warenabsatz.  
b. Der Warenabsatz erhöhte sich durch den Preisverfall.  
c. Der Mann zeigte seine Wut.  
d. \*Seine Wut zeigte sich durch den Mann.

There is some discussion in the literature (Schäfer 2007: 35ff.; Kurogo 2016) about the difference between verbs that use an unmarked anticausative, like *landen* ‘to land’ (7.81), see Section 5.5.5, and those that take a reflexive anticausative, like *schließen* ‘to close’ as discussed in this section (7.79). The answer to this question remains open, in my opinion. By providing long lists of verbs for each category, I hope to invigorate more research into this direction that goes beyond just incidental examples. [7.167]

- (7.81) a. Der Pilot landet das Flugzeug.  
b. Das Flugzeug landet (\*sich).

Attested Verbs [7.168]

- Change of position: *ändern, auf tun, bewegen, drehen, lockern, öffnen, schließen, senken, spalten, teilen, umgeben, verschieben, versammeln*
- Change of dimension: *abschwächen, ansammeln, ansparen, ausbreiten, ausdehnen, beschleunigen, beschränken, entfalten, erhöhen, erweitern, steigern, verändern, verbessern, verbreiten, verdoppeln, verengen, vergrößern, verkleinern, verkürzen, verlangsamen, verlängern, vermehren, verringern, verstärken, verteuern*
- Change of physical state: *abkühlen, ablagern, ablösen, abnutzen, abschalten, abschwächen, abseilen, auflösen, aufwärmen, ausschalten, beziehen, brechen (Wellen), erleuchten, einfügen, einschalten, eindrücken, entzünden, erwärmen, färben, festigen, füllen, gliedern, komplizieren, leeren, runden, röten, verändern, verbessern, vereinfachen, verhaken, verkomplizieren, verschlechtern, verwandeln, wärmen*



- Others: *bessern, bestätigen, erfüllen, entscheiden, konstituieren, lohnen, mildern, unterwerfen, wiederholen, zeigen*

[7.169]

**Further Examples**

- Ich schließe den Schrank.  
Der Schrank schließt sich.
- Sie hat ein neues Kapitel in dem Buch eingefügt.  
Das Kapitel hat sich harmonisch in das Buch eingefügt.
- Das Ergebnis lohnt den Aufwand.  
Der Aufwand lohnt sich.
- Ich beschränke seinen Einfluss.  
Sein Einfluss beschränkt sich auf Deutschland.
- Der Frühling verwandelt die Landschaft.  
Die Landschaft verwandelt sich.
- Ich konstituiere eine neue Disziplin.  
Die neue Disziplin konstituiert sich.
- Der Vertrag festigt unsere Beziehung.  
Unsere Beziehung hat sich gefestigt.
- Ich entscheide den Fall.  
Der Fall entscheidet sich.
- Die Polizei hat die Tür eingedrückt.  
Mit hörbarem Krach drückte sich der gewölbte Zinkdeckel unter Herrn Kortüms Gewicht ein.<sup>47</sup>
- Der Sturm hat den Wald verändert.  
Der Wald hat sich verändert.
- Wir haben (im Laufe der Jahre) etwas Geld angespart.  
Etwas Geld hat sich (im Laufe der Jahre) angespart.
- Ich habe das Tuch abgenutzt.  
Der Besen hat sich abgenutzt.
- Das Kind verhakt seine Finger.  
Seine Finger verhaken sich.
- Man kann Lebensmittel ansammeln, Werkzeuge, Waffen, Kapital und politische Gefolgschaften.<sup>48</sup>  
Die Lebensmittel sammelten sich an.
- Er bestätigt die Nachricht.  
Die Nachricht bestätigt sich.
- Wir wollen das Problem nicht (noch mehr) (ver)komplizieren.  
Die Lage hat sich in den letzten Tagen (ver)kompliziert.
- Er erfüllt meine Wünsche.  
Meine Wünsche erfüllen sich.
- Ich drehe die Kurbel.  
Die Kurbel dreht sich.
- Die Felsenküste bricht die Wellen.  
Die Wellen brechen sich an der Felsenküste.
- Die Flammen röteten die Gesichter der Umstehenden. Im Herbst rötet sich das Laub der Bäume.

<sup>47</sup>DWDS: Kluge, Kurt: Der Herr Kortüm. Leinfelden b. Stuttgart: Engelhornverlag Adolf Spemann. [o. J.] [1955].

<sup>48</sup>DWDS: Weizsäcker, Carl Friedrich von: Bewußtseinswandel, München: Hanser 1988, S. 37.

- Ein Blick auf die Tabelle besserte seine Laune zusätzlich auf.<sup>49</sup>  
Seine Laune bessert sich zusehends.
- Er rundet seine Lippen.  
Seine Lippen runden sich.
- Er hat sich mit einem Mitarbeiterstab umgeben.
- Hohe Transportkosten verteuern die Preise. Die Preise verteuern sich.
- Ich erleuchte die Bühne.  
Die Bühne erleuchtet sich.

**Notes**

The verb *beziehen* has various rather different meanings. For the anticausative alternation it means ‘to cover’ (7.82 a), with the anticausative having a specific meaning concerning the weather (7.82 b).

- (7.82) a. Ich beziehe das Bett mit einem Laken.  
b. Der Himmel hat sich mit Wolken bezogen.

The verb *wärmen* ‘to heat’ shows two different diatheses. First an anticausative diathesis, leading to an accusative reflexive pronoun (7.83 a). Second, a possessor raising diathesis that, which is additionally used self-inflicting, leading to a dative reflexive pronoun (7.83 b).

- (7.83) a. Der Pullover wärmt mich.  
Ich wärme mich (mit dem Pullover).  
b. Ich wärme deine Finger.  
Ich wärme dir die Finger.  
Ich wärme mir die Finger.

**7.5.3 [ NAD | –ND ] Reflexive anticausative+dative**

Some ditransitives allow for an anticausative marked with an accusative reflexive pronoun (7.84).

- (7.84) a. Er bietet mir neue Perspektiven.  
b. Neue Perspektiven bieten sich mir.

This diathesis is not possible with reflexive anticausative verbs (see Section 7.5.2) with an additional benefactive ‘free’ dative (see Section 6.8.9), like with *schließen* ‘to close’ (7.85 a,b) or *erfüllen* ‘to satisfy’ (7.85 c,d).

- (7.85) a. Ich schließe dir (= für dich) den Schrank.  
b. \*Der Schrank schließt sich dir.  
c. Er erfüllt mir (= für mich) meine Wünsche.  
d. \*Meine Wünsche erfüllen sich mir.

**Attested Verbs**

- *anbieten, aufdrängen, bieten, einprägen, entziehen, empfehlen, erklären, erschließen, eröffnen, nähern*

**Further Examples**

<sup>49</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.02.2016 (online).

- Er näherte seine Hand dem Lichtschalter.  
Seine Hand näherte sich dem Lichtschalter.
- Die Anleitung erklärt dem Benutzer den Bauplan.  
Der Bauplan erklärt sich dem Benutzer ganz von alleine.
- Ich empfehle dem Gast die Teilnahme nicht.  
Die Teilnahme empfiehlt sich dem Gast nicht unbedingt.
- Ich präge dem Kind diese Lektion ein.  
Diese Lektion prägt sich dem Kind ein.
- Er drängt mir eine Theorie auf.  
Die Überzeugung drängt sich mir auf.
- Ich eröffnete ihm die Ausstellung.  
Beste Aussichten eröffneten sich ihm.
- Das Register erschließt ihm den Inhalt.  
Der Inhalt hat sich ihm erschlossen.
- Ich biete dir eine Lösung an.  
Eine Lösung bietet sich dir an.
- Er entzieht mir das Wort.  
Ich entziehe mich meiner Pflicht.

#### 7.5.4 [ NAL | –NL ] Reflexive anticausative+location

[7.177] Some (but not all) verbs with a resultative alternation (Section 6.8.5), like *ziehen* ‘to pull’ (7.86 a,b) allow for a reflexive anticausative (7.86 c). This results in an accusative reflexive pronoun with an obligatory locational phrase. Leaving out the location is ungrammatical (7.86 d).

- (7.86) a. Der Bauer hat den Pflug gezogen.  
b. Ich habe den Faden durch das Nadelöhr gezogen.  
c. Die Straße hat sich früher durch das Dorf gezogen.  
d. \* Die Straße hat sich gezogen.

#### [7.178] Attested Verbs

- *bohren, eingraben, gliedern, häufen, ziehen*

#### [7.179] Further Examples

- Er häufte die Geschenke auf den Tisch.  
Die Geschenke häuften sich auf den Tisch.
- Er hat einen Strauch ins Erdreich eingegraben.  
Die Frösche graben sich in den Schlamm ein.
- Der Bauarbeiter bohrt den Presslufthammer in den Asphalt.  
Der Pressluftbohrer bohrt sich in den Asphalt.
- Er hatte das Buch in einzelne Kapitel gegliedert.  
Das Buch gliedert sich in drei Kapitel.

#### 7.5.5 [ NAP | –NP ] Reflexive anticausative+governed preposition

[7.180]

Less widespread, some verbs with an accusative and a governed preposition, like *erinnern* ‘to remind’ (7.87 a) allow for an anticausative marked with a reflexive pronoun (7.87 b). With the prepositions are governed prepositions (7.87 c).

- (7.87) a. Das Lied erinnert den Mann an den Krieg.  
 b. Der Mann erinnert sich an den Krieg.  
 c. Der Mann erinnert sich daran, dass er einen Termin beim Arzt hat.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.181]

- *an* : *erinnern, gewöhnen*
- *auf* : *lenken*

#### Further Examples

[7.182]

- Ich habe die Kinder an Ordnung gewöhnt.  
Die Kinder haben sich an Ordnung gewöhnt.
- Der Zeuge lenkt den Verdacht auf den Ehemann.  
Der Verdacht lenkte sich auf den Ehemann.

### 7.5.6 [ NAp | –Np] Reflexive anticausative+non-governed preposition

Verbs in this section, like *verbinden* ‘to connect’, allow for an anticausative diathesis (7.88 a,b). However, they additionally need a prepositional phrase, either with *mit* or *von*. These prepositional phrases are not governed, but can not (easily) be left out (7.88 c,d). There is a close affinity with *miteinander* reciprocals (7.88 e), see Section 7.4.19. [7.183]

- (7.88) a. Ich verbinde die Lampe mit dem Stromnetz.  
 b. Die Lampe verbindet sich nicht mit dem Stromnetz.  
 c. \* Ich verbinde die Lampe.  
 d. \* Die Lampe verbindet sich.  
 e. Die Lampe und das Stromnetz verbinden sich nicht miteinander.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.184]

- *mit* : *verbinden, vermischen, versöhnen*
- *mit/von* : *ernähren, nähren*
- *von* : *trennen, unterscheiden*

#### Further Examples

[7.185]

- Meine Mutter nährt mich mit Milch.  
Ich nähre mich mit (von) Milch.
- Meine Mutter ernährt mich mit Früchten.  
Ich ernähre mich mit (von) den Früchten.
- Ich vermische das Wasser mit dem Saft.  
Das Wasser vermischt sich mit dem Saft.
- Ich trenne die Lampe vom Stromnetz.  
Die Lampe trennt sich dauernd vom Stromnetz.
- Die Liebe verbindet Karl mit Anna.  
Karl verbindet sich mit Anna.
- Seine Haarfarbe unterscheidet ihn von seinem Bruder.  
Er unterscheidet sich von seinem Bruder (durch seine Haarfarbe).

– [ OBJ > SBJ > PBJ ] – *Reflexiv Erlebnispassiv*

## 7.5.7 [ NA | PN ] Reflexive conversive

[7.186] These verbs are similar to previous reflexive anticausatives, but the *von alleine* reading is not possible. Additionally, the original nominative can be retained as a prepositional phrase (7.89 a,b). All these prepositional phrases are governed prepositions (7.89 c). Interestingly, there appears to be a wide variety of prepositions that are governed by the various verbs that allow for this diathesis.

- (7.89) a. Der Preis empört den Kunden.  
 b. Der Kunde empört sich über den Preis.  
 c. Der Kunde empört sich darüber, dass der Preis schon wieder gestiegen ist.

[7.187] With many of these verbs the role of the reflexive argument appears to be more of an experiencer than a real agent, typically with the prepositions *an*, *bei*, *für*, *um* and *über*. A German name like REFLEXIV ERLEBNISPASSIV might thus be suitable for this diathesis (cf. Section 10.5.23 for the ERLEBNISPASSIV without reflexive pronouns). Although there are many experiencer verbs in this category, this pattern cannot be reversed: far from all verbs that semantically have an experiencer exhibit this diathesis, e.g. *frustrieren* ‘to frustrate’ or *nerven* ‘to annoy’ do not allow this diathesis (7.90). Wiskandt (2022: 253-255) proposes that the experiencer verbs with this diathesis imply some kind of consciousness and have less affected experiencers. However, such semantic explanations are probably always post-hoc and never causal (cf. Section 1.3.4).

- (7.90) a. Die Verspätung frustriert/nervt ihn.  
 b. \*Er frustriert/nervt sich über die Verspätung.

[7.188] Note that the *werden* passive is not possible for some of these verbs (7.91 a), though an impersonal passive of the reflexive conversive is mostly possible (7.91 b).

- (7.91) a. \*Der Kunde wird empört durch den Preis.  
 b. Über die Zerstörung der Schöpfung [...] wird sich empört.<sup>50</sup>

[7.189] For the verbs with a *durch* alternation, like *lösen* ‘to release’ (7.92), there exist an interesting opposition between the reflexive conversive (7.92 b) and the *werden* passive (7.92 c).

- (7.92) a. Dieser Saft hat den Schleim gelöst.  
 b. Der Schleim hat sich durch diesen Saft gelöst.  
 c. Der Schleim wird durch diesen Saft gelöst.

## [7.190] Attested Verbs

## • Experiencer verbs:

- *an* : *belustigen*, *stören*, *erfreuen*, *erheitern*
- *bei* : *anstrengen*, *beruhigen*, *entspannen*, *langweilen*, *quälen*, *unterhalten*
- *für* : *faszinieren*, *interessieren*

<sup>50</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 24.11.2003

- *um* : *bekümmern, kümmern*
- *über* : *amüsieren, aufregen, ärgern, begeistern, beschweren, beunruhigen, empören, entsetzen, erschrecken, erstaunen, erzürnen, freuen, grämen, wundern*
- **Other verbs:**
- *aus* : *bilden, entwickeln, ergeben, speisen*
- *durch* : *auszeichnen, entspannen, lösen, verraten*
- *in* : *spiegeln, widerspiegeln*
- *mit* : *aufhalten, beschäftigen, schmücken, überlagern*
- *von* : *nähren, verabschieden*

### Further Examples

[7.191]

- Sein Benehmen amüsiert mich.  
Ich habe mich amüsiert über sein Benehmen.
- Der Klang freut den Komponisten.  
Der Komponist freut sich über den Klang.
- Der Anblick entsetzt mich.  
Ich entsetze mich über dem Anblick.
- Die Musik erfreut mich.  
Ich habe mich an der Musik erfreut.
- Der Lärm ärgert mich.  
Ich ärgere mich über den Lärm.
- Der Lärm regt mich auf.  
Ich rege mich über den Lärm auf.
- Die gute Note freut mich.  
Ich freue mich über die gute Note.
- Sein Verschwinden wundert mich gar nicht.  
Ich wundere mich gar nicht über sein Verschwinden.
- Mathematik interessiert mich.  
Ich interessiere mich für Mathematik.
- Die Leute kümmern mich nicht.  
Ich kümmere mich nicht um die Leute.
- Sein Benehmen stört mich.  
Ich störe mich an seinem Benehmen.
- Die Band unterhältet das Publikum.  
Der Autor Holger Kreitling fühlte sich gut unterhalten beim Auftritt der Band tags darauf in Berlin.<sup>51</sup>
- Diese Musik beruhigt mich.  
Ich beruhige mich bei dieser Musik.
- Das Sprechen strengt ihn an.  
Er strengt sich an bei dem Sprechen.
- Die Gedanken trösten mich.  
Ich tröste mich mit den Gedanken.

<sup>51</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.02.2008, Nr. 08.

- Die Einzelheiten halten mich auf.  
Ich halte mich auf mit den Einzelheiten.
- Die Transaktionen ergaben einen hohen Gewinn.  
Ein hoher Gewinn ergab sich bei den Transaktionen.
- Die Frage ergab interessante Probleme.  
Interessante Probleme ergaben sich aus der Frage.
- Vier Ecken bilden ein Viereck.  
Ein Viereck bildet sich aus vier Ecken.
- Das Holz entwickelt einen starken Qualm.  
Der Qualm entwickelt sich aus dem Holz.
- Die Nachricht hat mich erschreckt.  
Ich habe mich über die Nachricht erschreckt.
- Die Vorstellung belustigt das Publikum.  
Das Publikum belustigt sich an der Vorstellung.
- Der Tee entspannt mich.  
Ich entspanne mich durch/bei den Tee.
- Der Dialekt verrät dich.  
Du verrätst dich durch deinen Dialekt.
- Das Problem beschäftigt mich.  
Ich beschäftige mich mit dem Problem.
- Große Selbstständigkeit zeichnet ihn aus.  
Er zeichnet sich aus durch große Selbstständigkeit.
- Die Milch nährt mich.  
Ich nähre mich von Milch.
- Das Wasser spiegelt den Baum.  
Der Baum spiegelt sich im Wasser.
- Die Kette schmückt den Baum.  
Er schmückt sich mit einer Kette.
- Die Frage ergibt interessante Probleme.  
Interessante Probleme ergeben sich aus der Frage.
- Der Referenzstrahl überlagert den Puls laser.  
Der Puls laser überlagert sich dabei mit einem Referenzstrahl.
- Der Anblick entsetzte sie.  
Bei diesem Anblick entsetzte sie sich.
- Leichte Fragen langweilen mich.  
Ich langweile mich bei leichte Fragen.
- Die Rede erzürnt mich.  
Ich erzürne mich über die Rede.
- Die gute Nachricht erheitert mich.  
Ich erheitere mich an dem Anblick.
- Das Geld speist seine Macht.  
Seine Macht speist sich daraus, dass er Dinge erledigt.

[7.192]

### Notes

[7.193]

The verb *sich verabschieden* (7.93 a) might also be thought of as an antipassive (7.93 b). However, it possibly better seen as an anticausative, related to (7.93 c). The reason is that the

agent of (7.93 a) and the patient of (7.93 c) are both typically the participant who is leaving.

- (7.93) a. Ich verabschiede mich von ihm.  
 b. Ich verabschiede ihn.  
 c. Er verabschiedet mich.

The verb *beschweren* has slight different meanings: in the transitive it means ‘to burden’ (7.94 a), while the reflexive conversive means ‘to complain’ (7.94 b). [7.194]

- (7.94) a. Heimweh beschwert mein Gemüt.  
 b. Ich beschwere mich über das Alter.

— [ PBJ > SBJ > ADJ ] —

### 7.5.8 [ NP | pN ] Reflexive prepositional passive

This diathesis with *rechnen* ‘to calculate’ (7.95) appears to be an idiosyncratic pattern. The governed preposition *mit* (7.95 a,b) is turned into a reflexive nominative subject, while the erstwhile subject is turned into an optional *für* phrase (7.95 c). [7.195]

- (7.95) a. Ich rechne mit einem guten Ergebnis.  
 b. Ich rechne damit, dass alles gut wird.  
 c. Das Ergebnis rechnet sich (für mich).

#### Attested Verbs

[7.196]

- *rechnen*

## 7.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

### 7.6.1 [ AP | NP ] Reflexive accusative-to-nominative

Reflexive diatheses are generally not used for promotion of arguments. The diathesis presented here is probably best seen as a diachronic quirk, showing that every linguistic generalisation can be overruled by incidental developments of language change. [7.197]

These accusative-to-nominative alternations are ongoing replacements of old-fashioned constructions, like with *ekeln* ‘to disgust’ (7.96). The presence of a reflexive pronoun can probably best be interpreted as a side-effect of the old accusative being supplemented by a new nominative. Note that a dative is also attested instead of an accusative (see Section 5.9.3). [7.198]

- (7.96) a. Mich ekele (es) vor dem Spinat.  
 b. Ich ekele mich vor dem Spinat.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.199]

- *ekeln, grauen*

#### Further Examples

[7.200]

- Mich graut es vor der Kälte. Ich graue mich vor der Kälte.



## 7.7 Diatheses with object demotion

### – [ OBJ > Ø ] – *Endoreflexiv*

#### 7.7.1 [ NA | N-] Reflexive accusative drop

[7.201] On first notice, examples like *sich äußern* ‘to speak out’ (7.97 a,b) look very much like a self-inflicted (‘reflexive’) alternation (see Section 7.4.5). However, in this case the reflexive *sich* pronoun in (7.97 b) does not have the same role as the accusative argument in (7.97 a). This can be shown syntactically by the impossibility of the coordination in (7.97 c).

- (7.97) a. Er äußert sein Bedauern über den Fall.  
 b. Er äußert sich über den Fall.  
 c. \* Er äußert sich und sein Bedauern über den Fall.

[7.202] The term AUTOCAUSATIVE is used by Geniušienė (1987: 183-184, 198-200; see also Wiemer & Nedjalkov 2007: 464) to describe this particular usage of a reflexive pronoun. Haspelmath (1987: 27-28) calls it ENDOREFLEXIVE. I prefer the term endoreflexive as it mnemonically includes the term ‘reflexive’. Cross-linguistically, endoreflexives are typically found with verbs that describe an action that is performed with the body, like *verstecken* ‘to hide’ (7.98). However, for the German verb *verstecken* it remains an open question whether these constructions are really different from self-inflicted reflexive constructions. Specifically, the coordination seems to be perfectly possible (7.98 c-e).

- (7.98) a. Er versteckt das Geschenk.  
 b. Er versteckt sich.  
 c. Er versteckt sich und das Geschenk.  
 d. Politiker verstecken sich und ihre Botschaften hinter verschwurbelten Sätzen.<sup>52</sup>  
 e. Sie verstecken sich und ihre Waffen.<sup>53</sup>

[7.203] The endoreflexive diathesis most clearly emerges with verbs that describe hurting the body, like *verbrennen* ‘to burn’ (7.99) or *schneiden* ‘to cut’. The usage of these verbs with a reflexive pronoun normally implies that the body is partially inflicted, i.e. only a part of the body is burned or cut. For this reason, the conjunction in (7.99 c) is strange and would only make sense in a context in which somebody would burn himself completely (cf. Elias Canetti’s novel *Die Blendung*).

- (7.99) a. Er verbrennt das Buch.  
 b. Er verbrennt sich.  
 c. \* Er verbrennt sich und das Buch.

#### [7.204] Attested Verbs

- *abduschen, abhetzen, abwenden, anlehnen, anziehen, aufrichten, ausziehen, äußern, bewegen, entblößen, erheben, hinlegen, hinsetzen, hinstellen, neigen, organisieren, recken, räkeln, schneiden, strecken, täuschen, verbrennen, verkleiden, verschlafen, verschlucken, zuneigen*

<sup>52</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 30.11.2009, Nr. 49.

<sup>53</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 31.10.2001, Nr. 45.

## Further Examples

[7.205]

- Er verschluckt die Tabletten.  
Er verschluckt sich.
- Er zieht seine Schuhe an.  
Er zieht sich an.
- Er neigt den Kopf zur Seite.  
Er neigt sich zur Seite.
- Er streckt seine Arme.  
Er streckt sich.
- Er wendet die Augen ab.  
Er hat sich von der Welt abgewandt.
- Er richtet den Stuhl auf.  
Er richtet sich auf.
- Er duscht das Salz ab.  
Er duscht sich ab.
- Er hetzte das Pferd ab.  
Er hetzte sich ab.
- Er täuscht mich.  
Er täuscht sich.
- Er hatte seinen Kopf ihr zugeneigt.  
Er hatte sich ihr zugeneigt

## Notes

[7.206]

The verb *äußern* ‘to express’ has a slightly different meaning depending on the animacy of the subject. With a human subject it normally signifies a verbal utterance (7.100 a,b), while with non-human subjects (who cannot speak) it more generally means ‘to show’ (7.100 c). Crucially, with non-human subjects the reflexive diathesis is obligatory (7.100 d).

[7.207]

- (7.100) a. Er äußert sein Bedauern über den Unfall.  
 b. Er äußert sich über den Unfall.  
 c. Die Krankheit äußert sich durch das Fieber.  
 d. \* Die Krankheit äußert den Fieber.

It appears that the reflexive *sich verschlafen* (7.101) is getting old-fashioned. Many German speakers reject such a construction. [7.208]

(7.101) Ach, Johanna, ich glaube, ich habe mich verschlafen.<sup>54</sup>

## 7.7.2 [ NAL | N-L ] Reflexive accusative drop+locative

Similar to the previous endoreflexive alternation, the alternation with *werfen* ‘to throw’ (7.102 a,b) acts on the body. However, additionally a locational phrase needs to be present (7.102 c). However, the reflexive construction (7.102 b) looks very much like self-inflicted reflexive reference. Indeed, the conjunction-test proposed in the previous section seems to be [7.209]

<sup>54</sup>DWDS: Fontane, Theodor: Effi Briest. Berlin, 1896.

perfectly possible here (7.102 d). It needs more research to decide whether this alternation is to be considered as a separate diathesis.

- (7.102) a. Er wirft die Kleider aufs Bett.  
 b. Er wirft sich aufs Bett.  
 c. \* Er wirft sich.  
 d. Die Frauen warfen sich und ihre Kinder vor mein Pferd und baten um Hilfe.<sup>55</sup>

[7.210] **Attested Verbs**

- *fokussieren, konzentrieren, legen, setzen, stellen, werfen*

[7.211] **Notes**

[7.212] The verbs *fokussieren* and *konzentrieren* ‘to concentrate, to focus’ are slightly out-of-place among the other verbs in this group. They also have an *auf* prepositional phrase, but they do not have a locative meaning. It still is a governed preposition though (7.103).

- (7.103) a. Ich konzentriere meine Energie auf das Spiel.  
 b. Ich konzentriere mich auf das Spiel.  
 c. Ich konzentriere mich darauf, das Spiel zu gewinnen.

— [ OBJ > ADJ ] — *Reziprokativ*

7.7.3 [ NA | Np] Reflexive *mit* antipassive

[7.213] Reflexive antipassive verbs like *treffen* ‘to meet’ (7.104 a,b) change an accusative argument to a non-governed prepositional phrase with *mit* (7.104 c). Semantically, this diathesis changes the action from a one-sided perspective towards a more reciprocal perspective. The resulting construction of this diathesis is reminiscent of the ‘real reciprocal’ construction (see Section 7.3.3).

- (7.104) a. Ich treffe dich.  
 b. Ich treffe mich mit dir.  
 c. \* Ich treffe mich damit, dass du krank bist.

[7.214] **Attested Verbs**

- *befreunden, prügeln, schlagen, treffen, verstehen*

[7.215] **Further Examples**

- Ich schlage dich.  
 Ich schlage mich mit dir.
- Ich verstehe dich.  
 Ich verstehe mich gut mit dir.
- Ich prügeln ihn.  
 Ich prügeln mich mit ihm.

<sup>55</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.03.2005, Nr. 13.

**Notes**

The verb *befreunden* ‘to become friends’ (7.105 a) seems to have become acceptable with a bare accusative only recently in the context of social media, probably as a direct calque from English ‘to befriend’ (7.105 b). Semantically, the difference between a one-sided and two-sided perspective found with the other verbs in this class is not relevant here.

- (7.105) a. Ich befreunde mich mit ihm.  
b. Du befreundest ihn.<sup>56</sup>

### – [ OBJ > PBJ ] – *Reflexiv Akkusativ Antipassiv*

#### 7.7.4 [ NA | NP ] Reflexive governed antipassive

The *sich* counterpart of the transitive *beklagen* ‘to lament’ (7.106 a,b) is somewhat alike to an intransitive action that has a reflexive pronoun attached. There is no semantic ‘self-inflicting’ reflexivity whatsoever in the expression, i.e. the complaining in (7.106 b) does not mean ‘I complain about myself’ (i.e. adding *selbst* is not possible). The complaint is still about *Lärm* ‘noise’.

Formally, the object of the complaint is demoted from an accusative (7.106 a), which is obligatory (7.106 c), to a prepositional phrase (7.106 b) that can be dropped (7.106 d). Note that without the prepositional phrase (7.106 d) the expression is indeed ambiguous between a real reflexive meaning (‘I complain about myself’) and a non-reflexive reading (‘I am complaining’). All prepositional phrases of the verbs in this section are governed prepositions (7.106 e).

Wiemer and Nedjalkov (2007: 464-465) call such verbs ‘deaccusatives’ and consider them to be ‘extremely rare’ in German (which they are not). It is an open question why some verbs take such a reflexive antipassive, while other take a simple antipassive without reflexive pronoun (as discussed in Section 6.7.8). For a typological survey of such antipassive uses of reflexive markers, see Janic (2010).

- (7.106) a. Ich beklage den Lärm.  
b. Ich beklage mich (\*selbst) über den Lärm.  
c. \*Ich beklage.  
d. Ich beklage mich.  
e. Ich beklage mich darüber, dass es so laut ist.

**Attested Verbs**

- *an* : *verschlucken*, *wagen*
- *bei* : *entscheiden*, *überstürzen*
- *für* : *entscheiden*, *entschuldigen*, *rechtfertigen*, *verantworten*, *verbürgen*
- *in* : *behaupten*, *üben*, *versuchen*, *vertiefen*
- *über* : *beklagen*, *besprechen*
- *von* : *trennen*
- *vor* : *distanzieren*, *fürchten*, *scheuen*
- *zu* : *bekennen*

**Further Examples**

<sup>56</sup> Attested online at <http://hundewelt.info/affenpinscher/>, accessed 2 August 2022.

- Ich fürchte den Ausgang des Verfahrens.  
Ich fürchte mich vor dem Ausgang des Verfahrens.
- Ich entschuldige den Vorfall.  
Ich entschuldige mich für den Vorfall.
- Ich verantworte mein Vorgehen.  
Ich verantworte mich für mein Vorgehen.
- Ich rechtfertige mein Vorgehen.  
Ich rechtfertige mich für mein Vorgehen.
- Ich bespreche die Angelegenheit (mit dir).  
Ich bespreche mich (mit dir) über die Angelegenheit.
- Ich wage den Sprung.  
Ich wage mich an die Aufgabe.
- Der Schauspieler versucht die neue Rolle.  
Der Schauspieler versucht sich in der neuen Rolle.
- Er übt die Kunst des Zeichnens.  
Er übt sich in der Kunst des Zeichnens.
- Er überstürzte seine Abreise.  
Er überstürzte sich bei seiner Abreise.
- Ich bekenne die Tat.  
Ich bekenne mich zu der Tat.
- Ich behaupte den ersten Platz.  
Ich behaupte mich in meiner neuen Stelle.
- Ich trenne die Gruppe.  
Ich trenne mich von der Gruppe.
- Er distanzierte den Gegner.  
Er distanzierte sich von seinem Gegner.
- Ich verbürge die Zuverlässigkeit dieser Aussagen.  
Ich verbürge mich für die Zuverlässigkeit dieser Aussagen.

[7.223] **Notes**

[7.224] There are two different roles with *entscheiden* that both allow for an antipassive alternation with a reflexive pronoun, both for the roles of the ‘problem’, alternating with *bei* (7.107 a) and for the role of the ‘solution’, alternating with *für* (7.107 b).

- (7.107) a. Der Richter entschied den Streit.  
Der Richter entschied sich bei dem Streit (für eine Strafe).
- b. Ich entscheide die Reihenfolge.  
Ich entscheide mich für diese Reihenfolge.

[7.225] The verb *beklagen* seems to have two different meanings: without *sich* it means ‘to lament’ while with *sich* it means ‘to complain’ (7.108 a). Likewise, the verb *verschlucken* shows a major semantic shift with this antipassive diathesis from ‘to swallow’ to ‘to choke’ (7.108 b). The verb *vertiefen* shows a minor semantic restriction, changing from ‘to engross’ to ‘to delve into’ (7.108 c).

- (7.108) a. Ich beklage den Tod.  
Ich beklage mich über den Lärm.
- b. Ich verschlucke die Pille.  
Ich verschlucke mich an der Pille.
- c. Ich vertiefe meine Kenntnisse.  
Ich vertiefe mich in mein Buch.

## 7.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

### – [ Ø > PBJ ] – *Reflexiv Bewegungsart*

#### 7.8.1 [ N– | NL ] Reflexive manner-of-movement

Intransitive verbs that describe a movement, like *tanzen* ‘to dance’ (7.109 a) can be used in manner-of-movement construction that includes an obligatory path describing the movement (7.109 b,c). This diathesis is discussed in detail in Section 6.8.2. [7.226]

- (7.109) a. Ich habe getanzt.  
 b. Ich bin durch den Garten getanzt.  
 c. \*Ich bin getanzt.

The same diathesis is also attested with non-movement verbs, like *träumen* ‘to dream’ (7.110 a), but then an additional reflexive pronoun is obligatory (7.110 b), next to the obligatory locational phrase (7.110 c). The meaning of this construction is that by performing the verb (i.e. by dreaming) a movement is performed as described in the locational phrase (i.e. going to New York). [7.227]

- (7.110) a. Ich träume.  
 b. Ich träume mich nach New York.  
 (= Ich träume, und im Traum gehe ich nach New York.)  
 c. \*Ich träume mich.

The location always appears to be describing a movement, with *durch* (7.111 a) ‘through’ and *in* ‘into’ (7.111 b) being the most productive. Incidental examples with *aus* and *nach* are also attested. [7.228]

- (7.111) a. Ich esse und trinke.  
 Ich aß und trank mich durch Deutschland.<sup>57</sup>  
 b. Das Kind zittert.  
 Würzburg zitterte sich am Ende in die Playoffs.<sup>58</sup>

This diathesis is exceptional, because an extra obligatory argument is introduced together with the reflexive pronoun. This is a clear counterexample to the generalisation that reflexive diatheses are demoting. This construction is closely related to a reflexive usage of intransitive verbs with an obligatory resultative adverbial, like with *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ (7.112). This diathesis is discussed in more detail in Section 9.4.1. [7.229]

- (7.112) a. Ich schlafe.  
 b. Ich schlafe mich gesund.

Although not all verbs listed below are strictly intransitive (e.g. *essen*, *trinken* can take an accusative and *arbeiten an*, *träumen von* take a governed preposition) I consider this to be an alternation of the intransitive usage describing the basic action without object argument. [7.230]

#### Attested Verbs [7.231]

- Food processing: *essen*, *fressen*, *trinken*

<sup>57</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.04.1998, Nr. 17.

<sup>58</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.05.2016 (online).

- Bodily processes: *denken, dösen, schlafen, schwitzen, träumen, zittern*
- Others: *arbeiten, fallen, kämpfen, liegen, lügen, schießen, schleichen*

## [7.232] Further Examples

- Heute aber döst sich das Viertel durch den Sabbat.<sup>59</sup>
- Die herumwieselnden Köche schwitzen sich durch verschiedene Runden.<sup>60</sup>
- Sie schläft sich in ihren Tod.<sup>61</sup>
- Die Motten fressen sich durch den Pullover.
- Die Städte fraßen sich ins Umland.<sup>62</sup>
- Schalke schießt sich aus der Krise.<sup>63</sup>
- Bevor ich auf das Eis gehe, muss ich meine Kür exakt im Kopf haben, ich denke mich quasi durch meinen Trick.<sup>64</sup>
- Er arbeitet sich durch die Daten.
- Ich kämpfe mich durch die Wellen.
- Ich lüge mich durch mein Leben.
- Sie fallen/liegen sich in die Arme.

## [7.233] Notes

[7.234] The movement verb *schleichen* ‘to sneak’ (7.113 a) allows for a regular non-reflexive manner-of-movement diathesis (7.113 b). However, curiously, it also allows for a reflexive manner-of-movement diathesis as discussed in this section (7.113 c). There is a subtle difference in meaning between these two uses, which is not trivial to pin down.

- (7.113) a. Ich habe geschlichen.  
 b. Ich bin nach Hause geschlichen.  
 c. Ich habe mich nach Hause geschlichen.

## 7.8.2 [ NA– | NAL ] Reflexive forced movement

[7.235] The forced movement diathesis (see Section 6.8.5) is typically found without a reflexive pronoun, like with *jagen* ‘to hunt’ (7.114).

- (7.114) a. Ich jage den Hund.  
 b. Ich jage den Hund aus dem Zimmer.  
 (= Ich jage den Hund und dadurch geht der aus dem Zimmer.)

[7.236] However, there are a few example in which additionally a reflexive pronoun is added, like with *graben* ‘to dig’ (7.115 a) and *wünschen* ‘to wish’ (7.115 b). Note that the dative reflexive pronoun is not a raised possessor with a self-inflicting reflexive. Such examples are discussed in Section 7.4.13.

- (7.115) a. Ich grabe mir einen Weg durch den Schnee.  
 b. Ich wünsche mir den Stuhl in die Sonne.

## [7.237] Attested Verbs

<sup>59</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 21.04.2005, Nr. 17.

<sup>60</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.04.2016 (online).

<sup>61</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 05.04.1997.

<sup>62</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.01.2017, Nr. 02.

<sup>63</sup>Attested online at <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/sport/2-0-gegen-hannover-schalke-schiesst-sich-aus-der-krise-1258798.html>, accessed 30 March 2021.

<sup>64</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.06.2009, Nr. 25.

- *graben, wünschen*

#### Further Examples

[7.238]

- [Sie] gruben sich einen Weg durch den Schutt.<sup>65</sup>
- Er wünschte sich seine Eltern in Sicherheit.
- BP wünscht sich den Prozess deshalb nach Houston.<sup>66</sup>
- Man muss kein St.-Pauli-Fan sein, um sich den HSV aus der Liga zu wünschen.<sup>67</sup>

#### Notes

[7.239]

The verb *bahnen* ‘to make a path’ (7.116) idiosyncratically is always used with a reflexive pronoun and the accusative *den Weg* ‘the path’. The resulting construction is like the other verbs in this section, but there is no diathesis. [7.240]

(7.116) Er bahnt sich einen Weg durch die Menschenmenge.

## 7.9 Symmetrical diatheses

### – [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] –

#### 7.9.1 [ NA | DN ] Reflexive accusative/dative inersive

Some verbs, like *erobern* ‘to conquer’, allow for both a regular transitive construction (7.117a) and a reflexive inersive in which the former nominative turns into a dative (7.117b). This diathesis appears to be rare. [7.241]

- (7.117) a. Der Eroberer unterwarf den Volksstamm.  
b. Der Volksstamm unterwarf sich dem Eroberer.

#### Attested Verbs

[7.242]

- *stellen, unterwerfen*

#### Further Examples

[7.243]

- Der Polizist stellte den Einbrecher.  
Der Einbrecher stellte sich dem Polizisten.

#### 7.9.2 [ NA | GN ] Reflexive accusative/genitive inersive

Both the alternants of *erbarmen* ‘to have pity’ (7.118) are very old-fashioned. This inersive diathesis appears to be very rare. [7.244]

- (7.118) a. Der Kranke erbarmt mich.  
(= Der Kranke erregte mein Mitleid.)  
b. Ich erbarmte mich des Kranken.  
(= Aus Mitleid kümmerte ich mich um den Kranken.)

#### Attested Verbs

[7.245]

<sup>65</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 15.11.1999.

<sup>66</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.05.2017, Nr. 33.

<sup>67</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 24.03.2015, Nr. 12.



- *erbarmen, erfreuen*

[7.246] **Further Examples**

- Das Geschenk erfreut mich.  
Ich erfreue mich bester Gesundheit.

### 7.9.3 [ ND | GN ] Reflexive dative/genitive inversive

[7.247] There used to be a reflexive verb *bewissen* ‘to know about’ in Early New High German (Pfeiffer 1993)<sup>68</sup>, but only the construction with the participle *bewusst* is still in contemporary use. The non-reflexive construction (7.119 a) is probably a later addition. As a synchronic diathesis this alternation is a rare example of a dative reflexive without accusative.

- (7.119) a. Das Problem ist mir bewusst.  
b. Ich bin mir keiner Schuld bewusst.

[7.248] **Attested Verbs**

- *bewusst sein*

### — [ OBJ > OBJ ] —

### 7.9.4 [ NA | NG ] Reflexive accusative-to-genitive

[7.249] Only a few examples of an accusative-to-genitive diathesis with additional reflexive pronoun are attested. All examples show substantial semantic drift. However, I consider the semantics of both counterparts to be close enough to be included here as a special kind of diathesis. For example, the verb *annehmen* means ‘to accept’ with an accusative (7.120 a), but ‘to take care of’ with a genitive and a reflexive pronoun (7.120 b).

- (7.120) a. Er nimmt das Problem an. (= ‘akzeptieren’)  
b. Er nimmt sich des Problems an. (= ‘kümmern’)

[7.250] The verb *bedenken* ‘to consider’ takes an accusative (7.121 a). There is an archaic usage meaning ‘to bethink’ with a reflexive pronoun and a genitive, still attested in the 19th Century (7.121 b).

- (7.121) a. Man bedenke den Aufwand.<sup>69</sup> (= ‘beachten’)  
b. Ich bedenke mich eines Besseren.<sup>70</sup> (= ‘besinnen’)

[7.251] **Attested Verbs**

- *annehmen, bedenken*

<sup>68</sup>Entry *wissen* at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/etymwb/wissen> accessed 2 August 2022

<sup>69</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 18.04.2001.

<sup>70</sup>Attested examples on Google books from 1800 (<https://books.google.de/books?id=WZNKAAAcAAJ&pg=PA393>) and 1848 (<https://books.google.de/books?id=RD8gAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA665>), accessed on 3 August 2022.



## Chapter 8

# Preverb alternations

### 8.1 Introduction

[8.1] Under the heading PREVERB I will subsume two different constructions, known in the German linguistic tradition as *Verbpräfixe* ‘verb prefixes’ (8.1 a) and *Verbpartikel* ‘verb particles’ (8.1 b). These constructions have clearly different syntactic characteristics (see Section 8.2.1), but from the perspective of valency alternations they appear to function highly similar. For a discussion of the term ‘preverb’ as a cover term for both constructions, see Booij & van Kemenade (2003).

- (8.1) a. Ich umfahre den Polizisten.  
b. Ich fahre den Polizisten um.

[8.2] There is a massive literature on the German alternations induced by verb prefixes and verb particles, including complete monographs on individual preverbs, for example Felfe (2012) on the many different alternations with the particle *an-*. However, most of this literature focusses on the semantic difference between a bare verb and a verb with a preverb. Changes in valency are mostly discussed only as an aside. In contrast, in this chapter the meaning of the preverbs will only play a secondary role. The focus will be on the valency change induced by the preverbs (for similar approaches see Eroms 1980; Kim 1983; Günther 1987; Wunderlich 1987; Stiebels 1996; Wunderlich 1997; Geist & Hole 2016).

[8.3] The central generalisation that can be extracted from the numerous examples in this chapter is that the structural effect of a preverb diathesis is to produce a verb with an accusative argument. This generalisation does not hold without special definitional stipulations (e.g. accusative reflexive pronouns have to be included) and there are various counterexamples (e.g. diatheses resulting in dative arguments), but overall the generalisation seems to be exceptionally strong (see Section 8.2.2). In a very broad sense, preverb diatheses can be seen as a kind of counterpart to reflexive diatheses as discussed in the previous chapter. Reflexive diatheses generally reduce the valency, while preverb diatheses tend to increase the valency.

[8.4] As is customary in German grammar, I will restrict the class of verb particles to morphemes that are related to prepositions. There are very many other morphemes that behave syntactically rather similar to preverbs, but which are related to adverbials/adjectives. These adverbial/adjectival preverbs are much more limited in the kind of diatheses that they induce, so I have decided to discuss them separately in the next chapter under the heading of adverbial alternations.

There are 11 diatheses that are sufficiently prominent to be given a German name. I propose the following names for these: [8.5]

- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] PRÄVERB KAUSATIV (see Section 8.6.1 ff.)
- [Ø > OBJ] PRÄVERB AKKUSATIV (see Section 8.8.1 ff.)
- [Ø > OBJ] PRÄVERB REFLEXIV AKKUSATIV (see Section 8.8.5 ff.)
- [Ø > OBJ] PRÄVERB DATIV (see Section 8.8.8 ff.)
- [ADJ > OBJ] PRÄVERB AKKUSATIV APPLIKATIV (see Section 8.8.10)
- [ADJ > OBJ] PRÄVERB DATIV APPLIKATIV (see Section 8.8.15)
- [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ] PRÄVERB VOLLAPPLIKATIV (see Section 8.9.1)
- [PBJ > Ø] PRÄVERB DELOKATIV (see Section 8.7.9 ff.)
- [PBJ > OBJ > Ø] PRÄVERB ANTIRESLTATIV (see Section 8.7.12 ff.)
- [OBJ > Ø] PRÄVERB ENDOREFLEXIV (see Section 8.7.1)
- [OBJ > ADJ] PRÄVERB DATIV ANTIPASSIV (see Section 8.7.7)

## 8.2 Characterising preverbs

### 8.2.1 Prefixes and particles

The central morphosyntactic difference between verb prefixes and verb particles is their morphological bond to the lexical root. As implied by the name, verb prefixes like *be-* are prefixed to the root and are never separated from it (8.2a). In contrast, verb particles like *ein-* are in many constructions separated from the root (8.2b), namely (i) in finite uses, (ii) by participle prefix *ge-* (see Section 10.2.1), and (iii) by infinitive ‘prefix’ *zu* (see Section 12.2.1). Additionally, verb prefixes are unstressed, while verb particles are stressed. To indicate whether a preverb is a prefix or particle, I will add a stress mark after (prefix) or before (particle). [8.6]

- (8.2) a. Ich *be'trete* den Saal.  
           Ich habe den Saal *be'treten*.  
           Ich hoffe den Saal zu *be'treten*.
- b. Ich *trete* die Tür 'ein.  
           Ich habe die Tür 'eingetreten.  
           Ich hoffe die Tür 'einzutreten.

The following elements can only be used as VERB PREFIXES in German (see Los et al. 2016: 177; Pfeiffer 1993 for the diachronic origin): [8.7]

- *ge'*, originally meaning ‘with’, probably cognate with Latin *com*
- *be'*, originally meaning ‘by, around’, cognate to modern German *bei*
- *er'*, originally meaning ‘out’, cognate both to modern German *aus* and *ur-*
- *ver'*, originally meaning ‘before’, probably cognate with both Latin *pro* and *per*
- *zer'*, originally meaning ‘in two’, cognate with Latin *dis-*
- *ent'*, originally meaning ‘against’, cognate with Greek *anti*
- *miss'*, originally meaning ‘missing’, still transparently cognate with modern German verb root (*ver*)*miss(en)*

The prefix *ge'* only occurs in completely grammaticalised combinations, i.e. there are no verbs (anymore) in which the root is still transparently related to the *ge'*-prefixed wordform (cf. Section 1.3.2). Pairs like *bieten* ‘to offer’ and *gebieten* ‘to order’ are thus simply treated [8.8]

here as two completely separate lexemes here, and will consequently not occur among any of the diatheses discussed below (examples in Section 8.3). In contrast, the addition of the prefix *miss-* is always completely transparent and never results in a diathesis, e.g. *achten* ‘to respect’ and *missachten* ‘to disrespect’ (examples in Sections 8.4.1, 8.4.3). That leaves the prefixes *be-*, *er-*, *ver-*, *zer-* and *ent-*, and these all occur frequently. They induce various diathesis as discussed throughout this chapter and they do not appear to have any preference for a special kind of diathesis.

[8.9]

Turning now to the VERB PARTICLES, the following prepositions can be used as preverbs:

- The four prepositions *durch*, *über*, *um* and *unter* can be used both as verb prefixes and as verb particles leading to diathesis.
- The nine prepositions *ab*, *an*, *auf*, *aus*, *bei*, *in* (= *ein*), *nach*, *vor* and *zu* are frequently used as verb particles leading to diathesis.
- The preposition *mit* only occurs as a verb particle in completely transparent derivation that never result in a diathesis, e.g. *arbeiten* ‘to work’ becomes *mitarbeiten* ‘to work along’ (see Sections 8.4.1, 8.4.3).
- A few polysyllabic prepositions are used sporadically as verb particles, namely *entlang*, *entgegen*, *gegenüber*, *hinter*, *neben* and *zwischen*. Verbs with these preverbs have not (yet) been included here.
- Crucially, the remaining prepositions are never used as verb particles with a verb root, namely *außer*, *bis*, *für*, *gegen*, *ohne*, *seit* and *von*. There exist only incidental examples like *fürsprechen* or *gegensteuern*. It is unclear to me whether there is any deeper reason for the absence of such derivations.

[8.10]

The two main groups of prepositional preverbs that are involved in diathesis show an intriguing semantic structure. Note that this semantic structure involves their prepositional meaning, not their function as preverbs:

- the prefix/particle prepositions *durch*, *über*, *unter* and *um* describe a movement along an object, i.e. ‘through, over, under’ and ‘around’, respectively.
- the particle-only prepositions come in semantic pairs describing either a directional movement (*zu/ab* ‘to/from’ and *ein/aus* ‘in/out’) or a stative position (*vor/nach* ‘before/after’ and *bei/an/auf* ‘near/on/on top’).

[8.11]

When used as a preverb, the meaning of these elements is highly variable. For example, the verb *antanzen* (cf. Felfe 2012: 1) has at least the following possible interpretations (8.3).

In this chapter, I will only sporadically comment on such semantic details.

- (8.3) a. Der Rüpel hat mich angetanzt.  
(= anstoßen beim tanzen)
- b. Angetanzt wurde recht spät, gegen zehn.<sup>1</sup>  
(= durch tanzen den Ball anfangen)
- c. Der Junge kam angetanzt.  
(= tanzend irgendwo hinbewegen)
- d. Ich habe mir ein kaputtes Knie angetanzt.  
(= durch tanzen etwas erreichen)
- e. Ich haben gegen die Resignation angetanzt.  
(= sich gegen etwas stemmen)
- f. Er ist beim Chef angetanzt.  
(= herbei zitiert werden)
- g. Bewegungsfolgen werden nur angetanzt und immer wieder abgebrochen.<sup>2</sup>  
(= nicht vollständig ausführen)

The locational particles: *da(r)*-, *her*- and *hin*- are not further investigate here. They do not appear to induce any diathesis when combined with a verb stem. [8.12]

### 8.2.2 Preverb-verbs prefer an accusative argument

The central generalisation that can be extracted from the numerous examples in this chapter is that the structural effect of a preverb diathesis (by verb prefixes or verb particles) is to produce a verb with an accusative argument. This idea is for example foreshadowed by Kim (1983) “Die *be*-Verben fordern immer eine E\_akk außer bei der Funktionsgruppe der ‘Intensivierung’, deren Basisverben durch Präfigierung sich reflexivieren” (1983: 54). [8.13]

Various different diatheses have to be distinguished though. First, many verbs without an accusative argument before the diathesis are turned into a verb with an accusative argument by the preverb diathesis: [8.14]

- With some verbs an accusative argument is added to a verb when it is prefixed. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ to *verschlafen* ‘to oversleep’ in (8.4a), see Section 8.8.1.
- Similarly, another constituent, like a prepositional phrase, can be promoted to an accusative argument. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *steigen* ‘to mount’ to *besteigen* ‘to climb’ in (8.4b), see Section 8.8.10.
- Alternatively, the diathesis can turn the nominative subject into an accusative argument, combined with the addition of a new causative nominative subject. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *brennen* ‘to burn’ to *verbrennen* ‘to burn something’ in (8.4c), see Section 8.6.1.

<sup>1</sup> Attested online at <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/vbki-ball-so-tanzte-berlins-wirtschaft-durch-die-nacht/21000986.html>, accessed 4 August 2022.

<sup>2</sup> DWDS: Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 30.09.2000

- (8.4) a. Der Student schläft.  
Der Student verschläft den Vortrag.  
b. Ich steige auf den Berg.  
Ich besteige den Berg.  
c. Der Stuhl brennt.  
Ich verbrenne den Stuhl.

[8.15] Second, verbs that already have an accusative argument show various different kinds of preverb diathesis. Yet, whatever happens, in almost all examples there is still an accusative argument present after the diathesis:

- When there is already an accusative argument, this argument can be retained while other participants in the sentence are marked differently. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *kaufen* ‘to buy’ to *verkaufen* ‘to sell’ in (8.5 a), see Section 8.6.9.
- Most frequently, the accusative argument is demoted, and another participant is promoted to accusative. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *hängen* ‘to hang’ to *behängen* ‘to drape’ in (8.5 b), see Section 8.9.1.
- Similarly, with some resultative constructions a prepositional phrase (often a location) can be promoted to an accusative argument while the original accusative cannot be expressed anymore. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *schütten* ‘to pour’ to *ausschütten* ‘to spill’ in (8.5 c), see Section 8.7.12.

- (8.5) a. Ich kaufe das Haus von ihm.  
Er verkauft mir das Haus.  
b. Ich hänge die Bilder an die Wand.  
Ich behänge die Wand mit Bildern.  
c. Ich schütte das Wasser aus dem Eimer.  
Ich schütte den Eimer aus.

[8.16] Third, some verbs appear to be counterexamples to the generalisation of accusative arguments with preverb diathesis because they do not have a full accusative argument after the application of the diathesis. However, they still have an accusative reflexive pronoun as a kind of formal substitute for the accusative. Note that functionally this reflexive pronoun is never coding a ‘self-inflicting’ reflexive construction, but only substituting for the ‘missing’ accusative argument.

- Some transitive verbs with an accusative lose the accusative argument after the diathesis, but formally an ‘empty’ accusative is retained in the form of a reflexive pronoun. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *schreiben* ‘to write’ to *verschreiben* ‘to misspell’ in (8.6 a), see Section 8.7.1.
- Some intransitive verbs remain intransitive after the diathesis, but formally an ‘empty’ accusative is added in the form of a reflexive pronoun. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *arbeiten* ‘to work’ to *überarbeiten* ‘to overwork’ in (8.6 b), see Section 8.4.6.
- Similarly, some intransitives (typically movement verbs) show even more indications that the prefixed verb with reflexive pronoun is alike to a transitive verb. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *laufen* ‘to walk’ to *verlaufen* ‘to be lost’ in (8.6 c), see Section 8.7.10. Some typical ‘agentive’ characteristics are attested with *verlaufen*, e.g. a perfect auxiliary *haben*.

- (8.6) a. Er schreibt einen Brief.  
Er verschreibt sich.  
b. Der Mitarbeiter arbeitet zu viel.  
Der Mitarbeiter überarbeitet sich.  
c. Der Hund ist nach Hause gelaufen.  
Der Hund hat sich im Wald verlaufen.

Finally, there are few exceptions to the generalisation that preverb alternations always have an accusative argument: [8.17]

- A very small group of verbs ( $\pm 3$  example) appear to lose the accusative argument completely after the preverb diathesis. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *kaufen* ‘to buy’ to *einkaufen* ‘to go shopping’ in (8.7 a), see Section 8.7.2.
- A small group of intransitive verbs ( $\pm 7$  examples) remains intransitive after a preverb diathesis. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *blühen* ‘to blossom’ to *verblühen* ‘to wither’ in (8.7 b), see Section 8.4.4. However, note that these verbs can be used as a nominal attribute (‘patientive’) after the diathesis, suggesting that that argument is more object-like after the diathesis.
- The most frequent exception (dozens of examples) are intransitive verbs that show a prepositional phrase turning into a dative argument with a preverb diathesis. This is for example attested with the diathesis from *jagen* ‘to hunt’ to *nachjagen* ‘to chase’ in (8.7 c), see Section 8.8.15.

- (8.7) a. Ich habe gestern ein Buch gekauft.  
Ich habe gestern eingekauft.  
b. Die Blume blüht. \*Die geblühte Blume stinkt.  
Die Blume verblüht. Die verblühte Blume stinkt.  
c. Die Polizei jagte einen Verbrecher.  
Die Polizei jagte dem Verbrecher nach.

### 8.2.3 Preverbs with non-verbal stems

Preverbs typically are added to verbal roots. However, there are a few examples in which preverbs are added to non-verbal roots, constructing a verb in the process. For examples, from adjectival roots like *frei* ‘free’ it is possible to derive a verb *befreien* ‘to free’ (8.8). This derivation typically has a causative function with the subject causing the object to become the adjectival predicate, see Section 8.6.3. However, in a few incidental cases, the semantics are slightly different, like with *lustig* ‘funny’ and *belustigen* ‘to amuse’ (8.9), see Section 8.8.2. [8.18]

- (8.8) a. Du bist frei.  
b. Ich befreie dich.  
(= Ich verursache, dass du frei bist.)
- (8.9) a. Der Clown ist lustig.  
b. Der Clown belustigt mich.

Preverbs are also sometimes used with a nominal root to derive a verb (see Section 8.6.4). This derivation likewise has a causative semantics in that the subject causes the object to have something, e.g. *Gift* ‘poison’ leads to *vergiften*, which means ‘to cause something to [8.19]



have poison' (8.10). With the prefix *ent-* a negation is added, e.g. *Waffe* 'weapon' leads to *entwaffnen*, which means 'to cause somebody to not have a weapon' (8.11).

- (8.10) a. Zucker ist Gift für die Zähne  
       b. Ich vergifte die Suppe.  
           (= Ich verursache, dass die Suppe Gift enthält.)
- (8.11) a. Der Dieb hat eine Waffe.  
       b. Ich entwaffne den Dieb.  
           (= Ich verursache, dass der Dieb keine Waffe hat.)

[8.20] There are some examples for which an intermediate verb exists. For example, the verbs *freien* 'to court' (8.12 a) or *giften* 'to rile' (8.12 b) are also based on the adjective *frei* and the noun *Gift*, respectively. However, these verbs are clearly independent developments from *befreien* (8.8) and *vergiften* (8.10).

- (8.12) a. Der junge Herr freite um seine jetzige Frau.  
       b. Er giftet lauthals gegen die feindliche Übernahme.

[8.21] Finally, there are few incidental examples of preverbs added to a prepositional root, but they will not further be discussed here (e.g. *begegnen* 'to meet' from *gegen* 'against', *erobern* 'to conquer' from *ober-* 'higher up', or *erwidern* 'to reply' from *wider* 'against').

### 8.3 Deponent verbs without alternation

[8.22] Verbs with preverbs frequently grammaticalise into a more specific meaning. For example, the verb *graben* 'to dig' and *begraben* 'to bury' are still semantically related and show a symmetrical applicative diathesis (see Section 8.9.2). However the meaning of the prefixed verb *begraben* has become semantically restricted to the digging of a grave (8.13). As a general rule, it seems to be the preverbal variant that shows more semantic drift.

- (8.13) a. Ich grabe ein Loch (für meinen Hund).  
       b. Ich begrabe meinen Hund (in einem Loch).

[8.23] It is common that such diachronic developments lead to pairs of verbs that semantically are not related anymore (8.14). In the extreme case, the original root of the preverbal verb

does not (anymore) in contemporary German (8.15).

- (8.14) Preverbal verbs with existing roots, though no semantic relationship
- a. *gefallen, gehören, geraten*
  - b. *bekommen, benehmen, berichten, beschaffen, bestehen, bestimmen, bevorstehen, beweisen*
  - c. *entsprechen, entwischen*
  - d. *ereignen, ereilen, erfahren, erhalten, erpressen, errichten, ersparen, erstehen, ertragen, ertrinken, erwischen, erzählen, erziehen*
  - e. *zergehen, zerlassen, zersetzen*
- (8.15) Preverbal verbs with non-existing verbal roots in contemporary German
- a. *gebären, gebieten, gebühren, gedeihen, gelingen, genesen, geschehen, gestehen, gewähren, gewinnen, gewöhnen*
  - b. *beginnen. bescheren. beschäftigen. beteiligen. bezichtigen*
  - c. *erbarmen, ergattern, erinnern, erklimmen, erkunden, erlauben, erläutern, erledigen, erstatten, ersticken*

## 8.4 Alternations without diathesis

There are many preverb alternations without diathesis. I distinguish three different kinds, <sup>[8.24]</sup> to be discussed in detail in subsequent sections.

- (i) Verbs (with adjectival predicates as a subclass) that do not show any diathesis when a preverb is added.
- (ii) Verbs that show no difference in argument marking, but that show differences in the attributive usage of participles.
- (iii) Verbs that show no difference in argument marking, but the prefixed verb has an obligatory reflexive pronoun.

### — Diathesis completely absent —

It is very common for a verb not to show any change in valency when a preverb is added. The <sup>[8.25]</sup> most widespread kind is for nominative-accusative verb to not show a change in valency, like *essen* ‘to eat’ and *aufessen* ‘to eat completely’ (8.16), see Section 8.4.3.

- (8.16) a. *Ich esse den Apfel.*  
b. *Ich esse den Apfel auf.*

In contrast, it is rather uncommon for intransitive verbs to remain intransitive when a preverb is added. However, it is attested, like with *sinken* ‘to sink’ and *versinken* ‘to sink’ (8.17), see Section 8.4.1. <sup>[8.26]</sup>

- (8.17) a. *Das Schifft sinkt auf hoher See.*  
b. *Das Schiff versinkt im Meer.*

### 8.4.1 [ N | N ] Preverb intransitives without diathesis

[8.27] It is rather unusual for the preverbal version of intransitive verbs to not show any valency change (8.18a,b), not even a difference between the usage of the attributive participles (8.18c,d). It seems to be slightly more common for only the preverbal participle to be open for attributive usage (see Section 8.4.4).

- (8.18) a. Die Milch kocht.  
 b. Die Milch kocht über.  
 c. Die gekochte Milch schmeckt nicht.  
 d. Die übergekochte Milch ist eine Sauerei.

[8.28] The verb *kochen* also exhibits a bare anticausative diathesis (8.19a,b), see Section 5.5.5. The preverb *über-* could thus also be interpreted as inducing an anticausative diathesis, when (8.19c) is opposed to (8.19a). However, because (8.19b) is both structurally and semantically closer to (8.19c) I have decided to take this pair as the preverb diathesis. Note that there also exist verbs that are unequivocal examples of a preverb anticausative alternation, as discussed in Section 8.5.

- (8.19) a. Ich koche die Milch.  
 b. Die Milch kocht.  
 c. Die Milch kocht über.

[8.29] The preverb *'mit-* is typically used with verbs that do not allow for an attributive participle, neither without preverb, nor with preverb (but see Section 8.4.4 for a few exceptions with movement verbs).

- (8.20) a. Der Student hat an dem Projekt gearbeitet.  
 b. Der Student hat an dem Projekt mitgearbeitet.  
 c. \* Der gearbeitete Student ist fertig.  
 d. \* Der mitgearbeitete Student ist fertig.

#### [8.30] Attested Verbs

- ver'- : *sinken, sterben, trocknen*
- 'über- : *kochen*
- miss'- : *klingen*
- 'mit- : *arbeiten, brüllen, denken, essen, fühlen, heulen, hören, kämpfen, lachen, leiden, lächeln, reden, schwingen, singen*

#### [8.31] Further Examples

- Das Schiff sinkt.  
 Das Schiff versinkt.  
 Das gesunkene/versunkene Schiff [...].
- Die Blumen trocknen im Keller.  
 Die Blumen vertrocknen im Keller.  
 Die getrockneten/vertrockneten Blumen [...].

### 8.4.2 [ N | N ] Preverb adjectives without diathesis

Adjectives are in many ways similar to intransitive verbs, being basically one-place predicates. There are various adjectives that remain intransitive when combined with a preverb, like *kühl* 'cool' and *abkühlen* 'to cool down' (8.21 a). Similar to the intransitive verbs from the previous section, both adjectival predicates can be used as attributive adjective (8.21 b). Note, however, that it is more common for preverbal adjectives to have a causative diathesis (see Section 8.6.3). [8.32]

- (8.21) a. Das Wasser ist kühl.  
           Das Wasser ist abgekühlt.  
       b. Das kühle Wasser schmeckt.  
           Das abgekühlte Wasser schmeckt.

There is a recurring question whether these verbs are directly derived from an adjective, or via an intermediate 'plain' verb, e.g. *kühlen* (cf. Section 8.6.3). Such intermediate verbs might also be independent developments, i.e. the plain verb *kühlen* and the preverbal variant *abkühlen* are both derived from the adjective *kühl*. One argument in favour of independent developments is that the 'plain' verbs have varying semantics: either stative, like *kranken* 'to be sick' or *wachen* 'to be awake'; or causative, like *kühlen* 'to make cold' or *röten* 'to become red'. Another argument is that not all such intermediate verbs exist, e.g. the verb *magern* does not exist. Likewise *späten* and *frühen* do not exist. [8.33]

#### Attested Verbs

- er'- : *rot, krank, wach*
  - 'ab- : *kühl, mager*
- [8.34]

#### Further Examples

- Der Hund ist wach.  
   Der Hund erwacht.  
   Der wache/erwachte Hund [...].
  - Der Junge ist rot.  
   Der Junge errötet.  
   Der rote/errötete Junge [...].
  - Der Junge ist krank.  
   Der Junge erkrankt.  
   Der kranke/erkrankte Junge [...].
- [8.35]

### 8.4.3 [ NA | NA ] Preverb transitives without diathesis

In contrast to intransitive verbs, it is very common for transitive nominative-accusative verbs to remain transitive when prefixed (8.22 a). The participles of both verbs can be used attributively (8.22 b). The examples presented in this section are in no way intended to be a complete listing, but only serve as an illustration for this phenomenon. This group of preverb alternations without valency change appears to be very large. [8.36]

- (8.22) a. Ich lagere die Kartoffeln im Keller.  
           Ich verlagere die Kartoffeln in den Keller.  
       b. Die gelagerten Kartoffeln [...].  
           Die verlagerten Kartoffeln [...].

#### Attested Verbs

[8.37]

- ver'- : *jagen, lagern*
- be'- : *fürchten, grüßen*
- miss'- : *achten, billigen, blicken, brauchen, deuten, gönnen, handeln, hören, interpretieren, trauen, verstehen*
- 'an- : *sehen*
- 'auf- : *essen, trinken*
- 'durch- : *halten*
- 'mit- : *ansehen, benutzen, bezahlen, bieten, bringen, erleben, feiern, garen, geben, gestalten, kochen, lesen, liefern, nehmen, nutzen, planen, regieren, schicken, schreiben*
- 'unter- : *bringen*

[8.38] **Further Examples**

- Ich halte die Stellung.  
Ich halte den Kampf durch.
- Ich bringe dich nach Hause.  
Ich bringe dich in dem Haus unter.
- Ich sehe dich.  
Ich sehe dich an.
- Ich fürchte das Prüfungsergebnis.  
Ich befürchte ein schlechtes Prüfungsergebnis.
- Ich grüße dich.  
Ich begrüße dich.
- Ich achte ihn.  
Ich missachte ihn.
- Ich billige den Plan.  
Ich missbillige den Plan.

— Patientive alternations —

[8.39] Some intransitives show a peculiar phenomenon when prefixed: they are still intransitive but the subject becomes more patient-like in that the participle can be used attributively (one of the characteristics often discussed under the heading of the 'unaccusative hypothesis', see Section 10.2.6). For example, the verbs *schlafen* 'to sleep' (8.23 a) and *einschlafen* 'to fall asleep' (8.23 b) are both intransitive. However, only *eingeschlafen* can be used attributively (8.23 c,d). These examples are discussed in Section 8.4.4.

- (8.23) a. Der Junge schläft.  
b. Der Junge schläft ein.  
c. \* Der geschlafene Junge schnarcht.  
d. Der eingeschlafene Junge schnarcht.

[8.40] Similarly, there is a small group of transitive nominative-accusative verbs that show the same effect with attributive participles. These verbs, like *merken* vs. *bemerken* 'to become aware of' (8.24 a,b), do not show a valency difference. Yet, there is a difference in that the participle of the prefixed *bemerken* can be used as attributive adjective, while the participle

of the non-prefixed *merken* cannot (8.24 c,d). These examples are discussed in Section 8.4.5.

- (8.24) a. Ich merke den Wind.  
 b. Ich bemerke den Fehler.  
 c. \*Der gemerkte Wind war schlimm.  
 d. Der bemerkte Fehler war schlimm.

#### 8.4.4 [ N | N ] Preverb intransitives with patient-like subject

Many verbs describing natural processes remain intransitive when prefixed, like *blühen* ‘to blossom’ and *verblühen* ‘to wither’ (8.25 a,b). The participle of these verbs can be used attributively when prefixed (8.25 d), but not without prefix (8.25 c). Also note that the auxiliary in the perfekt changes between *sein* and *haben* for these verbs. [8.41]

- (8.25) a. Die Blume hat geblüht.  
 b. Die Blume ist verblüht.  
 c. \*Die geblühte Blume ist immer noch schön.  
 d. Die verblühte Blume ist immer noch schön.

Note that there is a fascinating phenomenon going on here that is in need of more investigation. Many of the ‘ungrammatical’ attributively-used participles are actually attested, but only when they are themselves modified (8.26). My intuition is that in such examples the participle is actually a non-finite embedded relative clause (e.g. *Mauersteine, die grau schimmeln*). However, whether there really is a difference between verbs that allow for a usage as ‘isolated’ attributive participles, like *verblüht* (8.25 d) vs. ‘modified’ attributive participles, like *geblüht* (8.26 a) is an open question in need of more research. [8.42]

- (8.26) a. grau geschimmelte Mauersteine<sup>3</sup>  
 b. eine schlecht geschlafene Nacht<sup>4</sup>  
 c. eine braun gerostete Fußgängerbrücke<sup>5</sup>  
 d. die dabei verloren gegangene regionale Identität<sup>6</sup>

##### Attested Verbs

- ver- : *blühen, bluten, faulen, dampfen, rosten, schimmeln*
- 'ein- : *rosten, schlafen*
- 'ab- : *reisen*
- 'mit- : *fahren, fliegen, gehen, kommen, laufen, segeln*

##### Notes

Adjectival *gefaulte* seems to have been possible up to ±1850 (8.27). Also note that there is a dish called *gefaulte Erdäpfel*, which appears to be a back-translation from Bavarian *dafeide Erdäpfel*, which clearly has a different prefix. [8.44] [8.45]

- (8.27) a. [...] oder andre vielfach verdorbne, gefaulte, verschimmelte Nahrungsmittel.<sup>7</sup>  
 b. Auf eben diese Weise nimmt eine gefaulte Galle [...] einen gefälligeren Geruch an sich.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup>DWDS: Neutsch, Erik: *Spur der Steine*, Halle: Mitteldeutscher Verl. 1964 [1964], S. 387.

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 16.06.1989, Nr. 25.

<sup>5</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 30.08.2007, Nr. 36.

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 09.11.2017 (online).

<sup>7</sup>DWDS: Hahnemann, Samuel: *Organon der rationellen Heilkunde*. Dresden, 1810..

<sup>8</sup>DWDS: Haller, Albrecht von: *Anfangsgründe der Physiologie des menschlichen Körpers*. Bd. 2. Berlin, 1762.

### 8.4.5 [ NA | NA ] Preverb transitives with patient-like object

[8.46] Some transitive verbs like *ärgern* and the preverbal variant *verärgern* ‘to irritate’ are almost identical in meaning (8.28 a,b). However, they show the same differentiation in attributive participle usage as the patientive intransitives in the previous section (8.28 c,d), though without a difference in perfect auxiliary (both use *haben*). There is a connected difference in the possibility of the *Zustandspassiv* with *sein*, cf. Section 10.5.17. Note the somewhat older attested example of attributive *geärgert* in (8.28 e).

- (8.28) a. Die Verzögerung hat den Reisenden geärgert.  
 b. Die Verzögerung hat den Reisenden verärgert.  
 c. \*Der geärgerte Reisende. \*Der Reisende ist geärgert.  
 d. Der verärgerte Reisende. Der Reisende ist verärgert.  
 e. Der geärgerte Schulkamerad schrieb: [...] <sup>9</sup>

#### [8.47] Attested Verbs

- ver'- : *ärgern, brauchen, hassen, heiraten, wundern*
- be'- : *drücken, kennen, merken*
- er'- : *freuen*
- zer'- : *kratzen*
- 'an- : *ekeln*

#### [8.48] Further Examples

- Spinnen ekeln den Mann.  
 Spinnen ekeln den Mann an.  
 Der angeekelte/\*geekelte Mann.
- Der Regen wundert den Mann.  
 Der Regen verwundert den Mann.  
 Der verwunderte/\*gewunderte Mann.
- Das Geschenk freut den Mann.  
 Das Geschenk erfreut den Mann.  
 Der erfreute/\*gefrochte Mann.

### — Empty reflexives —

[8.49] Some verbs need an extra reflexive pronoun when they get a preverb, though the valency of the construction does not change. The reflexive pronoun is thus neither a self-inflicting reflexive construction, nor a marker of the diathesis itself. The reflexive pronouns in these cases seem to be mostly ‘empty’, except for putting a slight emphasis on the agency of the nominative subject (cf. ‘free’ reflexives in Section 7.4).

### 8.4.6 [ N | N ] Preverb reflexive intransitive alternations

[8.50] The verb *überarbeiten* is transparently derived from the verb *arbeiten* ‘to work’, but in two semantically different directions. In one sense *überarbeiten* means ‘to revise’, i.e. ‘to work on something again’, which shows an applicative diathesis (8.29 a,b), see Section 8.8.10. In

<sup>9</sup> DWDS: Büchner, Georg: Sämtliche Werke und handschriftlicher Nachlaß. Frankfurt (Main.), 1879.

another sense *überarbeiten* means ‘to work too hard’ (8.29c,d). In this sense an obligatory, but ‘empty’, accusative reflexive pronoun is present.

- (8.29) a. Ich arbeite am Text.  
 b. Ich überarbeite den Text.  
 c. Ich arbeite zu viel.  
 d. Ich überarbeite mich.

Movement verbs, like *tanzen* ‘to dance’ (8.30) quite productively can take the prefix *ver-* [8.51] to describe a movement made erroneously, without any change in valency (cf. Stiebels 1996: 143-151). The same semantic effect is also attested with some transitive verbs, but then the accusative object is dropped (see Section 8.7.1).

- (8.30) a. Ich laufe.  
 b. Ich verlaufe mich.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.52]

- *ver-* : *fahren, fliegen, laufen, tanzen*
- *über-* : *arbeiten*
- *‘durch-* : *lügen, mogeln*
- *‘ein-* : *arbeiten, singen*

#### Further Examples

[8.53]

- Ich lüge.  
 Ich lüge mich durch.
- Ich arbeite.  
 Ich arbeite mich ein.
- Ich singe.  
 Ich singe mich ein.

### 8.4.7 [ N | N ] Preverb reflexive adjectives alternations

Some adjectives that are turned into verbs through preverbs obligatorily need a reflexive pronoun, like with *sich verspäten* ‘to be late’ derived from *spät* ‘late’ (8.31). [8.54]

- (8.31) a. Die späte Vorstellung.  
 b. Die Vorstellung verspätet sich.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.55]

- *ver-* : *spät, früh*

### 8.4.8 [ NA | NA ] Preverb reflexive transitive alternations

The difference between the verbs *sehen* (8.32a) and *ansehen* (8.32b) is very delicate, maybe best summarised by comparing it to the English verbs *to see* and *to watch*. The preverbal verb *ansehen* ‘to watch’ implies slightly more agency of the nominative subject. In German [8.56]



this difference is additionally marked by a dative reflexive pronouns. However, note that this reflexive might be optional (cf. Section 7.4.4).

- (8.32) a. Ich sehe das Haus.  
b. Ich sehe mir das Haus an.

[8.57] Note that there is a second, highly similar, construction with *ansehen* and a non-reflexive dative argument (8.33 a). This dative has a completely different semantics, meaning something like ‘to notice’. This diathesis is further discussed under the heading of possessor raising in Section 8.8.18. Finally, *ansehen* can also simply mean ‘to look at’ (8.33 b), in which sense there is no diathesis at all, as discussed in Section 8.4.3.

- (8.33) a. Ich sehe ihm die Müdigkeit an.  
b. Ich sehe dich an.

#### [8.58] Attested Verbs

- *er-* : *kaufen*
- *'an-* : *hören, sehen, trainieren, üben*

#### [8.59] Further Examples

- Ich habe den Tango trainiert.  
Ich habe mir den Tango antrainiert.
- Ich kaufe dein Vertrauen.  
Ich erkaufe mir dein Vertrauen.

#### [8.60] Notes

[8.61] The verb *anüben* appears to be old-fashioned (8.34 a), though more recent examples can be found (8.34 b). It has an entry in the DWB, explaining “seit anfang des 19. jhs. gebräuchlich i.s.v. ‘sich etwas durch ständiges üben (mit mühe) aneignen, antrainieren.’”<sup>10</sup>

- (8.34) a. Ein derartiges Schauen müssten wir uns nun anüben.<sup>11</sup>  
b. Wer ständig gegen die wachsende Konkurrenz anüben muss [...].<sup>12</sup>

## 8.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

[8.62] All examples in the following subsections show subject demotion which results in intransitive verbs. Keeping with the observation that preverb alternations tend to produce nominative/accusative constructions (see Section 8.2.2), preverb diatheses with subject demotion are exceedingly rare. Almost all the attested examples use verb prefixes. Examples with verb particles are almost non-existing for subject demotion.

<sup>10</sup> Attested online at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb2/anüben>, accessed 5 August 2022.

<sup>11</sup> DWDS: Chamberlain, Houston Stewart: Die Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts. Bd. 1. München 1899.

<sup>12</sup> DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 11.08.1999.

— [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] —

### 8.5.1 [ NA | -N ] Preverb anticausative

Although there is a transparent relation between the transitive *löschen* ‘to extinguish’ (8.35 a) and the intransitive *erlöschen* ‘to go out’ (8.35 b), they show different inflectional patterns, illustrated below with different participles. Historically, the transitive (8.35 a) is a causative, but synchronically the prefixed *erlöschen* is probably better analysed as an anticausative. [8.63]

- (8.35) a. Sie hat das Feuer gelöscht.  
b. Das Feuer ist erloschen.

#### Attested Verbs

- er'- : *löschen*
- [8.64]

### 8.5.2 [ NA | -N ] Preverb reflexive anticausative

Some further anticausatives need an additional reflexive pronoun, like with *fangen* ‘to catch’ (8.36 a) and *verfangen* ‘to entangle oneself’ (8.36 b). Note that the intransitive *verfangen* seems to additionally require a locational prepositional phrase (8.36 c). [8.65]

- (8.36) a. Ich fange den Vogel mit einem Netz.  
b. Der Vogel verfängt sich im Netz.  
c. ? Der Vogel verfängt sich.

#### Attested Verbs

- er'- : *strecken*
  - ver'- : *fangen*
- [8.66]

#### Further Examples

- Der Schuster streckt die Stiefel.  
Der Wald erstreckt sich bis zum Gebirge.
- [8.67]

— [ PBJ > SBJ > Ø ] —

### 8.5.3 [ NL | -N ] Preverb location anticausative

Lipka (1972: 93-94) calls this phenomenon *Subjektvertauschung*, which he claims is ‘quite frequent in German.’ However, I do not know of any other examples of this diathesis except for the example given by Lipka, namely the diathesis between *laufen+aus* and *auslaufen*, both meaning approximately ‘to empty’ (8.37 a,b). It might be that Lipka intended to use this term for anticausatives in general (which indeed are quite common in German), but then his example using a preverb was ill-chosen. Hundsnurscher (1968: 130ff.) discusses many examples that might be semantically similar, but do not show diathesis (e.g. *tröpfeln/auströpfeln*). For historical context, see Carlberg (1948) for more about the history of the terminology and the relation to metonymy. For Lipka’s counterpart *Objektvertauschung*, see Section 8.7.12 [8.68]

- (8.37) a. Das Wasser ist aus der Flasche gelaufen.  
b. Die Flasche ist ausgelaufen.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.69]

- 'aus- : *laufen*

#### 8.5.4 [ NP | -N ] Preverb preposition anticausative+reflexive loss

[8.70] When combined with the prefix *ver-*, the verb *kümmern* 'to look after' (8.38 a) shows a clear anticausative diathesis in that the agent of the care is removed, leading to *verkümmern* 'to atrophy' (8.38 c). However, there are two further idiosyncratic characteristics of this diathesis, namely that (i) an obligatory reflexive pronoun is removed and (ii) the cared-for object (*Pflanze* 'plant' in the example below) starts out being in a governed prepositional phrase with *um* (8.38 a,b).

- (8.38) a. Ich kümmere mich nicht um die Pflanze.  
 b. Ich kümmere mich nicht darum, ob die Pflanze verkümmert.  
 c. Die Pflanze verkümmert.

#### [8.71] Attested Verbs

- *ver-* : *kümmern*

### 8.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

[8.72] Promotion to subject is somewhat more widespread compared to subject demotion discussed previously. Like with demotion, promotion to subject occurs preferably with verb prefixes and almost never with verb particles.

#### – [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] – *Präverb Kausativ*

##### 8.6.1 [ -N | NA ] Preverb causative

[8.73] By adding a preverb, some intransitive verbs like *enden* 'to end' obtain an extra causer argument (8.39).

- (8.39) a. Der Wettkampf endet.  
 b. Ich beende den Wettkampf.

[8.74] With some of the verbs, the causer might occur as a prepositional phrase with *durch* in the intransitive (8.40), similar to inverted passives, see Section 8.6.11. However, this *durch* phrase could also be interpreted as a regular causal phrase, as discussed in Section 6.2.6.

- (8.40) a. Ich lebe durch den Eingriff des Arztes.  
 b. Der Eingriff des Arztes belebt mich.

#### [8.75] Attested Verbs

- *be-* : *atmen, leben, enden*
- *ver-* : *ankern, heiraten, brennen*
- *zer-* : *knirschen*
- *'an-* : *brutzeln, treiben*

#### [8.76] Further Examples

- Paul und Marie heiraten.  
Ich verheirate Paul und Marie.
- Das Holz brennt.  
Ich verbrenne das Holz.
- Die Bremsen knirschen.  
Ich zerknirsche die Steine.
- Der Braten brutzelt im Ofen.  
Ich habe den Braten angebrutzelt.
- Die Wrackteile treiben im Wasser.  
Der Sturm treibt die Wrackteile an.
- Das Kind atmet.  
Ich beatme das Kind.

### 8.6.2 [ -N | NA ] Preverb causative with reflexive loss

An apparently idiosyncratic example is the verb *schämen* ‘to be ashamed’ that takes an obligatory reflexive pronoun (8.41 a). With the preverb *be-*, the verb *beschämen* ‘to shame’ is clearly a causative, but without a reflexive pronoun (8.41 b). [8.77]

- (8.41) a. Ich schäme mich.  
b. Sie beschämt mich.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.78]

- *be-* : *schämen*

### 8.6.3 [ -N | NA ] Preverb adjectival causative

Many adjectives can be turned into verbs by adding a prefix. The most widespread semantic effect is to turn a state, like *frei sein* ‘to be free’ (8.42 a) into a causative process *befreien* ‘to free somebody’ (8.42 b). [8.79]

- (8.42) a. Du bist frei.  
b. Ich befreie dich.

Note that in a few examples an intermediate verb exists. For example, the verb *begrünen* ‘to plant greenery’ (8.43 b) is transparently related to the adjective *grün* ‘green’ (8.43 a). Now, the intermediate verb *grünen* ‘to become green (of plants)’ also exists (8.43 c). However, the verbs in this section consists of examples in which such an intermediate non-preverbal verb is not, or only very rarely, attested. And even if the intermediate verb exists (e.g. *breiten*, *dunkeln*, *härten*, *kürzen*, *mehren*, *wärmen*), then the semantic relation between the adjective and the preverbal verb is still completely transparent, begging the question whether the intermediate verb is really an intermediate step in the derivation or a separate development. [8.80]

- (8.43) a. Der Balkon ist grün.  
b. Ich begrüne den Balkon.  
c. Die Rasenstücke [...] waren angewachsen und grünten lustig.<sup>13</sup>

[8.81]

<sup>13</sup>From Viebig, Clara: *Das tägliche Brot*. (Berlin 1952). Attested on <https://www.dwds.de/wb/grünen>, accessed 5 August 2022.

With a few adjectives, the causer can be expressed with a regular agentive *durch* or *von* prepositional phrase in the intransitive alternant. This sounds most natural with inanimate causers (8.44). See also Section 8.6.11 on inverted passives.

- (8.44) a. Er ist matt vom Sport.  
b. Der Sport ermattet ihn.

[8.82] With some verbs the causative also needs an umlaut (cf. Plank & Lahiri 2015), e.g. with *kurz* ‘short’ and *verkürzen* ‘to shorten’ (8.45 a,b). This might be an argument that the preverbal *verkürzen* is derived via the intermediate verb *kürzen*. Conversely, sometimes an umlaut is lost in the causative, e.g. with *böse* ‘angry’ and *erbosen* ‘to make angry’ (8.45 c,d). For more examples of umlaut with verb-to-adjective derivation, see Section 5.6.4.

- (8.45) a. Die Frist ist kurz.  
b. Ich verkürze die Frist.  
c. Er ist böse.  
d. Die Bemerkung erbost ihn.

[8.83] Not all verbs derived from adjectives with a preverb have a different argument structure, e.g. *erwachen* ‘to wake up’ as derived from *wach* ‘be awake’ (8.46). There is a difference in meaning of the predicate without preverb (i.e. stative) ‘to be awake’ (8.46 a) and with preverb (i.e. be caused) ‘to become awake’ (8.46 b), but there is no added causer. These examples are further discussed in Section 8.4.2.

- (8.46) a. Die Kinder sind wach.  
b. Die Kinder erwachen.

[8.84] There are also a few examples of preverbal adjectives in which an accusative object is added, like with *lustig* ‘funny’ and *belustigen* ‘to amuse’ (8.47). These examples are further discussed in Section 8.8.2.

- (8.47) a. Der Clown ist lustig.  
b. Der Clown belustigt mich.

#### [8.85] Attested Verbs

- be'- : *ängstig, fähig, frei, günstig, grün, ruhig, schuldig, schwer, unruhig*
- er'- : *bitter, böse, hart, hell, hoch, kalt, leichter, matt, müde, munter, mutig, neu, niedrig, rege, schlaff, warm, weich*
- ver'- : *besser, breit, breiter, deutlich, dunkel, edel, einfach, eng, größer, harmlos, herrlich, länger, niedlich, klein, kurz, kürzer, langsam, mehr, schön, schöner, start*
- zer'- : *mürbe*

#### [8.86] Further Examples

- Die Frist ist länger als sonst.  
Ich verlängere die Frist.
- Die Stadt ist schön.  
Parks verschönen die Stadt.
- Mein Haus ist schöner.  
Ich verschönere mein Haus.

- Er ist niedriger Herkunft.  
Ich erniedrige ihn.
- Der Tee ist bitter.  
Seine Misserfolge erbitterten ihn.
- Er ist müde vor Sorgen.  
Die Sorgen zermürben ihn.
- Die Straße ist jetzt breiter.  
Die Arbeiterinnen verbreitern die Straße.

### Notes

[8.87]

Comparatives like *besser* ‘better’ (8.48) are considered as adjectives here and can likewise be the basis for a derived verb *verbessern* ‘to improve’ (8.48). Note that there is also a potentially intermediate verb *bessern* ‘to improve’ (8.48 c). Similar adjectival roots are *breiter*, *größer*, *länger*, *kürzer* and *schöner*. [8.88]

- (8.48) a. Die Lebensbedingungen sind heutzutage besser.  
b. Ich verbessere die Lebensbedingungen.  
c. Der Bericht bessert meine Lauen.

The verb *erbittern* ‘to make bitter’ is probably derived from a verb *bittern* ‘to become bitter’, which does not exist anymore in contemporary German (Pfeiffer 1993).<sup>14</sup> Both are of course related to the adjective *bitter* ‘bitter’. [8.89]

### 8.6.4 [ -N | NA ] Preverb nominal causative

Preverbs can also be added to nominal roots, deriving a causative verb in the process. For example, the verb *vergiften* ‘to poison’ is derived from *Gift* ‘the poison’ (8.49 a). The meaning of such verbs is that the accusative object is caused to have the nominal property (i.e. ‘to cause to have poison’). In a few examples the derivation also includes an umlaut (like with *ergründen* ‘to ascertain’ from *Grund* ‘cause’). Nominal roots are most frequently attested with verb prefixes, though incidental verb particles are also attested, like *ein-* in *einbürgern* ‘to naturalise’ (8.49 b). [8.90]

- (8.49) a. Ich vergifte die Suppe.  
(= Ich verursache, dass die Suppe giftig ist.)  
b. Der Beamte bürgert den Flüchtling ein.  
(= Der Beamte verursacht, dass der Flüchtling zum Bürger wird.)

The prefix *ent-* includes an inherent negation, leading to verbs that express that the object does not have the nominal property, like *entwalden* ‘to deforest’, i.e. ‘to cause not to have a forest’ (8.50 b). The prefix *er-* seems to have a slightly different semantic structure in that there is an experiencer involved, either as the nominative subject, like in *erbeuten* ‘to loot’ [8.91]

<sup>14</sup>Entry *bitter* at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/etymwb/bitter>, accessed 6 August 2022.

(8.50 b), or as the accusative object, like in *erdolchen* ‘to stab with a dagger’ (8.50 b).

- (8.50) a. Die Arbeiter entwaldeten den Hügel.  
(= Die Arbeiter verursachten, dass der Hügel keinen Wald mehr hat.)
- b. Die Piraten erbeuteten den Schatz.  
(= Die Piraten verursachten, dass sie den Schatz haben.)
- c. Die Piraten erdolchen den Kapitän.  
(= Die Piraten verursachen, dass der Kapitän einen Dolch in sich hat.)

[8.92] Some of these noun-based verbs listed below could also be interpreted as being derived from a verbal stem (which in turn is derived from a nominal stem). For example, verbs like *salzen*, *wassern*, *pfeffern*, *gaunern*, *kalken* and *thronen* are listed in the DWDS dictionary.<sup>15</sup> So, a verb like *entsalzen* is maybe not derived from the noun stem *Salz* directly (as claimed here), but through an intermediate verb *salzen*. Whatever diachronic pathway is correct, the semantic relation between the noun *Salz* and the verb *entsalzen* is extremely transparent. For that reason I have still listed these examples here.

[8.93] In contrast, some intermediate verb stems exist, but they clearly do not have a direct relation to the preverbal verbs listed here. For example, *gründen* ‘to establish’ is clearly derived from *Grund* ‘ground’. However, *begründen* ‘to justify’ does not seem to be derived from *gründen*, but is directly derived from *Grund* in a separate development. Similarly, *giften* can be used with the meaning ‘to be annoyed’ and is clearly derived from *Gift* ‘poison’. However, *vergiften* ‘to poison’ is not derived from this verb *giften* but directly from the noun *Gift*.

#### [8.94] Attested Verbs

- be'- : *begrenzen* (*Grenze*), *begründen* (*Grund*), *behaupten* (*Haupt*)
- ver'- : *verchromen* (*Chrome*), *vergiften* (*Gift*), *vergolden* (*Gold*), *verkohlen* (*Kohle*), *vermüllen* (*Müll*), *verpfeffern* (*Pfeffer*), *versalzen* (*Salz*)
- er'- : *erbeuten* (*Beute*), *erdolchen* (*Dolch*), *ergaunern* (*Gauner*), *ergründen* (*Grund*)
- ent'- : *entkalken* (*Kalk*), *enthronen* (*Thron*), *entrinden* (*Rinde*), *entsalzen* (*Salz*), *entschlüsseln* (*Schlüssel*), *entwalden* (*Wald*), *entwassern* (*Wasser*), *entziffern* (*Ziffer*)
- 'ein- : *einbürgern* (*Bürger*), *eingemeinden* (*Gemeinde*)
- 'ab- : *abgrenzen* (*Grenze*)
- 'auf- : *aufischen* (*Tisch*)

#### [8.95] Notes

[8.96] The relation between *Haupt* ‘head’ and *behaupten* ‘to claim’ is diachronically clear (viz. *behaupten* means ‘to establish oneself as the principal about something’), but synchronically this relation is not transparent anymore. Likewise *entziffern* ‘to decipher’ is diachronically related to *Ziffer* ‘number’ but in a rather roundabout way. However, intuitively most German speakers do not seem to have a problem to make this semantic jump.

### 8.6.5 [ -N | NA ] Preverb nominal reciprocal causative

[8.97] A special subclass of nouns produce a inherently reciprocal verb when combined with a preverb. It appears that all these verbs are derived from a plural noun. For example, the plural *Brüder* ‘brother’ is the basis of the verb *verbrüdern* ‘to fraternise’, i.e. ‘to become

<sup>15</sup>Available online at <https://www.dwds.de>.

brothers' (8.51). This verb is inherently reciprocal, cf. RECIPROCA TANTUM as discussed in Section 7.3.3.

- (8.51) Wir verbrüdern uns (miteinander).  
(= Wir machen uns zu Brüdern.)

#### Attested Verbs

[8.98]

- 'an- : *anfreunden* (*Freunde*)
- ver'- : *verbrüdern* (*Brüder*), *verbünden* (*Bünde*), *verfeinden* (*Feinde*)

### 8.6.6 [ –NP | NAP ] Preverb causative+preposition

Some causative alternations have a governed preposition, like with *haften* 'to be liable' (8.52 a). The preposition becomes optional in the causative counterpart *verhaften* 'to arrest' (8.52 b). Note that there is quite some semantic leeway in this derivation. [8.99]

- (8.52) a. Eltern haften für ihre Kinder.  
b. Die Polizisten verhaften die Eltern (für ihre Taten).

#### Attested Verbs

[8.100]

- ver'- : *haften*
- 'aus- : *fahren*

#### Further Examples

[8.101]

- Die Landeklappen fahren aus dem Flügel.  
Der Pilot fährt die Landeklappen (aus dem Flügel) aus.
- Der Kunde fährt in der Kutsche.  
Ich fahre den Kunden (in der Kutsche) aus.

### 8.6.7 [ –ND | NAD ] Preverb causative+dative

The verb *gleichen* 'to be alike' (8.53 a) takes a dative argument, which is retained in the causative diathesis *angleichen* 'to adapt' (8.53 b). [8.102]

- (8.53) a. Seine Aussprache gleicht meinem Dialekt.  
b. Er gleicht seine Aussprache meinem Dialekt an.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.103]

- 'an- : *gleichen*
- ver'- : *passen*

#### Further Examples

[8.104]

- Die Brille passt mir.  
Der Arzt hat mir eine Brille verpasst.



### 8.6.8 [ -ND | NAP ] Preverb causative+dative antipassive

[8.105] In the special case of the causative diathesis between *gleichen* ‘to resemble’ (8.54 a) and the prefixed form *vergleichen* ‘to compare’ (8.54 b), the original dative argument is turned into a governed preposition (8.54 c).

- (8.54) a. Ich gleiche einem Affen.  
 b. Er vergleicht mich mit einem Affen.  
 c. Er vergleicht es damit, dass Affen Bananen essen.

#### [8.106] Attested Verbs

- ver'- : *gleichen*

### 8.6.9 [ -NA | NDA ] Preverb dative causative+accusative

[8.107] Different from most causatives, the original nominative of *mieten* ‘to rent’ (8.55 a) turns into a dative in the prefixed form *vermieten* ‘to lend’ (8.55 b). The more typical diathesis (as illustrated previously) is a causative in which the original nominative turns into an accusative. However, with verbs like *vermieten* there is already an accusative present before the diathesis, which is retained. In general, there seems to be a strong generalisation (with only few exceptions) that verbs in German do not govern multiple accusatives (cf. Section 5.3.8).

- (8.55) a. Ich miete die Wohnung (von ihm).  
 b. Er vermietet mir die Wohnung.

#### [8.108] Attested Verbs

- ver'- : *erben, füttern, kaufen, leihen, mieten, pachten, pfänden*
- be'- : *kennen*

#### [8.109] Further Examples

- Die Pferde füttern das Tiermehl.  
 Er verfüttert den Pferden das Tiermehl.
- Ich kaufe das Haus.  
 Er verkauft mir das Haus.
- Die Polizei pfändet mein Vermögen.  
 Ich verpfände dir mein Vermögen.
- Du kennst meine Absicht.  
 Ich bekenne dir meine Absicht.

— [ Ø > SBJ > PBJ ] —

### 8.6.10 [ -NA | NPA ] Preverb reversed fabricative+accusative

[8.110]

Different from the previously discussed causatives, the original nominative of *freuen* ‘to enjoy’ (8.56 a) turns into a governed preposition with the prefixed *erfreuen* ‘to delight somebody’ (8.56 b,c). The more typical diathesis is a causative in which the original nominative turns into an accusative.

- (8.56) a. Das Geschenk freut mich.  
 b. Er erfreut mich mit einem Geschenk.  
 c. Er erfreut mich damit, dass er vorbei kommt.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.111]

- er'- : *freuen*

### — [ PBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

The following diatheses can be seen as passives ‘in reverse’. On first notice everything just looks like a passive: (i) the accusative argument of the (prefixed) transitive verb turns into a nominative of the (non-prefixed) intransitive verb and (ii) the causer/agent of the (prefixed) transitive verb is expressed as a (governed) prepositional phrase with the (non-prefixed) intransitive verb. However, the direction of an alternation is by definition from the unmarked (non-prefixed) to the marked (prefixed) verb. So, these diatheses are ‘reversed’ passives. Although it would make sense to call such diatheses ‘antipassives’, this term is already taken by another kind of diatheses. Because the prepositional phrases are governed prepositions, these diatheses are examples of a REVERSED CONVERSIVE diathesis, as defined in Section 2.7.3.2.

[8.112]

#### 8.6.11 [ PN | NA ] Preverb reversed conversive

The causer of *erstaunen* ‘to amaze’ is expressed as a governed preposition *über* with the non-prefixed verb *staunen* ‘to be amazed’.

[8.113]

- (8.57) a. Ich staune über deine Arbeit.  
 b. Ich staune darüber, dass du schon fertig bist.  
 c. Deine Arbeit erstaunt mich.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.114]

- er'- : *staunen, warten*

#### Further Examples

[8.115]

- Ich warte auf den Test.  
 Der Test erwartet mich.

#### 8.6.12 [ PN | NA ] Preverb reversed conversive+reflexive loss

With the addition of the prefix, the verbs in this section lose their reflexive pronoun, like with *sich schämen* ‘to be ashamed’ (8.58 a) to *beschämen* ‘to shame’ (8.58 c). Further note

[8.116]

that the causer of the transitive is expressed as a governed preposition (8.58 b). So, there is both a ‘reversed’ conversive and a ‘reversed’ reflexive marking in these diatheses.

- (8.58) a. Ich schäme mich für meine Taten.  
 b. Ich schäme mich dafür, dass ich das gemacht habe.  
 c. Meine Taten beschämen mich

[8.117] The second examples of this diathesis with *wundern* ‘to wonder’ (8.59) is less clear, because this verb has also a reflexive passive alternation, see Section 7.5.7. Comparing (8.59 a,c) shows an alternation of an inverted conversive with reflexive loss. But comparing (8.59 b,c) shows an alternation without diathesis.

- (8.59) a. Ich wundere mich über dein Verhalten.  
 b. Dein Verhalten wundert mich.  
 c. Dein Verhalten verwundert mich.

[8.118] **Attested Verbs**

- be’- : *schämen*
- ver’- : *wundern*

— [ ADJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

#### 8.6.13 [ pNA | NA- ] Preverb reversed passive+accusative loss

[8.119] The relation between *erben* ‘inherit’ and *enterben* ‘disinherit’ is peculiar, because the accusative argument *Schreibtisch* of the verb *erben* in (8.60 a) cannot be expressed in any way with the prefixed verb *enterben* (8.60 b).

- (8.60) a. Ich erbe den Schreibtisch von meinem Vater.  
 b. Mein Vater enterbt mich.

[8.120] **Attested Verbs**

- ent’- : *erben*

## 8.7 Diatheses with object demotion

— [ OBJ > Ø ] —

### 8.7.1 [ NA | N- ] Preverb accusative drop+reflexive (*Präverb Endoreflexiv*)

[8.121] Some preverbs induce the loss of an accusative with a coincidental obligatory reflexive pronoun, like the diathesis between *wählen* ‘to choose’ and *sich verwählen* ‘to misdial’ (8.61). The examples of this diathesis mostly appear to relate to using your body in a certain way, which is reminiscent of the endoreflexive diathesis (see Section 7.7.1). Because of the similarities between the two, I propose to call this diathesis the *Präverb Endoreflexiv*.

- (8.61) a. Er wählt die falsche Nummer.  
 b. Er verwählt sich.

[8.122]

The examples with the prefix *ver-* quite productively result in verbs that describe an activity that is performed erroneously (cf. Stiebels 1996: 143-151). The same semantic effect with *ver-* (but with different diatheses) is also attested with intransitive movement verbs, see Section 8.4.6 and with measurement verbs, see Section 8.7.4.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.123]

- *be'-* : *trinken, saufen*
- *ver'-* : *greifen, hören, lesen, plappern, sprechen, schlucken, schreiben, spielen (Instrument), tippen, wählen*
- *über'-* : *essen, heben, strecken*

#### Further Examples

[8.124]

- Ich schlucke die Tablette.  
Ich habe mich verschluckt.
- Er schreibt einen Brief.  
Er verschreibt sich.
- Ich spreche drei Sätze.  
Ich verspreche mich.
- Ich greife den Zucker.  
Ich habe mich vergriffen.
- Ich hebe die schwere Kiste.  
Ich überhebe mich.
- Ich trinke Bier.  
Ich betrinke mich (mit Bier).
- Ich esse einen Kuchen.  
Ich überesse mich.
- Ich spiele die Sonate (auf der Geige).  
Ich habe mich verspielt.

### 8.7.2 [ NA | N- ] Preverb accusative drop

These verbs are counterexamples to the predominant pattern that preverbs induce an accusative argument (see Section 8.2.2). In contrast, in the diathesis from *kaufen* 'to buy' (8.62 a) to *einkaufen* 'to shop' (8.62 b) an accusative argument is completely dropped. Comparing this diathesis to the other diatheses in this section, it would be expected for a reflexive pronoun to be necessary here. However, that is not the case.

- (8.62) a. Ich habe gestern ein Buch gekauft.  
b. Ich habe gestern eingekauft.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.126]

- *er'-* : *trinken*
- *'ein-* : *kaufen, greifen*

#### Notes

[8.127]

[8.128]

Various examples of this diathesis show a strong semantic change, so it is debatable whether these should still be considered diatheses or simply different lexemes. The problematic examples are (i) *greifen* ‘to grasp’ (8.63 a) vs. *eingreifen* ‘to intervene’ (8.63 b) and (ii) *trinken* ‘to drink’ (8.63 c) vs. *ertrinken* ‘to drown’ (8.63 d).

- (8.63) a. Der Polizist hat den Stock gegriffen.  
 b. Der Polizist hat eingegriffen.  
 c. Ich trinke das Wasser.  
 d. Ich ertrinke.

### 8.7.3 [ ND | N- ] Preverb dative drop+reflexive

[8.129] There is quite some uncertainty among German speakers as to the case of the reflexive pronoun of *behelfen* ‘to manage’ (8.64). Based on a preliminary corpus search, the *Grammatisches Informationssystem* (Strecker 2017) concludes that accusative *mich* is clearly favoured, though in Google search results the dative *mir* seems to be preferred. This might suggest that there is an ongoing language change from reflexive accusative to dative with *behelfen*. Note that it is highly unusual for a dative reflexive to occur without an accusative argument being present as well (see paragraph 7.7 on page 186).

- (8.64) a. Ich helfe dir.  
 b. Ich behelfe mich (mir).

#### [8.130] Attested Verbs

- be- : *helfen*

### — [ OBJ > ADJ ] —

### 8.7.4 [ NA | Np ] Preverb antipassive+reflexive

[8.131] The verb *kalkulieren* ‘to calculate’ (8.65 a) allows for an antipassive diathesis in which an accusative argument is turned into an (optional) prepositional phrase by adding a prefix *verkalkulieren* ‘to miscalculate’. Additionally, an obligatory accusative reflexive pronoun is part of this diathesis, probably because a preverb diathesis needs an accusative constituent.

- (8.65) a. Ich kalkuliere die Miete.  
 b. Ich verkalkuliere mich bei der Miete.

[8.132] There are various further verbs of measurement in this class, like *schätzen* ‘to estimate’ and *rechnen* ‘to calculate’, but this semantic characteristic is not exhaustive. The prefix *ver-* indicates that the action is performed erroneously, which is also attested in various other diathesis (e.g. Section 8.7.1.)

#### [8.133] Attested Verbs

- ver- : *kalkulieren, messen, rechnen, schätzen, spekulieren, zählen, tun*
- be- : *fassen*

#### [8.134] Further Examples

- Ich fasse einen Entschluss.  
 Ich befasse mich mit dem Entschluss.
- Er hat seine Abrechnungen getan.  
 Er hat sich bei seinen Abrechnungen nie vertan.

### 8.7.5 [ NAA | NAp ] Preverb antipassive+accusative

The verb *lehren* ‘to teach’ (8.66 a) shows a slight variant of the previous antipassive. By adding the preverb, *belehren* ‘to instruct’ turns the inanimate accusative (*Regeln* ‘rules’) into a prepositional phrase (8.66 b) while retaining the other animate accusative (*dich* ‘you’). Because there is an accusative constituent in the sentence, this preverb diathesis does not necessitate a reflexive pronoun. [8.135]

- (8.66) a. Ich lehre dich die Regeln.  
b. Ich belehre dich über die Regeln.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.136]

- be'- : *lehren*

### 8.7.6 [ ND | Np ] Preverb dative antipassive+reflexive

The diathesis between *danken* and *bedanken*, both meaning ‘to thank’ (8.67), is a dative antipassive. The dative is turned into a prepositional phrase. Additionally, an obligatory accusative reflexiv pronoun is introduced. [8.137]

- (8.67) a. Ich danke dir.  
b. Ich bedanke mich bei dir.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.138]

- be'- : *danken*

### 8.7.7 [ NAD | NAp ] Preverb dative antipassive+accusative (*Präverb Dativ Antipassiv*)

Adding a preverb to various ditransitive verbs with dative and accusative arguments, like *schenken* ‘to gift’ (8.68 a), frequently results in the omission of the dative, like *verschenken* ‘to give away’ (8.68 b). The dative can be retained as a prepositional phrase, but is typically omitted. This diathesis appears to be widespread with ditransitive verbs. Because there is an accusative constituent in the sentence, this preverb diathesis does not necessitate a reflexive pronoun. [8.139]

- (8.68) a. Ich schenke dem Kindergarten meine Bücher.  
b. Ich verschenke meine Bücher (an den Kindergarten).

#### Attested Verbs

[8.140]

- er'- : *bringen*
- ver'- : *geben, leihen, senden, schenken, schicken*
- unter'- : *schreiben*
- 'ab- : *geben, senden, schicken*
- 'durch- : *reichen*

#### Further Examples

[8.141]

- Er hat dem Lehrer die Arbeit gebracht.  
Er hat die Leistung erbracht (für den Lehrer).

- Ich schenke dir ein Buch.  
Ich verschenke das Buch an dich.
- Ich schreibe dir einen Brief.  
Ich unterschreibe einen Brief (an dich).
- Ich gebe dem Handwerker den Auftrag.  
Ich vergebe den Auftrag an den Handwerker.
- Ich schicke dir den Brief.  
Ich habe den Brief abgeschickt.
- Ich reiche dir das Essen.  
Ich habe das Essen durchgereicht.

— [ OBJ > OBJ > ADJ ] —

### 8.7.8 [ NDA | NAp ] Preverb antipassive+dative-to-accusative

[8.142] Like the previously discussed diathesis (see Section 8.7.7), this diathesis takes a ditransitive verb with an accusative and a dative argument, like *schenken* ‘to gift’ (8.69 a). Then, by adding the preverb *be’-*, the accusative argument (*Buch* ‘book’) is turned into an optional prepositional phrase (i.e. accusative antipassive) with *beschenken* ‘to give a present’ (8.69 b). At the same time, the dative argument is turned into an accusative (*dir* becomes *dich*).

[8.143] Compare this to the diathesis with *ver-* as discussed in the previous section: *verschenken* ‘to give away’ takes the dative *von* *schenken* and turns it into a prepositional phrase (i.e. dative antipassive). The accusative is unaffected (8.69 c).

- (8.69) a. Ich schenke dir ein Buch.  
b. Ich beschenke dich mit einem Buch.  
c. Ich verschenke das Buch an dich.

#### [8.144] Attested Verbs

- *be’-* : *liefern, lohnen, schenken, singen*

#### [8.145] Further Examples

- Ich lohne dir deine Treue.  
Ich belohne dich für deine Treue.
- Ich liefere dem Bäcker das Mehl.  
Ich beliefere den Bäcker mit dem Mehl.
- Ich singe dir ein Lied.  
Ich besinge dich in einem Lied.

— [ PBJ > Ø ] — *Präverb Delokativ*

### 8.7.9 [ NL | N– ] Preverb intransitive delocative

[8.146] The non-preverbal *steigen* ‘to mount’ needs a location describing the endpoint (result) of the action (8.70 a). This location cannot be left out (8.70 b) and, crucially for this diathesis,

the participle cannot be used attributively without the location (8.70 c,d).

- (8.70) a. Der Mann steigt aus dem Auto.  
 b. \*Der Mann steigt.  
 c. Der aus dem Auto gestiegene Mann rutscht aus.  
 d. \*Der gestiegene Mann rutscht aus.

In contrast, with the preverbal *aussteigen* both previously ungrammatical options are possible (8.71). In effect that means that by adding the preverb, the verb loses the obligation to have a locational phrase. Such a DELOCATIVE diathesis is the reverse of a LOCATIVE diathesis in which a locational phrase becomes obligatory, see e.g. Section 6.8.2. [8.147]

- (8.71) a. Der Mann steigt aus dem Auto aus.  
 b. Der Mann steigt aus.  
 c. Der aus dem Auto ausgestiegene Mann rutscht aus.  
 d. Der ausgestiegene Mann rutscht aus.

Note that there is another usage of the verb *steigen* in the meaning 'to rise' that behaves differently (see Section 6.7.3). [8.148]

#### Attested Verbs

[8.149]

- ver'- : *reisen, rutschen*
- zer'- : *rinnen*
- 'durch- : *laufen, sickern*
- 'aus- : *brechen (herauskommen), gehen, steigen, ziehen*
- 'um- : *ziehen*
- 'unter- : *gehen*
- 'an- : *kommen*
- 'auf- : *stehen*

#### Further Examples

[8.150]

- Das Kind steht im Zimmer.  
 Das Kind steht auf.  
 Das aufgestandene/\*gestandene Kind [...].
- Der Zug kommt zum Bahnhof.  
 Der Zug kommt an.  
 Der angekommene/\*gekommene Zug [...].
- Die Brille rutscht von meiner Nase.  
 Die Brille verrutscht auf meiner Nase.  
 Die verrutschte/\*gerutschte Brille [...].
- Der Junge reist nach Japan.  
 Der Junge verreist.  
 Der verreiste/?gereiste Junge [...].
- Das Blut ist durch den Verband gesickert.  
 Das Blut ist durchgesickert.
- Ich bin durch den Wald gelaufen.  
 Der Kaffee ist durchgelaufen.
- Die Quelle bricht aus dem Gestein.  
 Der Gefangene ist ausgebrochen.



- Ich ziehe nach München.  
Ich ziehe aus.
- Ich gehe zur Disko.  
Ich gehe aus.
- Das Schiff geht nach Italien.  
Das Schiff geht unter.

### 8.7.10 [ NL | N- ] Preverb reflexive intransitive delocative

[8.151] This diathesis is similar to the previous diathesis (see Section 8.7.9) with the additional characteristics that the prefixed verbs like *beeilen* 'to hurry' also need a reflexive pronoun (8.72). Note that, contrary to (8.72 b), the verb *eilen* 'to hurry' can be used without a location phrase, but only in the meaning 'to be urgent' (cf. Section 6.7.3).

- (8.72) a. Ich eile nach Hause.  
b. \*Ich eile.  
c. Ich beeile mich.

#### [8.152] Attested Verbs

- ver'- : *fahren, irren, laufen, spekulieren*
- er'- : *hängen*
- be'- : *eilen*

#### [8.153] Further Examples

- Ich fahre nach Dresden.  
Ich verfahre mich (auf dem Weg nach Dresden).
- Ich irre durch den Garten.  
Ich verirre mich (im Garten).
- Ich laufe in den Garten.  
Ich verlaufe mich (im Garten).
- Ich spekuliere auf einen Gewinn.  
Ich verspekuliere mich.
- Er hängt an dem Balken.  
Er erhängt sich (an dem Balken).

### 8.7.11 [ NAL | NA- ] Preverb transitive delocative

[8.154] Verbs of caused location (see Section 6.5.10) like *stecken* 'to put into' (8.73 a) cannot be used without the locative preposition (8.73 b). In contrast, with the prefix *ver-* the verb *verstecken* 'to hide' can be used both with and without the location (8.73 c,d).

- (8.73) a. Ich stecke das Geschenk in den Schrank.  
b. \*Ich stecke das Geschenk.  
c. Ich verstecke das Geschenk in dem Schrank.  
d. Ich verstecke das Geschenk.

[8.155]

The diathesis is quite widespread stacked on top of a forced movement diathesis as discussed in Section 6.8.4, for example with *wehen* ‘to blow’ (8.74).

- (8.74) a. Der Wind weht hart.  
 b. Der Wind weht die Blätter von den Dächern.  
 c. \*Der Wind weht die Blätter.  
 d. Der Wind verweht die Blätter.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.156]

- ver'- : *drängen, jagen, stecken, gießen, schütten, treiben, rücken, schieben, scheuchen, sprühen, stoßen, streichen, wehen*
- zer'- : *hacken, reißen, sägen, schneiden*
- 'durch- : *bringen, setzen*
- 'um- : *setzen*
- 'unter- : *binden*
- 'ab- : *hängen, legen, reißen*
- 'ein- : *schenken, stecken*
- 'aus- : *graben, pusten, reißen, spucken, ziehen*
- 'zu- : *stellen*
- 'auf- : *setzen*
- 'an- : *kleben, treiben, spülen*

#### Further Examples

[8.157]

- Ich treibe die Mücken aus dem Haus.  
 Ich vertreibe die Mücken.
- Ich reiße die Blätter von dem Strauch.  
 Ich reiße die Blätter ab.
- Er hängt die Wäsche an die Leine.  
 Er hängt die Wäsche ab.
- Ich stecke das Taschentuch in meine Tasche.  
 Ich stecke das Taschentuch ein.
- Ich bringe den Antrag zur Sitzung.  
 Ich bringe den Antrag durch.
- Ich setze die Forderung auf die Tagesordnung.  
 Ich setze die Forderung durch.
- Der Lehrer setzt den Schüler in die Ecke.  
 Der Lehrer setzt den Schüler um.
- Ich binde die Skier an meine Schuhe.  
 Ich binde die Skier unter.
- Ich spucke die Kerne ins Gras.  
 Ich spucke die Kerne aus.
- Ich ziehe den Anzug über meinen Pullover.  
 Ich ziehe meinen Anzug aus.
- Ich reiße das Blatt aus dem Heft.  
 Ich reiße das Blatt aus.
- Ich puste den Staub vom Tisch.  
 Ich puste die Kerze aus.

- Ich lege die Akten ins Regal.  
Ich lege die Akten ab.
- Der Postbote stellt das Paket vor die Tür.  
Der Postbote stellt das Paket zu.
- Ich hacke den Stuhl in Stücke.  
Ich zerhacke den Stuhl.
- Ich streiche die Butter auf das Brot.  
Ich verstreiche die Butter.
- Ich setze den Hut auf meinen Kopf.  
Ich setzt den Hut auf.
- Ich klebe den Zettel an die Wand.  
Ich klebe den Zettel an.
- Ich treibe die Pferde auf die Wiese.  
Ich treibe die Pferde an.
- Die Wellen spülen Muscheln auf den Strand.  
Die Wellen spülen Muscheln an.
- Ich grabe den Schatz aus den Boden.  
Ich grabe den Schatz aus.
- Der Kommissar schüttelte den Kopf und schenkte Tee in drei Becher.<sup>16</sup> Der Kommissar schenkte Tee ein.

[8.158] **Notes**

[8.159] The verb *schenken* ‘to pour’ used to be common in a context of pouring a drink (8.75 a), but this is considered old-fashioned in German. The verb *einschenken* has is taking over this usage (8.75 b).

- (8.75) a. Frau Anna schenkte den Wein in die Becher.<sup>17</sup>  
b. Sie schenkten Wein ein.

– [ PBJ > OBJ > Ø ] – *Präverb Antiresultativ***8.7.12 [ NLA | NA– ] Preverb applicative+accusative drop**

[8.160] This diathesis is the reversal of the ACTION RESULT diathesis (see Section 6.8.7). The result of a verb like *pressen* ‘to squeeze’ is *Saft* ‘juice’ (8.76 a). With a preverb, the verb *auspressen* ‘to squeeze’ drops this accusative result and promotes the origin of the result *Zitrone* ‘citron’ to accusative (8.76 b).

- (8.76) a. Ich presse den Saft aus der Zitrone.  
b. Ich presse die Zitrone aus.

[8.161] Lipka (1972: 93, 173) calls this diathesis *Objektvertauschung* and McIntyre (2001: 275-277) ‘landmark flexibility’. For historical context on this diathesis, see Carlberg (Carlberg 1948) and Hundsnurscher (1968: 127). Lipka opposes this diathesis to *Subjektvertauschung*, which is discussed in Section 8.5.3.

[8.162] **Attested Verbs**

- be’- : *erben, rauben, stehlen*

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 30.12.2014, Nr. 01.

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Weismantel, Leo: Die höllische Trinität, Berlin: Union-Verl.1966 (1943), S. 428.

- ver'- : *drängen, legen, scheuchen, stellen, treiben*
- zer'- : *beißen, drücken, fressen, kauen*
- über'- : *schwemmen*
- 'aus- : *klopfen, lecken, packen, pressen, pumpen, rauben, schütten, trinken*
- 'an- : *fahren, werfen*
- 'ab- : *bürsten, ziehen*
- 'auf- : *gießen*
- 'ein- : *packen, räumen*

### Further Examples

[8.163]

- Ich erbe die Uhr von meinem Vater.  
Ich beerbe meinen Vater.
- Ich klopfe den Staub von dem Mantel.  
Ich klopfe den Mantel aus.
- Ich packe den Pullover in meinen Koffer.  
Ich packe meinen Koffer aus/ein.
- Ichpumpe das Wasser aus dem Keller.  
Ichpumpe den Keller aus.
- Ich trinke Wasser aus meiner Tasse.  
Ich trinke meine Tasse aus.
- Ich raube das Gemälde aus der Wohnung.  
Ich raube die Wohnung aus.
- Die Motten fressen ein Loch in den Pullover.  
Die Motten zerfressen den Pullover.
- Die Welle hat das Holz an Land geschwemmt.  
Die Welle hat das Land überschwemmt.
- Ich schütte das Wasser aus dem Eimer.  
Ich schütte den Eimer aus.
- Ich werfe Kohle auf den Grill.  
Ich werfe den Grill an.
- Ichbürste den Staub von dem Rock.  
Ichbürste den Rock ab.
- Ich gieße Wasser auf den Tee.  
Ich gieße den Tee auf.
- Ichräume meine Sachen in die neue Wohnung.  
Ichräume die neue Wohnung ein.
- Ich ziehe das Laken von dem Bett.  
Ich ziehe das Bett ab.
- Ich treibe die Kühe auf die Weide.  
Ich vertreibe die Kühe.

## 8.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

– [ Ø > OBJ ] – *Präverb Akkusativ*

### 8.8.1 [ N- | NA ] Preverb accusative addition

[8.164]

A relatively widespread effect of the addition of a preverb is that an accusative object is added, like with the diathesis from *zaubern* ‘to perform magic’ to *verzaubern* ‘to enchant’ (8.77).

- (8.77) a. Sie zaubert.  
b. Sie verzaubert mich.

[8.165] There are two other highly similar diatheses that likewise add an accusative object when a preverb is added. First, some verbs additionally need a dative reflexive pronoun, like when *arbeiten* ‘to work’ is turned into *erarbeiten* ‘to work for something’ (8.78 a). These verbs are discussed in detail in Section 8.8.5. Second, many verbs can express the new object as a prepositional phrase before the diathesis. For example, *klettern auf* ‘to climb onto X’ is turned into *erklettern* ‘to climb X’ (8.78 b). This applicative diathesis is by far the most frequently attested variant of these three diatheses. It is discussed in detail in Section 8.8.10.

- (8.78) a. Ich arbeite viel.  
Ich erarbeite mir ein Vermögen.  
  
b. Sie kletterten auf die Mauer.  
Sie erkletterten die Mauer der Botschaft.<sup>18</sup>

#### [8.166] Attested Verbs

- be'- : *lügen, schummeln, zaubern*
- er'- : *kämpfen, leben, leuchten, lügen, morden, schnüffeln, schwimmen*
- ver'- : *dösen, gammeln, pennen, petzen, qualmen, schlafen, schweigen, schwitzen, speisen, träumen, trödeln, wackeln, zaubern*
- ent'- : *zaubern*
- 'an- : *blinzeln, fauchen, hupen, leuchten, schwindeln*
- 'ab- : *schreiten*
- 'durch- : *boxen*
- 'vor- : *flunkern, heulen, lügen, rechnen*

#### [8.167] Further Examples

- Der Fotograf wackelt.  
Der Fotograf verwackelt das Foto.
- Sie petzt.  
Sie verpetzt den Jungen.
- Sie mordet.  
Sie ermordet ihn.
- Die Kerzen leuchten.  
Die Kerzen erleuchten den Saal.
- Ich habe gehupt.  
Ich habe dich angehupt.
- Ich lebe.  
Ich erlebe eine Überraschung.
- Der Mond leuchtet.  
Der Mond leuchtet uns an.

<sup>18</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.09.2012, Nr. 37.

- Ich boxe.  
Ich boxe den Vorschlag durch.
- Die Zigarre qualmt.  
Die Zigarren verqualmen den Raum.
- Ich blinzelte (in die Sonne).  
Ich blinzelte dich an.
- Ich schlafe (während der Vorlesung).  
Ich verschlafe die Vorlesung
- Die Armee hat gekämpft.  
Die Armee hat den Sieg erkämpft.

**Notes**

The verbs with the prefix *vor-* typically also take a dative argument (cf. Section 8.8.9).

[8.168]

[8.169]

- (8.79) a. Er lügt.  
Er lügt (mir) etwas vor.
- b. Er flunkert.  
Er flunkert (mir) die Erfahrung nur vor.
- c. Der Lehrer rechnet.  
Der Lehrer rechnet (den Schülern) die Aufgabe vor.

**8.8.2 [ N- | NA ] Preverb adjectival accusative addition**

Typically, preverbal adjectives lead to causative semantics by adding a new nominative subject (see Section 8.6.3). In contrast, the adjective *lustig* ‘funny’ is the root of the derived verb *belustigen* ‘to amuse’ and this verb adds a new accusative object (8.80).

[8.170]

- (8.80) a. Der Clown ist lustig.  
b. Der Clown belustigt mich.

**Attested Verbs**

[8.171]

- be'- : *lustig, lästig*

**Further Examples**

[8.172]

- Die Mücken sind lästig.  
Die Mücken belästigen mich.

**8.8.3 [ NP- | NPA ] Preverb accusative addition+preposition**

The verb *büßen* ‘to pay for something’ needs a governed preposition (8.81 a). This prepositional phrase is optionally retained when the verb is prefixed, leading to *verbüßen* ‘to serve a sentence’ (8.81 b). Additionally, it obtains an accusative argument in the process.

[8.173]

- (8.81) a. Sie büßt für ihre Tat.  
b. Sie verbüßt ihre Strafe für die Tat.

**Attested Verbs**

[8.174]

- er'- : *blicken*

- ver'- : *büßen*

[8.175] **Further Examples**

- Ich blicke in die Ferne.  
Ich erblicke ein Schiff (in der Ferne).

#### 8.8.4 [ ND- | NDA ] Preverb accusative addition+dative

[8.176] The verb *vertrauen* 'to trust' (8.82 a) takes a dative argument. The preverbal *anvertrauen* 'to entrust' (8.82 b) retains this dative and additionally includes a new accusative argument.

- (8.82) a. Sie vertraut mir.  
b. Sie vertraut mir ein Geheimnis an.

[8.177] **Attested Verbs**

- 'an- : *vertrauen*

#### — [ Ø > OBJ ] — *Präverb Reflexiv Akkusativ*

#### 8.8.5 [ N- | NA ] Preverb resultative accusative+reflexive

[8.178] Some intransitive verbs like *tanzen* 'to dance' (8.83 a) allow for a resultative diathesis *antanzen* 'to achieve something through dancing' (8.83 b). With this diathesis, the result of the dancing is expressed in a new accusative argument. A special characteristic of this diathesis is that a dative reflexive pronoun is obligatorily (see also Wunderlich 1997: 105-106).

- (8.83) a. Ich habe gestern viel getanzt.  
b. Ich habe mir gestern einen Muskelkater angetanzt.

[8.179] This diathesis contrasts with a highly similar diathesis that also introduces an accusative, but without the additional reflexive pronoun, like with *morden* 'to murder' (8.84). This diathesis is discussed in detail in Section 8.8.1. A possible avenue to explain this difference is that verbs with reflexive, like *antanzen*, typically have an accusative object that is the result of the action. In contrast, verbs without reflexive, like *ermorden*, typically have an object that is the patient of the action. However, this semantic difference does not seem to hold for all examples.

- (8.84) a. Sie mordet.  
b. Sie ermordet ihn.  
c. \* Sie ermordet sich ihn.

[8.180] Some verbs, like *erschwimmen* 'to achieve by swimming' (8.85), even allow for both constructions, either with reflexive pronoun (8.85 a) or without reflexive pronoun (8.85 b). More

examples of such ‘free’ reflexive pronoun are discussed in Section 7.4.4. Note that the semantic difference between these examples does not easily fit the opposition result vs. patient as proposed above.

- (8.85) a. Zumindest Völker erschwimmt sich jährlich einen fünfstelligen Betrag.<sup>19</sup>  
 b. Das erste EM-Gold für die Gastgeber erschwamm Adam Peaty.<sup>20</sup>

### Attested Verbs

[8.181]

- *er’-* : *arbeiten, boxen, kämpfen, laufen, schlafen, schreiben, schwimmen, schwindeln, tanzen, wandern*
- *’an-* : *essen, tanzen, trinken*

### Further Examples

[8.182]

- Ich erarbeite mir ein Vermögen.  
 (= Ich arbeite, und am Ende habe ich dadurch ein Vermögen.)
- Ich esse mir einen Bauch an.  
 (= Ich esse, und am Ende habe ich dadurch einen dicken Bauch.)
- Diese Haltung will ich mir auch antrinken.<sup>21</sup>
- Es hatte sich feuerrothe Backen erschlafen.<sup>22</sup>
- Sie erwandert sich die Atlantikküste.<sup>23</sup>
- Der Sportler hat sich den ersten Platz erkämpft.
- Schwergewichtler Witali Klitschko hat sich den Titel des Weltverbandes WBC erboxt.<sup>24</sup>

### Notes

[8.183]

The verb *schreiben* ‘to write’ allows for dative and accusative arguments (8.86 a), but in this diathesis it is the intransitive occupational usage (8.86 b) that is the basis for the resultative construction (8.86 c).

[8.184]

- (8.86) a. Ich schreibe dir einen Brief.  
 b. Ich schreibe (als Beruf).  
 c. Ich erschreibe mir ein großes Publikum.

— [ Ø > OBJ > ADJ ] —

### 8.8.6 [ NA- | NpA ] Preverb object switch+reflexive

A resultative accusative (see the previous Section 8.8.5) can also be added to a few transitive verbs that already have an accusative. This original accusative has to be demoted to an (optional) prepositional phrase. For example, when the verb *lesen* ‘to read’ (8.87 a) is turned into *anlesen* ‘to achieve by reading’ (8.87) a new accusative is added (*Wissen* ‘knowledge’),

[8.185]

<sup>19</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 16.03.2000.

<sup>20</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 17.05.2016 (online).

<sup>21</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.01.2018, Nr. 02.

<sup>22</sup>DWDS: Spyri, Johanna: Heidi’s Lehr- und Wanderjahre. Gotha, 1880.

<sup>23</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 24.05.2007, Nr. 22.

<sup>24</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 26.04.2004.



while the original accusative (*Buch* ‘book’) is demoted. This diathesis obligatorily needs a dative reflexive pronoun.

- (8.87) a. Ich habe ein Buch gelesen.  
b. Ich habe mir das Wissen (aus einem Buch) angelesen.

[8.186] **Attested Verbs**

- *er-* : *laufen, schreiben*
- *'an-* : *lesen, trinken*

[8.187] **Further Examples**

- Ich habe gestern einen Marathon gelaufen.  
Ich habe mir (beim Marathon) eine Medaille erlaufen.
- Er schrieb Miniaturen.  
Sein Alltag lieferte ihm Stoff zu kleinen Miniaturen, mit denen er sich eine Kolumne erscrieb.<sup>25</sup>
- Sie trinken Glühwein.  
[...] rotnasigen Menschen, die sich mit klebrigem Glühwein den nächsten Kaufrausch antrinken.<sup>26</sup>

### 8.8.7 [ NA– | NpA ] Preverb object switch

[8.188] The idiosyncratic diathesis from *schließen* ‘to close’ (8.88 a) to *einschließen* ‘to close away’ (8.88 b) introduces a new accusative object (*Schmuck* ‘jewellery’) and turns the original accusative (*Safe* ‘safe’) into an optional prepositional phrase. Different from the previous examples, no reflexive pronoun is allowed with this diathesis (8.88 c).

[8.189] The special characteristic of this diathesis is that the new accusative object (*Schmuck*) is impossible to express with the non-prefixed verb *schließen*. More typically, this object can be expressed as a prepositional phrase as well (see Section 8.9.1).

- (8.88) a. Ich schließe den Safe.  
b. Ich schließe den Schmuck (in den Safe) ein.  
c. \* Ich schließe mir den Schmuck ein.

[8.190] **Attested Verbs**

- *'ein-* : *schließen*

### – [ Ø > OBJ ] – *Präverb Dativ*

### 8.8.8 [ N– | ND ] Preverb dative addition

[8.191] The verbs in this section are intransitive verbs, like *gehen* ‘to walk’ (8.89 a), that when prefixed by *ent-* obtain a new dative argument, like with *entgehen* ‘to evade’ (8.89 b). This is not very common. More widespread, the prefixation of *ent-* induces a dative applicative

<sup>25</sup>DWDS: Zeit Magazin, 20.04.2011, Nr. 17.

<sup>26</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.12.2006, Nr. 52.

diathesis, turning a prepositional phrase into a dative argument, as discussed extensively in Section 8.8.15.

- (8.89) a. Ich gehe (nach Hause).  
b. Ich entgehe dem Urteil.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.192]

- ent'- : *gehen, kommen, wachsen, zaubern*

#### Further Examples

[8.193]

- Ich komme gleich.  
Ich entkomme einer Gefahr.
- Das Kind wächst.  
Das Kind entwächst den Windeln.

### 8.8.9 [ NA- | NAD ] Preverb dative addition+accusative

The verbs in this section are transitive verbs, like *lesen* 'to read' (8.90 a). When used with a preverb they obtain an additional dative argument, like with *vorlesen* 'to read to somebody' (8.90 b). Most prominently, the prefix *vor-* quite productively produces ditransitive verbs with accusative and dative arguments. [8.194]

- (8.90) a. Ich lese ein Buch.  
b. Ich lese dir ein Buch vor.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.195]

- 'ab- : *nehmen*
- 'vor- : *führen, legen, lesen, machen, sagen, schreiben, singen, spielen, stellen, zaubern*
- 'zu- : *werfen*
- 'über- : *werfen*

#### Further Examples

[8.196]

- Ich nehme die Einkäufe (in die Hand).  
Ich nehme ihr die Einkäufe ab.
- Ich habe den Ball geworfen.  
Ich habe dir den Ball zugeworfen.
- Ich habe den Schal geworfen.  
Ich habe dir den Schal übergeworfen.

### — [ ADJ > OBJ ] — Präverb Akkusativ Applikativ

#### 8.8.10 [ Np | NA ] Preverb applicative

A widespread diathesis induced by a preverb is the change of a prepositional phrase into an accusative, i.e. an APPLICATIVE diathesis. An example is the alternation between *grenzen* 'to border' and *begrenzen* 'to limit' (8.91), see e.g. Eroms (Eroms 1980: §1b/III/IV; Kim 1983: [8.197]

§1.1). The different subsections below are organised by the prepositions that alternate with the accusatives.

- (8.91) a. Die Mauer grenzt an den Garten.  
b. Die Mauer begrenzt den Garten.

[8.198] Note that the prepositions *über*, *unter*, *um* and *durch* appear to have a special status. These prepositions always alternate with exactly the same preverbs, viz. *über-*, *unter-*, *um-* and *durch-*. These prepositions are exactly those that can function both as verbal prefix and as verbal particle (see Section 8.2.1). Both kinds of preverbs are attested in these alternations.

#### 8.8.10.1 *an* Preverb applicative

- (8.92) a. Der Efeu wuchert an der Mauer.  
b. Der Efeu bewuchert die Mauer.

##### [8.199] Attested Verbs

- *be'-* : *fummeln*, *grenzen*, *knabbern*, *riechen*, *schnuppern*, *wuchern*
- *zer'-* : *nagen*, *kratzen*, *reiben*, *reißen*
- *'an-* : *fahren*, *fassen*, *knabbern*

##### [8.200] Further Examples

- Der Hund kratzt an der Tür.  
Der Hund zerkratzt die Tür.
- Ich fahre an den Bodensee.  
Ich fahre den Bodensee an.
- Ich fasse an die Wand.  
Ich fasse die Wand an.

#### 8.8.10.2 *auf* Preverb applicative

- (8.93) a. Ich steige auf den Berg.  
b. Ich besteige den Berg.

##### [8.201] Attested Verbs

- *be'-* : *brüten*, *glotzen*, *hauchen*, *legen*, *leuchten*, *pinkeln*, *reiten*, *scheinen*, *segeln*, *spucken*, *springen*, *steigen*, *treffen*, *treten*, *wandern*
- *er'-* : *blicken*, *drücken*, *klettern*, *schießen*, *steigen*, *zielen*
- *zer'-* : *beißen*, *drücken*, *hauen*, *kauen*, *klopfen*, *schießen*, *schlagen*, *trampeln*, *treten*
- *'ein-* : *drücken*, *hämmern*, *klagen*, *reiten*, *schlagen*, *schießen*, *treten*
- *'an-* : *spucken*, *stampfen*

##### [8.202] Further Examples

- Ich blicke auf meinen Freund.  
Ich erblicke meinen Freund.
- Ich steige auf den Berg.  
Ich ersteige den Berg.

- Ich schlage auf den Schrank.  
Ich zerschlage den Schrank.
- Ich drücke auf den Knopf.  
Ich drücke den Knopf ein.
- Ich klage auf Schadensersatz.  
Ich klage das Geld ein.
- Ich reite auf einem Pferd.  
Ich reite das Pferd ein.

### 8.8.10.3 *durch* Preverb applicative

The preposition *durch* only alternates with the preverb *durch-*, either as a verb prefix (8.94b) [8.203] or a verb particle (8.94c).

- (8.94) a. Der Fluß fließt durch das Tal.  
b. Der Fluß durchfließt das Tal.  
c. Der Fluß fließt das Tal durch.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.204]

- *durch-* : *dringen, fahren, fließen, laufen, schauen, schlagen, streifen, ziehen*
- *'durch-* : *beißen, blättern, bohren, fahren, fließen, laufen, schlagen*

#### Further Examples

[8.205]

- Ich fahre durch das Dorf.  
Ich durchfahre das Dorf.  
Ich fahre das Dorf durch.
- Ich laufe durch den Wald.  
Ich durchlaufe den Wald.  
Ich laufe den Wald durch.
- Ich schlage durch die Scheibe.  
Ich durchschlage die Scheibe.  
Ich schlage die Scheibe durch.
- Der Regen dringt durch den Vorhang.  
Der Regen durchdringt den Vorhang.
- Die Horden ziehen durch das Land.  
Die Horden durchzogen das Land.
- Ich streife durch die Stadt.  
Ich durchstreife die Stadt.
- Ich schaue durch das Mikroskop.  
Ich durchschaue deine List.
- Ich blättere durch das Buch.  
Ich blättere das Buch durch.
- Ich bohre durch das Brett.  
Ich bohre das Brett durch.
- Ich beiße durch den Apfel.  
Ich beiße den Apfel durch.

#### Notes

[8.206]

[8.207]

There are various still transparent derivations in which there is a rather strong semantic difference (8.95).

- (8.95) a. Ich drücke auf den Knopf.  
           Ich drücke den Plan durch.  
       b. Ich stehe in dem Garten während des Rückschlages.  
           Ich stehe einen Rückschlag durch.

#### 8.8.10.4 *gegen* Preverb applicative

- (8.96) a. Ich fahre gegen den Stein.  
       b. Ich fahre den Stein um.

##### [8.208] Attested Verbs

- 'an- : *fahren, hüpfen, klagen, springen, tanzen*
- 'um- : *fahren, stoßen*
- 'auf- : *stoßen*

##### [8.209] Further Examples

- Ich fahre gegen das Auto.  
   Ich fahre das Auto an.
- Ich stoße gegen die Tür.  
   Ich stoße die Tür auf.
- Der Rüpel tanzt gegen mich.  
   Der Rüpel hat mich angetanzt.
- Ich klage gegen dich.  
   Ich klage dich an.

#### 8.8.10.5 *in* Preverb applicative

- (8.97) a. Ich bohre in das Brett.  
       b. Ich zerbohre das Brett.

##### [8.210] Attested Verbs

- be'- : *fischen, siedeln, wohnen*
- er'- : *wandern*
- zer'- : *bohren, stechen, wühlen*
- durch'- : *bohren, leuchten, suchen*
- 'ein- : *laufen*

##### [8.211] Further Examples

- Er sticht (mit der Nadel) in den Finger.  
   Er zersticht den Finger (mit der Nadel).
- Ich wühle im Haar.  
   Ich zerwühle das Haar.
- Ich leuchte in jeden Winkel.  
   Ich durchleuchte jeden Winkel.

- Ich bohre in das Brett.  
Ich durchbohre das Brett.
- Ich suche in der Wohnung.  
Ich durchsuche die Wohnung.
- Ich laufe in meinen neuen Schuhen.  
Ich laufe meine neue Schuhe ein.
- Er wandert in seiner neuen Heimat.  
Er erwanderte seine neue Heimat.<sup>27</sup>

#### 8.8.10.6 *mit* Preverb applicative

- (8.98) a. Ich rede mit dir.  
b. Ich überrede dich.

##### Attested Verbs

[8.212]

- ver'- : *fahren* (Benzin), *heizen*, *schießen*, *schlampen*, *schludern*, *spekulieren*, *spielen* (Glücksspiel), *spritzen*, *sprühen*, *zögern*
- er'- : *schwindeln*
- über'- : *reden*

##### Further Examples

[8.213]

- Ich verheize das Holz.  
Ich heize mit Holz.
- Ich schlampe mit meinen Aufgaben.  
Ich verschlampe meine Aufgaben.
- Ich zögere mit den Maßnahmen.  
Ich verzögere die Maßnahmen.
- Ich zögere mit der Abreise.  
Ich verzögere die Abreise.
- Ich schwindele mit meinem Darlehen.  
Ich erschwindele (mir) mein Darlehen.
- Ich spiele mit meiner Glaubwürdigkeit.  
Ich verspiele meine Glaubwürdigkeit.
- Ich fahre mit Benzin.  
Ich verfahre mein letztes Benzin.

#### 8.8.10.7 *nach* Preverb applicative

- (8.99) a. Ich reiche nach der Flasche.  
b. Ich erreiche die Flasche nicht.

##### Attested Verbs

[8.214]

- be'- : *fliegen*, *reisen*
- er'- : *bohren*, *fragen*, *jagen*, *greifen*, *lauschen*, *reichen*, *schauen*, *spähen*, *tasten*
- 'aus- : *graben*

##### Further Examples

[8.215]

- Ich grabe nach dem Schatz.  
Ich grabe den Schatz aus.

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Zeit Magazin, 20.09.2012, Nr. 39.

**8.8.10.8 über Preverb applicative**

- (8.100) a. Ich schreite über die Schwelle.  
 b. Ich überschreite die Schwelle.

**[8.216] Attested Verbs**

- über'- : *fahren, fliegen, rollen, schreiten, springen*

**[8.217] Further Examples**

- Ich fahre über den Polizisten.  
 Ich überfahre den Polizisten.

**8.8.10.9 um Preverb applicative**

- (8.101) a. Ich fahre um den Polizisten.  
 b. Ich umfahre den Polizisten.

**[8.218] Attested Verbs**

- um'- : *fahren, kreisen*
- 'ein- : *kreisen*

**[8.219] Further Examples**

- Die Truppen kreisen um das Dorf.  
 Die Truppen umkreisen das Dorf.  
 Die Truppen kreisen das Dorf ein.

**8.8.10.10 unter Preverb applicative**

- (8.102) a. Der Tunnel führt unter die Bahnstrecke hindurch.  
 b. Der Tunnel unterfährt die Bahnstrecke.

**[8.220] Attested Verbs**

- unter'- : *führen*

**8.8.10.11 zu Preverb applicative**

- (8.103) a. Ich spreche zu dem Mann.  
 b. Ich spreche den Mann an.

**[8.221] Attested Verbs**

- er'- : *blicken, greifen, reichen*
- 'an- : *beten, blicken, brüllen, grinsen, lachen, reden, schauen, schreien, singen, sprechen, winken*

**[8.222] Further Examples**

- Der Mantel reicht bis zu meinen Füßen.  
 Der Mantel erreicht meine Füße.
- Ich rede zu dir.  
 Ich rede dich an.
- Ich singe zu meiner Geliebten.  
 Ich singe meine Geliebte an.

— [ PBJ > OBJ ] —

### 8.8.11 [ NP | NA ] Preverb governed applicative

A preverb applicative diathesis turns a prepositional phrase into an accusative argument. [8.223]  
This is a widespread diathesis (see the previous Section 8.8.10). In this section a few special verbs are listed in which the prepositional phrase is a governed preposition (see Section 6.2 on the definition of governed prepositions). For example, the preposition *an* used with the verb *arbeiten* ‘to work’ is a governed preposition (8.104 a,b). This role is turned into an accusative with the verb *überarbeiten* ‘to revise’ (8.104 c). This kind of diathesis appears not to be very common, and it might not be very useful to separate these governed prepositions from the previously discussed non-governed prepositions. However, I have kept them separate here for future in-detail comparisons.

- (8.104) a. Ich arbeite an dem Text.  
b. Ich arbeite daran den Text rechtzeitig fertig zu schreiben.  
c. Ich überarbeite den Text.

#### 8.8.11.1 *an* Preverb governed applicative

- (8.105) a. Ich leide an Kopfschmerzen.  
b. Ich erleide Kopfschmerzen.

##### Attested Verbs

[8.224]

- be'- : *arbeiten, denken*
- er'- : *arbeiten, denken, leiden*
- über'- : *arbeiten, denken*
- durch'- : *denken*
- 'aus- : *arbeiten*

##### Further Examples

[8.225]

- Ich arbeite an dem Plan.  
Ich arbeite den Plan aus.
- Die Klasse arbeitet an dem Begriff “Realismus”.  
Die Klasse erarbeitet den Begriff “Realismus”.
- Ich denke an den Plan.  
Ich durchdenke den Plan.

#### 8.8.11.2 *auf* Preverb governed applicative

- (8.106) a. Ich antworte auf deine Frage.  
b. Ich beantworte deine Frage.

##### Attested Verbs

[8.226]

- be'- : *achten, antworten, deuten*
- er'- : *sinnen, warten*

##### Further Examples

[8.227]

- Die Weltausstellung deutet auf den Frieden.  
Das Gesetz bedeutet das Ende für Dieselaautos.



**8.8.11.3 *gegen* Preverb governed applicative**

- (8.107) a. Ich kämpfe gegen das Unrecht.  
 b. Ich bekämpfe das Unrecht.

**[8.228] Attested Verbs**

- be'- : *geifern, kämpfen*

**8.8.11.4 *mit* Preverb governed applicative**

- (8.108) a. Ich rechne mit einem Verlust.  
 b. Ich rechne den Verlust ein.

**[8.229] Attested Verbs**

- be'- : *kämpfen*
- 'ein- : *kalkulieren, rechnen*

**8.8.11.5 *nach* Preverb governed applicative**

- (8.109) a. Ich strebe nach einem hohen Amt.  
 b. Ich strebe ein hohes Amt an.

**[8.230] Attested Verbs**

- er'- : *langen, sehnen*
- 'an- : *streben*

**[8.231] Further Examples**

- Ich sehne nach etwas Ruhe.  
 Ich ersehne etwas Ruhe.

**8.8.11.6 *über* Preverb governed applicative**

- (8.110) a. Ich klage über den Lärm.  
 b. Ich beklage den Lärm

**[8.232] Attested Verbs**

- be'- : *gutachten, herrschen, jammern, jubeln, klagen, lachen, lächeln, reden, schmunzeln, spotten, sprechen, staunen, trauern, urteilen, weinen, zweifeln*
- er'- : *forschen, lesen, lügen*
- ver'- : *fluchen, klagen, spotten, schweigen*
- 'aus- : *plaudern, lachen*

**[8.233] Further Examples**

- Ich plauderte über mein Geheimnis.  
 Ich plauderte das Geheimnis aus.
- Ich lache über dich.  
 Ich lache dich aus.

### 8.8.11.7 *um* Preverb governed applicative

- (8.111) a. Ich verspiele mein Haus.  
b. Ich spiele um mein Haus.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.234]

- *ver-* : *spielen, wetten*
- *er-* : *betteln, bitten, fechten, flehen, kämpfen, mogeln, spielen, streiten, tanzen*

### 8.8.12 [ NP | NA ] Preverb governed applicative+reflexive

The diathesis from *betteln* (8.112a) to *erbetteln* (8.112b), both meaning ‘to beg’, shows an additional reflexive marking on top of the accusative applicative. [8.235]

- (8.112) a. Ich bettele um ein Stück Brot.  
b. Ich erbettele mir ein Stück Brot.

When using the prefix *ver-* the meaning of this diathesis is a negative resultative, like with *bitten* ‘to ask’ vs. *verbitten* ‘to not tolerate’ (8.113). [8.236]

- (8.113) a. Ich bitte um ein besseres Verhalten.  
b. Ich verbitte mir dein Verhalten.

However, the datives in many of these examples can be interpreted as a benefactor, so it might be better to interpret them as a kind of *für* benefactive dative, see Section 6.8.9. The reflexive marking might also not be necessary, i.e. the action could also be performed in favour of somebody else. When both these possibilities come together, then this diathesis would be a transparent stack of applicative +> benefactive dative +> self-inflicting reflexive (8.114) and would not warrant a separate subsection (for the notion ‘stack’ see Section 2.5). [8.237]

- (8.114) Ich bettele um ein Stück Brot für dich.  
(+> applicative) Ich erbettele ein Stück Brot für dich.  
(+> benefactive dative) Ich erbettele dir ein Stück Brot.  
(+> self-inflicting reflexive) Ich erbettele mir ein Stück Brot.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.238]

- *er-* : *betteln, hoffen, sehnen, spielen, träumen*
- *ver-* : *bitten*
- *'aus-* : *denken*

#### Further Examples

[8.239]

- Ich hoffe auf einen schönen Geburtstag.  
Ich erhoffe mir einen schönen Geburtstag.
- Ich spiele um den Sieg.  
Ich habe mir den Sieg erspielt.
- Ich denke an den Plan.  
Ich denke mir den Plan aus.

### 8.8.13 [ NDP | NDA ] Preverb governed applicative+dative

[8.240] An unusual variant of a governed applicative is illustrated with the diathesis between *drohen* (8.115 a) and *androhen* (8.115 b), both meaning ‘to threaten’. Additional to the change from a prepositional phrase to an accusative there is a dative that does not change in this diathesis. Such unchanged datives are highly unusual together with an applicative. Note that the reversal, i.e. a dative applicative with an unchanged accusative, is much more widespread (see Section 8.8.16). This asymmetry is yet another example of the dative-accusative asymmetry as also observed with reflexive pronouns (paragraph 7.7 on page 186), the drop hierarchy (Section 5.7) and the antipassive hierarchy (Section 6.7).

- (8.115) a. Er droht mir mit Entlassung.  
b. Er droht mir die Entlassung an.

#### [8.241] Attested Verbs

- ver'- : *danken*
- 'an- : *drohen*

#### [8.242] Further Examples

- Ich danke dir für deinen Einsatz.  
Ich verdanke dir mein Leben.

— [ PBJ > OBJ > OBJ ] —

### 8.8.14 [ NPA | NAD ] Preverb governed applicative+accusative-to-dative

[8.243] A peculiar diathesis is attested with *drängen zu* ‘to urge’ (12.32 a) and *aufdrängen* ‘to force’ (8.116 b). The *zu* governed prepositional phrase is turned into an accusative, which is a regular applicative. However, additionally the accusative *dich* is turned into a dative *dir*.

- (8.116) a. Ich dränge dich zu einem Abo.  
Ich dränge dich dazu ein Abo zu nehmen.  
b. Ich dränge dir ein Abo auf.

#### [8.244] Attested Verbs

- 'ab- : *gewöhnen*
- 'auf- : *drängen*

#### [8.245] Further Examples

- Ich gewöhne die Kinder an Sauberkeit.  
Sie gewöhnt mir das Rauchen ab.

— [ ADJ > OBJ ] — *Präverb Dativ Applikativ*

### 8.8.15 [ Np | ND ] Preverb dative applicative

[8.246] The following applicatives turn a prepositional phrase into a dative. For example, *stammen* ‘to descent from’ is used with a preposition *aus* (8.117 a). This role is turned into a dative

with the preverb *entstammen* ‘to be descended from’. Note that these prepositions are never governed prepositions (for *ent-*, see also Eisenberg 2006b: 263-264).

- (8.117) a. Ich stamme aus einem Adelsgeschlecht.  
 b. Ich entstamme einem Adelsgeschlecht.

#### Atteste Verbs

[8.247]

- *er-* : *mangeln*
- *ent-* : *eilen, fliegen, fliehen, fließen, gehen, gleiten, kommen, laufen, springen, sprießen, steigen, stammen, strömen, wachsen, weichen*
- *'an-* : *hängen (gehangen)*
- *'nach-* : *fahren, gehen, hinken, laufen, reiten, rennen, schwimmen, rufen, schreien, schauen, sehen*
- *'zu-* : *arbeiten, hören, lachen, lächeln, laufen, nicken, prostern, reden, sich wenden, schauen, trinken, winken, zwinkern*
- *'bei-* : *liegen, stehen, stimmen*

#### Further Examples

[8.248]

- Ich lache freundlich zu dir.  
 Ich lache dir freundlich zu.
- Der Wagen fuhr zu mir.  
 Der Wagen fuhr auf mich zu.
- Er arbeitet für mich.  
 Er arbeitet mir zu.
- Meine Freunde haben zu mir geredet.  
 Meine Freunde haben mir zugeredet.
- Sein Referat mangelt an jeglicher Sachkenntnis.  
 Sein Referat ermangelt jeglicher Sachkenntnis.
- Die Kinder haben immer mit Liebe an ihren Eltern gehangen.  
 Seine Vergangenheit hat ihm noch angehangen.
- Ich rufe nach dir.  
 Ich rufe dir nach.
- Ich gehe hinter dir.  
 Ich gehe dir nach.
- Er fährt in ihrer Spur.  
 Er ist ihrer Spur nachgefahren.
- Die Rechnung liegt in dem Brief.  
 Die Rechnung liegt dem Brief bei.
- Ich rede mit ihm.  
 Ich rede ihm zu.
- Ich nicke zu dem Kind.  
 Ich nicke dem Kind zu.
- Er floh vor dem Feind.  
 Er entfloh der Gefahr.
- Ich wende mich zu dir.  
 Ich wende mich dir zu.

### 8.8.16 [ NAp | NAD ] Preverb dative applicative+accusative

[8.249] Some verbs allow for an additional accusative argument alongside a dative applicative diathesis. For example, the verb *flüstern* ‘to whisper’ (8.118 a) has an additional accusative argument in the form of reported speech. This argument is retained in the diathesis *zuflüstern* ‘to whisper to somebody’ (8.118 b). The *zu*- diathesis appears to be rather productive with verbs of communication (cf. Wiemer & Nedjalkov 2007: 472).

- (8.118) a. “Jesses Maria [...]”, flüsterte ich zu dem Russen [...].<sup>28</sup>  
 b. “Jesses Maria”, flüsterte ich dem Russen zu.

#### [8.250] Attested Verbs

- er'- : *klären*
- ent'- : *locken, nehmen, reißen, ziehen*
- 'an- : *hängen (gehängt), kleben, stecken*
- 'ab- : *gewinnen, handeln, nehmen*
- 'auf- : *packen*
- 'aus- : *setzen, treiben, ziehen*
- 'bei- : *fügen, legen, mischen*
- 'über- : *legen, werfen*
- 'um- : *wickeln*
- 'unter- : *schieben*
- 'zu- : *flüstern, pfeifen, rufen, schreien, spielen, tuscheln, treiben*

#### [8.251] Further Examples

- Ich kläre die Frage mit dir.  
Ich erkläre dir die Antwort.
- Ich habe ein Schild an die Wand gehängt.  
Ich habe meinem Widersacher einen Prozess angehängt.
- Ich nehme das Geld von dir.  
Ich nehme dir das Geld ab.
- Zu dem Paket füge ich eine Zollerklärung.  
Ich füge dem Paket eine Zollerklärung bei.
- Ich ziehe eine Feder aus dem Vogel.  
Ich ziehe dem Vogel eine Feder aus.
- Ich schiebe den Stuhl unter den Tisch.  
Ich schiebe dir ein Kissen unter.
- Ich treibe den Eigensinn aus dem Kind.  
Ich treibe dem Kind den Eigensinn aus.
- Ich habe den Hund in seine Hütte gesetzt.  
Ich habe den Hund der Kälte ausgesetzt.
- Ich nehme das Geld aus der Brieftasche.  
Ich entnehme der Brieftasche das Geld.
- Ich locke Töne aus dem Instrument.  
Ich entlocke dem Instrument einige Töne.
- Ich packe noch weitere Lasten auf den Esel.  
Ich packe dem Esel noch weitere Lasten auf.

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 29.05.2012, Nr. 19.

- Ich wickele ein Tuch um dich.  
Ich wickele dir ein Tuch um.
- Sie klebt einen Bart an ihn.  
Sie klebt ihm einen Bart an.

### 8.8.17 [ NPp | NAD ] Preverb dative applicative+governed applicative

An example of a ‘double’ applicative is found with the diathesis from *schweigen* ‘to be silent’ (8.119a) and *verschweigen* ‘to conceal’ (8.119b). With the addition of the preverb *ver-* both a dative and an accusative applicative are induced. [8.252]

- (8.119) a. Ich schweige zu dir über meinen Besuch.  
b. Ich verschweige dir meinen Besuch.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.253]

- *ver-* : *schweigen, sprechen*
- *'ab-* : *schwätzen*

#### Further Examples

[8.254]

- Ich spreche (mit dir) über das Buch.  
Ich verspreche dir das Buch.
- Ich schwätze (mit dir) über dein Geld.  
Ich schwätze dir dein Geld ab.

### 8.8.18 [ NAg | NAD ] Preverb possessor-of-accusative to dative

The verb *ansehen* has various different meanings, as summarised in Section 8.4.8. One of these can approximately be translated into English as ‘to notice’ (8.121). In this sense of *ansehen*, the possessor of the accusative argument from *sehen* is obligatorily expressed as a dative with *ansehen*. [8.255]

- (8.120) a. Ich sehe seine Müdigkeit.  
b. Ich sehe ihm die Müdigkeit an.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.256]

- *'an-* : *hören, sehen*

#### Further Examples

[8.257]

- Ich höre seine Müdigkeit.  
Ich höre ihm die Müdigkeit an.

## 8.9 Symmetrical diatheses

### — [ ADJ > OBJ > ADJ ] — *Präverb Vollapplikativ*

A regular APPLICATIVE diathesis changes a prepositional phrase into an accusative. Such diatheses are frequently attested with preverbs (see Section 8.8.10). When there is already [8.258]

an accusative present, like with *schreiben* (8.121 a), then the original accusative (*Buchstabe* 'letter') is demoted to a prepositional phrase, i.e. ANTIPASSIVE (8.121 b). This combination of an applicative with an antipassive is called a FULL APPLICATIVE here.

- (8.121) a. Ich schreibe den Buchstaben auf das Papier.  
b. Ich beschreibe das Papier mit den Buchstaben.

[8.259] The most widespread antipassive demotion uses the preposition *mit* (see Section 8.9.1), like with *beschreiben* (8.121 b). Less frequent are *in* antipassives (see Section 8.9.2) and *von* antipassives (see Section 8.9.3). Surprisingly, other prepositions are not attested for the antipassive part of a full applicative.

[8.260] In contrast, there is extensive variation in the prepositions that take part in the applicative part of the diathesis, e.g. *auf* in (8.121), but also *an*, *für*, *in*, *über* and *um* are attested. These will be discussed in the following subsections.

### 8.9.1 [ NpA | NAp ] Preverb full applicative+*mit* antipassive

#### 8.9.1.1 *an* Preverb full applicative

- (8.122) a. Ich hänge die Bilder an die Wand.  
b. Ich behänge die Wand mit Bildern.

#### [8.261] Attested Verbs

- be'- : *hängen, liefern*
- ver'- : *füttern, nageln*
- 'an- : *malen*

#### [8.262] Further Examples

- Der Händler liefert die Waren an den Kaufmann.  
Der Händler beliefert den Kaufmann mit den Waren.
- Ich füttere die Enten mit Brot.  
Ich verfüttere das Brot an die Enten.
- Ich male ein Gemälde an die Wand.  
Ich male die Wand mit Farbe an.

#### 8.9.1.2 *auf* Preverb full applicative

- (8.123) a. Ich schmiere Salbe auf die Wunde.  
b. Ich beschmiere die Wunde mit Salbe.

#### [8.263] Attested Verbs

- be'- : *bauen, gießen, kleben, kleckern, kritzeln, laden, legen, packen, schmieren, schmeißen, schreiben, schütten, segeln, spritzen, sprühen, streichen, streuen, werfen*
- ver'- : *kleben*
- über'- : *bauen, kleben*
- durch'- : *setzen*
- 'ein- : *werfen*
- 'auf- : *gießen*

- 'zu- : *bauen, drücken, kleben*

#### Further Examples

[8.264]

- Ich segele mein Boot auf den See.  
Ich besegele den See mit meinem Boot.
- Ich gieße Wasser auf den Tee.  
Ich gieße den Tee mit Wasser auf.
- Ich kleckere die Tinte auf die Bluse.  
Ich bekleckere meine Bluse mit Tinte.
- Ich setze meine Leute auf die wichtigen Stellen im Betrieb.  
Ich durchsetze den Betrieb mit meinen Leuten.
- Ich werfe den Stein auf das Fenster.  
Ich werfe das Fenster ein (mit einem Stein).
- Ich klebe den Zettel auf die Tür.  
Ich verklebe die Tür mit dem Zettel.
- Die Baufirma baut neue Häuser auf die Freifläche.  
Die Baufirma baut die Freifläche mit Häusern zu.
- Ich drücke meinen Finger auf die Wunde.  
Ich drücke die Wunde mit meinem Finger zu.
- Ich klebe ein Pflaster auf die Lücke.  
Ich klebe die Lücke mit einem Pflaster zu.
- Ich lege Fliesen auf den Boden.  
Ich belege den Boden mit Fliesen.

#### 8.9.1.3 *für* Preverb full applicative

- (8.124) a. Er singt die Hymne für dich.  
b. Mit der Hymne Amazing Grace besang jener John Newton seine eigene Bekehrung zum Christentum.<sup>29</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[8.265]

- be'- : *kochen, singen*

#### Further Examples

[8.266]

- Ich koche eine Suppe für dich.  
Ich bekoche dich mit einer Suppe.

#### 8.9.1.4 *in* Preverb full applicative

- (8.125) a. Ich pflanze Tulpen in das Beet.  
b. Ich bepflanze das Beet mit Tulpen.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.267]

- be'- : *pflanzen*
- er'- : *stechen*
- ver'- : *bauen, heizen, rauchen, stellen, stopfen*

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 02.07.2015, Nr. 27.



- 'ein- : *füllen, massieren, reiben*
- 'zu- : *mauern, schaufeln, schütten*

[8.268]

**Further Examples**

- Ich heize den Raum mit Kohle.  
Ich verheize Kohle im Raum.
- Ich rauche eine Zigarette im Schlafzimmer.  
Früher hatte er ihr die Zimmer stets mit schlechten Zigarren verraucht.<sup>30</sup>
- Er hat den Schnaps eingefüllt (in die Flasche).  
Er füllt die Flasche (mit Schnaps).
- Ich massiere die Creme in den Muskel ein.  
Ich massiere den Muskel (mit einer Salbe).
- Ich steche das Messer in den Mann.  
Ich ersteche den Mann mit dem Messer.
- Er mauert das Fundament in dem Loch.  
Er mauert das Loch mit dem Fundament zu.
- Ich habe Kohle in den Keller geschaufelt.  
Ich habe den Keller mit Kohle zugeschaufelt.
- Ich stelle den Schrank im Korridor.  
Ich verstelle den Korridor mit dem Schrank.
- Er hatte Feldsteine in den Zugang gebaut.  
Er hatte den Zugang zu seinem Garten mit Feldsteinen verbaut.

**8.9.1.5 über Preverb full applicative**

[8.269]

This diathesis is mentioned by Eisenberg (2006b: 257-258).

- (8.126) a. Ich streue Zucker über den Kuchen.  
b. Ich überstreue den Kuchen mit Zucker.

[8.270]

**Attested Verbs**

- be'- : *spannen*
- über'- : *gießen, malen, pinseln, schütten, streichen, streuen, ziehen*

[8.271]

**Further Examples**

- Ich gieße Wasser über die Blumen.  
Ich übergieße die Blumen mit Wasser.

**8.9.1.6 um Preverb full applicative**

- (8.127) a. Ich binde einen Verband um den Arm.  
b. Ich verbinde den Arm mit einem Verband.

[8.272]

**Attested Verbs**

- ver'- : *binden*
- um'- : *stellen, wickeln*

<sup>30</sup>Attested online at <http://www.dwds.de/wb/verrauchen>, accessed 9 August 2022.

- 'zu- : *binden*

#### Further Examples

[8.273]

- Ich stelle Kerzen um das Grab.  
Ich umstelle das Grab mit Kerzen.
- Ich binde einen Faden um das Paket.  
Ich binde das Paket mit dem Faden zu.
- Ich wickele ein Tuch um dich.  
Ich umwickele dich mit einem Tuch.

### 8.9.2 [ NpA | NAp ] Preverb applicative+*in* antipassive

A second pattern of applicative+antipassive combinations uses an *in* antipassive. For example, the diathesis between *wickeln* 'to wrap' and *einwickeln* 'to wrap around' (8.128) changes the original accusative *Tuch* 'cloth' into an prepositional phrase with *in*. The prepositions that are involved in the applicative part of this diathesis are again more varied (*für, mit, um, über*), but there are not enough examples to warrant separate subsections. [8.274]

- (8.128) a. Ich wickle das Tuch um den Arm.  
b. Ich wickle den Arm in dem Tuch ein.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.275]

- be'- (für) : *graben*
- be'- (über) : *schreiben*
- ver'- (für) : *graben, buddeln*
- ver'- (mit) : *bauen, backen*
- 'ein- (für) : *graben*
- 'ein- (um) : *wickeln*

#### Further Examples

[8.276]

- Ich grabe/buddele ein Loch für den Schatz.  
Ich vergrabe/verbuddele den Schatz im Loch.
- Ich grabe ein Loch für meinen Hund.  
Ich begrabe meinen Hund in dem Loch.
- Ich grabe ein Loch (in die Erde) für den Baum.  
Ich grabe den Baum in einem Loch (in die Erde) ein.
- Ich schreibe (dir) einen Brief über mein Erlebnis.  
Ich beschreibe (dir) mein Erlebnis in einem Brief
- Ich backe einen Kuchen mit einem Kilo Mehl.  
Ich verbacke ein Kilo Mehl in dem Kuchen.
- Ich baue ein Haus mit den Steinen.  
Ich verbaue die Steine in dem Haus.

### 8.9.3 [ NpA | NAp ] Preverb applicative+*von* antipassive

[8.277]

A third, less frequent, applicative+antipassive diathesis uses a *von* antipassive. All examples currently known to me use the preverb *er'-*, though they take different prepositions in the applicative side of the diathesis.

- (8.129) a. Er zwingt ihn zu einem Geständnis.  
b. Er erzwingt ein Geständnis von ihm.

[8.278] **Attested Verbs**

- *er'-(um) : bitten*
- *er'-(nach) : fragen*
- *er'-(zu) : pressen, zwingen*

[8.279] **Further Examples**

- Ich bitte dich um einen Gefallen.  
Ich erbitte einen Gefallen von dir.
- Ich frage dich nach dem Weg zum Bahnhof.  
Ich erfrage den Weg zum Bahnhof von dir.

#### 8.9.4 [ NpA | NAp ] Preverb reflexive applicative+ *von* antipassive

[8.280] The full applicative from *bitten* 'to ask' (8.130 a) to *verbitten* 'to not tolerate' (8.130 b) additionally needs a dative reflexive pronoun.

- (8.130) a. Ich bitte dich um einen Kommentar.  
b. Ich verbitte mir einen Kommentar von dir.

[8.281] **Attested Verbs**

- *ver'-(um) : bitten*

— [ OBJ > OBJ ] —

#### 8.9.5 [ ND | NA ] Preverb dative-to-accusative

[8.282] A few examples exist of a preverb diathesis in which a dative argument is changed into an accusative argument. For example, *folgen* 'to follow' (8.131 a) takes a dative, while *verfolgen* 'to pursue' (8.131 b) takes an accusative.

- (8.131) a. Ich folge dem Auto.  
b. Ich verfolge das Auto.

[8.283] **Attested Verbs**

- *be'- : dienen, drohen, folgen, lauschen, raten*
- *ver'- : dienen, folgen*
- *'an- : schreiben*

[8.284] **Further Examples**

- Ich rate dir (zum Plan).  
Ich berate dich (in dem Fall).
- Ich folge dem Rat.  
Ich befolge den Rat.
- Ich habe dir geschrieben.  
Ich habe dich angeschrieben.

### 8.9.6 [ NA | ND ] Preverb accusative-to-dative

Conversely, the diathesis from *jagen* ‘to hunt’ (8.132a) to *nachjagen* ‘to chase’ (8.132b) <sup>[8.285]</sup> changes an accusative argument into a dative argument. This seems to be less frequent than the reverse, as discussed in the previous section.

- (8.132) a. Die Polizei jagt den Verbrecher.  
b. Die Polizei jagt dem Verbrecher nach.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.286]

- ‘nach- : *jagen*

— [ OBJ > OBJ > OBJ ] —

### 8.9.7 [ NDA | NAG ] Preverb dative-to-accusative+accusative-to-genitive

Even more intricate, the diathesis from *rauben* (8.133a) to *berauben* (8.133b), both meaning ‘to rob’, <sup>[8.287]</sup> includes both a case change from dative to accusative and one from accusative to genitive. The usage of the genitive sounds rather old-fashioned.

- (8.133) a. Ich raube dir das Buch.  
b. Ich beraube dich des Buches.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.288]

- be’- : *rauben*

— [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 8.9.8 [ NA | AN ] Preverb accusative inersive

The alternation between *wundern* ‘to amaze’ (8.134a) and *bewundern* ‘to be in awe’ (8.134b) <sup>[8.289]</sup> reverses the nominative and accusative arguments. Note that the verb *wundern* also allows for a reflexive conversive diathesis (8.134c), see Section 7.5.7, but that construction cannot function as a intermediate step in this diathesis.

- (8.134) a. Dein Verhalten wundert mich.  
b. Ich bewundere dein Verhalten.  
c. Ich wundere mich über dein Verhalten.

#### Attested Verbs

[8.290]

- be’- : *wundern*

— [ PBJ > SBJ > PBJ ] —

### 8.9.9 [ NL | LN ] Preverb locational inersive

[8.291] The alternation between *strahlen* ‘to shine’ (8.135 a) and *erstrahlen* ‘to gleam’ (8.135 b) involves a reversal of nominative and locational arguments.

- (8.135) a. Die Sonne strahlt auf das Haus.  
b. Das Haus erstrahlt in der Sonne.

[8.292] **Attested Verbs**

- er'- : *strahlen*
- 'zu- : *wachsen*

[8.293] **Further Examples**

- Der Efeu wächst an der Hauswand.  
Die Hauswand wächst durch den Efeu zu.



## Chapter 9

# Adverbial alternations

### 9.1 Introduction

[9.1] It might come as a surprise that adverbials play a role in valency and diathesis. However, on closer inspection it is obvious that there are various verbs that obligatorily need an adverbial complement, like *sich verhalten* ‘to behave’ (9.1), which show that adverbials have to be considered when determining the valency of verbs.

- (9.1) a. Ich verhalte mich tapfer.  
b. \*Ich verhalte mich.

[9.2] Yet, adverbials cast an even wider net. There are various diatheses that involve obligatory adverbials, like DEOBJECTIVES (9.2 a), see Section 9.5.1, ANTICAUSATIVES (9.2 b), see Section 9.5.2, APPLICATIVES (9.2 c), see Section 9.8.2, and ANTIPASSIVES (9.2 d), see Section 9.7.7.

- (9.2) a. Ich lebe hier.  
Hier lebt es sich gut.  
b. Ich fahre den Lastwagen.  
Der Lastwagen fährt sich gut.  
c. Ich fische in dem Teich.  
Ich habe den Teich leergefischt.  
d. Ich sehe das Gemälde.  
Ich sehe mich satt an dem Gemälde.

[9.3] The adverbial constructions discussed in this chapter include two clearly different kind of adverbials, namely DEPICTIVE SECONDARY PREDICATES like *schnell* ‘quickly’ in (9.3 a) and RESULTATIVE ADVERBS like *leer* ‘empty’ in (9.3 b). The syntactic structures and the valency alternations in which they appear turn out to be rather different, possibly warranting two different chapters. However, the current combination of these superficially very similar constructions allows me to sharpen their distinction and investigate similarities and differences between the two.

- (9.3) a. Ich habe meine Hose schnell gekauft.  
b. Ich habe den Laden leer gekauft.

[9.4]

First, depictive secondary predicates (see Section 9.2.2) are typically manner adverbials. They appear in valency-reducing diatheses, often resulting in intransitive constructions as a result. This behaviour draws obvious parallels with reflexive diatheses (see Chapter 7). However, it remains unclear to me whether there is a deeper connection between reflexive and adverbial diatheses or whether this parallel is a superficial side-effect of some other syntactic properties. Depictive secondary predicates can also be expressed by participles, so there is a close connection to diatheses with light-verbs and participles (see Section 10.2.4).

Second, resultative adverbs (see Section 9.2.3) arguably form a new verb together with the main predicate, i.e. *leer* and *kaufen* form a new verb *leerkaufen* in which the first part *leer-* is separable, just like with prepositional preverbs like *an-* in *ankaufen* (known as *Partikelverben* in German grammar, see Section 8.2.1). Similar to the generalisation with preverbs (see Section 8.2.2), diatheses with resultative adverbs almost always lead to a transitive construction with a nominative and an accusative argument (or alternatively an accusative reflexive pronoun). This parallelism reinforces the impression that resultative adverbs should probably better be considered together with preverbs as discussed in the previous chapter.

There are six diatheses that seem prominent enough to be given a German name. I propose the following names for these: <sup>[9.5]</sup>

- [SBJ > Ø] WERTUNGSVERBATIV (see Section 9.5.1)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] WERTUNGSANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 9.5.2 ff.)
- [OBJ > Ø] AKTIONSFOKUS (see Section 9.7.1)
- [PBJ > ADJ] ADVERB DELOKATIV (see Section 9.7.4 ff.)
- [ADJ > OBJ] ADVERB AKKUSATIV APPLIKATIV (see Section 9.8.2 ff.)
- [ADJ > OBJ > ADJ] ADVERB VOLLAPPLIKATIV (see Section 9.9.1)

## 9.2 Delimiting adverbial arguments

### 9.2.1 Adverbials and adverbs

Adverbials are defined here strictly syntactically as a word or phrase that modifies the main predicate of a sentence. When such an adverbial consists of a single word that cannot be used in other syntactic functions, then such a word is called an ADVERB. There exists an arguably rather small class of such purely adverbial words in German with restricted semantic possibilities, namely local, e.g. *hier*, *oben*, *dort* (9.4 a), temporal, e.g. *gestern*, *später*, *immer* (9.4 b), causal, e.g. *deshalb*, *dennoch*, *folglich* (9.4 c) and modal, e.g. *ebenfalls*, *fast*, *ganz* (9.4 d). <sup>[9.7]</sup>

- (9.4) a. Das Flugzeug ist dort gelandet.  
 b. Das Flugzeug ist gestern gelandet.  
 c. Deshalb ist das Flugzeug gelandet.  
 d. Das Flugzeug ist ebenfalls gelandet.

There are special contexts in which some of these adverbs can be used to modify noun phrases, but apparently only post-nominal (9.5 a,b), a position that cannot be taken by adjectives (9.5 c), but seems to be related to the position of modifying prepositional phrases <sup>[9.8]</sup>



(9.5 d).

- (9.5) a. Das Flugzeug *dort* finde ich schöner.  
 b. Das Flugzeug *gestern* fand ich schöner.  
 c. \* Das Flugzeug *große* fand ich schöner.  
 d. Das Flugzeug *mit dem großen Fenster* finde ich schöner.

[9.9] Except for adverbs, there are many other kinds of expressions that can fill the syntactic role of adverbial, like prepositional phrases (9.6 a), quantified objects (9.6 b), see Section 5.3.9, or adverbial clauses (9.6 c). Also negation (9.6 d) and equative phrases (9.6 e) are syntactically highly similar to adverbials. For example, various verbs that obligatorily need an adverbial alternatively allow a negation or comparison phrase to fill the necessary adverbial slot (see e.g. Section 9.3.1).

- (9.6) a. Das Flugzeug ist *auf der Wiese* gelandet.  
 b. Das Flugzeug ist *jeden Tag* gelandet.  
 c. Das Flugzeug ist gelandet, *weil der Tank leer war*.  
 d. Das Flugzeug ist *nicht* gelandet.  
 e. Das Flugzeug ist *wie eine Feder* gelandet.

[9.10] Adjectives (and adjectival verbforms like participles, see Section 10.2.4) are also frequently used in adverbial function as discussed in the next sections.

### 9.2.2 Adjectives as depictive secondary predicates

[9.11] Given the right context, all German adjectival stems like *klein* ‘small’ can be used as DEPICTIVE secondary predicates, i.e. they can be used syntactically both as adjectives (9.7 a) and as adverbs (9.7 b).

- (9.7) a. Das kleine Kind ist geboren.  
 b. Das Kind ist klein geboren.

[9.12] Depending on the context and their placement inside the sentence, such depictive adjectival adverbs can ascribe a characteristic to different constituents in the sentence, like to an accusative object (9.8 a), a nominative subject (9.8 b) or a predicate (9.8 c).

- (9.8) a. Ich habe meine Hose eng gekauft.  
 b. Ich habe meine Hose müde gekauft.  
 c. Ich habe meine Hose schnell gekauft.

[9.13] Pure adverbs, i.e. single-word adverbials that cannot function as adjectives, only allow for the modification of the predicate (or the complete clause, for that matter). A pure adverb like *gestern* cannot ascribe any characteristic to the nominative subject or accusative object. For example, the adverb *gestern* in (9.9) can only refer to the action *kaufen*, not to the subject *ich* nor to the object *Hose*.

- (9.9) Ich habe meine Hose gestern gekauft.

### 9.2.3 Adjectives as resultative secondary predicates

There is a different RESULTATIVE construction with adjectival adverbs that superficially looks highly similar to the previous depictive examples, but it turns out to be a radically different construction. The adjectival adverb *leer* ‘empty’ in (9.10 a) can be interpreted, like in the previous examples, as a depictive predicate stating that the store is empty. In this interpretation the sentence has the meaning ‘I have bought the store that was empty as I bought it’ (9.10 b). Alternatively, it can be interpreted resultatively with the meaning ‘I have bought everything that was in the store, with the result that the store was empty afterwards’ (9.10 c). [9.14]

- (9.10) a. Ich habe den Laden leer gekauft.  
 b. Ich habe den Laden, der ganz leer war, gekauft.  
 c. Ich habe etwas im Laden gekauft mit dem Resultat, dass der Laden leer ist.

There are various differences between the depictive (9.10 b) and the resultative (9.10 c) interpretation. First, the accusative object in the resultative interpretation (9.10 c) is a completely new role for the main lexical verb *kaufen*. The addition of such a new role can lead to the appearance of new accusative constituents for otherwise intransitive verbs like *fischen* ‘to fish’ (9.11 a) or *niesen* ‘to sneeze’ (9.11 b). [9.15]

- (9.11) a. Ich habe den Teich leer gefischt.  
 b. Ich habe das Taschentuch voll geniest.

Second, participles can be used as depictive secondary predicates (9.12 b), see also Section 10.2.4. In contrast, participles never function as resultative adverbials (9.12 c). [9.16]

- (9.12) a. Ich habe den Laden gereinigt gekauft.  
 b. = Ich habe den Laden gekauft als der gereinigt war.  
 c. ≠ Ich habe etwas im Laden gekauft mit dem Resultat, dass der Laden gereinigt ist.

Third, resultative adjectival predicates in German do not seem to be possible in combination with verb particles (9.13 a–d). This is not just a semantic incompatibility, but also a syntactic one. The resultative adjectival predicates syntactically take the same place in the sentence as the verb particles. For example, dictionaries of German typically include resultative constructions as complex predicates, i.e. *vollschenken* ‘to pour until full’ (9.13 a)<sup>1</sup> or *leerräumen* ‘to empty completely’ (9.13 c)<sup>2</sup>, parallel to verbs with particles like *einschenken* ‘to pour into’ (9.13 c) and *ausräumen* ‘to empty out’ (9.13 d). [9.17]

- (9.13) a. Ich habe das Glas voll geschenkt.  
 b. \*Ich habe das Glas voll eingeschenkt.  
 c. Ich habe den Koffer leer geräumt.  
 d. \*Ich habe den Koffer leer ausgeräumt.

In contrast, with depictive adjectives there is no problem with adding verb particles (9.14 a, b). [9.18]

- (9.14) a. Sie kauft die Nägel krumm ein.  
 b. Ich habe mein Fahrrad grün angestrichen.

<sup>1</sup> Attested at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/vollschenken>, accessed 13 August 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Attested at [https://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/leer\\_raeumen](https://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/leer_raeumen), accessed 13 August 2022.

Highly productive resultative adjectival predicates in German are *leer-*, *voll-*, *tot-* and *fest-* (Fuhrhop 2012: 79–80), e.g. *vollniesen* ‘to sneeze full’ (9.15 a). However, many others are also attested, e.g. *still-* in *stillschweigen* ‘to silence something’, *fertig-* in *fertigstellen* ‘to finish’ or *schön-* in *schönreden* ‘to whitewash’ (9.15 b). Additionally, datives from raised possessors are often possible (9.15 b), see Section 5.8.4, including subsequent reflexive constructions (9.15 c). Note that the Duden grammar (2009: 790) presents *Er hält/macht den Tisch sauber* as examples of resultative adverbial constructions. However, these examples are probably better analysed as adjectival predicates with light verbs *halten* and *machen*, see the full discussion in Section 10.2.8.

- (9.15) a. Er niest das Taschentuch voll.  
 b. Er redet mir das Leben schön.  
 c. Ich rede mir mein Benehmen gut.

[9.20] There is a lot of variation with resultative adverbs. It seems like the adverb itself has a strong impact on the kind of diathesis that is induced. In some examples there is even a demotion, though this does not seem to be frequent (9.16).

- (9.16) a. Ich sehe das Gemälde.  
 b. Ich sehe mich satt an dem Gemälde.

### 9.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

[9.21] There are various verbs in German that obligatorily need an adverbial, which are collected in this section. All examples discussed in this section concern verbs with obligatory DEPICTIVE adverbials. I see no reason for obligatory RESULTATIVE adverbials to be impossible – I simply have not encountered any examples yet. The phenomenon to look out for are verbs with a resultative adverbial like *leerkaufen* in which the main predicate *kaufen* is not attested as an individual verb, but only occurs in combination with a resultative adverbial.

#### – Verb with obligatory depictive adverbial –

##### 9.3.1 [ N ] Nominative+adverbial

[9.22] Some verbs have obligatory manner adverbial arguments, called “Artergänzung” by Engelen (1986: 140). In some special situations the adverbial can be left out, but only with a subsequent strong evaluative implication. For example, with *aussehen* ‘to look/appear’ (9.17 a,b) without an adverbial (9.17 c) there is a strong negative implicature that somebody looks bad. In contrast, with a verb like *sitzen* ‘to fit’ (9.18 a), the omission of the manner adverb implies a positive fit (9.17 b). Note that negation also can function syntactically as a manner adverbial in this context (9.18 c).

- (9.17) a. Er sieht gut aus.  
 b. \*Er sieht aus.  
 c. Er sieht aber aus!
- (9.18) a. Der Mantel sitzt gut.  
 b. Der Mantel sitzt.  
 c. Der Mantel sitzt nicht.

[9.23]

Verbs with an obligatory local prepositional phrase (Section 6.3.3), like *übernachten* ‘to sleep over’ (9.19 a), can of course also be used with an obligatory local adverbial instead (9.19 b).

- (9.19) a. Er übernachtet bei Freunden.  
b. Er übernachtet hier/dort/draußen.

#### Attested Verbs

[9.24]

- Appearance: *ausfallen, aussehen, bleiben, gelaunt sein, klingen, riechen, sitzen (passen), wirken (erscheinen)*
- Quantity: *kosten, wiegen*
- Location: *entspringen, münden, spielen (zutragen), wohnen, übernachten, zeigen*

#### Further Examples

[9.25]

- Ich bleibe wachsam/ruhig.
- Sein Zeugnis ist schlecht ausgefallen.
- Der Vortragende wirkte nervös.

#### Notes

[9.26]

The verb *klingen* has two slightly different, but clearly related meanings. In the literal meaning ‘to ring’ it can only be used with a highly restricted set of nominative subjects that can actually ring, like *Glocken* ‘bells’ (9.20 a). In the more general meaning ‘to sound’ it can be used with a wide variety of subjects, but in this meaning it obligatory needs an adverbial (9.20 b,c).

[9.27]

- (9.20) a. Die Glocken klingen.  
b. Die Musik klingt gut.  
c. \* Die Musik klingt.

### 9.3.2 [ N ] Nominative+reflexive+adverbial

The obligatory reflexive verb *sich benehmen* ‘to behave’ preferably needs an adverbial constituent that describes how to behave (9.21 a,b), except in imperatives (9.21 c) and in some light verb constructions (9.21 d). Without an adverbial this verb has a conversational implicature of ‘good’ behaviour. Note that there is a completely different meaning of *benehmen* without reflexive *sich* meaning ‘to deprive of’ (9.21 e) that does not need an adverbial.

[9.28]

- (9.21) a. Ich benehme mich anständig.  
b. ? Ich benehme mich.  
c. Benimm dich!  
d. Ich weiß mich zu benehmen.  
e. Und trotzdem benimmt es mir fast den Atem.<sup>3</sup>

The verbs *sich verhalten* and *sich aufführen* ‘to behave’ similarly always need an adverbial that indicates the kind of behaviour (9.22 a-d). All such examples currently known to me

[9.29]

<sup>3</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 06.03.1992, Nr. 11.

describe some kind of behaviour. As always, leaving out the adverbial is sometimes possible with a strong conversational implicature, e.g. ‘bad’ behaviour with *sich aufführen* (9.22 e).

- (9.22) a. \* Ich verhalte mich.  
 b. Ich verhalte mich tapfer.  
 c. \* Ich führe mich auf.  
 d. Ich führe mich wie ein Holzklotz auf.  
 e. Du führst dich aber mal wieder auf!

[9.30] **Attested Verbs**

- *anhören, aufführen, benehmen, geben (vorzeigen), gebärden, verhalten*

[9.31] **Further Examples**

- Er gibt sich jovial.
- Ich verhalte mich abwartend.
- Diese Musik kann man sich gut anhören.

### 9.3.3 [ NP ] Nominative+governed preposition+adverbial

[9.32] Both the manner adverbial and the governed preposition cannot be left out with *halten von* ‘to think of’ (9.23).

- (9.23) a. Ich halte viel von dir  
 b. \* Ich halte viel.  
 c. \* Ich halte von dir.

[9.33] **Attested Verbs**

- *halten*

### 9.3.4 [ NA ] Nominative+accusative+adverbial

[9.34] Both the manner adverbial and the accusative argument cannot be left out with *stimmen in* in the meaning ‘to raise the atmosphere’ (9.24).

- (9.24) a. Die Musik stimmt die Leute freundlich.  
 b. \* Die Musik stimmt die Leute.  
 c. \* Die Musik stimmt freundlich.

[9.35] **Attested Verbs**

- *finden, stimmen*

[9.36] **Further Examples**

- Sie findet den Stuhl gut.

### 9.3.5 [ ND ] Nominative+dative+adverbial

The verb *bekommen* in the meaning ‘something agrees with someone’ needs a dative and cannot be used without an adverbial (9.25 a,b). With a negation it is possible, though with the obvious implicature that the agreement is ‘bad’ (9.25 c). [9.37]

- (9.25) a. Das Essen bekommt mir schlecht.  
 b. \* Das Essen bekommt mir.  
 c. Das Essen bekommt mir nicht.

The verb *fallen* in the meaning ‘to be difficult/easy’ can be used with either *schwer* or *leicht*, but apparently with no other adverbials (9.26). [9.38]

- (9.26) a. Die Aufgabe fällt mir schwer/leicht.  
 b. \* Die Aufgabe fällt mir.

#### Attested Verbs

[9.39]

- *bekommen, fallen*

### 9.3.6 [ D ] Dative+adverbial

Because there is no nominative argument in this special construction with *gehen* meaning ‘to cope with life’ (9.27 a) a non-phoric *es* pronoun is necessary. Note that the same meaning of *gehen* also occurs in other impersonal constructions, see Section 9.3.7. Without the adverbial there is a conversational implicature that one is coping ‘so-so’ with life (9.27 b). Without the dative it seems like the pronoun *es* is always referential, though the reference is often implicit. For example, in (9.27 c) the pronoun *es* seems to refer to something like ‘the using of the foot’ (see also Section 9.3.7). [9.40]

- (9.27) a. Mir geht es gut.  
 b. (Wie geht es dir?) Es geht.  
 c. Mein Fuß ist nicht mehr eingeschränkt, es geht besser.<sup>4</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[9.41]

- *gehen*

## — Alternation with obligatory depictive adverbials —

### 9.3.7 [ N | – ] Nominative drop+depictive adverbial

Some verbs allow the presence or absence of a nominative subject, like with *langen* ‘to be enough’ (9.28 a,b). Whether this is better interpreted as the loss or the addition of an agent is unclear. These verbs need an additional manner adverbial, negation, or *wie* comparison clause. [9.42]

- (9.28) a. Das Gehalt langt nicht.  
 b. Jetzt langt es aber!

#### Attested Verbs

[9.43]

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.07.2012 (online).

- *aussehen, funktionieren, gehen, klappen, langen*

#### [9.44] Further Examples

- Hier sieht es gut aus.  
Er sieht gut aus.
- So geht es jahrelang, bis es 1982 dann gar nicht mehr geht.  
Das Radeln geht gut.
- Hier funktioniert es wieder normal.  
Die Lampe funktioniert wieder.

#### [9.45] Notes

- [9.46] The verbs *gehen*, see Section 9.3.6 and *langen*, see Section 5.8.3 also allow for dative experiencers.

## 9.4 Alternations without diathesis

- [9.47] Depictive adverbials are a regular part of German grammar. In all German sentences there are many different possibilities to add depictive adverbials. In this chapter, I consider the addition of such an adverbial as a sort of alternation, which is arguably a stretch of the meaning of the term ‘alternation’. However, as will be shown in this chapter, there are actually various examples in which the addition of an adverbial induces a change in valency. In contrast, it is of course extremely common for such an alternation to occur without any change in valency. That is actually the ‘normal’ situation with depictive adverbials, as illustrated in (9.29).

- (9.29) a. Ich fahre nach Hause.  
b. Ich fahre schnell nach Hause.

- [9.48] The situation is more interesting with resultative adverbials. There are many diatheses with resultative adverbials (as discussed throughout this chapter), but there also exist a few highly productive patterns in which the addition of a resultative adverb does not result in a diathesis. More research is needed to predict under what circumstances a diathesis occurs, and when not. In the subsequent subsections I will present some illustrative examples in which there is no diathesis.

### — Reflexive resultative adverbs — *Resultativer Reflexiv*

#### 9.4.1 [ N | N ] Intransitives+reflexive+resultative adverbial

- [9.49] There is a special construction that apparently only exists for some intransitive verbs, like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ (9.30 a). The verb is combined with a reflexive pronoun and a resultative secondary predicate. The meaning of this construction approximately amounts to ‘by performing the verb, the secondary predicate is achieved’ (9.30 b).

- (9.30) Ich schlafe mich gesund.  
(= Ich schlafe, und dadurch bin ich gesund.)

The intransitive verbs that allow this seem to be strongly related to the agentive class of intransitive (see Section 10.2.6), while typical patientive intransitives are not possible in this construction, though note constructions like (9.31 f).

- (9.31) a. \*Ich habe mich gesund eingeschlafen.  
 b. \*Ich scheitere mich reich.  
 c. \*Ich sterbe mich tot.  
 d. \*Der Zug ist sich gut angekommen.  
 e. \*Ich wachse mich groß.  
 f. Der Wald wächst sich zu Tode.

When the combination of adverbial and verb is considered to be a new lexicalised predicate (i.e. *totlachen*, *hocharbeiten*), then these predicates would be obligatorily reflexive (alike to the verbs in Section 7.3.1). [9.51]

#### Attested Verbs

[9.52]

- *arbeiten, lachen, laufen, reden, schlafen, sitzen, sparen*, etc.

#### Further Examples

[9.53]

- Ich lache mich tot/kaputt/schlapp.
- Ich spare mich reich.
- Ich arbeite mich hoch.
- Ich laufe mich glücklich.

### 9.4.2 [ NP | NP ] Governed proposition+reflexive+resultative adverbial

The same reflexive+adverbial alternation is attested with some verbs that take a governed preposition, like *lachen* ‘to laugh’ (9.32). Note that the prepositional phrase can be retained. [9.54]

- (9.32) a. Ich lache (über den Witz).  
 b. Ich lache mich tot (über den Witz).

#### Attested Verbs

[9.55]

- tot- : *arbeiten, lachen*

#### Further Examples

[9.56]

- Ich arbeite an einem Buch.  
 Ich arbeite mich tot.

### — Resultative adverbs without diathesis —

### 9.4.3 [ N | N ] Intransitives+resultative adverbial

Different from the verbs in the previous sections, some intransitive verbs like *rennen* ‘to run’ allow for a secondary predicate without any other structural changes, resulting for example [9.57]



in *losrennen* ‘to start running’ (9.33). I consider this to be a resultative adverb because of the parallelism to the applicative diathesis in Section 9.8.2.

- (9.33) a. Der Junge rennt.  
b. Der Junge rennt los.

[9.58] An additional affect of this alternation is that the agentive *rennen* becomes a patientive *losrennen* (9.34), see also Section 10.2.6.

- (9.34) a. Der Junge hat gerannt.  
\*Der gerannte Junge [...].  
b. Der Junge ist nach Hause gerannt.  
Der nach Hause gerannte Junge [...].  
c. Der Junge ist losgerannt.  
Der losgerannte Junge [...].

#### [9.59] Attested Verbs

- los- : *lachen, reden, rennen*
- leer- : *laufen*

#### [9.60] Further Examples

- Er redet/lacht los.
- Der Eimer läuft leer.

### 9.4.4 [ NA | NA ] Transitives+resultative adverbial

[9.61] With transitive verbs, the addition of a resultative adverb normally does not lead to any role remapping. Such transitive verbs without diathesis appear to be a frequent and the examples given below are just a few illustrative verbs. The diathesis-free alternation of transitive verbs is quite different from the diathetical effect resultative adverbs have on many intransitive verbs (see Section 9.8.2).

- (9.35) a. Der Händler kauft die Sklaven.  
b. Der Händler kauft die Sklaven frei.

#### [9.62] Attested Verb

- frei- : *kaufen*
- tot- : *schießen*
- kaputt- : *kochen*
- platt- : *walzen*
- gut- : *machen*

#### [9.63] Further Examples

- Ich schieße den Bären.  
Ich schieße den Bären tot.
- Ich koche den Reis.  
Ich koche den Reis kaputt.
- Er machte einen Fehler.  
Er machte seinen Fehler gut.

## 9.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

### – [ SBJ > Ø ] – *Wertungsverbativ*

#### 9.5.1 [ N | – ] Reflexive intransitive drop+depictive adverbial

Many intransitives allow for a dropping of the nominative with an obligatory reflexive pronoun *sich* and an obligatory adverbial. Because of the dropped nominative there is an obligatory non-phoric *es* in such sentences (9.36 a). Such constructions seem to be possible with very many intransitive verbs, though with some, like *aufstehen* ‘rise’ (9.36 b), it is of debatable grammaticality. More research is needed into the question which intransitive verbs do not allow this diathesis. [9.64]

- (9.36) a. In der Gruppe lacht es sich besser.  
 b. ? Am frühen morgen steht es sich schlecht auf.

A very similar diathesis is attested with transitives, see Section 9.5.2, but in that case the accusative is retained as a nominative (i.e. anticausative). Also note that the connection between an intransitive subject drop and a transitive anticausative is strongly reminiscent of the unaccusative hypothesis, see Section 10.2.6. However, there does not seem to be an obvious match between patientive (‘unaccusative’) verbs and the verbs that allow for the current diathesis (cf. Steinbach 1998: 15-18). [9.65]

#### Attested Verbs [9.66]

- Very many intransitives allow for this construction, like:  
*leben, tanzen, lachen, ertrinken* etc.
- However, there are many exceptions like:  
*aufstehen, beginnen, stinken* etc.

#### Further Examples [9.67]

- Hier lebt es sich gut.
- In diesem Saal tanzt es sich gut.
- Beim Kanufahren ertrinkt es sich leichter als bei der Aquarellmalerei.

### – [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] – *Wertungsantikausativ*

#### 9.5.2 [ NA | –N ] Reflexive anticausative+depictive adverbial

With many verbs an anticausative is only possible with an evaluative adverbial and a reflexive pronoun (9.37). There is a clear parallel to the diathesis for intransitives described in Section 9.5.1. The semantically highly similar *lassen+Infinitiv* construction (9.37 c) does not need the adverbial (see Section 11.5.4). [9.68]

- (9.37) a. Ich schneide die Wurst mit diesem Messer.  
 b. Die Wurst schneidet sich schwer mit diesem Messer.  
 c. Die Wurst lässt sich mit diesem Messer schneiden.

Kunze (1996: 647) and Steinbach (1998) call this ‘middle’, Zifonun (2003) ‘fazilitives Medium’, Wiemer & Nedjalkov (2007: 465-466) classify it as a ‘passive-like meaning of reflexive’ and Kulikov (2011: 375-376) talks about a ‘potential agentless passive’. Steinbach (1998: 25ff.) argues that the adverbial is not necessary in the ‘middle’ construction, but this is [9.69]

because he combines different constructions under the heading of ‘middle’. His examples without adverbial are discussed here as a separate construction in Section 7.5.2.

[9.70] **Attested Verbs**

- *anfühlen, anhören, fahren, finden, gehen, laufen, lesen, lernen, malen, schneiden, schreiben, spielen, springen, tanzen, verdienen, verkaufen*, etc.

[9.71] **Further Examples**

- Ich fahre einen Lastwagen.  
Der Lastwagen fährt sich gut.
- Ich verkaufe das Buch.  
Das Buch verkauft sich gut.
- Ich schreibe Briefe mit einem Bleistift.  
Briefe schreiben sich schlecht mit einem Bleistift.
- Ich finde neue Freunde.  
Neue Freunde finden sich nur schwer.
- Ich male ein Bild.  
Das Bild hat sich wie von alleine gemalt.
- Ich spiele Klavier.  
Das Klavier spielt sich angenehm.
- Er hat den Marathon gelaufen.  
Ein Marathon läuft sich nicht einfach so.
- Er hat den Salto gesprungen.  
Ein Salto springt sich nicht einfach so.
- Er hat den Tango getanzt.  
Ein Tango tanzt sich ganz leicht.
- Ich habe seine kalte Nase angefühlt.  
Seine Nase fühlt sich kalt an.
- Ich lese den Roman.  
Der neue Roman liest sich mühelos.

[9.72] **Notes**

[9.73] Some of these verbs can also occur with a ‘free’ dative, see Section 7.4.4.

- (9.38)
- a. Ich höre (mir) deinen Vorschlag an.  
Dein Vorschlag hört sich gut an.
  - b. Ich habe (mir) das Konzert angehört.  
Das Konzert hört sich gut an.
  - c. Ich verdiene (mir) ein Vermögen.  
Ein Vermögen verdient sich leicht.

### 9.5.3 [ NA | -N ] Anticausative+depictive adverbial

[9.74] The verb *riechen* ‘to smell’ allows for an anticausative alternation (9.39 a,b), but the intransitive obligatorily needs an adverbial. It is possible to leave out the adverbial, but then a strong negative conversational implicature arises, i.e. without an adverbial the smell is bad (9.39 c).

Interestingly, with *schmecken* ‘to taste’ the absence of an adverbial leads to a positive implicature (9.39 d).

- (9.39) a. Ich rieche den Duft.  
 b. Der Duft riecht gut.  
 c. Der Müll riecht (schlecht).  
 d. Das Essen schmeckt (gut).

#### Attested Verbs

[9.75]

- *riechen, schmecken*

#### Further Examples

[9.76]

- Ich schmecke den Rotwein in der Soße.  
 Der Rotwein schmeckt (mir) gut.

— [ ADJ > SBJ > Ø ] —

### 9.5.4 [ Np | -N ] Conciliative+depictive adverbial

Some verbs that have a typical instrument connected to the action allow for the instrument to be turned into the nominative subject, but only with the addition of an adverbial (9.40). [9.77]

- (9.40) a. Ich schneide (das Brot) mit einem Messer.  
 b. Das Messer schneidet das Brot.  
 c. ? Das Messer schneidet.  
 d. Das Messer schneidet gut.

#### Attested Verbs

[9.78]

- *schneiden, schreiben*

#### Further Examples

[9.79]

- Ich schreibe den Brief mit einem Füller.  
 Der Füller schreibt gut.

## 9.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

This section is empty. It is only added here for the numbering to be parallel across chapters. [9.80]

## 9.7 Diatheses with object demotion

— [ OBJ > Ø ] — *Aktionsfokus*

### 9.7.1 [ NA | N- ] Action focus+depictive adverbial

Many transitive verbs can be used without an accusative object. However, with some verbs this deaccusative drop comes easier than for others. Real ambitransitive verbs that occur [9.81]

both as transitive and as intransitive, but without needing any extra marking in the intransitive, are discussed in Section 5.7.1. For some transitive verbs, like *sehen* ‘to see’ (9.41), the drop of the accusative is only possible in combination with an adverbial specification (9.41 b,c). What seems to happen here is that the focus of the utterance becomes the action itself, i.e. the ‘seeing’. However, this only makes sense with the addition of a specification of the action by an adverbial describing the manner in which the seeing is taking place.

- (9.41) a. Ich sehe das Haus.  
       b. \*Ich sehe.  
       c. Ich sehe gut.
- (9.42) a. Die Kinder zerstören die Sandburg.  
       b. ? Die Kinder zerstören.  
       c. Kinder zerstören halt gerne.

[9.82] **Attested Verbs**

- *schenken, sehen, zerstören*, etc.

[9.83] **Further Examples**

- Ich schenke nur zu Weihnachten und Geburtstagen.  
   \*Ich schenke.

### 9.7.2 [ NA | N– ] Endoreflexiv+depictive adverbial

[9.84] The verb *fühlen* ‘to feel’ (9.43 a) is similar to endoreflexiv verbs (see Section 7.7.1), but with an obligatory depictive adverbial (9.43 b,c). Note that the last sentence (9.43 c) is grammatical when it is interpreted as a ‘real’ self-inflicting reflexive, viz. ‘I touch myself’.

- (9.43) a. Ich fühle die Schmerzen.  
       b. Ich fühle mich schlecht.  
       c. \*Ich fühle mich.

[9.85] **Attested Verbs**

- *fühlen*

### 9.7.3 [ NA | N– ] Accusative *es*+depictive adverbial

[9.86] Some verbs allow for constructions with a non-phoric *es* pronoun possibly in the accusative (see Section 6.3.5). With some verbs in this construction a manner adverbial is also necessarily present, like with *meinen* ‘to deem’ (9.44 a,b). Without the manner adverbial the only possible interpretation of the pronoun *es* is phoric (9.44 d).

- (9.44) a. Ich meine deinen Bruder.  
       b. Ich meine es ernst.  
       c. \*Ich meine ernst.  
       d. Ich meine es.

[9.87] **Attested Verbs**

- *haben, meinen*

#### Further Examples

[9.88]

- Wir haben viel Geld.  
Wir haben es gut.

### – [ PBJ > ADJ ] – *Adverb Delokativ*

#### 9.7.4 [ NAL | NAp ] Transitive location drop+resultative adverbial

The locational prepositional phrase with verbs like *binden* ‘to tie’ (9.45 a,b) is obligatory present. In contrast, when adding a resultative adverbial, forming e.g. *losbinden* ‘to untie’ (9.45 c,d), then the locational phrase is not obligatory anymore (cf. Section 8.7.11). I currently only know of examples of this diathesis with the adverbials *los-*, *fest-* and *weg-*. However, I do not see any reason for other adverbials to be impossible.

- (9.45) a. Ich binde den Hund an die Leine.  
b. \*Ich binde den Hund.  
c. Ich binde den Hund von der Leine los.  
d. Ich binde den Hund los.

#### Attested Verbs

[9.90]

- *los/fest-* : *binden, haken, klopfen, schnallen, schrauben*
- *weg-* : *pumpen, pusten, schleudern, senden, stecken*

#### Further Examples

[9.91]

- Die Pumpe pumpt das Wasser aus dem Keller.  
Die Pumpe pumpt das Wasser weg.
- Ich puste die Asche vom Tisch.  
Ich puste die Asche weg.
- Ich sende das Paket nach Hause.  
Ich sende das Paket weg.
- Ich stecke das Geld in meine Tasche.  
Ich stecke das Geld weg.
- Die Arbeiter klopfen die Pflastersteine in den Bürgersteig.  
Die Arbeiter klopfen die letzten Pflastersteine fest.<sup>5</sup>

#### 9.7.5 [ NL | Np ] Intransitive location drop+resultative adverbial

A similar loss of obligatory location is found with *laufen* in the meaning ‘to pour’ (9.46). However, this verb does not take any accusative argument.

- (9.46) a. Das Wasser läuft in die Badewanne.  
b. Die Badewanne läuft voll (mit Wasser).

#### Attested Verbs

[9.93]

- *voll-* : *laufen*

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<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Bild, 28.04.2005.

### 9.7.6 [ NL | Np ] Intransitive location drop+reflexive+resultative adverbial

[9.94] Similar to the previous diathesis, some intransitives with obligatory location (9.47 a,b) can be used without this location when an adverbial is added (9.47 c). However, with these intransitives an additional reflexive pronoun is necessary.

- (9.47) a. Der Patient liegt auf dem Bett.  
 b. ? Der Patient liegt.  
 c. Der Patient liegt sich wund (auf dem Bett).

#### [9.95] Attested Verbs

- wund- : *liegen, sitzen*

### — [ OBJ > ADJ ] —

### 9.7.7 [ NA | Np ] Reflexive antipassive+resultative adverbial

[9.96] The accusative object of *sehen* ‘to see’ is transformed into a prepositional phrase when adding the adverbial *satt* to form *sattsehen* ‘to see until satisfied’ (9.48). This antipassive diathesis is currently only attested with the adverb *satt*, but I do not see any reason for other adverbs to be impossible here (see Section 8.7.4 for similar examples with preverbs).

- (9.48) a. Ich sehe das Gemälde.  
 b. Ich sehe mich satt an dem Gemälde.

#### [9.97] Attested Verbs

- satt- : *essen, sehen, lesen*

#### [9.98] Further Examples

- Ich esse die Bouletten.  
 Ich esse mich satt an den Bouletten.
- Ich lese die Artikel.  
 Ich lese mich satt an den Artikeln.

### — [ ADJ > OBJ > Ø ] —

### 9.7.8 [ NpA | NA- ] Applicative+accusative drop+resultative adverbial

[9.99] Adding a resultative adverbial to a transitive verb leads to an applicative diatheses. Any erstwhile prepositional phrase is turned into an accusative. With the adverbial *leer* it does not seem to be possible to retain the erstwhile accusative (9.49). In contrast, with the adverbial *voll* the retention of the accusative as a prepositional phrase is possible (see Section 9.9.1).

- (9.49) a. Ich kaufe ein Brot in dem Geschäft.  
 b. Ich kaufe das Geschäft leer.

#### [9.100] Attested Verbs

- leer- : *essen, kaufen, pumpen*

#### Further Examples

[9.101]

- Ich esse die Kartoffel von dem Teller.  
Ich esse den Teller leer.
- Ichpumpe das Wasser aus dem Keller.  
Ichpumpe den Keller leer.

## 9.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

– [ Ø > OBJ ] –

### 9.8.1 [ N- | NA ] Object addition+resultative adverbial

Some intransitives, like *bellen* ‘to bark’ get a completely new role in the accusative with the addition of a resultative adverbial (9.50). This seems to be a special variant of the more productive applicative as discussed in the next section. [9.102]

- (9.50) a. Der Hund bellt.  
b. Der Hund bellt die Kinder wach.

#### Attested Verbs

[9.103]

- wach- : *bellen*
- kaputt- : *fallen, sparen*

#### Further Examples

[9.104]

- Ich falle.  
Ich falle meine Hose kaputt.  
Als jemand der sich Handgelenk und insbesondere das Knie mit dem Rad kaputt gefallen hat: ich bin extrem froh, dass der Kopf heile geblieben ist.<sup>6</sup>

– [ ADJ > OBJ ] – *Adverb Akkusativ Applikativ*

### 9.8.2 [ Np | NA ] Applicative+resultative adverbial

This appears to be the most productive kind of diathesis with a resultative adverbial. An optional prepositional phrase of an intransitive verb like *niesen* ‘to sneeze’ (9.51 a) is reformulated as an accusative with the resultative adverbial, here *voll* ‘full’ (9.51 b). There are many different adverbials that induce this diatheses. The list presented below is in no way complete, but should just be seen as a set of random illustrative examples. [9.105]

- (9.51) a. Ich niese (in das Taschentuch).  
b. Ich niese das Taschentuch voll.

[9.106]

<sup>6</sup> Attested online at [https://www.reddit.com/r/Fahrrad/comments/vtyxw7/wie\\_haltet\\_ihr\\_das\\_durch/](https://www.reddit.com/r/Fahrrad/comments/vtyxw7/wie_haltet_ihr_das_durch/), accessed 13 August 2022.



This diathesis is also attested with governed prepositions, like with *reden über* 'to talk about' (9.52).

- (9.52) a. Ich rede über dein Benehmen.  
           Ich rede darüber, dass du dich gut benommen hast.  
       b. Ich rede dein Benehmen gut.

[9.107] In contrast to these intransitive verbs, with transitive verbs the addition of a resultative adverb mostly does not lead to any role-remapping (see Section 9.4.4). However, note the diatheses of transitive verbs with *satt* (Section 9.7.7), *leer* (Section 9.7.8) and *voll* (Section 9.9.1).

[9.108] **Attested Verbs**

- voll- : *heulen, niesen, quatschen*
- leer- : *fischen*
- gut- : *reden*
- schön- : *reden*
- gesund- : *beten*
- platt- : *drücken, laufen*
- kaputt- : *drücken, fahren, laufen, reißen*
- weg- : *diskutieren, lachen, reden*
- nass- : *schwitzen, weinen*
- wund- : *beißen, sitzen*
- hoch- : *drehen, laufen*
- nieder- : *diskutieren, boxen*
- frei- : *beten, bitten*

[9.109] **Further Examples**

- Ich fische in dem Teich.  
   Ich fische den Teich leer.
- Ich weine in das Taschentuch.  
   Ich weine das Taschentuch nass.
- Ich beiße auf meine Lippe.  
   Ich beiße meine Lippe wund.
- Ich sitze auf den Po.  
   Ich sitze den Po wund.
- Ich drehe an der Lautstärke.  
   Ich drehe die Lautstärke hoch.
- Ich heule in das Kissen.  
   Ich heule das Kissen voll.
- Ich quatsche mit ihm.  
   Ich quatsche ihn voll.
- Ich diskutiere/boxe mit ihm.  
   Ich diskutiere/boxe ihn nieder.
- Ich rede über die Reise.  
   Ich rede (mir) die Reise schön.
- Das Publikum lacht über die DDR.  
   Und ein ganzes Stadion lachte mal kurz die DDR weg.
- Ich bitte/bete um Vergebung.  
   Ich bitte/bete den Gefangenen frei.

- Ich bete für den Kranken.  
Ich bete den Kranken gesund.

#### Notes

Some of these verbs allow for the addition of an accusative result (9.53 a,b), see Section 5.8.1. The diathesis between (9.53 b) and (9.53 c) then becomes an example of a full applicative, see Section 9.9.1. [9.110] [9.111]

- (9.53) a. Ich laufe auf meinen neuen Schuhen.  
b. Ich laufe den Marathon in meinen neuen Schuhen.  
c. Ich laufe meine Schuhe bei dem Marathon platt/kaputt.

## 9.9 Symmetrical diatheses

### – [ ADJ > OBJ > ADJ ] – *Adverb Vollapplikativ*

#### 9.9.1 [ NpA | NAp ] Applicative+*mit* antipassive+resultative adverbial

The adverbial *voll* induces a full applicative, promotion a prepositional phrase to accusative, while the erstwhile accusative can still be (optionally) retained as a *mit* prepositional phrase. The examples with *leer* in Section 9.7.8 are highly similar, but cannot retain the erstwhile accusative. [9.112]

- (9.54) a. Ich schenke den Wein in das Glas.  
b. Ich schenke das Glas voll (mit Wein).

#### Attested Verbs

- voll- : *kritzeln, laden, laufen, packen, pumpen, schenken, schreiben, tanken*

#### Further Examples

- Ich kritzle/schreibe Buchstaben in das Buch.  
Ich kritzle/schreibe das Buch voll (mit Buchstaben).
- Ich lade Heu auf den Wagen.  
Ich lade den Wagen voll (mit Heu).
- Ich packe die Einkäufe in den Wagen.  
Ich packe den Wagen voll (mit Einkäufe).
- Ichpumpe Luft in den Reifen.  
Ichpumpe den Reifen voll (mit Luft).
- Ich tanke Benzin in das Auto.  
Ich tanke das Auto voll (mit Benzin).

## Chapter 10

# Light-verb alternations with *Partizip*

### 10.1 Introduction

[10.1] The term PARTIZIP is used here as the name for a verb form known in German grammar as *Partizip II*, for example *geschrieben* ‘written’ in (10.1). There is another *Partizip*, known in German grammar as *Partizip I*, but this wordform plays no role in the expression of diatheses. Constructions consisting of such a participle combined with an auxiliary-like light verb (i.e. a verb with limited lexical meaning) are manifold in German. They include constructions without diathesis, like the German *haben+Partizip* PERFEKT (10.1 a), and constructions with diathesis, like the *werden+Partizip* VORGANGSPASSIV (10.1 b).

- (10.1) a. Ich habe einen Brief geschrieben.  
b. Der Brief wurde geschrieben.

[10.2] Diatheses consisting of light verbs with participles are widely acknowledged as crucial constructions of German grammar. For example, the *werden+Partizip* passive is often seen as the quintessential example of a diathesis. Other similar constructions are also extensively discussed, like *sein+Partizip* (10.2 a), known as ZUSTANDSPASSIV (see Section 10.5.17), and *bekommen+Partizip* (10.2 b), known as REZIPIENTENPASSIV (see Section 10.5.21). Many others, though, are only sporadically discussed, like *gehören+Partizip* (10.2 c), here called NORMPASSIV (see Section 10.5.18).

- (10.2) a. Der Brief ist schon fertig geschrieben.  
b. Er bekommt einen Brief geschrieben.  
c. Dieser Brief gehört geschrieben.

[10.3] This chapter is an attempt to provide a complete survey of light-verb constructions with participles in German. Care has to be taken to distinguish light-verb constructions (10.3 a) from constructions in which the participle is used adverbially as a depictive secondary predicate (10.3 b). Both constructions superficially look very similar, but can be distinguished by various syntactic characteristics (see Section 10.2.4). For example, in subordinate constructions a depictive participle can stay together with the depicted noun and then possibly

be separated from the light verb (10.3b), while in a light-verb construction the participle always has to occur directly adjacent to the light verb (10.3a).

- (10.3) a. Er hält das Haus verschlossen.  
           Es ist bekannt, dass er das Haus vor den Kindern *verschlossen* hält.
- b. Er hinterlässt das Haus verschlossen.  
           Es ist bekannt, dass er das Haus *verschlossen* den Kindern hinterlässt.

After all such adverbial uses are discarded, there still remain many auxiliary-like light verbs that can be combined with a participle into a grammaticalised construction. The attested light verbs are summarised below by their literal meaning, but it is crucial to realise that these literal meanings are mostly lost in the grammaticalised constructions with participles. Also note that various of these verbs only rarely occur as light verbs. All these light-verb constructions will be discussed in separate subsections throughout this chapter. [10.4]

- Existential verbs: *sein, werden, bleiben, lassen, machen*
- Appearance verbs: *aussehen, scheinen, erscheinen, wirken*
- Grasp/Possession verbs: *haben, bekommen, kriegen, halten, erhalten, gehören, geben, finden, nehmen*
- Experience verbs: *wissen, sehen, glauben*
- Movement/Posture verbs: *stehen, kommen, liegen, gehen, setzen, zeigen*

The following twelve diatheses seem prominent enough to grant them a German name. I propose the following names: [10.5]

- [SBJ > Ø] *werden* UNPERSÖNLICHES VORGANGSPASSIV (see Section 10.5.1 ff.)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] *bleiben* KONTINUATIVANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 10.5.10)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] *aussehen/wirken* SINNESANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 10.5.12)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] *scheinen/erscheinen* INFERENZANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 10.5.11)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] *geben/zeigen* PRÄSENTATIVANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 10.5.13)
- [OBJ > SBJ > PBJ] *sein* ERLEBNISPASSIV (see Section 10.5.23)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *sein* ZUSTANDSPASSIV (see Section 10.5.17)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *werden* VORGANGSPASSIV (see Section 10.5.16)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *gehören* NORMPASSIV (see Section 10.5.18)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *bekommen* REZIPIENTENPASSIV (see Section 10.5.21)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *haben* PERTINENZPASSIV (see Section 10.5.22)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ/ADJ] *wissen/glauben/sehen/finden* OPINIATIV (see Section 10.6 ff.)

## 10.2 Characterising participle constructions

### 10.2.1 Identifying participles

German participles – in German grammar idiosyncratically known as *Partizip II* – can rather straightforwardly be identified by their morphology. However, this identification is complicated by the existence of a wide range of allomorphy, which will only be succinctly summarised here (cf. Duden-Grammatik 2009: 440, §613-614; Eisenberg 2006b: 201-202): [10.6]

- Typically, participles have a prefix *ge-*, like in *ge-kauf-t* (stem *kauf*), except when the stem already contains one of the prefixes *be-*, *er-*, *ver-*, *zer-*, *ent-*, like in *verkauf-t*. The prefix will appear between the stem and so-called verb particles *an-*, *ein-*, *vor-*, etc., like in *ein-ge-kauf-t*.

- Typically, participles have a suffix *-t*, like in *ge-kauf-t*, in some phonological surroundings with an epenthetic schwa, like in *ge-wart-et* (stem: *wart*). In a large but closed class of verbs the suffix is *-en*, like in *ge-lauf-en* (stem *lauf*), often combined with ablaut of the stem vowel, like in *ge-fund-en* (stem *find*).

[10.7] The allomorphs without *ge-* show syncretism, because such participles are identical to third person singular finite verb forms (or first/third person plural when ending in *-en*). In (10.4a) the wordform *verkauft* is a finite third person singular, while in (10.4b) it is a participle. However, given that the finite verbs show agreement with the subject, checking a different subject easily differentiates between these two homonyms, e.g. in the first person singular the finite verb changes to *verkaufe* (10.4c), while the participle remains unchanged (10.4d).

- (10.4) a. Er verkauft das Haus.  
 b. Er hat das Haus verkauft.  
 c. Ich verkaufe das Haus.  
 d. Ich habe das Haus verkauft.

[10.8] The formation of participles is highly productive in German. Every verb stem (i.e. every stem that can be used with person-inflected finite morphology) allows for the formation of a participle.<sup>1</sup> The formation of participles is extremely productive, and speakers have no problem producing participles for newly invented pseudo-words. The reversal is not true though, as there exist many participles that do not have corresponding finite verb forms (see Section 10.3).

## 10.2.2 Syntactic functions of participles

[10.9] Participles, like *geputzt* ‘cleaned’ in (10.5), can be used in three different syntactic functions in the grammar of German, namely as (i) an adnominal adjective (10.5a), see Section 10.2.6, as (ii) a depictive secondary predicate (10.5b), see Section 10.2.4, and as (iii) a part of light-verb construction (10.5c,d) to be discussed extensively throughout this chapter.

- (10.5) a. Das geputzte Haus erstrahlt im Sonnenlicht.  
 b. Er verkauft das Haus geputzt.  
 c. Er hat das Haus geputzt.  
 d. Das Haus wird geputzt.

[10.10]

<sup>1</sup>Latzel (1977: 73–76, citing and discussing data from Mater 1969) lists various verbs that do not allow for a participle. Most examples are very unusual verbs (e.g. *ornamentieren*, *leiben*), and most of the verbs listed clearly have participles (e.g. *ankeuchen*: *er kommt angekeucht*; *gutachten*: *ich habe gegutachtet*; *worthalten*: *ich habe wortgehalten*). The best examples of verbs without participles appear to be verbs with incorporated objects (e.g. *bausparen*, *wettlaufen*) that neither can be used in finite forms, nor as participle, but only as an infinitive. In these cases it is even questionable whether these words should be classified as verbs at all. Some participles indeed appear to be very rare, like with *stammen*, <sup>?</sup>*gestammt* ‘to originate from’ or *wogen*, <sup>?</sup>*gewogt* ‘to undulate’. However, examples are attested in corpora, e.g. *Wir haben keinen Hinweis darauf, woher der Geruch gestammt haben könnte* (DWDS: Die Zeit, 29.12.2014 online) or *Getanzt wird auch im Stehen nicht, nur gewogt*. (DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.04.2015, Nr. 16).

Arguably, these three functions are part of the spectrum of uses that are also available to German adjectives, like *leer* ‘empty’ in (10.6). Basically then, participles are morphologically derived verb forms that are syntactically alike to adjectives.

- (10.6) a. Das leere Haus erstrahlt im Sonnenlicht.  
 b. Er verkauft das Haus leer.  
 c. Er macht das Haus leer.  
 d. Das Haus ist leer.

Not all participles can be used in all three syntactic functions, however. For example, the participle *geschlafen* ‘slept’ (10.7) only allows for one of the contexts exemplified with *geputzt* in (10.5) above. Central to the discussion in this chapter is the fact that participles differ as to the kind of constructions in which they can occur. [10.11]

- (10.7) a. \*Das geschlafene Kind liegt im Bett.  
 b. \*Er beobachtet das Kind geschlafen.  
 c. Das Kind hat geschlafen.  
 d. \*Das Kind wird geschlafen.

Crucially, the adnominal and adverbial usage of participles are not monoclausal. An adnominal participle is an alternative expression of a relative subordinate clause and an adverbial participle has the status of an adverbial subordinate clause. In contrast, the light-verb constructions with participles are monoclausal. [10.12]

### 10.2.3 Adnominally used participles

The first observation of a restriction on participle usage goes back to the *Sprachlehre* of Carl Friedrich Aichinger (1754: 282 ff.). He reserves the term *PARTICIPIUM* for those stems that allow for an adnominal usage of their participles, like with *geputzt* in (10.5). His rationale for this restriction is that ‘real’ participles should allow for declension (like in Latin) and in German only the adnominal usage shows (minimal) declension. In contrast, participles that only occur in light-verb constructions, like *geschlafen* in (10.7) are morphologically immutable in German. Inflected wordforms like *geschlafene*, *geschlafenes* or *geschlafenen* do not exist in German. Aichinger proposes a separate name for such immutable participles, namely *SUPINUM*. This nomenclature is unfortunate, because the German participle has no relation at all to the Latin supine, neither formally nor functionally. Being criticised for this terminology, Aichinger in a later reply explains that he uses the term *Supinum* solely because the Latin supine is also an immutable verb form (Aichinger 1776: 627). Although there are many unfortunate terminological confusions in the history of linguistics, this usage of the term *Supinum* is regrettably still around in German grammatical literature to this day (with a history of transmission that deserves more in-depth study), most forcefully reinforced by the usage of this term in Bech (1955) and the large literature building on that influential work. [10.13]

The basic observation of Aichinger, though, is sound. There is clearly a group of verbs in German that do not allow for an adnominal usage of their participle. The impossibility of participles to function adnominally is nowadays often included as one of the characteristics of so-called unaccusative intransitives (here called ‘agentive’). Basically (and strongly simplified), the claim is that the verbs without adnominal participles are intransitive verbs that take the auxiliary *haben* in the perfect (see Section 10.2.6). Empirically, this correlation appears to be rather strong, though it is not without exceptions. For example, the verb [10.14]

*schmerzen* ‘to hurt’ (participle *geschmerzt*) and the verb *lügen* ‘to lie’ (participle *gelogen*) both have a perfect with the auxiliary *haben* and their participles are typically not used adnominally. However, exceptions can be found (10.8), though semantically these examples suggest a ‘patientive’ relation between the participle and the noun.

- (10.8) a. Sein Körper hat geschmerzt.  
Ähnlich ekstatisch *geschmerzte Körper* zeichneten der junge Kokoschka und Egon Schiele, als das Jahrhundert gerade begonnen hatte.<sup>2</sup>
- b. Er hat gelogen über die Geschichte.  
Die offizielle, aber *gelogene Variante der Geschichte* hat ihn selber mehr ergriffen.<sup>3</sup>

[10.15] Further, many intransitive verbs with a *haben* perfect can be used with a resultative accusative, for example manner-of-speaking verbs like *weinen* ‘to cry’ or movement verbs like *tanzen* ‘to dance’ (see Section 5.8.1). In such resultative usage they are transitives, and then the participle can be used adnominally with the accusative object (10.9).

- (10.9) a. Er hat geweint.  
Ich höre laute Schreie und unverständlich *geweinte Worte* aus dem Nebenzimmer.<sup>4</sup>
- b. Er hat getanzt.  
Besonders der im Biedermeierkostüm *getanzte Aschenbrödeltanz* mit Vertonung von Zepler ergab wirkungsvolle Bilder.<sup>5</sup>

[10.16] An even more intricate detail occurs with some movement verbs like *laufen* ‘to walk’. When used with a directional phrase like *nach Hause* ‘home’ this verb takes the auxiliary *sein* (10.10 a) and then the participle together with the directional phrase can be used adnominally (10.10 b). In contrast, the auxiliary *haben* seems incompatible with a directional phrase (10.10 c) and the participle without the directional phrase cannot be used adnominally (10.10 d).

- (10.10) a. Der Schüler ist nach Hause gelaufen.  
b. Der nach Hause gelaufene Schüler weint.  
c. Der Schüler hat \*(nach Hause) gelaufen.  
d. \*Der gelaufene Schüler weint.

#### 10.2.4 Adverbially used participles

[10.17] Participles that can be used adnominally can also be used adverbially, as so-called depictive secondary predicates (10.11 a), cf. also Section 9.2.2. In such sentences, the participle functions syntactically like an adverb in the sentence structure (10.11 b). The problem is that constructions with adverbial participles, like (10.11 a), are highly similar to light-verb

<sup>2</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 19.02.1988, Nr. 08.

<sup>3</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 08.05.2001.

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 11.01.2006, Nr. 02.

<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Berliner Tageblatt (Abend-Ausgabe), 12.03.1918.

constructions. For example, both constructions are coherent (10.11 c,d), cf. Section 1.3.1.

- (10.11) a. Er verkauft die Nägel gebogen.  
 b. Er verkauft die Nägel jetzt.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass er die Nägel gebogen/jetzt verkauft.  
 d. \* Es ist bekannt, dass er verkauft die Nägel gebogen/jetzt.

Diachronically, the depictive usage of participles is likely to be the origin of light-verb constructions. Various light-verb constructions appear to be only partially grammaticalised. For example, the participle *geschenkt* in (10.12 a) can both be interpreted as a depictive predicate with the meaning as in (10.12 b) and as part of a light-verb construction with meaning as in (10.12 c), see Section 10.5.21. [10.18]

- (10.12) a. Er bekommt ein Buch geschenkt.  
 b. Er bekommt ein Buch als Geschenk.  
 c. Ihm wird ein Buch geschenkt.

Synchronically, predicates as depictive secondary predicates and participles in light-verb constructions can be clearly separated. In the remainder of this section I will present five criteria for this separation: [10.19]

- i. Leaving out the participle.
- ii. Comparing the syntactic properties of participles to lexical adverbs.
- iii. Adding negation to the participle.
- iv. The semantic scope of the participle.
- v. Retention of arguments with the participle.

First, a participle as secondary predicate (10.13 a) can in most cases easily be identified by trying to leave it out of the sentence (10.13 b) or replace it with an adverb (10.13 c). The finite predicate of the sentence (here *verkaufen*, ‘to sell’) should not change its meaning, and in general the meaning of the sentence will remain almost identical (except of course for the meaning of the missing or replaced participle). [10.20]

- (10.13) a. Er verkauft die Nägel gebogen.  
 b. Er verkauft die Nägel.  
 c. Er verkauft die Nägel jetzt.

Second, more detailed indications to distinguish secondary predicates (10.14 a) from light verb constructions (10.15 a) can be obtained by investigating whether the participle behaves like an adverb. This can, for example, be shown overtly by trying to add linguistic material between the participle and the finite verb in a subordinate clause. This is possible for a participle as secondary predicate (10.14 b) and for adverbs (10.14 c). In contrast, for light-verb constructions in a subordinate clause, the finite verb always should follow immediately [10.21]



after the participle (10.15 b) with no possibility for anything to intervene (10.15 c).

- (10.14) a. Er kauft die Schuhe im Geschäft immer geputzt.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass er die Schuhe immer geputzt im Geschäft kauft.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass er die Schuhe immer morgens im Geschäft kauft.
- (10.15) a. Er bekommt die Schuhe im Geschäft immer geputzt.  
 (= Ihm werden die Schuhe im Geschäft immer geputzt.)  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass er die Schuhe immer im Geschäft geputzt bekommt.  
 c. \*Es ist bekannt, dass er die Schuhe immer geputzt im Geschäft bekommt.

[10.22] Third, secondary predication with participles can also be distinguished from light verb constructions by considering negation. Negation in sentences with a participle as a secondary predicate normally negates this secondary predicate itself (lexical scope), just like adverbs (10.16 a,b). With secondary predicates it is often even possible to use the prefix *un-* to mark the lexical scope of the negation over the participle (10.16 c). When the prefix *un-* can be added, this is an easy test for adverbial usage (Rothstein 2007: 161-162).

- (10.16) a. Er kauft die Schuhe nicht jetzt.  
 b. Er kauft die Schuhe nicht geputzt.  
 c. Er kauft die Schuhe (nur) ungeputzt.

[10.23] In contrast, negation in a monoclausal light verb construction with a participle has a wide scope reading over the whole sentence. For example, in (10.17 a) the verb *bekommen* has two different readings. Either, as in (10.17 b), the verb *bekommen* is a full lexical verb with the meaning 'to get as a gift' and a narrow scope negation over the participle *nicht geputzt* (which is almost equivalent to *ungeputzt* 'uncleaned'), resulting in a meaning of 'he gets a gift of uncleaned shoes'. In this interpretation, the participle is a secondary predicate. Alternatively (10.17 c), *bekommen* can be interpreted as a light verb with a meaning 'to get something done for you' with a full verb as participle *geputzt* 'cleaned'. Together with the wide scope negation the meaning of the sentence then becomes 'he doesn't manage to get his shoes cleaned'. In this interpretation, the participle is part of a light verb construction *bekommen+Partizip*, see Section 10.5.21.

- (10.17) a. Er bekommt die Schuhe nicht geputzt.  
 b. Er kriegt ein Geschenk, nämlich ungeputzte Schuhe.  
 c. Er schafft es nicht seine Schuhe putzen zu lassen.

[10.24] Note further that the sentence stress in (10.17 a) differs for both readings. The reading (10.17 b) has stress on the negation *nicht* (as is usually the case for lexical scope), while the reading (10.18 c) has stress on the participle *geputzt* (which is the regular stress placement for a wide-scope negation of the indicative main clause).

[10.25] Fourth, a further difference between participles as secondary predicate (10.18 a) and light verb constructions (10.18 b,c) is that secondary predicates are in many contexts ambiguous as to the scope of the predicate. For example, in (10.18 a) the secondary predicate *bekleidet* 'dressed' can be interpreted both as referring to the accusative object *Patienten* 'patients' and

(in this infamous example with a humorous undertone) to the nominative subject *Doktor* ‘doctor’. With a light verb construction there is never any such ambiguity.

- (10.18) a. Der Doktor untersucht seine Patienten immer bekleidet.  
 b. Der Doktor weiß seine Patienten immer bekleidet.  
 c. Der Doktor wird bekleidet.

Fifth and finally, in some circumstances arguments can be retained when participles are used as secondary predicate. For example, the syntactic function of the adverb *kaputt* ‘broken’ in (10.19 a) can be replaced by a participle *überlassen* ‘to abandon’, but only when the dative *dem Wetter* is retained (10.19c). This dative is not governed by the main verb *aussehen* ‘to appear’ but by the embedded predicate *überlassen* (10.19b). [10.26]

- (10.19) a. Der Balkon sieht *kaputt* aus.  
 (replacing *kaputt* with *Irgendjemand überlässt den Balkon dem Wetter*:)  
 Der Balkon sieht *dem Wetter überlassen* aus.  
 b. \* Der Balkon sieht *überlassen* aus.

Some more examples of such retained arguments are shown in (10.20) with intransitive and reflexive main verbs, and prepositional and dative retained arguments. [10.27]

- (10.20) a. Er hustete *plötzlich*.  
 (replacing *plötzlich* with *Schmerzen quälen ihn*:)  
 Er hustete *von Schmerzen gequält*.  
 b. Der Beschuldigte fühlt sich *schlecht*.  
 (replacing *schlecht* with *Irgendjemand liefert ihn dem Gericht aus*:)  
 Der Beschuldigte fühlt sich *dem Gericht ausgeliefert*.

### 10.2.5 Temporal interpretation of participle constructions

A widely discussed property of participle construction is the temporal structure of the resulting expression (cf. Höhle 1978: 42; Nedjalkov 1988: 412; Maienborn 2008: 88; Businger 2011: 162, among many others). There is a recurrent difference between TENSE-ORIENTED and PERFECT-ORIENTED participle constructions (perfect in the sense of Comrie 1976: Ch. 3). The role of perfective and imperfective aspectual meanings is rather inconclusive, so I propose to focus on slightly odd opposition ‘tense vs. perfect’ as the main diagnostic for the differences in temporal structure established by participle constructions. Note that in the German grammatical tradition there is a verb form called *Perfekt* that, confusingly, is primarily tense-oriented and not perfect-oriented (more on this below). [10.28]

A construction is TENSE-ORIENTED when it is possible to add a punctual non-present temporal adverbial to the participle construction, like *gestern* ‘yesterday’, *morgen* ‘tomorrow’, or *vor zwei Tagen* ‘two days ago’. Contemporaneous adverbials, like *jetzt* ‘now’ or *heute* ‘today’ are not useful to test for tense-orientation, as they are also compatible with perfect-orientation. For example, the *werden* Passive in (10.21 a) and the *bekommen* Dative Passive in (10.21 b) are both tense-oriented. In contrast, the *bleiben* anticausative in (10.22 a) and the [10.29]

*wissen* Opiniativ in (10.22b) are both not tense-oriented.

- (10.21) a. Das Auto wird morgen repariert.  
b. Er bekommt morgen das Auto repariert.
- (10.22) a. \* Die Tür bleibt morgen geöffnet.  
b. \* Sie weiß ihr Kind gestern/morgen eingeschlafen.

[10.30] Two conditions have to be met to identify a construction as being PERFECT-ORIENTED, namely (i) the process has to be completed and (ii) the resulting state-of-affairs remains intact after this completion. These two conditions can be tested in German by observing that in a context stating the completion (i) it is possible to add an 'ongoing' temporal adverbial (ii), like retrospective *schon lange* 'for a long time' and *seit zwei Stunden* 'since two hours', or prospective *für zwei Stunden* 'for two hours' and *bis morgen* 'until tomorrow'. For example, the *bleiben* and *wissen* participle constructions are perfect-oriented (10.23). As discussed previously, these constructions are not tense-oriented (10.22). In general, most constructions are either perfect-oriented or tense-oriented with only few exceptions. Congruously, the tense-oriented constructions with *werden* and *bekommen* (10.21) are not perfect-oriented (10.24). Note that the first condition of perfect-orientation (viz. that the process has to be completed) is crucial here. A sentence like *Das Auto wird seit zwei Stunden repariert* is grammatically perfectly fine in German, but only with an imperfective durative interpretation, i.e. the process is not completed, but still ongoing.

- (10.23) a. (Kontext: Die Tür ist offen.)  
Die Tür bleibt bis morgen geöffnet.  
b. (Kontext: Das Kind schläft.)  
Sie weiß ihr Kind schon seit zwei Stunden eingeschlafen.
- (10.24) (Kontext: Die Reparatur des Autos ist abgeschlossen.)  
a. \* Das Auto wird seit zwei Stunden repariert.  
b. \* Er bekommt das Auto schon lange repariert.

[10.31] The tense-oriented participle constructions are listed in (10.25). All others are perfect-oriented. Note that the actual time reference of tense-oriented participle constructions depends on the marking of the light verb.

- (10.25) Major TENSE-ORIENTED participle constructions:
- werden+Partizip* passive (see Section 10.5.16)
  - gehören+Partizip* passive (see Section 10.5.18)
  - bekommen+Partizip* dative passive (see Section 10.5.21)
  - kommen+Partizip* movement (see Section 10.4.10)
  - haben+Partizip* perfect (see Section 10.4.1)
  - sein+Partizip* perfect (see Section 10.4.2)

[10.32] Normally (except for the *haben/sein* perfect), when the light verb is in the *Präsens*, then the construction has present/future time reference (10.26a). Alternatively, when the light verb is marked as *Präteritum*, then the construction has past time reference and implies completion (10.26b). The time reference of perfect-oriented constructions works slightly different. When the light verb is in the *Präsens* then the resulting state is still in effect at the

time of utterance (10.27 a). In contrast, with the light verb in the *Präteritum* the resulting state has come to an end (10.27 b).

- (10.26) a. Das Auto wird morgen repariert.  
( $\mapsto$  Das Auto ist noch nicht fertig.)  
b. Das Auto wurde gestern repariert.  
( $\mapsto$  Das Auto ist fertig.)
- (10.27) a. Die Tür ist seit gestern geöffnet.  
( $\mapsto$  Die Tür ist immer noch offen.)  
b. Die Tür war seit gestern geöffnet.  
( $\mapsto$  Die Tür ist nicht mehr offen.)

The temporal interpretation of the *haben/sein+Partizip* (confusingly called *Perfekt* in the German grammatical tradition) is the exception to the basic regularities as stated above. There is a lot of fluidity in the temporal interpretation of the *Perfekt*, with much dialectal variation, ongoing change, and idiosyncratic diversity (cf. Fischer 2020). Most importantly though, while these constructions are called *Perfekt*, they are always tense-oriented (10.28 a,b). Individual verbs like *fliehen* ‘to flee’ also allow for a perfect orientation (10.28 d), but this option appears to be completely dependent on the specific lexical semantics of the verb. [10.33]

- (10.28) a. Ich habe gestern (\*morgen) geblutet.  
b. Der Gefangene ist gestern (\*morgen) geflohen.  
c. \* Ich habe seit drei Tage geblutet.  
d. <sup>?</sup> Der Gefangene ist seit drei Tagen geflohen.

Differently from all other tense-oriented constructions, with the light verb in the *Präsens* the Perfect has past time reference. With the light verb in the *Präteritum* the time-reference remains past, though there is an additional implication of the completion of the process (10.29). [10.34]

- (10.29) a. Ich hatte gestern geblutet.  
( $\mapsto$  Ich blute nicht mehr.)  
b. Der Gefangene war gestern geflohen.  
( $\mapsto$  Der Gefangene ist wieder gefangen.)

By combining the tense-oriented *sein+Partizip* perfect with another tense-oriented construction like the *werden+Partizip* passive, the resulting stack is (obviously) still tense-oriented (10.30 a,b). This is important because the resulting stack (10.30 b) looks very similar to the *Zustandspassiv* (10.30 c), but the *Zustandspassiv* is not tense-oriented. [10.35]

- (10.30) a. Das Auto wird repariert.  
b. Das Auto ist gestern repariert worden.  
c. \* Das Auto ist gestern repariert.

### 10.2.6 Lexical restrictions on participle constructions

[10.36] In recent years there has been an extensive discussion about two classes of intransitive verbs depending on their light-verb possibilities. This discussion originated with the discussion on the impersonal *werden* passive (see Section 10.5.1) in Perlmutter (1978). He introduced the terms *UNERGATIVE/UNACCUSATIVE* for intransitive verbs that do (unergative) or do not (unaccusative) allow for such impersonal passives (see Pullum 1988 for a discussion of the origin of the term and scholarly predecessors; for an early discussions in German, see Wunderlich 1985). The most extensive discussion of the grammatical possibilities of intransitives in German can be found in Grewendorf (1989), though unfortunately (and confusingly) using the term ‘ergative’ for what Perlmutter calls ‘unaccusative’. Similar phenomena of splits in intransitives have long been recognised in the typological literature under various names. Instead of unergative/unaccusative one can find active/inactive (Sapir 1917: 85), *S<sub>a</sub>/S<sub>o</sub>* (Dixon 1979: 70) or more mnemonic *AGENTIVE/PATIENTIVE* (cf. Mithun 1991). These last terms will be used here. The term *AGENTIVE* is used here because the sole argument of an agentive intransitive verb is syntactically treated similar to the agent of a transitive verb. Likewise, The name *PATIENTIVE* is used because the sole argument of patientive intransitive verb is syntactically treated similar to the patient of a transitive verb.

[10.37] The basic proposal from Perlmutter (1978) is the *UNACCUSATIVE HYPOTHESIS*. This hypothesis proposes that the sole argument of certain intransitive verbs is underlyingly alike to a transitive object (i.e. patientive). Such verbs can be identified by various syntactic characteristics. For example, a patientive verb like *ein-schlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ combines with *sein* to form the perfect (10.31 a) and not with *haben* (10.31 b). Further, patientives do not allow for an impersonal *werden* passive (10.31 c), but they can be used adnominally (10.31 d). In contrast, an agentive intransitive verb like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ has the reversed distribution (10.32).

- (10.31) a. Das Kind ist eingeschlafen.  
 b. \* Das Kind hat eingeschlafen.  
 c. \* Jetzt wird eingeschlafen.  
 d. Das eingeschlafene Kind schnarcht.

- (10.32) a. \* Das Kind ist geschlafen.  
 b. Das Kind hat geschlafen.  
 c. Jetzt wird geschlafen.  
 d. \* Das geschlafene Kind schnarcht.

[10.38] However, there is much more variation in the distribution of light-verb constructions besides just agentives and patientives, as summarised in Table 10.1. Basically, every theoretical possibility of light-verb construction is attested (except for neither *sein* nor *haben*). The real challenge concealed behind the unaccusativity hypothesis is the question how widespread all of these possibilities are. The *ein-schlafen*-class (*PATIENTIVE*) and the *schlafen*-class (*AGENTIVE*) are undoubtedly large classes of intransitive verbs in German. However, it is a clear desideratum for more research in corpus-based lexicology to exhaustively classify verbs in this way. Only then will it be possible to judge which classes are significant for German grammar (and which classes, if any, consist of only incidental exceptional examples).

Table 10.1: Possible combinations of light-verbs with participles

verb	<i>sein</i>	<i>haben</i>	<i>werden</i>
<i>einschlafen</i>	+	–	–
<i>fallen</i>	+	–	+
<i>rosten</i>	+	+	–
<i>klettern</i>	+	+	+
<i>bluten</i>	–	+	–
<i>schlafen</i>	–	+	+

Looking even further, there are many more light-verb constructions besides *sein*, *haben* and *werden* that can be included. For example, *bleiben+Partizip* (see Section 10.4.11) only seems possible with *einschlafen*, while *scheinen+Partizip* (see Section 10.4.15) seems possible with *einschlafen* and *fallen*, and *kommen+an-+Partizip* (see Section 10.4.10) only applies to *fallen* and *klettern*. Also of interest in this context is the possibility of various impersonal diatheses (see e.g. Section 9.5.1 and Section 11.5.1). This chapter will not attempt to answer the question how many different such verb classes are attested in German, but only takes the first step of presenting a list of possible light-verb constructions to be investigated in-depth in future research.

### 10.2.7 Different diatheses with the same light verb

Many light-verb constructions with participles will be discussed in more than one subsection in this chapter. This is necessary because many light-verb constructions show different sentence alternations for verbs with different valency. Typically, participles of intransitive and transitive verbs will lead to different alternations. For example, some intransitive verbs, like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ (10.33 a), allow for an *werden* impersonal passive in which the nominative argument is dropped (see Section 10.5.1). In contrast, with many transitive verbs, like *putzen* ‘to clean’ (10.33 b), the *werden* passive shows a different diathesis in which the accusative is turned into a nominative (see Section 10.5.16).

- (10.33) a. Das Kind schläft.  
           Jetzt wird geschlafen.  
       b. Irgendjemand putzt das Haus.  
           Das Haus wird geputzt.

There are many different such ‘repeated’ light-verb constructions. A recurring phenomenon, exemplified here with the light-verb construction with *bleiben*, is one in which intransitives show no diathesis (10.34 a), see Section 10.4.11, while transitives display an anticausative diathesis (10.34 b), see Section 10.5.10. This combination will be called ABSOLUTIVE here, calling on the ‘ergative/absolutive’ terminology as used in linguistic typology. This affinity of intransitive subjects to transitive objects is also reminiscent of the unaccusative hypothesis discussed previously, which proposes that some intransitive subjects are underlyingly objects. However, these absolutive phenomena are not uniform in German grammar. Exactly which verbs are amenable for which constructions appears to be rather unpredictable (or maybe better: ‘lexically dependent’), and the survey in this chapter is proposed to be a step towards a more precise understanding the such

constructional distributions.

- (10.34) a. Der Schlüssel verschwindet.  
Der Schlüssel bleibt verschwunden.  
b. Ich schließe den Schrank.  
Der Schrank bleibt geschlossen.

[10.42] A recurrent topic of debate in German grammar is the question whether the different constructions with the auxiliary *sein* should be considered to be a single construction or not (cf. Thieroff 2007 for a summary of the debate). I will here distinguish four different constructions with *sein* that are all in complementary distribution (i.e. a specific predicate can only occur in one of these):

- i. the *sein-Zustandspferkt* (10.35 a) with some intransitives like  *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’, see Section 10.4.2,
- ii. the *sein-Zustandspassiv* (10.35 b) with some transitives like  *waschen* ‘to wash’, see Section 10.5.17,
- iii. the *sein-Erlebnispassiv* (10.35 c) with a restricted set of experiencer transitives like  *erstaunen* ‘to astonish’, see Section 10.5.23 and
- iv. *sein* adjectival predication, like with  *wach* ‘awake’ (10.35 d), see Section 10.2.8.

[10.43] Because these constructions are in complementary distribution, I see no objection to consider them as one construction. However, there are also obvious differences, so splitting them up is likewise sensible. Whether one of these points of view is better than the other seems like a moot question to me. Both perspectives are useful.

- (10.35) a. Der Junge schläft ein.  
Der Junge ist eingeschlafen.  
b. Irgendjemand wäscht den Jungen.  
Der Junge ist gewaschen.  
c. Die Strafe erstaunt den Jungen.  
Der Junge ist erstaunt (über die Strafe).  
d. Der wache Junge ...  
Der Junge ist wach.

[10.44] Similarly, with opinative light verbs *wissen*, *glauben*, *sehen* and *finden* there exist different diatheses depending on the valency of the main verb. These different constructions are clearly related, and I tend to consider them all to be special cases of the same underlying construction. The following diatheses are attested: first, an opinionator is added with intransitives like  *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ (10.36 a), see Section 10.6.1. Second, transitive verbs like  *aufheben* ‘to preserve’ (10.36 b) are passivised before the opinionator is added Section 10.6.5.

- (10.36) a. Der Junge schläft ein.  
Der Großvater wusste den Jungen eingeschlafen.  
b. Das Archiv hebt den Nachlass auf.  
Der Großvater wusste den Nachlass im Archiv gut aufgehoben.

[10.45] In contrast to the previous examples, the separation between structurally similar constructions becomes critical when there is no complementary distribution, instead even possible

ambiguity. For example, there are two clearly different constructions of *haben* with a participle, and some verbs can occur in both constructions, leading to possibly ambiguous sentences, exemplified here with *schneiden* ‘to cut’. First, there is the *haben-Perfekt* (10.37 a), see Section 10.4.8 and second the *haben-Pertinenzdativ* (10.37 b), see Section 10.5.22. There is a crucial difference here in who is doing the cutting, as disambiguated by the words in brackets.

- (10.37) a. Der Friseur hat (mir) die Haare geschnitten.  
b. Der Friseur hat die Haare geschnitten (bekommen).

An exceedingly complex situation occurs with the light verb *machen*, which induces many different diatheses depending on the main verb. Fehrmann (2018) extensively describes *machen+adjective* constructions, but he seems to have completely ignored the complex situation with participles. There seem to be at least the following five different possibilities:

- i. No diathesis, leading to a resultative/stative interpretation (10.38 a), see Section 10.4.17.
  - ii. A conciliative diathesis (10.38 b), see Section 10.5.25.
  - iii. A passive diathesis with an additional reflexive pronoun (10.38 c), see Section 10.5.19.
  - iv. An inverted passive diathesis with an additional reflexive pronoun (10.38 d), see Section 10.6.9.
  - v. A subject switch, i.e. a commutative diathesis (10.38 e), see Section 10.9.2.
- (10.38) a. Der Verlust betrifft mich.  
Der Verlust macht mich betroffen.  
b. Ich begehre den Job wegen der Bezahlung.  
Die Bezahlung macht den Job begehrt.  
c. Die Polizei verdächtigt ihn.  
Er macht sich bei der Polizei verdächtigt.  
d. Ich eigne mich durch meine Qualifikation für den Job.  
Die Qualifikation macht mich geeignet für den Job.  
e. Er vergisst den Verlust.  
Ich mache den Verlust (bei ihm) vergessen.

## 10.2.8 Adjectives in light-verb constructions

Because of the similarity between participles and adjectives, it is instructive to turn the tables and investigate light-verb constructions with lexical adjectives like *schmutzig* ‘dirty’ or *offen* ‘open’. Most light verbs are used identically with adjective and participle constructions, but there are few interesting differences.

The verbs *sein*, *werden*, *bleiben*, known as KOPULAVERBEN in German grammar (e.g. Duden-Grammatik 2009: 416), can be used both with participles and adjectives (10.39). However, note that the meaning of the construction *werden* differs crucially between the two. With participles, the *werden* construction is of course a passive (see Section 10.5.16), while it is more of a future with adjectives (10.39 c), cf. the *werden+Infinitiv* in Section 11.4.9.

- (10.39) a. Mein Fahrrad ist schmutzig.  
b. Mein Fahrrad bleibt schmutzig.  
c. Mein Fahrrad wird schmutzig.



The appearance verbs *wirken*, *(er)scheinen* and *aussehen* (called ‘Askription’ by Lasch 2016: Chapter 7) likewise can be used both with participles and adjectives (10.40) with no apparent differences between the two.

- (10.40) a. Mein Fahrrad wirkt schmutzig.  
 b. Mein Fahrrad scheint schmutzig.  
 c. Mein Fahrrad erscheint schmutzig.  
 d. Mein Fahrrad sieht schmutzig aus.

[10.50] The light verbs *geben* (with obligatory reflexive pronoun) can be used with participles and adjectives without any apparent differences (10.41).

- (10.41) a. Er ist weltoffen.  
 b. Er gibt sich weltoffen.

[10.51] The light verbs *machen*, *lassen*, *halten* and *finden* are both used with adjectives and participles. With adjectives they all induce a novative alternation, i.e. a new subject role is added (see paragraph 2.99 on page 39). However, with participles they lead to different kinds of diatheses.

- i. The light verb *finden* adds an opinionator, both with adjectives and participles (see Section 10.6.4).
- ii. The subject of the light-verb *lassen* has a permissive meaning with adjectives (10.42 b), but an additional durative meaning with participles (see Section 10.4.13).
- iii. Similarly, the subject of *halten* has a causative meaning with adjectives (10.42 c) but like *lassen* it has an durative meaning when combined with participles (see Section 10.4.12).
- iv. Finally, *machen* has many different uses with adjectives (Fehrmann 2018: 218), among them a causative reading (10.42 d). With participles, *machen* likewise induces various different kinds of construction, which need a similarly in-depth study as Fehrmann’s study of adjectives (see paragraph 10.46 on page 326).

- (10.42) a. Ich finde mein Fahrrad schmutzig.  
 Ich finde das Projekt gescheitert.  
 b. Ich lasse die Tür offen.  
 Ich lasse die Tür geschlossen.  
 c. Ich halte den Kaffee warm.  
 Ich halte die Tür geschlossen.  
 d. Ich mache mein Fahrrad schmutzig.  
 Der Verlust macht mich betroffen.

[10.52] The combination of *haben* with adjectives (10.43) does not show any relationship to the *haben+Partizip* PERFECT. However, it is possible to draw a connection to the other *haben+Partizip* construction, namely the DATIVE PASSIVE (10.43 b), see Section 10.5.22. In both constructions the new subject (*sie*) is an experiencer, who is also the possessor of the

object (*Rechnung, Haare*).

- (10.43) a. Sie hat noch eine Rechnung offen.  
(= Ihre Rechnung ist noch offen.)  
b. Sie hat die Haare schön.  
(= Ihre Haare sind schön.)  
c. Sie hat die Haare geschnitten.  
(= Ihre Haare sind geschnitten.)

Finally, the light verbs *gehören*, *sehen*, *wissen* and *glauben* can be combined with participles, but they do not seem to occur with adjectives. [10.53]

### 10.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

Most participles are regularly derived from verb stems that allow for finite verb forms. However, there are various participles that are not directly related to a finite verb, but that still occur in light verb constructions. Parallel to the ‘3’ sections in earlier chapters, I will discuss here various different kinds of participles without finite counterpart: [10.54]

- Some participles have an idiomatic meaning that is not transparently related to the meaning of the morphologically corresponding finite verb (see Section 10.3.1).
- Some participles are derived from nouns, and the corresponding finite verb does not exist (see Section 10.3.2).
- Some participles might seem to be regular participles of verbs with a preverb, but the corresponding verb with preverb does not exist as a finite verb – only the verb without the preverb exists (see Section 10.3.3).

#### 10.3.1 Idiomatic meaning of participles

Some participles have obtained a specialised idiomatic meaning, different from the finite use of the verb. For example *verwenden* ‘to plead for’ with participle *verwandt* (10.44 a) has given rise to a completely separate participle *verwandt* ‘to be related’ (10.44 b). Note that there is also a separate verb *verwenden* meaning ‘to utilise’ with a different participle *verwendet*. [10.55]

- (10.44) a. Er hat sich sehr für die Einrichtung eines Spielplatzes verwandt.  
b. Wir sind verwandt.

Similarly idiomatic are the participles *verrückt* ‘crazy’ from *verrücken* ‘to relocate’ (10.45 a) and *verklemmt* ‘prudish’ from *verklemmen* ‘to get jammed’ (10.45 b) [10.56]

- (10.45) a. Er ist verrückt.  
b. Er ist verklemmt.

The participle *bekannt* ‘well-known’ is morphologically derived from *bekennen* ‘to confess’, although the meaning of the participle is related to *kennen* ‘to know’, which has a participle *gekannt*. [10.57]

- (10.46) a. Jeder kennt den Schauspieler.  
b. Der Schauspieler ist bekannt/\*gekannt

#### Attested Participles

[10.58]

- *bekannt, verrückt, verklemmt, verwandt*

#### [10.59] Notes

[10.60] Eisenberg (2006b: 201) also mentions *entsetzt* ‘appalled’ as an idiomatic participle, but the verb *entsetzen* ‘to appall’ seems to be perfectly possible as a finite verb (10.47 a). The intended meaning from Eisenberg is then simply the anticausative *Zustandspassiv* (10.47 b).

- (10.47) a. Der Anblick entsetzt ihn. Der Anblick hat ihn entsetzt.  
b. Er ist entsetzt.

[10.61] Likewise, DWDS mentions *verfroren* as an idiomatic participle, but the verb *verfrieren* ‘to freeze’ is attested, though rare (10.48).

- (10.48) a. Bei Wind verfrieren die Wangen in kürzester Zeit.<sup>6</sup>  
b. Meine Wangen sind verfroren.

### 10.3.2 Participles from nouns

[10.62] There exist various German words that are clearly participles in form, but their stems are nouns and not finite verbs. This might look like conversion, but it is not. The wholesale (zero-marked) conversion of nouns into finite verbs is attested in German (e.g. *ölen* ‘to apply oil’ from the noun *Öl*, ‘oil’), but this is far from as productive as in English.

[10.63] In contrast, the participles that are of interest here do not exist as finite verbs, i.e. there are no German verbs *blumen* ‘to put flowers on something’ or *flügeln* ‘to put wings on something’, but the participles *geblümt* ‘flowered’ (from noun *Blume* ‘flower’) and *gefügelt* ‘winged’ (from noun *Flügel* ‘wing’) are perfectly possible. Semantically, the noun-based participles express a kind of possessive relationship ‘subject exists with noun’, for example *geblümt* means ‘to have flowers applied to it’.

[10.64] Further, various participles are derived from nouns using verb prefixes *be-* and *ver-*. As discussed earlier, it is a relatively widespread phenomenon for finite verbs to be derived from nominal stems using these prefixes (see Section 8.2.3). For example, the verb *vergiften* ‘to poison’ is derived from the noun *Gift* ‘poison’ without any verb like *giften* in between (10.49 a,b). As a consequence, the participle *vergiftet* also exist (10.49 c).

- (10.49) a. \* Sie giftet ihn.  
b. Sie vergiftet ihn.  
c. Er ist vergiftet.

[10.65] In contrast, the participle *verhasst* ‘hated’ is derived from the noun *Hass* ‘hate’ and the verb *hassen* ‘to hate’ (10.51 a). However, the verb *verhassen* cannot be used as a finite verb (10.51 b), only as a participle (12.28 c).

- (10.50) a. Sie hasst ihn.  
b. \* Sie verhasst ihn.  
c. Er ist verhasst.

#### [10.66] Attested Participles

- *ge-* : *geblümt, geflügelt, gelaunt, genarbt, geschweift, gesittet, gestreift, gezackt*

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 10.01.1997, Nr. 03.

- *be-*: *begabt, behaart, berindet, beschürzt, besternt*
- *ver-*: *verhasst, verblümt, verwitwet*

### Notes

The finite verb *zacken* ‘to produce indentation’ is also attested, though rare (10.51 a), so *gezackt* might not be a good example of a participle without finite usage. In contrast, the verb *schweifen* ‘to ramble’ exists (10.51 b), but is semantically not directly related to the participle *geschweift* ‘curled’. Both seem independently derived from the noun *Schweif* ‘bushy tail’. The same holds for the participle *gestreift* ‘striped’ and the verb *streifen* ‘to roam, to streak’, which are probably both independently related to the noun *Streifen* ‘strip, band’.

- (10.51) a. Die Streifen zackten sich über Schuhe, Bänke, Tische, Mäntel, Bettgitter.<sup>7</sup>  
 b. Man schweifte wie auf einem riesigen Schuttplatz jenseits der Ränder der bekannten Welt.<sup>8</sup>

The participle *gelaunt* (from noun *Laune* ‘mood’) and *geregnet* (from noun *Regen*, ‘rain’) obligatorily needs a manner adverbial, see Section 9.3.1.

- (10.52) a. Ich bin gut gelaunt.  
 b. Ich bin nass geregnet.

### 10.3.3 Participles with preverbs

Word like *einverstanden* ‘agreed’ (10.53 a) looks morphologically like a regular participle from a verb *einverstehen*. However, that verb does not exist (10.53 b), only the non-prefixed verb *verstehen* exists. Latzel (1977: 79-80) discussed various examples with the preverb *aus-* and Rothstein (2007: 162) lists examples with the preverb *an-* that only occur in construction with light verb *kommen* (see Section 10.4.10). Participles with preverbs that do not have a corresponding finite verb appear to be a common phenomenon and the participles listed here are only to be taken as examples.

- (10.53) a. Ich bin einverstanden.  
 b. \* Ich verstehe ein.

### Attested Participles

- *abgeneigt, bekannt, einverstanden, zerschunden*
- *aus-*: *ausgeblufft, ausgedient, ausgekämpft, ausgeknabbert, ausgelitten, ausgepredigt, ausgeschätzt, ausgesorgt, ausgespielt, ausgeträumt, ausgezaubert, ausstudiert*
- *an-*: *angedampft, angedonnert, angeflitzt, angeheiratet, angehetzt, angeheult, angekeucht, angekrochen, angelatscht, angelaufen, angeprescht, angerast, angerasselt, angerauscht, angeritten, angerannt*

## 10.4 Alternations without diathesis

### — *haben/sein Perfekt* —

#### One vs. two constructions

<sup>7</sup>DWDS: Fichte, Hubert: Das Waisenhaus, Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verl. 1988 [1965], S. 139.

<sup>8</sup>DWDS: Jünger, Ernst: In Stahlgewittern, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 1994 [1920], S. 110.

The combination of the light verbs *haben* and *sein* with a participle is traditionally considered to be a single tense/aspect construction called *PERFEKT* in German grammatical terminology. Given the latinate origin of much of modern grammatical theory, the wish for a unified German equivalent of the inflectional Latin *PERFECTUM* is perfectly understandable. However, it is far from obvious that this German *Perfekt* with its two different light verbs is a unified construction. As I will argue below, it is probably better to distinguish two different ‘perfect’ constructions in German.

[10.73] The most intriguing argument in favour of a unified German *Perfekt* construction is that every verb stem in German has an epithetical construction consisting of *haben* or *sein* with a participle. In other words, every stem that allows for finite person/number agreement (i.e. *ich kauf-e*, *du kauf-st*, *er kauf-t*, etc.) also has at least one of the two constructions *haben+Partizip* or *sein+Partizip* without any change in role mapping (i.e. without diathesis). Such an universal applicability of a construction to all verbs is otherwise only attested (arguably) with *Modalverben* (see Section 11.4.9 and subsequent sections).<sup>9</sup> All the hundreds of other constructions discussed in this book always have a restricted domain of application (cf. Section 1.3.4). The universal applicability of the *Perfekt* is known to have been developed in the late Middle Ages and was only completed in the 16th century with the development of a *haben+Partizip* construction for the *Modalverben* (Fischer 2020: 258).<sup>10</sup> However, note that examples of a *Perfekt* with various *Modalverben* are still really rare in German. For example, in the DWDs corpus only a few examples of *haben gedurft* are attested, almost exclusively with *haben* in the *Konjunktiv*.

[10.74] In contrast, there is a sizeable group of intransitive verbs that allow for both the *haben* and the *sein* construction. For example, there are intransitives with two possibilities, like *splittern* ‘to splinter, to spliver’ (10.54), see Section 10.4.3, and there is a special kind of intransitives that take *haben* with reflexive pronouns, but *sein* without reflexive pronouns, like *verspäten* ‘to be late’ (10.55), see Section 10.4.4.

- (10.54) a. Das Glas ist (in tausend Scherben) gesplittert.  
b. Das Holz hat (zu leicht) gesplittert.

- (10.55) a. Der Zug hat sich verspätet.  
b. Der Zug ist verspätet.

[10.75] Most importantly, for all those verbs in which both *haben* and *sein* are possible, the meaning of the *haben+Partizip* construction can be clearly distinguished from meaning of the *sein+Partizip* construction. Roughly speaking, the *haben+Partizip* construction describes a completed continuous situation (*COMPLETIVE*), i.e. the endpoint of a continuous process, while the *sein+Partizip* construction describes the result of a change (*RESULTATIVE*), i.e. it describes the resulting state after some kind of change-of-state. There exist a long discussion about this difference, and there are various diagnostic differences, like the usage of temporal adverbials, cf. (10.56) showing *gestern* ‘yesterday’ to be compatible with *haben* while *schon*

<sup>9</sup>The universal applicability of the *Perfekt* and the *Modalverben* is reflected in the traditional practice in German grammatical description to consider the *haben+Partizip*, *sein+Partizip* and *werden+Infinitiv* constructions as part of the inflectional paradigm of a verb.

<sup>10</sup>Fischer writes: “Ab 1300 und häufiger erst ab 1400 bildet auch das Verb *haben* Perfektformen (*hat gehabt*). Perfektbildungen der *Modalverben* sind erst ab Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts belegt, wobei diese im Mittelhochdeutschen noch verschiedene Konkurrenzformen haben [...]. Erst dann hat die Perfektgrammatikalisierung alle Verben des Deutschen erfasst und ist vollständig vollzogen.” (Fischer 2020: 258)

*lange* ‘already since a long time’ (full discussion in Section 10.4.3 and Section 10.4.4).

- (10.56) a. Der Zug hat sich gestern verspätet.  
 b. \*Der Zug ist gestern verspätet.  
 c. Der Zug ist schon lange verspätet.  
 d. \*Der Zug hat sich schon lange verspätet.

It is important to note that this semantic differentiation only holds for those verbs that allow for both the *haben*+*Partizip* and the *sein*+*Partizip* constructions. The verbs that only allow for one of the two constructions (including verbs with nominative and dative arguments) cannot be separated along such semantic lines. For example, there does not appear to be any restriction on temporal adverbials with verbs like *lachen* ‘to laugh’ with only a *haben* Perfect (10.57), nor with *flüchten* ‘to flee’ with only a *sein* Perfect (10.58). [10.76]

- (10.57) a. Die Schüler haben gestern gelacht.  
 b. Die Schüler haben schon lange gelacht.
- (10.58) a. Der Gefangene ist gestern geflüchtet.  
 b. Der Gefangene ist schon lange geflüchtet.

Because of this, I prefer to consider the *haben* and *sein* perfects as two different constructions, for example called PROZESSPERFEKT (*haben*) and ZUSTANDSPERFEKT (*sein*) in German. To adhere to tradition, both are still called *Perfekt*, although functionally these construction appear to move towards marking past tense. The first part of the name *Zustandsp Perfekt* conjures up the other *sein*+*Partizip* construction traditionally called *Zustandspassiv* (see Section 10.5.17). [10.77]

### Gradience

Many European languages have a similar distinction between two different auxiliaries in the perfect. There is an extensive literature about the difference between these two options (Sorace 2000). In general, there is a widespread intuition that the opposition is correlated with some kind of difference in transitivity, with *haben* being used in the more transitive-like situations and *sein* in the more intransitive-like situations. [10.78]

There are a few experimental investigations for German (discussed below) that claim to show that there is a continuous transitivity gradience among verbs as for the possibility to use *sein* or *haben*. Although these investigations are highly interesting, and more work should take such experimental approaches, the following papers both suffer from the same methodological problem: both papers investigate groups of verbs defined on a semantic basis. However, syntactically the verbs in these groups have rather different characteristics. Taking averages over such hybrid groups (as is done in both papers) is not warranted. [10.79]

Keller & Sorace (Keller & Sorace 2003: 78, 90) define groups of predicates based on semantics. However, syntactically these groups are rather heterogeneous. Unfortunately, they do not provide any item-based post-hoc analyses. I expect that much of the variation that they observe is due to individual verbs taking either purely *sein* or purely *haben*. For example, the ‘change of state’ verbs used in experiment 2 (Keller & Sorace 2003: 90) are the following: *rosten* ‘to rust’, *modern* ‘to rot’, *faulen* ‘to rot’, *schimmeln* ‘to become mouldy’, *welken* ‘to wilt’, *blühen* ‘to bloom’, *keimen* ‘to germinate’, and *wachsen* ‘to grow’. Only five of these are really variable (*faulen*, *keimen*, *rosten*, *schimmeln*, *welken*). In contrast, *blühen*, *modern* are only possible with *haben* and *wachsen* is only possible with *sein*. [10.80]

[10.81] Similarly, Graf *et al.* (2017: 90) investigate six German verbs, viz. *fliegen* ‘to fly’, *rollen* ‘to roll’, *schweben* ‘to float, hover’, *schlingern* ‘to swerve, lurch’, *schwimmen* ‘to swim, float’, and *wirbeln* ‘to swirl, whirl’. However, these verbs belong to at least three clearly different syntactic groups determining *haben* vs. *sein*, so it seems unwarranted to treat them as a unitary group and simply average any effects as a gradient:

- Manner-of-movement verbs, see Section 6.8.2: *schlingern*, *schweben*
- *sein* causative verbs, see Section 5.6.2: *rollen*, *wirbeln*
- Intransitive motion verbs, see Section 10.4.3: *fliegen*, *schwimmen*

#### 10.4.1 [ N | N ] *haben*+*Partizip* Intransitive Perfect

[10.82] Many intransitive verbs only have a perfect with the auxiliary *haben*, like *lachen* ‘to laugh’ (10.59 a). Typically, the participle of such verbs cannot be used adnominally (10.155 b), see Section 10.2.3, but the impersonal *werden* passive is possible (10.59 c), see Section 10.5.1.

- (10.59) a. Die Schüler lachen.  
           Die Schüler haben gelacht.
- b. \*Die gelachte Schüler sind froh.
- c. Heute wurde viel gelacht.

[10.83] Although verbs with a *haben* perfect are often thought of as ‘agentive’ verbs, there are many non-agentive verbs, for example describing bodily processes (like *bluten* ‘to bleed’) or bodily sensations (like *jucken* ‘to itch’) that also take *haben* in the Perfect.

##### [10.84] Attested Verbs

- agentive verbs: *arbeiten*, *lügen*, *schwindeln* (*betrügen*), *hupen*, *stehen*, *sitzen*, *tun*
- bodily processes: *atmen*, *bluten*, *husten*, *lachen*, *weinen*, *niesen*, *pinkeln*, *schlafen*, *schwitzen*, *träumen*
- bodily sensations (see Section 5.8.3): *brennen*, *frieren*, *drücken*, *jucken*, *klopfen*, *rasen* (*Emotion*), *schmerzen*, *tränen*, *zittern*
- natural processes (see Section 5.8.3): *blühen*, *dampfen*, *modern* (*faulen*), *stinken*
- accusative addition (see Section 5.8.1): *leben*, *schauen*, *singen*, *spielen*, *springen*, *tanzen*
- manner-of-speaking (see Section 5.8.1): *brüllen*, *flüstern*, *grölen*, *johlen*, *murmeln*, *schreien*, *stottern*

#### 10.4.2 [ N | N ] *sein*+*Partizip* Intransitive perfect

[10.85] There exist also a large group of intransitive verbs that only allow for a Perfect with the auxiliary *sein*, like *flüchten* ‘to flee’ (10.60 a). In contrast to the intransitives with *haben*, the verbs with *sein* allow for an adnominal usage of the participle (10.60 b), but do not (easily) allow for an impersonal passive (10.60 c).

- (10.60) a. Der Gefangene flüchtet.  
           Der Gefangene ist geflüchtet.
- b. Der geflüchtete Gefangene wurde wieder gefasst.
- c. ? Heute wird geflüchtet.

[10.86] There is a strong semantic tendency for the intransitives with *sein* to be more ‘patientive’. Many of the verbs describe actions that are not performed deliberately, but more or less

happen to the subject (e.g. *sterben* ‘to die’, *fallen* ‘to fall’ or *scheitern* ‘to fail’). However, there are also many verbs that do not fit into this semantic characterisation (e.g. *flüchten* ‘to flee’, *gehen* ‘to go’ or *abreisen* ‘to depart’). Note that the characterisation ‘change-of-location/state’ verbs (Keller & Sorace 2003: 65) does not fit at all to describe the semantics of the verbs as listed below. There seems to be only a restricted set of monomorphemic verbs with a *sein* Perfect, but a much larger number of such verbs with preverbs cf. 8.4.4.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.87]

- monomorphemic: *bersten, beuteln, bleiben, dorren, fallen, fliehen, fließen, flüchten, gehen, gleiten, kentern, kommen, krepieren, platzen, prallen, quellen, reifen, schlüpfen, scheitern, schreiten, schrumpfen, sein, sinken, sprießen, steigen, sterben, stolpern, strömen, traben, wachsen, weichen, werden*
- with fixed prefix: *degenerieren, detonieren, gedeihen, gelangen, genesen, geschehen, explodieren*
- with preverb: *abbiegen, abhauen (weglaufen), abmagern, abreisen, absaufen, absteigen, abstürzen, anbrennen, ankommen, anschwellen, ansteigen, auffallen, aufstehen, aufsteigen, auftreten, aufwachen, aufwachsen, ausbleiben, ausbrechen, ausfallen, ausgehen, auslaufen, aussteigen, auswandern, ausweichen, ausziehen (wohnen), beitreten, durchlaufen, durchsickern, durchfallen, durchgehen, eindringen, einfließen, einfrieren, einkehren, einreisen, einrosten, einschlafen, einsteigen, einstürzen, eintauchen, eintreffen, eintreten, emigrieren, entbrennen, entfliehen, entkommen, entstehen, erfrieren, erkranken, erlöschen, ermüden, erschallen, erscheinen, ertrinken, fehlschlagen, herumgehen, hinfallen, mitgehen, mitkommen, nachkommen, stehenbleiben, umfallen, umsiedeln, umziehen, untergehen, untertauchen, überkochen, verbleiben, verblühen, verbluten, verdampfen, verfaulen, verfallen, verhungern, verreisen, verrosten, verrutschen, verschimmeln, verschwinden, versinken, versterben, vertrocknen, verwelken, vorgehen, vorkommen, wegfallen, weggehen, weglaufen, wegrennen, zerfallen, zerrinnen, zufrieren, zuwachsen, zurückbleiben, zurückfahren, zurückgehen, zurückkommen, zurücklaufen, zurückrennen*

#### Further Examples

[10.88]

- Er ist ertrunken/verstorben/gestorben/gescheitert.
- Er ist ausgebrochen/ausgegangen/ausgestiegen/ausgezogen.
- Ich bin aufgestanden/durchgelaufen/umgezogen/verreist.
- Der Junge ist gewachsen.
- Der Baum ist gefallen.
- Der Ballon ist geplatzt.
- Meine Hoffnung ist geschwunden.
- Der Wasserpegel ist gesunken/gestiegen.
- Die Flasche ist ausgelaufen.
- Die Prophezeiung ist eingetroffen.
- Die Kerze ist erloschen.
- Die Milch ist übergekocht.
- Das Schiff ist versunken.
- Das Kind ist eingeschlafen.
- Die Blumen sind vertrocknet/verblüht.
- Die Wunde ist zugewachsen.
- Der Zug ist angekommen.
- Der Regen ist durchgesickert.



- Die Sonne ist untergegangen.
- Die Ladung ist verrutscht.
- Der Schnee ist zerronnen.

### 10.4.3 [ N | N ] *haben/sein+Partizip* Intransitive perfect

[10.89] There is a surprisingly large group of intransitive verbs that allow for both a *haben* and a *sein* Perfect. In most of these verbs there is a clear semantic difference between the constructions with these auxiliaries. In general, these verbs allow for both a ‘completed process’ interpretation (COMPLETIVE, taking a *haben* Perfect) and a ‘new state after change’ interpretation (RESULTATIVE, taking a *sein* Perfect). In this section I have collected intransitive verbs that allow for both auxiliaries (see also Hinze & Köpcke 2007; Gillmann 2016: Ch. 5). Additionally, the next Section 10.4.4 discusses verbs that allow for an intransitive *haben* Perfect with a reflexive pronoun and an intransitive *sein* Perfect without a reflexive pronoun.

[10.90] A large group of *haben/sein* verbs describe natural processes, like *splittern* ‘to splinter’ (10.61 a) or *schimmeln* ‘to mold’ (10.61 b). Such natural processes can both be used to describe a process (taking a *haben* Perfect) and the result of this process (taking a *sein* Perfect).

- (10.61) a. Das Glas ist (in tausend Scherben) gesplittert.  
           Das Holz hat (zu leicht) gesplittert.  
       b. Das Obst ist (komplett) gefault.  
           Das Obst hat (vor sich hin) gefault.

[10.91] A similar situation is attested with a few verbs describing mental states, like *verzweifeln* ‘to despair’. Interpreted as a state, such verbs take a *sein* Perfect (10.62 a). However, some of such verbs also allow an interpretation as a process leading to this state, and then take a *haben* Perfect (10.62 b).

- (10.62) a. Sie ist ganz verzweifelt.  
       b. Und ich steh hier am teuflischen 17. Loch, wo so viele verzweifelt haben.<sup>11</sup>

[10.92] One widely applicable diagnostic is the different compatibility of both constructions with temporal adverbial constituents (see Section 10.2.5). The endpoint in a process (i.e. completive) is consistent with a punctual past temporal adverbial like *gestern* ‘yesterday’ or *vor zwei Wochen* ‘two weeks ago’ (10.63). In contrast, the new state after a change (i.e. resultative) is consistent with a durative perfect temporal adverbial like *schon lange* ‘already for a long time’ or *seit zwei Wochen* ‘since two weeks’ (10.64).

- (10.63) a. Der Zug hat sich gestern verspätet.  
       b. \* Der Zug hat sich schon lange verspätet.

- (10.64) a. \* Der Zug ist gestern verspätet.  
       b. Der Zug ist schon lange verspätet.

[10.93] Exactly the same semantic differentiation is also attested with nominative/accusative verbs like *verärgern* ‘to displease’. These verbs take a *haben+Partizip* Perfect with a completive meaning that allow for punctual adverbials (10.65). Most of these verbs also

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.01.2001, Nr. 02

have a *sein*+*Partizip* passive-like construction with a resultative meaning that allow for a durative adverbial (10.66).

- (10.65) a. Die Nachricht hat den Leser vor zwei Wochen verärgert.  
 b. \* Die Nachricht hat den Leser seit zwei Wochen verärgert.
- (10.66) a. \* Der Leser ist vor zwei Wochen über die Nachricht verärgert.  
 b. Der Leser ist seit zwei Wochen über die Nachricht verärgert.

Different diagnostics are needed for movement verbs. Many verbs of movement like *tanz* <sup>[10.94]</sup> ‘to dance’ (10.67 a) or *klettern* ‘to climb’ (10.67 b) allow for both a *haben* and a *sein* Perfect. The *haben* perfect can be interpreted as the ‘regular’ perfect for movement verbs (10.67 a). By being verbs of movement, their meaning is inherently a process, which fits in with the general principle of the *haben* perfect describing the endpoint of a continuous process. In contrast, the usage with *sein* has a transgressive meaning in which a border is crossed (10.67 b). By crossing this border, the verb in effect describes the endpoint of the change-of-state performed by the movement.

This difference between *haben* and *sein* is mirrored in the grammatical case that is used <sup>[10.95]</sup> with so-called *Wechselpositionen* like *in* and *auf*. Such prepositions take an accusative case with a change-of-state, but a dative case when there is no change-of-state. This fits perfectly with the two possible perfects, i.e. the transgressive *sein* perfect, necessitating an accusative *den* (10.67 b), and the continuous *haben* perfect, taking a dative *dem* (10.67 c).

- (10.67) a. Ich habe getanzt.  
 Der Junge hat geklettert.
- b. Ich bin in den Raum (hinein) getanzt.  
 Der Junge ist auf den Berg (hinauf) geklettert.
- c. Ich habe in dem Raum (herum) getanzt.  
 Der Junge hat auf dem Berg (herum) geklettert

Another crucial difference between *sein* and *haben* with movement verbs is that the *sein* perfect obligatorily needs a directional phrase like *nach Hause* (10.68 a,b), while the *haben* perfect does not allow for such a directional phrase (10.69 a,b). This difference offers a good explanation for the peculiar restrictions on the adnominal usage of the participle of movement verbs. Participles of movement verbs can only be used adnominally when combined with a directional phrase (10.68 c), as is expected for an intransitive verb with *sein* (cf. Section 10.2.3). In contrast, without a directional phrase the adnominal usage is not possible, as is expected for an intransitive verb with a *haben* perfect. <sup>[10.96]</sup>

- (10.68) a. \* Der Schüler ist gelaufen.  
 b. Der Schüler ist nach Hause gelaufen.  
 c. Der nach Hause gelaufene Schüler weint.
- (10.69) a. Der Schüler hat gelaufen.  
 b. \* Der Schüler hat nach Hause gelaufen.  
 c. \* Der gelaufene Schüler weint.

There are a few further verbs that take a *haben* Perfect, but also allow for a *sein* perfect in <sup>[10.97]</sup> transgressive situations. For example, the verb *einbrechen* ‘to commit burglary’ allows for

both (10.70). Although this verb is not a typical movement verb, the dative/accusative case change with *Wechselpositionen* like *in* is also observed here.

- (10.70) a. Die Diebe sind in den Tresor eingebrochen.  
b. Die Diebe haben im Tresor eingebrochen.

[10.98] Many verbs that describe a manner-of-motion can be used in different perfect constructions (cf. Section 6.8.2). For example, a verb like *wackeln* ‘to shake, to wiggle’ can be used as a verb performing the action, and then it takes a *haben* perfect (10.71 a). Alternatively, it can be used to describe a manner-of-motion, and then it takes a *sein* perfect (10.71 b).

- (10.71) a. Er wackelt mit dem Schwanz.  
Er hat mit dem Schwanz gewackelt.  
b. Er wackelt durch den Garten.  
Er ist durch den Garten gewackelt.

[10.99] A similar phenomenon can be observed with some weather verbs, like *stürmen* ‘to storm’ (see Section 6.8.3). When used as a description of a type of weather it takes a *haben* perfect (10.72 a). However, when used (metaphorically) as a manner-of-movement description it takes a *sein* perfect (10.72 b).

- (10.72) a. Es stürmt.  
Es hat gestürmt.  
b. Sie stürmen in den Saal.  
Sie sind in den Saal gestürmt.

[10.100] Anticausative verbs like *heilen* ‘to heal’ (see Section 5.5.5) allow for both an intransitive *sein* Zustandspassiv (10.73 a) and a *haben* perfect of the intransitive (10.73 b). In effect, this results in intransitive constructions with both *haben+Partizip* and *sein+Partizip*. A similar situation is attested with some of the locative anticausative verbs, like *kleben* ‘to stick to’ (10.74), see Section 6.5.10.

- (10.73) a. Der Doktor heilt die Wunde.  
Der Doktor hat die Wunde geheilt.  
Die Wunde ist geheilt.  
b. Die Wunde heilt.  
Die Wunde hat geheilt.
- (10.74) a. Ich klebe den Teller an den Tisch.  
Ich habe den Teller an den Tisch geklebt.  
Der Teller ist am Tisch geklebt.  
b. Der Teller klebt am Tisch.  
Der Teller hat am Tisch geklebt.

#### [10.101] Attested Verbs

- Natural process verbs: *altern, faulen, gären, keimen, rosten, schimmeln, splintern, triefen, welken*
- Mental state/process: *resignieren, verzweifeln*
- Motion verbs: *fahren, fliegen, hüpfen, klettern, kriechen, landen, laufen, reisen, reiten, rennen, rotieren, rutschen, schwimmen, segeln, wandern*

- Motion-like verbs: *einbrechen, münden*
- Manner-of-motion verbs (see Section 6.8.2): *irren, schwanken, stampfen, tanzen, wackeln*
- Weather manner-of-motion verbs (see Section 6.8.3): *blitzen, donnern, hageln, regnen, stürmen, wehen*
- Anticausative verbs (see Section 5.5.5): *abnehmen, abreißen, abstoßen, anfangen, anhalten, aufmachen, backen, baden, beginnen, bewegen, braten, bremsen, duschen, fliegen, heilen, kochen, landen, läuten, öffnen, rauchen, schließen, spielen (Tonträger), starten, stoppen, umdrehen, wiegen, zählen, zünden*
- Location anticausative verbs (see Section 6.5.10): *hängen, kleben, lehnen, stecken*

#### Further Examples

[10.102]

- Nach Medienberichten soll dies in einem erpresserischen System gemündet haben.<sup>12</sup>  
Es ist die monatelange Stimmungsmache gegen Flüchtlinge, die den Hass säte, der in Tröglitz nun in Flammen gemündet ist.<sup>13</sup>

#### Notes

[10.103]

The verb *schimmeln* with *sein* appears to be old-fashioned (10.75 a). Likewise, intransitive *altern* with *haben* is not in current use anymore (10.75 b).

[10.104]

- (10.75) a. Ich weiss nicht, warum dies Brot geschimmelt ist.<sup>14</sup>  
b. Sie fand, daß er in der letzten Zeit stark gealtert hatte.<sup>15</sup>

#### 10.4.4 [ N | N ] *haben/sein+Partizip* Reflexive intransitive perfect

All verbs with an obligatory reflexive pronoun (see Section 7.3.1 and subsequent sections) have a *haben* perfect, like *verspäten* ‘to be late’ (10.76 a,b). Many of these (but not all) have an alternative *sein* perfect without a reflexive pronoun (10.76 c). This last construction is probably best analysed as a special kind of *Zustandspassiv* Section 10.5.17. In effect, there are two different perfect constructions, one with *haben* and a reflexive pronoun (10.76 b) and one with *sein* without a reflexive pronoun (10.76 c).

[10.105]

- (10.76) a. Der Zug verspätet sich.  
b. Der Zug hat sich verspätet.  
c. Der Zug ist verspätet.

The application of these two intransitive perfects correlates with a difference in the temporal interpretation (cf. Section 10.2.5). The *haben* perfekt is consistent with a punctual temporal adverbial like *gestern* ‘yesterday’ (10.77 a) but not with a durative *seit zwei Stunden* ‘since two hours’ (10.77 b). The situation is reversed with the *sein* perfekt (10.77 c,d).

[10.106]

- (10.77) a. Der Zug hat sich gestern verspätet.  
b. \* Der Zug hat sich seit drei Stunden verspätet.  
c. \* Der Zug ist gestern verspätet.  
d. Der Zug ist seit drei Stunden verspätet.

[10.107]

<sup>12</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.11.2015 (online).

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.04.2015 (online).

<sup>14</sup>DWDS: Wander, Karl Friedrich Wilhelm (Hrsg.): Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon. Bd. 5. Leipzig, 1880.

<sup>15</sup>DWDS: Die Grenzboten. Jg. 70, 1911, Viertes Vierteljahr.

A similar situation arises with reflexive anticausative verbs like *schließen* ‘to close’ (see Section 7.5.2). Such verbs occur in transitive constructions, which allow for an intransitive *Zustandspassiv* with *sein* (10.78 a). Alternatively, such verbs have an intransitive usage with a reflexive pronouns with a *haben* perfect (10.78 b). In effect, there are two different perfect constructions for the intransitive usage, one with *haben* and a reflexive pronoun (10.78 b) and one with *sein* without a reflexive pronoun (10.78 a).

- (10.78) a. Ich schließe den Schrank.  
Der Schrank ist geschlossen.  
b. Der Schrank schließt sich.  
Der Schrank hat sich geschlossen

[10.108] A similar situation also occurs with many endoreflexive verbs (though not all, cf. Section 7.7.1) like *ausziehen* ‘to undress’ (10.79 a), resulting in both an intransitive reflexive *haben* perfect (10.79 b) and an intransitive non-reflexive *sein* perfect (10.79 c).

- (10.79) a. Der Patient zieht sich aus.  
b. Der Patient hat sich ausgezogen.  
c. Der Patient ist ausgezogen.

[10.109] Likewise, verbs that allow for both a reflexive conversive (*Reflexiv Erlebnispassiv*, see Section 7.5.7) and a *sein* passive (*Zustandspassiv*, see Section 10.5.17) have both a *sein* and a *haben* intransitive perfect. For example *aufregen* ‘to upset’ is a transitive verb (10.80 a). This verb allows for a reflexive conversive, which results in a *haben* intransitive perfect with a reflexive pronoun (10.80 b). However, there is also a *sein* perfect without reflexive pronoun (10.80 c), which is possibly best analysed as the *sein+Partizip* passive of the transitive (10.80 a).

- (10.80) a. Der Lärm regt ihn auf.  
Der Lärm hat ihn aufgeregt.  
b. Er regt sich auf (über den Lärm).  
Er hat sich aufgeregt (über den Lärm).  
c. Er ist aufgeregt (wegen den Lärm).

#### [10.110] Attested Verbs

- Obligatory reflexive verbs (see Section 7.3.1 ff.): *ausruhen, ausschlafen, bemühen, befreunden, beteiligen, betrinken, beschäftigen, drehen, eignen, entscheiden, entschließen, erholen, erkälten, erstaunen, konzentrieren, üben, verabreden, verbrüdern, verirren, verkrachen, verloben, verlieben, versuchen, verspäten, vertiefen*
- Reflexive anticausative verbs (see Section 7.5.2): *abkühlen, ablagern, ablösen, abnutzen, abschalten, abschwächen, abseilen, ändern, ansammeln, ansparen, auflösen, aufwärmen, ausbreiten, ausdehnen, ausschalten, beschleunigen, beschränken, bessern, bestätigen, bewegen, beziehen, drehen, eindrücken, einfügen, einschalten, entfalten, entscheiden, entzünden, erfüllen, erhöhen, erwärmen, erweitern, färben, festigen, füllen, gliedern, komplizieren, konstituieren, leeren, lockern, lohnen, mildern, öffnen, schließen, senken, spalten, steigern, stürzen, teilen, unterwerfen, verändern, verbessern, verbreiten, verdoppeln, vereinfachen, verengen, vergrößern, verhaken, verkleinern, verkürzen, verlängern, verlangsamen, vermehren, verringern, versammeln, verschieben, verschlechtern, verstärken, verwandeln, wärmen, wiederholen, zeigen*

- Reflexive conversive verbs (see Section 7.5.7): *anstrengen, aufregen, begeistern, beschäftigen, empören, entspannen, entwickeln, erfreuen, erschrecken, erstaunen, erzürnen, interessieren, langweilen*
- Endoreflexive verbs (see Section 7.7.1): *abduschen, abhetzen, abwenden, anlehnen, anziehen, aufrichten, ausziehen, bewegen, entblößen, hinlegen, hinsetzen, hinstellen, neigen, organisieren, quälen, strecken, verbrennen*

### Further Examples

[10.111]

- Die Milch hat gekocht. Die Milch ist gekocht.
- Das Flugzeug hat gelandet. Das Flugzeug ist gelandet.
- Ich habe mich betrunken. Ich bin betrunken.
- Ich habe mich ausgeruht. Ich bin ausgeruht.
- Er hat sich verirrt. Er ist verirrt.
- Er hat sich erkältet. Er ist erkältet.
- Er hat sich entschlossen zu reisen. Er ist entschlossen zu reisen.
- Er hat sich erholt von der Krankheit. Er ist erholt von der Reise.
- Ich habe mich im Handstand geübt. Ich bin geübt im Handstand.
- Der Globus hat sich gedreht. Der Globus ist gedreht.
- Er hat sich ausgeschlafen. Er ist ausgeschlafen.

### 10.4.5 [ ND | ND ] *haben+Partizip* Dative perfect

Verbs with a dative argument are strictly split between *sein* and *haben*. There do not appear to be any verbs that allow for both. The grammatical status of the datives is slightly different among these verbs (see Sections 5.3.4, 5.7.4, 6.7.10, 8.8.15 for detailed discussion). Similar to intransitives, the dative verbs with a *haben* Perfect, like *antworten* ‘to answer’ (10.81 a), do not allow for a construction with an adnominal participle (10.81 b), but the impersonal *werden* passive is possible (10.81 c).

[10.112]

- (10.81) a. Die Professorin hat en geantwortet.  
 b. \* Der geantwortete Student ist zufrieden.  
 c. Heute wird dem Studenten geantwortet.

### Attested Verbs

[10.113]

- *ähneln, angehören, antworten, beiliegen, beipflichten, bevorstehen, dienen, einleuchten, entsprechen, fehlen, gefallen, gehören, gelten, gleichen, gratulieren, helfen, imponieren, kündigen, liegen (natürliche Begabung), missfallen, nacheifern, passen, schaden, schmecken, sitzen (passen), trauen, vertrauen, zuhören, zureden*

### 10.4.6 [ ND | ND ] *sein+Partizip* Dative perfect

Similar to intransitives, the dative-verbs with *sein*, like *gelingen* ‘to succeed’ (10.82 a), all appear to allow for a construction with an adnominal participle (10.82 b), while the impersonal *werden* passive is not possible (10.82 c). There does not appear to be any obvious semantic

[10.114]

differentiation between the nominative+dative verbs that take *sein+Partizip* vs. those that take *haben+Partizip*.

- (10.82) a. Das Gemälde ist mir gelungen.  
 b. Das gelungene Gemälde ist schön.  
 c. \* Heute wird mir gelungen.

[10.115] **Attested Verbs**

- *auffallen, begegnen, bleiben, einfallen, beitreten, entgegen kommen, erscheinen, folgen, gegenüber treten, gelingen, geschehen, glücken, misslingen, nachgehen, nachlaufen, passieren, unterlaufen, unterliegen, unterstehen, verfallen, weglaufen, weichen, widerfahren, zufallen, zulaufen, zustoßen*
- Prefix *ent-*: *enteilen, entfliegen, entfliehen, entfließen, entgehen, entgleiten, entkommen, entlaufen, entspringen, entspringen, entsteigen, entstammen, entströmen, entwachsen, entweichen, entschlüpfen, entspringen, entwischen*

[10.116] **Notes**

[10.117] The verb *folgen* ‘to follow’ typically takes *sein*, but there appear to be incidental instances of *haben* (10.83 a), though this might be typical of a slightly different meaning ‘to obey’ (10.83 b). Similarly, the verb *begegnen* ‘to meet’ typically takes *sein*, but *haben* is attested (10.83 c).

- (10.83) a. [...] wenn China und Nordkorea den Empfehlungen der Kommission gefolgt hätte.<sup>16</sup>  
 b. Das Kind hat seiner Mutter gefolgt.  
 c. Er nannte Beispiele, wie er während seiner Präsidentschaft Notständen begegnen mußte und begegnet habe.<sup>17</sup>

### 10.4.7 [ NP | NP ] *sein+Partizip* Governed preposition perfect

[10.118] Almost all verbs with governed prepositions take a *haben* Perfect. Only a small group of such verbs take a *sein+Partizip* Perfect, for example *scheitern an* ‘to fail’ (10.84 a). Only very few examples of obligatory local prepositions belong in this category, like *eintreten* ‘enter’ (10.84 b).

- (10.84) a. Ich scheitere an der Aufgabe. Ich bin an der Aufgabe gescheitert.  
 b. Die Sportler treten in das Stadion ein. Die Sportler sind in das Stadion eingezogen.

[10.119] **Attested Verbs**

- *an* : *scheitern, sterben*
- *auf* : *kommen (einfallen)*
- *aus* : *entkommen, entfliehen, entschlüpfen, entspringen, entwischen*
- *bei* : *bleiben*
- *in* : *einziehen, geraten*
- *vor* : *fliehen, flüchten, weichen*

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Archiv der Gegenwart, 2001 [1953].

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Archiv der Gegenwart, 2001 [1952]

## Further Examples

[10.120]

- Ich bin nicht darauf gekommen.
- Ich bin dabei geblieben.
- Er ist in einer prekären Situation geraten.
- Die Sportler sind in das Stadion eingezogen.

10.4.8 [ NA | NA ] *haben+Partizip* Transitive perfect

Almost all transitive (nominative/accusative) verbs take a *haben* Perfect. However, the choice of light verb (i.e. *haben* or *sein*) is not linked to the lexical verb root, as there are many verbs that can be used both as an intransitive and as a transitive verb Section 5.6.2. With many such verbs, like *laufen* ‘to walk’ (10.85 a) or *segeln* ‘to sail’ (10.85 b), the intransitive uses *sein*, while the transitive uses *haben*. [10.121]

- (10.85) a. Er ist durch die ganze Stadt gelaufen.  
Er hat den Marathon gelaufen.
- b. Er ist mit dem Boot nach Korsika gesegelt.  
Er hat das Boot nach Korsika gesegelt.

Even stronger, almost all transitive verbs allow also for a *sein* Zustandspassiv (see Section 10.5.17 for only few exceptions). The effect is that a transitive verb like *schreiben* ‘to write’ can both be used with a *haben+Partizip* construction (‘Perfect’) and a *sein+Partizip* construction (‘Passive’). These are of course different diatheses, but the important point is that the lexical verb *schreiben* itself can be used both with *sein* and *haben*. [10.122]

- (10.86) a. Er hat einen Brief geschrieben.  
b. Der Brief ist geschrieben.

10.4.9 [ NA | NA ] *sein+Partizip* Transitive perfect

There is only a very small group of transitive (nominative+accusative) verbs that use only *sein* in the Perfect, like *angehen* ‘to tackle’ or *loswerden* ‘to get rid of’ (cf. Grewendorf 1989: 9; Strobel 2008: 102, 107ff.). [10.123]

- (10.87) a. Ich bin die Prüfung ruhig angegangen.  
b. Ich bin den Verfolger losgeworden.

Movement verbs with the preverbs ‘*ab-*’ (in the meaning ‘along’) and ‘*durch-*’ (with the meaning ‘through’ as a separable *Verbpartikel*) appear to be quite productive in producing transitive verbs with a *sein* Perfect. For example, a verb like *abkriechen* ‘to crawl along’ does not appear in any German lexical resources, but can productively be created and seems quite naturally to take a perfect with *sein* (10.88 a). Similarly, the somewhat more widespread verb *durchkriechen* ‘to crawl through’ also takes *sein* in the Perfect (10.88 b). [10.124]

- (10.88) a. Ich bin dann mit dem Messgerät auch nochmal das gesamte Fahrzeug abge-  
rochen.<sup>18</sup>
- b. Sobald man das Loch durchgekrochen ist, hat man einen grandiosen Blick auf  
das schöne Gletscherpanorama.<sup>19</sup>

## Attested Verbs

[10.125]

<sup>18</sup> Attested online at <https://www.wohnmobilforum.de/w-t88559,start,45.html>, accessed 23 April 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Attested online at <https://sac-saas.ch/24-02-2020-hangende-gletscher/>, accessed 23 April 2021.



- Preverb 'ab-': *abfahren, abkriechen, ablaufen, abschreiten*
- Preverb 'durch-': *durchfahren, durchgehen, durchkriechen*
- Stem -gehen: *angehen, durchgehen, eingehen, hinabgehen, hinaufgehen, hochgehen*
- Others: *loswerden*

[10.126] **Further Examples**

- Wir sind die Papiere durchgegangen.
- Wir sind den Vertrag eingegangen.
- Ich bin die Piste abgefahren.
- Ich bin den Weg abgelaufen.
- Ich bin die Treppe hinaufgegangen.

[10.127] **Notes**

[10.128] The verb *laufen* allows for both *sein* and *haben* in the intransitive (see Section 10.4.3), while also allowing for a resultative accusative (see Section 5.8.1). Because of this both *haben* and *sein* appear possible in transitive constructions (10.89).

- (10.89) a. Ich habe den Marathon gelaufen.  
b. Ich bin den Marathon gelaufen.

— Aspect —

**10.4.10 [ N | N ] *kommen*+(an-)+Partizip Movement towards (*Aditiv-progressiv*)**

[10.129] The *kommen*+*Partizip* construction (10.90) is used to convey that the subject is approaching while performing a specific kind of movement. It is very similar to a main verb *kommen* 'to come' with a secondary adverbial predicate (10.91). Rothstein (Rothstein 2007; Rothstein 2011) observed various structural differences between these constructions (see also the general discussion about participles as secondary predicates in Section 10.2.4). The *kommen*+*Partizip* construction, like with *hüpfen* 'to hop', can be identified by the impossibility of adding the negating *un-* prefix to the participle (10.90 b) and by the clause-final position of the participle (10.90 c,d). With secondary predicates like *verkleidet* 'dressed up' these syntactic characteristics are reversed (10.91 b-d).

- (10.90) a. Er kommt gehüpft.  
b. \*Er kommt ungehüpft.  
c. Er kommt aus seinem Zimmer gehüpft.  
d. \*Er kommt gehüpft aus seinem Zimmer.
- (10.91) a. Er kommt verkleidet.  
b. Er kommt unverkleidet.  
c. \*Er kommt aus seinen Zimmer verkleidet.  
d. Er kommt verkleidet aus seinem Zimmer.

[10.130] Rothstein also observes that these two different kinds of participles cannot be conjoined. A secondary predicate like *verkleidet* can be conjoined with adverbials like *froh* or *springend*

(10.92 a). In contrast, this is not possible with *gehüpft* (10.92 b). Likewise *verkleidet* and *gehüpft* cannot be conjoined in a *kommen+Partizip* construction (10.92 c).

- (10.92) a. Er kommt froh, springend und verkleidet.  
 b. \*Er kommt froh, springend und gehüpft.  
 c. \*Er kommt verkleidet und gehüpft.

The *kommen+Partizip* construction is typically attested with intransitive verbs of movement like *hüpfen*. However, there are also examples of movement verbs with additional accusative (10.93 a) or dative (10.93 b) arguments. These possibilities need more in-depth investigation. [10.131]

- (10.93) a. Er kommt den Berg herabgelaufen.  
 b. Er kam mir nachgelaufen.

A widely-discussed special variant is the construction with participles with a preverb *an-* (see Eisenberg 2006b: 266; Rothstein 2007: 162; Felfe 2012: 194, 241). Many of these *an-*verbs are only possible in this construction, i.e. they do not occur in finite clauses (Rothstein 2007: 162). Besides with movement verbs, like *reiten* ‘to ride on horsback’ (10.94 a), the *an-*construction also occurs with sound-production verbs, like *keuchen* ‘to pant’ (10.94 b). These two possibilities are related to the manner-of-movement construction, see Section 6.8.2, and the manner-of-speaking construction, see Section 5.8.1. [10.132]

- (10.94) a. Er kommt angeritten.  
 (= Er geht reitend irgendwohin.)  
 b. Er kommt angekeucht.  
 (= Er geht keuchend irgendwohin.)

The secondary predicate usage is also possible with transitive verbs, but then typically with an anticausative argument reversal (10.95). [10.133]

- (10.95) a. Er packt das Geschenk ein.  
 Das Geschenk kommt (un)eingepackt.  
 b. Er kocht die Rüben.  
 Die Rüben kommen (un)gekocht.  
 c. Er schreibt einen Brief.  
 Sein Brief kam schon fertig geschrieben bei mir auf den Tisch.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.134]

- movement verbs: *fliegen*, *hüpfen*, *laufen*, *schwimmen*, *zufliegen*, etc.
- *an-* verbs only attested in the *kommen+Participle* construction: *andampfen*, *andonnern*, *anfliegen*, *anflitzen*, *anhetzen*, *anheulen*, *ankeuchen*, *ankriechen*, *anlatschen*, *anlaufen*, *anpreschen*, *anrasen*, *anrasseln*, *anrauschen*, *anreisen*, *anreiten*, *anrennen*, *anrücken*

#### Further Examples

[10.135]

- Er kam aus dem Haus gelaufen.
- Er kam zum Ufer geschwommen.
- Eine Kugel kommt geflogen.
- Ein Vogel ist auf mich zugeflogen gekommen.
- Er kam geschmückt, erregt, und gespannt zu Tische (Thomas Mann, cited from Rothstein 2007: 161)

### 10.4.11 [ N | N ] *bleiben+Partizip* Continuative (*Perfektcontinuativ*)

[10.136] The *bleiben+Partizip* construction can be used both with some transitive verbs leading to an anticausative diathesis (see Section 10.5.10), and with a few intransitives, but then without any diathesis. For example, verbs like *verschwinden* ‘to vanish, to go missing’ (10.96 a) or *zufrieren* ‘to freeze over’ (10.96 b) allow for this epithesis. There is a close connection to the *sein+Partizip* construction, though with an added notion of continuation.

- (10.96) a. Der Schlüssel verschwindet.  
Der Schlüssel bleibt verschwunden.  
b. Der Binnensee ist zugefroren.  
Weihnachten rückt näher, und der Binnensee bleibt zugefroren.<sup>20</sup>

[10.137] The *bleiben+Partizip* construction is only possible with verbs that also allow for a *sein+Partizip* construction, though far from all verbs allow for both. In general, it turns out to be far from easy to find many examples of *bleiben+Partizip* with intransitive verbs, suggesting that there are strong restrictions on the application of this construction. There is a strong semantic intuition that only reversible events allow for a *bleiben+Partizip* construction (Helbig & Buscha 2001: 163; Schlücker 2007: 152). However, examples are attested with clearly irreversible events like *verbrennen* ‘to burn’ (10.97 a) or punctual events like *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ (10.97 b). The notion ‘reversibility’ is thus clearly not the whole explanation.

- (10.97) a. ? Das Buch bleibt verbrannt.  
Die Haut bleibt verbrannt, egal wieviel Sonnenmilch sie dann auftragen.<sup>21</sup>  
b. ? Das Kind bleibt eingeschlafen.  
Alex rührt sich, aber bleibt eingeschlafen.<sup>22</sup>

#### [10.138] Attested Verbs

- *erkranken, verbrennen, verrosten, verschimmeln, verschwinden, vertrocknen, verwelken, zufrieren*

#### [10.139] Further Examples

- Die Blume bleibt verwelkt (verblüht).
- Das Schloss bleibt verrostet.
- Das Geschirr wurde gewaschen, aber selbst der Fach wo das Geschirr reinkommt, ist verschimmelt geblieben.<sup>23</sup>
- Nur von 4000 Personen ist aktenkundig bekannt, daß sie verschwunden geblieben sind.<sup>24</sup>
- Die Köpfchen vertrockneten immer wieder, aber sie rappelte sich immer wieder auf. Seit 4 Wochen sind die Köpfchen vertrocknet geblieben.<sup>25</sup>
- Ich bin auch nach der Schwangerschaft weiter an Diabetes erkrankt geblieben.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Attested online at <https://www.haz.de/Umland/Wunstorf/Nachrichten/Inselvogt-Zobel-von-Feuerwehr-gerettet>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Attested online at <https://www.leben-mit-ms.de/expertenrat/ms-kortison>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Attested online at <https://blogs.cornell.edu/glp-spr58/2014/05/07/jesus-christus-und-ikea-in-wolfgang-beckers-goodbye-lenin/>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>23</sup> Attested online at <https://www.holidaycheck.de/hrd/hl-miraflor-suites-hotel-sehr-viel-verbesserungspotenzial/2e0be7a4-3803-4fe7-a19a-910d17de92b8>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Attested online at <https://www.zeit.de/1975/46/spurlos-verschwunden/seite-4>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Attested online at <https://www.hausgarten.net/gartenforum/threads/carnivoren-winterruhe.32314>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Attested online at <https://www.hipp.de/forum/viewtopic.php?t=17551>, accessed 16 July 2021.

#### 10.4.12 [ NA | NA ] *halten+Partizip* Caused continuative (*Kausativkontinuativ*)

A widespread option for transitive verbs is to use the *halten+Partizip* construction to express the ongoing perseverance to prolong of the end state of the action, like with *schließen* ‘to close’ (10.98). The attested verbs listed below are only a few exemplary lexemes. This construction is applicable to a much wider group of verbs. Semantically, *halten+Partizip* expresses a clear agency of the caused continuative. [10.140]

- (10.98) a. Er schließt die Tür.  
b. Er hält die Tür geschlossen.

##### Attested Verbs

[10.141]

- halten: *ausstrecken, besetzen, drücken, fangen, richten, schließen, verbergen, verstecken*, etc.

##### Further Examples

[10.142]

- Er hält seine Augen auf sie gerichtet.
- Er hält den Brief verborgen.
- Er hält das Personal gefangen.
- Er hält den Raum besetzt.
- Er hält die Taste gedrückt.
- Er hält den Arm ausgestreckt.

#### 10.4.13 [ NA | NA ] *lassen+Partizip* Permissive continuative (*Permissivkontinuativ*)

Similar to the previous construction, the *lassen+Partizip* construction also can be used to express the continuation of a state, like with *einschalten* ‘to turn on’ (10.99). Although this construction can be used with many different verbs, it turns out to be much more difficult to find suitable examples, which suggests that there are some additional constraints of the applicability of this construction. Semantically, *lassen+Partizip* expresses permissive continuative (cf. the permissive reading of *lassen* with infinitive, see Section 11.2.5). [10.143]

- (10.99) a. Ich schalte den Fernseher ein.  
b. Ich lasse den Fernseher eingeschaltet.

- lassen: *anlehnen, ausklammern, einschalten, öffnen, zudecken*

##### Further Examples

[10.144]

- Der Mann hatte den Zuleitungsschlauch ohne Zusatzsicherung mehrere Jahre hindurch geöffnet gelassen.<sup>27</sup>
- Die Tür hatte sie angelehnt gelassen, jetzt stand sie sperrangelweit offen.<sup>28</sup>
- Hätte man die Streitfragen wirklich ausgeklammert gelassen, dann wäre das Berlin-Abkommen ein großer Erfolg gewesen.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 12.07.2004.

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.03.1990, Nr. 13.

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.03.1974, Nr. 11.

## — Modality —

10.4.14 [ NA | NA ] *bekommen/kriegen+Partizip* Achievement (*Effektiv*)

[10.145] The construction of the light verbs *bekommen/kriegen+Partizip* is widely discussed as a dative passive (*Rezipientenpassiv*, see Section 10.5.21). However, transitive verbs without dative arguments can also occur in this construction with a completely different ‘to be able to’ interpretation (10.100). This usage is discussed as the ‘*bekommen*-Konstruktion 2’ (Leirbukt 1997: 15–16) or as the resultative usage of *bekommen/kriegen* (Lenz 2013: 86, 238–239). Different from the dative passive, the light verb *erhalten* is not possible in this resultative construction. I propose the German name *EFFEKTIV* (from Lat. *effectus* ‘accomplishment’) for this construction. In some situations it is even possible to construct ambiguous sentences, that can either have a *Effektiv* (10.100 b) or an *Rezipientenpassiv* (10.100 c) interpretation.

- (10.100) a. Ich koche einen Tee.  
 b. Ich bekomme (schon noch) einen Tee gekocht!  
 (= Ich schaffe es, einen Tee zu kochen.)  
 c. Ich bekomme (von meiner Mutter) einen Tee gekocht.  
 (= Meine Mutter kocht einen Tee für mich.)

## [10.146] Attested Verbs

- *kochen, öffnen, schließen, trocknen, vermieten, verschieben, zerbrechen*, etc.

## [10.147] Further Examples

- Wenn wir die Pforte geschlossen bekommen, verfassen wir nachträglich einen Bericht.<sup>30</sup>
- Er kriegt den Stock zerbrochen.
- Ich kriege den Schrank geöffnet.
- Er kriegt seine Kleider noch rechtzeitig getrocknet.
- Er kriegt den schweren Schrank auch alleine verschoben.
- Er kriegt die Wohnung vermietet.

## — Evidentiality —

10.4.15 [ N | N ] *scheinen/erscheinen+Partizip* Inferred evidence (*Perfektinferenz*)

[10.148] The light verbs *scheinen* and *erscheinen* are used with participles of some intransitive verbs to describe an inference being made by the speaker (10.101). There is a close semantic connection to the *sein* perfect as shown by the incompatibility with many agentive intransitives (10.101 a,b) and by the compatibility with a durative temporal adverb like *seit einer Stunde* (10.101 c). An additional experiencer dative is sometimes attested (10.101 d). With transitive verbs this construction leads to an anticausative diathesis, see Section 10.5.11. This construction is discussed in more depth in that section.

[10.149] These constructions are analysed by Lasch (2016: 253ff.) as *Askription mit modaler Relation*. However, I propose to categorise such construction as a kind of evidential, following

<sup>30</sup>Regnier, Sandra. 2017. *Die magische Pforte der Anderwelt*, p. 122. Available online at <https://books.google.de/books?id=Lhm1DgAAQBAJ&pg=122>, accessed 16 July 2021.

the proposal by Diewald & Smirnova (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 177-191). Diewald and Smirnova present an extensive discussion of the meaning of *scheinen* in various constructions, but, inexplicably, they did not include the construction with a participle. Still, their proposal that *scheinen* can express an inferential evidential also seems fitting for the participle construction. The German name PERFEKTINFERENZ is chosen because of the perfectivity of the main verb. It stands in opposition to the *Imperfektinferenz* construction, which uses a *zu-Infinitiv* (see Section 12.4.10).

- (10.101) a. Das Kind schläft endlich ein.  
           Das Kind scheint endlich eingeschlafen.  
       b. \* Das Kind scheint geschlafen.  
       c. Das Kind ist seit einer Stunde endlich eingeschlafen.  
       d. Das Kind scheint mir endlich eingeschlafen.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.150]

The following attested verbs are only illustrative examples taken from the data analysed by Lasch (2016).<sup>31</sup> There are many more verbs possible in these constructions, but these lists present a good sample of the kind of verbs that are actually attested.

[10.151]

- *scheinen* : *abreisen, brechen, entstehen, gefrieren, gelingen, geschehen, kommen, rücken, verlorengehen, verschwinden, versinken, werden, zerbrechen, zurückziehen*
- *erscheinen* : *ausbrennen, ausdehnen, ausformen, ausreifen, bräunen, eignen, einbilden, hervorsteigen, verblühen, verdicken, vertrocknen, wachsen*

#### 10.4.16 [ N | N ] *aussehen/wirken+Partizip* Sensory evidence (*Sin-nesevidenz*)

The verbs *aussehen* and *wirken* can be used with participles of intransitive verbs to describe an evaluation of an event based on sensory evidence by the speaker (10.102). These constructions are analysed by Lasch (2016: 253ff.) as *Askription mit modaler Relation*, but an evidential analysis seems more suitable. For *aussehen/wirken* I propose to categorise them as *direkt evidential* based on sensory evidence by the speaker. With transitive verbs these constructions lead to an anticausative diathesis, see Section 10.5.12.

[10.152]

- (10.102) a. Er schläft aus.  
           b. Er wirkt ausgeschlafen.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.153]

The following attested verbs are only illustrative examples taken from the data analysed by Lasch (2016).<sup>32</sup> There are many more verbs possible in these constructions, but these lists present a good sample of the kind of verbs that are actually attested.

[10.154]

- *aussehen* : *abstürzen, einbilden, brechen, sterben, verkleiden, verkümmern, verregnen, verwildern*
- *wirken* : *ausschlafen, aussterben, brechen, schwellen, verirren, versinken*

<sup>31</sup>Data accessed on 24 May 2012, available online at <https://goo.gl/xUng8v> for *aussehen*, <https://goo.gl/Xj7EW6> for *erscheinen*, <https://goo.gl/5YvKiw> for *scheinen* and <https://goo.gl/yCai8B> for *wirken*.

<sup>32</sup>Data accessed on 24 May 2012, available online at <https://goo.gl/xUng8v> for *aussehen*, <https://goo.gl/Xj7EW6> for *erscheinen*, <https://goo.gl/5YvKiw> for *scheinen* and <https://goo.gl/yCai8B> for *wirken*.

— Other —

#### 10.4.17 [ NA | NA ] *machen+Partizip* Resultative

[10.155] This is one of the various alternations that occur with *machen+Partizip* (see Section 10.2.7). With these experiencer verbs the alternation does not induce a diathesis.

- (10.103) a. Der Verlust betrifft mich.  
b. Der Verlust macht mich betroffen.

##### [10.156] Attested Verbs

- *betreffen, verbittern, verstören, verzagen*

##### [10.157] Further Examples

- Das Geschehen macht mich verbittert.
- Der Bericht hat mich verstört gemacht.
- Den Jäcklein hatte der getrunzene Wein verzagt und verstört gemacht.<sup>33</sup>

##### [10.158] Notes

[10.159] There are various highly frequent examples of *machen+Partizip* in which the participle is not directly derived from a finite verb.

- Das Geschäft macht mich angesehen.
- Etwas macht mich erfahren.
- Der Film macht ihn beliebt.
- Der Rauch macht mich benommen.

#### 10.4.18 [ NA | NA ] *nehmen+Partizip* Imprisonment

[10.160] The *nehmen+Partizip* construction frequently occurs with *fangen* ‘to catch’ in the context of imprisonment (10.104). Incidental cases with other verbs are attested, but these seem to be highly unusual.

- (10.104) a. Er fängt den Dieb.  
b. Er nimmt den Dieb gefangen.

##### [10.161] Attested Verbs

- *fangen, festnehmen, schenken*

##### [10.162] Further Examples

- Der mutmaßliche zweite Terrorverdächtige von Boston ist nach Polizeiangaben festgenommen genommen.<sup>34</sup>
- Ich habe mich übrigens nie als Miteigentümer der Leuna-Werke verstanden und hätte sie 1990 nicht geschenkt genommen.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup>DWDS: Perutz, Leo: Die dritte Kugel, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 1988 [1915], S. 217.

<sup>34</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.04.2013 (online).

<sup>35</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.05.2005, Nr. 20

### 10.4.19 [ NA | NA ] *setzen+Partizip* Imprisonment

The *setzen+Partizip* construction appears to be only possible with the verb *fangen* ‘to catch’ in the context of imprisonment (10.105). [10.163]

- (10.105) a. Er fängt den Dieb.  
b. Er setzt den Dieb gefangen.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.164]

- *fangen*

## 10.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

### – [ SBJ > Ø ] – *Unpersönliches Vorgangspassiv*

To call the diatheses in this section ‘passive’ is actually a misnomer, because there is no promotion of an argument to subject status. Also the retention of the original subject is mostly not possible. The categorisation of diatheses as followed in this work would suggest that VERBATIVE would be a more suitable term (see Section 2.7.2). However, because the actual constructions (using light verbs *werden*, *sein* or *gehören*) shows a parallel to the real passives, the widespread use of the name *unpersönlicher Passiv* in the German grammatical tradition is retained here. [10.165]

#### 10.5.1 [ N | – ] *werden+Partizip* Impersonal passive

The *werden+Partizip* impersonal passive is a widely discussed phenomenon in German grammar that occurs with some intransitive verbs (10.106 a,b). A special and very atypical characteristic of this diathesis is that there is no grammatical subject expressed. Typically in German, when a subject is dropped, then a valency-simulating pronoun *es* is inserted (see Section 2.2.3). However, in this diathesis any occurring pronoun *es* is only position-simulating (i.e. it occurs when the first position of the sentence, i.e. the *Vorfeld*, is empty). In contrast, when the first position is filled, the pronoun *es* is absent (10.106 b). [10.166]

This diathesis has become famous in grammatical discussion because of the claimed correlation with unaccusativity (see Section 10.2.6). Basically, the claim is that there is a correlation between the *sein/haben* selection in the Perfect and the possibility of the *werden* impersonal passive. Concretely, the claim is that (agentive) intransitive verbs with *haben* allow for the impersonal passive (10.106 a,b), while (patientive) intransitive verbs with *sein* do not (10.106 c,d). [10.167]

- (10.106) a. Das kleine Kind schläft.  
Das kleine Kind hat geschlafen.  
b. Es wird jetzt geschlafen.  
Jetzt wird (\*es) geschlafen.  
c. Das kleine Kind schläft ein.  
Das kleine Kind ist eingeschlafen.  
d. \*Jetzt wird eingeschlafen.

Although there indeed seems to be a tendency here, there are many counterexamples. For example, with verbs with *haben+Partizip* like *lügen* ‘to lie’, *jucken* ‘to itch’ or *blühen* ‘to [10.168]



blossom' it appears to be neigh impossible to use an impersonal passive. Possible examples are attested only with additional modal verbs like *können* or *dürfen* (10.107). In contrast, intransitive verbs with *sein* mostly do not allow for the impersonal passive, though examples can be found rather easily in corpora (10.108). This phenomenon clearly needs more in-depth corpus research.

- (10.107) a. In den Rieselfeldern kann ungehemmt gestunken und gelärmt werden.<sup>36</sup>  
 b. Im Gericht gibt es Fragen, bei denen gelügt werden darf.<sup>37</sup>
- (10.108) a. Lange Zeit weiß niemand - Patrick eingeschlossen - wovor hier eigentlich geflohen wird.<sup>38</sup>  
 b. Außerdem: Wie brutal ist das Betrachten eines Regenbogens, wenn nebenan krepirt wird?<sup>39</sup>  
 c. Auch 2001 soll mit zweistelliger Rate weiter gewachsen werden.<sup>40</sup>  
 d. In meiner Umgebung wird nicht gestorben.<sup>41</sup>

[10.169] In some specific contexts this impersonal construction also seems possible for transitive verbs with accusative arguments like *überarbeiten* 'to rework' (10.109a) or even ditransitive verbs like *geben* 'to give' (10.109b). However, note that in all such cases it appears to be impossible to retain any of the non-subject arguments, so these impersonal passives can be analysed as being stacked on top of an action focus diathesis (see Section 9.7.1) dropping the accusative role and leading to an intransitive verb.

- (10.109) a. Ich überarbeite den Aufsatz.  
 Morgen wird überarbeitet!
- b. Ich schenke dir die Bücher.  
 Geschenkt wird erst morgen.
- c. \*Erst morgen wird dir geschenkt.

[10.170] There is a recurrent usage of the term *Reflexivpassiv* in the German grammatical literature (e.g. Eisenberg 2006a: 131; Lasch 2016: 119). This does not appear to be a special diathesis, but rather a side-effect of an impersonal passive stacked on top of any construction with a reflexive pronoun. For example, verbs with obligatory reflexive pronouns retain this reflexive pronoun in an impersonal passive, like *konzentrieren* 'to concentrate' (10.110a), see Section 7.3.1. Also, sentence constructions that include a reflexive pronoun because of another diathesis can be used with an impersonal passive (i.e. stacking of diatheses). For example *kümmern* 'to worry, to take care' shows a conversive diathesis with an reflexive pronoun (see Section 7.5.7) and retains this reflexive pronoun in an impersonal passive (10.110b). Similarly, regular 'self-inflicting' reflexive constructions retain the reflexive pronoun in an impersonal passive (10.110c). In summary, the *Reflexivpassiv* is not a separate phenomenon

<sup>36</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.12.1983, Nr. 51

<sup>37</sup>Attested online at [http://www.rhetorik.ch/Aktuell/11/01\\_27/index.html](http://www.rhetorik.ch/Aktuell/11/01_27/index.html), accessed 4 June 2021.

<sup>38</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 05.01.2002

<sup>39</sup>DWDS: Arjouni, Jakob: Chez Max, Zürich: Diogenes 2006, S. 61

<sup>40</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 30.05.2001

<sup>41</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.03.2017 (online).

and the term should preferably not be used.

- (10.110) a. Die Regierung hat sich konzentriert auf die systemrelevanten Banken.  
Zunächst solle sich auf die systemrelevanten Banken konzentriert werden.<sup>42</sup>  
b. Ich kümmere mich darum.  
Es wird sich jetzt endlich darum gekümmert.  
c. Ich rasiere mich.  
Heute wird sich rasiert.

### 10.5.2 [ NP | -P ] *werden*+Partizip Impersonal passive+governed preposition

Many, but not all, verbs with governed prepositions (but without accusative argument, cf. Section 6.7.1) appear to allow for an impersonal passive, like *warten auf* ‘to wait for’ or *arbeiten an* ‘to work on’ (10.111). Note that these verbs all take a *haben*+Partizip Perfekt. Although it seems possible to retain the original subject as a *von* prepositional phrase, I have not been able to find good examples of such subject retention.

- (10.111) a. Auf den Professor wurde gewartet.  
b. An dem Aufsatz wurde gearbeitet.

Many, but not all, verbs that allow for a reflexive conversive diathesis, like *empören* ‘to appal’ or *aufregen* ‘to upset’ (10.112), cf. Section 7.5.7, also allow for an impersonal passive in the reflexive usage.

- (10.112) a. Über die Zerstörung der Schöpfung [...] wird sich empört.<sup>43</sup>  
b. In braver Einigkeit wird sich darüber aufgeregt, dass die Debattenkultur in Deutschland zu lahm, zu konsensuell, zu träge geworden sei.<sup>44</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

Governed preposition verbs (see Section 6.7.1)

- *über* : *herrschen, siegen, triumphieren, lügen, reden, sprechen, schweigen, denken, diskutieren, meditieren, nachdenken, klagen, lachen, schimpfen, staunen, streiten, weinen*
- *auf* : *abfahren (mögen), drängen, hoffen, rechnen, verzichten, warten, schimpfen*
- *an* : *arbeiten, denken, klopfen, teilnehmen, zweifeln*
- *um* : *streiten*

Reflexive conversive verbs (see Section 7.5.7)

- *über* : *aufregen, ärgern, begeistern, beschweren, empören, freuen, wundern*
- *um* : *kümmern*

#### Further Examples

- Als Erstes wird sich allgemein darüber gewundert, wie anders man doch aussehe und dass man sich dennoch wieder erkannt habe.<sup>45</sup>
- Wenn du etwas falsch machst, wird sich um dich gekümmert.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 11.09.2012, Nr. 37

<sup>43</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 24.11.2003

<sup>44</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.09.2017 (online).

<sup>45</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 01.12.2004

<sup>46</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 24.09.2015 (online).

### 10.5.3 [ ND | –D ] *werden+Partizip* Impersonal passive+dative

[10.177] Only a small subset of all verbs with a dative argument allow for an impersonal passive. Although this appears to be slightly more common for verbs with a *haben* Perfect, like *entsprechen* ‘to conform’ or *helfen* ‘to help’ (10.113), cf. Section 10.4.5, there are also verbs with a *sein* Perfect that allow for an impersonal passive, like *enfliehen* ‘to flee’ or *beitreten* ‘to join’ (10.114), cf. Section 10.4.6.

- (10.113) a. Seiner Bitte wird entsprochen.  
b. Den Eltern wurde geholfen.

- (10.114) a. Dem Gefängnis wird entflohen.  
b. Dem Verein wird beigetreten.

#### [10.178] Attested Verbs

- *haben* Perfect: *antworten, beipflichten, bevorstehen, entsprechen, gratulieren, helfen, nacheifern, trauen, vertrauen, zuhören, zureden*
- *sein* Perfect: *beitreten, folgen, nachgehen*

#### [10.179] Further Examples

- Auch in diesem Fall wird dem Gesprächspartner zuerst beigespflichtet, indem [...].<sup>47</sup>
- Ich weiß nicht, wie weit dem Zola-Roman gefolgt wird.<sup>48</sup>
- Ich habe angeordnet, daß allen Spuren [...] nachgegangen wird.<sup>49</sup>

### – [ SBJ > Ø ] –

### 10.5.4 [ N | – ] *sein+Partizip* Impersonal passive

[10.180] It appears to be impossible for intransitives to be used in an *sein+Partizip* impersonal passive. This section is only included to discuss the theoretical possibility of this construction, because there is a curious parallel with other impersonal constructions. Impersonal constructions with light verbs *werden*, *sein* and *gehören* occur with additional governed prepositions or datives (see the next sections), but a parallel construction with *sein* is (apparently) not attested for ‘real’ intransitives (10.115).

- (10.115) a. \* Es ist geschlafen.  
b. ? Während dem Protest ist viel gehupt.

[10.181] Such constructions only seem to be possible with an additional *worden* (10.116), which is effectively a stack of an impersonal *werden+Partizip* passive with a *sein+Partizip* perfect (with the participle of *werden* showing up as the idiosyncratic form *worden*).

- (10.116) a. Da ist geschrien worden.  
b. Vier Jahre ist geschlafen worden, jetzt sollen wir alles in vier Tagen machen.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Attested online at <https://wortwuchs.net/stilmittel/concessio/>, accessed 6 Juni 2021

<sup>48</sup> DWDS: Klemperer, Victor: [Tagebuch] 1928. In: “Leben sammeln, nicht fragen wozu und warum”, Berlin: Aufbau-Taschenbuch-Verl. 2000, S. 258

<sup>49</sup> DWDS: Der Spiegel, 16.01.1989

<sup>50</sup> Attested online at <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/dachau/brandschutz-karlsfeld-wohnaeuser-kritik-1.5250267>, accessed 17 June 2021

### 10.5.5 [ NP | -P ] *sein+Partizip* Impersonal passive+governed preposition

It turns out to be astonishingly hard, but not impossible, to find examples of *sein* impersonal passives with governed prepositions, like e.g. with *denken* (10.117 a). Constructions with an additional *worden* are widespread, but those are stacks of *werden* passive with a perfect (10.117 b), see Section 10.5.17 for a more in-depth discussion of this difference. [10.182]

- (10.117) a. Aber auch daran ist gedacht.  
 b. An nichts ist gearbeitet worden.  
 (= An nichts wird gearbeitet. +> *sein+Partizip* perfect)

#### Attested Verbs

[10.183]

- *denken*

### 10.5.6 [ ND | -D ] *sein+Partizip* Impersonal passive+dative

In contrast, *sein* impersonal passives with datives are easy to find. Most nominative/dative verbs that allow for a *werden* impersonal passive (see Section 10.5.3) also seem to be possible with *sein+Partizip* (10.118). [10.184]

- (10.118) a. Dem Entschluss ist entsprochen.  
 „Es gibt kein Zurück“, sagte Metzger, „ganz gleich, ob dem Willen des Haushaltsausschusses entsprochen ist oder nicht.“<sup>51</sup>  
 b. Ihm ist geholfen.  
 Ich glaube nicht, dass den Jungs damit geholfen ist.<sup>52</sup>  
 c. Ihm ist gekündigt.  
 Schon gar nicht, bevor dem Mieter dort wirksam gekündigt ist.<sup>53</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[10.185]

- *antworten, entsprechen, helfen, kündigen*

### 10.5.7 [ N | – ] *gehören+Partizip* Impersonal passive

The *gehören+Partizip* passive appears to occur in some examples with intransitive verbs, resulting in impersonal constructions. An in-depth introduction of the *gehören+Partizip* passive can be found in Section 10.5.18. The usage of this constructions with intransitive verbs needs more in-depth study, as many examples seem doubtful (10.119 a,b). However, they are sparsely attested (10.119 c). [10.186]

- (10.119) a. ? In der Sauna gehört geschwitzt.  
 b. ? In der Nacht gehört geschlafen.  
 c. Um die Uhrzeit gehört geschlafen.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 27.04.2002

<sup>52</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 17.05.2003

<sup>53</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 03.05.2003

<sup>54</sup>Attested online at <http://www.motor-talk.de/forum/empire-bikes-und-klaus-huelsmann-t3208043.html?page=7>, accessed 16 June 2021

### 10.5.8 [ NP | –P ] *gehören+Partizip* Impersonal passive+governed preposition

[10.187] Impersonal passive constructions with a governed preposition are attested with the light-verb *gehören* (10.120). Basically the same verbs that occur with *werden+Partizip* can also occur with *gehören+Partizip* (see Section 10.5.2), though more detailed study is necessary.

- (10.120) a. Ich kämpfe gegen den Feind.  
Gegen den Feind gehört gekämpft.  
b. Darüber gehört diskutiert, darüber gehört gestritten.<sup>55</sup>

#### [10.188] Attested Verbs

- *diskutieren, kämpfen, streiten*

### 10.5.9 [ ND | –D ] *gehören+Partizip* Impersonal passive+dative

[10.189] Impersonal passives with a dative are widespread with the light-verb *gehören* (10.121). Such examples were already included in one of the first discussions of the *gehören+Partizip* Passive (Reis 1976: 70).

- (10.121) a. Ich helfe dem Studenten.  
Dem Studenten gehört geholfen.  
b. Ich kündige ihm.  
Ihm gehört gekündigt.  
c. Ihm gehört das Handwerk gelegt.

#### [10.190] Attested Verbs

- *antworten, entsprechen, helfen, kündigen*

– [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] –

### 10.5.10 [ NA | –N ] *bleiben+Partizip* Anticausative (*Kontinuativantikausativ*)

[10.191] The construction *bleiben+Partizip* is both used with intransitive verbs (see Section 10.4.11) and with transitive verbs (this section). The verb *bleiben* has even more uses as a light verb (see [Section 11.4.2; sec:zuinfinitive-bleiben]) and it can also be used as a main verb with a meaning ‘to remain’. This widespread usage has led to quite some discussion in the German grammatical literature about the unity of all these constructions (Eroms 2000: 404; Helbig & Buscha 2001: 163; Krämer 2004; Schlücker 2007: 152; Lasch 2016: 72). Following the general approach in this book, all constructions are discussed separately. However, this is no way precludes any underlying connection between them.

[10.192] The name *Kontinuativantikausativ* for the transitive *bleiben+Partizip* construction is inspired by Helbig & Buscha (2001: 163). This construction is closely related to the stative *sein+Partizip* (see Section 10.5.17), but adds a notion of continuation (10.122 a). However, there are various further important differences between these two construction. First, because of the continuative semantics, a stacked Perfect is not possible with *bleiben+Partizip*

<sup>55</sup>Attested online at <https://katharina-schulze.de/zukunft-wird-aus-mut-gemacht/>, accessed 17 June 2021

(10.122b). Second, *bleiben+Partizip* does not appear to allow for the retention of the agent, so it is truly an anticausative (10.122c).

- (10.122) a. Die Tür bleibt geöffnet.  
Die Tür ist geöffnet.  
b. \*Die Tür ist geöffnet geblieben.  
Die Tür ist geöffnet gewesen.  
c. \*Die Tür bleibt geöffnet durch den Wind.  
Die Tür ist geöffnet durch den Wind.

Third, *bleiben+Partizip* is only possible with a small subset of all verbs that allow for *sein+Partizip* (10.123). Helbig & Buscha (2001: 163) also offer an explanation for the restricted applicability of this construction. They propose that only verbs that describe reversible events allow for this diathesis. [10.193]

- (10.123) a. \*Das Buch bleibt geschrieben.  
b. \*Das Auto bleibt gewaschen.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.194]

- *fangen, füllen, öffnen, schließen, verwarnen, etc.*

#### Further Examples

[10.195]

- Die Tür bleibt geschlossen.
- Der Betrüger bleibt gefangen.
- Der Fußballer bleibt verwahrt.
- Das Fass bleibt gefüllt.

### 10.5.11 [ NA | -N ] *scheinen/erscheinen+Partizip* Anticausative (*Inferenzantikausativ*)

The light verbs *scheinen* and *erscheinen* can be used with participles in monoclausal constructions. With intransitive verbs these light verbs do not induce any diathesis (see Section 10.4.15). In contrast, with transitive verbs these constructions result in an anticausative diathesis (10.124). Such constructions are analysed by Lasch (2016: 253ff.) as *Askription mit modaler Relation*. However, inspired by the analysis by Diewald & Smirnova (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 177-191) it seems better to consider these expression as marking inferential evidence. As a German name I propose to use the term *INFERENZANTIKAUSATIV*. [10.196]

- (10.124) a. Der Sturm beschädigt das Dach des Hauses.  
b. Das Dach des Hauses sieht beschädigt aus.

The retention of the agent using a *von* phrase appears to be possible, though examples are very rare (10.125a,b). Note that examples with *wie von* phrases have to be discarded, as such phrases do not instantiate an agent. Because of the very rare attestation of such [10.197]

agents I consider these diatheses to be anticausatives, not passives. These constructions are sometimes attested with an additional experiencer dative (10.125 c,d).

- (10.125) a. Im Längsschnitt erscheint der helle Innenraum von zwei dunklen Linien begrenzt.<sup>56</sup>  
 b. Zuletzt scheinen von diesem Prozeß die biblischen Gleichnisse betroffen.<sup>57</sup>  
 c. Der Titel [...] scheint mir unglücklich gewählt.<sup>58</sup>  
 d. Sein Gesicht erschien mir vertrocknet.<sup>59</sup>

[10.198] The light verb *scheinen* can also occur with an extra *zu sein* construction (10.126), which is analysed here as a stack of a *sein+Partizip* Perfect (see Section 10.4.2) with a *scheinen+zu-Infinitiv* construction (see Section 12.4.10). The two examples in (10.126 b,c) are thus two different constructions, though the semantic difference needs a deeper investigation.

- (10.126) a. Der Gast reist ab.  
 b. Der Gast scheint abgereist.  
 c. Der Gast scheint abgereist zu sein.

#### [10.199] Attested Verbs

[10.200] The following attested verbs are only illustrative examples taken from the data analysed by Lasch (2016).<sup>60</sup> There are many more verbs possible in these constructions, but these lists present a good sample of the kind of verbs that are actually attested.

- *scheinen* : *abschließen, andeuten, anordnen, aufführen, aufgeben, aufheben, auflösen, aufrufen, aufzeichnen, ausschalten, ausschließen, beabsichtigen, beenden, begeistern, begründen, beseitigen, bestehlen, bestimmen, betreffen, einbetten, entfernen, entleihen, entscheiden, enttäuschen, erfinden, erledigen, erlöschen, erreichen, erschöpfen, falsifizieren, fassen, gebieten, hüllen, klären, lösen, machen, niederdrücken, retten, schließen, sichern, stützen, treffen, treiben, überfordern, überstehen, überwinden, überzeugen, umwittern, verbinden, verbreiten, verlieren, verstören, verwirklichen, vorzeichnen, wagen, wählen, würdigen, ziehen*
- *erscheinen* : *abschließen, anpassen, anzeigen, aufhängen, ausschalten, ausschließen, bedrohen, begrenzen, belasten, beziehen, binden, färben, geben, gefährden, kompromittieren, machen, rechtfertigen, sichern, verändern, verbinden*

### 10.5.12 [ NA | -N ] *aussehen/wirken+Partizip* Anticausative (*Sinnesantikausativ*)

[10.201] The verbs *aussehen* and *wirken* (both meaning ‘to appear, to look’) can be used with participles in monoclausal constructions. With intransitive verbs these light verbs do not induce any diathesis (see Section 10.4.16). In contrast, with transitive verbs like *quälen* ‘to agonise’

<sup>56</sup>Lasch 2016, citing DWDS: Nultsch, Wilhelm, Allgemeine Botanik, Stuttgart: Thieme 1964, S. 52

<sup>57</sup>Lasch 2016, citing DWDS: Busch, Werner, Das sentimentalische Bild, München: Beck 1993, S. 284

<sup>58</sup>Lasch 2016, citing DWDS: Der Spiegel 23.02.1987

<sup>59</sup>Lasch 2016, citing DWDS: Blos, Wilhelm, Denkwürdigkeiten eines Sozialdemokraten, Band 1, München: G. Birk, 1914., S. 9306

<sup>60</sup>Data accessed on 24 May 2012, available online at <https://goo.gl/xUng8v> for *aussehen*, <https://goo.gl/Xj7EW6> for *erscheinen*, <https://goo.gl/5YvKiw> for *scheinen* and <https://goo.gl/yCai8B> for *wirken*.

(10.127 a) or *verändern* ‘to change’ (10.127 b) these constructions result in an anticausative diathesis.

- (10.127) a. Die Erinnerung quält ihn.  
Er wirkt gequält.  
b. Die Renovierung verändert den Bahnhof.  
Der Bahnhof sieht verändert aus.

The retention of the agent using a *von* phrase appears to be possible, though examples are rare (10.128). Note that examples with *wie von* phrases have to be discarded, as such phrases do not instantiate an agent. It seems like the retention of an agent is more acceptable with verbs describing a mental state, like *quälen* (10.127 a), in contrast to verbs that describe a change of state, like *verändern* (10.127 b). Because of the very rare attestation of such agents I consider these diatheses to be anticausatives, and not passives. [10.202]

- (10.128) a. [...] deren Zweige übrigens schon von der Sonnenhitze schnell verdorrt aus-  
sahen.<sup>61</sup>  
b. Auch bei der Messe in Györ [...] wirkte der Papst [...] von Strapazen gezeich-  
net.<sup>62</sup>

These constructions are attested with an additional experiencer dative, but this is very rare (10.129). With *aussehen* (10.129 a) it is only very rarely attested in older examples and with *wirken* it seems to be more common to use an *auf* prepositional phrase instead of a dative (10.129 b). [10.203]

- (10.129) a. [...] der alte Kriegsheld sieht mir sehr determiniert aus [...].<sup>63</sup>  
b. Der Herr Assauer wirkte mir doch leicht angesäuselt.<sup>64</sup>  
Der Herr Assauer wirkte auf mich doch leicht angesäuselt.

The participles that are used in these constructions are very similar to secondary predicates (see Section 10.2.4). There is a continuum of constructions between clearly embedded constructions (10.130 a), secondary predicate constructions (10.130 b,c), and clearly monoclausal constructions (10.130 d). These constructions have a long history in the generative tradition under the heading of “subject raising”. A major early discussion of this phenomenon can be found in Postal (1974). [10.204]

- (10.130) a. Ich finde, dass die Pflanze aussieht, [alsob sie nicht von dir versorgt worden ist].  
b. Ich finde, dass die Pflanze [wie nicht von dir versorgt] aussieht.  
c. Ich finde, dass die Pflanze nicht [wie von dir versorgt] aussieht.  
d. Ich finde, dass die Pflanze nicht [von dir versorgt] aussieht.

### Attested Verbs

The following attested verbs are only illustrative examples taken from the data analysed by Lasch (2016).<sup>65</sup> There are many more verbs possible in these constructions, but these lists present a good sample of the kind of verbs that are actually attested. [10.205]

<sup>61</sup>DWDS: Keil, Ernst (Hrsg.): Die Gartenlaube. Jg. 2 (1854).

<sup>62</sup>Lasch 2016, citing DWDS: Archiv der Gegenwart, 2001

<sup>63</sup>DWDS: Wallenrodt, Johanna Isabella Eleonore von: Fritz, der Mann wie er nicht seyn sollte oder die Folgen einer übeln Erziehung. Bd. 2. Gera, 1800.

<sup>64</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 30.05.2003

<sup>65</sup>Data accessed on 24 May 2012, available online at <https://goo.gl/xUng8v> for *aussehen*, <https://goo.gl/Xj7EW6> for *erscheinen*, <https://goo.gl/5YvKiw> for *scheinen* and <https://goo.gl/yCai8B> for *wirken*. [10.206]



- *aussehen*: *absperren, abtragen, angreifen, anregen, anstrengen, ausschlagen, ausstopfen, begehen, bekümmern, beschädigen, besetzen, drucken, durchleiden, einengen, einrichten, enttäuschen, entzücken, erhitzen, erschöpfen, handhaben, herstellen, improvisieren, knicken, marmorieren, niederschlagen, missgestalten, mitnehmen, möblieren, nähren, narkotisieren, pflegen, stechen, überwachen, verändern, verarbeiten, verbrennen, verjüngen, verlieren, vernichten, verschmutzen, verstören, verwüsten, vollenden, zerkratzen, zerquälen, zerrupfen, zerstreuen, zerzausen, zwingen*
- *wirken*: *ankleben, ankreiden, anspannen, aufmalen, auszeichnen, blockieren, darstellen, deplatzen, deprimieren, entkrampfen, erleichtern, ermatten, hacken, kalkulieren, konstruieren, machen, pflegen, planen, quälen, rupfen, schreiben, stressen, überladen, überreiben, verändern, verbergen, verfehlen, verkümmern, verlieren, verschließen, verstören, verzerren, zeichnen, zerfetzen, zersplittern, zurechstützen, zusammenhauen, zusammensuchen*

### 10.5.13 [ NA | -N ] *geben/zeigen+Partizip* Reflexive anticausative (*Präsentativantikausativ*)

[10.207] The diatheses *geben+Partizip* (10.131 a) and *zeigen+Partizip* (10.131 b) obligatorily need a reflexive pronoun. Both construction induce an anticausative diathesis in which the original agent cannot be retained. Semantically these two constructions are also rather similar as they both express a consciously induced appearance.

- (10.131) a. Die Musik entspannt ihn.  
Er gibt sich entspannt.
- b. Etwas motiviert das Orchester.  
Auch das Orchester zeigte sich motiviert.<sup>66</sup>

[10.208] This construction typically occurs with 'state-of-mind' verbs. Though note that it also frequently occurs with participles that are not transparently related to their meaning as finite verbs. For example, the verbs *reservieren* 'to reserve' and *aufräumen* 'to clean up' are only metaphorically related to their usage as states-of-mind participles (10.132).

- (10.132) Er gibt sich reserviert/aufgeräumt.

#### [10.209] Attested Verbs

- *aufklären, befriedigen, besiegen, entspannen, erfüllen, ermutigen, lösen, motivieren, schlagen, überzeugen*

#### [10.210] Further Examples

- Er gibt sich geschlagen/besiegt/gewonnen.

### 10.5.14 [ NA | -N ] *stehen+Partizip* Anticausative

[10.211]

<sup>66</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.04.1999, Nr. 15

Some instances of *stehen* with a participle appear to have an anticausative effect. However, such examples are quite rare and also rather idiomatic (10.133).

- (10.133) a. Irgendjemand hat die Tür geöffnet.  
Die Tür steht geöffnet.  
b. Irgendjemand hat mich korrigiert.  
Ich stehe korrigiert.

Most examples of finite *stehen* with a participle that occur in texts are not instances of this diathesis. Typically, the verb *stehen* ‘to stand’ is used in its literal meaning and the participle is an depictive secondary predicate (10.134a). Another frequent use of *stehen* with participle is attested with ‘text manipulation’ verbs, like *schreiben*, *erwähnen*, *nennen*, *eintragen*, *vermerken* etc. (10.134b). This seems to be a metaphorical usage of *stehen*, in the sense that letters ‘stand’ on a page. The participle is here likewise a depictive secondary predicate. [10.212]

- (10.134) a. Das Planschbecken stand im Garten aufgebaut.  
b. Die Worte stehen auf der Titelseite geschrieben.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.213]

- *korrigieren*, *öffnen*, *schließen*

#### Further Examples

[10.214]

- Vielleicht auch, weil er weiß, dass die Truppen hinter ihm nicht geschlossen stehen.<sup>67</sup>
- Wenn die SPD nicht geschlossen stehe, werde es schwierig, den Wahlkampf durchzustehen.<sup>68</sup>

### 10.5.15 [ NA | –N ] *gehen+Partizip* Anticausative

The construction *gehen+Partizip* appears to be only possible in very few examples, like with *verlieren* ‘to lose’ (10.135). The retention of the agent as a dative is sometimes possible, but seems to be rather old-fashioned (10.135b). [10.215]

- (10.135) a. Ich verliere den Ring.  
b. Der Ring geht (mir) verloren.

The verb *gehen* is attested with various other participles, but these are different constructions. First, the construction (10.136a) is an fixed construction *\*\*es geht\** with a dative experiencer and an adverb describing a personal feeling. This adverb can sometimes look like a participle, like *ausgezeichnet* ‘fine’ or *beschissen* ‘crappy’, but these are idiomatic and their meaning is only metaphorically related to their finite verbs, e.g. *auszeichnen* ‘to stand out’ and *bescheißen* ‘to screw somebody’. Second, the construction in (10.136b) has a participle as a secondary predicate. In this sentence the verb *gehen* is the independent verb meaning ‘to walk’. [10.216]

- (10.136) a. Mir geht es ausgezeichnet/gut.  
b. Er geht gebückt.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.217]

<sup>67</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 12.10.2004.

<sup>68</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 29.09.2012, Nr. 40.

- gewinnen, vergessen, verlieren

[10.218] **Further Examples**

- Und mit ein wenig Glück hätte das Spiel auch gewonnen gehen können.<sup>69</sup>
- “Natürlich denke ich darüber nach, weshalb ich das tue”, sagt sie jetzt, den Blick auf die Straße gerichtet, “wie viel Lebensqualität mir verloren geht, was das überhaupt bringt.”<sup>70</sup>
- “Sehen Sie,” rief der Prinz mit Verdrusse, wie Sie sich von der Oberfläche hintergehen lassen, und wie leicht Sie mir gewonnen gehen!<sup>71</sup>
- Moderne Stiftungen [...] bringen Themen aufs Tapet, die sonst vergessen gehen.<sup>72</sup>

— [ OBJ > SBJ > ADJ ] —

**10.5.16 [ NA | pN ] werden+Partizip Passive (Vorgangspassiv)**

[10.219] The *werden+Partizip* VORGANGSPASSIV is the quintessential diathesis according to typical textbooks on German grammar. This diathesis promotes an accusative to nominative and (optionally) retains the original nominative, typically as a prepositional *durch* or *von* phrase (10.137), but see Section 6.2.6 for a discussion of the status of these prepositions. Pape-Müller (Pape-Müller 1980: 77-85) discusses various other grammatical possibilities to express the agent. Any further arguments, like datives or governed prepositions, are simply retained (10.137 c,d).

- (10.137) a. Der Handwerker hat das Haus angemalt.  
 b. Das Haus wird angemalt (durch den Handwerker).  
 c. Er schenkt mir den Schrank.  
 d. Der Schrank wird mir (von ihm) geschenkt.

[10.220] A verb peculiar constructions occurs when a Perfect ist stacked on top of a *werden* passive. The verb *werden* takes a *sein+Partizip* Perfect (see Section 10.4.2), but the participle of *werden* in this Perfect construction is the idiosyncratic wordform *worden* and not the expected *geworden* (10.138 a). This seems to be the only place in German in which the wordform *worden* is used. Note that it is easy to find examples of *geworden* as well (10.138 b,c), but the constructions with *worden* seems to be much more frequent. It is unclear whether there is any difference between the use of *worden* and *geworden* in this context.

- (10.138) a. Die Tür ist geschlossen worden.  
 b. Tsipras schloss einen Rücktritt aus, der diskutiert geworden war, [...].<sup>73</sup>  
 c. Als die Krise in ihrer ganzen Dimension erkannt geworden sei, habe die Regierung gut reagiert.<sup>74</sup>

[10.221] This *werden* passive typically occurs with transitive verbs with an accusative argument, though it is also frequently attested as an ‘impersonal’ passive with intransitive verbs (see Section 10.5.1). Also some nominative+dative verbs allow for such an impersonal passive

<sup>69</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.11.2013, Nr. 47.

<sup>70</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 09.07.2017, Nr. 28.

<sup>71</sup>DWDS: Schiller, Friedrich: Der Geisterseher. Leipzig, 1789.

<sup>72</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 30.04.2014, Nr. 19.

<sup>73</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.07.2015 (online).

<sup>74</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 06.04.2015, Nr. 13

(see Section 10.5.3). Reflexive pronouns in the accusative case do not count as an accusative arguments, as they will never be promoted to nominative subject. Some verbs with an accusative reflexive pronoun allow for an impersonal passive (see Section 10.5.1).

However, note that not all (nominative/accusative) transitive verbs allow for this *werden+Partizip* passive diathesis. For example, this diathesis is not possible for various verbs that also have a reflexive conversive diathesis (see Section 7.5.7), like *wundern* ‘to wonder’ (10.139). The passive is also not possible with verbs with obligatory quantified object (see Section 5.3.9), like *wiegen* ‘to weight’ (10.140). Also verbs of possession, like *besitzen* ‘to possess’ (10.141) do not allow for a passive.

- (10.139) a. Sein Verhalten wundert mich.  
b. \* ich werde gewundert durch sein Verhalten.
- (10.140) a. Der Lastwagen wiegt einen Zentner.  
b. \* Ein Zentner wird von dem Lastwagen gewogen.
- (10.141) a. Ich besitze einen Hund.  
b. \* Ein Hund wird von mir besessen.

#### Unattested Verbs

The *werden+Partizip* passive is possible with most verbs that take an accusative argument, except for the following ones:

- Verbs with obligatory quantified objects (Section 5.3.9): *dauern, enthalten, kosten, messen, rechnen, sparen, umfassen, wachsen, wiegen, zunehmen*
- Verbs with reflexive conversive (Section 7.5.7): *bekümmern, entwickeln, ergeben, empören, erstaunen, interessieren, freuen, kümmern, wundern*
- Verbs of possession: *bekommen, besitzen, erhalten, kriegen*
- Other verbs without passive: *kennen, schmerzen (traurig machen, mit Akkusativ)*

#### 10.5.17 [ NA | pN ] *sein+Partizip* Passive (*Zustandspassiv*)

The second most widely discussed diathesis in the German grammatical literature (closely after the *werden+Partizip* passive) is the *sein+Partizip* ZUSTANDSPASSIV (Nedjalkov 1988; Rapp 1996; Maienborn 2008, just to cite a few major contributions to this topic). There is a long and ongoing discussion whether this construction should be considered a separate construction in its own right or not (see Section 10.2.7). Following the discussion by Maienborn (2008) I will treat it as a separate construction here. The agent can optionally be retained, though often only with difficulty as with most passives.

- (10.142) a. Der Postbote öffnet den Brief.  
b. Der Brief ist schon (von dem Postboten) geöffnet.

Crucially, there is an important difference between the *sein+Partizip* (10.143a) and the *sein+Partizip+worden* constructions (10.143b). These are sometimes seen as free-choice alternatives, but they are clearly not interchangeable (cf. Maienborn 2008). The construction with *worden* is best analysed as a stack of a *werden+Partizip* passive plus on top of that a

*sein+Partizip* perfect (with the special stipulation that the *sein+Partizip* perfect of *werden* leads to an idiosyncratic participle *worden*, see Section 10.5.16).

- (10.143) a. Der Brief ist geöffnet.  
 b. Der Brief ist geöffnet worden.  
     = Jemand öffnet den Brief.  
     +> *werden+Partizip Passiv* (= Der Brief wird geöffnet.)  
     +> *sein+Partizip Perfekt* (= Der Brief ist geöffnet worden.)

[10.227] The two constructions (with and without *worden*) have different temporal structures (see Section 10.2.5). Crucially, the *sein+Partizip* ZUSTANDSPASSIV (10.144 a) has a resultative meaning, which is consistent with a durative past temporal adverbial like *schon seit zwei Tagen* (10.144b) but not with a past punctual adverbial like *vor zwei Tagen* or *gestern* (10.144 c). In contrast, the *werden+Partizip* passive plus *sein+Partizip* perfect (10.145 a) has a completive meaning with a reversed temporal interpretation (10.145 b,c).

- (10.144) a. Ich öffne den Brief.  
 b. Der Brief ist schon seit zwei Tagen geöffnet.  
 c. \* Der Brief ist schon vor zwei Tagen geöffnet.

- (10.145) a. Das Haus wird repariert.  
 b. \* Das Haus ist schon seit zwei Tagen repariert worden.  
 c. Das Haus ist schon vor zwei Tagen repariert worden.

[10.228] Most verbs with an accusative argument seem to allow for a *Zustandspassiv*, with additional arguments being simply retained, like the dative of *vermieten* 'to rent' (10.146).

- (10.146) a. Der Nachbar vermietet mir den Stellplatz.  
 b. Der Stellplatz ist mir schon seit langem vermietet.

[10.229] Still, there are some transitive verbs that do not appear to allow a *Zustandspassiv*, like *ärgern* 'to irritate' (10.147 a,b). Among those verbs without *Zustandspassiv* there is a recurrent alternative to use a preverb to attain the expected meaning, like *verärgern* 'to irritate' (10.147 c), see also Section 8.4.5. Maienborn (2008: 102-103) also notes the claims in the literature that some verbs do not allow a *Zustandspassiv*, but she dismisses such claims as the effect of pragmatic restrictions on their usage. I will list some verbs that appear to be at least problematic, if not completely impossible. However, the extend of applicability of the *Zustandspassiv* needs more in-depth corpus investigations.

- (10.147) a. Die Schüler ärgern den Lehrer.  
 b. \* Der Lehrer ist geärgert.  
 c. Der Lehrer ist verärgert.

#### [10.230] Unattested Verbs

[10.231] Almost all transitive allow for a *Zustandspassiv*. The following verbs with accusative arguments do not seem to allow for a *sein+partizip* passive construction:

- Impossible: *drücken* (*sorgen machen*), *feiern*, *fühlen*, *hören*, *kennen*, *kümmern*, *legen*, *lohn*, *merken*, *mögen*, *passen*, *quälen*, *riechen*, *schmecken*, *schätzen* (*hochachten*), *sehen*, *setzen*, *stecken*, *verlangen*, *wissen*, *zeigen*, *zwicken*

- Impossible, but alternation with a preverb available: *ärgern* (*verärgern*), *brauchen* (*verbrauchen*), *ekeln* (*anekeln*), *freuen* (*erfreuen*), *hassen* (*verhassen*), *heiraten* (*verheiraten*), *kratzen* (*zerkratzen*), *wundern* (*verwundern*)
- Different meaning of participle: *anhalten*, *ergeben*, *stören*

### Further Examples

[10.232]

Examples in which the *Zustandspassiv* does not seem to be possible:

[10.233]

- Er feiert seinen Geburtstag. \*Der Geburtstag ist gefeiert.
- Er fühlt den Stich. \*Der Stich ist gefühlt.
- Er hört das Geräusch. \*Das Geräusch ist gehört.
- Das Leid der Armen kümmert mich. \*Ich bin gekümmert.
- Ich lege/setzen/stecken das Kind unter die Decke. \*Das Kind ist unter die Decke gelegt/gesetzt/gesteckt.
- Das Ergebnis lohnt den Aufwand. \*Der Aufwand ist gelohnt.
- Ich merke den Schmerz. \*Der Schmerz ist gemerkt.
- Ich mag den Mann. \*Der Mann ist gemocht.
- Ich passe den Anzug. \*Der Anzug ist gepasst.
- Die Schuldgefühle quälen ihn. \*Er ist gequält.
- Ich rieche/schmecke den Braten. \*Der Braten ist gerochen/geschmeckt.
- Er schätzt seinen Mitarbeiter. \*Sein Mitarbeiter ist geschätzt.
- Er sieht das Haus. \*Das Haus ist gesehen.
- Ich weiß die Antwort. \*Die Antwort ist gewusst.
- Ich zeige dir meine Schätze. \*Meine Schätze sind gezeigt.
- Ich zwicke deinen Arm. \*Dein Arm ist gezwickt.
- Ich verlange eine Erklärung. \*Eine Erklärung ist verlangt.

Further impossible verbs, but with these an alternation with a preverb is available:

[10.234]

- Er braucht ein Auto. Das Auto ist (\*gebraucht) verbraucht.
- Sorgen drücken mich. Ich bin (\*gedrückt) bedrückt.
- Das Essen ekelt mich. Ich bin (\*geekelt) angeekelt.
- Die Aussicht freut mich. Ich bin (\*gefremt) erfreut.
- Er hasst seinen Nachbarn. Der Nachbar ist (\*gehasst) verhasst.
- Ich heirate meinen Freund. Mein Freund ist (\*geheiratet) verheiratet.
- Ich kenne den Mann. Der Mann ist (\*gekannt) bekannt.
- Er kratzt seinen Arm. Der Arm ist (\*gekratzt) zerkratzt.
- Sein Verhalten wundert mich. Ich bin (\*gewundert) verwundert.

### Notes

[10.235]

Some verbs have a *sein+Partizip* diathesis, but only with a rather strong semantic shift in the meaning of the verb. For example, *anhalten* means ‘to stop’, but *angehalten sein* means ‘to be admonished’ (10.148a). Likewise, *stören* means ‘to disturb’, but *gestört sein* means ‘to be crazy’ (10.148b) and *ergeben* means ‘to yield’, but *ergeben sein* means *to be devoted to*

[10.236]

(10.148 c).

- (10.148) a. Ich halte den Bus an.  
Die Botschaften sind angehalten, Visa nicht auszustellen.<sup>75</sup>
- b. Der Lärm stört den Mann.  
Der Mann ist gestört.
- c. Die Transaktionen ergaben einen hohen Gewinn.  
Ich weiß aber, daß Herr Dulles dem Frieden ergeben ist.<sup>76</sup>

### 10.5.18 [ NA | pN ] *gehören+Partizip Passive (Normpassiv)*

[10.237] The *gehören+Partizip* passive adds a normative aspect to the meaning of the passive. It expresses that something ought to happen. An early (short) discussion of this construction is given by Reis (1976: 70) and Höhle (1978: 50-51), with slightly more elaboration in Engel (1996: 458), Eroms (2000: 405-412) and Szátmari (2002: 179-182). More recent discussions are found in Stathi (2010) and Lasch (2016: 84ff.). This construction is widespread for transitive verbs like *verbrennen* 'to burn something' (10.149 a). Any further arguments can be retained, like the dative *ihm* 'to him' with the verb *sagen* 'to say' (10.149 b). The retention of the agent with a prepositional phrase seems to be perfectly possible (10.149 c), although not frequent.<sup>77</sup>

- (10.149) a. Er verbrennt dieses Buch.  
Dieses Buch gehört verbrannt.
- b. Hanna sagt ihm die Meinung.  
Ihm gehört die Meinung gesagt.
- c. Der Schiedsrichter warnt den Spieler.  
Der Spieler gehört warnt (durch den Schiedsrichter).

#### [10.238] Attested Verbs

[10.239] Various authors have listed verbs that allow for this construction. As examples, I have reproduced those lists here.

- Examples from (Szátmári 2002: 180): *abnehmen, abnehmen (wegnehmen), abschaffen, abstellen, auftauen, ausmisten, behandeln, bestrafen, entsorgen, feiern, legalisieren, machen, reformieren, stoppen, trennen, überprüfen, verfilmen, verhängen*
- Examples from (Stathi 2010: 335): *ablösen, abreißen, abschaffen, abschieben, abwählen, aufhängen, auflösen, ausmerzen, ausmustern, auspeitschen, aussortieren, austauschen, auswechseln, ausweisen, ausrotten, bedrohen, bestrafen, beschränken, beseitigen, bombardieren, diffamieren, disqualifizieren, einsperren, einschränken, eliminieren, entlassen, erschießen, hinrichten, kontrollieren, kritisieren, rausschmeißen, rauswerfen, schlachten, schlagen, schließen, steinigen, überwachen, umbringen, verbannen, verbieten, verhaften, vernichten, verprügeln, wegjagen, wegsperrern*
- Examples from (Lasch 2016: 452): *abbauen, ablösen, anreichern, absagen, abschaffen, abschneiden, abwählen, ändern, aufarbeiten, aufhängen, auflösen, aufnehmen, ausbauen, ausmerzen, ausschließen, aussortieren, beenden, begründen, beseitigen, besiegen, besteuern, bestrafen, diskutieren, eindämmen, einsperren, entkriminalisieren, entlassen,*

<sup>75</sup>DWDS: Beförderungsverbot. In: Aktuelles Lexikon 1974-2000, München: DIZ 2000

<sup>76</sup>DWDS: Archiv der Gegenwart, 2001 [1956]

<sup>77</sup>There are no examples of *gehören+Partizip* with a retained agent in the corpus compiled by Lasch (2016), see <https://goo.gl/VPJbAb>. Höhle claims that the retention of the agent is not possible (1978: 50-51), though his examples seem perfectly acceptable to me.

*erschießen, ersetzen, erzählen, hauen, jäten, kappen, melken, nehmen, privatisieren, reformieren, schicken, schließen, schnallen, schützen, setzen, sprengen, stellen, streichen, testen, therapieren, trennen, überprüfen, übersetzen, umwenden, untersagen, verbieten, verbrennen, vergasen, verlachen, vertiefen, vertreiben, verweisen, ziehen*

### 10.5.19 [ NA | pN ] *machen+Partizip* Reflexive passive

This is yet another diathesis involving the light verb *machen*, this time with an obligatory reflexive pronoun. [10.240]

- (10.150) a. Die Polizei verdächtigt ihn.  
b. Er macht sich bei der Polizei verdächtigt.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.241]

- *fürchten, verdächtigen*

#### Further Examples

[10.242]

- Die Lehrer fürchten ihn. Er hat sich gefürchtet gemacht (bei den Lehrern).

#### Notes

[10.243]

There are various *machen+sich+Partizip* constructions that do not appear to be transparently related anymore to the finite usage of the main verb (10.151). [10.244]

- (10.151) a. Ich mache mich auf alles gefasst.  
b. Ich mache mich um etwas verdient.  
c. Die Loyalität macht sich bezahlt.

### — [ OBJ > SBJ > ADJ ] —

### 10.5.20 [ ND | pN ] *bekommen/kriegen/erhalten+Partizip* Intransitive dative passive

The *bekommen* dative passive is typically found with verbs with a dative that also have an accusative argument (see Section 10.5.21). Leirbukt (1997: 64-67) only finds a single example without accusative in his corpus, but he lists various examples as presented by other authors. Examples with verbs like *helfen* 'to help' are questionable (10.152 a,b), but are widely attested inside a modal constructions (10.152 c). [10.245]

- (10.152) a. Die Ärztin hilft mir.  
b. ? Ich bekomme geholfen (von der Ärztin).  
c. Ich bin krank und will geholfen bekommen!<sup>78</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[10.246]

- Examples from Leirbukt (1997: 64): *applaudieren, assistieren, beipflichten, danken, drohen, gratulieren, heimleuchten, pfeifen, schmeicheln, widersprechen, zuarbeiten, zubeißen, zuwinken*

<sup>78</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 12.01.2002



## [10.247] Further Examples

- Er bekommt zugearbeitet/beigepflichtet/gedankt.
- Auf diesem Wege möchte man gerne zum Geburtstag gratuliert bekommen.<sup>79</sup>
- besonders aber hat Madame Lortzing die Schmeichelszenen mit dem Vater so schön und gut gespielt, daß sie bei jeder Scene hat applaudirt bekommen.<sup>80</sup>

10.5.21 [ NDA | pNA ] *bekommen/kriegen/erhalten+Partizip Dative passive (Rezipientenpassiv)*

[10.248] The dative passive is widely discussed in the German grammatical literature under the name *Rezipientenpassiv*. Leirbukt\* (1997) presents a major monograph-sized investigation of this construction. This diathesis promotes the dative argument to nominative subject. For example, the dative *dem Schüler* of the verb *abnehmen* 'to take away' (10.153 a) is remapped to nominative *der Schüler* (10.153 b). As with all passives, the original agent can be expressed with a *von* or *durch* prepositional phrase, though this is uncommon. Leirbukt (1997: 130) finds 10-20% expressed agents, most using *von*, and almost all being semantically animate.

- (10.153) a. Der Lehrer nimmt dem Schüler das Handy ab.  
 b. Der Schüler bekommt das Handy abgenommen (von dem Lehrer).

[10.249] The choice between the light verbs *bekommen*, *kriegen* and *erhalten* does not seem to have any clear semantic impact, but is mainly determined stylistically and dialectally (Leirbukt 1997: Ch. 4; Lenz 2013: 427ff.).

## [10.250] Attested Verbs

- Leirbukt (Leirbukt 1997: 68-99) lists hundreds of verbs organised in many semantic classes.

## [10.251] Further Examples

- Ich baue dir ein Haus.  
 Du bekommst (von mir) ein Haus gebaut.
- Sie schneidet ihm die Haare.  
 Er bekommt die Haare geschnitten.

10.5.22 [ NDA | pNA ] *haben+Partizip Possessor passive (Pertinenzpassiv)*

[10.252] Transitive verbs that allow for a possessor-dative alternation (see Section 5.8.4) can be used in a very special *haben+Partizip* diathesis. For example, the possessor of the object of a verb like *reparieren* 'to repair' (10.154 a) can alternatively be expressed as a dative (10.154 b). This dative can be promoted to subject in a *haben+Partizip* construction (10.154 c). I propose to call this construction *Pertinenzpassiv*. Sentence (10.154 c) is highly ambiguous with a preference for the epithetical agentive reading 'I have repaired the computer' (*Perfekt*), so it needs a special context to be understood in the intended diathetical experiencer meaning

<sup>79</sup> Attested online at <https://www.tafeldeko.de/news/geburtstagsgruesse-viele-moeglichkeiten-zu-gratulieren/>, accessed 16 July 2021.

<sup>80</sup> Gräff, Hans Gerhard (ed.) *Goethes Ehe in Briefen* p. 401, available online <https://books.google.de/books?id=vehYBQAAQBAJ&pg=PA401-IA2>, accessed 16 July 2021.

‘The computer has been repaired on my behalf’ (*Pertinenzpassiv*). As extensively discussed by Leirbukt (Leirbukt 2000), inside a modal construction the diathetical reading is the preferred one, for example using *wollen*, ‘to want’ (10.154 d).

- (10.154) a. Der erfahrene Techniker hat meinen Rechner repariert.  
 b. Der erfahrene Techniker hat mir den Rechner repariert.  
 c. Ich habe den Rechner repariert.  
 (= Der Rechner ist für mich repariert worden.)  
 d. Ich will den Rechner repariert haben.

The retention of the original subject is only possible with some stative verbs (10.155 a). Retention is much more widespread With the light verb *haben* in the *Konjunktiv* (10.155 b). With the stacked modal construction it is also more widespread to retain the original subject (10.155 c). [10.253]

- (10.155) a. Er hat das Gesicht von tiefen Falten durchfurcht (Latzel 1977: 301).  
 b. Ich hätte den Rechner gerne von dem erfahrenen Techniker repariert.  
 c. Ich will den Rechner von dem erfahrenen Techniker repariert haben.

It is crucial for this *Pertinenzpassiv* that the possessor of the accusative can be expressed alternatively as a dative. It is exactly the set of those verbs that allow for such a *Pertinenzdativ* that also allow for a *Pertinenzpassiv*. It is neither all datives, nor all possessors, that allow for a *Pertinenzpassiv* (Hole 2002: 175-177). This interpretation is only available when both dative and possessor expressions are possible. Additionally, the *Pertinenzpassiv* is most easily applied with verbs that are typically outsourced, i.e. verbs that describe actions that are often performed by somebody else, i.e. *reparieren* ‘to repair’, *die Haare schneiden* ‘to cut hair’ or *den Arm brechen* ‘to break an arm’. [10.254]

There are various tests to identify *haben+Partizip* construction as a diathesis. Businger (2011: 160-171) presents an extensive discussion of such criteria. I will present only two (major) criteria here. First, the two interpretation of the *haben+Partizip* constructions have different temporal interpretations (see Section 10.2.5). The epithetical Perfekt is tense-oriented (10.156 a), while the diathetical experiencer interpretation is perfect-oriented (10.156 b). This difference can be shown by adding temporal adverbial phrases. The punctual past *gestern* ‘yesterday’ invokes an epithetical reading (10.156 a), while a durative perfect *seit drei Tagen* ‘since three days’ invokes a diathetical reading (10.156 b). [10.255]

- (10.156) a. Ich habe den Rechner gestern repariert.  
 (= Gestern habe ich etwas getan, nämlich den Rechner repariert.)  
 b. Ich habe den Rechner seit drei Tagen repariert.  
 (= Mein Rechner ist schon seit drei Tagen repariert.)

Second, the diathetical experiencer reading is incompatible with an additional repetition of the possessor, either as adnominal genitive (10.157 a) or as dative (10.157 b). These examples sentences can only be interpreted as epithetical agentive constructions. In contrast, with some body injury verbs like *brechen* ‘to break’ the repetition of the possessor is possible with the experiential reading of the *Pertinenzpassiv* (10.157 c). Note that this is. for example, [10.256]

not possible with *amputieren* ‘to amputate’ (10.157 d,e).

- (10.157) a. Ich habe meinen Rechner repariert.  
 (= Ich habe etwas getan, nämlich meinen Rechner repariert.)  
 b. Ich habe mir den Rechner repariert.  
 (= Ich habe etwas getan, nämlich meinen Rechner repariert.)  
 c. Ich habe mir den Arm gebrochen.  
 (= Mir ist etwas passiert, und dadurch ist mein Arm gebrochen.)  
 d. Ich habe den Arm amputiert.  
 e. ? Ich habe mir den Arm amputiert.

[10.257] Hole (2002: 177) claims that (10.158 a) without different subject (*Der Chef*) and possessor (*Anna*) can have a diathetical experiencer reading. Although this interpretation might be possible (with much difficulty), I think that the *Pertinenzpassiv* is never used this way in German. In contrast, note that with additional *Konjunktiv* (10.158 b) or with modal stacking (10.158 c) is clearly possible to have an explicit or even different possessor. Because of this, Hole (2002: 173-174; following Leirbukt 1981) even proposes that the embedded construction (10.158 b,c) should be considered yet again a different construction. I do not follow this proposal here.

- (10.158) a. Der Chef (der in Annas Büro sitzt) hat Annas Fenster geöffnet.  
 (= ? Irgendjemand hat Annas Fenster für den Chef geöffnet.)  
 b. Der Chef hätte gerne Annas/sein Fenster geöffnet.  
 c. Der Chef will gerne Annas/sein Fenster geöffnet haben.

[10.258] There is a long scholarly history describing this experiencer reading of the *haben+Partizip* construction (e.g. Kruisinga 1935: 122; Bech 1955: 20-21; Stopp 1957: 278; Seiler 1973: 842-843; Latzel 1977: 289; Helbig 1978: 42-43; Höhle 1978: 46; Eroms 2000: 395-396, 420-421). The first more in-depth discussion is by Leirbukt (1981; 2000), followed by Hole (2002), Rothstein (2007), and most recently Lasch (2016: 87ff.) and Businger (2011: Ch. 4). In the recent literature following Hole (2002), this construction is known as the *PARTIZIPIALE HABEN-KONFIGURATION* (PHK). I find this name rather cumbersome and uninformative. Alternatively, I propose to call this construction *PERTINENZPASSIV* as there is an strong connection to the *Pertinenzdativ* (see Section 5.8.4) and the *Rezipientenpassiv* (see Section 10.5.21).

[10.259] The possibility of this diathesis without accusative object is observed by Rothstein (2007: 295-296), but his examples (*öffnen*, *schließen*) are not applicable, because they also occur as intransitives (10.159). Those verbs are covert anticausatives, see Section 5.5.5. Still, there are incidental examples without accusative object, but they show a rather idiosyncratic remapping of roles as discussed in Section 10.9.1.

- (10.159) a. Der Laden hat seit drei Stunden geöffnet.  
 b. Der Inhaber öffnet seinen Laden heute etwas später.  
 c. Der Laden öffnet heute etwas später.

[10.260] Starting from the very first mentioning of the *haben* dative passive a connection to the *bekommen* dative passive (Section 10.5.21) is recurrently mentioned (e.g. Kruisinga 1935: 122) and criticised (e.g. Hole 2002: 172-173; Businger 2011: 176-184). The basic observation is the parallel as shown in (10.160). Although there is undoubtedly a similarity between

(10.160 a) and (10.160 b), these two sentences are clearly different constructions. For example, both constructions have different temporal structures (10.161).

- (10.160) a. Ich habe den Arm verbunden.  
(= Mir ist der Arm verbunden.)  
b. Ich habe den Arm verbunden bekommen.  
(= Mir ist der Arm verbunden worden.)
- (10.161) a. Ich habe den Arm schon seit drei Stunden verbunden.  
b. \*Ich habe den Arm gestern verbunden.  
c. Ich habe den Arm gestern verbunden bekommen.  
d. \*Ich habe den Arm schon seit drei Stunden verbunden bekommen.

There is a fascinating parallel between different kinds of *Pertinenzdativ* and different constructions with the light-verb *haben*. The *Pertinenzdativ* of an accusative object allows for a *haben+Partizip* diathesis (10.162 a), as discussed in this section. In contrast, a *Pertinenzdativ* of a local prepositional phrase with a positional verb (see Section 6.8.11) allows for a *haben+Infinitiv* diathesis (10.162 b), see Section 11.9.2. Finally, a *Pertinenzdativ* of an intransitive verb (see Section 5.8.3) allows for a *haben+am-Infinitiv* diathesis (10.162 c), see Section 13.9.1. [10.261]

- (10.162) a. Der Friseur schneidet die Haare des Lehrers.  
Der Lehrer hat die Haare geschnitten.  
b. Der Affe sitzt auf meiner Schulter.  
Ich habe den Affen auf meiner Schulter sitzen.  
c. Mein Haus brennt.  
Ich habe mein Haus am brennen.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.262]

- Body tending: *kämmen, maniküren, ondulieren (Haare), rasieren, schneiden (Haare), streicheln, verbinden*
- Injury: *amputieren, auskugeln, brechen, verdrehen, verrenken, zerquetschen*
- Repair: *aktualisieren, korrigieren, reparieren, verbinden*
- Manipulation: *aufstellen, einbauen, einrücken, versperren*

#### Further Examples

[10.263]

- Während der Brexit-Kampagne wettete Boris Johnson unermüdlich gegen die Europäische Union - jetzt nimmt er als britischer Außenminister erstmals an einer Sitzung mit Amtskollegen in Brüssel teil. Erste Beobachtung: Er hat die Haare geschnitten.<sup>81</sup>
- Bei der zweiten Attacke, die wieder in ihrem Haus stattfindet, reißt sie ihm die Ski-Maske vom Gesicht, erkennt ihn und jagt ihm eine Schere durch die Hand, die sie von ihrem Schreibtisch ergattern konnte, woraufhin er flüchtet. Am nächsten Tag begegnen sie sich auf der Straße vor ihren Häusern. Er hat die Hand verbunden.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Attested online at [https://www.n-tv.de/der\\_tag/Boris-Johnson-in-Bruessel-ganz-handzahn-article18215036.html](https://www.n-tv.de/der_tag/Boris-Johnson-in-Bruessel-ganz-handzahn-article18215036.html), accessed 15 July 2021.

<sup>82</sup> Attested online at <https://andreas-huckele.de/elle-ein-film-von-paul-verhoeven-mit-isabelle-huppert-ein-kinoabend-zum-selberdenken/>, accessed 15 July 2021.

– [ OBJ > SBJ > PBJ ] –

### 10.5.23 [ NA | PN ] *sein+Partizip* Conversive (*Erlebnispassiv*)

[10.264] A group of emotional verbs like *verärgern* ‘to irritate’ (10.163 a) shows a special diathesis with the light verb *sein*. When used with a *sein+Partizip* construction, the original nominative subject (i.e. the cause of the emotional reaction, here *Nachricht* ‘notice’) can be retained as a governed preposition. This preposition differs between the verbs. For example, the verb *verärgern* induces the preposition *über* (10.163 b). The special status of this preposition can be shown by using the *da+Preposition*, *dass* paraphrase (10.163 c), see Section 6.2.1.

- (10.163) a. Die Nachricht verärgert mich.  
 b. Ich bin verärgert über die Nachricht.  
 c. Ich bin verärgert darüber, dass die Nachricht verbreitet wurde.

[10.265] Some verbs that allow for this *sein+Partizip* conversive also allow for a reflexive conversive, like *amüsieren* ‘to amuse’ (10.164), see Section 7.5.7. However, not all verbs allow for both diatheses. For example *ärgern* ‘to irritate’ does not allow the *sein+Partizip* conversive, but does allow the reflexive conversive. (10.165). The verb *anwidern* ‘to nauseate’ shows the reverse distribution (10.166).

- (10.164) a. Der Witz amüsiert mich.  
 b. Ich bin von/über den Witz amüsiert.  
 c. Ich amüsiere mich über den Witz.  
 d. Ich habe mich über den Witz amüsiert.

- (10.165) a. Der Witz ärgert mich.  
 b. \*Ich bin geärgert von/über den Witz.  
 c. Ich ärgere mich über den Witz.  
 d. Ich habe mich über den Witz geärgert.

- (10.166) a. Der Witz widert mich an.  
 b. Ich bin angewidert von dem Witz.  
 c. \*Ich widere mich von dem Witz an.  
 d. \*Ich habe mich von dem Witz angewidert.

#### [10.266] Attested Verbs

- *in* : *begründen, faszinieren, interessieren*
- *mit* : *beschäftigen, schmücken*
- *über* : *amüsieren, aufregen, begeistern, beunruhigen, empören, entsetzen, enttäuschen, erfreuen, erstaunen, erzürnen, überraschen, verärgern, verstören, verwundern*
- *von* : *anekeln, anstrengen, anwidern, beruhigen, entspannen, langweilen, quälen*

#### [10.267] Further Examples

- Der Geruch hat ihn angewidert. Er ist angewidert von dem Geruch.
- Der Witz hat ihn amüsiert. Er ist amüsiert über den Witz.
- Dein Benehmen hat ihn enttäuscht. Er ist enttäuscht über dein Benehmen.
- Das Problem beschäftigt den Schüler. Der Schüler ist mit dem Problem beschäftigt.

- Die Nachricht verärgert mich. Ich bin verärgert über die Nachricht.
- Die Nachricht verstört mich. Ich bin verstört über die Nachricht.
- Die Schule langweilt mich. Ich bin gelangweilt von der Schule.
- Deine Massage entspannt mich. Ich bin entspannt durch deine Massage.
- Deine Leistung entsetzt mich. Ich bin entsetzt über deine Leistung.
- Die Rede erzürnt mich. Ich bin erzürnt über die Rede.
- Ein Desaster begründet die Hoffnung. Die Hoffnung ist im Desaster begründet.

#### 10.5.24 [ NA | PN ] *liegen+Partizip* Conversive

The few examples of this construction all have a governed preposition *in*.

[10.268]

- (10.167) a. Das Desaster begründet die Hoffnung.  
 b. Im Desaster liegt immer auch die Hoffnung begründet.  
 c. Die Hoffnung liegt darin begründet, dass...

Most examples with a finite verb *liegen* and a participle have a different structure, like (10.168). In these examples the verb *liegen* has the literal meaning ‘to lie’ and the participle is a adverbial secondary predicate (see Section 10.2.4).

[10.269]

- (10.168) a. Er liegt in der Kirche aufgebahrt.  
 b. Das Geschenk liegt in der Schublade versteckt.

##### Attested Verbs

[10.270]

- *begründen, beschließen, verbergen*

##### Further Examples

[10.271]

- Trotz aller Fehlritte und Peinlichkeiten, die sich Hannah und Co. leisteten, vergaß Girls nicht, dass im größten Desaster immer auch die Hoffnung auf einen Neustart begründet liegt.<sup>83</sup>
- Die Tatsachen aber sind hart, wie die Wahrheit, die in ihnen beschlossen liegt.<sup>84</sup>
- Radinsky begriff, welche Macht in Datenmassen verborgen liegt.<sup>85</sup>

#### — [ ADJ > SBJ > Ø ] —

#### 10.5.25 [ NpA | –NA ] *machen+Partizip* Conciliative

This is yet another diathesis involving the light verb *machen*.

[10.272]

- (10.169) a. Ich begehre den Job wegen der Bezahlung.  
 b. Die Bezahlung macht den Job begehrt.

##### Attested Verbs

[10.273]

- *begehren, beschämen*

##### Further Examples

[10.274]

- Sie beschämt mich durch ihre Großmut. Ihre Großmut macht mich beschämt.

<sup>83</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 13.02.2017 (online).

<sup>84</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.09.1964, Nr. 38.

<sup>85</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 26.01.2017, Nr. 03.

## 10.6 Diathesis with promotion to subject

### Opiniatives

[10.275] The four German verbs *wissen* ‘to know’, *glauben* ‘to believe’, *sehen* ‘to see’ and *finden* ‘to find’ (and apparently only those four) allow for a construction with a participle, reminiscent of the Latin *accusativus cum participio* construction. These constructions describe an opinion of the nominative subject about the veracity of the predicate expressed as a participle. Consequently, such diatheses will be called OPINIATIVE here. This opinion is marked as either more certain (*wissen*, *finden*) or less certain (*glauben*, *sehen*). These constructions can be syntactically identified by the possibility to form an alternate expression with a *dass* finite complement clause (10.170).

- (10.170) a. Sie glaubt ihn eingeschlafen.  
 (= Sie glaubt, dass er eingeschlafen ist.)  
 b. Sie weiß den Nachlass im Archiv gut aufgehoben.  
 (= Sie weiß, dass der Nachlass im Archiv gut aufgehoben ist.)

[10.276] The participles in such constructions are either derived from patientive intransitive verbs, like  *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ (10.170 a) or transitive verbs, like  *aufheben* ‘to take care’ (10.170 b). These two possibilities lead to quite different diatheses. With intransitive clauses, like  *er schläft ein* (10.170 a), the erstwhile nominative turns into an accusative and a new nominative opinionator is introduced, i.e. a remapping pattern  $[-N | NA]$ . In contrast, with transitive clauses like  *das Archiv hebt den Nachlass auf* (10.170 b), the accusative does not change and the erstwhile nominative is dropped or can optionally be expressed with a prepositional phrase. Together with the newly introduced opinionator this leads to a remapping pattern  $[-NA | NPA]$ . These two remapping patterns will be discussed separately below.

[10.277] In testing for these constructions with *finden* and *sehen* (10.171), note that with these verbs the participle constructions cannot directly be reformulated with a *dass* finite complement clause. The meanings of the verbs *sehen* ‘to see’ and *finden* ‘to find’ have been grammaticalised in this construction to mean something like *glauben* ‘to believe’ (10.171 b) or *überzeugt sein* ‘to be sure’ (10.171 b), respectively.

- (10.171) a. Er sieht seinen Erfolg bedroht.  
 (= Er glaubt, dass sein Erfolg bedroht ist.)  
 b. Er findet das Kunstwerk gelungen.  
 (= Er ist überzeugt, dass das Kunstwerk gelungen ist.)

[10.278] In identifying these constructions, care has again to be taken with the verbs *finden* and *sehen*. These verbs occur in superficially similar constructions, as exemplified in (10.172), which actually have a completely different underlying structure. In these examples the verbs *finden* and *sehen* are used in their literal transitive meaning of finding/seeing an object. Additionally, these sentences are modified by a depictive secondary predicate in the form of a participle, as extensively discussed in Section 10.2.4.<sup>86</sup> In these constructions, it is not

<sup>86</sup>The verb *finden* can also be combined with a regular adverb like in *das finde ich gut*, see Section 9.3.4. This does not appear to be possible with the other opiniative verbs *wissen*, *glauben* and *sehen*.

possible to paraphrase the participle with a *dass* complement clause.

- (10.172) a. Sie findet ihn am Schreibtisch eingeschlafen.  
 (= Sie findet ihn, während er am Schreibtisch eingeschlafen ist.)  
 (≠ Sie findet, dass er am Schreibtisch eingeschlafen ist.)
- b. Er sieht die Buchstaben verzerrt.  
 (= Er sieht die Buchstaben, aber die Buchstaben sind verzerrt.)  
 (≠ Er sieht, dass die Buchstaben verzerrt sind.)

As originally observed by Leirbukt (2000), all these constructions appear to be much more acceptable (and much more frequent) when they are stacked inside a modal verb like *wollen* (see Section 2.5 for the term ‘stacking’). Leirbukt only discusses *sehen* (10.173) and *wissen* (10.174) and seems to have missed the constructions with *glauben* and *finden*. He also discussed constructions with *haben*, but these are separated here as a completely different diathesis in Section 10.5.22. [10.279]

- (10.173) a. ? Sie sahen in dem Interview ihre Namen nicht genannt.  
 b. Sie wollten in dem Interview ihre Namen nicht genannt sehen.
- (10.174) a. ? Die Belegschaft weiß das Wahlergebnis keinesfalls als Zustimmung verstanden.  
 b. Die Belegschaft möchte das Wahlergebnis keinesfalls als Zustimmung verstanden wissen.

Similarly, these opiniatives are much more acceptable (and much more frequent) when they form a stack in combination with a self-inflicting reflexive pronoun alternation (see Section 7.4.5). The reflexive marking indicates that the opinionator and the opined object are the same participant. This is possible both with intransitives (10.175) and transitives (10.176). [10.280]

- (10.175) a. Ich scheitere.  
 b. ? Der Lehrer sieht mich gescheitert.  
 c. Ich sehe mich gescheitert.
- (10.176) a. Die Polizei verfolgt den Dieb.  
 b. ? Ich weiß den Dieb von der Polizei verfolgt.  
 c. Der Dieb weiß sich von der Polizei verfolgt.

### – [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] – *Intransitiv Opiniativ*

#### 10.6.1 [ –N | NA ] *wissen+Partizip* Intransitive opiniative

- (10.177) a. Das Kind schläft ein.  
 b. Sie weiß das Kind eingeschlafen.

#### Attested Verbs

[10.281]

- *einschlafen*



### 10.6.2 [ -N | NA ] *glauben+Partizip* Intransitive opinative

- (10.178) a. Der Sieg kommt.  
b. Er glaubte den Sieg gekommen.

#### [10.282] Attested Verbs

- *einschlafen, kommen, verirren*

#### [10.283] Further Examples

- Als man die Band schon fast eingeschlafen glaubt kommt der Song zurück und kann mich diesmal sogar richtig begeistern.<sup>87</sup>
- Als die Tochter des Hauses, die schon längst für Jean Pauls Romane schwärmte, ihn sicher eingeschlafen glaubte, trat sie leise ins Zimmer, um ihn recht nach Herzenslust zu betrachten.<sup>88</sup>
- Erbarmen wir uns derer, die wir verirrt glauben.<sup>89</sup>

### 10.6.3 [ -N | NA ] *sehen+Partizip* Intransitive opinative

- (10.179) a. Die UN scheitert.  
b. Viele Menschen sehen die UN bereits gescheitert.  
(= Viele Menschen glauben, dass die UN bereits gescheitert ist.)

#### [10.284] Attested Verbs

- *scheitern*

#### [10.285] Further Examples

- Während viele Nichtregierungsorganisationen die UN bereits gescheitert sehen, hat Weltbank-Präsident James Wolfensohn noch Hoffnung.<sup>90</sup>

### 10.6.4 [ -N | NA ] *finden+Partizip* Intransitive opinative

- (10.180) a. Er wächst.  
b. Ich finde ihn gewachsen.

#### [10.286] Attested Verbs

- *gelingen, scheitern, wachsen*

#### [10.287] Further Examples

- Ich finde das Projekt gescheitert.
- Ich finde das Kunstwerk sehr gelungen.

<sup>87</sup> Attested online at <https://www.metal1.info/metal-reviews/code-nouveau-gloaming/>, accessed 11 March 2022

<sup>88</sup> DWDS: Parthey, Gustav: Jugenderinnerungen. Bd. 2. Berlin, [1871].

<sup>89</sup> Heinrich Böll, *Für Alexander S. zum 65. Geburtstag*.

<sup>90</sup> DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 26.01.2005 .

– [ Ø > SBJ > ADJ ] – *Transitiv Opiniativ*10.6.5 [ –NA | NpA ] *wissen+Partizip* Transitive opiniative

- (10.181) a. Das Archiv hebt den Nachlass auf.  
 b. Ich weiß den Nachlass im Archiv gut aufgehoben.

The following example (10.182) from Leirbukt (2000) shows that any additional dative arguments are simply retained. [10.288]

- (10.182) a. Jemand unterstellt die Ostgebiete dem Kontrollrat.  
 b. Ich weiß die Ostgebiete dem Kontrollrat unterstellt.

**Attested Verbs**[10.289]

- *aufheben, lieben, regeln, unterstellen, verstehen*

**Further Examples**[10.290]

- ... wenn er die materiellen Fragen vor der Eheschließung geregelt weiß.<sup>91</sup>
- Sie schob den Hausarzt vor, den sie von dem Jungen wie einen Freund geliebt wußte.<sup>92</sup>

Stacked with modal verbs:

[10.291]

- Mancher Regierungsvertreter möchte es so verstanden wissen.<sup>93</sup>
- Wenn ich dich nicht so gut aufgehoben gewußt hätte, wäre ich Dir nachgefahren.<sup>94</sup>

Stacked with self-inflicting reflexive alternation:

[10.292]

- Er wusste sich verstanden.
- Hugo wusste sich geliebt.
- Er wusste sich von Gott geschaffen.
- Sie wusste sich umstellt.
- Er weiß sich verfolgt und beobachtet.
- Man weiß sich dabei nicht gesichert.
- Sie wussten sich durch ihn gewahrt.
- Sie wusste sich geschützt.

10.6.6 [ –NA | NpA ] *glauben+Partizip* Transitive opiniative

- (10.183) a. Der Wind zerreißt das Seil.  
 b. Er glaubt das Seil vom Wind zerrissen.  
 (= Er glaubt, dass das Seil vom Wind zerrissen ist.)

**Attested Verbs**[10.293]

<sup>91</sup><sub>DWDS</sub>: Gerling, Reinhold: Was muß man vor der Ehe von der Ehe wissen? In: ders., Das große Aufklärungswerk für Braut- und Eheleute, Dresden: Buchversand Gutenberg 1933 [1901], S. 207.

<sup>92</sup><sub>DWDS</sub>: Bodenreuth, Friedrich [d.i. Jaksch, Friedrich]: Alle Wasser Böhmens fließen nach Deutschland, Berlin: Büchergilde Gutenberg 1938 [1937], S. 22.

<sup>93</sup><sub>DWDS</sub>: Die Zeit, 17.09.2017 (online).

<sup>94</sup><sub>DWDS</sub>: Müller-Jahnke, Clara: Ich bekenne. In: Deutsche Literatur von Frauen, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2001 [1904], S. 52626.

- *benachteiligen, entschuldigen, erreichen, lieben, verfolgen, verlieren, verraten, zerreißen*

[10.294] **Further Examples**

- Er glaubte den Ring verloren.
- Er glaubte den Sieg erreicht.
- Hörte man ihn, man wunderte sich und glaubt ihn entschuldigt, Ja er hatte noch übriges Recht und vieles zu klagen.<sup>95</sup>

[10.295] Stacked with self-inflicting reflexive alternation:

- Er glaubte sich verraten/zurückversetzt/verfolgt/benachteiligt.
- Weil sie sich von ihrem Vater nicht geliebt glaubte, flüchtete Irmgard mit 17 Jahren trotzig zu den Diakonissinnen, um Krankenschwester zu werden.<sup>96</sup>

### 10.6.7 [ –NA | NpA ] *sehen+Partizip* Transitive opinative

- (10.184) a. Der Autor bricht das Vertrauen.  
b. Die Zeitung sieht das Vertrauen durch den Autor gebrochen.

[10.296] **Attested Verbs**

- *bestärken, bestätigen, brechen, nötigen, verpflichten, zwingen*

[10.297] **Further Examples**

- Während die WAZ das Vertrauen und den Gesellschaftervertrag gebrochen sieht und juristisch gegen Dichand vorgeht, wehrt sich Dichand publizistisch.<sup>97</sup>

[10.298] Stacked with self-inflicting reflexive alternation:

- Ich sehe mich bestätigt.
- Ich sehe mich gezwungen/genötigt/verpflichtet, dass
- Ich sehe mich bestärkt durch viele Diskussionen und Privatmeinungen.
- Auch der Verwaltungsrath der »Steyrermühl« hat sich bemüsst gesehen, einen Rechtfertigungsversuch wegen der von ihm begangenen Stempelentwendung zu unternehmen.<sup>98</sup>

### 10.6.8 [ –NA | NpA ] *finden+Partizip* Transitive opinative

- (10.185) a. Das Alter verändert mich.  
b. Du findest mich vom Alter verändert?

[10.299] **Attested Verbs**

- *bestätigen, nötigen, verändern*

[10.300] **Further Examples**

<sup>95</sup>DWDS: Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von: Reinecke Fuchs. In zwölf Gesängen. Berlin, 1794.

<sup>96</sup>DWDS: Leinemann, Jürgen, Dr Spiegel 09.05.1988, S.140.

<sup>97</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 24.01.2003.

<sup>98</sup>DWDS: Kraus, Karl, Die Fackel, 20.03.1900, S.9.

- Um die Sache zu prüfen, habe er im Urlaub mal einen Nacktbadestrand aufgesucht - und dort das Bild aus der Sauna bestätigt gefunden.<sup>99</sup>

Stacked with self-inflicting reflexive alternation:

[10.301]

- Er fand sich bestätigt.
- Sie fand sich genötigt, ja zu sagen.
- Es heißt, sie habe sich damals in einem Interview falsch zitiert gefunden.<sup>100</sup>

— [ ADJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 10.6.9 [ pN | NA ] *machen+Partizip* Inverted passive with reflexive loss

One of the many different diathesis with the light-verb *machen* (cf. paragraph 10.46 on page 326). [10.302]

- (10.186) a. Ich eigne mich durch meine Qualifikation für den Job.  
 b. Die Qualifikation macht mich geeignet für den Job.

**Attested Verbs**

[10.303]

- *besaufen, eignen, konzentrieren*

**Further Examples**

[10.304]

- Ich konzentriere mich (durch den Kaffee). Der Kaffee macht mich konzentriert.
- Ich besaue mich (mit Wein). Der Wein macht mich besoffen.

## 10.7 Diatheses with object demotion

Not attested.

[10.305]

## 10.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

Not attested.

[10.306]

## 10.9 Symmetrical diatheses

— [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 10.9.1 [ DN | NA ] *haben+Partizip* Intransitive possessor passive

A few incidental intransitive verbs allow for a special variant of the possessor passive diathesis Section 10.5.22. In the possessor passive, the possessor of an accusative object [10.307]

<sup>99</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.02.2016 (online).

<sup>100</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 14.06.2010 (online).

(10.187 a) is remapped to nominative subject (10.187 c). This is only possible with possessors that can alternatively be expressed as a dative (10.187 b).

- (10.187) a. Der Friseur schneidet meine Haare.  
 b. Der Friseur schneidet mir die Haare.  
 c. Ich habe die Haare geschnitten.

[10.308] A similar diathesis for the possessor of an intransitive subject is attested, though it is very rare (cf. Businger 2011: 162-163). An example is the verb *anschwellen* 'to swell', for which the possessor of the subject (10.188 a) can be expressed as dative (10.188 b) and as subject in a *haben+Partizip* construction (10.188 c). In these intransitive examples, it seems even possible to repeat the possessor adnominally (10.188 d).

- (10.188) a. Sein Arm schwillt an.  
 b. Ihm schwillt der Arm an.  
 c. Er hat den Arm angeschwollen.  
 d. Er hat seinen Arm angeschwollen.

[10.309] A similar, but more widespread diathesis is the *haben+am-Infinitiv* constructions (10.189), see Section 13.9.1.

- (10.189) a. Meine Leitungen frieren zu.  
 b. Mir frieren die Leitungen zu.  
 c. Ich habe die Leitungen am zufrieren.

[10.310] **Attested Verbs**

- *einwachsen, schwellen, zufrieren*

[10.311] **Further Examples**

- Ihm sind Haare im Auge eingewachsen.  
 Er hatte Haare im Auge eingewachsen.
- Wenn Sie bemerken, dass Sie Ihr Bein oder sogar zwei Beine geschwollen haben, dann die Frage: "Was tun?"<sup>101</sup>
- Wenn Sie Ihre Lippen geschwollen haben, müssen Sie behandelt werden.<sup>102</sup>

— [ Ø > SBJ > Ø ] —

### 10.9.2 [ -NA | N-A ] *machen+Partizip* Commutative

[10.312] One of the many different diathesis with the light-verb *machen*.

- (10.190) a. Er vergisst den Verlust.  
 b. Ich mache den Verlust vergessen.

[10.313] **Attested Verbs**

- *vergessen*

<sup>101</sup> Attested online at <https://clione.ru/de/treatment/treatment-has-swelled-up-the-leg-what-to-do-if-swelling-and-redness-of-the-feet>, accessed 13 Mai 2017.

<sup>102</sup> Attested online at [https://de.iliveok.com/health/warum-ist-die-lippe-geschwollen\\_106329i16005.html](https://de.iliveok.com/health/warum-ist-die-lippe-geschwollen_106329i16005.html), accessed 16 July 2021.

**10.9.3 [ -NA | N-A ] *geben+Partizip* Commutative**

Apparently only possible with the main verb *verlieren*. Note that the the person losing something (10.191 a) is not necessarily the same person as the person declaring the loss (10.191 b). [10.314]

- (10.191) a. Irgendjemand verliert den Ring.  
b. Ich gebe den Ring verloren.

**Attested Verbs**[10.315]

- *verlieren*

## Chapter 11

# Light-verb alternations with *Infinitiv*

### 11.1 Introduction

[11.1] Constructions with a light verb and an infinitive are widely discussed in German grammar. Such constructions are widespread without diathesis, for example in combination with modal verbs (11.1 a), see Section 11.4.9ff. or forming an ABSENTIVE with *sein* (11.1 b), see Section 11.4.3. Less widely discussed is an interesting construction of *haben* with infinitive and an adverbial (11.1 c), see Section 11.4.6.

- (11.1) a. Die Schülerin muss/darf/will/kann die Pflanzen gießen.  
b. Die Schülerin ist die Pflanzen gießen.  
c. Die Schülerin hat gut reden.

[11.2] There are also various light verbs that induce a diathesis when used with an infinitive. For example, *lassen* induces a causative (11.2 a), see Section 11.6.2. Various verbs of perception induce a special experientive construction, like *sehen* (11.2 b), see Section 11.6.6. Less widely discussed is the diathesis of *haben* with an infinitive of a position verb (11.2 c), see Section 11.9.2.

- (11.2) a. Die Lehrerin lässt die Schülerin die Pflanzen gießen.  
b. Die Lehrerin sieht die Schülerin die Pflanzen gießen.  
c. Die Lehrerin hat ihre Pflanzen auf der Fensterbank stehen.

[11.3] Following Bech (1955) such construction are often designated as *Erster Status* in the German grammatical literature. However, this name is not very transparent nor particularly mnemonic, so I prefer to simply use the term LIGHT-VERB-PLUS-INFINITIVE constructions.

[11.4] There are eleven frequently occurring diatheses that use a light verb+infinitive construction and for which I propose a German name, as listed below. Note that the *lassen+Infinitiv* construction occurs in many different diatheses. A detailed discussion of these can be found in Section 11.2.5.

- [SBJ > Ø] *lassen* UNPERSÖNLICHER MÖGLICHKEITSPASSIV (see Section 11.5.1)
- [SBJ > ADJ] *heißen* INTRANSITIVER NOTWENDIGKEITSDEMOTIV (see Section 11.5.3)

- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *lassen* MÖGLICHKEITSSPASSIV (see Section 11.5.4)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *lassen* PERMISSIVPASSIV (see Section 11.5.5)
- [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ] *lassen* PERMISSIVINVERSIV (see Section 11.9.1)
- [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ] *haben* ORTSPERTINENZINVERSIV (see Section 11.9.2)
- [Ø > SBJ > ADJ] *lassen* PASSIVKAUSATIV (see Section 11.6.1)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] *lassen* PERMISSIVKAUSATIV (see Section 11.6.2)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] *schicken* DIREKTIVKAUSATIV (see Section 11.6.3)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] *machen* AGENTIVKAUSATIV (see Section 11.6.4)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] *sehen/hören/fühlen/spüren* PERZEPTIV (see Section 11.6.6)

## 11.2 Characterising infinitive constructions

### 11.2.1 Identifying the infinitive

The German infinitive (cf. Duden-Grammatik 2009: 443) is straightforwardly identified as a wordform ending in *-en* (11.3 a) with an allomorph *-n* after stems ending in *-el/er* (11.3 b). This infinitive is considered to be the citation form of a verb, for example occurring as the index entry in dictionaries. Note that there is a widespread syncretism between the infinitive and the finite 1st and 3rd person plural present form of most verbs. For example, the wordform *werden* in (11.3 c) is a finite 1st plural, while *laufen* is an infinitive. This can be ascertained by changing the subject to the singular (11.3 d), which shows the different agreement of the finite form *werde*, while the infinitive *laufen* does not change.

- (11.3) a. *lauf-en, versteh-en, werd-en*  
 b. *sammel-n, bedauer-n, änder-n*  
 c. *Wir werden laufen.*  
 d. *Ich werde laufen.*

### 11.2.2 Nominal predication

Functionally, the infinitive is a nominal form of the verb that regularly occurs preceded by a determiner (11.4). In such usage, German orthography urges for the capitalisation of the infinitive. This nominal nature of the infinitive contrasts nicely to the adjectival nature of the participle, as discussed in the previous chapter.

- (11.4) *Das Laufen fällt mir schwer.*

Given the nominal nature of the infinitive, there is a close connection between light-verb-plus-Infinitive constructions and nominal predication, i.e. constructions of a light verb with a bare noun (without determiner). Nominal predication in German is typically constructed with light verbs *werden*, *sein* or *bleiben* (Duden-Grammatik 2009: 812-813). The parallel between infinitives and nouns is obvious with the future meaning of *werden* (11.5 a), see Section 11.4.9, and the continuative meaning of *bleiben* (11.5 b), see Section 11.4.2. However, as illustrated in (11.5 c), the meaning of *sein*+noun ('identification') is quite different from



*sein*+infinitive ('absentive'), see Section 11.4.3.

- (11.5) a. Ich werde Vater.  
Ich werde wenig schlafen.  
b. Ich bleibe Vater.  
Ich bleibe lieber sitzen.  
c. Ich bin Vater.  
Ich bin dann mal einkaufen.

[11.8] Modal verbs (see Section 11.4.7) are normally not used for nominal predication. However, in recent political framing the nominal predication *Kanzler können* 'to know how to be a chancellor' has become famous (11.6 a), even leading to other modal verbs being used in the same construction (11.6 b). Kubczak (2014) investigates the parallel of such usage to nominal constructions of ability like (11.6 c).

- (11.6) a. Kurt Beck, der kann Kanzler.<sup>1</sup>  
b. Rosier darf Kanzler!<sup>2</sup>  
c. Er kann den Dialekt dieser Gegend.

[11.9] Possession of a noun can be indicated by using the verb *haben* in German, though the possessed nouns typically need a determiner (11.7 a). With mental states like *Schmerzen* 'pain' or *Geduld* 'patience' it is possible to use the same *haben* construction with bare nouns (11.7 b). In a metaphorical sense such mental states can be considered a kind of possession. Compare that to the two different constructions using *haben* with an infinitive. The *Ortsper-tinenzinversiv* (11.7 c), see Section 11.9.2, still includes a sense of possession. The subject of this construction (here *Er* 'he') is necessarily the possessor of the object in the prepositional phrase (here *Nase* 'nose'). In contrast, the *Exemptiv* (11.7 d), see Section 11.4.6 has no relation to possession at all.

- (11.7) a. Ich habe eine Tasse.  
b. Ich habe Geduld/Schmerzen.  
c. Er habe einen Tropfen an seiner Nase hängen.  
d. Er hat leicht reden.

[11.10] A further kind of nominal predication uses the verb *heißen* 'to be named' (Duden-Grammatik 2009: 813), indicating that the subject has a particular name (11.8 a). Instead of a noun it is also possible to use infinitives, either without *zu* (11.8 b) or with *zu* (11.8 c). Both these construction indicate equation, and it is unclear whether there is any difference between the equations with or without *zu*. Interestingly, both the subject and the predicate in such sentences need to be infinitives (and both either with or without *zu*). Note that the light verb *heißen* can also be used in a (somewhat old-fashioned) causative construction (11.8 d), which seems to be completely separate from the equation usage (see Section 11.6.5). The other causative light verbs *lassen*, *schicken*, *machen* likewise do not have a counterpart

<sup>1</sup>Nürnberger Nachrichten, 30.04.2007: 3, cited from Kubczak (2014: 128)

<sup>2</sup>Süddeutsche Zeitung, 03.08.2011, cited from Kubczak (2014: 129)

in nominal predication.

- (11.8) a. Dieses Sternbild heißt Großer Bär.<sup>3</sup>  
 b. Die Symbole abschaffen heißt die Freimaurerei abschaffen.<sup>4</sup>  
 Von den Erwachsenen lernen, heißt Reife beweisen.<sup>5</sup>  
 c. Diese Wahrheit zu akzeptieren, hieße zu resignieren.<sup>6</sup>  
 Eine Katze zu haben, heißt, sich um ein Lebewesen kümmern zu müssen.<sup>7</sup>  
 d. Der Henker hieß ihn niederknien.

### 11.2.3 ACI *accusativus cum infinitivo*

Given the immense influence of Latin grammar on grammatical theory, it is no surprise that the classical Latin *accusativus cum infinitivo* (ACI) construction is often used to describe a similar phenomenon in German. In such light-verb-plus-infinitive diatheses, the subject of the verb in the infinitive, viz. the nominative subject of *kaufen* and *putzen* in (11.9), ends up as an accusative. This regularly results in sentences with multiple noun phrases in the accusative, namely when already an accusative argument was present before the diathesis. Such double accusatives are highly unusual in German outside of these constructions (see Section 5.3.8). [11.11]

This ACI construction is very widespread in Latin, but in German only attested with the few light-verb-plus-infinitive construction that add a new subject (see Section 11.6), namely causative light verbs like *schicken* ‘to send’ (11.9a) and perception light verbs like *sehen* ‘to see’ (11.9b). As a cover term for such diatheses, I have proposed the term *NOVATIVE* in Section 2.7.3.2. So, ACI constructions are the result of novative diatheses that use a light-verb-plus-infinitive construction. [11.12]

- (11.9) a. Er kauft einen Topf.  
 Sie schickt ihn einen Topf kaufen.  
 b. Der Mann putzt den Tisch.  
 Sie sieht, dass der Mann den Tisch putzt.  
 Sie sieht den Mann den Tisch putzen.

Although the surface structure of these constructions in German is clearly monoclausal, underlyingly there might be different structures between light verbs like *schicken* (11.9a), that only allow for an infinitive construction, and light verbs like *sehen* (11.9b), that additionally allow for a biclausal *dass* alternative (see Harbert 1977 for a discussion). [11.13]

Speyer (Speyer 2018) discusses the history of these constructions in German, arguing that they are originally Germanic (and possibly even proto-Indo-European) and not calques from Latin. [11.14]

### 11.2.4 IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv*

The *Ersatzinfinitiv* is a special syntactic phenomenon attested in West-Germanic languages (Schmid 2005; Schallert 2014). It concerns the inflectional paradigm of some of the light [11.15]

<sup>3</sup>(Duden-Grammatik 2009: 813)

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.11.2017, Nr. 47

<sup>5</sup>In: Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache: *Wörterbuch zur Verbvalenz*. Grammatisches Informationssystem grammis. <https://grammis.ids-mannheim.de/verbs/view/400556/1>, accessed 27 September 2021.

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 25.07.2005

<sup>7</sup>(Duden-Grammatik 2009: 813)

verbs that are used with infinitives, like *können*, *sehen* or *lassen*. For example, the verb *sehen* has a regular perfect with *haben* and a participle *gesehen* (11.10 a). However, when *sehen* is used as a light verb with an infinitive, then the perfect consists of *haben* with an infinitive *sehen* (11.10 b). A participle would be ungrammatical in this construction (11.10 c). Because the infinitive is used instead of the expected participle, this phenomenon is known as an *Ersatzinfinitiv* or ‘infinitive instead of a participle’ (Lat. *infinitivus pro participium*, IPP). Diachronically this is a relatively recent development, probably starting in the 14th/15th Century (Jäger 2018; see also Coupé 2015: Ch. 7 for a detailed diachronic study of the IPP in Dutch).

- (11.10) a. Sie sieht, dass er den Tisch putzt.  
           Sie *hat gesehen*, dass er den Tisch putzt.  
       b. Sie sieht ihn den Tisch putzen.  
           Sie *hat ihn den Tisch putzen sehen*.  
       c. \* Sie *hat ihn den Tisch putzen gesehen*.

[11.16] Based on data from various West-Germanic languages and dialects, Schmid (2005: 32–33, 106) proposes an hierarchy of verb types that show this phenomenon (11.11). German fits nicely in this hierarchy (almost by definition, because German was used to propose the hierarchy in the first place). The German verbs inducing the IPP are causative *lassen*, modals *dürfen/können/mögen/müssen/sollen/wollen* and also *brauchen*, perception verbs *hören, sehen* and benefactive *helfen*.

(11.11) Implicational scale of IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* verbs

causatives < modals < perception verbs < benefactives < duratives < inchoatives < control verbs

[11.17] However, this hierarchy should be interpreted rather loosely. The designation ‘causative’ on the hierarchy is a misnomer. The verb *lassen* also induces the IPP in its other uses, viz. possibility and permission (see the next Section 11.2.5). Conversely, other causative constructions with *schicken* (see Section 11.6.3) and *machen* (see Section 11.6.4) do not induce an IPP. Likewise, while the perception verbs *hören* and *sehen* induce an IPP, the syntactically similar perception verbs *fühlen* and *spüren* do not (see Section 11.6.6ff.).

[11.18] Further, the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* is not obligatory for benefactive *helfen* and neither for the perception verbs *sehen* and *hören*, but it is obligatory for modal verbs. This would actually nicely correspond to the hierarchy proposed, were it not for the verb *lassen*, which allows for both infinitive and participle (11.12). However, according to Enzinger (2012: 34) the sentence with a participle only allows for a permissive reading, so that would still fit the designation ‘causative’ on the hierarchy.

- (11.12) a. Sie hat mich die Kleider waschen *lassen*.  
           (causative = Sie verursacht, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)  
           (permissive = Sie erlaubt, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)  
       b. Sie hat mich die Kleider waschen *gelassen*.  
           (only permissive = Sie hat erlaubt, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)

### 11.2.5 The many guises of *lassen+Infinitiv*

[11.19] It has been widely observed that there is a wide variety of uses of the *lassen+Infinitiv* construction in German (e.g. Eisenberg 2006a: 369–371; Kotůlková 2010a; Pitteroff 2014). In this

chapter I will distinguish nine different diatheses that all use the *lassen+Infinitiv* construction, as summarised in Table 11.1. There is an additional epithetical usage of *lassen* with a participle that is discussed in Section 10.4.13.

[11.20]

The nine diatheses are reduced to six groups, which I have given a German name (as shown in the table). However, these can be further reduced to basically three different options: a reflexive epistemic passive, expressing possibility (*Möglichkeitspassiv*), a reflexive modal passive, expressing permission (*Permissivpassiv*, *Permissivinversiv*) and a non-reflexive causative (*Permissivkausativ*, *Passivkausativ*). I will succinctly summarise these different options here. For a detailed discussion, please see the sections as indicated in the table.

Table 11.1: Different diatheses with a *lassen+Infinitiv* construction

Section	Remapping	German Name	Reflexive	Interpretation
11.5.1	[ N   – ]	<i>Möglichkeitspassiv</i>	yes	possibility
11.5.2	[ NP   – P ]	<i>Möglichkeitspassiv</i>	yes	possibility
11.5.4	[ NA   pN ]	<i>Möglichkeitspassiv</i>	yes	possibility
11.5.5	[ NA   pN ]	<i>Permissivpassiv</i>	yes	permission
11.5.6	[ ND   pN ]	<i>Permissivpassiv</i>	yes	permission
11.5.7	[ NDA   pNA ]	<i>Permissivpassiv</i>	yes	permission
11.9.1	[ ND   AN ]	<i>Permissivinversiv</i>	yes	permission
11.6.2	[ – N   NA ]	<i>Permissivkausativ</i>	no	causation/permission
11.6.1	[ – NA   NpA ]	<i>Passivkausativ</i>	no	causation

[11.21]

The *Möglichkeitspassiv* is typically attested with transitive verbs with a clear agent, like *besteigen* ‘to climb’ (11.13). The accusative (*den Berg*) is promoted to nominative subject and the erstwhile subject is demoted to an optional *von* prepositional phrase. A reflexive pronoun is necessary, and the diathesis has an epistemic meaning expressing the possibility of the action. With agentive intransitive verbs, like *wandern* ‘to hike’ (11.14 a), this diathesis leads to an *unpersönlicher Möglichkeitspassiv*, often even without a valency-simulating *es*. The nominative subject is removed and an evaluative adverbial like *gut* is necessary. Verbs with a governed preposition, like *warten auf* ‘to wait for’ (11.14 b) are slightly different as (i) the governed preposition is retained, (ii) the valency simulating *es* is impossible and (iii)

no evaluative adverbial is necessary (11.14b).

(11.13) MÖGLICHKEITSPASSIV

- a. Der Besucher besteigt den Berg.
- b. Der Berg lässt sich (von dem Besucher) besteigen.  
(= Es ist (für den Besucher) möglich den Berg zu besteigen.)

(11.14) UNPERSÖNLICHER MÖGLICHKEITSPASSIV

- a. Der Besucher wandert dort.  
Dort lässt (es) sich gut wandern.
- b. Der Besucher wartet auf ein Tattoo.  
Auf ein Tattoo lässt sich warten.<sup>8</sup>

[11.22] The *Permissivpassiv* has some similarities to the previous *Möglichkeitspassiv*, but enough differences to consider it a different diathesis. Both are passives and both need a reflexive pronoun, but (i) the semantics, (ii) the role remapping, and (iii) the verbs that use the *Permissivpassiv* are completely different. Semantically, the *Permissivpassiv* expresses permission, sometimes almost causation. As for remapping of roles, this diathesis most typically promotes datives to nominative subject, like with *schenken* 'to gift' (11.15 a). There is a special group of select transitive verbs in which the accusative is promoted to nominative subject, like *belustigen* 'to amuse' (11.15 b). A second special group of verbs, like *gefallen* 'to please' (11.16), promotes the dative, but demotes the original nominative to an accusative, not to a prepositional phrase (i.e. an inversive diathesis, called *Permissivinversiv* here).

(11.15) PERMISSIVPASSIV

- a. Mein Vater schenkt mir ein Fahrrad.  
Ich lasse mir ein Fahrrad schenken (von meinem Vater).
- b. Der Clown belustigt mich.  
Ich lasse mich von dem Clown belustigen.

(11.16) PERMISSIVINVERSIV

- a. Dein Ton gefällt mir nicht.
- b. Ich lasse mir deinen Ton nicht gefallen.

[11.23] The *Permissivkausativ* and the closely related *Passivkausativ* add a new participant to the sentence who causes the event to happen. Although both causatives are similar, there are various differences between the two variants of the causative. First, the erstwhile nominative is demoted to an accusative in the *Permissivkausativ* (11.17), while it is demoted to an optional *von* prepositional phrase in the *Passivkausativ* (11.18). Besides the difference in role remapping, there is also a difference in applicability. Namely, there are various verbs that allow for a *Permissivkausativ* but not for a *Passivkausativ*. For examples, the verb *ausziehen* 'to take off, to undress' (11.18 b,c) is not compatible with a *Passivkausativ*. Finally, the *Permissivkausativ* can both have a causative (11.17 a) and a permissive (11.17 b) reading, while the *Passivkausativ* cannot have a permissive interpretation, only the causative

<sup>8</sup> Attested online at [https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/deutschland/id\\_89453948/corona-lockerungen-die-haeme-ueber-die-friseuroeffnungen-ist-entlarvend-.html](https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/deutschland/id_89453948/corona-lockerungen-die-haeme-ueber-die-friseuroeffnungen-ist-entlarvend-.html), accessed 15 September 2021.

interpretation is possible (11.18 a).

(11.17) PERMISSIVKAUSATIV

- a. Der Schüler schreibt einen Test.  
Der Lehrer lässt den Schüler einen Test schreiben.  
(= Der Lehrer verursacht, dass der Schüler einen Test schreibt.)
- b. Der Schüler geht nach Hause.  
Der Lehrer lässt den Schüler nach Hause gehen.  
(= Der Lehrer erlaubt den Schüler nach Hause zu gehen.)

(11.18) PASSIVKAUSATIV

- a. Der Schüler putzt den Tisch.  
Der Lehrer lässt den Tisch (von dem Schüler) putzen.  
(= Der Lehrer verursacht, dass der Tisch (von dem Schüler) geputzt wird.)
- b. Der Sohn zieht die Jacke aus.  
Der Vater lässt seinen Sohn die Jacke ausziehen.
- c. \* Der Vater lässt die Jacke (von seinem Sohn) ausziehen .

### 11.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

Not attested.

[11.24]

### 11.4 Alternations without diathesis

— Aspect —

#### 11.4.1 *tun+Infinitiv* Verbfocus

The *tun+Infinitiv* construction (Schwarz 2004) is considered substandard and frowned upon in written German (11.19 a). However, it is widespread in German dialects and also frequent in the spoken standard language (Erb 2001: Ch. 5). The acceptability is strongly improved for many German speakers with fronting of the infinitive (11.19 b), putting focus on the verb meaning and losing any aspectual implication (Schwarz 2004: 15-18). This second usage is more akin to English *do*-support than to a progressive aspect.

- (11.19) a. ? Ich tu dir das Buch schenken.  
b. Schenken tu ich dir das Buch.

#### 11.4.2 *bleiben+Infinitiv* Continuative

The construction *bleiben+Infinitiv* (cf. Eisenberg 2006a: 351; Engel 1996: 476) is typically used with position verbs like *sitzen* ‘to sit’ or *liegen* ‘to lie’ (11.20 a). This construction with *bleiben* indicates that the position is being maintained. Some verbs denoting activities also appear possible, but examples are difficult to find (11.20 b), see also further examples below. Note that the combination of *bleiben* with an infinitive of a position verb is often considered

[11.26]

to be a single word in German orthography (11.20 c). This construction does not induce an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.20 c).

- (11.20) a. Nora bleibt morgens immer ewig liegen. (Schlücker 2007: 142)  
 b. ? Er bleibt ihr Briefe schicken.  
 c. Nora ist morgens immer liegengeblieben (\*liegenbleiben).

[11.27] **Attested Verbs**

- from DWDS dictionary: *stehenbleiben, klebenkleiben, hängenbleiben, liegenbleiben, sitzenbleiben, steckenbleiben*
- other stative verbs: *bestehen, erhalten, haften, hocken, vergessen*
- possibly also with activities: *laufen, leben, schicken*

[11.28] **Further Examples**

- Drehe ich den Regler wieder nach rechts um Warmwasser zu fragen geht der Brenner wieder an und bleibt laufen obwohl kein Warmwasser gezapft wird.<sup>9</sup>
- Und wenn jemanden eine Schlange biss, so sah er die eherne Schlange an und blieb leben.<sup>10</sup>
- Die TPP-Grundzüge bleiben erhalten.<sup>11</sup>
- Seine künstlerischen Leistungen bleiben bestehen, auch wenn man sie nun in anderem Licht betrachtet.<sup>12</sup>
- Immer mehr bleiben hocken, wenn eine neue Übung beginnt.<sup>13</sup>

### 11.4.3 *sein+Infinitiv Absentive*

[11.29] The ABSENTIVE is a construction that expresses that the subject participant is currently not present because of some activity that is being pursued. The grammatical concept was originally proposed by de Groot (2000). For German, this phenomenon is widely discussed in the literature (cf. Vogel 2007: 269ff.; Abraham 2008; König 2009). An activity like *schwimmen* ‘to swim’ can be used in the infinitive with the light verb *sein* to indicate absence because of the swimming (11.21 a). This construction is typically used with intransitive verbs, though there does not seem to be a strict prohibition of more complex activities with more arguments (11.21 b). This construction does not induce an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.21 c).

- (11.21) a. Ich schwimme.  
 Ich bin schwimmen.  
 b. Ich bringe dem Nachbarn den Teller zurück.  
 Ich bin nur mal kurz dem Nachbarn den Teller zurückbringen.  
 c. Ich bin dem Nachbarn den Teller zurückbringen gewesen (\*sein).

[11.30] The absentive can only be used with verbs that clearly include agency, so typical patientive verbs like *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ do not allow for this construction (see Section 10.4.2). In contrast, a verb like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ does allow for an absentive construction, though

<sup>9</sup>Attested online at <https://www.haustechnikdialog.de/Forum/t/242166/Viessmann-Vitopend-100-bleibt-laufen>, accessed 24 September 2021.

<sup>10</sup>Lutherbibel 1984: 4.Mose 21:9

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 28.11.2017 (online).

<sup>12</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.11.2017 (online).

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 25.01.1996.

it needs a suitable context (11.22 b). Note that not all verbs with a *haben* Perfekt (often analysed as ‘agentive’, see Section 10.4.1) allow for an absentive, for example *sitzen* ‘to sit’ does not (11.22 c).

- (11.22) a. \* Ich bin einschlafen.  
 b. Ich bin dann mal schlafen!  
 c. \* Ich bin auf den Stuhl sitzen.

#### Attested Verbs

[11.31]

- agentive verbs like *arbeiten, bringen, laufen, rennen, schlafen, schwimmen, zurückbringen*, etc.
- not possible with non-agentive verbs like: *abkühlen, ankommen, aufstehen, bluten, einschlafen, fallen, husten, niesen, scheitern, stürzen, verrosten, wachsen, weinen*

#### 11.4.4 *gehen/fahren+Infinitiv* Abitive

Parallel to the *sein+Infinitiv* absentive, the light verbs *gehen* ‘to go’ and *fahren* ‘to drive’ can also be used to indicate (intended) absence because of an activity (11.23 a). In accordance to their lexical meaning, these two light verbs place a focus on the movement away, leading to the absence. I propose the term ABITIVE (from Lat. *abire* ‘to depart, to go away’) for this construction. This term explicitly evokes a relation to the ABLATIVE, which is a nominal category that expresses a motion away from something. The verbal abitive construction does not induce an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.23 c).

- (11.23) a. Er besucht seinen Freund.  
           Er geht/fährt seinen Freund besuchen.  
 b. \* Er geht einschlafen.  
 c. Er ist seinen Freund besuchen gegangen/gefahren (‘gehen/fahren)

#### Attested Verbs

[11.32]

- probably exactly the same verbs as can be used with *sein+Infinitiv* absentive can also be used with *gehen/fahren+Infinitiv* (see Section 11.4.3).

#### 11.4.5 *kommen+Infinitiv* Aditive

Contrasting to the *gehen/fahren +Infinitiv* abitive there is also a *kommen+Infinitiv* construction to express a movement towards a location where an activity takes place (11.24 a). I propose the term ADITIVE (from Lat. *adire* ‘to approach’) for this verbal category. The parallel nominal case is called ALLATIVE, which also includes the prefix *ad-*, though with internal sandhi. This verbal aditive construction does not induce an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.24 b).

- (11.24) a. Er kommt hier immer die Zeitung lesen.  
 b. Er ist hier immer die Zeitung lesen gekommen (‘kommen)

#### Attested Verbs

[11.33]

- probably exactly the same verbs as can be used with *sein+Infinitiv* absentive can also be used with *kommen+Infinitiv* (see Section 11.4.3).



### 11.4.6 *haben+leicht/gut+Infinitiv* Fortunative

[11.36] The construction *haben+Infinitiv* describes a situation in which the subject is in a fortunate situation to do something, so I propose to call this construction FORTUNATIVE (from Lat. *fortunatus* ‘blessed, lucky’). This construction obligatorily needs an adverb, most frequently *leicht* ‘easy’ (11.25 a) or *gut* ‘well’ (11.25 b). Only incidentally other adverbs are attested, like *klug* ‘clever’ (11.25 c). The main verbs seem to be restricted to intransitive verbs, most frequent are *reden* ‘to talk’ and *lachen* ‘to laugh’. Utterance verbs appear to be particularly common in this construction. The only examples with transitive verbs involve incorporated objects, which are argueably intransitive (11.25 d).

- (11.25) a. Er hat leicht reden.  
           Nike hatte leicht protzen.<sup>14</sup>  
       b. Er hat gut lachen.  
           Der Kanzler hat gut schimpfen.<sup>15</sup>  
       c. Du hast klug reden.<sup>16</sup>  
       d. Wer im Rohr sitzt, hat gut Pfeifen schneiden.<sup>17</sup>

#### [11.37] Attested Verbs

- Utterance verbs: *protzen, reden, sagen, schimpfen, trösten, verbieten*
- Others: *beweisen, lachen, regieren*.

#### [11.38] Further Examples

- Jungen haben leicht sagen: “Mädchen sind doof.”<sup>18</sup>
- Wer behauptet, es laufe in der Geschichte alles auf das gleiche hinaus, und als Beweis dafür Szenen liefert, die immer auf das gleiche hinauslaufen, der hat leicht beweisen.<sup>19</sup>
- Ach, Roswitha, der Geheimrat hat leicht verbieten, und Du hast es auch leicht, all’ das nachzusprechen.<sup>20</sup>
- Der Herr Baron hat leicht trösten; ich bin und bleib’ unglücklich, wenn ich meinen Casperl nimmer sieh.<sup>21</sup>
- Wer aber geliebt ist, hat leicht regieren.<sup>22</sup>

### — Modality —

[11.39] The traditional modal verbs *dürfen/können/mögen/müssen/sollen/wollen* and the modal-like light verbs *werden* and *brauchen* can all be used in constructions with infinitives. There do not seem to be any restrictions on which verbs can occur as infinitives in such constructions.

<sup>14</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 13.07.1998

<sup>15</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 14.12.2002

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Neutsch, Erik: *Spur der Steine*, Halle: Mitteldeutscher Verl. 1964 S.7

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Wander, Karl Friedrich Wilhelm (Hrsg.): *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon*. Bd. 3. Leipzig, 1873.

<sup>18</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.10.1978, Nr. 43.

<sup>19</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 28.04.1972, Nr. 17.

<sup>20</sup>DWDS: Fontane, Theodor: *Effi Briest*. Berlin, 1896.

<sup>21</sup>DWDS: Poggi, Franz von: *Lustiges Komödienbüchlein*. Bd. 4. München, 1871.

<sup>22</sup>DWDS: Eckermann, Johann Peter: *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*. Bd. 3. Leipzig, 1848.

### 11.4.7 *dürfen/können/mögen/müssen/sollen/wollen+Infinitiv* Modal verbs

The modal verbs *dürfen/können/mögen/müssen/sollen/wollen* are extensively discussed in the German grammatical literature and will therefore not be discussed in any detail here (e.g. see Duden-Grammatik 2009: 556ff.). In a construction with infinitives, these modal verbs induce an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.26). [11.40]

- (11.26) a. Er will das Haus bauen.  
 b. Er hat das Haus bauen wollen (\*gewollt).  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass er das Haus bauen hat wollen (\*hat gewollt).

An interesting supplementary effect that these modal verbs have on diathesis concerns the interpretation of the *haben+Partizip* construction. This construction has two different interpretations (11.27 a), either *Perfekt* (see Section 10.4.8) or *Pertinenzpassiv* (see Section 10.5.22). In most uses, the *Perfekt* interpretation is the preferred reading. However, with an additional modal light verb only the *Pertinenzpassiv* interpretation is possible (11.27 b). [11.41]

- (11.27) a. Er hat sein Auto repariert.  
 (*Perfekt* = Er repariert sein Auto, und das ist abgeschlossen.)  
 (*Pertinenzpassiv* = Irgendjemand repariert das Auto für ihn.)  
 b. Er will sein Auto repariert haben.  
 (nur *Pertinenzpassiv* = Er will, dass sein Auto repariert wird.)

### 11.4.8 *brauchen+Infinitiv* Negative obligation

The light verb *brauchen* ‘to need’ is typically used with *zu-Infinitiv* with a negation or a modal particle like *nur* or *bloß* (11.28 a), see Section 12.4.6. However, it also occurs without *zu* (11.28 b). Without *zu* it seems to be more typically used in sentences without objects. Whether there is any semantic difference between the usage with or without *zu* needs more in-depth investigation. When it is used without *zu* it seems only logical to include *brauchen* in the set of modal verbs (cf. Duden-Grammatik 2009: 556). The light verb *brauchen* is similar to the modal verbs in that it induces an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.28 c). [11.42]

- (11.28) a. Du brauchst nur noch zu unterschreiben.  
 b. Du brauchst nur noch unterschreiben.  
 c. Du hättest doch nur noch unterschreiben brauchen!

### 11.4.9 *werden+Infinitiv* Future

The light verb *werden* is traditionally classified as a temporal auxiliary used for future reference, but is only very rarely used as a real temporal future. The *Präsens* is mostly used for future time reference in German (11.29 a). It is probably better to consider the *werden+Infinitiv* construction together with the other modal verbs as the usage typically includes a modal implicature of expectation and/or presumption (11.29 b). There is a long discussion about the merits of this classification of *werden* as a modal verb in the German grammatical tradition (e.g. Fabricius-Hansen 1986: 141ff), even with suggestions of evidential usage (Diewald [11.43]

& Smirnova 2010: 170). Crucially, the *werden+Infinitiv* can also be used with past-time reference (11.29 c).

- (11.29) a. Der Feind greift morgen vielleicht an.  
 b. Der Feind wird morgen vielleicht angreifen.  
 c. Seine Mutter wird sich damals gefreut haben.<sup>23</sup>

[11.44] It is undecidable whether the *werden+Infinitiv* construction induces an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* because constructions that would trigger such an IPP do not exist. A *werden+Infinitiv* (11.30 a) is incompatible with a stacked participle construction, like a *sein* perfekt (11.30 b), a *werden* passive (11.30 c), or a *gehören* passive (11.30 d).

- (11.30) a. Die Biene wird mich stechen.  
 (= *werden+Infinitiv Futur*)  
 b. \*Die Biene ist mich stechen geworden/werden.  
 (= stack of *werden+Infinitiv Futur* +> *sein+Partizip Perfekt*)  
 c. \*Ich werde (von der Biene) stechen geworden/werden.  
 (= stack of *werden+Infinitiv Futur* +> *werden+Partizip Vorgangspassiv*)<sup>24</sup>  
 d. \*Ich gehöre stechen geworden/werden.  
 (= stack of *werden+Infinitiv Futur* +> *gehören+Partizip Normpassiv*)

— Other —

#### 11.4.10 *lernen+Infinitiv*

[11.45] The verb *lernen* ‘to learn’ can both occur in a construction with an infinitive (11.31 a) and with *zu* plus infinitive (11.31 b), see also Section 12.2.2. There is an obvious parallel to the verbs *lehren* ‘to teach’ (Section 11.6.12) and *helfen* ‘to help’ (Section 11.6.13), both of which add a new participant (the ‘teacher’ and the ‘helper’, respectively). The verb *lernen* does not add a new participant, although there is a strong implication of an unspoken teacher (11.31 b), except in case of natural developmental processes (11.31 a).

- (11.31) a. Das Baby läuft.  
 Das Baby lernt laufen.  
 b. Ich schreibe meiner Oma monatlich einen Brief.  
 Ich lerne meiner Oma monatlich einen Brief (zu) schreiben.

#### 11.4.11 *legen+sich+Infinitiv*

[11.46] The light verb *legen* with infinitive only appears to be used in a single expression with the main verb *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ (11.32).

- (11.32) Er legt sich schlafen.

[11.47] **Attested Verbs**

- *schlafen*

<sup>23</sup>(Duden-Grammatik 2009: 211)

<sup>24</sup>Note that the reversed stack is perfectly possible, viz. *Ich werde (von der Biene) gestochen werden*, which is a stack of *werden+Partizip Vorgangspassiv* +> *werden+Infinitiv Futur*. However, this stack does not help decide whether an IPP occurs with the *werden* future.

## 11.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

### – [ SBJ > Ø ] – *Unpersönlicher Möglichkeitspassiv*

#### 11.5.1 [ N | – ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Reflexive impersonal+adverbial

When used with intransitive verbs like *arbeiten* ‘to work’ (11.33 a), the construction *lassen+Infinitiv* leads to an impersonal construction removing the nominative subject. This construction obligatorily includes a reflexive pronoun and an adverbial phrase expressing an evaluation (11.33 b). The expected valency-simulating pronoun *es* is typically present, but it seems also possible to leave it out. The conditioning of the presence or absence of *es* needs more investigation (cf. Kunze 1996: 649). Semantically, this diathesis adds an epistemic notion of possibility to the meaning of the verb. There is a clear parallel to the impersonal construction without *lassen* in (11.33 c), see Section 9.5.1. The *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis invokes an *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.33 d). [11.48]

- (11.33) a. Ich arbeite zuhause.  
 b. Zuhause lässt (es) sich gut arbeiten.  
 c. Zuhause arbeitet es sich gut.  
 d. Früher hat es sich hier immer gut arbeiten lassen.

Although it is possible to find examples without adverbial, these always seem to have a strong evaluative implicature (cf. Section 9.3.1). For example, in the examples in (11.34) the implication is that the life or dreams are good. [11.49]

- (11.34) a. Hier lässt es sich leben.<sup>25</sup>  
 b. Hier lässt es sich träumen!<sup>26</sup>

This diathesis *lassen+sich+Infinitiv+Adverbial* is structurally a stack of two constructions (see Section 2.5 for the notion ‘stack’). It combines an impersonal reflexive with adverbial (11.35 a), see Section 9.5.1, and a *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis (11.35 b), see Section 11.6.2. However, the resulting combination of these two diatheses is semantically not transparent. The *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis has two different interpretations, a causative (11.35 c) and a permissive (11.35 d). Neither of these interpretations leads to the combined meaning of the *lassen+sich+Infinitiv+Adverbial* stack as in (11.34 a). For that reason I consider this combination to be a separate grammaticalised diathesis, i.e. a FIXED STACK. [11.50]

- (11.35) a. Zuhause arbeitet es sich gut.  
 b. Sie lässt mich arbeiten.  
 c. (= Sie sorgt dafür, dass ich arbeite.)  
 d. (= Sie lässt mich in Ruhe um zu arbeiten.)

This diathesis is not possible with many patientive intransitive verbs like *platzen* ‘to burst’ (11.36 a,b) or *bluten* ‘to bleed’ (11.36 c,d). Note that this group of patientive intransitives [11.51]

<sup>25</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.01.2012, Nr. 02

<sup>26</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.12.2013, Nr. 50

is a different group of patientive intransitives that takes a *sein+Partizip* Perfect (cf. Section 10.2.6).

- (11.36) a. Der Ballon platzt. Der Ballon ist geplatzt.  
 b. \*Zuhause lässt es sich gut platzen.  
 c. Der Patient blutet.  
 Der Patient hat geblutet.  
 d. \*Hier lässt es sich schwer bluten.

[11.52] **Attested Verbs**

- agentive intransitives like *atmen, laufen, leben, schwimmen, singen, spielen, springen, tanzen, träumen* etc.
- not possible with patientive intransitives like *platzen, bluten, niesen, husten*, etc.

[11.53] **Further Examples**

- An der frischen Luft lässt es sich frei atmen.

### 11.5.2 [ NP | –P ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Reflexive impersonal+governed preposition

[11.54] Verbs with governed prepositional phrases, like *zweifeln an* ‘to doubt something’ (11.37 a), show a similar diathesis as pure intransitives (see the previous Section 11.5.1). However, there is no adverbial evaluation necessary with these verbs. The status of the valency-simulating *es* is unclear, though my impression is that with governed prepositional phrases it is more widespread to leave *es* out (11.37b). Whether there really is a difference in the status of *es* depending on the presence of governed prepositional phrases needs more research.

- (11.37) a. Ich zweifele an der Ernsthaftigkeit der Aussage.  
 b. An der Ernsthaftigkeit der Aussage lässt <sup>?</sup>(es) sich zweifeln.

[11.55] This diathesis appears to be possible with almost all intransitive verbs with a governed preposition. I have only been able to find a few exceptions, like *stinken nach* ‘to stink of something’ (11.38).

- (11.38) a. Der Müll stinkt nach Fisch.  
 b. \*Nach Fisch lässt es sich stinken.

[11.56] **Attested Verbs**

- Almost all verbs with governed prepositions. Not possible with: *duften, riechen, stinken*

– [ SBJ > ADJ ] – *Intransitiver Notwendigkeitsdemotiv*

11.5.3 [ N | p ] *heißen+Infinitiv* Modal subject demotion

The light verb *heißen* can be used with an infinitive in various different constructions. A widespread option is a demotive usage with intransitive verbs, like *warten* ‘to wait’ (11.39 a). The original subject is demoted, but can optionally be retained as a *für* prepositional phrase. As there is no new subject introduced, an obligatory valency-simulating pronoun *es* is introduced. [11.57]

Transitive verbs can be used in this construction, but only when the object does not have an article (11.39 b). Such objects can be considered to be incorporated objects, and there is a recurrent debate in German orthography whether such objects should be written separated by a space or not. Semantically, this *heißen+Infinitiv* construction is very close to the *gelingen+zu-Infinitiv* (see Section 12.5.5). Both express a kind of externally induced necessity (i.e. modal *müssen*). [11.58]

- (11.39) a. Alles andere wartet.  
           Für alles andere heißt es warten.<sup>27</sup>  
       b. Und dann heißt es Daumen drücken.<sup>28</sup>

There is some debate possible about whether this construction is coherent or not. When *heißen* is interpreted as a modal predicate expressing obligation, then it is clearly coherent (11.40 c). However, there is a widespread other interpretation of *heißen* as a more lexical predicate with the meaning ‘to be named, to denote’. In that interpretation it is mostly written with a colon, and that construction is not coherent (11.40 b). [11.59]

- (11.40) a. Es ist bekannt, dass es dann Daumen drücken heißt.  
       b. Es ist bekannt, dass es dann heißt: Daumen drücken.

Exactly the same construction *heißen+Infinitiv* can be also be used as a causative, although this usage is slightly old-fashioned (see Section 11.6.5). Sometimes both diatheses are possible, like with *niederknien* ‘to kneel down’ (11.41 a). Counterintuitively, the effect ist that *heißen+Infinitiv* can both induce a causative subject addition (11.41 b) and a modal subject demotion (11.41 c). [11.60]

- (11.41) a. Er kniete nieder.  
       b. Der Henker hieß ihn niederknien.  
       c. Vor dem Henker heiß es für ihn niederknien.

**Attested Verbs**

- only intransitive verbs, or transitive verbs without objects or incorporated objects without article. [11.61]

– [ OBJ > SBJ > ADJ ] – *Möglichkeitspassiv*

11.5.4 [ NA | pN ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Reflexive epistemic passive

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 17.04.2017, Nr. 13.

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 03.08.2017, Nr. 29.

With most transitive verbs the light verb *lassen* with a reflexive pronoun and an infinitive results structurally in a passive diathesis with an epistemic interpretation that something is possible (11.42). A small group of transitive verbs invoke a different interpretation, as discussed in the next Section 11.5.5. Compared to the previously discussed intransitive variant (see Section 11.5.1, there is (i) no adverbial evaluation necessary and (ii) the agent can be retained as an optional prepositional phrase with *von*. This diathesis invokes an *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.42 c).

- (11.42) a. Ich schließe den Schrank.  
 b. Der Schrank lässt sich schließen (von mir).  
 (= Es ist möglich, dass ich den Schrank schließe.)  
 c. Gestern hat sich der Schrank noch schließen lassen.

[11.63] Just as discussed previously with intransitives (see Section 11.5.1), this diathesis might seem to be a transparent combination of a reflexive anticausative (11.43 a), see Section 7.5.2, and a *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis (11.43 b), see Section 11.6.2. However, semantically the combination of both leads to a different interpretation, so the combination is arguably a new construction.

- (11.43) a. Der Schrank schließt sich (von alleine).  
 b. ? Ich lasse den Schrank sich schließen.

[11.64] It is even possible to find ambiguous constructions like (11.44 a), see also Kunze (1996: 650ff.). In this example, the transparent combination of a *lassen* causative with a self-inflicting reflexive leads to the causative interpretation in (11.44 b), while the fixed stack as discussed in this section leads to the epistemic interpretation ('possibility') in (11.44 c).

- (11.44) a. Der König lässt sich tragen.  
 b. (= Der König sorgt dafür, dass er selbst getragen wird.)  
 c. (= Es ist möglich den König zu tragen.)

[11.65] Verbs like *übersehen* 'to overlook' (11.45 a) or *erläutern* 'to elucidate' (11.45 b) only appear to allow for this epistemic interpretation with an additional evaluative adverbial like *leicht* 'easy' or *schwer* 'difficult' (cf. Section 9.5.2). More research is needed to establish what kind of verbs necessarily need such an additional adverbial.

- (11.45) a. Der Dozent übersieht den Rechtschreibfehler.  
 Solch ein Rechtschreibfehler lässt sich leicht (vom Dozenten) übersehen.  
 b. Der Dozent erläutert den Begriff.  
 Der Begriff lässt sich nur schwer (vom Dozenten) erläutern.

#### [11.66] Attested Verbs

- This diathesis seems possible with most transitive verbs, e.g. *bezweifeln*, *schließen*, *tragen*.
- Some verbs appear to expect an evaluative adverbial, e.g. *übersehen*, *erläutern*.

#### [11.67] Further Examples

- Ich bezweifle die Lösung. Die Lösung lässt sich bezweifeln.

– [ OBJ > SBJ > ADJ ] – *Permissivpassiv*11.5.5 [ NA | pN ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Reflexive permissive passive

For some of the transitive verbs the *lassen+sich+Infinitiv* diathesis has a different interpretation from the previously described epistemic passive (see Section 11.5.4). For example, this diathesis of *empören* ‘to appall’ (11.46 a,b) has a permissive interpretation (‘allowing something to happen’) (11.46 c), not the epistemic interpretation (‘it is possible that something happens’) discussed above (11.46 d). This interpretation is attested for a subset of those verbs that also allow for a reflexive conversive (see Section 7.5.7). [11.68]

- (11.46) a. Der Witz empört mich.  
 b. Ich lasse mich nicht von diesem Witz empören.  
 c. (= Ich erlaube nicht, dass ich von diesem Witz empört werde.)  
 d. (≠ Es ist nicht möglich, dass ich von diesem Witz empört werde.)

Various verbs like *empören* ‘to appall’ describing negative emotions strongly prefer an additional negation with the *lassen+sich+Infinitiv* diathesis (11.47 a). Reversely, verbs describing positive emotions like *begeistern* ‘to enthuse’ typically do not use a negation with this diathesis (11.47 b). [11.69]

- (11.47) a. ? Ich lasse mich von diesem Witz empören.  
 b. Ich lasse mich von diesem Witz begeistern.

## Attested Verbs

[11.70]

- Verbs of negative emotions, typically with negation: *ärgern, beruhigen, erschrecken, empören, erzürnen, langweilen, stören*
- Verbs of positive emotions, typically without negation: *begeistern, belustigen, erheitern, unterhalten, quälen*

## Further Examples

[11.71]

- Davon lasse ich mich nicht ärgern/stören.
- Ich lasse mich nicht schnell erschrecken, sagen wir es so.<sup>29</sup>
- Mehr als zwei Minuten lässt man sich von so jemandem nicht langweilen.<sup>30</sup>
- Davon lasse ich mich begeistern.
- Man steht in bequemen Intervallen und liest die Zeitung oder lässt sich von den Burschen belustigen.<sup>31</sup>
- Eine Mehrheit von 59 Prozent dagegen lässt sich von Büttenreden erheitern.<sup>32</sup>

11.5.6 [ ND | pN ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Dative reflexive permissive passive

A few verbs, like *helfen* ‘to help’ (11.48 a) and *gratulieren* ‘to congratulate’ (11.48 b) show a dative reflexive passive with a permissive interpretation. This diathesis is much more common with an additional accusative, as extensively discussed in the next Section 11.5.7. There seem to be only very few verbs with a dative (but not accusative) that allow for this [11.72]

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 26.10.2003

<sup>30</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.05.2000, Nr. 21

<sup>31</sup>DWDS: Kisch, Egon Erwin: Der rasende Reporter, Berlin: Aufbau-Taschenbuch-Verl. 1925, S. 7

<sup>32</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.03.2011 (online).



passive diathesis. Various other verbs with a dative show a reflexive inersive diathesis, to be discussed separately (see Section 11.9.1).

- (11.48) a. Sie hilft mir.  
 Ich lasse mir von ihr helfen.  
 (= Ich erlaube, dass sie mir hilft.)  
 b. Sie gratuliert mir.  
 Ich lasse mir von ihr gratulieren.  
 (= ich erlaube, dass sie mir gratuliert.)

[11.73] **Attested Verbs**

- *gratulieren, helfen, imponieren*

[11.74] **Further Examples**

- Ich lasse mir nicht davon imponieren, aber ich rechne damit.<sup>33</sup>

[11.75] **Notes**

[11.76] The verb *kündigen* ‘to terminate, to resign’ (11.49) is a special case, because it takes an accusative reflexive pronoun (11.49 a). However, this might be explained by the flexibility to use the verb either with a dative or an accusative argument (11.49 b).

- (11.49) a. Ich lasse mich (vom Chef) kündigen.  
 b. Der Chef kündigt mir/mich.

### 11.5.7 [ NDA | pNA ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Dative reflexive permissive passive+accusative

[11.77] Verbs with both a dative and an accusative, like *schchenken* ‘to gift’ show a parallel passive diathesis to the *lassen* reflexive passive (see Section 11.5.5), but now the dative is promoted to nominative subject (13.25). Semantically this diathesis (11.50 b) has a clear permissive meaning. Syntactically, there seems to be a close connection to the *bekommen+Partizip* dative passive (see Section 10.5.21), which – though – lacks the permissive meaning (11.50 c).

- (11.50) a. Der Verkäufer schenkt mir den Rechner.  
 b. Ich lasse mir den Rechner schenken (vom Verkäufer).  
 c. Ich bekomme den Rechner geschenkt (vom Verkäufer).

[11.78] This diathesis is also possible with other datives, like possessive datives (11.51 a) or benefactive datives (11.51 b). Like all *lassen+Infinitiv* constructions, this diathesis invokes an *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.51 c).

- (11.51) a. Der Friseur schneidet meine Haare.  
 Der Friseur schneidet mir die Haare.  
 Ich lasse mir die Haare schneiden (vom Friseur).  
 b. Mein Vater kocht mir eine Suppe.  
 Ich lasse mir (von meinem Vater) eine Suppe kochen.  
 c. Ich habe mir die Haare schneiden lassen.

[11.79]

<sup>33</sup>DWDS: Die Grenzboten. Jg. 65, 1906, Viertes Vierteljahr.

In this construction the semantics are rather transparently related to the *lassen+Infinitiv* causative/permisive diathesis (Section 11.6.2). This can be clearly seen when a different dative recipient is used, like *sein Freund* ‘his friend’ (11.52 a). First apply the *lassen+Infinitiv* causative (11.52 b) and subsequently replace the recipient with a self-inflicting reflexive pronoun *mir* (11.52 c). The result is semantically the same as the fixed stack discussed above, repeated here (11.52 d). However, there are two key differences. First, structurally there is a crucial difference in the expression of the erstwhile agent *Verkäufer* ‘seller’, either being an accusative (11.52 c) or a prepositional phrase (11.52 d).

- (11.52) a. Der Verkäufer schenkt seinem Freund den Rechner.  
 b. Ich lasse den Verkäufer seinem Freund den Rechner schenken.  
 c. Ich lasse den Verkäufer mir den Rechner schenken.  
 d. Ich lasse mir vom Verkäufer den Rechner schenken.

Second, another difference to the transparent stack of causative plus self-inflicting reflexive (11.52 c) is that the fixed stack of *lassen+sich (Dativ)+Infinitiv* does not allow for a different recipient (11.53). In summary, this fixed stack is different from the transparent combination, but it is semantically closely related to it. [11.80]

- (11.53) a. Der Verkäufer schenkt seinem Freund den Rechner.  
 b. \* Ich lasse seinem Freund den Rechner schenken (von dem Verkäufer).

#### Attested Verbs

[11.81]

- *schenken, schneiden, verbieten*, etc.

#### Further Examples

[11.82]

- Ich verbiete ihr das Rauchen nicht. Sie lässt sich (von mir) das Rauchen nicht verbieten.

## 11.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

— [ Ø > SBJ > ADJ ] —

### 11.6.1 [ –NA | NpA ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Passive causative (*Passivkausativ*)

The *lassen+Infinitiv* causative diathesis (see the next Section 11.6.2) can be used with almost all German verbs. With some verbs this diathesis results in a construction with two accusatives (11.54 a). However, such double accusatives as produced by this diathesis can be resolved by optionally changing the new accusative to a *von* prepositional phrase (11.54 b), or even dropping it altogether (11.54 c), resulting in an embedded anticausative reading with unknown agent (cf. Enzinger 2012: 26). Note that this is only possible with the causative [11.83]

reading and not with the permissive reading of the *lassen+Infinitiv* diathesis (11.54 c).

- (11.54) a. Der Mitarbeiter wäscht die Teller.  
           Sie lässt den Mitarbeiter die Teller waschen.  
       b. Sie lässt die Teller von dem Mitarbeiter waschen.  
       c. Sie lässt die Teller waschen.  
           (= Sie sorgt dafür, dass die Teller gewaschen werden.)  
           (≠ Sie erlaubt, dass die Teller gewaschen werden.)

[11.54] This construction of *lassen+Infinitiv* with a *von* agent phrase might very well be considered a different diathesis. For example, it is impossible with some verbs (Nedjalkov 1976: 7; Enzinger 2012: 27) like *ausziehen* ‘to take off’ (11.55). This impossibility seems to be widespread with verbs that allow an endoreflexive diathesis (see Section 7.7.1), but that has to be investigated further. With a stacked endoreflexive diathesis the *von* replacement is perfectly possible (11.55 d). The *von* replacement also seems to be restricted (or maybe even impossible) for verbs that do not have an accusative argument, like *antworten* ‘to answer’ (11.56).

- (11.55) a. Sein Sohn zieht die Jacke aus.  
           b. Er lässt seinen Sohn die Jacke ausziehen.  
           c. \* Er lässt die Jacke von seinem Sohn ausziehen.  
           d. Er zieht sich aus.  
               Er lässt sich von seinem Sohn ausziehen.  
       (11.56) a. Der Lehrer antwortet dem Schüler.  
               b. Der Dekan lässt den Lehrer dem Schüler antworten.  
               c. ? Der Dekan lässt dem Schüler vom Lehrer antworten.  
               d. ? Der Dekan lässt dem Schüler antworten.

— [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] —

#### 11.6.2 [ -N | NA ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Permissive causative (*Permissivkausativ*)

[11.55] Although the *lassen +Infinitiv* is widely acknowledged in German grammar as a causative, the actual semantics are more variable than that. Basically there seem to be two major interpretations, a causative and a permissive (11.57 b). Enzinger (2012: 6-7) calls the permissive reading *Kontinuativ* as this interpretation typically expresses that a situation is allowed to persist or continue. This diathesis typically invokes the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.57 c). However, the use of participle *gelassen* is possible (11.57 d), but seems to be restricted to the permissive interpretation (Enzinger 2012: 34).

- (11.57) a. Ich wasche die Kleider.  
           b. Sie lässt mich die Kleider waschen.  
               (causative = Sie verursacht, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)  
               (permissive = Sie erlaubt, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)  
           c. Sie hat mich die Kleider waschen *lassen*.  
           d. Sie hat mich die Kleider waschen *gelassen*.  
               (permissive = Sie hat erlaubt, dass ich die Kleider wasche.)

[11.56]

Durative intransitives like *schlafen* ‘to sleep’ prefer a permissive reading (11.58 a), while punctual intransitives like *einschlafen* ‘to fall asleep’ prefer a causative reading (11.58 b). However, this appears only to a preference, not a semantic necessity. There are also clearly ambiguous examples, like *arbeiten* ‘to work’ (11.58 c). Various other factors influencing the possibly interpretations are discussed by Enzinger (2012: 33-).

- (11.58) a. Ich lasse das Kind schlafen.  
(= Ich erlaube, dass das Kind weiter schläft.)  
b. Ich lasse das Kind einschlafen.  
(= Ich Sorge dafür, dass das Kind einschläft.)  
c. Ich lasse das Kind arbeiten.  
(= Ich erlaube, dass das Kind weiter arbeitet.)  
(= Ich Sorge dafür, dass das Kind arbeitet.)

This diathesis can be applied to verbs of various argument structures. There is always a new nominative introduced, and the old nominative is demoted to an accusative. Other arguments are simply retained. If there is already an accusative present as in then the resulting construction simply has two accusative constituents. Such double accusatives are unusual in German because most role-remappings lead to a chain of remappings to not end up with identically marked constituents (see Section 2.6 on the notion of a ‘chain’). Any datives (11.59 a) or prepositional phrases (11.59 b) are simply left untouched by this diathesis.

- (11.59) a. Ich schreibe meiner Oma einen Brief.  
Meine Mutter lässt mich meiner Oma einen Brief schreiben.  
b. Der Vater ärgert sich über die vielen Staus.  
Die Nachrichten lassen meinen Vater sich über die vielen Staus ärgern.

There are various verbs that do not allow for this diathesis (cf. Nedjalkov 1976: 17), like *gefallen* ‘to like’ (11.60 a,b) that have a non-agentive nominative subject. However, the restrictions to the applicability of the *lassen* causative needs more in-depth investigation.

- (11.60) a. Der Schlitten gefällt dem Jungen.  
b. \* Der Verkäufer lässt den Schlitten dem Jungen gefallen.

#### Attested Verbs

- Almost all verbs, with some exceptions, e.g. it is not possible with *ähneln*, *bekommen*, *beschweren*, *besitzen*, *gefallen*, *interessieren*, *kennen*, *missfallen*, *sich befinden*, *verunglücken*

### 11.6.3 [ -N | NA ] *schicken+Infinitiv* Causative (*Direktivkausativ*)

The verb *schicken* allows for a construction with an infinitive (11.61). This diathesis expresses not a direct causation, but more a directive to somebody to do something. This diathesis does not invoke the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.61 c).

- (11.61) a. Er schläft.  
b. Ich schicke ihn schlafen.  
c. Ich habe ihn schlafen geschickt (\*schicken).

The meaning of the light verb *schicken* in this diathesis is rather close to the meaning of the full verb *schicken* ‘to send’ (11.62 a). The diathesis with infinitive seems to be restricted to agentive intransitives (11.62 b,c).

- (11.62) a. Ich schicke ihn nach Hause.  
 b. \*Er schickte mich einschlafen.  
 c. \*Er schickte mich fallen.

[11.92] There is a frequent sentence structure of *schicken* with the infinitive of the transitive verb *holen* ‘to fetch something’. Other than this verb there do not appear to be many transitive examples.

- (11.63) a. Ich hole Bier.  
 b. Er schickt mich Bier holen.

[11.93] **Attested Verbs**

- agentive intransitives: *duschen, einkaufen, schlafen*, etc.
- transitives: *holen*

[11.94] **Further Examples**

- Du hast noch mehr als einmal gearbeitet und mich schlafen geschickt.<sup>34</sup>
- Doch als sie ihn später ein zweites Mal Wasser holen schickt, kommt Sachin aufgeregt zurück ...<sup>35</sup>
- Wenn Manne seine Diener, zwei beflissene Penner, Bier holen schickt, dann ...<sup>36</sup>
- Gegen Nürnberg ließ Fairchild, diesmal wieder Angreifer, seinen aufgestauten Frust verbal an Referee Chvatal aus, der ihn mit einer Spieldauerstrafe duschen schickte.<sup>37</sup>

#### 11.6.4 [ -N | NA ] *machen+Infinitiv* Causative (*Agentivkausativ*)

[11.95] The verb *machen* can be used with an infinitive to express a causative meaning. This typically is found with intransitives, like *lachen* ‘to laugh’ (11.64 a), though incidental transitives are also attested, like *vergessen* ‘to forget’ (11.64 b). Although this construction might look like an English calque (‘he makes me laugh’), it is already attested in early German examples (11.64 c), so it seems to be an old Germanic construction. This diathesis does not invoke the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.64 d).

- (11.64) a. Ich lache.  
 Der Clown macht mich lachen.  
 b. Ich vergesse die Verabredung.  
 Der Stress macht mich die Verabredung vergessen.  
 c. Das Pulver von eines Schwanen Beiner auf eines Kopf gestreuet soll alsbald die Haar ausfallen machen.(Martin Zeiler, 1659)<sup>38</sup>  
 d. Der Clown hat mich lachen gemacht (\*machen).

[11.96] **Attested Verbs**

<sup>34</sup>DWDS: Mauthner, Fritz: Wörterbuch der Philosophie. In: Bertram, Mathias (Hg.) Geschichte der Philosophie, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2000 [1910], S. 24606

<sup>35</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 06.12.2012, Nr. 50

<sup>36</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 10.02.2005, Nr. 07

<sup>37</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 19.02.2004

<sup>38</sup>DWDS: Zeiller, Martin: Centvria III. Variarvm Quæstionvm. Bd. 3. Ulm, 1659.

- intransitives: *flattern, frösteln, lachen, leiden, schaudern, weinen*
- transitives: *hinnehmen, vergessen*

### Further Examples

[11.97]

- Der Lärm macht mich schaudern.
- Die Diktatur machte die Menschen ihr Schicksal passiv hinnehmen.
- Und der harte Bass brandet in so tückischen Wellen durch die Halle, dass er die Hosenbeine flattern macht.<sup>39</sup>
- Spengler führt vor, wie der Gang der Geschichte die Menschen Idee und Wirklichkeit der eigenen Freiheit vergessen macht.<sup>40</sup>

### 11.6.5 [ -N | NA ] *heißen+Infinitiv* Causative

The verb *heißen* can also be used with an infinitive to express a causative meaning (cf. Engel 1996: 489), though this is rather old-fashioned (11.65 a,b). This diathesis does not invoke the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.65 c). Note that there is a different, apparently completely independent, demotive usage of *heißen+Infinitiv* (see Section 11.5.3).

[11.98]

- (11.65) a. Er kniete nieder.  
 b. Der Henker hieß ihn niederknien.  
 c. Der Henker hat ihn niederknien geheißen (\*heißen).

### Further Examples

[11.99]

- Eins von den Kindern hieß er zum Doktor laufen.<sup>41</sup>
- Hierauf hat mich der Vater in sein Arbeitsgemach geführt, hat mich auf den weichsten Sessel niedersitzen geheißen.<sup>42</sup>

### – [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] – *Perzeptiv*

The following perception verbs (Lat. *verba sentiendi*, German *Wahrnehmungsverben*) are regularly discussed as a special class in the German grammatical tradition: *sehen* ‘to see’, *hören* ‘to hear’ and *fühlen/spüren* ‘to feel’ (e.g. Eisenberg 2006a: 266; Kotůlková 2010b; Enzinger 2012: 23). These verbs are special because they can occur both in a biclausal construction with a finite *dass* complement clause and in a monoclausal construction with an infinitive. This class of verbs is not completely homogeneous because only *sehen* and *hören* can optionally occur with an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv*. I propose to also include the verbs *riechen* ‘to smell’ and *finden* ‘to find’ (but in this construction meaning ‘to detect’) in this class verbs, although their use in infinitive constructions is much more restricted.

[11.100]

### 11.6.6 [ -N | NA ] *sehen+Infinitiv* Experiencer

[11.101]

<sup>39</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 31.05.2007 (online).

<sup>40</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 21.12.2017, Nr. 49

<sup>41</sup>DWDS: Ganghofer, Ludwig: Der Dorfapostel, Stuttgart: Adolf Bonz 1900, S. 124

<sup>42</sup>DWDS: Rosegger, Peter: Die Schriften des Waldschulmeisters. Pest, 1875.

The verb *sehen* ‘to see’ can both be used with a finite *dass* complement clause (11.66 a) and with an infinitive construction (11.66 b). This infinitive construction allows for an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.66 c,d).

- (11.66) a. Ich sehe, dass du dem Jungen ein Buch gibst.  
 b. Ich sehe dich dem Jungen ein Buch geben.  
 c. Ich habe dich dem Jungen das Buch geben sehen/gesehen.  
 d. Die Mutter war sehr ängstlich und hat ständig ihre Kinder unter einem Auto liegen sehen.<sup>43</sup>  
 Bei ihrer Flucht habe sie auf den Hoteltreppen viele Leichen liegen gesehen.<sup>44</sup>

### 11.6.7 [ -N | NA ] *hören+Infinitiv* Experiencer

[11.102] The verb *hören* ‘to hear’ can both be used with a *dass* complement clause (11.67 a) and with an infinitive construction (11.67 b). This infinitive construction allows for an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.67 c,d).

- (11.67) a. Ich höre, dass du das Lied singst.  
 b. Ich höre dich das Lied singen.  
 c. Ich habe dich das Lied singen hören/gehört.  
 d. Während meiner Recherche habe ich Ulrike nicht singen hören.<sup>45</sup>  
 Dort hat mich ein Erzieher auf dem Flur singen gehört.<sup>46</sup>

### 11.6.8 [ -N | NA ] *fühlen+Infinitiv* Experiencer

[11.103] The verb *fühlen* ‘to feel’ can both be used with a *dass* complement clause (11.68 a) and with an infinitive construction (11.68 b). This infinitive construction does not allow for an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.68 c,d).

- (11.68) a. Er fühlt, dass die Ameisen über seinen Arm laufen.  
 b. Er fühlt die Ameisen über seinen Arm laufen.  
 c. Er hat die Ameisen über seinen Arm laufen gefühlt (\*fühlen).  
 d. Auf so anrührende Weise wie in Asmara haben wir uns selten unterhalten gefühlt.<sup>47</sup>

### 11.6.9 [ -N | NA ] *spüren+Infinitiv* Experiencer

[11.104]

<sup>43</sup>In: Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache: *Wörterbuch zur Verbalenz*. Grammatisches Informationssystem grammis. <https://grammis.ids-mannheim.de/verbs/view/400881/14>, accessed 22 July 2021

<sup>44</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.11.2008, Nr. 48

<sup>45</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.01.2018, Nr. 01

<sup>46</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.09.2016 (online).

<sup>47</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.12.2010, Nr. 51

The verb *spüren* ‘to feel’ can both be used with a *dass* complement clause (11.69 a) and with an infinitive construction (11.69 b). This infinitive construction does not allow for an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.69 c,d).

- (11.69) a. Er spürt, dass die Ameisen über seinen Arm laufen.  
 b. Er spürt die Ameisen über seinen Arm laufen.  
 c. Er hat die Ameisen über seinen Arm laufen gespürt (\*spüren).  
 d. Und Pfauder habe sein Herz bis zum Hals hoch klopfen gespürt.<sup>48</sup>

### 11.6.10 [ -N | NA ] *riechen+Infinitiv* Experiencer

The verb *riechen* ‘to smell’ can be used with a *dass* complement clause (11.70 a) and in very few cases it is also attested with an infinitive construction (11.70 b). This infinitive construction does not allow for an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.70 c,d). [11.105]

- (11.70) a. Er riecht, dass seine Mutter Milchreis kocht.  
 b. Er riecht seine Mutter Milchreis kochen.  
 c. Er hat seine Mutter Milchreis kochen gerochen (\*riechen).  
 d. Er schlug sich querfeldein, nahm meilenweite Umwege in Kauf, wenn er eine noch Stunden entfernte Schwadron Reiter auf sich zukommen roch.<sup>49</sup>

#### Further Examples

[11.106]

- Seine Majestät hatte einen Streit im Haus gehört und etwas brennen gerochen.<sup>50</sup>
- Ich war gerade 20 Minuten draußen und hab bei 8°C zwei Familien unabhängig voneinander Grillen gerochen.<sup>51</sup>

### 11.6.11 [ -N | NA ] *finden+Infinitiv* Experiencer

The verb *finden* (literally meaning ‘to find’, but in this construction the meaning is closer to *feststellen* ‘to detect’) cannot be used with a *dass* complement clause (11.71 a). However, it is attested with an infinitive, similar to the previous *verba sentiendi* (11.71 b). This infinitive construction typically occurs with position verbs like *stehen*, *liegen*, *sitzen*. This construction does not allow for an IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.71 c,d). [11.107]

- (11.71) a. Er stellte fest (\*findet), dass sein Teller auf dem Tisch steht.  
 b. Er fand seinen Teller auf dem Tisch stehen.  
 c. Er hat seinen Teller auf dem Tisch stehen gefunden (\*finden).  
 d. Er [...] rauchte den Joint auf, den er dort liegen fand.<sup>52</sup>

#### Attested verbs

[11.108]

- position verbs: *stehen*, *liegen*, *sitzen*, etc.

<sup>48</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 30.11.1996

<sup>49</sup>DWDS: Süskind, Patrick: Das Parfum, Zürich: Diogenes 1985, S. 4

<sup>50</sup>William M. Thackeray: Die Rose und der Ring. Übersetzung Jörg Karau 2009. Attested online at <https://www.joergkarau-texte.de/PDF/Die%20Rose%20und%20der%20Ring.pdf>, accessed 22 July 2021.

<sup>51</sup>Note the non-standard capitalisation. Attested online at <https://twitter.com/oerthelius/status/1368214157347221508>, accessed 13 September 2021.

<sup>52</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 02.10.1998



## [11.109] Further Examples

- Der gütige Herr wollte weiterschreiten, als er einen Dritten bitterlich weinend am Straßenrand sitzen fand.<sup>53</sup>
- Indessen hatte Perdikkas die Stadt, gegen die er gesandt war, bereits von den Einwohnern verlassen gefunden.<sup>54</sup>

– [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] –

11.6.12 [ –N | NA ] *lehren+Infinitiv* Assistive

[11.110] The verb *lehren* ‘to teach’ can be used as a light verb with infinitive. The construction induces a novative diathesis in which a new role (‘the teacher’) is introduced as a nominative and the erstwhile nominative is demoted to accusative (11.72a,b). Atypically for a light-verb construction, the meaning of the light verb *lehren* remains completely transparently related to the full verb with the meaning ‘to teach’. There is an alternative construction with *zu-Infinitiv* (see Section 12.2.2) that appears to have a highly similar meaning. More research is needed to elucidate any difference between these two constructions (11.72b,c). The *lehren+Infinitiv* diathesis does not invoke the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.72 d).

- (11.72) a. Der Junge schwimmt.  
 b. Die Mutter lehrt den Jungen schwimmen.  
 c. Die Mutter lehrt den Jungen zu schwimmen.  
 d. Die Mutter hat den Jungen schwimmen *gelehrt*.

[11.111] There does not seem to be any syntactic restriction on the main lexical verbs that can be used in this diathesis. Any verb can be used as long as the verb can sensibly be conceived as something that can be taught. Any other arguments of the lexical verb simply are retained, which regularly leads to double accusatives (11.73 a,b).

- (11.73) a. Ich wasche mich.  
 b. Sie lehrt mich mich waschen.

11.6.13 [ –N | ND ] *helfen+Infinitiv* Assistive

[11.112] The verb *helfen* ‘to help’ can be used as a light verb with infinitive. The construction induces a novative diathesis in which a new role (‘the helper’) is introduced as a nominative and the erstwhile nominative is demoted to dative (11.74a,b). Atypically for a light-verb construction, the meaning of the light verb *helfen* remains completely transparently related to the full verb with the meaning ‘to help’. There is an alternative construction with *zu-Infinitiv* (11.74c), see Section 12.2.2, that appears to highly similar. More research is needed to elucidate any difference between these two constructions. The *helfen+Infinitiv* diathesis allows

<sup>53</sup>DWDS: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1995 [1945]

<sup>54</sup>DWDS: Droysen, Johann Gustav: Geschichte Alexanders des Großen. Hamburg, 1833.

the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.74 d).

- (11.74) a. Ich trage den Koffer.  
 b. Er hilft mir den Koffer tragen.  
 c. Er hilft mir den Koffer zu tragen.  
 d. Er hat mir den Koffer tragen *geholffen*.  
     Er hat mir den Koffer tragen *helfen*.

Any lexical verb can be used in this construction as long as the verb can sensibly be conceived as something that can be helped with. Other arguments of the lexical verb simply are simply retained. However, the *helfen+Infinitiv* construction seems to be dispreferred when the lexical verb has many arguments (11.75 a,b). It appears to be more typical of construction with only a single lexical argument (11.75 c,d). Note that this construction is also typically used without the beneficiary of the helping being expressed, i.e. the agent of the lexical verb is dropped (11.75 d). [11.113]

- (11.75) a. Ich schreibe dir einen Brief.  
 b. ? Sie hilft mir dir einen Brief schreiben.  
 c. Sie hilft mir schreiben.  
 d. Sie hilft den Brief schreiben.

## 11.7 Diatheses with object demotion

Not attested. [11.114]

## 11.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

Not attested. [11.115]

## 11.9 Symmetrical diatheses

— [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 11.9.1 [ ND | AN ] *lassen+Infinitiv* Dative reflexive inersive (*Permissivinversiv*)

Most verbs with a dative (but no accusative) do not allow for a reflexive *lassen+Infinitiv* construction (see Section 11.5.6). The few that do allow for such a construction, like *schmecken* ‘to taste’ (11.76) show a special diathesis. The dative turns into a nominative subject and the erstwhile nominative turns into an accusative. The resulting construction has a permissive meaning and is clearly related to the reflexive *lassen+Infinitiv* passive diatheses for ditransitive verbs (see Section 11.5.7) [11.116]

- (11.76) a. Das Bärenfleisch schmeckt mir.  
 b. Ich lasse mir das Bärenfleisch schmecken.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 22.11.1985, Nr. 48 [11.117]

In exceptional cases, a possessor dative (see Section 5.8.3) can also be used in this diathesis, like with *wachsen* ‘to grow’ (11.77).

- (11.77) a. Mein Bart wächst.  
 b. Der Bart wächst mir.  
 c. Ich lasse mir den Bart wachsen.

[11.118] **Attested Verbs**

- *entgehen, entgleiten, entwischen, gefallen, kosten, passieren, schmecken, wachsen*

[11.119] **Further Examples**

- Der Spaß entgeht mir. Den Spaß lasse ich mir nicht entgehen.
- Der Eintritt kostet mir 10 Euro. Ich lasse mir den Eintritt 10 Euro kosten.
- Dein Ton gefällt mir nicht. Ich lasse mir deinen Ton nicht gefallen.
- Den Kuß lasse ich mir gefallen.<sup>56</sup>

### 11.9.2 [ NDL | ANL ] *haben+Infinitiv* Dative inversive (*Ortspertinenzinversiv*)

[11.120] The construction of a light verb *haben* with an infinitive (cf. Hole 2002: 183-185) is attested with various position verbs like *hängen* (11.78 a). Such constructions obligatorily need a locational phrase (11.78 b). The hanging object is expressed as an accusative, and the nominative subject of the *haben+Infinitiv* construction is actually a possessor dative of the location (11.78 c,d), see Section 6.8.11. This diathesis does not invoke the IPP *Ersatzinfinitiv* (11.78 e).

- (11.78) a. Er hat einen Tropfen an der Nase hängen.  
 b. \* Er hat einen Tropfen hängen.  
 c. Ein Tropfen hängt ihm an der Nase.  
 d. Ein Tropfen hängt an seiner Nase.  
 e. Er hat einen Tropfen an der Nase hängen *gehabt* (\*haben).

[11.121] The new nominative subject seems to have multiple possibly origins. It mostly is the possessor of the location as in (11.78) but there are also examples in which it is the possessor of the original subject, as in (11.79). In such examples the new subject of the *haben+Infinitiv* diathesis is not related to a dative. It is not completely clear to me how to best approach such examples.

- (11.79) Ich habe das Auto auf dem Parkplatz stehen.  
 (= Mein Auto steht auf dem Parkplatz.)  
 (≠ Das Auto steht auf meinen Parkplatz.)  
 (≠ Das Auto steht mir auf dem Parkplatz.)

[11.122] There is a curious parallel between this diathesis and the *haben+am-Infinitiv* diathesis, see Section 13.9.1. Both use the light verb *haben* with an infinitive, they show the same role-remapping, and semantically they are highly similar. The first difference is that the dative in this diathesis is the possessor of the locational object, while the dative in the *haben+am-Infinitiv* diathesis is the possessor of the nominative. The second difference is

<sup>56</sup>DWDS: Brief von Irene G. an Ernst G. vom 07.12.1939, Feldpost-Archive mkb-fp-0270

of course the extra *am* preposition. It is a tantalising thought that this *am* preposition is somehow related to the fact that there is no obligatory location present in that diathesis.

#### Attested Verbs

[11.123]

- Position verbs: *liegen, stehen, sitzen, hängen, stecken*
- Manner of position verbs: *haften, kleben, lehnen, pendeln*

#### Further Examples

[11.124]

- Der Teller steht ihm auf dem Tisch.  
Er hat den Teller auf dem Tisch stehen.
- Viola Kleßmann aus Charlottenburg gehört nicht zu denen, die am Ende einen roten Punkt an ihrer Teilnehmernummer kleben haben.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 28.07.2003.

## Chapter 12

# Light-verb alternations with *zu-Infinitiv*

### 12.1 Introduction

[12.1] Besides diatheses with regular infinitives, as discussed in the previous chapter, there are also light-verb constructions with *zu* and an infinitive. The German particle *zu* is historically an allative ‘towards’ preposition related to English *to*. In the German orthography, the *zu* element is regularly separated from the infinitive by a space. However, morphologically the *zu-Infinitiv* is clearly one word and should be considered a special non-finite form of the verb along the participle and the infinitive (see Section 12.2.1).

[12.2] The *zu-Infinitiv* can be combined with various light verbs to form monoclausal construction. This is widespread without diathesis, for example with light verbs *pflegen* (12.1 a), see Section 12.4.1, and *haben* (12.1 b), see Section 12.4.5. However, the main focus of this chapter is on light verbs that induce diathesis when used with the *zu-Infinitiv*, for example *sein* (12.1 c), see Section 12.5.8, and *stehen* (12.1 d), see Section 12.5.6.

- (12.1) a. Sie pflegte laut zu lachen.  
b. Die Schüler haben die Aufgaben zu lösen.  
c. Hunde sind an der Leine zu führen.  
d. Ein weiterer Beschäftigungsabbau steht zu befürchten.

[12.3] Following Bech (1955), construction with a *zu-Infinitiv* are often designated as *Zweiter Status* in the German grammatical literature. However, this name is not very transparent nor particularly mnemonic, so I prefer to simply use the term *zu-Infinitiv* construction.

[12.4] One of the central issues with sentences that include a *zu-Infinitiv* is the question whether such sentences are biclausal or monoclausal. There is actually a grammaticalisation cline with (non-coherent) biclausal structures on the one side and (coherent) monoclausal structures on the other side (see Section 12.2.2).

[12.5] The major aim of this chapter is to list and discuss all grammaticalised coherent monoclausal *zu-Infinitiv* construction of the German language, all diatheses as well as all epitheses. There is a strong tendency for the monoclausal *zu-Infinitiv* constructions to express some kind of imperfective aspect, as opposed to participle constructions (Chapter 10) that tend to express perfective meanings.

[12.6]

The following eight diatheses with a *zu-Infinitiv* are attested regularly in German, so I propose a German name for them. Note that the light verbs *sein* and *geben* are both used in two different diatheses. The two *geben* diatheses are remarkably different, both structurally and semantically.

- [SBJ > Ø] *sein* UNPERSÖNLICHER MODALPASSIV (see Section 12.5.1 ff.)
- [SBJ > ADJ] *geben* MÖGLICHKEITSDEMOTIV (see Section 12.5.4)
- [SBJ > ADJ] *gelten* NOTWENDIGKEITSDEMOTIV (see Section 12.5.5)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] *gehen* UNMÖGLICHKEITSANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 12.5.7)
- [OBJ > SBJ > Ø] *stehen* ERWARTUNGSANTIKAUSATIV (see Section 12.5.6)
- [OBJ > SBJ > ADJ] *sein* MODALPASSIV (see Section 12.5.8)
- [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ] *bleiben* RESTINVERSIV (see Section 12.9.1)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] *geben* AUFTRAGSKAUSATIV (see Section 12.6.1)

## 12.2 Defining the *zu-Infinitiv*

### 12.2.1 Morphological structure

The combination of *zu* with an infinitive is regularly written as two words in German orthography, like with the infinitive *kaufen* ‘to buy’ in (12.2 a). However, the combination is written as one word when the verb has a separable preverb, like *ein-* in *einkaufen* ‘to shop’ (12.2 b). With such preverbs, *zu* is inserted between the preverb and the verbal stem. [12.7]

- (12.2) a. Du brauchst nichts zu kaufen.  
b. Du brauchst nichts einzukaufen.

From a purely grammatical perspective, *zu* is clearly bound morphology when used with an infinitive (cf. Duden-Grammatik 2009: 439; Haider 2010: 272-273), because (i) it is always unstressed and (ii) it is not separable from the infinitive, not even by preverbs like *ein-*. The combination of *zu* plus infinitive is thus best considered to be a grammaticalised non-finite verb form of German, alongside the *Partizip* and the *Infinitiv*. I propose to simply call it the *zu-Infinitiv*. [12.8]

Probably the only reason that simplex verbs still have a written space between *zu* and the infinitive is that homographs would be introduced when the two parts would be written without a space. For example, the *zu-Infinitiv* of the verb *schließen* ‘to close’ would be *zuschließen* with unstressed *zu* and main stress on *schließ* (12.3 a), while the regular *Infinitiv* of the verb *zuschließen* ‘to lock’ would be *zuschließen* with stressed *zu* (12.3 b). Obviously, an alternative orthographic choice would be to indicate the primary stress in such (rare) cases of possible confusion (e.g. by a diacritic). However, the separation by a space is entrenched in German orthography and is unlikely to change. Yet, this should not distract from the fact that morphologically *zu* is clearly bound morphology. [12.9]

- (12.3) a. Du brauchst die Tür nicht zu schließen.  
b. Du musst die Tür nicht zuschließen.

### 12.2.2 Grammaticalisation

[12.10]

The element *zu* in the *zu-Infinitiv* is obviously related to the preposition *zu*, which has a bewildering number of different uses in German.<sup>1</sup> Diachronically, there has been a development from an originally allative meaning ‘towards’ via a purpose meaning ‘with the intend to’ to the usage of *zu* in complement clauses. This grammaticalisation pathway is widespread worldwide (Haspelmath 1989) and well-described for Germanic languages (e.g. Smirnova 2016 for German; Los 2005 for English).

[12.11] This grammaticalisation pathway can be further extended as shown in (12.4). The verb *lehren* ‘to teach’ can actually be used in all three syntactic stages. In the first stage, the verb *lehren* is used with a *zu-Infinitiv* complement clause that is expressed after the main clause. Such constructions are non-coherent and thus consist of two clauses. In the second stage, the verb *lehren* can also be used with a *zu-Infinitiv*, but now this infinitive is incorporated into the main clause. Such constructions are coherent and thus consists of just a single clause. Finally, in the third stage, the verb *lehren* is used with a bare infinitive without *zu*. Such constructions are always monoclausal.

(12.4) Grammaticalisation pathway of infinitive constructions

- (1) *zu-Infinitiv* biclausal complement (*Ich habe ihn gelehrt, zu tanzen.*)
- » (2) *zu-Infinitiv* monoclausal construction (*Ich habe ihn zu tanzen gelehrt.*)
- » (3) *Infinitiv* monoclausal construction (*Ich habe ihn tanzen gelehrt.*)

[12.12] As an illustration of these different uses of the verb *lehren*, I have added a corpus example of each usage in (12.5), which show the various constructions in subordinate position to clarify the structural differences.

- (12.5) a. Wahrscheinlich auch, weil ihn die Erfahrung [gelehrt hat], [niemals nie zu sagen].<sup>2</sup>
- b. Unser Abgott Theodor Fontane dagegen, der uns [so vieles in Stadt und Land zu sehen] [gelehrt hat], scheint die Berliner Galerie kaum besucht zu haben.<sup>3</sup>
- c. Was hast du den Indios für Possen angerichtet, daß sie dich [so schön tanzen] [gelehrt haben] ?<sup>4</sup>

[12.13] The focus of this chapter are the constructions in the second stage of this grammaticalisation pathway: monoclausal *zu-Infinitiv* constructions. This kind of construction is attested with various verbs that are coherent when used with *zu-Infinitiv*, like *haben* (12.6). A simple test for coherence is to embed a sentence like (12.6 a) inside another main clause like *es ist bekannt, dass...* ‘it is known that...’ (see Section 1.3.1). Coherent monoclausal constructions, i.e. stage 2 in (12.4), can then be identified by the obligatory position of the finite verb at the end of the clause (12.6 b). A finite verb before the *zu-Infinitiv* is not possible (12.6 c).

- (12.6) a. Sie [hat] noch viele Jahre [zu leben].
- b. Es ist bekannt, dass sie noch viele Jahre [zu leben] [hat].
- c. \* Es ist bekannt, dass sie [hat] noch viele Jahre [zu leben].

[12.14] Because there is a grammaticalisation cline, there are various verbs that can be used in more than one of these three different stages, as summarised in (12.26). Most verbs with a *zu-Infinitiv* actually only allow for the first option: biclausal non-coherent complement

<sup>1</sup>For example, see the listing of the DWDS at <https://www.dwds.de/wb/zu>.

<sup>2</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 28.07.2013 (online).

<sup>3</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 11.06.1998

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: Perutz, Leo: Die dritte Kugel, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 1988 [1915], S. 5

constructions (12.7 a). These fall outside of the scope of this book. At the other extreme, some verbs only allow for monoclausal *Infinitiv* construction (12.7 f). These were already discussed in the previous Chapter 11. The group of verbs that allow for both stage 2 and 3 (12.6 e) is small, as this only seems to be possible for the verbs *brauchen*, *heißen*, *helfen*, *lehren* and *lernen*.

(12.7) Intermediate stages on the grammaticalisation pathway

- a. **Only stage 1 possible** (only biclausal *zu-Infinitiv*): e.g. *schwören* ‘to vow’, *fragen* ‘to ask’
- b. **Both stage 1 and 2 possible with the same meaning** (biclausal and monoclausal *zu-Infinitiv*): e.g. *anfangen* ‘to begin’, *versuchen* ‘to attempt’
- c. **Both stage 1 and 2 possible with different meanings** (biclausal and monoclausal *zu-Infinitiv*): e.g. *pflegen*, ‘to nurse’ or ‘to do habitually’, *drohen* ‘to threaten’ or ‘there is evidence for it’
- d. **Only stage 2 possible** (only monoclausal *zu-Infinitiv*): e.g. *haben* lit. ‘to have’, but here: ‘to must’, *wissen* lit. ‘to know’, but here: ‘to can’
- e. **Both stage 2 and 3 possible** (monoclausal, both *zu-Infinitiv* and *Infinitiv*): e.g. *brauchen* ‘to require’, *helfen* ‘to help’
- f. **Only stage 3 possible** (only monoclausal *Infinitiv*): e.g. *müssen* ‘to must’, *können* ‘to can’

In between these extremes there are various further possibilities. First, the group of verbs that allow for both stage 1 and 2 without any obvious differences in meaning (12.7 b) are widely discussed in the German grammatical literature under the heading MODALITÄTSVERBEN. Various lists are found in Wurmbrand (2003: 318–319) and Colomo (2010: 167–175), citing earlier literature. A short survey of various structural and semantic aspects of this group is presented in Rapp & Wöllstein (2013). From a quick search in the DWDS corpus it appears that the following verbs are the most interesting for further research (i.e. these verbs are frequently attested with both sentence structures, but without obvious differences in meaning between those structures): *anfangen*, *aufhören*, *beabsichtigen*, *beginnen*, *erlauben*, *gedenken*, *glauben*, *heißen*, *helfen*, *hoffen*, *lehren*, *lernen*, *lieben*, *sich lohnen*, *machen*, *meinen*, *streben*, *trachten*, *sich trauen*, *vergessen*, *versuchen*, *vorgeben*, *wagen*, *wünschen*. Examples with the verb *wünschen* ‘to wish’ are shown in (12.8). These verbs will not be further discussed in this chapter, but they deserve more research. [12.15]

- (12.8) a. Es gebe viele Stimmen in der CSU, die ihm gewünscht hätten, eine längere Auszeit zu nehmen.<sup>5</sup>
- b. Das war es was er zu hören gewünscht hatte.<sup>6</sup>

All verbs that only allow for stage 2 (12.7 d) and those that have a special meaning when used as stage 2 (12.7 c) will be discussed in detail in this chapter. The explicit claim is that this chapter presents a complete list of such verbs. However, special care has to be taken with polysemies. Many of the verbs that are discussed in this chapter occur both in stage 1 and stage 2, but with clearly different meanings. For example, in its lexical meaning *versprechen* means ‘to promise’ and then it is not coherent (12.9 a). In contrast, in its evidential meaning *versprechen* means something like ‘there is evidence for it’ and then it is coherent (12.9 b). [12.16]

<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.11.2011 (online).

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: Fontane, Theodor: Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg. Bd. 4: Spreeland. Berlin, 1882.



Although this correlation is not 100% perfect, there is a very strong tendency for the different meanings to also show different syntactic constructions (see Section 12.4.11).

- (12.9) a. Er verspricht rechtzeitig nach Hause zu kommen.  
Es ist bekannt, dass er verspricht rechtzeitig nach Hause zu kommen.  
b. Der Film verspricht eine Sensation zu werden.  
Es ist bekannt, dass der Film eine Sensation zu werden verspricht.

[12.17] There is some overlap between the constructions discussed in this chapter and the HALBMODALVERBEN as introduced by Eisenberg (e.g. 2006a: 362-365) and discussed in much detail in Colomo (2010: Ch. 6). However, that term is defined in a much more restricted way to include only *pflegen*, *scheinen*, *drohen* and *versprechen*. The focus of the present chapter is more widely expanded. Crucially, Eisenbergs *Halbmodale* do not include the level 2 verbs with the most obvious modal meanings, viz. *haben*, *brauchen*, *wissen* and *verstehen* (see Section 12.4.3 ff.).

## 12.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

[12.18] This is not attested. Note that theoretically such verbs might occur in German, but as far as I am aware there do not exist any examples. The necessary observation would be a lexical verb that can occur in a *zu-Infinitiv* construction (12.10 a), but cannot be used as a finite verb (12.10 b). The verb *überzeugen* in (12.10) is thus no example of this hypothetical phenomenon, as the second sentence then should have been ungrammatical.

- (12.10) a. Der Lehrer weiß seine SchülerInnen zu überzeugen.  
b. Der Lehrer überzeugt seine SchülerInnen.

## 12.4 Alternations without diathesis

### — Aspect —

#### 12.4.1 *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* Habitual (*Habituativ*)

[12.19] The lexical verb *pflegen* means ‘to nurse, to maintain’. However, in combination with a *zu-Infinitiv* the verb *pflegen* is one of the clearest examples of a construction that is always coherent, while at the same time it has a completely different meaning. The *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* expresses a habitual aspect, meaning approximately something like ‘to usually do something’ (12.11 a,b). Examples proving coherence are shown in (12.11 c,d).

[12.20] Colomo (2010: 246-256) argues that the real semantic content of *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* is not the habitual aspect, but that it is more closely related to modal meanings of other *zu-Infinitiv* constructions. However, that analysis needs a lot of semantic trickery, and I do not see what is gained from it. I propose to simply consider the *pflegen+zu-Infinitiv* a HABITUATIV in German.

- (12.11) a. Sie lacht laut.  
b. Sie pflegte laut zu lachen.  
c. Es ist bekannt, dass sie laut zu lachen pflegte.  
d. \* Es ist bekannt, dass sie pflegte laut zu lachen.

### 12.4.2 *belieben+zu-Infinitiv* Habitual

The verb *belieben* can be used with a *zu-Infinitiv*, but only in rather archaic and mostly ironic usage. When interpreted literally, such structures convey a habitual action by the subject. However, interpreted ironically it normally means that the speaker disagrees with the action (12.12 a). This even leads to contexts in which the construction is used to express ‘you should reconsider your actions’ (12.12 b). [12.21]

- (12.12) a. Der Herr *belieben* zu scherzen.  
 b. Schmöller *beliebe* zu überlegen, dass er in diesem Satze seine Meinung plötzlich ändert.<sup>7</sup>

### — Modality —

### 12.4.3 *wissen/verstehen+zu-Infinitiv* Ability (*Abilitiv*)

The construction *wissen+zu-Infinitiv* is only mentioned in-passing in the German grammatical literature (e.g. Engel 1996: 483; Holl 2010: 10; Duden-Grammatik 2009: 426). This omission is all the more striking as it is widely acknowledged that the inflection of *wissen* shows various similarities to the *Modalverben* (Duden-Grammatik 2009: 458-459, 481-482). Actually, it is quite obvious that the *wissen+zu-Infinitiv* construction has a modal meaning expressing capability ‘to be able to’ (12.13 a). This construction is obligatorily coherent (12.13 b,c). [12.22]

- (12.13) a. Der Lehrer weiß die Schüler zu begeistern.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass der Lehrer die SchülerInnen zu begeistern weiß.  
 c. \*<sup>^</sup> Es ist bekannt, dass der Lehrer weiß die SchülerInnen zu begeistern.

Even less mentioned is *verstehen+zu-Infinitiv* (cf. Engel 1996: 483), which likewise has a modal meaning of ‘to be able to’ (12.14 a). This construction is also obligatorily coherent (12.14 b,c). [12.23]

- (12.14) a. Er versteht zu siegen.  
 b. Er hat zu siegen verstanden.<sup>8</sup>  
 c. \* Er hat verstanden zu siegen.

### Further Examples [12.24]

- Ich weiß deinen Einsatz zu schätzen.
- Ich weiß ihn nirgends einzuordnen.<sup>9</sup>

### 12.4.4 *vermögen+zu-Infinitiv* Negative ability

The construction *vermögen+zu-Infinitiv* is a formal-register expression meaning ‘to be capable of something (with effort)’ (cf. Engel 1996: 482). It is typically used with negation [12.25]

<sup>7</sup>DWDS: Menger, Carl: Die Irrthümer des Historismus in der deutschen Nationalökonomie. Wien, 1884.

<sup>8</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 04.10.2000.

<sup>9</sup>Attested online at <https://www.philaseiten.de/cgi-bin/index.pl?PR=51029>, accessed 26 October 2021.

(12.15 a) and it is obligatorily coherent (12.15 b). Incidental cases without negation are also attested (12.15 c).

- (12.15) a. Wie lange genau, vermag er nicht zu sagen.<sup>10</sup>  
 b. Wie lange genau, hat er nicht zu sagen vermocht.  
 c. Bisher habe die Industrie es vermocht, Rohstoffe immer noch effizienter und noch billiger zu fördern.<sup>11</sup>

#### 12.4.5 *haben+zu-Infinitiv* Obligation (*Obligativ*)

[12.26] The *haben+zu-Infinitiv* construction, extensively discussed in Holl (2010) has a clear modal meaning of obligation (12.16 a,b). There is a clear parallel to the English *to have to* construction. This construction is obligatorily coherent (12.16 b).

- (12.16) a. Die Schüler lösen die Aufgaben.  
 b. Die Schüler haben die Aufgaben zu lösen.  
 c. Es ist bekannt, dass die Schüler die Aufgaben zu lösen haben.

#### [12.27] Further Examples

- Was hat das zu bedeuten?
- Du hast ihm zu helfen!
- Er hat noch ein Jahr zu leben.
- Der Bundesgerichtshof hat jetzt diese Streitfrage zu entscheiden.
- Er hat nichts zu befürchten.
- Der Fürst hatte (über) dieses Land zu befehlen.

#### 12.4.6 *brauchen+zu-Infinitiv* Negative obligation

[12.28] The verb *brauchen* 'to need' is similar to its English counterpart in many ways. As a lexical verb it expresses a necessity for something (12.17 a). It can also be combined with a *zu-Infinitiv*, though in German this construction obligatorily needs either a modal particle *nur* or *bloß* (12.17 b) or a negative element (12.17 c). The construction *brauchen+zu-Infinitiv* is typically combined with one of the following negations: *nicht*, *nichts*, *wenig*, *kein*, *niemand*, *nie*, *kaum*, *ohne dass*. Just like with English *to need* there is a tendency for the meaning of negated *nicht brauchen* to shift from expressing a non-necessity to a non-obligation (12.17 c).

- (12.17) a. Ich brauche ein Handtuch.  
 b. Du brauchst nur zu rufen.  
 c. Niemand braucht es zu wissen.

[12.29] In colloquial usage *brauchen* can also be used without *zu* (12.18 a), being on the border to being a proper *Modalverb* (see Section 11.4.8). The *brauchen+zu-Infinitiv* construction is obligatorily coherent (12.18 b).

- (12.18) a. Er braucht seine Kleider nicht selber (zu) waschen.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass er seine Kleider nicht selber zu waschen braucht.

<sup>10</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 23.06.2015, Nr. 25.

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 26.03.2015, Nr. 13.

### 12.4.7 *gehören+zu-Infinitiv* Obligation

The construction *gehören+zu-Infinitiv* expressed an obligation (12.19). It can be attested sporadically in older German texts with a modal meaning of ‘to ought to do something’ (Lasch 2018: 177-181). This construction disappears from the DWDS corpus around 1800. The example below is from a 19th century collection of proverbs, which are typically in retaining extinct grammatical constructions. The few attested examples indicate that it was a coherent construction. [12.30]

- (12.19) Den Kauffleuthen vnd Bawren gehört zu trawen vnd glauben zu halten mit dem grossen hauffen.<sup>12</sup>

### 12.4.8 *suchen+zu-Infinitiv* Conative (*Konativ*)

The verb *suchen* ‘to search’ has a special usage with a *zu-Infinitiv* expressing the meaning ‘to attempt to do something’ (12.20 a). In this usage, the meaning of *suchen* is very close to the meaning of *versuchen* ‘to try’. It seems to be restricted to a high-education written register in German. Crucially, in this meaning the verb *suchen* is a light verb because the construction *suchen+zu-Infinitiv* is obligatorily coherent (12.20 b,c). Note that the semantically similar lexical verb *versuchen* is not obligatorily coherent. [12.31]

There is an old tradition in Latin grammar to describe one of the possible meanings of the Latin present tense as a ‘conative present’ (from Lat. *conor* ‘to try’) when\* it should be translated as an attempted action. Thus, it seems fitting to call the *suchen+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis a CONATIVE. [12.32]

- (12.20) a. Skrupulös, vorsichtig und diszipliniert sucht Lindner deren Fehler zu vermeiden.<sup>13</sup>  
 b. Mit ihrem Namen ist ein blutiges Ereignis verbunden, das sie erfolglos zu verhindern gesucht hatte.<sup>14</sup>  
 c. \* ... ein Ereignis, ... das sie erfolglos gesucht hatte zu verhindern.

### 12.4.9 *denken+zu-Infinitiv* Cogitative (*Kogitativ*)

In most contexts, the verb *denken* means ‘to think, to believe’. In this meaning, a *zu-Infinitiv* construction is not coherent (12.21 a,b). In contrast, with a *zu-Infinitiv* in a coherent construction, the verb *denken* means ‘to plan, to intend’ (12.21 c,d). This usage of *denken* is arguably somewhat special, either old-fashioned or simply slightly poetic. I propose to call this coherent monoclausal construction a *cogitative* (from Lat. *cogitare* ‘to plan, to intend’). [12.33]

- (12.21) a. Er denkt, mich überraschen zu können.  
           Es ist bekannt, dass er denkt, mich überraschen zu können.  
 b. \* Es ist bekannt, dass er mich überraschen zu können denkt.  
 c. Ich denke ihn zu überraschen.  
           Es ist bekannt, dass ich ihn zu überraschen denke.  
 d. ? Es ist bekannt, dass ich denke, ihn zu überraschen.

#### Further Examples

[12.34]

<sup>12</sup>DWDS: Wander, Karl Friedrich Wilhelm (Hrsg.): Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon. Bd. 2. Leipzig, 1870.

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.11.2017, Nr. 48

<sup>14</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.05.2003, Nr. 20

- Weil damals eine schicksalhafte Wahlschlacht anstand, die Putin für sich zu gewinnen dachte.<sup>15</sup>
- Der Prinz besah sich einige neue Juwelen, die er heimlich zu tragen dachte.<sup>16</sup>

— Evidentiality —

#### 12.4.10 *scheinen+zu-Infinitiv* Inferential evidence (*Imperfektinferenz*)

[12.35] The coherent construction *scheinen+zu-Infinitiv* (12.22) is similar to the English *seem+Infinitiv* construction. Because of this similarity, there has been a long tradition of applying a subject raising analysis to this construction in German (see Olsen 1981: 134-146 for a summary and refutation). However, the raising analysis is not used anymore, at least since Olsen (see also Pafel 1989; Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 177-191 for later analyses). Diewald & Smirnova (2010: 182) analyse *scheinen+zu-Infinitiv* as an inferential evidential in which the speaker expresses some confidence in the claimed event based on deduction from available knowledge. So, this construction is an inferential evidential. As a German name I propose IMPERFEKTINFERENZ in opposition to the *Perfektinferenz* when used with a participle (see Section 10.4.15).

- (12.22) a. Er scheint ihm ein Buch zu geben.  
 b. Ich habe gesehen, wie er ihm ein Buch zu geben scheint.  
 c. \* Ich habe gesehen, wie er scheint ihm ein Buch zu geben.

[12.36] A special characteristic of this construction is that an additional dative experiencer can sometimes be added (12.23 a). Very sparingly *erscheinen* instead of *scheinen* is used with a *zu-Infinitiv* (12.23 b). The light verb *erscheinen* is much more commonly attested with a participle (see Section 10.4.15).

- (12.23) a. Das Kind scheint mir zu schlafen.  
 b. Viele von ihnen hatten während des Vorwahlkampfes Hillary Clinton unterstützt, weil ihnen die Vorstellung eines schwarzen Präsidenten einfach zu kühn, zu vermessen erschien.<sup>17</sup>

#### 12.4.11 *drohen/versprechen+zu-Infinitiv* Direct evidence (*Wertungs-evidenz*)

[12.37] A detailed discussion of *drohen* and *versprechen* is presented by Diewald & Smirnova (2010: 191-217). Basically, when used with a *zu-Infinitiv*, both verbs can either have a speech-act usage (12.24), meaning ‘to threaten’ and ‘to promise’, respectively, or they can have a grammaticalised light-verb usage with an evidential meaning (12.25). There is a very strong tendency that the speech-act usage is syntactically non-coherent, while evidential usage is

<sup>15</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.01.2006, Nr. 02.

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Klepper, Jochen: Der Vater, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann 1962 [1937], S. 452.

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 06.11.2008, Nr. 46.

coherent (Reis 2005: 136-140).

(12.24) Speech-act usage (non-coherent)

- a. Er hatte dem Konzern gedroht, Lebensmittel zu vergiften.<sup>18</sup>
- b. Er hat versprochen, Marihuana zu legalisieren.<sup>19</sup>

(12.25) Evidential usage (coherent)

- a. Das führt zu einem Problem, das Johanna Knüppel in den Wahnsinn zu treiben droht.<sup>20</sup>
- b. Die Pfänder hinter den Papieren waren Immobilien, deren Wert ständig weiter zu steigen versprach.<sup>21</sup>

Diewald & Smirnova (2010: 191-217) analyse the coherent light-verb usage of *drohen* and *versprechen* as marking a direct evidential, i.e. the speaker of the utterance has first-hand evidence for the proposition (12.26). There are various differences between *drohen* and *versprechen*. First, *drohen* is very frequent in its evidential coherent reading (80%), while *versprechen* (10%) is not (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 214). Second, *drohen* can be used with animate/human subjects, while *versprechen* is restricted to inanimate subjects. Third, *drohen* does not have strong restrictions as to which verbs can be used as infinitive. The verbs are typically non-agentive but possibly intentional (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 197-199). In contrast, *versprechen* only allows for a restricted set of verbs that do not express agency (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 212). Finally, *drohen* implies a negative evaluation from the speaker's point of view, while *versprechen* implies a positive evaluation. Because of this evaluation I propose to use the German name WERTUNGSEVIDENZ for this construction. [12.38]

(12.26) Evidential interpretation of light-verb usage

- a. *drohen*: "The speaker has (had) perceptual access to certain pieces of information which s/he interprets as pointing towards the described event (which is evaluated negatively from the speaker's point of view)." (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 195)
- b. *versprechen*: "The speaker has perceptual access to certain pieces of information which s/he interprets as pointing towards the described event (which is evaluated positively from the speaker's point of view)." (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 209)

Attested Verbs

[12.39]

- *drohen*: there are no strict restrictions, though agentive verbs are atypical.
- *versprechen*: not with agentive verbs, most frequently used with *werden*, *enthalten*, *weichen*, *bieten*.

— Covert causation —

12.4.12 *kommen+zu-Infinitiv* Covertly caused state (*Verborgener Zustandskausativ*)

[12.40]

<sup>18</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 14.10.2015 (online).

<sup>19</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.05.2016 (online).

<sup>20</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.12.2017, Nr. 51.

<sup>21</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.08.2017 (online).

The verb *kommen* ‘to come’ can be used with a *zu-Infinitiv* of some intransitive verbs to express a state that is reached (12.27).<sup>22</sup> This construction conveys that there is some unexpressed force or agent that has caused the state to be reached, so I propose to call this construction a COVERTLY CAUSED STATE. The meaning can be described as ‘something happened, which led to the subject being in a specific state’. A parallel construction is frequently attested with nouns, like *Sie kam zu Reichtum/Ehren/Ende*.

- (12.27) a. Plötzlich ist er neben ihr zu liegen gekommen.<sup>23</sup>  
 b. Jetzt ist sie hier im Torf auch zu blühen gekommen.<sup>24</sup>

[12.41] This construction appears to be restricted to intransitive verbs. It might appear that transitive verbs also can occur in this constructions, like with *helfen* in (12.28 a). However, such examples are always examples of the literal *kommen*, i.e. the subject is intentionally moving towards some place to perform an action. Such constructions are not coherent and the *zu-Infinitiv* seems to be an abbreviated version of an adverbial *um zu-Infinitiv* subordinated clause (12.28 b).

- (12.28) a. Sie kamen ihm zu helfen.  
 b. Es ist bekannt, dass Sie gekommen sind (um) ihm zu helfen.  
 c. Wir dürfen nicht zulassen, dass die Stationierung von Truppen zum Surrogat für Politik wird und dass Truppen, die in der Absicht zu helfen gekommen sind, im Laufe der Zeit als Eindringlinge und Besatzer wahrgenommen werden.<sup>25</sup>

#### [12.42] Attested Verbs

- *liegen, wohnen, leben, glauben, blühen, sprechen, stehen*

#### [12.43] Further Examples

- Er kam auf das Thema zu sprechen.
- Sie kam neben mir zu stehen.
- Sie kam im Zug zu sitzen.
- Das kann dir teuer zu stehen kommen.
- Sie ist zu glauben gekommen.

### 12.4.13 *bekommen/kriegen+zu-Infinitiv* Covertly caused experience (*Verborgener Rezipientenkausativ*)

[12.44] Jäger (2013) presents a detailed examination of the *bekommen/kriegen+zu-Infinitiv* construction (12.29). She concludes that the subject of such sentences is typically an experiencer (Jäger 2013: 235). The centrality of the experiencer role is reminiscent of the *bekommen/kriegen/erhalten+Partizip* dative passive diathesis, in which the recipient is promoted

<sup>22</sup>see also Lesart 44 von *kommen* in the *Wörterbuch zur Verbvalenz*, available online at <https://grammis.ids-mannheim.de/verbs/view/400724/44>, accessed 3 November 2021.

<sup>23</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.08.1992, Nr. 33.

<sup>24</sup>Attested online at <https://www.orchideenkultur.net/index.php?topic=23522.0>, accessed 27 September 2021.

<sup>25</sup>Attested online at <https://docplayer.org/40817735-Clausewitz-gesellschaft-e-v-jahrbuch-eine-zusammenfassung-von-beitraegen-aus-der-arbeit-der-gesellschaft-2006.html>, accessed 3 November 2021.

to subject (see Section 10.5.21). However, both structurally and semantically these two constructions are clearly different.

- (12.29) Ich habe auch sonst mancherlei zu sehen bekommen, was anderer Augen versagt bleibt.<sup>26</sup>

Jäger performed a corpus investigation and found that 77% of all examples used a verb of sensation (Jäger 2013: 83), like *spüren* ‘to feel’ (12.30 a). The second largest group with about 16% were verbs of consumption (Jäger 2013: 161), like *essen* ‘to eat’ (12.30 b). Various agentive verbs make up a third group of about 6% (Jäger 2013: 201), like *packen* ‘to grasp’ (12.30 c). [12.45]

Similar to the previous *kommen+zu-Infinitiv* construction (see Section 12.4.12), there is always some unexpressed force or agent at work that causes the subject to experience something, even with verbs that do not describe an experience, e.g. (12.30 c). So I propose to call this construction a COVERTLY CAUSED EXPERIENCE. [12.46]

- (12.30) a. Das hat auch Wiesbaden zu spüren bekommen.<sup>27</sup>  
 b. Den Tag über bekommen sie nichts Warmes zu essen.<sup>28</sup>  
 c. Die Nacht war dunkel, und ich bekam nachher den Jammerkerl zu packen.<sup>29</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[12.47]

- sensation verbs: *sehen, hören, spüren, fühlen, verspüren, kosten, merken, wissen*
- consumption verbs: *essen, lesen, trinken, kaufen, fressen, schlucken*
- agentive verbs: *tun, packen, sprechen, greifen*

## 12.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

### – [ SBJ > Ø ] – *Unpersönlicher Modalpassiv*

#### 12.5.1 [ N | – ] *sein+zu-Infinitiv* Impersonal

The *sein+zu-Infinitiv* construction is typically used with transitive verbs as a passive with modal meaning expressing obligation (see Section 12.5.8). With intransitive verbs such a passive would lead to an impersonal construction, but this seems to be very rare (contrary to the claim in Holl 2010: 18). The example given by Holl is doubtful (12.31) and I have not been able to find any more intransitive examples. [12.48]

- (12.31) Ab 22 Uhr ist zu schlafen. (Holl 2010: 18)

#### 12.5.2 [ NP | -P ] *sein+zu-Infinitiv* Impersonal+governed preposition

It is slightly more common to find impersonal *sein+zu-Infinitiv* constructions with governed prepositions, though this usage is still very rare (12.32). Note that the original nominative subject cannot be retained in another form, and it is not replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es*. Because of the parallel to the *Modalpassiv* (see Section 12.5.8) I will call this [12.49]

<sup>26</sup>cited in Jäger (2013: 11) from DWDS: Janitschek, Maria (1902): Die neue Eva, Leipzig: Seemann, S. 36138

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 13.03.1958, Nr. 11.

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Frisch, Karl von: Erinnerungen eines Biologen, Berlin: Springer 1957, S. 7.

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Scheerbart, Paul: Immer mutig! In: Deutsche Literatur von Lessing bis Kafka, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2000 [1902], S. 144560.



diathesis UNPERSÖNLICHER MODALPASSIV, although the name ‘passive’ is actually not fitting in this case. Just as with the *Modalpassiv*, this construction can have either a deontic *müssen* interpretation (12.32 a) or an agentive *können* meaning (12.32 b), the latter typically with negation.

- (12.32) a. Auf Ernst war wie immer lange zu warten. (Holl 2010: 18)  
 b. Mit ihm ist nicht zu spaßen.

[12.50] **Attested verbs**

- *antworten auf, arbeiten an, lachen über, spaßen mit, warten auf*

[12.51] **Further Examples**

- Daran ist zu arbeiten.<sup>30</sup>
- Und noch über einen Engel ist zu lachen, wenn man der Erzengel ist.<sup>31</sup>

### 12.5.3 [ ND | -D ] *sein+zu-Infinitiv* Impersonal+dative

[12.52] Similar to the previous section, impersonal *sein+zu-Infinitiv* is possible with some verbs taking a dative object, though this usage is exceedingly rare (12.33). Note that the original nominative subject cannot be retained and, while removed, it is not replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es*. Because of the parallel to the *Modalpassiv* (see Section 12.5.8) I will call this diathesis UNPERSÖNLICHER MODALPASSIV, although the name ‘passive’ is actually not fitting in this case. Just as with the *Modalpassiv*, this construction can have either a deontic *müssen* interpretation (12.33 a) or an agentive *können* meaning (12.33 b), the latter typically with negation.

- (12.33) a. Und den Orchestermusikern ist zu gratulieren.<sup>32</sup>  
 b. Auch ihm war nicht zu trauen.<sup>33</sup>

[12.53] **Attested Verbs**

- *beitreten, gedenken, gratulieren, helfen, trauen*

[12.54] **Further Examples**

- Wer wirklich reif sein will für die Reifeprüfung, dem ist zu helfen.<sup>34</sup>
- Den tragenden Gründen dieser Stellungnahme ist beizutreten.<sup>35</sup>
- Auch mehrerer Einzelarbeiten zur Geschichte der Ostsiedlung ist zu gedenken.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>30</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 28.10.1999, Nr. 44.

<sup>31</sup>DWDS: Vischer, Friedrich Theodor von: Ästhetik oder Wissenschaft des Schönen. Bd. 1. Reutlingen u. a., 1846.

<sup>32</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 21.12.1990, Nr. 52.

<sup>33</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.09.2005, Nr. 38.

<sup>34</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 02.10.2000.

<sup>35</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 17.02.1984, Nr. 08.

<sup>36</sup>DWDS: Jahresberichte für deutsche Geschichte, 1939, S. 354.

— [ SBJ > ADJ ] —

#### 12.5.4 [ NA | pA ] *geben+zu-Infinitiv* Subject demotion (*Möglichkeitsdemotiv*)

Transitive verbs can be used in a *geben+zu-Infinitiv* construction, demoting the nominative subject (cf. Engel 1996: 488). The removed nominative subject is replaced by a valency-simulating pronoun *es*, so the finite verb is always in the third person singular, resulting in fixed expressions *es gibt* or *es hat gegeben*. The original nominative subject can be retained by a *für* prepositional phrase (12.34b). This construction is obligatorily coherent (12.34c). [12.55]

Semantically, this construction expresses an option that is available to the original subject. Structurally, the subject is demoted (or even unexpressed). Because of these two characteristics I propose the somewhat cumbersome German designation MÖGLICHKEITS-DEMOTIV. Note that the same *geben+zu-Infinitiv* construction is also used for a semantically and structurally quite different causative construction, namely the *Auftragskausativ* (see Section 12.6.1). [12.56]

- (12.34) a. Seine Fans kaufen ein Gesamtpaket.  
 b. Stattdessen gibt es für seine Fans ein Gesamtpaket zu kaufen.<sup>37</sup>  
 c. Stattdessen hat es für seine Fans ein Gesamtpaket zu kaufen gegeben.

This construction is commonly used with an quantified adverb like *viel/genug/reichlich/nichts* (12.35b) instead of an nominal accusative object (12.35c). Also, *geben+zu-Infinitiv* is typically used without the retained subject in a *für* phrase (12.36a). Without a retained subject, the expression of a full nominal accusative is more widespread (12.36b).

- (12.35) a. Die Reisenden entdecken das Land.  
 b. Es gibt für Reisende noch viel zu entdecken.  
 c. \* Es gibt für Reisende das Land zu entdecken.
- (12.36) a. Es gibt reichlich zu trinken.  
 Gestern hat es reichlich zu trinken gegeben.  
 b. Ich gewinnen einen Preis.  
 Es gibt einen Preis zu gewinnen.

#### Further Examples [12.58]

- Noch einen anderen Grund gibt es für Nadella die freien Hersteller zu umgarnen.<sup>38</sup>
- Es gibt jetzt wichtigeres zu tun.
- Es gibt nichts zu klagen/essen/sehen/lachen/beachten/bereden/hören.
- Es gibt noch viele Geschenke einzupacken.
- Es gibt noch viele Probleme zu lösen.

#### 12.5.5 [ NA | pA ] *gelten+zu-Infinitiv* Subject demotion (*Notwendigkeitdemotiv*)

The verb *gelten* can be with a *zu-Infinitiv* by demoting the original subject to an (optional) *für* prepositional phrase (12.37a). As there is no replacement for the subject of the sentence, [12.59]

<sup>37</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 11.12.2013 (online).

<sup>38</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 03.04.2014, Nr. 15

a valency-simulating pronoun *es* is introduced. This results in a fixed expression *es gilt* (cf. Engel 1996: 488-489). This construction expresses a necessity, close to a modal ‘must’, and is mainly used in a formal written register.

[12.60] The *gelten+zu-Infinitiv* construction is typically coherent, viz. the finite verb *gilt* appears at the end of a subordinate clause (12.37 a). However, it is possible to find non-coherent examples (12.37 b), indicating that this construction is not completely grammaticalised into a monoclausal construction. The coherent usage appears to be the more widespread, though.

- (12.37) a. Lanz verteidigt den Sieg.  
           Jetzt gilt es für Lanz den Sieg zu verteidigen.<sup>39</sup>  
       b. Das alles ist die Aufgabe, die es zu lösen gilt.<sup>40</sup>  
       c. Das ist eine Tradition, die es gilt zu erinnern und zu erhalten.<sup>41</sup>

[12.61] **Further Examples**

- Da war also der Punkt an dem es einzusetzen galt. (Bech 1955: 220-222)
- Das ist der Jackpot, den es für uns zu knacken gilt.<sup>42</sup>
- MINT-Berufe sind noch echte Männerdomänen, die es für Frauen zu erobern gilt.<sup>43</sup>
- Es gilt jetzt den Tisch zu putzen.
- Es galt vielleicht einen Selbstmord zu verhüten.
- Es galt keine Zeit zu verlieren.

— [ OBJ > SBJ > Ø ] —

**12.5.6 [ NA | -N ] *stehen+zu-Infinitiv* Anticausative (*Erwartungsantikausativ*)**

[12.62] The construction *stehen+zu-Infinitiv* is used as an anticausative, expressing the expectation that the original accusative will come to pass. Examples with an explicit accusative noun phrase as in (12.38 a) are actually rare. Typically, this diathesis is found with cognitive predicates expressing an expectation (Engel 1996: 481; Holl 2010: 10, fn. 4), like *befürchten* ‘to fear’, with a *dass* complement clause (12.38 b). Functionally, this complement clause has the same status as an accusative object, which becomes the subject after the application of the *stehen+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis.

[12.63] Complement clauses typically move towards the end of the sentence in German, and then the first position of the sentence has to be filled. A position-simulating pronoun *es* is frequently used, resulting in a widespread collocation *es steht zu-Infinitiv* (12.38 b). However, this pronoun *es* is removed when the first position of the sentence is filled otherwise, so this *es* has a completely different status compared to the obligatory valency-simulating *es* of *es*

<sup>39</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 02.11.2012 (online).

<sup>40</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.07.2017, Nr. 28.

<sup>41</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 09.11.1996.

<sup>42</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 16.11.2010 (online).

<sup>43</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 13.06.2008, Nr. 25.

*gibt zu-Infinitiv* (Section 12.5.4) and *es gilt zu-Infinitiv* (Section 12.5.5).

- (12.38) a. Ich befürchte einen weiteren Beschäftigungsabbau.  
Ein weiterer Beschäftigungsabbau steht zu befürchten.<sup>44</sup>
- b. Jemand befürchtet, dass ihr Nachfolger das anders handhaben wird.  
Es steht zu befürchten, dass ihr Nachfolger das anders handhaben wird.<sup>45</sup>
- c. So steht zu befürchten, dass sich die innenpolitischen Gräben noch vertiefen.<sup>46</sup>

Except for the verbs of expectation, there are two incidental, but quite frequent, verbs that can be used in this construction, namely *lesen* ‘to read’ (12.39 a) and *verkaufen* ‘to sell’ (12.39 b). Semantically, these do not seem to express any notion of expectation. Crucially, the *stehen+zu-Infinitiv* construction is coherent with these two verbs (12.39 c,d). [12.64]

- (12.39) a. Es stand zu lesen, dass die Mannschaft gegen den Trainer spielen würde.<sup>47</sup>
- b. Luxuriöse Villa auf der Insel Brač steht zu verkaufen.<sup>48</sup>
- c. Es ist bekannt, dass es hier zu lesen steht.
- d. Es ist bekannt, dass das Haus zu verkaufen steht.

#### Attested Verbs

[12.65]

- Verbs of positive expectation: *bedenken, befürchten, erwarten, fürchten, hoffen, vermuten*
- Verbs of negative expectation: *bezweifeln*
- Others: *lesen, verkaufen*

### 12.5.7 [ NA | –N ] *gehen+zu-Infinitiv* Negative anticausative (*Unmöglichkeit+antikausativ*)

The *gehen+zu-Infinitiv* anticausative (12.40 a) seems to be typical for an informal register. Most examples include a negation and only very few examples without negation are attested (12.40 b,c). The construction expresses that something is impossible (or, without negation, possible). [12.66]

- (12.40) a. Ich lösche die Datei.  
Die Datei geht nicht zu löschen.
- b. Die temporäre Datei geht zu löschen, aber nicht die exe.<sup>49</sup>
- c. Das Radio geht zu reparieren. (Helbig & Buscha 2001: 166)

[12.67]

<sup>44</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 15.01.1999.

<sup>45</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.05.2016 (online).

<sup>46</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.05.2015, Nr. 19.

<sup>47</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 03.09.2012 (online).

<sup>48</sup>Attested online at <https://www.croatia-property.net/de/property/luxuriöse-villa-auf-der-insel-brac-zu-verkaufen-1991/>, accessed 8 November 2021.

<sup>49</sup>Attested online at <https://administrator.de/forum/windows-7-probleme-nach-laufwerksbuchstaben-zuweisung-von-wechseldatenträgern-112602.html>, accessed 8 November 2021.

There is a special idiomatic construction *VERB, was zu VERB geht* (12.41) that includes the *gehen+zu-Infinitiv* construction. There does not seem to be any obvious semantic relation to the monoclausal construction as illustrated above.

- (12.41) a. Die Sozialdemokraten haben [...] verhindert, was nur zu verhindern ging.<sup>50</sup>  
 b. Die [...] Hochschulen haben versucht zu retten, was zu retten ging.<sup>51</sup>  
 c. Was zu privatisieren ging, ist privatisiert.<sup>52</sup>

[12.68] **Attested Verbs**

- *ändern, bauen, beheben, kitten, löschen, reparieren, rezipieren, schneiden, stopfen, verschließen*

[12.69] **Further Examples**

- Dieses Glas geht nicht zu schneiden weil es Sicherheitsglas ist.<sup>53</sup>
- Leichtes Balsa geht zu schneiden, vor allem wenn es dunkles Balsa ist.<sup>54</sup>
- In den übrigen Abspielminuten fragt man sich: wie diese Musik eigentlich zu rezipieren geht.<sup>55</sup>
- Ein Maul mehr ging nicht zu stopfen.<sup>56</sup>
- So sehr, dass eigentlich nichts mehr zu kitten geht.<sup>57</sup>
- ... der Bescheid, daß die Rampe auf keinen Fall zu bauen geht.<sup>58</sup>
- ... einen Flurschaden, der möglicherweise gar nicht mehr zu beheben ging.<sup>59</sup>
- Unser Quartier lag in einem Kellergeschoß, und mein Zimmer ging nicht zu verschließen.<sup>60</sup>
- Was einmal geschehen, das geht nicht zu ändern.<sup>61</sup>

— [ OBJ > SBJ > ADJ ] —

### 12.5.8 [ NA | pN ] *sein+zu-Infinitiv* Passive (*Modalpassiv*)

[12.70] When used with transitive verbs, the *sein+zu-Infinitiv* construction is a passive diathesis with a modal meaning. A passive is defined here as a promotion of the accusative object to nominative subject and the demotion (and typically complete deletion) of the original subject. Authors that argue against a passive status for this construction simply use other criteria for what counts as ‘passive’ (see Holl 2010: 19).

[12.71] Depending on the context, various modal interpretations are possible for the *sein+zu-Infinitiv* construction, as illustrated in (12.42). These examples show a *müssen*

<sup>50</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 23.09.2000.

<sup>51</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 17.05.2000.

<sup>52</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 14.07.2003.

<sup>53</sup>Attested online at <https://www.gutefrage.net/frage/schneiden-einer-feuerfesten-scheibe>, accessed 8 November 2021.

<sup>54</sup>Attested online at <https://www.rc-network.de/threads/portalfräse-mit-laser-nachrüsten.370360/page-4>, accessed 8 November 2021.

<sup>55</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 05.09.2009, Nr. 20.

<sup>56</sup>DWDS: Am Ende der Welt X. Herzschnalzen Blog, 2010-06-01.

<sup>57</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 21.07.2001.

<sup>58</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 22.07.1977, Nr. 30.

<sup>59</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 03.11.1972, Nr. 44.

<sup>60</sup>DWDS: Liliencron, Adda Freifrau von: Krieg und Frieden, Erinnerungen aus dem Leben einer Offiziersfrau. In: Simons, Oliver (Hg.) Deutsche Autobiographien 1690-1930, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2004 [1912], S. 45055.

<sup>61</sup>DWDS: Wander, Karl Friedrich Wilhelm (Hrsg.): Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon. Bd. 1. Leipzig, 1867.

interpretation in (12.42 a), a *dürfen* interpretation in (12.42 b), a *können* interpretation in (12.42 c) and a *nicht brauchen* interpretation in (12.42 d). The *müssen* and *können* interpretations appear to be the most frequent.

- (12.42) a. Ich führe einen Hund an der Leine.  
Hunde sind (von ihren Besitzern) an der Leine zu führen.  
b. Ich öffne das Fenster.  
Das Fenster ist (nur von bestimmte Personen) zu öffnen.  
c. Du löst die Aufgabe.  
Die Aufgabe ist (für dich) leicht zu lösen.  
d. Ich erwarte Hagel.  
Hagel ist nicht zu erwarten.

There are various syntactic differences between the major *müssen* and *können* interpretations (Holl 2010: 18-21). First, with the *müssen* interpretation (12.42 a) it is possible to retain the original agent with a *von* prepositional phrase, but this is very uncommon. In contrast, the *für* agent retention (12.42 c) is only possible with the *können* interpretation. Second, a *können* interpretation can be forced by adding adverbials (including negation) like *einfach* ‘easily’ (12.43 a) or *schön* ‘beautifully’ (12.43 b). [12.72]

- (12.43) a. Das Pult ist zu bedienen. Das Pult ist einfach zu bedienen.  
b. Der Weg ist zu gehen.  
Der Weg ist schön zu gehen.

Verbs without an accusative argument can be used in the *sein+zu-Infinitiv* construction to form an impersonal passive, though this is rare (see Section 12.5.1 and subsequent sections). In contrast, most verbs with an accusative argument allow for this diathesis, but not all of them do. Holl (Holl 2010: 19) argues that there is a difference between the verbs that allow for a *sein+zu-Infinitiv* passive and those verbs that allow for a *werden+Partizip* passive (cf Section 10.5.16), as exemplified with *bekommen* ‘to get’ (12.44). There are indeed a few more verbs that can be used with *sein+zu-Infinitiv* but not with *werden+Partizip* (e.g. *entwickeln*, *erhalten*, *kriegen*, *messen*, *rechnen*), but overall there actually appears to be quite good match between the applicability of both passives. [12.73]

- (12.44) a. \* Die Bücher werden am Schalter im Lesesaal bekommen.  
b. Die Bücher sind am Schalter im Lesesaal zu bekommen.

### Unattested Verbs

The following verbs with accusative arguments do not allow for a *sein+zu-Infinitiv* passive. There is strong overlap with the verbs that do not allow for a *werden+Partizip* passive (cf Section 10.5.16). [12.74] [12.75]

- Verbs with obligatory quantified objects (Section 5.3.9): *dauern*, *enthalten*, *kosten*, *sparen*, *umfassen*, *wachsen*, *wiegen*, *zunehmen*
- Verbs with reflexive conversive (Section 7.5.7): *bekümmern*, *empören*, *ergeben*, *erstaunen*, *interessieren*, *freuen*, *kümmern*, *wundern*
- Verbs of possession: *besitzen*
- Other verbs without passive: *kennen*, *schmerzen* (*traurig machen*, *mit Akkusativ*)

### Further Examples

[12.76]

- Ein Loblied ist zu singen auf dieses Buch.<sup>62</sup>
- Mein Rücktritt war nur politisch zu begründen.
- Die Aufgabe ist unmöglich zu lösen.
- Kriterien sind zu entwickeln.<sup>63</sup>
- Das ist leicht zu rechnen.<sup>64</sup>
- Denn Leistung ist schwer zu messen.<sup>65</sup>

[12.77] **Notes**

[12.78] The verb *kennen* ‘to be acquainted with’ used to be possible in this construction. The most recent example that I have been able to find is from Hugu von Hofmannsthal (12.45).

(12.45) Sie ist schwer zu kennen.<sup>66</sup>

## 12.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

– [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] –

### 12.6.1 [ –NA | NDA ] *geben+zu-Infinitiv* Causative (*Auftragskausativ*)

[12.79] The *geben+zu-Infinitiv* construction has two rather different uses. It can be used with subject demotion and a modal meaning (see Section 12.5.4) or with subject promotion and a causative meaning (this section). As a causative it is widely used with a small set of verbs of cognition that take an embedded clause, like *bedenken* ‘to consider’ (12.46 a). Embedded in the *geben+zu-Infinitiv* construction, this results in a causative ‘to cause to consider’ (12.46 b). Such constructions are coherent (12.46 c,d).

- (12.46) a. Ich bedenke, dass es schon spät ist.  
 b. Er gibt mir zu bedenken, dass es schon spät ist.  
 c. Er hat mir zu bedenken gegeben, dass es schon spät ist.  
 d. \* Er hat mir gegeben zu bedenken, dass es schon spät ist.

[12.80] This causative construction is also widely attested with other verbs, e.g. *trinken* ‘to drink’ (12.47). With those verbs, the meaning of the *geben+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis is very close to lexical *geben* ‘to give’. For example *geben zu trinken* often simply means ‘hand over some drink to be consumed’ (12.47 a). However, it can also mean ‘cause food to be consumed’, typically in the context of little children (12.47 b). Whatever the exact meaning, this construction is always coherent, as can be seen from the position of the verb *geben* in the examples below.

- (12.47) a. Soldaten hätten ihnen zu essen und zu trinken gegeben.<sup>67</sup>  
 b. Als Großmütter ihren Enkeln mit der Flasche ungesüßte Schokolade zu trinken gaben.<sup>68</sup>

[12.81] **Attested Verbs**

<sup>62</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 09.06.2005, Nr. 24

<sup>63</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.09.2008, Nr. 39.

<sup>64</sup>Attested online at <https://wohnwagen-forum.de/wwf/forum/index.php?thread/67750-stromzähler/&pageNo=2>, accessed 9 November 2021.

<sup>65</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 21.09.2017 (online).

<sup>66</sup>DWDS: Hofmannsthal, Hugo von: Der Schwierige. In: Deutsche Literatur von Lessing bis Kafka, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2000 [1917], S. 92458.

<sup>67</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.05.2015 (online).

<sup>68</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.03.2013, Nr. 11.

- Verbs of cognition: *bedenken, denken, erkennen, erwägen, verstehen*
- Verbs of consumption: *beißen, essen, fressen, trinken, saufen, schlucken*
- Other agentive verbs: *leben, lesen, lernen, lösen, tragen, schaffen (arbeiten), tun*

### Further Examples

[12.82]

- Er gibt dem Kind Milch zu trinken.
- Er gibt mir viel zu tragen.
- Er gab mir ein Problem zu lösen.
- Ich gebe ihm eine Tasche zu tragen.
- Diese Tagebücher gab sie mir zu lesen.<sup>69</sup>
- »Das Blut dieser Frau komme über Sie und Ihre Kinder«, gab der Baron ihm noch zu schlucken.<sup>70</sup>
- Die Liftjungen geben mir aber heute zu schaffen!<sup>71</sup>

### Notes

[12.83]

The verb *leben* 'to live' is used in this construction with a slightly different meaning. As illustrated in (12.48 a) it does not mean 'to cause to live' but 'to predict to remain alive'. [12.84]

The *geben+zu-Infinitiv* construction with the verb *denken* 'to think' is typically stacked inside a modal *sollen/müssen+Infinitiv* (12.48 b) or a perfect *haben+Partizip* (12.48 c). [12.85]

- (12.48) a. Der Arzt gab mir noch drei Wochen zu leben.  
 b. Sollte das nicht den Pazifisten zu denken geben?  
 c. Hoffentlich hat die Sendung auch Lehrern zu denken gegeben

## 12.7 Diatheses with object demotion

Not attested

[12.86]

## 12.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

Not attested

[12.87]

## 12.9 Symmetrical diatheses

— [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 12.9.1 [ NA | DN ] *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* Inversive (*Restinversiv*)

The *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis shows many intricate details that are in need of a much deeper investigation than I can offer here. I have only been able to find a few short discussions of this construction in the literature, none of which go into much detail (Höhle 1978: 48-50; Engel 1996: 478-479; Colomo 2010: 196-197). [12.88]

[12.89]

<sup>69</sup>DWDS: Müller-Jahnke, Clara: Ich bekenne. In: Deutsche Literatur von Frauen, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2001 [1904], S. 52490.

<sup>70</sup>DWDS A. Zweig, Junge Frau, S. 203

<sup>71</sup>DWDS: Kafka, Franz: Amerika. In: Deutsche Literatur von Lessing bis Kafka, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2000 [1914], S. 105459.



Basically, this diathesis is an passive-like construction, with the accusative being promoted to nominative subject. However, different from a passive, the original subject can be retained as a dative (12.49 a). For that reason this diathesis is classified as an INVERSIVE. Because the demotion (N to D) is 'larger' than the promotion (A to N), this diathesis can be considered a 'demoted' inersive. Just like all diatheses, this construction is coherent (12.49 b).

[12.90] Semantically, this diathesis expresses that (some part of) the patient is still left over to be applied to the verb, so there is a rest still to be considered. For this reason I propose to use the German name *RESTINVERSIV* for this diathesis.

- (12.49) a. Der Inspektor klärt den Fall.  
           Dem Inspektor bleibt nur noch der letzte Fall zu klären.  
       b. Ich habe gehört, dass dem Inspektor nur noch der letzte Fall zu klären bleibt.

[12.91] The retention of the subject as a dative is rare in real usage (12.50 a-c). However, a frequent phenomenon with the *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* diathesis is that a quantified adverb is used instead of a nominal object, for example *viel*, *genügend*, *wenig*, *nichts anderes* (12.51). In such examples, the retention of the subject as a dative is widespread (12.51 b). All such constructions are clearly coherent (12.51 c).

- (12.50) a. Jetzt bleibt nur noch, diesen Entwurf zu diskutieren.  
           ... weil jetzt nur noch dieser Entwurf zu diskutieren bleibt. (Höhle 1978: 49)  
       b. Der Wahlleiter klärt den Wahltermin.  
           Vorher jedoch bleibt der Wahltermin zu klären.<sup>72</sup>  
       c. Ich berücksichtige den Glücksanspruch der Mutter.  
           Aber ebenso bleibt der Glücksanspruch der Mutter auch zu berücksichtigen.<sup>73</sup>

- (12.51) a. Ich entdecke hier viel.  
       b. Hier bleibt mir noch viel zu entdecken.<sup>74</sup>  
       c. Es ist bekannt, dass mir hier noch viel zu entdecken bleibt.

[12.92] The *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* is commonly used with verbs that take a complement clause, like *abwarten* 'to wait and see' (12.52 a). This construction is also coherent, because the order in the subordinate clause is *abzuwarten bleibt* and not *bleibt abzuwarten* (12.52 b). The original *ob* complement clause, now twice embedded, remains extraposed at the end of the sentence. Retention of the original subject as dative seems impossible with such complement-taking verbs.

- (12.52) a. Ich warte ab, ob Paul wirklich kommt.  
           Es bleibt abzuwarten, ob Paul wirklich kommt. (Holl 2010: 10)  
       b. Wir müssen Geduld haben, weil abzuwarten bleibt, ob Paul wirklich kommt.

#### [12.93] Attested Verbs

- Verbs with complement clauses: *abwarten*, *beachten*, *berichten*, *diskutieren*, *entscheiden*, *erledigen*, *erwägen*, *hoffen*, *prüfen*, *sehen*, *untersuchen*, *wünschen*
- Agentive verbs: *anmelden*, *berücksichtigen*, *einräumen*, *entdecken*, *klären*, *tun*

<sup>72</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 30.10.1987, Nr. 45.

<sup>73</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 02.10.1970, Nr. 40.

<sup>74</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 09.03.2003.

## Further Examples

[12.94]

- Jetzt bleibt nur noch dieser eine Schrank einzuräumen. (Colomo 2010: 196)
- Zu diskutieren bleibt der mögliche Molekularmechanismus der Konversion.<sup>75</sup>
- Der Zentrale bleibt noch genügend zu entscheiden, wenn man den Landtagen wieder mehr zu tun gibt.<sup>76</sup>
- Viel bleibt nicht mehr zu berichten.<sup>77</sup>
- Ansonsten bleibt den Soldaten wenig zu tun.<sup>78</sup>
- Auf Erden bleibt der Kirche deshalb nichts anderes zu tun, als die Leidenden zu trösten auf den Jüngsten Tag.<sup>79</sup>
- Mir bleibt nur noch, Privatinsolvenz anzumelden.<sup>80</sup>

## Notes

[12.95]

The situation with verbs that take a dative argument, like *danken* ‘to thank’ or *antworten* ‘to answer’ needs more investigation. the *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* construction seems to result in sentences with a double dative (12.53 b). However, this construction does not appear to be coherent (12.53 c,d).

[12.96]

- (12.53) a. Ich danke dem Veranstalter für diese Ausstellung.  
 b. Mir bleibt, dem Veranstalter zu danken für diese Ausstellung.<sup>81</sup>  
 c. Ich bin fast fertig, weil mir nur noch bleibt, dem Veranstalter zu danken.  
 d. ? Ich bin fast fertig, weil mir nur noch dem Veranstalter du danken bleibt.

There is yet another construction with *bleiben* and a *zu-Infinitiv*, shown in (12.54), that needs more investigation. Basically, the *zu-Infinitiv* clauses seem to be subordinate to the nouns *Ratschlag* ‘advice’ (12.54 a) and *Anspruch* ‘aspiration’ (12.54 b). However, a better analysis is probably to consider these nouns as ‘hidden’ predicates, approximately *Ratschlag geben* ‘to give advice’ (12.54 c) and *Anspruch haben* ‘to have an aspiration’ (12.54 d). Then the *bleiben+zu-Infinitiv* construction is a regular anticausative here. However, note that this construction does not appear to be coherent.

[12.97]

- (12.54) a. Es bleibt der Ratschlag, Objekte gut zu prüfen.<sup>82</sup>  
 b. Es bleibt der Anspruch, die Region zu befrieden.<sup>83</sup>  
 c. Jemand gab den Ratschlag, die Objekte gut zu prüfen.  
 d. Jemand hat den Anspruch, die Region zu befrieden.

<sup>75</sup>DWDS: Bresch, Carsten: *Klassische und molekulare Genetik*, Berlin u. a.: Springer 1965 [1964], S. 174.

<sup>76</sup>DWDS: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 16.10.2003.

<sup>77</sup>DWDS: *Berliner Zeitung*, 24.02.1996.

<sup>78</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 01.01.1993, Nr. 01.

<sup>79</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 16.09.2010, Nr. 38.

<sup>80</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 22.09.2005, Nr. 39.

<sup>81</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 02.05.1969, Nr. 18.

<sup>82</sup>DWDS: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 24.12.2004.

<sup>83</sup>DWDS: *Die Zeit*, 15.10.1998, Nr. 43.

## Chapter 13

# Light-verb alternations with *Präpositionsinfinitiv*

### 13.1 Introduction

[13.1] This final chapter investigates a class of constructions that consist of light verbs with a preposition, an article and an infinitive, like the *sein+am-Infinitiv* progressive (13.1 a), see Section 13.4.1, or the *haben+am-Infinitiv* inversive (13.1 b), see Section 13.9.1.

- (13.1) a. Ich bin am Arbeiten.  
b. Der Jongleur hat unzählige Teller am Drehen.

[13.2] Such constructions appear to be relatively new to the German language. The *sein+am-Infinitiv* progressive has seen most historical research, and in this research a few tentative examples have been observed as early as 16th century (Gárgyán 2010: 124-132). However, this construction only becomes regularly attested in the 19th century. The other constructions discussed in this chapter have not yet been properly diachronically investigated, but my impression is that these are all relatively recent developments. Accordingly, these constructions are often considered colloquial and are regularly avoided in formal written language.

[13.3] In German orthography, when an infinitive is used as a noun (as most clearly indicated by a preceding article) than it should be written with a capital letter. Consequently, I have written all infinitives with capitals in this chapter. However, there is quite a bit of uncertainty in the daily orthographic practice. For example, both capitalised and non-capitalised forms of the *am* progressive are frequently attested in contemporary German (Gárgyán 2010: 67-68, 73-74).

[13.4] In this chapter, I will argue that German has various grammaticalised monoclausal constructions alike to the *sein+am-Infinitiv*. The grammaticalised combination of a preposition, an article and an infinitive will be called a *Präpositionsinfinitiv* and is analysed as a non-finite verbform alongside *Partizip*, *Infinitiv* and *zu-Infinitiv*.

[13.5] The morphosyntactic characteristics of the *Präpositionsinfinitiv* are discussed in detail in Section 13.2.1. In identifying a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*, care has to be taken to distinguish it from other highly similar constructions. First, a *Präpositionsinfinitiv* is a monoclausal construction, distinct from other highly similar biclausal subordinate structures, like with *träumen von* ‘to dream of’ in (13.2 a), see Section 13.2.2. Second, the *Präpositionsinfinitiv* is dif-

ferent from adverbial phrases with infinitives, like goal-oriented *zum Schwimmen* ‘with the intent to swim’ in (13.2b), see Section 13.2.3.

- (13.2) a. Sie träumt vom Schwimmen.  
b. Er läuft zum Schwimmen durch die halbe Stadt.

The result of this meticulous demarcation is that only few clearly grammaticalised constructions with a *Präpositionsinfinitiv* can be identified. The handful of epitheses and the three diatheses that are presented in this chapter are all constructed with just a few light verbs, namely *haben*, *sein*, *bleiben*, *gehen*, *fahren*, *kommen* and *halten*. I propose the following German names for the three diatheses: <sup>[13.6]</sup>

- [PBJ > SBJ > Ø] *sein zum* AUSLÖSERSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (see Section 13.5.1)
- [OBJ > SBJ > OBJ] *haben am* PERTINENZINVERSIV (see Section 13.9.1)
- [Ø > SBJ > OBJ] *halten am* KONTINUITÄTSKAUSATIV (see Section 13.6.1)

## 13.2 Defining the *Präpositionsinfinitiv*

### 13.2.1 Grammatical structure

The *Präpositionsinfinitiv* is a grammatical construction that will here be distinguished from the superficially identical ‘regular’ combination of a preposition with an infinitive. This distinction is rather subtle and there is quite some individual variation, indicating that the *Präpositionsinfinitiv* is still in its early stages of grammaticalisation. I will first discuss the general characteristics of preposition-infinitive combinations, to then argue that the *Präpositionsinfinitiv* is different.<sup>1</sup> <sup>[13.7]</sup>

To start off, note that the infinitive is basically a noun derived from a verb (see Section 11.2.2). As a noun, it can be preceded by an article, forming a noun phrase, like *das Schreiben* ‘the writing’ (13.3a). And as a noun phrase, it can be preceded by a preposition to form a prepositional phrase *durch das Schreiben* ‘by writing’ (13.3b). The infinitive can also have additional attributive modifiers, e.g. adjectives like *schnelle* ‘fast’ (13.3c), prepositional phrases like *im Dunkeln* ‘in the dark’ (13.3d) or genitives like *eines Tagebuchs* ‘of a diary’ (13.3e). Syntactically, the position of the preposition-infinitive phrase in the sentence is flexible. Specifically, it does not have to occur at the end of a subordinate clause (13.3f). Finally, under some morphophonological circumstances the preposition and article fuse together, leading to words like *beim*, from *bei+dem* (13.3g). All these possibilities show that <sup>[13.8]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tangentially related to the present subject, the Duden grammar includes an extensive discussion about *präpositional angeschlossene Funktionsverben* (Duden-Grammatik 2009: 416-425). These are light-verb constructions with strictly derivational nominalisations, typically those ending in *-ung*. I have decided not to include these here, although there are clear parallels to the kind of constructions discussed in this book.

the infinitive operates exactly like a regular noun inside a prepositional phrase.

- (13.3) a. [Das Schreiben]<sub>NP</sub> fällt ihm schwer.  
 b. [Durch das Schreiben]<sub>PP</sub> ist er berühmt geworden.  
 c. [Durch das schnelle Schreiben]<sub>PP</sub> ist er müde geworden.  
 d. [Durch das Schreiben im Dunkeln]<sub>PP</sub> ist er blind geworden.  
 e. [Durch das Schreiben eines Tagebuchs]<sub>PP</sub> hat er viel gelernt.  
 f. Es ist bekannt, dass er sich [durch das Schreiben]<sub>PP</sub> von seinen Dämonen befreit hat.  
 g. [Beim Schreiben]<sub>PP</sub> ist er eingeschlafen.

[13.9] Different from (13.3), some preposition+article+infinitive combinations have special characteristics indicating that they are in the process of being grammaticalised into bound morphology, namely (i) they are fused, (ii) unstressed, (iii) inseparable and (iv) cannot be modified. I will call such a fixed combination a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*. Such fixed combinations behave syntactically as a non-finite verbform, alongside the *Partizip*, *Infinitiv* and *zu-Infinitiv*. For example, they regularly occur in the so-called right sentence bracket, in which all German non-finite verbs are placed.

[13.10] By definition, a combination of preposition+article+infinitive is a grammaticalised *Präpositionsinfinitiv* when the following characteristics hold. These characteristics will be illustrated in more detail below.

- (i) The preposition and the article are obligatorily fused.
- (ii) The fused preposition/article is always unstressed (e.g. contrastive focus is not possible).
- (iii) The fused preposition/article is inseparable into its component pieces.
- (iv) The infinitive does not allow for any attributive modifiers, neither pre-nominal adjectives nor post-nominal genitives or prepositional phrases.
- (v) In subordinate position, the preposition+article+infinitive combination is placed inseparably immediately in front of sentence-final finite.

[13.11] To illustrate these characteristics, I will contrast a locational *am* with a proper noun *Tisch* 'table' (13.4a) with a grammaticalised *am* in the *sein+am-Infinitiv* progressive construction (13.4b). Superficially, these two sentences look structurally similar. For example, both have a fused preposition+article *am*, from *an+dem*.

- (13.4) a. Ich sitze am Tisch.  
 b. Ich bin am Arbeiten.

[13.12] However, there are many structural differences. First, the locational *am* can take contrastive stress (13.6a), while the progressive *am* cannot (13.6b). This difference arguably stems from the fact that the progressive *am* does not have any alternative. However, note that a linguistically aware speaker could actually use the example in (13.5b) because there seems to be a slight difference between the *am* progressive (see Section 13.4.1) and the *beim* frequentative (see Section 13.4.4).

- (13.5) a. Ich sitze áam Tisch, nicht áuf dem Tisch.  
 b. ? Ich bin áam Arbeiten, nicht béim Arbeiten.

[13.13]

Next, in the locational usage the fused preposition+article can be separated into two words (13.6 a). This is not possible in the grammaticalised progressive construction (13.6 b), cf. Gárgyán (2010: 71).

- (13.6) a. Ich sitze an dem Tisch.  
b. \*Ich bin an dem Arbeiten.

Additionally, attributive adjectives are possible in the locational usage (13.8 a), but not in the progressive construction (13.8 b), cf. Gárgyán (2010: 69). Other modifiers, like genitives, relative clauses or prepositional clauses, are likewise not possible in the grammaticalised progressive construction. [13.14]

- (13.7) a. Ich sitze am schönen Tisch.  
b. \*Ich bin am harten Arbeiten.

Finally, the syntactic flexibility of a locational phrase like *am Tisch* is much greater than the progressive *am Arbeiten*. This is most clearly illustrated by adding an adverb like *gerne* ‘gladly’, and then embedding the whole construction into a subordinate position. In the locational example, the adverb can occur both before and after the prepositional phrase (13.8). In contrast, the adverb can only occur before and not after the prepositional phrase in the progressive construction (13.9). Crucially, this shows that the phrase *am Arbeiten* cannot be separated from the finite verb *bin* in subordinate position. This kind of restriction is consistent with analysing *am Arbeiten* as a non-finite verbal form.<sup>2</sup> [13.15]

- (13.8) a. Es ist bekannt, dass ich gerne am Tische sitze.  
b. Es ist bekannt, dass ich am Tisch gerne sitze.
- (13.9) a. Es ist bekannt, dass ich gerne am Arbeiten bin.  
b. \*Es ist bekannt, dass ich am Arbeiten gerne bin.

### 13.2.2 Prepositional subordination

Verbs with governed prepositions show many characteristics of a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*. However, they are classified here as a different kind of constructions. By definition (see Section 6.2.1), governed prepositions allow for a biclausal subordinate construction with *da(r)+Präposition, dass...*, like with *reden über* ‘to talk about’ (13.10 a). Alternatively, most governed prepositions also allow for a similar construction with a subordinate *zu-Infinitiv* (13.10 b). As a third alternative only the infinitive can be used (13.10 c), leading to a construction very close to a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*. [13.16]

- (13.10) a. Sein Vater redet darüber, dass Rauchen ungesund ist.  
b. Sein Vater redet darüber, nicht mehr zu rauchen.  
c. Sein Vater redet übers Rauchen.

Such a ‘bare subordinate infinitive’ is possible with almost all verbs that have a governed preposition. I have added some corpus examples for *träumen von* ‘to dream of’ (13.12 a), [13.17]

<sup>2</sup>Gárgyán (2010: 35, 179-181) investigates the co-occurrence of adverbial prepositional phrase in progressive sentences. She finds various postposed examples, although they appear less frequent than preposed ones. Unfortunately, she did not explicitly investigate progressives in subordinate position. The few examples cited do not show anything intervening between the *am* phrase and the final *sein* in subordinate position.

*hindern an* ‘to hinder’ (13.12b) and *klagen über* ‘to lament’ (13.12c). Frequent collocations with a similar structure are *Freude haben an* (13.11d) and *Spaß haben an* (13.11e).

- (13.11) a. Ich träume vom Autofahren.<sup>3</sup>  
 b. So werden die Cannabispflanzen am Blühen gehindert.<sup>4</sup>  
 c. Übers Altwerden klagte er oft und verhöhnnte alles, was kam, ihn zu ehren.<sup>5</sup>  
 d. Ich habe Freude am Lesen.  
 e. Ich habe Spaß am Leben.

[13.18] Such prepositional phrases with bare subordinate infinitives, like with *neigen zu* ‘to tend to’ (13.12a), show various similarities to a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*. For example, the preposition and the article cannot be separated into *zu dem* (13.12b). Additionally, the prepositional phrase cannot be separated from a finite verb in subordinate sentence-final position, e.g. by interspersing them with an adverb like *immer* ‘always’ (13.12c).

- (13.12) a. Der RB-Fan neigt zum Klatschen.<sup>6</sup>  
 b. \*Der RB-Fan neigt zu dem Klatschen.  
 c. \*Es ist bekannt, dass der RB-Fan zum Klatschen immer neigt.

[13.19] However, in contrast to a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*, modification of the infinitive is possible. This is illustrated here with genitives in prepositional constructions with *bringen zu* (13.13a) and *abhalten von* (13.13b). These genitives are actually retained arguments of the verbs in the infinitive. For example in (13.13b), *vom Besuchen des Spiels* is derived from *sie besuchen das Spiel*, in which *Spiel* ‘game’ is the object of *besuchen* ‘to visit’. Adjectival modification is illustrated with examples of *profitieren von* (13.13c) and *einladen zu* (13.13d).

- (13.13) a. Die Stadt [...] versucht, ihn auf anderen Wegen [zum Aufgeben des Hofes] zu bringen.<sup>7</sup>  
 b. Mit erhöhten Ticketpreisen sollten die Hooligans [vom Besuchen des Spiels] abgehalten werden.<sup>8</sup>  
 c. Ebay profitiert [vom boomenden Einkaufen] im Internet.<sup>9</sup>  
 d. Mehrere Bänke sollen [zum besinnlichen Sitzen] [...] einladen.<sup>10</sup>

[13.20] Summarising, verbs with a governed preposition allow for a construction that is very close to the *Präpositionsinfinitiv*. However, governed prepositions with infinitives are transparently related to biclausal subordinate constructions and retain characteristics of biclausality. Still, governed prepositions seem to be a good starting point for future developments of new *Präpositionsinfinitiv* constructions. What would have to happen is that a verb with a governed preposition establishes a new (grammaticalised) meaning when used with a bare infinitive.

[13.21] A possible example in an early stage of a grammaticalisation is the verb *denken*. The verb *denken* has various slightly different meanings. Crucially in the current context, the

<sup>3</sup>DWDS: Zeit Magazin, 16.05.2013, Nr. 21.

<sup>4</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.06.2015, Nr. 25.

<sup>5</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 12.07.1956, Nr. 28.

<sup>6</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.04.2014, Nr. 17.

<sup>7</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 25.10.2017 (online).

<sup>8</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.08.2013 (online).

<sup>9</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.10.2012 (online).

<sup>10</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 17.01.2003.

combination *denken an* means ‘to remember, to not forget’ (13.14a). This preposition *an* is a governed preposition and can be used with a subordinate *daran, dass...* construction (13.14b) or a *daran+zu-Infinitiv* construction (13.14c). A different meaning for *denken* ‘to plan, to consider’ is attested without *an*, but with a *zu-Infinitiv* (13.14d), see also Section 12.4.9. Now, contradictorily, *denken+ans-Infinitiv* has the meaning ‘to plan’ (13.14e), i.e. it does not have the same meaning as *denken an*. The meaning of the *denken+ans-Infinitiv* construction is thus separated from *denken an* and might be classified as a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*.

- (13.14) a. Bitte denke an die Kinder!  
 b. Bitte denke daran, dass du die Kinder abholen sollst.  
 c. Bitte denke daran, die Kinder abzuholen!  
 d. Er denkt morgen zu verreisen.  
 e. Viele Junge denken ans Auswandern.<sup>11</sup>

Another candidate for grammaticalisation is the verb *bringen*. The verb *bringen* ‘to bring’ without *zu* (13.15a) has a rather different meaning compared to *bringen zu* ‘to provoke, to cause’ with a governed preposition *zu* (13.15b). This might be a first step in a development towards a new *Präpositionsinfinitiv* construction. However, currently there is simply a bifurcation between a verb *bringen* and a verb *bringen zu*. Crucially, *bringen zu* allows for modification of the infinitive (13.15c). A completely grammaticalised *Präpositionsinfinitiv* is arguably very close in this construction. [13.22]

- (13.15) a. Sie bringt mich nach Hause.  
 b. Sie bringt mich immer zum Weinen.  
     Sie bringt mich immer dazu, zu weinen.  
 c. [...] wenn [...] ein wilder Föhn [...] die weichen Schneemassen [...] zum schnellen Schmelzen bringt.<sup>12</sup>  
     Wer es zum aktiven Offizier gebracht hat [...].<sup>13</sup>  
     Er hätte vielleicht sogar auf diese Art seine Flucht zum guten Ende bringen können.<sup>14</sup>

A example of a light verb that has already separated from its lexical meaning is *kommen+zum-Infinitiv* ‘end of movement’, which has a different meaning from *kommen+zu-Infinitiv* ‘to have time for’ (see Section 13.4.7). [13.23]

### 13.2.3 Adverbial constructions

Another phenomenon that looks like a *Präpositionsinfinitiv*, but has to be separated from it, are adverbial prepositions with infinitives. These are constituents that consist of a preposition, an article and an infinitive, like *zum Laufen*, but they have an adverbial status in the sentence. Because adverbials are syntactically optional, the first easy test for such adverbials is to simply leave them out. The resulting sentence should still be grammatical. [13.24]

Examples of teleological (‘goal oriented’) *zum-Infinitiv* adverbials are especially common. For example, *zum Schwimmen* in (13.16a) can be paraphrased as ‘with the intend to swim’, or in German as ‘um zu schwimmen’. Another frequent adverbial is a temporal [13.25]

<sup>11</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.03.2013, Nr. 10.

<sup>12</sup>DWDS: Voß, Richard: Zwei Menschen, Stuttgart: Engelhorn 1911 [1949], S. 52.

<sup>13</sup>DWDS: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1995 [1945].

<sup>14</sup>DWDS: Seghers, Anna: Das siebte Kreuz, Berlin: Aufbau-Taschenbuch-Verl. 2002 [1942], S. 207.



*beim-Infinitiv*, meaning ‘while’ (13.16b). Other prepositions with infinitives are less frequent in adverbial function. Some incidental locational examples can be found, like an allative (‘from’) *vom-Infinitiv* (13.16c).

[13.26] These adverbials do not adhere to the characteristics of the *Präpositionsinfinitiv*. They can move rather freely inside the sentence (13.15a) and they can be modified by a genitive (13.15b) or an adjective (13.16c).

- (13.16) a. Er ist [zum Schwimmen] durch die halbe Stadt gelaufen.  
(= ‘um zu schwimmen’)
- b. Er verletzt sich [beim Schälen einer Avocado].  
(= ‘während dem Schälen’)
- c. Er nimmt den Zug [vom täglichen Einkaufen] nach Hause.  
(= ‘von dem Einkaufen kommend’)

### 13.3 Deponent verbs without alternations

[13.27] Not attested.

### 13.4 Alternations without diathesis

#### — Temporal Aspect —

#### 13.4.1 *sein+am-Infinitiv Progressive (Progressiv)*

[13.28] The *sein+am-Infinitiv* progressive has already extensively been investigated (Krause 2002; Gárgyán 2010) and I will not repeat all results from those investigations here. This construction can be used with intransitive verbs to mark an ongoing activity (13.17a). It is considered colloquial and frowned upon in formal writing, but it is in widespread use. Transitive verbs can only be used with incorporated objects without article (13.17b), which are arguably intransitive (see Section 5.2.5). The variant with an separated object without article is only used in a small patch at the Dutch border of the German speaker area (13.17c).<sup>15</sup>

- (13.17) a. Der Feind greift an.  
Der Feind ist am Angreifen.
- b. Der Millionär kauft Häuser.  
Der Millionär ist am Häuserkaufen.
- c. ? Der Millionär ist Häuser am Kaufen.

[13.29] It is important to realise that this section only deals with the *sein+am-Infinitiv* construction. There are various other ways in which a progressive aspect can be expressed. The *sein+im-Infinitiv* is a progressive of change (see Section 13.4.2) and the *bleiben+am-Infinitiv* construction is a continuative progressive (see Section 13.4.3). In contrast, the *sein+beim-Infinitiv* construction is not analysed as a progressive here, but as an absentive (see Section 13.4.4).

<sup>15</sup>Verlaufsform mit ‘am’. In: Elspaß, Stephan & Robert Möller. 2003ff. Atlas zur deutschen Alltagssprache (AdA). Online at <https://www.atlas-alltagssprache.de/r10-f10abcd>, accessed 29 November 2021.

### 13.4.2 *sein+im-Infinitiv* Progressive change (*Mutativprogressiv*)

Gárgyán (2010: 42-43) only quickly mentioned the *sein+im-Infinitiv* progressive as variant of the *am* progressive. The *im* variant is frequently attested in the fixed expression *im Kommen sein* ‘to be approaching’ (13.18 a). From a quick search in the DWDS corpus it is quite obvious that the *im* progressive has a straightforward semantic profile. It is used either for processes that are increasing, like *wachsen* ‘to grow’ (13.18 b) or for processes that are decreasing, like *abklingen* ‘to abate’ (13.18 b). Summarised, the *sein+im-Infinitiv* is a progressive with an additional aspect that something has to change. [13.30]

- (13.18) a. Aber der Frühling ist im Kommen.<sup>16</sup>  
 b. Die Spaßgesellschaft ist im Wachsen.<sup>17</sup>  
 c. Die Schwellung ist im Abklingen.<sup>18</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[13.31]

- become less: *abflauen, abklingen, abnehmen, aussterben, schwinden, sinken, verblassen, verschwinden*
- become more: *anrollen, ansteigen, entstehen, steigen, wachsen, zerfallen, zunehmen*

#### Further Examples

[13.32]

- Eine eigene Fahrerflotte sei im Entstehen.<sup>19</sup>
- Die nächste Husten-, Schnupfen- und Erkältungswelle ist im Anrollen.<sup>20</sup>
- Die Kommunistische Partei in Italien war im Erstarken.<sup>21</sup>

### 13.4.3 *bleiben+am-Infinitiv* Progressive continuative (*Kontinuativprogressiv*)

Parallel to the *sein* progressiv there is also a *bleiben* progressive, which combines the progressive aspect with an added continuative aspectual meaning. The most frequent collocation is with the verb *leben* ‘to live’ (13.19 a), but many other agentive intransitive verbs can also be used in this construction. However, this construction appears to be less productive than the *sein* progressiv. [13.33]

- (13.19) a. Also sind wenigstens die am Leben geblieben.<sup>22</sup>  
 b. Das Schiff muss immer schön am schwimmen bleiben.<sup>23</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[13.34]

- *dampfen, jammern, kämpfen, leben, schwimmen*

#### Further Examples

[13.35]

<sup>16</sup>DWDS: Langer Winter. Schneeschmelze | Texte, 2010-02-16.

<sup>17</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 06.09.2001.

<sup>18</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 03.08.1995.

<sup>19</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.02.2016 (online).

<sup>20</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 15.11.2011, Nr. 46.

<sup>21</sup>DWDS: Umerziehung in Westdeutschland. Eine Deutsche Weise, 2012-02-24.

<sup>22</sup>DWDS: Kant, nicht Keller. Oder?. Not quite like Beethoven, 2009-11-19.

<sup>23</sup>Attested online at <https://freiamtplus.ch/blog-home-switcher/660-operette-mit-historischem-hintergrund.html>, accessed 26 November 2021.

- Ich habe zu sorgen, daß meine Schornsteine am dampfen bleiben.<sup>24</sup>
- „Ich bin am kämpfen, daß ich meinen alten Lohn wiederkriege“, sagt er, „da muß man am kämpfen bleiben.“<sup>25</sup>
- Bestes Beispiel dafür, dass dieser Blog hauptsächlich durch Silkroad Artikel am leben bleibt.<sup>26</sup>
- Dann seit ihr mit 16Euro im monat und viel Zeit auch bald 100ff und müsst nicht immer am jammern bleiben.<sup>27</sup>

### — Spatial Aspect —

#### 13.4.4 *sein+beim-Infinitiv* Recurrent absence (*Absentivfrequentativ*)

[13.36] The *sein+beim-Infinitiv* construction (13.20 a) seems to be very similar to the *sein+am-Infinitiv* progressive (e.g. they are deemed functionally indistinguishable in Gárgyán 2010: 41-42). However, that is the wrong comparison. The *sein+beim-Infinitiv* is actually functionally similar to the *sein+Infinitive* absentive (13.20 b), see Section 11.4.3. The *sein+beim-Infinitiv* likewise signifies that the subject is not present (absentive), but it adds an extra aspectual dimension. Additionally, it expresses that the activity is performed regularly or habitually. I will use the term ‘frequentative’ for this aspect.

- (13.20) a. Ich bin beim Arbeiten.  
b. Ich bin Arbeiten.

[13.37] This construction is normally used with agentive intransitive verbs. However, there is a special kind of sentences that show a curious role-reversal with transitive verbs. Consider (13.21 a) as an example. Here, the verb *Haareschneiden* ‘to cut hair’ (13.21 a) consist of a transitive verb *schneiden* ‘to cut’ with an incorporated object *Haare* ‘hair’. Incorporation is a widespread technique in German to reduce the valency of the verb (see Section 5.2.5). Crucially, the nominative of the sentence *sie* ‘she’ is the experiencer of the cutting (i.e. she is the cuttee), not the agent (the cutter). So, there seems to be some kind of anticausative diathesis going on here. However, I will not analyses this sentence as an anticausative. As an alternative, I propose to interpret the infinitive *Haareschneiden* as a metonymic replacement for the location *Friseur* ‘barber’ (13.21 b). Whatever the eventual preferred analysis will be, this example is a fascinating case that has to be investigated further.

- (13.21) a. Sie war beim Haareschneiden.<sup>28</sup>  
b. Sie war beim Friseur.

[13.38] Another detail that is confusing is the construction *dabei sein* with a *zu-Infinitiv* (13.22 a). Although *bei* might look like a governed preposition (see Section 13.2.2), there is a semantic mismatch. The subordinate *dabei sein* construction in (13.22 a) is a progressive, while the *Präpositionsinfinitiv* in (13.22 b) is an absentive. The meanings of these two constructions appear to have been drifting apart.

- (13.22) a. Ich bin dabei einzukaufen.  
b. Ich bin beim Einkaufen.

[13.39]

<sup>24</sup>DWDS: Gall, Lothar: Krupp, Berlin: Siedler 2000, S. 81.

<sup>25</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 29.05.1981, Nr. 23.

<sup>26</sup>DWDS: Das Diamond Gaming Network eröffnet Silkroad Privatserver. the-pain.net, 2011-02-03.

<sup>27</sup>DWDS: Russisches Silkroad Online angekündigt. the-pain.net, 2009-07-07.

<sup>28</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 19.10.2001.

Finally note that a *beim* phrase can also be a temporal adverbial (see Section 13.2.3). In such usage there is no *sein+beim-Infinitiv* construction. This is for example the case in (13.23). The main predicate in the *dass* complement clause is *kein Hindernis sein* ‘to be no obstacle’ and not *beim Geldverdienen sein* ‘to be making money’.

- (13.23) Immerhin kann man unterstellen, dass Latein-Lernen kein Hindernis ist beim Geldverdienen.<sup>29</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[13.40]

- agentive intransitive verbs: *arbeiten, aufholen, aufstehen, einkaufen, skifahren, weggehen*
- anticausative-like constructions: *binden, fettabsaugen, haareschneiden*

#### Further Examples

[13.41]

- Ich war beim Aufstehen.<sup>30</sup>
- Gouverneur Frederic Mishkin war beim Skifahren.<sup>31</sup>
- Ich bin alleine, meine Frau ist beim Einkaufen.<sup>32</sup>
- Aber der männliche Nachwuchs ist beim Aufholen.<sup>33</sup>
- Keiner soll allein sein beim Weggehen.<sup>34</sup>

#### Notes

[13.42]

The two examples in (13.24) are further cases of the anticausative-like usage, as described above for the infinitive *Haareschneiden*.

[13.43]

- (13.24) a. Sie war beim Fettabsaugen.<sup>35</sup>  
b. Meine Diplomarbeit ist beim Binden.<sup>36</sup>

### 13.4.5 *gehen/fahren+zum-Infinitiv* Recurrent movement towards (*Abitivfrequentativ*)

The *gehen/fahren+zum-Infinitiv* construction basically expresses a movement towards a place at which the verb will be performed. It is typically used with agentive intransitive verbs like *einkaufen* ‘to shop’ (13.25 a) or *schwimmen* ‘to swim’ (13.25 b). There is a close connection to the *gehen/fahren+Infinitiv* abitive construction, which also expresses a movement towards an activity (see Section 11.4.4). The current construction with the *zum-Infinitiv* adds a frequentative/habitual aspect to the activity. It is often attested with adverbs like *regelmäßig* to emphasise this aspectual notion.

[13.44]

- (13.25) a. Ich fahre gleich zum Einkaufen.  
b. Ich gehe regelmäßig zum Schwimmen.

[13.45]

<sup>29</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 05.01.2005.

<sup>30</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 09.11.2001.

<sup>31</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 31.01.2008, Nr. 06.

<sup>32</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 10.03.2001.

<sup>33</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 21.08.1996.

<sup>34</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 19.10.2002.

<sup>35</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 14.11.2001.

<sup>36</sup>DWDS: verwaltungmodern.de, 2007-04-10.

This construction is normally used with agentive intransitive verbs. However, there is a special variant with transitive verbs like *massieren* ‘to massage’ (13.26). Conspicuously, in the example below the subject *ich* is the massagee (i.e. the patient of the massage) not the massager. This suggests a kind of anticausative diathesis. I have not followed up on that idea because (i) this usage seems to be rare, and (ii) I think that the verb *massieren* can here be interpreted as metonymically replacing the place where the activity takes place (13.26 b).

- (13.26) a. Ah ja, und dann bin ich zum Massieren gegangen.<sup>37</sup>  
 b. Ich bin zum Massagesalon gegangen.

[13.46] Care has to be taken not to confuse the current abitive-frequentative construction with a lexical usage of *gehen/fahren*. Especially when there is also a teleological *zum* adverbial (see Section 13.2.3), then such sentences look highly similar. For example, the sentences in (13.27) are almost identical to the examples in (13.25). Yet, the sentences in (13.27) are crucially different. The *zum* phrases in these sentences are adverbials that express the reason for the lexical *gehen/fahren in* ‘to go/drive to some place’. These are not examples of the *gehen/fahren+zum-Infinitiv* abitive-frequentative.

- (13.27) a. Ich fahre gleich zum Einkaufen in die Stadt.  
 (= Ich fahre in die Stadt um einzukaufen.)  
 b. Ich gehe regelmäßig zum Schwimmen ins Schwimmbad.  
 (= Ich gehe ins Schwimmbad um zu schwimmen.)

#### [13.47] Attested Verbs

- agentive intransitive verbs: *baden, beichten, einkaufen, essen, fischen, joggen, schlittenfahren, schwimmen, spielen, tanzen*
- anticausative-like constructions: *massieren*

#### [13.48] Further Examples

- Das können wir nämlich deshalb so gut, weil wir immer mit den Kleinen zum Schlittenfahren gegangen sind.<sup>38</sup>

### 13.4.6 *kommen+vom-Infinitiv* Recurrent movement from (*Aditivfrequentativ*)

[13.49] The opposite of the previous *gehen+zum-Infinitiv* is the *kommen+vom-Infinitiv* expressing ‘movement towards’ (13.28). There is an straightforward change in preposition, opposing *gehen zum* ‘to go to’ to *kommen von* ‘to come from’. There also exist a *kommen+zum-Infinitiv* construction, but that has a completely different semantics (see Section 13.4.7 below).

[13.50] Just like the previous *gehen+zum-Infinitiv*, the *kommen+vom-Infinitiv* has an additional frequentative/habitual aspect. This construction expresses that the movement towards is done regularly as a matter of habit. This stands in opposition to the *kommen+Infinitive*

<sup>37</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 17.06.1994, Nr. 25.

<sup>38</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 20.02.1998.

additive construction (without preposition *von*) that does not include the habitual aspect (see Section 11.4.5).

- (13.28) a. Er kommt vom Einkaufen.  
 b. Das hat meine Mutter nämlich damals getan, wenn ich nachts um drei vom Tanzen kam.<sup>39</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[13.51]

- Probably the same verbs as for the *gehen+zum-Infinitiv* can be used for the *kommen+vom-Infinitiv*.

### 13.4.7 *kommen+zum-Infinitiv* End of movement (*Bewegungsende*)

The *kommen+zum-Infinitiv* has a very specific interpretation to indicate that a movement has reached an endpoint of stasis. For example *kommen zum Stehen* (13.29 a) means ‘to grind to a halt’. The same construction can also be used metaphorically for other activities that come to a standstill, like the *Friedensverhandlungen* ‘peace negotiations’ in (13.29 b). There only appear to be handful of verbs that can be used in this construction and they all describe that a state is reached at the end of a movement. For want of a better term, I will use the German name BEWEGUNGSENDE for this construction.

[13.52]

- (13.29) a. Das Auto kommt vor der Ampel zum Stehen.  
 b. Die Friedensverhandlungen im Jemen sind zum Erliegen gekommen.<sup>40</sup>

Besides this stative usage, there are a few other sentence patterns that look similar, but have to be distinguished from it. First, there is a *zum* adverbial structure with a teleological, meaning ‘with the goal to’. This can be paraphrase in German with *um zu* (13.30 a). This is a widespread possibility for a *zum-Infinitiv* that is not specific for a combination with *kommen* (see Section 13.2.3). Second, there is an interpretation of *kommen zu* meaning ‘to have time for’ (13.30 b). In this usage, the preposition *zu* is a governed preposition and can be paraphrased in German with *dazu+zu-Infinitiv* (13.30 c). This is a lexically separate meaning of the verb *kommen*. Third, there is a highly frequent fixed expression *zum Tragen kommen* ‘to bring to bear’ (13.30 d). All these sentence patterns do not appear to have any relationship with the stative *kommen+zum-Infinitiv* discussed above in (13.29).

[13.53]

- (13.30) a. Kaum jemand sei zum Baden gekommen.<sup>41</sup>  
 (= Jemand kommt um zu baden.)  
 b. Ich bin in den letzten Tagen nicht zum Schreiben gekommen.<sup>42</sup>  
 (= Ich habe keine Zeit gehabt zum Schreiben.)  
 c. Ich bin nicht dazu gekommen, dir einen Brief zu schreiben.  
 d. Die Stärke des Gegners wäre nicht zum Tragen gekommen.<sup>43</sup>

#### Attested Verbs

[13.54]

- *erliegen, halten, liegen, sitzen, stehen, stoppen*

<sup>39</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 04.11.1999, Nr. 45.

<sup>40</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 07.07.2017 (online).

<sup>41</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 18.05.2017, Nr. 21.

<sup>42</sup>DWDS: Brief von Ernst G. an Irene G. vom 28.10.1939, Feldpost-Archive mkb-fp-0270.

<sup>43</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 18.08.2005.

## [13.55] Further Examples

- Bei Balesfeld im Kreis Bitburg-Prüm hatte sich der Wagen eines Pärchens überschlagen und war auf einer Landstraße auf dem Dach zum Liegen gekommen.<sup>44</sup>
- Endlich bin ich auf einem der wackligen Holzstuhl zum Sitzen gekommen.<sup>45</sup>
- In der ganzen Branche sei diese Dynamik aber fast zum Stoppen gekommen.<sup>46</sup>

## 13.5 Diatheses with subject demotion

– [ PBJ &gt; SBJ &gt; Ø ] –

13.5.1 [ NP | –N ] *sein+zum-Infinitiv* Emotional trigger subject (*Auslösersubjektivierung*)

[13.56] The construction *sein+zum-Infinitiv* drops the nominative subject and promotes a governed preposition to subject. Such a role-remapping is rather unusual in German. In the other instance, the KREATIONSUBJEKTIVIERUNG (see Section 6.5.7), it is a creation manufactured by the subject that is promoted to subject. In the present construction, it is the trigger of an emotional reaction that is promoted to subject.

[13.57] The *sein+zum-Infinitiv* diathesis appears only to apply to verbs of emotion, like *heulen* ‘to cry’ (13.31). This emotion is triggered by something, which is expressed with an *über* governed preposition (13.31 a). With this diathesis, the trigger is promoted to subject and the original subject is dropped and cannot be retained in any form (13.31 b). Typically this diathesis is used without explicitly expressing the trigger at all. As a result, the new sentence after the diathesis lacks a subject, and thus a valency-simulating pronoun *es* is commonly attested in this construction (13.31 c).

- (13.31) a. Ich heule über den Schaden.  
           Ich heule darüber, dass der Schaden so groß ist.  
       b. Der Schaden ist zum Heulen.  
       c. Es ist zum Heulen.

## [13.58] Attested Verbs

- Verbs of emotion: *empören*, *heulen*, *kotzen*, *lachen*, *totlachen*, *verrücktwerden*, *verzweifeln*, *weinen*

## [13.59] Further Examples

- Es ist zum Verzweifeln.
- Es ist zum Totlachen.
- Die ganze Person ist zum Empören.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.07.2016 (online).

<sup>45</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 21.09.1984, Nr. 39.

<sup>46</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 12.09.2002.

<sup>47</sup>Attested online at <https://headtopics.com/de/analyse-trumps-problemzone-3271583>, accessed 9 November 2021.

## 13.6 Diatheses with promotion to subject

– [ Ø > SBJ > OBJ ] –

### 13.6.1 [ –N | NA ] *halten+am-Infinitiv* Continuative causative (*Kontinuitätskausativ*)

The *halten+am-Infinitiv* construction is used with agentive intransitive verb, most typically with *am Laufen* ‘to walk’ (13.32 a). However, the subject of the intransitive has to be an inanimate entity. The *halten+am-Infinitiv* diathesis adds a new participant to the event that causes the process to continue. This construction is also frequently attested with verbs describing heat production, like *kochen* ‘to cook’ (13.32 b). However, these cooking verbs appear to be mostly used in a metaphorical sense. Surely, expression like *halten am Kochen* ‘to keep something cooking’ can be used in a literal sense in a conversation about cooking. However, such an expression is more frequently used in a metaphorical sense of ‘to keep some discussion alive’ (13.32 b). [13.60]

- (13.32) a. Der so erzeugte Druck hielt die Partnerschaft am Laufen.<sup>48</sup>  
 b. Photos, Interviews und Indiskretionen halten den Topf am Kochen.<sup>49</sup>

There are also some examples with the light verb *erhalten* instead of *halten* (13.33), but there is no obvious difference in meaning. The verb *erhalten* most frequently occurs in the collocation with *am Leben* ‘alive’. [13.61]

- (13.33) a. Schwimmen kann der Rochen nur in einer Nährstofflösung, die die Herzmuskelzellen am Leben erhält.<sup>50</sup>  
 b. Das Feuer, das den Geist der Liebe lebendig erhält, kann nur von oben her entzündet und am Brennen erhalten werden.<sup>51</sup>

The semantically opposite *hindern am* ‘to prevent’ is not (yet?) grammaticalised. Although it is frequently used with *am Infinitiv* (13.34 a), it does not show the characteristics of a grammaticalised *Präpositionsinfinitiv* (see Section 13.2.1). For example, it can be used with an adjectival modifier (13.34 b) and the preposition *am* can also be expressed as *an dem* (13.34 c). [13.62]

::: ex - Zwei Zeugen hätten die sechsköpfige Gruppe am Betreten gehindert.<sup>52</sup> - Er hat die Pommern nicht nur am rechtzeitigen Entkommen gehindert [...].<sup>53</sup> - [...] haben sie ihn so lange an dem Ziel seines Lebens gehindert.<sup>54</sup> [13.63]

#### Attested Verbs [13.64]

- *drehen, laufen, leben, lesen*
- heat verbs: *brennen, brodeln, glimmen, kochen, köcheln, lodern, siedern, schwelen*

#### Further Examples [13.65]

<sup>48</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 28.05.1999.

<sup>49</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.01.1961, Nr. 04.

<sup>50</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 08.07.2016 (online).

<sup>51</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 02.08.1951, Nr. 31.

<sup>52</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 14.03.2014, Nr. 11.

<sup>53</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 20.03.2014, Nr. 13.

<sup>54</sup>DWDS: Die Zeit, 27.04.1990, Nr. 18.



- Wer die Münze nicht am drehen halten kann, muss anscheinend einen Schnaps auf Ex trinken.<sup>55</sup>
- Deshalb posten moderatoren immer in jedem thread und halten die diskussion am kochen.<sup>56</sup>
- Das hält die SSH-Verbindung länger am leben.<sup>57</sup>
- Die Frage, ob und wie A und B zusammenkommen, ist aber nicht das, was mich am Lesen hält.<sup>58</sup>
- Zubereitung: Den Fond erhitzen und am Sieden halten.<sup>59</sup>

## 13.7 Diatheses with object demotion

[13.66] Not attested

## 13.8 Diatheses with promotion to object

[13.67] Not attested

## 13.9 Symmetrical diatheses

— [ OBJ > SBJ > OBJ ] —

### 13.9.1 [ DN | NA ] *haben+am-Infinitiv* Dative inersive (*Pertinenzinversiv*)

[13.68] The *haben+am-Infinitiv* construction is a fascinating construction that needs much more research (cf. Businger 2011: 323-325). It is a colloquial construction that is virtually unattested in traditional corpora. However, in more informal usage online it is reasonably easy to find examples.

[13.69] The basic clause of this diathesis has an agentive intransitive verb, like *brennen* ‘to burn’ (13.34 a). A new subject is added to the sentence, and the old subject is demoted to accusative (13.34 b). This new subject is an experiencer of the original basic clause, which can also be expressed as an experiencer dative (13.34 c), see Section 5.8.3. This experiencer is always inherently the possessor of the original subject (13.34 d).

[13.70] This means that the subject of a *haben+am-Infinitiv* construction (here *Der Student* ‘the student’) is always inherently the possessor of the object of this construction (here *die Wohnung* ‘the apartment’). All diathesis that include such inherent possession are have the word *pertinenz* as part of their German name. The current diathesis is thus called PERTINENZINVERSIV. This diathesis is closely related to the *Ortpertinenzinversive*, see Section 11.9.2. Both diatheses are semantically and structurally similar, though curiously the *Ortpertinenz-*

<sup>55</sup> Attested online at <https://pippin-unterwegs.de/hogmanay-in-glasgow/>, accessed 20.11.2021.

<sup>56</sup> DWDS: Die Schönheit Des Simplexen, 2005-06-29.

<sup>57</sup> DWDS: Konstantin Filtschew WebLog, 2008-10-13.

<sup>58</sup> DWDS: Von Genrebetrachtungen und Happy Ends. Katastrophengebiet, 2011-06-05.

<sup>59</sup> DWDS: KOCHWERKSTATT Wo es so lecker ist!. koch-werkstatt.de, 2006-03-09.

*zinversive* uses a *haben+Infinitiv* construction without *am*.

- (13.34) a. Die Wohnung brennt.  
 b. Der Student hat die Wohnung am Brennen.  
 c. Ihm brennt die Wohnung.  
 d. Seine Wohnung brennt.

#### Attested Verbs

[13.71]

- *brennen, drehen, funktionieren, glühen, hacken, laufen, schlafen*

#### Further Examples

[13.72]

- Alex, wie ihn alle nennen, hatte immer was am Laufen.<sup>60</sup>
- Den habe ich immer am Hacken.<sup>61</sup>
- Jetzt, am Anfang der Arbeit an diesem Projekt komme ich mir vor wie ein Jongleur, der unzählige Teller in der Luft am Drehen hat.<sup>62</sup>
- Aber auf das Geschiss, bis wir mal die Holzkohle am Glühen haben, können wir gut und gerne verzichten.<sup>63</sup>
- Das Problem vieler Anfänger ist, daß sie immer alles gleich am funktionieren haben wollen, ohne sich vorher zu informieren.<sup>64</sup>
- Als ich sie vorhin endlich am Schlafen hatte (halb zehn oder so :-? ) bin ich duschen.<sup>65</sup>
- Nehmen wir an ich habe daheim die Wohnung am Brennen.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>DWDS: Berliner Zeitung, 10.12.2005.

<sup>61</sup>DWDS: Der Tagesspiegel, 14.08.2000.

<sup>62</sup>(Businger 2011: 324)

<sup>63</sup>(Businger 2011: 324)

<sup>64</sup>(Businger 2011: 324)

<sup>65</sup>(Businger 2011: 324)

<sup>66</sup>(Businger 2011: 324)

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