Contrasting English and German: some trends and perspectives

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1. General considerations

Although English and German are relatively closely related in typological terms, it has often been noted that both languages follow decidedly different strategies in encoding and distributing information. Verbs are a case-in-point. As already mentioned, where in German we find many prefixed verbs, English employs simple verbs or verbs with postposed particles, as in:

(1)

a. blow out the candle - die Kerze ausblasen
b. turn off the radio – das Radio ausschalten
c. break the vase – die Vase zerbrechen

Note that while the German prefix can be separated in a and b, the productive component zer- in c is not separable:

(1)

a’. Er blies die Kerze aus. ‘He blew out the candle’.
b’. Er schaltete das Radio aus. ‘He turned the radio off’.
c’. *Er brach die Vase zer-. ‘He broke the vase’.

We also see that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the morphological strategies in both languages. Thus, in c a simple English verb corresponds to a morphologically complex German verb. Also, morphologically complex English particle verbs may find simple verbs as their counterparts in German, as in:

(2) The White Sox beat up on the Rangers [...].
(WBBR Sports, 5-9-99)
(3) Die White Sox schlugen die Rangers.

On the one hand, in English there seems to be less specific information packed into the verb itself than in German, as in:

(4)
John broke the vase. - Die Vase zerbrach. (-brach → inf. brechen ‘break’)

(1)
The rope broke. - Das Seil zerriß. (-riß → inf. reißen ‘tear’)
The engine broke. - Die Maschine ging kaputt. (literally: ‘went broken’)

On the other hand, due to the large variety of historical origins of the English vocabulary, there are many different words available where this is not the case in German, yielding such doublets as extinguish - blow out, terminate – end (Bolinger 1971: 5-7).

The reasons for the language-specific amount of information encoded in verbs lie at least in part in some general properties of English grammar that contrast with German. These properties affect language-internal information distribution and can roughly be summarised as follows (based on Hawkins 1986: 121 / 1992, Fischer 1997: ch. 5, Kortmann 1999: 126 ff., Kortmann & Mair 1992):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>· less word-order freedom</td>
<td>· more word-order freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· finite verb in V2</td>
<td>· verb-final position of finite verb in subclauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· more movement across phrase boundaries</td>
<td>· less movement across phrase boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· more semantic roles per grammatical function</td>
<td>· less semantic roles per grammatical function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· less grammatical morphology</td>
<td>· more grammatical morphology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· no full-fledged case system</td>
<td>· full-fledged case-system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· more restrictions on use of tenses</td>
<td>· less restrictions on use of tenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· aspect grammaticalized by the Progressive form</td>
<td>· no grammaticalized aspect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Less word order freedom in E can particularly be exemplified by stronger restrictions on the placement of PP-adjuncts in English compared to their German PP-counterparts as well as corresponding German case-marked NP equivalents (Hawkins 1986: ch. 3.1):

(5)

a. *To his brother Peter gave for Christmas the book.
b. Seinem Bruder gab Peter zu Weihnachten das Buch.

c. *Peter gave for Christmas (to) his brother the book.
d. Peter gab zu Weihnachten seinem Bruder das Buch.

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1 The examples are taken from Hawkins (1986: 38-39) who says that he has adapted them from Bierwisch (1963: 31; ibid.). Although the English and German sentences in each pair are implicitly regarded as translation equivalents by Hawkins, it is clear that for Christmas is not equivalent to zu Weihnachten, compare e.g. Are you going home for Christmas? with Fährst du über Weihnachten [zu Weihnachten] nach Hause? (from PONS-Collins).
Greater word-order variation in German also shows up in the final placement of finite verbs in German subclauses, whereas in English here the verb-second order (verb behind the subject) is maintained:

(6) Buffy said [(that) she **wanted** to get drunk that night in the first place].
(6’) Buffy sagte, [daß sie sich diesen Abend sowieso betrinken **wollte**].

Particularly in the government-binding paradigm it has been assumed that in movements from deep (D) to surface (S)-structure verbs move from the final position in subclauses to the verb-second position in German, making the SOV subclause order the basic one (Grewendorf 1988: ch. 10, Haider & Prinzhorn 1986: 2, von Stechow & Sternefeld 1988: 39). Thus we have the following contrast suggesting that there will be less movement in English than in German:

**English:**

(7) that Buffy **wanted** to get drunk that night in the first place.
(7’) Buffy **wanted** to get drunk that night in the first place.

**German:**

(8) daß Buffy sich diesen Abend sowieso betrinken **wollte**. (word order at D-structure)

(8’) Buffy **wollte** sich an diesem Abend sowieso betrinken. (word order at S-structure)

While there seems to be less movement in English in general, there is more movement across phrase boundaries in English (extraction), which in English, but not in German occurs in environments of non-strictly subcategorised infinitive subclauses, at least according to Hawkins (1986: 91), who claims:

“Extractions out of non-strictly subcategorised infinitival phrases with e.g. *um ... zu* (‘in order to’) and *ohne ... zu* (‘without ... ing’) are completely impossible in German, but possible in English [...]”.

This is supposedly exemplified by sentences like the following (1986: 97):

(9) **What** did he, come [in order PRO, to pick up __ _]?  
/ *Was, kam er, [um PRO, abzuholen __ _]?

(10) **What** did he, drive [without PRO, observing __ _]?  
/*Was, ist er, gefahren, [ohne PRO, zu beachten__ _]?

PRO represents the empty subject of the subordinate clause (see e.g. Haegeman 1994: ch. 4.2); the wh- element in English can be moved out of the object position of the subordinate infinitive clause. Hawkins concedes that judgements
of native English speakers differ with regard to the acceptability particularly with regard to sentences like e’, however (ibid.). The tendency to extract more in English may be attributed to the observation by Berg (2002) that the English sentence structure has become more hierarchical in the course of its history. Thus, the movements could be incorporated in raising configurations without resulting in ambiguities or difficulties in processing the sentences, because of the clear hierarchy inherent in their structure (by contrast to German).

Justice (1987: ch. 9) postulates different (typical) hierarchies for English and German. A typical German sentence is seen as a “nest of boxes”, reflecting extensive bracketing structures in the sense that elements on one level function as brackets for elements on lower levels:

(11)

Sie **kamen**
mit
einer
**an**
infolge des
plötzlich
losgebrochenen
in der
Nacht
**verspätung**
**ungewöhnlich großen**
infolge des **sturmes**
in der vorangegangenen

‘They arrived late because of the storm which suddenly came up last night’

The verb plus its separable particle are in bold types (**kamen ... an**; inf. **ankommen** ‘arrive’). While such sentence structures also occur in English, elements typically do not become quite as deeply embedded (examples from Justice):

(12)

Reagan conferred with Arafat in the Oval Office yesterday.

or so I heard from a ‘usually reliable source’ if you’ll pardon the expression

(13)

What did you bring up that book out of

I didn’t want to be read to

The structures clearly do not look as hierarchical as their German counterparts. We note in the second example that the elements on the same level do not reflect the same degree of cohesion as in the German sentence (except for the phrasal verb **bring ... up**). Thus compare **What ... for or that book ... out of**, which are not really cohesive and well-formed (i.e. complete) phrase structures if taken by themselves, with **mit ... Verspätung** ‘delayed’, **einer ... ungewöhnlich großen** ‘an exceptionally long’, or **infolge des ... Sturmes** ‘because of the storm’ which do
form cohesive units. The phrasal verbs which function as “brackets” in English are usually effective within local domains by contrast to the German prefixed verbs, which typically embrace the whole sentence.

One may now conclude the following: if German verbs as well as other phrasal elements function as “brackets” for large embedding structures, the VP nodes are processed relatively high in the sentence tree, provided that we have top-down processing as Berg (2002) assumes and Justice entails. One may also claim that different degrees of fusion amongst the prefixes and the stems are more significant to the global sentence structure in G than in the case of English verb stems and particles, where embedding only affects the immediate local syntactic environment.

More semantic roles per grammatical function in E particularly show up in connection with a greater choice of subjects (see e.g. Beedham 1982: 6, Hawkins 1982):

(14)  
Your dollar buys 1 Euro 10 Cents.
(14’)  
Für ihren Dollar bekommen sie 1 Euro 10 Cents.

This has particularly given rise to the (albeit questionable) claim that English verbs are more elastic and semantically vague, because they occur in more contexts than their German counterparts, as already mentioned. This is in turn connected to the fact that less grammatical morphology in English yields more temporary ambiguities, as can be seen by the so-called “garden-path” sentences (Hawkins 1992):

(15)

Changing places

are something I don’t like.

(15’)

Den Wohnort zu wechseln ist blöd. / g’’. Orte, die sich ändern, sind etwas, das ich nicht mag.

(16)

are a pain in the neck.

Focus matters

a lot in linguistics.

(16’)

Fokus nervt. / l’’. Fokus ist in der Sprachwissenschaft sehr wichtig.

There is more case-syncretism in English and thus no full-fledged case system, as opposed to German (e.g. Welte 1987: 21):
(17) Ich verhaute ihn. / I beat him up.
(18) Ich gab ihm den Hammer. / I gave him the hammer.

In English, the loss of information by case syncretism contrasts with more specific meanings associated with word order, as e.g. represented by the ‘dative alternation’:

(19) I gave him the hammer. / Ich gab ihm den Hammer.
(20) I gave the hammer to him. / *Ich gab den Hammer ihm (/zu ihn).

On the one hand, it seems reasonable to assume that more restrictions on word order in English make word order more significant to meaning in English than in German (because it is rarer, it becomes more significant where it occurs), but on the other hand word order in German becomes a more productive and relevant tool in expressing meaning than in English:

(21)
Du selbst kannst denken. ‘You can think for yourself’.
Denken kannst du selbst. ‘It is thinking, which you can do for yourself.’
Selbst du kannst denken. ‘Even you can think.’

Contrary to the case system, the English tense system is more restrictive and thus appears to be more diversified (see e.g. Vater 1997: 59):

(22) He was (/has been) in the Party in 1933.
(23) Er war 1933 in der Partei / Er ist 1933 in der Partei gewesen.
(24) Tomorrow this time she’ll have passed her test. (future perfect)
(25) Morgen hat sie den Test um diese Zeit bestanden. (present perfect: hat ... bestanden)
(26) Morgen wird sie den Test um diese Zeit bestanden haben. (future perfect)

In example 22 the present perfect is not interchangeable with the simple past, because there is reference to a definite time (in 1933). In German the Präteritum (preterite or “past tense”) and Präsensperfekt (“present” perfect) are interchangeable, however (in o’), notwithstanding often assumed unique pragmatic functions associated with each form. In fact, the perfect has become

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2 Thus compare e.g. Rauh (1983: 270): “As has been demonstrated again and again the boundaries between semantics and pragmatics are blurred, though the difference between e.g. the Preterite and the Present Perfect or the Future Tense and the Immediate Future can only be positively described on the level of pragmatics. Selecting the one or the other form in many cases only depends on the speaker’s attitude [...].”

Benveniste (1974 / 1971: 266ff.), Declerck (1991: 17), Weinrich (1964: 70), Thieroff (1992), and many more both highlight the functional-pragmatic dimension of tenses (albeit often only implicitly) and its strong connection with semantic (invariable) meanings.

Two groups of tenses are usually distinguished. The first group includes those that are primarily used in narration and which express “past” time reference in the widest (even
more common than the preterite in such environments where reference to a
definite time is made. In p both the future perfect and the present perfect can be
used to refer to the ‘past in the future’, where in English only the future perfect
is possible.

This can again be seen in light of the claim that English verbs are
semantically more vague (or even ambiguous): the tighter tense system makes
up for “lost” (temporal) verb meanings, although the above examples do not
really show the German verbs to be more specific in this respect, unless we
regard be- in bestanden (inf. bestehen ‘pass’) as an aspectual marker of
resultativity.

Finally, we find grammaticalized aspect in form of the progressive in E and
no grammaticalized aspect in German (see e.g. Comrie 1976: 8):

(27) When I came into the room the president was writing a letter.
(28) Als ich in den Raum trat, schrieb der Präsident (gerade) einen Brief.
(29) Als ich in den Raum trat, war der Präsident dabei, einen Brief zu schreiben.

Together with the assumption that English verbs are often semantically more
vague and thus syntactically more elastic than German ones, the above
phenomena warrant certain generalisations. We can assume that more word-
order freedom in German leads to the necessity to make verbs more precise, i.e.
to pack more specific information into the verbs. This has given rise to a number
of corresponding hypotheses which resemble those introduced earlier. For
example, similarly to our “explicitness / complexity hypothesis”, according to
what may be called the “explicitness- or vagueness hypothesis” (see e.g. Plank
1984, Hawkins 1986) the semantic content of verb lexemes in English is
generally less explicit than in German, once more presenting scenarios like the
following as the default case:

(30)
a. The house comes with a swimming-pool
a’. *Das Haus kommt mit einem Swimming-Pool

metaphoric) sense (Weinrich’s “erzählende” Tempora; Deckerck’s “past time-sphere” tenses).
Narrative tenses in German include, for example: Konjunktiv-Präteritum (conditional or past
subjunctive: er würde singen ‘he would sing’), Präteritum (preterite: er sang ‘he sang / was
singing’), and Plusquamperfekt (pluperfect: er hatte gesungen ‘he had sung’). These tenses
are characterized by the fact that distance between the speaker’s perspective and the
eventualities which are related is expressed (see e.g. Andersson 1989).

Narrative tenses are said to contrast with a second group which are primarily used in
argumentation and direct speech due to their “present” time reference or ‘closeness’ with
regard to the speaker’s perspective (“besprechende” Tempora according to Weinrich), as e.g.
German Präsens (er singt ‘he sings / is singing’) and Präsensperfekt (“present” perfect: er hat
gesungen ‘he had sung’).

While the Präteritum (past tense) in German would thus be classified a “narrative” tense,
the Präsensperfekt (present perfect) is a tense of “argumentation”. This suggests a difference
in terms of speaker’s intention and attitude between the two (in Rauh’s sense above), despite
their interchangeability in contexts of definite time reference.
a’. Das Haus **hat** einen Swimming-Pool, or: Das Haus **ist** mit einem Swimming-Pool **ausgestattet**.

b. **sit** on a chair
b’. **sit** for a painter
b’’. **sit** for an exam
b’’’. **sat** in the garage
b’’’’. **sitting** in the hall
b’’’’’. **sits** heavy on the stomach
b’’’’’. **sits** in the pole position

‘auf einem Stuhl **sitz**en’
‘Modell **sitz**en’
‘eine Prüfung **ablegen** (/*absitz**en)*’
‘das Auto **war** (/*sitzt*) in der Garage’
‘das Päckchen **liegt** (/*sitzt*) in der Halle’
‘das Essen **liegt** (/*sitzt*) schwer im Magen’
‘das rote Auto **ist / liegt** (/*sitzt*) an der Spitze’

... 

While the verb **come** in English can carry the meaning ‘be- equipped with’, this is not possible in German. We therefore conclude that English **come** is semantically less explicit and more vague than G **kommen**. Similarly **sit**, which is less explicit with regard to domain-specifics. But note again that at the same time **sit** encodes certain relatively abstract meanings more consistently throughout different domains (e.g. ‘be- positioned somewhere in a stable way’), thus supporting the “incorporation / consistency hypothesis” introduced earlier. According to Hawkins (1986: 29), less explicitness (in terms of domain-specific meanings) has a direct bearing on the wider range of arguments that English verbs can take, as e.g. be seen by the following examples from Plank (1984: 132):

(31)
to close a door / a window / a road / a bridge / a conference
eine Tür / ein Fenster / *eine Straße / *eine Brücke /?eine Konferenz schließen.

But, as already mentioned, at least for some cases the notion of greater vagueness of verbs in English cannot be generalized (Burgschmidt & Götz 1974: 235-237; Fischer 1997: ch. 5.1):

(32)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>krabbeln</strong></td>
<td><strong>crawl</strong> (child; insects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>scurry, scuttle</strong> (insects)</td>
<td>(Burgschmidt &amp; Götz, p. 235)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>springen</strong></td>
<td><strong>jump</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>leap</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>bound</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>spring</strong></td>
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<td><strong>vault</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>saltate</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>scip</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(sich) **erinnern**

**remember** (something) = **sich erinnern**

**remind** (a person of something) = **jemanden an etwas erinnern**
English here is more specific in terms of process specification (*crawl*, *scurry*; *declare*, *explain*), and it marks intensity (*leap*, *jump*; cf. a giant leap / ?jump; a great leap / ?jump forward) as well as result meaning (*remember something*) by contrast to goal-oriented processes (*remind somebody of s.th.*).

Besides German verbs that are less specific than their English counterparts, we find German examples that are at least as ambiguous as the beginnings of English garden-path sentences:

(33)

a. Grüne wählen (newspaper headline)
b. Die Japaner mögen die Koreaner nicht. / Die Koreaner mögen die Japaner nicht.
c. Ich habe mich schon sehr lange auf den Besuch Ihrer großen Nation gefreut.
   (T.V. series *Immer wenn er Pillen nahm*, 1969)

Example a could either mean ‘vote Green’ or ‘the Greens cast their ballots’. This is due to ambiguity of both the lexeme *wählen* and of the grammatical form of the verb, which may either be the third person plural in the present tense, or the imperative. The meaning of both sentences in b is either ‘the Japanese don’t like the Koreans’ or ‘the Japanese are not liked by the Koreans’. Here the German surface case forms remain ambiguous, and word order does not serve to resolve the ambiguity. Example c could either mean ‘I have been looking forward to visiting your country for a long time’ or ‘I have been looking forward to the visit by (representatives of) your country’, the last one applying a metonymic reading to *ihrer großen Nation* (‘your great country’ for ‘representatives of your great country’). Again, the (surface) case form does not resolve the ambiguity.

It may thus also be doubted whether the explicitness or vagueness hypothesis can be generalised, which has not surprisingly been questioned (“explicitness controversy”, see e.g. the discussion by Kortmann & Meyer 1992: 155). Most notably Rohdenburg (1992) mentions such phenomena as the use of prepositions, infinitives, and participles, where the English elements should be regarded as being more explicit (i.e. less vague or ambiguous) than their German counterparts, witness the use of *um* in the following:

(34)
das Geheimnis *um* das Schiff Marie-Celeste
Ich komme *um* 5 Uhr.
Ich fahre *um* das Haus herum.

Different expressions have to be used in English in each case:

(35)
The mystery *surrounding* the ship ...
I’ll arrive at 5 o’clock.
I drove around the house.

Kortmann & Meyer (1992: 159) thus claim that English shows more explicitness regarding optional elements, such as prepositional adjuncts or attributes of noun phrases, while German tends to be more explicit with regard to verbs. More explicit verb meanings mean greater restrictions on the semantic roles of the arguments (“restrictiveness hypothesis”; ibid.).

One should finally mention the performance hypothesis by Hawkins (1992), according to which greater explicitness of German verbs can be explained at least in part by their final positioning in the basic SOV structure, which shows up on the surface in subclauses:

(36)
..., daß Karl den Saal verließ

This contrasts with SVO in the same context in English:

(37)
Carl left the hall. / ... (that) Carl left the hall.

If we take the SOV structure in German as basic, by contrast to SVO in English, we may conclude that in German there seems to be a greater need to resolve remaining ambiguities in the final position (in which verbs appear in the “basic” word order). Since verbs occur in this position more often in German than in English, the burden of resolving the ambiguities and vagueness is carried by the verbs in these cases. This can be taken to account for the restrictions on their uses in German, e.g. in:

(38)
daß der Wohnwagen drei Leute *schläft (the verb would be too vague)
/ daß der Wohnwagen drei Leute aufnehmen kann
(verb + modal verb specific enough to resolve ambiguities and remaining vagueness).

What the whole discussion amounts to is a controversy on how semantic and syntactic information is distributed amongst the linguistic elements of a sentence. It will thus be one major goal of any contrastive studies of the English and German lexicon to investigate to what extent structure-driven patterns of information distribution will actually have an impact on the structure of lexical fields, or, more specifically, it will have to be asked whether generalisations concerning the information contents of verbs in terms of more or less “explicitness” will be borne out at all.
2. Lexical Contrasts

On the inter-language level (relations between two languages) we find more or less direct translations of expressions, but the range of meanings associated with the sign and its translations will in most cases not be identical (different “values” according to de Saussure), as in the following (cp. Coseriu 1969: 108-109, Geckeler 1971: 102):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French: louer / English: rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German: mieten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German: vermieten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

French *louer* or English *rent* can either correspond to German *mieten* (‘rent s.b.’s apartment’) or *vermieten* (‘rent to s.b.’). The German words have different values, because their range of meanings is delimited within the system of signs in a different way, and their invariant meanings differ compared to the French and English counterparts. By contrast to *mieten*, *vermieten* has an inseparable prefix.

Although English and German are relatively closely related in typological terms, they are said to follow different strategies concerning how information content is distributed over the lexicon (see e.g. Kortmann & Meyer 1992). In particular, a number of common English verbs (both result and simple process verbs) correspond to more than one German verb, and it seems tempting to regard the pattern “one English verb corresponding to several German verbs” as a default case with English verbs “neutralising” German meaning differences (cp. e.g. Plank 1984). For example, we have verbs like *put* with its translations *setzen, stellen, legen*. Similarly:

(39)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engl.</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>set</td>
<td><em>legen</em> (‘set the stones on top of each other’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>vereinbaren / festlegen</em> (‘set a date’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>einstellen</em> (‘set the clock’), etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run</td>
<td><em>laufen / rennen</em> (‘run a mile’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>leiten / führen</em> (‘run a business / factory’), ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introduce</td>
<td><em>vorstellen</em> (a person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>einführen</em> (methods, devices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>eins setzen</em> (new means of transport, devices), amongst others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notwithstanding that relatively common English verbs tend to neutralise German contrasts, sometimes more specific English verbs are available in the vicinities of the neutralising elements, as in the case of *put*:
This can be summarised as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The neutralisation hypothesis:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Common English verbs tend to neutralise contrasts expressed by different German verbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) This does not exclude the existence of more specific English verbs besides the neutralising element in the same context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As (b) already suggests, counter-examples to the pattern “one English verb, several German verbs” may be likely, at least under certain conditions, witness e.g. G erklären with its E translations declare and explain, or:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(41)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laufen</td>
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<tr>
<td>(...)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It would not be feasible to regard these as “less common” verbs than e.g. introduce mentioned earlier, thus relegating the pattern “several E verbs, one G verb” to the realm of “exceptional” cases. The relation of such patterns to the “neutralisation hypothesis”, should it hold as a universal principle at all, needs careful examination. In the above example at least different types of process specification are made more explicit in English than in German (run, walk, go as opposed to work), but we have similar process distinctions in German as well:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(42)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diese Maschine arbeitet nicht. ‘this machine isn’t operating’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diese Maschine läuft nicht. ‘this machine doesn’t work’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diese Uhr *arbeitet / läuft nicht. ‘this clock doesn’t work’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps more importantly, the idiomatic things don’t turn out well as translation of es läuft nicht gut marks a situation as a result event where in German we refer to a process (läuft nicht gut, literally ‘doesn’t walk well’). Considering the other translations of laufen (run, work, ...), which are process verbs, English is thus more explicit in distinguishing between different process and result conceptualisations linguistically here.
Where there is only one verb yielding several translations, the language with the single verb is semantically more vague, and concerning the verb’s potential contextual uses more “elastic” than the translations. Hawkins (1986: 28) claims that at least with regard to grammatical relations German speakers are forced to make semantic distinctions where English speakers are not. For example, English verbs more freely occur with different semantic roles of their arguments, as in *The engine broke, My guitar broke a string, I broke the vase*. In German different verbs, entirely different sentence structures or at least prefixed variants will have to be used in each case to be able to have the same range of semantic roles of the subject, cf. *Die Maschine ging kaputt, An meiner Gitarre zersprang eine Saite, Ich ließ die Vase fallen*. German thus tends to exhibit a closer matching between meaning differences and differences in surface form, at least in these examples. Extending this notion to the structure of the lexicon we could again say that in English a single verb is likely to be used in contexts where in German we would have to choose different verbs and German is more “explicit” or even “precise” in encoding lexical meaning (see e.g. Plank 1984: 325). One may suspect that in “complex” cognitive environments (cp. Rohdenburg 1999) different meanings tend to be made more explicit by choosing different verbs in German:

**The explicitness hypothesis / complexity hypothesis:**

In complex cognitive environments differences in meaning are made more explicit in German.

However, the language with a single verb in more contexts encodes certain combinations of general core meanings more clearly and consistently by single lexical items, since these combinations which are “invariably” associated with a single verb occur in more contexts and very likely in more domains. The different contexts where a verb can be used then seem to have a specific combination of clearly defined abstract meanings in common. One would therefore regard English as being more consistent and precise in expressing certain combinations of meanings by single lexical items (see e.g. Fischer 1999: 240) even throughout different semantic domains, which brings us to:

**The incorporation hypothesis / consistency hypothesis:**

English verbs tend to incorporate abstract meanings. They tend to express combinations of general meanings in a more consistent way throughout more domains than German verbs.

Another fact to be considered is language-specific textual interpretation associated with verbs and their meanings. For example, the question of total or

---

3 Provided that encoding strategies in the lexicon and grammar run parallel which may be doubted; see below.
partial synonymy of translations arises where different translations of a single E verb alternate within short text units:

(43)
[...], much heavier rolling-stock was *introduced* on the Anglo-Scottish expresses over the East Coast route. The Great Northern Railway had already *introduced* the ‘Atlantic’ type of engine in 1898 but the first North Eastern move towards larger engines than the 4-4-0 lay in the 4-6-0 type, *introduced* by Wilson Worsdell in 1899, [...].
(O.S. Nock: *Railways at the Turn of the Century*, p. 174; my italics and bold types)

(O.S. Nock: *Eisenbahnen um die Jahrhundertwende*, p. 198; my italics and bold types).

Here we wonder whether the different translations are just stylistically motivated (avoidance of repetition) or whether they point to actual differences in meaning. In a Saussurian framework in the sense above the latter would be answered in the affirmative. Indeed, in this example the English verb *introduce* is connected with at least three context-dependent meanings to which each German verb relates in a specific way:

(44)

*introduce*

(a) ‘use (from a certain time on), operate’

*much heavier rolling-stock was introduced*

(b) ‘acquire (for the Great Northern Railway)’

*The ‘Great Northern Railway had already introduced the ‘Atlantic’ type of engine in 1989*

(c) ‘invent / design / construct / built’

*the 4-6-0 type, introduced by Wilson Worsdell in 1899*

The meanings are connected by the fact that the actual use of rolling stock is presented as the result of acquisition, construction, or invention. This constitutes the invariant meaning of the term *introduce*. The two German verbs relate to the context-dependent meanings (a) – (c) above in a sense that at least in this context *einsetzten* seems closer to ‘use, operate’ and *einführen* to ‘acquire’ or ‘invent / design’. The following illustrate this tendency:

(45)

*neue Züge während der Ausstellung einsetzen / *einführen*

‘use / operate new trains during the trade fair’

*neue Züge von der Ausstellung an einsetzen / *einführen*

If meant as: ‘start *operating* new trains from the trade fair on’.

*neue Züge mit der Vertragsunterzeichnung einführen (?!einsetzten)*

If meant as: ‘*acquire* new trains with the signing of the contract’.
‘operate new trains after the signing of the contract’

This provides us with a seemingly neat picture (*einsetzen* in ‘operate’ contexts, *einführen* for ‘acquire’), but in the potential ‘acquire’ context *The ‘Great Northern Railway had already introduced* ... actually *einsetzen* is used as a translation, which renders more unambiguously an ‘operate / use’ reading in German than in connection with English *introduce*. We therefore highlight more the aspect of actually operating the new rolling stock in German. This suggests that the English contextual meanings become at least re-interpreted, if not completely disambiguated in a way not necessarily warranted by the original version in using either one of the German verbs available. It leads us to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The contextual re-interpretation hypothesis:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different possible German translations of English verbs induce different re-interpretations of context-dependent meanings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The now following facts serve as a basis for a further working hypothesis. Here the data shows that English and German follow different strategies in encoding ‘result’ meaning, and they suggest that English is more consistent in expressing the difference between ‘process’ and ‘result’ reference by oppositions of simple verb lexemes:

(1) Particularly German result verbs are often prefixed variants of simple verbs (Eichinger 2000), for example in die Vase *zerbrechen* (*break the vase*); *umfallen* (*fall*); *umbringen* (*‘kill’*). The contrast between result and process meanings is thus expressed by prefixing and not in simple-verb paradigms, as in *aufessen* (*‘eat up’: signifying a result*) and *essen* (*‘eat’: specifying a process without commitment to a result*). As already indicated, this is similar to the English strategy in *eat* (process reference) vs. *eat up* (result reference), but in English we also find particularly many partial simple-verb synonyms that differ in terms of result vs. process meaning (Tobin 1993), as in *advance peace* (result reference) vs. *promote peace* (goal-oriented process); *succeed somebody* (resultant situation) vs. *follow somebody* (goal-oriented process); *break the vase* (focus on a result) vs. *smash/shatter the vase* (process specification); *make coffee* (yielding a result) vs. *do the coffee* (reference to the process involved). These differences are not necessarily expressed by simple verb oppositions in German. Instead, German does not encode these oppositions in the lexicon at all (*Kaffee machen*); or it involves prefixing patterns and other morphological

---

4 Gisa Rauh pointed out to me that, arguably, specific process verbs are available in German here, as in *Ich kochte mal schnell den Kaffee* (‘I’ll do the coffee in a moment’) where *kochen* (literally: ‘cook’) contrasts with *machen* ‘make’ in *Ich mache mal schnell den Kaffee* ‘I’ll make the coffee in a moment’. We have to consider, however, that the German contrast is not expressed by an opposition in terms of such *general* verbs as English *do* vs. *make*. The German distinction thus does not appear to be a systematic across-the-board distinction like
strategies on a relatively inconsistent basis, thus compare: die Vase
zerschmettern / zerschlagen / zerhauen / umschmeißen / kaputt machen /
fallen lassen which all involve process or cause specification regardless of the
morphological encoding strategies, or den Frieden fördern / voranbringen / ein
Stück voranbringen; jemanden folgen / nachfolgen which express result
meaning, but again show no clear morphological strategy in both involving
periphrastic constructions and prefixing. It may be questioned whether similar
clear-cut “minimal” word pairs as in English can be identified in German here.

(2) Prefixed and non-prefixed variants of verbs in German do not necessarily
form oppositions in terms of ‘process’ and ‘result’, as in the case of umbringen
‘kill’ vs. bringen ‘bring’.

(3) Possibly even more so than English postposed particles, many alleged
German ‘result’ prefixes are not even consistent in expressing result meaning
(Plank 1981), thus we have: Holz zerhacken (chop wood) (reference to a
process); ein Bein brechen / *zerbrechen / *abbrechen (break a leg) (result
implied, but no prefix in G).

(4) English is more consistent in encoding result as opposed to process
meaning by closed class elements and grammatical forms (Comrie 1976), as e.g.
in: John was writing a letter (on-going process) vs. John wrote a letter
(existence of the completed letter as a result); I went to New York in 1983 (no
commitment to a result such as current relevance at the speech time) vs. I have
been to New York before (current relevance as a resultant state). This indicates
that English is more consistent in expressing the contrast between a commitment
to a result and indifference with regard to potential results in general, yielding:

The Result Hypothesis:

Simple verbs in English are more systematic in expressing result conceptualisations (and
possibly other similarly abstract conceptualisations) than German ones. Differences
between quasi-synonyms are likely to be differences in terms of process and result reference
in English.

the English make - do contrast, particularly since den Kaffee kochen (lit.: ‘cook the coffee’) 
may be interpreted as a metonymic ‘result’ expression in the sense of HEATING UP THE
COFFEE IS MAKING IT. This would be a clear ‘result’ reading, thus blurring the alleged
contrast between machen (‘result’) and kochen (‘process’).
3. The role of ‘result’ and goal-orientation in English and German

As indicated above, many differences between English and German are even more subtle than the ones already discussed. Hence they are more difficult to analyse. For example, differences in verb meaning as in the following example can be revealed by considering the textual context only:

(46)

[A female police investigator talking to the head of a youth hostel, who is alleged to tolerate drug deals and happens to be her lover:]

“[...] On July the ninth, a call was made [...] to your hostel [...] it wasn’t to the payphone you’ve got in the hallway, the one that people use to do their drug deals.”

“They don’t use that phone to make drug deals,” Will said, “I think you’ll find that dealers prefer their own mobile phones.”

(French, Nicci: The Red Room, p. 292)

Here make drug deals and do drug deals appear to be synonymous at first sight. Following Fowler (1965: 136-137) we will most likely explain the above alternation by giving stylistic explanations (avoiding repetition, choice of informal register etc.). Persson (1989) would call the two expressions “synonyms” if they could be replaced without changing the meaning of the expressions, and “variants” if they yielded a difference in meaning. Duffley (1999), Swan (1995: 162-163), and Tobin (1993) will probably claim that they are “variants” in the above sense (or only partial synonyms), because replacing them would yield at least a slightly different meaning, and indeed there is a decisive difference concerning the environments they occur in. While the payphone ... people use to do their drug deals represents a general statement regarding the situation in the hostel, with the sole intention of the speaker to identify a specific telephone, They don’t use that phone to make drug deals occurs as part of a defense strategy: the head of the hostel takes it for granted that the investigator assumes that drug deals are actually carried out and hence completed via one of his payphones. No such commitment to ‘result’ meaning is made in connection with do drug deals. We see that the meanings of the signs here interact with their pragmatic functions regarding speech acts (see e.g. Thomson & Martinet 1986). Given the fact that there are differences in meaning which influence the most likely pragmatic functions, one may now ask whether there are expressions in German that point to exactly the same difference:

(47)

A.: „... das Telefon, an dem die Leute ihre Drogendeals machen / abschließen / tätigen / abwickeln.“

B.: „Sie schließen / wickeln an diesem Telefon keine Drogendeals ab ...“

„Sie tätigen / machen und diesem Telefon keine Drogendeals ...“
It is questionable whether the German verbs involved here reflect exactly the same difference in meaning as *make* and *do* in the English textual environment. In connection with prepositions there are indications that E makes result reference more explicit than German. For example, we have a tendency to express path-goal/result schemata where this would not necessarily be the case in German:

(48)
a. The Yanks **take a loss to** the Minnesota Twins. (WBBR 'On the Weekend', 4-8-00)
b. Die Yanks verloren **gegen** die Minnesota Twins.

*zu den

While English conceptualises the event of loosing as a figurative movement with a subsequent resultant state (‘the loss is at the Twins since the Yanks took it there’), German makes reference to force dynamics by using *gegen* ‘against’. English may also conceptualise an eventuality as such figurative movement where reference in German remains purely stative:

(49)
a. [We want] honesty **to** the White House. (George W. Bush on WBBR, 4-8-00)
b. Wir wollen Ehrlichkeit **in** Weißen Haus (/?in das Weiße Haus).

(50)
a. the president **to** S.’s hospital. (WBBR hospital commercial, 13-8-00)
b. der Präsident des S.-Krankenhauses (/*zum S. Krankenhaus).

The a-examples conceptualise a path-goal schema, while the German b-examples are stative and non-directional.

A strong tendency to present goal-focused and result-focused conceptualisations as ‘direction’ comes to the surface in all of the English examples. Similarly:

(51)
a. Be first **to the market-place** while your ideas are still hot. (WBBR commercial 11-8-00)
b. Seien Sie der erste **am** (/*zum) Markt solange Ihre Ideen heiß sind.
c. We understand you’re **in** [/*to] the market **for** a new car.

(Mitsubishi-commercial WBBR 11-8-00)
d. Wenn wir richtig verstehen, schauen Sie sich **am** Markt wegen eines neuen Autos um.

English here makes use of a path-goal schema in a (by **to**) or c (by **for**: directional orientation), where in German again only pure state reference occurs without directional components:
(52)

a. be first to the market place
   tr  ‘market place’
   ‘to’

b. you’re in the market for a new car
   ‘m.place’
   ‘for’

(53)

Closely connected with this one observes the tendency in English to express focus, integrality (“togetherness”), and perspectives where this is not necessary in German:

a. Twenty seconds is plenty of time to a thief. (AFN public-service announcement 1999)
   (‘time’ and ‘thief’ seen from the outside)

b. Twenty seconds is plenty of time for a thief.
   (focus is on the thief: ‘plenty of time’ characterises the thief as beneficiary)

c. 20 Sekunden sind viel Zeit für einen / *zu einem Dieb.

In example a we refer to the fact that 20 seconds are a lot of time in objective terms. The situation of possible burglary is presented as an integrated whole, of which the 20 seconds are an integral part. In b, by contrast, ‘plenty of time’ constitutes the amount time which the thief will find at his disposal as seen from his perspective. The focus is therefore on the thief who is characterised as beneficiary, and his view of the situation is highlighted. In the original public-service announcement, version a was probably chosen because it sounds more objective. German does not encode this difference systematically here, thus note the awkwardness of example a below:

(54)

a. 20 Sekunden sind viel Zeit im Hinblick auf einen Dieb.
   (situation seen from perspective of the speaker, i.e. from the outside)

b. 20 Sekunden sind viel Zeit für einen Dieb.
   (focus on the thief’s point of view)

5 In other contexts, the difference is maintained in German, however, as in:

a. new approaches to the prevention of cancer (WBBR news, Dec. 02)
   a’. neue Ansätze zur / der / in der Krebsvorbeugung (generic characterisation of the approaches)

b. new approaches for the prevention of cancer
   b’. neue Ansätze für die Krebsvorbeugung (signifying the purpose of the approaches)
We can thus interpret *to* as expressing “togetherness” in the sense that a situation is seen holistically, while *for* highlights one perspective or component part of that situation. This concerns prepositions, not verbs. It becomes relevant here, because a particular close affinity between the relational conceptualisations of prepositions and verbs can be found in English, as examples like the following show:

(55)
You have to **up** the chances and **up** the excitement.  (Conan O’Brian Show 28-8-99)

The prepositional element takes over entirely the function of a verb in expressing a relation between agent and affected object. Should there be a tendency for result conceptualisations to be expressed more explicitly in English than in German by using prepositions, it thus seems feasible ask whether this should not be the case in connection with verbs as well. Indeed, many verbs in English systematically distinguish between ‘process’ and ‘result’ reference and quasi-synonyms often form contrasts in this respect (examples from Tobin 1993):

(56)

a. This is how it **ended**. (reference to process leading to a result)
   a’. *This is how it **finished**.

b. the beginning of **the end** (‘end’ as process with duration)
   b’. the beginning of the **finish**

c. He **finished** off first. (reference to the result)
   c’. *He **ended** off first. (reference to a process)

In a (*This is how it ended*) we refer to a process and its specifications, i.e. to the process that led to the eventual termination of something, for example, a relationship. *Ended* is adequate to express semantic focus on the process phase, while *finished* seems infelicious. The same is shown by the derived nominalizations in b (*the beginning and the end*): only *end* may express focus on the process here, of which we particularly highlight the beginning, not *finish*. By contrast, in c (*He finished off first*) we concentrate on the fact that somebody was the winner of a race (as a result). Focus is thus on the result and *finish* becomes adequate.

Also, note those cases where result orientation is marked by the verb lexeme itself, whereas in German we need additional prepositional adjuncts or complex predicate complements involving particles, as in:

(57)
They **made** it an all-talk station.
Sie machten **aus ihr** eine Talk-Radiostation. (*aus*: literally ‘out of’)
Sie wandelten sie **in eine Talk-Radiostation um**. (literally: ‘transfer / change ... into’
Again, the expression of the result conceptualisation involved seems to be more part of the verb lexeme itself in English than in German.

Result schemata in the sense of cognitive linguistics are largely presented as being motivated by the following metaphor: REACHING A (RESULT) STATE IS ARRIVING AT A LOCATION (see e.g. Radden 1995: 23). Both English and German incorporate deictic meanings in such conceptualisations, as conveyed by come in the following (examples are from Radden 1995, G translations are mine):

(58)

a. All good things come to an end.
   a’. Alle guten Dingen kommen einmal zum Ende.

b. The postwar period is coming to a close.
   b’. Die Nachkriegszeit kommt nun zu ihrem Ende.

There are many cases where English encodes meaning in deictic terms where this is not the case in German (again, Radden’s examples, translations are mine):

c. Thatcher’s postwar era had come to nought.
   c’. Die Thatcher-Nachkriegsära hat sich in nichts verflüchtigt.

d. She had come to realise that she couldn’t be trusted.
   d’. Sie begann (*kam dahin) einzusehen, daß sie ihm nicht trauen konnte.

e. Postwar European order is coming apart.
   e’. Die europäische Nachkriegsordnung fällt (*kommt) auseinander.

While English uses the goal location as deictic perspective in all of these examples, in German other perspectives are conveyed, and additional points serve as “ground” against which the conceptualised movement is measured: in c’ in nichts verflüchtigt ‘dissolved into nothing’ we view the event from the source perspective (movement: in ‘into something’ as seen from the outside), in begann einzusehen ‘started to realise’ the event is presented as inchoative, i.e. relative to the temporal source location which serves as ground, and in e’ fällt ... auseinander ‘fell apart’ the source is again the ground (aus, literally ‘out of’).

Here auseinanderfallen functions as a single verb and grounding is conveyed by prefixes (“satellites” in the sense of Talmy 1985). In English deictic perspective is expressed consistently by come in the above examples, while German is more

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6 Radden (p. 33) also points out that this clearly has to be seen as a typological universal by which we classify languages. Thus, Russian uses reflexives “anti-causative” constructions in such contexts, where ‘the lecture comes to an end’ would be translated as ‘the lecture ends itself’ (lekcija končajetsja) and thus contrasts with both English and German. Radden (ibid.) calls the deictic meanings inherent in verbs like come and go “focus”, however (by contrast to strictly speaker-oriented “deixis”), a view to which I do not subscribe, see 3.3.4 for details.
consistent in marking the source as ground by various means, most notably
satellites (separable or inseparable prefixes). Moreover, where German does use
deictic *kommen* ‘come’, English tends to use more specific verbs:

(59)
a. Sein Auftritt kam gut an. (resultant impression)
a’. His performance was greatly appreciated.

b. Das kommt darauf an ob ... (reference to a process of deliberation)
b’. It depends on whether ...

c. Das kommt dabei raus! (result seen with regard to a process)
c’. This is what this leads to!

In these examples English makes more specific reference to the nature of the
process that leads to the result in b’ and c’, while in a’ more specific reference is
made to the nature of the result itself. We thus arrive at the following
preliminary assumption: verbs in German are more precise in the sense that they
impose greater restrictions on the semantic types of arguments they take (and
arguably show more specific meaning content), while English verbs express
certain types of abstract conceptualisations such as deictic perspective in a more
systematic way. Particularly in ‘result’ contexts at least some English verbs tend
to be more specific by the semantic content incorporated in the lexeme. We may
generalise this as the “result hypothesis” already mentioned.

The three concepts focus, deictic perspective / viewpoint, and temporal
grounding introduced above will clearly have to be kept apart. Consider, for
example:

(60)
a. You can bring a friend (to my party).
a’. *Du kannst einen Freund bringen.
a’’. Du kannst einen Freund mitbringen.

The German prefix *mit*- expresses path grounding, i.e. it connects the figure
involved with the movement along the path. In English grounding does not show
up directly, but the optional PP contains *to*, which presents the figure with
regard to the goal location (see our earlier analyses). This means that the goal
serves as ground here. Note that we may find the same PP with *bring* and *take*. Both therefore have to be considered cases of goal grounding with the potential
grounding properties incorporated in the verb. While the deictic perspective
associated with *bring* is the goal location, *take* has the source location as its
deictic viewpoint, however. This shows us that the expression of deictic
viewpoint or perspective is not the same as temporal grounding and that we have
to keep these notions apart. The other important concept is semantic focus.
Thus, we may say that in English verbs like *kill* or *slaughter* place the focus on
the process phase. This shows up in collocations like *That's killing me!* which clearly signify the process phase. If we compare *kill* to the German verb *töten*, we notice that such collocational uses are not possible, hence: *Das tötet mich.* We may therefore conclude that E *kill* focuses on the process, while G *töten* may only focus on the result.

4. A closer look at the lexicon and morphology

4.1 General considerations

Theoretically there are three possible inter-language relations amongst lexical items: (a) one English expression corresponds to exactly one German expression - a case of complete English-German equivalence. (b) One English expression corresponds to several German expressions. In these cases we have English - German divergence. (c) As a third possibility, several English expressions correspond to one German expression, which marks a case of English - German convergence (see e.g. Hüllen 1971: 3 ff.). We can assume that complete E-G equivalence on the inter-language level is probably as hard to find as complete synonymy on the intra-language level.

4.2 English-German divergence

4.2.1 Typical patterns as reflected in dictionaries

In bi-lingual dictionaries typically E-G divergence patterns like the following can be found, and these occur particularly in connection with result verbs (based on PONS-Collins):

\[(61)\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E: produce</th>
<th>German: herstellen, erzeugen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>produce crops</td>
<td>die Ernte <em>abwerfen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce coal</td>
<td>Kohle <em>fördern</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a book</td>
<td>ein Buch <em>schreiben</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a sculpture</td>
<td>eine Skulptur <em>anfertigen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce one’s masterpiece</td>
<td>sein Meisterwerk <em>hervorbringen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a pistol</td>
<td>eine Pistole <em>ziehen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce one’s wallet</td>
<td>seine Brieftasche <em>hervorholen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a play</td>
<td>ein Bühnenstück <em>inszenieren</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce bitterness</td>
<td>Bitterkeit <em>hervorrufen</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly:
4.2.2 German prefixes and English particles

4.2.2.1 German prefixes as Aktionsart-markers

Arguably, the prefixes make the German verbs more specific. This can be supported by the fact that the choice of prefixes is not random. Rather, it represents a systematic selection, as in the above examples, where we find:

(62)

$hervor$- ‘source grounding’; ‘out of’; ‘goal deixis’

$los$- ‘source grounding’; ‘away from’

$raus$- ‘source grounding’; ‘out of’

$weg$- ‘source grounding’, ‘away from’

$ab$- ‘source grounding’, ‘away from (a path)’

$ver$- ‘result meaning’, (here:) ‘source grounding’, ‘focus on the object and its distribution’

The concepts expressed are primarily spatial concepts that become metaphorized, as in $hervorbringen$ ‘produce’, literally ‘bring forth’. Brinton (1988:203) observes a historical change from purely spatial meanings in the Old-Germanic languages to “aspectual”, or rather ‘Aktionsart-’ meanings in modern Germanic languages. She uses Old English as an example, where the Germanic spatial meanings were still apparent, while in Modern German the meanings associated with prefixes are said to be predominantly aspectual (ibid.):
This also shows that German prefixes are historically connected to meanings which involve spatial **grounding** which is the orientation of an event with regard to a point in time, typically the source or the goal of the event. Eichinger (1989, 2000) claims that Aktionsart-meanings (i.e. event types), aspect (in the sense of temporal perspectivization) and spatial meanings are expressed by Modern German prefixes. He gives a taxonomy along the following lines:

**Meanings of Prefixes:**

1. **object focus**: be-, ent-, as in: beenden ‘end’, entleeren ‘empty’, entbinden (von) ‘free s.b. / s.th. from’, entzücken ‘delight someone’
2. **aspectual orientation**: er, ver-, zer-, as in: erreichen ‘reach’, verletzen ‘hurt’, zerlegen ‘put apart’
3. **negation**: miss-, as in: missverstehen ‘misinterpret’, missbrauchen ‘misuse’

Eichinger (2000: 230) sets these inseparable prefixes apart from separable prefixes, which he calls “particles” (the list is slightly adapted, E translations are mine):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>particle</th>
<th>topological</th>
<th>dimensional</th>
<th>aspectual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ein</td>
<td>einsitzen (be imprisoned)</td>
<td></td>
<td>einschlafen (fall asleep)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eintauchen (dive)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(indulge in)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>einsteigen (step on, enter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>einpacken (pack)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aus</td>
<td>aussteigen (leave)</td>
<td></td>
<td>ausfüllen (fill out)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>auspacken (unpack)</td>
<td></td>
<td>ausleeren (empty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zu</td>
<td>vor</td>
<td>ab</td>
<td>nach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuorden (allot)</td>
<td>vorstehen (head)</td>
<td>abliegen (ab)</td>
<td>nachlaufen (run after)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auf</td>
<td>auffliegen (sit, lie on)</td>
<td>abfahren (leave)</td>
<td>vorarbeiten (work in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aufpreten (occur)</td>
<td>aufblühen (blossom)</td>
<td>absinken (sink)</td>
<td>vorrücken (advance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auflegen (hang up)</td>
<td>aufheben (pick up)</td>
<td>abfahren (leave)</td>
<td>vorarbeiten (work in)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly to the prefixes, the “particles” may encode spatial meaning (aussteigen – Er stieg aus; nachlaufen – Er läuft ihr nach etc.). They also express Aktionsart (einschlafen – Er schief ein; aufblühen – Die Blume blüht auf; ausfüllen –Er füllt das Formular aus), and particles determine the argument frame of the verb (Er schläft einen guten Schlaf – Er schläft (*einen guten Schlaf) ein; Er steht dem Unternehmen vor – Er steht (*dem Unternehmen)).

Although these particles are separable from the verb, co-occurrences of particles and prefixes are often subject to restrictions:

(65)
vorbehandeln ‘prepare’
*anbehandeln ‘start treating s.th.’
nachbehandeln ‘add finishing touches’
vorschieben ‘delay’
nachverleimen ‘glue together again’
* nachversprechen ‘promise once more’
nachvertonen ‘dub (a movie)’

* anverrücken ‘move s.th. against s.th.’
* ausbeschreiben ‘describe s.th. in its entirety’

---

7 Härtl & Witt (1998: 13) point out that particles as in Ingrid legte ihre Folien auf ‘I. put her transparencies on (the overhead projector)’ have to be kept apart from anaphoric adverbials, as in Ingrid legte ihre Folien darauf ‘I. put her transparencies on (it)’. In the second case darauf anaphorically refers to a location that can be made explicit (darauf → auf den Projektor), while auf is more like a truncated prepositional phrase (auflegen → auf den Projektor legen). Furthermore, while there is an infinitive auflegen, it seems questionable whether we should still regard darauflegen as a simple verb – this shows that we are actually dealing with a continuum from bound prefixes (like ver-, be-) via independent particles (as auf above) to anaphoric adverbials (like darauf); also see below.
The restrictions suggest that combination is not possible where it results in some form of semantic redundancy, although it is hard to find such redundancy in ill-formed examples like *vorbetreten ‘enter before s.o.’ (vor- ‘before’ + be- ‘object focus’ + -treten ‘step’). The restrictions may also be an indication of the fact that particles and prefixes may fill the same syntactic slot (thus excluding each other).

Prefixes and particles differ in terms of connectedness or “fusion” with the verb stem. For example, the particle in hinaustreten ‘step outside’ is more transparent than the inseparable prefix in betreten ‘enter’, since the meaning of be- is much more opaque than the spatial expression hinaus-. Eichinger (1989: 354 ff.) shows that most separable prefixes (particles) establish coherent semantic subsystems, as in:

**temporal deixis:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vorbestellen ‘order in advance’</th>
<th>bestellen ‘order’</th>
<th>nachbestellen ‘re-order’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE</td>
<td>DEICTIC CENTER</td>
<td>AFTER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talmy’s notion of grounding also plays a role (cp.3.3.5):

**spatial grounding:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hereinholen ‘take inside’</th>
<th>holen ‘pick up’</th>
<th>hineinholen ‘take (bring) inside’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(GOAL as ground)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(SOURCE as ground)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: the deictic viewpoint is the GOAL perspective in all cases of holen.

Hundsnurscher (1968) observes that the ability to refer to coherent semantic sub-systems leads to the tendency to form morphological substitutions. Parts of a prefixed verb then become substituted to form another word, provided that the new morphemes (and particles) belong to the same semantic sub-system as the original ones (also see Becker 1993). This not only applies to separable German prefixes (particles), but also to English prefixed verbs (German examples from Becker 1993: 186):

(66)

| einpacken | - | auspacken | pack | - | unpack |
| einschließen | - | ausschließen | include | - | exclude |
| einklammern | - | ausklammern | put in brackets | - | put outside brackets / exclude |
| einhaken | - | aushaken | hook | - | unhook |
| einfädeln | - | ausfädeln | filter into the stream of traffic | - | slip out of ... |
| eintragen | - | austragen | fill in | - | erase |
| einfassen | - | ausfassen | put a fence around a patch of land | - | remove a fence from ... |
| einrahmen | - | ausrahmen | frame | - | remove a frame from |
| einspannen | - | ausspannen | to fit / put in a frame | - | remove from a frame |
The predominant morphological derivation process in German as presented here is not of the form A > BA (with B being the prefix), but rather BA > CA, i.e. one word constituent becomes substituted, according to Becker. The above items mark opposites, i.e. a systematic relation holds between the first and the second item. Systematic semantic relations also apply in pairs that are not strictly opposites, like:

(67)
aufschreiben - niederschreiben

As could be seen in the chart above, substitution of prefixes to yield systematic semantic contrasts is possible for the E prefixed items as well, for example, in overestimate – underestimate, upgrade - downgrade. It is not possible with most particle verbs, however:

(68)

bring up a point – *bring down a point
run down the business activities – ?run up the business activities
step down from a post - *step up to a post
write something down – *write s.th. up (on a board)

In fact, the inability to form opposites along the lines

(69)

*He came up and down with a idea.
*He brought up and down a point.

represents a test to prove that we are dealing with particle verbs, and not with verbs followed by a simple prepositional phrase, as in:

(70)

He walked up and down the hill.
She stepped on and off the radio.

The stronger tendency to form morphological substitution in connection with German separable prefixes (particles) thus reflects a tendency towards more systematic semantic relations amongst the particles in German, as opposed to English particles whose meanings seem more opaque and idiosyncratic in these cases. Some German prefixes, most notably inseparable ones like be-, ver-, ent- or miss-, do not have systematic counterparts which establish clear-cut systems either, however.

Rauh (1999) shows that at least some German separable prefixes (particles) like auf-, an-, über – have meanings that are directly derived from the meanings of the corresponding prepositions. One may deduce from this that systematic
relations amongst the prepositions also mean systematic relations amongst the prefixes. More specifically, Rauh claims that the meanings of particles (separable prefixes in G) are associated with the prototypical meanings of prepositions via meaning chains, but contrary to earlier approaches (cp. Brugman 1981, Lakoff 1987) she does not consider the way such chaining takes place universal. Instead, Rauh sees meaning chains as being motivated by the positions of the linguistic elements in their respective language-specific lexical fields. For example, we may have a particle meaning that can potentially be derived from the corresponding preposition via a chain, but the resulting meaning may already be expressed by another particle. In this case the potential meaning chain will not be realised, although a corresponding chain may exist in other languages. Besides discussing German particles, Rauh applies the idea of language-specific chaining to English particles like on (turn on the radio), whose meanings she also regards as being derived from the respective prepositions. For example, in the case of the particle in turn s.th. on, the ‘continuation’ sense of on is analysed as being linked to the ‘contact’ sense of the preposition on (as in on the surface): ‘continuation’ is seen as ‘contact’ of a state with a reference time.

With respect to German auf the following prototypical meanings are given (p. 111; slightly abbreviated by me, my emphases)\(^8\):

(71)

prototypical meanings according to Rauh (1999):

\[ \text{auf} \]

for stative contexts:
- **theme object** and **reference object** are related spatially
- location of the theme object is specified relative to the reference object
- **vertical relation**: the theme object is higher than the reference object
- **contact** between the theme object and the reference object
- the reference object is conceptualised as a horizontal surface
- the reference object **supports** the theme

for dynamic contexts:
- **movement** of the theme object **towards a goal** (the reference object)

---

\(^8\) Although (the preposition!) auf can often be translated as on (auf dem Berg; on the hill) Rauh (p. 112) sees a fundamental difference between the two in the sense that auf may signify movement (er stand auf ‘he stood up’, er schoß auf den Fuchs ‘he shot at the fox’), while on is limited to stative ‘contact’ senses and its derivations, hence he stood up / *on, or the hunter shot at / *on the fox. Case selection makes the stative or dynamic uses of auf explicit in German, thus we have Er schoß auf den Laster (Accusative) ‘he shot at the van’, vs. Er schoß auf dem Laster (Dative) ‘he shot (while standing) on the van’ (also cp. Wollmann 1996: 32 ff.).
With these prototypical meanings, particle meanings like the following are said to be directly associated:

a) contact, support, horizontal surface of the reference object:
   * etwas aufbringen ‘apply (paint)’, aufdrücken ‘print s.th. on s.th.’, aufprägen ‘emboss / stamp’, auflackieren ‘varnish’, aufpausen ‘trace (on s.th.)’, ...

b) movement towards a goal, vertical relation, support:
   
   **ergative:**
   aufsteigen ‘climb up’, auftauchen ‘to surface’, aufrappeln ‘recover’, aufstehen ‘get up’, aufstreben ‘aspire’, ...

   **causative:**
   etwas aufsetzen ‘put s.th. on’, aufrichten ‘erect’, aufhieven ‘heave s.th. up’, aufheben ‘break s.th open (with a lever)’, aufhängen ‘hang s.th. on s.th.’, etwas aufheben ‘pick s.th. up (from the ground)’, ...

We also see less prototypical meanings along the following lines (amongst others):

movement towards a goal, vertical relation, support;
plus: repeatedly locating the object on the vertical dimension:
   * etwas auftürmen ‘pile up’, aufstopfen ‘stack up’, aufstocken ‘build more storeys onto’,
   aufhäufeln ‘make a heap’

look or glance as goal-oriented movement:
   * aufsehen / aufschauen / aufblicken ‘look up’,

upward movement (i.e. goal-oriented) re-interpreted as ameliorization:
   * etwas aufbessern ‘improve’, aufarbeiten ‘refurbish’, auffrischen ‘polish / brush up’, jemanden aufmuntern / aufheitern ‘cheer someone up’, ...

   * auf as a general marker of perfectivity (derived from ‘goal-oriented movement’):
   aufessen ‘eat up’, aufbrauchen ‘use up’, auflauen ‘de-frost’, auflassen ‘abandon’, ...

---

9 The verb *aufstocken* can also mean ‘build another (i.e. one) storey onto a building’ (according to Collins-PONS). In this case it would not denote repeated action.

10 This verb *aufhäufeln* is not in my vocabulary, neither could it be found in the bilingual dictionaries consulted here. It contrasts with *aufhäufen* ‘pile up’ in that the latter means ‘pile up in large amounts’. It may be questioned whether *aufhäufen* necessarily denotes ‘repeated action’, as e.g. in *Die Arbeit häufte sich vor mir auf* ‘I had work piling up in front of me’, while *aufhäufeln* probably will.
The system of meaning chains advocated by Rauh can account for certain intra-language contrasts (translations based on Collins-PONS):

(72)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>etwas aufbringen</td>
<td>'apply (e.g. paint)'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'fix s.th. on s.th', ‘post s.th (on a wall)’</td>
<td>(surface seen as horizontal) (surface seen as vertical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etwas aufkleben</td>
<td>'glue s.th'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'post on a wall'</td>
<td>(horizontal surface) (vertical surface)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etwas aufnageln</td>
<td>'nail on'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'nail on'</td>
<td>(horizontal surface) (vertical surface)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etwas aufnahen</td>
<td>'sew on', 'sew up'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(horizontal surface)</td>
<td>(vertical surface)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This would indeed point in the direction of relatively systematic delimitation of the ranges of possible prefix-uses in German due to interaction with other prefixes, whose ranges of application are also systematically delimited. At least the translations in Collins-PONS indicate that distinctions like *aufnageln* vs. *annageln* are not reflected in English (*nail on* as translation for both of them). Similarly: *aufnähen* vs. *annähen*, which are both translated as *sew on*.

The field-dependent meaning chains leading from prototypical prepositional meanings to more or less derived prefix (particle) meanings do not directly explain the role of different degrees of fusion amongst the prefixes and the stems, however. One may perhaps say that greater fusion amongst stem and particle leads to a higher degree of abstraction and thus movement away from the most prototypical meanings connected with the prefix (e.g. in cases where 'perfectivity’ becomes in turn re-analysed as ingressiveness or egressiveness, as in *aufhören* ‘end’, *aufgeben* ‘give up’, *aufmerken* ‘suddenly pay attention to’ and where the stems lose their original meanings).

The last point becomes particularly relevant, since German prefixed verbs reflect the iconic proximity principle, according to which elements that stand more closely together or that cannot be separated are closer connected in meaning than elements that do not stand together or which can be separated
This particularly applies to the “double particle” verbs (Eichinger 2000: 165-167), where the two particles form inseparable units, as in:

(73)

hinwegrasen (hin +weg +rasen) – ‘buzz off’ – *Er wegraste hin.
hinaustragen (hin + aus + tragen) – ‘carry outside’ – *Er austrug den Eimer (‘the bucket’) hin.
hervortreten (her + vor + treten) – ‘step forward’ – *Er vortraf her.

As already indicated, there is a continuum in terms of fusion from prefixed verbs with inseparable prefixes, via particle verbs (in Eichinger’s sense) with separable particles, to two-word compounds as:

(74)

anhaben ‘wear’ (separable particle an ‘at’)
recht haben ‘be right’ (noun Recht ‘justice’)

(sich) verliegen ‘hurt ones’ back while sleeping’ (inseparable result prefix ver-)
einliegen ‘lie in a new bed until it becomes more comfortable’ (separable particle ein ‘in’)
falsch liegen ‘be wrong about s.th.’ (predicate adjective falsch ‘wrong’)

kaputt analysieren ‘analyse until it becomes unclear’ (predicate adjective kaputt ‘broken’)

(compare e.g. Ackema 1995: 316 ff. for an analysis of similar constructions in Dutch).

To summarize, German particles and prefixes constitute similar syntactic categories (hence the widespread collocation restrictions) but their use is highly sensitive to the proximity principle. In general we find that the inseparable and separable prefixes (particles) systematically encode lexical content where mutual replacement is possible within these two categories. Greater restrictions on the semantic types of arguments in German are largely due to the semantic content of the prefixes.

4.2.2.2 German prefixed verbs as holistic constructions

One may doubt whether prefixes, which are used extensively in German, make verbs more specific, however. Instead, there are indications that separable and inseparable prefixes are to be seen as integral parts of lexemes and that many prefixed verbs are to be analysed more or less holistically (in an idiomatic way, if you will). Thus, Becker (1993: 187) makes the point that morphological

11 The idea of varying degrees of fusion with the stem is taken to its extreme by Kunsmann (1973: 129), albeit in a transformational framework, where the German verb mißtrauen ‘mistrust’ is analyzed as being derived from an underlying double-prefix verb mißvertrauen, wherby ver+trauen (G vertrauen ‘trust’) become “collapsed” to yield mißtrauen on the surface.
substitution sometimes yields new lexemes which cannot be analysed compositionally anymore (ibid.):

(75)

- a. \[ \text{Part} \rightarrow V \rightarrow \text{untrennlich} \]
  \[ 
  \begin{array}{c}
  \text{auf-} \\
  \text{be-} \\
  \end{array} 
  \begin{array}{c}
  \text{brechen} \\
  \text{gehen} \\
  \end{array} 
  \]

- b. \[ \text{Part} \rightarrow V \rightarrow \text{untrennlich} \]
  \[ 
  \begin{array}{c}
  \text{auf-} \\
  \text{be-} \\
  \end{array} 
  \begin{array}{c}
  \text{-decken} \\
  \text{-treten} \\
  \end{array} 
  \]

The stem in *aufdecken* ‘reveal / uncover’ is metaphorical (*-decken* ‘(un)cover’ for ‘reveal’) and *betreten* is metonymical (*-treten* ‘hit the ground’ for ‘appear’), but both uses are relatively opaque compared to the examples in a. Substitution of the prefix by a “systematic” counterpart may not yield systematic and expected results, as in

(76)

- *auslaufen* ‘run out of’ (of liquid) - *einlaufen* ‘shrink’ (dress / clothing)

While in the case of *aus-* ‘out’ the verb *laufen* ‘run (liquid)’ is still recognisable, the stem becomes more opaque in connection with *ein-* (literally:) ‘into’ in *einlaufen* (‘shrink’).

To account for how prefixed German verbs fit into word fields, the relationships amongst them as well as to simple verbs may be interpreted in two ways: a) verbs with the same stem that differ in their prefix are simply two independent lexemes that have nothing in common, i.e. we should analyse them holistically, not compositionally, as two entirely different words, or, b) the prefixes are simply a way of expressing something in a systematic manner that modifies a common verb core, i.e. prefixed expressions in German should be analysed compositionally. If a) (the holistic interpretation) applies, the occurrence of prefixed verbs in English - German divergence patterns is to be seen as an indication that the implication of Hawkins’s findings concerning English verbs’ being semantically vague (see 1.4 and below) applies. Should b) hold (systematic relations between prefixed verbs that have the same stem), this statement would at least require some modification.

There are strong arguments in favour of a) (holistic interpretation), however. Thus, most prefixes in G are obligatory in order to express the eventuality concept involved. For example, the simple verb *treten* (‘hit’) attains a completely different meaning than *betreten* (‘enter’). We can say that *-treten* in *betreten* functions like a bound morpheme, provided we want to regard it as a morpheme at all. We should therefore include complex items like *betreten* ‘enter’, or even clearer: *aufhören* ‘stop’, as single-word expressions in word
fields in the sense that they are semantically lexicalized but morphologically still transparent to a certain degree. The same is true of the following examples:

(77)

a. Er versaute den Tisch. ‘He messed up the table’.

b. *Er saute den Tisch.

The morphemes ver- and -sauen are bound morphemes here (object and result focus of ver-, -sauen derived from Sau ‘sow’) the verb, although complex, functions like a single lexical item. The lexical content of German prefixes gets typically fused with the stem in the sense that both do not really function independently. We shall thus regard verbs like versauen as holistic result verbs.

Even if we establish that prefixes in German are integral parts of single-lexeme verbs and and that these expressions can best be interpreted holistically, we may still ask whether the presence of such prefixes really points to less semantic vagueness. Some authors doubt this. Thus, following Durrell (1992: 93- 96), Fischer (1997: 303) regards prefixes simply as a way of allowing verbs to project more (not less!) semantic roles on the accusative complements, as in:

(78)

accusative **addressee-complement** made possible by prefix:
- anlügen ‘lie to somebody’ (vs. intransitive: lügen ‘lie’)
- belügen ‘lie to somebody’
- anflunkern ‘tell stories / make up stories’ (vs. intransitive flunkern)
  (eine Frau) anmachen, anbaggern ‘harass (a woman)’ (also: beneficiary?)

accusative **goal – complement** made possible by prefix:
- beziehen ‘move into a place’ / ‘cover (a bed with sheets)’
- besichtigen ‘visit (a location)’

But even here it could be concluded that we need the prefix to make a verb match the clear-cut case-system, at least as far as the accusative case is concerned. At first sight the thesis of less semantic vagueness, less room for ambiguities and as a result stronger restrictions on the semantic types of complements that verbs take in German may thus hold. We would then expect English - German divergence as a general tendency.

4.2.2.3 English phrasal particles as counterparts of germanic prefixes

Phrasal particles in English are often seen as the etymological counterpart of the German prefixes (Curme 1913/14). They form an integral part of the English lexicon. For example, as translations for G trennen, in Collins-PONS the following items are listed amongst others):
Verbs like *take away*, *take off* and *split up* are considered phrasal verbs or particle verbs, similar to constructions like *turn off the radio*, *run down business activities* (Sroka 1972: ch. 1). The items are formally identical with prepositions, but particles can be distinguished from them by linguistic tests (Bolinger 1971: ch. 1). For example, phrasal verbs can be accompanied by a prepositional phrase like any single verb: *take something away from somebody*, *split up the sum into several smaller amounts*. The particle may also not be fronted together with a NP that follows it. Thus we have *Down the hill rolled the wheel-chair* in the case of prepositional phrases, but not *Down the business activities he ran* in the case of particles. Another test is object placement between verb and particle as in *take off a patch from the dress* / *take a patch off from the dress*; *turn the radio on* / *turn on the radio*. This is only possible with particles, but not with prepositions, as in *step on the radio* / *step the radio on* (see e.g. Bolinger 1971, ch. 1, Kilby 1984: ch. 6, Radford 1984: ch. 2.5). The test only applies to transitive verbs, and even here it does not apply to all particle verbs, however.

Possible object placement between verb and particle suggests several alternative syntactic interpretations of phrasal constructions, here contrasted with a non-phrasal PP complement in a:
non-phrasal (V + PP):

a. VP
   V
   step
   PP
   on the radio

phrasal:

b. VP
   verb
   NP
   turn
   Part
   S
   the radio
   off
c. VP
   verb
   turn
   NP
   Part (Adjective)
   the radio
   off

d. VP
   V
   NP
   turn
   Part
   off
   the radio

e. VP
   V
   turn
   off
   the radio

In b (from Kilby 1984: 99) the particle is part of the verb, c (adapted from Bolinger 1971: 91) corresponds to the analysis of resultative constructions discussed in 2.3, where the particle is seen as an adjective in a secondary predication. Diagram c may well apply where resultant state expressions of the type *The radio is off* are implied by phrasal verbs, but it may be out where this is not possible, as in the *bring up an idea - *An idea is up. Diagrams d – e show how the relation between V-Obj-Part (*turn the radio off*) and V-Part-Obj (*turn off the radio*) have also been described in terms of “backward” particle movement from the final position (Emonds 1976) or even “forward” movement from in-between the verb and the object NP into the position after the object NP (compare e.g. Kunsmann 1973 based on Legum 1968). Following the

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12 Legum also points to the fact that sentences like *John ran away* seem to be derived from sentences of the form *John ran away to Europe*. Here *away* is said to be a particle because it can be modified by an additional directional PP. Analyzing *away* as a particle that can occur without the following PP also implies an incorporation rule where the particle (*away*), the following preposition (*to*) and the NP from inside the PP (*Europe*) become incorporated in a
“backward” movement approach (movement into the position between verb and object NP), Hawkins (1994: 70-71; 180 ff.) shows that preferences concerning the moved or unmoved variant are at least in part performance-driven, i.e. dependent on the amount of material in-between the verb and the object NP, which results from the movement (more material in case of complex particle phrases is more difficult to process, cf. John turned the radio on and off \(\rightarrow\) *John turned on and off the radio\(\)).\footnote{Also compare Kunsmann (1973: 156).} Dehé (2002) claims that particle placement is largely determined by the way in which we present information in terms of functional properties of the context (e.g. as parts of given-new or theme-rheme dichotomies).

The translations for (sich) trennen above show that similarly to the German prefixed verbs, English verb + particle constructions are an integral part of the English vocabulary and should be considered lexical units that stand in paradigmatic opposition with simple verbs as well as with each other. Disregarding their exact syntactic status, the particles are therefore similar to German prefixes, because they modify the meaning of the verb and determine the argument frame of the verbs.

Semantic analyses also suggest that the meanings of the particles are similar to those of the German prefixes (see e.g. Brinton 1988: ch. 4). Thus we have:

\[(81)\]

**spatial concepts:**
bring forth an idea, bear out a hypothesis, carry out a plan

**aspectual meaning:**
cut away at the bread (atelic)
cut off a piece of bread (telic)

**object focus:**
run a factory
run down a factory (focusing on terminal state of the factory)

hammer (intransitive; activity verb)
hammer out an agreement (transitive, achievement verb)

The above meanings correspond to the semantic categories used by Eichinger (2000) for German prefixes. In addition, metaphoric extension of the spatial meanings can be observed (Lindner 1983), as with German prefixes.

Despite the semantic resemblance of English particles to German prefixes, Brinton (1988: 185) rejects the idea of simply regarding phrasal verbs in English as a replacement of the old Germanic prefixes:

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13 Also compare Kunsmann (1973: 156).
“From Old English to Early Modern English, the language underwent an important structural shift, from a productive system of verbal prefixes to a new system of post-verbal particles. In this shift, phrasal verbs as well as prepositional verbs came to be the functional equivalents of the older prefixed verbs [...] Though many of the modern post-verbal particles are the etymological counterparts of the verbal prefixes, it seems now clear that the system of post-verbal particles represents a new development [...] not a continuance in any direct way of the older system of prefixation, nor the ‘survival of the primordial phrasal verb’ of Proto-Indo-European.”

The remaining prefixes in English are therefore not semantic equivalents of newer particles, but have to be regarded as a complementary system. In German, by contrast, separated particles are simply syntax-driven variants of the prefixed forms, as already shown:

(82)
, daß er das Haus einriß. ‘that he broke down the building’
Er riß das Haus ein. ‘he broke down the building’

In English the prefixed verbs do not bear the same relation with separated particles. Forming a particle verb out of a prefixed verb is either impossible or yields expressions with different meanings: overrun – run over; underestimate - *estimate under; uphold - *hold up., overdo s.th. – do s.th. over, overlook s.th. – look s.th. over. While prefixed verbs and particle constructions are thus syntactic variants in German, in English particle verbs and prefixed verbs form complementary systems in encoding meanings. For example, by contrast to the typical meanings of ‘completion / result’ of English phrasal verbs (see below), typical meanings expressed by English prefixed verbs are: excess (overdo), lack (underestimate s.th), defeat (overrun, outweigh), persistence (uphold), or converseness (undo, unravel).

Even more so than the German prefixed verbs, English phrasal verbs have been considered expressing ‘result’ meaning of some sort. For example, Kilby 1984: 102) notes:

“... all phrasal verbs have resultative meaning of some sort – i.e. they specify a state of affairs which results from the action denoted by the verb.”

Similarly, Bolinger (1971: 99-100) talks about “perfective meaning as manifested in a resultant situation” (in connection with up), and Lipka (1972: 182) considers die out, write out or puzzle out as “completive”, and verbs like burn out or live out as “terminative”. Kennedy (1920: 24) sees “exhaustion and extinction” as meanings in blind out, die out, wear out, and Curme (1931: 381) observes “terminative slant” in verbs like pay off, write off and sleep off (for a more extensive listing of such ‘result’ meanings in connection with phrasal verbs see e.g. Brinton 1988: 243 ff.).

As in the case of German prefixes and particles, other aspectual meanings besides ‘completion / result’ may also be expressed, as e.g. ingressiveness, e.g.
in set out (Lipka 1972: 182) or continuative meaning, as in cut away at the bread; roll along down the river, but in general the range of aspectual meanings seems more restricted to ‘result’ and ‘ingressive’ conceptualisations than in German.

Bolinger (1971: Ch. 8), Traugott (1978) and Brinton (1988: ch. 6) consider phrasal particles to be an integral part of the English aspectual system, together with other “aspectualizers” like the catenatives begin, continue, stop and used. While the latter are said to mark “aspect” in the sense of perspectivizing situations (Brinton 1988: 235), the particles are seen as Aktionsart-markers (ibid.; Bolinger 1971: 98).

Traugott (1978: 393) points to the fact that despite metaphorized spatial concepts in connection with particles like up and down, these particles do not form coherent sub-systems when used as aspectual markers. Traugott thus contrasts the coherent sub-system in the vertical dimension, as expressed by up ‘earlier’ vs. down ‘later’, with neutralisation of such differences in connection with purely aspectual uses of the same items:

(83)

**temporal:**
They came up with a good idea. (‘earlier’)
They came down with an agreement. (‘later’)

**aspectual:**
He drank up his beer.
He drank down his beer. (contrast neutralised)

While there is a difference in meaning in the temporal examples, there is only a slight difference in the aspectual sentences in the sense that drink down induces (slight) negative connotations, as opposed to up (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: ch. 4). Similarly, in the following, no Aktionsart-distinction is established at all:

(84)
He wrote up the report. (‘completed the report’)
He wrote down the report. (‘completed the report’; down as dimensional marker)

As opposed to German, where particles (prefixes) tend to form coherent sub-systems, we therefore observe a tendency of the English Aktionsart-particles not to form apparent coherent oppositions and therefore semantic subsystems in English.

This is in line with the fact that meanings of phrasal verbs are considered idiomatic or at least to some degree opaque (Bolinger 1971, Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs 1989: ix), and the constructions are fixed and stereoptyped, or, as Bolinger (p. 110) puts it:

“The parts of these combinations can no longer be freely assembled and disassembled”.
In the *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* (1989: ix) it is highlighted that the resulting constructions form lexical units without special grammatical status:

“The fact that a particular verb + particle construction is idiomatic need not affect its grammar.”

By contrast, Gries (1998) provides empirical evidence in the form of corpus analyses in favor of a functional account of particle placement. Gries shows that particles are treated like independent words in terms of pragmatic word order functions. For example, final placement in *John brought him back* (/ *John brought back him*) is supposed to signal less consciousness raising, while constructions of the type *John brought back peace* (?)/*John brought peace back*) is said to signal ‘more consciousness raising’, i.e. more attention is required to process the sentence. The pragmatic dimension of particle placement in English has also been highlighted by Bolinger (1971: 123):

(85)

a. They found out the assassin.
b. They found the assassin out.

While in a the sentence is about finding out the identity of the assassin, in b the identity is already presupposed due to the final positioning of the particle.

To summarise these observations: verb + particle constructions in English are similar to German prefixes because they cover similar ranges of meanings. Similarly to German prefixing the resultant constructions form lexical units. Also, as in the case of German prefixed verbs the resulting meanings can be analysed as “locative meanings” and most forms express metaphorical extensions of such concepts. By contrast to German, the range of Aktionsart meanings is more limited to resultative and ingressive concepts, although other aspectual meanings may also be expressed. In addition, phrasal verbs show a high degree of idiomaticity; at least in comparison with German separable prefixes (particles) whose meanings do not become opaque in many cases, and where opaqueness of inseparable prefixes has to be attributed to a high degree of fusion with the stem. All in all the question whether the constructions are “idiomatic” plays a greater role in English than in German, since we are dealing with multi-word constructions in English. In addition, pragmatic factors play a greater role in the use of verb-particle constructions in English, and English particles, albeit “aspectual” (Aktionsart-) markers, establish less coherent semantic sub-systems than German separable prefixes.

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14 Brinton (1988: ch. 5) disagrees and claims that most phrasal verbs are actually metonymic. Examples like *come up with an idea* seem to support this: The act of approaching somebody stands for communicating with that person.
4.2.3 Alleged closer matching of meaning and form in German

Looking at our initial lists of the English verbs produce and shift and their German translations in 4.2.1 above, we note that a relatively large number of the German verbs included in our list do not involve prefixes:

(86)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>produce crops</td>
<td>die Ernte abwerfen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce coal</td>
<td>Kohle fördern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a book</td>
<td>ein Buch schreiben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a sculpture</td>
<td>eine Skulptur anfertigen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce one’s masterpiece</td>
<td>sein Meisterwerk hervorbringen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a pistol</td>
<td>eine Pistole ziehen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce one’s wallet</td>
<td>seine Brieftasche hervorholen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce a play</td>
<td>ein Bühnenstück inszenieren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce bitterness</td>
<td>Bitterkeit hervorrufen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift the nail, the screw</td>
<td>den Nagel, die Schraube loskriegen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift the cork</td>
<td>den Korken rauskriegen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift furniture</td>
<td>Möbel verrücken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift one’s arm</td>
<td>den Arm wegnehmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift one’s office</td>
<td>das Büro verlagern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift boulder, rubble</td>
<td>Müll, Schutt wegräumen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift the scenery</td>
<td>Kulissen schieben_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift one’s ground</td>
<td>seinen Standpunkt ändern_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift someone from an opinion</td>
<td>jemanden von einer Meinung abbringen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift one’s weight from foot to foot</td>
<td>sein Gewicht von einem Fuß zum anderen verlagern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift the blame onto somebody else</td>
<td>die Schuld auf einen anderen schieben</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The meaning differences expressed by the German items (and thus the sub-division of the word field) can therefore not be determined by the prefixes alone. Similarly, we found only a few of the English translations of German items to be particle verbs, with varying syntactic status of the particle-like element. Again, it cannot be the particles alone that subdivide the word field in English, and particles as well as prefixes are similar in this respect.

What we do note are greater restrictions on the number of domains that each of the verbs cover in German. The English verbs listed unify more fields. This can be seen as an indication of greater ambiguity or vagueness, as already mentioned (see Hawkins 1986: 122). Given this assessment, English - German divergence in the sense of Hüllen (see 4.1 above) would have to be regarded as the “normal” case, i.e. one English lexical unit corresponding to several German ones. Plank (1984: 312) provides evidence like the following for this:
1. the affected - effected distinction:
dig a hole - ein Loch **graben**
dig potatoes - Kartoffeln **ausgraben**
dig the garden - den Garten **umgraben**

In German we encode the distinction effected object vs. affected object by using **graben** (effected) vs. **ausgraben** (affected). This distinction is not encoded by different lexemes in English.

In the case of ‘clothing’ verbs, the range of objects is more restricted in connection with G **anziehen** ‘put on something’:

2 clothing

**put** on a coat - einen Mantel **anziehen**
**put** on a tie - eine Krawatte *anziehen / umbinden*
**put** on a mask - eine Maske *anziehen / anlegen*
**put** on a hat - einen Hut *anziehen / aufsetzen*

The examples show that the type of object is more clearly defined in German. Plank (1984: 313) also observes a stronger tendency to more systematically encode the difference between dressing and undressing in English. Despite this he claims that the German verbs encode “more” than the English ones. This, according to Plank, also applies to the way in which verbs encode the following phenomena (some of these already mentioned):

3. positioning something (p. 315)
   - setzen (in a firm position)
   - stellen (upright position)
   - legen (vertical position)

4. killing (p. 317)
   - erschießen (human beings only)
   - abschießen (animals only)

5. teaching / training (p. 319)
   - erziehen (children, students)
   - anlernen (apprentices, workers in general)
   - drillen (military, sports)
   - trainieren (sports, aviation, military)
   - abrichten (animals)

6. closing s.th.
   - absperren
   - sperren
7. cooking (p. 330), e.g.:

- cast
  - gießen (liquid)
  - werfen (solid)
  - schütten (powder)

We see that at least in the above examples the English verbs are less specific than the German translations. As already mentioned in 1.4, further evidence supports this with regard to verbs. For example, the greater tolerance to temporary ambiguities in so-called garden-path sentences in English as mentioned in chapter 1 can be seen as an indication of collapsing several meanings into one lexeme:

(90)

a. This door opens new possibilities. - Diese Tür eröffnet uns neue Möglichkeiten.
b. This door opens quite easily. - Diese Tür kann leicht geöffnet werden.
c. My guitar broke a string. - Eine Saite meiner Gitarre brach.
d. My guitar broke the world record. - Mit meiner Gitarre wurde der Weltrekord gebrochen.
e. My guitar broke Ø. - Meine Gitarre ging kaputt.
f. Changing places is stupid. - Ich mag es nicht, den Wohnort zu wechseln
g. Changing places are something I don’t like. - Ich mag es nicht, wenn sich Orte verändern.

Sentences c-d and f-g also show again that English verbs tend to occur in more domains at the same time than German ones, i.e. they are syntactically and semantically more elastic, as, for example:

(91)

- break a leg - ein Bein brechen
- break a rope - ein Tau zerreißen
- break a tendon - einen Sehnenriß haben
- break the vase - die Vase zerbrechen / kaputtmachen

And once more there are relatively ordinary verbs in English that denote an event and its opposite at the same time, as in:

15 Compare once more Hawkins (1986: 121): “[...] the surface forms (morphologically and syntactic) of German are in a closer correspondence with their associated meanings [...] There is greater ambiguity (and/or vagueness) of surface forms in English, i.e. greater collapsing of semantic distinctions and of different semantic types onto common surface forms. The result is more of a one-to-one mapping between form and meaning in German, with distinct forms carrying distinct meanings to a greater extent [...].”

16 The same tendency can be seen in connection with adjectives like terrific, as in:

- a terrific headache = ‘terrible headache’  
  G: fürchterliche Kopfschmerzen
- a terrific concert = ‘phantastic concert’;  
  G: ein fantastisches Konzert
(92)
dust (the furniture) = ‘remove dust from’
    G: abstauben
dust (the cake) = ‘cast sugar on the cake’
    G: bestreuen (mit Zucker)

seed = ‘sow with seeds’
    G: säen
seed = ‘extract seeds from (a grapefruit)’
    G: entkernen

skim = ‘become covered with a film or scum’, as in:
The oil skimmed the water.
    G: verunreinigen
skim = ‘remove from the surface of liquid’, as in
    skim the mild, also figuratively: skim the surface
    G: abschöpfen

In German this is largely limited to verbs where the opposite readings belong to
completely different semantic (sub-) domains of polysemous prefixed verbs (a-d
below), or such opposite readings occur in connection with very specific verbs,
as in f-g below (German examples from Lutzeier (1997: 390-391):

(93)
a. Die Regierung hält Wahlen ab (abhalten ‘hold elections’)  
   ‘The government is holding elections.’
b. Der Mantel hält Nässe ab (abhalten ‘keep away’)  
   ‘The coat keeps the water away.’
c. Die Firma stellt neue Arbeitskräfte ein. (einstellen ‘hire’)  
   ‘The company is hiring new employees.’
d. Die Firma stellt die Produktion von Mikroskopen ein. (einstellen ‘discontinue’)  
   ‘The company is discontinuing its production of microscopes.’

f. Er köpft sein Ei zum Frühstück.
   literally: ‘literally: decapitate the egg’, i.e. ‘cut the egg’ (with a knife)
g. Die Maschine köpft die Nadel.
   ‘put a head on the needle’

By contrast, in English also converse processes from the same domain may be
denoted, as in:

(94)
rent an apartment from somebody    ‘mieten’
rent an apartment to somebody      ‘vermieten’

The above evidence seemingly provides a neat picture supporting Hawkins’s
findings as well an explanation of Plank’s data: English surface structures leave

greater room for semantic interpretation, at least with respect to the phenomena mentioned above, but yet again simple examples shatter this picture:

(95)

Ich leih
er ein Buch. - I borrow a book.
Ich leih
der ein Buch. - I lend you a book.

When there is contradictory evidence that shows a closer match between meaning and form in English instead of German, this may be regarded as a compensatory strategy to make up for the lack of explicitness of the English case system, as in the last example. More explicitness in English grammar, such as explicit marking of adverbs by –ly, can be interpreted as a strategy to make up for a lack of explicitness in verbs and verbal (as well as adjectival) inflections. According to Fischer (1997: 299) the explicit marker –ly in English makes clear that the elements thus marked characterise the verb rather than its complements. Since verbs in German are said to be already semantically more specific than English ones, there does not seem to be the need for explicit marking of adverbs.

Similarly, the existence of the aspectual form marking progressiveness in English possibly functions as a strategy of making up for less semantic explicitness of the verb lexemes themselves, and, as already discussed in the introduction, Rohdenburg (1990) points to what he interprets as stronger restrictions on the use of prepositions in English, which can also be regarded as a “compensatory” strategy, and more restrictive uses of the present perfect can be seen in a similar light.

4.3 English - German divergence in relation to convergence and equivalence

Arguably, such cases of E-G convergence (several English lexemes, one German lexeme) are less common, but in German – English dictionaries we find at least as many E-G convergence patterns listed as there are divergence patterns, as for example (also compare the examples in 1.4):

(96)

E: split (up) cleave chop divide bifurcate
G: spalten.

Many simple English verbs can converge into complex (prefixed) German verbs:

17 The denomin

rift and fissure might also fall into this group, although they are not mentioned in all dictionaries.
Use of the English variants here depends on the type of things that are denoted by the object:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>link</td>
<td>verbinden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connect</td>
<td>verbinden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>join</td>
<td>verbinden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>couple</td>
<td>verbinden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To base such analyses on data gained from dictionaries is problematic (Schneider 1988: ch. 5). Normally, E-G dictionaries will tend to give as many German expressions for one English expression as possible. G-E dictionaries, by contrast, tend to give several English expressions for one German expression. To get a comprehensive picture, both types of data sources will have to be combined. This then points to another problem: divergence or convergence in many cases only represents a part of more complex meaning relations. Let us look at the standard example of put again. The English term functions as a hyperonym for set, lay, and place. This makes it a cover term for the three German expressions setzen, stellen, legen as well (such a cover term or hyperonym is not available in German). At the same time, for example setzen, which is taken to be more specific than E put, may in turn be translated into at least put, lay, place, or set in E, as in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G setzen:</th>
<th>E translations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>etwas auf die Rechnung setzen</td>
<td>put s.th. on the bill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auf etwas setzen</td>
<td>lay a bet on something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seine Hoffnungen in jemanden setzen</td>
<td>place / put one’s hopes in somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jemanden an Land setzen</td>
<td>set somebody ashore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We find a similar situation with stellen, i.e. several possible E translations besides put:
etwas auf den Tisch **stellen**
jemanden unter seine Aufsicht **stellen**
die Uhr **stellen**

*put* something on the table
*place* somebody under one’s care
*set* the clock

And, **legen** behaves similarly:

(101)

**G legen:**
Ich **legte** den Blumenstrauß auf den Tisch
eine Frau aufs Kreuz **legen**
eine Hand auf die andere **legen**
Er **legte** die Steine vorsichtig aufeinander.

**E translations:**
I **put** the flower bouquet on the table
**lay** a woman
**place** on hand over the other
He **set** the stones carefully on top of each other.

In the same way, each of the E verbs correspond to more than one German verb, as, for example:

(102)

**E place:**
**place** a person at a table
**place** s.b. under one’s care
**place** one hand over the other

**G translations:**
.... an den Tisch **setzen**
.... unter seine Aufsicht **stellen**
.... auf die andere Hand **legen**

This yields something like the following network-like inter-language convergence / divergence pattern:
Following former analyses (see e.g. Durrell 1980), we can indeed regarded *put* as an element that fits into the slot of a hyperonym for the three German verbs as well as the other English expressions shown here, because E *put* is the most neutral term with regard to movement, manner, and resultant position involved in the events expressed (see e.g. Pauwels 2000 for details). In addition, each of the hyponymic (troponymic) German terms corresponds to several of the English expressions, not just *put*.

We will also have to add other expressions to the above inter-language correspondence-patterns. For example, not in all cases either *legen*, *setzen*, or *stellen* would be appropriate translations of *put*:

(104)

**E put:**

- *put* the lid on the box
- *put* something in the drawer
- he *put* his hands in his pocket
- *put* the dog in the kitchen
- *put* a bullet through one’s head
- *put* a glass to one’s lips

**G translations other than *setzen*, *stellen*, *legen*:**

- den Deckel auf die Schachtel *tun*
- etwas in die Schublade *legen*
- er *steckte* seine Hand in die Tasche
- den Hund in die Küche *bringen*
- sich die Kugel *geben* /
- sich eine Kugel in den Kopf *jagen*
- ein Glas zu seinen Lippen *führen*

The large number of different translations for *put* points to its status as a hyperonym, i.e. to vagueness in meaning. For the specific German items, unique invariant meanings can be (more or less) identified. Two specific meaning components become relevant with German *legen*, for instance:
G. *legen*:
(a) careful movement
(b) horizontal extension of the object in its resultant position

Because of this we have: *Ich lege den Strauß auf den Tisch* ‘I put the flower bouquet on the table’ (i.e. not in a vase; it is lying on the table);

*Ich lege den Modellwagen auf den Tisch* ‘I put the model railway coach on the table’ (i.e. carefully; it is most likely not standing on its wheels but lying on one of its sides).

For E *lay* we get:


E. *lay*
(a) active involvement of the actor, and
(b) horizontal extensions of the objects involved in their resultant position (e.g. carpet all over the floor), and possibly
(c) a covering sense (which gives rise to metaphoric extension)

as shown in:


Note that in none of these contexts G *legen* would be appropriate. But now specific meanings are closely connected with the German verbs that are not necessarily part of the invariant meaning of *lay*:


These look like invariant meanings of the verbs in German. In the case of English *lay*, they may at best be seen as contextually activated “messages”, if
they show up at all. There is thus no clear hyponymy relation between *lay* and the German items.

4.4 Preliminary contrastive characterisation of verb fields

The above field exhibits the first two of the following relations observed by Plank (1984: 331):

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inter- language relations concerning object-agreement restrictions of verbs according to Plank 1984:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• [...] firstly, two or more verbs in German may correspond to a single English verb lacking the object-oriented meaning component found with its German counterparts [...] [as: <em>put</em> vs. <em>setzen, stellen, legen</em>; F. P.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• [...] secondly, English may have verbs with object-agreement requirements similar to those of their German counterparts, but may have additional, and perhaps more commonly used, verbs which neutralize this object-oriented meaning opposition [...] [as: <em>lay, place, set</em> with similar, but not identical object-agreement requirements compared to <em>legen, stellen setzen</em>, as opposed to “neutralizing” <em>put</em>; F. P.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• [...] thirdly, parameters referring to semantic classes of objects may have a more prominent status in the structure of lexical fields of predicates in German than in the corresponding fields in English [...] [as in the case of the translations of <em>E link</em>; F. P.].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

We can now combine the above characterisations by Plank with our preliminary findings in the following way:

**Preliminary Contrastive Characterisation of Verb Meanings and Meaning Relations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less object-oriented meaning</td>
<td>more object-oriented meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more hyponymy</td>
<td>less (unambiguous) hyponymy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more field unification</td>
<td>less field unification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more markedness oppositions</td>
<td>more domain restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particles as Aktionsart-markers</td>
<td>mainly separable prefixes as Aktionsart markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particles with idiomatic meanings</td>
<td>separable prefixes forming semantic sub-systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inseparable prefixes with special meanings</td>
<td>prefixes with Aktionsart- and dimensional meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(variable) incorporation of particles in the pragmatic sentence structure</td>
<td>position of verb morphemes subject to syntactic restrictions and the proximity principle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concerning the intra- and inter-language relations in terms of convergence, divergence, and hyponymy, we establish that interlanguage divergence does not necessarily correspond to interlanguage “hyponymy”.

5. Bibliography


Lutzeier, Peter Rolf (1995a): "Lexikalische Felder - was sie waren, was sie sind und was sie sein könnten". - In: Gisela Harras (ed.): *Die Ordnung der Wörter. Kognitive und lexikalische Strukturen*. Berlin, ...: Walter de Gruyter, 4-29 (= Institut für deutsche Sprache, Jahrbuch 1993).


