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# Grammaticalization and related changes in contemporary German

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## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

1.1. In a sense, every grammatical change leads to a new grammar. The term *grammaticalization* could be interpreted as ‘creation of new grammar’ (where *grammar* is taken as a mass noun). Then grammatical change would equal grammaticalization. Extension is a fate that traditional terms commonly undergo when they are taken up in modern linguistics. Here, ‘grammaticalization’ will be used in a narrower sense. A variation affecting a linguistic unit will be considered a case of grammaticalization if it is directed towards subjecting that unit more to rules of grammar. This proposition is not meant to carry any implications as to whether rules pre-exist units or vice versa. Among the implications that it does carry are the following <sup>2</sup>:

- The element in question turns from a less grammatical (initially, lexical) element into a more grammatical one.
- The element loses substance both on the phonological and the semantic sides; its selection restrictions are loosened.
- The freedom to manipulate the element decreases. It is integrated into a paradigm, it becomes increasingly obligatory in certain constructions, and it occupies a fixed (ultimately, morphological) position.

A paradigm case which illustrates most of these features is the grammaticalization of the Latin preposition *ad* ‘to’ to the Spanish case marker *a* ‘accusative’. Phonological attrition goes hand in hand with the loss of concrete semantic features. The original sense of direction towards an entity or a place is extended to mark a being that is reached by the verbal action. This yields an indirect object marker. As such, its locus is with human complements. Then it is extended towards a direct object marker, first only of human, then increasingly of other animate objects. At the same time, it regularly fuses with the definite

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Lehmann 1982 for a systematic treatment.

article *el*; and it enters a minimal paradigm with *de* (which itself is grammaticalized from a Latin local preposition).

Analogical change is the other principal kind of grammatical change. The weak conjugation of erstwhile strong verbs in several Germanic languages is a well-known example. Grammaticalization and analogy have some points in common, among them the expansion of the distribution of an element and the introduction of a subregularity into the grammar. Also, grammaticalization may involve reanalysis of an underlying construction. Reanalysis, in turn, presupposes a pattern which can serve as its model. For instance, the grammaticalization of German *haben* ‘have’ to a perfect auxiliary involves, as an early stage, the construction [*hat* NP<sub>acc</sub> V<sub>part. pass.</sub>], where the NP<sub>acc</sub> is the direct object of *hat* and the V<sub>part. pass.</sub> is a predicative complement of the direct object. This is reanalyzed as a periphrastic form of V, which takes NP<sub>acc</sub> as its direct object. This reanalysis, however, is rendered possible only because German already possessed the periphrastic verb form [*ist* V<sub>part. pass.</sub>], which thus could serve as an analogical model. For such reasons, it is often difficult to distinguish grammaticalization from analogical change.

Finally, grammatical change is to be distinguished from lexical change. The latter often also involves reduction and coalescence, as when Anglo-Saxon *hlāf-weard* ‘bread-warden’ becomes Modern English *lord*. Changes like *terrific* ‘horrifying’ > ‘remarkable’ have both the generalization of meaning and use and the codification in certain grammatical positions (here, the position of an evaluator/intensifier) in common with grammaticalization. Therefore, there will also be borderline cases between grammatical and lexical change.

1.2. The purpose of this contribution is to review a variety of grammatical constructions in contemporary non-literary German which are currently in vogue but are either not considered or at least not (yet) accepted by standard grammars. All of them share at least some of the features that are characteristic of grammaticalization. Some of them can be classed as cases of grammaticalization beyond doubt. Others are not so clear and may show more aspects of analogical grammatical change or of lexical change. They will be presented nonetheless, because they occasion some discussion on the limits of grammaticalization. There will also be the question as to whether the phenomena in their totality indicate a drift in the contemporary language.

Not being a Germanist, I am not in the best position to write on grammaticalization in German. The following survey is not intended to be exhaustive or balanced. Some changes will be highlighted, others mentioned only in passing. For the past three years or so, I have been gathering data on the present topic. They are instances of ongoing changes or current fashions, occasionally encountered and unsystematically noted down. Some of them are tied up with my own dialect environment, which is Northwest Germany. For several of the phenomena to be mentioned below, I have no spontaneous data at all. Thus, my data cannot claim to be representative or to show the extent to which a phenomenon is or has been gaining ground. Furthermore, no arguments *ex silencio* are allowed: it is quite

possible that the most interesting ongoing changes have escaped my notice. To the extent, however, that there are data, they prove that the phenomenon exists at a supra-idiolectal level.

There is also the methodological difficulty of chronology. Historical linguists and philologists are used to working through the relevant corpus in order to ascertain the earliest occurrence of a given phenomenon and to trace its tradition. I have not been able to do this. All I can say is that, except where stated otherwise, the phenomena treated have aroused my attention during the past ten years or so as things that were not formerly in the language. Many of them are not in the grammars. Nevertheless, should anyone be inclined to conclude that just because something is currently in the colloquial language but condemned by normative grammar, it must be a recent development or indicative of an ongoing change, it is beneficial to read Sandig 1973. There it is shown that some of the nonstandard features of contemporary German have been in the language since the Old High German stage. Even a phenomenon that has been spreading only since very recently does not need to have been invented very recently. It is quite possible that it can be found in earlier literature, and such earlier occurrences may or may not be the source of the recent development.

## 2. Nominal categories

### 2.1. Gender and number

2.1.1. There are currently changes in all of the traditional nominal categories, i.e. gender, number and case. The change in gender concerns the nature of the opposition between the masculine and feminine genders. As in many other languages, it used to be a privative opposition, with masculine as the unmarked member. For about fifteen years, this relationship has been gradually shifted in favor of an equipollent opposition between the two. This manifests itself clearly in the use of the derivational suffix *-in* ‘-ess’. The most obvious examples occur in job announcements. For a position admitting both women and men, formerly a *Lehrer* ‘teacher’ would have been sought; now invariably a post for a *Lehrer/in* (i.e. *Lehrer/Lehrerin*) is announced. This is a clear case of a language change resulting from a change in society.

The phenomenon has some of the characteristics of grammaticalization, above all the quantitative expansion of the feminine suffix to the detriment of the zero form.<sup>3</sup> So far, however, the suffix remains a derivational one; it has not become a gender marker. Hence,

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<sup>3</sup> As usual, the ongoing change creates uneasiness, manifesting itself, e.g., in hypercorrection. Thus, a club president addresses the ‘dear members’, in a circular of 1987, by *Liebe Mitglieder/-innen*, as if *Mitglied* were masculine or *Mitglied(er)innen* could be a grammatical form of German; and a report on women's fight sports features *Der Kung-Fu-Lehrer ... schätzt die Zahl seiner weiblichen Kursteilnehmerinnen auf ungefähr zwanzig Prozent*. [*Zeit-Magazin*, 1988] ‘The Kung-Fu instructor estimates the number of his female course participantesses at about 20%.’

we should probably not class this change as a case of grammaticalization, but instead learn from it that expansion should not be used too naively as a criterion of grammaticalization.

2.1.2. One of the German plural allomorphs is *-s*. While this has a stronger basis in the Low German dialect, it used to be one of the rarest in standard German. It has occurred for a long time in certain forms ending in posttonic *-el/n* (*Jungens* ‘boys’, *Mädels* ‘girls’, *Kumpels* ‘miners, buddies’), which may be said to belong to the colloquial register of standard German. Apart from such marginal exceptions, the suffix originated in loans with one of two non-German phonological traits: nouns ending in a vowel other than  $\emptyset$  (*Mamas*, *Tees* ‘teas’, *Nazis*, *Autos*, *Zulus*), and certain non-feminine nouns stressed on the last syllable (*Kartons*, *Parks*).

It is apparently during the course of this century that *-s* has been continually gaining ground (see Wurzel 1984, ch. 4 for details and explanations). It is penetrating into nominal morphology by a relaxation of the above compound condition: it now suffices that the noun in question be either a loan or have a stress or final full vowel in the last syllable. First, while most loan nouns still form their plural in one of the genuinely German allomorphs (*Visionen*, *Passagiere*, *Computer(0)*), *-s* is increasingly used on non-Germanized loans with various phonological structures (*Sputniks*, nonstandard *Lexikons*). Second, it is gradually becoming the usual plural allomorph for words ending in a long vowel or in a stressed syllable. Native German nouns with such a phonological structure are rare. *Uhus* ‘eagle-owls’ is the only plural form for this noun. If *wo* ‘where’ were substantivized, it would form an *-s*-plural: *die wo's*. However, the relevant phonological classes are fed by abbreviations and acronyms (*PCs*, *Profs*), which are very frequent and where *-s* is currently most productive both in spoken and in written language. Other words are changing their plural marking (*Tablette* > *Tabletts* ‘trays’, *Konten* > *Kontos* ‘accounts’). Yet others take the *-s* on top of an irregular plural which is probably not felt as a morphological plural: nonstandard *Spaghettis*, *Brokkolis*.

Paradigm instances of the development of plural morphemes by grammaticalization include Mandarin *men* ‘class’ and Bengali *jana* ‘host’, both of which have become plural suffixes. The case of German *-s*, instead, is another example of analogical expansion. It shows how problematic the distinction between the latter and grammaticalization can be. Clear cases of grammaticalization, such as the two mentioned, show a loosening of selection restrictions. This is parallel to the loosening of the restriction on plural *-s* that the noun so marked should be foreign and end either in a long vowel or on a stressed syllable. The reason why we nevertheless distinguish between grammaticalization and analogical extension is that the latter fails on the central criterion of grammaticalization, which is that the unit in question should become more subject to rules of grammar.

## 2.2. Case relations

The development of case markers is one of the standard examples of grammaticalization. Its reverse side is the loss of old inflectional case markers. Reduction to zero is the logical

end phase of grammaticalization. Let us first look at the relevant phenomena and then discuss the problems behind them.

### 2.2.1. The possessive attribute relation

Case endings have been reduced and lost in German from Proto-Indo-European times. Feminine nouns, except proper names, no longer inflect for case. Neuter nouns form the genitive in *-s*. Masculine nouns fall into two declension classes and accordingly form the genitive either in *-s* or in *-en*. These markers have proved astonishingly resistant. Nevertheless, those nouns that take the *-s* allomorph lack it in a variety of cases, all of which have in common an article form - definite *des* or indefinite *eines* -which shows the genitive. Two of these cases are provided for by standard grammar:

- a) Foreign nouns, especially if they end in *s*, often lack genitive marking: *des Atlas/Numerus*, but also *des Kazike*.
- b) Those proper names which are generally articleless (chiefly, person and place names) do not take their genitive *-s* after an article. Such names normally take the definite article only if they are expanded by an attribute, as in *des jungen Goethe* ‘of young Goethe’, *des alten Berlin* ‘of old Berlin’. Names which are by themselves complex allow the definite article more easily: *des Ludwig van Beethoven*. However, this construction is not colloquial and connotes distance between speaker and referent.

The genitive attribute with article, but no mark on the noun(s) is currently extended in two directions: First, to other composite attributes, especially those including appositions. Thus, while *des Konjunktiv* is nonstandard, *des Konjunktiv Imperfekt* is all right. And examples like E1 and E2, although not (yet) standard, are increasingly found.

- E1. ... ist eine Wanderausstellung des Koblenzer Bundesarchiv geplant. [radio, 1988]  
‘... a flying exhibition of the Koblenz Federal Archive is planned.’
- E2. Anstelle des traditionell gewählten Mann des Jahres prangt ein Computer auf dem Titel. [computer magazine, 1988]  
‘Instead of the traditionally elected man of the year, the title page boasts a computer.’

Second, the postnominal possessive attribute without genitive marking extends to such simple proper names as are generally accompanied by the definite article: *des Saturn/Mai/Hunsrück* (mountain range).<sup>4</sup>

Inside possessive attribution, there are currently two ways of renewing the genitive. We first turn to the preposition *von* ‘from, of’, which has been slowly making its way into the possessive attribute relation for a long time. Most genitive attributes are paraphrasable by a prepositional attribute involving *von* (*die Oper von Ludwig van Beethoven* ‘Ludwig van

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<sup>4</sup> I even have one isolated example without article: *Die Botschaft Jesus* ‘The Message of Jesus’ (book title of 1972).

Beethoven's opera'), although this is often stylistically clumsy and not high style. Thus, *die CPU von dem Computer* will be heard, but not read.

However, there are at least two cases where *von* must be used to signal the possessive relation. The first involves a personal possessive relation in an indefinite NP. The indefinite counterpart to the definite NP *mein Schwager* (= nonstandard *der Schwager von mir*) 'my brother-in-law' is *ein Schwager von mir*, which, keeping *Schwager* as the head constant, has no alternative.

Second, no noun has a distinctive genitive plural morpheme. If the genitive noun is modified by determiners or adjectives, these will have different patterns of case syncretism. For example, the masculine noun form *Effekte* can be nominative, genitive or accusative plural. The adjective form *stilistischer* can be nominative singular masculine, genitive and dative singular feminine and genitive plural of any gender. If the two form a phrase, as in *Erzielung stilistischer Effekte* 'attainment of stylistic effects', the case of this phrase is calculated as the intersection set of the case meanings of the two constituent forms, reducing to the genitive plural in this case (see Werner 1979). When the noun stands alone, case ambiguity is not resolved by morphological means. Now, while the other cases do not require morphological disambiguation, so that *Effekte* may constitute an NP in the nominative or accusative, it may not constitute an NP in the genitive. The modifier in *Erzielung stilistischer Effekte* cannot be dropped. Therefore, if *Effekte* alone is to constitute an attribute, *von* has to be used: *Erzielung von Effekten*.<sup>5</sup>

The other possibility of formally renewing the possessive attribute is by means of the possessive pronoun. There is a cross-linguistically widespread construction which combines the possessed noun with a possessive pronoun (referring to the possessor) and an (optional) noun phrase in some appropriate syntactic relation (representing the possessor). In German, this construction is nonstandard and dialectal. There are variants of it which differ as to case inflection of the possessive NP and possessor gender marking in the possessive pronoun. A mapping of this construction into Standard German would look as in E3.a.

- E3. a. der Lehrerin ihr Hut  
       'the (female) teacher's hat'  
       b. die Lehrerin ihr Hut  
       c. die Lehrerin sein Hut

In E3.a, the case relation of the possessive NP is the dative (just as in the corresponding Hungarian construction), and the possessive pronoun duly reflects the possessor's gender.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Plank 1980, esp. 296-298, on this matter. Hartmut Haberland draws my attention to the fact that the non-distinctness explanation is not sufficient to generalize to the genitive singular, since while *das Wahrzeichen Oslos* 'Oslo's landmark' is fine, *\*die Förderung Erdöls* 'the hauling of petrol' is not, despite its distinctness.

However, the dialects and sociolects which actually use this construction (for instance, Ruhrdeutsch, a variety of Lower Frankish) often also reduce inflection in various ways. Thus, the possessive NP may appear in the nominative, as in E3.b. Finally, the possessive pronoun is limited to the masculine-possessor variant, as in c. This is, incidentally, also what happened in the development of the English genitive 's.

Beside its function in attribution, the genitive has another one in verbal valency. There, however, it has retreated to a very few verbs, most of which have alternative valencies or enough synonyms to allow their avoidance. Typical examples include *sich erinnern* 'remember', which can take a genitive object, but more commonly takes a prepositional object with *an*, or *bedürfen* 'need', which has an almost perfect synonym in the transitive *brauchen*.

### 2.2.2. The dative relation

In the plural, the dative is the only case with a morphological mark of its own *-(e)n*. In the singular, neuter nouns have *-e/Ø*, while masculine nouns have either *-e/Ø* or *-(e)n*, according to declension class. The two allomorphs differ markedly in their stability. The *-en* allomorph is fairly stable. *Dem Herr* 'to the sir' is very substandard and characteristic of child language. Yet, as in the instance of the loss of the genitive *-s*, omission of the dative mark is encouraged if the noun has postnominal attributes; cf. E4.

E4. Flucht vom Planet der Affen [German movie title, 1971]  
'Escape from the Planet of the Apes'

The *-e* allomorph has all but disappeared from the colloquial and even non-literary written language. Most nouns do not admit it at all (see the list in Heidolph et al. 1981:598), and those that do admit it normally do not carry it: *dem Manne/Hause/Gewichte* 'to the man/house/weight' are stilted. The suffix survives only in some phraseologisms such as *am Tage* 'in the daytime', *zu Hause* 'at home'. Fossilization is a common symptom of grammaticalization in its terminal phase.

Unlike the English and Latin-Romance dative cases, and unlike the German, English and Latin-Romance genitive cases, there is no single preposition taking the place of the dative inflection. The following verbs can all take simple indirect objects, but alternatively allow prepositional objects as indicated: *senden/schicken an* 'send', *weiterleiten an* 'forward', *genügen für* 'suffice'. Other verbs taking indirect object have derived counterparts taking direct object: *(be-)drohen* 'menace', *(be-)dienen* 'serve', *(be-)raten* 'advise', *(an-)schreiben* 'write'. Earlier yet, experiencer verbs which used to take the perceived entity as the subject and the experiencer in the dative changed their valence, taking the experiencer as the subject and the perceived entity as the direct object: *mir ahnt* > *ich ahne* 'I forebode', *mir träumt* > *ich träume* 'I dream'. On the other hand, many verbs such as *geben* 'give', *fehlen* 'be absent', *gehören* 'obey', have a stable indirect object construction without an alternative. Outside of verbal valency, the dative is mostly



substitutable by prepositions, especially *für* 'for'. Thus, *ich kaufe ihm ein Buch* 'I buy him a book' = *ich kaufe ein Buch für ihn, das klingt mir merkwürdig* 'that sounds weird to me' = *das klingt merkwürdig für mich*. It would be a rewarding study to disentangle and then recombine change in inflection paradigms, in syntactic relations and in semantic relations in this area.

### 2.2.3. Loss by grammaticalization

As I have argued in earlier publications (e.g., Lehmann 1985), it is futile to ask whether the grammaticalized prepositions oust the older case suffixes or whether, instead, the attrition of the case inflection attracts the prepositions to fill the gap. It seems more appropriate to view adpositions and case affixes as being at two stages of the same scale and both being grammaticalized simultaneously and in parallel.

It has long been clear that one of the most palpable symptoms of grammaticalization is reduction on both the semantic and the phonological sides of the language sign. The logical endpoint of this is complete loss. However, not every case of loss of a grammatical element can be regarded as purely a matter of grammaticalization. This is also true of the reduction of case inflection. Both the examples of the genitive and of the dative show that factors at very different levels contribute to this reduction. At the level of the grammaticalization scale which includes adpositions and case affixes, it is, loosely speaking, a question of fulfilling a given function with an alternative device. If, however, case forms disappear because there are no longer any verbs which require or even admit them, it is rather a question of no longer fulfilling a given function. To the extent that this is true of German genitive and dative inflections, their fate is not exclusively one of grammaticalization.

## 2.3. Complex prepositions

The formation of new prepositions through the combination of a (mostly relational) noun with either a preposition or a case suffix is one of the most common grammaticalization processes in the world. It has been done in German, as in other Indo-European languages, for millennia. Since about 1975, there has been a new wave of complex prepositions. The most common of these are the following:

- im Zuge* 'by, during, in',
- im Wege* 'by (way/means of)',
- im Vorfeld* 'on the eve (of), before',
- im Anschluß* 'following, after',
- im Gefolge* 'in the sequel (of), after',
- im Verfolg* 'in the course (of)'.

They are mostly promoted in bureaucratic and journalistic jargon; none of them are really colloquial. Here are some illustrative examples:

- E5. Im Zuge der Regierungsumbildung wurden zwei Ministerien zusammengelegt.  
[example constructed on a common pattern]  
'In the course of the reshaping of the government, two ministeries were conflated.'
- E6. wenn die Bußgeldstelle im Wege der automatischen Datenverarbeitung arbeitet  
[radio interview, 1987]  
'if the fines department works by means of automatic data processing'
- E7. Im Vorfeld seiner Reise hatte der pakistanische Außenminister vor einigen Tagen erklärt, ... [radio news, 1987]  
'On the eve of his journey, the Pakistan Secretary of State had declared some days ago ...'
- E8. Im Anschluß an die Nachrichten der Wetterbericht. [daily news]  
'After the news, the weather forecast.'
- E9. Die vorliegende Untersuchung ist die revidierte Fassung einer Arbeit, die im Gefolge eines Seminars über 'Sprachliche Variation und Diversität' entstand ...  
[linguistic paper, 1981]  
'The present study is the revised version of a paper that originated in consequence of a seminar on "Linguistic variation and diversity"'
- E10. Im Verfolg der Untersuchungen ergab sich, ... [scientific article, 1989]  
'In pursuance of the investigations, it turned out ...'

The following features of this set are noteworthy:

1. All the cases involve a metaphor; the respective literal meanings are as follows:

*im Zuge* 'in the train/procession (of)',  
*im Wege* 'in the way (of)',  
*im Vorfeld* 'in the fore-field (of)',  
*im Anschluß (an)* 'in connection (with)',  
*im Gefolge* 'in the suite (of)',  
*im Verfolg* 'in pursuance (of)'.

2. There is a common formal pattern here: The basic nouns are bi- or trisyllabic, with final or penultimate stress. They combine with the form *im* (elementary locative preposition *in* plus definite article) to yield a complex preposition which (except for *im Anschluß*) requires the genitive of its complement. The pattern has been productive for a certain period (since about 1975, I guess). Earlier, such complex prepositions as *aufgrund* 'on the basis', *anhand* 'with the aid', and even the postposition *zufolge* 'according to' came into usage. I am not aware of any formation parallel to the latter in the last years.<sup>6</sup> That the above is a currently productive pattern is confirmed by an additional consideration: What is meant by *im Wege* would normally be expressed by *auf dem Wege*. *Weg* after the

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<sup>6</sup> One that comes to mind is *auf der Basis* 'on the base', which is parallel to *aufgrund*. However, this is not as recent, and, moreover, it does not yet seem to be a preposition.

preposition *in* occurs exclusively in this complex preposition. There appears to be analogical pressure at work.

3. An examination of my data reveals a feature that so far seems to have gone unnoticed in research on grammaticalization: the complex prepositions arise in a narrowly circumscribed set of contexts. The complement of *im Zuge* and *im Verfolg* is a verbal noun, normally an action noun. The complement of *im Wege* is a new technology in all three recorded examples; in two of them it is automatic data processing.<sup>7</sup> The complement of *im Vorfeld* is a social activity, often some sort of meeting. The complement of *im Gefolge* is usually a trend-setting, preferably scientific activity. This is a preliminary hint that phraseology<sup>8</sup> is at work in grammaticalization: When a newly coined periphrastic expression is received by other members of the speech community, it will not be in isolation, but in the context in which it was originally coined. It will not then spread at once to all kinds of contexts which, given the rules of grammar, would admit it, but will initially be restricted to certain collocations which come close to being phraseologisms.

The interplay of grammaticalization and lexicalization can also be seen inside each of the complex prepositions. First of all, *im Zuge* and *im Wege* show the dative ending *-e* which is falling out of use in free syntax (cf. §2.2.2), but survives in phraseological contexts. Second, the typical symptom of lexicalization, namely a disturbance of compositionality by either semantic or formal changes, is again observable in *im Wege*, since its internal structure does not obey the respective subrule of syntax. This is why complex prepositions are termed ‘prepositional phraseologisms’ in Burger et al. 1982:23. If they remain in the language, one day each of them will become an entry in the German lexicon, just as the earlier *auf Grund* has now been entered as *aufgrund*.

4. According to their external syntactic behavior, the six complex prepositions fall into two groups: those that are used exclusively as prepositions (i.e., they require a complement), and those which allow adverbial use. *Im Zuge* and *im Wege* belong in the former group, *im Vorfeld* and *im Anschluß* belong in the latter. E11 and E12 illustrate the latter.

E11. ... ist die Verfahrensweise der LABK auch darauf gerichtet, im Außenverhältnis fachaufsichtliche Interventionen grundsätzlich im Vorfeld abzuwehren.  
[administrative circular, 1987]

‘the procedure of the LABK is also directed, in its external relations, principally

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<sup>7</sup> All of my examples stem from independent discourses. They do not reflect any idiolectal idiosyncrasies or patterns evolved during a particular discourse.

<sup>8</sup> In this paper, I am using ‘phraseology’ and related terms in the broad sense defended in, e.g., Pilz (1983). This includes relatively fixed collocations without regard to their semantic regularity, and also collocations of non-lexical elements.

towards precluding in advance interventions of disciplinary supervision.<sup>9</sup>

E12. Mehr darüber gleich im Anschluß. [radio lead-in, 1989]

‘More on this directly hereafter.’

E12 should be compared with E8. The rhetorical purpose of E11 is apparently to avoid being precise on what exactly might provoke an intervention. It may be remarked at this point that, in general, periphrases do not seem to be used for the sake of greater precision. The law of iconicity according to which more expression generally corresponds to more content here appears to be suspended: the periphrases add vagueness by being intercalated into, and thus dilating, relations that would otherwise be direct.<sup>10</sup>

E13 shows *im Gefolge* without a complement.

E13. Sie haben also auf Edelman und in dém Gefolge auf Dieckmann hingewiesen.

‘you have referred to Edelman and, in consequence of that, to Dieckmann.’ [radio interview, 1987; a research tradition is being referred to.]

*In dém Gefolge* must mean either ‘thereafter’ or ‘in the succession of Edelman’. To the extent that grammaticality judgements are possible in the case of “trendy” phrases, E13 is probably ungrammatical in regard to the variety to which it belongs. I have no example of *im Gefolge* or *im Verfolg* in simple adverbial use.

Taken by themselves, the lexical nouns *Weg* and *Zug* would probably be classed as non-relational, while *Vorfeld*, *Anschluß*, *Gefolge* and *Verfolg* appear to be relational. The first guess would therefore be that the former set could be used adverbially, the latter not. The data point in the opposite direction. A possible explanation might be that only a relational noun gives the information that reference to something else is implied, whereas adverbial *im Zuge*, *im Wege* would not link up with the semantic context in this way (cf. Seiler 1983).<sup>11</sup>

## 2.4. *von ... her* and other limitative constructions

2.4.1. By far the most fashionable of those grammatical constructions which are unknown to normative grammar is the *von-her* construction. It has been in everybody's mouth since about 1980, and its new function seems so natural to speakers that most of the people whose attention I drew to its “trendy” character were completely unaware of it.

Before the change, the relevant situation was roughly as follows: The discontinuous preposition *von ... her* (preposition *von* ‘from’ plus deictic particle *her* ‘hither’) had the

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<sup>9</sup> The style of the translation mirrors the original one.

<sup>10</sup> Seiler's (1973) interpretation of the periphrasis involving ‘have’ and ‘be’ auxiliaries as expressing the configuration ‘possessor of an act’ would seem to be a case in point.

<sup>11</sup> apart from the fact that adverbial *im Wege* would interfere with the idiom *im Wege sein* ‘to be an obstacle’

strictly concrete-local meaning '(coming) from', as in E14.

E14. Von draußen vom Walde komme ich her. [folk poem]

'I am coming from outside, from the woods.'

E15 shows a slight metaphorical extension in an adverbial phrase at the sentence level.

E15. Er war vermögend, schon von den Eltern her, besaß zudem ein Herrenmodegeschäft ... [Schöne Welt, 1987]

'He was already affluent from his parents, and in addition owned a gentlemen's fashion shop.'

The discontinuous preposition was also commonly used in a set of metaphoric phraseologisms centering around the notion *eine Sache von einem Standpunkt her betrachten* 'to view a matter from a standpoint', such as *von X her gesehen/betrachtet/beurteilt*, etc. 'seen/viewed/judged from X'. Such phrases were and are used as sentence-level adverbials to express such notions as 'with reference to, in/with regard to/of, with respect to, as regards, considering X'. Other devices to express this have been such clumsy circumlocutions as *was X betrifft*, *im Hinblick auf X*, *hinsichtlich X*, but also simpler constructions with *in* 'in' and *nach* 'after'. We will return to these in §2.4.2.

The phrase *von X her gesehen/betrachtet* is already fairly fixed and depleted. Otherwise it would not be possible to express the same semantic relation to X either in an ablative (*von X her gesehen*) or in an allative (*im Hinblick auf X*, *hinsichtlich X*) metaphor. The first and decisive step in the recent development of *von-her* is the omission of the past participle of a verb of viewing which formerly closed the adverbial. E16 is an example which might as well contain such a participle (e.g., *von heute her gesehen*) and would then illustrate the typical use of the latter.

E16. Solche Sätze wirken von heute her nichts weniger denn kabarettistisch überzogen.

[Die Zeit, 1986]

'Such sentences, viewed from today's standpoint, seem anything but cabaretishly exaggerated.'

The omission of the participle is a remarkable feat, since it is the head of the phrase. It seems natural to assume that constructions such as the one in E15 served as a formal model. At this stage, we have a discontinuous preposition which expresses a limitative relation between a proposition and a factor which restricts the scope for which the proposition is valid. E17 is a very early example.

E17. Auch ist die Zahl der bisher in Linear A aufgefundenen Inschriften nicht groß (etwa 300) und ihr Textumfang zumeist recht gering, desgleichen lassen sie von ihrem Inhalt her (Abrechnungsquittungen, kurze Weihaufschriften) keine breitere Erfassung der Sprache erwarten. [linguistic book, 1970]

'Also, the number of the inscriptions discovered so far in Linear A is not large (around 300), and their text length is, for the most part, rather small; likewise, considering their content (clearing receipts, short votive inscriptions), they do not

make one expect any broader conception of the language.’

E18 - E23 show how much the initial meaning of *von ... her* has broadened.

E18. Der ist nicht der allerschönste, den ich vorführen kann, aber von der Tendenz her wird sicher klar, was gemeint ist. [free speech, 1987]

‘That is certainly not the most beautiful one that I can demonstrate; but the tendency of what is meant will surely get clear.’

E19. Wenn der Minister in dieser Sache Wort hält, kann ich nur sagen, daß wir von der Zielrichtung her einer Auffassung sind. [radio interview, 1987]

‘If the minister keeps his word in this matter, I can only say that we are of one opinion as regards the goal.’

E20. Also von den Bildern her, mir persönlich sagt der nicht so zú, der Macke. [conversation at a Macke exhibition, 1987]

‘These pictures, me personally Macke does not appeal to that much.’

E21. [Unter dem Fuß des Rechners] duckt sich der vorderste Teil der Mutterplatine. Von der Breite her schließt er schön ordentlich mit der Querleiste der Tastatur. [computer magazine, 1986]

‘Under the foot of the computer is located the foremost part of the motherboard. In its width, it is exactly flush with the cross-bar of the keyboard.’

E22. [Ad ‘move alpha’:] Nun, dieser Ausdruck ist ein zeitlicher und suggeriert sozusagen vom Ausdruck her, daß da etwas passiert. [free speech, 1987]

‘Well, this expression is a temporal one and implies, you know, by this expression that something is happening here.’

E23. A: Treffen die hauptsächlich auf Substantive zu? - B: Ja, [C: Auf Prädikatoren.] - also von den Wortarten her auf Prädikatoren. [discussion, 1987]

‘A: Do those apply principally to nouns? - B: Yes [C, interrupting: to predicators] - well, in regard to word classes, to predicators.’

Some of these examples show that the ablative meaning of the metaphorical base is completely lost. This is particularly clear in E19, which features *von der Zielrichtung her* ‘from the goal-direction’. Others show that *von ... her* is used as a convenient device for introducing concepts which are somehow felt as relevant but whose exact relation to the point is not (to be made) clear. This can be seen in E23. Most important, however, are the roles of *von-her* phrases as contrastive topic (in the sense of Chafe 1976), as simple topic and as shadow actant. These will now be taken up in turn.

A contrast between the NP in the *von-her* phrase and a concept in the context can already be seen in E17. E24 and E25 are unmistakable examples of *von-her* phrases functioning as contrastive topics.

E24. Es ist diese und nur diese Dimension, die seine Kunst als subversiv vorkommen läßt und indizierende Saubermänner auf den Plan ruft. Vom bloßen Wortlaut her sind die

Formulierungen nämlich eher von der verbindlichen Art. [*Die Zeit*, 1986]

‘It is this and only this dimension [of interactive speech] that makes his art appear subversive and that evokes indexing expurgators. For, as regards the wording alone, the formulations are rather of the diplomatic kind.’

E25. Herbert Hupka ist auf Ceylon geboren. Die ersten drei Lebensjahre verbrachte er in Australien, aber von Herkunft, Elternhaus und Schule her sind Ratibor und Oberschlesien seine Heimat. [book, 1980]

‘Herbert Hupka was born in Ceylon. The first three years of his life he spent in Australia, but as for origin, home and school, Ratibor and Upper Silesia are his homeland.’

The use of *von ... her* to mark simple topic can be regarded as a further step in its depletion. Relevant examples are E21 and E23. By far the most common phrase of this type, and the most common use of *von ... her* in general, is the phraseologism *von daher*, as in E26.

E26. ... Also von daher weiß ich nicht, was das soll. [from a discussion, 1986]

‘In view of this, I wonder what that is supposed to be (good for).’

*Von daher* is a sentence introducer that links the sentence with the preceding context. The nature of the suggested relation is as vague as in the other cases.

Loss of communicative force in the sense of functional sentence perspective has often been regarded as a factor in grammaticalization, above all in the various hypotheses about a development from topic to subject. In the present connection, it suffices to realize that when the communicative function of an element fades, its syntactic cohesion with the context tends to tighten. The limitative force of the *von-her* phrase then relates directly to a particular sentence actant. In a sense, it represents that actant at a different syntactic level. A shadow actant is, then, a syntagm which bears a limitative semantic relation to a certain actant. Semantically, it is part of that actant or on equal footing with it as regards the predication. It does not bear itself the syntactic function of that actant, but a small transformation, with no change in voice and little change in meaning, could put it into that actant's position. E18 and E20 show what is meant more effectively than further explanation.

Given both the general prominence of the subject over the other actant functions and the natural affinity between subjects and topics, it becomes intelligible that the shadow subject is by far the most common shadow actant function of *von ... her*. Typically, the syntactic subject is either empty, as in E18, or it bears a relation of factual connection to the NP in the *von-her* phrase, e.g. a possessive relation in E17, E21 and E24, a source relation in E20. An extreme example of this kind is E22, in which the syntactic subject is repeated in a *von-her* phrase. An example of a shadow object will be found below.

Concomitant with the development from contrastive topic via simple topic to shadow actant, we find an increasing integration of the *von-her* phrase into the clause. In some of

the examples, especially E17, E19 and E22, it is no longer a sentence-level adverbial, but well integrated into the clause. It may be recalled that decrease of structural scope is a symptom of grammaticalization (cf. Lehmann 1982, ch. IV.3.1).

Although German allows a variety of discontinuous constructions, it does not exactly favor them. One may therefore wonder whether discontinuity would not be an obstacle in the grammaticalization of an element. Actually, the second part of *von ... her* is dropped more and more often,<sup>12</sup> so that the result is the simple preposition *von*, which is in the center of the system of grammatical relations, anyway. Here are some examples:

E27. Lisp ist nach FORTRAN die zweitälteste Programmiersprache, von der Sprachkonzeption aber völlig anders. [computer magazine, 1987]  
 ‘Lisp is, after FORTRAN, the second-oldest programming language, but completely different in its language-conception.’

E28. weil sie eben in Relation zu den anderen Kandidaten von den Vorleistungen nicht das aufzuweisen hatte [from a discussion, 1986]  
 ‘because, in relation to the other candidates, she did not have that much to offer from her previous performance’

E29. Die Gesellschaft ist inzwischen auf über 800 Mitglieder angewachsen, und das ist natürlich von der Zielsetzung der DGfS äußerst erfreulich. [free speech, 1987]  
 ‘The society has meanwhile grown to over 800 members, and this is, of course, highly gratifying, in view of the goal of the DGfS.’

E30. besonders raffiniert von der Farbe [sticker at a dress in a show-window, 1987]  
 ‘particularly sophisticated in its color’

E31. Man müßte nun für jeden dieser zusammengesetzten Datentypen ... Prozeduren schreiben, was allein vom Schreibaufwand sehr aufwendig wäre. [programming handbook, 1984]  
 ‘One would now have to write procedures for each of these complex data types, which would be very expensive considering the writing expenditure alone.’

E27 exemplifies the contrastive topic, E30 the shadow subject (the color of the dress is sophisticated), E31 a limitative relation which is close to the shadow subject. E28 shows a particularly high degree of the integration of the *von (- her)* phrase, which in this case yields a shadow object; an adequate paraphrase would be *weil sie eben in Relation zu den anderen Kandidaten nicht die Vorleistungen aufzuweisen hatte* ‘because ... she did not have that previous performance to offer’. Incidentally, a comparison of E29 with E19 confirms the point made in section 2.3 about the phraseological locus of many newly grammaticalized elements.

2.4.2. The examples are from all kinds of non-literary texts, from informal talk via journal articles to scientific books. There can be no doubt that (quite independently from the use

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<sup>12</sup> Given that *her* is not a postposition, the logical alternative of dropping the first part is unavailable.



of a "trendy" expression) several of them evidence unpremeditated, negligent talk or bad style, e.g. E18, E20, E21, E22, E23, E30,<sup>13</sup> E31. To complete the picture, we should ascertain that the alternatives to *von* (-*her*) are alive, although they are not used as spontaneously as their competitor. Those that I have data for are *hinsichtlich* 'in regard to' (E32), *gemessen an* 'measured against' (E33), *in* 'in' (E34) and *nach* 'after' (E35).

E32. Der mit 12 MHz getaktete ARC Turbo 12 kann sich hinsichtlich seiner Leistung mit dem PS/2 Modell 60 von IBM messen. [computer magazine, 1987]

'The ARC Turbo 12, tacted with 12 mhz, can compete with the PS/2 model 60 of IBM in performance.'

E33. Der neue Tischcomputer aus Texas stellt nämlich, gemessen an Preis und Leistung, alles bislang Dagewesene in den Schatten. [*Capital*, 1986]

'The new desk computer from Texas indeed overshadows, in regard to price and performance, everything that has appeared up to now.'

E34. Wir sind ja doch eben gerade in der Técnica, von der Técnica her, wesentlich weiter. [radio interview, 1987]

'For we are substantially more advanced particularly in technology, viewed technically.'

E35. Noch ein Wort dazu, was Beispiele ihrer Funktion nach sein können. [free speech, 1987]

'Another word on what examples can be as to their function.'

In each of these examples, the phrase in question could easily be substituted by a *von-her* phrase, with no change in meaning. E34 is particularly intriguing as the speaker offers the paraphrase himself, apparently thinking that the received construction does not sufficiently bring out his point. Compare, moreover, E35 with E17 and E32/E33 with E28. If *von* (-*her*) should be further grammaticalized, then the above alternatives will probably survive, as they allow the expression of more specific limitative relations.

It is very hard to prognosticate where this development can lead. On the one hand, it is probably no accident that it is just the preposition *von* which acquires the function of shadow subject. It is well established in the function of marking the passive agent, which probably has semantic affinities with the shadow subject as illustrated above. In view of this, there is little to prevent German from getting double subject constructions just as Japanese. On the other hand, it might be an obstacle for such a development that *von* already has so many functions, in particular the ablative and possessive functions, so that it might prove undesirable to freight it with an additional one.

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<sup>13</sup> Moreover, E30 shows the extent to which the new function of *von* tends to oust older ones. Ten years ago, this expression would have been interpreted exclusively, with stress on *raffiniert* instead of on *Farbe*, as implying that the color has achieved something sophisticated; cf. *Wie raffiniert von dir!* 'How clever of you!'.

2.4.3. Finally, yet another limitative construction should be mentioned, which I have singled out because it is a word formation process. It combines the topic (or shadow actant) noun with the complex derivational suffix *-mäßig* ( $[[x]_N\text{-mäßig}]_{\text{Adj}}$  ‘by the measure of x’) and thus converts it into an adjective which, for the present purpose, is used adverbially. This construction alternates to a large extent with the *von-her* construction and is insofar synonymous with it. Examples can be derived from E28 by replacing *von den Vorleistungen* by *vorleistungsmäßig*, or from E32 by replacing *hinsichtlich seiner Leistung* by *leistungsmäßig*.

This process is fashionable, too. However, as is typical in word-formation, it is restricted to single-noun topics which, in one of the alternative constructions, would be accompanied at most by a definite determiner. The complex suffix *-mäßig* is in a paradigm with a few other adjective-forming suffixes such as (N)-*förmig* ‘of the form (of N)’, (N)-*haltig* ‘containing (N)’ and (N)-*artig* ‘of the kind (of N)’. These are currently productive and illustrate the development of new derivational suffixes from formerly free lexical morphemes. The phenomenon has been much investigated in German linguistics (cf., e.g., Inghult 1975). It illustrates the transition from compounding to derivation. It might be subsumed under grammaticalization. This would entail that derivation is more grammatical than composition. The latter problems are discussed in Lehmann 1989. Both these and the question of the function of all the devices mentioned in this section need much more investigation.

### 3. Verbal categories

#### 3.1. Modal verbs

There is a long tradition in German of creating verbal categories by embedding a non-finite form of the full verb in a periphrasis with another verb which then degenerates to an auxiliary. The most recent of these which is well established as an auxiliary, but still expanding, is *würde* ‘would’, which forms an analytic subjunctive which can substitute for the synthetic past subjunctive. The relationship between the two is very similar to the one between the synthetic genitive and the analytic *von* construction (cf. §2.2.1). Normative grammar recommends the use of the synthetic form wherever possible, but the lower the level of formality, the more the analytic form prevails. Also, there are cases where the synthetic form is insufficient and thus impossible. For example, originally *möchte* was the past subjunctive of *mag* ‘like’. Now, however, this category must be paraphrased by *würde mögen*, because *möchte* has lexicalized into a polite form of *will* ‘want’.<sup>14</sup> I hypothesize that the grammatical necessity of using an analytic construction instead of a competing synthetic one is a safe hint as to the direction in which the development goes. However, on the whole there have been no revolutionary developments

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<sup>14</sup> Thus, it is not possible to say *wenn nicht so viel Salz drin wäre, möchte ich das wohl* ‘if there were not so much salt in it, I would like it’.

in our century as regards the expansion of *würde*.

More recent is the development of *brauchen* ‘need, require’ into a modal verb. As this is well studied by now (cf., e.g., Wurzel 1984:149), a few remarks will suffice here. The established modal verbs, such as *wollen* ‘will’, *können* ‘can’, *müssen* ‘must’ and a couple of others, form a very homogeneous group. They differ from lexical verbs in such respects as being defective as to verbal categories, having different personal endings and taking their infinitive complement without *zu* ‘to’. All of these are common symptoms of grammaticalization.

In standard German, the verb *brauchen* belongs in the class of verbs which take an infinitive complement with *zu*, as in E36.

E36. Das beabsichtigt/braucht er nicht zweimal zu sagen.

‘He does not intend/need to say that twice.’

In colloquial German and various dialects, it is making its way into the group of modal verbs by adapting itself semantically and formally to its constraints (see Lehmann 1982, ch. IV.4.2.2 on paradigmaticization). Semantically, it functions as the counterpart of *müssen* in negative contexts, as illustrated in E37.

E37. a. Das muß er zweimal sagen.

‘He must say that twice.’

b. Das brauch er nicht zweimal sagen.

‘He need not say that twice.’

Incidentally, it is not quite clear why this should happen, since *das muß er nicht zweimal sagen* means the same as E37.b. Anyway, if the former alternative did not exist, *brauchen* would be, as part of the paradigm of modal verbs, in a suppletive relation with *müssen*. The formal adjustment of *brauchen* involves loss of the final *-t* in the third person singular present and omission of the *zu* before the infinitive; cf. E37.b with E36. It is a safe bet that *brauchen* will become a fully integrated modal verb if it survives.

### 3.2. Progressive aspect

Other European and Non-European languages have a progressive aspect of the type *I am working*, *estoy trabajando* or even *je suis en train de travailler*. Standard German, which is, perhaps, one of the poorest languages as regards the category of aspect, has nothing of the sort. However, in a couple of West German dialects, in particular Lower Frankish (spoken, e.g., in Cologne), a progressive aspect has come into use.<sup>15</sup> This is expressed by a periphrasis which involves *sein* ‘be’ plus the infinitive, which is governed via the preposition *an* ‘at’ fused with the definite article of the infinitive to yield *am*. E38 is a

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<sup>15</sup> I am told that it has existed in Pennsylvania Dutch since the 17. century. There it seems possible that a syntactic loan has met with support by a predisposition in certain German dialects.

typical and, at the same time, the earliest example I know of.<sup>16</sup>

E38. Ich bin am Arbeiten. [letter by August Macke, 1908]

‘I am working.’

There are a couple of possible models for this construction. On the one hand, there is the gerund of the type *ich habe mich beim Arbeiten verletzt* ‘I have hurt myself at work/while working’, which also features the infinitive depending on a preposition fused with the definite article. This can also occur as the predicate of a copula sentence: *ich bin beim Arbeiten* ‘I am at work/working’. On the other hand, there is the modal expression *ich habe zu arbeiten* ‘I have to work’, which features the infinitive depending, via the preposition *zu*, on an auxiliary verb and thus forming a periphrastic verb form. Except for the preposition *an* itself, which is not otherwise used in standard German for the embedding of non-finite verbs, all the structural features of the progressive construction are well established in standard German. It is currently spreading into the colloquial language of Northwest Germany. The interesting feature about the relative chronology of the spread is that intransitive verbs allow the progressive aspect much more easily than transitive or other plurivalent ones. Thus, while many speakers would accept E38 at the colloquial level, examples like E39 are still rare outside of the original dialect area.

E39. Ich bin jetzt dieses Orientierungs-Papier am überarbeiten. [Colonese speaker, 1988]

‘I am currently reworking this orientation paper.’

As E39 shows, the internal syntax of the verbal group in the progressive follows the pattern of other periphrastic verbal categories: auxiliary verb in second position, then all the complements and adjuncts (in partly variable order), finally the non-finite form of the full verb. The preposition-plus-article portmanteau morph *am* forms a constituent with the non-finite verb form.

There is an alternative construction, exemplified in E40.b.<sup>17</sup>

E40. a. Martha ist Flaschen am sortieren.

‘Martha is sorting out bottles.’

b. Martha ist am Flaschen-Sortieren.

‘Martha is bottle-sorting.’

Here the complement comes between *am* and the non-finite verb form. This construction is obligatory if the direct object is indefinite and non-specific; cf. B41.

E41. Jupp ist am Radfahren / \*Rad am fahren.

‘Joe is bicycle-riding.’

Again, examples like E40.b and E41 are more widely accepted than those like E40.a. They have to be analyzed as instances of incorporation. This is in consonance with the above

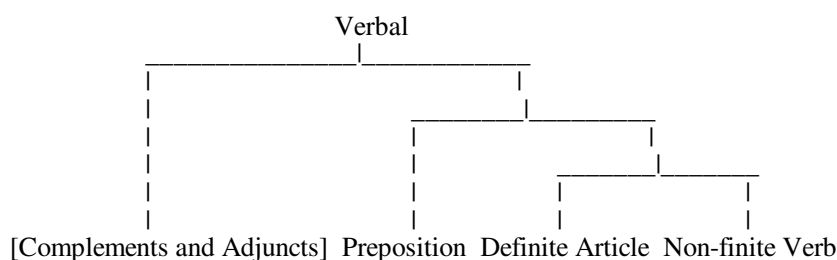
<sup>16</sup> I did not gather data on the progressive aspect because it is too familiar in my dialect environment.

<sup>17</sup> This point has been clarified to me by Ulrike Claudi.

observation that the progressive is much more common with intransitive than with transitive verb constructions: the incorporation construction is treated like an intransitive one.

If one wants an explanation for the order in the spread of the progressive, there is a structural and a semantic factor that can be added. First, the relevant shallow<sup>18</sup> syntactic structure of constructions such as those in E39 and E40.a is as in F1.

F1. *Progressive of syntactically complex verbal*



This means that the material depending on the non-finite verb form is outside the scope of the definite article which determines it. This is non-iconic and unprecedented in German syntax.

Second, the semantic locus of the progressive aspect is in intransitive verbs. Progressivity and intransitivity have a natural affinity (see, e.g., Hopper & Thompson 1980), as the progressive aspect centers the attention on the situation of the subject. Given such conditions, one would predict that if a grammatical category is introduced into a language, it will start from its natural locus and only later penetrate into less prototypical domains. This is borne out by the diffusion of the German progressive aspect. In the meantime, it is intriguing to observe the conspiracy of the structural and the semantic factors, which are completely independent.

### 3.3. Andative and venitive

Motion deixis is well established in German in the form of the particles *hin/her* ‘away from/towards the deictic center’. These combine freely with motion verbs; cf. *hinschwimmen* ‘swim towards a point outside the deictic center’ vs. *herschwimmen* ‘swim towards the deictic center’. Their combination with other verbs, however, essentially leads to lexicalization, with the deictic feature being lost. Cf., from *sagen* ‘say’, *hinsagen* ‘say carelessly’ and *hersagen* ‘rehearse’, or, from *machen* ‘make’, *hinmachen* ‘hurry up’ and *hermachen* ‘produce an impression’. The idea of the grammatical categories andative vs. venitive, however, is that any verbal action can be characterized as having its origin in the deictic center (and, thus, being directed away from it) vs. having its origin outside the deictic center (and, thus, preferably being directed towards it). Cf. the Italian periphrastic

<sup>18</sup> The surface structure would have to bring out the fact that the preposition and the article form a constituent.

passive with *andare* vs. *venire* as a paradigm example.

Again in the colloquial language of Northwest Germany, there has been an andative for quite some time. It is formed by coordinating the full verb with *hingehen* ‘go away from the deictic center’, as in E42.

E42. Nun könnte man ja hingehen und das Ganze nochmal schreiben.

‘Now one [including the deictic center] could go right ahead and write the whole thing again.’

The range of functions of this construction is not yet understood. I realized its andative function only when I first heard its venitive counterpart, as in E43.

E43. Was wir nun nicht verstehen, ist, warum man nicht herkommt und das schutzgeimpfte Tier dem antibakteriell positiven Tier gleichstellt. [radio interview, 1987]

‘What we now do not understand is why one [i.e. persons outside the deictic center] does not put the protectively inoculated animal on a par with the antibacterially positive animal.’

*Herkommen und*, as in E43, is much rarer than *hingehen und*. Its venitive function, however, is unmistakable. Lacking sufficient data, I cannot say more about this.

### 3.4. The addressee passive

German passives demote the active subject and signal that whatever is the subject is not the agent. The standard passive involves the use of *werden* ‘become’ and *sein* ‘be’ as auxiliaries. If applied to transitive verbs, it involves the promotion of the active direct object to subject.<sup>19</sup> The colloquial language has, in addition, an addressee passive (see Heidolph et al. 1981: 556f). This involves *bekommen/kriegen* ‘get’ as auxiliaries. Its locus of application is ditransitive verbs with an indirect object, as in E44.<sup>20</sup>

E44. a. Die Arbeiter zeigten ihr den ganzen Betrieb.

‘The workers showed her the whole operation.’

b. Sie kriegte (von den Arbeitern) den ganzen Betrieb gezeigt.

‘She was shown the whole operation (by the workers).’

The active indirect object is promoted to subject. Other complements remain unaffected. Just as in the standard passive, the active subject can be adjoined in a *von*-phrase.

The construction is currently expanding in the following directions:

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<sup>19</sup> Leaving the direct object unpromoted is not standard and uncommon at the nonstandard level.

<sup>20</sup> Its narrowest locus is, of course, in constructions which are close to its etymological origin, such as *sie bekam ein Buch geschenkt* ‘she was presented a book’, etymologically ‘she got a book presented’.

1. The variant employing *bekommen* penetrates into the standard language.<sup>21</sup> Thus, a version of E44.b with *bekam* instead of *kriegte* appearing in the radio news is not unthinkable.

2. The addressee need not be an indirect object. NPs in benefactive or possessive functions, as long as they are datives in the active version, can also be promoted, as in E45.

E45. Sie kriegte den Wagen repariert.

‘She got the car repaired.’

3. The verb does not need to have a non-dative complement. The addressee passive is becoming possible with verbs that take only an indirect object.

E46. Sonja bekommt immer von euch geholfen. [conversation, 1987]

‘Sonja always gets helped by you.’

4. The complement to be promoted does not even need to be in the dative. Other syntactic functions are allowable, as long as they express something like an addressee semantic function, as in E47.

E47. Dann kriege ich immer geschimpft. [conversation, 1987]

‘Then I always get scolded.’

E46 and E47 are observed data. Speaker judgements vary on such examples; they are outside my own idiolect. Steps 2 - 4 of the expansion nicely illustrate the dropping of selection restrictions which stem from the etymology of the construction.

Restricted to the colloquial language, there is yet another periphrastic construction involving *bekommen/kriegen*, with a meaning that Seiler (1973) calls ‘possessor of an act’, as exemplified in E48.

E48. Kriegst du das bis heute abend geschrieben?

‘Can you (manage to) get that written by this evening?’

The construction is formally identical to the addressee passive. Here, however, there is no implication that the subject cannot be agent. Instead, there is an attribution of the act to the subject as the one who is responsible for it, so that he will either have to do it himself or else see to it that it is done. Probably, this auxiliary function of *bekommen/kriegen* is based on (interference with) a different meaning of *kriegen*, namely ‘manage, succeed’.

### 3.5. Function verbs

A function verb construction (*Funktionsverbgefüge*, also [*verbale*] *Streckform* ‘stretched [verbal] form’) is a syntagm consisting of a moderately grammaticalized verb and an abstract verbal noun as its complement such that the syntagm bears a paradigmatic relation

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<sup>21</sup> *Kriegen* and *bekommen*, in- or outside the periphrastic passive, are basically register variants of each other.

to the verb underlying the verbal noun. The paradigmatic relation may consist of a valency change or a (sometimes very slight) change in the *aktionsart* of the full verb. The grammaticalized verb takes on those grammatical properties of the corresponding full verb which can only be expressed by a finite (as opposed to nominalized) verb, including subject and direct object government, while the verbal noun retains the lexical properties of the full verb, including that part of its valency which is not affected by nominalization. The grammaticalized verb is called a function verb (*Funktionsverb*). Function verb constructions have been a favorite topic in German linguistics (cf. Helbig 1979, Heidolph et al. 1981:431-442); thus I can be brief here.

Function verb constructions have their stylistic locus in bureaucratic, scientific and journalistic jargon. Some function verbs are more grammaticalized and form highly regular constructions; also, several function verbs are synonyms and thus mutually exchangeable with a given verbal noun. Other function verb constructions are more lexicalized and have the character of phraseologisms (cf. Burger et al. 1982:37); they may not even have a simple verb corresponding to them. There are transitions between the two groups. Thus, some of the highly regular function verb constructions such as *Anwendung finden* 'find application', as in E52, are fairly common and to that extent approach the status of phraseologisms. The whole strategy, thus, is productive more or less like a derivative pattern. I will here concentrate on the grammaticalized cases. Some of the most common function verbs are *kommen* 'come', *gelangen* 'arrive, reach', *bringen* 'bring', *finden* 'find', *erfahren* 'experience, undergo', *unterziehen* 'subject', *zuföhren* 'bring to', *vornehmen* 'execute'. Here are some recorded examples:

- E49. eine Notationsvereinfachung, bei der nur mehr die Endeinheiten D und 1/2 zur Darstellung kommen. [linguistic book, 1984]  
 'a notational simplification in which only the terminal units D and 1/2 are represented'
- E50. Wir haben dieses Konzert aufgenommen und bringen es heute zur Sendung. [radio, 1988]  
 'We have recorded this concert and are broadcasting it today.'
- E51. bis ein Stapelprogramm geladen und zur Ausführung gebracht wird [computer magazine, 1987]  
 'until a stack program is loaded and executed'
- E52. Für Sendungen nach den österreichischen Zollausschlußgebieten ... finden die für den Verkehr innerhalb des Bereichs der Deutschen Bundespost geltenden Gebühren Anwendung. [mail information booklet, 1982]  
 'For shipments to the Austrian Customs-Exclusion Territories, the fees which are valid for traffic within the domain of the Deutsche Bundespost apply.'
- E53. Einige Bilder erfahren auch eine neue Interpretation ... [book commercial, 1987]  
 'Also, some pictures get a new interpretation'



E54. Diese Regelungen sollen noch einer vollständigen Überarbeitung unterzogen werden. [radio interview, 1987]

‘These regulations are yet to be subjected to a complete revision.’

E55. daß sie einer geregelten Bejagung zugeführt werden können. [hunting journal, 1987]

‘that they [the kinds of game] can be subjected to a controlled hunting’

E56. Herr N.N., der seinerzeit die Aufstellung des Glasbruchschadens vorgenommen hat [business letter, 1988]

‘Mr. N.N., who at that time made the statement of the glass damage’

The most productive function verbs form morpho-syntactic paradigms. F2 presents the commonest pattern (VN = verbal noun).

#### F2. Terminative function verb constructions

version	active	passive
simple full verb	$x_{\text{sbj}} \text{ V } y_{\text{obj}}$	$y_{\text{sbj}} \text{ wird (von x) } V_{\text{pass}}$
function verb constructions	$x_{\text{sbj}} \text{ bringt } y_{\text{obj}} \text{ zu } VN_{\text{dat}}$	$y_{\text{sbj}} \text{ kommt/gelangt (durch x) zu } VN_{\text{dat}}$
	$x_{\text{sbj}} \text{ unterzieht } y_{\text{obj}} \text{ } VN_{\text{dat}}$	$y_{\text{sbj}} \text{ findet/erfährt (durch x) } VN_{\text{acc}}$

These constructions all involve terminative *aktionsart*. As is apparent from F2, the periphrasis of an active simple verb generally involves transitive function verbs, while the periphrasis of a passive simple verb generally involves intransitive function verbs. Here as elsewhere in the grammar of German and other languages, *bringen* is the causative-transitive counterpart of *kommen*. The same lexical relationship obtains between *unterziehen* and *erfahren*. The choice between the two function verb patterns in F2 depends on the degree of affectedness of the object of the simple verb; *finden/erfahren/unterziehen* are appropriate with more strongly affected objects.

## 4. Intensification

Intensification is probably an area which continuously undergoes change in most languages; people are never content with available means to express the importance of what they have to say. Very much goes on here at the nonstandard level, where what was a strong expression yesterday is antiquated today. However, these are chiefly lexical changes. We will look at two subareas in which other languages have grammatical means, so that there is a chance of the German phenomena being cases of grammaticalization. Moreover, the two phenomena described in this section are typical of the sometimes stilted register of journalistic prose.

### 4.1. *mehr als*

The history of modern *mehr als* ‘more than’ remains to be written. Probably the first and decisive step in its development into an intensifier was a syntactic reanalysis. Cf. E57.a and b.

E57. a. Das ist mehr als das Doppelte.

‘That is more than double.’

b. Das ist mehr als ausreichend. [computer magazine, 1987]

‘That is more than sufficient.’

In E57.a, *mehr* is the head of the phrase, *als das Doppelte* is some kind of complement. E57.b can be analyzed analogously. But current usage presupposes its reanalysis with *ausreichend* as the head of the phrase, *mehr als* as a modifier. Cf. Matthews 1981:156f for similar reanalyses.

Phraseology again plays a major role. The collocation in E57.b was found in two computer journals of 1987. Other common collocations are *mehr als zweifelhaft/fraglich* ‘more than doubtful/questionable’. These cases all admit a literal interpretation. That is, *mehr als ausreichend* could signify, on a scale reaching from wanting over insufficient, sufficient, adequate to abundant, a point above ‘sufficient’; *mehr als zweifelhaft* could imply ‘improbable’, assuming that this is the next step on the scale of plausibility; and similarly for all the other constructions. However, there are reasons for assuming that this is not the intended interpretation. First, how do we know that *mehr als ausreichend* means ‘above “sufficient” on the appropriate scale’, whereas *mehr als zweifelhaft* means ‘below “doubtful” on the appropriate scale’? Second, there are collocations with adjectives such that the literal interpretation does not make sense, as in E58 and E59.

E58. Ungeachtet solcher Erfolge sind aber die Aussichten mehr als gering, daß die Resolution den angestrebten Erfolg ... erreicht. [written radio commentary, 1987]  
‘Despite such successes, the prospects are more than dim that the resolution will attain the desired success.’

E59. Mehr als deutlich führt dieses etwas ausführlich beschriebene Beispielprogramm vor Augen, wie systemnah ein Software-Designer mit Modula-2 programmieren kann ... [computer magazine, 1987]  
‘This example program, described in some detail, demonstrates more than clearly how closely to the system a software designer can in fact program with Modula-2’

In E58, a literal interpretation would require a level above *gering* ‘low’, whereas the intended interpretation is, if anything, a level below ‘low’. In E59, there is simply no appropriate scale, so that *mehr als deutlich* cannot refer to a level above ‘clear’; it can only mean ‘with particular clarity’.

This extension to adjectives for which only an intensifier interpretation is available marks a step in the expansion of *mehr als*. Another step is its transfer to nouns, as in E60 and E61.

E60. Sein Versprechen ist mehr als eine Versicherung. [commercial, 1987]<sup>22</sup>

‘His promise is more than an insurance.’

E61. Wenn es aber gelänge, die "Verweildauer auf vier Tage auszudehnen", dann wäre das mehr als ein Erfolg. [Die Zeit, 1988]

‘But if it were possible "to extend the period of stay [of tourists] to four days," that would be more than a success.’

Before 1980 or so, *mehr als ein Erfolg* could only have meant, with the appropriate intonation, ‘two or more successes’. In E61, it apparently means something like ‘a good success’. Similarly, *mehr als eine Versicherung* in E60 is not supposed to mean ‘two or more insurances’, but probably ‘a good insurance’.

The last step in the expansion of *mehr als* so far is its transfer to verbs, as in E62 - E64.

E62. Der Nachteil, daß das Fehlen eines Linkers die Entwicklung größerer Programmprojekte erschwert, wird durch die hohe Übersetzungsgeschwindigkeit von Turbo-Pascal mehr als aufgehoben. [computer magazine, 1987]

‘The disadvantage that the development of program packets is impeded by the lack of a linker is more than compensated for by the high compilation speed of Turbo-Pascal.’

E63. [der Nachteil] läßt sich durch die hohe Druckgeschwindigkeit, also ein Mehrfach-Ausdrucken eines Dokuments, mehr als ausgleichen. [computer magazine, 1987]

‘[the disadvantage] can more than be compensated for by the high printing speed - that is, a repeated printing of a document.’

E64. ... Vertrauensbeweis, den er mit seinen Forschungen mehr als rechtfertigte. [written speech, 1987]

‘... proof of trust which he more than justified by his research’

*Mehr als V* means something like ‘V and do something in addition’, or even simply ‘fully V’. Note again the phraseological character of the collocations in E62 and E63. The development is so recent that one cannot yet say which lexical groups of verbs allow *mehr als* as a modifier. What is certain is that only verb forms which are final in the verbal syntagm allow it. This includes non-finite verb forms, as in E62 and E63, and verbs in subordinate clauses, as in E64. This restriction is a consequence of the almighty verb-second principle in independent declarative sentences, which allows no modifiers before the finite verb. Thus, *he more than justified that proof of trust* has no direct translation into German.

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<sup>22</sup> This is the headline of an extended commercial of an insurance company which also features a trustworthy-looking representative. The headline is not taken up in the commercial text, so that I cannot tell what it means. I take this to be a symptom of the depletion and the extremely phraseological character of *mehr als*.

The historiography of *mehr als* as an intensifier would probably reveal that it is a loan translation from English, in which *more than* is further advanced in its development. It is not subject to ordering constraints; and it has a negative counterpart, *less than*, as in *the other co-editors have been less than responsive* [letter, 1987], which does not have a German equivalent. The latter point may be interpreted as showing that the English phrase is paradigmaticized and, thus, grammaticalized at least to some extent. In the German case, this is not so clear. *Mehr als* forms a phraseologism, but it is doubtful whether this phraseologism is making its way into the grammar.

#### 4.2. *zunehmend*

Continuous intensification of a property which is expressed by an adjective, as in ‘faster and faster’, used to be expressed by *immer* ‘ever’, as in *immer schneller*. For concepts expressed by verbs undergoing a change of continuous increase, the usual expression was *immer mehr* ‘ever more’. Recently (estimate: since 1980), *immer (mehr)* has tended to be replaced by *zunehmend* ‘increasingly’. E65 - E67 show this for the intensification of adjectives, E68 shows it for verbs.

E65. Die Nachfrage wird zunehmend schwächer. [radio commentary, 1987]  
‘The demand becomes increasingly weaker.’

E66. Diese Schattenwirtschaft wird zunehmend weniger von der Partei kontrolliert. [radio, written text, 1988]  
‘This shadow economy is controlled increasingly less by the party.’

E67. Das echte Elfenbein wurde Ende des letzten Jahrhunderts zunehmend selten und teuer. [radio, written text, 1989]  
‘The real ivory became increasingly rare and expensive by the end of the last century.’

E68. Die Nachfrage verlagert sich zunehmend ins Ausland. [constructed on a common pattern]  
‘The demand increasingly shifts to foreign countries.’

E65 - E67 clearly show the degree of desemanticization which this device has reached in a few years (cf. the semantically parallel E58). I suspect that this is, again, a loan translation from English. Since *immer (mehr)* is probably a grammatical device of continuous intensification, *zunehmend*, too, may be conceived of as a marginal case of grammaticalization.

### 5. Sentence-level syntax

The following two subsections deal with changes in main constituent order. Such are not *prima facie* cases of grammaticalization. However, one of the factors in grammaticalization is the reduction of syntagmatic variability (see Lehmann 1982, ch. IV.3.3). This leads to a fixation of the sequential order of grammaticalized elements in

relation to their host elements. A language that used to have postpositions can acquire prepositions through the grammaticalization of relational nouns or coverbs which precede their complements. The result would be an apparent change in the word order of adpositions.

Again, rigid ordering constraints at low grammatical levels cannot be directly loosened (that would be degrammaticalization). However, they can be replaced by freer ordering if the construction in question is renewed. For example, if there was a rule that possessive attributes must be prenominal, there is no possible rule change that allows the same attributes to alternatively stand in postnominal position. There is, however, the possibility of acquiring, maybe through the grammaticalization of an anaphoric pronoun to an attributor, a new kind of possessive attribute, which would then be postnominal.

Word order change can, therefore, be the consequence of grammaticalization. It is from this perspective that the following two cases should be viewed.

### 5.1. Verb-second position in subordinate clauses

German is famous for requiring final position of the finite verb in subordinate clauses, an order which never appears in main clauses. There have been enough analyses considering one of the orders as basic and the other as derived. This issue becomes superfluous as soon as one realizes that the orderings in main and subordinate clauses are in a grammaticalization relationship. According to the generalized Penthouse Principle (Ross 1973), syntactic diversity is reduced at lower grammatical levels. In particular, constituent order is more rigid in subordinate clauses than in main clauses, and it is more rigid in non-finite subordinate constructions than in finite subordinate clauses. If we apply this to the facts of German, the following (simplified) picture of German main constituent structure emerges:<sup>23</sup>

#### F3. *Constituent order in clause types*

subordination type sentence type	independent	dependent	
		finite	non-finite
declarative	#X V Y#	#Z V#	#Z V#
non-declarative	#V Z#		

Whereas there are two alternative orderings in main clauses according to sentence type, there is only one ordering in dependent clauses. In addition to this greater paradigmatic variability, there is also greater syntagmatic variability in main clauses. There is, to begin with, a ternary subdivision of positional constituents in declarative main clauses, but only

<sup>23</sup> V: verb; X: one constituent; Y, Z: remaining clause constituents.

a binary one in subordinate clauses (cf. Heidolph et al. 1981:705f).

*Ex hypothesi*, the verb-final rule for subordinate clauses represents an instance of relative rigidity of sequential ordering. It would therefore be unexpected for non-finite dependent constructions to again show the ordering possibilities of main clauses. Quite to the contrary, the locus of the verb-final constraint is in non-finite subordinate constructions. Finite subordinate constructions display verb-final ordering insofar as they are close to, or modeled on, non-finite ones.

From this reasoning, the expectation arises that if there is variation of main constituent order in dependent clauses, it will be in finite rather than in non-finite ones, and it will show one of the possibilities that obtain for main clauses, rather than yet another one. This is borne out by the facts. There is considerable variation in both colloquial and written German with respect to verb order in finite subordinate clauses; but there is almost no possibility to end a non-finite subordinate construction by anything but the verb.

First of all, there are subordinate clauses which do not need to be introduced by a conjunction and then regularly show verb-first order. These are conditional clauses and concessive and comparative subtypes of these (cf. Heidolph et al. 1981:718f). Second, if a subordinate clause  $S_2$  is a constituent of a subordinate clause  $S_1$ ,  $S_2$  will normally follow  $S_1$ , so that  $S_1$  does not have verb-final order. The same tends to be true for other heavy constituents of a subordinate clause, which more often than not follow the finite verb even in written German. Thus, E69.b is a perfectly acceptable alternative to a.

- E69. a. Als er nun endlich nach all der schweren und langweiligen Arbeit Feierabend machte, da kam es ihm vor, als ob ...  
 ‘When he then finally called it a day after all that hard and boring work, it appeared to him as if ...’  
 b. Als er nun endlich Feierabend machte nach all der schweren und langweiligen Arbeit, da kam es ihm vor, als ob ...

While these are cases of free variation which have to be conceived as subcases of the verb-final constraint, there is a third case of non-final position of the finite verb in subordinate clauses which is different from the first two mentioned. This is verb-second ordering, as in declarative main clauses. I am not here referring to asyndetic constructions of the type *ich glaube, er kommt* ‘I think he comes’, whose subordinate nature is doubtful. The constructions which are of interest in the present connection are illustrated in E70 and E71.

- E70. Wir konnten den Wagen noch nicht reparieren, weil wir mußten auf die Ersatzteile warten.

‘We could not yet repair the car because we had to wait for the spare parts.’

- E71. Wir können auch noch wárten, obwohl morgen ist er bestimmt áuch nicht weiter.  
 ‘We can wait a little more, although tomorrow he will surely not be any further along.’

Such constructions are not standard, but very common at the colloquial level. They have been in the language since Old High German; cf. Sandig 1973. So far, they appear to be restricted to causal and concessive clauses. They are not to be interpreted as variations of subordinate clause constituent order. Instead, the subordinative conjunctions *weil* and *obwohl* (and some synonymous ones) are reinterpreted as coordinative conjunctions, on the analogy of *denn* and the adverb *allerdings*, respectively (which could be substituted in E70 and E71, with little or no change in meaning, to produce standard German). After them, main clause syntax is required. This means that subordinate clause order is renewed, at least in certain areas, by main clause order.

An independent clause has its own illocutionary force, whereas a subordinate clause generally has none of its own. Just as main clauses linked by *denn* and *allerdings*, verb-second clauses introduced by *weil* and *obwohl* are subduced from the scope of the would-be main predication and independently express the speaker's point of view. This is illustrated by the following minimal pair:<sup>24</sup>

- E72. a. Maria verehrt ihren Mann, obwohl er es nicht verdient hat.  
       ‘Mary reveres her husband although he does not deserve it.’  
       b. Maria verehrt ihren Mann, obwohl verdient hat er es nicht.  
       ‘Mary reveres her husband, but he does not deserve it.’

The concessive clause in E72.a is within the scope both of the main clause illocutionary force and of the main clause predication (i.e. it is a part of the circumstances taken into account by the main clause subject). In E72.b, the concessive clause is outside these two scopes and gives a separate assessment of the situation by the speaker. It is this main clause status of the concessive clause in b which also renders possible the expression of emphasis by non-finite predicate fronting.

The main clause hypothesis also explains why the constituent ordering observed in the "subordinate" clauses of E70 and E71 never occurs when the subordinate clause precedes the main clause. Inversion of main and subordinate clause is possible in E72.a and would be possible in E70 and E71 if the subordinate clauses had verb-final order, but not as they stand. The explanation is that a coordinative conjunction must go between what it coordinates.

## 5.2. Verb-first position in main clauses

The German constraint on verb-second position in declarative main clauses differs substantially from the situation in English. The English rule may essentially be conceived as a V-3 constraint which says that adverbial, subject and main verb must come in this order at the beginning of the clause. The German constraint presupposes that first and

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<sup>24</sup> E72 and the relevant observation are due to Ekkehard König. Cf. also König & Van der Auwera 1988.

second position are fixed constituent structure slots and that the first can be filled by anything, and determines that the second must be filled by the finite verb.

There are at least two potentially dysfunctional aspects about such a constraint. First of all, it leads to a substantial amount of discontinuity in main clauses. The non-finite verb has to be separated from the finite verb, especially from the auxiliary; an adverb that is part of the verbal lexeme and appears as a verb prefix in subordinate clauses has to be separated from the verb in main clauses; and so forth. The phenomenon has been described by Germanists as *Satzklammer* ('[sentential] braces'; cf. Heidolph et al. 1981:707-709). We will see in a moment that this is not the interpretation given to it by speakers. Second, the constraint forbids clause-initial position of the finite verb, which is necessary if the clause consists only of a verb, and desirable, *inter alia*, in presentative sentences.

The second of these shortcomings is remedied by expletive *es* 'it' and *da* 'there', as illustrated in E73 and E74.

E73. a. Es regnet.

'It is raining.'

b. Es wird getanzt.

'There is dancing.'

E74. Da kreuzt plötzlich dieser Holtermann auf.

'Suddenly old Holtermann shows up.'

To understand the working of main constituent ordering, it is essential to be aware that, in such constructions, *es* and *da* are nothing but dummy slot holders which allow formal observance of the verb-second constraint. In the colloquial language, constructions with expletive *es* are not affected, although they are relatively rare (E73.b would more commonly be *da wird getanzt*). However, the expletive *da* is increasingly dropped. Here are some recorded examples:

E75. A: Das is kaputt das Auto. - B: Kann man nich mehr mit fahren. [1987]

'A: It is broken, the car.' - B [4 years]: 'You can no longer ride in it.'

E76. Wenn es so weiter geht, können wir pünktlich ankommen. Kommen natürlich nachher noch Geschwindigkeitsbeschränkungen. [conversation, 1987]

'If it goes on like this, we can arrive in time. There will be, of course, speed limits later on.'

From the point of view of the standard language, an initial *da* is missing in B's utterance in E75,<sup>25</sup> which would anaphorically resume 'the car'; and the second sentence in E76 likewise should begin with either of the expletive particles.

This construction is allowable in a variety of registers and text sorts. It is typical of

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<sup>25</sup> Even then the sentence would be substandard (just as E80 below), because preposition stranding is not standard.



narrative expositions, both poetic (*Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein stehn* [Goethe] ‘a boy saw a little rose’) and colloquial, especially in joke-telling (*Kommt eine Frau zum Arzt ...* ‘A woman comes to the doctor’s’). It is also no accident that one of the examples is from child language, as omission of sentence-initial *da* is very common there. Ten years ago, there used to be a genre of jokes called *Häschenwitze* ‘bunny jokes’, whose main character was a bunny-rabbit. The punch line was always reserved for him, and it consisted of a declarative main clause introduced by the finite verb. E77 is an example.

E77. Hattu [hast du] also doch Möhrchen gehabt.

‘So you did have carrots, after all.’<sup>26</sup>

The omission of sentence-initial *da* has been generalized to some of the forms of the anaphorical pronoun *der*. In particular, *das* is as freely omitted as *da*.

E78. kenn ich, weiß ich, war ich schon [title of a German movie, 1980]

‘I’ve seen it, I know it, I’ve been there’

E78 combines some common sayings with omission of both *das* and *da*. In examples such as E75 and E78, the missing form is not merely expletive, but is the sole legitimate representative of a sentence constituent. In such cases, initial position of the element in question is the necessary condition of its omission. Consequently, in the alternative versions E75' and E78', where another constituent takes the first position, the anaphoric form has to appear.

E75'. Man kann nich mehr damit fahren.

E78'. ich kenn das, ich weiß das, ich wár da schon.

The insensitivity of this process to grammatical relations shows that we are not faced with an instance of ‘pro-drop’. Instead, it seems best to interpret the examples as the result of a tendency towards verb-initial order in main declarative clauses. This is also suggested by the sayings in E79, which are extremely common in the colloquial language.

E79. a. Is[t] ja noch mal gút gegangen.

‘It has turned out well once again.’

b. Wird schon nicht so schlimm wérden.

‘It won't turn out that badly.’

c. Hast du eben Péch gehabt.

‘You just have had tough luck.’

d. Ham [haben] wir ja noch nie gesehen.

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<sup>26</sup> Bunny goes to the pharmacist's and asks: ‘Do you have carrots?’ The pharmacist says: ‘No, bunny, this is a drugstore; we don't have any carrots.’ Next day, bunny comes to the drugstore and again asks: ‘Do you have carrots?’, and the pharmacist again explains that he doesn't. Third day, the same story. On the fourth day, the pharmacist has put a sign on his door saying ‘Today no carrots’. Bunny appears and reproachfully says to the pharmacist: E77.

‘That we have never seen before.’

e. Könnte ja jeder kommen.

‘Then anybody could come.’

f. Mußt du [mußt du] halt noch mal hingehen.

‘You just have to go there again.’

The missing initial pronominal form has the syntactic functions of subject in E79.a and b, direct object in d and place adverbial in the others.

Another point is noteworthy about the syntax of verb-initial sentences. While probably any verb can start a sentence of this type (cf. E78), the examples in E75, E77 and E79 are typical in beginning with auxiliaries or modals. It remains to be seen why this should be so.

In this way, both of the limitations of the verb-second constraint are overcome in the colloquial language. Not only can the sentence start with the verb; but the particularly disturbing discontinuities are also removed. The full verb is relegated, in its non-finite form, to that part of the sentence where the syntagms most closely related to it are assembled. The only remaining discontinuity is the one between the auxiliary or modal and the full verb. However, this may well be merely an apparent one. There are so many languages which separate the expression of such grammatical categories as person, number, tense, mood and aspect from the expression of the lexical verb that it might be an Indo-European preconception to think that they should go together.

Incidentally, if verb-first order in declarative main clauses is colloquial and the replacement of verb-final order in subordinate clauses by main clause order is colloquial, too, one wonders whether it is not an anachronism to introduce verb-second order into subordinate clauses. In fact, it is exactly that hybrid between verb-first and verb-second order which is being used in so-called subordinate clauses in colloquial German. E80 would be an example.

E80. Das sollten wir nicht tun, weil (da) hat ja keiner was von.

‘That we should not do, since nobody gets anything from it.’

If this development succeeds, German will become a verb-initial language. The constructions which are currently at the center of the movement remind one of the situation in the Celtic languages, where verb-initiality also means, in the first place, initial position of the auxiliary. In the present context, we have yet to consider in which respect the development is one of grammaticalization. Under closer analysis, there are two parallel ways of paying lip service to the verb-second constraint. One is to put an expletive element in the first position which then reduces to zero. What is grammaticalized here is the constraint of filling the preverbal position. The other way is to fill the second position with a grammatical verb, thereby allowing the lexical verb to come later in the clause. Here the constraint of filling the second position by a verb is depleted, grammaticalized. Grammatical rules are changed by obeying them.

## 6. Grammaticalization in contemporary German

6.1. It is difficult to derive a typologically relevant generalization from the diverse phenomena reviewed above. There is grammaticalization both in the nominal and in the verbal sphere, both at the low and at the high grammatical levels. The advance of prepositions to the detriment of cases, and of modals, auxiliaries and function verbs to the detriment of synthetic verb forms, bespeaks a general tendency towards analytic morphological structure. Prepositions are separated from the governed noun by the determiners and attributes of the latter. Grammatical verbs are separated from their non-finite or nominalized lexical verb by the rules of main constituent order. There is, therefore, at present no chance that the analytic constructions will coalesce to yield new synthetic ones.

6.2. At a universal level, the data conform to the rule that the greatest freedom reigns at the highest grammatical levels. Therefore, the changes that are potentially most far-reaching are those initiated at the highest levels. At its origin, a change in clause order or main constituent order is merely an instance of free variation and, thus, inconspicuous as regards the typological structure of the language. However, if and when the structures so created grammaticalize, the erstwhile variant will become the rule, and lower level grammar will be shaped in ways that are completely incompatible with its former state.

6.3. While many grammatical changes go on and probably originate at the colloquial level, colloquial speech is far from being the only, or even the principal, source of grammatical change. The mass media play an extremely important role in the coinage and diffusion of new collocations, which then go the way of lexicalization or grammaticalization. Grammatical change is, to some extent, register-bound in the sense that some of the changes are limited to the colloquial level, others to formal style. For some of the grammaticalizational phenomena observed, especially complex prepositions and function verbs, it is not the colloquial, but bureaucratic and journalistic style which promotes them. Some of these innovations may never reach the colloquial level.

6.4. Grammaticalization manifests itself on the synchronic and diachronic axes. Insofar, phenomena may be, and have been, classed as cases of grammaticalization even if there is no clear evidence of historical change. In fact, the set of phenomena reviewed in the foregoing is quite heterogeneous as regards socio-historical aspects of language change. Some phenomena have appeared in the language only recently, such as the *mehr als* and *zunehmend*-constructions. Others have been well-established in non-standard or dialectal varieties of German for a long time, such as the progressive or the pseudo-subordinate clause with the verb in second position. Yet others have always been possible in the standard language in limited contexts, but have considerably expanded their domain in recent times. This is true for the main clause with verb in first position.

Again, some of the changes, esp. those relating to word order, lead to entirely new grammatical structures. Others, e.g. those producing complex prepositions, are but

contemporary instances of a model that has been productive for a long time. In this paper, the common denominator of all the phenomena has been their grammatical character, centering around the concept of grammaticalization, and their recency in colloquial standard German. In all cases, there has been a shift in the pattern of variation which leads to greater prominence of a phenomenon in colloquial standard German.

6.5. The study of grammatical change on the basis of data on synchronic (or, at best, brachychronic) variation in the contemporary stage of a language is subject to a serious problem of verification. Given presently available methodological means, it is next to impossible to know which of the changes that speech habits currently exhibit are synchronic manifestations of ongoing genuine language change, and which of them are but ephemeral fashions. In this situation, a study such as this can hope to elucidate the synchronic dynamism of the language; it cannot hope to tell which innovations will result in changes and which ones will disappear without a trace in future synchronies.

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