

A bottom-up approach to the (non-)identity of German participle forms

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We argue that the lowest common semantic denominator of German participle forms is the derivation of a property by the participle morpheme *-t* and derive aspectual and argument-structural properties of participle forms in different uses from this common core.

- (1) Sie hat die Wand bemalt. (2) Die Wand wurde bemalt. (3) Die Wand ist bemalt.
„She has painted the wall.“ „The wall was painted.“ „The wall is painted.“

Previous work has argued for the formal identity of participle forms in perfect (1) and passive (2) constructions and correlated this identity with aspectual and argument-structural identities (most recently: Wegner 2019). We investigate whether and how the identity of German participle forms can be extended to predicative constructions with the copula *sein* „be“ (3) in which the same participle form as in perfect and passive constructions appears. Predicative participles constitute a challenge to the aspectual and argument-structural identity criteria of German participle forms. Concerning aspectual properties of predicative participles, Kratzer (2000) distinguishes two types of predicative participles by their compatibility with the modifier *immer noch* „still“. Kratzer proposes that predicative participles that allow for modification with *immer noch* denote alterable „target states“ and that those that don't denote non-alterable „resultant states“. Since only resultant state predicatives but not target state predicatives have a perfective semantics, the aspectual identity of German participle forms in perfect and predicative constructions is only partial. Concerning argument-structural properties of predicative participles, the argument-structural identity of participle forms in passive and predicative constructions is partial because modification with *von* „by“-phrases is heavily restricted in predicative participle constructions (most recently: Gehrke 2015). In conclusion, neither argument-structural nor aspectual properties can be the locus of the identity of German participle forms.

In this talk, we extend the analyses of Pross (2019) and Pross & Roßdeutscher (2019) and argue that the participle morpheme *-t* has the same semantic function of deriving a property in passives, perfects and predicatives and can thus serve as a suitable identity criterion for German participle forms. We propose that the kind of state that is derived from a given participial property depends on (i) the construction to which the participle morpheme *-t* is applied (ii) the prefix of the participle construction (iii) the auxiliary with which the participle is combined.

References: Pross, T. (2019). What about lexical semantics if syntax is the only generative component of the grammar? *NLLT* 37, 215–261. Pross, T. & Roßdeutscher, A. (2019). Towards a correlation of form, use and meaning of German *ge*-prefixed predicative participles. *Glossa* 4(1), 93. Wegner, D. (2019). The properties of perfect(ive) and (eventive) passive participles: An identity approach. *Glossa* 4(1), 34.

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