

PURE EXISTENTIALS AS INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL PREDICATES: EVIDENCE FROM GERMANIC¹

1 Introduction

Taking German impersonal existentials as a starting point, I will introduce a distinction between locative-existential and pure existential constructions. The term locative-existential refers to the kind of existential construction we are familiar with from English and other languages. The *there*-construction, for example, can be used to denote permanent or temporary presence of an object at a location as in (1a), and also existence as such as in (1b):

- (1) a. There is a wolf at the door.
b. There are many unicorns. Milsark (1977: 1, 20)

Pure existentials, on the other hand, are restricted to denote existence as such, without reference to a location, or permanent presence at a (large) location. But pure existentials cannot denote temporary or accidental presence at a certain location.

I start by reviewing two impersonal existential constructions in German, which can be distinguished precisely along these lines. Then the relevant contrast is described in terms of individual-level predication. More data from existentials in Scandinavian languages (Danish, Swedish and Icelandic) further motivate the empirical distinction. I will then suggest an account of German impersonal existentials relying on the lexical decomposition of the verbs involved.

2 Impersonal existentials in German

This paper is mainly concerned with existential constructions in German, specifically with the impersonal existential construction (IEC) involving the verb *geben* 'give'. This construction is compared to the Alemannic² IEC involving the verb *haben* 'have' and to the

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² The Alemannic data presented are from a dialect spoken in Southern Vorarlberg, Austria (short: Ale). I am very grateful to Isabella Marte, Stefan Gamon and Klaus Hämmerle for their judgements and their patience.

existential/locative use of the copula *sein*.³ In this section, I will give a short overview of the basic syntactic and semantic facts found in German existentials.

2.1 Distributional facts

With respect to distributional and syntactic properties, both IECs are quite different from the copula. I will only briefly summarize the basic facts.⁴

Table 1: Syntactic properties of IECs (compared with the copula construction)

	Copula <i>sein</i>	IEC: <i>geben</i> and <i>haben</i> (Ale)
Case of DP	NOM	ACC
Verb-Agreement	with DP	with <i>es</i>
<i>es</i> clause-internally	*	obligatory

The facts in table 1 suggest that the (expletive) pronoun *es* is an ordinary subject with impersonal *geben* and *haben*, whereas it is only a dummy element (V2 or topic marker) in the copular construction (where the subject is the DP). This is supported by the data in (2): as a genuine subject, *es* is always obligatory in the IEC, whereas it only occurs sentence initially, and never sentence internally, with the copula.

- (2) a. In meinem Garten gibt *(es) viele Gänseblümchen.
in my garden gives it many daisies

- Ale b. In minam Garta hot *(s) an Hufa Gänseblüamle.
in my garden has -it many daisies

- c. In meinem Garten sind (*es) viele Gänseblümchen.
in my garden are it many daisies

„There are many daisies in my garden.”

While functioning as a subject in the IEC, the *es* it is not referential at all. The tests for argumenthood suggested in Chomsky (1981), Travis (1984), Bennis (1987) and Vikner (1995), which apply to weather-*es* in German, do not apply to the expletive in the IEC in a straightforward way; cf. section 5.2. Still, it is different from *es* as a topic- or V2-marker, which

³ In Alemannic dialects impersonal *geben* exists alongside impersonal *haben*. As far as I know, there is no difference between Standard German and Alemannic with respect to *es gibt*, but *es hot* is only found in Alemannic.

⁴ I will only summarize the facts here, for the more data see Czinglar (1998).

is not argumental at all.⁵ For the purpose of this paper, I will hence refer to *es* in an IEC as a quasi-argument.

2.2 Is there a predicate restriction?

With respect to the predicative relation between the object DP and the XP, the German IECs behave quite differently from the German copular construction and also from the English *there*-construction (TC). An important syntactic difference between the English TC and the German copular construction is that a predicative XP is obligatory with German *sein*:

- (3) a. * Es ist genau eine gerade Primzahl.
it is exactly one even prime
b. * Viele {Elefanten, Gründe, Primzahlen} sind.
many {elephants, reasons, prime numbers} are

This is not very surprising from the point of view that (3) is a predicative context lacking a predicate.⁶ Like the TC, impersonal existentials with *geben* and *haben* can be bare:

- (4) a. Es gibt viele {Elefanten, Gründe, Primzahlen}.
it gives many {elephants, reasons, prime numbers}

- Ale b. Es hot an Hufa {Elefanta, Gründ, Primzahla}.
it has many {elephants, reasons, prime numbers}

„There are many {elephants, reasons, prime numbers}.”

⁵ With the copula, *es* is used as a real expletive, a filler of the sentence-initial position, SpecCP. Arguably a similar mechanism is responsible for *there* appearing in the English existential, when there is no s-structure subject; for an analysis subsuming EPP-expletives and V2-expletives see Roberts & Rousseau (1998).

⁶ These examples make clear that there must be a difference between expletive *es* plus copula in German and expletive *there* plus copula in English. The TC allows bare existentials. McNally (1992: 144) gives the following example:

i. There is exactly one even prime.
This seems to suggest that expletive *there* has some predicative content after all, whereas expletive *es* doesn't have any. One could argue that the German particle *da* has similar spatio-temporal anchoring properties as *there*.

ii. Da sind viele Elefanten.
The difference is, that (ii) is clearly locative, whereas (i) need not be. A bare existential without any locative connotation is impossible with *da*:

iii. * Da ist genau eine Primzahl.
On the other hand, *there* and *da* can be combined with other locative elements, such as another *da* or *there* or some locative PP. This suggests that they both behave like expletives; see Bayer & Suchsland (1997) for more on *da* and the existential construction in German.

- (5) Und nach Felmys Ansicht gibt es heute fast nur "hundsmiserable" Drehbücher.
 „And in Felmy's opinion there are/exist almost only miserable scripts today.”

attested in corpus: Mannheimer Morgen, 1989

If there is no locative PP, the existence of the object depicted by DP is usually spatially unbounded: (5) asserts that there are almost only miserable scripts today, and in Felmys view, almost all the scripts of the world are miserable.⁷

While any phrase can appear in the XP-position of the copula, the XP-position of impersonal *haben* and *geben* is more restrictive: only locative elements (PPs and adverbs) can appear there.

- (6) a. Es gibt viele Österreicher {in Afrika, dort, *klug, *gegen den Euro}.
*it gives many Austrians {in Africa, there, *clever, *against the Euro}*
- Ale b. Es hot an Hufa Öschterreicher {z' Afrika, döt, *gschied, *gegad da Euro}.
*it has many Austrians {in Africa, there, *clever, *against the Euro}*

For the English TC it is well established that the DP and the XP entertain some kind of predicative relation.⁸ From the fact that the XP-position in German IECs needs to be filled by a locative element, we can conclude that, if the XP-position in German is predicative at all, the kind of predication is certainly very restricted.⁹

Table 2: Summary of the properties of the XP-position

	Copula <i>sein</i>	IEC: <i>geben</i> and <i>haben</i> (Ale)
Status of XP	obligatory	optional
Category of XP	all categories	only locative PPs/locative adverbs
Function of XP	predicative	not genuinely predicative

⁷ Depending on the context, a "null location" induces statements about a rather „big" location, the maximal location being the whole universe.

⁸ Only such predicates that can also appear as with the copula *be* are allowed in the TC; cf. McNally (1992: 10) and references cited there:

- i. * The soldier is veteran.
 ii. * There is a soldier veteran.

For an analysis of TC in terms of predication see Williams (1984).

⁹ We also find non-locative PPs in the English TC; see McNally (1992: 11):

- i. There are many educated people we know out of work.

3 "Pure" existentials as individual-level predicates

The fact that only locative elements are allowed in the IEC sheds doubt on the claim that the XP-position is predicative position. In this section, I will show that impersonal *geben* is even more restrictive: it does not allow quantification over particular situations.

3.1 Permanent location

The property depicted by the locative in XP-position cannot be interpreted as an accidental property of the object.¹⁰

- (7) Wie Ihr selbst [...] feststellen könnt, gibt es heute im Bosch-Werk nicht nur einen Kommunisten.
 „As you can find out for yourselves, there is (works) not only one communist at Bosch today.”

attested in corpus: Limas

The location attributed to the object does not just hold for one particular, or accidental situation: By uttering (7) one does not talk about a certain day, when communists came to visit the Bosch works, but about the number of communists among the (regular) workers there. One could also say, that impersonal *geben* must denote a permanent property, or a possible "habitat" for the object depicted by DP.¹¹

- (8) a. Es gibt (viele) Pferde in Kanada.
it gives (many) horses in Canada
- „There are (many) horses in Canada.”
- b. * Es gibt (viele) Pferde vor dem Haus.
it gives (many) horses in front of the house target = (9)

In contrast to impersonal *geben*, impersonal *haben* does not induce such a restriction. It can be interpreted as a mere locative, like existential constructions in English, French, Spanish and many other languages; cf. Freeze (1990).

¹⁰ For a more detailed description and more data see Czinglar (1998). Apparently, Hammer (1971: 219-222) describes German *es gibt* in a similar way: denoting existence as such or existence in a large area; cited in Newman (1996: 162).

¹¹ I am grateful to Irene Heim (p.c.) for this observation.

- (9) a. Vor dem Haus sind Pferde.
in front of the house are horses

- Ale b. Voram Hus hot's Rössr.
in-front-of-the house has-it horses

"There are horses in front of the house."

In sum, the following descriptive generalization holds for German existentials:

- (10) Impersonal *geben* does not allow quantification over particular situations, whereas Alemannic impersonal *haben* and the copula *sein* do.

3.2 Existentials and the individual/stage-level distinction

The generalization in (10) is reminiscent of the individual/stage (henceforth i/s) distinction; cf. Carlson (1977/80), Kratzer (1988/95), Chierchia (1995) and others. As is well known since Milsark (1974, 1977), the English TC allows predication by stage-level predicates, but not by individual-predicates:

- (11) a. There are three people (who know you) sick with the flu.
b. * There are three people (who know you) able to answer that question.
c. * There was a woman a contestant on the game show.

McNally (1992: 10ff)

Carlson (1980: 128) ties the predicate restriction in the English TC to the semantics of the copula, which he assumes to be operating over stages.¹² A newer analysis of the predicate restriction in terms of quantification over stages can be found in Musan (1996).

In an influential article, Kratzer (1988/95) formulates the difference between i- and s-predication in terms of argument structure: s-predicates have an extra (Davidsonian) argument, which i-predicates lack: the event argument.¹³ Contrary to Carlson's non-quantificational

¹² Rothstein (1983) also posits three different kinds of *be*: predicative, identificational and existential. In Spanish, we even find two lexically different copulas corresponding to i- and s-level predication (*ser* versus *estar*):

- i. Juan es inteligente/alto/fiable.
„John is intelligent/tall/trustworthy.“
ii. Juan está enfermo/aburrido/cansado.
„John is sick/bored/tired.“

Mejías-Bikandi (1993: 331f)

¹³ One piece of evidence for Kratzer's analysis comes from locatives (cf. Kratzer 1988/95: 127). If the main verb is an s-predicate, the locative PP can either be construed with the DP or with the event argument:

- i. ... weil fast alle Flüchtlinge in dieser Stadt umgekommen sind
... since almost all refugees in this city perished are

This explains the two readings: "... since almost all refugees in this city perished" and "... since almost all refugees

analysis, Kratzer assumes a Lewis/Kamp/Heim style theory of unselective binding: the variable introduced by the event argument of s-predicates can be bound by any quantifier; cf. for example Heim (1982).

Adopting Kratzer's analysis plus the assumption that an existential predicate introduces an existential quantifier, we can assign the following basic structures to impersonal *haben* and *geben*, respectively (s stands for situation):

$$(12) \quad \begin{array}{c} \text{es hot } x \text{ in } s \quad (\text{Ale}) \\ \vdots \\ \exists s, x \quad \text{VP } (s, x) \end{array}$$

$$(13) \quad \begin{array}{c} \text{es gibt } x \\ \vdots \\ \exists x \quad \text{VP } (x) \end{array}$$

These structures predict that (12) has an eventive interpretation, which (13) lacks, because there is no situation variable for \exists to quantify over. This prediction is borne out.

3.3 Impersonal *geben* as an i-predicate

Usually PPs are well-behaved s-predicates. But, as I have shown in section 3.1, the locative relation between the object and the location must hold more permanently in the case of impersonal *geben* than is expected with stage-level predication. If we regard impersonal *geben* as an i-predicate, this behavior makes sense.

One important property of i-predication is stable stativity: i-predicates do not like to be temporally modified; cf. the criteria for i-predication in Chierchia (1995). The following set of data show that *es gibt* cannot be temporally modified, whereas Alemannic impersonal *haben* and the copula can:

- (14) Es gibt einen Verrückten in unserem Haus.
it gives a lunatic in our house

"There is a lunatic living in this house."

perished in this city". Lacking an event argument, an i-predicate can only induce the DP-internal construal "... because almost all swans in Australia are black.":

- ii. ... weil fast alle Schwäne in Australien schwarz sind
... since almost all swans in Australia black are

- (15) a. ?? Gestern gab es einen Verrückten in unserem Haus.
yesterday gave it a lunatic in our house target = b.
 b. Gestern war ein Verrückter in unserem Haus.
yesterday was a lunatic in our house
 „Yesterday, there was a lunatic in our house.“
 Ale c. Göschtrd hot's an Verruckta i üserm Hus ghet.
yesterday has-it a lunatic in our house had = b.
- (16) a. * In unserem Haus gibt es gerade einen Verrückten.
in our house gives it at-this-moment a lunatic target = b.
 b. In unserem Haus ist gerade ein Verrückter.
in our house is at-this-moment a lunatic
 „There is a lunatic in our house right now.“
 Ale c. I üserm Hus hot's grad an Verruckta.
in our house has-it at-this-moment a lunatic = b.

The adverb *gerade* “at the moment of speaking” forces the event to “happen” at the time of utterance, which results in sharp ungrammaticality with *es gibt*. A similar context is exemplified in (17) and (18): A *beim*-Phrase containing a nominalized infinitive usually introduces an event, which is happening at the same time as the event predicated of by the main verb. The i-predicate in (17) resists spatio-temporal anchoring, and the *beim*-phrase cannot be interpreted DP-internally, hence ungrammaticality results. Exactly the same happens with *es gibt* in (18):

- (17) * ... weil fast alle Schwäne beim Schwimmen schwarz sind
 ... *because almost all swans at-the swim-INF black are*
 “... because almost all swans are black when/while swimming.”
- (18) a. * Es gibt zwei Verrückte in unserem Haus beim Kartenspielen.
it gives two lunatics in our house at-the card-playing target = c.
 Ale b. In unserem Haus sind zwei Verrückte beim Kartenspielen.
in our house are two lunatics at-the card-playing
 „Two lunatics are playing cards in our house.“
 c. Es hot zwä Verruckte i üserm Hus bim Kartaspila.
it has two lunatics in-the house at-the card-playing
 “There are two lunatics playing cards in our house.”

These data are in line with the generalization (10) and they suggest that *es gibt* can be analyzed in terms of the i/s-contrast. Something in the syntax and/or semantics of *es gibt* forces the locative PP to be interpreted as an i-predicate.¹⁴

Table 3: Summary of interpretational properties

	copula <i>sein</i>	IEC <i>geben</i>	IEC <i>haben</i>
relation between object and location	√permanent/habitat √accidental/temporary	√permanent/habitat *accidental/temporary	√permanent/habitat √accidental/temporary
predicative nature	determined by predicate	i- predicate: <i>geben</i> (x)	s-predicate: <i>haben</i> (e,x)
predicative content	determined by predicate	existential property	locative situation

4 Evidence from Scandinavian¹⁵

So far, I have established that German has an existential construction, which does not allow quantification over particular situations. In that respect, *es gibt* is different from existentials in many other languages, for example *there is* in English, *il y a* in French, *hay* in Spanish, *es hot* in Alemannic and *ima* in Croatian¹⁶; cf. also Freeze (1992).

But existentials of the *es gibt* type do exist in languages other than German: I will discuss data from Danish (Da), Swedish (Sw) and Icelandic (Ice) showing that these languages also have „pure” existentials, which do not allow quantification over particular situations.

¹⁴ McNally (1992: 139) points out that “there is a class of nouns for which locative predicates behave as if they were individual-level. These are nouns such as *dent*, *hole*, *space*, which are interpreted as relations between some entity and a location.” Like other i-predicates they do not license existential readings for bare plural subjects and they are ungrammatical in *when*-clauses; see Kratzer (1988/95: 129f) for the i/s-contrast in *when*-clauses:

i. # Holes were in the wall.
 ii. # When the hole is in the wall, it is easy to look through.

McNally (1992: 139)

These data show that the i/s-properties of predicates do not necessarily follow from lexical information alone.
¹⁵ The data in this section were provided by Sten Vikner for Danish, Anna Boman for Swedish, Thorhallur Eythorsson and Johannes Gisli Jonsson for Icelandic.

¹⁶ Thanks to Antigone Katičić for pointing out to me that Croatian *ima* „(pro) has” seems to be quite similar to the other existentials involving the verb „have”.

In Danish and Swedish there is a construction made up of the locative adverbial "there" and the s-passive of the verb "find", which is comparable to a medial passive (MP).¹⁷ This construction can be used as a bare existential, i.e. without a locative:¹⁸

- (19) Da a. Findes der engle?
Sw b. Finns det änglar?
find-MP there angels

"Are there angels? Do angels exist?"

- (20) Da a. Der findes børn der gerne spiser spinat.
Sw b. Det finns barn som gärna äter spinat.
there find-MP children, who gladly eat spinach

"There are children, who like to eat spinach."

Just like *es gibt*, the s-passive of „find” is restrictive with respect to the kind of location it occurs with. Whenever a non-accidental relation between object and location can be construed, the s-passive is fine:

- (21) Da a. I Stuttgart findes der mange danskere.
Sw b. I Stuttgart finns det många danskar.
in Stuttgart find-MP there many Danes

"There are many Danes (living) in Stuttgart."

¹⁷ The s-passive of "find" in Scandinavian has an obvious counterpart in German: *sich finden*, a reflexive version of "find". However, the German construction does not have an existential meaning. Furthermore, Newman (1996: 167) reports that the s-passive of „give” can be marginally used as an existential construction in Danish and Swedish. As this has not been brought up by my informants at all, I presume that it is quite archaic (cf. also Grimm & Grimm (1878/1984, Vol. 4: 1706) *der gives mennesker* „there are people”):

- i. Sw Det gives lösning.
there gives-MP solution „There is a solution.”
ii. Da Der gives børn som ...
there gives-MP children, who ... „There are children, who ...”

¹⁸ Note that an existential interpretation is only possible with the s-passive. The normal passive of *finde*, which is formed with *blive* "become", does not receive an existential interpretation:

- i. * Bliver der fundet engle? (Da)
become there found angels

Vikner (1988: 23f.) argues that the *blive*-passive and the *s*-passive differ with respect to their argument structures: being the eventive counterpart of "be", *blive* introduces its own theta-role, while there is no such extra theta-role in s-passives. This analysis is very similar to the present account making use of an additional event argument.

- (22) Da a. ? I vores hus findes der flere danskere.
Sw b. I vårt hus finns det många danskar.
in our house find-MP there many Danes

"There are many Danes (living) in our house."

- (23) Da a. ? Hos Bosch findes der mange gode ingeniører.
Sw b. Hos Bosch finns det många bra ingenjörer.
at Bosch find-MP there many good technicians

"There are many good technicians (working) at Bosch."

But as soon as temporal modification makes clear that the relation is only temporary or accidental, the sentences become ungrammatical:¹⁹

- (24) Da a. ?? Efter fodboldkampen fandtes der mange danskere ude på gaden.
Sw b. * Efter fotbollsmatchen fanns det många danskar ute på gatan.
after football-match-the find-MP-PAST there many Danes out on the street

"There were many Danes on the street after the football match."

- (25) Da a. * I Stuttgart findes der mange danskere i dag, på grund af fodboldkampen.
in Stuttgart find-MP there many Danes today, because of football-match-the
"Because of the football match, there are many Danes in Stuttgart today."

- Da b. * I Stuttgart fandtes der mange danskere i går, på grund af fodboldkampen.
in Stuttgart find-MP-PAST there many Danes yesterday, because of ...
"Because of the football match, there were many Danes in Stuttgart yesterday."

Another existential construction in Danish is made up of the locative adverbial, the copula and a prepositional element: *der være til* "there be at". The same construction can be found in Icelandic:

- (26) Da a. Er der engle til?
be there angels at
Ice b. Eru *(til) englar?
are at angels

„Are there angels?"

¹⁹ For a locative statement, i.e. a statement involving eventive quantification, the copula must be used:

- i. Efter fodboldkampen var der mange danskere ude på gaden. (Da)
ii. Efter fotbollsmatchen var det många danskar ute på gatan. (Sw)
after football-match-the were there many Danish out on the street
"After the football match there were many Danish people out on the street."

In Icelandic, the preposition *til* must be used for the pure existential, cf. (26b), and it must not be used when a temporary locative interpretation is intended, cf. (27b):²⁰

- (27) Ice a. Það eru (til) hestar í Kanada. = (8a)
there are (at) horses in Canada

- Ice b. Það eru (*til) hestar fyrir framan husid. cf. (8b) and (9a)
there are (*at) horses in front of the-house

In sum, the evidence from Scandinavian languages suggests that the descriptive generalization for German in (10) can be formulated in a more general way:

- (28) "Pure" existential predicates do not allow quantification over particular situations.

Not all languages have distinct predicates dedicated to pure existence. As I have already mentioned, English, Spanish, French and Croatian only have a locative-existential, which can also be used to express pure existence. German, Alemannic, Danish, Swedish and Icelandic, on the other hand, have a pure existential in addition to the locative-existential construction.

I have described the difference between the pure existential and the locative-existential in terms of the difference between individual-level and stage-level predication. In order to explain how this difference comes about, I want to take a closer look at German *es gibt*.

5 How to derive pure existence?

To account for the behavior of impersonal existential constructions (IECs) in German, we have to consider the respective argument structures of the verbs underlying IECs.

As I have shown in section 3, there is an *i/s*-contrast between impersonal *haben* and impersonal *geben*. Since the argument structures of the locative predicates involved (i.e. locative PPs and adverbials) cannot be responsible for this contrast, we have to look for other differences between the two constructions. At first sight, *es hot* and *es gibt* are syntactically very similar (cf. section 2). But obviously, the two constructions involve different verbs: *geben* „give” and *haben* „have”.

²⁰ Icelandic *vera til* behaves like *es gibt* regarding the basic distinction between *pure existence* and *location*. But it does not share all the interpretations of *es gibt*. For example, the preposition *til* cannot always disambiguate between an existential and a locative reading. It is ungrammatical in the following context:

i. Í Stuttgart / Í þessu husi eru (*til) margir Danir.
in Stuttgart / in this house are (at) many Danes

A purely existential meaning can easily be construed in (i), still it is ungrammatical to use *til*.

I will argue that the interpretational difference stems from the way in which the locative PP is anchored to the structural representation of an IEC. Hence, it will prove useful to look for certain differences in argument structure or lexical relational structure (in the sense of Hale & Keyser 1993).

Logically, there are three different ways to integrate the PP into the structure:

First, it could be analyzed as a predicative modifier to the DP. This has been argued for the English TC by Williams (1984) and for *i*-predicates in general by Kratzer (1988/95). Such an analysis is not feasible for *es gibt*, though, because the PP can move to DP-external positions freely. This would not be expected under a DP-internal construal

Second, the PP could be a secondary predicate, for example like a depictive or resultative predicate. This has been argued for the TC in different ways by Stowell (1978), Safir (1985) and McNally (1992). I will postpone the discussion of secondary predication until section 6. There are good empirical arguments against such an account for the IEC with *geben*. Nevertheless, the secondary predicate analysis will be useful to explain some non-existential interpretations of impersonal *geben*, which I have not discussed yet.

Third, the PP could be a direct argument of the verb, much like the locative complement of a verb like *put*. In the following section, the interpretational restriction on the locative predicate with *es gibt* will be derived from the lexical argument structure of *geben*.²¹

5.1 Lexical decomposition of *geben* and *haben*

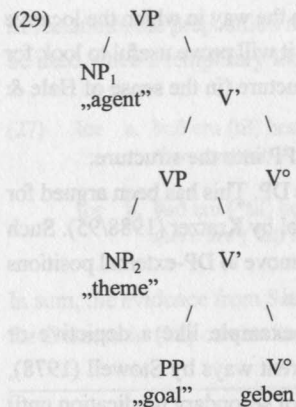
Although impersonal *geben* has a completely different interpretation from ditransitive *geben*, there is evidence that it has developed out of the main verb *geben* diachronically; cf. also section 6.3. I assume that some sort of grammaticalization or bleaching process has taken place, and this process had its effects on the lexical argument structure of *geben*.²²

Let's assume a Larsonian shell structure for ditransitive *geben*, cf. Larson (1988):²³

²¹ Thanks to Ellen Brandner and Gereon Müller for discussing this issue with me.
²² I am grateful to Ans van Kemenade (p.c.) for pointing out this possibility.

²³ The structure in (29) is a simplified representation of what I take to be the underlying structure of *geben*. I do not assume that the dative NP is the most embedded complement of the verb in German. Possibly, the construction involving a dative is derived from an underlying locative configuration, which is, unlike in English, not overtly expressed in Standard German. In Southern German varieties, though, we find an overt realization of the structure in (29):

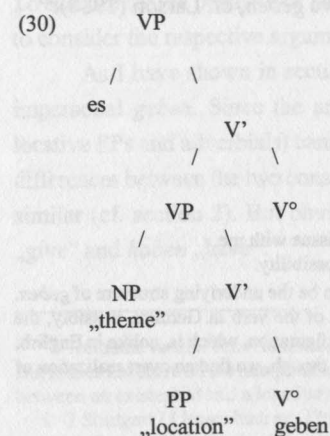
i. % Peter gibt das nasse Handtuch auf die Heizung.
Peter gives the wet towel-ACC onto the radiator-ACC
„Peter puts the wet towel onto the radiator.”



In Hale & Keyser's (1993) terms, the lexical relational structure in (29) can be unambiguously interpreted as follows: The matrix event of *giving*, caused by NP₁ („agent”), implicates a subordinate event, which directly affects NP₂ („theme”) and implicates an interrelation between the verb *geben* and the PP. This interrelation can be described as „change of location”, and the PP is interpreted as a goal.

Kratzer (1994) argues for a direct relation between voice, Aktionsarten and external arguments: The agent-layer in the VP can be identified with the eventive reading of dyadic *geben*; the whole structure represents an event.

Due to some morphosyntactic process (reminiscent of passive or middle formation), the external argument („agent” or „causer”) gets absorbed and replaced by the dummy pronoun *es*. *Es* is a non-referential pronoun in German, it has the default features [3p, sg]. Hence, the impersonal interpretation of *es gibt*. We arrive at the following structure:

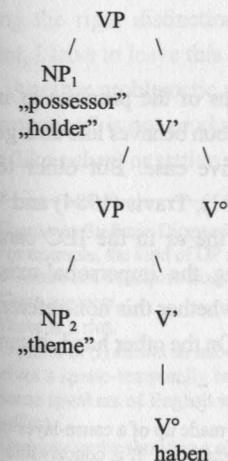


The absorption process has another important consequence: As the agent argument gets absorbed, the remaining structure no longer represents an event. What remains is a state without an agent, and there is no way to reintroduce this agent into the structure. This correlates with a reinterpretation of the role of the internal argument: a PP can only be a „goal”, if there is some action going on. Corresponding to the transfer from event to state, the role of the PP gets reinterpreted as „location”.

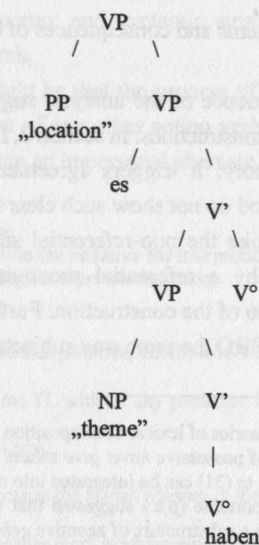
The structure in (30) accounts for the fact that *es gibt* has a stative interpretation. But it is not clear yet, why the location is forced into a „habitat” reading in this constellation. A state may involve individual-level and stage-level predicates alike (cf. *being intelligent* vs. *being drunk*).

Although the precise formulation is still to be made, I believe that the i-level properties of impersonal *geben* can be derived from the lexical make-up of the predicate. Let's compare the lexical argument structure of impersonal *geben* to that of *haben*. By assumption, the same morphosyntactic process as above has transformed possessive *haben* (31a) into impersonal *haben* in the Alemannic dialects. I take the roles „possessor”, „holder” and „location” to refer to the same argument in both structures:

(31) a. possessive *haben*



b. impersonal *haben*



Presumably, (31a) is itself a derived lexical structure: There are well-known arguments that possessive *have* is derived from the copula *be* by incorporation of a locative element (e.g. the preposition *at*) into *be* and the subsequent promotion of the location to the specifier of VP; cf.

Benveniste (1960), Freeze (1992), Kayne (1993), Guéron (1995), Hoekstra (1995), Belvin & den Dikken (1997) and others.²⁴

The structure in (31a) represents a state, the „possessor” or „holder” (cf. Kratzer 1994) of which gets absorbed in the transformation process yielding (31b). The result is a state without a „holder”. One way to reintegrate the „holder”, corresponding to the role „location”, into the structure is to adjoin it to VP or somewhere else higher up (this might be comparable to the *by*-paraphrase in the passive).

In (31b) the locative predicate combines with the whole VP-complex, whereas the locative predicate in (30) combines directly with the verb *geben*. This is the crucial point with respect to the generalization in (10), or more general in (28): “Pure” existential predicates do not allow quantification over particular situations.

The analysis is to be formulated along the following lines: The locative predicate and *geben* form a unit, and this unit is for some reason not accessible for quantification. The quantifier cannot access the locative variable of the PP, hence there it cannot quantify over particular situations. The whole verbal complex (VP), being a state and not an event, does not provide an event variable either. Hence, there is no variable for the existential quantifier to quantify over. The locative PP in the Alemannic IEC with *haben*, being adjoined to VP, provides a variable accessible for quantification.

5.2 Problems and consequences of the analysis

One consequence of the analysis suggested concerns the status of the pronoun *es* in both impersonal constructions. In section 2, I have shown that the pronoun behaves like an argument: it is obligatory, it triggers agreement and it bears nominative case. But other tests of argumenthood do not show such clear results; cf. Chomsky (1981), Travis (1984) and Vikner (1995): Unlike the non-referential subject of weather verbs, the *es* in the IEC cannot be substituted by a referential pronoun, i.e. not without losing the impersonal-existential interpretation of the construction. Furthermore, it is not clear, whether this non-referential *es* can control PRO the same way subjects of weather verbs can.²⁵ On the other hand, it cannot be

²⁴ Most theories of lexical decomposition maintain that the verb *give* is made up of a cause-layer on top of the structure of possessive *have*: *give* means to *cause* someone to *have* something. It is conceivable that the structures (29) to (31) can be integrated into one big tree, each representing a different stage of the derivation. Dominique Sportiche (p.c.) suggested that the predicate, which is more restricted, i.e. impersonal *geben*, corresponds to a substructure of agentive *geben*.

²⁵ The judgements for the control cases vary quite strongly: Some people do not get (i) and (ii) at all, others find them perfectly fine. For Jindřich Toman, Sařir’s informant, it was obviously ungrammatical; see Czinglar (1997) for more examples:

i. * Es gab neue Modelle, ohne PRO wirklich gute zu geben.
it gave new models, without PRO really good-ones to give

ii. ?? Es gibt viele Aufsätze zu diesem Thema, ohne PRO auch nur eine überzeugende Theorie zu geben.
it gives many papers about this topic, without PRO even just one convincing theory to give

Sařir (1985b: 226)

analyzed as an EPP-dummy pronoun, because the object DP could easily play this role, moving to the structural subject position, like it does in the passive. As the facts are not quite clear, I will neglect that problem for now, and allow the non-referential pronoun to be introduced into the argument structure of the IEC.

The analysis sketched in the last section faces another problem: the argument or adjunct status of the locative predicate. Syntactically, the locative PP behaves quite similar with impersonal *geben* as with impersonal *haben*. In fact, there are dialects, where a locative PP or a locative adverb is obligatory with *es hot*, for example an Alemannic dialect spoken in Swabia, in the area around Stuttgart.²⁶ Impersonal *geben*, where the PP is argued to be an argument, allows a bare existential, i.e. allows for the locative to be omitted. This might have to do with the semantics of the two constructions: If there is no overt location present, *es gibt* is interpreted with respect to some „contextually maximal” location, sometimes even the universe.²⁷ Alemannic *es hot* does not in and of itself provide a slot for a locative argument. Still, it mostly involves particular situations, hence particular locations, and it may be fatal in some dialects, when there is no location present at all.²⁸

The difference in status of the locative PP cannot be further motivated syntactically: On the one hand, the locative PP together with *geben* is not accessible for quantification, on the other hand, it can be scrambled and topicalized freely. Obviously, the locative is not (syntactically) incorporated into the verbal head. Presumably, this problem can be solved by drawing the right distinction between argument structure and syntactic structure. At the moment, I have to leave this question for future research.

Another problematic aspect of this analysis might be that the process of „impersonal transformation” is not productive at all. I do not know of any other action verb involving a causer (like *geben*) or stative verb (like *haben*) possessing an impersonal alternate in German.²⁹

²⁶ Thanks to Stefanie Dipper for her judgements on Swabian.

²⁷ For example, the kind of DP used in the existential construction can influence the interpretation of the „zero locative”. Here are examples from McNally (1992: 144) regarding the *there*-construction:

i. There are riots.
ii. There is a riot.

The bare plural in (i) allows an unbounded, hence purely existential interpretation, but (ii) involving an indefinite DP receives a spatio-temporally bounded reading.

²⁸ Some speakers of English were not so sure, if they liked the TC without any predicate. Maybe this is a similar effect.

²⁹ The only verbs showing a similar alternation are process verbs:

i.	... weil die Blätter im Wald rauschen because the leaves whisper in the woods”
i’.	... because the leaves in-the wood whisper because the leaves whisper in the woods”
	... weil es im Wald rauscht	
	... because it in-the wood whispers because there is whispering in the woods.”
ii.	... weil der Teekessel in der Küche pfeift	
	... because the kettle in the kitchen whistles because the kettle whistles in the kitchen.”
ii’.	... weil es in der Küche pfeift	
	... because it in the kitchen whistles because there is whistling in the kitchen.”

This kind of „ambiente-es” is not possible with verbs that have agents or causers; cf. iii. where *es* cannot function as the subject of a predicate, which specifies some deliberate action:

But this process is arguably not a synchronic one, anyway. In the next section, I will show that this transformation is part of a diachronic grammaticalization process affecting *geben* already for quite a long time.

6 *Es gibt*: a semantic continuum

In this section, I will argue that the transformation yielding impersonal-existential *geben* is part of a larger diachronic process. The gradual development from agentive *geben* to the impersonal form produced a semantic continuum, which contains the existential meaning, but also other interpretations. In the following, I will review some non-existential uses of impersonal *geben*. Although the differences are subtle, these data can be clearly distinguished, syntactically and semantically, from the existential use of *geben*.

This is specific to the verb „give”: On the one hand, some of the impersonal uses of *geben* can be found in other languages; cf. Newman (1996). On the other hand, the pure existentials discussed in section 4, which are not based on the verb „give”, do not have these non-existential interpretations.

6.1 Particular situations

There are synchronic uses of the IEC with *geben*, which clearly involve quantification over particular situations. For example, in (32) it is synonymous with „be/take place/happen”:³⁰

- (32) a. Morgen wird es ein Gewitter geben.
tomorrow will it a storm give
„Tomorrow, there will be a storm.”
- b. Gestern gab es ein Erdbeben in L.A.
yesterday gave it an earthquake in L.A.
„Yesterday there was an earthquake in L.A.”
- c. Dreimal am Tag gibt es einen Stau auf der Autobahn.
3 times a day gives it a traffic jam on the freeway
„There is a traffic jam on the freeway 3 times a day.”

- iii. * ... weil es draussen so laut {winselt, schreit, singt...}
... because it outside so loudly {whines, shouts, sings...}

³⁰ A similar use of *give* is found in Spanish (Vidal Valmala, p.c.) and Brazilian Portuguese (Newman 1996, citing Salomao 1990):

- i. Spa Se dan muchas tormentas aqui.
REFL give-3PL many storms here „There are many storms here.”
- ii. BP Deu praga na goiabeira.
gave-3SG plague in-the guava-tree „There is a plague in the guava-tree.”

Note that temporal modification is no problem at all in (32). Apart from these common uses of *es gibt* as a clearly eventive predicate, there are other contexts, where *es gibt* tolerates quantification over particular situations. As this is a contradiction of what I said about existential *es gibt*, I will show that the eventive interpretation stems from a different structural configuration.³¹

6.2 Adjunct secondary predication

The aim of this section is two-fold: First, I will show that existential *es gibt* does not involve adjunct secondary predication by the locative predicate. Second, I will show that this is precisely the configuration of non-existential *es gibt*.

We can empirically distinguish different classes of secondary predication:³² In some cases, the secondary predicate changes the meaning of the primary predicate, as in *I found her new film crazy*. For that reason, although somewhat paradoxical, *crazy* is sometimes called an argument predicate; cf. Rapoport (1993), Winkler (1994), Staudinger (1997). In other cases, the secondary predicate has a resultative interpretation, as in *I hammered the metal flat*. In yet other cases, the secondary predicate modifies the object DP without changing the basic meaning of the primary predicate, as in *I drink my tea cold*; in this usage *cold* is referred to as a depictive adjunct predicate (cf. McNally 1992, Rapoport 1993).

In addition to different empirical domains, different technical solutions have been formulated.³³ In what follows, I will be neutral on the question of which solution might be best. For the PP-predicate of *es gibt*, the following properties have to be captured: It is optional, it does not contribute much to the meaning of the main predicate and it specifies a property adhering to the object DP during the main event.

The differences between non-existential and existential *es gibt* are summarized below. I will show that the properties of non-existential *es gibt* are co-extensive with the properties of adjunct secondary predication.

³¹ I am grateful to Marcel den Dikken for suggesting this direction.

³² For a comprehensive survey of secondary predication see for example Winkler (1994).

³³ For a comprehensive overview of theoretical approaches see Winkler (1994), and also Staudinger (1997) for German.

Table 4: Syntactic and semantic differences

	non-existential <i>es gibt</i>	existential <i>es gibt</i>
category of predicate	all categories (XP)	only locative PPs/locative adverbs
word order	restricted: [DP XP]	free
interpretation of object DP	free	not specific, quantified or generic
interpretation of predicate	s-predicate	i-predicate

The first point is illustrated in (33). In section 2.2, I have shown that existential *es gibt* can only be combined with a locative predicate. But if it is interpreted non-existentially, other predicates can be used, too: in (33a) the adjective „for free” and in (33b) the NP „(as) an estate car”³⁴:

- (33) a. Es gibt ja auch was gratis, nich wahr?
it gives also something for free, doesn't it
 „There will be something for free, won't it?” *attested in corpus: FKO, 1967*
- b. Er war "Auto des Jahres 1988" [...]; es gibt ihn als ungemein geräumigen Familien-Kombi, als Benziner und als Diesel.
he was "car of-the year 1988" [...]; it gives him as really comfortable family estate car, as gas motor and as diesel motor
 „It was the car of the year 1988: it's available as a really comfortable estate car, as a gas motor and as a diesel motor.”
attested in corpus: Mannheimer Morgen, 1987

In (33), *es gibt* translates best as „be available as” or „be offered as”, it is clearly not existential.

The next example shows that there are word order restrictions on secondary predication. The predicate must always follow its subject, i.e. the object DP, in the Mittelfeld:

- (34) a. Peter hat sein Weissbier warm getrunken.
Peter has his white-beer warm drunk
 „Peter drank his white beer warm.”
- b. Peter hat den Fisch roh gegessen.
Peter has the fish raw eaten
 „Peter ate the fish raw.” *Staudinger (1997: 81, 84)*
- (35) a. * Peter hat warm sein Weissbier getrunken.
Peter has warm his white-beer drunk
- b. * Peter hat roh den Fisch gegessen.
Peter has raw the fish eaten

³⁴ Bowers (1990) regards the particle „as”, which links two NPs, as the predicative particle *par excellence*.

We can observe the same word order restrictions with non-existential *es gibt* in (36), but not with existential *es gibt* in (37):

- (36) a. Bei H&M gibt es viele Pullover billiger.
at H&M's gives it many sweaters cheaper
 b. * Bei H&M gibt es billiger viele Pullover.
 „At H&M many sweaters are offered cheaper.”
- (37) a. Seit zwei Jahren gibt es einige berühmte DJs in Wien.
since two years gives it some famous DJs in Vienna
 b. Seit zwei Jahren gibt es in Wien einige berühmte DJs.
 „Since two years, there are some famous DJs in Vienna.”

Furthermore, the object DP must not be definite, specific or strongly quantified, if it really to be interpreted existentially:³⁵

- (38) a. * Seit zwei Jahren gibt es die berühmten DJs in Wien.
since two years gives it the famous DJs in Vienna
- b. * Es gibt jedes Familienmitglied in Wien, das ich mag.
it gives every family member in Vienna, that I like

On the other hand, it is quite common for the object DP to be definite, specific or quantified in secondary predication configurations; cf. also (35). Bare plurals may receive a generic interpretation as in (39b):

³⁵ The status of the definiteness effect in German has often been questioned and its existence has been denied; cf. Grewendorf (1986), Haider (1993: 137). It is clearly not an easy issue: On the one hand, it is quite clear that this effect plays a role in the IEC as in (38), on the other hand, it can be overridden: Definite descriptions, names and pronouns do occur with *es gibt*, as can be seen in (i), attested in a corpus (Mannheimer Morgen 1989):

i. Daktari, den Helden der erfolgreichen Fernsehserie, gibt es wirklich!
 „Daktari, the hero of the successful TV-show, does really exist!”

Although definites are more marginal in the English *there*-construction, they do appear there, yielding the so-called „list reading”; cf. Safir (1985), McNally (1992) and Ward & Birner (1995). The name in (i) changes the interpretation of the IEC, very much like definites in list reading contexts do: existence is no longer asserted, but rather reinforced or negated; note the reinforcing particle *wirklich* „really”. For similar reasons, McNally (1992) suggested a dissociation between the condition on strong quantification and the definiteness restriction in the *there*-construction.

- (39) a. Peter trinkt jedes Weissbier warm.
Peter drinks every white-beer warm

- b. Petra untersucht Patienten nackt.
Petra examines patients naked

Non-existential *es gibt* does not oppose against strong DPs, and it also allows bare plurals to be generic:

- (40) a. Diesen Pullover gibt es bei H&M billiger.
this sweater gives it at H&M cheaper
 "This sweater is offered cheaper at H&Ms."
 b. In Österreich gibt es Kodome gratis.
in Austria gives it condoms for free
 "In Austria, condoms are generally for free."

Existential impersonal *geben*, on the other hand, does not tolerate generic objects at all: bare plurals are never interpreted generically:³⁶

- (41) In Kanada gibt es Pferde.
 a. "Some horses exist in Canada."
 b. * "Horses in general exist in Canada."

In section 3, I put forth empirical arguments for the claim that the locative is interpreted as an i-predicate in the pure existential construction. The last reason, for why existential *es gibt* does not involve a secondary adjunct predicate, is that „warm” and „raw” in (34) are clearly s-predicates. They do not describe a permanent property of the object, but a transient property pertaining to the object during the main event.³⁷

As we have seen, non-existential *es gibt* involves particular situations. Hence, the location need not be a habitat for the object in (42a), temporal modification by *gerade* is

³⁶ E. Kiss (1998: 159) observes that predicates expressing existence (in a certain way or at a certain location) license existential bare plurals, although they are i-predicates:

- | | | |
|------|--|--------|
| i. | There are active volcanos in the Northern part of the country. | ⊃ *Gen |
| ii. | Misprints occur on every page of this book. | ⊃ Gen |
| iii. | Problems exist. | ⊃ Gen |

³⁷ I-predicates are ungrammatical in adjunct predication configurations:

- | | |
|------|--|
| i. | * Yefet ate the chickens large. |
| ii. | * Ayala read the book interesting. |
| iii. | * Peter trinkt das Weissbier teuer. (SG) |

Peter drinks the white-beer expensive

Rapoport (1993) argues that i-predicates can only be anchored to the thematic structure (i.e. argument structure) of a verb as its complement, whereas s-predicates can only be anchored to a verbal complex as adjuncts. It might be worthwhile to explore the intuition behind this analysis to account for the difference between existential and non-existential *es gibt*. But I will leave this for future research.

Rapoport (1993: 171)

Staudinger (1997: 229)

possible as in (42b), and even the introduction of a *beim*-phrase in (42c) does not lead to ungrammaticality:

- (42) a. In japanischen Restaurants gibt es Fisch oft roh.
in Japanese restaurants gives it fish sometimes raw
 "In Japanese restaurants, they serve fish sometimes raw."
 b. Gerade jetzt gibt es Margaritas zu Happy-Hour Preisen.
right now gives it margarita at happy-hour prices
 „Right now, they offer margarita at happy-hour prices."
 c. In Las Vegas gibt es beim Kartenspielen alle Drinks umsonst.
in Las Vegas gives it at-the card-playing all drinks for free
 „In Las Vegas, they offer drinks for free while you are playing cards."

From these data, we can conclude that the existential and the non-existential *es gibt* constructions differ with respect to their structural make-up: Existential *geben* takes a locative PP as its argument. In this configuration the locative PP is not accessible for eventive quantification. Non-existential *geben* takes only an object as its argument and allows secondary predication by all kinds of adjuncts. In this configuration, the predicate is interpreted as an s-predicate.

Whenever the predicate can only be interpreted as temporary with respect to the object, a non-existential interpretation of *es gibt* arises:

- (43) a. Gestern gab es vor der Uni Glühwein.
yesterday gave it in front of the university hot wine
 „They offered hot wine in front of the university yesterday."
 b. Dort hinten gibt's einen Kuli auf dem Tisch.
there behind gives-it a ball-point on the table
 „Behind there is a ball-point on the table."

Most of these non-existential variants of *es gibt* have some kind of „modal” character. Compare it to the explicitly modal use of the existential construction in German and English:

- (44) a. Es gibt viel zu tun.
it gives much to do
 „There is a lot to do.” Der Duden (1995: 179)
 b. I'd love to get away from my job, the kids, the bills [...]. But there are the kids to consider.

Ward & Birner (1995: 726; attested)

Depending on (syntactic and pragmatic) context, examples like (44) get an interpretation involving „must” or „can”. I suggest that examples like (45) have a similar kind of modal interpretation, even without the infinitival clause:

- (45) a. Hier gibt es Milch (zu kaufen).
 here gives it milk (to buy)
 „One can buy/find milk here.”
- b. Was gibt's heute (zum Essen)?
 what gives-it today (to-the eat)
 „What are we going to eat today?”

It is not even necessary that these examples involve an overt predicate or purpose clause. They receive a non-existential modal interpretation nonetheless, if the context forces it. Consider the following passage from a newspaper article headed „Teheran calls for terror and murder”:

- (46) „Es ist nicht schwer, Amerikaner oder Franzosen zu töten”, fuhr er fort. „Etwas schwieriger ist es, Israelis zu töten, ...
 ... aber es gibt so viele Amerikaner und Franzosen auf der Welt.”
 ... *but it gives so many Americans and French on the world*

„It is not hard to kill American and French people”, he continued. „It is somehow more difficult to kill Israelis, but then: there are so many American and French people in the world.”

attested in corpus: Mannheimer Morgen, 6.5.1989

The passage involving *es gibt* does not express the fact that there are many Americans and Frenchmen (living, existing) in the world, but that there are enough of them to kill.

The examples in this section are not interpreted as pure existentials. Hence, they are no counterexamples to the claim I put forth in section 3: Pure-existentials do not allow quantification over particular situations.

6.3 Some diachronic speculations

To explore the relation between the argument structure of ditransitive *geben* and of impersonal *geben* it is necessary to develop a diachronic perspective. Newman's (1997) study on the origin of the German *es gibt* construction provides a very useful starting point.

I assume that some sort of grammaticalization or bleaching process has taken place from ditransitive to impersonal *geben*. Whereas the first is present throughout the history of (written) German, the latter only appears in the Early New High German period, specifically in the 16th and 17th century; cf. Newman (1997: 307). Newman concentrates on Fischart's „Geschichtsklitterung”, a greatly expanded translation of Rabelais' „Gargantua”, published in

1575. Here impersonal *geben* is mostly found in contexts where it conveys the meaning „leads to” or „give rise to”:

- (47) wann nur alte Weiber unnd die Hund dran seychten,
 so gebs guten Burgundischen Saltpetre (125, 37-38)
 so gave-it good Burgundy saltpetre
 „all you need is for old women and dogs to urinate on it,
 and you'd get good Burgundy saltpetre”

Newman (1997: 310)

Newman relates this usage of the impersonal to the two-place predicate *geben*, meaning „produce, yield”, as in Modern German *Kühe geben Milch* „Cows give milk.” According to Newman (1997: 317), the development of the „produce/yield”-sense of *geben* from the „transfer control”-sense is widely attested accross languages. This construction was already established before Fischart, and it can be found in his writings:

- (48) als vil all Berge Trauben geben (82, 22-23)
 as much all moundains grapes give
 „as much as all mountains produce grapes”

ibid (316)

(48) exemplifies a clear cause-effect relationship: the subject is identified with a kind of cause, and the object specifies the effect. A decausativisation process, as I have suggested in section 5, could be argued to yield the impersonal construction, preserving only the effect part of the event.³⁸ This use of *geben* is closely tied to an existential meaning, because the effect part specifies the coming into existence of an object.

Another early usage of *es gibt* concerns the happening reading of the impersonal construction; cf. section 6.1:

- (49) O wie ernsthaftt betten gibt es alsdann für ihn, daß er wider gesond heimkomme (103, 4-5)
 Oh what intense praying gives it then for him ...
 „Oh what intense praying there'll be for him then, so that he may return home safely.”

ibid (312)

At this point, I can only speculate about how impersonal *geben* might have derived from agentive/causative *geben*, how this process affected the argument structure of the respective verbs and how this grammaticalization or bleaching process is reflected in the grammatical restrictions imposed on the construction.

But it seems to be plausible, that this process starts out at the more „lexical” end of the continuum: This first step yields impersonal constructions which still carry some amount of

³⁸ As Newman (1997, citing Behagel) points out, the emergence of *es gibt* can be construed as part of a more general proliferation of impersonal constructions in the New High German period.

meaning, like „produce/yield”, „take place”, „be available” and „be offered”; see also section 6. At the more „grammatical” or „bleached” end of the continuum, we find the purely existential meaning „exist”, the grammatical restriction against quantification over particular situations being a remnant of this development.

7 Conclusion

In this paper, I have shown that we need a more fine-grained distinction, when we talk about existential constructions in general: locative-existentials and pure existentials. The difference is exemplified by the German impersonal existential constructions involving *geben* „give” and *haben* „have”, and it is further motivated by data from Scandinavian languages.

Pure existentials are special in that they denote existence as such: They do not allow quantification over particular situations. The German impersonal existential *es gibt* behaves exactly like that. I have argued that the difference between *es gibt* and *es hat*, which is found in Alemannic dialects, derives from the different argument structures of the respective underlying verbs. Ditransitive *geben* involves a „cause” layer, which is absorbed by the expletive impersonal pronoun *es*. What remains is a state involving a theme and a location argument. With possessive *haben*, it is the possessor (i.e. the location) itself, which has been absorbed, and which has to be reintroduced into the argument structure as an adjunct. This leads to the different properties with respect to quantification over situations.

Furthermore, I have motivated this morphosyntactic derivation into an impersonal construction by introducing a diachronic perspective on the verb *geben*. The diachronic development from a full lexical verb into a bleached impersonal variant has affected the argument structure of *geben* in various ways, opening up a whole continuum of interpretations for the impersonal construction.

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Information regarding the corpora: <http://corpora.ids-mannheim.de/~cosmas/>

Zusammenfassung

Dieser Artikel beschäftigt sich mit interpretativen Eigenschaften von Existenzkonstruktionen in diversen germanischen Sprachen, der Schwerpunkt liegt jedoch auf dem Deutschen. Seit Milsark (1974) werden in bezug auf die Existenzkonstruktion zwei Beschränkungen diskutiert: der Definitheitseffekt und die Prädikatsrestriktion. Das Hauptaugenmerk dieses Artikels liegt auf zweiterem. Ich behaupte, dass es Existenzprädikate gibt, die ausschließlich existentiell zu interpretieren sind, und dass diese Eigenschaft sie *individual-level* Prädikaten sehr ähnlich macht. Eine solche rein existentielle Konstruktion ist zum Beispiel *es gibt* im Deutschen, aber auch im Dänischen, Schwedischen und Isländischen finden sich solche Existenzkonstruktionen. Die entsprechende sprachenübergreifende Generalisierung lautet: Reine Existenzprädikate erlauben keine Quantifizierung über singuläre Situationen. Darin unterscheiden sie sich von den lokativen Existenzprädikaten, welche sowohl für Einzelsituationen wie auch für generelle ortsunabhängige Existenzaussagen verwendet werden können. Die meisten Sprachen scheinen über solche lokativen Existenzprädikate zu verfügen: z.B. *there is* im Englischen, *il y a* im Französischen, *hay* im Spanischen und auch *es hot* im Alemannischen. Letzteres wird aufgrund der syntaktischen Parallelität zu *es gibt* als Vergleichskonstruktion herangezogen, wobei die Unterschiede in der Interpretation aus den Argumentstrukturen der einzelnen zugrundeliegenden Verben abgeleitet werden. Diese Ableitung wird durch die diachrone Spekulation motiviert, dass unpersönliches *geben* das Resultat eines langen Grammatikalisierungsprozesses zu sein scheint, welcher das lexikalische Verb *geben* als Ausgangspunkt nimmt.

Christoph Caspar Pfisterer

THE REAL NATURE OF KRIPKE'S PARADOX

Abstract. Reading Kripke's *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*, at first one can easily get confused about his claim that the problem discovered was a sort of ontological scepticism. Contrary to the opinion of a great number of contemporary philosophers who hold that rule-following brings up merely epistemological problems I will argue that the scepticism presented by Kripke really is an ontological scepticism because it is concerned with the exclusion of certain facts. The first part in this paper is dedicated to a presentation of Kripke's paradox with a clarification of the position of "plus/quus-talk" in the argument. Part two is engaged in one of his classical direct solutions: the dispositional theory which will serve as a preparation for the last section. Part three is concerned with Kripke's solution to the sceptical problem, ending with the question whether he is giving a real solution. In part four I will try to give an answer to those questions, distinguishing between two different versions of the problem given by the paradox; a wrong one and a correct one. Readers who are really fed up with the sceptical problem and its sceptical solution can skip part one, two and three, concentrating instead on my own argument for the real nature of the sceptical problem. In part five I will pick up some ideas from Horwich, who tries to give a "straight solution" to the paradox reanimating some weaker version of a dispositional theory of meaning. I will argue that Horwich's solution is misleading because he aims at the wrong version of the paradox.

1. The Sceptical Problem

It is a widespread conviction that being able to speak a language requires the ability to follow rules. It is often assumed that learning a language means learning rules for applying the words the language is composed of. This does not seem to be merely a truth about speaking a language but about all our actions. When a motorist comes to a halt in front of a red traffic light, we say that he knows the traffic regulations. When we are asked for reasons for his behavior, we answer that he is behaving such and such, *because* he learned something specific that leads him through traffic. The reason for his halting is something else which has to do with traffic lights and coming to a standstill. With language, the case is similar. We assume that there must be something that is responsible for one's utterances. Moreover, we think of the responsible force as something in *one's mind*. If you wonder how language is possible and if you want to explain why at least some of the noise we produce becomes meaningful, then you have to find *something else that explains* those things. Whatever circumstance we assume to be responsible for such and such behavior, it must differ from the behavior which it is responsible for. Otherwise we would call the explanation circular and we would hardly regard it as an explanation. Rules seem to satisfy this constraint; they differ from the behavior they are responsible for. But there are other difficulties. Kripke refers to Wittgenstein who discovered great problems within the maintained common picture.

This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here. (Wittgenstein 1952, §201)