

## Case in Spatial Adpositional Phrases: The Dative-Accusative Alternation in German

*Henk van Riemsdijk*  
*Tilburg University and University of Kyoto*

### **Abstract:**

This article argues, following important observations by Zwarts (2005, 2006), that accusative marking in spatial adpositional phrases is closely linked to the notion 'extent' or, more generally, to measure phrases, which quite generally take the accusative case. It conjectures that the accusative case that shows up in GOAL-PPs, but not in SOURCE-PPS, is due to an implied measure phrase. Finally, I suggest that the dative case that characterizes purely locative PPs and SOURCE-PPS is not a governed case at all but the manifestation of the default case in oblique domains.

### **Keywords:**

spatial, adposition, preposition, postposition, circumposition, case, dative, accusative, default case, measure phrase, goal, source, route, locative, directional, orientation

### **1. The questions and the program<sup>1</sup>**

In case marking languages such as German, objects of adpositions tend to be case-marked. Learning German as a second language means, among other things, to memorize which adposition governs which case. Mostly the choice of case is unpredictable from the meaning or form of the adposition. Fortunately, there are some sub-regularities that make life a little bit easier. The most important subregularity is that spatial adpositions govern the dative when they are purely locative but the accusative when they are directional. This dual case marking behavior is illustrated in (1).

- (1) a. *Peter legt das Buch auf den Tisch*  
Peter puts the book on the.ACC table

---

1 I am happy to dedicate this paper to Alexandra Cornilescu in recognition of the great changes that she has brought about in the linguistics scene in Romania and well beyond. A much earlier version of this paper, even more immature than the present one, was presented at a workshop on PPs in Venice in the fall of 2005. More recently, I presented my ideas to the "4th Friday Research Forum" at Kobe University in March 2007. I wish to thank the respective audiences and Szymon Grzelak for helpful discussion. For additional input thanks are due to Joe Emonds and, especially, to Viola Schmitt, who helped clarify some crucial properties of measure phrases. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the hospitality of Yukinori Takubo and the Linguistics Department of the Graduate School of Letters at Kyoto University, where this article was written.

- b. *Das Buch liegt auf dem Tisch*  
 the book is-lying on the.DAT table

Similar patterns are found in other Indo-European languages that have preserved (part of) the case system. The following table, which I borrow from Zwarts (2005), shows how the case system of Proto-Indo-European has syncretized to the four-way case system of present day German.<sup>2</sup>

(2) <i>Spatial meanings</i>	<i>Proto-IE</i>	<i>German</i>
	Nominative	Nominative
	Vocative	
	Genitive	Genitive
	Dative	Dative
	Instrumental	
'source' ----->	Ablative	
'location' ----->	Locative	Accusative
'extent' ----->	Accusative	
'goal' ----->		

One prominent position on the alternation in (1) is to say that locational adpositional phrases are the complements of superordinate heads (verbs, adverbs, nouns) that determine whether the PP in question is to be interpreted as locative or as directional: *legen* ('put') and *liegen* ('lie') in the above example. The superordinate head would then impose accusative or dative case, the adposition being largely transparent to the case marking process.<sup>3</sup> This position, often referred to as "Doppelrektion" (dual case government), is found, among others, in Abraham (2003). My approach in the present article is different. While the superordinate head may well contribute to the determination of the meaning of the PP, the choice of the accusative will be argued to be dependent on other factors.

The main question that I will discuss in this article, then, are the following.

- What factors determine the choice of dative and accusative in spatial PPs (in German)?

In attempting to answer this question, I will first argue in favor of splitting up the notion of direction into two distinct subcomponents: ROUTE and SOURCE/GOAL. This is the topic of

<sup>2</sup> See Emonds and Spaelti (2005) for discussion of the status of ablative and dative case in Latin.

<sup>3</sup> Note that this line of reasoning implies that there always is a superordinate head, which is not evident as there are contexts in which locative or directional PPs seemingly occur without such a head, as for example in the "PP with DP!" construction:

- (i) *Ins Bett mit dir!*  
 into-the.ACC bed with you  
 'To bed with you!'

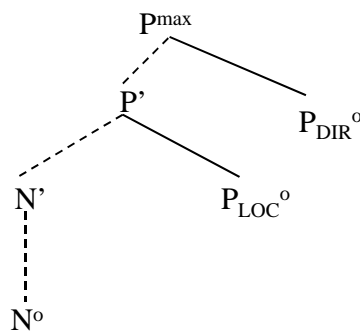
It is possible that some silent motion predicate can be argued to be present in all such cases. I believe that the existence of silent motion verbs is well established, cf. Van Riemsdijk (2002), but I also believe that each case needs to be argued separately, so I remain agnostic about generalizing such an approach.

section 2. In section 3, following largely Zwarts (2005, 2006), I will identify ROUTE as a major contributor to the choice of the accusative case. Then, in section 4, I will outline a tentative proposal to extend ROUTE as the main factor determining the accusative case to GOAL-PPs.

## 2. Decomposing DIR

Much work on the internal structure of spatial PPs has assumed that there are separate positions for location and direction, cf. in particular Van Riemsdijk (1990), Koopman (Koopman, 2000), Den Dikken (Dikken, 2003), Huijbregts & Van Riemsdijk (2001, 2007) and many others. Others have proposed structures far richer than these (cf. among others Noonan, 2005, Svenonius, 2004). In (3) I give the relatively simple structure argued for in Huijbregts and Van Riemsdijk (2001, 2007).<sup>4</sup>

(3)



This type of structure is insufficient to handle contrasts like the following.<sup>5</sup>

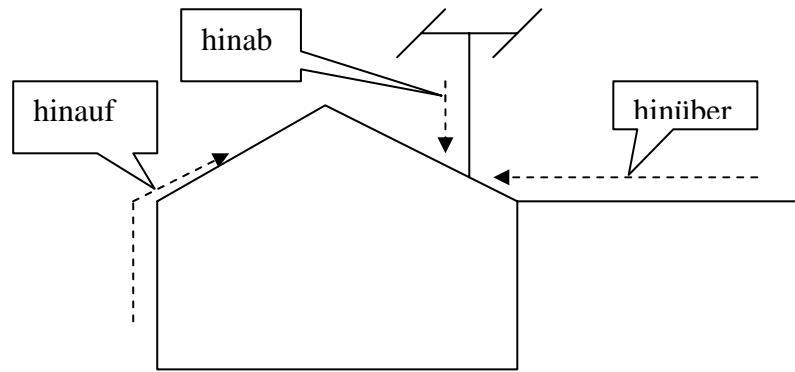
- (4) a. *Die Schnecke kroch auf das dach hinauf/hinab/hinüber*  
 the snail crept on the.ACC roof up/down/across  
 ‘The snail crept up/down/across onto the roof’
- b. *Die Schnecke kroch das Dach hinauf/hinunter*  
 the snail crept the.ACC roof up/down  
 ‘The snail crept upward along the roof’

The three variants of (4) correspond to the three motions depicted in (5). In each case the (top of/ upper side of) the roof is the endpoint, the terminus of the motion while the three possible postpositional elements correspond to the orientation of the path or route along which the snail moves.

4 In (3) the heads are located in the head-final position. But I do not intend to convey any position on underlying or derived positions of heads here and will remain agnostic on the issue throughout this article.

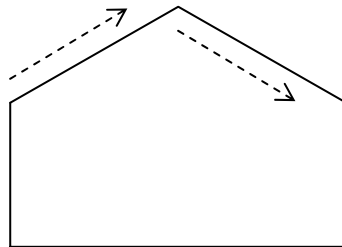
5 In earlier work (Van Riemsdijk, 1990) I had overemphasized the role of the postpositional element as a kind of copy of the preposition. I now believe that the high frequency of copies in that position is really an artifact due mainly to pragmatic factors. Hence the postpositional element makes a semantic contribution of its own to the whole circumpositional phrase.

(5)



In (6) on the other hand we have an upward or downward motion without an explicitly indicated starting point or endpoint. The roof is the ground in relation to which the upward motion is defined, but there is no implication as to whether the motion takes place on the top side or the bottom side of the roof.<sup>6</sup>

(6)



The contrast between the two examples shows quite straightforwardly that the prepositional element serves to pinpoint the goal of the motion while the postpositional element denotes the orientation or the path of the motion. In the remainder of this article I will use the following terminology and abbreviations:<sup>7-8</sup>

6 Needless to say, the snail was chosen as the moving object to lend pragmatic plausibility to the latter interpretation.

7 I have chosen to drop the 'C' from LOC uniquely to achieve esthetic symmetry among the four functional elements in PPs: LO, RO, SO, GO.

8 Further, we might assume that SOGO is subdivided by features. Seeking a tenuous connection with aspectual notions, one could choose TELIC and INCHOATIVE or alternatively stick with GOAL and SOURCE. Using the latter:

(i)

	+SOURCE	-SOURCE
+GOAL	BETWEEN??	TO
-GOAL	FROM	VIA?/NO MOTION

The case of BETWEEN is quite problematic from a conceptual point of view. In fact, *zwischen* ('between') functions just like other GOAL-Ps:

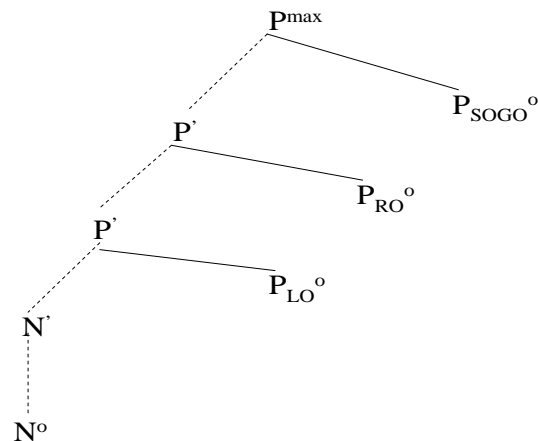
- (ii) a. *Er steht zwischen den Kontrahenten*  
he is-standing between the.DAT opponents
- b. *Er stellt sich zwischen die Kontrahenten*  
he puts himself between the.ACC opponents

I will not pursue this further decomposition here, but I do want to point out that the link with aspectual notions is potentially very interesting. Some ideas are developed in Helmantel (2002). Svenonius (2002, 2004) is also thinking along similar lines. See also endnote 12 below.

- place/location: LOCATION LO
- motion/ orientation/path/route: ROUTE RO
- source/goal: SOURCE SO  
GOAL GO

And I will minimally modify (3) to accommodate RO as in (7).<sup>9</sup>

(7)



### 3. Joost Zwarts' generalization

Table 1. represents the list of adpositions that Zwarts gives in his (2006) paper.

<b>Table 1</b>	DATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE & ACCUSATIVE
	aus 'out of'	durch 'through'	an 'on'
	außer 'outside'	entlang 'along'	auf 'on'
	bei 'near'	gegen 'against'	hinter 'behind'
	entgegen 'against'	um 'around'	in 'in'
	gegenüber 'opposite'		neben 'next to'
	nach 'to'		über 'over'
	von 'from'		unter 'under'
	zu 'at, to'		vor 'in front of'
			zwischen 'between'

It should be noted that Zwarts ignores the postpositional elements in circumpositional PPs, despite the fact that these elements can occur independently, as shown in examples like (4) above.

<sup>9</sup> As in (3), this tree is labelled in conformity with the ideas on (extended) m-projections developed in Van Riemsdijk (1998a) and also used in Huijbregts and Van Riemsdijk (2001, 2007). These assumptions are immaterial to the line of argumentation presented in the present article.

Zwarts groups these adpositions according to the parameters discussed above in the following way:

<b>Table 2</b>		DATIVE	ACCUSATIVE
<i>Locative prepositions</i>		an 'on (hanging)' auf 'on (standing)' bei 'near' gegenüber 'opposite' hinter 'behind' in 'in' mit 'with' neben 'beside' über 'over, above' unter 'under' vor 'in front of' zwischen 'between'	-
<i>Directional prepositions</i>	<i>Source</i>	aus 'out of' von 'from'	
	<i>Route</i>	(entlang 'along')	durch 'through' entlang 'along' über 'over' um 'around'
	<i>Goal</i>	entgegen 'against' nach 'to' zu 'to'	an 'onto' auf 'onto' gegen hinter 'against' in '(to) behind' neben 'into' über '(to) beside' unter 'over' vor zwischen '(to) under' '(to) in front of' '(to) between'

And he draws the following conclusion (adapted from Zwarts, 2006), correctly in my view.

- DATIVE case goes with locative or source adpositions
- ACCUSATIVE case goes with route or goal adpositions

We see immediately that the dative-accusative divide does not correspond to the locative-directional distinction, but that SOURCE-Ps pattern with LO-Ps while RO-Ps pattern with GO-Ps. In the next section I will try to argue that both RO-Ps and GO-Ps impose a kind of measure phrase (MP) interpretation on the PP, which causes the accusative case to show up.

#### 4. A tentative proposal

We start with the observation that pure RO-Ps take the accusative case. This is true for the adpositions *durch* ('through'), *entlang* ('along'), *über* ('over'), *um* ('um') as well as postpositional elements of the type found in (4). The complete list of these is given in (8).<sup>10</sup>

$$(8) \quad \left. \begin{array}{l} \{ \text{hin} \} \\ \{ \text{her} \} \end{array} \right\} - \left. \begin{array}{l} \text{auf} \\ \text{ein} (< \text{in}) \\ \text{über} \\ \text{unter} \end{array} \right\} \quad \left. \begin{array}{l} \text{'upwards'} \\ \text{'inwards'} \\ \text{'across'} \\ \text{'downwards'} \end{array} \right\} - \left. \begin{array}{l} \text{'away from X'} \\ \text{'towards X'} \end{array} \right\}$$

Note that the deictic prefix *hin-/her-* does not denote a source or a goal, but an orientation. Orientations are properties of paths (RO).

Taking this observation as a point of departure, we may formulate the following hypotheses.

1. It is the ROUTE component that is responsible for the accusative in the GOAL-PPs (as opposed to the SOURCE-PPs);
2. The object of a ROUTE-P functions like a Measure Phrase (MP);
3. GOAL-Ps imply an (implicit or explicit) ROUTE component, SOURCE-Ps do not;
4. Any datives showing up are not "governed" cases but represent the default case in oblique domains.<sup>11</sup>

The rest of this section will be devoted to some arguments in favor of these hypotheses.

##### 4.1. ROUTE-DPS as Measure Phrases

Let us now first establish that the object of a RO-P acts like a measure phrase in taking the accusative case and in several other respects as well.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Note that *heran* ('closer') and *hervor* ('to the fore') also exist. But the former can only occur with a prepositional element (that is as part of a GO-PP) or as a verbal particle, and the latter only occurs either intransitively, or also with a preposition in which case it forms a SO-PP (and accordingly takes the dative case).

<sup>11</sup> I take this to be quite generally true, that is, also for temporal adpositions such as *seit* ('since') and non-spatio-temporal ones like *mit* ('with'), but I will limit myself largely to spatial adpositions here.

<sup>12</sup> A suggestion along these lines can also be found in Joost Zwarts' paper: "The accusative in PIE was used for goals (like an allative), which is still reflected in its PP use, but **it was also used for extents, which is very similar to our route use here** ..." (Zwarts, 2006 - emphasis mine, HvR)

It would also be worthwhile to further explore the link, briefly alluded to in endnote 8, between spatial, temporal and aspectual concepts. An interesting observation supporting such a link can be found in Cornilescu (2001: 484f): "... a (complete) event (accomplishment) consists of an activity phase, when the event holds, followed by a culmination point, when the change of state takes place, leading to a resulting state. The *in*-phrase, characteristic of accomplishments, measures the distance between the beginning of the activity and the culmination point." Indeed the German counterpart to *in*, which is also *in*, takes the accusative case:

(i) *Du solltest den Kuchen in zwölf gleich grosse Stücke schneiden*  
 you should the cake into twelve equally large pieces cut  
 'You should cut the cake into twelve equally large pieces'

Accusative is indeed the case for MPs in German:

- (9) a. *Er hat die ganze nacht geschlafen*  
 he has|the.ACC whole night slept  
 ‘He slept all night’
- b. *Sie hat 2km zurückgelegt*  
 she has 2km.ACC covered  
 ‘She covered 2km’

Let us now apply some criteria for MP-status.

➤ Adjectival amount/degree modifiers

Modifiers like *whole* and *half* can be used to modify DPs that denote an extent, but not DPs that denote a goal.

- (10) a. *Er hat die halbe/ganze Nacht geschlafen*  
 he has the half/whole night slept
- b. *Er ist den halben/ganzen Berg hinauf gegangen*  
 he has the half/whole mountain up gone  
 ‘He went up half the mountain / the whole mountain’  
 (extent maximalized, goal pragmatically implied)
- c. *Er ist den halben/ganzen Berg hinauf gerannt*  
 he has the half/whole mountain up run  
 ‘He covered half the distance up the mountain / the whole distance running’
- d. \**Er ist auf den halben/ganzen Berg hinauf gegangen*  
 he has onto the half/whole mountain up gone  
 ‘He has gone up onto half the mountain / the whole mountain’ (GO)
- e. *Er ist auf den Berg halb/ganz hinauf gegangen*  
 he has onto the mountain wholly up gone  
 ‘He has gone halfway / completely up onto the mountain’

As (10) shows, the DP preceding a pure RO-P acts just like the MP in (10) in this respect. (10) shows that a RO-PP that is used as an adjunct acts identically. In (10), however, we have a typical GO-PP whose DP cannot be modified by extent-denoting modifiers. However, the postpositional route component of such a circumpositional phrase can be modified by the corresponding extent-adverb, as shown in (10). The same behavior can be observed in temporal cases that are expressed by figurative use of spatial Ps:

- (11) *Sie hat die halbe/ganze Nacht hindurch geschlafen*  
 she has the half/whole night through slept  
 ‘She slept throughout half the night / the whole night’

➤ Non-distributive universal quantification

Universal quantifiers that quantify over an extent can only be interpreted non-distributively.



- (12) *Wir haben alle Tage (des Urlaubs) geschlafen*  
 we have all days (of-the holiday) slept  
 ‘We slept the whole holiday (all days of it)’  
 \*‘We slept each and every day of the holiday’

The same effect can be observed with spatial PPs:

- (13) a. *Ich bin alle Stufen der Treppe hinauf gegangen*  
 I have all steps of-the stairs up gone  
 ‘I went up the whole stairs (all steps of it)’
- b. *Ich bin auf alle Stufen der Treppe hinauf gegangen*  
 I have onto all steps of-the stairs up gone  
 \* ‘I went up the whole stairs (all steps of it)’  
 (#) ‘I went up each and every step of the stairs’

Similarly for adnominal spatial PPs:

- c. *Alle Stufen der Treppe hinauf gibt es ein Geländer*  
 all steps of-the stairs up is there a banister  
 ‘Up the whole stairs (all steps of it) there is a banister’

➤ use of bare plurals

Bare plurals cannot be used as MPs in German.

- (14) *Sie hat \*(drei) Tage geschlafen*  
 she has (three) days slept  
 ‘She slept for (three days)’

The same is true for RO-PPs.

- (15) a. *\*Berge hinauf führen oft beschilderte Wege*  
 mountains up lead often signposted paths  
 ‘Up mountains paths are often signposted’
- b. *Auf Berge hinauf führen oft beschilderte Wege*  
 onto mountains up lead often signposted paths  
 ‘Up onto mountains paths are often signposted’

At this point, we can draw up the interim conclusion that there is indeed considerable evidence that the DP-object of a pure RO-postposition is a kind of MP.

One potential problem does seem to arise, however: RO-PPs can take an additional explicit MP, as shown in (16).<sup>13</sup>

---

13 Note that, as can be observed in (10), adjectival/adverbial modifiers like *ganz* (‘whole’) are quite flexible in their points of attachment.

- (i) a. *Ganz den Berg hinauf*  
 b. *Ganz auf den Berg hinauf*  
 c. *Den Berg ganz hinauf*

- (16) a. *300m den Berg hinauf macht einen total fertig*  
 300m the mountain up makes one totally finished  
 ‘300m up the mountain exhaust you completely’
- b. *Ganz den Berg hinauf ist wohl zu weit*  
 wholly the mountain up is presumably too far  
 ‘All the way up the mountain is presumably too far’

But these examples are unproblematic since MPs can cooccur quite generally, as shown in (17), and each one of the MPs takes the accusative case.

- (17) *Er hat die ganze Nacht nur zwei Stunden geschlafen*  
 he has the whole night only two hours slept  
 ‘He slept only two hours during the whole night’
- (18) *Sie hat zwei Stunden (lang) 20kmh aufrechterhalten können*  
 she has two hours (long) 20kmh keep-up could  
 ‘She was able to keep up 20kmh for two hours’

Note also that our conclusion sheds new light on the old issue of whether English *ago* is a true postposition taking a DP-complement, or whether it is an intransitive preposition taking an obligatory MP.

- (19) a. two nights ago  
 b. \*all nights ago  
 c. the whole night ago

Similarly with German *her* (‘ago’):

- (20) a. *zwei Nächte her* (‘two nights ago’)  
 b. *\*alle Nächte her* (‘all nights ago’)  
 c. *\*Nächte her* (‘nights ago’)  
 d. *die ganze Nacht her* (‘the whole night ago’)

Observe, finally, that we have to say that ROUTE is a measure, an extent, but an extent with an orientation, (see also endnote 10). This is so because if it did not have an orientation, *den Berg hinauf* (‘up the mountain’) and *den Berg hinunter* (‘down the mountain’) would have the same meaning, which they do not. This may well be true for MPs in other contexts as well. Time is intrinsically oriented in cases like *he slept three hours*. Also, presumably, *he covered 2km* implies directed locomotion.

- 
- d. *Den ganzen Berg hinauf*  
 e. *\*Auf den ganzen Berg hinauf*

*Ganz* can be alternatively realized in various positions, either as adverbial modifier of P-heads or as adjectival modifier of the object of some P, as long as it does not directly modify the object of a GO-P, as in (i-e). This type of alternative realization (Emonds, 2000, 1987) is comparable to that found in patterns like (ii) that I discuss in Van Riemsdijk (1998b).

- (ii) a. *genau bis an die richtige Stelle*  
 exactly to at the right place  
 ‘to exactly the right place’  
 b. *bis genau an die richtige Stelle*  
 c. *bis an die genau richtige Stelle*

4.2. *GOAL vs. SOURCE*

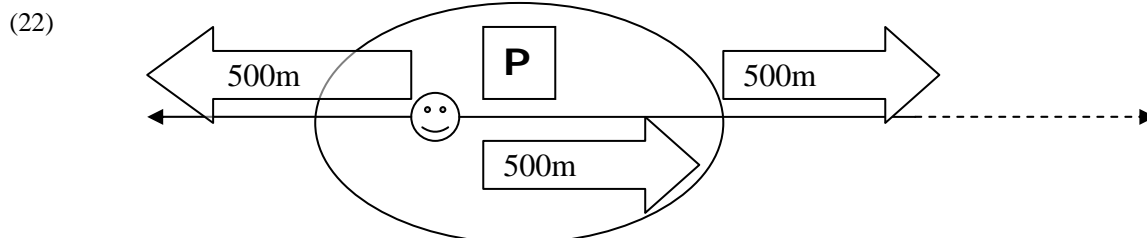
In this section I will suggest that the difference between SO-PPs and GO-PPs can be traced back to the role of the RO-component: I propose that in GO-PPs there is an implied RO-component which is lacking in SO-PPs. My ideas on this issue are admittedly quite speculative and the evidence is rather suggestive. Still, I feel that this is a line of reasoning that is worth pursuing.

The main idea is this. If you move towards an endpoint, a GOAL, it makes sense to specify the distance in space or time. If you move away from some SOURCE, this is much less obvious. In other words, we always focus on the way ahead, not on the path already covered. The distance ahead when we move away from a source is always indeterminate, unless a GOAL is specified in addition.

Consider the following examples.

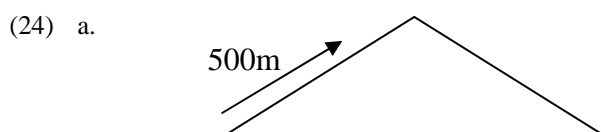
- (21) a. ?I walked 500m out of the parking lot  
b. ?I walked the whole way out of the parking lot

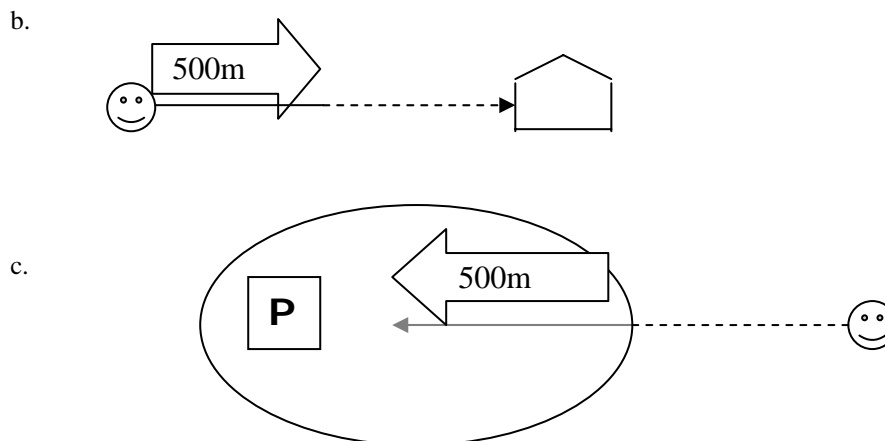
Confronted with (21), the question arises what these sentences mean exactly. The picture below suggests three possible interpretations. Consultation with about a dozen speakers of English and German has revealed a considerable diversity of judgments as to which interpretation is the one that imposes itself.



Similarly, (21) seems to be rather indeterminate as to what exactly is implied. Interestingly, the most prominent meaning seems to be the one in which my walking reaches the confines of the parking lot, turning the SO-PP into an implied GO-PP. Indeed, with GO-PPs no such difficulties seem to arise, as shown by the examples in (23) that are each directly representable by the corresponding pictures in (24).

- (23) a. We walked 500m up the slope  
b. We walked 500m towards the house  
c. We walked 500m into the parking lot





Furthermore, while it is not entirely impossible, it is often very difficult to express the orientation of the ROUTE explicitly with SO-PPs. Consider the following examples.

- (25) *Aus dem Haus heraus/??hinauf leckten Flammen*  
 out the house out/up flared flames  
 ‘Out of/up out of the house flared flames’

When the semantically empty copy *heraus* is used, there is no indication as to the orientation of the ROUTE. When the orientation is made explicit, as with *hinauf* (‘up’), the sentence is clearly quite degraded. Similarly for the following example.

- (26) *Aus dem Panzerfahrzeug heraus/??herauf/??herunter kamen brennende Soldaten*  
 out the armored-vehicle out/up/down came burning soldiers  
 ‘Out of / up out of / down out of the armored vehicle came burning soldiers’

I conclude, tentatively, that there is reason to believe that implied MPs (implied ROs) can be associated with GO-PPs but not, or only with difficulty, with SO-PPs. And I conjecture that it is the implied RO-component that is responsible for the accusative that is assigned in GO-PPs.

#### 4.3. *What about the DATIVE?*

The remaining question, it would appear, is why it is the dative case that shows up in LO-PPs and SO-PPs. The answer I want to propose for this question is, in a sense, that the question is misguided. There is no positive property that LO- and SO-PPs share that is responsible for the dative case. Rather, as I argued in Van Riemsdijk (1983), the dative case is the default case in oblique domains such as PPs. In other words, when there is a positive reason for the accusative to be assigned, such as the presence of an MP-component, that is what happens. When there is no such factor, the dative automatically shows up.

Let me summarize some of the evidence that I presented in the 1983 article.

#### ➤ DP-complements to adjectives

In the AP domain, non-PP dependents are overwhelmingly in the dative, as the following examples show.

- (27) *der seinem Vorgesetzten ähnliche/treue/unbekannte/verhasste/ergebene/gleichgültige Mann*  
 the his.DAT boss similar/loyal/unknown/hated/devoted/indifferent man  
 ‘the man similar/loyal/unknown/odious/devoted/indifferent to his boss’

A much smaller set takes the genitive, modulo those that are Measure Phrase like, such as *keinen Heller wert* (‘worth not a penny’) that, not unexpectedly, take the accusative.

➤ Possessive constructions

When the adnominal genitive is “absorbed” by the possessive adjective, the possessor shows up in the dative case (cf. Van Riemsdijk, 1983: (42) p244);

- (28) a. *[dem Mann] [sein] Vater*  
 the.DAT man his father  
 ‘the man’s father’
- b. *[des Mannes] Vater*  
 the.GEN man father  
 ‘the man’s father’
- c. *\*[des Mannes] [sein] Vater*  
 the.GEN man his father  
 ‘the man’s father’
- d. *\*[dem Mann] Vater*  
 the.DAT man father  
 ‘the man’s father’

➤ Appositive DPs to obliquely case-marked DPs can show up in the dative

Appositives to obliquely case-marked DPs may either agree in case with the nominal head of the complex DP or take the dative, deviating from the agreement pattern that is obligatory in non-oblique contexts (cf. Leirbukt, 1978, Winter, 1966) – (examples cited from these sources in Van Riemsdijk, 1983: (42-51) p245-247).

First consider appositives to (oblique) genitives, adnominal genitives in (29) and (30), a genitive assigned by the preposition *wegen* (‘because of’) in (31) and a genitive assigned by the verb *sich annehmen* (‘attend to’) in (32). In all these cases the dative case on the appositive DP is perfectly grammatical (though an agreeing genitive is also possible).

- (29) *Sie war im Besitz zweier Kleidungsstücke der Ermordeten,*  
 she was in possession two.GEN pieces-of-clothing the.GEN murdered-woman,  
  
*einem Persianermantel und einem roten Kimono...*  
 a.DAT fur coat and a.DAT red kimono...  
  
 ‘She owned two pieces of clothing of the murdered woman, a fur coat and a kimono’

- (30) *Nach Ansicht des Verfassers, dem Ordinarius für Soziologie an der*  
 according-to the-view the.GEN author, the.DAT professor for sociology at the

*Universität Tübingen, muss der Soziologe stets Moralist ... sein*  
 university Tübingen must the sociologist always moralis ... be

‘According to the author, the professor of sociology at the University of Tübingen, the sociologist must always be a moralist ...’

- (31) *Die Hauptgestalt, Amos Comenius, war schon dem Knaben Kokoschka ... teuer*  
 the main-character, Amos Comenius, had already to-the boy Kokoschka ... dear

*gewesen wegen seines ‘Orbis Pictus’, dem alten Lehrbuch in Bildern*  
 been because-of his.GEN ‘Orbis Pictus’, the.DAT old schoolbook in pictures

‘The main character, Amos Comenius, had already been dear to Kokoschka when he was still a boy because of his ‘Orbis Pictus’ the old pictorial schoolbook’

- (32) *Endlich hat sich ein kompetenter Mechaniker meines Wagens angenommen,*  
 finally has refl. a competent mechanic my.GEN car attended-to

*einem hierzulande seltenen russischen Modell*  
 a in-this-country rare Russian model

‘Finally a competent mechanic has attended to my car, a Russian model that is rare in this country’

Turning now to oblique accusatives, that is, accusatives assigned by a preposition, we see in (33) that here too the dative appositive is acceptable.

- (33) *Der König kam aber ohne Krone und Zepter, den*  
 the king came however without crown.ACC and scepter.ACC, the.DAT symbols

*wichtigsten Symbolen seiner Macht und Würde*  
 most-important symbols of-his power and dignity

‘But the king arrived without crown and scepter, the most important symbols of his power and dignity.’

In non-oblique contexts, datives are always excluded, as is shown by the appositive to a direct object accusative in (34) and the appositive to a nominative subject in (35).

- (34) *Ich besuchte dann Herrn Müller, \*unserem/unsere Vertreter in Pforzheim*  
 I visited then Mr.ACC Müller, our.DAT/our.ACC representative in Pforzheim  
 ‘I then visited Mr. Müller, our representative in Pforzheim’

- (35) *Im Haus wohnte ein alter Mann, \*einem/einer der ältesten Bewohner der Stadt*  
 in-the house lived an.NOM old man, one.DAT/one.NOM of-the oldest inhabitants of-the city  
 ‘In the house lived an old man, one of the oldest inhabitants of the city’

➤ Oblique part-whole constructions in Warlpiri<sup>14</sup>

---

14 I came into the possession of these data thanks to a personal communication from the late Ken Hale.

In Warlpiri, part-whole relationships between body parts and the body are generally rendered by means of agreeing DPs. With the grammatical cases (absolutive and ergative) as well as with the dative, agreement is obligatory. But with oblique cases such as the allative agreement is optional, and when the DPs do not agree, the possessor of the body part (the “whole”) shows up in the dative, as in (40). Observe that Warlpiri marks datives with an additional dative agreement marker on the auxiliary (examples cited from Van Riemsdijk, 1983: (52-56) p248-249).

- (36) *Kurdu ka wanti-mi rdaka ngulya-kurra*  
 child.ABS PRES fall.NONPAST hand.ABS hole.ALL  
 ‘The child falls into the hole with its hand’
- (37) *Maliki-rli ka kurdu yarlki-mi rdaka*  
 dog.ERG PRES child.ABS bite.NONPAST hand.ABS  
 ‘The dog bites the child in the hand’
- (38) *Maliki-rli ka kurdu yarlki-mi kartirdi-rli*  
 dog.ERG PRES child.ABS bites.NONPAST mouth.ERG  
 ‘The dog bites the child with its mouth’
- (39) *Kurdu ka-rla maliki-ki yarnka-rni ngirnti-ki*  
 child.ABS PRES.DAT dog.DAT go-for.NONPAST tail.DAT  
 ‘The child goes for the dog’s tail’
- (40) a. *Yumangi ka langa-kurra yuka-rni maliki-kurra*  
 fly PRES ear.ALL enter.NONPAST dog.ALL  
 ‘The fly flies into the dog’s ear’
- b. *Yumangi ka-rla langa-kurra yuka-rni maliki-ki*  
 fly PRES.DAT ear.ALL enter.NONPAST dog.DAT  
 ‘The fly flies into the dog’s ear’

It is on the basis of these considerations that I claim that the dative found in spatial PPs needs no separate explanation: it is simply the default case.

#### 4.4. *Some residual cases*

There is a relatively small (and diminishing) number of (mostly non-locative) adpositions that govern the genitive – most of these are denominal or deadjectival and possibly reducible, at least in part, to an analysis in terms of an actual or silent N. And there is a very small group of, again mostly non-locative, adpositions that govern the accusative: *für* (‘for’), *ohne* (‘without’), *wider* (‘against’). I will not address these cases here. Instead I will limit myself to some brief remarks on five spatial adpositions that are interesting in that they do not completely fit into the general pattern described above but, at least in part show properties that are quite in line with my proposal.

**um** (‘around’) is a pure RO-P that takes the accusative, as it should, but in other than the other RO-Ps it is prepositional.

**entlang** (‘along’) is a RO-P, but it occurs in a variety of frames:

- as postposition it occurs with accusative case, as it should;
- as preposition it takes the genitive case;

- for some speakers (not for the present author) it can also be a pre-or postposition that takes the dative case, but this type of construction is on the way out and tends to be replaced by prepositional dative: *am See entlang* ('at the lake<sub>DAT</sub> along'); instead
  - with dative case, *entlang* can be used as a locative: *entlang dem See stehen grosse Villen* ('along the lake stand large villas')
- In other words, *entlang* is gradually sliding into the general and regular pattern.

**entgegen** ('towards') is a GO-P that (exceptionally) takes the dative case;

**zu** ('to') is a GO-P that (exceptionally) takes the dative case, but (perhaps significantly) this preposition seems more resistant to MPs than the other GO-Ps: *??300m zu mir* ('300m to me'), *??ein Stückweit zu ihm* ('a part-of-the-way to him');

**nach** ('to') is a GO-P that takes the dative case, but (significantly) we only know this by inference from the temporal use ('after'); *nach* is used exclusively with place names without articles that do not overtly express any case:

- *nach Berlin* ('to Berlin')
- *\*nach der Hauptstadt* ('to the capital')
- *\*nach dem Berlin das Du mir beschrieben hast* ('to the Berlin that you described to me')
- *\*nach Peter* ('to Peter')
- *\*nach dem Pazifik* ('to the Pacific')
- *nach Den Haag* ('to The Hague') vs. *\*nach Dem Haag* ('to the.DAT Hague')  
(cf. *im Haag* (in the.DAT Hague) vs. *in Den Haag* ('in The Hague'))

In other words, we might as well say that spatial *nach* takes the accusative.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4.5. *Towards an implementation*

Below I present some sketchy ideas about how the spatial PPs in German might work. I do not pretend to be offering a complete analysis. For example, where movements are assumed to take place, I leave open the question of what triggers the movement. Similarly, I have chosen to put the prepositional heads, lexical and functional on the left but do not imply that this is my position. What is central to the suggested derivations is the idea that accusative case is assigned to a DP under Spec-Head Agreement between the (moved) DP and RO. No KP is assumed, partly for reasons of simplification, partly because I am sceptical about its existence, at least in strongly fusional case assigning languages like German.

---

<sup>15</sup> In its temporal use, *nach* means 'after', which is conceptually on a par with a SOURCE. Its GOAL counterpart is *bis* ('until') which shows case properties that are very similar to those of spatial *nach*. When *bis* takes a DP, that DP cannot display overt case:

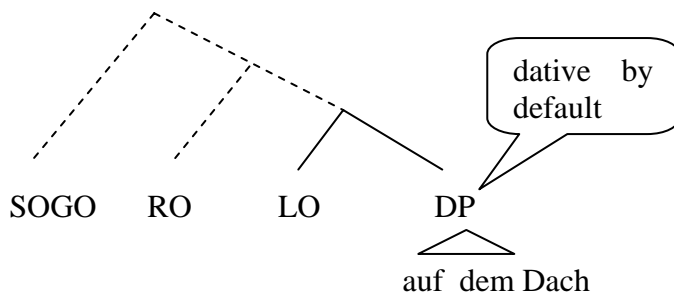
(i) *bis Mitternacht* ('until midnight') vs. *\*bis die Geisterstunde* ('until the witching hour')

When overt case marking cannot be avoided because the article cannot be omitted (as in the case of *Geisterstunde*), *bis* must take a PP headed by *zu*:

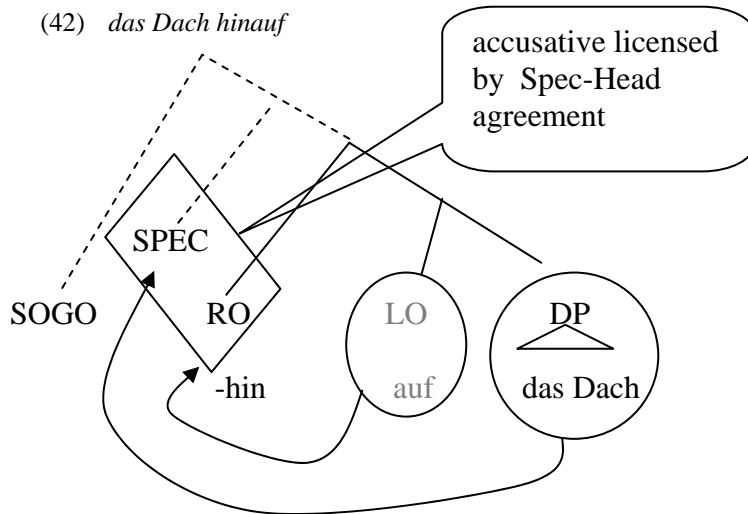
(ii) *bis zur Geisterstunde* ('until to-the witching hour')



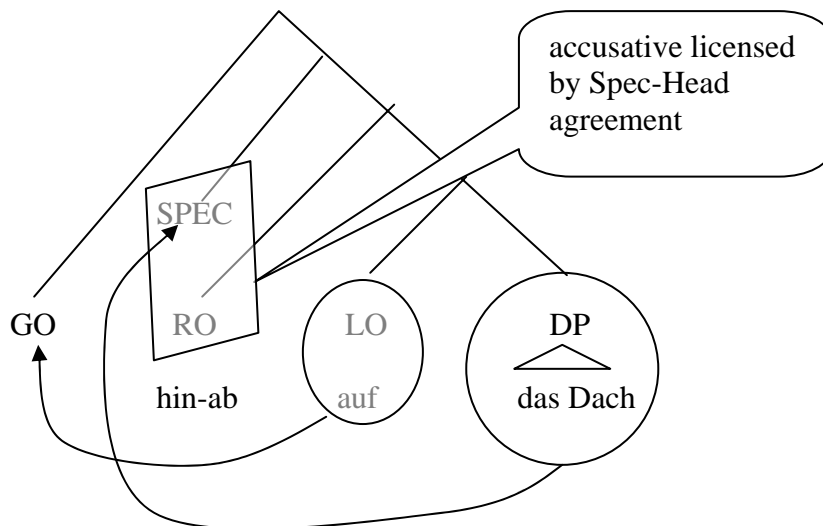
(41) *auf dem Dach*

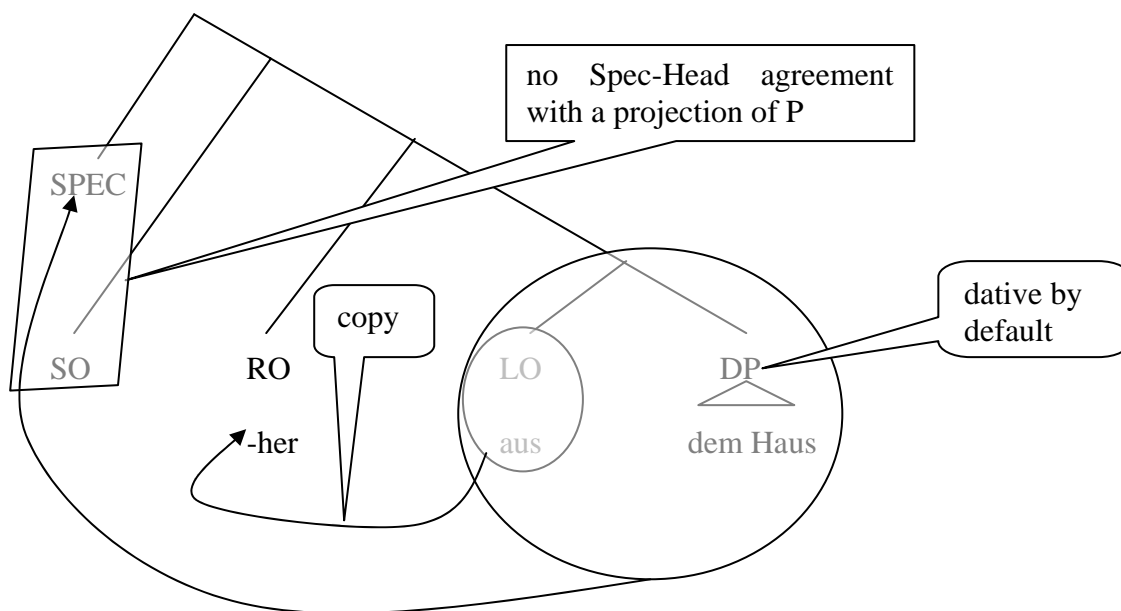


(42) *das Dach hinauf*



(43) *auf das Dach hinab* ('down onto the roof')



(44) *aus dem Haus heraus*

## 5. Conclusion

I have argued that the accusative in German spatial PPs can be fully attributed to the measure phrase character of both ROUTE-PPs and GOAL-PPs. The datives that show up in LOCATIVE-PPs and SOURCE-PPs are manifestations of the more general principle that dative is the default case in oblique domains.

## 6. References

- Abraham, Werner. 2003. The myth of doubly governing prepositions in German. In *Motion, Direction and Location in Languages. In honor of Zygmunt Frajzinger*, eds. Erin Shay and Uwe Seibert, 19-38. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Cornilescu, Alexandra. 2001. Romanian nominalizations: case and aspectual structure. *Journal of Linguistics* 37:467-501.
- Dikken, Marcel den. 2003. On the syntax of locative and directional adpositional phrases. Ms. CUNY, New York.
- Emonds, Joseph. 2000. *Lexicon and Grammar: The English Syntacticon*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Emonds, Joseph E. 1987. The invisible category principle. *Linguistic Inquiry* 18:613-631.
- Emonds, Joseph E., and Spaelti, Philip. 2005. Fully Distributing Morphology: The Phonology and Syntax of Latin Case Inflections (Talk Abstract). Kobe: Shoin Women's University, SILS.
- Helmantel, Marjon. 2002. *Interactions in the Dutch adpositional domain (Ph.D. dissertation, Leiden University)* LOT Dissertation Series 66. Utrecht: Igitur, University of Utrecht Publishing Service.
- Huijbregts, Riny, and Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 2001. Location and locality. In *Progress in Grammar*, eds. Elena Anagnostopoulou and Marc van Oostendorp, 1-23. Amsterdam: Meertens Institute.
- Huijbregts, Riny, and Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 2007. Location and Locality. In *Clausal and phrasal architecture: syntactic derivation and interpretation: A Festschrift for Joseph E. Emonds*, eds. Simin Karimi, Vida Samiian and Wendy Wilkins. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Koopman, Hilda. 2000. *The syntax of specifiers and heads*. London: Routledge.

- Leirbukt, Oddleif. 1978. Über dativische Appositionen bei akkusativischem Bezugswort im Deutschen. *Linguistische Berichte* 55:1-17.
- Noonan, Máire. 2005. Spotlight on spatial PPs: evidence from German shadows. Ms. McGill, Montreal.
- Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 1983. The case of German adjectives. In *Linguistic categories: auxiliaries and related puzzles*, eds. Frank Heny and Barry Richards, 223-252. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 1990. Functional prepositions. In *Unity in Diversity: papers presented to Simon C. Dik on his 50th birthday*, eds. Harm Pinkster and Inge Genée, 229-241. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 1998a. Categorical feature magnetism: The endocentricity and distribution of projections. *The Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 2:1-48.
- Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 1998b. Head movement and adjacency. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 16:633-678.
- Riemsdijk, Henk C. van. 2002. The unbearable lightness of GOing. The projection parameter as a pure parameter governing the distribution of elliptic motion verbs in Germanic. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 5:143-196.
- Svenonius, Peter. 2002. Icelandic Case and the Structure of Events. *The Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 5:197-225.
- Svenonius, Peter. 2004. Spatial P in English. Tromsø: CASTL.
- Winter, Werner. 1966. Vom Genitiv im heutigen Deutsch. *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Sprache* 22:21-35
- Zwarts, Joost. 2005. The case of prepositions: Government and compositionality in German PPs. Ms. Radboud University Nijmegen and Utrecht University.
- Zwarts, Joost. 2006. Case marking direction: the accusative in German PPs. Nijmegen: Radboud University Nijmegen.