

DISCERNING DEFAULT DATIVES: SOME PROPERTIES OF THE DATIVE CASE IN GERMAN

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1 Some Remarks on Default Case¹

It would be hard to deny that default case exists, as a phenomenon. Exclamations consisting of a noun or noun phrase, for example, tend to occur in the nominative case, at least in those languages that have a system of overt case marking. Take “shit!”, or its German counterpart “Scheisse!”. In all likelihood there is no silent or deleted clause in which these nominal expressions are embedded. These forms do not show any overt case marking, but this cannot be due to the absence of a clausal environment, for as soon as the nominal expression is somewhat more elaborate, the nominative case manifests itself, as the following German examples show. In the absence of a clause containing a case assigner, the nominative case shows up as the default case.

- (1) der Hammer! – ein Holler! – so ein verdammter Schlendrian! – so ein Wahnsinn!
the hammer – a elderberry – such a damned rut – such an insanity
great! -- that's crazy! -- such a damned rut! -- such madness!

It is, perhaps, less obvious that default case manifests itself also with other cases. The present paper discusses a number of interesting ways in which the dative case shows default behavior, with brief remarks also on default accusatives and genitives.

One reason why default case has not attracted the interest that it deserves is probably that its existence creates a fairly serious problem for the case filter, one of the cornerstones of case theory (cf. Vergnaud, 2008) which in turn was one of the cornerstones of Government and Binding Theory (Chomsky, 1981). Take the paradigm example that case theory was introduced for: the passive. The idea was that passive morphology “absorbs” or suppresses the verb’s power to assign accusative case to its direct object. Therefore the object must move to the subject to pick up nominative case, for if it remains without case it falls prey to the case filter and the sentence is ruled out. This line of reasoning presupposes that there are no other ways in which the object could receive case. But there are. In fact, inside the DP the equivalent of passive can avail itself of *of*-insertion, or it can be moved to the prenominal position, where it picks up genitive case:

- (2) a. The destruction of the city
b. The city’s destruction

Why can’t *of*-insertion be used to rescue the object of a passive verb, or, for that matter a DP that has failed to undergo raising, from the case filter?

- (3) a. *It was destroyed of the city
b. *It seemed of the city to be destroyed

1 This paper was presented at the workshop entitled “Sentence Types: Ten Years After”, which took place at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität in Frankfurt a/M on June 26 - 28, 2009. I wish to thank Günther Grewendorf and Ede Zimmermann and their colleagues for organizing this wonderfully inspired and inspiring conference and the audience for interesting discussion. Most of the materials discussed are based on earlier work, in particular Van Riemsdijk (2007, to appear). I thank Josef Bayer, Anikó Csirmaz, Joe Emonds, Riny Huijbregts, Viola Schmitt and, last but not least, Memo Cinque, whose 2005 workshop on PP-structure in Venice rekindled my interest in the topic discussed here.

There are potential answers to these question. For example, it may very well be correct to say that *of*-insertion and genitive assignment are processes that apply automatically inside DPs only. In a sense, *of* and genitive case are two sides of the same coin, and we may well say that the genitive is the default case in the nominal domain. For an interesting elaboration of such an idea, see Kagan & Pereltsvaig (2009).

There is, however, a second way in which a case-less direct object might be rescued: it might get the default nominative, as discussed in (1) above. Indeed, the default nominative does show up in more complete clausal contexts, such as hanging topic left dislocation (HTLD):²

- (4) Der Hans_{NOM} ich glaube nicht dass ich ihn_{ACC} mag
 the John I believe not that I him like
 'John, I don't think I like him'

In other words, what prevents the following example from being rescued by default nominative realization?

- (5) *It was destroyed the city_{NOM}

Undoubtedly, answers can be provided for this problem as well. In general, it would seem that the domain in which a specific default case imposes itself must be defined in precise ways.

The present paper presents two studies on the default dative case.³ In section 2, I present arguments to show that the dative that shows up in locational adpositional phrases is not an assigned case but a default case. And in section 3 I discuss ways in which the overt expression of the dative case is sometimes obligatory but can, in other cases, be waived. The way I will refer to this set of phenomena is to say that certain uninflected nominal forms are incompatible with contexts in which dative case is assigned, but that there are other contexts in which this dative incompatibility is suppressed.

2 Pure Route Ps take the Accusative, the Dative is the Elsewhere Case⁴

2.1 The questions and the program

In case marking languages such as German, objects of adpositions tend to be case-marked.. One of the most important subregularities is generally formulated as follows: 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 (6).

² Occasionally, case attraction does occur in HTLD constructions, hence the following alternative to (4) is not unacceptable:

Den Hans_{ACC}, ich glaube nicht, dass ich ihn_{ACC} mag

In the corresponding contrastive left dislocation, accusative case is obligatory:

Den Hans_{ACC} / *Der Hans_{NOM} den_{ACC} glaube ich nicht, dass ich mag

For details, see Vat (1997).

³ The ideas and proposals presented here are intentionally presented in a rather theory-neutral way. For some proposals on the integration of case and case theory in a minimalist framework, see Pesetsky & Torrego (2004, 2007), among others. There are some ideas there that point in a similar direction as in my own proposals, while in other respects the approaches appear to be quite divergent. Mostly, however, the empirical domains covered as well as the type of questions asked are rather disjoint. Hence I abstain from discussing their views in the present article.

⁴ This section presents an abbreviated version of the materials discussed in Van Riemsdijk (2007).

- (6) a. Peter legt das Buch auf den Tisch
Peter puts the book on the_{ACC} table
- 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.

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

The dominant view is that adpositions that allow both variants have the property referred to as "Doppelrektion" (dual case government) (cf. Abraham, 2003). The alternative I wish to explore here (cf. Van Riemsdijk, 2007) is that the choice of the accusative is dependent on certain specific factors, while the dative case is the elsewhere or default case.

The main question that I will address in this section, then, is the following.

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

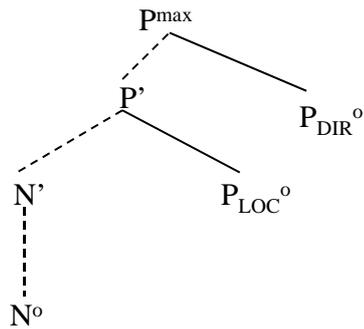
My argumentation will proceed in the following steps:

- The notion of direction must be split up into two distinct subcomponents: ROUTE and SOURCE/GOAL (section 2.2).
- ROUTE is a major contributor to the choice of the accusative case (cf. Zwarts, 2005, 2006) (section 2.3).
- ROUTE can be identified as the main factor determining the accusative case in GOAL-PPs (section 2.4.).

2.2 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 (2000), Den Dikken (2010), Huijbregts & Van Riemsdijk (2001, 2007) and many others. Others have proposed structures far richer than these (cf. among others Noonan, 2005, Svenonius, 2010). In (8) I give the relatively simple structure argued for in Huijbregts and Van Riemsdijk (2001, 2007).

(8)

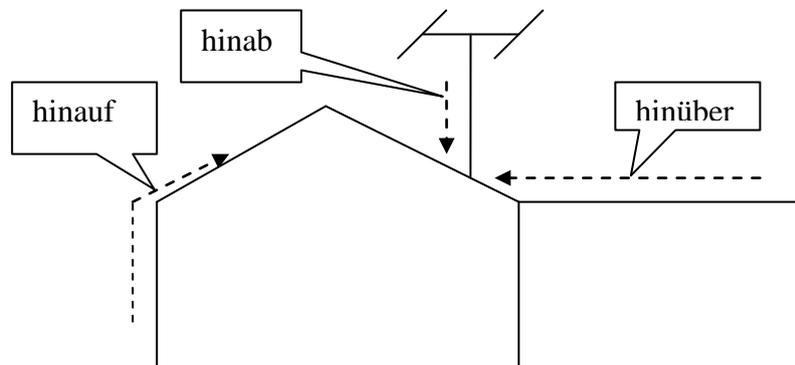


This type of structure is insufficient to handle contrasts like the following.

- (9) 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'

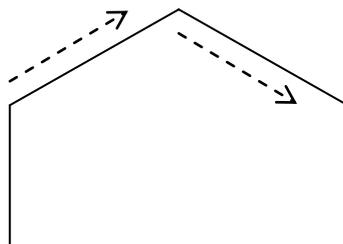
The three variants of (9)a correspond to the three motions depicted in (10). In each case the (top of/ upper side of) the roof is the endpoint, the terminus of the motion, while the three possible postpositional elements correspond to the orientation of the path or route along which the snail moves. In these examples, an endpoint of the motion is specified: some position on the roof.

(10)



In (11), which corresponds to the example (9)b, 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.

(11)

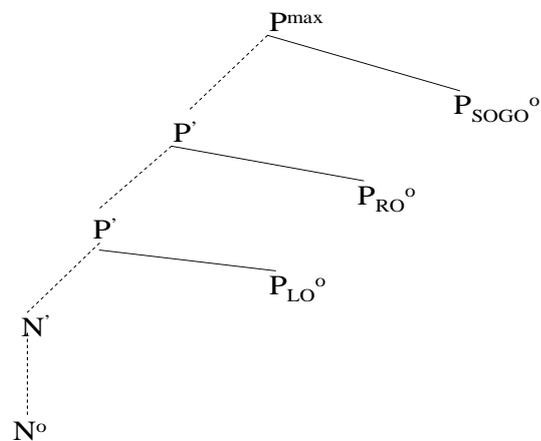


The contrast between the two examples shows quite straightforwardly that the prepositional element serves to pinpoint the goal of the motion while the postpositional element denotes the orientation or the path of the motion. In the remainder of this article I will use the following terminology and abbreviations:

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

And I will minimally modify (8) to accommodate RO as in (12).

(12)



2.3 Joost Zwarts' generalization

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

Table 1	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 (9)

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

Table 2

		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 'against' hinter '(to) behind' in 'into' neben '(to) beside' über 'over' unter '(to) under' vor '(to) in front of' zwischen '(to) between'

And he draws the following conclusion (in 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 LOCATION-Ps while ROUTE-Ps pattern with GOAL-Ps. In the next subsection 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.⁵

2.4 A proposal

The basic observation on which the proposal below rests is this:

(13) **Pure ROUTE PPs take the accusative**

This is true for the adpositions *durch* ('through'), *entlang* ('along'), *über* ('over'), *um* ('um') as well as post-positional elements of the type found in (9). The complete list of these is given in (14).

⁵ I return to the unexpected datives with GO-Ps (*entgegen*, *nach*, *zu*) in subsection 2.4.3.

(14)

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

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.

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

2.4.1 ROUTE-DPS as Measure Phrases⁶

A major insight underlying my line of argumentation has its roots in some diachronical observations and their interpretation by Joost Zwarts:

The behaviour of the dative, straddling the line between locative and directional uses, can partially be understood historically. The dative and accusative in present-day German PPs evolved out of the richer case system of Proto-Indo-European (PIE) (Beekes, 1995, Blake, 1994, Fox, 1995). The present-day dative is a syncretism of three distinct cases in PIE. It covers the PIE dative, which was a non-spatial case for recipients and benefactives and is still used as such in German and many other Indo-European languages. However, it has absorbed the locative case (that was used for location) and the ablative case (for sources). 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** (what is called perlocative or translative in local case terminologies).

(quoted from Zwarts, 2006 -- emphasis mine, HvR)

At this point, some clarification of terminology is in order. The “extents” that Zwarts talks about in the above quote, and which he likens to the notion of “route”, are often referred to as measure phrases. It is, indeed, easy to see that (nominal) measure phrases are characterized by the accusative case in German and other Indo-European languages. Extent expressions in turn play an important role in the literature on event structure, where they are often referred to as (situation) delimiters (cf. Tenny, 1994). The link between (situation) delimiters and accusative case is argued for extensively in Csirmaz (2006) on the basis of a variety of Hungarian constructions. Tenny uses ‘measure’ for scales, including paths, hence measure phrases are not necessarily delimited. Therefore, in view of the reasoning below, and as suggested to me by Anikó Csirmaz, I adopt the term ‘delimiters’.

Accusative is indeed the case for (delimiting) MPs (henceforth DMPs) in German:

⁶ The material presented in this section profited greatly from discussion with and input from Anikó Csirmaz and Viola Schmitt.

- (15) a. Er hat die ganze nacht geschlafen
 he has_{theACC} 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 DMP-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.

- (16) 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 (16)b shows, the DP preceding a pure RO-P acts just like the MP in (16)a in this respect. (16)c shows that a RO-PP that is used as an adjunct acts identically. In (16)d, 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 (16)e. The same behavior can be observed in temporal cases that are expressed by the figurative use of spatial Ps:

- (17) 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.

- (18) 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:

- (19) 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'
 (#) 'Up each step of the stairs there is a banister'

➤ ambiguity with adverbs like *again*

Adverbs like *again* can lead to ambiguity in eventive contexts (cf. Von Stechow, 1996):

- (20) John closed the door again
 (i) the event of John's closing the door has occurred previously
 (ii) the state of the door being closed has existed previously

This ambiguity is also found in Goal-PPs (as opposed to Source PPs), as argued in Nam (2004: exx (24-26))

- (21) a. John drove to New York again
 ambiguous: event repetition or state restitution
 b. John drove from New York again
 unambiguous: repetitive meaning only
- (22) a. John sent the book to New York again ambiguous
 b. John sent the book from New York again unambiguous

The same effect is indeed found with other diagnostics for telicity of events:

- (23) a. Mary ran (for ten minutes / *in ten minutes)
 b. Mary ran to the store (*for ten minutes / in ten minutes)
 c. He ran from the library (for ten minutes / *in ten minutes)

(23)c is an atelic activity like (23)a: no time-frame and no delimited route; (23)b however is a telic event (an accomplishment) that typically takes a delimiting DP.

For now we conclude that there is considerable evidence that the DP-object of a pure RO-postposition is a DMP. The asymmetry between source-PPs and goal-PPs that was also evidenced by the examples will be pursued in subsection 2.4.2.

The conclusion we have reached is not without its problems, however. First, RO-PPs can take an additional explicit DMP, as shown in (24).

- (24) 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'

Upon consideration, however, these examples are unproblematic since DMPs can cooccur quite generally, as shown in (25), and each one of the MPs takes the accusative case.

- (25) 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'
- (26) Sie hat zwei Stunden (lang) 20km/h aufrechterhalten können
 she has two hours (long) 20km/h keep-up could
 'She was able to keep up 20km/h for two hours'

It is true that such examples are in conflict with the Unique Path Constraint of Goldberg (1991) and/or the Single Delimiting Constraint of Tenny (1994), where both impose the uniqueness of delimiters associated with eventualities. The conclusion must be that the delimiters in (25) or (26) modify distinct entities (Csirmaz p.c.): eventuality time and topic time in (25) and distinct scales (duration and speed) in (26).

Does this help for (24)? Perhaps. We would have to say that there are two distinct DMPs, one associated with the extent of the path (sc. 300m), and one specifying the actual distance that suffices to exhaust the climber. These two DMPs and their interpretations happen to be coextensive in this case.

A second potential problem seems to arise when we look at the Japanese accusative-dative alternation (Fukuda, to appear, Kuno, 1973, Sugamoto, 1982), which may appear to counterexemplify the connection between goal and accusative. Take (27) from Fukuda's paper.

- (27) Gakusei-ga yama-o/ni nobor-ta
 student-NOM mountain-ACC/DAT climb-PERF
 'Students climbed the mountain'

Apparently the goal (mountain) can be expressed either by the dative or the accusative. But in actual fact, as Fukuda argues, there is an important difference between the two variants having to do with the notion of path:

- (28) Gakusei-ga kaidan-o/#ni nobor-ta
 student-NOM stairs-ACC/#DAT climb-PERF
 'Students climbed the stairs'
- (29) Gakusei-ga yane-#o/ni nobor-ta
 student-NOM roof-#ACC/DAT climb-PERF
 'Students climbed on the roof'

As Fukuda puts it, 'stairs' is naturally interpreted as a path while in (29) the roof is the endpoint of the climbing, but the roof does not define the path. Hence this may actually turn out to be supporting evidence. Consider again the examples in (9), repeated here for convenience and with the addition of a third variant with a preposition only.

- (30) 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'
- c. Die Schnecke kroch auf das Dach
 the snail crept onto the_{ACC} roof

The b-example is a case where, unlike example (29), the roof is the path. Hence we might expect a corresponding example in Japanese to be felicitous with both case endings, the accusative corresponding to the b-example and the dative to the interpretation in which the roof is the endpoint of the snail's climbing activity: the roof is reduced to a point without extension. This seems to be confirmed.

- (31) Katatsumuri-ga yane-o/ni nobor-ta
 snail-NOM roof-ACC/DAT climb-PERF
 'The snail crept upward on/onto the roof'

Similarly, (27) is actually ambiguous in the intended way. What remains is the question as to why the goal-interpretation is associated with the dative case. I will assume that in Japanese, other than in German, the DMP, which is implicitly associated with a goal-PP, does not have the force to impose 'its' accusative case to the object of the goal-P. This actually appears to be a more general property of Japanese: even though the language does have an overtly marked accusative case, (adverbial) MPs are caseless.⁷

Observe, finally, that we have to say that ROUTE is a measure, an extent, but an extent with an orientation. 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.

The apparent problems for our conclusion, that the object of a pure route-P is a delimiting DP and hence expected to show up in the accusative case, may thus be solvable and, what is more, may even turn out to support the hypothesis.⁸

⁷ Thanks to Yukinori Takubo (p.c.) and Masayuki Oishi (p.c.) for helpful discussion of the subtle nuances in (27-29) and (31). Thanks to Oishi-sensei as well for confirming that Japanese MPs, provided they are adverbial, do not have any overt case, unless they are used contrastively..

⁸ 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.

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

Similarly with German *her* ('ago'):

- (ii) 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')

What my line of reasoning suggests is that this is a non-issue to the extent that delimiting DPs associated with adpositions are both objects of that adposition and measure phrase like modifiers.

2.4.2 GOAL vs. SOURCE

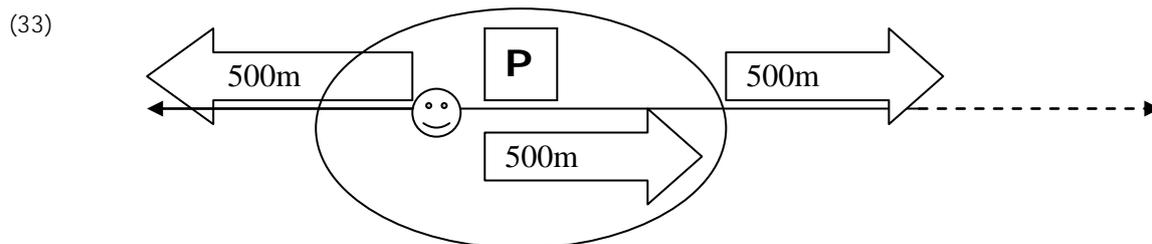
In this section I will suggest that the difference between SO-PPs and GO-PPs can be traced back to the role of the RO-component: I propose that in GO-PPs there is an implied RO-component which is lacking in SO-PPs. My ideas on this issue are admittedly quite speculative and the evidence is rather suggestive.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

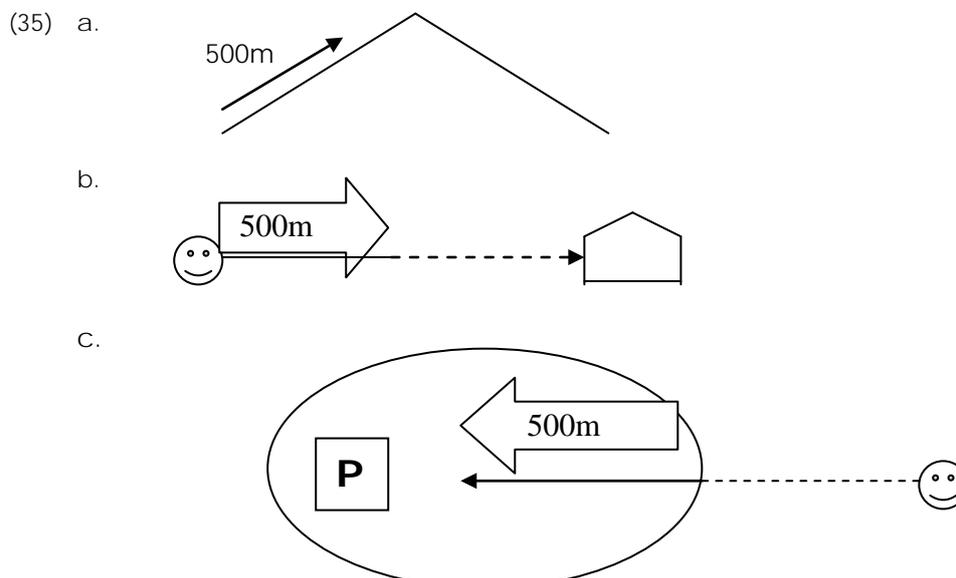
- (32) a. ?I walked 500m out of the parking lot
b. ?I walked the whole way out of the parking lot

Confronted with (32), 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, (32) 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 (34) that are each directly representable by the corresponding pictures in (35).

- (34) 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.

- (36) 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.

- (37) 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.

2.4.3 What about the DATIVE?

The remaining question at this point is: why do we get the dative case in location-PPs and in source-PPs? The answer I would like to suggest is that there is no positive property that LO- and SO-PPs share that is responsible for the dative case. Instead, building on earlier work, I propose that the dative case manifests itself in these LO/SO-PPs simply as a consequence of the fact that the dative is the elsewhere or default case in oblique domains such as PP's. This is what I argued in Van Riemsdijk (1983). In other words, when there is a positive reason for the accusative to be assigned, such as the presence of a DMP-component, that is what happens. When there is no such factor, the dative automatically shows up.

In support of this claim, I will summarize some of the main arguments presented in my (1983) article.

- The overwhelming majority of DP-complements to adjectives (also an oblique domain) shows up in the dative. (38) presents some examples.

- (38) der seinem Vorgesetzten ähnliche/treue/unbekannte/verhasste/ Mann
 ergebene/gleichgültige
 the his_{DAT} boss similar/loyal/unknown/hated/ man
 devoted/indifferent
 'the man similar/loyal/unknown/odious/devoted/indifferent to his boss'

A much smaller set of adjectives 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 datives.

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

- (39) 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. (40) contains an adnominal genitive DP whose nominal appositive appears in the Dative. (41) is an example of a genitive assigned by the preposition *wegen* ('because of') whose apposition again shows up in the dative. Finally, the verb *sich annehmen* ('attend to') in (42) assigns a genitive to its internal argument, and the appositive to that argument is realized with the dative case. In all these cases the dative case on the appositive DP is perfectly grammatical (though an agreeing genitive is also possible).

- (40) 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'
- (41) 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'
- (42) 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 (43) that here too the dative appositive is acceptable.

- (43) 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 (44) and the appositive to a nominative subject in (45). In other words, in non-oblique contexts case agreement is obligatory.

- (44) Ich besuchte dann Herrn Müller, *unserem/unseren 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'
- (45) Im Haus wohnte ein alter Mann, *einem/einer der
 in-the house lived an_{ANNOM} old man, one_{DAT/ONENOM} of-the
 ältesten Bewohner der Stadt
 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 (data from †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 (absolute and ergative) as well as with the dative, agreement is obligatory. But with oblique cases such as the allative case, 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 (50). Observe that Warlpiri marks datives with an additional dative agreement marker on the auxiliary (examples cited from Van Riemsdijk, 1983: (52-56) p248-249).

- (46) 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'
- (47) Maliki-rli ka kurdu yarli-mi rdaka
 dog.ERG PRES child.ABS bite.NONPAST hand.ABS
 'The dog bites the child in the hand'
- (48) Maliki-rli ka kurdu yarli-mi kartirdi-rli
 dog.ERG PRES child.ABS bites.NONPAST mouth.ERG
 'The dog bites the child with its mouth'
- (49) Kurdu ka-rla maliki-ki yarnka-mi ngirnti-ki
 child.ABS PRES.DAT dog.DAT go-for.NONPAST tail.DAT
 'The child goes for the dog's tail'

- (50) 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.

2.4.4 Some residual cases

There is a relatively small (and diminishing) number of (mostly non-locative) German 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, while not fitting completely into the general pattern described above, they do, at least in part, show properties that are in line with my proposal.

um ('around') is a pure RO-P that takes the accusative, as it should, though (other than the other RO-Ps) it is prepositional.⁹

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

- as postposition it occurs with the accusative case, as it should;
- as preposition it takes the 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 the prepositional dative: *am See entlang* ('at the lake_{DAT} along'); instead
- with dative case, *entlang* can be used as a locative preposition: *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 DMPs than the other GO-Ps: *??300m zu mir* ('300m to me'), *??ein Stückweit zu seiner Mutter* ('a part-of-the-way to his mother');

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.¹⁰

⁹ The issue of prepositional vs. postpositional order among spatial Ps is one that I have not considered in the present paper.

¹⁰ Section 3 takes up the issue of non-case-inflected, not overtly case marked nominal elements that occur in dative contexts in greater detail.

2.5 Conclusion

I have argued that the accusative in German spatial PPs can be fully attributed to the delimiting measure phrase character of the DP in ROUTE-PPs and that the accusative in GOAL-PPs is due to the presence of an (implicit) DMP. 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.

3 Dative Incompatibility Suppression¹¹

3.1 1. Preliminaries.

If dative marked DPs in PPs get their marking not from case assignment but as a virtue of the default manifestation of the dative case, questions arise as to whether this case manifestation is of equal force as that found in true case assignment situations. This section investigates a set of phenomena that, though not well understood in some ways, does shed some light on the issue. In brief, there is a set of uninflected nominal pro-forms that cannot survive in dative case assignment contexts but can, provided certain other conditions are met, survive in (oblique) adpositional contexts. I take this contrast to be another indication that case marking in oblique and non-oblique domains is quite different, a conclusion that appears to be consonant with the conclusions reached in section 2 above in a general sense, though working out the precise details will be seen to be far from trivial.

German possesses a series of nominal quantificational pro-forms that can remain uninflected in nominative and accusative domains, but not when they are assigned dative case, cf. Gallmann (1997:p67f).

(51) Hans hat viel(-es) / alles / wenig(?-es) / nichts gegessen^{ACC}
Hans has much / everything / little / nothing eaten

(52) Viel(es) / alles / wenig(?-es) / nichts hat^{NOM} uns überzeugt
much / everything / little / nothing has us convinced

There is much syncretism in the paradigms, but in particular the above examples with *viel* show that while case inflection is possible in these contexts, the uninflected form is tolerated, that is, it is compatible with the requirements imposed by nominative/accusative domains. The following examples, however, show that in dative contexts it is only the inflected form that yields a grammatical result. I will call this effect "dative incompatibility".

(53) Das widerspricht^{DAT} vielem^{DAT} / allem^{DAT} / wenigem^{DAT}
that contradicts much / everything / little

(54) *Das widerspricht^{DAT} viel / allerlei / etwas / nichts / wenig
that contradicts much / all-kinds-of-things / something / nothing / little

(55) *Was widerspricht^{DAT} das?
what contradicts that
(= 'what does that contradict?')

Some of these words including *allerlei*, *etwas*, *nichts*, *was* lack a dative form altogether and consequently they are not tolerated as objects of a verb that governs the dative case.

However, if the governing element is a preposition, this dative incompatibility disappears (modulo the case-less r-pronouns, cf. Gallmann (1997), Van Riemsdijk (1978)).

11 This section presents an abbreviated and partly improved version of Van Riemsdijk (to appear).

- (56) mit^{DAT} vielem^{DAT} / bei^{DAT} allem^{DAT} / von^{DAT} wenigem^{DAT}
with much / with everything / of little
- (57) mit^{DAT} viel / allerlei / etwas / nichts / was / wenig
with much / all-kinds-of-things / something / nothing / what / little
- (58) bei^{DAT} viel / allerlei / etwas / nichts / was / wenig
with much / all-kinds-of-things / something / nothing / what / little

These data, which I will refer to as “dative incompatibility suppression”, essentially admit two types of interpretations:

A. The prepositional dative is a different case from the indirect object or verb-governed dative. That is, we could distinguish grammatical vs. oblique dative case. We can then say that uninflected pro-forms are compatible with the oblique dative but not with the grammatical dative case, following Van Riemsdijk (1983, 2007).

B. Dative (in-)compatibility is contextually determined: the pro-forms in question are inherently incompatible with dative case, but prepositions suppress this inherent feature. This is what, following Van Riemsdijk (to appear), I will argue for in the next section (section 3.2.).

3.2 An argument for a context dependent solution

A first piece of evidence for hypothesis B comes from an examination of the position of adpositions. German, which is generally considered to be prepositional, has postpositional and circumpositional PPs as well. Here are some postpositions that govern the dative:

- (59) entgegen (towards), entlang (along), nach (according-to), zufolge (as a consequence of), zuliebe (benefactive for), zuwider (contra)

None of these tolerate any of the case neutral proforms illustrated in (51) through (58):

- (60) a. *allerlei entgegen^{DAT} (towards all kinds of things)
b. *nichts nach^{DAT} (according to nothing)
c. *was zufolge^{DAT} (as a consequence of what)
d. *viel zuwider^{DAT} (opposed to much)
e. *viel entlang^{DAT} (alongside much)

Second, Bayer & Bader (2007)¹² observe that the phonetic weight and the morphological complexity of adpositions may play a role, though there is considerable variation in the judgments. Heavier prepositions yield results significantly worse than those in (56)-(58).

- (61) a. %während^{DAT} nichts (during nothing)
b. %wegen^{DAT} allerlei (because of all kinds of things)
c. %dank^{DAT} was (thanks to what)

It should be pointed out, however, that the examples in (60) are considerably worse than those in (61). Furthermore, *nach*, which is monosyllabic, morphologically simplex and not in any obvious sense denominal, deverbal or deadjectival, can occur both as a preposition and as a postposition; as a preposition governing the dative it is used in prepositional objects and as a temporal adposition meaning 'after'; as a postposition it means 'according to'; in these various uses, we get a clear contrast: the preposition *nach* tolerates uninflected pro-forms, but the postposition *nach* does not.

¹² They credit Andrew McIntyre with the observation.

- (62) Nach was hast Du gesucht?
after what have you searched
'What were you looking for?'
- (63) Nach was kommt das Intermezzo?
after what comes the Intermezzo
'After what comes the Intermezzo?'
- (64) *Was nach soll eine Eiszeit bevorstehen?
what according-to should an ice-age be-imminent
'According to what is an ice-age supposed to be imminent?'

I conclude from these facts that the factor preposition vs. postposition is the major determinant of whether dative incompatibility is suppressed. Postpositions and verbs both govern leftward in German, as opposed to prepositions. This suggests that it is the direction of government that plays a decisive role in whether or not dative incompatibility suppression is active.

This interpretation of the facts is confirmed when we look at adjectives. Adjectives in German can take DP complements which they govern leftward, (cf. Van Riemsdijk, 1983). The case, as argued in Van Riemsdijk (1983) and briefly alluded to above (section 2.4.3.), is mostly the dative case, cf. example (38). In such a left-covering context, we find no suppression of dative incompatibility, in other words, the uninflected pro-forms are not tolerated.

- (65) *Nur wenige Leute sind nichts verfallen^{DAT}
only few people are nothing addicted
'Only few people are addicted to nothing'
- (66) *Was ähnlich^{DAT} sind denn diese Felsformationen?
what similar are prt. these rock-formations
'What are these rock formations similar to?'

This observation supports our conclusion that the direction of government determines whether uninflected pro-forms are tolerated under dative government. Pro-forms such as *etwas*, *nichts*, *viel*, *allerlei*, *was*, *wenig* are inherently specified as nominative/accusative and hence as incompatible with contexts in which the dative case is required. This dative incompatibility is suppressed, under non-canonical (that is, left-to-right) case government.¹³ However, direction of government is not the only factor determining whether dative incompatibility suppression (DIS) occurs. Morphological complexity and phonological weight may also block DIS.

The latter observation invites the conjecture that DIS is an interface phenomenon: uninflected pro-forms survive throughout the syntactic derivation but the derivation crashes at the PF interface unless the uninflected nominal form is immediately preceded by a light preposition.

The interpretation of DIS as a PF-interface effect is also supported by considerations related to its interaction with head movement. In their clause final position verbs cause the dative incompatibility effect, as shown in section 3.1. Observe now that the dative incompatibility effect persists (that is, no DIS effect arises) when the (finite) verb undergoes Verb Second in root clauses, as shown in the examples (53) - (55). Hence, it is not the case that Verb Second creates a situation of 'non-canonical (left-to-right) case government' as discussed above in connection with PRE-positions. This might at first sight be interpreted as an indication that the DIS effect is truly syntactic. That would be the wrong conclusion, however, since it is predicted

¹³ I am using the term "non-canonical" here in view of the overall head-final character of German syntax: O-V, DP-A, DP-P or P-DP. I am leaving aside the internal structure of the DP here. If genitive phrases are DPs (and not PPs), they occur both to the left and to the right of N. Dative phrases in DPs only occur to the left of the N in possessive constructions, as briefly discussed in 2.4.3.

by phase theory and in particular phasal transfer. By the time the finite verb is raised to C° , the vP phase has become inaccessible to syntactic operations, with the exception of its head (the finite verb) and its edge, due to the Head Constraint,¹⁴ currently referred to as the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). In phase theory parlance, the inaccessible elements of vP have already been transferred to spell-out. Therefore Phase Theory in combination with the proposal that the DIS effect applies at the PF-interface, that is, at spell-out, correctly predicts that Verb Second does not affect dative incompatibility.

At first sight, this line of reasoning might be thought to apply to the preposition – postposition alternation as well, which would be a problem as prepositions, unlike postpositions, do exhibit the DIS effect, as shown in section 3.1. Before answering this question, however, we need to know how the preposition – postposition alternation is accounted for. However, this issue remains largely unsolved. On the one hand, a uniform underlying head-final analysis for languages like Dutch and German would suggest that adpositions are base-generated in final position and are fronted to yield prepositions. On the other hand, these languages might be considered to be underlyingly mixed-headed. Furthermore, it might also be the case that the adpositional head remains inert and that its dependents move around.¹⁵ There is little question, however, that the relationship between pre- and postpositional structures is a matter that does not involve domains larger than the (extended projection of the) PP itself. While (pace Chomsky, 2008) the PP may well constitute a phase, as argued in Van Riemsdijk (1978), there is every reason to assume that the position of the adposition within the PP is settled by the time the PP is transferred to spell-out. Hence there is no reason why the headedness (or quite simply the left- or right adjacency of the adposition to its complement) should not feed the DIS effect.

These considerations, which support the interpretation of DIS as an interface effect, will be central to our discussion of the behavior of *was* ('what') in transparent free relative clauses, which I turn to in the following section.

3.3 Was in transparent free relatives

One of the prominent and important properties of headless or free relatives (FRs) is the matching effect. The FR's *wh*-word or *-phrase*, though arguably in the complementizer position of the relative clause (cf. Groos and Van Riemsdijk, 1981, Van Riemsdijk, 2006a), must match the case requirements of the matrix clause. The matching requirement is sensitive not to the "abstract" case imposed in a certain context, but by the surface form of the word or phrase in question.¹⁶ The relative pronoun *was* ('what') is syncretic between the nominative and the accusative case. Hence, an FR introduced by *was* in German can simultaneously satisfy a matrix nominative requirement and an accusative requirement in the relative clause or vice versa, as shown in the following two examples.

(67) Ich esse^{ACC} was da ist^{NOM}
 I eat what there is
 'I eat what is there'

(68) Was ich koche^{ACC} muss gegessen werden^{NOM}
 what I cook must eaten be
 'What I cook must be eaten'

¹⁴ See Van Riemsdijk (1978).

¹⁵ See Corver (1997) for enlightening discussion of the corresponding question in Dutch Adjective Phrases. Corver argues that in AP it is the head that moves, rightward in his proposal.

¹⁶ This property of the matching effect is, of course, fully in line with our earlier conjecture that the case phenomena we are looking at here are situated at the interface.

With datives this does not work. For discussion about the facts, see Groos & Van Riemsdijk (1981) and Grosu (2003, 2007).

(69) *Dieses Bild gleicht^{DAT} was Du gezeichnet hast^{ACC}
 this picture resembles what you drawn have
 'This picture resembles what you have drawn'

(70) *Ich kaufe^{ACC} was dieses Bild gleicht^{DAT}
 I buy what this picture resembles
 'I buy what this picture looks like'

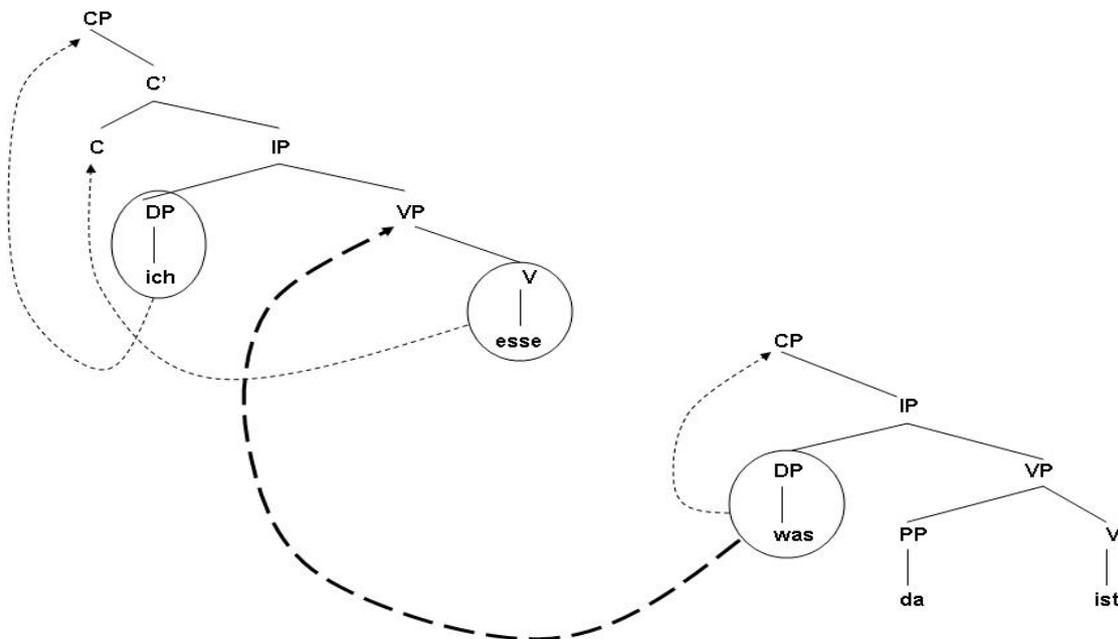
But the DIS effect is active. A (matrix) preposition suppresses dative incompatibility on the relative pronoun *was* that initiates the FR. This is fully expected in view of what we have said about matching in FRs above.

(71) Die Kinder spielen mit^{DAT} was sie bekommen haben^{ACC}
 the children play with what they received have
 'The children are playing with what they got'

(72) Die Kinder spielen mit^{DAT} was verteilt wurde^{NOM}
 the children play with what distributed was
 'The children are playing with what was distributed'

This is not the place to argue in detail how FRs, and in particular the matching effect, should be dealt with in current syntactic theory. Let me just point to the analysis that I have argued for extensively elsewhere, the so-called "graft" analysis (cf. Van Riemsdijk, 2006b) in which the *wh*-word (here *was*) is remerged twice, once from its base position into the Spec,CP position of the relative clause, an instance of internal merge, and once into the direct object position of the matrix verb, an instance of a combination of internal and external merge which I refer to as graft (the example illustrated here is (67)).

(73)



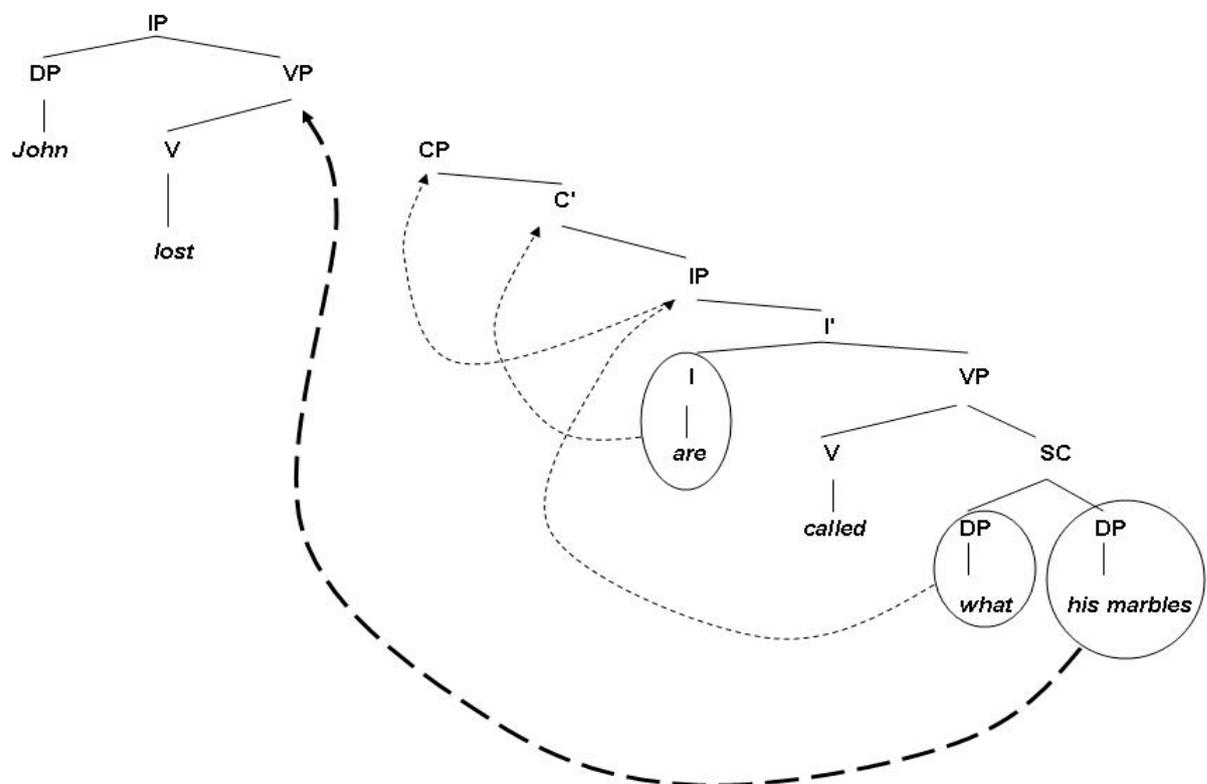
Such an analysis predicts that *was* displays (case) properties both of the matrix clause and of the relative clause.

Let us now turn to a very special type of FRs, so-called transparent free relatives (TFRs). These are illustrated by examples such as the following.

(74) John lost what according to the dictionary are called his marbles

My analysis (cf. Van Riemsdijk, 2006b and references cited there) for TFRs is that in an example like this, *his marbles* and not *what* is grafted into the matrix clause to account (among many other properties) for the fact that 'lose one's marbles' is a local idiom. In other words, it is the predicate nominal that enters into a matching relationship with the matrix clause. A graft analysis treats such TFRs as shown in (75).

(75)



Grosu's (2003 and elsewhere) has argued against my graft analysis on various grounds, which space prevent me from discussing here. His alternative analysis is to assume that TFRs are just like regular FRs and that, due to the predication relation between *was* and the predicate nominal, the relevant information about the predicate nominal is passed along to *was* and in this way becomes accessible to the matrix clause. For reasons I have addressed elsewhere (cf. Van Riemsdijk, 2006b, 2006c), I believe Grosu's position is quite untenable.

In a more recent paper (2007), however, Grosu presents a new argument against my graft analysis which he undoubtedly thinks is the coup de grâce. Indeed, in my analysis of TFRs the

DIS effect should not be found since it is the predicate nominal and not *was* that is grafted into the matrix structure. However, the DIS effect does obtain.¹⁷

(76) Er wohnt in^{DAT} was man einen Hühnerstall^{ACC} nennen koennte
 he lives in what one a^{ACC} chicken-coop call could
 'He lives in what one may call a chicken coop'

(77) Sie spricht mit^{DAT} was ich einen Idioten^{ACC} nennen würde
 she speaks with what I a^{ACC} idiot call would
 'She is talking with what I would call an idiot'

Grosu also observes that this effect is not found in non-prepositional contexts, as expected:

(78) *Er hat was man eine merkwürdige Idee^{ACC} nennen könnte viel Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt^{DAT}
 he has what one a strange idea call could much attention given
 'He has devoted considerable attention *(to) what one might call a strange idea'

Grosu's conclusion, not unexpectedly, is that *was* in TFRs must be a kind of relative clause head just like the *was* in regular FRs, as has been his claim all along (cf. Grosu, 2003).

I believe Grosu is, again, on the wrong track here. In fact TFRs show the same behavior that we observed above when governed leftward by a postposition or an adjective (cf. Van Riemsdijk, to appear). As the following examples show, postpositions and (leftward governing) adjectives do not suppress the dative incompatibility effect.

(79) *Hans ging was man einen kräftig gebauten Mann^{ACC} nennen könnte entgegen^{DAT}
 Hans went what one a^{ACC} powerfully built man call could towards
 'Hans went towards what one might call a powerfully built man'

(80) *Susanne ist was man als ihre beste Freundin^{ACC} bezeichnen kann zufolge^{DAT} 27 Jahre alt
 Susanne is what one as her best woman-friend characterize can according-to 27 years old
 'Susanne is, according to what one can characterize as her best woman-friend, 27 years old'

(81) *Gregor war was in der DDR die Stasi^{ACC} genannt wurde hinlänglich bekannt^{DAT}
 Gregor was what in the GDR the Stasi called was abundantly know
 'Gregor was well known to what in GDR-times was called the Stasi
 (= Staatssicherheitsdienst = State Security Service)'

We must be careful here, since In these examples it is impossible to tell whether the ungrammaticality is caused by the dative incompatibility effect due to *was* or by the (grafted) predicate nominal. On the one hand, *was* cannot suppress dative incompatibility because it is governed by a leftward governing adjective, on the other hand the predicate nominal has a non-matching case.

In order to make the argument stick, let us look at adjectives that (leftward) govern the accusative case. They yield grammatical output and they do so in precisely those cases where the predicate nominal must be assumed to be shared (in some way) by the matrix. And indeed, it is the predicate nominal that induces a case matching conflict.

(82) Dieses Haus ist was man keinen Heller^{ACC} zu nenne pflegt wert^{ACC}
 this house is what one no dime to call uses worth
 'This house isn't worth what they usually call a dime'

¹⁷ The examples are from Grosu (2007:p111).

- (83) *Dieses Haus ist was kein Heller_{NOM} zu heissen scheint wert^{ACC}
 this hous is what no dime to b-called seems worth
 'This house isn't worth what seems to be called a dime'
- (84) Was man den Kudamm_{ACC} zu nennen pflegt entlang^{ACC} gehe ich gern spazieren
 what one the Kudamm to call uses along go I gladly walk
 'Along what they usually call the Kudamm, I like to go for a walk'
- (85) *Was der Kudamm_{NOM} zu heissen scheint entlang^{ACC} gehe ich gerne spazieren
 what the Kudamm to be-called seems along go I gladly walk
 'Along what seems to be called the Kudamm, I loke to go for a walk'

Clearly, *was* does not play any role here since its syncretic properties would predict that in each case both examples are grammatical. In other words, as far as case matching is concerned, *was* is out of the picture since not it but the predicate nominal is grafted into the matrix structure.

So far so good, but then, why do Grosu's examples with prepositions (76) and (77) show the DIS effect? In line with our earlier findings, the DIS effect is a pure interface effect. Uninflected pro-forms such as *was*, *nichts* etc. suppress the (dative) case inducing requirement on (non-canonically governing) adpositional elements immediately to their left in the string. And since this effect takes place at spell-out, it takes place after linearization, as it must in a graft analysis. Hence, Grosu's argument, though interesting in itself, is without force.

Needless to say, the discussion about the DIS effect in this section raises many questions, many of which I cannot address here. Nevertheless, I will point out a number of these question.

First, if dative is the default case in PPs, it is *ipso facto* not assigned. But then, how can we maintain that uninflected nominal proforms, and in particular *was*, have the power to "suppress the (dative) case inducing requirement on (non-canonically governing) adpositional elements immediately to their left in the string"? The answer, I assume, is to be found in the notion of 'oblique domain' that has been one of the cornerstones of the idea that the dative case is the default case **in oblique domains**. Clearly oblique domains must be syntactically detectable as such. The oblique domains that have played a role in the present discussion are the PP and the AP. Another way to put things is to say that P and A mark their domain as oblique. Formulating the DIS effect more precisely, then, we need to say that uninflected nominals suppress the oblique marking effect of prepositions (and adjectives¹⁸). Importantly, this does not turn a preposition into a structural case marker assigning, say, nominative or accusative. Otherwise we would expect the same dative incompatibility effect that we find in the domain of verbs.

But, and this is a second question, why is the DIS phenomenon subject to a directionality (of government?) effect? Here I can only speculate. What appears to be at issue is German's largely head final but in some cases mixed headedness. Verbs take their nominal complements on the left and so do adjectives, while adpositions are ambivalent. Noun phrases are the domain of the genitive case, which has been left out of consideration here.¹⁹

¹⁸ Given that adjectives take DP complements to their left only, this addition is vacuous.

¹⁹ Given that adpositions also govern the genitive case, sometimes, why is there not a phenomenon of genitive incompatibility (suppression)? There are only few adpositions that govern the genitive. Furthermore, these adpositions in many cases govern the dative alternatively. In fact the genitive may simply be on its way out. Cf. "Der Dativ ist dem Genitiv sein Tod" (the dative is the genitive's death) by Bastian Sick, Kiepenheuer & Witsch Verlag, Cologne, 2005). The very title constitutes an example of a dative possessive construction that replaces the traditional but somewhat archaic genitive.

For case government, adjectives pattern with verbs, while nouns do not govern any case (modulo genitives). This makes P the only head that (sometimes) governs rightward. I suspect that, being exceptional, this is a recessive property and that it is this property that is at the origin of dative incompatibility suppression and is responsible for the fact that the DIS effect is 'relegated' to the (PF-)periphery.

Third (and last), why is the DIS effect triggered by function words like *viel*, *wenig*, *allerlei*, *etwas*, *nichts* and *was* ('much', 'little', 'all-kinds', 'some(thing)', 'nothing', 'what')? These words can occur as full nouns, but are generally regarded as pro-forms or function words. They waver in terms of their categorial status. First, they occur as quantificational elements in the functional structure of (extended) nominal, adjectival and adpositional projections:

- (86)
- a. viel Geld, wenig Glück, allerlei Probleme, etwas Wein
(much money, little luck, all kinds of problems, some wine)
 - b. etwas unbequem, wenig besser, nichts neues, was gutes
(somewhat uncomfortable, little better, nothing new, something good)
 - c. etwas über dem Durchschnitt, nur wenig unter der 20%-Marke
(a bit above the average, only little below the 20% mark)

These words occur as functional elements in the functional projections of N, A and P. Following the tenet of Categorical Uniformity (cf. Grimshaw, 1991, 2005, Van Riemsdijk, 1990, 1998),²⁰ this means that these elements, at least in their functional use, are seriously underspecified in their categorial identity. This categorial versatility,²¹ in all likelihood due to underspecification, may well be at the bottom of the deviant, defective behavior of these uninflected elements in terms of their case properties.

4 Summing up

In this paper I have argued the following main points.

²⁰ The Categorical Identity Thesis (CIT) states that functional heads are categorially non-distinct from the lexical head that projects them.

²¹ Indeed, even when used independently, they can occur in different functions, e.g. as adverbials.

- (i) a. Das Gewitter hat etwas nachgelassen
the thunderstorm has a bit abated
'The thunderstorm has abated a bit'
- b. Peter ist viel herumgekommen in der Welt
Peter is much around come in the world
'Peter has travelled a lot around the world'

In addition, *was* has a tendency to take on the function of a complementizer as it does in relative clauses in many variants of Bavarian (*wo* being the more general option).

- (ii) de Leid, de was vui Geid hobm, ...
the people who that much money have
'the people who have much money'

And possibly, the intermediate clause initial *was* in partial movement constructions in German also has the status of complementizer.

- (iii) Was glaubst du was Peter meint wohin wir fahren sollen?
what believe you what Peter thinks where we drive should
'Where do you believe Peter thinks we should drive?'

- Default case is domain dependent;
- The Default case in oblique domains (including PP and AP) is the dative case;
- The accusative that characterizes pure paths and goals in spatial PPs is due to the presence of an (explicit or implicit) delimiting measure phrase;
- The apparent alternation between dative and accusative in spatial PPs must be reinterpreted as an alternation between the DMP-induced accusative and the default dative;
- P and A are oblique domain inducers; the oblique domain inducing effect of (light) prepositions (as opposed to postpositions) can be suppressed by uninflected nominal elements in their (immediate) domain;
- This dative incompatibility suppression (DIS) effect is a PF-interface phenomenon.

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