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# A RE-EXAMINATION OF *WIEDER*: REMARKS ON AN OVERLOOKED PREFIX\*

## ABSTRACT

*Departing from the repetitive-restitutive ambiguity of the German adverb wieder ('again'), we investigate its homophonous counterpart, the verbal prefix wieder (VPW). It occurs in verbs like wiederauferstehen ('to resurrect') and corresponding deverbal nouns (Wiederauferstehung 'resurrection'). We offer an initial structural and semantic description of these forms and elaborate on the specific requirements that VPW seems to impose on the base it attaches to. We observe that formations with VPW show a strong preference for restitutive interpretations and that VPW, in contrast to the adverb, seems to require completeness of the end state, which can be attained by a specific morphological makeup of the base. This suggests that VPW constructions might also be analyzable in a scalar fashion, calling into question the decompositional approach proposed for the adverb. Our findings are also briefly put into cross-linguistic perspective by looking at re-, the English counterpart of VPW, and some data from Dutch.*

## KEYWORDS

*adverbs; decomposition; morphology; verbal prefix; restitution/repetition*

## 1. Introduction

A strand of research closely associated with work by VON STECHOW (1996) views certain adverbs like the German *wieder* 'again' as probes into the way compositional meanings and syntactic structure relate and in particular investigates to what ex-

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tent these items shed light on the fine structure and fine-grained meaning components that enter into the meaning of the verb. We may descriptively call these items *decompositional adverbs* without however favoring a specific analysis or without committing ourselves to that view.

The adverb *wieder* gives rise to an ambiguity shown in (1): the first example allows for both a restitutive and a repetitive reading while in the second one, only the repetitive interpretation is available. Such facts were observed by many in languages like English, German and others (cf. *inter alia* DOWTY 1979, FABRICIUS-HANSEN 2001, BECK 2005). VON STECHOW (1996) famously argued that it is a structural ambiguity.

- (1) a. *weil Fritz die Tür wieder öffnete* restitutive/repetitive  
 because F. the door again opened  
 'because Fritz opened the door again'
- b. *weil Fritz wieder die Tür öffnete* repetitive only  
 because F. again the door opened

The ambiguity arises in DO>ADV order while in the ADV>DO order only the repetitive reading is available.<sup>1</sup> The restitutive reading is that Fritz brought it about that the door is again open. Under this reading, the door could e.g. have been built in an open state such that there has never been an opening event with respect to that door. The door can then be closed and Fritz acts upon the door such that the open state recurs. Under the repetitive reading, a repeated opening event is crucial. This semantic requirement is commonly captured in terms of presuppositions:

- Presupposition in the repetitive reading: Fritz must have opened the door before.
- Presupposition in the restitutive reading: The door must have been in a state of being open and Fritz restored that state – it is not necessary that he opened the door before.

The syntactic analysis VON STECHOW (1996) offers is shown in (2):

- (2) a. [<sub>AgrO-P</sub> [*wieder* [<sub>VoiceP</sub> Fritz [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>SC</sub> *wieder* [<sub>SC</sub> *die Tür offen*]] V=BECOME] Voice]]]  
 b. [*wieder* [<sub>AgrO-P</sub> [<sub>VoiceP</sub> Fritz [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>SC</sub> *die Tür offen*]] V=BECOME] Voice] AgrO ]]

In (2a) and (2b), the verb is decomposed into Voice (agency) + BECOME + a small clause comprising the direct object and the verbal root *open*. The small clause denotes the end state brought about by the AGENT. To paraphrase the meaning of

1 With some verbs, ADV>DO orders are also ambiguous between repetition and restitution, such as *verlassen* 'to leave'. VON STECHOW (1996, 110ff.) establishes the generalization that this option is possible only "in those cases in which a 'subject' enters the description of the target state".

(2a), Fritz brought about that the door is in an open state. *Wieder* can freely adjoin to either VoiceP or the small clause, giving rise to different readings: In the latter case, only the restitutive reading obtains, while in the former case only the repetitive one is available. The differential readings reduce to scope differences with respect to BECOME. To capture the ambiguity of (1a), VON STECHOW (1996) proposes that the direct object *die Tür* obligatorily raises to SPEC-AgrOP. Since raising of the direct object obscures which of the two *wieders* is crossed, the ambiguity of (1a) is captured. If, by contrast, *wieder* adjoins to AgrOP as in (2b), only the repetitive reading is available as BECOME is in its scope; the landing site of the raising of the direct object is inevitably below this high position of the adverb.

One of the core features of von Stechow's account is that semantically, a single lexical entry suffices to capture the different readings. It is shown in (3). The denotation of the lexical entry can take the denotations of the different adjunction sites (Small Clause, Voice Phrase) as argument, and so the restitutive/repetitive ambiguity given in (1) is a purely structural one.

(3)  $[[wieder_{rep}]] = \lambda P.\lambda e:\exists e'[e' < e \ \& \ P(e')].P(e)$  "Such an event has happened before."

Numerous works have belabored the issue since, mostly from the syntax-semantics interface:

- cross-linguistically: Kutchi Gujarati (PATEL-GROSZ - BECK 2014), English (DOWTY 1979, BECK - JOHNSON 2004), Greek (SPARTHAS ET AL. 2015), Italian (CARDINALETTI 2003), French (SPORTICHE 2008)
- diachronically for different periods of English, cf. BECK - GERGEL (2015), GERGEL - BLÜMEL - KOPF (2016)
- wrt different readings and different kinds of semantic analysis, cf. BLUTNER & JAEGER (2003), PEDERSEN (2014), FABRICIUS-HANSEN (2001)
- wrt more or less synonymous counterparts of *again*, cf. HORN (1980), KEYSER & ROEPER (1992), MARANTZ (2007)
- *wieder* as a modal particle, PITTNER (2009)

To the best of our knowledge, a systematic investigation into *wieder* as a prefix in German (de)verbal word formations like in (4) is missing so far:

- (4) a. *wiedervereinigen* 'to reunite'  
b. *Wiedervereinigung* 'reunification'  
c. *wiederauferstehen* 'to resurrect'  
d. *Wiederauferstehung* 'resurrection'

The phenomenon is mentioned in the descriptive and prescriptive, as well as the generative literature (cf. CARDINALETTI 2003, 15; PEDERSON 2014, fn. 33). The pur-

pose of this paper is to take a first descriptive stab at salient properties of the verbal prefix *wieder*, henceforth VPW.

The paper is structured as follows: In section 2, we will examine general properties of VPW by looking at the morphological structure and semantics of formations like the ones in (4). Applying contextual tests, we will show that VPWs exhibit resitutive readings only. Section 3 is devoted to a descriptive generalization pertaining to the structure of VPW, namely HORN'S (1980) Generalization. The subsequent section deals with phenomena of intra- and crosslinguistic variation in the use of the adverb *wieder* versus VPW. We show that HORN'S Generalization is necessary, but insufficient to capture elusive instances we characterize semantically. We argue that "completeness of the result state" is the semantic property needed for prefixation by VPW (but not the homophonous adverb). Thus, a scalar approach to the semantics of verbs that VPW co-occurs with might be needed. Section 5 concludes.

## 2. *Wieder* as a prefix

In addition to the adverb *wieder*, German has a homophonous prefix that patterns with English and Latin *re-* in many instances. FLEISCHER - BARZ (2012, 265) note this parallelism in their descriptive introduction to German morphology and refer to forms such as *Reexport* 're-export' or *Reinfektion* 're-infection', which can analogously be formed using the indigenous VPW, i.e. *Wiederexport* and *Wiederinfektion*. As the adverb *wieder* and the VPW are homophonous, combinations of *wieder* plus verb are string-identical, compare *wieder vereinigen* 'unite again' and *WIEDervereinigen* 're-unite'. They are distinguished in that the former has normal intonation while the latter bears initial stress, for which we use capital letters. In order to ensure that we are dealing with the prefix, we will mostly use nominalizations of the kind in (4b) and (4d). By assumption, only VPW but not the syntactic adverb can participate in word formation processes that yield these forms, we assume that the adverb does not participate in complex word formation.

### 2.1 Data

A slice of data that illustrates the occurrence of VPW is given in (5). It is compiled from the German Reference Corpus (DeReKo) accessible through the COSMAS II web application provided by the IDS Mannheim:<sup>2</sup>

- (5) a. *Wiedereröffnung* 'reopening'  
 b. *Wiederaufforstung* 'reforestation'

<sup>2</sup> The corpus search performed here can easily be re-created by using the query *wieder\*ung* containing a Kleene star for an underspecified number and combination of characters between VPW and the suffix.



- c. *Wiederanpflanzung* ‘replanting’
- d. *Wiedererwärmung* ‘rewarming’
- e. *Wiedereinführung* ‘reintroduction’
- f. *Wiedergewinnung* ‘reattainment’
- g. *Wiedererlangung* ‘regain’
- h. *Wiederherstellung* ‘restitution’
- i. *Wiederverkörperung* ‘reembodiment’

As the data in (5) show, prefixal *wieder* can be considered a productive element in word formation. Note that it is not difficult to make up novel forms on the fly, e.g. *die Wiederbemalung der Kuppel* ‘the repainting of the dome’, *die Wiederbestuhlung der Mensa* ‘(lit.) the rechairsing of the cantine’, *die Wiedermotorisierung des Oldtimers* ‘the remotorization of the antique car’. In (5), we have exclusively listed nominalizations that make use of the suffix *-ung* to derive nouns from underlying verbs. It is worth mentioning that other types of nominalization, e.g. nominalized infinitives such as *Wiedereröffnen*, are equally possible. In what follows, we will accept the different patterns of nominalization as a given fact and will not further discriminate between them.<sup>3</sup>

Structurally, the forms in (5) share the general pattern given in (6) below. In many instances, the presence of an additional prefix or particle attached to the verbal base is obligatory:

- |     |        |   |           |   |               |   |      |
|-----|--------|---|-----------|---|---------------|---|------|
| (6) | Wieder | + | *(er-)    | + | öffn          | + | -ung |
|     | Wieder | + | PTCL/PREF | + | (VERBAL) ROOT | + | NOM  |

Notice that the ungrammatical variant of (6) contrasts with the corresponding full sentence (1a) with a restitutive reading, repeated here as (7a):

- (7) a. *weil Fritz die Tür wieder öffnete*  
 because Fritz the door again opened
- b. *weil Fritz die Tür wieder schloss*  
 because Fritz the door again closed

Evidently, a particle on the verb is not needed for the syntactic adverb but for VPW. The contrast is surprising: *öffnen* and likewise verbs like *schliessen* ‘close’ in (7b)

<sup>3</sup> We abstract away from forms such as *Wiederholung/wiederholen* ‘repetition/to repeat’, literally “to take again” or *Wiedergabe/wiedergeben* ‘(to) playback’, literally “to give again”. A precise characterization of their compositional meaning proves difficult: It is the verbal roots which appear to be non-compositional, somewhat idiomatic or deviant from what appears to be the canonical lexical meaning – the former example has little to do with literal ‘taking’ and the latter with ‘giving’. Relatedly, it is difficult to pinpoint whether *wieder* is repetitive or restitutive. An obvious idea would be to say that these are lexicalized forms. We leave the issue open at this point.

(compare \**das Wiederschliessen der Tür* ‘the reclosing of the door’) by themselves have all the relevant properties to participate in restitutive readings. And yet they are ungrammatical with VPW and require the presence of a particle or prefix, which appears to come to the rescue (cf. *das Wieder{zu/ab}schliessen der Tür* ‘the {reclosing/locking} of the door’ or the grammatical variant of (6)). As we will see in the next section, VPW gives rise to restitutive readings only. The distributional contrast between sentences with a syntactic adverb *wieder* co-occurring with verbs like *schliessen/öffnen* and VPW disallowing co-occurrence with these verbs will be taken up in section 4.

The obligatoriness of a prefix or particle in the presence of VPW appears to be fairly robust across verbs. Next to the ones just mentioned, the forms in (5) are unacceptable once we omit the prefix or particle, i.e. to the extent that the verbs are available at all: \**Wiederpflanzen*, \**Wiederwärmen*, \**Wiederführen* (\*re-lead), \**Wiederstellen* (\*re-put). There are nevertheless a few formations that are grammatical without this additional element, e.g. *Wiederkehr/wiederkehren* ‘returning/to return’, *Wiederkommen/wiederkommen* ‘returning/to return’, *Wiederfinden/wiederfinden* ‘retrieval/to retrieve’. We will elaborate on this issue in section 3 and 4.

## 2.2 Readings

Having described a number of salient morphological properties of the formations containing VPW, we can now investigate their semantic interpretation and ask whether there is a preference for specific readings. Forms such as *Wiedervereinigung* ‘reunification’ or *Wiederauferstehung* ‘resurrection’ presuppose a single event of restoring unity/life and do not contain a presupposition that unification or rising from the dead has happened before.

As a testing ground for available readings, one can use contexts which force either a repetitive or restitutive interpretation of the forms. The aim is to identify contrasts with respect to acceptability that hint to a preference of semantic interpretation. We do this by means of the following examples:

- (8) a. The fishing club of the Rhein-Main area settled the rainbow trout in 1980. These days the club’s successor settles this fish once more. #*Die Wiederansiedlung war ein voller Erfolg* / ‘The resettlement was a great success’.  
 b. The fishing club of the Rhein-Main area settled the rainbow trout due to a decrease in the population (there has been no previous settlement). *Die Wiederansiedlung war ein voller Erfolg* / ‘The resettlement was a great success’.
- (9) a. The Kohl-government reduced taxes, as did the subsequent Schröder-government. #*Diese Wiederabsenkung kam bei allen gut an* / ‘This relowering was well received by everyone’.

- b. The Kohl-government increased taxes, the subsequent Schröder-government reduced them. Diese *Wiederabsenkung* kam bei allen gut an/‘This relowering was well received by everyone’.

In (8) and (9), the contexts given under a. force a repetitive reading, whereas the examples in b. force a restitutive interpretation. Strikingly, one can observe that the forms *Wiederansiedlung* ‘resettlement’ and *Wiederabsenkung* ‘relowering’ are acceptable in the restitutive contexts only. For instance, (8a) introduces two events of settlement. However, *Wiederansiedlung* does not require a presupposition that settlement occurred before. It adds the presupposition that the result state of the settlement has existed before, not that a settlement event happened before. This can be illustrated in (8b): The rainbow trout was in a state of being settled in a certain area, then the number of specimen decreased – the event denoted by *Wiederansiedlung* restores the state before the decrease in population. Concluding, VPWs give rise to restitutive readings and obviate repetitive ones.<sup>4</sup>

It is likely that VPW attaches low in the structure, i.e. close to the object – analogous to the restitutive adverb in (2a). An appropriate structural analysis of the nominalizations containing the *wieder*-prefix has to take this observation into account.

### 3. Choice of verbs

The purpose of this section is to investigate if the use of VPW hinges on the choice of verb. If it is true that VPW gives rise to restitutive readings only (but see footnote 3), we expect only such verbs to be available with VPW that imply a result state. A result state, in turn, is available with verbs which select an internal argument. Here we build on previous work on counterparts of VPW, namely the English verbal prefix *re-* (as in *rebuild*). The pertinent generalization was established by HORN (1980):

(10) Horn’s Generalization (HG)

*re-* requires object (transitive object or underlying object of unaccusative)

HG accounts for the deviance of formations like \**re-sleep* and \**re-run*. We refer the reader to MARANTZ (2007) and HOLSINGER (2008) for discussion and analysis. By

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<sup>4</sup> This is not quite accurate because focal stress assigned to *wieder* appears to improve many of these instances and gives rise to repetitions, cf. e.g. BECK (2006) for semantic effects focus intonation has on the adverb counterpart of VPW. We take up the issue more thoroughly in BLÜMEL – PARTICKE (in prep.), where we arrive at the conclusion that repetitive readings are pragmatic effects. For reasons of space, we abstract away from these complications here, suggesting for now that structurally and with respect to compositional semantics, VPW only allows restitutive readings.



and large, HG carries over to German *wieder*, but as we will argue below, it provides only for the structural side of things, i.e. we will argue that HG needs to be supplemented by a semantic constraint to capture the full range of VPW facts. (11) shows the incompatibility of VPW with unergative verbs:

- (11) \**Wieder*-{sitzen/schlafen/frieren/telefonieren/schwimmen/arbeiten}  
 ‘re-{sit/sleep/freeze/phone/swim/work}’

All of these verbs are activities and their deviance matches our earlier conjecture that VPW allows for restitutive readings only. Many German verbs appear to form unaccusatives by means of prefixes or particles. Thus, if HG is correct for German *wieder*, their preponderance in occurring with *wieder* is not surprising:

- (12) *Wieder*-{**absitzen**/**einschlafen**/**ein**frieren/**weg**schwimmen/**ab**arbeiten}  
 ‘re-{sit-down/fall-asleep/freeze/away-swim/work-away}’

To put it differently, the ungrammaticality of examples (11) can be traced to HG. Unaccusativity tests like forming attributively used participles (cf. GREWENDORF 1989, 18ff.) confirm that (11) are not, while (12) are unaccusatives:

- (13) a. \**der gesessene Reiter* (\*the sat rider) vs.  
       *der abgessene Reiter* (lit. the off-set rider)  
   b. \**der geschlafene Student* (\*the slept student) vs.  
       *der eingeschlafene Student* (lit. the in-slept student)  
   c. \**das geschwommene Mädchen* (\*the swum girl) vs.  
       *das weggeschwommene Mädchen* (lit. the away-swum girl)

The examples above show that prefixation and the addition of a particle can have argument structural effects, insofar as a THEME becomes available: e.g. *arbeiten* ‘to work’ allows for PP-complements only ([<sub>pp</sub> *an DP*] *arbeiten* ‘to work on DP’) but ***bearbeiten*** ‘to work on’ obligatorily selects DPs and assigns accusative Case (\*(*DP*) *bearbeiten*); *malen* ‘to draw’ is a verb of creation which optionally selects a DP-object ((*ein Bild*) *malen* ‘to paint (a picture)’) while ***bemalen*** ‘to draw/paint’ obligatorily selects a DP-object (\*(*eine Decke*) *bemalen* ‘to paint the ceiling’). The issue of the compositional meaning of these particles and prefixes is vast, complicated and often hinges on subtle aspects and we leave it for future research (cf. e.g. LÜDELING 2001 and MCINTYRE 2007 for studies). We conclude that prefixation and the addition of a particle on a verb often times introduces a THEME-argument. Thus HG appears to make the right cut.

However, there are exceptions to HG and to the observation that VPW comes with verbs which have a verb with a prefix/particle. First, HG appears to be too liberal.

The generalization fails to exclude certain verbs like *fangen* ('to catch'), *schliessen* ('to close') and *öffnen* ('to open') in (14) which conform to HG but are still deviant:

- (14) a. \**Fritz hat die Katze WIEdergefangen*/\**das Wiederfangen der Katze*.  
'Fritz has the cat re-caught'/'the re-catching of the cat.'  
b. \**Fritz hat die Tür WIEder-{geschlossen/geöffnet}*.  
'Fritz re-{closed/opened} the door.'  
c. \**das Wieder-{schliessen/öffnen} der Tür*  
'the re-{closing/opening} of the door'

Compare these instances to full sentences with a *wieder* as a syntactic adverb, e.g. (15a) and (15b), all of which are all perfectly acceptable with restitutive readings:

- (15) a. *Fritz hat die Katze wieder gefangen*. (in a context where the cat has previously disappeared)  
b. *Fritz hat die Tür wieder {geschlossen/geöffnet}*.

This suggests that conditions VPW imposes on the verb are stricter than the ones that the corresponding syntactic adverb imposes on the verb.

Secondly, there are acceptable cases in which VPW co-occurs with verbs which lack an additional prefix or verbal particle like *finden* ('to find'), cf. (16). This indicates that the particle or prefix is not required for VPW *per se*, but rather is a side effect of a requirement of VPW (namely HG).

- (16) *Fritz hat die Katze WIEdergefunden*/*das Wiederfinden der Katze*.  
'Fritz has the cat re-found'/'the refinding of the cat'

To conclude this section, HG points at a necessary condition for the use of VPW. The facts just described suggest that it is not a sufficient one.

#### 4. "Picky" *wieder*: some cross- and intralinguistic variation

In this section we investigate residual cases of VPW which are HG-conform and yet unacceptable. We give an informal semantic characterization of the verbs in question in an effort to identify the relevant factor that makes them unfit for VPW-prefixation. This will lead us to tentatively suggest that *degrees* might be the right notion to describe the semantics of the verb class(es) compatible with VPW. That is, to capture the specific requirements of VPW, it might be necessary to abandon a decompositional framework and analyze the semantics of the verbs in terms of scales,

cf. PEDERSON (2014) for an approach along these lines for English *again* and certain degree achievement verbs like *widen* ('make more wide'). Generally, it seems as if VPW cannot prefix such verbs but appears to require a completeness of the result state. If the descriptions in this section are correct, this might suggest that a decompositional approach is misguided (pace VON STECHOW 1996 and much subsequent work) and that indeed the notion restitution is descriptively inadequate. Throughout this paper, we have used the notion for expository purposes and will continue to do so. However, we ask the reader to bear in mind that it might be necessary to think of the restitutive/repetitive divide in a different way.

With this caveat let us reiterate cases in which VPW cannot occur (17c-d) (in addition to the previously mentioned ones we add *füllen* 'to fill') and compare them to the corresponding contexts where the restitutive German adverb *wieder* can appear (17a-b):

- (17) a. *Fritz hat die Tasse wieder gefüllt.*  
       'Fritz has the cup again filled.'  
       b. *Fritz hat die Tür wieder {geöffnet/geschlossen}.*  
       'Fritz has the door again {opened/closed}.'  
       c. \**das Wiederfüllen der Tasse*  
       'the re-filling of the cup'  
       d. \**das Wieder{-öffnen/-schliessen} der Tür*  
       'the re-{closing/opening} of the door'

It is noteworthy that these are contexts in which the English restitutive verbal prefix *re-* can appear, compare the examples in (18):

- (18) a. *Mary refilled the cup with coffee.*  
       b. *Mary reopened/-closed the door.*

It appears as though English *re-* patterns with the restitutive use of the German syntactic adverb while VPW goes beyond requiring restitutive contexts, but has stricter semantic needs. The fact that English *re-* is more liberal indicates that the restrictions of VPW are not morphological and/or structural in nature and, as we will see below, there is evidence that they are semantic in nature.

One question to ask at this point is: Is VPW the same lexical item as the syntactic adverb, or are we dealing with an instance of lexical ambiguity? An indirect argument for lexical ambiguity comes from Dutch,<sup>5</sup> which is otherwise fairly close to German. Dutch makes a formal distinction between the verbal prefix *weder* and the syntactic adverb *weer*:

5 Thanks to Hedde Zeijlstra for these data. He remarks that "*weder* instead of *weer* [used as a syntactic adverb] is extremely archaic".

- (19) a. *de weder-opstanding*  
the weder up-standing  
'the resurrection'  
b. *\*weeropstanding*  
b. *Jesus is weer opgestaan.*  
Jesus is again upstood  
'Jesus resurrected.'

In light of these differences we could list VPW/*weder* including its semantic peculiarities as one lexeme, and [<sub>Adv</sub> *wieder*]/*weer* as a separate one. A different route to take would be to take the form identity of the syntactic adverb and VPW at face value and account for the above mentioned co-occurrence differences in terms of structural differences and/or claim that the adverb and VPW are in fact one lexical item which is polysemous.

Is VPW more selective in that it requires a greater degree in accomplishing the result state, unlike syntactic restitutive *wieder*? *Finden* 'to find', *kommen* 'to come' and *kehren* 'to come', in contrast to *schliessen/öffnen*, might imply completeness of the result state. So we might have a handle on the reason why the former works with VPW, while the latter do not. We can test the claim by checking to what extent the respective verbs can be modified by adverbials that introduce degrees and imply an incompleteness of the result state like *ein bisschen* 'a little (bit)' or *etwas mehr* ('some more'):

- (21) a. *Fritz hat die Tür {ein bisschen/etwas mehr} geöffnet/geschlossen.*  
Fritz has the door a little/some more opened/closed  
b. *Fritz hat die Tasse {ein bisschen/etwas mehr} gefüllt.*  
Fritz has the cup a little/some more filled  
(22) a. *#Fritz hat die Katze {ein bisschen/etwas mehr} gefunden.*  
Fritz has the cat a little/some more found  
b. *#Fritz ist {ein bisschen/etwas mehr} nach Köln (zurück)gekehrt.*  
Fritz is a little/some more to Cologne returned  
c. *#Fritz ist {ein bisschen/etwas mehr} nach Köln gekommen.*  
Fritz is a little/some more to Cologne come

As we can see, the correlation is quite striking: Verbs that appear to imply completeness of the result state (*finden*, *kehren* and *kommen*) are distinctly odd when modified by adverbials which introduce degrees – and it is these very verbs which permit VPW-prefixation. This contrasts with verbs which do not imply completeness of the result state (*öffnen* and *schliessen*): These allow modification by degree adverbials and disallow co-occurrence with VPW. These observations support the claim that VPW requires completeness of the result state, or so we believe.

Possibly then, the aforementioned presence of a particle/prefix on a verb contributes to the required completeness of the result state and thus licenses VPW:

- (23) a. *das Wieder*{**zu/ab/auf/be**}*schliessen*  
 b. *das Wiederer***öffnen**

If these observations and descriptions are on target, they deliver another expectation or prediction: The modifiers used in (21)/(22) ought to dislike the verbs in (23) endowed with a particle or prefix. This seems to be the case:

- (24) a. #*Der Direktor hat die Schule* {*ein bisschen/etwas mehr*} *eröffnet*.  
 The director has the school a little/some more inaugurated  
 b. #*Fritz hat die Tür* {*ein bisschen/etwas mehr*} {*zugeschlossen/aufgeschlossen*}.  
 Fritz has the door a little/some more locked/unlocked

Let us summarize our findings, relying on the claim in MARANTZ (2007) that *re-* is exclusively restitutive:

**Tab. 1 VPW compared to adverbial *wieder* and English *re-***

	Repetitive?	Completeness of result state required?
<b>syntactic adverb <i>wieder</i></b>	yes	no
<b>re-prefix</b>	no	no
<b>VPW</b>	no	yes

The yes-yes combination is not filled on principled grounds as repetitive readings do not require a result state.

While the above observation appear to establish the correct criterion to capture why VPW-prefixation is disallowed with the relevant class of verbs, we would like to point out there is an outlier. *Fangen* ‘to catch’ seems to imply a completeness of the result state, too and yet cannot be prefixed by VPW (repeated from (14a) as (25b)), contrasting with the adverb counterpart (25a):

- (25) a. *Fritz hat die Katze wieder gefangen* (in a context where the cat has previously disappeared)  
 b. \**das Wiederfangen der Katze*

We may add that the addition of a prefix in this case too repairs the defect of a bare verb like *fangen*: *das Wieder*{**ein/auf**}*fangen* (lit. re-(in/up)-catch) are both acceptable. So what is it that the particles contribute semantically and what is it that the bare verb lacks? We hope to tackle this complication in future work.

In this section we have established that in addition to HG, VPW semantically requires completeness of the result state. For this reason VPW cannot be prefixed to verbs which lack this semantic property (the German counterparts of *close*, *open* and the like).

## 5. Conclusions

The point of this paper is primarily descriptive: We have offered an initial characterization of some salient properties of the German prefix *wieder* and confirmed a generalization of its English counterpart *re-*. Structurally and semantically, VPW is a restitutive element. Beyond buttressing what has been said about *re-*, we gave an informal descriptive semantic generalization which captures specific needs of VPW in contrast to the homophonous adverb: VPW requires completeness of the end state.

A formal structural analysis and a semantic account of the descriptions given here remain to be worked out. A given formal semantic account has, of course, repercussions for the structure: While a structure given by e.g. VON STECHOW (1996) in section 1 might be necessary for the restitutive/repetitive framework, it remains to be seen to what extent the facts observed in this paper are plausibly encoded directly in the syntax: Should the notion “completeness of result state” and the lack thereof have a structural representation? Or are these semantic properties part of lexical information, in which case a simpler structure suffices?

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