

# ‘Multiple’ Filling of the Prefield and Pseudo-Incorporation

Werner Frey

## Abstract

This contribution builds on Gisbert Fanselow’s (1993: 66-71) groundbreaking work on the phenomenon of a seemingly multiple filling of the prefield (mfPrefield). The mfPrefield is of some interest since, as is well-known, the prefield – the position in front of the finite verb in a verb-second clause of German – is supposed to host only one constituent. However, as already Fanselow (1993) has claimed, the impression of a multiply filled prefield is spurious. In an attempt to develop Fanselow’s insights, this paper argues that a mfPrefield is only possible if the rightmost of the constituents in the mfPrefield is pseudo-incorporated. In contrast to standard phrases, pseudo-incorporated phrases occur in a specific local configuration with the verb. It will be shown that only the members of a very restricted set of complements can be pseudo-incorporated. The pseudo-incorporated phrases show several specific properties: they have to follow manner adverbials, they cannot undergo extraposition, they cannot be left behind when the licensing verb is moved to the prefield, they are not followed by a parenthetical niche.

The paper takes up Driemel’s (2023) thesis that pseudo-incorporated NPs have properties of verbs and extends the thesis assuming that all pseudo-incorporated XPs have verbal properties. It is assumed that this circumstance makes them co-heads of the main verb of the clause. As co-heads, they can project a VP in the prefield on their own which can host arguments of the verb and adverbials related to the verbal projection.

## 1. The Phenomenon of Multiply Filled Prefields and the Problem of Overgeneration

The term ‘(seemingly) multiple filled prefield (mfPrefield)’ refers to examples in which several maximal phrases occur in the prefield of a German verb-second clause (V2-clause), i.e., in the position before the finite verb in a V2-clause. The main verb of the clause is not in the prefield. These examples seem to contradict the well-established generalisation that the prefield may host only one XP. In (1) we find examples with supposedly two independent maximal phrases in the prefield.

- (1) a. [Die Kinder] [nach Stuttgart] solltest du bringen.  
 the children to Stuttgart should you bring  
 (Engel 1970: 81)
- b. [Der Universität] zum Jubiläum gratulierte auch  
 the university on-the anniversary congratulated also  
 Bundesminister D. Wilms (...)  
 federal minister D. Wilms  
 (Müller 2005)
- c. [Zum zweiten Mal] [die Weltmeisterschaft] errang Clark 1965.  
 for-the second time the championship won Clark 1965  
 (Müller 2005)
- d. [Dem Spiel] [eine Wende] konnten sie aber nicht mehr  
 the game a rebound could they though not anymore  
 geben.  
 bring-about  
 (Müller 2005)
- e. [Kindern] [Märchen] hat sie immer gerne vorgelesen.  
 to-children fairy-tales has she always gladly read

(2) demonstrates that the mfPrefield can encompass more than two phrases.

- (2) Im Mai jeden Tag der Annette einen Brief nach Hamburg hätte er  
 in May every day the Anette a letter to Hamburg had he  
 lieber nicht schicken sollen.  
 rather not send should  
 'In May, he should rather not have sent a letter for Anette to Hamburg  
 every day.'

Fanselow (1993: 66f) states important generalisations for this construction:

- (3) (i) The XPs of the mfPrefield may be long moved.  
 (ii) All XPs of the mfPrefield must be clause-mates.  
 (iii) The mfPrefield is formed by one constituent.

To support (3i) Fanselow presents the example (4). Both objects in the mfPrefield are arguments of the embedded verb *schicken*.

- (4) Der Maria einen Ring glaub ich nicht, dass er je schicken wird.  
 the Maria a ring think I not that he ever give will

The generalisation (3ii) is evidenced by the example (5-a). (5-b) shows that the two constituents in the mfPrefield in (5-a) have their base positions in different clauses.

- (5) a. \*Den Mann in den Kasten habe ich gebeten den Brief zu werfen.  
the man into the box have I asked the letter to throw  
b. Ich habe den Mann gebeten, den Brief in den Kasten zu  
'I have the man asked to throw the letter into the  
werfen.  
box.'

Finally, an example like (6) gives evidence for the central claim in (3iii). The scope of the negation comprises both constituents in the prefield, not only the leftmost one. Since we can safely assume that an operator like negation modifies only one constituent, (3iii) follows.

- (6) Nicht der Anette einen Brief hätte er schreiben sollen, sondern der  
not the Anette a letter had he write should but the  
Ina eine Postkarte.  
Ina a postcard  
'He shouldn't have written a letter to Anette, but a postcard to Ina.'

The analysis Fanselow (1993: 70) proposes for the mfPrefield-construction is stated in (7).

- (7) A mfPrefield is constituted by the fronting of a VP with an empty verbal head. The empty verb is licensed by the main verb of the clause, but it is not a trace of verb-movement.

Other authors have followed Fanselow in assuming the presence of an empty verb head in the mfPrefield, e.g. S. Müller (2005, 2015). Note that there is a variant of this approach that actually treats the empty head in the mfPrefield as a trace of verb movement (cf. G. Müller 1998, 2018). Thus, according to both variants, data like the one in (1) are only allegedly mfPrefields, instead there is a complex constituent in front of  $V_{fin}$ , which is headed by an empty verb or a verb trace.

It should be noted that, in addition to an account such as (7) and its variant, an alternative approach has also found supporters in the literature, cf. (8).

- (8) For German the V2-restriction is just not maintainable, V2, V3, V4, ... are in principle possible.

Lötscher (1985), Speyer (2008), Schalowski (2015) and Winkler (2017) are among the authors who subscribe to (8). For example, Speyer (2008) builds on Rizzi's (1997) split CP approach, which provides several functional projections, including Topic and Focus projections, in the C-domain in front of  $V_{\text{fin}}$ . Note that Speyer assumes a split CP also for Early Modern High German.

Obviously, the thesis in (8) needs to be enriched with additional conditions in order to do justice to Fanselow's observations that all XPs before the finite verb must be clause-mates, cf. (3ii). Moreover, it is not immediately clear how this account can accommodate the facts which support Fanselow's claim that in an mfPrefield construction the items before the finite verb form a constituent, cf. (3iii).

Let us now turn to a serious problem with the approaches to analysing the mfPrefield construction outlined so far, the problem of overgeneration. The proposals outlined do not exclude examples such as the following.

- (9) a. \**[Die Kinder] [in Stuttgart] wirst du sehen.*  
           the children in Stuttgart will you see
- b. \**[Dem Chef] [an seinem Geburtstag] gratulierte auch Maria.*  
           the boss at his birthday congratulated also Maria
- c. \**[Zum zweiten Mal] [dieses Buch] las Paul dieses Jahr.*  
           for-the-second time this book read Paul this year
- d. \**[Dem Kollegen] [diese große Auszeichnung] konnten sie  
           the colleague this great distinction could they  
           aber nicht mehr geben.  
           though not anymore give*
- e. \**[Ihren Kindern] [dieses Märchen] hat sie immer gerne  
           to-her children this fairy-tale has she always gladly  
           vorgelesen.  
           read*

To exclude ungrammatical mfPrefield constructions, only some information-structural constraints for the mfPrefield have been proposed so far (cf. Speyer 2008, Bildhauer and Cook 2010). In terms of information structure, however, the examples in (1) and (9) do not differ. For example, according to Rizzi's

(1997) hierarchy, in the examples of (1) and (9) the first preceding constituents could be topics, the second foci. Thus, information structure cannot help to explain the discrepancy in grammaticality. It is difficult to see how the sketched proposals could overcome the problem of overgeneration.

Obviously there is also the problem of licensing the empty verb for the proposal in (7) and its variant. Fanselow's (1993) suggestion that it is the main verb that can license a complement-VP projected by an empty verb has the consequence that, regardless of word order, every German clause has at least two different analyses. This seems a high price to pay. Furthermore, the variant according to which the empty verb in the mfPrefield is a trace of verb movement is confronted with the problem that this verb trace is not c-commanded by its antecedent. One would have to assume remnant movement, but it would be remnant movement of a constituent whose head is missing (cf. Takano 2000 and Sternefeld 2006: 531 for arguments against remnant movement with an empty head).

A further problem for the accounts which assume an empty verb in the mfPrefield should be mentioned. The following observation is due to Marga Reis, it concerns the feature specification of the resumptive pronoun of the German left dislocation construction when it resumes a mfPrefield.

- (10) a. Zum zweiten Mal die Weltmeisterschaft errungen,  
 for-the second time the world-championship won  
das hat Clark 1965.  
 PRON<sub>NEUT</sub> has Clark 1965
- b. Zum zweiten Mal die Weltmeisterschaft, die  
 for-the second time the world-championship<sub>FEM</sub> PRON<sub>FEM</sub>  
 errang Clark 1965.  
 won Clark 1965
- c. \*Zum zweiten Mal die Weltmeisterschaft, das<sub>NEUT</sub> errang Clark  
 1965.

In (10-a) the resumptive pronoun resumes a standard VP which is left-dislocated. The gender of the pronoun is neuter. In (10-b) we find a left-dislocated mfPrefield which contains the same XPs as the VP in (10-a). The resumptive pronoun in (10-b) has feminine gender, the gender of the final DP/NP in the mfPrefield. As (10-c) illustrates the pronoun with neuter gender

is not possible. The data suggest that the mfPrefield does not simply constitute a VP with an empty verbal head.

There are two other proposals for the analysis of mfPrefield which should be mentioned. The first one is the Structural Removal approach of G. Müller (2018), the second one the Cluster approach proposed in Sabel (2020). The proposal of G. Müller (2018) is a combination of remnant VP-movement with an empty verbal head and the abandonment of the V2-requirement under certain conditions. The idea is that after the movement of a remnant VP with an empty verb due to verb-movement, structural removal applies and generates a structure with different CP-specifier positions in front of the C<sup>0</sup>-position which hosts the finite verb in a V2-Structure. Structural removal only applies in the case of a structure with an empty head. I would like to make three comments. Firstly, because this approach does not formulate any further conditions for the elements that can occur in the VP to be moved, it is confronted with the problem of overgeneration that we addressed in connection with the data in (9). On the other hand, this approach can at least say something about data as in (10-b), (10-c). If the determination of the grammatical form of a left-dislocation's resumptive pronoun happens only after structural removal has operated and if it refers to the rightmost element in the mfPrefield, the gender determination in (10-b) results. Finally, I would like to mention two empirical arguments put forward by G. Müller (2018) in favour of his proposal that a mfPrefield involves multiple constituents after removal of the VP projection has taken place. According to Müller (2018), it is predicted that a preceding quantified DP in a mfPrefield may bind a pronoun in the middle field. However, I do not feel comfortable with this prediction, as for me there is a difference in grammaticality between (11-a) and (11-b).

- (11) a. Jedes Kind<sub>1</sub> hat sein<sub>1</sub> eigener Vater nach Stuttgart gebracht.  
           every child has his own father to Stuttgart brought  
       b. \*Jedes Kind<sub>1</sub> nach Stuttgart hat sein<sub>1</sub> eigener Vater gebracht.

Likewise, Müller (2018) predicts that a negative polarity item like German *sonderlich* may be licensed by a preceding phrase in the mfPrefield. Again, I do not believe that the facts really support this prediction, cf. the contrast between (12-a) and (12-b).

- (12) a. Keinem Kind hat er sonderlich gerne Märchen  
no child-DAT has he particularly gladly fairy-tales  
vorgelesen.  
read
- b. \*Keinem Kind Märchen hat er sonderlich gerne vorgelesen.

According to Sabel's (2020) Cluster account, in the so-called middle field of a German clause, i.e., in the region between the  $C^0$ -position and the clause-final verbal elements, a cluster of constituents can be formed by scrambling. This happens by right-adjunction of a constituent to another constituent. In the mfPrefield construction such a cluster is moved to the prefield. This cluster approach captures the fact that the constituents of a mfPrefield must be clause-mates and the fact that these constituents may be long moved. However it is hard to see how it could account for the observation illustrated in (10-c), since *die Weltmeisterschaft* would be adjoined to *zum zweiten Mal*. More importantly, however, is the fact that the approach is also fundamentally confronted with the problem of overgeneration that we addressed in connection with the data in (9).

Next, I would like to point out that, according to several linguists such as Müller (2005), Speyer (2008) and Sabel (2020), the order in which the constituents of the mfPrefield can appear is fixed, it must be the order that is the base order of these constituents in the middle field. However, it seems to me that in this generality the claim is not correct. For example, there are grammatical variants of (2) with different orders of the constituents.

- (13) a. Im Mai der Anette jeden Tag einen Brief nach Hamburg hätte er  
lieber nicht schicken sollen.
- b. Jeden Tag der Anette im Mai einen Brief nach Hamburg hätte er  
lieber nicht schicken sollen.

There is, though, one ordering constraint that must be respected. The final constituent of the mfPrefield cannot be reordered. In (14) this is illustrated with respect to (1-b), (1-c) and (2).

- (14) a. \*Zum Jubiläum der Universität gratulierte auch Bundesminister D.  
Wilms.
- b. \*Die Weltmeisterschaft zum zweiten Mal errang Clark 1965.

- c. \*Im Mai jeden Tag der Anette nach Hamburg einen Brief hätte er lieber nicht schicken sollen.

The proposal for the analysis of the mfPrefield to be presented in the next section will take these observations into account. However, I would first like to point out that in the literature examples are sometimes subsumed under the term mfPrefield construction which, in my opinion, have nothing to do with it.

- (15) a. Den Chef, den mag keiner.  
the boss RESPRON likes no-one
- b. Den Chef, ihn mag jeder.  
the boss him likes everyone
- c. Nur die Braut hat jeder gesehen.  
only the bride has everyone seen
- d. Brandstiftung vermutlich war die Ursache für ein Feuer im  
arson presumably was the cause for a fire in-the  
Waschraum.  
lavatory
- e. Nie aber ging er ins Kino.  
never though went he to-the cinema
- f. In Züpfners Box der Mercedes bewies, dass Züpfner zu Fuß  
in Züpfner's box the Mercedes proved that Züpfner by foot  
gegangen war  
walked was
- g. Ganz rechts vor der Ampel blieb er stehen.  
completely right in-front-of the traffic-light stood he still
- h. Gestern am Strand hat sie ihn getroffen.  
yesterday on-the beach has she him met

In (15-a) we find a German left dislocation, a true verb-third construction with the resumptive pronoun in the prefield. (15-b) is a hanging topic construction, the hanging topic appearing outside of the clause. (15-c) contains the focus particle *nur*. There is some debate as to whether such a particle is attached to ForceP, the top node of the clause (Jacobs 1986, Büring and Hartmann 2001) or to the DP (Reis 2005), or whether the particle is a head, but it is clear that (15-c) is not the mfPrefield construction under discussion here, which involves two independent theta roles. In (15-d) and (15-e) we either find a



right-adjunction of the adverb/particle, or the adverb/particle is again a head with movement of the accompanying XP. In (15-f) there is a DP in the prefield with a preposed attributive PP, and in (15-g) the prefield contains a PP with the AdvP in its Spec. The only real challenge to the standard assumptions is posed by (15-h). According to Haider (1982: 17) (15-h) shows a fusion of a temporal and a local adverbial. That something like this might be possible is suggested by (16-a). Note the contrast with the combination with a causal adverbial in (16-b), (16-c). So we can tentatively assume that in (15-h) the temporal AdvP is in the Spec of the locative PP.

- (16) a. Wann und wo hat sie ihn getroffen?  
when and where has she him met  
b. ??Wann und warum hat sie ihn getroffen?  
when and why has she him met  
c. \*Gestern wegen der Probleme hat sie ihn getroffen.  
yesterday because-of the problems has he him met

Finally, there are also examples like (17).

- (17) a. Gestern das Konzert war begeisternd.  
yesterday the concert was sparkling  
b. Dort der Hund ist extrem groß.  
there the dog is extremely big

Here we have the preposing of an adverb inside a DP. Note that temporal and local adverbs may appear as attributes inside a DP.

- (18) a. Das Konzert gestern war begeisternd.  
b. Der Hund dort ist extrem groß.

In sum, examples like the ones in (15) and (17) are not instances of the mfPrefield and can most likely be accounted for by standard tools.

## **2. A New Proposal for the Analysis of mfPrefields**

I would now like to make a new suggestion for the analysis of mfPrefield.

- (19) The mfPrefield-construction is only possible if its rightmost constituent belongs to the class of elements which are pseudo-incorporated in German.

Usually the notion of pseudo-incorporation is applied to nouns and NPs (cf. e.g. Massam 2001, Dayal 2011, Driemel 2023). Here I will use it in a broader sense, as I believe that other categories (in German) can also be pseudo-incorporated (NPs, APs, PPs). Below are some tests to show this. Pseudo-incorporation “describes a phenomenon in which an argument forms a ‘closer than usual’ relation to the verb” (Driemel 2023). Note that the intuition that a particularly close relation to the verb is associated with the *mf*Prefield has already been expressed in older literature (Fanselow 1987, see also Lühr 1985).

Before discussing (19), I will in the following first argue for the existence of pseudo-incorporation in German, and that different types of XPs are pseudo-incorporated. These are listed in (20). Frey (2015) claims that they are pseudo-incorporated into the verbal cluster of German and that semantics approves pseudo-incorporation of XPs only if the resulting predicate expresses a typical activity.

- (20) i. directional and resultative XPs
- ii. XPs of light verb constructions
- iii. weak definite NPs
- iv. separable verbal prefixes
- v. idiomatic XPs
- vi. non-specific indefinite NPs
- vii. subject predicatives

Various tests are offered to assess the incorporation of an XP into the verbal cluster.

- (21) i. The main verb cannot be positioned in the prefield without the XP.
- ii. Bare manner adverbials have to appear in front of the XP.
- iii. XP cannot be extraposed although the categorial status of XP would allow it.
- iv. There is no parenthetical niche following XP.

Using some of these tests, I would like to show for the XP types listed in (20i, iii, vi) that they are pseudo-incorporated (cf. Frey 2015 for a more comprehensive presentation). (22-a), (22-b) show that it is not possible to move the main verb and leave behind a resultative or directional XP. In contrast, (22-c), (22-d) show that this process is possible with a depictive or a local XP.

- (22) a. \*Getrunken hat Max die Tasse leer. (resultative)  
drunk has Max the cup empty  
b. \*Gefahren hat Max das Auto in die Garage. (directional)  
driven has Max the car into the garage  
c. Getrunken hat Max die Milch heiß. (depictive)  
drunk has Max the milk hot  
d. Geparkt hat Max das Auto in der Garage. (local)  
parked has Max the car in the garage

Resultatives and directionals have to follow manner adverbials, cf. (23-a), (23-b). Note the difference to a local PP, cf. (23-c), (23-d).

- (23) a. \*Er hat alles unter das Klavier langsam gelegt.  
he has everything under the piano slowly put  
b. Er hat alles langsam unter das Klavier gelegt.  
c. Er hat heute im Garten ausdauernd gearbeitet.  
he has today in the garden persistently worked  
d. ??Er hat ausdauernd im Garten gearbeitet.

(24-a), (24-b) show that a directional PP cannot be extraposed, but a local PP can.<sup>1</sup>

- (24) a. \*Er hat alles gelegt unter das Klavier.  
b. Er hat heute gearbeitet im Garten.

It is next shown that so-called weak definites are pseudo-incorporated and that regular definites are not.<sup>2</sup> For reasons of space, only two of the tests are used. The main predicate cannot be preposed so that a weak definite is left behind, in contrast a strong one can be left behind.

---

<sup>1</sup>Regarding test (21iv) we find data like in (i).

- (i) a. \*Er hat alles unter das Klavier – glaube ich – gelegt.  
he has everything under the piano believe I put  
b. Er hat heute im Garten – glaube ich – gearbeitet.

<sup>2</sup>Some properties of so-called weak definites are (here illustrated with English examples): no uniqueness requirement, cf. (ia) vs. (ib), possible sloppy identity in elliptical contexts, cf. (ic) vs. (id), necessarily narrow scope, cf. (ie) vs. (if), only possible as objects of certain verbs and prepositions. cf. (ig) vs. (ih), not just any noun can form the head of a weak definite, cf. (ia)-(if).

- (25) a. \*Gebrochen hat sich Otto heute den Arm.  
 broken hat REFL Otto today his arm  
 (weak def. reading intended)
- b. Gebrochen hat sich Otto heute den linken Arm.  
 ‘Otto broke his left arm today.’

A weak definite cannot be extraposed, cf. (26-a), a strong one can, cf. (26-b).

- (26) a. \*Ab heute muss Max wieder gehen ins Büro.  
 from today must Max again go to-the office
- b. Heute hat sich Max lange aufgehalten in seinem Büro.  
 today has REFL Max long been stayed in his office

Let us finally turn to non-specific indefinites. (27-ab) illustrate that a non-specific indefinite may follow a (non-scrambled) manner adverbial; this is different with an universally quantified phrase or a strong definite, cf. (27-c), (27-d).

- (27) a. Otto hat heute einfühlsam ein Frühlingsgedicht rezitiert.  
 Otto has today sensitively a spring-poem recited
- b. Sie hat heute wunderbar Schubert-Sonaten gespielt.  
 she has today wonderfully Schubert-sonatas played
- c. ??Otto hat heute einfühlsam jedes Gedicht rezitiert.  
 Otto has today sensitively every poem recited
- d. ??Sie hat heute wunderbar die letzten Schubert-Sonaten  
 she has wonderfully the last Schubert-sonatas  
 gespielt.  
 played

- 
- (i) a. Lola is reading the newspaper no uniqueness  
 b. Lola is reading the book uniqueness  
 c. Lola went to the hospital and Alice did too sloppy reading possible  
 d. Lola went to the hotel and Alice did too only strict reading  
 e. Every boxer was sent to the hospital narrow scope  
 f. Every boxer was sent to the hotel wide scope  
 g. Lola went to the store weak reading possible  
 h. Lola went around the store no weak reading

The preposing of the main predicate without the non-specific indefinite is not possible.

- (28) a. \*Rezitiert hat Otto heute sehr einfühlsam ein Frühlingsgedicht.  
b. \*Gespielt hat sie heute wunderbar Schubert-Sonaten.

Let us now come back to the topic of the mfPrefield. It is immediately clear that the right-most phrases in the mfPrefields of the examples in (1) and (2) belong to the list of pseudo-incorporated constituents in (20). In (1-a), (1-b) and (2) this is a directional PP, in (1-c) it is a weak definite, in (1-d) it is an XP of light verb constructions, and in (1-e) it is a non-specific indefinite. For the remaining pseudo-incorporated constituents listed in (20), separable verbal prefixes, idiomatic XPs and subject predicatives, examples can also be found in which they appear as the right-most element of an mfPrefield.<sup>3</sup>

In (9) various examples were given which, despite their ungrammaticality, are generated by existing analyses of the mfPrefield construction. However, the ungrammaticality of these examples follows from our thesis in (19). If we look at the rightmost phrases of their mfPrefields, we recognise that these are not pseudo-incorporated. In (9-a) the rightmost phrase is a locative adverbial, in (9-b) it is a temporal adverbial, in (9-c)-(9-e) the right-most phrases are strong definite DPs.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>In (ia) we find a separable verbal prefix as the right-most element of a mfPrefield, in (ib) an idiomatic XP, in (ic) a subject predicative.

- (i) a. Die Tür zu sollst du machen.  
the door up should you close  
b. Öl ins Feuer goss gestern das Rote-Khmer-Radio.  
fuel to the fire added yesterday the Khmer Rouge Radio  
c. Immer sehr bescheiden ist der berühmte Komponist geblieben.  
always very modest is the famous composer remained

Müller (2005)

<sup>4</sup>If, for instance, we apply to some of the examples in (9) the first of our tests for pseudo-incorporation in (21), we find that it results in grammaticality, showing that the examples do not exhibit pseudo-incorporation.

- (i) a. Sehen wirst du die Kinder in Stuttgart.  
b. Gratuliert hat Maria dem Chef an seinem Geburtstag.  
c. Vorgelesen hat sie ihren Kindern immer gerne dieses Märchen.

Likewise we find that if the rightmost element in the prefield is a PP this PP can be extraposed.

### 3. Pseudo-Incorporated Phrases are Co-Heads of the Verb

Driemel (2023) argues that pseudo-incorporated nouns or NPs have nominal and verbal properties. They form a hybrid category in which there is a primacy of nominal properties. Driemel's empirical arguments for the verbal properties of pseudo-incorporated nouns or NPs across languages are that they always have narrow scope, that they are unable to bind or control, and that in a given language the movement patterns of its pseudo-incorporated nominal categories will mimic the movement patterns of its VPs. I would like to adopt Driemel's thesis and extend it to all pseudo-incorporated phrases in German. They seem to have the properties that Driemel attributes to pseudo-incorporated nouns or NPs (except perhaps the property to lack the ability to act as controllers).<sup>5</sup> Note also that they are all predicative in nature, i.e., they are not closed referential expressions. This is immediately obvious for resultatives and directional XPs, XPs of light verb constructions, separable verbal prefixes and idiomatic XPs. Furthermore, non-specific indefinites are usually analysed as open predicates which are only closed when existential closure is applied to the verbal predicate of the clause. Moreover, according to Krifka and Modarresi (2016), a weak definite denotes a function that applies to the Davidsonian event argument introduced by the verb and yields the unique element of that event which satisfies the description of the weak definite. Existential closure applies to the verbal predicate.

We can now go one step further. If a pseudo-incorporated phrase has verbal properties and also shows a special structural closeness to the verb, we

- 
- (ii) a. Du wirst die Kinder sehen in Stuttgart.  
 b. Maria hat dem Chef gratuliert an seinem Geburtstag.

<sup>5</sup>For example, an incorporated indefinite is not a good binder.

- (i) ??Max hat heute eilig Briefe<sub>1</sub> geschrieben, damit sie<sub>1</sub> rechtzeitig ankommen.  
 Max has today hastily letters written so-that they on-time arrive

Regarding the last property it holds that all pseudo-incorporated phrases cannot be scrambled but they can be moved to the prefield, cf., e.g., (ii). The same holds for VPs.

- (ii) a. \*Max hat in die Garage das Auto gefahren.  
 Max has into the garage the car driven  
 b. In die Garage hat Max das Auto gefahren.

can assume that it has the status of a co-head.<sup>6</sup> This means that it forms a complex predicate together with the verb. Under this assumption the argument structure of the verb is also linked to the pseudo-incorporated phrase, i.e., the arguments of the verb and VP-oriented adverbials can also be licensed by the pseudo-incorporated phrase. We can therefore formulate our thesis for the mfPrefield:

(29) The mfPrefield is spanned by a pseudo-incorporated phrase.

It follows that in the mfPrefield construction one constituent occupies the prefield, we have a standard V2-clause.

We can now return to two properties of the mfPrefield construction mentioned above. The phrases licensed by the pseudo-incorporated phrase can be scrambled in the normal way, only the pseudo-incorporated phrase as the element generating the mfPrefield has to remain in its position. Also the data in (10-b), (10-c) become understandable in a certain way. The phrase generated by the pseudo-incorporated phrase has the properties of the constituent that projects it. In (10-b), (10-c) this is a pseudo-incorporated NP, i.e., a constituent with primary nominal properties, including feminine gender. We may assume that the resumptive pronoun of the German left dislocation in (10-b), (10-c) agrees with the primary features of the constituent to which it relates. Furthermore, we immediately account for the ungrammaticality of (30), which S. Müller (2015) acknowledges as a problem for his approach or that of Fanselow (1993), that postulate an empty verb in the mfPrefield.

(30) \**e* hat Clark 1965 zum zweiten Mal die Weltmeisterschaft errungen.

To conclude our observations, we can raise the question of how the pseudo-incorporated phrases are to be located structurally. I will only briefly touch on this question; the main purpose of this small contribution is to point out the empirical generalisation that the mfPrefield must contain a rightmost pseudo-incorporated phrase. In Frey (2015), I argued in favour of pseudo-incorporated phrases being part of the verbal complex in German. This proposal has the disadvantage of placing maximal phrases in a structural domain originally reserved for head elements. Frey (2022) tries to overcome this problem by adopting the proposal of several authors that a regular argument does not

---

<sup>6</sup>A similar concept is alluded to by Sternefeld (2006), who introduces in passing the notion of a relative head referring to the non-finite verb of a verbal complex in German.

appear as a complement of  $V^0$ , but as a complement of a functional projection above  $V^0$ . The positions of the complements of  $V^0$  thus become free for pseudo-incorporated phrases. We arrive at the following proposal:

- (31) Inside the projection of  $V^0$  only pseudo-incorporated phrases are generated.

According to (31), only pseudo-incorporated phrases are licensed by the main verb on its own.

## References

- Bildhauer, Felix and Philippa Cook (2010): German Multiple Fronting and Expected Topic-Hood. In: S. Müller, ed., *The Proceedings of the 17th International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar*. CSLI Stanford, Stanford, pp. 68–79.
- Büring, Daniel and Katharina Hartmann (2001): ‘The syntax and semantics of focus-sensitive particles in German’, *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* **19**, 229–281.
- Dayal, Veneeta (2011): ‘Hindi pseudo-incorporation’, *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* **29**, 123–167.
- Driemel, Imke (2023): *Pseudo-Noun Incorporation and Differential Object Marking*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Engel, Ulrich (1970): Regeln zur Wortstellung. In: U. Engel, ed., *Forschungsberichte des Instituts für deutsche Sprache*. Vol. 5, Mannheim, pp. 9–148.
- Fanselow, Gisbert (1987): *Konfigurationsalität. Untersuchungen zur Universalgrammatik am Beispiel des Deutschen*. Narr, Tübingen.
- Fanselow, Gisbert (1993): ‘The return of the Base Generators’, *Groninger Arbeiten zur Germanistischen Linguistik* **36**, 1–74.
- Frey, Werner (2015): NP-Incorporation in German. In: O. Borik and B. Gehrke, eds., *The Syntax and Semantics of Pseudo-Incorporation*. Brill, Leiden, pp. 227–263.
- Frey, Werner (2022): Weak definites are in the direct care of the verb. In: C. Gianollo and Ł. J. . S. I. Lindemann, eds., *Paths through meaning and form. Festschrift offered to Klaus von Heusinger on the occasion of his 60th birthday*. Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln, Cologne, pp. 73–77.
- Haider, Hubert (1982): ‘Dependenzen und Konfigurationen: Zur deutschen V-Projektion’, *Groninger Arbeiten zur Germanistischen Linguistik* **21**, 1–60.
- Jacobs, Joachim (1986): The syntax of focus and adverbials in German. In: W. Abraham and S. de Meij, eds., *Topic, Focus and Configurationality*. Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, pp. 103–127.



- Krifka, Manfred and Fereshteh Modarresi (2016): 'Number neutrality and anaphoric update of pseudo-incorporated nominals in Persian (and weak definites in English)', *Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT)* **26**, 874–891.
- Lötscher, Andreas (1985): 'Syntaktische Bedingungen der Topikalisierung', *Deutsche Sprache* **13**, 207–229.
- Lühr, Rosemarie (1985): 'Sonderfälle der Vorfeldbesetzung im heutigen Deutsch', *Deutsche Sprache* **13**, 1–23.
- Massam, Diane (2001): 'Pseudo noun incorporation in Niuean', *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* **19**, 153–197.
- Müller, Gereon (1998): *Incomplete Category Fronting*. Kluwer, Dordrecht.
- Müller, Gereon (2018): 'Structure Removal in Complex Prefields', *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* **26**, 219–264.
- Müller, Stefan (2005): 'Zur Analyse der scheinbar mehrfachen Vorfeldbesetzung', *Linguistische Berichte* **203**, 29–62.
- Müller, Stefan, with contributions by Felix Bildhauer and Philippa Cook (2015): *German Clause Structure: An Analysis with Special Consideration of So-Called Multiple Frontings*. Language Science Press, Berlin.
- Reis, Marga (2005): 'On the syntax of so-called focus particles in German. A reply to Büring and Hartmann 2001', *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* **23**, 459–483.
- Rizzi, Luigi (1997): The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery. In: L. Haegeman, ed., *Elements of Grammar. Handbook in Generative Syntax*. Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp. 281–337.
- Sabel, Joachim (2020): Verb Third as Cluster Movement in German. In: H. Lohnstein and A. Tsiknakis, eds., *Verb Second*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 295–328.
- Schalowski, Sören (2015): *Wortstellungsvariation aus informationsstruktureller Perspektive: Eine Untersuchung der linken Satzperipherie im gesprochenen Deutsch*. ISIS, Working Papers of the SFB 632, Universitätsverlag Potsdam, Potsdam.
- Speyer, Augustin (2008): 'Doppelte Vorfeldbesetzung im heutigen Deutsch und im Frühneuhochdeutschen', *Linguistische Berichte* **216**, 455–485.
- Sternefeld, Wolfgang (2006): *Syntax. Eine morphologisch motivierte generative Beschreibung des Deutschen*. Vol. 2, Stauffenburg, Tübingen.
- Takano, Yuji (2000): 'Illicit Remnant Movement: An Argument for Feature-Driven Movement', *Linguistic Inquiry* **31**, 141–156.
- Winkler, Julia (2017): 'V3-Stellung im Deutschen: Wettbewerb um das Vorfeld', *Linguistische Berichte* **250**, 139–168.

