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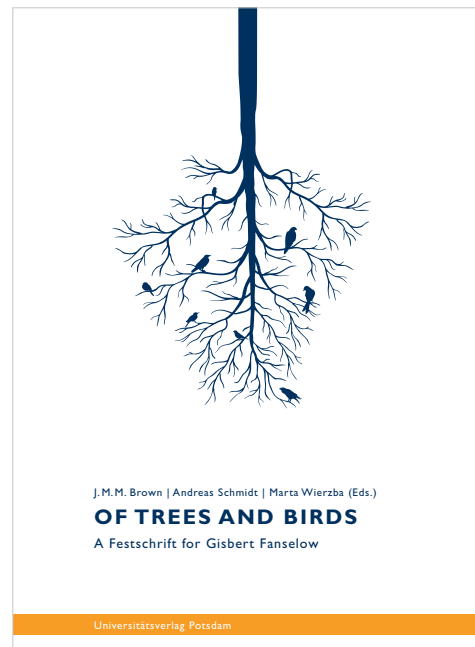
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Bienenfresserortungsversuch: **compounding with** **clause-embedding heads**

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Research on deverbal/synthetic compounds has usually paid no specific attention to complex deverbal compounds whose head is derived from a clause-embedding predicate (CEP); analyses/discussions of synthetic compounds typically focus on compounds of the type *Lastwagen-fahrer* ('truck-driver'), with the non-head saturating the internal argument of the entity-selecting head (Fanselow 1981; see also Neef 2015, Olsen 2017 for an overview). The structure I am interested in is illustrated in (1a): the head of this German compound is derived from the verb *versuchen* 'try', which selects a clausal argument and usually takes an infinitival complement inducing subject control as in (1b).¹

- (1) a. Gisbert-s [[Biene-n-fresser -ort-ung-s] -versuch]
Gisbert-GEN bee-LNK-eater -spot-NOML-LNK -try.NOML
'Gisbert's attempt to spot bee eaters'
- b. Gisbert_i versucht [$\nearrow_{i/*j}$ die Biene-n-fresser zu orten].
Gisbert try.3SG the bee-LNK-eaters to spot.INF
'Gisbert tries to spot the bee eaters.'

1. I will use \nearrow as notation for the covert (controlled) argument in order to remain neutral concerning its status. A birding enthusiast like Gisbert will probably accept this notational device in a *festschrift* squib ...

The interpretation of the complex compound in (1a) mirrors that of the clausal structure in (1b): the prenominal genitive is interpreted as agent of the deverbal noun *Versuch* ‘attempt’ and as controller of the experienter/perceiver argument of the embedded deverbal noun *Ortung* ‘spotting’. Disjoint/non-control readings seem strongly dispreferred. This squib will focus on the interpretation of such complex compounds and point out some unexpected patterns of argument inheritance. Before dealing with these issues I will briefly discuss the morphological structure of these compounds.

1 Morphological structure

The non-head in (1a), which saturates the clausal argument slot of the head, is a typical deverbal compound in itself: its head is a transitive verb, its non-head is interpreted as the underlying theme argument of the deverbal head. (1a) is formed analogously to examples attested in corpora:

- (2) a. Merkel-s [[**Opel-Rett-ung-s**] -**versuch**]
 Merkel-GEN Opel-rescue-NOML-LNK -try.NOML
 ‘Merkel’s attempt to rescue Opel’ [DWDS Zeit 2010]
- b. der fehlgeschlagene amerikanische [[**Geisel-Befrei-ung-s**]
 the failed American hostage-free-NOML-LNK
 -**versuch**] im Iran
 -try.NOML in.the Iran
 ‘the failed American attempt to free the hostages in Iran’
 [IDS sgt 1997]
- c. [[**Waffe-n-beschaff-ung-s**] -**vorhaben**]
 weapon-LNK-obtain-NOML-LNK -plan.NOML
 ‘the intent/plan to obtain weapons’ [DWDS Zeit 2013]
- d. [[**Organ-spende**] -**bereit-schaft**]
 organ-donate.NOML -willing-NOML
 ‘the willingness to donate organs’ [DWDS Zeit 2016]

(2b) shows that the agent/controller of the nominal *Versuch* may be realized as attributive ethnonymic adjective ('American').

The head of the embedded compound is either a deverbal noun as in ((1a/2) or a verbal stem that is integrated with a linking schwa as in (3).

- (3) [[Rorschach-Form -deut-e] -versuch]
 Rorschach-form -interpret-LNK -try.NOML
 'the attempt to interpret Rorschach forms' [IDS sgt 2008]

Although German nominal compounding is recursive in principle and stacking of CEPs may yield complex recursive structures, deverbal compounds of the type *Bienenfresser-ortungs-versuch* are attested only infrequently in corpora. Structurally more complex examples such as (4) are attested even rarer (mainly in certain registers: Bureaucratese, Journalese).


- (4) Gisbert-s [[[Großtrappen-beobacht-ung-s] -verzicht-s]
 Gisbert-GEN great.bustard-observe-NOML-LNK -waive.NOML-LNK
 -erklär-ung]
 -state-NOML
 'Gisbert's statement of doing without observing the great bustards'

CEP-headed compounds may alternatively take non-heads that do not saturate the internal (clausal) argument of the head (e.g., *Modell-versuch* 'model test', *Lang-zeit-versuch* 'long-term attempt'). With simple nominal non-heads, one can observe coerced eventive/situational readings of the non-head – similar to reinterpretation effects of nominal complements to aspectuals (e.g., *finish the book*):


- (5) ein [**Flanke-n-versuch**] von Gambino
 a cross/flank-LNK-try.NOML by Gambino
 'Gambino's attempt to hit a cross' [IDS hmp 2006]

2 The interpretation of CEP-headed compounds

As indicated above, the complex compound in (1a)/(6) only seems to allow an interpretation in which the prenominal genitive is a controller of the experiencer argument of *Ort-ung* ‘spotting’.

(6) Gisbert_i-s [[ _{i/*j} [Biene-n-fresser -ort-ung-s]] -versuch]

Unlike its equivalent in other languages (see Grano 2017), non-control uses of *versuchen* are rare and dispreferred by many speakers of German. The necessary causative coercion of the clausal complement that can be observed in languages with non-control interpretations does not seem to be available in (6). In Stiebels (2007, 2010) I have argued for a distinction between “structural control” (= the regular syntactic notion of control) and “inherent control”, i.e., the lexical requirement of certain CEPs for argument identification (control readings) in all types of clausal complements – even finite ones. For many speakers of German, *versuchen* is an inherent control predicate. This property is inherited to the nominalized form *Versuch*. If *Versuch* is replaced by a CEP that does not display inherent control, no control reading is required in the compound. In (7a) the covert experiencer argument of *Ort-ung* may, but need not, be co-indexed with the prenominal genitive because *hoffen* ‘hope’ and its derived nominal do not require argument identification with an argument of the clausal complement in non-control contexts (see (7b)).

- (7) a. Gisbert_i-s [[ _{i/j} [Biene-n-fresser -ort-ung-s]]
 Gisbert-GEN bee-LNK-eater -spot-NOML-LNK
 -hoffn-ung]
 -hope.NOML
 ‘Gisbert’s hope that he/someone has spotted/will spot the bee eaters’
- b. Gisbert hofft, dass Derk die Biene-n-fresser ortet.
 Gisbert hope.3SG that Derk the bee-LNK-eaters spot.3SG
 ‘Gisbert hopes that Derk will spot the bee eaters’

As the compound in (8) illustrates, the agent of a nominalized CEP may be realized as non-head and even act as controller:

- (8) das **Kanzler_i-versprechen**, [$\nearrow_{i/*j}$ die Erwerbslosen-zahl
 the chancellor-promise.NOML the unemployed-number
 bis zur Wahl auf unter 3,5 Millionen zu drücken]
 till to.the election on under 3.5 million to lower.INF
 ‘the chancellor’s promise to lower the unemployment rate below
 3.5 million by the time of the election’ [DWDS BZ 2002]

Therefore, CEP-headed compounds do not necessarily induce structures of control; the highest argument of the embedded head could be realized within the compound in principle. The control properties of the CEP head are crucial for the interpretation. For a compound such as (9a) the question arises as to which bracketing is correct, the one suggested in (9a) or the one in (9b).

- (9) a. [Kanzler- [Rücktritt-s -droh-ung]]
 chancellor- resign.NOML-LNK -threaten-NOML
 ‘the chancellor’s threat to resign’ [DWDS TS 2003]
 b. [[Kanzler- Rücktritt-s] -droh-ung]

(10a) shows that a non-control-relation between the agent of *Drohung* and the agent of *Rücktritt* is unacceptable because the spokesperson does not have the authority to threaten the resignation of the chancellor. If the CEP head is replaced by CEP that is not an inherent control predicate, disjoint referents for the agents of the CEP head and the embedded deverbial head are possible.

- (10) a. *die [[Kanzler-Rücktritt-s] -drohung] des
 the chancellor-resign.NOML-LNK -threaten-NOML the.GEN
 Pressesprechers-s
 spokesperson-GEN
 ‘the spokesperson’s threat that the chancellor will resign’


- b. die [[Kanzler-Rücktritt-s] -ankündig-ung] des
 the chancellor-resign.NOML-LNK -announce-NOML the.GEN
 Pressesprechers-s
 spokesperson-GEN
 ‘the s.person’s announcement that the chancellor will resign’

Thus, the compound in (9a) displays a word-internal control relation as indicated in (11a); the representation proposed in (11b) would resemble backward control (Polinsky & Potsdam 2002), with the controller being in a lower-ranked position than the controlled argument. Since backward control is not attested in German otherwise, I stick to the presentation in (11a).

- (11) a. [Kanzler_i- [[/ _{i/*j} Rücktritt-s] -droh-ung]]
 b. [/ _{i/*j} [[Kanzler_i- Rücktritt-s] -droh-ung]]

As expected, control readings can also be observed in CEP-headed compounds based on (inherent) object control predicates. The compound in (12a) is based on the object control verb *vorwerfen* ‘reproach’, which takes a dative object (see (12b)); the compound in (12c) is based on the object control verb *auffordern* ‘request’, which takes an accusative object (see (12d)).


- (12) a. [[Daten-vernicht-ung-s] -vorwurf]
 data-destroy-NOML-LNK -reproach.NOML
 ‘the reproach of data destruction’ [DWDS Zeit 2012]
- b. Sie_i warf ihrem Bruder_j vor [/* _{*i/j} die
 she reproach.PST.3SG her.DAT brother PT the
 Daten vernichtet zu haben].
 data destroy.PTCP to AUX.INF
- c. [[Feuer-einstell-ung-s] -aufforder-ung]
 fire-stop-NOML-LNK request-NOML
 ‘the request to stop firing’ [DWDS KK 1967]

- d. Sie_i forderten die Polizisten_j auf, [*i/j] das Feuer
 they request.PST.3PL the policemen PT the fire
 ein-zu-stellen].
 PT-to-put.INF
 ‘they requested the policemen to stop firing’

The controllers are left implicit in (12a/c). However, one can also find examples with overt controllers. As has been already observed for English (see Pesetsky 1991, Sichel 2010), internal arguments of nominalized object control predicates are – apart from very rare exceptions – not realized structurally (i.e., with genitive), but obliquely (i.e., with a PP). The internal argument of *Vorwurf* may be realized with a PP headed by *gegen* ‘against’ as shown in (13).


- (13) ... den falschen [[**Vergewaltig-ung-s**] -**vorwurf**]
 the.ACC wrong rape-NOML-LNK -reproach.NOML
 einer Lehrerin gegen einen Ex-Kollegen
 a.GEN teacher against a.ACC ex-colleague
 ‘a teacher’s wrong accusation of a colleague to have raped
 her/s.o.’ [DWDS Zeit 2013]

The obliquely realized internal argument of *vorwerfen/Vorwurf* controls the covert argument of the embedded head *Vergraul-ung* ‘scaring away’ in (14), thus mirroring object control with infinitival complements.

- (14) Gisbert_i-s [*i/j/*k] [Kormoran-vergraul-ung-s]
 Gisbert-GEN great.cormorant-scare.away-NOML-LNK
 -**vorwurf**] gegen die Fisch-züchter_j
 -reproach.NOML against the fish-producers
 ‘Gisbert’s accusation of fish producers scaring away the great cor-
 morants’

Note that object controllers may not be realized as non-heads in CEP-headed compounds. Thus, (15) only allows an interpretation in which the non-head corresponds to the agent of the CEP head. The controller

is covert; it would be realized with a PP headed by *an* ‘at’.

- (15) die **Kanzler_i-aufforder-ung**, [ **i/j* sich zu melden], ...
 the chancellor-request-NOML REFL to report.INF
 ‘the chancellor’s request to report for sth.’ [DWDS TS 2002]

3 Argument inheritance

Previous research on compounds has shown that inheritance of arguments of the non-head to the compound may occur, yet rather restrictively (e.g., *Härte-grad des Wassers* ‘degree of hardness of the water’). Siebert (1999) assumes that argument inheritance is restricted to abstract heads, which, however, still leads to overgeneration of forms.

If the CEP head and the embedded head would undergo Functional Composition, all arguments of the embedded head should be inherited to the compound, which, however, is not correct. The following example is not really acceptable.

- (16) **/??* Gisbert-s [Überleben-s -hoffnung] der
 Gisbert-GEN survive.NOML-LNK -hope-NOML the.GEN.PL
 Kampfläufer in Unterleuten
 ruffs in Unterleuten
 ‘Gisbert’s hope that the ruffs will survive in Unterleuten’

Nevertheless, one can find examples of argument inheritance in the corpora, some of which are shown in (17) and (18). If the theme argument of the embedded head is not saturated within the compound, it may be realized as genitive DP as in (17a/c) or as PP as in (17b). Note that the agent/controller argument is covert in (17a/c) and realized as genitive DP in (17b).

- (17) a. erster [**Über-gabe-versuch**] der 14
 first over-give.NOML-try.NOML the.GEN.PL 14
 Sahara-Geiseln in Mali
 Sahara-hostages in Mali
 ‘the first attempt to hand over the 14 Sahara hostages in Mali’
 [IDS mm 2003]
- b. die mangelnde [**Rück-nahme-bereit-schaft**] der
 the lacking back-take.NOML-willing-NOML the
 nord-afrikanischen Staaten für abgelehnte
 North-African countries for reject.PTCP
 Asyl-bewerber
 asylum-seekers
 ‘the lacking willingness of the North-African countries to take
 back rejected asylum seekers’ [DWDS Zeit 2016]
- c. [**Rück-zahlung-s-aufforder-ung**] der gesamten
 back-pay-NOML-LNK-request-NOML the.GEN.PL total
 staatlichen Gelder
 public funds
 ‘the request to pay back all public funds’ [DWDS Zeit 2016]

If the embedded head is ditransitive and the theme argument is realized as non-head of the embedded compound (see (18)) the recipient argument may be inherited to the complex compound and realized as PP (never as DAT):

- (18) a. [[**Heroin-ab-gabe**] -**versuch**] für Alt-junkies
 heroin-off-give.NOML -try.NOML for old-junkies
 ‘the attempt to hand out heroin to old junkies’ [IDS stern 1999]

- b. ein erneuter [[**Geld-über-gabe**] -**versuch**] an
 a repeated money-over-give.NOML -try.NOML at
 den Karstadt-Erpresser “Dagobert”
 the.ACC Karstadt-blackmailer Dagobert
 ‘a repeated attempt to hand over the money to the Karstadt
 blackmailer Dagobert’ [DWDS BZ 1994]

At this point I am not able to give a characterization of those CEPs that are transparent for inheritance of arguments of the embedded head; more empirical research is needed.

Though belonging to a marked register, CEP-headed compounds give interesting insights into word-internal control relations – highlighting the semantic contribution of the CEP – and patterns of argument inheritance.



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