

Conditions for the Exclusion of *immer noch* in German Adjectival Passives

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The talk is concerned with the German adjectival passive (*Zustandspassiv*), which is a copular-predicative construction where the predicative expression is formed by a verbal participle. By using an adjectival passive, the speaker not only refers to a state but at the same time explicitly refers to the event that has led to the state. Although the construction has been intensively studied and many insights have been gained (e.g. Welke, 2007; Maienborn, 2007,2009,2010; Gehrke, 2011), some puzzles remain. Our aim is to address one of them that goes back to Kratzer (2000): we want to clarify the conditions under which adjectival passives tolerate or reject combination with *immer noch*.

Kratzer (2000) has observed that some German adjectival passives accept the combination with *immer noch*, while others don't. Calling the former „target state passives“ (1) and the latter „resultant state passives“ (2), she writes: “target state passives [...] describe states that are in principle reversible, hence can be transitory, and this is what the adverbial *immer noch* ('still') requires.” Indeed, by using *immer noch*, the speaker expresses her surprise about the fact that the state P holds at the time of utterance t_0 (thereby presupposing that P has been holding before t_0). The speaker thus communicates that she did not expect P to hold at t_0 . Plausibly enough, this expectancy conflicts with verbs that denote events which are known to produce irreversible states.

- (1) (a) Die Ausfahrt ist (immer noch) versperert.
 (b) Die Reifen sind (immer noch) aufgepumpt.
 (c) Das Bild ist (immer noch) gestohlen.
- (2) (a) Das Theorem ist (? immer noch) bewiesen.
 (b) Die Gäste sind (? immer noch) begrüßt.
 (c) Das Bild ist (? immer noch) gemalt.

However, as noted in the literature (e.g. Gehrke, 2011), there are cases which escape Kratzer's account, see (3). These states are clearly reversible, but *immer noch* is nevertheless bad. The question is: why? Note that, as (4) shows, it cannot be properties of the state alone that rule out *immer noch*. Hence the event semantics of the verb underlying the participle must be taken into account too.

- (3) (a) Der Briefkasten ist (? immer noch) geleert.
 (b) Die Wäsche ist (? immer noch) gewaschen.
 (c) Das Glas ist (? immer noch) ausgetrunken.
- (4) (a) Der Briefkasten ist (immer noch) leer.
 (b) Die Wäsche ist (immer noch) sauber.
 (c) Das Glas ist (immer noch) leer.

If we look at the data, we see that the subject-NPs in (3) all denote entities that (pre-supposing reasonably foreseeable use) take on two cyclically alternating states. For instance, if used as intended, a mailbox will change its state from Full to Empty to Full to Empty etc. Moreover, all of the verbs in (3) denote events that bring about states involved in such cycles. This alone cannot be the reason for the exclusion of *immer noch*, however, as witnessed by (5). Importantly, the cycles implied by the subject-NPs in (3)–(5) are asymmetric. They involve a default state and, as we want to call it, an operational state (the default state is the state that the entity is in when it is brand-new).

- (5) (a) Der Tank ist (immer noch) gefüllt.
 (b) Die Fahrradreifen sind (immer noch) aufgepumpt. [= (1b)]
 (c) Der Akku ist (immer noch) geladen.

The generalization so far is that *immer noch* is tolerated only if the verb denotes an event that leads to the operational state within an asymmetric cycle. In this regard, consider (6) where the subject-NP denotes an entity that is associated with a symmetric cycle, i.e. where there is no dedicated default state. In such a case, *immer noch* is fine even with the same kind of predicate as in (3).

- (6) (a) Die Schleuse ist (immer noch) geleert.
 (b) Der Priel ist (immer noch) geleert.

Yet still we find counterexamples to the generalizations arrived at. In (7), the subject-NPs imply asymmetric cycles and the verbs underlying the adjectival predicate denote events leading to the respective default states. Nevertheless, *immer noch* is accepted. We believe that the crucial difference between (3) and (7) lies in the fact that the operational states in (7) do not provide sufficient conditions for inviting the return to the respective default states, but the operational states in (3) do. Loosely speaking: it always makes sense to empty a full mailbox, but it is not always reasonable to turn off a lit lamp.

- (7) (a) Die Lampe ist (immer noch) ausgeschaltet.
 (b) Die Kerze ist (immer noch) ausgepustet.
 (c) Der Buchladen ist (immer noch) geschlossen.

In order to theoretically account for these observations, we want to appeal to FrameNet (Baker et al., 1998; Ruppenhofer et al., 2010). The idea is that the two frames that the verbs *füllen* and *leeren* evoke form a minimal scenario Filling/Emptying, which we conceive of as a script in the sense of Schank & Abelson (1977). We additionally propose that, to qualify as a script, the two frames must be related by a relation of occasion (Hobbs 1985, Kehler 2003). A similar script would be Getting_dirty/Cleaning where Cleaning corresponds to the frame evoked by verbs like *reinigen* or *waschen*.

If, as in (3), the verb *leeren* is used in an adjectival passive, the change of state that the sentence reports on is perceived of as being in accordance to a general expectation: the final frame of the script Filling/Emptying is reached. This piece of information, that the state actually is as expected, conflicts with *immer noch*, by which, as we saw, the speaker expresses her surprise about the observation that the state is holding.

While in (2), the conflict with *immer noch* resides in the utterance's truth conditions, the conflict in (3) can be attributed to the script invoked. Therefore the conflict does not arise in the latter case if there is explicit information that the actual event has no dedicated end state. We argue that this is what is happening in (6). The undergoer of the event is explicitly categorized as a waterway lock, and since locks are known for alternatingly taking on two operational states (no default state), the information provided by the script, telling that emptying leads to a final state, is overridden.

Turning to (7), why is *immer noch* possible in such cases? At first sight, the event frames evoked by the verbs *anschalten* and *ausschalten* also seem to form a script. In such a script, *ausschalten* would refer to the event that leads to the final state. And lamps clearly have a default state. We argue that this conclusion is premature: The frames evoked by *anschalten* and *ausschalten* do not form a script because, ontologically, the two states On and Off do not stand in an occasion relation, which we take to be a necessary prerequisite for scripts.

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