



## LEGE ARTIS

Language yesterday, today, tomorrow

Vol. I. No 1 2016

# GERMAN CAUSATIVE EVENTS WITH PLACEMENT VERBS

*Sabine De Knop*

De Knop, S. German causative events with placement verbs// *Lege artis*. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow. The Journal of University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Warsaw: De Gruyter Open, 2016, vol. 1 (1), June 2016. – p. 75-115. DOI: 10.1515/lart-2016-0002 ISSN 2453-8035

**Abstract:** Several studies have described the semantic uses of German posture verbs, but only few have dealt with German placement verbs. The present study wants to make up for this gap. Starting from a collection of examples from the core corpora of the *Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache* (DWDS) and some former studies on posture verbs, it first describes the variety of the most common German placement verbs *stellen* ('to put upright'), *legen* ('to lay down'), *setzen* ('to set') and *stecken* ('to stick').

**Keywords:** placement verbs, posture verbs, corpus study, semantic uses, construction grammar, caused motion construction, intransitive motion construction, foreign language learning, foreign language teaching, embodied learning, French learners, German.

## 1. Introduction

The conceptualization of space and linguistic expressions for spatial dimensions have been a favourite research topic for many years, as attested by numerous studies like Aurnague et al. (2007), Foolen et al. (2012), Kopecka & Narasimhan (2012) or Thiering (2015), to name just a few. The concept of space presents various interesting facets and can be studied from different perspectives. The study of space can focus on location, motion, orientation, on the perspective of the speaker, within one language or cross-linguistically, and so on (compare Levinson 2012). The present article deals with German "placement" (Gullberg 2009) or "put" (Berthele 2012) verbs (PLV), e.g., *stellen* ('to put upright'), *setzen* ('to set'), *legen* ('to lay'), *stecken* ('to stick'), or *hängen* ('to hang') and their use in larger constructions. With his seminal work on the

typological classification of languages, Talmy (1985 and 2000) pointed out that the Germanic languages are characterized by a salience of the manner dimension (see also De Knop & Gallez 2013) and the expression of the path of motion mainly with so-called satellites (see also Schönefeld 2006). In an example like

(1) *Leg das Buch auf den Tisch, bitte.*

Lit. 'Lay the book on the table, please.'

'Put the book on the table, please.'

the main verb *leg* expresses the manner of motion or placement, i.e. in a horizontal position, and the path of action is expressed by the preposition *auf* ('on'). Here are some more examples with other placement verbs, which illustrate that the manner dimension is expressed by the verbform:

(2) *Er hat den Teller schon auf den Tisch gestellt.*

Lit. 'He has the plate already on the table put (upright).'

'He has already put the plate on the table.'

(3) *Die Mutter setzt das Baby in den Kinderstuhl.*

Lit. 'The mother sets the baby in the high chair.'

'The mother puts the baby in the high chair.'

Compared with verb-framed languages like French, Spanish or Italian (see Talmy 2000), the speaker has the obligation to select a placement verb in German to match the events and to express the orientation of the objects or persons which are being moved or placed. By contrast, in French for instance, the speaker uses a generic term like *mettre* ('to put') or *placer* ('to place') which simply expresses a movement, but without any directionality. Having said this, German speakers sometimes use the general verb *tun* ('to do') as a generic term, e.g.:

(4) *Wo hast Du die Zeitung hingetan?*

Lit. 'Where have you the paper towards done?'

'Where have you put the paper?'

But this use is very colloquial and in a narrow sense is not considered to be grammatically appropriate German. It is only used in conversational language. The paper will only analyze written examples found in corpora for German (see hereunder).

In spite of the variety of placement verbs typical of the German language and the typological and pedagogical issues related to this variety, up to now this topic has not been dealt with in detail in the scientific literature. Several studies have rather focused on the cognate posture verbs in different languages, e.g., Ameka & Levinson (2007), De Knop (2014), De Knop & Perrez (2014), Gibbs et al. (1994), Kutscher & Schultze-Berndt (2007), Lemmens & Perrez (2010), or Serra-Borneto (1995 and 1996). Less research has been done about placement verbs, except for some languages as Dutch (Gullberg 2009; Lemmens 2002 and 2006), Danish (Hijazo-Gascón, Cadierno & Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2016), or Swedish (Viberg 1998). For a cross-linguistic perspective, Kopecka & Narasimhan (2012) is also worth mentioning. For German, four articles about the semantic uses of placement verbs can be quoted: Fagan (1991) is one of the first papers to have described German posture and placement verbs in a comparative approach. But her study is still very tentative and not systematic. Berthele (2004, 2006 and 2012) offers a contrastive analysis of placement verbs in German and Romansh dialects and their use in these different linguistic varieties. But none of these works offers a systematic description of the semantic uses of German placement verbs. The present paper aims at making up for this gap. Starting from a corpus study and examples collected in the *Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache* (DWDS), it first describes the conceptual and semantic variation of the most common causative

placement verbs in a usage-based perspective (Section 2). Not only are placement verbs used for the expression of concrete or metaphorical motion and location, but they are also good candidates as so-called "Funktionsverben" (more or less 'light verbs') in "Funktionsverbgefügen" (Eisenberg 2006; Herrlitz 1973; Van Pottelberge 2001). The present study is inspired by former studies on posture verbs, i.e. De Knop (2014), De Knop & Perrez (2014), Kutscher & Schultze-Berndt (2007), Lemmens (2005), Lemmens & Perrez (2010), and Serra-Borneto (1995 and 1996) and by a research on Dutch placement verbs by Lemmens (2006). Posture and placement verbs conceptualize schemas and are used in specific constructions and with prototypical prepositions which retain the semantics of these verbs (see also Schönefeld 2006). Therefore we think that it is useful to describe them in larger frames and within the model of Construction Grammar. This is presented in Section 3. Adopting a cross-linguistic perspective, Section 4 zooms in on some of the difficulties possibly encountered by speakers of Romance languages when learning German. Because of the "asymmetry in the encoding of placement" (Narasimhan et al. 2012: 3) between Germanic and Romance languages, learners of satellite-framed languages have to expand semantic categories acquired in their mother tongue to fit the categories of the L2 (Gullberg 2009; Ijaz 1986). But often, a simplification through the non-use of placement (and posture) verbs is taking place (Gullberg 2009: 8). Finally Section 5 presents some conclusions and further perspectives.

## **2. Semantic variation of placement verbs**

Because German placement verbs are etymologically and diachronically linked to posture verbs (Berthele 2012: 149; Kluge 1883/2011), it makes sense to describe them in a parallel way. Surprisingly, this has not been done up to now except for Fagan's (1991) tentative study on German and Lemmens' (2006) description of Dutch posture and placement verbs. Our analysis focuses on the following most common verbs:

Table 1: German posture and placement verbs in the study

German posture verbs	German placement verbs
<i>stehen</i> ('to stand')	<i>stellen</i> ('to put upright')
<i>sitzen</i> ('to sit')	<i>setzen</i> ('to put in a sitting position')
<i>liegen</i> ('to lie')	<i>legen</i> ('to put in a lying position')
<i>stecken</i> ('to be stuck')	<i>stecken</i> ('to put into smt tight')

A further argument in favor of a parallel description of placement and posture verbs is that they are used in constructions which are semantically linked to each other. The following transitive example expresses a causative action with the placement verb *legen* ('to lay'),

(5) *Die Mutter legt das Kind ins Bett.*

Lit. 'The mother lays the child in (the) bed.'

The result of this action is expressed by an intransitive construction which is non-causative and which uses the corresponding posture verb *liegen* ('to lie'):

(6) *Das Kind liegt im Bett.*

Lit. 'The child lies in (the) bed.'

But before we look at constructional aspects in Section 3, let us analyse the different semantic uses of German placement verbs in detail.

In the studies on the semantic uses of posture verbs, De Knop (2014), De Knop & Perrez (2014), Lemmens (2005), and Lemmens & Perrez (2010), already distinguished three major semantic uses: a postural, a locational and a metaphorical use. These uses also characterize placement verbs for which similar examples can be found. However, with placement verbs the postural meaning is hardly expressed as they are used for a dynamic process with motion. But in some rare cases the placement can focus on the

specific posture, so that a postural use can be recognized. In De Knop and Perrez (2014) the different uses of posture verbs have already been described in full detail. Therefore, in this section we rather concentrate on the semantic uses of the corresponding placement verbs and pinpoint possible differences between posture and placement verbs.

### 2.1. The German placement verb *stellen*

The locational meaning of *stellen* focuses on the placement of an object or person with a base, e.g.:

- (7) *Schließlich stellt sie sich mit ihrem Wagen an das Ende der langen Schlange vor Kasse sieben.* (Dückers, Tanja, Spielzone, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1999, S. 42)

Lit. 'Finally puts in an upright position she herself with her trolley at the end of the long queue in front of cash-point seven.'

'Finally, she goes with her trolley to the end of the queue in front of cash-point seven.'

- (8) *Plötzlich erscheint er ihr wieder sehr fremd, ein Kunde bei Karstadt, der gerade Zwiebeln und ein Glas Marmelade auf das Fließband stellt.* (Dückers, Tanja, Spielzone, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1999, S. 43)

Lit. 'Suddenly appears he to her again very strange, a customer at Karstadt, who just onions and a glass jam on the belt puts in an upright position.'

'Suddenly, he looks again very strange, a customer at Karstadt's, who just puts onions and a glass of jam on the belt.'

But in the absence of a base, the use of *stellen* is motivated by the vertical dimension of the objects moved, as illustrated in the following examples,

(9) *Hast du daran gedacht, die Blumen in die Vase zu stellen oder liegen sie noch auf dem Tisch?*

Lit. 'Have you of this thought, the flowers in the vase to put upright or lie they still on the table?'

'Have you thought of putting the flowers into the vase or are they still on the table?'

(10) *Um Platz zu sparen, ist es besser, die Teller in die Spülmaschine zu stellen.*

Lit. 'In order space to save, it is better, the plates in the dishwasher to put upright.'

'In order to save space, it is better to put the plates up in the dishwasher.'

The canonical position expressed by *stellen* is also relevant in figurative or more abstract uses of the verb. It is not difficult to understand why speakers say

(11) *Andere Technologiekonzerne wie Google, Facebook und Microsoft stellten sich hinter Apple.* (Die Zeit, 29.03.2016)

Lit. 'Other technology companies like Google, Facebook and Microsoft put upright themselves behind Apple.'

'Other technology companies like Google, Facebook and Microsoft put themselves under Apple.'

It is the personification of the companies which allows using *stellen* in this abstract context. But there can also be a semantic incompatibility between *stellen* and the local complement following it, e.g.:

(12) *Der Fund von drei Leichen in einem Schwimmbad in Bergheim bei Köln stellt die Polizei vor ein Rätsel.* (Die Zeit, 29.03.2016)

Lit. 'The discovery of three bodies in a swimming-pool in Bergheim near Cologne puts upright the police in front of a riddle.'

'The discovery of three bodies in a swimming-pool in Bergheim near Cologne is a mystery for the police.'

Or the incompatibility emerges from the concomitant use of *stellen* and one of its arguments:

(13) *Nun wolle sich die FDP ihrer Verantwortung stellen.* (Die Zeit, 29.03.2016)

Lit. 'Now wants itself the FDP to its responsibility put upright.'

'Now the FDP [Liberal party in Germany] wants to take up the challenge.'

In all the illustrations with *stellen* discussed up to now there is a correspondence between the semantics of this verb and of the posture verb *stehen* ('to stand'). This posture verb is also used metaphorically to refer to written texts, e.g.:

(14) *Auch das Thema Geld steht auf der Tagesordnung.* (Die Zeit, 21.12.2011)

Lit. 'Also the topic money stands on the agenda.'

'The topic of money is also on the agenda.'

Interestingly enough, it is not the corresponding placement verb *stellen* which is used in the causative construction of written texts, but the verb *setzen* ('to set'), as illustrated in

(15) *[...] man kann nach der Anrede auch ein Komma setzen und schreibt dann den Text mit kleinem Buchstaben weiter.* (Oheim, Gertrud, Einmaleins des guten Tons, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann 1955, S. 401)

Lit. '[...] one can after the address also a comma set and write then the text with small letter further.'

'After the address one can also write a comma and then go on with the text with a small letter.'



We will look at this difference in more detail later when we describe the uses of *setzen*. Let us first look at the verb *legen* ('lay') which constitutes the orientational counterpart of *stellen*.

## 2.2 The German placement verb *legen*

In its locational use *legen* expresses the concrete placement of living persons or animals in horizontal orientation, as illustrated in

(16) *Ich gehe in mein Zimmer, schmeiße meine neueste Easy-CD an und lege mich aufs Bett.* (Dückers, Tanja, Spielzone, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1999, S. 18)

Lit. 'I go in my room, throw my newest Easy-CD on and lay myself on the bed.'

'I go to my bedroom, start my newest Easy-CD and lie on the bed.'

(17) *Wenn du krank bist, ist es besser, wenn du dich hinlegst.*

Lit. 'If you ill are, it is better, if you yourself down lays.'

'If you are ill, it is better to go to bed.'

In these cases the placement verb *legen* is used as a reflexive verb. It can also be used as a transitive verb with a direct object, illustrated in

(18) *Anne-Catherine legte ihm ihre Hand auf die Schulter.* (Degenhardt, Franz Josef, Für ewig und drei Tage, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1999, S. 172)

Lit. 'Anne-Catherine laid to him her hand on the shoulder.'

'Anne-Catherine put her hand on his shoulder.'

(19) *Andy legte eine Decke über die den quälenden Schlaf der Betrunkenen Schlafende.* (Degenhardt, Franz Josef, Für ewig und drei Tage, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1999, S. 168)

Lit. 'Andy laid a blanket over the the tormented sleep of the drunken sleeping.'

'Andy laid a blanket on the drunken lady who was disturbed in her sleep.'

But *legen* is also often used as an alternative to *stellen* to express an 'untidy' placement or a localization of objects in an inappropriate way, e.g.:

(20) *Wo hast du meine Schuhe hingelegt?*

Lit. 'Where have you my shoes down laid?'

'Where have you put my shoes?'

This example presupposes that the shoes have been put upside down.

*Legen* is further used for geotopographical localization, like in

(21) *Der Sturm legt sich über die Stadt.*

Lit. 'The storm lays itself over the town.'

'The storm crawls over the city.'

More abstract entities can also be conceptualized as 'laying', e.g.:

(22) *Der Streit legte sich nach kurzer Zeit.*

Lit. 'The quarrel laid itself after short time.'

'The quarrel subsided in a short time.'

(23) *Den Fokus sollte man auf die Integration legen.*

Lit. 'The focus should one on the integration lay.'

'One should focus on the integration.'

### 2.3 The German placement verb *setzen*

The placement verb *setzen* ('to set') also conceptualizes locational and metaphorical meanings. The following example focuses on the localization in the canonical

'sitting' posture,

- (24) *Karl-Walter zur Linden blätterte in dem Buch, setzte sich in den Lesesessel, [...]*  
(Degenhardt, Franz Josef, Für ewig und drei Tage, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1999, S. 111)

Lit. 'Karl-Walter zur Linden browsed in the book, set himself in the reading seat, [...]'

'Karl-Walter zur Linden browsed in the book and sat down in the reading chair, [...]'

Typical of the verb *setzen* is the localization of small animals like birds and insects, e.g.:

- (25) *Der frei umherfliegende Vogel setzte sich mit Vorliebe seinem Herrn auf die Schulter.* (Bredel, Willi, Die Väter, Berlin: Aufbau-Verl. 1946, S. 217)

Lit. 'The free around flying bird set itself with preference to its master on the shoulder.'

'The bird which flew around freely sat down on the master's shoulder on its own will.'

- (26) *Eine Fliege setzte sich auf meine Glatze, ich wollte sie wegjagen [...]*  
(Die Zeit, 12.11.1993)

Lit. 'A fly set itself on my dome, I wanted it chase away [...]'

'A fly sat down on my bald head, I wanted to chase it away [...]'

*Setzen* also conceptualizes containment, especially with prisons which are seen as containers for prisoners, e.g.:

- (27) *Der Vater wurde ins Gefängnis gesetzt, der Junge eingefangen und in ein KZ gebracht.* (Klemperer, Victor, [Tagebuch] 1942, S. 225)

Lit. 'The father was into prison set, the boy captured and in a concentration

camp brought.'

'The father was put into prison, the boy was captured and brought to a concentration camp.'

The placement verb *setzen* can also be used to express a contact, e.g.:

(28) *Er setzte die Brille schief auf die Nase.*

Lit. 'He set the glasses askew on the nose.'

'He put the glasses askew on his nose.'

(29) *Kuno sprang auf und setzte mir ein Messer an die Kehle.* (Die Zeit, 15.03.1974)

Lit. 'Kuno jumped up and set to me a knife at the throat.'

'Kuno jumped up and put a knife on my throat.'

More abstract uses are also possible with the placement verb *setzen*. For instance, the concept of containment also characterizes the following metaphorical example:

(30) *Großes Vertrauen setzten die Befragten dagegen in die deutschen Schwimm-Asse.* (Die Zeit, 17.07.2011)

Lit. 'Great confidence set the interviewed against this in the German swim aces.'

'The people who were interviewed put all their confidence into the German swim aces.'

Interestingly, the conceptualization of 'localization' of a written text requires the use of the placement verb *setzen* and not *stellen* as could be expected from the postural use and cognate posture verb *stehen*. Compare the following examples (31) and (32):

(31) *Es steht ein Komma zwischen den beiden Wörtern.* [posture verb *stehen*]

Lit. 'There stands a comma between both words.'

'There is a comma between the words.'

(32) *Der Lehrer setzte ein Komma zwischen die Wörter.* [placement verb *setzen*]

Lit. 'The teacher set a comma between the words.'

'The teacher put/wrote a comma between the words.'

The placement verb *setzen* is also preferably used in collocations or so-called *Funktionsverbgefügen*, e.g., *in Bewegung setzen* (lit. 'to set into movement' = 'to start moving'), *in Verbindung setzen* (lit. 'to set into relation' = 'to connect'), *in Verlegenheit setzen* (lit. 'to set into embarrassment' = 'to embarrass'), *einen Motor in Gang setzen* (lit. 'an engine in going set' = 'to start an engine'), *in Kenntnis setzen* (lit. 'to set into knowledge' = 'to inform'), *unter Druck setzen* (lit. 'under pressure set' = 'to put under pressure'), or *ein Gerücht in die Welt setzen* (lit. 'a rumour in the world set' = 'to start a rumour'). In these examples the verb *setzen* has lost its original semantics of the canonical position, it expresses an inchoative meaning for the start of a process, it is synonymous to *bringen*.

#### 2.4 The German placement verb *stecken*

The meaning of *setzen* is closely linked to that of the placement verb *stecken* ('to put tight', 'to thrust') which focuses on the tightness or narrowness of the place as a container where persons or objects are put, e.g.:

(33) *Der Briefträger steckte den Brief in den Kasten.*

Lit. 'The postman stuck the letter into the box.'

'The postman put the letter into the letter-box.'

(34) *Er steckte die Zigarre in den Mund.* (DWDS)

Lit. 'He stuck the cigar into the mouth.'

'He put the cigar in his mouth.'

The object can also be in tight contact with the location, e.g.:

(35) *Die Bauarbeiter steckten Pfähle in die Erde.* (DWDS)

Lit. 'The workmen stuck poles into the ground.'

'The workmen put **the** poles into the ground.'

(36) *Sie steckte den Ring an den Finger.*

Lit. 'She stuck the ring to the finger.'

'She put the ring on her finger.'

Metaphorical examples can also be found:

(37) *Sie steckt viel Arbeit in dieses Geschäft.* (DWDS)

Lit. 'She sticks much work into this business.'

'She puts much work into this business.'

(38) *Gewaltige Mittel in die Forschung stecken.*

Lit. 'To stick enormous resources into the research.'

'To put enormous resources into research.'

### 2.5 Some particular uses of placement verbs

At the beginning of this section we argued in favor of a parallel description of posture and placement verbs as they conceptualize similar meanings. Having said this, we have to express some reservations because there is not always a one-to-one correspondence as already illustrated above with examples (31) and (32) for the expression of written text/material. In some collocations too, one may wonder why different placement verbs are used in spite of their syntactic and semantic similarity. The following examples contain the same preposition *in* and have the same syntactic structure.

(39) *Der Bundeskanzler verspricht, daß er sich sofort mit Präsident Mitterrand in Verbindung setzen werde* (Nr. 257: 55. Deutsch-französische Konsultationen vom 26. April 1990, S. 3101)

Lit. 'The chancellor promises that he himself immediately with President Mitterrand in relation set will.'

'The chancellor promises that he will immediately contact President Mitterrand.'

(40) *Stone habe im Wahlkampf seine persönlichen Interessen in den Vordergrund gestellt.* (Die Zeit, 09.08.2015)

Lit. 'Stone has in the election campaign his personal interests in the foreground put upright.'

'In the election campaign Stone has given priority to his own interests.'

The selection of different placement verbs can be explained by the underlying conceptualizations. Whereas with *setzen* (example 39) an inchoative meaning is being conveyed which focuses on the start of the contact process, example (40) conceptualizes the idea of putting some objects – in this case the personal interests – into space, and more specifically into the foreground, thereby making them predominant and visible. The interests are conceptualized as having a base and as being movable objects. Placement verbs are used in specific constructions in which elements of the construction sustain the conceptualization of these verbs. We look at the different constructions in detail in the following section.

### **3. Placement and posture verbs in constructions**

Posture and placement verbs are used in different constructions which are semantically and syntactically related to each other. In the framework of Construction Grammar, constructions are defined as entrenched form-meaning mappings (Goldberg 1995; 2006) which have a meaning of their own. Goldberg (1995; 2006) distinguishes several types of constructions where placement verbs are used in caused motion constructions, whereas posture verbs are used in intransitive motion constructions. Let us look at both types of constructions more closely.

### 3.1 German placement verbs in caused motion constructions

Goldberg's model has the advantage of allying in one frame the semantic and syntactic description of constructions and of defining a prototypical abstract construction. Schematically, the caused motion construction is represented as follows:

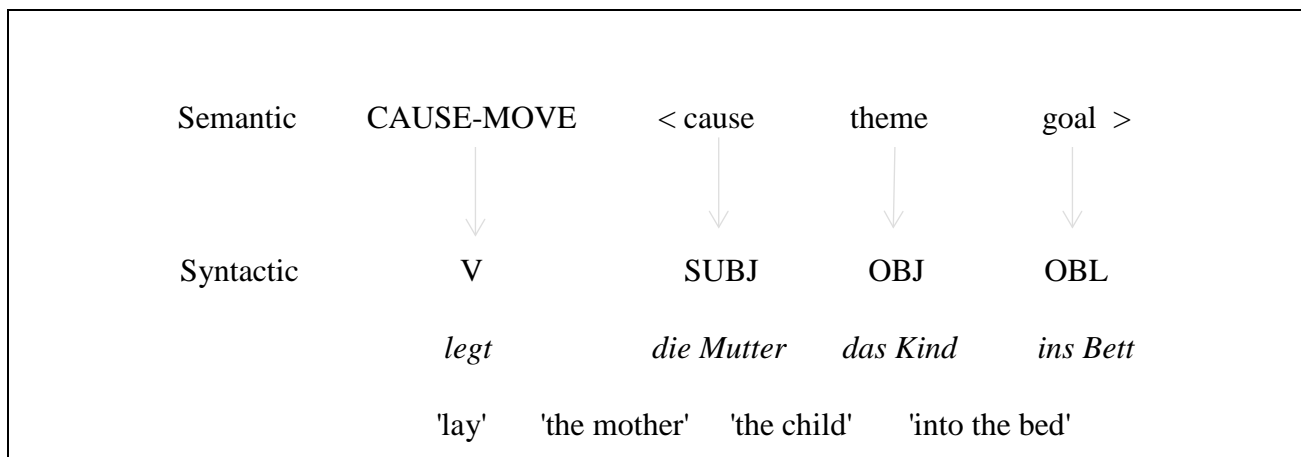


Figure 1: the caused motion construction according to Goldberg (1995)

In the caused motion construction the subject expresses the 'causer' of a movement/motion to happen towards a goal expressed by an oblique element. This motion involves an object referred to as **the** theme, which can be a reflexive as well. In German caused motion constructions the use of a specific placement verb is preferred, not to say obligatory, for the expression of concrete motion. This is not the case in Romance languages which rather use a general placement verb like French *mettre* or Italian *mettere* ('to put'). Although English belongs to the category of Germanic languages (Talmy 2000), the general verb *put* is used in caused motion constructions too (see also Stefanowitsch 2013).

A description of placement verbs in the model of Construction Grammar presents some findings. First, the constructional frame in which placement verbs have to be used is defined. In this frame there is a semantic correspondence between the local preposition which introduces the oblique element and the placement verb. For instance, it is not surprising that *setzen* is often used with an oblique element introduced by the



preposition *in* for the expression of a container or by the preposition *an* ('at') or *auf* ('on') for the expression of contact, e.g.:

(41) *Ich setzte mich in den Sessel, um ein bißchen zu schlafen.* (Brussig, Thomas: Wasserfarben, Berlin: Aufbau-Taschenbuch-Verl. 2001 [1991], S. 134)

Lit. 'I set myself in the armchair, in order a bit to sleep.'

'I sat down in the armchair to sleep a bit.'

(42) *Dann schildert Luka Kusmitsch, wie er dem Kommandanten einer Kaserne, [...], das Messer an den Hals gesetzt hat und dafür fast zu Tode gepeitscht wurde.* (Fath, Rolf: Werke A. In: Reclams Opernlexikon, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2001 [1998], S. 220)

Lit. 'Then depicts Luka Kusmitsch, how he to the commander of a barracks, [...], the knife at the throat set had and for this almost to death scourged was.'

'Then Luka Kusmitsch depicts how he had set the knife at the throat of the commander of barracks, [...], and how he had been scourged for this.'

(43) *Vielleicht setzte er den Hut jedesmal einfach mit zuviel Kraft auf seinen Kopf;* (Walser, Martin: Halbzeit, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp 1997 [1960], S. 246)

Lit. 'Perhaps set he the hat each time simply with too much power on his head.'

'Perhaps each time he simply put the hat on his head with too much power.'

*Stellen*, on the other hand, is often used with prepositions which express a linear orientation towards the subject, like *hinter* ('behind'), *neben* ('next to'), *unter* ('under'), *vor* ('before'), or *zwischen* ('between'), e.g.:

(44) *Musikstätten stellte die Stadt erneut vor große Aufgaben.* (Krautwurst, Franz: Nürnberg. In: Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Berlin: Directmedia Publ. 2001 [1961], S. 55462)

Lit. 'Musikstätten put in an upright position the town again before great tasks.'

'Musikstätten set the great tasks before the town.'

(45) *Er stellt eine Milchtüte zwischen die Gläser, setzt sich und nimmt zwei Telefonhörer gleichzeitig ab.* (Schulze, Ingo: Simple Storys, Berlin: Berlin-Verl. 1998, S. 95)

Lit. 'He puts in an upright position the milk carton between the glasses, sets himself and answers two telephone handsets at the same time.'

'He puts the milk carton between the glasses, sits down and answers two telephone calls at the same time.'

These prepositions are local "two-way prepositions" (Serra-Borneto 1997; Smith 1987, 1993 and 1995), which can be used either in the accusative or in the dative case, depending on the meaning conveyed. For the expression of a dynamic movement towards a goal the accusative is required. If a local, more static process or motion without a path towards a goal is meant the dative is used after the two-way preposition.

As a second finding, Goldberg's schema can be completed by some additional information about morpho-syntactic cases which are relevant to German structures. Accordingly, the subject is in the nominative case and the object in the accusative case. In the caused motion construction the accusative case is used after the two-way preposition because the construction expresses a motion along a path and towards a goal. This can be fictive motion (Matlock 2004a and 2004b) as illustrated by the collocation in example (40).

### *3.2. German posture verbs in intransitive motion constructions*

German posture verbs are used in another type of construction, the intransitive motion construction (Goldberg 1995; 2006).

Semantic	MOVE	< theme	goal >
	↓	↓	↓
Syntactic	V	SUBJ	OBL
	<i>liegt</i>	<i>das Kind</i>	<i>im Bett</i>
	'lies'	'the child'	'in the bed'

Figure 2: the intransitive motion construction according to Goldberg (1995)

In this case the theme is expressed by the subject and the oblique element corresponds to the goal. As this construction does not express a cause which would trigger a motion along a path towards a goal, the oblique element expresses a static location and therefore is in the dative case. The German intransitive motion construction requires a specific posture verb. In English or in Romance languages the general verb *to be* or French *être*/Italian *essere* is used.

Both constructions are related to each other at several levels. Syntactically, both constructions share the same preposition and the same oblique element, but with different morpho-syntactic cases (accusative case in the caused motion construction, dative case in the intransitive motion construction). The same theme is expressed by the subject in the intransitive motion construction and by the object in the caused motion construction. Semantically, the intransitive motion construction expresses the result of the action expressed by the caused motion construction. For instance, if the mother lays down the child into his/her bed (caused motion construction), as a result the child lies in bed (intransitive motion construction). Goldberg (1995; 2006) claims that constructions can be related to each other by the so-called inheritance links and indeed the intransitive motion construction is linked to the caused motion construction by a part-of-relation. The description of placement verbs (and the corresponding posture verbs) within constructions suggests several advantages for foreign language learning. The following section deals with this specific topic.

#### 4. Cross-linguistic and pedagogical perspectives

It has become clear that the German language focuses on the manner of motion and location with the use of different placement and posture verbs. This constitutes a major difference with Romance languages – as we have seen before. Having said this, Romance languages also have different verbs for the expression of several orientations in localization or motion. French, for instance, has the placement verbs (*se lever/mettre debout* ('(oneself) stand/put up'), (*se coucher* ('(oneself) lay down'), (*s')asseoir* ('(oneself) sit down'), *pendre/accrocher* ('hang up'), *fourrer* ('thrust'), and so on, however they are more rarely used and are not obligatory in caused motion constructions, as illustrated in the following contrastive examples,

- (46) a. Fr. *Papa met le journal sur la table.*  
b. Germ. *Vati legt die Zeitung auf den Tisch.*  
Lit. 'Daddy lays the paper on the table.'
- (47) a. Fr. *Papa met le vase sur la table.*  
b. Germ. *Vati stellt die Vase auf den Tisch.*  
Lit. 'Daddy puts upright the vase on the table.'
- (48) a. Fr. *Papa met le bébé dans la chaise.*  
b. Germ. *Vati setzt das Baby in den Kinderstuhl.*  
Lit. 'Daddy sets the baby in the children chair.'
- (49) a. Fr. *Papa met le cadre au mur.*  
b. Germ. *Vati hängt das Bild an die Wand.*  
Lit. 'Daddy hangs the picture at the wall.'

In the same way, French can express the orientation of posture with different verbal phrases like *être debout* ('to be standing'), *être couché* ('to be lying'), *être assis* ('to be

sitting'), or *être fourré* ('to be thrust') (see also Ameka & Levinson 2007 or Gullberg 2009). But it can be observed that these French expressions are compound verbs consisting of the general verb *être* ('to be') with an additional past participle (*couché/assis/fourré*) or adverb (*debout*). There is no specific simplex verb for the expression of different postures (except for *pendre* 'to hang') in French. This reflects the general tendency of the French language to prefer a generic verb for the expression of postures.

#### 4.1. Learning issues

From a didactic point of view, the asymmetry (Narasimhan et al. 2012: 3) between German and French in the conceptualization of posture and placement often leads to learning difficulties. The French-speaking learner must first realize that the general concept (and verb) in his mother tongue corresponds to several concepts in German. Littlemore (2009: 29) observes that "[t]hings become even more difficult for language learners when a concept that is divided into two broad categories in their own language is divided into, say, three categories in the target language". This often leads to a simplification by the learner who uses the general German posture verb *sein* ('to be') or who opts for one single verb among the whole range of placement verbs (see also Gullberg 2009: 8).

Another difficulty results from the need to distinguish the orientation of the concepts expressed and the correct selection of one posture or placement verb among the whole range of verbs. Serra-Borneto (1995: 462) defines the difficulty for the posture verbs *stehen* and *liegen* as follows:

*... locative verbs like stehen and liegen are simply devices the speaker uses to convey information about the orientation of the object(s) he is referring to in discourse. Thus, in order to decide how to characterize the position of an object, the speaker first has to set his attention on the most relevant dimension of the object and then must match it with one of the abstract spatial axes. These cognitive operations of course imply a certain amount of "schematization," which is 'a process that involves*

*the systematic selection of certain aspects of the referent scene to represent the whole, while disregarding the remaining aspects' (Talmy 1983: 225), because one particular feature of the overall shape of the object is isolated in order to determine its orientation.*

This pertains especially to the more abstract uses of these verbs. E.g., what motivates the selection of *stehen* vs. *setzen* in the above mentioned sentences (14) and (15) for the same conceptualization of a written text?

(14) *Auch das Thema Geld steht auf der Tagesordnung.* (Die Zeit, 21.12.2011)

Lit. 'Also the topic money stands on the agenda.'

'The topic of money is also on the agenda.'

(15) [...] *man kann nach der Anrede auch ein Komma setzen und schreibt dann den Text mit kleinem Buchstaben weiter.* (Oheim, Gertrud, Einmaleins des guten Tons, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann 1955, S. 401)

Lit. '[...] one can after the address also a comma set and write then the text with small letter further.'

'After the address one can also write a comma and then go on with the further text with a small letter.'

Example (14) expresses a static event and example (15) a dynamic process.

For learners the use of such verbs in collocations is even more difficult, e.g.:

(50) *Sein Humor ist von der Art, die den Partner immer in Verlegenheit setzt.* (Die Zeit, 31.03.1972)

Lit. 'His humor is of the type that the partner always in embarrassment sets.'

'His humor is such that it always embarrasses the partner.'

(51) *Wir haben alle Einwohner von Rwanda vor ihre historische Verantwortung gestellt.* (Archiv der Gegenwart, 47, 1977)

Lit. 'We have all inhabitants of Ruanda before their historical responsibility put upright.'

'We have shown all inhabitants of Ruanda their responsibility.'

(52) *Die Allianz [...], die die Entscheidung über Krieg und Frieden ausländischen Mächten in die Hand gelegt [...] haben, [...]* (Archiv der Gegenwart, 22, 1952)

Lit. 'The alliance [...], which the decision about war and peace to foreign powers in the hand put in lying position [...] have, [...]

Lit. 'The alliance [...], which has put the decision about war and peace into the hands of foreign powers, [...]

To learn a foreign language means to reorientate one's attention and, in the case of French speakers learning German, to focus on different aspects of the visual scenery. Athanasopoulos (2009: 92) suggests a "cognitive restructuring in the mind of bilinguals". Robinson und Ellis (2008) advocate "rethinking for speaking". The teacher has a specific task consisting in first drawing learners' attention on the similarities and differences between both languages. Concrete contrastive examples like (46)-(49) constitute a good start for the topic. With a focus on placement verbs, the teacher can then extend the examples of concrete localization to the more abstract uses. For instance, the verb *setzen* is used for the localization of small animals or insects which are conceptualized as 'sitting down', e.g., the above example

(26) *Eine Fliege setzte sich auf meine Glatze, ich wollte sie wegjagen [...]*

(Die Zeit, 12.11.1993)

Lit. 'A fly set itself on my dome, I wanted it chase away [...]

'A fly sat down on my bald head, I wanted to chase it away [...]

The more abstract uses of the posture and placement verbs can be explained with the underlying conceptualizations, e.g., the contact between the nose and the glasses in

(28) *Er setzte die Brille schief auf die Nase.*

Lit. 'He set the glasses askew on the nose.'

'He put the glasses askew on his nose.'

Some systematicity is needed, the different uses could be presented in tables with some examples of constructions (see Appendix I-IV). But as we saw before, these verbs are used in specific constructions. A teaching methodology based on constructions is integrative and makes it possible to teach several issues at the same time: the construction and the different lexical elements in the construction as well as morpho-syntactic aspects like case selection.

#### *4.2. Embodied learning*

However, having learnt the constructions and their specificities does not automatically imply that the learner masters these foreign constructions and their instantiations. The learning process can be fostered by additional exercises based on 'embodied learning'. Lakoff (1987) claims that conceptual categories and their linguistic expressions are the result of embodied processes. If we start from the premise that "human concepts are not just reflections of an external reality, but [...] they are crucially shaped by our bodies and brains, especially by our sensorimotor system" (Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 22), we can exploit this insight to develop a better teaching methodology based on 'embodiment', because it is "through our bodily perceptions, movements, emotions, and feelings that meaning becomes possible" (Rathunde 2009: 71). Posture and placement verbs and their uses provide ample evidence for this claim. The difficulty for language learners is that they have not experienced the foreign concepts, their categorization and the corresponding linguistic expressions as in their mother tongue. Consequently, teaching has to make up for this deficit.



There are many possibilities to create exercises based on embodiment. Surprisingly, little has been done in this research field. In 1982 James Asher advocated the "total physical response" based on interactive activities and motion in the class-room. He reported some positive results with this methodology. Birchfield (2015) developed the 'smallLAB learning' which focuses on imagined activity that can aid reading comprehension in young children. Rathunde (2009: 73) stresses the need to create more embodied educational environments through the integration of nature in the teaching methodology. The analyzed constructions with the posture and placement verbs are ideal examples for exercises based on embodiment. Learners can for instance be asked to perform caused motion constructions or intransitive motion constructions with their own body. The teacher may bring some objects which can be moved by the learners and with which learners can represent "scenarios or lifelike situations" (Di Pietro 1987: 3). Or s/he can provide some pictures of motion, for instance the small video sequences designed by Bowerman et al. (2004). Learners can be asked to describe the situations depicted with caused motion constructions or with intransitive motion constructions, also using placement or posture verbs (see also Handwerker (2008) or Handwerker & Madlener (2006)). Another exercise type is inspired by games like "Taboo" (1989). One student should perform a scene without words, the other students have to guess what is represented. With these exercises students become "full participants in human discourse" (Di Pietro 1987: 3) and use their body to represent scenes. Embodiment fosters not only the learning but also the retaining of the new structures.

These exercises make it possible to repeat the structures and to practice them with a certain frequency so that they can become entrenched with the learners. Ellis and Cadierno (2009: 118) claim that "frequency of exposure promotes learning". With more advanced learners the teacher can focus on the use of placement and posture verbs in collocations (Konecny 2010) or so-called 'Funktionsverbgefügen' (Eisenberg 2013). Here too a description in semantic networks can be useful. E.g., the causative

placement verb *setzen* is often used for an inchoative meaning, for instance in *außer Aktion setzen* (lit. 'to set out of action'), *in Brand setzen* (lit. 'to set into fire'), *in Bewegung setzen* (lit. 'to set into motion'), *außer/in Betrieb setzen* (lit. 'to set out of/into action'), *in Gang setzen* (lit. 'to set into going' = 'to start'), *in Kenntnis setzen* (lit. 'to set into knowledge' = 'to inform'), *außer/in Kraft setzen* (lit. 'to set out of/into power'), *in Verbindung setzen* (lit. 'to set into contact' = 'to connect'). As mentioned before, in these cases the verb *setzen* is a synonym of *bringen* ('to bring'). In a paper by De Knop & Mollica (in prep.) some tests have been conducted with Italian learners who were taught according to the methodology developed in this paper. The results are promising (see De Knop & Mollica in prep.).

## **5. Conclusions and perspectives**

The model of Construction Grammar offers a good framework for the description of placement (and posture) verbs at a general level. But for the selection of the specific placement verb, the description in semantic networks proves to be very useful. As the paper shows, a description of the variation in larger sequences allows describing not only the verbs, but also their concrete uses and the other elements with which placement verbs match (prepositions introducing the oblique element for instance). The different instantiations with a placement verb are organized in a structured inventory, the constructicon.

At the pedagogical level, such a constructicon is also very useful for the learning of the foreign structures and the matching verbs. The learner has to learn form-meaning mappings which are typical of the foreign language and with which events or situations are being construed (Ellis & Cadierno 2009: 125). Foreign language teaching is in great need of such constructicons for the typical structures of German. We hope to have shown some of the possibilities to achieve such an objective in the future.

## References

- Ameka, F.K. & Levinson, S.C. (2007). Introduction: The typology and semantics of locative predicates: Posturals, positionals, and other beasts. In *Linguistics* 45 (5/6), p. 847-871.
- Asher, J. J. (1982). *Learning another language through actions. The complete teacher's guidebook*. Los Gatos, Ca.: Sky Oaks Productions.
- Athanasopoulos, P. (2009). Cognitive representation of colour in bilinguals: The case of Greek blues. In *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 12 (1), p. 83-95.
- Aurnague, M., Hickmann, M. & Vieu, L. (2007). *The categorization of spatial entities in language and cognition*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Berthele, R. (2004). The typology of motion and posture verbs: A variationist account. In *Dialectology meets typology. Dialect grammar from a cross-linguistic perspective*. Kortmann, B. (ed.). Mouton de Gruyter, p. 93-126.
- Berthele, R. (2006). *Ort und Weg. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der sprachlichen Raumreferenz in Varietäten des Deutschen, Rätoromanischen und Französischen*. Berlin, New York: de Gruyter.
- Berthele, R. (2012). On the use of PUT verbs by multilingual speakers of Romansh. In *Events of "putting" and "taking": A crosslinguistic perspective*. Kopecka, A. & Narasimhan, B. (eds.). John Benjamins, p. 145-166.
- Birchfield, D. (2015). Embodied learning: Origins and Implications. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzahyTMq8u4>
- Bowerman, M., Gullberg, M., Majid, A. & Narasimhan, B. (2004). Put project: the cross-linguistic encoding of placement events. In *Field manual volume 9*. Majid, A. (ed.). Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, p. 10-24.
- De Knop, S. (2014). Conceptual tools for the description and the acquisition of the German posture verb *sitzen*. In *Learner corpus research, cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition*, special issue of *corpus linguistics and linguistic theory* De Knop, S. & Meunier, F. (eds.), 11 (1), p. 127-160.

- De Knop, S. & Gallez, F. (2013). Manner of motion: A privileged dimension of German expressions. In *Compendium of cognitive linguistics research*. Fuyin Li, T. (ed.), 2, p. 25-40.
- De Knop, S. & Mollica, F. (forthcoming). Construction-based teaching of the German caused motion and intransitive constructions to Italian learners.
- De Knop, S. & Perrez, J. (2014). Conceptual metaphors as a tool for the efficient teaching of Dutch and German posture verbs. In *Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, 12 (1), p. 1-29.
- Di Pietro, R. J. (1987). *Strategic interaction: Learning languages through scenarios*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eisenberg, P. (2006). Funktionsverbgefüge – Über das Verhältnis von Unsinn und Methode. In *Grammatische Untersuchungen, Analysen und Reflexionen. Festschrift für Gisela Zifonun*. Breindl, E., Gunkel, L. & Strecker, B. (eds.). Narr Verlag, p. 297-318.
- Eisenberg, P. (2013). *Der Satz*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.
- Ellis, N. & Cadierno, T. (2009). Constructing a second language. Introduction to the special section. In *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, 7, p. 11-139.
- Fagan, S. (1991). The semantics of the positional predicates *liegen/legen*, *sitzen/setzen*, and *stehen/stellen*. In *Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, 24 (2), p. 136-145.
- Gallez, F. & De Knop, S. (2016). German caused motion constructions with *ein-/in*: a constructionist teaching methodology for French-speaking learners. Talk at the 2nd conference on Constructionist Approaches to Language Pedagogy (CALP 2016) in Basel, 10-11 June 2016.
- Gibbs, R. W., Beitel, D. A., Harrington, M. & Sanders, P. (1994). Taking a stand on the meanings of stand: Bodily experience as motivation for polysemy. In *Journal of Semantics*, 11 (4), p. 231-251.
- Goldberg, A. (1995). *Constructions. A construction grammar approach to argument structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Goldberg, A. (2006). *Constructions at work: The nature of generalization in language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gullberg, M. (2009). Reconstructing verb meaning in a second language: How English speakers of L2 Dutch talk and gesture about placement. In *Annual review of cognitive linguistics*, 7, p. 222-245.
- Handwerker, B. (2008). 'Chunks' und Konstruktionen – Zur Integration von lerntheoretischem und grammatischem Ansatz. In *Estudios Filológicos Alemanes* 15, p. 49-64.
- Handwerker, B. & Madlener, K. (2006). Multimedia-Chunks für Deutsch als Fremdsprache. Ein Lernmodul zur Entwicklung lexikalisch-grammatischer Kompetenz. In *Sprachen Schaffen Chancen*. Hahn, A. & Klippel, F. (eds.). Oldenbourg, p. 199-206.
- Herrlitz, W. (1973). *Funktionsverbgefüge vom Typ "in Erfahrung bringen"*. Ein Beitrag zur generativ-transformationellen Grammatik des Deutschen. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- Hijazo-Gascón, A., Cadierno, T. & Ibarretxe-Antuñano, I. (2016). Learning the caused motion construction in L2 Spanish. In *Applied Construction Grammar*. De Knop, S. & Gilquin, G. (eds.). Mouton de Gruyter, p. 185-210.
- Ijaz, I.H. (1986). Linguistic and cognitive determinants of lexical acquisition in a second language. In *Language Learning*, 36 (4), p. 401-451.
- Kluge, F. (1833/2011). *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Konecny, C. (2010). *Kollokationen: Versuch einer semantisch-begrifflichen Annäherung und Klassifizierung anhand italienischer Beispiele*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Events of "putting" and "taking": A crosslinguistic perspective*. Kopecka, A. & Narasimhan, B. (eds.). (2012). Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Kutscher, S. & Schultze-Berndt, E. (2007). Why a folder lies in the basket although it

- is not lying: The semantics and use of German positional verbs with inanimate figures. In *Linguistics*, 45 (5-6), p. 983-1028.
- Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, fire, and dangerous things*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lemmens, M. (2002). The semantic network of Dutch posture verbs. In *The linguistics of sitting, standing and lying*. Newman, J. (ed.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 103-139.
- Lemmens, M. (2005). Motion and location: Toward a cognitive typology. In *Parcours linguistique. Domaine anglais*. Girard, G. (ed.). Publication de l'Université St. Etienne, p. 223-244.
- Lemmens, M. (2006). Caused posture: Experiential patterns emerging from corpus research. In *Corpora in cognitive linguistics: corpus-based approaches to syntax and lexis*. Gries, S. Th. & Stefanowitsch, A. (eds.). Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 261-297.
- Lemmens, M. & Perrez, J. (2010). On the use of posture verbs by French-speaking learners of Dutch: A corpus-based study. In *Cognitive Linguistics*, 21 (2), p. 315-347.
- Levinson, S. C. (2012). Preface. In *Events of "putting" and "taking": A crosslinguistic perspective*. Kopecka, A. & Narasimhan, B. (eds.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. xi-xvi.
- Littlemore, J. (2009). *Applying cognitive linguistics to second language learning and teaching*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Matlock, T. (2004a). Fictive motion as cognitive simulation. In *Memory and cognition*, 32 (8), p. 1389-1400.
- Matlock, T. (2004b). The conceptual motivation of fictive motion. In *Studies in linguistic motivation*. Radden, G. & Panther, K.-U. (eds.). Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 221-248.

- Moving Ourselves, Moving Others*. Foolen, A., Lüdtke, U.M., Racine, T.P. & Zlatev, J. (eds.). (2012). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Narasimhan, B., Kopecka, A., Bowerman, M., Gullberg, M., & Majid, A. (2012). Putting and taking events: A crosslinguistic perspective. In *Events of putting and taking: A crosslinguistic perspective*. Kopecka, A. & Narasimhan, B. (eds.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 1-18.
- Rathunde, K. (2009). Nature and embodied education. In *The journal of developmental processes*, 4 (1), p. 70-80.
- Robinson, P. & Ellis, N. (2008). *Handbook of cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition*. London: Routledge.
- Schönefeld, D. (2006). From conceptualization to linguistic expression: Where languages diversify. In *Corpora in cognitive linguistics. Corpus-based approaches to syntax and lexis*. Gries, S. Th. & Stefanowitsch, A. (eds). Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 297-344.
- Serra-Borneto, C. (1995). *Liegen and stehen* in German: A study in horizontality and verticality. In *Cognitive Linguistics in the redwoods: The expansion of a new paradigm in linguistics*. Casad, E.H. (ed.). Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 459-505.
- Serra-Borneto, C. (1996). Polarity and metaphor in German. In *The construal of space in language and thought*. Pütz, M. & Dirven, R. (eds.). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 373-394.
- Serra-Borneto, C. (1997). Two-way prepositions in German: Image and constraints. In *Lexical and syntactical constructions and the construction of meaning*. Verspoor, M., Lee, K. D. & Sweetser, E. (eds.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 187-204.
- Smith, M.B. (1987). The semantics of dative and accusative in German: An investigation in cognitive grammar. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Linguistics, University of California at San Diego.
- Smith, M. B. (1993). Cases as conceptual categories: Evidence from German. In *Conceptualizations and mental processing in language: A selection of papers from the*

- first international Cognitive Linguistics conference in Duisburg, 1989*. Geiger, R.A. & Rudzka-Ostyn, B. (eds.). Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 531-565.
- Smith, M.B. (1995). Semantic motivation vs. arbitrariness in grammar: Toward a more general account of the DAT/ACC contrast with two-way prepositions. In *Insights in Germanic linguistics: Methodology and transition*. Rauch, I. & Carr, G.F. (eds.). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 293-323.
- Stefanowitsch, A. (2013). Variation and change in English path verbs and constructions: Usage patterns and conceptual structure. In *Variation and change in the encoding of motion events*. Goschler, J. & Stefanowitsch, A. (eds.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 223-244.
- Taboo, the game of unspeakable fun*. (1989). Boston: Hasbro.
- Talmy, L. (1985). Lexicalization patterns: Semantic structure in lexical forms. In *Language typology and syntactic description*. Shopen, T. (ed.). Vol. 3: *Grammatical categories and the lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 57-149.
- Talmy, L. (2000). *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, vol. 2. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Thiering, M. (2015). *Spatial semiotics and spatial mental models: Figure-ground asymmetries in language*. Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton.
- Van Pottelberge, J. (2001). *Verbonominale Konstruktionen, Funktionsverbgefüge. Vom Sinn und Unsinn eines Untersuchungsgegenstandes*. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Viberg, Å. (1998). Crosslinguistic perspectives on lexical acquisition: The case of language-specific semantic differentiation. In *Perspectives on lexical acquisition in a second language*. Haastrup, K. & Viberg, A. (eds.). Lund: Lund University Press, p. 175-208.



## Appendix I

Table 2: The semantic uses of *stehen* and *stellen*

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>stehen</i>	<i>stellen</i>
postural	Be on a base	<i>Die Teller stehen auf dem Tisch</i> Lit. 'The plates stand on the table'	<i>Stelle bitte die Teller auf den Tisch</i> Lit. 'Please put (vertically) the plates on the table'
locational	Extend upward from a base	<i>Mit dem Supergel stehen die Haare den ganzen Tag</i> Lit. 'With the supergelly the hair stands the whole day'	/
	Verticality in absence of base	<i>Die Teller stehen schon in der Spülmaschine</i> Lit. 'The plates already stand in the dish-washer'	<i>Stelle bitte die Teller in die Spülmaschine</i> Lit. 'Please put (vertically) the plates into the dishwasher'
metaphorical	Being in a canonical position	<i>Er steht vor einem Dilemma/Problem</i> Lit. 'He stands in front of a dilemma/problem'	<i>Vor eine Verantwortung stellen</i> <i>Vor Gericht stellen</i> Lit. 'to put/place in front of a responsibility' Lit. 'to place/to bring to court/justice'
	Written text	<i>Was steht an der Tafel?</i> Lit. 'What stands on the blackboard?' <i>Ein Komma steht zwischen den beiden Wörtern</i> Lit. 'A comma stands between both words'	/  <i>Er setzt ein Komma zwischen die beiden Sätze</i> Lit. 'He sets a comma between both sentences'

## Appendix II

Table 3: The semantic uses of *liegen* and *legen*

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>liegen</i>	<i>legen</i>
postural	Be on one's side/not on the base with horizontal orientation	<i>Wo liegen meine Schuhe?</i> Lit. 'Where do my shoes lie?' <i>Sie lag im Bett und schlief</i> Lit. 'She lay in bed and was sleeping'	<i>Wo hast du meine Schuhe hingelegt?</i> Lit. 'Where did you lay my shoes?' <i>Die Mutter legte das Baby ins Bett</i> Lit. 'The mother laid the baby in the bed' <i>Die Henne legt ein Ei</i> Lit. 'The hen laid an egg'
locational	Location of dimension-less entities	<i>Der Ball liegt im Sand</i> Lit. 'The ball lies in the sand'	<i>Er hat den Ball in den Sand gelegt</i> Lit. 'He has laid the ball into the sand'
	Geotopographical location	<i>Köln liegt am Rhein</i> Lit. 'Cologne lies at the Rhine'	
metaphorical	Abstract entities	<i>Die Verantwortung liegt bei dir</i>	<i>Die Verletzten legten ihre Hoffnung in die Hände der Helfer</i>

		Lit. 'The responsibility lies with you'	Lit. 'The wounded laid their hope in the hands of the helpers' <i>Den Fokus/den Akzent/den Schwerpunkt auf etwas legen</i> Lit. 'to lay the focus/the accent/the emphasis on something'
	Scale	<i>Der Punkt liegt auf der Gerade</i> Lit. 'The point lies on the line'	<i>Er setzt den Punkt auf die Gerade</i> Lit. 'He sets the point on the line'
other	(Reflexive use, but similar semantics)		<i>Der Nebel legt sich über die Stadt (REFL)</i> Lit. 'The fog lays itself over the town' <i>Der Streit/die Aufregung legt sich (REFL)</i> Lit. 'The quarrel/The upset lays itself'

### Appendix III

Table 4: The semantic uses of *sitzen* and *setzen*

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>sitzen</i>	<i>setzen</i>
postural	Be in a sitting position	<i>Ein Ehepaar sitzt am Tisch</i> Lit. 'The couple sits at the table' <i>Das Baby sitzt auf der Kommode</i> Lit. 'The baby sits on the dresser'	<i>Das Ehepaar setzte sich an den Tisch</i> Lit. 'The couple sat down at the table' <i>Die Mutter setzt das Baby auf die Kommode</i> Lit. 'The mother sets the baby on the dresser'
locational	Location of small animals (+ insects)	<i>Wieviele Vögel sitzen im Baum?</i> Lit. 'How many birds sit in the tree?' <i>Eine Fliege sitzt auf dem Kuchen</i> Lit. 'A fly sits on the cake'	<i>Das Rotkehlchen setzt sich in den Baum</i> Lit. 'The robin sits down in the tree' <i>Die Fliege setzt sich auf den Kuchen</i> Lit. 'The fly sits down on the cake'
	Containment  (+ Affiliation)	<i>Er sitzt im Gefängnis</i> Lit. 'He sits in prison' <i>Der Schmerz sitzt in dem Bauch</i> Lit. 'The pain sits in the stomach' <i>Er sitzt im Parlament</i> Lit. 'He sits in parliament' (= is a member of parliament)	<i>Die Polizei setzte den Kriminellen ins Gefängnis</i> Lit. 'The police set the criminal guy in prison' <i>Der Chirurg setzt eine Prothese in die Hüfte</i> Lit. 'The surgeon sets a prosthesis in the hip'
	Contact	<i>Die Brille sitzt schief auf der Nase</i> Lit. 'The glasses sit crooked on the nose' <i>Das Messer sitzt an der Kehle</i> Lit. 'The knife sits at the throat'	<i>Er setzt die Brille auf die Nase</i> Lit. 'He sets the glasses on the nose' <i>Der Bandit setzte ein Messer an ihre Kehle</i> Lit. 'The bandit set the knife at the throat'
metaphorical	Containment	<i>Er sitzt in der Falle/in den Problemen</i>	<i>Er hat sein Vertrauen in seine Schwester gesetzt</i>

		Lit. 'He sits in the trap/in the problems'	Lit. 'He has set his confidence in his sister'
	Contact	<i>Das Kleid sitzt nicht</i> Lit. 'The skirt does not sit' (= 'does not fit')	
	Written text	<i>Ein Komma steht zwischen den Wörtern</i> Lit. 'A comma stands between the words'	<i>Der Lehrer setzte ein Komma zwischen die Wörter</i> Lit. 'The teacher set a comma between the words' <i>Einen Diskussionspunkt auf die Tagesordnung setzen</i> Lit. 'To put a discussion point on the agenda'
Synonym of <i>bringen</i>		<i>In Kopie stehen/sein</i> <i>In Bewegung sein</i> <i>In Verbindung stehen</i> <i>In Verlegenheit sein</i>  <i>In Kenntnis stehen?</i> <i>Unter Druck stehen</i>  <i>Jmd steht vor der Tür</i>	<i>In Kopie/cc. setzen</i> <i>In Bewegung setzen</i> <i>In Verbindung setzen</i> <i>In Verlegenheit setzen</i> <i>Einen Motor in Gang setzen</i> <i>In Kenntnis setzen</i> <i>Unter Druck setzen</i> <i>Ein Gerücht in die Welt setzen</i> <i>Jmd vor die Tür setzen</i>

## Appendix IV

Table 5: The semantic uses of *stecken*

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>stecken</i>	<i>stecken</i>
postural	Be/Put into a reduced and tight space	<i>Der Schlüssel steckt im Schloss</i> Lit. 'The key is stuck in the keyhole'	<i>Ich habe den Schlüssel ins Schloss gesteckt</i> Lit. 'I have stuck the key into the keyhole'
locational	Tight Containment	<i>Der Brief steckt im Kasten (DWDS)</i> Lit. 'The letter is stuck in the letter-box' <i>Der Splitter steckte noch in der Wunde (DWDS)</i> Lit. 'The splint was still stuck in the wound' <i>Die FüÙe stecken in derben Schuhen (DWDS)</i> Lit. 'The feet are stuck in heavy shoes' <i>Der Wagen steckt im Schlamm</i> Lit. 'The car is stuck in the mud' (tight)	<i>Der Briefträger steckte den Brief in den Kasten</i> Lit. 'The postman stuck the letter into the box' <i>Er steckte die Zigarre in den Mund (DWDS)</i> Lit. 'He stuck the cigar into the mouth' <i>Die Bauarbeiter steckten Pfähle in die Erde (DWDS)</i> Lit. 'The workmen stuck poles into the ground/earth'

	Tight Contact	<i>Der Ring steckt am Finger</i> (DWDS) Lit. 'The ring is stuck at the finger'	<i>Sie steckte den Ring an den Finger</i> Lit. 'She stuck the ring to the finger'
metaphorical	Tight Containment	<i>Sie steckt tief in der Arbeit</i> (DWDS) Lit. 'She is deeply stuck in (the) work'  <i>In diesem Projekt steckt viel Geld</i> Lit. 'In this project much money is stuck'	<i>Sie steckt viel Arbeit in dieses Geschäft</i> (DWDS) Lit. 'She sticks much work in this business'  <i>Gewaltige Mittel in die Forschung stecken</i> Lit. 'To stick enormous resources into research'
	Tight Contact	<i>Was steckt hinter dem Mord?</i> Lit. 'What sticks behind the murder?'	


### Notes:

1. I thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this article. I am also grateful to the editor-in-chief, Prof. Nataliya Panasenکو, for offering me the possibility to publish my research in *Lege Artis. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow*.

2. Most examples have been found in the *Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache* (DWDS). In this case, they are quoted with the source. This list of examples is completed by examples collected by the author of this paper, in which case no source is quoted.

3. As suggested by one of the reviewers, onions do not have a base, but *stellen* is probably triggered by the glass of jam.

4. There are other caused motion constructions which express fictive motion and which are used with non-motion verbs, e.g., *Er boxt sich schon durch*, lit. 'He boxes himself through', meaning 'He will fight and manage in the end'; or *Ronaldo köpft Portugal ins Halbfinale*, Lit. 'Ronaldo heads Portugal into the final', meaning 'Ronaldo brings/takes Portugal into the final by heading the ball' (examples from Gallez & De Knop 2016). But these verbs have to express a manner.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contact data</b></p> <p>Sabine De Knop,  Professor of the German  language and linguistics, Head  of the Department of modern  Germanic languages  Université Saint-Louis  Blvd. du Jardin botanique 43  B 1000 Brussels, Belgium  e-mail:  <a href="mailto:sabine.deknop@usaintlouis.be">sabine.deknop@usaintlouis.be</a>  Website:  <a href="http://www.usaintlouis.be/sl/100078.html">http://www.usaintlouis.be/sl/100078.html</a></p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fields of interest</b></p> <p>Cognitive Linguistics,  construction grammar,  applications of  cognitive linguistics and  construction grammar,  language typology,  phraseology,  pedagogical grammar  and metaphor, color  terms</p>
---	---	---

### Résumé in English

Several studies have described the semantic uses of German posture verbs, but only few have dealt with German placement verbs. The present study wants to make up for this gap. Starting from a collection of examples from the core corpora of the *Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache* (DWDS) and some former studies on posture verbs, it first describes the variety of the most common German placement verbs *stellen* ('to put upright'), *legen* ('to lay down'), *setzen* ('to set') and *stecken* ('to stick'). Posture and placement verbs are used in different constructions, which in the framework of Goldberg's (1995; 2006) Construction Grammar are semantically and syntactically related to each other by so-called inheritance links. Placement verbs are used in caused motion constructions, whereas posture verbs appear in intransitive motion constructions. This model makes it possible to describe both types of constructions and their instantiations with the corresponding verbs in parallel, which is a more integrative approach than starting from a simple description of the semantic and syntactic use of the verbs. In the second part, the article further adopts a cross-linguistic and typological perspective and focuses on possible difficulties encountered by French speakers when learning German placement verbs. But their description in larger sequences like

constructions and in parallel with the semantic use of posture verbs allows for a more efficient learning. Additionally, the learning process can be fostered by exercises based on 'embodiment'. The paper makes a few suggestions for a teaching methodology based on such an approach.

**Keywords:** placement verbs, posture verbs, corpus study, semantic uses, construction grammar, caused motion construction, intransitive motion construction, foreign language learning, foreign language teaching, embodied learning, French learners, German.

### **Résumé in German**

Mehrere Studien haben sich mit dem semantischen Gebrauch der deutschen Positionsverben befasst, viel seltener wurden die Gebrauchsmöglichkeiten der deutschen Lokalisierungsverben beschrieben. Die folgende Studie möchte dies nachholen. Ausgehend von einer Beispielsammlung aus dem Kernkorpus des *Digitalen Wörterbuchs der Deutschen Sprache* (DWDS) und einigen Studien über Positionsverben beschreibt der Beitrag die Auswahl an den gebräuchlichsten deutschen Lokalisierungsverben *stellen*, *legen*, *setzen* und *stecken*. Die Positions- und Lokalisierungsverben treten in unterschiedlichen Konstruktionen auf, die im Rahmen des Goldbergischen (1995; 2006) Modells der Konstruktionsgrammatik dank so genannter Vererbungsbeziehungen semantisch und syntaktisch miteinander verbunden sind. Lokalisierungsverben werden in kausalen Bewegungskonstruktionen benutzt, während Positionsverben in intransitiven Bewegungskonstruktionen vorkommen. Das Modell der Konstruktionsgrammatik ermöglicht es, beide Konstruktionstypen, deren Instanziierungen und die passenden Verben parallel zu beschreiben. Der zweite Teil des Beitrags nimmt eine kontrastive und typologische Perspektive ein und fokussiert auf mögliche Schwierigkeiten, die Französischsprechende beim Erlernen der deutschen Lokalisierungsverben erfahren können. Eine Beschreibung dieser Verben in

umfangreicheren Sequenzen wie Konstruktionen und zusammen mit den semantischen Gebrauchsmöglichkeiten der Positionsverben kann zu einem leichteren Erlernen der Verben führen. Der Lernprozess kann weiter durch Übungen, die auf Körpererfahrungen (engl. 'Embodiment') beruhen, gefördert werden. Der Artikel macht einige Vorschläge in dieser Richtung.

**Stichwörter:** Lokalisierungsverben, Positionsverben, korpusbasierte Studie, semantische Gebrauchsmöglichkeiten, Konstruktionsgrammatik, kausale Bewegungskonstruktion, intransitive Bewegungskonstruktion, Fremdsprachenlernen, Fremdsprachenunterricht, "verkörpertes" Lernen (englisch: 'Embodiment'), französischsprechende Lerner, Deutsch.

### **Résumé in French**

Plusieurs études ont décrit l'emploi sémantique des verbes de position allemands, mais rares sont celles qui ont traité des verbes allemands de placement. Cette étude se propose de combler cette lacune. Elle part d'une collection d'exemples des corpora principaux du *Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache (DWDS)* et de quelques premières études sur les verbes de position pour décrire la variété des verbes de placement allemands les plus courants, soit *stellen* ('mettre debout'), *legen* ('coucher'), *setzen* ('asseoir') et *stecken* ('fourrer'). Les verbes de position et de placement sont utilisés dans des constructions différentes, mais qui, dans le modèle des grammaires de constructions de Goldberg (1995; 2006), sont apparentées tant au niveau syntaxique qu'au niveau sémantique par des liens hiérarchiques (en anglais, 'inheritance links'). Les verbes de placement sont utilisés dans les constructions causales de mouvement, tandis que les verbes de position apparaissent dans les constructions intransitives de mouvement. Ce modèle permet de décrire les deux types de constructions et leurs instances avec les verbes correspondants en parallèle et dans une approche plus intégrative. Dans la deuxième partie de cet article, l'analyse prend une tournure

contrastive et typologique en se concentrant sur les difficultés que peuvent rencontrer des apprenants francophones quand ils apprennent les verbes de placement allemands. Leur analyse dans des séquences linguistiques plus grandes, telles des constructions, alliée à la description de la sémantique des verbes de position permet un apprentissage plus efficace des verbes de placement. De plus, le processus d'apprentissage peut être favorisé par des exercices basés sur la concrétisation corporelle (anglais: 'embodiment'). L'article propose quelques suggestions pour une didactique des langues basée sur une telle approche.

**Mots-clés:** verbes de placement, verbes de position, étude de corpus, emplois sémantiques, grammaires de constructions, construction causale de mouvement, construction intransitive de mouvement, apprentissage des langues étrangères, didactique des langues étrangères, 'embodiment', apprenants français, allemand.

### **Résumé in Russian**

В научных исследованиях уже неоднократно поднималась тема семантического использования немецких стальных глаголов. При этом лишь немногие исследования были посвящены немецким каузативным глаголам. Задача данной работы – восполнить этот пробел. В первой части статьи на примерах из основного корпуса Электронного Словаря Немецкого Языка (DWDS) и некоторых предыдущих исследований стальных глаголов показано разнообразие использования самых распространённых каузативных глаголов: *stellen* (ставить), *legen* (класть), *setzen* (сажать), *stecken* (втыкать). Стальные и каузативные глаголы используются в отличных друг от друга структурах, которые, согласно "Конструктивной грамматике" Голдберг (1995; 2006), синтаксически и семантически связаны между собой так называемой связью наследования. Каузативные глаголы являются частью каузативных конструкций движения, а стальные глаголы используются в непереходных конструкциях



движения. Данная схема отражает коррелятивные отношения каузативных и статальных глаголов. Этот подход является более интегративным в сравнении с простым описанием синтаксического и семантического употребления глаголов. Во второй части статьи рассматриваются кросс-лингвистические и типологические факторы, в частности, сложности, которые могут возникать у носителей французского языка при изучении немецких глаголов положения. Однако восприятие этих глаголов в более широком контексте и одновременно понимание их семантического употребления позволяет сделать обучение более эффективным. Кроме того, выполнение упражнений, основанных на принципе "воплощённого сознания", может помочь ускорить процесс обучения.

**Ключевые слова:** каузативные глаголы, статальные глаголы, корпусная лингвистика, семантическое использование, конструктивная грамматика, каузативные конструкции движения, непереходные конструкции движения, изучение иностранных языков, преподавание иностранных языков, воплощённое сознание, франкоязычные ученики, немецкий язык.

Article was received by the editorial board 27.09.16;

Reviewed 9.10.16. and 10.10.16.

Similarity Index 6%.