

Areal Variation in Case Government

of the German verb *vergessen* 'to forget' in contrast with Czech *zapomínat/zapomenout* 'to forget'

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Institutional Context

- CENTRAL** -Kolleg
"Empirical Perspectives on area-typological Phenomena of language contact and language change"
- SFB "German in Austria"** /PP06
„German and the Slavic languages in Austria – Aspects of language contact“

Context and Questions

Point of departure

The **case variation** of German *vergessen* 'to forget' in Austria is usually explained as a result of **intense language contact with Czech.**

Research questions:

- R1)** Is the construction *vergessen* [*auf* + acc] restricted to German in Austria (DiÖ)?
- R2)** Do the patterns of case variation of the equivalents of 'to forget' correspond in Czech (Č) and DiÖ? Is a contact explanation therefore possible?

parallel constructions in Č and DiÖ germ. *auf* ~ cz. *na* 'on'

Deutsches Referenzkorpus – DeReKo

- C1)** year: 2010–2015
area: D, A, CH, L
genre: newspapers/magazines
size: 715.338.107 tokens
hits: 2164 (*vergessen* [*auf* + acc])
- C2)** year: 2010
area: A(ustria)
genre: selected newspapers/magazines
size: 11.217.843 tokens
hits: 999 (*vergessen*)

Corpora, Grammatical Constructions

accusative argument (acc)

vergessen [+ acc]*
zapomínat (ipf.) / *zapomenout* (pf.) [+acc]*

prepositional argument (praep)

vergessen [*auf* + acc]**
zapomínat (ipf.) / *zapomenout* (pf.) [*na* + acc]*

Český národní korpus – SYN2015 (subcorpus)

- C3)** year: 2010
genre: newspapers/magazines (all)
size: 7,981,747 tokens
hits: 961 (*zapomínat/zapomenout*)

* standard varieties / ** colloquial (standard) variety of DiÖ

Areal distribution within German (R1/C1)

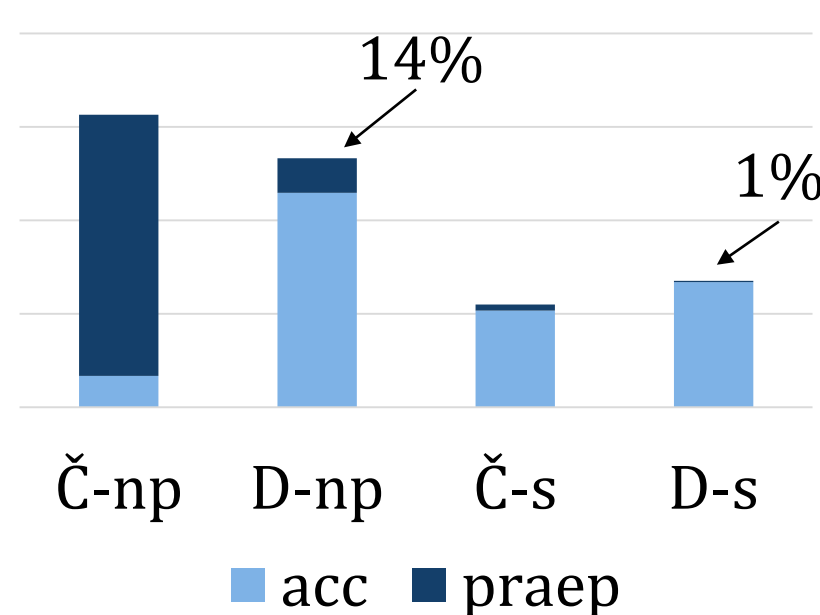
Search query: *vergessen* + *auf*

Treffer	rel. Häuf.	Texte	von	bis	Land
1.539	6.323 pMW	1.506	2010	2015	A
218	1.028 pMW	205	2010	2015	CH
363	1.566 pMW	340	2010	2015	D
44	1.563 pMW	42	2010	2015	L
2.164	3.025 pMW	2.093	2010	2015	4 Länder

→ High relative frequency of *vergessen* [*auf* + acc] in DiÖ.

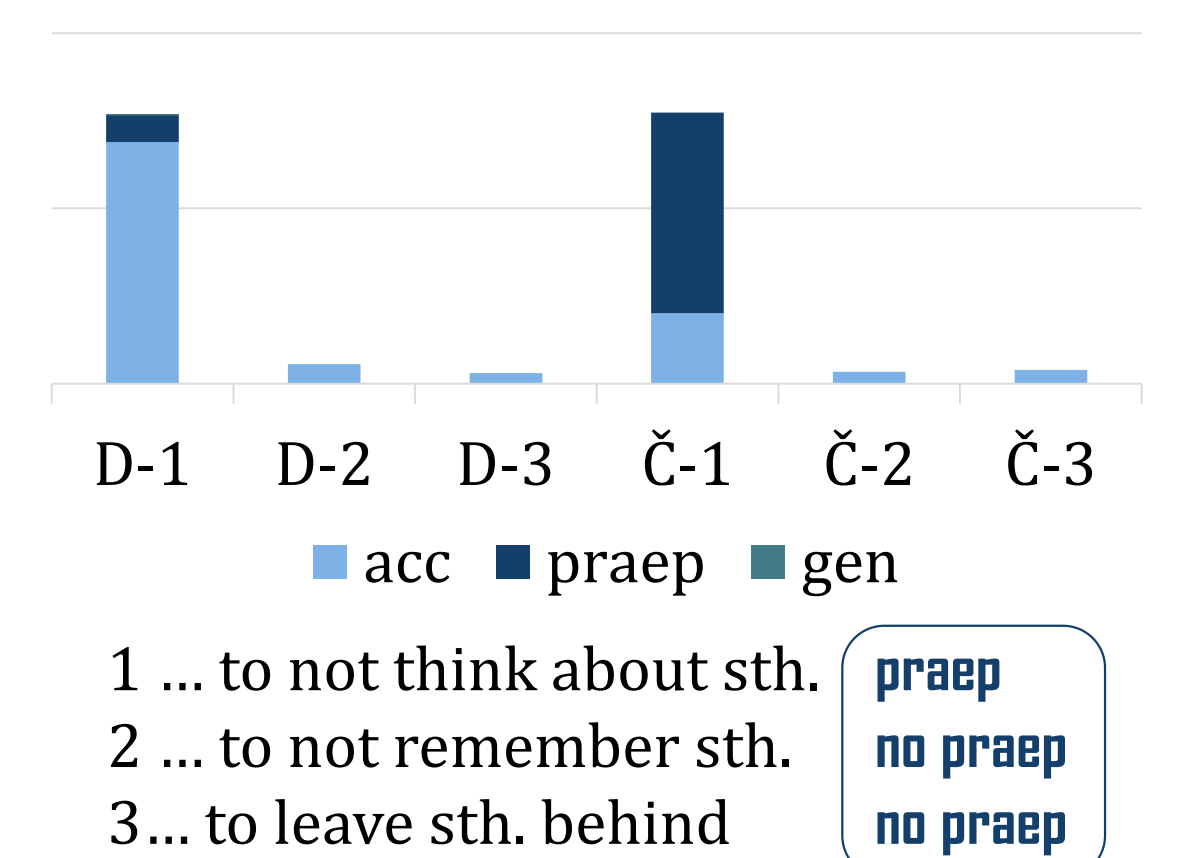
Results in Contrast

Object realization (R2/C2, C3)



TENDENCY:
np: (more) praep
s: no praep

Semantical distribution in DiÖ and Č (R2/C2, C3)



- ... to not think about sth. **praep**
- ... to not remember sth. **no praep**
- ... to leave sth. behind **no praep**

Answers to our research questions

- R1)** Yes, the construction *vergessen* [*auf* + acc] is significantly more frequent in DiÖ.
- R2)** The praep-construction occurs with the same semantics and preferably with NP-object realisation in DiÖ and Č.

Conclusions

To be done ...

Contact perspective
diachronical (corpus) analysis, development, source language?

(Area-)typological perspective
distribution in other German varieties, contrast with other languages

References:

Český národní korpus, SYN2015
Deutsches Referenzkorpus DeReKo-2015-II
For detailed references see our handout.

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This handout complements the poster with the same title, that was presented on April, 28th 2017 at the *Linguist(ic)s Prague 2017* (<http://linguisticsprague.ff.cuni.cz/>). It adds a bibliography and gives examples for the meanings.

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Meanings

cf. meaning 1 on the poster (CONTINUUM)	to not think	to not think about something accidentally/at a certain point in time	activity	+ cognition-oriented
			object	+ accessible
		German example (BVZ, 13. 01. 2010)	Czech example (Sedmička, 42/2010)	
		<i>Man schiebt das Problem so lange vor sich her, bis man es vergisst.</i>	<i>Po nějaké době jsem na to ale zapomněl a vzpomněl jsem si na to až docela nedávno.</i>	
		‘You keep putting off that problem until you forget about it.’	‘After a while I forgot about it and I was not able to remember it until a while ago.’	
	to not consider	to not consider something (information) in the context of/with regard to another action	activity	+ cognition-oriented
			object	+ accessible
		German example (Profil, 28. 06. 2010)	Czech example (Hospodářské noviny, 28. 05. 2010)	
		<i>Man darf nicht vergessen, dass Kindern oft die Fähigkeit fehlt zu artikulieren, was sie erleben.</i>	<i>Řekl bych, že na tuto úroveň se dostaneme za dalších dvanáct měsíců, ale nesmíme zapomínat, že trh se mění.</i>	
		‘One should not forget that children are often not capable of expressing what they have experienced.’	‘I would say, that at this level we will make through another twelve months, but we must not forget, that the market changes.’	
	to not commemorate	to not commemorate a (important) person or event	activity	+ cognition-oriented
			object	+ accessible
German example (Falter, 13. 01. 2010)		Czech example (Právo, 07. 04. 2010)		
<i>Der Komponist Eric Zeisl (1905-1959) ist im Grunde vergessen.</i>		<i>Na italského komunistu se totiž zapomnělo.</i>		
	‘The composer Eric Zeisl (1905-1959) is basically forgotten.’	‘The Italian communist is actually forgotten.’		
to miss to do something	to accidentally miss to do something that should be done	activity	- cognition-oriented	
		object	+ accessible	
	German example (Falter, 13. 01. 2010)	Czech example (Maminka, 5/2010)		
	<i>Beinahe hätte das Paar wegen des ganzen Trubels die Unterschrift im Ehebuch vergessen.</i>	<i>Dělají chyby z nepozornosti – v diktátech zapomínají na háčky a čáčky.</i>		
	‘The married couple would have almost forgotten about the signature in the book.’	‘They make mistakes due to carelessness – in dictations, they forget about the carons and acutes.’		

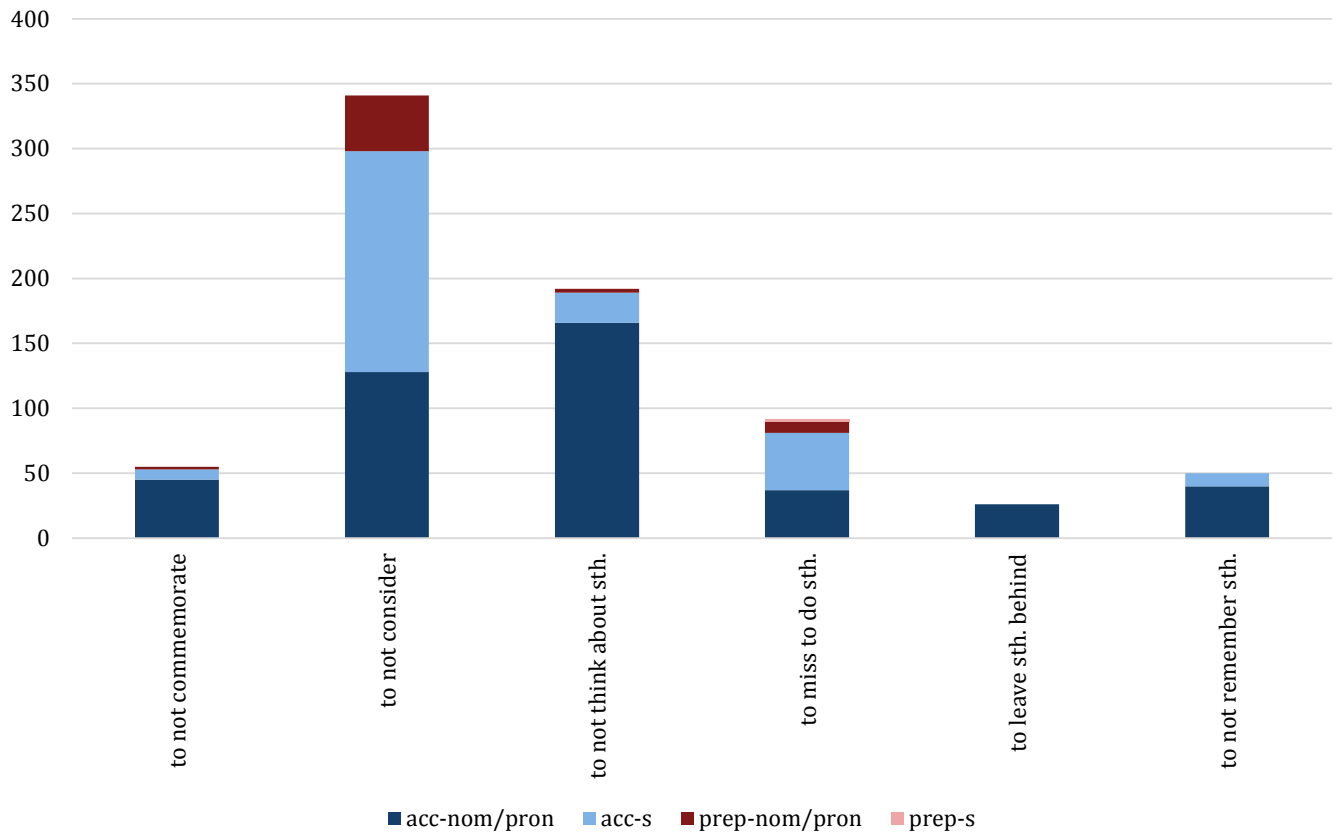
cf. meaning 1 on the poster (CONTINUUM)	to let be	to let something be/to generally not do something	activity	- cognition-oriented	
		German example	object	+ accessible	
		<i>not classified</i>	Czech example (Elle, 2/2010)	<i>Letos tedy zapomeňte na francouzskou manikúru.</i> 'Forget about French nails this season.'	
	to not happen	to not happen in the future (anymore)/to happen with a very low probability	activity	- cognition-oriented	
		German example	object	+ accessible	
		<i>not classified</i>	Czech example (Mladá fronta dnes, 27. 09. 2010)	<i>[...] protože cestu vám bude otevírat zelená vlna na semaforech? Zapomeňte!</i> '[...] because you will encounter a green wave on your way (i. e. all traffic lights will be green)? Forget about it! (i. e. That's not going to happen!).'	
cf. meaning 2 on the poster	to not remember	to not remember a piece of information in a context, in which it is needed	activity	+ cognition-oriented	
		German example (Falter, 10. 03. 2010)	object	- accessible	
		<i>Als ob man den Namen seines Babys vergessen würde.</i>	Czech example (Reflex, 24./2010)	<i>Když se vám to podaří, rychle si sen zapište, než ho zapomenete.</i>	
		'As if you forgot your baby's name.'	'If you manage to do so, write down your dream quickly, before you forget it.'		
cf. meaning 3 on the poster	to leave	to leave something behind	activity	- cognition-oriented	
		German example (Profil, 26 04. 2010)	object	- accessible	
		<i>Angeblich wurde das Handy in einer Bar vergessen.</i>	Czech example (Praktická moderní žena, 3/2010)	<i>EXTRA VELKÝ DISPLEJ! I KDYŽ SI ZAPOMENETE BRÝLE, VŽDYCKY BUDETE VĚDĚT, KOLIK VÁŽÍTE...</i>	
		'Allegedly the mobile phone was forgotten in a bar.'	'Extra-large display! Even if you forget your glasses, you will still always know, how much you weigh...'		

The following two categories are not included in the statistics presented on the poster:

	to loose control	to not be able to control oneself	activity		
			object		
		German example (Profil, 25. 10. 2010)	Czech example (Mladá fronta Dnes, 27. 09. 2010)		
		<i>Bitte, Herr Direktor, jetzt vergessen Sie sich.</i>	<i>Hráči vpředu se proti Liberci zapomínali.</i>		
		'I beg your pardon, Sir, you are losing control.'	'The players in the front lost control against Liberec.'		
	to not forgive/to thank	to not forgive somebody something / to (repeatedly) thank somebody for something	activity		
			object		
		German example (Profil, 06. 09. 2010)	Czech example (Blesk pro ženy, 38/2010)		
		<i>Das vergesse ich ihm nie, weil es mir sehr geholfen hat...</i>	<i>Já už jsem stará a občas mu je zapomenu druhý den.</i>		
		'I will never forget [what he has done for me], because it has been a great help...'	'I am old already and every so often will forgive him right on the next day.'		

Please note, that these semantic categories were developed during the classification process as prototypical categories with fuzzy edges. Therefore, many examples could not easily be classified. Especially those summarized as “meaning 1” on the poster form a continuum. Therefore, the proportions in the two corpora should not be compared against each other. We currently consider developing a test design in order to delimit the categories. The following diagrams depict the total distribution of the constructions in our corpora.

Constructions in C2 (German in Austria)



Constructions in C3 (Czech)

