

Evidence for the relevance of secondary stress in German: Prosodic restrictions in verbal prefixation with *ver-*

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This contribution deals with secondary stress in Modern Standard German (MSG) and its relevance in prefixation using the verbal prefix *ver-*. (1a) exemplifies the prosodic patterns allowing for prefixation with *ver-* (*ver*+stressed syllable or *ver*+schwa). By contrast, in (1b) affixation is "blocked" (*ver*+unstressed syllable) proving in this way the influence of secondary stress in MSG (see also Kaltenbacher 1999).

(1) Blocking related to prefixation with *ver-*

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|----|--|-----------------------------------|
| a. | <i>spielen</i> -> <i>verspielen</i> | <i>ver</i> +primary stress |
| | 'to play', 'to game away' | |
| | <i>telefonieren</i> -> <i>vertelefonieren</i> | <i>ver</i> +secondary stress |
| | 'to phone', 'to spend money/time on the phone' | |
| | <i>G[ə]wält</i> -> <i>verg[ə]wältigen</i> | <i>ver</i> +schwa |
| | 'violence', 'to violate' | |
| b. | <i>kopieren</i> -> * <i>verkopieren</i> | * <i>ver</i> +unstressed syllable |
| | 'to copy' | |

The data

I argue for initial secondary stress in MSG. In unprefixated verbs, secondary stress starts at the left edge in verbs with minimally two syllables preceding primary stress. Although it is difficult to diagnose acoustically secondary stress in MSG (cf. e.g. Kleber & Klipphahn 2006), there are several leads that point to its existence, for instance, ERP-studies (Knaus et al. 2011), emphatic stress shifts to this position (Berg 2008). Also stress preservation observed word-internally is overridden in initial contexts revealing the power of initial secondary stress, cf. e.g. *Rivale* 'rival' -> *Rivalit'üt* 'rivalry', **Rivàlit'üt* (Alber 1997, 1998). That being said, a pattern like 1b (*ver-kopieren*) can only arise by prefixation to a verb with only one syllable preceding primary stress (cf. 2a) or by prefix conversion of a noun/adjective with initially unstressed syllable (cf. 2b). Dictionary look-ups (Duden 2005, Krech et al. 2009, Mater 2006) show that in MSG only two antiquated verbs are enlisted with this pattern, both derived with the stress shifting suffix *+ieren* (*verlustieren* 'to amuse oneself' and *verschimpfieren* 'to denigrate').

By contrast, diachronical data reveals that in earlier stages this prosodic restriction was not as strong as in MSG. In the digital version of the DWb (Deutsches Wörterbuch, initiated by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm) 20 examples can be found in which *ver-* is attached to a base starting with an unstressed syllable (see also Henzen 1956):

(2) Outdated verbs prefixed with *ver-* (bases are still in use in MSG)

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|----|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. | <i>ver-maskieren</i> | (base: <i>maskieren</i> 'to mask') |
| b. | <i>ver-ballásten</i> | (base: <i>Ballást</i> 'ballast') |

All entries with pattern (2a) or (2b) enlisted in the DWB are not anymore present in modern dictionaries (besides the two above mentioned verbs). The consistency with which these verbs

are sorted out is a strong argument for the hypothesis that the relinquishment is due to a form of blocking related to the stress properties of the direct base.

Analysis

Kager (2000) demonstrates blocking in modern Dutch related to suffixes interacting with primary stress. I will apply Kager's analysis of prosodically conditioned blocking to the prefix *ver-* observing its interaction with secondary stress. The analysis assumes that the affix *ver-* needs a direct base with some initial prominence. The only (apparent) exception to this stress condition is a base containing a schwa syllable. I argue that schwa syllables are "invisible" for the stress seeking prefix. When considering initial prominence, the affix can skip the initial schwa (cf. e.g. *vèrg[ə]wáltigen* 'to rape') and thus, blocking is avoided. Only in this case, secondary stress is assigned to *ver-* for rhythmical reasons in order to avoid violation of *LAPSE. This shows that *ver-* is not lexically specified as unstressed and that the rhythmical constraint *LAPSE cannot be the reason for the exclusion of derivations like **verkopieren*. If it is possible to assign secondary stress to *ver-*, a perfectly alternating rhythm could arise also in verbs like **vèr.ko.píe.ren* but nonetheless these forms are sorted out in MSG.

Prefixation with *ver-* demonstrates that the stress properties of the base have to be taken into account also with regard to secondary stress. Data can count as further evidence for the existence and relevance of secondary stress in Modern Standard German and its interaction with morphology.

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