LEXICAL AND SYNTACTICAL CONSTRUCTIONS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BI-ANNUAL ICLA MEETING IN ALBUQUERQUE, JULY 1995

Edited by

MARJOLIJN VERSPOOR
University of Groningen

KEE DONG LEE
Yonsei University

EVE SWEETSER
University of California at Berkeley

Verb-First Constructions in German

Holger Diessel
State University of New York at Buffalo

1. Introduction

This paper examines a particular construction in German in which the finite verb occurs sentence-initially.* Examples of this construction, which I will call the *V-first construction,* are given in (1) and (2).

(1) *Kommst du zu unserer Party?*
    come you to our party
    'Will you come to our party?'

(2) *Gib mir den Schlüssel!*
    give me the key
    'Give me the key.'

The sentence in (1) is a *yes-no* question; example (2) shows an *imperative* sentence. Apart from yes-no questions and imperatives, a number of "minor sentence types" (Saddock and Zwicky 1985: 162), *exclamatives, optatives, hortatives, conditionals* and *sentences in short fiction* can be introduced by a finite verb in German (see below).

The word order of V-first constructions contrasts with the basic word order in German *declarative* sentences. In declarative sentences, the finite verb occurs in second position. The first position of declaratives can be filled by a variety of constituents, including the subject (3), the direct or indirect object (4), or a prepositional phrase (5).

(3) *Peter trinkt ein Bier.*
    Peter-SUBJ drink a beer
    'Peter is drinking a beer.'

(4) *Das Spiel haben wir verloren.*
    the game-OBJ have we lost
    'We have lost the game.'

(5) *Mit dem Fahrrad bist du schneller.*
    with the bicycle are you faster
    'You are faster with the bicycle.'

In this paper, I show that V-first constructions are used to realize a particular class of speech acts. My analysis challenges recent work on sentence-types in German (Meibauer 1987). In this work, sentence-types are defined as clusters of grammatical features that together express a certain function. Since most grammatical features occur with several different sentence types, it is assumed that only the combination of certain features is meaningful. The features themselves are characterized as "rein strukturelle Bausteine" [purely structural building blocks] that lack a direct meaning or function (Altmann 1987: 30). Contrary to this view, I argue that the position of the finite verb is not just a structural feature, but that a certain verb position is directly associated with a particular communicative function.

The theoretical framework that I will use for my analysis is *Construction Grammar* (see Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988; Fillmore and Kay 1994; Goldberg 1992; Koenig 1993; Koenig and Jurafsky 1994; Lakoff 1987). Construction Grammar emphasizes the notion of grammatical construction for linguistic analysis. A grammatical construction is a linguistic configuration in which a certain phonological and/or morphosyntactic structure is paired with specific semantic and/or pragmatic information. German V-first constructions are such form-function units that combine a certain syntactic property, namely a specific word order, with a particular illocutionary point and a particular quality of the propositional content.

Employing the framework of *Construction Grammar*, I will represent the common features of all different types of V-first constructions in a *general V-first construction*. This construction is *inherited* by imperatives, yes-no questions, and all other sentences in which the finite verb occurs initially. *Inheritance* is a technical term of Construction Grammar (and many other current frameworks) that designates a particular relationship between two constructions.[1] To simplify, a construction is (strictly)[2] inherited by another construction when the features of the less specific construction are entirely contained in the more specific construction.

The following section will describe the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of the general V-first construction. In Section 3 to Section 8, I will show that this construction is indeed inherited by all sentences in which the finite verb occurs initially.

2. The General V-First Construction

Syntactically, the general V-first construction is specified by a particular word order: the sentence-initial position of the finite verb. The semantic and pragmatic properties of this construction are not so straightforward. They become recognizable when V-first constructions are compared with sentences in which the finite verb is second.

V-second constructions are used with all different kinds of speech acts, including those that can be realized by V-first constructions. Compare the V-second constructions in (6) to (10) with the V-first constructions in (6') to (10'):

V-second construction	*V-first construction*
(6) *Das Buch gefällt dir?* the book like you 'You like the book?'	(6') *Gefällt dir das Buch?* like you the book 'Do you like the book?'
(7) *Das ist fantastisch!* that is fantastic 'That is fantastic!'	(7') *Ist das fantastisch!* is that fantastic 'That is fantastic!'
(8) *Wir sollten jetzt gehen.* we should now go 'We should go now.'	(8') *Gehen wir!* go we 'Let's go.'
(9) *Ich möchte, daß du kommst.* I want that you come 'I want you to come.'	(9') *Komm!* come 'Come!'
(10) *Ich wünschte, Tom wäre hier.* I wish Tom were here 'I wish Tom were here.'	(10') *Wäre Tom bloß hier.* were Tom MP here 'I wish Tom were here.'

These examples show that the use of V-second and V-first constructions overlaps. Every speech act that is framed in a V-first construction can also be realized by a V-second construction. Note, however, that the V-second constructions in (6) to (10) are structurally marked: (6) and (7) are realized with a marked intonation contour, (8) involves a modal verb in subjunctive, and in (9) and (10) the object is a complement clause rather than a simple noun phrase. The structural marking in these sentences reflects their marked functional status: none of the examples above represents the prototypical use of a V-second construction. A prototypical V-second construction is a basic declarative sentence that imparts *factual* information in an *assertive* speech act (see Wunderlich 1976: 123; Saddock and Zwicky 1985: 160; Oppenrieder 1987: 183; Givón 1990: 779).[3] An example is given in (11):

(11) *Das Buch kostet 20 Mark.*
the book costs 20 Deutsch Marks
'The book costs 20 Deutsch Marks.'

Unlike the marked V-second constructions in (6) to (10), the unmarked declarative sentence in (11) does not have a corresponding V-first construction. The meaning and force of the prototypical V-second construction cannot be expressed in a V-first construction. Thus, in a first step, we can describe V-first constructions in relation to the unmarked V-second construction as non-assertive speech acts that are not used to convey factual information.

The analysis that I will present in the following sections will draw upon central ideas of speech act theory that Searle has put forward in his taxonomy of illocutionary acts (Searle 1979). In order to distinguish a limited set of basic speech act classes, Searle suggested a number of speech act dimensions. The two central dimensions of his taxonomy are (i) the *illocutionary point* of a speech act, and (ii) the *direction-of-fit* between the words and the world.[4]

The illocutionary point designates the purpose of a speech act. Speech acts are used with varying intentions for different purposes: (1) to claim the truth of the information that is expressed in the propositional content (*assertive* speech act); (2) to get the hearer to do something (*directive* speech act); (3) to commit the speaker to a future action (*commissive* speech act); or (4) to express a psychological state of the speaker (*expressive* speech act).[5]

The other dimension, the direction-of-fit, specifies a central property of the propositional content. Speech acts in which the propositional content matches a state of affairs in the world have a *word-to-world* direction-of-fit. Speech acts that are used "to get the world to match the word" (Searle 1979: 3) show *world-to-word* matching. It has to be emphasized that the direction-of-fit does not establish a binary distinction. As Searle points out, there are "speech acts in which there is no direction-of-fit" (Searle 1979: 15). Thus, we have to assume at least three different values for this dimension.

Given the two basic speech act dimensions, we can describe the functional features of the general V-first construction as follows: The illocutionary point of V-first constructions is *non-assertive*; their direction-of-fit *does not allow for word-to-world* matching. The crucial properties of V-first and V-second constructions are informally stated in the two following box diagrams:

Prototypical V-second construction

syntax:	V-second
illocutionary point:	assertive
direction-of-fit:	word-to-world matching

V-first construction

syntax :	V-first
illocutionary point:	non-assertive
direction-of-fit:	no word-to-world matching

The negative character of my definition of V-first constructions reflects an important aspect of my analysis: it shows that the V-first construction is based on the V-second construction, which is the most common sentence form in German. The use of V-first constructions overlaps with non-central V-second constructions; however, both the form and function of the V-first construction contrast with the prototypical, default use of V-second constructions in basic declarative sentences. Thus, the V-first construction functions as a *natural complement* to the prototypical V-second construction.

The particular arrangement between V-first and V-second constructions in German is evidence for the *grammatical and cognitive ecology* that Lakoff characterizes as a fundamental property of the linguistic system (Lakoff 1987: 462-494). Following Lakoff, I assume that the grammatical constructions of a language are not a random collection of arbitrary form-function pairings. Grammatical constructions are systematically related among one another, and the form-function combination of non-central constructions is usually *based on* (or motivated by) the form-function combination of central constructions (Lakoff 1987: 464). The German V-first construction is based on the dominant V-second construction; it has an *ecological location* in the grammatical system of German, and its form-function relation is motivated by the form-function relation of the dominant V-second construction.

I now turn to the analysis of yes-no questions, imperatives and all other sentences that are introduced by a finite verb in German. I will describe the individual properties of each V-first construction, and I will show that the features of the general V-first construction are inherited by all its subtypes.

3. Yes-No Questions

There are two interrogative constructions in German: i) *informative* questions that are introduced by a question word (12), and ii) *yes-no* questions, realized by a V-first construction (13):

(12) *Was willst du?*
      what want you
      'What do you want?'

(13)   *Gehst du morgen zur Arbeit?*
       go-INDICATIVE you tomorrow to work
       'Will you go to work tomorrow?'

The finite verb that is used in a yes-no question is either a main verb (13) or an auxiliary of a complex verb phrase construction (14-15). The finite verb is fully inflected and can occur in the indicative (13-14) or the subjunctive (15). Yes-no questions are marked by a *rising intonation* contour that distinguishes this construction from all other sentences that are introduced by a finite verb in German.

(14)   *Hat Paul die Tür abgeschlossen?*
       have-INDICATIVE Paul the door locked
       'Did Paul lock the door?'

(15)   *Hätte er mir geholfen?*
       had-SUBJUNCTIVE he me helped
       'Would he have helped me?'

Questions, including yes-no questions, are a subtype of *directive* speech acts (Searle 1979: 14). Interrogatives are used by the speaker to get the addressee to answer his or her question. Questions can be defined as a request for an answer, that is, a request for a verbal response.

Yes-no questions are frequently used to realize indirect speech acts (Searle 1975: 60). The sentence in (16) shows, for instance, an interrogative sentence that is not merely meant as a question, but as a request for a non-verbal action.

(16)   *Kannst du mir das Salz bitte reichen?*
       can you me the salt please pass
       'Could you pass me the salt, please?'

Although the sentence in (16) is not used as a pragmatic question its illocutionary point is directive. However, extensions to other speech act classes occur, but they involve a pragmatic inference which is context dependent. Rhetorical questions, for instance, are non-directive speech acts, but their interpretation is based on a conversational implicature (Grice 1975) that is evoked by the context. This paper concentrates on the conventional features of V-first constructions; pragmatic inferences that extend the conventional use of V-first constructions to other speech act domains are beyond the scope of the present investigation.

The direction-of-fit of yes-no questions is *unspecified*. The speaker does not know whether the words of his or her question match a certain state of affairs in the world until the addressee has specified this relation in his or her answer.

Yes-no question

inherit:	V-first
syntax:	rising intonation
illocutionary point:	directive
direction-of-fit:	unspecified

4. Imperative Sentences

Imperative sentences are realized without an overt subject, and they employ a particular verb form.[6] Imperative sentences that are directed towards a single addressee are realized with a verb form that lacks any inflection (17). Imperatives that address a group of people are marked with the second person plural suffix '-t' (17').

(17)   *Geh!*   (17') *Geht!*
       go-SG   go-PL
       'Go!'   'Go!'

Like yes-no questions, imperative sentences function as *directive* speech acts. The examples in (18) to (21) show imperative sentences that realize different types of directive speech acts: (18) is a command, (19) is a request, (20) is a warning, and (21) is a recommendation.

(18)   *Schieß!*
       shoot
       'Shoot!'

(19)   *Bring mich bitte zum Flughafen!*
       bring me please to-the airport
       'Please, bring me to the airport!'

(20)   *Paß auf!*
       watch out
       'Watch out!'

(21)   *Nimm ein Taxi!*
       take a cab
       'Take a cab!'

The propositional content of an imperative construction denotes an action that the addressee is supposed to perform in the future (Wunderlich 1984: 101). If the hearer does what is expressed in the propositional content s/he will change some state of affairs in the world. The direction-of-fit of imperative sentences shows therefore *world-to-word* matching.

Imperative sentence

inherit:	V-first
syntax:	i. imperative verb form
	ii. no overt subject
illocutionary point:	directive
direction-of-fit:	world-to-word

5. Exclamative Sentences

There are at least three different exclamative constructions in German: (i) exclamatives that are introduced by an independent *daß* clause (22), (ii) exclamatives that involve a question word (23), and (iii) exclamatives that are realized by a V-first construction (24).

(22) *Daß dú dich hierher traust!*
      that you yourself here-to-me dare
      'You dare to come here!'

(23) *Wie kált es hier ist!*
      how cold it here is
      'It's cóld here!'

(24) *Hat ér vielleicht/aber ein Glück gehabt!*
      have he MP a luck had
      'What luck he had!'

Exclamative sentences are marked by an *emphatic accent* that distinguishes V-first exclamatives from all other V-first constructions (Oppenrieder 1987: 167). Furthermore, exclamatives frequently involve two modal particles (MP), *aber* and *vielleicht*, that are either impossible or not very common in other V-first constructions (Thurmair 1989: 190-195).

Exclamative sentences are used to express a psychological state of the speaker: surprise (25), pleasure (26), or a negative assessment (27). A psychologi-

cal state is expressed in an expressive speech act. The illocutionary point of exclamative sentences is, thus, *expressive*.

(25) *Hat das aber gut geklappt!*
      have that MP well worked
      'Did that work well!'

(26) *Bin ich vielleicht glücklich!*
      am I MP happy
      'Am I happy!'

(27) *Ist das vielleicht idiotisch!*
      is that MP stupid
      'That's stupid!'

In exclamative sentences there is no direction-of-fit. The illocutionary force of exclamatives *neutralizes* this dimension. Compare, for instance, the exclamative sentence in (28) with the parallel assertion in (29):

(28) *War dás aber ein spannender Film!*
      was that MP an exciting movie
      Thát was an (incredible) exciting movie.'

(29) *Das war ein spannender Film.*
      that was an exciting movie
      'That was an exciting movie.'

In (29) the speaker describes from a neutral perspective a certain state of affairs. It is claimed in this speech act that the information expressed in the propositional content matches a state of affairs in the world. The exclamative sentence in (28) does not involve such a claim. That there was a certain state of affairs that is relevant to this speech act is simply presupposed and hence not asserted. Based on the presupposed information the speaker expresses his/her subjective opinion. Searle (1979: 15) describes this as follows:

Notice that in expressives there is no direction-of-fit. In performing an expressive, the speaker is neither trying to get the world to match the words nor the words to match the world, rather the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed.

Exclamative sentence

inherit:	V-first

syntax:	i. emphatic accent
	ii. mod. part. *aber + vielleicht*
illocutionary point:	expressive
direction-of-fit:	neutralized

6. Optative Sentences

Scholz (1991) has shown that optative sentences constitute a further sentence-type in German. Two major optative constructions can be distinguished: i) optatives that are realized by an independent *wenn* clause (30), and ii) optatives that are a subtype of the general V-first construction (31).

(30) *Wenn er bloß käme.*
      if he MP would come
      'I wish he would come!'

(31) *Käme er bloß!*
      would come he MP
      'I wish he would come!'

Optative sentences are obligatorily marked by a subjunctive verb form (Scholz 1991: 58). Yes-no questions and exclamatives that include a verb in the subjunctive can have the same morphosyntactic form as an optative sentence. However, yes-no questions and exclamatives are formally distinct from optatives insofar as they are marked by suprasegmentals: a rising intonation contour (yes-no questions) and a contrastive accent (exclamatives). Furthermore, optative sentences mostly include certain modal particles, *bloß, nur* and *doch* (and their combination) that never occur in exclamatives or yes-no questions (Thurmair 1989: 49).

Optatives express "the speaker's wishes" (Saddock and Zwicky 1985: 164), and it is implied in an optative sentence that the speaker has no influence on the realization of the desired situation (Oppenrieder 1987: 186). The illocutionary point of an optative sentence is, thus, *expressive* (Saddock and Zwicky 1985: 164; Scholz 1991: 235).

As in exclamatives, the (expressive) illocutionary point of optative sentences *neutralizes* the direction-of-fit of the propositional content.

Optative sentence

inherit:	V-first

syntax:	i. obligatory subjunctive
	ii. mod. part. *bloß, nur, doch*
illocutionary point:	expressive
direction-of-fit:	neutralized

7. Hortative Sentences

Hortatives are often considered a subtype of imperative sentences (Saddock and Zwicky 1985: 177; Winkler 1989: 7). They are formally marked by a subject constraint: the subject of hortatives is always the first person plural pronoun (nominative: *wir*).

(32) *Gehen wir!*
      go we-NOM
      'Let's go!'

A subtype of German hortative sentences involves the verb *lassen*. *Lassen*-hortatives are introduced by an imperative verb form followed by the accusative form of the first person plural pronoun, i.e. *uns*:

(33) *Laß uns gehen!*
      let we-ACC go
      'Let's go!'

Hortative sentences prompt the addressee to join the speaker in a future activity. Their illocutionary force is therefore *directive*.

The propositional content of hortative sentences refers to an action that the speaker and the addressee will perform in the future. If both the speaker and the addressee do what is expressed in the propositional content, their action gives rise to a new situation. Thus the direction-of-fit of hortatives shows *world-to-word* matching.

Hortative sentence

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│  ┌──────────────────────────────┐   │
│  │ inherit:        V-first       │   │
│  └──────────────────────────────┘   │
│  syntax:              1-PS-PL subject │
│  illocutionary point: directive       │
│  direction-of-fit:    world-to-word   │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```

8. V-First Constructions in Conditionals and Short Fiction

This final section is concerned with two V-first constructions that previous studies have analysed as subtypes of declarative sentences: V-first conditionals and V-first sentences in short fiction. I will discuss them in turn.

8.1. V-first conditional clauses

There are two types of V-first conditional clauses: (i) conditionals that have the form of a yes-no question (34), and (ii) conditionals that correspond to the form of an imperative sentence (35). In both types, the V-first construction is syntactically *dependent* on a following main clause.

(34) *Gibst du mir deine Telefonnummer, dann rufe ich dich morgen an.*
      give you me your telephone number then call I you tomorrow
      'If you give me your telephone number, I will call you tomorrow.'

(35) *Gib mir mein Geld zurück, oder ich rufe die Polizei.*
      give-IMP me my money back or I call the police
      'Give me my money back, or I will call the police!'

The information that is expressed in (non-counterfactual) conditional sentences is hypothetical: the speaker does not know whether the propositional content of the conditional sentence fits a state of affairs in the world. The direction-of-fit can have two different values: it is *unspecified* for conditional clauses with the form of yes-no questions (34), and it shows *world-to-word* matching in the case of conditional clauses that correspond to an imperative sentence (35). Thus, the direction-of-fit of V-first conditionals is of the same sort as in other V-first constructions.

The illocutionary point of this construction differs, however, from other V-first constructions. Conditional sentences can realize a variety of speech acts. They are frequently used as commissives or directives (36-39), but they also occur in assertions (39) (see Wunderlich 1976):

(36) *Verpaßt du den Bus, nimm ein Taxi.*
      miss you the bus take a cab
      'If you miss the bus take a cab.' (RECOMMENDATION)

(37) *Kommst du noch einmal zu spät, fliegst du raus.*
      come you more one time too late fly you out
      'If you are late again you'll be fired.' (THREAT)

(38) *Gerätst du in irgendwelche Schwierigkeiten, helfe ich dir.*
      get you into any difficulties help I you
      'If you get into any difficulties, I'll help you.' (PROMISE)

(39) *Sollte Licht in seinem Zimmer sein, ist er zu Hause.*
      should light in his room be is he at home
      'If there is a light on in his room, he must be at home.' (AS-
      SERTION)

It has to be emphasized that the illocutionary point of these examples is a property of the complex conditional sentence (i.e. of main and subordinate clause). The V-first construction realizes only one part of a conditional sentence, namely the protasis. The other part, the apodosis, occurs in the usual form of a main clause after a preceding subordinate clause. Together protasis and apodosis function as commissive, directive or assertive speech acts, but the V-first construction itself is not associated with any of these functions. V-first conditional clauses (i.e. the protasis) are subordinate clauses, and subordinate clauses lack an illocutionary point independent of the related main clause (Foley and Van Valin 1984: 240).[7] Thus, unlike all other V-first constructions, V-first conditional clauses do not have an illocutionary dimension. The following box diagram shows the features of a V-first conditional clause (i.e. the protasis); it does not represent the properties of a complex conditional sentence (i.e. protasis and apodosis together).

Conditional clause

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│  ┌──────────────────────────────┐   │
│  │ inherit:        V-first       │   │
│  └──────────────────────────────┘   │
│  syntax:              dependent on main clause │
│  illocutionary point: ----             │
│  direction-of-fit:    unspecified/world-to-word │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```

8.2. V-first constructions in short fiction

Oppenrieder (1987) observed that sentences in short fiction, especially in jokes, are frequently framed in V-first constructions (40). He classified these V-first constructions as a subtype of declarative sentences (Oppenrieder 1987: 179).

(40) *Kommt ein Mann in den Laden und fragt: "Wo ist der Bahnhof?"*
comes a man into the store and asks where is the station
'A man came into the store and asked: Where is the station?...'

Sagt die Frau hinter dem Tresen: "..."
says the woman behind the counter: "..."
The woman behind the counter said: "..."

Oppenrieder analyses V-first constructions in short fiction as V-second constructions in which the sentence-initial position is not filled by an overt constituent. He points out that the dummy subject *es* could be inserted before the verb, and he explains the missing initial constituent with the information structure of these sentences: V-first constructions do not include any given or old information which is usually encoded before the predicate. Oppenrieder assumes that the finite verb occurs initially because these sentences are "völlig rhematisch" [fully rhematic] (Oppenrieder 1987: 179).

If Oppenrieder's account were correct, one would expect to find V-first constructions in all different text types whenever a sentence is fully rhematic. But, as Oppenrieder points out, this type of V-first construction is restricted to a particular genre, namely to short fiction (Oppenrieder 1987: 179).[8] This restriction suggests that the use of this type of V-first construction depends on properties of this particular genre. Contrary to Oppenrieder, I claim that V-first constructions in short fiction are a further subtype of the general V-first construction.

Information that is expressed in short fiction and related genres is not supposed to match a situation in the real world. V-first constructions that occur in this particular genre indicate that the expressed information is non-referential. There is no direction-of-fit between the words of a joke and the facts in the world, and because this dimension is missing we find V-first constructions in this type of discourse.

Since V-first constructions in jokes and other short fiction are not intended to describe a real world event, they cannot be classified as assertions. As Searle points out, assertive speech acts "commit the speaker (in varying degrees)... to the truth of the expressed proposition" (Searle 1979: 12). Jokes and other short fiction are not told to claim, suggest, hypothesize or to deny the truth of the expressed information. Sentences being used in this genre are used to entertain and to amuse. I therefore classify these sentences as *entertaining* speech acts that are distinct from assertions.
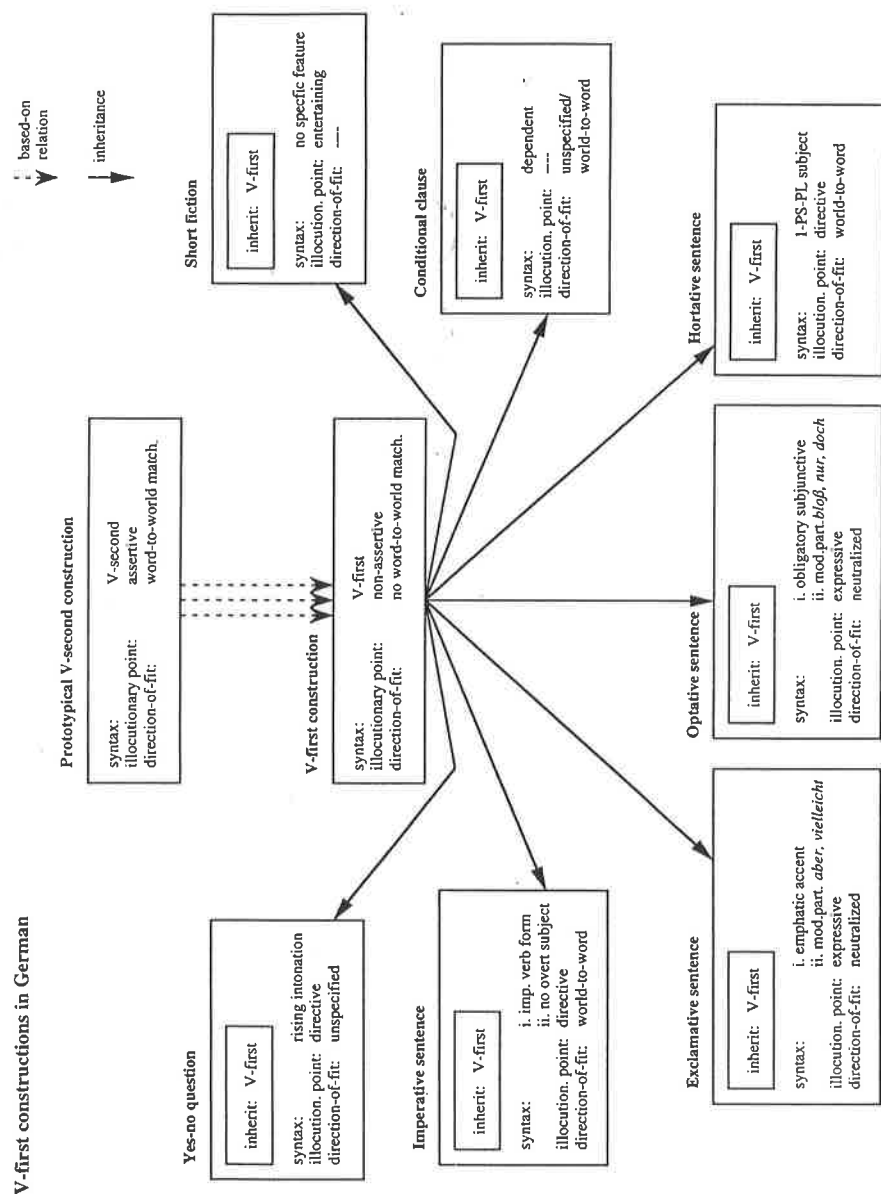
Short fiction

inherit:	V-first
syntax:	no specific feature
illocutionary point:	entertaining
direction-of-fit:	---

9. Conclusion

In this paper I have shown that German V-first constructions are used to realize a particular class of speech acts. Using the framework of Construction Grammar, I represented the common features of all sentences that are introduced by a finite verb in German in a general V-first construction. This construction combines a particular syntactic feature, namely the sentence-initial position of the finite verb, with a particular illocutionary point and a certain quality of the propositional content. V-first constructions are used to realize non-assertive speech acts in which the speaker is not commited to the truth of the propositional content. My analysis has shown that the features of the general V-first construction are inherited by all sentences in which the finite verb occurs initially: yes-no questions, imperatives, exclamatives, optatives, hortatives, conditionals and V-first sentences in short fiction.

The negative definition of the V-first construction reflects the ecological location of this construction in the grammatical system of German. I have argued that the form-function correspondence of the V-first construction is motivated by the dominant V-second construction. The use of V-first constructions overlaps with the non-central use of V-second constructions, but it contrasts with the default, prototypical usage of V-second constructions in basic declarative sentences. V-first constructions function as a natural complement to prototypical V-second constructions; they have an ecological location in the grammatical system of German. The basic results of this study are summarized in the diagram on the next page.

V-first constructions in German

based-on relation

inheritance

Prototypical V-second construction

syntax: V-second
illocutionary point: assertive
direction-of-fit: word-to-world match.

V-first construction

syntax: V-first
illocution. point: non-assertive
direction-of-fit: no word-to-world match.

Short fiction

inherit: V-first

syntax: no specific feature
illocution. point: entertaining
direction-of-fit: ——

Conditional clause

inherit: V-first

syntax: dependent
illocution. point: ——
direction-of-fit: unspecified/ world-to-word

Hortative sentence

inherit: V-first

syntax: 1-PS-PL subject
illocution. point: directive
direction-of-fit: world-to-word

Optative sentence

inherit: V-first

syntax: i. obligatory subjunctive ii. mod.part.*bloß, nur, doch*
illocution. point: expressive
direction-of-fit: neutralized

Exclamative sentence

inherit: V-first

syntax: i. emphatic accent ii. mod.part. *aber, vielleicht*
illocution. point: expressive
direction-of-fit: neutralized

Imperative sentence

inherit: V-first

syntax: i. imp. verb form ii. no overt subject
illocution. point: directive
direction-of-fit: world-to-word

Yes-no question

inherit: V-first

syntax: rising intonation
illocution. point: directive
direction-of-fit: unspecified

Endnotes

* I would like to thank Jean Pierre Koenig for his comments on an earlier version of this paper. All remaining errors are, of course, mine.
1. The equivalent notion in *Cognitive Grammar* is *schematicity* (Langacker 1988).
2. Flickinger, Pollard and Wasow (1985) distinguish default (or normal) inheritance from strict inheritance. In this paper I will only consider strict inheritance.
3. Some authors emphasize the quality of the propositional content while others focus on the illocutionary force of prototypical declarative sentences. I consider both aspects equally important.
4. Unlike Searle, cognitive linguists assume that linguistic expressions 'refer' to entities in a *mental model/space* of reality, rather than to reality or the 'world' itself (e.g. Fauconnier 1985).
5. Searle assumes one further type of illocutionary act, *declarative* speech acts, that are used in specific institutional contexts (Searle 1979: 26). Declaratives are of no relevance to my analysis.
6. Winkler (1989: 7) distinguishes four types of imperative sentences: (i) the central imperative construction that is described in the current section, (ii) *hortatives* that will be discussed in section 7, (iii) *Sie*-imperatives that are used when the addressee is unknown to the speaker or when s/he has a higher social status, and (iv) *Heischesätze* that are realized with a verb in the present subjucntive. All four types of imperative sentences are V-first constructions. *Sie*-imperatives and *Heischesätze* will not be discussed in this paper.
7. For a different view see Ducrot (1972) who analyses protasis and apodosis as two distinct speech acts.
8. V-first constructions occur in jokes, anecdotes and other related text types. They are not used in short narrations, reports or descriptions that are based on a real world event.

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