Revisiting *wieder*: a restitutive prefix and its coerced object

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Starting with von Stechow’s (1996) structural account of the repetitive-restitutive ambiguity of the German adverb *wieder* ‘again’, we investigate its hitherto unstudied verbal prefix counterpart as in *wiederaufstehen* ‘resurrect’. As it is string-identical to the syntactic adverb plus verb, we use deverbal nominalizations like *Wiederaufstehung* ‘resurrection’ to avoid confusion. *Wieder*-prefixes occur for the most part with prefixed or particle verbs and often is the prefix/particle obligatory, see for instance *Wieder*(er)öffnung ‘reopening’. A few cases without additional prefix/particle exist (e.g. *Wiederkehren* ‘returning’). After a series of tests, we observed that only restitutive readings are available, suggesting that prefixal *wieder* does not modify the event denoted by the verb but rather a structurally represented result state (*pace* Lieber’s 2004:147 account of English verbal prefix *re-*). This observation raises the expectation that *wieder*-prefixation is unavailable with activity verbs (unlike the homophonous syntactic adverb). Minimal pairs like *Wiederschlafen* vs. *Wiedereinschlafen* confirm this prediction. Furthermore, prefixal *wieder* requires an object (transitive object or object of unaccusative, cf. Horn 1980 on English *re-*)? As many German verbs appear to form unaccusatives by means of prefixes or particles, their preponderance with *wieder* is not surprising. We adopt a DM-style analysis of Marantz (2007) according to which the restitutive prefix directly selects the (underlying) object DP or *pro* (in nominalizations) respectively. Semantically, the DP/*pro* is coerced from an expression of type *e* into a change of state event. *Wieder* adds the presupposition that the end state, which is part of the coerced change-of-state denotation of the DP, has existed before. Various units in the structure name the result state. After an informal semantic characterization, the cross- and intra-linguistic (un)availability of forms is considered.

**References:**  
• Marantz, A. (2007): Restitutive re- and the first phase syntax/semantics of the VP. Ms.  

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