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1 Historical Background

German, together with English, Frisian and Dutch (including **Flemish and Afrikaans**), is a member of the West Germanic group within the Germanic branch of Indo-European. It is currently used by **between 95-100 million native speakers worldwide and by over 10 million second language speakers**. An estimated 75-100 million people have received some form of instruction in German as a foreign language. Almost 88 million of the German native speakers are citizens of one of the central European countries or regions in which German has official status, together with many second language users (e.g. immigrants with a different L1). German is the sole official language of Germany, Austria, 17 cantons of Switzerland, and Liechtenstein. It is a co-official language, along with others, in Belgium, 4 cantons of Switzerland, Luxembourg and Southern Tyrol (Italy).

The current German native speaker totals for these countries and regions are (cf. Ammon 2014): **Germany** (74.43 million); **Austria** (7.45 million); **Switzerland** (5.16 million); **Liechtenstein** (32,075); **Belgium** (73,000); **Luxembourg** (12,100), and **Southern Tyrol** (324,303), i.e. 87.5 million in total. The estimated number of German L2 speakers in these countries is 8.5 million, most of them in Germany (6.67 million), Austria (781,563) and Switzerland (543,039).

Outside of the European countries in which German has (co-)official status, there are German-speaking minorities in neighbouring countries and other countries of Europe: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy (outside of Southern Tyrol), Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine. Many of these speakers are descendants of German speakers who lived within the larger borders of pre-1914 Germany or within the Austro-Hungarian empire, in which German was the main administrative language. The Austro-Hungarian empire occupied a large part of central and eastern Europe and came to an end in 1918 at the end of the First World War. Around the world today German also has a significant presence as a minority language in several countries as a result of migrations from the European German Sprachraum during the 19th and 20th centuries, especially to the USA and Canada, Brazil, Argentina and Australia.

The current numbers of native speakers using some variety of German (generally Standard German unless otherwise specified, see the discussion of dialects immediately below) in selected countries other than the European ones in which it has (co-)official status are, according to Ethnologue (2015), Wikipedia (“German Language”) and Ammon (2014) approximately the following: **Brazil** (1.5 million, with as many as 3 million listed as speaking a Central German dialect “Hunsrückisch” ultimately from the Rhineland Palatinate, a name which is also applied to speakers of Standard and Low German varieties, however); **USA** (1.1 million, plus 118,000 speakers of the West

Central German dialect Pennsylvania Dutch used by the Amish and Old Order Mennonites, 12,000 Low German, 10,800 speakers of Upper German Bavarian Hutterite, and 161,000 speakers of Yiddish, see below); **Canada** (430,000, plus 80,000 Low German, 15,000 Pennsylvania Dutch and 23,200 Hutterite); **Argentina** (400,000, plus 4,000 Low German); **Russia** (394,138); **France** (210,000, plus 660,000 of the Low Alemannic Alsatian dialect and 100,000 of the West Central German Lorraine Franconian dialect); **Israel** (200,000); **Paraguay** (166,000, plus 40,000 Low German); **Bolivia** (160,000, plus 60,000 Low German); **Australia** (79,000); **Romania** (36,884); **New Zealand** (36,000); **Chile** (35,000); **Uruguay** (28,000); **Namibia** (22,500); **South Africa** (12,000); and **Netherlands** (1.8 million speakers of Dutch Low Saxon which is distinct from Standard Dutch and on a dialect continuum with German Low Saxon, 825,000 Limburgisch speakers on a dialect continuum with German Low Franconian). Finally, between 1 and 2 million people still speak **Yiddish** worldwide, especially in Ukraine, Israel and the USA. Yiddish, or Judaeo-German, is a traditional dialect of German with strong lexical influence from Hebrew and Slavonic languages. It was the language of most of the Jews who died in the Holocaust under Nazi Germany.

Map 4.1 gives an indication of the major regional dialects of German within Europe. There are three main groupings of these dialects: Low German (“**Plattdeutsch**”) in the north (comprising North Lower Saxon, Westphalian etc.); Central German (comprising Middle Franconian, Rhine Franconian, Thuringian etc.); and Upper German in the south (comprising Swabian, Alemannic and **Bavarian-Austrian**).

INSERT MAP 4.1 HERE

The major basis for the threefold division involves the extent to which the Second Sound Shift of the Old High German period was carried out (see below for discussion of the historical periods of German). It changed voiceless stops *p*, *t*, *k* to voiceless fricatives *f*, *s*, *x* ([ç] or [x]) and affricates *pf*, *ts*, *kx*; and voiced stops *b*, *d*, *g* to voiceless stops *p*, *t*, *k*. The Low German dialects (as well as Dutch, Frisian and English) were unaffected by these changes. The Central German dialects carried them out in varying degrees, and Upper German carried them out (almost) completely. The following pairs of words provide examples:

Low German *pad*, Upper German *Pfad* (English *path*)
 Low German *skip*, Upper German *Schiff* (English *ship*)
 Low German *heit*, Upper German *heiss* (English *hot*)
 Low German *ik*, Upper German *ich* (English *I*)
 Low German *bök*, Upper German *Buch* (English *book*)
 Low German, Central German *Kuh*, Swiss German *Chue* (English *cow*)
 Low German *bäk*, Upper German (Bavarian) *Pach* (English *brook*)
 Low German *dör*, Upper German *Tür* (English *door*)
 Low German *genuch*, Upper German (Bavarian) *kenug* (English *enough*)

The increasing realisation of these changes within the Central German dialects is illustrated for some representative words involving the *p*, *t*, *k* shifts in [Map 4.2](#).

INSERT MAP 4.2 HERE

The gradual conversion of these voiceless stops to the corresponding fricatives or affricates follows the progression shown below and in Map 4.2, and hence there are dialects of German whose pronunciation of these words corresponds to each of the lines, with Low German shifting at most *ik* to *ich* and Upper German completing all the shifts:

‘I’	‘make’	‘village’	‘that’	‘apple’	‘pound’	
ik	maken	dorp	dat	appel	pund	}
ich	machen	dorf	dat	appel	pund	
ich	machen	dorp	dat	appel	pund	}
ich	machen	dorf	dat	appel	pund	
ich	machen	dorf	das	appel	pund	
ich	machen	dorf	das	apfel	pund	
ich	machen	dorf	das	apfel	pfund	Upper German

The term High German is used to subsume Central and Upper German (both of which underwent the Second Sound Shift to some extent at least) as opposed to Low German.

There are also numerous other linguistic features which now distinguish the dialects of [Map 4.1](#) (see the references listed in the bibliography for discussion of these). In addition to these regional dialects many scholars now distinguish national varieties of German, corresponding to the major political areas in which German is spoken (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) on account of various supra-regional and supra-dialectal norms that are accepted as standard in each.

This standard language of Germany emerged much later than the corresponding standard languages of England and France, on account of the political and cultural fragmentation of the German-speaking regions of Europe. There was no centre comparable to London or Paris that could impose its variety as the dominant one, so each region employed its own form of German at least until the sixteenth century. Prior to this point there had been a supra-regional ‘compromise language’ in the south (*das gemeyne Deutsch*), while in the north Low German enjoyed a privileged status until the seventeenth century as the commercial language of the Hanseatic League and was even used as a lingua franca throughout northern Europe. The basis for the emerging standard language in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, was East Central German (see [Map 4.1](#)). This variety of German was itself a compromise that had arisen as a result of the contact between speakers of numerous dialects following the extensive migration of Germans in the Middle Ages, as they occupied hitherto Slavonic-speaking areas. East Central German was therefore intrinsically well suited to becoming a standard language, and its subsequent acceptance by the remainder of the German-speaking population can be attributed to numerous external factors: the invention of the printing press (1450), which made possible publication on a large scale, the most influential printed work being Luther’s translation of the Bible written in East Central German (1522–34) and

deliberately intended to be accessible to all German speakers; the use of German instead of Latin for legal records (c. 1400), and the influential and normative role of East Central German legal writing in particular; and the rise of the cities, which attracted people from various regions and increased trade and commerce, making the need for a common language all the more urgent.

The emerging standard gradually permeated both the northern Low German-speaking regions and the south, and during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries slowly penetrated into Austria and Switzerland as well. However, it was only in the nineteenth century that the phonological norms were finally set. By this time Prussia had become the dominant political force in all the German-speaking areas of Europe except for Switzerland and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, first through a customs union (the *Zollverein*), and then in 1871 through political unification. But prior to its expansion Prussia was originally a northern Low German-speaking state, whose speakers had learnt High German as a second language. With the spread of the emerging High German standard to the north, northern speakers tended to accentuate a close relationship between phonemes and graphemes. And with minor modifications this North German pronunciation of the originally High German standard became the norm for standard German pronunciation or *Bühnendeutsch* (stage German), both in Germany proper, and later in Austria and Switzerland as a result of an agreement concluded between the three countries in 1899. Today, television and radio announcers in Munich, Stuttgart and Baden-Baden sound much the same as their North German counterparts. Despite the 1899 agreement, however, the same does not hold true for Austrian and Swiss announcers. But as far as the written language is concerned, there is now a widespread consensus among the German-speaking countries.

The historical evolution of High German is divided into the following stages: Old High German (OHG), covering the runic inscriptions from the sixth century AD and written texts from the eighth century to 1050; Middle High German (MHG) from 1050 to 1350; Early New High German (ENHG) from 1350 to 1650; and thereafter New High German (NHG) proper.

The Old High German texts are primarily religious writings and translations (from Latin) produced in the monasteries of Central and Upper Germany. Some of the main linguistic changes that separate Old High German from Proto-Germanic are: the Second Sound Shift; numerous vocalic sound changes, including the monophthongisation (in certain environments) of Gmc. *ai* > *ē* and *au* > *ō*, the diphthongisation of Gmc. closed *ē* > *ea* or *ia* and *ō* > *oa*, *ua* or *uo* (depending on the dialect) and the beginnings of *i*-umlaut revealed orthographically in the conversion of *a* > *e* before *i*, *ī*, *j*; the development of a definite article out of a demonstrative determiner; and the emergence of new periphrastic verbal constructions for the passive, future, perfect and pluperfect. In late Old High German some morphological syncretism sets in, anticipating Middle High German, but otherwise Old High German contains a very richly differentiated morphology for nouns, adjectives, determiners, pronouns and verbs.

Middle High German is the language of the great German poets of the late Middle Ages (Walther von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Gottfried von Strasburg etc.). The two most characteristic phonological differences between Old High German and Middle High German are: the weakening and partial loss of vowels in unstressed

syllables; and the spread of *i*-umlaut (or at least of its graphic representation). Both short vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* and long vowels \bar{a} , \bar{e} , \bar{i} , \bar{o} , \bar{u} could be reduced to schwa [ə] (orthographic *e*) or lost altogether: compare OHG *wola* ‘well’ (adv.), *aro* ‘eagle’, *beran* ‘to bear’, *salida* ‘bliss’ with the corresponding MHG *wol(e)*, *ar(e)*, *bërn*, *sælde*. The *i*-umlauting is responsible for the front rounded vowels of Modern German (see section 2) which became phonemic with the reduction of the *i*-umlaut environment that had triggered their presumably allophonic variation hitherto (e.g. OHG *mūsi* > MHG *miuse* [müːsə]). The reduction of unstressed syllables is also responsible for widespread syncretism in morphological paradigms as hitherto distinct vowels became reduced to [ə]. Otherwise the morphological paradigms of Middle High German remain much as they were in Old High German, and retain the lexical members and forms characteristic of the latter. Increasingly, however, the phonologically induced syncretism led to uncertainty as more and more words adopted morphological forms that originally belonged to other paradigms. These analogical formations eventually led to widespread restructuring in the morphology, but only in the Early New High German period. Among syntactic changes in Middle High German the replacement of the Old High German negative morpheme *ne* ‘not’ by *nicht* (etymologically ‘no thing’) is one of the more striking, as is the further expansion in the uses of the definite article. And in the area of the lexicon, the strong influence of French courtly society is reflected in numerous loanwords. Some of these were not to survive (e.g. *garzūn* ‘page’ and *tjost* ‘joust’) but many have, e.g. *Abenteuer* ‘adventure’, *fein* ‘fine’, *Lanze* ‘lance’, *Melodie* ‘melody’, *Tanz* ‘dance’, *Tournier* ‘tournament’.

The Early New High German period saw numerous important changes throughout the grammar. In the phonology, short open syllables, for example, underwent either vowel or consonant lengthening (e.g. MHG [ligən] > NHG [liːgən], [hamər] > [hammər]); MHG [ə] was lost altogether in numerous environments (in some dialects much more than others) e.g. *legete* > *legte* ‘laid’; the Middle High German diphthongs *ie*, *üe*, *uo* became long monophthongs *iː*, *üː*, *uː* (in Central but not Upper German, which retains the diphthongs), MHG *biegen* > [biːgən] ‘bend’, *küene* > *kühn* ‘bold’, *ruofen* > *rufen* ‘call’; the Middle High German long closed vowels *iː*, *üː*, *uː* were correspondingly diphthongised to *ei*, *öu* (*eu*), *ou* (again subject to dialectal differentiation), MHG *zīt* > *Zeit*, [lütə] > *Leute*, *hūs* > *Haus*. There were profound restructurings in the morphology. For example, new plural paradigms for nouns evolved and expanded to compensate for the vowel reductions in unstressed syllables, particularly umlauted plurals: compare MHG *vogel/vogele* ‘bird/birds’ with NHG *Vogel/Vögel*. This process went even further in certain dialects with the result that one still hears today *Täg*, *Ärm*, *Hünd* in lieu of the standard *Tage* ‘days’, *Arme* ‘arms’ and *Hunde* ‘dogs’, while certain earlier distinct dialectal variants such as *Worte/Wörter* ‘words’ have both become standard German, though with slightly different meanings (words within a continuous text as opposed to individual words). Another plural suffix that was greatly expanded is *-er*, as in *Kind/Kinder* ‘child/children’, and also the *-en* suffix. The verb morphology also underwent some reductions, including a certain levelling of alternations in strong verbs (see Section 3) and also a levelling of the Middle High German consonantal alternation between *ich was* ‘I was’ and *wir wāren* ‘we were’. In the syntax, Early New High German was the period in which the

characteristic verb position of Modern German was fixed: final position in subordinate clauses, second and first position in main clauses (see [Section 4](#)). This had been the basic tendency in earlier periods as well, but there had been much more variation, especially in Middle High German, during which there were numerous postposings of constituents to the right of the verb in hitherto verb-final structures. Prenominal participial relative clause constructions are first attested in this period: *die von dem Bauer geschlachtete Kuh* ‘the by the farmer killed cow’, i.e. ‘the cow which was killed by the farmer’. Certain postposed adjectives and possessive determiners (*den vater almechtigen* ‘the father almighty’) were replaced by prenominal orders. And there were widespread changes involving subordinate conjunctions: certain conjunctions died out (*wande, wan* ‘because’); new ones emerged (e.g. *während* ‘while’, *falls* ‘in the event that’); and the use of *daß* ‘that’ alone was frequently replaced by more semantically specific and precise forms such as *so daß* ‘with the result that’, *damit* ‘in order that’, *weil* ‘because’, etc.

With the completion of the Early New High German period (1650) we reach what is essentially Modern German. The precise phonological norms of the standard were still to be set (see above), but morphology and syntax now undergo only minor modifications compared with the changes that have been outlined. It is instructive to get a sense of the extent of some of these changes by comparing a short text in Old High German with its Modern German translation. The text is the Lord’s Prayer, see [Table 4.1](#), as it appeared in the East Franconian Tatian of c. 830. Alongside it is a New High German translation and also the English of the Authorised Version of 1611.

INSERT TABLE 4.1 HERE

2 Phonology

The segmental phonemes of Modern Standard German (consonants and vowels) are set out in [Table 4.4 below](#). Twenty-one consonant phonemes are normally distinguished. Each of these is illustrated in the minimal pairs of [Table 4.2](#), in word-initial, word-medial and word-final position. The blanks in the table indicate that the consonant in question does not occur in the relevant position in a word.

INSERT TABLE 4.2 HERE

One of the most striking things about the minimal pairs in [Table 4.2](#) is the absence of any voiced obstruents (stops and fricatives) in word-final position, i.e. /b d g v z ʒ/. This is no accident. Voiced obstruents are regularly converted to their voiceless counterparts in syllable-final position, i.e. before a syllable break. Such syllable breaks occur in three types of positions: at the end of a word, e.g. /liːp/ *lieb* ‘dear’; at the end of part of a compound word, e.g. /liːp+oigəln/ *liebäugeln* ‘to make eyes at’; and before suffixes beginning with a consonant, e.g. /liːp+liŋ/ *Liebling* ‘darling’. By contrast, the voiced /b/ occurs in syllable-initial position in forms such as /liː+bən/ *lieben* ‘to love’ and /liː+bər/

lieber ‘rather’, and so does not get devoiced. Devoicing also takes place in consonant clusters before /t/ and /s/: /liːpt/ *liebt* ‘loves’, /liːpst/ *liebst* ‘lovest’. Notice that the orthography retains the voiced stop in these examples, thereby representing the morphological relatedness between the different forms of the same stem.

The status of /ç/ and /x/ in German is a matter of some dispute. The velar fricative /x/ occurs only after central and back vowels, and never in initial position. The palatal /ç/ occurs after front vowels, after the consonants /n l r/, and in word-initial position. This looks like a classic case of complementary distribution which should lead us to analyse these fricatives as allophones of the same phoneme. But there is an exception. The German diminutive suffix spelled *-chen* occurs as /çən/ in all positions, even after central and back vowels, and hence /ç/ sometimes stands in contrast with /x/: /tauçən/ *Tauchen* (‘little rope’) versus /tauxən/ *tauchen* (‘to dive’); /kuːçən/ *Kuhchen* (‘little cow’) versus /kuːxən/ *Kuchen* (‘cake’).

Another problem involves the status of the affricates [pf] and [ts], created by the Second Sound Shift. Are these unit phonemes or clusters of two phonemes? They are historically derived from unit phonemes and minimal pairs are readily found which suggest that they retain this status. Nonetheless, German (like English) has numerous other clusters of stop plus fricative, and there seems to be no clear basis for distinguishing [pf] and [ts] from these: e.g. /ps/ in /gips/ *Gips* ‘plaster’, /pʃ/ in /hüpʃ/ *hübsch* ‘pretty’, /tʃ/ in /doitʃ/ *deutsch* ‘German’ and /ks/ in /zeks/ *sechs* ‘six’.

The phoneme /r/ has a complicated set of allophones and is subject to a certain variation in pronunciation among speakers. When /r/ is followed by a vowel, as in /roːt leːrə besər/ *rot* ‘red’, *leere* ‘(I) empty’, *bessere* ‘better (pl.)’ (i.e. whether or not it is also preceded by a vowel), most speakers pronounce it as a uvular trill or fricative (phonetic symbol [R]), although some use an apico-alveolar trill or flap (phonetic symbol [r̥]). When /r/ is not followed by a vowel, its pronunciation varies depending on whether the vowel which does precede it is long, short or /ə/. After a long vowel, /r/ is always a non-syllabic [ʀ], much like the /ʀ/ of English *but*. The word *leer* /leːr/ ‘empty’ is phonetically [leʀ]. After unstressed /ə/, the /r/ and /ə/ combine to give syllabic [ʌ]. The word *besser* /besər/ ‘better’ is phonetically [besʌ]. After a short vowel, /r/ may either be a non-syllabic [ʀ] again or else it may be pronounced as a uvular trill or fricative or as an apico-alveolar trill or fricative, like an /r/ which precedes a vowel. There are therefore three possible pronunciations for a word like *irrt* /irt/ ‘errs’: [iʀt] and [iřt].

There are 19 separate vowel phonemes of German (including three diphthongs), exemplified in the minimal pairs of [Table 4.3](#).

INSERT TABLE 4.3 HERE

The vowels written with umlauts /ü: ü ö: ö/ are front rounded vowels resulting from *i*-mutation in Old and Middle High German. The colon is a length symbol used for distinguishing the long versus short pairs /iː/ versus /i/, etc. (though see below). There are also articulatory phonetic differences associated with these length distinctions, which are

indicated approximately in **Table 4.4**. The short /i̯ ü̯ u̯/ are lower and more central than /iː üː uː/, the short /e̯ ö̯ o̯/ are also lower and more central than /eː öː oː/, and /a/ is higher and more central than /aː/. The three diphthongs involve glides from one tongue position to another: in /ai/ the tongue begins in low central position and glides towards a position which is higher and further front; in /oi/ the tongue begins in lower mid back rounded position gliding also towards a position higher and further front; and with /au/ the tongue begins in low central position and glides towards a position higher and further back.

INSERT TABLE 4.4 HERE

The important difference between long and short vowels in German is more accurately described as a difference of tense versus lax articulation. Tense vowels are produced with greater muscular energy than lax vowels, and it is this that causes them to be articulated in more extreme positions in the vocal tract. The reason for considering the tense/lax opposition more fundamental is that the additional feature of length is found only in stressed syllables: all the examples in **Table 4.3** involve stressed syllables in which the tense vowels are long (those with a colon), and the lax vowels are short (those without). But in unstressed syllables, it is often possible to perceive a tense/lax distinction, and yet both sets of vowels are now short. There are perceptible differences between tense /iː/ in /diːneː/ *Diner* and lax /i/ in /difuːs/ *diffus*, in both of which the stress falls on the second syllable, and yet both *i* vowels are technically short. Similarly, the unstressed initial syllables of /koːlumbus/ *Kolumbus* and /koleːgə/ *Kollege* differ in tense versus lax articulation of the *o*, but both vowels are again short. In more informal and faster speech, even this tense/lax distinction disappears in unstressed syllables. Nonetheless, the distinctiveness of tense versus lax vowels is not restricted to stressed syllables, whereas the long versus short distinction is. Notice finally that the /ə/ of German occurs only in unstressed syllables.

3 Morphology

Despite the morphological syncretism of the Early New High German period (see **Section 1**), the inflectional morphology of Modern German is very rich and preserves major features of the Old High German system. Few among the other modern Germanic languages have a morphology of comparable richness. The biggest changes involved the inflectional paradigms for nouns. The Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Germanic system of classification according to the phonology of the stem (which is still evident in, for example, Russian, see the chapter in this volume) was destroyed and new paradigms evolved. Nouns are now classified according to their inherent gender (masculine, feminine or neuter) and according to their plural forms. The major plural allomorphs are: suffixed *-e* (*Tier/Tiere* ‘animal’), *-er* (*Kind/Kinder* ‘child’), *-Ø* (*Fenster/Fenster* ‘window’), *-en* (*Frau/Frauen* ‘woman’), *-s* (*Kino/Kinos* ‘cinema’), stem vowel mutation plus *-e* (*Stadt/Städte* ‘city’), stem vowel mutation plus *-er* (*Mann/Männer* ‘man’) and stem vowel mutation alone (*Mutter/Mütter* ‘mother’). The noun phrase as a whole

distinguishes separate case inflections for nominative, accusative, genitive and dative in both singular and plural, but these are now only residually marked on the noun itself (because of the reduction of unstressed syllables) and are primarily carried by preceding determiners and adjectives. However, the dative plural of all nouns still exhibits an *-(e)n* suffix, the genitive singular of most masculine and neuter nouns an *-(e)s* suffix, and the dative singular of many masculine and neuter nouns an optional *-e* suffix.

The full set of morphological distinctions carried by the German noun phrase (i.e. gender, number and case) can be illustrated by considering the sequence of definite article+noun in the chart given here.

Definite Article and Noun Inflections

	<i>Singular</i>			<i>Plural</i>
	M.	F.	Nt.	All genders
Nom.	<i>der</i> Mann 'the man'	<i>die</i> Frau 'the woman'	<i>das</i> Haus 'the house'	<i>die</i> Männer 'the men'
Acc.	<i>den</i> Mann	<i>die</i> Frau	<i>das</i> Haus	<i>die</i> Männer
Gen.	<i>des</i> Mannes	<i>der</i> Frau	<i>des</i> Hauses	<i>der</i> Männer
Dat.	<i>dem</i> Mann(<i>e</i>)	<i>der</i> Frau	<i>dem</i> Haus(<i>e</i>)	<i>den</i> Männern

The definite article assumes just six forms: *der*, *den*, *des*, *dem*, *das* and *die* (morphologically analysable as two bound morphemes *d+er*, *d+en* etc.). Since gender distinctions are inherent in the noun, and since plurality is richly marked on the noun itself, the most important function of the determiner is to mark case. Individual definite article forms can be used in more than one case function without risk of intolerable ambiguity: *der* followed by a masculine singular noun is a nominative; followed by a feminine singular noun a genitive or dative; and followed by a noun with plural marking a genitive; etc. The expressive power of these definite article case distinctions is identical to that of all other sequences of determiner+noun, and also to determiner+adjective+noun and \emptyset +adjective+noun sequences as well. The weakest distinction is between nominative and accusative, which is marked only by the *der/den* alternation in the masculine singular. However, the nominative is fully distinguishable in all genders and numbers from the genitive, and is also fully distinguishable from the dative. The accusative is also fully distinguishable from both genitive and dative. The genitive is in turn distinct from the dative, except for feminine singular nouns.

An adjective following the definite article receives case inflections according to the weak paradigm, with *-e* or *-en* endings, as shown in the chart of adjective inflections.

Adjective Inflections

Weak Adjective Inflections

	<i>Singular</i>			<i>Plural</i>
	M.	F.	Nt.	All genders
Nom.	<i>der</i> gute Mann	<i>die</i> gute Frau	<i>das</i> gute Haus	<i>die</i> guten Männer

	‘the good man’	‘the good woman’	‘the good house’	‘the good men’
Acc.	den guten Mann	die gute Frau	das gute Haus	die guten Männer
Gen.	des guten Mannes	der guten Frau	des guten Hauses	der guten Männer
Dat.	dem guten Mann(e)	der guten Frau	dem guten Haus(e)	den guten Männern

Strong Adjective Inflections

	<i>Singular</i>			<i>Plural</i>
	M.	F.	Nt.	All genders
Nom.	guter Wein ‘good wine’	gute Milch ‘good milk’	gutes Obst ‘good fruit’	gute Äpfel ‘good apples’
Acc.	guten Wein	gute Milch	gutes Obst	gute Äpfel
Gen.	guten Weines	guter Milch	guten Obstes	guter Äpfel
Dat.	gutem Wein	guter Milch	gutem Obst	guten Äpfeln

Mixed Weak and Strong Adjective Inflections

	<i>Singular</i>			<i>Plural</i>
	M.	F.	Nt.	All genders
Nom.	kein guter Mann	keine gute Frau	kein gutes Haus	keine guten Häuser
Acc.	keinen guten Mann ‘no good man’	keine gute Frau ‘no good woman’	kein gutes Haus ‘no good house’	keine guten Häuser ‘no good houses’
Gen.	keines guten Mannes	keiner guten Frau	keines guten Hauses	keiner guten Häuser
Dat.	keinem guten Mann	keiner guten Frau	keinem guten Haus	keinen guten Häusern

Other determiners requiring weak adjective endings are: *dieser* ‘this’, *jener* ‘that’, *welcher* ‘which’, *jeder* ‘each’, *alle* ‘all’. It will be apparent that these adjective inflections do not increase the expressive power of the German case system, compared with the definite article+noun inflections. When an adjective+noun sequence has no preceding determiner (with indefinite mass nouns and plurals), the same case distinctions can be carried by adjective inflections of the strong paradigm, also shown in the chart of adjective inflections. These strong adjective inflections (-er, -en, -es, -em, -e) are practically identical in form and distribution to the bound morphemes of the definite article, and the expressive power of the whole paradigm is again identical to the definite article+noun inflections. Indefinite count nouns in the singular require the indefinite article *ein* ‘a’. This determiner, together with *kein* ‘no’ and the possessives *mein* ‘my’, *dein* ‘your’, *sein* ‘his’, etc., is itself inflected more or less like the definite article, but requires accompanying adjective inflections which are a mixture of weak (-en, -e) and strong (-er,

-e, -es). The chart of adjective inflections illustrates this mixed adjective paradigm following *kein*.

Personal Pronouns

Singular

	<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i> <i>(familiar)</i>	<i>3rd</i> M.	F.	Nt.
Nom.	ich	du	er	sie	es
Acc.	mich	dich	ihn	sie	es
Gen.	meiner	deiner	seiner	ihrer	seiner
Dat.	mir	dir	ihm	ihr	ihm

Plural

	<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i> <i>familiar</i>	<i>2nd</i> <i>polite: s. & pl.</i>	<i>3rd</i>
Nom.	wir	ihr	Sie	sie
Acc.	uns	euch	Sie	sie
Gen.	unser	euer	Ihrer	ihrer
Dat.	uns	euch	Ihnen	ihnen

German personal pronouns exhibit a rich set of case distinctions, as shown in the chart of personal pronouns. All four cases are fully distinct in the singular for first, second (familiar) and masculine third persons, while feminine and neuter third person forms are identical only in the nominative and accusative. In the plural the four cases are on each occasion represented by three separate forms. In the first and second (familiar) persons accusative and dative fall together, and in the second (polite) and third persons nominative and accusative fall together. Relative and interrogative pronouns are also case-marked. The relative pronoun, for example, is identical in form to the definite article, except for all the genitives and the dative plural (the relative pronoun having *dessen* instead of *des*, *deren* instead of *der*, and *denen* instead of *den*).

The existence of a productive case system sets German off from the other modern Germanic languages except for Icelandic and Faroese. As regards the use of the cases, the most important factor which determines the assignment of case to a noun phrase is the nature of the ‘governing category’, loosely, the category which forms an immediate constituent with this noun phrase and which determines the syntactic type of the resulting phrase. Thus, a preposition combines with a noun phrase to make a prepositional phrase and it assigns a case to this noun phrase; a verb combines with a noun phrase to make a verb phrase and assigns case to this noun phrase; and so on. Different prepositions assign accusative case, dative case or genitive case, as illustrated below:

(a) durch das Zimmer; für mich. (acc.)

‘through the room; for me’

(b) aus dem Hause; mit mir. (dat.)

‘out of the house; with me’

(c) an die/der Wand; auf den/dem Stuhl. (acc./dat.)

‘on the wall; on the chair’

(d) trotz des Wetters; während des Jahres. (gen.)

‘despite the weather; during the year’

The case alternation in (c) carries a difference in meaning: *auf den Stuhl* with an accusative noun phrase signals motion towards the place in question, as in ‘the cat jumped on(to) the chair’; *auf dem Stuhl* with a dative designates a location without a change in state, e.g. ‘the cat was lying on the chair’.

An adjective within an adjective phrase may also assign case to a noun phrase. Different adjectives assign accusative, dative or genitive case, as in:

(a) Ich bin ihn los. (acc.)

‘I am him rid’, i.e. ‘I am rid of him.’

(b) Sie ist ihrem Vater ähnlich. (dat.)

‘She is her father similar’, i.e. ‘similar to her father.’

(c) Er ist dieser Taten schuldig. (gen.)

‘He is these deeds guilty’, i.e. ‘guilty of these deeds.’

A head noun within a noun phrase assigns genitive case to a modifying possessor noun phrase:

der Hut der Anna; Annas Hut.

‘the hat of the Anna; Anna’s hat’

The most complex governing category is the verb. The single argument of a one-place predicate (verb or predicate adjective) is most typically in the nominative case, as below, though both accusative and dative are found in so-called ‘impersonal constructions’:

(a) Ich schlafe. Ich friere. (nom.)

‘I am sleeping. I am freezing.’

(b) Mich hungert. Mich friert. (acc.)

‘Me hungers. Me freezes’, i.e. ‘I am hungry; I am freezing.’

(c) Mir ist warm. (dat.)

‘Me is warm’, i.e. ‘I am warm.’

These impersonal constructions were more frequent in earlier stages of German, but they still exist in the modern language. With two-place predicates, one argument is in the nominative case (the subject), but the second argument may be accusative, dative or genitive, depending on the choice of verb. Most verbs take the accusative (and these noun phrases then behave syntactically as direct objects), a not inconsiderable number take the dative and just a handful take the genitive (only one or two of which are really productive in modern usage):

(a) Ich liebe dich. Er sieht meinen Vater. (nom.-acc.)

‘I love you. He sees my father’.

(b) Er hilft mir. Sie antwortete ihrem Vater. (nom.-dat.)

‘He is helping me. She answered her father.’

(c) Sie bedarf des Trostes. Er ermangelt der nötigen Kraft. (nom.-gen.)

‘She needs consolation. He lacks the requisite strength.’

In three-place predicate constructions consisting of a verb and three (prepositionless) noun phrases the most common case assignments are nominative-accusative-dative, followed by nominative-accusative-genitive, with just a handful of nominative-accusative-accusative:

(a) Ich schrieb meinem Vater einen Brief. Das rate ich dir. (nom.-acc.-dat.)

‘I wrote my father a letter. That advise I you (to do).’

(b) Man entthob ihn seines Amtes. Er schämt sich seines Sohnes. (nom.-acc.-gen.)

‘One relieved him (of) his office. He shames himself (of) his son.’

(c) Er lehrt mich eine Sprache. Er hieß mich einen Toren. (nom.-acc.-acc.)

‘He is teaching me a language. He called me a fool.’

As in the other Germanic languages, many verbs also take prepositional phrases with characteristic prepositions when expanding on their minimally present argument noun phrases, e.g.:

(a) Ich denke oft *an* dich.

‘I think often *of* you.’

(b) Ich danke dir *für* deinen Brief.

‘I thank you *for* your letter.’

Not all case assignment in German is determined by a governing category in this way. For example, there are productive case contrasts in sentence time adverbials such as those shown below, in which the accusative refers to a specified (definite) time, and the genitive to an unspecified (indefinite) time:

(a) Er kam *letzten Freitag*. (acc.)

‘He came last Friday.’

(b) *Eines Tages* kam er. (gen.)

‘One day came he.’

Finally, the major morphological distinctions carried by the verb are illustrated in the chart of verb inflections.

Verb Inflections

	<i>weak</i>	<i>strong</i>
<i>Infinitive</i>		
	sag+ <i>en</i> ‘to say’	trag+ <i>en</i> ‘to bear’
<i>Participles</i>		
Present	sag+ <i>end</i>	trag+ <i>end</i>
Past	ge+sag+ <i>t</i>	ge+trag+ <i>en</i>

Imperative

2nd Sg. (familiar)	sag+(e)	trag+(e)
2nd Pl. (familiar)	sag+t	trag+t
Polite form	sag+en Sie	trag+en Sie

Present

	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>
ich (1st)	sag+e	sag+e	trag+e	trag+e
du (2nd)	sag+st	sag+st	träg+st	trag+st
er, sie, es (3rd)	sag+t	sag+e	träg+t	trag+e
wir (1st)	sag+en	sag+en	trag+en	trag+en
ihr (2nd)	sag+t	sag+t	trag+t	trag+t
sie (3rd), Sie (2nd)	sag+en	sag+en	trag+en	trag+en

Past

	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>
ich (1st)	sag+te	sag+te	trug	trüg+e
du (2nd)	sag+test	sag+test	trug+st	trüg+st
er, sie, es (3rd)	sag+te	sag+te	trug	trüg+e
wir (1st)	sag+ten	sag+ten	trug+en	trüg+en
ihr (2nd)	sag+tet	sag+tet	trug+t	trüg+t
sie (3rd), Sie (2nd)	sag+ten	sag+ten	trug+en	trüg+en

As in all the other Germanic languages, two basic classes of verb need to be distinguished: weak (exemplified by *sagen* ‘to say’) and strong (exemplified by *tragen* ‘to bear’). The strong class undergoes vowel alternations in the stem (so-called ‘ablaut’) in addition to taking inflectional affixes for person and number agreement, etc. The number of strong verbs has been historically on the decline and there has been a certain levelling and redistribution of vowel alternants among the different tense and person categories that these alternants distinguish (especially in Early New High German), but Modern German still has a large class of strong verbs which includes some of the most common verbs in the language (*geben* ‘to give’, *essen* ‘to eat’, *liegen* ‘to lie’, *sehen* ‘to see’, *riechen* ‘to smell’, *gießen* ‘to pour’, *fliegen* ‘to fly’, *schreiben* ‘to write’, *sprechen* ‘to speak’, *fallen* ‘to fall’, *fahren* ‘to travel’, and many others). The weak class does not undergo such vowel alternations and takes (partially different) inflectional affixes for person and number agreement.

Proceeding down the chart of verb inflections, the German infinitive marker is an *-en* suffix attached to the stem. The present participle is formed by adding the suffix *-end*. The past participle consists of a *-t* suffix for weak verbs and an *-en* suffix for strong verbs, with a *ge-* prefix for both in cases where the first syllable of the stem is stressed. If the first syllable is not stressed (e.g. *bemérken* ‘to notice’), this initial *ge-* is omitted (*bemérkt* ‘noticed’ not **gebemérkt*). There are three imperative forms with identical morphologies

for weak and strong verbs, as shown. German has only two simple tenses, present and past, both inherited from Proto-Germanic and shared with other Germanic languages. Numerous compound tenses are formed from combinations of *haben* ‘to have’, *sein* ‘to be’ and *werden* ‘to be/ become’ plus past participle or infinitive, e.g. the perfect (*ich habe gesagt* ‘I have said’), pluperfect (*ich hatte gesagt* ‘I had said’), future (*ich werde sagen* ‘I will say’), future perfect (*ich werde gesagt haben* ‘I will have said’) and so on. These compounds were fixed in the Old High German period. The person and number agreement suffixes of the present tense are identical for weak and strong verbs: four suffixes (*-e*, *-st*, *-t*, *-en*) are divided among the six grammatically distinguishable types of subjects that the verb agrees with (first, second and third persons singular, first, second and third persons plural). For stems ending in various (primarily dental) consonants, e.g. *-t* in *wart+en* ‘to wait’, an epenthetic *e* appears before the *-st* and *-t* suffixes (compare *sag+st/wart+est* and *sag+t/wart+et*). A special form for the subjunctive exists only in the third person singular (*er sage* as opposed to *er sagt*); otherwise subjunctive and indicative are identical (though productive paradigms for a distinct present subjunctive do exist for *sein* ‘to be’, the modal auxiliaries and one or two other verbs). The past tense indicative inflections for weak verbs all contain an initial *t-*, and differ in several respects from the corresponding strong verb indicative inflections, as shown. The past subjunctive of weak verbs is identical to the indicative, but the past subjunctive of strong verbs exhibits numerous contrasts with the indicative: first and third persons singular show *-e* rather than \emptyset and the stem vowel is unlauded wherever possible.

4 Syntax

One of the most interesting features of Modern German syntax, in comparison with other languages, is its word order (particularly the position of the verb). Within the Germanic language family, German is striking for the extent to which it has remained conservative, preserving structural properties of both Old High German and the Germanic parent language itself. The Scandinavian languages and English, by contrast, have undergone more extensive syntactic changes in the same time period, with Dutch being intermediate between German and English. The present summary will accordingly illustrate some of the basic features of German verb position, and will outline some of the major syntactic differences which now distinguish German from one of the more radical Germanic languages, namely English.

There are three major positions of the verb in German clauses: final position, second position (i.e. the verb is the second clause-level constituent) and first position. The basic rule is: final position in subordinate clauses; second and first position in main clauses. A more precise statement, however, must first distinguish between finite and non-finite (i.e. infinitival and participial) verb forms. In subordinate clauses containing a finite verb (and, optionally, any additional non-finite verbs), all verb forms are final (in the order non-finite before finite), e.g.:

(a) Ich weiß, daß Heinrich die Frau *liebt*.

‘I know that Henry the woman *loves*’, i.e. ‘loves the woman.’

(b) Ich glaube, daß mein Vater vor einigen Tagen nach London *gefahren ist*.

‘I believe that my father several days ago to London *travelled has*.’

In non-finite subordinate clauses, non-finite verbs are again final:

Ich freue mich darauf, abends in der Wirtschaft Bier *zu trinken*.

‘I am looking forward to-it, evenings in the pub beer *to drink*’, i.e.

‘I am looking forward to drinking beer in the pub in the evenings.’

And so they are even in main clauses, although the finite verb now stands in second position (a–b) or first position (c–d):

(a) Heinrich *liebt* die Frau.

‘Henry *loves* the woman.’

(b) Mein Vater *ist* vor einigen Tagen nach London *gefahren*.

‘My father *has* several days ago to London *travelled*.’

(c) *Liebt* Heinrich die Frau?

‘Loves Henry the woman?’ i.e. ‘Does Henry love the woman?’

(d) *Ist* mein Vater vor einigen Tagen nach London *gefahren*?

‘*Has* my father several days ago to London *travelled*?’

German verb compounds consisting of a separable element (e.g. an adjective, particle, even a prepositional phrase or a noun phrase) in conjunction with a verb provide further examples of verb-final structures. The separable element assumes the same position as a non-finite verb form, and hence German main clauses frequently end in a verbal satellite constituent, such as *tot* ‘dead’ from the compound *totschlagen* ‘to beat dead’:

Der König *schlug* den Feigling *tot*.

‘The king *beat* the coward *dead*.’

In subordinate clauses, satellite and verb stand together, and the verb alone, not the whole verbal complex, provides the domain for the attachment of infinitival *zu* ‘to’:

(a) Ich weiß, daß der König den Feigling *totschlug*.

‘I know that the king the coward *dead-beat*’, i.e. ‘beat the coward dead.’

(b) Ich freue mich darauf, den Feigling *totzuschlagen*.

‘I look forward to-it, the coward *dead-to-beat*.’

The final position of verbal forms in the above structures is not rigidly adhered to, however. Various constituents can stand to the right of the verb, and the frequency with which they do so is a matter of style: postposings are more frequent in informal, conversational German; and less frequent in formal, written German. There are strict rules governing which constituents can be postposed and which cannot. Direct objects, for example, cannot be postposed over the verbal satellite *über* ‘across’ (from *übersetzen* ‘set across’) in the following example, regardless of style:

(a) Man *setzte* die Urlauber in einem Boot *über*.

‘One set the holidaymakers in a boat across’

(b) ***Man** *setzte* in einem Boot *über* die Urlauber.

‘One set in a boat across the holidaymakers’

Nor can obligatory adjuncts (or strictly subcategorised constituents) move to rightmost position, as exemplified in the ungrammatical (b) in which the obligatorily present prepositional phrase has been postposed behind the infinitive *verleiten* ‘to lead (astray)’:

(a) Die Gelegenheit *wird* ihn bestimmt zu einem voreiligen Schritt *verleiten*.

‘The opportunity will him certainly to a rash move lead’, i.e. ‘will certainly encourage him to make a rash move.’

(b) ***Die** Gelegenheit *wird* ihn bestimmt *verleiten* zu einem voreiligen Schritt.

‘The opportunity will him certainly lead to a rash move.’

The constituents which can move are in general: (1) those which are heavy, i.e. which are long in terms of number of words, and complex in their internal structure; and (2) those which are more loosely integrated into the interpretation of the sentence, e.g. optional adverbial constituents which can serve as ‘afterthoughts’. With regard to (1), notice that non-subject embedded finite clauses in German *must* be postposed behind a ‘final’ verb form:

(a) ***Er** *hatte* daß er nicht lange leben würde *gewußt*.

‘He had that he not long live would known.’

(b) Er *hatte gewußt*, daß er nicht lange leben würde.

‘He had known, that he not long live would.’

With infinitival embeddings (which are typically shorter than finite clauses), the postposing is regularly optional rather than obligatory:

(a) Er *hatte* die Frau zu gewinnen *gehofft*.

‘He had the woman to win hoped’, i.e. ‘He had hoped to win the woman.’

(b) Er *hatte gehofft*, die Frau zu gewinnen.

‘He had hoped, the woman to win.’

As an example of (2), consider:

(a) Ich erzähle dir gleich, was ich bei Müllers *gehört habe*.

‘I tell you right-away, what I at the Müllers (place) heard have.’

(b) Ich erzähle dir gleich, was ich *gehört habe* bei Müllers.

‘I tell you right-away, what I heard have at the Müllers (place).’

The verb-second structures of the main clauses allow a wide variety of constituents to occupy first position, not just a subject. Some typical examples are given below, involving various fronted adverbials (a-d), non-subject noun phrases (e-f), a verb phrase (g), non-finite verb forms (h-i), an adjective (j) and an embedded clause (k):

(a) *Möglicherweise* *hat* Heinrich uns *vergessen*.

‘Possibly has Henry us forgotten’, i.e. ‘Possibly Henry has forgotten us.’

(b) Gestern *sind* wir ins Theater *gegangen*.

- ‘Yesterday have we to-the theatre gone.’
- (c) In München *wohnt* der Mann.
‘In Munich resides the man.’
- (d) Schön singt die Opernsängerin.
‘Beautifully sings the opera singer.’
- (e) Den Hund *sieht* die Katze.
The dog (acc.) sees the cat (nom.), i.e. ‘The cat sees the dog.’
- (f) Dem Mann *habe* ich das Buch *gegeben*.
‘The man (dat.) have I the book (acc.) given.’
- (g) Das Auto zu reparieren *hat* der Junge *versucht*.
‘The car to repair has the boy tried,’ i.e. The boy has tried to repair the car.’
- (h) *Gewinnen müssen* wir.
‘Win must we’, i.e. ‘Win we must.’
- (i) *Bestraft muß* er werden.
‘Punished must he be.’
- (j) Dumm *bin* ich nicht.
‘Stupid am I not.’
- (k) Daß er oft lügt *wissen* wir alle.
That he often lies know we all.’

Only one constituent can typically precede the verb in these constructions. A slight exception is provided by structures such as *gestern abend auf der Party fehlte Heinrich* ‘yesterday evening at the party was-missing Henry’, in which two thematically related constituents precede, *gestern abend* and *auf der Party*. But normally this is not possible. The most normal position for the subject in the above verb-second structures is immediately after the verb, though it can sometimes stand further to the right as well.

All of the structures just given are semantically declarative statements. Verb-first structures, by contrast, occur in a variety of primarily non-declarative sentence types, including yes-no questions (see above). Other verb-first structures are: imperatives (a), exclamations (b), and counterfactual and conditional clauses (c-d):

- (a) *Bringen* Sie das Buch herein!
‘Bring you the book in-here.’
- (b) *Bist* du aber schmutzig!
‘Are you ever dirty.’
- (c) *Hätte* ich nur Zeit, ich würde Ihnen helfen.
‘Had I only time, I would you help.’
- (d) *Kommt* er, so sehe ich ihn.
‘Comes he, then see I him’, i.e. If he comes, then I will see him.’

Modern colloquial German also exhibits a verb-first pattern in ‘dramatic’ narrative style :

Kommt da plötzlich jemand hereingeschneit. ‘Comes then suddenly someone bursting-in’, i.e. Then suddenly someone comes bursting in.’

This pattern was more productive in earlier stages of the language.

The verb-second and verb-first structures of German main clauses have close parallels in all the modern Germanic languages. Even English, which has gone furthest in the direction of fixing SVO, employs a verb-first rule in an almost identical set of environments to German, and it has numerous subject-verb inversion rules creating verb-second structures in a significant number of the environments that we have seen for German (see Hawkins 1986: chs. 11 and 12 for a summary).

Before leaving the topic of word order, notice that the positioning of other sentence-level constituents in German apart from the verb is relatively free. Within the other major phrasal categories, however (the noun phrase, the adjective phrase, the prepositional phrase), the ordering of daughter constituents is just as fixed as in English.

With its rich inflectional morphology, verb-final structures and word order freedom, Modern German preserves syntactic features that were common to all the older West Germanic languages. Modern English, by contrast, has essentially lost its case morphology on nouns (as well as other inflectional morphology), has fixed basic SVO word order, and permits less sentence-level word order freedom. Modern English syntax also differs from that of Modern German in other significant ways. Most of these are the result of English having effected changes which were either not carried out, or carried out to a much lesser extent, in German. We shall conclude with a very brief enumeration of some more of these contrasts.

English has larger and semantically broader classes of subject and direct object noun phrases than German, i.e. the quantity and semantic type of noun phrases that undergo rules sensitive to these grammatical relations is greater in English than in German. For example, many direct objects of English correspond to dative-marked noun phrases in German, which are arguably not direct objects since they cannot be converted to passive subjects. Compare the English sentences below with their German translations and with the corresponding passive sentences:

- (a) She loves the man/him.
- (b) Sie liebt *den Mann/ihn*. (acc.)
- (a) She helped the man/him.
- (b) Sie half *dem Mann/ihm*. (dat.)
- (a) The man/He is loved.
- (b) Der Mann/Er wird geliebt.
- (a) The man/He was helped.
- (b) *Der Mann/Er wurde geholfen.

The accusative-marked (and semantically prototypically patient) noun phrases of German in these constructions correspond to English direct objects and are also direct objects in German. But the dative (and semantically recipient) argument of *helfen* 'to help' also corresponds to a direct object in English, though it is not itself a direct object in German. The case syncretism of English has collapsed the distinct classes of noun phrases in German into a larger class of direct objects, with consequences for both the productivity

of various syntactic operations, and for the semantic breadth or diversity of the direct object relation.

Grammatical subjects in English also constitute a larger and semantically more diverse class. English frequently has subjects with non-agentive semantic roles where these are impossible in German, as the following selection shows:

- (a) *The king* visited his people. (Su.=agent)
- (b) *Der König* besuchte sein Volk.

- (a) *My guitar* broke a string. (Su.=locative; cf. *on my guitar...*)
- (b) **Meine Gitarre* (zer)riß eine Saite.

- (a) *This hotel* forbids dogs. (Su.=locative; cf. *in this hotel...*)
- (b) **Dieses Hotel* verbietet Hunde.

- (a) *A penny* once bought 2 to 3 pins. (Su.=instrumental; cf. *with a penny...*)
- (b) **Ein Pfennig* kaufte früher 2 bis 3 Stecknadeln.

- (a) *This advertisement* will sell us a lot. (Su.=instrumental; cf. *with this ad...*)
- (b) **Diese Anzeige* verkauft uns viel.

Related to this contrast is the existence of a productive set of raising rules in English, creating derived subjects and objects. These operations are either non-existent or extremely limited in German, as the following literal German translations of the English structures show. The English sentences (a-c) exemplify subject-to-subject raising, i.e. *John* is the original subject of *to be ill* and is raised to become subject of *seems*, etc.; (d-e) involve subject-to-object raising, whereby *John* has been raised to become direct object of *believe*, etc.; and (f-h) give examples of object-to-subject raising (or tough movement), in which the original object of *to study* has been raised to become subject of *is easy*, etc.:

- (a) John seems to be ill.
- (b) John happens to be ill.
- (c) John ceased to be ill.

- (a) Johann scheint krank zu sein.
- (b) *Johann geschieht krank zu sein.
- (c) *Johann hörte auf krank zu sein.

- (d) I believe John to be ill.
- (e) I understand him to be stupid.

- (d) *Ich glaube Johann krank zu sein.
- (e) *Ich verstehe ihn dumm zu sein.

- (f) Linguistics is easy to study.
- (g) Literature is pleasant to study.
- (h) History is boring to study.

- (f) Die Linguistik ist leicht zu studieren.
- (g) *Die Literatur ist angenehm zu studieren.
- (h) *Die Geschichte ist langweilig zu studieren.

Related to these more productive clause-external raising rules in English is the fact that the extraction of *wh* elements out of subordinate clauses is also more productive in English than in German. For example, German can typically not extract out of finite subordinate clauses:

That is the prize which I hope (that you will win Δ).
 *Das ist der Preis, den ich hoffe (daß du Δ gewinnen wirst).

Nor can German extract out of a prepositional phrase, thereby stranding a preposition, whereas such extraction and stranding is typically optional in English:

- (a) The woman who I went to the movies $pp(\text{with } \Delta)$.
 (b) The woman $pp(\text{with whom})$ I went to the movies.
 (a) *Die Frau, der ich ins Kino $pp(\text{mit } \Delta)$ ging.
 (b) Die Frau, $pp(\text{mit der})$ ich ins Kino ging.

The (b) versions of these sentences involve a fronting (or ‘pied piping’) of the whole prepositional phrase, rather than extraction out of it. German also has a productive verb phrase pied piping rule which is without parallel in English:

- (a) *The man $vp(\text{to kill whom})$ I have often tried
 (b) The man who I have often tried $vp(\text{to kill } \Delta)$.
 (a) Der Mann $vp(\text{den zu töten})$ ich öfters versucht habe
 Der Mann, den ich $vp(\Delta \text{ zu töten})$ öfters versucht habe; OR
 (b) Der Mann, den ich öfters versucht habe $vp(\Delta \text{ zu töten})$

Finally, numerous deletions which are possible in English are blocked in German, in part because the case system of German renders non-identical deletion targets which are identical in English. An example is given below, in which the leftmost occurrence of *the king* can delete in English, whereas the accusative-marked *den König* in German is not identical to the dative *dem König* and cannot be deleted by this latter:

- (a) Fred saw *the king* and thanked *the king*.
 (b) Fred saw and thanked *the king*.
 (a) Fritz sah *den König* und dankte *dem König*.
 (b) *Fritz sah und dankte *dem König*.

Deletions are also more restricted in German for other reasons as well. For example, deletions, like the extractions discussed above, cannot strand a preposition, even when the relevant noun phrases have identical cases:

- (a) He is the father of *the boy* and the friend of *the boy*.
 (b) He is the father of and the friend of *the boy*.
 (a) Er ist der Vater von *dem Jungen* und der Freund von *dem Jungen*.
 (b) *Er ist der Vater von und der Freund von *dem Jungen*.

Deletion of a relative pronoun is also impossible in German, but possible in English:

(a) The woman who(m) I love is coming tonight.

(b) The woman I love is coming tonight.

(a) Die Frau, die ich liebe, kommt heute abend.

(b) *Die Frau ich liebe kommt heute abend.

Summarising, we have the following overall typological contrasts between English and German:

<i>German</i>	<i>English</i>
More grammatical morphology	Less grammatical morphology
More word order freedom	Less word order freedom
Less semantic diversity of grammatical relations	More semantic diversity of grammatical relations
Less raising	More raising
Less extraction	More extraction
More pied piping	Less pied piping
Less deletion	More deletion

Bibliography

For **accessible grammars** of German written in English, readers may consult **Durrell (2011)** and the accompanying **workbook**, **Durrell et al (2011)**, which is designed for those who wish to practice their learning of German. **Introductory and intermediate learners can use Durrell and Kohl (2015), Durrell (2003) and also the classic text by Russon (1967). A useful book for vocabulary building is Fagan (2004).**

There are several useful works on German grammar, language history and sociolinguistics written in English. These include, in phonology, Moulton (1962) and the summary chapters 2 and 3 of König and Gast (2007) comparing German and English. For greater detail see Wiese (1996). König and Gast describe many features of German (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and lexicon), with particular reference to their contrasts to English. Hawkins (1986, reissued in 2015) also surveys major areas of syntactic and morphological contrast between German and English. For a recent generative syntax of German, see Haider (2010). Lockwood (1968) presents the major syntactic changes from Old High German to New High German. The papers in Russ (1990) give a summary of the dialects of Modern German. Clyne (1984) discusses the sociolinguistic situation in those countries in which German is the national language or one of the national languages, and Barbour & Stevenson (1990) bring together all aspects of variation (historical change, dialectology and sociolinguistics) in their book on variation in German.

For studies written in German, see the single-volume description of all areas of German grammar in the *Duden Grammatik* (2009), the two-volume description in Eisenberg (1999), and the three-volume set in Zifonun et al (1997). Althaus et al. (1973a) includes a summary of major areas of German grammar, with extensive further references. For phonology see also Hall (2000), and for phonology and morphology Lessen Kloeke (1982). Bierwisch (1963) is the first detailed generative treatment of the syntax of the German verb and of numerous related rules, and is still considered a classic. See Grewendorf (1988) for a later generative syntax of German and more recently Haider (2010) referenced above. The papers in Lang and Zifonun (1996) examine German from a typological perspective, comparing it with other languages and positioning it in relation to current universal generalizations. Bach (1970) and Eggers (1980) are standard reference works on the history of the German language. Althaus et al. (1973b) gives a summary of dialect differences among the German regions, of major historical changes in the different periods of both High and Low German, and of the current status of German in countries where German is not a national language, with extensive further references throughout. Ammon (2014) gives a more recent summary of the distribution of German speakers worldwide.

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Map 4.1: Dialects and Dialect Groups (adapted from Clyne 1984)



[Note to Editor: Convert " - - - Border between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic" to '- - - Former border between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic'.]

Map 4.2: Isoglosses Resulting from the Second Sound Shift (Map adapted from T. Bynon. *Historical Linguistics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (1977))

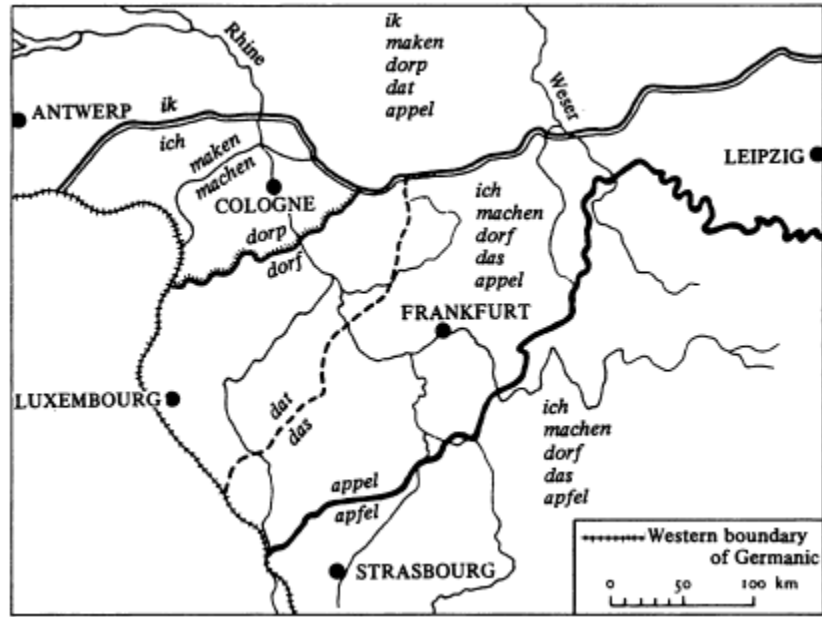


Table 4.1: The Lord's Prayer

<i>Old High German</i>	<i>Modern German</i>	<i>English</i>
'East Franconian, Tatian, c. 830		Authorised Version, 1611
Fater unser thu thar bist in himile, si giheilagot thin namo, queme thin rihhi, si thin uuillo, so her in himile ist so si her in erdu; unsar brot tagalihhaz gib uns hiutu, inti furlaz uns unsara sculdi, Und vergib uns unsere Sunden, so uuir furlazemes unsaren sculdigon; inti ni gileitest unsih in costunga, uzouh arlosi unsih fon ubile.	Vater unser, du bist da im Himmel. Geheiligt werde Dein Name. Dein Reich komme. Dein Wille geschehe, wie er im Himmel geschieht, so geschehe er auf Erden. Unser tägliches Brot gib uns heute. Und vergib uns unsere Sünden, wie wir unseren Schuldigern vergeben. Und du mögest uns nicht in Versuchung führen, sondern erlöse uns von Bösem.	Our father which art in heauen hallowed be thy name. Thy kyngdome come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen, Giue vs this day our daily bread. And forgiue vs our debts, As we forgiue our debtors. And lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer us from euill.

Table 4.2: Minimal Pairs for German Consonant Phonemes

/p/	/pasə/	passe	/raupən/	Raupen	/riːp/	rieb
/b/	/bas/	Baß	/raubən/	rauben		
/t/	/tasə/	Tasse	/baːtən/	baten	/riːt/	riet
/d/	/das/	das	/baːdən/	baden		
/k/	/kasə/	Kasse	/haːkən/	Haken	/ziːk/	Sieg
/g/	/gasə/	Gasse	/haːgən/	Hagen		
/f/	/fasə/	fasse	/höːfə/	Höfe	/raif/	reif
/v/	/vas/	was	/löːvə/	Löwe		
/s/	/sateʷ/	Satin	/raisən/	reißen	/rais/	Reis
/z/	/zats/	Satz	/raizən/	reisen		
/ʃ/	/ʃats/	Schatz	/rauʃən/	rauschen	/rauʃ/	Rausch
/ʒ/	/ʒeːniː/	Genie	/raːʒə/	Rage		
/ç/	/çiːna/	China	/raiçən/	reichen	/raiç/	reich
/x/			/rauxən/	rauchen	/raux/	Rauch
/h/	/hasə/	hasse				
/m/	/masə/	Masse	/hemən/	hemmen	/ram/	Ramm
/n/	/nasə/	nasse	/henən/	Hennen	/ran/	rann
/ŋ/			/heŋən/	hängen	/raŋ/	rang
/l/	/lasə/	lasse	/koːlə/	Kohle	/vil/	will
/r/	/rasə/	Rasse	/boːrə/	bohre	/vir/	wirr
/j/	/jakə/	Jacke	/koːjə/	Koje		

Table 4.3: Minimal Pairs for German Vowel Phonemes

/iː/	bieten	Stiele	ihn	ihre
/i/	bitten	Stille	in	irre
/üː/	Güte	fühle	kühn	führe
/ü/	Mütter	fülle	dünn	Dürre
/uː/	Rute	Buhle	Ruhm	Fuhre
/u/	Kutte	Bulle	Rum	murre
/eː/	beten	stehle	wen	zehre
/e/	Betten	Stelle	wenn	zerre
/öː/	Goethe	Höhle	tönt	höre
/ö/	Götter	Hölle	könnt	dörre
/oː/	rote	Sohle	Sohn	bohre
/o/	Rotte	solle	Bonn	Lorre
/ɛː/	bäte	stähle	wähne	währe
/ə/	gesagt	bitte	wartete	bessere
/aː/	rate	fahle	Bahn	Haare
/a/	Ratte	falle	Bann	harre
/ai/	leite	Feile	Bein	
/oi/	Leute	heule	neun	eure
/au/	Laute	faule	Zaun	

Table 4.4: Segmental Phonemes of German

Consonants												
	<i>Bilabial</i>		<i>Labio-dental</i>		<i>Dental-alveolar</i>		<i>Palato-alveolar</i>		<i>Palatal</i>	<i>Velar</i>	<i>Glottal</i>	
	p	b			t	d			ç	k	g	
Fricative			f	v	s	z	š	ž	ç		x	h
Nasals	m					n					ŋ	
Laterals					l	r						
Semi-vowels									j			

Vowels										
	<i>Front</i>					<i>Central Back</i>				
High	iː		(üː)							(uː)
		i		(ü)						(u)
Mid	eː		(öː)							(oː)
		e		(ö)	ɛː		ə			(o)
Low							a			
							a:			

Plus: diphthongs ai, oi, au

Note: () designates lip-rounding