

# **Sociocultural conceptualizations: Schemas and metaphorical transfer as metalinguistic learning strategies for French learners of German<sup>1</sup>**

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## **1. Introduction**

Whereas traditional foreign language teaching mainly concentrated on language as an object, that is, on the transmission of grammatical rules and lists of foreign vocabulary items, today's modern language teaching rather concentrates on the language as a communication tool and aims for genuine and fluent communication in semi-authentic situations. Real-life situations are rooted in and follow from cultural experiences in past and present life. This is the dimension in foreign language teaching that cognitive linguistics is relevant for. By its usage-based orientation and its being rooted in gestalt psychology and phenomenology, it offers a possibility of perceiving and describing the layer of sociocultural experience in a scientifically motivated way. „Cognitive Linguistics approaches language as an integrated part of human cognition which operates in interaction with and on the basis of the same principles as other cognitive faculties.” (Dirven 2004: 1)

On this cognitive view, extralinguistic reality is not an unstructured mass, but it is experientially structured as the result of coherent conceptualizations in diverse categories, each firmly based in larger domains of experience. Reality, that is the experience of reality, is organized by speakers of different languages in different categories: “We communicate the world as our language structures the phenomena of the world and categorises them as entities, processes, actions, space, time, etc. Consequently our general cognitive ability, as far as categorisation functions are concerned, interacts with our linguistic ability.” (Dirven 1989: 57) If we postulate an interactive relationship between language and the process of categorization, which is a result of our conceptualization, then we can conclude that differences

between languages reflect differences in conceptualization<sup>2</sup>: „formal differences between languages are symptomatic of differences in conceptualization.“ (Taylor 1993: 213). Categorization is not only or solely universal, but also and to a very large extent culturally specific, which means that more often than not it differs from one language to the other. This is particularly clear when we compare historically closely related conceptualizations in the Romance languages with those in the Germanic languages: Germans use a *Schraubenzieher* ('screwdriver', literally a "screwpuller"), which stresses the aspect of "pulling the screws", whereas French people use a *tournevis* which "turns the screws"<sup>3</sup>. Even if the experience of the same reality is present in German and in French, often there is a major difference in the way this reality is focussed: French people speak of *danger de mort* ('danger of (finding) death'), whereas Germans talk of *Lebensgefahr* ('life danger'; 'danger of losing one's life'). Sometimes one particular language has linguistic signs for conceptualizations which are not expressed in the other language because they simply do not exist: In German we find linguistic signs like *hitzefrei* ('having time off from school or work on account of excessively hot weather'), *Adventsplätzchen* ('special cookies baked during Advent'), *das Räuchermännchen* ('wooden figure from East Germany which burns incense') or *die Weihnachtspyramide* ('Christmas pyramid', i.e. a kind of merry-go-round with the holy family driven by candles); there are no counterparts in French for these German signs (as we see there are no linguistic signs for these objects in the English language either)<sup>4</sup>. Even if you try to explain or describe what these realities/objects are to French speakers, you will have many difficulties<sup>5</sup>.

This difference in the conceptualization and in the expressions of conceptualizations has implications for foreign language acquisition: The learner of a foreign language will have greater learning problems with the linguistic signs which reflect foreign categories not present in his own language or which reflect a different focus in the experiencing of reality; s/he will have to learn to view events in a different way. In his study in the classroom Danesi (1993) showed that students have indeed the greatest problems with "the foreign way of thinking": "According to Danesi (1993: 490), students often develop a high level of speaking proficiency in a second

language, but they continue to think ‘in terms of their native conceptual system: that is, students typically use target language words and structures as ‘carriers’ of their own native language concepts.’” (Lantolf 1999: 43) That’s why Lantolf concludes: “Although it may be possible for people to develop an intellectual understanding and tolerance of other cultures, a more interesting question, perhaps, is if, and to what extent, it is possible for people to become cognitively like members of other cultures; that is, can adults learn to construct and see the world through culturally different eyes?” (Lantolf 1999: 29-30) This is exactly the question this paper deals with. I will first try to show the difference in conceptualization between French and German for two different domains, one in the verbal sphere and one in case morphology, and I will further look for solutions for an easier acquisition of the differences.

## **2. The expression of motion and location in German and French**

In the following we will see that there are major differences between French and German in the way the concepts of motion and location are expressed. Already in 1985 Talmy compared the expression of motion in different languages; his analysis mainly focussed on the comparison between Spanish and English. He came to the conclusion that Romance languages constitute a different type of language from other Indo-European languages (1985: 75), because they express the path of motion in a different way: Does a language privilege plain verbs, as Romance languages do, or is the path of motion expressed by satellites accompanying the verb – i.e. particles, prepositions,... – as in other Indo-European languages? This leads Talmy to differentiate between verb-framed and satellite-framed languages. Starting from this difference I will look at and compare examples from French (a Romance language) and German (a Germanic language).

### *2.1. Manner and path of motion as conceptualized in verb-oriented vs. satellite-oriented languages*

According to Slobin (2000) each language verbalizes experience favoring one particular perspective: “The world does not present ‘events’ to be encoded in language. Rather, in the process of speaking or writing, experiences are filtered through language into verbalized events.” (2000: 107) Romance and Germanic languages are different in the way they express motion and the path of motion.

### 2.1.1. Manner of motion

Whereas French uses the verb *aller* (‘to go’) in a more schematic or abstract way for any kind of movement or change of location, German obligatorily uses several linguistic signs and must differentiate between the way the movement is taking place: *gehen* (only on foot), *fahren* (by car, train or boat), *fliegen* (by air)<sup>6</sup>. As Talmy (1985), Slobin (1996, 2000) and many other researchers have shown<sup>7</sup>, French and other Romance languages tend to use more general verbs of motion and do not tend to specify the manner of motion, whereas Germanic languages incorporate manner specifications much more into the verb. This explains the difference between the following German and French sentences:

- (1a) *Er rannte aus der Küche* (‘He ran out of the kitchen’);
- (1b) *Il sortit de la cuisine* (‘He came out of the kitchen’).

The German verb *rennen* (‘to run’) expresses the manner of motion, whereas *sortir* (‘to come/go out’) expresses the very general movement of “exiting”.

If there is a necessity or a wish to specify the manner of motion in French, the speaker will often use a gerund or adverbial constructions. Pourcel (2005) illustrates with a long list of English verbs expressing the manner of motion that often their translation into French is only possible when using a complex construction with *marcher* ‘to walk’; some of her examples are: *to stalk* – *marcher d’un air digne ou menaçant*; *to tramp* – *marcher d’un pas lourd*; *to plod* – *marcher d’un pas lent*; *to stomp* –

### 2.1.2. Path of motion

(2a) *Er rannte aus der Küche durch das Wohnzimmer zur Straße;*  
 (V) (SAT) (SAT) (SAT)  
 (2b) *Il sortit de la cuisine, traversa la salle de séjour pour aller à*  
*la rue ;*  
 (V) (V) (V)  
 ‘He ran out of the kitchen through the living-room into the street’.

- (4a) *Die Athleten schwimmen ans andere Ufer;*  
(V) (SAT)  
(4b) *Les athlètes traversent le fleuve (en nageant) ;*  
(V)  
'The athletes swim to the other side (of the river)'.

Whereas German uses prepositional satellites (*aus der Küche*, 'out of the kitchen'; *durch das Wohnzimmer*, 'through the living-room'; *zur Straße*, 'to the street'; *ans andere Ufer*, 'to the other side of the river') to express the path of motion, French uses a series of plain verbs (*sortir*, 'to come out'; *traverser*, 'to cross'; *aller*, 'to go') which are far more general than the German satellites<sup>11</sup>. As we can see with the translations, English as a Germanic language is quite similar to German in the way it expresses the path of motion. We are now in a state to understand why Talmy makes a difference between verb-framed and satellite-framed languages.

The description of this difference can help to explain why some syntactic constructions are not common usage in some languages although they are lexically possible and fully correct. Germans for instance will say:

- (5a) *Lass uns rübergehen* ('Let us go over [to the other side of the street]')  
(path of motion expressed by the satellite *rüber*), rather than  
(5b) *Lass uns die Straße überqueren* ('Let us cross the road')  
(path of motion expressed by a plain verb, which is unusual in German)<sup>12</sup>.

French speakers on the other hand speak of :

- (5c) *Traversons la rue* ('Let us cross the road')  
(plain verb for the path of motion).

### 2.1.3. The acquisition of motion expressions

Until now a contrastive linguistics approach showing this major difference between the Romance and the Germanic languages has been lacking in foreign language teaching. Cadierno (2004) also points to this deficiency in her paper about the expression of motion events in a second language: “The question of how adult second language learners come to express spatial relations in a second language is a rather neglected area within second language acquisition research” (2004: 13). We must now ask the question of what happens when speakers of the V-language French learn the SAT-language German. Our study with French speaking students shows a transference of some of the French lexicalization patterns when learning German: First, often a generalization about the manner of motion takes place instead of a differentiation; German sentences produced by French speakers often have the verb *gehen* ‘to go’ for all kinds of motion. Second, there is a tendency for French speakers to use full verbs to express the path of motion in German as we saw in the example (5b) – which does not reflect the patterns commonly used in German. As French teachers of German know all too well, students have more difficulties with the so-called particle verbs in German, where the particle functions as a satellite.

Often foreign language teachers react to foreign sentences by learners with: “You don’t say it like that in German”, without any further explanation. For the French learner of German this not only means that s/he has to acquire many more specific verbs expressing the manner of motion, but also and especially that s/he has to learn to experience and see events in different ways: S/he will have to focus much more both on the manner as the core of the motion to be conceptualized obligatorily in each utterance and on the various possible satellites, which are not left as an optional choice but form part of the experiential habitus of focussing.

By using simple examples like those above and schemas like the following, teachers can make learners aware of the differences in the expression of motion and of the path of motion.

<b>Motion</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>German</b>
<b>Manner</b>	One single general verb: <i>aller</i>	Several differentiated verbs: <i>fahren, fliegen, gehen, schwimmen,...</i>
<b>Path</b>	Several plain verbs: <i>traverser, sortir, entrer,...</i>	Satellites: Particles: <i>hinein-, herüber-, heraus-,...</i> ; Prepositions: <i>aus..., durch..., zu...,...</i>

## 2.2. Manner of location and change of location

A similar distinction can be made in the way speakers of German and French express location and the change of location.

### 2.2.1. Manner of location

Whereas French speakers like to use the very general verb *être* ('to be') to express a location of persons or things, Germans will almost always specify in which position they are located and use very different verbs which express the manner of location (a sitting, a lying or a standing position). "The use of one of the two verbs in competition [*stehen* or *liegen*] is almost obligatory in German when referring to the location of an object, i.e. you would hardly find the semantically neutral verb *sein* (= 'to be') in a locative sentence, where it is common in other languages, like English or Italian." (Serra-Borneto 1996: 377)

- (6a) *Où est ma tasse ?* ('Where is my cup?');
- (6b) *Wo steht meine Tasse ?* ('Where does my cup "stand"?');
- (7a) *Le livre est sur la table* ('The book is on the table');
- (7b) *Das Buch liegt auf dem Tisch* ('The book is "lying" on the table');
- (8a) *L'enfant est sur la commode* ('The child is on the chest of drawers');
- (8b) *Das Kind sitzt auf der Kommode* ('The child is sitting on the chest of drawers');



- (9a) *Le cadre est au mur* ('The picture is on the wall');  
(9b) *Das Bild hängt an der Wand* ('The picture is hanging on the wall').

Germans use the verbs *stehen*, *sitzen*, *liegen*, *hängen* to express a state or a location. Again, the difficulty for French speakers learning German will be this differentiation of the location of objects or persons.

### 2.2.2. Change of location

Similarly, for a change of location Germans will obligatorily use differentiated verbs expressing how things or persons are put or placed: in a sitting (*setzen*), standing (*stellen*) or lying (*legen*) position, whereas French uses one single verb: *mettre* ('to put').

- (10a) *Où as-tu mis le journal ?* ('Where have you put the newspaper ?') ;  
(10b) *Wo hast du die Zeitung hingelegt ?* ('Where have you "laid" the newspaper ?');  
(11a) *Je mets le vase sur la grande table* ('I put the vase on the large table');  
(11b) *Ich stelle die Vase auf den großen Tisch* ('I put the vase "in a standing position" on the large table');  
(12a) *Où as-tu mis ma tasse ?* ('Where have you put my cup ?');  
(12b) *Wo hast du meine Tasse hingestellt ?* ('Where have you put „in a standing position“ my cup ?').

For the expression of the change of location German also has a very general verb which corresponds to the French *mettre: tun*. And indeed we sometimes hear in Germany sentences like:

- (10c) *Wo hast du die Zeitung hingetan ?* ('Where have you put the newspaper ?');  
(11c) *Ich tue die Vase auf den großen Tisch* ('I put the vase on the large table');

(12c) *Wo hast du meine Tasse hingetan ?* ('Where have you put my cup ?').

Sentence (10c) can be accepted because one does not know "in which position" the newspaper is. Sentences (11c) and (12c) are very colloquial and will probably be rejected by purists of the German language as being bad German sentences: a vase (11c) or a cup (12c) will usually be put in a standing position (a sitting position is never possible for a vase or a cup and a lying position is quite unusual<sup>13</sup>).

The expression of the manner of location and of the change of location in the Romance and Germanic languages can be represented in the following table:

Location	French	German
<b>Manner</b>	Very general verb: <i>être</i>	Several differentiated verbs: <i>sitzen, stehen, liegen, hängen</i>
<b>Change</b>	Very general verb: <i>mettre</i>	Several differentiated verbs: <i>setzen, stellen, legen, hängen</i>

### 2.2.3. *The acquisition of location expressions*

As with the concept of motion French speakers have some difficulties when they learn German expressions of location. They tend to generalize and to use one single verb in German for the expression of a fixed position; it is most of the time the verb *sein* ('to be'). On the other hand we observed that the German verb *sein* is more often used by French speakers when they want to express a change of location.

A French speaker will have to think of the way things/persons are or in what position they are placed in German categories before s/he expresses a meaning of location or change of location. The foreign language teacher can introduce the differences with contrastive examples and then present the regularities in the form of schemas as described above. This kind of approach has been very much neglected up till now in foreign language

teaching. With the use of the schemas it should be easier to achieve first an increase in awareness and then a real active use of the differences.

### **3. Morphosyntax: spatial differentiation as static or dynamic location**

#### *3.1. Location and physical motion marked as dative or accusative*

Teachers of German know all too well that spatial relations as conceptualized in German and syntactically realized in the system of verbs, prepositions and case marking in sentences constitute a major problem for French speakers, especially when prepositions can be used with two different cases dependent on the conceptualization which is being conveyed (called *two-way prepositions* by Smith (1987)); verbs expressing spatial conceptualizations are used with prepositional nominal groups which are either dative or accusative objects (with a different case-marking):

(13a) *Er geht auf die Straße* (he is not yet in the street) (accusative object)

‘He is walking into the street’

(13b) *Er geht auf der Straße* (he is already there) (dative object)

‘He is walking (up and down) in the street’<sup>14</sup>.

This static/dynamic differentiation relates to the difference Germans experience and see between verbs which express an already existing location (*stehen* (‘to stand’), *sitzen* (‘to sit’), *liegen* (‘to lie’)) – often realized by a dative object in sentences – and verbs which express physical motion towards a landmark: something or someone *stellen* (‘to put in a standing position’), *setzen* (‘to set’), *legen* (‘to lay’) – which often implies the use of an accusative object. This differentiated use has been described in great detail by Leys (1989) and (1995). Traditional research tried to explain the difference with the concepts of ‘motion/no motion’, ‘direction/no direction’, ‘location/no location’. This is unsatisfactory. Cognitive linguistics approaches like those by Di Meola (1998), Draye (1996), Meex (2002),

Meex and Mortelmans (2002), Smith (1993) and (1995), Serra Borneto (1997) offer a more insightful way of explaining the difference:

*Er lief in den Wald* vs. *im Wald*  
He ran in the-ACC. forest vs. the-DAT forest  
'He ran into the forest' vs. 'was running in the forest'.

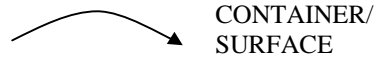
Here, the dative designates that the process in which – in cognitive grammar terminology – the *trajector* *er* is engaged, is taking place in the *search domain* of the preposition, i.e., on a point or in a set of points which fulfill the (spatial) specifications that the preposition *in* imposes on the *landmark* *Wald*. The accusative designates that the trajector *er* is engaged in a process which brings it into a position which permanently satisfies the specifications imposed by the preposition on the landmark *Wald*. (Draye 1996: 187)

### 3.2. Case-marking for partial motion

In addition to the prototypical examples like (13a) and (13b) there is a list of more difficult cases:

- (14) *in einen Apfel beißen* ('to bite into an apple'),
- (15) *Kaffee in eine Tasse gießen* ('to pour coffee into a cup'),
- (16) *etwas an die Tafel schreiben* ('to write something on the blackboard'),
- (17) *an die Tür klopfen* ('to knock on the door').

In these examples German sees a dynamic location which requires an accusative: there is a dynamic movement from the teeth to the apple, from the coffee to the cup, from the hand to the blackboard and from the hand to the door. At the concept level the apple or the cup are experienced as containers, the blackboard or the door as surfaces. To facilitate the experiential learning and gradual acquisition of these verbs one can describe German spatial verbs in visualized schemas with their syntactic realizations (the arrow is supposed to represent the concrete movement of the trajector or the trajectory towards the container or the surface):



<i>In einen Apfel beißen</i>	Zähne ('teeth')	Apfel ('apple') ( <i>beißen</i> )
<i>Kaffee in eine Tasse gießen</i>	Kaffee ('coffee')	Tasse ('cup') ( <i>gießen</i> )
<i>An die Tafel schreiben</i>	Hand ('hand')	Tafel ('blackboard') ( <i>schreiben</i> )
<i>An die Tür klopfen</i>	Hand ('hand')	Tür ('door') ( <i>klopfen</i> )

This means that the learner of German must analyze the examples in a conscious way. The movement is not necessarily explicitly expressed but can be reconstructed with our very general encyclopedic knowledge: one bites into an apple with one's teeth, one writes on the blackboard with the chalk in one's hand, one knocks on the door with one's hand. There is an underlying metonymic relationship between the action designated by the verb and some implicit objects (teeth or hand) which the learner must be made aware of and learn to visualize if s/he wants to find a justification for the use of the accusative.

### 3.3. Case-marking for abstract domains of thought perceived as motion

The crux is that this spatial distinction within spatial relations is also transposed to more abstract domains of thought as linguistically laid down in German. Some abstract German verbal expressions such as

- (18) *auf ein Problem eingehen* ('to go into a problem'),
- (19) *sich an die Hoffnung klammern* ('to cling to hope'),
- (20) *in eine andere Sprache übersetzen* ('to translate into another language'),
- (21) *ins Gesicht sagen* ('to say to someone's face'),
- (22) *hinter etwas schauen* ('to look behind something' [in a figurative

way]),  
(23) *ich bin an den Vertrag gebunden* ('I am bound to the contract')

face the French speaker with a similar dilemma: Is this an instance of a static or a dynamic abstract location? None of the approaches mentioned above looks at these more abstract examples in which there is no real, concrete movement. An explanation attempt is made by Smith (1995) who shows that the difference between dative and accusative use can also be motivated by the presence or the absence of change:

Dative designates that the trajector of the preposition is confined to a set of points satisfying the locative specification of the preposition (i.e. the search domain of the preposition). This situation can be interpreted as unchanging with respect to the preposition's search domain. Accusative designates that the trajector of the preposition is not always confined to the search domain of the preposition, but enters the search domain at some point along a path. This situation can be interpreted as involving change with respect to the locative configuration encoded by the preposition. (Smith 1995: 296)

Smith illustrates the concept of *change* with the verb *übersetzen* which requires an accusative object:

*Hans hat den Brief ins (in das) Deutsche übersetzt.*

Hans has the letter in-the-ACC German translated  
'Hans translated the letter into German.'

Thus, to translate from one language to another (encoded in German, as well as in English, by a verb which literally means 'to set over') involves the (figurative) movement of the trajector of the preposition over a (linguistic) boundary of sorts, which results in a change in the trajector. (Smith 1995: 313)


In my opinion this concept of change is too general; there is no change in the sentences: (18) *Ich gehe auf ein Problem ein*, (19) *Ich klammere mich an die Hoffnung*, or (23) *Ich bin an den Vertrag gebunden*. Serra-Borneto (1997) looks at some more abstract examples of static verbs with the accusative:

*Das Wasser reicht ihm bis über die Schenkel*

The water reaches to-him till over the-ACC thighs  
 ‘The water is above his thighs;’  
*Er ist über seine besten Jahre hinweg.*  
 He is over his-acc best years away  
 ‘He is over his best years (He has left behind the best years of his life)’ (Serra-Borneto 1997: 192).

He justifies the use of the accusative with the sense of *abstract motion*, although the situation is in itself static: But “you can imagine the eyes of the speaker following a trajectory from the ground up to the thighs and beyond them”. (Serra-Borneto 1997: 192) This abstract motion is typical for our examples above: the motion or the trajectory from the brain to the problem ((18) *auf ein Problem eingehen*), the motion of the hands to hope ((19) *sich an die Hoffnung klammern*), the motion of words from one language into the other ((20) *in eine andere Sprache übersetzen*), the motion of the words to the face ((21) *ins Gesicht sagen*), the motion of the eyes that look behind something or someone ((22) *hinter etwas schauen*), the motion of the hands to the contract ((23) *ich bin an den Vertrag gebunden*). The use of the accusative in the non-prototypical examples above highlights the entire path of motion. We need a further concept to explain the interpretation of the actions of our examples as being a motion and we can find it in conceptual metaphor theory as proposed by Lakoff/Johnson (1980): The abstract activity is perceived as motion, which means that there is a metaphorical transfer from the abstract activity to the motion. The conceptual metaphor ‘ABSTRACT ACTIVITY IS MOTION’ underlies our examples<sup>15</sup>. We can represent the abstract motion like this:

abstract motion



<i>auf ein Problem eingehen</i>	Gehirn (‘brain’)	<i>Problem</i> (‘problem’) ( <i>eingehen</i> , ‘to go into’)
<i>sich an die Hoffnung klammern</i>	Hände (‘hands’)	<i>Hoffnung</i> (‘hope’) ( <i>klammern</i> , ‘to cling’)

<i>in eine andere Sprache übersetzen</i>	Wörter in einer Sprache ('words in one language')	Wörter in <i>einer anderen Sprache</i> ('words in another language') ( <i>übersetzen</i> , 'to translate')
<i>hinter etwas schauen</i>	Augen ('eyes')	<i>hinter etwas</i> ('behind something or someone') ( <i>schauen</i> , 'to look')
<i>ins Gesicht sagen</i>	Wörter ('words')	<i>Gesicht</i> ('face') ( <i>sagen</i> , 'to say')
<i>an den Vertrag gebunden</i>	Hände ('hands')	<i>Vertrag</i> ('contract') ( <i>gebunden sein</i> , 'to be bound')

The elements of the second column ('head', 'hands', 'words', 'eyes') are again not explicit but can be reconstructed by metonymy starting from the verbs used and our knowledge about the action they designate: you cling to something with your hands (19), you translate words (20), you look with your eyes (22),... The trajectory is between implicit elements which are metonymically bound to the verbs used.

### 3.4. Implications for the acquisition of German by foreigners

French speakers have major problems in the case-marking of such examples because the abstract activities are not necessarily perceived as a motion which motivates the use of the accusative. The difficulties can be reduced if the teacher chooses an approach in which s/he privileges an explanation that demonstrates the underlying conceptual metaphor. Juchem (2006) claims that you can even save time in teaching lessons if you raise metaphor awareness. The examples we discussed are illustrations of the underlying conceptual metaphor: 'ABSTRACT ACTIVITY IS MOTION'. The foreign language teacher can ask questions like: Imagine the verb *klammern* ('cling') (example 19); what do you need to cling to something ? Show how you cling; what do you use when clinging ?... Learners will speak of their hands. This roundabout way is necessary to get to the underlying metaphor. The last step will be to show that exemplifications of this conceptual metaphor require the accusative case-marking in German.



#### 4. Conclusion

The insights gained from the discussion of our examples bring important changes for foreign language teaching. It should have become clear that many differences between French and German can only be explained when considering the way both languages conceptualize. The concept of manner is not as relevant in French as it is in German. The cooking domain brings further evidence for the prevalence of the manner dimension for German speakers. They will always specify the cooking method by using different linguistic signs: by frying (*braten*), baking (*backen*), boiling (*kochen*). Again, French has several expressions for the different cooking methods but French speakers rather use the general verbs *cuire* ('cook') or even *faire* ('to make'): *Je cuis la viande* ('I cook the meat') without specification of the way of cooking or *Je fais un gâteau* ('I make a cake'). Foreign language teachers should point to the importance of the manner dimension in German and to the obligatory use of a variety of verbs reflecting the diversity at the concept level.

The teaching of the German case-marking with abstract verbs can be facilitated if one chooses the indirect way of explaining the underlying conceptual metaphor: An abstract activity being interpreted as a motion offers a good explanation for the use of the accusative.

Until now, foreign language teaching has vaguely advised the foreign language learner "to learn to think in the foreign language". However, this can only happen with a cognitively and experientially rooted approach to language understanding and description. We now are in a position to begin to appreciate what this slogan involves.

#### Notes

1. I would like to thank Professor R. Dirven (University of Duisburg-Essen) for many insightful and constructive remarks and also Dr. Allan Turner (University

of Greifswald, Department of English and American Studies,) for a correction look at my paper. This paper has been extended and deepened out in De Knop and Dirven (forthcoming).

2. Here a caveat has to be mentioned: In spite of the great similarity between the cognitive approach and the well-known theory of linguistic relativity (Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis) both approaches are fundamentally different: “Although cognitive linguistics fully recognizes the language-specific and culture-specific “construal” of the experiential world, nevertheless it does not derive from it any patterns of thought as ‘given’ through this linguistic categorization. Human cognition is extremely creative and flexible, so it can appropriate many other patterns of categorization through borrowing, second language acquisition and foreign language learning. Linguistic relativity in the cognitive sense rather expresses itself in each individual speech event (the psycholinguist Dan Slobin (1996) calls this “thinking for speaking”) rather than in fixed, permanent modes of thinking, which would be in the sense of Whorf (1956) a “language for thought.”” (De Knop and Dirven forthcoming)
3. At the lexical level there is also a difference between French and German in the way that French mostly juxtaposes words as they occur in a verb phrase (*tourne-vis* [German: *Schraubenzieher*], *essuie-main* [German: *Handtuch*]), whereas German combines compounding (*Schrauben* [‘screws’] + *zieh-* [‘pull’]) and derivation (*-er*; instrumental derivational morpheme).
4. See also Wierzbicka (2006) in which she shows that “English is the only language in the world which has a word for the concept of ‘privacy’ (2006: 5).
5. Whereas German is highly flexible in the areas of compounding and derivation, French is far less so. This may explain why German coins all kinds of new compounds for its cultural innovations.
6. Of course in French you have similar linguistic signs like *marcher* (‘to walk’), *rouler* (‘to drive’), *voler* (‘to fly’),... but they are not used like in German where the speaker has no choice when he wants to express a motion; s/he will have to analyze the manner of motion before talking and then use the corresponding verb.
7. For Turkish, see e.g. Özçaliskan (2003, 2004, 2005a and 2005b); for Dutch: Lemmens (2002 and 2004) and van Oosten (1986). Matsumo (1996) compares English and Japanese verbs of subjective motion.
8. For more details, see her full list p. 4. In her paper with Kopecka (Pourcel and Kopecka 2005) it becomes clear that there is much more variability in the expression of motion events in French than generally accepted from Talmy’s

Kommentar [TDR1]: Is this caveat necessary? Is it something you’ll be coming back to later as it affects your analysis/es or adds something to your research aims in this paper? If not, you might consider leaving it out. See also my Comment No 2 about the extent to which we will allow every single contribution to present the nuts and bolts of the CL approach.

typology. They suggest that the above pattern is not the only one available in French. As we are concerned with the acquisition of German patterns by French speakers, it cannot be our aim to go into the details of the different frames they are describing. Our question is much more how L2 learners can learn to express motion in a language (German) which is typologically different from their native language (French).

9. Studies on this topic have been done for translations between Spanish and English, e.g. by Slobin (2000).
10. See also the study by Slobin (1996) in which he compares Spanish and English; Özçaliskan's (2003) looks at examples of Turkish as compared with English and comes to the conclusion that Turkish "typically encodes direction of motion in the main verb of a clause (e.g., *He enters, exits, ascends, descends*), whereas English prefers to encode direction of motion by using particles or prepositions, making the main verb slot available for a manner verb (e.g., *He walks, runs, crawls in/out/across*)."
11. Bowerman (1996) compares English and Korean and notices that Korean presents a mixed picture.
12. In her investigation of French motion verbs Kopecka (2006) shows that French can also express the path of motion in a prefix revealing a satellite-framed pattern attributed to Germanic and Slavic languages, e.g. "*L'oiseau s'est en-volé (P + M) du nid*" (Pourcel/Kopecka 2005: 11). According to Kopecka it seems that the expression of path in a prefix is widely spread in French. We cannot go into the details of these examples in this paper. For more examples, see Kopecka (2006).
13. The particle *über-* in *überqueren* cannot be separated from the verb *-queren*, so it cannot be considered to be a satellite.
14. A lying position for a vase or a cup is possible when these objects are being transported (in a box for instance) but this is not the usual position.
15. English keeps something of this differentiation by the use of *into* (*he is walking into the street*) or *in* (*he is walking in the street*).
16. In her description of fictive motion verbs like in "the road runs along the coast" or "a trail goes through the desert", Matlock (2004) also stresses the importance of conceptual metaphors for motion verb extensions "e.g., TIME IS SPACE, CHANGE IS MOTION" (Matlock 2004: 222).

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