

Language-specific tests for verb-particle constructions

PARSEME shared task on automatic detection of verbal multiword expressions

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This document has significantly changed wrt. its [previous version](#).

This document contains language-specific guidelines related to the VPC (Verb-Particle Construction) category defined in the [general guidelines](#).

1 Tests for discriminating particles from homographic prepositions and prefixes

The following tests allow to properly identify prepositional verb particles in cases where they might be homographic with prepositions in prepositional phrases (PPs) or with verbal prefixes. The word to be discriminated is referred to as a *candidate word*.

1.1 English-specific test for distinguishing particles from prepositions

The following tests concern English words which can be either a proposition or a particle depending on the context, e.g. *up*, *on*, *through*, etc. If a candidate word passes any of the three following tests it can be categorized as a particle.

Test 8.1.EN - [PART+PREP] - Particle followed by a preposition

Is the candidate word followed by a preposition? If so, it is a particle.

- *I can no longer **put up** with him* (*up* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *I **got up** the hill* (*up* does not pass the test)

Test 8.2.EN - [FIN-PART] - Sentence-final particle

Does the candidate word *w* occur at the end of a clause which is: (i) affirmative or imperative, (ii) headed by the verb governing *w*, (iii) not a relative clause? Can the sentence be reformulated so as to put the candidate word at the end of such a clause? If so, then it is a particle.

- *They **got up** a petition on Monday. They **got it up**.* (*up* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *They **got up** a hill later than expected. *They got it up.* (*up* does not pass the test)

Test 8.3.EN - [AD-INS] - Adjunct insertion

Can a circumstantial adjunct be inserted between the governing verb and the candidate word? If no, then the latter is a particle.

- *I **took off** my clothes at once - *I took at once **off** my clothes.* (*off* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *she always tries to **take in** her clients - *she tries to take always **in** her clients* (*in* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *he **has been off** alcohol recently - he **has been** recently **off** alcohol* (*off* does not pass the test)

1.2 German-specific tests for distinguishing particles from prepositions and verbal prefixes

The following tests concern German words which can be both a particle and either a preposition or a verbal prefix, depending on the context, e.g. *mit*, *um*, *vor*, etc. If a candidate word passes any of the three following tests it can be categorized as a particle.

Test 8.1.DE - [FIN-PART] - Sentence-final particle

Does the candidate word occur at the end of the sentence or can the sentence be reformulated so as to put the candidate word at the end? If so, the candidate word is a particle, otherwise it is a preposition or a prefix.

- ***Kommst** Du mit? lit. come you with? 'are you coming?'* (*mit* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *Ich **schlage** vor allen zu verzeihen 'I propose to forgive everyone', Ich **schlage** es vor 'I propose it'* (*vor* passes the test, it is a particle)
- ***Kommst** Du mit jemandem? 'Are you coming with someone?' ***Kommst** Du jemandem mit?* (*mit* does not pass the test, it is a preposition)
- *Er **umfuhr** den ganzen See mit dem Fahrrad 'He drove around the whole lake with a bike', *er fuhr ihn um* (*um* does not pass the test)
- **But:** *Der Mülleimer wurde **umgefahren**. 'The trash bin was knocked down', Er **fuhr** den Mülleimer um 'He knocked down the trash bin'* (*um* passes the test, it is a particle)

Test 8.2.DE - [SEP-PART] - Separable particle

Can the verb and the candidate word be spelled both separately and together? If yes, then the latter is a particle, otherwise it is a preposition or a prefix.

- ***passen** Sie auf die Autos auf! 'be careful with the cars!', Sie müssen auf die Autos **aufpassen**! 'you must be careful with the cars'* (*auf* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *Er **fuhr** das Schild um 'he drove over the sign', er sollte das Schild nicht **umfahren** 'he should not drive over the sign'* (*um* passes the test, it is a particle)
- *Er **umfuhr** den ganzen See mit dem Fahrrad 'he rode around the whole lake with a bike', *er fuhr den ganzen See mit dem Fahrrad um* (test not passed, *um* is a prefix)
- ***sprechen** Sie mit ihm! 'speak with him', *Sie sollen ihm **mitsprechen*** (*mit* does not pass the test)

2. Tests for discriminating VPCs from compositional verb+particle constructions

Once we have checked that the pre-identified expression contains a verb and a particle, we still need to check that this combination is not semantically compositional. The essential test is to see if a sentence without the particle can refer to the same event/state as the sentence with the particle. If so, then this is a compositional VPC and should **not** be annotated, as shown for English by Test 16 [V+PART-DIFF-SENSE] in the general guidelines. Here we provide similar tests for Hungarian and German. Examples for other relevant languages should be added.

2.1 Hungarian-specific examples

Test 14.HU - [V+PART-DIFF-SENSE] - Sense shift due to the particle

Can a sentence without the particle refer to the same event/state as the sentence with the particle? Special care must be taken when the same construction might or might not be a valid VPC depending on its context.

- *A csatár nem rúgta be a helyzetét.* 'The forward missed its chance to score a goal.' (*A csatár berúgta a helyzetét* implies *A csatár rúgott* 'The forward kicked', so *rúgta be* does not pass the test, it is not a VPC)
- *A meccs után csak az edző nem rúgott be.* 'Only the coach did not get drunk after the match.' (*A meccs után az edző berúgott* 'The coach got drunk after the match' does not imply that *Az edző rúgott* 'the coach kicked', so *rúgott be* passes the test, it is a VPC)
- *Nem jött be a szobába.* 'He did not come into the room.' (*Bejött a szobába* 'he entered the room' implies *Jött a szobába* 'he came into the room', so *jött be* does not pass the test, it is not a VPC)
- *Nem jött be ez a koktél nekem.* 'I didn't like this cocktail.' (*Bejött ez a koktél nekem* 'I liked this cocktail' does not imply *Jött ez a koktél nekem* 'this cocktail bumped into me', so *jött be* passes the test, it is a VPC)

2.2 German-specific examples

The following is the German version of Test 16 for discriminating compositional verb+particle combinations from non-compositional VPCs.

Test 14.DE - [V+PART-DIFF-SENSE] - Sense shift due to the particle

Can a sentence without the particle refer to the same event/state as the sentence with the particle? If yes, then it is not a non-compositional VPC. Special care must be taken when the same construction might or might not be a valid VPC depending on its context.

anfangen

- *Der Lehrling fängt ein Praktikum an.* lit. *the apprentice catches an internship on* 'the apprentice begins an internship' does not imply *Der Lehrling fängt ein Praktikum* 'the apprentice catches an internship' (*fängt an* passes the test, it is a VPC)

- *Die Bäuerin hat sich wieder eingefangen* lit. *the farmer's wife has herself again caught* 'the farmer's wife has calmed down again' does not imply *Die Bäuerin hat sich wieder gefangen* 'the farmer's wife has caught herself again' (*eingefangen* passes the test, it is a VPC)
- *Der Bauer fängt die Hühner ein.* lit. *the farmer catches the chickens in* 'the farmer catches the chickens' implies *der Bauer fängt die Hühner* 'the farmer catches the chickens' (*einfangen* does not pass the test, it is not a VPC)

ablegen

- *Der Schüler legt die Prüfung ab.* lit. *the pupil lays the exam off* 'the pupil does the exam' does not imply *der Schüler legt die Prüfung* 'the pupil put the exam' (*legt ab* passes the test, it is a VPC)
- *Das Schiff legt vom Hafen ab.* lit. *the boat lays from the harbor off* 'the ship leaves the harbor' does not imply *das Schiff legt vom Hafen* 'the boat puts from the harbor' (*legt ab* passes the test, it is a VPC)
- *Der Lehrer legt das Buch auf dem Tisch ab.* lit. *the teacher lays the book on the table apart* 'the teacher puts the book on the table' implies *Der Lehrer legt das Buch auf den Tisch* 'the teacher puts the book on the table' (*legt ab* does not pass the test, it is not a VPC)
- *Der Lehrer legt den Mantel ab.* (lit: the teacher lays the coat off = the teacher takes off his coat) implies *Der Lehrer legt den Mantel* (*legt ab* is not a VPC)