

**The SVO/SOV-question and Verb Particle Constructions in Danish, German and Yiddish**  
Sten Vikner, University of Aarhus, Denmark

I will start out by suggesting that prepositions and (separable) particles have the same structure:

[<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> P<sup>o</sup> DP]] and [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>PrtP</sub> Prt<sup>o</sup> DP]]

and that the difference is that prepositions assign case, whereas particles do not. Therefore the complement DP of a particle (e.g. *the book* in *throw out the book*) will not be assigned a case. This problem has two potential solutions: **EITHER** the particle is incorporated into the verb (i.e. into V\*), in which case V\* (maybe via the trace in Prt<sup>o</sup>) may now assign case to the "object", **OR** the DP may move to PrtP-spec, where it can be assigned case directly by V<sup>o</sup> (as in ECM-constructions).

The picture can be extended to the Germanic SOV-languages, assuming that what differs between SVO and SOV is only the ordering of the verb and a separable particle, and never the ordering of the verb and an inseparable particle.

I will then go on to show that the view that Yiddish is an OV-language like German and Dutch, not a VO-language like English or Danish, is supported by facts concerning verb particles. I shall argue against Diesing's (1997:383) claim that particles may not form the basis of an argument for the underlying order of Yiddish being OV.

The point is that only if Yiddish is an OV-language like German and Dutch, not a VO-language like English or Danish, can we explain why Yiddish is like German and unlike Scandinavian in allowing even those particles to occur preverbally in non-V2 constructions that do not incorporate, as seen by their not moving along with the finite verb during V2, by their requiring participial/infinitival forms with intervening *-ge-* *-tsu-*, and by their ability to topicalise.