

## The SVO/SOV-question and Verb Particle Constructions in Danish, German and Yiddish

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

$[_{VP} [_{PP} P^{\circ} DP]]$  and  $[_{VP} [_{PrtP} Prt^{\circ} DP]]$

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  $Prt^{\circ}$ ) may now assign case to the "object", **OR** the DP may move to  $PrtP$ -spec, where it can be assigned case directly by  $V^{\circ}$  (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.