

- Janssen, Theo A.J.M. 1992. "Het indirect object: Een grammatisch-theoretisch sjibbolet en een culturele entiteit, maar geen grammatische categorie?" [The indirect object: A grammatical-theoretical shibboleth and a cultural entity but not a grammatical category?]. *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 108:354-371.
- Janssen, Theo A.J.M. 1994. "Betekenis en interpretatie, of hoe taal en wereldbeeld elkaar aanvullen. [Meaning and interpretation, or how language and world view complement each other]. In Tieme van Dijk and Roel Zemel (eds.), *Het is kernis hier. Lezingen ter gelegenheid van het 75-jarig bestaan van Nederlands aan de Vrije Universiteit*. Amsterdam: Stichting Neerlandistiek VU and Münster: Nodus Publikationen. 5-18.
- Janssen, Theo A.J.M. 1997. "Geen vorm en toch een functie? Modale, temporele, aspectuele en lexematische bijzonderheden bij *hebben*. [No form but still a function? Modal, temporal, aspectual, and lexematic particularities in connection with *hebben* 'to have'.] In Els H.C. Elffers-van Ketel, Joop M. van der Horst, and Wim G. Klooster (eds.), *Grammaticaal spektakel. Artikelen aangeboden aan Ina Scherner-Vermeer*. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 123-134.
- Keller, Rudi. 1995. *Zeichentheorie. Zu einer Theorie semiotischer Wissens*. Tübingen: Francke.
- Newman, John. 1993. "The semantics of giving in Mandarin." In Richard A. Geiger and Brygida Rudzka-Ostyn (eds.), *Conceptualizations and Mental Processing in Language*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 433-486.
- Newman, John. 1996. *Give. A Cognitive Linguistic Study*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter [Cognitive Linguistics Research 7].
- Newman, John. "The origin of the German *es gibt* construction." This volume.
- Reid, Wallis. 1995. "Quantitative analysis in Columbia School theory." In Ellen Contini-Morava and Barbara Sussman Goldberg (eds.), *Meaning as Explanation: Advances in Linguistic Sign Theory*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 115-152.
- Ruhl, Charles. 1989. *On Monosemy: A Study in Linguistic Semantics*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Scherner-Vermeer, E. Inal C. 1991. *Substantivie versus formele taalbeschrijving: het indirect object in het Nederlands* [Substantial versus formal description of language: The indirect object in Dutch]. [University of Amsterdam doctoral dissertation].
- Tobin, Yishai. 1995. "Only vs. just: Semantic integrality revisited." In Ellen Contini-Morava and Barbara Sussman Goldberg (eds.), *Meaning as Explanation: Advances in Linguistic Sign Theory*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 323-359.
- Van Belle, William and Willy Van Langendonck. 1992. "The indirect object in Dutch." *Leuvense Bijdragen* 81:19-43.
- van der Leek, Frederike. 1996. "The English comative construction: A componential account." In *CLS* 32:363-378.
- Vries, Mathias de, Lambert A. te Winkel, et al. 1882-present. *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal* [Dictionary of the Dutch language]. The Hague: Nijhoff and Leiden: Sijthoff [Second edition 1993; The Hague: Sdu].
- Wierzbicka, Anna. 1986. "The semantics of the internal dative — a rejoinder." *Quaderni di Semantica* 7:155-165.

The origin of the German *es gibt* construction

John Newman
Massey University

1. Introduction

In modern German, *geben* occurs in two very different constructions which appear far removed from each other, both syntactically and semantically. In the construction illustrated in (1), *geben* translates as 'give' and functions as a three-place predicate, whereas in (2), *geben* functions as a two-place predicate with an impersonal subject, corresponding approximately to the English 'there is/are' construction.

- (1) *Ich gab dem Kind einen Apfel.*
I:NOM gave the:DAT child:DAT a:ACC apple:ACC
'I gave the child an apple.'
- (2) *Es gibt einen Gott.*
it:NOM gives a:ACC God:ACC
'There is a/one God.'

The relationship between these two construction types is by no means obvious and it is natural to turn to an historical investigation of *geben*, in order to shed some light on the relationship.

While the construction in (1) has existed throughout the history of German from the time of written documents, the *es gibt* construction only established itself in the Early New High German period, in particular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Since this period is well documented in terms of published literature, we are in a position to trace the early stages

in the history of the *es gibt* construction. Of particular interest is the writer Johann der Täufer Friedrich Fischart (1546/7-1590) who would appear to be the first significant writer to make extensive use of the construction, as was already noted in the important works of Grimm (1837:230) and Kehrein (1854:55) in the nineteenth century. While Fischart appears to be the first writer to have made extensive use of an *es gibt* construction, it would be plainly wrong to say he "invented" the construction. There are occasional instances of *es gibt* + NP:ACC 'there is/are' before the time of Fischart's writings which Kehrein (1854:56) had noted. One relevant passage occurs in a text called *Ein Pasquillus von dem Schloß zu Plassenburg* by Hans Sachs (1494-1576) which I quote below (with a little more context than that given originally by Kehrein):

- (3) *Nach dem ersetzet' das Schloß Plassenburg mit einem tiefen
Seuffer, daß es gleich im Buchholz ein Widerhall gab, und gab
weiter kein Antwort.* (Sachs, 1554?, in 1966 ed. Vol. 2, p. 401)
- 'After that, Castle Plassenburg sighed a deep sigh such that there was immediately an echo in the beech-woods and there was no further answer.'

I have not been able to ascertain the exact date of this passage, but the date of the events described is given by Sachs as July 14, 1554 later in the same text. If we assume it was written at about the time of the events, then we could say it was written ca. 1555, and obviously not before 1554. In the passage quoted, it would be difficult, although perhaps not impossible, to construe the subject pronoun *es* as referring to *das Schloß* 'the castle'. *Es* would be the correct pronoun form, if it were referring to the castle. (The lack of an accusative ending on *ein Widerhall* is not untypical of object NPs in this period of German.) The sense then would be literally 'such that the castle gave (made?) an echo in the beech-woods'. It seems more feasible to construe *es gab* ... *ein Widerhall* as a modern *es gibt* construction, meaning 'there was an echo' and this is how Kehrein appears to have interpreted it too.¹

The present study is intended as a further contribution to our knowledge of the early history of the *es gibt* construction. To this end, I will focus on the early uses of *es gibt*, as evidenced in the writings of Fischart. Focusing on this one author and his uses of *geben*, in both personal and impersonal constructions, has advantages when it comes to attempts to

relate various uses of *geben*, as I wish to do. Proceeding in this way, we avoid the dangers of relating uses which might be geographically scattered and which may not all be present in one dialect or one coherent style of the language. While a complete history of *es gibt* is yet to be written, the present study offers a snapshot of its use at a crucial early stage in its history.

The work from which I will draw the early examples of *es gibt* is Fischart's *Geschichtklitterung*, a greatly expanded and very free translation of the French novel *Gargantua* by François Rabelais, published in 1534. Fischart's work was given the title *Geschichtklitterung* which might be translated as 'Historical Scribbling' or 'Storyscribble?', though it is also referred to as *Gargantua*. *Geschichtklitterung* was first published in 1575, a second edition appeared in 1582, and a third edition appeared in the year of Fischart's death, 1590.²

Although we are not interested here in the various literary qualities which characterize *Geschichtklitterung*, the work is so unusual in certain respects that some remarks about the work are necessary in order to appreciate the oddity of many, indeed most, of the sample sentences taken from this work. Before elaborating on the language of *Geschichtklitterung*, however, one should note that the French original on which it is based has special linguistic qualities which are preserved and enhanced in Fischart's translation. Rabelais' *Gargantua*, along with his book *Pantagruel* (ca. 1532) and some other works, presents a grand comic saga of fantastic and preposterous proportions. Matching the content, Rabelais' language is equally extraordinary in the way it combines the language of higher learning, expressions from Latin and Greek, crudities, colloquialisms, alliteration, rhyme, onomatopoeia, word coinage, foreign words etc.³

Many of the comments which have been made about Rabelais' *Gargantua* also apply to *Geschichtklitterung*. It would be quite misleading, however, to view *Geschichtklitterung* as nothing more than a translation of Rabelais' novel. For one thing, Rabelais' novel is written in such a linguistically idiosyncratic way that any "translation" would necessarily involve considerable originality on the part of the translator in order to reproduce the effect in the original French. Not only does Fischart reproduce similar linguistic effects to what is found in the original, but he greatly expands on the original in terms of length, albeit in a stylistically exaggerated way. A phrase or two in the original may be expanded to the extent

of a few pages by Fischart. Often, these elaborations take the form of inventories of observations, classifications, or enumerations of entities, all expressed in Fischart's linguistically playful way. Fischart's linguistic play is evident in almost every phrase. The result of these linguistic and stylistic liberties is an unusual and very obscure text. In fact, *Geschichtklitterung* has been described as "the most grotesque book of German literature."⁵

I will proceed by documenting the range of interpretations which attach to *es gibt* constructions in Fischart's *Geschichtklitterung*. In working through the illustrative examples from Fischart, I shall try to express the semantic force of the *es gibt* construction as carefully as possible. As one might infer from the remarks above, it is rarely a simple matter to establish a definitive meaning for any example from Fischart, given the highly individualistic and innovative style of the writing. Fortunately, for our purposes, it will not be necessary to dwell on every word in each example. Rather the focus will be on the particular semantic contribution which the *es gibt* component appears to make. The context of each example is often crucial in establishing the appropriate meaning and some reference to the context will be made where this is relevant. The 1963 edition of *Geschichtklitterung* was published together with a companion glossary. Nyssen (1964), which is invaluable in any attempt to interpret the text, although even this glossary is no more than suggestive in its annotations of many words and phrases.

2. The meanings of *es gibt*

When we consider the larger contexts which the *es gibt* constructions are part of, it can be seen that very often there is a sense of 'leads to, gives rise to' attaching to the construction. The overwhelming majority of the *es gibt* instances in *Geschichtklitterung* appear to fall into this category. I shall begin by analyzing the example in (4), which illustrates typical properties attaching to Fischart's use of *es gibt*. (In these and other examples from Fischart, I will show the essential part of the construction in bold.)

- (4) *wann nur die Weiber und die Hund dran seychen, so gets guten Burgundischen Saltpeter* (125, 37-38)
 'all you need is for old women and dogs to urinate on it, and you'd get good Burgundy saltpetre'

or

'having just old women and dogs urinate on it would produce good Burgundy saltpetre'

In (4), we see an explicit 'if... then...' construction, with *wann* 'if/when' introducing the condition, and *so* the accompanying consequence clause containing a subjunctive form of *es gibt*. The explicit antecedent clause functions semantically as the cause of the Burgundy saltpetre. (It may be noted that the *es gibt* construction never occurs as part of an antecedent clause in Fischart's use.)

(5) illustrates *es gibt* used in a similar context to (4). In (5), however, the *es gibt* clause is functioning as a subordinate clause (of result), rather than the main clause as in (4):

- (5) *da regnets dann eitel Glück, das man im Treck sizet biß über die Ohren, da schneiet und hagelt es mit Gelt zu, das es Beuten gibt* (106, 17-18)

'if will rain nothing but good fortune, so much so that you'll be sitting in mud [of good fortune] up over your ears, it will snow and hail with money, so much so that you'll have bumps [on account of all the coins pelting against your body]'

or

'... so much so that it [the pelting of all the coins against your body] will lead to/cause bumps'

The example occurs as part of a passage describing the qualities of a perfect wife and how happy a house will be when the wife is so good. (4) describes, figuratively, how happy and prosperous such a couple will be. To emphasize this, Fischart resorts to an oxymoron: the couple will be so happy that they will be up to their ears in mud/filth (cf. colloquial English *filthy rich*). Then comes another oxymoron creating the same kind of effect: it will snow and hail with money [on the lucky couple], so much so that they will end up with lumps and bruises. The appearance of the lumps is the result of all the money hailing down on them. Once again, the *gibt* may be interpreted as 'leads to/will lead to'.

Apart from *wann* 'if...' and *das(s)* 'so that', various other connectives may serve to indicate a kind of antecedent-consequence relationship within the sentence, with the *es gibt* construction forming part of the consequence. In (6) *so* imposes this kind of semantic structure to the sentence:

- (6) *sonst wo die Erd sich zwischen Sonn und Mon einlegt, so gibts finsternuß* (99, 13-14)

'normally where the earth positions itself between the sun and the moon, then that will lead to darkness'

or

'normally where the earth positions itself between the sun and the moon, then that will lead to darkness'

In this example, the positioning of the sun and the moon is what leads to darkness. The context makes clear that this sentence is actually a metaphorical description of a domestic situation, where sun = husband, moon = wife, and the earth = unpleasantness. The *wo* which introduces the clause describing the sun and the moon could be translated as either 'where' or 'when'. In any case, the event of the earth positioning itself between the sun and the moon is what brings about the darkness. These examples describe an antecedent-consequence relationship like that of a physical law. The dynamic way of expressing the antecedent clause with the verb *sich einlegen* 'to position oneself in (between) . . .' suggests an equally dynamic interpretation for the consequence clause along the lines of 'this will lead to/ create darkness', rather than simply 'there exists darkness'.

In other examples there is no previous clause within the sentence functioning as an antecedent to the *es*. However, one could maintain the same kind of analysis as we have proposed above for a number of these sentences, with the *gibt* understood, as before, as 'leads to/will lead to'. Consider (7) for example:

- (7) *O wie ernsthafti betten gibt es alsdamm für ihn, daß er wider gesund heimkomme* (103, 4-5)

'Oh what intense praying there'll be for him then, so that he may return home safely'

or

'Oh what intense praying it [the husband leaving the house] will lead to . . .'

(7) occurs in the context of a discussion of the sorrow which the wife has to endure when her husband leaves the house. The departure of the husband is clearly a discourse topic in the relevant passage. Here, then, the *es*

could be taken to refer to the departure or absence of the husband which in turn brings about the wet eyes and the praying (for his safe return).

The examples (4)-(7) illustrate the most commonly occurring structures in which *es gibt* is found. In all of them, there is a dynamic component in the meaning of *es gibt*, associated with the development, emergence, or creation of a new entity. This dynamic component is present in varying degrees, from being quite strongly present in examples (4) and (5) to being weakly implied in an example such as (7). There are few examples of *es gibt* in *Geschichtklitterung* which simply describe an unconditional, present existence of objects or reality of events. (8) is one of the few convincing examples of this usage.

- (8) *Dann es gibt gestolene Kind . . .* (88, 6-7)

'For there are stolen children . . .'

(8) begins a list of various types of humans who exist in the world, such as cripples, love-children, etc. and could not be construed as being the end result of events described in the preceding discourse.

Summing up these findings we can observe that there is, in many cases, a dynamic element of meaning in the *es gibt* construction. The meaning of *gibt* can often be interpreted as 'leads to/will lead to'. More specifically, one can distinguish the following uses, although there is often overlap between them:

- (9) (i) There is an antecedent clause and the object NP of *es gibt* NP refers to a resulting consequence;
 (ii) There is an implied antecedent clause and the object NP of *es gibt* NP refers to a resulting consequence;
 (iii) The *es gibt* clause asserts the existence of the referent of the object NP of *es gibt* NP.

The majority of instances appear to involve a reference to some future development. Indeed, the sense of 'leads to, develops' makes inherent reference to a relative future, in so far as the existence of some new entity is described. I believe the development of the modern *es gibt* construction is best understood as a progression from (9i) through (9ii) to (9iii) and I will elaborate further on the connections between these three uses in Section 5.

3. *es gibt* and *il y a*

As a way of further delineating the meaning of *es gibt* in *Geschichtsklitterung*, one may consider Fischart's translations of *il y a*. The French expression translates as a purely stative 'there is, are' in English without any suggestion of a 'lead, develop' sense as we have attributed to Fischart's *es gibt*. Fischart's translations of *il y a* may therefore help to clarify the function of *es gibt* in his prose.

As mentioned above, *Geschichtsklitterung* is by no means a literal translation of Rabelais' *Gargantua* and it is not always the case that one is able to find exact German counterparts to the original French phrases/clauses. Nevertheless, I was able to match the six instances of *il y a* clauses in the original with corresponding clauses in Fischart's German, providing us with some data for studying Fischart's translation of *il y a*. The relevant examples are given below.⁶

- (10) *il y a dix huit jours que je suis à matagrabiliser ceste belle harangue* (85, 10-11)
 'I have been these eighteen days in matagrabilising this brave speech'
 More literally: 'It has been eighteen days . . .'
es sind achtzehnen tag, daß ich an diser mühtichen red hab matagrabilisirt, und gekauet, und gerspelt ritzigs unnd reudigs (222, 34-36)
- (11) *il y a un chapitre in statutis Ordinis auquel ne plainoit le cas* (152, 20-21)
 'there is a chapter in Statutus Ordinis which opposeth my laying of it down'
es ist eyn Capitul in statutis ordinis, dem wird der handel nicht gefallen (354, 38-39)
- (12) *Il n'y a rabouilliere en tout mon corps où cestuy vin ne furette la soif* (40, 28-29)
 'There's not a corner in all my body where this wine doth not ferret out my thirst.'
Es ist kein Königlin Nest noch irrgang in mein gantzen Leib, da dieser Wein nicht den durst erfrettet (144, 1-3)

- (13) *Il n'y a (dist Gallet) ordre* (130, 6)
 "'There is neither hope nor remedy'" said Gallet'
 More literally: ' . . . there is no order . . .'
Da ist kein ordnung (319, 23-24)

- (14) *Il n'y a rien si vrai que . . .* (156, 8)
 'There is nothing so true as that . . .'
Es ist nichts so war, als . . . (362, 19)

- (15) *Cent diables me saulent au corps s'il n'y a plus de vieux hyvrogues qu'il n'y a de vieux medecins!* (160, 5-7)
 'A hundred devils leap into my body, if there be not more old drunkards than old physicians!'
Oder 1000 Teuffel sollen mir inn den Mönchsack fahren, wa man nicht mehr alte Volsseuffer find, als alte Artzet (368, 24-26)

The examples describe existing situations or the present non-existence of situations, rather than pointing to what will emerge under certain conditions. In most cases Fischart uses the *es ist/sind* construction, which, like the French original, describes existence, not change. (15) is interesting in that a *man findet* 'one finds' construction is used to translate *il y a*. This kind of construction is, in fact, identified by Grimm and Grimm (1984, Vol. 4:1703) as the most common way of describing the existence of entities in Middle High German, before the rise of the *es gibt* construction. So, while there is more than one way in which *il y a* is translated by Fischart, it is significant that in no case is *es gibt* chosen. This fact lends indirect support to the view that a 'leads to' nuance attaches to Fischart's use of *es gibt*.

Fischart's translations of *il y a* are of interest in another respect, too. One might speculate that *il y a*, which was well established in French at the time of Rabelais, provided a model for *es gibt*. Fischart was born in the Alsace and received much of his education in that region (he attended Gymnasium in Strassbourg, for example), so a French influence in the writing of Fischart is feasible. Just considering Fischart's intense preoccupation with Rabelais' writings would make a French influence on Fischart's writing quite feasible. If a German construction were to be chosen on the basis of the French construction, one would expect *es hat X* with the verb *haben* parallel to the use of the French *a*, from *avoir*, in *il y a*. In fact, *es hat X*

is found occasionally in the history of German, as well as colloquially and dialectally, with the sense of 'there is/are'. Grimm and Grimm (1984, Vol. 10:69) cite examples of the construction in the history of German, the earliest example dated 1510. The fact that Fischart does *not* use *es hat X* in his translations of *il y a* is significant, in so far as it shows that Fischart was not trying to introduce or promote the French construction in German. Nevertheless, one might see a weaker type of French influence in the use of *es gibt* in the sense that the prior existence of an impersonal construction in French may have facilitated the development of a similarly impersonal construction (for a similar meaning) in German. Also, there are close semantic relationships between 'have' and 'give', 'give' being like a causative of 'have'. This would be consistent with the idea that French *il y a* (weakly) influenced the development of the *es gibt* construction.

4. The two-place verb *geben*

Alongside the *es gibt* construction, Fischart has a variety of uses of *geben* in personal constructions. The uses which are of most interest in this context are the two-place predicate uses of *geben*, since these are most similar in their syntactic frame to the impersonal *es gibt* construction. By two-place predicate, I mean one where no more than a nominative subject and an accusative object form part of the construction. I will exclude here uses of *geben* 'transfer control' where the recipient is understood, but not overtly present. There are two distinct uses of *geben* as a two-place predicate, meaning 'produce, yield', exemplified in (16), and 'become', exemplified in (17).

- (16) a. *verzicht mir, daß ich euch den Säuen vergleich, sie geben*
damnoch guten Speck (56, 30-31)
 'pardon me that I compare you to sows, but they do produce good bacon'
- b. *als vil all Berge Trauben geben* (82, 22-23)
 'as much as all mountains produce grapes'
- (17) a. *gebst ein guten Goldschmied* (123, 25)
 'you will become a good goldsmith'

- b. *Geliet ihr Fronecken, welche nit gern spinnen, die geben*
gute Wirtin? (135, 29-30)
 'Isn't it so that your girls who don't like to spin will make good innkeepers/innkeepers' wives?'

The development of a 'produce, yield' sense from a 'give' sense is widely attested in languages (it is extensive, for example, in the Romance languages), and motivations for this semantic shift can be found in the conceptual similarities between 'give' and 'produce, yield'.⁸ Thus, just as 'give' involves the movement of a thing from out of the sphere of control or possession of the giver, so 'produce, yield' involves a kind of movement of a new entity out of a physical region associated with the producing entity. Underlying both senses is a schematic meaning of emergence out of a bounded region. The 'produce, yield' sense of *geben* was already established by the time of Fischart and is well documented for earlier periods in German.⁹

The closeness of the 'produce, yield' sense to the 'leads to' meaning of *es gibt* may be illustrated with a direct comparison of examples (5) and (16b), rewritten here as (18) and (19):

- (18) *Berge geben Trauben* (based on 82, 22-23)
 'mountains produce grapes'
- (19) *es gibt Beulen* (based on 106, 17-18)
 'there will be lumps [on the body]'
- or
- '[the hailing down of money] will lead to/cause lumps [on the body]'

In both cases, the subject referent is seen as a kind of cause and the object referent as the effect of some process and this cause-effect relationship may be seen as a schematic meaning uniting these senses of *geben*. The processes differ in kind: in the former it is a biological process, involving the growth of grapes in the environment of the soil/climate of the mountain. Properties related to the mountain cause the grapes to grow. In the latter, the snowing and hailing [of money] causes the boils to break out. The causes are construed slightly differently also in that the cause is a noun-like entity in (18) and a clause-like entity in (19). I believe, then, that we see in the two-place predicate use of *geben* meaning 'produce, yield'

the closest relative to the *es gibt* construction, as used by Fischart. It is important to bear in mind that most uses of *es gibt* by Fischart involve the 'leads to' sense, rather than the 'exists' sense, as discussed above. This is a key point in understanding the relationships between the uses of *geben* at this stage.

It should be borne in mind that the emergence of the *es gibt* construction occurred as part of a more general proliferation of impersonal constructions in the New High German period, as noted, for example, by Behagel (1923:318). New impersonal constructions which arose at this time include, but are not restricted to, verbs describing physical or emotional human states such as *es ekelt mich* 'I am disgusted (by something)', *es juckt mich* 'I feel itchy', *es verlangt mich nach etwas* 'I desire something' etc. Thus, we see a preference at this time for constructions with an impersonal *es* subject and *es gibt* should be seen as falling into this pattern. The emergence of the use of *es gibt* in constructions such as (19) represents a blending of the two-place 'produce, lead to' *geben* construction with an impersonal construction. When the subject entity is no longer profiled or "in focus", then the profile invariably shifts to the effect on the object entity.

Figure 1 summarizes the key stages in the evolution of the *es gibt* construction. In this Table, I have distinguished the Middle High German period (from the twelfth to the thirteenth century), the time of Fischart (second half of the sixteenth century), and the contemporary period, referred to as Modern Standard German. In all these stages, both three-place and two-place predicate uses of *geben* are apparent. Note, in particular, that the two-place predicate use of *geben* in the sense of 'produce/lead to' is attested well before the time of Fischart. Grimm and Grimm (1984, Vol. 4:1701-1702) and Spalding (1967:924) comment on and exemplify Middle High German (and even Old High German) uses of *geben* in this sense. I have shown the three-place and two-place predicate uses as two separate clusters of meaning. At the time of Fischart, the 'produce/lead to' use is extended to impersonal constructions with the range of uses documented above and shown as a group of meanings extending out of, and overlapping with, the two-place predicate uses. In Modern Standard German, the *es gibt* construction is more appropriately shown as a cluster of meanings in its own right.

Another relevant usage to consider is the reflexive *sich begeben* 'to

Middle High German 12 c. - 13 c.	Fischart 2nd half 16 c.	Modern Standard German
[X TRANSFERS Y TO Z]	[X TRANSFERS Y TO Z]	[X TRANSFERS Y TO Z]
[X BECOMES Y X PRODUCES/YIELDS Y X LEADS TO Y]	[X BECOMES Y X PRODUCES/YIELDS Y X LEADS TO Y THERE WILL OCCUR Y THERE EXISTS Y]	[X PRODUCES/YIELDS Y X LEADS TO Y]
] <i>es gibt</i>	[THERE WILL OCCUR Y THERE EXISTS Y]
] <i>es gibt</i>

Figure 1. *Geben* in three historical stages

occur, happen' which contains *geben* as a recognizable part of the verb. This verb is used reflexively by Fischart, as shown in examples (20) and (21).

- (20) *und aber wiflich ist, dz mit alle krankheit am oder im leib sich erregen, sonder mehrmals im gemüt durch melancholii oder traurigkeit sich begeben* (15, 1-3)

'though it is well-known that not all sicknesses of the body or inside the body happen by themselves, but rather they occur sometimes in one's soul/heart due to melancholy or sadness'

- (21) *Dann wann es sich begab, das er zornig . . . ward* (159, 24-26)
'Then when it happened that he grew angry . . .'

In (20), *sich begeben* occurs with a nominal subject referring to sicknesses which develop, while in (21) the subject is an *es* referring to the *das* clause which follows. As with most cases of *es gibt*, so too with *sich begeben*, there is a dynamic component of meaning. Although *geben* and *sich begeben* are clearly distinct verbs, there is a relatedness in form between the *es gibt* and *sich begeben* constructions. The relatedness in form is matched to some extent by similarities in meaning, namely the sharing of a 'develop, emerge' component of meaning.

5. The polysemy of *geben*

In the preceding sections, I have argued for a close relationship between the 'produce, leads to' sense of *geben* and the use of *geben* in the *es gibt* construction. This relationship is hinted at in some commentaries on the history of the *es gibt* construction (e.g. Grimm 1837:230; Spalding 1967: 926; Ebert 1986:32), but without the detailed evidence I have presented here. Returning to the question posed at the beginning of this paper, concerning the relationship between (1) and (2), we may now see that the emergence of the *es gibt* construction was not a one-step change from the 'transfer control of something' sense. Rather, the range of meanings associated with the *es gibt* construction in Fischart's use may be arranged in a way which shows the gradualness of the steps involved. These shifts in meaning are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. The evolution of *es gibt Y* from *X gibt Y*

<i>X gibt Y</i>	
(A) There is a causal relationship between some entity X and the emergence of another entity Y. Implication: There is some entity Y which will exist subsequent to X. Ex. (16b)	↓
<i>Es gibt Y</i>	
(B) Context of usage: There is an antecedent clause - consequent clause structure and <i>es gibt Y</i> is part of the consequent. There is some entity Y which will exist subsequent to the event described by the antecedent clause. Ex. (4)-(6)	↓
<i>Es gibt Y</i>	
(C) Context of usage: There is an implied causal relationship between prior events in the discourse and the emergence of some entity Y. There is some entity Y which will exist subsequent to the prior events. Ex. (7)	↓
<i>Es gibt Y</i>	
(D) Y exists. Ex. (8)	

In Table 1, I have indicated the most prominent component of meaning, the "profile" in Langacker's (1987) terminology, in bold. The plain face represents aspects of the meaning which are associated with the use of *geben* but are present as part of the larger frame of meaning.

Viewed in this way, the change from A to B is not nearly as dramatic as the traditional labels of "personal" and "impersonal" might suggest. Both the A and B meanings describe the emergence of a new entity as part of a consequence, but there is a shift in what is profiled. In the A meaning, the *geben* alone encodes this cause-effect relationship with the subject functioning as the cause and the object functioning as the effect. In the B usage, the core of the meaning of *geben* is the emergence of the object referent, but the *es gibt* construction appears as a consequent (main or subordinate) clause representing the effect of some antecedent clause. The encoding of the cause-effect relationship is achieved by explicit connective devices

(*warm . . . dann . . . (so) dass* etc.) linking clauses as well as the emergent sense inherent in *geben*. The change from A to B thus reflects a shift from relative prominence of the cause-effect relationship to the prominence of the creation of the new entity itself. Viewed in this way, it is comparable to the relationship between the uses of *wash* in *I washed the clothes* and *The clothes washed clean*. In its transitive use, *wash* profiles the interaction between the Agent and Patient, at the same time implying a resulting clean state of the clothes. In the intransitive use, *wash* profiles the emergence of the clean state of the clothes and backgrounds the interaction between the implied Agent and Patient. In both the *geben* and *wash* examples, there is a profile shift from an interaction towards the result of the interaction.

The change from B to C maintains the profile shift towards the emergence of a new entity, but without any of the explicit connective devices which point to a prior cause. Rather, there is some event or action in the preceding discourse which gives rise to the new entity introduced by the *es gibt* construction. If one just takes the examples of the C meaning in isolation, without considering the prior discourse, then the *es gibt Y* construction may be translated as simply 'there will be Y'. In the narrow sense, then, the C meaning amounts to asserting the future existence of an entity, but it must be remembered this narrow sense is embedded in the larger context of an effect produced by some cause supplied by the prior discourse. The change from B to C represents therefore a change in the scope of the causal relationship being described. In A, the relationship involves a causal antecedent from within the same sentence, whereas in B it involves a causal antecedent which is outside the sentence but still retrievable from the larger discourse.

The meaning D arises out of the profiled portion of the C meaning which focuses on the existence of an entity. When the C usage is stripped of the accompanying antecedent-consequent structure, then we are dealing with nothing more than a marker of existence, albeit in a future context. From there, it is but a small step to the use of *es gibt* to encode existence in a present context.

I propose the chain in Table 1 as a way of making the polysemy involving A, B, C, and D more understandable. I should emphasize, however, that the proposed chain is not directly evidenced in the early history of the *es gibt* construction. The ideal evidence for a chain like this would be a succession of periods of German as in (22).

(22)	Period I	A
	Period II	A, B
	Period III	A, B, C
	Period IV	A, B, C, D

The instances of *es gibt* prior to Fischart are too limited and sporadic for us to draw firm conclusions, but certainly there is no compelling evidence for the chronological development sketched in (22). Instead, the meanings B, C, and D all seem to emerge more or less together. The chain A through D is offered therefore as a way of understanding the varied uses of *geben* in Fischart, rather than as a documentation of the historically attested stages.

6. Conclusion

While I have chosen to focus on the uses of *es gibt* in the sixteenth century, it should be pointed out that the chain of meanings referred to above can also be found in modern German, a point also made by Spalding (1967:926). While the 'there is/are' sense has become more established and perhaps even the most prominent sense, the construction still betrays something of its origin. In fact, one can cite modern German sentences corresponding to each of the stages identified in Table 1:

- (23) a. *Der Ofen gibt Wärme.*
 'The oven provides/gives warmth.'
 b. *Wenn du das rust, gibt's ein Unglück.*
 'If you do that, there'll be a calamity.'
 c. *Es gibt bald Regen.*
 'There will be rain soon.'
 d. *In diesem Fluss gibt es viele Fische.*
 'There are many fish in this river.'

There is a tendency to take the *es gibt* construction as basically equivalent to 'there is/are', perhaps influenced by a desire to reduce meanings to formulae which philosophers and logicians are more used to dealing with. In any case, this is a simplification and more careful accounts will acknowledge the full range of uses to which *es gibt* is put. Hammer (1971:220), for example, identifies one of the uses of modern *es gibt* as 'recording the

consequences of some event', as in (23b), representing an aspect of usage which is crucial in understanding the polysemy of *geben*.

The dynamic, emergent nuance associated with certain uses of *es gibt* in Fischart's prose as well as in modern German is thus the key to understanding the relationship of *es gibt* to other uses of *geben*. This is a further illustration of what Hopper (1991:22) has called the Principle of Persistence:

When a form undergoes grammaticization from a lexical to a grammatical function, so long as it is grammatically viable some traces of its original lexical meanings tend to adhere to it, and details of its lexical history may be reflected in constraints on its grammatical distribution.

Notes

1. My own search of *es gibt* in a number of Early New High German texts from the period between ca. 1350 to ca. 1550 revealed no more than a few examples, none of which could be analyzed unambiguously as meaning 'there is/are'. See Grimm and Grimm (1984, Vol. 4:1703), Kehrein (1854:55), and Spalding (1967:926) for examples of *es gibt* prior to Fischart.
2. So translated in Weinberg (1986:11).
3. The edition used in this study is Johann Fischart (1963). References to this work are given by page number, followed by line number.
4. For an analysis of Rabelais' language, see Coleman (1971:204-229). Coleman, incidentally, compares Rabelais with James Joyce in terms of their linguistic creativity.
5. Hugo Sommerhalder, in his notes to Fischart's *Geschichtsklitterung* (1963:439).
6. In these examples, the Rabelais quotes are taken from Grimal (1939) and the English translations are from Sir Thomas Urquhart (1883).
7. Following Nyssen (1964:84), *gettet* is taken to be an interjection in this clause.
8. See Newman (1996:144-171) for some discussion of the extension of 'give' words, cross-linguistically, to mean 'emerge, lead to, yield'.
9. See Grimm and Grimm (1984, Vol. 4:1701) for Middle High German examples of *geben* in constructions like 'give light', 'give off a sound' etc.

References

- Behaghel, Otto. 1923. *Deutsche Syntax: Eine Geschichtliche Darstellung*. Band I. Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung.
- Coleman, Dorothy G. 1971. *Rabelais: A Critical Study in Prose Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ebert, Robert Peter. 1986. *Historische Syntax des Deutschen II: 1300-1750*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Fischart, Johann. 1963. *Geschichtsklitterung (Gargantua)*. Düsseldorf: Karl Rauch Verlag.
- Grimal, Pierre (ed.) 1939. *Gargantua* (1534). Paris: Cluny.
- Grimm, Jacob. 1837. *Deutsche Grammatik*. Viertes Teil. Göttingen: Dieterichsche Buchhandlung.
- Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. 1984. *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag. Orig. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1878.
- Hammer, A.E. 1971. *German Grammar and Usage*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hopper, Paul J. 1991. "On some principles of grammaticization." In Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Bernd Heine (eds.), *Approaches to Grammaticalization*, Vol. 1: *Focus on Theoretical and Methodological Issues*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 17-35.
- Kehrein, Joseph. 1854. *Grammatik der deutschen Sprache des fünfzehnten bis siebenzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Dritter Theil. Leipzig: Verlag von Otto Wigand.
- Langacker, Ronald W. 1987. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, Vol. 1. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Newman, John. 1996. *Give: A Cognitive Linguistic Study*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter [Cognitive Linguistics Research 7].
- Nyssen, Ute. 1964. *Johann Fischarts Geschichtsklitterung. Glossar*. Düsseldorf: Karl Rauch Verlag.
- Sachs, Hans. 1966. *Werke in zwei Bänden*. Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag.
- Spalding, Keith (with the assistance of Kenneth Brooke), 1967. *An Historical Dictionary of German Figurative Usage*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Urquhart, Sir Thomas. 1883. *The Life of Gargantua and the Heroic Deeds of Pantagruel*. London: Rutledge and Sons.
- Weinberg, Florence M. 1986. *Gargantua in a Convex Mirror. Fischart's View of Rabelais*. New York: Peter Lang.