ON THE EVENT STRUCTURE OF GERMAN *BLEIBEN*

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Abstract

The German copular verb *bleiben* („*to remain*") is supposed to denote the continuation of a state. In this paper, I will argue that *bleiben* has next to that reading another reading, too, where it denotes a change of state and which seems to be equivalent to *werden* ("*to become*"). The aim of this paper is to present an event structure for *bleiben* which integrates both readings as well as to examine the event structures of *werden* and *bleiben* and to discuss whether the change-of-state meaning denoted by *bleiben* is equivalent to that of *werden*. I will show that this is not the case and that *bleiben* always denotes a state. An exception to this last point forms *bleiben* when it appears in the context of non-finite posture verbs. These *bleiben*-constructions, which are limited to a small number of posture verbs, denote events, too.

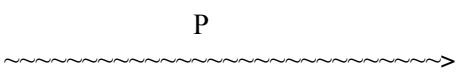## 1   The event structure of German copular verbs

The meaning of the three German copular verbs *sein* ("*to be*"), *werden* ("*to become*") and *bleiben* ("*to remain*") seems to represent a well-balanced system: *sein* denotes a state, *werden* denotes a change of state and *bleiben* the continuation of some state:

(1)   a.   Peter ist gesund   [Peter is healthy]

       b.   Peter wird gesund   [Peter becomes healthy]

       c.   Peter bleibt gesund   [Peter remains healthy]

(2)   Bei dem Flugzeugunglück blieben die Passagiere unverletzt

                         [Despite the crash of the plane the passengers remained healthy]

A classical, somehow more precise analysis of the meaning of *bleiben* is that *bleiben* asserts a state P and presupposes another instance of P at an interval preceding the interval of the assertion immediately. So (1)c) asserts that Peter is healthy and presupposes that he has been healthy before.

The following diagram represents these intuitions about the internal structure of *sein, werden* and *bleiben*[1].

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[1] Note that the representation of *werden* in the diagram is a simplification because obviously the change of state is not necessarily atomic as the diagram indicates but can also cover some time. I will not take this into consideration nor will I talk about other problems concerning the event structure of *sein* and *werden*. I consider

(3) a. *sein*:
$$P$$
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~>

  b. *werden*:
$$\neg P \qquad\qquad P$$
/////////////////////////// ~~~~~~~~~~~~~>

  c. *bleiben*:
$$P \qquad\qquad P$$
~~~~~~~~~~~~~ ~~~~~~~~~~~~~>

[cf. Lenz 1996]

However, on a closer look it seems that *bleiben* has – in contrast to the above overview - at least two different readings. Next to the "regular" cases like in (1)c) and (2) there are a lot of data where the alleged presupposition of an identical first state doesn't hold. In these cases, *bleiben* denotes a change of state rather than the continuation of a state and it seems to be equivalent to *werden*. This shows, first of all, that an internal structure of *bleiben* like the one suggested above is too restrictive. Second, if the meaning of *bleiben* is at least partly identical to that of *werden*, how can the existence of such an equivalence be motivated within the system of the copular verbs? Accordingly, the aim of this paper is not only to present a solution to the problem of the two readings of *bleiben* but also to consider this solution within the whole system of the copular verbs and to show how they form a well-balanced system in a different way than indicated above.

2   Data

Next to the "regular" occurences where *bleiben* denotes the continuation of a state, there are data where the alleged presupposition doesn't seem to hold, i.e. where there isn't any identical state P at the first interval. This reading is called the BECOME-reading, as in these cases *bleiben* seems to be equivalent to *werden* ("*to become*"), whereas the "regular" reading can be called the REMAIN-reading (cf. Steinitz 1999a). Basically, two groups of BECOME-data can be distinguished: first, constructions where *bleiben* appears in the context of non-finite posture verbs, and second, all other *bleiben*-constructions in the BECOME-reading.

In a null context, constructions where *bleiben* appears in the context of non-finite posture verbs are ambiguous ((4)). In an appropriate context they can be desambiguated ((5), (6)).

(4) a. Peter bleibt stehen   [Peter remains/becomes standing]

  b. Der Ball bleibt liegen   [The ball keeps/becomes lying]

<u>REMAIN-reading</u>

(5) a. Alle setzten sich hin, nur Peter blieb stehen

     [Everybody sat down but Peter remained standing]

  b. Die Kinder vergaßen den Ball und so blieb er im Garten liegen

     [The children left the ball and therefore it remained lying in the garden]

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sein as denoting a state and *werden* as denoting a change of state, either as accomplishment, achievement or even as a process (cf. Steinitz 1999b, Musan 1999).

BECOME-reading

(6) a.   Plötzlich blieb Peter stehen   [Suddenly Peter stopped]

     b.   Der Ball rollte aus und blieb kurz vor dem Tor liegen

                                        [The ball went slowlier and stopped short of the goal]

In (7) there are examples of *bleiben*-constructions other than with non-finite posture verbs where the alleged presupposition doesn't hold either. Therefore, these constructions represent some sort of a BECOME-reading, too.

(7) a.   (Talking to somebody who is extremely nervous at the moment:)

           Nun bleib mal ganz ruhig!   [Please get calm!]

     b.   Er trommelt eine Weile von innen gegen die Tür, dann bleibt es still

                                        [He beats the door for a while, then it becomes silent]
                                        [Zwerenz 1973, in: Rosenthal 1984]

     c.   Wo ist das Buch geblieben?   [Where did the book go?]

     d.   Im Dorf mit den niedrigen, weissgetünchten Häusern war eine Gewehrsalve zu hören.

           Dann blieb es still   [In the village with the small whitewashed houses a volley

                                        was heard. Then it became quiet]

Apart from these data there are independent general arguments from the historical development of *bleiben* which support the claim that confining *bleiben* to the REMAIN-reading is too restrictive. The first argument concerns the fact that *bleiben* chooses *sein* as auxiliary. Following a general rule, *sein* is chosen as auxiliary by non-transitive eventive verbs whereas *haben* ("*to have*") is chosen by verbs denoting a state or a process. According to the "traditional" view which says that *bleiben* denotes the continuation of a state, one would therefore expect *bleiben* to choose *haben* as auxiliary, but in fact *sein* is chosen. This is a hint that *bleiben* at least originally had a change-of-state meaning rather than that of a durative state. The second argument deals with the oldest predecessor of *bleiben*, Gothic *leiben*, *bileiben* which means something like *remain behind*, *stay behind*. This refers to a change of state rather than to a continuing state, too: if somebody or something remains behind this presupposes that there are other entities which in contrast do not take part in the state asserted but which realize a state contrary to that state. For example, if somebody remains behind at a certain place there must be somebody who left. To make the sentence *Peter remained behind* true, the presupposition of others leaving the place is inevitable, but not the one of Peter having stayed at that place before. So *remain behind* makes reference to the counterstate rather than denoting the continuation of the state asserted.

Given these data, it is too restrictive to assume that *bleiben* denotes the continuation of a state because this includes the presupposition of an identical first state. Besides, there is another conceptual problem about such a structure: if there are two instances of state P following each other immediately, how can we tell at which point the first interval ends and the second starts? What does "continuing" really mean? Continuing over and above which point of time? – With respect to these problems, the remainder of the paper deals with the following questions:
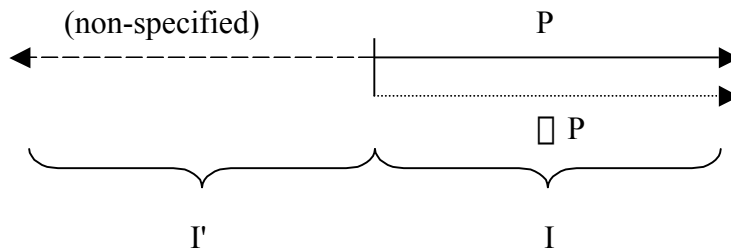
(1) Does *bleiben* in the BECOME-reading really behave like *werden*? And if this is the case, how can the existence of two copular verbs be motivated having partly identical functions?

(2) How must an underlying event structure look like that covers both readings of *bleiben* (provided we want to exclude the possibility of two homonym occurences of *bleiben*)?

3   *Bleiben* as state denotation

I assume that there are two main groups of *bleiben*-constructions: First there are "regular" *bleiben*-constructions: state denotations which are obtained compositionally. The state asserted is characterized either as a *continuing state* (see (1)c), (2)) or as a *resultant state* (see (7)). In contrast, *bleiben* in the context of non-finite posture verbs is an event denotation (see (6)). Its meaning can't be obtained compositionally. Due to these basic differences I will restrict the term "BECOME-reading" to the latter group; state denoting "become"-constructions like in (7) are instead referred to as 'resultant state reading'.

State denoting, compositional *bleiben* consists of three components: the assertion of some state P at an interval I and the presupposition of the existence of an interval I' which precedes I immediately. The assumption of a first presupposed interval whose value is left underspecified allows to achieve the continuing state reading as well as the resultant state reading from the same lexical entry. In section 3.3 we will discuss which kind of eventuality is allowed at that interval and we will see how the two readings are realized in the actual use.

The third component of state denoting *bleiben* is the reference to a counterstate ¬ P in a closest possible world at the time of the interval of assertion. The following diagram indicates how assertion, presupposition and reference to a counterstate are related to each other:

In the following sections we will discuss the notion of 'reference to a counterstate' as well as the internal structure as given above. Among other things, we will examine whether it is necessary to assume that the internal structure consists of two intervals if the first interval is underspecified anyway.
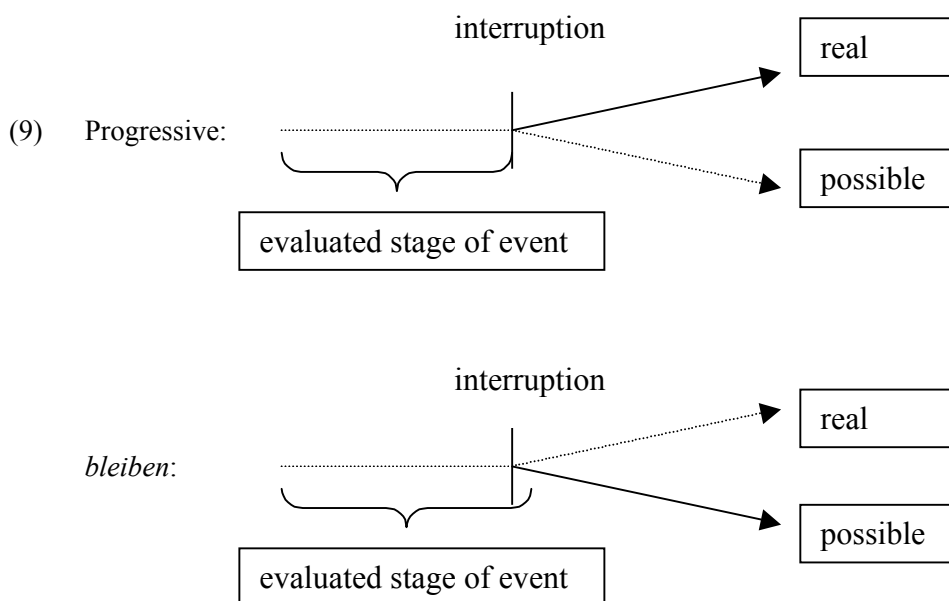
3.1   Reference to a counterstate

Bleiben typically appears in a context (or creates such a context) where the counterstate is more likely to exist than the state asserted; it appears in a context where one would typically expect the counterstate to take place instead of what actually happens. In this sense, *bleiben* denotes the absence of the counterstate, and therefore, a sentence like *Peter blieb krank* ("*Peter remained ill*") could be paraphrased as "*Peter didn't become healthy*".

A similar idea about the expectation of a counterstate is found in Landman's (1992) article about the progressive and the imperfective paradox. Landman assumes that the progressive makes reference to one or, if necessary, more possible worlds where everything happens as one would expect if things go their normal way. One example he gives is (8):

(8)   Mary was crossing the street when the truck hit her

The problem Landman raises is whether it is true to say that Mary is crossing the street because due to the truck she doesn't manage to reach the other side, so there is no actual crossing. Landman argues for the truth of uttering *Mary was crossing the street* in a context like (8) because he assumes that in the case of interruptions (for example the truck hitting Mary), as soon as the interruption takes place the progressive makes reference to the closest possible world where everything is like in the real world up to and except for the interruption. What happens in the possible world is the normal, reasonable continuation of what started in the real world. With respect to (8), this means that given Mary is equipped with average skills of street crossing one can assume that in the closest possible world she will manage to finish the crossing of the street and therefore it is true to say *Mary was crossing the street* in a context like (8).
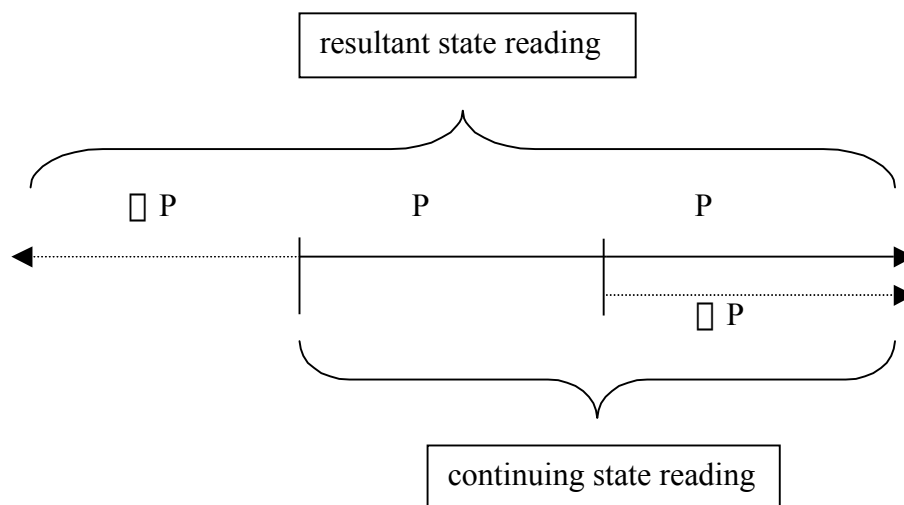
For *bleiben*, the idea of the reference to a counterstate can be formulated in a similar way. Still, there are differences concerning the interruption: in the case of the progressive, what happens in the possible world is the normal, reasonable continuation of what took place before the interruption. So the interruption itself is not part of the stage of event in the real world which is to be continued in the possible world. In the case of *bleiben* in contrast, this interruption forms a part of the stage of event which is to be continued in the possible world. The evaluation of what is the normal, reasonable continuation takes place on the basis of the interrupted original event. Apart from this, the existence of some kind of interruption forms an obligatory part of the meaning of *bleiben*, but this is not true for the progressive.

(9)   Progressive:

bleiben:

The reference to the counterstate has one important additional function: it helps to identify the two intervals I and I'. If there is some state P which is followed immediately by another state P, and we want to assume that these are somehow two different intervals, they have to be distinguished. This is what the reference to the counterstate does: the second interval is the one for which not only P is asserted, but, at the same time, for which the counterstate is expected to be (or become) true, in contrast to the first interval, where there aren't any expectations about a counterstate.

3.2   Event Structure: One-, two-, or three-piece structure?

Obviously the resultant state reading can't be explained on the supposition that *bleiben* presupposes P at I', the interval preceding the interval of the assertion. However, this problem could be solved (and the presupposition of P at I' kept) if we assume that the resultant state reading adds an interval to the REMAIN-(continuing state)-reading. The resultant state reading could then be paraphrased as "to become and remain P".

Such an analysis would correspond to the intuition that the REMAIN-reading is the regular reading and that the resultant state reading is irregular and derived from the REMAIN-reading and dependent on a special context. According to such a "become and remain"-analysis (10) has the following structure: a first (additional) interval where there is noise, a second interval of silence and a third interval where it is quiet, too, with the additional expectation of noise.

(10)   Er trommelt eine Weile von innen gegen die Tür, dann bleibt es still

[He beats the door for a while, then it becomes silent]

It is doubtful whether (10) is interpreted in this way, namely as a continuing state which is marked as the result of a change of state. The problem gets clearer through adding temporal modification:

(11)   Er trommelt eine Weile von innen gegen die Tür, dann bleibt es für 5 Minuten still

[He beats the door for a while, then it becomes silent for 5 minutes]

The temporal modifier applies to the interval of assertion which in a tripartite structure is the last one. According to the "become and remain"-analysis, there would be a first (additional) interval where there is noise, a second (presupposed) interval of silence and then a third (asserted) interval where it is quiet, too, and which is temporally modified. With other words, after a change of state there would first be an interval of non-specified length which is followed up by an interval of 5-minute-duration, and this for sure doesn't meet our intuition about the meaning of (11). Instead, the most natural interpretation of (11) is that the temporally modified interval takes place right after the change of state.

So a "become & remain"-analysis doesn't lead to the correct interpretation. Instead, we must assume that the resultant state reading consists of two intervals, too, but that the first interval has – in contrast to the REMAIN-reading – a value which is contrary to that of the second interval. But if this is true, what exactly does *bleiben* presuppose? On that condition one can't say any more than that *bleiben* presupposes the mere existence of some interval. It is unclear whether this kind of information is sufficient; we will discuss this problem in the remainder of this section and in the next one.

One way to get rid of the presupposition problem just mentioned is to assume that *bleiben* isn't a presupposition trigger at all. On this supposition the event structure of *bleiben* consists of just one interval. The only difference from *sein* (*be*) then would be that next to the assertion of some state P there is the reference to the counterstate ¬ P. So is *bleiben* really a presupposition trigger? Such an one-piece-analysis seems possible in cases like:

(12)   a.   Maria blieb von Peters Reue unbeeindruckt und ließ sich trotzdem scheiden

[Maria remained unimpressed by Peter's remorses and got divorced nevertheless]

   b.   Peter blieb drei Tage lang in Spanien   [Peter remained in Spain for three days]

The (a)-sentence could be paraphrased as "Maria didn't get impressed by Peters remorses and got divorced (though it was to expect that she would get impressed)" and the (b)-sentence as "Peter was in Spain for three days (and did not leave)". Here, a relation to an interval before the time of the assertion doesn't seem necessary. However, for the following sentences a one-piece-analysis is much more difficult:

(13)   a.   Bei dem Flugzeugunglück blieben die Passagiere unverletzt

[The passengers remained unhurt despite of the plane crash]

   b.   Der Bankräuber fuchtelte mit der Pistole herum. Die Kassiererin blieb ruhig

[The bank robber waved the pistol. The cashier remained calm]

Here, the paraphrases would be "The passengers were unhurt despite of the plane crash" and "The bank robber waved with his pistol. The cashier was calm though". This doesn't seem to be sufficient. The context specifies some point of time (namely, the crash respectively the waving of the bank robber) from which on one would expect the counterstate to become true.

But in fact the state continues despite of these interrupting events. In order to interpret this continuation the relation to the interval before is indispensable.

On a closer look it appears that the one-piece-analysis in (12) is only possible because these sentences show special features. Durative temporal modifiers like *drei Tage lang* in (12)b) specify the duration of the interval about which something is said and indicate the left and the right boundary of that interval. What happens before or after is irrelevant. So the denotation of (12)b) is restricted to the second interval I due to the temporal modifier, but not because of the internal event structure of *bleiben*. In (12)a), the one-piece-analysis is possible for a different reason. (12)a) asserts that Maria is unimpressed by Peter's remorses. The beginning of I is marked by Peter's remorses, they form the "interruption". But strictly speaking, there is no state at all which continues despite an interruption because before Peter's remorses took place, Maria could neither be impressed nor unimpressed by them. So at I' there isn't a state identical nor contrary to the one asserted at I, and we would rather say that here I' isn't interpreted at all. So a one-piece-analysis seems possible but not necessary: if we assume a two-piece-structure for *bleiben*, cases like this show that the first interval may also be underspecified in the actual use and therefore they provide evidence for the flexibility of this analysis.

More evidence for the claim of the existence of a first underspecified interval comes from Late Middel Dutch. These data (legal sources 1250-1600) differ from the data of today in two respects: first, there are much more data with a resultant state reading, and second, there are lots of data which are ambiguous between both stative readings. In these cases the value of the first interval can't be determined, so it remains underspecified in its actual use. Thus, next to explicit continuing or resultant state readings, Late Middel Dutch *bliven* can denote a state despite the fact that the counterstate is more likely to come into existence – and it is left open whether this state did exist before or not.

(14)   Niettemin ein jeglich mach in plaetse van ein schutsel ofte bevrijinge op sijnen cost wel ein

scheidtzmuer doen maken, ende setten dieselve op gemein erve, sonder metsgateren ofte mit

medtsgateren over beyde sijden, ende bie soeverre hie die muer stelt op gemeine erffe, soe blijft

de muer altijt gemein, ende moet daernae op gemeine costen onderhalden werden

[Nichtsdestotrotz darf jeder (...) eine Mauer auf Baugrund der Allgemeinheit bauen, (...),

und wenn er die Mauer auf allgemeinen Grund setzt, so wird/bleibt/ist die Mauer

Allgemeingut, und muß von da an durch die Allgemeinheit in Stand gehalten werden]

[http://www.kulak.ac.be/rechten/Monballyu/Rechtlagelanden/Geldersrecht/gelder1-2.html]

3.3   The condition of a reasonable relation

Assuming that *bleiben* doesn't presuppose an identical state P but just the existence of some first interval I' whose value is underspecified makes it possible to achieve both the continuing state reading and the resultant state reading. What can be said about this first interval? Obviously states being identical as well as contrary to the state asserted occur at that interval. Given there is sufficient contextual information, (15) can have two readings: either one has been calm before and remains calm afterwards, or one is nervous before and becomes calm afterwards.

(15)   Nun bleib mal ganz ruhig!   [Please remain/get calm!]

The question is whether we also find states or even other eventualites which do not have a relation of identity or contradiction to the state asserted, and, if this is the case, how such constructions are interpreted. In both (16) and (17) the eventualities at I' are neither identical nor contrary to the state asserted at I; still the sentences in (16) are fine whereas the examples in (17) are hardly acceptable. This shows that we need additional restrictions on the eventualities at I'.

(16)   a.   Peter ging in die Oper. Danach blieb er schick

                                             [Peter went to the opera. Afterwards, he remained chic]

       b.   Peter spielte Flöte, danach blieb er sitzen

                                             [Peter played the flute, afterwards he remained sitting]

       c.   Peter spielte Flöte, danach blieb er nicht sitzen

                                             [Peter played the flute, afterwards he didn't remain seated]

       b.   Peter war jahrelang Radiomoderator, danach blieb er Frühaufsteher

                     [Peter was a presentor at the radio for years, afterwards he remained an early raiser]

(17)   a.   Peter ging in die Oper. ??Danach blieb er gut genährt

                                             [Peter went to the opera. ??Afterwards he remained well nourished]

       c.   Peter spielte Flöte, ??danach blieb er stecken

                                             [Peter played the flute, afterwards ?? he remained sticking]

       d.   Peter war jahrelang Radiomoderator, ??danach blieb er Metzger

                     [Peter was a presentor at the radio for years, afterwards ?? he remained a butcher]

In the sentences in (17), the eventuality at I' doesn't relate in any way to the state asserted at I, they don't have anything in common. This is different in (16): we can easily imagine Peter going to the opera and being chic at the same time, as well as his playing the flute and being seated simultaneously or being an early raising radio presentator. What we do here is to interpret the eventuality of the first interval such that we can accommodate for that same interval a state identical to the state asserted at I. In short: we try to interpret the state asserted as a continuing state. (16)b) & (c) are fine because it seems unproblematic to interpret the playing of the flute as being consistent with someone's sitting whereas in (17)b) it seems less easy to interpret the playing of the flute as being consistent with someone's sticking.

The eventualities at I' are restricted to states which are either identical or contrary to the state asserted at the second interval. Eventualities other than these must be able to be interpreted such that they are consistent with the state we want to accommodate, namely with a state identical to the state at I. These restrictions can be summarized by saying that the eventuality of the first interval must relate to the state of the second interval in a reasonable way.

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> Condition of a reasonable relation:
>
> The eventuality of the presupposed interval must relate to the state asserted in the second interval in a reasonable way.

This means that the default-interpretation of *bleiben* is the REMAIN-reading. In case there is no information about I' like in (1)c), (2), the *bleiben*-state is interpreted as a continuing state, and a state being identical to the state asserted is accommodated for the first interval. The construction also has a continuing state interpretation in case of explicit information about an identical first state. If there is explicit information about another eventuality (event or process) at I' like in (16) and (17), only the REMAIN-reading is available. This is on condition that it is possible to interpret that eventuality such that it is consistent with the state we want accommodate (namely, a state identical to the state asserted at I). The resultant state reading is only available if there is explicit information about a state contrary to the state asserted.

Bleiben presupposes the existence of an interval which precedes the interval of the assertion immediately. It doesn't say what kind of eventuality takes place at that interval. But there is a condition that this eventuality must stand in a reasonable relation to the state asserted and its counterstate, namely: the counterstate is the reasonable continuation of that eventuality as one would expect in the given circumstances. The state asserted on the other hand is contrary to that state and it is that continuation one would not expect under the given circumstances – yet, it is a possible continuation.

4   *Bleiben* as event denotation

All *bleiben*-constructions mentioned in the previous section are state denotations, also those in the resultant state reading. In these cases, the change of state is only derived secondarily. So the event structure of *bleiben* denoting a resultant state with an implicit change of state is quite different from that of *werden* and from the BECOME-reading in the context of non-finite posture verbs. These differences will be examined more detailed in this section. My claim is that these latter constructions are event denotations and that they represent an irregular, non-compositional construction. The number of verbs which can take part in this construction is limited to a small extent. Temporal modification serves as diagnostics to support this claim and points out the differences between them and the constructions so far mentioned. In this paper, I will restrict myself to the discussion of these properties. I will refrain from examining how this construction comes about and what its relation to "regular" *bleiben*-constructions is (but see Steinitz 1999a, Rosenthal 1984, Krämer 2002).
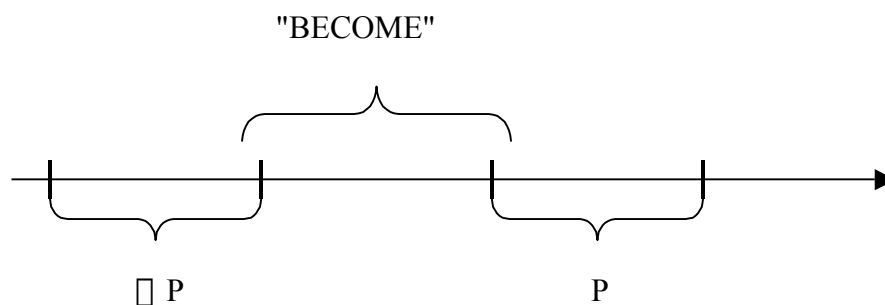
The data in (4), (5) and (6) show that constructions where *bleiben* appears in the context of non-finite posture verbs are ambiguous in that they can have a REMAIN-reading as well as a BECOME-reading and that they can be desambiguated in an appropriate context. They show properties different from regular state denoting constructions, however this only concerns the BECOME-reading. In the REMAIN-reading they are just an instance of regular state denoting constructions. The two main differences are the following: (a) *bleiben* + non-finite posture verb-constructions (BECOME-reading) denote events, not states, and (b) *bleiben* + non-finite posture verb-constructions (BECOME-reading) don't make reference to a counterstate.

The first difference mentioned, namely that these constructions denote events rather than states, is intuitively clear: in a sentence like

(18)   Plötzlich blieb Peter stehen   [Suddenly, Peter stopped]

the state of Peter's standing isn't interpreted as being of some duration but rather as being the result of an event of stopping. This stopping-event is over as soon as the resultant state is reached. Therefore for this construction we can assume an event structure which is equivalent to that of *werden*, for example a structure like Dowty (1979) assumes for BECOME:

"BECOME"

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      ⎧‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾⎫
  ⌐P  ⎫          ⎧  P
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[Dowty 1979:140; slightly modified]

Considering again sentence (18), the second property is also intuitively clear: the most natural interpretation is that (18) denotes the event of stopping but this interpretation doesn't include any expectations about Peter not stopping. This lack of reference to a counterstate follows naturally from the assumption that these constructions do not denote states but rather events: there is no state which can have a counterstate.

Temporal modification can serve as diagnostics to verify these intuitions. If there is an event, namely a change of state, one would expect event modification to be admissible. On the other hand, if we assume that regular *bleiben*-constructions in the resultant state reading denote states, event modification shoudn't be possible in these cases, and this is exactly what we find:

no event modification with regular *bleiben* (resultant state reading)

(19)   a.   Er trommelt eine Weile von innen gegen die Tür, dann bleibt es *langsam still

                      [He beats the door for a while, then it slowly becomes silent]

       b.   Er trommelt eine Weile von innen gegen die Tür, dann wird es langsam still

                      [He beats the door for a while, then it slowly becomes silent]

(20)   a.   Jetzt bleib mal *allmählich ganz ruhig!   [Please get calm gradually!]

       b.   Jetzt werd mal allmählich ganz ruhig!   [Please get calm gradually!]

The (a)-sentences show that event modification is not possible in the case of regular *bleiben*-constructions in the resultant state reading. In the (b)-sentences *bleiben* is replaced by *werden*, and here, event modification is admissible. So the ungrammaticality of the (a)-sentences can't be due to some conceptual restriction but must result from the event structure: there is no change-event which can be modified. This is different with *bleiben* in the context of non-finite posture verbs (*bleiben*-NPV-constructions); here, event modification is possible:

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event modification with *bleiben*-NPV-constructions

(21) a.   Der Ball rollte lange übers Feld, bevor er langsam im Tor liegen blieb

[The ball rolled over the field before it slowly stopped at the goal]

b.   Der Trecker fuhr durch den Schlamm und blieb dann langsam stecken

[The tractor drove through the mud and then slowly got stuck]

This different behaviour regarding event modification indicates different underlying event structures. State modification on the other hand is allowed by regular state denoting *bleiben*-constructions:

state modification with regular *bleiben* (resultant state reading)

(22) Er trommelt eine Weile von innen gegen die Tür, dann bleibt es fünf Minuten lang still

[He beats the door for a while, then it becomes silent for five minutes]

Interestingly, we find that state modification is also possible with *bleiben*-NPV-constructions ((23)). This can be explained by the fact that *bleiben* in these constructions has not only an event-denoting function, but can be an instance of regular, state denoting *bleiben*, too.

state modification with *bleiben*-NPV-constructions

(23) a.   Der Trecker fuhr durch den Schlamm und blieb dann 3 Stunden lang stecken

[The tractor drove through the mud and then remained stuck for 3 hours]

b.   Der Ball rollte lange übers Feld, bevor er für 5 Minuten im Tor liegen blieb

[The ball rolled over the field before it remained lying at the goal for 5 minutes]

If we assume that *bleiben*-NPV-constructions can either be regular *bleiben*-constructions (thus state denoting) or non-compositional event-denoting constructions, it follows naturally, that state modification as well as event modification is possible, but not both at the same time, as we can see in (24):

(24) a.   Der Trecker fuhr durch den Schlamm und blieb dann *langsam 3 Stunden lang stecken

[The tractor drove through the mud and then *slowly remained stuck for 3 hours]

b.   Der Ball rollte lange übers Feld, bevor er *langsam für 5 Minuten im Tor liegen blieb

[The ball rolled over the field before it *slowly remained lying at the goal for 5 minutes]

Evidence for the claim that *bleiben* + NPV-constructions are structurally ambiguous also comes from Dutch: Dutch *blijven* can take most verbs as a non-finite complement. These constructions are always interpreted in the REMAIN-reading and denote the continuation of the activities denoted by the non-finite verb ((25)). Dutch *blijven* also has an eventive BECOME-reading, however, this reading is restricted to exactly the same posture verbs as in German ((26)):

(25)   blijven eten, slapen, werken, wachten, boodschappen doen, ...

                         [to remain eating, sleeping, working, waiting, shopping, ...]

(26)   stehen / sitzen / liegen / hängen / kleben / haften / stecken / schweben bleiben

      blijven staan / zitten / liggen / hangen / haken / kleven / plakken / steken / zweven

           [to remain/become standing / sitting / lying / hanging / sticking / adhering / floating]

This accounts for the assumption that there is one particular construction with *bleiben* in the context of a limited number of non-finite posture verbs with an eventive BECOME-reading. Still, *bleiben* in the context of non-finite posture verbs, and, for Dutch, with (more or less) all verbs, can take part in the regular, state-denoting construction, either as continuing or as resultant state. This means that these constructions can have three different readings in total:

(27)   Ia.   (stative *bleiben*, REMAIN-reading):

         Die Kinder vergaßen den Ball und so blieb er im Garten liegen

            [The children left the ball and therefore it remained lying in the garden]

      Ib.   (stative *bleiben*, resultant state reading)

         Der Ball rollte lange übers Feld, bevor er für 5 Minuten im Tor liegen blieb

            [The ball rolled over the field before it remained lying at the goal for 5 minutes]

      II.   (eventive *bleiben* – BECOME-reading)

         Der Ball rollte lange übers Feld, bevor er langsam im Tor liegen blieb

            [The ball rolled over the field before it slowly stopped at the goal]

5   Conclusion

One of the questions raised at the beginning was how to motivate the existence of an event denoting BECOME-reading of *bleiben* because such a reading would be equivalent to the meaning of *werden*. We have seen that – except for the construction *bleiben* + non-finite posture verb – there is no eventive BECOME-reading of *bleiben* and therefore no reading where the event structures of *bleiben* and *werden* are equivalent. This difference can clearly be shown by the different behaviour regarding event and state modification. Compositional *bleiben*-constructions denote states and, at the same time, make reference to a counterstate rather than denoting the continuation of some state. Accordingly, the main difference between the meaning of *sein* and *bleiben* isn't that between a state on the one hand and some longer (or continuing) state on the other but that between a state and another which exists despite of the fact that its counterstate is much more likely to come into existence. Furthermore, *bleiben* also presupposes the existence of an interval which precedes the interval of the assertion immediately. At that first interval a state can take place which is either identical or contrary to the state asserted at the second interval, but also other kinds of eventualities given they satisfy the condition of a reasonable continuation.

Taking the arguments from the historical development of *bleiben* into account, too, this leads to the conclusion that the assertion of a state and reference to a counterstate are the most prominent components of *bleiben* which define its meaning in contrast to that of *sein* and

werden whereas the presupposition of the existence of the first interval can be considered as being less important.

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