The diachrony of directional *out of* in English [presentation or poster]

In this talk, I offer a syntactic account of the diachrony of English directional expressions consisting of the verbal particle *out* followed by an *of* PP. In Present-Day English (PDE), verbs of motion can combine with directional phrases specifying the path. In (1), for example, the transitive particle verb *push away* combines with the directional PP *from the desk*.

(1)   a.   She *pushed* the chair *away from the desk*.
          b.   She *pushed away* the chair *from the desk*.

The two word orders in (1) illustrate the well-known word order alternation of PDE particle verbs. Cappelle (2001: 318) observes that, in the presence of a directional PP, the tendency is for particles to be placed immediately before the directional PP (as in (1a)), and that examples such as (1b) are less acceptable. In examples containing the particle *out* followed by an *of* PP, the word order option in (1b) is completely ungrammatical. This is illustrated in (2).

(2)   a.   He *pulled* the plugs *out of his ears*.
          b.   *He *pulled out* the plugs *of his ears*.

At first glance, the ungrammaticality of (2b) suggests that *out* is not a particle, and *out of* has in fact been treated as a complex preposition. However, syntactic evidence shows that directional *out of* is not a complex preposition (see Cappelle 2001) and that *out* is indeed a particle. Svenonius (2004), who accounts for the word order alternation of particle verbs through the operation of 'particle shift', offers an explanation for why particle shift is blocked in PDE examples like (2b). His analysis is a strictly synchronic one, and runs into problems when diachronic data are taken into account: these reveal that directional *out of* was separable in Old English (OE) and Middle English (ME). This is illustrated with two ME examples in (3).

(3)   a.   And therewith he *drew* the truncheon of the speare *oute of hys body*, …
               and therewith he drew the fragment of the spear out of his body
               'And with that he drew the fragment of the spear out of his body, …'
               (CMMALORY, 645.4135)
          b.   Hie warp *ut* Adam *of paradise*; …
               he threw out Adam of paradise
               'He expelled Adam from paradise; …'
               (CMVICES1, 105.1276)

Examples such as (3b) contrast with the ungrammatical PDE example in (2b) and suggest that the syntax of *out of* PP sequences has undergone change.

In this talk I investigate the diachronic development of directional *out of* and propose a syntactic analysis of the loss of the option of separating the particle *out* from the *of* PP. Corpus data for OE, ME and Early Modern English (EModE), collected from *The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (Taylor et al. 2003) and the *Penn Parsed Corpora of Historical English*, reveal that non-adjacent *out of* was possible roughly until the end of the ME period. I will argue that the loss of the option of separating *out* and *of* is connected to the status of the preposition *of*. As Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 658) note, "*[o]f* is the most highly grammaticised of all prepositions". Originally, the particle *out* and the *of* PP formed a loose semantic unit and were syntactically independent, as illustrated in (4a). As the directional meaning of *of* ('(away) from') became more and more bleached, the

particle *out* became the primary semantic locus of the directional expression and formed a closer semantic unit with the *of* PP, which lost its syntactic dependence, (4b).

(4)	a.	[PrtP out] [PP of NP]	reanalysed as:	b.	[PrtP out [PP of NP]]

The structure in (4b) represents the ModE/PDE situation in which *out* and *of* are no longer separable. The explanation in terms of the grammaticalisation of the preposition *of* also accounts for the fact that other directional expressions (such as *away from*, see (1)) still allow separation (even though it is not the preferred option).

Building on Svenonius' (2004) suggestion that directional PPs may appear inside or outside the particle's projection, I offer an analysis of the syntax of particle verbs that straightforwardly explains both the synchronic and the diachronic facts. In my analysis, English particles are optionally projecting elements (see Elenbaas 2007; Los et al. 2012). When particles do not project a phrase, they obligatorily merge with the verb to form a complex verb (V+Prt) and move along with the verb to *v*, thus ending up in pre-object position, as illustrated in (5a). When particles do project a phrase (PrtP), they act as syntactically independent elements and follow the object, as illustrated in (5b).

(5)	a.	[$_{vP}$ [$_{v}$ [$_{V}$ V+Prt]] [$_{VP}$ DPobj t$_{V+Prt}$ [$_{PP}$ [$_{P}$ of] NP]]]
	b.	[$_{vP}$ [$_{v}$ [$_{V}$ V]] [$_{VP}$ DPobj t$_{V}$ [$_{PrtP}$ [$_{Prt}$ out] [$_{PP}$ [$_{P}$ of] NP]]]]

In OE and ME, the particle is not forced to project when an *of* PP is present, since *of* PPs are not part of the particle's projection, see (5a). After the proposed reanalysis in (4), *of* PPs do form part of the particle's projection, and the particle *out* therefore projects a phrase, illustrated in (5b). This confines the particle to the post-object position in which it is adjacent to the *of* PP.

The proposed analysis sheds light on the status of directional *out of*, and on how it is different from that of other directional expressions. It is shown that these differences are the result of different diachronic paths.

References
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