Saarland *nommo* ('again'): evidence for an interface-based co-imprint of iteratives

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1. Introduction

1.1. Object of investigation and brief taxonomy

The empirical domain of our paper is determined by properties of meaning and at the syntax-semantics interface shown by the Saarland dialect version of the German adverb *nochmal,* 'again/once more', which we illustrate in (1) and (2).

(1)   Dad giffd sich nómmò. (Toni Schäfer, 1997, *Mundart am Schaumberg*)
         This gives itself again
         The situation will resolve itself.
(2)   Es werrd nochmo ungemiedlich – Schnee & Rään sinn gemeld' fürs Wochenenn! (SR3
         Saarlandwelle on Facebook, 2022)
         It becomes again unpleasant   – snow and rain are announced for-the weekend
         We're in for more bad weather – the weather forecast predicts snow and rain for the
         weekend.

We will refer to these forms as *nommo*, but we note for the sake of completeness that there is phonological and orthographical variation, as quite expected in a non-standardized dialectal situation. For example, the form *nochmo* is likely to be encountered in Eastern parts of the Saarland, or in contexts where speakers tend to be closer to the standard, as in (2) above. *Nommo* and various spelling variants such as *nòmmòò*, *nómmó* or *nómmò* in (1) are used in villages around the Schaumberg mountain, but other forms such as *nómòl* exist in this area as well (Schäfer 1997). Given that we could not see any relevant differences in meaning correlating with the forms and given that our main plot is about the constitution of meaning, we will refer to them generically as *nommo*.

The adverb *nommo* belongs to the class of iteratives. Iteratives are words such as English *again,* German *wieder*, and their several counterparts in multiple languages. They are typically classified as a subclass of those adverbials which are often – though by no means always – considered decompositional (cf. Beck 2005 for discussion and a relevant scale of such notions). Potentially decompositional adverbs are sometimes also called functional (Rapp & von Stechow 1999, Maienborn & Schäfer 2011). We will avoid this term here, as it can cause confusion with several other meanings of 'functional' and stay with the concept of potential decompositionality in the background (cf. Morgan 1969, McCawley 1971 for its beginnings). Let us illustrate what decompositionality is: What the vast literature has pointed out for such items, is that they are able to modify the events denoted by their sister predicates or – often alternatively and clearly depending on the context – just subevents of the respective events. Such 'subevents' are standardly result states. To illustrate the basic point first, consider the sentence in (3) and specifically what it can presuppose. We use English in this toy example at the beginning simply to make the basic point of illustration independent of our object of investigation, but all the relevant details in syntax and semantics will naturally be shown in the Saarland dialect in due course.

(3)   Peter turned the light on again.

Presuppositions are indeed a key property of such adverbs and they run as follows for our introductory example. On a reading in which the iterative *again* modifies the entire event, i.e. the turning on of the light, the presupposition is that Peter has done this before. This is called the repetitive reading, essentially by everybody working on iteratives. On another reading, however, it is only presupposed that the light had been on before (maybe switched on by someone else, this does not matter). A possible fitting course of events, i.e., a possible context here setting up the Common Ground of a conversation, accordingly, is that someone turned the light off and Peter is then, via assertion, the one who turned it on, i.e. he restituted the previous result state. This reading is hence often called restitutive, or alternatively counterdirectional. Given that these two terms are at their core synonymous and do so for the vast majority of examples (though not all, an issue to which we will return), but that they depend on the orientation of the researchers who have worked on the items, we will follow Gergel & Beck's (2015) rather clumsy way of double labeling, here abbreviated as cd/res, simply to mark the fact that the analysis need not be prejudged by a particular label for this type of central non-repetitive reading. For the background, we may note: typically, structural analyses have used the label 'restitutive' for the key non-repetitive reading, while lexical approaches have used the term 'counterdirectional' for essentially the same type of reading.

Nommo is one of several iteratives that are commonly used in the Saarland dialect. Another common example is *widder* (Standard German *wieder* (*again*)), which can be used in a repetitive and in a cd/res reading in both Standard German and the Saarland dialect. The German example in (4) and the Saarland dialect example in (5) have the same two possible interpretations as the English example in (3) above.

(4) Peter hat das Licht wieder angemacht.
    Peter has the light again on-turned.
    Peter turned on the light again.
(5) Peter hat es Licht widder angemacht.
    Peter has the light again on-turned.
    Peter turned on the light again.

1.2.   The meaning and precedence questions

We draw attention to, and pave the way for, two interrelated research questions in this subsection, which we will address in our paper and which are related to the primacy of meanings in iteratives. They are formulated in (6) and (7), respectively. (Further questions that are related to our current inquiry and findings will be introduced in the follow-up Section 1.3 below).

(6)   RQ1: Is a cd/res reading available in *nommo*?
(7)   RQ2: Is there a general precedence of one meaning over the other in the class of repetitives? Specifically, are there any insights from *nommo* to be gained on this issue from a potentially developmental perspective?

To preview our plot: The first question will be decisively answered in the affirmative in our study and due to the data situation in the Saarland dialect, but notice that even this question is not trivial. That is, neither from a conceptual nor an empirical point of view. It is perfectly conceivable that some adverbs only have repetitive readings that essentially modify full events. This has, for instance, been claimed for *erneut,* 'anew' (cf. Beck 2005 and references there) and has mostly tacitly been assumed for *nochmal* in standard German (and similar items in other languages) as well. The second question, namely the one of precedence is more involved and we will turn to outlining its basic dimensions in the remainder of this introductory subsection.

To preview the answer here as well (for orientation purposes of the reader), we will indeed claim that the fact that the Saarland development is in the opposite direction from the perspective of other developments, shows that no general precedence should be assumed; that is, even if other iterative adverbs in other Germanic languages have been evolving from cd/res to rep. This point is consistent with theoretical approaches both from a lexicalist perspective (Zwarts 2019) and a combined perspective (Beck 2012, Beck & Gergel 2015), as we argue.

Regarding the issue of precedence: Whenever two prominent meanings are allowed, i.e. in ambiguous expressions, the possibility of precedence of one over the other has often been contemplated. Beyond frequency-based prevalence or subjective prevalence in the minds of language users, there is crucially also a developmental question of precedence, which is particularly relevant to semantic interpretation. To situate the discussion with just one type of better-known example: modal expressions are also ambiguous. Notably they often allow – depending on the context and *inter alia* – a root or an epistemic reading, a fact which has incidentally also incited both structural and non-structure-based analyses. Importantly, it has been observed that root readings have precedence historically over epistemic readings at least in English; cf. Denison (1993) for a review of earlier literature and e.g. Gergel (2017) and Eide & Gergel (2024) for more recent qualifications across Germanic; see in particular Fritz & Gloning (1997) for the relationship of the two readings in the history of German. We then have, by and large, developmental precedence of the root meaning (root → epistemic). In the case of the modals, the precedence of root meanings has also been suggested on the acquisitional developmental timeline, not only the historical one (cf. Noveck 2001 for a classic study among others reaching such a conclusion, but cf. e.g. Papafragou & Ozturk 2007 for qualifications).

While there are many aspects to this large debate on precedence, it should be clear that when the possibility of such tendencies arises, issues of possible grammaticalization are imminent and relevant, irrespective of whether viewed structurally, pragmatically, cognitively, or otherwise, even purely descriptively. For immediate purposes, the concept of semantic change can (and according e.g. to Eckardt 2011, should) also be made independently of grammaticalization. The ambiguity and precedence issue in the domain of iteratives has become relevant diachronically, as well indeed, since the studies of Fabricius-Hansen (1983, 2001) and Beck & Gergel (and related corpus studies on English summarized there). From Fabricius-Hansen's etymological argument as well as the more recent actual corpus studies (cf. also Kopf & Gergel 2023 for additional broad discussion of further data and tests) the picture has emerged rather clearly that the meanings of adverbs such as *again* and *wieder* has been developing from a cd/res reading to a repetitive one over the centuries.

In particular cases, additional changes can naturally add up to the key change of interest in our study and thus produce more complex trajectories. For instance, the change from a preposition (cf. the respective prepositional cognate *against* and *wider*) is prefixed to the trajectory of the key iteratives in English and German respectively. In the case of English, where corpus studies of several thousand occurrences have been amassed, there is also an intermediate change of a particle – that is a stage at which *again* meant 'back'. Such additional changes depend on a number of additional factors, for the fuller details of which we have to refer to the respective studies. But notice that they solely can (that is: need not, in general) preface an iterative change of meaning. In fact, it can also be the case that only one of the two changes just mentioned paves the way towards a transformation in iteratives, namely the one from a particle like-element. This is easily observable with *back* in early Modern but also current English (cf. Gergel in press a, for such readings of *back*), and just as clearly with Dutch *terug,* as Zwarts (2019) has argued. The most advanced incursion of *terug* into the domain of *weer* (the standard iterative for 'again' in Dutch) is in Flemish dialects. That is, while the meaning 'back' receives a series of cd/res readings generally in Dutch, in some dialects (Flemish) it goes 'farther' in carrying repetitive readings. Incidentally, for German *zurück,* such changes have not been noticed as much, to our knowledge, but we point out that some cd/res readings certainly already

exist and are not hard to cull in naturally occurring contextuzalizations, as for instance the following attestation from an Austrian headline illustrates:

(8)   Context: a controversial high-ranking police officer had been suspended a year before.
         Polizei: Umstrittener Chef hat Job zurück.   (*Der Grazer, 7.04.2024, p. 10*)
         Police: Controversial boss has job back.

In simplified fashion, then, the developments studied in the literature so far, empirically, are as schematically rendered in (9):

(9)   ((P 'against' →) Particle 'back' →) Adverb **cd/res** → Adverb **rep**

Notice two things: First, we only concentrate, as mentioned, on the issue of development between cd/res and rep, i.e. not the 'back' or 'against' meanings in this paper. The latter two meanings are possible sources as in the studies cited, but they are not iteratives themselves. Second, there are of course different 'sub-meanings', i.e. more fine-grained sub-types of cd/res meanings that will not a play a major role in our study (but see e.g. Beck & Gergel 2015 and Zwarts 2019 – we will selectively mention only relevant points in our paper). At the same time, we will mention some additional meanings in section 4 which *nommo* has also acquired and which go beyond the usual cd/res and rep dichotomy discussed in the literature. Given the restrictions, the basic question remains: Do the core developments indeed only unfold from cd/res towards rep, or also the other way around? And what does this tell us about the nature of iteratives?

1.3.   The issues of the interfaces of meanings

While our goal in this paper is not grounded in theory *per se*, von Stechow (1995, 1996, 2000) made a relatively clear contribution not only theoretically (for which it is mostly known), but also from the impetus given to a data-driven perspective regarding a correlation between meaning and form in the case of the German iterative *wieder*. Cf. (10) and (11) adapted from von Stechow (1996: 87-88):

(10)   … weil   Ali Baba Sesam wieder öffnete.
         because Ali Baba Sesame again   opened
         because Ali Baba opened Sesame again.

(11)   … weil Ali Baba wieder Sesam öffnete.
         because Ali Baba again Sesame opened

The main point, according to von Stechow, is that while the first sentence, (10), allows both a repetitive and a restitutive reading, the second one, and (11), only allows a repetitive one. A number of researchers and especially Klein (2001) have additionally made the point prominent that a focally stressed *wieder* can only be felicitous in a repetitive context.
        There are several qualifications and points of discussion that can be made regarding the basic observation and the interplay of meaning and structure, but given that our focus is not on *wieder*, we will restrict attention to two due to current relevance. Not all adverbs can be expected to be structure- or intonation-sensitive in the way *wieder* is. So the question is, given the ambiguity that according to our observations *nommo* will be shown to possess, what is its behavior with respect to its interface properties?

(12)   RQ3: Is *nommo* sensitive to interface properties in the way *wieder* is? Specifically:

(i)   Is *nommo* sensitive to syntactic positioning?
(ii)   Is *nommo* sensitive to the intonational environment?

These questions are also interesting in contrast with Standard German because *nochmal* (the Standard German variant of *nommo*) only allows a repetitive reading, regardless of the positioning. Consider (13) and (14) below.

(13)   … weil   Ali Baba Sesam   nochmal öffnete.
         because Ali Baba Sesame again   opened
         because Ali Baba opened Sesame again (= a second time)
(14)   … weil   Ali Baba nochmal Sesam öffnete.
         because Ali Baba again   sesame opened
         because Ali Baba opened Sesame again (= a second time)

While *wieder* in (10) above allowed for both repetitive and cd/res readings in Standard German, *nochmal* in (13) gives rise to only the repetitive interpretation. The repetitive reading is the only available reading for both *wieder* and *nochmal* in (11) and (14).

   A final note is in order, especially for readers less familiar with the subject of iteratives. It may seem that the major questions we have raised are disparate and disconnected. From the point of view of much of the theoretical impetus (regardless from which direction it comes), this may even be strengthened, as the question how current behavior in syntax, semantics and intonation, on the one hand, and developmental questions, on the other, interact is too often neglected. But we think that the point in this paper regarding the correlation of meaning, structure and intonation is particularly telling with regard to showing that even though it is not replacing *wieder, nommo* has indeed been enthroning itself in the landscape of iteratives in ways that make it a serious competitor in the Saarland dialect, which is our current research focus. More significantly, we will show that the ways the components of grammar interact is not generally restricted to single lexical items and their respective sources. We turn to the issue of possible sources next.

2. The issue of precedence and the availability of non-repetitive readings for *nommo*

2.1. Inductive expectations

Let us briefly specify why the question of precedence is relevant. Given that we are not aware of any dictionaries or studies claiming the rise of non-repetitive and specifically cd/res readings historically in the standard or in other dialects (while we certainly do not exclude this empirically and comparisons should be fruitful), we must assume that the primary meaning of *nochmal* has essentially been the repetitive ever since it entered iterative domain. The composition of *noch (ein)mal,* very close in fact in terms of its morpheme composition to French *encore une fois,* is not the object of inquiry. The standard variety also has *nochmals* with a common -s ending, cf. also *abermals*. Adverbs such as *erneut, nochmals* and the French *encore une fois* are considered very similar, e.g. by Benazzo & Andorno (2017:118), who only note restitutive readings in French for the prefix *re-*. If this is right, then it means that *encore une fois* lacks, at least standardly, a restitutive reading. As Pierre Larrivée (p.c.) confirms *encore une fois* is indeed not an acceptable iterative on restitutive readings (but e.g. *de nouveau* would be). To what extent contact with French, more generally, might be relevant, is an interesting question of course, especially in the Saarland context. But not only do we not see immediate evidence for it (given that *encore une fois* does <u>not</u> seem to allow the cd/res reading of interest).

It is also the case that not too much should be attached to it without precise further investigation (if one wanted to explore the possibilities of contact further), since many other languages have very similar iterative expressions as well. Hence, even if the surface facts were closer to one another than they are, we could occasionally be dealing with contact-based, but just as well endemic creations. For example, not only Italian *un'altra volta* (which incidentally also does not seem to allow restitutive readings, as Mara Frascarelli, p.c. points out) but also e.g. Hungarian *még egyszer (még=noch, egyszer=einmal)* have adverbial expressions that seem to be built on at least very similar morphological schemes.

In what follows, we outline some of the possible reasons why semantic changes within the area of iteratives *might* (and we emphasize that we will challenge this type of expectations) be taken to be unidirectional, namely going – in simplified terms – from cd/res towards rep.

A first possible reason is that the largest corpus studies conducted so far (cf. Beck & Gergel 2015, Kopf & Gergel 2023 and the references cited there) stress the clear development of English *again* from restitutive to repetitive. Notice that it is not only the transformation that is directed towards the repetitive, since the two readings have essentially co-existed since the beginning of the Middle English period; but also the clear proportion of counterdirectional/restitutive readings that declines strongly over time at the expense of repetitive readings.

That the developments of non-cognates in Germanic such as German *wieder* (Farbricius-Hansen 2001) and Dutch *terug* (Zwarts 2019) appear to go into the same direction is a second point that strengthens the previous one. One would naturally wish for more corpus studies, but the direction of development in all such cases is clear.

Third, the fact that such processes have been and still are quite alive in different linguistic communities can also be seen through the prism of language contact. Not only does the French-imported iterative prefix *re-* as it made its way into English have a partly similar (pre-)history (Marchand 1969), but the opposite type of loan (namely from English to French this time) can also be shown to exist. Current Francophone communities that are bilingual with English as the other language have imported the counterdirectional *back.* Interestingly, some of them have pushed the item to receive even clearer repetitive readings than it has in English; cf. e.g. *je vou dirai pas back* in the sense of 'I won't tell you again', as shown in King (2011: 117). Beck & Gergel (2015) more generally expect expressions that have a counterdirectional origin to decompose and potentially develop in largely similar way as *again* has done in what are now the mainstream varieties of English.

A fourth reason to expect developments to proceed in the direction cd/res→rep can be culled from markedness observations. Crosslinguistically it is a marked option for an adverb to modify just subpart of an event, as compared to the entire event (Beck & Synder 2001, Beck 2005). Items that are already originally counterdirectional/restitutive due to their genesis will then have an easier time developing towards the unmarked option of the repetitive (which, recall, is essentially full-event modification). But the other way around, i.e. rep → cd/res would be a step against possible markedness constraints, if the repetitive reading does not have a straightforward way to modify e.g. a result state.

Finally, a fifth point could be interpreted from a relatively narrow structure-based interpretation of language change as follows. Given that the restitutive reading of structural analyses is the one having narrower scope than the repetitive one and that language change in syntactic-affine approaches such as Roberts & Roussou (2003) is upward movement in a syntactic tree, one might be tempted to see the large number of developments we have cited above (*again, wieder, terug, back*) as all showing certain tree-geometric properties and thus being at least consistent with a syntactico-centric view of language change.

What we have seen in this subsection, then, is that there are reasons to believe that counterdirectional/restitutive readings take precedence over – and may be expected to only later give rise to – repetitive readings. However, the inductive step relies on the very nature of the

changes discussed. In the next two subsections we will show that such an inductive step is a fallacy if it is taken to predict that changes from the repetitive to the counterdirectional/restitutive should be precluded.

2.2. The empirical picture with respect to restitution/counterdirectionality in the case of *nommo*

Having enumerated empirical and theoretical reasons generated by earlier findings for the expectation cd/res → rep, we now turn to showing that such a line of development may be a likely, but by no means a necessary course of events in language change. We will subsequently return to reconciling the expectations discussed above with the actual development in the Saarland dialect in the next subsection.

The Saarland adverb *nommo* clearly has non-repetitive readings. Prominently among these are the meanings that we characterized as cd/res in our introduction (cf. Section 1 above). Consider the sentences in (15)-(17) below.

(15)   Ich lafe nommo zum Zelt.
       I   run   again   to-the tent.
       I'm running to the tent again./I'm running back to the tent.
(16)   Datt Land […] hat sisch verirrt on hat sisch nommo fonn. (Jürgen Brill, 1995, Us Land)
       the land   has itself lost   and has itself again found.
       The land was lost and found itself again.
(17)   Peter bought a white fence last year. After the winter, some of the paint has flaked off.
       He says:
       Ich streiche de Zaun nommo weiß.
       I   paint   the fence again   white.
       I'm painting the fence white again.

In (15), the speaker started at the tent and is now running back. While it is possible that the speaker is not running to the tent for the first time, i.e. that they are repeating this run, it is equally possibly that they are simply returning to the tent as their place of origin and have not made the trip before. In other words, both a repetitive and a cd/res reading are possible in (9). The same holds for examples (16) and (17) but especially in (17), the cd/res reading seems more likely here, given that the context in (17) specifies that the fence is relatively new. Naturally with stronger biasing contexts, disambiguation can be achieved for all the sentences in (15)-(17) above. E.g. if the context is such that in the relevant preceding time interval in (15), the speaker just left the tent, then the cd/res reading is the only felicitous one, as previous returnings to the tent will be rendered irrelevant. The key point is, then, as follows: while with the appropriate contextualization repetitive readings can obtain for *nommo* (as for its cognates in any dialect we are aware of), the cd/res is also very clearly extractable in the Saarland dialect.

We can zoom in a little further and observe that complex predicates in the sense of Beck & Snyder (2001), Snyder (2001, Beck (2005) are particularly well-suited to carry cd/res readings, as we illustrate in (12)-(15).

(18)   Stellst du die Pupp nochmo ins Regal?
       put   you the doll again   in-the shelf?
       Can you put the doll back on the shelf?
(19)   Kannst du es Fenster nochmo zu   machen?
       can   you the window again PRT(closed) make
       Can you close the window again?

(20)   Vielleicht bringt er es Rad nommo in die Reih.
       maybe   brings he the bike again   in the row.
       Maybe he will fix the bike up again.
(21)   Wann bringst du ma es Buch dann nochmo?
       when bring   you me the book PRT again
       When will you give me the book back/again?

The examples in (18)-(21) illustrate the behavior with goal PPs, verb-particle combinations and double-object constructions. Crucially, they all have cd/res readings. Overall, having cd/res readings might appear as unexpected for some speakers coming from the perspective of the standard German *nochmal,* but it is a fact of the dialect. Given that we are not aware of *nochmal* or its variants possessing cd/res readings in the past in the standard or somewhere else, we make the developmental assumption that the cd/res readings we witness in the Saarland region are more recent, i.e. comparatively and diachronically speaking newer form-meaning pairings than the fully standard repetitive ones.

2.3. A closer look back at theory: how to reconcile the misguided expectations

To take stock, *nommo* shares with items from Germanic such as *again, back, terug, wieder,* and others, the fact that it develops ambiguities, i.e. a reading is observable in the dialect that has not been detected for it elsewhere before so far (to our knowledge). But unlike the other items mentioned, *nommo* develops the ambiguity starting out from the seeming 'wrong' end of the semantic map, i.e. from the repetitive reading. This is neither typologically unique (as for instance Arabic *thanyaten* has been undergoing a similar development over a long observable historical span, Gergel, Babbli, Puhl (2021), nor inconsistent with what current approaches to iteratives such as Zwarts (2019) or Beck & Gergel (2015) would ultimately predict. Crucially, Zwarts points out that the semantic map he suggests should not be read as unidirectional and Beck & Gergel's notion of *Constant Entailments,* which is near-equivalence in relevant contexts such as those of the complex predicates, is symmetrical and bidirectional per definition. But it is worth mentioning, that at least the bulk of the items that have been studies so far has pointed – empirically, as mentioned – simply into the other developmental direction. This could indicate that markedness still is active overall and presumably most items develop the other way. Finally, what about syntactico-centric views of language change? The answer is that, on closer inspection, they are not informative about the current type of change, neither as rep → cd/res, as currently under inspection, nor cd/res → rep, as witnessed in previous studies. The reason is that movement is at the core of such changes as in Roberts & Roussou (2003). That is, technically these are movement dependencies which remain frozen in place and give rise to new syntactic patters. For instance, the premodals as original full verbs underwent head-movement in early English, whereas the current English modals are taken to be full-fledged auxiliaries and do not undergo the V-to-T type of movement – the latter are thus taken to be a reanalyzed syntactic class. But the semantic analyses of iteratives do not assume any type of either head or phrasal syntactic movement even when they are structure-based (cf. Gergel 2009 for what change at the level of Logical Form would entail). We hence take the current data to give substance to the predictions of approaches such as Zwarts (2019) and Beck & Gergel (2015) which theoretically open up the developmental field of iteratives in either direction.

3. How the interfaces work together in the interpretation of *nommo*

In addition to showing clear cd/res readings of *nommo* arising to some extent against expectations *,* the goal of our paper is to show a correlation between meaning and form that to

our knowledge has not been observed so far, but which in fact replicates to a fair degree facts about standard German *wieder,* though clearly not full identity. Crucially, the interpretive component interacts both with the structural one and the intonational one (cf. e.g. Klein 2001 and references for *wieder*).

As described in section 1.3, the only reading that is available for stressed, i.e. narrow-focused *wieder* is the repetitive reading. *Nommo* behaves the same way. While in (22) both a repetitive and a restitutive interpretation is plausible, depending on the context, only a repetitive interpretation is possible for (23).

(22)   Ich lafe nommo zum Zelt.
       I   run again to-the tent.
       I'm running to the tent again (and I haven't necessarily done this before).
(23)   Ich lafe NOMMO zum Zelt.
       I   run again to-the tent.
       I'm running to the tent again (and I've done this before).

Similarly, while (24) could be used in repetitive and restitutive contexts, the position of *nommo* in (25) indicates that a repetitive interpretation is needed. Compared to the sensitivity to intonation, the sensitivity to structure seems less strict for some speakers in the sense that while a repetitive interpretation of (25) would be favored, the restitutive reading might not be ruled out completely. This is not the case for (22) and (23) above.

(24)   Ich streiche de Zaun nommo weiß.
       I   paint   the fence again   white.
       I'm painting the fence white again.
(25)   Ich streiche nommo de Zaun weiß.
       I   paint   the fence again   white.
       I'm painting the fence white again.

This also holds for simple transitive verbs (in the sense that they need not be complex predicates), as illustrated in the following examples:

(26)   … weil de Hund die Katz nommo gefang hat.
       because the dog the cat   again   caught has
       because the dog caught the cat again.
(27)   … weil de Hund nommo die Katz gefang hat.
       because the dog again. the cat   caught has
       because the dog caught the cat again.
(28)   … weil de Hund die Katz NOMMO gefang hat.
       because the dog the cat   again   caught has
       because the dog caught the cat again.
(29)   … weil de Hund NOMMO die Katz gefang hat.
       because the dog again. the cat   caught has
       because the dog caught the cat again.

The felicity of an appropriate context, i.e. whether the dog caught the cat for a second time or whether the state of captivity had been restored (e.g. after the cat had just been free) depends on the position of *nommo* and on whether *nommo* is stressed. If *nommo* is stressed as in (28) and (29), the repetitive interpretation is the only one that is available, regardless of its position.

If *nommo* is not stressed and appears earlier in the clause, as in (27), the repetitive interpretation is preferred. If it appears later in the clause, as in **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**, both the repetitive interpretation and the cd/res interpretation are possible. Notice that these examples would work the same way with *wieder* in standard German. We refrain from attaching the syntactic positions to particular labels (as e.g. in von Stechow's article on *wieder*), given that the labelling itself is irrelevant from the point of view of semantic interpretation. But crucially, whatever the middle field position outside of the core verb phrase is in which *nommo* appears in (27) (e.g. the edge of the vP projection), this seems to be the safe place from which only a repetitive reading obtains, as far as the syntax is concerned. Even more strongly, a focused *nommo* only allows repetitive readings.

To summarize, we have shown that the Saarland adverb *nommo* has striking similarities with *wieder* that to our knowledge have not been observed before.

4. Discussion and outlook

In a nutshell, we have answered our research questions in the following manner:
- The Saarland dialectal variants of *nochmal* clearly, and unlike the common wisdom regarding standard German *nochmal,* allow cd/res readings in addition to the rep reading.
- There is no precedence of cd/res over repetitive readings, as the case of the Saarland readings shows.
- There is a striking interplay between meaning, on the one hand, and structure and intonation, on the other. Quite similarly to the non-cognate *wieder,* structurally high instances of *nommo* typically have repetitive readings, as have stressed ones.

We take it as a rather striking development that *nommo* carves out a space for itself in the grammatical representation and usage patterns of the Saarland dialects that is picky in several respects, in the sense that it is structure- but more generally interface-sensitive in ways that mimic *wieder* or *again,* items that come from the clear counterdirectional domain. The reason why we do not argue, as von Stechow (1996) did, that the structure drives interpretation wholesale has three components.

First, as pointed out also in the cases of other adverbs such as *wieder* and *again* (Klein 2001, among others), the intonational pattern also plays a crucial role in interpretation. We have not discussed a particular account, given that we take the mechanics of focus interpretation and alternative semantics to operate in a similar way here as they do for other iteratives (Beck 2006). From the point of view of the Saarland *nommo,* the intonational facts are at least as strong as the syntactic ones.

Second, there are certain issues with purely structural accounts (cf. e.g. Jäger & Blutner 2000, von Stechow 2000, Beck & Gergel 2015 among others). To illustrate a point for which we are not aware of a fully worked-out account for *wieder,* we will consider a particular configuration with quantification, originally pointed out by Jäger & Blutner. Our intention is to show that the current Saarland *nommo* is in fact so close to *wieder* semantically, that it can take over such functions (whatever their ultimate optimal account may be) as well, as illustrated in (30):

(30)   Enner vom Stamm der Delaware hat sich nommo in New Jersey niddergeloss.
        One from-the tribe the Delaware has himself again in New Jersey settled.
        A Delaware has settled in New Jersey again.

The context in such examples is such that a Delaware (whose tribe was driven out of their homelands many generations ago) settled down in New Jersey. A state that is being restituted and at the same time in a straightforward mapping with the syntax is not obvious in such cases. (To be fair, alternative accounts have serious issues too; cf. von Stechow 2000).

Third, while we have presented our findings focusing on the answers to the central research questions, summarized above, we can see the development of *nommo* in a wider context of language change. In such a context, it is of course perfectly natural for iteratives to develop discourse uses, which are then even less structure-sensitive (cf. e.g. Gergel, Blümel & Kopf 2016 on Old English *eft*). A variety of discourse-related readings can be adduced, we think, from any iterative (including the classics *wieder* and *again,* but also partially Standard German *nochmal* in this sense), but to give an example in which one discourse notion has already been fully conventionalized historically, consider *aber, 'but',* now clearly an adversative conjunction, but the ancestor of which in Old High German was a relatively regular iterative. In what follows, we illustrate some possibly discourse-related meanings of *nommo.* Consider (31)-(34).

(31)   Context: Tom bought a car in Saarlouis.
        Jetzt verkaaft er's nochmo in Saarbrücken.
        now sells   he-it again in Saarbrücken.
        Now he resells it in Saarbrücken.
(32)   Ich muss nochmo gugge, ob ich es Licht ausgemacht hann.
        I must again   look   if I   the light turned-off have
        I have to check (again) if I've turned off the light.
(33)   Kannst du nochmo gugge, ob er was zu trinke ingepackt hat?
        Can   you again   look   if he something to drink packed has
        Can you check if he has packed something to drink?
(34)   Ich wische nochmo schnell den Tisch ab.
        I   wipe   again   quickly the table PRT
        Let me wipe the table real quick.

In (31), Tom is buying and selling a car in different locations, which means that neither the repetitive nor the cd/res reading is fully applicable. Tom is not selling a car for the second time nor is the car returning to its original position/location or owner. One possible interpretation is that this use of *nommo* might be similar to a redirectional or so-called *send-it-somewhere-else* reading, which has been observed for one reading of the English prefix *re-* (Gergel in press b), but which, at least with the verb *sell*, can also be observed with *wieder*. A possible alternative is to interpret this example as cd/res, while only taking the verb into account. Such an alternative is not entirely straightforward under usual phrase-structural rules which take the object to be very close to the verbal head, but perhaps such re-interpretations can obtain under appropriate discourse conditions. The example (32) shows an even stronger influence of additional, discourse factors. It can be interpreted as somewhat repetitive. Regardless of whether the person in question really did turn off the lights, it can be assumed that they perceived the lights being on or off, and thus checked, in a way, the status of the lights, before presumably leaving the room. Example (33) is similar to (32). Here, the speaker asks someone else to check whether a third person has packed something to drink. In other words, neither speaker nor addressee have checked this before, which makes a repetitive interpretation harder to come by. Examples like (33) would typically be preceded by the speaker asking the person referred to as *he* in the example to pack something to drink. Finally, while it is, of course, plausible that the speaker in (34) is not wiping the table for the first time, a repetitive interpretation is not necessarily the most likely one and certainly not the only available one. Rather, *nommo* is used here similarly to German particle *noch* to indicate that wiping the table happens before something else, e.g.

setting the table (cf. Löbner 1989, Beck 2020 on the central readings of *noch* and Pittner 2009 as well as Sauerland & Yatsushiro 2017 on discourse uses of iteratives). In this kind of use, *nommo* appears to be developing into a very generalized type of additive. All in all, we take such examples to be suited to show the naturalness of the development of *nommo* not only into a full-fledged iterative, but also beyond into several interesting discourse-related uses including its own specialties.

   Overall, then, we have seen that even though coming from a very different source, *nommo* shows striking parallels to *wieder* in the Saarland dialect. It is fully able to reproduce its range of central meanings, including some of the problematic ones, and a few other interesting ones. It is our hope that future research will develop tools to address the range of readings and correlations we have uncovered from a corpus-based diachronic perspective (here, unfortunately, even *wieder* lags somewhat beyond) as well as an acquisitionally developmental perspective (cf. e.g. Wittek 1998 and Schramm 2024 on *wieder*).

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