

Facets of ‘different’ in French: *différent* and *autre*

L.M. Tovena & M. Van Peteghem

This paper tests on French Beck's claim that two distinct ‘different’ are involved in the production of the range of possible readings of the corresponding elements in German and English. French data do not support her claim of a split where German marks it via a lexical differentiation. Furthermore, they reveal that her proposal in terms of a comparison operator is also unable to account properly for the English data for which it was originally put forth.

Beck (2000) proposes a double treatment for the NP dependent readings of *different* in (1) and (2), contra the unified approach in Carlson (1987) and Moltmann (1992). In her analysis, (1) exemplifies a reciprocal use of a relational adjective and (2) a particular use of a comparison operator. In short, her claim is that the mechanisms involved in deriving these two readings are different. The fact that in these constructions where English always uses *different* German uses two distinct lexical items, i.e. *verschieden* for (1) and *ander* for (2), as shown respectively in (3) and (4), is presented as evidence supporting her choice of setting the two uses apart.

- (1) Detmar and Kordula live in different cities
- (2) Every girl read a different book
- (3) Detmar und Kordula wohnen in verschiedenen Städten
- (4) Jedes Mädchen hat ein anderes Buch gelesen

French also has two distinct items, namely *différent* and *autre*. Their similar lexical origin—*ander* and *autre* come from roots expressing otherness, *verschieden* and *différent* are close to difference—prompted the idea of testing against French data Beck's claim that the two NP dependent readings of *different* originate from different types of operations. As this paper will show, the test does not support an extension to French of Beck's proposal. Furthermore, it makes it easier to spot shortcomings in the original analysis in terms of a comparison operator when applied to English.

The paper is organised as follows. First, we recall some basic data on *different* and we define the terminology we are going to use. We also briefly summarise the German data, as presented by Beck, and our French data. It will soon appear that the opposition between *différent* and *autre* in French only partially overlaps with the opposition between *verschieden* and *ander*. Second, we examine aspects of Beck's double analysis of *different*, each time adding French to the picture. Finally, we discuss problematic

points in her analysis of English, in particular with respect to the formalisation of the quantified NP dependent reading.

1 *Different and the others*

1.1 *Recapitulation on different*

The word *different* is used to express non-identity of entities or kinds. One element of this contrastive relation is expressed by the phrase containing *different*, hereafter the diff-phrase for all the instantiations of ‘different’, the other one can be identified directly or indirectly in various ways. First, a direct description of the second element is overtly provided in the syntax via a *from* phrase, and marginally also by the complementiser *than* as in comparative constructions, see (5). However, according to all our informants, *than* is not so natural in this use.

- (5) a Daniel read a book different from this one
b ?Daniel read a different book than my novel

The expression ‘item of comparison’ refers to the syntactic constituent and, from the point of view of the interpretation, covers also the case of indirect description discussed below. Another example of direct description is when the contrast is established among members of the set denoted by the plural N in the diff-phrase, as in (6).

- (6) Daniel bought different books.

In (6), several books stand in the buying relation with Daniel and they differ among themselves. The diff-phrase acts as first and second entity in the contrast, in the sense that all the elements that are being contrasted come from the same set, namely the set directly described by the diff-phrase. Plural morphology acts as multiplier, as defined shortly. This is the reciprocal reading (Beck 2000:103), or a case of ‘internal reading’ in Dowty’s (1985) terminology.

Finally, a direct description of the second element may come from previous discourse, as in (7), or be understood. This is the so-called discourse anaphoric reading, an external reading for Dowty. However, this is a special type of anaphoricity inasmuch as the diff-phrase does not corefer with the so-called antecedent. The referent of the diff-phrase is disjoint from that of the co-indexed ‘antecedent’, but the latter still plays a role in

determining the former by specifying the shared descriptive content. The diff-phrase refers to something in the restricted complement of the antecedent

(7) Lou bought two pens and a book of origami. Daniel bought a different book.

Second, the item of comparison describes the second entity of the contrast in an indirect way, by introducing a clause with ellipsis of the VP, as in (8). Only *than* allows this use.

(8) a Daniel read a different book than Louise

b *Daniel read a different book from Louise

In fact, (8a) states that the book that Daniel read is different from the book that Louise read. Thus, books are being contrasted. The *than* phrase introduces an entity that is not a book, rather it is a person who stands in the same relation to a book as Daniel, the subject of the main clause. One interprets the sentence as meaning that in total there is more than one ‘reading of a book’ and that the books are not the same. The two people overtly named are each the first element of ordered pairs in the denotation of the predicate, whose second elements are non-identical books.

This effect of multiplication has been represented in different ways in the literature, e.g. as a multiplication of (sub)events, using quantification (Carlson (1987), Moltmann (1992)), or as a multiplication of values of arguments of a predicate and therefore as a pluralized predication, using covers, i.e. partitioning the set, to get different instantiations for argument positions (Beck (2000)). We call ‘multiplier’ the element, usually a phrase, that triggers the effect of multiplication. The multiplier is always semantically plural, except in cases where there is an item of comparison containing a direct description and where there is an anaphoric reading.

When the item of comparison is absent, the role of multiplier can be taken up by an element other than the diff-phrase, that provides an indirect description. Usually it is an NP, that can be plural or coordinated, as in (9), or universally quantified, as in (10), but it can also be a quantified adverbial phrase, see below. These NPs license internal readings in Dowty’s terminology, while Beck calls ‘Q-bound’ the reading exemplified in (10).

(9) a The girls bought different books.

b Daniel and Louise bought different books.

(10) Every student bought a different book.

1.2 German and French data

German uses two distinct lexical items, namely *verschieden* and *ander*, in order to cover the distribution of English *different*¹. *Verschieden* is used in plural NP dependent cases, as seen in (3), and for reciprocal readings, see (11). *Ander* is used in quantified NP dependent cases, as shown in (4), and also for anaphoric readings, see (12).

(11) Daniel hat verschiedene Bücher gekauft

Daniel bought different books

(12) Daniel hat ein anderes Buch gekauft

Daniel bought a different book

Like German, French also has two distinct lexical items, namely *différent* and *autre*. The similar lexical origin of the elements in the two languages could lead one to expect similar behaviours. Indeed, there are points in common. For instance, like their German counterparts, *différent* and *autre* can take items of comparison, more detail in the next section. Then, *différent* and *verschieden* share a ‘reciprocal’ reading, compare (11) and (13) which both mean ‘Daniel bought books that are different from one another’. Finally, *autre* and *ander* share a discourse anaphoric reading, compare (12) and (14).

(13) Daniel a acheté différents livres

(14) Daniel a acheté un autre livre

However, there are differences too. Contrary to *verschieden*, *différent* gives rise to both types of NP dependent readings, (15)-(16) correspond to (1)-(2).

(15) Pierre et Paul vivent dans des villes différentes

Peter and Paul live in different towns

(16) Chaque étudiant a lu un livre différent

Each student read a different book

Furthermore, and contrary to what is the case for *ander*, such NP dependent readings are not possible for *autre*, contrast (15)-(16) with (17)-(18). In these contexts, *autre* exhibits only the anaphoric reading. For instance, when used with a plural NP as in (17), it means that Pierre and Paul live in a town that is different from a previously mentioned one, or an understood one. With a universal NP, cf. (18), the use of *autre* is felt to be awkward or difficult to interpret. *Autre* appears to be primarily anaphoric (Van Peteghem (1997)).

(17) Pierre et Paul vivent dans une autre ville.

(18) ?Chaque étudiant a lu un autre livre.

The following table is as a provisional partial summary of the distribution of the items and will be refined shortly. Note the comparatively reduced distribution of *autre*. The first two columns contain material discussed in the next subsection.

	overt direct description	overt indirect description	reciprocal ('various')	plural NP dependent	quantified NP dependent	(discourse) anaphoric
German	verschieden, ander	ander	verschieden	verschieden	ander	ander
French	différent, autre	différent, autre	différent	différent	différent	autre

1.3 Relational *different* vs. comparative *different* and the pairs *verschieden/ander* and *différent/autre*

Beck provides several arguments that emphasise similarities between diff-phrases with quantified NP readings and comparative operators. They fall into three types. First, she looks at the realisation of items of comparison, focussing on distributional data. In English, the item of comparison is introduced by the preposition *from* and the complementiser *than*. The behaviour of the French and German items matches these data. Both languages use a preposition for one element, namely *von* with *verschieden* and *de* with *différent*, as shown in (19), and a complementiser for the other, namely *als* with *ander* and *que* with *autre*, as shown in (20). Being complementisers, *als* and *que* can also introduce an indirect description, cf. (21). The restriction on the items of comparison is taken by Beck to suggest that *different from* and *verschieden von* (and accordingly *différent de*) are better analysed as relational elements.

(19) a Luise hatte ein von diesem verschiedenes Beispiel

b Luise avait un exemple différent de celui-ci

Louise had an example different from this one

(20) a Luise hat ein anderes Beispiel als dieses

b Luise a un autre exemple que celui-ci

(21) a *Luise hat ein von Griselda verschiedenes Buch gelesen

b Luise hat ein anderes Buch gelesen als Griselda

c *Louise a lu un livre différent de Griselda

d Louise a lu un autre livre que Griselda

¹ German data are mainly adapted from Beck. The discussion of English should include *other*, that Beck ignores. As we test her hypothesis, we will also not treat it.

Louise read a different book than Griselda

Conversely, interpretational data on items of comparison are used to conclude that *ander* and *different* (and accordingly *autre*) are close to comparative operators. This second type of argument stresses the fact that in clauses with *different* the item of comparison introduced by *than* is ambiguous between the roles of providing a direct or an indirect description, like what happens in comparatives, where the second item can be a simple NP, in which case it refers to the element that is being compared, or an NP inside an S with ellipsised verb, in which case it identifies an element that stands in the same relation as the matrix subject, for instance, with the entity in the NP identified by the comparative adjective. For instance, the sentences in (22) mean either that Louise met a man different from or taller than Otto, i.e. an NP comparative, or otherwise that she met a man different or taller than the man that Otto met, i.e. an S comparative. In other words, the item of comparison can provide direct and indirect descriptions just because we know that Otto is a man's name. The same ambiguity is found in German and French, cf. (23).

- (22) a Louise met a different man than Otto
b Louise met a taller man than Otto
- (23) a Louise a rencontré une autre femme que Griselda
b Luise hat eine andere Frau getroffen als Griselda
Louise met a different woman than Griselda

So far, what said for German applies also to French. Languages go separate ways with respect to the possibility of having the anaphoric interpretation in cases with no item of comparison. In sentences with *ander*, as well as in comparatives, one gets only a discourse anaphoric interpretation. In (24), the book read by Louise is different or better than one previously mentioned. For *verschieden*, however, the anaphoric reading is not available and (25) has only the reciprocal and plural-NP dependent readings.

- (24) a Luise hat ein anderes Buch gelesen
Louise read a different book
b Luise hat ein besseres Buch gelesen
Louise read a better book
- (25) Frank and Max mögen verschiedene Bücher
Frank and Max like different books

Note that (26), a closer counterpart of (24), is ungrammatical because it does not contain any plural or universal NP with which to build a dependent reading, and lacking plural morphology the *diff*-phrase cannot trigger a reciprocal reading. From the impossibility of an anaphoric reading it follows that *verschieden* can never occur in a singular NP without an item of comparison. In this respect however French *différent* behaves differently, as it can be used also in the singular and get the anaphoric interpretation, just like *autre*, cf. (27).

(26) *Frank hat ein verschiedenes Buch gekauft

(27) a Frank a acheté un livre différent

b Frank a acheté un autre livre

Frank bought a different book

This means that, contrary to German where only *ander* can give rise to the anaphoric reading, this reading is available for both *autre* and *différent* in French, at least when *différent* occurs in postnominal position. In prenominal position, it has only the reciprocal reading, cf. (28) corresponding to (25).

(28) Frank et Max aiment différents livres

Frank and Max like different books

If there is a plural NP on which to build a dependency, as in (29), *autre* has only the anaphoric reading, while *différent* is ambiguous between the anaphoric and the NP dependent readings. So (29a) necessarily means that Frank and Max like books that are different from some previously mentioned books, while (29b) also has the reading whereby Frank and Max have different tastes. The impossibility of having a reciprocal reading in (29b), that is available in the German counterpart (25), is connected with the postpositioning of *différent*.

(29) a Frank et Max aiment d'autres livres

b Frank et Max aiment des livres différents

Frank and Max like different books

The situation with respect to (29b) in the three languages is summarised as follows:

	NP dependent	reciprocal	d-ana
<i>Frank and Max like different books.</i>	+	+	+
<i>Frank et Max aiment des livres différents</i>	+	-	+
<i>Frank und Max mögen verschiedene Bücher</i>	+	+	-

Three sets of remarks are in order.

■ First, French data do not fit in the partitioning defined by German. Although *différent* behaves as a relational adjective as in German, cf. the restrictions on the item of comparison, it also has the anaphoric

reading and occurs where German has to use *ander*. Note, furthermore, that the meaning of this difference goes beyond a simple case of local discrepancy, as it questions the pairing between readings (plural NP and reciprocal on the one hand and quantified NP and anaphoric on the other) which Beck considers to be a manifestation of the work of two different elements. In such a view, these pairings are no place for cross linguistic variation. Note also that there are overlaps, as both sentences in (29) have the anaphoric reading, which is also an unexpected fact in a rigid association of readings with elements.

■ Second, there are problems for the claim that universally quantified NP dependent cases involve a comparative operator. We have seen that the lexical divide for French does not partition the set of readings in the same way as German, as the plural NP dependent and anaphoric readings are obtained via the same element. There is a discrepancy also with respect to the quantified NP dependent reading. As shown in (30a), French extensively uses *différent* for universally quantified NP dependent cases.

(30) a Chaque fille a lu un livre différent

(= each girl read a book different from the book read by every other girl)

b ??Chaque fille a lu un autre livre.

(=each girl read a book different from the one previously mentioned)

The awkwardness of (30b) shows that this reading is not as easily available with *autre* as with English *different* and German *ander*. In all the examples containing a universal NP in subject position discussed in Beck's paper, French uses *différent* instead of *autre*, (while German uses *ander*). Speakers' intuitions are that in (30b) the essentially discourse anaphoric use of *autre* in some way clashes with the distributive force of the quantifier.

■ Third, there are questions on the role of plurality due to Beck's formalisation of the effect of multiplication in plural NP dependent readings exclusively in terms of covers. Beck stresses the fact that we need to understand the relations in both relative and matrix clauses as cumulated for the required cover to be possible in (31). She says that when the head of the relative clause is singular, the dependent reading is lost because the series of cumulated relations is broken. However, (32) shows that it is possible to have a singular NP in a chain of NPs and still get the plural NP dependent reading in French.

(31) Otilie und Marie haben Bücher gelesen, die zu verschiedenen Schlüssen kamen

Otilie and Marie read books that came to different conclusions

(32) Paul et Pierre ont pris une attitude qui révèle des points de vue différents

Paul and Peter adopted an attitude that translates different points of view

This possibility rests on the presence of the abstract noun in object position. Yet number is important, as (33a) has a reading where a single choice is made by Peter and a single choice by Paul, beside an anaphoric reading, whereas (33b) is ambiguous between a single choice each or several choices per person.

- (33) a Pierre et Paul ont fait un choix qui trahit des visées différentes
Peter and Paul made choices that disclose different goals
b Pierre et Paul ont fait des choix qui trahissent des visées différentes
Peter and Paul made choices that disclose different goals

Next, (34) shows that for French it is not necessarily true that the plural NP dependent reading is only possible when the diff-phrase is plural, which is presented by Beck as strong evidence in support of a formalisation of the multiplication effect via covers.²

- (34) Jean et Lea ont chanté la même chanson mais ils ont fait (chacun) un dessin différent
John and Lea sang the same song but drew different drawings

2 Quantified NP dependent readings and the comparison operator

As the difference between French and German data concerns primarily quantified NP dependent readings, in the remainder we focus on the competition between *différent* and *autre* in this particular case³. As said above, *autre* is usually not used in sentences with a quantified NP as multiplier. However, there are two cases where it can be interpreted as dependent on a universal quantifier and the sentence is perfectly acceptable.

2.1 Quantified NP dependent readings and the direction of the relation

The first case is exemplified in (35).⁴ In (35a,b) the quantifier occurs in a temporal adverbial. The reading is possible also with universal quantification on deverbal nouns, as shown in (35c). As an aside, it has to be noted that in all these examples the alternative use of *différent* is possible with no relevant shift in meaning, cf. (36).

- (35) a Elle met tous les jours une autre robe

² A reviewer suggested that *chacun* (each) is needed for (34) to be acceptable or at least highly improved, otherwise a plural diff-phrase is preferred. However, this need is not felt by the native speakers we consulted. This suggests that a formalisation via covers may be problematic at least for certain idiolects.

³ We will deal primarily with *autre*. On *différent*, see among others Laca & Tasmowski (2001).

She wears a different dress every day

b Il sort chaque soir avec une autre copine

He goes out every night with a different girl

c Chaque discussion a révélé un autre problème

Every discussion disclosed a different problem

(36) a Elle met tous les jours une robe différente

b Il sort chaque soir avec une copine différente

c Chaque discussion a révélé un problème différent

We can ask ourselves what makes the use of *autre* possible in (35) and awkward in (30b). The main difference appears to be that only in (35) the set of objects that are being compared are individualised through temporally ordered events. In order to use *autre*, we apparently need a sequence of events and the value of the diff-phrase at one moment is contrasted with the value taken up at a preceding moment. Actually, one can observe that in all the cases of quantified NP dependent readings with comparatives discussed by Beck, reproduced in (37), there is an element that suggests sequencing.

(37) a Each subsequent apple was more succulent

b Susanne got more tired with every step

c Nutella gets more expensive every year

d She gave a better talk every year

e Uli was more tired the hotter it got

As a matter of fact, if we take away from these sentences all the elements providing an ordering criterion, their grammatical status degrades, as shown in (38). For instance, (38a) cannot be interpreted because it is just not possible for each apple of a given set to be more succulent than all the others. However, with *different* we do not need an ordered set, as shown by the acceptability of the sentences in (39). It is quite possible for each apple to be different from all the other apples in the basket, cf. (39a).

(38) a *Each apple was more succulent

b *She gave a better talk in every place

(39) a Each apple was different

b She gave a different talk in every place

Note that the use of *autre* in these examples is as awkward as the comparative adjective. We will come back to this similarity at the end of this section. Note furthermore that for

⁴ This type of sentences is common in the East and North of France, but may be objected by speakers of

the German examples (40a,b) Beck proposes the formalisations (40c,d) respectively, and insists on a condition of order for the comparative but not for the *different* case, contrast (40d) with (40c). We will come back to these examples shortly.

- (40) a Otto hat jedes Jahr ein anderes Auto gekauft.
 Otto bought a different car every year.
 b Otto hat jedes Jahr ein grösseres Auto gekauft.
 Otto bought a bigger car every year.
 c $\forall t_1 t_2 [\text{year}(t_1) \ \& \ \text{year}(t_2) \ \& \ t_1 \neq t_2 \rightarrow \text{Otto bought a different car in } t_2 \text{ than in } t_1]$
 d $\forall t_1 t_2 [\text{year}(t_1) \ \& \ \text{year}(t_2) \ \& \ t_1 < t_2 \rightarrow \text{Otto bought a bigger car in } t_2 \text{ than in } t_1]$

One of the main points of Beck is that the examples in (37) have to be put together with examples such as (41a), for which she proposes the paraphrase in (42a) and the formalisation in (42b).

- (41) a Every girl read a different book
 b #Every girl read a better book
 (42) a Every girl read a book that was different from the book that every other girl read
 b $\forall x, y [\text{girl}(x) \ \& \ \text{girl}(y) \ \& \ x \neq y \rightarrow x \text{ read a different book than } y]$

However, in contexts that do not provide any temporal indication, the comparison operator cannot be used with a sentence internal interpretation. In fact, while (41a) is fine, (41b) has only the anaphoric reading. Notice that the formula given by Beck for the operator *different* in (42b) is logically equivalent to the formula (43b) she proposes for reciprocals as (43a), and does not work for comparatives.

- (43) a Mary and Bill saw each other.
 b $\forall x [x \in \text{M\&B} \rightarrow \forall y [y \in \text{M\&B} \ \& \ y \neq x \rightarrow x \text{ saw } y]]$

Thus, on the one hand the formalisation proposed by Beck for the quantified NP dependent readings of *different* in (42b) indeed treats it as reciprocal, and on the other hand Beck's claim that the comparative behaves like *different* is not supported by the data. It follows that examples such as (41a) should be analysed in terms of reciprocity, and not be put together with comparative constructions. Then, if one accepts this point,

other regions.

one can make sense of the fact that in the formula in (42b) we need to quantify over pairs of girls, a point Beck cannot justify.

Let's go back to (40). Beck insists on considering the change in the condition of the restrictor from $t1 \neq t2$ in (40c) to $t1 < t2$ in (40d) just a small thing. However there is more than meets the eye, as the sharp contrast between (38) and (39) shows. In fact, the expression $t1 < t2$ contributes two distinct pieces of information, namely that $t1$ is different from $t2$, as we suppose that the relation is not reflexive, and that the direction in which the relation holds does matter and must match temporal ordering. The important point here is that verification concerns reflexivity but not always the direction in which a relation R holds. So, for (40c) all the pairs in the domain can satisfy the relation R . Instead, in (40d) the set of possible pairs is further restricted by the constraint that only pairs where the first member is temporally located after the second satisfy R . The difference between these two cases is that the predication expressed by the comparative adjective is represented by a transitive asymmetric relation, while *different* imposes a symmetric not necessarily transitive relation.

The lack of transitivity makes it possible to interpret sentences such as (35a) in terms of a weak form of reciprocity. In this interpretation, the set of dresses may well be smaller than the set of days under consideration, for instance all the days of the year, but what matters is that she never wears the same dress as the eve.

Reciprocals do not require symmetry, but do not have any problem in accommodating it (Dalrymple *et al.* 1998), so this reading could be produced with a symmetric operator.

Comparatives impose an asymmetric relation. Thus, it may be the case that the condition in the restrictor of (40d) has nothing to do with compositional semantics, as claimed by Beck, but it clearly seems to have something to do with the lexical semantics of the comparative morpheme.

We pointed out above that *autre* cannot be used in cases such as (39), where comparative forms are problematic. This is because here comparatives and *autre* function in the same way, since *autre* does not just establish a relation between two elements, but it selects one element as the reference against which the identity of the other(s) is tested. Hence, it requires R to be verified in a single direction.

In sum, *different* always imposes a symmetric relation, but the two directions are not verified in all cases. The difference between the types of relation enforced does not seem to matter when the scope relation (Dalrymple *et al.* 1998) is not that of inequality,

i.e. when ‘different’ is not the main predicate. In this case, the prediction would be that, when it has internal reading, ‘different’ should not be lexically realised via an operator expressing an asymmetric relation, unless there is an ordering among the items. Indeed, in this case German does not use *ander*, nor French *autre*, cf. (44) and (45).

- (44) a London and Paris are different
b London und Paris sind verschieden
c Londres et Paris sont différents
- (45) a All the children are different
b Alle Kinder sind verschieden
c Tous les enfants sont différents

The reciprocal reading is the other case where symmetry could be expected to hold, because we are fishing twice from the same set, so to speak, without going through an external multiplier. But Dalrymple *et al.* have shown that symmetry need not be always enforced in reciprocity. Interestingly enough, in this case too German does not use *ander*, cf. (11).

2.2 Anaphoric effects in quantified NP dependent diff-phrases

As said above, *autre* in French can be interpreted as NP dependent in two cases. The first case is exemplified by (35), the second by (46).⁵ The peculiarity of this second case is that the noun quantified over by *chaque* is the same as the noun modified by *autre*. Here the *chaque* NP, which works as multiplier, also acts as the antecedent for an anaphoric interpretation of the *autre* NP.

- (46) a Chaque enfant est absolument dissemblable à un autre quant à sa vie intérieure (Dolto – Frantext)
Each child is absolutely dissimilar from another (any other) one with respect to her inner life
- b Chaque enfant s’est mis avec un autre pour former un binôme
Every child got together with another one to form a binomial

In these examples, the predicative relation is established between elements of the same nature, that is all children. This seems to say rather clearly that reciprocity is at work

⁵ The reviewers pointed out that *dissemblable à* is not a standard French expression. Yet, we keep Dolto’s example because it is the only clear case of strong reciprocity we got in our sample obtained via a ‘quick and dirty’ search in Frantext.

here. Another fact that suggests that these examples are best characterised as containing a reciprocal operator is the presence of different truth conditions that correspond to different types of reciprocity. In (46a) it is said that the relation expressed by the adjective holds between all the elements of this set. In other words, every child is different from every other child of the set. We are dealing here with an instance of strong reciprocity (Dalrymple *et al.* (1998)). Instead, (46b) says that for each child there is exactly one other child with whom he or she is in the relation expressed by the verb, and who is in that relation with him or her. This means that elements of the set are paired off so that every member participates with some other member in the relation R as the first or the second argument, but not necessarily in both roles, what is called Inclusive Alternative Ordering by Dalrymple *et al.*

It has to be noted that strong reciprocity also obtains when *autre* occurs in a definite NP, as in (47). So, these two sentences can go together with (46).

(47) a Chaque élève était un sujet d'étude pour l'autre. (Guibert – Frantext)

Each pupil was a subject of study for the others.

b Qui dit système dit ensemble cohérent : si tout se tient, chaque terme doit dépendre de l'autre (V. Brondal – Frantext)

Talking about a system means to talk about a coherent system, if everything holds together, then each term must depend on the other

It is important to note that in these cases *autre* cannot be replaced by *différent* in French and that here even English uses the expression *other* more easily than *different*. However, *other* has not been considered in Beck's study, although one cannot ignore its relation with the item *different* on the one hand and with the concept of reciprocity on the other hand. Recall that this item is a constituent of the well-studied reciprocal pronoun *each other*. As a matter of fact, in examples (46) we have the same reciprocal device, but with the two parts occurring separately in two positions of the sentence. It seems obvious that *other*, *autre* and also *ander* in German are involved here in the expression of reciprocity and that we cannot confine them only to the domain of comparison. More importantly, they appear to be basically anaphoric: it is because an element is picked out and thus becomes salient that the use of *other* or *autre* is much more convenient than that of *different* or *différent*.

3 Summary and concluding remarks

The table below summarises how readings, lexical forms and contexts associate when realising ‘different’ in English, French and German. As we can see, the use of *autre* in French is more restricted than in German and larger than in English. The distribution of the French items is not as complementary as in German, as *différent* shares the anaphoric value with *autre* and occurs equally in quantified NP dependent readings.

	reciprocal	plural NP dependent	quant NP +symmetric R	quant NP +asymmetric R	discourse anaphoric	misc ⁶
English	different	different	different	different	different	other
German	verschieden	verschieden	ander	ander	ander	ander
French	différents	différent	différent	autre différent	autre différent	autre

The discussion has shown that the partition proposed by Beck for German and English diff-phrases does not suit French, and that the analysis in terms of a comparative operator does not suit the English data. These are two important but specific points. However, there is also a general point to be made. The relation of ‘being different’ is basically symmetrical, but the attention may focus on one direction only. Therefore, languages may capture it also via asymmetric operators, in given contexts. Our comparative study has shown that there is a gradient, a situation that recalls the case of reciprocals (Dalrymple *et al.* (1998)). Languages may vary in how they divide up the gradient when realised as lexical items. Inevitably, the realisation of the extreme of the gradient imposes tighter constraints on the selection of the items.

In conclusion, English has a symmetrical operator (*different*) whose power can be under-exploited if one direction is ‘ignored’. In this sense, we can say that *different* is ‘over-used’. In those cases where the relation is verified only in one direction, French uses *autre*, an element that expresses an asymmetric relation. Note that French can also over-use its symmetric operator *différent*, but there is a preference for the directional operator *autre* in many contexts where the relation is verified only in one direction. Finally, the prediction of the suitability of asymmetric (comparative) operators in certain contexts can accommodate the case of German, not directly studied in this paper.

⁶ Under the column miscellaneous we gather example (46) as well as cases such as (i) and the contrast in (ii). All these cases deserve to be investigated.

- i. a d’autres questions? ‘other questions?’
b autres directions (on a traffic sign) ‘other directions’
- ii. a *in different words
b in other words

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