**KEYWORDS:** argument structure, experiencer, psych verbs, stative verbs

**BACKGROUND:** The status of ‘experiencer’ arguments in psychological verbs and their diverse behaviour has been a controversial issue for decades (see e.g. Belletti & Rizzi 1988; Grimshaw 1990; Dowty 1991; Pesetsky 1995; Reinhart 2001; Landau 2010). Especially the controversy about experiencers in object positions is far from being resolved, as the high number of (recently published) conflicting analyses shows (e.g. Kim 2016; Cheng & Sybesma 2015; Fábregas & Marin 2015; Kailuweit 2015; Alexiadou & Iordâncu 2014; Cheung & Larson 2014; Grafmüller 2013).

**CLAIM:** The reason why none of the analyses has been entirely satisfactory in accounting for all aspects of the diverse behaviour of experiencers is that most approaches consider object experiencer verbs (=OEv) to be a (more or less) homogenous group. Contrary to that, I will argue that (i) OEv are not as homogenous a group as usually assumed, but that they fall into two starkly different groups depending on their event structure properties: stative vs. nonstative (see Pylkkänen 2000). And that (ii) experiencers in stative psych verbs are structurally different from ‘experiencers’ in nonstative OEv verbs. Only stative OEv have ‘true’ experiencer arguments (see Landau 2010), ‘experiencers’ in nonstative OEv are in fact regular internal direct objects. Stative OEv are crucial for the debate on psych verbs, since their analysis has hardly ever been addressed properly (but see Pylkkänen 2000; Arad 2002; Rothmayr 2009). I will present empirical arguments for the different status of experiencers in stative OEv, which has been claimed before, but has not yet been proven empirically.

**DATA:** German alternating psych verbs formed with the same Root/lexical item (see 1) shed light on the crucial aspectual distinction: while OEv without prefix, like ärgern ‘annoy’, wundern ‘puzzle’, etc., are stative, do not entail a change of state (1a), and have neither verbal nor adjectival passives (2a), the prefixed version ver-ärgern ‘PREFIX-annoy’, ver-wundern ‘PREFIX-puzzle’, etc. are bieventive change of state verbs with a result/target state (1b), and have both verbal and adjectival passives (2b), as well as agentive readings, i.e. behave like typical accomplishments.

1. a. Die Fragen ärgerten ihn *in kurzer Zeit/ für zwei Stunden.
   the questionsNom annoyed himAcc hours.long / in short time/ for two hours
   b. Die Fragen ver-ärgerten ihn *in kurzer Zeit/ für zwei Stunden.
      the questionsNom PREFIX-annoyed himAcc hours.long / in short time/ for two hours
2. a. *Er wurde (durch die Fragen) geärgert.
      heNom became through the questions annoyed
      – Er war geärgert.
      heNom was annoyed
   b. Er wurde (durch die Fragen) ver-ärgert.
      heNom became through the questions PREFIX-annoyed
      – Er war ver-ärgert.
      heNom was PREFIX-annoyed

**ANALYSIS:** Their inability to form verbal passives (2a) is taken as evidence that stative OEv lack an external argument. The fact that they cannot undergo adjectival passivization (2a) plus a number of other diagnostics (like their inability to be topicalized with the past participle, object drop, etc.) shows that the experiencer is not a canonical internal direct object (see Levin & Rappaport’s 1986 SCG; Bruening 2014), but behaves rather like an indirect/goal object in double object constructions. Therefore, these verbs are analysed as ‘complex ergative’ (Bennis 2004) verbs. The experiencer of stative OEv is introduced by a functional head in the sense of Wood & Marantz’s (2017) i*, i.e. externally to the Root. This is what all stative psych verbs, both subject experiencer verbs (=SEv) as well as (DAT and ACC) OEv have in common: being an experiencer means being the externally merged argument of a stative eventuality. In the case of SEv this head is VoiceHOLDER, in case of OEv it is Appl/P(HAVE)/i* (depending on the assumed theory of DOC/applicatives). In this respect, parallels can be drawn between stative psych verbs and adjectives, not least because the split between ergative and unergative stative psych verbs mirrors the well-known split between ergative and unergative adjectives (see Cinque 1989, 1990; Bennis 2004). Cross-linguistically similar patterns observed in Polish (Bondaruk et al. 2017; Bialy 2005), Brazilian Portuguese (Petersen 2016), Dutch (Bennis 2004), Hebrew (Arad 1998, 2002), Finnish (Pylkkänen 2000, Nelson 2000), and Spanish (Fábregas & Marin 2015) also point towards such an analysis as complex (i.e. double object) ergative verbs.