

TRY TO DO vs. TRY DOING

Zu Beginn dieses Artikels schlägt Ihnen der Verfasser einen Test vor – er soll Ihnen einen Hinweis dafür geben, ob es sich für Sie lohnt, sich die Mühe zu machen und alle Seiten des Artikels zu lesen.

In den folgenden 33 Kurztexten / Situationen sollen Sie sich für eine von drei Möglichkeiten für das Verb in Klammern entscheiden: 1. (nur) Infinitiv, 2. (nur) gerund, 3. sowohl Infinitiv als auch gerund sind möglich.

Die "Auflösung" finden Sie ganz am Ende des Artikels auf Seite 27.

Vortest

1. Imagine walking by New York's Second Avenue Deli on a blustery February night and seeing two men lying on their stomachs on the sidewalk reaching for something under a parked limo. I was one of the men.

When I'd left the deli after a bowl of matzo ball noodle soup, a tongue sandwich and a celery tonic, a button on my coat popped off, and I could hear it bounce away on 33rd Street. As I tried _____ (find) it in the dark, a counterman walked out and asked if he could help. Even though I insisted I'd only lost a button, he ran back into the deli for a flashlight.

After spotting the button under the big car and seeing it was beyond our reach, he returned to the store for a broom. With me shining the flashlight and him reaching with the broom, we retrieved the button.

We high-fived, but when I thanked the deli guy, he just shrugged it off. "We do a lot for our customers," he said. "Anything you need, just let us know."} (New York Times)

2. {I'm a senior college student, I tried _____ (find) a job and failed, am I a failure? I feel like I disappointed myself and my loved ones.}

3. The presence of fishing vessels and warships from China and other nations in the disputed waters of the South China Sea are [sic] contributing to a rise in tensions across the region, as countries try _____ (defend) their territorial claims by deploying various vessels. (New York Times)

4. For months, Mr. Romney tried _____ (make) inroads among voters who were disappointed with, but not necessarily angry at, Mr. Obama. (New York Times)

5. "I went and got a can out of the trash and filled it with water and I marched right back to her and threw it right in her face until her face was swollen," he said. The can hurt the woman's cheek, the police said, and Mr. Himmelstein was arrested and charged with assault. "I'm a little bit disappointed in me," he said this week, and tried _____ (explain) what had set him off.} (New York Times)

6. Samantha tried _____ (explain) to Consuela, who had grown up on a farm outside Caracas, the concept of "sustainable agriculture". (New York Times)

7. He tried _____ (explain) the situation to his would-be bosses, and even hired a lawyer, "but they told me unless I cleared up this discrepancy, we can't hire you". (New York Times)

8. {I'd wake up and I was like 'How did I get home last night?' And guys were like 'You got ripped [= stoned] and you drove home and we tried _____ (stop) you and you got into a fight.'} (New York Times)

9. {The mob also had batons and guns. Even when the police were present during some of the worst destruction on Saturday, no one tried _____ (stop) them. Were they afraid of the mob's size or were the police told not to intervene?} (Vice)

10. The habit of self-criticism engenders fear of failure, meaning that self-critics often don't even try _____ (achieve) their goals because the possibility of failure is unacceptable. (Huffpost)

11. So the last-ditch amendments may give Iraq's constitutional drafters more time to try _____ (pull) more Sunnis back into peaceful politics and away from the insurgency. (The Economist)

12. {Mwamba is heard clearly saying, "I'll park, I'll park," on the video, and appears to try _____ (pull) her car over to the side of the road. Though the footage is unclear, she remarks of being impeded in her attempt to park her car by officers, who then proceed to aggressively pull her from it.} (Vice)

13. {"She's just passed out drunk," Shelton concluded. He popped open a capsule of ammonia, waved it under the woman's nose, and tried _____ (pull) her from the car. The woman, rousing, grabbed hold of the car's emergency brake, but she lost her grip and tumbled out into the parking lot.} (The New Yorker)

14. {The pirates shot her husband in the back of the head, and he fell in the water, she said. She spun her craft around to her husband, dove into the water and tried to drag her 250-pound husband to the side of her craft. "I tried _____ (pull) him up, but I couldn't," Hartley said. She says she retreated as bullets whizzed by her. "It's a miracle I'm even here," she said, crying on the phone.} (Arkansas Democrat Gazette)

15. {The slaughter in Jalalabad appears to have occurred in similar circumstances to the better-known murder in 2005 of 24 Iraqi civilians in Haditha, in western Iraq. After being attacked by a suicide bomber, American marine special forces allegedly retaliated by shooting at every Afghan in sight. Another 50 civilians were wounded in their attack. As in Haditha, the marines then tried _____ (hide) their bloody tracks. Afghan journalists at the scene had video film confiscated and digital photographs deleted from their cameras.} (Economist)

16. {A few years back, Lauryn Hill did a comeback tour during the Rock the Bells hip-hop festival [...], so my friend and I flew from Vancouver to San Francisco to watch it. As soon as we got to the venue, we smoked two blunts [= Joints] and ate a brownie each. Before the openers were through, we had passed out hard. A stranger sitting nearby tried _____ (shake) us awake – he'd overheard us joking earlier about how moronic it would be if we came all this way and missed Lauryn Hill. I remember looking at him, confused and glassy-eyed, shrugging and going right back to sleep. Effectively, we spent \$600 (530) each to take a four-hour nap.} (Vice)

17. Squatter Bred 19 Dogs Who Tried _____ (Escape) Feces-Covered NJ Mansion, Officials Say.

Der ganze Text zu dieser Überschrift heißt: {Nineteen dogs used for breeding were rescued from the basement of a once-shining mansion in New Jersey, rescue officials said. The 16 German Shepherds and three Dobermans were found weak and malnourished being kept in cramped cages of the feces-covered home in Paterson. Evidence on the cages shows that the dogs tried to escape, said the rescue that worked alongside Second Chance Pet Adoption League. One dog tried digging through the basement floor in an effort to get out, NorthJersey.com reports.}

18. On Valentine's Day, 1912, two honeymooners tried _____ (cross) the ice bridge that forms over Niagara's river each winter.

19. {Gale-force winds whipped the glacier. Carrying their bergens, each weighing 200 pounds, in five hours Mountain Troop had covered about half a mile – and these men were the cream of mountain-warfare experts. With the light fading fast, they tried _____ (erect) two-man Arctic tents behind an outcrop of ice in order to provide some shelter, but savage winds blew one tent away like a paper handkerchief and snapped the tent poles of the others.}

20. {It remained to be seen if we could get into China without our visas – and that was assuming we could actually get out of Uzbekistan. Someone had tried _____ (assassinate) the Uzbek president, so the border was closed.} (Jim Rogers)

21. I pour a canteen of water into a helmet and try _____ (wash) some of the mud from my face.

22. {At headquarters, I learn of Captain Hogan’s death. He was in a captured pillbox [= *Bunker*] when a mortar shell got one of his men. Badly wounded, the man tried _____ (drag) himself back to cover. The captain crawled out to give him a hand.}
23. {Sometimes, the bad guys made it easy for us. – One day we went out and set up in a village near the main road. It was a good spot; we were able to get a few insurgents as they tried _____ (pass) through the area on their way to attack the hospital. All of a sudden, a bongo truck—a small work vehicle with a cab and a bed in the back where a business might carry equipment—careened from the road toward our house. Rather than equipment, the truck was carrying four gunmen in the back, who started shooting at us as the truck drove across the fortunately wide yard.}
24. Luna made his way to the border with Arizona, where he tried _____ (cross) and was quickly deported once again.
25. {Two brothers from southern Mexico tried _____ (cross) the border several times but were sent back by U.S. officials. On their third try they ended up trapped in a tractor trailer, one brother survived, the other died along with 53 others.}
26. {He’s become one of the program’s better-known success stories and now works part time in the produce section of a supermarket and cooks nearly all his meals. He’s expanding his cooking skills to include fish, which he had never tried _____ (prepare) before. “I know what healthy food looks like, and I know what to do with it now,” he says.}
27. {The student, identified by authorities as 19-year-old Angel Granados-Diaz, had been suicidal for several months, according to prosecutors, when he took the loaded and legally bought shotgun to school on May 17. Before Lowe intervened, the teen had already tried _____ (kill) himself outside a bathroom, but the shotgun did not discharge.
Ähnlich: In one video shared with The Kansas City Star, Samsel tells students about “a sophomore who’s tried _____ (kill) himself three times,” adding that it was because “he has two parents and they’re both females.”}
28. {Starting the 1916–17 junior season as a goaltender [= *Torwart*], Morenz became a forward when it became apparent his speed was much more suitable for an offensive role, and he helped the Mitchell ice hockey team win the Western Ontario junior championship. After the Morenz family moved to the nearby community of Stratford in May 1917, Morenz tried _____ (enlist) in the Canadian military but was refused when recruiters learned he was only 15 years old.} (Wikipedia)
29. {Almost every evening, following supper, bent over a typewriter, I’d translate my diary scribbblings into something I hoped would be coherent prose. Each week I’d mail a few pages to Myrt, who, in turn, tried _____ (translate) them into neat, polished prose in the impeccable typing she’d learned in high school. During her lunch hour, or in slack hours, or after hours, she was performing yeoman’s work [= *gute Dienste leisten*] for her fiancé.}
30. {More than once I’d slid off the road in my hurry, ending up – luckily enough – in snowdrifts. But there was nothing soft about the reception I received from my squadron CO [= *commanding officer*]. Bedraggled and utterly exhausted, I tried _____ (stand) at attention before the major and made an effort to salute and explain my absence. He cut me short. “Curtis, where the hell have you been?”}
31. {To correctly do sit-ups, you need to place your feet as close as possible to your buttocks. Try not _____ (move) your feet and slowly get up.}
Ähnlich: {Water is around 800 times denser than air, so any movement will suppose much more effort. Try not _____ (move) too much in order to not get tired fast and to save some air.}
32. **{The tip:** Don’t throw out eggshells – use them as “pots” for seedlings instead. Cut off the top of a raw egg with a knife, rinse out the shell, make a hole in the bottom of the shell with a nail, then fill with seed compost and sow. When the plant is big enough to be transplanted, just put the whole thing in the soil.

The catch: It may look cute, but this is the most fiddly and uneconomical way of sowing seeds. Have you ever tried _____ (make) a hole in half an eggshell? "Fiddly" doesn't begin to cover it. Eggshells, once empty, are fragile beasts.} (The Guardian)

33. {Tiny fell down the muddy bank one night, whacked his head on a rock and split it open. He tried _____ (get) to his feet, fell a second time and rolled into the river. Tiny's bloated body was found a little over a week later.} (Guardian)

Zur "Auflösung" des Text gehen Sie bitte ans Ende des Artikels (Seite 27)

Und jetzt zum Unterschied zwischen "try to do something" und "try doing something"

1. In der Mehrzahl der Fälle steht der Infinitiv nach "to try": "To try to do sth." bedeutet "etwas (Schwieriges) versuchen / versuchen, etwas zu bewältigen" und impliziert eine gewisse Anstrengung.

2. Die zweite Möglichkeit, nämlich "to try doing sth." hat einen anderen Sinn und bedeutet "etwas ausprobieren, es versuchen mit ..." und impliziert die Idee eines Experiments: man will herausfinden, ob etwas funktioniert bzw. nützlich sein könnte bzw. vielleicht sogar Spaß macht.

Ein (deutschsprachiger) Schüler lernt zuerst "to try to do" kennen und wird frühestens auf dem Niveau A2 mit "to try doing" konfrontiert. Aus diesem Grund verbleibt eine lebenslange Neigung Deutschsprachiger zum Infinitiv "to try to do sth." Falls also Germanismen auftreten, dann nur in diese Richtung, z.B.: *If you are depressed, why don't you try to call up somebody and see a movie?* (Korrekt ist: *If you are depressed, why don't you try calling up somebody and seeing a movie?*)

Der Unterschied zwischen "to try to do sth." und "to try doing sth." wird in vielen Lehrbüchern behandelt. Der Hauptgrund dafür, warum dem Verb "to try" hier trotzdem ein eigener Artikel gewidmet ist, liegt im (abschließenden) vierten Kapitel: Man trifft nämlich immer wieder auf Fälle, wo sich die Welt des Verbs "to try" nicht so schön fein säuberlich trennen lässt.

1. Beispiele für "to try to do sth." = "etwas (Schwieriges) versuchen / versuchen, etwas zu bewältigen"

A man who tries to carry a cat home by its tail will learn a lesson that can be learned in no other way. (Mark Twain)
They were caught when they tried to cross the river. "They will try to find out the truth, but that is not easy to find because it was more than 30 years ago," he was quoted as saying. The French explorer Jacques Cartier tried to find a sea passage to link the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. They moved quickly, trying to find a way out. I have tried to do my best for you. I have tried to discuss the subject with you many times, but you have consistently refused to give me a hearing. He tried to imagine what his own feelings would be if he were in her place. Having fallen overboard, he tried to get back on the boat. I'll try to find someone to ask. What is the Algerian government trying to hide? They have spent the past 18 month trying to rebuild their lives. He was voted the champion Sprinter of 2011, and although he tried to defend his title in 2011, he faltered and finished seventh. He tried to get back again, but he couldn't do that, either. She is trying to help people who don't want to be helped. I finally gave up trying to study and watched an old movie. His friends have tried to support him as best they can. Bounty hunters round up people who are trying to escape from the justice system. We try to make our briefings as objective as possible. A dog tried to bite me. Men in the icy water tried to reach the boats. They moved quickly, trying to find a way out. Britain's biggest tobacco company made a decision in 1974 not to try to stop pregnant women from smoking. Cuba has been desperately trying to stave off economic collapse. Now, as employers try to stave off layoffs, workers are being asked to work less. The immigration Service says the number of illegal entrants found

trying to enter Britain clandestinely is stable. A police explosives expert was injured trying to defuse the bomb. Her mother tried to make everyone comfortable, but it was awkward. It was hopeless to try to explain everything. Was he trying to attract attention? Murphy tried to stop the lorry, but it was too late. You should try to spend less. Once a year I try to spend some months in the field in African villages. I try to spend time in prayer and Bible study every day. I'm trying to achieve an inner quietness and peace. Try never to think of it again. He was trying to look uninterested. At first he tried to run, but immediately he fell and rolled. {I don't want any potatoes. I'm trying to lose some weight.} People left their homes in panic, trying to flee the city. A Burmese journalist has been shot dead while trying to escape from custody, the army has said. {It was almost four o'clock when the telephone rang. The woman tried to reach it first, but her husband was quicker.} He tried to pull himself together. I had never tried to lose weight before. {Try not to move. Lie quite still.} {Try not to move around too much so you don't bleed again. The bandages aren't that thick and blood will soak through pretty quickly.} "Right," said the doctor, "we're just going to have a look at you, please try to relax and try not to move." "If you think you've broken your finger or thumb, there are some things you can do while you're waiting to see a doctor. You should try not to move the finger or thumb – it may help to tape it to the finger next to it." She tried to make her voice sound as natural as possible. She tried to hide her tears. In those depression days, a friend of my mother was trying to make a living by teaching dancing in the evening. He was trying to look uninterested. He must have drowned while trying to escape. For 50 years he has been trying to persuade people to eat healthier. Try to avoid hurting your partner unnecessarily. Our job was to try to knock out the guns. But I tried to not be judgmental and leave it open for the audience to decide how they feel about all that. In an interview in his suite earlier in the evening, Mr. Spitzer tried to not sound too presumptuous about his future. {Gillian Dale gripped the illuminated sign and tried to not look at the traffic roaring beneath her on Highway 41. "I'm scared of heights," she shuddered.} "I tried to not let it get to me," Ms. Hellerman said, "but to an extent, I did wonder why my performance had declined". I tried to not focus too much on that stuff, because it just makes you laugh, and this is a really serious endeavor. I think more than anything I just tried to not let it define me. People from opposite teams can make you feel quite small, but no matter what I felt inside I always tried to not let it affect my performance. I tried not to laugh. I tried not to show my surprise. Ira tried not to feel jealous. She tried not to feel insulted. Still, he tried not to lose hope. I tried not to stare. People tried not to breathe. {In 2016, Lisa Pleas was facing an incredible undertaking: her father's deteriorating health. She tried to help him as much as possible, but he was a proud veteran and retired steel worker who didn't always want to go to his doctor appointments or take his medications.} Then I try to go back to sleep, but the effort is useless. I try to get eight hours of sleep each night. {I've struggled with health for most of my life. In high school, I played sports but ate crappy food. In college, I was physically lazy but tried to maintain a healthy diet. I've never been able to quite get it right . . . that is, until I had a child of my own.}

2. Beispiele für "to try doing sth." = "etwas ausprobieren, es versuchen mit ..."

Als Einleitung ein paar Mehrfach-Beispiele:

To combat insomnia, I've tried everything. I've tried putting a drop of whiskey in my late-night coffee. I've tried going without coffee completely and sucking mints instead. I stuck a wooden board under the mattress for a few months, and then I ripped out the springs. I even sawed a few inches off the bed legs, but it was no good. I've tried propping myself up on three pillows, and I've even tried counting sheep. But nothing seems to work!

Wir sehen hier eine Reihe von Alternativen : 5 x gerund und dazu noch 3 andere (wooden board, rip out springs, sawn-off bed legs) – alles wird ausprobiert. Das ist das Kennzeichen von "to try + gerund": Es gibt mehrere Alternativen, die ausprobiert werden.

Trump's 2016 opponents tried everything. His Republican primary rivals tried ignoring him. They tried reasoning with voters, pointing out that he wasn't a traditional conservative. Some tried ridiculing him; Marco Rubio insulted the size of his hands. Ted Cruz tried aligning himself with Trump, which was good enough for second place.

Hier haben wir 4 x gerund und 1 Objekt (everything) – alles wird ausprobiert.

Weitere Beispiele:

He went west as a young man and tried **storekeeping**, **ranching**, **panning** for gold and **working** as a railway policeman, all without success.

I tried **arguing**, I tried **pleading**, nothing worked.

{I have a 2, nearly 3-year-old. For the last few months he has refused to eat ANYTHING. He refuses everything that's offered to him except yoghurt, crisps and chocolate. It's to the point I'm worried he is going to end up ill. Does anybody have advice? We've tried **offering** him 'picky' dinners so he can chose what he wants to eat, we've tried **not making** a big deal out of the food when we put it down, I feel like we've tried everything!}

Vorbemerkung: "To try doing sth." kommt in der englischen Sprache weniger oft vor als "to try to do sth." Wenn das gerund hier mit fast doppelt so vielen Beispielen vertreten ist wie der Infinitiv, dann liegt der Grund darin, dass das Gefühl deutschsprachiger Menschen (mit Englisch als Zweitsprache) für "to try doing sth." weniger gut entwickelt ist, weil die gerund-Variante erst später im Sprachunterricht eingeführt wird – deshalb erscheint es sinnvoll, hier über die Menge der Beispiele einen Ausgleich zu schaffen.

Try drinking tea without sugar for, say, a fortnight, and it is very unlikely that you will ever want to ruin your tea by sweetening it again. (George Orwell) Many couples now try living together before marriage. Instead of looking back only at negative events in your life, try remembering your successes. She tried smoking pot again only when she discovered that she had Hodgkin's disease. Try finding potato flour, but if you cannot find it then try potato starch. If the pieces do not fit together, try building a transition. {Try getting other neighbours together. Write a letter saying that a group of you are getting together to ask the noisy neighbour to be quieter.} Should diabetes specialists even bother to advise patients to try helping themselves through diet and exercise first, before prescribing drugs? I fit in university around work and I've even tried studying out of the back of an ambulance. As an undergraduate at Harvard University, Baker tried studying philosophy and social studies. I recommend that all college students who have the opportunity try studying abroad! Try studying for an exam without eating all day and you'll see what I mean. Try studying with a friend if you want to improve your marks. If you're getting frustrated with someone with dementia, try stopping and counting to 10, Dr. Power suggested. {Abandon that Big Five [= elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion, leopard] checklist. Instead, try stopping whenever your children spot something that interests them – oxpeckers [= Madenhacker = a bird] in an impala's ear, perhaps, or a huge puddle of elephant wee [= Urin].} IBM has tried making transistors from carbon nanotubes (hollow cylinders of carbon atoms). I tried making a dough with durum semolina, the naturally yellow coarse flour used to make dry Italian-style pastas. They tried making tea in a giant tea bag, which was actually a laundry bag converted for the purpose. Have they tried taking paracetamol? Have they never even tried taking drugs? Mr. McDonald tried taking a bus from the station to work, but that took too long. I tried taking the children to the park, but it was bitterly cold and they didn't want to ride their bikes. He added, "I tried taking a day off a couple of weeks ago, but it didn't work out". If you want a foretaste of hell, try spending three nights in a Mexican hospital. Try spending the whole afternoon playing with Colorforms and see how stimulated you feel. {"The snowplough is the beginning of all skiing," said Robert. "Even the best skiers use it sometimes." That may well be true, but try spending a whole day crouched slightly forward with your feet turning inwards, while simultaneously dropping one shoulder or the other as you fall down a hill. It's a tiring, frustrating experience.} And the eighty per cent of New Yorkers who backed Hillary Clinton could try spending a day on a soon-to-be-automated assembly line, or learn to chop their own firewood. I decided to try spending an entire week on the roads of Westchester -- back-country to highway -- without going a single mile over the speed limit, no matter how slow that was. Try spending a few more dollars per bottle and you'll find that you like Chardonnay just fine. I tried thinking of the turkey as just a big chicken, but the Thanksgiving turkey assumed mythic proportions for me. Stuart Wheeler should apologise and he should try thinking before he opens his mouth, too. Let's try thinking about it from your child's perspective. If you want first-class mathematicians, try looking in Bulgaria. Then I tried looking him up in the phone book. When I tried looking up the number for customer support, the program informed me that the support desk was temporarily closed "due to high contact volumes". The 22-inch snowfall is already eleven times greater than the average for October, but Ms. Virden tried looking on the bright side. {"We have tried editorials," said Dr. DeAngelis. "We tried getting the pharmaceutical companies to do it. We tried talking to leaders in government.} Twelve days after Isla was born, her mother tried running again. It was hard studying and running, so I decided to focus on one thing,

and I tried running. When you're itching for a sugar fix, try reaching for a mandarin orange. She looks cold so I try pulling up the blanket, but her arm is in the way and I don't want to break it. I could try losing weight, drinking less and going to bed earlier, he said. Try imagining a world without elephants. Try imagining one of those houses where the owners almost bankrupt themselves by putting up excessive Christmas lights. {Tom's voice grew louder – no result from Sid. Tom said "Sid, Sid!" and tried shaking him.} His wife tried shaking him, but he did not respond. Eye surgeons tried using lasers to correct vision. Next the doctors tried plugging my tear ducts to keep my eyes moist. I tried retiring to my bedroom, but ever there the noise was too loud. {As chocolate has a relative bitterness it's often difficult to match with the right type of wine; try serving an old Port, it's a good partner.} We have tried giving food away, but there are too many problems with food safety, a Tesco spokesman said. Some people argue that Tony Blair should have tried giving the people more power rather than more cash. A high-fibre diet helps prevent constipation and piles; try eating more wholemeal bread, breakfast cereals, vegetables and fruit. To prevent nausea during pregnancy, try eating small, frequent meals once every two hours or so during the day. When heated to a temperature of around 80°C, cooking oil can become harmful – just try dipping your finger in it. The doctor suggested that she try swimming to strengthen her muscles. {When roasted slowly, the garlic cloves become soft and spreadable, and taste more mild and sweet than raw, or even sauteed garlic – which is why you can eat so much more of it. It's a totally new experience, and I highly encourage everyone to try roasting garlic at least once, even if just to try garlic in a new way.} If all else fails, you could try stating what the consequences would be if that rule were broken. If such absenteeism occurs frequently, try telephoning their home during the day. People always want to use technology to solve our problems – why can't we try using common sense for a change? Try drinking some tonic water before eating your next piece of dark chocolate: the bitterness of the chocolate will be eliminated. If you want to conceal your cellulite, try using a self-tanner, because cellulite tends to be slightly less noticeable on darker skin. When she arrived in New York in 1966, she decided to try modeling to support herself. His bedroom window came bursting away from its hinges even though we'd tried sticking it down with sellotape. Calling for help often results in "Did you try restarting your computer?" I tried working more full days from home, but people at work said I wasn't around enough. If all else fails, try thinking like the enemy. Have you ever tried not doing any of these things to check how necessary they are? That night I tried not being decent, being sharp and bitchy instead. I have tried not having coffee after 12pm, going to bed at 7:30 pm to let my body adjust to the blanket. We tried not having an age limit when we first opened but experience has shown us that the cafe environment is not suitable for younger children. Then we tried not having sex for two weeks. Try not letting those words start to get to you. {The loaves are splitting while I let them rise before baking them. And sometimes it is just a small crack that kinda spreads out as it bakes and other times it's a big split all the way along the loaf that looks like someone mangled it with a knife. I've tried not letting them rise as long but that affects the texture. I've tried less flour and more flour, less yeast and more yeast ...} {Wanna know the secret to creating innovative work, consistently? Ruthless rest. Being suuuper busy is cool and all, but have you ever tried not making plans, doing something meditative – like taking a long, aimless nature walk – and sleeping seven to nine hours a night? Ideas will start flying out of you, trust us.} I tried counting sheep at night, I even tried medication, but nothing worked. I've tried sleeping on the sofa for two nights, and I never want to see the bloody thing again. In France nothing is easy – just try getting a taxi or waiting in line at the post office. When you disagree with colleagues, try repeating their side of the argument back to them affirmatively. In the following passage, try changing the past to the present tense to judge whether or not the sense of immediacy and excitement is increased. I tried making the baby a mush of bread and milk and sugar, which he scarcely touched. Acting on a hunch unsupported by scientific theory, the researchers tried adding to the sulphur a small quantity of selenium. {But there are situations where plastics are unavoidable. Try having a medical procedure without using a plastic syringe or an intravenous drip bag.} {Try complimenting your mate just once a day. The resulting rush of affection will surprise you.} If your child struggles with organization, try providing a daily checklist of items that they should pack. He had tried working as an apprentice technician at a dentist's and as a painter before joining up [= *einrücken*] in 1939.

3.1. Den Unterschied zwischen "to try to do sth." und "to try doing sth." sieht man z.B. in den folgenden Situationen:

I tried to imagine what was happening. (*Hier strengt sich der Sprecher an.*) ≠

I tried imagining something beautiful, a flower. (*Hier versucht der Sprecher vielleicht eine Technik der Meditation.*)

If you have someone you're trying to impress, try helping them with their schoolwork.

Bei "trying to impress" geht es darum, etwas Schwieriges hinzukriegen. Bei "try helping them" geht es dagegen um eine Strategie, die versuchsweise angewendet werden soll, also um ein Ausprobieren. Der Satz heißt ungefähr: "Wenn Du Eindruck machen willst, dann versuch's mal mit damit, Hilfe bei der Hausübung zu leisten."

He told her that he was on billboards all over India, and that he was famous in Canada for snowboarding. She supposed that he was trying to impress her – and she tried explaining to him that it would be better if he didn't try to.

"She tried explaining" bedeutet ungefähr "Sie versuchte es mit vernünftigem Zureden"; "was trying to [impress her]" ist dagegen ein klassischer Fall von "etwas Schwieriges versuchen" – wie jeder Jüngling weiß, der schon einmal ein Mädchen beeindrucken wollte ...

"I was worried," said Wheeler. "I was trying to help him. I tried pulling him up. I grabbed his shoulder and pulled him to his feet. I remember stumbling with him. I had my arm out."

"I was trying to help him" stellt jedenfalls den Versuch dar, eine (schwierige) Aufgabe zu bewältigen. "I tried pulling him up" mag (körperlich gesehen) auch nicht leicht gewesen sein, aber hier wird die Methode beschrieben: "Ich probierte es (erst mal) damit, ihn hoch zu ziehen."

I was very tired, and tried hard to get to sleep again.

Sobald ein "hard" dabei steht, befinden wir uns im Bereich des Infinitivs "to try to do sth.", weil eine Anstrengung damit verbunden ist: We try hard not to play censor. I tried hard not to yawn. They tried hard not to get caught. Try hard not to sound nervous! She tried hard to keep with the rhythm of the music. He also tries hard to maintain relationships with clients. The center tries hard to be child-friendly. The service is amazing; you get a drink for free and Adris (the owner) really tries hard to make you feel comfortable. "To try hard doing sth." ist nicht idiomatisches Englisch.

We recommend you try using a different browser.

"To use" ist ein Verb, welches "try + gerund" nahe legt, weil es dabei häufig um ein Ausprobieren geht: If you suspect this to be the case, try using the monitor with a different computer to see if the issue persists. {Try using mushrooms instead of meat for your next meal! This tip teaches us how mushrooms can be a good meat alternative!} Finally, if all else fails, try using a wired connection instead of Wi-Fi. The Pope tries using Good Friday to bring together Ukrainians and Russians. Woman tries using child to shoplift from Walmart, police say. {Estranged wife tries using media to hurt his reputation, Olson says. University of Arizona men's basketball coach Lute Olson accused his estranged wife of filing spurious petitions in their divorce case to "harass" him and tarnish his reputation, a court document filed Friday shows.} He tried using keyboards with layouts that minimized finger movement, but they didn't help much. With my elderberry wine just about ready I also tried using this instead of cider.

Das heißt aber nicht, dass "to try to use" grundsätzlich unmöglich wäre: Other gangs have tried to use journalists to their advantage. – Hier geht es nicht ums Ausprobieren, sondern um den Versuch, etwas (Schwieriges) zu erreichen, nämlich eine gute Presse zu bekommen.

If you are appalled at the election outcome and feel the call of hate, perhaps try asking yourself, 'What is it like to be a Trump supporter?' – *"Try asking yourself" hat hier den Sinn von "Versuch's mal damit, dich in die Gegenseite hinein zu versetzen" – das ist der Vorschlag, eine alternative Methode auszuprobieren. ≠*

{Often battles about food are a distraction from a deeper issue. But this can make it tempting to brush off these fights and the feelings involved as frivolous instead of diving deeper. So if you're feeling increasingly bothered by your partner's eating habits, try to ask yourself: What is it about this that bugs me so much? What's the story I tell myself when I see their behavior?} – *Der Schlüssel zu diesem "try to ask yourself" liegt hier in den Worten "instead of diving deeper": Damit wird impliziert, dass es einer Anstrengung bedarf, sich mit "your*

partner's eating habits" auseinander zu setzen. Ungeachtet dessen wäre in diesem Satz auch "try asking yourself" möglich – in vielen Situationen kann man unterschiedliche Akzente setzen (⇒ nächstes Kapitel 3.2.).

I've tried being straightforward, and I find it has its advantages. – *Hier heißt es "tried being straightforward", weil es sich um eine Art Philosophie, also um eine Methode handelt. ≠*

We have always tried to be straightforward with you and, in that spirit, I need to share something. – *Hier ist mit "tried to be straightforward" gemeint: "Wir haben uns immer bemüht, offen und ehrlich zu sein."*

Instead of looking back only at negative events in your life, try remembering your successes. – *"Schluss mit der Konzentration auf die negative Dinge im Leben, ab jetzt gilt eine neue Philosophie!" (Ähnlich: If you are consistently in a negative frame of mind, try listing the positive and negative aspects of your life.) ≠*

{Where were you during these last eight years? Do you even remember? Probably not. It's all a haze of horribly hideous headlines, excruciating election evenings, and idiotic international incidents. So, together, let's try to remember what happened: During these past eight years, this country has seen its citizens' civil liberties imperiled, its environment endangered, and its freedoms jeopardized.} – *Hier geht es um die Anstrengung, sich aus einem "haze" von Erinnerungen etwas fast schon Vergessenes ins Gedächtnis zurückzurufen.*

If you can't think of anything to talk to her about, try asking her "What class were you just in"? – *"Try asking her": Wenn dir nichts Besseres einfällt, dann versuch's mal mit dieser Art der Anmache. ≠*

{The death of her husband means Ms. Guan must also worry about how she's going to support her children, all of whom are under 13. "After my husband was killed," she says, "I was left with four little children. Of course, they can't have a job, because they are too young. They keep asking me for money for clothes and other needs, and I can't do anything about it." When I try to ask her about the effect her husband's death has had on her children, her grief boils over, and she weeps bitterly.} – *"When I try to ask her": Hier geht es um ein schwieriges Unterfangen – eine Witwe dazu zu bringen, sich zu öffnen und über den Tod ihres Mannes zu sprechen.*

I tried riding once, but I fell off the horse. – *"Ich hab's auch mal mit Reiten probiert". ≠*

Drunken man tried to ride a horse onto track at Breeders' Cup, police say. – *Da hat sich offenbar jemand zu viel zugemutet, also etwas Schwieriges nicht geschafft.*

Let's just try loving him and being very nice to him. – *"Try loving him" beschreibt hier einen Weg, der (versuchsweise) beschritten werden soll. ≠*

My goal with John is to try to love him and to help him do what's right. – *"Try to love him": Das ist hier keine neue Methode, sondern eine (schwierige) Aufgabe, der sich der Sprecher stellt. Der Schlüssel liegt im Wort "goal": ein angestrebtes Ziel impliziert kein Ausprobieren, sondern hart Arbeit.*

He tried taking his boots off and walking in his bare feet, but the ground was stony and that was even worse. – *"He tried taking his boots off": Er hat es mit der Barfuß-Methode versucht, allerdings hat diese hier nicht funktioniert. ≠*

{And of course, there was the matter of readjusting to earth's gravity once Melvin safely reached the ground. "You feel 10 times your [actual] weight," he says. His body's natural balancing systems needed a few days to recalibrate, too – he remembers feeling like he was doing somersaults when he tried to take his boots off.} – *"He tried to take his boots off": Für einen Astronauten, der soeben wieder auf die Erde zurückgekehrt ist, ist auch das Ausziehen von Schuhen eine schwierige Übung, die neu erlernt werden muss.*

They offer sessions aimed at people who'd like to try snowboarding. – *"To try snowboarding": Es gibt Kurse für Menschen, die es einmal mit Snowboarden versuchen wollen. ≠*

{Don't try to snowboard in terrain that is too difficult for your skill level. It's important to challenge yourself and push your limits, but only do so within your abilities. Trying to ride in terrain that is beyond your skill level can lead to serious injury.} – *"Try to snowboard" bedeutet in diesem Zusammenhang etwas Schwieriges, jedenfalls Gefährliches – diese Idee wird nochmals aufgenommen im nächsten Satz: Trying to ride in terrain that is beyond your skill level can lead to serious injury.*

Ähnlich: I tried sailing but could never get the hang of it. ≠ Fedot Alekseyevich Popov tried to sail east from the Kolyma to the Bering Strait in 1762 but was foiled by ice; trying again in 1764, he and his party disappeared.

She didn't leave me – we agreed to try living separately. – *“We agreed to try to live separately”: Wir haben uns auf einen neuen Modus geeinigt. ≠*

{When I first began my journey of recovery from alcohol and drug addiction, I didn't do it because I wanted to get sober. Sure, I agreed to go to detox, I agreed to go to rehab, I agreed to go to my first 12-step meeting, and agreed to try to live without alcohol and drugs, but it wasn't a decision I wanted to make. It was a decision I *had* to make. My body was falling apart.} – *“I agreed to try to live without alcohol and drugs”: Es ist leicht ersichtlich, dass es sich dabei für den Sprecher um eine gewaltige Herausforderung handelte.*

{A couple people in the office had seen the guy and thought he looked a bit shady and maybe he took the laptop. So the cops and a few of us go downstairs to see if we can see anyone matching the description of the guy who took the laptop. Nothing. There is a metro station just a few feet away so I try to tell the cops that he is probably there on the platform waiting for the train. Now, I'm a 5'4", 19 year old girl (at the time) with long gnarly dreads and a nose ring. Nobody is paying any attention to what I think. So I decide to go check out the platform myself.} – *“I try to tell the cops”: ein vergebliches Unterfangen (d.h. eine zu schwierige Aufgabe) für “a 5'4”, 19 year old girl (at the time) with long gnarly dreads and a nose ring”. ≠*

Well, you can try telling the cops that, but I've got a feeling they're not gonna buy you story. – *“You can try telling the cops that”: “Mit dieser Geschichte brauchst du es erst gar nicht zu versuchen” – d.h.: “Lass' dir etwas anderes einfallen.”Es mag schon auch schwierig sein, Polizisten von etwas zu überzeugen, aber hier geht es darum, eine bestimmte Strategie auszuprobieren.*

{Astonishingly, some in Russia are now reviving the lie that the murderers at Katyn were not by the NKVD, but the Nazis. That was maintained during the communist era, but only by punishing savagely those who tried to tell the truth.} – *“Tried to tell the truth”: Die Wahrheit zu sagen war damals ein riskantes Unterfangen, welches mit schwerer Strafe bedroht war, also eine fast nicht zu bewältigende Aufgabe. ≠*

You might as well apply the cynic's adage: if all else fails, try telling the truth. – *“Try telling the truth”: “Wieso es nicht einmal (zur Abwechslung) mit der Wahrheit versuchen?”*

{At first, I tried reasoning with him. I stopped to ask his name, told him that I understood he had a job to do, and suggested that he keep enough of a distance to allow me to have a conversation without him listening in. [...] After two or three days of this, I decided I'd had enough.} (Barack Obama about a stalker) – *Der Schlüssel zu “I tried reasoning” liegt in “at first”: Obamas erster Ansatz war der Versuch, ein vernünftiges Gespräch zu führen; nach zwei oder drei Tagen überlegte er sich aber einen anderen Weg und probierte eine neue Methode. ≠*

I tried to reason with him, but even as I started to explain what had happened he stood up to leave. – *Hier geht es nicht um eine Methode unter mehreren, sondern um eine schwierige Aufgabe – die auch prompt fehlschlug.*

{Eighty young people sitting on empty market stalls began putting on masks and balaclavas. The sergeant realised her role was to "keep up the ridiculous pretence" that she and five untrained officers could stop any disorder. She walked into the group of masked youths and tried talking to them. "[Then] this mass of people I had just been talking to became a mob, and they just started to smash all the shops. They were smashing the amusement arcade, and I could see inside the shop – I've never been so shocked in all my life that they were doing this in front of us."} – *“Tried talking” soll hier zum Ausdruck bringen, dass es die Polizistin (zuerst) mit gutem Zureden versuchen wollte. ≠*

"I tried to talk to them, but they were strangers and wouldn't listen," Bernard said. – *“They were strangers and wouldn't listen” weist auf die Schwierigkeiten des Versuchs hin. In diesem Fall wäre aber auch “I tried talking to them” (⇒ nächstes Kapitel 3.2.).*

Other stagehands tried stomping the flames out with their hands and feet, but within seconds, the small fire in the loft spread rapidly. – *Ein Feuer mit Händen und Füßen zu löschen, ist sicher eine ungewöhnliche Methode – aber um die Methode geht es hier. In diesem Fall wäre aber auch möglich “tried to stomp the flames out” – je nachdem, welche Relevanz man den “hands and feet” zumisst (⇒ nächstes Kapitel 3.2.). ≠*

In December, an accidental fire at a home near Santee left Ramirez with third-degree burns on his feet when he tried to stomp the flames out. – *Hier geht es eindeutig um die Bewältigung einer schwierigen Aufgabe.*

{When the employees asked Sinotrans for compensation for those who refused the transfer, however, they were told none was on offer. The staff had only two choices, the managers informed them: relocate or resign. The workers tried negotiating with Sinotrans, but in late May matters took an ugly turn.} – *“The workers tried negotiating”*: Die Arbeiter verlegten sich aufs Verhandeln, versuchten es also mit dieser Methode. ≠

The teacher tried to negotiate an agreement between the quarreling students. – *Hier geht es nicht um eine auszuprobierende (neue) Methode, sondern um das Erreichen eines (schwierigen) Ziels.*

If you lose money trading, try changing strategies. – *Hier wird vorgeschlagen, etwas Neues auszuprobieren.* ≠

{Many people won't pick up a book and read it cover to cover. This might be because they are tired, they don't have time, or they have trouble paying attention. But, I think we should try to change this and read at least one book per month.} – *Hier sollen wir – wenn's auch schwer fällt – etwas (Schwieriges) zu erreichen suchen, nämlich pro Monat mindestens ein Buch lesen.*

{If you always park in a garage at work, try parking down the street and walking a distance to work. It is good exercise and you may meet new people.} – *Wieso nicht einmal etwas anderes ausprobieren?* ≠

If the parking lot has surveillance cameras, try to park near one. – *Falls möglich (darin besteht die Schwierigkeit – es ist nämlich nicht immer möglich), sollen Sie in der Nähe einer Überwachungskamera parken.*

If you are tired of arguing with strangers on the internet, try talking with one of them in real life. (Obama) – *Wenn es über das Internet nicht funktioniert, dann versuchen Sie es einmal von Angesicht zu Angesicht (= eine alternative Strategie).* ≠

She won't listen to me – can you try to talk some sense into her? – *“Ich schaffe es nicht, aber vielleicht können Sie sie ja zur Vernunft bringen?”* – *Hier ist von einer schwierigen Aufgabe die Rede.*

That "incredible voice" was apparently a natural gift, evident from the time Mr. Pascal was 11 and first tried singing with a makeshift rock band some young friends had gotten together. – *Er versuchte es zuerst mit einer Rock Band; das war sein erster Schritt – weitere folgten (= er probierte verschiedene Strategien aus). In diesem Fall hätte “first tried to sing“ einen anderen Sinn, nämlich: “Er versuchte zuerst, bei einer Rock Band (als Sänger) aufgenommen zu werden“ – dabei wäre nicht einmal klar, ob ihm das (= etwas Schwieriges) überhaupt gelang.* ≠

If I concentrate I can call up a blurry memory of him singing as he pushed my twin brother and me in a wooden wheelbarrow down a green hill, laughing as we tried to sing along with him. – *Die Kinder versuchten, gesanglich mitzuhalten, was gar nicht einfach war.*

{Tuition was due. The rent was, too. So Mary went in search of a job. First she tried selling insurance policies. Then she sat at the reception desk at a hotel, but ran into financial trouble.} – *Hier hat Mary zwei verschiedene Möglichkeiten ausprobiert, zu Geld zu kommen.* ≠

{Woman arrested on charges she tried to sell baby. – A Mississippi woman has been arrested on a charge that she offered to sell her infant son to a Louisiana woman she met through an online classified ad.} – *Hier geht es nicht um Alternativen, sondern um ein einziges (schwieriges) Vorhaben.*

Try talking in a calm voice. – *“Versuchen Sie es mal (zur Abwechslung) mit ruhiger Stimme.“* ≠

Try to talk in a calm voice. – *“Reißen Sie sich zusammen und sprechen Sie leiser.“*

They decided that it would be interesting and fun if they tried making love. – *“Interesting and fun“ weist uns hier den Weg; Die beiden suchen zur Abwechslung eine neue Art der Zerstreung.* ≠

Last time I tried to make love to my wife, nothing happened, so I said to her, “What's the matter, you can't think of anybody either?” (Rodney Dangerfield). – *Dieses “I tried to make love to my wife“ war offenbar mit (vergeblichen) Anstrengungen verbunden ...*

After taking power in 1979, the Sandinistas tried channeling the religious devotion of the Nicaraguan people toward revolutionary goals. – *Die Sandinisten versuchten es mit einer bestimmten Art der Politik (als Alternative z.B. zu Repression).* ≠

{All this excitement and nervous energy is definitely something we can use in a performance. I really tried to channel all this electricity coming from both me and from the audience into delivering my musical message –

knowing that quite often these kinds of situations are what bring about the most inspired and emotionally charged performances.} – *Hier muss sich der Künstler offenbar gewaltig anstrengen, um sein Ziel zu erreichen.*

76% of respondents said they've tried working out at home during the pandemic [= Covid 2020-22], and 66% said they prefer it to the gym. – *Man sieht hier schon die beiden Alternativen "at home" vs. "gym", zwischen denen man wählen kann. ≠*

{Physical activity, of course, doesn't guarantee perfect health, but doctors say it helps a bundle. Williams always has tried to work out during the day, except when his bad back flares.} – *Williams bemüht sich, auf seine Trainingseinheiten zu kommen.*

No, I didn't want to steal it, I just wanted to try shooting the gun. – *Hier geht es darum, eine neue Erfahrung zu machen, etwas auszuprobieren. Bei "try to shoot the gun" würde man daran denken, dass der Sprecher – ungeübt in solchen Dingen – erst einmal mit dem Mechanismus des Schlosses zurechtkommen müsste. ≠*

I can't help but think of the scene from Home Alone 2, where they try to shoot the gun but it's all covered in oil and grease, and he's just fumbling with it. – *In diesem Satz geht es tatsächlich um die Schwierigkeit beim Abfeuern der Waffe.*

The next time you find yourself inclined to whine about the conditions in the dreaded coach cabin midway through a flight from New York to Los Angeles, try imagining the experiences of the settlers traveling for months in their covered wagons to reach their destinations. – *Bei "try imagining" geht es hier nicht um eine schwierige Aufgabe, sondern darum, sich mit Hilfe einer bestimmten Methode von den aktuellen Unbequemlichkeiten abzulenken – man kann das auf verschiedene Arten versuchen, eine davon ist es, sich die Probleme der Pioniere des Westens vorzustellen. ≠*

{By the time he was entangled with Kelly McGillis in "Top Gun" in 1986, Tom Cruise was on full celebrity-lockdown. He seemed to live entirely behind the golden gates of Hollywood. Go ahead, try to picture in your mind's eye Tom Cruise in a normal environment of any kind, anywhere, doing anything normal. For that matter, try to imagine him not smiling.} – *Mit diesem "Go ahead, try to picture ..." (nebst "For that matter, try to imagine him not smiling") wirft der Sprecher dem Leser sozusagen den Fehdehandschuh hin, indem er ihn zu etwas auffordert, das er selber für unmöglich hält: Der Top-Gun-Held beim Schuheputzen? – Unvorstellbar! Tom Cruise ohne sein Markenzeichen-Lächeln? – Aber nicht doch!*

{Pay attention to your knees in order to avoid putting excessive stress on them. Try not to move your feet, so you don't lose balance. Lower yourself so your thighs are parallel to the floor and try to hold in this position for a few seconds.} – *Hier geht es um Anleitungen zur korrekten Ausführung von "ball wall squats" ("try not to move your feet", "try to hold this position"), und Anleitungen implizieren etwas Schwieriges. ≠*

{Also try NOT moving your head with every punch. Not having to constantly move your head can give you more stability, speed, and power. Try throwing 2-3 punches before moving your head to a new position.} – *Hier geht es ums Boxen; normalerweise sollte man als Boxer während einer Schlagkombination den Kopf bewegen, um dem Gegner kein festes Ziel zu bieten – aber hier schlägt der Trainer ausdrücklich ein Abweichen von der Routine vor, um etwas Neues auszuprobieren.*

{I was raised by really strict Chinese immigrant parents and I tried to do the same with my two daughters. It worked in some ways, and not in others.} – *Hier bemüht sich die Sprecherin, dem Beispiel ihrer Eltern zu folgen. ≠*

You may have tried balancing a spoon on your nose, but have you ever tried doing the same with a biscuit? *Hier spricht der Sprecher davon, eine Spielerei auszuprobieren: "Haben sie es schon einmal damit versucht ...?" Möglich wäre hier aber auch der Infinitiv: You may have tried to balance a spoon on your nose, but have you ever tried to do the same with a biscuit? (⇒ nächstes Kapitel 3.2.).*

{Serena Williams shared the story of when she received her first million-dollar check. She was so used to simply depositing checks at the drive thru of her local bank that she tried to do the same with a seven-figure check: "And I remember I went through the drive-thru to deposit my check, and then they were like, 'I think you need to come in for this,' and so I ended up going inside ... 'Just put it in my account!'" – *Dieses Beispiel weicht von den üblichen Fällen ab: Hier impliziert "she tried to do the same" nämlich nicht etwas besonders Schwieriges, aber die Alternative – "she tried doing the same" – würde zum Ausdruck bringen, dass sie absichtlich ein Experiment*

versuchte: "Mal sehen, wie die reagieren, wenn ich mit einem Millionen-Scheck ankomme!" Dies ist aber offenbar nicht gemeint.

{Once I started working for myself I quickly figured out that if I let myself start work whenever it suited me on any given day, I'd lose too many productive hours. I soon created a strict routine that involves being in my office at 8.30 am. I have tried to do the same each working day since.} – "I have tried to do the same" bringt zum Ausdruck, dass sich der Sprecher um Selbstdisziplin bemühte. ≠

{One of my friends uses ConvertKit for his newsletters and when he selects "underline" it highlights the text in yellow. I've tried doing the same, but when I do, it actually underlines the text.} – Hier geht es darum, dass der Sprecher dieselbe Methode anwendet wie sein Freund – mit irgendwelchen zu überwindenden Schwierigkeiten hat das nichts zu tun. (Dass sich dann doch noch ein Problem auftut – das Computer-Programm des Sprechers reagiert anders als das seines Freundes – ändert nichts an der Wahl des gerund für eine bestimmte Methode.)

I'll try being nicer if you'll try being smarter. – Nett zu sein, mag für manche Menschen eine gewaltige Anstrengung bedeuten. Hier geht es aber um eine Abweichung vom gewöhnlichen Verhalten, also eine Art Experiment. ≠

Unless you really try to be nice to them and treat them as human beings, you won't get anywhere. – In diesem Satz ist jedenfalls ein deutliches Bemühen gefordert.

3.2. Das Kapitel 3.1. soll nicht zu der Auffassung verleiten, dass immer nur eine der beiden Formen korrekt sein kann – in manchen Situationen hat der Sprecher die Wahl, sich für einen von zwei Aspekten zu entscheiden:

I tried getting a job, but with my police record nobody'd hire me. – Dieser Satz heißt "Ich hab's auch mit Arbeitssuche probiert" – genauso möglich wäre auch "I tried to get a job, but with my police record nobody'd hire me." – In diesem Fall hieße das dann: "Ich bemühte mich, Arbeit zu finden."

{Bean sprouts at a farmer's market is probably not going to be a huge seller. Although I've never tried selling them, I have grown them. You soak them, put them in the dark and then rinse them twice a day until they sprout, then you have to rinse off the hulls.} – Hier geht es um zwei Arten, mit Bohdensprossen umzugehen: Der Sprecher (im Originalsatz) baut sie zwar an, aber mit dem Verkauf hat er es nie probiert. Die Alternative "I've never tried to sell them" wäre auch möglich – dann stünde das Bemühen um den Verkauf im Vordergrund.

If you begin by saying "I am sorry, but ..." you are inviting the other person to try manipulating you by playing on your feelings of guilt. – "Try manipulating you": Hinter diesem Satz (= Original) steht die Vorstellung, dass "the other person" flugs auf eine neue Taktik umschalten könnte. Möglich wäre allerdings auch "try to manipulate you" – dann ginge es um die Idee eines Wettkampfes (also einer schwierigen Aufgabe).

He said it was ridiculous to try to use a voluntary system to control "cruel and evil wrongdoers". – Das ist der Original-Satz, der sich auf ein gescheitertes Projekt bezieht: "try to use" bedeutet hier, dass man sich in seinen Erwartungen getäuscht sah – sich sinnlos bemüht hatte. Möglich wäre allerdings auch "to try using": das hieße dann etwa: "Wie konnte man überhaupt auf die Idee kommen, es mit einem "voluntary system" zu versuchen?"

Hold your hand palm up, fingers splayed, and try curling your pinky [= kleiner Finger] inward without bending the knuckles of any other finger. Das ist der Original-Satz – man soll einmal etwas ausprobieren. Möglich wäre allerdings auch "try to curl", weil es sich um etwas Schwieriges handelt, das sicher nicht alle Menschen zustande bringen.

When I tried explaining to the journalist the nuance and the difference between the two statements, I was told that I was "too complicated". – Das ist der Originalsatz: "Als ich es mit einer Erklärung der Feinheiten versuchte ..." Allerdings ist auch der Infinitiv argumentierbar: "When I tried to explain to the journalist the nuance and the difference between ..." Die ablehnende Reaktion des Journalisten zeigt ja, dass der Sprecher an etwas

Schwierigem gescheitert war: Wer will sich schon mit sprachlichen und interpretativen Feinheiten auseinandersetzen?

We tried calling him on his radio, but he didn't answer. – *Das ist der Originalsatz: Die Methode "Funkgerät" hat also nicht funktioniert. Möglich ist allerdings auch: I tried to call him on his cell phone but he never answered. – Es war ein Versuch, und der schlug fehl.*

Denied a South Korean passport, he tried forging one. – *Das ist der Originalsatz: Der Mann hat es also mit einer Fälschung probiert. Möglich wäre aber auch der Infinitiv, wie z.B. in diesem Satz: Kim then tried to forge a passport but was caught and sentenced to two years in prison. – Hier geht es um einen schwierigen Versuch, der fehlschlug.*

{I love archaeology, particularly the study of ancient Indian history, archaeology and art. Together with my postdoctoral colleague Eric Altschuller, I have even tried cracking the Indus Valley script. (Needless to say, we were not the first to attempt this. It is the world's last major undeciphered script and has been intensively studied by professional linguists as well as thousands of crackpots and wannabes like us.)} – *Das ist der Originaltext, in dem der Sprecher ungefähr sagen will: "Wir versuchten uns sogar an der Indus Valley Schrift." Aus dem ersten Satz ("I love archaeology, particularly ...") erkennen wir, dass der Sprecher weit gefächerte Interessen hat, und die Indus Valley Schrift ist eines von mehreren, dem er sich widmet. Ungeachtet dessen wäre auch möglich "I have even tried to crack the Indus Valley script": "Ich habe sogar den (fast aussichtslosen) Versuch unternommen, die Indus Valley Schrift zu entziffern."*

If others respond oddly to things we say, we may wish to try stating our intentions more directly. – *Der Sinn dieses Satzes ist: "Dann versuchen wir es halt mit der direkten Methode." Denkbar wäre aber auch die Alternative: If others respond oddly to things we say, we may wish to try to state our intentions more directly. Das hieße dann etwa: "Dann müssen wir uns halt mehr anstrengen und uns direkter ausdrücken."*

I tried phoning Stephanie, but there was no reply. – *Das heißt "Ich hab's (auch) bei Stephanie versucht." Eine Google-Suche ergibt jedoch eine deutliche Präferenz von "I tried to phone" gegenüber "I tried phoning".*

{Ever try getting stuff done while you're sick or suffering from allergies? Yeah, good luck.} – *Das ist das Original. Der Zusatz "Yeah, good luck" stellt die Schwierigkeit des Unternehmens in den Vordergrund. Korrekt wäre also jedenfalls auch "Ever try to get stuff done while you're sick?" Allerdings ist auch eine alternative Interpretation denkbar: "Hast du es als Kranker schon mal mit Arbeit versucht"?*

{Despite his MTV American English, Meesh is Kuwaiti to the core. The first time I try speaking with him he refuses to talk until I bribe him with several packs of Marlboro Reds.} – *Das ist das Original – der Sprecher versucht, auf irgendeine Weise einen Kontakt herzustellen. Möglich wäre aber auch "The first time I try to speak with him ...", weil das ja gar nicht so einfach ist und nur durch Bestechung möglich wird. Eine Google suche für "try to speak with him" ergibt 20 x mehr Treffer für den Infinitiv als für das gerund, aber "try speaking with him" kommt immer noch auf über 200.000 (im November 2022), ist also nicht als fehlerhaft zu qualifizieren.*

Eine Grauzone gibt es beim Infinitiv "try to do sth." in jenen Fällen, wo das Kriterium der "Schwierigkeit" nicht eindeutig festzumachen ist:

Heißt es "Have you ever tried to smoke?" oder "Have you ever tried smoking"? Ein Google-Vergleich zeigt, dass beides möglich ist. Eine eindeutige Präferenz ist nicht auszumachen.

{Sprinkles [= a kind of vitamin powder] were distributed by a local organization in the Nyando district of southwestern Kenya. [...] But making Sprinkles work was challenging. Some people tried to use them as soap. Others were put off by the packet's red color, which they associated with disease.} – *Ob man hier "tried to use them as soap" wählt (so das Original) oder doch lieber "tried using them as soap" – darüber werden sich vermutlich auch native speakers nicht einig sein.*

3.3. Oft ist ein genauer Blick notwendig:

Mr. Phillips tried finding contract work, and has since switched to teaching, but he can't find a job that matches his

previous salary. – *Wieso nicht “tried to find contract work”? Ist Jobsuche nicht meistens etwas Schwieriges? Und dann steht da auch noch, dass er eine Gehaltseinbuße hinnehmen muss! – Nun, die Begründung für die Wahl des gerund liegt in “switched to teaching”: Offenbar hat Mr. Phillips mehrere Wege ausprobiert. Es geht um die Frage, welchem Aspekt der Sprecher mehr Bedeutung einräumt – “tried to find” wäre jedenfalls auch nicht falsch.*

Have you ever tried finding a contact number to ask a live person at Amazon where your order is? – *Viele große Firmen (also auch Amazon) haben den notorischen Ruf, telefonisch unerreichbar zu sein – man könnte also versucht sein, automatisch zu “Have you ever tried to find ...” zu greifen. Denkbar wäre aber auch, dass der Sprecher einfach nur einen neuen Weg vorschlagen wollte – wenn es z.B. nicht per Internet klappt, wieso es nicht einfach altmodisch per Telefon versuchen?*

Analog: I have tried finding someone to contact directly at Kraft, but the company does not make that easy. (New York Times) Der Zusatz “the company does not make that easy” suggeriert zwar “tried to find”, aber denkbar wäre auch die Vorstellung eines alternativen Zuganges.

{Back in the 80s, when separated cycle tracks were being rebuilt after three decades of car-centric planning, people were returning to the bike in great numbers. The city saw them heading down the main car-clogged arteries and decided to try building a high-quality route down a parallel quiet street. To their surprise, nobody used it. They realised that cyclists merely wished to follow the same ‘desire lines’ as everyone else – choosing the most direct route.} – *Natürlich ist der Bau von neuen Straßen immer mit Schwierigkeiten verbunden – das ist hier aber trotzdem kein Grund für “the city decided to try to build”. Vielmehr soll hier ausgedrückt werden, dass es die Stadt mit einer neuen Strategie versuchte – Fahrräder parallel zu Autos ein oder zwei Straßen weiter weg.) In diesem Fall wäre “The city decided to try to build ...” falsch, weil man dabei an Schwierigkeiten bei der Umsetzung denken würde, nicht an eine neue Strategie.*

His own church trips abroad had taught him the limitations of overseas missionary work, and he wanted to try building God's kingdom closer to home. – *Nichts Geringeres als “God's kingdom” zu erbauen – das ist wahrlich ein gigantisches Vorhaben; trotzdem steht hier nicht “try to build God's kingdom”, sondern “try building God's kingdom”: Der Schlüssel liegt im nachfolgenden “closer to home”. Darum geht es nämlich – eine andere Variante von “God's kingdom”, etwas Neues.*

Try helping your child solve a mathematical problem while engaged in cooking a complex dish – there will be hesitations, pauses, repetitions because the material situation is 'dividing' speaker attention. – *Bei “mathematical problem” denkt man zuerst einmal an etwas Schwieriges und ist versucht, automatisch “try to help” zu verwenden. Der Sinn des Satzes ist aber: “Versuchen Sie mal, sich in eine Situation zu versetzen, wo sie zwei Probleme gleichzeitig lösen müssen” – damit sind wir bei einem Experiment, also bei “to try doing sth.”*

{Shockingly, many of the stranded didn't realize that Lampedusa wasn't mainland Italy until they set foot on the island. Some of the most desperate tried escaping from the CIE [= Center for Identification and Expulsion], as if they would be able to walk across 500 miles of sea to the Italian mainland. The guards set out to look for them nonetheless.} – *Wenn es um “escape” geht, dann denkt man zuerst an etwas Schwieriges, und ist versucht, “tried to escape” zu wählen. Hier steht aber ein anderer Aspekt im Vordergrund: Einige der Schiffbrüchigen wollten nicht abwarten, wie es im CIE weiter gegangen wäre, sondern lieber einen anderen Weg versuchen.*

{They are experts at finding the weak link in the system. If Portugal is cracking down, they'll try entering Europe through Greece; later, they'll move on to Spain.} – *Illegale Einwanderung ist sicherlich ein schwieriges Unterfangen, aber hier geht es darum, verschiedene Wege auszuprobieren.*

Crafts were part of my family heritage, and I tried making pottery and jewelry. – *Sicherlich ist es nicht leicht, “pottery and jewelry” herzustellen, aber hier geht es darum, dass sich der Sprecher in zwei bestimmten “crafts” versucht hat, er hat also Alternativen ausprobiert.*

Have you tried making your own seed compost in the past, and if so, what combination worked best for you? – *Hier geht es nicht darum, ein bestimmtes Problem zu lösen (= die Herstellung von Kompost), sondern es geht um die Frage “Kaufen oder selber machen?” – also um einen von zwei Wegen.*

{When Solange was 14, and starting her pop career after signing to Columbia Records, that stubbornness reared up, following a family trip to Jamaica. "I just fell in love with Rastafarian culture, in that way one does at that age, in that you get things a little wrong," she recalls. "I grew my hair right down to my butt, and when I got home I tried making reggae music. My label's reaction was, 'What. The Hell. Is this?'" } – Bei *"I tried making reggae music"* steht nicht der Versuch im Vordergrund, etwas Schwieriges zu meistern, sondern der Umstand, dass Solange etwas Neues ausprobierte.

{During my short sojourn in Canada I was also visited by a member of the Canadian intelligence services, CSIS. I tried explaining to both him and the border police that denying me entry would look bad for Canada.} (Guardian) – Es mag eine Herausforderung darstellen, Geheimdienst-Leuten oder Polizisten etwas zu erklären, aber hier steht ein anderer Aspekt im Vordergrund: Der Sprecher versuchte es mit einer bestimmten Strategie, nämlich *"Seht mal, was ihr da tun wollt ist schlecht für euer Land."*

Don't try taking a train in England on Christmas Day – there aren't any. – *Einen Zug am 25. Dezember zu finden ist also unmöglich – und unmöglich ist sogar noch mehr als schwierig. Und trotzdem "try taking"? – Der Sinn dieses gerund ist ungefähr: "Du brauchst erst gar nicht auf die Idee zu kommen, einen Zug nehmen zu wollen; am 25. 12. kann man in England verschiedenes unternemen, aber Zugfahren funktioniert nicht". Es geht also um eine Möglichkeit von mehreren, um einen Versuch.*

I recently tried taking a couple of online personality tests, and I must say I was disappointed by the exercise. – *Tests sind häufig etwas Schwieriges, aber hier geht es um eine neue Variante, die ausprobiert wurde, nämlich Online-Tests.*

Pumpkin pies and pumpkin bread are delicious, but try thinking outside the box this year. – *Es mag schon schwierig sein, sich etwas Neues für Halloween einfallen zu lassen, aber hier geht es nicht um die Anstrengung, sondern um den Vorschlag, es mal mit etwas anderem zu probieren.*

Me and my girlfriend are planning to move to Singapore and work there; we tried looking for jobs online and did apply to some. – *"To look for a job" erfordert zweifellos Engagement und Anstrengung – aber hier geht es um etwas anderes: Die beiden haben es auch schon online versucht, also eine bestimmte Methode probiert.*

She has tried looking for housing outside San Francisco but can't afford to be without money for the couple of months it can take to transfer her benefits to another city. – *Eine Wohnungssuche kann natürlich anstrengend sein – aber hier geht es um "outside San Francisco" (z.B. als Alternative zu San Francisco direkt).*

A year later when my relationship ended, I tried looking for him through common friends, but he had relocated to Chicago. – *Einen Ex-Freund wiederzufinden mag zwar gar nicht so einfach sein; in diesem Fall geht es aber um die Methode: "Ich hab's auch schon über gemeinsame Freunde versucht".*

{Chris was in a coma, the doctor said, and in all likelihood had suffered severe, irreversible brain damage. He was breathing only with the help of a ventilator and would probably have a series of heart attacks in the night. "First they asked us to let them pull the plug," Judy recalled one recent afternoon, as we sat in the living room of the Coxes' house in a Memphis suburb. "Then they tried getting us to sign a do-not-resuscitate order." Without one, the doctor explained, hospital staff would be forced to revive Chris each time he started slipping away, which could mean cracking his ribs and shocking him with electricity. Even if they managed to keep his body alive, what was left of his brain would surely die in the days ahead. Wayne and Judy refused to sign. "This is not some dog we're talking about putting down," Wayne shouted. "This is our son." } – *An diesem Beispiel erkennt man die Wichtigkeit des Kontextes. Wenn man nur den Kernsatz betrachtet ("Then they tried getting us to sign a do-not-resuscitate order"), dann sieht das aus wie ein Überredungs-Versuch und ließe "they tried to get us to sign a do-not-resuscitate order" erwarten. Erst zusammen mit dem Satz davor ("First they asked us to let them pull the plug") wird klar, dass es sich um eine neue Strategie handelt: Die Eltern wollen die Apparate nicht einfach abschalten lassen, also versuchen es die Ärzte mit einer Verzichtserklärung auf Wiederbelebung mittels Defibrillator.*

{Occasionally he'd sleep 16 hours and wonder why he was tired. My wife and I tried getting him to go to a movie with us, but he was way too busy. Or he was certain "Julie & Julia" wasn't going to be his kind of film.} – *Hier geht es nicht um einen Überredungsversuch, sondern um das Ausprobieren einer bestimmten Art von Therapie.*

Although he tried running for president 18 months ago, Paul is quick to play down his political ambitions. (New York Times) – *Ein Präsidentschaftswahlkampf ist sicher eine anstrengende Sache, aber hier steht ein anderer Aspekt im Vordergrund: "Sogar running for president" hat er schon versucht – nebst anderen Dingen.*

{[Usain] Bolt's agent, Ricky Simms, won't say whether he believes that his client could run a mile in less than five minutes. But Simms confirmed, over e-mail, that the world's greatest sprinter has, in fact, never tried running that far: "Usain has never run a mile."} (New Yorker) – *Natürlich erfordert es eine große Anstrengung, eine Meile auf Zeit zu laufen, aber hier geht es um die Wahl einer bestimmten Distanz (unter mehreren zur Auswahl).*

{When the sun set on October 11, [1776] the battle had clearly gone against the Americans. Most of the American ships were damaged or sinking, and the crews reported around 60 casualties. The British reported around 40 casualties on their ships. Aware that he could not defeat the British fleet, Arnold decided to try reaching the cover of Fort Crown Point, about 35 miles (56 km) to the south. Under the cover of a dark and foggy night, the fleet, with muffled oars and minimal illumination, threaded its way through a gap about one mile (1.6 km) wide between the British ships and the western shore, where Indian campfires burned.} (Wikipedia) – *Die vom amerikanischen Befehlshaber angepeilte Absetzbewegung war ein Unternehmen, dessen Schwierigkeit auch noch näher beschrieben wird – trotzdem steht hier ein anderer Aspekt im Vordergrund: Arnold versuchte es mit einer bestimmten Strategie (vermutlich hatte er mehrere Möglichkeiten zur Auswahl).*

{Now take this one stage further. From the top of the backswing, try pulling your arms into your body as you start down. Most golfers either throw the clubhead at the ball or pull the club down too vigorously. If you throw the clubhead at the ball you'll widen the arc, actually slowing the clubhead down.} – *Die korrekte Schlag-Technik beim Golfen ist sicher schwer zu erlernen. Hier geht es aber darum, es mit einer bestimmten Methode zu versuchen.*

He and his brother-in-law tried running a small grocery, but they said they gave up because taxes were too high to make a profit. – *Die beiden Männer versuchten sich als Betreiber eines Geschäftes. Obwohl sie dabei scheiterten, geht es hier nicht um den Aspekt der Schwierigkeit, sondern um ein Experiment im Bereich der Nahversorgung.*

{Anybody who has ever tried losing weight knows that it's a pain in the ass. But what's even worse is gaining the same amount of weight in half of the time you've achieved your weight loss.} – *Abnehmen ist schwierig und erfordert viel Disziplin – keine Frage. Hier geht es aber nicht um die Bewältigung von Schwierigkeiten, sondern um den Effekt eines Versuchs: "Wer es schon mal mit Abnehmen probiert hat, weiß, dass es weh tut."*

IBM has tried making transistors from carbon nanotubes (hollow cylinders of carbon atoms). – *So ein Verfahren ist sicher sehr kompliziert, aber hier geht es darum, dass IBM ein bestimmtes Verfahren versucht hat.*

{She shaved her eyebrows off and replaced them with black squiggles that look like Arabic writing. She tried hiding them behind sunglasses and a straw hat, but they peeped out insidiously nonetheless.} – *Man könnte wohl zuerst auf "She tried to hide them" tippen, weil sie etwas Schwieriges versuchte, aber hier steht die Methode im Vordergrund, welche ausprobiert wurde: "hiding them behind sunglasses and a straw hat".*

Lawrence County man tried escaping out of the bathroom before being arrested on drug charges. *Hier geht es nicht um die Schwierigkeiten, mit denen eine Flucht meistens verbunden ist, sondern darum, dass ein ungewöhnlicher Weg gewählt wurde: aus dem Badezimmerfenster.*

Analogue: {Gang leader tried escaping prison wearing a mask of his daughter's face. Brazilian prisoner Clauvino da Silva donned a silicone mask, wig, and clothing of a 19-year-old but was stopped by officers when leaving.}

You may be able to show instances of the positive effect of free trade, but try convincing the banana farmers of the eastern Caribbean. – *Jemanden von etwas zu überzeugen ist oft schwierig; aber hier geht es nicht darum, etwas (Schwieriges) zu bewältigen, sondern darum, etwas auszuprobieren: "Wenn Du schon glaubst, so gute Argumente zu haben, dann versuch's doch mal bei den "farmers of the eastern Caribbean".*

When they come up to you, they don't even try talking to you – they just want to know your name, address and phone number. – *Das heißt etwa: "Sie versuchen es gar nicht erst mit small talk, sondern agieren streng nach Vorschrift." Es geht NICHT um das Bemühen einer zwischenmenschlichen Kontaktaufnahme (das wäre "they don't even try to talk to you").*

Try connecting to this server later. – *Die Betreiber des Servers wollen natürlich nicht den Eindruck erwecken, dass es besonders schwierig sei, mit ihnen Kontakt aufzunehmen, daher wählen sie die unverfänglichere Variante: "Versuchen Sie es später noch einmal / Wenn nicht jetzt, dann halt später."*

Not only is there no God, but try getting a plumber on weekends. (Woody Allen) – *Einen Klempner am Wochenende zu bekommen (selbst in Notfällen wie einem Rohrbruch) ist bekannter Maßen schwierig. Trotzdem steht hier das gerund "getting" und nicht "to get", weil Woody Allen hier mit Alternativen spielt: "Versuch's mit Gott, und du wirst scheitern; versuch's mit einem Klempner am Wochenende, und du wirst auch scheitern."*

Try translating the English text of a brochure into French and I guarantee you will need 30% to 50% more space. – *Übersetzungen sind eine schwierige Aufgabe, aber darum geht es hier nicht. Hier geht es um die Frage, wie konzis die englische Sprache ist – und eine Möglichkeit, das herauszufinden, ist ein Versuch der Übersetzung eines Textes ins Französische.*

After much debate the divers tried turning the valve clockwise – and it moved. – *Ob es schwierig war, das Ventil zu bewegen, ist unerheblich – vielmehr geht es darum, es mal andersrum zu versuchen.*

Feeling down in the dumps, you take a friend's advice and just try keeping a smile on your face; miraculously, you soon feel better. – *Hier versucht man es mit einer bestimmten Methode: "Keep smiling!" Ob einem das leicht fällt oder nicht, ist nicht die Frage.*

I tried dieting, I tried exercising, but I couldn't keep it up. – *Einerseits läßt der Nebensatz "but I couldn't keep it up" vermuten, dass hier etwas Schwieriges (Gewicht abnehmen) versucht wurde. Das ist aber nicht die Intention dieses Satzes, bei dem es vielmehr ums Ausprobieren von zwei unterschiedlichen Strategien geht.*

Only a fool would try coming over the bridge to attack the hundreds of Marines who were gathering during the dark hours. – *Ein selbstmörderischer Angriff ist zweifellos eine (sogar aussichtslose) Gewaltanstrengung, aber das ist nicht die Intention des Satzes – der heißt ungefähr: "Nur ein Narr würde es mit einem Angriff über die Brücke versuchen." Es geht also um die Wahl einer bestimmten Strategie.*

If you think the American tax code is outdated and complicated, try understanding America's immigration code. – *Gesetzeswerke zu studieren erfordert gewiss große Anstrengung; hier geht es aber um einen anderen Aspekt, nämlich zwei Unternehmungen miteinander zu vergleichen.*

Beijing officials have tried tackling the traffic by restricting the number of cars on the streets. – *Das zu "tried" gehörige Verb ist "to tackle (the traffic)", und das hohe Verkehrsaufkommen in den Griff zu bekommen, ist sicherlich eine schwierige Aufgabe – also wäre zu erwarten "Beijing officials have tried to tackle the traffic". Hier ist aber eine gewisse Großzügigkeit in der Interpretation angebracht, denn gemeint ist eigentlich: "Beijing officials have tried restricting the number of cars on the streets in order to tackle the traffic." Und jetzt passt das gerund wieder, denn "restricting the number of cars on the streets" ist eine Methode unter mehreren möglichen. (Man hätte ja auch z.B. Straßen verbreitern oder überhaupt neue Straßen bauen können, indem man Häuserzeilen abriß.)*

Ähnlich: Greece wants to try kick-starting its economy through massive amounts of government spending. Mit diesem Satz ist "eigentlich" gemeint: Greece wants to try spending massive amounts of money as a way to kick-start its economy.

{I should note here that I am not exempt from locating my own value in my work. I tried not having "ambition" after I had my children. Though it would be more accurate to say that my life was pulled out from under me when I became a mother and, feeling the loss and seeing no escape from it, I tried acquiescing. I tried to let go, to be "only" a mother. I sank into depression and loneliness. Then I quit drinking and reshaped my career.} - *An diesem Beispiel sieht man, wie eng die Redeabsichten beieinander liegen können: Zuerst "tried not having*

‘ambition’ und ‘tried acquiescing’ – die Frau versucht es mit Zurückhaltung und Genügsamkeit; dann aber plötzlich “I tried to let go, to be ‘only’ a mother“: da merkt man plötzlich, wie schwer ihr das fiel – bis hin zu Depressionen und Einsamkeit.

{One day my editor wished to have a series of articles upon begging in the metropolis, and I volunteered to supply them. There was the point from which all my adventures started. It was only by trying begging as an amateur that I could get the facts upon which to base my articles.} (C. Doyle: The Man with the Twisted Lip) - *Für einen bürgerlichen Mann ist es sicher nicht leicht, sich über Nacht in einen Bettler zu verwandeln. Hier geht es aber nicht um die Schwierigkeiten, mit denen das verbunden war, sondern darum, dass er sich auf eine neue Situation einlassen, also etwas Neues ausprobieren wollte.*

A year after his heart attack, after long prodding by his wife, he tried cycling. – *Für einen rekonvaleszenten Menschen nach einem Herzinfarkt ist es sicherlich nicht leicht, mit dem Radfahren anzufangen. Aber das ist nicht der Punkt: Hier versucht die Frau, ihren Mann zu bewegen (im wahrsten Sinn des Wortes), es mit einer neuen Art der Rehabilitation zu versuchen.*

He never mastered the knack of hunting with the shotgun, although he tried shooting dove and pheasant and quail. – *“The knack of hunting” scheint uns darauf hinweisen zu wollen, dass es sich beim Schießen mit der Schrotflinte um eine schwierige Kunst handelt; nichtsdestoweniger überwiegt aber dann die Aufzählung von “dove and pheasant and quail“: “Er versuchte es bei drei verschiedenen Vogel-Arten – vergebens.“*

{When I went to Europe just before retiring, I saw how it is there – nothing but compact cars, yet they’ve still got traffic jams over there, they’ve still got parking problems, they’ve still got accidents. Just try getting in and out of those low taxicabs without hitting your head, or try not to get clipped while you’re walking around the Arc de Triomphe. This small-car thing won’t last forever.} – *Das erste “try” ist mit dem gerund verbunden – “Just try getting in and out of those low taxicabs without hitting your head” – weil es um ein Ausprobieren geht: “Probieren Sie einfach mal das Ein- und Aussteigen in eines dieser niedrigen Pariser Taxis, und schauen Sie, ob Sie das schaffen, ohne sich den Kopf zu stoßen“. Das zweite “try” hat den Infinitiv bei sich – “try not to get clipped while you’re walking around the Arc de Triomphe“. Hier geht es nicht um ein Ausprobieren – das wäre in so einer lebensgefährlichen Situation makaber; der zweite Satz heißt etwa: “Wenn sie um den Arc de Triomphe zu Fuß unterwegs sind, achten Sie um Himmels willen darauf, nicht von einem Auto angefahren zu werden.“*

{The bodies of at least three people were recovered Tuesday after they drowned while trying to cross the Rio Grande from Mexico, federal and El Paso officials said. The El Paso Fire Department water rescue team recovered the bodies of a teenage boy and girl and an adult woman on Tuesday, department spokesman Carlos Briano said. All three were Guatemalan nationals, the Guatemalan Foreign Ministry said. Ministry spokesman Tekandi Paniagua said the boy was 16, the girl was 15 and the woman was 37."Our preliminary hypothesis is that, because of intense rains, the river's flow rose as they crossed it," Paniagua said. The two females were with a group of at least five people who tried crossing the border illegally from Mexico, U.S. Border Patrol spokesman Jose Romero said. Federal agents have the other three in custody.}

Das erste “try” steht mit dem Infinitiv – “ they drowned while trying to cross the Rio Grande from Mexico“, weil es sich um eine schwierige Aufgabe handelt – immerhin bezahlten es drei Menschen mit ihrem Leben. Das zweite “try“ dagegen ist mit einem gerund verbunden: “The two females were with a group of at least five people who tried crossing the border illegally from Mexico“: Der Schlüssel zu diesem gerund ist das Adverb “illegally“: Man kann einen Grenzübertritt “legally“ und “illegally“ bewerkstelligen, hat also die Wahl zwischen zwei Möglichkeiten – deshalb das gerund.

Spectators try climbing the walls to get a view. – *Es mag schon sein, dass die Wände dort nur unter Schwierigkeiten zu erklettern sind, aber das ist hier keine relevante Frage – vielmehr geht es darum, dass “climbing the walls“ eine Alternative dazu ist, weiter unten (fast) nichts zu sehen – man probiert es mit einem bestimmten Verfahren.*

{These mango, rice and bean farmers were upset with the new rules. Konte recalls they took to the radio to criticize his plans, to wonder who gave him the authority to act like he was the president of Sierra Leone. “I understood their position,” he says. “To cut off a business from making profits is very difficult.” He tried explaining why the changes were necessary. It also helped that he gave them each 2,000 Leones – the equivalent

of 46 cents – to cover higher costs. “I was able to overcome that and get their support,” he says.} (New York Times) – *Erklärungen sind oft mit Schwierigkeiten und Anstrengungen verbunden, aber hier liegt der Schlüssel in dem Satz “It also helped that he gave them each 2,000 Leones – the equivalent of 46 cents – to cover higher costs.” Der Politiker versuchte also auf zwei Wegen, die Unterstützung der Bauern zu gewinnen – die Erklärungsversuche waren einer davon; es geht also um die Wahl einer Methode.*

If you've ever tried looking up scholarly papers online, you've likely encountered one of the many paywalls put up by the journals those papers were published in. – *Die Paywalls machen es zwar nicht leicht - es geht aber hier um den Online-Zugang (als Alternative z.B. zu Bibliotheken).*

He attended Our Lady & St Bede School but dropped out at 15 after having tried running away from home several times, and worked as a porter. (Independent) – *Egal, wie leicht oder schwierig die Flucht jeweils gewesen sein mag – der Sinn des Satzes ist “Er hat es einige Male mit Abhauen probiert“ – deshalb gerund.*

{“How are you going to find it, Tom? Where will you look?” – “We tried hunting for gold on the island when we were pirates. I know where there is a house full of spirits. And there are old trees with dead branches everywhere.”} (Mark Twain) – *Goldsuche ist natürlich etwas Schwieriges – sei es in der Natur oder als Schatzsuche. Tom (Sawyer) will aber nicht auf solche Anstrengungen hinweisen, sondern vielmehr erklären, wie er überhaupt Kenntnis hat von Gold-Quellen: Als sie Piraten waren (d.h. Piraten gespielt hatten), da haben sie sich auch auf Schatzsuche begeben (neben anderen Aktivitäten typisch für Jungs).*

{In 2016, Lisa Pleas was facing an incredible undertaking: her father’s deteriorating health. She tried to help him as much as possible, but he was a proud veteran and retired steel worker who didn’t always want to go to his doctor appointments or take his medications. Lisa felt the weight of her father’s health resting on her shoulders. “To check on everything my father needed was a challenge. I was going crazy, but I tried not letting it show to him,” said Lisa.} – *Mit “incredible undertaking“ bereits im 1. Satz wird der Leser darauf eingestimmt, dass Lisa eine schwierige Aufgabe zu meistern hatte. Im 2. Satz steht folgerichtig “She tried to help him as much as possible“. Dann werden noch weitere Schwierigkeiten aufgezählt – und trotzdem überrascht uns plötzlich das gerund im letzten Satz (“I tried not letting it show to him.“). Damit will Lisa ihren persönlichen Weg zur Bewältigung der Probleme ausdrücken – sie wählt eine bestimmte Strategie – sich nur nichts anmerken lassen.*

{Three days after U.S. soldiers started putting up the razor wire in Nogales, their work was put to the test. On Nov. 9, a Mexican man tried jumping the fence through a gap in the wire. U.S. Border Patrol agents immediately responded. The man tried to scramble back over the wall but got entangled in the newly emplaced coils, U.S. Customs and Border Protection confirmed to TIME.} (Time) – *Mit einer neuen Situation konfrontiert, versucht es ein Mann mit einem Sprung durch eine Lücke im Grenzzaun – eine Methode, die zwar nicht funktioniert, aber ein gerund rechtfertigt (“a Mexican man tried jumping the fence through a gap in the wire“). Der Versuch, wieder zurück zu klettern, gehört aber eindeutig in die Kategorie “Bewältigung einer schwierigen Aufgabe“, daher Infinitiv: “The man tried to scramble back over the wall.“*

{The worst place to try flirting is in New York City. The men there are a mite (= ein wenig] arrogant, since the women outnumber them by about three hundred to one (a serious point spread). This makes every New York Man, even a pear-shaped churlish bore, think he is everybody. Men in New York are never yearning, never hungry. They all have that sleek, well-fed look of a tiger who’s already had his supper.} – *Dieses Zitat stammt aus dem Buch “Sex Tips for Girls“ von Cynthia Heimel und beschreibt unmissverständlich die Schwierigkeiten, mit denen sich eine Frau in New York konfrontiert sieht, wenn sie einen Mann kennlernen will. Man würde hier also auf den ersten Blick “The worst place to try to flirt is New York City“ erwarten. Auf den zweiten Blick funktioniert aber auch die folgende deutsche Übersetzung: “Der schlechteste Ort, um es mit Flirten zu versuchen, ist New York City“. Damit ist etwa gemeint: “In New York kann man tausend Dinge tun, nur Flirten funktioniert ganz schlecht (für Frauen). Damit wäre also Flirten als eine von vielen Möglichkeiten angesprochen – ein Punkt für das gerund.*

I learned that a P-38 reconnaissance plane that we had escorted recently had tried making it back to make an emergency landing, but had crashed and burned in the field separating our two fighter groups.

Es gibt kaum eine schwierigere Aufgabe für einen Piloten, als ein beschädigtes Flugzeug wieder zurück zum Flugplatz zu bringen. Also ein eindeutiger Fall für einen Infinitiv? Ein Infinitiv wäre jedenfalls auch korrekt: “had

tried to make it back“ – Auf den zweiten Blick lässt sich aber auch das hier gewählte gerund erklären: Ein Pilot, dessen Flugzeug im Krieg angeschossen (also beschädigt) wurde, hatte im Prinzip zwei Möglichkeiten: Entweder sofort mit dem Fallschirm auszusteigen, oder zu versuchen, seine Maschine irgendwie nach Hause zurück zu bringen. Im gegenständlichen Fall hatte er sich für letzteres entschieden – zu seinem Unglück.

4. Abweichungen von der Regel

Wenn der Leser jetzt nach dem Studium der Kapitel 1.- 3. meint, er hätte den Unterschied zwischen “try to do sth.” und “try doing sth.” verstanden, dann ist er jetzt – leider – “in for a surprise“: Es finden sich nämlich (hauptsächlich im American English) immer wieder Sätze mit dem gerund, die “eigentlich“ (d.h. nach der Grundregel) nur einen Infinitiv erwarten ließen, weil es sich eindeutig um zu meisternde Schwierigkeiten handelt.

Der Verfasser hat 33 solche Beispiele gesammelt. Die einzige Erklärung dafür scheint zu sein, dass die Form “to try doing sth.” im Begriff ist, sprachlich “aufgeweicht“ zu werden, indem sie auch Fälle inkorporiert, die herkömmlich zu “to try to do sth.” gehörten.

Interessanter Weise findet diese “Aufweichung“ nur in eine Richtung statt: Für die Gegenrichtung “to try doing sth.“ ⇒ “to try do do sth.“ hat der Verfasser keine Beispiele gefunden.

In der Fachliteratur wird der Gebrauch von “to try“ in der Regel so beschrieben, wie es der Verfasser in den Kapiteln 1.-3. dargestellt hat, z.B.:

- Collins Cobuild English Usage:

If you try to do something, you make an effort to do it. [...] If you try doing something, you do it in order to find out how useful, effective or enjoyable it is.

- Raymond Murphy: English Grammar in Use:

Try to do = attempt to do, make an effort to do: I was very tired. I **tried to keep** my eyes open, but I couldn't. [...]

Try also means “do something as an experiment or test”. For example: These cakes are delicious. You should **try** one. [...] If try (with this meaning) is followed by a verb, we say **try –ing**: A: The photocopier doesn't seem to be working. B: **Try pressing** the green button. [...]

Compare:

I **tried to move** the table, but it was too heavy.

I didn't like the way the furniture was arranged, so I **tried moving** the table to the other side of the room. But it still didn't look right, so I moved it back again.

- John Stevens: Handbuch des englischen Sprachgebrauchs:

Auf try kann ein to-Infinitiv oder eine –ing-Form folgen. Try to do s.th. bedeutet „versuchen, etwas zu tun, das schwierig ist oder Anstrengungen erfordert“; try doing s.th. bedeutet „etwas ausprobieren, das eine Lösung sein könnte bzw. das vielleicht nützlich/wirksam wäre oder Spaß machen könnte“.

- Michael Vince: Macmillan English Grammar In Context (Advanced):

Try to do describes an attempt. I tried to stop him but I failed.

Try doing describes an experience, or an experiment. Have you tried changing the batteries? That might work. / If you feel faint, try putting your head between your knees.

- Martin Hewings: Advanced Grammar in Use:

To say that we attempt to do something: I tried to get the table through the door, but it was too big.

To say we test something to see if it improves the situation: I tried taking some aspirin, but the pain didn't go away.

- G. De Devitiis et. al.: English Grammar for Communication:

Try followed by the –ing form refers to an experimental action: She tired cleaning the carpet with a special liquid. / Why don't you try taking an aspirin?

Try followed by the to-infinitive refers to the effort involved in carrying out the action. There is an

implication that the action is difficult to perform: I tried hard to convince him, but it was no use. / Hold your arms up high and try to touch the ceiling.

- C. E. Eckersley and J. M. Eckersley: Comprehensive English Grammar for Foreign Students:
Try with the infinitive has the meaning 'make an attempt', e.g. You must *try to be* more careful. / He will *try to meet us* at seven o'clock.
Try with the gerund means 'make an experiment', e.g. Have you ever *tried cooking* meat in wine instead of water? / He *tried gardening, keeping pigs, rearing poultry*, but didn't succeed in any of them.

Es scheint also, dass sich die Grammatiker beim Gebrauch von "to try to do" vs. "to try doing" einig sind. Allerdings hat der Verfasser ein Buch gefunden, welches vom Konsens abweicht:

- Michael Swan: Practical English Usage:

To talk about making an experiment – doing something to see what will happen – we use **try + -ing**.

I tried sending her flowers, writing her letters, giving her presents, but she still wouldn't speak to me.

To talk about making an effort to do something difficult, we can use either **try + infinitive** or **try + -ing**.

I tried to change the wheel, but my hands were too cold. (OR I tried changing the wheel ...)

*Aus den folgenden 33 Beispielen scheint hervorzugehen, dass Michael Swan den Sachverhalt genauer erkannt hat als seine Kollegen, wenn er schreibt: To talk about making an effort to do something difficult, we can use either **try + infinitive** or **try + -ing**. So stellt sich der moderne Sprachgebrauch nämlich tatsächlich dar – zu mindestens im American English (obwohl die letzten beiden Beispiele # 32 und # 33 aus dem Guardian stammen).*

Es folgen 33 "irreguläre" Sätze mit Anmerkungen des Verfassers. Diese Sätze sind alle aus unanfechtbaren idiomatischen Quellen – in der Mehrzahl ist auch die Quelle angegeben und lässt sich googeln.

1. Imagine walking by New York's Second Avenue Deli on a blustery February night and seeing two men lying on their stomachs on the sidewalk reaching for something under a parked limo. I was one of the men.

When I'd left the deli after a bowl of matzo ball noodle soup, a tongue sandwich and a celery tonic, a button on my coat popped off, and I could hear it bounce away on 33rd Street. **As I tried finding it in the dark**, a counterman walked out and asked if he could help. Even though I insisted I'd only lost a button, he ran back into the deli for a flashlight.

After spotting the button under the big car and seeing it was beyond our reach, he returned to the store for a broom. With me shining the flashlight and him reaching with the broom, we retrieved the button.

We high-fived, but when I thanked the deli guy, he just shrugged it off. "We do a lot for our customers," he said. "Anything you need, just let us know."} (New York Times)

Dieser Versuch, den Knopf in der Finsternis zu finden, kann nur als schwieriges Unterfangen interpretiert werden und nicht als irgendein Ausprobieren – trotzdem steht hier das gerund.

2. Mr. Mapoma tried finding a job, but found that his immigration status as a permanent resident was an obstacle. (New York Times) ≠ 2. {I'm a senior college student, **I tried finding a job** and failed, am I a failure? I feel like I disappointed myself and my loved ones.}

Während man sich im 1. Satz noch vorstellen kann, dass es Mr. Mapoma einmal mit der Jobsuche versuchen wollte, fällt es im 2. Satz schwer, das gerund "finding" zu begründen – angesichts von "failure" und "disappointment", was auf nicht gemeisterte Schwierigkeiten hinweist.

3. The presence of fishing vessels and warships from China and other nations in the disputed waters of the South China Sea are [sic] contributing to a rise in tensions across the region, as **countries try defending** their territorial claims by deploying various vessels. (New York Times)

Die Spannungen steigen nicht durch die Wahl einer bestimmten Methode der Territorialverteidigung, sondern durch den Versuch der Durchsetzung von Ansprüchen an sich – zu erwarten wäre "countries try to defend their territorial claims".

4. For months, **Mr. Romney tried making inroads among voters** who were disappointed with, but not necessarily angry at, Mr. Obama. (New York Times)
Hier geht es eindeutig um eine Anstrengung, die Mr. Romney aufbringen musste – trotzdem steht gerund.
5. {"I went and got a can out of the trash and filled it with water and I marched right back to her and threw it right in her face until her face was swollen," he said. The can hurt the woman's cheek, the police said, and Mr. Himmelstein was arrested and charged with assault. "I'm a little bit disappointed in me," he said this week, and **tried explaining what had set him off.**} (New York Times)
Dass es hier um das Ausprobieren einer Methode gehen soll, ist nicht ersichtlich. Zu erwarten wäre vielmehr "He tried to explain what had set him off."
6. **Samantha tried explaining to Consuela**, who had grown up on a farm outside Caracas, the concept of "sustainable agriculture". (New York Times)
Einem Landkind ein abstraktes Konzept zu erklären ist sicher nicht so leicht. Zu erwarten wäre also "Samantha tried to explain ..."
7. **He tried explaining the situation to his would-be bosses**, and even hired a lawyer, "but they told me unless I cleared up this discrepancy, we can't hire you". (New York Times)
Dass er sogar ein Anwalt engagieren musste, zeigt, dass es sich um etwas Schwieriges handelte. Trotzdem steht hier das gerund.
8. {I'd wake up and I was like 'How did I get home last night?' And guys were like 'You got ripped [= stoned] and you drove home and **we tried stopping you** and you got into a fight.'} (New York Times)
An ein Ausprobieren denkt man hier nicht – vielmehr daran, dass es vermutlich schwierig war, eine Person unter Drogeneinfluss zu stoppen. Trotzdem steht hier das gerund.
9. {The mob also had batons and guns. Even when the police were present during some of the worst destruction on Saturday, **no one tried stopping them**. Were they afraid of the mob's size or were the police told not to intervene?} (Vice)
Hier geht es eindeutig um eine schwierige Aufgabe – trotzdem steht gerund.
10. The habit of self-criticism engenders fear of failure, meaning that **self-critics often don't even try achieving their goals** because the possibility of failure is unacceptable. (Huffpost)
Hier geht es eindeutig um eine schwierige Aufgabe – trotzdem steht gerund.
11. So the last-ditch amendments may give Iraq's constitutional drafters more time to **try pulling more Sunnis back into peaceful politics** and away from the insurgency. (The Economist)
Hier geht es eindeutig um eine schwierige Aufgabe – trotzdem steht gerund.
12. {Mwamba is heard clearly saying, "I'll park, I'll park," on the video, and **appears to try pulling her car over to the side of the road**. Though the footage is unclear, she remarks of being impeded in her attempt to park her car by officers, who then proceed to aggressively pull her from it.} (Vice)
Mwamba hat hier nichts ausprobiert, sondern verzweifelt versucht, einer Aufforderung der Polizei nachzukommen – trotzdem gerund.
13. {"She's just passed out drunk," Shelton concluded. He popped open a capsule of ammonia, waved it under the woman's nose, and **tried pulling her from the car**. The woman, rousing, grabbed hold of the car's emergency brake, but she lost her grip and tumbled out into the parking lot.} (The New Yorker)
Hier wird eine physische Kraftanstrengung Sheltons beschrieben, keine Versuchsanordnung – trotzdem gerund.
14. {The pirates shot her husband in the back of the head, and he fell in the water, she said. She spun her craft around to her husband, dove into the water and tried to drag her 250-pound husband to the side of her craft. **"I tried pulling him up, but I couldn't,"** Hartley said. She says she retreated as bullets whizzed by her. "It's a miracle I'm even here," she said, crying on the phone.} (Arkansas Democrat Gazette) –
"Tried to drag her 250-pound husband" beschreibt eine herkulische körperliche Anstrengung; der

Perspektivenwechsel zum gerund des "I tried pulling him up" ist nicht einsichtig – umso weniger, als der Aspekt der Anstrengung durch "but I couldn't" noch unterstrichen wird.

15. {The slaughter in Jalalabad appears to have occurred in similar circumstances to the better-known murder in 2005 of 24 Iraqi civilians in Haditha, in western Iraq. After being attacked by a suicide bomber, American marine special forces allegedly retaliated by shooting at every Afghan in sight. Another 50 civilians were wounded in their attack. As in Haditha, **the marines then tried hiding their bloody tracks**. Afghan journalists at the scene had video film confiscated and digital photographs deleted from their cameras.} (Economist)

Der Versuch, ein Kriegsverbrechen zu vertuschen, kann nicht als eine Art Experiment erklärt werden – trotzdem gerund.

16. {A few years back, Lauryn Hill did a comeback tour during the Rock the Bells hip-hop festival [...], so my friend and I flew from Vancouver to San Francisco to watch it. As soon as we got to the venue, we smoked two blunts [= Joints] and ate a brownie each. Before the openers were through, we had passed out hard. **A stranger sitting nearby tried shaking us awake** – he'd overheard us joking earlier about how moronic it would be if we came all this way and missed Lauryn Hill. I remember looking at him, confused and glassy-eyed, shrugging and going right back to sleep. Effectively, we spent \$600 (530) each to take a four-hour nap.} (Vice)

Der fremde Nachbar wollte hilfsbereit sein und bemühte sich, die beiden wach zu kriegen – vergeblich. Es geht um das Bemühen – trotzdem gerund.

17. Squatter Bred 19 **Dogs Who Tried Escaping Feces-Covered NJ Mansion**, Officials Say.

Die Hunde hielten es nicht mehr aus in ihrer verdreckten Umgebung und wollten flüchten – ganz offenbar eine Anstrengung. Trotzdem steht ein gerund.

Der ganze Text zu dieser Überschrift heißt: {Nineteen dogs used for breeding were rescued from the basement of a once-shining mansion in New Jersey, rescue officials said. The 16 German Shepherds and three Dobermans were found weak and malnourished being kept in cramped cages of the feces-covered home in Paterson. Evidence on the cages shows that the dogs tried to escape, said the rescue that worked alongside Second Chance Pet Adoption League. One dog tried digging through the basement floor in an effort to get out, NorthJersey.com reports.}

Interessant daran ist der Satz: "Evidence on the cages shows that the dogs tried to escape ..." Für ein- und dieselbe Sache wird also in der Überschrift ein gerund und im Text der Infinitiv verwendet.

Man sehe auch: "One dog tried digging through the basement floor in an effort to get out". – *Dieses gerund gehört zum Kapitel 3.2.: Man kann das, so wie es das Original tut, als eine bestimmte Strategie interpretieren (also gerund), oder aber auch als (verzweifelt) Bemühen – der Infinitiv "One dog tried to dig through the basement floor" wäre auch möglich.*

18. On Valentine's Day, 1912, **two honeymooners tried crossing the ice bridge that forms over Niagara's river each winter**.

Hier überwiegt doch wohl der Aspekt der Bewältigung einer Schwierigkeit – trotzdem steht ein gerund.

19. {Gale-force winds whipped the glacier. Carrying their bergens, each weighing 200 pounds, in five hours Mountain Troop had covered about half a mile – and these men were the cream of mountain-warfare experts. With the light fading fast, **they tried erecting two-man Arctic tents behind an outcrop of ice** in order to provide some shelter, but savage winds blew one tent away like a paper handkerchief and snapped the tent poles of the others.} – *Aus dem Kontext geht hervor, dass hier nicht experimentiert, sondern ein schwieriger Versuch unternommen wurde – trotzdem steht ein gerund.*

20. {It remained to be seen if we could get into China without our visas – and that was assuming we could actually get out of Uzbekistan. **Someone had tried assassinating the Uzbek president**, so the border was closed.} (Jim Rogers)

Ein Mordversuch ist sicher keine Experiment – trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

21. I pour a canteen of water into a helmet and **try washing some of the mud from my face**.

Ein überraschendes gerund – sich mit primitiven Mitteln das Gesicht zu waschen lässt mehr an einen eher aussichtslosen Versuch denken als an ein bestimmtes Verfahren.

22. {At headquarters, I learn of Captain Hogan's death. He was in a captured pillbox [= *Bunker*] when a mortar shell got one of his men. Badly wounded, **the man tried dragging himself back to cover**. The captain crawled out to give him a hand.}

Gibt es ein besseres Beispiel für verzweifelte Bemühungen? Trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

23. {Sometimes, the bad guys made it easy for us. – One day we went out and set up in a village near the main road. It was a good spot; we were able to get a few insurgents as **they tried passing through the area** on their way to attack the hospital. All of a sudden, a bongo truck—a small work vehicle with a cab and a bed in the back where a business might carry equipment—careened from the road toward our house. Rather than equipment, the truck was carrying four gunmen in the back, who started shooting at us as the truck drove across the fortunately wide yard.}

Es fällt schwer, in diesem Kriegsbericht an etwas anderes zu denken als an eine schwer zu bewältigende Aufgabe – hier geht es nicht um eine von mehreren Strategien. Trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

24. Luna made his way to the border with Arizona, where **he tried crossing** and was quickly deported once again.

Ein Asylant [?] scheitert zum wiederholten Mal beim Versuch des Grenzübertritts – er schafft es nicht, sein Ziel zu erreichen. Trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

25. **Two brothers from southern Mexico tried crossing the border several times** but were sent back by U.S. officials. On their third try they ended up trapped in a tractor trailer, one brother survived, the other died along with 53 others.}

“Several times” bedeutet, dass es hier nicht um eine Methode geht, sondern um etwas besonders Schwieriges – trotzdem steht ein gerund.

26. {He's become one of the program's better-known success stories and now works part time in the produce section of a supermarket and cooks nearly all his meals. He's expanding his cooking skills to include fish, **which he had never tried preparing before**. “I know what healthy food looks like, and I know what to do with it now,” he says.}

Auf den ersten Blick könnte man meinen, die Sache sei klar: “Mit Fisch hat er es noch nie probiert, wohl aber mit Fleisch und anderen Nahrungsmitteln – also gerund, weil etwas Neues / Alternatives ausprobiert wird. Diese vorschnelle Interpretation übersieht aber, dass die (für ein gerund) erforderliche Alternative im Verb liegen müsste, nicht im Objekt, also z.B.: “I have tried catching fish, but I have never tried preparing fish to eat.” Aus diesem Grund ist der Originalsatz als von der Grundregel abweichend zu klassifizieren.

Man vergleiche: Every Friday I receive an email from Warner Farms about the coming Tuesday's share and what it will consist of and I organize my weekend grocery shop around what other items I'll need. One unexpected benefit of the farm share is how many new veggies I've tried since it began. In early summer, the majority of my shares were foods I had never tried to prepare myself like rainbow chard, garlic scapes, beets, and turnips. The new flavors and textures added so much excitement to my daily salad or veggie roast.} – “Foods I had never tried to prepare myself”: Das ist klassisch, hier geht es um ein Bemühen, daher Infinitiv.

27. {The student, identified by authorities as 19-year-old Angel Granados-Diaz, had been suicidal for several months, according to prosecutors, when he took the loaded and legally bought shotgun to school on May 17. Before Lowe intervened, **the teen had already tried killing himself outside a bathroom**, but the shotgun did not discharge.}

Der Nebensatz “but the shotgun did not discharge” bedeutet, dass es in diesem Fall um die (technische) Durchführbarkeit geht, also um praktische Schwierigkeiten, nicht um irgendeine Strategie – trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

Ähnlich: In one video shared with The Kansas City Star, Samsel tells students about “a sophomore who's tried killing himself three times,” adding that it was because “he has two parents and they're both females.”

“Three times”: Auch hier geht es nicht ums Ausprobieren einer Variante, sondern darum, etwas Schwieriges (endlich) erfolgreich hinzukriegen.

28. {Starting the 1916–17 junior season as a goaltender [= *Torwart*], Morenz became a forward when it became apparent his speed was much more suitable for an offensive role, and he helped the Mitchell ice hockey team win

the Western Ontario junior championship. After the Morenz family moved to the nearby community of Stratford in May 1917, **Morenz tried enlisting in the Canadian military** but was refused when recruiters learned he was only 15 years old.} (Wikipedia)

Der Sinn dieses Satzes ist sicher nicht, dass der junge Morenz nach ein paar Jahren Eishockey einmal zur Abwechslung den Militärdienst ausprobieren wollte – vielmehr versuchte er, sich trotz seines jungen Alters zum Militär hineinzuschwindeln. Es geht also um die Bewältigung einer schwierigen Aufgabe – und trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

29. {Almost every evening, following supper, bent over a typewriter, I'd translate my diary scribblings into something I hoped would be coherent prose. Each week I'd mail a few pages to Myrt, **who, in turn, tried translating them into neat, polished prose** in the impeccable typing she'd learned in high school. During her lunch hour, or in slack hours, or after hours, she was performing yeoman's work [= gute Dienste leisten] for her financé.}

Myrt bemüht sich hier, sprachliche (stilistische) Dienste zu leisten – eine anspruchsvolle Aufgabe, Trotzdem steht ein gerund.

30. {More than once I'd slid off the road in my hurry, ending up – luckily enough – in snowdrifts. But there was nothing soft about the reception I received from my squadron CO [= commanding officer]. Bedragged and utterly exhausted, **I tried standing at attention before the major** and made an effort to salute and explain my absence. He cut me short. "Curtis, where the hell have you been?"}

Ein erschöpfter Soldat bemüht sich, vor seinem Offizier Haltung zu bewahren – ein eindeutiger Fall einer schwierigen Aufgabe. Trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

31. {To do a hip lift or shimmy, you need to bend both knees. Then, straighten your right leg, which should raise your right hip, lifting it upward. The hip bone should shoot up towards your rib cage. Make sure to keep your heels flat on the ground as you do the lift and **try not to move your upper body** at all.} {Engage with people. **Try not to move your eyes** too much. A slight glance down or around looks really magnified and can give the sense that you aren't fully connected.}

{You may use your arms, bend your knees, or move your body to maintain your balance, but **try not to move your feet**. Try to hold this position until I tell you to stop.}

Es erfordert harte Arbeit und viel Zeit, um solche tänzerische bzw. turnerische Posen richtig auszuführen, daher überrascht die Wahl des Infinitivs in diesen beiden Sätzen nicht – wohl aber die Wahl des gerund in den nächsten beiden Beispielen:

{To correctly do sit-ups, you need to place your feet as close as possible to your buttocks. **Try not moving your feet** and slowly get up.} {Water is around 800 times denser than air, so any movement will suppose much more effort. **Try not moving too much** in order to not get tired fast and to save some air.}

32. **The tip:** Don't throw out eggshells – use them as "pots" for seedlings instead. Cut off the top of a raw egg with a knife, rinse out the shell, make a hole in the bottom of the shell with a nail, then fill with seed compost and sow. When the plant is big enough to be transplanted, just put the whole thing in the soil.

The catch: It may look cute, but this is the most fiddly and uneconomical way of sowing seeds. **Have you ever tried making a hole in half an eggshell?** "Fiddly" doesn't begin to cover it. Eggshells, once empty, are fragile beasts.}

(The Guardian)

Der Journalist weist in den letzten beiden Sätzen ausdrücklich auf die Schwierigkeiten hin, rohe Eierschalen zu bearbeiten. Zu erwarten wäre also "Have you ever tried to make a hole in half an eggshell?" Trotzdem steht hier ein gerund.

33. {Tiny fell down the muddy bank one night, whacked his head on a rock and split it open. **He tried getting to his feet**, fell a second time and rolled into the river. Tiny's bloated body was found a little over a week later.}

(Guardian)

Hier wird eine schwierige Aufgabe beschrieben (an der Tiny auch scheiterte) – trotzdem gerund.

Zum Abschluss die "Auflösung" des Vortests:

In den weiter oben stehenden Sätzen mit den gelben Markierungen finden Sie jeweils zur entsprechenden Nummer im Vortest die Originalversion (mit Anmerkungen des Verfassers).

In SÄMTLICHEN Sätzen steht im Original ein gerund.

Überall, wo Sie die Option "(nur) Infinitiv" gewählt haben, befinden Sie sich in guter Gesellschaft anerkannter Fachleute – siehe die sieben bullet points am Anfang des 4. Kapitels. Trotzdem fehlt Ihnen noch das Tüpfelchen auf dem "i" ⇒ Studieren Sie das 4. Kapitel (und wundern Sie sich, was alles möglich ist).

Als Deutschsprachiger werden Sie vermutlich die Option "nur gerund" selten oder nie gewählt haben.

Auf alle Lösungen nach der 3. Option ("sowohl Infinitiv als auch gerund sind möglich") dürfen Sie stolz sein – Sie haben ein ausgezeichnetes Gefühl für die englische Sprache.

(Einschränkung: Dass in den 33 Sätzen beides möglich ist – Infinitiv und gerund – ist die Einschätzung des Verfassers, und ich bin kein native speaker.)

27 pages, ca. 20.000 words

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