

When Flanders met Brabant

Microvariation in the Dutch C-domain

Jeroen van Craenenbroeck & Marjo van Koppen
KU Leuven/CRISSP & Utrecht University/UiL-OTS

1 Outline

- **main topic:** microparameter interaction in the Dutch C-domain
- **main claim:** transition zones between dialect areas offer a unique window into parametric microvariation
- **central data:** the interaction between complementizer agreement, clitic doubling, short *do* replies, conjugated ‘yes’ and ‘no’ and negative clitics in Dutch dialects
- **main findings:**
 1. what looks like a single parameter distinguishing two major dialect regions should be split up into three separate parameters
 2. while logically independent, these microparameters tend to conspire, rendering certain combinations of parameter settings highly infrequent and others very common

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2 Introduction: finding microparameters

- “Comparative work on the syntax of a large number of closely related languages can be thought of as a new research tool, one that is capable of providing results of an unusually fine-grained and particularly solid character.” (Kayne (1996, xii))

→ a detailed comparison of closely related varieties reveals which properties are plausibly parametrically related to one another

- **case study:** two central dialect areas in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium are **Flanders** (consisting of the provinces of East and West Flanders and the northeast of France) and **Brabant** (consisting of the provinces of Flemish Brabant and Antwerp)



Figure 1: Dialect regions in Belgium: Flanders and Brabant

- **in this talk:**

- we focus in particular on *transition dialects* between different dialect regions
- such dialects have properties of both neighboring regions
- this helps us to identify with more certainty which properties are parametrically linked to one another

3 Empirical differences between Flanders and Brabant

There are a number of C-domain related differences between Flanders (F) and Brabant (B):

1. **complementizer agreement:** F-dialects have complementizer agreement (Haegeman, 1992), B-dialects do not

(1) *Kvinden da*(n) die boeken te diere zyn.*
I.find that.PL those books too expensive are
'I think those books are too expensive.' (F)

(2) *Gaale gelooft zeker ni da(*n) zijle armer zijn as waale.*
You believe surely not that they poorer are than we
'You probably won't believe that they are poorer than us.' (B)

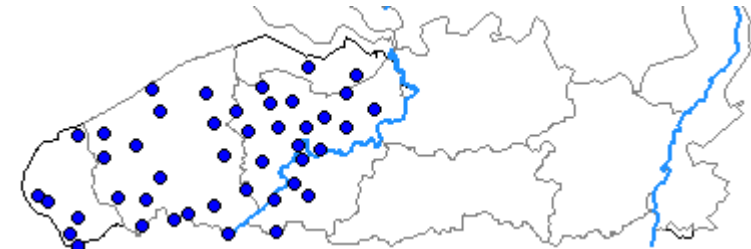


Figure 2: Distribution of complementizer agreement in 3rdpl (Barbiers et al., 2005)

2. **clitic doubling:** F-dialects have a complete clitic doubling paradigm, while B-dialects only have a partial paradigm (typically 1st sg and 2nd sg/pl). (Barbiers et al, 2006)

(3) *Kpeinzen dase (zie) morgen goat.*
I.think that.she_{CLITIC} she_{STRONG} tomorrow goes
'I think she'll go tomorrow.' (F)

- (4) *Asse (*zij) zo gevaarlijk leeft, dan...*
 if.she_{CLITIC} she_{STRONG} so dangerously lives then
 ‘If she lives so dangerously, then ...’ (B)

exception: the French Flanders region differs from East and West Flanders in this respect in that it has no clitic doubling



Figure 3: Distribution of full clitic doubling paradigms

3. **short do replies:** F-dialects can contradict a previous statement with a short reply containing *doen* ‘do’, B-dialects cannot

- (5) *A: Ie slaapt. B: Ie en doet.*
 he sleeps he NEG does
 ‘A: He’s sleeping. B: No, he isn’t.’ (F)

- (6) *A: Hij slaapt. B: *Hij en doet.*
 he sleeps he NEG does
 INTENDED: ‘A: He’s sleeping. B: No, he isn’t.’ (B)



Figure 4: Distribution of short do-replies

4. **agreement/clitics on ‘yes’ and ‘no’:** in short polarity answers, the affirmative or negative particle ‘yes’/‘no’ can be accompanied by agreement and/or a subject clitic in F-dialects, but not in B-dialects

- (7) *A: Wil je nog koffie? B: Jaa-n-k.*
 want you PART coffee Yes-1SG-I
 ‘A: Do you want some more coffee. B: Yes.’ (F)

- (8) *A: Wil de nog koffie? B: Ja(*n)(*k).*
 want you PART coffee Yes-1SG-I
 ‘A: Do you want some more coffee. B: Yes.’ (B)



Figure 5: Distribution of agreement/clitics on ‘yes’ and ‘no’

5. **negative clitic:** Flanders dialects use the negative clitic *en* in negative clauses, Brabant dialects do not

- (9) *K en goa nie naar schole.*
 I en go not to school
 ‘I’m not going to school.’ (F)

- (10) *Ik (*en) ga nie naar t school.*
 I en go not to the school
 ‘I’m not going to school.’ (B)



Figure 6: Distribution of negative clitic *en*

6. Data summary:

	Flanders	Brabant
complementizer agreement	+	-
full clitic doubling paradigm	+	-
short <i>do</i> replies	+	-
agreement/clitics on yes/no	+	-
negative clitic	+	-

→ It is tempting to now look for one parameter that can account for all of the observed variation.

however: if we take into consideration the transition zone between Flanders and Brabant, the empirical picture becomes much more nuanced.

4 The importance of transition zones



Figure 7: Dialect regions in Belgium: Flanders, Brabant, and the Dender region

- the region surrounding the Dender river forms a transition area between Flanders and Brabant
- historically, the region has shifted allegiances a couple of times:
 - in the early Middle Ages it was part of the county of Flanders
 - during the late Middle Ages the political, economical, and cultural influence of the duchy of Brabant grew, and the Dender region came under heavy Brabantic influence
 - in the 16th and 17th century it regained its position inside Flanders, where it remains to this day (as part of the province of East Flanders)

→ Let's now revisit the 5 empirical properties from the previous section:

1. **complementizer agreement:** the Dender dialects do not display complementizer agreement

(11) *Geir en geloof ni da(*n) se zeir armer zijn*
 you not believe not that-PL they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} poorer are
asgegir.
 than.you_{CLITIC}.you_{STRONG}
 'You don't actually believe that they are poorer than you.' (D)

2. **clitic doubling paradigm:** the Dender dialects have a full clitic doubling paradigm

- (12) *Asse zeir voor eir werk leven, dan ...*
 if.she_{CLITIC} she_{STRONG} for their work live then
 ‘If they are living for their work, then...’ (D)

- **however:** clitic doubling in the Dender region does not behave the same as in Flanders: the Dender dialects have doubling in both finite and infinitival contexts, Flemish only in finite clauses

- (13) *Mé ze zoi te kommen, ...*
 with they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} to come
 ‘Because of them coming, ...’ (D)

- (14) *Mee (*se) zunder te komen, ...*
 with they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} to come
 ‘Because of them coming, ...’ (F)

3. **short *do* replies:** the Dender dialects allow short *do* replies

- (15) *A: IJ slaapt al zeker. B: A en doet.*
 he sleeps already surely he *en* does
 ‘A: He is asleep already, I suppose. B: No, he isn’t.’ (D)

4. **agreement on yes/no:** the Dender dialects have clitics, but no agreement on yes/no

- (16) *A: Einz al gegeten? B: Jaa(*n)s.*
 have.they already eaten yes.PL.they_{CLITIC}
 ‘A: Have they already eaten? B: Yes, they have.’ (D)

5. **negative clitic:** the Dender dialects have a negative clitic *en*

- (17) *Z en wil nie dansn.*
 She *en* want not dance
 ‘She does not want to dance.’ (D)

6. **Data summary:**

	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
complementizer agreement	+	-	-
full clitic doubling paradigm	+	+	-
clitic doubling in infinitivals	-	+	-
short <i>do</i> replies	+	+	-
agreement on yes/no	+	-	-
clitics on yes/no	+	+	-
negative clitic	+	+	-

- **conclusion:** the addition of the Dender data suggests that what separates Flanders from Brabant is not a single parameter, but rather the interaction between multiple ones

5 Analysis

5.1 Pattern #1: the AgrC-parameter

	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
complementizer agreement	+	-	-
agreement on yes/no	+	-	-

- Koppen (2014) and references mentioned there: complementizer agreement is the overt reflex of unvalued ϕ -features on C undergoing Agree with the subject
- **supporting evidence:** the ϕ -feature specification of C (complementizer agreement) can be different from—and is hence independent from—that of T (Haegeman and Koppen (2012); Koppen (2005)):

(18) *Ich dink des doow en ich ôs treffe.*
 I think that-2SG you and I ourselves meet-PL
 ‘I think that you and I will meet.’

(19) *omdan die venten tun juste underen computer kapot was*
 because-PL those guys then just their computer broken
 was-SG
 ‘because then the computer of those guys just broke down.’

- Craenenbroeck (2010), Holmberg (2013): polarity particles such as ‘yes’ and ‘no’ occupy a position in the C-domain

→ **hypothesis:** the first parameter distinguishing Flanders from both the Dender region and Brabant is the AgrC-parameter:

(20) **the AgrC-parameter:**
 Dialects {have/do not have} unvalued ϕ -features on C

THE AGRC-PARAMETER	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
ϕ -features on C	yes	no	no

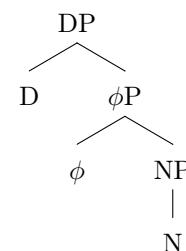
5.2 Pattern #2: the D-parameter

	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
full clitic doubling paradigm	+	+	-
clitic doubling in infinitivals	-	+	-

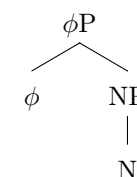
starting point: Craenenbroeck and Koppen (2008)’s analysis of clitic doubling:

- **step one:** according to the tests in Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002) strong pronouns in doubling dialects are pro-DPs, while subject clitics are pro- ϕ Ps

(21) **strong pronoun**

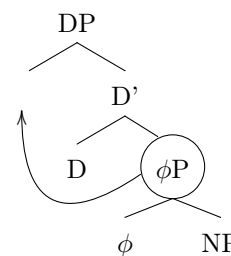


(22) **subject clitic**

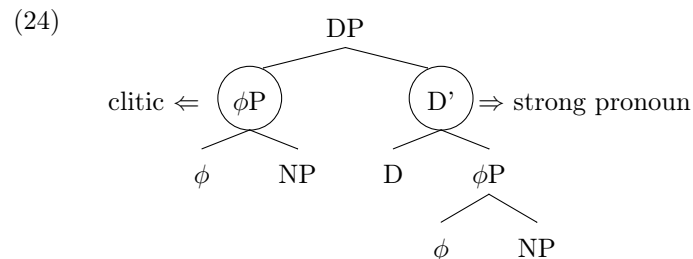


- **step two:** a clitic-doubled subject starts life as a big DP (see also Belletti (2005); Uriagereka (1995); Laenzlinger (1998); Grohmann (2000); Poletto (2008); Kayne (2005)); more specifically, clitics are the result of ϕ P-movement to specDP:

(23)



- **step three:** when the resulting structure is handed over to PF, the moved ϕ P is spelled out as a subject clitic, while the remainder of the DP is realized as a strong pronoun:



→ **hypothesis:** the second parameter distinguishing dialect regions in Belgium concerns the feature specification of the D found in strong pronouns:

- (25) **the D-parameter (first version):**
Dialects {have/do not have} an edge feature on the D-head found in strong pronouns

THE D-PARAMETER (first version) edge feature on D	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
	yes	yes	no

note: this does not yet explain the difference in clitic doubling in infinitivals between Flanders and the Dender region:

- (26) *Mé ze zoi te kommen, ...*
with they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} to come
'Because of them coming, ...' (D)

- (27) *Mee (*se) zunder te kommen, ...*
with they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} to come
'Because of them coming, ...' (F)

→ **hypothesis:** these data show that the precise feature specification of the D-head found in strong pronouns is not identical in the two regions:

in Flanders, subject clitics are Fin-related (i.e. only occur in finite clauses), while in the Dender region they are not

- (28) **the D-parameter (final version):**
The D-head found in strong pronouns can have the following feature specifications in (Belgian) Dutch dialects:

- no edge feature
- edge feature
- edge feature combined with [*uFin*]

THE D-PARAMETER (final version) feature specification of D	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
	[EF, <i>uFin</i>]	[EF]	[]

note: the AgrC-parameter and the D-parameter are independent of one another: the Dender dialects have clitic doubling, but no complementizer agreement, and conversely, there are dialects that have complementizer agreement, but no clitic doubling, e.g. South Hollandic:

- (29) *Azz-e me (*wij) sober leven, dan ...*
if-PLURAL we we frugally live, then
'If we live frugally, then...'
(SH)

more in detail:

	-EF	+EF	+EF, <i>uFin</i>
+AgrC	North & South Holland, Limburg Groningen, Frisia Gelderland (partly), Overijssel French Flanders	?	East & West Flanders
-AgrC	Brabant, Utrecht, Drenthe, Gelderland (partly)	Dender	?

- four of the six logically possible combinations are attested

- the Flanders region is split up into two parts: in East and West Flanders the D found in strong pronouns has both an edge feature and an unvalued [Fin]-feature, while in French Flanders, D has no (relevant) features
- the two remaining combinations:
 - [+AgrC,+EF]: dialects with complementizer agreement and clitic doubling, even in non-finite clauses → possibly attested in a small number of individual dialects close to the Dender region
 - [-AgrC,+EF,uFin]: dialects without complementizer agreement, and with clitic doubling, but only in finite clauses → not attested

possible explanation: in order for the [uFin] on ϕ P to be checked, there has to be a probe in the C-domain capable of attracting the clitic ⇒ there needs to be an unvalued ϕ -feature on C (or rather, Fin)

5.3 Pattern #3: the PolP-parameter

	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
short <i>do</i> replies	+	+	-
clitics on yes/no	+	+	-
negative clitic	+	+	-

- Craenenbroeck (2010): the negative clitic *en* occupies a high Pol-head in the left periphery

→ **hypothesis:** the third parameter distinguishes Flanders and the Dender region from Brabant and concerns the absence or presence of a polarity head in the left periphery:

(30) **the PolP-parameter**

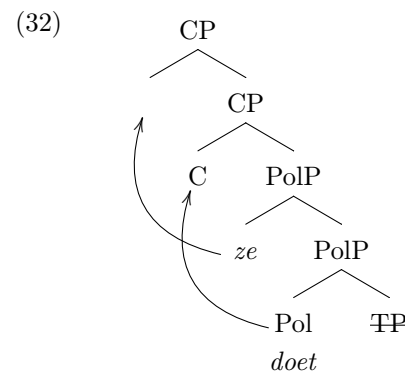
Dialects {have/do not have} a PolP in the clausal left periphery.

THE POLP-PARAMETER	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
presence of left-peripheral PolP	yes	yes	no

starting point: Craenenbroeck (2010)’s analysis of short *do* replies:

- short *do* replies only occur in non-embedded contradictory polar replies to declarative clauses → they involve TP-ellipsis licensed by a left peripheral polarity head:

(31) A: *Marie ziet Pierre niet graag.* B: *Ze doet.*
 Mary sees Pierre not gladly she does
 ‘A: Mary doesn’t love Pierre. B: Yes, she does.’



- **supporting evidence:** short *do* replies are only compatible with high left-peripheral adverbs:

(33) A: *Marie guid alted nui de mes.* B: **Z'en duu geregeld.*
 Mary goes always to the mass she.NEG does often
 INTENDED: ‘A: Marie always goes to mass. B: She often doesn’t.’

(34) A: *Pierre woendj ie.* B: **IJ en duu nie mieje.*
 Pierre lives here he NEG does not more
 INTENDED: ‘A: Pierre lives here. B: He doesn’t anymore.’

(35) A: *Marie kom mergen.* B: **Z'en duu wuirschaainlek.*
 Marie comes tomorrow she.NEG does probably
 INTENDED: ‘A: Marie is coming tomorrow. B: She probably isn’t.’

- (36) *A: Jef zeit da gou veel geldj etj. B: K'en duu pertang.*
 Jef says that you much money have I.NEG doe however
 'A: Jef says you have a lot of money. B: I don't, however.'

- Craenenbroeck (2010): the occurrence of clitics on 'yes' and 'no' are derived from short *do* replies: they involve further (higher) ellipsis of an already truncated structure
- **supporting evidence:** *there*-expletives in short *do* replies and yes/no+clitics:

- (37) *{ Dui / * T } stui ne vantj inn of.*
 there it stands a man in.the garden
 'There's a man standing in the garden.'

- (38) *A: Dui stui ne vantj inn of. B: { * Dui / T } en*
 there stands a man in.the garden there it NEG
duut.
 does
 'A: There's a man standing in the garden. B: No, there isn't.'

- (39) *A: Dui stui ne vantj inn of. B: Jui { * d'r / t }.*
 there stands a man in.the garden yes there it
 'A: There's a man standing in the garden. B: Yes.'

conclusion: given that the negative clitic, short *do* replies, and clitics on 'yes' and 'no' are all dependent on the presence of a high left-peripheral Pol-head, dialects which lack this head (i.e. the dialects of Brabant) do not display any of these phenomena

note: just as was the case with the D-parameter, the Pol-parameter is independent from the AgrC-parameter: there are dialects with complementizer agreement, but without negative clitic/short *do* replies/conjugated 'yes' and 'no', and there are dialects with negative clitic/short *do* replies/conjugated 'yes' and 'no', but without complementizer agreement:

	-PolP	+PolP
+AgrC	North & South Holland, Limburg Groningen, Frisia Gelderland (partly), Overijssel	Flanders
-AgrC	Brabant, Utrecht, Drenthe, Gelderland (partly)	Dender

note: agreement on 'yes' and 'no' in the dialects of Flanders (see above) is the result of the interaction between *two* parameters: it requires a positive setting for both the AgrC- and the PolP-parameter

5.4 Summary and parameter interaction

summary part 1: we have formulated three parameters:

- **the AgrC-parameter:**
Dialects {have/do not have} unvalued ϕ -features on C
- **the D-parameter:**
The D-head found in strong pronouns can have the following feature specifications in (Belgian) Dutch dialects:
 - no edge feature
 - edge feature
 - edge feature combined with [*uFin*]
- **the PolP-parameter**
Dialects {have/do not have} a PolP in the clausal left periphery.

summary part 2: these parameters account for the data in the following way:

	Flanders	Dender	Brabant
complementizer agreement	+AgrC	-AgrC	-AgrC
agreement on yes/no	+AgrC	-AgrC	-AgrC
short <i>do</i> replies	+PolP	+PolP	-PolP
clitics on yes/no	+PolP	+PolP	-PolP
negative clitic	+PolP	+PolP	-PolP
full clitic doubling paradigm	+EF	+EF	-EF
clitic doubling in infinitivals	+EF, <i>uFin</i>	+EF	-EF

parameter interaction: the interaction between these parameters is represented in the following table:

	+AgrC		-AgrC	
	+PolP	-PolP	+PolP	-PolP
-EF	French Flanders	Holland, Limburg, Frisia Groningen, Overijssel Gelderland (partly)	?	Brabant, Utrecht, Drenthe, Gelderland (partly)
+EF	?	?	Dender	?
+EF,[uFIN]	Flanders	?		

- of the twelve logically possible combinations, five correspond to dialect regions in Belgium, France, or the Netherlands
- the combination of [+EF, uFin] and [-AgrC] is arguably unattested due to the lack of a probe in the C-domain that can attract the clitic (see also above)
- the remaining five combinations do not correspond to dialect regions, and are at most potentially represented by one or two individual dialects

note: there seems to be a tendency for dialects that have a positive setting for the PolP-parameter to also have a positive setting for the D-parameter, and vice versa

speculation: the link between these two parameters is a case of a nominal-clausal parallelism:

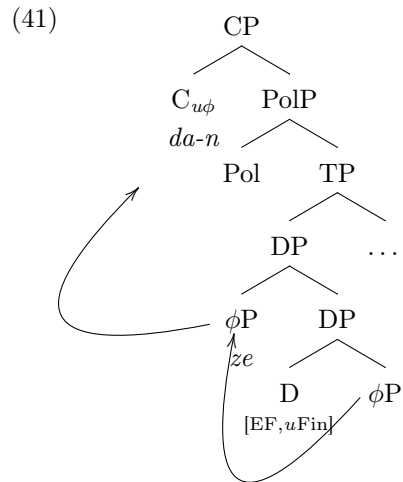
- dialects with a positive setting for the PolP-parameter are dialects with an extended clausal left periphery
- dialects with a positive setting for the D-parameter are dialects with an extended nominal left periphery
 - assume that the D-parameter is not only about the feature specification of D, but also about its presence or absence:
 - in Brabant D is not void of features as we have concluded above, but completely absent in strong pronouns (i.e. strong pronouns are ϕ Ps)
 - in Flanders and the Dender region, D is present in strong pronouns (i.e. strong pronouns are DPs), potentially leading to clitic doubling as a result of ϕ P movement to spec,DP.
- what the parameter interaction table now shows is a tendency for dialects to have either an extended CP- and an extended DP domain or a non-extended CP- and a non-extended DP-domain

6 Sample derivations

6.1 Complementizer agreement and clitic doubling

6.1.1 Flanders: complementizer agreement and clitic doubling in finite clauses

(40) *da-n ze zunder weg gaan*
 that-PL they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} away go
 ‘that they’re going away.’

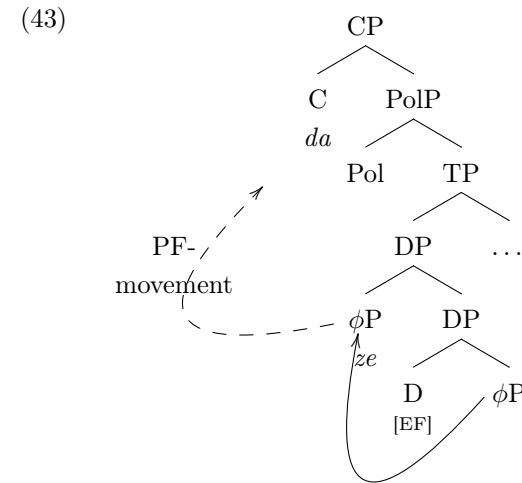


• **main ingredients of the analysis:**

- the CP-domain is split into CP and PolP
- C bears unvalued ϕ -features
- the D found in clitic-doubled strong pronouns bears [+EF, uFin]
- this D attracts the ϕ P to its specifier
- ϕ P is spelled out as the clitic *ze*, the remainder of the DP as the strong pronoun *zunder*
- $u\phi$ on C agrees with the subject, is spelled out as complementizer agreement, and attracts the subject clitic

6.1.2 Dender region: complementizer agreement and clitic doubling in finite and infinitival clauses

(42) *da ze zijle weg gaan*
 that they_{CLITIC} they_{STRONG} away go
 ‘that they’re going away.’



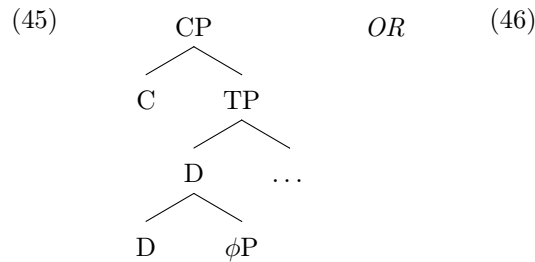
• **main ingredients of the analysis:**

- the CP-domain is split into CP and PolP
- C does not have unvalued ϕ -features
- the D found in clitic-doubled strong pronouns bears just [+EF]
- this D attracts the ϕ P to its specifier
- ϕ P is spelled out as the clitic *ze*, the remainder of the DP as the strong pronoun *zijle*
- at PF, the subject clitic needs a host → it attaches to the complementizer *da*

note: the difference in type of clitic movement between Flanders (syntactic) and the Dender region (phonological) explains why only the latter allows clitic doubling in infinitival clauses

6.1.3 Brabant: no complementizer agreement, no clitic doubling

(44) *da zij weg gaan.*
 that they_{STRONG} away go
 ‘that they’re going away.’



• **main ingredients of the analysis:**

- the CP-domain is unsplit
- C does not bear unvalued ϕ -features
- either the D found in strong pronouns lacks an edge feature or the D-layer is absent altogether
- either way, the derivation does not allow for (parts of) the subject pronoun to be doubly spelled out \Rightarrow clitic doubling is absent

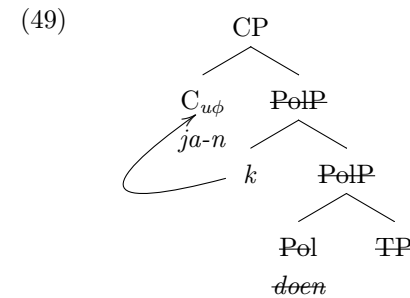
note: the fact that 1st.sg and 2nd.sg/pl person pronouns do seem to allow for doubling even in Brabant could suggest that apparent clitic doubled forms such as *ekik* (‘I’, lit. I.I) or *egij* (‘you’, lit. you.you) are in fact non-doubled, positionally restricted strong pronouns (Pauwels, 1958; Schutter, 1994; Nuyts, 1995; Vogelaar, 2005)

(47) *Jan en ekik hebben dat gedaan.*
 Jan and I.I have that done
 ‘Jan and I have done that.’

6.2 Short do replies, conjugated yes/no and the negative clitic

6.2.1 Flanders: short do replies, clitics and agreement on yes/no and a negative clitic

(48) *A: Wil je nog koffie? B: Jaa-n-k.*
 want you PART coffee Yes-1SG.I
 ‘A: Do you want some more coffee. B: Yes.’

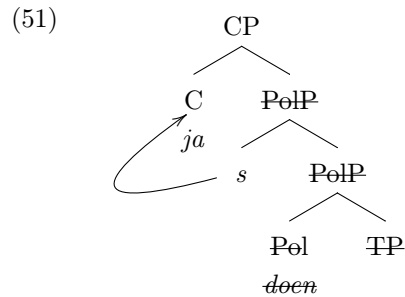


• **main ingredients of the analysis:**

- the underlying structure for conjugated yes/no is a short *do* reply
- the polarity particles ‘yes’ and ‘no’ are merged in C
- C bears unvalued ϕ -features
- C agrees with the clitic, which moves to C prior to the deletion of PolP, resulting in the string *yes-agreement-clitic*

6.2.2 Dender region: short do replies, clitics but not agreement on yes/no and a negative clitic

(50) *A: Einz al gegeten? B: Jaa(*n)s.*
 have.they already eaten yes.PL.they_{CLITIC}
 ‘A: Have they already eaten? B: Yes, they have.’



• **main ingredients of the analysis:**

- the underlying structure for conjugated yes/no is a short *do* reply
- the polarity particles ‘yes’ and ‘no’ are merged in C
- C does not bear unvalued ϕ -features
- the clitic PF-moves to C prior to the deletion of PolP, resulting in the string *yes-clitic*

6.2.3 Brabant: no short *do* replies, no conjugated yes/no, no negative clitic

- (52) A: *Wil de nog koffie?* B: *Ja(*n)(*k).*
 want you PART coffee Yes-1SG-I
 ‘A: Do you want some more coffee. B: Yes.’

• **main ingredient of the analysis:**

- Brabant dialects do not have a negative clitic \Rightarrow they have no PolP in the CP-domain \Rightarrow there are no short *do* replies in Brabant \Rightarrow there is no conjugated yes/no in Brabant

7 Conclusions

1. Belgian Dutch dialects differ in the featural richness and (sometimes concomittant) size of their left periphery:
 - (a) Flanders dialects have unvalued ϕ on C and a left peripheral PolP
 - (b) Dender dialects have a left peripheral PolP but no ϕ on C
 - (c) Brabant dialects have neither a left peripheral PolP nor ϕ on C
2. more generally, the distribution of complementizer agreement, short *do* replies, clitic doubling, and conjugated yes/no seems to be due to the interaction of three parameters:
 - (a) the AgrC-parameter: Dialects {have/do not have} unvalued ϕ -features on C
 - (b) the D-parameter: The D-head found in strong pronouns can be specified as: [], [EF], [EF,[uFin]]
 - (c) the PolP-parameter: Dialects {have/do not have} a PolP in the clausal left periphery.
3. while these parameters are logically independent, certain value setting combinations are much more common than others: a positive setting for the D-parameter tends to go hand in hand with a positive setting for the PolP-parameter

8 Extensions of the analysis

our analysis: while the CP-domain in Flanders and the Dender region is always split (due to the presence of PolP), in Brabant it is not → we might expect to see additional effects of this difference in ‘left peripheral size’ (see also Craenenbroeck (2011))

8.1 Obligatory vs. optional expletives

In Flanders and the Dender region the expletive is always obligatory in inverted main clauses and embedded clauses, while in Brabant dialects it is optional (see also Haegeman (1986))

(53) *dat *(er) in de fabriek nen jongen werkte.*
 that there in the factory a boy worked
 ‘that a boy worked in the factory’ (F/D)

(54) *dat (er) in die fabriek ne jongen werkte.*
 that there in the factory a boy worked
 ‘that a boy worked in that factory’ (B)

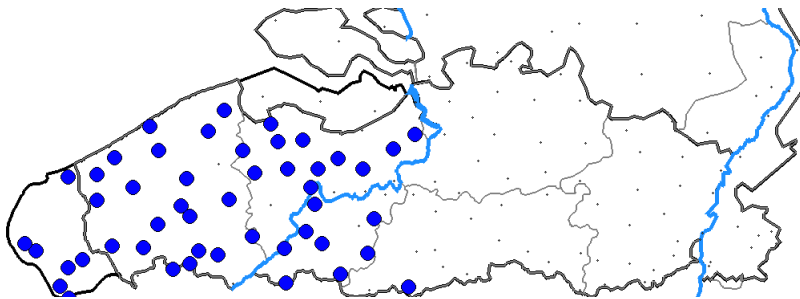
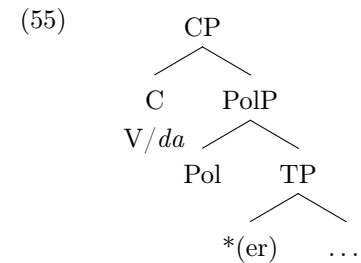


Figure 8: Obligatory expletive in inverted main clause (data from Barbiers et al (2006))

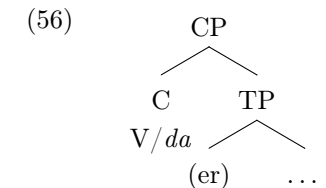
• analysis:

- in inverted main clauses and embedded clauses, the C-position is filled (by the verb and the complementizer respectively)
- in Brabant the C-head immediately c-commands specTP → the fact that specTP is in the local domain of C allows this position to remain empty (= an ECP-style effect)
- in Flanders and the Dender region PolP intervenes between C and TP → specTP is not in the local domain of C, and specTP cannot remain empty

Flanders/Dender



Brabant



8.2 SpecCP- vs. specTP-expletives

Flanders and the Dender region have a so-called specCP-expletive (*t*, ‘it’), while Brabant has a specTP-expletive (*er* ‘there’):

- (57) a. *T zyn gisteren drie studenten gekomen.*
 it are yesterday three students come
 ‘Three students came yesterday.’
- b. **Zyn t gisteren drie studenten gekomen?*
 are it yesterday three students come
 INTENDED: ‘Did three students come yesterday?’
- c. **dan t gisteren drie studenten gekomen zyn.*
 that.PL it yesterday three students come are
 INTENDED: ‘that three students came yesterday.’ (F/D)

- (58) a. *D'r staan twee venten in den of.*
 there stand two men in the garden
 'There are two men standing in the garden.'
 b. *Staan d'r twee venten in den of?*
 stand there two men in the garden
 'Are there two men standing in the garden?'
 c. *dat er twee venten in den of staan.*
 that there two men in the garden stand
 'that there are two men standing in the garden.'
- (B)

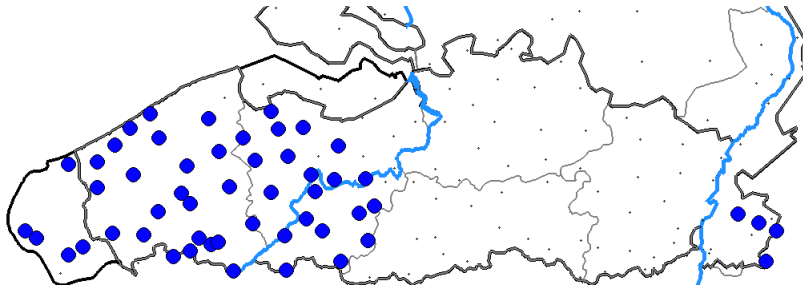


Figure 9: specCP-expletives (data from Barbiers et al (2006))

• prerequisite of the analysis: the status of specCP-expletive *t*

- traditional analysis of the specCP-expletive *t* in Flanders and the Dender region → it is the (expletive) third person neuter pronoun *het* 'it'.
- **however**, it does not seem synchronically related to the pronoun *het* 'it': it is never replaced by *dat* 'that' and it is never spelled out or even pronounced as the full form *het* 'it':

- (59) $\{ T / *Et / *Da \}$ *zijn drie studenten gekomen.*
 t it that are three students come
 'There came three students.'

- (60) $\{ T / Et / Da \}$ *regent.*
 t it that rains
 'It is raining.'

- instead, this *t* seems much more akin to main clause particles such as Breton *bez* or Welsh *fe*, since (i) they are also disallowed in embedded clauses and inverted main clauses; (ii) they do not trigger agreement on the verb

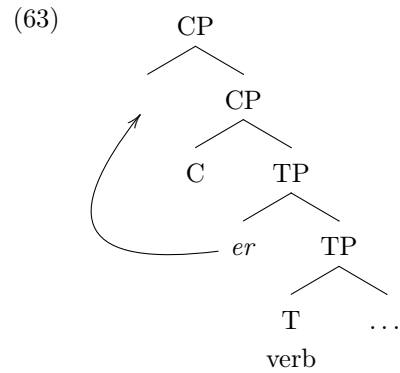
- (61) *Bez' e ra glva.*
 PRT r does rain
 'It rains.' (Breton, Jouitteau (2008))

- (62) *Fe glywes i'r cloc.*
 PRT heard.s1g the clock
 'I heard the clock.' (Welsh, Jouitteau (2008))

- **hypothesis:** the specCP-expletive *t* in Flanders/Dender is a main clause complementizer, i.e. it spells out the C-head (see Craenenbroeck (2011) for detailed discussion)

• analysis:

- assume that in expletive-initial main clauses the C-domain needs to be overtly realized in all dialect regions
- **Brabant:** the expletive can move to specCP to accomplish this

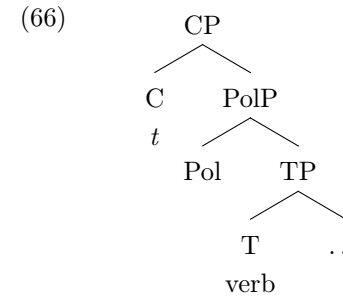


– **supporting evidence:** in Brabant the strong locative form *daar* ‘there’ can also be used as an expletive, but not in Flanders/Dender:

(64) *Doar zat enen inbreker in dat skap.*
 there sat a burglar in that closet
 ‘There was a burglar in that closet.’ (B)

(65) **Doa ligt ier nen brief ip tafel.*
 there lies here a letter on
 ‘There’s a letter lying on the table here.’ (F)

– **Flanders/Dender:** PolP blocks expletive movement to specCP, so the C-domain is realized by spelling out C as *t*



• **summing up:** the parametric account outlined above correctly predicts that the Flanders-Dender-Brabant split should show up in additional left-peripheral phenomena

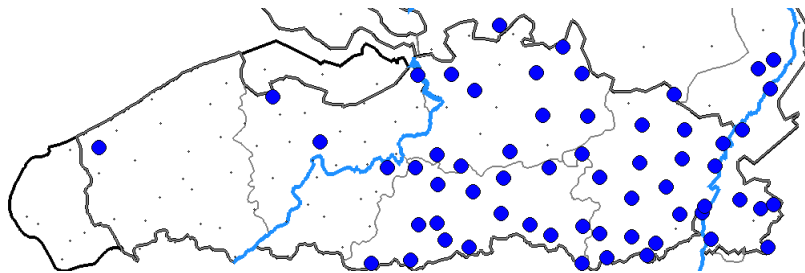


Figure 10: use of *daar* as an expletive (data from Barbiers et al (2006))

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