Astrid van Alem (Leiden University)

Complementizer agreement is clitic doubling: a uniform analysis of intervention effects

It is well known that many non-standard varieties of West-Germanic have Complementizer Agreement (CA): not only the verb, but also the complementizer agrees with the subject. This phenomenon has led to a debate in the literature about whether CA is pure syntactic agreement (e.g. Carstens 2003, van Koppen 2005) or a PF phenomenon (e.g. Ackema & Neeleman 2004, Fuss 2014, Weisser 2019). This paper presents novel data on CA that show that neither approach is correct. Instead, it argues for a new approach to CA, analysing it as clitic doubling. This analysis accounts for the varying behavior of CA across varieties. This result shows that the question whether something is agreement or clitic doubling is not only relevant for object agreement (e.g. Nevins 2011), but also for subject agreement.

Data: challenges for previous accounts   I focus on variation in CA in Frisian, Southern Limburgian, and Bavarian. In those varieties, CA reacts differently to intervention of a focus particle (and additional material) between the complementizer and the subject. In Frisian (1), intervention leads to ungrammaticality with and without CA present (cf. De Haan 2010); in Limburgian (2), the CA morpheme is realized in between the intervener and the subject; in Bavarian (3), the CA morpheme is always realized on the complementizer (cf. Fuss 2014).

(1) a. dat-st   do ytst   b. *dat-st   ek do ytst   c. *dat ek do ytst
    that-2SG you eat.2SG   that-2SG also you eat.2SG   that also you eat.2SG
    'that you eat'   'that you also eat'   'that you also eat'

(2) a. dat-s   toe uts   b. dat auch-s-toe   uts
    that-2SG you eat.2SG   that also-2SG-you eat.2SG
    'that you eat'   'that you also eat'

(3) a. ob-sd   du […] host   b. ob-sd   a   du […] host
    if-2SG you   have.2SG   if-2SG also you   have.2SG
    'if you have'   'if you also have'

The Limburgian data are problematic for Agree-based accounts of CA: it is not clear how C-agreement can be realized on the subject instead of the complementizer. The Frisian data are problematic for PF accounts of CA, as PF alternations should not be able to lead to ungrammaticality.

Additional evidence from Frisian against PF accounts of CA comes from first conjunct CA: first conjunct CA is optional and corresponds to a difference in interpretation. Since PF rules cannot alter interpretation, CA cannot be the result of a PF operation.

CA morpheme is a clitic   I show that the CA morpheme is a clitic by applying diagnostics that distinguish clitics from agreement (Zwicky & Pullum 1983, Nevins 2011, among others). In all testable respects, the CA morpheme has the properties of a clitic: it has a low degree of selection with respect to its host; it exhibits fewer morphological idiosyncrasies than other inflectional morphemes; it is able to attach to other clitics; it is tense-invariant. In addition, the CA morpheme can license pro-drop, while the varieties under discussion are non-pro-drop languages, and (in contrast to agreement) it does not survive sluicing (Lobeck 1995). I conclude that an agreement analysis of the CA morpheme is not tenable, and analyse it as a doubled clitic.

Analysis   I argue that the CA morpheme is a partial copy of the complex DP subject in the sense of Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002) (4) (cf. the analysis of clitic doubling in Flemish by van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen 2008). Based on properties of the clitic, including argument status and the availability of generic readings (Gruber 2017), I show that the clitic is a PhiP in Frisian and Bavarian, and a NP in Limburgian. The same diagnostics show that the subject pronouns that are doubled in (1-3) are DPs.

(4)

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{DP} \\
\diagup\ \diagdown \\
\text{D}^0 \quad \varphi\text{P} \\
\diagup\ \diagdown \\
\varphi^0 \quad \text{NP} \\
\mid \\
\text{N}^0
\end{array}
$$

Only when the subject is a DP can a focus particle intervene between the complementizer and the subject. If so, constituency tests show that the focus particle forms a constituent with

the subject. All focus particles that exhibit this behavior are phrasal (Barbiers 2010). My analysis of this is that the focus particle is in the Spec of an extra functional projection FP on top of the DP subject.

To account for the varying intervention effects on CA, I make the following assumptions: (i) there is a ban on Comp-to-Spec movement due to anti-locality (Abels 2003); (ii) subjects in SpecTP, but not VP-internal subjects, are islands for extraction (Merchant 2001); (iii) clitic doubling is triggered by a Probe on C (cf. Preminger 2009). The different patterns of CA are derived as follows. In Frisian clauses without a focus particle in SpecFP, the clitic moves to SpecFP. Both the clitic and the full DP are spelled out. When there is a focus particle in SpecFP, the clitic competes for the same position with it (5); the clitic cannot move to SpecDP because of *Comp-to-Spec, and the clitic cannot move out because the subject is an island. Because one position cannot host two elements, the structure becomes ungrammatical. In Limburgian clauses without a focus particle in SpecFP, the clitic moves to either SpecFP or SpecDP, and both the clitic and the DP subject are realized. When the subject is modified by a focus particle, the clitic cannot move to SpecFP; however, it can still move to SpecDP, since the Limburgian clitic is just an NP, and movement to SpecDP does not violate *Comp-to-Spec (6). This derives the word order *C-focus particle-CA morpheme-subject*. The clitic cannot move out of the subject (across the focus particle) because the subject is an island for extraction. In Bavarian, as in other varieties of German, subjects are allowed to stay inside VP (Diesing 1992). When a focus particle attaches to the subject, the clitic cannot move to SpecFP (because this position is taken by the focus particle), or to SpecDP (as this would violate *Comp-to-Spec). However, the subject is allowed to stay in the VP and, in that case, is not an island, allowing the clitic to move out of it (7). The clitic targets the trigger for doubling, the Probe on C, leading to the word order *C-CA morpheme-focus particle-subject*.
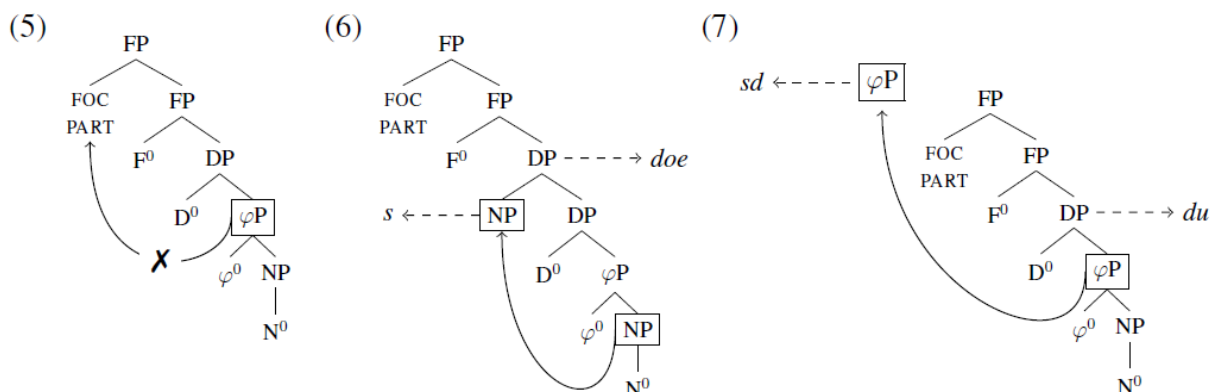
Conclusion This paper argues for a clitic doubling analysis of CA in West-Germanic. The analysis accounts in a uniform way for novel data that are not compatible with previous Agree-based or PF approaches to CA. This result shows that questioning the staus of a morpheme as agreement of as clitic doubling (e.g. Nevins 2011; Kramer 2014) is relevant for object agreement and subject agreement alike. It furthermore illustrates that there is no subject-object asymmetry in this respect, although subjects and objects exhibit different constraints due to independent properties such as derived islandhood.

References   Abels (2003) *Successive cyclicity, anti-locality, and adposition stranding*. UConn dissertation; Ackema & Neeleman (2004) *Beyond morphology*. OUP; Barbiers (2010) Focus particle doubling. *Structure preserved;* Carstens (2003) Rethinking complementizer agreement. *LI;* Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002) Decomposing pronouns. *LI;* De Haan (2010) Complementizer agreement. *Studies in West-Frisian grammar;* Diesing (1992) *Indefinites*. LI monograph; Fuss (2014) Complementizer agreement (in Bavarian)**.** *Bavarian syntax;* Gruber (2017) Temporal and a-temporal uses of 'you'. *JCGL;* Kramer (2014) Clitic doubling or object agreement. *NLLT;* Lobeck (1995) *Ellipsis*. OUP; Merchant (2001) *The syntax of silence*. OUP; Nevins (2011) Multiple Agree with clitics. *NLLT*; Preminger (2009) Breaking agreements. *LI;* van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen (2008) Pronominal doubling in Dutch dialects. *Microvariation in syntactic doubling;* van Koppen (2005) *One Probe, two Goals*. LOT dissertation; Weisser (2019) Telling allomorphy from agreement. *Glossa;* Zwicky & Pullum (1983) Cliticization vs. inflection. *Language*.