

The morpho-syntax of Dutch participle manner adverbials: towards unification of a class

The issue. Dutch manner adverbials (MAs) are a heterogeneous class; in (1), we find what look like a **bare adjective**, a **prepositional phrase**, a **pronominal** (plausibly a nominal projection, see Abney, 1987; Cardinaletti & Starke, 1994), and a **present participle verb** used as MAs.

- (1) Reinder gaat **snel** / **op deze manier** / **zo** / **lop-end** naar huis.
Reinder goes **quick** / **in this manner** / **this.way** / **walk-PTCP** to home
“Reinder goes home **quickly/in this way/this way/walking**.”

Dutch MAs then, can be derived from any of the major lexical categories A, P, N, and V. This heterogeneity makes the class difficult to define based on properties of their inner structure. Still, their inner structure plays a key role; taking a closer look at Dutch verbal constituents in (2), we find that none of the finite verb *loopt*, the infinitive *lopen*, or past participle *gelopen* are well-formed as MAs, in contrast to present participle *lop-end* in (1).

- (2) *Reinder gaat **loopt** / **lopen** / **gelopen** naar huis.
Reinder goes walks / to.walk / walked to home
Intended: “Reinder goes home walking.”

In contrast, other forms of the present participle in Dutch dialects or Standard Dutch (SD) are eligible MAs, witness (3).

- (3)a. Ga je **loop-es**? Katwijk D., from Overdiep (1940)
Go you walk-S
“Will you go walking?”
b. **a-luep-es** Aarschot D., from Pauwels (1958)
A-walk-S
“walking”
c. Vroeger ging het teksten leren **spel-end-erwijs** [...] SD, from Van de Velde (2005)
Previously went the texts learning play-PTCP-ERWIJS
“Previously, learning of scripts happened by way of playing [...]”

Thus, it appears that some, hitherto not understood, quality of the inner structure of Dutch present participle verbs makes them well-formed MAs among verbal constituents. The aim of this talk, which is a work in progress, is to shed light on the inner structure of Dutch present participle MAs using, among other things, novel dialect questionnaire data.

Questions. The data in (1-3) raise the following questions:

- (i) What makes SD present participle verbs well-formed MAs, like the other MAs in (1)?
- (ii) What makes other SD verbal constituents, like the ones in (2), ill-fit as MAs?
- (iii) How to account for variation in the design of Dutch present participle verbs? What do the MAs in (3) reveal about their inner structure?

Inspired by previous (cross-linguistic) studies on other(, non-verbal) MA patterns, I propose to tie together the answers to questions (i-iii) by decomposing the inner structure of Dutch present participle MAs.

Background and hypothesis. These questions about the inner structure of Dutch participle MAs are closely related to the controversial categorial status of adverb(ial)s in the overall

architecture of grammar as syntactic primitives or as derived categories (cf. Baker, 2003; Bybee, 1985; Emonds, 1987; Sugioka & Lehr, 1983; Zwicky, 1995). I adopt the hypothesis that manner adverb(ial)s are uniformly PPs, with P⁰ possibly silent. Under this unifying account, (hints of) adpositional and nominal (sub)structure are vital for arguing that MAs that do not look like PPs actually are, and arguably also point to ways to make sense of adjectival (cf. Alexeyenko, 2015; Cloin-Tavenier, in press; Corver, 2021, a.o.), or verbal constituent parts, as I do here. In this way, this talk contributes to our knowledge of the structure of adverb(ial)s by adding verbal constituents to the list of lexical categories feeding MA formation that have been studied, completing the set described in (1) above (a set which turns out not to be so heterogeneous after all).

Analysis. Building on Alexeyenko's (2015) study of English *-ly* adverbs, I propose that in Dutch present participle MAs a silent nominal manner expression is attributively modified by an adjectival predicate (see Broekhuis (2013) on the adjectival nature of Dutch present participle morphology). I argue that the inner structure of the MA *lopend* consists of a larger phrasal constituent in which *lopend* functions similarly to *fun* in a modified nominal constituent like *a fun game*. The structure of *lopend* is roughly as in (4), with PtcpP in [Spec,DP] attributively modifying a silent manner NP. This extended nominal constituent is embedded under a PP layer, which is responsible for the distributional behavior of the adverbial. It is this inner structure that Dutch present participle MAs share with other MAs, but not other Dutch verbal constituents, answering (i-ii).

(4) [PP \emptyset P [DP [PtcpP *lopend*] [D' \emptyset D [NP \emptyset MANNER]]]]]

Dialectal Dutch data like (3) feature additional morphology, such as the prefix *a-*, and suffixes *-s* and *-erwijs*, and provide a more detailed window into the structure of these MAs. Concretely, I propose *-erwijs* overtly realizes the manner nominal in (4), as in (5).

(5) [PP \emptyset P [DP [PtcpP *lopend*] [D' \emptyset D [NP *-erwijs*]]]]]

Furthermore, taking inspiration from Corver (2024), I propose that the ‘adverbial *-s*’ found in (3ab) betrays a different structure that still fits the adpositional design of MAs. Concretely, the inner structure of (3a) and (3b) is given in (6a) and (6b) respectively, with FP an extended adpositional projection. As I argue, this analysis also captures the lexical restriction that only the root \sqrt{lop} is found in this MA structure. Under (5-6), variation in Dutch present participle MAs reveals that it neatly adheres to the uniform adverbial PP design, answering (iii).

(6) a. [FP [_{NP} *lopens*] [F' \emptyset F⁰ [PP \emptyset P⁰ [~~*lopens*~~]]]]]
 b. [PP *a-* (= P⁰) [_{NP} *luepes*]]

In the talk itself, I elaborate the analyses above using data from SD, as well as other Indo-European languages. Time permitting, I also discuss the ostensibly similar temporal adverbial (*al*) *lopend* ‘while walking’ pattern; contrasting its analysis with that of MA *lopend* lends further, semantic, support to the idea that crucial morpho-syntactic building blocks of present participle MAs are part of the structure, even if they are silent.

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Classifier constructions in English, German and Dutch: N-N compounds vs. head-classifier constructions

Classifying constructions serve the purpose of specifying the type of entity that is being referred to; examples are *nuclear weapons*, *fire arms*, or *a man of faith* (Rijkhoff 2009: 54f). The non-head component can be an adjective (e.g. *nuclear*), a noun (e.g. *fire*), or a prepositional phrase (e.g. *of faith*). In those cases where the classifier takes the form of, or includes, a noun, this noun is used non-referentially and functions as a conceptual restriction (restriction of the property, not the referent set) (Gunkel & Zifonun 2009: 209).

The main focus of this paper will be a comparison between compounds (such as *fire arms*) and classifying constructions with a PP postnominal modifier, here referred to as head-classifier constructions (HCCs; e.g. *man of faith*). What is interesting about these constructions is that, despite the fact that they are formally quite different, they are semantically very similar and can often be used without a clearly discernible difference in meaning.¹ Nevertheless, as can be seen from the frequency of some of these constructions in the British National Corpus (BNC), there often is a clear preference for one of the two constructions:

- (1) a. stone wall (309) / wall of stone (4)
 - b. date of birth (138) / birth date (9)
 - c. prisoner of war (194) / war prisoner (4)
 - d. man of substance (11) / substance man (0)
- (BNC)

The same constructions can also be found in two other Germanic languages, German and Dutch. Both of these languages, however, seem to have a clear preference for compounding. German, for instance, not only prefers *Steinmauer* ‘stone wall’ (3,627 hits in DeReKo) to *Mauer aus Steinen* or *Mauer aus Stein* ‘wall of stone(s)’ (80 hits and 102 hits respectively in DeReKo), but also *Geburtsdatum* ‘birth date’ (18,092 hits in DeReKo) rather than *Datum der Geburt* ‘date of birth’ (151 hits in DeReKo), and *Kriegsgefangene* ‘prisoners of war’ (545 hits in DeReKo) instead of **Gefangene des Krieg(e)s*. In some cases, however, here too only the postnominal alternative seems to be available, e.g. *Mann von Mut* ‘man of courage’ (Zifonun 2010: 132, 139).

Like German, Dutch generally seems to prefer compounding, e.g. *geboortedatum* ‘birth date’ (5,468 hits in CHN) rather than *datum van geboorte* ‘date of birth’ (11 hits in CHN), and *krijgsgevangene* ‘prisoners of war’ instead of **gevangene van oorlog*.² However, as in German and English, there are instances where only the postnominal alternative seems to be used (e.g. *man van inhoud* ‘man of substance’). In other cases, there may be a clear preference for an adjectival

¹ Note, however, that in some cases, the meaning or use of the two alternates is quite different. For instance, when we look at constructions with the head noun *code*, we find that N-N compounds are used to refer to an actual code (i.e. a number; e.g. *order code*, *charge code*, *city code*, *bar code*), whereas HCCs are used to describe guidelines for behaviour (*code of practice*, *code of conduct*, *code of dress*, etc.).

² Note that *krijgsgevangene* includes the highly infrequent (and somewhat archaic) noun *krijg* ‘war’, whose use in present-day Dutch seems to be restricted to compounds.

classifier, as in the case of *stenen muur* ‘stony wall’ (399 hits in CHN) versus the much less frequent *muur van steen* ‘wall of stone’ (9 hits in CHN) and the very specialized N-N compound *steenmuur* ‘stone wall’ (1 hit in CHN). This clearly shows that the three languages appear to have different preferences when it comes to the classifying form chosen.

In a previous paper looking at the English classifier forms (Authors 2024), it was argued that there are sufficient differences, not only in form, but also in function, between HCCs and compounds to conclude that we are dealing with two separate constructions. Thus, HCCs were shown to express only three types of relations between the two nouns: intrinsic (e.g. *wall of stone*), taxonomic (e.g. *beast of burden*) and head-qualifier (e.g. *man of substance*) (Author 2007; Author 2023; Authors 2024). N-N compounds, on the other hand, allow for a much wider range of relations between head and dependent, including location, time, duration, purpose, cause, means/manner, apposition, and intrinsic property. In addition, the two constructions differ with regard to the type of classifier noun they accept (+count/-count; concrete/abstract/mass; singular/plural) and the modifiability of the classifying noun.

However, whereas the previous analysis captures the differences between the HCC and compounds, it does not account for the differences between the three subtypes of HCCs. For instance, intrinsic HCCs allow, as expected, for both modification of the classifying noun (*an axe of rough stone*) and predicative use of the PP (*Here the earliest type of axe is of stone* (BNC)). Qualifying HCCs, on the other hand, allow for modification (*a man of great honour*), but not for predication (**this man is of honour*), while more conventionalized cases like the taxonomic HCC *bird of prey* do not allow for either. Another question left unanswered is why one form is preferred over the other? Why is *stone wall* preferred over *wall of stone* but *date of birth* over *birth date*?

Using corpus data from the BNC (for English), DeReKo (for German), and CHN (for Dutch), the present study will explore the differences between the various classifier constructions in these languages. In particular, it will address the following questions:

- What alternations are available in the three languages, which preferences can be observed?
- Is there a correlation between the choice of construction (in any of the three languages) and the type of relation between the two nouns? Do differences between the three languages apply to all subtypes of compounds and HCCs?
- Do the postnominal constructions used in German and Dutch belong to the same kind of construction as the HCC in English?
- In those cases where alternation is possible: what determines the choice for a particular form (pragmatic, semantic or processing factors; genre; degree of conventionalization)?

Working within the framework of Functional Discourse Grammar (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008), this study explores how semantics, and also to some extent pragmatics, influences syntactic form in the noun phrase.

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Comparing native and non-native adult speakers' ability to assign grammatical gender to isolated nouns in French

In French, mastering grammatical gender is challenging even for native speakers. For adults, gender is only mastered at about 75% for a wide range of frequencies (Ayoun, 2018). Even though some 80% of French word endings contain cues to their grammatical gender (Lyster 2006), the strength of that correspondence varies considerably. While some endings are strongly biased toward either gender (e.g., [ɛt] is 90% feminine; [je] is 95% masculine), other endings are gender ambiguous. Factors such as the presence of an initial vowel (see Dewaele, 2015) also contribute to gender errors made by adult native speakers (NS) of French. Due to its challenging character, the acquisition of gender in French is particularly interesting to study both from the first- as well as from a second-language perspective.

Grammatical gender is a feature of language which is situated at the interface of syntax and the lexicon. It is a property of the noun that affects the words which need to agree with it, such as, in the case of French, the modifying determiners and adjectives. However, even though gender manifests itself in the inflections of associated modifiers, it is a lexical property of the noun. It can therefore be treated as a component of word knowledge (see, e.g., Ayoun 2007, Ecke, 2022)¹. In second language (L2) acquisition, a learner's knowledge of a given vocabulary item at a given time may be partial, i.e., it may include, for example, some idea of the word's meaning and familiarity with its pronunciation, but not the spelling or the syntactic or collocational patterns. By analogy, the word's form and/or meaning may be familiar, but the gender information may be missing.

Our focus in this study is on grammatical gender as part of lexical knowledge; more specifically, we examine the relationship between word recognition and the knowledge of grammatical gender.

Since we want to avoid any inferencing concerning a word's gender on the basis of the syntactic behavior of associated words, we tested words in isolation, making it impossible for the participants to guess gender based on clues that are extraneous to the word itself.

Research exploring the acquisition of grammatical gender as an aspect of lexical knowledge is scarce. In the literature, we find a minority of studies are on gender assignment compared to gender agreement. Among such studies, either (a) they do not test isolated words (Bates, Devescovi, Hernandez, & Pizzamiglio 1996; Taraban, & Kempe 1999) or (b) they test isolated word in combination with language processing tasks (White, Valenzuela, Kozłowska-Macgregor & Leung 2004), or (c) they do not compare adults (e.g., L1 adults and L2 children in Blom, Polišká & Weerman 2008 and in Clahsen Hadler, & Weyerts 2004; L2 adults and L1 children in Kupisch & Barton, 2013).

In an attempt to fill the research gap identified above, we track the level of grammatical gender knowledge across proficiency levels in L2 French, by collecting answers to an online test consisting of 24 spoken French words of comparable frequency while viewing the corresponding images. The use of images in addition to sound allows participants to know the

¹ See Richards (1976) and Nation (2001) for the general concept of word knowledge and its components; even though these sources do not mention gender as such, as they focus on English, a genderless language.

meaning of words that they had never encountered, allowing us to investigate the role of L1 transfer. Participants had to indicate which gender they thought the word belonged to (masculine or feminine) and whether they already knew the word and its gender before the test.

Correct gender assignment may be aided by guessing based on the word's ending. To be able to account for this, our vocabulary items represent endings characterized by different levels of transparency. In the absence of word ending cues, correct assignment in French by non-native speakers (NNS) can be affected by the transfer of grammatical gender from the participants' L1, which is a well-documented phenomenon (see Johanessen et al. 2024 and Sá-Leite Fraga & Comesaña 2019). Furthermore, in the absence of gender cues, they may assign masculine, which is the default gender for French (Bartning 2000; Holmes & Dejean De La Bâtie 1999). Our study is designed in such a way as to make it possible to investigate the potential impact of these factors.

Our participants are L2 French learners of different proficiency levels whose L1 is German, a language with three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter. This is important for the design of this study. A gendered L1 enables us to observe any effects of cross-linguistic influence, and the neuter gender allows for a combination of vocabulary items that isolates crosslinguistic influence and the masculine-by-default effect.

We examined the following research questions:

1. How do NNS compare with NS in their knowledge of words and their corresponding gender?
2. How does the ability of NNS to utilize gender clues compare to that the NS, and how does it develop across proficiency levels?

We tested a total of 1,333 adult native speakers of German for their knowledge of grammatical gender in French, and we compared their trajectory of grammatical gender acquisition in L2 French to a baseline of adult NS of French. Those L2 participants were aged 22.8 (SD: 2.51; [18-36]) and belonged to all six levels of proficiency in French (A1 to C2), with no significant exposure to another gendered language.

A total of 103 adult native speakers of French, aged 26.6 (SD 8.1, [18-58]), were tested on their knowledge of grammatical gender for the same nouns, with their response times compiled for each item. Our analyses show that as the participants' L2 proficiency increased, the likelihood of a correct response also increased significantly ($p < 0.001$ for all levels), and the impact of L1 transfer for L1-feminine words declined steadily. By level C1, participants' knowledge of familiar words already matches that of native speakers. However, their knowledge of grammatical gender remains below that of NS across all levels, even at the C2, where proficiency should theoretically be native-like. In addition, data from our NS participants confirm the challenging nature of grammatical gender in French, with a wide range of retrieval times ([0.19-5.16 s], which correlate significantly with responses and gender scores assigned by NNS).

We discuss the importance of revising target-language norms which are used in SLA studies, as well as the need to consider grammatical gender as one of the factors which impact word learnability (Laufer 1997). The paper ends with a discussion of the limitations of our study and suggestions for further research.

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VARIABILITY OF SUBJECT ISLAND EFFECTS: EXPERIMENTAL FINDINGS FROM SPANISH

1. INTRODUCTION. The unacceptability of extractions from island domains (Ross 1967) has been explained by postulating general syntactic constraints (see Chomsky 1977, 1995; Huang 1982, a.o.). The prevailing assumption for these grammatical approaches is that these constraints apply universally across different constructions and languages. However, in the last decade, the literature has argued that this assumption does not hold for subject islands (i.e., the ban of extractions from subjects). For instance, Haegeman et al. (2014) propose that the island status of subjects in English and Spanish emerges from the interaction and cumulative effect of multiple factors (such as type of verb, position of the subject, its thematic role, or its definiteness), rather than a single, general constraint. This casts doubts on constraint-based explanations of island effects. Furthermore, experimental research on subject islands has shown variation both in the strength of the island effects and the conditions that determine their unacceptability cross-linguistically (see, e.g., Abeillé et al. 2020; Polinsky et al. 2013). Our research aims to investigate how some of the different factors listed above interact to create what's perceived as a degraded extraction out of a subject in Spanish. To do so, we designed a series of experimental tasks, aiming to answer the following general questions: Is the unacceptability of extractions from subjects the result of the combined effect of diverse factors? If it is, what does that suggest about the mechanisms governing long-distance dependencies? In this presentation, we report and discuss the results of one of these tasks, which compared type of verb and subject position.

2. OUR STUDY. Building on Haegeman et al.'s theoretical proposal, and Polinsky et al.'s experimental work, this study aims to answer the question of what makes subjects an island for extraction in Spanish, filling an empirical gap in the literature. We focus on the difference between unergative (UE) and unaccusative (UA) verbs, which involve different types of subjects: while the former is an external argument (i.e., merged as a specifier), the latter is an internal argument (i.e., merged as a complement)—transitive verbs were tested in a previous experiment, not reported here. The external/internal argument distinction interacts with the surface position of the subjects in Spanish: subjects can appear in a preverbal or a postverbal position, and it's commonly assumed that the former is a derived/moved position, while the latter is not. As Wexler and Culicover (1980) (a.o.) claim, a moved constituent is frozen for extraction. Thus, we predicted a gradience of acceptability as follows: UA + post-verbal > UE + post-verbal > UA + pre-verbal \cong UE + pre-verbal. This gradience would reflect how the type of verb and the subject position interact to (dis)allow extractions from subjects, under the assumption that moved elements are harder to extract from; and that extraction from complements is easier than from specifiers (consistent with Huang 1982, a.o.).

3. METHODS. We conducted a 1-7 Likert scale acceptability judgment task with a 2x2 design, through the PCIBex platform (Zehr and Schwarz 2018). 12 experimental item sets were created by manipulating type of verb (unaccusative vs. unergative) and subject position (pre vs. post-verbal). Each sentence was preceded by a supportive context (see (1) for a sample item); in all cases the extracted wh-phrase was D-linked, and the subject was indefinite. This created a 'best-case' scenario, minimizing potential effects from other factors. We included a balanced number of grammatical and ungrammatical fillers. Each participant (n=118) read and judged 36 sentences (with their corresponding contexts).

- (1) Unergative verb: *correr* 'to race' | Unaccusative verb: *morir* 'to die'

Context: Talking about a car race, Juan tells Pedro that a driver from Angola {**raced** | **died**} in the final. The next day, Pedro asks Juan:

- a. *Post-verbal condition*

¿[De qué país]_i dijiste que {**corrió** | **murió**} un piloto ____i en la final?
of which country said.2SG that raced.3SG died.3SG a driver in the final

Literal: "[Of which country]_i did you say that {raced / died} a driver ____i in the final?"

b. *Pre-verbal condition*

¿[De qué país]_i dijiste que un piloto ____i {**corrió** | **murió**} en la final?
 of which country said.2SG that a driver raced.3SG died.3SG in the final
 Literal: “[Of which country]_i did you say that a driver ____i {raced / died} in the final?”

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION. To eliminate by-participant scale biases, raw ratings were z-score transformed and analyzed using mixed effect linear regression models. Figure 1 shows the results. Although we didn’t find a significant effect of type of verb, we did find a strong tendency ($p = 0.516$); same for the interaction ($p = 0.645$). In a nested comparison model, we found that, for unaccusative verbs, extractions from postverbal subjects were rated better than extractions from preverbal subjects ($p = 0.0206$). This asymmetry, however, was absent in questions involving unergative verbs; in these cases, the surface position of the subject did not show any effects ($p = 0.7803$). Overall, the experimental data show that extractions from unaccusative postverbal subjects were rated better than those from the other three conditions, which yielded similar results.

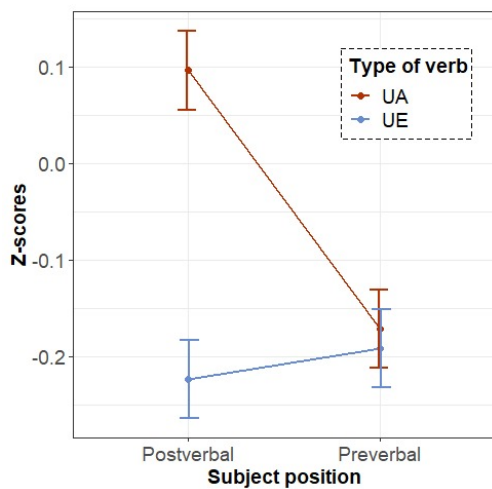


Figure 1: Results

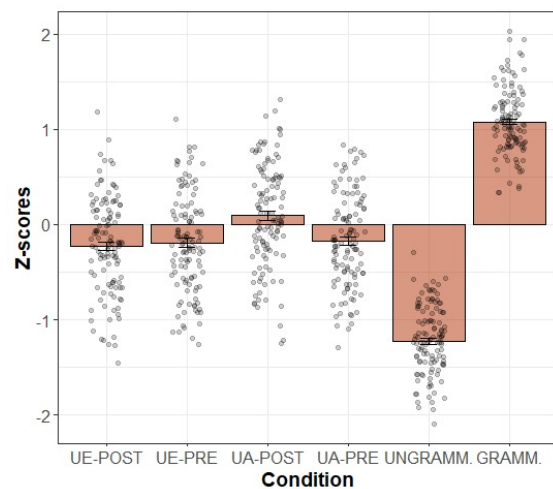


Figure 2: Inter-speaker variation

These results show that the surface position of the subject only affects extractions from subjects of unaccusative verbs, but not of unergative verbs. A possible explanation for these results is that extractions from subjects in complement position (i.e., postverbal subjects of unaccusative verbs) are better than extractions from subjects in specifier position, regardless of whether this position is derived (i.e., preverbal subjects of both types of verbs) or not (i.e., postverbal subjects of unergative verbs). This resembles Huang’s (1982) Condition on Extraction Domains, although a CED account would predict a more clear-cut pattern, which we don’t find. Furthermore, our data suggest that there are no freezing effects, given that extractions of post- and preverbal subjects of unergative verbs are not different from each other. It’s also worth mentioning that the unmarked position for subjects of unergatives in Spanish is preverbal (*Sonia trabajó* vs. *Trabajó Sonia* ‘Sonia worked.’). In this respect, it might be the case that extractions from postverbal subjects of unergative verbs could be penalized as a marked position. Finally, Figure 2 shows the distribution of mean z-scores across participants and conditions, revealing substantial variation in the ratings of these structures (as compared to (un)grammatical fillers). We argue that the observed interspeaker variability also challenges universal constraint-based accounts of subject islands.

5. CONCLUSIONS. Our research fills an empirical gap by examining the acceptability of extractions from subjects in Spanish, focusing on the comparison between type of verb (unaccusative vs. unergative) and subject position (preverbal vs. postverbal). Our predicted gradience in the judgments was not found, and surface position of the subject doesn’t seem to be determinant across the board. Our results suggests that what matters is the complement vs. specifier position from where extraction takes place. Finally, the inter-speaker variation found challenges the universality of syntactic constraints and also cautions against simply relying on the presence/absence of the relevant statistical effects.

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Intensional genitive in Polish

Intensional verbs belong to a number of semantic classes (Moltmann 1997, Larson 2002, Hinzen et al. 2014), such as: (i) verbs of search and examination, e.g. *seek, look for*, etc., (ii) verbs of absence, e.g. *lack, need*, etc., (iii) verbs of desire and volition, e.g. *want, long for*, etc., (iv) verbs of expectation and presumption, e.g. *expect, await*, etc., (v) verbs of resemblance and similarity, e.g. *resemble, compare*, etc., (vi) verbs of creation and depiction, e.g. *imagine, draw*, etc., and (vii) cognitive verbs, e.g. *see, feel*, etc. The criteria of intensionality, posited in the literature (Moltmann 1997, 2008, i.a.), are as follows: (a) the availability of non-specific readings for complements of intensional verbs, (b) the lack of existential import, and (c) the failure of truth preservation under extensional substitution. In Balto-Slavic languages, including Lithuanian (Šereikaitė 2020, Sigurðsson and Šereikaitė 2024), Russian, Ukrainian and Polish (Kagan 2013), intensional verbs may co-occur with complements marked for genitive case, which is then called intensional genitive.

In this paper, we examine the distribution and syntactic properties of intensional genitive in Polish. Polish intensional genitive has received very little attention, in contradistinction to the genitive of negation and partitive genitive, which have been extensively analysed (cf., Franks 1995, Przepiórkowki 2000, Witkoś 2020, i.a.). In order to determine which intensional verbs can appear with genitive complements in Polish, we first searched for the verbs which select genitive complements in *Walenty*, an online valency dictionary of Polish (<https://walenty.ipipan.waw.pl>). Subsequently, the verbs with genitive complements were subjected to the three intensionality diagnostics mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The search yielded 33 intensional verbs, which can take complements marked for intensional genitive. The intensional verbs that can co-occur with intensional genitive belong to the following four semantic classes: (i) verbs of absence: *brakować* ‘lack’, *potrzebować* ‘need’, *żądać* ‘demand’, *dopraszać się* ‘ask for, etc., (ii) verbs of desire and volition: *chcieć* ‘want’, *pragnąć* ‘desire’, *zyczyć* ‘wish’, *łaknąć* ‘want/wish’, etc., (iii) verbs of search: *szukać* ‘seek’, *poszukać* ‘seek’, *patrzeć* ‘seek’, *doszukiwać się* ‘try to find’, etc., and (iv) verbs of expectation: *spodziewać się* ‘expect’, *oczekiwać* ‘expect’, *wyczekiwać* ‘expect’, *wypatrywać* ‘expect’, etc.. Verbs of resemblance and similarity, verbs of creation and depiction, as well as cognitive verbs only appear with accusative complements in Polish. The application of the three intensionality tests to selected intensional verbs from the four semantic classes mentioned above is illustrated in (1)–(3) below:

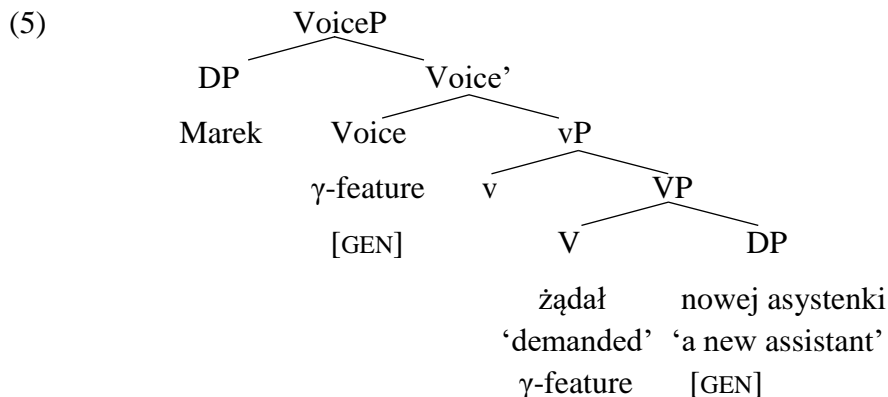
- (1) Żądam /Chcę /Szukam /Spodziewam się nowej asystentki
 I.demand I.want I.search.for I.expect REFL new.GEN assistant.GEN
 (jakakolwiek się nada).
 any RELF suffice
 ‘I demand/want/search for/expect a new assistant (any will do).’
- (2) Żądam /Chcę /Szukam /Spodziewam się gwiazdki z nieba.
 I.demand I.want I.search.for I.expect REFL star.GEN from heaven
 ‘I demand/want/search for/expect the moon.’
- (3) a. Żądam /Chcę /Szukam /Spodziewam się Supermana.
 I.demand I.want I.search.for I.expect REFL Superman.GEN
 ‘I demand/want/search for/expect Superman.’
- b. Żądam /Chcę /Szukam/ Spodziewam się Clarka.
 I.demand I.want I.search.for I.expect REFL Clark.GEN
 ‘I demand/want/search for/expect Clark.’

The data in (1) show that the four classes of intensional verbs admit of a non-specific reading of their genitive case-marked complement. The examples in (2) demonstrate that the verbs under scrutiny may appear with complements that lack existential entailments. Finally, the sentences in (3a–b) illustrate that substituting one expression for another that is co-referential with it in the complement of the verb changes the truth-value of the sentence in which the VP occurs. Verbs from *fear*-class, like *bać się* ‘fear’, *obawiać się* ‘fear’, *unikać* ‘avoid’, etc., require a genitive complement, but they do not allow the non-specific reading of their genitive complement (Moltmann 1997). Hence, the genitive with *fear*-class verbs is not intensional.

Having determined the inventory of verbs which can appear with intensional genitive in Polish, we turn to analysing the intensional genitive itself. We first examine whether intensional genitive is structural or inherent. Although intensional genitive hardly ever alternates with accusative (this is only possible with *chcieć* ‘want’ and *potrzebować* ‘need’), it seems to represent structural case. This is because (i) the genitive complement may be replaced with *dużo* ‘a lot’-phrase, which is restricted to structural case positions (Przepiórkowski 1999: 112), (ii) complements marked for intensional genitive may be replaced with distributive *po*-phrases, which are only admissible in structural case positions (Franks 1995, Przepiórkowski 1999), and (iii) the genitive object may turn into nominative under passivisation. The passivisation of the complement marked for intensional genitive is illustrated in (4), taken from the National Corpus of Polish:

- (4) Pieniądze, o których tu mowa zażądane zostały
 money.NOM about which here talk demanded become
 na rzecz największego klubu sejmowego.
 for sake biggest club parliament
 ‘The money mentioned here has been demanded for the biggest parliamentary club.’

We argue that the structural intensional genitive in Polish is assigned by a thematic Voice in the configuration similar to that associated with structural accusative. Following Šereikaitė’s (2020) analysis of structural dative in Lithuanian, we propose that the Voice that assigns intensional genitive is equipped with a special feature, which forces it to select a special class of predicates. Intensional case assignment is schematically depicted in (5):



In (5), the Voice is equipped with an uninterpretable γ -feature, which is checked by the corresponding feature on the verb via Agree. The Voice with the γ -feature combines with the genitive case, which is then assigned to the DP *nowej asystenki* ‘a new assistant’. If there is no Agree between the verb and Voice, the Voice will assign accusative case by the Elsewhere Principle. The selectional relationship between different verbal roots and Voice heads, proposed here, has also been invoked in Alexiadou et al. (2008) and Schäfer (2008).

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Dealing with "subject-oriented" reflexive possessive in clauses with quirky or mismatching subjects in Czech

Czech grammars, e.g., Trávníček (1951), Grepš and Karlík (1989), Daneš et al. (1987), and Grepš et al. (2012) state that the basic condition and at the same time the obligatory syntactic context of reflexive possessive *svůj* is the co-reference with the external argument of the verb, i.e. subject.

- (1) a. *(My_i/Každý_j) budeme_h mít svoji_{i/j/h} postel.*
we_i each_j have_{I.ST.PL.FUT} REFL bed.
"We/ Each of us will have our/ their (own) bed."

While reflexive possessives seem to prefer anaphoric binding with an antecedent in subject position to others, the subject position antecedent can be referred to not only by reflexive possessives but also by non-reflexive possessive pronouns.

- (2) a. *Já mám můj/ svůj mobil.*
I have my/ REFL phone.
"I_i have my_i phone."
b. *Lukáš chytil jeho/ svého psa.*
Lukáš caught his/ REFL dog.
"Lukáš_i caught his_i dog."

Complete non-complementarity was reported for the first and second person, but not third person, by Sturgeon (2003: 83). My survey suggests that rather than complete non-complementarity, there exists an inter-speaker variation (as opposed to cases of different elements, e.g. Spanish clitics, which show behavior dependent on person-contexts).

Furthermore, according to Mertins' (2021) questionnaire, 28,5% the subject of the sentence, *Petr* in (3), was identified as the referent for the non-reflexive pronoun (for reasons of space I provide a shortened example) which should be interpreted as cataphor due to the presence of a "better" non-local referent. *Martin* in (3).

- (3) *Zatímco se Petr_i (local) honí kolem stromu s jeho_j pejskem, vyleze Martin_j (nonlocal) na hromadu dříví.*
Expected interpretation: "While Petr_i (local) plays chase around a tree with his_j dog, Martin_j (non-local) climbs a timber pile." (Mertins, 2021:111)

More cross-linguistic data suggest further parametric variation - if the antecedent is subject, the reflexive possessive is preferred, but not all antecedents of reflexive possessives are in subject position. See the following example from Russian (Nedoluzhko, 2016: 114) and Norwegian.

- (4) a. CZ: *Matku_i vždy velice těšila péče o *své_i děti.*
b. RU: *Mamu_i vseгда očēn radovala zabota o svoich_i detjach.*
c. NO: *Moren_i min liktealltid å ta seg av barnasine_i.*
"The care for self's children always gave joy to the mother."

As to the status of subject, in Czech, as a nominative-accusative language, the formal syntactic subject canonically surfaces as nominative.

- (5) David chce jít ven.
David_{NOM} want_{3RD-PRES} g_{INF} out.
"David wants to go out."

Nevertheless, Czech tradition also notes that there are “subjectless” sentences and Čakányová (2024) explores subjects of verbs of cognition or perception where both formal and semantic subjects are present but in a form of two separate constituents (5a, 6a).

- (6) a. Davidovi se nechce pracovat.
 David_{DAT} not-want_{3SG.N.REFL} work_{INF}
 "David doesn't feel like working."
 b. Davidovi se nechce udělat svůj díl práce.
 David_{DAT} not-want_{3SG.N.REFL} do REFL part_{ACC} work_{GEN}.
 "David doesn't feel like doing his part of work."
- (7) a. Janu škrábe v krku.
 Jana_{ACC}scrape_{-3.SG.N} in throat_{LOC.SG.M}
 "Jana has a sore throat."
 b. *Janu škrábe ve svém krku.
- (8) Jana ho zanechala svému/ jeho osudu.
 Jana him_{ACC} left_{3.SG.F} REFL/ his faith
 "Jana left him to his faith."

Some of these contexts, as well as others, as illustrated in (8), allow reflexive possessive referring to an antecedent which is not in the formal subject position.

The first part of this paper offers an account of the variation between the reflexive and non-reflexive possessive through hierarchically ordered binding domains of different size (based on Fischer) and Agree mechanism with no co-indexation (extended to reflexive possessive from Reuland 2012).

In the second part, the focus is on the analysis of Czech cases where the antecedent of the reflexive possessive is not in the subject position, discussing first the formal properties of semantic subjects (as in 5 and 6) through established subject tests (Sigurðsson 1992, Poole 2015) and the featural content of the reflexive possessive stating the underspecification, but not non-existent status of 3rd person (following e.g. Nevins 2007). Following Despić (2015), it is also argued that the reflexive possessive agrees with an antecedent in the higher phase but not necessarily subject.

Finally, I discuss the mechanics rendering all the above presented contexts of reflexive possessives confirming that, as convincingly argued by Reuland (2012) and Despić (2015), they exist only in languages either lacking definiteness marking or encoding definiteness postnominally.

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What measure phrases can tell about relative and absolute adjectives – and vice versa

Analysing measure phrase constructions continues to be a point of contention (see Corver 2009, Csirmaz & Stavrou 2017, Scontras 2020).

One particular problem is how to account for the differing behaviour in constructions such as (1) and (2). Constructions with absolute adjectives, such as *square* in (1), allow for the deletion of measure phrases without a significant change in meaning, whereas constructions with relative adjectives, such as *tall* in (2), do not¹.

- (1) a (2x2-meter) **square** table
- (2) a *(3-foot) **tall** boy

This raises the questions of a) how to analyse these measure phrase-adjective combinations with special emphasis on the functions of measure phrase and adjective, and b) how to explain the functional and formal behaviour of these adjectives.

This paper argues that the relative/absolute distinction of adjectives plays a central role in the analysis of measure phrase-adjective constructions, and that, in turn, the analysis of measure phrase-adjective constructions offers valuable insights for the analysis of adjectives in their base form, especially regarding the relative/absolute distinction. It thus proposes a) for measure phrase constructions with relative adjectives a predicate-argument relation, and for measure phrase constructions with absolute adjectives a head-modifier relation. It further proposes b) that this difference is based on differences in the adjective's associated scale structures, and c) that Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG, Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008) is particularly suitable for capturing and explaining their functional and formal behaviour.

Relative adjectives are associated with open-ended scales, while absolute adjectives are associated with (partially) closed scales (Kennedy & McNally 2005: 354f.) or an either-or distinction (Paradis 2001: 52). While the latter thus has an absolute standard regardless of its head, as in (3), the former's standard is relative to the head, as in (4).

- (3) a square **floor tiles** vs. a square **table**
- (4) a tall **boy** vs. a tall **tree**

In both (5) and (6), the measure phrase provides an explicit value, however, in (5) it fixes the relative adjective's value to an explicit degree value, whereas in (6) it only provides further detail about the absolute adjective.

- (5) a **5-foot**-tall boy
- (6) a **2x2**-meter-square table

In both cases, measure phrase (q_i) and adjective (f_k) are analysed as forming a compound that applies to the head (x_i). For relative adjectives, as in (7), this compound is a Configurational Property (f_j), consisting of a predicate (the adjective *tall* (f_k)) and an argument (the measure phrase *5-foot* (q_i)). For absolute adjectives, as in (8), this compound is a Complex Property (f_j)

¹ A *3-foot tall boy* does not entail that the boy is tall (in the sense of 'above average height'). Deleting the measure phrase thus changes the interpretation of the adjective *tall* and leads to a considerable change in meaning of the expression. A *2x2 meter square table*, however, entails that it is a square table, thus allowing for the deletion without a considerable change in meaning.

consisting of a head (the adjective *square* (f_k)) and a modifier (the measure phrase *2x2-meter* (q_i)).

(7) (1 x_i : (f_i : boy (f_i)) (x_i): (f_j : [$(f_k$: tall (f_k)) (5 q_i : (f_i : foot (f_i)) (q_i))^{Degree}] (f_j)) (x_i))

(8) (1 x_i : (f_i : table (f_i)) (x_i): (f_j : (f_k : square (f_k): (2x2 q_i : (f_i : meter (f_i)) (q_i)) (f_k)) (f_j)) (x_i))

This accounts for the possibility to delete measure phrases combining with absolute adjectives, and the impossibility to do so with relative adjectives.

Further, an analysis of measure phrase and adjective as compound explains the non-prototypical behaviour of the measure noun (f_i) regarding inflection and modification, an alternative to semi-lexicality analyses (cf. Csirmaz & Stavrou 2017: 5-8 and references therein).

In the absence of an explicit value, relative adjectives need a comparison class argument as their standard, while absolute adjectives do not, since they can make use of their scale's endpoint(s) (Kennedy & McNally 2005: 349-358). This is captured by analysing the relative adjective *tall* (f_k) in its base form as having a comparison class argument (x_j) with the same denotation as the head, i.e. the Lexical Property (f_i) of being a boy, as in (9), and the absolute adjective *square* (f_i) as not having one, as in (10).

(9) (1 x_i : (f_i : boy (f_i)) (x_i): (f_j : [$(f_k$: tall (f_k)) (x_j : (f_i) (x_j))^{comparison_class}] (f_j)) (x_i))

(10) (1 x_i : (f_i : table (f_i)) (x_i): (f_j : square (f_j)) (x_i))

The paper will further discuss differences between attributive and predicative uses of measure phrase-adjective constructions, proposing that in the latter case adjective and measure phrase do not form a compound, thus accounting for differences in conceptualization and formalisation between the two uses.

In sum, the proposed analysis presents a different perspective on measure phrase-adjective constructions, with an emphasis on the relative/absolute distinction of adjectives, and shows how FDG can capture and account for the functional and formal consequences of this distinction.

Keywords:

Measure phrase, relative adjective, absolute adjective, Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG), degree modification

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The Distribution of Contrastive Topics in Japanese

Issue: In Japanese, a phrase marked with the topic marker *-wa* results in two types of topic interpretations; one is the thematic topic (TT) and the other is the contrastive topic (CT). This presentation focuses on the distribution of the latter type of topics, that is, CTs in Japanese. It is assumed that CTs have relatively free distributions; the subject *John-wa* in (1a) and the object *ringo-wa* in (1b) can be interpreted as CTs, respectively.

- (1) a. (Mary-wa toot-ta-ga,) John-wa zannennakotoni siken-ni oti-ta.
 M.-CT pass-PST-but J.-CT unfortunately exam-DAT fail-PST
 ‘(Although Mary passed the exam,) [John]_{CT} unfortunately failed the exam.’
 b. (Banana-wa tabe-nakat-ta-ga,) John-ga kinoo ringo-wa tabe-ta.
 banana-CT eat-NEG-PST-but J.-NOM yesterday apple-CT eat-PST
 ‘(Although he didn’t eat a banana,) John ate [an apple]_{CT} yesterday.’

However, CTs cannot appear in some environments; contrary to the nominative-marked counterpart in (2a), the CT, *Mary-wa*, cannot be licensed inside the relative clause (RC) headed by *otokonoko* ‘boy’ in (2b) (e.g., Hara 2006: 73–74). The case in (2b) contrasts with an English CT in the RC in (3).

- (2) a. John-ga [[Mary-ga kinoo kooen-de mi-ta] otokonoko]-o sagasiteiru.
 J.-NOM M.-NOM yesterday park-at watch-PST boy-ACC looking.for
 ‘John is looking for a boy who Mary watched at the park yesterday.’
 b. *John-ga [[Mary-wa kinoo kooen-de mi-ta] otokonoko]-o sagasiteiru.
 J.-NOM M.-CT yesterday park-at watch-PST boy-ACC looking.for
 ‘John is looking for a boy who [Mary]_{CT} watched at the park yesterday.’

- (3) A: What about Mary? Did she bring something tasty?
 B: The dish that [Mary]_{CT} brought was superb. (Constant 2014:64, slightly modified)

Puzzlingly, even in RCs, an object can be interpreted as CT, as in (4), where *ringo-wa* serves as a CT.

- (4) John-ga [[kinoo kooen-de ringo-wa tabe-ta] otokonoko]-o sagasiteiru.
 J.-NOM yesterday park-at apple-CT eat-PST boy-ACC looking.for
 ‘John is looking for a boy who ate [an apple]_{CT} at the park yesterday.’

In this presentation, we offer theoretical explanations for the following issues: (i) the asymmetry in RCs between Japanese and English (=2b)/(3)) and (ii) the subject/object asymmetry in Japanese RCs (=2b)/(4).

Proposal and Analysis: Rizzi (1997) hypothesizes that elements like DPs obtaining discourse-related interpretations already have a topic feature in the lexicon. Nakajima (2017) argues, however, that such a feature is not intrinsic to elements in the lexicon but assigned to them contextually. Building on Nakajima’s insight, we argue that functional heads are responsible for discourse-marking via the Discourse Feeding in (5).

- (5) Discourse Feeding (DF):

Discourse functional heads are designated to have both valued and unvalued features of F in the lexicon (e.g., [*u*Top, *v*Top]) and feed (spread) such features to a potentially discourse-marked element in their c-commanding domains.

- (6) a. [_C_[*u*Top, +Top]] ... [_{XP}_[*v*Top]] b. [_C_[+Top, *v*Top]] ... [_{YP}_[*u*Top]]

If we take the (6a) option, where [*v*Top] is fed to XP, [*u*Top] on C probes XP_[*v*Top] and receives a value in long-distance fashion. See the rough derivation of (3B), shown in (7), where C can feed [*v*Top] within the RC in English.

- (7) [DP the dish_{*i*} [_{CP} C_[*u*Top, +Top] that [_{TP} Mary [_{*v*Top]} ... brought *t_i*]]] was superb.
↑
OK_{DF}

Let us turn to the discussion of RCs in Japanese. We follow Murasugi (1991, 2000) in assuming that

RCs in Japanese consist of TP, rather than CP. If C is unavailable in a relative clause in Japanese, it is expected that the DF by C is inapplicable, and a subject in a RC cannot be interpreted as a CT. This expectation is borne out by (2b), with its rough derivation being illustrated in (8).

- (8) * $[_{CP} [_{TP} \text{John-ga} \boxed{[_{DP} [_{TP} \text{Mary-wa kinoo kooen-de mi-ta} \text{otokonoko}]]}] \text{-o sagasiteiru}] C_{[u_{Top}, +\text{Top}]}$
-

RCs in Japanese lack C; thus, the DF by C is never available inside RCs in the first place. Furthermore, we cannot rely on the matrix C to license CTs inside RCs since they constitute islands; hence, the DF targeting inside islands is blocked due to their barrierhood for syntactic operations (e.g., movement/agree). Therefore, the parametric difference between Japanese RCs and those in English with regard to whether subjects in RCs can receive a CT interpretation is straightforwardly explained by the presence or absence of the C head *within* RCs; a subject within RCs in Japanese, unlike one in RCs in English, cannot be licensed as a CT because of the lack of C that can feed $[v_{Top}]$.

Of interest to us is that an object in Japanese RCs can be interpreted as a CT, as in (4). This subject/object asymmetry in RCs in Japanese comes from the existence of the functional *v* head (see Nakamura 2021 for the licensing of CTs by the *v* head). While subjects in RCs cannot obtain $[v_{Top}]$ due to the lack of C in Japanese, objects can be potential candidates for the DF from *v* since they reside in a c-commanding domain of *v*. See (9), where the DF by *v* is applicable to the object *ringo* ‘an apple’.

- (9) $[_{CP} [_{TP} \text{John-ga} \boxed{[_{DP} [_{TP} \dots [_{vP} [_{NP} \text{ringo-wa}]_{[v_{Top}]}] v_{[u_{Top}, +\text{Top}]]} \dots]} \text{otokonoko}]] \text{-o sagasiteiru}] C$
-

Hence, our approach can explain (i) the asymmetry in RCs between Japanese and English and (ii) the subject/object asymmetry in relative clauses in Japanese with respect to the availability of CTs.

The present analysis can be supported by the following examples exhibiting the inapplicability of the CT interpretation of a subject within the coordinated TP clauses in Japanese. According to Kishimoto (2013), the highest projection coordinated by the disjunctive particle *-ka* is highly likely to be TP. This analysis is supported by the fact that the structurally high modal adverbs *osoraku* ‘probably’ and *tabun* ‘perhaps’, which are argued to occupy projections higher than TP (e.g., Minami 1974, 1993; Cinque 1999), cannot appear within the disjunctive coordination involving *-ka* in (10).

- (10) * $[_{\text{Ken-ga}} \text{tabun} \text{hasir-u} \text{ka}] [_{\text{Mari-ga}} \text{osoraku} \text{hasir-u} \text{ka}] \text{da}$.
 Ken-NOM probably run-PRES DJ Mari-NOM perhaps run-PRES DJ COP
 ‘Either Ken will probably run or Mari will perhaps run.’ (Kishimoto 2013:200)

Based on Kishimoto’s (2013) analysis, it follows that such a disjunctive TP-coordination lacks the C head, with the further expectation that a CT interpretation of a subject in the relevant coordination cannot be obtained because the DF by C does not occur due to the absence of the C head. Indeed, this expectation is borne out; a subject cannot be marked with a contrastive marker *-WA*, as in (11b).

- (11) a. $\text{sentakusi-wa}, [_{\text{Ken-ga}} \text{hasir-u} \text{ka}] [_{\text{Mari-ga}} \text{hasir-u} \text{ka}] \text{da}$.
 option-TT Ken-NOM run-PRES DJ Mari-NOM run-PRES DJ COP
 ‘The option is Ken will run or Mari will run.’
 b. * $\text{sentakusi-wa}, [_{\text{Ken-WA}} \text{hasir-u} \text{ka}] [_{\text{Mari-WA}} \text{hasir-u} \text{ka}] \text{da}$.
 option-TT Ken-CT run-PRES DJ Mari-CT run-PRES DJ COP

The above examples show that the CT-marked nominal, unlike the nominative-marked counterpart, cannot be licensed in the disjunctive TP-coordination due to the lack of C. Furthermore, if coordinated structures behave like an island, we cannot appeal to the matrix C head to license the CT interpretation.

- (12) * $[_{CP} \dots \boxed{[_{TP} \text{Ken-WA} \dots \text{DJ}] [_{TP} \text{Mari-WA} \dots \text{DJ}]} \dots \text{matrix } C_{[u_{Top}, +\text{Top}]}$
-

A straightforward explanation for the unacceptability of (11b) is that the matrix C head cannot feed $[v_{Top}]$ to the embedded subjects owing to the islandhood of coordinated structures.

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The ambiguous *it BE (not) that*: the inferential and existential readings

Introduction. This paper deals with the form *it BE (not) that* + clause. While researchers agree on the fact that the *it BE (not) that* (henceforth, IBT) form is a type of focus construction, there is no consensus on what type. IBTs have been largely analyzed as either so-called inferentials (e.g., Declerck 1992; Delahunty 1995, 2001) or extraposition (e.g., Haugland 1992: 62; Hurford 1973). This paper argues that the different analyses essentially arise from the fact that the form is ambiguous between a specificational and an existential reading (cf. Bolinger 2018[1972]: 36). Consider the following example:

- (1) a. For the past three years I have been rehearsing in secret a new effect. I can't even tell either of you what it is. *It's not that I don't trust you*, but I cannot afford that the tabloids get a hold of this now. (COCA 2008: movie)
- b. The reason is not that I don't trust you, but...
- c. It is not the case that I don't trust you, but... = I do trust you, but..

The negation in example (1a) can either be analyzed to reject the proposition in the *that*-clause as the reason for not revealing the addressee the secret effect (as paraphrased in (1b)) or to reject the proposition (i.e., its factuality) in the *that*-clause (as paraphrased in (1c)). The former reading corresponds to the inferential analysis, and the latter to the extraposition analysis. Based on data from the *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) and *News on the Web* (NOW), the paper addresses (i) what evidence we have for the dual interpretations of the IBT form and (ii) how Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG; Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008) can effectively elucidate the form's ambiguity.

IBT as an inferential construction. Inferentials may fulfil various discourse-pragmatic functions depending on the context, but typically express an explanation or reason for a preceding statement (e.g. Delahunty 2001). Declerck (1992) essentially considers inferentials to be semantically specificational and explains their usage in terms of an inferred variable and a corresponding value. That is, the speaker uses inferentials to clarify what value (best) satisfies an inferred variable (e.g. a reason, cause, result, etc.). Evidence for the specificational analysis comes from scope relations (e.g. modality, negation, etc.). Consider the following negative inferential:

- (2) I've been studying Czech on and off for a couple of years now [...] I'm not sure I have the guts to do like you though. Any suggestions for someone not so bold/brave? *It's not that I worry about looking like a moron* (although I admit that the concern is somewhat there), I more worry about offending that person. Once in Chicago, we went to a Czech restaurant. I tried to speak Czech to the waitress. She got annoyed, gave a dirty look and said, "I do speak English you know." (COCA 2012: web)

The inferential in (2) clarifies what the speaker's problem or dilemma with using Czech (as a non-native speaker) is. Importantly, the speaker clearly does not deny the truth or validity of the *that*-clause, as the following segment would lead to a contradictory statement (also see Delahunty 1995). That is, that the speaker is not worrying about looking like a moron would be conflicting with that concern being somewhat there. What is more, the comparative element *more* clearly indicates that the speaker indeed worries about looking like moron, but just so to a lesser (or less significant) degree.

IBT as an existential construction. The negation in the IBT form has also been analyzed in terms of asserting the negation of the embedded clause (Hurford 1973: 252) or to “[deny] the proposition expressed in the content clause” (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 962). In example (3), the construction *it wasn’t that I was arrogant* is a response to speaker A’s polar question *were you arrogant?*. Indeed, speaker B appears to deny that they were arrogant in that situation, as opposed to rejecting a reason, problem, result, etc.

- (3) A: Jeremy, were you arrogant? Is Zach right?
 B: No, *it wasn’t that I was arrogant*, chef.

The utterance in (3) is not specificational and does not involve an inferred variable; a substitution of the *it* by *reason, trouble, consequence*, etc. would not be appropriate in this particular context. Instead, the construction can roughly be paraphrased by *it is/was not true/the case that I was arrogant* (see also Haugland 1992: 62). Put differently, the negation in the example above is used to deny the validity or factuality of the proposition in the *that*-clause.

Analysis. Building on Bolinger (2018[1972]: 36), the form IBT is analyzed to be ambiguous between an inferential and existential construction. While sharing the same morphosyntactic form, the inferential (4) and existential (5) constructions differ at the Representational (RL; ≈semantics) and Interpersonal (IL; ≈pragmatics) Levels.

- (4) IL: (C₁: [-I worry about looking like a moron-] (C₁))
 RL: (p₁: (pres **neg** ep₁: (e₁: (f^c₁: [(p₂) (p₂: [-I worry...-] (p₂))] (f^c₁)) (e₁)) (ep₁)) (p₁))
- (5) IL: (**emph** C₁: [-I wasn’t arrogant-] (C₁))
 RL: (p₁: (**neg** past ep₁: [-I am arrogant-] (ep₁)) (p₁))

This paper analyzes inferentials with two (co-indexed) Propositional Contents (p₂) in a specificational configuration, one of which representing an absent-headed variable. It is argued that the negation operator (when present) goes to the overall specificational configuration at the RL (contra Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2018: 38). By contrast, the existential construction is analyzed as a grammatical expression of Emphasis (cf. Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 106); negative existentials are accounted in terms of emphasizing the non-occurrence of an event.

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According to Moritake (2022, to appear), the difference in the way that nominative Case is assigned to a subject comes from the parameterization of features on C (see Rizzi 2017 for the argument that the difference of features on functional heads may be directly associated with the syntactic parameterization; see also Borer 1984 and Chomsky 1995). Moritake (2022, to appear) argues that when [μ phi] is present on C, phi-feature Agree is dominant over upward Agree for Case and underlies the realization of nominative subjects in a language like English. On the other hand, if [μ phi] is absent on C, upward Agree is responsible for nominative Case assignment to a subject in a language like Japanese.

Furthermore, Moritake (to appear) proposes that the C head with only [NOM], available in Japanese, is programmed as one of the default feature settings of the C head in grammar. This analysis is supported by the facts observed in child English. Interestingly, English-speaking children around two to three years of age can produce nominative subjects not only in finite clauses with a phi-feature agreement morphology *-s* on a verb, as shown in (8a), but also in a clause where *-s* is absent, as demonstrated in (8b) (Harris & Wexler 1996; Schütze & Wexler 1996; Ingham 1998; among others).

- (8) a. He has six. (Nina, 2;2) (Schütze & Wexler 1996:674)
 b. He bite me. (Sarah, 2;9) (Harris & Wexler 1996:11)

Assuming that sentences like the one in (8b) lack phi-feature Agree altogether since no agreement morphology is observable, Moritake (to appear) argues, together with Rizzi's (2017) idea that features on functional heads lead to syntactic parameterization, that it is necessary to adopt the hypothesis that C with only [NOM] is accessible to children acquiring English as a default strategy, and hence, C bearing only [NOM] allows children acquiring English to utilize upward Agree to implement nominative Case assignment. The subject in (8b) can thus agree with $C_{[NOM]}$ upwardly; accordingly, it receives nominative Case, even though phi-feature Agree between C and the subject is absent in (8b).

Building on Moritake's (2022, to appear) analysis, I propose that although phi-feature Agree is not available in AAE, adults who speak AAE can access C with only [NOM] in the same way as people who speak Japanese (and English-speaking children around the age of two to three) can, whereby subjects like those in (1) and (2) can obtain nominative Case via upward Agree, as roughly schematized in (9).

- (9) [$_{CP}$ [$_{C'} C_{[NOM]}$ [$_{TP}$ subject $_{[\mu Case], [\mu phi]}$...]]] (AAE)
 ↑
 upward Agree between C and DP → Nominative Case

This analysis is corroborated by the fact found in child AAE. It is observed that children acquiring AAE also admit the absence of *-s* morphology in almost all cases, as adults who speak AAE do (Steffensen 1974; Newkirk-Turner et al. 2015; among others). This indicates that phi-feature Agree is applicable neither to adult AAE nor to child AAE. What is of significance here is that the appearance of nominative subjects is licensed in child AAE in cases where agreement morphology is not realized, as shown in (10).

- (10) a. He be band and fooling with me. (AAE) (Jamilla, 3;6) (Green 2004:64)
 b. Everyday she ride a her bike to school. (AAE) (Z091, 4;5) (Green & Roeper 2007:306)

I then plausibly posit that children acquiring AAE can access C with only [NOM] by default, thereby permitting a subject to obtain nominative Case through upward Agree between $C_{[NOM]}$ and a subject.

Implication: This analysis implies that native adult speakers of AAE have not been exposed to much primary linguistic data sufficient to set the parameter of C, in contrast to adult native speakers of SE who have determined the value of C as [μ phi] plus [NOM] in the course of language acquisition; thus, adult native speakers of AAE still utter sentences including nominative subjects but lacking *-s* in environments where it cannot be omitted in SE due to the obligatory phi-feature Agree. It would not be able to account for data in AAE without assuming the availability of C with only [NOM] at the initial state.

The present analysis never makes the theory complex because C with only [NOM] is one of the default feature specifications of grammar, with the consequence that upward Agree for nominative Case is construed as one of the default agreement options in grammar.

Extension: East Anglian dialects of English (EA) allow nominative subjects to show up even if phi-feature agreement morphology *-s* does not appear on a verb, as represented in (11) (see Trudgill 1997).

- (11) a. He like it, do he? (EA) b. She buy some every day. (Trudgill 1997:140)

Trudgill (1997) suggests that the absence of *-s* is the norm in EA. This indicates that phi-feature Agree does not occur between C and a subject in EA. Building on Trudgill's (1997) suggestion, I posit that EA patterns with AAE in that people who speak EA can utilize C with only [NOM] by default; hence, nominative subjects are realizable in EA even though phi-feature Agree is never attested in this dialect.

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