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# Comparative Studies in Germanic Syntax

*Edited by*

Jutta M. Hartmann

László Molnárfi

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From Afrikaans to Zurich German

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László Molnárfi

Tilburg University



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### **Volume 97**

Comparative Studies in Germanic Syntax: From Afrikaans  
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# From Afrikaans to Zurich German

## Comparative studies in Germanic syntax

Jutta M. Hartmann & László Molnárfi

Tilburg University

The present volume contains a selection of papers presented at the 20th Comparative Germanic Syntax Workshop in Tilburg, June 2005. While – following a tradition of earlier CGSW-proceedings – the contributions cover a wide range of Germanic languages as well as a wide range of current topics in modern syntactic theory, the selection also shows a strong comparative commitment. Such commitment might seem evident. Indeed, the relevance of the comparative methodology for modern syntax, and more specifically for a theory of UG, can hardly be disputed. To some extent, syntactic theorizing is meaningless without observing, describing, comparing (and, in the ideal case, explaining) varieties or variations of a specific language phenomenon occurring cross-linguistically or in different historical stages of a given language. The aim is to find and to control the cross-linguistically relevant contrasts that do not go back to external factors, but can be explained as reflexes of the same difference in the grammar of the given languages, contributing to our better understanding of the architecture of UG.

Yet, the editors of the present volume feel (and, as we believe, this sentiment is shared by many) that the comparative aspect of CGSW has somewhat weakened in recent years and needs to be addressed in a proper way. Only if comparative studies offer more than just non-systematic side-glances to other languages can important generalizations be captured and real explanatory power achieved (cf. especially Haider 1993 or Abraham 1995 in this regard). For that reason we wanted to take the notion “comparative” and “Germanic” in the title of the Workshop seriously, and asked for contributions that address at least two Germanic languages (or different diachronic stages of the same Germanic language) in depth, or discuss a specific grammatical phenomenon of a given language in the overall Germanic perspective.

Heeding this truly comparative perspective, the essays in this volume celebrate variety both with respect to the languages investigated and the topics addressed.

The editors particularly welcome that besides the “usual suspects” (i.e. English and German) and recurring guests (i.e. the Scandinavia) of the CGSW-series, we could include here studies on lesser-investigated languages such as modern Afrikaans and Zurich German. The volume has also benefited from a strong historical component, including studies on linguistic aspects of various diachronic stages of English and German. Here, the emphasis often lies on intralinguistic, rather than cross-linguistic variety, the methodology of comparison facing particular challenges in terms of adequate collection and evaluation of historical data (see particularly McFadden & Alexiadou’s contribution in this respect).

While covering a wide range of current issues in linguistics, the present collection of essays can be subsumed under three major thematic headings. The first part of the volume contains comparative studies on predication in Germanic, addressing issues such as case dependency in the domain of predication (*Sigurðsson*), constraints of movement preserving or distorting thematic relations (*Koenenman*) or a “quirky” case of complex predicate formation in Afrikaans (*de Vos*). The second part of the volume contains papers on the (pro)nominal domain in Germanic, including studies on the licensing conditions of pronominal noun phrases (*Roehrs*), number neutralization in the Dutch pronominal system (*Postma*) and resumptive pronouns in Zurich German (*Salzmann*). The last part of the volume looks at Germanic syntax from a diachronic perspective, taking up on issues such as auxiliary selection in the history of English and, more generally, in Germanic (*McFadden & Alexiadou*), remnant fronting in Middle English (*Biberauer & Roberts*) and syntactic sources of word-formation processes in Old English and Old High German (*Trips*). Thus, the volume presents a wide range of studies that enrich both theoretical understanding and empirical foundation of comparative research on the Germanic languages.

“The Nom/Acc alternation in Germanic” by Halldór Ármann Sigurðsson describes the distribution of accusative case and discusses the nature of the nominative/accusative distinction in the standard Germanic languages. In addition, it illustrates and discusses the well-known fact that inherent accusatives and certain other types of accusatives do not behave in accordance with Bruzio’s Generalization. In spite of these Non-Burzionian accusatives, there is a general dependency relation between the so-called ‘structural’ cases, Nom and Acc, here referred to as the relational cases, such that relational Acc is licensed only in the presence of Nom (as has been argued by many). This relation is here referred to as the Sibling Correlation, SC. Contrary to common belief, however, SC is not a structural correlation, but a simple morphological one, such that Nom is the first, independent case, CASE1 (‘an only child’ or an ‘older sibling’, as it were), whereas Acc is the second, dependent case, CASE 2, serving the sole purpose of being distinct from Nom – the Nom-Acc distinction, in turn, being a morphological interpretation or translation of syntactic structure. It has been an unresolved (and largely a ne-

glected) problem that the Germanic languages split with respect to case-marking of predicative DPs: nominative versus accusative (It is I/me, etc.). However, the morphological approach to the relational cases argued for in this paper offers a solution to this riddle: The predicative Acc languages have extended the domain of the Sibling Correlation, such that it applies not only to arguments but also to adjacent DPs in general. That is, the English type of predicative Acc is not 'default', nor is it caused by 'grammatical viruses', but a well-behaved subtype of relational Acc. The central conclusion of the paper is that one needs to abandon the structural approach to the relational cases in favor of a more traditional morphological understanding. However, this is not a conservative but a radical move. It requires that we understand morphology (and PF in general) not as a direct reflection of syntax but as a translation of syntax into an understandable but foreign code or 'language', the language of morphology. Nom and Acc are not syntactic features but morphological translations of syntactic correlations. It is thus no wonder that they are uninterpretable to the semantic interface.

Olaf Koenenman's "Shape conservation, Holmberg's generalization and predication" builds on all the previous approaches to Shape Conservation and tries to solve some problems that arise with them (in particular, related to A-movement in passive constructions). It is argued that Holmberg's Generalization is a syntactic and not a phonological phenomenon. This view allows the author to generalize over a larger set of facts in the following way: Within the thematic domain, it is impossible to invert the relationships of thematic categories, i.e. categories assigning or receiving a  $\theta$ -role. The reason is that the grammar wants the interface interpretations at LF and PF to be uniform. It is shown that notorious counterexamples to thematic isomorphism, such as passivization and short verb movement, can be dealt with in a unified way by making reference to predication theory.

Mark de Vos' "Quirky verb-second in Afrikaans: complex predicates and head movement" discusses a special case of complex predicate formation in modern Afrikaans. The central aim of the paper is to give a novel account for 'Quirky Verb Second', a peculiar construction in Afrikaans which optionally pied-pipes a coordinated verbal cluster to verb-second position. Afrikaans is a verb-second language that also allows the formation of a coordinated verb cluster: [POSTURE VERB] [AND] [LEXICAL VERB]. The construction is putatively pseudo-coordinative in character and typically occurs with aspectual verbs of posture. Either the posture verb may undergo verb-second individually or, alternatively, the entire coordinated verbal complex may undergo verb second. This construction is puzzling on a number of grounds. If verb second includes head movement from *v* to at least *T* (Den Besten 1989), then the optional pied-piping of a phrase-like element is puzzling. However, if verb-second involves phrasal remnant movement (Müller 2004), then the optional ability of the posture verb to be extracted from a coordinate structure (in violation of the Coordinate Structure Constraint (Ross

1967)) is equally puzzling. This dilemma places this construction in a unique position of being able to distinguish between these two opposing views of verb-second. The paper proceeds by outlining the properties of the pied-piped vs. the non-pied-piped construction. It is demonstrated that the pied-piped coordinated constituent is indeed a verbal head. It is also shown that the base, non-pied-piped structure is phrasal. A variety of tests are used to provide converging evidence for these claims. Crucial evidence from separable particle placement is used to demonstrate that a remnant-movement analysis would be untenable. The analysis is couched in terms of 'true' coordination – in other words, the pseudo-coordinative character of the construction is derived from the properties of the phrase structure itself rather than the properties of the coordinator. Coordination is argued to scope over individual aspectual features within the verbal cluster itself. This means that under certain special conditions, individual phonological features are not within the scope of coordination, allowing them to undergo verb-second without violating the Coordinate Structure Constraint. Thus, it is argued that verbal head-movement may indeed be phonological feature movement (Boeckx & Stjepanovic 2001; Chomsky 2000; Zwart 1997), but with the added caveat that it can also be true syntactic movement in certain instances. The proposal has implications for theories of head movement, excorporation and coordination.

In "Nominal arguments and nominal predicates", Marit Julien argues that the claim that predicative nominal phrases are structurally smaller than argumental nominal phrases is not corroborated by Scandinavian. For one thing, singular nominals without determiners, which are structurally smaller than DPs, can be predicates or arguments. Even more strikingly, it appears that full DPs, and even larger phrases, can also be predicates as well as arguments in Scandinavian. To show this, Julien first sets out to identify a number of predicate tests, and then applies these tests to Scandinavian nominal phrases of various sizes. The conclusion is that DPs can clearly be predicates, and so can phrases where a universal quantifier has a DP as its complement. Hence, the difference between nominal arguments and nominal predicates cannot be linked to the presence or absence of a D-projection. Nominal phrases containing demonstratives are however not acceptable as predicates. The reason might well be a purely semantic one, having to do with the deictic content of the demonstrative. The conclusion will be that the contrast between nominal arguments and nominal predicates is not structural but semantic. If the lexical content of a nominal phrase is such that the phrase can get a purely intentional interpretation, the phrase can be a predicate, but if its lexical content requires an extensional reading, the phrase is necessarily referential and cannot be used to predicate.

Dorian Roehrs' "Pronominal noun phrases, number specifications, and null nouns" deals with the licensing conditions of pronominal nouns phrases in Germanic. According to standard assumptions, the determiner and the head noun

in the DP exhibit morphological agreement. Adopting the Postal view, Roehrs starts with the observation that pronominal determiners require semantic, rather than morphological, agreement. Concentrating on number, he demonstrates in detail that these standard assumptions are not only too weak, allowing ungrammatical cases such as *\*du verdammtes Pack* ‘you(SG) damn gang’, but also too strong, disallowing grammatical examples such as *ihr verdammtes Pack* ‘you(PL) damn gang’. In order to provide a uniform and homogenous account of the determiner system, he proposes that pronominal determiners must agree with their head noun not only semantically but also morphologically. Morphologically disagreeing nouns are argued to be in a Specifier position and the head of the extended noun phrase hosting that Specifier is a null noun. Specifically, Roehrs proposes that both regular and pronominal determiners are the same with regard to morphological agreement; however, they differ in their semantic denotations and syntactic selectional features: while regular determiners are defined as general “totality extractors” and may select AgrP and NP, pronominal ones “pick out” single or multi-member sets and select not only AgrP and NP but also the phrase with the disagreeing Specifier. He concludes that regular determiners are less specified pronominal determiners. More generally, arguing that semantic number is part of the semantics, he proposes that morphological and semantic numbers are to be dissociated from one another. Another consequence of the discussion is that the inventory of null nouns is extended from null countable and mass nouns (cf. Panagiotidis 2002) to collective nouns, pluralia tantum, and proper names.

Martin Salzmann’s “Long relativization in Zurich German as resumptive prolepsis” addresses the issue that, standing out among Germanic languages, Zurich German (ZG) employs resumptive pronouns in relativization. There is an intriguing asymmetry in the distribution of resumptives: while resumptives are limited to oblique positions in local relativization, they appear across the board in long-distance relativization. This suggests that there is a fundamental difference between the two constructions. The paper reanalyzes a previous approach by van Riemsdijk where long-distance relativization in ZG is re-interpreted as local aboutness relativization plus binding. The construction can be shown to have paradoxical properties: On the one hand, there is reconstruction into the position occupied by the resumptive pronoun, on the other hand, the complement clause turns out to be an island for extraction. This paradox is resolved by assuming a tough-movement style analysis: Operator movement in the complement clause derives a predicate and licenses an extra argument in the matrix clause, the proleptic object. This in turn is A’-moved and deleted under identity with the external head. This predication analysis makes an alternative reconstruction strategy available as in tough-movement and accounts for the opacity of the complement. The link between the proleptic object and the operator in the complement clause is an ellipsis operation. Together with concomitant Vehicle Change effects this nicely explains

the intricate Condition C pattern in both the proleptic construction and in tough-movement. The presence of a resumptive pronoun follows from a constraint that requires specific chains to be phonetically realized in ZG. The entire structure represents what Salzmann calls “resumptive prolepsis”. On a more theoretical level, this approach suggests a straightforward way of handling exceptional and hitherto ill-understood cases of reconstruction within a theory that makes crucial use of full copies of the antecedent. It unifies resumptive prolepsis with tough-movement in crucial respects and thereby provides a fresh look at the latter.

In Gertjan Postma’s “Toward a syntactic theory of feature neutralization” Kayne’s (2000) syntactic theory of feature neutralisation is adopted and adapted to account for two cases of number neutralisation in Dutch, as well as a correlation across Germanic between the presence of number neutralisation in the nominative paradigm and the type of V2 attested in those languages. The weak Dutch object pronoun, oblique pronoun, and possessive pronoun *je* ‘you’ is both singular and plural. In traditional terms: *je* exhibits number neutralization. However, this property of *je* is dependent on the syntactic context: only if *je* is bound, it can be both singular and plural. If not, only the singular reading is retained. To get a plural reading the use of the complex plural form *jullie* ‘you.PL’ is the only option. One way to handle this theoretically is to assume two distinct forms *je* with the same phonological matrix, an anaphoric pronoun *je* which has number neutralisation, and a pronominal pronoun *je* which is singular. It is shown that this option leads to problems with the binding theory and needs various unattractive *ad hoc* stipulations. Postma follows Kayne (2000), who shows that Italian *sé* is part of the singular paradigm. Nevertheless, it can be used as a plural: it acquires plural readings by an abstract distributor, DIST, which occupies a syntactic slot and has syntactic properties, such as the requirement that it must be bound by a plural antecedent. Kayne’s theory can be considered as a syntactisation of morphological neutralisation. This theory is straightforwardly applicable to the Dutch data listed above. It predicts a deep link between anaphoric behaviour and number neutralisation. The main objective of the paper is to apply Kayne’s theory to a diachronic problem. The Middle-Dutch 3rd person pronoun *hem* ‘him’ displayed number neutralisation (it could mean both ‘him’ and ‘them’), and could be used anaphorically (‘himselves’/‘themselves’). Modern Dutch lost this property. Recent data (Postma 2004) show that the loss of number neutralisation in *hem* goes hand in hand with the loss of its anaphoric use. To fill the gap left by anaphoric *hem*, Dutch borrowed the reflexive *zich* from German border dialects. This newly acquired form, once again, has number neutralisation. This confirms the link between number neutralisation and anaphoricity, as suggested by Kayne.

In the paper “Auxiliary selection and counterfactuality in the history of English and Germanic” by Thomas McFadden and Artemis Alexiadou, the retreat of *be* as perfect auxiliary is examined in a diachronic perspective. Corpus data

are presented showing that the initial advance of *have* was most closely connected to a restriction against *be* in past counterfactuals. Other factors which have been reported to favor the spread of *have*, are either dependent on the counterfactual effect, or significantly weaker in comparison. It is argued that the effect can be traced to the semantics of the *be* perfect, which denoted resultativity rather than anteriority proper. Related data from other older Germanic and Romance languages are presented, and finally implications for existing theories of auxiliary selection stemming from the findings presented are discussed.

Theresa Biberauer's and Ian Roberts' "The loss of residual 'head-final' orders and remnant fronting in Late Middle English: causes and consequences" is a further contribution to the ongoing discussion of the possible triggers of word order change in Middle English (ME). The primary empirical focus of the paper is the residual "head-final" orders found in ME. The usual chronology for the general change from OV to VO in English situates it in Early ME (Canale 1978; van Kemenade 1987; Lightfoot 1991; Roberts 1997; Kroch & Taylor 1994; Fischer et al. 2000), but as various authors have pointed out, orders which are indicative of some kind of persisting OV grammar are found, albeit at rather low frequency and somewhat disguised by other factors, until the 15th century (see Fischer et al. 2000: 177 for a summary and references). Here the authors will propose an analysis of these orders which supports the novel proposal in Biberauer & Roberts (2005; henceforth: B&R) that the loss of residual "head-final" orders is related to the introduction of obligatory clause-internal expletives. The reason for this is that both developments result from the loss of *v*P-movement to SpecTP and its replacement by DP-movement to that position. The orders that are investigated include the so-called Stylistic Fronting (Styl-F), SVAux sequences and what has been analysed as Verb Projection Raising (VPR), i.e. AuxOV sequences. Following and developing the proposals in B&R, new analyses of these orders are proposed. B&R also integrate the observations and analysis of van der Wurff (1997, 1999) regarding the last attested OV orders with non-pronominal DPs. Furthermore, it is shown how the changes that B&R propose for Late ME created some of the preconditions for the well-known development of a syntactically distinct class of modal auxiliaries in the 16th century (Lightfoot 1979; Roberts 1985, 1993; Warner 1997; Roberts & Roussou 2003; Biberauer & Roberts 2006a, b).

Carola Trips' "Syntactic Sources of word-formation processes" surveys word-formation from a diachronic perspective and the question of whether word-formations are built by the same principles that govern syntax. It is assumed that word-formations like compounds and derivations historically start out as syntactic phrases and in the process of becoming morphological phrases lose structural syntactic properties like maximal projections and functional categories as well as semantic properties like e.g. referentiality. This is shown with diachronic data from German and English focusing on the phenomena of the development of

suffixes like Modern English *-hood*, Modern German *-heit*, and the rise of genitive compounds. Based on these findings it will be claimed that an analysis like Lieber (1992) or Ackema (1999) assuming that morphological operations are governed by syntactic principles is not borne out and that word-formation operations have to be attributed to an independent module of word-formation subject to its own governing principles. Nevertheless, the rise of genitive compounds shows that new syntactic structures can occur once old syntactic structures have developed into morphological structures implying that there is interaction between syntax and morphology. Thus, looking at word-formation from a diachronic perspective provides new insights into the nature and place of morphology.

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**PART I**

**Studies on predication**