Towards a unified account of verbal morphology in West-Germanic

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Introduction

In non-standard varieties of West-Germanic (Dutch, Afrikaans, German), verbal morphology (e.g., the infinitival marker te/’to’ and the past participle marker ge-) often appears on a different position than required by selection criteria.

(1) Koen zal niet {hoeven, gaan, voetballen}.
Koen will not to go to play football.

(2) … dat Jan die huis ([ge]-dacht, [ge]-hbben, [te]-]).
… that Jan the house [‘think’, ‘have’, ‘build’].

In regional Dutch, te can be: - raised = appear on V1 instead of V2
- lowered = appear on V3 instead of V2
- doubled = appear twice, when selection requires only one te

In regional Afrikaans, ge- can be: - lowered = appear on V3 instead of V2
- doubled = appear twice, when selection requires only one ge-

The data

Three theoretically possible positions in three-verb clusters:
(abstracting away from different verb orders within the cluster)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>Afrikaans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>za/te-V1-cz/te-V2-go/te-V3</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1-cz/te-V2-go/te-V3</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>za-te-V2-cz-te-V3</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Terminology:
- Raising = appearing on a hierarchically higher verb...
- Lowering = appearing on a hierarchically lower verb...
- Doubling = appearing one time more often (i.e. twice)...
- as required by selection

In Afrikaans, te-complements are generally rare (De Vos 2001)
- Za-/Te-Dutch is most flexible, then German, Afrikaans is not

Displacement of the infinitival marker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dutch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>raising</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowering</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doubling</td>
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<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- German does not seem to allow za-raising (Salzmann 2013 et seq.; Schallert 2018)
- In Afrikaans, te-complements are generally rare (De Vos 2001)
- Za-/Te-Dutch is most flexible, then German, Afrikaans is not

Displacement of the past participle marker

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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</table>

- Ge-raising is unattested (Couradie 2012; De Vos 2003; Hilde 2006; Jaeger 2016; see Postma 2002 for discussion on Dutch)
- Ge-/Ge is most flexible, then Dutch, German is not

Dutch is most flexible w.r.t. te-placement, Afrikaans w.r.t. ge-placement, German behaves in between Dutch and Afrikaans w.r.t. both types of morphology

The analysis

Prerequisites

1. The morphosyntactic status of an affix
- The flexibility w.r.t. their position of verbal morphemes indicates whether it is an affix or clitic

Freedom in placement = za/te or ge- is clitic
Restrictions in placement = za/te or ge- is affix

2. Merge positions of the affixal vs. clitic verbal morphology
- When za/te or ge- is an affix: realised as a feature on the verb
- When te/za or ge- is a clitic: it is an individual element, realised by an Agree relation between the verb that selects the verbal morphology and a lower functional head
- This functional head is low in the structure, right above the lexical verb (see Wurmbrand (2001); Hinterhölzl (2009))

Analysis part I: the clitic moves

When za/te or ge- is a clitic, it can successive cyclically move up (cf. clitic climbing in Italian (Cardinaletti & Shlonsky (2004)) to higher verbs within the cluster

Back to the example in (1)

(5) -hoc {hoeven, ca Ap/G aan, F 000 V voetballen

V 1 hoven selects a 0-affinitive: te should appear on V2
- When te is a clitic, it is merged in F, right above the lexical verb, caused by an Agree relation between V 1 hoven and F
- If it stays in its low merge position: ge-lowering
- But it can also successive cyclically move up within the cluster:

Analysis part II: the affix does not move

When za/te or ge- is an affix, it is realised as a feature on the verb on which it should appear, and therefore cannot move

Back to the example in (2)

(6) … dass er das Buch {zu}gelesen, zu haben, (*zu) dachte
… that he the book to read to have to thought ‘… that he thought he had read the book.’ (Salzmann 2016)

V 1 dachte selects a 0-affinitive: za can only appear on V2

Explaining the attested microvariation

The morphosyntactic status of za/te and ge- in West-Germanic

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>za/te</td>
<td>clitic</td>
<td>clitic/affix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ge-</td>
<td>affix</td>
<td>clitic/affix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Dutch, za/te is a clitic and ge- is an affix
- In German, za and ge- are ‘in between’ affix/clitic
- In Afrikaans, za is a clitic and ge- is an affix

Imperfectives and open questions

- Why is ge-raising unattested, while te-raising is possible?
- More fieldwork (esp. in German and Afrikaans) is needed
- It looks like the more clitic-like one of the two verbal morphemes is, the more affix-like the other is. Is this apparent interaction real?
- Is there an interaction between the flexibility of ge- and the IPP effect (the appearance of the past participle marker as a bare/inflational form)?
- Afrikaans is most flexible w.r.t. ge- and has most optional IPP, the opposite is true for Dutch, and German is again in ‘between’ (Schmid 2005)

Conclusion

- In non-standard varieties of West-Germanic, the infinitival/past participle marker can appear on a different position than required by selection
- When the verbal morpheme is restricted to one position, it has the status of an affix, whereas when it shows positional flexibility, it has the status of a clitic
- In the latter case it is merged low in the functional structure and can successive cyclically climb up to higher verbs (cf. clitic climbing in Italian)

Implications & open questions

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