# Being progressive and evaluative
## Comparing Afrikaans and Dutch progressive verb clusters

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# Introduction

## Empirical focus

- Afrikaans and Dutch periphrastic progressives with a motion/posture verb as aspectual marker

(1)   Ek **loop**/**sit**/**staan**/**lê en werk**.
      I   walk/sit/stand/lie and work
      'I'm working.'                                    (Afrikaans)

(2)   Ik **loop**/**zit**/**sta**/**lig te werken**.
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   →In Dutch: 'motion/posture verb te V'

# Introduction

### Evaluative content of MPPs

▶ MMPs are often accompanied by secondary, *evaluative* content (Haeseryn et al. 1997; Lemmens 2005; Biberauer 2017; Biberauer & Vikner 2017; Breed et al. 2017; Breed 2017a,b)

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- MMPs are often accompanied by secondary, *evaluative* content (Haeseryn et al. 1997; Lemmens 2005; Biberauer 2017; Biberauer & Vikner 2017; Breed et al. 2017; Breed 2017a,b)
- They signal the speaker's evaluation or attitude concerning the eventuality described by the sentence

# Introduction

*Example evaluative content in an Afrikaans MPP*

(3)   Stel      jou voor, dat elkeen     vir hom     een donkie
      Imagine you for,    that everyone for himself a    donkey
      **loop vang** het.
      walk catch have
      'Imagine, that everyone would go and catch a donkey of his
      own.'                                    (Afrikaans, Korpusportaal)

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     own.'                                (Afrikaans, Korpusportaal)

- ▶ The speaker evaluates the eventuality of everyone catching a
  donkey of his own as undesired

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*Example evaluative content in a Dutch MPP*

(4)  Ja ik merk   net      dat ik de herhaling heb **lopen**
     yes I  noticed just.now that I  the rerun    have walk
     **kijken**, verdikkeme.
     watch, dammit
     'Yes I just notice that I've been watching the rerun,
     dammit.'                              (Dutch, OpenSoNaR+)

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     'Yes I just notice that I've been watching the rerun,
     dammit.'                          (Dutch, OpenSoNaR+)

  ▶ The speaker evaluates the eventuality of watching the re-run
    as undesired

# Introduction

### Semantic bleaching of the verbs in MPPs

- The semantics of the motion/posture verbs are bleached to different degrees within and across the two languages (Haeseryn et al. 1997; Lemmens 2005; Donaldson 1993; De Vos 2005; Biberauer 2017; Breed 2017a)

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## Semantic bleaching of the verbs in MPPs

▶ The Afrikaans and Dutch progressive verbs can still retain their lexical semantics, but their semantics seem also to be bleached (Biberauer 2017, Breed 2017, Haeseryn et al. 1997)

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- ▶ The Afrikaans and Dutch progressive verbs can still retain their lexical semantics, but their semantics seem also to be bleached (Biberauer 2017, Breed 2017, Haeseryn et al. 1997)
- ▶ The motion/posture verbs in MPPs do not always entail a physical motion/seated/standing/lying position in MPPs
- ▶ They can sometimes even combine with a lexical verb incompatible with motion/postural position

# Introduction

*Example physical motion entailed*

(5)  Het was een kudde herten die   had ***lopen*** **grazen** in het
     It   was a   herd  deer   that had walk  graze  in the
     struikgewas aan de  overkant.
     bushes      on  the other.side.
     'It was a herd of deer that had been grazing in the bushes
     on the other side.'                         (Dutch, SoNaR+)

# Introduction

*Example lexical verb incompatible with physical motion*

(6)  Jammer dat ze   in de  show hadden ***lopen*** **knippen**,
     Pity     that they in the show had     walk  cut,
     miste   een aantal leuke stukken.
     missed a    couple fun   parts.
     '[It is] a pity that they've been cutting in the show, a
     couple of fun parts were missing.'

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▶ Present the results of a pilot study on evaluative content in the corpus sample, i.e. on *pragmaticalisation* of these MPPs

▶ Discuss additional features of MPPs related to their *grammaticalisation*

# Corpora

### Afrikaans

- Corpus based research: *Korpusportaal*
  - 85 million words
  - Standard and regional Afrikaans
  - Written and electronic text, incl. text written to be spoken (broadcast)
  - Various registers and genres

# Corpora

### Dutch

- Corpus based research: *SoNaR+*
    - Two subcorpora: *SoNaR-500* (500 mil. words) & *Corpus Gesproken Nederlands* (9 mil. words)
    - Standard Dutch and Flemish
    - Printed and electronic text; spoken Dutch/Flemish
    - Various registers and genres

# Data collection

- Queries to return Afrikaans and Dutch MPPs with *loop/lopen*, *sit/zitten*, *staan/staan* and *lê/liggen*

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- Embedded under temporal auxiliary *het/hebben* 'have'
- *Future work*: embedded under other modals/non-embedded MPPs

# Data annotation

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- *Pilot*: annotations by two native speakers per language

# Data annotation

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- *Afrikaans*: a random sample of 109 sentences per MMP type
- *Dutch*: a random sample of 94 sentences per MPP type
- All sentences annotated for the presence/absence of *evaluative content*
- *Pilot*: annotations by two native speakers per language
- Speakers were familiarised with the concept of *evaluative content* prior to the annotations

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- ▶ The native speakers were also asked to annotate whether:
  - ▶ the lexical verb of the sentence was inherently negative or not
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  - ▶ the sentence entailed a physical motion through space/seated/standing/lying position or not

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  - the presence of taboo words (words related to deceases, sex, religion et cetera)

# Evaluative content

| **Evaluation** | *loop* n=109 | | *sit* n=109 | | *staan* n=109 | | *lê* n=109 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Present | 75 | 68,8% | 11 | 10,0% | 24 | 22,0% | 28 | 10,0% |
| Absent | 20 | 18,3% | 84 | 77,1% | 79 | 72,5% | 80 | 77,1% |
| Unclear | 14 | 12,9% | 14 | 12,9% | 6 | 5,5% | 1 | 12,9% |

Table 1: Distribution of evaluative component in the Afrikaans MPP set

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Table 2: Distribution of evaluative component in the Dutch MPP set

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- An evaluation is often present in the *lopen* MPPs, as well as the *liggen* MPPs
- This is most often a negative evaluation
- *Liggen* is often associated with death, illness and laziness (Lemmens 2005)

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## Other elements influencing *evaluative content*

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- ▶ It seems that these aspectual verbs can create *evaluative meaning* on their own
- ▶ *Note*: native speakers often indicated *lopen/loop* (and also *liggen* for Dutch) as the cause for this evaluation

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- ▶ The semantic bleaching goes from the motion/posture verbs' lexical meaning to a more schematic, abstract meaning of iteration/duration, eventually leading to a progressive interpretation (cf. Sweetser 1988, Kuteva 1999)

# Semantic bleaching

| Motion/posture entailed | *loop* n=109 | | *sit* n=109 | | *staan* n=109 | | *lê* n=109 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 12 | 11,0% | 98 | 89,9% | 94 | 86,2% | 95 | 87,2% |
| No | 43 | 39,4% | 2 | 01,8% | 4 | 03,7% | 13 | 11,9% |
| Unclear | 54 | 49,6% | 9 | 08,3% | 11 | 10,1% | 1 | 00,9% |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 15 | 16,0% | 35 | 37,6% | 82 | 87,2% | 69 | 73,4% |
| No | 69 | 73,4% | 19 | 20,4% | 6 | 06,4% | 20 | 21,3% |
| Unclear | 10 | 10,6% | 39 | 41,9% | 6 | 06,4% | 5 | 5,3% |

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- In both languages, the sentences with motion verb MPPs have the highest percentage of evaluative content
- In both languages, the motion verbs are semantically bleached to the highest extent (i.e. grammaticalised to the highest extent)
- It seems that a more grammaticalised aspectual verb is more likely to be able to trigger evaluative meaning

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- Note that in the case of Dutch *liggen*, the low degree of grammaticalisation facilitates the bringing about of evaluative content
- This is caused by the lexical semantics of this verb being associated with death, illness or laziness

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- ► Ross (2016): Verbs or morphemes indicating movement away from deictic center →'unexpected event'
- ► Stefanowitsch (2000, 129): "undesired"/"unexpected" readings are "divergent" from path
- ► Verbs like 'walk' indicate a certain iteration, continuousness, which can be a metaphorical representation of irritation
- ► I.e. a way for speakers to express their, most often, negative evaluation of the eventuality of the sentence

# Conclusion and outlook

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- We proposed that grammaticalisation is a trigger for additional *pragmaticalisation*

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- In both languages, the sentences with a motion verb MPP have the highest percentages of *evaluative content*
- These verbs also show the highest degree of semantic bleaching, i.e. *grammaticalisation*
- We proposed that grammaticalisation is a trigger for additional *pragmaticalisation*
- *Outlook*: these motion verbs also show different morphosyntactic behaviour compared to the posture verbs

# Conclusion and outlook

## Morphosyntactic variation

- The motion verb MPPs show high occurrences of *te/en*-drop

(7)  Ek het   in die schaduw **loop** (**en**) **wag**.
     I   have in the shade     walk and  wait
     'I've been waiting in the shade.'

(8)  Ek het   in die schaduw **staan** *(**en**) **wag**.
     I   have in the shade    stand and    wait
     'I've been waiting in the shade.'                    (Afrikaans)

# Conclusion and outlook

### Morphosyntactic variation

(9)    Ik heb  in de  schaduw **lopen** $^?$(**te**) **wachten**.
       I  have in the shade    walk  to    wait
       'I've been waiting in the shade.'

(10)   Ik heb  in de  schaduw **staan** (**te**) **wachten**.
       I  have in the shade    stand to   wait
       'I've been waiting in the shade.'             (Dutch)

# Conclusion and outlook

## Morphosyntactic variation

- In Afrikaans we also see much higher frequencies of a bare form of the aspectual verb in the case of *loop* compared to the posture verbs

(11)   a.   Ek het   (**geloop**)/ **loop en werk**.
           I   have walk/       walk to work

       b.   Ek het   **gesit**/ **sit en werk**.
           I   have sit/    sit to work

       c.   Ek het   **gestaan**/ **staan en werk**.
           I   have stand/    stand to work

       d.   Ek het   **gelê**/ **lê en werk**.
           I   have lie/   lie to work
           'I've been working.'                        (Afrikaans)

# Conclusion and outlook

► These ongoing morphosyntactic changes are additional indications of **the more advanced grammaticalisation** of the motion verbs compared to the posture verbs

# Conclusion and outlook

- These ongoing morphosyntactic changes are additional indications of **the more advanced grammaticalisation** of the motion verbs compared to the posture verbs
- *Future work*: testing the interaction between morphosyntax, semantic bleaching and evaluative content with more native speakers/in bigger corpora/experimentally

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