

Comparative movement out of Dutch VP-anaphors

An elliptical analysis of Dutch dat doen 'do that'

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1 The puzzle

Dat doen 'do that' can be used to pronominalize VPs in Dutch

- (1) Jij leest veel boeken en ik doe dat ook.
You read many books and I do that too.
'You read many books and so do I.'

Movement is generally not possible out of *Dat Doen*

- (2) *Hoeveel taarten heeft Jan gebakken en hoeveel taarten heeft Piet dat gedaan?
How many cakes has Jan baked and how many cakes has Piet that done?
'How many cakes has John baked and how many has Piet?'

However, the VP anaphor can occur in a comparative *than*-clause.

- (3) Jan bakt lekkerdere taarten dan Piet dat ooit gedaan heeft.
Jan bakes tastier cakes than Piet that ever done has.
'Jan is baking tastier cakes than Piet has ever done.'

Comparatives are generally assumed to involve A-bar-movement of an empty degree operator (Lechner& Corver, 2017; Lechner, 2004; Kennedy, 2002; Chomsky, 1977).

2 The data

2.1 The properties of *doen*

- Doen* cannot refer to states
- (4) *Hij kent de eerste minister en ik doe dat ook.
He knows the prime minister and I do that too.
'He knows the prime minister and so do I.'
- Doen* can be embedded under modals and auxiliaries (e.g. passive auxiliary)
- (5) Er wordt vandaag in Brussel aan de weg gewerkt en in Gent wordt dat ook gedaan.
There becomes today in Brussels at the road worked and in Ghent becomes that also done.
'There are roadworks in Brussels today and also in Ghent'

→ *Doen* spells out an eventive *v*

2.2 The properties of *dat*

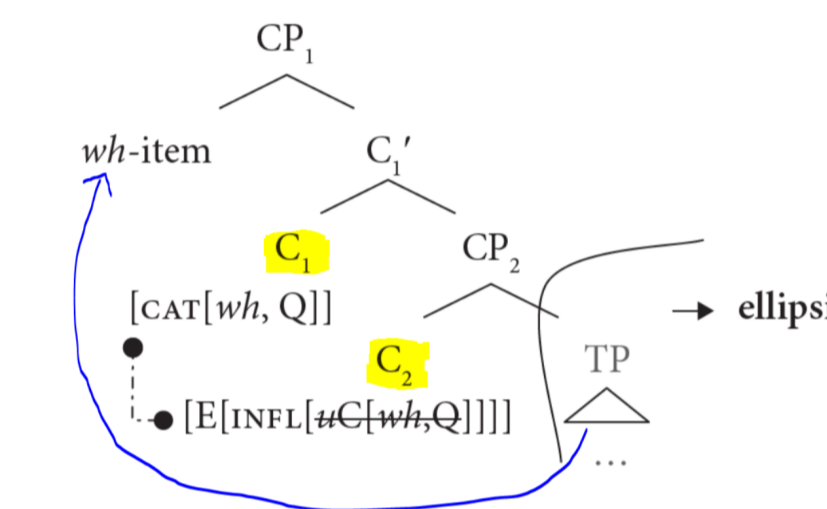
- Neuter demonstrative pronoun used as a VP-anaphor
- Mixed properties regarding the dichotomy between deep and surface anaphors (Hankamer & Sag, 1976).

	<i>Dat doen</i>	Deep	Surface
Missing antecedent anaphora	X	X	✓
Inverse scope	X	X	✓
Pragmatic control	✓	✓	X
Extraction out of ellipsis site (1)	X	X	✓
Extraction out of ellipsis site (2): unaccusatives	?	X	✓
Extraction out of ellipsis site (3): comparatives	✓	X	✓

3 Prerequisites for the analysis

- Comparative movement shows that the anaphor should have internal syntactic structure to host the movement trace, which is not expected with deep anaphors
Baltin (2012): even deep anaphors involve deletion of a phrase
- Aelbrecht (2010): timing of ellipsis
 - Ellipsis is licensed by Agree between [E]-feature and licensing head
 - The ellipsis occurs when the licensing head is merged.
→ Structure in between ellipsis and licensing head allows some elements to escape from the ellipsis site.

Sluicing according to Aelbrecht (2010):



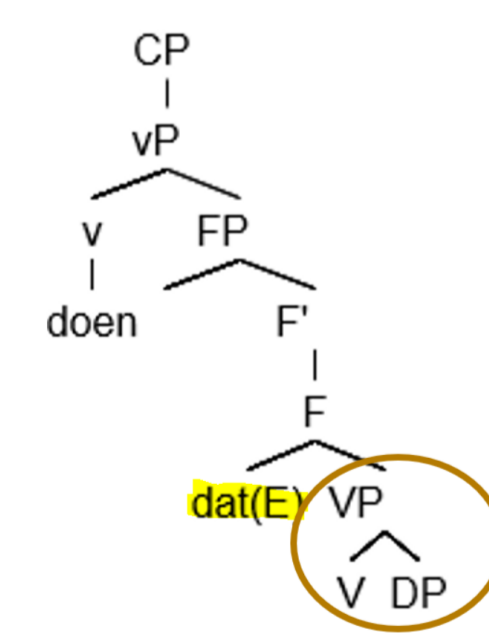
- I follow the analysis of Bentzen, Merchant, and Svenonius (2013) for the position of the anaphor.
- Comparatives involve comparative deletion:

- (6) Ik bak lekkerdere taarten dan jij [lekkere taarten] (bakt).
I bake tastier cakes than you [nice-cakes] (bake).
'I bake tastier cakes than you do.'

4 The analysis: [E]-driven extraction out of an ellipsis site

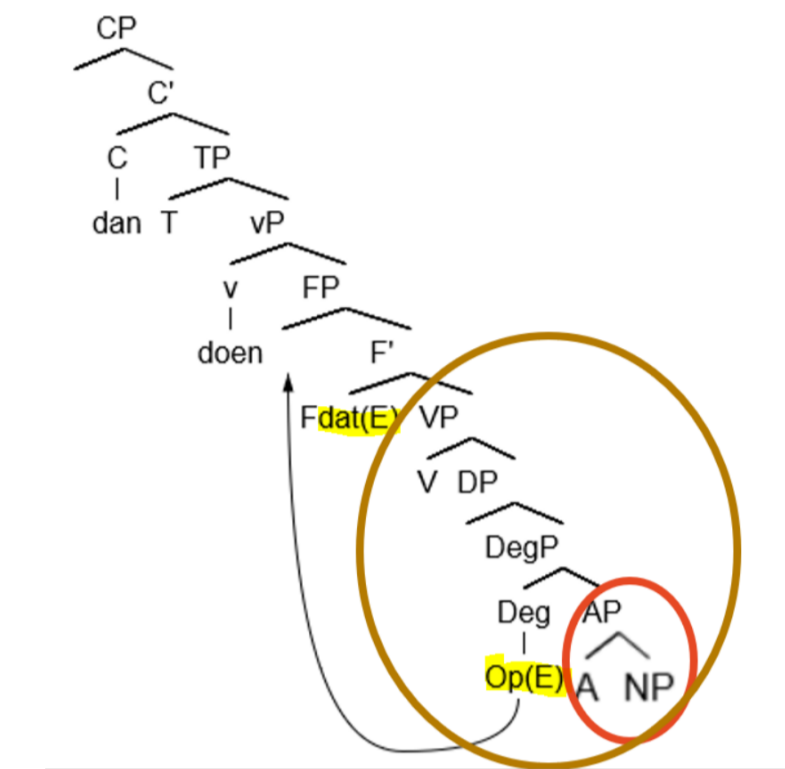
- I assume that the *dat doen*-construction involves ellipsis of the VP
- (7) Jij leest veel boeken en ik doe dat ook [VPboeken-lezen].
You read many books and I do that too [VPbooks-read].
'You read many books and so do I.'
- Dat* is the licensing head of the ellipsis, since ellipsis also happens when only *dat* is used.
- (8) Ik was gisteren ziek en jij was dat ook.
I was yesterday ill and you were that too.
'I was ill yesterday and so were you.'
- Doen* is last resort if no auxiliary is available.

4.1 Why is movement generally blocked?



- As soon as the licensing head *dat* is merged, the VP is deleted and becomes inaccessible for further syntactic operations
- Since the licensing head is the same as the head hosting the [E]-feature and it is not a cyclic head, there is no escape hatch for movement

4.2 Why is comparative movement allowed?



- The AP is elided due to comparative deletion
- The operator has the [E]-feature for the comparative deletion and is the licenser for the deletion
- The operator checks its own uninterpretable E-feature so that the uninterpretable feature and the AP can be elided
- Dat's* uninterpretable [E]-feature agrees with both its own [E]-feature and the [E]-feature on the operator
- The operator moves to the specifier of the FP and the VP gets deleted

5 Conclusion

- Elements containing an [E]-feature can be extracted out of an ellipsis site, even if there is no material between the licenser and the head with the [E]-feature.
- Since comparatives involve comparative deletion, they allow for movement out of the ellipsis site.

6 Outlook

- Dat doen* can also occur in a non-elliptic structure, namely VP-topicalisation. It could be interesting to examine this construction in the future.

- (9) Haar verraden dat doe ik niet.
Her betray that do I not.
'I do not betray her.'

Selected references

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