

PRONOMINAL DOUBLING IS LEXICALIZATION

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SUMMARY Existing accounts of pronominal doubling assume there is something special about the morphosyntax of doubling: a special base-generated structure (a “big DP”, see e.g. Kayne 2005) and/or a special mechanism for spelling out multiple copies in a movement chain (see e.g. van Craenenbroeck and van Koppen 2002). By contrast, this talk argues that the Nanosyntactic Lexicalization Algorithm can yield doubling without any additional mechanisms. In a nutshell, a pronoun that can lexicalize an entire functional sequence in one go, spells out two parts independently when the fseq gets interrupted by a Foc-feature. More generally, this approach correctly predicts there to be a correlation between the morphological shape of pronouns in a language and the presence of pronominal doubling.

THE DATA This talk focuses on clitic doubling patterns in dialects of Dutch. Let’s first situate this phenomenon within the whole pronominal paradigm. The data in (1)–(3) represent a typical case: in addition to the doubled pronoun in (1), there is also a deficient (clitic and/or weak) pronoun as in (2), and a strong one like in (3). Note that the forms show a formal resemblance.

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|-----|--|-----|----------------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| (1) | <i>ge-gij</i> | (2) | <i>ge</i> | (3) | <i>gij</i> |
| | YOU _{clitic} -YOU _{strong} | | YOU _{clitic/weak} | | YOU _{strong} |
| | ‘you’ | | ‘you’ | | ‘you’ |

The doubled and strong pronoun can be used contrastively, but the deficient one cannot:

- (4) *Ik denk da {*ge /gij /ge-gij} moet komen, niet ik.*
I think that you_{def} you_{strong} you_{clitic}-you_{strong} should come, not I
‘I think you should come, not ME.’

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND Nanosyntax is a Late Insertion, Syntax-all-the-way-down approach to grammar in which each consecutive formal feature in the functional sequence is Merged as a separate syntactic head (Starke 2009). Merger of the next feature can only take place if the current step of the derivation is successfully lexicalized. Lexicalization invariably targets phrases. It involves matching the syntactic representation of one or more lexical items against the current stage of the syntactic derivation, and it follows a strictly ordered series of steps. For the purposes of this talk, only the first two steps are relevant:

- (5) **The Lexicalization Algorithm:** After merging a (projecting) feature F:
- lexicalize FP;
 - if that fails, move (the spec of) the complement of F and lexicalize.

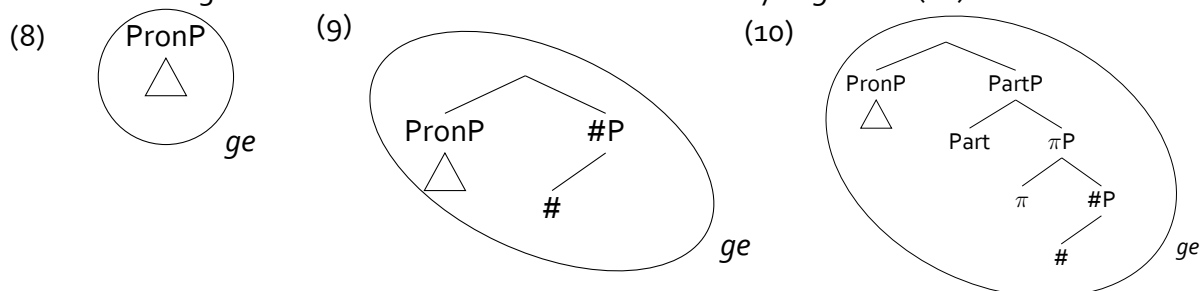
In what follows we show that this basic setup suffices to derive doubling patterns like the ones in (1). We first lay out the lexical items and then go through the derivations.

LEXICAL ITEMS We decompose the strong pronoun *gij* into two morphemes: the deficient form *ge* and a focus marker *ij*. The latter can also be found in pairs like *me/mij* ‘me_{weak}/me_{strong}’ or *ze/zij* ‘she_{weak}/she_{strong}’. Its syntactic representation is given in (6): it spells out a FocP as a unary branching structure. The deficient pronoun *ge* on the other hand has the syntactic representation in (7): it spells out the pronominal core (abbreviated as PronP, see e.g. Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002)) as well as number (singular, so just the number head #) and person (second person, so both the person head π and the Part(icipant)-head). Importantly, it is a movement-containing lexical entry (Blix 2021), which following Van Craenenbroeck (2025) we assume contains a structural pointer on the sister of the moved constituent.

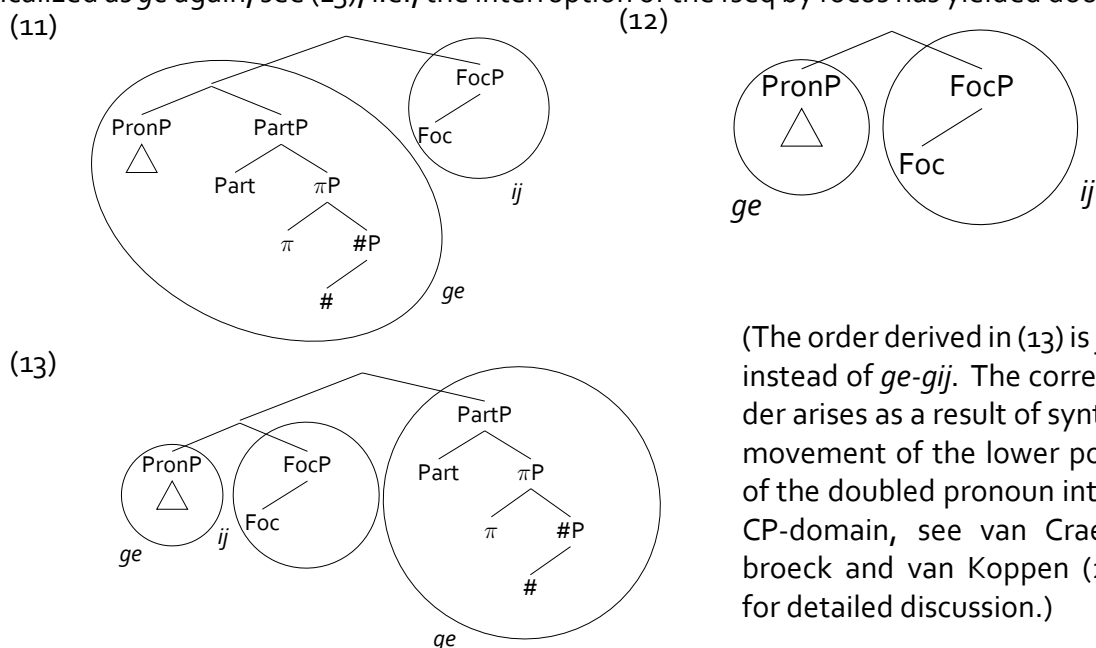
- (6) *ij* $\leftrightarrow$ FocP
Foc

- (7) *ge* $\leftrightarrow$
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- The tree for (7) shows the syntactic representation of the deficient pronoun *ge*. The root node branches into PronP and PartP. PronP is represented by a triangle symbol. PartP branches into Part and π P. π P branches into π and #P. #P branches into #.

DERIVATIONS We start with the derivation of the deficient pronoun. First the pronominal core is merged; it is lexicalized as *ge* (8). When the #-head is Merged, the entire #P cannot be spelled out as is and so we resort to evacuation movement, see (9). Given that the lexical entry in (7) contains a pointer, it can lexicalize the entire structure in one go. The structure then continues to grow until it matches the entire lexical entry of *ge* as in (10).



The strong and doubled pronoun spell out the same structure, but with the addition of a Foc-feature. Following Belletti (2004) we assume that FocP can be Merged at the top or in the middle of the fseq. When Merged on top, the result is the strong pronoun: the structure up to PartP gets lexicalized as *ge* like in (10), while the FocP is lexicalized as *ij* (after evacuation movement), as in (11). If Foc is Merged on top of PronP, however, *ij* enters the derivation at a much earlier stage, see (12). When number and person are subsequently Merged, they trigger evacuation movement of the entire PronP/FocP-constituent, and the resulting constituent is lexicalized as *ge* again, see (13), i.e., the interruption of the fseq by focus has yielded doubling.



(The order derived in (13) is *gij-ge* instead of *ge-gij*. The correct order arises as a result of syntactic movement of the lower portion of the doubled pronoun into the CP-domain, see van Craenenbroeck and van Koppen (2002) for detailed discussion.)

THE BIGGER PICTURE The approach advocated here suggests that the presence of doubling in a dialect is determined by the lexical/structural properties of the pronouns of that dialect. A statistical analysis of the pronominal paradigm of 246 Dutch dialects does indeed yield a strong correlation between the morphological shape of the pronouns—in particular, the presence of *g*-based pronouns in 2SG and 2PL—and the presence of doubling.

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