

German Dialects and an Anti-Cartographic Approach to the CP-domain

My talk presents a theoretical investigation of well-known German dialect data that show a complex CP-periphery and at the same time indicate that a pure cartographic approach with designated positions for each single function.

Bavarian and Alemannic show Doubly Filled COMP in the co-occurrence of a *wh*-phrase in [Spec,CP] and an overt C head in embedded interrogative clauses (Bayer and Brandner 2008, Brandner 2008), see (1), and in Bavarian also in relative clauses (Brandner and Bräuning 2013, Brandner 2008), see (2). The traditional view is that the *wh*-phrase is located in the same CP as the overt complementiser, as given in (3a); this approach is essentially maintained by recent theoretical works on the syntax of the dialects in question (see e.g. Bayer and Brandner 2008). Cartographic approaches, on the other hand, claim that the *wh*-phrase moves to a CP higher than the one headed by the overt complementiser, as given in (3b). As claimed e.g. by Baltin (2010), such an assumption is in line with the Split-CP system of Rizzi (1997), and hence the ban on a true Doubly Filled COMP could be maintained universally (see also Ferraresi 2005).

I argue that the multiple-CP approach for cases like (1) and (2) is untenable, and such structures actually present evidence for a flexible CP-periphery. First, as shown by Bayer and Brandner (2008), word-sized *wh*-elements (e.g. *wer* ‘who’) occupy a C position rather than a specifier, and are in complementary distribution with *dass* ‘that’. This asymmetry between visible phrase-sized and word-sized *wh*-elements can only be explained by assuming that they target a single CP. In a double CP-layer, a reanalysed *wh*-element could occupy the higher C head, leading to a double complementiser configuration: however, the mere grammaticalisation of an element in the higher CP should not directly influence the overt realisation of the lower C head. A second argument comes from the order of the *wh*-phrase and the overt C head, which is “*wh*+C” in Alemannic/Bavarian; I will argue that if multiple CPs are involved, the overt C head is higher than the CP hosting the *wh*-element, rendering “C+*wh*”. This is attested historically in comparatives in German in the combination *als wie* ‘than as’, illustrated in (4), which, depending on the dialect, is present in modern dialects, too (e.g. Hessian, Alemannic): the combination originally involved the C head *als* and the operator *wie*, and even if *wie* has been reanalysed as a C head, this reanalysis did not require the immediate loss of the higher overt C head (see Jäger 2010).

Since the size of the CP (single or double) seems to vary not only across dialects but also across constructions, I propose that the properties encoded in the CP are not linked to designated projections, but rather the number of CPs is dependent on how the overt realisation of the features responsible for these properties is distributed. In particular, in embedded relatives subordination, [+sub], and the interrogative feature, [+wh], have to be encoded; [+sub] does not have to be overt but [+wh] has to be marked syntactically in embedded clauses. It is possible that i) the [+wh] is interpretable on the C head, e.g. *ob* ‘if’ in embedded polar questions or if a word-sized *wh*-element occupies the C head (à la Bayer and Brandner 2008); ii) the [+wh] is uninterpretable on the C head that is insensitive to [\pm wh] and is inserted merely to hold the feature: this C head is zero in Standard German and *dass* in e.g. Alemannic/Bavarian. In ii), the movement of an overt *wh*-element (on which the feature is interpretable) is necessary.

In comparatives, the C head is marked for the comparative, [+compr], which has to be marked overtly, and which is interpretable on overt C heads (e.g. *als*) but not on zero ones. Hence the immediate insertion of an overt [+compr] head would not trigger operator movement, which is prohibited since the comparative operator as a relative operator is not licensed in situ. It follows that first a C with uninterpretable [+compr] must be inserted: if the operator is overt, the overtness of [+compr] is satisfied – if not, a further C head is inserted, hence the double CP. In *than*-clauses, the negative polarity of the clause (Seuren 1973) always has to be marked on an overt C head, and hence the double CP is always given.

- (1) I frog mich **wege wa dass** die zwei Autos bruchet. (Alemannic)
 I ask REFL for what that they two cars need
 ‘I wonder why they need two cars.’ (Bayer and Brandner 2008: 88, ex. 3b)
- (2) der Mann, **der wo...** (Bavarian)
 the man REL.PRONOUN REL.PARTICLE
 ‘the man who...’ (Brandner 2008: 373, ex. 51)
- (3) a. [CP **wege wa** [C' **dass** ...]]
 b. [CP **wege wa** [C' Ø [CP [C' **dass** ...]]]]
- (4) Ich bin größer **als wie** du.
 I am taller than as you
 ‘I am taller than you.’

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