

Verb Doubling as head movement: Alemannic VO?

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1 The phenomenon: Verb doubling

Four verbs in Alemannic (**go**, come, begin, let) can only grammatically embed an infinitive clause when a *doubler element* comes in-between.

- (1) a. *i gang *(ga) schaffa* main clause
i go go work
i go work
- b. ... **(ga) schaffa goo* embedded clause
... go work go
... (to) go (to) work(ing)

Other than the verbal doubling phenomena of many languages (Barbiers et al., 2008) Alemannic Verb Doubling does not involve a topicalized position as the final site of the doubled constituent.

- (2) The remaining three of the four doubling verbs
- a. *i chum cho schaffe* come
i come.fin come work
i come (to) work
- b. *s fot afo ragne* begin
it begins begin rain
it starts to rain
- c. *la lo si!* let
let.imp let be
let it be!

(3) Possible object/doubler configurations: Transitive

- a. *i gang ga [s Büro] ufrumme*
I go.fin go the office tidy-up
I go clean the office
- b. *i gang [s Büro] ga ufrumme*
I go.fin the office go tidy-up
I go clean the office

- (4) Ditransitive
- a. *I gang ga [dem Onkl] [a buach] koufe*
I go.fin go the uncle a book buy
I go buy a book for my uncle
- b. *I gang [dem Onkl] ga [a buach] koufe*
I go.fin the uncle go a book buy
I go buy a book for my uncle
- c. *I gang [dem Onkl] [a buach] ga koufe*
I go.fin the uncle a book go buy
I go buy a book for my uncle

- (5) At least one doubler, but possibly several!
- a. *I gang ga [dem Onkl] ga [a buach] koufe*
I go.fin go the uncle go a book buy
I go buy a book for my uncle
- b. *I gang ga [dem Onkl] ga [a buach] ga koufe*
I go.fin go the uncle go a book go buy
I go buy a book for my uncle
- c. **I gang [dem Onkl] [a buach] koufe*
I go.fin the uncle a book buy
I go buy a book for my uncle

Q: Does the object move/vary, or the doublet?

2 Previous research: VD is unproductive

Existing research unanimously rejects a productive doubling analysis, while some assumes doubling to have been productive at earlier stages (Hodler, 1969; Lötscher, 1993; Schönenberger & Penner, 1995a; van Riemsdijk, 2002; Brandner, 2006; Salzmann & Brandner, 2011; Salzmann, 2013).

- "Of course, in synchronic grammar these elements are fully grammaticalized anyway, so we are not really talking about a productive process in the grammar." (van Riemsdijk, 2002, p. 160)
- "This is also the reason why I do not think that the VIM could be the spell-out of an intermediate trace of moved verbs, as suggested to me by Günther Grewendorf (p.c.). In addition, it is also far from obvious where the governing verb should be moving from, where it is going, and why it should move in the first place." (van Riemsdijk, 2002, p. fn. 22)
- "(...) [It is] hardly made explicit in what sense go/cho are actually doubles and **what the underlying syntax of the construction looks like.**" (Salzmann, 2013)[4], emph.added]

3 Defending a productive analysis

3.1 In short: "It is actual syntactic doubling" or: "Doublets are spelled-out traces of V".

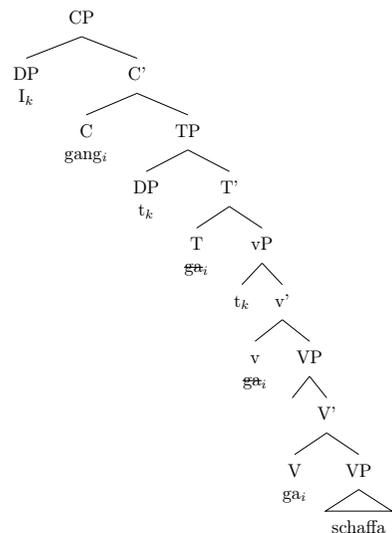
- Doubling is movement (= copy-and-delete) without deletion.

More precisely:

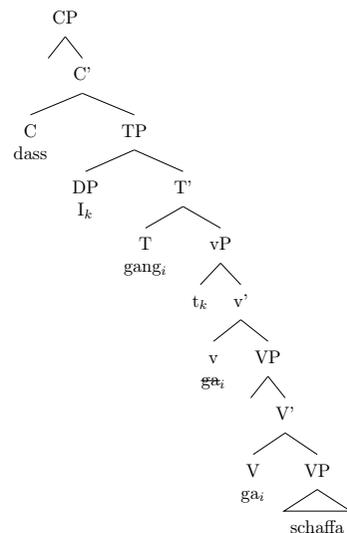
- It is a head-movement chain of a V going to v, T (and in main clauses to C).
- Usually, all but one copy get deleted at PF. In this case, upon inflection, the chain "splits": [ga.fin] [ga, ga], which is why we have at least doubling. [ga.fin] [g̃a, ga]
- NB: This has been implicitly suggested (and often instantly rejected) in the literature, but it seems that an analysis has never been worked out in detail.
- In terms of category, the most similar idea is that of doublers being *expletives* (Schönenberger & Penner, 1995b). This presentation is about verb doubling, but the concept of syntactic doubling (or expletives/resumption) would hold also for R-pronoun doubling which Alemannic happens to have.

3.2 Suggestion (the tree)

main clause:



embedded clause:



3.3 Conceptual argument for this approach

- Conceptual argument: Predicts the data with existing machinery.

More precisely: Whatever the doublers' category (verbal complementizer, modal, expletive), we need to account for their distribution. Head-movement, then, just gives it to us.

3.4 Empirical arguments for this approach

- Empirical argument: tripling (two doublers, one inflected verb) is not ruled out

(6) *i gang ga da Onkl ga bsuacha*
I go.fin go the uncle go visit

I go visit the uncle

- Another empirical argument: Systematic correspondence within (sub)dialects

(7) a. *ich gu gu posträ* (...)
I go.fin go do-the-groceries (#520)

b. *Ga de no mitem a dSense*
go.fin then PART with+him to Sense (#2524)

ga loufä
go walk

c. *ich go etz s beby go {a luege}*
I go.fin now the baby go see (#2116)

Data from the Swiss SMS Corpus (Stark et al., 2009-2014).

- Potential argument if the data supports it (marginal data, hard to acquire): Different number of allowed doublets in matrix (= V2; V is in C) vs. subordinate (V-final, V is in V or raised to v or T) clauses.

3.5 Non-trivial doubling 1 – <Aux Doublet>, <Modal Doublet>, <Doublet>

No full verb to double from?

van Riemsdijk (2002), in defending the same kind of analysis as defended here, argues for a "silent 'go'".

<Modal Doublet> Silent "go"

- "The real problem with the M+VIM [dubbed "Modal + Doublet" here] construction is, then, that we ostensibly lose the generalization that VIMs are copies. However, if we assume that there is an empty light motion verb GO involved in these constructions, the generalization stands with full force." van Riemsdijk (2002)(p. 159).
– Why double a silent verb non-silently?: "because it does not make sense for a flag to signal the presence of something invisible if that flag is invisible itself." (p. 160)

(8) [_{TP} I [_T sot] [_{vP} dm Dädda [_v ε_{go}] [_{VP} Wii [_V ga] bringe]]]

<Aux Doublet> IPP + silent "go" Another independently observed phenomenon that plays into the current puzzle is Infinitivus-pro-participio (IPP) – participles of modals generally have infinitive morphology when subordinating an infinitive complement themselves (similarly in Standard German: "ich habe gehen müssen/*gemusst"). This, plus subsequent ellipsis of the IPP-born *Infinitivus* as shown directly above makes it possible to allow also for the configuration of a modal plus a doublet, where there is no ancestor to the doublet either (7). In sum, these are the steps:

1. V moves to participle position (here v)
2. Upper copy has participle morphology, lower one is a doublet.
3. Upper copy is substituted by an infinitive form = IPP.
4. Infinitive is silenced, in the sense of van Riemsdijk (see above).
5. Result: Aux + doublet.

(9) $[_{TP} I [_{T} \text{bia}] [_{vP} \text{dm Dädäda } [_{v} \text{ggänge } \varepsilon_{\text{goo.IPP}}] [_{VP} \text{Wii } [_{V} \text{ga}] \text{ bringe }]]]$

<Doublet> silent "go"

- S isch nüd schön, d Lüüt eso go verschrecke. (Weber 1964:207 in Salzmann & Brandner (2011) p. 69, fn. 23) <V_k Doublet₁>

(This particular phenomenon is investigated in Bucheli Berger (2021) in the SaRDiS proceedings #4)

3.6 Non-trivial doubling 2: Cross-doubling and open-class doubling

This time, there is a full verb, but the 'wrong' one.

<V_k Doublet₁> semantic decomposition

The doublet "go" occurs with an open class of motion verbs, such as "run", "drive" or "ride". It can also occur with "khoo" ("come"), which takes its very own doublet ("cho") in some Alemannic varieties. For this reason, the goo + cho.doublet cases have been called "cross-doubling" in the literature.

(10) $kum/fahr/renn/\dots ga \quad s \quad hoola$
 come/ride/run/... go.doublet it fetch
 "come/drive/run/... to get it"

For these cases we need to appeal to semantic decomposition for a productive doubling account to hold: One component denoting *motion* and another/others for its manner: Only [*motion*], then, would move up, and attain its [*manner*] features only at the final position, as sketched in van Riemsdijk (2002, fn. 19).

(11) $[_{TP} I [_{T} \text{renn}] [_{vP} \text{dm Dädäda } [_{v} \{ga\}] [_{VP} \text{Wii } [_{V} \{ga\}] \text{ bringe }]]]$

3.7 Objections and replies

3.7.1 Optional deletion

Why is the deletion optional? We need have one doubler, but can have several.

Solution A – Split chain Inflection of the chain element at the last step of the movement (i.e., C or T), splits the chain.

- $[[ga] [ga] [ga]] \rightarrow [[gang]] [[ga] \{ga\}]$
- Problem: multiple doublets, i.e. "gang ... ga ... ga".

Solution B – Object licensors Another possible answer: Perhaps object raising "licenses" the

spell-out of a given doubler. See also section 3.8.

Solution C – Performance errors Tripling data are all performance(production) errors.

3.7.2 Heteromorphous doubling (= "Nontrivial doubling II" above)

- Why "come/run/... + go"

"... go is **not the spell-out of a lower copy** of the movement chain ... A spell-out analysis is unattractive [because] go occurs after various motion verbs, including räne 'run', lauffe 'run', springe 'run' or schicke 'send' (...)"

However, as stated, a generative semantic/late insertion approach can account for this: [motion] doubles, and receives the lexical (here: [manner]) features (e.g. "run") only in the inflected, "lexical" copy.

"A spell-out approach would then have to resort to syntactic decomposition of motion verbs (with go just spelling out the abstract motion component) for which there is little independent motivation in Swiss German" (ibid.)

I understand that abstract spell-out would not be language-specific but universal. In other words, maybe this *is* the motivation that Swiss also is like this.

- Not all dialects have a vowel correspondence "Second, in many dialects (e.g. Zurich German), the form of go does not correspond to any of the regular inflectional forms of the verb 'go', it is e.g. not identical to the infinitive (which would be gaa in ZG); rather, the form is simply fossilized, suggesting that doubling is no longer a productive process." Salzmann (2013h, p.6)

I do not take these cases as arguments against the productive doubling analysis, since those forms may just have different vocabulary spelled out in those dialects. See also gloss 7 for correspondence in subdialects, a set of data that symmetrically opposes Salzmann's support from Zurich Alemannic here.

3.7.3 Salzmann's lack-of-positions argument

"At least in V-final structures, there will simply not be two intermediate copies of the verb. A proper analysis of such examples remains difficult though; see Brandner and Salzmann (2012: 90f.) for discussion." (2013h, p.6, fn. 6)

The positions in which doublers can show up are T, v and V in verb-second/matrix clauses (with the inflected version in C), and v, V in embedded clauses (with the inflected version in T).

Solution: Have a vP [C' [C das] [TP mer_k [T' [T gönd_i] [vP t_k [v' [v g_{er}] [VP [DP en guete Platz] [V' [V go] [VP2 sueche]]]]]]]]

3.8 Why *"... ga."?

Why can the embedded phrase (the sister of the original go-verb) not be raised, leaving in place a single doublet string-finally= If <ga> is morphologically a (pro)clitic, this would predict that this would violate PF.

Future research should investigate double-doubler constructions as found in Bernese.

- (12) a. *gang goge schaffe* Bernese
 b. *gang *ga ga schaffa* non-Bernese

Hinted in orthography and prosody, the two clitics in this Bernese form are incorporated (they form one word), unlike in non-Bernese. The newly formed double-clitic then can be licensed phonologically by the V ("schaffe"), whereas in non-Bernese, the linearly first "ga" has no licensing and is thus ruled out.

4 Consequence: VO

4.1 VO means that VP is head-initial

Doublers strictly precede their complement. If the syntactic doubling account is right, and taken seriously, this means that at least VPs in Alemannic are head-initial (the headedness of Germanic VPs is disputed).

- (13) a. ... **schaffa ga*
 ... work go
 b. ... *ga schaffa*
 ... go work

To generate the cases of tripling (the main argument for a productive account here: two doublers and an inflected verb are not clearly ruled out), the analysis requires that also vP and/or TP are head-initial.

4.2 What about TP

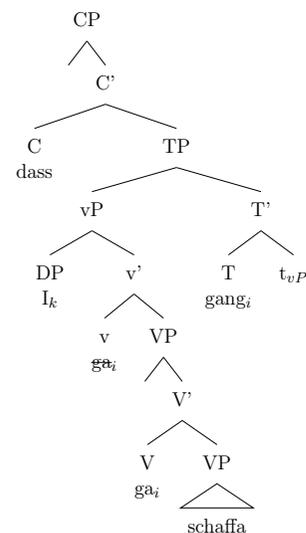
The headedness of TP in Alemannic is a question on its own, since both linearly T-final and T-initial forms are grammatical.

- (14) a. ... *welle schlofe*
 ... wanted sleep
 ... wanted to sleep
 b. ... *schlofe welle*
 ... sleep wanted
 ... wanted to sleep

4.2.1 How to derive linearly final T if we assume TP is head-initial, though?

In linearly T-final forms, the matrix vP/VP is moved to a specifier of this TP. Or, to avoid multiple specifiers, pied-piping the subject along with the raised VP (Biberauer & Roberts, 2005) is conceivable. This would also solve the problem that head-final TP over head-initial VP violates the *Final-over-final-condition* (Sheehan et al. (2017)) (a problem also brought up in the Salzmann (2010) handout).

4.3 Deriving linearly final T



5 Summary

5.1 It was argued here that

- Swiss German Verb Doubling is indeed productive syntactic doubling
- all possible variations can be derived without introducing new mechanisms
 - one or several doublers
 - all combinations of raised objects
 - not shown in this presentation: doublers under modals (silent "go" in V, cf. van Riemsdijk (2002)), and under auxiliaries (Infinitivus pro Participio + silent "go")
- The most important conclusion is that Swiss German must thus be VO
 - argument for antisymmetric ("Kaynian", Kayne (1994)) syntax
 - also true for TP, salvaging the Alemannic FOFC violation problem

6 (Related: R-Pronoun doubling)

Speculation: Alemannic has a tendency for doubling (i.e., spelling out traces):

- (15) *do kann i nüt deför* R-pronoun (da)
 there can i nothing for-it
 I'm not to blame (for this)

Compare:

- (16) a. *dafür kann ich nichts* Standard German
 b. *da kann ich nichts für* Colloquial/Northern German

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