

Subject doubling, clitic pronouns and the left periphery in Dutch dialects

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Abstract

In this paper we lay the foundation for a micro-typology of pronominal doubling constructions in southern Dutch dialects. Based on a detailed comparison of 16 dialects, we distinguish two dialect groups. The dialects differ in the types of clitics that they have, as well as in the way they implement the Verb Second (V2) requirement. We distinguish three types of subject clitics, depending on whether they are merged DP-internally or DP-externally, and on whether they are dependent on an Agree relation with C or not. We furthermore argue that one group of dialects allows both X^0 and XPs to fulfill the V2-requirement, whereas in the other group it has to be an XP. The dialects also differ in whether ForceP or FinP is the locus of the V2-requirement. We show that these differences have an effect on the type of doubling that is allowed in the two dialect groups.

1 Introduction: two dialect groups

The syntactic status of (subject) clitics has been an ongoing debate in linguistics since the seventies of the previous century, discussing, e.g., (i) the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic properties of clitic pronouns (e.g. Zwicky 1977, Cardinaletti and Starke 1999); (ii) their syntactic status as heads (see e.g. Sportiche 1995; Kayne 1975, 1991; Manzini 2022), phrases (see e.g. Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002; Cardinaletti and Starke 1999), or a combination of the two (Chomsky 1995), and (iii) the question of whether they are base-generated as part of a larger DP (see e.g. Abney 1987; Kayne 1975) or merged directly in a functional head position in the

extended projection of VP (Poletto 2000; Sportiche 1995). It has furthermore been argued that (subject) clitics within one and the same language do not have to be of the same type. For the Northern Italian dialects for example, Poletto (2000) and Poletto and Tortora (2016) have shown that there are four types of subject clitics. These clitics are similar in that they are all merged as heads in the left periphery. They differ, however, in whether they agree with the subject in ϕ -features or not. The clitics that agree with the subject differ from each other in whether they agree in person, number, or deixis. The analysis of subject clitics in turn has had important repercussions for the theory of the left periphery of the clause. Poletto (2000), for instance, shows that the left periphery in the Northern Italian dialects consists of multiple projections each hosting a specific type of subject clitic.

This paper adds to this ongoing debate, by reporting on in-depth research into sixteen Dutch dialects spoken in the Belgian provinces of West Flanders, East Flanders, and Flemish Brabant. These dialects have in common that they all have subject clitics (Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen 2000), i.e. subject pronouns that adhere to the tests proposed by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) to separate subject clitics from weak and strong subject pronouns. We furthermore show that these subject clitics differ from each other in whether they are DP-internal or not, and whether they are sensitive to agreement or not. Support for this classification comes from the behavior of these subject clitics in subject doubling constructions.

Based on the type of subject clitics they have, we divide the sixteen dialects under investigation into two subgroups, illustrated in the map in Figure 1. The first group, represented by the white circles, is situated in (West and East) Flanders and contains the dialects of Klemskerke, Lapscheure, Brugge, Wijtschate, Blankenberge, Izenberge, Waregem, Oostende, and Nieuwkerken-Waas. The patterns we find in this group of dialects are representative for the patterns we find in the Flemish dialects more generally (see also De Vogelaer and Devos (2008)). Hence we will refer to this group as the Flemish dialects. The second group of dialects (represented by the black circles) is spoken in the border area between the Flemish dialects and the Brabantic dialects (cf. also De Vogelaer and Devos (2008), Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2019)). Given that they are all situated in the vicinity of the river Dender, we refer to them as the Dender dialects. These dialects include those of Aalst, Wambeek, Affligem, Asse, Merchtem, Brussels, and Sint-Katherina-Lombeek. The subject doubling patterns that we find in these dialects are different from ones we find in Brabantic (spoken in the Belgian provinces of Antwerp, Flemish Brabant, and the Dutch province of North-Brabant), where subject doubling is only attested in the second person singular and plural and the first person singular (see e.g. De Vogelaer and Devos (2008)).

We show that within these two groups of dialects three types of subject clitics can be dis-



Figure 1: The two dialect groups under consideration

tinguished: (i) DP-external subject clitics spelling out an inflectional head in the left periphery, (ii) DP-internal subject clitics that are sensitive to agreement, and (iii) DP-internal subject clitics that are not sensitive to agreement. All dialects discussed in this paper have the first type of DP-external clitic. They also all have DP-internal clitics, but these are sensitive to agreement in the Flemish dialects, but not in the Dender dialects. We furthermore show that the left periphery of the Flemish dialects is crucially different from the left periphery of the Dender dialects, in particular in the way the Verb Second (V2)-requirement is implemented.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the differences concerning subject clitic doubling between the two groups of dialects. Section 3 discusses a type of subject doubling, namely doubling with coordinated subjects, that is found in both groups. Section 4 provides an analysis for subject clitic doubling. Section 5 concludes this paper.

2 Doubling differences between Flemish dialects and Dender dialects

2.1 Introduction

This section provides a description of the properties of subject doubling in the Flemish dialects and Dender dialects introduced above. We will show that these dialects behave differently with respect to five types of subject doubling properties: (1) the clause type in which clitic doubling is allowed, (2) topic doubling, (3) tripling, (4) absolute *with*-constructions, and (5) clitic doubling with the first conjunct of a coordinated subject. We discuss these properties in the following five subsections.

2.2 Clitic doubling in different clause types

All dialects discussed in this paper display clitic doubling of the subject, where a clitic pronoun doubles a strong subject pronoun. Most of these dialects show a full paradigm of clitic doubling in which clitic doubling is possible in all person/number combinations.¹ Dialects differ, however, in the clause types in which clitic doubling can appear.

Consider an example of clitic doubling in (1) for the Flemish (F) dialect of Klemskerke, and in (2) for the Dender (D) dialect of Brussels.

- (1) Ik peinzen da **me** 't wijder gedaan hebben.
I think that we.CLITIC it.CLITIC we.STRONG done have
'I think that we have done it.' Klemskerke Dutch, F
- (2) Ik geluuf da **we** 't waaille emme gedaan.
I think that we.CLITIC it.CLITIC we.STRONG have done
'I think that we have done it.' Brussels Dutch, D

The subject clitics *me* in Klemskerke Dutch and *we* in Brussels Dutch double the strong subject pronouns *wijder* and *waaille* respectively.

Clitic doubling occurs in embedded clauses as in (1) and (2) in all dialects under discussion. The same holds for so-called inverted main clauses (i.e. main clauses in which the subject is not sentence-initial but follows the finite verb) as in (3) (from Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen 2019:271).

¹ See Barbiers et al. (2005) and De Vogelaer (2005) for an in depth description and references about clitic doubling in the Dutch dialects.

- (3) Mergen komme me waaile.
 tomorrow come we.CLITIC we.STRONG
 ‘Tomorrow we are coming.’

Wambeek Dutch, D

Dutch and its dialects are generally Verb Second in main clauses. This means that if the first position of the clause is filled by something other than the subject, for example in (3) the temporal adverb *mergen* ‘tomorrow’, the subject follows the finite verb. Clitic doubling occurs post-verbally in these case, as is shown in (3): the subject clitic *me* ‘we’ follows the finite verb, *komme* ‘come’ and doubles the strong subject pronoun to its right, *waaile* ‘we’.

The third clause type in Dutch and its dialects are main clauses with the subject in initial position directly followed by the finite verb, i.e. subject-initial main clauses. Dialects differ as to whether they allow clitic doubling in subject-initial main clauses. Haegeman (1990, 1992, 2004), De Vogelaer and Devos (2008), and Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2019) show that the Flemish dialects, like that of Lapscheure in (4) (from Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2019:269)), allow clitic doubling in subject-initial main clauses.

- (4) Ze goa zie.
 she.CLITIC goes she.STRONG
 ‘She’s going.’

Lapscheure Dutch, F

In this example, the subject clitic pronoun *ze* ‘she’ doubles the strong subject pronoun *zie* ‘she’. This pattern is not possible in the Dender dialects, however, as shown in (5).

- (5) { Waaile / We / * Me } komme waaile mergen.
 we.STRONG we.WEAK we.CLITIC come we.STRONG tomorrow
 ‘We are coming tomorrow.’

Wambeek Dutch, D

This example shows that the first element of a doubled subject in sentence-initial position in Wambeek Dutch cannot be the clitic pronoun *me*, but has to be a less deficient element, like the weak pronoun *we* or even the strong pronoun *waaile*.^{2,3}

²See Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2002a) for argumentation that *me* is a clitic pronoun and *we* is a weak pronoun.

³The type of subject doubling we find in this example is fundamentally different from the type of subject clitic doubling under discussion in this subsection. The Dender dialects display so-called topic doubling in which a topicalized subject—which can be a strong or weak pronoun, as in this example, but also a full DP—gets doubled by a strong subject pronoun. This type of doubling is restricted to subject-initial main clauses and enforces a topic reading on the subject. We refer the reader to Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2002a, 2002b), and De Vogelaer and Devos (2008) for in-depth discussion of this type of doubling. We return to this type of doubling in the next

To summarize, clitic doubling in the Flemish dialects and Dender dialects can occur in the following clause types:

(6)	clitic doubling in...	DENDER DIALECTS	FLEMISH DIALECTS
	embedded clauses	✓	✓
	inverted main clauses	✓	✓
	subject-initial main clauses	*	✓

2.3 Topic doubling

Topic doubling is a subtype of subject doubling in which the linearly first subject element can be anything but a clitic: a weak pronoun, a strong pronoun, a full DP, or a coordination see, Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2002a, 2002b), De Vogelaer and Devos (2008). This first element is then doubled by the second subject element which is always a strong pronoun. An example with a weak or strong subject pronoun in initial position was already provided in (5) for the Dender dialect of Wambeek. Another example, with a full DP subject as first element, is provided in (7) (from Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen 2002a:295).

- (7) Een vrou komt zaai e kaffee binn.
a woman comes she.STRONG a bar in
‘Women usually enter a bar.’/ # ‘A woman enters a bar.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

In (7) the indefinite subject DP *a woman* is doubled by the strong pronoun *zaai* ‘she’. This example reveals an important property of topic doubling, namely its interpretation: the only available interpretation for this indefinite subject is generic. Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2002a, 2002b) argue on the basis of these and comparable data that indefinite subjects doubled by a strong pronoun behave as topics. In (7), for instance, the meaning of the topic doubled subject is the same as topicalized indefinite direct objects: they are incompatible with a non-specific indefinite reading.

Topic doubling is unavailable in the Flemish dialects as exemplified in (8) for the dialect of Klemskerke.

- (8) *Die vrouwe en heeft zij daar nietend mee te doene.
that woman not has she.STRONG there nothing with to do
INTENDED: ‘That woman has nothing to do with that.’ Klemskerke Dutch, F
-
- subsection.

The distinction between clitic doubling and topic doubling becomes even clearer if we investigate the status of the two subjects in a bit more detail. Both types of subject doubling have a strong subject pronoun as second element. The status of this subject pronoun differs, however. In clitic doubling, the second element is the actual subject and the clitic is the double. In topic doubling, however, it is the other way around: the first element is the actual subject and the second element, the strong pronoun, is the double. This becomes clear when we use coordinated subjects. Consider the clitic doubling examples in (9) and (10).

- (9) ... da se [zaailn en waailn] dui suimen wel oitgeruiken.
that they.CLITIC they.STRONG and we.STRONG there together PRT out.come
‘...that they and we will solve that together.’ Wambeek Dutch, D
- (10) ... da me [gou en ik] dui suimen wel oitgeruiken.
that we.CLITIC you.STRONG and I.STRONG there together PRT get.out.of
‘...that you and I can solve that together.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

We discuss these examples in detail below (subsection 2.6 and section 3), but what we want to point out here is that the second element in clitic doubling can be a coordination. The fact that the second element can have more content and structure in this way suggests that it is not a mere double copying the features of the other subject element, but that it is itself the actual subject (cf. also Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen 2002a, 2002b, 2008).

In topic doubling the situation is reversed. This is already clear from the fact that the first element can contain lexical information. It can for instance be a complete DP-subject as in (7). Moreover, unlike clitic doubling, topic doubling cannot have a coordination as its second element. This is illustrated in (11).

- (11) Waailn emmen (*Jean en ik) dui niks mee te muiken.
we.STRONG have Jean and I there nothing with to make
‘We have nothing to do with that.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

To summarize the main point of this subsection, topic doubling is attested in the Dender dialects, but not in the Flemish dialects.

2.4 Tripling

The next subtype of doubling which differentiates the Flemish from the Dender dialects is so-called tripling. This pattern is only attested in subject-initial main clauses and it involves three instances of the subject. The linearly first subject element can be anything but a subject clitic

pronoun, the second one is always a clitic and the third one is always a strong pronoun. Tripling patterns can be schematically represented as in (12).

- (12) **subject₁** **finite verb** **subject₂** **subject₃** ...
 deficient pronoun clitic strong pronoun
 strong pronoun
 full DP
 proper name

As this description makes clear, tripling is the sum of topic doubling and clitic doubling: the combination of subject₁ and subject₃ constitutes a typical topic doubling configuration, while subject₂ and subject₃ together form a prototypical clitic doubling instance.⁴ An example of tripling is provided in (13) for the dialect of Affligem (a Dender dialect). Note the three subject pronouns *we*, *me*, and *weir*.⁵

- (13) We hebben me weir daar niks mee te maken.
 we.WEAK have we.CLITIC we.STRONG there nothing with to make
 ‘We have nothing to do with that.’ Affligem Dutch, D

This pattern is not attested in the Flemish dialects, as shown in (14) for the dialect of Klemskerke. This example shows that there can be two instances of the subject(*m* and *wieder*), but that it is impossible to add an additional clitic pronoun in between the strong pronoun and the finite verb.

- (14) M’ hebben (*me) wieder daar nietend mee te doene.
 we.CLITIC have we.CLITIC we.STRONG there nothing with to do
 ‘We have nothing to do with that.’ Klemskerke Dutch, F

In short, while the Flemish dialects and the Dender dialects have subject doubling in subject-initial main clauses, only the latter for subject tripling in these clause types.

⁴We refer the reader to Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2002b, 2019) for an in-depth discussion of (this analysis of) tripling.

⁵De Vogelaer and Devos (2008) argue that tripling is a rare phenomenon that exists mostly in the first person singular and plural. On the basis of this they conclude that tripling is not a syntactic phenomenon where the subject is realized thrice, but a morphological phenomenon where the clitic pronoun following the finite verb is either part of the verbal inflection or part of the (internally complex) strong pronoun. Although tripling is rather rare in the Dutch dialects, our data show that it is significantly more acceptable in the Dender dialects discussed in this paper than in the Flemish dialects.

2.5 Clitics in absolute *with*-clauses

The next difference we focus on is the behavior of subject clitic doubling in absolute *with*-clauses, as in (15).

- (15) Met Laura/haar in het team, winnen we zeker.
with Laura/her in the team win we surely
'With Laura in the team we'll definitely win.' Standard Dutch

Absolute *with*-clauses contain the preposition *met* 'with' followed by a complement consisting of a subject (*Laura* 'Laura'/*haar* 'her') and a predicate (*in het team* 'in the team'). In Standard Dutch the subject is non-nominative and the predicate can be adjectival, adverbial, adpositional, or infinitival/participial (see e.g. Broekhuis 2020 and references cited there).

The Flemish and Dender dialects additionally allow *to*-infinitives as the predicate in this construction, in combination with a nominative subject (see Haslinger 2007 and references cited there). This is illustrated in (16) (from Haslinger 2007:107).

- (16) Mè ikke te gaan werken, ...
With I to go work ...
'With me working, ...' Sint Niklaas Dutch, F

In this example the complement of *mè* 'with' contains the nominative subject pronoun *ikke* 'I' and the *to*-infinitive *te gaan werken* 'to go work'. Although all dialects under discussion in this paper allow absolute *with*-clauses with a nominative subject, only the Dender dialects, like Brussels Dutch in (17), allow for clitic doubling in these constructions. The Flemish dialects do not allow clitic doubling in this construction, as illustrated for Waregem Dutch in (18).

- (17) Me (se) zui te komme, ...
with she.CLITIC she.STRONG to come
'Because of her coming, ...' Brussels Dutch, D
- (18) Mee (*se) zunder te komen, ...
with they.CLITIC they.STRONG to come
'Because of them coming, ...' Waregem Dutch, F

2.6 First conjunct clitic doubling (FCCD)

The final type of subject doubling distinguishing the Flemish dialects from the Dender dialects concerns a specific type of subject clitic doubling, namely doubling of a coordinated subject.

Consider the example in (19) from the Dender dialect of Wambeek.

- (19) ... da se [zaailn en waailn] dui suimen wel oitgeruiken.
 that they.CLITIC they.STRONG and we.STRONG there together PRT out.come
 ‘...that they and we will solve that together.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

In this example, the subject is a coordination of two pronouns, namely *zaailn en waailn* ‘they and we’. The subject clitic *se* ‘they’ doubles the first pronoun of this coordinated subject, *zaailn*, and not the entire coordination *zaailn en waailn* (which has the feature specification first person plural). We refer to this construction as first conjunct clitic doubling (henceforth abbreviated as FCCD).

The Dender dialects all have FCCD, whereas not all of the Flemish dialects do. The Flemish dialect of Klemskerke in (20) does, whereas the one of Waregem in (21) does not.

- (20) ... da se [zij en wijder] daar tegare wel gaan uitgeraken
 that they.CLITIC they.STRONG and we.STRONG there together PRT go out.come
 ‘...that they and we will solve that together.’ Klemskerke Dutch, F
- (21) *... dan ze [zunder en wonder] daar wel tope uitgeraken
 that they.CLITIC they.STRONG and we.STRONG there PRT together out.come
 ‘...that they and we will solve that together.’ Waregem Dutch, F

2.7 Summary

In the preceding subsections we have discussed five subject doubling properties that distinguish the Flemish from the Dender dialects. We have schematized them in (22).

(22)

	DENDER DIALECTS	FLEMISH DIALECTS
Clitic doubling in subject-initial main clauses	*	✓
Topic Doubling	✓	*
Tripling	✓	*
clitics in absolute <i>with</i> -construction	✓	*
First conjunct clitic doubling	✓	%

Section 4 provides an analysis of these differences, but first, to get a more complete picture of subject doubling in these dialect groups, we will also discuss some similarities between them in the next section.

3 Doubling similarities between Flemish and Dender dialects

As we have already shown in section 2, the Flemish dialects and Dender dialects differ from each other, but they also show similarities: all dialects have subject clitics and subject clitic doubling, see examples (1) and (2). In the previous section we have also illustrated that the dialects differ in whether or not they have first conjunct clitic doubling (see examples (19)-(21)). This difference is not a black and white division between the Flemish and Dender dialects. The Dender dialects all have FCCD, whereas only a subset of the Flemish dialects does.

This section discusses another instance of clitic doubling with a coordinated subject, namely one where the clitic agrees with the complete coordination, which we will call Full Coordination Clitic Doubling (or FuCCD for short). We show that FuCCD, in contrast to FCCD, behaves similarly in the Flemish and the Dender dialects. Let us first take a look at a basic FuCCD-example in (23).

- (23) Ik paus da me [gou en ik] dui suimen wel kunn oitgeruiken.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I there together PRT can get.out.of
 ‘I think that you and I can solve that together.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

In this example from the Dender dialect of Wambeek Dutch, the subject is a coordination *gou en ik* ‘you and I’. This coordination is doubled by a subject clitic which agrees with the ϕ -feature specification of the complete coordination, namely first person plural. The same example is ill-formed in another Dender dialect, Asse Dutch. This is illustrated in (24), where the first person plural clitic pronoun cannot co-occur with the subject coordination *gij en ik* ‘you and I’.

- (24) *Ik peis da we [gij en ik] daar samen wel kunnen uitkomen.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I there together PRT can get.out.of
 INTENDED: ‘I think that you and I can solve that together.’ Asse Dutch, D

The same variation in FuCCD-acceptability can also be found in the Flemish dialects. The dialect of Izenberge allows FuCCD, see (25), whereas the Flemish dialect of Waregem does not, see (26).

- (25) Ik peizen da me [gij en ik] dat tegare wel gaan klaarzen.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I that together PRT go solve
 ‘I think that you and I can solve that together.’ Izenberge Dutch, F
- (26) ?*Ik peize da me [gij en ik] daar wel tope uitgeraken.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I that PRT together get.out.of
 ‘I think that you and I can solve that together.’ Waregem Dutch, F

In short, the split between acceptable and unacceptable cases of FuCCD crosscuts that of the Flemish versus the Dender dialects. What all dialects do have in common, though, is the fact that an object clitic intervening between the subject clitic and the coordination improves the acceptability of the FuCCD-examples. Consider the following two pairs of examples.

- (27) *Ik peis da we [gij en ik] daar samen wel kunnen uitkomen.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I there together PRT can get.out.of
 INTENDED: 'I think that you and I can solve that together.' Asse Dutch, D
- (28) Ik peis da we t [gij en ik] samen wel aankunnen.
 I think that we.CLITIC it.CLITIC you and I together PRT handle
 'I think that you and I can handle it together.' Asse Dutch, D
- (29) ?*Ik peize da me [gij en ik] daar wel tope uitgeraken.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I that PRT together get.out.of
 INTENDED: 'I think that you and I can solve that together.' Waregem Dutch, F
- (30) Ik peize da me t [gij en ik] wel tope gaan kunnen.
 I think that we.CLITIC it.CLITIC you and I PRT together go can
 'I think that you and I can handle it together.' Waregem Dutch, F

The difference in acceptability between examples (27)/(29) on the one hand and (28)/(30) on the other shows that both in Asse Dutch and in Waregem Dutch the intervention of the object clitic *t* 'it' leads to grammatical improvement of the FuCCD-pattern.⁶

To summarize, the dialects discussed in this paper have the following properties in common: FuCCD is possible in some but not all dialects, but when an object clitic intervenes between the two parts of the clitic doubled subject, the acceptability increases.⁷

⁶The Flemish dialects of Brugge and Nieuwkerken-Waas never allow FuCCD (with or without object clitic intervention). We refer the reader to van Craenenbroeck and van Koppen (2018) for possible analyses for this difference.

- (i) *Ik peize da me [gij en ekik] d'r samen wel uitkomm.
 I think that we.CLITIC you and I there together PRT get.out.of
 'I think that you and I can solve that together.' Nieuwkerken-Waas Dutch, F
- (ii) *Ik peize da me t [gij en ekik] samen wel aankunn.
 I think that we.CLITIC it.CLITIC you and I together PRT handle
 'I think that you and I can handle it together.' Nieuwkerken-Waas Dutch, F

⁷Interesting and surprising though it may be, we will not attempt to provide an analysis of this ameliorating effect of object clitics in this paper. See van Craenenbroeck and van Koppen (2018) for such an analysis. The present paper will abstract away from the object intervention effect and only analyse FuCCD-doubling in general.

(31)

	DENDER DIALECTS	AGREEMENT-DIALECTS
FuCCD	%	%
FuCCD + object clitic	✓	✓

4 The analysis: subject doubling and the left periphery in Dutch dialects

4.1 Introduction

The previous two sections discussed the similarities and differences between subject doubling in the Flemish and the Dender dialects. This section provides an analysis of these data, in which the Flemish and the Dender dialects differ with respect to their V2-properties and their pronominal inventory. More in particular, we argue in subsection 4.2 that in the Flemish dialects the V2-requirement is operative in a high CP-layer, e.g. ForceP, and in the Dender dialects in a lower CP-layer, e.g. FinP (see also Van Craenenbroeck to appear, Hinterhölzl 2021, and Wolfe 2016). This will account for the option of Topic Doubling in the Dender dialects and the absence thereof in the Flemish dialects. We furthermore argue in subsection 4.3.1 that both types of dialects have DP-external clitics, which explains the presence of FuCCD in both dialect groups. In addition, both types of dialects also have DP-internal clitics, but while they are sensitive to agreement in the Flemish dialects, they are not in the Dender dialects.

4.2 The left periphery of the Flemish and Dender dialects

4.2.1 Prerequisite: Verb Second in the Flemish and Dender dialects

We follow the analysis of Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2016, 2019), who argue that both the Flemish and the Brabantic dialects (including the Dender dialects) have extended left peripheries. Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2019) in particular show that these dialects have (at least) two CP-layers: ForceP and FinP (following Rizzi 1997). They base this conclusion among others on the fact that both dialect groups show doubly filled COMP phenomena of the type shown in (32). In this example an embedded *wh*-question starting with the *wh*-word *wien* ‘who’ which is directly followed by the complementizer *dat* ‘that’ (from Barbiers et al. 2006).

- (32) Zeg ma nie **wien da** se zie hadde wiln roepn.
 tell but not who that they.CLITIC they.STRONG had want call
 ‘Don’t tell me who they planned to call.’
 Diksmuide Dutch, F

A similar example is found in (33) where the (complex) complementizer *lijk of* ‘as if’ is followed by the finite complementizer *dat* ‘that’ (from Barbiers et al. 2006):

- (33) T is juist lijk **of dat** er etwien in dn hof stoat.
 it is just like if that there someone in the garden stands
 ‘It looks as if there is someone in the garden.’
 Brugge Dutch, F

Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2019) argue on the basis of these and similar phenomena for the following left peripheral structure in these dialects:

- (34)
-
- ```

graph TD
 ForceP --> Spec1[Spec]
 ForceP --> Force_prime[Force']
 Spec1 --> wien[wien]
 Force_prime --> Force[Force]
 Force_prime --> FinP[FinP]
 Force --> of[of]
 FinP --> Spec2[Spec]
 FinP --> Fin_prime[Fin']
 Spec2 --> da_dat[da/dat]
 Fin_prime --> Fin[Fin]
 Fin_prime --> TP[TP]

```

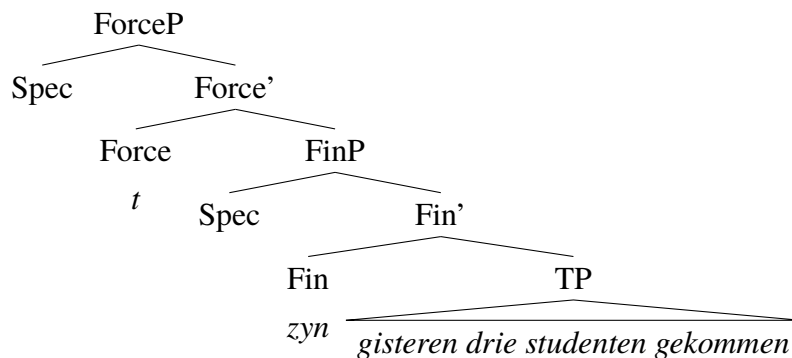
Van Craenenbroeck (to appear) shows that the Flemish and Brabantic dialects also differ with respect to their V2-properties. On the basis of expletives, he argues that V2 in the Flemish dialects can be satisfied by an  $X^0$ , whereas V2 in the Brabantic dialects requires an XP. Consider the example in (35) from the Flemish dialect of Lapscheure and in (36) from the Dender dialect of Wambeek.

- (35) T    zyn gisteren    drie    studenten gekomen.  
 EXPL are yesterday three students come  
 ‘Three students came yesterday.’  
 Lapscheure Dutch, F
- (36) Dr/\*T    stonj tweeë vantjn inn    of.  
 there/EXPL stand two men in.the garden.  
 ‘There are two men in the garden.’  
 Wambeek Dutch, D

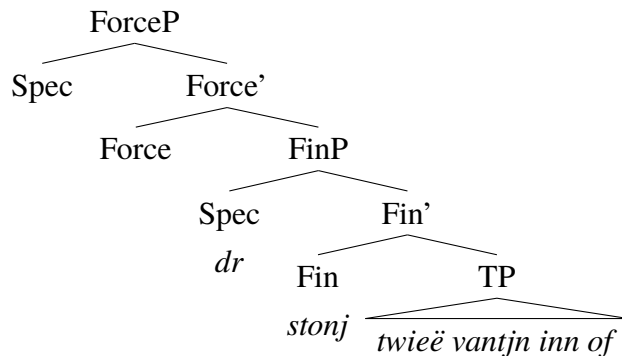
The *t*-expletive in (35), Van Craenenbroeck (to appear) argues, is not an expletive pronoun merged in a specifier, but rather a main clause complementizer which is merged in  $\text{Force}^0$  to fulfill the

V2-requirement.<sup>8</sup> The Brabantic dialects, like the one in (36), cannot have such a main clause complementizer but have to have an XP-expletive, like *dr* ‘there’, to fulfill the V2-requirement. Van Craenenbroeck (to appear:fn18) proposes that one way to interpret these data is to assume that in the Flemish dialects  $\text{Force}^0$  has a V2-requirement, whereas in the Brabantic dialects it is  $\text{Fin}^0$  that has the V2 requirement (similar analyses of variation in the locus of V2 have been proposed by e.g. Wolfe (2016) and Hinterhölzl (2021)).<sup>9</sup> The tree structures in (37) and (38) illustrate this analysis for the examples in (35) and (36) respectively:<sup>10</sup>

(37) **Flemish dialects**



(38) **Brabantic dialects**



<sup>8</sup>We refer the reader to the original paper for more details on this analysis.

<sup>9</sup>Van Craenenbroeck (to appear) ends up proposing a different analysis, whereby the Brabantic dialects have only one CP-layer, whereas the Flemish dialects have an extended left periphery. The approach developed in the current paper is, as far as we can see and as was already foreshadowed in Van Craenenbroeck’s fn18, compatible with the data discussed in Van Craenenbroeck (to appear).

<sup>10</sup>An anonymous reviewer points out that the analysis in (37) predicts V3-structures to be possible in this type of dialect. Such structures are indeed attested, as discussed by Haegeman and Greco (2018) and De Clercq and Haegeman (2018). See also Hinterhölzl (2021) for an analysis similar to the one discussed in the main text.

This difference in the position of V2 between the Flemish and the Dender dialects helps us understand the first three subject doubling differences between these two dialect groups discussed in section 2: clitic doubling in subject initial main clauses, topic doubling, and tripling.

#### 4.2.2 Clitic doubling in subject-initial main clauses

Recall from subsection 2.2 that clitic doubling is possible in subject-initial main clauses in the Flemish dialects (see example (4), repeated here as (39)), but not in the Dender dialects (see example (5), repeated here as (40)).

- (39) Ze            goa   zie.  
       she.CLITIC goes she.STRONG  
       ‘She’s going.’

Lapscheure Dutch, F

- (40) \*Me            komme waaile            mergen.  
       we.CLITIC come    we.STRONG tomorrow  
       ‘We are coming tomorrow.’

Wambeek Dutch, D

This difference is easily explained given the analysis discussed in the previous section. In Flemish dialects  $X^0$ -elements, like the main clause complementizer  $t$  in (35), can satisfy the V2-requirement. We assume that clitic pronouns are heads (see also Sportiche 1995; Kayne 1975, 1991; Manzini 2022). This means that the clitic of a clitic doubled subject can fulfill the V2-requirement in the Flemish dialects and hence that clitic doubling should be possible in subject-initial main clauses in these dialects.

The Dender dialects, however, do not allow  $X^0$ s in V2-position. As a result clitics cannot occur clause-initially and hence clitic doubling in subject-initial main clause is impossible in these dialects.

#### 4.2.3 Topic doubling and tripling

Now let us consider how the analysis in subsection 4.2.1 explains the presence of topic doubling and tripling in the Dender dialects and their absence in the Flemish dialects. Reconsider the topic doubling examples in (8), repeated here as (41), from the Dender dialect of Wambeek.

- (41) Een vrou    komt    zaai            e kaffee binn.  
       a    woman comes she.STRONG a bar    in  
       ‘Women usually enter a bar.’/ # ‘A woman enters a bar.’

Wambeek Dutch, D



This pattern is not possible in the Flemish dialects as was shown in example (7), repeated here as (42).

- (42) \*Die vrouwe en heeft zij                      daar nietend mee te doene.  
           that woman not has    she.STRONG there nothing with to do  
           Intended: That woman has nothing to do with that. Klemskerke Dutch, F

To explain these data we have to make one additional assumption, for which we base ourselves on Van Urk (2018).<sup>11</sup> Van Urk shows that in the Nilotic language Dinka Bor multiple copies of one movement chain can be spelled out given two conditions: (i) the copy has to be reduced with respect to the higher spelled-out copy, and (ii) there has to be a PF-requirement forcing the spell-out of multiple copies. One such PF-requirement is V2: Van Urk (2018) assumes, following e.g. Richards (2001), that V2 is a combination of an EPP-feature which instructs syntax to move an element to this position as well as a PF-instruction to actually spell-out an element in this position. In Dinka Bor this leads to the spell-out of the copy of a moved DP in specvP. The moved DP is itself also spelled out in the higher landing site. The lower DP-copy is not spelled out as an exact copy of the higher element but realized as a pronoun with fewer  $\phi$ -features than the higher spelled-out element.

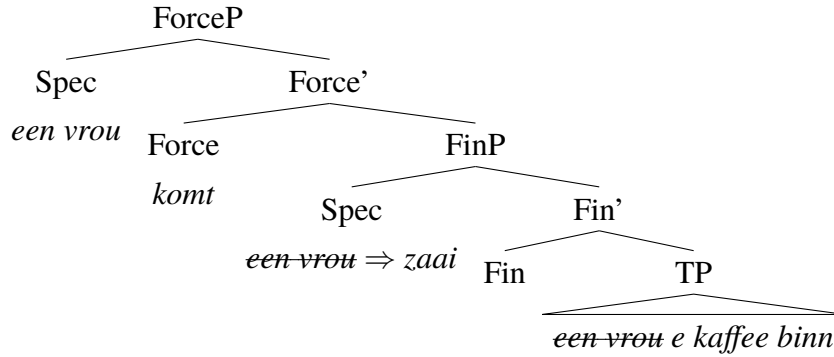
This analysis of Van Urk (2018) gives us a handle on the analysis of topic doubling in the Dender dialects. Recall from the previous subsection that the Dender dialects have a V2-requirement on FinP. We assume that topicalization involves movement to specForceP.<sup>12</sup> For subject topicalization in the Dender dialects this means that the subject moves from specFinP (where the subject moves to fulfill the EPP-requirement) to specForceP (where it gets its topic interpretation). FinP also has a V2-requirement at PF which means that a spell-out is required in this position. We assume that the lower copy of the moved subject gets spelled out for this reason. Following Van Urk (2018), the spell-out has to be a reduced version of the higher copy. In the topic doubling example in (41) the higher copy is a DP and the spelled out lower copy is a reduced element with respect to this DP, namely a strong pronoun. The analysis of example (41) is then as in (43).

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<sup>11</sup>We refer the reader to the original paper for the detailed argumentation of this analysis which we will not discuss here for reasons of space. Note, however, that Van Urk also assumes this analysis can be applied to subject doubling in the dialects discussed here

<sup>12</sup>Within the left peripheral analysis of Rizzi (1997) there is a designated topic position to which topics move in languages like Italian. We assume, since there is no evidence for a third layer in the C-domain in addition to ForceP and FinP, that ForceP in these dialects includes the topic (and focus) features that project their own XP in other languages.

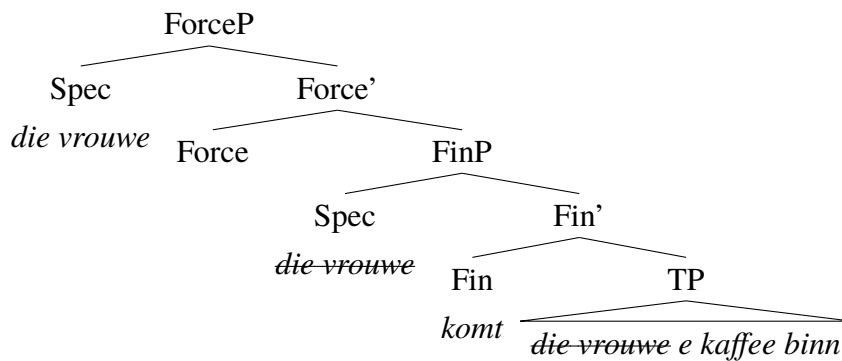
(43) **Topic doubling in Dender dialects**



The indefinite subject *een vrouw* ‘a woman’ moves from the TP-domain into specFinP to fulfill the EPP-Requirement of Fin. It is then topicalized by moving to specForceP (see also Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen 2002a, 2002b). Because FinP has a V2-requirement in this dialect, the copy of *een vrouw* also has to be spelled out. It spells out as the reduced element *zaai* in specFinP, leading to topic doubling.<sup>13</sup>

In the Flemish dialects the V2-requirement is on Force<sup>0</sup>. This means that movement of the subject from specTP or (depending on the analysis) specFinP to specForceP does not lead to copy spell-out. Consider the analysis in (44) of the example in (42).

(44) **No topic doubling in Flemish dialects**



The topicalized subject *die vrouwe* ‘that woman’ moves to specForceP where it fulfills the V2-requirement of this dialect, both in syntax and at PF. Because there is no V2-requirement on the

<sup>13</sup>This analysis raises the question of how to explain those instances of topic doubling where the higher and the lower copy are identical and hence one of the requirements of copy spell-out according to Van Urk (2018), reduction of the lower copy, is not met. Interestingly, Van Urk (2018) suggests a possible solution involving the internal structure of pronouns in Dutch. We refer the reader to his original paper for further details.

lower  $\text{Fin}^0$ , spell-out of a lower copy of this subject is prohibited for reasons of economy (see Van Urk 2018 and references cited there) and hence leads to ungrammaticality.<sup>14</sup> As a consequence topic doubling cannot occur in these dialects.

This analysis also explains why tripling is possible in the Dender dialects, see (13) repeated here as (46), but not in the Flemish dialects, see (14), repeated here as (46).

- (45) We hebben me weir daar niks mee te maken.  
 we.WEAK have we.CLITIC we.STRONG there nothing with to make  
 ‘We have nothing to do with that.’ Affligem Dutch, D
- (46) M’ hebben (\*me) wieder daar nietend mee te doene.  
 we.WEAK have we.CLITIC we.STRONG there nothing with to do  
 ‘We have nothing to do with that.’ Klemskerke Dutch, F

Tripling, as already discussed in subsection 2.4 above, is a combination of clitic doubling and topic doubling. Since the Flemish dialects do not allow topic doubling, they also do not allow tripling.

#### 4.2.4 Summary

This section has presented an analysis, based on previous work by Van Craenenbroeck (to appear) and Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2016, 2019), in which the Flemish and Dender dialects differ with respect to (i) how the V2-requirement can be met in these dialects (i.e. via an  $\text{X}^0$  or XP in the Flemish dialects, but only an XP in the Dender dialects), and (ii) which head in the extended left periphery has a V2-requirement ( $\text{Force}^0$  in the Flemish dialects and  $\text{Fin}^0$  in the Dender dialects). This analysis also explains why the Flemish dialects unlike the Dender dialects can have clitic doubling in subject-initial main clauses, and why only the Dender dialects have topic doubling and tripling.

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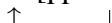
<sup>14</sup>Note that this analysis also sheds light on why topic doubling is restricted to the southern Dutch dialects and does not appear in any of the other Dutch dialects. Van Craenenbroeck and Van Koppen (2019) show that these other Dutch dialects do not have an extended left periphery. Hence subject movement never involves an additional step in the left periphery and therefore also never generates a copy that needs to be spelled out to fulfill the V2-requirement.

### 4.3 The status of clitics in the Flemish and Dender dialects

#### 4.3.1 DP-internal vs. DP-external clitics

In the previous subsection, we have shown how subject doubling interacts with the structure of the left periphery of the clause. This subsection will focus on the interaction of clitic doubling and the status of clitics. We will argue that there are two types of clitics. The first type are clitics that are merged external to the subject (see also e.g. Poletto 2000; Sportiche 1995), schematically represented in (47).


- (47) **DP-external clitic**  

$$[C^0 \text{ [FP clitic [TP [DP strong] ...]]}]$$


This clitic is merged in the CP-domain and agrees with the subject. It then moves to adjoin to the highest C-head.<sup>15</sup>

The second type are DP-internal clitics (see also e.g. Abney 1987; Kayne 1975). They are base-generated inside the subject DP and move into the left periphery of the clause, as schematized in (48).

- (48) **DP-internal clitic**  

$$[C^0 \text{ [TP [DP clitic + strong] ...]]}]$$


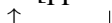
One way to distinguish between these two types of pronouns is by looking at intervention patterns. In particular, we assume that an  $X^0$  adjoined to the DP-subject blocks movement of a DP-internal clitic, which is also an  $X^0$ , into the left periphery and as such prevent clitic doubling, see (49).

- (49) **DP-internal clitic**  

$$[C^0 \text{ [TP [DP INTERVENER clitic + strong] ...]]}]$$


A DP-external clitic on the other hand is not affected by such an intervening element, see (50).

- (50) **DP-external clitic**  

$$[C^0 \text{ [FP clitic [TP [DP INTERVENER strong] ...]]}]$$


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<sup>15</sup>We remain agnostic as to the precise identity of the functional head hosting this subject clitic or its position inside the left periphery.

Interestingly, the clitics found in FuCCD and FCCD behave differently with respect to intervention. Whereas FuCCD is not sensitive to an intervener, FCCD is. Consider the examples from the Dender dialect of Wambeek in (51) and (52) respectively.

- (51) Ik venj da me [(en) gou en ik ontslag mute pakken.  
 I find that we.CLITIC and you and I resignation must take  
 ‘I think you and I should resign.’ Wambeek Dutch, D
- (52) Ik venj da ge [(en) gou en ik] ontslag mute pakken.  
 I find that you.CLITIC and you and I resignation must take  
 ‘I think you and I should resign.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

In (51), the subject *(en) gou en ik* ‘and you and I’ can be doubled by a clitic which agrees with the entire coordination (FuCCD) independently of whether the conjunction *en* ‘and’ is adjoined to the left of the subject or not. This indicates that FuCCD clitic doubling is not blocked by the intervening  $X^0$  *en* and hence that the FuCCD-clitic is base-generated outside of the subject.

In example (52), however, the clitic *ge* ‘you’ only doubles the first conjunct, *gou* ‘you’. This type of doubling is disallowed when the subject is preceded by the conjunction *en* ‘and’. We take this to mean that the subject clitic in this example originates from within the subject. In short, clitics in FuCCD are DP-external, while clitics in FCCD are DP-internal. All dialects, both Flemish and Dender dialects, have both types of doubling. This means that all dialects discussed in this paper have both types of clitics.

#### 4.3.2 Two types of DP-internal clitics

Although all dialects have DP-internal clitics, the Flemish and Dender dialects differ in whether or not these clitics are sensitive to agreement between C and the subject. In the Flemish dialects they are and in the Dender dialects they are not. This becomes clear when we reconsider the examples of the absolute *with*-constructions discussed in section 2.5 above, in particular examples (17) and (18) repeated here as (53) and (54) respectively.

- (53) Me (se) zui te komme,  
 with she.CLITIC she.STRONG to come  
 ‘Because of her coming, ...’ Brussels Dutch, D
- (54) Mee (\*se) zunder te komen, ...  
 with they.CLITIC they.STRONG to come  
 ‘Because of them coming, ...’ Waregem Dutch, F

In these types of infinitival clauses there is a reduced clausal structure, without a CP (see Haslinger (2007)). Hence, only clitics that are not dependent on a relation between C and the subject are expected to occur in these contexts. We assume that this is the reason that clitic doubling is possible in absolute *with*-constructions in the Dender dialects, but not the Flemish dialects.

Support for the idea that the Flemish dialects have a special agreement relation between C and the subject comes from the fact that they also all show another reflex of this agreement relation namely complementizer agreement (see e.g. Van Koppen 2017 for a complete description and references). In the Flemish dialects the complementizer introducing an embedded finite clause agrees with the subject of that embedded clause. An example is provided in (55) for the Wijtschate dialect: the complementizer *da* agrees with the plural subject *ze zider* as evidenced by the plural *n*-suffix on the complementizer.

- (55) K peizn da-n            ze            zider            komn.  
       I think that-PLURAL they.CLITIC they.STRONG come  
       ‘I think they are coming.’ Wijtschate Dutch, F

Complementizer agreement is not found in the Dender dialects, see (56).<sup>16</sup>

- (56) Ik paus da(\*-n)        se            zaailn            kommen.  
       I think that-PLURAL they.CLITIC they.STRONG come  
       ‘I think they are coming.’ Wambeek Dutch, D

The presence of complementizer agreement in Flemish might also shed light on the fact that some Flemish dialects allow FCCD, whereas other do not (see section 2.6 above). Complementizer agreement paradigms are often defective. Dialects with complementizer agreement differ as to the type of subject that can trigger this type of agreement (pronominal or not, coordination or not, etc., see Van Koppen (2005, 2017)). If clitic doubling in the Flemish dialects is also dependent on this agreement relation we might expect it to also be sensitive to the type of subject and hence we might expect some of the Flemish dialects to not allow FCCD. The Dender dialects do not have this sensitivity to an agreement relation and, as expected from this perspective, no restrictions on clitic doubling of FCCD occurs.

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<sup>16</sup>The Dender dialect of Affligem does have complementizer agreement in at least the third person plural and is hence an exception to this generalization. We have nothing insightful to say about this fact at the moment.

### 4.3.3 Summary

In this subsection we have argued that all dialects under discussion have both DP-internal and DP-external subject clitics. The first type, which is sensitive to intervention of an adjoined conjunction to the subject, features in FCCD, and the second, which is insensitive to this type of intervention, in FuCCD. We have furthermore shown that the DP-internal clitics in the Flemish dialects are dependent on an agreement relation between C and the subject, comparable to complementizer agreement, which is also found in these dialects. This means that clitic doubling is not possible in absolute *with*-constructions in these dialects. The DP-internal clitics in the Dender dialects, however, are not dependent on an agreement relation. They can freely occur in absolute *with*-constructions.

## 5 Conclusion

This paper has proposed a micro-typology of pronominal doubling constructions in southern Dutch dialects. We have argued for two dialect groups based on the behavior of subject doubling. In particular, we have shown that the Flemish dialects differ from the Dender dialects in how they implement the V2-requirement as well as in the finer detailed of their clitic inventory.

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