

## Subject doubling in Dutch dialects

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This paper deals with pronominal subject doubling in three dialects of Dutch. We make a distinction between two types of doubling: clitic doubling and topic doubling. The former only occurs in subclauses and inverted main clauses, whereas the second is restricted to subject-initial main clauses. A clitic doubled subject consists of a clitic and a strong pronoun. We take them to be merged as one DP. A topic doubled subject on the other hand always involves a non-clitic pronoun doubled by a strong pronoun. Here, we analyse the doubling pronoun as the spelling out of a subject trace. Both analyses consist of two parts: one which is situated in narrow syntax and one which takes place at PF.

### *1. Two types of pronominal doubling*

In this section we discuss data concerning pronominal doubling in three dialects of southern Dutch, namely the dialects of Wambeek and Lapscheure and the regiolect of the Belgian province of Brabant. We make a distinction between two types of pronominal doubling: clitic doubling and topic doubling.

#### *1.1. Clitic doubling*

The first type of pronominal subject doubling, clitic doubling, has frequently been discussed in the literature on Dutch dialects (cf. de Geest 1995, Haegeman 1992, Zwart 1993). The main characteristics of this type of subject doubling are that the first subject element is always a clitic pronoun, while the second is necessarily a strong pronoun.<sup>1</sup> Consider the examples in (1).

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper we will make use of the tripartition of the pronominal system into clitic, weak and strong pronouns as proposed by Cardinaletti & Starke (1999). For argumentation that their tripartition also holds for the pronominal systems of the dialects under consideration here, cf. Van Craenenbroeck & Van Koppen (2000).

- (1) a. **Subclauses** (Wambeek)  
 da me ze waaile nuir ojsh gojn bringen.  
 that we<sub>CLITIC</sub> them we<sub>STRONG</sub> to home go bring  
 ‘...that we’re going to take them home.’
- b. **Inverted main clauses**  
 Nuir ojsh gon me ze waaile bringen.  
 to home go we<sub>CLITIC</sub> them we<sub>STRONG</sub> bring  
 ‘Home were going to take them.’
- c. **Subject-initial main clauses**  
 \* Me gojn ze waaile nuir ojsh bringen.  
 we<sub>CLITIC</sub> go them we<sub>STRONG</sub> to home bring

The sentences in (1a-b) show that clitic doubling can occur in subclauses and inverted main clauses. The c-example on the other hand demonstrates that this construction is not allowed in subject-initial main clauses. The properties of clitic doubling are summarised in the table below.

| Clitic Doubling |  |                               |                               |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| dialect         | sentence type  | 1 <sup>st</sup> subj. element | 2 <sup>nd</sup> subj. element |
| Lapscheure      | subclauses<br>inverted main clauses<br>*subj.-ini.main clauses | clitic                        | strong                        |
| Brabant Dutch   | subclauses<br>inverted main clauses<br>*subj.-ini.main clauses | clitic                        | strong                        |
| Wambeek         | subclauses<br>inverted main clauses<br>*subj.-ini.main clauses | clitic                        | strong                        |

### 1.2. Topic doubling

So far, the second type of subject doubling, topic doubling, has –at least to our knowledge– gone unnoticed in the linguistic literature. In this type of subject doubling the first subject element can be a weak pronoun, a strong pronoun, a proper name or a definite DP (depending on the dialect), but never a clitic pronoun. The second subject element is always a strong pronoun. As the data in (2) show, the dialects under consideration here vary with respect to the first subject element they allow in this construction.

- (2) a. { Ze / \*Zie / \*Da wuf / \*Marie } goa zie. (Lapscheure)  
 { she<sub>WEAK</sub> / she<sub>STRONG</sub> / that woman / Mary } goes she<sub>STRONG</sub>  
 ‘She is going.’

- b. { Ze / Zij /\*die vrou /\*Marie } komt zij. (Brabant)  
 { she<sub>WEAK</sub> / she<sub>STRONG</sub> /that woman / Mary } comes she<sub>STRONG</sub>  
 ‘She will come.’
- c. { Ze / zij / dei vrou / Marie } gui zij. (Wambeek)  
 { she<sub>WEAK</sub> / she<sub>STRONG</sub> / that woman / Mary } goes she<sub>STRONG</sub>  
 ‘She/that woman/Mary is going.’

Example (2a) shows that in the Lapscheure dialect the first subject element can only be a weak pronoun. In the Brabant Dutch regiolect (2b) it can be both a weak and a strong pronoun, while the dialect of Wambeek has the largest set of possibilities. The first subject element in this dialect can be a weak pronoun, a strong pronoun, a proper name or a definite DP. There is no variation concerning the second subject element in these dialects: this is always a strong pronoun. Just like clitic doubling, topic doubling is restricted in its syntactic distribution. Consider the data in (3).

- (3) a. **Subject-initial main clauses** (Wambeek)  
 Dei vrou gui zij nuir ojsh.  
 that woman goes she<sub>STRONG</sub> to home  
 ‘That woman is going home.’
- b. **Subclauses**  
 \* ... da dei vrou zij nuir ojsh guit.  
 that that woman she<sub>STRONG</sub> to home goes
- c. **Inverted main clauses**  
 \* Nuir ojsh gui dei vrou zij.  
 to home goes that woman she<sub>STRONG</sub>

Topic doubling can only occur in subject-initial main clauses (3a). The examples in (3b-c) show that it is not possible in inverted main clauses or subclauses. The properties of topic doubling are summarised in the table below.

| Topic Doubling |   |  |                               |
|----------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| dialect        | sentence type   | 1 <sup>st</sup> subj. element                | 2 <sup>nd</sup> subj. element |
| Lapscheure     | subj.-ini.main clauses<br>*subclauses<br>*inverted main clauses | weak   | strong                        |
| Brabant Dutch  | subj.-ini.main clauses<br>*subclauses<br>*inverted main clauses | weak, strong                                 | strong                        |
| Wambeek        | subj.-ini.main clauses<br>*subclauses<br>*inverted main clauses | weak, strong,<br>definite DP,<br>proper name | strong                        |

## 2. The analysis

## 2.1. Theoretical assumptions

Before moving on to the analysis of subject doubling, we want to introduce some theoretical concepts and ideas we will make use of in the rest of this paper. The first concerns the internal structure of a clitic doubled subject. It has often been noted that in many languages clitics are homophonous with determiners (cf. Uriagereka 1995, Cardinaletti & Starke 1994, fn 65). This parallelism is illustrated for French in (4).

- |     |      |      |                    |                      |   |      |                       |                  |
|-----|------|------|--------------------|----------------------|---|------|-----------------------|------------------|
| (4) | Jean | voit | <b>le</b>          | garcon.              | - | Jean | <b>le</b>             | voit.            |
|     | John | sees | the <sub>DET</sub> | boy                  | - | John | him <sub>CLITIC</sub> | sees             |
|     |      |      |                    | 'John sees the boy.' | - |      |                       | 'John sees him.' |

An obvious way to give a structural interpretation to this empirical generalisation is to assume that clitics and determiners are merged in the same structural position. That would straightforwardly explain why in many languages these elements are so alike. This is the option we adopt. We take both clitics and determiners to be merged in the D°-head of a DP. Furthermore, we assume that the second element in a clitic doubled subject (the strong pronoun) is merged as the head of an NP that is the complement of the clitic in D° (cf. also Uriagereka 1995; Laenzlinger 1998; Grohmann 2000). Together the clitic and the strong pronoun form a single DP.

The second theoretical claim we want to introduce in this subsection concerns the defining characteristic of clitics. We assume that clitics always need to attach to a phonologically realised head. This can come about in two ways: parasitically on an instance of syntactic movement<sup>2</sup> or as the result of cliticisation at PF. Furthermore, we assume that Dutch clitics are enclitic. This implies that they always end up on the right-hand side of their host.

## 2.2. Clitic doubling

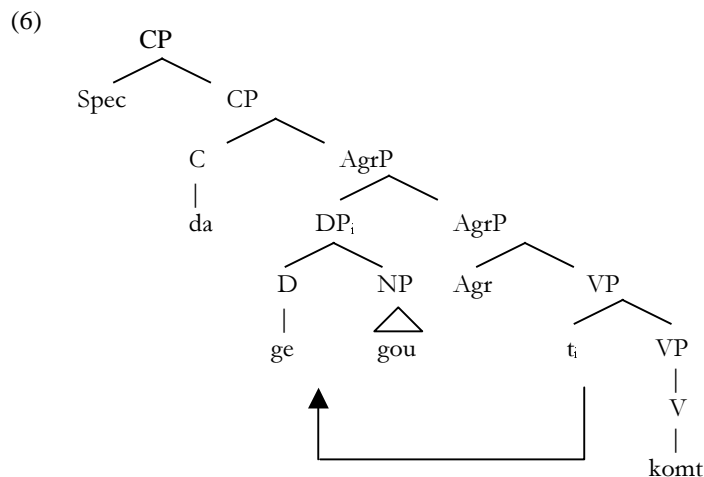
In this subsection we give an analysis of clitic doubling in embedded clauses and inverted main clauses. This analysis also provides an explanation for the absence of clitic doubling in subject-initial main clauses. In (5) an example of clitic doubling in an embedded clause is given.<sup>3</sup>

- |     |     |      |                       |                       |                          |           |
|-----|-----|------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| (5) | ... | da   | ge                    | gou                   | komt.                    | (Wambeek) |
|     |     | that | you <sub>CLITIC</sub> | you <sub>STRONG</sub> | come                     |           |
|     |     |      |                       |                       | '...that you're coming.' |           |

<sup>2</sup> As the clitic's requirement to attach to a phonologically realised head is a strictly phonological one, it is not an appropriate trigger for syntactic movement. Therefore, if the clitic does find a host in narrow syntax, it would have to be the result of an instance of movement triggered by other (syntactic) factors.

<sup>3</sup> In this example we abstract away from the placement of object clitics (compare 1a). For an elaborate discussion of object clitics, cf. Van Craenenbroeck & Van Koppen (in prep.).

The derivation of this sentence consists of two parts. The first takes place in narrow syntax. It is illustrated in (6).



The subject DP, containing both the clitic and the strong pronoun, moves from the specifier of VP to the specifier of AgrP. The C°-position is filled with the complementizer *da* ('that') and the finite verb stays in its base position. At this point the syntactic derivation is finished. The clitic pronoun *ge* ('you'), however, has not yet found a phonologically realised head to attach to. As a result it will have to find one at PF. This is illustrated in (7).

(7) **Phonological Form**

$[_{CP} da [_{AgrP} ge gou [_{VP} komt ]]] \rightarrow [_{CP} da+ge [_{AgrP} gou [_{VP} komt]]]$

As the clitic pronoun is enclitic, it has to search for a host to its left. The complementizer in C° is the first (and only) available host for the clitic. It attaches on the right-hand side of the complementizer.

The derivation of clitic doubling in inverted main clauses does not differ much from that of clitic doubling in subclauses. Consider the sentence in (8).

- (8) Mergen kom de gou. (Wambeek)  
 tomorrow come you<sub>CLITIC</sub> you<sub>STRONG</sub>  
 'Tomorrow you will come.'

The derivation of this sentence again consists of two parts. The first takes place in narrow syntax. The clitic doubled subject – generated as one DP – moves from the specifier position of VP to the specifier position of AgrP. The verb moves from V° via Agr° to C° (cf. Zwart 1993, 1997). The Spec,CP-position is occupied by the

adverb *mergen* ('tomorrow').<sup>4</sup> This concludes the narrow syntax derivation of the sentence in (8). Again the subject clitic has not yet found a host. This means it has to look for one at PF. To its left there is only one suitable host, namely the finite verb. Thus the clitic attaches to the verb. This is illustrated in (9).

(9) **Phonological Form**

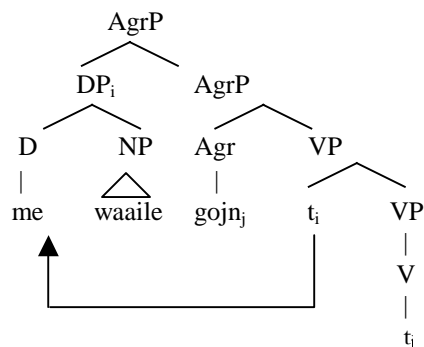
[<sub>CP</sub> Mergen kom [<sub>AgrP</sub> ge gou [<sub>VP</sub> ]]] → [<sub>CP</sub> Mergen kom+de [<sub>AgrP</sub> gou [<sub>VP</sub> ]]]

Now let's turn to subject-initial main clauses. Recall that clitic doubling is excluded in this sentence type.

(10) \* Me gojn waaile. (Wambeek)  
 we<sub>CLITIC</sub> go we<sub>STRONG</sub>

Reasoning along the lines of the analysis outlined above, one would expect the sentence in (10) to have a syntactic derivation such as in (11).

(11)



The structural analysis in (11) is identical to the one of inverted main clauses, the only difference being that in non-inverted main clauses the verb only moves up to Agr° (cf. Zwart 1993, 1997). As the phrase marker is handed over to PF, however, the analysis runs into problems. The subject clitic *me* ('we') has not found a suitable host in narrow syntax. Therefore we expect it to look for such a host at PF. As there is no phonologically realised head available to the left of the subject clitic (the C°-position being empty), the derivation crashes. This is illustrated in (12).

(12) **Phonological Form**

[<sub>AgrP</sub> me waaile komme [<sub>VP</sub> ...]] → \*me [<sub>AgrP</sub> waaile komme [<sub>VP</sub> ...]]

<sup>4</sup>We abstract away from the base-generated position of *mergen*. The only thing that is relevant for our analysis is that it ends up in Spec,CP.

Thus clitic doubling is not allowed in subject-initial main clauses under the analysis presented above.

### 2.3. Supporting evidence: object clitic placement

This subsection provides extra support for the analysis of clitic doubling given in section 2.2. Consider the data in (13).

- (13) a. ... dat-et Valère doar goa kuopen. (Lapscheure)  
           that-it<sub>CLITIC</sub> Valère there goes buy  
           ‘...that Valère is going to buy it there.’  
       b. ... da Valère da wuf doar gezien eet.  
           that Valère that woman there seen has  
           ‘...that Valère has seen that woman there.’

This example shows that as far as their syntactic distribution is concerned object clitics behave differently from full object-DPs. Whereas the former immediately follow the complementizer, the latter are situated to the right of the subject. The obvious question to raise at this point is where this distributional difference comes from.

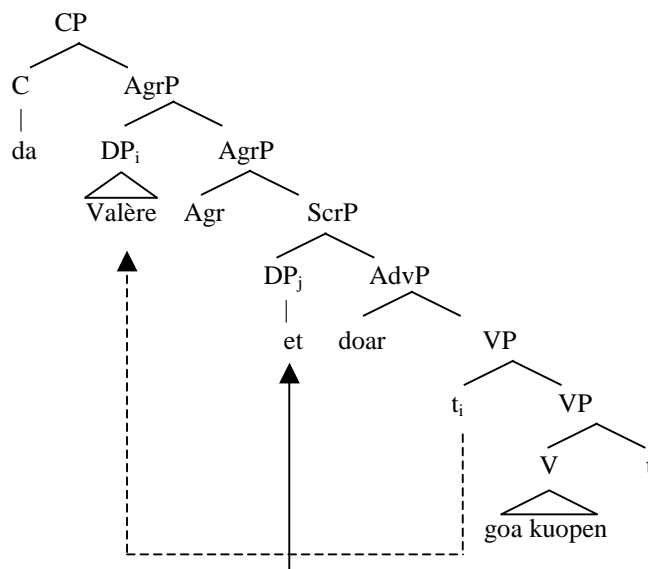
A first step towards the answer concerns the behaviour of deficient pronouns more generally. Consider in this respect the Standard Dutch examples in (14).

- (14) a. Ik heb <jou> gisteren <jou> gezien.  
           I have <you<sub>STRONG</sub>> yesterday <you<sub>STRONG</sub>> seen  
           ‘I have seen you yesterday.’  
       b. Ik heb <je> gisteren <\*je> gezien.  
           I have <you<sub>DEFICIENT</sub>> yesterday <you<sub>DEFICIENT</sub>> seen  
           ‘I have seen you yesterday.’

The a-sentence shows that a strong object pronoun can occur both before and after the temporal VP-adverb *gisteren* (‘yesterday’). The deficient pronoun *je* (‘you’) on the other hand, can only occur in a position to the left of the adverb. We take this to mean that deficient pronouns necessarily scramble to a position just below the subject (cf. Zwart 1993). Since clitics are deficient pronouns this scrambling mechanism also applies to them. This means that the syntactic derivation of the example in (13a) proceeds as in (15).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> We abstract away from the precise analysis of the VP-adverb *doar* (‘there’). We do assume that it ends up (either by move or by merge) somewhere at the left edge of VP.

(15)



In this structure the subject has moved to Spec,AgrP in order to license case and agreement. The object, being a deficient pronoun, has moved to the Spec of some ScrP, a functional projection just below AgrP.<sup>6</sup> That concludes the syntactic derivation of this sentence. However, this cannot be the whole story as far as the placement of the object clitic is concerned. It has now climbed past all VP-adverbs (and all other objects), but it is still to the right of the subject. We are therefore forced to assume that the clitic crosses the subject at PF. Recall that in section 2.2 we assumed that Dutch subject clitics are enclitic and that it is a defining characteristic of them that they need to attach to the nearest phonologically realised head. Let us now assume that the same holds for object clitics. This would mean that the object clitic in (13a) needs a phonologically realised head to its left to attach to. Therefore, at PF, it skips the subject-DP and attaches to the nearest phonologically realised head to its left: the complementizer in the C°-position. This is illustrated in (16).

(16) **Phonological Form**

[<sub>CP</sub> dat [<sub>AgrP</sub> Valère [<sub>ScrP</sub> et [<sub>AdvP</sub> doar [<sub>VP</sub> goa kuopen ]]]]] →  
 [<sub>CP</sub> dat-et [<sub>AgrP</sub> Valère [<sub>ScrP</sub> [<sub>AdvP</sub> doar [<sub>VP</sub> goa kuopen ]]]]]

This analysis makes a further prediction. If a subject clitic is present in the sentence, we expect the object clitic not to move past it. Instead, since the subject clitic is now the nearest phonologically realised head for the object clitic, it

<sup>6</sup> By using the abstract label ScrP we want to refrain from making any statements about the precise analysis of scrambling or the nature of the projection in which it occurs. The only thing that is relevant for our present purposes is that the deficient pronoun ends up in a position just below the projection hosting the subject.



attaches to the subject clitic (which has itself cliticised to the complementizer). This prediction is confirmed in (17).

- (17) ... da-ze-t                                  zie                  goa      kuopen.                  (Lapscheure)  
                that-she<sub>CLITIC</sub>-it<sub>CLITIC</sub>      she<sub>STRONG</sub>      goes      buy  
                ‘...that she’s going to buy it.’

Thus we see how the minimal assumptions we made in section 2.1 suffice to account for the syntactic distribution of object clitics as well. This in turn constitutes extra evidence in favour of the analysis for clitic doubling outlined above.

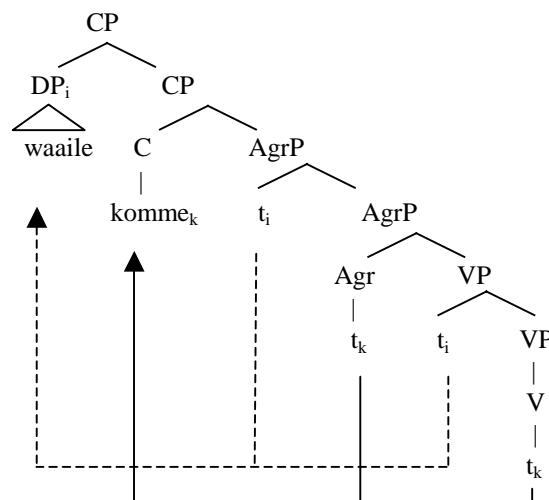
#### 2.4. Topic doubling

Recall that in topic doubling constructions the first subject element can be a weak pronoun, a strong pronoun, a definite DP or a proper name (depending on the dialect). Furthermore, this type of doubling is restricted to subject-initial main clauses. In this section we provide an analysis for topic doubling which is able to capture these characteristics in a straightforward manner. Consider the sentence in (18).

- (18) Waaile            komme            waaile.                                  (Wambeek)  
                we<sub>STRONG</sub>            come                  we<sub>STRONG</sub>  
                ‘We’ll come.’

From the theoretical assumptions made in section 2.1 it follows that a topic doubled subject cannot be merged as a single DP. We assumed that strong pronouns are base-generated in an NP and as there can be only one NP per DP, one DP cannot contain two strong pronouns. Let us therefore assume that the subject in a sentence such as (18) is merged as a non-doubled strong pronoun, as in (19).

- (19)



In this structure the subject-DP first moves to Spec,AgrP in order to license case and agreement. The verb moves along to Agr<sup>o</sup>. This does not conclude the ‘narrow syntactic’ derivation of this sentence, however. We assume that in a topic doubling construction, the subject-DP moves to a topic-position (here represented as Spec,CP). Evidence in favour of this movement will be given in section 2.5. The verb again moves along to the head of CP (cf. the V2-requirement of Dutch). At this point in the derivation the phrase marker can be handed over to PF. We now propose to analyse the strong pronoun doubling the subject in a sentence such as (18) as the spell-out of the subject trace in Spec,AgrP.<sup>7</sup> This is illustrated in (20).

(20) **Phonological Form**

$$[_{CP} \text{ waaile}_i \text{ komme } [_{AgrP} t_i [_{VP} \dots ]]] \rightarrow [_{CP} \text{ waaile komme } [_{AgrP} \text{ waaile } [_{VP} \dots ]]]$$

One might wonder at this point why it is the trace in Spec,AgrP that gets spelled out and not the one in Spec,VP. We take this to follow from the principles of binding theory. A pronoun in Spec,VP would be locally A-bound by the subject trace in Spec,AgrP, thus violating Condition B. As a result only the highest subject trace in an A-position – i.e. the one in Spec,AgrP – can be spelled out in a topic doubling construction.

Topic doubling is disallowed in subclauses (cf. supra, section 1.2) as is illustrated in (21).

(21) \* ... da waaile waaile komme. (Wambeek)  
           that we<sub>STRONG</sub> we<sub>STRONG</sub> come

Recall that our analysis of topic doubling is a two-step procedure. First the subject is topicalised and then the subject trace in Spec,AgrP is spelled out as a strong pronoun. As it turns out the problem with the sentence in (21) concerns the first of these two steps. Several authors have drawn attention to the fact that Dutch unlike other Germanic languages does not allow embedded topicalisation (Hoekstra & Zwart 1994, 1997; Zwart 1997; Barbiers 2000). This is illustrated in (22).

(22) \* Ik denk dat die film Jan gezien heeft. (St.Dutch)  
           I think that that movie John seen has  
           ‘I think that that movie John has seen.’

Given the analysis outlined above, this observation allows us to account for the absence of topic doubling in subclauses. If the subject cannot be topicalised in this

<sup>7</sup> The motivation for this spell-out is semantic in nature. Due to restrictions of space, however, we cannot go into this aspect of pronominal doubling here. For more details, cf. Van Craenenbroeck & Van Koppen (2000, in prep).

type of sentence, there is no trace in Spec,AgrP that can be spelled out. Hence, topic doubling is excluded.

As we already mentioned, topic doubling is not possible in inverted main clauses either. This is shown in (23).

- (23) \* Mergen komme waaile waaile. (Wambeek)  
 tomorrow come we<sub>STRONG</sub> we<sub>STRONG</sub>

Again the ungrammaticality of this example follows from step one of our analysis. Assuming there to be only one topic-position in the syntactic structure of a sentence such as (23), namely Spec,CP (cf. Hoekstra & Zwart 1997), it is clear why topic doubling is excluded in this example. The adverb *mergen* ('tomorrow') already occupies the Spec,CP-position in this sentence. As a result the subject cannot move there, there is no trace in Spec,AgrP to be spelled out and topic doubling is impossible.

### 2.5. Supporting evidence

In this section we present extra evidence in favour of the claim that topic doubled subjects have moved to a topic-position. A first indication concerns the behaviour of quantifiers in topic doubling constructions. On the basis of examples such as the ones in (24) many authors have made a distinction between 'weak' and 'strong' quantifiers (cf. Milsark 1979; Zwarts 1981).

- (24) a. There are some books on the table.  
 b. \* There are all the books on the table.

Quantifiers which can occur in existential *there*-sentences are traditionally called 'weak' (24a), whereas those that are excluded in these contexts are labelled 'strong' (24b). Milsark (1979:218) notes that weak quantifiers – in his terminology 'non-quantificational' – cannot function as the topic of a sentence. In view of our analysis this observation makes a prediction concerning the possibility of topic doubled quantifiers. If weak quantifiers cannot be topics, then we expect not to find them in topic doubling constructions. This prediction is borne out in (25).

- (25) Alle / \*gin manne meege zaailn ie binn (Wambeek)  
 all / no men may they<sub>STRONG</sub> here inside  
 'All men can come in.'

This example illustrates that strong quantifiers can, whereas weak ones cannot be topic doubled. However, the situation is more complex than this example suggests. As Barbiers & Rooryck (1998) point out, Milsark's observation needs to be refined further. Some weak quantifiers can be topicalised, but then their meaning shifts from non-specific to generic. An example of this is given in (26) (Barbiers & Rooryck 1998, (5)).

- (26) Een plant staat \*(doorgaans) in de tuin. (Standard Dutch)  
 a plant stands usually in the garden  
 ‘A plant is usually in the garden.’

As the obligatory presence of the temporal adverb *doorgaans* (‘usually’) indicates, the weak quantifier *een* (‘a’) is not interpreted as a non-specific indefinite, but as a generic. With respect to our analysis this predicts that some weak quantifiers can be topic doubled, but only if they are interpreted generically. This prediction is confirmed in (27).

- (27) Een vrouw mag zij ie nie komme. (Wambeek)  
 a woman may she here not come  
 ‘Women are not allowed to come here.’

In this example the DP *een vrouw* (‘a woman’) can only be interpreted as referring to women in general.

A second clue that our analysis of topic doubling is on the right track comes from the interaction between wh-movement and topic doubling. Consider the example in (28).

- (28) Wie eid-ij da geduin? (Wambeek)  
 who has-he<sub>STRONG</sub> that done  
 meaning: \* ‘Who has done that?’ (real question)  
 ‘It is obvious that X has done that.’ (rhetorical question)  
 ‘It is obvious that no one has done that.’ (rhetorical question)

As the English translations of this example show, a wh-phrase can only be topic doubled if the sentence in which it occurs is interpreted as a rhetorical question, not when it is a normal request for information. Again this follows from our analysis in a straightforward manner. Under its normal (question) interpretation a wh-phrase moves to the Spec-position of a specialised WhP. Since it cannot be in a topic-position at the same time, we expect this reading to be incompatible with topic doubling, a prediction that is borne out in (28). The only way it can be topic doubled is when it has moved to a topic-position, but then it loses its wh-interpretation.<sup>8</sup> This is exactly what happens in the rhetorical readings of the example in (28). There, the wh-phrase refers to an entity which is already known or understood by the hearer (either a specific person or no one at all).

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<sup>8</sup> An anonymous reviewer raises the question as to why the spell out of a trace (a PF-phenomenon) would be dependent on movement to a topic position (which is arguably a LF-phenomenon). We believe this to be related to the fact that the trace is spelled out as a strong pronoun, which necessarily implies known or presupposed information. As this is not compatible with a Wh- or focus-reading only topics can be doubled in this manner.

*3. Conclusion*

In this paper we have discussed pronominal subject doubling in three dialects of southern Dutch. First of all we have argued that there is not one, but two types of pronominal doubling. The first one is the well-known clitic doubling construction. It always involves a clitic pronoun doubled by a strong pronoun and it only occurs in subclauses and inverted main clauses. The second type of doubling we have called topic doubling. It is restricted to subject-initial main clauses and the first subject element can be a weak pronoun, a strong pronoun, a definite DP or a proper name.

Our analysis of clitic doubling started from the assumption that a clitic doubled subject is merged as one DP. In narrow syntax, this DP moves to the Spec, AgrP-position and at PF the clitic attaches to the nearest phonologically realised head to its left. In subclauses this is the complementizer, in inverted main clauses the fronted finite verb in C°. The absence of such a host to the left of the clitic in subject-initial main clauses prevents clitic doubling from occurring in this type of sentence. Our analysis was further supported by the behaviour of object clitics in the dialects under consideration.

In a topic doubling construction we take the doubling strong pronoun to be the spell-out of the highest subject trace. The subject itself has moved to a topic-position. Evidence in favour of this analysis comes from the behaviour of topic doubled weak quantifiers and the interaction between wh-movement and topic doubling.

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