

Empirical Evidence for Split-CP in German (varieties): Double Complementizers in Saurian and Emphatic Topicalization in Bavarian.¹

Helmut Weiß

(Frankfurt)

1. Introduction

Rizzi (1997, 2001) proposed to split the C-domain into several functional phrases as in (1). While ForceP and IntP (introduced in Rizzi 2001) represent features concerning the clausal type, TopP and FocP host information structural features.

(1) [ForceP [IntP [TopP [FocP [FinP

The split-CP hypothesis has received a lot of approval and there is broad empirical evidence for this approach in many languages. For German, however, there is hardly any direct empirical evidence that the C domain is split into multiple projections. The restriction to one constituent in the prefield that applies to strict V2 languages even seems to speak against a split CP in German. If there is more than one spec position that could serve as a landing position for phrases shifted from the middle field into the prefield, one would not expect that only one constituent is allowed to precede the finite verb in root sentences. Therefore, most researchers either assume that German (and its dialectal varieties) do not possess a split C-domain (most prominently Haider 2010) or use a mechanism that ensures that only one constituent appears before the finite verb. Grewendorf (2002), e.g., proposed an approach where any constituent that moves to the left periphery passes through SpecFinP and leaves a trace there which then prevents further

¹ This contribution is dedicated to Cecilia Poletto, who herself made substantial contributions to the split-CP model (e.g., in Poletto 2000). I want to thank two anonymous reviewers as well as Josef Bayer, Melanie Hobich, and Thomas Strobel for their helpful input and comments.

movement of other constituents (another explanation is Müller’s 2004 remnant VP movement approach).²

In my paper, I will present and discuss two types of data that speak in favor of a split-CP approach for German (varieties). In section 2, I will introduce data from Saurian, a Bavarian dialect spoken in a speech island in Northern Italy (Prov. of Udine). This German variety offers direct evidence for a split-CP approach in two respects: First, adverbial clauses are introduced by an appropriate complementizer as *vaspegn* ‘because’ to which could be added *as* ‘that’ as a second complementizer; second, multiple complementizers are attested in embedded interrogative clauses as well. The second type of data, presented in section 3, includes constructions from Middle Bavarian, which have a special form of emphatic topicalization.

2 Double Complementizers in Saurian

The split-CP structure contains three head positions (i.e., ForceP°, IntP°, FinP°) that can be occupied by complementizers. Therefore, languages that have ‘multiple complementizers’ offer direct evidence for the existence of a split-CP in the respective languages. Saurian is one of these languages.³ This German variety offers direct evidence for a split-CP approach in two respects. First, adverbial clauses are introduced by an appropriate complementizer to which *as* ‘that’ as a second complementizer can optionally be added. This is often the case with the causal complementizer *vaspegn* ‘because’ (cf. 2) and, but to a lesser extent, with the temporal complementizer *be(i)n(e)* corresponding to Germ. *als* ‘when’ (cf. 3) as well as *wenn* ‘when’ (cf. 4).

(2) A15. Gianni è arrivato tardi perché non ha potuto prendere la corriera in tempo

- a. ARM: Der Gianni ist khemen spote *vaspegn as* ar neit ot genumen de koriera pa zait
The G. is come late because that he not has taken the bus in time
- b. GRA: Der Gianni ist ruvert spote *vaspegn as* ar ot valourn de koriera
The G. is arrived late because that he has missed the bus
- c. ART: Der Gianni ist khemen spote *vaspegn* ar ot net pakhemen de koriera zan der zait

² Analyses of V2 languages within a cartographic approach was also provided by Rizzi (2019) on Danish or Samo (2019) on German.

³ See Bidese et al. (in prep.) for further information about Saurian and how the data was collected. AUG, ARM, ART, ERM, FER, GRA, and LAR are acronyms of our informants whom I sincerely thank for their invaluable help.

The G. is come late because that he has not get the bus to the time

‘G. came late because he didn't take the intercity bus on time.’

(3) **A3. Quando il cacciatore si è mosso, la volpe è scappata**

- a. LAR: **Ben** 's der jeger otsi geriert, der vuks ist intrunen
When the hunter has-him moved, the fox is escaped
- b. ARM: **Ben** der khjokhmon otsi geriert, der vuks ist intrunen
When the hunter has-him moved, the fox is escaped
- c. GRA: **Ben** 's der khjokhmon otsi geriert, der vuks ist intrunen
When the hunter has-him moved, the fox is escaped

‘When the hunter moved, the fox escaped’

(4) **C4. Non incontro mai nessuno quando vado a correre (nel bosco)**

- a. LAR: I tue nie khans pageign **ben** i gei za lafan tschmörganz
I do never no-one meet when I go to run in-the-morning
- b. FER: I tue nie khans pageign **beine as** i gea za lafan im bolde
I do never no-one meet when that I go to run in-the wood
- c. ARM: I tue nie khans pageign im bolde **ben** i gea za lafan
I do never no-one meet in-the wood when I go to run
- d. ART: I pageigne nie khans **ben** i gea in bolt
I meet never no-one when I go in wood
- e. ERM: I tue nie khans pageign **ben** i gea im bolde
I do never no-one meet when I go in-the wood

‘I never meet anyone when I go (for a run) in the woods’

Second, multiple complementizers are attested in embedded interrogative clauses as well (cf. 5): the interrogative complementizer is *be(i)n(e)*⁴ ‘whether’ (lit. *when*) or *bo*⁵ ‘whether’ (lit. *where*) in Saurian both of which can be optionally accompanied by *as* ‘that’.

(5) **B22. La mamma mi ha chiesto se sei andato a scuola oggi**

- a. AUG: De mueter otmi gevörschet **ben** 's de pist geben in der schuele haite
The mother has-me asked when that you are been in the school today
- b. ART: De mueter otmi gevroget **bo** 's i pin geben in de schuele haite
The mother has-me asked where that I am been in the school today
- c. ERM: De mueter otmi gevroget **ben** de pist gean in der schuele haite

⁴ The lexical form *be(i)n(e)* has a total of three functions as a complementizer: in addition to temporal (3, 4) and interrogative ones (5), it also introduces conditional clauses. Note that there is also an homophonic interrogative pronoun.

⁵ The dictionary by Denison & Grassegger (2007: 27, s.v. *bo-(a)s*) also records this usage of *bo* as interrogative complementizer.

- The mother has-me asked when you are gone in the school today
- d. GRA: De mueter otmi gevörschet *bo* de pist gean in de schuele haite
The mother has-me asked where you are been in the school today

‘Mother asked me whether you went to school today.’

Structurally, double complementizers can be analyzed most easily in the context of a split-CP: the respective adverbial complementizer is in ForceP and the ‘expletive’ *as* ‘that’ in FinP, cf. (6a). For embedded interrogative clauses, an analysis where the interrogative complementizer is in IntP is more appropriate (see 6b).

- (6) a. [ForceP *vaspegn/barum/be(i)n(e)*] [TopP [FocP [FinP *as* ...
- b. [ForceP [IntP *ben/bo*] [TopP [FocP [FinP *as* ...

Similar data are also known from Danish, where adverbial conjunctions (e.g., *fordi* ‘because’, *hvis* ‘if’ or *mens* ‘while’) are possible together with *at* ‘that’ (cf. Nyvad 2016: 366-369).⁶ In German dialects spoken in Germany, however, complementizer doubling occurs very seldom. Weiß (2013: 781, fn. 10) mentions that the two complementizers *wo* ‘where’ and *dass* ‘that’ are marginally possible in relative clauses in Bavarian, cf. (7):

- (7) dea Mã, dea wo dass des gsogd hod
the man, the where that that said has
‘the man who said that’

Therefore, the Saurian data are important for two reasons: First, complementizer doubling as such occurs systematically in Saurian, whereas it is a rather marginal phenomenon in most other German dialects; second, complementizer doubling in Saurian is not restricted to adverbial clauses (as in Danish), but also appears in embedded interrogative clauses. This makes Saurian rather unique (but future research has to prove whether this is indeed the case).

3 Emphatic topicalization in Bavarian

⁶ Nyvad (2016) uses a cP-recursion analysis to explain complementizer doubling in Danish. I will not go into her arguments for this analysis.

In addition to the complementizer positions, the split-CP structure also contains positions equipped with the information structural features topic and focus (see 1 above). Now, there is empirical evidence for the existence of a Split-CP in German supplied by a special type of topicalization constructions. As firstly discussed by Volodina & Weiß (2010) and Weiß (2011), post-initial connectors (*nacherstfähige Konnektoren*) like *nämlich* ‘namely’ or *allerdings* ‘however’ that appear between a constituent in the prefield and the finite verb in C°/Fin° (cf. 8a, b) can be analyzed as base-generated in Top° with the topicalized constituent in SpecTop (cf. 9) (see also Catasso 2015, Speyer & Weiß 2018).

- (8) a. Peter nämlich liebt die Gefahr
Peter namely loves the danger
‘Peter nämlich liebt die Gefahr’
- b. Peter allerdings bevorzugt ...
Peter however favors ...
‘However, Peter prefers ...’

- (9) [ForceP [IntP [TopP *Peter* [Top° *nämlich* [FocP [FinP *liebt* ...

The topicalization data in (8a, b) offer empirical evidence for the existence of a split-CP in root sentences in German. They are not compatible with reduced-CP approaches like Wolfe’s (2015) Force-FinV2 system with German as a ForceV2 language where the finite verb in root sentences moves to Force°. ⁷ The topicalization data, however, provide empirical evidence for the split-CP nature of Germanic varieties because there, the finite verb must occupy a position below Topic and therefore below Force.

But what about embedded clauses? Do they also have a split-CP or just a single one? Emphatic topicalization in Bavarian may give us the evidence we need. As shown by Bayer (2001), sentences like (10a-d) are instances of topicalization (more specifically emphatic topicalization). The construction has two peculiarities: First, that a complement (or adverbial) clause is raised into the CP specifier of the matrix clause, and second, that a constituent is then extracted from the raised clause. The extracted constituent is an emphatic topic (with the feature [etop]).

⁷ Thanks to one reviewer for bringing Wolf (2015) to my attention.

- (10) a. Da Xaver daß an Mantl kafft hot hot neamad glaubt
the Xaver that a coat bought has has nobody believed
'As for Xaver, nobody believed that he bought a coat'
- b. An Mantl daß da Xaver kafft hot hot neamad glaubt
a coat that the Xaver bought has has nobody believed
'As for a coat, nobody believed that Xaver bought one'
- c. Da Hans ob kummt woß-e ned
the Hans whether comes know-I not
'As for Hans, I don't know whether he will come'
- d. An Fünfer daß-e kriag häid-e ned g'moant
a five that-I get had-I not thought
'As for a grade five, I didn't think I would get one'

In Bayer's (2001) analysis, the feature [etop] is associated with the C head of the raised CP (i.e., CP and etopP 'coincide') and the extracted constituent moves to SpecCP/etopP in order to check the [etop] feature (cf. 11):

- (11) [CP/etopP da Xaver₁ [C'/etop' [C/etop daß] [IP t₁ an Mantl kafft hot]]] ...

I want to propose an alternative analysis within the split-CP approach. The reason for this is that post-initial connectors (*nacherstfähige Konnektoren*) like *oba* 'but' are also possible with emphatic topicalization (cf. 12a-d):⁸

- (12) a. Da Xaver oba daß an Mantl kafft hot hot neamad glaubt
the Xaver but that a coat bought has has nobody believed
'As for Xaver, nobody believed that he bought a coat'
- b. An Mantl oba daß da Xaver kafft hot hot neamad glaubt
a coat but that the Xaver bought has has nobody believed
'As for a coat, nobody believed that Xaver bought one'
- c. Da Hans oba ob kummt woß-e ned

⁸ Thanks to Josef Bayer (p.c.) who confirmed my grammaticality judgments concerning the sentences in (12).

the Hans but whether comes know-I not
'As for Hans, I don't know whether he will come'

- d. An Fünfer oba daß-e krieg häid-e ned g'moant
a five oba that-I get had-I not thought
'As for a grade five, I didn't think I would get one'

If we apply our Split-CP analysis in (9) to the sentences in (12), we get the structure in (13). Since (as we assume) post-initial connectors are base-generated in Top° and the extracted constituent is raised to the left of them, its landing site cannot be the specifier of the head where the complementizer is located, but must be a higher one. SpecTopP is then an obvious assumption.

(13) [ForceP [IntP [TopP *da Xaver*₁ [Top[°] *oba* [FocP [FinP daß *t*₁ an Mantl kafft hot]]] ...

If we assume that Bavarian and German do not differ structurally with respect to their left periphery (as is argued for in Weiß 1998), the proposed analysis for emphatic topicalization contradicts the widespread assumption that German has a reduced CP layer.

4 Summary

So far it is unclear whether a split CP exists in German (varieties) or not. Most researchers assume that this is not the case. In my paper, I presented and discussed two types of data that may be empirical evidence for the existence of a split-CP in (some) German varieties. In section 2, I introduced data from Saurian (a Bavarian dialect spoken in a speech island in Northern Italy) that offers direct evidence for a split-CP approach in two respects: First, adverbial clauses are introduced by an appropriate complementizer as *vaspegn* 'because' to which *as* 'that' could be added as a second complementizer; second, multiple complementizers are even attested in embedded interrogative clauses. The second type of data, presented in section 3, included constructions from Middle Bavarian, where so-called post-initial connectors (*nacherstfähige Konnektoren*) occur in a special type of topicalization construction that has been called emphatic topicalization by Bayer (2001). In this construction, a complement or adverbial clause is raised into the CP specifier of the matrix clause, and a constituent is then extracted from the

raised clause. Between the extracted constituent and the complementizer of the raised clause a post-initial connector like *oba* ‘but’ is possible (cf. 12a-d above) and this implies that the extracted constituent must have been raised to a higher position than SpecCP. Since the extracted constituent is an emphatic topic, it is plausible to assume that it was raised to Spec TopP to check its topic feature against the connector in the head of the TopP (cf. 13 above).

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