Title: The syntax of Dutch
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Publisher: Cambridge University Press
Series: Cambridge Syntax Guides

1. Objectives

The book has the following objectives:

a) to lay out clearly and without theoretical bias the structure of clauses and phrases of Dutch;
b) to serve as a reference guide for existing typological and theoretical work on the syntax of Dutch, as well as to provide a framework for further such work;
c) to summarise the main issues of Dutch syntax featuring in structuralist and generative work of the past decades;
d) to introduce to an international readership some of the peculiarities of Dutch syntax which have not been discussed outside circles of Dutch linguists.

2. Contents

The book will consist of four parts:

1. Introduction
2. Description of the syntactic structure of Dutch
3. Dutch syntax in structuralist and generative linguistics
4. Some further peculiarities

The introduction presents basic information needed in the three parts to follow: (a) something on the language, its affiliation, history, and dialect divisions, (b) a description of the basic morphosyntax (word classes, morphosyntactic features, identification of grammatical functions, verb classes and alternations, and something on sentence prosody), essentially whatever is needed to understand the example sentences and should not detain us in parts 2-4, and (c) a first look at the issues involved in theoretical discussions of Dutch syntax. This part should not exceed 20 pp.

The description has a bit of the character of a reference grammar, but with more attention to observational adequacy, trying to sketch the phenomena in broader strokes and with appropriate generalizations. But the idea is that here the reader should be able to find an answer to questions he may have on Dutch syntax. There will be no more than four chapters: (a) clause structure, with some attention to the position of the verb, types of clauses, and the topological fields (front, middle, back) and things that are found there, (b) noun phrase structure, (c) complex clauses (subordination and coordination), and (d) dependencies, including discussion of binding and coreference, control, negation and negative polarity, focus and quantification, and extraction/displacement phenomena. This part should come in at about 150 pp.

The third part surveys the ways in which Dutch syntax has featured in the structuralist and, mostly, generative linguistic tradition. Here the reader will find clear and concise discussion of
a number of structural features of Dutch syntax (presented already in part two), and their
treatment in the literature. The chapters will be: (a) lexical semantics and related issues
(unaccusativity, resultativity, etc.), (b) the discussion of Dutch as an OV or VO language
(including discussion of what goes on in the Mittelfeld, (c) the proper analysis of verb second
and subject-verb inversion (including discussion of the asymmetry between main and
embedded clauses), (d) verb clustering and extraposition, (e) noun phrase structure, and (f)
binding and control. At an estimate of (no more than) 15 pages per section, this should be (no
more than) 90 pp.

The further peculiarities part contains descriptions of a number of facts and paradigms that
have featured prominently in the tradition of Dutch linguistics, but have rarely been discussed
in a more international context. The constructions in question are listed in the detailed table of
contents. Readability will be served if we restrict ourselves to a round number, say ten, of such
constructions, with 3-5 pages allotted to each of them, so that this part should not exceed 50
pp.

All in all we are looking at a total of 275-300 pp including bibliography.

3. Table of contents

PART ONE, Introduction [20pp]

1. Dutch: the language, its history, its dialects

A brief description of the Dutch language in terms of genetic affiliation, history, number of
speakers, where spoken, dialect divisions etc.

2. Basic morphosyntax

Concise presentation of basic facts of Dutch morphosyntax, organized along the lines of
standard descriptive/typological work. Identification of word classes by form and distribution.
Constituents that can be identified by standard tests. List of morphosyntactic features
associated with each word class, either inherently or via agreement. The realization of the
grammatical functions subject, object, predicate. A discussion of verb classes in terms of
valency, plus an indication of the alternations found (passive, middle, applicative, resultative,
causative). Some basic facts on sentence prosody and the expression of focus/background,
topic/comment, etc.

2.1 Word classes and constituent types
2.2 Morphosyntactic features
2.3 The realization of grammatical functions
2.4 Verb classes and alternations
2.5 Prosody

3. Main issues in theoretical Dutch syntax

Discusses the theory of topological fields, structuralist views on Dutch clause structure, the
question of headedness (Dutch as a VO or OV language), and the proper analysis of verb
placement. This section provides a background knowledge of the views on recurrent issues in
Dutch syntax.

PART TWO, Syntactic structure [150pp]
This part undertakes a detailed description of the phenomena of Dutch syntax, without entering into theoretical discussions (= part 3). The purpose of this chapter is to provide a reference section on Dutch syntax which does full justice to the facts and should be useful to researchers for an indefinite period of time.

4. Clause structure

4.1 Main vs. embedded clauses

Describes Dutch clause structure with special attention to asymmetries between main and embedded clauses.

4.2 Verb second, final, first

A description of the placement of the verb.

4.3 The middle

A description of what goes on in the Mittelfeld: discussion of the distribution of adverbs, various types of objects, secondary predicates, negation, and discourse particles.

4.4 The front

A description of the types of elements that may be found to the left of the finite verb in main clauses. Discussion of different clause types with some attention to historical and dialectal variation.

4.5 The back

Presentation of the basic facts regarding backgrounding and extraposition.

5. Nominal and prepositional phrases

Description of structure and word order phenomena within noun phrases, including prepositional phrases, with special attention to the placement and morphology of adjectives.

6. Complex sentences

6.1 Subordination

Lays out the intricate typology of clausal subordination in Dutch, explaining the properties of full and reduced complement clauses and the ensuing patterns of verb clustering and/or extraposition. Basic structure of relative clauses. Discussion of typology of adjunct clauses.

6.2 Coordination

Presentation of facts of clausal coordination with special attention to ellipsis phenomena. Includes a brief synopsis of coordination more generally.

6.3 Unclear cases

Brief discussion of embedded clauses with the properties of main clauses, with a comparison of related facts in other Germanic languages.
7. Dependencies

This section discusses dependency phenomena which are taken to be subject to a c-command condition.

7.1 Binding and coreference

Presents the repertoire of semi-referential elements in Dutch and the conditions on their use.

7.2 Control

Discusses obligatory and nonobligatory control, with special attention to controller shift phenomena.

7.3 Negation and Negative Polarity

Presents the morphology and syntax of negation in Dutch, and discusses conditions on the distribution of negative polarity items.

7.4 Focus and quantification

Presents the distribution of focus particles and focus sensitive elements, the interpretation of indefinites and their placement, an scope phenomena more generally.

7.5 Extraction

Lists extraction phenomena and the extent to which extraction is subject to standard conditions.

PART THREE, Dutch syntax in structuralist and generative linguistics [90pp]

This part revisits the phenomena of part 2 and describes how they featured in theoretical linguistic discussions, with some attention to structuralist linguistics, but focusing on the discussions within generative grammar.

8. Lexical semantics

The phenomena of Dutch have made a clear contribution to theories of argument structure (lexical semantics), in particular with regard to the classification of intransitive verbs (unergatives vs. unaccusatives) and the Small Clause hypothesis of resultatives. The relevant analyses and views are summarized here.

9. Dutch as an OV/VO language

Dutch has been one of the key languages in a prolonged discussion of the Universal Base Hypothesis, which raged in the early 1970s and was resumed in the 1990s. The various positions are summarized here with a discussion of the arguments employed. Discussion of views on the factors deriving word order phenomena in the Mittelfeld.

10. Verb second

Equally important is the question of the proper analysis of verb placement in main and embedded clauses, and the explanation of the typical verb second constraint. This section
takes the reader through the entire discussion, with some attention to pre-generative views as well.

11. Verb clustering and extraposition

The complexities of the analyses of verb clustering are generally baffling and offputting to non-specialists. This section describes the relevant views step by step, explaining clearly the issues involved and the position of the debate within the larger context of views on Dutch clause structure.

12. Structure of nominal and prepositional phrases

Describes the phenomena of Dutch noun phrases in relation to the DP-hypothesis of noun phrase structure. Discussion of views on adjective phrase structure, adjective placement, and phenomena involving prepositional phrases.

13. Binding and control

Describes the role played by the phenomena of Dutch in theories of binding and control.

PART FOUR, Further peculiarities

The purpose of this part is to present to a wider public a number of classic cases of Dutch syntax discussed in Dutch language journals but rarely beyond. This should be a fun section introducing material for further research.

14-23. [Ten small sections on the constructions listed below] [50pp]

(i) *dat zijn kooplieden* [nonagreeing copula constructions]
(ii) *deze stoel zit lekker* [nonargument middles]
(iii) *een emmer bramen* [partitives]
(iv) *een schat van een kind* [pseudo-partitives]
(v) *van die dingen* [pseudo PPs]
(vi) *hij is later istie nog wereldkampioen geworden* [anakoloutha]
(vii) *na Zwolle rijdt deze trein verder als intercity naar Groningen en zal alleen stoppen te Assen* [subject deletion under coordination]
(viii) *dat vervelende altijd maar doorzeuren van jou* [nominalization]
(ix) *hij is (aan het) vissen* [progressives]
(x) *ik moet weg* [modals with nonverbal predicates]

BIBLIOGRAPHY