One of the main points made in Aissen (2003) is that arguments that are not harmonic should have some overt marking. The paper shows how this accounts for Differential Object Marking (DOM), where disharmonic objects are marked with overt, morphological case. It is noted that there may well be other means of overt marking, for instance word order. In this paper we illustrate how two of the dimensions that are relevant to DOM, animacy and person, influence word order phenomena in Dutch. We argue that Dutch requires marked objects to be in the canonical object position, whereas unmarked, pronominal, objects shift.

Dutch is an SOV language with verb second in main clauses. The order of the arguments is generally fixed, but there are at least two constructions where a direct object can shift over another argument to the left under certain conditions: the Accusativus cum Infinitivo (AcI) and the double object construction (DOC).

The AcI construction is headed by a sensory verb, the verb laten (to let) or helpen (to help). The verb takes an object and an xcomp. The embedded subject is functionally controlled by the object of the main verb (1a). We take the LFG analyses of this construction in (Zaenen and Kaplan, 1995) and (Kaplan and Zaenen, 2003) as our starting point. All nominal arguments (also the embedded ones) are selected for in the VP c-structure rule, and the verbal complements are selected in V’. This accounts for the crossing dependencies that occur when one AcI constructions is embedded in another (1b).

The order of the embedded and non-embedded nominal arguments is restricted to the canonical word order in (1a) by the f-precedence requirement (xcomp + NGF) $\sim f$ (1 NGF) on the verb (Kaplan and Zaenen, 2003). However, under certain conditions, the embedded object can shift over the higher object as in (1c). In other words: the f-precedence constraint is violable. This object shift (OS) is possible only if the object is pronominal. In addition, only inanimate objects shift. This is best illustrated with animate and inanimate examples of the weak pronoun ’m (him/it) (1d). Note that inanimate objects are unmarked. Marked objects have to be in their canonical object position.

(1) a. Marijn zag Anne een boek lezen
Marijn saw Anne a book read

Marijn saw Anne reading a book

b. Marijn zag Anne Chris helpen lezen
Marijn saw Anne Chris help read

Marijn saw Anne helping Chris to read

c. Marijn zag ’t Anne lezen
Marijn saw it Anne read

Marijn saw Anne reading it

d. Ik heb ’m je zien doorslikken
I have it you seen swallow

I saw you swallowing it

e. % I heb ’m je zien zoenen
I have him you seen kiss

I saw you kissing him

The f-precedence constraint can be rephrased as a violable Optimality Theoretic constraint: $*(X < O)$, which is short for $\langle f \text{xcomp} \rangle < f \langle f \text{obj} \rangle$. The specification of the f-structure domain prevents interaction between arguments of multiple AcI constructions within a sentence.
demonstrative pronouns can shift too. The constraint may be grounded in information structural or prosodic constraints. Until further research explains the motivation for pronominal OS, we will use this as a stand-in.

We model marked objects in a non-canonical word order as the worst of the worst (Lee, 2003) by combining \( *_{c} (X<0) \) and \( \ast_{OBj\_anim} \) in a local constraint conjunction (Smolensky, 1995). The resulting constraint (sub)hierarchy is then:

\[
(2) \quad \ast_{OBj\_anim} \land *_{c} (X<0) \ll \text{PRO}_{do} \ll *_{(X<0)}
\]

A similar word order alternation exists in the DOC. Here, the canonical word order is indirect object < direct object (3a), but unmarked, pronominal direct objects can shift to the left, over the indirect object (3b). Like in the AcI construction, marked objects must be in the canonical object position. But unlike the AcI construction, not all animate direct objects are too disharmonic to shift. Third person animate pronouns may optionally shift (3d-3c). \(^1\)

\[
(3) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. Marijn geeft Anne het boek} & \quad \text{Marijn gives Anne the book} \\
\text{b. Marijn geeft het Anne} & \quad \text{Marijn gives it Anne} \\
\text{c. Marijn wijst 'm Anne aan} & \quad \text{Marijn points him Anne on} \\
\text{d. Marijn wijst Anne 'm aan} & \quad \text{Marijn points Anne him on} \\
\text{e. % Marijn wijst jou Anne aan} & \quad \text{Marijn points you Anne on}
\end{align*}
\]

In an LFG grammar, the f-precedence constraint \( \langle \text{OBJ} \rangle \prec_f \langle \text{OBJ} \rangle \) in the c-structure rule for V’ would determine the order of both objects. We now see that this f-precedence constraint, too, is violable. Again, we translate the constraint into the violable OT constraint \( \ast_{fOBJ} <_{f} \text{fOBJ2} \). This constraint is in competition with the \( \text{PRO}_{do} \ll \) constraint introduced earlier. Local constraint conjunction of \( \ast_{OBj\_local} \) and \( \ast_{fOBJ} <_{f} \text{fOBJ2} \) is violated in case we find the worst of the worst, i.e. a marked direct object in a marked position. We can model the optional shift of animate third person direct objects with a constraint tie between \( \text{PRO}_{do} \ll \) and the local constraint conjunction \( \ast_{OBj\_anim} \land \ast_{(X<0)} \)\(^2\). The resulting constraint (sub)hierarchy for the DOC is then:

\[
(4) \quad \ast_{OBj\_anim} \land \ast_{(X<0)} \ll \text{PRO}_{do} \ll \ast_{(X<0)}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Subj} & \text{DO} = \text{ Anim} & \text{DO} = \text{ Inanim} \\
\hline
\text{Marijn geeft Anne}\_io het boek\_do & \ast_{(X<0)} & \ast_{(X<0)} \\
\text{Marijn geeft het boek\_do Anne}\_io & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn geeft het boek\_do Anne\_io} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst Anne\_io jou\_da aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst jou\_da Anne\_io aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst 'm\_do Anne\_io aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst Anne\_io 'm\_do aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst jou Anne\_io aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst hem Anne\_io aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\text{Marijn wijst hem Anne\_io aan} & \ast & \ast \\
\end{array}
\]

The Dutch DOC and AcI construction show that overt marking of disharmonic direct objects cannot only be realized by morphological case marking, but also by word order. Further research should explain what motivates the left alignment of object pronouns.

References


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\(^1\)Example 3c is structurally ambiguous. The reading with ‘m\_do’ and haar\_obj is also possible.

\(^2\)In a Stochastic OT model this variation would be modeled by close ranked constraint, leaving open the possibility of a bias towards one of the two realizations.