
Clause typing in main clauses and V1 conditionals in Germanic

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Concentrating on German, I examine the left periphery of V1 main clauses (polar interrogatives, V1 conditionals, and V1 declaratives) and their relation to ordinary V2 clauses. I investigate whether the first position, [Spec,CP], is filled, and why verb movement takes place even in the absence of overt material in [Spec,CP]. I argue that verb movement occurs because the [fin] feature of the C head must be lexicalised. While there is in this sense an overtness requirement on C in German main clauses, there is no such requirement on the specifier: some constituent has to be there due to an [EDGE] feature that is always present in main clauses, yet this XP does not have to be overt. However, zero elements (clause-typing operators and anaphors) are licensed only under certain conditions, which is why the language normally surfaces as V2. Contrary to Zwart (2005), I claim that zero elements in [Spec,CP] in main clauses are not postulated but are semantically and syntactically motivated, yet I follow Fanselow (2009) in assuming that verb movement to C and the (overt/covert) filling of [Spec,CP] are not inseparable phenomena.

Polar interrogatives contain an operator corresponding to *whether*; a covert operator in German yields surface V1. In V1 conditionals and declaratives, the anaphoric elements *dann* and *so* may appear in [Spec,CP], and they are licensed by a preceding clause (the subclause in conditionals and an independent clause in declaratives). As these anaphors are recoverable from the context, their zero counterpart is licensed as well, yielding surface V1. Importantly, V1 conditionals/declaratives cannot be uttered in an “out of the blue” context: the anaphor (overt or covert) needs a preceding proposition as an antecedent. Thus, V1 main clauses are licensed if the zero operator/anaphor is pragmatically felicitous and semantically recoverable; verb movement is syntactically triggered by lexicalising [fin] in C regularly.

References: • Fanselow, G. (2009): Bootstrapping verb movement and the clausal architecture of German (and other languages). In: A. Alexiadou et al. (eds.) *Advances in comparative Germanic syntax*. John Benjamins. 85–118. • Zwart, C. J.-W. (2005): Verb second as a Merge. In: M. den Dikken and Ch. M. Tortora (eds.) *The function of function words and functional categories*. John Benjamins. 11–40.