Modal complement ellipsis in Dutch

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OUTLINE OF THE TALK

1 INTRODUCTION: MODAL COMPLEMENT ELLIPSIS

Modal complement ellipsis (MCE) in Dutch → reminiscent of English VP ellipsis

(1) A: Wie wil er meerijden naar het strand morgen?
who wants there with.drive to the beach tomorrow
B: Ik kan niet [*e*].
I can not
'Who wants to drive along to the beach tomorrow' – 'I can't.'

! However: Dutch doesn't have VP ellipsis (cf. among others Lobeck 1995)

(2) A: Heeft Tom lang staan wachten? – B: * Hij heeft [*e*].
has Tom long stand wait he has
'Has Tom been waiting long?' – 'He has.'

→ main claim: Dutch modals can select a null VP proform as their complement

2 DISTRIBUTION

- Modals can have 2 interpretations: deontic and epistemic

(3) Om acht uur moet Klaas thuis zijn.
at eight hour must Klaas at.home be
a. 'At 8 Klaas is obliged to be home.' = **deontic**
b. 'At 8 it must be the case that Klaas is at home.' = **epistemic**

→ MCE is only allowed with deontic modals

(4) A: Komt Thomas ook naar je lezing? – B: Hij moet [*e*]
comes Thomas also to your talk he has.to
'Is Thomas coming to your talk too?' – 'He has to.' = **deontic**

(5) A: Zou Klaas nu op zijn bureau zijn?
Would Klaas now on his office be
B: *Hij moet wel [*e*]. Hij werkt altijd op zaterdag. = **epistemic**
he must PRT he works always on Saturday
INTENDED READING: 'It must be the case that he is in his office.'

Other deontic modals: *willen* 'want to', *mogen* 'be allowed to', *kunnen* 'can', h*oeven* 'need'

(6) A: Komt Thomas ook naar je lezing?
comes Thomas also to your talk
'Is Thomas coming to your talk too?'
B: Hij wil/ mag/ kan/ hoeft niet [*e*].
he wants may can need not
'He doesn't want to/is not allowed to/can't/doesn't need to.'

→ no temporal auxiliaries: *zullen* 'shall/will', *zijn* 'be', *hebben* 'have'

(7) A: Komt Thomas ook naar je lezing? – B: * Hij zal niet [*e*].
comes Thomas also to your talk he will not

(8) A: Is Thomas ook naar je lezing gekomen? – B: * Hij is niet [*e*].
is Thomas also to your talk come.PART he is not

(9) A: Heeft Katrien gisteren gebeld? – B: * Ze heeft niet [*e*].
has Katrien yesterday called she has not

3 A COMPARISON WITH ENGLISH VP ELLIPSIS

Overview:
- 3.1 VPE = deletion of a full syntactic structure
- 3.2 No syntactic structure in MCE

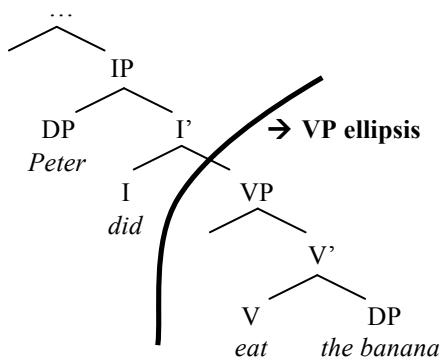
3.1 VPE = deletion of a full syntactic structure

• Ross (1969), Merchant (2001) & Johnson (1996, 2001):

English VP ellipsis (VPE) = deletion of a full syntactic structure

(10) Mina didn't eat the banana, but Peter did [$_{VP}$ ~~eat the banana~~].

(11)



→ 4 main arguments:

❶ Arguments or adjuncts may survive the ellipsis (= pseudogapping):

(12) Mina rolled up a newspaper and Peter did a magazine [*e*].

→ VP must contain internal structure to be able to host the trace of the object (which has moved out of the VP prior to the deletion of VP; see Jayaseelan 1990, Johnson 1996; Lasnik 1999a, 1999b, 2001)

(13) Mina gave Peter some money, but she won't Tom [~~$_{VP}$ give t_{Tom} some money~~]

❷ Wh-phrases may extract out of an elided VP (cf. Schuyler 2002, Merchant to appear)

(14) A: Who did Peter introduce to Mina? - B: I don't know. Who did Tom [*e*]?

→ VP must contain internal structure to be able to host the trace of the wh-phrase

(15) Who did Tom [~~$_{VP}$ introduce t_{who} to Mina~~].

❸ An elided VP can have a *there*-expletive as its subject (Ross 1969):

(16) Mina thought there were elephants in the hall, but there weren't/*wasn't [*e*].

→ the elided VP must contain an indefinite DP which licenses *there* and agrees with the finite verb

(17) Mina thought there to be elephants in the hall, but **there weren't** [~~$_{VP}$ **elephants** in the hall~~]

❹ VPE allows antecedent-contained deletion (ACD)

(18) Mina reads each book that Peter does [*e*].

The relative clause involves wh-movement (Chomsky 1977) of a silent operator (Chomsky (1981). This empty operator Op_i needs to bind a trace.

(19) Mina reads each book Op_i that Peter does [*e*].

→ the elided VP has to contain syntactic structure that can host the trace

(20) Mina reads each book Op_i that Peter does [$_{VP}$ read t_i]

⇨ VP ellipsis in English involves the deletion of a fully specified syntactic VP

3.2 No syntactic structure in MCE

Applying the tests to MCE: no syntactic structure in MCE

❶ It does not allow for pseudogapping:

(21) * Katrien wil Bert wat geld geven, maar ze wil Silke niet [*e*].
Katrien wants Bert some money give but she wants Silke not
INTENDED READING: '…but she doesn't want to give Silke some money.'

→ no internal structure, so nothing can be moved out of it

❷ wh-extraction out of the ellipsis site is disallowed:

(22) A: Aan wie moet Katrien een cadeautje geven?
to who must Katrien a present give
B: Dat weet ik niet. * Aan wie moet Bert [*e*]?
that know I not to who must Bert

→ no internal structure, so nothing can be moved out of it

❸ The subject of MCE cannot be a *there*-expletive

(23) A: Moeten er veel mensen naar de vergadering komen?
must there a.lot.of people to the meeting come
B:*Nee, er moeten niet [*e*].
no there must not

→ *there* is only licensed by an indefinite DP lower in the structure, but MCE does not contain any lower internal structure

❹ no ACD with MCE

(24) * Joris leest elk boek dat Monika moet [*e*].
Joris reads each book that Monika must
INTENDED READING: Joris reads every book that Monika must read

→ *i*-within-*i* filter violation (Chomsky 1981)

(25) *Pieter [leest elk boek da Sofie moet pro_i]$_i$

= parallel to (26): infinite regress

(26) *I saw [every portrait of it_i]$_i$

⇨ MCE in Dutch does not involve deletion of a fully specified syntactic VP structure

4 THE ANALYSIS: A VP PROFORM

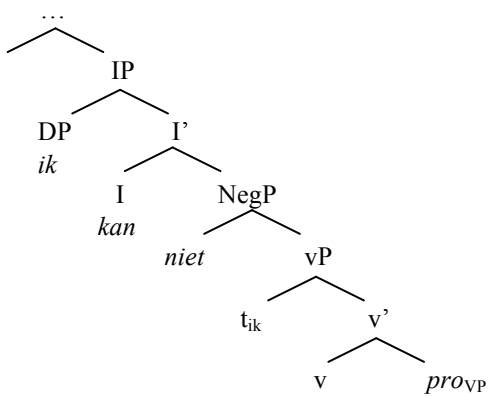
Overview

4.1 The analysis: a null VP proform

English VPE**:** deletion of a fully-fledged syntactic VP structure
⇳
Dutch MCE: no syntactically specified complement, but a null VP proform

(27) Ik wil wel komen vanavond, maar ik kan niet [*e*].
I want PRT come tonight but I can not
'I want to come tonight, but I can't.'

(28)



→ can we find other proforms like this in language? → short do replies (section 4.2)

4.2 SDRs: another proform case (Van Craenenbroeck 2004)

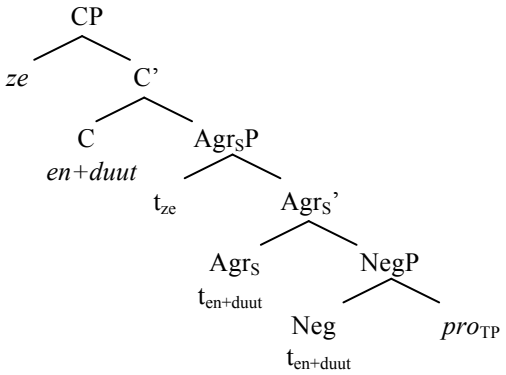
• Short Do Replies (SDRs) in Dutch dialects (see Ryckeboer 1986, 1998, Van Craenenbroeck 2004):

(29) A: Sofie zie Pieter geirn.
Sofie sees Pieter gladly
B: Z'en duut [*e*].
she.NEG does
'Sofie loves Pieter.' – 'No, she doesn't.'

(30) A: Sofie zie Pieter nie geirn.
Sofie sees Pieter not gladly
B: Ze duut [*e*]
she does
'Sofie doesn't love Pieter.' – 'Yes, she does.' [Wambeek Dutch]

Van Craenenbroeck (2004): SDRs do not involve deletion of a full syntactic structure
→ they involve a null TP-proform

(31)



• Arguments: 4 tests

❶ No pseudogapping in SDRs:

(32) A: Pieter zie Sofie geirn.
Pieter sees Sofie gladly
B:*Mo ij en duu Jessica [*e*].
but he NEG does Jessica [Wambeek Dutch]
INTENDED READING: 'Pieter loves Sofie.' – 'But he doesn't Jessica.

❷ Wh-extraction are disallowed:

(33) A: Ik weet wou da Sofie geire ziet.
I know who that Sofie gladly sees
B: * En wou en duu-se [*e*]?
and who NEG does.she [Wambeek Dutch]
INTENDED READING: 'I know who Sofie loves.' – 'And who doesn't she?'

❸ the SDR-subject cannot be a *there*-expletive

(34) A: Dui stonj drou mann inn of.
There $stand_{PL}$ three men in.the garden
B: * Dui en doenj [*e*].
There NEG do_{PL} [Wambeek Dutch]
INTENDED READING: 'There are three men standing in the garden.' – 'No, there aren't.'

❹ no ACD in SDRs

(35) * Pieter leest elken boek da Sofie duut [*e*]
Pieter reads each book that Sofie does [Wambeek Dutch]

⇨ Van Craenenbroeck (2004): SDR does not involve a fully-fledged deleted syntactic structure, but a structureless clausal proform

4.3 VP-proforms vs. TP-proforms

Both SDR and NMC involve a null proform

Van Craenenbroeck (2004): SDR → null <u>TP</u> proform

Arguments: more differences between VPE and SDR:

❺ *Do* in VPE can occur in the past tense, *duut* in SDR cannot.

(36) A: Ed loved Julia. – B: a. No, he didn't [*e*].
b.* No, he doesn't [*e*].

(37) A: Sofie zag Pieter geirn. – B: a.* Z'en dee [*e*]
Sofie saw Pieter gladly she.NEG did
b. Z'en duu [*e*]t
she.NEG does
'Sofie loved Pieter.' – 'No, she didn't.' [Wambeek Dutch]

→ SDR-proform replaces whole TP, including Tense → default tense

❻ VPE can co-occur with low adverbs, while SDR cannot:

(38) A: Ed lives here. – B: He doesn't [*e*] anymore.

(39) A: Sofie woendj ie. – B:*Z'en duu nie mieje [*e*].
Sofie lives here she.NEG does not anymore [Wambeek Dutch]

→ proform replaces whole TP, including the adverbs in it

❼ Subject restrictions:
no restrictions for VPE: it allows proper names, universal quantifiers, weak and strong pronouns…
severe restrictions for SDR: only weak pronouns that are coreferential with the subject of the antecedent clause

(40) A: Ed loves Julia. – a. B: But Bill doesn't [*e*].
b. B: Everybody does [*e*].

(41) a. A: Pieter zie Sofie geirn. – B:* Mo Jef en duut [*e*].
Pieter sees Sofie gladly. but Jeff NEG does
INTENDED READING: 'Pieter loves Sofie.' – 'But Jeff doesn't.'
b. A: Pieter zie Sofie geirn. – B:* Iederiejn duut [*e*].
Pieter sees Sofie gladly everybody does [Wambeek Dutch]
INTENDED READING: 'Pieter loves Sofie.' – 'Everybody does.'

→ in SDR the subject has to be base-generated in [spec, Agr_SP] and only a weak pronoun that is contextually given can be base-generated there.

⇨ SDRs involve a null TP proform

Modal Complement Ellipsis → null <u>VP</u> proform

❺ A modal with a null complement can occur in the past tense

(42) A: Heeft Klaas echt gewerkt gisteren? – B: Hij moest wel [*e*].
has Klaas really worked yesterday he must.PST PRT
'Did Klaas really work yesterday?' – 'He had to.'

→ only VP, which does not contain tense, is null

❻ Modals can co-occur with low adverbs

(43) A: Komt Sam vanavond? – B: Nee, hij wil niet meer [*e*].
comes Sam tonight no he wants not anymore
'Is Sam coming tonight?' – 'No, he doesn't want to anymore.'

→ adverbs can occur higher than the null VP

❼ No subject restrictions with null modal complements

(44) Ik dacht dat er veel mensen zouden komen vanavond,
I thought that there a.lot.of people would come tonight
maar niemand wou [*e*].
but nobody wanted
'I thought a lot of people would come tonight, but nobody wanted to.'

→ the base position of the subject is higher than the null VP

⇨ Unlike SDR, which involve a TP proform, MCE are null VP proforms: they replace the VP complement of the modal

4.4 Summary

	VP ellipsis	MCE	SDR	
Pseudo-gapping	✓	*	*	**Diagnose syntactic structure or proform**
ACD	✓	*	*	
There-expletives	✓	*	*	
Wh-extraction	✓	*	*	
Past tense	✓	✓	*	**Diagnose which type of proform**
Adverbials	✓	✓	*	
Subject restrictions	no	no	yes	

⇨ MCE differs from both VPE and SDR:
- in VPE there is deletion of a fully specified VP with internal structure, while in MCE there is not (parallel to SDR)
- in SDR the proform replaces a whole clausal structure (i.e. TP), while in MCE the proform is a smaller part, namely VP.

5 FURTHER ISSUES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

5.1 Restriction to deontic modals

→ deontic modals can also select NPs (cf. (45)), PPs (cf. (46)), AdvPs (cf. (47)) and APs (cf. (48)), unlike epistemic modals and temporal auxiliaries (Barbiers 1996).

(45) a. Stijn moet een puppy.
Stijn must a puppy
'Stijn has to have a puppy.'
#'It must be the case that Stijn has a puppy.'
b.* Stijn zal een puppy.
Stijn will a puppy

(46) a. Ik moet naar huis.
I must to house
'I have to go home.'
#'It must be the case that I go home.'
b.* Ik zal naar huis.
I will to house

(47) a. Ik moet weg.
I must away
'I have to go away.'
#'It must be the case that I am away.'
b.* Ik zal weg.
I will away

(48) a. Hij moet dood.
he must dead
'He has to be dead.'
#'It must be the case that he is dead.'
b.* Hij zal dood.
he will dead

→ selectional possibilities of deontic modals are wider than those of other auxiliaries
→ they can assign case (see DP complements) and that is why only they can select a VP proform

5.2 *Open questions*

① Is there an overt counterpart of this proform in Dutch?
Suggestion: Dutch has a null SO, on a par with the English overt VP proform *so*.

② We have two strategies in language to elide a verb phrase (or clause), deletion of a syntactic structure and null proforms.
→ how does language decide between these strategies? What determines the choice?
→ Can we unite these two strategies?

6 CONCLUSION

❶ Deontic modal verbs in Dutch can select a null VP proform as their complement

❷ The null complements differ from VP ellipsis in 4 respects:
- they do not allow pseudo-gapping
- they do not allow wh-extraction out of the ellipsis site
- they do not allow a *there*-expletive as their subject
- they do not allow Antecedent Contained Deletion (ACD)

→ MCE involves a null proform, and not deletion of a full syntactic structure

❸ The properties listed in ❷ are the same as the ones we find in Short Do Replies in dialect Dutch, but MCE differs from SDRs in the kind of proform:
SDRs → TP proform (Van Craenenbroeck 2004)
MCE → VP proform

❹ Language has two strategies of ellipsis, for both TPs and VPs: deletion of a full syntactic structure (e.g. in sluicing and English VPE) and a null proform (e.g. in SDRs and MCE)

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