

The instrumental R-pronoun and postposition in Dutch

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1 The problem

Dutch has several types of inanimate pronouns.

- (1) a. t
it
'it'
- b. *dat
that
'that'
- c. *wat
what
'what'
- d. *iets
something
'something'
- e. *alles
everything
'everything'

Dutch has a preposition for that expresses instrumental.

- (2) met een potlood
with a pencil
'with a pencil'

Inanimate pronouns in Dutch do not combine with the instrumental preposition.

- (3) a. *met t
with it
'with it'
- b. *met dat
with that
'with that'

- c. *met wat
with what
'with what'
- d. *met iets
with something
'with something'
- e. *met alles
with everything
'with everything'

Instead, an R-pronoun plus postposition is used.

- (4) a. (e)r mee
there with
'with it'
- b. daar mee
there with
'with that'
- c. waar mee
where with
'with what'
- d. ergens mee
somewhere with
'with something'
- e. overal mee
everywhere with
'with everything'

2 This paper: questions and answers

There is a big question to be asked:

- Why *[P inanimate]?

And there are three questions with respect to the instrumental:

- why is there an *r*, even though there is no location involved
- why does the adposition change form?
- why does the adposition change position?

Answer to the big question:

- the R-pronoun and postposition are the default spellout, as long as they form a proper constituent

Answers to the smaller questions:

- the *r* is ambiguous between location and (caseless) thing
- the preposition and postposition are two separate items in the lexicon so: (1) the form can be different, and (2) the position can be different

3 Proof for proper constituent

Let's compare a proper constituent vs. not a proper constituent

- (5) a. Ze heeft (de brief) daar mee geschreven.
she has the letter there with written
'She wrote (the letter) with that.'
- b. Ze heeft (de brief) met dat potlood geschreven
she has the letter with that pencil written
'She wrote (the letter) with that pencil.'

Daar mee ‘there with’ forms a proper constituent, *met dat* ‘with that’ does not.

- (6) topicalization
 - a. Daar mee heeft ze (de brief) geschreven.
 - b. *Met dat heeft ze (de brief) potlood geschreven.
 - c. Met dat potlood heeft ze (de brief) geschreven.
- (7) coordination
 - a. Ze heeft (de brief) hier mee en daar mee geschreven.
 - b. *Ze heeft (de brief) met die en met dat potlood.
 - c. Ze heeft (de brief) met die pen en met dat potlood geschreven.
- (8) fragment answer
 - a. Waarmee heeft ze de brief geschreven?
 - b. daarmee
 - c. *met dat
 - d. met dat potlood

4 Technical implementation

- (9) $r = [\text{loc } [\text{thing}]]$
 (10) $\text{met} = \text{binary entry}$
 (11) $\text{mee} = \text{unary entry}$

alternative fseq

- (12) [F4 [F3 [F2 [F1 [THING [D [DEIX]]]]]]]

4.1 Mobility of *mee*

daar can move while stranding *mee*. A consequence of letting *mee* be a suffix makes it hard to only move *daar*. Can *d-* and *a-* be lower in the hierarchy than *r*? Then *r* can be a suffix on *da*. That way, *d* and *a* are not projecting as specifiers.

4.2 Full DPs and animates

Why do full DPs not take *mee* as a suffix? Has to do with pronominal strength features and gaps. (?)

5 Big-big question

Should adpositions by default be able to be pre and post?

5.1 pro

lots are syncretic

5.2 against

several can only be pre or post

(13) only pre: *zonder*, *volgens*

(14) only post: *vandaan*

5.3 two tables

three instances of *in*

	DP	R
pre	LOC	*
post	DIR	LOC

twice *mee* and once *met*

	<i>mee</i>	<i>met</i>
pre	verb	noun
post	noun	*