Bavarian parasitic gaps revisited*

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1. Introduction

Taking my cue from Felix (1985), in this paper I deal with a peculiar construction in Bavarian German (henceforth: BG), which is ungrammatical in Standard German (henceforth: SG) and which is illustrated in (1) through (4) (examples from Felix 1985).

- (1) Das ist der Kerl_i den_i wenn ich e_i erwisch, erschlag ich e_i this is the guy_i who_i if I e_i catch beat I e_i 'This is the guy who I will beat (up) if I catch him'
- (2) Das ist das Buch_idas_i wenn ich e_i finde kaufe ich e_i auch this is the book_i which_i if I e_i find buy I e_i also 'This is the book which I will buy if I find it'
- (3) Ich bin ein Typ_i der_i wenn e_i gefördert wird, leistet e_i auch etwas I am a type_i who_i if e_i challenged is accomplishes e_i also thing 'I am the kind of person who accomplishes things if he is challenged'
- (4) Das ist eine Frau_i die_i wenn e_i etwas verspricht, halt e_i es auch this is a woman_i who_i if e_i something promises keeps e_i it also 'She is a woman who keeps her promises if she promises something'

As Felix (1985) discusses in detail, this construction is characterized by three properties. First, the embedded *if*-clause immediately follows what he refers to as the "*wh*-pronoun" (i.e. *den* in (1), *das* in (2), *der* in (3) and *die* in (4)), a property that above all marks the construction as dialectal. Secondly, the verb of the final clause precedes its subject, which

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– as the contrast between (5) and (6) shows – is not the regular word order in either BG or SG relative clauses. Thirdly, there are two empty categories e in (1) through (4), both co-indexed with the so-called "relative pronoun".

- (5) Das ist der Kerl_i den_i ich e_i erschlag. this is the guy_i who_i I e_i beat 'This is the guy I beat up'
- (6) *Das ist der Kerl_i den_i erschlag ich e_i this is the guy_i who_i beat I e_i

Furthermore, Felix notes that these three properties are mutually dependent because the VSO word order in the final clause is possible if and only if the *if*-clause immediately follows the 'relative pronoun', and the second empty category is dependent on this word order. It follows therefore that the sentences in (7) through (9) are all ungrammatical, irrespective of whether there is an empty category or a resumptive pronoun.³

- (7) *Das ist der Kerl_i den_i wenn ich e_i erwisch, ich e_i / ihn erschlag this is the guy_i who_i if I e_i catch I e_i / him beat
- (8) *Das ist der Kerl_i den_i erschlag ich e_i wenn ich e_i / ihn erwisch this is the guy_i who_i beat I e_i if I e_i / him catch
- (9) *Das ist der Kerl_i den_i ich e_i erschlag wenn ich e_i erwisch this is the guy_i who_i I e_i beat if I e_i catch

Clearly all three properties of the construction under investigation are intriguing and need to be addressed. This is especially the case since the only available analysis of this construction in the literature to date, namely the one in Felix (1985), is both theoretically and empirically problematic. It is the purpose of this paper to point out these problems and to propose an alternative analysis that evades them.

¹As Lutz (2004:305) notes, "V2-relatives are (extremely) rare in German", but they do exist (see Gärntner 2001). Interestingly though, the V2-relatives discussed in Gärntner involve indefinite external heads (i.e. they are unlike (6) in this respect).

²In fact, the second empty category in (1) through (4) is in free alternation with a resumptive pronoun. ³See footnote 2.

⁴As will be discussed more closely in section 2, there is however a rich literature and various proposals on a seemingly related but not identical construction in BG, which has often been treated as a parasitic gap construction (cf. Bayer 1983, 1988, 2001, Grewendorf 1988, Stechow and Sternefeld 1988, Lutz 1997, 2004, Weiß 1998) and an example of which is given in (i):

⁽i) Den wann i e derwisch, derschlog i e. him if I catch slay I 'If I catch him, I slay him'

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. In section 2, I review the core of Felix' (1985) analysis pointing out its merits and its drawbacks. In section 3, I put forth my alternative analysis. Section 4 discusses some challenges to this alternative and suggests ways to tackle them. Finally, section 5 concludes with some programmatic remarks on whether embedded V2 can be seen as part of a larger family of topic agreement phenomena.

2. Felix' (1985) analysis: Its virtues and its shortcomings

Felix (1985) analyses the construction exemplified in (1) as a parasitic gap construction. Specifically, he argues that *den* in (1) is extracted from the adjunct clause, with the empty category in the final clause being a parasitic gap licensed by the trace of *den* in the adjunct clause, as given in (10).

(10) Das ist der Kerl_i den wenn ich t_i erwisch, erschlag ich e_i this is the guy_i whom_i if I t_i catch beat I e_i

As evidence for his view that *den* in (1) has been extracted from the *if*-clause (rather than from the final clause), Felix brings in two arguments. One argument bears on the existence of sentences like the ones in (11) and (12) in which there is only one respective gap (i.e. empty category), so that the relative pronoun could have only been extracted from the position associated with it.⁵

- (11) Das ist der Wein; den; wenn ich e; trink, krieg ich Kopfweh this is the wine; which; if I e; drink get I headache 'This is the wine that gives me a headache when I drink it'
- (12) Das ist die Frau_i die_i wenn du e_i heiratest, bist du verrückt this is the woman_i who_i if you e_i marry are you crazy 'This is the woman that you are crazy if you marry her'

Felix' second argument for his view that *den* in (1) has been extracted from the *if*-clause and not from the final clause involves the fact that in sentences in which the verbs in the two clauses assign different morphological cases, the relative pronoun can only bear the case assigned by the verb in the *if*-clause and not the case assigned by the verb in the final

This construction is however more common than what Lutz (2004:305) refers to as the "somewhat exotic variant [...], namely clefts with associated V2-relatives" discussed in Felix (1985), which is the topic of the present paper.

⁵Note that these data also render implausible an analysis of the construction in (1) through (4) in terms of across-the-board movement, as has been proposed in Bayer (2001) for the parasitic gap construction in (i) (footnote 4). Bayer's (2001) analysis has however been independently argued against in Lutz (2004).

clause. This is illustrated in (13): *treffen* 'to meet' assigns accusative case to its internal argument, whereas *helfen* 'to help' assigns dative case.⁶

(13) Das ist der Kerl_i de \mathbf{n}_i /*de \mathbf{m}_i wenn ich e_i treff, werd ich e_i helfen this is the guy whom_{ACC} / whom_{DAT} if I e_i meet will I e_i help 'This is the guy who I will help if I meet him'

Finally, Felix (1985) – as well as von Stechow and Sternefeld (1988) – consider it essential that the extracted element c-commands both the parasitic gap (i.e. e in (10)) and the gap that licenses it (i.e. t in (10)).

While Felix' analysis is able to account for a range of facts in a straightforward manner, it faces both theoretical and empirical problems. On the theoretical side, extraction out of a strong island should be prohibited. In fact, extraction from strong islands is disallowed in another, similar construction in BG, namely the one that arguably feeds on the phenomenon of "Emphatic Topicalization" (Bayer 2001, Lutz 1997, 2004 and references cited therein) and which has been analyzed as a parasitic gap construction by several scholars (see also footnote 4). This construction is illustrated in (14a); (14b) and (14c) show that extraction out of the *if*-clause is impossible.

- (14) a. Den, wann i e derwisch, derschlog i e. him if I e catch slay I e 'If I catch him, I slay him'
 - b. *Den Peter_i / *Wen_i ärgert sich Hans, wenn er t_i sieht? the_{ACC}Peter_i / who_i annoys REFL Hans if he sees (Lutz 2004:272)
 - c. *Koa Mensch, wenn t_i b'suffa is, foit eam_i was g'scheids ei.
 no person if drunk is fallshim something useful in
 (Bayer 2001:39)

Felix' analysis also predicts that the relative pronoun should be able to cyclically move higher up, producing examples like (15), which are however ungrammatical.

(15) *Das ist der Kerl den ich erwarte (dass) wenn ich erwisch, erschlag ich. this is the guy whoI expect (that) if I catch slay I

Finally, the observation that the so-called 'relative pronoun' in sentences such as (1) must appear in the left edge of the (arguably leftward-moved) island seems suggests that this element never leaves the island, contra Felix. This is indeed what I propose.

⁶Bayer (2001:8) assumes extraction of *den* 'him' from the same position in the so-called parasitic gap construction exemplified in (i) in footnote 4: "it seems obvious that the trace is in the topicalized clause, while the parasitic gap is in the root clause".

⁷C-command is also essential under Lutz's (1997, 2004) analysis of the parasitic gap construction in (i) in footnote 4.

3. An alternative analysis

In this section, I put forth an analysis of the BG construction in (1) through (4) which does not face the problems that Felix' analysis runs into. The crucial ingredients of my analysis are the following. First, following proposals in Chomsky (1977), Platzack (1986), den Besten (1989), Vikner (1991), Authier (1992) for (other) Germanic languages, I argue that BG but not SG has a recursive CP, as given in (16). Specifically, the *if*-clause moves from its VP-adjoined base position (t_i) in (16) to the specifier position of the final CP, thereby triggering verb movement to C^0 , a process which is parallel to English (Emonds 1969, 1970, 1976) – e.g. *Up trotted the dog.* 8

(16) Das ist der Kerl [CP1 den_i [CP2 [Spec,CP] wenn ich t_i erwisch]_i [C⁰ erschlag_k] ich $e_i t_k t_i$]

Secondly, I contend that the so-called 'relative pronoun' in a sentence like (1) is in fact an agreeing complementizer of sorts. More specifically, it is the result of a phonological fusion (i.e. PF-merger) of the complementizer dass 'that' and a clitic n 'him', analogous to the dialectal Italian che l' in (17) and the French qui in (18); see Rooryck (2000), who analyzes qui as a complex of que and a clitic (cf. also Kayne 1976). Crucially however, unlike in the Romance examples below, the clitic n 'him' in a sentence such as (1) must – prior to its phonological fusion with dass 'that' – have moved to the left edge of the if-clause. In other words, the analogy with Romance that I am trying to establish is only partial, since in (17) and (18) the clitic does not cross a complementizer the way I am claiming that it does in BG, where it appears at the left edge of the if-clause, i.e. crossing over the C^0 head occupied by wenn 'if'.

- (17) è una cosa *che l'* ha detta il ministro is a thing **thatit**_{CL}-has said the minister (standard = *che* ha detto **0** il ministro) **that**has said **0** the minister (Fiorentino 2007:267)
- (18) je voudrais un renseignement: c'est à propos de ma femme I'd like to have some information: it is about my wife **qu'elle** a été opérée ya deux mois **that she** has been operated two months ago (standard = **qui** 'who') (Fiorentino 2007:267)

⁸Recall that: "The VSO word order in the final clause is possible if and only if the *if*-clause immediately follows the *wh*-phrase..." (Felix 1985).

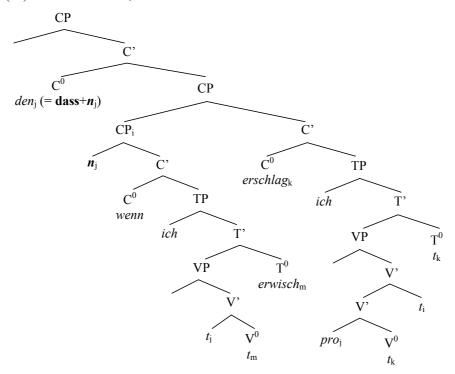
⁹The BG data as presented under my analysis are somewhat reminiscent of Tsez, where topicalization triggers agreement of an operator with the topic (Polinsky and Potsdam 2001). There is however a crucial difference between the two languages, since judging by the data that Polinsky and Potsdam present, it is only the topicalization of complement clauses that trigger agreement in Tsez. The BG data however involve adjuncts, as discussed.

Thirdly, I take the so-called 'parasitic gap' (i.e. the second empty category) in (1) through (4) to be a null resumptive pronoun, i.e. *pro* (Cinque 1990), analogous to what was originally claimed in Taraldsen (1978) for sentences like (19) in Italian.

(19) Ecco la ragazza_i [che mi domando [$chi_j [e_j crede [che e_i possa cantare]]]] here the girl that me ask who thinks that may sing 'Here is the girl that I wonder who thinks may sing'$

In sum, the analysis that I propose for a sentence like (1) is given in (20):

(20) Das ist der Kerl_i



Having outlined my analysis, I know turn to a more detailed motivation of all three core ingredients of it presented above.

To start with, the idea that BG but not SG has a recursive CP structure is independently motivated by the notorious fact that the Doubly-Filled COMPL filter of the type *[CP WH that] is not operative in BG, while it is in SG. The sentences in (21) from Bayer (1984) illustrate this property of BG.

- (21) a. I woaß ned wer daß des doa hot.
 I know not who that this done has 'I don't know who has done this'
 - b. I woaß ned wiavui daß-a kriagt.
 I know not how-much that-he gets
 'I don't know how much he gets'
 - c. Der Mantl **den wo** i kafft hob. the coat which that I bought have 'The coat I bought'

Turning to the second crucial ingredient of my analysis, namely that *den* in (1) is not a relative pronoun but a (agreeing) complementizer instead, it is interesting to note that this is perfectly in line with what has been independently proposed for other Germanic languages such as Dutch and even English by Pesetsky and Torrego (2006: note 22):

"What is not reflected in the realization of that as who and which in relative clauses is the determiner/complementizer component — which in English might be expected to yield a word whose initial morpheme is orthographic th. One can easily imagine a language that is like adult English (and unlike Romance) in showing agreement on C with the goal of Rel in finite relative clauses, but where the form that the complementizer takes reflects, not the wh-morphology associated with Rel, but the D-morphology otherwise characteristic of complementizers more generally. Such a language appears to be Dutch. In Dutch, relative clauses introduced by a moved wh-PP show an initial v- (orthographic w): e.g. de man [over wie] ik sprak 'the man about whom I spoke'; het boek [waarover] ik sprak. This is also the morphology characteristic of wh-question words.

The Dutch counterpart to English finite *who* and *which* relatives, however, does not show a *wh*-form, but instead displays a form that starts with *d*-, just like demonstratives and just like the normal declarative complementizer *dat*. This form agrees with the relativized head in gender (neuter vs. non-neuter) and in number. When the head is neuter singular, the form that introduces the relative clause is in fact *dat* (*het boek dat ik gisteren las* 'the book that I read yesterday'). In all other cases, it is *die* (neuter plural: *de boeken die ik gisteren las* 'the books that I read yesterday'; non-neuter singular: *de man die ik gisteren zag* 'the man that I saw yesterday'). [...]

We suspect that the presence of d- rather than w- is significant. The [...] elements die and dat are agreeing complementizers, not wh-phrases — just like the English instances of who and which [...]. Dutch finite relative clauses differ from Romance relatives (and from English infinitival relatives) in showing ϕ -feature agreement, but they are just like their Romance counterparts (and unlike English finite relatives) in showing C/D morphology rather than wh-morphology on its agreeing complementizers. A similar

pattern may be observed in non-restrictive relatives in Spanish, where a form with an obvious instance of D may be observed (*el cual/la cual* etc.)."

Finally, my idea that the second empty category in the construction exemplified by (1) through (4) is a null resumptive pronoun (i.e. *pro*) is directly corroborated by the fact that, as mentioned earlier, this gap is in free alternation with an overt resumptive pronoun, as illustrated in (22) through (25) below, though this is of course also compatible with a parasitic gap status of the empty category, since parasitic gaps have been claimed to take the form of a null pronoun (Cinque 1990, Postal 1993).

- (22) Das ist der Kerl_i den_i wenn ich e_i erwisch, erschlag ich e_i / **ihn**_i this is the guy_i who_i if I e_i catch beat I e_i / him_i 'This is the guy who I will beat (up) if I catch him'
- (23) Das ist das Buch_idas wenn ich e_i finde kaufe ich e_i / e_i auch this is the book_i which if I e_i find buy I e_i / it_i also 'This is the book which I will buy if I find it'
- (24) Ich bin ein Typ_i der_i wenn e_i gefördert wird, leistet e_i / e_i auch etwa I am a type_i who_i if e_i challenged is achieves e_i / he_ialso thing 'I am the kind of person who accomplishes things if he is challenged'
- (25) Das ist eine Frau_i die_i wenn e_i etwas verspricht, halt e_i / sie_i es auch this is a woman_i who_i if e_i something promises keeps e_i / she_i it also 'She is a woman who keeps her promises if she promises something'

The idea that the second empty category in the construction exemplified by (1) through (4) is a null resumptive pronoun is further corroborated by the fact that in a language like Italian, in exactly the same construction, alongside the variant with the overt object clitics (26a), there also exists the variant in (26b), with the clitics dropped.¹⁰

- (26) a. Questo è l'uomo, che se lo vedo lo uccido this is the man that if $CL_{3S,MASC}$ see-I $CL_{3S,MASC}$ kill-I
 - b. Questo è l'uomo che se vedo uccido.this is the man that if see-I kill-I 'This is the guy that I will kill if I see him'

The analysis that I have outlined here predicts that if n 'him' in (1) is a clitic phonologically fused with the preceding complementizer dass 'that' then the counterpart

¹⁰Interestingly though, there seems to be quite a bit of variation among Italian speakers as to the relative acceptability of (26a) and – or rather versus – (26b). Specifically, some speakers don't accept (26b) at all (Giuliana Giusti, p.c.), whereas for some others it is the preferred version with (26a) being "at best VERY substandard" (Pino Longobardi, p.c.). Yet others, accept both (26a) and (26b) but consider the latter colloquial (Roberta D'Alessandro, p.c.).

of 'whose brother' instead of *den* 'who' should not be possible. Indeed a sentence like (27) is ungrammatical in BG.

(27) *Das ist der Kerl dessen Bruder wenn ich erwisch erschlag ich.
this is the guy whose brotherif I catch slay I
(intended reading) 'This is the guy whose brother I will slay if I catch him'

While this fact can be taken to be a mere coincidence since the genitive has been lost in BG dialects, the fact that an overtly *wh*-marked relative pronoun such as *welchen* 'who(m)' is also impossible in the construction under investigation is further evidence for the correctness of my analysis.¹¹

(28) *Das ist der Kerl_i welchen_i wenn ich e_i erwisch, erschlag ich e_i . this is the guy who if I e_i catch slay I e_i

Moreover, the fact that the invariable relative BG complementizer *was/wo* (see e.g. (21c)) is impossible in (29) further corroborates the analysis that I have outlined in this paper.

(29) *Das ist der Kerl_i den_i was / wo wenn ich e_i erwisch, erschlag ich e_i . this is the guy who REL / REL if I e_i catch slay I e_i .

Finally, the fact that a sentence like the one in (30) below is ungrammatical – compare it with Felix' sentence in (11) – is also predicted under my analysis.

(30) *Das sind die Tabletten die wenn ich Kopfweh kriege nehme ich. these are the pills which if I headache get take I 'These are the pills I take if I get a headache'

Having presented my analysis and some additional evidence in its favor, in the next section I turn to some challenges that it is faced with and suggest ways how to tackle them.

4. Some challenges and how to tackle them

While the analysis presented in the previous section makes certain predictions that are borne out, certain data still seem problematic to account for. For instance, though as already mentioned possessor (i.e. complex) *wh*-phrases are not possible in the construction under scrutiny (cf. e.g. (27)), a dative DP can be used instead, as shown in (31).

¹¹Interestingly, Lutz (2004:274) notes that even in emphatic topicalization constructions of the type in (14) "complex *wh*-phrases like in *wäichan Haus* ('in which house') are considerably worse than simple *wh*-expressions".

(31) Das ist der Kerl_i de**m**_i seinen_i Bruder_j wenn ich erwisch, erschlag ich. this is the guy whom_{DAT} his brother if I see slay I 'This is the guy, whose brother I will beat up if I catch him.'

Interestingly, this same 'possessor' strategy is also found in (spoken) English even in the presence of the complementizer *that*, as discussed in Fiorentino (2007) and as shown in (32) below.

(32) The man that his wife died ...

Thus, a final answer to how (31) comes about should also be able to accommodate data like (32). I would however like to suggest that the expression *dem sein Bruder* 'him his brother' in (31) is a phonological merger of the complementizer *dass* 'that' and a 'big' DP (namely *m sein Bruder*, consisting of the dative clitic *m* 'him' and the possessor *sein Bruder* 'his brother') at the left edge of the (leftward moved) *wenn*-island, as discussed earlier

Impossible to account for in such terms are however sentences like those under (33) through (35), which are acceptable for many speakers.

- (33) %Das ist der Kerl mit dem wenn ich tanze, stoße ich zusammen. this is the guy with whom_{DAT} if I dance crash I together 'This is the guy, with whom, if I dance with him, I crash.'
- (34) %Das ist der Kerl von dem wenn ich mir nichts erwarte, kriege ich nichts. this is the guy from who if I me nothing expect get I nothing 'This is the guy, from whom if I don't expect anything I don't get anything (either).'
- (35) %Das ist das Bettauf dem wenn ich liege, schlafe ich ein. this is the bed on which_{DAT} if I lie sleep I 'This is the bed, on which if I lie, I fall asleep on it.'

While these data might turn out to undermine the analysis that I proposed in section 3 in favor of a pied-piping analysis, I would however like to suggest an alternative, namely that these apparent PPs are just complex complementizers, on a par with *wiavui* 'how much' in (21b) and other combinations such as *bis dass* 'until', *statt dass* 'instead of', *eh' dass* 'before', etc. In addition, they are complex 'agreeing' complementizers, in the sense now familiar, namely that a dative clitic in the left edge of the leftward-moved island phonologically cliticizes onto them.

5. Conclusion

In this paper I have argued that (some) relative pronouns in BG are better analyzed as agreeing complementizers of sorts, located in the higher CP of a recursive CP. In turn, this process of complementizer agreement is fed by (embedded) topicalization à la Bantu (see also Polinsky and Potsdam 2001 on the triggering of agreement by topicalization of

complement clauses in Tsez). I have in other words shown that embedded topicalization also feeds V2. A further big picture ramification of this paper is that relative clauses are actually sentential complements introduced by *bona fide* complementizers, as first hypothesized by Klima (1964) for *that* relatives in English, as opposed to the alternative view that sentential complements are underlyingly relative clauses (Manzini and Savoia 2003, Kayne 2008).

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