Towards an explanation of certain that-\textit{t} phenomena: 
The COMP-node in Bavarian*

JOSEF BAYER

Introduction

In this paper an attempt is made to trace back to some minimal parametrical variations some major syntactic differences between Standard German (SG) and Bavarian (B), the variety of German spoken in the south-east of West-Germany. My main concern is to arrive at an explanation for the violations of the *that-\textit{t} filter which occur frequently in B. The Government and Binding framework, as developed in Chomsky (1981) offers a theory which allows us to derive the Bavarian da\textit{ß}-\textit{t} phenomena and certain cases of pro-drop without stipulations.

1. Extractability

Linguists dealing with German syntax are sometimes puzzled by the fact that there is a great deal of variation among speakers as far as extraction from finite clauses is concerned. Both the examples in (1) are impossible in the usage of rigid German "non-extractors":

\begin{align*}
(1a) & \text{\textit{Weni glaubst du [daB Emma ti liebt] who believe you that E. loves} } \\
& \text{"Who do you believe that Emma loves?"} \\
(1b) & \text{\textit{Weri glaubst du [daB ti Emma liebt] who do you believe loves Emma?"} }
\end{align*}

The corresponding Bavarian sentences in (2) are perfectly grammatical:

\begin{align*}
(2a) & \text{\textit{Weami moanstn [daB da Franz ti troffa hot] who think-you that the F. met has} } \\
& \text{"Who do you think that Franz has met?"} \\
(2b) & \text{\textit{Weai moanstn [daB ti an Franz troffa hot] who do you think has met Franz?"} }
\end{align*}
The problem does not seem to have to do with the *that-* filter directly, because SG reacts to both subject- and object-extraction negatively, whereas B seems to be quite happy with violations of the Empty Category Principle (ECP), which says that an empty category should be properly governed. According to this principle, (1a) should be fine, because the trace is not governed by an X' element and not coindexed in an immediately perspicuous way. Why then are the data as they are?

2. COM in Bavarian

B provides impressive examples of doubly-filled COM. As a rule, any finite embedded clause may be introduced with two COM-positions. This holds, of course, also for relative clauses. My examples indicate that the complementizers dafl (for V-complementation) and wo (for N-complementation) may be missing, but in fact there are many speakers who almost never leave them away:

(3) (a) I wass ned [wann (da xavea t; kummt)]
   I know not when that X. comes
   "I don't know when Xaver will arrive"
(b) Es is no ned g'wenn [weis, (da x)] [t; kummt]
   it is yet not sure who that comes
   "It is yet not sure who will come"
(c) dea Hund [da, (wo) [t; gestern d'Katz bissn hot]]
   the dog which that yesterday the cat bitten has
   "the dog which has bitten the cat yesterday"
(d) dea Frau [da, (wo) [da xavea t; a Busi g'gem hot]]
   the woman to-who that Xaver has kissed
   "the woman who Xaver has kissed"

Before I turn to a problem with Bavarian relative clauses let me indicate how the ungrammaticality of (1) can be derived. SG, as spoken by non-extractors, has one and only one COM. Therefore, (1a) is not rejected, because the trace left in object-position would be ungoverned (it is governed), but rather because COM is already occupied by dafl. The w-word simply cannot escape, because the usual escape-hatch, a $\beta$-COM, is blocked by a complementizer-word.

A first question about relatives is why many speakers would express (3c) with the relative pronoun missing rather than leaving out wo: (3c) dea Hund [wo [e gestern d'Katz bissn hot]]

This is strange, because now there is no antecedent for e. Assuming that e = PRO is unmotivated, since in (3c) there was much reason to argue that it was a wtrace. On the other hand, the relative pronoun in (3b) cannot be left out. The result would be ungrammatical. Since deletion of the relative pronoun in COM leads always to ungrammaticality if the pronoun is not in the Nominative, we can formulate the following principle:

(4) Unmarked-Case Transmission (UCT)$^3$

$$[\text{comp} X] [\text{comp} wo] \rightarrow [\text{comp} X] [\text{comp} wo]$$

where $\iota$ = the unmarked Case (i.e. Nominative)

There is a slight complication which, however, does not affect (4). Note that we can read a relative without a non-Nominative pronoun grammatical, if the head of the relative has the same Case as the deleted pronoun:

(5) (a) I sog's dem M0 [wo [des e g'heat]] ned I tell-it to the man that this belongs-to not
   "I won't tell it to the man to whom this belongs"
(b) *I kenn den M0 [wo [des e g'heat]] ned
   "I don't know the man to whom this belongs"

In (5a) the head-NP dem M0 is a Dative; and the Dative is required for a pronoun in A-position to fill the gap e in the clause, because gehört governs a Dative-object; in (5b) the head is in the Accusative; therefore there is a Case conflict between Dative and Accusative. We can account for this situation with the following principle:

(6) General Case Transmission (GCT)

$$[\text{NP}] [\text{comp} X] [\text{comp} wo] \rightarrow [\text{NP}] [\text{comp} X] [\text{comp} wo]$$

where $\iota$ = any Case, $\bar{X} = \iota$.

If an optional deletion rule deletes the pronoun which precedes wo, the head-NP has a chance to transmit its Case onto wo, rendering some sentences grammatical and others not. The ungrammatical examples would be ruled out by Case-theory. (5a,b) have to be analyzed as:

(7) (a) I sog's [dem M0] [is [comp $\bar{X} $] [comp wo] ] [t; g'heat]] ned where $\iota = j$
(b) *I kenn [dem M0] [is [comp $\bar{X} $] [comp wo] ] [t; g'heat]] ned where $\iota = j$

To sum up, the N-complementizer wo can inherit the feature [+ nominative] from a moved and later on deleted Nominative pronoun, such that no ECP-violation occurs if we face a wo-X structure. In any other situation the grammaticality depends on the coincidence of head-Case and the Case of the deleted pronoun.
3. Full Pronouns and Clitics

Now I want to draw attention to the fact that a syntax dilemma arises when we follow certain historically oriented descriptions of the Bavarian clitic (Nominative) pronouns. The lists of full and clitic pronouns (8) and (9) are taken from Altmann.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bavarian</th>
<th>singular</th>
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<th>Bavarian</th>
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<td>3 pers.</td>
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Note now the following examples of the movement of the subject pronouns into the second noun into the second.

(10) (a) [s] [kom] [ba] [kummt] is d'Suppn schô koid

"Until I arrive the soup will already be cold"

(b) [s] [kom] [ba] [kummt] [kummt] is d'Suppn schô koid

Until that come is the soup

schô koid

already cold

"Until I arrive the soup will already be cold"

There is no clear picture of a syntactic process. Why should a clitic pronoun remain in the S-clause, if it is 2nd person? Note further that the same thing would lead to ungrammaticality in all the other persons:

(11) (a) *i: ba [kummt] is d'Suppn schô koid

(b) *dea ba [kummt] is d'Suppn schô koid

Another reason for not being content with the present analysis has to do with phonology. I assume that clitic pronouns should derive in an immediately perspicuous way from the corresponding full pronouns. This seems to be the case for all the forms but for the 2nd person forms. I have to emphasize again that I do not make any claims which touch the historical development. Among the forms in (8) and (9) it should not be too difficult to derive, say, /s/ from /si/, /rna/ from /mia/ etc., but it would be difficult to derive in synchronic phonology /at/ from /du/ and /ts/ from //.

To summarize, we have – as (10) indicates – an inconsistent syntax, and we have a doubtful phonology, but we have nice tables of the pronominal paradigm where every full form has a corresponding clitic. My claim is that it is neither the syntax nor the phonology of B which is messy, but table (9) looking at the verb forms in (10b/e) it appears immediately that -st-ts are the personal endings on the verb. Therefore I hypothesize that they are not clitics in subject-position, but rather inflections on COMP. This is the reason why they cannot disappear under conditions of movement.

4. Pro-Drop

Note now that in (10b/e), which are now respectively analyzed as (12a/b)

(12) (a) [du [bis dað-st] [kummt] is d'Suppn schô koid

(b) [ia/es [bis dað-ta] [kummt] is d'Suppn schô koid

the subject pronouns du and ia/es can be dropped. In that case it is unlikely that movement takes place at all. In all the other examples where we had a movement analysis already in (10), pro-drop leads to ungrammaticality. Leaving away the inferential morphology in COMP in (12) again rules out the sentences as unacceptable. Without even approaching a more sophisticated level of argumentation we can conclude from the way the data pattern that there must be an intimate connection between the make-up of COMP and the adjacent empty element to the right of it. B "becomes" a pro-drop language just in case COMP is inflectionally enriched to such an extent that the referential properties of the governed empty element can be recovered. Although -st-ts are not clitic pronouns, they have the quality to specify COMP in the relevant way. What kind of empty element is e in this case? Since there is no antecedent, I assume it not to be a wh-trace. As there is no sentence-level controller, it cannot be PRO. A more relevant reason which rules out PRO and PROarb is that PRO would appear in governed position. This will become clear in the next section.

5. Are there ECP-Violations in Bavarian?

I will show now that empty subjects are properly governed in the sense of Chomsky (1981). The ECP reads as follows:
If complementizer:

(13) \( ECP \) must be properly governed

(14) \( \alpha \) properly governs \( \beta \) if (i) \( \alpha \) governs \( \beta \) and (iii) \( \alpha \) = [±N, ±V] or (ii) \( \alpha \) is coindexed with \( \beta \)

If we generalize our principle UCT in (4) a bit, we can account for the transmission of Unmarked Case in all clauses introduced by a complementizer:

(4) Generalized UCT:

\[ [\text{COMP}] [\text{COMP-complementizer}] \rightarrow [\text{COMP}] [\text{COMP-complementizer}] \]

where \( \iota \) – the Unmarked Case; \( X \) may be trace

(4') guarantees that the index of trace is transmitted onto the complementizer, if the moved element is in the Nominative. For example in

(15) \[ [\text{S}] [\text{COMP}] [\text{S}] [\text{COMP}] [\text{S}] \]

\( da11 \) inherits index \( i \) and can therefore properly govern \( t_i \). As far as I can see, (4') and (6) can handle some important problems of abstract Case in B.

We have accounted for the situation where a subject-trace is properly governed. In the light of data where subject pro-drop can only occur if a defined morphology appears in COMP, it is evident that this morphology is the trigger for (optional) pro-drop. Since the morphology in question consists of the 2nd person verb-affixes, we might argue that there is a correspondence-feature which links INFL and COMP:

(16) \[ ... [\text{COMP}, \# \text{2 person}] ... [\text{INFL}, \# \text{2 person}] ... \]

(17) \[ [\text{2 person}/1g] \rightarrow [\text{1g}] \]

A complementizer which attracts verbal morphology in such a way can readily be assumed to be a lexical governor.\(^{11}\) If this holds, the ECP is fulfilled without stipulations on proper government: In B empty categories are properly governed either (a) because they are traces governed by a verb which is \([\text{N}, \#V]\), fulfilling (ii) of (14), or (b) because they are subject-traces governed due to GUJT (= (4')), fulfilling (ii) of (14), or (c) because they are base-generated empty elements which are governed by an enriched complementizer, which might be \([-\text{INFL}]\), fulfilling again (ii) of (14). Under this analysis it is evident why PRO and PROag do not qualify. They would be governed by COMP. Rather, the empty element following a governing COMP seems to have all the properties Chomsky ascribes to PRO.\(^{11}\)

6. Where is INFL?

There are competing theories as to where INFL is in German. The most frequent proposals are (I) INFL is directly dominated by S;\(^{13}\) (II) INFL is directly dominated by VP.\(^{14}\) The following Bavarian data are graphically arranged to make my point clear:\(^{15}\)

(18) (a) \( \emptyset \) wenn-ts pro -me mech-ts (If you like me, ...) \( \emptyset \) wenn-ts pro -me mech-ts (Do you like me?)

(19) \( \emptyset \) wenn-ts pro -me mech-ts t1 (Who do you like?)

(20) \( \emptyset \) wenn-ts pro -me mech-ts t1 mech-ts (If you like ME, ...)

(21) \( \emptyset \) wenn-ts pro -me t1 mech-ts ( ... why you like me)

One can see that the finite verb mech-ts can also govern pro. The problem with proposal (I) is that it predicts

(19') *pro (ja/ea) mi mech-ts you me like

"You like me"

to be a well-formed declarative sentence: If INFL is immediately dominated by S, it should under the required conditions allow for pro-drop. This prediction is wrong. The advantage of (I) is, however, that there is a solution for Nominative-assignment. Proposal (II) predicts correctly that \( \emptyset \) is ungrammatical, because INFL being part of the maximal projection VP cannot govern pro. Beyond this, (II) gives at least the idea of an explanation for V/2 in German: (19) may be freely generated by \( X \)-syntax. The nature of pro and the presence of an appropriate landing site for \( \emptyset \) in the INFL in COMP\(_2\) could then be seen to be the trigger for V/INFL-movement.\(^{16}\) The problem of assigning Case to the subject-NP that (I) could solve seems to be a "Scheinproblem". If we assume – as Chomsky has once proposed – that \([+\text{nominative}]\) is an abstract property of finite sentences (if there is a phonological matrix where the feature can be spelt out) we can capture the fact that in V/2-sentences the subject-NP has Case without being governed by AGR.

(20) \[ S \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{NP} \quad \text{VP/INFL} \]

\[ [\# \text{2 person}] \quad [\# \text{2 pers}] \]
Here, INFL does not govern NP, NP gets Case by virtue of being the subject of a finite clause. It might be governed by some percolation mechanism in the sense of Safr (1982). If INFL is marked [+2 person] it acquires the feature [+pronominal] after movement to COMP. It can properly govern pro. In V/adj-sentences with an overt complementizer or a wh-moved element in COMP, agreement-rule (16) guarantees that COMP becomes [+pronominal]. Ungrammatical examples like

(21)

"You don't like me"

are now ruled out: If pro were in COMP of (20), it could not be governed by INFL. pro could, however, move to COMP, leaving a trace which would be properly governed by mech-ty. Is there (21) ruled in again? I think it is not, because pro might be argued to move into an A-position, consequently binding the trace non-locally. Semantically it is unclear how an undetermined element like pro could serve as a binder of a wh-trace. Without doubt, there is a superior solution which might be achieved with a deeper understanding of German syntax.

7. Conclusion

The results of this study of COMP in B are: It was shown that the ECP holds in B. It followed quite naturally from the fact that B has doubly-filled COMP (or rather two COMP-positions), a general rule of Case-transmission which percolates the Nominative in form of an abstract index onto an otherwise unmarked complementizer-word, and the fact that B has a somewhat more vivid morphology than SG. An important fact is that in 2nd person COMP acquires inflectional morphology. This enables COMP to properly govern an empty pronominal in an adjacent subject-variation. At the same time we could avoid the strange effect of B's allowing for pronoun-doubling and wh-movement irregularly. With the present account we could also avoid difficulties which arise in synchronic phonology of B, when the pseudo-clitics should be derived from the full pronouns.

Although B seems to be a dialect which is quite different from SG, we could show that an important subset of the syntactic differences which any naive observer can notice, is explained on the basis of a few parametrical variations. The differences between B and SG I focused on in this study arise mainly, because the dialect of strict "non-extractors" has only one COMP. If this COMP is blocked by e.g. da, the following sentence is closed for movement. Since German observes Subjacency, it is obvious why under such conditions COMP-to-COMP-movement cannot take place. In B, on the other hand, one can observe all effects of long wh-movement, because there is room for trace and a complementizer. COMP-

infection makes it possible to drop 2nd person pronouns — a process which is unknown in SG.

B gives an example of what Chomsky in Chomsky (1981) suspects to be a language with a "mixed system", i.e. a language where subject-drop does not occur regularly, but only in some constructions.

Notes

1. For their help and patience I want to thank the uncorrupted speakers of Bavarian who were always ready to listen to my "sentences", and the people who heard my previous talks about this subject. Especially I bow to thank Tilmen Holbr, Ginter Grewendorf, Peter Stautz, Thomas Thiersch, and Thome Torris whose critical questions sharpened my understanding of the subject matter. I have to emphasize that the dialect described here is my own. There is at least one other Bavarian subdialect which is revealing as far as that-1 phenomena are concerned, namely Lower Bavarian. I say something about Lower Bavarian in a forthcoming study.

2. Carl Bonnor (personal communication) and Van der Auwera (this volume) in his U6 suggest that (universally) subjects are harder to move out of their clauses than non-subjects. According to Van der Auwera, this property should be linked to the fact that the semantic role of subject NPs is less predictable than that of non-subject NPs. Therefore, subjects should be more clause-bound than non-subjects (cf. his U6). I cannot see the force of the argument. Note also German constructions like Mir ar schickl, Mir geh's aus, Mich hett, Dom Patizeen wird ein Tumor herausgestürt wobei the initial Dative/Assessive-NPs are fronr roles like "patient" and "recipient". In the light of the advanced research on the ECP I doubt that much can be gained from semantic and functional considerations in this area. Bayerian indicates that there is no prima facie asymmetry in German between subject- and object-NPs. I doubt that a quantitative study of overall German would contradict that. For "properly governed" see Pp. 10.

3. A more serious reason is that in other cases PRO would be governed. This is not an available option in the framework I am following.

4. This is inspired by the que+principle in Preyer (1982). There are good reasons to consider the Nominative to be the Unmarked Case. It is, for example, the Case of quotation, it is free of special morphology, it appears in infinitival constructions, if there is no element which could assign another Case. Agmgrammaticism gives psycholinguistic evidence in support of my view.

5. Some native speakers get very confused with pure so-relatives in metalinguistic decisions. They either tend to reject all the examples or to accept all of them, including the ungrammatical ones. I follow my own intuitions and Merkle (1975), p. 14ff.

6. For historical descriptions see Weichold (1907) and Schwan (1907).

7. Hans den Besten (personal communication) doubts that in cases like wenn-st kummt-st if you come) would be governed. This is not an available option in the framework I am following.

8. For other German dialects this might be appropriate, e.g. Berlinerisch wenn-st. Note, however, the following distribution of grammaticality in the two dialects:

(i) Wenn-st kummt-st
(b) Wenn-st du kummt-st
(ii) Wenn-st te kummt-te
(b) *Wenn-st du kommet-

These data indicate that wennst is a COMP-conclitic structure, whereas wenn-st is an inflected
COMP. Only the latter tolerates a following full pronoun. Of course, this claim does not extend to a historical theory.

8. With this view I am not alone. Pfalz (1918) proposed an analysis along these lines. See also Kulte (1984) as well as Richter (1979), where other dialects and languages are mentioned which show agreement phenomena in COMP. Bengtten/Hagerman (this volume) in dealing mainly with West-Flemish, develop an account according to which clitics in general are not more than feature carriers, i.e. agreement phenomena without referential force. But also in their data one finds indications that certain elements derive from the verb, whereas others derive from the pronoun, e.g. deel (3) komen (that I come), alie (3) komen (that they come), where -k<ik, -e<easter, but [-nasal]<-n in komen. Bengtten and Hagerman show that there is a trade-off in West-Flemish between pro this is the "little" pro, not PRO, see Chomsky (1982), 8, and the feature-load of the governor of pro. It was suggested to me to handle the Bavarian data similarly. The reason not to do that is simply that in B the inflectional morphology in COMP is purely verbal, whereas the clitics attached to COMP are purely pronominal. This is again readily demonstrated by the fact that unlike West-Flemish, B does not at all tolerate strings of the form COMP-clitic-pronoun. The status of clitics as pronouns is here fully preserved.

9. One could imagine that the antecedent was deleted in the derivational process. I would require more space to argue against such a solution.

10. See Chomsky (1981), p. 250; the other relevant definitions follow Bengtten/Groos (1982). Important for the present discussion are:

a. governed f \{ (i) a minimally c-commands \}

b. minimally governed f \{ (ii) a c-commands \}

c. \(~ a c-commands \}

11. Richter who calls complementizers like da/3 "Partikel", which means something like "uninflecting word", refers to this as a process of "Departikularisierung"; cf. Richter (1979), p. 536.

12. Cf. Chomsky (1982), 8, where pro is defined as [-anaphor, +pronominal]; pro is the natural consequence of "richer" inflectional systems, i.e. a governed pronominal without a phonological matrix whose content is fully determined by a governing AGR-element. See also Bengtten/Hagerman (this volume).


14. Most native grammarians.

15. In all the places of (18) where pro appears, the full pronoun ia of 2nd person/plural is also possible.

16. See also Chomsky (1982), p. 85. Chomsky would rather leave the exact nature of the empty category to be determined by move-a and the interaction of the various subtheories.

17. For a recent critique of assuming COMP-positions for all three sentence-types of German (V/prem, V/1, V/2) see Reis (1983). Personally I have no qualms about giving up the cover term "COMP" for cases where no overt or \#-complementizer is required.

18. Note example (106) in Chomsky (1982) e fu arrestato i (he was arrested), where e = pro. Such cases of NP-movement would turn out in Bavarian (in 2nd person) to be grammatical as well, e.g. della ci pro digerite seisav (that you will be arrested).