

Waarmee and *met wat* in Dutch free relatives

Fenna Bergsma

October 2018

In Dutch, a relative pronoun in instrumental case can be realized as *waarmee* ‘where.with’ or as *met wat* ‘with what’. Free relative constructions in which one predicate requires instrumental case and the other predicate accusative case (INS-ACC free relatives) show that the two realizations are used in different contexts. In (1a), the instrumental case is required in the embedded clause and the accusative is required in the main clause, and only *waarmee* is grammatical. In contrast, (1b) shows that only *met wat* can be used, if the case requirements are reversed.

- (1) a. Ik heb gekocht *waarmee*/**met wat* jij schildert.
I have bought_{acc} where with/with what you paint_{ins}
‘I bought what you are painting with.’
b. Ik schilder *met wat*/**waarmee* jij hebt gekocht.
I paint_{ins} with what/where with you have bought_{acc}
‘I paint with what you bought.’

In my analysis, I combine grafting (remerging of embedded features, Van Riemsdijk 2006) with the case hierarchy in nanosyntax (Caha 2009). I draw a parallel between INS-ACC free relatives in Dutch and DAT-ACC free relatives in German.

- (2) a. Ich lade ein **wen/wem* auch Maria vertraut.
I invite_{acc} who.ACC/who.DAT also Maria trusts_{dat}
‘I invite whoever Maria also trusts.’ (German, Vogel 2001:344)
b. *Ich vertraue *wen/wem* auch Maria mag.
I trust_{dat} who.ACC/who.DAT also Maria likes_{acc}
‘I trust whoever Maria also likes.’ (German, Vogel 2001:345)

I argue that the syntax of INS-ACC free relatives in Dutch and DAT-ACC free relatives in German is nearly identical, but lexical entries differ. *Waarmee* in (1a) spells out the instrumental case as a whole, just like *wem* spells out a dative in (2a). *Met* in (1b) is the spellout of features that become available at a later stage in the derivation, and serves as a repair mechanism that saves the construction. As German has no such repair mechanism available for ACC to DAT, (2b) is ungrammatical.

The work can inform us about restrictions on change of spellout and on the nature of elements in the left periphery of the embedded clause.

References

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