

# Doubling in Germanic relative clauses

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## 1 Introduction

various elements introducing relative clauses in Germanic

two major strategies:

- relative pronoun strategy
- relative complementiser strategy

two possible sources of relative markers:

- demonstrative elements
- *wh*-elements

→ four major patterns (single marker):

- demonstrative-based relative pronoun (*d*-pronoun)
- *wh*-based relative pronoun (*wh*-pronoun)
- demonstrative-based relative complementiser (*d*-complementiser)
- *wh*-based relative complementiser (*wh*-complementiser)

fifth possibility: a combination of a pronoun and a complementiser (doubling)

in theory: four possibilities – but: not all of them exist

→ question: what restricts co-occurrences

proposal: restrictions primarily related to the relative feature, [rel] and whether it is interpretable on the given element

## 2 Relative markers

*d*-pronouns e.g. in German – inflected for case, number, gender

- (1) a. der Mann, **den** wir kennen  
the.M.NOM man who.M.ACC we know.1PL  
'the man who we know'
- b. die Frau, **die** uns kennt  
the.F.NOM woman who.F.NOM we.ACC knows  
'the woman who knows us'

Dutch also uses *d*-pronouns – inflected for gender

- (2) a. het boek **dat** ik heb gelezen  
the.N book that.N I have read.PTCP  
'the book I have read'
- b. de man **die** daar staat  
the.M man that.M there stands  
'the man who is standing there'

*wh*-pronouns in English – potentially inflected for case, human/non-human distinction

- (3) a. the man **who** lives next door  
b. the woman **whom** we sent the books  
c. the book **which** is on the table

*wh*-pronouns also in German:

- (4) a. der Mann, **welchen** wir vorhin gesehen haben  
the.M.NOM man which.M.ACC we before seen have.1PL  
'the man who we have just seen'
- b. die Frau, **welche** das Haus gebaut hat  
the.F.NOM woman who.F.NOM the.N.ACC house built.PTCP has  
'the woman who built the house'

complementisers differ: not inflected, and not influenced by the head noun

English *d*-complementiser:

- (5) a. the man **that** lives next door  
b. the woman **that** we sent the books  
c. the book **that** is on the table

*d*-complementiser also in e.g. Danish (also other Scandinavian languages):

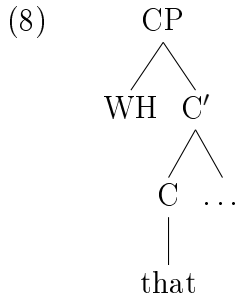
- (6) Det her er bogen **som** Mary købte.  
it here is the.book that Mary bought.PST  
'This is the book which Mary bought.' (Bacskai-Atkari & Baudisch 2018)

*wh*-complementisers in South German varieties (*wo* or *was*)

- (7) Ich suech ebber **wo** mer helfe künnt.  
 I search someone REL I.DAT help.INF could  
 ‘I am looking for someone who could help me.’  
 (Alemannic; Brandner & Bräuning 2013)

also: *what* in English

syntactic difference between relative pronouns and complementisers:



→ syntax potentially allows a doubling structure (Van Gelderen 2009, Brandner & Bräuning 2013, Bacskai-Atkari 2018b)

### 3 Doubling

four logically possible configurations – only three attested:

	<i>d</i> -complementiser	<i>wh</i> -complementiser
<i>d</i> -pronoun	+	+
<i>wh</i> -pronoun	+	–

→ question: why – all options would fit in the template in (8)

*d*-pronoun + *d*-complementiser: Old English (Van Gelderen 2009), Waasland Dutch (Boef 2013)

- (9) a. ac gif we asmeagaþ þa eadmodlican dæda **þa þe** he worhte, þonne  
 but if we consider those humble deeds that that he wrought then  
 ne þincþ us þæt nan wundor  
 not seems us that no wonder  
 ‘But if we consider the humble deeds which he wrought, that will seem no  
 wonder to us.’ (*Blickling Homilies*; Watanabe 2009, citing Allen 1980)
- b. Dat is de man **die dat** het gedaan heeft.  
 that is the man who that it done has  
 ‘That is the man who has done it.’ (Boef 2010)

*d*-pronoun + *wh*-complementiser: South German dialects (Brandner & Bräuning 2013, Weiß 2013, Fleischer 2017)

- (10) Des Geld, **des wo** ich verdiene, des geheert mir.  
 the.N money that.N REL I earn.1SG that.N belongs I.DAT  
 ‘The money that I earn belongs to me.’  
 (Hessian; Fleischer 2017)

*wh*-pronoun + *d*-complementiser: English (see Van Gelderen 2009), marginally Swedish<sup>1</sup>

- (11) a. It’s down to the community **in which that** the people live.  
 (Van Gelderen 2013: 59, ex. 8)
- b. Detta är studenten **vilken som** bjöd in Mary.  
 this is the.student which that invited in Mary  
 ‘This is the student who invited Mary.’ (Bacskai-Atkari & Baudisch 2018)

but: no *wh*-pronoun + *wh*-complementiser

## 4 Doubling with *wh*-complementisers

relative clauses often treated on a par with *wh*-interrogatives: e.g. Chomsky & Lasnik (1977) assume *wh*-movement to COMP in both cases

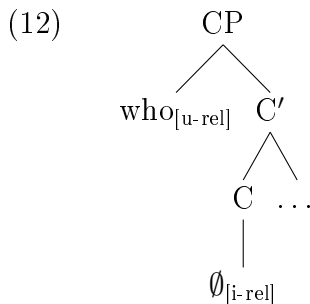
but: evidence from other Germanic languages that relative clauses do not necessarily contain a *wh*-element at all

Rizzi (1997): relative assumed to be a clause type (“Force”)

Watanabe (2009): Old English *wh*-elements were indefinites with a zero quantifier – property lost later, making it possible for *wh*-elements to appear in relative clauses (they are no longer quantificational and do not make the clause a complete proposition)

*wh*-pronouns as relative pronouns: inherently operator elements, equipped with an [u-rel] feature

→ such elements need to be checked against an [i-rel] complementiser

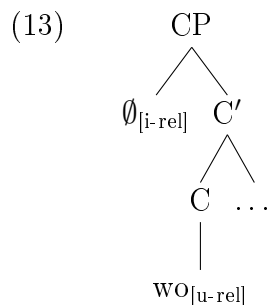


<sup>1</sup>This option was indicated as possible by the informant from the Färgelanda municipality but not by the one from Göteborg.

reanalysis of the operator into a complementiser possible (either directly via the relative cycle, see Van Gelderen 2009, or indirectly via analogy with other constructions, see Brandner & Bräuning 2013)

[u-rel] feature on the *wh*-element preserved also in C

→ such complementisers need to be checked off by an [i-rel] operator

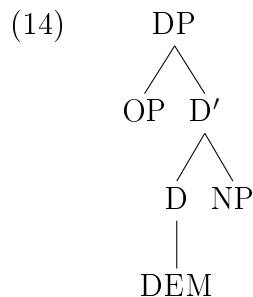


→ since *wh*-pronouns and *wh*-complementisers are both [u-rel], they cannot check off the relevant feature with each other

→ no doubling *wh*-pronoun + *wh*-complementiser

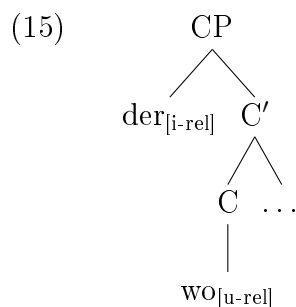
but: it can also be lexicalised by an overt relative pronoun – a *d*-pronoun

structure of *d*-pronouns as relative pronouns (following Boef 2013: 44):



operator in the specifier of the demonstrative

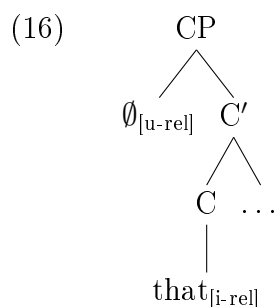
operator has the feature [i-rel] – it can check off the [u-rel] feature of the complementiser (empty or *wh*-complementiser)



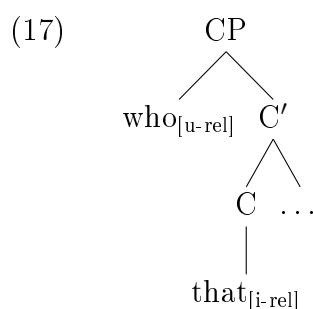
→ doubling with *d*-pronoun + *wh*-complementiser possible

## 5 Doubling with *d*-complementisers

reanalysis of *d*-pronoun into *d*-complementiser: [i-rel] feature of the operator reinterpreted as [i-rel] on the original pronoun (and ultimately on the complementiser) itself



→ doubling patterns with a *wh*-pronoun and a *d*-complementiser borne out as well



doubling patterns involving a *d*-element and a *wh*-element derive in a straightforward way from the feature properties of the elements and from the basic mechanism of feature checking (involving an uninterpretable and an interpretable feature)

the same considerations rule out *wh+wh*

but: *d+d* configurations not straightforward – two [i-rel] elements

both the pronoun and the complementiser have additional functions (other than encoding the relative type):

- pronoun: associated with the gap in the relative clause, agreement with head noun
- complementiser: encoding finiteness

*wh*-pronouns generally show no agreement (Van Kampen 2007 for Dutch) – not German *welcher/welche/welches*: agreement depends on the complement-taking abilities of the given *wh*-pronoun (*welche* and *which* take an NP complement, *who* and *wer* do not)

→ one possibility: the *d*-pronoun is inserted into [Spec,CP] as a demonstrative for agreement and marking the gap but not for checking off the [rel] feature – possible pattern for a first step of the relative cycle with new pronouns

another possibility: the complementiser marks finiteness only and has no [i-rel] feature

Dutch: *d+d* doubling found in Waasland Dutch – relatives with a single *dat* (as a complementiser) found in Vlaams-Brabant Dutch (Boef 2013)

→ *d+d* doubling in Dutch features an extra insertion of the complementiser, not of the operator – possible reason: general tendency in Germanic languages to lexicalise the C position (Bacskai-Atkari 2018a)

Old English: *d+d* attested, also single *d*-pronouns (Seppänen 2004) – but single *þe* also possible, especially with object relative clauses (Geoghegan 1975)

- (18) a. ge onfeð ðæm mægene Halges Gastes, **se** cymeð ofor eow  
you receive the power Holy.GEN Spirit.GEN which comes over you  
‘you receive the power of the Holy Spirit which comes over you’  
(*Blickling Homilies*; Seppänen 2004)
- b. Seo ilce burg Babylonia, **seo ðe** mæst wæs & ærest ealra burga  
that same city Babylon which that greatest was first all cities  
‘that same city of Babylon, which was the greatest and the first of all cities’  
(*Orosius*; Seppänen 2004)
- c. her onginnað seo boc **þe** man Orosius, nemnað  
here begins the book that one Orosius calls  
‘here begins the book that one calls Orosius’ (*Orosius*; Geoghegan 1975)

later development: reanalysis of one of the *d*-pronouns (*that*) into a complementiser, removing the original complementiser *þe* (Van Gelderen 2009)

→ possible scenario: in doubling patterns, *þe* already interpreted as a finiteness marker, weakening its status as a relative marker – alternative: *d*-pronoun a clause-internal head agreeing with the matrix head noun (*that* as a *d*-pronoun occurs mostly with neuter antecedents for a while, see Allen 1977)

## 6 Conclusion

Germanic relative clauses: relative pronouns (*d* or *wh*) and/or complementisers (*d* or *wh*)

combinations:

- *d+wh*: attested
- *wh+d*: attested
- *d+d*: attested
- *wh+wh*: not attested

symmetric patterns compatible with the basic feature-checking involving [-rel] and [u-rel]

asymmetric patterns either not attested or ruled out due to feature-checking restrictions

→ feature properties restrict possibilities allowed by the syntactic structure otherwise

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