

The Small Clause Concept as a Contribution to the Pedagogical Grammar of Dutch*

0. Introduction

Pedagogical and scientific grammars do not serve the same purposes. The former provide answers to the practical questions of language users. They have to be comprehensive and accessible. Any bias toward one of the competing linguistic theories would be misguided. A scientific grammar, however, is committed to a specific theoretical and methodological paradigm. Being the result of ongoing research, it can at best offer a provisional survey of the state of the art. What it lacks in coverage of linguistic phenomena should be counterbalanced by the quality of the in-depth treatment of its subject matter. Hierarchically, a scientific grammar rates higher, as a provider of new grammatical insights. A pedagogical grammar has to be regularly reassessed and updated. Advantage should be taken of any serious progress in the area of linguistic research. Any important delay in catching up with views generally entertained in the field of linguistics is a sure sign of a deficiency. The incentive to write this paper was the apprehension that the treatment in the 'Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst' (ANS) of the syntactic phenomenon labelled 'Bepaling van Gesteldheid' (BvG), 'statal modifier', offers a case in point. In my opinion the pedagogical ANS has failed to recognize important progress in this area and so I believe a realignment is in order.

In the first section, I shall present the ANS (1984) point of view with respect to the BvG data. In section two, I shall compare the latter to Den Hertog's treatment (DH) (1973). In the final section, I shall argue that the 'Small Clause' concept, developed in the tradition of Generative Grammar, can be adapted to the requirements of a pedagogical grammar and can guarantee a generalized and more insightful treatment of the BvG phenomena. (Haegeman 1991 and Hoekstra 1984 and in prep.)

1. Secondary Predication Repudiated.

The ANS devotes the entire section 29 of chapter 21 (p.903-908) to the treatment of the construction termed BvG. The first aspect considered is the definition, which is based on two basic assumptions: (a) that the BvG modifies the action or state expressed by the verb, (b) that the BvG also relates to the subject or the object of the sentence. Thus, the BvG is claimed to combine an adverbial with an adnominal property. The second component of the treatment consists of a subcategorization into three subclasses:

- (i) BvG *tijdens* de handeling, ('during the action')
- (ii) BvG *volgens* de handeling, ('according to the action')
- (iii) BvG *ten gevolge van* de handeling. ('as a result of the action')

The terminology is obviously a bit old-fashioned. 'Gesteldheid' is not the most widely used equivalent in Present Day Dutch for 'quality' or 'state'. Inadvertent users should, furthermore, be aware of the tricky semantics of the circumlocutionary expressions in (i) through (iii). The three prepositional phrases are adjoined to the antecedent 'gesteldheid', not to 'bepaling'. The sentences (1) through (3) correspond to the subdivision in - (iii):

- (1) Hongerig kwam Richard binnen.
'Richard came in hungry.'
- (2) De koffie ruikt lekker.
'The coffee smells good.'
- (3) Jan verfde het hekje groen.
'Jan painted the gate green.'

In (1), 'hungry' expresses the state Richard is in while coming in: in (2), 'good' refers to a quality of the coffee 'according to the action' expressed by the verb 'smell'; in (3), 'green' is a state of the gate brought about by the action of painting.

Subsequently and in passing the ANS introduces a different interpretation of the BvG. It suggests that one might consider it as an instance of secondary

predication. What this means is that a sentence like (1) might be interpreted as a combination of two separate propositions, as in (1')

(1') Richard is hungry. Richard came in.

There is no inherent relation between the action expressed by the verb and the state Richard is in, as can be expected with a 'BvG *ten gevolge van de handeling*'. In a sentence like (3), however, with a reading as in (3')

(3') John painted the gate. The gate turned green.

the two propositions enter into a close relation: the state is the consequence of the action. This is what should be expected with a "BvG *ten gevolge van de handeling*'.

There is no evidence that the ANS takes this 'Secondary Predication Hypothesis' (SPH) seriously. No further attempt is made to exploit it. And, most revealingly, no mention is made of the difficulty into which one gets when attempting to construct two propositions from sentence (2), as is exemplified in (2'):

(2') ?The coffee smells. The coffee is good.

On p. 906 an analogous example, viz (4), is discussed. It is paraphrased as in (4').

(4) De soep smaakt *heerlijk*.
'The soup tastes delicious.'

(4') "De soep is heerlijk wat de smaak betreft."
'As far as the taste is concerned, the soup is delicious.'

With the SPH dismissed, the ANS proceeds with a discussion in detail of the three classes of BvG. The main purpose is to show how the BvGs can be realized. For type (i), the 'BvG *tijdens de handeling*', the possibilities are as follows: participle or adjective, prepositional phrase introduced by 'als' or 'met' and indefinite pronouns. For an illustration, see (5) through (9).

(5) *Lachend* nam Ria de brief aan.
'Laughing Ria accepted the letter.'

(6) Mijn vader is *arm* gestorven.
'My father died poor.'

(7) We gingen *als goede vrienden* uit elkaar.
'We parted as good friends.'

(8) *Met de handen in haar schoot* zat ze somber voor zich uit te staren.

'With her hands in her lap, she sat staring moodily.'

(9) Hij gooide de kegels *alle negen* om.
'He hit all nine of the pins.'

As no other fundamentally new insights can be derived from the detailed review of the realizations of the two remaining types of BvG, it is without doing any injustice to the ANS that I shall now try to assess the merits of this section 29 of chapter 21.

Being judged partly adverbial and partly adnominal, the BvG is a hybrid category. I qualify the incapacity to come to grips with the essentials of this construction as the fundamental weakness of the ANS approach. The half-hearted treatment of the BvG does not draw the lines firmly, it leaves the phenomena in a syntactic limbo. How should one understand the adverbial-cum-adnominal status of a BvG phrase, bearing in mind that each of the terms unequivocally refers to utterly opposite meanings? The answer must be that this definition is inadequate. And I take this to be a consequence of the shortcomings of traditional grammar, which lacks the sophistication required to cope with problems of such complexity.

Another disadvantage of the ANS treatment has to do with its use of purely semantic notions, which are of a somewhat dubious nature. The BvG is claimed to refer to the state or quality of the subject or the object of the sentence, established "during", "according to" or "as a result" of the action expressed by the verb. The correctness of the subcategorization relies entirely on the distinctions expressed by the three prepositions. But again, how should one construe a reference to a quality *according to* the action expressed by the verb in a sentence like (2), repeated as (10)?

(10) De koffie ruikt *heerlijk*.

It is far from clear how the semantics work in this case. Must one assume 'the coffee smells'? Doesn't this imply that the smell is a bad one? And how can it be that the smell is, nevertheless, qualified as 'good'? I have serious doubts about the validity of a

subcategorization that leaves one with an unexplained contradiction. The least one can say is that the ANS approach is too inconsistent to be able to cope with as syntactically straightforward a construction as in (10). As we have already remarked, no attempt has been made to interpret (10) as an instance of secondary predication. Only the semantic aspects are taken seriously, which gives rise to an unswerving repudiation of the SPH.

Before going deeper into this matter of repudiating syntactic solutions to the treatment of the BvG, I would like to briefly sketch the stance taken at the end of the nineteenth century by the then highly respected grammarian C.H. den Hertog, author of the 'Nederlandsche Spraakkunst' in three volumes, first published between 1892 and 1895 and reedited between 1903 and 1904.

2. *Secondary Predication Disclosed.*

When one checks Hulshof's annotated and modernized 1973 version of the second edition of Den Hertog's 'Nederlandsche Spraakkunst', one is struck by a close resemblance to the ANS on at least two counts. The name given to the phenomena is the same and the hybrid nature of the BvG is one of the first aspects highlighted in the definition. This follows from the fact that it is assumed to be both adverbial and adnominal. The comparison of the ANS with DH also reveals that the latter contains a number of interesting features which are missing in the ANS.

First, there is the remark that the correct understanding of the meaning and the function of BvG phrases is obscured by the fact that two groups of very heterogeneous phenomena are, erroneously, brought together under one label. This confusion can only be avoided if the two categories are kept apart. The distinction which is introduced makes use of the following two labels: BvG *of the first kind* (BvG I) and BvG *of the second kind* (BvG II).

The second interesting observation in DH addresses the question of the true nature of BvG phrases. According to DH both the BvG I and the BvG II are instances of a subordinate predicate (in Dutch *ondergeschikt gezegde*). In the case of the BvG I, the subordinate or secondary predication is said to correspond with adverbial adjuncts of attendant circumstances. In the case of the BvG II, the

secondary predicate is assumed to be part of the matrix sentence predicate. It is interpreted as a necessary complement to the latter. Together, these two features are at the core of a revolutionary insight that I would like to define as the breakthrough and the disclosure of the SPH.

A third interesting feature of the DH approach has to do with the way the BvG II phenomena are subdivided. The categories which are distinguished tally with three types of verbs. DH mentions BvG II phrases which are (a) the result of *perception*, (b) the result of a *mental activity* or (c) the result of *doing or causing*.

Taking stock of the proposals advocated by DH and balancing them against the stand taken in the ANS, I believe there is good reason to prefer the older approach to the more recent one. DH embraces the view that, fundamentally, BvG phrases are instances of secondary, subordinate predication. He distinguishes two different ways for the secondary predicate to connect with the main or matrix clause. In the case of BvG II, the secondary predicate is integrated in the main clause predicate. DH, furthermore, introduces semantic distinctions at the right moment. It goes without saying that the possibility for the secondary predicate to be integrated in the main clause predicate is contingent on the semantic properties of the head of the predicate phrase. In a sentence like (11)

- (11) *Iedereen vindt hem vervelend.*
'Everybody considers him tedious.'

the verb has an argument structure with a complement slot that can be filled by the secondary predicate (he-tedious).

It is at once remarkable and regrettable that the SPH, so prophetically disclosed at an early stage, has not been subscribed to and expanded in the decades that followed. As we have remarked, even the eminent ANS failed to avail itself of this fortunate opportunity. Instead, it repudiated the SPH and put all its eggs in the wrong basket. The treatment it proposes for the BvG phenomena is purely semantic. The distinction between the three types of BvG is based on the differences in meaning of three prepositions, viz. *tijdens*, *volgens* and *ten gevolge van*. This strategy is not capable of capturing the essential

nature of the BvG phenomena, and it fails to provide a correct analysis of the syntax of the sentences under discussion.

It is time, now, to turn to the main topic of this paper, the demonstration of how Generative Grammar has developed and perfected the SPH.

3. *Secondary Predication Vindicated.*

One of the major innovations in the framework of Generative Grammar is the development of X-bar Syntax, as part of the theory of Universal Grammar. Its basic assumption is that the four lexical categories *noun, adjective, verb and preposition* project into hierarchical structures, named after their lexical heads: Noun Phrase (NP), Adjective Phrase (AP), Verb Phrase (VP) and Prepositional Phrase (PP). (The variable 'X' ranges over the four lexical heads.) Lexical projections are endocentric, i.e. they have the properties of their heads and they must minimally consist of a head. Between the lowest level, where the head is situated, and the highest or maximal projection, a variable number of intermediate levels are possible. Constituents left or right of the head of the projection are named complements. They are sisters to the head. Constituents higher up in the projection are sisters at an intermediate level; they are called adjuncts. The abstract representation of the system is given in (12). Intermediate levels, i.e. X-bar levels, are represented as X'. XP indicates the maximum projection. SPECS stands for Specifier, it is dominated by XP.

| | | | |
|------|----------|---------------------|----------|
| (12) | XP | (X ^{max}) | |
| | SPEC | X' | |
| | adjunct | X' | adjunct |
| | complem. | X' | complem. |

Once a head has been lexicalized, its external argument is inserted in the Specifier position and its internal argument is inserted in a complement position to the left or the right of the head.

Lexical projections are normally subordinated to functional projections, in order to form sentences or clauses. The functional category C, which stands for

COMP(lementizer), projects into the Complementizer Phrase (CP), whereas the functional category I, for INFL(ection), projects into the INFL Phrase (IP). In special cases, however, the clausal form is minimal. It may consist of a lexical head together with its external and internal argument, without there being any sign of a finite verb. Clauses of such a reduced size are called 'Small Clauses' (SC).

The BvG phrases of traditional grammar are interpreted as SCs in generative grammar. Where they occur, they are interpreted as instances of secondary predication. They can be inserted in an adjunct slot or in a complement slot. The first structural possibility refers to the case of DH's BvG I. The second structural possibility is characteristic for the BvG II phenomena.

Let us consider first a few of the BvG I cases, or for that matter the ANS category of BvG *tijdens*. We therefore go back to the examples in (5) and (6), repeated as (13) and (14):

- (13) [_i *lachend*]_{AP} nam Ria_i de brief aan.
 (14) Mijn vader_i is [_i *arm*]_{AP} gestorven

For (13) we would assume that 'lachend' is the head of an AP-SC. Its subject is an empty category, controlled by the subject of the matrix, 'Ria'. In (14), we interpret 'arm' as the head of an AP-SC, with the subject an empty category controlled by 'mijn vader'. In both cases the secondary predicate is a SC of the AP category; its subject is coreferential with the subject of the matrix sentence clause. The AP-SC is inserted at the adjunct level, which is to say, that it is outside of the matrix predicate. In (15) we look at an example with an AP-SC, the subject of which is controlled by, and accordingly coreferential with, the object of the matrix.

- (15) Ze vingen de leeuw_i [_i *levend*]_{AP}
 'They caught the lion alive.'

The BvG II, according to DH's prediction, should be part of the matrix predicate. In (3), repeated as (16), we have an example of an AP-SC.

- (16) Jan verfde [het hekje *groen*]_{AP}

The AP-SC [het hekje groen] is now interpreted as the object of the matrix verb 'verven'. The result is

the secondary predicate without a verb. The SC second predicate now has a lexicalized subject 'het hekje'. So one could say that the contrast between BvG I and BvG II boils down to two essential properties. The former is an adjunct SC with an empty subject, which is either controlled by the matrix subject or object. The latter is a complement SC with a lexicalized subject of its own.

For the sake of further clarification we examine (17) and (18), both instances of BvG II SCs, the first with a PP form, the second with an NP form.

- (17) De jongen werkt [zich uit de naad.]_{PP}
 'The boy works hard.'
 (18) Ze maakten [hem burgemeester.]_{NP}
 'They made him mayor.'

A sentence like (19) exhibits a VP-SC, which DH has no trouble in identifying as a BvG II.

- (19) Ik zag [Cecilia komen.]_{VP}

The ANS takes a different stand here with respect to this instance of an Accusative and infinitive construction, but this is a consequence of the fact that 'Cecilia' is interpreted as the object of the main verb. There are serious grounds for claiming that DH is basically right in assuming that [Cecilia komen] is the direct object SC of the perception verb. To go into that matter here would lead us too far astray, however.

If one works carefully through the examples in both DH and the ANS, one can see that everything so far can be accounted for by the SC theory except for one specific set of examples mentioned in the ANS, illustrated in (2), repeated as (20), and in (21).

- (20) De koffie_i ruikt [t_i lekker.]_{AP}
 (21) De buis_i vriest [t_i kapot.]_{AP}

In essence, the interpretation proposed within the framework of the SC theory suggests that 'koffie' and 'de buis' are originally - at deep-structure level - subjects of the SCs, before being moved into the empty specifier slot of the matrix sentence. Lack of time forces me to leave it at that.

4. Conclusion

By way of conclusion, I would like to present an outline of a possible treatment of the so-called BvG phenomena with a view toward a future pedagogical grammar of Dutch.

The first measure that suggests itself is to stop interpreting the phenomena as belonging to the domain of the syntax of simple sentences. No reference should be made any longer to constituents with the function and meaning attributed to the BvG manifesting themselves in non-complex sentences. During the discussion of complex sentences and more specifically of the syntax of subordination, it should be demonstrated that subordinate clauses can assume different shapes. In the subsequent survey, one new category should be distinguished and identified, besides the well known ones: tensed clauses with complementizers and clauses with a *te*-infinitive. The name need not be SCs. Any meaningful alternative will do: undeveloped clause or reduced clause, for instance. The important issue, however, is that it be made clear that the third type of subordinate, "small" clause, is a somewhat veiled form of subordination, which functions, nevertheless, in exactly the same fashion as the traditionally recognized subordinate clauses do. The next fact to be mentioned is that these secondary predicates can occur either as adjuncts or as parts of the matrix predicate, i.e. as complements. In the case of adjunction the SCs have an empty subject, which is coreferential to the subject or the object of the matrix sentence. Constructed as complements, the SCs possess a lexical subject. The remaining part of the presentation will then have to list the various realizations, or to put it in a different way, the diversity of forms which can be assumed by those SCs, i.e. NPs, APs, PPs or VPs with a bare infinitive.

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