

Prosodic and syntactic recalculation in West Germanic V3-structures

In the oral production of a West Germanic (WGmc) verb-second (V2) structure, pitch accent is often used to emphasize the left-edge element (1c, d), but it is not required for subjects or temporal adverbs (1a, b) (small caps for pitch accent):

- (1) a. Wir fahren oft in die Berge
b. Am Wochenende wollen wir wieder in die Berge fahren
c. In die BERGE fahren wir immer gerne
d. Mit dem AUTO wollen wir am Wochenende in die Berge fahren

Thus, V2-structures in WGmc (here from Standard German, SG) come in two varieties, with or without pitch accent on the left-edge element. The same is true in V3-structures, though Kiezdeutsch (2c, d) is the only member of WGmc that allows V3 without pitch accent on either pre-finite (V_{fin}) verb element; pitch accent is required in (2a, b) on the left-edge element:

- (2) a. EHRlich, ich bin von dir total enttäuscht (SG)
b. In der TAT, wir haben die Differenzen hinter uns gelassen (SG)
c. Danach sie tanzt so (Kiezdeutsch)
d. Jetzt isch hasse ihn (Kiezdeutsch)

The structures lacking a pre- V_{fin} pitch accent in (1) and (2) share at least two properties: i) if V2, they either have a pre- V_{fin} subject or a temporal adverbial, and ii) if V3, a temporal adverb precedes the pre- V_{fin} subject and neither may have pitch accent. This second variety, as stated, is found only in Kiezdeutsch. This leads to the hypothesis that V3 in Kiezdeutsch, generated only with a left-edge temporal adverbial followed by a subject, is made possible because neither element requires pitch accent, i.e. the syntactic status of an element as a constituent is determined in part by its prosodic weight. We note that if a pre- V_{fin} element in a Kiezdeutsch main clause has pitch accent, then the same options are available as in Standard German: i) the structure abides by V2, or ii) the structure is V3 with an obligatory pause after the left-edge element, as in (2a, b). Of note is that the pitch accent requirement in V2-structures applies only to elements that must form a chain relation to their base position in the VP; subjects and temporal adverbials are exempt for reasons stated below.

Of particular interest here will be the two varieties of V3 in WGmc, with Kiezdeutsch the only variety of WGmc that has V3 without pitch accent. My hypothesis to account for the V3-option lacking pitch accent has two components: i) both of the two left-peripheral elements, the temporal adverbial and the subject, are inherent to the Tense Phrase (TP) domain of WGmc, the subject because $Spec,TP$ is its agreement valuation position with V_{fin} in T, and the temporal adverbial because of its relation to the tense feature of T, as supported by the work of Alexiadou (2000); ii) the lack of pitch accent in the left periphery induces a recalculation of lexical weight in the left periphery: two elements, both lacking pitch accent, both inherent to TP and both with limited lexical weight, count the same as one element with one syllable bearing pitch accent. In different terms, the left periphery of this V3-structure can be generated and articulated with no more effort than the left periphery of any V2-structure with pitch accent on its left-edge element. We note in addition that this V3-structure has no lexically realized element in its CP-projection.

References

- Alexiadou, A. 2000. On the Syntax of Temporal Adverbs and the Nature of $Spec,TP$. *Rivista di Linguistica* 12:53-75.
Zwart, J.-W., 2005. "Verb second as a function of merge." In *The Function of Function Words and Functional Categories*, M. den Dikken, C. M. Tortora (eds.), 11–40. Amsterdam: Benjamins.