Spatial deixis and pivot puzzles

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1   Introduction: the kite of spatial deixis

Jaspers (2014) proposes to extend the by now familiar Kite of Opposition to the domain of spatial deixis.[1] More specifically, he maps the spatial pronouns *where*, *there*, and *here* onto the kite as in Figure 1.
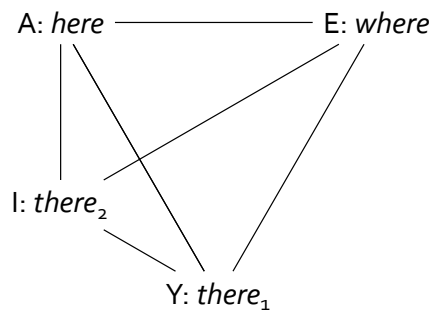

Figure 1: The Kite of Opposition for spatial deixis in English

As for the rationale behind this particular implementation, Jaspers (2014, 1) mentions the following:

> "The initial division in the space is between the (nondeictic) *where* and its deictic but nonspecific (High+Middle) complementary *there$_2$* (..). The latter is inclusive, including the denotation of *here* in its own denotation.   Its prototypical instantiation is functional-expletive

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> *there₂*. (..) we can divide the *there₂* space exhaustively into distal
> *there₁* (H) and proximate *here* (M)"

In what follows I will be setting aside *where* and focus exclusively on the deictic variants of spatial expressions. As the kite in Figure 1 and the passage quoted above make clear, Jaspers discerns three such expressions. First of all there is the "deictic but nonspecific" *there₂*, which can be found in expletive constructions such as (1). The fact that this use of *there* is compatible with both proximate (*over here*) and distal (*over there*) locative expressions confirms its position as an I-corner element. It is only in the secondary opposition between A and Y that we get the 'real' distal locative pronoun *there₁* and its proximate counterpart *here*.

(1)   There is a man over here/over there.

As is often the case (see Jaspers 2017 for more examples), the I- and the Y-corner are lexicalized homonymically, thus making it less straightforward to uniquely identify each corner of the kite. Standard Dutch, however, wears its spatial deixis kite on its sleeve as it were, in that it provides a unique and distinct lexicalisation for each corner:
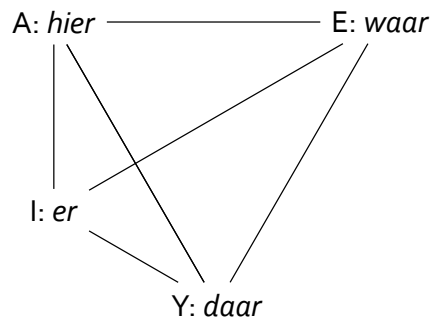
A: *hier* ——————— E: *waar*

I: *er*

Y: *daar*

Figure 2: The Kite of Opposition for spatial deixis in Standard Dutch

The functional-expletive function of locative pronouns is taken up exclusively by the unstressed R-pronoun *er* 'ER'[2] (see (2)[3]), leaving the two stressed forms

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[2] Given that there is no unique English counterpart, I will be glossing the unstressed R-pronoun *er* (and its dialectal variants) as ER throughout this paper.

[3] See below, the discussion of the examples in (12), for a possible (grammatical) interpretation of (2b). I'm abstracting away from such double locative readings here.

(*daar* 'there' and *hier* 'here') in a position to uniquely express distal and proximate location respectively.

(2) a. Er staat hier/daar een man in de tuin.
        ER stands here/there a   man in the garden
        'There is a man in the garden here/there."   (Standard Dutch)
    b. *Daar staat hier/daar een man in de tuin.
        there stands here/there a   man in the garden
        INTENDED: 'There is a man in the garden here/there."   (Standard Dutch)

This paper takes the kite in Figure 2 as its starting point and explores its lexicalizations in a number of Dutch dialects. I show that these dialects are less well-behaved than Standard Dutch in that they involve pivot shifts (Jaspers, 2005, Ch5), which lead to certain corners of the kite being occupied by multiple lexical items. Interestingly, though, unlike the shifts reported in Jaspers (2005, Ch5), the ones addressed in this paper proceed *towards* rather than *away from* the I-corner. As such, they present something of a puzzle from the point of view of Jaspers (2005), who takes the direction of the shifts to be additional evidence in support of his position that I-corner operators are lexically less specified than the other corners. I present two such pivot puzzles here: a case of Y → I-shift, and a case of A → I-shift. The former will receive a fairly straightforward reinterpretation in diachronic terms as a case of I → Y-shift, the latter I will leave as an open question for Dany to solve.

2   Pivot puzzle #1: Y → I-shift

Consider the following example from the dialect of Wambeek:

(3) Dui is niks   gebeed.
    there is nothing happened
    'Nothing happened (there).'   (Wambeek Dutch)

The first thing to know about this dialect is that just like Standard Dutch, it makes a distinction between the weak R-pronoun *d'r* 'ER' (sometimes spelled/pronounced as *er* or *t'r* due to various phonological processes), the strong distal form *dui* 'there', and the strong proximate form *ie* 'here'. In spite of the fact that the example in (3) contains the strong form *dui* 'there', however, the sentence is ambiguous. In addition to its expected meaning that nothing hap-

pened at some distant location, it also has the more neutral meaning whereby nothing happened in general.[4] In other words, the strong R-pronoun *dui* 'there' can be used as an expletive. This is further confirmed by the fact that the neutral interpretation of example (3) comes with a definiteness restriction on the subject:

(4)   Dui   is dad accident gebeed.
        there is that accident happened
        'That accident happened *(there).'   (Wambeek Dutch)

Note that the distal reading—and the concomitant stress on the R-pronoun, see note 4—becomes obligatory in this example. This supports the idea that the neutral reading of (3) involves an expletive use of *dui* 'there', as it is well-known that *there*-expletives impose a definiteness restriction on the subject. A second way to clearly bring out the expletive reading of *dui* 'there' is by adding an additional, conflicting locative expression such as *ie* 'here' or *genner* 'over there'.[5] This is illustrated in (5).

(5)   Dui   stuid ie/genner   ne vantj inn   of.
        there stands here/over.there a   man in.the garden
        'There's a man here/over there in the garden.'   (Wambeek Dutch)

The fact that *dui* 'there' is compatible with conflicting locative expressions such as *ie* 'here' and *genner* 'over there' again supports its status as a pure expletive. A final piece of evidence concerns sentences in which a locative dimension is completely absent, such as the existential sentence in (6). As the number of prime numbers smaller than ten is not tied to a particular location, a locative reading for *dui* 'there' would lead to a pragmatically odd or infelicitous sentence. Given that the example is perfectly well-formed, however, such a locative reading is missing, and *dui* 'there' is being used as a pure expletive pronoun.

(6)   Dui   zen mo vier priemgetalle   klanjer as tien.
        there are only four prime.numbers smaller as ten

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[4]The two readings can be distinguished prosodically: in its distal interpretation *dui* 'there' tends to be stressed—as is also the case for fronted locative expressions in Standard Duch— whereas in the neutral reading it isn't.

[5]Wambeek Dutch has a tripartite distance-based locative system, which makes a distinction between proximate *ie* 'here', medial/distal *dui* 'there', and distal *genner* 'over there' (a cognate of the archaic English form *yonder*). The question if and how such systems should be mapped onto the spatial deixis kite is one I have to leave open here.

'There are only four prime numbers smaller than ten.' (Wambeek Dutch)

Summing up, the Wambeek Dutch strong R-pronoun *dui* 'there' can be used as an expletive. Moreover, as Figure 3 shows, this dialect is not unique in this respect: in the whole eastern part of Dutch-speaking Belgium, similar facts are attested (see also Schoevaers 2017 for a recent confirmation of this geographical pattern).
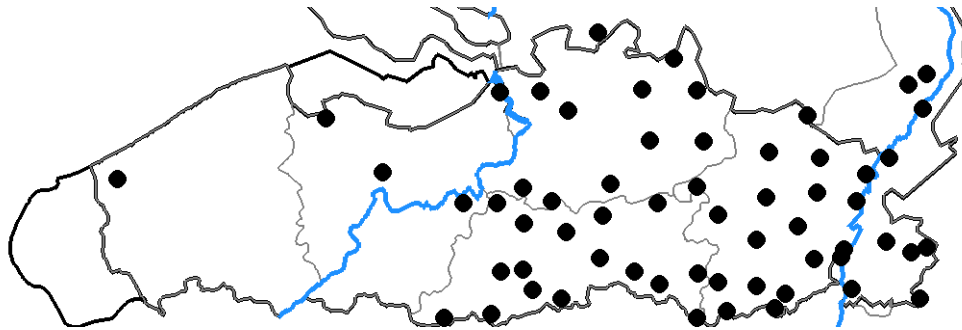

Figure 3: The use of *daar* 'there' as an expletive (Barbiers et al., 2006)

What does this mean for the spatial deixis kite? Given that in all contexts where *dui* 'there' can be used as an expletive, it can also be replaced by the unstressed form *d'r* 'ER' (but not vice versa: *d'r* 'ER' cannot be used to express distal location), the kite for Wambeek Dutch (and the eastern dialects in general) would look like this:
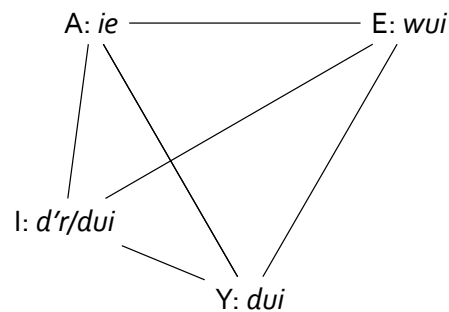

Figure 4: The Kite of Opposition for spatial deixis in Wambeek Dutch (I)

The I-corner can be lexicalized in two ways, and one of these lexicalizations is

also found in the Y-corner. One way of describing this pattern is in terms of *pivot shift*: the Wambeek Dutch pattern starts out from the Standard Dutch one in Figure 2, but the Y-corner can shift—and hence extend—towards the I-corner. If this were an accurate description, however, it would be quite unexpected from the point of view of Jaspers (2005). While Jaspers extensively discusses pivot shifts (see Jaspers 2005, Ch5), they always involve shifts *away from* the I-corner, never towards it. Moreover, this is not a coincidence, but a reflection of the fundamental inequality between the various corners. In the words of Jaspers:

> "I-corner operators are the pivots of their paradigms. (..) they are the operators of the triads which easily acquire A-corner(like) and/or E-corner interpretations in different contexts. (..) These facts support the hypothesis that rather than having three operators on an equal footing in logical triads, there is relief: the pivot is the most versatile and hence by hypothesis the lexically least specified item and the meanings of the two other corners are functions of its meaning" (Jaspers, 2005, 170)

The characterization of the pattern in Figure 4 as a case of Y → I-shift is thus at odds with Jaspers (2005), and indeed, one could just as easily conceptualize the Wambeek Dutch system not as the Standard Dutch one plus Y → I-shift, but as the English one (cf. Figure 1), with its built-in I → Y-shift, in combination with a lexical innovation, i.e. a separate lexicalization of the I-corner. Viewed from this perspective the Wambeek Dutch kite in Figure 4 would be a transition point between the English and the Standard Dutch one.

In reality, the diachronic evidence suggests that the truth is somewhere in between. As shown in van der Horst (2008, 969), in the Middle Dutch period (when the use of locative expletives was on the rise), both *er* 'ER' and *daar* 'there' were used as expletives, but they were positionally restricted: *daar* 'there' was used in sentence-initial position, and *er* 'ER' in all other positions. This is illustrated by the following two examples.

(7)   Doe seid-er een monic: ...
       then said-ER a   monk
       'Then a monk said: ...'   (Middle Dutch)

(8)   Daer is een verrader onder   ons.
       there is a   traitor   among us
       'There's a traitor among us.'   (Middle Dutch)

This means that from the get-go the spatial deixis kite in Dutch had a double lexicalization for the I-corner, one that was positionally determined. One of these lexicalizations shifted towards the Y-corner and when the positional restriction was lifted—i.e. when *er* 'ER' was allowed to occur in sentence-initial position—the strong I-form *daar* 'there' not only shifted but full-on migrated to the Y-corner, resulting in the Standard Dutch system in Figure 2. As is often the case, the dialects of Dutch reflect an earlier stage of this development, i.e. one in which the I-corner still has its double lexicalization. In short, Jaspers (2005) was right: there is no pivot shift towards the I-corner.

3 Pivot puzzle #2: A → I-shift

In this section we turn our attention to the A-corner, i.e. the proximate R-pronoun *ie* 'here'. At first glance, *ie* 'here' is a perfectly well-behaved inhabitant of that corner: it obligatorily expresses a (proximate) locative reading in (9), it is incompatible with conflicting locative modifiers (10), and it leads to a pragmatically odd reading in purely existential contexts (11).

(9) Ie is niks gebeed.
here is nothing happened
'Nothing happened *(here).' (Wambeek Dutch)

(10) *Ie stuid dui/genner ne vantj inn of.
here stands there/over.there a man in.the garden
INTENDED: 'There's a man there/over there in the garden.' (Wambeek Dutch)

(11) #Ie zen mo vier priemgetalle klanjer as tien.
here are only four prime.numbers smaller as ten
'There are only four prime numbers smaller than ten here.' (Wambeek Dutch)

In short, it looks like the R-pronoun *ie* 'here' is always and only used as a proximate locative pronoun. Before we move on to some more exotic cases that will make us question this generalization, we need to make a very short detour. As discussed in detail by Maienborn (2001), sentences can contain multiple locative expressions. These can even be contradictory or identical, as long as they have a different scope. Consider in this respect the following two examples.

(12) a. In Rome I used to live on that side of the city, but here$_1$ I live here$_2$.
b. In Rome I used to live on this side of the city, but here I live there.

The example in (12a) contains two instances of the locative pronoun *here*, while the one in (12b) contains two conflicting locative expressions: *here* and *there*. In spite of this, however, both sentences are perfectly well-formed and interpretable. The reason for this is that the scope of these locative expressions is different: while *here₁/here* refers to a particular city (e.g. 'in New York'), *here₂/there* refers to an area within that city (e.g. 'on this/that side of the city'). Under this double locative reading, some of the examples that were starred above (in particular the ones in (2b) and (10)) become grammatical (and the one in (5) gains an additional reading). I have abstracted away from this reading so far and will continue to do so, but it is good to be aware of its existence, given that we will be looking at sentences containing two instances of *ie* 'here' in what follows. Fortunately, in practice it is relatively straightforward to detect the double locative reading: it requires a very specific context to set it up and it usually involves contrastive stress on both locative expressions.

With all of this in mind, let us now consider the following example:

(13)   Ie   eit ie   niemand nie me   Jef geklapt.
        here has here no-one   not with Jef talked
        'No-one spoke with Jef *(here).'   (Wambeek Dutch)

There are two things of note regarding this example. First of all (and as expected), it obligatorily has a proximate locative reading: the sentence means that no one spoke with Jef here, not that no one spoke with him in general. Secondly, in spite of the fact that (13) contains two instances of *ie* 'here', only one shows up in the interpretation. While a double locative reading is possible for the example in (13)—given the appropriate context and heavy stress on both R-pronouns—by far the most unmarked reading of this sentence is one in which there is only one locative expression. With respect to the spatial deixis kite, what this seems to suggest is that while one instance of *ie* 'here' behaves like a *bona fide* member of the A-corner, the other one is more "functional-expletive" in nature, and hence should be housed in the I-corner.
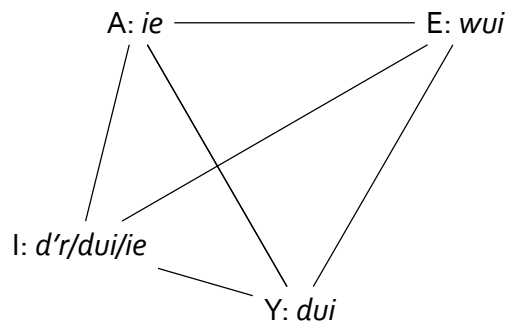
A: *ie* ——————— E: *wui*

I: *d'r/dui/ie*

Y: *dui*

Figure 5: The Kite of Opposition for spatial deixis in Wambeek Dutch (II)

What this looks like, then, is a case of A → I-shift, *pace* what is predicted by Jaspers (2005). Note that in this case there is no diachronic evidence to bail us out: as far as I know, there is no evidence of the proximative locative pronoun being used as an expletive in earlier stages of Dutch. Another possible way out would be to blame the syntax: the doubling pattern shown in (12) is very reminiscent of so-called subject doubling in these dialects, an example of which is given in (14).

(14)   Zaai ei   zaai nie me   Jef geklapt.
        she has she not with Jef spoken
        'She didn't speak with Jef.'   (Wambeek Dutch)

This sentence contains two instances of the strong subject pronoun *zaai* 'she', yet as the English translation makes clear, its interpretation involves only one third person female referent. Examples like these have been argued by van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen (2002) to involve copy spell-out: the subject pronoun *zaai* 'she' moves to its final landing site somewhere in the left periphery, and not only the highest but also the one but highest copy of this movement chain gets spelled out. Applied to the example in (13), this would mean that there is only one single instance of *ie* 'here', and that the fact that we see two is but a surface reflection of it having undergone movement at some point in the derivation. The apparent A → I-shift is only illusory, and Jaspers (2005) was right in claiming that such shifts do not occur.

Unfortunately, however, the parallel between (13) and (14) raises a number of additional issues. As pointed out by van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen (2002), only subjects can undergo doubling/copy spell-out in Wambeek Dutch

(and Dutch dialects in general). This means that the mere fact that *ie* 'here' can be doubled is in and of itself an indication that it occupies the subject position, i.e. that it displays expletive-like (and thus I-corner-like) behavior. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that *ie* 'here' imposes a definiteness restriction on the subject, *but only when doubled*:

(15)   *Ie   eit ie   Marie me   Jef geklapt.
          here has here Marie with Jef talked
          INTENDED: 'Marie spoke with Jef here.'   (Wambeek Dutch)

(16)   Ie   eit Marie me   Jef geklapt.
          here has Marie with Jef talked
          'Marie spoke with Jef here.'   (Wambeek Dutch)

If the second *ie* 'here' in (15) were a mere copy of the movement chain that brought the first *ie* 'here' to sentence-initial position, i.e. the same movement that took place in (16), there is no reason to expect any effect—let alone a difference in effect—on the definiteness of the subject. The fact that a definiteness restriction shows up in (15) thus supports the idea that the second *ie* 'here' in this example is expletive-like in its behavior.

Finally, to add some more insult to injury, *ie* 'here' can also be tripled, as in (17). In this case, the parallel with subject doubling breaks down: while subject tripling does occur (van Craenenbroeck & van Koppen, 2002), it is never of the copy spell-out type, i.e. it never involves three identical copies of the same subject pronoun (18). Once again, then, we are led to conclude that at least one of the instances of *ie* 'here' behaves like an expletive, and therefore by extension that we are witnessing an A-corner element that has shifted towards the I-corner.

(17)   Ie   eit ie   ie   niemand nie me   Jef geklapt.
          here has here here no-one   not with Jef talked
          'No-one spoke with Jef *(here).'   (Wambeek Dutch)

(18)   *Zaai ei   zaai zaai nie me   Jef geklapt.
          she has she she not with Jef spoken
          INTENDED: 'She didn't speak with Jef.'   (Wambeek Dutch)

As pointed out above, I'm leaving this puzzle open here, confident that Dany will be able to bring kitological order to the Wambeek Dutch mess.

4 Conclusion

This paper has addressed the lexicalization of the spatial deixis kite in a number of Dutch dialects. I focused in particular on two cases of pivot shift, whereby the lexicalization of one corner of the kite is used to express another. An additional property of these shifts is that they seem to proceed *towards* the I-corner, rather than away from it as predicted by Jaspers (2005). The first shift turned out to be illusory and allowed for a straightforward reinterpretation in diachronic terms, while the second one turned out to be more vexing and had to be left as a topic for future Jaspersian research.

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