Focus and the Extraposition of Noun Phrase Complement Clauses in Dutch

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0. Introduction

This paper deals with the Extraposition of Noun Phrase Complement Clauses (ENPC) in Dutch, illustrated in (1), where the head noun and complement are separated by the word op. ENPC represents the splitting of a head and finite complement by intervening elements; this is normally analyzed as the result of the complement being extraposed to the end of the clause.

(1) Dit roept de vraag op waardoor deze categorie gewettigd wordt.
‘This calls the question up what this category is licensed by.’

Of course, ENPC is subject to restrictions, the exact nature of which will concern us here. We will formulate rather simple restrictions on ENPC based on grammatical relations and positional fields and show them to be too simplis-tic. However, this will show some regularities with ENPC. Based on a corpus of attested examples, we will then argue that the restriction must be stated with reference to focus. Although other scholars have proposed similar accounts, the one presented here has the advantage of being based on careful empirical study of real linguistic data and thus empirically documents the regularities to be found. Moreover, the present study has the additional virtue of offering further empirical evidence for the correctness of an account based on focus.

1. Initial Hypothesis: Grammatical Relations

My interest in ENPC began after arguing against proposals for Relative Clause Extraposition (= RCE) made by Perlmutter & Zaenen (1984); (cf. Shannon to appear, in prep.). This led me to consider ENPC to see whether the facts there were similar and could also be accounted for by my proposal. According to Perlmutter and Zaenen RCE depends on grammatical relations (= GRs). Looking at ENPC from such a point of view, we might propose the following restriction H1: ENPC is a) mandatory from heads which are (surface) objects; it is not possible from heads which are b) subjects or c) prepositional objects. Looking at a small range of examples to test this hypothesis, we find it confirmed: in the examples below ENPC is not found with subjects (2a-b) or prepositional objects
(3a-b), but it is with objects (4a-b). Moreover, if we try to reverse these cases and extrapose with subject heads or not extrapose with object heads, the results are always worse.

(2) a Het idee, dat hij een tijdje bij zijn oom en tante zou intrekken, maakte hem blij.
   ‘The idea that he would move in with his uncle and aunt for a while made him happy.’

b Het feit dat het belangrijkste van Reichlings werk tot op heden niet is vertaald, beperkte zijn invloed.
   ‘The fact that the most important work of Reichlings’ to this day has not been translated limited his influence.’

(3) a Bij de gedachte, dat zijn ouders ook hier zouden zijn, gaapte Anton.
   ‘At the thought that his parents might also be here Anton yawned.’

b Op de vraag, wat zo’n subjectief concept nu precies is, worden uiteenlopende en soms niet al te duidelijke antwoorden gegeven.
   ‘To the question what such a subjective concept exactly is varying and sometimes not very clear answers are given.’

(4) a Descartes wilde het feit verklaren, dat mensen iets kunnen willen.
   ‘Descartes wanted to explain the fact that men can will something.’

b Nu kan men zich de vraag stellen of vrouwen ... zich sterker zullen gaan richten op niet-standaardtaalvormen ...
   ‘Now one can ask oneself the question whether women will orient themselves more to non-standard linguistic forms.’

However, consideration of further examples soon casts serious doubt on the correctness of H1; in fact, examples like (5)-(7) show that this hypothesis cannot be correct. Contra clause (a) of H1 ENPC is not found with direct objects in (5); moreover, against sections (b) and (c) extraposition is found with subjects, as in (6), as well as with prepositional objects, as in (7).

(5) a De vraag, wat iemand met een gezegde bedoelt, beantwoorden we door te letten op een heel complex gebeurtenissen.
   ‘The question what someone means with a predicate we answer by attending to a whole complex of events.’

b De opvatting dat een bepaalde variëteit superieure eigenschappen bezit, vinden we ook terug in negatieve uitspraken over de dialecten.
   ‘The opinion that a certain variety possesses superior properties we also find again in negative assertions about the dialects.’
(6) a Hierboven is de vraag gesteld hoe sociale klassen kunnen worden onderscheiden.
   ‘Above the question was asked how social classes can be distinguished.’

   b In de laatste jaren dringt het inzicht door dat elke analyse uit moet gaan van het gestoorde taalgedrag van het individu.
   ‘In the past years the insight has come through that each analysis must proceed from the disturbed linguistic behavior of the individual.’

(7) a Het Vatikaans Departement voor de Geloofsleer is tot de conclusie gekomen dat de duivel echt bestaat.
   ‘The Vatican Office of the Faith has come to the conclusion that the devil really exists.’

   b In dat geval kan men zich niet aan de indruk onttrekken, dat zowel stoeltje als bal een soort van primitief object vormen voor het kind.
   ‘In that case one cannot avoid the impression that both stoeltje and bal form a sort of primitive object for the child.’

2. Second Hypothesis: Positional Fields

It would thus appear that H1 must be scrapped. One can still imagine various ways in which GRs might be made more abstract so as to cover such cases, but we will not attempt that here. Instead, let us next assume that instead of GRs, linear order, specifically in terms of positional fields (= PoFs; cf. Geerts 1984), represents the crucial parameter for the restriction on ENPC. Reviewing our previous examples from the perspective of this model, a rather different, apparently more adequate hypothesis about ENPC suggests itself. So far the only instances where ENPC was found were cases where the head was located in the middle field (= MF) (1, 4a-b, 6a-b, 7a-b); with heads in the forefield (= FF) (2a-b, 3a-b, 5a-b), however, extraposition has not been possible. If we further consider examples (8) with the head in the postfield (= PF), we also find no extraposition there. This is of course unsurprising since no other element is usually found with the head and complement in the PF.

(8) a Dit sluit aan bij het idee dat kinderen zich al zeer jong een tweede taal eigen kunnen maken.
   ‘This connects with the idea that children can acquire a second language at a very early age.’

   b Blijft over de vraag waarom PRO niet [-anaf, -pron] zou kunnen zijn.
   ‘There remains the question why PRO cannot be [-anaph, -pron].’

On the basis of these facts hypothesis H2 can be proposed: ENPC is found a) ALWAYS with heads in the MF, but b) NEVER with heads in the FF, and c) NEVER
with heads in the PF. This hypothesis makes specific predictions and therefore can easily be disproven, for as attractive as this hypothesis might appear, it turns out that it too is not correct. Examples such as those in (9)–(12) demonstrate this point. Here, contrary to clause (a) of our hypothesis, ENPC is not found with MF heads, regardless of whether they are subjects (9), objects (10), or prep objects (11); moreover, in disagreement with clause (b), ENPC is found with heads located in the FF in the examples of (12).

(9) a Soms leidt de gedachte dat een pronomen een vervanging is van een volledige NP tot D-structuren van oneindige diepte.
'Sometimes the idea that a pronoun is a replacement of a full NP leads to D-structures of infinite depth.'

b In die situatie lijkt de gedachte dat een algemeen toepasbare theorie over deze constructie geconstrueerd kan worden een hersenschim.
'In that situation the thought that a generally applicable theory of this construction can be constructed seems to be a phantom.'

(10) a De man hoorde de mededeling dat hij zou sterven rustig aan.
'The man calmly listened to the message that he was to die.'

b Wat de inrichting van de kunsttaal betreft, laat Quine de vraag, of er eigenschappen en relaties in de wereld bestaan, open.
'As for the establishment of an artificial language, Quine leaves the question if there exist properties and relations in the world open.'

(11) a Nu kan men het bij de negatieve conclusie, dat ze daaraan niet voldoen, laten.
'Now one can leave it at the negative conclusion that they do not fulfill it.'

b Zie over de distributie dat sententiële structuren niet op de subjectpositie mogen staan Koster (1978).
'See on the distribution that sentential structures cannot stand in subject position Koster (1978).'

(12) a De vraag rees, of het menselijk kenvermogen op dit hachelijke gebied wel bevoegd is.
'The question arose whether the human ability to know is really capable in this tricky area.'

b De gedachte is geopperd dat de hoorder gebruik maakt van psychologische correlaten hiervan, wanneer hij een zin analyseert.
'The idea has been proposed that the hearer makes use of psychological correlates of this when he analyzes a sentence.'

Viewed superficially at least, it thus appears that neither GRs nor PoFs are sufficient for an adequate formulation of the restriction on ENPC. At least this conclusion appears warranted as long as we demand of a "grammatical" rule like
ENPC that it must be without exception and we are not interested in tendential correlations to be found in actual data.

3. An Alternative: An empirical investigation of ENPC

Does this mean that we must completely disregard the claims made about GRs or PoFs and ENPC? I would argue that such a conclusion would be too hasty: interesting generalizations can indeed be found, although they are not absolute but tendential. Our previous conclusions were based on consideration of a few, (very carefully!) selected examples, which are not necessarily representative of the full range of data. This is of course an ever present danger when the linguist bases his account solely on a few examples, especially if they are of his own construction. There is always the risk that the hypothesis will be a hasty, and thus incorrect one, based on insufficient consideration of a small range of examples which do not fully exemplify all possibilities (cf. Shannon 1993, to appear). One welcome potential antidote to this danger of hasty generalization is the consideration of a fairly wide range of representative, actually attested and not constructed cases. Since I was not aware of any previous investigation, I decided to collect a large empirical corpus and will consider here the initial results of that research. In all, over 1,000 examples of ENPC were gathered and analyzed using a computer database program. For the present study 819 examples were considered; of these 210 were irrelevant, since it was impossible to tell whether ENPC had taken place. This left 609 examples. First let us consider the rough totals of the frequency of ENPC, at least in this sample. Of the 609 relevant examples, 169 (28%) contained extraposition, whereas 440 (72%) did not. Thus, extraposition is certainly not the norm: in the majority of instances the head and its complement are not separated from each other.

Moreover, the data are more interesting if considered in less global terms. Looking at our database, we quickly note that there was a lot of truth to our previous hypotheses. First of all, it turns out that positional fields are relevant to the presence versus absence of ENPC, or at least there are very strong tendencies here. When we check H2 against the actually attested examples, it in fact fares very well. Starting with the PF, in all there were 166 instances of such heads, and in complete agreement with clause (c) of H2 not a single case of extraposition was found. Thus, lack of extraposition indeed appears to be exceptionless for heads contained in the PF. With FF heads, we find a similarly good, though this time not perfect correlation with the claim made in part (b) of H2. In all there were 190 examples with heads in the FF, of which 185 (97.4%) do not show extraposition; however, there were 5 cases (2.6%) which did evince ENPC. Thus, with a head noun in the FF the absence of ENPC was clearly the rule. Here too, then, our original claim was quite right: the FF is indeed very inhospitable to extraposition of the complement. Thus, the conclusion seems warranted that part
(b) of our second hypothesis is almost completely correct, with a very small number of exceptions. However, when we consider the behavior of MF heads our claim (a) does not fare as well. While the majority of cases do in fact—in conformity with our hypothesis—show ENPC, a significant minority did not. Out of the total 253 MF heads found, extrapolation was present in 164 cases (65%) and absent in 89 (35%). Thus, there are a sizeable number of exceptions to this claim. However, it still appears justified to conclude that the MF is rather hospitable to ENPC.

Furthermore, pace our earlier conclusions, grammatical relations were also found to be relevant for ENPC, though perhaps less clearly so. In large agreement with H1, verbal objects were indeed very hospitable to ENPC: out of a total of 112 examples, 90 (80%) showed extrapolation of the complement, whereas only 22 (20%) did not. Thus, absence of ENPC is the exception—and extrapolation the rule—with heads which are verbal objects. Moreover, in further keeping with H1, subjects were quite inhospitable to extrapolation: of 214 cases containing a subject head, only 64 (30%) showed ENPC, while 150 (70%) did not. Thus, in contrast to the situation with object heads, nonextraposition was the rule, extrapolation the exception with subject heads. Finally, heads which represented the object of prepositions were the most inhospitable to ENPC: of 275 instances, only 15 (5%) displayed extrapolation, while the rest (260 examples = 95%) did not. Thus we can safely state that objects of prepositions are in general extremely inhospitable as heads for ENPC.

Finally, the combination of GRs and PFs also turns out to be extremely relevant for ENPC. In the FF—which, as noted earlier, is extremely antagonistic to ENPC in general—only subjects allow extrapolation, and even then not very often: of 108 cases of fore-field subject heads, only 5 (5%) evince ENPC; the other 103 (95%) do not. It is important to note that no other head category in our sample shows a single instance of extrapolation when it is located in the FF. Object heads, which are very rare in the FF (4 examples), never showed extrapolation. Similarly, with prepositional objects, which were found quite frequently in the FF (77 cases or 28% of the time), not a single example displayed extrapolation. When we then turn to look at the MF, however, the story is rather different. As pointed out previously, the middle field is relatively hospitable to ENPC, but here too there are clear differences according to GRs. Thus, with object heads in the MF, extrapolation is the rule: in the 108 examples found, a full 83% of the time (90 instances) extrapolation took place, whereas there were only 18 cases (17%) in which extrapolation was absent. Prep objects, on the other hand, proved much less conducive to ENPC in the MF: of a total 42 cases, 27 (64%) were not extraposed, as opposed to 15 (36%) that were. Finally, subject heads ranged somewhat between these two extremes, but clearly closer to the prep object heads in not favoring ENPC. With subject heads, extrapolation slightly outnumbers the instances of nonextraposition: 59 cases with ENPC (58%), as opposed to 43 without it (42%), of a total 102 examples. Finally, as
indicated earlier, extraposition of the complement was never found with heads in the PF, regardless of grammatical relation. Not a single instance of an object head located in the PF was found, and only four subject heads in the PF were observed. Prep objects, on the other hand, were very frequently encountered in the PF (156 examples), but never with extraposition. The following table contains a breakdown of our ENPC data.

Table 1: ENPC, Positional Fields, and Grammatical Relations

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FF</th>
<th>FF</th>
<th>FF</th>
<th>MF</th>
<th>MF</th>
<th>MF</th>
<th>PF</th>
<th>PF</th>
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<td>108</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>112</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>77</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>156</td>
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<td>166</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, the transitivity of the verb also appears to bear an interesting correlation with the extraposition of the complement, at least in the MF and FF (recall that in the PF ENPC is never found). Consider the cases of subjects of true transitive versus intransitive verbs, thus excluding instances of reflexive verbs or copula, etc. Transitive verbs clearly disfavor extraposition from their subjects—roughly 3/4 of the examples show no extraposition—whereas with intransitive verbs the likelihood of extraposition from the subject is about equal. Moreover, when we break these figures down in terms of positional fields, the correlations are even more interesting. Recall that with FF subjects extraposition is rarely found, whereas in the MF it is relatively common. Looking at the correlation of transitivity with ENPC in terms of PoFs, we observe that with subject heads in the FF ENPC is rare, but when it is found, it is only with intransitive verbs, not with transitives. Moreover, with subjects in the MF, when the verb is transitive, extraposed and nonextraposed instances are equal (22 vs. 22), but with intransitive verbs, the subject is much more likely to be extraposed: 19 instances with extraposition versus only 8 without. Thus, we note here that in general transitive verbs tend to disfavor ENPC with subject heads, whereas intransitive verbs tend to favor extraposition.

Moreover, the average number of words preceding or following the head differs significantly when extraposition does or does not occur. If we only consider examples with heads located in the MF, we can compare the number of words preceding and following the head. These figures only count nonverbal elements in the MF and do not include the first prong (i.e. the finite verb in verb
second structures, complementizer in subordinate clauses) nor any (nonfinite) verbal elements in the so-called second prong. Consider first the average number of words in the MF following the head: when extraposition is found, there is a significantly lower average number of words after a MF head (0.262) than when extraposition is not present (2.539). Conversely, the average number of MF words preceding the head displays the opposite tendencies: when the complement is extraposed, there is a higher average number of words before the head (2.030) than when there is no extraposition (0.573). What these figures in essence demonstrate is that with ENPC the head comes quite late in the MF and is followed by virtually no other middle field elements, whereas when ENPC is lacking the head occurs quite early in the MF with other words normally following it and few preceding it.

In summary, we have observed in this section a number of tendential, but nonetheless interesting and apparently significant correlations between various factors and the presence versus absence of ENPC. Contrary to our previous conclusions, GRs and PoFs turned out to be relevant after all, though not without exception. We also noted a number of further interesting correlations which any insightful analysis of ENPC should account for, viz. with transitivity and the average number of words preceding and following MF heads. In the following section we will attempt to account for all these observed correlations by appealing to a single crucial factor: the focus nature of the head NP.

4. A Workable Account

As we have just seen, while our previous hypotheses did not constitute exceptionless rules, they do represent interesting generalizations concerning the tendencies found with ENPC, as determined by investigating an empirical corpus of actual examples. However, the fact remains that the restriction on ENPC cannot be stated for all instances in terms of the factors GRs and/or PoFs, even though such a combination of factors appears to be very significant for extraposition. Does this then mean that there is no single account of ENPC which fares any better than those proposed above? I think not. It appears that there is still one alternative left which accounts for everything observed above, and some more to follow. Just as I have been able to show for Relative Clause Extraposition (cf. Shannon to appear, in prep.), ENPC is only possible from noun phrases which contain the focus elements of their clause. We can then formulate our final hypothesis, based on the notion focus (H3): ENPC is ONLY possible from NPs containing the focus of the clause.

Assuming this hypothesis and given certain other functional tendencies associated with focus, we can now make very good sense of the previously cited facts. Specifically, we should consider Behaghel's (1932:4) Second Law that nonfocus, topical or presupposed material tends to precede the focus material in a
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clause. In Dutch this means that typically the focus element occurs late in the MF, with nonfocus or presupposed material earlier in the MF, and the FF often reserved for nonfocus topical or background situational material. Viewed in this light, the correlations between PoFs and ENPC now appear reasonable: the FF, as normally reserved for topical material, should be inimical to ENPC—as it indeed is—whereas the MF, which is where the focus is normally located, should be hospitable to ENPC, all in agreement with the observations made above. Moreover, since prototypically objects are quite frequently found to be focus, while prototypical subjects more often constitute topics (cf. Van Oosten 1984), it is hardly surprising that objects like ENPC, subjects less so. Furthermore, since the subject of transitive verbs appears less frequently as focus than the subject of intransitive verbs, we can understand our earlier observation that intransitive verbs favor extraposition from heads which are their subject, whereas with transitive verbs this is not the case. Finally, given the tendency for the focus to come late in the MF, when ENPC occurs (the head constitutes the focus) there should be fewer words following than when there is no ENPC. Similarly, when ENPC does not take place—i.e. the head thus does not represent the focus—there should be fewer words before the head (since nonfocus elements tend to occur earlier in the clause), whereas with ENPC there should be more words before the head—i.e. it occurs after more material, later in the clause, which is where we would expect the focus to appear. All these predictions were borne out by the previously cited data.

In addition to these data, further evidence can be cited for the basic correctness of our account of ENPC. First of all, it can be observed that the position of focus (or main "sentence") stress correlates very well with ENPC, as indeed it should: the head, as focus, should normally be in the domain of this stress, and a preliminary check confirms that this is normally so (or possible). Moreover, it has been observed that certain elements typically occur before the focus element. For instance, Verhagen (1986) notes for Dutch that sentence adverbs (waarschijnlijk) typically evince this behavior. Similarly, other elements like scalar particles (ook, maar) and negators (niet, geen) have been claimed to act as "focus modifiers"; cf. Jacobs (1986) e.g. for German. Assuming these observations to be correct, we can then test our hypothesis by asking how these elements behave vis-à-vis the head. Accordingly, the focus element should be located after (i.e. to the right of) the focus indicator, in the unmarked case in fact immediately following it. Given H3, we predict that focus modifiers occur before—preferably immediately before—the head when the complement is extraposed (the head as focus occurs to the right of the focus modifier), but after the head when the complement is not extraposed. A check of our corpus finds indeed that our predictions are strongly supported. It turns out that such focus modifiers regularly precede the head with ENPC: of 10 cases in which the focus modifier preceded the head, 9 showed ENPC and only one did not; moreover, in the 6 instances when the focus modifier immediately preceded the head, the
complement was always extraposed. Conversely, when the focus modifier occurred after the head there was no extraposition in 53 of 56 examples. Thus, these data on the position of focus modifiers seem to strongly corroborate our analysis.

Another piece of evidence for H3 is the fact that certain constructions which focus the subject are always found with ENPC. Indefinite Extraposition (= IE; sometimes called "presentatives") e.g. functions to delay and focus a subject. When a subject head occurs in this construction, we would expect ENPC to be the rule, if it is sensitive to the focus nature of the head. Since such sentences typically have indefinite subjects and the heads are normally definite, not many examples of this type were observed. However, in our corpus five instances of Indefinite Extraposition with MF heads were found. Of these five instances, four contained subject heads, and all four had ENPC. The other example of IE had a prepositional object head without ENPC, since the focus occurs later in the clause (recall IE focuses the subject). Thus, the fact that with subject heads in the Indefinite Extraposition construction ENPC is always found provides further—albeit in view of the paucity of examples somewhat weaker—evidence for the claim that the noun phrase containing the head must contain the focus for extraposition to occur.

Originally I had thought that I was the first to discover the correct account of such phenomena involving Extraposition from NP. However, it turns out that other researchers have made similar. For example, Guéron (1980) made the claim for extraposition from NP in general for English; cf. also Rochement & Culicover (1990). Moreover, as I most recently discovered, others have also made this discovery for Dutch (cf. Zonneveld 1978). However, my work still contributes to our understanding of this construction, especially by virtue of its large empirical database and the correlations which it has uncovered, which in turn provide further evidence for the correctness of such an account.

5. A Functional Answer Why: Competing Motivations

Given the basic correctness of the approach adopted here, at least two further general questions still arise: 1) why does ENPC exist at all and 2) why is it restricted to focus elements? In answer to the first question we can first of all establish that ENPC appears to result from what have been called "competing motivations". On the one hand, we have Behaghel’s First Law (1933), a sort of iconic distance principle which states that elements that go together semantically tend to occur close together in the clause. The splitting of head and complement which ENPC creates clearly violates this tendency by pulling apart elements which syntactically and semantically clearly belong together. This violation of the iconic distance principle is, we argue, due to a strong countertendency pulling in the opposite direction: Behaghel’s "Gesetz der wachsenden Glieder" ("Heavy NP
Shift") motivates placing subordinate clauses late, e.g. in the PF. This conflict of two opposing pragmatic forces is yet another example of the old adage that one can't have one’s cake and eat it too.

But why should it be focus which determines when extraposition takes place? The answer to this question must be sought in the nature of focus elements. Such rhematic or focus elements are automatically (by form, stress, and/or position) marked as elements whose identification requires extra effort, since they are not contextually given. Therefore, ENPC—which delays information about the element in question—is acceptable. Thus, as usually novel information, the extraposition of such complement clauses should ease production for the speaker and processing for the hearer. However, thematic elements are assumed to be contextually identifiable, hence delaying information on them would lead the hearer down a garden path: their identification should require little attention, so if the complement clause is presented later (as an afterthought, perhaps), the hearer has been misled. Hence, extraposition of nonfocus (presupposed) information would not be optimal for speaker or hearer. Moreover, in some sense it appears that elements (at least clauses) occurring in the PF make an independent statement; this appears to be relevant here too in that extraposed clauses may then receive special prominence. Note furthermore that the number of words between head and complement should be minimal; this is basically a corollary to Behaghel’s First Law, which dictates that if elements belonging together are to be separated, then the distance between them should not be very great. This would prevent difficulties in associating the head and the (extraposed) complement and insure that no other noun phrases which could mistakenly be taken for the head intervene—i.e. it prevents unwanted ambiguities. Having the focus as head insures all of this, since the focus element will usually occur late in the clause and normally no other noun phrase will follow.

6. Conclusion

We have argued here that an empirically adequate formulation of the restrictions on ENPC must be stated in terms of focus: extraposition is only possible when the NP containing head and complement comprises the clausal focus. While others have pointed out this connection, the present study is the first to consider ENPC in considerable empirical detail. It was also argued that instead of—or rather in addition to—the usual method of constructing examples to formulate and test linguistic hypotheses, the study of a corpus of actually attested examples constitutes a valuable empirical method which should be practiced much more often in linguistic description and theorizing. Through this method we were able to demonstrate that although an exceptionless restriction cannot be arrived at by invoking either GRs or PoFs (either alone or in combination), such hypotheses do indeed largely correspond to the actual state of affairs to be observed. Also a
number of other significant correlations with ENPC were uncovered in our corpus; these correlations found a natural explanation within our account. Finally, it was proposed that ENPC itself results from "competing motivations": on the one hand, Behaghel’s First Law demands that semantically related elements should be kept together, while Behaghel’s "Gesetz der wachsenden Glieder" ("Heavy NP Shift") represents a counterweight motivating the placement of complement clauses late in the clause, e.g. in the PF. It was also proposed that there are very good practical reasons for extraposing the complement when a focus element is involved, rather than with a presupposed element. Moreover, in conclusion, although we have not attempted here to set forth a theory of focus placement, it would appear that much of the data cited in this study can be of value in constructing and/or testing such a theory.

References

Shannon, T. F. (in prep.) 'Relative clause extraposition in Dutch: Syntactic versus pragmatic factors'.