V2 all the way down

Germanic innovations in the embedded CP of German-Italian bilinguals

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Handout

Embedded V2 (EV2) and its acquisition

Overgeneralisation of EV2 reported in existing work in monolinguals (primarily) and a bilingual (i.a., Müller, 1994, *et seq.*; Schönenberger, 2001; Julien, 2007; Westergaard & Bentzen, 2007).

↪ **Source**, **extent** and **formal nature** of this EV2 *unclear*, and often language/child-specific.

Some questions
❶ How can overgeneralisation of EV2 be characterised 'synchronically'?
❷ Which developmental processes lead to this overgeneralisation stage?
❸ Can EV2 shed light on typology of CP?

This paper: **overgeneralisation of EV2 in German-Italian bilinguals** and its **implications** for the development of the CP.

Two important precedents:

- **Schönenberger (2001)** on Swiss German monolinguals: EV2 in target (bridge verbs, *wil*-clauses) and non-target-like contexts (*wenn* 'if/when', *öb* 'whether', *wh*-V2). Linear V2 and Linear V3 found. Topicalisation only permitted with *wil* ('because'); pronominal subjects only in V3.

- **Müller (1994, *et seq.*)** on German-French bilingual Ivar: EV2 with complementisers. Embedded topicalisation reported for all. Predominantly Linear V3.

Our contribution theoretical significance of EV2 in German-Italian bilinguals: (i) a *formal* analysis of their EV2 stage, (ii) a *developmental* motivation for this stage.

🔍 In a nutshell

Constrained overgeneralisation of EV2 in German-Italian bilinguals. Significance is *three-fold*: (1) We argue *not* parameter missetting; (2) We argue *not* transfer from Italian; (3) Instead, we argue indicative of *CP-complexification*.

→ Analysis in terms of **CP differentiation**: *statically*, three projections can generate the EV2 patterns; *developmentally*, MMM rationalises their emergence.
→ We argue EV2 provides a **lens into the formal development of CP**, including its parallels in **contact-induced** morphosyntactic change.

A corpus study: German-Italian bilinguals

Study with **5 German-Italian bilinguals children** (Müller et al., 2016, corpus):

- Embedded word-order: V-final, linear V2, linear V3, (ambiguous/other)
- Word order by embedding marker; presence/absence of embedded topicalisation.

Broad results

→ **Two profiles** of overgeneralisation: *total* vs *partial* absence of V-final.
  - CAR and MAR show 96-100% EV2, LUK and LUC show 39-47%.
→ **Inverse correlation** between EV2 frequency and V-final frequency.
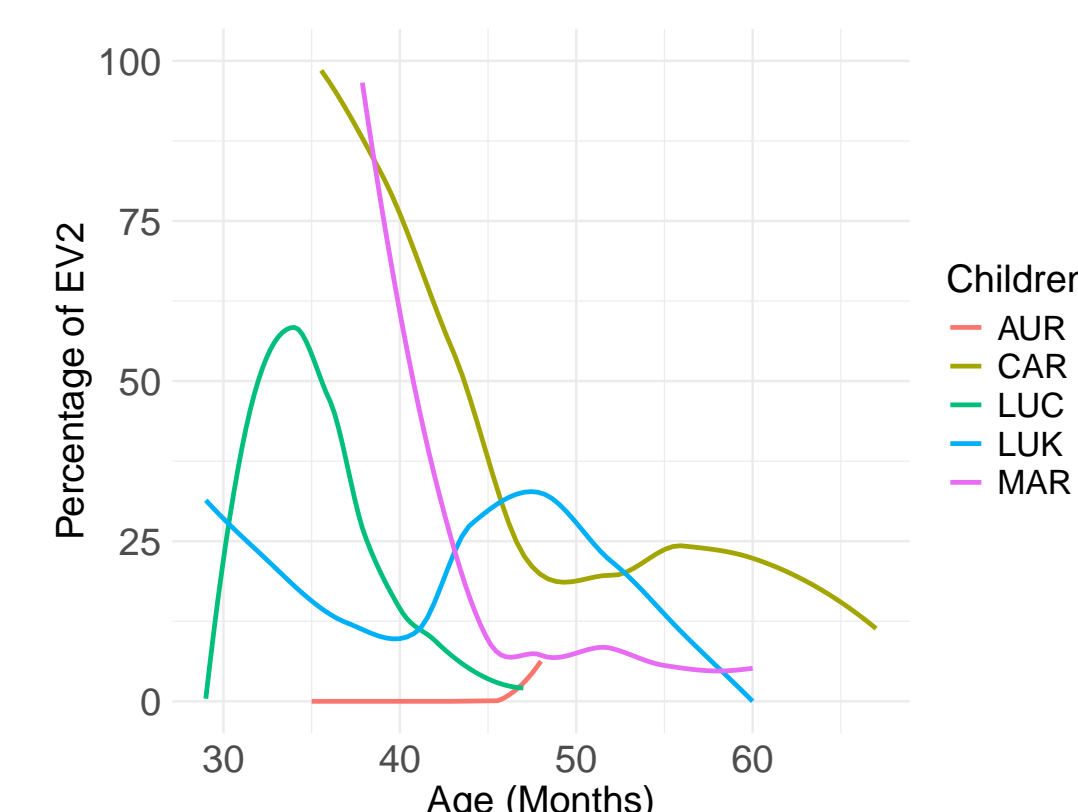→ Co-existence of **Linear V2** and **V3** orders during EV2 stage.

Figure 1. EV2 across the 5 bilinguals

Fine-grained results

- By embedding marker: EV2 with all of *weil*, *wenn*, *wh*-complements/relatives and (very rarely) *dass* 'that' – *but to different extents.*
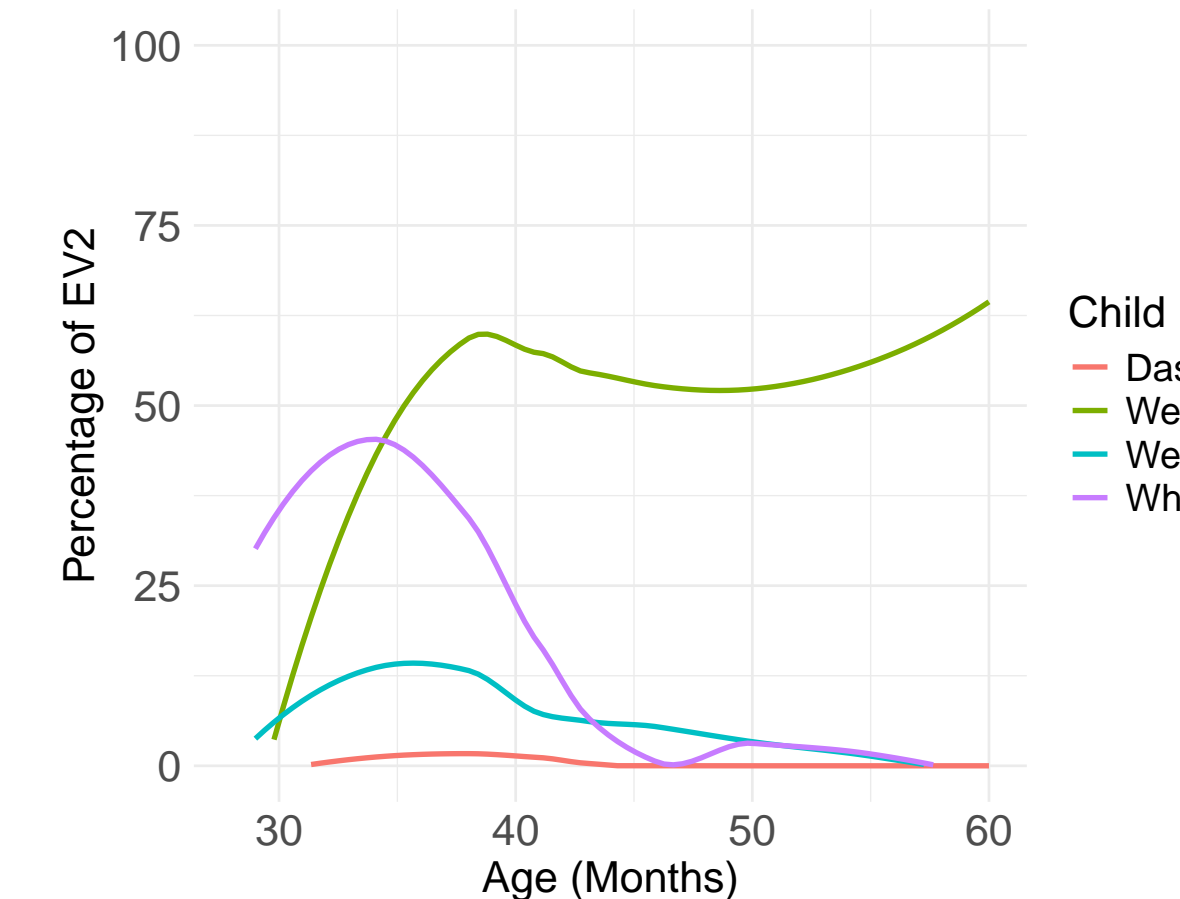- Only *weil* clearly sanctions embedded topicalisation.

Figure 2. EV2 across the 5 bilinguals

	wenn	%	*wh*	%	*weil*	%	*dass* %	**All**	%
CAR	0-12	100%	0-12	100%	0-11	100%	–	0-35	100%
MAR	1-1	50%	0-17	100%	0-12	100%	–	1-30	96.7%
Total	1-13	7.1%	0-29	100%	0-22	100%	–	1-65	98.4%

Table 1. Proportion of EV2 by embedding marker before change-point (CAR and MAR)

- Pronominal subjects predominate in Linear V3 (Comp-Subj$_{pron}$-V) with 95.6% as in Schönenberger (2001) → *pace* Schönenberger, we argue this restriction is *independent of EV2*; observed to the same extent in V-final *wenn*-clauses (92%).

Typologically noteworthy system!
Wh-V2 is the most common in all children, over *wenn/dass*.
Yet, ungrammatical in almost all Germanic languages, including Icelandic and Yiddish (Vikner, 1995), with the exception of Afrikaans.

Generalised to predicates disallowing *wh*-V2: *discover*-type or resolutive predicates (McCloskey, 2006), without the illocutionary force of a question: *gucken* ('look'), *wissen* ('know'), *hören* ('hear'), *sagen* ('say'), *erklären* ('explain').

Existing analyses and a theoretical 'gap'

→ **Against parameter missetting** (pace Müller, 1994, 1996)

- *Not* Yiddish setting: *wh*-V2 ungrammatical in Yiddish; embedded topicalisation more common in Yiddish, on the other hand.

→ **Against transfer from Italian** (pace Müller, 2003)

- V$_{fin}$ moves above Neg and Adv.
- V$_{fin}$ follows topicalised XPs.
- V$_{non-fin}$ precedes object (OV) in structures with modals and auxiliaries.
- Linear EV2/3 found, *but* V3+ orders unattested.
- AUR, more dominant in Italian, shows no EV2.

↪ Data instead points to *extension* of a *Germanic* pattern (V- and XP-movement to CP) that is formally integrated into bilinguals' German.

❗ **One analysis remains – Schönenberger (2001)**

- '*Minimally split CP*' (ForceP and FinP). Differential behaviour of Comps obtained by height of verb movement and base-generation slot for Comps.
↪ **Ontological problems**: What's the status of her 'minimally split' CP? Where do ForceP and FinP come from? What do main clauses look like?
  Needed: a developmental account motivating this 'minimally split' CP.
↪ **Question:** What's the status of the Kayne-Rizzi-Roberts effect? (McCloskey, 2006).

Overgeneralised EV2 as CP complexification

Proposal: analysis in terms of elaboration or **complexification of the embedded CP**: bilinguals' embedded CP consistently 'bigger' than monolinguals'.

(1) **Synchronic account:** Three left-peripheral projections for EV2 stage.
  - 'Pure' subordinators (*weil*) structurally high in **SubP** (Bhatt & Yoon, 1992).
  - 'Modal-flavoured' subordinators lower within CP (Bhatt & Yoon, 1992).
  - **Minimally expanded CP**, following Walkden (2017).
    - CP$_2$ hosts *wenn*, *wh*-complements and topics.
    - Subjects in EV3 in CP$_1$.
  - Co-existence of Linear V2/3 down to **optionality in subject/topic raising** (already obtains in adult German, see Grewendorf, 1989; Diesing, 1992; Haider, 1993; and acquisition, van Kampen 2010, 2020).
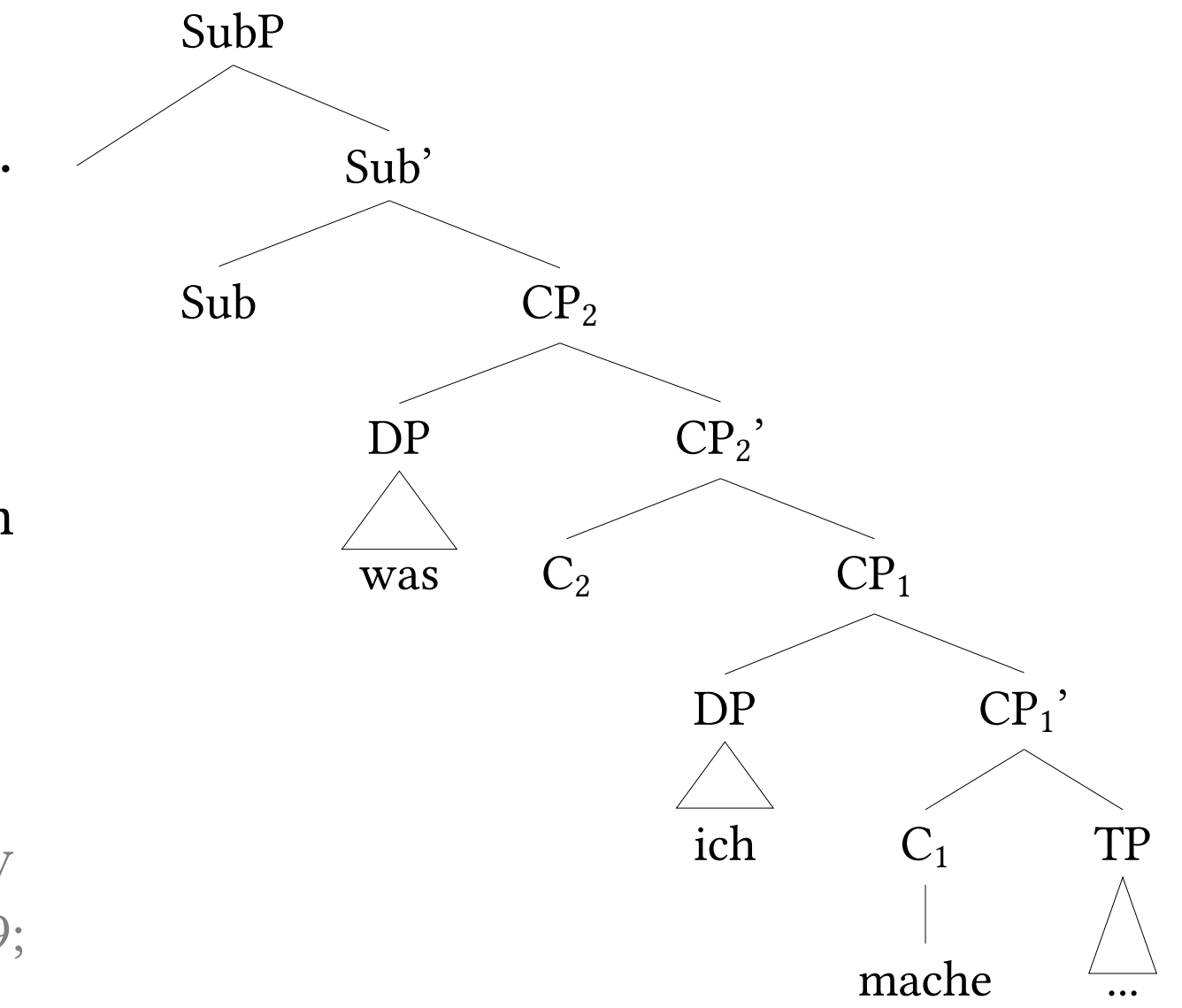
→ Embedded topicalisation with *wh*-complements and *wenn* ruled out.
→ SubP independently avoids KRR violation.

(2) **Developmental motivation:** learners conceptualised under **Maximise Minimal Means** framework (Biberauer, 2011, *et seq.*) – prioritise generalising structures and $[F]$s already in the grammar.
  - Learners *amplify* the regularity of pattern in PLD (V2), possibly boosted by Italian SVO.
  - Then *integrate* main-clause-like structure (also expanded in German; see Haegeman & Greco, 2016; den Dikken & Surányi, 2017; Walkden, 2017) in newly-acquired embedded clauses.

→ Connection with work supporting *crosslinguistically variable* degrees of elaboration of the CP (i.a., Biberauer & Roberts, 2015; Walkden, 2017; Hsu, 2017; Bosch, 2023; Cournane & Klævik-Pettersen, 2023).

Diachronic extensions
Later-acquired properties vulnerable to change → $[F]$-overgeneralisation may lead to change. Three systems with diachronic extensions of EV2:

- **Afrikaans and Manenberg Kaaps** (Biberauer, 2017, 2024; Van Rooi, 2022): EV2 with bridge verbs of all classses (Hooper & Thompson, 1973); *wh*-V2 (unique in Germanic), EV2 with polar interrogatives.
  - Highly contact-influenced, predominantly by VO languages.
- **Cimbrian** (Bidese et al, 2013, *et seq.*): *hybrid complementation system*, Germanic complementiser shows V-final order; Romance-borrowed *ke* shows V2 constraints, *not mere extension of Italian SVO.*
  - Upper German variety in contact with Italian and NIDs.

Conclusion and implications

(1) Empirical contribution: overgeneralisation of EV2 in German-Italian bilinguals. **(2) Broad theoretical question** at stake: how does the CP *change* throughout development?

↪ An analysis in terms of (emergent) **CP-complexification** characterises the EV2 stage *and* helps rationalise it developmentally.

- **Implications** for understanding contact-induced change under child bilingualism, as well as the typology of (E)V2.
→ Question: How does Ivar's system (Müller, 1996) fit into this account?
→ Which patterns are observed in Germanic-Germanic bilinguals?