Scope Marking in the Pennsylvania Dutch Progressive Construction[*]

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Abstract: Pennsylvania Dutch (PD) uses and marks progressive aspect similar to other variants of German. In this paper, we focus on presenting novel data to show how PD differs from those other variants. Furthermore, we present a formal analysis of the progressive construction which addresses the position and information structural contribution of the progressive morpheme. The analysis relies on Felser's (1999) analysis but is extended and adapted to account for PD's idiosyncrasies.

1.   Introduction

Pennsylvania Dutch (PD) is a variant of non-standard German that displays morphophonological and syntactic traits commonly found in East Palatinate (Ostpfälzisch) dialects in continental German. Keiser (2012) estimates that roughly 160,000 native speakers of PD exist today; however, this estimate may be conservative.[1] In this paper, we introduce an analysis of the progressive construction of PD relying on recently elicited data and an analysis proposed by Felser (1999) for Northwestern non-standard German. PD's progressive construction is remarkably different from those found in other variants of German, as we explicate in detail below.

This squib is organized as follows. In section 2, we describe the PD progressive construction. We address its distribution as well as some similarities and differences to the progressive in other variants of German. In section 3, we present a novel sketch of an analysis of the progressive construction by Felser (1999). We establish that the relevant morpheme marks outer aspect and extend Felser's approach to cover progressive aspect in PD. In section 4, we discuss some open questions before concluding the paper in section 5.

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[1] The Wikipedia entry for Pennsylvania German/Dutch suggests that 300,000 native speakers can be found in the United State and Canada today. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pennsylvania_German_language (accessed June 8, 2015)

2.   The Progressive in PD: Empirical Overview

Pennsylvania Dutch uses *an* and its allomorph *am* as markers of the progressive aspect.[2] These usually consist of a copula construction with an infinitival verb and this morpheme, as shown in (1).

(1)   Der   Santa Claus   is   an   die   Kinner   Presents gevve.
             the   Santa Claus   is PROG the   kids   presents give
             'Santa Claus is giving the kids presents.'

PD is remarkable among German variants with respect to two features of the progressive construction. First, the positioning of the progressive marker is flexible, unlike in other variants. This is discussed in section 2.1. Second, PD allows for the progressive morpheme to occur twice. This is described in section 2.2.

2.1.   Position of the Aspect Marker

Ebert (1996) describes common patterns of progressive aspect in informal and regional variants of German. She observes that typically the different German variants place the aspect marker either preceding or following the direct object of a transitive clause (2).

(2)   a.   Züritüütsch (Zurich German): progressive marker preceding direct object
               Er isch   am   e gschicht   verzelle.   (Ebert 1996:28)
               he is   at   a story   telling
               'He is telling a story.'
        b.   Rhineland German: progressive marker following direct object
               Anna war   einen Brief am   Schreiben.   (Ebert 1996:25a, our translation)
               Anna was   a.ACC letter PROG write
               'Anna was writing a letter.'

In PD, both options are available (3).

(3)   a.   Ich   bin   an   (da) Schuh   butze.
               I   am   PROG the   shoes   clean
        b.   Ich   bin   (da) Schuh   an   butze.
               I   am   the   shoes   PROG clean
               'I'm cleaning (the) shoes.'

This flexibility can be seen even more clearly in a ditransitive sentence. In these constructions the progressive morpheme may occur preceding either the object or the verb as illustrated in (4).

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[2] We will not discuss the distribution of the allomorphs but assume that it is phonologically conditioned.

(4)   a.   Der   Santa Claus   is an   die   Kinner   Presents gevve.
          the   Santa Claus   is PROG   the   kids   presents   give
          'Santa Clause is giving the kids presents.'
      b.   Der   Santa Claus   is die   Kinner   an Presents gevve.
      c.   Der   Santa Claus   is die   Kinner   Presents an gevve.

In addition to the flexible positioning, PD differs from other variants of German as it allows for other progressive usages that are not available in some of the variants of German described by Ebert (1996). She describes the use of the progressive marker for informal German to be highly restricted as it cannot occur with stative verbs (5a, b) or with direct or prepositional objects (5c, d).

(5)   a. * Otto ist in der   Ecke am   Stehen.
          Otto is in the   corner PROG   stand
          'Otto is standing in the corner.'
      b. * Die   Sonne   ist am   Scheinen.
          the   sun   is PROG   shine
          'The sun is shining.'
      c. * Was   bist   du   am   Machen?
          What are   you   PROG do
          'What are you doing?'
      d. * Die   Kinder   sind mit   einem   Ball   am   Spielen.
          the   children   are with   a   ball   PROG   play
          'The children are playing with a ball.'
          (Ebert 1996:5a, 13a, 6b, 6c our translations)

PD does not have these restrictions (6): the progressive marker may occur with certain stative verbs (6a) (cf. Brown & Putnam, 2015) as well as with direct and prepositional objects (6b[3], c).

(6)   a.   Ich   bin   sellige   Sach(e)   an   wisse.   (Brown & Putnam, 2015:37)
          I   am   such   things   PROG know
          'I know such things.'
      b.   Die   Kinner   sin   an   mit   einem   Ball   spielen.
          the   kids   are PROG with   a   ball   play
          'The kids are playing with a ball.'

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[3] This sentence has only been confirmed to be grammatical for older speakers and might not be acceptable for younger speakers.

c.   Er is an   die   Blumen wässerte.

     he is PROG the   flowers   water

     'He is watering the flowers.'

These sentences in (6) show that the progressive construction of PD differs from the progressive in other variants of German in both its availability as well as its structural configuration. Another major difference in the distribution of the progressive morpheme is presented in the following section.

2.2.   Progressive Marker Doubling

The progressive construction in PD has a highly unusual feature in that the progressive morpheme may optionally occur up to two times in the same clause. To our knowledge, this has only been described for one regional dialect of German, namely *Kölsch* ('Cologne German') (Bhatt & Schmidt 1993). In PD, the following patterns for the occurrence of more than one progressive marker holds: first, it is possible to have two markers but not more than two (7a). When two markers occur, their positioning is relatively flexible (7b-d).

(7)   a. * Der   Santa Claus   is am   die   Kinner   an   Presents an   gevve.

          the   Santa Claus   is PROG the   kids   PROG presents PROG give

          'Santa Claus is giving the kids presents.'

    b.   Der   Santa Claus   is am   die   Kinner   an   Presents gevve.

    c.   Der   Santa Claus   is am   die   Kinner   Presents an gevve.

    d.   Der   Santa Claus   is die   Kinner   an Presents an gevve.

There are some restrictions on where the two progressive marker may occur. First, both occurrences must be in the midfield. Occurrences in the fore-field (8a) or in an extraposed position following the final verb are ungrammatical (8b).[4]

(8)   a. * An   die   Kinner   is sie   an   Kuch backe.

          PROG the   kids   is she   PROG cake   bake

          'She is baking the kids cake.'

    b. * Sie   is an Kuch backe   an die   Kinner.

In the midfield the leftmost progressive marker may occur above (9a) or below (9b) a verbal adjunct but not directly preceding such an adjunct (9c).

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[4] The judgment on this sentence requires further investigation.

(9)   a.   Er is an   die   Kinner in die   Stub   an   Presents gevve.

             he is PROG the   kids   in the   living.room   PROG presents   give

             'He is giving presents to the kids in the living room.'

       b.   Er is in die   Stub   an   die   Kinner Presents an   gevve.

             he is in the   living.room PROG the   kids   presents   PROG give

             'He is giving presents to the kids in the living room.'

       c. * Er is die   Kinner an   in die   Stub   an   Presents gevve.

             he is the   kids   PROG in the   living.room   PROG presents   give

             'He is giving presents to the kids in the living room.'

In summary, PD allows for flexible positioning of one or two progressive markers. The discussed data show that the progressive marker must occur in the midfield preceding one or two complements of the verb or the verb itself. Positioning the progressive marker outside of the midfield or preceding adjuncts leads to ungrammaticality. In the following section, we will propose an analysis for this distribution.

3.   Provisional Analysis

Before providing our formal analysis of PD's progressive construction, we first discuss why it is reasonable to classify *an/am* as progressive markers, and thereby as strictly functional elements, and not as prepositions (section 3.1). Following that discussion, we present an analysis of the progressive construction in Northwestern (NW) German proposed by Felser (1999) and extend her analysis to Pennsylvania Dutch, specifically PD sentences with only one progressive marker (section 3.2). Lastly, we propose an extension of the analysis to those PD sentences that include two aspectual markers (section 3.3).

3.1.   The allomorphy of *an/am*

German, including PD, has a preposition *an* with an alternative form *am* that is usually used as a locative preposition.

(10)   Der   Apfel hängt am   Baum.

             the   apple   hangs   on.the tree

             'The apple is on the tree.'

Duden (2009) aligns the *an/am* used in progressive sentences to this preposition as well as the preposition *beim*: "Bei *sein* + substantiviertem Infinitiv mit *am* (*ich bin am Überlegen*) oder *beim* (*ich bin beim Aufräumen*) handelt es sich um eine Verlaufsform (Progressivkonstruktion)…" (Duden 2009: 427).[5] We contend, in line with Felser (1999), that the morpheme *an/am* used in

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[5] '*be* + nominalized infinitive with *am* (*I am 'am' thinking*) or *beim* (*I am 'beim' cleaning*) mark progressive constructions.

the progressive construction is not a preposition but a functional morpheme that overtly marks aspect. Felser argues that in non-standard Northwestern German this morpheme cannot be a preposition because it behaves differently than the homophonous preposition. Below, we present some of her arguments for NW German and demonstrate that they also hold for Pennsylvania Dutch.

First, Felser (1999) states that if the morpheme *an/am* was a preposition it should select a nominal projection similarly to the preposition *beim*. However, the projection following *an/am* in progressive clauses does not allow for nominal modifiers (11).

(11) a. * Er ist am   lauten   Vorlesen.   (NW German)
            he is PROG loud   reading-out
      b.   Er ist beim lauten   Vorlesen.   (NW German)
            he is at.the loud   reading-out
            'He is reading out loud.'
            (Felser 1999:17)
      c.   Er   is an   lauten   Vorlesen.   (PD)
            he   is PROG loud   reading-out
            'He is reading out loud.'

A second argument that Felser (1999) presents is that varieties of non-standard German usually do not license multiple prepositional phrases with the same preposition. However, it is possible for the locative *an/am* preposition to occur in progressive sentences (12).

(12) a.   Er ist [PP an   einem   Haus]   am   Bauen.   (NW German)
            he is   at   a   house   at.the build
            'He is building a house.'
            (Felser 1999: 22)
      b. * Er baute [PP an   einem   Haus]   [PP an einem   Zaun].   (NW German)
            he built   at   a   house   at a   fence
            'He worked on a house on a fence.'
      c.   Er is an   Haus am   Bauen. (PD)
            he is at   house PROG build
            'He is building a house.'

Third, Felser (1999) discusses that *am* is typically a contraction of the preposition *an* and the definite article *dem*. However, *am* in the progressive construction cannot be split into those two elements (13).

(13)　a.　Er arbeitet am/　an dem　Projekt.　　　　(NW German)
　　　　　he　works　　at.the/　at　the project
　　　　　'He is working on the project.'

　　　b.　Er war　am/　*an　dem　Arbeiten.　　　(NW German)
　　　　　he　was　at.the/　at　the　　work
　　　　　'He was working.'
　　　　　(Felser 1999: 24)

　　　c.　Er is　da Ball　am　　schmeisse　zu da Bu.　　(PD)
　　　　　he　is　the ball　PROG　throw　　　to　the boy
　　　　　'He is throwing the ball to the boy.'

　　　d. *　Er is　da Ball　an dem　schmeisse　zu da Bu.　(PD)
　　　　　he　is　the ball　at　the　　throw　　　to　the boy
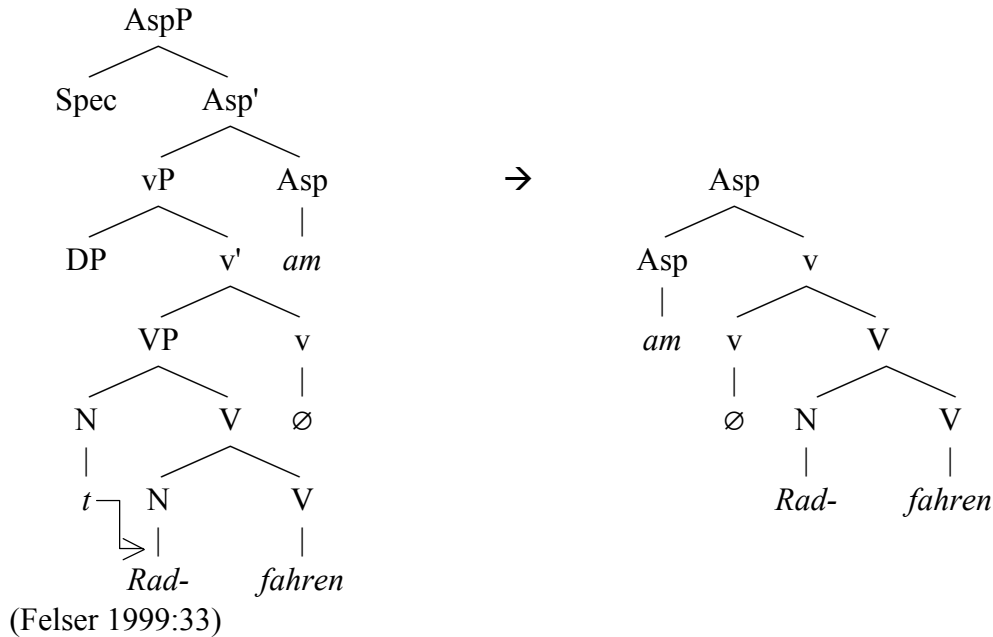　　　　　*'He is throwing the ball to the boy.'*

Thus, Felser (1999) concludes that the *an/am* morpheme in the progressive construction is different from the homophonous locative preposition.

3.2.　Felser (1999) and Pennsylvania Dutch Progressive Aspect

Felser (1999) proposes that the progressive morpheme is an aspectual head which is located outside of vP. This is in line with other (recent) approaches to aspect. Nossalik (2010) describes aspect as commonly divided into inner and outer aspect. Inner aspect is used to identify the inner event structuring (e.g. telicity, states, and achievements). It is structurally located inside of vP, typically above VP. This contrasts with outer aspect, which is located outside of vP and marks other event characteristics such as perfective and progressive aspect. Thus, Felser's contention that the progressive marker *am/an* is located outside of vP concurs with other approaches. In the remainder of this section, we will present her analysis of the progressive aspect in NW German and our adaptation of it to PD clauses with one aspectual morpheme. (In section 3.3, the approach is extended to PD sentences with two progressive markers.)

　　　　Felser (1999) argues for a head-final Asp(ect) projection that hosts the progressive marker *am/an*. In order to derive the appropriate order of elements, she suggests that certain elements incorporate into the lexical verb before this complex verb incorporates into Asp. This yields the order of *am/an* preceding the verb (and the elements incorporated in it). This is schematized below for *Rad-fahren* ('bike ride'):

(14)

```
          AspP
         /    \
      Spec     Asp'
              /    \
            vP      Asp                →              Asp
           /  \      |                              /    \
         DP    v'    am                           Asp      v
              /  \                                  |      /  \
            VP    v                                am    v      V
           /  \   |                                      |     / \
          N    V  Ø                                      Ø    N    V
          |   / \                                             |    |
          t  N   V                                          Rad-  fahren
             |   |
           Rad- fahren
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(Felser 1999:33)

In our provisional analysis, incorporation achieves the desired word order and interpretation of the progressive construction.

In what follows we adopt Felser's (1999) analysis for Pennsylvania Dutch. We contend that in PD the progressive marker *am/an* is also the head of a head-final outer aspect projection. However, unlike in NW German, the positioning of the progressive marker in PD is flexible (cf. examples in (3) and (4)). This can be explained by allowing for PD to flexibly incorporate different parts of VP into V (before V incorporates into Asp). We propose that it is the information structurally smallest event marked for progressive aspect that incorporates into Asp. Consider the ditransitive clause (4), repeated below.

(15) a. Der Santa Claus   is an   die   Kinner Presents gevve.
          the   Santa Claus   is PROG the   kids   presents give
          'Santa Clause is giving the kids presents.'
      b. Der Santa Claus   is die   Kinner   an Presents gevve.
      c. Der Santa Claus   is die   Kinner   Presents an gevve.

The difference positioning options of the progressive marker reflects which event is marked for aspect: in (15a), it is giving the kids presents; in (15b), it is giving presents; and in (15c), it is only the act of giving. We suggest that, in terms of the analysis by Felser (1999), these differences stem from different incorporations into V: in (15a), *die Kinner Presents* incorporates; in (15b), *Presents* incorporates; in (15c), nothing incorporates into V.

Based on this proposal, we predict that the aspect marker *am/an* should never occur outside of a VP modifier, such as a VP adverb, because only elements that are included in VP may incorporate into V (and then Asp). Thus, we predict sentence (16) to be ungrammatical. (This judgment has not yet been confirmed with a native speaker.)

(16) * Peter is an carefully das Buch lesen.
    Peter is PROG thoroughly the book read
    'Peter is reading the book thoroughly.'

Our analysis of aspect marking in PD crucially relies on the flexible incorporation of different derivational units (i.e., 'chunks') of the VP into V and Asp. While at first blush this might seem unusual, it finds support in one crucial difference between PD and NW German, namely with respect to separable prefix verbs. Whereas NW German does not allow the aspect marker to occur between a verb and its (separable) prefix, PD does not have the same restriction (17).
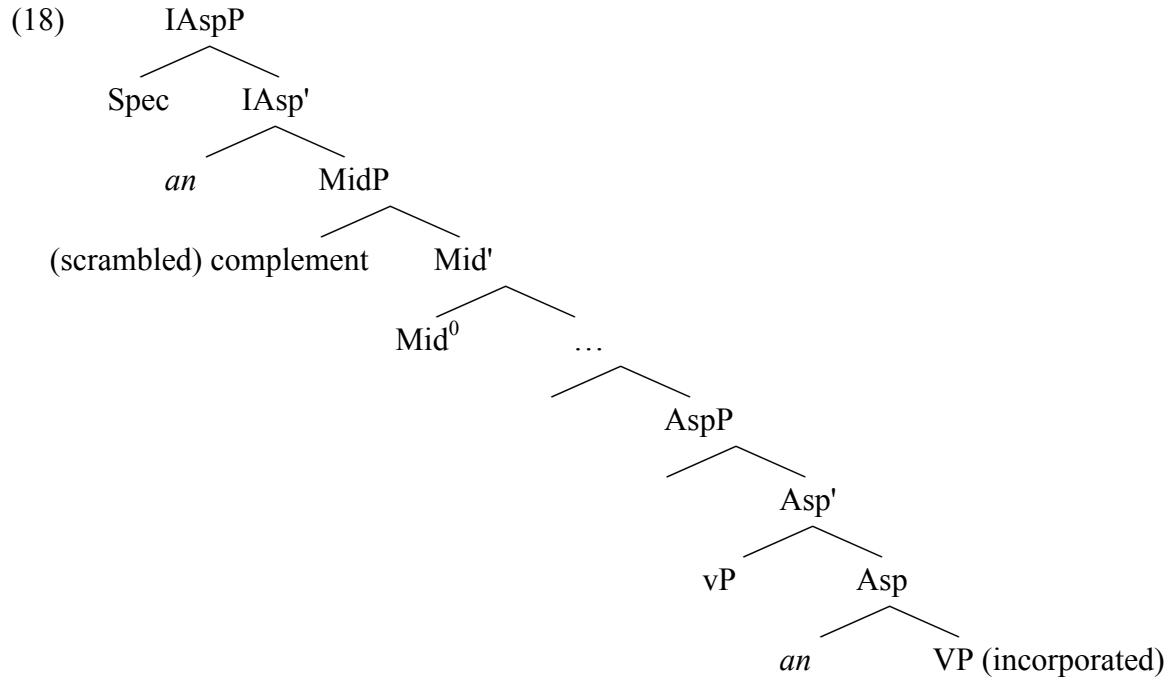
(17) a. Ich bin das gerade am Aufschreiben.   (NW German)
      I   am   it   just   at.the down.write
      'I am just writing it down.'

    b. * Ich bin das gerade auf am Schreiben.   (NW German)
      I   am   it   just   down at.the write
      (Felser 1999: 24)

    c. Er is sei Zimmer am aufräume.   (PD)
      he is his   room   PROG clean.up
      'He is cleaning up his room.'

    d. * Er is sei Zimmer auf am räume. (PD)
      he is his   room   up   PROG clean
      'He is cleaning up his room.'

This shows that PD is more flexible in which elements of V(P) are allowed to incorporate into Asp; thus, supporting our approach of flexible incorporation in PD progressive sentences.

3.3. Analysis of Double Progressive Marking

As discussed in section 2.2, PD allows the progressive marker to be used twice in one clause. In this section, we present our analysis of such structures. This analysis is builds upon and extends the analysis presented in the previous section.

For clauses with two aspectual morphemes, we propose that there is a designated functional projection in the midfield to which complements may move ('scramble'), namely *Mid(field)P*. This position is unordered with respect to vP modifiers. Furthermore, MidP can be selected by another functional projection that we call Information Aspect (IAsp). This head-initial projection delimits the aspect marking to the biggest event that should be marked for aspect. This structure is schematized in (18).

(18)
```
        IAspP
       /     \
    Spec      IAsp'
             /     \
           an        MidP
                    /     \
    (scrambled) complement   Mid'
                            /     \
                         Mid⁰       …
                                   /   \
                                 AspP
                                /     \
                                      Asp'
                                     /    \
                                   vP      Asp
                                          /    \
                                        an      VP (incorporated)
```

This structure can be applied to sentences with two progressive morphemes (7b-d), repeated below.

(19) a.   Der   Santa Claus   is am   die   Kinner   an   Presents gevve.
          the   Santa Claus   is PROG the   kids   PROG presents   give
          'Santa Claus is giving the kids presents.'
      b.   Der   Santa Claus   is am   die   Kinner   Presents an gevve.
      c.   Der   Santa Claus   is die   Kinner   an Presents an gevve.

In (19a), *Presents* incorporates in to the verb *gevve* which incorporate together into Asp; *am* is in the IAsp position while *die Kinner* has moved to MidP. The event of *giving presents* is the minimal event marked for progressive aspect, and the event of *giving the kids presents* is the maximal event marked for progressive aspect. Due to the flexible incorporation allowed by PD (see section 3.2), sentences (19b) and (19c) can be derived in a similar fashion.

Our analysis of sentences with two aspectual morphemes has several desirable conse-quences. First, it restricts both occurrences of the morpheme to the midfield (cf. example (8)). Second, it correctly predicts that in sentence in which the subject occurs below the inflected verb, the progressive morpheme may not precede the subject (which is assumed to move to T and cannot occur in MidP) (20).

(20)   * In der   Stub is an   der   Santa Claus die   Kinner Presents an   gevve.
         in the   room is PROG the   Santa Claus the   kids   presents PROG give
         'In the living room, Santa Claus is giving the kids presents.'

Lastly, our analysis does not allow for IAsp to occur without AspP because on the information structural level, the two projections must agree as they mark the minimal and maximal event for aspect. We maintain that marking the maximal event is impossible without marking the minimal event. Thus, IAspP cannot be present in the structure without AspP.

4.   Open Questions

Our analysis of PD sentences with progressive aspect marked once or twice can explain the main features of the construction. However at this stage, some questions concerning this construction and its analysis are still unanswered. We mention some of these below, introducing questions that need to be addressed in a more comprehensive analysis of this construction in PD.

First, the question remains why PD allows elements to flexibly incorporate different 'chunks' of the verb and VP into Asp, as we suggested throughout this squib. While the empirical data support this conclusion, it is unclear why other variants of German are not as flexible in their possible incorporations. This requires further investigation into PD as well as into incorpo-ration in general. One possibility for this flexibility may lie in the transparency in (mor-pho)syntax-semantic mapping with respect to progressive aspect, but admittedly, this hypothesis requires further investigation.

A second open question concerns the MidP-projection that we propose to account for the structures that include two progressive markers. This projection is suggestive at this stage, espe-cially in light of PD not allowing for standard German midfield scrambling of complements (Putnam 2007) and requires more research in the future to substantiate its existence. It is unclear how (and if so, why) PD repurposed a functional projection that is available in other variants of German. Again, we leave this topic for future research.

Third, the interaction between different types of aspect need to be investigated in more depth, likely in line with a more detailed treatment of inner and outer aspect and its relationship to the verb phrase (VP) as pioneered by Travis (2010). While we maintain that IAsp relies on the presence of Asp for information structural purposes, we have not formalized this agreement be-tween the two projections. Furthermore, this introduces a third layer of aspect that is not under-stood yet. This leads to another open question: the progressive marker in PD interacts with inner

aspect (Brown & Putnam, 2015). Although this is not unique to PD, this has not been taken into account in our analysis.

5. Conclusion

Pennsylvania Dutch has some remarkable uses and features for its progressive construction. In this paper, we presented analyses of PD sentences that include either one or two aspectual morphemes. Our analyses build on Felser's (1999) proposal for the progressive in NW German. This analysis relies on incorporation into V. The resulting complex head then further incorporates into a head-final Aspect projection in the midfield of the clause. We have shown how flexible incorporation of different 'chunks' can account for the patterns found in PD. Furthermore, we proposed a second aspectual projection, IAsp, which is needed in sentences with two aspectual morphemes. Our analysis can account for many features of the PD progressive construction while raising some new questions concerning (flexible) incorporation and the types of aspect found at least across different variants of non-standard German.

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