Heritage Language Syntax 2 (HLS2)
The shape and size of defective domains in Pennsylvania Dutch

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Big questions in research on HL-syntax:

- **Q₁**: How sturdy are the ‘core’ aspects of HL-syntax?
- **Q₂**: Which elements of core/peripheral aspects of HL-syntax may be more vulnerable to change (when compared with others)?
- **Q₃**: How does (HL-)syntactic change progress? Can we model it?

**Empirical focus of this talk**: Defective domains in Pennsylvania Dutch
Defective domains

- **Infinitives**
  - *It began to rain.*

- **Acls**
  - *I heard her singing in the shower.*

- **Clausal gerunds**
  - *Mike delivering a decent talk at the workshop was a shock to everyone.*

- **Defective clausal gerunds**
  - *I tried opening the door.*

- **ECM, Raising, & Control**
  - *I expect him to order a whiskey sour.* [ECM]
  - *He seems to be upset that the Steelers lost.* [Raising]
  - *He tried to quit yelling at his kids in public.* [Control]
Hypotheses

H$_1$: The core elements of HL-syntax are pretty sturdy (Polinsky, 2018; Lohndal, 2021, etc.)

H$_2$: (HL-)Syntactic change is *highly* conservative

H$_3$: A modular & derivational approach is well-equipped to model these changes

More specifically (for this talk), I argue:

- Contact/HL-syntax shows a strong preferences for changes at the edge of phases (Polinsky, 2018; Biberauer, 2018; Putnam & Hoffman, 2021)
- Feature reassembly/restructuring is also attested *within* certain domains (Putnam, 2019, 2020; Putnam et al., 2019a,b)
What is Pennsylvania Dutch?

- PD is a language that has "outgrown its name" (Keiser, 2012:1).
  - +300 years spoken on North American soil (and now in South America!)
  - Started in SE Pennsylvania, now spoken throughout the Midwest and Ontario (and other areas!)
  - ≈ 400,000 L1 speakers of PD today
  - Predominantly spoken as the L1 of the Old Order Amish (OOA) and other conservative Mennonite groups
  - NB: For an easily accessible history of the language, see Louden (2016)
- PD ain’t going nowhere anytime soon...
  - The Amish population doubles in every generation (average family size 8.6 members)
  - If they keep this pace, by 2315 there will be more Amish in the US than any other ethnic or religious group!
There are no exclusively monolingual speakers of PD.

The OOA exist in a state of **diglossic bilingualism** (Grosjean, 2001, 2008)

- Although the vast majority of OOA are sequential bilinguals (acquiring PD first), English is omnipresent in their daily lives.
- Bifurcation of modes and sociolinguistic domains:
  - **PD**: home, family, church, local community
  - **English**: non-Amish neighbors, work (outside of the home), ‘worldly’ topics

Thus, PD speakers are "deep bilinguals" (to quote López, 2020)

- It makes little sense to attempt to distinguish between *loanwords* and *borrowings* (a la Poplack (2018) and related work) in PD
- Their lexicon is truly **hybrid**

**Assessment**: PD is a heritage language, but not endangered.
Defective domains in English

- Let's undertake a brief overview of some of the general properties of defective domains in English
- These structures are (still) the source of much (intense) debate and diverse theoretical analyses – both in English and cross-linguistically
Abundant literature exists debating the position of *to* in English:
- Adjoined *to*P dominanting *v*P,
- As *T*, or
- As *C*

Most importantly (which we’ll discuss later): The position of *to* (English) and *zu* German are not identical.
Defective domains in English: Acls

(1)  a. I heard Marsha [singing in the shower.
    b. I saw Peter [throwing the football in his backyard.

Standard German also licenses Acls:

(2)  Ich habe ihn sprechen hören/gehört.
    'I heard him speaking/talking.'

Acls are $\nu$Ps:

(3)  I heard Marsha [$\nu$P singing in the shower.
(4)  a. Carol worried about [PRO being late for dinner.  
    b. Carol worried about [Greg being late for dinner.

From Pires (2007,16):

(5)  a. Mary favored [Bill taking care of her land].
    b. Susan worried about [Mark being late for dinner].
    c. Sylvia wants to find a new house without [Anna helping her].
    d. [Sue showing up at the game] was a surprise to everybody.

Clausal gerunds (in English) can appear as:
- complements to verbs (5-a),
- complements to prepositions (5-b) & (5-c), and
- phrases in ‘subject position’ (5-d)
Gerund complements of aspectualizers (e.g., start, finish, & keep) and verbs such as try and avoid form a distinct class (Pires, 2007:70):

(6) a. Mary started/finished/continued [reading the newspaper].
b. Bill tried [talking to his boss].
c. Philip avoids [driving on the freeway].

Due to (i) their lack of independence re: tense & aspect and (ii) the questionable status of PRO, these are often referred to as defective clausal gerunds

Two possible structural analyses:

- TP-projection with a ‘defective’ head (with ‘null’ Tense)
- vP-projection similar to Acls
(7) Mike expected [him to win the game].  
(8) Cindy seems [to be sick].  
(9) a. Jan convinced Cindy [PRO\textsubscript{j} to taddle on Marsha].  
    b. Bobby\textsubscript{j} tried [PRO\textsubscript{j} to eat more ice cream than his brothers].

Theoretical assumptions:

- Items that receive accusative case in ECM-structures are in Spec,TP
- Raising predicates are also TPs
- Control structures require a CP (in order to license PRO)
Defective domains in Penn Dutch

Louden’s (2016, 2019) generalizations:

- Infinitival constructions are introduced with *fer* ‘for’ or are phonologically null \( \emptyset \)
- The distribution of these two options is dependent on semantically equivalent English expressions
- If the infinitival *to* is required in English, *fer* must occur in Pennsylvania Dutch
- If English requires or permits a gerund or bare infinitive, *fer* is omitted

Although these generalizations hold, I discuss the following options in this talk:

- The structure and variation in PD non-finite clauses is primarily *syntactic* in nature, and, in turn,
- I provide a sketch of the syntax of non-finite structure in PD with an eye towards how this impacts HL-syntax development and change
As discussed and analyzed by Börjars & Burridge (2011), PD lost its infinitival marker *zu* around the turn of the previous century.

(10) a. **Fer** Sauder **zu** haysa is doch gar ke Shand.  
   for Sauder INF be-called is but absolutely no shame  
   ‘To be called Sauder is no shame at all’  
   [Poetry of Ben Sauder, 1930s]  

b. **Se** wore ols so shlim **fer** danse.  
   they were always so eager INF dance.NF  
   ‘They were always so eager to dance.’  
   [Horne, 1905]

- Huffines (1986,1990) shows that these uses of both *fer* and *zu* is quite rare, usually restricted to elderly non-sectarian speakers
W/o getting into great detail, English *to* and German *zu* do not occupy the same structure positions:

(11) a. Maria decided *to* carefully remove the bigger splinter.
    b. Maria beschloss den größeren Splitter vorsichtig *zu* entfernen
       / *zu* vorsichtig entfernen.

*Important side note:* Given that the subject is expressed in Acl's (in both German, English, & PD) but PRO in control predicates, this supports the hypothesis that Acl's are vPs underlingly.
These examples of tough-movement in PD show that: (i) *fer* is the contemporary PD infinitival marker and (ii) that it appears in C:

(12) a. Es iss hatt \([\text{CP } \text{fer’s}] \quad \text{Buch uffpicke}\).
   "It is difficult/hard to pick up the book."

b. Es iss hatt \([’s \text{ Buch uffferpicke}\).

c. Er iss hatt \([’s \text{ Buch uffzupicke}\).
Examples of *fer*-infinitives in PD:

(13)   a. Der Tim hat gemeindt \[_{CP} \text{fer} \text{ die Bicher wegduh.}\]
        the Tim has remembered \[\text{INF die books away-make}\]
        ‘Tim remembered to put the books away.’

   b. Die Kinner hen admit \[_{CP} \text{fer’s} \text{ Fenschder}\]
        the children have admitted \[\text{INF=the.NEUT window}\]
        verbroche hawwe mit Schtee.
        broken have with stone
        ‘The children admitted to break the window with (a) stone.’

   c. \[_{CP} \text{Fer happy sei} \text{ misse die Kinner gut schloofe.}\]
       \[\text{INF happy be.NF must the children well sleep}\]
       ‘To be happy the children must sleep well.’
As predicted by Louden, there are infinitival readings where *fer* does not appear:

(14)  
a. Die Lisa hat vergesse [CP (*fer) der Allen saage wege the lisa has forgotten INF the Allen say.NF about der Gaul.
the horse
‘Lisa forgot to tell Allen about the horse.’

b. ’S is an schtaerte (*fer) reggere.
it is PROG start rain.NF
‘It is starting (*to start) to rain (*raining).’
Defective domains in Penn Dutch: Acls

PD licenses Acls:

(15) Die Sarah hot die Rose gheert [vP gut Deitsch schwetze.
    the Sarah has the Rose heard well Dutch speak.NF
    ‘Sarah hear Rose speak(ing) Dutch well.’
The situation w/ clausal gerunds is somewhat complicated in PD:

(16) a. *Sarah wett n neier Haas finne [CP ohni Rose sie 
Sarah wants a new house find without Rose her 
helfe. help.NF 
Intended: ‘Sarah wants to find a new house without Rose helping her.’

b. *Sarah worry wege [CP Sally spät zu Owetesse komme. 
Sarry worries about Sally late to dinner come.NF 
Intended: ‘Sarah worries about Sally coming/being late for dinner.’
(17)  *[CP Rose zu die Hochzich komme] war n Surprise zu alliebber.
Rose to the wedding come.NF was a surprise to everyone

Intended: ‘Rose showing up at the wedding was a surprise to everyone.’

Unlike in English, in PD clausal gerunds cannot occur as:
• the complement of a verb (16-a),
• the object of a preposition (16-b), or
• in subject position (17)
There is a bit more tolerance for clausal gerunds as objects of a preposition for younger speakers:

(18) a. *Ich meind vun \( [CP \ Sally zu die Gmee geh \ mit uns.]

‘I remember Sally going to church with us.’

b. Ich meind (vun) \( [CP wann die Sally in die Gmee gange is mit uns.

‘I remember when Sally went to church with us.’

c. Ich meind noch vun \( [CP zu die Gmee laafe.

‘I still remember running to (the) church.’

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In contrast, defective clausal gerunds are common in PD:

(19) a. Ich bin n      browiere $[v_P \text{ die Daer uffmache.]}$
    I    am       PROG try the door open.NF
    ‘I am trying to open the door.’

b. Ich haawe browiert $[v_P \text{ die Daer uffmache.]}$
   I have tried the door open.NF
   ‘I tried to open the door.’

c. Die Ime schtaerte ihn nochgehe.
   the bees start him after-go.NF
   ‘The bees start going / to go after him.’
Control structures require the *fer*-infinitival marker in C:

(20)  Ich haawe ihn verschwetzt [CP fer uffheere schmoke.
     I have him convinced INF stop smoke.NF
     ‘I convinced him to stop smoking.’
English-style (subj-to-subj) raising is not found in PD:

(21) a. Der John seemt / guckt [CP wie er grank iss. the John seems look like he sick is ‘John seems to be sick / looks like he is sick.’

b. Der John act / guckt [CP wie er zu der Schtoor geh the John acts looks like he to the store go will.

wants ‘John acts like he wants to go to the store.’
Although ECM-predicates are generally dispreferred, we do observe structures such as the following in PD:

(22) a. Niemand expect teachers [CP fer perfect sei. no one expects teachers INF perfect be ‘No one expects teachers to be perfect.’

   b. Er weest, ass ich ihn expect haawe [CP fer die Daer he knows that I him expect have INF the door schliesse. shut.NF ‘He knows that I expected him to lock/shut the door.’
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<td><strong>Defective CG</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
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**Table 1:** English-PD-German non-finite clauses
Analysis of defective domains in Penn Dutch

- English has a projection toP
- Penn Dutch has either:
  - Lost this projection, or
  - No longer as a phonological reflex of this head
Penn Dutch has *verbal* gerunds

Alexiadou, Iordachioaia, & Soare (2010): two types of gerunds

(23)  **Noun-y gerunds:**  \[ \text{DP} \to (\text{NumP} \to \text{ClassP} \to npP) \to (\text{AspP}) \to \text{VoiceP} \]

(24)  **Verb-y gerunds:**  \[ \text{DP} \to \text{AspP} \to \text{VoiceP} \to \text{vpP} \to \text{Root} \]

Brown & Putnam (2015) and Bosse & Putnam (2016) argue that PD has verbal gerunds:

(25)  *Die Kinder sind (*am) mit einem Ball (*am) Spielen.\]

Intended: ‘The kids are playing with the ball.’ [Coll. German]

(26)  Die Kinner sin (a)n mit ’em Ball spiele.

‘The kids are playing with the ball.’ [Penn Dutch]
Additional evidence

From Huffines (1986):

(27) Er is an \[XP\] Gleeder ins Klasset henke.
    he is PROG clothes into-the closet hang.NF
    ‘He is hanging clothes in the closet.’

Double-progressive marker:

(28) Er is (a)n die Kinner in die Stub (a)n Presents
    he is PROG the kids in the living.room PROG presents
give.NF
    ‘He is giving presents to the kids in the living room.’
Syntax of defective clausal gerunds (in PD)

AspP

(a)n

Gleeder

DP

XP

PP

vP

ins Klasset

henke
Where’s PRO?

(29) Ich bin n browiere [\(vP\) (PRO?)] die Daer uffmache.
I am PROG try (PRO) the door open.NF
‘I am trying to open the door.’

Key questions:

- **Q₁**: Is the agentive argument in the \(vP\) in (29) PRO?
- **Q₂**: How does this fit with standard stories of PRO-theorem (Pires, 2007; Reed, 2014) – especially those that espouse a null Case-account of PRO?
‘Big picture’ questions for HL-syntax

...let’s return to the ‘big questions’ from the introduction:

- **Q₁**: How sturdy are the ‘core’ aspects of HL-syntax?
- **Q₂**: Which elements of core/peripheral aspects of HL-syntax may be more vulnerable to change (when compared with others)?
- **Q₃**: How does (HL-)syntactic change progress? Can we model it?

What we’ve seen here:

- **Re: Q₁**: Non-finite structures in Penn Dutch still look ‘very German’ overall
- **Re: Q₂**: Structural salience (i.e., movement to the edge of a phase) and feature restructuring within a phase
  - *Fer* (in C) as an infinitival marker
- **Re: Q₃**: Changes are conservative and incremental
Conclusion & the road ahead

- HL-syntax once again looks pretty sturdy wrt non-finite structures in Penn Dutch (barring a few minor exceptions)
- So what’s next?

(30) Ich meind(e) noch vun [\(\text{XP}\) ?ihn/*Sally mit uns zu die Gmee
goh.

'I remember him/Sally going to church with us.'

- Younger speakers find (30) - with the pronoun - to be acceptable
- *If* this represents a growing trend, it would be a step towards licensing a clausal gerund...
Thanks!

- Rose Fisher
- Terje Lohndal
- Mark Louden
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- My informants! :)

Thanks!