

MICRO-DIVERSITY IN DUTCH INTERROGATIVE DPs*
A CASE STUDY ON THE (DIS)CONTINUOUS *WAT VOOR 'n N*-CONSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This paper presents a micro-comparative perspective on the Dutch *wat voor 'n N*-construction (meaning: ‘what kind of N’). Besides a description of the various formal manifestations of this nominal construction as found intra-dialectally and cross-dialectally, an analysis is given of the dimensions of variation at the level of internal syntax and external syntax. As regards the external syntax, an analysis will be given of patterns that permit a split *wat voor 'n N*-pattern and those that do not. An important outcome of our analysis will be that a uniform structural basis ‘underlies’ the different manifestations of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction: more specifically, predication, configurationally defined as a DP-internal small clause structure, and predicate displacement.

1. *Micro-variability within the Dutch wat voor 'n N-construction*

The syntax of the Dutch *wat voor 'n N*-construction, as exemplified in (1a), has been an important topic on the Dutch generative syntactic research agenda ever since Hans den Besten’s discussion of this nominal expression in the 1980s (see Den Besten 1981, 1985). Its most striking property is, arguably, the possibility of subextracting the *wh*-word *wat* out of the nominal expression, which yields a discontinuous pattern like (1b).

- (1) a. *[Wat voor 'n auto] heb je gekocht?*
 What for a car have you bought

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- “What kind of car did you buy?”
 b. *Wat_i heb je [t_i voor 'n auto] gekocht?*
 What have you for a car bought

Also its internal syntactic structure has triggered much discussion. It raises questions such as: What is the internal constituency of the nominal expression, and what is the nature of the words *voor* and *'n*? In the present chapter, we hope to contribute to our understanding of this nominal construction by investigating its internal and external syntax from a micro-comparative (i.e. cross-dialectal) perspective.¹ As will become clear in the course of this chapter, the various manifestations of this nominal construction type, as attested both intradialectally and interdialectally, display interesting dimensions of variation, both regarding their internal syntax and their external syntax. For example, it turns out that certain variants of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction do not permit the split pattern. That is, the *wh*-word cannot be removed from within the nominal expression. The question obviously arises as to how this asymmetry in subextraction behavior can be accounted for.

Ever since Den Besten's seminal discussion of this nominal construction type, a variety of syntactic analyses of it has been given in the generative literature.² In this chapter, we will take the analysis as given in Bennis et al (1998) as our theoretical basis. There are two important ingredients in this analysis: Firstly, there is a DP-internal predication relationship between the noun *auto* and the *wh*-word *wat* in (1). The former is the external argument (i.e. 'the subject') of the predication relation, and the latter is the (nominal) predicate. Secondly, the surface order is derived by means of DP-internal predicate displacement. That is, the predicate *wat* undergoes movement to a position which precedes its subject. In this chapter, we will try to show in what ways the various surface manifestations of the Dutch *wat voor 'n N*-construction relate to differences in the "formal implementation" of the predication relation and the predicate displacement process.

This chapter is organized as follows: In section 2 we provide the reader with some background information about the phenomenon of DP-internal predicate displacement. Following Bennis et al. (1998), we take this computational operation to be part of the internal syntax of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction. In section 3, we present a description of the various

¹ We will use the ortographic convention *'n* to represent the indefinite article segment of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction. In the literature, one also finds the orthographically non-reduced form *een* ('a'), as in *wat voor een auto* (what for a car, 'what kind of car'). Importantly, the two ortographic forms have the same pronunciation: /ən/.

² See, for example, Bennis (1983), Corver (1990, 1991), Pafel (1996), Leu (2008a,b). For reasons of space, we abstract away from a discussion of, and comparison with, analyses different from the one presented here, which is based on Bennis et al (1998).

manifestations of the *wat voor 'n N* construction. Furthermore, we will give a formal analysis of the internal syntax of each variant. In section 4, we examine the subextraction behavior of the different variants of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction: that is, which variants permit a discontinuous pattern and which do not? Section 5 concludes the article.

2. *Predicate displacement within the wat voor 'n N-construction*

In this section we will outline the structural analysis of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction in Standard Dutch as proposed by Bennis et al. (1998). We will take this analysis as the starting point for our investigation of the micro-diversity attested within this nominal construction across different dialects of Dutch. As will become clear in this section, Bennis et al. make two major claims regarding the internal syntax of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction: First of all, this nominal construction involves a predication relationship between the pronoun *wat* ('the predicate') and the Noun ('the subject'), which is configurationally represented as a DP-internal small clause representation XP. Secondly, the surface position of *wat* in the left periphery of the noun phrase is a derived position; that is, DP-internal (predicate) displacement moves *wat* from the small clause predicate position to Spec,DP. In what follows, we will first place these claims about DP-internal predication and predicate displacement in a somewhat broader context, so that the reader can see that the empirical basis for these claims is not restricted to the *wat voor 'n N*-construction. We will start our discussion with the nominal construction which perhaps shows the phenomenon of DP-internal predication and predicate displacement most clearly, namely the so-called *N of N*-construction.

2.1 *Predicate Inversion and the spurious indefinite article*

In recent generative studies, a number of nominal construction types have been (re)analyzed in terms of predicate displacement, most notably the so-called *N of/van N*-construction (cf. (2)-(3)).

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|-----------|
| (2) | <i>die idioot van 'n dokter</i> | (Dutch) |
| (3) | <i>that idiot of a doctor</i> | (English) |

Den Dikken (1995, 1998, 2006), for example, proposes that in constructions like (2)-(3) the displaced predicate originates in a DP-internal small clause configuration, which is represented as XP in (5); see also Bennis et al. (1998).³ This XP is asymmetrically constituted such that the external

³ See Kayne (1994) for an analysis in terms of predicate displacement, in which the

argument of the predicate, located in the complement position of the small clause head X, occupies the specifier position of XP, which following Den Dikken (2006) may also be referred to as R(elator)P(hrase); see (4). Predicate displacement involves movement of the predicate (i.e., the complement of the small clause head) to the specifier position of a higher functional head FP, as depicted in (5):⁴

- (4) $[_{DP} \textit{die} [_{FP} \textit{Spec} [_{F'} F [_{XP} \textit{dokter} [_{X'} [X \textit{'n}] \textit{idioot}]]]]]$
 (5) $[_{DP} \textit{die} [_{FP} \textit{idioot}_j [_{F'} F (= \textit{van}) + X_i (= \textit{'n}) [_{XP} \textit{dokter} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$

As indicated in (4)-(5), we will take X to be the indefinite article 'n. As noted in Bennis et al. (1998), 'n is spurious in this nominal environment in the sense that it does not seem to 'belong to' the noun that follows it, nor in fact to the noun that precedes it. Normally, the indefinite article is compatible with singular NPs only (see (6a,b)). Furthermore, it does not cooccur with proper names and mass nouns (see (6c,d)).

- (6) a. *Ik heb 'n boek gelezen.*
 I have a book read
 b. **Ik heb 'n boeken gelezen.*
 I have a books read
 c. **Ik heb 'n Westertoren gezien.*
 I have a Westertoren seen
 d. **Ik heb 'n spinazie gegeten.*
 I have a spinach eaten

As illustrated in (7a), the second noun of the *N van 'n N* construction can be plural. Furthermore, 'n can precede proper names (7b) and mass nouns (7c). That 'n does not belong either to the preceding noun (i.e. the displaced predicate) is shown by the existence of examples like (7d), in which the first noun (and also the second one) is plural (data drawn from Bennis et al 1998).

- (7) a. *?die ramp van 'n getalscongruentiefeiten*
 that disaster of a number agreement facts
 b. *die pracht van 'n Westertoren*
 that beauty of a Westertoren
 c. *'n pracht van 'n spinazie*
 a beauty of a spinach
 d. *die schatten van 'n kinderen*
 those darlings of a children

inverted predicate originates in a predicate position of a clausal IP.

⁴ In Den Dikken (2006), FP is characterized as a L(inker)P(hrase).

Consider, finally, the prepositional element *van* in (7). With Den Dikken (1995, 2006), we will assume that *van* in the *N van 'n N* construction is a nominal copula, which surfaces at PF in the functional head position F. In fact, this nominal copula is considered to be the nominal equivalent of the verbal copula (English *to be*). As shown in the English example (8a), the infinitival copula can be freely omitted in copular sentences with a straight subject-predicate order. It cannot be left out, however, in the Predicate Inversion counterpart of (8a), given in (8b) (see Moro (1988) for discussion):

- (8) a. *I consider John (to be) the best candidate.*
 b. *I consider the best candidate (*to be) John.*

2.2 Predicate displacement in the *wat voor 'n N*-construction

Let us next consider the derivation of the interrogative noun phrase *wat voor 'n boeken* in (9).

- (9) *Wat voor 'n boek(en) heb jij gelezen?*
 what for a book(s) have you read
 “What kind of book(s) did you read?”

Following Bennis et al. (1998), we will assume that this nominal pattern also has a ‘small clause base’, as in (10). Thus, *wat* is a predicate nominal in the complement position of a small clause head X, which is lexicalized by the spurious indefinite article *'n*.⁵ The noun *boek(en)* functions as the external argument and occupies [Spec,XP].

- (10) [_{XP} *boeken* [_{X'} *'n* [_{XP} *wat*]]]

The spurious status of the indefinite article *'n* is suggested by the fact that it can precede the plural noun *boeken* in (9). Further support for its spurious status comes from the fact that it can precede a quantifying noun like *iemand* ‘someone’, as in (11a). As shown in (11b), *iemand* normally cannot

⁵ As shown in (i), the lexical item *wat* also occurs as a nominal predicate in clausal copular constructions:

- (i) a. *Dat is (me) wat.*
 that is (me) what
 ‘I think that’s quite something.’
 b. *Wat is dat?*
 What is that
 ‘What’s that?’

be preceded by an indefinite article.⁶

- (11) a. *Wat voor 'n iemand heb jij ontmoet?*
 What for a someone have you met
 “What kind of person did you meet?”
 b. *Jan heeft gisteren (*'n) iemand ontmoet.*
 Jan has yesterday (a) someone met
 “Jan met someone yesterday.”

The derived structure of *wat voor 'n boeken* is given in (12):⁷

⁶ As opposed to Leu (2008a,b) and van Riemsdijk (2005), we will not assume that the indefinite article *'n* precedes a silent noun SORT/KIND. Given the possibility of having a lexical noun *soort* ‘sort/kind’ in the *wat voor 'n N* construction, as in *wat voor 'n soort boeken* (what for a sort books, ‘what kind of books’), it is, of course, tempting to say that there is a silent noun SORT/KIND present in *wat voor 'n boeken*, which then has the representation: *wat voor 'n SOORT boeken*. Importantly, however, we also find patterns like the following, in which the article *'n* precedes the plural noun *soorten* (see also Corver 1990)

- (i) *Wat voor 'n soorten virussen zijn er?*
 What for a sorts viruses are there
 “What kinds of viruses are there?”

An analysis in which *wat voor 'n soorten virussen* receives the analysis *wat voor 'n SOORT soorten virussen* is not so obvious semantically. Its ‘non-silent’ counterpart, *wat voor een soort soorten virussen*, seems infelicitous.

⁷ The question may be raised as to whether there is any independent support for the application of DP-internal displacement of *wat*. It is quite hard to use islandhood effects (e.g. the complex NP-constraint, the wh-island constraint, et cetera) for showing that movement is involved in the derivation of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction. A potentially interesting contrast is the one given in (i), (ii), and (iii):

- (i) a. *wat voor iemand / iets heb jij gezien?*
 what for someone / something have you seen
 “You saw someone who is like what (i.e. what kind of person)?”
 “You saw something which is like what (i.e. what kind of thing)?”
 b. **wat voor niemand / niets heb jij gezien?*
 what for noone / nothing have you seen
 “You saw noone who is like what?”
 “You saw nothing which is like what?”
 (ii) a. *wat voor 'n dieren / wat voor twee dieren heb jij gezien?*
 What for a animals / what for two animals have you seen
 “What kind of (two) animals did you see?”
 b. **wat voor geen dieren heb jij gezien?*
 what for no animals have you seen
 “You saw no animals which were like what?”

The observation here is that *wat* cannot cooccur with a negative nominal expression within the *wat voor N*-construction. If DP-internal movement of *wat* to [Spec,DP] takes place, as in (12), the wh-word crosses the negative nominal expression (*niemand, niets, geen dieren*),

- (12) $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{voor}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [_{X'} 'n]_i + F [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

According to this representation, the nominal predicate *wat* undergoes *Predicate Inversion* and moves into [Spec,FP]. Furthermore, the spurious article *'n* raises and adjoins to the functional head F. Then there is a final movement step, called *Predicate Fronting* by Bennis et al., which places the inverted nominal predicate *wat* into [Spec,DP].⁸ Observe that the D-head is occupied by the preposition-like element *voor*. With Bennis et al. (1998), we will assume that this element is the lexicalization of a [+WH] operator D-head. It is this prepositional D-head which defines interrogative force on the nominal expression, and it is the Spec-position of this D-head from where the DP-internally displaced predicate *wat* can leave the nominal construction, yielding a discontinuous pattern like (1b).^{9, 10}

yielding a DP-structure in which the displaced wh-word is separated from the trace in the base position (i.e. complement of X) by an intervening negative word in [Spec,FP]. As is well-known from clausal constructions, a non-argumental wh-word cannot cross a negative expression (see Ross's Inner Island effects (1983); see also Corver (1990) and Honcoop (1998) for this observation in relation to the *wat voor*-split phenomenon). Thus, one might interpret the ill-formedness of (ib) and (iib) as some sort of DP-internal inner island effect.

- (iv) a. **Wat_i heeft niemand [t_i voor 'n boeken] gekocht?*
 What has noone – for a books bought
 “What kind of books did noone buy?”
 b. [*Wat voor 'n boeken*]_i heeft niemand t_i gekocht?

One might, of course, object that negative expressions like *niets* cannot be qualified for kind, and consequently cannot be questioned for this. As shown in (v), however, we do find nominal expressions containing a negative word and a qualifying element:

- (v) Ik heb [iets dergelijks] / [niets dergelijks] gezien
 I have something such-like-s / nothing such-like-s seen
 “I saw something like that / nothing like that.”

⁸ In Bennis et al (1998), the operation of Predicate Inversion is taken to be an A-movement type operation. The operation of Predicate Fronting is analyzed as an A-bar movement operation.

⁹ Bennis et al. (1998) note that, in many southern varieties of Dutch and also in substandard Dutch, *voor* is used as the infinitival complementizer in constructions that feature operator-movement to [Spec,CP], as, for example, in the infinitival relative clause in (i).

- (i) [*'n boek* [_{CP} *OP_i* [_{C'} *voor* [_{PRO} [_{PP} *t_i in*] *te kijken*]]]]]
 a book for into to look
 “a book to look into”

¹⁰ See Postma (1995), Bennis (1995), Bennis et al. (1998) for discussion of the structural meaning of the wh-word *wat*; i.e., the idea that the pronoun *wat* receives part of its meaning derivationally by moving to a specific syntactic position in the syntactic structure —for

Recall from our discussion of the *N van N*-construction in section 2.1 that *van* surfaces as a nominal copula in contexts of DP-internal Predicate Inversion, i.e., when the nominal predicate undergoes movement to [Spec,FP]. If the derivation of *wat voor 'n boeken* in (10) also involves A-movement of *wat* to [Spec,FP], we expect the appearance of the nominal copula *van*, which yields the pattern in (18). Schematically:

$$(13) \quad [_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{voor}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} F (= *van) + 'n_i [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$$

However, presence of *van* yields an ill-formed structure: **wat voor van 'n boeken*. Den Dikken, who also observes the impossibility of this pattern, states the following:¹¹

The suggestion that presents itself is that the presence of an overt meaningless functional element (*voor*) under D causes the emptiness of the LINKER in a context in which it would otherwise be obligatorily overt. This can be thought of as a kind of “non-proliferation treaty” —a desire to keep the amount of meaningless material to a minimum. (Den Dikken 2006:226)

As an alternative account of the non-co-occurrence of *voor* and *van*, one might propose that the two elements compete for the same structural position. Suppose, for example, that the nominal copula *van* (i.e. the F-head) raises to D when the specifier position of D gets occupied by the wh-

example, a Spec-position of a functional head. In (ia), for example, the pronoun *wat* has an indefinite meaning (i.e., ‘something’) when it occupies its base position. In (ib), *wat* receives its interrogative meaning by occupying the Spec-position of a functional category C, which is specified for the interrogativity (represented here as [+WH]).

- (i) a. *Ik denk [CP dat Jan wat gelezen heeft]*
 I think that Jan has what read has
 “I think that John read something.”
 (*wat* = indefinite pronominal reading)
- b. *Ik vraag me af [CP wat_j [C' C_{[+wh]} [IP Jan t_j gelezen heeft]]]?*
 I wonder me PRT wat John read has
 (*wat* = interrogative pronominal reading)

What acts as an (interrogative) operator in (ib), since it binds a variable (i.e. the ‘wh-trace’ left behind after wh-movement). Analogously to (ib), we may assume that the wh-word *wat* in (13) acts as an operator-like element, since it binds a wh-trace (variable) which is contained within the nominal expression. More specifically, the wh-word picks up its interrogative meaning in [Spec,DP] under spec-head agreement with the [+WH] prepositional determiner *voor*. It then moves to [Spec,CP], where it takes scope at the clausal level, yielding the reading: For what x_i [x_i : thing/property] John read [x_i book].

¹¹ The notion ‘linker’ corresponds to F in our representation.

element *wat*. Compare, in this respect, T-to-C movement of a finite auxiliary or the dummy verb *do* in English wh-interrogative main clauses (*Who will/do you invite?*). If F (= *van*) has to raise to D when a wh-element raises to [Spec,DP], then the complementary distribution of *voor* and *van* is directly accounted for: they compete for the same structural slot, viz. D. In what follows, we will show that certain dialects permit the pattern *wat van 'n boeken* (what of a books; ‘what kind of books’). We will argue that in this variant of the *wat voor N* construction, the nominal copula *van* raises to D.

Having provided the reader with some background of the phenomenon of DP-internal predicate displacement, we will now turn to a discussion of the cross-dialectal variation attested for the *wat voor 'n N* construction.

3. Dimensions of diversity within the *wat voor 'n N-noun phrase*

In this section we will present a descriptive overview and an analysis of the variants of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction as attested across dialects of Dutch. The dialectal data presented are collected as part of the DiDDD-project (Diversity in Dutch DP Design), which is executed at the University of Utrecht (see Corver et al. 2007). For this project, the nominal system of 53 dialects, evenly distributed over the Netherlands and Flanders (the Dutch speaking part of Belgium), has been investigated in depth.¹²

From a descriptive point of view, a first global distinction within the class of *wat voor 'n N* patterns can be made along the following dimensions: (a) presence of the nominal element *soort* ‘sort’; (b) presence of a ‘doubling’ pro-form, e.g. *zulk* ‘such’; (c) ‘bare form’ (i.e. absence of *soort* and *zulk*). As will become clear in the course of this article, further distinctions can be made within this descriptive tripartition on the basis of formal characteristics such as (d) presence versus absence of preposition-like elements; (e) presence versus absence of the indefinite article *'n*. In (14), an example from each class of the descriptive tripartition is given.

- | | | | |
|------|----|--|-----------------------------|
| (14) | a. | <i>wat voor 'n soort boeken</i>
what for a sort books | (the <i>soort</i> -pattern) |
| | b. | <i>wat voor zulke boeken</i>
what for such books | (the doubling pattern) |
| | c. | <i>wat voor 'n boeken</i>
what for a books | (‘bare’ pattern) |

¹² See Vangsnes (2008) for an in-depth micro-variation (i.e. dialectal) study of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction in the Scandinavian languages and Leu (2007, 2008a,b) for a comparative study of the Germanic languages in general, including variants of German (e.g., Swiss German). See also Van Riemsdijk (2005).

In what follows, we will discuss each of these descriptive patterns. For each pattern, we will first give a descriptive overview of the variants of the pattern as attested in the DiDDD database, and subsequently provide an analysis of these variants. We will start our discussion with the bare pattern in (14c).

3.1 The ‘bare’ pattern: *wat voor ’n boeken*

Starting with the ‘bare pattern’ — i.e. the pattern in which neither *soort* nor a doubling pronoun like *zulke* is present — we can distinguish the following variants:

- | | | | |
|------|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| (15) | a. | <i>wat voor ’n boeken</i> | what for a books |
| | b. | <i>wat voor boeken</i> | what for books |
| (16) | a. | <i>waffer ’n boeken</i> | what+for a books |
| | b. | <i>waffer boeken</i> | what+for books |
| (17) | a. | <i>wat van ’n boeken</i> | what of a books |
| | b. | <i>wat van boeken</i> | what of books |
| (18) | a. | <i>wat ’n boeken</i> | what a books |
| | b. | <i>wat boeken</i> | what books |

The a-examples differ from the b-examples in the presence versus absence of the spurious indefinite article *’n*. We will assume that the two variants have the same structure and only differ in the lexical (i.e. phonological) contents of the spurious indefinite article: *’n* (i.e. /n/) versus \emptyset (i.e. //; absence of sound). Schematically, represented here for (15):

- (19) $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{voor}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F_{\emptyset} + X_i (= \text{'n}/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{boeken} [X' t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

The pair in (16) differs from the one in (15) as regards the phonological strength of the preposition-like determiner: In (15) we have the phonologically strong form *voor* whereas in (16) we have the weak form *fer*. We will assume that the two forms occupy the same syntactic position, viz. D, and that the weak form, as opposed to the strong form, phonologically cliticizes onto the left-adjacent wh-word, yielding *waffer*.¹³

¹³ From an orthographic point of view, we might also have represented *fer* as *ver*, as this expresses the parallelism with *voor* even more clearly. We have chosen for *fer* as it (orthographically) expresses the [-voiced] property of the fricative more clearly.

- (20) $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{voor/fer}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F_\emptyset + X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

Consider next the pair in (17), where we find the preposition-like element *van* instead of *voor*.¹⁴ The question, obviously, arises as to what kind of element *van* is. Two options are available: (a) *van* is an instance of the nominal copula *van*, as in (21); (b) *van* is a preposition-like D(eterminer), just like *voor* (see (22)):

- (21) $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} D_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F (= \text{van}) + X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

- (22) $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{van}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F_\emptyset + X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

It is admittedly quite hard to decide between these two structural analyses. A nice characteristic of the analysis in (21) is that it displays the interaction between the preposition-like D(eterminer) *voor* and the nominal copula *van*. In none of the dialects investigated, we found a pattern in which *voor* and *van* co-occur: **wat voor van 'n boeken*. The absence of *voor* would make it possible for the nominal copula to surface. Turning next to the potential analysis in (22), we should ask ourselves whether *van* as a preposition-like determiner, analogously to *voor*, makes any sense. In Bennis et al. (1998), the analysis of *voor* as a preposition-like determiner was given support by drawing a parallel with the clausal system. That is, *voor* occurs as a (prepositional) complementizer in certain dialects. Given the often assumed parallelism between the clausal system and nominal system, one might expect there to be prepositional determiners as well (see note 9); the element *voor* in the *wat voor 'n N*-construction is taken to be such an element. Following this same line of reasoning, the question arises as to whether *van* ever occurs as a prepositional complementizer in varieties of Dutch. As suggested by the Aarschot Dutch example in (23), *van* can fulfill this role of 'prepositional complementizer' in certain varieties of Dutch (see Pauwels 1958:400).

- (23) *Hij had schrik [van te vallen].* (Aarschot Dutch)
He had fear to fall
"He was afraid to fall."

¹⁴ The *wat van 'n N*-pattern is found in the following dialects that are part of the dialectal database of the DiDDD-project: Hooghalen Dutch, Klazienaveen Dutch, Groenlo Dutch, Noord Deurningen Dutch, Borgloon Dutch, Oosteklo Dutch. These dialects are not all part of the same geographical region in the Netherlands or Belgium. For example, Klazienaveen Dutch is spoken in the province of Drenthe in the northern part of the Netherlands. Oosteklo Dutch, on the contrary, is spoken in East Flanders, Belgium.

Taking the perspective of cross-categorial parallelism, one might propose then that *van* can occur as a prepositional determiner as well. There is a subtle difference, though, between *van* in (23) and the prepositional complementizer *voor* in the example in note 9: the latter occurs in a clausal construction in which an (empty) operator has been moved to [Spec,CP]. In (23), it is not obvious that (empty) operator movement to [Spec,CP] has taken place. We seem to have an infinitival clause here, the subject position of which, [Spec,TP], is occupied by an empty pronoun, i.e. PRO. In other words, *van* in (23) is not really similar to prepositional *voor* in example (i) of note 9, in that it does not require any operator-like element in its Spec-position. Given this asymmetry between the prepositional complementizers *voor* and *van* and also adopting the view of cross-categorial symmetry, one might propose that the element *van* which features in the nominal expression *wat van ('n) boeken* is not a prepositional D(eterminer) either, but rather a nominal copula. The fact that *van* does not occur in any of the *wat voor*-variants of Aarschot Dutch may also be suggestive for rejecting the prepositional D-analysis of *van* in (17).¹⁵ Acknowledging that the evidence against a D-analysis is not very strong, we will tentatively assume in what follows that *van* is a nominal copula, as in representation (21).¹⁶

Consider, finally, the variants in (18), which may rightfully be called ‘bare patterns’, since there even is no preposition-like element (*voor/van*) present in the structure. We propose here that these variants have the same structure as the slightly ‘more lexicalized’ patterns in (15)-(17). As indicated, we assume that *wat* raises to [Spec,DP] via [Spec,FP].

$$(24) \quad [_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} D_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F (= \emptyset) + X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$$

3.2 The *soort*-pattern: *wat voor 'n soort boeken*

Within the descriptive pattern featuring the noun *soort* we have identified the following variants in our database:¹⁷

- (25) a. *wat voor ('n) soort van boeken*
 what for (a) sort of books
 “what kind of books”
 b. *wat voor ('n) soort boeken*

¹⁵ Aarschot Dutch has the following variants: *wat 'n N*, *wat N*, *waffer N*, *wat voor N*, *hoe 'n N*, *oke N* (see Pauwels 1958:350).

¹⁶ It will be argued in section 4 that *van* (=F), together with the adjoined small clause head X, raises to D.

¹⁷ Besides *soort*, also other nouns can function as a predicate nominal in this variant of the *wat voor N*-construction: e.g. *type*, *merk*, as in *wat voor type/merk auto's* (what for type/sort cars; ‘what kind of cars’).

- what for (a) sort books
- (26) a. *waffer ('n) soort van boeken*
 what+for (a) sort books
 b. *waffer ('n) soort boeken*
 what+for (a) sort books
- (27) *wat van soort boeken*¹⁸
 what of sort books
- (28) a. *wat ('n) soort van boeken*
 what (a) sort of books
 b. *wat ('n) soort boeken*
 what (a) soort books
- (29) *wat soortige boeken*
 what soort-ig+e books

Except for the presence of *soort* and modulo example (29), the patterns in (25)-(28) are quite similar to the ones discussed in section 3.1.¹⁹ One important dimension of variation concerns the presence versus absence of *van* after *soort*. Furthermore, the pattern in (29), where *wat soort* is followed by the bound morpheme *-ig(e)*, is also quite remarkable.

Obviously, the first question which we will have to address concerns the status of the noun *soort*. That is, what role does it fulfill within the nominal construction.²⁰ We propose that *soort* is a noun which acts as a nominal predicate and takes *boeken* as its external argument within a (DP-internal) small clause configuration (see (30a)).²¹ The linear order *soort* (= the predicate) + *boeken* (= external argument) is the result of Predicate Inversion; see (30b). We further propose that the nominal expression *soort (van) boeken* functions as the external argument of the nominal predicate *wat*, as in (31a). The inverted surface order is obtained by predicate displacement of *wat* to a position preceding the external argument *soort*

¹⁸ (27) is the only pattern of the type *wat van soort N* attested in our database. Possibly, other variants of this type exist, such as *wat van 'n soort N* or *wat van soort van N*. We have only represented here what we found in our database.

¹⁹ In the examples (25)-(28), we have represented the variation regarding the presence versus absence of *'n* in a single example. In (15)-(18), this dimension of variation was represented in different examples (the a-examples versus the b-examples).

²⁰ In certain dialects, we also find the noun *soortement* besides *soort*. Presumably, *-ment* is the same morpheme as the one found in nouns like: *mankement* ('defect'), amusement ('entertainment'), *traktement* ('salary, pay'). The non-productive, non-Germanic suffix *-ment* typically attaches to the root of verbs ending on *-e(e)r-en*; e.g. *mankeren* ('to lack'), *amsuseren* (to amuse), *trakteren* ('to treat'). So we also find: *sorteren* (to sort, assort').

²¹ See also Zamparelli (1998) for discussion of the nominal construction *this kind of car*.

(*van*) *boeken* (see (31b)).²² In other words, predicate displacement applies more than once in this nominal construction.²³

- (30) a. $[_{XP} \textit{boeken} [_{X'} X_{\emptyset} \textit{soort}]]$
 b. $[_{FP} \textit{soort}_j [_{F'} [F (= \textit{van}) + X_i (= \emptyset)] [_{XP} \textit{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]$ ²⁴
- (31) a. $[_{XP} \textit{soort van boeken} [_{X'} X (= 'n/\emptyset) \textit{wat}]]$
 b. $[_{FP} \textit{wat}_m [_{F'} [F + X_l (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \textit{soort van boeken} [_{X'} t_l t_m]]]]$
 c. $[_{DP} \textit{wat}_m [_{D'} \textit{voor}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_m [_{F'} [F + X_l (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \textit{soort van boeken} [_{X'} t_l t_m]]]]]]$ ²⁵

²² As an alternative to the analysis in (30)-(31), one might propose that the pattern *wat voor 'n soort van boeken* has the following internal syntax: $[[\textit{wat voor een soort}] \textit{van boeken}]$. That is, *wat voor 'n soort* constitutes a complex nominal expression which is derived by predicate displacement of *wat* to a position preceding *soort*. This complex expression acts as a predicate nominal which predicates over *boeken*, as in (i).

- (i) a. $[_{XP} \textit{boeken} [_{X'} X_{\emptyset} [\textit{wat voor 'n soort}]]]$
 b. $[_{FP} [\textit{wat voor 'n soort}]_k [_{F'} [F (= \textit{van}) + X_l] [_{XP} \textit{boeken} [_{X'} t_l t_i]]]]$

We do not adopt this analysis for the following reasons: Firstly, the coordination patterns in (ii) are incompatible with the structural analysis in (ib). Secondly, subextraction of *wat* out of *wat voor 'n soort van N* is possible. In (ib), *wat* is part of a left branch specifier phrase. Normally, subextraction is not possible from within such a configuration; see also section 4.

- (ii) a. *wat [voor 'n soort van boeken] en [voor 'n soort van kranten]*
 what for a sort of books and for a sort of newspapers
 “what kind of books and newspapers”
 b. *wat voor 'n [soort van boeken en soort van kranten]*

²³ That a nominal expression derived by predicate inversion can be involved in a more complex nominal involving predicate inversion is clear from an example like: *that asshole of an idiot of a doctor* (see Den Dikken (2006) for discussion).

²⁴ As pointed out by two reviewers, our analysis predicts that the spurious indefinite article *'n* should also occur as a small clause head in (30), yielding — in combination with the derivation in (31) — the pattern: *wat voor 'n soort van 'n boeken* (what for a sort of a books; ‘what kind of books’). Although we have not found this pattern in our database, arguably because this logically possible form was not presented in the questionnaires which were filled out by our informants, both two of the reviewers and we as authors think this pattern is quite acceptable. Notice by the way that the occurrence of this pattern makes the analysis according to which *'n* is followed by a silent noun *SOORT* (see e.g. Leu (2008a,b) and see also note 6) implausible; it is quite hard to see what it means: *wat voor 'n soort van 'n SOORT boeken* (what for a sort of a SORT books; *‘what kind of a kind of books’). Notice also that the same pattern with a second, non-silent noun *soort* is infelicitous: **wat voor 'n soort van 'n soort boeken*.

²⁵ Under the analysis in (30)-(31), one expects a pattern like *wat voor 'n soort van 'n boeken* to be possible. In this pattern we find two instances of the spurious indefinite

Taking this derivation as our starting point, we will discuss in what follows different variants of this *wat voor 'n soort N* pattern. Before doing that, however, we will first concentrate on some of the ingredients of the derivational analysis in (30)-(31), starting with the first part, i.e. (30a,b). Let us first of all point out that the pattern *soort van boeken* is not restricted to the *wat voor*-environment. As shown in (32), it can also, for example, be part of a nominal expression (DP) introduced by an indefinite article or a demonstrative determiner:

- (32) a. *Jan heeft [een soort van gedicht] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a sort of poem out-read
 “Jan read out a sort of poem.”
 b. *Jan leest [dit soort van boeken].*
 Jan reads this sort of books
 “Jan reads this kind of books.”

Following the derivation in (30a,b), a nominal expression like *een soort van gedicht* will have the derived representation in (33):²⁶

- (33) $[_{DP} \text{een} [_{FP} \text{soort}_j [_{F'} [F (= \text{van}) + X_i (= \emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{gedicht} [X' t_i t_j]]]]]$

An analysis according to which *van* is a nominal copula, analogously to the element *van* in the *N van N*-construction, leads to the expectation that they display similar grammatical behavior. This is indeed the case. First of all, it is impossible to coordinate two sequences each of which is introduced by *van*; see (34). In other words, *van+NP* cannot act as a conjunct. Secondly, as exemplified in (35), extraposition of the *van+NP* is impossible. Thirdly, as illustrated in (36), *van+NP* cannot be pronominalized as *daar+van* (there-of).

- (34) a. **Jan heeft [een soort van gedicht en van opstel] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a sort of poem and of essay out-read
 “Jan read out a kind of poem and a kind of essay.”
 b. **Jan heeft [een pracht van een gedicht en van een opstel] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a beauty of a poem and of an essay out-read
 “Jan read out a beauty of a poem and a beauty of an

article 'n. According to our own judgments, and also according to the judgments of the reviewers, this instance of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction is quite acceptable.

²⁶ Spurious 'n is possible here: *'n soort van 'n gedicht* (a sort of a poem; 'a sort of poem'), *dit soort van 'n gedichten* (this sort of a poems; 'this kind of poems')

essay.”

- (35) a. **Jan heeft een soort voorgelezen van gedicht.*
 Jan has a sort read-out of poem
 “Jan read out a sort of poem.”
- b. **Jan heeft een pracht voorgelezen van een gedicht*
 Jan has a beauty read-out of a poem
 “Jan read out a beauty of a poem.”
- (36) a. **Jan heeft [een soort daarvan] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a sort there-of out-read
 “Jan read out a (poem-like) thing.”
- b. **Jan heeft [een pracht daarvan] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a beauty there-of out-read
 “Jan read out a beauty of a (poem-like) thing.”

Observe that *van* as found in a nominal expression like *een gedicht van Jan* ‘a poem of Jan’s’ behaves differently in all three respects, which suggests that it has an internal syntax different from the *N van N*-construction and the *soort van N*-construction:

- (37) a. *Jan heeft [een (gezamenlijk) gedicht van mij en van Kees] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a (joint) poem of me and of Kees read-out
 “Jan read out a poem jointly written by me and Kees.”
- b. *Jan heeft een gedicht voorgelezen van Kees.*
 Jan has a poem read-out of Kees
 “Jan read out a poem written by Kees.”
- c. *Jan heeft [een gedicht daarvan] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a poem there-of read-out
 “Jan read out a poem written by him/her.”

Having provided support for the parallelism between the *N van N*-construction and the *soort van N*-construction, let us next turn to a variant of the latter construction, viz. the pattern in which *soort* and *N* are juxtaposed; i.e. there is no intervening nominal copula *van*.

- (38) *Jan heeft [een soort gedicht] voorgelezen.*
 Jan has a sort poem out-read
 “Jan read out a kind of poem.”

In the spirit of Corver’s (2002) analysis of Dutch pseudopartitive constructions like *’n doos sigaren* (a box cigars, ‘a box of cigars’), where we also find a juxtaposition of two nominal elements, we will assume that *soort*, being a bare noun, is able to undergo predicate displacement of the

head movement type; that is, *soort* raises to X, forming the complex head [_X X+*soort*], which subsequently head-moves to F, yielding [_F F+[_X X+*soort*]].²⁷ This yields the derived structure in (39):²⁸

$$(39) \quad [_{DP} \text{een} [_{FP} [[_{F} F+[X+\textit{soort}]_i] [_{XP} \textit{gedicht} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$$

We propose that, since the complex head F becomes ‘lexicalized’ (i.e., it has sound properties) after adjunction of the complex head [X+*soort*] to F, there is no reason anymore to spell out F as the nominal copula *van*. In other words, there is a sort of economy principle which blocks copular spell out of the F-head, when the complex head already has obtained lexical contents.

So far, we have given an analysis of the lower part of the *wat voor 'n soort (van) N*-pattern: the variant *soort van 'n N* results from phrasal predicate displacement, whereas the variant *soort N* involves predicate displacement of the head movement type.

Turning now to the various instantiations of the pattern *wat voor 'n soort N* in (25)-(28), we see that the analyses of the various realizations are quite similar to the ones given for the *wat voor 'n N*-pattern. The major difference is that in the latter pattern we have a simple phrase (e.g. the NP *boeken*) as the external argument of *wat* (see (19)), whereas in the former pattern we have a complex phrase (e.g. *soort (van) boeken*) as the external argument of *wat*; see (31). The variant *wat voor ('n) soort (van) boeken* now

²⁷ An alternative line of analysis would be one according to which the predicate *soort* is base-generated as a specifier of the small clause and *gedicht* as the complement of X. Under such an analysis, the predication relationship in syntax is configurational yet nondirectional (see Den Dikken (2006:43)). In this chapter, we will adopt an analysis in which the predicate originates in the complement position of X.

²⁸ A question which may arise is whether the *N van N*-construction has a juxtaposed *N-N* variant as well. As a matter of fact, we do find the pattern in (ib) besides (ia). Importantly, this *N-N* variant can have a phrasal stress pattern; i.e. stress falls on the second noun (*'n pracht geDICHT*), which suggests that it is not a nominal compound. It should be *What* acts as an (interrogative) operator, since it binds a variable (i.e. the ‘wh-trace’ left behind after wh-movement):

d, however, that this pattern is exceptional. On the whole, the juxtaposed pattern is not permitted as a variant of the *N van N*-construction, as exemplified in (ii).

- | | | |
|------|----|--|
| (i) | a. | <i>Jan heeft ['n pracht van 'n gedicht] voorgelezen</i>
Jan has a beauty of a poem read-out |
| | b. | <i>Jan heeft ['n pracht gedicht] voorgelezen</i> |
| (ii) | a. | <i>Jan heeft ['n juweel van 'n gedicht] voorgelezen</i>
Jan has a jewel of a poem read-out |
| | b. | * <i>Jan heeft ['n juweel gedicht] voorgelezen</i>
Jan has a jewel poem read-out |

We have nothing of interest to say here about the restricted occurrence of the *N-N* counterpart of the *N van N*-construction.

has the structure in (40a), where we abstract away from the internal structure of the external argument *soort (van) boeken*. The variant *waffer ('n) soort (van) boeken* has the structure in (40b). Finally, the variant *wat ('n) soort (van) boeken* is assigned the structure in (40c):

- (40) a. $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{voor}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F+X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{soort (van) } N [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$
 b. $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} \text{fer}_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F+X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{soort (van) } N [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$
 c. $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} D_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F+X_i (= 'n/\emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{soort (van) } N [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

As for the variant *wat van soort boeken*, we will assume, in line with our discussion of *van* in section 3.1, that *van* is a nominal copula.

- (41) $[_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} D_{[+WH]} [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F (= \mathbf{van})+X_i (= \emptyset)] [_{XP} \text{soort boeken } [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

Summarizing, our analysis of the *wat voor soort N*-pattern is similar to our analysis of the *wat voor N*-pattern. The crucial difference is that in the former pattern, the external argument of the nominal predicate *wat* is complex (*soort (van) boeken*) rather than simplex (*boeken*). Importantly, the complex nominal expression *soort (van) boeken* involves a predication configuration and is derived by means of predicate displacement. There is one variant of the *soort*-pattern which we have not discussed so far, viz. *wat soortige boeken* (see (29)). We will wait with the discussion of this variant until section 3.4.

3.3 The doubling pattern: *wat voor zulke boeken*

Having provided an analysis of the bare pattern (*wat voor 'n N*) and the *soort*-pattern (*wat voor 'n soort (van) N*), let us now turn to the third descriptive pattern, i.e. the doubling pattern, as in *wat voor zulke boeken* (what for such books, ‘what kind of books’). Recall that we called it the ‘doubling’ pattern because of the co-occurrence of two pronominal elements, namely the interrogative pronoun *wat* and the indefinite demonstrative element *zulke* (or, as we will see below, the interrogative pronoun *welke*). We will claim that *zulk* is not an atomic word, but rather consists of various subparts, one being *-lk*. We will propose that *-lk* is an adjectival small clause head (i.e. a Relator in the sense of Den Dikken (2006)), which establishes a relation between a predicate (i.e. the complement of *-lk*) and a subject (the specifier of *-lk*). But before getting into this more deeply, we would like to start with the pair (42)-(43):

- (42) [*Wat voor 'n boek*] heeft Jan gelezen?
 What for a book has Jan read
- (43) [*Zo 'n boek*] heeft Jan gelezen.
 Such a book has Jan read

(42) and (43) are related: In a way, (42) is the interrogative counterpart of (43), which features what is called the indefinite demonstrative indefinite pronominal *zo 'n* in Dutch traditional grammar. Modulo the element *voor*, the two constructions are very similar: a pro-form precedes a noun and the two are separated from each other by an intervening indefinite article *'n*. In Bennis et al (1998), this parallelism is made visible in the structural analysis of the two nominal constructions: both constructions involve a predication configuration and, in both constructions, the surface word order is derived by means of Predicate Inversion. As we already know, in (42), *wat* is the inverted predicate. In *zo 'n boek*, the pro-form *zo* is the inverted predicate. In other words, what is traditionally analyzed as a single word, actually consists of two parts: *zo* and *'n*. Schematically:²⁹

- (44) a. [_{XP} boek [_X [_X 'n] zo]]

²⁹ Also here the question arises as to whether there is any independent evidence for the displacement of the pro-predicate *zo*. Interestingly, *zo* cannot combine with a negative word (see (ia,b)) but can be combined with the 'positive' counterpart (see (iia,b)). This may be interpreted as an inner island effect: the predicate *zo* cannot cross the intervening negative word, which occupies [Spec,XP]; see (iii).

- (i) a. **zo niets*
 so nothing; "nothing like that"
- b. **zo niemand*
 zo noone; "noone like that"
- (ii) a. *zo iets*
 so something
 "something like that"
- b. *zo iemand*
 so someone
 "someone like that"
- (iii) *_{[FP zo_j [_{F'} [_{F+X_i]] [_{XP} niets [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]}}

There does not seem to be any semantic reason for the ill-formedness of the patterns in (i) and (ii). Notice, for example, the following constructions, which semantically correspond to the intended meanings in (ia) and (iia):

- (iii) a. *niets dergelijks*
 nothing such-like-s
 "nothing like that"
- b. *iets dergelijks*
 something such-like-s
 "something like that"

- b. $[_{FP} zo_j [_{F'} [F+X_i (= 'n)] [_{XP} boek [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$

Thus, put informally, *zo 'n boek* expresses the meaning: ‘book which is so’; i.e. ‘a book like that’. That *zo* can function as a pro-predicate is also clear from clausal patterns like the following:

- (45) a. *Jan is normaal nooit zo.* (e.g. *zo* = ‘arrogant’)
 Jan is normally never so
 “Jan normally never behaves that way.”
 b. *Jij wordt later ook zo.* (e.g. *zo* = bald)
 You become later also so
 “Later, you will also be like that.”

In (45a,b) *zo* functions as the predicate in a clausal copular construction, with *zijn* (‘to be’) as the copular verb in (45a), and *worden* (‘to become’) as the copular verb in (45b).

If the analysis in (45b) is on the right track, we expect *'n* in (45b) to be an instance of the spurious indefinite article. Although in Standard Dutch, we do not find a pattern in which *'n* precedes a plural noun, in colloquial Dutch and Dutch dialects a pattern like that is attested (see, for example, Pauwels 1958):³⁰

- (46) $[Zo 'n boeken] heeft Jan gelezen$
 So a books has Jan read
 “Jan read such books.”

As an alternative to the interrogative pattern in (43a), we find the pattern in (47a) in a number of Dutch dialects. We propose that, analogously to the non-interrogative *zo 'n boek*, this variant has the structure in (47b):

- (47) a. $[Hoe 'n boek] heb je gelezen?$
 b. $[_{DP} hoe_j [_{D'} D_{[+WH]}] [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} [F+X_i (= 'n)] [_{XP} boek [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

Although in certain dialects it is possible to use a nominal expression like (46), in which *'n* is followed by a plural noun, in standard Dutch (and many other dialects) one has to use the variant in (48), featuring the pronominal element *zulk(e)*:

- (48) $[Zulke boeken] heeft Jan gelezen.$
 such-e books has Jan read

³⁰ In the DiDDD-database, the following dialects display, for example, this pattern: Lier Dutch, Maasbree Dutch, Dilbeek Dutch.

“Jan read such books.”

Also here, Dutch traditional grammars characterize *zulke* as a single word. However, extending our decompositional analysis for *zo'n* in (44a), we would like to propose that *zulke* contains the following sub-parts: *zo* + *-lk* + *-e*. Thus, the first part corresponds to the pro-form *zo*. But what about *-lk* and *-e*? As for *-lk* we propose that this bound-morphemic element is the equivalent of the English word *like*, which typically establishes a predication relationship between an argument and a predicate, as for example in (49), where *eyes* functions as the subject and *diamonds* as the predicate within the nominal expression *eyes like diamonds*.

(49) *She has [eyes like diamonds].*

In Dutch, we have the equivalent pattern in (50), featuring the element *gelijk* ‘like’. The use of *gelijk* is somewhat archaic; normally the word *als* ‘like/as’ is used in this context:

(50) a. *Zij heeft [ogen gelijk diamanten].*
 b. *Zij heeft [ogen als diamanten].*

With Bennis et al (1998) and Den Dikken (2006), we assume that *like* is a small clause head; i.e. a Relator in the sense of Den Dikken (2006). We further propose that *-lk* is a bound morphemic instance of the small clause head. This relator head establishes a predication relationship between a predicate and an argument. In the case of *zulke boeken* in (48), we take *-lk* to establish a predication relation between the predicate *zo* and the argument *boeken*. This is represented in (51a). The surface order results from the application of Predicate Inversion, as in (51b):

(51) a. $[_{XP} \text{boeken } [_{X'} [_{X'} -lk] \text{zo}]]$
 b. $[_{FP} \text{zo}_j [_{F'} [[_{X_i} (= -lk) + F] + -e]] [_{XP} \text{boeken } [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]$
 (= *zulke boeken*)

Importantly, *zulke* is morphologically inflected: the inflection *-e* — which is the same inflection as the one found on attributively used adjectives (*mooi-e boeken*; beautiful-*e* books) — agrees with the plural noun *boeken*. The property of being inflected like an adjective, suggests that *-lk* is an adjectival (i.e. [+N,+V]) relator head. In this respect it differs from the spurious indefinite article, which we take to be nominal (i.e. [+N,-V]) in nature. In the context, of this article we will not present a full-fledged theory on the nature of adjectival inflection. We will assume that the bound-morphemic adjectival relator-head enters into a spec-head agreement relationship with the noun *boeken*, which manifests itself morphologically

as the adjectival inflection $-e$ on $-lk$ (i.e. $-lk-e$).³¹

Interestingly, besides the form *zulke* we also find the form *zu(l)kse* in certain Dutch dialects. We propose that the $-s$ in *zu(l)kse* is a bound-morphemic instance of the nominal copula.³² Schematically (example from Uithuizen Dutch):

- (52) *Ik heb krekt zukke/zukse schounen as mien zuster.*
I have exactly such-*e*/such-*s-e* shoes as my sister
“I have exactly the same shoes as my sister.”

- (53) $[_{FP} z\emptyset_j [_{F'} [X_i (= -(l)k)+F (= s/\emptyset)+-e] [_{XP} schounen$
 $[X' t_i t_j]]]]$
($F = -s \rightarrow zukse schounen$; $F = \emptyset \rightarrow zukke schounen$)

In certain dialects (not in Standard Dutch) we find the interrogative pattern *hoelke boeken* (how-lke books, ‘what kind of books’).³³ If (51b) is the analysis for *zulke boeken*, then arguably (54) is the analysis for *hoelke boeken*:

- (54) a. $[_{XP} boeken [X [X -lk] hoe]]$
b. $[_{FP} hoe_j [_{F'} [F (= \emptyset) +X_i (= -lk) + -e] [_{XP} boeken$
 $[X' t_i t_j]]]]$

Having given an analysis of *wat voor 'n N* variants such as *hoe'n boeken* and *hoe(l)ke boeken*, let us next turn to the slightly more complex patterns in (55):

- (55) a. *wat voor zulke boeken* (Uithuizen Dutch)
what for such-INFL books
b. *wat voor welke boeken*
what for which-INFL books

In these variants, we find two pronominal elements: the wh-word *wat* and a second pronominal element: (a) the indefinite pronominal *zulke/zukke* in (55a) and (b) the interrogative pronominal *welke* in (55b).³⁴

³¹ Under an Agree-based analysis, one might propose that $-lk$ enters into an Agree-relation with the noun *boeken* in $[Spec,XP]$ after $-lk$ has raised to F.

³² Zie Den Dikken (1998) and Corver (2008, 2009) for other nominal environments in which the nominal copula $-s$ surfaces.

³³ In the DiDDD-database, Urk Dutch and Gilze Dutch exhibit this pattern, for example.

³⁴ In Uithuizen Dutch, we also find the pattern *wat van zukke boeken* (what of such books; ‘what kind of books’). It does not seem unlikely that *van* is the nominal copula here. Another interesting pattern is *watvukke boeken* (what-v-(s)uch books; ‘what kind of books’) from Noord-Deurningen Dutch. The form *watvukke*, possibly, is a contracted form of *wat+van+zukke*.

Two potential analyses come to mind for these constructions: One analysis would be to say that the additional pro-form and the noun *boeken* constitute a complex nominal expression which functions as the external argument of the predicate nominal *wat* (as in (56a)). Importantly, the small clause subject *zulke boeken* is itself derived via predicate displacement, as is depicted in (51). The surface word order *wat voor zulke boeken* is derived by application of predicate movement, as schematically represented in (56b).

- (56) a. $[_{XP} [zulke\ boeken] [_{X'} X\ wat]]$
 b. $[_{DP} wat_j [_{D'} voor [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} X_i+F [_{XP} [zulke\ boeken] [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

According to the second, alternative analysis, it is not the small clause subject which is complex, but rather the predicate nominal. More specifically, the ‘base structure’ is the one in (57a), with *boeken* as the small clause subject, *-lk* as the small clause head (i.e. the Relator in Den Dikken’s sense), and *wat voor zo* as the complex predicate. This predicate has the ‘underlying structure’ in (58a): *zo* is the small clause subject and *wat* is the interrogative predicate. Thus, the meaning corresponding to this small clause configuration can informally be paraphrased as: ‘so is what?’. The pattern *wat voor zo* is the result of predicate movement of *wat* to the specifier position of *voor*, as in (58b). The complex predicate *wat voor zo* undergoes predicate displacement to a position preceding *boeken*, with concomitant movement of the small clause head *-lk(e)*. This yields the sequence *wat voor zo + -lke boeken*.³⁵

- (57) a. $[_{XP} [boeken] [_{X'} -lk [wat\ voor\ zo]]]$
 b. $[_{FP} [wat\ voor\ zo]_j [_{F'} [X_i (= -lk)+F]+e [_{XP} boeken [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$
- (58) a. $[_{XP} zo [_{X'} X\ wat]]$
 b. $[_{DP} wat_j [_{D'} voor [_{FP} t'_j [X_i+F] [_{XP} zo [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$

The question, obviously, arises as to whether there is any empirical support for one or the other analysis. One potential argument comes from subextraction. Getting ahead of our analysis of the discontinuous *wat voor N*-patterns, we already point out here an important contrast between the patterns *wat voor 'n boeken* and *wat voor 'n soort boeken*, on the one hand, and the *wat voor N*-patterns in (55), on the other hand: The former permit

³⁵ Certain dialects permit the pattern *wat voor zukse boeken*, featuring the element *-s*, which we interpret as an instance of the nominal copula:

- (i) $[_{FP} [wat\ voor\ zo]_i [_{F'} [X_j (= -lk)+F (=s)]+e [_{XP} boeken [_{X'} t_j t_i]]]]]$

subextraction of *wat* out of the nominal expression (see (59a)), whereas the latter do not (see (59b)).

- (59) a. *Wat_i heb jij voor [t_i voor 'n (soort) boeken] gekocht?*
 What have you for a (sort) books bought
 “What kind of books did you buy?”
- b. **Wat_i heb jij voor [t_i voor zulke/welke boeken] gekocht?*
 What have you for sort such/which books bought
 “What kind of books did you buy?”

This asymmetry in subextraction behavior is quite remarkable since the patterns are superficially quite similar. Under a structural analysis like (56b), it is not immediately obvious why *wat* cannot be moved out of the nominal expression, since, after DP-internal predicate displacement has taken place, *wat* occupies [Spec,DP], which is the escape hatch for subextraction. Under a structural analysis like (57), on the contrary, the ill-formedness of the subextraction pattern may follow from the fact that *wat* is too deeply embedded within the *wat voor N*-construction. Importantly, it does not occupy the edge position of the nominal expression *wat voor zulke boeken*, but rather the edge position of the inverted predicate *wat voor zo*, which is a left branch specifier contained within the larger nominal expression *wat voor zulke boeken*. This implies that removal of *wat* out of the *wat voor N*-construction involves subextraction out of a left branch specifier of the nominal expression. Such subextractions are generally ruled out for reasons of locality. For example, subextraction of *wat* is impossible out of a *wat voor N*-construction which acts as left branch possessor within a complex nominal expression (see (60a)). As shown in (60b), pied piping of the entire nominal expression is required.

- (60) *Ik vraag me af ...*
 I wonder REFL PRT ...
- a. *...*[wat]_i ze [[t_i voor 'n jongen] z'n fiets] hebben gestolen.*
 ...what they for a boy his bike have stolen
- b. ...*[[wat voor 'n jongen] z'n fiets]_i ze t_i hebben gestolen.*
 ...what for a boy his bike they have stolen
 “I wonder what kind of boy’s bike they stole.”

We will assume that the pattern *wat voor welke boeken* has the same derivation as *wat voor zulke boeken*, the only difference being the small clause that constitutes the predicate of *boeken*. Instead of $[_{XP} zo [_X' X wat]]$ in (58), we have the predicate $[_{XP} wat [_X' X wat]]$, which can informally be paraphrased as: ‘something is what?’³⁶

³⁶ *wat* in [Spec,XP] is the indefinite pronoun, meaning ‘something’.

We propose that that the ‘doubling’ patterns in (61) essentially have the same derivation as the patterns in (55).

- (61) a. *hoe zo 'n boek*
 how so a book
 “what kind of book?”
 b. *hoe zulke boeken*
 how such books
 “what kind of books?”

The sequence *hoe zo* forms a complex phrase derived by predicate displacement of the interrogative word *hoe*, as in (63):

- (62) a. $[_{XP} \text{zo } [_{X'} X \text{ hoe}]]$
 b. $[_{FP} \text{hoe}_j [_{F'} [X_i + F] [_{XP} \text{zo } [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]$
 (*hoe zo*)

The complex phrase *hoe zo* constitutes a predicate of *boeken*. The surface word order is derived by applying predicate displacement to the complex predicate *hoe zo*, as in (63) and (64). In (63), *'n* is the small clause head, and in (64) *-lk* is the small clause head.

- (63) a. $[_{XP} [\text{boeken}] [_{X'} 'n [\text{hoe zo}]]]$
 b. $[_{FP} [\text{hoe zo}]_j [_{F'} [X_i (= 'n) + F] [_{XP} \text{boek } [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$
 (*hoe zo 'n boek*)
 (64) a. $[_{XP} [\text{boeken}] [_{X'} -lk-e [\text{hoe zo}]]]$
 b. $[_{FP} [\text{hoe zo}]_j [_{F'} [X_i (= -lk-e) + F] [_{XP} \text{boeken } [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$
 (*hoe zulke boeken*)³⁷

Our analysis of *-lk* as an adjectival (i.e. [+N,+V]) small clause head opens the way to an analysis of the pattern *wat soortige boeken* in (29). In the next section, we will briefly discuss this pattern.

3.4 Another soort-variant: *wat soortige N*

The central question about this variant of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction is, of course, the following: What is the nature of the bound morpheme *-ig*,

³⁷ In certain dialects of Dutch, we also find the pattern *hou zukse bouken*:

- (i) *Hou zukse bouken hes de koft?* (Uithuizen Dutch)
 How such-s-e books have you bought
 “What kind of books did you buy?”

which appears attached to the noun *soort*? We propose that *-ig* is an adjectival suffix; see also Leu (2008a,b) for German. More specifically, we assume that, just like adjectival *-lk*, it is a small clause head that mediates between an external argument (i.e. the subject) and a predicate. Schematically:

$$(65) \quad [XP NP_{subject} [X' ig YP_{predicate}]]$$

Potential support for this Relator-status of *-ig* may come from the following pairs, which suggest a certain parallelism between the *N van N* construction and the construction featuring *-ig*.

- (66) a. *'n schat van 'n jongen*
a darling of a boy
b. *'n schatt-ig-e jongen*
a darling-ig-e boy
“a darling of a boy”/ “a cute boy”
- (67) a. *'n etter van 'n ventje*
a puss of a guy
b. *'n etter-ig ventje*
a puss-ig guy
“a jerk of a boy”/ “a nasty boy”

It does not seem implausible to assign an analysis to the examples (66b)-(67b) which parallels the analysis of the *N van N*-constructions in the a-examples. This structurally parallel analysis is depicted in (68):

- (68) a. $[DP 'n [FP schat_j [F' F (= van)+X_i (= 'n) [XP jongen [X' t_i t_j]]]]]$
“a darling of a boy”
b. $[DP 'n [FP schat_j [F' [F+[X ig+-e]_i] [XP jongen [X' t_i t_j]]]]]$

Taking *-ig* to be an adjectival Relator-head, we can now assign the following analysis to the expression *wat soortige boeken*. First of all, we propose that *wat soort* constitutes a phrase, whose internal syntax involves predicate movement. More specifically, (69a) is taken to be the base structure, and (69b) the derived structure.

- (69) a. $[XP soort [X' X wat]]$
b. $[DP wat_j [D' D [FP t'_j [X_i+F] [XP soort [X' t_i t_j]]]]]$

The phrase *wat soort*, in turn, functions as a predicate over the NP *boeken*, with the adjectival head *-ig* functioning as the mediating Relator-head:

- (70) a. $[_{XP} [boeken] [_{X'} -ig [wat\ soort]]]$
 b. $[_{FP} [wat\ soort]_j [_{F'} [X_i (= -ig) + F] + e [_{XP} boeken [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]$

Summarizing, we have analyzed three descriptive patterns of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction: the bare pattern (*wat voor boeken*), the *soort*-pattern (*wat voor 'n soort (van) boeken*) and the doubling pattern (*wat voor zulke boeken*). In all three patterns, *wat* starts out as a predicate nominal in a predication configuration and undergoes predicate displacement to a position preceding the ‘subject’ of the predication relationship. The nature of the subject differs in the three descriptive patterns: In the bare pattern, a bare NP (*boeken*) is the subject; in the *soort*-pattern, *soort*+NP (*soort boeken*) constitutes the subject of *wat*; in the doubling pattern, finally, a pro-form (e.g. *zo*) acts as the subject of *wat*.

4. Micro-diversity in the split *wat voor 'n N*-construction

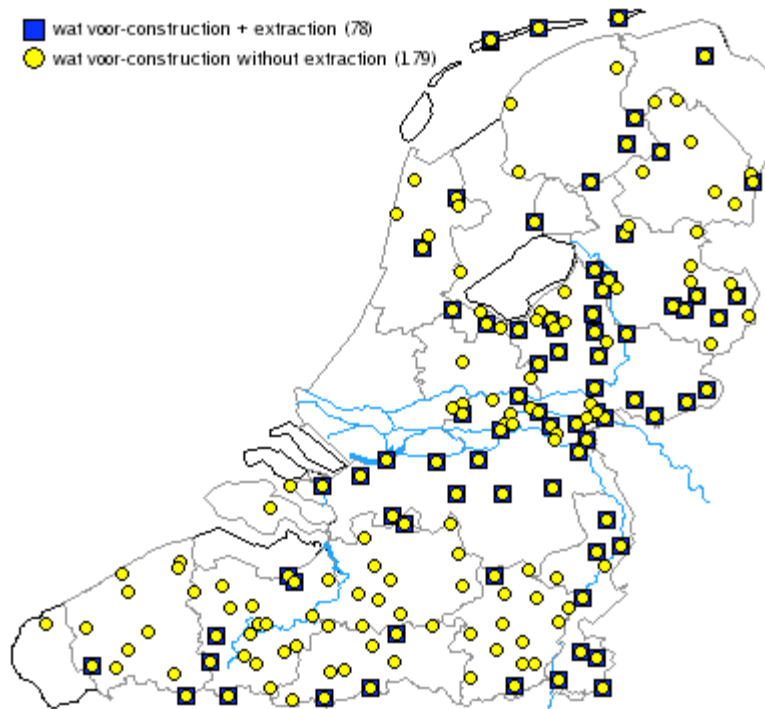
Having provided an analysis of the internal syntax of various *wat voor N*-patterns, we will now turn to the external syntax of this interrogative nominal construction. More specifically, we will examine the phenomenon of *wat voor*-split from a micro-comparative perspective. As will become clear, this phenomenon is not attested in all dialectal varieties of Dutch. The question obviously arises then whether this variation can somehow be related to differences in the internal syntax of the cross-dialectal variants of the *wat voor 'n N*-construction.

Before turning to a more detailed discussion of each of the split patterns, let us formulate some major empirical findings that emerged from our cross-dialectal study:

- There are Dutch dialects that do not permit the split pattern.
- If Dutch dialect L allows for the split *wat voor*-pattern, it also allows for the non-split pattern.
- There are no dialects which have the split *wat voor*-pattern but do not have the non-split pattern.

These findings are represented in the map in (71). The yellow dots represent the dialects that do not permit subextraction of the *wh*-element. The small squares with a yellow dot are the dialects which have both the split pattern and the non-split pattern. The absence of dotless squares shows that there are no dialects which only permit the split pattern.

(71)



Another generalization that can be formulated on the basis of our cross-dialectal study is that subextraction of the *wh*-word is only possible when the prepositional element *voor* or *van* is present. The examples in (72) exemplify these split patterns.

- (72) a. Wa_i het je [t_i veur appels] gekauch? (dialectal Dutch)
 what have you – for apples bought
 b. Wa_i het je [t_i va beuk] gekauch? (dialectal Dutch)
 what have you – for books bought

Let us now turn to the various subextraction patterns, starting with the variants that do permit subextraction of *wat*:

- (73) a. $wat \dots voor$ ('n) boeken (see (15))
 what... for (a) books
 b. $wat \dots voor$ ('n) soort (van) boeken (see (25))
 what ... for (a) sort (of) books
 c. $wat \dots van$ ('n) boeken (see (17))
 what... of (a) books
 d. $wat \dots van$ soort boeken (see (27))
 what ... of sort books

Following standard assumptions (see e.g. Szabolcsi (1983, 1994)), we will assume that a *wh*-phrase can leave a nominal expression via the edge (i.e. [Spec,DP]) of this expression. That is, [Spec,DP] functions as an escape hatch. In (73a,b), *wat* has been moved to the Spec-position of the prepositional determiner *voor*, before it leaves the ‘nominal home’ (see (19) and (31)). Before turning next to the examples in (73c,d), we would first like to point out that subextraction is impossible from the patterns in (74), which lack the element *van*:³⁸

- (74) a. **wat* ... (’n) *boeken* (see (18))
 b. **wat*... (’n) *soort (van) boeken* (see (28))

The question obviously arises as to how to account for this contrast between (73c,d) and (74a,b)? Remember that we analyzed *van* in (73c,d) as an instance of the nominal copula, realizing the functional head F. This functional head F (i.e. *van*) forms a complex head together with the raised small clause head X (i.e. the spurious indefinite article ’n). In other words, the sequence *van* ’n has the structure: [_F F (= *van*) [_F X (= ’n)]]]. Suppose now that the nominal copula *van* (dragging along the spurious indefinite article) is able to raise to the [+interrogative] D-head, quite analogously to the raising of a (copular) finite verb to C in an interrogative main clause in Dutch.³⁹

- (75) a. *Wat zijn dat?*
 What are that
 “What are those things?”
 b. [_{CP} *wat*_j [_C *zijn*_i [_{TP} *dat*_k [_T *t*_i [_{VP} *t*_k [_V *t*_i *t*_j]]]]]]]]

We tentatively propose that it is the raising of the nominal copula (i.e., the complex head [F+X]) which makes it possible to sub-extract *wat* out of the nominal *wat voor N*-phrase. In a certain way, the D-head needs “support” of the nominal copula *van* for subextraction of *wat* to be possible. When the nominal copula *van* is absent (i.e. F has no phonological contents) no raising of [F+X] to D takes place, even if the small clause head X has lexical

³⁸ In standard Dutch, we do find the split pattern in (ia) in exclamative constructions:

- (i) a. *Wat heb jij ’n boeken gekocht!*
 What have you a books bought
 “How many books you bought!”
 b. *Wat ’n boeken heb jij gekocht!*

In Corver (1990), it is argued, though, that this split pattern does not result from subextraction of *wat* from within the nominal expression *wat ’n boeken*, which, as shown in (ib) is also possible in exclamative clausal contexts. Rather, he proposes that *wat* in (ia) is base-generated as an exclamative clausal operator in [Spec,CP].

³⁹ We abstract away from the question as to whether Dutch is SVO or SOV underlyingly.

contents by means of the spurious indefinite article 'n. In other words, it is the lexical contents of the head of the complex head [_F F [X]] which is crucial for movement to the interrogative D-head to be possible. With [_F F (= van) [X]] raising to D, the structure in (21), where the nominal copula is still *in situ*, can now be more precisely represented as (21'), where the nominal copula (i.e. the complex head [F+X]) has been raised to the interrogative D-position.

$$(21') \quad [_{DP} \text{wat}_j [_{D'} [\mathbf{van} + 'n/\emptyset]_k [_{FP} t'_j [_{F'} t_k [_{XP} \text{boeken} [_{X'} t_i t_j]]]]]]]$$

When *van* is absent (i.e. F is not spelled out phonologically), the complex F-head does not raise to D. Thus, *wat ('n) boeken* has the representation in (24). We will assume that it is the absence of "lexical support" for D which blocks subextraction of the wh-word *wat* in [Spec,DP].

In short, for subextraction of *wat* from [Spec,DP] to be possible, the D-head needs to have lexical content, either via direct Merge (as in the case of *voor*) or via head movement (i.e. raising of the nominal copula (i.e. [_F F (= van) + X (= 'n/∅)] to D).⁴⁰

Consider next the ill-formed patterns in (76). Given the fact that subextraction is permitted when *voor* is phonologically strong, the conclusion seems inescapable that the ill-formedness of these patterns is due to the phonologically weak status of the prepositional determiner. Subextraction of *wat* will yield a 'dangling' weak determiner, which has no host to attach to; see (20) and (40b) for the relevant representations.

- (76) a. **wat ... fer ('n) boeken* (see (16))
 b. **wat ... fer ('n) soort (van) boeken* (see (26))

We have already discussed in section 3.3 the impossibility of subextracting the wh-word *wat* from within the *wat voor zulke N* construction, repeated

⁴⁰ As pointed out by a reviewer, also in the Dutch clausal domain, lexicalization of C is required for subextraction of a wh-phrase to be possible. As shown in (ia), the C-head does not have to be lexicalized when a wh-phrase occupies [Spec,CP]. However, when a wh-phrase is removed from an embedded CP, the C-position cannot be empty; i.e. it must have lexical contents:

- (i) a. *Ik weet niet* [_{CP} *wat*_i [_{hij} *t*_i *doet*]]
 I know not what he does
 b. *Ik weet niet* [_{CP} *wat*_i [_{hij} *denkt* [_{CP} *t*'_i [_{C'} *(*dat*) [_{hij} *t*_i *doet*]]]]]]
 I know not what he thinks (that) he does

An interesting illustration of lexicalization of C via (head) movement of a finite verb to C comes from Belfast English. As pointed out by Henry (1995), intermediate wh-movement to the Spec-position of an embedded CP triggers I-to-C movement in this English variant:

- (ii) What_i did Mary claim [_{CP} *t*'_i [_{C'} *did*_j [_{they} *t*_j *steal* *t*_i]]]]?

here as (77a). According to our analysis, *wat voor zo* constitutes a phrase, which after predicate displacement occupies a left branch specifier position, i.e. [Spec,FP]; see (57b). Importantly, *wat* does not occupy the edge-position of DP. Subextraction from within a left branch specifier position is generally taken to be impossible. This account of the non-extractability of *wat* also applies to the *wat voor welke N*-pattern in (77b), the only difference being that *wat voor wat* constitutes the wh-phrase. Finally, removal of *wat* out of the nominal expression *wat soortige boeken* in (77c) is blocked for the same reason: *wat* is part of a left branch phrase occupying [Spec,FP]; see (70) Crucially, it does not occupy [Spec,DP]. As a result of that, subextraction is impossible.

- (77) a. **wat ... voor zulke boeken* (see (55))
 b. **wat ... voor welke boeken*
 c. **wat ... soortige boeken* (see (29))

Consider, finally, the ill-formed split patterns in (77), where the wh-word *hoe* ‘how’ has been removed from a nominal expression.

- (77) a. **hoe ...zulke boeken* (see (61))
 b. **hoe ... -like boeken* (see (54))
 c. **hoe ...’n boeken* (see (47))

The ill-formedness of (77) is related to the ill-formedness of the split patterns in (76): *hoe* forms a phrase together with *zo*. This phrase is a left branch specifier of the functional head F; see (64). Subextraction from within this specifier position is blocked. The ill-formedness of (77b) arguably relates to the bound morphemic status of the stranded adjectival Relator-head *-lk(e)*: a bound morpheme cannot be stranded; see (54) for the relevant structure. Consider, finally, (77c). It seems likely that this split pattern is out for the same reason why (74a) is out: There is no raising of a complex F-head, containing the nominal copula *van*, to D. Consequently, D does not get lexicalized. Even though *hoe* occupies the edge position within DP (see (47b)), subextraction of *hoe* is blocked because of the absence of “lexical contents” in the D-position.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tried to give a description and an analysis of the intra- and inter-dialectal variants of the Dutch *wat voor N*-construction. Building on Bennis et al’s (1998) structural analysis of the standard Dutch *wat voor N*-construction, we have argued that both a DP-internal predication configuration and a process of predicate displacement are at the basis of the different variants. The variants differ from each other in a number of

respects, such as (i) the nature of the ‘subject’ of the predication relation (bare NP, *soort*+NP, a pro-form like *zo*); (ii) the realization of the small clause head (*'n*, \emptyset , *-lk*); (iii) the (non)realization of F as a nominal copula (*van* or the bound morpheme *-s*). Importantly, we have tried to show that there is a common structural core (predication and predicate displacement) behind these different variants, which is in line with Chomsky’s (2001) Uniformity Principle, which states that “In the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, assume languages to be uniform, with variety restricted to easily detectable properties of utterances”. In a way, then, the different intra- and interdialectal *wat voor N*-manifestations are all variants on a common structural theme.

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