

The Path is the Goal

On the goal postposition *út* in Modern West Frisian*

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1. Introduction

Like other Mainland West Germanic languages, Modern West Frisian shows a fascinating mixture of pre- and postpositional structures. Thus the adposition *út* ‘out (of)’, which denotes a source, i.e. a change of location from AT to not-AT, may occur as a preposition, as a postposition and as the pre- or postpositional part of a circumposition:

- (1) a. *út* `e stêd (wei) ‘out of the city’
 out the city (away)
- b. (ta) de stêd *út* ‘out of the city’
 (to) the city out

I will not be concerned here with the subtle meaning differences between these uses of *út* nor with the question of how they are related (for discussion w.r.t. Dutch I refer to Luif 2000, Helmantel 2002 and Beliën 2006, 2008 among others). Instead I want to draw attention to a postposition *út* in Frisian, which does not denote a source, but rather a goal, i.e. a change of location from not-AT to AT (cf. WFT 24, s.v. *út*, 16, Hoekstra 2011). Compare, for example:

- (2) *it* lân *út* ‘(out) into the field’
 the field out

Apart from the curious shift from a source to a goal adposition that it seems to have undergone in the course of its history, *út* has some other properties that are interesting from the perspective of recent theorizing on the structure and semantics of adpositional phrases.

In this paper I will argue that the goal postposition *út* specifically selects a direction as its postpositional complement. I will elaborate here on work in progress by Zwarts (2010a,b,c). Goal expressions with *út* can be turned into source

expressions by adding a further postposition *wei* ‘away, from’ (*it lân út wei* ‘out of the field’). These source expressions are exceptional not only because they contain two postpositions, but also because they embed a goal expression. I will discuss this in connection with the idea that the basic space structuring concepts are hierarchically ordered, as has recently been argued in work by Pantcheva (2010a,b).

The structure of the paper is as follows: In Section 2 I will present the basic data on goal expressions with the postposition *út* and the corresponding source expressions with *út wei*. In Section 3 I will contend that *út* selects a direction and briefly discuss the nature of directions. In Section 4 I will show how the source expressions with *út wei* may add to the evidence for a hierarchy of space. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. The goal postposition *út*

The goal preposition *út* first of all occurs in constructions with the general direction term *kant* ‘side; direction’ in Frisian. Compare:

- (3) a. *Dû moatst dy kant út en de oare trije de oare kant.*
 You must that side out and the other three the other side
 [Y. Poortinga, *De foet fan de reinbôge* 243 (1979)]
 ‘You must go that way and the other three the other way.’
- b. *Ik ried yn de giele Daf-44 (...) de Frjentsjerter kant út.*
 I drove in the yellow Daf-44 the Frjentsjer side out
 [R. v. d. Velde, *Sa wie ‘t sawat* 92 (1997)]
 ‘I drove in the yellow Daf-44 in the direction of Frjentsjer.’

Frisian shares these constructions with Dutch (*die kant uit*, *de kant van Amsterdam uit*). Also like Dutch it possesses complex directional adverbs like *efterút* (Dutch *achteruit*) ‘backwards’ and *foarút* (Dutch *vooruit*) ‘forward’, in which *út* seems to express movement into a region of space defined by the adverbs *efter* ‘at the back’ and *foare* ‘at the front’. Presumably, the shift of *út* from a source to a goal adposition initially took place in these shared expressions. Although a discussion of their diachronic development is beyond the scope of this paper, it seems likely that the original modifier of an (intransitive) source adposition has been reinterpreted and reanalysed as the complement of a goal postposition.

Frisian has then extended this use of *út* to other contexts. Thus *út* may combine with cardinal direction terms:

- (4) *Tsjibbe woe ha, hja soenen it noarden út.* Tsjabbe miende
 Tsjibbe would have, they should the north out. Tsjabbe meant

dat se 't **suden út** moesten en Tsjebbe woe **it westen út**.
 that they the south out must and Tsjebbe would the west out
 [CJ017505]
 'Tsjebbe suggested that they should go north. Tsjebbe meant that they had to go south and Tsjebbe wanted to go west.'

It may also take locative phrases with the preposition *efter* 'beyond':

- (5) Hy sil **efter Ljouwert út** om wurk.
 He shall beyond Ljouwert out for work [N.J. Haisma, *donia* 135 (1952²)]
 'He is going out there beyond Ljouwert to look for a job.'

The goal postposition *út* further selects nouns denoting fields, both general terms like *lân/lannen* 'field(s)' and *ffild* 'field' and more specific ones like *greide(n)* 'pasture(s)', *miede(n)* 'meadow(s)' and *bou(wen)* 'farmland, acres':

- (6) De feint en de boer soenen togearre **it lân út**. [CJ119210]
 The farm.hand and the farmer should together the field out
 'The farm hand and the farmer were going out into the field together.'

Finally, *út* appears with nouns denoting roads like *wei* or *dyk* 'way, road' and *reed* 'lane, track', or waterways like *feart* 'canal':

- (7) Alle dagen gie ik eefkes mei Django **de dyk út**.
 All days went I for-a-while with Django the road out
 [L.C. 19 (01-12-1982)]
 'Every day I went out onto the road with Django for a while.'

All these goal expressions with the postposition *út* can be turned into source expressions by adding a further postposition *wei* 'away, from'. Compare:

- (8) a. Jiks (sjocht) yn 'e fierte, **de kant fan 'e see út wei**,
 Jiks sees in the distance, the side of the see out away
 in hiele ploech manlju oankommen.
 a whole group men on-coming. [J. Spoelstra, *Hjir* 19 (2005)]
 'In the distance, from the direction of the sea, Jiks sees a whole bunch of men coming.'
- b. Bonifacius is it **suden út wei** komd mei syn gefolch.
 Boniface is the south out away come with his followers [CJ 043718]
 'Boniface came from the south with his followers.'
- c. Donia? **Efter Dokkum út wei**? Jo binne dochs dy man
 Donia? Beyond Dokkum out away? You are MOD that man
 dy't nei Ynje ta west hat?
 who-that to the (Dutch) East Indies to been has?
 [N.J. Haisma, *donia* 81 (1952²)]

‘Donia? From out there beyond Dokkum? You are this man who has been in the East Indies, aren’t you?’

- d. De grouwe weiden hea (komme) wer **de Mieden út wei**.
 The heavy loads hay come again the meadows out away
 [W. Cuperus, *tried II* 126 (1942)]
 ‘The heavy loads of hay come out of the meadows again.’
- e. Bitewainen komme **de blabzige reden út wei**.
 Beet-wagons come the muddy lanes out away
 [N.J. Haisma, *donia* 331 (1952²)]
 ‘Wagons full of beets are coming down the muddy lanes.’

The postposition *wei* explicitly reverses the orientation of the embedded postpositional phrases with *út*.

These basic data on the goal postposition *út* in Frisian raise some questions. First the selectional restrictions of *út* ask for an explanation. In which sense do direction terms, locative phrases with *after* ‘beyond’ and nouns denoting fields and roads form a natural semantic class? Secondly, one might wonder whether there is any need for goal expressions with *út* and source expressions with *út wei* next to seemingly competing expressions: In what way does *it easten út (wei)* differ from *nei/út it easten* ‘to/from the east’? What is the difference between *it lân út (wei)* and *it lân yn/út* ‘into/from the field’? These questions will be addressed in the next section.

3. Direction as an adpositional object

Zwarts (2010a,b,c) has drawn attention to the fact that the adpositional object is not always a bounded region, but can also be a direction. Directions, or rather the regions they define, are unbounded and they depend on an (implicit) point of view in relation to which they are defined. Zwarts illustrates this mainly on the basis of adpositional phrases with cardinal direction terms (*in the east*, *to the east*, *from the east*). To make his point, he discusses, for example, the distinction between *the east* used as a direction and *the East* as the name of a particular bounded region (the East of the Netherlands or the eastern world).

Note now that whereas *nei it easten* ‘to the east/East’ and *út it easten* ‘from the east/East’ are in principle ambiguous between these two readings, *it easten út (wei)* only allows the direction reading. Therefore *it easten út (wei)* is excluded in the examples in (9), in which only the toponymic reading is available:

- (9) a. Us buorlju binne **nei it easten** / ***it easten út** ferfearn.
 Our neighbours are to the East / the East out moved
 ‘Our neighbours moved to the East.’

- b. It skaakspul komt út it easten / *it easten út wei.
 The chess.game comes from the East / the East out away
 ‘Chess originates from the East.’

This seems to indicate that the goal postposition *út* specifically selects a direction. That *kant* ‘side/direction’ in the constructions with *út* is a direction needs no further argumentation. Locative adpositional phrases of the type *after Ljouwert* ‘beyond Ljouwert’ also clearly represent a direction; what is ‘beyond Ljouwert’ depends on one’s point of view and ‘beyond Ljouwert’ is an unbounded region. But what about the nouns for fields and roads?

There is ample evidence that the fields and roads that appear in goal expressions with *út* are used as directions as well. First, these expressions have a prominent implicit point of view: they suggest that the *figure* (the theme of the spatial relation expressed by the adposition) moves from a more closed space (house, farm, village) into the open. Further, the fields and roads involved must in principle ‘disappear beneath the horizon’, i.e. be unbounded. Accordingly, nouns denoting bounded fields cannot combine with the goal postposition *út*:

- (10) a. *De boer rûn **de kamp** / **de jister** / **de seize út**.
 ‘The farmer walked out into the paddock / the milking yard / the
 six *pûnsmiet* (6 x 36 are) field.’
 b. *De trainer rûn **it fjild út**.
 ‘The trainer walked out onto the (playing) field.’

Similarly, *út* only combines with roads which lead away from some place and which in principle are open-ended. In the case of a lane or track that leads to a farm, one would normally use *de reed út* ‘(out) onto the lane’ when the figure leaves the farm, not when it is heading for it.

Although someone who goes *it lân út* ‘(out) into the field’ or *de dyk út* ‘(out) onto the road’ necessarily enters the field or gets onto the road, this is not the essence of the meaning of goal expressions with *út*. Someone who goes *it lân út* or *de dyk út* rather goes in the direction that is determined by the field or the road. The field and the road could perhaps be considered as modifiers of the direction. It is not the field or the road itself that is the *ground* (reference object) of the goal relation expressed by *út*, but rather the path through the field or the path along the road. In this respect *it lân út* en *de dyk út* contrast with *it lân yn* ‘into the field’ en *de dyk op* ‘onto the road’, where the field and the road actually are the (ground of the) goal.

Interestingly, the noun for the biggest open field, the world, can also be used with *út*:

- (11) a. Foar tsien gounne benzine rydst **de wrâld út**.
 for ten guilders gasoline drive-you the world out
 [P. Akkerman, *lins* 51 (1968)]
 ‘For ten guilders of gasoline you can drive wherever you like.’
- b. Ik hie **de wrâld út** kinnen as trainer. Mar dat hie ’k dan tsien
 I had the world out could as trainer. But that had I then ten
 jier ferlyn dwaan moatten.
 year ago do must [(Foppe de Haan) *L.C.* 5 (30-03-2009)]
 ‘I could have gone anywhere as a trainer, but then I should have done
 that ten years ago.’

In the examples in (11) the noun *wrâld* ‘world’ functions as a universal quantifier over directions; *de wrâld út* means something like ‘in all directions, anywhere, wherever one likes’. Again there is a prominent implicit point of view, viz. ‘the own small world’: the own village or direct environment in (11a), the own country (Fryslân, the Netherlands) in (11b).

That nouns denoting fields and roads have a special function in goal expressions with *út* also becomes clear from the fact that they must be definite (**in dyk út* ‘(out) onto a road’). The fields and roads that appear in such expressions must be contextually unique, so that they can function as unequivocal indicators of direction.

It is tempting to relate the expansion of the goal postposition *út* in Frisian directly to the geography of the Frisian landscape. Imagine a classical Frisian village (or farm): in the middle of nowhere, a radial parcellation, with the road, the lanes, the canal and the fields going in all directions. It need not come as a surprise that people have made use of these geographical objects to indicate direction and that they have generalized from more abstract expressions like *dy kant út* and *it easten út* to more concrete ones like *de dyk út* and *it lân út*.

I have followed Zwarts (2010a,b,c) here in assuming that adpositional objects can be directions. The goal postposition *út* actually represents the rather exceptional case of an adposition that exclusively selects a direction.¹ Zwarts goes one step further, however, in claiming that in expressions like *to the east* the adpositional object (*the east*) does not represent the ground of the spatial relation expressed by the adposition (as in real goal expressions), but a more or less abstract direction; in adpositional phrases with a direction as their adpositional object it would rather be the implicit point of view that functions as the ground. He considers the fact that ground and adpositional object do not coincide in these expressions as an argument against a strict isomorphism between syntax and semantics.

At first sight, Frisian *út* might seem to corroborate this view. One could argue that *út* has preserved its source meaning and that it takes the implicit point of view

as its semantic argument. However, in that case it would be rather mysterious that the orientation of the expressions with *út* can be reversed by the source postposition *wei*. (Note that adding *wei* does not lead to a shift of the point of view.) In fact, it is hardly a coincidence that normally (putting aside the special case of Frisian *út*) directions are combined with the same adpositions that are used with bounded regions as well (*in, to, from the east / in, to, from the park*). Therefore I consider *út* as a goal postposition synchronically (even though there is a very prominent point of view) and I assume that, as in other goal expressions, the postpositional object is the ground.

More specifically, I consider directions as a special type of locations (PLACES), viz. as those locations that are definitionally dependent on a point of view. In the case of *after Ljouwert út* ‘out there beyond Ljouwert’ the direction actually surfaces as a locative expression. When the figure moves in a certain direction, it necessarily goes to the unbounded region defined by that direction. The crux is — and this is what makes directions as the ground of a goal relation special — that with the movement of the figure this region will be continually redefined. When someone walks to the east (s)he reaches it with every step, but at the same time it recedes to the horizon with every step. The goal is only reached by constantly moving, so that one might actually claim that in this case the path is the goal.

4. A hierarchy of space

Source expressions with *út wei* are more complex than most other adpositional phrases in Frisian in at least two ways: they contain two postpositions and they involve embedding of a goal expression in a source expression. In this section I will show that adpositional phrases involving a direction as their adpositional object may reveal distinctions that are not visible in other adpositional phrases.

In the semantic and syntactic literature (Jackendoff 1983, Helmantel 2002, Koopman 2010, Den Dikken 2010, Svenonius 2010) it is normally assumed that path expressions embed a place expression, i.e. that they have the structure in (12) (order irrelevant):

- (12) [[PLACE] PATH]

Circumpositions in Frisian (and other Mainland West Germanic languages) corroborate this structure, insofar that most of them consist of a place preposition and a path postposition, i.e. either a goal, source or route postposition (cf. Popkema 2006: 195–198). Compare:

- (13) a. **oan** 'e ein **ta** 'until the end' [[PLACE] GOAL]
 on the end to
 op 'e hazze ôf 'up to the hare'
 on the hare off
- b. **by** it fjoer **wei** 'away from the fire' [[PLACE] SOURCE]
 at the fire away
 ta it finster **út** 'out of the window'
 at the window out
- c. **yn** de berm **lâns** 'along the wayside' [[PLACE] ROUTE]
 in the wayside along
 ûnder 'e brêge **troch** 'under the bridge'
 under the bridge through

Pantcheva (2010a,b) argues that PATH should be further differentiated in that source expressions embed a goal expression and route expressions embed a source expression. Her evidence comes from languages which use case to express spatial reference. Thus, for example, in Quechua the ablative case ending is suffixed to the allative (*-man-ta* 'ALL-ABL') and in Avar the perlocative case ending is attached to the ablative (*-da-ssa-n* 'on, -LOC-ABL-PER'). Whereas adpositional phrases in the Germanic languages do not normally show such distinctions, we actually find some evidence of them in adpositional phrases that select a direction. As we have noticed already, source expressions with *út wei* embed a goal expression, which itself can dominate a place expression:

- (14) a. it lân út **wei** [[GOAL] SOURCE]
 'out of the fields'
- b. efter Dokkum út **wei** [[[PLACE] GOAL] SOURCE]
 'from out there beyond Dokkum'

Further consider the route postposition *oer* 'over' in Frisian. This postposition can combine with a bounded region (*de brêge oer* 'over the bridge'), but also with directions. It may occur with *kant*, cardinal direction terms and adpositional phrases with *efter* 'beyond':

- (15) a. **Dy kant oer** binne twa plysjes dy't ús attrapearje wolle.
 that side over are two cops who us catch want [CJ 064414]
 'Over there are two cops who want to catch us.'
- b. Twingend en driigjend berûn de loft, it **hie**le
 compellingly and menacingly darkened the air, the whole
 easten oer. [P. Akkerman, *ypma* 120 (1993³)]
 east over
 'Compellingly and menacingly the sky darkened, over there in the whole east.'

- c. De hannelers (rieden) dan nei Dokkum en de klaai
 The pedlars drove then to Dokkum and the clay
after Dokkum oer.
 beyond Dokkum over
 [www.dewouden.com/uploads/file/durk-bosgraaf-interview.pdf]
 ‘The peddlers drove then to Dokkum and the clay-district over there
 beyond Dokkum.’

It can, however, also take a goal expression or a source expression as its complement (cf. (16a,b)). Even an extreme and textually unattested example like (16c), which contains three postpositions and in which all four space structuring concepts are represented, seems grammatically possible:

- (16) a. **Nei ’t easten oer** kaam hjir en dêr al in stjer.
 To the east over came here en there already a star
 [P. Akkerman. *ypma* 11 (1993³)] [[GOAL] ROUTE]
 ‘Over there to the east an occasional star already appeared.’
- b. De greate skiere wolken komme **fan de Snitser mar oer**
 The big grey clouds come from the Snits lake over
 oanskouwen. [[SOURCE] ROUTE]
 on-sliding [L. Brolsma, *De tocht fan de Sallemander* 35 (1948)]
 ‘Big grey clouds come drifting over there from the Snits lake.’
- c. [?]**Efter Dokkum út wei oer** kaam in tongerbui
 Beyond Dokkum out away over came a thunderstorm
 opsetten. [[[PLACE] GOAL] SOURCE] ROUTE]
 up-setting
 ‘Over there from out there beyond Dokkum a thunderstorm
 approached.’

We may conclude then that with adpositions that select a direction there is some evidence for the hierarchy in (17):

- (17) PLACE < GOAL < SOURCE < ROUTE

Such a hierarchy is already reflected by Hjelmslev’s (1935, 1937) ideas about markedness in the Greenlandic case system. Here the spatial cases receive the feature specifications in (18) (according to Blake 2001:38):²

- (18) LOCATIVE [–from, –to]
 ALLATIVE [–from, +to]
 ABLATIVE [+from, –to]
 PERLATIVE [+from, +to]

In this system the locative is the most unmarked, the perlocative the most marked case. The allative and ablative are equally marked in (18), but due to the cognitive bias for GOAL over SOURCE (cf. Pantcheva 2010a and the literature mentioned there) the ablative may actually be more marked than the allative.

To close this section consider the circumpositions in (19):

- | | | | |
|---------|--|--|-------------------|
| (19) a. | nei Ljouwert (ta)
to Ljouwert to | ‘to Ljouwert’ | [[GOAL] GOAL] |
| b. | fan `e stoel (ôf)
from the chair off
út `e stêd (wei)
out the city away | ‘from the chair’

‘out of the city’ | [[SOURCE] SOURCE] |
| c. | troch de tunnel (hinne)
through the tunnel to
oer de mar (wei)
over the lake away | ‘through the tunnel’

‘from over the lake’ | [[ROUTE] ROUTE] |

The examples in (19) involve two adpositions of the same hierarchical level (goal, source and route respectively), of which the second is more or less optional. The examples in (19c) need some further comment. At first glance they might seem to represent a route expression dominated by a goal and a source position respectively, in violation of the hierarchy in (17); in pronominal adverbs *hinne* is used as the counterpart of the goal preposition (circumposition) *nei... (ta)* (e.g. *nei de stêd (ta)* / **dernei (ta)* / *derhinne* ‘to the city / there’) and *wei* is normally used as a source postposition (*út `e stêd wei*). When, however, we depart from a Hjelmslevian feature system, we can underspecify *hinne* as [+to] and *wei* as [+from]. Normally these postpositions will then receive the default specifications [–from, +to] and [+from, –to] respectively. In (19c), however, the marked specification [+from, +to] is forced by the hierarchy in (17). It might be no coincidence that the underspecified postpositions *hinne* and *wei* correspond to the German deictic particles *hin* and *her*, but I cannot go into that here.

What (19) shows is that circumpositions with adpositions of the same hierarchical level must be allowed, but this of course does not necessarily invalidate the hierarchy.

5. Conclusion

In this paper I have discussed goal expressions with the postposition *út* in Frisian and the corresponding source expressions with *út wei*. I have shown that the goal postposition *út* specifically selects a direction (cf. Zwarts 2010a,b,c). The semantics

of direction, in particular the question of whether and in which sense a direction can be a ground, needs further clarification.

Further I have argued that the source expressions with *út wei* as well as other adpositional phrases involving directions provide evidence for a hierarchy of space: PLACE < GOAL < SOURCE < ROUTE (cf. Pantcheva 2010a,b). Whether this hierarchy is wired into the syntactic structure of adpositional phrases (in the form of corresponding projections), as Pantcheva assumes in the spirit of the cartographic approach to phrase structure, or whether it is basically a conceptual-semantic hierarchy that is reflected in the syntactic dominance relations is left here as a matter for future research.

Notes

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1. Other candidates might be the Frisian preposition *om* ‘around’ in expressions like

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|--------|---|---|--------------------------|
| (i) a. | om | ’e noard | ‘in, to the north’ |
| | | around the north | |
| b. | om | utens | ‘abroad, out of Fryslân’ |
| | | around out-ENS | |
| c. | om | fierrens | ‘far away’ |
| | | around far-ENS | |
| d. | omheech, -hegen(s) / omleech, -legen(s) | | ‘up / down’ |
| | | around.high(-EN(s)) / around.high(-EN(s)) | |

and German *gen* ‘against’ in

- | | | | |
|---------|-----|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| (ii) a. | gen | Norden | ‘to the North’ |
| | | against North | |
| b. | gen | Himmel / gen Erden, Boden | ‘up / down’ |
| | | against heaven / against earth, floor | |

2. A similar system, making use of the aspectual features [inchoative] and [telic], is suggested by Van Riemsdijk & Huijbregts (2007).

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