

## **Appearances are deceptive: a closer (generative) look at some Germanic “retentions” in Afrikaans**

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From the perspective of clausal syntax, Afrikaans (in all its matricleal forms) at first sight looks very West Germanic: it is Verb Second (V2), the direct object precedes the verb (OV), it has verb clusters, and it exhibits scrambling. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the value of taking a closer look - and, moreover, a generative one - at two of these apparently stable West Germanicisms: V2 and scrambling. In both cases, it emerges that Afrikaans has not, as is often assumed, simply retained core West Germanic properties. Instead, Afrikaans V2 and scrambling clearly reflect the effects of:

- (i) striking innovations in other parts of the grammar, including the aspect, tense, negation, and imperative components; and
- (ii) the distinctive way in which (inter)subjective information has come to be encoded, particularly in vernacular Afrikaans varieties.

Even in respect of V2 and scrambling, then, Afrikaans very clearly signals its hybrid grammatical character as a language with Germanic roots which has been fundamentally shaped by the contact situation in which it arose and developed over time. This is significant for our understanding of the linguistic systems that underlie Afrikaans in its various forms, and, additionally, for our wider understanding of how Afrikaans fits into the comparative West Germanic picture and also of how Afrikaans compares to other contact varieties, Germanic or otherwise.