

Doubling left syntactic positions in Danish

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Abstract

This paper deals with the doubling of certain positions on the left edge of Danish clauses. Such doublings consist of a referential element (an NP or a clause) followed by an anaphoric element (an unstressed personal pronoun or an unstressed resumptive adverb). In main clauses, doubling applies to the CP-spec position, whereas in subordinate clauses, it applies to the subject position. This construction is found all over Mainland Scandinavia, cf. Johannessen (2014). In present-day Danish, its main domain is spoken language, but it is also frequently found in poetry. Unless there is a clear contrast, the construction is optional, as shown in the analysis of a broadcast public speech (section 5). In earlier versions of Danish, as shown in section 4, the construction was more frequent in writing and it also seems to have been almost obligatory.

1. Introduction

In Danish, the semantic content of CP-spec (or ‘fundamentfeltet’ in the Danish syntactic tradition, cf. Bjerre et al. 2008) often appears in a double form: an anaphoric element (unstressed pronoun or adverb) preceded by a content element, ranging from a deictic pronoun up to full semantic representations:¹

- (1) Ham der, han er komplet tosset.
Him there, he is completely mad
‘The person over there is completely mad’

¹ The anaphoric element is underlined.

- (2) Hunden, den har mavepine.
Dog-the, it has stomach-pain
 ‘The dog has pains in the stomach’
- (3) I torsdags, der var vi på Moesgård.
On Thursday, there we were at Moesgård
 ‘On Thursday we went to Moesgård’
- (4) Hvis du ikke stopper nu, så ringer jeg til politiet!
If you not stop now, then call I to police-the
 ‘If you do not stop now, I’ll call the police’

The construction is also found in subordinate clauses; here, the subject (which in modern Danish is in an IP-spec-position) doubles:

- (5) Jeg fortalte ham at mester han sikkert bliver helt stiktosset hvis han sagde sådan.
I told him that boss-the he certainly becomes completely mad if he said so
 ‘I told him that the boss will be completely mad if he said so’
- (6) De mure som mester han forlangte revet ned igen, var ikke så dårlige igen.
The walls that boss-the he demanded torn down again were not so bad for-that-matter
 ‘The walls that the boss wanted to have torn down again, were not so bad for that matter’
- (7) Når mester han forlangte noget lavet om, så skulle det ske her og nu.
When boss he demanded something done again, then should it happen here and now
 ‘When the boss wanted something remade, it should be carried out right away’

Much of this sounds very colloquial to native ears, but the construction is also found in certain types of high style as well, cf. this quote from a much-used church hymn:

- (8) Det kendes på os som lysets børn / at natten hun er nu omme.
It be-known on us as light's children that night-the she is now over
 'Let it be known by us as children of the light that the night is now over'

(N.F.S. Grundtvig, ca. 1826)

The construction is also found in the other Mainland Scandinavian languages, Norwegian and Swedish, cf. Johannessen (2014). Johannessen (2014) offers a full overview of the distribution of both the main clause structure and the subordinate clause structure, showing that the construction is present within the whole Mainland Scandinavian area.

Since much grammar writing has a strong written language bias, such constructions with evidently synonymous elements juxtaposed are normally written off as 'bad style' or 'merely spoken language', cf. Hansen (1983). Indeed, the construction is spoken language, but as I shall try to argue, it holds an interesting key to the syntax of spoken Danish, being able to shed light both on the prosodic features of modern Danish (synchronically) and on the development of the functional syntax (historically). The line of the argument follows John Du Bois' concept of Preferred Argument Structure (Du Bois 2003), extended with the observation that adverb phrases alternate with noun phrases in CP-spec in Danish.

In the absence of a suitable term I shall use the term 'doubling' to refer to such constructions below. Johannessen (2014) uses the term 'left dislocation' for this construction; but since this term is often connected with contrastive meaning, an implication which many of my Danish examples do not fulfill, I have preferred the term 'doubling'. The doubling itself consists of two elements: a referential part and an anaphoric part, and they will also be referred to in these terms.

2. The construction in Danish grammar

The fact that pronouns (resuming NP's) and single adverbs (resuming adverbial clauses or phrases) may be inserted after a heavy introductory element, is discussed at length in Falk & Torp (1900:275-277) with a wealth of examples from the literature. The first reference grammar of Danish syntax, Mikkelsen (1911) [1975], mentions the construction only briefly under the heading of "Pleonasms" (Mikkelsen 1911 [1975]:744, 747). Many interesting stylistic observations are found in Albeck (1939: 162), who finds the origins both in emphatic expressions and in improvising orality. Paul Diderichsen (1941:50-58) argues that the (pro-)nominal and

adverbial element occupy the same position in the syntax, i.e. what we now call ‘fundamentfelt’, aka CP-spec. In his modern Danish syntax (Diderichsen 1962), the construction is mentioned briefly (p. 178 & 194-5) without much further ado. The most recent reference grammar of Danish, Hansen & Heltoft (2011), deals with the construction in many details under the heading of ‘extraposition’. After an account of the formal aspects (Hansen & Heltoft 2011:1827-1836), they give an account of semantics and style (Hansen & Heltoft 2011:1836-1840), where they emphasize the connection to topic and focus.

In general, the construction is supposedly frowned upon in writing, but the problem is not serious enough to worry the traditional guides to improved written form (e.g. Oxenvad 1951, Hansen 1965, Jacobsen & Jørgensen 1988, 1995).

3. The details of the construction

Basically all kinds of constructions that are possible in a CP-spec may also appear in the doubling. Danish allows all nominal constructions - subjects, objects and predicates - to appear here. Furthermore, most adverb types with the exception of negations and other operators may have their place here as well. The infinite verb element (the VP node) may also be found here, normally accompanied by all its sister constructions. Other possibilities are clauses and small clauses, cf. Jørgensen (2000:81-83), Lundskær-Nielsen et al. (2011:207-8). There is a strong consensus that the CP-spec position is filled with the preferred argument, cf. Du Bois (2003). In the case of Danish (and probably many other languages as well), we also have to take a whole range of circumstantial adverb phrases into consideration for the CP-spec of the main clause.

The anaphoric element shows concord with the referential part. The anaphor is a personal pronoun (unstressed) when the referential part is an NP (including the infinite VP, the nominal clause and the small clause, all referred to with *det*), whereas the equally unstressed adverbs *så* and *da* are used when the referential part is an adverb phrase or an adverbial clause. It is crucial that these elements are all unstressed, a fact pointing to their purely anaphoric status.

In nominal reference, the pronouns follow the modern distribution:

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Expression</i>
to person	♀: <i>hun</i> (oblique: <i>hende</i>); ♂: <i>han</i> (oblique: <i>ham</i>)
to non-person	common gender: <i>den</i> ; neuter: <i>det</i>
to nominal clause	<i>det</i>

In older variants of Danish, where three genders (masculine, feminine, neuter) were still maintained, another distribution was used. In this version, which corresponds to the descriptions in the two earliest grammars of Danish, Kock 1660 and Pontoppidan 1668², animateness is not taken into account:

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Expression</i>
to masculine gender	<i>han</i> , obl. <i>ham/hannem</i>
to feminine gender	<i>hun</i> , obl. <i>hende</i>
to neuter gender	<i>det</i>
to nominal clause	<i>det</i>

The construction seems from the beginning to be reserved for statements; we never find it in e.g. constituent questions:

- (9) *Hvorfor, så har du ikke taget bogen med?
Why then have you not brought book-the with?
 ‘Why didn’t you bring the book?’

It also is remarkable that doubling in the subject construction proper in main clauses does not occur; only the CP-spec may double:

- (10) *Så må detektiven han have fundet ud af at slette sine egne spor.
So must detective-the he have found out of to remove his own traces
 ‘So the detective must have found out how to remove his own traces’

This fact may be a clue to the use of the construction. The constituent in

² Reprinted in Berthelsen (1915) 1979

CP-spec in a statement in Danish has to be an anaphorical element. If for some discursive reason you need a non-anaphoric element in this function, it must be doubled, calling the attention to the (stressed) referential point of departure in the mind of the listener before we enter the sentence proper with the (unstressed) anaphoric element; but as I have mentioned, there is no evident need to see this as contrastive meaning. Thus, spoken Danish tends to display a topic-focus structure quite neatly and relate it to a prosodic pattern departing from an unstressed element and moving towards stressed elements. By associating the topic with anaphorical meaning (and lack of stress), the split between the contextual functions is clearly spelled out.

In clauses the doubling only occurs with the subject, unless the whole sentence switches to declarative (= main clause) word order (Hansen & Heltoft 2011:1675-1708):

- (11) Jeg sagde til dig at den bog den har jeg smidt ud
I told to you that that book that have I thrown out
 ‘I told you that I threw that book out’

The doubling of the subject is probably best understood in the light of Barry Blake’s statement that the subject is a grammaticalisation of the topic (Blake 1994:31-32), a statement in agreement with the theory of Preferred Argument Structure.

Interestingly enough, the doubling has entered the multiethnolect of Aarhus, where even deictic pronouns may allow doubling:

- (12) Ham han vil ikke hjælpe dig
Him he will not help you

In this context this aspect will not be pursued any further. In her master’s thesis Ditte Zachariassen (2012) has made a thorough analysis of her findings from this field.

As I shall demonstrate in the following sections, the concept of Preferredness may vary, both historically and pragmatically. The limit between what is considered well enough prepared to go without doubling varies to a fairly high extent in my data, both in a synchronic dimension and in a pragmatic dimension.

4. The historical dimension

The construction is found quite frequently in Medieval Danish. Here are some early examples from a religious text, the Legend of Saint Christina from the Cambridge fragment (presumably high style):

- (13) Fyr æn sancta cristina toc thæt brøth tha bath hun til war hærræ (...)
Before than saint cristina took that bread, then prayed she to our lord
 ‘Before Saint Christina took the bread, she prayed to the lord’
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:283, slightly simplified³)

- (14) Annæn dagh thær æftær tha com hænnæ fathær oc wildæ hethræ sinæ guthæ (...)
Second day there after then came her father and would honour his gods
 ‘On the second day after this, her father came and would honour his gods’
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:283, slightly simplified)

- (15) Hærræ thin dottær. war frughæ hun skændæ thæm allæ i syndær oc castath them ut i gatæ.
Master, your daughter, our lady she scolded them all to pieces and threw them out in street
 ‘Master, your daughter, our lady, destroyed them all completely and threw them into the street’
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:284, slightly simplified)

In this case we find an adverbial clause, an adverbial phrase and a subject as referential elements, that is, the same range of elements as in Modern Danish. The *tha* adverb inserted to resume the sentence, has an interesting semantic content. It does not belong to any traditional class of adverb, its meaning being illocutionary, according to Hansen & Heltoft (2011:1840).

³ In all quotations from Uldaler & Wellejus (1968) the indicators of philological restitution have been omitted; otherwise the book is quoted literally.

Certain late Medieval sources use the doubling so frequently that a closer analysis of the system is possible. A quantitative analysis of the occurrences of different doubling situations in one source, “Jesu Barndoms Bog” printed by Gotfred af Ghemen 1508⁴, gives the following figures:

Non-anaphoric CP-spec with doubling	31
Non-anaphoric CP-spec without doubling	28
Anaphoric CP-spec	80

Most of the non-anaphoric CP-spec’s with doubling are initial adverbial clauses:

- (16) then tid herodes oc iøderne hørde thet thā wore the sorgfulle (...)
the time Herod and jews-the heard it, then became they sorry
 ‘When Herod and the Jews heard this, they began to worry’
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:383, slightly simplified)

- but a few are NP’s:

- (17) (...) oc elizabeth thin fæncke hon scal fødhe een søn i sin allerdome
 (...) *and Elizabeth your female-relative she shall give-birth-to a son in her old-age*
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:379, slightly simplified)

The vast majority of the non-doubled non-anaphoric CP-spec’s are single nouns and proper names (the end of CP-spec is marked by a |):

- (18) Josep | spurde om hon wiste hwat thet betyde
 ‘Joseph asked if she knew what it meant’
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:380, slightly simplified)

Only twice is a more heavy construction found without doubling:

- (19) (..) paa hemmelin | sage mange menniske iij skøne soler (...)
on heaven-the saw many people three beautiful suns
 ‘In heaven many people saw three beautiful suns’
 (Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:382, slightly simplified)

⁴ Quoted from Uldaler & Wellejus (1968:379-83).

- (20) Ther guts søn føder wor | thedis een skøn ny stierne for alle menniske
When God's son born was appeared a beautiful new star to all people
 'When God's son was born, a beautiful new star appeared to all people'

(Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:382, slightly simplified)

Since proper names and simple NP's may be seen as closely related to the speech situation (Togebj 1997, 2003), we may conclude that doubling occurs when the material for the CP-spec is preferred, but still not too well bound by the context. Note that doubling does not occur in (19) and (20), both of these referring to matters that are very topical in the context. Thus it seems as if the doubling is an obligatory device for situating remote CP-spec material in the discourse.

Jesu Barndoms Bog also contains a rare specimen of doubling in an embedded clause (the below), incidentally alongside doubling in the main clause (tha):

- (21) Som the helige iij konighe the komme til byen tha slo the theris
 pawlun op oc rede them til (...)
As the holy three kings they came to town-the then put they their tent up and made themselves ready (...)
 'When the holy three king came to the town, they put up their tent and prepared themselves (...)

(Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:383, slightly simplified)

The picture we find in the late medieval sources seems to be that doubling took place quite frequently, probably along the same patterns as in modern spoken Danish. Whenever a potential topic was not sufficiently well situated in the discourse, it was doubled so that the sentence could start from an unstressed anaphoric element. At the time of the Reformation (after 1525), when printing evolved, the doubling was used more cautiously in purely written sources. Doubling is found in prose when the referential element is very long, like this (admittedly somewhat excessive) quote from Hans Thomissøn's short history of psalm singing in his hymn book from 1569 representing an adverb phrase:

- (22) For det andet / efferdi at mange omgaaes saa met Guds Ord / at de enten icke forstaa det / men læse eller siunge det uflittelligen met

en forfængelig mundklammer: (lige som hine Papistiske Prester / Muncke oc Nunner fremsnurre deris Læsning oc sang / den de icke forstaa) heller oc vanbruge det til nogen Ketterj oc falsk Lærdom at bestyrcke / som Papisterne / Gendøbere / Sacramenterer / Antinomi oc andre Sophister oc Suermere gjøre: Da vil Paulus at wi icke saaledis / men i all Visdom skulle Christi ord anamme oc beholde (...)

For the second, since that many deal thus with God's word that they either not understand it, but read or sing it undiligently with a vain mouth-use: (like as those popish priests, monks and nuns forward-roll their lecture and song which they not understand) else or abuse it to some heresy and false doctrine to reinforce like the catholics, anabaptists, sacramentarians, antinomists and other sophists and fanatics do: then will Paul that we not thus, but in all wisdom should Christ's word appreciate and keep (...)

'Secondly, because many deal with the word of God in such a way that they either do not understand it, but read and sing it carelessly, in a vain use of the mouth (like those popish priests, monks and nuns that recite their reading and song, which they do not understand) or else abuse it for the purpose to reinforce heresy and false doctrine, like catholics, anabaptists, sacramentarians, antinomists and other sophists and fanatics do, Saint Paul wants us not to do like this, but to appreciate and preserve the word of Christ in all wisdom (...)'

(Thomissøn 1569:c[viii], v)

Likewise after a nominal element:

- (23) Thi huo som vaar en Arrianer oc nectede Christi Guddom / hand enten tagde stille / naar disse ord bleffue siungen / eller oc han sang / Ære være Gud Fader ved Sønnen (...)

Since who that was an Arian and denied Christ's divinity, he⁵ either kept silent, when these words were sung, or else he sang, Glory be God Father through son-the (...)

'Since whoever was a follower of Arius and denied that Christ was divine, he would either keep silent at these words, or he would sing 'Glory to God the Father through the son (...)'

(Thomissøn 1569:d[i], v)

⁵ The original text spells *hand*, corresponding to modern *han* 'he'.

- but Thomissøn also uses quite long referents without doubling (the end of CP-spec is marked by a |):

- (24) (...) oc effterdi ieg da bleff fororsaget / til at underuise Ungdommen
ocsaa om danske Psalmer ret at siunge udi Kirckerne / oc der
fattedis icke alleniste Noder til mange Psalmer / men ocsaa mange
skøne Psalmer som Lutheri sidste tydske Psalmebog dog indeholdt
|: begynte ieg da at beflitte mig her om (...)
*... and since I then was caused to teach youth-the also about Danish
psalms right to sing in churches-the, and there was-a-lack-of not
only notes to many psalms but also many beautiful psalms that
Luther's last German hymnbook indeed contained, began I therefore
to occupy myself here about ...*
'... and since I at that time had to teach the youth how to sing Danish
psalms in the churches in the right way, and notes were lacking, not
only for many psalms, but also for the beautiful German psalms by
Luther in his last hymnbook, I had to work on the matter.'
(Thomissøn 1569:dii, v - diii, r)

This tendency has prevailed in prose texts up to the present day.

Although proper prose style thus tried to do without it, the doubling construction found an interesting loophole in poetry. The unstressed syllable did good service to the regulated kind of verse prosody that had developed in the early 17th century, delivering an extra weak syllable when needed, but the doubling was found already in the unregulated verses of the previous centuries. An example from 'Rimkrøniken' (late 15th century):

- (25) Alle the som trodhe poo christ / them wille ieg altidh forhettæ.
All they that believed in Christ / them would I always persecute
'I would always persecute those people that believed in Christ'
(Uldaler & Wellejus 1968:190, Ericsson fragment,
slightly simplified)

- from the folk ballad manuscripts of the 16th century:

- (26) Syffuert hand haffuer en fuolle.
Sivert he has a fole
 ‘Sivert has a fole’
 (DgF 3 version A v. 1)
- (27) Møtte udi denn grønne lundt / ther stannder minn iomffrues gaardt.
Middle in the green wood, there stands my mistress’s house
 ‘In the middle of the green wood stands the house of my mistress’
 (DgF 70 version B v. 26)

- from the early Lutheran psalm books (here Thomissøn 1569):

- (28) Den lille Fuel hand fluer saa høyt / Oc Værit bær under hans Vinge
The little bird he flies so high / and weather-the supports under his wing
 ‘The little bird flies so high and the weather carries his flight’
 (Thomissøn 1569:317)
- (29) Naar wi skulle til vort Fæderne Land / Oc skillies ved dette ælende;
 / Da befaler ieg GUD min Siel i Haand (...)
When we shall [go] to our fathers’ land / and depart from this misery
/ then command I God my soul in hand
 ‘When we shall go to the land of our fathers / and leave this misery
 / I will put my trust in God.’
 (Thomissøn 1569:317-8)

The metrical poetry of the baroque period (here Thomas Kingo, 1634-1703) maintained the use of the construction, as I mentioned:

- (30) Vort Time-glas det alt nedrinder, (...)
Our hour-glass it already runs-out
 ‘Our hour-glass is running out.’
 (Kingo 1939-74 vol. III p. 101)
- (31) O Gud, mit Hierte det er rede / Med Tak at bryde himlens Slot, (...)
Oh God, my heart it is ready / with thank to break heaven’s castle
 ‘Oh God, my heart is ready to enter the castle of heaven with gratefulness’
 (Kingo 1939-74 vol. III p. 101)

- (32) Ja, denne Dag, som nu mod Natten qvelder, / Hand skyder mig i hu,
 / Hvor nær mit Hoved nu / Mod Graven helder.
*Yes, this day that now towards night-the moves / he pushes me in
 mind / how near my head now / against grave-the leans*
 ‘Yea, this day which is turning into night reminds me how close my
 head is to be leaning against the grave.’
 (Kingo 1939-74 vol. III p. 89)

- and all the way up to modern times it may be found in Danish versification:

- (33) Men i vor Lade, paa vor Lo, / *der* har vi nu Guds Gaver (...)
*But in our barn, on our threshing-room / there have we now God's
 gifts*
 ‘But in barns and in threshing-rooms we now have the gifts of God.’
 (N.F.S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872,
 quoted from Billeskov-Jansen 1967 vol. II:127)
- (34) Når din hals er en halv meter nedløbsrør / og din tunge er som en
 galosche / når din drøvel er stor som en briosche / så'r det oganet,
 der er løvet tør (...)
*When your throat is a half meter [of] drainpipe / and your tongue is
 like a boot / when your uvula is big as a brioche / then-is it organ-
 the that is run dry*
 ‘When your throat is like half a meter of drainpipe, and your tongue
 is like a boot, when your uvula is like a big bun, then it is the organ
 that has run dry.’
 (Poul Henningsen, 1894-1967,
 quoted from Billeskov-Jansen 1966:171)

5. Modern spoken language usage

In Modern Danish main clauses the construction is only found in statements, and not in constituent questions. It is very frequent also in more formal spoken style, cf. the following quotes from the resignation of former prime minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt on the night after the June 2015 parliamentary elections in Denmark.⁶ Ms. Thorning-Schmidt uses the construction quite frequently, both after initial (adverbial) clauses:

⁶ A video of the resignation speech is found at this web address: <www.politiko.dk/nyheder/se-thornings-afskedstale>

- (35) Som I ved - kære venner - så er Socialdemokratiet ikke et parti med de nemme løsninger.

As you know - dear friends - then is Socialdemocratic-party-the not a party with the easy solutions

‘As you know, dear friends, the Socialdemocratic Party is not a party with easy solutions.’

- (36) Var der en lygtepæl, så var der en plakat.

Were there a lamppost, then was there a poster

‘In every lamp post there was a poster.’

- after initial adverbials:

- (37) Men kære allesammen, i aften, så rakte vores fælles indsats ikke så langt som vi håbede.

But dear everybody, in (this) evening, then reached our joint effort not so far as we hoped

‘But dear all, tonight, our joint efforts did not reach as far as we hoped.’

- (38) ... men hver eneste dag så har ansvaret været mit.

... but each single day then has responsibility-the been mine

‘... but each single day, the responsibility has been mine and mine alone.’

- after full NP’s:

- (39) Vores venner hos det Radikale Venstre, de har ikke fået det valg som jeg synes de fortjener.

Our friends at the “Radikale Venstre”, they have not had the election that I thought they deserve

‘Our friends from the “Radikale Venstre” [the other party in the outgoing government coalition] have not had the election they deserved.’

-and in a clause:

- (40) Vi må erkende i aften at de partier der peger på Lars Løkke de har et flertal.

We must admit in (this) evening that the parties that point to Lars Løkke they have a majority

‘We have to admit that the parties that prefer Lars Løkke [leader of the Danish opposition] have won the majority.’

But doubling is not applied consistently; you find several examples without doubling, e.g. an initial heavy adverb (end of CP-spec marked with |; in brackets my suggestion as to what could have been added):

- (41) *og til alle Danmarks store piger og unge kvinder | vil jeg sige direkte*
(og til alle Danmarks store piger og unge kvinder der vil jeg sige direkte)

And to all Denmark's big girls and young women will I say directly

‘And to all big girls and young women in Denmark I will say directly ...’

- a full NP:

- (42) *resultaterne | taler for sig selv*
(resultaterne de taler for sig selv)

results-the speak for themselves

‘The results speak for themselves.’

- an adverb and a non-doubled subordinate clause:

- (43) *Imorgen | vil jeg gå til dronningen og erklære at regeringen | træder af.*

(Imorgen der vil jeg gå til dronningen og erklære at regeringen den træder af)

Tomorrow will I go to queen-the and declare that government-the steps down

‘Tomorrow I will go to the queen and declare that the government resigns.’

In oral style, one may use the doubling more frequently than ms. Thorning-Schmidt does, but obviously the construction is not considered to be

improper *per se* in this speech. The doubling is used quite inconsistently throughout the speech, sometimes present, as in (35)-(40), sometimes not, as in (41)-(43), dependent on style rather than grammar. As may be seen from the video, ms. Thorning-Schmidt has a manuscript, but treats it rather freely in the situation; we have a contrast between a pronounced oral style (where many doublings will be acceptable) and a formal style leaning on the formulations from a manuscript (presumably without doublings). Hence the penduling between these two points is a natural consequence.

6. Conclusion

The importance of the construction is the emphasis on the anaphoric element in the sentence construction, cf. John Du Bois. In main clauses this anaphoric element may be almost anything in the CP-spec position. In clauses, this restriction does not hold. The subject of a clause is in a normal subject position, and yet it may double if the necessary content does not meet the demand for an anaphoric element.

The device seems to be a simple functional one: The sentence needs a topic which is well situated in the context on which the content of the focus may be developed. Such a topic must be anaphoric and hence unstressed. If this topic is not well enough situated, it may be given in a full referential (stressed) form at the beginning of the sentence, but with a resumptive element right before the topic domain is finished. Different varieties of Danish follow this simple pattern; but to varying degrees. The stronghold of the doubling construction is clearly the spoken language. For various reasons, the written language has tried to find other ways than the doubling, but also here you may find clear traces of the procedure. An interesting theme in the development is the borderline between what is sufficiently topical to avoid doubling. The comparison between Jesu Barndomsbog and the speech by the resigning prime minister demonstrates that the actual delimitation of what needs doubling in order to appear closely enough bound by the situation may vary considerably, although all the time maintaining a boundary between what is supposed to be topical in the given situation, and what is not.

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