ON THE SYNTAX OF TITLES

1. Introduction: Dutch title constructions as in (1-2) are derived in syntax, more specifically in a manner that is reminiscent of the Hebrew construct state.

(1)	graaf Dracula		(2)	kapitein Von Trapp
	count Dracula			captain Von Trapp
	'count Dracula'			'captain Von Trapp'

This analysis entails that (a) titles are a product of syntax, not of the lexicon (contra Jackendoff & Culicover 2005). (b) we have yet another instance of the construct state in a non-semitic language (cf. Barbiers 2007).

2. Problem: Titles are not a lexical class, so why are they interpreted as titles? Titles are not restricted to a closed class in the lexicon. Any noun (3), including neologisms (4), can be interpreted as a title.

(3)	boekenkast Bily		(4)	naakstrandgemeente Bredene
	bookcase Bily			nude.beach.town Bredene
	Bily the bookcase (Ikea-name)			Bredene, the town with the nude beach

It is therefore not plausible that titles are interpreted as titles because of a certain lexical property. The problem is then how we come to the title interpretation. I propose that it is a specific syntactic configuration, viz. the construct state, that yields the title interpretation.

3. Background: the construct state: The Hebrew construct state (5) is a combination of a head noun and a complement, where the complement immediately follows the head and a variety of semantic relations can hold between the head and the complement.

(5)	beyt ha-'is	[all Hebrew examples are taken from Siloni 1997:21-26]
	house the-man	
	'the man's house'	

4. Data: the title construction resembles the construct state: The title construction shares the following six properties with the Hebrew construct state:

(i) neither in the construct state (6) nor in the title expression (7) can a preposition intervene between the head and the complement,

(6)	beyt (*sel) ha-'is [Hebrew]	(7)	professor (*van) Einstein [Dutch]
	house of the-man		professor of Einstein

(ii) the construction does not allow for an initial determiner. First note that a determiner for proper names is possible in the Flemish variant of Dutch: first names and family names that refer to males can have a determiner (9). However, when preceded by a title, this initial determiner is excluded (10), as it is for construct states (8).

(8)	(*ha)-beyt ha-'is	[Hebrew]
	the-house the-man	

(9)	Ik heb de Larousse gezien.	[Flemish]
	I have the Larousse seen	
	'I have seen Larousse.' (*Larousse* is a family name.)	

(10)	* Ik heb de professor Larousse gezien.	[Flemish]
	I have the professor Larousse seen	

(iii) the whole DP is interpreted as definite. As pointed out in (ii), the Hebrew construct state is never marked as definite by means of an initial determiner. Nevertheless, the whole is interpreted as definite. Similarly, the whole title construction is interpreted as definite, despite the absence of an initial determiner.

(iv) Both the Hebrew construct state (11) and the title construction (12) are recursive.

(11)   gag   beyt   ha-'is   (12)   professor   doctor   ingenieur Degryse
       roof   house   the-man   professor   doctor   engineer Degryse
       'the roof of the house of the man'   'professor doctor engineer Degryse'

(v) Both for the construct state (13 vs. 14) and the title construction (14 vs. 15), the presence of the complement is obligatory.

(13)   beyt ha-'is   (14)   * beyt
       house the-man   house
       'the man's house'

(15)   Ik heb   paus Benedictus gezien.   (16)   * Ik heb   paus gezien.
       I have pope Benedict   seen   I   have   pope   seen
       'I have seen pope Benedict.'

(vi) Both in the construct state (17) and the title construction (18-19),the head noun loses stress.

(17)   * BAYIT ha-'is   [small caps indicate stress]
          house the-man   (*bayit* is the stressed form of the unstressed *beyt*)

(18)   koningin ZOrex   (19)   * koningIN   Zorex
       queen   Zorex   queen   Zorex
       'queen Zorex'

5. Analysis: N-to-D movement: Ritter (1991) analyzes the construct state as an instance of N-to-D movement, as illustrated in (20).

(20)   [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ beyt [$_{NumP}$ [$_{Num°}$ ~~beyt~~ [$_{NP}$ ha-'is [$_{N°}$ ~~beyt~~]]]]]]

In this construction the complement resides in Spec,NP and as such it establishes a semantic relation with the noun. The noun raises via the Num° head (i.e. the head that assigns sg/pl marking) to the D° head. As Ritter (1991) shows, all the above properties immediately follow from this structure. Most notably, the absence of the initial determiner follows: the moved noun is in competition with any determiner.

In a similar vein, I propose the following structure (21) for the Dutch title construction.

(21)   [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ professor [$_{NumP}$ [$_{Num°}$ ~~professor~~ [$_{NP}$ Einstein [$_{N°}$ ~~professor~~]]]]]]

The title raises from its head position to the D° head where it gets interpreted as a proper name (cf. Longobardi 1994). On its way it passes its functional domain. This is shown by the fact that it can get plural marking (22) or a diminutive (23) on its way.

(22)   professoren Chomsky   en   Kayne   (23)   prinsesje   Elizabeth
       professors Chomsky   and   Kayne   princess.DIMINUTIVE Elizabeth
       'the professors Chomsky and Kayne'   'little princess Elizabeth'

In argument position, the title ends in the D° head, hence the illicitness of the initial determiner (10): the title and the determiner are in competition for the same position.

6. Conclusion: title constructions are interpreted as such not because of a certain lexical property, but because of a certain syntactic configuration: an N-to-D movement structure that is highly reminiscent of the Hebrew construct state.

7. Time permitting, I will contrast this construction both with constructions as *Van Gogh, the painter* that have been analyzed as appositions (Lekakou&Szendroï 2008) and with full names such as *Virginia Woolf*, that pattern with the appositions, not with the titles.

References: Barbiers, S. (2007) *Indefinite numerals one and many and the casue of ordinal suppletion.* Lingua 117(5). ✄ Jackendoff, R. & Culicover, P.W. (2005) *Simpler syntax.* Oxford: OUP. ✄ Borer, Hagit (2005) *In name only.* Oxford: OUP. ✄ Lekakou, M. & Szendroï (2008) ✄ Longobardi (1994) *Reference and Proper Names.* LI 25:609-665. ✄ Ritter, E. (1991) Two functional categories in Noun Phrases: evidence from Modern Hebrew. In: Rothstein, S. (ed.) *Perspectives on Phrase Structure: heads and licensing.* San Diego: Academic Press. ✄ Siloni, T. (1997) *Noun phrases and nominalizations.* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.