The cartography of yes and no in West Flemish

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We make an in-depth study of the response particles ja/nee (‘yes’/‘no’) in the Lapscheure dialect of Dutch, focusing on two properties:

(i) The particles show overt φ-feature marking (1).
(ii) In ‘reversal’ answers, the particles bear an additional marker which we term ‘reversal schwa’.

There are co-occurrence restrictions between the reversal particles, sentential particles (ba) and ‘reversal doet’ (2) (cf. Van Craenenbroeck (2010)).

(1)  a. Q: Goa Marie morgent kommen?   A: Ja-s./Nee-s.
    ‘Q: Is Marie coming tomorrow?’      A: ‘Yes/No.’

    b. Q: Een-k tyd?   A: Ja-g./Nee-g.
       have=I time yes-2SG/no-2SG

(2)  A: K’een geen tyd.
     I=have no time

     B: Ja-g-e. / Ba ja-g-e. / Ja-g-e doet. / *Ba ja-g-e doet.
      yes-2SG-RVRS   PRT yes-2SG-RVRS yes-2SG-RVRS do

     ‘B: Yes you do.’

We develop a cartographic analysis of the above facts, arguing that ja/nee represent TP proforms (Krifka 2013). We analyse the pronominal marking as agreement marking, a reflex of the presence of φ-features which are merged in Fin to satisfy the Subject Criterion, along the lines of Rizzi & Shlonsky 2007, and which drive movement of ja/nee to the left periphery.

It will turn out that a crucial component of the derivation of the patterns in (2) is the fact that ja/nee, as single words, have a status ambiguous between T⁰ and TP (cf. Muysken 1986), and can move either as phrases or as heads.