Implications of the Danish definiteness alternation for concord in Nanosyntax

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Introduction

- There is a universal merge order of functional features, and a succinct universal algorithm for how they merge
- Lexical entries spell out entire phrases (trees of features)
- Language variation derives from the availability of lexical entries

- Suffixes are default, prefixes are a "last resort" (Starke, 2018)
- Disagreement on limits to prefix construction / workspace closure (Caha, 2019; Starke, 2018; Caha et al., 2019)
- Multiple Merge (Caha, 2019) allows concord (multiple expression of a feature) and multi-morpheme prefixes

Data

(1) a. kant-**en**
edge-DEF
'the edge'

   b.*den kant
DEF edge
≈ 'the edge'

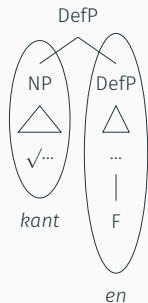(2) a.*skarpe kant-en
sharp edge-DEF
≈ 'the sharp edge'

   b. **den** skarpe kant
DEF sharp edge
'the sharp edge'

(3) a. kant-**en**
      edge-DEF.SG.C
      'the edge'

  b. **den**   skarpe kant
      DEF.SG.C sharp edge
      'the sharp edge'

(4) a. hus-**et**
      house-DEF.SG.N
      'the house'

  b. **det**   store hus
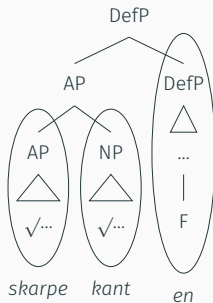   DEF.SG.N big   house
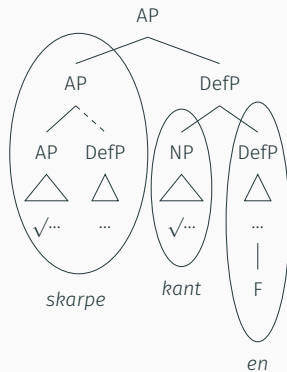   'the big house'

Analysis

(1a) kant-**en**
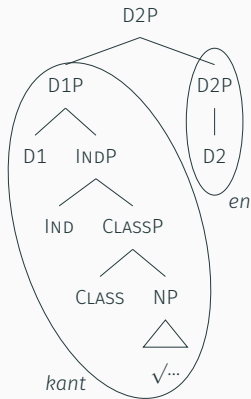   edge-DEF

(2b) **den** skarpe kant
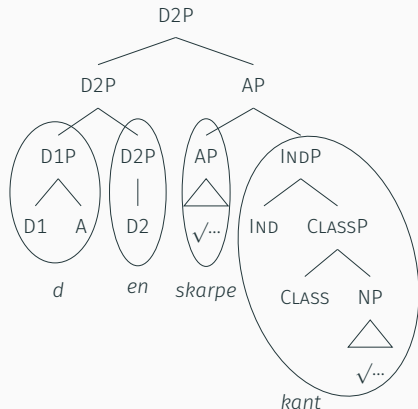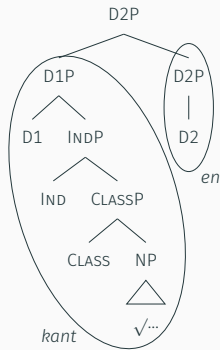   DEF sharp edge

"Regular" Merge:

Multiple Merge:

(1a) kant-**en**
      edge-DEF

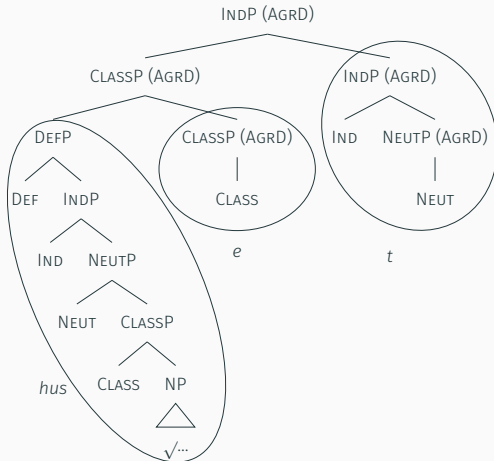(2b) **den** skarpe kant
      DEF sharp edge

6

(1a) kant-**en**
      edge-DEF.SG.C

(4a) hus-**et**
      house-DEF.SG.N

- Danish definiteness presents challenge for Multiple Merge
- Analysis possible with older components of Nanosyntax: Taraldsen (2010), Starke (2018)
- Need for hybrid theory and/or refinement of Multiple Merge

References

Baunaz, Lena and Eric Lander (2018). "Nanosyntax". In: *Exploring nanosyntax.* Ed. by Lena Baunaz et al. Oxford University Press.

Caha, Pavel (2019). *Case competition in Nanosyntax. A study of numeral phrases in Ossetic and Russian.* LingBuzz. URL: https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/004875.

Caha, Pavel, Karen De Clercq, and Guido Vanden Wyngaerd (2019). "The fine structure of the comparative". In: *Studia Linguistica* 73.3, pp. 470–521.

Hankamer, Jorge and Line Mikkelsen (2018). "Structure, Architecture, and Blocking". In: *Linguistic Inquiry* 49.1, pp. 61–84.

Starke, Michal (2018). "Complex Left Branches, Spellout, and Prefixes". In: *Exploring Nanosyntax.* Ed. by Lena Baunaz et al. Oxford University Press.

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Appendix

(5) Restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses

    a. **den stol** som jeg sad på
       DEF chair that I sat on
       'the chair that I sat on' [restrictive only]

    b. **stol-en** som jeg sad på
       chair-DEF that I sat on
       'the chair, which I sat on' [non-restrictive]

Concord

(6) a. kant-**en**
edge-DEF.SG.C
'the edge'

b. **den** skarpe kant
DEF.SG.C sharp edge
'the sharp edge'

c. **en** (skarp) kant
INDEF.SG.C sharp edge
'a (sharp) edge'

(7) a. hus-**et**
house-DEF.SG.N
'the house'

b. **det** store hus
DEF.SG.N big house
'the big house'

c. **et** (stor-**t**) hus
INDEF.SG.N big-N house
'a (big) house'

(7c) et   stor-**t** hus
INDEF.SG.N big-N house

(2b) den   skarp-**e** kant
DEF.SG.C sharp   edge