

# DPs Syntax in acquisition

A case study on Italian L2 by Czech and Slovak learners

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Czech and Slovak are languages which don't exhibit a manifest position for the Articles in the Determiner Phrase. The aim of this paper is to show how this structure is accessed during the learning of Italian, a language which presents the articles as for the standard behavior for nouns.

**Keywords:** Determiner Phrase, Italian L2, Second Language Acquisition, Syntax

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## 1 Introduction

Czech (ces) and Slovak (slk) are languages of the Slavic branch in the Indo-European family. Alongside a certain morphological complexity in noun declension systems, these languages –except for Bulgarian (3b) and Macedonian (Dryer, 2013, in Dryer and Haspelmath (2013))– don't show an overt realization of the Determiner position inside the noun phrase (1) (Harkins, 1953). Conversely, Italian (ita) and the other romance languages explicit that position as a default behaviour, usually with a free morpheme preceding the noun (2) or by cliticization of the definite article (3a):

(1) No articles

- a. ces (Veselovská, 2014, 14)  
*Chlapec/Marie/Ona/každý miluje ryby/ {své rodiče}.*  
 Boy/Marie/She/Everyone Love.3sg Fish/ {POSS parent}  
 "SUBJ loves [the] fish/ his parents"
- b. slk (Kamenárová, 2007, 113)  
*Večer čítam knihy, píšem referáty..*  
 Evening Read.1SG Book.PL Write.1SG Paper.PL  
 "In the evening I read [the] books, I write (school) papers ..."

(2) Proclitic

- a. ita (Bianco, 2017, 60)  
*Il terremoto ha distrutto la città.*  
 ART.DEF Earthquake AUX.3sg Destroy.PTCP.PST ART.DEF City  
 "The earthquake destroyed the city"
- b. fro (Dufournet and Lecoy, 2008, 3261)  
*La dame étoit devant la sale.*  
 ART.DEF Girl Be.3sg ADV ART.DEF Room  
 "The *dame* is in front to the room"

(3) Enclitic

- a. ron (Cojocaru, 2003, 45)  
*Prieten=ul meu este aici.*  
 Friend=ART.DEF POSS Be.PRES.3sg Here  
 "My friend is here"
- b. bul (Leafgren, 2011, 37)  
*Kъде е книга=та му?*  
 Where Be.3SG Book=ART.DEF POSS.1SG  
 "Where is my book?"

## 2 Theoretical background

Two hypothesis: DP as Spec or Phrase.

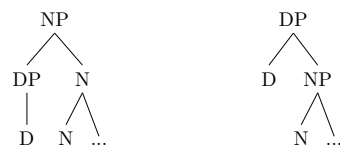


Figure 1: Structural comparison between NP-over-DP and DP-over-NP Hypotheses

## 2.1 Implications for the DP-Hypothesis in Italian

## 2.2 Implications for the DP-Hypothesis in Czech

# 3 Case Study

## 3.1 Retrieve the linguistic data

```
ggplot(df, aes(fill=df$L1, y=abs(rnorm(nrow(df)))), x=df$Corpus)) +
  geom_bar( stat="identity") + labs(x="Corpora", y="Number of texts", color="Native")
```

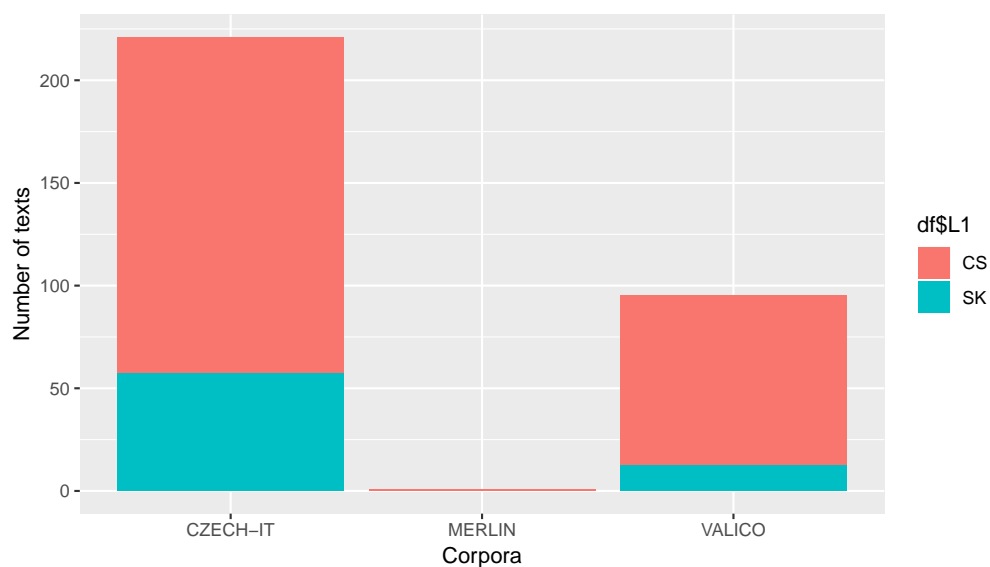


Figure 2: Number of texts by different Corpora

### 3.2 Perform a test

Provide 10 noun phrases with different referential structure in terms of animateness with a neutralized article. The students are invited to write full sentences for each one.

Goals:

- Test the syntactic distribution of phrases (SUBJ vs OBJ)
- Test the distribution of DETs ([+def], [-def], Ø)

## 4 Conclusion

### Financial coverage

This work was partially supported by the funding grant XXX.

### Abbreviations

Languages are indicated by the abbreviations provided in the ISO 639-3 format (SIL International, 2009). Morphological glosses styles adhere to the widely recognized *Leipzig Glossing Rules* (Comrie et al., 2008), while other abbreviations respect (Boeckx, 2012).

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