

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 (cs) and Slovak (sk) 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 and Macedonian (Dryer, 2013, in Dryer and Haspelmath (2013)) – don't show an overt realization of the Determiner position inside the noun phrase (Harkins, 1953). Conversely, Italian (it) and the other Romance languages explicit that position as a default behaviour, usually with a free morpheme before the noun – with the exception of Romanian, which uses a intralexematic suffixation on the noun for the article – :

(1) Slavic languages

a. (cs, *Reference*)

Viděl jsem Ø/?ten chlapec který běží
See.PTCP.PST AUX.1sg DEM Boy.SG pro Run.3sg

(2) Romance languages

a. (it, *Reference*)

Ho visto un/il/*Ø ragazzo che corre
AUX.1sg See.PTCP.PST DET Boy.SG pro Run.3sg

b. (fr, *Reference*)

J'ai vu un/le/?Ø garçon courir
I.AUX.1sg See.PTCP.PST DET Boy.SG Run

2 Theoretical background

Two hypothesis: DP as Spec or Phrase.

2.1 Determiners in Italian

2.2 Implications for the DP-Hypothesis in Italian

3 Case Study

3.1 Retrieve the linguistic data

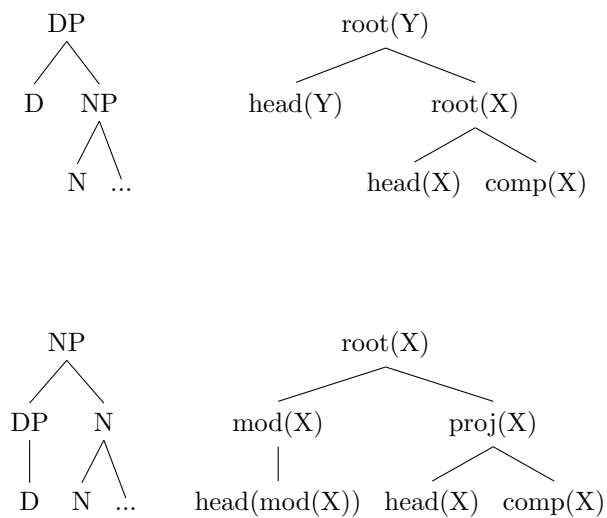


Figure 1: DP and NP phrases

```
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="N")
```

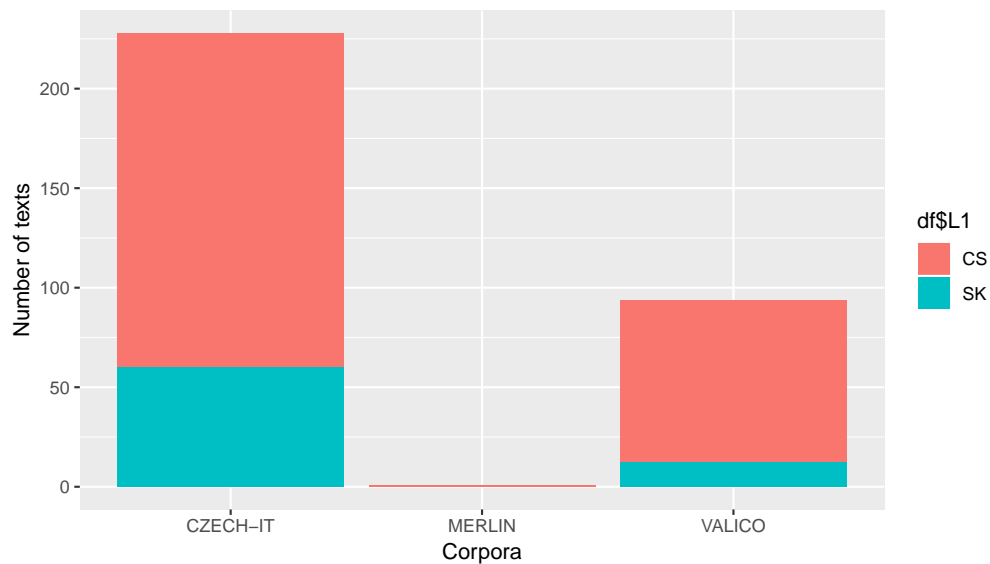


Figure 2: Number of texts by different Corpora

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

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Abbreviations

Languages are indicated by the abbreviations provided in the standard ISO 639-1 format (ISO, 2002). The linguistic abbreviations adhere to the widely recognized *Leipzig Glossing Rules* (Comrie et al., 2008).

5 References

References

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