

# 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<sup>1</sup>:

(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.

<sup>1</sup>Otherwise, Romanian uses a intralexematic suffixation for the article, which falls in the end of the word.

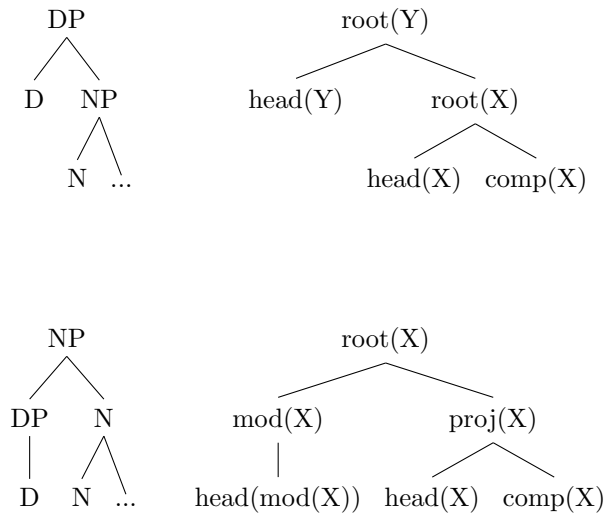


Figure 1: DP and NP phrases

## 2.1 Determiners in Italian

## 2.2 Implications for the DP-Hypothesis in Italian

# 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="Na
```

## 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],  $\emptyset$ )

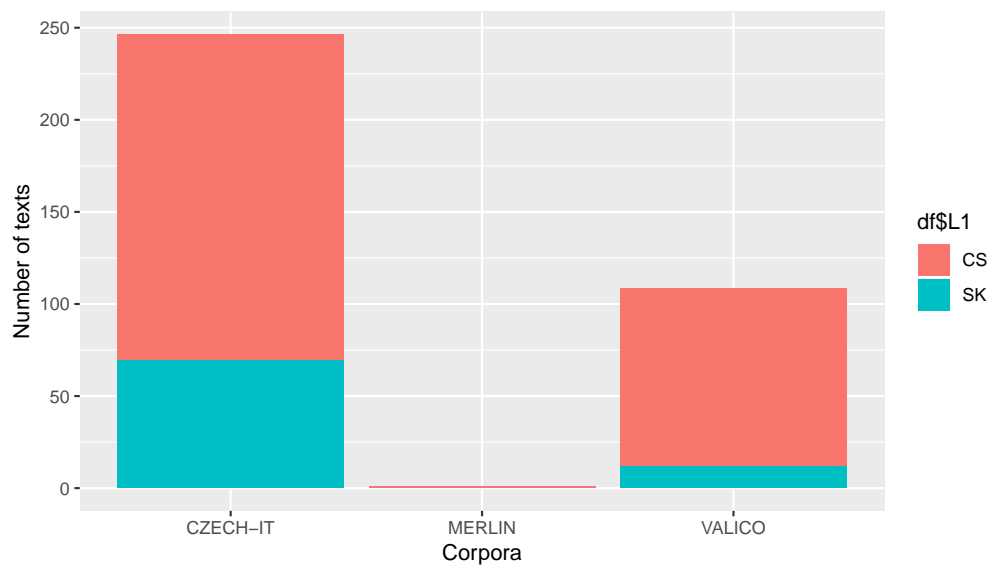


Figure 2: Number of texts by different Corpora

## 4 Conclusion

## 5 Financial coverage

This work was partially supported by the funding grant XXX.

## 6 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).

## 7 References

### References

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