
Article omission as non-projection of D

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Theories of omission are often based on standard normative language varieties, and pay less attention to situationally defined registers of languages (e.g. headlines, diaries, recipes) in which more elements can be omitted. We present a case-study of article omission in the *headline* register in Dutch and German, and argue that article omission is not due to PF-deletion or null article insertion but rather to the non-generation of the DP-layer. This adds to the family of proposals that accounts for missing material in terms of reduced structure (e.g. Haegeman 2017). The argument is based on a novel generalisation about the inflection we find on attributive adjectives and considerations about the interpretation of NPs.

Definite and indefinite articleless noun phrases in Dutch and German headlines show inflectional endings on the adjective that are different from the endings in the corresponding standard language NPs with articles. In headlines, both languages spell out the *strong* agreement form on the adjective in the absence of an article (and only in that context), consider example (1) from www.eltern.de.

- (1) Mit klein-**em** Kind nach Übersee?
with small-AGRstr child.NEUT to overseas (date: 21-01-2022)

Such facts disqualify the PF-deletion account of article omission (the surface-deleted article should participate in agreement/concord and yield the unattested form *mit ~~einem~~ klein-en Kind*). We also show that postulating a *null article* for the data (as proposed in Weir 2017, Reich 2017) face some problems, too. Instead of these accounts, we propose that noun phrases like (1) lack a DP layer and correspond to NP (or NumP) only in the syntax. Aspects of interpretation normally signaled by determiners are due to type-shifting operations that turn a property-denoting noun into a kind, entity or existential expression. Since it is lacking, D is not a factor in determining the form of other elements in the NP and as a result, the adjective shows strong agreement, similarly to mass nouns (*kalt-es Wasser*). Time allowing, we identify proposals on adjectival inflection that are compatible with our data (e.g. Ackema and Neeleman 2020).

References: • Ackema, P. & A. Neeleman (2020) Unifying nominal and verbal inflection. In A. Alexiadou and H. Borer (eds) *Nominalizations: 50 years on from Chomsky's remarks*. OUP, 29–52. • Haegeman, L. (2017) Unspeakable sentences. Subject omission in written registers: a cartographic analysis. *Linguistic Variation* 17:2, 229–250. • Reich, I. (2017) On the omission of articles and copulae in German newspaper headlines. *Linguistic Variation* 17:2, 186–204. • Weir, A. (2017) Object drop and article drop in reduced written register. *Linguistic Variation* 17:2, 157–185.