Gender agreement and mismatches: the syntactic structure of quantified and superlative partitives

Westveer, T.J.T.; Sleeman, A.P.; Aboh, E.O.

Publication date
2021

Citation for published version (APA):
1. Introduction

The problem: acceptability of gender mismatches in partitive constructions

Superpartitive constructions: German = French
(1) a. Der jüngste von den Studenten ist Irene. [In partitive constructions, nominal relator… the construction is headed by a referential element = DP]
b. Der jüngste der Studenten ist Irene.

Quantified partitives: German = French
(2) a. Ein Referential der Studenten ist Irene.
   b. Ein Referential der Studenten ist Irene.

→ How to explain this contrast?

4. Quantified vs. superpartitive partitives

4.1 Superpartitives: French = German

(10) (11) DP <= referent = female

5. Concluding remarks

Novel syntactic analysis of both quantified and superpartitive partitives:


→ No PP, but nominal relator, spells out as de in French; assigns genitive case in German
→ Silent nominal classifier, no copying

Explanation of agreement differences between French and German:

→ Semantic feature valuation applies, if…

1. ... the construction is headed by a referential element = DP
   => Mismatch accepted in superpartitive in French and German
2. ... if the lower D does not bear any gender value = last resort
   => Mismatch not accepted in quantified partitives in French
   => Mismatch accepted in quantified partitives in German

References

For a complete list of references, please consult the original paper. Tho Westveer, Petra Sleeman & Enoch O. Aboh - Universiteit van Amsterdam TAU-dag RUG - 10-11 June 2021