# THE LITTLE NP HYPOTHESIS[*]

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1.   Introduction

Since Abney (1987), the DP hypothesis has been taken for granted by almost all linguists following the generative approach to syntax. The DP hypothesis states that the head of a nominal phrase is a determiner, D^0, rather than a noun, N^0. This is represented by the structure on the left. By contrast, on the right is the structure[1] proposed by the NP hypothesis, where D is instead the specifier of the nominal phrase:

(1)
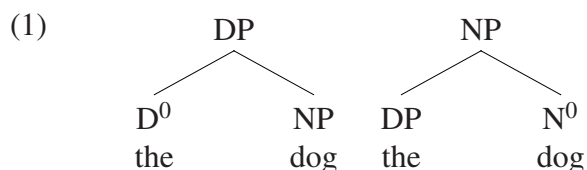
Very few linguists of the minimalist tradition reject the DP hypothesis universally, though there have been attempts to do so, especially by Bruening (2009) and Chomsky (2007a). On the other hand, some, such as Bošković and Sener (2014), make the intermediate claim that the NP hypothesis is true in languages with no articles, such as Turkish, while the DP hypothesis may be true in others.

Perhaps the most important reason why linguists have mostly abandoned the NP hypothesis is that, at the time, there was reason to view clauses and phrases as structually parallel: Chomsky (1986) reworked the structure of clauses as CP-IP-VP. I and C are functional heads, and they fit the X-bar schema. Why shouldn't D also follow suit with these functional heads and be the head of a nominal phrase?

But given that we have abandoned the X-bar theory in favor of Chomsky (1995)'s Bare Phrase Structure, there is no reason to think that all functional categories project a complement and a specifier; on the contrary, the existence of non-projecting heads is

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[1]This structure leads to several problems for the proponent of the NP hypothesis. In the past, it was mysterious how a D^0 could be the specifier of a noun. That has disappeared with the advent of Bare Phrase Structure, according to which specifiers and heads are contextually defined. But now, one runs into multiple complications with the nature of Merge here. Why is D the specifier, rather than a head in this structure as a result of Merge? A defense of this structure may result in an *ad hoc* complication of the definition of Merge, which is an undesirable result. It is theoretically desirable to keep the structure of the DP hypothesis.

predicted.[2]

If we were to try to make a more modern comparison, Chomsky (2007a) draws parallels between nominal and verbal phrases rather than nominals and clauses, arguing that we would then expect all nominals to be headed by a little nP shell. Bruening (2009) gives us empirical reasons to go with such a claim, based on semantic selection facts. Verbs that select for clausal complements always select for C and not V. We would then expect verbs that select for nominal complements to select for N, and not D. Therefore, the head of a nominal phrase should likewise be a noun.

Other arguments defending the DP hypothesis exist. For example, *the delicious pineapple* is possible, but *delicious the pineapple* is not. This seems to show that adjectives c-select NPs but not DPs. But the argument from Abney (1987) in favor of the DP hypothesis that will be most thoroughly discussed in this paper is the observation that multiple determiners cannot appear together in nominal phrases as they would compete for the same syntactic slot:

(2)   a.   * this the dog
      b.   * this my/our chair
      c.   * the John's video game

The challenge for the NP hypothesis here is that it is not obvious why such combinations should be banned. The DP hypothesis can explain this pattern easily by stating that determiners do not c-select DPs as complements. However, a supporter of the NP hypothesis ought to question whether or not such combinations should be banned for this reason, because it would not be possible to make such nominal phrases in other languages, contrary to fact.

The DP hypothesis overgenerates, because all of these combinations are possible in many other languages, regardless of whether or not they have articles, in languages such as Turkish, Greek, Portuguese, Javanese, Spanish and Hungarian. If Abney is right, why should some languages allow multiple syntactic objects to share a syntactic slot, and some not allow them to share at all?

The goal of this paper is to present an alternate approach to Abney's syntactic slot solution by building on Chomsky (2007a)'s general structure of nominal phrases, in which the head of a nominal phrase is a little nP shell above DP. This approach takes the best of both hypotheses and combines them into one. On one hand, the DP hypothesis undeniably has structural advantages that the NP hypothesis does not. On the other, the NP hypothesis can account for selection symmetries that the DP hypothesis cannot.

After presenting data on the possibility of these nominal phrases in various languages, I consider potential ways a proponent of the DP hypothesis might take to derive the struc-

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[2]One example of this might be Head Movement, if we follow Matushansky (2006)'s approach of movement of head to Spec position, after which morphological merger takes place. The copied and merged X^0 does not project. This is done in order to avoid violating the Extension Condition, which says that syntactic operations can only target the root of a tree. Further, the head is then able to c-command its copy, allowing the operation Chain Reduction from Nunes (1995) to take place.

tures in (2a)-(2c), such as a multiple specifier approach and a Cartographic approach. I conclude that the least theoretically costly and most empirically plausible way to derive these structures is with the nominal phrase structure of Chomsky (2007a).

I try to show the feasibility of this approach by deriving the structure of the nominal phrases in (2a)-(2c), and others, in these languages. I give a reason as to why this is not possible in English, contradicting Abney (1987). I conclude that the NP and DP hypothesis do not necessarily need to rule each other out; it is reasonable to combine the best of these two hypotheses as we try to solve various problems in the structure of nominal phrases across languages.

2.   The Data

Although English does not allow nominal phrases with multiple determiners, the following word orders are attested in other languages. In all of these languages, the noun is never at the front of the nominal phrase, but in certain languages, the demonstrative may follow the noun. In addition, the possessor is usually unable to be at the front of the nominal phrase; definites and demonstratives are more commonly seen.

(3)   Demonstrative > Possessor > Noun (Turkish, Portuguese)

    a.   este meu gato   Portuguese
        This my   cat

    b.   Şu   ben-im köpe-ği-m   Turkish
        This I.GEN   dog.ACC.1SG

In Turkish, but not in Portuguese, the possessor may precede the demonstrative, which seems to imply that either the possessor can move further in Turkish than in Portuguese, or that movement of the demonstrative to the front of the nominal phrase is forced in Portuguese but not in Turkish.

(4)   Possessor > Demonstrative > Noun (Turkish)

    a.   Ben-im şu   köpe-ği-m   Turkish
        I.GEN   this dog.ACC.1SG

A proponent of the DP hypothesis may claim that multiple determiners with demonstratives are possible only because demonstratives are not actually determiners at all, or that they occupy a different slot in these languages, which have a different syntactic structure for nominal phrases that allow for the presence of multiple determiners. However, definite articles such as *the* are also capable of appearing in tandem with demonstratives or possessors in the same nominal phrase, meaning that the problem is not unique to demonstratives.

(5)   Definite > Possessor > Noun (Hungarian, Portuguese)

    a.   O   meu gato   Portuguese
        The my   cat

b. a Mari-Ø   vendeg-e-Ø   Hungarian[3]
    the Mary.NOM guest.POSS.3SG

The following examples (6a)-(6d) from Alexiadou et al. (2007) show that a demonstrative may precede a definite article in certain languages.

(6)   Demonstrative > Definite > Noun (Greek, Spanish, Hungarian, Japanese)

    a. ez a haz   Hungarian
        This the house

    b. ika n anak   Javanese
        This the baby

    c. afto to vivlio   Greek
        This the book

    d. este el hombre   Spanish
        This the man

Alexiadou et al. (2007) points out that in Greek and Spanish, the noun may precede the demonstrative, which leads them to argue that demonstratives start lower in the structure and raise to Spec,DP. But another alternative is that the demonstrative stays in place while the noun moves to a higher position, perhaps Spec,DP as I will suggest later in this short paper, following Chomsky (2007a).

(7)   Definite > Noun > Demonstrative (Greek, Spanish)

    a. to vivlio afto   Greek
        The book this

    b. el hombre este   Spanish
        the man   this

The problem for Abney (1987)'s argument here should be plain. If such structures are impossible in English but not in many other languages, then this indicates that the idea that these determiners compete for the same syntactic slot is incorrect; because such an explanation is universal, then in these languages the determiners should be competing for the same syntactic slot, but they do not.

Now, this argument alone is not sufficient to counter the DP hypothesis; perhaps a different kind of syntactic structure is present in these languages but not in English. Alternatively, perhaps the constraints that apply in English simply do not apply in these languages; perhaps they allow for multiple specifiers while English does not. But we will soon see, after giving Turkish nominals a very detailed look, that the DP hypothesis is theoretically ill-equipped at giving us structures for nominals with both a possessor and a demonstrative.

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[3]The Hungarian data in this paper is from Szabolcsi (1984).

2.1 Turkish

In this subsection, we will take a look at some relevant data in Turkish[4], for which the intuitions are actually fairly complicated: the word orders Dem-Poss-NP and Poss-Dem-NP are both possible, in both declarative and non-declarative sentences. Usually, the demonstrative has no effect on the meaning, apart from emphasis.[5]

(8) a. Şu ben-im köpe-ği sev-dim
         This I.GEN dog.   ACC   love.1SG
         'I love my dog.'

     b. Şu biz-im köpe-ği sev-dik
         This we.GEN dog.ACC love.1PL
         'We love our dog.'

     c. Şu Mary-nin köpe-ğini sev-dik
         This Mary.GEN dog.ACC   love.1PL
         'We love Mary's dog.'

As noted before, the possessor may also precede the demonstrative; in fact, this may be more natural to native speakers:

(9) a. Ben-im şu köpe-ği sev-dim
         I.GEN   this dog.ACC love.1SG
         'I love my dog.'

     b. Biz-im şu köpe-ği sev-dik
         We.GEN this dog.ACC love.1PL
         'We love our dog.'

     c. Mary-nin şu köpe-ğini sev-dik
         Mary.GEN this dog.ACC   love.1PL
         'We love Mary's dog.'

These word orders are possible in non-declarative sentences as well:

(10) a. Ben-im şu köpe-ği sev-din mi?
         I.GEN   this dog.ACC love.1SG Q
         'Have you loved my dog?'

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    b.   Şu ben-im köpe-ği sev-din mi?
           This I.GEN   dog.ACC love.1SG Q
           'Have you loved my dog?'

    c.   Ben-im şu köpe-ği sev!
           I.GEN   this dog.ACC eat
           'Love my dog!'

    d.   Şu ben-im köpe-ği sev!
           This I.GEN   dog.ACC love
           'Love my dog!'

An adjective may only precede the noun; all other word orders, where the adjective precedes the possessor or the demonstrative, are ungrammatical.

(11) a.   Ben-im şu eski resim
           I.GEN   this old picture

    b.   * Ben-im eski şu   resim
           I.GEN   old this picture

    c.   * Eski ben-im şu   resim
           Old I.GEN   this picture

    d.   Şu ben-im eski resim
           This I.GEN   old picture

    e.   * Şu   eski ben-im resim
           This old I.GEN   picture

    f.   * Eski şu   ben-im resim
           Old this I.GEN   picture

The paradigm gets even more complicated when we add in numerals. For the sake of simplicity, I will not include the ungrammatical constructions. Only the sentences below are grammatical, where the order of the adjective and numeral is interchangeable, but nothing else is.

(12) a.   Ben-im şu eski iki resim
           I.GEN   this old two picture

    b.   Ben-im şu   iki eski resim
           I.GEN   this two old picture

    c.   Şu   ben-im eski iki resim
           This I.GEN   old two picture

> d.   Şu   ben-im iki eski resim
> This I.GEN   two old picture

Usually, the demonstrative is only used for the sake of emphasis. However, it can also have a semantic contribution, as Jaklin Kornfilt (p.c.) has pointed out to me. Suppose there are multiple contextually salient dogs, and Ali wants to eat one dog in particular, and Ali has made the utterer aware of this intention. The utterer can say the following sentence by putting emphasis on the demonstrative to pick out a particular contextually salient dog:

(13)   Ali sen-in   şu köpe-ği yeme-yi isti-yor
       Ali you.GEN this dog.ACC eat.INF   want.PRES
       'Ali wants to eat *this* dog of yours.'

Furthermore, if one attempts to point out one dog in particular with the demonstrative, but switches the order of the possessor and the demonstrative, the sentence as a result is ungrammatical. This contrasts with the usual case where Dem-Poss-NP is grammatical; but only in this case it seems to be rather terrible.

(14)   * Ali şu   sen-in   köpe-ği yeme-yi isti-yor
       Ali this you.GEN dog.ACC eat.INF   want.PRES
       'Ali wants to eat *this* dog of yours.'

It is difficult to say why this is the case. However, we can use this fact to disprove a particular claim about the nature of nominals containing both a possessive and demonstrative in Turkish. Bošković and Sener (2014) make the same observation about these facts, and argue that since both word orders are possible in Turkish, they are adjuncts[6], because that would provide a simple explanation of the optional word order. According to this proposal, the NP hypothesis is true in languages like Turkish with no articles.

     This claim, however, does not explain some facts about the demonstrative in Turkish. First, if both of them are adjuncts, then the ungrammaticality of the word order Dem-Poss-NP in this sentence when trying to pick out a particular contextually salient NP is not predicted. Why would that lead to ungrammaticality? Furthermore, though it is subject to native speaker intuitions, the word order Poss-Dem-NP seems on the whole to be more natural than Dem-Poss-NP, another fact that is difficult to explain for the adjunct analysis.

     Another way to come to the conclusion that the demonstrative in Turkish in these cases is an adjunct is as follows. Japanese, a language which is closely related to Turkish, has two kinds of demonstratives, one of which is adjectival and one of which is a pronoun. *Kono*, a demonstrative adjective, can be paired with NPs to get things like *this dog*. *Kore*, a demonstrative pronoun, cannot be paired with NPs[7]:

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[6]Notice that even the possessor can be an adjunct according to Bošković and Sener (2014), as they reject the presence of D heads in article-less languages like Turkish.

[7]For the sake of simplicity, I do not consider other demonstratives such as *sore* and *ano*.

(15)　a.　Kono inu
　　　　　This　dog

　　　b.　* Kore inu　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Japanese
　　　　　This　dog

Interestingly, in Japanese, the demonstrative adjective can even precede a personal pronoun or an R-expression, such as a proper name, with the understanding that the utterer intends to emphasize himself.[8]

(16)　a.　Kono watashi
　　　　　This　I

　　　b.　Kono Kenji　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Japanese
　　　　　This　Kenji

One might now be able to say that the demonstrative present in the Poss-Dem-NP and Dem-Poss-NP constructions in Turkish is an adjunct. The problem with this argument is that Turkish uses the same word, *Şu*, for the demonstrative regardless of its context, and it does not have a word that corresponds to *kore* in Japanese:

(17)　Şu-nu　　yed-im
　　　This.ACC ate.1SG
　　　'I ate this.'

To say that there are two kinds of demonstratives in Turkish, one of which is a nominal and one of which is an adjective, even though they are seemingly the same word, would unnecessarily complicate the facts. It is preferable for the minimalist to pick the simpler hypothesis out of two that try to arrive at the same results. Instead, one might want to posit the existence of a null NP when the demonstrative behaves as a lone pronoun.

　　　Though we have rejected Bošković and Sener (2014)'s analysis of this paradigm, as we will see in the next section, this does not mean that the DP hypothesis is more capable of deriving these structures.

3.　The Problem

This my dog is a particularly troubling construction to derive for the DP hypothesis, since demonstratives raise to Spec,DP. But this is also the position that genitives occupy in the well-known bimorphemic approach to possessive pronouns, where the pronoun occupies Spec,DP position and D^0 contains the possessive clitic.

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[8]This might be taken as evidence for Bošković and Sener (2014)'s argument that languages without articles like Japanese have no DPs, because adjectives are not able to be adjuncts of DPs; for example, *big the dog* is completely ungrammatical in English, a language with DPs according to them.

(18)

```
              DP
           ╱      ╲
        DP          D'
       ╱  ╲        ╱  ╲
      my         D      NP
                 |      ╱ ╲
                gen      dog
```
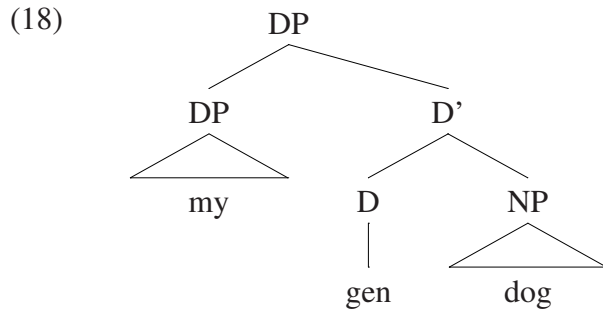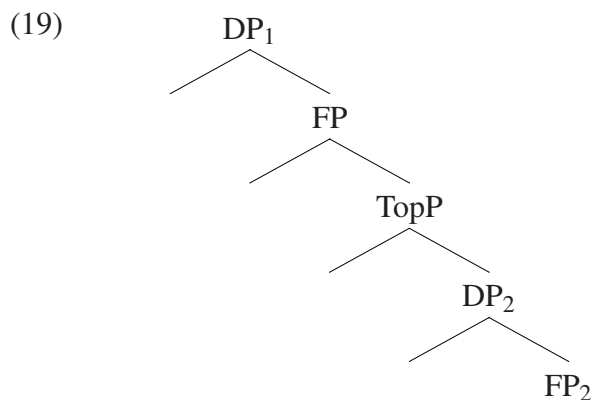
Both the bimorphemic and Alexiadou et al. (2007)'s approach claim that these two objects can move into the same position. This is a more modern way of coming to the same conclusion as Abney (1987): they are once again competing for the same syntactic slot. But the fact remains that these are possible structures in some languages, and we need to account for it.

Kornfilt (1985) posits an AgrP projection above DP in Turkish, so that we do not run into a multiple specifier problem, but this solution has become outdated. Chomsky (1995) argues that if we apply Occam's Razor, we do not need AgrP projections by reducing Agreement to spec-head relations. Closely related to AgrP, Cartographic approaches to nominal structure assume the existence of many specifier positions for the demonstrative to move into.

3.1 Cartographic Approaches

Since Rizzi (1997)'s approach to the left periphery which posited numerous functional projections, in addition to parallels between CPs and DPs, linguists have posited the existence of many functional projections in the DP layer. Furthermore, this functional structure is universal. In the following structure of the left periphery of the DP proposed by Alexiadou et al. (2007), the demonstrative can move into the higher DP.[9]

(19)

```
        DP_1
       ╱   ╲
            FP
           ╱  ╲
              TopP
             ╱   ╲
                 DP_2
                ╱  ╲
                    FP_2
```

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[9]Even the simplest Cartographic structure for nominal phrases has at least 12 functional heads independent of D or N, as in Guardiano (2009).

An important problem is that, as functional structure is universal, it is assumed to be completely linearly ordered. Failures in the transitivity of the functional sequence are not expected; but according to Nilsen (2003)'s reproduced examples in (20a)-(20c), they can be found in languages like Dutch.

(20) a. Stale har (*ikke) muligens ikke spist hvetekakene sine
          Stale has (*not) possibly not   eaten the.wheaties his
          'Stanley possibly hasn't eaten his wheaties.'

      b. Stale har (*alltid)   ikke alltid   spist hvetekakene sine
          Stale has (*always) not   always eaten the.wheaties his
          'Stanley hadn't always eaten his wheaties.'

      c. Dette er et morsomt gratis spill hvor spillerne   alltid   mulligens er et
          this   is a fun   free game where the.players always possibly   are one
          klikk fra   a   vine $1000!
          click from to win $1000
          'This is a fun, free game where you're always possibly a click away from
          winning $1000!'

But a more fundamental problem is the complexity of such approaches. Chomsky (1995) argues that each functional projection we posit must undergo minimalist scrutiny, as each projection comes at the cost of a less parsimonious theory, which is contrary to the main purpose of the minimalist program.

3.2   Multiple Specifiers

One might want to assume that the Turkish nominal phrase may have two specifier positions:

(21)
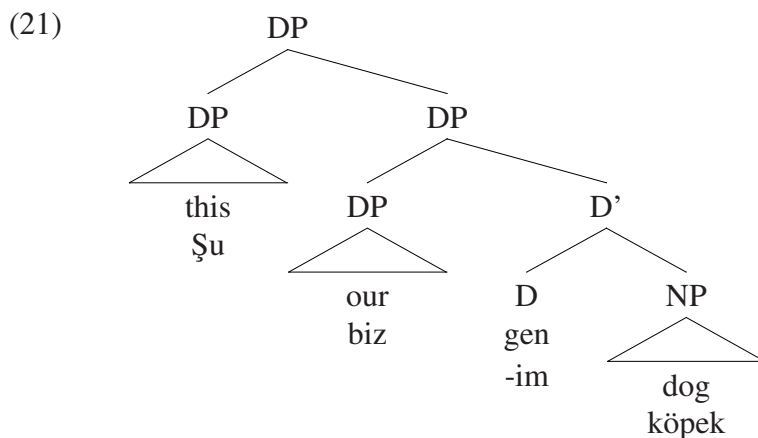
This isn't a completely impossible scenario. Japanese, in particular, is a closely related language which might have multiple specifiers. Kuroda (1988) argues that Japanese heads

allow more than one specifier because it allows the "multiple subject construction," as seen in the sentence below. The presence of nominative Case on two nominal phrases seems to indicate that both occupy a Spec,TP position where they can receive Case:

(22)   Taro-ga   musume-ga   isya-ni   natta
       Taro.NOM daughter.NOM doctor.DAT became
       'Taro, his daughter became a doctor.'   Japanese

A proponent of the DP hypothesis can now try similar examples in Turkish and hope that it might have multiple specifiers. However, Turkish fails the multiple subject test for multiple specifiers as Kornfilt (1991):

(23)   * medeni ülke-ler   erkek-ler   ortalama hayat süre-si   kısa
         civilized country.PL-NOM man.PL-NOM average life   span.CMPD-NOM short

It is worth noting, however, that Alexiadou et al. (2007)'s account may be able to provide a structure for *my this dog*, as the demonstrative does not originally occupy one of two specifier positions. The problem is the raising of the demonstrative in *this my dog*, because it must then occupy the second Spec,DP position.

4.   The nP Hypothesis

We need a specifier position above DP that is available for the demonstrative to move into, and it must not be *ad hoc*. One way of doing so might be looking at the advent of little vP, first proposed by Hale and Keyser (1993), and applying it to nominals. Chomsky (2007b) draws a more modern parallel between the structures of nominal and verbal phrases, and suspects that both might be able to constitute phases. Nominal phrases can be + or - definite, which is differentiated by the property of referentiality. The element responsible for this referentiality is D.
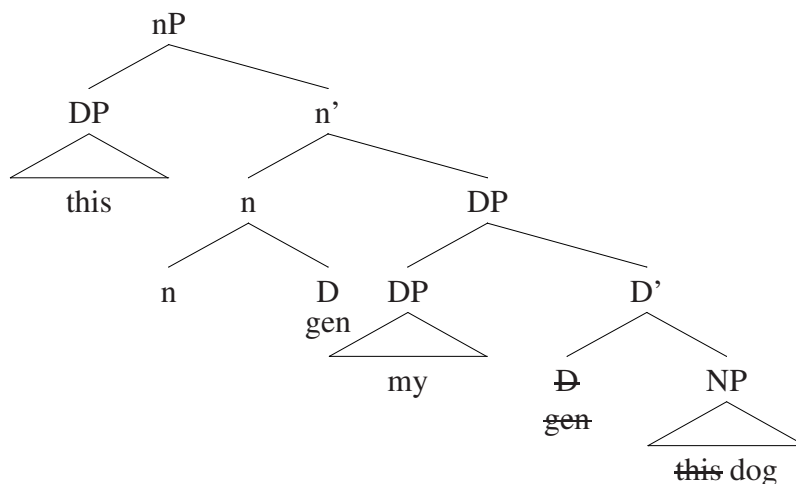
He considers an indefinite nominal like *author* or *many authors*, where the label of the latter is not *many*, which is an XP and not a lexical item. In both cases, the label of the phrases must be *author*. If we assume a correspondence with verbal phrases, then the nominal phrase will be headed by n, which takes a DP as a complement.

nP provides us a non-extraneous specifier position for the demonstrative in *this my dog* to move to.[10][11]

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[10]I am simplifying the structure for the bimorphemic genitive phrase here. Further, for the sake of simplicity, I assume the demonstrative begins at Spec,NP position.
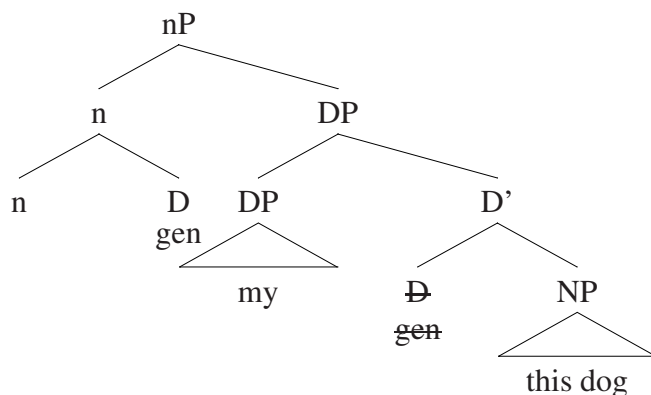
[11]Notice in this tree that D, gen, has also moved to little n. This happens, however, after Spec,DP has already received its Case from D, so there is no problem; as a result, the DP is already being correctly phonologically interpreted.

(24)

```
                    nP
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
        DP                      n'
       ╱  ╲            ┌─────────┴─────────┐
      this            n                    DP
                    ╱   ╲          ┌────────┴────────┐
                   n     D        DP                 D'
                         gen     ╱  ╲         ┌───────┴───────┐
                                my           D̶               NP
                                            g̶e̶n̶             ╱  ╲
                                                          t̶h̶i̶s̶ dog
```
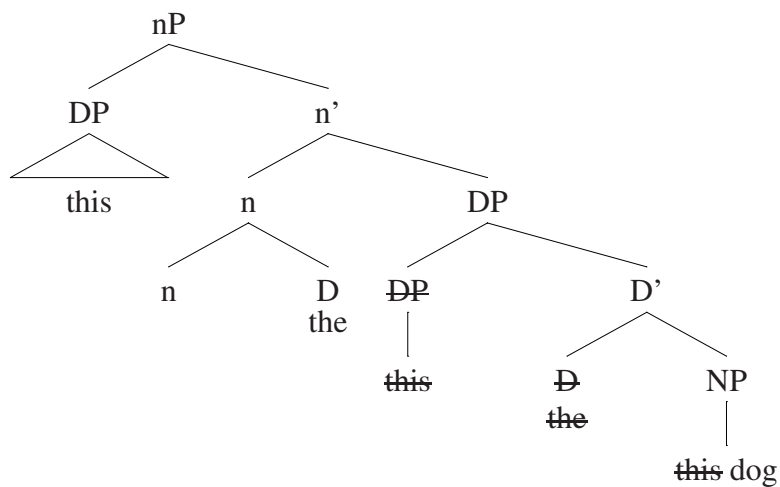
A structure for *my this dog* might be as follows, where the demonstrative remains in a lower specifier position, following Alexiadou et al. (2007).

(25)

```
                    nP
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
          n                     DP
        ╱   ╲           ┌────────┴────────┐
       n     D         DP                 D'
             gen      ╱  ╲         ┌───────┴───────┐
                     my           D̶               NP
                                 g̶e̶n̶             ╱  ╲
                                              this dog
```

In a structure like *this the dog*, the demonstrative moves up to Spec,nP while the definite article moves to n^0.

(26)

```
                    nP
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
        DP                      n'
       ╱  ╲            ┌─────────┴─────────┐
      this            n                    DP
                    ╱   ╲          ┌────────┴────────┐
                   n     D        D̶P̶                 D'
                         the       │          ┌───────┴───────┐
                                  t̶h̶i̶s̶        D̶               NP
                                             t̶h̶e̶              │
                                                          t̶h̶i̶s̶ dog
```

the dog this involves movement of *the* to n^0, just as in (26), *dog* to Spec,DP and *this* stays low. Alternatively, the noun may not move to Spec,DP; the demonstrative may start at a position lower than the noun. In *the my dog*, *the* moves to n^0 but *my* does not move at all.

(27)
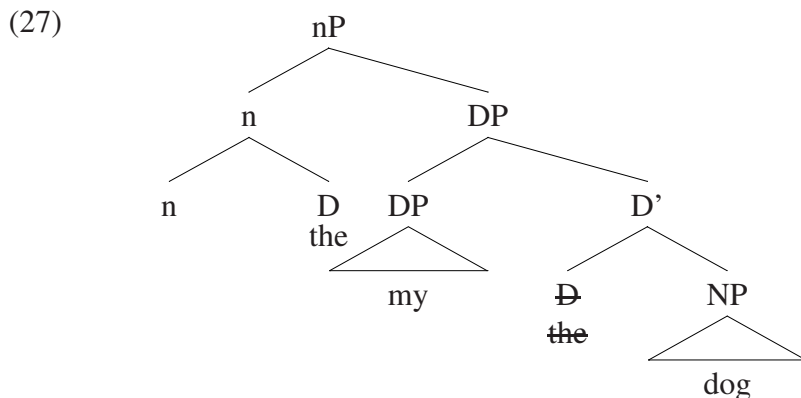
This approach assumes that syntactic movement is driven by features. For example, different syntactic features in n^0 lead to different results: *this my dog* and *my this dog* in Turkish, are derived depending on the feature that moves the demonstrative on n^0. Further, differences in structures cross-linguistically can be explained by variations in the syntactic features of the functional heads. Portuguese does not have *my this dog*: this might be explained by the necessity of the feature that moves the demonstrative on n^0 in Portuguese.

5. Theoretical Implications

5.1 Multiple Determiners in English

Why are multiple determiners in a nominal illicit in English, then? It would be *ad hoc* to say that the structure in these languages should fundamentally differ from the structure of nominals in English, and we want to keep as many similarities as possible.

My answer to this is to say that nominals have identical syntactic structures in every language. That is, it is syntactically possible in English, and indeed in any language, to obtain *this the dog*. But this is merely a phonological restriction, that is present in English and other languages which disallow multiple determiners, defined with the following rule.

(28)　　*Phonological Overtness in English nPs*: Only one phonologically overt syntactic object can occupy one of Spec,nP, n^0 and Spec,DP in a nominal phrase.

Here is how this rule works. *this* is in Spec,nP and *the* is in n^0 in *this the dog*. This is illicit in English since two phonologically overt elements in Spec,nP and n^0 cannot be pronounced at the same time. In the case of *this my dog* and *my this dog*, there cannot be two phonologically overt elements in Spec,nP and Spec,DP. Finally, in the case of *the my dog*, I assume that there cannot be two phonologically overt elements in n^0 and Spec,DP.

One prediction of this approach is that, since there is nothing syntactically wrong with multiple determiners in English, one might find contexts in which such structures do occur. In certain contexts, demonstratives paired with proper names are felicitous in English.[12]

(29)   This Jon Snow is the one who became King in the North.

5.2   The Most Central Element of a Nominal Phrase

As noted prior, Chomsky wants to make the noun the most fundamental element in all nominal phrases rather than the determiner, as linguists have done since Abney (1987). But there have been other attempts to do this; most significantly by Bruening (2009). He notes that verbs that select for clausal complements select for C, and never select for V.

By contrast, verbs that select for nominal complements select for N, and never for D. We already say that the head of a clause is C, and if we want to draw a parallel as proponents of the DP hypothesis have done, it would be reasonable to say that the head of a nominal is N, and not D. He uses these examples in particular, which involve questions vs. declaratives, nonfinite vs. finite and subjunctive vs. indicative clauses:

(30)   a.   Sue thinks that/*whether the world is flat.
       b.   Sue wonders *that/whether the world is flat.
       c.   Bertrand wants (*that) the world to be flat.
       d.   Sue asked that the answer be/*is two.
       e.   Sue thinks that the answer *be/is two.

It is plausible to say that verbal complements select for C. But this is never the case for nominal complements, as seen in Bruening's examples:

(31)   a.   I gathered the students.
       b.   * I gathered the student.
       c.   I gathered the scissors. (more than one pair of scissors)
       d.   * I gathered the scissors. (if only one pair of scissors)
       e.   The students met.
       f.   * A student met.

Bruening notes that selection for number is semantic rather than syntactic, as seen by this contrast. Bruening, too, wants to eliminate potentially extraneous functional projections like NumP in favor of simpler structures like the one supported in this squib.

As a result, it is reasonable to assume that semantic number is a property of the noun. So, the functional elements of nominals are never selected; it is instead the noun that is selected. Therefore, if the head of CP is C, then the head of NP is N. To be more specific, adopting Chomsky (2007)'s idea, it is n.

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[12]However, it is worth noting that *This Jon Snow* may simply be a shorter version of *This person named Jon Snow*, which does not involve multiple determiners competing for the same slot.

6.   Conclusion

In this squib, I have argued that the DP hypothesis struggles to explain why nominal phrases with multiple determiners are illicit in English but not in other languages. I developed a structure for nominals first proposed by Chomsky (2007a), and derived the structure of five kinds of nominals with multiple determiners. I concluded that English may have a phonological restriction preventing such nominals rather than a syntactic one.

The nP hypothesis takes the best of both worlds of the NP and DP hypotheses: it accounts for the intuition that the noun is the most fundamental element of the noun, and keeps the structural advantages of the DP hypothesis, while providing a much more minimalist derivation for nominal structures than modern approaches.

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