On Polish *jakiś*

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Originally proposed by Abney (1987), the DP hypothesis states that, much like the verbal system is headed by its functional elements (T and C), the nominal system is headed by its own functional element – the determiner D, which takes NP as its complement and a DP is projected, even when the D is not pronounced (i.e. is phonologically null). While this hypothesis is meant to apply to the underlying syntactic structure of all languages – both those with articles (pronounced D) and without (null D) – there is a debate as to whether or not this is actually the case. For instance, Bošković (2008, 2010) has made a number of generalizations that outline the fundamental differences between languages, defined by the presence (or not) of articles in them. These serve as the basis for his argument that there is a fundamental difference in the noun phrase structure of languages with articles and those without. While most of his supporting examples come from Serbo-Croatian, he clearly states that these generalizations extend across all Slavic languages, with the exception of Bulgarian and Macedonian.

   The aim of this paper is to study the Polish noun phrase and in particular the syntax and semantics of the understudied indefinite *jakiś,* whose behaviour will provide insights into the DP hypothesis challenged by Bošković.

   First, I will show that not all of the generalizations put forth by Bošković hold true for Polish, which poses a challenge for the proposed NP/DP parameter. Moreover, even when they do hold true, it appears that these generalizations do not necessarily provide an argument in support of Bošković's hypothesis; such as in the case of the generalization that only languages without articles may allow left-branch extraction (LBE), which may not actually be an extraction (or movement), but rather an occurrence of copy-and-delete (Pereltsvaig 2013), similar to split wh-phrases in French and Russian. If this is the case, while there may still be a correlation between a language's lack of articles and its allowance of LBE, this is not necessarily due to a lack of DP.

   Second, I will argue that Polish, despite sharing features with Serbo-Croatian described by Boskovic, makes use of an indefinite pronoun, *jakiś* ('any,' 'some,' 'about' and, in my intuition, 'a'). I will argue that it is an epistemic indefinite (EI) according to the parameters set out by Alonso-Ovalle and Menéndez-Benito (2015) and functions identified by Aloni and Port (2006), and I will compare *jakiś* to EIs in other languages, such as German and Spanish. I will also argue that it can function as an indefinite article with both an analysis of its semantic function, as in (1), based on my own intuitions as well as those of surveyed native Polish speakers, and its syntactic distribution.

(1) a. Jakiś   mężczyzna wszedł do budynku, ale (ja) nie   wiem kto to jest.
         Some/a   man   entered in building   but (I) NEG know who it is
         'Some/a man entered the/a building, but I do not know who he is.'
    b. *Jakiś   mężczyzna wszedł dobudynku i   (ja) wiem kto to jest.
          some/a   man   entered in building and (I) know who it is
          '*Some/a man entered a/the building and I know who it is.'   (Polish)

In addition to providing evidence in favour of the DP hypothesis in articleless languages, my analysis of *jakiś* will provide more precise semantics for it than those established thus far (Haspelmath 1997). In previous research, *jakiś* has either been ignored or its semantics oversimplified.

   In summary, by focusing on *jakiś*, I will be able to show two things: (1) Polish has an indefinite article (one with an interesting semantics, feeding into the recent literature on epistemic indefinites); and (2) Polish has a DP.

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