The assumption that noun phrases project an additional layer, the determiner phrase (DP), has been standard in the generative literature for the last 30 years. The motivation and evidence for this conjecture initially came from languages with obligatory articles, primarily English. Yet many languages of the world lack articles altogether. Is it legitimate to posit the DP in such languages? This question has been debated in the literature recently. In this seminar, we will examine the arguments in favor of the DP, and see whether they are applicable to languages that lack articles. We will explore the consequences positing of the DP entails for a wide range of phenomena in grammar.

Key words: syntax, typology, determiner, determiner phrase, article

Course requirements:
Attendance required: yes
1. Active participation in class discussion: 10%
2. Presentation: 20%
3. Final assignment: 70%

Topics to be covered:
1. Basic properties of the DP in languages with overt articles. Parallels between the DP, the TP and the CP.
2. Arguments against positing the DP in languages with overt articles.
3. The DP in languages without articles: pro and contra.
4. Consequences of positing the DP projection: the DP and extraction out of noun phrases; the DP and ellipsis in noun phrases.
5. The DP and argumenthood of noun phrases.
6. Fine structure of the DP and DP-internal movement.

Tentative Schedule
Week 1-2: Introduction: Course overview & logistics. Basic properties of the DP. Parallels between the DP, the TP, and the CP.
Week 3-4. Arguments against the DP in languages with articles.
Week 5-8. The DP in languages without articles: pro and contra.
Week 9-10. Consequences of positing the DP projection: the DP and extraction out of noun phrases; the DP and ellipsis in noun phrases.
Week 11-12. Can you be a verb argument without being a DP? DP and case assignment.
Readings

All the readings will be posted on the course site.


Bruening 2009 Selectional Asymmetries between CP and DP Suggest that the DP Hypothesis is Wrong. University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics. Vol. 15 > Iss. 1


Supplementary readings


