
On the Syntax of Yiddish Adnominal Possession

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This paper offers a Minimalist analysis of Yiddish prenominal possessive constructions, as exemplified in (1).

- (1) a. der shkheyne-s kets-l
the neighbour-s cat-DIM
'the neighbour's cat'
b. der shkheyne-s akets-l
the neighbour-s a cat-DIM
'a cat of the neighbour'

The proposed analysis contains three central claims:

(i) Yiddish prenominal possessors do not originate in postnominal position. Prenominal and postnominal possessors differ in their morphosyntactic and distributional properties.

(ii) Yiddish indefinite possessives, formed with an indefinite article following the prenominal possessor (see (1b)), constitute a subtype of prenominal possessive constructions and have a distinct phrase structure. The prenominal possessor in an indefinite possessive construction is first-merged in a reduced relative clause (cf. Cinque's 2010 analysis of indirect modification adjectives) situated in the specifier position of a functional phrase dominating the Num(ber)P in the extended nominal projection.

(iii) (In)definiteness spread in Yiddish prenominal possessives has a syntactic explanation (contra Dobrovie-Sorin 2003, 2004), resulting from an Agree relation that values the person feature of D.

References: • Cinque, G. (2010): *The syntax of adjectives*. MIT Press. • Dobrovie-Sorin, C. (2003): From DPs to NPs: A bare phrase structure account of genitives. In: *From NP to DP*, vol. 2, 75-120. John Benjamins. • Dobrovie-Sorin, C. (2004): Genitives and determiners. *UMOP (University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics)* 29, 115-32.