



Second language speakers and postnominal adjectival inflection in Dutch

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RU Quantitative Lexicology and Variational Linguistics

Introduction

- Partitive genitive

Als er iets ergs met haar gebeurd is,...
something bad-GEN

[_{NP} Quantifier Adjective-s]

niets bijzonders	'nothing special'
veel interessants	'a lot of interesting things'
wat zinnigs	'something sensible'
...	

Introduction

- Partitive genitive: -∅ variant

Je dacht onwillekeurig aan iets erg, een ratelslang of zo.

something bad-∅

Introduction

- Factors of alternation: -∅ (Pijpops & Van de Velde 2014)
 - Type-Adjective: *verkeerd* ('wrong') & color adjectives
 - goed* ('good')
 - beter* ('better')
 - fout* ('incorrect')
 - Nationality: Belgians
 - Register: informal language
 - Quantifier: iets & niets
 - Frequency: low frequent phrases

Introduction

- L2 speakers
 - L2 chatcorpus Moroccorp ↔ L1 chatcorpus ConDiv

(Grondelaers et al. 2000, Ruetten & Van de Velde 2013)

Introduction

- L2 speakers

- Simplify attributive adjectival inflection on **-e** by generalizing the most frequent **-e** ending

Standard: **-∅** in indefinite nt. sg. *een mooi verhaal*
-e elsewhere *een mooie auto*

Moroccorp: **-e** *een mooie verhaal*
een mooie auto

(Weerman 2003, Blom et al. 2008, Ruetten & Van de Velde 2013: 468-471, Van de Velde & Weerman 2014: 117-119)

Introduction

- L2 speakers
 - Deflect: break down case systems

(Lupyan and Dale 2010, Trudgill 2011 and Bentz & Winter 2013),

Hypotheses

Simplify by generalizing one variant

⇒ Factors of alternation can be easily dropped

~ -e inflection

Do not generalize one variant

⇒ Factors of alternation cannot be easily dropped

↔ -e inflection

Most frequent variant
-s

Morphologically simplest variant
-∅

~ L1 speakers

↔ L1 speakers

-e inflection option

Deflexion option

Same factors option

Other factors option

Data

- Quantifiers: iets ('something'), niets ('nothing'), wat ('something'), veel ('a lot'), zoveel ('so much')
- Adjectives: aardig ('nice'), apart ('apart'), belangrijk ('important'), beter ('better'), bijzonder ('particular'), blauw ('blue'), concreet ('concrete'), deftig ('decent'), dergelijk ('similar'), erg ('awful'), geel ('yellow'), gek ('crazy'), goed ('good'), groen ('green'), interessant ('interesting'), klein ('small'), lekker ('tasty'), leuk ('fun'), mooi ('beautiful'), nieuw ('new'), nuttig ('useful'), oranje ('orange'), positief ('positive'), purper ('purple'), raar ('weird'), rood ('red'), spannend ('exciting'), speciaal ('special'), verkeerd ('wrong'), verschrikkelijk ('horrible'), vreemd ('weird'), warm ('warm'), wit ('white'), zinnig ('sensible'), zwart ('black')

(Pijpops & Van de Velde 2014: 9-12)

Data

- Explanatory variables

- Type-Adjective regular, *verkeerd*-adjectives, colour adjectives
- Nationality Belgium, Netherlands
- Register quality newspaper, mass newspaper, e-mail, chat
- Quantifier *iets* ('something'), *niets* ('nothing'), *veel* ('a lot'), *wat* ('something'), *zoveel* ('so much')
- Frequency log transformed frequency of the phrase
- Length-Adjective number of syllables (1-4)
- Length-AP number of words (1-2)

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Data

- Gries & Deshors (2014):
 - Single regression model on data from L1 and L2 corpora
 - Variables: explanatory variables + variable *Corpus*
 - Stepwise variable selection procedure based on AIC
- ⇒ Focus on interactions between *Corpus* and other variables

Results

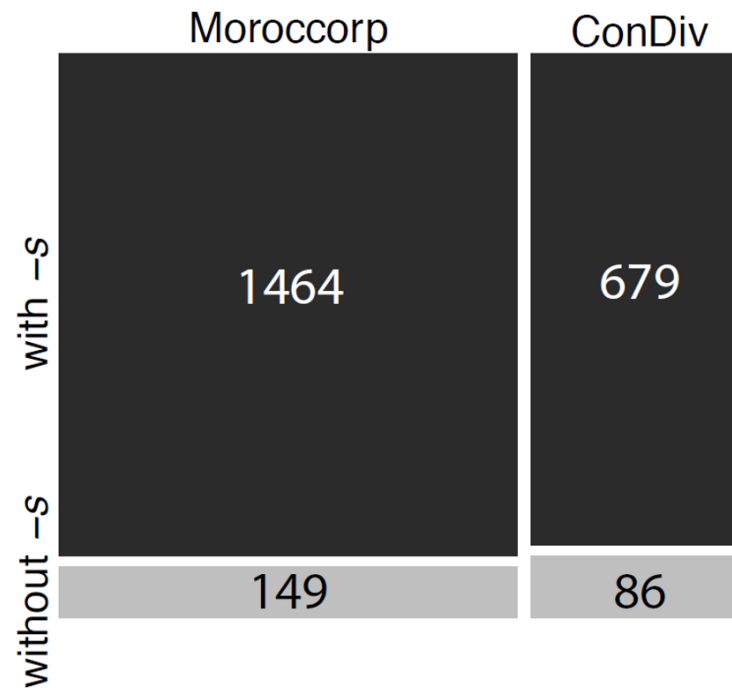


Figure 3: Bivariate mosaic plot of the variable Corpus, with raw numbers

Results

Table 1: regression model

- AIC:	1240	- Total number of hits:	2378
- C-index:	0.842	- Hits with -s:	2143
- Number of phrases:	96	- Hits without -s:	235

Predictors	Levels	Estimates	Confidence intervals		P-values
			2,5%	97,5%	
	intercept	-2.09	-2.98	-1.19	< 0.0001
Type-Adjective	<i>other</i>	Reference level			
	<i>deviant</i>	1.78	1.07	2.48	< 0.0001
	<i>colour</i>	4.34	2.71	5.97	< 0.0001
Frequency		-0.73	-1.32	-0.14	0.0153
Corpus	<i>Moroccorp</i>	Reference level			
	<i>ConDiv</i>	-0.98	-2.28	0.33	0.1416
Interaction	<i>Moroccorp</i>	Reference level			
Frequency - Corpus	<i>ConDiv</i>	0.87	0.15	1.59	0.0175

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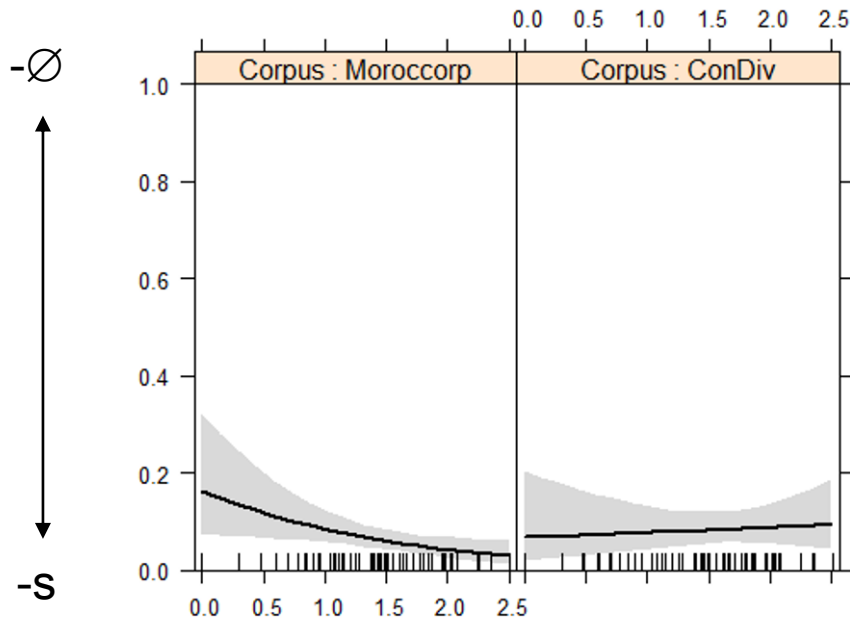


Figure 2: effect plot of the interaction between *Frequency* and *Corpus*

- But...
 - Large confidence intervals
 - Frequency mostly determined by Moroccorp

Results

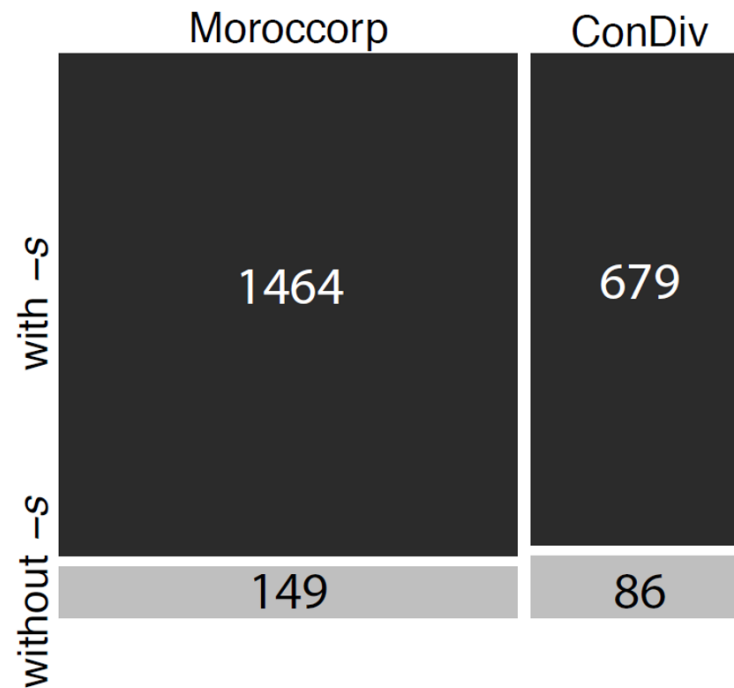


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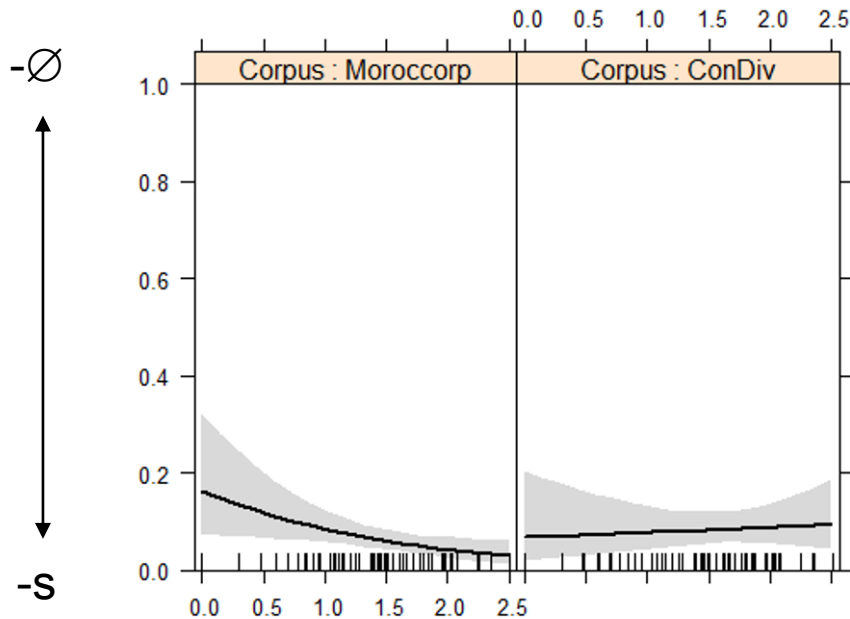


Figure 2: effect plot of the interaction between *Frequency* and *Corpus*

- But...
 - Large confidence intervals
 - Frequency mostly determined by Moroccorp
 - Dropping predictors slightly increases predictive quality to C-index = 0.844

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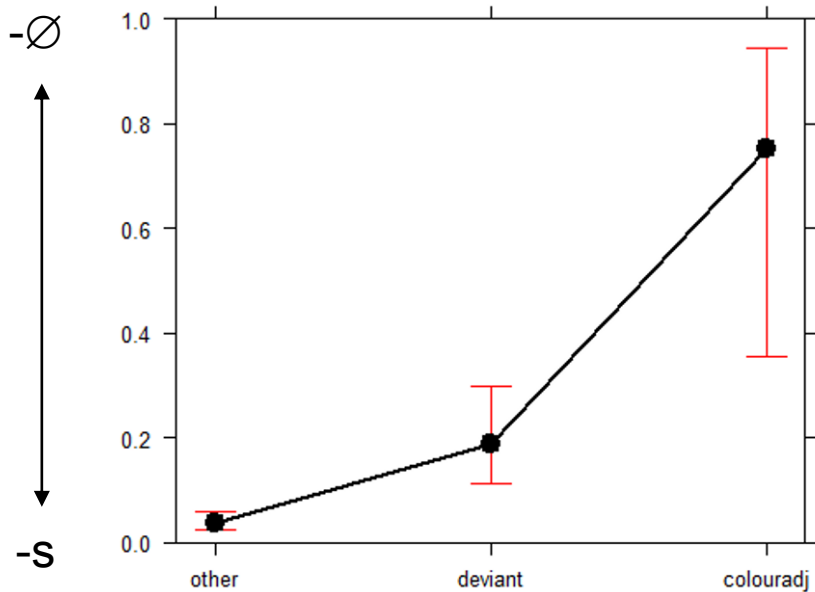


Figure 1: effect plot of *Type-Adjective*

- Type-Adjective
 - Massive influence in both ConDiv and Moroccorp
- ⇒ No real difference between ConDiv and Moroccorp
- Neither in absolute numbers
 - Nor in factors

Conclusions

Simplify by generalizing one variant

⇒ Factors of alternation can be easily dropped

~ -e inflection

Do not generalize one variant

⇒ Factors of alternation cannot be easily dropped

↔ -e inflection

Most frequent variant
-s

Morphologically simplest variant
-∅

~ L1 speakers

↔ L1 speakers

-e inflection option

Deflexion option

Same factors option

Other factors option

Conclusions

- Type-Adjective cannot be easily dropped

↔ -e inflection rule

⇒ Moroccorp chatters do pick up the (seemingly) unmotivated –s rule, but they don't pick up the unmotivated –e rule

“you can drop –s with *verkeerd, goed, beter, fout* and the color adjectives”

~ “you can drop -e in indefinite nt. sg.”

⇒ Type-Adjective is **not** just an unmotivated rule

Conclusions

- *verkeerd* ('wrong'), *goed* ('good'), *beter* ('better'), *fout* ('incorrect')
prefer -∅

Of heb ik hier iets verkeerd verstaan...

or have I here something wrong(ly) understand

Conclusions

- *verkeerd* ('wrong'), *goed* ('good'), *beter* ('better'), *fout* ('incorrect')
prefer -∅

Of heb ik hier [iets verkeerd] verstaan...

or have I here something wrong(ly) understand

Conclusions

- *verkeerd* ('wrong'), *goed* ('good'), *beter* ('better'), *fout* ('incorrect')
prefer -∅

Of heb ik hier iets [~~verkeerd~~ verstaan]...

adverb

or have I here something wrong(ly) understand

Conclusions

- *verkeerd* ('wrong'), *goed* ('good'), *beter* ('better'), *fout* ('incorrect')
prefer -∅

Als ik iets verkeerd gegeten heb, heb ik buikpijn.

If I something wrong eaten have, have I stomach-ache

Conclusions

- *verkeerd* ('wrong'), *goed* ('good'), *beter* ('better'), *fout* ('incorrect')
prefer -∅

*Als ik iets [verkeerd gegeten] heb, heb ik buikpijn.
?adverb?*

If I something wrong eaten have, have I stomach-ache



Conclusions

- *verkeerd* ('wrong'), *goed* ('good'), *beter* ('better'), *fout* ('incorrect') prefer -∅

Partitive genitive

*Als ik [iets verkeerd]
gegeten heb, heb ik buikpijn.*

If I something wrong eaten
have, have I stomach-ache

Construction with adverb

*Of heb ik hier iets
[verkeerd verstaan]...*

or have I here something
wrong(ly) understand



Conclusions

- Increased -s omission because of influence from a superficially resemblant, yet structurally unrelated construction
- ⇒ Production of partitive genitives according to an exemplar-based view of language

Thanks!

- Further information:

- dirk.pijpops@kuleuven.be

- Pijpops, Dirk & Freek Van de Velde. 2014. A multivariate analysis of the partitive genitive in Dutch. Bringing quantitative data into a theoretical discussion. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*. Published online, ahead of print.
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- Van de Velde, Freek & Fred Weerman. 2014. The resilient nature of adjectival inflection in Dutch. In Petra Sleeman, Freek Van de Velde & Harry Perridon (eds.), *Adjectives in Germanic and Romance*, 113–145. (Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Weerman, Fred. 2003. Een mooie verhaal. Veranderingen in uitgangen. In Jan Stroop (ed.), *Waar gaat het Nederlands naartoe? Panorama van een taal*, 249–260. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker.

Slides if there are questions

- Partitive genitive: weird thingie
 - Very restricted use
 - Survivor of genitive case
 - Genitive marking on the adjective
 - Postnominal adjective
 - Contrastively
 - English: *something good*
 - German: *etwas Gutes* → *zu etwas Gutem*

Data

- Explanatory variables

L1 (confirmed in earlier study)

- Type Adjective
- Frequency

L2 (to investigate)

- Type Adjective
- Frequency
- Quantifier
- Length Adjective
- Length AP

Overall distribution of the two forms:



with -s



without -s

possible syntactic ambiguity

no syntactic ambiguity



Mosaic plot: distribution of the variants over the verbs combined with the adjective *verkeerd* ('wrong')

=> Data still show preference for [-s], even where there's no syntactic ambiguity!



Contamination effects

