

Syntax and semantics of the Luxembourgish partitive

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The Luxembourgish language shows a commonly used partitive system that consists of partitive pronouns and partitive articles. Until now those partitives have only been described on the surface. This study is based on a large corpus of spoken and written Luxembourgish (about 80 m. tokens) and aims at giving a profound insight into the syntactic and semantic properties of this system. Partitives exist in two distinct forms: *där/der* (for uncountable feminine singular nouns or plurals) and *däers/es* (for uncountable masculine and neuter singular nouns). Each pronoun has a strong (*där* [dɛ:v], *däers* [dɛ:ɐs]) and a weak (*der* [dɐ], *es* [ɛs]) variant. When it comes to partitive articles, only the strong forms are available (*där*, *däers*). The data shows that partitive pronouns serve as indefinite anaphoric pronouns (*ech wëll es* ‘I want some’), whereas partitive articles mostly denote specificity (*där Mëllech hu mer keng* ‘we haven’t got that kind of milk’).