Francoprovençal at the Crossroads

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Outline

1. DiFuPaRo: An overview
2. The data
   ➢ ALAVAL
   ➢ New fieldwork data
3. Tagging the data
4. Exploring the data
1. DiFuPaRo: an overview
URPP Language and Space

The project

DiFuPaRo:

• Title: “Distribution and Function of ‘Partitive articles’ in Romance: a microvariation analysis”.

• Project leaders: E. Stark (UZH) & C. Poletto (Frankfurt-am-Main)

• Funding: SNSF (Swiss National Science Foundation)

• Funding: DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft)

• Duration: 3 years (2018-2021)

• Website: https://www.rose.uzh.ch/de/seminar/personen/stark/DiFuPaRo.html
Goals and research question

- Study so-called ‘partitive articles’ (PAs) in their **indefinite** interpretation → i.e. elements like Fr. *du/des* and It. *del/dei* (= historically DE + def. art.)
- Focus on the **spatial distribution** of PAs
- Investigate **Gallo- and Italo-Romance varieties** (standard French/Italian, colloquial Swiss French, Northern Italian Dialects (NIDs) and Francoprovençal)
- **Research question:**
  Can we identify a pattern in the geographical distribution of ‘types of PAs’ in our Romance varieties and explain their existence, e.g. based on observed internal correlations or as a result of language contact (or both)?
  → Zoom on Francoprovençal
Francoprovençal:
• Non-standardised
• Nearly extinct: total users in all countries (2011): 227’000
• Crossroads between e.g. NIDs and oïl dialects (e.g. French)

NIDs Realizations

- **Yellow: Bare Nouns**
  no lejes mai Ø libris
  (Aquileia, UD)

- **Green: PA**
  lesi maj di liber
  (Alba, CN)

- **Black: DE (= PA without the def. art.)**
  lese maj ed liber
  (Torino2)

Source:
2. The data
**ALAVAL: a Francoprovençal database**

- *Atlas linguistique audiovisuel des dialectes francoprovençaux du Valais romand* (UNINE)
- elicitation by translations and open questions
- 21 different Swiss varieties (42 speakers)
- 51 relevant input sentences
- [http://alaval.unine.ch/](http://alaval.unine.ch/)
New fieldwork data

Location
- Evolène (Valais); 7 speakers (July 2019) → 455 nominals
- Bulle (Fribourg); 6 speakers (November 2019) → 390 nominals
- ...

Questionnaire
Part 1: translation task (from French); 15 contexts, fillers, 65 sentences
Part 2: Grammaticality Judgement Test; 20 contexts, 24 sentences
3. Tagging the data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>attribute macrogroup</th>
<th>attribute subgroup</th>
<th>attribute</th>
<th>attribute description</th>
<th>value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sociolinguistic information</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>variety</td>
<td>variety to which the data belong</td>
<td>FREE TEXT</td>
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<td>region</td>
<td>administrative region to which the speaker belongs</td>
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<td>administrative province to which the speaker belongs</td>
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<td>gender</td>
<td>gender of the speaker</td>
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<td></td>
<td>male</td>
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<td>other</td>
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<td>DE</td>
<td>there is a DE element introducing the nominal group (derivative)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>number DE</td>
<td>morphological marking of the DE with respect to number</td>
<td>singular</td>
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<td></td>
<td>plural</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ø</td>
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<td>morphological marking of the DE with respect to gender</td>
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<td>fem</td>
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<td>neut</td>
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<td>morphological form of the DE element (subattribute of [DE P+def])</td>
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<td></td>
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4. Exploring the data
The DiFuPaRo Database

- Data from
  - ALAVAL,
  - OFROM (*Corpus Oral de Français de Suisse Romande*, UNINE),
  - ASIt (*Atlante sintattico d’Italia* for NIDs),
  - (+ own fieldwork)

- Currently consisting of **9108 NPs** (3307 from the ALAVAL) for different (morpho-)syntactic properties
  
  [https://pub.cl.uzh.ch/projects/partitivity/interface/difuparo](https://pub.cl.uzh.ch/projects/partitivity/interface/difuparo)

- The francoprovençal data **need to be transcribed into IPA** to be added to the database.
Objets partitifs et prépositionnels

- **partitifs**
  
  (a) système oriental
  
  [de, de, do]

  (b) système occidental
  
  f. [de la]
  
  m. [dy, dy, do]

  (c) marque zéro

  
- **cas prépositionnels**

  f. [de la, de a]

  m. [dy, dy, do]

  m. [du, du, dö, do]

- symbols of petite taille:
  
  formes rares

Source:
http://alaval.unine.ch/atlas?carte=21062
Relevance to *Language and Space in Switzerland*

**Issues**

1. Little information on PAs in FrPr, an understudied minority language: no real spatial analysis
2. Very few maps: only ALAVAL maps
3. Existing maps are limited: too fine-grained, not fine-grained enough

**DiFuPaRo provides:**

1. A detailed analysis of PAs: 104 attributes in the database
2. The possibility to combine the attributes for more or less fine-grained analyses
3. The possibility to create maps based on these combinations for a detailed spatial analysis
Relevance to *Language and Space in Switzerland*

**DiFuPaRo: focusing on the distribution of PAs**
Different types of ‘PAs’: - with the ‘definite article’ component or without  
- Francoprovençal vs. NIDs  
- Francoprovençal vs. oral French

**DiFuPaRo: investigating correlations**
Does the *distribution* of the different types of ‘PAs’ correlate with some *morpho-syntactic features*? E.g.  
- Number/gender marking on the noun  
- Type of number marking on the noun  
- Etc.
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Conclusion

• The tagging system and the database can be exploited in many ways.
• The different features can be combined to create maps.
• The more data we have, the better.

Important cost: transcriptions

1 minute of speech \(=\) 1 hour of transcription
1 hour of transcription \(=\) 60 CHF
55 min of speech \(=\) 55 hours of transcription \(\rightarrow\) 3’300 CHF needed
URPP Language and Space

References


