A formal account of diachronic case and adposition change
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The poster in a nutshell

- This work concerns itself with 1) the core function of case that is expressing grammatical function and 2) the functional load distributed often between case and adpositions. It examines the loss of case in Balkan Slavic (Bulgarian and Macedonian).
- I apply the diachronic predictions of the Final-Over-Final Condition to a KP (case phrase) and use a diachronic corpus to track the shift in grammatical function expression from case suffixes to prepositions.
- The original grammatical functions in the KP follow these predictions in the preliminary data, whilst the locative especially does not.
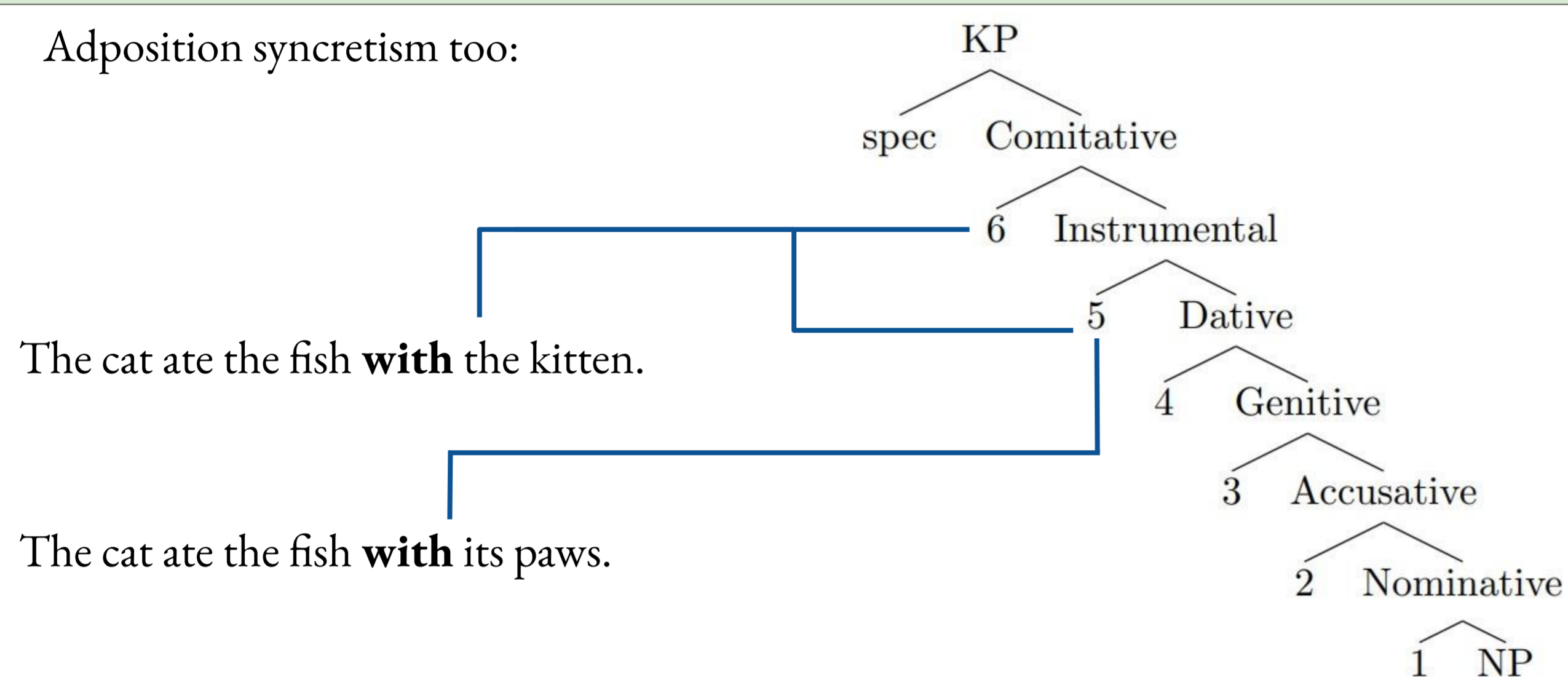
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Poster handout

1 Background

- The loss of cases in Indo-European and takeover of their functional load by adpositions is a well-known and remarkably widespread one within Indo-European (Hewson and Bubenik, 2006).
  Blake's Hierarchy: NOM > ACC/ERG > GEN > DAT > LOC > ABL/INS > other
- Blake's hierarchy (1994) captures cross-linguistic tendencies of case inventories- if a language has a case in the hierarchy, it will also have all the cases to the left of that case. Diachronically, cases should be lost from right to left.

2 Exploded KP account of adposition and case morphology
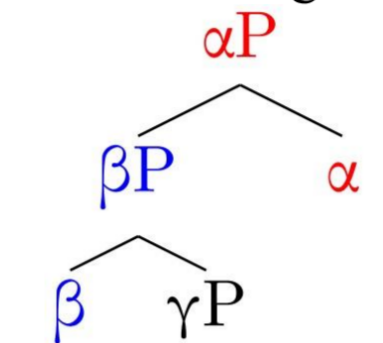
- The KP account of morphological case used here (Caha, 2009) is a nanosyntactic account that also aims to capture case inventories and syncretisms cross-linguistically. The cases are in containment relationships: e.g. the dative contains the genitive and all the cases lower than it in the tree (below)
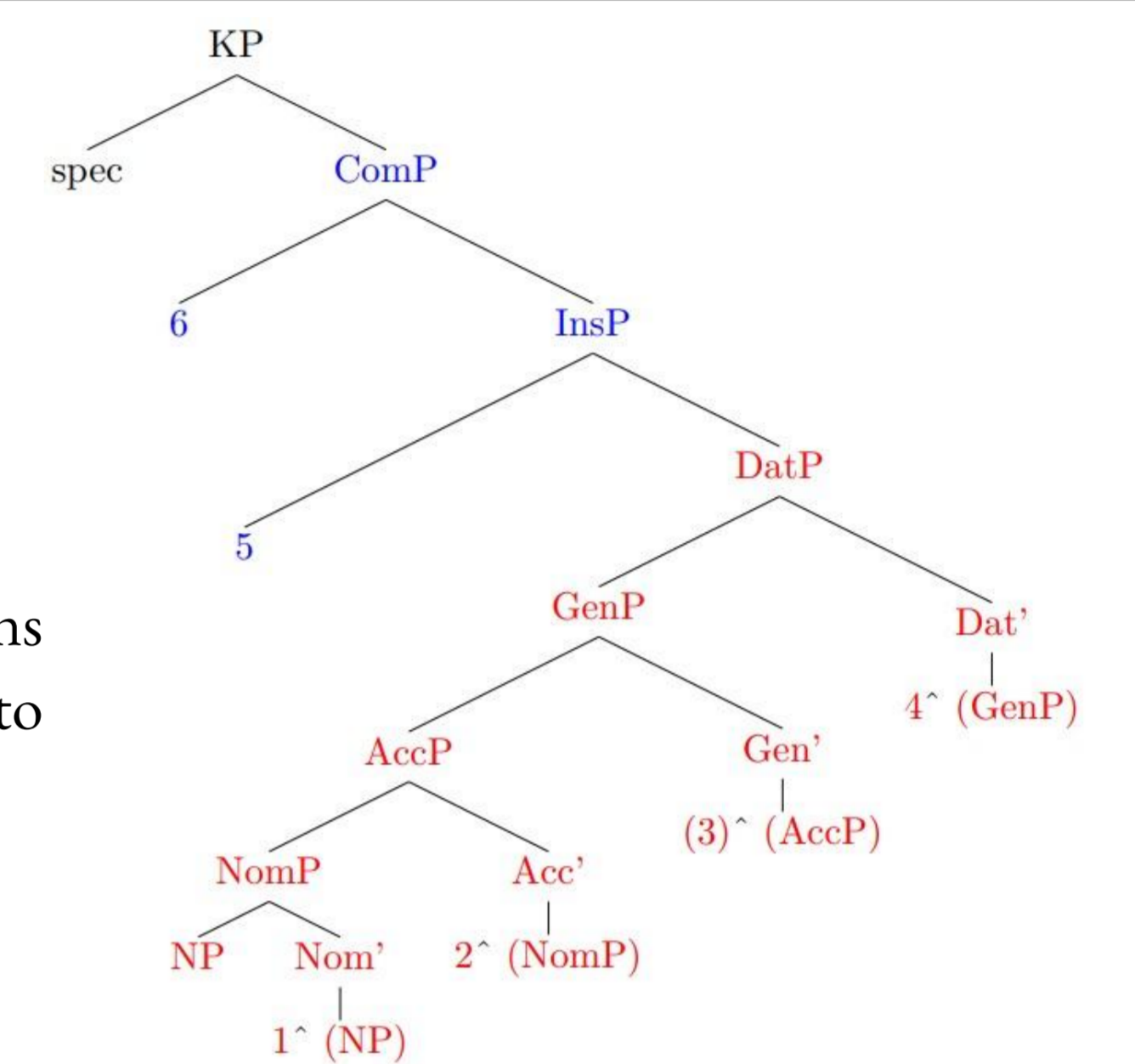- Syncretism only occurs with adjacent segments in the tree.

Adposition syncretism too:

The cat ate the fish **with** the kitten.

The cat ate the fish **with** its paws.

3 The Final-Over-Final Condition (FOFC)

- FOFC: A head-final phrase αP cannot dominate a head-initial phrase βP, where α and β are heads in the same extended projection (Biberauer, Holmberg and Roberts, 2014)
- FOFC makes the same synchronic predictions as the KP approach concerning case and adposition inventories and syncretisms

A FOFC-violating structure:

An iterative roll-up movement to intervening positions between the feature terminal nodes is employed here to elicit head-final elements (case suffixes or postpositions).
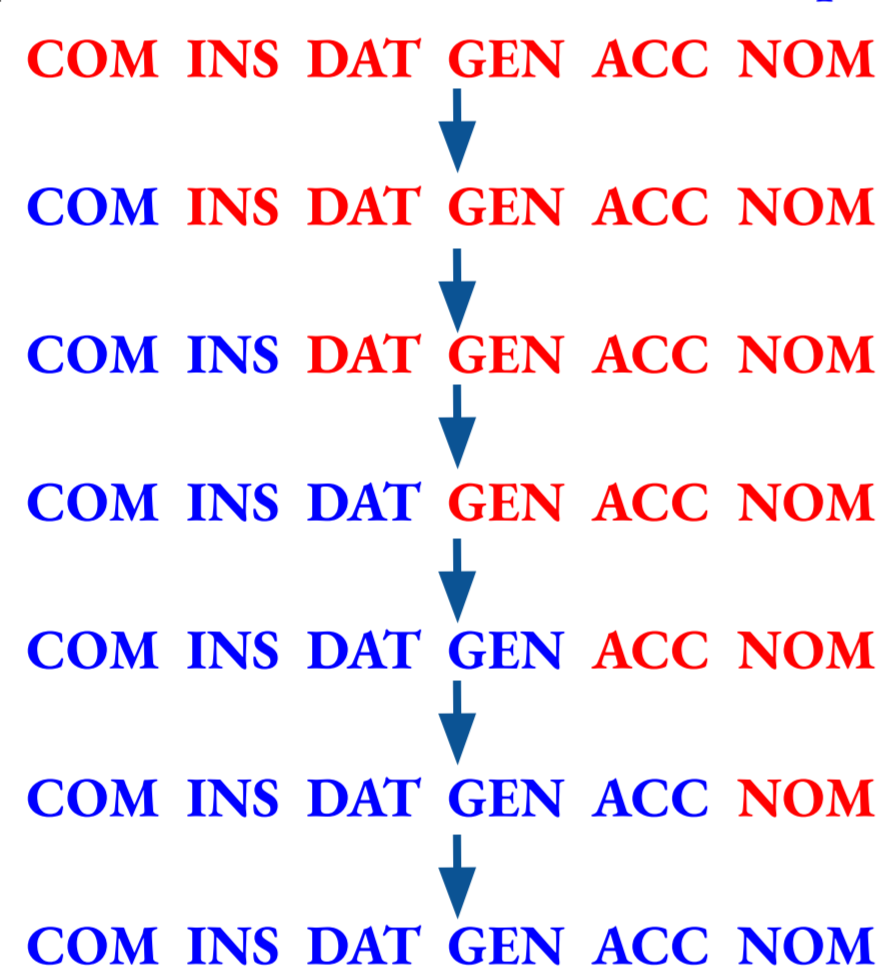

In this tree, comitative and instrumental are expressed as prepositions or case prefixes, and the rest as postpositions or case suffixes.

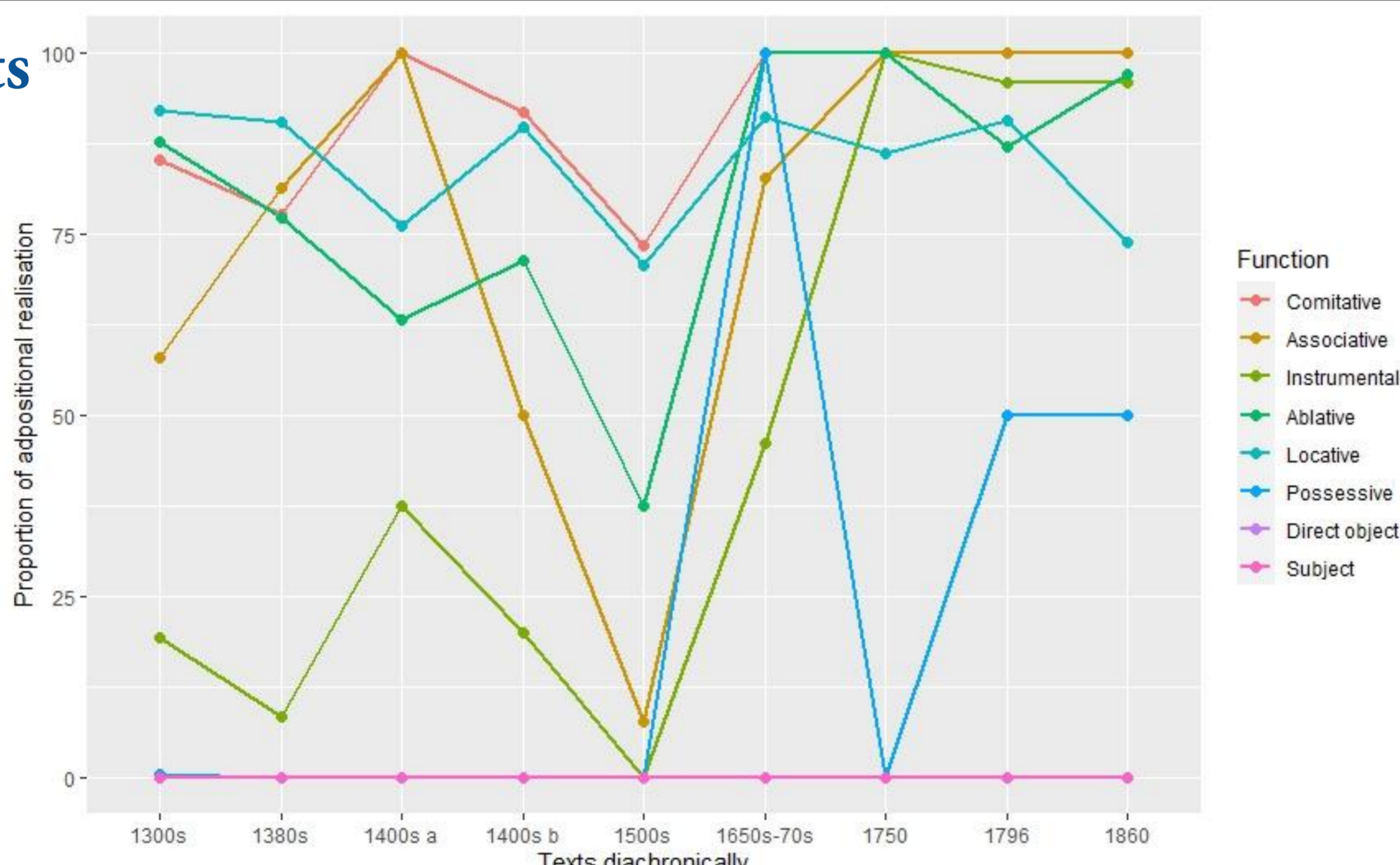### 4 Diachronic predictions for the KP

- Diachronic change from a harmonically head-final projection to a head-initial one must occur 'top-down' to avoid FOFC violations (and vice versa for head-initial to head-final). I apply this directly to the KP.

A change in functional load expression from case suffixes to prepositions must therefore occur **top-down** to avoid FOFC-violations:

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

COM INS DAT GEN ACC NOM

'Loss of case' can be rephrased as the **erosion of the roll-up feature moving down the KP**

5 Methodology and research question

- The Annotated Corpus of Pre-Standardized Balkan Slavic Literature (Šimko, 2020) was used to track the shift in expression of the functional load (from case suffixes to prepositions, broadly).
- I adopted more functional terms which leads to the assumption of a more fine-grained, functional KP (below). This was to avoid ambiguities in the traditional case forms and to be able to accurately compare grammatical function expression.
- Diachronic research question: does the adpositional realisation proportion of each function increase diachronically?

Highest proportion of prepositional realisation

Lowest proportion of prepositional realisation

- The ordering of the totally new functions (ablative, benefactive and locative) are based on the syncretic forms of both adpositions and case markers in the texts
- e.g. the associative shows strong to fairly strong syncretism with comitative and instrumental, instrumental with ablative etc.

6 Results

This graph shows some preliminary data including 9 function-annotated texts, from the 1300s to 1860.

Expected findings:
- Comitative is always high in adpositional realisation and direct object and subject low
- The instrumental shows a nice steady diachronic increase, and the possessive too other than the jump to 100% in the 1650s-70s text (which is low-token)
- Even ignoring the low token texts (1500s and 1650s-70s), there seems to be an increase for many of the functions
- Caha's original functions so far seem to increase relatively to one another diachronically in adpositional realisation: the corpus shows the predicted functional takeover of adpositions going down the KP
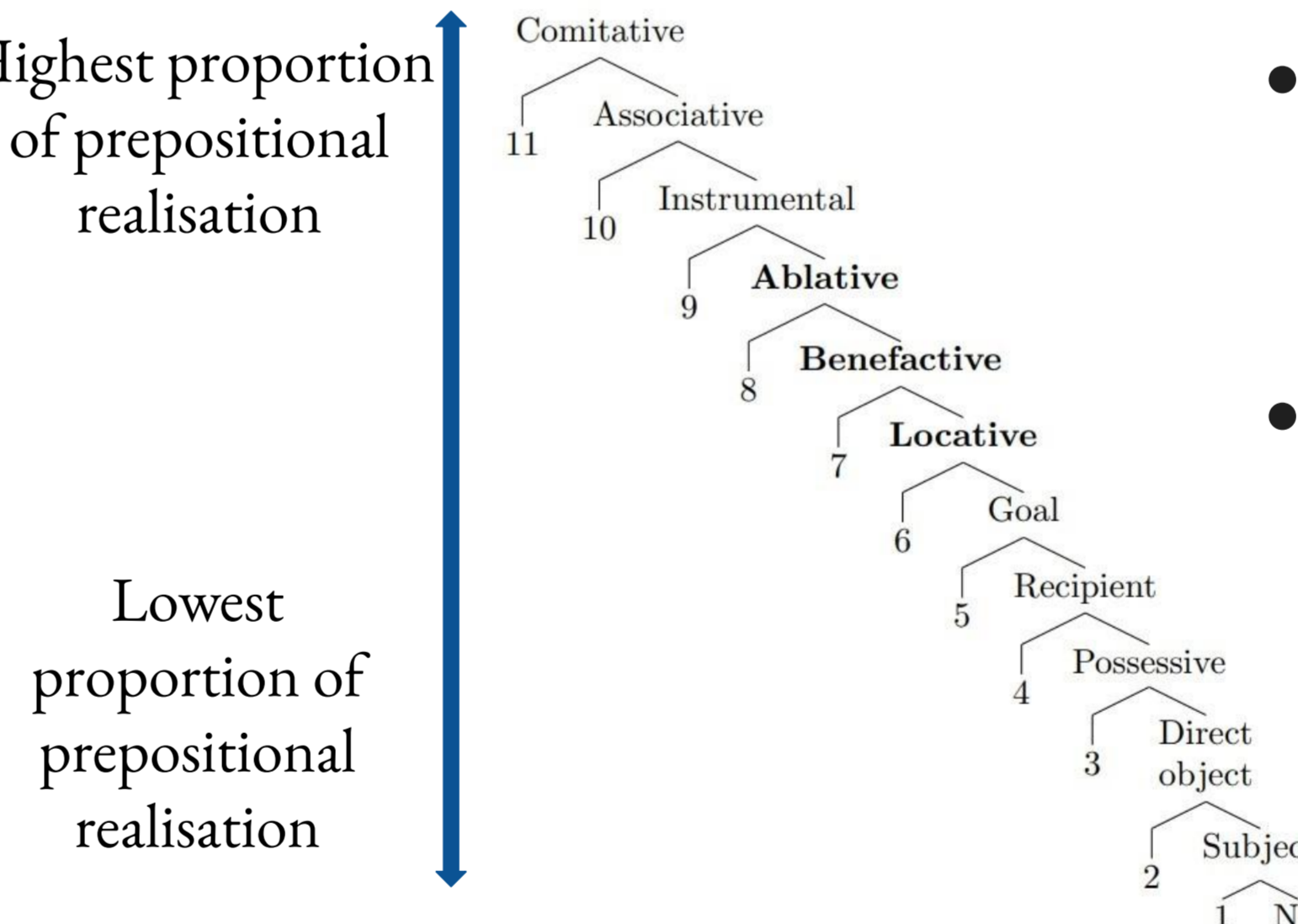
Unexpected findings:
- Locative and ablative functions adpositional realisation is often higher than the associative and especially the instrumental, and locative is consistently high in adpositional realisation
- Goal (not included for clarity) shows no consistent pattern

7 Locative?

- The locative function is also especially broad in terms of number of forms, forming syncretisms with various other functions in the KP: its current position in the KP is therefore tentative.
- Multiple projections representing the different flavours of the locative could be the answer, which particularly concerns various locative adpositions requiring certain cases:

NOM - ACC - LOCPREP1 - GEN - LOCPREP2 - DAT - LOCPREP3 - INSTR
(Caha, 2009)

- In Czech, locprep3 represents locative adpositions taking nominals oriented with respect to a spatial axis- either up/down or front/back, locprep2 represents locative adpositions taking nominals that are containers or spaces and locprep1 represents locative adpositions taking nominals with no restrictions
- The division and examination of the locative instances in the corpus according to these semantics could help solve the puzzle of how/if the locative function interacts with the others in the KP

8 Next steps

- Tagging and inclusion of further texts from the corpus in the analysis (especially more from the 1500s and 1600s)
- Manipulation of the locative instances as suggested in 7
- Parallel theoretical ongoing work discusses pathways of change involving other types of KP (e.g. case prefixes, postpositions)

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References:
Biberauer, T., Holmberg, A., & Roberts, I. (2014). A syntactic universal and its consequences. *Linguistic Inquiry 45*. Blake, B. J. (1994). *Case*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Caha, P. (2009). *The nanosyntax of case*. PhD thesis, University of Tromso. Hewson, J., & Bubenik, V. (2006). *From case to adposition: The development of configurational syntax in Indo-European languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Šimko, Ivan. (2020). *Annotated Corpus of Pre-Standardized Balkan Slavic Literature*, Slovenian language resource repository CLARIN.SI, ISSN 2820-4042, http://hdl.handle.net/11356/1368.

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