Nomina Loci in Czech: A Distributed Morphology Approach

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In the structuralist literature, Nomina Loci (NL) are defined on the mere onomasiologic ground. They are nouns expressing location; see (1).

(1) a. *brod* ‘ford’
    b. *herna* ‘playroom’
    c. *hřiště* ‘playground’ (Czech)

The problem is that such classification puts together nouns with very different morphosyntactic behaviour. Some of them show (at least partial) argumental structure of the corresponding verb; the others do not. It is demonstrable with a pair (1b) vs. (1c). Both of the words have root √H(E)R ‘play’. (1b) with the derivational suffix –*n*– can only have the possessive interpretation (2). (1c) with the derivational suffix –*išt*- is ambiguous; see (3).

(2) *Petrova herna* (3) *Petrovo hřiště*
    ‘Peter’s playroom’                 ‘Peter’s playground’
    a. ‘Peter’s playground’
    b. ‘the place where Peter plays’

The Distributed Morphology framework (Embick & Noyer 2007) makes me able to state where the argumental structure comes from. Only for (3), there is a little v-head under the derivational suffix; see (4). Little v-head merges with the root as first, categorizing it as verb. DP in the Spec(vP) position can thus have agentive interpretation.

(4) Derivation of *[Petrovo hřiště]_{vP}*

![Diagram of derivation]

References


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