

## SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES IN CZECH MULTIWORD UNITS: TYPES AND TOKENS IN THE TOTALITARIAN ERA AND TODAY

VLADIMÍR PETKEVIČ

Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague,  
Czech Republic (ORCID: 0000-0003-0468-4158)

PETKEVIČ, Vladimír: Syntactic Structures in Czech Multiword Units: Types and Tokens in the Totalitarian Era and Today. *Journal of Linguistics*, 2025, Vol. 76, No 1, pp. 200 – 211.

**Abstract:** We compare six selected types of syntactic structures in the Czech multiword units (MWUs) of the language of communist totalitarian journalism, represented by the Frap Totalita corpus, to the same types of structures in the MWUs of the post-totalitarian journalistic language, represented by the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus. Attention is also paid to their lexical content. For some structures there are relatively large frequency differences in usage, while in others they are (considerably) minor. In terms of the MWU lexical setting, the languages represented by the corpora differ substantially.

**Keywords:** multiword units, Frap Totalita corpus, Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus, syntactic structures, lexical setting, frequency, comparison

### 1 INTRODUCTION

We compare six selected types of surface syntactic structures of multiword units (MWUs) in Czech and their lexical setting in two types of Czech journalistic texts. The first type is represented by the Frap Totalita corpus, containing primarily journalistic and political texts from the postwar period (1945–1989), the second type by journalistic texts created after 1989 until today and collected in the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus. The paper is a contribution to a larger study on the Czech language of three genres:

- (a) texts from the period of totalitarianism (1945–1989)
- (b) contemporary standard (primarily newspaper) texts
- (c) contemporary non-standard and anti-system texts

within the project *Czech phraseology and changes in its use in temporal and genre contexts*.

In the six types of syntactic structures we try to find out whether there are any significant differences in the syntactic structure of MWUs in texts of the (a) and (b) types, or whether the differences are only in the lexical content of MWUs; we do not deal with semantics at all.

## 2 CORPORA AND SOURCES OF MULTIWORD UNITS

In order to compare the syntax of MWUs<sup>1</sup> and their lexical content in communist totalitarian and post-totalitarian journalistic language, we use the working version of the Frap Totalita corpus and of the Frap SYNv13-PUB one. The Frap Totalita corpus, consisting of 15,947,180 corpus positions, contains journalistic texts from the 1948–1989 period: Rudé právo ‘Red Law’ newspaper texts published in selected quarters of the years 1952, 1969 and 1977, as well as professional (propaganda) texts, memoirs, speeches, letters and a very small portion of fiction. The corpus contains all texts from the Totalita corpus<sup>2</sup> and some prose texts (ca. 207,000 positions).

The Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus of contemporary journalism, consisting of 74,932,112 corpus positions, contains journalistic texts (mainly from newspapers and magazines) from the 1989–2023 period, every year between 1991–2023 being represented by ca. 2.5 million positions, and the years 1989 and 1990 by ca. 160,000 and 1.5 million positions, respectively.

Thus, the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus is ca. five times larger. In the following, we will therefore compare the frequency of MWUs and their syntactic structures in terms of the instances-per-million (ipm) measure (mostly rounded).

We use the following sources of MWUs:

- FRANTALEX lexicon of Czech MWUs consisting of ca. 56,000 lemmas<sup>3</sup>
- LEMUR database<sup>4</sup> (LExicon of Multiword expRessions of Czech) containing ca. 26,000 MWU lemmas (based on FRANTALEX)
- Frap Totalita corpus and Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus, where MWUs from FRANTALEX and LEMUR are tagged as MWU lemmas.

## 3 SELECTED SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES AND THEIR COMPARISON

The following MWU types of syntactic structures will be studied:

1. Nominal group (Adj, Noun), where the attributive adjective Adj agrees with the immediately following governing Noun in number, gender and case
2. Deverbal noun modified by another deverbal noun<sup>5</sup> in the genitive case
3. Coordination of deverbal nouns

<sup>1</sup> In this paper, the term MWU is conceived in a very broad sense as any collocation representing a single syntactic-semantic unit, not necessarily a phraseme; by phraseme we mean a MWU whose meaning is not determined by the composition of the meanings of its constituents.

<sup>2</sup> <https://wiki.korpus.cz/doku.php/cnk:totalita>

<sup>3</sup> FRANTALEX is a lexicon containing Czech MWUs based on Čermák et al. (1983–2009), their variants and additional MWUs found in corpora (Skoumalová et al. 2024, p. 2).

<sup>4</sup> Skoumalová et al. 2024.

<sup>5</sup> Deverbal nouns are neuter nouns derived from passive verbal participles and ending in nominative singular with *-ní/-tí*.

4. Accumulation of attributive nouns in the genitive case
5. Nominal groups with a nominating nominative and/or a foreign word or an (in)declinable noun
6. Periphrastic comparison of adjectives

Unless otherwise stated for a given structure, we state the following general hypothesis:

**Generally, MWUs in totalitarian and post-totalitarian journalistic language do not differ too much in their syntactic structures; however, they differ significantly in their lexical setting.**

### 3.1 Nominal group (Adj, Noun)

A nominal group (Adj, Noun) consists of a governing Noun and an immediately preceding dependent attributive adjective Adj agreeing with Noun in gender, number and case. In Tab. 1a, frequency of this type in both corpora is presented: as a number of occurrences (tokens) and ipm for all 7 cases in Czech:

Case	Frap Totalita		Frap SYNv13-PUB	
	Occurrences / %	ipm	Occurrences / %	ipm
<b>Nom</b>	306,608 / 20.0%	19,226	1,418,272 / 26.0%	18,927
<b>Gen</b>	<b>593,608 / 38.6%</b>	<b>37,205</b>	1,562,366 / 28.7%	<b>20,850</b>
<b>Dat</b>	<b>65,460 / 4.3%</b>	<b>4,105</b>	186,352 / 3.4%	<b>2,487</b>
Acc	269,954 / 17.5%	16,928	1,168,171 / 21.4%	15,590
Voc	850 / 0.1%	53	1,841 / 0.03%	25
Loc	171,478 / 11.2%	10,753	688,763 / 12.6%	9,192
Ins	<b>127,635 / 8.3%</b>	<b>8,004</b>	427,461 / 7.8%	<b>5,705</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,535,593 / 100.0%</b>	<b>96,274</b>	<b>5,453,226 / 100.0%</b>	<b>72,776</b>

**Tab. 1a.** Case frequency of the (Adj, Noun) nominal groups in both corpora (the biggest differences are highlighted in bold)

In Tab. 1b, the most frequent MWUs of this structural type and typical of both types of language represented by their respective corpora are shown. Non-specific, usual MWUs such as příští rok ‘next year’ or the toponym České Budějovice contained in both corpora are omitted.

Frap Totalita		Frap SYNv13-PUB	
MWU lemmas: 305,850	ipm	MWU lemmas: 1,127,751	ipm
1. Sovětský svaz ‘Soviet Union’ <sup>6</sup>	817	Česká republika ‘Czech Republic’	250
2. komunistická strana ‘communist party’	579	Evropská unie ‘European Union’	101

<sup>6</sup> The glosses are mostly literal translations.

3. dělnická třída ‘working class’	387	životní prostředí ‘environment’	100
4. národní hospodářství ‘national economy’	303	výběrové řízení ‘tender’	55
5. ústřední výbor ‘central committee’	285	tiskový mluvčí ‘spokesperson’	43
6. socialistická země ‘socialist country’	259	městský úřad ‘municipal authority’	39
7. socialistická společnost ‘socialist society’	238	sociální demokrat ‘social democrat’	39
8. národní výbor ‘national committee’	192	lidské právo ‘human right’	35
9. socialistická revoluce ‘socialist revolution’	187	cenný papír ‘security’	33
10. pracující lid ‘working people’	160	mobilní telefon ‘mobile phone’	32

**Tab. 1b.** The most frequent MWU lemmas corresponding to the (Adj, Noun) structure in both corpora

Given the politicized discourse of totalitarian journalism, it can be stated that:

- The Frap Totalita corpus ( $ipm=96,274$ ) contains considerably more occurrences of (Adj, Noun) nominal groups than the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus ( $ipm=72,776$ ): in totalitarian journalism and post-totalitarian journalism, it is roughly every 11<sup>th</sup> pair and every 13<sup>th</sup> pair, respectively.
- Frap Totalita contains considerably more occurrences of genitive structures, which is due to the frequent modification of nouns denoting mainly political events, offices, parties, states: *představitel komunistické strany* ‘representative of the communist party’, *státy Varšavské smlouvy* ‘states of the Warsaw pact’
- There are more occurrences of (primarily prepositional) dative and instrumental structures in Frap Totalita: *k pátému pětiletému<sub>dat</sub> plánu<sub>dat</sub>* ‘to the fifth five-year plan’, *láska k Sovětskému<sub>dat</sub> svazu<sub>dat</sub>* ‘love for the Soviet Union’, *se Sovětským<sub>ins</sub> svazem<sub>ins</sub>* ‘with the Soviet Union’, *vztahy mezi socialistickými<sub>ins</sub> zeměmi<sub>ins</sub>* ‘relations between socialist countries’.
- The differences in MWUs’ lexical content are telling; moreover, the most frequent MWUs in Frap Totalita are considerably more frequent than their counterparts in Frap SYNv13-PUB – a symptom of the thematic poverty of totalitarian journalism.

### 3.2 Deverbal noun modified by another deverbal noun in the genitive case

We examine nominal groups described by the following structure pattern:

Noun-verb<sub>1</sub> Adj<sub>gen</sub>{0–3} Noun-verb<sub>2gen</sub>

where a deverbal noun Noun-verb<sub>1</sub> is modified by a genitive nominal group Adj<sub>gen</sub>{0–3} Noun-verb<sub>2gen</sub>, governed by the genitive deverbal noun Noun-verb<sub>2gen</sub>, which is modified by 0–3 agreeing adjectives.

In Tab. 2a, frequency of this structure type is presented:

Frap Totalita			Frap SYNv13-PUB		
MWU lemmas	MWU occurrences	ipm	MWU lemmas	MWU occurrences	ipm
3,027	5,475	343	7,018	11,096	148

**Tab. 2a.** Frequency of the Noun-verb<sub>1</sub> Adj<sub>gen</sub>{0–3} Noun-verb<sub>2gen</sub> pattern in both corpora in terms of MWU lemmas, their occurrences and ipm

The most frequent MWUs of this type are shown in Tab. 2b.

Frap Totalita		Frap SYNv13-PUB	
MWU lemmas: 3,027	ipm	MWU lemmas: 7,018	ipm
1. plnění usnesení 'implementation of a resolution'	14.4	zahájení trestního stíhání 'initiation of a criminal prosecution'	1.6
2. zasedání Valného shromáždění 'meeting of the General Assembly'	13.2	vydání stavebního povolení 'issuance of a building permit'	1.2
3. snížení zbrojení 'reductions of arms'	3.8	navýšení základního jmění 'increase of share capital'	1.0
4. zastavení horečného zbrojení 'stopping of the feverish arms race'	3.5	podání trestního oznámení 'filing of a criminal report'	0.7
5. rozvíjení socialistického soutěžení 'development of socialist competition'	3.0	snížení základního jmění 'reduction of share capital'	0.7
6. omezení zbrojení 'limitation of arms'	2.9	zvýšení základního jmění 'increase of share capital'	0.7
7. splnění usnesení 'fulfillment of resolutions'	2.5	zastavení trestního stíhání 'discontinuation of prosecution'	0.6
8. zdokonalování řízení 'improvement of management'	2.4	sdělení obvinění 'statement of charges'	0.6
9. splnění stranických usnesení 'fulfillment of party resolutions'	2.3	zahájení řízení 'initiation of proceedings'	0.6
10. zlepšení zásobování 'improvement of supply'	2.1	vydání územního rozhodnutí 'issuance of a zoning decision'	0.5

**Tab. 2b.** The most frequent MWUs of the Noun-verb<sub>1</sub> Adj<sub>gen</sub>{0–3} Noun-verb<sub>2gen</sub> pattern in both corpora

We see that genitive structures are predominant in the language of totality (ipm 343:148). This is because the texts from the totalitarian period are lexically and thematically much poorer than contemporary ones; they contain (probably intentionally) political clichés to a large extent, cf. the remarkable ipm differences between individual MWUs in Tab. 2b.

The difference in the MWU lexical content is obvious.

It is interesting to note that structures in which Noun-verb<sub>2gen</sub> is modified by a single adjective are frequent.

### 3.3 Coordination of deverbal nouns

In the coordination of two deverbal nouns, both nouns are in the same case.

In Tab. 3a we present frequency data on this type of structure:

Frap Totalita			Frap SYNv13-PUB		
MWU lemmas	MWU occurrences	ipm	MWU lemmas	MWU occurrences	ipm
3,698	6,358	399	6,450	8,023	107

**Tab. 3a.** Frequency of the coordination structure of two deverbal nouns in both corpora in terms of MWU lemmas, occurrences and ipm

In Tab. 3b, the ten most frequent MWUs are shown with their respective ipm.

Frap Totalita		Frap SYNv13-PUB	
MWU lemmas: 3,698	ipm	MWU lemmas: 6,450	ipm
1. splnění a překročení 'meeting and exceeding'	7.53	rozhodnutí a vykázání 'decision and eviction' <sup>7</sup>	0.81
2. plánování a řízení 'planning and management'	5.89	padělání a pozměňování 'forgery and alteration'	0.79
3. plnění a překračování 'meeting and exceeding'	5.58	padělání a pozměnění 'forgery and alteration'	0.77
4. řízení a plánování 'management and planning'	5.52	ubytování a stravování 'accommodation and catering'	0.75
5. zachování a upevnění 'preservation and consolidation'	5.02	zajištění a udržení 'securing and maintaining'	0.37
6. ubytování a stravování 'accommodation and catering'	4.89	stravování a ubytování 'catering and accommodation'	0.36
7. vedení a řízení 'leadership and management'	4.45	chování a jednání 'behaviour and action'	0.33

<sup>7</sup> Typically in the MWU *maření výkonu úředního rozhodnutí a vykázání* 'obstruction of the execution of an official **decision** and **eviction**'.

8. prohlubování a zdokonalování ‘deepening and improving’	2.63	poškození a ohrožení ‘damage and threat’	0.32
9. myšlení a jednání ‘thinking and acting’	2.51	čtení a psaní ‘reading and writing’	0.31
10. rozšíření a prohloubení ‘widening and deepening’	2.20	myšlení a jednání ‘thinking and acting’	0.20

**Tab. 3b.** The most frequent MWUs constituted by the coordination of two deverbal nouns in terms of MWU lemmas and ipm in both corpora

We see that more structures constituted by the coordination of deverbal nouns are contained in Frap Totalita (399:107 ipm, cf. Tab. 3a). The reasons: Totalitarian language is lexically poor: a small number of lexical types (e.g. *splnění a překročení*) occur very frequently, compare the marked differences between ipm on the same lines in Tab. 3b. Moreover, it turns out that some structures are pleonastic: a single meaning is redundantly expressed by coordination – the meaning of one conjunct includes the meaning of the other (e.g. *splnění a překročení* ‘meeting and exceeding’ of a five-year plan, where *překročení* ‘exceeding’ implies *splnění* ‘meeting’).

The difference in the MWUs’ lexical content is again diametric, the most common MWUs of this type in the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus belonging to the language of law.

### 3.4 Accumulation of attributive nouns in the genitive case

This type of structure is formally described as follows:

Noun<sub>0</sub> Adj<sub>1gen</sub>{0–3} Noun<sub>1gen</sub> Adj<sub>2gen</sub>{0–3} Noun<sub>2gen</sub> Adj<sub>3gen</sub>{0–3} Noun<sub>3gen</sub>  
Adj<sub>4gen</sub>{0–3} Noun<sub>4gen</sub>...

where the substructure Adj<sub>xgen</sub>{0–3} Noun<sub>xgen</sub> (x = 1–n) represents a nominal group where the Adj agrees with the following Noun in the genitive case, gender and number.

Consider a nominal group with at least four dependent nouns in the genitive case. In the Frap Totalita corpus, the following are characteristic examples of the accumulation of genitive MWUs:

(1) *Ve vystoupení generálního tajemníka<sub>1</sub> ústředního výboru<sub>2</sub> Komunistické strany<sub>3</sub> Československa<sub>4</sub>...*  
 ‘In a speech of the General Secretary<sub>1</sub> of the Central Committee<sub>2</sub> of the Communist Party<sub>3</sub> of Czechoslovakia<sub>4</sub>...’

(2) ... z usnesení vyplývají ... nové methody sestavování **státního plánu**<sub>2</sub> rozvoje<sub>3</sub> národního hospodářství<sub>4</sub>.

‘... arise from the resolutions ... new methods of the **drawing up**<sub>1</sub> of the state **plan**<sub>2</sub> of the **development**<sub>3</sub> of the national **economy**<sub>4</sub>.’

In the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus, the MWU lexical content is, as expected, quite different:

(3) *Zcela nepochybně naplnil skutkovou podstatu přečinu<sub>1</sub> maření<sub>2</sub> výkonu<sub>3</sub> úředního rozhodnutí<sub>4</sub>.*

‘He has undoubtedly fulfilled the offence of<sub>1</sub> the **obstruction**<sub>2</sub> of the **execution**<sub>3</sub> of an official **decision**<sub>4</sub>.’

(4) ... vypisuje výběrové řízení na obsazení místa<sub>1</sub> tajemníka<sub>2</sub> sekretariátu<sub>3</sub> Českého svazu<sub>4</sub> vodovodů<sub>5</sub> a kanalizací<sub>5</sub>.

‘...announces a selection procedure for the **position**<sub>1</sub> of **Secretary**<sub>2</sub> of the **Secretariat**<sub>3</sub> of the Czech **Association**<sub>4</sub> of Water Supply<sub>5</sub> and Sewerage<sub>5</sub>.’

In the examples, the bold nouns are, syntactically, nominal attributes of their respective governing nouns.

Frequency data in Tab. 4 (Frap Totalita ipm=247 : Frap SYNv13-PUB ipm=175) show that in the Frap Totalita corpus, this type of structure is more common.

Frap Totalita			Frap SYNv13-PUB		
MWU lemmas	MWU occurrences	ipm	MWU lemmas	MWU occurrences	ipm
3,470	3,932	247	12,418	13,091	175

**Tab. 4.** Frequency – lemmas, occurrences, ipm in both corpora – of nominal groups containing, in addition to the governing noun, at least 4 dependent nouns in the genitive case

It can be stated that in the Frap Totalita corpus, the nominal structure with chained genitive noun attributes is more frequent than in the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus. However, this structure seems to be a distinctive feature of the official language of both types of language.

### 3.5 Nominal groups with a nominating nominative and/or a foreign word or an (in)declinable noun

There are three types of nominal groups (A–C) with a nominating nominative, a foreign word or an (in)declinable word:

A. In the nominal group, only the first word is inflected, the second one is in the nominating nominative. The Frap Totalita corpus contains the following typical

examples: *v okrese Praha* ‘in the district of Prague’, *na dole Zápotocký* ‘at the mine Zápotocký’, *v nakladatelství Svoboda* ‘in the Svoboda publishing house’.

Typical examples in the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus are: *v okrese Praha* ‘in the district of Prague’, *v kraji Vysočina* ‘in the Highlands region’, *v paláci Akropolis* ‘in Akropolis Palace’.

The structure is common in both corpora.

B. In the nominal group, only the last word (often of foreign origin) is inflected, the first one being a foreign or undeclinable word. In Frap Totalita, the first (bold) word is typically foreign: *v New Yorku* ‘in New York’, *na Wall Streetu* ‘on Wall Street’, *po Mao Ce-tungovi* ‘after Mao Zedong’. These collocations are almost exclusively proper names.

In Frap SYNv13-PUB, however, a new type of structure appears, where the first word may be a foreign or undeclinable word, but also a declinable word in the nominative case, the second one being an inflected noun (possibly of foreign origin): *na home officu* ‘at the home office’, *v Sazka aréně* ‘in Sazka Arena’, *v Tip Sport* extralize ‘in the Tip Sport extraleague’. This type is productive, Czech is clearly influenced by English: the nominal attribute comes first.

C. Not a single word in the nominal structure is inflected. Compared to Frap Totalita (*chargé d'affaires*, *Morning Star*), there are many more such MWUs in the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus that are adopted from English without change; this type is very productive: *Australian open*, *home credit*, *power play*.

In general, the lexical content of MWUs in the two corpora differs considerably.

### 3.6 Periphrastic comparison of adjectives

In general, Czech adjectives can be compared in the comparative degree by the synthetic comparative form (*hladší* ‘smoother’) as well as periphrastically by combining the adverb *více* ‘more’ or *méně*<sup>8</sup> ‘less’ with the positive degree of the compared adjective (*více protisrbský* ‘more anti-Serbian’, *méně hustý* ‘less dense’). For some adjectives, only one of the possibilities is grammatically correct. However, in usage, contrary to the standard language codification, we encounter

- (i) the form of *více* + comparative form
- (ii) the form of *méně* + comparative form.

We distinguish, of course, between the adverbs *více* and *méně* in the comparison function and in the other functions/compounds:

- in the qualitative function, cf.: *bydlení je více<sub>comp</sub> dražší<sub>comp</sub>* ‘housing is **more-expensive**<sub>comp</sub>’ vs. *prodává více<sub>quant</sub> dražších ledniček* ‘he sells **more**<sub>quant</sub> expensive refrigerators’, i.e. more refrigerators

<sup>8</sup> The constructions with *méně* ‘less’ are also referred to as comparison.

- in the particle construction *více* [*či*] *méně* ‘more or less’: *to se mu více méně podařilo* ‘he **more or less** succeeded’
- in structures where *více* or *méně* modifies a verb rather than an adjective: *pracoval stále více lepší metodou* ‘he **worked more** using a better method’.

First, we present typical corpus examples of periphrastic comparison:

### 1. *více* + positive degree:

Frap Totalita:

(5) *Budeme ještě více bděli*<sub>pos</sub>.  
‘We’ll be even **more vigilant**<sub>pos</sub>.’

Frap SYNv13-PUB:

(6) *Zdálo se, že jsme byli více nervózní*<sub>pos</sub> *než oni.*  
‘We seemed to be **more nervous**<sub>pos</sub> than they were.’

### 2. *více* + comparative degree:

Frap Totalita:

(7) *Spojují je pouty mnohem více papežštější*<sub>comp</sub> *než sám papež.*  
‘They bind them with ties far **more papal**<sub>comp</sub> than the Pope himself.’

Frap SYNv13-PUB:

(8) *Lidi na heroinu jsou však více uzavřenější*<sub>comp</sub>.  
‘People on heroin, however, are **more withdrawn**<sub>comp</sub>.’

### 3. *méně* + comparative degree:

Frap Totalita:

(9) *Dal se cestou méně schůdnější*<sub>comp</sub> *a méně výnosnou*<sub>pos</sub>.<sup>9</sup>  
‘He took the **less feasible**<sub>comp</sub> and less **profitable**<sub>pos</sub> route.’

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<sup>9</sup> It is interesting that in (9) the adjective *schůdnější*<sub>comp</sub> following the first occurrence of *méně* expresses the comparative degree, whereas the adjective *výnosnou*<sub>pos</sub> following the second occurrence of *méně* is in the positive degree.

Frap SYNv13-PUB:

(10) ... z *filmařů*, kteří jsou možná v tuzemsku *méně známější*<sub>comp</sub>.  
 ‘...of filmmakers who are perhaps **less well known**<sub>comp</sub> at home.’

In Tab. 5 we summarize the frequency of adjectival comparison.

	Frap Totalita		Frap SYNv13-PUB	
Comparison type	occurrences	ipm	occurrences	ipm
synthetic comparative	36,125	2,265	176,810	2,360
<i>více</i> + pos degree	88	5.50	794	10.60
<i>více</i> + comp degree	20	1.25	92	1.23
<i>méně</i> + comp degree	11	0.70	32	0.43

**Tab. 5.** Frequency of kinds of adjectival comparison in terms of occurrences and ipm in both corpora

Summary:

- *více*+positive: In Frap SYNv13-PUB (ipm=10.6) there are twice as many instances of adjectival comparison as in Frap Totalita (ipm=5.5)
- *více*+comparative: post-totalitarian language does not differ from its totalitarian counterpart (ipm: 1.25 : 1.23)
- *méně*+comparative: Due to insufficient data, it can be said that the frequency of this phenomenon in totalitarian journalism (Frap Totalita ipm=0.7) and in post-totalitarian journalism (Frap SYNv13-PUB ipm=0.43) is similar.

We see that in the Frap SYNv13-PUB corpus, adjectives are compared peripherastically more often than in the Frap Totalita corpus by *více/méně* + positive/comparative degree. In any case, the synthetic comparative clearly prevails. The reasons for the peripherastical comparison can, generally, be as follows:

- (i) the influence of analytical comparison in English
- (ii) speakers' difficulties with forming synthetic comparative forms
- (iii) endeavour to emphasize the comparative degree.

## 4 CONCLUSION

In general, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The hypothesis stated at the beginning of § 3 has been confirmed. In terms of syntactic structures, totalitarian and post-totalitarian language differ, but not by much: the syntax of Czech has changed very little in 50–70 years.

- In terms of the lexical content of MWUs, the difference between the two types of language studied is considerable, which is, not surprisingly, due to the fact that after Czech society transitioned to freedom and democracy, the language of journalism changed: the post-totalitarian journalistic language has become lexically richer and more varied than its totalitarian counterpart, which was highly politicized, lexically very poor and characterized by a lot of clichés.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research was supported by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, reg. no. GA ČR 24-10254S.

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