

Overview

- North Germanic languages are known for the way in which they morphosyntactically mark definite DPs.
- There is both a definite SUFFIX and a prenominal definite ARTICLE, as the Danish examples in (1a) and (1b) show.

(1) *Danish*:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. <u>hesten</u>
horse.DEF
‘the horse’ | b. <u>den</u> gamle hest
the old horse
‘the old horse’ |
|--|--|

The North Germanic languages:

- Danish
- Faroese
- Icelandic
- Norwegian
- Swedish

- An influential idea that was popular in the 1990s was that there was only a single head housing definiteness marking (D°), and that N° -to- D° movement resulted in suffixation.
- This looks plausible in a language like Danish, where the article and the suffix are in complementary distribution.
 - However, as we will see it is not immediately obvious what blocks N° -to- D° head movement in cases like (1b).
 - Although originally thought to be the adjective itself, this depends on one’s assumptions about the structure of DPs.
- Furthermore, in most North Germanic languages – Swedish, Norwegian, and Faroese – the suffix and the article are not in complementary distribution.
- These languages display what is known as DOUBLE DEFINITENESS, where under many circumstances both the article and the suffix co-occur.

There are also proposals that there must be more than one head in the structure – either multiple D° positions or else separate functional positions for the suffix and determiner. We’ll look at one of these below.

(2) *Swedish*:

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. <u>hästen</u>
horse.DEF
‘the horse’ | b. <u>den</u> gamla <u>hästen</u>
the old horse.DEF
‘the old horse’ |
|--|---|

- Double definiteness has, nonetheless, been analyzed with N° -to- D° movement, but the utility of this analysis is less obvious.
- Today we’ll look at the following:
 1. The patterns of definiteness marking in Scandinavian languages
 2. Some of the various analyses that have been proposed

1 Patterns

There are roughly three different patterns to be found:

- (3) Single definiteness (complementary distribution)
 - a. Obligatory article with adjectival modification (Danish)
 - b. Optional article with adj. modification (Icelandic)
 - (4) Double definiteness (Swedish, Norwegian, Faroese)
- In each subsection I've given a chart of how definite DPs work with adjectival modification: Danish (6), Icelandic (10), and Swedish (12).
 - Each of these is arranged the same way. The second column with examples (d)–(f), which shows adjectival modification, are where each of the languages shows variation from each other.

1.1 Danish

- The most straightforward pattern is found in Danish.
- The indefinite article is always preverbal, regardless of whether it is modified by an adjective.

(5) *Indefinites in Danish:*

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. en hest
a horse | b. en gammel hest
an old horse |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|

- Definite DPs work differently. Here there is a postnominal suffix and the prenominal article, which are in complementary distribution.
- The definite article famously appears when an adjective modifies the noun (6e), which blocks the use of the definite suffix (6d).
- The article cannot appear with an unmodified noun (6b).
- No double definiteness occurs, as in (6c) and (6f)

The caveat here is that a stressed article acts as demonstrative in this environment.

(6) *Definiteness marking with adjectives in Danish:*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| a. hest-en
horse-DEF | d. *gamle hesten
old horse-DEF |
| b. *den hest
the horse | e. den gamle hest
the old horse |
| c. *den hest-en
the horse-DEF | f. *den gamle hest-en
the old horse-DEF |

- PP modification requires the definite suffix rather than the article:

(7) *PP-modification in Danish:*

- a. gris-en med blå pletter
pig-DEF with blue spots
'the pig with blue spots'
- b. * den gris med blå pletter
the pig with blue spots

- Relative clauses provide a very interesting case, in that the placement of the definiteness marking differentiates between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clause readings.

(8) *Relative clauses in Danish:*

- a. hest-en som vandt løb-et
horse-DEF that won race-DEF
'The horse, which won the race' *nonrestrictive*
'The horse that won the race' *%restrictive*
- b. den hest som vandt løb-et
the horse that won race-DEF
'The horse that won the race' *restrictive*

Hankamer and Mikkelsen
2005:108, (43)

- This tells us that we are not simply looking at a case of linear adjacency. Rather we must be looking at something structural.
- Furthermore, the different forms of modification can co-occur. Here, a restrictive relative clause outside of a PP induces the prenominal article:

- (9) den gris med blå pletter som vi fik af nabo-en
the pig with blue spots that we got from neighbor-DEF
'the pig with blue spots that we got from the neighbor'

Hankamer and Mikkelsen
2005:112, (53)

1.2 Icelandic

- As with Danish, the suffix and the prenominal article are in complementary distribution – only one may appear in any given DP.
- DPs without adjectival modification must take the suffix – compare (10a) and (10b).
- However, adjectival modification does not block the appearance of the suffix.
 - Either the prenominal article (10e) or the postnominal suffix (10d) are available.
 - Norris (2011) reports that speakers prefer the suffix; Sigurðsson (2006) reports that the prenominal marker sounds literary or archaic. However, speakers nonetheless have judgments about it.
 - This distinguishes Icelandic from Danish, though the article and suffix are still in complementary distribution.

(10) *Icelandic:*

Sigurðsson 2006, cited by Norris (2011:100)

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|----|--|
| a. | bók-in
book-DEF | d. | rauða bók-in
red book-DEF |
| b. | * hin bók
the book | e. | hin rauða bók
the red book |
| c. | * hin bók-in
the book-DEF | f. | * hin rauða bók-in
the red book-DEF |

- Just as a point of comparison, relative clauses in Icelandic appear with nouns with definite suffixes.

I do not know if this correlates with any restrictive/nonrestrictive reading difference.

(11) *Relative clauses in Icelandic:*

- | | |
|----|--|
| a. | Konan sem sat á bekknum hló.
woman.DEF that sat on bench laughed |
| b. | bækur-nar fimm sem þú keyptir í kolaporti-nu
books-DEF five that you bought at flea.market-DEF
'the five books that you bought at the flea market' |

Sigurðsson 2006:(1e), Norris 2011:(14)

1.3 **Swedish, Norwegian, and Faroese**

- Swedish, Norwegian, and Faroese are like Danish (and Icelandic) in that they all have both prenominal definite articles and definite suffixes.
- The place where these languages behave noticeably differently are with adjectival modification.
- Here we see that the suffix and the prefix are not in complementary distribution but must, under regular conditions, co-occur.

(12) *Definiteness marking in Swedish:*

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|----|--|
| a. | häst-en
horse-DEF | d. | * gamla hästen
old horse-DEF |
| b. | * den häst
the horse | e. | * den gamla häst
the old horse |
| c. | * den häst-en
the horse-DEF | f. | den gamla häst-en
the old horse-DEF |

- As in Danish, PP modification does not cause the prenominal article to appear:

- (13) (*den) bergensar-en i klass-a mi
the Bergener-DEF in class-DEF my
'the Bergener in my class'

Norwegian, Julien 2005:87, (3.23a)

- As I discuss in LaCara (2011), the facts in Swedish are actually somewhat more complicated than this, however.

- The prenominal article can be dropped if the element to which the DP refers to is presupposed to be unique:

(14) *No Definite Article in Swedish:*

Delsing 1993; Perridon 1989

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| a. | Ta (den) nya bilen!
take (the) new car-the
'Take the new car!' | c. | (den) vänstra handen
(the) left hand-the
'the left hand' |
| b. | (den) franska revolutionen
(the) French revolution-the
'the French revolution' | d. | (den) största delen
(the) biggest part-the
'the biggest part' |

- The suffix cannot be used in a restrictive relative clause if there is no obvious discourse referent that the DP could refer to:

(15) *Restrictive relative clauses in Swedish:*

Delsing 1993:119

- | | |
|----|--|
| a. | Den bok som säljer flest exemplar belönas.
the book that sells most copies is-rewarded
'The book that sells the most examples is awarded a prize.' |
| b. | * Den boken som säljer flest exemplar belönas.
the book.DEF that sells most copies is-rewarded |

- There is some variation between double definiteness languages with regard to what happens here, I believe. The main point here, though, is that the conditions on double definition are not simply morphosyntactic, but seem to track some notion sort of semantic information.

See, e.g., Julien 2005:Ch. 3

2 Analyses

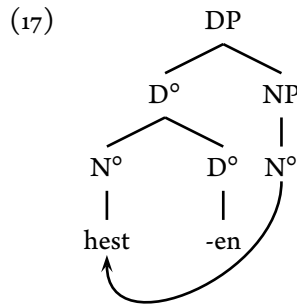
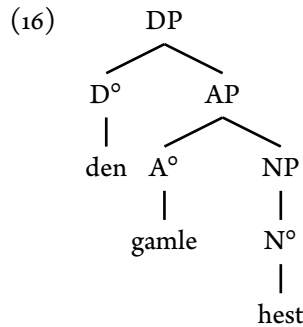
- There are a large number of analyses of the above data in the literature. The following is only a sample.
- One tendency is to try to explain all of the languages with the same analysis or, at least, very similar ones. This is probably due to the close relationship between these languages and the outward similarity of definiteness marking in each of them.
- Still, it is probably worth raising the question whether we want an analysis of, say, Swedish, that relies on some notably different facts about Icelandic.

2.1 Delsing's analysis: Head movement

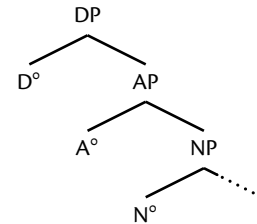
- Delsing's analysis handles Danish most straightforwardly, so let's start with that.
- Due to the complementary relationship between the suffix and the article, Delsing (1993) proposes that the suffix and the article are syntactically the same element.
- The suffix occurs when N° moves to D° (Delsing 1993:130); the preverbal article appears when this movement is blocked.

Delsing's head movement approach is essentially the one adopted by Embick and Noyer (2001).

- This relies, in part, on the structure of DPs proposed by [Abney \(1987\)](#), where APs intervene between the DP and NP projections:
- When there is an adjective in the structure between D° and N°, head movement from N° to D° is blocked by the intervening adjective, as in (16).
- When there is no adjective, however, the noun is moves to D°, as in (17).



[Abney \(1987:327\)](#) originally placed AP between DP and NP:



Although it is never made explicit, this is presumably due to the head movement constraint of [Travis \(1984\)](#).

- [Delsing](#) proposes that there is parametric variation in Scandinavian languages.
 - In Icelandic and double definiteness languages, the noun may be base-generated with the suffix.
 - Languages vary with whether D° must be lexicalized (how the NP is IDENTIFIED in his terms).
- This lets us explain the three kinds of languages we see above.
 - N° cannot be generated with definite morphology in Danish, so can only receive it by moving to D°.
 - Double definiteness languages can generate N° with definite morphology. N°, nonetheless, moves to D° in double definiteness languages to lexicalize D° when no adjective intervenes between N° and D°. When one does, *den* appears as an expletive in D°, doubling the suffix on N°.
 - For Icelandic, [Delsing \(1993:131\)](#) notes that it is not possible to tell if there is movement in cases without adjectival modification. He assumes that ‘[t]he overt inflection in gender, number and case seems to be enough to identify the noun phrase, without having to lexicalise the D-position.’ Presumably, this is why only the suffix is typically needed when there is adjectival modification.
- It is interesting to note that [Delsing](#) essentially appeals to rich inflectional morphology in DP in this argument to explain why D° need not be filled in Icelandic
- In fact, in footnote 23, [Delsing](#) suggests that the reason Faroese is a double definiteness language, unlike Icelandic, is due to its less robust inflectional paradigm.

[Santelmann \(1993\)](#) makes a similar proposal, where the appearance of *den* is akin to English *do*-support in T°.

The assumption seems to be there could be N°-to-D° movement, but even if it is blocked, the morphology is sufficient for identifying NP.

[Delsing](#) says ‘strong’, though it’s likely he means rich. Notice how different this is from the view of rich morphology we saw in the clausal domain, where rich morphology is thought to be the motivation for V°-to-I° movement.

(18) *Double definiteness in Faroese:*

Julien 2005:27, (2.3)

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| a. | kettlingur-in
kitten.NOM-DEF
'the kitten' | b. | tann svartu kettlingur-in
the black kitten.NOM-DEF
'the black kitten' |
|----|---|----|---|

2.2 Hankamer & Mikkelsen

- Hankamer and Mikkelsen (2005) focus mostly on Danish, but one of their main criticisms is an important one for head movement analyses.
 - They argue that APs should be treated as adjuncts to NP.
 - If APs are adjuncts and do not intervene between DP and NP, then A° cannot be a blocker for head movement.
- One of the main reasons Abney (1987) argues that NPs are complements of adjectives in English is that (attributive) adjectives cannot take complements.

(19) * the [proud of his son] man

Abney 1987:326, (380b)

- But in Scandinavian languages, this is not obviously the case. Adjectives do appear with complement material.

I worry, though, that the complement appears *before* the adjective in these cases. Scandinavian languages are left headed.

(20) en över sin insats stolt försvarsadvokat
an over his accomplishments proud defense.attorney
'a defense attorney (who is) proud of his accomplishments'

Swedish, Delsing 1993:82

(21) den overfor sælgere vrantne mand
the toward salespeople grumpy man
'the man (who is) grumpy toward salespeople'

Danish, Hankamer and Mikkelsen 2005:96, (18b)

- Thus, Hankamer and Mikkelsen adopt a more traditional view of AP as a modifier to NP, which has enough structure to host complements.
- If this view is right, then movement from N° -to- D° cannot be blocked by the head movement constraint. Adjuncts may intervene between heads, and A° should not count as a blocker.
- Another criticism, interesting in the context of this seminar, is of the last-resort nature of the derivation.
 - Embick and Noyer (2001) propose that the noun must move to D° to support the morphology in D° . When movement is blocked by the adjective, *d*-support occurs in D° to support the *-en* suffix that normally appears on the noun.
 - As Hankamer and Mikkelsen (2005) point out, if the only motivation for movement to D° is the requirement that the morphology have a host, and if *d*-support is always available as a last-resort, then it is actually unclear why cases like **den hest* (6b) are categorically ruled out in Danish. If head movement fails

This is supposed to be similar to the traditional approach to *do*-support in English; adjectives in Danish nominals function like negation in English clauses.

to occur, *d*-support should always be able to rescue the derivation. ‘Rather, they say (p. 97), ‘it seems that the movement must be forced by some constraint stated over syntactic structure, since head movement is a syntactic operation.’

- Hankamer and Mikkelsen (2005) propose a morphological analysis that does not rely on head movement, but rather on modifying post-lexical insertion rules to be sensitive to the syntactic context and the head–phrase ambiguity of bare phrase structure.

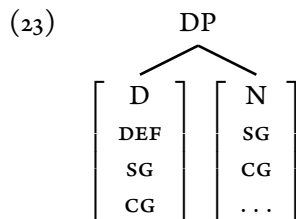
- Hankamer and Mikkelsen (2005) propose two different lexical insertion rules for definite determiners in Danish:

(22) *Lexical insertion rules for Danish:*

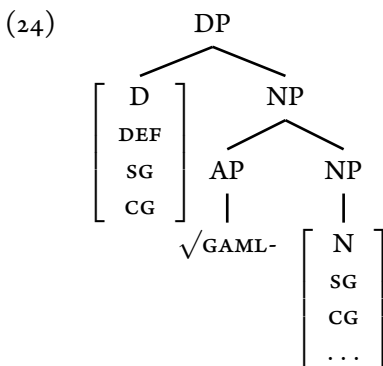
- $-en \leftrightarrow [D, \text{DEF}, \text{SG}, \text{CG}]$ if sister to a minimal N° that contains the features $[\text{SG}]$ and $[\text{CG}]$
- $den \leftrightarrow [D, \text{DEF}, \text{SG}, \text{CG}]$ elsewhere

Here, CG stands for COMMON GENDER, one of two grammatical genders in Danish. The other is NEUTER.

- In a DP with only a noun and a determiner, D° and N° will be sisters:



- In this context, the lexical item inserted will be the one in (22a). Hankamer and Mikkelsen (2005), following Embick and Noyer (2001), assume that in this configuration, it is possible for the determiner to suffix onto the noun for morphological reasons.
- In a DP with an AP modifier, D° will not be sister to an N° , but to an NP since AP must adjoin to NP:



- In this context, (22b) must be used, since the conditions on (22a) are not met.
- This can explain the behavior of relative clauses:
 - Restrictive relatives adjoin to NP.

– Non-restrictive relatives adjoin to DP.

- However, PPs would seem to need to adjoin to DP rather than NP for this to work. This is a problem for cases like (9) where a restrictive relative clause adjoined outside of a PP requires the definite article:

(9) den gris med blå pletter som vi fik af nabo-en
 the pig with blue spots that we got from neighbor-DEF
 ‘the pig with blue spots that we got from the neighbor’

They provide a solution to this that involves a raising analysis of restrictive relatives and D° taking the relative CP directly (pp. 113–118). I will not cover this in detail here.

Hankamer and Mikkelsen 2005:112, (53)

- Argument PPs also pose a problem for them on the assumption that such PPs are selected as sisters to N° :

(25) *Argument PPs*:
 a. forfatter-en til bog-en
 author-DEF to book-DEF
 ‘the author of the book’
 b. *den forfatter til bog-en
 the author to book-DEF
 ‘the author of the book’

Danish, Hankamer and Mikkelsen 2005:118, (63)–(64)

2.3 LaCara

- In LaCara (2011), I try to extend Hankamer and Mikkelsen’s (2005) analysis of Danish to the rather more complicated situation in Swedish.
- I do not try to solve the many problems I just noted for Danish – many of these, in fact, are inherited by my analysis and I do not even raise them.

2.4 Julien

- Julien (2005) proposes an analysis of Scandinavian DPs that is rather more cartographic in nature.
- There is some amount of head movement, but also phrasal movement in some instances.
- Unlike the above analyses, Julien proposes that there are two functional heads associated with definiteness in the DP.
 - D° , which carries features associated with semantic uniqueness, hosts the definite article.
 - n° , which bears referential features, hosts the definite suffix.
- Head movement assembles a noun with its inflectional morphology (e.g., plural number morphology and definiteness marking).
- However, there is also a requirement that the DP layer be IDENTIFIED. This requires either filling SpecDP (with movement) or filling D° (with a determiner) to ensure that there be phonological material in DP.

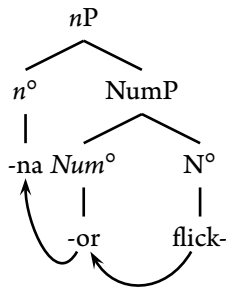
This is not clearly related to Delsing’s (1993) notion of identification.

- Where there is no intervening adjective, *nP* moves to SpecDP.

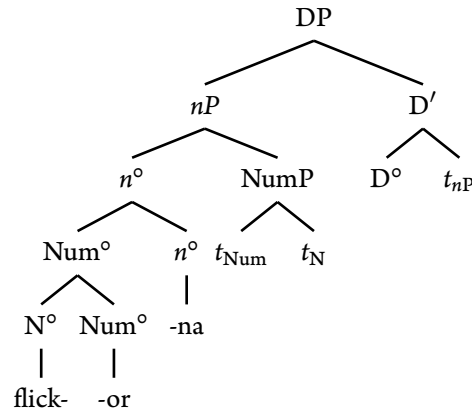
This movement is evidently violates the anti-locality constraint, which to my knowledge Julien does not notice.

(26) flickorna
 flick-or-na
 girl-PL-DEF
 'the girls'

a. Head movement in *nP*:



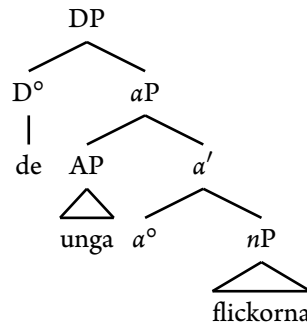
b. *nP* movement for identification:



- However, when an adjective intervenes between *D°* and *nP*, Julien proposes that this blocks the probe from *D°*. Since AP is not a valid candidate to move to SpecDP (because it lacks a referential index), DP must be identified by inserting *den* into *D°*.

Julien assumes that APs are merged in the specifiers of functional projections (*aP*), following Cinque (1994).

(27) de unga flickorna
 the young girls.DEF



- As I discuss in LaCara 2011:70–71, it is not fully clear why AP cannot serve to identify DP or what features AP might carry that should interfere with a probe from *D°*.
- It seems to have to do with the notion that the topmost layer of the DP carry a nominal category feature to make a DP referential (Julien 2005:18), but it is not clear how spelling out *D°* with a determiner instead of movement would actually accomplish this.
- With regard to cases involving relatives, Julien dedicates an entire chapter to these, which is worth a look if you are interested in that problem.

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