Second-Position Clitics and the NP-DP Parameter *

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1. Introduction

Recent work has questioned the universality of the dp layer (Fukui 1988, Pereltsvaig 2006). One line of work argues that this projection is absent in languages which lack definite articles (Bošković 2008). In support of this view, Bošković (2016) adduces the generalization below.

(1) The 2P-DP Generalization

Second-Position (2P) clitic systems are found only in languages without articles.

Bošković (2016) suggests that the generalization in (1) reflects a cross-linguistic universal. However, it is not. Definite articles coexist with a robust 2P system in several languages of the South Sulawesi subfamily (Austronesian, Indonesia). The following examples illustrate in Coastal Konjo (Makassar Subgroup). This language has a definite article =a (2). Moreover, it indexes absolutive arguments with second-position enclitics like =i (3).

(2) Konjo: Definite Article

Na-itte=i asu=a meong=a. 3ERG-see=3ABS dog=DEF cat=DEF
‘The dog saw the cat.’

Friberg 1996:4

(3) Konjo: 2P Enclitics

Kuttu=i an-jama. lazy=3ABS ANT-work
‘He works lazily.’

Friberg 1996:39

This snippet argues that this pattern obviates (1). In Section 2, I show that some South Sulawesi languages have acquired a definite article. In Section 3, I show that these languages retain 2P systems. In Section 4, I suggest a modification of (1) to preserve its validity.

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2. The Definite Article

The languages of the South Sulawesi subfamily are split with regard to the presence of a definite article. Many lack such an element. The following examples illustrate in Mandar (Northern Subgroup). In this language, non-anaphoric definite arguments appear as bare NPs (4). Overtly anaphoric nominals, in contrast, strictly surface with demonstratives (5).

(4) **Mandar: Weak Def → Bare**

\[
\text{Loppaq}=i \text{ allo.}
\]
\[
\text{hot}=3\text{ABS} \text{ sun}
\]

‘The sun is hot.’ (= “it’s hot out”)

Friberg and Jerniati 2000:45

(5) **Mandar: Strong Def → Dem**

\[
\text{Masuliq} \text{ diqo} \text{ bau}=\text{o.}
\]

expensive that fish=there

‘The fish was expensive.’

Sikki et al. 1987:653

The central and southern languages, however, mark definiteness in a different way. These languages have innovated true definite articles which surface as enclitics at the edge of the noun phrase. These elements are unanimously referred to as definite articles in the literature (Friberg 1996, Finer 1998, Jukes 2006, Laskowske 2016). Their forms are tabled below.

(6) **Definite Articles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANG</th>
<th>DEF</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bugis</td>
<td>=é</td>
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<tr>
<td>Makassar</td>
<td>=a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Konjo</td>
<td>=a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selayar</td>
<td>=njo</td>
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</tbody>
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The definite articles above appear on both anaphoric and non-anaphoric definites. Globally unique elements like the sun, for instance, do not surface bare in the languages above. Rather, they take the article (7). Thus in the city of Makassar, one often hears (8).

(7) **Bugis: Weak Def → é**

\[
\text{Labu}=\text{n}=i \text{ esso}=\text{é.}
\]
\[
\text{descend}=\text{already}=3\text{ABS} \text{ sun}=\text{DEF}
\]

‘The sun has already gone down.’

Bugis; Syarifuddin et al. 2017:26

(8) **Makassarese: Weak Def → a**

\[
\text{Bambang}=i \text{ sedeng allo}=\text{a!}
\]
\[
\text{hot}=3\text{ABS} \text{ again sun}=\text{DEF}
\]

‘The sun is hot again!’

Friberg and Daeng 2000:4

The same articles appear obligatorily with anaphoric definites. The following example illustrates in Makassarese. Here, the article occurs alongside an overt demonstrative.

(9) **Makassarese: Strong Def → Demonstrative + a**

a. **Niaq** seqre romang.  
   there.is one forest  
   ‘There was a forest.’

b. **Anjo** romang=a, \text{ ta}=\text{nikanakana-ya}=i \text{ lombo-na siagáng luaraq-na}.  
   That forest=DEF not=be.said-SUBJ=3ABS size-3GEN and width-3GEN  
   ‘That forest, its size and width could not be described.’

Friberg and Daeng 2000:4

Jukes 2006:66
3. The Second Position System

Despite the split above, the languages of the South Sulawesi subfamily show uniform second-position systems. These languages invariably index the absolutive argument with an agreement clitic which surfaces in 2p (Campbell 1989, Matti 1994, Stromme 1994, Valkama 1995, Friberg 1996, Finer 1999, Jukes 2006, Laskowske 2016, Brodkin 2021). The following examples illustrate in Mandar, which lacks a definite article. Here, the clitic follows the verb when it is initial (10a) but the highest auxiliary when one appears (10b).

(10) Mandar: Absolutive Enclitic in 2P
a. Maq-ala=i ant anggaq 1000.  
   ‘He took up to one thousand.’  
   Sikki et al. (1987:126)

b. Indang=i meloq maq-ala.  
   ‘He didn’t want to take.’  
   Sikki et al. (1987:2)

The same pattern holds in the languages which have innovated a definite article. In Makassarese, for instance, the absolutive enclitic shows the same behavior. It follows the verb in verb-initial clauses (11a) but surfaces on the highest auxiliary when one appears (11b).

(11) Makassarese: Absolutive Enclitic in 2P
a. Ku-baca=i suraq-nu.  
   ‘I read your letter.’  
   Jukes (2006:465)

b. Leqbak=i ku-baca.  
   ‘I already read it.’  
   Jukes (2006:466)

This pattern reflects a second-position effect. Simplifying somewhat, across the subfamily the absolutive enclitic surfaces after the first prosodic word in the clause. This pattern holds even when its host is not a verb or an auxiliary. In Bugis, for instance, the absolutive enclitic can be hosted by a preposition (12a) or by a possessed noun inside a noun phrase (12b).

(12) Bugis: Absolutive Enclitic in 2P
a. Ku=kaq pasa=é m-elli balé.  
   ‘I bought some fish at the market.’  
   Laskowske (2016:10)

   ‘I’m Ali’s apprentice.’  
   Kaufman (2008:133)

The absolutive enclitic is not alone in this behavior. Across the South Sulawesi subfamily, many other elements surface in 2p: for instance, aspectual enclitics (Friberg 1996), vp-level adverbs (Jukes 2006), cp-level adverbs, and weak pronouns (Brodkin 2021). In other words, complex 2p systems recur across the South Sulawesi subfamily- despite the fact that these languages are split with respect to the presence of an overt definite article.
4. Conclusion

These facts necessitate a weakening of the generalization in (1). Several languages of the South Sulawesi subfamily show both definite articles and 2p systems. As such, it is clear that there is no strict link between the presence of an article and the absence of 2p enclitics.

The story, however, may not end here. The South Sulawesi data show that the strong form of (I) is false. Nevertheless, a correlation along the lines above may still hold. If so, the natural goal would be to reformulate (I) in such a way as to make it an absolute: in other words, to modify the relevant generalization such that it covers the set of languages under investigation in Boskovic (2016) and excludes those of the South Sulawesi subfamily.

By rethinking the notion of “dp-language,” it may be possible to do so in a principled way. In its original form, the generalization in (I) envisioned a strictly binary split: the possibility of 2p phenomena in a given language would reduce to the lexical presence of a definite article. The other parameters in Boskovic (2008) are formulated along similar lines.

The notion of a binary split, however, independently requires reevaluation. It has long been known that the “definite article” does not form a unitary category in cross-linguistic perspective (Ebert 1971). Since Boskovic (2008), moreover, much work has shown that definite articles often fall into one of two classes: they are typically either “weak definite articles,” which encode a presupposition of uniqueness, or “strong definite articles,” which encode a presupposition of anaphoricity (Schwarz 2009, Aguilar-Guevara et al. 2019).

This distinction is relevant to the syntax. From a semantic perspective, the notion of anaphoric definiteness can be composed on top of uniqueness (Hanink 2018). From the syntax, moreover, many languages mark anaphoric definiteness through a combination of a weak definite article and an demonstrative (Alexiadou et al. 2008). As such, recent work has argued for a containment relation between the two types of article above (Royer 2019).

If this line of work is on the right track, then the binary system above must be enriched. Alongside the languages which lack both articles (Serbo-Croatian, Japanese) and languages which have the strong definite article (Bulgarian, English), it is necessary to recognize a third class of languages which show the weak definite article and not the strong one.

The relevant language of the South Sulawesi subfamily fall into the third category. In these languages, the definite article occurs in several contexts where strong definite articles do not appear. For instance, they occur alongside the indefinite numeral “one.”

(13)  **Makassar: Weak Article used with Specific Indefinites**
    Ri seqre=a kampong ammantang=i seqre=a tukalabini.
    At one=DEF village live=3ABS one=DEF couple
    ‘In a certain village lived a certain couple.’  Jukes (2006:73)

This pattern suggests that the relevant set of definite articles are weak. This conclusion allows for the reformulation of (II) below. I leave it to future work to establish its validity.

(14)  **Revision: The 2P-DP Generalization**
    Second-Position systems cannot exist in languages with strong definite articles.
References


