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Scandinavian and Balkan Noun Phrases

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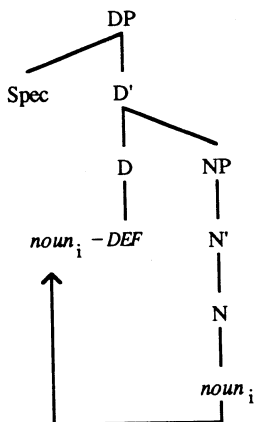
An argument in favour of a syntax-morphology distinction: Scandinavian and Balkan noun phrases*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the Scandinavian languages and the Balkan languages except Greek¹, a full referential definite noun phrase can consist of a singular count noun carrying a definite ending (referred to as DEF in this paper). Within the framework of recent transformational theory, an analysis such as the one in (1) has been proposed for such noun phrases (e.g. Delsing (1988, 1989) and Holmberg (1990) for Swedish; Taraldsen (1990) for Norwegian; Dobrovie-Sorin (1987) and Grosu (1988) for Romanian).

(1)



Implicit, or sometimes explicit in such analyses are two claims. Firstly, DEF is a syntactic and not a morphological element, or, in other words, it is a **clitic**, not an **affix**. A stronger version of this claim is that there is no distinction between syntax and morphology, so that the phenomena that have traditionally been dealt with by the morphological unit can be accounted for in the syntax. The second claim made in (1) is that DEF is a (syntactic) determiner.

In stating the first of these claims, I have made a distinction between morphology and syntax, between affixes and clitics. Here, morphology can, for the moment, be defined as the set of rules which govern the formation of words, syntax being the set of rules which govern the formation of phrases and sentences. There is, however, one type of unit which shares many characteristics with a word, but the formation of which is governed by syntactic rules. Such units are **host-clitic** combinations. The first claim above is then either that all NOUN-DEF combinations are governed by syntactic rules, or that there is no distinction between morphological rules and syntactic rules, and therefore no distinction between **stem-affix** combinations and **host-clitic** combinations. In this paper, I hope to show that in order to describe the behaviour of DEF in the languages under discussion, the

distinction between morphology and syntax must be maintained. I will also demonstrate that not all of the DEFs discussed here are clitics. With respect to the second claim, I will provide evidence that DEF does not act as a syntactic determiner in all of these languages.

In section 2, I will consider the DEFs of the Scandinavian and Balkan languages in the light of criteria for the distinction between clitics and affixes that have been proposed in the literature (proposed and discussed by e.g. Carstairs (1981, 1987), Klavans (1983, 1985), Sadock (1991), Spencer (1991), Zwicky (1985) and Zwicky and Pullum (1983)). In section 3, I will discuss the consequences of analysing DEF as a syntactic determiner. In section 4, I summarize the discussion.

2. DEF AS A CLITIC OR AN AFFIX

2.1. Phrasal hosts vs. non-phrasal stems

It is usually assumed that the position of a clitic is defined in terms of a phrasal unit, which we will call a **host phrase**, following Klavans (1983, 1985). More specifically, a clitic tends to occur on or near the edges of the host phrase. For DEF, we can assume that the host phrase is the noun phrase. The word that the clitic is phonologically attached to can then be termed the **host word**. The position of an affix, on the other hand, is defined in terms of a particular syntactic category, the **stem**.

As the data in (2) shows, the position of the Swedish (S) DEF cannot be defined in terms of a phrasal unit. From (2a), we might conclude that DEF attaches to the leftmost word of the phrase, or that its host word is the rightmost word of the phrase. However, the data in (2b) and (2c) show that neither of these hypotheses is correct. The same holds for DEF in the other Scandinavian languages.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----|---|--|--|---|
| (2) | a. | [gris-en] _{NP} | | | S |
| | | pig-DEF | | | |
| | b. | [den här gamla smutsiga gris-en] _{NP} | | | S |
| | | this old dirty pig-DEF | | | |
| | c. | [gris-en [med smutsigt tryne] [som tycker om gröt]] _{NP} | | | S |
| | | pig-DEF with a dirty snout who likes porridge | | | |

The Balkan languages are often assumed to have DEF in second position, a Wackernagel position within the noun phrase (cf. for instance Dobrovie-Sorin (1987) and Grosu (1988), but for a different view and also to some extent differing grammaticality judgements, see Halpern (this volume)). This is most consistently true for Macedonian and Bulgarian.² Data from Macedonian (M) are presented in (3).

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----------|--------|----------------|-----------------------|
| (3) | a. | čovек-ot | | | M |
| | | man-DEF | | 'the man' | |
| | b. | dobr-iot | čovек | | M |
| | | good-DEF | man | 'the good man' | |
| | c. | dobr-iot | mal | čovек | M |
| | | good-DEF | little | man | 'the good little man' |

In Romanian (R), there are three ways of saying 'the good man'. These are given in (4). The first two examples do not pose any problems for a 'second position' analysis. If in the example in (4c), the *l* of *cel* is assumed to be DEF, as the

glossing here implies, the DEF is not in second position. However, Dobrovie-Sorin (1987) provides arguments against such an analysis. Instead, she claims that *cel* as a whole fills the function of DEF here, and therefore DEF is in second position.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----------------|----------|------|----------------|---|
| (4) | a. | om- ul | bun | | | R |
| | | man-DEF | good | | 'the good man' | |
| | b. | bun- ul | om | | | R |
| | | good-DEF | man | | 'the good man' | |
| | c. | om | cel | bun | | R |
| | | man | PART.DEF | good | 'the good man' | |

From the data presented here, we can conclude that the Scandinavian DEF behaves like an affix with respect to this criterion, and that DEF in the Balkan languages, with some exceptions, shows the characteristics of a clitic.

2.2. Low degree of selectivity

As long as the positional criteria with respect to the host phrase are fulfilled, a clitic is expected to show a low degree of selectivity with respect to the category of the host word. An affix, on the other hand, displays a high degree of selectivity with respect to its stem. The examples in (5a) to (5c) show that in Swedish, a noun phrase becomes ungrammatical if DEF is attached to an adjective, a verb and a particle, respectively. As (5d) illustrates, DEF cannot even attach to any noun within the noun phrase, but only to the semantic head noun.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---|
| (5) | a. | flicka- n | som var trött / | *flicka | som var trött- en | S |
| | | girl-DEF | who was tired | girl | who was tired-DEF | |
| | b. | flicka- n | jag träffade / | *flicka | jag träffade- n | S |
| | | girl-DEF | I met | girl | I met-DEF | |
| | c. | brev- et | hon slängde bort / | *brev | hon slängde bort- et | S |
| | | letter-DEF | she threw away | letter | she threw away-DEF | |
| | d. | flicka- n | med byxor / | *flicka | med byxor- na | S |
| | | girl-DEF | with trousers | girl | with trousers-DEF | |

In the Balkan languages, DEF is less selective with respect to the category of the word it attaches to. In (3) and (4) examples were provided where DEF attached either to a noun or an adjective. DEF in these languages can also attach to *wh*-words, possessive pronouns, and certain numerals. Examples are provided in (6), where A stands for Albanian.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|------------------|----------|--|-------------------|---|
| (6) | a. | cil-i | djalë | | | A |
| | | which-DEF | boy | | 'which boy' | |
| | b. | moj- ot | časovnik | | | M |
| | | my-DEF | watch | | 'my watch' | |
| | c. | întfi- ul | etaj | | | R |
| | | first-DEF | floor | | 'the first floor' | |

In Macedonian, DEF can even attach to a word that does not directly modify the noun, as shown in (7).

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|---------|--------|--|---------------------------|---|
| (7) | çetiri- te | stotini | lug'e | | | M |
| | four-DEF | hundred | people | | 'the four-hundred people' | |

In each of the Balkan languages there is a small number of categories which can occur in noun phrase initial position, but which do not allow DEF to attach to

- | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| (12) a. | teatar+ot | → | teatrot
theatre.DEF | M |
| b. | realisam+ot | → | realismot
reality.DEF | M |
| c. | turisam+ot | → | turismot
tourism.DEF | M |
| (13) a. | familii+i | → | familiei
family.GEN/DAT.DEF | R |
| b. | copii+i | → | copiii
child.PLU.DEF | R |
| (14) | krye
head | krye-t
head-DEF | kre-u
head-DEF | A |

Another type of irregularity which is often assumed to be characteristic of stem-affix combinations is arbitrary gaps. This means that if a particular NOUN-DEF combination fails to occur in a language, without there being any principled explanation for this distributional gap, then this can be taken as an indication that in this language, DEF is best viewed as an affix. Arbitrary gaps of this type can be found in the Scandinavian languages. I refer the reader to Börjars (1992a) for examples. I have not found any examples of arbitrary gaps in the Balkan languages, but since they are the kind of examples which are not very likely to occur in a grammar of the language, and which are also unlikely to be presented by a native speaker informant, I do not want to claim that there are no arbitrary gaps in the Balkan languages.

3. DEF AS A SYNTACTIC DETERMINER

3.1. Co-occurrence with syntactic determiners

In most current analyses of noun phrases, be they NP or DP analyses, it is usually assumed that each noun phrase can only contain one syntactic determiner. If DEF is analysed as a syntactic determiner, we would expect that it cannot co-occur with other syntactic determiners. With respect to this expectation, the Scandinavian languages display interesting differences. In Swedish, DEF co-occurs with most, but not all definite syntactic determiners, as illustrated in (15).

- | | | | | | | |
|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|---|
| (15) a. | den | gamla | mus-en | / | *mus | S |
| | the/that | old | mouse-DEF | | mouse | |
| b. | den | mus-en | / | *mus | S | |
| | that | mouse-DEF | | mouse | | |
| c. | den här | mus-en | / | *mus | S | |
| | this | mouse-DEF | | mouse | | |
| d. | denna | mus | / | *mus-en | S | |
| | this | mouse | | mouse-DEF | | |

Norwegian (N) DEF behaves similarly to the Swedish DEF with a few exceptions. A crucial difference is seen on comparing (15d) with (16).

- (16) denne bil-en / *bil N
 this car-DEF car

Fjeldstad and Hervold (1989:39) claim that the co-occurrence of definite determiners and DEF, i.e. the so-called double determination 'is more commonly used in *Nynorsk* than in *Bokmål*, and many use it consistently.' However, Å.-B. and R. Strandskogen (1980:57), in their grammar of *Bokmål* signal an increased use of 'double determination' also in this variety of Norwegian. It seems then as if the official varieties of Norwegian are already in, or are moving towards, a situation in which definite independent determiners always co-occur with DEF. This means that if DEF is analysed as a syntactic determiner, all definite Norwegian noun phrases containing an independent determiner must have two determiner nodes.

In Danish (D), DEF occurs in complementary distribution with syntactic determiners. Examples are found in (17).

- (17) a. mand-en D
 man-DEF
 b. den unge mand / *mand-en D
 the young man man-DEF
 c. den mand / *mand-en D
 that man man-DEF
 d. denne mand / *mand-en D
 this man man-DEF

In Icelandic (I), DEF occurs in complementary distribution with most independent definite determiners, as the examples in (18) show.

- (18) a. maður-inn I
 man-DEF
 b. þessi maður I
 this man
 c. sá maður I
 that man
 d. hinn mikli maður⁴ I
 the great man
 e. mikli maður-inn I
 great man-DEF

For emphasis, some of the determiners in (18) can also be used in combination with DEF, as in (19).

- (19) a. þau ár(-in) I
 those years-DEF 'those (very) years'
 b. þetta ár(-ið) I
 this year-DEF 'this very year'

There is, however, one determiner in Icelandic which requires the presence of DEF. It is homonymous with the definite article (except in NEUT.SG.NOM/ACC), and is usually translated as 'the other'. An example is provided in (20).

- (20) hinn maður-inn / *maður I
 the.other man-DEF man

In Faroese, there is frequently optional co-occurrence between definite syntactic determiners. Barnes (1990:23-25) does provide some indications of preference, but the rules governing co-occurrence remain vague. This is illustrated in (21).

- (21) a. **tann** svarti kettlingur(-in) F
 the black kitten-DEF
 b. **henda** genta(-n) F
 this girl-DEF
 c. **tann** tíð(-in) F
 that time-DEF

There is as much variation in the behaviour of DEF with respect to co-occurrence restrictions in the Balkan languages as in the Scandinavian ones. In Albanian, for instance, there are cases of optional co-occurrence, as illustrated in (22).

- (22) a. **ky** djalë / djal-i A
 this boy boy-DEF
 b. **ai** djalë / djal-i A
 that boy boy-DEF

In Macedonian, if the possessive pronoun is not considered a determiner, DEF does not co-occur with any syntactic determiners. Since DEF can actually attach to a possessive determiner, as in (6b), there are good reason to assume that it is itself adjectival in nature. Examples can be found in (23).

- (23) a. **toj** čovek / čovek-ot / ***toj-ot** čovek M
 that man man-DEF that-DEF man
 b. **ovoj** čovek / *čovek-ot / ***ovoj-ot** čovek M
 this man man-DEF this-DEF man

Whether or not the demonstrative independent determiners in Romanian require the presence of DEF depends on the position of the demonstrative. As (24) illustrates, if the demonstrative is in prenominal position, the noun does not carry DEF. DEF is, however, obligatorily present if the demonstrative follows the noun. Since in the latter case the demonstrative carries an ending, it is possible that arguments can be found in favour of analysing the demonstrative as adjectival when it follows the noun. For a discussion of comparable cases, see Lyons (1991).

- (24) a. **acest** om R
 this man
 b. **om-ul** acesta R
 man-DEF this

On the basis of the data in 2.1 and 2.2, I concluded that DEF in the Scandinavian languages behaved as an affix, whereas DEF in the Balkan languages showed the characteristic behaviour of a clitic. If the co-occurrence argument used in this section is accepted, the data discussed here have showed that the syntactic status of DEF cuts through the distinction between affixes and clitics. In Norwegian and Swedish, we find total, or near total, co-occurrence; in Danish, Macedonian and Bulgarian, there appears to be complementary distribution; in Icelandic and Romanian, the distribution of DEF and syntactic determiners is approaching

complementary distribution; finally, in Faroese and Albanian there is optional co-occurrence. I will return to these facts in section 4.

3.2. Co-ordination

In English, the free syntactic definite determiner *the* can determine a co-ordinated nominal. If the co-ordinated nominal forms a close semantic unit, as in (25), this may even be the only possibility if the unit meaning is to be maintained.

- (25) [fish and chips] + definite article → the [fish and chips]
 ↗ the fish and the chips

In Swedish, where DEF behaves like an affix, it cannot determine a co-ordinated nominal, as (26a) shows. The example in (26c) indicates that the ungrammaticality of (26a) is not likely to be due to disagreement in number, since the singular indefinite determiner *en* can determine the same co-ordinated nominal.

- (26) a. *[mamma och pappa] -n S
 mother and father -DEF
 b. mamma-n och pappa-n S
 mother-DEF and father-DEF 'the mother and father'
 c. Hon har en trevlig [mamma och pappa]. S
 she has a.SG nice.SG mother and father

However, if we compare this with data from Macedonian, where DEF is clitic-like, we find the same inability to determine a co-ordinated nominal. This is illustrated in (27).

- (27) a. *[maži i ženi] -te M
 husbands and wives -DEF
 b. *[maži-te i ženi] M
 husbands-DEF and wives
 c. maži-te i ženi-te M
 husbands-DEF and wives-DEF 'the husbands and wives'

4. CONCLUSIONS

The data discussed in the previous sections can be summed up as in Table 1 below. A plus sign (+) in bold print indicates that DEF in this language behaves like a clitic with respect to this criterion, a smaller plus sign means that DEF in this language can plausibly be analysed as a clitic with respect to this criterion, but only if some assumptions are made about seeming counter-evidence. A minus sign (-) indicates that DEF has the characteristics of an affix. A few comments on the table are in order.

As seen in 2.3, morphophonological irregularities occur in all the Scandinavian and Balkan languages. The criteria discussed in 2.1. and 2.2, on the other hand, do divide the languages into two distinct categories, one where DEF is a clitic, i.e. the Balkan languages, and one where DEF shows the characteristics of an affix, i.e. the Scandinavian languages. Therefore, I do not want to conclude from 2.3. that all DEFs are affixes. I take the data summed up in the column 'Irregularities' to indicate that clitics and affixes are not different in kind with respect to the type of phonological attachment, but that there are differences of degree of phonological attachment. The difference between clitics and affixes lies

mainly in how their position is defined; the selectional frame of a clitic refers to a phrasal element and that of affixes to a non-phrasal element.

I have no explanation for why these DEFs cannot determine a co-ordinated nominal. There are languages where what appear to be relatively free determiners cannot determine a co-ordinated nominal either. One such language is Welsh, where the determiner *y* may, for instance, carry stress in marked cases. An example from Welsh is given in (28).⁵

- (28) a. *y* *pysgodyn* *a'r* *sglodian* W
 the fish and.the chips 'the fish and chips'
- b. **y* *pysgodyn* *a* *sglodian* W
 the fish and chips

It seems then that the explanation for the ungrammaticality of (26a), (27a) and (27b) should be sought in the nature of determination rather than the nature of affixation and cliticization.

	Clitic vs. Affix			Syntactic	
	Phrasal host	Selectivity	Irregularities	Co-occurrence	Co-ordination
Swedish	-	-	-	-	-
Norwegian	-	-	-	-	-
Danish	-	-	-	+	-
Faroese	-	-	-	-(opt.)	-
Icelandic	-	-	-	+	-
Albanian	+	+	-(arb. gaps?)	-(opt.)	-
Romanian	+	+	-(arb. gaps?)	+	-
Macedonian	+	+	-(arb. gaps?)	+	-
Bulgarian	+	+	-(arb. gaps?)	+	-

Table 1 Schematic representation of the behaviour of DEF in the Scandinavian and Balkan languages with respect to criteria for clitic status

If we "add up" the criteria represented in Table 1, we get a sliding scale from affix to clitic, or from morphology to syntax, as represented by the horizontal line in Table 2. However, as the vertical line indicates, there is a sharp dividing line along this sliding scale. With respect to the first two criteria in Table 1, the Scandinavian languages behave clearly as one group and the Balkan languages as another. With respect to the syntactic behaviour of DEF, specifically as regards co-occurrence restrictions, the languages divide differently. This means that in order to reflect this two-way distinction, our representations must have two dimensions. I suggest that these two dimensions are syntax and morphology. All DEFs will have some manifestation in the morphology, though their morphological selectional frame will vary; in some cases it will refer to a phrasal unit, and in some cases to a non-phrasal one. At the syntactic level, some DEFs will occur under a node of their

own, functioning as a syntactic determiner. This will be the case for Danish and Romanian. Others will not be represented individually in the syntax, but occur only as morphological marking on another word. This will be the correct representation for Norwegian, and probably also for Albanian. Whether or not DEF has an independent representation in the syntax is independent of its morphological status.

To my mind, representations of the kind given in (1) do not provide a suitable formalism for making the distinctions set out in the previous paragraph. We are dealing here with discrepancies between the morphological and the syntactic level. One of the most obvious frameworks for representing discrepancies between different levels of the grammar is Autolexical Syntax, as proposed by Sadock (1991). I refer to Börjars (1992b) for examples of how the noun phrases discussed here could be represented within Autolexical syntax.

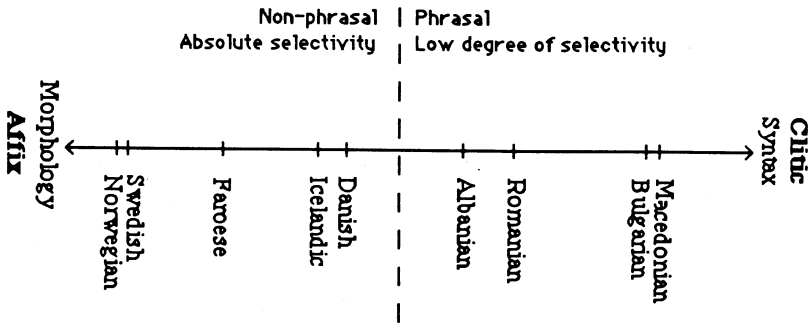


Table 2 A "clitic cline" for DEF in the Scandinavian and Balkan languages

FOOTNOTES

* I would like to thank Martin French and Mirjana Kočoska for their help with the Balkan data. I have also greatly benefited from discussions on these topics with John Payne, Nigel Vincent and Martin French. In spite of the fact that I have not adopted all their suggestions in this paper, I am grateful to Aaron Halpern, Alec Marantz and Philip Miller for their comments and helpful conversations at the BLS meeting. Finally, I would like to express my thanks to Andrew Masters for his help in preparing this article. Of course, the responsibility for errors that may still be found in this paper is entirely mine.

¹ In this paper, for the sake of simplicity, I will use the term 'the Balkan languages' to refer to the Balkan languages which have DEF, thus excluding Greek.

² Albanian data pose problems for an analysis in terms of a Wackernagel position within the noun phrase (cf. Börjars 1992a).

³ With respect to the data in (12), native speaker judgements may vary slightly, but to my knowledge, they will always involve unpredictable irregularities.

⁴ According to Kress (1982:174), the use of the prenominal definite article is literary. In the spoken language, the definite end article, or a demonstrative pronoun (*sá, sú* or *pað*) is more common.

⁵ I am grateful to Bob Borsley, who pointed this out to me, and to Winifred Davies, who provided the native speaker judgements.

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