



Background

- Some noun phrases in Magahi (Eastern Indo-Aryan) are similar to Hindi-Urdu (1).
- But, Magahi differs from Hindi-Urdu in having numeral classifiers (2) and using a bare classifier construction for definite noun phrases (3).

- (1) *baṛā kuttā* (2) *e-go kuttā* (3) *kutt-wā*
big dog one-CLF dog dog-CLF.DEF
'big dog' 'a/one dog' 'the dog'

- Modifiers in definite noun phrases take the suffix *-kā* (masc.; 4) or *-ki* (fem.; 5).

- (4) *baṛ-kā kutt-wā* (5) *choṭ-ki bilai-yā*
big-D dog-CLF.DEF small-D cat-CLF.DEF
'the big dog' 'the small cat'

This Study:

- Compares the use of *-kā* to determiner spreading (DS; Alexiadou 2014).
- Proposes a uniform analysis for (in)definite DS and multiple classifier constructions (MCCs), and explains why they do not always co-occur.
- Revisits Plank's (2003) universal.

Determiner Spreading

- Determiner spreading (DS) is a phenomenon in the syntax of modification involving "extra" determiners.

- (6) *to megalo to kokino to vivlio* Greek
the big **the** red **the** book
'the big red book' (Alexiadou & Wilder 1998: 303)

- DS occurs in various languages, but not always with the same syntax/semantics.
- DS patterns differ in recursivity, adjective type, and interpretational effects (Alexiadou 2014; Kouneli 2021).

(7)	Recursive?	Predicative?	Restrictive?
Greek DS	✓	✓	✓
Swedish DS	✗	✗	✗
Hebrew DS	✓	✗	✗

Indefinite Determiner Spreading

- Indefinite DS involves "extra" indefinite determiners.

- (8) *ei stor ei fin ei seng* Senja Norwegian
a big **a** fine **a** bed
'a big nice bed' (Anderssen et al. 2019: 14)

- While similar to definite DS, Alexiadou (2006, 2014) claims it has a different syntax.
- Anderssen et al. (2019) compare Senja Norwegian indefinite DS to Greek definite DS and claim that the former consists of parallel direct modification with nominal proforms while the latter does not.

Selected References

[1] Alexiadou, Artemis. 2006. On the cross-linguistic distribution of (in)definiteness spreading. Presentation at ÖLT Syntax Workshop, University of Klagenfurt. [2] Alexiadou, Artemis. 2014. Multiple determiners and the structure of DPs. John Benjamins Publishing Company. [3] Alexiadou, Artemis & Chris Wilder. 1998. Adjectival modification and multiple determiners. In Artemis Alexiadou & Chris Wilder (eds.), *Possessors, predicates and movement in the DP*, 303–332. Benjamins, Amsterdam. [4] Anderssen, Merete, Artemis Alexiadou & Terje Lohndal. 2019. *Til en ung en kjekk en kar: Indefinite determiner spreading in Scandinavian and beyond*. School of Communication & Culture, Aarhus University. [5] Asimwe, Allen, Maria Kouneli & Jenneke van der Wal. 2023. Determiner spreading in Rukiga. *Linguistics* 61(5), 1285–1339. [6] Clausen, Mica. 2022. "Classifier Spreading" in Thai. Ms., NYU. [7] Jenks, Peter. 2006. On the Thai classifier-modifier construction. Talk presented at Harvard Linguistic Theory Reading Group. [8] Kouneli, Maria. 2021. A relative clause analysis of determiner spreading in Kipsigis. Ms., Leipzig University. [9] Plank, Frans. 2003. Double articulation. In *Noun phrase structure in the languages of Europe*, 337–396. Mouton De Gruyter. [10] Winchester, Lindley. 2019. *The morphosyntax of the Maltese determiner phrase*. Georgetown University dissertation.

Magahi Data

- kā* can be added to modifiers recursively, but not to non-predicative adjectives.

- (9) *hamar bartamān-^{*}kā maṣṭar-wā*
1SG.GEN **current-^{*}D** teacher-CLF.DEF
'my current teacher'

- kā* requires a restrictive interpretation.

- (10) **Context:** You saw {#one, two} dog(s) yesterday.

baṛ-kā kut-wā baṛi sundar halai
big-D dog-CLF.DEF very beautiful was

'The big dog was very beautiful.'

- kā* can also be used with participial RCs.

- (11) *ām khā rah-al-ki laṛki-yā*
mango eat AUX-PTCP-D girl-CLF.DEF

'the girl eating a mango'

- While *-kā* is usually assumed to be definite (Sinha 1966; Verma 2003), it occurs in indefinite DPs and the connection to RRCs is maintained.

- (12) *ek tho jaharil-kā bhēng*
one CLF **poisonous-D** frog

'a poisonous frog'

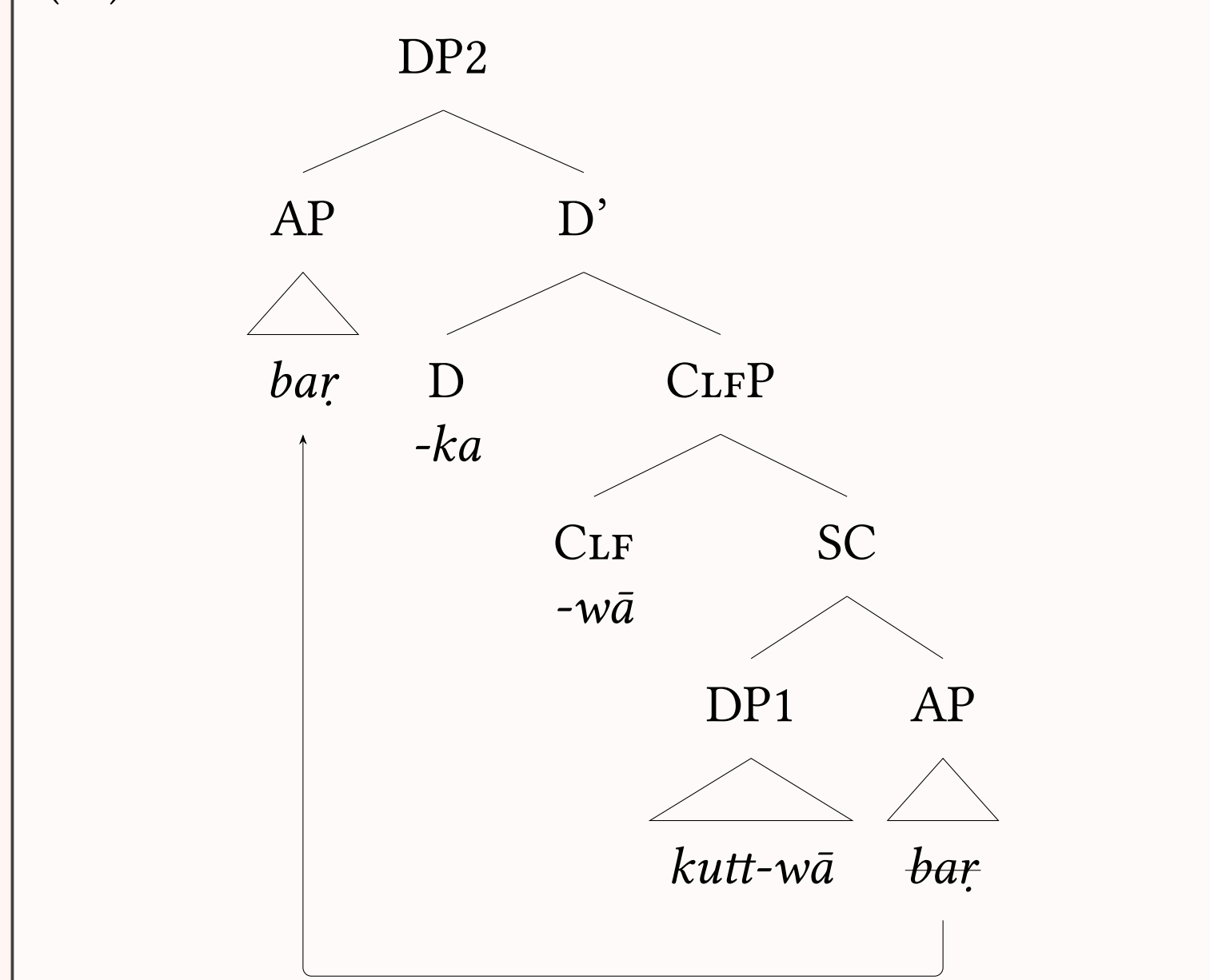
- (13) *du tho taigor ke dwāra likh-al-kā kitāb*
two CLF **Tagore GEN by** **write-PTCP-D** book

'two books written by Tagore'

Proposal: Reduced Relative Clauses

- Alexiadou & Wilder (1998); Alexiadou (2014) propose that Greek DS consists of a determiner that takes a reduced relative clause (RRC) complement where the predicate AP subsequently raises to SpecCP.
- I adopt a similar analysis for Magahi, but where the AP raises to SpecDP.

(14) Structure for Definite DS



How this captures ...

- Recursivity:** The subject of the RRC can be another complex DP.
- Predicative Requirement:** The adjectives are predicates in the RRC.
- Restrictive Interpretation:** This is indirect modification (Cinque 2010).

SpecDP vs SpecCP Landing Site

- Greek DS allows for a noun-initial word order.
- This is captured by the RRC subject DP raising to the higher SpecDP position.
- This is ungrammatical in Magahi, explained here by the AP occupying the higher SpecDP position.

Multiple Classifier Constructions

- Thai uses bare nouns for definites, but noun phrases with modifiers can have "extra" classifiers.

- (15) *nók tua sūi-k^hiaw tua jàj* Thai
bird **CLF** green **CLF** big
'the big green bird' (Hundius & Kölver 1983: 169)

- This Thai pattern has the properties of Greek-type DS (Jenks 2006; Clausen 2022).
- Magahi has both definite and indefinite MCCs.

- (16) *baṛ-ka-wā kutt-wā*
big-D-CLF.DEF dog-CLF.DEF
'the big dog'

- (17) *e-go baṛ-kā-go kuttā*
one-CLF big-D-CLF dog
'a/one big dog'

- MCCs also have the properties of Greek-type DS, including recursivity.

- (18) *baṛ-ka-wā kar-ka-wā kutt-wā*
big-D-CLF.DEF black-D-CLF.DEF dog-CLF.DEF
'the big black dog'

- This is captured by the determiner and classifier both introducing a RRC, supported by RCs in Cantonese (Matthews & Yip 2013) and Nuosu Yi (Jiang & Hu 2016).

Definite DS without Indefinite DS

- Greek, Kipsigis (Kouneli 2021), Maltese (Winchester 2019), and Thai (Jenks 2011) all have Greek-type definite DS or MCCs without an indefinite counterpart.
- But, Alexiadou (2014) argues that Greek has indefinite DS with a null article.
- Similarly, the other languages with Greek-type DS lack true indefinite articles.
- Meanwhile, Rukiga (Asimwe et al. 2023) has Greek-type DS in both definite and indefinite noun phrases.

- (19) *o-mu-sháij' ó-mu-rungí* Rukiga
AUG-1-man **AUG-1-good**
'a good man' (Asimwe et al. 2023: 1292)

Revisiting Plank's (2003) Universal

- Plank (2003: 337) proposes the following universal (20).
- (20) No language will practise double articulation of any kind unless it also articulates its NPs singly.
- But, Thai MCCs (15) and Magahi indefinites (21-22) are counterexamples!

- (21) *kuttā* dog
'a dog'
- (22) *baṛ-kā-go kuttā*
big-D-CLF dog
'a big dog'

- So, Plank's universal does not hold for languages that allow bare noun arguments.

-kā as a Determiner

- kā* occurs higher than the classifiers *-wā*, *-go*.
- kā* functions referentially, licensing ellipsis.

- (23) *baṛ-*(kā) kutt-wā*
big-D dog-CLF.DEF
'the big one/dog'