Article:

Resumption as a novel DP/NP diagnostic

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The syntactic status of determiners is still very much under debate (Abney 1987, Bošković 2005, Bruening 2009, a.o.). Little attention has been given to bare argument languages, specifically those in which only a certain type of definite occurs with a determiner. For instance, in Akan (Kwa) anaphoric definites (1a) are marked with *nó* but unique definites (1b) occur as bare nouns (Arkoh and Matthewson 2013).[2] The latter refers to a set of referents which are taken to be unique based on shared world knowledge.
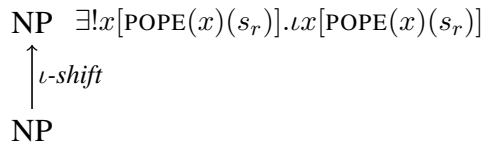
(1) Arkoh and Matthewson (2013: 5,11, orthography adapted)

    a. Mò-tɔ́-ɔ̀   èkùtú. **èkùtú nó** yɛ̀ dɛ̀w pápá.
       1SG-buy-PST orange orange DEF be nice good
       'I bought an orange. The orange is/was really tasty.'

    b. Kwámi nyá-à   kràtàá fí-ì   Ègyá krɔ́nkrɔ́n **pópe** hɔ́.
       Kwame get-PST letter from-PST father holy   pope there
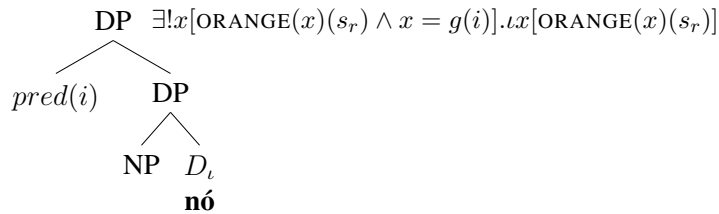   'Kwame got a letter from the holy father Pope.'

Under Jenks's (2018) analysis of classifier languages, uniqueness-based definites constitute NPs, for which a ι-type shift derives uniqueness. For anaphoric definites Jenks follows Schwarz (2009) by assuming that they are DPs, where the D head introduces an index. This analysis aims to derive the fact that only anaphoric definites occur with a determiner. Uniqueness-based definites never occur with a determiner due to the Blocking Principle (Chierchia 1998). We transfer the analysis to Akan in (2).

(2) Definites in Akan based on Jenks (2018)

    a. Uniqueness-based definite in (1b):

      NP $\exists!x[\text{POPE}(x)(s_r)].\iota x[\text{POPE}(x)(s_r)]$
      $\uparrow$ *ι-shift*
      NP

    b. Anaphoricity-based definite in (1a):

      DP $\exists!x[\text{ORANGE}(x)(s_r) \wedge x = g(i)].\iota x[\text{ORANGE}(x)(s_r)]$
      $pred(i)$ DP
              NP D_ι
                    nó

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[2]The bare noun status of uniqueness based nouns is still under debate, see Bombi (2018) and Owusu (2022) for further discussion.

In this snippet, we will provide an additional argument in favour of a DP/NP distinction correlating with the semantic type of definiteness in Akan.

Kwa languages display productive resumption patterns. For Akan in particular, it has been observed that the tail of a movement dependency is realized as a pronoun, which is mostly shown with proper names and definites (Saah 1994, Ameka 2010, Korsah 2016). Interestingly, the availability of resumptive pronouns is related to the meaning of the moved phrase. Hein and Georgi (2021) show that focused objects leave gaps if they are non-referential. We present (3) with non-specific indefinites (slightly adjusted from their paper).

(3) *Context: You tell a classmate that you're planning to rent a school uniform. However, you don't know if that's possible. Your classmate asks: 'Will you ask the headmaster?' But you say:*

Dààbí.	**ɔkyèrɛ̀kyérɛ̀ní**$_i$	nà	m-ɛ́-bísá	__$_i$	kàné.
no	teacher	FOC	1SG-FUT-ask		first

'No. I will ask a (random) TEACHER first.' (one of the many teachers around)

Hein and Georgi (2021) argue that resumption in Akan is derived via partial lower copy deletion. Chain reduction for movement chains only deletes NP in Akan. Non-specific indefinites are NPs, hence the gap in (3). But for DP-arguments the D head remains.

If only NPs are deleted at the tail of a movement chain and the analysis in (2) is correct, we expect anaphoric definites to leave a resumptive pronoun, whereas unique definites are predicted to leave a gap. In (4) and (5), we show that this prediction is borne out.[3]

(4) *Context: My friend is glancing through a magazine. She sees a nice man but does not know who he is. She says "I like this man!". I exclaim:*

Éìì!	**Pope**$_i$	nà	wó	pɛ́	__$_i$	sèèséí?
PRT	pope	FOC	2SG	like		now

'Hey. You like the POPE now?'

(5) *Context: We both talk about Yaw and that he met a boy and [a girl]$_i$ yesterday. I think I heard that the boy needed some help, so Yaw helped him. But you disagree and tell me:*

Dààbí.	[**Àbáaáyéwá nó**]$_i$	nà	Yaw	bóá-à	#(**nó**$_i$)	ɛ̀nórà.
no	girl	DEF FOC	Yaw	help-PST	3SG.RES	yesterday

'No. Yaw helped the GIRL yesterday.'

By considering the availability of resumptive pronouns, we are able to provide independent evidence for the definiteness account in Jenks (2018) and partial copy deletion in Akan (Hein and Georgi 2021). Future research will show in how far resumption can serve as a novel test for syntactic size in more languages than Akan.

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[3]We intentionally do not mention *pope* in the context in (4) to avoid a competition between the unique and the anaphoric form.

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