The distribution and development of articles in the world’s languages

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Defining and classifying articles
Articles as a crosslinguistic category
Articles are markers in the nominal domain whose main function is to encode the referential function of the noun that they occur with.

- **function**
  Articles are markers of referentiality.

- **domain**
  Articles occur together with nouns. (Their form does not matter!)

- **distribution**
  Articles must occur systematically in contexts determined by their referential functions.
  They do not need to occur obligatorily: Exceptions are allowed if they are can be described as rules or strong correlations.
The relation between referent types and article types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referent Types</th>
<th>Article Types</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definite</td>
<td>Specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Anaphoric, Recognition)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

- **Definite**
  - Definite domain: Definite, Specific, Nonspecific
  - Indefinite domain: Exclusive-Specific, Indefinite, Nonspecific

- **Inclusive-Specific**

- **Referential**
Some examples
Recognitional article (Oksapmin)

✓ recognitional definite

Context: “[...] New Year’s Day which everybody in the community had known about [...]” (Loughnane 2009: 124)

(2) [niu jia max] bəten x-t-pel=o li=m xe-ja
new year ART:RECOG pray o-PFV-FUT.PL=QUOT say-SEQ be-PRS.PL
‘They wanted to pray for you, you know, that New Year.’

✗ deictic definite

(3) tap j=ox
pig DEM:DIST=3SG.M
‘that pig there (the pig)’

✗ anaphoric definite

(4) wili ox ma hai skul ixle mox tfopa mox de-ixil
Willy 3SG.M REL high school POSS:3 ANAPH chopper ANAPH WHICH=3
apli-n-gwel=o li-m dəxat ...
come-PFV-VIS.PST=QUOT say-SEEQ
‘Willy asked me “did you see which ones came in the chopper for the high school?” …’
(Loughnane 2009: 117)
Exclusive-specific article (Akan)

X definite

(5)  a.  mʊ-tɔ-ɔ ekutu bi
    1sg-buy-pst orange ART:EXSPEC
    ‘I bought an orange.’

  b.  ekutu no/ *bi ye dɛw dɛɛ
      orange ART:DEF ART:EXSPEC be nice so
      ‘The orange is/was so nice.’
      (Arkoh and Matthewson 2013: 6)

✓ specific

(6)  me-wɔ [akyɛde bi] ma wo
    1sg-have gift ART:EXSPEC give 2sg
    ‘I have a gift for you.’
    (prim. data)

X nonspecific

(7)  me-nya-a anka me-wɔ [yere (*bi)]
    1sg-get-pst before 1sg-have wife ART:EXSPEC
    ‘I wish I had a (any) wife.’
    (prim. data)
Inclusive-specific article (Tepehua)

✓ definite

(8) [juu 7anu7 x-t’iyun-7an] lapanak waa x-ta-7asaanan.
   ART:INSPEC DEM:DIST PST-two-poss:pl people FOC PST-s:3pl-play.instruments
   ‘Those two people played instruments.
   (Kung 2007: 485)

✓ specific

(9) t’asa-ni-kan-lich nii ka-xtaq-ni-kan-a7ch [juu lhiich’alhkat].
   ‘They yelled that they were going to give him a job.’
   (Kung 2007: 463)

✗ nonspecific

(10) [tam maqaali7] ka-maa-ch’ixtaq-ninch juu tuumiin aantu qoxiyaa
    ART:PRES rich.person IRR-CAUS-loan-DAT-O:2 ART:INSPEC money NEG good
tuumiin palata.
    money better
    ‘A rich person could loan you money, but it isn’t good money.’
    (Kung 2007: 616)
Nonspecific article (Q’anjobal)

✓ definite

(11)  [cham anima] may kon tojlaneni ay jun miman ya-tut.
    cl: male  person  pst comp  pay.pst.s:3sg.o:1pl  exist  art:exspec  big  3sg-house
    ‘The man who paid us has a big house.’

✓ specific

(12)  tzeb’ach yul [jun/*junoq  tuktuk]. mayal wawrej naq tz’umon ch’en come.imp  in  art:exspec  art:nspec  tuktuk  already  called  cl  driver
    ‘Let’s take a (certain) tuktuk. I already called the driver.’

✓ nonspecific

(13)  asi’ yul [junoq  tuktuk].
    go.imp  in  art:nspec  tuktuk
    ‘Let’s take a (any) tuktuk.’
Referential article (Rapa Nui)

✓ **definite**

(14) ki a kōrua ki [te nu’u] hakaroŋo mai ’ī a au he kī atu to PROP 2PL to ART:REF people listen hither IMM PROP 1SG NTR say away ‘To you, to the people listening, I tell you ...’ (Kieviet 2017: 46)

✓ **specific**

(15) ’i te noho iŋa tuai era ’ā [te taŋata e tahi] te ’iŋoa at ART:REF stay NMLZ ancient DIST IDENT ART:REF man NUM one ART:REF name ko Tu’uhakararo PROM Tu’uhakararo ‘In the old times (there was) a man called Tu’uhakararo.’ (Kieviet 2017: 238)

✓ **nonspecific**

(16) he kī ō’oku ki kō’ku ŋā poki taina era mo oho o mātou mo kimi NTR say O.Poss:1SG to O.Poss:1SG PL child sibling DIST for go of 1PL.EX for search i [te pipi] ACC ART:REF shell ‘I told my brothers and sisters that we would go to look for shells.’ (Kieviet 2017: 239)
The crosslinguistic distribution of articles
The sample

- 112 languages from the 6 macro areas defined in WALS and Glottolog (Dryer and Haspelmath 2013; Hammarström et al. 2018)
- 151 articles
Distribution of article types

Crosslinguistic distribution of articles
Areal distribution of article types

- **Africa & N America**: high proportion of definite articles
- **Eurasia & S America**: high proportion of indefinite articles
- **Australia**: high proportion of anaphoric articles
- **Papunesia**: nonspecific articles

Can we relate grammatical properties of the macro areas to those differences?
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Can we relate grammatical properties of the macro areas to those differences?
Africa and North America have the strongest bias towards definite articles.

This could simply be a default preference for definite articles over articles from the indefinite domain.
We find almost exclusively anaphoric articles in Australia.

If one does not want to consider such markers as articles, then Australia has a much higher bias against articles than the other macro areas.
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Why are there so many anaphoric articles / markers in Australia?
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Why does Australia have such a strong bias against articles?
Why such a strong bias against articles in Australia?

1. demonstrative paradigms with highly specialized markers (Himmelmann 1997)

(17) demonstratives in Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990: 144-146)

a. ngirndaji ‘this (PROX)’
b. ngooddo ‘that (DIST)’
c. ngirnda ‘this (invisible to the speaker?)’
d. niyaji ‘this (previously mentioned)’
e. niyi ‘that (previously mentioned)’
f. ginharndi ‘you know (the one)’

there might be no good candidate for a definite article in the definite domain
Why such a strong bias against articles in Australia?

Flexible NP structure

- many Australian languages have a highly flexible NP structure with no fixed position of modifiers in the NP (Austin and Bresnan 1996; Hale 1983; Legate 2001; Schultze-Berndt and Simard 2012)

(18) Jamijung (Schultze-Berndt and Simard 2012: 1020)

a. thanthu wirib mulanggirrning
   DEM dog fierce
   ‘that aggressive dog’

b. jarlig janju wuju
   child DEM small
   ‘that little child’
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- discontinuous NP structures have been related to the absence of determiners (e.g. Schultze-Berndt and Simard 2012; Bošković 2009; Ledgeway 2011)

- NPs without determiners have a less salient gestalt property, which makes the separation of nominal elements more acceptable (Himmelmann 1997: 134-157)
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- the flexibility of the NP with no dedicated modifier / determiner slot may in turn also prevent the development of articles
Why such a strong bias against articles in Australia?

3 covert nominal heads

- The fact that nominal heads can be covert (i.e. modifiers can be used without the head noun) may also disprefer the development of systematic adnominmal markers, since the nouns themselves can be left syntactically unexpressed.

(19)  
\[
\text{gunha} \quad \text{wirntu-rri-nyja.} \\
\text{that.ABS} \quad \text{dead-INCH-PST} \\
\text{‘That one died.’} \\
\]

Jiwarli (Austin and Bresnan 1996: 249)

- Gil (2013) notes that even though adjectives occurring without head nouns are found in all areas of the world, Australia almost exclusively has such languages.
Eurasia and South America have a relatively large number of articles in the indefinite domain.
Indefinite markers in Eurasia (Indo-Iranian & Turkic)

(Johanson and Csató 1998; Cardona and Jain 2003; Haig 2008; Windfuhr 2013)
Indefinite markers (including articles) are especially common in Iranian and Turkic languages which also commonly have definiteness-based DOM.

(DOM data from Sinnemaki (2014))
Indefinite markers (including articles) are especially common in Iranian and Turkic languages which also commonly have definiteness-based DOM.

Definiteness-based DOM may account for the bias against definite articles (?)
If a language only marks definite (or specific) objects, case marking takes care of the referential marking in the object position.

(20) Turkish (Hedberg, Görgülü, and Mameni 2009: 13)

a. Mary kek-i yap-tı
   Mary cake-ACC make-PST
   ‘Mary baked the cake’

b. Mary bir kek yap-tı
   Mary art:INDEF cake make-PST
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In subject positions, the referent is mostly definite and identifiable, no additional definite marking is needed.

The referential value needs to be marked in subject and other non-object positions when the referential value goes against the default expectation.
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The referential value needs to be marked in subject and other non-object positions when the referential value goes against the default expectation especially for indefinite subjects (S), and also subjects in existential constructions that introduce new, animate, and otherwise discourse-prominent referents

this is the main use of an emerging indefinite article (often from num. ‘one’)

Crosslinguistic distribution of articles
Indefinite articles in Eurasia

19/47
Nonspecific articles are almost only found in Oceanic, Mayan, and Siouan languages.
Factors that favor the development of nonspecific markers

How do nonspecific articles develop?
- nonspecific articles can develop from verbal irrealis markers or predicate markers

What are the factors that favor such a development?
- a systematic realis/irrealis distinction in the verbal domain
- word class flexibility (verbal marker > nominal marker)
- an elaborate determiner system, i.e. a fixed “determiner” slot in the noun phrase
- ...
- **-oq** as an irrealis marker of an event:

(21) q-q’anjab’ ayach ta q-ach q’anjab’-oq.
    pot-talk to.2 cond pot-2pl talk-**IRR**
    ‘X will talk to you, if you talk.’

(Mateo Toledo 2017: 538)

- **-oq** as an irrealis marker of a nominal predicate:

(22) man anima-**oq** hach.
    neg person-**IRR** 2sg
    ‘You are not a person.’

(Mateo Toledo 2017: 551)

→ ambiguous reading between irrealis predicate interpretation and nonspecific referential interpretation

- **-oq** as a nonspecific marker in a free choice (23) context:

(23) asi’ yul [junoq tuktuk]
    go.imp in **NONSPEC** tuktuk
    ‘Let’s take a (any) tuktuk.’

( primary data)
• Some Oceanic languages use *te* as the definite/inclusive-specific article and *he* as the nonspecific article.

• In other languages, *te* is an article and *he* rather a predicate marker.
The development PREDICATE > NONSPECIFIC

te & he

- te = IN-SPECIFIC / REFERENTIAL
  - he = PREDICATE
    - Rapa Nui
    - Maori

- te = DEFINITE / IN-SPECIFIC
  - he = NONSPECIFIC
    - Tongan
    - East Uvean
    - Niuafo’ou
    - Tokelauan

Vaeakau-Taumako

Crosslinguistic distribution of articles
The development PREDICATE > NONSPECIFIC

**te & he**

- **te = IN-SPECIFIC / REFERENTIAL**
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    - **3 East Uvean**
    - **Niuafo’ou**
    - **Tokelauan**

- **2 Vaeakau-Taumako**
he as a predicate marker in Rapanui

- **he** is used as predicate marker:

  (24) a Thor Heyerdahl [**he** científico e tahi]
  PROP Thor Heyerdahl **PRED** scientist **NUM** one
  ‘Thor Heyerdahl was a scientist’ (Kieviet 2017: 452)

- The article **te** is used instead of the predicate marker **he** with nonspecific referents:

  (25) he kī ō’oku ki kō’ku ŋā pokī taina era mo oho o mātou
  NTR SAY O.POSS:1SG to O.POSS:1SG PL child sibling DIST for go of 1PL.EX
  mo kimi i [**te** pipi]
  for search ACC **REF** shell
  ‘I told my brothers and sisters that we would go to look for shells.’
  (Kieviet 2017: 239)
**2 he in Vaeakau-Taumako**

- **(h)e as a predicate marker:**

  (26) Na no hinga po a ia [e no-nohine], ioko ia na na e dem ipfv do comp pers 3sg PRED red-wife conj 3sg dem dem PRED pakhola loa te=na.
giant EMPH SPEC=DEM
‘She acts like a woman, but she is really a giant.’
(Næss and Hovdhaugen 2011: 167)

- **(h)e in negated existential constructions:**

  (27) Siai loa [e mahila] k=u kapakapa ai i i hale.
  neg emph PRED/NONSPEC knife hort=1sg work pro.obl lda house
‘There is no knife for me to use in the house.’ (Næss and Hovdhaugen 2011: 167)

- **(h)e as a nonspecific marker:**

  (28) Ta he-henga [e nohine] mona.
  1DU.IN.HORT RED-search NONSPEC wife ben-poss:3sg
‘Let’s look for a wife for him.’ (Næss and Hovdhaugen 2011: 166)
he as a nonspecific marker in East Uvean

- **he** marks nonspecific referents:

> (29) kei au fia kai [**he** mo’i laisi].
still 1sg want eat **NONSPEC** cl rice
‘I still want to eate a bit of rice (but am not sure whether there’s any left).’  
(Livingston 2016: 43)

- **he** is also used in free choice context:

> (30) mai **ha’-a** ’aku.
**DIR1** **NONSPEC**-**GEN** **GEN.1SG**
‘Give me some.’  
(Livingston 2016: 90)

- the marker ’e instead of **he** is used as a predicate marker

> (31) ’e lahi te tagataa.
**NPST** big **INSPEC** man.**DEF**
‘The man is big.’  
(Livingston 2016: 139)
Definite articles

Their distinction and development from demonstratives
The distinction between def. articles and demonstratives

In order to compare markers across languages, the difference in demonstratives and definite articles has to be defined in their respective functions.

Cut-off point between demonstratives and articles

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Spatial deixis</th>
<th>Anaphora</th>
<th>Uniqueness</th>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrative (ii)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Anaphoric article</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Definite article (i)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Definite article (ii)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intermezzo: referential functions

(cf. Hawkins 1978; Ariel 1988; Himmelmann 1997; Dryer 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>referent type</th>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deictic</td>
<td>Can you see the house (over there)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recognitional</td>
<td>What happened to the dog (that we used to have)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absolutely unique</td>
<td>The Earth is round.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anaphoric</td>
<td>Did you like the movie? Wasn’t it great?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bridging</td>
<td>Eva bought a book. The author is French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contextually unique</td>
<td>How do I get to the center?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establishing</td>
<td>Did you hear the news? The entire museum burned down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific</td>
<td>I met a funny new neighbor yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nonspecific</td>
<td>Do you happen to have a pen? Any pen will do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generic</td>
<td>I like cats.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Type I demonstratives (Tikuna)**

☑ **spatial deixis**

(32) nukü dau [**nema** putüra] na meechi
s:2sg.o:3sg see **DEM** flower cop beautiful
‘Look, this flower is beautiful.’ (prim. data)

✗ **anaphora**

(33) A. i-pata-wa nucha dau [wii **güena**] tare buun nema
cuchia-wa kitchen-loc
1sg-house-loc s:1sg.o:3sg see one **woman** two child there
‘When I came home, I saw a **women** with two children in the kitchen.’

B: nukü wa [**nema** / (**lliema**) **güena**]?
s:2sg.o:3sg know **DEM** / **3SG.F** woman
‘Did/do you know **this woman**?’ (prim. data)
Type II demonstratives (Ejagham)

✓ spatial deixis

(34) ma ŋəle gibe ka [ečo ndjik] elogo
1sg beg hold for.me bag.cl5 DEM:PROX.cl5 small
‘Please, can you hold this bag for a second?’

✓ anaphora

(35) A: ewugu m-ba ŋi mɔninki na aβo aβi ka kifən
when 1sg-came saw woman.cl1 with 2 children in kitchen
‘When I came home, I saw a woman with two children in the kitchen.’

B: bo mənɛ wi [mɔninki ŋu]?
pst know.2sg cl1 woman.cl1 DEM:PROX.cl1
‘Did you know this woman?’

✗ contextual uniqueness

(36) [ndzuk oβasi (*ŋi)] erifa ka etek ndjik?
house.cl9 god DEM:PROX.cl9 where in village.cl5 DEM:PROX.cl5
‘Where is the church in this village?’

Definite articles

The distinction between DEF and DEM
Anaphoric article (Limbum)

✗ spatial deixis

(37)  we  rìŋ  [ndjìŋwě  čà/  *f5]  ā?
  2sg  know  woman  DEM:DIST  ART:ANA  Q
  ‘Do you know that woman (over there)?’
  (prim. data)

✓ anaphora

(38)  a.  When it was looking for food, the elephant stumbled into a child.
  b.  ...[mú  f5]  à  kēʔ  á  ćí  wārī
      ...child  ART:ANA  3SG  start  INF  PROG  cry
      ‘...The child started to cry.’

✗ contextually unique

  Tantoh  has  pst2  buy  book  one  person  writing  ART:ANA  is  person-Wimbum
  ‘Tantoh has bought a book; the author is a Wimbum person.’
  (prim. data)
Across the world’s languages, we find many markers that qualify as definite articles but that do not cover spatial deictic referents.

- Those definite articles could have developed from anaphoric markers that were never used in spatial deictic contexts to begin with.
- They should still be treated as definite articles since the use in deictic contexts is related to the diachronic source of the article, not to the article itself.
Type I definite article (Kaqchickel)

**X spatial deixis**

(40) a. [**ri** ulew] tz’il.
   ART:DEF ground dirty
   ‘The ground (in general / *here) is dirty.’

   b. [**la** ulew] tz’il.
   DEM ground dirty
   ‘The ground (here) is dirty.’

**✓ anaphora**

(41) a. ‘When I came home, I saw a **woman** with two children sitting in my kitchen.’

   b. awetaman ruwäch [**ri** ixoq]?
   know.pst.2sg eyes.3sg ART:DEF woman
   ‘Did you know the **woman**?’

**✓ contextual uniqueness**

(42) a. I went to a wedding.

   b. …[**ri** xten nik’ule] jabe’l (ok) ri rutziaq
   …ART:DEF lady get.married pretty EMPH POSS:3SG dress
   ‘…The **bride** had a pretty dress.’
This is the type of definite article that we find in e.g. German or English:

✓ spatial deixis

(43) Schau mal, der Schmetterling dort ist riesig!

✓ anaphora

(44) Schau, da ist ein Schmetterling. Der Schmetterling ist wirklich gigantisch!

✓ contextually unique

(45) Wo ist das Badezimmer in eurer neuen Wohnung?
The development of definite articles

deixis > anaphora > (contextual) uniqueness ?

(46) deictic > anaphoric > (contextually) unique

Lyons (1999: 161, 332)

the development of DEM > DEF happens through both (spatial) deictic and anaphoric uses of the demonstrative
Himmelmann (1997: 93-97)

- the anaphoric use of a demonstrative is not relevant for its development into a definite article
Himmelmann (1997: 93-97)

- the anaphoric use of a demonstrative is not relevant for its development into a definite article

- the important uses are its establishing and recognitional uses (called “anamnestisch”)

- establishing contexts:
  the referent is marked as identifiable based on (future) shared contextual knowledge
  
  *That market we went to last week had a wonderful flower stand.*

- recognitional contexts:
  the referent is marked as identifiable based on shared world knowledge
  
  *I went to that market again, you know, the one we went to last week.*
Himmelmann (1997: 93-97)

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I want to show that the anaphoric use of a demonstrative does play a role in the development of definite articles.
What are the functions of an anaphoric marker?

- Sharp (2004: 266) in her Nyangumarta grammar:
  “The main function of the anaphoric demonstrative nyarra, is to direct the listener’s attention to something with which s/he is familiar with but which is not present.”

- attention drawing to an identifiable referent that is not present in the discourse situation
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- the establishing and recognitional functions are an extension of the anaphoric use of demonstratives, not of their deictic use
Komnzo has the anaphoric article *ane* that is not used to mark spatial deictic definite referents.

*ane* in an anaphoric context:

(47)  

a.  

\[
\text{bthan kabe fthé fenz yona-si bänemr magic man when body.liquid drink-NMLZ RECOG.PURP zrethkäfth mätrak-si=r. start..IRR.PVF.S:3PL take.out-NMLZ=PURP}
\]

‘When *the sorcerers* drink the body fluids, they start by bringing out this one.’

b.  

\[
\text{...fthé fof krefar [ane bthan kabe] bobo fokam when EMPH set.off.IRR.PVF.S:3SG ART:ANA magic man MED.ALL grave zn=fo fokam mnz=fo sikwankwan=me zbär thd. place=LOC grave house=LOC secret=INSTR night middle ‘...the sorcerer sets off to go to the grave yard, to the grave house. He goes secretly in the middle of the night.’}
\]

(Döhler 2018: 408-409)
This anaphoric article *ane* is also used in establishing (and recognitionial uses):

(48) watik [menz-menz *ane* fof yabun kafar] thgathg bänemr then RED-story.man *ART:ANA EMPH* fat big burned.place PURP *ANE* fof zenfara ...
*ART:ANA EMPH* set.off.PST...

‘Well, **that big, fat creature** went to the burned place to get and eat those ones ...(the people who were lying around dead).’

(Döhler 2018: 383)
The function of anaphoric markers (Komnzo)

(49) watik [menz-menz ane fof yabun kafar] thgathg bänemr ane
then RED-story.man ART:ANA EMPH fat big burned.place PURP ART:ANA
fof zenfara ...
EMPH set.off.PST...

‘Well, that big, fat creature went to the burned place to get and eat those one
...(the people who were lying around dead).’ (Döhler 2018: 383)

In between, the following referents are mentioned:

- the people
- Gwam
- dogs
- that scorched place
- Gwam, that one dog
- the dog, the creature, Gwam
- two men, Gwam, his small brother Muri
- Gwam, Muri
- Gwam, the dogs, that burned place
The function of anaphoric markers (Komnzo)

(50) watik [menz-menzę̃ ane fofof yabun kafar] thgathg bänemr ane fofof zenfa ra... then RED-story.man ART:ANA EMPH fat big burned.place PURP ART:ANA EMPH set.off.PST...

‘Well, that big, fat creature went to the burned place to get and eat those one ...(the people who were lying around dead).’ (Döhler 2018: 383)

- the people
- Gwam
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- Gwam, that one dog
- the dog, the creature, Gwam
- two men, Gwam, his small brother Muri
- Gwam, Muri
- Gwam, the dogs, that burned place

(51) a. ane=ężo fofof ężatha yayamgwa ra... ART:ANA=ONLY EMPH dog shock.PST.3SG.M shock.PST.3SG.M ‘That (creature) shocked the dog, it shocked him.’

b. ...[ane menz=ężo] fofof kabe maf anatha. ...ART:ANA story.man=ONLY EMPH people who.erg.sg eat.PST.O:3PL EMPH ‘...that creature which ate the people.’

- After so many other referents being mentioned, the boundaries between the anaphoric and establishing/recognitional functions become blurry.

Such contexts may be crucial for the extension from anaphoric markers to establishing/recognitional functions.
Relating different types of definite contexts

deictic ——— anaphoric

establishing          recognitional

contextually unique

bridging

part-whole

association

...

possessive

---

demonstrative  anaphoric article  definite article  emerging definite article
Relating different types of definite contexts

deictic — anaphoric

establishing — recognitional

contextually unique

bridging
part-whole
association
...

possessive
Relating different types of definite contexts

- deictic
- anaphoric

- establishing
- recognitional

- contextually unique
  - bridging
  - part-whole
  - association
  - ...

- possessive

- demonstrative
- anaphoric article
- definite article
- emerging definite article

Definite articles
The development of definite articles
Relating different types of definite contexts

- Deictic
- Anaphoric
  - Establishing
  - Recognition
  - Contextually unique
    - Bridging
    - Part-whole
    - Association
    ...
  - Possessive
- Demonstrative
- Anaphoric article
- Definite article
- Emerging definite article
Relating different types of definite contexts

definitive contexts
  - deictic
  - anaphoric
    - establishing
    - contextually unique
      - bridging
      - part-whole
      - association
      - ...
    - possessive
  - recognition

Definite articles
  - demonstrative
  - anaphoric article
  - definite article
  - emerging definite article

The development of definite articles
Relating different types of definite contexts

- Deictic
- Anaphoric
- Establishing
- Recognitional
- Contextually unique
  - Bridging
  - Part-whole
  - Association
  - ...
- Possessive

Definite articles

- Demonstrative
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- Definite article
- Emerging definite article

The development of definite articles
Relating different types of definite contexts

deictic ——— anaphoric

establishing ——— recognitional

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demonstrative anaphoric article definite article emerging definite article

Definite articles The development of definite articles
Relating different types of definite contexts

- Deictic
- Anaphoric
- Establishing contextually unique
- Recognitional
- Contextually unique: bridging, part-whole association...
- Possessive

Demonstrative | Anaphoric article | Definite article | Emerging definite article
Limbum has the anaphoric article ｆɔ́ and the spatial demonstrative ｃa.

The demonstrative ｃa is (mostly) used for spatial deixis, and it is unacceptable as an anaphoric marker.

The demonstrative ｃa is also less acceptable than the anaphoric article ｆɔ́ in at least some establishing/recognitional contexts:

(52) ｍè bi kir ｃi kɔ́ni [ŋwɛ́h ｆɔ́ / *ｃa zhi ｍè mu suŋ we ａｍｂò 1 　FUT again PROG meet person 　ART:ANA DEM 　COMP 1 　PST2 tell 2SG about ｙe ｎà] ntìni 3SG 　CD 　today ‘I am meeting [that person that I told you about] again later today’
Concluding remarks
Concluding remarks

Article types

- We can distinguish 8 types of articles in the languages of the world: DEF, ANA, RECOG, INDEF, EXSPEC, NSPEC, INSPEC, REF

Areal patterns

Certain grammatical properties can be related to certain types of articles:

- **Australia:**
  specialized demonstratives including anaphoric ones facilitate the development of anaphoric articles but prevent the development of definite articles
  the development of articles is disfavored without a fixed NP structure and determiner slots

- **Eurasia:**
  DOM may favor the development of indefinite articles and disfavor the development if indefinite articles in Iranian and Turkic languages

- **Papunesia & North America:**
  a pre-existing system of determiners and word class flexibility allow for the development of otherwise strongly disfavored nonspecific articles (nonspecific)
The development of definite articles

A definite article must occur systematically with anaphoric and contextually unique referents.

- As for demonstratives, it is their anaphoric use that allows their functional extension to recognitional and establishing contexts.
- These in turn allow for the functional extension to contextually unique contexts.
Thank you!
Sharp, Janet (2004). Nyangumarta: A Language of the Pilbara Region of Western Australia. Canberra: Australian National University, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies.