

*SEMANTIC AND TYPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DEFINITES,
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**Definite article distinctions in West Germanic:
Form and function**

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A. Background: Two general issues

1. The temporal nature of universals: Timeless laws and/or laws of change? And what's the difference anyhow?

Are limitations of linguistic diversity due to (i) **timeless laws** (constraining states) or (ii) **laws of change** (constraining transitions)?

- (i) Universals impose limits on variation across languages (= across mental lexicons-and-grammars) at any and all times; through constraints on what are possible lexicons-and-grammars – irrespective of the primary linguistic data that happen to be encountered as a matter of historical contingency by language learners (L1 or L2) or by speakers/hearers over their life-span – change is constrained insofar as languages must at no stage be in violation of a timeless (genetic or functional, categorical or preferential) law, or at any rate not without subsequent changes making swift amends (therapy rather than prophylaxis).
(Possibly: There are no laws of change.)

(ii) Universals constrain change: particular **sources** (forms, categories, constructions, paradigms, rules, constraints, etc.) – as encountered by language learners or mature speakers/hearers as a matter of historical contingency – can only yield particular **results** (forms, etc.) under particular **conditions** (e.g., to do with frequency) through particular **mechanisms** of change (reanalysis); through constraints on what can be reanalysed as what, limits are imposed on how languages can differ: they can only **be** as different as they could **become** different.
(Possibly: There are no timeless laws.
Or: Concomitant or consecutive changes are superintended by timeless laws: At any and all times, w cannot be reanalysed as x without y being/having been reanalysed as z .)

Answer: Either or both.

But often constraints have both an an achronic/panchronic and a diachronic reading, and it is often hard to see whether they are materially different and which one is preferable.

Laws of change only

Z is a permissible/not dispreferred state of a mental lexicon-and-grammar.
(i.e., not prohibited/discouraged by timeless universal constraints)

Transitions from X to Z (over generations or over the life-spans of individuals) are permissible/not dispreferred.

Transitions from Y to Z (over ...) are impermissible/dispreferred.

Transitions from X to Z (over ...) in manner M are permissible/not dispreferred.

Transitions from X to Z (over ...) in manner N are impermissible/dispreferred.

Timeless laws only, or perhaps laws of change, too/instead

Z is an impermissible/dispreferred state of a mental lexicon-and-grammar.

That is all there is to say.

Or, there is more to say, which effectively makes the above statement redundant, namely:

There are **no previous states** from which (over generations or over the life-spans of individuals) to get to state Z **in any manner**.

examples:

- (1) Timeless law: For all languages at any and all times, Adp NP implies VO and N Gen, NP Adp implies OV and Gen N.

Motivation: Harmonic serialisation of HEAD–DEP, and/or uniform branchingness direction, subserving easy planning and processing.

Law of change (read '⊃' as '<'): Adpositions only ever derive from object-taking verbs or from genitive-taking head nouns (well, sometimes also from adverbs, adjectives, interjections) through grammaticalisation; rarely, the other way round, object-taking verbs and genitive-taking nouns derive from adpositions; grammaticalisation as well as degrammaticalisation is always **order-preserving**.

Motivation: Adpositions are inherently relational, and if new ones are needed, lexical relational expressions are the most convenient source (other than borrowing or the reanalysis of existing adpositions) – and why would one reverse the given ordering of the parts of constructions (if any **is** given) in such categorial reanalyses (**inertia**).

(2) Timeless law: For all languages at any and all times, the overt expression of indefinite pro's (pronouns, articles) in the plural implies an overt expression for such indefinites also in the singular.

(Cf. asymmetries as in English SG *a book* – PL \emptyset *books*, Palatinate dialect of High German *Aus Pirmasens ist einer gekommen* – ... *sind* \emptyset *gekommen* 'from Pirmasens someone has come' – '... some have come')

Motivation: Markedness reversal, with individuation of referents (SG), otherwise unmarked vis-à-vis group-reference (PL), becoming marked in the case of "ignoratives" (indefinites, interrogatives) and therefore requiring/favouring extra formal expenditure.

Law of change: Indefinite forms only ever derive from (i) the numeral 'one' (dedicatedly singular), (ii) mid-range quantifiers (dedicatedly plural), (iii) interrogative pronouns, (iv) generic nouns, (v) ... (?) by grammaticalisation (= obligatorification, ...).

Motivation: Inertia – or if source forms in grammaticalisation do alter their inflection, then they lose rather than gain inflectional contrasts.

Caution: This law of change in itself doesn't suffice to prevent SG u – PL m for indefinites. Suppose a mid-range quantifier is grammaticalised as an indefinite, then PL would initially have overt expression (because mid-range quantifiers are dedicated plural) and SG would be zero.

(It is possible for dedicated singular/plural source forms **subsequently** to acquire a number contrast. Cf. Engl PL *sm books* – SG *sm book*, Bavarian SG *a Buach* – PL *oa Biacha* 'ein Buch – eine Bücher'.)

Superintending law: Don't grammaticalise a PL indefinite unless there already is a (possibly suppletive) SG form for that indefinite!
(Which is tantamount to the **timeless** law above.)

See THE UNIVERSALS ARCHIVE for more:

<http://typo.uni-konstanz.de/archive/intro/>

2. Phonological phrasing: Syntactic or rhythmic?

Is phonological phrasing, at the lower levels of the prosodic hierarchy (ph word, clitic group?, ph phrase) determined by **surface morphosyntactic constituency**, or does it follow **rhythmic** principles regardless of morphology and syntax?

Answer for Germanic and (some/many) other languages: The latter. The default phrasing, in casual, non-rehearsed speech, is trochaic/dactylic, regardless of iambic syntax; hence en- rather than pro-cliticisation.

examples, concerning def/indef articles in German:

syntax:	Frag [den Peter] _{NP}	Frag [einen Polizisten] _{NP}
phonology:	(FRA.gŋ) (PE.ter) *(FRAK) (m PE.ter)	(FRA.gnən) (PO.li.zis.ten) *(FRAK) (nəm PO.li.zis.ten) *(FRAK) (eim PO.li.zis.ten)

And what about?

[den Peter]_{NP} hab ich gefragt
(n/m PE.ter) hab ich gefragt

[einen Polizisten]_{NP} hab ich gefragt
(nem/eim Polizisten) hab ich gefragt

☞ no left host to encliticise on to!

Hence probably the pro-/en-cliticising ambivalence of articles.

Definite articles are tough challenges on both fronts, temporality of universals and phonological phrasing.

B. Foreground: Differential ("split") definiteness marking

1. The temporal nature of the relevant constraint(s)

Timeless law (The Löbner-Ortmann Law of Split Definiteness):

For all languages at any and all times, there is a latent functional contrast between **pragmatic** (context-determined uniqueness of reference: phoric, deictic) and **semantic** definiteness (world/register-determined uniqueness of reference), with some flexibility as to where to draw the single dividing line on this one-dimensional continuum, and the only possibilities to formally mark definiteness are these:

- **no** marking of **either** kind of definiteness;
- marking of **both** kinds of definiteness (either identically or distinctly);
- marking **only** of pragmatic definiteness, but **not** of semantic definiteness.

It is impossible for semantic definiteness anywhere and ever to be formally marked and pragmatic definiteness to remain unmarked.

Motivation: Economy – marking only where definiteness is not predictable from the kind of meaning of the relevant lexical items.

Laws of change, concerning the life-cycle of definite articles, a story in two parts, weakening of meaning and weakening of form (stronger/weaker = more/fewer semantic and formal contrasts):

(i) change of meaning and usage: DEM > DEF (Stage I > II > III > IV)

Whenever (distal) demonstratives (or any other source forms, such as possessive pronouns) are re-analysed as definite articles (obligatorification and perhaps other concomitants of "grammaticalisation"), this re-analysis happens first with (certain kinds of) pragmatic definites and only subsequently with semantic definites.

Motivation: Economy – re-deployment of existing forms with a new function, that of definiteness, once it is recognised as an (incipient) grammatical category, first in such circumstances where definiteness is not predictable from the kind of meaning of the relevant lexical items.

(ii) change of form and construction: DEF word > clitic > affix

Whenever definite articles, once innovated as a distinct grammatical category indiscriminately covering all or some subtypes of definiteness, undergo changes of prosodic and segmental attenuation further on in their life-cycle, semantic definites will be affected prior to pragmatic definites, permitting the functionalisation of distinct forms as differential definiteness markings.

Motivation: Iconicity – asymmetry between (stronger) pragmatic and (weaker) semantic definiteness reflected by formal asymmetry of (more autonomous and contrastive) pragmatic-def and (prosodically and segmentally less autonomous and contrastive) semantic-def marking.

Advantages of bi-partite, but coherent diachronic story over the achronic/panchronic account in terms of two separate, independent "splits" à la Ortman 2011:

- "Split 2" (distinct markers for pragmatic and semantic definiteness) implying prior "Split 1" (marker for pragmatic definiteness, semantic definiteness unmarked) in the life-cycle of definite articles.
- Differential markers of pragmatic and semantic definiteness in "Split 2" always formally related to one another (derived from one another through phonological weakening), as well as formally related to the single undifferentiated definiteness marker of "Split 1".

[Is this true?]

Worthiness of definiteness marking not only a matter of **nouns**, with different conceptual subclasses showing different propensities to being definite!

Attributive adjectives as such (not just superlatives and ordinals [where care must be taken not to mistake superlative and ordinal marking for definite articles]) are pivotal at both transitions in the bi-partite weakening story: they primarily occur in **pragmatically** definite NPs, especially in contrastive definites, and these seem to be (among) the most definite-article-worthy NPs of all.

To illustrate how contrastive/reference-distinctive attributive adjectives (as opposed to reference-embellishing epithets) are precisely at the threshold where demonstrativeness shades into definiteness.

*Es war einmal ein König, der hatte eine Tochter.
Diese/jene/*die Tochter hieß Edeltraud.*

*Es war einmal ein König, der hatte zwei Töchter.
Die/*diese/*jene schöne Tochter hieß Kunigunde, die/*diese/*jene
hässliche Tochter hieß Adelheid.
(Die schöne dieser Töchter hieß ...)*

Such NPs with contrastive/reference-distinctive attributive adjectives should be at the very top of a "scale of uniqueness" (Löbner 1985, 2011, Ortman 2011). Diachronically, (i) they are where definite articles appear first as a distinct grammatical category and (ii) they resist formal weakening longest.

At least this is the story for Germanic.

2. Origins and progress of Germanic definiteness marking

(1) origins

(i) (distal?) demonstrative stem **on-/en-*, inflected pronominally (for gender, number, case) > “weak” declension of **adjectives** (also nominalisation of A) [similar to Baltic]

(ii) (distal?) demonstrative stems, inflected pronominally (for gender, number, case):

(a) **s-/t-* (MASC&FEM/NEUT, but levelled early in favour of *t-*)

(b) **j-*

(c) **h-*

- demonstrative > primarily prag-definite, then extended to sem-definite;
- primarily used in NPs with **adjective**, at least and clearly demonstrable in North Germanic:

N [DEF A], (N DEF) A; DEF A N

then extended to A-less NPs:

N=DEF > N-DEF; DEF N

Adjective article and noun article in contemporary North Germanic, here Swedish:

		'bear', M	'large bear'
indefinite	SG	<i>en björn</i>	<i>en stor björn</i>
	PL	<i>björn-ar</i>	<i>stor-a björn-ar</i>
definite	SG	<i>björn=en</i>	<i>den stor-a björn=en</i>
	PL	<i>björn-ar=na</i>	<i>de stor-a björn-ar=na</i>

Much about the early development of the definite noun articles in the Scandinavian Germanic languages is controversial, concerning the timing (starting point sometime between 500 and 1100 CE), the precise ancestral forms, and the source construction(s). The two **source constructions** that have been contemplated are equally "offensive" insofar as in neither is it the noun itself that the definite article is originally associated with. One, favoured by Jacob Grimm (1837) and many others, is an **attributive** construction with a **common noun** and a (**restrictive?**) **adjective** in postnominal position (i); the other has **proper names** as heads, with a following adjective as more of an **appositional epithet** (ii). The demonstrative-derived pristine definite article is a syntactic co-constituent not of the noun or proper name, but of the addendum to the noun, an adjective in the weak declension (the original Germanic marker of definiteness and also the form for nominalisations).

- (i) björnr [(h)inn stori]
'bear, the large (one)'
- (ii) Björnr [(h)inn harfagri]
'Björn, the fairhaired (one)'

This new definiteness marker in complex noun phrases then came to be associated with the head noun, with phonological phrasing as the agent (or perhaps concomitant) of change:

Attributive adjectives themselves would switch to prenominal position, requiring a definite article of their own (again demonstrative-derived, though now from *þann* rather than *(h)inn* as of old). The noun's definiteness marker essentially remained an enclitic in insular Scandinavian Germanic, continuing to itself inflect for case (e.g., Icelandic *bjarn-ar=in-s* bear-GEN.SG=DEF.M.SG-GEN.SG). In the continental languages its distributional pattern has become that of a suffix (e.g., Swedish *björn-en-s* bear-DEF.M.SG-GEN.SG), although the noun's definite marker continues to remain outside the domain for assigning tonal accents to disyllabic words, as behooves an enclitic (Lahiri et al. 2005, 2006).

(2) **progress**: the old story of “weakening” (grammaticalisation), but sometimes with a new ending

- meaning: (distal) DEM > DEF
- use: optional > obligatory in all (def) NPs
- binding: variably en- or pro-clitic > invariably suffix
(or also prefix like SwG *tt*, possibly BavG *t* or YorkshE *th*?)
- form: prosodic attenuation, segmental reduction, sometimes with syllabic and non-syllabic alternants
- distribution:
 - by register: lento, careful (syll) vs. allegro, casual (non-syll)
 - syntactically in Swiss German (owing to reanalysis of clitic as prefix?): before noun (non-syll), elsewhere (syll);
- function: **functionalised** in Bavarian (Salzburg/Salzkammergut, Altötting, Middle Bav., North Bav. of Egerland), Low and Central Franconian (Amern, Eupen, Köln, Mönchengladbach, Mainz ...), North Frisian of Fering: **pragmatic vs. semantic definite**

3. Segmental weakening in Upper High German (here: Middle Bavarian)

	M	N	F	PL	>	M	N	F	PL	≥	N	F	PL
NOM	<i>d-er</i>	<i><u>d</u>-as</i>	<i>d-ie</i>	<i>d-ie</i>		<i>dε̃/d̃</i>	<i>des/̃s</i>	<i>də</i>	<i>də</i>		<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>d</i>
ACC	<i><u>d</u>-en</i>	<i><u>d</u>-as</i>	<i>d-ie</i>	<i>d-ie</i>		<i>den/(̃)n</i>	<i>des/̃s</i>	<i>də</i>	<i>də</i>		<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>d</i>
DAT	<i><u>d</u>-em</i>	<i><u>d</u>-em</i>	<i>d-er</i>	<i><u>d</u>-en</i>		<i>den/(̃)n</i>	<i>den/(̃)m</i>	<i>der̃/d̃</i>	<i>dene/de/(̃)n</i>				
GEN	<i><u>d</u>-es</i>	<i><u>d</u>-es</i>	<i>d-er</i>	<i>d-er</i>		<i>des/(̃)s</i>	<i>des/(̃)s</i>	<i>dε̃/d̃</i>	<i>dε̃/d̃</i>				

- Omit the first consonant of the definite article (/d/, the original demonstrative, now definite stem!), unless there would be no consonant left.
- Omit final /ə/.

Similar omission patterns are observed elsewhere in German (and Dutch and Frisian?) where prag and sem definites are differentiated.

What sort of **phonological** phrasing of the definite article would naturally account for this sort of omission pattern?

Invariable right-association (as the syntax would have it) wouldn't.

These are plausible reductions when the definite article forms the end of a phonological group, irrespective of the onset of the following constituent.

How is *d* DEF.ACC.SG.FEM/ACC.PL realised in Bavarian with the different onsets of nouns, in NPs which are direct objects of a preceding verb in the imperative?

- | | | | | | |
|----|------------|------|---------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| a. | <i>Hol</i> | ∅ | <i>Decken!</i> [t] | 'Get the | blankets! |
| | | ∅ | <i>Gans</i> [g] | | goose |
| | | ∅ | <i>Kissen</i> [k] | | cushions |
| | | ∅ | <i>Betten</i> [p] | | beds |
| b. | <i>Hol</i> | ∅ | <i>Pfannen</i> [pf] | 'Get the | pan ! ' |
| | | ∅ | <i>Zither</i> [ts] | | zither |
| c. | <i>Hol</i> | [pf] | <i>Federn</i> [f] | 'Get the | feathers ! ' |
| | | [ts] | <i>Sachen</i> [s] | | things |
| | | [tʃ] | <i>Schüssel</i> [ʃ] | | bowl |
| | | [tv] | <i>Wannen</i> [v] | | vats |
| | | [th] | <i>Hosen</i> [h] | | trousers |
| d. | <i>Hol</i> | [tl] | <i>Leiter</i> | 'Get the | ladder ! ' |
| | | [tn] | <i>Nägel</i> | | nails |
| | | [tr] | <i>Reiter</i> | | riders |
| | | [pm] | <i>Milch</i> | | milk |
| e. | <i>Hol</i> | [tʔ] | <i>Ecken</i> | 'Get the | corners! |

(Since Bavarian has no voicing contrast in labial and dental stops, the dental *d*, when realised as a separate segment, is a voiceless, unaspirated [t].)

- Before **stops** and **affricates** of all places of articulation the plural and feminine singular accusative definite article, syncretic with nominative, has become inaudible (a/b);
- before **fricatives** and **sonorant consonants** its single coronal segment remains (c/d), getting assimilated to labials, and frequently yielding onset clusters impermissible at left word edges ([tv, th, tl, tn, pm]);
- before **vowels** (e), the coronal segment remains too, inducing in Bavarian a glottal-stop-like onset not so prominent with vowel-initial words otherwise in Upper German and thereby bringing about minimal pairs such as *die Decken* [tɛkŋ] – *die Ecken* [tʔɛkŋ]. The [t] does not become a true onset, a situation which is identical to that of the unstressed prefixes, which do not resyllabify either: *beʔantwortet*, *mitʔarbeiten*. (In Swiss German of Thurgau and probably elsewhere, the contrast is one between geminate /tt/ and singleton /t/.)

Such formal alternations would seem different to reconcile with a general preference for all grammatical words to phonologically associate leftwards, as the syntax dictates. Still, without further study we do not want to rule out that even plain consonantal /t/ does lean left rather than right in such varieties of German (which could account for minimal pairs like that just mentioned).

On the other hand, definite NPs are topics, and as such will frequently occur in sentence-initial position – with plainly nothing there to left-associate with. This is perhaps the most salient situation where the phonological phrasing default can be overruled, and procliticisation is getting its rare chance.

4. Functionalisation of strong and weak definite articles in Bavarian

Like North Frisian and Low and Central Franconian, varieties of (Middle) Bavarian do **not** distribute the CV and C forms of the definite article in terms of word class (before adjectives vs. before nouns, as Swiss German does (see below; other Alemannic too?)), but **functionalises** the formal contrast, splitting up the single notion of definiteness into two – **pragmatic** (or contextual) definiteness and **semantic** (or world/register) definiteness – and concomitantly splitting up one lexeme into two (hence not allomorphs of a single definite article!), both with the status of clitics.

Iconicity governs the distribution:

- stronger form: pragmatic definite meaning
- weaker form: semantic definite meaning

Pragmatic definiteness: c(ontext)-definite

- a) *I hab a Kuah kauft, aber **de** Kuah gibt koa Milch.*
‘I have bought a cow, but the cow gives no milk’
- b) *Welche Blusn ziagst o, **de** blaue oder **de** rote?*
‘Which blouse do you put on, the blue or the red one?’
(among the several colours available)

Semantic definiteness: w(orld)-definite

- c) *Frag **d** Oma.*
‘Ask Granny!’
- d) *Welche Blusn ziagst o, **d** blaue oder **d** rote?*
‘Which blouse do you put on, the blue or the red one?’
(with only the two colour choices given)

Nota bene: There is considerable diversity in this respect even between speakers of otherwise very similar varieties of Bavarian, and some uncertainty among speakers who do recognise the functional contrast!

Some Bavarians even distribute strong and weak definite article forms like the Swiss do, namely in terms of word classes: before adjective and noun, respectively!

Below is something which two speakers of Middle Bavarian who rarely agree agree on (Walter Breu, of Marktl near Altötting, and author of the article quoted, and Frans Plank, of Hengersberg an der Donau), amidst violent disagreement of another (Josef Bayer, of Dietfurt im Altmühltal).

Breu 2004: 37

Der semantische Artikel [kurz] wird beispielsweise für generische Sachverhalte wie in (122) und bei den Namen von Bekannten wie in (123) verwendet. Der pragmatische Artikel [lang] findet sich etwa in der anaphorischen Wiederaufnahme wie in (124) oder bei den Namen noch nicht nostrifizierter Personen wie in (125):

(122) *Dà Wòed kheàd òle Làed.* ‘Der Wald gehört allen Leuten’

(123) *Wann khimd n da Bèda?* ‘Wann kommt denn Peter?’

(124) *Deà Wòed kheàd òle Làed.* ‘Der (genannte) Wald gehört allen Leuten’

(125) *Hàed wa widà deà Bèda dò.* ‘Heute war wieder der (jener) Peter da’

Die Opposition der beiden Artikelreihen besteht auch in präpositionaler Umgebung, z.B. *fià n* : *fià den* ‘für den’, *fià d* : *fià de* ‘für die’ etc. Bei einigen Präpositionen kann hier bei Maskulina und Neutra im Singular ausnahmsweise eine ähnliche Differenzierung auch im Standarddeutschen nachgewiesen werden, z.B. *àn* ‘im’ vs. *à den* ‘in dem’, wie in dem folgenden Beispiel:

(126) *I bi geàn àn Wòed* : *I bi geàn à den Wòed.*

‘Ich bin gerne im Wald’ : ‘Ich bin gerne in dem (genannten) Wald’

(6) ‘Das Haus ist zu klein für uns’

... mit dem bairischen semantischen oder dem pragmatischen Artikel wiedergegeben werden, je nachdem ob es sich um das eigene *Haus* handelt oder ein noch zu kaufendes.

Zu erwähnen ist insbesondere die Tatsache, daß zumindest in der hier dargestellten Variante des Bairischen bei okkasioneller Substantivierung von **Adjektiven** auch der (dem sorbischen Nullartikel) entsprechende semantische Definitartikel [kurz] verwendet werden kann. Dieses formale Kriterium für den Gebrauch des pragmatischen Artikels spielt hier also eine geringere Rolle als in der SWR:

(127) *Wòs mèkkstn fir à štikke, s grosse odà s glõãne?*

‘Welches Stück möchtest du denn, das große oder das kleine?’

Dennoch fördert das Adjektiv auch im Bairischen den Gebrauch des pragmatischen Artikels [lang] z.B. bei Attribuierung; vgl. SCHEUTZ (1988, 239f.) für die von ihm beschriebene Variante des Bairischen. – Alternativ ist in (127) im übrigen auch der pragmatische Artikel (*des*) möglich, insbesondere, wenn der Sprecher den Hörer erst darauf aufmerksam machen will, daß es eine Auswahl gibt.

4. Distribution of /ti/ and /tt/ in Swiss German

(1) CV form /ti/ in modifier-noun constructions:

- | | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| a) | <i>di</i> | <i>fuul</i> | <i>Frau</i> | ‘the lazy woman’ | |
| b) | <i>di</i> | <i>bekannt</i> | <i>Frau</i> | ‘the known woman’ | |
| c) | <i>di</i> | <i>fürchbar</i> | <i>fuul</i> | <i>Frau</i> | ‘the awfully lazy woman’ |
| d) | <i>di</i> | <i>extrém</i> | <i>fuul</i> | <i>Frau</i> | ‘the extremely lazy woman’ |

☞ phonological make-up, metrical structure, and number of modifiers is irrelevant

(2) CV form /ti/ with nominalised adjective and with adjective plus elided noun:

- | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| a) | <i>di</i> | <i>Fuul</i> | ‘the lazy one’ | |
| b) | <i>di</i> | <i>Bekannte</i> | ‘the acquaintances’ | |
| c) | <i>di</i> | <i>flüssig</i> | <i>Frau und</i> | ‘the industrious woman and |
| | <i>di</i> | <i>fuul</i> | Ø | the lazy one’ |

(3) C form /tt/ with unmodified nouns:

- | | | | | |
|----|----------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|
| a) | <i>d</i> | <i>Uhr</i> | /tt + u:R/ → [ttu:R] | ‘the watch’ |
| b) | <i>d</i> | <i>Tour</i> | /tt + tt/ → [tt] | ‘the tour’ |
| c) | <i>d</i> | <i>Gárasch</i> | /tt + k/ → [kk] | ‘the garage’ |

d)	<i>d</i>	<i>Frau</i>	/tt + f/ → [pf]	‘the woman’
e)	<i>d</i>	<i>Figúr</i>	/tt + f/ → [pf]	‘the figure’
f)	<i>d</i>	<i>Pfánne</i>	/tt + pf/ → [pf]	‘the cooking pot’
g)	<i>d</i>	<i>Medizín</i>	/tt + m/ → [ʔm]	‘the medicine’
h)	<i>d</i>	<i>Léitere</i>	/tt + l/ → [ttl]	‘the ladder’
i)	<i>d</i>	<i>Chránkeschwöschter</i>	/tt + x/ → [kx]	‘the nurse’
j)	<i>d</i>	<i>Dúrtonleitere</i>	/tt + t/ → [tt]	‘the major scale’
k)	<i>d</i>	<i>Bláumeise</i>	/tt + p/ → [pp]	‘the tomtits’
l)	<i>d</i>	<i>Súurchriesi</i>	/tt + s/ → [ts]	‘the sour cherries’
m)	<i>d</i>	<i>Beduíne</i>	/tt + p/ → [pp]	‘the Beduins’

- ☞ phonological make-up and metrical structure of the nouns is irrelevant
- ☞ The C form is highly selective in terms of the morphological category of the host: it must be a **noun** – which is what is to be expected for **affixes** but not for **clitics**.

(4) C form /tt/ with nouns of geographic origin in *-er* (adjectives or genitival nouns?):

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| a) <i>d Basler</i> | /tt + p/ → [pp] | ‘the inhabitants of Basel’ |
| b) <i>d Luzerner</i> | /tt + l/ → [ttl] | ‘the inhabitants of Luzern’ |
| c) <i>d Schwiizer</i> | /tt + ʃ/ → [tʃ] | ‘the inhabitants of Switzerland’ |
| d) <i>d Basler Lächerli</i> | /tt + p/ → [pp] | ‘the cookies of Basel’ |
| e) <i>d Luzerner Narre</i> | /tt + l/ → [ttl] | ‘the fools of Luzern’ |
| f) <i>d Schwiizer Botschaft</i> | /tt + ʃ/ → [tʃ] | ‘the embassy of Switzerland’ |

but (genuine adjective):

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| g) <i>di schwiizerisch Botschaft</i> | | ‘the Swiss embassy’ |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|

Strong correlation with morphemes uncontroversially analysed as prefixes

ge- prefix to form the past participle:

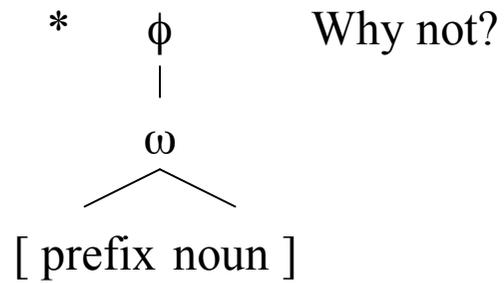
Standard German

- a) *geahnt* /kk/ + *ahnt*
- b) *gepflanzt* /kk/ + *pflanzt*
- c) *getragen* /kk/ + *treit*
- d) *gegabelt* /kk/ + *gabet*
- e) *gefallen* /kk/ + *fale*
- f) *gesegelt* /kk/ + *seglet*
- g) *geschaltet* /kk/ + *schaltet*
- h) *gekocht* /kk/ + *chochet*
- i) *gemalt* /kk/ + *moolet*
- j) *genagelt* /kk/ + *naglet*
- k) *gelebt* /kk/ + *lebt*
- l) *geraten* /kk/ + *roote*
- m) *gejagt* /kk/ + *jagt*
- n) *gewartet* /kk/ + *wartet*

Swiss German

- [kkɑ:ntt] ‘suspected’
- [pflantst] ‘planted’
- [ttrɔitt] ‘carried’
- [kkaplətt] ‘forked’
- [kfalə] ‘liked’
- [ksɛklətt] ‘sailed’
- [kʃalttətt] ‘switched’
- [kxɔxxətt] ‘cooked’
- [kkmɔ:lətt] ‘painted’
- [kknaklətt] ‘nailed’
- [kklept] ‘glued’
- [kkRɔ:ttə] ‘guessed’
- [kkjakt] ‘hunted’
- [kkvarttətt] ‘glued’

- ☞ assimilation processes indicate that the prefix and the verb stem belong to the same phonological word
- ☞ the same assimilation processes occur between lexical words in the same phonological word



function words are part of phonological words only iff the resulting form conforms to the phonotactic well-formedness conditions of the language (e.g., proper consonant clusters, existing lexical words with particular sound sequence, etc.)

APPENDIX: The words (?), or rather word (?) forms, without a vowel (other than *mhm*, *tsk* [], *Wrtlprmpft*, ...) – or are they (en-/pro?)clitics? or affixes?

NB: these (given in bold) are **obligatorily** non-syllabic for particular semantic functions and/or in particular syntactic contexts; synchronically, they are not reduced casual-speech variants of full forms which would be equally possible with the same functions and in the same contexts (as are the more numerous non-bold forms without vowel)

	BavG	SwG	StHG
definite article, FEM.SG.NOM/ACC and PL.NOM/ACC	<i>te/t</i>	<i>ti/tt</i>	<i>die</i>
definite article, NEUT.SG.NOM/ACC	<i>(e)s</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>das</i>
definite article, MASC.SG.ACC/DAT and NEUT.SG.DAT	<i>(e)n</i>	<i>də(r), əm</i>	<i>den, dem</i>
indefinite article, MASC/NEUT.SG.DAT	<i>(e)n</i>	<i>əm(ənə)</i>	<i>einem</i>
	with further variants		
	<i>(e)m, ɛrən, ɛrəm</i>		
personal pronoun, 3SG.NEUT.NOM/ACC	<i>(e)s</i>	<i>(e)s</i>	<i>es</i>
personal pronoun, 3SG.FEM.NOM/ACC and 3PL.NOM/ACC and 2SG/PL.FORMAL.NOM	<i>s(i)</i>	<i>s(i)</i>	<i>sie</i>
personal pronoun, 3SG.MASC.ACC/DAT	<i>(eɐ)m</i>	<i>ə(n), əm</i>	<i>ihn, ihm</i>
personal pronoun, 2SG.NOM	<i>t(u)</i>	<i>tt(u)</i>	<i>du</i>
personal pronoun, 2PL.NOM (< DUAL)	<i>(e)s</i>	—	—

infinitive marker, Engl. <i>to</i>	<i>tsun/ts</i>	<i>tsum/ts</i>	<i>zu, zum</i>
degree adverb, Engl. <i>too</i>	<i>tsu/ts</i>	<i>tsu/ts</i>	<i>zu</i> [tsu, tsu, tsə]
local/temporal preposition, Engl. <i>to</i> , meaning of <i>at</i>	<i>tsu/ts</i>	<i>tsu/ts</i>	<i>zu</i> [tsu, tsu, tsə]
(adjective, ‘closed’)	<i>tsuə</i>	<i>tsu</i>	<i>zu</i> [tsu:]
modal particle, W-question marker	<i>denn/n</i>	<i>denn</i>	<i>denn</i>

Compare two **prefixes** (derivational, inflectional) without vowel:

transitivised, perfectivised verbs	<i>p-</i>	<i>p-</i>	<i>be-</i>
resultative participle	<i>k-/Ø-</i>	<i>kk-</i>	<i>ge-</i>
collective nouns from nouns	<i>k(e)-</i>	<i>k(e)-</i>	<i>ge-</i>
collective nouns from verbs	<i>k(e)-</i>	<i>k(e)-</i>	<i>ge-</i>

Definite article distinctions in West Germanic: Form and function

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Abstract

There are several varieties of Frisian and German where definite articles come in two versions, registering a distinction between two kinds of definiteness that have variously been characterised as "pragmatic" vs. "semantic" or as phoric-or-deictic vs. context-independent uniqueness-of-reference (e.g., Löbner 1985, 2011, Lyons 1999, Ortman 2011): Fering on the one hand (North Frisian; Ebert 1971a, b) and Low and Central Franconian (Rhenish) dialects of German on the other (as spoken at Amern, Eupen, Köln, Mönchengladbach, or Mainz; Reis 1891, Heinrichs 1954, Hartmann 1982, Schroeder 2006). In addition, although their functionalities differ, there are several varieties of Upper German on record as having two forms of definite articles, if only for some paradigmatic categories (notably FEM.SG.NOM/ACC, NEUT.SG.NOM/ACC, PL.NOM/ACC). For Bavarian, these include the regional varieties of Salzburg/Salzkammergut and the Altötting area (East Middle Bavarian; Scheutz 1988, Breu 2004, pc) and the Egerland (North Bavarian, Bohemia; Schiepek 1908); as to Alemannic, this seems to hold true for Swiss German in general (Krähenmann & Plank 2004). Further, northern regional varieties of English English, in particular that of Yorkshire, likewise have two forms of the definite article (Jones 2002, 2005, 2007, Rupp & Page-Verhoeff 2005, Rupp 2007, Tagliamonte & Roeder 2007, Hollmann & Siewierska 2011, Roeder 2012).

In a diachronic perspective, wherever such two forms of the definite article occur in West Germanic, the second represents a reduced variant of the full definite article, originating in cliticisation. Taking a closer look at how the tension between procliticisation (following syntactic phrasing) and encliticisation (following the Germanic rhythmic default, see Lahiri & Plank 2011, Plank 2011) is shaping the form of articles is one aim of this paper.

The second aim is to make sense of the alternative results of definite article reduction. The distinction of a pragmatic and a semantic definite article, as in North Frisian, Low/Central Franconian, and North/Middle Bavarian is only one way of utilising the resulting formal variants. (Functionally, German's Slavonic neighbours, Conversational Upper Sorbian and

Upper Silesian, are analogous insofar as their innovated definite article is limited to pragmatic definites, with semantic definites remaining unmarked; Breu 2004, Scholze 2008, Czardybon 2010, Ortman 2011.) Another outcome, seen in Swiss German, is a syntactic distribution of the two forms, with the full variant occurring before adjectives and the reduced variant elsewhere. Yet another outcome, or interim state, is the ostensibly free or stylistic variation of two definite article forms, as in regional Northern English or Middle Bavarian (where even within narrowly circumscribed areas speakers either observe or ignore the semantic vs. pragmatic definiteness distinction for definite articles).