

The Various Factors of the Article Split in the Dialects of the Rhine Area

Structure

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1. Introduction

1.1 The article split

- Rhenish dialects exhibit a grammatical asymmetry in definiteness marking:
 - **Article split** (Ortmann (2014)): Two different forms of the definite article.
- **Strong** vs. **weak** form → the weak form is based on a vowel reduction.
- Dialects under investigation: 'Kölsch' and 'Mönchengladbacher Platt', spoken in Cologne and Mönchengladbach, respectively, located in North-Rhine-Westphalia near Düsseldorf.
- Examples: Own data
 - Samples of records of Mönchengladbacher Platt (MG Platt).
 - Two different sorts of data: Fairy tales, narrated by one speaker.
 - Spontaneous conversation between two speakers.
 - Transcribed on the basis of an own orthography.

(1) Paradigm of the articles (based on data of MG Platt)

	NOM	SG			DAT	SG			PL
		masc	fem	neuter		masc	fem	neuter	
strong		<i>dä</i> [dɛ]	<i>dii</i> [di]	<i>dat</i> [dat]		<i>däm</i> [dɛm]	<i>dä</i> [dɛ]	<i>däm</i> [dɛm]	<i>dii</i> [di]
weak		<i>dr</i> [dɪ]	<i>də</i> [də]	<i>ət</i> [ət]		<i>dəm</i> [dɛm]	<i>dr</i> [dɪ]	<i>dəm</i> [dɛm]	<i>də</i> [də]

1.2 Theoretical background: The concept types

- Theory of concept types and determination (CTD) (Löbner (2011)):

(2) Table of the 4 types of nouns

	[-U] Inherently non-unique	[+U] Inherently unique
[-R] Inherently non- relational	Sortal nouns (SN) <i>stone, book</i>	Individual nouns (IN) <i>moon, weather</i>
[+R] Inherently relational	Relational nouns (RN) <i>sister, leg</i>	Functional nouns (FN) <i>father, head</i>

(modified version of Löbner (2011))

- Each noun type exhibits a corresponding concept type: SNs, RNs, INs and FNs exhibit SCs, RCs, INs and FCs, respectively.
- Each concept type corresponds to a specific kind of determination: Definite determination corresponds to the inherently unique concept types.
- Two kinds of uniqueness: semantic and pragmatic uniqueness:
 - Inherently non-unique nouns undergo a type shift: [-U] → [+U]: pragmatic uniqueness.
 - Inherently unique nouns are already [+U], no shift is required: semantic uniqueness.

Claim: The selection of the article depends on the respective concept type of the CNP (common noun phrase):

→ The **strong article** is used with **non-unique** ([-U]) **concepts**, indicating pragmatic uniqueness.

The **weak article** is used with **unique** ([+U]) **concepts**, indicating semantic uniqueness.

(3)(a) [...] *mid ənə jɔldənə Bal* [...], *worp dā* *Bal huach* [...]
 [...] with INDEF golden ball threw DEF.M.SG.**STRONG** ball [SC] up
 '[...] with a golden ball [...] threw the ball in the air [...]'

(Fairy tale: 'The Frog King')

(b) *Un dr* *Moond shin imr nəch*.
 and DEF.M.SG.**WEAK** moon [IC] shone still

'And the moon still shone.'

(Fairy tale: 'Hansel & Gretel')

Claim: The article split is not only governed by the concept type but also by the factors anaphoricity, weak definiteness, prenominal modifier and (prenominal) 'favorite' modifier.

2. The additional factors

2.1 Anaphoricity

- Relevance as a factor: Anaphoricity leads to a shift in combination with SCs ([−U]), indicated by the **strong article** (see (4a)).
- Assumption: Anaphoricity in combination with FCs ([+U]) require the **strong article**.

(4) [...] *klɔptə dan an də _____ Düür*
knocked then at DEF.F.SG.WEAK front door

ən dii Düür jing əp
and DEF.F.SG.STRONG front door went open
'[...] then knocked at the door, and the door opened [...]'

(Fairy tale: 'Hansel & Gretel')

(5) „[...] *dii Schtaabbrandbɔmbə, dii si-*
DEF.F.SG.STRONG incendiary bomb REL REFL

əm _____ Dachschtuul vasjəsət hɔdə [...]
in_DEF.DAT.M.SG.WEAK roof truss got stuck had

“[...] *dä Dachschtuul wɔr [...]*
DEF.M.SG.STRONG roof truss was

'[...] the incendiary bomb that got stuck in the roof truss [...] the roof truss was [...]'
(Spontaneous conversation)

(6) *ət wɔr əns ənə _____ Köning [...]* *Dɔɔ sɔt dä _____ Köning [...]*
it was once INDEF king there sat DEF.M.SG.STRONG king

'Once upon a time there was a king [...] There the king sat [with his family...]'

(Fairy tale: 'The Frog King')

2.2 Weak definiteness

- Cf. de Swart (2012) for bare nominals in non-referential uses, called ‘weak definites’: The noun often occurs without an article (e.g. in Germanic languages: *go to school, go to bed*)
- Assumption: Weak definiteness is marked with the **weak article**.

(7) [...] *klɔptən ət an də _____ Düür* [...]
knocked it at DEF.F.SG.WEAK front door

mäk də _____ Düür əp [...]
made DEF.F.SG.WEAK door open

‘[...] it knocked at the front door [...] opened the front door [...]’

(Fairy tale: ‘The Frog King’)

(8) *Un da ding ət an də _____ Muur ə Schtriikholz aanmaakə* [...]
and there did it at DEF.F.SG.WEAK wall INDEF match light

[...] *nɔɔr ə Schwäjəlkə noam, un dat an də _____ Wank aanmeek,*
another INDEF match took and this at DEF.F.SG.WEAK wall lit

[...] *nɔɔr ə Schtriikholz, meek dat an də _____ Wank aan* [...]
Another INDEF match made this at DEF.F.SG.WEAK wall on

‘And then it lit a match at the wall [...] took another match and lit this at the wall [...] another match, lit this at the wall [...]’

(Fairy tale: ‘The Little Match Girl’)

2.3 Prenominal modifier

- Cf. Ortmann (2014) for the influence of adjectives in Scandinavian: The suffixed article indicates uniqueness as such and the additional use of the free article is syntactically governed by adjectives.
- Assumption: Prenominal modifiers require the **strong article**.

(9) (a) *mor-en til Peter* (b) *den syke mor-en til Peter*
mother-DEF of Peter DEF sick mother-DEF of Pete
‘Peter’s mother’ ‘Peter’s sick mother’

(Ortmann, 2014:305)

- (10) *Un duur dii läärje Schtrōōtə leep ə klee Mätschə [...]*
 and through DEF.F.PL.STRONG empty streets walked INDEF little girl
 ‘And a little girl walked through the empty streets [...]’
 (Fairy tale: ‘The Little Match Girl’)

2.4 'Favorite' modifier

- ‘Favorite’ modifier (Partee et al. (2002)): superlatives as in *the highest mountain*, *the tallest dog* (also mentioned by Löbner (2011)).
 Descriptions containing a superlative refer uniquely: there is only one tallest dog, one highest mountain.
- ‘Favorite’ modifiers require the **weak article**.

- (11) "*ət leewste Schpeelzöüsch!*"
 DEF.N.SG.WEAK favorite toy
 "The favorite toy!"

(Fairy Tale: ‘The Frog King’)

3. Conclusions

3.1 The Factors and the resulting article forms

(12) Table: The factors and the resulting article forms

Example	Factor					Article
	Anaphoricity	Weak definiteness	Prenominal modifier	(Prenominal) 'favorite' modifier	Concept type	
(3a)	strong	–	–	–	strong	strong
(3b)	–	–	–	–	weak	weak
(4), (5), (6)	strong	–	–	–	weak	strong
(7)	–	weak	–	–	weak	weak
(8)	–	weak	–	–	strong	weak
(10)	–	weak	strong	–	weak	strong
(11)	–	weak	–	weak	weak	weak

3.2 Towards a ranking

(13) Ranking of the factors

Anaphoricity, 'favorite' modifier > prenominal modifier > weak definiteness > concept type

Conclusion: It has been shown that (i) the factors anaphoricity, weak definiteness, prenominal and 'favorite' modifier govern the article split besides the concept type and that (ii) these factors overrule the factor concept type.

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