

GROWING SYNTAX: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DP IN NORTHERN GERMANIC*

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ABSTRACT In this paper, we argue that grammaticalisation can not just result in individual elements becoming more grammatical, but also in the development of grammatical structure through the emergence of a functional category and subsequently a full projection of that functional category. Our claims are underpinned by a detailed study of the development of noun-phrase structure and determiners from Old Norse to Present-Day Faroese.

1 INTRODUCTION

Grammaticalisation is generally described as a process whereby lexical content is lost and replaced by more grammatical content. An example is provided in (1), which shows the Swedish verb *komma* with a future meaning. The original, and still existing, meaning of the verb is ‘come’.

- (1) Det **kommer** att snöa i morgon.
it come.PRS INF snow.INF tomorrow
‘It will snow tomorrow.’

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Vincent & Börjars (2010b: 285) distinguish this from another type of grammaticalisation which involves a construction as a “template” made up of slots and categories.¹ This kind of change can be illustrated by the distribution of the verb-first pattern in the apodoses of hypothetical sentences in various Germanic languages as in (2).

- (2) a. Ändern sie das Testament, dann tritt eine neue
change.PRS they the testament then set.PRS a new
Rechtslage ein.
legal.situation in
'If they change the testament, a new legal situation obtains.'
- b. Räknar man även barnen, blir siffran
count.PRS one even child.DEF.PL become.PRS number
avsevärt högre.
considerably higher
'If children are also counted, that number increases substantially.'
- c. Had they left home earlier, they wouldn't have missed the train.

The difference between the languages lies in the extent to which the pattern has been grammaticalised, as discussed in Hilpert (2010), from which examples (2-a) and (2-b) are taken. In Swedish and the other modern Scandinavian languages it is found in all registers and with all verbs as a systematic alternative to the pattern where there is an overt conjunction equivalent to English *if* (Swedish *om*, Danish *hvis*) and the verb follows the subject. By contrast, in German, to quote Hilpert (2010: 200), ‘the construction tends to occur in formal written contexts of stating regularities or law-like procedures’. In English, it has become frozen and only occurs with the modals or auxiliaries *had*, *should* and *were*; elsewhere the structure with *if* is required. Such conjunctions are in turn themselves the product of the first kind of grammaticalization: *om* and *if* are cognate and derive from oblique case forms of a noun meaning ‘doubt’, while *hvis* is in origin an interrogative pronoun. Hence, for hypotheticals in these languages the choice is between the grammaticalised structure and the grammaticalised conjunction or complementiser.

In this paper, we discuss a third type of grammaticalisation, which contains ingredients of both these types in that the change we will study

¹ We are using ‘construction’ in the non-technical sense here. Within Construction Grammar, the bold element in (1) would also be a ‘construction’.

involves both the development of a grammaticalised meaning in one element and this grammaticalised meaning becoming associated with a particular structural position. We will argue that the grammaticalisation that results in one item becoming a dedicated marker of definiteness also involves first the development of a category D and subsequently the emergence of a full DP projection.

We will start in Section 2 by introducing the theoretical architecture we will use for our analysis. In Section 3 we outline some analyses which are similar to our own in that they assume that syntactic structure, and in particular structure involving functional projections, can develop over time. The data on which our claims are based are presented in Section 4, from Old Norse to Present Day Faroese. In Section 5 we draw together our conclusions.

2 THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

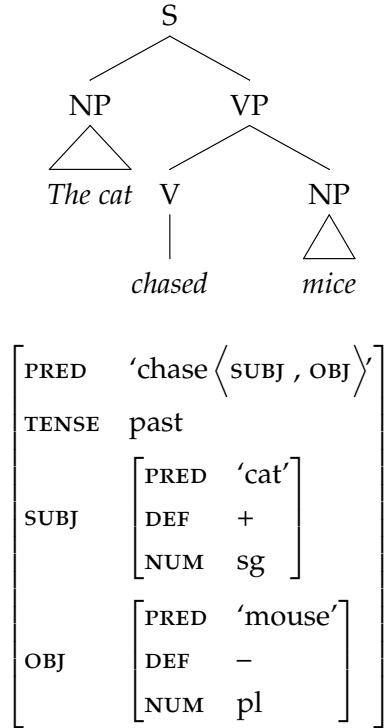
There are four assumptions about the representation of grammar which are crucial to our analysis:

- i. different dimensions of linguistic information are represented independently;
- ii. a language can be configurational or non-configurational;
- iii. functional projections are assumed only where functional information is associated with a specific structural position;
- iv. a distinction can be made between NP languages and DP languages.

The assumption in i. is central to Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) (Bresnan 2001, Dalrymple 2001, Falk 2001), which is the theory within which we will couch our analysis. LFG is a parallel correspondence architecture; different types of information associated with any linguistic element are represented in separate dimensions, each of which has its own formalism and organisational principles. The different dimensions are then linked by mapping rules which do not assume that relations are exclusively one-to-one. We can illustrate this with respect to two dimensions which will be of particular interest to us in this paper: the one that captures information about categories and constituent structure — c-structure — and the one that represents functional information such as grammatical relations, tense and definiteness — f-structure. C-structure is represented as labelled constituent trees, whereas f-structure takes the shape of attribute-value matrices. A

simple example is provided in (3).²

(3) c-structure and f-structure in LFG



The lines indicate mapping principles which ensure that *the cat* is associated with the SUBJECT function, that the V supplies the PRED feature etc. The architecture assumes further dimensions, for instance m(orphological)-structure, a(rgument)-structure, p(rosodic)-structure and i(nformation)-structure (also referred to as d(iscourse)-structure). Though we will not make any reference to the formal analysis of any of these, one assumption which will be of importance to our analysis is that information-structural factors need not be captured through the positing of separate structural positions unless these are independently motivated (in which case so called GRAMMATICALISED DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS are assumed).³

A consequence of the parallel architecture is that historical change may take place in one dimension, but not in another; there can be change in

² An English sentence is generally assumed to be headed by a functional category in LFG, but the simplified tree in (3) serves to illustrate how mapping works.

³ There are different proposals for how to formalise i/d-structure in LFG, see for instance King (1995), Butt & King (1996), Choi (1999), O'Connor (2006).

form without an associated change in function and the reverse. In such instances, there would then also be a change in the mapping between the two dimensions. This distinguishes this approach from accounts of linguistic change within some other frameworks, as illustrated by a comparison with [Roberts & Roussou \(2003\)](#) or [van Gelderen \(2004\)](#), where the changes in form and function are assumed to be more closely matched.

[Bresnan \(1982, 2001\)](#), [Austin & Bresnan \(1996\)](#), [Kroeger \(1993\)](#) and [Nordlinger \(1998\)](#) have all discussed the role of ii. within LFG. A more subtle and accurate formulation of it would be that **certain structures** within a language can be configurational or non-configurational. There are languages with near complete non-configurationality, like Dyrbal ([Dixon 1972](#)), but frequently languages are referred to as non-configurational when there is simply no evidence of a VP, even though noun phrases may be fully configurational in the same language. In this paper, we will be concerned with the configurationality of noun phrases and will have nothing to say about clausal structure. We suspect, however, that there is a strong tendency for noun phrases to be more configurational than clauses in a language. In line with the LFG assumptions about the nature of c-structure, we will assume that trees are neither exclusively binary branching nor exclusively endocentric.

Counter to most modern syntactic analyses, we take a very restrictive view of projecting functional categories, as stated in iii. In LFG, the functional information represented in f-structure can be contributed not just by the syntax, but also by the morphology.⁴ Hence a syntactic functional projection is only assumed when it can be independently argued for; the overt marking of functional information is not sufficient on its own to justify a functional projection. Following [Kroeger \(1993: 6-7\)](#) and [Börjars, Payne & Chisarik \(1999\)](#), for instance, we assume that only when there is evidence that functional information is associated with a particular structural position is a functional projection motivated. On this assumption, we would take the fact that finiteness is associated with second position in the clause in the Scandinavian languages to be evidence that the clause is headed by a functional category which projects up to phrasal level.

It has been assumed by for instance [Szabolcsi \(1987\)](#) and [Stowell \(1989\)](#) that a referential noun phrase must be of category DP (or in more recent approaches the projection of some other functional category), so that an NP can only be non-referential. We assume instead that a distinction can be made between languages — or stages of languages — in which referential

⁴ Other dimension of information can also contribute f-structure information, for instance in the Iron dialect of Ossete, definiteness can be indicated solely by a leftward shift of stress within the noun phrase ([Abaev 1949](#)).

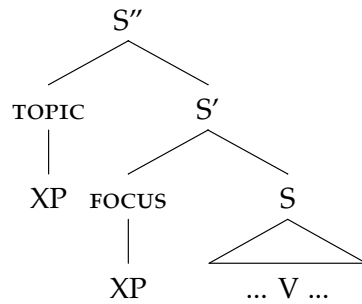
noun phrases are DPs and those in which they are NPs. Chierchia (1998) argues for this position on semantic grounds. Syntactic arguments for the distinction between NP languages and DP languages have been provided by a number of linguists, going back to Fukui (1986) and Fukui & Speas (1986). More recently Bošković (2005, 2008, 2009), assuming a distinction between NP and DP languages, has attempted to show that this distinction correlates with a number of other properties of the noun phrase. Some of these can be relatively straightforwardly empirically established, such as ‘syntactic discontinuity and free word order’, but others rely on specific theoretical assumptions. In Bošković (2010), the generalisations are extended to include clausal properties, to show that an NP language is also likely to lack functional categories such as TP at the clausal level.

Though the assumption that a language can be an NP language in the sense of allowing NPs to function as fully referential noun phrases chimes in with our approach, it should be pointed out that the DP/NP analyses referred to above generally take the presence or absence of a syntactic definite determiner as sufficient evidence to establish what type the language is. As explained in Section 2, we take a different approach and assume that a DP projection is motivated only when a functional feature, such as definiteness, is associated with a particular structural position. The exponence of this feature need not take the shape of a syntactic determiner. Conversely, a language might have a dedicated syntactic definiteness element, but if this element is not associated with a particular structural position, we would not assume a projecting D.

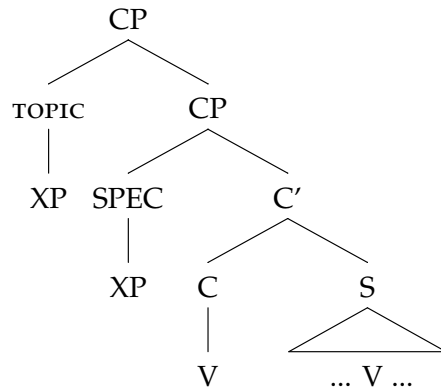
3 PREVIOUS ACCOUNTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE

In itself the idea that functional categories and syntactic structure emerge together over a period of time is not new. In a classic paper, Kiparsky (1995) argued that in origin the Indo-European proto-language did not have complementisers and hence did not have a CP projection. Rather, he suggests that the basic Indo-European clause is exocentric with two informational-structurally privileged positions at the left edge and with no clausal embedding. This yields the structure in (4), a structure which over time transmutes into (5) as the category C emerges (again by a process of grammaticalisation).

- (4) Indo-European clause structure (Kiparsky 1995: 153)



(5) Germanic clause structure (Kiparsky 1995: 140)



On his account, the basic change which triggers the passage from (4) to (5) is the shift of subordinate clauses from adjunct to argument status, a development which is signalled by the emergence of complementisers to flag these new embeddings. These indeclinable complementisers (*þe*, *þæt*, *er*, *som*, etc) have no inherited nominal content and thus can also come to host verbal elements leading to the modern process of V-to-C movement or its equivalent in non-derivational models of syntax.

An analogous argument is made for the emergence of prepositional phrases to replace many of the functions of the Latin case system in Vincent (1999). The difference in this instance is that Latin of course already had PPs, so the structure in and of itself is not new; what is new is rather the deployment of that structure in association with a grammaticalised preposition. Thus, reflexes of the Latin preposition *de*, in origin meaning ‘down, away from, concerning’, come to replace the genitive case as the marker of nominal and adjectival dependence in all the Romance languages (cf Vincent & Börjars (2010a: 468–70) and references cited there).

The idea that syntactic structure and functional categories emerge together over time has also been applied to nominal constituents, and a number of scholars have adduced evidence for the view that the functional head

D and its DP projection have emerged over time.⁵ For instance, Vincent (1997) argues that the Romance languages develop a D system through the grammaticalisation of the Latin deictic *illum/-a* to yield French *le/a*, Italian *il/la*, Portuguese *o/a* and kindred forms (cf also Lyons (1999: 322–333)). Less frequently in Romance the same pattern develops although from a distinct etymon, as with the Sardinian article *su/sa* from Latin *ipse*. Such emergence of identical configurational structures from diverse etymological sources within groups of related languages parallels the different hypothetical complementisers *if*, *om*, *hvis* cited in Section 1 or the various embedding complementisers discussed by Kiparsky (1995).

A parallel between the Romance and Germanic developments is drawn by Perridon & Sleeman (2011: 7), who identify definiteness as being associated with a D-position in both families. They state that ‘In West-Germanic and West-Romance the histories of the definite article and the D-position coincide to a large extent’. They further assume that ‘All elements that are placed in D (‘promoted/raised to D’) function as definite determiner’, so that the indefinite article can be assumed to be associated with a different category. They do not, however, discuss a possible projection of the functional category.

Staying within Germanic, Lander & Haegeman (2012) have sought to apply Bošković’s synchronic typology of NP and DP languages in the diachronic domain. They generalise their analysis of Old Norse as an NP language to earlier stages of Germanic more generally, and contrast this situation with the full DP structure which they argue is characteristic of the modern languages.⁶ They also follow Bošković in linking the distinction between NP and DP languages with properties not directly relating to the noun phrase.

Heltoft (2010) arrives at a similar conclusion though from a different theoretical perspective, analysing the development of syntactic structure over time as an instance of GRAMMATION, a concept introduced in Andersen (2006). He argues that changes to the use of determiners and genitives in Danish provide evidence that the language has undergone a change from

⁵ As will become clear, we assume a language can have a category D without having a DP projection. Some authors assume there is a necessary connection. For instance Van de Velde (2010, 2011) describes D as an “emergent category”, but does not develop the consequences for noun phrase structure further. Nonetheless, he concludes that a ‘determiner projection’ has emerged (2010: 293).

⁶ Lohndal (2007) proposes that the development between Old Norse and Modern Norwegian involves the development of a functional projection, nP, and that it is the development of definiteness marking both on the noun and by means of a syntactic determiner which provides the evidence for the emergence of this category. However, since the earlier and the later noun phrase structure are both assumed to involve a range of functional categories, such as DP, NumP and *α*P, this approach is not relevant to the issue at hand here.

noun phrases being of the category NP to their becoming DPs. Although he does not provide details of the internal structure of the two types of phrases, he does show how a range of associated changes – morphological, syntactic and semantic – can be understood in a framework within which the notion of paradigm has been extended to include the relation between syntactic constructions.

What none of the preceding works do, and what distinguishes them from our own account, is attempt to analyse the nature of the internal structure of the emergent DP and to focus on the mechanisms whereby that structure emerges. In this respect, perhaps nearest in spirit to our own endeavour is [Himmelman \(1997: 1\)](#), who observes: ‘The central hypothesis is that syntactic structure can be the result of grammaticalisation processes, just as grammatical elements are; that it is not just article-like elements which arise this way, but also the categories and the constituent structure that characterises nominal expressions.’⁷ Obviously, for such an account to hold water it is necessary to investigate in some detail the evidence for the internal structure of the nominal constituents at different historical moments, and it is that which we now proceed to do.

4 DATA

4.1 *Old Norse*

Old Norse is a North Germanic language and is the common ancestor language of both the continental (Swedish, Norwegian and Danish) and the insular (Icelandic and Faroese) varieties of Scandinavian. During the period 700-1100, however, Old Norse develops into two distinct branches: eastern and western Norse. Much of the available written data comes from the literary period of Old Norse (1150 to 1400) and belongs to the western branch of Old Norse: Old Icelandic and to a lesser extent Old Norwegian, and this will also be the main source of data used here.

From a superficial survey of data, it would seem as if the basic facts relating to definiteness marking have changed very little from Old Norse to Insular Scandinavian. Definiteness can be manifest either as a bound marker on the noun, as in (6-a) or as a syntactic element as in (6-b).⁸

⁷ Our translation from the German original: ‘Die zentrale Hypothese besagt, daß syntaktische Struktur ebenso Ergebnis von Grammatikalisierungsprozessen ist wie Grammatische Elemente, daß also in einem solchen Prozeß nicht nur die artikelähnliche Elemente entstehen, sondern zugleich auch die für nominale Ausdrücke charakteristischen syntaktischen Kategorien und Konstituentenstrukture.’

⁸ We will use ‘bound marker’ throughout in order to avoid a discussion of whether it is a clitic or an affix. However, elsewhere we have argued against claims that it is a clitic ([Börjars &](#)

- (6) a. hestr-inn
horse-DEF
'the horse'
- b. (H)inn stóri hestr
DEF big.WK horse
'the big horse'

The bound marker of definiteness is an unusual development, certainly from a European perspective; of the Germanic languages, only the Scandinavian ones have it.⁹ The exact origin and timing of the development of the Scandinavian bound definiteness marker is not completely clear; though there is some evidence of a bound definiteness marker already in the Runic inscriptions. There is also some dispute as to the detail of the development (we refer the reader to [Perridon \(1989: 127–149\)](#) for a summary of the arguments). However, it arose at a time when word order was quite free. It seems reasonable to assume that it arose from a free element *hinn* which tended to follow the noun (see for example [Wessén \(1992: 29–30\)](#), [Faarlund \(2007\)](#), [Börjars & Harries \(2008\)](#) and [Stroh-Wollin \(2009\)](#)).¹⁰ As we shall see, an adjective, with which the syntactic definiteness marker was originally associated, tended to follow the noun.

Old Norse differs crucially from modern Scandinavian languages in that noun phrases need not contain any explicit marker of definiteness in order to receive a definite interpretation. The same holds for indefiniteness. Noun phrases such as those in (7) receive an unambiguous definite interpretation even though there is no exponent of definiteness.

- (7) a. Draumr er mikill ok merkiligr
dream is great and remarkable
'The dream is great and remarkable.' (VG 30.17)
- b. Hestr var allvænligr
horse was beautiful
'The horse was beautiful.' (Gunnl. 5.59)

[Harries 2008](#)).

Throughout this paper, we will not provide a detailed glossing of examples, but only give those features that are relevant to the discussion. The following glosses will be used: ACC(usative), COMP(lementiser), DEF(inite), DEM(onstrative), GEN(itive), INDEF(inite), INF(initial marker), REL(ativiser), STR(ong) and WK (weak).

⁹ Of the 620 languages referred to in [Dryer \(2011a\)](#), 92 are described as having a bound definite marker on the noun.

¹⁰ The proposal by [van Gelderen \(2007: 294–5\)](#) that it arose from the locative adverb *hinn/hitt* 'here' is, as [Stroh-Wollin \(2009: 3\)](#) puts it 'to say the least, remarkable'.

- c. Austmaðr svarar ...
 east.man answers
 ‘The Norwegian answers ...’ (Gunnl 2.62)

More generally, there is no evidence of a unified category D(eterminer). Definiteness markers are not in complementary distribution with each other, nor with demonstratives or possessive pronouns. We provide some examples of the range of variation in (8).¹¹ As these examples illustrate, not only is there flexibility with respect to co-occurrence, the order between the elements is also not firm, with the exception that the definiteness marker *hinn* only occurs with an adjective and then always immediately preceding it. However, a weak adjective can also occur without any syntactic definiteness element.¹² Though there are examples of so-called DOUBLE DEFINITENESS, that is the co-occurrence of a syntactic definiteness marker with a noun marked for definiteness which is to become a characteristic feature of Norwegian and Swedish, this is actually relatively uncommon so that it is not easy to find examples such as (8-b), (8-c) or (8-h).¹³ We will return to the ordering of the elements shortly.

- (8) a. þetta sverð
 DEM sword
 ‘this sword’ (Hró 3.139)
- b. sá ornninn
 DEM eagle.DEF
 ‘that eagle’ (Gunnl 2.39)
- c. inu syðra landinu
 DEF southern.WK land.DEF
 ‘the southern land’ (Lax 5.17)
- d. þessi inn underligi hlutr
 DEM DEF wonderful.WK thing

11 See also Lander & Haegeman (2012: 32–3), who illustrate all possible combinations of free definiteness marker *hinn*, bound definiteness marker *-inn* and demonstrative *sá* using constructed examples extrapolated from the literature. We will not use constructed examples in this paper, but rely only on actual examples.

12 Interestingly, with modifiers that in themselves imply uniqueness, such as superlatives, ordinals or *same* ‘same’, it is more common to find the syntactic definiteness marker than not (see Harries (Forthcoming) for discussion and data.)

13 The classic reference on double definiteness in the Scandinavian languages is Lundeby (1965). Plank (2003) provides a typological overview of the phenomenon.

'this wonderful thing' (ER 85.23)

- e. með þessi þinni meðferð
with DEM POSS co-operation
'with your co-operation' (VG 25:25)
- f. in góðu klædi þin
DEF good.WK clothes POSS
'in your good clothes' (BN 59:9)
- g. þitt hitt milda andlit
POSS DEF mild.WK face
'your mild face' (Barl 187.13) (Faarlund 2004b: 60)
- h. draumkonan sú hin verri
dreamwoman.DEF DEM DEF worse
'the dream woman who was worse' (Gísla saga Súrssonar 33)
(Dahl 2004: 150)
- i. umskaða þann inn mikla ok inn illa
harm DEM DEF big.WK and DEF bad.WK
'that big and bad harm' (BN 126:24)

The syntactic definiteness marker *hinn* is restricted to environments where the noun is modified by an adjective as in (8-c), (8-d) and (8-f)-(8-i) or where a weak adjective functions as the head of a noun phrase (9).

- (9) a. fyrir þá sök, at **hinir snauðu** áttu litlar jarðir, en
for DEM reason COMP DEF poor.WK have little earth and
hinir auðgu hugðust mundu leysa sín óðul þegar er
DEF rich.WK think must redeem their udal at once REL
þeir vildu
they want
'because the poor had little land, and the rich believed that they
would be able to redeem their udal rights as soon as they wanted'
(Har 32)
- b. ok grafa upp **ina dauði**
and dig up DEF dead.WK
'and dig up the dead' (BN 161.1)

The association between definiteness markers and adjective phrases is consistent with developments in a number of languages. Generally, if there are dedicated definiteness markers in a language, there will be more of them in a noun phrase that includes adjectival modification (see Renzi (1992) for Romance and Harris (1980) for Slavonic). Dahl (2007: 152), in his study of definiteness in Scandinavian vernaculars, notes '[t]he existence of articles that mark adjectives only, as in Latvian or Old Slavonic, indicates that the initial stages of the grammaticalization of the definite articles may be restricted to noun phrases containing modifiers.'

The modern Scandinavian indefinite determiner *en* developed from the numeral *einn*. It is generally recognised that in Old Norse the element did not have the distribution of an indefinite determiner, but it still functioned as a numeral at this stage, or had meanings such as 'only', 'a single', 'a certain' or 'sole' (see for example Wessén (1992: 47–8), Heusler (1921: 131) and Faarlund (2004b: 56)).

In fact, the only category within the noun phrase which is obligatorily marked for (in)definiteness is the adjective. The endings traditionally referred to as WEAK and STRONG generally force a definite or indefinite interpretation, respectively, as illustrated in (10) (cf Wessén (1992: 42)). However, the [WEAK/STRONG] feature does not have quite the same meaning as the [DEF ±] marked on determiners and nouns and it would not be appropriate at this stage of the language to use the same feature for nouns and adjectives. We will return to this issue shortly.

- (10) a. blindr er betri, en brendr sé
 blind.STR is better than burnt.STR is
 'a blind man is better than one who is burnt' (Háv 71.4)
- b. Svo segir Bragi skáld gamli
 such says Bragi poet ancient.wk
 'So says Bragi, the ancient poet.' (Gylfa 1:11)

On the basis of the data examined so far, we can draw a number of initial conclusions. Old Norse does not have a dedicated definite element, neither free nor bound, in the sense that there is no element which is obligatory for a noun phrase to receive a definite or indefinite interpretation. There is no category D at the level of the noun phrase in Old Norse, there is no evidence of definite elements competing for one position. Since there is no category D, there is no functional projection. Our conclusions are in line with those of Lander & Haegeman (2012), though we reach them via slightly different reasoning. Unlike Lander & Haegeman (2012), we assume that there

is definiteness marking associated with the AP, and more generally that the AP is the actual structural locus for definiteness marking. Our conclusions are closer to those of Heltoft (2010: 14), who states that ‘definiteness is a paradigmatic contrast in adjectives and thus in NPs, but not in nouns.’ Perridon & Sleeman (2011: 8) argue that ‘North-Germanic and Rumanian developed an “adjectival” article, which in principle only has scope over an adjective’. Our conclusions are also consistent with discussion of the connection between definiteness markers and adjectival modification in other varieties of early Germanic by previous authors, e.g. Curme (1910) and Heinrichs (1954). Indeed, with respect to Proto-Germanic, Ringe (2006: 170) suggests it is ‘reasonable to hypothesize that the n-stem suffix of the weak adjective paradigm was originally a definite article’. We propose to analyse this in terms of a structural association between definiteness marker and the adjective phrase (see (25) at the end of this sub-section).

Let’s consider further data now. The order within the noun phrase in Old Norse is generally described as relatively free; demonstratives, adjectives and possessives can appear either before or after the noun. Though we will continue to refer separately to possessives and adjectives, and use the traditional terminology of possessive pronoun, we concur with the conclusion drawn by Heltoft (2010: 20) that possessive pronouns and adjectives actually formed one category at this stage. With respect to word order, Faarlund (2004b: 55) goes as far as to say that ‘the word order within the NP seems almost totally unconstrained by syntactic rules’. However, as Faarlund himself goes on to show, there are patterns to the distribution between pre- and post-nominal position, so that some constraints can be identified. Still, as will become apparent, we are inclined to agree with Faarlund’s statement in so far as the constraints on ordering are not **syntactic** in nature.

There are attempts in the literature to capture the generalisations relating to the word order within Old Norse noun phrases, but there is no common agreement as to how this should be done. A recent exchange serves to illustrate. Faarlund (2004a: 917) states about the language of the Runic inscriptions, the earliest documented stage of the Nordic languages, that all adjectives and possessive and demonstrative determiners follow the noun and that dependent genitive noun phrases usually do so. He recognises two examples where the genitive precedes the head noun. Eythórsson (2011: 43), on the other hand, states about the same data set that ‘there are several examples of the order genitive–noun, ... On the other hand, the order noun–genitive appears rare; in fact there is only one clear example’.¹⁴ The data set

¹⁴ Eythórsson includes possessive pronouns in the category ‘genitive’, whereas Faarlund treats them as two separate categories, with the possessive determiner always following the noun

on which the disagreement is based is relatively limited and well-known, so that it genuinely is a question of different interpretations of the same data. The point of view of traditional scholarship is represented by [Antonsen \(1975: 24\)](#): ‘The preponderance of evidence points to the unmarked order head+modifier. ... There are, however, a significant number of genitives before the head.’

The examples provided by the two authors are relevant to our interpretation of later data. We provide the noun–possessor examples in (11) and those with prenominal possessors in (12). Eythorsson argues that (11-a) is the only clear example of a postnominal possessor, whereas according to Faarlund, it is the pattern in (12) which is rare.

- (11) a. þewaz godagas
retainer.NOM Godagas.GEN
‘the retainer of Godagas’ [Valsfjord cliff inscription, ([Eythórsson 2011: 43](#)), ([Faarlund 2004a: 917](#))]
- b. erilaz Asugisalas
erilaz Asugisalas.GEN
‘the erilaz of Asugisalas’ [Kragehul lance shaft inscription, ([Faarlund 2004a: 917](#))]¹⁵
- c. gudija Ungandiz
priest Ungandis.GEN
‘Ungandis’s priest’ [Nordhuglo rune stone, ([Faarlund 2004a: 917](#))]¹⁶
- (12) a. magoz minas staina
son.GEN 1SG.GEN stone.ACC
‘my son’s stone’ [[Vettelund rune stone](#), ([Eythórsson 2011: 43](#))]
- b. hnabdas hlaiwa
Hnabdaz.GEN grave
‘Hnabdaz’s grave’ [[Bø rune stone](#), ([Eythórsson 2011: 43](#))]

and the genitive noun phrase usually following the noun.

15 The word *erilaz* is generally assumed to be a title, but it receives different translations in the literature, for instance ‘earl’ or ‘nobleman’. We have followed ([Antonsen 1975: 322](#)) here and used *erilaz*.

16 This is an example where different interpretations involve different categories *Ungandiz* has been interpreted as ‘immune to magic’, in which case it would be an adjective, and would not be an example of a postnominal possessor, but ([Antonsen 1975: 225](#)) argues authoritatively that it is the name of the priest’s ‘overlord’.

- c. Ingijon hallaz
 Ingio.GEN stone
 ‘Ingio’s stone’ [Stenstad rune stone, (Faarlund 2004a: 917)]
- d. ...an waruz
GEN enclosure
 ‘...’s enclosure’ [Tomstad rune stone, (Faarlund 2004a: 917)]¹⁷

Note that (12-a) also contains *magoz minas*, which has the order head–possessor, and is indeed one cited by Faarlund (2004a: 917) as an example of what he considers the dominant order. Both authors point out that when the possessum is animate, the possessor follows it and when the possessum is inanimate, there is a prenominal possessor. This is a generalisation that goes back to Smith (1971) and Antonsen (1975), though as Eythórsson (2011: 43) points out, it is based on a small dataset. We will return to this generalisation when we have looked at later, non-Runic, Old Norse.

Turning now from Runic inscriptions to Old Norse texts, it is generally agreed that the unmarked order involves adjectives and possessives following the noun, as in (13) and (18) (Braunmüller (1994: 30) argues that this is true more generally for Proto-Germanic).¹⁸ Faarlund’s (2004b: 68) generalisation that ‘The basic position of the adjective is to the left of the noun. ... It is more common, however, for the adjectives to follow the noun on the surface’ may sound rather puzzling as an empirical description. However, the assumption that the prenominal position is ‘basic’ stems from theoretical assumptions about universal phrase structure, so that it is the second part of the quote which captures the empirical generalisation.

- (13) a. hann hafði sét **konu fagra**
 he had seen woman beautiful
 ‘he had seen a beautiful woman’ (Sno Edd 1.69)
- b. hann hafði í hendi **øxi mikla**
 he had in hands axe big
 ‘he had a big axe in his hands’ (BN 34.10)
- c. Jófriðr fœddi meðan **meybarn ákafa fagrt**
 J. give.birth meanwhile girl.child greatly beautiful
 ‘meanwhile Jófriðr gave birth to an gloriously beautiful baby girl’ (Gunnl 3.13)

¹⁷ The stone is worn and some text is missing, but it is generally assumed to have been a name.

¹⁸ Wessén (1992: 111) points out that in Old Swedish, postnominal modification was more rare and word order more generally less free than in West Scandinavian.

However, if there is emphasis on the property expressed by the adjective or if it is contrasted with some other property, it usually precedes the noun, as in (14) (see for instance [Valfells & Cathey \(1981: 16\)](#) or [Faarlund \(2004b: 69\)](#)). In (14-a), the two illegitimate sons are contrasted with legitimate sons, and in (14-b), the heathen men are contrasted with the previously mentioned Christian men.

- (14) a. hann átti **tvá laungetna sonu**, Hriflu ok Hrafn, en síðan
 he had two illegitimate sons, H. and H. and since
 hann kvángaðist, áttu þau Jófríðr tíu börn.
 he married had they J. ten children
 ‘He had two illegitimate sons and after his marriage with Jófríðr
 ten children’ (Egil 167.25)
- b. Þá váru hér **menn Kristnir** ... af því at þeir vildu eigi
 there were here men Christian of that to they wanted NEG
 vera hér við **heiðna menn**,
 be here with heathen men
 ‘There were Christian men here ... because they did not want to
 be here with heathen men.’ (Lib Isl 4.24–6)

When there is more than one adjective modifying a noun, it is common for one to occur pre-nominally and the other co-ordinated following the noun, as in (15).

- (15) a. mikit hús ok fagrt
 big house and beautiful
 ‘a big and beautiful house’ (Sno Edd 1.56)
- b. inn sterkasti maðr ok all-frækni
 the strongest man and very.courageous
 ‘the strongest and very courageous man’ (Heims 10.110-1)

It should also be pointed out here that under the right information-structural conditions, an adjective can even be extracted from its noun phrase and fronted to clause-initial position, as in (16)

- (16) goðan eigum vér konung
 good own we king
 ‘We have a good king.’ (Heim II) ([Rögnavaldsson 1995: 8](#))

It is appropriate at this point to briefly consider the form and position of adjectives in a broader perspective. There is a long tradition of work, within both traditional grammar and formal semantics, of distinguishing between adjectives which function to delimit or restrict the reference of the accompanying noun – in the terminology of Bolinger (1967) ‘referent-modifying’ – and those which combine with and modify the predicate expressed by the noun, a function which Bolinger dubs ‘reference-modifying’ (for other labels for the same contrast see the compilation in Vincent (2007: 58). The standard example is *old friend*, which may mean ‘a friend of advanced years’ (referent modifying) or ‘a friend of long standing’ (reference modifying). At the same time there is good evidence elsewhere within Indo-European that this semantic distinction maps onto word order, with postnominal position being preferred for the adjective in its referent-modifying while prenominal position is associated with reference-modifying uses (for Greek, see Dik (2007), Bakker (2009) and for Latin see Vincent (2007) and references there). Thus, compare Italian *un amico vecchio* ‘a friend who is old’ and *un vecchio amico* ‘someone who has been a friend for a long time’. Indeed in this latter position the combination of adjective + noun has sometimes been analysed as a compound Radatz (2001). Within languages which exploit the positional difference in this way, it is the prenominal adjectives which are associated with emphasis and emotive overtones. Though we are not aware of a systematic study of adjectives, their position and their function in Old Norse, it is interesting to note that one of the prenominal uses of the adjective *lítill* ‘small’ in *Snorri Sturluson’s Edda* which cannot be accounted for in terms of emphasis is the example found in (17), where the adjective is clearly reference modifying.¹⁹

- (17) engi er svá lítill drykkjumaðr at eigi gangi af í
 no-one is so small drinking man that not go out of in
 þrimr
 three times
 ‘no-one is such a small-time drinker that he cannot finish it in three’
 (Sno Edd 1.276–7)

In Germanic a similar contrast in function has been recognised in respect of WEAK vs STRONG adjectives. Thus, Curme (1910), argues that in early Germanic the STRONG form of the adjective implied a focus on the quality

¹⁹ The idiomatic translation is that of Jesse L Bycock, see Bycock (2005).

expressed by the adjective rather than on the individual identified by the NP. Brunner (1951: 51) describes Old English *WEAK* adjectives as ‘individualising’ in contrast to the ‘generalising’ *STRONG* ones.²⁰ In similar vein, Harries (Forthcoming) shows that *STRONG* adjectives in Old Norse can be employed in an otherwise definite phrase to indicate non-restrictive modification, as for instance *Pann helgan mann* (holy.*STR* man) ‘the saint’, in a way that is reminiscent of the compound noun analysis mentioned above.²¹ Evidence of this kind suggests that the modern Scandinavian association of *WEAK* with definite and *STRONG* with indefinite may be traced back to a rather different kind of opposition. In particular, the etymological source of the *-n* stem formation of *WEAK* adjectives goes back to the Proto-Indo-European ‘individualizing’ suffix: contrast Latin *catulus* ‘shrewd’ with the cognomen *Catō, -ōnis* ‘the shrewd one’. The same ancient contrast may then play out differently in different languages. McFadden (2009), for example, shows how the Germanic developments in the declension of adjectives are parallel to and yet structurally different from the distinction between definite/long and indefinite/short adjectives in Baltic and Slavic. Similarly, the resulting system of adjectival marking in Scandinavian is different in form from that of Present-Day German (on the differences, see for instance Haberland & Heltoft (2007)).

Turning now to possessive pronouns, like adjectives, they tend to follow the noun, as illustrated by (18). Given that they can be considered to belong to the same syntactic category as adjectives, this is not surprising.

- (18) a. **hest min** skaltu taka
 horse my shall.you take
 ‘you shall take my horse’ (Gunnl 3.15)
- b. Þá lét Njorðr kalla til sín Skírni, **skósvein Freys**
 then let N. call to REFL S. servant Frey.GEN
 ‘Then Njorðr summoned Skírni, Frey’s servant’ (Sno Edd 1.63)
- c. ok er þaðan komit **kyn allra Orkneyinga jarla**
 and are from that come kin all.GEN Orkney.GEN earl.GEN

20 Fischer (2001: 253) comments on Brunner: ‘I do not think that ‘individuating’ vs. ‘generalizing’ is the most useful distinction’. Instead, she picks up Brunner’s additional description of the weak adjectives as *wiederaufnehmend* (‘resumptive’) and associates weak adjectives with ‘given’ (or ‘thematic’) and strong ones with ‘new’ (or ‘rhematic’).

21 Delsing (1994), analyses the use of adjective forms in Old Swedish noun phrases including possessives, which frequently have a *STRONG* adjective. He finds that the choice of form is influenced by word order, but also that ‘classifying’ adjectives tend to occur in *STRONG* form, whereas ‘descriptive’ adjectives occur in *WEAK* form.

‘And from this came the kin of all Orkney’s earls’ (Lax 8.7)

The examples in (19) and (20) come from *Gunnlaugs saga Ormstungu*, a text with plenty of examples of postnominal possessive pronouns: *faðir hans* ‘his father’ (ch 1), *húsfreyja þín* ‘your wife’ (ch 2), *dóttur þinnar* ‘your daughter’ (ch 2), *bróður sinn* ‘his.REFL brother’ (ch 3), *kona hans* ‘his wife’ (ch 5), *frændi minn* ‘my kinsman’ (ch 5) and many more. In (19) and (20), the possessor precedes the noun and in all cases, there is contrastive emphasis. In (19) there is explicit contrast between the two fathers, whereas the examples in (20) come from a discussion about whose daughter Helga is.²²

- (19) at **minn faðir** væri eptirbát **þins** **föður**
 that my father was after.boat your.GEN father.GEN
 ‘that my father trailed in the wake of yours’ (Gunnl 9.33)
- (20) a. þvi at hon er eigi **hans dóttir** ...
 that at she is not his daughter
 b. en þó sé hon **þí dóttir** ...
 but if is she your daughter
 c. þá er þessi **þín dóttir** en eigi mín
 then is this your daughter and not mine
 ‘(She has not got the good looks of Oláf the Peacock) because she is not his daughter ... but if she is your (Thorgerd’s) daughter ... this is your (Thorstein’s) daughter, not mine (Thorgerd’s).’ (Gunnl 3:43–46)

The distribution of adjectives and possessors indicate that the prenominal position can be described as information-structurally privileged, without here going into more subtle information-structural categories. This interpretation of the factors influencing the order is consistent with the generalisation made for the Runic data discussed above, that the head noun is inanimate when the possessor is prenominal and animate when the possessor follows it. In (12), with prenominal possessors, not only is the possessum inanimate, but the possessor is animate, indeed human.²³ In the context of a Rune stone, in phrases such as *my son’s stone* or *Ingio’s stone*, it is the reference to the person which has high information value and hence its occurrence in

²² It should be pointed out that one of the two remaining vellum manuscripts of this text has postnominal possessors in (19) (Foote 1957: 22). This does not affect our generalisation, however, since all we are claiming is that when elements are prenominal, this is because they have some special information status.

²³ Though the possessor is not visible in (12-d), it is generally assumed to have been a proper noun.

prenominal position can be motivated by its information-structural status, rather than animacy in and of itself. In all three examples in (11), the noun phrase quoted is preceded by *ek* ‘I’, and the noun phrase as a whole provides new information about the “speaker”, the possessor on its own does not have a privileged role in terms of information. The idea that the prenominal position marks a special information status in Runic Old Norse is made explicit by Antonsen (1975: 24–5), who describes the order in *þrijōz dohtriz* ‘three daughters’ as being unexpected in Northwest Germanic Runic language and states that the quantifier ‘probably is topicalised in view of the order in other varieties.’

We conclude that syntactically, the word order is to a large extent free; the patterns we see in the order are driven by information-structural considerations. Constraints based on information structure tend to take the form of tendencies rather than the absolute constraints which are more typical of syntax. So it is with the constraints we propose here. In LFG, syntax and information structure are represented in separate dimensions, using different primitives and format of representation and hence the constraints on the two dimensions and the mapping between them can be stated separately.

The freedom of word order we have seen so far holds also for demonstratives; they can occur before or after the noun, as illustrated in (21).²⁴

- (21) a. Hversu lízk þér á **mey þessa**?
 how thinks you about girl DEM
 ‘What do you think of this girl?’ (BN 1.23)
- b. ‘Af **horni þessu** þykkir þá vel drukkit ef i einum drykk
 of horn DEM be thought it well drunk if in one drink
 gengr af
 go out of
 ‘It is thought that drinking from this horn is done well if it is
 emptied in one drink’ (Sno Edd 1.275)
- (22) a. ok til **þess húss** gekk kona
 and to DEM house went woman
 ‘and to this house the woman went’ (Sno Edd 1.56)

²⁴ There are two demonstratives: *sá* ‘distal’ and *þessi* (or *sjá*) ‘proximal’. Though both have a different distribution in Old Norse from their present-day counterparts, they appear to behave in a similar fashion with respect to the issue at hand here, the position with respect to the noun.

- b. Hann festir **þetta mál**
 he settles this matter
 ‘He fixed this arrangement’ (Egil 11.13)
- (23) a. at hann kvað at Lögbergi **kviðling þenna** ...
 that he recited to L short verse DEM
 ‘that the recited to Lögberg: ...’ (verse follows) (Lib Isl 4.81)
- b. þa drakk hann ok kvað **visu þessa**
 then drank he and recited verse DEM
 ‘then he drank and recited this verse (verse follows)’ (Þorf 5.307)

The use of the demonstrative in (21) is deictic. In (22-a) Hǫskuldur has just called his daughter over to ask Hrút for his opinion of her. In (21-b) Utgarða-Loki has just been brought the horn by one of the servants. In (22), the demonstrative is used anaphorically, referring to something that has just been mentioned in the context, and in (23), it refers to something that is about to come in the text, so can be described as cataphoric.

There is one further environment in which demonstratives are commonly used and that is in noun phrases containing relative clauses. This use can involve unique and specific reference (24-a), as would be expected of a demonstrative, but it can also be non-specific, as in (24-b), or even indefinite, as in (24-c). Indeed, Dyvik (1979: 51) states that the use of a demonstrative is ‘a nearly automatic consequence of restrictive adjectival modification, regardless of the nominal’s semantic properties.’²⁵ On the same issue, Faarlund (2004b: 84) comments that ‘NPs containing a relative clause are almost always complements of a demonstrative’.²⁶

- (24) a. Nú munum vér fœra konungi **skatt þenna** er vér höfum
 now must we send king tribute DEM REL we have
 við tekit
 with taken
 ‘Now we must take to the king the tributes that we have received’
 (Egil 138.31)
- b. ‘eigi sé ek **þann mann** hér inni er eigi mun lítilræði
 not see I DEM man here inside REL not will degradation

²⁵ This is our translation of the original ‘en tillærmet automatisk følge av restriktiv adjektival leddsetning, uavhengig av nominates semantiske egenskaper.’ It is clear from Dyvik’s examples that relative clauses fall under ‘adjectival modification’.

²⁶ Faarlund assumes that the demonstratives heads a DP in Old Norse, so that the NP consisting of the noun and the relative clause forms a complement of the demonstrative.

í þykkja at fask við þik'
 in be thought INF wrestle with you
 'I cannot see a man here that would not find it degrading to
 wrestle with you' (Sno Edd 1.328)

- c. En þar at gildinu var sá maðr er Hogni hét
 and there at feast was DEM man REL H. called
 'and at the feast there was a man called Hogni' (Egil 7.20)

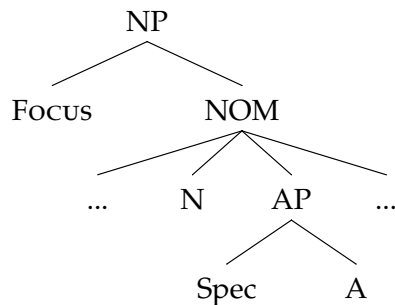
It is not possible to make absolute generalisations about the order between the demonstrative and the noun, but some tendencies can be established. The evidence from Runic Old Norse suggests that the postnominal demonstrative is the original positioning (Faarlund 2004a, Stroh-Wollin 2009). However, when it is used anaphorically, as in (22), pre-nominal positioning is very common, and Faarlund (2004b: 85) states about the use illustrated by (24) that 'more often than not, the head noun is fronted, with the consequence that the demonstrative immediately precedes the relative clause.'

The relatively free word order we have seen illustrated here suggests to us some degree of non-configurationality, which is best represented as a flat structure in which elements are not associated with particular structural positions. We assume that configurationality is not an either-or property of natural languages, but that different constituents within a single language may exhibit this property to differing degrees. While complete non-configurationality is a rare phenomenon, partial non-configurationality is very much to be expected. We do, for instance, recognise an AP within the generally non-configurational noun phrase. There has been some debate about configurationality in relation to Old Norse. Faarlund (1990) argues that Old Norse was a non-configurational language and Braunmüller (1994) has made the case for Old Norse noun phrases being non-configurational. Platzack (1991), Stockwell & King (1993) and Rögnvaldsson (1995) all argue against the conclusions drawn by Faarlund (1990). However, they do so on the basis of a broader notion of non-configurationality than order and constituency alone, though Rögnvaldsson (1995: 4) states that 'Free word order is usually considered one of the main characteristics of non-configurational languages'. However, it is only one of the characteristics, with characteristics such as lack of pleonastic NPs, extensive null-anaphora, lack of passive and raising and the use of a rich case system also being seen as evidence of non-configurationality (based on Hale (1982, 1983)). For us, non-configurationality is a c-structure notion and can be determined by an analysis of constituency alone, though it may of course co-vary with other

properties. On this view, both clauses and noun phrases in Old Norse were non-configurational. We shall not discuss clauses in any detail here, but we will return to a comparison of clauses and noun phrases in the light of [Kiparsky \(1995\)](#) as discussed in Section 3. Interestingly, from a typological angle, [Gil \(1987\)](#) points to a connection between non-configurationality and the non-obligatoriness of (in)definiteness marking, though characteristics associated with the dichotomy he suggests do not hold fully for Old Norse.

Furthermore, the positioning of information-prominent and contrastive elements at the front supports an analysis in which the noun phrase contains a dedicated discourse-prominent position on the left edge. For convenience, we have used the term *focus* for this position in (25), but rather than enter a detailed discussion of what information-structural terminology is appropriate for noun-phrase internal elements, we prefer to think of it terms of the more neutral ‘information-structurally privileged’²⁷ The conclusions we have drawn give us the tree in (25) for the Old Norse noun phrase.

(25) Old Norse noun phrase structure



This tree has an information structurally privileged position on the left edge where adjectives and possessors are assumed to be positioned when they are contrasted or otherwise emphasised. The free word order is captured by means of a flat structure under *NOM*, avoiding the traditional *N'* since its association with recursion would be inappropriate here. We interpret the data as evidence that definiteness was associated with the adjective at this stage and in the tree the node hosting a syntactic definiteness marker is found within the *AP*. In recognition of the fact that we do not see evidence

²⁷ For a summary of work on information structure within the noun phrase, see [Aboh, Corver, Dyakonova & van Koppen \(2010\)](#), work which has suggested an information structurally motivated position within the noun phrase, such as [Giusti \(1996\)](#), [Bernstein \(2001\)](#) or [Haegeman \(2004\)](#), have done so within a very different approach to syntactic structure from that taken here).

of a syntactic category D we have called it SPEC rather than D.²⁸

4.2 Early Faroese

There is a wealth of material in different genres for the earliest predecessor of Faroese, Western Old Norse, and similarly for modern Faroese. However, there is less material available from the period in between. It is also beyond the scope of this paper to look at every stage of the language development. However, in order to get support for our hypothesis of the trajectory of the change from Old Norse to Modern Faroese, we will in this section look at two intermediate stages of the language. Firstly, the language of *Seyðabrævið* ('The sheep charter'), the oldest remaining document in Faroese, from 1298. Unlike another early document *Føroyingasøgu* 'The Faroe sagas', *Seyðabrævið* was written in the Faroe Islands and hence is likely to provide the most accurate picture of the Faroese language at the time. The document is only around 3,000 words long and it is written in the language typical of statutes, with more frequent general reference such as 'if any man...', rather than specific or definite reference, which influences the number of definite noun phrases one can expect. Nonetheless, we will be able to see the beginnings of some changes compared to Old Norse. We will then turn to the language of the first volumes of the newspaper *Føringatíðindi*, dating from 1890s. This is of interest to us since it is published at a time of increased interest in the Faroese language. Indeed, the front page of the first issue of the newspaper is dedicated to a discussion of the Faroese language, with contrasting references to Icelandic and Danish, and in subsequent issues, there is frequent reference to the role of Faroese and the influence of Danish. The language of this publication is then least likely of any source to have been influenced by other Scandinavian languages.

In *Seyðabrævið*, unmodified nouns must occur in their definite form (26-a) in order to get a definite interpretation, the only exception to this when they are complements of prepositions. Indefinite noun phrases, on the other hand, can consist of just as noun as in (26-b). There is then evidence that definiteness needs to be marked explicitly, unlike in Old Norse, but that an indefinite determiner has still not developed.

- (26) a. Bardr Peterson war ritade **brefet**.
 B.P. had written letter.DEF
 'Barður Peterson had written the letter.'

²⁸ The term is used more loosely here than in the strict X-bar sense of a phrase which is unique and in some sense "completes" a phrase.

- b. Ef **sauðr** gengi j annars haga ...
 if sheep goes in other's field
 'If a sheep goes into another man's field...'

The only examples we can find in *Seyðabrævið* of the syntactic definiteness marker *hinn* is in combination with a numeral and preceding a superlative adjective, that is where the nominal already has unique reference.

- (27) a. hin iij fimt
 DEF three period
 'the third period'
- b. hin kærazste vin
 DEF dearest fiend
 'the dearest friend'

In *Seyðabrævið*, the demonstrative precedes the noun, as illustrated in (28). At this stage there is no evidence for so-called double definiteness. The noun following a demonstrative occurs without the definite ending, and in this respect the language behaves like Old Norse.

- (28) Nu gengr þessi **saiðr** aptr i þann haga
 now goes this sheep after in that pen
 'Now this sheep goes back in that pen.'

The demonstrative, and not *hinn* is used with relative clauses, where it also precedes the noun, as in (29), except in a small number of examples. This contrasts with Old Norse, where the demonstrative could occur before or after the noun, and where it strongly tended to follow the noun when it was modified by a relative clause.

- (29) Sva er ok at tala um þa menn er þegar læggiast i kot
 such is also INF say about DEM men REL at once lay in hut
 'This can also be said of the men who immediately set up in a hut.'

At this stage, adjectives tend to be prenominal, as in (30), but they may still be postnominal, in particular when the noun is preceded by a numeral, as in (31-a). When the noun phrase involves a quantifier, on the other hand, the adjective precedes the noun and the quantifier follows it, as in (31-b).

- (30) a. gamlan saið
 old.STR sheep
 'an old sheep'

- b. skynsaman mannu
wise.STR men
'wise men'
- (31) a. ii vitni skilrik
two witnesses trustworthy.STR
'two trustworthy witnesses'
- b. fatokir men allir
poor.STR men all
'all poor men'

The possessive construction appears similar to that of Old Norse at this stage of the language. In *Seyðabrævið*, the possessor generally follows the possessum, as in the examples in (32), but when used contrastively, as in (33), it can be fronted.

- (32) a. fænad hans
livestock his
'his livestock'
- b. grøði sína
crops 3SG.REFL
'his crops'
- c. haglendi annarz manz
outfield other.GEN man.GEN
'another man's outfields'
- (33) Þa skal han fa til ii vitni skilrik at þat er hans
then shall he get to two witnesses trustworthy COMP DEM is his
sauðr
sheep
'Then he shall provide two trustworthy witnesses to confirm that it is his sheep (rather than someone else's).'

Though the limited data set must make us cautious in drawing general conclusions, we believe there is early evidence of word order becoming firmer, with the pre-nominal position becoming the neutral position for adjectives and demonstratives. The order between possessor and possessum still follows the pattern we saw in Old Norse. As (30-a) illustrates, singular indefinite noun phrases can occur without any dedicated indefiniteness marker, so there is no evidence of an indefinite article developing.

Turning now to data from the 1890s, we see some further changes.²⁹ A possessor can now occur pre-nominally without any specific information status being implied, as illustrated in (34) and (35). Indeed, the prenominal position is the more common position for possessors when the noun phrase contains an adjective phrase.

- (34) a. *síni börn*
 their.REFL children (FT 1.2.1)
 b. *teirra stað*
 their town (FT 1.2.4)
 c. *okkara egna ríki*
 our own country (FT1.2.4)
 d. *sínum bestu monnum*
 their best men (FT1.2.2)
- (35) a. *Christiansens nykeypta skip*
 C.GEN newly-bought ship
 ‘Christiansen’s newly-bought ship’ (FT 1.2.3)
 b. *fyri folksins ogn*
 for people.GEN.DEF.GEN property
 ‘for the benefit of the people’ (FT 1.2.2)

Though examples of non-pronominal possessors in genitive case can be found as illustrated by (35), it should be pointed out that a decline in the use of the genitive case can be seen at this stage, with a prepositional possessor being used instead.

Noun phrases containing a pre-modifying adjective can either occur with just a definite noun, as in (36-a), or with a combination of a definite noun and a syntactic definiteness marker, as in (36-b). The frequency of *tann* is increasing, with its use expanding into environments associated with a definiteness marker rather than a demonstrative as in (36-c).

- (36) a. *fyrsti lærari í realskúlanum*
 first teacher.DEF in lower.secondary.school
 ‘the first teacher in the lower secondary school’ (FT 3.2.4)
 b. *hin viðgíttni Danski fólkatingsmaðurin*
 DEF famous.WK Danish member.of.parliament.DEF
 ‘the famous Danish member of parliament’ (FT 3.1.4)

²⁹ The references for the examples are to FT(*Føringatíðindi*) Volume.Number.Page.

- c. Genta okkara hev i nú mist allan hug till at sigla
 girl our had in now lost all desire to INF sail
 tann salta sjógv.
 DEM/DEF salty sea
 ‘The girl of our story had now lost all desire to sail the salty sea.’
 (FT 1.1.3)

Demonstratives no longer co-occur with the syntactic definiteness marker or with possessive pronouns. When a demonstrative combines with an unmodified noun, the noun does not generally carry the definite ending, as in (37). When the noun is modified, usage varies as illustrated by (36-b) and (38-a), where the noun is definite, and (38-b), where it is not. At this stage Faroese has then not developed double definiteness.

- (37) a. hesum lærarum
 these teachers (FT1.2.2)
 b. tær bygdir
 those districts (FT1.2.2)
 c. tann lærdómur
 that knowledge (FT1.2.2)
- (38) a. hesar ungu landsmenninar
 these young countrymen.DEF (FT 1.2.3)
 b. hesu stuttu ferð
 this short trip (FT 1.1.3)

An indefinite article has developed, and indefinite singular count nouns can no longer be used referentially without *ein*, regardless of whether there is a WEAK/STRONG marked adjective preceding it.

- (39) a. eitt blað
 INDEF newspaper (FT 1.1.1)
 b. ein vælkominn gestur
 INDEF welcome.STR guest (FT 1.1.1)

We see in this data that the word order has become firmer, with prenominal position being the neutral one for adjectives and demonstratives and from the 1890s also for possessors. The firmer word order is an indication that configurationality has started to develop. There is no longer evidence of an information-structurally privileged position within the noun phrase. The complementary distribution of the syntactic definite markers – articles, demonstratives and possessors – we see as evidence that a D category is emerging. The earlier dataset shows no evidence of an indefinite article, but

by the 1890s, an article is required in indefinite referential noun phrases. There is evidence that definiteness marking is becoming associated with the left edge of the noun phrase, and that the WEAK/STRONG feature counts as a definiteness feature for these purposes, so that the WEAK adjective can occur initially in (36-a). However, it is no longer the case that WEAK/STRONG marking alone is sufficient for the noun phrase to receive a definite or indefinite interpretation. Unlike in Old Norse, the syntactic determiner is no longer associated with the adjective, but with the noun phrase as a whole; the adjective phrase has ceased to be the locus for definiteness. We will now turn to Present-Day Faroese to follow these developments.

4.3 Present-Day Faroese

4.3.1 (In)definiteness markers

Present-Day Faroese (PDF), retains the bound definiteness marker, but it has developed a new syntactic definiteness marker from the distal demonstrative *tann*.³⁰ As in the earlier stage of Faroese, adjectives now precede the noun, but in a development from the 1890s, a syntactic definiteness marker is required when there is premodification. The element *tann* is both a definite determiner and a demonstrative. *Hin* is also used as a non-demonstrative definite determiner in some contexts, but in other contexts, this use sounds literary or archaic.

- (40) a. teldan
 computer.DEF
 ‘the computer’
- b. tann stóra gatan
 DEF big.WK mystery.DEF
 ‘the/that big mystery’
- c. hin størsta vindmylluparkin í Europa
 DEF biggest windmill.park.DEF in Europe
 ‘the biggest wind farm in Europe’

³⁰ In this section, we shall use ‘Faroese’ to refer to Present-Day Faroese. All examples are taken from, or in a few instances adapted from, *Färöisk textsamling*, which is available at *Språkbanken* (<http://spraakbanken.gu.se/>), or from a corpus of Faroese prose and newspaper texts constructed for Harries (Forthcoming). We are grateful to those who have been involved in making the texts in the electronic corpus publicly available.

As (40-b) and (40-c) show, the syntactic definiteness marker co-occurs with the morphological marker on the noun. This is the case also when there is a definite syntactic element other than the article, as in (41). However, as (42) shows, the syntactic definite elements cannot co-occur.

- (41) a. tann bilin
 DEM car.DEF
 ‘that car’
- b. hetta gamla orðið
 DEM old.WK word.DEF
 ‘this old word’
- (42) a. *hasin tann maðurin
 DEM DEF/DEM man.DEF
 ‘that man’
- b. *tann hasum læknanum
 DEM DEM doctor.DEF
 ‘after those doctors’

The data in (40) and (41), would seem to lead to the conclusion that Faroese displays double definiteness, that is that a syntactic definite marker has to co-occur with a noun carrying the bound definite marker. Double definiteness divides the modern Scandinavian languages: Swedish and Norwegian have double definiteness, whereas Danish and Icelandic do not. With respect to Faroese, however, slightly different views on this issue are represented in the literature; [Thráinsson, Petersen, Jacobsen & Hansen \(2004\)](#) and [Julien \(2005\)](#) class it with the Mainland Scandinavian languages as having double definiteness, whereas [Lockwood \(1977\)](#) and [Barnes & Weyhe \(1994\)](#) describe double definiteness as a tendency only. It is indeed possible in Faroese to have a prenominal adjective without an accompanying syntactic definiteness marker, as in (43). However, as [Harries \(Forthcoming: Sect 4.4\)](#) shows, the syntactic determiner can be omitted only in a constrained set of environments, for instance with unique descriptions, where the modifier gives the noun phrase a unique reference or in non-referential noun phrases.

- (43) a. meðan **svarti deyðin** herjar í 1348
 while black death.DEF ravishes in 1348
 ‘while the Black Death ravishes in 1348’
- b. **hægsta fjallið** í fóroyum
 highest mountain.DEF in Faroe Islands

‘the highest mountain in the Faroe Islands’

- c. **gamli borgarstjórin** í New York, Rudolf Giuliani
 old mayor.DEF in New York R.G.
 ‘the old mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani’

It is not modification in general which triggers the requirement for a syntactic determiner, only pre-modification. As the examples in (44) show, a definite noun can combine with post-modification to form a referential noun phrase.

- (44) a. borðinum, sum høvuðspersónarnir skuldu sita við
 table.DEF REL head.persons would sit at
 ‘the table that the main people would sit at’
- b. maðurin í bilinum
 man.DEF in car.DEF
 ‘the man in the car’

Explicit syntactic marking is now required also for indefinite noun phrases, as in (45). As indicated in Lockwood (1977: 109) and (Thráinsson et al. 2004: 91), some indefinite noun phrases may occur without the indefinite article, but this is in similar contexts to those where the definite article can be omitted, and we will assume that the article is obligatory in indefinite referential noun phrases.

- (45) a. *(Ein) **ungur maður** hevði blandað methanol í
 INDEF young.STR man had mixed schnapps with
 brennivín, og síðan selt tað til *(ein) **handilsman**.
 methanol and then sold it to a tradesman
 ‘A man had mixed methanol in schnapps and then sold it to a tradesman.’
- b. *(Eitt) **nýtt dagtilhald** er latið upp í
 INDEF new.STR.NT day residence is let up in
 høvuðsstaðnum.
 capital.DEF
 ‘A new day centre was opened in the capital.’

From the data presented so far in this section, we can conclude that referential noun phrases require explicit marking for definiteness and indefiniteness. Furthermore, the definiteness is associated with the left edge of the noun phrase, and the WEAK/STRONG marking on the adjective cannot satisfy this requirement; when the definite noun is preceded by an adjective, a syntactic

definiteness marker needs to be present for the noun phrase to be referential. We will return to the issue of why the definite noun cannot precede the adjectives and thereby satisfy the left-edge criterion in Section 4.3.3.

4.3.2 Possessives

There is still some variation in possessor–possessum order when the possessum is unmodified. However, when there is adjectival modification, the preferred order is with the possessor preceding the noun and the adjective, so that the order in (46-a) is overwhelmingly more common than that in (46-b).³¹

- (46) a. mín góði vinur
my good.WK friend
b. góði vinur mín
good.WK friend my
'my good friend'

There is a trend attested in Faroese towards a preference for a definite marked noun if the possessive follows the noun; whereas (47-a) is the traditional form, (47-b) is gaining ground.

- (47) a. barn mítt
child my
b. barnið mítt
child.DEF my
'my child'

The distribution of possessive determiners, which give a definite reading, provides further evidence of the generalisation that definiteness is associated with the left edge, and that the adjectival WEAK/STRONG marking cannot satisfy this requirement.

The use of the genitive case for non-pronominal possessors has fallen out of use (see Lockwood (1977: 28) and Thráinsson et al. (2004: 62–3)), instead a prepositional phrase tends to be used; the contrast between pronominal and non-pronominal possessors is illustrated in (48). A more recent development is the *sa(r)* possessive. We will not discuss this further here, but refer to Harries (Forthcoming: Chapter 3).

³¹ In the corpus created for Harries (Forthcoming), 97% of the noun phrases containing a possessive pronoun and a premodified possessum had the order in (46-a).

- (48) Men tað er ikki **mín trupulleiki** – tað er **trupulleikin hjá**
 but that is NEG my trouble that is trouble.DEF PREP
Føroyum.
 Faroe.Islands
 ‘That is not my problem – it is the Faroe Islands’ problem.’

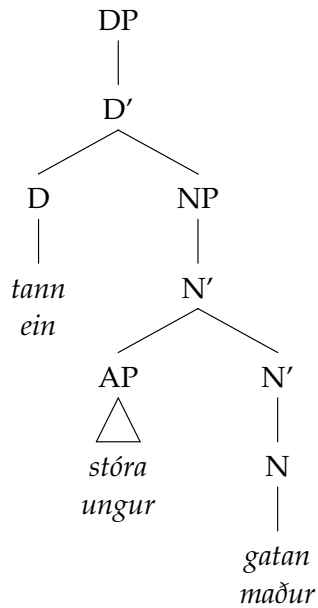
4.3.3 Analysis

One of the main developments between Present-Day Faroese and its early predecessor is the firm word order which has developed; there is now next to no flexibility. Furthermore, the order is established syntactically and though there is still some flexibility, there is no information-structurally privileged position. There are dedicated syntactic elements for both definiteness and indefiniteness; articles have developed and they occur in complementary distribution with other syntactic markers of definiteness. This we take as evidence of the existence of a category D. Furthermore, the feature responsible for definiteness and indefiniteness marking is associated with the left edge of the noun phrase in PDF.³² As discussed in Section 2, the association of a feature with a particular structural position leads us to assume a projecting functional category in c-structure.³³ Given our assumptions, this means the non-configurational flat NP in Old Norse has developed into a configurational articulated DP structure in PDF. This gives the tree in (49) for the noun phrases in (40-b) and (45-a).

- (49) Modern Faroese noun phrase structure

³² As in other Germanic languages, there are so-called pre-determiners which can precede the determiner and thereby occupy the left edge: *allan tann hvíta fiskin* ‘all the white fish.DEF’. We assume that such elements are outside the domain for which the left-edge generalisation holds.

³³ Others have accounted for the distribution of definiteness in terms of a percolating left-edge feature (for instance *van der Auwera (1990)* and *Svenonius (1992)*), but have not linked this to a functional projections.



In this analysis, the constraint that definiteness be marked on the left edge is a structural fact, it is because the DP is left-headed. This means that we assume a definite noun may occur under D if the noun phrase in which occurs does not contain pre-modification, to give the tree in (50).

(50) Modern Faroese noun phrase structure: unmodified definite noun



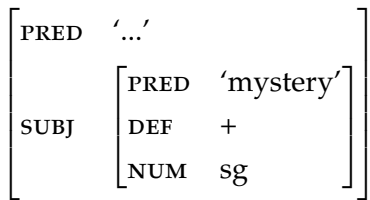
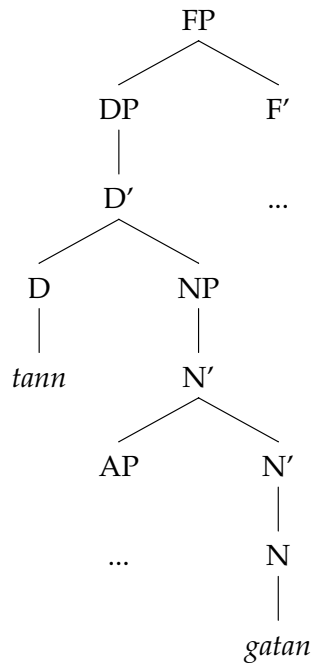
Nouns without a definiteness marker cannot occur in this position since they are unmarked for definiteness rather than [DEF-]. Evidence for this is not just the fact that they cannot on their own function as a referential noun phrase as illustrated in (51) (see also (45) above), but also the fact that they can actually occur in a definite noun phrase in some contexts.

- (51) ***(Ein) kona** og ***(eitt) barn** hyggja í ***(eina) bók**, meðan
 INDEF woman and INDEF child look in INDEF book while
 dustsúgvarin ger sítt arbeiði.
 vacuum.cleaner does its work
 ‘A woman and a child are looking at a book while the vacuum cleaner
 is doing its work.’

The existence of the functional projection is motivated by the fact that the feature [DEF±] is associated with the left edge, and it is the fact that a definite noun is marked for this feature that allows it to occur in D. This is parallel to the way in which a finite verb occurs under a clausal functional category in Scandinavian languages to create verb-second, or rather V_{finite} -second, order. It does not require a process of “inflectional derivation” as proposed for Danish by [Hankamer & Mikkelsen \(2002\)](#), but relies on functional categories sharing the main categorial features of their associated lexical categories; the functional category D is essentially nominal in nature, it can house only functional features associated with nominals. [Grimshaw \(1991, 2005\)](#) discussed this in terms of ‘extended projections’. In LFG, the close connection between a functional category and its lexical complement is captured by the notion of co-head ([Bresnan 2001: 101–9](#)). More concretely, in LFG, the head of the functional category and the head of its lexical complement will be f-structure co-heads; through their projections, they will both be associated with the same f-structure, as illustrated by the fragment in (52). We will not be concerned here with the formalism which makes this happen, but refer to [Bresnan \(2001: 101–9\)](#) for this.³⁴

- (52) D and NP as functional co-heads

³⁴ We use F for the clausal functional category so as not to have to commit to it being C or I, or some other specific functional category (see [Börjars, Engdahl & Andréasson \(2003\)](#) for discussion). We ignore the adjective here since the standard analysis of adjectival modifiers in LFG involves a feature whose value is a set, and this would complicate the illustration unnecessarily.



One challenge for any account of noun phrases in Mainland Scandinavian is how to account for the fact that a syntactic determiner is required when there is pre-modification, and this applies also to Faroese.³⁵

We assume that the explanation is historical, that this is a reflex of the time when the syntactic determiner was a specifier of the adjective rather than of a nominal constituent. In this sense, we see it as an example of STRUCTURAL PERSISTENCE, extending a term introduced by Hopper (1991). He uses it to describe how a grammaticalised element may contain some trace of its original lexical meaning, as for instance when the verb *will* in English

35 The issue is generally discussed in relation to definite noun phrases, not because adjectives in indefinite noun phrases do not need to be preceded by a syntactic determiner, but because a syntactic determiner is always required for referential indefinite noun phrases, whether they involve a pre-modifier or not. However, Börjars & Donohue (2000: 234–2) show that at least for Swedish, it can be argued to hold also for indefinite noun phrases, as they can occur without article in predicative position, except when they are preceded by an adjective.

contains traces of volition in some uses even after its grammaticalisation into a future marker. Breban (2009) and Börjars, Denison, Krajewski & Scott (2013) have also used the term in the extended structural sense. However, at the same time, it is clear that the structure of APs and the connection with the syntactic definiteness marker has changed, so that it is no longer appropriate to assume that the element forms a constituent with the adjective, as assumed for Old Norse in (25). The question is then how to capture this in a theoretical analysis.

A broad range of analyses have been proposed in the literature, and we will only briefly illustrate a number of them here, since to our minds, they are all best described as “technical and correct”, rather than “insightful”. Many have relied on constraints on feature assignment in combination with specific assumptions about permissible operations on trees. In the analysis proposed in Hellan (1986), the syntactic determiner is required in order to assign the feature [WEAK] to the adjective and [DEF] to the noun. A definite noun without pre-modifiers is considered the result of a “downwards” merger between a definite determiner in D and the noun, resulting in a definite noun in N. The reason the syntactic determiner in this guise cannot assign the feature [WEAK] to an adjective is that the definite noun is assumed to occur under N, and hence the adjective would precede it. Since an element can only assign features under government, which is rightward, this is ruled out.

Holmberg (1992) argues that a noun phrase is licensed for an argument position only when its specifier position is filled. In the case of a definite noun without pre-modification, there is assumed to be an empty element *pro* in the specifier position of NP. This is the same position as that occupied by a pre-modifying AP, and for such a phrase to be licensed, a new functional projection, nP, is created above it and a syntactic determiner fills its specifier position and hence licenses it. In this approach, an unmodified definite noun in argument position is of category NP, whereas a noun phrase containing an AP is of category nP.³⁶

Börjars (1998) analyses Swedish noun phrases in terms of Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (?). Within this formalism, a modifier selects its head, and the specification of this head can refer to its selection requirements in terms of complements and specifiers. By employing this feature of the formalism, a weak adjective can be specified as selecting a nominal head which is specified as taking an obligatory definite determiner as its specifier. Though this analysis makes the correct predictions, it might also be taken

³⁶ In a similar vein, though for reasons of c-commanding relations, Schoorlemmer (2012) assumes that the presence of a pre-modifying adjective triggers a new phrasal category, but in his analysis, they are both DPs.

as evidence that the formalism is too powerful since it allows a modifier indirectly to select the specifier of its head sister; a modifier can select its “aunt” in the tree.

A semantic solution is offered by Cooper (1984).³⁷ The phrase structure rules assumed in his analysis freely generate noun phrases consisting of an adjective and a definite noun, but the interpretation rules can only interpret noun phrases with adjectives if they also contain a syntactic determiner. Though this solution also makes the correct predictions, given that the semantic definiteness marker on the noun is generally powerful enough to get a definite interpretation in the semantics, there is no evidence in favour of the requirement for a syntactic determiner being semantically driven.

In the account proposed here and in many others the question is not so much ‘why is the syntactic determiner required?’, as ‘why can the definite noun not fill the D position when there is an adjective?’. Delsing (1993) assumes that this is because the AP blocks movement upwards of the definite noun. Even though Delsing works within a theory where zero elements are not ruled out, the assumption is that the D must be filled and hence an “expletive” *den* is introduced. Since it is an expletive element, it does not have any features and hence it is not actually a syntactic definite determiner.³⁸

We have outlined a diverse range of accounts of why the syntactic definiteness marker is required, with the intention of showing that though there are many and varied accounts, and they all make correct predictions about the distribution of definiteness markers, they do so by using the technical machinery available within their respective frameworks. It seems to us, they do not increase our understanding of this rather odd distribution and hence none of them is entirely satisfactory. Other accounts of the same phenomenon have appeared in the literature since, but they are essentially variants of previous ones, using more recent theoretical machinery. To our minds, none of the accounts discussed here can be said to truly explain why the syntactic determiner is required.

We will then offer a technical solution consistent with the framework within which we are formulating our account, but this does not particularly capture the structural persistence we assume is the historical explanation. LFG includes a principle of Economy of Expression:

Economy of Expression All syntactic phrase structure nodes are optional and are not used unless required by independent principles (Com-

³⁷ He also offers an analysis in terms of morpho-syntactic features, but this is of less interest to us here since it is less distinct from other analyses proposed in the literature.

³⁸ Santelmann (1992) also provides an analysis in which the syntactic determiner is an expletive element.

pletteness, Coherence, Semantic expressivity) (Bresnan 2001: 91)

In the tree in (50), the NP complement of D has been deleted because it is not required by any independent principles. Since an AP occurs within an NP, this means that in this configuration, there is no position for the AP to occupy.³⁹

Under this analysis, one may ask how here can be postmodification of a definite noun, as in (44), if the definite noun is in D and the NP has been deleted, how can there be postmodification. We would argue that this is because postmodification does not attach within the NP, but within the DP. There is evidence that personal pronouns are of category D. Though they generally occur “intransitively”, as the examples in (53) show, they can take an NP complement like any other D.

- (53) a. Eru **vit føroyingar** veruliga so illa kálvføddir at vit ikki
 are we Faroese really so badly calf-reared COMP vi not
 kunna stýra okkum sjálvum
 can govern us selves
 ‘Are we Faroese so raised so badly that are not able to govern
 ourseleves.’
- b. Kunnu **tit foreldur** ikki læra børnini at halda
 can you parents not teach children.DEF INF hold
 fingrarnar burtur frá hesum?
 fingers.DEF away from this
 ‘Can you parents not teach the children to keep their hadns off
 this?’

Bare pronouns cannot occur with pre-modifiers, as (54) shows. We would argue that this is because there is no NP for the AP to occur within. A post-modifier, on the other hand, is possible, as in (55), evidence that post-modifiers attach to the DP.

- (54) *nýggja eg
 new.WK I
 ‘the new me’
- (55) a. vit í Suðuroynni
 we in Suðuroy.DEF
 ‘we in Suðuroynni (the South Island)’

³⁹ This is similar to the approach taken by Hankamer & Mikkelsen (2002) within a different framework.

- b. vit sum skulu stýra landinum í framtíðini
 we REL shall govern country.DEF in future.DEF
 ‘we who will govern the country in the future’

We will further have to assume that if an NP is required by the ‘independent principles’ referred to in the definition of Economy of Expression, for instance because of the presence of an AP, then the definite noun must appear in the N, rather than in the D.

Though there is a sense in which the syntactic definiteness marker occurs to satisfy a constraint for there to be definiteness on the left edge, it is not an expletive element as in some analysis of other Scandinavian languages discussed above. In functional terms, the syntactic and the morphological definiteness markers contribute the same feature values. Since D, under which a syntactic determiner is found and N, which houses the definite noun in a noun phrase also containing a syntactic determiner, are co-heads, they both contribute features to the same f-structure, as illustrated in (52) above. The fact that they contribute the same feature is not a problem, it will be the case not just for the DEF feature, but also for NUM and GEND. In this sense, we consider “double definiteness” a relatively superficial phenomenon; in Faroese, Swedish and Norwegian the determiner and the noun agree not just for number and gender, but also for definiteness, whereas in Danish, which does not show double definiteness, they do not agree.⁴⁰ The fact that the definiteness feature has “semantic clout” in a way that number and gender do not does not materially change this. We do not believe that the difference justifies an assumption that Danish has a fundamentally different noun phrase structure from Swedish, Norwegian and Faroese.

5 CONCLUSIONS

We have argued here that a category D has developed between Old Norse and Present-Day Faroese and that subsequently this category has come to head a DP projection. In our view, these are two distinct steps. A category D can be said to be developing when definiteness marking starts to become obligatory and when there is complementary distribution between this new marking and other independent markers such as demonstratives and possessive pronouns which encode the same feature. However, at this stage there is no independent empirical reason to assume a phrasal projection associated with this category. Nor from a theoretical point of view is it necessary to postulate

⁴⁰ Other authors, for instance Julien (2005), have argued that the two elements contribute different features, but we believe the effects they refer to cannot be attributed separately to the two elements, but are the result of a number of interacting factors.

that all categories project to the phrasal level (see [Toivonen \(2001, 2003\)](#) for a discussion of the grammar of non-projecting categories within LFG). Only when the functional feature becomes associated with a particular structural position do we assume that the category projects to the phrasal level. This distinguishes our approach from that taken by [Lander & Haegeman \(2012\)](#) and others, where the existence of a category D is in itself evidence for a DP. This in turn reflects our broader theoretical view that there is a valuable and empirically supported distinction to be drawn between items which give realisation to grammatical or semantic features and those which define larger structural units such as phrases. A single item such as a demonstrative or a definite article may of course in a given language fulfil both functions but the link is not a necessary one, as indeed our historical evidence shows. One may compare in this connection the distinction drawn by ?: 44–5 between ‘heads’ and ‘markers’. In their terms, what we have demonstrated is the way in which, diachronically speaking, an item may emerge first as a marker and only in a second phase of development become a head.

Both the steps that we postulate constitute sub-types of grammaticalisation as discussed in [Section 1](#): in the first the particular grammatical feature [DEF] comes to have its own morphological exponent, while the second involves the creation of new grammatical structure. An obvious question to ask at this point is: what does it mean for a feature like [DEF] to have its own exponent? Standard accounts of grammaticalisation look to answer this question from a semantic perspective and to focus on the element which has changed its function from, for example, demonstrative or numeral to become a definite or indefinite article. This change is often assumed to involve a “bleaching” of the item’s meaning, hence it is described as a loss. The opposite, and equally important, perspective takes the functional feature or the emergent category as the point of departure and describes the change as having resulted in an overt expression for the feature and is hence considered a gain rather than a loss. In the words of [von Fintel \(1995: 185\)](#), ‘what the process (*sc.* of grammaticalization) does is enrich the inventory of functional categories in a language. Before what we had was a small number of (implicit) functional categories and a certain number of logical items (which weren’t yet functional morphemes). Afterwards, we have a new functional item. Functional meanings that before were just floating around without an overt foothold can get one this way’. More specifically in the case that interests us here, the feature [DEF] existed in Old Norse, but did not have dedicated exponence, this it gains as the result of grammaticalisation.

This approach assumes that there is a fixed universal inventory of functional semantic categories such as [DEF], which von Fintel equates to high

logical types, but that languages can vary across time and space in the way that they give realization to these categories. In his words: ‘In grammaticalization, the functional system of a language gets richer, although overall no new meanings get created’ (1995: 185). There is no reason to challenge this assumption in the particular instance that we have studied in this paper since definiteness can reasonably be subsumed within even a very restricted set of universal operators, although other work suggests that a full account will have to find ways of incorporating items that contain a combination of grammatical and lexical meaning. A relevant case study in the domain of determiners is the analysis of German *lauter* ‘only, many’ set out in Eckardt (2006: Chap 7).

One of the great benefit of accounts like those offered by von Fintel and Eckardt is that they provide a way to link the patterns of semantic ‘bleaching’ evident in the processes dubbed as grammaticalization to the tradition of formal semantic analysis rather than seeing such developments as implicitly challenging formal approaches to linguistic analysis. What they do not offer is a specific mapping between the semantics and the syntax. Thus, von Fintel (1995: 183) notes that the mapping can be achieved in a variety of ways, including universal empty D heads but also including type-shifting, appropriate use of features or meanings associated directly with constructions. The data we have analysed here begin to resolve that question by demonstrating that the emergence of feature structure is a precursor to, and both logically and chronologically distinct from, the emergence of full syntactic configurationality.

Once however we have a fixed, configurationally defined, D position it can provide a locus for the development of related elements. If there is a dedicated element for the feature value [DEF +] at the head of DP, it is natural for an element with the feature value [DEF –] to develop. The DP which has come about as a result of the development of a definite article can now also accommodate an indefinite article. It is what Bisang (1996) refers to as an ATTRACTOR POSITION. Strictly speaking it is only at the stage when we have both definite and indefinite articles that we are entitled to talk of one feature [DEF] with the two contrasting values plus and minus. Before that we simply have a monovalent feature [DEF]. Such a conclusion is supported by two convergent lines of argument. First, even in languages where it is reasonable to postulate the presence of both definite and indefinite articles, they emerge historically from different sources and at different times. Second, in the sample compiled and analysed by Dryer (2011a,b), there are 98 languages which have only a definite article and no indefinite one and 45 which have an indefinite but no definite article. In other words, in typological terms

there is no intrinsic connection between the presence of the two kinds of article within a single language. In the language we have considered here, it is clearly the case that [DEF –] developed later. The early Faroese text has obligatory marking for [DEF +], but it is only in the language on the 1890s that we find obligatory [DEF –] marking. It is not unreasonable to suppose, as we do here, that the indefinite article which develops from the numeral *einn* should come to form a paradigmatic alternation with a pre-existing definite article, but this is a contingent fact about the history of the languages we have studied not a necessity driven by the immutable properties of Universal Grammar.

We return now to the analysis of the development at clausal level between Indo-European and Germanic outlined by Kiparsky (1995) (see (4) in Section 3). It is interesting to note the parallels between this and our analysis of the development of noun phrase structure in the same language family. At both levels, a projecting functional category has developed. In both cases, the functional category is motivated by a functional feature, [FIN] and [DEF], being associated with a particular position. The fact that the category houses a feature rather than a specific element means that lexical elements with marking for the specific feature can occur in the same position; finite verbs and definite nouns occur under the functional category. Furthermore, in both clauses and noun phrases an information structurally defined initial position has grammaticalised as a syntactically defined position. The grammaticalisation of structure can be taken to have been a general development in Germanic; word order which had been syntactically relatively free, with order determined by information-structural principles solidifies into a syntactically determined structure.

It has been suggested in the literature that the development of an article system is related to the loss of case Holmberg (1993), Giusti (1995). Like Anward & Swedenmark (1997) we do not believe that there is a direct relationship between the two changes. Faroese and Norwegian show close similarities with respect to the distribution and development of definiteness markers, still their case systems are quite different. Norwegian has lost case except on some pronouns, Faroese, on the other hand has a productive system of nominative, accusative and dative, with genitive disappearing except on pronouns. Leiss (2000, 2007), on the other hand, links the development of (in)definiteness with the decline of aspectual markers. Perridon & Sleeman (2011: 4) provide convincing arguments against this hypothesis, not the least of these being the fact that there are over four centuries between the loss of the aspectual prefixes that Leiss argues are implicated and the development of definiteness. In the analysis presented here, the development of definiteness

marking in Scandinavian is anchored in discourse structure, and in particular the role of the left edge of a constituent as the marker of focus or topic, as explored within the noun phrase by Longobardi (1994, 2001). Changes in case marking are independent developments, often triggered by sound change. What both have in common is their reliance on configurationality to express content that previously was not overtly marked or was marked by morphological means. Loss of case and the development of articles may thus converge over time as they do in the history of many languages but the processes and pace of the changes are independent of each other.

More generally, our account argues the case on diachronic grounds for a parallel architecture such as that which characterises Lexical Functional Grammar in the spirit of Vincent (2001). Languages are made up of separate facets — informational, semantic, syntactic, morphological and phonological — which are defined by different types of analytical primitives and which come together in different combinations in different languages. It follows from this view that change may operate at different speeds and in different ways within each domain, leading to a wide variety of historical profiles just as there exist a wide variety of possible languages. It is one such profile that has been the focus of attention in the present study.

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