

The Definite Article in Swahili

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Abstract

This paper contributes to the debate on whether or not Swahili nominals have overt determiners to qualify for DP analysis. It has been concluded in some circles that Swahili nominals are not amenable to DP analysis for lacking determiners – definite articles. It is assumed in this paper that what appear to be articleless DPs in Swahili are underlyingly headed by the D node which always remains empty except in cases when D is occupied by the pronominal demonstratives base generated in a lower position inside the DP structure. The strongest evidence in Swahili comes from asymmetries between pronominal and postnominal demonstratives whereby the pronominal demonstratives are said to be anaphoric and postnominal demonstratives deictic. Assuming that the pronominal demonstrative is base generated below D, the conclusion must be that the demonstrative appears in the pronominal position following the raising.

Key words: *Swahili nominals, DP analysis, definite article, articleless DPs in Swahili, pronominal demonstratives, postnominal demonstratives, DP structure*

Introduction

Carstens (1991, 1993, 2008) argues that nouns in Bantu languages such as Swahili lack overt determiners – definite articles, comparable to the articles in languages such as English. Hence, noun phrases are analyzed as articleless DPs headed by an empty D node – a null D. It is under this assumption that the raising of N(oun) to D(eterminer) position in Swahili DP structure is explicated under Carstens' (1991, 1993) analysis.

It has also been argued vehemently that Swahili nouns just like nouns in many other Bantu languages are not analyzable as DPs but NPs. A tendency to favour NP analysis can be observed in studies which have focused on analyzing the structure of noun phrases as NPs rather than DPs in Bantu languages (Lusekelo, 2009, 2013; Ndomba, 2006; Rugemalira, 2007). Lusekelo (2013), for instance, claims that nouns in Bantu languages like Swahili are better analyzed as NPs and not DPs. The reasons given include the fact that Bantu nouns are bare – articleless, and they head their modifiers in the order N>DET>MOD contrary to English order DET>MOD>N (Lusekelo, 2013:27). Lusekelo (2013) observes that

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determiners in Swahili nouns appear postnominally in a position not related to definite article like *the* in English. He also points out that rarely the determiners precede head nouns in Bantu languages such as Swahili. The rare case in which determiners in Swahili precede head nouns is illustrated in (1) (author's morphological parsing).

1. *W-ale* *wa-zee* *wa-pole.*
2 those 2 elder/old-person 2 kind
Those kind elders.'
2. *Wa-zee* *w-ale* *wa-pole.*
2 old-person/elder 2 those 2 kind
'Those kind elders.' (Lusekelo, 2013:24)

In (1) – (2), the demonstrative *wale* 'those' appearing prenominally and postnominally serves as the determiner with a deictic force. According to Lusekelo (2013), the prenominal and postnominal demonstratives have nothing to do with the definite article. Rugemalira (2007) assumes with Lusekelo (2013) that determiners in Bantu nouns can appear either prenominally or postnominally. Rugemalira (2007) argues that the distributive quantifier – *each/every*, in many Bantu NPs are determiners which appear prenominally only as in (3) – (5).

3. *Wó n-ndu.* [Mashami]
each 1 person
'Each person.'
4. *Buri mu-ntu.* [Ha]
Each 1 person
'Each person.'
5. *Kila m-tu.* [Swahili]
Each 1 person
'Each person.' (Rugemalira (2007:138))

The other determiners – the demonstrative and the possessive, according to Rugemalira (2007), appear postnominally in the order illustrated in Mashami (6) – (7).

6. *N'ndú u-lya wá-kwa.*
1 person 1 that 1 of mine
'That person of mine.'
7. *Ikusáro lyilyá lyákwa.*
5 thought 5 that 5 of mine
'That thought of mine.' (Rugemalira, 2007:138)

Rugemalira (2007) argues that the postnominal demonstrative and the possessive are determiners despite the restriction that the possessive cannot precede the demonstrative. He points out that the same pattern is observed in Swahili where the postnominal demonstrative and possessive are determiners. Examples (8) – (9) are illustrative.

8. *Mtu wangu yule.*
Noun. Poss. Dem.
'That person of mine.'

9. *Yule mtu wangu.*
Dem. Noun. Poss.
'That person of mine.' (Rugemalira, 2007:142)

Given the article less nature of Swahili nouns, what remains to be established in Swahili nouns is which of the identified categories of determiners can function as the definite article like the one found in English DP. Since the article is the only category which is attested to occupy the head of the Determiner Phrase (DP) uncontroversially and cross linguistically, what is also to be said is whether or not the identified categories in Swahili occupy D slot in DP structure.

Considering the universality of the DP category, we need to posit if article less nouns in Swahili project a DP above NP. Studies have established that articleless nouns are DPs assumed to have null determiners (Chen, 2004; Cummins, 1998; Portefield & Srivastav, 1988). Carstens (1991, 1993) points out that the Swahili nouns are DPs with null Ds. According to Carstens (1991, 1993) noun initial Swahili DPs are derived by head-to-head movement of the Noun from its base generated position to D. Thus, Swahili nouns are said to project DP above NP. In the similar way, it is argued that languages including Polish, Czech, Hindi, Indonesian (Cummins, 1998; Portefield & Srivastav, 1988; Veselovská & Janebová, 2014), Slavic languages like Polish and Croatian/Serbian/Bosnian (Progovac, 1998; Rutkowski, 2002; Trenkic, 2004), and Chinese (Chen, 2004) which lack articles project a null D. The next section provides a brief note on DP hypothesis which forms part of the core discussion in this paper.

The DP Hypothesis

Abney's (1987) DP hypothesis assumes that nouns project higher functional categories – D(eterminers) which head their own phrases called Determiner Phrases (DPs). The hypothesis also assumes that there are restricted classes of items that have been considered to occupy D and the most instantiations of the position of the D are the articles – in English there are indefinite and definite articles. This view suggests that nouns are not heads of the phrases traditionally referred to as noun phrases (NPs). Instead, articles are taken to be the head of this projection, dubbed determiner phrase or simply DP.

According to Longobardi (1994), this observation suggests two positions about the structure to be assigned to the projections of determiners. First, the former which assumes alongside Jackendoff (1977) that nouns are heads locates determiner phrases inside noun phrases (NPs), particularly in their specifier positions as schematically hypothesized in (10).

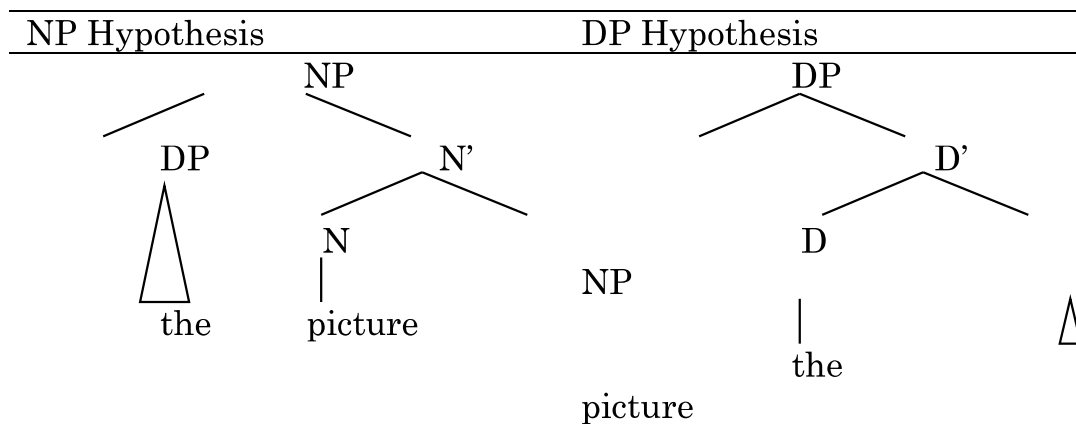
10. [NP DP [N'N]]

Second, the latter position which assumes that the article is the head conceives the whole nominal construction as coinciding with DP and NP as the complement of the head D (Abney, 1987). The latter conception is hypothesized in (11).

11. [DP [D' D NP]]

The two conceptions are illustrated in (12).

12. NP versus DP



In (12), distinct notions on NP and DP are illustrated. The NP hypothesis assumes that the DP is included in NP structure while the DP hypothesis assumes that the NP is included in DP internal structure. In contemporary state of linguistic theories DP hypothesis

has proved more plausible than its predecessor – NP hypothesis. The motivation for DP hypothesis is a conceptual parallel with the structure of clauses – CP-IP-VP (Chomsky, 1986b). The issue at hand was that functional categories like C(omplementizer) and I(nflection) fit the X-bar schema, and head XPs with complements and specifiers; hence the same should be expected for functional heads like D as the head of DP internal structure.

The assumptions that all languages share underlying phrase structure, suggests that DPs should be projected both in languages that have articles and in those that do not. Progovac (1998:165) points out that ‘even Serbo-Croatian (SC), a language without articles, projects a DP on top of NPs in argument positions.’ Some researchers object this fact pointing out that DP hypothesis is inapplicable to nouns which lack articles. Lusekelo (2013), for instance, claims that nouns in Eastern Bantu languages should be analyzed as NPs but not DPs. One of the reasons for this observation is that the N(oun) in Eastern Bantu languages nominal expressions occurs to the far-left – hence NPs, contrary to English whereby the N(oun) is preceded by the articles (Determiners) – hence DPs.

The intention of this paper is to argue that Swahili DPs project a determiner in DP structure and that there is a category which corresponds to the definite article appearing in D. The evidence of this argument comes from observing the distribution of demonstratives – prenominal and postnominal, in Swahili. The next section attempts to describe the distribution of demonstratives in order to posit whether or not Swahili subscribes to DP analysis.

Determiner Demonstratives in Swahili

Carstens (1991, 1993, 2008) points out that Swahili DPs lack overt determiners – articles, in comparison to other languages such as Spanish – a Romance language, illustrated in (13) – (15).

13. *La casa bonita.*
the FEM house pretty FEM
‘The pretty house.’ (Carstens, 2008:153)
14. *El niño pequeño.*
the MASC child MASC small MASC
‘The small boy.’ (Carstens, 2008:160)
15. *La niña pequeña.*
the FEM child FEM small FEM
‘The small girl.’ (Carstens, 2008:160)

The examples in (13) – (15) illustrate that Spanish and English have definite articles. Spanish has two definite articles – *la* for FEM(inine) nouns and *el* for MASC(uline) nouns while English has *the* as the sole definite article. The nouns in the two languages are in sharp contrast from Swahili nouns in (16) – (18).

16. *Uharibifu wa mfalme.*
 14 destruction of 1 king
 ‘The destruction of the king.’ (Carstens, 1991:84)
17. *Mti wa mkulima.*
 3 tree of 1 farmer
 ‘The farmer’s tree.’ (Carstens, 1991:120)
18. *Usomaji wa Juma wa kitabu.*
 14 read-NOM 14 of 14 of
 ‘Juma’s reading of the book.’ (Carstens, 1991:120)

In (16) – (18) Swahili nouns are bare – nouns without definite article attachment, contrary to their English equivalent translations. Carstens (1991, 2008) points out that Swahili nouns project null Ds since they lack determiners. She concludes that nouns raise to D to fill the empty slot. In a different view, Rugemalira (2006) points out that demonstratives and possessives in Swahili are determiners, noting however, that possessives can only appear postnominally while the demonstrative can appear pre- and post-nominally. It is unclear under Rugemalira’s view how Swahili DP, for instance, come to project determiners postnominally and prenominal. Nevertheless, should Swahili nouns project determiners of some kind the landing site for N would be posited either in or below D. However, the assumption that D is specified for definite articles makes nouns in D definite under Carstens’ (1991, 1993) analysis.

de Velde (2005) analyzes the prenominal demonstrative and the postnominal demonstrative distinctively. According to de Velde (2005), the prenominal demonstratives are not ‘demonstrative proper’ but definite articles. According to de Velde (2005), the prenominal demonstratives are quite widespread in many Bantu languages such as Swahili, Chaga, Giryama, Digo, Nyamwezi, and Dciriku. He also argues that in these languages prenominal demonstratives have the same function as the definite article in western European languages; examples in Swahili are provided in (19) – (21).

19. *Hiki kitabu.*
 7 this 7 book
 ‘The book (that I introduced into your conversation).’
20. *Hicho kitabu.*
 7 that 7 book
 ‘The book (that you introduced or mentioned).’
21. *Kile kitabu.*
 7 that 7 book
 ‘The book (known to both of us).’ (de Velde, 2005:467-437)

According to de Velde (2005), the prenominal demonstratives *hiki* ‘this’ (19), *hicho* ‘that’ (20), and *kile* ‘that’ (21) are used as the definite article ‘*the*’. Ndomba (2017) suggests that prenominal demonstratives are likely to be used when there is specific reference to an entity or idea mentioned previously while the postnominal demonstratives are used when pointing at something – deictic function (see Carstens, 1991; Dryer, 2007; Givón, 2001; Trenkic, 2004). The contrast between the deictic demonstrative and anaphoric demonstrative is illustrated in (22).

22. *Mu-uguzi a-li-wa-pa ma-ziwa wa-toto wale. Wa-le wa-toto*
 1 nurse 1 Past. 2 give 6 milk 2 child 2 those. 2 those 2 child
wa-li-kuwa wa-na-njaa.
 2 Past. are 2 be 9 hungry

The nurse gave those children some milk. The children were hungry.’ (Ndomba, 2017:122)

The postnomial demonstrative *wale* ‘those’ in *muuguzi aliwapa maziwa watoto wale* ‘the nurse gave those children some milk’ is deictic since it serves to point at a location – a place where the children were – far from the speaker and the spoken about – third person plural. On the contrary, in the prenominal position in *wale watoto walikuwa wana njaa* ‘the children were hungry’ the demonstrative is not deictic but anaphoric and is translated as the definite article. However, the demonstrative would be deictic if it followed the head noun.

The prenominal demonstrative points to the shared knowledge among participants in contextual discourse and is based on something that was mentioned earlier. In this accord, the prenominal demonstrative functions as the definite article in Swahili

while the postnominal demonstratives are deictic. This finding is similar to the analysis of definite article via demonstratives in Serbian (Trenkic, 2004). In this study, Trenkic (2004) points out that it is often assumed that in languages that do not have a definite article, demonstratives are used when a definite reference has to be made absolutely clear adding that for this reason, Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian demonstratives are regularly identified in contrastive studies as potential translation equivalents of the English definite article. Similarly, in Swahili the prenominal demonstrative is assumed to be the equivalent of the definite article in an article language like English.

Givón (2001:6) and Carstens (1991) point out that demonstratives are deictic. In addition, Dryer (2007) shows that demonstratives indicate proximity and non-proximity of location of the referent in relation to the position of the speaker and hearer. Trenkic (2004) points out that the basic function of demonstratives is to identify referents for the hearer by pointing at them and that demonstrative systems cross linguistically make three-tier person-based distinction which encode ‘near me (speaker – Person 1)’, ‘near you (spoken to – Person 2)’, and ‘near her/him (spoken about – Person 3)’ deictic reference. In terms of deictic forms present, languages are categorized broadly into two. First, languages which distinguish between *this/these* introducing ‘near me’ or speaker reference and *that/those* introducing ‘near you’ or spoken to reference. Second, languages which make three-tier deictic distinctions: *this/these* introducing ‘near me’, *that/those* introducing ‘near you’, and *that/those* introducing ‘near her/him’ references.

Classical Armenian, according to Lyons (1999), is a language with a three-tier person-based demonstrative system. In this language, the distinction is found in the affixed definite articles as well as demonstratives as in 23.

23. Three-tier person-based demonstratives in Armenian

Definite article		Demonstrative	
–s	the ‘near me’	ays	this ‘near me’
–d	the ‘near you’	ayd	that ‘near you’
–n	the ‘near him, etc.’	ayn	that ‘near him, etc.’

Source: Lyons, 1999:55

Similar to Armenian, Swahili, a Bantu language under study, has three-tier person-based demonstrative system. Since noun expressions in Swahili are based on gender and noun class prefixes,

demonstratives must agree in number and gender with classes to which they belong as illustrated in 24.

24. The three-tier person-based demonstrative system in Swahili

Cl	Prefix	Example	Gloss	Demonstratives		
				Person 1	Person 2	Person 3
1	m(u)-	Motto	Child	hu-yu	hu-yo	yu-le
1a	Ø	Baba	Father	hu-yu	hu-yo	yu-le
2	wa-	Watu	persons	ha-wa	ha-o	wa-le
3	m-	Mti	Tree	hu-u	hu-o	u-le
4	mi-	Miti	Trees	hi-i	hi-yo	i-le
5	ji-	Jiwe	stone, eye	hi-li	hi-lo	li-le
5a	Ø	Panga	matchet	hi-li	hi-lo	li-le
6	ma-	Mapanga	matchets	ha-ya	ha-yo	ya-le
7	ki-	Kiti	Chair	hi-ki	hi-cho	ki-le
8	vi-	Viti	chairs	hi-vi	hi-vyo	vi-le
9	N-	Nyumba	House	hi-i	hi-yo	i-le
10	N-	Nyumba	houses	hi-zi	hi-zo	zi-le
11	(l)u-	(l)ubao	timber	hu-u	hu-o	u-le
12	ka-	Katoto	small child	ha-ka	ha-ko	ka-le
13	tu-	Tutoto	small children	hu-tu	hu-to	tu-le
14	u-	Uwizi	Theft	hu-u	hu-o	u-le
15	ku-	Kuimba	singing	hu-ku	hu-ko	ku-le
16	pa-	Pahala	Place	ha-pa	ha-po	pa-le
17	ku-	Kwahala	place	hu-ku	hu-ko	ku-le
18	mu-	Mwahala	place	hu-mu	hu-mo	m(u)-le

Kihore et al. (2012), point out that the main demonstrative agreement is *h-* which is realized as *hu-*, *ha-*, and *hi-* for first and second person. The forms of the agreement harmonize vowels of the noun prefixes of respective stems. Thus, the agreement is *hu-* in Class 1, Class 3, Class 9/10, Class 11, Class 13, Class 14, Class 15, Class 17, and Class 18 because the vowel is *-u*. The agreement is *hi-* in Class 4, Class 5, and Class 7/8 when the vowel is *-i*. The agreement is *ha-* in Class 2, Class 12, and Class 16 where the vowel is *-a*.

Unlike the agreement forms meaning ‘near me’ and ‘near you’ which appear as prefixes, agreement forms meaning ‘near her/him’ *-le* appears as a suffix. An instance of the three-tier person-based

demonstratives in class 1 are *hu-yu* ‘this (speaking), ¹⁵*hu-yu-o* ‘that (spoken to), and *yu-le* ‘that (spoken about). The plural forms are *ha-wa* ‘these (speaking), *ha-o* ‘those (spoken to), and *wa-le* ‘those’ (spoken about).

However, the observed redundancy in agreement forms in Bantu nominal classes has impact in the list of demonstrative forms. As Carstens (1991) observed it is a weakness of the Meinhoff noun class system which is assumed in literature. In (24), mismatches and overlaps can be observed between demonstrative forms for classes 1 and 2 on the one hand and; classes 9 and 10 on the other. Furthermore, there are overlaps in classes 3, 11 and 14. The demonstratives must agree in number and gender with respective noun heads as illustrated in (25) – (27).

25. *Wa-toto ha-wa hu – end - a shule.*
 2 child these 2 1SM HAB go Fv school
 ‘These (here) children attend school.’
26. *Vi-ko hi-vyo vi – me – uzwa - a.*
 8 pipe those 7 7SM PERF PASS sell
 ‘Those (near you) pipes are sold.’
27. *Ma-shamba ya-le ya - me - me - a mazao.*
 6 farm 4 those 4SM PERF grow 6 crop
 ‘Those (near her/him) farms have (grown) crops.’

It can be observed that there is proper agreement between demonstrative and respective head nouns on the one hand and between Subject Markers (SMs) and the head nouns on the other. Observing the demonstratives, it can be seen that *-wa* in *hawa* (25) agrees with the head noun class prefix *wa-*; *-vyo* in *hivyo* (26) agrees with noun class prefix *vi-*, and *ya-* in *yale* (27) agrees with noun class prefix *ma-*. As noted earlier, agreement is as well maintained between Subject Markers (SMs) on verbs and respective subject head nouns where SM *hu-* in *huenda* ‘go/attend (as in school)’ agrees with *watoto* ‘children’ in (25), SM *vi-* in *vimeuzwa* ‘have been sold’ agrees with *viti* ‘chairs’ (26), and SM *ya-* in *yamemea* ‘have grown’ agrees with *mashamba* ‘farms’ (27). Based on these facts; lack of agreement between demonstratives and respective head nouns as in (28) – (30) leads to ungrammaticalities.

¹⁵ The surface form of *hu-yu-o* is *hu-yo* following the dropping of the vowel of the agreement, according to (Kihore et al., 2012).

28. **Wa-toto ha-ya hu – end - a shule.*
 2 child these 6 1SM HAB go Fv school
 ‘These (here) children attend school.’
29. **Vi-ko hi-zi zi – me – uzw - a.*
 8 pipe those 10 7SM PERF PASS sell
 ‘Those (near you) pipes are sold.’
30. **Ma-shamba wa-le wa - me - me - a mazao.*
 6 farm 2 those 4SM PERF grow 6 crop
 ‘Those (near her/him) farms have (grown) crops.’

(28) – (30) are not well-formed in Swahili because of wrong agreement forms. The Well-Formedness Conditions (WFCs) requires that the demonstratives agree in gender and number with the noun they refer to. In this respect any kind of disagreement leads to ungrammaticality. Thus, class 6 demonstrative *haya* ‘these’ does not agree with class 2 head noun *watoto* ‘children’, class 10 demonstrative *hizi* ‘these’ does not agree with class 8 head noun *viko* ‘pipes, and class 2 demonstrative *wale* ‘those’ do not agree with class 6 head noun *mashamba* ‘farms’.

Commenting on the function of the demonstratives in Bantu languages (see Swahili illustrations in (19) – (21)), de Velde (2005) notes that the use of these demonstratives as the definite article is part of a gradual development towards grammaticalization into full-fledged definite articles. Chen (2004), de Velde (2005), and Heine & Nurse (2008) concur with Greenberg (1978) who points out that the definite articles evolve stage-by-stage through the grammaticalization of the demonstratives.

According to Greenberg (1978:61) the process of grammaticalization begins when “a purely deictic element has come to identify an element previously mentioned in discourse” adding that “the point at which a discourse deictic becomes a definite article is where it becomes compulsory and has spread to the point at which it means ‘identified’ in general.”

Diessel (1999) and Greenberg (1978) assert that when anaphoric demonstratives develop into definite articles their use is gradually extended from non-topical antecedents to all kinds of referents in the preceding discourse. In this context, it is observed that “in the course of this development, demonstratives lose their deictic function and turn into formal markers of definiteness” (Diessel, 1999:129). Chen (2004) summarizes Greenberg’s view in (31).

31. Greenberg's Stages of grammaticalization of deictic functional categories

Stage 0	Transitional	Stage 1
Situational deictic	Anaphoric	Shared knowledge association
>	>	>
Source: Chen, 2004:1147		

The analogy in (31) is significant because it provides clues for the affinity between demonstratives and the definite articles. The fact that the definite articles emanate from demonstratives provides strong evidence to support views which suggest that under certain conditions demonstratives function as definite articles. In order to place demonstratives in this line of argument, the discussion begins with the shared assumption that demonstratives are primarily deictic (Brugè, 2002; Carstens, 1991; de Velde, 2005; Dryer, 2007; Givón, 2001; Kihore et al., 2012; Ström, 2015; Trenkic, 2004). Ström (2015), Dryer (2007) and Kihore et al. (2012) point out that demonstratives indicate the proximity and non-proximity of the location of a referent in relation to the position of the speaker and the hearer. Ström (2015) and de Velde (2005) show that prenominal and postnominal demonstratives in Swahili and many other Bantu languages have semantic or pragmatic difference, adding that postnominal demonstratives in some languages like Bankon have emphatic value. de Velde (2005) illustrates that prenominal demonstratives found in languages such as Bankon, Nkore, Kanyoka, Bemba, and Bolia are emphatic while postnominal demonstratives have no emphatic value. The assumption that the demonstrative can be emphatic pre- and post-nominally does not constrain the assumption on the definite article coding. Another view of looking at the demonstratives which is shared by de Velde (2005) who points out that postnominal demonstratives in some languages like Swahili can be referred to as 'proper demonstratives' meaning that they serve a deictic function – to point to an object. These are illustrated in (32) – (34).

32. *Ki – tabu hiki.*
 7 book 7 this
 'This book (at my place).'
33. *Ki – tabu hicho.*
 7 book 7 that
 'This book (at your place)' or 'the book already mentioned.'
34. *Ki – tabu kile.*
 7 book 7 that

‘That book (far from us).’ (de Velde, 2005:436)

The examples above show that postnominal demonstratives ((32) – (34)) are deictic. In Swahili, deictic demonstratives appear in three-tier person-based forms representing proximity with the speaker (Carstens, 1991; de Velde, 2005; Kihore et al., 2012). The forms of the demonstratives distinguish between ‘speaker’ (first person), ‘spoken to’ (second person), and ‘spoken about’ (third person). The demonstratives illustrated in (32) – (34) fall under the same analysis expressing the notion of distance in addition to the deictic force – *here (near/with) the speaker* (32), *there (near/with) the spoken to* (33), and *there (near/with) the spoken about* (34). In saying (32), for instance, it is assumed that the object under discussion is either on the speaker’s hand or nearby. Unlike (32), in saying (33) it is assumed that the speaker refers to an object held by or is near the spoken to. In saying (34), it is assumed that the object under discussion is far from both the speaker and the spoken to.

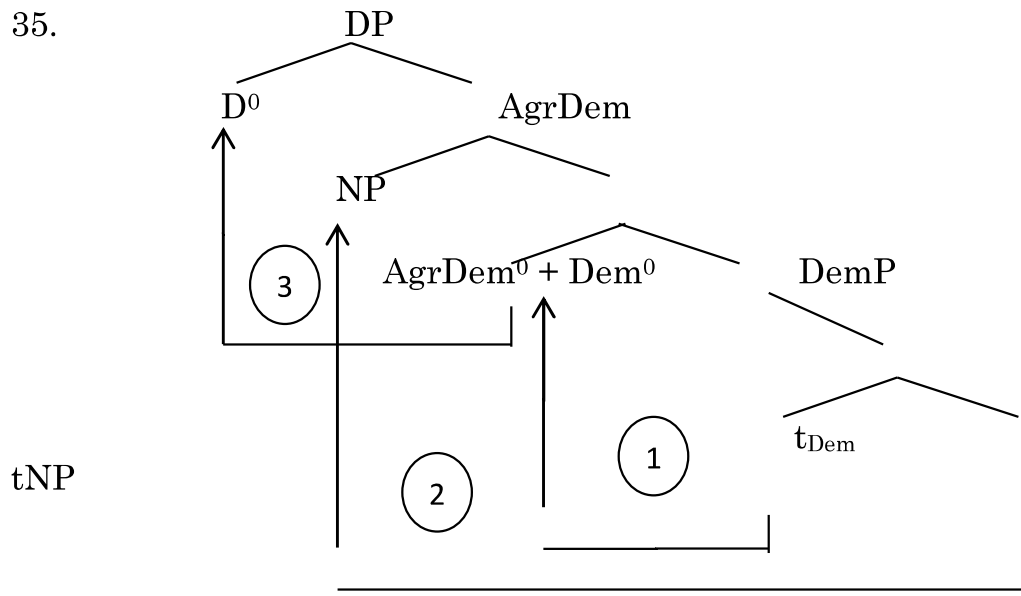
The postnominal demonstratives illustrated above differ from the prenominal demonstratives in (19) – (21) which are said to be anaphoric – used as definite articles. This fact is in line with Krifka (1995) who considers the prenominal demonstratives in Bantu languages as definite articles. Ström (2015) suggests that in Swahili the prenominal position of the demonstrative is an innovation which triggers the grammaticalization process of the demonstratives into definite articles. However, demonstratives in Swahili are not yet grammaticalized as definite articles like *the* in English. The next section attempts the derivation of Swahili nouns in DP structure.

Deriving Determiner Phrase in Swahili DP

Giusti (1995, 2002) observes that in DP structure only articles – definite and indefinite, are indisputably considered to occupy D heading NP. Commenting on the status of D, Progovac (1998:166) states ‘articles seem to be the only category which occupies the D, uncontroversially and crosslinguistically.’ This view suggests that D is associated with the class feature for the definite article. According to Giusti (1992, 1995, 2002), evidence for the prominence of articles on the D comes from demonstratives and possessives which are said to co-occur with articles in many unrelated languages such as Hungarian, Javanese, and Italian.

Shlonsky (2004) observes that in Beirut Arabic, the appearance of the demonstrative in prenominal position stems from obligatory

movement of the demonstrative. Shlonsky (2004) argues that in this language full prenominal demonstratives like *haydi* ‘this’ are heads which undergo movement from Dem^0 to D^0 . In this view, *haydi* (with its variants – *hayda*, *hool* for the masculine singular and plural forms) occupies a head position lower than D and enters into a specifier head relation with an XP in Spec/Dem (or in SpecDem) which is followed by further movement of Dem to D as illustrated in (35).



Source: Shlonsky, 2004:1502

In (35), Shlonsky (2004) argues that the full postnominal demonstrative, *haydi* moves from Dem^0 and projects Agr.Dem (movement indicated by 1), the NP (or an AgrP containing it) is then raised to Spec/AgrDem (movement indicated by 2). Finally (movement indicated by 3), AgrDem⁰ undergoes head movement and adjunction to D^0 . Shlonsky (2004) illustrates that the movement in 1 is of the sort postulated for other agreement – including functional heads in the nominal domain. The movement in 3 is unique to demonstrative heads. According to Shlonsky (2004), in many languages, the presence of a pre-nominal demonstrative precludes the appearance of a definite determiner. It is also noted that such demonstratives are akin to Levantine Arabic’s *hal*, which may only appear prenominally as illustrated in (36) – (37).

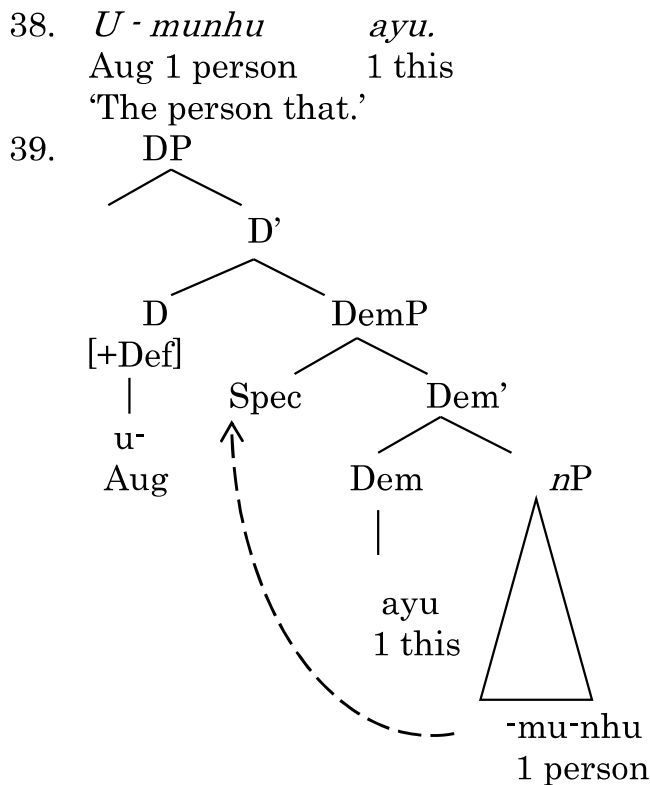
36. *Hal bint.*

This girl

37. **(*l) bint hal.*

the girl this (Shlonsky, 2004:1500)

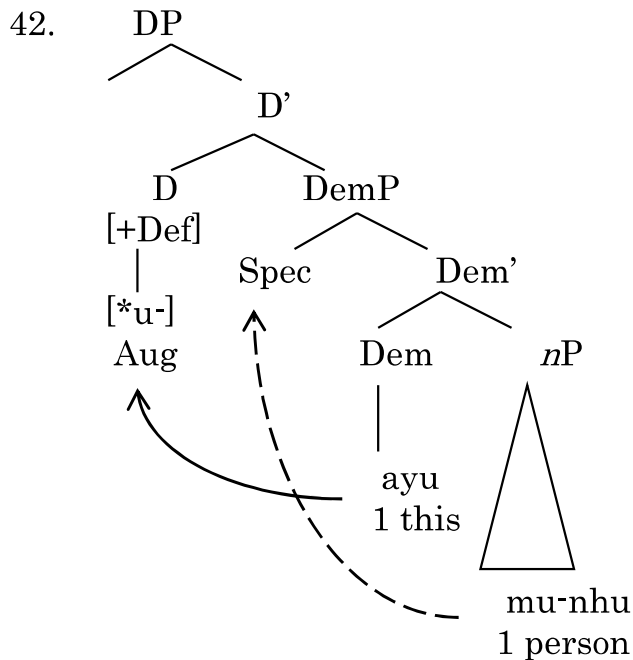
Shlonsky (2004) explains that *hal* ‘this’ is bi-morphemic, and consists of a half of a ‘demonstrative’, procliticized onto the definite article *l*. In this view, *hal* can be thought of as the lexicalization of a head in which the demonstrative is fused with the determiner. Based on these facts, Shlonsky (2004) concludes that the demonstrative *hal* ‘this’ is base-generated in D^0 . In (36), the *hal* in question differs from the Beirut Arabic demonstrative *haydi* which is base generated below D and only raises to D to attach to a definite article feature present in D. In my view, the analysis of *hal* in (36) is comparable to the analysis of augments in augment languages like Nyiha, Nyakyusa, and Gogo where the augment is said to occupy D when demonstrative appears below D as illustrated in (38) – (39).



In (39), the augment *u-* appears in D; the position specified for the definite article in article languages like English. The demonstrative *ayu* ‘this’ appears below D in a position – postnominal position, specified for deictic function. The raising of *nP* to Spec DP is blocked at Spec DemP by the presence of the augment *u-* in D. This finding concurs with Shlonsky (2004) who shows that the order $n > Dem$ in Beirut Arabic results from the raising of *nP* to Spec DemP (35). In this language, the augment and prenominal demonstration are in

complementary distribution. The augment is deleted when the postnominal demonstrative raises to D as illustrated in (40) – (42).

40. *Ayu mu-nhu*
 1 this 1 person
 ‘The person.’
41. **Ayu u - munhu.*
 1 this Aug 1 person
 ‘This the person.’ (Ndomba, 2017)

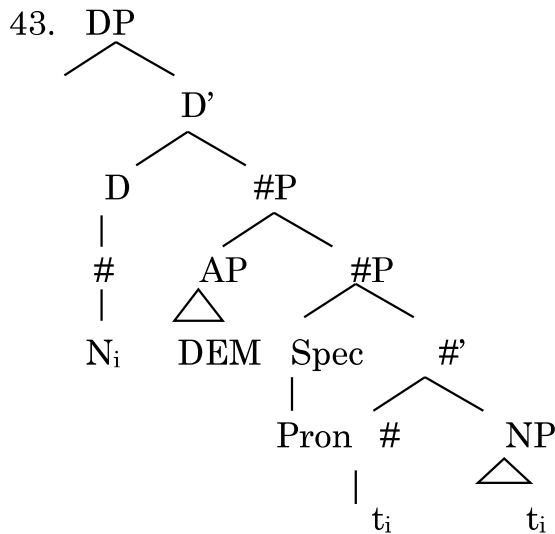


In (42), the augment in D blocks the raising of *nP* to Spec DP in the assumed way. The postnominal demonstrative *ayu* ‘this’ is base generated in Dem below D. The postnominal demonstrative *ayu* raises from Dem⁰ to D⁰ resulting into the order [Dem>>nP]. In D, the demonstrative functions as the definite article. Since the augment and the prenominal demonstrative in Gogo are in complementary distribution, the raising demonstrative deletes the augment and occupies D. It can also be observed in (41) that the co-occurrence of the prenominal demonstrative and augment is impermissible.

The analysis pursued in this section is in line with Shlonsky (2004), Brugè (1996) and Brugè and Giusti (1996) who show that prenominal demonstratives in many dialects of Arabic (including Egyptian and Moroccan Arabic) are heads which undergo movement from Dem⁰ to D⁰. Nevertheless, since Swahili is not an augment language, the

prenominal demonstrative becomes the only category that can appear in D as the definite article.

Carstens (1991) points out that the demonstratives in Swahili can appear prenominally or postnominally, and that post-nominal demonstratives are adjuncts to #P located below D. This view is illustrated in (43).



Source: Carstens, 1991:107

In (43), the demonstrative (DEM) is an adjunct to #P. According to Carstens (1991, 1993), the above derivation is only explicable assuming head-to-head movement of N to D (notice the traces 't') and the movement of Num across the demonstrative in X⁰ would violate the Head Movement Constraint (HMC) (Baker, 1988; Carstens, 1991; Chomsky, 1986a; Ouhalla, 1999; Travis, 1984). In (44), the Travis (1984) HMC formulation is adopted.

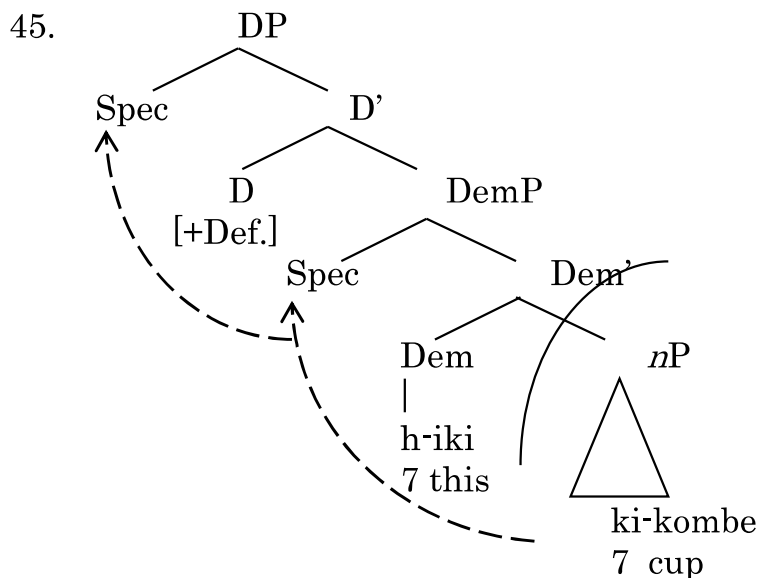
44. Head Movement Constraint

An X⁰ may only move to the Y⁰ which properly governs it (Travis, 1984:131).

In (44), with the demonstrative as the adjunct to NumP the N-to-D Head Movement Constraint becomes inoperative. Carstens (1991) also notes that the alternative syntactic lowering of the demonstrative to adjoin to NumP would equally not be plausible in that it would not be structure preserving. In this sense, Carstens (1991) concludes that demonstratives are adjuncts to #P and in that position the demonstratives precede all lexical arguments of Num

and they can undergo optional raising to Spec DP. According to Carstens (1991) both postnominal and prenominal demonstratives are not in any way analyzed as determiners – definite articles, but deictic categories.

de Velde (2005) classifies the demonstratives in Bantu languages into two. First, postnominal demonstratives serve a deictic function by showing relative location or distance of the referred entity in relation to the participants taking part in contextual discourse. Ndomba (2017) derives base generated demonstrative in Swahili in (45).



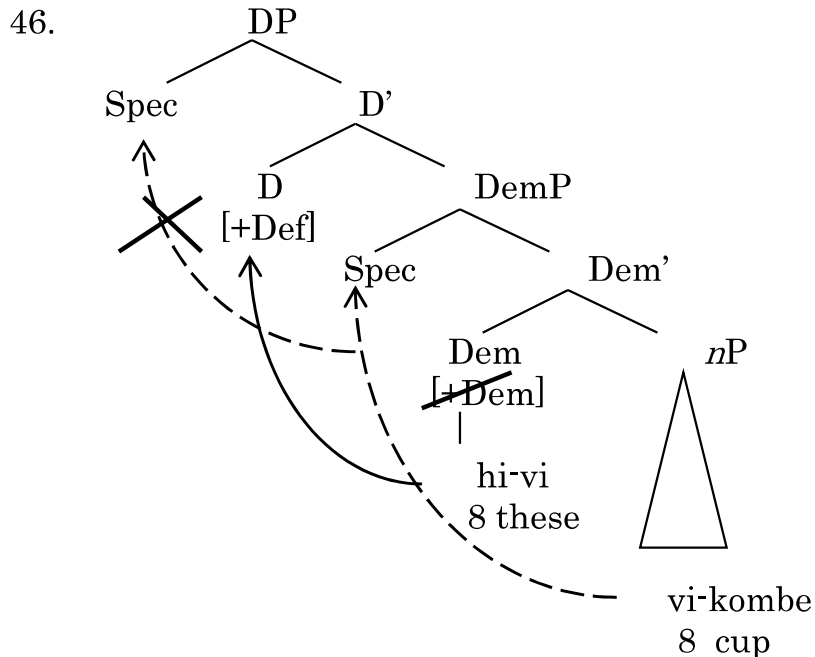
Source: Ndomba, 2017:127

In (45), the postnominal demonstrative appears below D in a position not associated with the definite article suggesting that the demonstrative is the ‘proper demonstrative’ – deictic, according to de Velde (2005). The underlying structure relations between the Swahili *kikombe hiki* in (45) and the English equivalent *this cup* are the same. The only difference is the Swahili surface where *nP* raises to Spec DP via Spec DemP. In Spec DP, *nP* is able to check its relevant features in D via Spec head relation. Since D is null, the features are checked against D itself at LF contrary to when D is occupied in which case the features would be checked against the occupant. It was mentioned in the former derivation (38) that the raising of the demonstrative to a specifier position was explicable to avoid violating TMC. However, in (40) such a violation is inoperative since the demonstrative is no longer in the adjunct to NumP as in Carstens’

(1991) derivation. With the demonstrative under Dem below D, *n*P obligatorily raises to Spec DP resulting in the order *n* Dem – with the demonstrative encoding deictic force.

Second, pronominal demonstratives function as the definite article like *the* in English. de Velde (2005) clearly points out that the pronominal demonstrative is used as the definite article in some Bantu languages like Swahili. Commenting on the difference between the pronominal demonstrative and postnominal demonstrative with regard to their respective positions in DP structure, Ström (2015) argues that the pronominal demonstrative position in Swahili is an ‘innovation’ accompanied with bleaching out of ‘deictic’ force or features of the pronominal demonstratives themselves. Shlonsky (2004) indicates that demonstratives are base generated below D as illustrated in (45).

According to Shlonsky (2004) for the demonstratives to appear in D they must have raised from below D. Ström (2015) notes that the pronominal position of the demonstrative in Bantu DPs is an innovation meaning that it is not canonical. This view suggests that the pronominal appearance of the demonstrative is the result of some modification in the canonical DP structure. Sacleux (1909:130) quoted in Ström (2015:139) assumes with Lusekelo (2013) that in Bantu DPs ‘it is not common for the demonstrative to precede the noun’. Ström (2015) and Heine and Kuteva (2002) indicate that the pronominal order of the demonstrative is part of the changing process toward the grammaticalization of the demonstrative. I assume alongside the related literature that the pronominal demonstrative appears in D where it functions as the definite article. Since the pronominal appearance is assumed to be an innovation, it is assumed that the pronominal demonstrative appears in D following its raising on a par with Shlonsky (2004). Ndomba (2017) derives the pronominal demonstrative in (46).



Source: Ndomba, 2017:128

In (46), the Dem raises obligatorily to D. The raising of Dem is triggered by the strong definite article feature in D. Hence, with the demonstrative in D, the raising of *nP* to Spec DP is blocked and consequently the *nP* lands in Spec DemP. The derivation above confirms the view that only articles – definite and indefinite, are indisputably considered to occupy D heading NP (Giusti, 1995, 2002). This observation presupposes that even in Swahili nouns, D position is assumed to possess an abstract definite article feature [+Def] alongside other relevant features of *nP* in D irrespective of whether or not the language has determiners.

This finding confirms Roberts and Roussou's (2003) hypothesis on grammaticalization of demonstratives into definite articles; a process which amounts to changing in category membership of the functional head immediately above, assuming the hierarchy [D–Dem–*n*]. Nevertheless, one might wonder why not base-generate the anaphoric demonstrative under D as with the definite article in English. The only current possible explanation could be that the demonstrative in Swahili is not fully evolved as a grammatical category – a definite article, as in languages like English or French which have full-fledged grammaticalized articles – definite and indefinite.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that Swahili nouns are equally amenable to DP analysis just like nouns in article languages such as English. I have illustrated that D in Swahili DPs is either empty or occupied by the demonstrative; the only category which may occupy D, uncontroversially and crosslinguistically. In this position, the demonstrative functions as the definite article in a language like English. However, different from the definite article which is base generated in D in English language the pronominal demonstrative appear in D following movement from a position below D as illustrated.

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