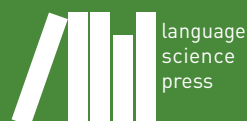


Grammaticalization in the North

Östen Dahl

■ Studies in Diversity Linguistics ??



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ISBN 978-3-000000-00-3



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ISSN: 2363-5568

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Östen Dahl. 2015. *Grammaticalization in the North* (Studies in Diversity Linguistics ??). Berlin: Language Science Press.

This title can be downloaded at:

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ISBN: 978-3-000000-00-0

ISSN: 2363-5568

Cover and concept of design: Ulrike Harbort

Typesetting: Change typesetter in localmetadata.sty

Proofreading: Change proofreaders in localmetadata.sty

Fonts: Linux Libertine, Arimo

Typesetting software: Xe_{La}TeX

Language Science Press

Habelschwerdter Allee 45

14195 Berlin, Germany

langsci-press.org

Storage and cataloguing done by FU Berlin



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1 The expansion of the definite forms

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 General

It is often pointed out in the dialectological literature that Peripheral Swedish vernaculars tend to use definite marking of noun phrases more than the standard language. An early mention (perhaps the first) of this is found in the description of the Närpes vernacular in **Freudenthal 1878** where it is said that this dialect, like the other Ostrobothnian vernaculars, has “a decided predilection”¹ for the definite form, which is often used “when the indefinite form would be appropriate”. The examples given by Freudenthal are:

(1) Närpes ()

- a. *Kva ha et tjøft i stádin?* – *Ättren*
what have.PRS you buy.SUP in town.DEF pea.DEF.PL and
o grýnen.
grain.DEF.PL
‘What have you bought in town? – Peas and grains.’
- b. *Kva jer he, som ligger op jólen?* – *He je gräse.*
what be.PRS it REL lie.PRS on earth.DEF it be.PRS grass.DEF
‘What is it that is on the ground?’ – ‘It is grass.’
- c. *víne, som há vuri vattne*
wine REL have.PRS be.SUP water.DEF
‘the wine, that has been water’

This feature of Peripheral Swedish area speech is also felt to be one of its salient characteristics by non-linguists, as witnessed by such facetious uses as the alleged translation of *filet mignon* into Westrobothnian: *stektjötte mä gulsåsn* ‘the

¹ “Die Närpesmundart hat in Analogie mit den übrigen schwedischen Volksmundarten Österbottens eine entschiedene Vorliebe für die bestimmte Form des Substantivs, die daher häufig angewandt wird, wo eigentlich die unbestimmte Form am Platze wäre...”

fried meat with the yellow gravy’ (this expression also exemplifies adjective incorporation, see 4.3.3). As is typical of the cursory treatment of grammatical phenomena of this kind, however, few of the older works in the dialectological tradition go beyond just pointing out the existence of such extended uses, and even fewer try to treat it above the level of individual vernaculars. In more recent work, there have been attempts to take a more theoretical and general approach, but to this date nobody seems to have thought of it in terms of grammaticalization processes. This is unfortunate, since in fact it represents a development that is not common typologically and that has not received any serious attention in the literature on diachronic grammar and language typology.

1.1.2 Extended definites in the literature

In addition to the above-mentioned work on Ostrobothnian by Freudenthal, the extended uses of definite articles in the Peripheral Swedish area are discussed in the dialectological literature by **Levander1909** for Elfdalian and by **Hummelstedt1934** for Ostrobothnian. A relatively detailed discussion of the use of the definite article in Upper Norrland and Ostrobothnian is found in Dahlstedt & Ågren (1954: 281ff).

In recent years, the phenomenon has been treated by **Nikula1997** who restricts her discussion to Ostrobothnian, Delsing (1993, 2003b), and Holmberg & Sandström (2003) [1996], among others.

Nikula1997 gives a fairly detailed description of the extended use of definite articles in the southern Ostrobothnian variety spoken in the town of Närpes. She says that the general condition on the definite form in Närpesmål is that the noun is used “referentially”. “Referentially” is apparently used in a rather wide sense here, more or less synonymous to “non-predicatively” (but see further discussion under 3.2.5).

Delsing1993 proposes that “the special form with the suffixed article in Northern Swedish is a partitive article”, drawing parallels with French. He notes that nouns with “partitive articles” are different from ordinary definite NPs since they can occur in existential constructions, that is, with a dummy subject such as *hä* in

- (2) “North Swedish” (unspecified location) ()
Hä finns vattne däri hinken.
it exist.PRS water.DEF (there)in bucket.DEF
‘There is water in the bucket.’

Delsing2003a says that the “partitive article” is used with uncountable nouns, plurals, and singulars that denote undelimited or arbitrary quantities. In addition, he postulates a separate use of definite articles in “predicative constructions” (see 3.2.6). Delsing is also the only scholar to my knowledge who has tried to map the areal distribution of the extended uses of definite articles in any detail. Thus, in **Delsing2003a** there is a map of what he calls “partitive articles”, divided into a northern and a southern area. The northern area, where “the partitive article is used when the standard language has a bare noun” (in our terms, mainly non-delimited uses, to be treated below in 3.2.2), includes the Swedish-speaking areas of Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Österbotten, and Ångermanland and parts of Jämtland. The southern part, where, according to Delsing, the “partitive article” has to receive a generic interpretation (see 3.2 below), basically comprises the rest of Norrland and the northern parts of Dalarna and Värmland. The basic picture provided by Delsing, with a greater use of definite articles in the north than in the south, is generally correct; but in particular the characterization and delimitation of the southern area has to be modified in various ways, as we shall see below.

1.1.3 Grammaticalization of definites from a typological perspective

How many languages have definite articles, and are they equally common in all parts of the world? Answers to these questions can be found in **Dryer2005** based on a world-wide sample of 566 languages.

In Dryer’s sample, 337, or almost 60 per cent, were found to have definite articles, including 56 languages in which the definite article was formally identical to a demonstrative pronoun, and 84, or 15 per cent of the total sample, where the definite article was manifested as an affix. In other words, having a definite article may be more common among the world’s languages than not having one; suffixed articles, like the ones we find in Scandinavian languages, on the other hand, are clearly a minority phenomenon.

Like most grammatical features, definite articles are not evenly spread geographically. As can be seen from Map 8, which shows the distribution of definite articles in Dryer’s sample, they are generally present in Western Europe and much of Africa north of the Equator but are rare for instance in most of Asia and South America.

Noun phrases with definite articles are used both anaphorically, that is, as picking up the reference of a noun phrase occurring earlier in the discourse, as in (3), or non-anaphorically. In the latter case, the referent of the noun phrase may be a unique object, as in (4), but more commonly it is something that is

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identifiable in the discourse situation, as in (5).

Map 8. Distribution of definite articles (black symbols) in a sample of 566 languages (Dryer2005).

Map 9. Distribution of definite affixes (black symbols) in a sample of 566 languages (Dryer2005).

- (3) *In the street, I saw a cat and a dog. The dog was barking furiously.*²
- (4) *I met the author of Syntactic Structures.*
- (5) *Please close the door.*

A highly frequent phenomenon is the “anchoring” of a definite noun phrase to some other element, whether mentioned in the discourse or not (Fraurud1992). In (6), for instance, *the hard disk* is understood as the hard disk of the computer mentioned in the first clause – in other words, the computer serves as the anchor. This example illustrates what is often called “associative” or “bridging co-reference”³ uses of definite noun phrases,

- (6) *I have to fix my computer: there is some problem with the hard disk.*

In addition to straightforward referential cases as the ones exemplified above, definite articles are also used in generic noun phrases, as in (7).

- (7) *The lion is a mammal.*

In English, this phenomenon is somewhat restricted, but as we shall see below, it plays a more salient role in other languages.

² It is perhaps symptomatic that examples of the anaphoric use of definite noun phrases in the literature tend to contain antecedents which are parts of a conjoined noun phrase: at least in natural speech, pronouns tend to be preferred to full noun phrases as straightforward anaphors in most contexts, and we need a structure such as a conjoined NP for there to be two equally possible antecedents, in which case a definite NP is motivated.

³ Another term that is sometimes used is “bridging anaphora”. Originally, the term “bridging” referred to the “bridging assumption” that provided the link between the definite noun phrase and its anchor. Thus, in (i) we have to make the assumption that the picnic supplies included beer (Clark & Haviland1974):

(i) Mary got some picnic supplies out of the car. The beer was warm.

But the point is that the interpretation of definite noun phrases sometimes involves inferencing gets lost if the term “bridging” is generalized to cases where the assumption in question is trivial or follows from the meaning of the noun phrases involved. In *In this group, the members work well together*, the only assumption necessary to link *the members* to *this group* is that a group has members.

The most common diachronic source for definite articles is demonstrative pronouns, typically distal ones ('that'). As pointed out by Lyons1999 there is a substantial overlap between the domains of use of demonstratives and definite articles, notably in anaphoric function. For instance, in a context like the following, both *that* and *the* are acceptable:

- (8) *Last year, I saw a film by Ingmar Bergman. I would like to see that/the film again.*

The first stage in the development of definite articles from demonstratives, accordingly, consists in a more general use of a demonstrative in anaphoric function. Such "anaphoric articles" are attested in various languages – Lyons1999 mentions Hausa and Lakota as examples. Geographically closer to the area studied here is spoken Finnish, where at least in some varieties the demonstrative *se* tends to be used in ways suggestive of an "anaphoric article" (see Laury1997 and, for a more sceptical view, Juvonen2000):

- (9) Finnish ()
...niin sit se mies meni ja, osti ne kaikki
 so then **this** man go.PST and buy.PST **this**.PL all
ilmapallot ja anto ne sille pojalle,
 balloon.NOM.PL and give.PST this.PL **this**.ALL boy.ALL
ja sit se poika...
 and then **this** boy
 '...so then the man went and bought all the balloons and gave them to the boy, and the boy...' (Juvonen2000)

For an erstwhile demonstrative to look more like the definite articles we are used to from languages such as English, it has to acquire also non-anaphoric uses. Finnish *se* is still unacceptable e.g. in a context as that exemplified in (6). The mechanism behind an expansion from an anaphoric to a more general definite article is not well understood, but we may note that it involves the elements usually associated with grammaticalization processes: a rise in frequency through the expansion to new contexts where the element becomes obligatory, combined with a loss of prosodic prominence and an ensuing reduction of phonetic weight (what is commonly but misleadingly referred to as "erosion").

A language can also have more than one definite article. One way in which such a situation can develop is through separate waves of grammaticalization that give rise to a "layered" system in which two (or more) elements of varying

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age compete with each other. The youngest element will then typically have the functions that are first to grammaticalize, such as anaphoric ones. This is exemplified by various West Germanic varieties, such as the Fering dialect of North Frisian described by Ebert1971 (although the actual rules for choosing between the articles are a bit more complicated; for an accessible account see Lyons1999). Compare the following examples:

(10) North Frisian (Fering dialect) ()

- a. *Hat kaam me a maan.*
she come.PST with DEF man
'She came with her husband, lit. the man.'
- b. *Hat kaam me di maan.*
she come.PST with DEF man
'She came with the man.' (Lyons1999)

Among languages whose definite articles would seem to be of a “garden variety” kind, there is in fact considerable variation which is largely attributable to how far the grammaticalization process has gone and which routes it has taken. For example, the English definite article on the whole has a relatively restricted domain of use compared to definite articles in many other languages. Most saliently, as has already been noted, English has a restricted use of definite articles with generic noun phrases – this will be further discussed in section 3.2.1. But English also shows a reluctance to use articles with proper names, in contrast to many other languages, such as Greek and southern German vernaculars, but also many northern Scandinavian vernaculars, to be discussed in section 3.2.8. Even in English there are exceptions, such as some types of geographical names, e.g. names of rivers such as *the Thames*. Since proper names are usually seen as “inherently definite”, the use of definite articles would seem to be wholly redundant from the communicative point of view. However, such apparently redundant uses of grammatical elements are typical of later stages of grammaticalization processes and show that the identification of the “function” of a grammatical element is not always easy (Dahl2004).

The story does not end here, however. A definite article may develop further, expanding its domain of use to a point where it is no longer possible to call it “definite” or even an “article”. This process was described by Greenberg1978 who argued that definite articles are the source of various grammatical morphemes. A particularly notable example of this process involves noun class markers, such as those found in Bantu languages wherein the affixes are obligatory with nouns

irrespective of the context in which they appear. The details of the route to such a situation from “garden variety” definite articles are far from clear. One example of an intermediate stage suggested by Greenberg would be the “specific” articles found in many Oceanic languages which also cover many of the functions of the indefinite article of English, in particular that of introducing new, specific discourse referents. Compare the Samoan article *le* in the following example:

- (11) Samoan (Austronesian) ()
 [2BD?]O **le** ulugāli[2BD?]i, fānau l-a lā tama [2BD?]o
 PRS ART couple give_birth ART-POSS 3DU child PRS
le teine [2BD?]o Sina.
 ART girl PRS Sina
 ‘There was a couple who had a child, a girl called Sina.’ (Mosel & Hovdhaugen1992)

What we find in Scandinavian vernaculars, however, is an expansion of the range of uses of definite articles that goes in a different direction and cannot be described in terms of “specificity” in any sense. The Scandinavian development therefore is of considerable interest for our understanding of the role of definite articles in grammaticalization processes.

Map 10. Definiteness marking of non-modified nouns in Europe west of 30°E (dark grey: free article only, light grey: suffixal marking).

1.1.4 Definite marking in Scandinavian in general

As already noted, Western Europe is one of the areas in the world where definite articles are generally present. The distribution is determined by areal rather than by genetic factors. Although definite articles would seem to be a general feature of the Germanic, Celtic and Romance families, this is a late phenomenon not found in the older historical stages of Indo-European. The presence of definite articles in these languages must therefore be attributed to a later spread rather than to inheritance from a parent language. In fact, there is a relatively neat diachronic progression in the appearance of definite articles from the Eastern Mediterranean to north-western Europe, basically in the order of Semitic [F0E0?] Greek [F0E0?] Romance [F0E0?] Germanic, suggesting a rather slow expansion wave which took about two thousand years to complete. The Fenno-Ugric and Slavic languages in Europe are split with respect to definiteness marking, and there is evidence that definite articles are latecomers in these languages also

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If we focus on Europe west of 30°E (Map 10), we find definite articles in one central and two relatively peripheral areas. In the large central area comprising most of Western Europe, definite articles are manifested as free morphemes occurring initially in noun phrases. However, in the two peripheral areas found in Scandinavia and the Balkans, definiteness is marked by suffixing. This marking occurs in the standard languages of Romanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Albanian. These developments fit less straightforwardly into the general expansion pattern, although the general timing and the closeness to the preposed article area makes areal influence likely here, too. In Scandinavia, the situation is further complicated by the presence of both preposed and suffixed articles, with varying divisions of labour in the individual languages (see 4.3 for details). It should also be noted here that there are significant differences between the suffixed articles in Scandinavia and those found in the Balkans: the latter should probably be seen as movable clitics rather than suffixes – they typically show up on the first word in the noun phrase, more or less irrespective of its grammatical category (thus, in Macedonian and Bulgarian, definite articles can be cliticized even to possessive pronouns: *moja-ta kniga* ‘my-DEF book’).

The origins of definiteness marking in the Scandinavian languages are rather obscure. Definite articles seem to have been absent from the earliest stages of Old Nordic and there are only sporadic attestations from runic inscriptions. From Sweden, two attestations of what seems to be the same formulaic phrase *kup heabi onti-ni* or *kup hialbi *anti-ni* ‘God help soul.DEF’ i.e. ‘may God help the soul’ are cited. When written documents start to appear in the 13th and 14th centuries, both preposed and suffixed articles are still rare in many texts, in particular in laws and poetry (which happen to constitute the bulk of the preserved written material); such instances are possibly rarer in Denmark and Sweden than in the West Nordic area. Here are some statistics (Delsing2002 based on Larm1936 and Skautrup1944):

Table 1.1: Percentage of definite nouns among nouns in general

Older Västgöta Law 0.5
Uppland Law 5
Östgöta Law 7.5
Scanian Law 8
Jutland Law 10

The source of the suffixed article is commonly assumed to be an original demonstrative *inn* or *hinn*. The forms with an initial *h*-, which may be due to a re-inforcement of *inn* in analogy with other 3rd person pronouns (Perridon1989

Syrett2002), were only used in preposed position in East Nordic. According to a popular hypothesis (going back to Grimm (1822-40)), the suffixed article originated as an adjectival article in a construction such as *maþr inn gamli* ‘man the old’. I think this hypothesis should be viewed with some scepticism. The low frequency in spoken language of the adjectival construction makes it unlikely as a general model for noun phrases (as is also noted by Seip & Saltveit1971). There also seems to be little concrete evidence of such a development anywhere. (In the Balkan languages the corresponding constructions would be expressed as ‘man-the old’ and the article would thus not be in the right place relative to the noun.) Thus, the alternative hypothesis that the suffixed article has developed out of an unstressed postposed demonstrative seems more plausible. In fact, this phenomenon is exemplified by the inscription *hali hino* ‘[flat] stone *this*’ on the whet-stone of Strøm (Norway) from about 600 C.E.

With respect to the timetable for the development of the suffixed article, there seem to be two basic views. The first, which assumes that the genesis of the suffixed article in the spoken language is significantly earlier than its appearance in the written language, appears to originate with Neckel1924. This position is also taken in recent works by both Perridon1989 who speaks of “a hidden life” of the article “before it starts its public written life”, and Syrett2002 who says that “...it seems reasonable to suggest that” the suffixed article “was the end product of an unrelated series of morphological and syntactical developments within the progression from” Ancient Norse to Old Norse (the transitional period between these two being broadly defined as lasting from the 6th century until 1100).

The main representative of the other view is Delsing2002 who thinks that the suffixed article “developed as an innovation in the 13th century”. (He does not say explicitly what territory this claim is intended to cover, but it is given in the context of a treatment of Old Swedish and Old Danish.) He argues against the view that “the low frequency of articles in the oldest texts can be explained by style”, pointing to the fact that not only legal and poetic texts but also texts which “are written in styles where we would expect an ample use of the articles”, e.g. the Gutasaga (a text presumed to be from the 13th century and containing a description of the mythical origin of the island of Gotland) and the chronicles from Vidhem [S47], have a low frequency of definite marking.

Delsing’s discussion of the style question seems to conflate two possible effects of style (or genre) on the use of definite articles: (i) a generally lower frequency of definite marking due to pragmatic reasons; (ii) the possible use of an archaizing language. Thus, he says: “Runic inscriptions, laws and poetry are not the kind of texts where we expect to find articles” (ibid.). There obviously are some text types

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where definite articles would be infrequent in any language due to a restricted need for definite reference, and runic inscriptions may be cases in point, but this would hardly hold for the other kinds of text mentioned by Delsing. Thus, in a language where definite articles are regularly used, such as English or Modern Swedish, they occur also in laws and poetry. Consider as an example Article 1:1 of the Swedish constitution (*Regeringsformen*), which contains two noun phrases with definite marking:

- (12) Swedish ()
Den offentliga makten utövas under lagarna.
DEF public power.DEF exert.PASS.PRS under law.PL.DEF
'(The) public power is exerted under the laws.'

On the other hand, laws and poetry are genres which are often formulated in an archaizing language and which may thus differ significantly from other text types and in particular from informal spoken language. It may be noted that even contemporary legal Swedish exhibits patterns of article usage which most probably reflect an older stage of development. Thus, until the last decades of the 20th century, it was normal for singular generic noun phrases in legal texts to be used without any article, as in

- (13) Swedish ()
Hund skall hållas kopplad på offentlig plats.
dog shall keep.PASS.INF leash.PP on public place
'A dog shall be kept on a leash in public places (lit: Dog shall be kept leashed on public place)'

The absence of definite articles in medieval legal prose would thus be due to an archaizing language rather than to the general low frequency of definite articles in legal texts. The same goes for poetry, *mutatis mutandis*. But as Delsing points out, there are other texts which also exhibit a low incidence of definiteness marking. The first text mentioned by Delsing, the *Gutasaga*, may not be too relevant in this context, since the variety it is written in, Old Gutnish, is not necessarily representative of mainstream Old Swedish. On the other hand, the *Vidhem* chronicle (presumed to be written in Västergötland around 1250, although there seems to be no general agreement on this) may be evidence that the use of definite marking was generally restricted in the written language of the period. However, this text is an appendix to the Västergötland law, so one could perhaps expect the style to be close to that of legal language.

In my opinion, several things speak against the hypothesis that the suffixed article is a 13th century innovation. One is the geographical distribution of the suffixed article: in spite of its low frequency in some early texts, it is attested in the 13th century from all parts of the Scandinavian area: Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. And even earlier, in the first half of the 12th century in Iceland (according to Perridon (2002: §1019)), there is a consistent use in the First Grammatical Treatise. Moreover, although not frequent, even the very earliest texts in Sweden do contain quite a few definite articles. Thus, the Older Västgöta Law, assumed to be from around 1225, contains 23 instances of suffixed articles (Larm 1936). This means that, already at this stage, the suffixed article was well enough entrenched to show up in written language all over Scandinavia, although it was still used in a restricted fashion.

Furthermore, if it were the case that the forms that we see in the oldest texts represent a recent innovation, we would expect them to behave in a way typical of early stages of a grammaticalization process. This is not the case, however. When we first meet the suffixed definite article, it has already reached a relatively advanced stage of grammaticalization. This goes both for form and function: even the earliest attestations are suffixed rather than separate words, and they display non-anaphoric uses (see 3.1.3), suggesting a full-fledged definite article. For instance, the earliest attestations from Sweden, *kuþ hialbi antini* ‘God help the [i.e. his] soul’ are clear examples of an associative use. The following example from the Vidhem chronicles is also clearly non-anaphoric:

(14) Medieval Written Swedish ()

Han læt gøræ kyrkiunæ i agnistaðhum.

he let.PST make.INF church.DEF.ACC in Agnestad

‘He had the church in Agnestad built.’ [S47]

If the rise of definite articles was close in time to the creation of the documents in which they are common, we would expect to find more signs of the early stages of development, both with regard to form and to function.

What was just said about the earliest documented stages is paralleled in the modern forms of Scandinavian: there is no variety that reflects an earlier stage in the grammaticalization process. It should also be noted that the suffixed article has a virtually total coverage in Scandinavian, with the exception of the Jutish dialects in Denmark that use prefixed articles exclusively. Thus, the suffixed articles are also manifested in a remarkably uniform way in the most conservative and peripheral varieties. This is in contrast to the prefixed definite article, which is absent both in modern spoken Icelandic and in the Peripheral Swedish ver-

naculars, and the indefinite article, which is absent in Icelandic. It is also in contrast to most of the major phonological changes in medieval Scandinavian, which tended to be only partially implemented or not implemented at all in peripheral areas. An example is the monophthongization of the original diphthongs *ai* and *au* to *e* and *ö*, respectively, which according to the standard view spread from Denmark to south and central Sweden in the 11th century, but which a millennium later has still not yet been completed in some of the outlying areas, such as northern Norrland, western Dalarna, Österbotten and Gotland.

1.1.5 Neutralization of the definite-indefinite distinction

A fairly common phenomenon, which should be kept apart from the expansion of the definite forms discussed in this chapter, is the partial neutralization of the opposition between definite and indefinite forms: that is, the same form comes to represent both definite and indefinite. For instance, in Orsa (Os), neuter nouns do not distinguish definite and indefinite forms. There is no vernacular in which the neutralization between indefinite and definite is total. Rather, as in Orsa, it tends to hit paradigms only partially. What forms are neutralized varies from place to place, but there are a few typical patterns.

Neutralization between indefinite and definite in the plural. This is probably the most common pattern, being found in relatively many places.

In Ovensiljan, this appears to be a relatively late development. Levander¹⁹⁰⁹ describes Elfdalian as still having a distinction for masculine nouns in the nominative plural, e.g. *kaller:kallär* (indefinite and definite nominative plurals of *kall* ‘man’), and for some feminine nouns, e.g. *djieter:djietär* (from *djiet* ‘goat’), but not for a feminine noun such as *flugu* ‘fly’ which has the only form *flugur* in the nominative plural. However, Levander notes that the distinction is not found in all villages in Älvdalen (with varying isoglosses for different types of nouns), and according to Levander¹⁹²⁸ it is found in Orsa and Våmhus but not in Mora, Sollerön, Venjan and Ore. In the accusative plural, a distinction between forms such as *kalla:kalla*; exist in all the varieties which retain the nasal vowels, that is, most of Älvdalen, Våmhus and Bonäs (Mora parish).

In Karleby⁴ (NOB), the old indefinite plural forms have disappeared entirely in favour of the definite ones, e.g. *gå*[1E37?]a ‘(the) yards’, *gatuna* ‘(the) streets’ (Hagfors¹⁸⁹¹). Likewise, in Runö (Es), there is no indefinite-definite distinction at all in the plural (cf. (69) below.)

⁴ The previous town of Gamlakarleby and the parish of Karleby were merged into Karleby town in 1977. For simplicity, I use the name “Karleby” throughout.

Neutralization between indefinite and definite in neuter nouns, with zero endings in the nominative/accusative, is found in at least three geographically quite distinct areas: Orsa and northern Venjan in the Ovansiljan area (Levander1928) and parts of Värmland. In the Cat Corpus we thus find the following examples of cognates of Swedish *golv* ‘floor’ used as a definite noun with a zero ending:

- (15) Orsa (Os) ()
Gow wa niskajrad.
 floor be.PST new-clean.PP
 ‘The floor was newly cleaned.’ (Cat Corpus)

(cf. Swedish *Golvet var nyskurat*)

- (16) Västra Ämtervik (Vm) ()
Men nepå gôLv va dä en hög mä matt-traser.
 But down_on floor be.PST it INDF heap with carpet_rag.PL
 ‘But on the floor there was a heap of rags.’ (Cat Corpus)

(cf. Swedish *Men på golvet var det en hög mattasor*)

In Orsa and Venjan, where the dative case is still alive, there is also neutralization in the dative of these nouns.

Neutralization between indefinite and definite in the dative. This appears to be common or even normal in the dative-preserving vernaculars. Thus, according to Marklund1976 nouns in *Skelletmål* have two rather than four dative forms – one for singular and one for plural, as in *pigen* ‘the maid’: *pigåm* ‘the maids’ (from *piig* ‘maid’), or just one for both, as in *vaidjåm* ‘the wall(s)’. There is thus no definite/indefinite distinction, and although Marklund does not say so explicitly, it appears that the normal interpretation of the dative forms is definite – the ending is also normally added to the definite stem (as in the case of *vaigg:vaidjåm*).

The developments are somewhat different in the singular and the plural. In the singular, the indefinite form tends to be marginal or absent, whereas the definite form is stronger; in the plural, it is the definite form that disappears. In Dalecarlian, the vernacular of Orsa appears to be the only exception in that there are separate forms for definite dative plurals ending in *-uma*, as in *revuma* ‘fox.PL.DEF.DAT’. According to Levander (1909), at the time of his investigation in the first decade of the 20th century, elderly persons in Älvdalen sometimes used definite dative plurals in *-ume*. Otherwise, the indefinite dative plural ending *-um* has been generalized, e.g. Elfdalian *rövum* ‘fox.PL.DEF.DAT’.

Neutralization of definiteness in individual lexemes. Individual lexemes or groups of lexemes sometimes have identical indefinite and definite forms. Thus, in Elfdalian, neuter nouns in *-ð* have a zero ending in the definite singular nominative and accusative, e.g. *broð* ‘bread’. Many Elfdalian nouns are not inflected at all. The word for ‘coffee’ is perhaps most notable in this connection; *kaffi*, which like *broð* is highly frequent in contexts in what is below called non-delimited readings, would normally trigger a definite form.

Neutralization of the definiteness distinction means that the consequences of the changes discussed below are more restricted than they would otherwise be, since in many cases it will not make any difference if an indefinite or a definite form is chosen. It also means that direct comparisons between dialects are not always possible – if you translate an example from one dialect to another, the distinction between definite and indefinite may disappear on the way.

As I said above and as also argued by Hummelstedt1934 neutralization of the definiteness distinction is in principle a different phenomenon from that of extensions of the domain of definite forms. One may of course also speculate whether there is any causal relationship between the processes by which definite forms acquire new uses and the processes by which definite and indefinite forms are neutralized. What could perhaps be expected is that if the definite forms expand too much, the indefinite forms will simply fall into oblivion. This is essentially what seems to happen in the final stages of the grammaticalization paths described by Greenberg. However, confusingly, it is not always the definite forms that win out in the neutralization process: for instance, in Orsa, as we have seen, neuter nouns have zero endings for both indefinite and definite. In other words, the neutralization process may well obliterate the results of the grammaticalization process. On the other hand, given that neutralization is so common, it is somewhat remarkable that speakers are still able to make the distinction when it is needed. Also, there is no consistency in the neutralizations: thus, Orsamål is “radical” in having no definiteness distinction in neuter nouns and “conservative” in being the only vernacular that preserves the same distinction in the dative plural.

It should also be noted that the systems described above often go against general assumptions about markedness relations in morphology (as when a distinction is upheld in oblique cases but not in the nominative) (see Dahl & Koptjevskaja-Tamm2006).

1.2 Survey of extended uses of definites

1.2.1 Generic uses

Generic noun phrases are used to refer generally to a species (natural kind), class or type of entities.⁵ There are actually at least two main kinds of generic uses of noun phrases (KrifkaEtAl1995). The first, and most well-known, is when the noun phrase occurs in a context in which a general, “law-like” or nomic statement is made about the species, class or type that the noun phrase denotes (Dahl1973). The standard example in the linguistic literature is *Beavers build dams*, in which dam-building is described as a typical activity of beavers. This first type is called “characterizing sentences” by KrifkaEtAl1995. In the second type, which they call “kind predications”, the species or kind is referred to without there being a generalization over its members. For instance, in the sentence *The zoologist was studying the beaver*, the beaver species is referred to as the object of the zoologist’s study, but no inference can be drawn about individual beavers.

An interesting typological generalization is that generic uses of noun phrases do not in general have a dedicated mode of expression; rather, several different types of noun phrases may be recruited for those uses. Thus, in English, bare plurals, singulars with indefinite articles, and singulars with definite articles can all be used generically. We may thus also say *A beaver builds dams* and *The beaver builds dams*. There are quite definite restrictions, however. Indefinite singulars can only be used for “characterizing sentences”, not for “kind predications”: *The zoologist was studying a beaver* must mean that he or she was studying a concrete individual (or, possibly, a specific sub-species). Also, in English, definite plurals and definite mass nouns cannot in general be used generically: *The beavers build dams* must refer to a specific group of beavers and *The gold is expensive* must refer to a specific mass of gold. In this respect, languages with definite articles vary quite considerably. To see this, it is sufficient to compare English to French, where in fact *Les castors construisent des barrages* is the standard way of saying that beavers build dams, and correspondingly, the articleless construction, which is typical of English, is generally ungrammatical. In fact, the French situation appears to be more common among languages with definite articles (at least in Europe). That is, plurals and mass nouns as a rule take a definite article when used generically. Behrens2005 looked at five European languages – French, English, German, Greek, and Hungarian, and found that French, Greek and Hungarian all behave similarly in this regard, whereas German turned out to be somewhere

⁵ In Swedish grammatical literature, the traditional term used is “allmän betydelse” ‘general meaning’.

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in the middle. Compare the following example from Behrens' corpus, *The Little Prince*:

- (17) a. *English: Flowers are weak creatures.*
 b. *German: Die Blumen sind schwach.*
 c. *French: Les fleurs sont faibles.*
 d. *Greek: Ta lulúdhja íne adhínama.*
 e. *Hungarian: A virágok gyengék.*

Swedish, like German, is an intermediate case in that it sometimes follows the French and sometimes the English pattern. Thus, Swedish uses a definite NP in *Livet är kort* 'Life is short' (cf. French *La vie est brève*) but like English prefers a bare noun in *Guld är dyrt* 'Gold is expensive'. Possibly, Swedish is slightly more restrictive than German in the use of definite generics: it would seem more natural to use an indefinite plural in the translation of (17) than a definite one:

- (18) Swedish ()
Blommor är veka varelses.
 flower.PL be.PRS weak.WK being.PL
 'Flowers are weak beings.'

However, many Peripheral Swedish varieties behave more like French in this respect, with an across-the-board use of definite forms in generics. We thus find examples such as the following:

- (19) Älvdalen (Os) ()
Guld ið ir dyrt.
 gold.DEF be.PRS.SG expensive.N
 'Gold is expensive.' (questionnaire)

Generic uses of definites seem to be among the most widespread of the extended uses of definites found in the Peripheral Swedish area. They are thus characteristic not only of Upper Norrland and Upper Dalecarlian but also of regions such as Värmland, southern Finland, and Norway. Compare the following examples:

- (20) Östmark (Vm) ()
Kaffen ä allt bättre än ten.
 coffee.DEF be.PRS sure better than tea.DEF
 'Coffee is sure better than tea.' (Broberg1936)

- (21) Pernå (Ny) ()
Björc(in, han ä n[277?] bäter ti möbler, men han ä so
birch.DEF it be.PRS surely better for furniture.PL But it is so
hörder ti arbita.
 hard INFM work.INF
 ‘Birch, it is better for furniture, but it is so hard-worked.’ (Lundström
 (1939: 13-14))
- (22) Ingå (Ny) ()
Va hadde man för tjö:rdo:n ti de:? - Tjärnan.
 what have.PST one for vehicle for that **cart.DEF**
 ‘What kind of vehicle did they use for that? – A [lit. the] cart.’
 (Harling-Kranck & Mara1998)
- (23) Tromsø (Troms, Norway) (bkm:Ref135628619)
 a. *Det e mer varme i kola enn i veden.*
 It be.PRS more heat in **coal.DEF** than in **firewood.DEF**
 ‘There is more heat in coal than in firewood.’ (Iversen1918)
 b. *Ulvan e’ minder som bjørnan.*
Wolf.DEF.PL be.PRS small.CMPR than **bear.DEF.PL**
 ‘Wolves are smaller than bears.’ (Iversen1918)

The examples in (23) are the only ones that I have found in the literature from Norway, but reactions from Norwegian linguists suggest that such generic uses are in fact more widespread.

As noted above, Delsing’s “tentative” map of the “partitive” uses of definites in Scandinavia shows all of Northern Sweden (and a strip in Norway along the Swedish border in Trøndelag) as having “partitive articles where the standard language has generic naked forms”, the southern border coinciding more or less with the *limes norrlandicus*. More specifically, it passes through northern Värmland and southern Dalarna and cuts Gästrikland in two. As for Värmland, Delsing’s line is roughly at the height of Torsby and Ekshärad, but the Cat Corpus examples – from Västra Ämtervik (Fryksdalen) and Mangskog – give evidence that the border goes at least 40-50 kilometers further south in Värmland:

- (24) a. Västra Ämtervik (Vm) ()
FöggLân skâ en föll int mat...
bird.PL.DEF shall.PRS one PRAG NEG feed

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- b. Mangskog (Vm) ()

Fugglane skâ en föll inte mate...

bird.PL.DEF shall.PRS one PRAG NEG feed

‘Birds, you should not feed...’ (Cat Corpus)

The use is not consistent, however – in the following example the indefinite form is used:

- (25) Västra Ämtervik (Vm) ()

Sockerkak ä dä bäst Kätt’n vet.

Sponge_cake be.PRS DEF.N best cat.DEF know.PRS

‘Sponge cake is Cat’s favourite.’ (Cat Corpus)

- (26) Mangskog (Vm) ()

Sockerkake ä dä bäste Katten vet.

Sponge_cake be.PRS DEF.N best cat.DEF know.PRS

‘Sponge cake is Cat’s favourite.’ (Cat Corpus)

On the other hand, there is rather little evidence for generic uses of noun phrases in the rest of Delsing’s southern area. Delsing does not himself provide any such examples, and the Cat Corpus evidence is rather negative, in the following sense: In the translations of (24)-(25), no definite forms show up in texts from Hälsingland (3 texts), Härjedalen (1 text), and Dalarna outside the Ovansiljan area (about ten texts). (The examples from Ovansiljan are sometimes ambiguous due to the neutralization of the definiteness distinction in the plural.) Consider, for example, the following three translations from Hälsingland:⁶

- (27) a. Färila (Hä) ()

Fôgg[1E37?]â skâ mânn fäll int matâ, häll!

Bird.PL shall.PRS one PRAG NEG feed.INF either

- b. Forsa (Hä) ()

Fuglar ska man fell int mata e.

bird.PL shall.PRS one PRAG NEG feed.INF NEG⁷

- c. Järvsö (Hä) ()

Fôggla ska man fell int mata, e.

bird.PL shall.PRS one PRAG NEG feed.INF NEG

‘Birds, you should not feed...’ (Cat Corpus)

⁶ The endings in the plural tend to be confusing – for instance, the -a ending is definite in some vernaculars and indefinite in others. In the case of Färila and Järvsö the indefinite plural of ‘bird’ is *fôggla* and the definite plural is *fôgglan*.

Likewise Västerdalarna:

- (28) Transtrand (Vd) ()
- a. *Göll e dirt.*
gold be.PRS expensive
'Gold is expensive.' (questionnaire)
 - b. *Häster kut fort.*
horse.PL run.PRS fast
'Horses run fast.' (questionnaire)

Citation uses. Among uses of definite nouns that are close to generics, one can mention meta-linguistic uses or what is commonly called “citation forms”. This kind of use seems to be quite common in many parts of the peripheral area. Thus, speakers who are asked to write down word lists often quote nouns in the definite form. This use of definite forms is already reflected in the word lists of *Pitemål* compiled by the philologist Johan Ihre in the 18th century (Reinhammar2002).

Some clear examples of citation uses are:

- (29) Ersmark (NVb) ()
- He kall ve fö sjanostn för gammalt.*
it call.PRS we for sand_cheese.DEF for old.N
'This we call “sand cheese” of old.' [S43]
- (30) Svartlå, Överluleå (Ll) ()
- Jö tråo dom kåles skråkaran.*
I think.PRS they call.PASS.PRS “skråkar”.DEF.PL
'I think they are called “skråkaran” ' [S45]

Definite forms in citation uses are occasionally mentioned in the literature. Thus, Dahlstedt & Ågren (1954: 282) say that if you ask a Norrlandic farmer what the berries that grow along the sides of the field are called, he answers *Åkerbära* ‘the polar cloudberries’. According to Lagman1979 the definite form shows up “to a certain extent” as the “lexical form” in Estonian Swedish. Thus, he says, the answer to the question “What is ‘white horse’ in Nuckö Swedish?” would be *hoit aiken* ‘white horse.DEF’. Steensland1994 in his book on Elfdalian plant names,

⁷ The morpheme *e* is a reinforcing element that co-occurs with negation often enough to warrant talking of a double negation construction. It is common in vernacular texts from Uppland and Hälsingland.

says that he uses indefinite forms throughout, “although this can often appear unnatural to an Elfdalian”. “In Elfdalian definite forms are most often used when a plant is named.”⁸

1.2.2 Non-delimited uses

A major type of extended uses of definite forms in the Peripheral Swedish area are the ones I shall call **non-delimited**. Consider the following sentence from the Cat Corpus:

- (31) a. Swedish ()
Ja, bara jag har fått in vedbörden, så ska jag
 yes only I have.PRS get.SUP in wood_bundle.DEF so shall.PRS I
värma mjölk åt honom.
 warm.INF milk for him
- b. Skellefteå (NVb) (bkm:Ref110672187)
Jå, bara I ha börä ein veabåla, så skå I
 yes only I have.PRS get.SUP in wood_bundle.DEF so shall.PRS I
väärm mjölka åt 'n.
 warm.INF milk.DEF for him
- c. Orsa (Os) ()
Ja, bara i a fendji in widn sö skari
 yes only I have.PRS get.SUP in firewood.DEF so shall.PRS_I
wärm mjötje a num.
 warm.INF milk.DEF for him
 ‘As soon as I have got the wood bundle into the house, I’ll warm
 some milk for him.’ (Cat Corpus)

Here, both *Skelletmål* and the Orsa vernacular use the definite form of the noun *milk* in the second clause, although an indefinite form would be expected from the point of view of Standard Swedish, since there is no earlier mention of milk in the text.

Such uses have often been called “partitive” in the literature, which seems natural in view of the fact that they by and large correspond to the use of the “partitive articles” in French and Italian, and also are generally translatable by

⁸ “Jag återger i regel de älvdalska växtnamnen i obestämd form, trots att detta många gånger kan te sig onaturligt för en älvdaling. I älvdalskan använder man nämligen oftast bestämd form, då man benämner en växt.”

the partitive case in languages such as Finnish and Estonian. As pointed out in Koptjevskaja-Tamm2001 however, the term “partitive” is better reserved for constructions which express part-whole relationships in a narrower sense, such as *a piece of the cake*. For constructions that derive historically from partitive constructions but are synchronically used to express a non-specified quantity of something, such as noun phrases with partitive articles in Romance languages, Koptjevskaja-Tamm uses the term “pseudo-partitive”. This term, however, is less suitable for patterns that have no direct link to partitive constructions in the proper sense, and I therefore prefer the term “non-delimited” here. “Non-delimited” means that the noun phrase contains no indication of a quantity such as *a cup of* in *a cup of tea* or *much* in *much beer*. The lexical heads of non-delimited NPs are either mass nouns or plural count nouns. In English and Central Scandinavian, they would typically be “bare NPs”, e.g. *beer* in *I am drinking beer*.

Delsing1993 notes that the non-delimited uses of definite forms, or as he calls them, noun phrases with “partitive articles”, can be used in existential constructions with a dummy subject, as in the following examples:

- (32) “North Swedish” (location unspecified) ()
Hä finns vattne däri hinken.
 it exist.PRS water.DEF there_in bucket.DEF
 ‘There is water in the bucket.’

- (33) *Hä väks granän överallt.*
 it grow.DEF fir.DEF everywhere
 ‘Fir trees grow all around.’

From this observation, Delsing draws the conclusion that these forms are not really definite, and that we are not dealing with “definite forms” or a “definite article” but rather with manifestations of a “partitive article” separate from the ordinary definite article or definite forms. He also includes generic uses of definite forms under this heading.

The definiteness constraint on NPs in the Swedish dummy subject construction (which is similar to the English one) makes it possible to use this construction as a test on definiteness in Swedish. The definiteness constraint is not universal, however; it does not hold for the corresponding constructions in German:

- (34) German ()
Es kommt der Zug von Kiel.
 it come.PRS DEF.M.NOM train from Kiel
 ‘The train from Kiel comes/is coming.’

It follows that the definiteness constraint is not necessarily applicable to the varieties discussed here. Furthermore, it is not obvious that there is a unified notion of definiteness that can be applied at all levels of description. What is marked by a definite article may well be semantically or pragmatically indefinite, and vice versa. The postulation of two separate entities underlying the various uses of definite forms detracts attention from the fact that these forms are diachronically connected and may also be argued to form a continuum synchronically. We may of course decide that the distribution of definite forms in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars is too different from that of the entities we usually call definite articles to deserve that name. I think practical considerations speak in favour of not inventing a new term here. Delsing's proposal, "partitive article", could of course only cover the extended uses of definite forms. However, Delsing applies it not only to non-delimited uses but also to generic ones. Since there are dialects which have generic but no non-delimited uses of definites, this has the rather peculiar consequence that there would be partitive articles whose only reading is generic. Generic readings are not found with partitive articles in Romance. Instead, those languages as a rule mark generic noun phrases by definite articles. Similarly, with respect to case-marking in Fenno-Ugric, generic NPs pattern with NPs that have definite reference. Furthermore, even in Swedish, the definite form is used with generic noun phrases in various contexts (above all with singular nouns), which, on Delsing's proposal, would make the borderline between the definite and the partitive articles look a bit arbitrary. There is good reason, as we shall see, to assume that generic readings of definites are diachronically prior to non-delimited ones. We shall also see that there are various other extended uses of definites for which "partitive" is not a natural label. In view of this, I find the term "partitive article" rather inadequate for the extended uses of definites in Peripheral Swedish. (BergholmEtAl1999 take this line of reasoning even further, labelling all extended uses of definite forms "generic".)

As examples of extended uses of definite articles in the literature, one often finds expressions such as 'pick berries'. In sentences such as (33) and (34) it is natural to use a non-delimited noun phrase since it does not really make sense to specify a quantity.

(35) *I am picking berries.*

(36) *I pick berries in summer.*

There are, however, other contexts where a quantity is at least implied:

(37) *I picked berries today.*

In contradistinction to (33), where the activity is still going on and the result is yet undetermined, (35) implies the existence of a specific quantity of berries that I have picked. In similar contexts, English bare nouns are in competition with nouns preceded by quantifiers, such as with the unstressed variant of *some* sometimes denoted in the linguistic literature as *sm*):

(38) *I picked some berries today.*

There may be some variation among languages as to the choice between constructions with and without quantifiers. It does appear that, in many Peripheral Swedish vernaculars, cognates of Swedish *någon* ‘some’ have undergone a development which has led to a considerably wider use than in the standard language. They thus show up both when Swedish has quantifiers such as *lite* ‘a little’ and when it uses bare noun phrases. Levander1909 notes that Elfdalian *någår* is used in “indefinite individualization” in a way that differs from what is found in Swedish, as in

(39) Åsen, Älvdalen (Os) ()
Ig al etter nog broðe.
 I shall.PRS after **some** bread.DAT
 ‘I’ll go and get some bread.’

Similarly, compare (30)(b) in *Skelletmål*, where a definite form *mjölka* is used, with the corresponding sentence in Ume-Sävarmål, from the southern part of the same province (Västerbotten):

(40) Sävar (SVb) ()
Ĵoo, barra ja ha byre in veabÖLa, sä ska ja
 yes only I have.PRS get.SUP in wood_bundle.DEF so shall.PRS I
väärm na mjÖlk ått ‘n.
 warm.INF **some** milk for him
 ‘As soon as I have got the wood bundle into the house, I’ll warm (some) milk for him.’ (Cat Corpus)

The *Skelletmål* translator has here chosen to use a definite noun *mjölka*, whereas the Sävar translation contains *na* followed by an indefinite form of the noun *mjÖlk*. However, *Skelletmål* as described by Marklund1976 is not alien to an extended use of *na*. Marklund1976 says that *na* is used often enough to “lose its character as a pronoun in the proper sense and may even sometimes lack a

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standard language counterpart”, especially “with adjectives in negated and interrogative clauses”, which sounds like a straightforward description of a grammaticalized item. Some examples are:

- (41) *Skelletmål* (NVb) ()
Hæ e kâmmē na mââng?
have.PRS it come.SUP **some** many
‘Have many [people] arrived?’ (Marklund1976)
- (42) *Skelletmål* (NVb) ()
Eint vær I dâ na rädd.
NEG be.PST I then **any** afraid
‘I wasn’t afraid then at all.’ (Marklund1976)

For *Pitemål*, Brännström (1993: 19) says: “In *Pitemål*, *na* is used as an indefinite article in the plural”, quoting examples such as the following:

- (43) *Pitemål* (Pm) ()
Hä kom na fLi’ttjom ötät väjen.
it come.PST **some** girl.DAT.PL along road.DEF
‘There came some girls along the road.’ (Brännström (1993: 19))
- (44) *Dji’v mä na kòrvom!*
give.IMP PRO.1SG.OBL **some** sausage.DAT.PL
‘Give me some sausages!’ (Brännström (1993: 19))

(For a discussion of the case marking, see 3.2.4 below.)

In other words, *na*-marked noun phrases have encroached on the territory of non-delimited definites in part of the Peripheral Swedish area.

Map 11. Present-day distribution of non-delimited uses of definite nouns.

1.2.3 Areal distribution of non-delimited uses

Although the map in Delsing2003a shows non-delimited uses of definite nouns as being restricted to the Swedish-speaking areas of Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Österbotten, Ångermanland and parts of Jämtland, the distribution is in fact wider. In addition to the northern area just mentioned, non-delimited definites are quite strongly represented in the Ovansiljan area, and more or less sporadic

examples are found also elsewhere in the Peripheral Swedish area. We shall first look at the two core areas.

The northern core area. It appears that non-delimited definites are normal in all Westrobothnian, Norrbothnian, Angermannian, and Ostrobothnian vernaculars, and the usage is fairly stable. It is striking that non-delimited definites are even found in the so-called “settler dialects” (*nybyggarmål*) of the province of Lappland, which are usually said to be strongly influenced by Standard Swedish. Compare the following example from Arvidsjaur in the south-western Lappland:

- (45) Arvidsjaur (Nm) ()
Jaa, I ska berätt för je då ji å a Karolina nåppe
 yes I shall.PRS tell.INF for you when I and PDA.F Karolina pick.PST
snottren i höst.
 cloudberries.DEF.PL in autumn
 ‘Well, I’ll tell you how Karolina and I picked cloudberries last autumn.’ [S4]

In my opinion, Jämtland should also be included in the northern core area. Delsing is a bit vague here: he first mentions examples of definite forms after quantifiers from the Indal river valley, and then says that “partitive articles” (apparently in general) are “more frequent there than around Lake Storsjön and westward” (Delsing2003a). On the map, he draws the western border of the use of the partitive article in non-delimited uses at the parish of Lit – this seems to be based on the distribution of quantified uses. However, it is fairly clear that non-delimited uses can be found all over the province (Bo Oscarsson, personal communication). The following is an example from the parish of Kall in the western part of Jämtland (the informant was born around 1850, the text was written down in 1908):

- (46) Kall (Jm) ()
En vakker ‘n dag rest ‘n åt skoga å skull skaff
 one beautiful PIA day go.PST he to forest.DEF and will.PST get.INF
ven.
 wood.DEF
 ‘One day he went to the forest to get firewood.’ [S11]

The southern core area (Ovansiljan). This area is much smaller than the northern one, and the strength of non-delimited uses is also more variable, suggesting a general receding tendency. The most stable usage is found in the more

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conservative vernaculars of Älvdalen, Våmhus, and Orsa. Levander1909 quotes the following examples:

- (47) Älvdalen (Os) ()
U lum f[1EB?] stjyreð et middags.
 shall.PRS.1PL have.INF **curdled_milk**.DEF to dinner.GEN⁹
 ‘We’ll have curdled milk for dinner.’

- (48) *Will du f[1EB?] snuseð min mig?*
 want.PRS you have.INF **snuff**.DEF with PRO.1SG.OBL
 ‘Do you want to have snuff from me?’

More recent attestations can be quoted from Bengt Åkerberg’s translation of the novel *Hunden* by Kerstin Ekman:

- (49) Älvdalen (Os) ()
- a. *Eð liep nið smeltwattneð i uäly.*
 it run.PST down **melting_water**.DEF in hole.DEF.ACC
 ‘Melting water was running down into the hole.’ [S9]
 - b. *Måyre; war ikåv min wattne;.*
 marsh.DEF be.PST pregnant with **water**.DEF.DAT
 ‘The marsh was pregnant with water.’ [S9]

(a) demonstrates the possibility of using a definite form in the dummy subject construction, showing that this is indeed possible also in the Ovansiljan area.

Also in Mora, which has always been the centre of the Ovansiljan region, non-delimited uses of definite forms are relatively strong. Thus, the translation of (30) in the Mormål version in the Cat Corpus is:

- (50) Mora (Os) ()
Ja, bar I a feir-in wiråbördu, så ska I
 yes only I have.PRS get_in.SUP wood_bundle.DEF so shall.PRS I
warm mjetse a onum.
 warm.INF **milk**.DEF for PRO.3SG.M.DAT
 ‘As soon as I have got the wood bundle into the house, I’ll warm some milk for him.’ (Cat Corpus)

⁹ This is a fossilized “old” genitive, see 5.4.2.

An example from the Bible texts in [S20]:

- (51) *Östnors-seljamål* (Os) ()
Finns ä nån ... såm djäv dem jen wårn när
 exist.PRS it somebody that give.PRS 3PL.OBL INDF snake when
*dem fråg ettär **fistjen?***
 they ask.PRS after **fish.DEF**
 ‘Is there anybody ... who gives them a snake when they ask for fish?’
 (Matt. 7:10) [S20]

In an older text we find the following:

- (52) *Mora* (Os) ()
Ä wa je keLing frammä, so add selt
 there be.PST INDF woman out_there REL have.PST sell.SUP
brendunä.
aquavit.DEF
 ‘There was a woman out there, who had sold aquavit.’ [S46]

(It may be noted that both (47) and (48) contain dummy subjects.)

However, the use of definite forms may be receding in Mormål. Compare the following parallel examples from the Elfdalian translation of the Gospel of John (*Juanneswaundsjala*;) and *Mormålsbibeln*:

- (53) a. *Älvdalen* (Os) ()
*Ed so ar kumid til åv tjyötj, ed ir **tjyöted...***
 it REL have.PRS come.SUP to of flesh.DEF.DAT it be.PRS **flesh.DEF**
 ‘That which is born of flesh is flesh...’ (John 3:6) [S37]
- b. *Önamål* (Mora, Os) ()
*Er så a kem-til åv **tjöt e tjöt...***
 it REL have.PRS come_about.SUP of **flesh** be.PRS **flesh**
 ‘That which is born of flesh is flesh...’ [S20]
- c. *Älvdalen* (Os) ()
*...ig ar kumid og döper min **wattne;***
 I have.PRS come.SUP and baptize.PRS with **water.DEF.DAT**
 ‘...I have come to baptize with water.’ [S37]

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d. Önamål (Mora, Os) ()

...ar I kem å döpar min wattn.

have.PRS I come.SUP and baptize.PRS with **water**

‘...I have come to baptize with water.’ [S20]

Among the other parishes in Ovansiljan, non-delimited definites are used fairly systematically in the Cat Corpus texts from Orsa and Våmhus:

(54) a. Orsa (Os) ()

Ja, bara i a fendji in widn så skari

yes only I have.PRS get.SUP in firewood.DEF so shall.PRS_I

wärm mjötje a num.

warm.INF **milk**.DEF for PRO.3SG.M.DAT

b. Våmhus (Os) ()

Ja, bara i a faið in wi:ðn, so ska i

yes only I have.PRS get.SUP in firewood.DEF so shall.PRS I

warm miö:tsi a na.

warm.INF **milk**.DEF for PRO.3SG.F.DAT

‘As soon as I have got the wood bundle into the house, I’ll warm some milk for him.’ (Cat Corpus)

Similarly, in the extensive questionnaire materials from Orsa collected by Eva Olander, the overwhelming majority of the informants used definite forms in examples such as the following:

(55) Orsa (Os) ()

An drick mjötji.

he drink.PRS **milk**.DEF

‘He drinks milk.’

In Sollerön, the use of non-delimited definites appears to be weaker. Thus, according to informants, it would be most natural to use an indefinite form in the following example:

(56) Sollerön (Os) ()

An drikk mjok.

he drink.PRS **milk**

‘He is drinking milk.’ (questionnaire)

However, according to Margit Andersson (personal communication), it might be possible to use the definite form if a habitual interpretation is intended:

- (57) Sollerön (Os) ()
An drikk mjotji.
 he drink.PRS milk.DEF
 ‘He drinks milk.’

Similarly, Andersson & Danielsson1999 quote examples such as the following, with bare nouns where e.g. Elfdalian, for example, would clearly use definite forms:

- (58) Sollerön (Os) ()
I åt bermos ata mjotjän.
 I eat.PST lingonberry_jam with milk.DEF.DAT
 ‘I ate lingonberry jam with the milk.’ (Andersson & Danielsson1999)
- (59) Ä e mjok i putällim.
 it be.PRS milk.DEF in bottle.DEF.DAT
 ‘There is milk in the bottle.’ (Andersson & Danielsson1999)

However, the same book also lists expressions such as *res päroni* ‘peel potatoes.DEF.PL’ (Andersson & Danielsson1999). In the Cat Corpus, there is at least one clear case of a definite form:

- (60) Sollerön (Os) ()
 ... å ä add vurti skårån upå snjom.
 and it have.PST become.SUP hard_crust.DEF on snow.DEF
 ‘... and there was a hard crust on the snow.’ (Cat Corpus)

In the translation from Ore, which is regarded as a transitional variety between Ovensiljan and Nedansiljan, we find an indefinite form even in this sentence:

- (61) Ore (Os) ()
 ... ô ä add wurte skare på snjon.
 and it have.PST become.SUP hard_crust on snow.DEF
 ‘... and there was a hard crust on the snow.’ (Cat Corpus)

Attestations outside the core areas. The areas where non-delimited uses are more sporadically represented include most of the rest of Norrland, and also the

central province of Uppland, and possibly also Estonia. We shall look at each province in turn.

Medelpad. This province is situated along the coast immediately south of Ångermanland. As in the case of Jämtland, **Delsing2003a** is a bit vague here. He quotes **Vestlund1923** as saying that an example such as *de väks granen*¹⁰, registered in Häggdånger in southern Ångermanland and labeled an “existential construction” by Delsing, would be “completely impossible” in Medelpad. Somewhat later, Delsing says that for southern Norrland in general (and, as is clear from the map, including Medelpad) it seems that partitive articles have to be generic, which “among other things excludes existential constructions”. However, Vestlund has more to say on this issue in the work referred to by Delsing. In his comparison of Angermannian and Medelpadian, he says that in both vernaculars the definite form is used “to a considerably greater extent” than in the standard language¹¹ and that it is easy enough to hear expressions in Medelpad such as the following:

- (62) Selånger (Md) ()
nôppä bära
 pick.INF berry.DEF.PL
 ‘pick berries’
- (63) *sälä vön*
 sell.INF firewood.DEF
 ‘sell firewood’
- (64) *Vi ha fåt möN ti väjån.*
 we have.PRS get.SUP ant.DEF in wall.DEF
 ‘We have got ants in the wall.’
- (65) *Hä bli vakkär-värä i môra.*
 it become.PRS nice_weather.DEF in morning
 ‘The weather will be nice tomorrow.’

Similarly, **Bogren1921** says that the vernacular of Torp, a parish in the western part of Medelpad, “uses the definite form in some phrases where the standard language has indefinite forms”.¹² He gives additional examples such as:

¹⁰ “Vestlund (ibid.) nämner också att ångermanländska exempel med existentialkonstruktion, som *hä väks granen* [sic], är omöjliga i Medelpad.”

¹¹ “I såväl mp. som åm. användes best. form hos substantivet i betydligt större utsträckning än i riksspråket.” (**Vestlund1923**)

¹² “Torp. använder i en del fraser best. form där rspr har obest”

- (66) Torp (Md) ()
ha tin
have.INF time.DEF
‘have time’
- (67) *fara t 8 ge*
travel.INF train.DEF
‘go by train’

It is therefore unclear what to make of Vestlund’s claim about the impossibility of sentences such as *de väks granen*. Curiously enough, it seems to be contradicted by the following example from one text that Vestlund himself edited, where there is a fairly clear case of a dummy subject construction:

- (68) Liden (Md) ()
*[Då han fick si bjO[30D?](r)n-dænn, sa vart-n sa ivri hætt han gLömd e tell
å slättje elen, å då han hadde sätt å(v) mæ bjO[30D?](r)n, sa fek-n si hætt]
hæ hólle på brann skogelen efrån där han hadde*
it keep.PRET on burn.PST forest_fire.DEF from where he have.PST
lega,
lie.SUP
‘[When he saw that bear, he got so excited that he forgot to put out the
fire, so he saw that] there was a forest fire burning where he had been
lying.’ [S38]

Admittedly, the text originates from Liden, the northernmost parish of Medelpad, and may not be representative of the province in general.

Hälsingland. Going further south along the coast, we find that the vernaculars of Hälsingland do not in general seem to employ definite forms of nouns in non-delimited uses. Compare

- (69) Färila (Hä) ()
De hadde vòrsste skåre på snön.
it have.PST become.SUP crust on snow.DEF
‘There was a hard crust on the snow.’ (Cat Corpus)
- (70) Järvsö (Hä) ()
Momma va på väg ut ätte ve.
Granny be.PST on way out after firewood
‘Granny was on her way out to get firewood.’ (Cat Corpus)

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In a text originating from the parish of Bergsjö in the 1870's, however, there are several examples that suggest that non-delimited uses were possible in earlier times in Hälsingland, e.g. the following (notice the dummy subject):

- (71) Bergsjö (Hä) ()
Hæ twg te b[26D?]åsx sönnaväre.
 it take.PST INFM blow.INF southerly_wind.DEF
 'It started blowing from the south.' [S28]
- (72) ...o j[277?]L[259?] ðpp *el[259?]n* för å rðsta s[259?] en
 and make.PST up fire.DEF for INFM roast.INF REFL INDF
kaff[259?]drðpa.
 coffee_drop
 '...and made a fire to roast themselves a drop of coffee.' [S28]

We shall see that the use of a definite form of the noun 'fire' in lexical expressions such as 'make a fire' is particularly widespread.

Härjedalen. Between the northern and southern core areas, we find the small province of Härjedalen, the vernaculars of which are traditionally regarded as "Norwegian". Reinhammar1973 quoted by Delsing2003a says rather cautiously that definite forms in general are "possibly less common" here than in other Norrlandic dialects. Delsing quotes some cases from Härjedalen texts where definite forms would be expected but do not occur. This is also in accordance with my findings, at least for non-delimited uses. Compare

- (73) Ljusnedal (Hd) ()
Dä kommer snö uppepå.
 it come.PRS snow on_top
 'There will be snow on top.' (Cat Corpus)

Uppland. Non-delimited uses of definites are in general not found in the vernaculars of the Mälars provinces. The only clear example mentioned in the literature is the following from Alunda in Uppland, in a transcription of the speech of a man born in 1880:

- (74) Alunda (Up) ()
[Ann(å)rs sô brênde-råm åpp rörn ib[29F?]ann,]
mênn dômt tord (i)nt sêttâ jêll'n på dê [för ê sjenâ åpp i
 but they dare.PST NEG put.INF fire.DEF on that
skogen.]

‘[Otherwise they burnt the reeds sometimes,] but they did not dare to put fire to it, [since then it [the fire] would spread into the woods].’
(Västerlund (1988: 60))

Here, we recognize the use of a definite form of the word for ‘fire’ in a lexicalized expression meaning ‘make fire’ or ‘put fire to’ that we also saw in (63)(b) from Hälsingland. Västerlund (1988: 40) comments that the use of the definite form of *jell* ‘fire’ is surprising in view of the fact that this “syntactic peculiarity”, i.e. an extended use of definite forms, “has earlier only been attested from Norrland, Dalarna and Värmland”.¹³ I shall return to this kind of example below (3.2.3.1).

Nedersiljan. In the Nedersiljan vernaculars in Dalarna, non-delimited uses of definite forms do not in general seem possible, to judge from the written sources. Consider for instance the following example from Häradsbygden (Leksand):

- (75) Häradsbygden, Leksand (Ns) ()
Först skå o körna, gör ust å kok
 first shall.PRS she churn.INF make.INF **cheese** and cook.INF
missmör.
whey-cheese
 ‘First she’ll churn, make cheese and cook whey-cheese.’ [S48]

However, in Levander et al. (1961-) I have found a couple of examples of what seems to be non-delimited uses:

- (76) Leksand (Ns) ()
tännd jelln ti nävra
 light.INF **fire.DEF** in birch-bark
 ‘put fire to the birch-bark’
- (77) Rättvik (Ns) ()
Vi hallom-å fåm smått om mjöltjä.
 we PROG.PRS.1PL get.PRS.1PL little about **milk.DEF**
 ‘We’re getting short of milk.’

These may be taken as suggesting that definite forms have been used earlier in these contexts. Notice again the use of definite forms in the expression *tännd jelln* ‘put fire to’.

¹³ “...ägnat att förvåna, eftersom denna syntaktiska egenhet tidigare endast tycks vara känd från Norrland, Dalarna och Värmland.” (Västerlund (1988: 60))

Estonia. I have found a single plausible example of a non-delimited use of a definite form in an Estonian Swedish text. Interestingly, it comes from the very south-east end of the Swedish dialect area in the Baltics, from the small island of Runö (Estonian: Ruhnu) in the Bay of Riga, and is taken from **Vendell1882** thus representing a rather old variety. In the following example, there are several non-delimited nouns. Some of them are clearly indefinite, such as *brämin* ‘aquavit’ (definite form *brämini*); others could be both indefinite and definite, since the distinction is neutralized in plural forms, e.g. the plurale tantum *käta* ‘(the) meat’, but the word *kLimskin* appears to be an indisputable definite form (Vendell lists the base form of this word as *kLimsk*).

(78) Runö (Es) ()

[*Hesto ska bullupi kuma.*]

Tua ska vi dans, ita käta, drikk brämin,
 then shall.PRS we dance.INF eat.INF meat.PL drink.INF aquavit
kLimskin, ita kLing upa hoitbre, kakubre, setsurt
dumpling.DEF eat.INF butter on wheat bread cake bread
breγu, kouk hurs brufolki kuma uter
 sweet-sour bread.PL look.INF how bride-people.DEF come.PRS.PL out
kirki.
 of church.DEF

‘[In autumn we’ll have the wedding.] Then we shall dance, eat meat, drink aquavit, (eat) dumplings,¹⁴ eat butter on wheat bread, cake bread, sweet-sour bread, watch how the newlyweds come out of church.’
 (Vendell1882)

Norway. **Delsing2003a** says that it is not clear to what extent “partitive articles” are used in Norway. “Some Norwegians associate the use with Trøndelag” [my transl.]. He quotes Iversen as “giving a few examples”; the ones he seems to have in mind (quoted above) are clearly generic, however. He says that he has found a few examples in texts that resemble North Swedish “partitive articles”, but mentions only one perhaps not too convincing example:

(79) Ytre Vikna (Nord-Trøndelag, Norway) ()

...der vi låog å drog garna.

...where we lay.PST and pull.PST net.PL.DEF

‘...where we were pulling the fishing-nets.’ (**Delsing2003a**)

¹⁴ *kLimsk* is used in the singular. It is somewhat unclear if it is a mass or a count noun – the corresponding Swedish word *klimp* seems to be rather indifferent to the distinction.

Several Norwegian linguists whom I have asked have denied any knowledge of non-delimited uses of definites in Norwegian.

1.2.4 Attestations of non-delimited uses from earlier periods

Probably the oldest attested example of a non-delimited use of a definite form from the Dalecarlian area, although not a particularly clear one, is in the oldest known wedding poem in a Swedish dialect, written in 1646 by a student at the university of Dorpat (present-day Tartu, Estonia, at the time one of the two universities on Swedish territory), who originated from Mora. The text is quoted in Björklund (1994: 166). The passage contains many obscure terms and rather than trying to translate it into English I quote it in the Appendix together with Björklund's incomplete translation into Swedish. It consists of an enumeration of different kinds of food. Most of them are denoted by bare nouns, with one exception, *lunssfiskren*, translated by Björklund as *surfisk(en)* '(the) sour fish', supposedly referring to fish preserved by salting. This is apparently a definite form, although the ending *-ren* is unexpected (the definite form of *fisk* 'fish' is *fistjen* in the modern vernacular, cf. ex. (47)). Such inconsistent usage of definite forms is common in older sources, and might be taken as an indication that the use of the definite form was optional, but it may also be interpreted as an influence from the standard language, or to the extent that the examples are from poetry, as a result of exigencies of the bound form.

From the 18th century, there are several clear examples, such as the following from 1716:

- (80) Dalecarlian (18th century) ()

Färdas um näter, og tobaken räkia, og såfwå å
 travel.INF about night.PL and tobacco.DEF smoke.INF and sleep.INF on
marcki.
 ground.DEF.DAT

'Travel by night, smoke tobacco, and sleep on the ground' [S25]

A similar example is found in Näsman (1733). It contains a definite form *Snus-tobakin* 'snuff-tobacco.DEF' which corresponds to an indefinite form in the accompanying Swedish translation (b), making the intended interpretation fairly clear:

- (81) a. Mora (Os) (1733) ()

[Dug ir jen mann dug Ilof, soss satt mig i stukkin,] fær ig soup
 for I inhale.PST

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Snustobakin *mæss* *Præstn* *hiælt* *â* *pridikâ*.
snuff-tobacco.DEF when clergyman.DEF keep.PST on preach.INF

- b. *Swedish1733* Swedish (1733) ()

[Du är en mann du Elof, som satt mig i stocken,] för jag söp
for I inhale.PST

Snustobak medan Præstn hölt på at predika.
snuff-tobacco while clergyman.DEF keep.PST on INFM preach.INF

‘[You’re some man you Elof, who put me in the stocks], because I was using snuff tobacco when the vicar was preaching.’

From the northern area, the oldest attested example is from an 18th century wedding poem from Nederluleå in the *Lulemål* area in Norrbotten, which contains the following passage with several definite forms mixed with indefinite ones:

- (82) Nederluleå (L1) ()

[Gud hân bewâra dâm wel fra ou-aro

Gifwi dām Hwäite å Råg nou i laro]

Drick uti tonnen kött/**fläske** å **kökin** / Neda
 drink.IMP in barrels.DEF.PL meat **pork.DEF** and **cake.DEF.PL** down

fra gålfwen å åltt up dill tōkin **Kouen** å
from floor.DEF.DAT and all up to ceiling.DEF.DAT cow.DEF.PL and

ouxan *å* *gjeitren* *å* *faara*
ox.DEF.PL and goat.DEF.PL and sheep.DEF.PL

‘[God may save them from the bad years

Give them wheat and rye enough in the cases]

Drink in the barrels, meat, pork and cakes,

All the way from the floor to the ceiling

Cows and oxen and goats and sheep' [S10]

From the same time and area we also find multiple attestations of extended uses of definite forms in the word lists from *Pitemål* compiled by the 18th century Swedish philologist Johan Ihre, e.g. the typical expression *nåpp bera* ‘to pick berries’ (Reinhammar2002).

Non-delimited uses of definite forms are thus attested as early as the 17th century for Dalarna and the 18th century for Upper Norrland, that is, more or less as early as we can get using written sources emanating from these areas.

Going further back, it is quite clear that non-delimited uses of definite forms are not characteristic of Written Medieval Swedish. On the other hand, it is pos-

sible to find a few indications of such uses. We saw that the use of a definite form of the noun *eld/jell* ‘fire’ seems to be, or have been, possible in an area which is rather much wider than the one where non-delimited definites are commonly found (exs. (63)(b), (65), (67) above). This inspired me to do a search for such examples in medieval texts. I thus excerpted all occurrences of the word *eld(h)* ‘fire’ in the Old Swedish corpus *Källtext*, focusing on the use of this word in more or less lexicalized collocations as the object of verbs such as *tända* ‘light up’ and *göra* ‘make’. In the majority of all cases, a bare noun was used, but there were a few examples of definite forms, such as (74):

- (83) Medieval Written Swedish ()
Misther falcken klöffwana, tha tak paper oc tånth
lose.PRS falcon.DEF claw.DEF.PL then take.IMP paper and light.IMP
elden *thär j [oc bren the thaana som klöffwen wil aff falla, oc smör*
fire.DEF there in
sidhan äffther mädh honagh oc bint bombas thär wm j nyo dagha]
‘Should the falcon lose its claws, then take paper and make fire therein
[and burn the toes from which the claw is falling off, and rub afterwards
with honey and tie a bandage around it for nine days].’ [S7]

The quoted text is a complete and independent section of the manuscript in which it occurs; the possibility of an anaphoric interpretation is precluded because there is no mention of fire earlier in the text that *elden* ‘fire.DEF’ could refer back to. The manuscript, “Bondakonst” from around 1500, was written by Peder Månsson (Petrus Magni), who was the last Catholic bishop of Västerås and the translator or author of several books. According to the 16th century chronicle of Peder Swart, Peder Månsson was born in the parish of Tillberga in Västmanland, fairly close to the border with Uppland; he would thus have been a speaker of an Upper Swedish variety. However, in her monograph on Peder Månsson’s language, Nordling2001 rejects this claim as not being trustworthy; thus, unfortunately, it does not seem possible to locate Peder Månsson linguistically. (More examples of this type from Written Medieval Swedish are found in the Appendix.)

1.2.5 Typological parallels

Although the extension of definite marking to non-delimited uses of noun phrases that we find in the Peripheral Swedish area is typologically rather uncommon, and the possibility is not discussed at all in recent works such as Himmelmann1997

and Lyons1999 it is not unique. One language where a parallel use is found is Spoken Moroccan Arabic.¹⁵ Thus, Caubet1983 quotes the following example:

- (84) Moroccan Arabic ()
Kāin [259?]l-h[32C?]obz.
there-is DEF-bread
'There is bread.'

While the definite article in other modern Arabic vernaculars does have a comparatively wide range of uses, it is not in general used in non-delimited noun phrases (Elie Wardini, personal communication). A detailed investigation of the use of definite articles in Arabic varieties could shed further light on the evolution of articles in general.

1.2.6 Uses with quantifiers

A defining criterion of non-delimited uses was said in 3.2.2 to be the absence of any expression that indicates individuation or a measure. However, in a part of the geographical area where non-delimited uses of definites are found, definite forms can also be used after quantifying expressions such as numerals or words meaning 'many', 'few' and the like. Delsing2003a quotes examples such as (76).

- (85) Överkalix (Kx) ()
mitsi fälke
much people.DEF
'many people' (Delsing2003a)

He says that the use is well attested in Norrbotten, Västerbotten and Ångermanland, and is also found along the river valley of Indalsälven in Jämtland. However, Delsing does not distinguish between cases like (76) and constructions where the quantifier and the noun are linked by a preposition, as in (77).

- (86) Ragunda (Jm) ()
gott om fistjevattna
plenty about fishing-water.DEF
'plenty of fishing-water' (Delsing2003a)

¹⁵ I am indebted to my former student Rashid El-Maaroufi who first made me aware of the Moroccan facts.

It appears that in the latter construction, where the noun has a more independent syntactic status, definite forms tend to be used more widely. In what follows, I shall be looking mainly at constructions of the first type, where the quantifier is immediately followed by a noun.

Westrobothnian. In this dialect area, the patterns seem different for numerals and other quantifiers such as ‘much’ and ‘many’. BergholmEtAl1999 studied three parishes representing different parts of the Westrobothnian dialect area: Bjurholm (transitional Angermannian-Westrobothnian), Burträsk (northern Westrobothnian), and Sorsele (southern Westrobothnian in the province of Lapland). For quantifiers other than numerals, it was only in Sorsele that the use of definite forms after quantifiers was predominant, most consistently after ‘much’, ‘many’ and ‘not any’:

- (87) Sorsele (SVb) ()
Heä mycke snön dära backen.
 it_be.PRS much snow.DEF there_on hill.DEF
 ‘There is much snow on the hill.’ (BergholmEtAl1999)
- (88) *Han drack mycke öle.*
 he drink.PST much beer.DEF
 ‘He drank a lot of beer.’ (BergholmEtAl1999)
- (89) *Han ha int na peninga.*
 he have.PRS NEG any money.PL.DEF
 ‘He hasn’t got any money.’ (BergholmEtAl1999)

In Burträsk and Bjurholm, definite forms with these quantifiers were uncommon or even “exceptions”, according to Bergholm et al. Curiously, the pattern with numerals was almost the opposite – here the Sorsele informants showed considerable variation and only the older informants tended to use definite forms consistently:

- (90) Sorsele (SVb) ()
Han ha tre brödr en.
 he have.PRS three brother.DEF.PL
 ‘He has three brothers.’ (BergholmEtAl1999)

In both Burträsk and Bjurholm, however, definite forms were used with numerals ‘2’ and ‘3’ by most informants:

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- (91) Bjurholm (ÅV) () **Han** *ha tre brören.*
 He have.PRS three brother.DEF.PL
 ‘He has three brothers.’ (BergholmEtAl1999)

A similar example is also reported from Vilhelmina (SVb) by Wälchli et al. (1998). In a questionnaire from Arvidsjaur, definite forms are given as the only alternative after *mycke* ‘much’.

According to Dahlstedt & Ågren (1954: 282), presenting examples from Åsele (Åm) and Vilhelmina (Åm), the definite plural form in Laplandic vernaculars has “often totally ousted”¹⁶ the indefinite form “even after numerals”. Delsing2003a also quotes examples from these locations as well as from Örträsk (ÅV).

Norrbothnian. In *Pitemål*, judging from the examples given in Brännström (1993) and Lidström & Berglund1991 plural quantifiers are followed by the dative (see below), but definite forms without case marking are possible with *mö’tje* ‘much’, both in the singular and the plural:

- (92) *Pitemål* (Pm) ()
Hä var mö’tje foLKe krö’gom ’en.
 it be.PST much people.DEF around he.OBL
 ‘There were a lot of people around him.’ (Brännström (1993: 52))
- (93) *E fjō[19A?]omsómmarn var -e mötje djātinga.*
 ? last_summer.DEF be.PST it much wasp.DEF.PL
 ‘Last summer there were a lot of wasps.’ (Lidström & Berglund1991)

In *Lulemål*, the use of the definite form seems relatively consistent after *mitji* – there are more than 30 examples in Nyström (1993), all except one with the definite form.

- (94) *Lulemål* (Ll) ()
He vär so åomitji pojkan o fLikken ini
 it be.PST so very_much boy.DEF.PL and girl.DEF.PL i
gämeLstän dil hāLjen.
 old_town.DEF to holiday.DEF
 ‘There were so terribly many boys and girls in the church town¹⁷ during

¹⁶ “I de svenska målen i Lappland har däremot den bestämda flertalsformen ofta totalt trängt ut den obestämda, t.o.m. efter räkneord...” (Dahlstedt & Ågren (1954: 282))

¹⁷ This refers to the “Gammelstad church town” (included in the UNESCO World Heritage List), comprising more than 400 cottages serving as an overnight stop for parishioners coming from far-away. See <http://www.lulea.se/gammelstad/>.

the holiday.’

Similarly, from the Cat Corpus:

- (95) *Lulemål* (Ll) ()
O åt tordes jö gä främ ati gålan heler, för der
 and NEG dare.PST I go.INF up to farm.DEF.PL either for there
vär so mitji heondan.
 be.PST so much dog.DEF.PL
 ‘And I didn’t dare go close to the farms either, for there were so many dogs.’ (Cat Corpus)

From Råneå in the *Lulemål* area, Delsing2003a quotes *mitsi bröde* ‘much bread.DEF’.

However, with most other quantifiers, including *meir* ‘more’, negative quantifiers such as *öyngar* ‘none’ and *ånt na* ‘not any’, and numerals, only indefinite forms show up:

- (96) *Lulemål* (Ll) ()
Ho hä öynge förhå.
 she have.PRS no restraint
 ‘She has no restraint, i.e. she cannot restrain herself.’ (Nyström (1993))
- (97) *Ini skapen fännsch e bara tvo kälper, in litn*
 in cupboard.DEF exist.PST it only two cold_potato One small
korvbuyt o in hå l v lök.
 sausage_piece and one half onion
 ‘In the cupboard there were only two cold potatoes, one small piece of sausage and half an onion.’ (Cat Corpus)

Delsing quotes the example *nå döfolke* from *Lulemål*, with the intended interpretation ‘some dead people’. This would be the only such example from Norrbotten. However, since other sources give the form *nä* for ‘some’ in *Lulemål*, which should according to Nordström (1925) be followed by an indefinite form in the singular and a dative form in the plural, some checking of the source seems to be warranted. The texts Delsing refers to for *Lulemål* do not as far as I can see contain any such phrase, but there is a passage in the text [S31] which might have been misinterpreted. It contains the phrase *spadd upa n[277?] döfolke*, where the

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first three words are translated in a footnote as ‘put on him by evil magic’ [“trol-lade på honom”], where *n*[277?] is the dative form of ‘him’; ‘some dead people’ would rather be *nä döfolk*.

From the Kalix area, we find examples both with ‘much’ and with numerals:

- (98) Nederkalix (Kx) ()
Wå söynda skå dö vä så myttji sopan?
 What sin.DEF shall.PRS you with so much milk.DEF
 ‘What the hell are you going to do with so **much milk**?’ (Cat Corpus)
- (99) *A tåo fram to kålpotåtisan, in*
she take.PST out two cold_potato.DEF.PL one
kårvbäit å in hålv lök.
 sausage-piece and one half onion
 ‘She took out two cold potatoes, a piece of sausage, and half an onion.’
 (Cat Corpus)
- (100) Siknäs, Nederkalix (Kx) ()
så forskrätseli mytji smöre
 so terribly much butter.DEF
 ‘so terribly much butter’ (Stenberg1971)

For Överkalix, cf. (76) above, with ‘much’. Definites with numerals are not attested from Överkalix, however.

Northern Settler Area. In a questionnaire from Arvidsjaur, definite forms are given as the only alternative after *mycke* ‘much’, *nå* ‘some’, and alternating with indefinites after numerals.

Ostrobothnian. For Karleby, Hagfors1891 quotes the examples *mytji järne* ‘much iron.DEF’ and *na lite tjöte* ‘some little meat.DEF’. For the same vernacular, as described by Vangsnes2003 the use of definite forms is obligatory after *mytji* ‘much’ and *somt* ‘some, certain’:

- (101) Karleby (NOB) ()
mytji öle
 much beer.DEF
 ‘much beer’

This is only visible in the singular since the Karleby vernacular has neutralization of definiteness in the plural. To make things more complex, other quantifiers,

such as *mang* ‘many’, *noga* ‘some’ and numerals, require the indefinite singular of the following noun (possibly under Finnish influence):

- (102) Karleby (NOB) ()
tri hest
 three horse.SG.INDF
 ‘three horses’

Eriksson & Rendahl 1999 in their questionnaire investigation of Ostrobothnian, report that, in general, their informants did not use definite forms after quantifiers. One exception was a person from Pedersöre, a neighbour parish of Karleby. Even this informant showed variation (e.g. *mytchi öli* ‘much beer.DEF’ but *mytchi snö* ‘much snow’.) Two informants from Malax in their material used a definite form after *itt na* ‘not any’ in the following example:

- (103) Malax (SOB) ()
He je itt na snön på martje.
 it be.PRS NEG any snow.DEF on ground.DEF
 ‘There is not any snow on the ground.’ (questionnaire)

It does seem that the use of definite forms after quantifiers in Österbotten is basically restricted to the northernmost part.

Jämtland. Delsing quotes three examples from written texts, but two of them are prepositional constructions, so the only remaining one would be *nå brännvine* ‘some vodka’ from Lit. I have not been able to find any other attestations from Jämtland.

Ångermanland. Delsing reports four examples from written texts, two with *myttje* (Tåsjö, Anundsjö) and two with *na* (Säbrå, Stigsjö). Wälchli et al. (1998) quote the following examples from Edsele:

- (104) Edsele (ÅM) ()
Där vax -e mötje gräse.
 there grow.PST it much grass.DEF
 ‘There was much grass.’ [S5]
- (105) *Män hon fann inge ägga utan sto där utan*
 but she find.PST no.PL egg.DEF.PL but stand.PST there without
ägg o utan höne
 egg.PL and without hen
 ‘But she did not find any eggs but stood there without eggs and without a hen.’ [S5]

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In the Cat Corpus, we find the following examples:

- (106) Junsele (Åm) ()

Momma hadd bodd eschammen häri stugern mang e
Granny have.PST live.SUP alone in hut.DEF many PIA
åra nu.
year.DEF.PL now

‘Granny had lived alone in the cabin for many years now.’ (Cat Corpus)

- (107) *Momma titte åt sia, steg opp å geck hit tell fönstre*

Granny look.PST at side rise.PST up and go.PST here to window.DEF
å gnôp tå na gulblaa tå blomma däri
and pinch.PST off some yellow_leave.DEF.PL from flower.DEF in
fönstre.
window.DEF

‘Granny looked aside, got up and went up to the window, and pinched off some yellow leaves from the plant in the window.’ (Cat Corpus)

No examples with numerals are attested from this area, to my knowledge.

Dalecarlian. Definite forms are not in general used with quantifiers in any Dalecarlian variety. In the literature, counterinstances to this are found in two places, both from Älvdalen. One is discussed below under the heading “Earlier periods”, the other is a brief mention in **Levander1909** where it is said that definite forms are “occasionally” found with *någär* ‘some’, as in *nå grandeð* ‘a little bit’ – which looks like a set expression, although it is hard to tell, since no details are given.

Earlier periods. In Written Medieval Swedish, quantifiers and interrogative pronouns were sometimes followed by a definite noun. At least two different types can be distinguished (Wessén (1956: 36-37)). One can be labeled “true partitive” – the noun refers to a specific superset, that is, a larger set from which a member or a subset is picked out by the quantifier or interrogative pronoun:

- (108) Written Medieval Swedish ()

somlikin sädhin
some grain.DEF
‘some of the grain’

- (109) *Han spurde, hulkom gudhenom thet teknit*
 he ask.PST which.DAT.SG.M god.DEF.DAT.SG that.N sign.DEF
tilhörde.
 belong.PST
 ‘He asked which of the gods the sign belonged to.’ [S36]

This type of definite, then, is different from what we find in quantifier phrases in modern vernaculars where there is no specific superset involved. The construction was probably a general feature of older forms of Scandinavian and survives in Modern Icelandic. The Icelandic use is mentioned by Riesler2002 as a typological parallel to the “partitive” uses of definite forms in northern Scandinavian, but there is no overlap between the two types. Although this fact does not exclude a diachronic relationship, there is to my knowledge no historical evidence to suggest such a connection.

The second medieval Swedish type at first seems more like the modern Peripheral Swedish area one. Compare:

- (110) Written Medieval Swedish ()
Tha war om siidher engin födhan i stadhenom.
 then be.PST finally no food.DEF in town.DEF.DAT
 ‘Eventually, there wasn’t any food in the town.’ [S32]

However, it turns out that the distribution of definite forms after quantifiers is different in medieval Swedish than in the modern vernaculars. Wessén notes that the definite form is most common with the inherently negative *ängin* ‘no, none’. Among the rather numerous examples he lists, there are only two that contain another quantifier, and in one of these, the quantifier is clearly within the scope of a negation:

- (111) Written Medieval Swedish ()
...medhan the orkadho ekki bära mykin matin
 ...while they be_able_to.PST.3PL NEG carry.INF much food.DEF
mz sik.
 with REFL
 ‘...while they did not manage to carry much food.’ [S6]

The only example that is neither inherently negative nor within the scope of a negation is the following:

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- (112) Written Medieval Swedish ()

...æn hans discipuli gingo in i stadhin at faa them
...but he.GEN disciple.PL go.PST in in town.DEF to get.INF them
nakan matin.
some.ACC.SG.M food.DEF

‘... but his disciples went into the town to get some food.’ [S6]

The pattern represented by (93)–(95) does not appear to have been a general one in Written Medieval Swedish. In the Källtext corpus, most occurrences of *ängin* ‘no, none’ are followed by indefinite nouns. Most of Wessén’s examples come from a few texts (the Pentateuch, Bonaventura), and even in those texts the pattern appears exceptional. On the other hand, the use still survived in some 16th century texts, notably the New Testament translation of 1526:

- (113) Early Modern Swedish ()

Wij haffuom intit brödith.
we have.PRS.1PL no.N bread.DEF

‘We have no bread.’ [S30]

There is an intriguing example from an early text in what purports to be Elfdalian (Näsman (1733)):

- (114) Älvdalen (Os) (18th century) ()

...**ingan uidn** *klufin...*
...**no firewood.DEF** hew.PP...
‘...no firewood hewn...’

When Lars Levander transcribed this text in Lundell (1936: T117), “normalizing” it according to early 20th century usage, he changed this phrase into *inggan wi kluvnan*.¹⁸ It is impossible to tell whether (97) really represents 18th century Elfdalian or not.

A fairly similar pattern is found in Norwegian, both the standard varieties and the dialects. The following sentence is quoted by FaarlundEtAl1997 as one of several examples where “individual predicative expressions in negated sentences” take a definite suffix on the noun.

¹⁸ Or rather, using the Swedish dialect alphabet (landsmålsalfabetet):

- (115) Bokmål Norwegian ()
Mange kronene var det ikke.
 many crown.PL be.PST it NEG
 ‘Many crowns it wasn’t.’

However, with quantifiers this pattern is not restricted to predicative positions. Examples like the following are quite common:¹⁹

- (116) Bokmål Norwegian ()
De snakket ikke mange ordene.
 they talk.PST NEG many word.PL.DEF
 ‘They didn’t speak many words.’ (Internet)
- (117) *Det tok ikke mange sekundene før døren var*
 it take.PST NEG many second.PL.DEF before door.DEF be.PST
åpen.
 open
 ‘It didn’t take many seconds before the door was open.’ (Internet)

Compare also examples such as the following, in which a definite noun with indefinite meaning is used in the scope of negation:

- (118) Tromsø (Troms, Norway) ()
Han eide ikkje nåla i væggen.
 he own.PST NEG nail.DEF in wall.DEF
 ‘He did not own a nail (lit. the nail) in the wall.’ (Iversen1918)

Datives after quantifiers. This is a topic that I have treated in another paper (Dahl2008), and although it is related to the question of definite marking, it is strictly speaking separate from it, so I will only briefly state the facts here. In the dialect areas Northern Westrobothnian, *Pitemål* and *Lulemål*²⁰, a quantifier may be followed by a form which is diachronically (and at least in some varieties also synchronically) a definite dative plural form. In *Pitemål* and *Lulemål*, this is obligatory after *na* ‘some’:

¹⁹ A Google search for the string “tok ikke mange” yielded 1360 hits, and of the first 50 examples more than 80 per cent were followed by a definite noun.

²⁰ As I was later informed by Oskar Rönnerberg, the phenomena described here for *Pitemål* and *Lulemål* are also found in *Kalixmål* as spoken in Kalix.

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(119) *Pitemål* (Pm) ()

Hä kom na fLi'ttjom ötät väjen.

it come.PST some girl.DAT.PL along road.DEF

'There came some girls along the road.' (Brännström (1993: 19))

In a curious development restricted to the southern Norrbothnian varieties – *Pitemål* and *Lulemål* – this pattern has spread in such a way that the erstwhile dative plural form is also used in contexts where there is no quantifier, notably when some modifier such as an adjective or a possessive pronoun precedes the noun. Examples from Råneå (Lm) are *truy swårta faro* 'three black sheep', *våder bano å dåmers aongo* 'our children and their [other people's] brats', *nuya kLedo* 'new clothes' (Råneå (Wikberg2004)). An unexpected property of these constructions is that they contain a non-apocopated form of the plural adjectives, with the weak ending *-a* (Dahlstedt1956). In fact, such combinations of non-apocopated adjectives and dative-marked nouns are in competition with the construction that would be expected in such contexts, viz. definite nouns with incorporated adjectives. Compare the following examples which illustrate the two possibilities:

(120) *Lulemål* (Lm) ()

*Hån hä fo fLugo, hån hä låga se wita
he have.PRS get.SUP fly he have.PRS make.DEF REFL white
bökso
trouser.DAT.PL*

'He's got crazy, he has got himself white trousers.'

(121) *Hån kām o lovere ini witböxen.*

he come.PST and brag.PST in white_trouser.DEF.DAT.PL

'He came bragging in white trousers.' (Nyström (1993: 105))

In Dahl2008 I suggest as a possible scenario that the construction with an adjective in *-a* and a noun in the historical dative form has arisen as an attempt to fill what seemed like a gap in the paradigm, namely an analogue to Swedish premodified indefinite noun phrase. It should be noted in this context that the original indefinite plurals in these vernaculars have by and large lost their endings while retaining the grave pitch accent, at the same time as they have become restricted in their use to combinations with numerals. The following example illustrates how such endless forms alternate with historical dative forms:

(122) *Pitemål* (Pm) ()*Hä stå:r åått àasp dēna bäärt, å hä jär sto:ra*it stand.PRS **eight aspen.PL** there away and it be.PRS **big.PL***åspom.***aspen.DAT.PL**

‘There are eight aspens over there, and they are big aspens.’ (Lidström & Berglund1991)

Such plural forms are used also in premodified noun phrases. Thus, according to the suggested scenario, the *-a* ending was directly imported from Swedish, while the original dative forms in *-om/-o*, which were used with quantifiers such as *na*, were apparently seen as more natural alternatives to Swedish plural nouns than the endingless historical indefinites. Some nouns, however, retain plural forms that are also distinct from the singular forms at the segmental level, e.g. *Pitemål ha'nd: hēnder* ‘hand:hand.PL’. Such plural forms are also used in premodified noun phrases rather than the historical datives, the reason presumably being that these forms were more directly analogous to Swedish plurals than the endingless ones.

Definites after quantifiers: Summing up. The use of definite forms after quantifiers in the Swedish dialect area is more restricted than the non-delimited use. The dialectal areas involved are Norrbothnian, the Northern Settler Area, Westrobothnian, Jämtland, Angermannian, and Ostrobothnian, that is, in principle corresponding to the whole northern “core area” of non-delimited uses, while the southern “core area” (Ovansiljan) lacks attestations except for the marginal examples from Älvdalen. But even within the northern area, there is considerable variation. What is most striking is that the geographical distribution of the attestations differs quite considerably between the various quantifiers involved, as can be seen in Map 12-15. Since attestations tend to be somewhat sporadic, one should be somewhat cautious with conclusions, but there seem to be some fairly clear tendencies. Thus, the use of definite forms after numerals is almost exclusively attested in the county (not the province!) of Västerbotten – which is not an entity according to the dialectological tradition, but rather consists of parts of four different dialect areas in Dahlstedt’s maps. The use of dative after quantifiers is also a geographically restricted phenomenon, found in Northern Westrobothnian, *Pitemål* and *Lulemål*.

The historical relationships between the uses of definite nouns after quantifiers in Scandinavian are not clear. Disregarding the true partitive uses, the definite forms in older Swedish, Norwegian, and the singular example from 18th century

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Dalecarlian, seem to be “negative polarity items”, that is, they occur basically only within the scope of negation (with (95) as the only attested exception). In the Peripheral Swedish vernaculars where definite nouns show up after quantifiers, there is no such limitation – on the contrary, in some varieties the definite forms are used primarily with ‘much’. I would therefore submit that we are dealing with two separate developments.

Map 12. Attestations of definites after ‘much’.

Map 13. Attestations of definites after numerals.

Map 14. Attestations of dative after quantifiers (black symbols: extended uses).

1.2.7 Singular count uses

In the peripheral area, there are also some unexpected uses of suffixed articles with singular count nouns, such as the following:

(123) Älvdalen (Os) ()

Am est-n.

have.1PL horse-DEF

‘We have a horse, i.e. we are horse-owners.’ (questionnaire)

Such examples, which would normally take an indefinite article in English, by and large correspond to “bare nouns” in the Central Scandinavian languages e.g.

(124) Swedish ()

Vi har häst.

we have.PRS horse

‘We have a horse, i.e. we are horse-owners.’

I shall call such cases “low referentiality uses” (Teleman et al. (1999: 3:56) “svagt referentiell betydelse”), since they share the trait that the identity of the referent is not highlighted; what is important in (104)-(105) is rather the property of owning a horse. Correspondingly, the bare noun construction in Swedish is normally used when speaking of something that it is normal to have exactly one

Map 15. Attestations of definites after *na*.

exemplar of, including cars²¹ and telephones (at least until recently!), but excluding spaceships (because you are not expected to have one) or books (because you are expected to have several). However, the corresponding sentences with indefinite articles are also grammatical, and in fact preferred in certain contexts, e.g. if the referent is going to be important in the ensuing discourse. The articleless variant is however felt to be ungrammatical in Elfdalian (I have not been able to systematically check on other vernaculars), but conversely, the definite article is not possible in Central Scandinavian.

From the diachronic point of view, the article-less cases of Central Scandinavian could be seen as due to an incomplete grammaticalization of the indefinite article, whereas the use of the definite article in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars is a case of grammaticalization that goes further than we would perhaps expect. Typologically, it is not wholly unique, however. While (104) could not be translated into French using a definite article, there are similar examples such as (106), where a definite article is normal:

- (125) French ()
Nous avons le téléphone.
 we have.PRS.1PL DEF telephone
 ‘We have a (lit. the) telephone.’

Cases like this are mentioned in standard grammars of French, but they tend to be subsumed under generic uses of the article (I’ll return to this question in 3.4).

With respect to the peripheral Swedish dialect area, the low referentiality uses of definite forms are not well documented in the literature, and when examples are provided they are usually not seen as a type of their own, distinct from non-delimited uses. For instance, Dahlstedt & Ågren (1954: 282), after discussing uses of definite forms for “indefinite quantities” and saying that Norrlandic dialects “are very consistent in this use of the definite forms”, cite the following as “maybe particularly striking to a Standard Swedish ear”:²²

²¹ A Google search suggests that the bare noun phrase *har bil* ‘has car’ is about ten times as common as *har en bil* ‘has a car’ in Swedish, and of the latter the overwhelming majority were followed by a relative clause.

²² “De norrländska bygdemålen är mycket konsekventa i detta bruk av bestämd form. Särskilt påfallande för ett rikssvenskt öra är måhända...”

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(126) Vilhelmina (SVb) ()

Sä vi mâka ôss kâmmarn.

so we clear.PST us chamber.DEF

‘so we cleared us a chamber.’ [i.e. we made a shelter by clearing some snow]’

This example, like the following ones, shows that the phenomenon may include cases that do not correspond to bare-noun constructions in Swedish:

(127) Älvdalen (Os) ()

E wa swaindjîn å weem.

it be.PST bend.DEF on road.DEF.DAT

‘There was a bend in the road.’ [S12]

(128) *Ig ar gart stark-äln ig.*

I have.PRS make.SUP strong_heel.DEF.ACC I

‘I have made a strong heel’ (Levander1909)

Due to restricted documentation and a rather low text-frequency, it is not so easy to establish the precise geographical distribution for the extended use of definite forms of singular count nouns, but I have found a number of examples from various ends of the Peripheral Swedish area, to be listed in the following:

Norrbothnian. Starting from the north, the following two translations of the same sentence from the Cat Corpus can be cited from the Kalix area:

(129) Överkalix (Kx) ()

Ji skå taLa om föR di mamm aT ji ållti

I shall.PRS speak.INF about for you.OBL mother that I always

hä önske mi i kätt, men he gär jåo äint änn

have.PRS want.SUP me.OBL INDF cat but it go.PRS PRAG NEG well

aT ha kätta da’n båo ini in höires-håos.

INFM have.INF cat.DEF when_one live.PRS in one.DAT.N apartment

house

‘I want to tell you, Mother, that I have always wanted to have a cat – but it isn’t possible to have a cat (lit. the cat) when you live in an apartment house.’ (Cat Corpus)

(130) Nederkalix (Kx) ()

Jä skå tåla åom för dä, måmme åt jä ållti
 I shall.PRS speak.INF about for you.OBL mother that I always
veillt hå i kjaatt män hä gja jo åt hää
 want.SUP have.INF INDF cat but it go.PRS PRAG NEG have.INF
kjatta når man bår ini i höreshöus.
 cat.DEF when one live.PRS in INDF apartment house
 (same translation as above)

In Stenberg1971 we find the following examples:

(131) Siknäs, Nederkalix (Kx) ()

He fanns jo separatoN.
 it exist.PST PRAG separator.DEF
 ‘There was a milk separator.’

(132) *Jåå, hästn har ve jo.*

yes horse.DEF have.PRS we PRAG
 ‘Yes, we do have a horse.’

A transcribed text on the DAUM website contains a couple of clear examples from the *Lulemål* area (female speaker born in 1895):

(133) Edefors (Ll) ()

Vi hadd ju åt jän spisn så en kodd ju
 we have.PST PRAG NEG iron_stove.DEF so one can.PST PRAG
åt baka bulla.... Da ve fikk jä nspisn
 NEG bake.INF bun.DEF.PL when we get.PST iron_stove.DEF
da baka ja ju wetbull a peparkakun
 then bake.PST I PRAG wheat_bun.DEF.PL and ginger-bread.DEF.PL
men strakks hadd ve barra öppenspisn.
 but right_away have.PST we only open_stove.DEF
 ‘As you know, we didn’t have an iron stove so we couldn’t bake buns...
 When we got an iron stove I used to bake wheat buns and gingerbreads,
 but in the beginning we had only an open fireplace.’ [S33]

Westrobothnian. In Västerbotten, there seems to be more variation in the use of singular count uses of definites than is found for non-delimited uses. Thus, BergholmEtAl1999 report that mainly older speakers used definite forms in (112).

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Wälchli et al. (1998), on the other hand, did not find any examples of definites at all in this sentence when using the same questionnaire.

(134) Burträsk (NVb) ()

Vi hadd hästn menn ja vor litn.

we have.PST horse.DEF when I be.PST small

‘We had a horse when I was a kid.’ (questionnaire)

In transcribed texts from Västerbotten, a few examples are found, e.g.:

(135) Norsjö (NVb) ()

...å för-[26D?][251?]'[251?]i[32F?]? se'nn där-[256?]äm inte

and for long ago where

h[251?]'[251?]dd tjö'ttkw[251?]'[273?][251?]

they NEG have.PST meat-grinder.DEF

se [251?]'nnvä'nnde dä m k [19A?] e'sta'i[32F?]t'n.

so use.PST they “clothes-poker”.DEF

‘...and long ago where they didn’t have a meat-grinder they used a klädstöt.²³ (Westerberg2004)

(136) Skelletmål (NVb) ()

Hänna dug äint för ajn som ha julpän.

this do.PRS NEG for one that have.PRS fly.DEF

‘This won’t do for someone with a fly.’ (Westerlund1978)

Middle Norrland. There seem to be no clear examples from the provinces of Jämtland, Ångermanland, and Medelpad. Although it is hard to argue from the absence of evidence, something could certainly be expected to show up in the extensive text materials, so it would appear that singular count uses are not found here. This impression is strengthened by the fact that definite forms are also not found with instrumental prepositional phrases (see below).

Ostrobothnian. Nikula1997 quotes the following examples from Närpes, exemplifying the bare noun pattern:

(137) Närpes (SOB) ()

Vi ha: häst därhäm.

we have.PRS.PL horse at_home

‘We have a horse at home.’

²³ Tool used when washing clothes.

- (138) *Ja ha:r no: moånanslyö:n.*
 I have.PRS certainly **monthly_salary**
 ‘Sure, I have a monthly salary.’

She seems to imply that this is the only possibility in this vernacular and explains this by the “non-referential function” of the noun phrases in question, which do not introduce a referent but rather contribute to the characterization of the subject as horse-owners and salaried employees respectively.

Eriksson & Rendahl1999 in their questionnaire investigation of Ostrobothnian, also found that the bare noun pattern was predominating. However, one informant from Munsala in northern Österbotten did produce a definite variant, together with one with an indefinite article:

- (139) Munsala (NOB) ()
- a. *Vi had hästin, tå ja va lill.*
 we have.PST **horse.DEF** when I be.PST small
 - b. *Vi had in häst, tå ja va lill.*
 we have.PST **INDF horse** when I be.PST small
- ‘We had a horse when I was a kid.’ (questionnaire)

Eriksson & Rendahl1999 also quote a number of examples of definite-marked countable singulars from published texts:

- (140) Sideby (SOB) ()
Så kviila vi middain.
 so rest.PST we **noon.DEF**
 ‘Then we took a nap.’ (Standard Swedish *vila middag*) [S19]
- (141) Sideby (SOB) ()
Å dām hav öitjon.
 and they have.PRS **dinghy.DEF**
 ‘And they have a dinghy.’ [S19]

Ivars2005 presents at least one fairly clear example from Närpes:

- (142) Närpes (SOB) ()
Han ha: ju brännvinsbo:den han.
 he have.PST PRAG **liquor-shop.DEF** he
 ‘He had a liquor shop, he.’

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Thus, the use of definite forms with singular countables is fairly well documented also in Ostrobothnian, although the article-less pattern is more common in present-day usage.

Ovansiljan. Examples from Elfdalian have already been quoted above. Questionnaires from Orsa and Sollerön give a result which is similar to the one reported above for non-delimited uses. Thus, the majority of the informants from Orsa used the definite form in (120), whereas none from Sollerön did:

- (143) Orsa (Os) ()
Wi addum äst'n dö i wa lit'n.
we have.PST.1PL horse.DEF when I be.PST small
'We had a horse when I was a kid.' (questionnaire)

Summing up. Like the use of definite forms after quantifiers, the extended use of definite forms with count nouns display is less well entrenched in the Peripheral Swedish area than the non-delimited type. Their absence from the Middle Norrland area is conspicuous. (Compare also the more questionable example (188) from Hållnäs in Uppland below.)

1.2.8 Instrumental prepositional phrases

Himmelmänn1998 claims that articles "are generally used less frequently, and with regard to semantic and pragmatic generalisations, less consistently in adpositional phrases than in other syntactic environments (such as subject or object position)". Manner and instrumental adverbial phrases would be a case in point, and indeed, in English, certain types of manner-characterizing prepositional phrases tend to involve bare nouns, particularly those that indicate manner of locomotion, such as *by train*, *by foot*, *by car*. In Central Scandinavian, the use of such bare nouns is considerably wider. Thus, in Swedish, the phrase *med kniv* '[lit.] with knife' is much more common²⁴ than *med en kniv* 'with a knife', and in the following sentence, the use of an indefinite article sounds definitely strange:

- (144) Swedish ()
Hon äter soppa med (?en) sked.
she eat.PRS soup with INDF spoon
'She eats soup with a spoon.'

²⁴ A Google count: *med kniv*: 14300, *med en kniv*: 2820. In English, there is a parallel in the phrase *by knife*, appearing in phrases such as *homicide by knife*.

In the light of these observations and Himmelmann's claim, it is rather unexpected to find languages where in fact (121) would be translated using a definite article in the phrase 'with a spoon', even when it is evident that no specific spoon is being referred to. Nevertheless, in French, if the preposition *à* is chosen, it is regularly followed by the definite rather than by the indefinite article:

- (145) French ()
Elle mange la soupe à la cuillère.
 she eat.PRS DEF soup with DEF spoon
 'She eats soup with a spoon.'

where a definite NP is used after the preposition *à*. With this preposition, the definite article seems more or less obligatory. (Compare captions of paintings such as *Jeune fille au chèvre* 'Young girl with a goat'). With the synonymous preposition *avec* the definite article is possible but the preferred variant appears to be with an indefinite NP:

- (146) French ()
Elle mange la soupe avec une cuillère.
 she eat.PRS DEF soup with INDF spoon
 'She eats soup with a spoon.'

Similarly, in the Peripheral Swedish vernaculars, instrumental phrases of this type often show up with a definite head noun. Thus, Levander1909 quotes the following Elfdalian example, which he translates into Swedish using a bare noun construction (*med kniv* 'with a knife')

- (147) Älvdalen (Os) ()
Sjo ur dier ovo skrievað min knaivem!
 see how they have.PRS.3PL write.SUP with knife.DEF.DAT
 'Look what they have written with a knife!' (Levander1909)

A modern Elfdalian example elicited by questionnaire is (125).

- (148) Älvdalen (Os) ()
An jät suppu min stjiedn.
 he eat.PRS soup.DEF.ACC with spoon.DEF.DAT
 'He eats soup with a spoon.' (questionnaire)

However, the informant indicated that the indefinite form was also possible:

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(149) Älvdalen (Os) ()

An jät suppu min stjied.
he eat.PRS soup.DEF.ACC with spoon.DAT
'He eats soup with a spoon.' (questionnaire)

From Orsa, where there were several questionnaire responses, the majority used a definite form, either in the dative or non-case marked:

(150) Orsa (Os) ()

An jat suppo mi stjed'n/stjedi.
he eat.PRS soup.DEF.ACC with spoon.DEF
'He eats soup with a spoon.' (questionnaire)

Out of four questionnaire responses from Sollerön, a definite form was given by all three informants born before 1940:

(151) Sollerön (Os) ()

An jät såppo minn stjeden.
he eat.PRS soup.DEF.ACC with spoon.DEF
'He eats soup with a spoon.' (questionnaire)

For Upper Norrland, we find definite forms throughout, as evidenced in questionnaires from Bjurholm, Burträsk, Norsjö, and Glommersträsk:

(152) Bjurholm (NVb) ()

Han ät soppa ve skea.
he eat.PRS soup.DEF with spoon.DEF
'He eats soup with a spoon.' (questionnaire)

In an early text from Överkalix, the following example is found:

(153) Överkalix (Kx) ()

...fistsen fik di takk[277?] åys [277?]pp ve slaiven
fish.DEF get.PST they almost scoop.INF up with ladle.DEF
bårti an[277?]...
from river.DEF
'...as for the fish, they almost had to scoop it up with a ladle from the river...' [S17]

Similar examples are found in other transcribed texts from Överkalix.

Middle Norrland. No examples have been found in texts from Jämtland, Ångermanland, and Medelpad. For Jämtland, informants from Lit indicate that definite forms are not possible in examples of this type.

Ostrobothnian. Hummelstedt1934 enumerates quite a few examples of the type from Närpes.

(154) Närpes (SOB) ()

- a. *Vi skār a me štjeron.*
we cut.PST it with sickle.DEF
'We cut it with a sickle.'
- b. *Vi λōw me lijjan.*
we cut.PST with scythe.DEF
'We cut [grass] with a scythe.'
- c. *Ja tjuōp me tjärron.*
I drive.PST with cart.DEF
'I drove [with] a cart.'
- d. *He jiēg me λ edan.*
it go.PRET with sledge.DEF
'We went [lit. it went] by sledge.' (Hummelstedt1934)

Ivars2005 gives examples such as *me kni:vin* 'with knife.DEF', *me li:an* 'with scythe.DEF' from South Ostrobothnian. (Nikula1997 who also discusses Närpes-mål, does not mention instrumental phrases at all.)

In the translation of the sentence 'He eats soup with a spoon', Eriksson & Rendahl1999 obtained four definite-marked responses among a total of 11 Ostrobothnian informants:

(155) a. Malax (SOB) ()

- Ha jeter soppu me skeide.*
he eat.PRS soup.DEF? with spoon.DEF
- b. Närpes (SOB) ()
An jäter soppon me sjöiden.
he eat.PRS soup.DEF with spoon.DEF
- c. Tjöck (SOB) ()
Han jiter sopen me skeiden.
he eat.PRS soup.DEF with spoon.DEF
'He eats soup with a spoon.'

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They also quote the phrase *sloo me liian* ‘cut with a scythe’ from [S19].

Examples are also found in Southern Finland and Estonia, where extended uses of definites are in general quite restricted. Thus, Lundström (1939) quotes examples from Nyland:

- (156) Snappertuna (Ny) ()
Man slör gräse me l i an.
 one cut.PRS grass.DEF with scythe.DEF
 ‘One cuts the grass with a scythe.’ (Lundström (1939: 15))
- (157) *N[277?] blir e brā dehāran, bara man tar innoger*
 sure become.PRS it good this just one take.PRS a_few
tāg me hyviln.
 take.PL with plane.DEF
 ‘This will surely be good, if you take a few shavings with a plane.’
 (Lundström (1939: 15))

In a text from Ormsö in Estonia, we find the following example:

- (158) Ormsö (Es) ()
Nu kond ve bere hlā rågen mā l i an ā
 now can.PST we begin.INF cut.INF rye.DEF with scythe.DEF and
triske bLai nu mike leta.
 threshing become.PST now much easy.CMPR
 ‘‘Now we could begin to cut the rye with a scythe and the threshing
 became much easier.’ [S24]

Summing up. The use of definite forms in instrumental prepositional phrases can be considered a special case of uses with singular count nouns. The distribution of the instrumental use also is somewhat similar to that of definite forms in constructions such as ‘We have a horse’, discussed in 3.2.5. In particular, we may note that no attestations are found from Middle Norrland. On the other hand, the instrumental use extends to some areas where the other types of definite singular count nouns are not found, viz. southern Finland and Estonia.

A possible objection (Ulrika Kvist Darnell, personal communication) is that the intended interpretation in the examples in this section is not indefinite but instead closer to something like ‘the X that I have’. It is true that if the examples had occurred in a text corpus, it would have been difficult to know exactly how they should be understood. However, the use of definites in such contexts has

been noted as striking from the point of view of the standard language by several scholars who are well acquainted with the vernaculars in question. Many examples were also given as translations of Swedish sentences with indefinite noun phrases. But the fact that such examples have a somewhat fluid interpretation may be relevant in a diachronic context – see further the discussion in 3.4.

1.2.9 “Det var kvällen”

Delsing2003a subsumes two different cases under “predicative constructions”: one exemplified by examples such as *här ä sommarn* ‘it is summer’, which he calls “impersonal”, and another exemplified by “identifying constructions” such as

(159) (no location) ()

De här ä körpen.

this here be.PRS pick.DEF

‘This is a pick.’

It appears, though, that these two patterns have rather different geographic distributions. Examples like (135), which are rather close to citation uses (see 3.2.1), are not to my knowledge attested outside the area where extended uses of definites are normally found, but “impersonal” constructions characterized by the pattern

impersonal subject ‘it’ + copular verb ‘be’ or ‘become’ + noun denoting a temporal interval

are quite widespread in Scandinavia. In the Swedish dialect area, examples can thus be found not only in Härjedalen, Västerdalarna, Dalabergslagen and Åboland, all close to the extended definite area, but also in south-western Sweden (the provinces of Halland and Bohuslän):

(160) Träslövsläge (Hl) ()

Nu borja här a bli kwälen, a sola

now begin.PST here INFM become.INF evening.DEF and sun.DEF

gick nair i sjön.

go.PST down in lake.DEF

‘Now evening was coming (lit. it started to become the evening), and the sun set in the lake.’ (Cat Corpus)

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- (161) Sotenäs (Bo) ()

Dä höllte pô ô b?i vårn no, dä kjännte
it hold.PST on INFM become.INF **spring**.DEF now that feel.PST

Pissen.

pussycat.DEF

‘Spring was coming (lit. it was becoming spring), Cat felt that.’ (Cat Corpus)

- (162) Östmark (Vm) ()

Nu ä dä snart sommarn.

now be.PRS it soon **summer**.DEF

‘Now it will soon be summer.’ (Broberg1936)

- (163) Transtrand (Vd) ()

Hä vaL snart vintern.

it become.PRS soon **winter**.DEF

‘It will soon be winter.’ (questionnaire)

- (164) Houtskär (Åb) ()

Nör he b[1E37?]ei kv ē ldinj o in kōm heim me
when it become.PST **evening**.DEF and he come.PST home with
förenj...

sheep.DEF.PL

‘When evening came and he came home with the sheep...’ (Lundell1936)

Delsing mentions a Norwegian informant from Trøndelag who accepts examples of this type, giving the impression that it is locally restricted in Norwegian. In fact, the construction is well represented in written Norwegian, both Bokmål and Nynorsk. The following example is from the Nynorsk part of the “Norsk Tekstarkiv”:

- (165) Nynorsk Norwegian ()

Det vart kvelden og det vart natta på nytt.
it become.PST **evening**.DEF and it become.PST **night**.DEF on new

‘Evening came and it became night again.’ [S29]

An Internet example in Bokmål:

(166) Bokmål Norwegian ()

Da det ble kvelden hadde bortimot 250 shaman'er
when it become.PST evening.DEF have.PST around 250 shaman.PL
samlet seg rundt slangen og kvinnen...
collect.PP REFL.3PL around snake.DEF and woman.DEF
‘When evening came, around 250 shamans had collected around the
snake and the woman...’ (Internet)

The pattern does not seem to be possible in Danish or in the southernmost Swedish provinces (although it goes as far south as Halland). Its wide distribution makes it somewhat unlikely that it has spread together with the other extended uses of definite forms, which are less widespread.

1.2.10 Various minor patterns

Illnesses. In the literature, names of illnesses are sometimes provided as examples where definite forms are used in vernaculars more extensively than in Swedish. Thus:

(167) Pyttis (Ny) ()

B[277?]onen har j[277?] c(ikh[277?])ston.
child.DEF.PL have.PRS PRAG whooping-cough.DEF
‘The children have got whooping-cough.’ (Lundström (1939: 11))

(168) Östmark (Vm) ()

Han ä ill kommen ta jekta. ‘He is suffering badly from gout’
he be.PRS badly come.PP of gout.DEF
(Broberg1936)

(169) Sollerön (Os) ()

I a fänndji ålldi.
I have.PRS get.SUP stitch.DEF
‘I have got a stitch in my side.’ (Andersson & Danielsson1999)

It seems hard to generalize here, though, since names of illnesses tend to behave idiosyncratically in many languages, including English – thus, *flu* is preferably used with the article but the synonymous *influenza* without.

Measure phrases. Definite forms also sometimes show up in phrases denoting measurements of time, weight, etc. Lundström (1939: 9) provides a number of examples from Nyland:

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- (170) a. Pojo (Ny) ()
 [Hur länge räcker det till Lovisa?]
 Timmen o femton.
 hour.DEF and fifteen
 ‘[How far is it to Lovisa?] - One hour fifteen.’
- b. Borgå (Ny) ()
 Han c(örd **på t** **ī man**.
 he drive.PST **on hour.DEF**
 ‘He drove [the distance] in an hour.’

In the Cat Corpus, I have only found one clear example from Överkalix (all the other vernaculars have an indefinite NP in the corresponding sentence):

- (171) Överkalix (Kx) ()
 He dråo nestan **haL(e)v-täimen** enan fressn tåoRs
 it take.PST almost **half-hour.DEF** before tomcat.DEF dare.PST
 koma främm.
 come.INF fore
 ‘It took almost half an hour before Cat dared come out.’ (Cat Corpus)

1.2.11 Preproprial articles

What is most appropriately called preproprial articles are used widely in Scandinavia. Preproprial articles are identical in form to third person pronouns – either full forms, which is common in Norway, or reduced (clitic) forms, as is the normal case in Sweden: *a Brita* ‘Brita’, *n Erik* ‘Erik’.

In most colloquial varieties of Swedish, third person pronouns can be used in front of proper names but then with a rather clear pragmatic effect: *han Erik* ‘that person Erik you know’. No such effect is found in the vernaculars where preproprial articles in the proper sense are used, rather they are normally obligatory with persons’ given names and with name-like uses of kin terms. They normally do not occur with surnames (which may instead have “postproprial” articles, see below). They do not appear when names are used metalinguistically (‘His name is...’) or as vocatives.

Delsing2003a claims that in many vernaculars, preproprial articles are normally used only to refer to persons with whom the speaker is acquainted. It is not clear how this claim should be reconciled with the obligatory character of the articles, which he also mentions. In her study of the use of preproprial articles, Törnqvist (2002) quotes several earlier works on Norwegian dialects in

which the use is said to be unrestricted, and also a wide range of examples from Swedish vernaculars of the use of preproprial articles to refer to unacquainted referents. The reluctance that Delsing has found in some dialects against using preproprial articles with names such as *Jesus* and *Elvis* should perhaps be explained by their cultural foreignness rather than by the relationship between the speaker and their referents.

According to **Delsing2003a** preproprial articles are used generally in Norrland excluding Hälsingland and Gästrikland, in Västerdalarna and northern Värmland, and in most of Norway, excluding an area in the south and bilingual areas in the north. This is in full accordance with other statements in other sources and with the usage reflected in texts that I have seen, in particular the Cat Corpus. Delsing also says that they are used “sometimes” in Faroese and “optionally” in Icelandic spoken language. It can be seen that the distribution of preproprial articles overlaps significantly with that of extended uses of definite forms, but there are also some striking differences. Thus, if we compare the area where preproprial articles are obligatory with the area where non-delimited uses of definite forms are common, we can see that they overlap in Upper and Middle Norrland, that is, in the provinces of Jämtland and Ångermanland and the Westrobothnian and Norrbothnian dialect areas. Outside this zone, however, there is no location where the two phenomena co-exist. Thus, preproprial articles are found in most of Norway and along the Norwegian border all the way from northern Värmland and northwards except in Ovansiljan – the southern stronghold of non-delimited uses of definite forms. On the other side of the Baltic, Ostrobothnian behaves like the Ovansiljan vernaculars in these two regards. These facts suggest that preproprial articles and extended uses of definite forms have separate histories of origin.

Looking back in time, I do not know of any very old attestations of preproprial articles from Swedish vernaculars, but I have found several older texts in the Norwegian Diplomatarium with uses of pronouns that look very much like preproprial articles. One such text, consisting of one long sentence with no less than five occurrences of the pattern Pronoun+Proper Name, is rendered in the Appendix. It dates from 1430 – unfortunately, the location is not known. It thus appears that the usage was already fairly firmly established in at least some Norwegian varieties in medieval times. This, together with the geographical distribution in the Swedish dialectal area, suggests a spread from Norway, perhaps most probably from Trøndelag.

Proper names also sometimes show up with definite suffixes (called “postproprial articles” by **Delsing2003a**). This usage appears to be less systematic and is

most common with surnames (occasionally even in more standard varieties of Swedish). With kin terms, definite suffixes are found in Upper Norrlandic vernaculars where Standard Swedish has a bare form and many other vernaculars have preproprial articles. Compare the following examples:

- (172) Sävar (SVb) ()

Mormora *var* *alldess rö* *oppi öga*.
Granny.DEF become.PST quite red in eye.DEF.PL
 ‘Granny’s eyes became quite red.’ (Cat Corpus)

- (173) Malung (Vd) ()

O **Mormor** *va*[1E6D?] *âldeles rö* *i ögon*.
PDA.F Granny become.PST quite red in eye.DEF.PL
 ‘Granny’s eyes became quite red.’ (Cat Corpus)

- (174) Swedish ()

Mormor *blev* *alldeles röd i ögonen*.
Granny become.PST quite red in eye.DEF.PL
 ‘Granny’s face became quite red.’

The fourth logical possibility – both a preproprial article and a definite suffix on the same noun – is so far unattested in any variety (Törnqvist (2002)).

1.2.12 Postadjectival articles

Some Scandinavian dialects feature indefinite NPs according to the pattern exemplified by *en stor en bil* ‘a big car’, where there is, in addition to the usual preposed indefinite article, another one between the adjective and the noun. According to **Delsing2003a** the construction is found in Norway from southern Trøndelag and northwards, and in Sweden in Västerbotten, Ångermanland, Medelpad, and Jämtland. There is evidence to suggest, however, that the phenomenon had a wider distribution in earlier times. Thus, Delsing himself mentions an example from 18th century Norrbothnian, and I have found a couple of attestations also in 18th century Dalecarlian texts, such as the following from 1730:

- (175) Dalecarlian (18th century) ()

Kullur der giärå ‘*n* *jen snoggan jen krantz*
 girl.PL there make.PRS.3PL him.DAT INDF neat.ACC PIA laurel
um missommors nåti
 about midsummer.GEN night.DAT
 ‘Girls there make a neat laurel for him in the midsummer night’ [S26]

1.3 Some earlier attempts to explain the extended uses of definite forms

Delsing notes that it is sometimes hard to tell postadjectival articles from inflectional suffixes on the adjective. He claims that a suffixal analysis is more adequate in most provinces further south, as well as east of the Baltic.

1.2.13 Summary of geographical distribution of extended uses

We have seen that there are several different types of extended uses of definite forms in the Peripheral Swedish area, which vary to some extent in their geographical distribution. Some of the types, notably the pattern *Det är sommaren* ‘It is the summer’ and (to a somewhat lesser extent) generic uses of definites, go beyond the Peripheral Swedish area, being found also in Norway and/or southern Sweden. For the geographically more restricted uses, we can identify a few core areas: a large northern one, comprised of the provinces of Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Ångermanland, Jämtland, and Österbotten, and a smaller southern one, basically restricted to the Ovensiljan region in Dalarna. Sporadic attestations elsewhere suggest that the core areas were earlier more extensive.

1.3 Some earlier attempts to explain the extended uses of definite forms

1.3.1 Holmberg & Sandström

In a paper written in Swedish, Holmberg & Sandström (2003) try to give a unified generative treatment of many of the phenomena discussed in this book. The title of their contribution is, in translation, “What is particular with Northern Swedish noun phrases?”. By “Northern Swedish” (*nordsvenska*), they are actually referring to a not precisely specified group of dialects in Västerbotten and the parts of Ångermanland and Norrbotten that border on the former province, said to have the following properties: 1) preproprial articles, 2) postposed possessives, 3) preposed possessives with definite head nouns, 4) postposed demonstratives, 5) adjectival incorporation, 6) suffixed definite articles on adjectives in noun phrases without a lexical head, 7) definite forms of generic nouns, 8) definite forms of “partitive” plurals and mass nouns.

Holmberg & Sandström admit that these features do not always occur together, and that some of them also occur outside the “Northern Swedish” area. “However, there are a number of Westrobothnian dialects which display all the features, and we shall show that their combination is not accidental but on the contrary, a consistent language variety” (Holmberg & Sandström (2003: 87), my

translation).

Holmberg & Sandström adhere to the analysis of noun phrases in which they are projections of a functional category D or “determiner”, which has the consequence that in a noun phrase such as *the house*, it is *the* rather than *house* that is the head. They suggest that a major difference between Northern Swedish and other Scandinavian varieties, such as Standard Swedish, lies in the status of definite articles: the postposed article in “Northern Swedish” is a clitic, “base-generated in D [determiner position]”, whereas in Standard Swedish it is an inflectional suffix, “base-generated on [the] N[oun]”. Another difference, relating to the first, is that Northern Swedish, like the Romance languages, requires that the D-position always be filled (that is, it is realized overtly).

Let us see how these properties are used to explain the eight phenomena enumerated above.

The D-position can, essentially, be filled in two ways: either by a base-generated determiner, or by moving the head noun (as in the figure above). The first way is seen in preproprial articles, the second in postposed demonstratives and possessives, where the head noun supposedly moves across the postposed element in order to fill the D-position. Definite adjectives in “Northern Swedish” have to be incorporated because if they appeared separately from the noun they would have to agree with it – and they don’t.

In the case of adjectives in noun phrases without a lexical head, it is assumed that the empty element *pro* [which is the head of the NP] moves to D and the adjective is incorporated into it.

Definite suffixes on generic nouns and “partitive” plurals and mass nouns are explained by the requirement that the D-position be filled, in the relevant cases by a definite suffix that attracts the head noun of the noun phrase.

Holmberg & Sandström suggest that the properties of North Swedish have developed in two steps. In the first step, the definite article is reinterpreted as a Romance-style clitic in D (the determiner position) to which a noun has to move – a clitic needs a host. This gives rise to movement of all definite nouns to D. In the second step, language-acquiring children choose to interpret this movement as depending on a requirement that D must always be filled, which gives rise to “generic and partitive articles”.

One major problem with Holmberg & Sandström’s theory is how to apply it to dialects in which not all properties enumerated above are present. We can note that Norwegian vernaculars tend to have preproprial articles and postposed possessives but in general lack the extended uses of definite forms found in Northern Sweden. Conversely, the Ovansiljan vernaculars lack preproprial articles

1.3 Some earlier attempts to explain the extended uses of definite forms

and postposed demonstratives, although they display most of the other properties. This means that the evidence for movement of nouns to D is considerably weaker in those vernaculars. Moreover, the differences in geographical distribution between e.g. preproprial articles and extended uses of definites suggest that they also have different historical origins).

Notice further that nouns preceded by demonstratives generally take definite suffixes in all Swedish spoken varieties, e.g.

- (176) Älvdalen (Os) ()
 an dar kalln
 that there man.DEF
 ‘that man’

If the definite suffix originates in the D position, it is not clear how it could end up on the noun in such noun phrases. The same can be said of noun phrases with definite nouns following quantifiers, as described in 3.2.4, which are common in the area focused on by Holmberg & Sandström, although they do not mention them. It would appear that those noun phrases have both an unfilled D and a definite suffix in an unexpected position where it cannot be accounted for by the demand for a filled D. (One could probably say more or less the same of possessives with definite head nouns which are listed as one of the interesting properties by Holmberg & Sandström but are not further commented upon in the paper.)

Consider also the explanation of the preproprial articles, where the condition on filled D’s is also invoked. Holmberg & Sandström, quoting Longobardi (1994, 1995), note that in Romance languages, which are also supposed to have the filled-D condition, some varieties (e.g. Standard Italian) do and others (e.g. some Italian vernaculars) do not have preproprial articles. It thus has to be assumed that, in a language with the filled-D condition, there are two possibilities: either there is a preproprial article or the proper name moves to D. What is excluded, they say, is for a proper name that remains in situ to lack an article. The problem here is that the movement of proper names to D is in general “invisible” since the proper name is in initial position in the NP anyway. Thus, the filled-D condition could be said to be vacuously fulfilled for proper names even in languages such as Elfdalian and Swedish. This fact raises some doubt about the motivation for the introduction of preproprial articles. If the filled-D condition is fulfilled anyway, why should a language bother to introduce them? Indeed, since there is more than one solution compatible with the filled-D condition, it may be said that this parameter underdetermines the behaviour of proper noun phrases. Notice

that apparently one and the same language can choose different solutions: it is generally only with first names that preproprial articles are obligatory.

With respect to the claim that definite suffixes are clitics in Peripheral Swedish vernacular, it may be noted that clitics generally represent less advanced stages in grammaticalization processes, and the development from inflectional ending to clitic is rather uncommon. It is generally assumed that the Scandinavian definite articles have passed through a clitic stage, and later been fused with their head nouns – that is, the opposite direction. The wider range of uses of definite forms in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars compared to Central Scandinavian rather suggests that the Peripheral Swedish forms have advanced further in the grammaticalization process. There is little indication of synchronic clitic-like behaviour. One may for instance compare the definite suffixes to the marker of the *s*-genitive, which in Central Scandinavian may be added to the last constituent of the noun phrase even if that is not the head noun. The same holds for the possessive marker *es* in Elfdalian (see 5.4.2). No such thing is possible with definite suffixes in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars. Also, phenomena such as portmanteau expression of definiteness, number and case, neutralization of the definiteness distinction (see 3.1.5), and variation between different declension classes are not typical of clitics. The fact that indeclinable nouns such as *kaffi* ‘coffee’ take zero definite endings is also unexpected if the definite suffix is a clitic. Admittedly, it is true that the fact that headless adjectives can take definite suffixes can be interpreted as a deviation from what could be expected from a well-behaved noun suffix.

1.3.2 Extended uses of definite forms – a Fenno-Ugric substrate?

In Finnish, non-delimited subjects and objects take the partitive case in situations where other noun phrases would take the nominative or accusative, respectively, as in the following examples:

- (177) Finnish ()
Ostin olutta.
 buy.PRET.1SG beer.PART
 ‘I bought beer.’

- (178) *Ostin oluen.*
 buy.PRET.1SG beer.ACC
 ‘I bought the beer.’

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There would seem to be an analogy here with Peripheral Swedish vernaculars, in particular if we choose to describe them, as e.g. Delsing does, as having a “partitive article”. Given the fact that the Peripheral Swedish area borders on Fenno-Ugric speaking territory, could there be a historical connection between the two phenomena: the partitive case in Finnish and the “partitive article” in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars? The idea of such a connection pops up now and then in the discussion and has recently been articulated by **Riesler2002**. It does have some initial plausibility, but I shall argue that the analogy is superficial and that there is little empirical evidence to support the hypothesis.

It is fairly easy to see that the analogy is not very direct. After all, the partitive case in Finnish is a case, not an article, and as such it has rather many different uses, which tend to correlate with indefiniteness rather than definiteness, and often these uses have no counterpart in definite forms in the Peripheral Swedish vernaculars. Thus, the Finnish partitive is used with negated objects, with objects of non-resultative verbs, and in predicative uses such as

- (179) Finnish ()
Opiskelijat ovat suomalaisia.
student.NOM.PL be.PRS.3PL Finn.PART.PL
‘The students are Finns.’

where Peripheral Swedish vernaculars would have indefinite forms. Conversely, not all the extended uses of definite forms in those varieties correspond to Finnish partitives. Thus, generic noun phrases as subjects or objects are consistently in the nominative or accusative in Finnish. Likewise, countable nouns in the singular take the nominative or accusative if the syntactic conditions are the right ones, even in the cases where Swedish has a bare noun and Peripheral Swedish vernaculars use definite forms. Thus, we get

- (180) Finnish ()
Meillä on hevonen.
we.ALL be.PRS.3SG horse.NOM
‘We have a horse’

rather than **meillä on hevosta*, with the partitive.

In his discussion of the issue, Riesler does acknowledge many of these circumstances. Actually, he maintains that one of the reasons why a Finnish learner of Scandinavian could be inspired to use definite forms in contexts where Finnish

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has the partitive is because the latter cannot be generally associated with indefiniteness or partitivity, and because it is syntactically the unmarked case for native speakers of Finnish. Riesler suggests that the extended definite forms in the vernaculars might be explained as resulting from second-language learners' filling of a morphologically empty position. After all, Riesler says, there is no "naked form" of uncountable nouns ("nicht zählbare Substantive") in Finnish. The German term is probably intended to include also plurals; on the other hand, the statement is not quite true as it stands, as uncountable nouns such as *olut* 'beer' certainly do have a zero-marked form, the nominative, which appears in definite and generic uses such as

- (181) Finnish ()
Olut on kylmää.
beer be.PRS.3SG cold.PART.SG
'The beer is cold.'
- (182) *Olut* *on* *virvoitusjuoma.*
beer.NOM.SG be.PRS.3SG beverage.NOM.SG
'Beer is a beverage.'

The unmarked status of the partitive is thus less obvious than Riesler makes it.

Another relevant issue is whether the kind of interference suggested can be attested in second-language learning. Riesler quotes some cases of overuse of definite forms in the Norwegian of Saami speakers taken from Bull1995. Indeed, second-language learners of Scandinavian languages often over-generalize definite forms, but the question is whether it happens more often with speakers of Uralic languages than with others. We find some data relevant to this question in Axelsson1994 who studied how speakers of Finnish, Polish, and Spanish handled Swedish noun phrases at different stages of second-language acquisition. The subjects were 60 adults attending a Swedish course for immigrants and were in the investigation divided into a "low-level" and a "high-level" group depending on their initial proficiency in Swedish.

Among other things, Axelsson provides some statistics on the use of definite nouns when the norms of the target language require bare nouns. Such overuse of definite marking turns out to occur in the speech of all three groups, and both with "low-level" and "high-level" speakers. Out of 2599 noun phrases in the total material that should show up as "bare nouns" according to target-language norms, 126 (4.8 %) had a definite suffix. The Finnish group had the largest percentage – 57 occurrences or 7.4 % – and the Spanish the lowest – 30 occurrences

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or 3.3 %. The Polish group was in between with 39 occurrences or 4.3 %. This seems to indicate that Finnish speakers may have a larger propensity than the others to overuse definite forms. However, the variation in the material is fairly large—on one occasion, when “low-level” learners were tested for the second time, the Polish group had actually more occurrences (17) than the Finnish one. Also, as it turns out, even the Spanish speakers, who make the fewest mistakes of this kind, and who have a relatively “standard” kind of definiteness marking in their native language, sometimes produce sentences which look as if they were from a Peripheral Swedish area vernacular:

- (183) Swedish L2 (Spanish speakers) ()
*Därför kan man inte ta **salvan** varje dag.*
 therefore can.PRS one NEG take.INF ointment.DEF every day
 ‘Therefore one could not take ointment every day.’
- (184) *Ja vill **skilsmässan**.*
 I want.PRS divorce.DEF
 ‘I want a divorce.’
- (185) *när man har **tiden** att läsa*
 when one have.PRS time.DEF INFM read
 ‘when one has time to read.’

Conversely, the examples Axelsson provides of inappropriate uses of definite forms by Finnish speakers do not at all fall under the heading of non-delimited uses:

- (186) Swedish L2 (Finnish speakers) ()
Ja vill jobba på sjukhuset.
 I want.PRS work.INF on hospital.DEF
 ‘I want to work at a hospital.’
- (187) *kanske kontoret eller nånting*
 maybe office.DEF or something
 ‘maybe an office or something’

(Axelsson notes that “In some of these isolated examples it might also seem possible to use a definite noun, but with regard to the larger context this has been assessed as impossible.” For (156)(b), no context is given but presumably it

is uttered as a response to a question like “What kind of job would you like to have?”)

It should also be noted that for all the groups, it is much more common not to use a definite article when it should be there than to use it when it should not be there. Thus, out of the 1266 noun phrases (without modifiers) in the material where the target language norms would require a definite head noun, the learners used a bare noun in 429 (33.8%). Interestingly, however, the Finnish speakers did so more seldom: their error rate was only 21 per cent here. Thus, compared to other groups, Finnish L2 learners of Swedish are more prone to overuse than to underuse definite forms – however, in absolute terms, omissions are more frequent than inappropriate uses, even for Finnish speakers.

If we grant that, judging from available data, there is a slightly higher tendency for Finnish speakers to overuse definite suffixes than for some other groups, two questions remain: whether this tendency has anything to do with the existence of a partitive case in Finnish, and whether the tendency is strong enough to give support to the idea that Fenno-Ugric speakers could be behind the expansion of the definite forms in various Scandinavian vernaculars. In my opinion, the evidence for a positive answer is in both cases rather dubious. Also, I shall now argue that in spite of the fact that Peripheral Swedish vernaculars tend to have Fenno-Ugric neighbours, the historical and geographic picture does not fit the idea of a Fenno-Ugric source for the extended definites.

That Finnish influences could be expected in the Swedish varieties in Finland is fairly obvious, although it may be noted that such influence is likely to be stronger in urbanized areas, where language contact is bound to be intensive, than in monolingual rural areas. If the extended uses of definites are the result of Finnish influence, we would not expect them to be strongest in Österbotten but rather in southern Finland. As for Sweden, Finnish influence could be expected in Norrbotten and Västerbotten, where there are fairly large groups of Finnish (or Fennic) speakers, and the area of Finnish settlement was even larger in medieval times (Wallerström (1995)). However, further south in the Peripheral Swedish area, contacts with Finnish speakers have been more restricted. Riesler says that the use of the partitive article in “dialects in North and Central Scandinavia” is not unexpected as the shift from Finnish to Scandinavian among the “Forest Finns” in Eastern Norway, Värmland, and Dalarna “is a fact”.²⁵ This would imply

²⁵ “Der Gebrauch des partitiven Artikels ist nicht nur über die schwedischen Dialekte in Finnland sondern auch über Dialekte in Nord- und Mittelskandinavien verbreitet. Das verwundert nicht, da die Skandinavisierung und der damit verbundene Sprachwechsel der skogsfinnar in Ostnorge, Värmland und Dalarna ein Fakt ist.” (Riesler2002).

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that the developments in the south are separate from those in the north, since the “Forest Finns” came relatively late (starting in the late 16th century) and the language shift to Swedish is even later (it was completed only in the 20th century). This is perhaps not necessarily an obstacle to the hypothesis, but what is more serious is that the “Forest Finns” and the non-delimited uses of definite forms turn out to have an almost complementary distribution – that is, the Ovansiljan area, which makes up the southern core area is almost the only place in Svealand and southern Norrland where the “Forest Finns” did not settle,²⁶ as can be seen from Map 16.

Now, Finnish, or Fennic, speakers are not the only representative of the Fenno-Ugric family in Scandinavia: there are also the Saami, who speak a number of fairly divergent varieties traditionally referred to as the Saami language. Riesler says that “probably both Finnish and Saami interferences have triggered the change in North Scandinavian morphosyntax”. Referring to papers by himself and Jurij Kusmenko, he points to various phenomena that have to be explained by a Saami substrate, mainly in the area of phonology.

Postulating Saami influence could possibly help explain why the extended definites are found in areas where there have been few Finns. Unfortunately for the Saami substrate hypothesis, however, there is no very good reason to assume the existence of a Finnish-style partitive in Saami as spoken in the areas in question. As Riesler notes, present-day Saami varieties in Sweden and Norway do not have a partitive case at all – he submits, however, that this may not be a problem since a partitive is attested in older forms of Ume and Lule Saami, spoken in the immediate vicinity of the regions where the extended uses of definites are strong. But this partitive was apparently not like its present-day Finnish counterpart, in spite of Riesler’s claims to the contrary. His evidence for a parallel between Finnish and Saami in this respect is that the Saami partitive was used with the objects of verbs like ‘seek’. But this is most probably a use which is independent of the general use of the partitive with non-delimited objects and reflects an earlier stage in the development of Fenno-Ugric languages, whereas the non-delimited use is most plausibly explained as an areal phenomenon in the Baltic region, and there seems to be no basis for assuming that it ever spread to Saami (Lars-Gunnar Larsson, personal communication). What all this means is that it

²⁶ A possible exception would be the area called “Orsa Finnmark”, which is, as the name indicates, technically part of Orsa parish. In Map 16, these are the dots immediately north of the grey circles. As the map suggests, however, Orsa Finnmark is quite separate from the main settlements in Orsa. In Älvdalen, the name “Finnmarken” is used to refer to some peripheral, relatively recently settled villages; there seems to be no evidence that there were ever any Finns there.

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is not possible to construct a plausible scenario where the extended definites in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars would arise through influence from a partitive case in the neighbouring Fenno-Ugric languages.

Map 16. Distribution of “Forest Finns” (black dots) compared to that of non-delimited uses of definite forms (grey circles). Sources: **Tarkiainen1990 Broberg1980**

1.4 Reconstructing the grammaticalization path

The extended uses of definite forms that we see in the Peripheral Swedish area represent a kind of development that has not been studied from a typological or diachronic point of view, although, as was noted above, it is not without parallels outside Scandinavia. In historical linguistics, like in evolutionary biology, it is often the case that researchers look in vain for the “missing link”, that is, the crucial intermediate stages in a process of change – instead, the details of the process have to be inferred from what we can observe in the present. This also holds here. From written documentation, we know that the patterns in question go back at least to the 18th and almost certainly to the 17th century, but we can only guess at what happened between the introduction of the suffixed definite article, which probably took place at least half a millennium earlier, and the point in time when the first attestations show up.

Our guesses need not be totally unqualified, however. Among the uses of the definite forms that are “extended” from the point of view of Central Scandinavian (and for that matter, English), not all are equally exotic – on the contrary, as I have noted above, many if not most languages with definite articles tend to use them more systematically with generic noun phrases than English and Central Scandinavian. We can also observe that the area where we find more generic definites than in the standard languages is larger than that, for example, of the non-delimited uses and the low-referentiality singular count uses. Given these observations, it seems natural to look closer at the possibility that generic uses are the stepping-stone to the latter ones.

This idea indeed seems to make sense also from the semantic point of view. In fact, genericity has sometimes been used as a collective label for the extended uses: thus, **Hummelstedt1934** speaks of “allmän eller generell betydelse”,²⁷ **Marklund1976** of “totality meaning” [totalitetsbetydelse] and **BergholmEtAl1999** suggest the term “generic article” as a replacement for Delsing’s “partitive article”. Calling

²⁷ This quotation is difficult to translate since *allmän* and *generell* both mean ‘general’ in Swedish.

something like *beer* in a sentence such as *He's drinking beer* “generic” certainly presupposes a rather generous definition of that term, but it has to be admitted that the notion of genericity does not lend itself to an easy delimitation. In the section on generic noun phrases above, I distinguished two basic kinds of generic uses of noun phrases. One of the two basic uses of generic noun phrases discussed in 3.2.1 was “kind predications”, meaning that something is said about a kind or species rather than about its members, e.g.

(188) *The northern hairy-nosed wombat is an endangered species.*

The question that arises is whether it is not possible to say that almost any mention of a species constitutes such a “kind predication”. Indeed, one of the major claims in the influential paper by Carlson 1977 was that “existential” uses of bare nouns in English (as in *There are wolves in the forest*) are really kind-referring. In most contexts, there is in fact no ambiguity between generic and existential readings due to restrictions on the syntactic positions in which these readings can occur. However, there are some seemingly genuine cases of ambiguity, such as (158), which has one clearly kind-referring reading, which is synonymous to (159), and one existential, which might occur in a context such as (160).

(189) *John studies cats.*

(190) *John studies the species *Felis catus*.*

(191) *John studies cats, because he is not allowed to use humans for his experiments.*

In a language such as French, the two readings of (158) would be distinguished formally, the generic reading taking a definite article and the existential one taking a partitive article. Consider the following quotation from a theological discussion site:

(192) French ()
Peut-on, par exemple, étudier l' Homme sans étudier des
 can-one for example study DEF man without study.INF PART
hommes?
 man.PL
 ‘Can one for instance study man without studying human beings?’
 (Internet)

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These observations notwithstanding, the borderline of genericity is rather fuzzy. I said above that it seems that it is often the construction in which a noun phrase appears that determines whether we understand it as generic or not. But another side of the matter is that one and the same content can often be expressed by alternative constructions, only one of which involves a generic noun phrase. For instance, plain existential statements can be paraphrased as statements involving singular definite generics, e.g.:

(193) *There are not many wombats left.*

(194) *The wombat is rare these days.*

(195) *There are lions in Kenya and Tanzania.*

(196) *The lion is represented in both Kenya and Tanzania.*

These alternative ways of expressing what is basically the same proposition have parallels in cases such as

(197) *I suddenly became dizzy.*

(198) *A sudden dizziness came upon me.*

where the difference is in whether the state of dizziness is expressed via an adjective or highlighted as an abstract noun *dizziness*, which obtains the role of the subject of the sentence. Semantically, this means that the state is “reified” or “hypostasized”, that is, treated as an abstract object.

As it turns out, there is considerable cross-linguistic variation in how propositions such as those expressed in (166)-(167) are constructed grammatically, and some languages may well choose standard ways of expression that are more similar to (167). Sympathizers of Whorfianism will see this as evidence of differences in how we structure the world. I am personally somewhat skeptical to such hypotheses, at least as far as fully grammaticalized constructions go. That is, if there is just one standard way of expressing some particular content, more substantial evidence is needed to show that this influences the ways people think. But interesting phenomena are observable when different patterns compete. Consider the following Italian sentence:

- (199) Italian ()
Papa beve il caffè ogni mattina.
father drink.PRS.3SG DEF coffee every morning
‘Father drinks coffee every morning.’ (Internet)

In English or Swedish, using definite marking on ‘coffee’ to express the corresponding content results in a rather weird interpretation (the natural reaction is “what coffee?”). In Italian, on the other hand, it is the article-less alternative that is felt to be weird: Father drinks (an unspecified, and thus unusual amount of) coffee every morning (Pier Marco Bertinetto, personal communication). Thus, the definite article seems to be induced by the fact that coffee is drunk regularly, in more or less specified quantities.

Similarly, in the following Sicilian sentence (quoted from Squartini & Bertinetto2000 original source: Skubic (1973-74:231))Skubic (1973-1974 231)), and its translation into Italian, the swordfish is, it seems, focused enough to be worth “reifying” by the use of a definite article:

(200) a. Sicilian ()

Aju manciatu tanti voti u piscispata, e m’
have.PRS.1SG eat.PP many time.PL DEF swordfish and me.DAT
ha fattu sempri beni.
have.PRS.3SG do.PP always good

b. Italian ()

Ho mangiato tante volte il pesce spada, e
have.PRS.1SG eat.PP many time.PL DEF fish sword and
mi ha fatto sempre bene.
me.DAT have.PRS.3SG do.PP always good

‘I have eaten swordfish many times, and it has always done me well.’

The competition between different grammatical patterns makes it possible for subtle nuances in interpretation to arise (see for further discussion Dahl2004). If, on the other hand, the use of the definite article in a similar context becomes obligatory, as in the Peripheral Swedish vernaculars, such nuances are lost. Another point to be made in this connection is that usage is often regulated in specific constructions but the way it is regulated may vary from one language to another. Consider, as an example, complements of verbs like *smell*, as in

(201) *He smells of vodka.*

In most Germanic languages, it is simply impossible to use definite marking here, and from this point of view, it may seem more plausible to construe such sentences as talking of a restricted quantity of vodka, rather than as involving a kind predication in the sense of KrifkaEtAl1995 Nevertheless, in many Peripheral Swedish varieties as well as in French, the normal construction is with a definite article:

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- (202) a. Älvdalen (Os) ()
*An lupter **brendwineð***
 he smell.PRS **vodka.DEF**
- b. French ()
*Il sent **la vodka***
 he smell.PRS.3SG **DEF vodka**
 ‘He smells of vodka.’

This could be interpreted as evidence that Elfdalian and French construe the predicate ‘smell’ as holding between a perceiver and a kind, and that other languages construe it as holding between a perceiver and an indefinite quantity of something. On the other hand, since there is no evidence for such a cognitive difference, it could be argued that it is equally plausible that languages are indifferent to the distinction between these two possible construals.

The Romance languages, which on the whole seem more generous than Germanic in allowing definite articles in the fuzzy border area of genericity, exhibit some interesting cross-linguistic patterns of variation. **Zamparelli2002** discusses various examples of what looks like extended uses of definite articles in Italian and other Romance languages. According to him, the following cases “force us to conclude that, in Italian, some definites can ... have a purely indefinite meaning”. (The glosses in (173)-(178) and (182)-(184) are Zamparelli’s. The boldface is mine.)

- (203) Italian ()
Ogni settimana, il mio sito web viene attaccato dagli hacker.
 every week, my web_site is attacked by_DEF.PL hacker
 ‘Every week, my web site is attacked by **the hackers**.’

- (204) Italian ()
*Nel 1986 i **ladri** hanno svuotato il mio appartamento.*
 In 1986 **DEF thieves** have emptied my apartment.
 ‘In 1986 the thieves emptied my apartment.’

- (205) Italian ()
*La casa è sporchissima. In cantina ci sono i **topi** e*
 DEF house is filthy. In DEF basement there are DEF **mice** and
*sotto il lavello vivono **gli scarafaggi**.*
 under DEF sink live DEF **cockroaches**
 ‘The house is filthy. In the basement there are the mice and under the sink live the cockroaches.’

(206) Italian ()

*Che fai per mestiere? Fotografo **gli** **uccelli**.*

What do you do for INDF living? I photograph DEF

bird.PL

‘What do you do for a living? I photograph the birds.’

(207) Italian ()

*Con questi disturbi ho dovuto smettere di bere **il** **caffè**. **Il***

with this condition I had to stop to drink DEF coffee. DEF

***tè** invece mi facilita la **digestione**.*

tea instead helps the digestion.

‘With this condition I had to stop drinking the coffee. The tea instead helps my digestion.’

(208) Italian ()

*Gianni è così pallido che sembra abbia visto **i** **fantasmi**.*

Gianni is so pale that it seems he has seen DEF

ghosts

‘Gianni is so pale that it seems he has seen the ghosts.’

Zamparelli’s examples have in common that it is not natural to preserve the definite article when translating into English. They differ from each other in various ways, however. Consider, to start with, (173). It is not generic in the sense that it is a general statement about hackers. Rather, what it says is that every week, some hackers visit my site. Whether it is the same persons every week or not is not said, and probably the speaker does not know. What could be argued here is that in (173), the hackers who visit my site are seen as representatives of the world-wide community of hackers, as it were. Similarly, the mice in the basement in (174) could be thought of as representing the mouse species in general. This would make (173) and (174) a bit similar to a sentence such as the following:

(209) *The Americans have visited the moon.*

(210) *Swedish*

(211) ***Räven** har varit i **hönshuset** igen.*

fox.DEF have.PRS be.SUP in hen-house.DEF again

‘The fox has been in the hen-house again.’

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There are clear differences here though. In English, the conditions for using the definite article in a “representative” sense are stricter than in Italian. It appears that the reason one can say something like (179) is that the American visitors to the moon were representatives of the American nation not only in some extended or metaphorical sense but also quite concretely, since they acted on behalf of the US government. When it becomes possible to go to the moon as a tourist, it clearly will not be sufficient for me and some of my friends to go there for (181) to be true.

(212) *The Swedes have visited the moon.*

(180) is different from Zamparelli’s example in that the noun phrase is in the singular. Zamparelli notes that if *il topo* ‘the mouse’ is substituted for *i topi* in (174), the interpretation has to be specific. A prerequisite for the use of a singular in (180) is that foxes tend to operate one by one, in such a way that we can think of the fox that visited the hen-house last night as a representative of the fox species.

Zamparelli notes that the three Romance languages Italian, Spanish and French differ in how readily they accept definite noun phrases in contexts of this kind. Thus, in the French translation of (174), only partitive articles are possible. In Spanish, definite articles are possible, but not with the existential verb *hay* ‘there is’, only with verbs such as *estar* ‘be’ and *vivir* ‘live’:

(213) French ()

Dans la cave, il y a ?les / des souris, et
 in DEF basement it there have DEF PARTART mouse.PL and
dans l’ évier vivent ?les / des cafards.
 in DEF sink live.PRS.3PL DEF PARTART cockroaches
 ‘In the basement there are the mice and under the sink live the cockroaches.’

(214) Spanish ()

*En el sótano hay (*los) ratones, y bajo la fregadera hay*
 In DEF basement exist (DEF) mice, and under DEF fridge exist
*(*las) cucarachas.*
 (DEF) cockroaches
 ‘In the basement there are mice and under the fridge there are cockroaches.’

(215) Spanish ()

*En el sótano están *(los) ratones, y bajo la fregadera viven*
 In DEF basement are (DEF) mice and under DEF fridge live
**(las) cucarachas.*
 (DEF) cockroaches

‘In the basement are mice and under the fridge live cockroaches.’

What we see here, then, is a cline of acceptability for definite noun phrases in uses that can be seen as non-delimited, with French being most restrictive and Italian being most liberal. This then suggests a way by which definite noun phrases may expand their domain of use into the indefinite territory with the situation in the Peripheral Swedish vernaculars or Moroccan Arabic (see 3.2.3.2 above) as the eventual result. In the absence of historical data, it is of course impossible to verify whether the route has been exactly the same, but given the other circumstances mentioned in the beginning of this section, generic uses must be regarded as a highly probable diachronic source for the extended uses of definite forms.

For singular count nouns, there are also non-generic uses of definite-marked noun phrases than generic ones that could serve as bridging cases. Consider the following sentences in English:

(216) *Did you bring **the knife***
 ?

(217) *Did you bring **a knife***
 ?

In many situations, both (185) and (186) would be acceptable. (Imagine, for instance, a picnic.) It is often rather irrelevant if a specific knife is held in mind or not. In Swedish, one could use any of the following three variants:

(218) Swedish ()

Tog du med dig kniven/en kniv/kniv?
 take.PST you with you knife.DEF/INDF knife/knife
 ‘Did you bring a knife?’

It thus seems plausible that the fluidity of the use of articles here could set the scene for the expansion of the definite forms. In fact, this fluidity sometimes makes it difficult to evaluate uses of definite markings in written sources. Consider the following excerpt from a recording of a speaker born in 1881 and coming from Hållnäs, one of the linguistically most conservative parishes in Uppland:

(219) Hållnäs (Up) ()

[The speaker is describing how sheep were collected from their summer-pasture in the autumn.]

Å den såm hadde nô förstånd då se feck han ju
and he who have.PST some sense then see.IMP get.PST he PRAG
ha bröy-sättjin, helle bröy-kôrjin, å le't åpp
have.INF bread-sack.DEF or bread-basket.DEF and search.INF up
en ta'ckâ såm fåLd etter.
INDF ewe who follow.PST after

'And he who had some sense got to have the bread sack, or the bread basket, to find a ewe who was lagging behind.' (Källskog et al. (1993: 33))

Speakers of standard Swedish do not react to the use of definite forms here, but if (188) had occurred in a Peripheral Swedish area vernacular, it could relatively easily be seen as parallel to the examples discussed in 3.2.5.

Many of the extended uses of definite forms seem rather eccentric from the point of view of standard definitions of definiteness. As was mentioned above, it is a general characteristic of advanced stages of the evolution of definite articles that the semantic element of definiteness is weakened or gets lost entirely, as when articles develop into general affixes on nouns. Such a loss of the semantic essence of a morpheme may appear paradoxical, in that the motivation for having a definite article in the first place ought to be to express definiteness. In the words of Hawkins2004 "why should the definite article be recruited for more and more NPs in performance and grammar and gradually jettison the semantic-pragmatic conditions of its deictic source?" Hawkins suggests that the answer has to be found in the processing of grammar: the functions of definite articles that become dominant at later stages of its evolution are to "construct a (case-marked) NP" and to "attach specified categories to the (case-marked) NP that it constructs". It is not clear from Hawkins' text if "construct" means anything but "unambiguously signal", but the consequence is in any case that the function of a definite article is syntactic rather than semantic. Hawkins notes (quoting Lyons1999) that the cross-linguistic tendency for definite articles to occur early in noun phrases can be explained through the necessity to signal the NP-hood of an expression early on. Notice that the principle "Signal NP-hood as early as possible" would have much of the same effect as the principle "The D-position must be filled" suggested by Holmberg & Sandström. However, Hawkins' principle makes most sense in complex NP's, where an article preposed to or cliticized to the first word would function much as a labeled left bracket. It is less clear

what the point of having a definite article on a bare noun would be. Perhaps we should see the function of definite articles whose use is extended beyond what is warranted by semantic definiteness as enhancing the general level of redundancy in grammar and thus making the transmission of the message safer (see **Dahl2004**). It should be added that any theory which attributes too essential a role to definite suffixes in varieties like the Peripheral Swedish ones will have problems explaining the tendency in the same varieties towards extensive neutralization of the distinction between definite and indefinite forms.

2 Attributive constructions

2.1 Introduction

One area of grammar where Scandinavian languages show some well-known peculiarities is in the expression of definite noun phrases which contain preposed attributes. In all varieties of Central Scandinavian, a preposed definite article is employed in such noun phrases; however, whereas this article in Danish has a complementary distribution to the ordinary suffixed article, as illustrated by *det store hus* ‘the big house’ (as opposed to *huset* ‘the house’), Swedish (and also normally Norwegian) uses both articles, as in *det stora huset* ‘the big house’. However, in northern Scandinavia, there is a radically different way of combining an adjective and a noun: the normal translation of ‘the big house’ would be something like *stor-hus-et* ‘big-house-DEF’, where the adjective is incorporated into the noun and there is no preposed article. In this chapter, I shall discuss this construction and a number of additional variations on the general theme that contribute to a quite variegated picture. However, one challenge in doing so is the tight interaction of several different parameters with different histories and geographical distribution. Another problem is the low frequency of adjectival modifiers in definite noun phrases (noted by Thompson1988). In the corpus *Samtal i Göteborg* (Löfström (1988)), comprising half a million words of spoken Swedish – corresponding to 1250 printed pages, there were only 253 examples of the pattern

- (1) *den/det/dom Adj-e/a N-DEF*

that is, the standard form of such NPs in Swedish. (Comparatives and superlatives were excluded from this count.) This is equivalent to about once in ten minutes of conversation, or once in five printed pages. In addition, it turns out that a few adjectival lexemes had a rather dominant place among those examples: about 40 per cent consisted of tokens of the four adjectives *stor* ‘big’, *liten* ‘small’, *gammal* ‘old’, *ny* ‘new’. It is probably no accident that these items are among the cross-linguistically prototypical adjectives in the sense that they

show up in practically every language that has a separate class of adjectives.¹ In written dialect texts, which are either direct renderings of spoken language or else tend to be close to spoken language in form, the corresponding patterns also show up very sparingly.

2.2 Definite marking in attributive constructions: The typological perspective

As it turns out, it is quite common cross-linguistically for attributive constructions to show some peculiarities with respect to definiteness marking. Thus, we find languages in which definiteness is only marked when a noun phrase contains a modifier, as in Latvian which has suffixed definite articles on adjectives, although it does not otherwise use definite marking, as illustrated by the following examples.

- (2) Latvian ()
- a. *liel-a* *māja*
big-F.NOM.SG house
'a big house'
 - b. *liel-ā* *māja*
big-F.NOM.SG.DEF house
'the big house'

In another pattern, an article that usually sits on the noun shows up on the adjective in an attributive construction, as exemplified by Amharic:

- (3) Amharic ()
- a. *bet-u*
house-DEF
'the house'
 - b. *tʔllʔq-u bet*
big-DEF house
'the big house'

¹ According to Dixon1977 the adjectives that occur most frequently across languages are 'large', 'small', 'long', 'short', 'new', 'old', 'good', 'bad', 'black', 'white'.

2.2 Definite marking in attributive constructions: The typological perspective

Finally, the phenomenon of double articles is by no means restricted to Scandinavian. Consider, for example, Standard Arabic, in which the noun and the adjective each take the identical article *al*:

- (4) Standard Arabic ()
- a. *al-bayt*
DEF-house
'the house'
 - b. *al-bayt al-kabir*
DEF-house DEF-big
'the big house'

From Germanic languages, we can mention Yiddish, where double articles are optional and more likely to appear when the adjective is postposed (Plank2003)

- (5) Yiddish ()
- a. *di grine oygn*
DEF green.PL eye.PL
'the green eyes'
 - b. *di oygn di grine*
DEF eye.PL DEF green.PL
'the green eyes'

Even closer to home, in Old Icelandic, we find cases where two preposed definite articles are combined with a suffixed definite article on the noun. This triple marking is certainly a challenge for any theory that supposes that each morpheme fills a separate slot in the underlying structure. The following example is from the saga of Gísli Súrsson. The protagonist is having recurrent dreams where two dream-women, one good and one bad, appear:

- (6) Old Icelandic () *Hann segir, att nú kom at honum*
he say.PRS that now come.PRS to he.DAT
draumkona-n sú hin verri...
dreamwoman-DEF DEF DEF worse
'[Reporting Gísli's answer to a question about his dreams:] He says that now came to him the evil dream-woman...' (Gísli saga Súrssonar 33)

See Dahl2003 for further examples and discussion.

2.3 Survey of attributive definite NP constructions

2.3.1 The deprecated standard: the Scandinavian preposed article

Like the suffixed article, the preposed definite article in Scandinavian goes back to medieval times, and the earliest attestations are from texts from Iceland and Norway where the pronouns *hinn* and *enn* were used early on in this function. In Early Written Medieval Swedish, as described by Larm1936 there was competition between several different ways of expressing definite NPs with preposed attributes. Most often, only one article was used, but it could be either a preposed or a suffixed one, thus either *þæn gamli man* or *gamli mannin*. The preposed article – in the beginning sometimes *hinn* but more frequently *þæn*, another originally demonstrative pronoun – was more common in poetic language and the suffixed one most frequent in prose, although even there the preposed alternative was preferred – the overall ratio between the two articles was 10:1. The alternative with double articles seems to have become a serious contestant only later. The distribution of the two articles over genres suggests that the preponderance of the preposed article in poetry “essentially depends on foreign influence” (Larm1936).² According to Larm, there is a difference in deictic force between the two alternatives as used in prose, in that *þæn* tends to be used in contexts that are more similar to those of “normal” demonstratives. Larm thus concludes that contrary to what earlier researchers such as Falk-Torp and Nygaard had proposed, the preposed article *þæn* cannot be older than the suffixed one³ (Larm1936).

It is consonant with this view to assume that the preposed article arrived later in the Swedish dialect area than the suffixed article. In fact, as we shall now see, the use of the preposed article is still more restricted in Standard Swedish than in Standard Danish.

In Dahl2003 I discuss in some detail two classes of cases where the preposed article does not show up, viz. what I call **selectors** and **name-like uses**. I use “selectors” as a cover term for three categories that are usually treated separately in Swedish grammars (all examples are Swedish):

a subset of what TelemanEtAl1999 435) call “relational pronouns”: “ordinative pronouns”, e.g. *först(a)* ‘first’, *sist(a)* ‘last’, *nästa* ‘next’, *förre* ‘previous’, “perspectival pronouns”, e.g. *höger/högra* ‘right (hand)’, *vänster/vänstra* ‘left (hand)’, *norra* ‘north’ etc., *övre* ‘upper’ etc., and *ena* ‘one (of)’

² “...att den rika frekvensen av typen *þæn gamli man* i poesien till väsentlig grad beror på främmande inverkan.”

³ “*þæn* såsom artikel kan ej vara äldre än suff. artikel.”

used to refer to well-known objects, typically chosen out of a small set. For instance, if you own two houses next to each other but of different size, it is very natural to call them *stora huset* ‘the big house’ and *lilla huset* ‘the little house’, even before these denominations have become so “entrenched” that capital letters would be used in writing. We can see that such cases are fairly similar to the cases with selectors discussed above. Name-like uses are treated quite differently in the Central Scandinavian languages. In Danish, we find either (i) the usual pattern with a preposed article and no definite marking on the noun (*Det Hvide Hus* ‘the White House’), (ii) no definite marking whatsoever (*Nordisk Råd* ‘the Nordic Council’) or (iii) definite marking only on the adjective, i.e. by choosing the weak form (*Store Bælt* ‘the Big Belt, i.e. the sound between the islands of Sjælland and Fyn’). In no case do we find a definite form of the noun, however. All three Danish patterns are also found in Swedish, more or less marginally. The first pattern is found in archaic expressions such as (i) *den helige Ande* ‘the Holy Ghost’ and the second occasionally in names such as *Svensk Uppslagsbok* ‘The Swedish Encyclopedia’. The third pattern is represented in toponyms such as *Store Mosse* ‘Large Peatbog’ over most of the South Swedish and Göta dialect areas. As for Norwegian, Bokmål, which in other cases has double articles, goes with Danish here, but Nynorsk stands out by using double articles even in these contexts (e.g. *Det Kvite Huset* ‘the White House’).

Generalizing from these patterns, it can be said that all Central Scandinavian languages (in which I do not count Nynorsk) show tendencies to have less definiteness marking with selectors and name-like uses than in other cases of definite noun phrases with preposed modifiers. In general, there tends to be less marking of noun phrases whose definiteness is in one way or the other “inherent”; in diachronic developments, they tend to be the last ones to receive marking. With respect to the preposed article, it appears fairly clear that it is generally stronger in Denmark than in the other Scandinavian countries, especially Sweden. If we consider also the non-standard varieties, we can see that there is in fact a cline going from south-west to north-east, with the preposed article becoming gradually weaker as we move along it. In south-western Jutland, the preposed article is used universally and the suffixed article does not exist. Southern Swedish vernaculars are less restrictive than Standard Swedish in the use of the preposed article, that is, they are more like Standard Danish. On the other hand, in the Peripheral Swedish area, in particular the more conservative parts, preposed definite articles of the Central Scandinavian type are quite restricted and are possibly largely ascribable to influence from Swedish.

(8) Älvdalen (Os) () *In[1EB?] guäve; add an laggt ien*
on floor.DEF.DAT have.PST he lay.SUP INDf
filt briewið wåtjakku.
blanket next_to wet_jacket.DEF.ACC
‘On the floor, he had put a blanket next to the wet jacket.’ [S9]

In some cases, we get quite distinct readings of one and the same adjective-noun combination. Thus, the phrase *the new car* might mean either 'the car I just bought (in contrast to the one I had before)' or 'the recently fabricated car'. In Swedish, there is a compound *nybil* which has only the second reading in the standard language. In the vernaculars where adjective incorporation is possible,

this tends to be true of the indefinite form, but the definite form *nybiln* will also have the reading of referring to a new car that is contrasted to a car I had before (Sandström & Holmberg2003). In fact, the presence of such readings of combinations with an adjective like ‘new’ is a relatively certain indicator that we are dealing with something more than “ordinary compounding”.

In generative theory, where a sharp distinction between “lexicon” and “syntax” is normally postulated, it is natural to assume, as Sandström & Holmberg2003 do, that compounding belongs in the lexicon and incorporation in the syntax. However, the distinction between incorporation and compounding is a tricky one and should probably rather be seen as a continuum, as I argue in Dahl (2004: Ch. 10) where I discuss incorporating patterns in general. In fact, this distinction between incorporation and compounding often becomes blurred. In a relatively large number of cases, it is not possible to determine whether we are dealing with a unitary concept or not. Many of the examples in the literature which are quoted as examples of the tendency to use adjective-noun compounds instead of ordinary attributive constructions are indeterminate in this way, making it hard to pinpoint the geographical distribution of the phenomenon. I think it is fairly clear that in addition to the use of clear cases of adjective incorporation in the Peripheral Swedish area, there is also a general predilection for adjective-noun compounding which raises the general frequency of such compounds relative to other Germanic languages. This means that one-word adjective-noun combinations are more common not only in definite but also in indefinite NPs. I shall return to the issue of indefinite NPs after an excursion into language typology.

Typological considerations. In the general linguistic literature, adjective incorporation is a somewhat neglected phenomenon, at least in comparison to noun incorporation, that is, the process by which a noun stem is incorporated into the verb of a sentence. Still, in some languages, adjective incorporation is the normal way of adding an attributive adjective to a noun, either generally, as in Lakota, a Siouan language (Boas & Deloria1941), or under certain conditions, as in Chukchi (Muravyova1998), a Chukchi-Kamchatkan language in which attributive adjectives are obligatorily incorporated when the head noun is in a non-absolute case.

There are also many examples of attributive constructions which cannot be regarded as full-fledged incorporation but which are still “tighter” than normal adjective-noun constructions. As a general tendency, these tighter constructions seem to be favoured by a low prominence of the adjective and are often restricted to a few adjectives, usually “prototypical” ones, such as ‘big’, ‘small’, ‘old’, ‘new’, ‘good’, ‘bad’, i.e. the ones that show up in languages in which adjectives are

a closed class with a small number of members (see fn. 1). It has been observed (Croft & Deligianni 2001) that preposed modifiers are more tightly integrated into a noun phrase than postposed ones, for instance by lacking normal grammatical markings. This can be illustrated by pairs such as Spanish *el gran libro* ‘the great book’ – *el libro grande* ‘the big book’. Italian, the Celtic languages, Persian, Komi and Southern Ute also exhibit this kind of phenomenon.

For a more detailed survey of adjective incorporation from a typological point of view, see Dahl2004

Indefinite adjective-noun combinations. I claimed above that there is a general predilection in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars for one-word adjective-noun combinations, not only in definite NPs (see also Delsing (2003a: 44 , fn. 19)). Many references in the literature to the phenomenon do not distinguish indefinite and definite noun phrases and the examples given are often indefinite ones (for a case in point, consider the examples from **Hedblom1978** quoted below in 4.4).

The question, then, is what is the status of these indefinite adjective-noun combinations. Acknowledging that “Northern Swedish”, i.e. primarily Westrobothnian, has a “relatively productive formation of adjective-noun compounds”, Sandström & Holmberg 2003 claim that there are two major differences between (i) compounds as used in indefinite noun phrases and (ii) what they see as true cases of adjective incorporation in definite noun phrases.

The first difference according to Sandström & Holmberg is that indefinite adjective-noun compounds are restricted to monosyllabic adjective stems. Thus, they say, examples such as **en vackerkweinn* ‘a beautiful woman’ and **en duktipajk* ‘an able boy’ are impossible. However, **BergholmEtAl1999** provide counterexamples from Burträsk (NVb) and Sorsele (SVb) such as *magersteint* ‘lean girl’ and *vackerkwinn* ‘beautiful woman’. In the Cat Corpus, we find *magerstackar* ‘lean poor thing’ in the text from from Sävar (SVb) and the following example with the bisyllabic stem *gammel-* ‘old’ from Northern Westrobothnian:

- (9) *Skelletmål* (NVb) (...)hä ha vorte möittje bättär seda I
it have.PRSS become.SUP much better since I
bört å håå ä gammal-kattskinn där om
begin.PST INFM have.INF INDF old-catskin there
netträn.
at night.DEF.PL
‘...it [my back] has become much better since I began to put an old cat
skin there at night.’ (Cat Corpus)

From the Ovansiljan area we can cite **Levander1909** examples *klakkug-dsieter* ‘horn-less goats’ and *digger-frunt* ‘fat woman’ (both Elfdalian), and from the Cat Corpus, *nog blickna-blad* (Älvdalen) ‘some withered leaves’ and *no blitseblar* (Mora, same meaning). A more extreme example is *nykuäkaðpärur* ‘newly boiled potatoes’ (Elfdalian, Åkerberg (2012, 201)). (Cf. also the examples from Nederkalix quoted below.) Thus, it is possible that the restriction holds for some variety, but definitely not generally for the Peripheral Swedish area and not even for Westrobothnian.

The other difference between definite and indefinite adjective-noun combinations cited by Holmberg & Sandström is semantic and thus potentially of a more fundamental nature. According to them, indefinite adjective-noun compounds do not have all the readings of the definite incorporated ones; thus, (198) can only mean that the person in question has bought a newly made car, not one that is “new for him”:

- (10) Westrobothnian () *Han ha tjöfft sä n nybil.*
 he have.PRS buy.SUP REFL INDF new.car
 ‘He’s bought himself a new car.’

Yet, it does appear that indefinite adjective-noun combinations in Peripheral Swedish have uses that would not be expected of “normal” compounds, in particular in cases where the adjective signals an accidental or “occasional” property of the referent rather than forms a designation of a “unitary concept” together with the noun. Consider the following example from Elfdalian (Levander1909):

- (11) Älvdalen (Os) () *Gok etter ien sturwiðåbörd!*
 go.IMP after one.F.DAT big.firewood.load
 ‘Go and get a big load of firewood!’

Rutberg1924 gives a number of examples from Nederkalix (Kx), some of which have a definite “occasional” ring: *in litn artibåt* ‘a nice little boat’, *i vokkert röbat* ‘a beautiful red band’, *småswartskou* ‘small black boots’, *i vokke-liλ-bån* ‘a beautiful little child’, *in lil-fåti-ståkkar* ‘a poor little thing’, *i sta-skallat-kou* ‘a big hornless cow’.

In fact, **Levander1909** says explicitly that Swedish indefinite adjective-noun combinations “usually” correspond to compounds in Elfdalian, and in his general treatment of Dalecarlian (**Levander1928**), he echoes this statement by saying that “at least in Älvdalen” compounding is “incomparably much more frequent” than

the syntactic construction.⁴ It is possible, as Delsing (2003a: 44, fn. 19) suggests, that the tendency is stronger in Dalecarlian than in Upper Norrland, or in parts of it, if we consider the examples from Nederkalix above. **Dahlstedt1962** says about Vilhelmina (SVb) that “it does not seem to offend linguistic intuitions to use relatively occasional word combinations as compounds ... but this type of formation is not the usual one.” His examples are *n gammbjärkbränne* ‘an old forest clearing, overgrown by birch’ and *n tōkken gammstyggöbb* ‘such an ugly old man’ (at least the first one seems like a possible lexicalization to me, though).

I think these circumstances give support to the idea that there is no clear borderline between compounding and incorporation and also that indefinite one-word adjective-noun combinations can have incorporation-like properties in Peripheral Swedish vernaculars. In any case, it seems unlikely that the one-word combinations we find in indefinite and definite NPs are diachronically wholly separate from each other.

Combinations with other determiners. In the simplest possible case of adjectival modifiers, there are no other elements in the NP than the adjective and the head noun. A definite noun phrase may also contain other elements, however, notably demonstratives (which, as we shall see in 4.3.4, are often used much like preposed definite articles). There is considerable variation as to the extent to which adjectives are incorporated in such contexts, which partly seems to be dependent on word order. In many Norrlandic varieties, the typical demonstrative pronoun is postposed and indeclinable, and there incorporation tends to take place in the same way as in simple noun phrases, thus:

- (12) *Skelletmål* ()*Kattkalln låg oppa bolä å beunnrä*
 tomcat.DEF lie.PST on table.DEF and admire.PST
 konsti-burken dänna...
 strange-can.DEF that
 ‘Cat on the table admiring that strange can...’

When the demonstrative precedes, incorporation may or may not take place. The most common case appears to be that it does not. Rather, the adjective appears with or without an ending (but sometimes with a change in pitch accent, see below), as in the examples quoted in 4.4. But incorporation is not always excluded. Thus, **Vangsnes2003** quoting personal communication from Ann-Marie Ivars, mentions examples such as *honde gamälbókjen* ‘that/the old book’ from

⁴ “Dylik sammansättning av adj. och subst. är åtminstone i Älvd. ojämförligt mycket vanligare än de båda ordens uppträdande bredvid varandra som skilda ord.”

Närpes (SÖb); and in questionnaire material from Österbotten, also provided by Ann-Marie Ivars, there are similar examples from Munsala (NÖb) and Västansjö (Åb). Reinhammar2005 quotes cases from Hammerdal (Jm) such as *'n dån li'hllpöytjen* 'that small boy' (see further 4.3.4).

Origins of adjective incorporation. In Swedish, adjectives in definite noun phrases take what is traditionally called a “weak” ending (possibly a development of an erstwhile definite article on adjectives), normally *-a*. Plural adjectives always take the ending *-a*, regardless of where they occur. Over a large area in Scandinavia, final vowels have historically been deleted in the process referred to as apocope (illustrations are easily found in the example sentences in this book, e.g. the infinitive forms *berätt* ‘tell’ in Arvidsjaur (Nm) and *skaff* ‘get’ in Kall (Jm) – cf. Standard Swedish *berätta* and *skaffa*.) Since the adjective incorporation area is by and large included in the apocope area, it would not be implausible to connect the genesis of adjective incorporation with such a process. Dahlstedt1962 however, wants to explain it through a slightly different process by which the connecting vowel between the element of compounds is deleted. He does not really give any clear examples, but the precondition, he says, is that the adjective-noun combination is kept together in one “beat”.⁵ The problem, however, is how the adjective-noun combination came to have the same prosody as ordinary compounds. Vangsnes2003 (citing personal communication from Görel Sandström) suggests that it was rather the other way around: the final vowels were apocopated, and this created the conditions for incorporation: there was nothing – “except perhaps prosody” – that distinguished the combination of an ending-less adjective and a noun from a compound. This again seems to play down the importance of prosody.

Apocope was probably originally a wholly phonologically conditioned process applying to word-final but not utterance-final unstressed vowels after a stressed long syllable (a syllable which contained at least one long segment).

In modern vernaculars, apocope is contingent on a combination of phonological, morphological and lexical factors. Thus, in modern Elfdalian, many words still alternate between apocopated and non-apocopated forms depending on the position in the sentence. The process is no longer purely phonological, though, since many words (especially new additions to the lexicon) do not participate in it. In many vernaculars, apocope leaves a trace behind in that the distinction between the two Scandinavian tonal word accents is preserved even though the

⁵ “Vokalbortfallet (synkopen) ... är i princip samma slag som hos övriga sammansättningar med tvåstavig förled...Förutsättningen för vokalbortfallet torde från början ha varit att adjektiv och substantiv sammanhölls till en språktakt...”

In addition, the pattern illustrated in (201) shows up also with indefinite nouns, such as *twerobåkk* ‘steep slope’ (Levander1909). Again, it seems that the one-word pattern must have undergone generalization from the cases where it was essentially conditioned by phonological developments. Dahlstedt1962 also assumes an expansion of the pattern from “one-beat” cases to more complex ones.⁶ At this point, however, it may not be possible to empirically distinguish between a straightforward extension of the compounding pattern and an assimilation of endless attributive adjectives to that pattern.

2.3.3 The obscurer alternatives

In addition to the standard double-marked construction and adjective incorporation, there are also a couple of other possibilities for expressing definite NPs with attributes found in the Peripheral Swedish area. These are not always given proper attention in the literature.

2.3.4 Non-incorporated modifiers without preposed articles but with definite head nouns

We saw above that in Swedish there are frequent cases where a NP contains a preposed modifier but no preposed article. In Written Medieval Swedish, such cases were more common and apparently not restricted to the contexts where they are normal in Modern Swedish. Compare

- (15) Written Medieval Swedish () *Migdonia gik tel mörko huset.*
 Migdonia go.PST to dark.WK? house.DEF
 ‘Migdonia went to the dark house.’ [S8]

The distribution of this construction in Written Medieval Swedish as described by Larm1936 and the virtual absence of standard preposed articles in conservative Peripheral Swedish vernaculars suggests that this was the normal way of expressing definite attributive NPs in large parts of medieval Sweden, and the more general use of the pattern without a preposed article has in fact survived in some vernaculars in the Peripheral Swedish area. Compare:

- (16) Leksand (Ns) () *Sô jä får ingôn trevnâ ti fin rommä...*
 so I get.PRS no nice_feeling in fine room.DEF
 ‘So I don’t like it in the fancy room.’ [S48]

⁶ The example he provides is perhaps not wholly obvious, though: *stor övervalls dalasäcken* ‘?’

As we see in this example, the construction in the vernaculars has typically undergone apocope of the weak adjective ending, which means that the adjective seems to be undeclined. The ending has not disappeared but undergone what is sometimes called “Cheshirization”: it leaves a prosodic trace in the form of a “grave” pitch accent. Consider the following examples from **Levander1928** with marking of the pitch accent:

- (17) Ore (Os) ()*n̄y*‘ *ruttjin*
 new.WK coat.DEF
 ‘the new coat’
- (18) Leksand (Ns) ()*lissl* *påjtjôn*
 little.WK boy.DEF
 ‘the little boy’
- (19) Nås (Vd) ()*gvît* *sôkkor*
 white.WK sock.PL.DEF
 ‘the white socks’

Similar examples can be found in texts from Estonia, although without the pitch accent:

- (20) Nuckö (Es) ()*stor re staina* *opat krusat sând butne*
 big red stone.DEF.PL on rippled sand bottom.DEF
 ‘the big red stones on the rippled sand bottom’ [S39]

Sandström & **Holmberg2003** argue that definite attributive NPs without incorporation and without a preposed article violate the “argument rule” proposed by **Delsing1993** which prohibits leaving the D (determiner) position empty in argument NPs. This would seem to exclude examples like those above. Admittedly, the rule is not supposed to apply to languages with morphological case (such as Icelandic), which might explain away at least the vernaculars which have retained some of the old case system. On the other hand, among the examples given, Nås and Estonia are clearly outside the area which preserves cases, so that would be a counterexample to their claims.

2.3.5 Non-standard preposed articles

We saw in 4.3.1 that the Central Scandinavian preposed article is on the whole absent from the Peripheral Swedish area, at least as far as headed noun phrases in

the more conservative vernaculars of the Peripheral Swedish area go. However, this statement has to be qualified: preposed articles can be found, but they do not look quite the same as in the standard languages. Thus, in Elfdalian, in addition to the incorporation construction, as exemplified in (209)(a), we may have (209)(b), where the demonstrative *an dar* ‘that’ can be used without its original deictic force.

- (21) Älvdalen (Os) ()
- a. *swart-rattj-in*
black-dog-DEF.NOM.SG
‘the black dog’
 - b. *an dar swart rattj-in*
that there black dog-DEF.NOM.SG
‘the black dog’

What we see here is apparently yet another and at least partly independent instance of the common grammaticalization process by which a definite article develops out of a distal demonstrative pronoun, in this case *an dar* ‘that’, that is, a combination of the pronoun *an* ‘he’ and the adverb *dar* ‘there’.⁷

This phenomenon turns out to be quite wide-spread in the Peripheral Swedish area. In fact, several descriptions indicate constructions involving demonstratives as the primary alternative for expressing attributive definite noun phrases, or at least, as an alternative on a par with adjective incorporation. Thus, **Ivars2005** says that the major alternative for definite NPs with preposed modifiers in southern Ostrobothnian is the construction “demonstrative *hande* + agreeing adjective + noun with suffixed definite article”. That is, rather than the incorporated *röhu:se* ‘the red house’, one finds *hede rött hu:se* and rather than *röstugon* ‘the red hut’ one finds *honde ryö: stugon*. (See **Vangsnes2003** for further examples from southern Ostrobothnian).

As for Nyland, where the preposed article is possible in the vernacular, Lundström (1939: 21) says that the vernacular prefers to use a demonstrative pronoun when speaking of “already familiar or previously mentioned objects”.⁸ It thus appears that the demonstrative is encroaching on the territory of the preposed article, but has not yet taken it over totally.

A further variation on the theme is found in Jämtland. **Reinhammar2005** says about the vernacular of Hamnerdal that the demonstrative ‘*n dânn* is used in

⁷ For convenience, I will gloss such pronouns as demonstratives, even if they are clearly used as definite articles.

⁸ “förut bekanta eller tidigare omtalade föremål”

a way that comes close to a preposed definite article. Primarily, however, this occurs with headless adjectives and adjective-noun compounds (incorporated adjectives) combinations, as in *'n dân li 'hllpöytjen* 'that small boy'.

In his section on definite forms of adjectives in Dalecarlian, **Levander1928** translates, without comment, Ore (Os) *an-da gamm[1E37?]ästa* as 'the oldest one', and he also has a suspiciously high number of examples with demonstratives from different parishes where he nevertheless keeps the demonstratives in the translation.

Regrettably, it is not possible to establish the exact geographical distribution of the construction discussed here, since it is usually hard to prove that examples in text cannot be understood as normal demonstratives. Except for statements like the above in published descriptions, where one has to rely on the author's judgement, systematic occurrences in translations provide the best evidence for the claim that a demonstrative in a vernacular has been grammaticalized as a definite article. I shall return to the geographical distribution in the following section, but it should be noted here that there are no attestations of extended uses of demonstratives in the Norrbottenian, Westrobothnian and Angermannian dialectal areas. This may possibly have something to do with the fact that, in many of those vernaculars, the most frequent way of forming a demonstrative NP tends to be by adding an adverb such as *daNNa* 'there' after the noun, e.g. *hässtn daNNa* 'that horse' (*Skelletmål*, **Marklund1976**).

2.4 Distribution of attributive definite NP constructions

In the preceding section, we saw that there are at least four possible ways of handling definiteness marking in noun phrases with preposed modifiers in the Peripheral Swedish area: (i) standard preposed articles; (ii) adjectives incorporated in nouns with suffixed articles; (iii) non-incorporated modifiers without preposed articles but with definite head nouns; and (iv) preposed articles derived from complex demonstratives. We shall now look more closely at their distribution in the individual vernaculars.

Delsing2003a identifies two areas in northern Scandinavia in which definite NPs with preposed modifiers behave differently from Central Scandinavian. The first and larger one is shown in his Map 9 as comprising the traditionally Swedish-speaking parts of the following provinces: Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Lappland, Jämtland, Ångermanland, Medelpad, and Härjedalen, as well as the Dalecarlian area. Here, Delsing says, adjective incorporation is the normal way of forming a definite noun phrase with an adjectival attribute. There are two types of excep-

tions to this generalization. The first type concerns so-called “absolute positives”, which I shall return to in 4.8. The second type is referred to by Delsing as “emphasis, in particular with superlatives and other expressions where the preposed article tends to be omitted in Standard Swedish”⁹ – here the pattern used is an adjective with a weak ending without a preposed article. In the three provinces of Norrbotten, Västerbotten, and Ångermanland, preposed articles are not attested at all. In addition to the core area of adjective incorporation, there are also, says Delsing, “smaller areas”, viz. Hälsingland, Gästrikland, Österbotten och Trøndelag, where “the same pattern is used”, but “double definiteness shows up in the emphasis case”.¹⁰

The claim that preposed articles are totally absent from the three northernmost coastal provinces is a bit too categorical. Thus, **Rutberg1924** gives a number of examples from Nederkalix (Kx) such as *dän stora gårn* ‘the big farm’, *dom höa höusa* ‘the high houses’, *de öyntjelia liλbåne* ‘the poor little kids’. Her generalisation is that “adjectives show up as independent words when the adjective has stronger stress and especially when it is preceded by a demonstrative pronoun ...”. **Wikberg2004** notes several types of cases where preposed definite articles are used in Rånemål, including dates, NPs modified by *äänn* ‘other’, and before numerals, e.g.

- (22) Rånemål (Ll) () *Di truy päjkan sparke ball*
 DEF three boy.DEF.PL kick.PST ball
 ‘The three boys were playing ball.’

The Cat Corpus material also confirms that in the northernmost provinces definite NPs containing ‘other’ tend to contain a preposed article of the standard kind, e.g.

- (23) a. Nederkalix (Kx) () *Den aann kårvit’n har ‘a meste*
 DEF other sausage_end.DEF have.PST she almost
tåppe ein ini öre.
 stuff.SUP in into ear.DEF
 b. Skelletmål (NVb) ()
Dän ann eenn hadd hon ståppä ein inni airä.
 DEF other end.DEF have.PST she stuff.SUP in into

⁹ “dels vid emfas, särskilt vid superlativer och andra uttryck som gärna utelämnar den framförställda artikeln i rikssvenska”

¹⁰ “I mindre områden (Hälsingland, Gästrikland, Österbotten och Trøndelag) används samma mönster men dubbel definitethet uppträder i emfas-typen.”

ear.DEF

c. SÄVAR (SVb) ()

...å **den aann körv-enn** sättä na mot öre.
 ...and DEF other sausage_end.DEF put.PST she to

ear.DEF

‘The other (sausage) end she had almost stuffed into her ear.’ (Cat Corpus)

Similarly, in the text [S16] from Älvdalen, where there are otherwise few if any preposed articles, *oðer* ‘other’ is fairly consistently preceded by what looks like a preposed article:

- (24) Älvdalen (Os) () **Diär odrä gesslkallär** ad ve
 DEF other.PL herder boy.PL have.PST be.SUP
tungnäd kâit upi budär etter fuätsä[328?]...
 forced.PP run.INF in shielings after people.DAT
 ‘The other herder boys had been forced to run to the shielings for people...’ [S16]

There are also other patterns, however, as in:

- (25) Junsele (Åm) () **Anner korvään stöppe** na nästan
 other sausage_end.DEF stuff.PST she
in i öre.
 almost in into ear.DEF
 ‘The other sausage end she had almost stuffed into her ear.’ (Cat Corpus)

With regard to the use of adjective incorporation in general, it is not quite easy to verify the southern border of the area where incorporation is the preferred, or even only possible, construction, but it does appear that it is fuzzier and more complex than Delsing makes it. Thus, for Njurunda in Medelpad, which would belong to the larger core area according to Delsing, Stenbom1916 gives examples such as *n dänn stygge pōjken* ‘the nasty boy < that there nasty boy’ as one of two possible constructions, the other being adjective incorporation. In other words, there is competition here between incorporation and a non-standard preposed article construction. In the case of the province of Hälsingland, we find that Delsing’s own account is slightly contradictory. On

the one hand, he says that it belongs to the peripheral incorporation area, on the other, in his discussion of the use of the preposed article, he says that it is used about as much as in the standard language, basing himself on what he has found in written texts. In several descriptions of Hälsingland vernaculars, incorporation is described in a way that suggests that it is the primary alternative. Hjelmström (1896: 82) says that “like other Norrlandic vernaculars” the Delsbo vernacular uses compounds such as *storbo*[1E37?]*e* ‘the big table’ and *gamme*[1E37?]*jænta* ‘the old girl’ instead of Swedish *det stora bordet* and *den gamla flickan*. According to, According to Franck1995 incorporation is frequent in Forsa (his examples are *få*[331?]*nhåttén* ‘the fancy hat’, *sto*[331?]*rträ*[331?] ‘the big tree’, *svå*[283?]*thåsten* ‘the black horse’). Hedblom1978 in his discussion of the speech of some descendants of emigrants from Hanebo (Hä) in Bishop Hill, Illinois, says that they prefer compounds instead of adjectival attributes. His examples are *hå*[1E37?]*vatt*[2C8?]*n* ‘hard water’, *skar*‘*pbrö*’ ‘crisp bread (knäckebröd)’, *på gamme*[1E37?]*da*[2C8?]*ganô* ‘in the old days’. However, most of these could also be interpreted as lexical compounds and are difficult to evaluate out of context. On the other hand, as Delsing says, the written material from Hälsingland contains a considerable number of preposed articles, although partly differing in form from Standard Swedish. In the following example we find two instances of the demonstrative *en* used as a preposed article. (It looks confusingly like an indefinite article, but the weak forms of the following adjectives and the definite form of the noun tell us that it has to be the demonstrative.)

- (26) Delsbo (Hä) ()[*Marget o jΘ j*[277?]*le, sum m*[277?]*ra sa*]
o fleg å upp jenne dä bratte trampan evver en
 and fly.PST on up that there steep.WK staircase.DEF across DEF
mΘrska bΘtten o in i en liλla, jusa kammarn.
 dark attic and in to DEF little well-lit.WK

chamber.DEF

‘[Marget and I did as the old woman said] and flew up that steep staircase across the dark attic and into the small, well-lit room.’ [S18]

Likewise, in the Cat Corpus we find that incorporation is used in the following sentence in two of three Hälsingland texts:

- (27) a. Färila ()
 ...*vitgardinân* *ff[1E37?]addrâ*.
 ...white_curtain.DEF.PL flutter.PST
 ‘...the white curtains fluttered.’ (Cat Corpus)
- b. Forsa ()
 ...*vitgardinene* *jussom vinka* *at-en*.
 ...white_curtain.DEF.PL like wave.INF at_one
 ‘...the white curtains waved at you as it were.’ (Cat Corpus)

Moving south along the Swedish east coast, Gästrikland appears to be fairly similar to Hälsingland, to judge from the description in Lindkvist1942. Having given some examples with preposed articles, Lindkvist says that they are not so frequent “since the vernaculars have other, more convenient means of expression”,¹¹ quoting examples such as: *gamm[259?]/lprost’n* ‘the old dean’, *gamm[259?]/lgubb[259?]n* ‘the old man’, *unghäst’n* ‘the young horse’, *ungföltji* ‘the young people’, *ludimyssâ* ‘the hairy cap’, *lillmiss’n* ‘the little cat’, *liss-stintâ* ‘the little girl’. These examples do look like fairly typical incorporation cases. In Uppland, which is not included in Delsing’s list, the standard preposed article appears to be the most common case but there are a couple of indications that incorporation also occurs, or used to occur.

Hesselman1908 quotes examples from the 17th century author Schroderus such as

- (28) Upplandic (17th century) ()
- a. *Finsk kyrkian*
 Finnish church.DEF
 ‘the Finnish Church’ (apparently used as a proper name)
- b. *först resan*
 first time.DEF
 ‘the first time’
- c. *anner-sidon*
 other-side.DEF
 ‘the other side’

and claims, with no indication of sources, that “Modern Upplandic” (“nyupp-ländska”) has expressions such as

¹¹ “ty målen ha andra, bekvämare uttrycksmedel”

(29) Upplandic ()

- a. *rö(d)-boken*
red-book.DEF
'the red book'
- b. *på ander-sidan*
on other-side.DEF
'on the other side'

In fact, the spelling of some of the 17th century examples suggest that they may rather be of the type discussed in 4.3.3.1, that is, non-incorporated modifiers without preposed articles but with definite head nouns. A further example is found in the transcribed text from Alunda in Västerlund (1988: 56), *red på ên vi't-kamp* 'rode on a white horse', but although Västerlund refers to it as "a compound with an adjective as first member according to the Norrlandic pattern", it is at least not a prototypical case of incorporation, since it occurs in an indefinite noun phrase.

In Finland, on the other hand, incorporation is rather weaker than what is suggested by Delsing. For southern Ostrobothnian, **Ivars2005** says that adjective incorporation is not obligatory, but does occur. Her quest for examples, however, gave "meagre results", and she thinks the usage is receding. She found that adjective incorporation in southern Ostrobothnian is productive for "common adjectives such as *gammal* 'old', *ny* 'new', *lång* 'long', *stor* 'big', and colour adjectives. She says that her intuitive feeling is that incorporation is on the retreat, yielding to the construction with a preposed demonstrative (see 4.3.4). Likewise, **Eriksson & Rendahl1999** found only two indisputable examples of adjective incorporation in their relatively extensive questionnaire material from Ostrobothnian. About the use of the demonstrative construction, Ivars says that it often retains the function of demonstrative pronouns to "indicate, contrast and actualize" referents. This, I assume, is natural as long as no new dedicated distal demonstrative has developed and the old one still has to serve both as a demonstrative and as a definite article.

Delsing's smaller area also includes Trøndelag in Norway. It is rather hard to get clear documentation of the use of adjective incorporation in Trøndelag beyond the fact that it exists. For instance, **Vangsnes2003** mentions it in passing, without giving examples. **FaarlundEtAl1997** say that in Trøndelag Norwegian compounds with an adjectival first member are used more frequently than in Norwegian otherwise and give two examples, of which at least the first one cannot be seen as a straightforward lexical compound:

- (30) Norwegian ()*Han er spent på dette, har hørt mye*
he be.PRS thrilled about this have.PRS hear.PP much
snakk om nypresten.
talk about new_clergyman.DEF
‘He is thrilled about this, he has heard much talk about the new
clergyman.’
- (31) Norwegian ()*Stakkars Jon og Lise som må gå på skolen i*
poor Jon and Lise who must.PRS go.INF on school in
gammelklær.
old_clothes.PL
‘Poor Jon and Lise, who have to go to school in old clothes.’

An Internet search yields a fair number of examples from Norway with incorporated *ny-* ‘new’. The following, which is from a transcript of a story told by a woman born in Ålesund in 1901, suggests that the area where the usage is found extends at least into the province of Møre og Romsdal:

- (32) Ålesund (Norway) ()*Og vi va flytta inni nyhuset, vi.*
and we be.PST move.PP into new_house.DEF we
‘And we had moved into the new house.’ (Internet)

It is harder to document clear cases of incorporation with other adjectives than *ny-* ‘new’, though, and my general impression is that the construction is rather restricted.

Delsing does not mention Estonia among the areas where incorporation is found. However, Tiberg1962 mentions examples such as *rödköttet* ‘the red meat’, *hvitöken* ‘a white horse’, which again, admittedly, could be taken to be ordinary compounds.

In the Dalecarlian area, the incorporation construction is undoubtedly strong. Levander1928 claims that “the usual counterpart of standard language expressions such as ‘the black horse’, ‘the old tables’ etc. is the compounding of the adjective and the noun into one word”.¹² He gives examples from Ovansiljan and Nedansiljan:

- (33) Älvdalen (Os) (
;

¹² “Dalmålets vanliga motsvarighet till riksspråkssuttryck som ‘den svarta hästen’, ‘de gamla borden’ o.d. är emellertid sammansättning av adjektivet och substantivet till ett ord”.

2 Attributive constructions

- a.) *swarrt-esstn*[325?]
 black-horse.DEF
 ‘the black horse’
- b. *ga;mm-būärðe*
 old-table.DEF
 ‘the old tables’
- (34) Sollerön (Os) () *n̄-ruttjen*
 new-coat.DEF
 ‘the new coat’
- (35) Rättvik (Ns) () *n̄-tjöλln*[325?]
 new-skirt.DEF
 ‘the new skirt’

At the same time, however, it is clear that the strength of the construction varies, and that it may also have changed over time. We may consider some questionnaire responses to the sentence ‘Put the red lid on the big can’ (given in the context ‘You have got two lids and two cans.’) from two locations in the Ovansiljan area, Sollerön and Orsa. From Sollerön, only one informant used the incorporation construction. The two other informants used a preposed demonstrative, or what looks like a endless non-incorporated adjective:

- (36) Sollerön (Os) ()
- a. *Sätt rod-lutjä upå stur-buttñ.*
 put red-lid.DEF on big-can.DEF
- b. *Sätt eta rod lutjä upå stur burtjän.*
 put that.N.SG red lid.DEF on big can.DEF
- c. *Sätt eta rod lutjä upå donda stur buttu.*
 put that.N.SG red lid.DEF on that.F.SG big can.DEF
 ‘Put the red lid on the big can.’

The three informants from Orsa uniformly used a preposed demonstrative, varying only in the presence of the weak ending of the adjective:

- (37) Orsa (Os) () *Setj deda rōd luk uppo denda stur(a) butt’n!*
 put that.N.SG red lid.DEF on that.F.SG big.(WK) can.DEF
 ‘Put the red lid on the big can!’ (questionnaire)

However, this does not mean that adjective incorporation does not occur in Orsa. The following sentence was translated with an incorporated adjective by several informants (the questionnaires from Sollerön show the same pattern as for the other sentence):

- (38) Orsa (Os) () *Wi trajvdöst bättör börti gambölstugun.*
 we like_it.PST better in old.house.DEF
 ‘We liked it better in the old house.’ (questionnaire)

Some, however, prefer the preposed demonstrative here too:

- (39) Orsa (Os) () *Wi trajvdös bättör börti doda gamla stugo.*
 we like_it.PST better in that.F.SG old.WK house.DEF
 ‘We liked it better in the old house.’ (questionnaire)

The questionnaire material shows that there is competition between two or even more ways of handling adjectival modifiers of definite NPs in the Ovansiljan area. It also suggests that the variation between the constructions is not arbitrary, but the data are not rich enough to give clear indications of the tendencies.

Turning now to the most conservative vernacular of the Ovansiljan area, Elf-dalian, we find that **Levander1909** again expresses himself quite categorically, in that he states under the section on definite attributive adjectives: “This form is obtained by compounding the adjective and the noun.” He gives a number of examples:

- (40) Älvdalen (Os) ()
- a. *gambelwaisur*
 old.song.PL.DEF
 ‘the old songs’
 - b. *frekolislkulla mai*
 kind.little.girl.DEF my.F.SG
 ‘my kind little girl’
 - c. *sturkasungen*
 big.fur-coat.DEF
 ‘the great fur-coat’
 - d. *småkrippär*
 small.children.DEF.PL
 ‘the small children’

In spite of this, however, it is clear that modern Elfdalian also allows for the use of distal demonstratives in the function of preposed definite articles. Compare the following questionnaire sentence:

- (41) Älvdalen (Os) () *An dar lissl wait mass kajt in i*
that there little white cat run.PST in in
e dar stur rođ ausað.
that there big red house.DEF
‘The little white cat ran into the big red house.’ (questionnaire)

It appears that speakers feel reluctant to incorporate more than one adjective at a time. This is in contrast to vernaculars from Upper Norrland, where informants are quite happy to do that:

- (42) Arjeplog (Nm) () *Lill-vit-katt-n* sprang in i *sto-rö-hus-e*.
 little-white-cat-DEF run.PST in in big-red-house-DEF
 ‘The little white cat ran into the big red house.’ (questionnaire)

It is also in contrast to Levander's example (228)(b) above, where the two adjectives *frek* 'kind' and *lisl* 'little' have been incorporated together.

Thus, we have seen that the Ovansiljan area is generally characterized by the competition between adjective incorporation and preposed demonstratives in the function of definite articles, although it is not easy to see the principles for the choice. In 4.4, I shall look at this competition in some more detail.

From the Nedansiljan and Västerdalarna areas, there are some examples of incorporation, e.g. (223) above, but more commonly we seem to get other patterns. The Cat Corpus contains examples of both the standard preposed definite article construction and of what looks like the use of demonstratives as articles (although there is some uncertainty due to possible influence from the source text). What is peculiar to these areas, however, is the tendency to use unincorporated adjectives without any preposed article, as in the examples (204)-(207) above. This construction is also found in Åland (Eva Sundberg, personal communication), as in the following questionnaire sentence:

- (43) Brändö (Ål) () Sätt *röd locket på stor burken!*
 put.IMP red lid.DEF on big can.DEF
 'Put the red lid on the big can!' (questionnaire)

However, in Åland, like in Southern Finland and Estonia, preposed articles are also regularly used, although their form often differs from that found in Swedish.

This suggests that there have been at least partly independent paths from demonstratives to definite articles, as in the following examples, where the articles have the form *hon* and *he tän*, respectively:

- (44) Brändö (Ål) () *Hon lill vit kattan sprang in i he tän*
 that.F.SG little white cat run.PST in in that.N.SG that
stor röd huset
 big red house
 ‘The little white cat ran into the big red house.’ (questionnaire)

2.5 Definiteness marking in special contexts

Let us now consider Delsing's claim that the larger northern area uses a weak adjective without a preposed article in the 'emphasis type'. His examples (given without a location) are *siste gång* '(the) last time' and *störste husa* 'the biggest houses' – in other words what I have above (4.3.1) referred to as "selectors", although it is not obvious that they are necessarily emphatic. To judge from the Cat Corpus material, there is considerable variation in the vernaculars in the area delineated by Delsing. Consider the first sentence of the Cat story in some Peripheral Swedish varieties, listed from north to south:

- (45) a. Nederkalix (Kx) () [Män voj voj, tuken ståckar,]
 saar mårмора når 'a så 'en Murre **fårstgjaka**.
 say.PST Granny when she see.PST PDA.M Cat **first_time.DEF**
- b. Skelletmål (NVb) ()
 sa Mormora **förstgånga** hon feck sei kattkalln
 say.PST Granny **first_time.DEF** she get.PST see.INF tomcat.DEF
- c. Sävar (SVb) ()
 sa Mormora **först-gånga** hon vart vis Kattgöbben.
 say.PST Granny **first_time.DEF** she become.PST aware tomcat.DEF
- d. Junsele (Åm) ()
 sa Momma **först ganga** hun såg Katta.
 say.PST Granny **first** **time.DEF** she see.PST cat.DEF
- e. Lit (Jm) ()
 ...sa a Momma **förste gången** hu såg Fresn
 say.PST Granny **first.WK** **time.DEF** she see.PST cat.DEF

f. Älvdalen (OS) ()

sagd Mumun, fuäst gandsin o såg Masse.

say.PST Granny first time.DEF she see.PST Cat

['But my, what a poor thing',] said Granny the first time she saw Cat.'

Thus, we see that the Norrbothnian and Westrobothnian vernaculars (a-c) actually use incorporation here. Among the three southern vernaculars, it is only Lit that uses a form like the one cited by Delsing – in the other two (Junsele and Älvdalen), the weak ending of the ordinal has been apocopated. We thus have at least three possibilities rather than one here: (i) incorporation; (ii) no preposed article and an unreduced weak form of the modifier; (iii) no preposed article and an apocopated form of the modifier. If we check some other sources, this variation is confirmed:

In Nordström (1925: 61) we find *först-bilje'ttn* 'the first label' from *Lulemål*. Likewise, in another description of a *Lulemål* variety, Wikberg2004 which treats the vernacular of Böle (Råneå, LL), there is a translation of the first chapters of Genesis, referred to as *Först-Mosebaoka*, and the seven days of the creation are consistently referred to by incorporated forms: *förstdän* 'the first day', *änndän* 'the second day', *trididän* 'the third day', etc.

In two questionnaires from the northern Westrobothnian area (Norsjö and Glommersträsk, Arvidsjaur), the informants give forms such as *elschtsöstra hennasch Anna* 'Anna's eldest sister'.

In [S5] from Edsele (Åm), I have on the one hand found forms such as *fö[282?][288?]vägga* 'the first wall' and *ffålvägga* 'the fourth wall', on the other hand (on the same page) *annär vägga* 'the second wall' and *trejje vägga* 'the fourth wall'.

In addition to the example above from the Lit Cat Corpus text, we also find apocopated examples such as *gamlest pöjkn* 'the eldest son', and there are many similar examples in written texts. For instance, in a published translation of the parable of the Prodigal Son, in three instances we find the phrase *feitest kæhlfven* 'the fattest calf'. The variation in apocopation is probably not free, but contingent on the number of syllables in the word, trisyllabic words being more prone to having their final vowel apocopated than bisyllabic ones.

The Elfdalian example is in accordance with the terse statement in Levander1909 "Compounding of comparatives and superlatives with nouns does not occur"¹³ and his example:

¹³ "Sammansättning av komp. l. superl. med subst. brukas ej."

- (46) Älvdalen (OS) () *I kam nylest lovdan.*
 I come.PST last Saturday
 ‘I came last Saturday.’

For the “smaller area” consisting of Hälsingland, Gästrikland, Österbotten and Trøndelag, Delsing claims that “double definiteness shows up in the emphasis case”.¹⁴ Again, it is not clear what Delsing has in mind when he speaks of “emphasis”, and he gives no examples, but it is possible to read this as saying that preposed articles are more common here than in Standard Swedish. If we look at the usage with selectors, it appears that, at least for Hälsingland, which is the only province represented in the Cat Corpus, this is not the case. Franck1995 gives examples from Forsa (Hä) such as (*dän*) *sisste dan* ‘the last day’ and *hèle hösten* ‘the whole autumn’. Here, the preposed article is like that used in Swedish, only as an alternative. The Cat Corpus material suggests a consistent pattern without a preposed article at least for the expression ‘the first time’:

- (47) a. Forsa (Hä) () *...sa Momma når ho såg Fräsen första*
 say.PST Granny when she see.PST cat.DEF first.WK
varve.
 time.DEF
- b. Färila (Hä) ()
...sa Momma förstå gönnjen ho såg Fresn.
 say.PST Granny first.WK time.DEF she see.PST cat.DEF
- c. Järvsö (Hä) ()
...sa Momma första gånjen ho feck si Fräsen.
 say.PST Granny first.WK time.DEF she get.PST see.INF
 cat.DEF
 [‘But my, what a poor thing’,] said Granny the first time she saw Cat.’

2.6 Competition between constructions: a case study

In order to see more clearly how the competition between the two constructions works, I looked at the translation into Elfdalian of a Swedish novel from 1986, *Hunden* ‘The dog’ by Kerstin Ekman[S9].¹⁵ The novel was translated in 2000 by Bengt Åkerberg, with consultations with a number of other native speakers.

¹⁴ “dubbel definitet uppträder i emfas-typen”

¹⁵ The investigation was also reported in Dahl2004

Elfdalian is primarily a spoken language, and Bengt Åkerberg's translation is one of the longest written texts ever published in it. As I mentioned above, definite NPs with adjectival modifiers are rather infrequent in spoken language – something like one occurrence in 2000 words, corresponding to once in five written pages. By contrast, in Kerstin Ekman's novel, the frequency of this construction was 279 in about one hundred pages, that is, on average three per printed page, or approximately ten times as many as in the spoken corpus. In addition, the distribution of different adjectival lexemes is very different. The four "top" adjectives *stur* 'big', *liten* 'small', *gammal* 'old', and *ny* 'new', which make up about 40 per cent of all adjectives in definite NPs in spoken Swedish (see 4.1), account for only 26 tokens or less than 10 per cent of the total in *Hunden*.

It is fairly clear that definite NPs with adjective modifiers have a rather different role in the genre represented by this novel than in spoken language. Instead of simply helping to identify the referent of the NP, adding a modifying adjective to a definite NP in such texts is often a device to add subtle details – consider examples such as *det starka ljuset från himlen* 'the strong light from the sky' or *den mörkgröna bladfällan* 'the dark-green pelt of leaves'. Someone who wants to translate such a text into a language with a very restricted written tradition faces a peculiar situation: it is necessary to decide how to say things that have never or very seldom been said before in that language. In this sense, the translated text is not a natural sample of the language, and this might call the results into doubt. On the other hand, the translation may also be seen as a (partly unintentional) grammatical experiment – what happens if a native speaker is forced to express all these definite NPs with the adjectival modifiers retained? And the patterns in the results turn out to be quite significant.

Among the adjectives that are incorporated, we can first note that there are 16 occurrences of the three "prototypical" adjectives, *stur* 'big', *lissl* 'small' and *gammel/gamt* 'old' (the fourth adjective from the top group – *ny* 'new' – occurs only once in the original and the translation is not incorporated). In particular, the adjective *stur* 'big' is incorporated 10 out of 12 times. In other words, these prototypical adjectives have an incorporation propensity that is about three times higher than that of adjectives in general in this text. Among other adjectives that are incorporated more than once, we find *gryön* 'green', *guäl* 'yellow', *langg* 'long', *swart* 'black', and *wåt* 'wet'. Except for the last one, all of these belong to semantic groups that are likely to show up as adjectives.

There were also clear correlations between propensity for incorporation and parameters such as frequency and length. Out of 29 examples of (single) adjectives with more than one syllable, only four were incorporated. Only once were

two Swedish adjectives translated as a double incorporation (*lausug-wait-kwi'n* ‘the lice-ridden white belly’).

Generalizing about the competition between the two constructions in Elfdalian, it appears that the incorporating construction survives better with “core” or “prototypical” adjectives, and that it has particular difficulties in the case of multiple modifiers.¹⁶ This is also congruent with what we have seen in other vernaculars outside the northern core area – such examples of incorporation that are found tend to involve the four most frequent adjectives (‘big’, ‘small’, ‘old’, ‘new’). With those adjectives, it is not impossible to find examples that look like incorporation even outside the Peripheral Swedish area, even sometimes in Standard Swedish. Consider the following example from the (unpublished) Swedish version of the Cat text:

- (48) Swedish ()[*Det första han såg när han kom ut på gården var*
en ekorre som satt i stortallen bortom brunnen och
 INDF squirrel REL sit.PST in big.pine.DEF beyond well.DEF and
skalade kottar.
 peel.PST cone.PL
 ‘[The first thing he saw when he went out into the yard was] a squirrel
 that sat in the big pine behind the well, peeling cones.’ (Cat Corpus)

In this sentence, most of the translations of the Cat story use a compound *stortallen* ‘the big pine’. By itself, this could of course be explained by influence from the Standard Swedish text that was the original for most of the translations. What is noteworthy, though, is that several translations from southern Sweden – Västergötland, Bohuslän, and Skåne are exceptions: they prefer the standard preposed article construction, suggesting that compounds with adjectives may be less natural in those vernaculars.

It is tempting to suggest that adjectival incorporation has been more general in older times and has been pushed back. What speaks in favour of this is that – like several other phenomena discussed in this book – it seems to be strongest in the most conservative parts of the Peripheral Swedish area.

¹⁶ One would also expect such difficulties to occur when the adjective is modified by an adverb. However, it turns out that there are no such cases in the material! The conclusion is that even in a literary text such as Kerstin Ekman’s novel with a comparatively high frequency of definite NPs with adjectival modifiers, the adjectives are themselves seldom modified. An Internet search reveals that such cases do occur, although much more infrequently than with indefinites (this goes for both Swedish and English). Thus, the string *a very big* is about twenty times as frequent as the string *the very big*.

2.7 Definite suffixes on adjectives

In many Peripheral Swedish area dialects, adjectives may take definite suffixes, identical to those of nouns, if they are used in definite noun phrases without a lexical head noun, i.e. as translations of English examples such as *the small one*. Compare the following example from Elfdalian:

- (49) Älvdalen (Os) () *Ir eð i lisslun eld sturun?*
 be.PRS it in little.DEF.SG.DAT.F or big.DEF.SG.DAT.F
 ‘Is there [coffee] in the little one or the big one?’ (Levander1909)

The definite suffixes are in general identical to the ones used with nouns. It should be noted, however, that adjectives with definite suffixes generally have a grave accent, e.g. *lisslun* and *sturun* in (237) (for Upper Norrland, see Holmberg & Sandström (2003)). Definite suffixes on nouns do not in general induce a grave pitch accent if the noun does not have it by itself. Compare Elfdalian *sturn* ‘the big one’ from *stur* ‘big’ with *kálln* ‘the man’ from *kall* ‘man’. (The *-n* suffix is here syllabic, which means that the definite forms are bisyllabic and can carry grave accent.) This suggests that the definite suffix was originally added to an adjective with a weak ending: *sture-n*. (Holmberg & Sandström, who assume that these forms arise by the movement of the adjective to the D position, assume that the grave accent is a “phonological reflex of the empty pronoun into which the adjective is incorporated”. They do not explain how an empty pronoun comes to induce a grave accent.)

Delsing2003a reports adjectives with definite suffixes from Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Ångermanland, Jämtland, Härjedalen, Medelpad, and Dalarna. He did not find them in Österbotten or Värmland, but notes that they are attested in Norway (Trøndelag and Nordmøre). The use in the Cat Corpus is basically in accordance with this.

In Standard Swedish, *Lillen* and *Lillan*, masculine and feminine weak forms of *liten* ‘little’, are used as hypocoristics for small children. Like the Peripheral Swedish forms, they have a grave accent. By contrast, a form like *försten* ‘the first one’, which is also sometimes used, is often pronounced with an acute accent.

2.8 “Absolute positives”

A rather curious construction is found in a relatively large number of Scandinavian varieties, including Standard Swedish. It involves an adjective with a weak ending followed by a definite noun:

- (50) Swedish () *Han är ju redan stora karn.*
 he be.PRS PRAG already big man.DEF
 ‘(lit.) He is already the big man.’

The Swedish Academy Grammar (Teleman et al. (1999: 3:20)) mentions such cases, almost in passing, as examples of lexicalized phrases parallel to other cases of omitted preposed articles. However, we are rather dealing with a productive construction with quite specific properties. (Delsing refers to it as “absolute positives” without indicating any source for this term.) Typical uses are in predicative position, where there is no apparent motivation for the use of a definite form of the noun, but the construction is also found in prepositional phrases. The expressions give an emphatic impression and there seems to be a common element of “completeness” or “maximalness” to many uses of the construction, but there are also examples of combinations with negation where this element is not present. Thus, consider the following examples from southern Westrobothnian and Bokmål Norwegian, respectively:

- (51) Hössjö (Umeå, SVb) () *Det är kölsvarte mörkre ne*
 it be.PRS pitch-black.WK darkness.DEF
ända till Mosjö.
 down all_DEF_way to Mosjö
 ‘It is pitch dark [lit. the pitch-black darkness] down to Mosjö.’ [S44]
- (52) Bokmål Norwegian () *Jeg veide bare 1440 gram og var*
 I weigh.PRET only gram and be.PST NEG
ikke store gutten.
 big.WK boy.DEF
 ‘I weighed only 1440 grams and wasn’t a [lit. the] big boy.’ (About the narrator’s premature birth) (Internet)

For the Peripheral Swedish vernaculars, there is an additional feature that makes this construction stand out: the adjectives used are not incorporated and the weak ending may not undergo apocope. The pattern has been noted in the literature, e.g. for *Skelletmål* by Marklund1976 who notes that in *Skelletmål*, it is found “in certain expressions that indicate a rather high degree, a ‘rather’ or ‘only’, which either restricts or emphasizes the property”,¹⁷ as in the following examples:

¹⁷ “i vissa uttryck som innebär en rätt hög grad, ett ‘ganska’ eller ‘bara’, som antingen begränsar eller betonar egenskapen (adjektivet)”

Skelletmål (NVb)

gode bitn ‘a good (i.e. substantial) bit’, *store kæN* ‘a big man’, *tonge læsse* ‘a heavy load’, *blåe mjôLLka* ‘pure skim milk’, *raNe vættne* ‘pure (mere) water’, *rette såTTn* ‘the right sort’

Likewise, after saying that definite attributive adjective are formed by compounding in Elfdalian, **Levander1909** adds that adjectives are “exceptionally” used as words of their own when heavily stressed:

(53) Älvdalen (Os) ()

- a. *bero bokken*
naked.WK ground
‘(the) naked ground’
- b. *Al du renn jär i twero bjärre?*
shall.PRS you run.INF here in steep.WK mountain
‘Are you going to ski here on the steep mountain?’
- c. *Og du ir aut o kåiter i mörk notn.*
and you be.PRS out and run.PRS in dark night.DEF
‘And you are out running around in the dark night.’

However, Elfdalian differs from *Skelletmål* in that these examples follow the normal rules for apocope. Thus, in (242)(c) the weak ending is apocopated, but not in (242)(a)-(b) because the stems are short-syllabic.

In the Cat Corpus, the “absolute positive” pattern is mainly found in the translations of the following sentence, quoted here in the Standard Swedish version, and in a version from Våmhus (Os):

- (54) Swedish () *Det är ju inte långa biten ner till oss.*
it be.PRSis PRAG NEG long.WK piece.DEF down to us
‘It is not far (to go) down to us.’ (Cat Corpus)

- (55) Våmhus (Os) () *Ä i ju int launga bi:tn nið a wuoss.*
it be.PRS PRAG NEG long.WK piece.DEF down to us

Most of the examples in the Cat Corpus are from Dalarna but there are also examples from Hälsingland and Bohuslän, e.g.:

- (56) Sotenäs (Bo) () *D’ ä jo ’nte länge bedden ner te ûss*
it be.PRS PRAG NEG long piece.DEF down to us

The apocopated pattern is found in the Ovansiljan area (but cf. example from Våmhus, without apocope) and also in a couple of other places in Dalarna, e.g.

- (57) Aspeboda (Be) () *Hä ä ju nt lång bitn ne tä ôss* *The*
it be.PRS PRAG NEG **long piece.DEF** down to us
distribution in the Cat Corpus texts from Dalarna and Hälsingland is shown
in Map 17.

Map 17. Occurrences of absolute positives in the Cat Corpus.
Black circles: absolute positives with apocope; grey circles:
absolute positives without apocope; white circles: no abso-
lute positives attested.

