

Til en ung en kjekk en kar: Indefinite determiner spreading in Scandinavian and beyond¹

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Abstract

This study investigates multiple indefinite determiners in structures involving adjectival modification in a Norwegian dialect. Determiner spreading has been observed in numerous non-standard Germanic varieties but has been most extensively explored in Modern Greek. This paper considers recurring indefinites in Norwegian in light of Greek polydefinites, finding numerous similarities. In both languages, structures involving multiple determiners allow violations of adjectival ordering restrictions (AORs) and are prohibited with adjectives that may not occur in predicative position. However, these similarities are only apparent, as both can be explained by the fact that polyindefinites in Norwegian involve parallel direct modification. Furthermore, they are homophonous with nominal proforms such as *a big one* (*en stor en*). These facts, together with their prosodic characteristics, hints at an analysis where these polyindefinites are nominal proforms.

1. Introduction

While the occurrence of multiple definite articles in the presence of adjectival modification in languages such as Modern Greek is a well-known

¹ We are proud to be able to present this paper to our dear friend Sten Vikner. Sten has influenced research into especially Scandinavian languages from a generative perspective for decades, including our own work, and we are looking forward to being further influenced for many years to come. The data from Senja in this paper were collected as part of the ScanDiaSyn project. Alexiadou's research was partly funded by DFG project AL 554/8-1.

and well-studied linguistic phenomenon (cf. e.g. Alexiadou & Wilder 1998; Alexiadou 2014; Kolliakou 2004, Lekakou & Szendrői 2007; Ramaglia 2007; Leu 2009; and Lekakou 2017), the existence of multiple indefinite articles with adjectival modifiers has received considerably less attention in the literature. This paper aims to bridge this gap by studying a phenomenon which looks like recursive indefinite articles, or polyindefiniteness, in a North Norwegian dialect spoken on the island of Senja.

In the Senja dialect, multiple indefinite articles can be found in indefinite noun phrases involving one or more adjectives, as illustrated in (1a) – (1c). The presence of all except the first article is optional, as indicated by parentheses. Furthermore, all adjectives must precede the noun (1d).

(1) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- a. **ei** stor **(ei)** fin **(ei)** seng
a.F big.M/F (a.F) fine.M/F (a.F) bed
 ‘a big nice bed’
- b. **en** stor **(en)** fin **(en)** gutt
a.M big.M/F (a.M) fine.M/F (a.M) boy
 ‘a big nice boy’
- c. **et** stor-t **(et)** fin-t **(et)** hus
a.N big-N (a.N) fine-N (a.N) house
 ‘a big nice house’
- d. ***en** stor **en** gutt **en** fin.
a big.M a boy a fine.M

Note that adjectives in Norwegian also inflect for gender, although due to syncretism between the masculine and the feminine gender, there is only a two-way opposition between the syncretic form and the neuter form. The adjectival inflection is often called the ‘strong adjectival paradigm’, to illustrate that definite forms inflect differently (the ‘weak adjectival paradigm’), as shown in (2).

(2) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

det	stor- <i>e</i>	fin- <i>e</i>	hus- <i>e</i>
<i>the.N</i>	<i>big-WEAK</i>	<i>nice-WEAK</i>	<i>house-DEF.N</i>

‘the big nice house’

This paper will investigate the various restrictions on the distribution of polyindefinites, as well as another phenomenon which strongly resembles these structures, namely the possible addition of the vowel *-e* with adjectives in indefinite noun phrases. Such an investigation involves considering to what extent these multiple indefinites share any characteristics with polydefinites, or so-called Determiner Spreading (DS), in Modern Greek and determining to what extent they can be represented in similar ways. As we will see, the two construction types share some important characteristics, but are also different in several ways.

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 considers recursive indefinite articles and adjectives in the dialect of Senja. Conversely, section 3 does the same but for definite articles and adjectives in Greek. In section 4, the data from the Senja dialect will be compared with determiner spreading in Modern Greek. Two analytic questions concerning the recursive article and the predicativity of adjectives are addressed in section 5. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2. An overview of polyindefinites and recursive *-e* in the Senja dialect

As illustrated in (1) above, the Senja dialect of Norwegian optionally allows recursive indefinite articles in modified indefinite noun phrases. These articles can appear with all the three genders, and all except the first article can be omitted. However, when multiple articles occur, there is a preference for them to appear with all the adjectives. The phenomenon under investigation is referred to as a recursive article, but thus far this term is mainly used for convenience, as the exact status of the element is not clear (see section 2.3 below).

Indefinite determiner doubling has been reported from a range of non-standard varieties across Germanic. (3)-(5) provide some examples from the literature (see also Lekakou 2017 on article doubling more generally).

- (3) **North Swedish** (Delsing 1993: 143)
en stor en ful en kar
a big a ugly a guy
 ‘a big ugly guy’
- (4) **Zürich German** (Weber 1948: 203)
 Mer wöisched **en** rächt **en** gueten Apitit.
We wish a real a good appetite
 ‘Enjoy your meal.’
- (5) **Bavarian** (Kallulli & Rothmayr 2008: 97)
a so a große bua
a so a big boy
 ‘such a big boy’

However, as Wood & Vikner (2013) point out, these examples can also be found in written corpora, e.g., in English and in Danish (see also Vannebo 1972 on Norwegian).

- (6) My rules are to cut down drinking, control my temper if I am drinking, not to drink in **a** such **a** large group and not to waste much money. (Wood 2002: 109)
- (7) **Danish** (Wood & Vikner 2013: 518)
 Det modsatte er, at du ere
The opposite is that you are
en sådan en smart fyr, der er meget ude om natten.
a such a smart guy who is much out at night
- (8) **Danish** (Wood & Vikner 2013: 519)
 Men**et** så stort **et** prosjekt i byens hjerte kræver
But a.N so big.N a.N project in town.the’s heart demands
 selvsagt et langt højere informationsgrad.
of.course a far higher information.degree

Wood & Vikner argue that the use of this article is not confined to a particular style or register in either English or Danish. Native speakers report that such examples need a comma intonation in order for them to

be acceptable. A full investigation of these constructions remains to be conducted in Danish, so we turn our attention to another Scandinavian variety, namely the dialect of Senja in Northern Norway.

The recursive article usually appears in structures which are highly descriptive. A few examples found through a Google search are provided in (9)-(11) below:²

(9) **Norwegian**

Noen bilder fra **en flott en vinterdag** i Finnvikdalen.
some photos from a lovely a winter.day in Finnvik.valley
 ‘Some photos of a beautiful winter’s day in Finnvikdalen.’

(10) **Norwegian**

Det gir oss **en flott en økning** på 27%.
That gives us a great an increase on 27%
 ‘That provides us with a great increase of 27%.’

(11) **Norwegian**

Amazon mener å se **et stort et potensial...**
Amazon mean to see a large a potential...
 ‘Amazon believes there to be a great potential...’

In fact, recursive articles very often appear and feel most natural in exclamative constructions of the kind *what a ____*. Again, consider a couple of examples from Google (12), and a couple of our own examples (13).

(12) **Norwegian**

a. For **en flott en hjemmeside** du har!
What a nice a home page you have
 ‘What a nice home page you’ve got!’

² It is interesting that it is possible to find examples with recursive articles through Google searches. Our guess would be that these are the result of the mixed oral/written status of a number of the functions of the web, such as blogs and chat rooms, which makes it possible to use forms that are non-standard in writing. Another possibility is that they are quite simply errors, but we do not think this is very likely. Whether these are all written by speakers of North Norwegian dialects, or whether there are other areas where the same structures are used, is not clear. Also, the google searches give very many examples of the structure in Danish, raising similar questions.

- b. For **en flott en presentasjon!**

What a nice a presentation

‘What a nice presentation!’

- (13) a. Førre **ei stor ei fin ei pia!**³

What a big a nice a girl

‘What a nice big girl!’

- b. Førre **en falsk en faen!**

What a false a devil

‘What a lying bastard!’

Additionally, recursive structures resemble intensifying structures with *så* ‘so’, which are found in all dialects of Norwegian. In these structures, adjectives are followed by an indefinite article. The following examples illustrate the phenomenon, all taken from Google (see also Wood & Vikner 2011 on Danish, English and German).

(14) **Norwegian**

- a. **Så fin en gryte du fikk!**

So nice a pot you got

‘What a nice pot you got!’

- b. ... han hadde hatt **så fin en drøm.**

he had had so nice a dream

‘... he had had such a nice dream.’

- c. Ah, **så fin en by!** Ah, **så fin en tur!**

Ah, so nice a city ah, so nice a trip

‘Ah, what a city! Ah, what a trip!’

- d. og det var ikke **en fullt så fin en tanke.**

and that was not a quite so nice a thought

‘... and that was not quite as nice a thought.’

These facts suggest that the recursive article is related to an intensifying interpretation (see also Alexiadou 2010: 12), unlike Greek, as we will see in sections 3 and 4.

³ This is very typical use of the polyindefinite as a comment on somebody’s baby.

In the next section, we will consider some of the literature on the much more well-studied phenomenon of polydefiniteness in Modern Greek in order to determine whether it shares any characteristics with polyindefiniteness found in North Norwegian.

3. An overview of polydefiniteness in Greek

Multiple definite determiners have been observed in a number of languages; the most well-known and well-studied of these is probably so-called Determiner Spreading (DS) or polydefiniteness in Greek. This section will consider some of the characteristics of this phenomenon to see how it compares with the recursive indefinites found in the North Norwegian Senja dialect. However, it is already clear that DS in Greek is fundamentally different from polyindefiniteness in Norwegian in at least two ways: First, there is an important difference between the two in the sense that we are considering definites in one language and indefinites in the other. Second, we will suggest that the recursive article in Norwegian is post-adjectival rather than pre-adjectival. Nevertheless, there are some ways in which Norwegian polyindefiniteness resembles polydefiniteness in Greek, and because of this it is helpful to consider the Greek case in some more detail.

Determiner Spreading in Greek is a phenomenon that occurs in the presence of two or more adjectives in definite noun phrases. It is obligatory when the adjectives appear post-nominally. While the order of the various adjectives is rigid in general (15), DS leads to a freer word order (16) (Alexiadou & Wilder 1998: 303). However, the order of adjectives cannot be scrambled if they all appear pre-nominally; it is necessary for the noun to move away from its base position for this to happen (Alexiadou & Wilder 1998: 316-317; Alexiadou 2014) (17).⁴

(15) **Greek** (Alexiadou & Wilder 1998: 317)

a. **to** megalo kokkino vivlio
 the big red book

b. ***to** vivlio kokkino megalo
 the book red big

⁴ According to Alexiadou and Wilder (1998: 317), this order is only acceptable if *kokkino* 'red' is contrastively stressed. However, according to Ramaglia (2007), some speakers consider (17) acceptable even without contrastive focus/stress.

(16) **Greek** (Alexiadou & Wilder 1998: 316-317)

a. **to** megalo **to** kokkino **to** vivlio
the big the red the book

b. **to** vivlio **to** kokkino **to** megalo
the book the red the big

(17) **Greek** (Alexiadou & Wilder 1998: 317)

***to** kokkino **to** megalo **to** vivlio
the red the big the book

Modified indefinite noun phrases in Greek do not involve any DS, but nevertheless permit a relatively free word order (18). However, the indefinite article can only appear once in these structures, as illustrated in (19).

(18) **Greek** (Marinis 2003: 168)

a. ena meghalo petrino spiti
a/one big stone-made house

b. ena meghalo spiti petrino
a/one big house stone-made

c. ena petrino spiti meghalo
a/one stone-made house big

d. ena spiti meghalo petrino
a/one house big stone-made

e. ena spiti petrino meghalo
a/one house stone-made big

(19) **Greek** (Marinis 2003: 168)

***ena** meghalo **ena** petrino **ena** spiti
a big a stone-made a house

Alexiadou (2014) argued that the reason why multiple indefinite determiners are out is because the indefinite article is actually a numeral, i.e. an AP in its own right, and as a result it cannot be doubled.

4. Greek polydefiniteness and Norwegian polyindefiniteness compared

If we compare the findings in section 3 to polyindefiniteness in the Senja dialect, we find that general Adjectival Ordering Restrictions (AORs) apply to both indefinites and definites in Norwegian (20), while the order is less restrictive with polyindefinites (21). However, all adjectives must be prenominal (22), which is different from Greek DS, where it appears that the adjectives can scramble only when the noun also has scrambled (see the examples in (15)-(17) above).

(20) Norwegian

- a. en stor fin rød vase
a big nice red vase
 'a nice big red vase'
- b. *en rød stor fin vase
a red big nice vase
- c. den store fine røde vase-n
the.M/F big nice red vase-DEF
 'the nice big red vase'
- d. *den røde store fine vase-n
the.M/F red big nice vase-DEF

(21) **en** rød **en** fin **en** stor **en** vase
a red a nice a big a vase
 'a red, nice, big vase'

(22) ***en** vase **en** stor **en** fin
a vase a big a nice

Note, however, that in examples such as (21), in which the adjectives do not follow AORs, there is no accompanying marked interpretation of the noun phrase.

Returning to polydefiniteness in Greek, it has been shown that it is prohibited with non-intersective adjectives of the type *alleged* and *former* and with ethnic adjectives, including nationality adjectives occurring with

event nominals, and names⁵ (for relevant examples and other adjectives that resist DS, see e.g., Alexiadou & Wilder 1998; Kolliakou 1999; Marinis 2003; Ramaglia 2007). Consider (23):

- (23) **Greek** (Ramaglia 2007: 164)
- a. **o** ipothithemenos (***o**) dolofonos
 *the alleged (*the) murderer*
- b. **o** proin (***o**) proedhros
 *the former (*the) president*
- c. **i** italiki (***i**) isvoli
 *the Italian (*the) invasion*

All of these share the characteristic that they would be ungrammatical with the adjective in predicative position, and this has resulted in Alexiadou & Wilder (1998) proposing an analysis of the phenomenon inspired by Kayne's (1994) analysis of attributive adjectives. Alexiadou & Wilder suggest that the adjectives occurring with DS originate in relative clauses which are complements of the determiners. Furthermore, they argue that the fact that modified indefinite noun phrases also permit scrambling in Modern Greek suggests that these structures should be given the same representation as their definite counterparts involving DS. Leu (2009) also takes Greek polydefinites to originate as relative clauses, but unlike Alexiadou & Wilder (1998), he claims that this is true of all attributive adjectives, including non-intersective ones.⁶

This seeming ban on polydefiniteness with adjectives that cannot be used predicatively found in Greek appears to apply to polyindefinites as well, as adjectives that cannot be used predicatively cannot occur with the recursive article (24). However, in Norwegian, the ungrammaticality of nationality adjectives also extends to non-event nominals, as illustrated in

⁵ With names, such as the North Pole (ia) and the White House (ib), the predicative use is ungrammatical under the relevant interpretation.

- (i) a. **o** Vorios (***o**) Polos
 the North Pole
 b. **o** Lefkos (***o**) Ikos
 the White House

⁶ According to Leu, there is some variation between native speakers regarding whether they accept non-intersective adjectives in DS structures or not.

(24d). The adjective *Norwegian* is perfectly acceptable as the predicate of the noun *artist*, as shown in (24e).

(24) **Norwegian**

- a. ***en** påstått **en** morder
 a *alleged* *a* *murderer*

- b. ***en** tidligere **en** skuespiller
 a *former* *a* *actor*

- c. ***en** norsk **en** invasjon
 a *Norwegian* *a* *invasion*

- d. ***en** norsk **en** artist
 a *Norwegian* *a* *artist*

- e. Artist-en var norsk.
 Artist-DEF was Norwegian
 ‘The artist was Norwegian.’

The fact that nationality adjectives which can appear in predicative position may be used in polyindefinites suggests that predicativity might not play as important a role for these structures as it might appear. This issue will be returned to in section 5, as we consider the interpretive impact of article recursion in Greek and Norwegian.

The interpretation of Greek polydefinites has been considered to varying degrees in the literature. In some cases, such as Alexiadou & Wilder (1998), DS is not ascribed any particular interpretation as compared to monadic definites. This view is shared by Lekakou & Szendrői (2007), who in fact explicitly argue that there is no particular interpretation connected to these structures. There are some studies where polydefinites are claimed to have an interpretive impact (for a summary, see Alexiadou 2014), however, and one of these is Kolliakou (2004). Kolliakou argues that monadic definites and polydefinites are semantically identical, but that while both kinds of definites are associated with the kind of uniqueness constraints that applies to definites in general, the latter are also dependent on some notion of contrast with alternative elements that are contextually salient. A similar view is expressed in Ramaglia (2007). This is an effect

that is frequently achieved by deaccenting in other languages. Kolliakou (2004: 268) illustrates deaccenting with the following dialogue (25):

- (25) Ann: What did you get Ben for Christmas?
 Clara: I gave him [_{focus} a blue SHIRT].
 Ann: What did you get Diane?
 Clara: I got her [_{focus} a RED shirt].

The DPs *the blue shirt* and *the red shirt* are prosodically different in the sense that in the former, the nuclear accent (in small capitals) is on the noun, while in the latter, it is on the adjective *red*. In the second DP, the noun has been deaccented to contrast the red with the blue shirt. As mentioned, the same kind of contrast can be expressed either through deaccenting or with the use of polydefinites in Greek, according to Kolliakou (2004). This is illustrated in the following dialogue:

(26) **Greek** (Kolliakou 2004: 269)

- a. Zoe: Ti pires tu Yanni gia ta
 What.ACC got.2SG the John-GEN for the
 christugena?
 christmas
 ‘What did you get Yannis for Christmas?’
- b. Daphne: (Tu pira) [_{focus} tin aseミア PENA]
 He.GEN got.1sg the silver pen.ACC
 ‘I got him the silver pen.’
- b’. Daphne: #(Tu pira) [_{focus} tin ASEMIΑ pena]
 #‘I got him the silver pen.’
- b’’.Daphne: #(Tu pira) [_{focus} tin aseミア tin pena]
 #‘I got him the silver pen_{polydefinite}.’
- c. Zoe: Ti pires tis Maria?
 What.ACC got.2SG the Mary-GEN
 ‘What did you get Maria?’

- d. Daphne: (Tis pira) [_{focus} tin chrisi tin pena]
She.GEN got.1sg the golden the pen.ACC
 ‘I got her the golden pen_{polydefinite}.’
- d’. Daphne: (Tis pira) [_{focus} tin CHRISI pena]
 ‘I got her the golden pen.’
- d’’.Daphne: #(Tis pira) [_{focus} tin chrisi PENA]
 #‘I got her the golden pen.’

Thus, it appears that Greek polydefinites are interpreted with contrastive focus on the adjective, but this is not the case for Norwegian polyindefinites. A context such as (25) above is not appropriate for the recursive indefinite article. Rather, Norwegian polyindefinites seem to have the quality that they intensify the interpretation of the adjective that they cooccur with.

Our comparison between the determiner spreading phenomena found in Greek and Norwegian reveals that both allow scrambling of adjectives and that both are prohibited with non-predicative adjectives. However, there are some differences as well, as we have seen that Norwegian polyindefinites are not permitted with nationality adjectives, even when they appear with non-event nominals. Furthermore, we have seen that the two recursion phenomena yield very different interpretations. In the next section, we will consider a couple of issues in some more detail, which will prepare the ground for a more detailed formal analysis in future work.

5. Some analytical questions

In this section, we will consider two analytical questions that pertain to polyindefiniteness: The status of the recursive article and adjectival inflection in 5.1, and in 5.2 the relationship between polyindefiniteness, predicativity, and adjectives.

5.1 The status of the recursive article and adjectival inflection

The Senja dialect, like many other Germanic varieties, distinguishes between strong and weak adjectives; strong adjectives appear in indefinite noun phrases (and predicatively) and are referred to as such among other things because they are marked for gender, as illustrated in section 1 above. The weak adjectival inflection is found in definite noun phrases and is characterised by displaying the same form in all genders and numbers (27).

In the Senja dialect, as well as some other North Norwegian varieties, there exists something which looks like an extra adjectival inflection (-*e*). This inflection may occur in modified indefinite noun phrases. This adjectival ending will henceforth be referred to as adjectival -*e*, and is illustrated in (28).

(27) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- a. det stor-*e* fin-*e* hus-*e*
the.N big-WEAK nice-WEAK house-DEF
- b. den stor-*e* fin-*e* seng-*a*
the.M/F big-WEAK nice-WEAK bed-DEF
- c. den stor-*e* fin-*e* gutt-*n*
the.M/F big-WEAK nice-WEAK boy-DEF
 ‘the nice big house/bed/boy’

(28) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- ei** stor(-**e**) fin(-**e**) seng
a.F big-e nice-e bed
 ‘a nice big bed’

A comparison between (27b) and (28) shows that the adjectival -*e* appearing in the indefinite noun phrase resembles the weak adjectival inflection, but this similarity is only apparent. A closer comparison between the two reveals that they are different prosodically. The adjectival -*e* that appears in indefinite noun phrases imposes pitch accent 1 (high-low), while the weak adjectival inflection imposes pitch accent 2 (low-high-low) (see Kristoffersen 2000 on this difference in Norwegian more generally). Interestingly, the recursive article patterns with the adjectival -*e* and takes pitch accent 1.

(29) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- a. den ²[stor-**e**] gutt-en
the.M big-WEAK boy-DEF
- b. **en** ¹[stor-**e**] gutt
a.M big-e boy
- c. **en** ¹[stor **en**] gutt
a.M big a.M boy

The fact that both occur post-adjectivally and impose pitch accent 1 suggests that the adjectival *-e* and the recursive indefinite article might be slightly different spell-outs of the same element. Relatedly, the post-adjectival indefinite article appears to be prosodified with the preceding adjective rather than the following adjective or noun, making (30a) and not (30b) the correct representation of the element in question. This raises the question of whether the recursive article is a true article.

(30) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- a. en [stor en] [fin en] gutt
 b. [en stor] [en fin] [en gutt]
 a big a nice a boy

Naturally, this prosodification does not preclude the possibility that the relevant element is an article; it is well known that prosodic and syntactic structure do not always overlap. Thus, the term recursive article will be used here for practical purposes. The possibility that the form used in these contexts is a post-adjectival element of some kind opens up the question of what the exact status of this element is, a question we will return to below.

The claim that adjectival *-e* and the recursive indefinite article spell out at least partly overlapping features is reinforced by the fact that they occur in complimentary distribution, as illustrated in (31) below.

(31) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- ei** stor-**e** (***ei**) fin-**e** (***ei**) seng
a.F big-e (a.F) nice-e (a.F) bed

However, there is one important difference between the two: While the recursive indefinite article appears with nouns in all genders, the adjectival *-e* is only found on adjectives that are not overtly marked for gender. Recall that we distinguished between strong and weak adjectives above, where strong adjectives were described as occurring in indefinite noun phrases and having overt gender (and number) marking. A closer look at these reveals that it is in fact only neuter adjectives that have clear overt gender marking, and the adjectival *-e* can only occur with the forms that do not, namely the syncretic masculine and feminine forms. This is illustrated in (32a-c), which is equivalent to (1), but with the adjectival *-e* rather than the recursive indefinite article. As shown in (32d), stripping the neuter

adjective of its inflection does not improve the acceptability of the noun phrase. Furthermore, the only strong adjective that is overtly inflected for gender in the masculine and the feminine forms, *liten* (small), cannot occur with the adjectival *-e*, irrespective of whether the gender marking is present or not (32e-f).

(32) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- a. **ei** stor-**e** fin-**e** seng
a.F big-e fine-e bed
- b. **en** stor-**e** fin-**e** gutt
a.M big-e fine-e boy
- c. ***et** stor-**t-e** fin-**t-e** hus
a.N big-N-e fine-N-e house
- d. ***et** stor-**e** fin-**e** hus
a.N big-e fine-e house
- e. ***en** lit-en-**e**/lit-**e** gutt
a.M small-M-e/small-e boy
- f. ***ei** lit-a-**e**/lit-**e** jente
a.F small-F-e/small-e girl

So far, we have seen that the Norwegian Senja dialect permits recursive indefinite articles. However, these articles are prosodified as enclitic rather than proclitic on the adjectives, suggesting that they are post-adjectival elements rather than pre-adjectival articles. This impression is reinforced by the existence of the adjectival *-e* which also may be used in indefinite noun phrases and can be shown to be in complimentary distribution with the recursive article. Both the recursive article and the adjectival *-e* impose pitch accent 1 on the adjective and article/*-e* combination. The two are different, however, in the sense that while the article form can occur with nouns and adjectives of any gender, the adjectival *-e* can only appear with adjectives without overt gender marking. This suggests that what has been referred to as a recursive article here is in fact not an article at all, though the name is maintained for practical reasons.

Numerous different analyses have been proposed for the recursive article. Delsing (1993) originally proposed that they are all articles. This captures the plural indefinite article in these Northern Swedish varieties, cf. (33):

(33) **North Swedish** (Delsing 1993: 144)

små a stena
small a.PL stones

However, this analysis needs to capture the different status from the main indefinite article, which we can see when considering the Northern Norwegian plural indefinite article as in (34).

(34) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

a. Han hadde **ei** *(stor-e) tre i hage-n.
he had a.F big-PL tree.N.PL in garden-DEF
 ‘He had some (big) trees in the garden.’

b. Før ***(ei)** (stor-e) hend-er
what a.F big-PL hand-PL
 ‘What (big) hands!’

As (34) illustrates, the plural indefinite article only occurs in structures that are either modified (34a) or exclamative (34b). Importantly, in these contexts, the indefinite article cannot be recursive.

We will now consider three further hypotheses about the status of the recursive article. First, we explore the possibility that it is an adjectival inflection of some kind. Second, we consider an analysis whereby the recursive article is a spurious article. Lastly, we discuss an analysis whereby the recursive article is a nominal proform, arguing that this captures two important properties, namely the intensified interpretation and the parallel direct modification that it imposes.

We start by looking at the possibility that it is an adjectival inflection. It has been suggested in Julien (2005) and Anderssen (2006) that the recursive article could be the spell-out of the head of the phrase which has the Adjectival Projection in its specifier position. Anderssen further argues that the adjectival *-e* represents a non-gender-marked form of the

same head. Recall that we have already seen that both the adjectival *-e* and the recursive article take pitch accent 1 in combination with the preceding adjective. This also seems to support the view that both should be regarded as adjectival inflections. Consider (35a-b), repeated from (29b-c) above.

(35) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

a. **en** ¹[stor-**e**] gutt
a.M big-e boy

c. **en** ¹[stor **en**] gutt
a.M big a.M boy

The view that multiple determiners originate as adjectival inflections has also been argued by Leu (2009). Leu develops an analysis of Greek DS that takes the recursive definite article to be the expression of adjectival inflection. We will not go into the details of his approach here but briefly note two arguments against pursuing such an approach to Norwegian polyindefinites: Taking the view that the recursive article is an adjectival inflection also does not explain why it is incompatible with non-predicative adjectives. Nor does it provide us with any insight into why it is accompanied by an intensive interpretation and parallel direct modification.

The second proposal to be considered holds that the recursive article is a spurious article (Bennis, Corver & den Dikken 1998; Alexiadou 2014). Specifically, Alexiadou proposes that the recursive article is a relator/linker (cf. den Dikken 2006) in a predicative small clause structure. (36) illustrates this for the indefinite article *en* ‘a.M’.

(36) [_{DP} en [_{FP} F [_{SC} NP en AP]]]

Wood & Vikner (2013) argue against this based on two arguments. First, only the second of two doubled articles in Northern Swedish has special properties (Delsing 1993: 144). Second, sometimes the first and sometimes the second of the two doubled articles in Austrian German and Swiss German can take on a special and non-agreeing form (Kallulli & Rothmayr 2008: 127). Their own data from Danish and English also suggest that there are interpretational effects associated with the presence of the recursive article. In terms of the Senja dialect, it is also worth mentioning that unlike e.g.,

Northern Swedish, the recursive article in Northern Norwegian does not have a plural form. That is, something like (37) is entirely unacceptable.⁷

(37) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

*tre stor-e **ei** fin-e jente
three big-PL a.F nice-PL girls

We take this to suggest that the recursive article is not a spurious article.

A more promising line of inquiry may be the third and final proposal that the recursive indefinite article is a nominal proform following each adjective. Several Germanic languages, including English and Norwegian, make use of nominal proforms in the presence of adjectives, and in Norwegian these proforms are homonymous with the indefinite articles. Consider some examples in (38).

(38) **English**

a. I bought a new dress, a blue **one**.

Norwegian

b. Jeg lever I en drøm, en vill **en**.
I live in a.M dream a.M wild a.M
 ‘I’m living in a dream, a wild one.’

c. De har kjøpt nytt hus, et stort **et**.
They have bought new house a.N big a.N
 ‘They have bought a new house, a big one.’

d. Jeg ønsker meg ny seng, ei stor **ei**.
I wish REFL new bed a.F big a.F
 ‘I wish for a new bed, a big one.’

In Norwegian, these nominal proforms only occur in indefinite noun phrases. It should also be noted that adjectives can be stacked in these structures.

⁷ The form *ei* can be used as a quantifier of some sort, akin to *noen* ‘somebody’ in cases like (i).

(i) Han hadde ei store hender/føtter/øra.
He had a.F big.PL hands/feet/ears

However, in such environments, *ei* cannot be recursive.

(39) **Norwegian**

- a. Marit har kjøpte (et) nytt hus, et stort, fint *(et).
Marit has bought a new house a big nice one (lit. a.N)
- b. Marit har kjøpt (et) nytt hus, et stort (et) fint *(et).
Marit has bought a new house a big one nice one (lit. a.N)

Thus, an analysis that takes the recurring indefinite articles to be nominal proforms appears to be a promising avenue to pursue.

5.2 Parallel direct modification and the ban on non-predicative adjectives

So far, we have established a number of facts about the recursive indefinite article in Norwegian. We have seen that it is used in highly descriptive contexts and intensifies the interpretation of the adjective in these situations. The addition of these articles furthermore makes it possible to scramble the adjectives. In this subsection, the interpretive effect of polyindefinites will be considered in the context of Sproat & Shih's (1991) notion of parallel direct modification. As we will see, noun phrases involving indefinite article recursion exhibit all the characteristics of parallel direct modification. Furthermore, it will be argued that the ban on non-predicative adjectives with recursive articles is not related to the predicative nature of these adjectives, but rather to two different facts: First, non-predicative adjectives are not easily intensified. Second, they always scope over adjectives that occur further down in the structure and hence cannot be involved in parallel direct modification.

Sproat & Shih (1991) discusses parallel direct modification as a phenomenon in which all the adjectives modify the noun directly without scoping over one another, and in which Adjectival Ordering Restrictions (AORs) do not apply. Recall that we have shown that AORs generally apply with Norwegian adjectives, which is why (40a) is acceptable, while (40b) is not. However, there are exceptions to AORs; one of these is illustrated in (40c) in which the adjective *rød* (red) receives contrastive focus/stress, indicated here by small capitals.

(40) **Norwegian**

- a. en stor rød vase
a big red vase

- b. *en rød stor vase
a red big vase
- c. en RØD stor vase
a red big vase

Another exception to AORs is parallel direct modification, as discussed in Sproat & Shih (1991). Parallel direct modification is typically found with adjectives that are realised as separate prosodic units. This fact explains why the scrambled order is fine in (41a) and (41b), but not in (40b) above. In (41a) each adjective is made into a prosodic unit by turning them into compounds, while in (41b) this is ensured by inserting a break between the adjectives (so-called ‘comma’ intonation). In both these cases, each adjective modifies the noun directly without scoping over the adjective following it.

(41) **Norwegian**

- a. en illrød kjempestor vase
a fire.red giant.big vase
 ‘a deep red, gigantic vase’
- b. en rød, stor vase
a red big vase

Recall that recursive articles have the characteristic that they permit scrambling of adjectives without inducing a marked interpretation of the noun phrase as a whole. Furthermore, the recursive article makes each adjective a separate prosodic unit. This means that polyindefinites exhibit all the characteristics of direct parallel modification, and we will argue that this is exactly the effect that polyindefinites (and the adjectival *-e*) in Norwegian have on the interpretation of the adjectives and the noun phrase as a whole. Compare (41) and (42):

(42) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

- en** rød **en** stor **en** vase (parallel dir. mod.)
a red a big a vase

Thus, it appears that polyindefinites permit scrambling because they fall within the typical examples of exceptions to AORs. That is, they are instances of parallel direct modification.

Recall that nationality adjectives, such as *Norwegian*, like non-intersective ones, cannot occur in polyindefinites when they occur with an event nominal, such as in (43a) below, repeated from (24c). This could be attributed to the fact that nationality adjectives cannot occur in predicative position with event nominals, as illustrated in (43b). However, as shown in (24d) and (24e) in the previous section, repeated here as (43c) and (43d), this ban extends to nationality adjectives when they do not appear with event nominals as well, and thus can occur in predicative position.

(43) **Norwegian**

- a. ***en** norsk **en** invasjon
 a Norwegian an invasion
- b. *invasjon-en var norsk
 invasion-DEF was Norwegian
- c. ***en** norsk **en** artist
 a Norwegian an artist
- d. Artist-en var norsk.
 artist-DEF was Norwegian

This observation makes us question whether non-predicativity really is a central characteristic of polyindefinites. This impression is reinforced by the fact noted above that non-intersective adjectives such as *former* and *alleged* cannot take part in parallel direct modification. These observations strengthen the impression that polyindefiniteness is fundamentally different from polydefiniteness. The predicative nature of DS in Greek has been at the core of some approaches to this phenomenon, such as for example Alexiadou & Wilder (1998). Note, however, that as discussed in Alexiadou (2014), predicativity is not the only factor enabling adjectives to appear in polydefiniteness, since e.g., numerals may appear in predicative position, but do not appear in DS. Thus, Alexiadou (2014) concludes that at least for DS what is necessary is a restrictive interpretation of the adjective.

We have already seen that the recursive indefinite article in the Senja dialect is different from Greek DS in the sense that it does not cause any of the adjectives to be focussed, irrespective of whether the order is

scrambled or not. We have also suggested that the interpretive effect of the recursive indefinite article is that it (i) causes all the adjectives to modify the noun directly and (ii) leads to an intensified interpretation of the noun phrase. The former fact is illustrated in (42) above, while the latter was shown in (12)–(13) in section 2, and illustrated the strong preference for polyindefinites to appear in exclamatives. Example (13) is repeated here for convenience.

(13) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

a. Før **ei** stor **ei** fin **ei** pia!

What a big a nice a girl

‘What a nice big girl!’

b. Før **en** falsk **en** faen!

what a false a devil

‘What a lying bastard!’

It is possible that the dispreference for non-predicative adjectives with recursive articles is the result of the highly descriptive, intensified nature of polyindefinites. Consider (28) below, which illustrates that non-predicative adjectives are not compatible with exclamatives. This suggests that these adjectives are not descriptive enough to co-occur with the recursive article in the Senja dialect. Note also that the exclamatives in (44) are unacceptable irrespective of whether the recursive article is present or not, as the adjectives themselves are incompatible with the kind of grading involved.

(44) **Norwegian, Senja dialect**

a. *Før en påstått (en) morder!

What an alleged a murderer

b. *Før en tidligere (en) president!

What a former a president

c. *Før en norsk (en) invasjon!

What a Norwegian an invasion

d. *Før en norsk (en) artist!

What a Norwegian an artist

In light of this, it is unlikely that these nominals originate as relative clauses, while monadic indefinites do not. The ban on non-predicative adjectives can be ascribed to other characteristics of these elements.

Related to this is the following observation: We sketched above an analysis, according to which articles are actually resumptive nominal proforms. The literature on nominal ellipsis has pointed out that there are certain restrictions as to the type of adjectives that may participate in ellipsis. For instance, Sleeman (1996) argues that only adjectives that are partitive can participate in ellipsis (see also Alexiadou & Gengel 2012). The adjectives that are not licensed in poly-indefiniteness typically do not allow such readings.

In this subsection, we have seen that polyindefinites involve parallel direct modification; the addition of the recursive article turns each adjective into separate prosodic units that modify the noun directly and hence permit scrambling of the adjectives. Recursive structures are highly descriptive and intensify the interpretation of the modified noun phrase. The ban on non-intersective adjectives in these structures can be attributed to the impossibility of using direct modification with these adjectives, as they always scope over any following adjectives. Furthermore, neither non-intersective nor nationality adjectives can be used in exclamatives, which suggests that they are not gradable and descriptive enough to appear in polyindefinites. The fact that these adjectives all are non-predicative appears to be a coincidence.

An analysis whereby the recursive articles are resumptive nominal proforms that are spelled out in intensifying nominal expressions involving direct parallel modification would have to take all the facts described in the previous sections into account. First, it would need to ensure that the resumptive forms are coreferential with and get their reference from the head noun. The (indefinite) DP has to consist of an α P for each adjective, all branching into α Ps containing the adjective (AP) and a nominal element consisting of the proform *en/ei/et* (*one*), thus ensuring parallel modification.⁸ In the presence of the nominal proform, α has to spell out a gender-marked adjectival inflection (*-t or -Ø*), while when it is absent, α spells out the adjectival ending *-e*. The details of such an analysis will still need to be worked out, and for reasons of space, we leave this for future work.

⁸ We note here that Alexiadou & Gengel (2012) offer an alternative analysis, according to which *one* in English is actually a classifier and not a pro-form. In Borer's (2005) system, *one* lexicalizes DivP.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed indefinite determiner spreading in Scandinavian and beyond. We have especially focused on polyindefiniteness in the Senja dialect of Norway and we have compared the properties of polyindefiniteness with those of polydefiniteness in Modern Greek. The two kinds of determiner spreading display different properties, among other things relating to their interpretation. As we have shown, the recursive indefinite article in the Senja dialect results in an intensifying interpretation of the noun phrase. Furthermore, characteristics that at first sight appear to be shared by the two determiner spreading phenomena, such as the ban on non-predicative adjectives, on closer examination are found to be caused by different properties of these adjectives. We have also briefly discussed the status of the recursive indefinite article in the Senja dialect, tentatively arguing in favour of a nominal proform analysis.

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