Noun Particle /-wɑ/: A Definite Bare Classifier in Magahi

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Abstract

The interpretation of the bare noun in classifier languages has been a research topic of great interest, especially, when it comes to the Southeast Asian languages. This paper is an attempt to understand the interpretation of bare and/or marked noun of the lesser studied language of the Southeast Asian languages, Magahi, an eastern language of India, from a typological point of view. It is argued that bare nominal in Magahi gives the interpretation of generic or indefinite nonspecific on the argument positions, considering the form of the predicate. Definiteness is expressed with a noun particle /-wa/ in the language. The paper, following relevant literature, claims that the noun particle in Magahi is actually a classifier. Moreover, following the typological understanding, more specifically, it is a definite bare classifier. The study suggests that /-wa/ particle, being the noun classifier, heads the nominal projection. This paper also suggests that Magahi requires a sophisticated nominal schema where there can be the possibility of more than one higher projection above NP.

Key Words: Southeast Asian Languages, Typology, Bare Classifier, NP/DP Projection

1. Setting the Tone

Magahi belongs to the Bihari sub-group of languages, and hence it is   an Indo-Aryan language which is of great interest to typologists working on the classifier-languages in South-east Asia. When it comes to the description of classifier of the South-east Asian languages, only Bangla seems to be the prompt candidate. Magahi, though having   much to offer, has been so far ignored. The present investigation is directed towards the better understanding of the structure of the noun phrase in the language. Various approaches are adopted towards the understanding of Noun phrase (henceforth NP) in the languages, primarily understanding the architecture of human cognition in terms of sign, signifier and significance. The various approaches, e.g., Generativist approach, Functionalist approach, Cognitive approach, etc. are different paths to understand the semantico-syntactic derivation of the NP. The derivation in itself comprises a bigger question of the conceptual or cognitive realization of an object on the level of an image or a prototypical idea of the object. This further encompasses the idea of bringing down the abstract reality to the concrete reference (linguistic realization of an object). The realization of a noun in a linguistic discourse, i.e. from N-to-NP further seeks an explanation as to whether N-to-NP is a lexical derivation or a morphological or a syntactic one. I would like to start with the above-argumentation and supplement it with the preliminary information that getting an argumenthood can be a universal as well as language specific parameter.

In Indian languages most of the work on the NP is limited to understanding the syntactic positioning of constituents within it. The issue that is being addressed in this paper is the least attended to subject in the Indian context, especially in the languages of Bihar. The paper deals with the phenomenon or derivation of NP whereby a bound morpheme, also called as the noun particle, occurs with the noun every time it comes in a discourse. This bound morpheme whose elsewhere form is /-wɑ/ has been studied to some extent. It has been reported that it has definiteness effect in the NP (Kumar 2016, 2017, 2018). It has referential property; it refers to

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an object in a discourse, primarily, establishes the fact that the noun is antecedent. It has been termed as 'specificity marker' (Alok 2012), 'discourse marker' (Kumar 2015), 'affective particle' (Alok 2014), 'definite determiner/particle' (Kumar 2016, 17, 18) etc., but there is definitely a lack of terminological understanding while describing its full function. We cannot, in a strict sense, call it a specificity marker. Affective particle is very ambiguous term and does not necessarily restrict its denotation. Discourse marker, since particle only occurs in a discourse and cannot occur when the noun occurs individually. However, it doesn't capture the quintessential property of the particle.

(1) gəiyɑkɑ   d   əhəi
    cow.DD   what   give   be.PRS.3NH
    What does the cow give?

(2) d   udʰ/
         *d   ud
                                   ʰwɑ

    milk/   milk.DD

In this paper, I have tried to analyse what literature has to offer regarding the syntax, semantics and distribution of /-wɑ/ particle in Magahi. The analysis includes the account on whether we can reasonably find an understanding of the literature in any direction. Literature review has been followed by a framework under typological consideration that how the similar nominal structure has been treated. Then, an effort has been made to see it in the similar line of the classifier, particularly the way the similar semantically motivated morpheme is treated in the languages like Chinese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Italian, Bangla, etc. In these languages, the issue of the interpretation of bare noun with respect to the presence/absence of a classifier is interesting to notice. Inmost of these languages, a noun-classifier combination yields (in)/definite reading. This claim is supported by the fact that classifier has been studied from the point of fact that it brings the pragmatic information as well in the discourse in the form of definiteness.

The additional areas which are studied in this approach are the interpretation of the noun phrase, particularly, the bare or marked noun as definite, indefinite and generic. Further sections devoted to see whether the particle can be treated from the similar approaches adopted by Cheng & Sybesma (1999) in the case of Cantonese, or Simpson (2005) & Wu & Bodomo (2009), etc. In this paper, it has been argued that similar case exists in Magahi, thus considering the typological value of the terminology, I argue in favour of considering this particle as 'definite bare classifier'. This paper, thus, further attempts to prove its terminological validity by examining the similar phenomenon in the above-mentioned languages, particularly Cantonese, Bangla, etc. It concludes with a broader implication of the classifier /-wɑ/ in the language, and how there is a way forward to understand the NP in Magahi, and for that matter in other languages of Bihar, say, Bhojpuri.

2.   Literature Review

Grierson, in the Linguistic Survey of India 1905, first identified Magahi as one of the languages of the Bihari sub-group. He occasionally contrasts Magahi with Maithili and Bengali. Grierson, in the description of the forms of noun, says that there are three forms in Magahi- short, redundant and long, e.g. the word 'gʰorɑ' (horse) is the short form, 'gʰorwɑ' (the horse) is the redundant form, and 'gʰorəuwɑ' is the long form. Semantic distinction among the forms were not documented or discussed. Later, Aryani (1965), in the spirit of Grierson (1905), has classified nouns into three forms:'hɑsəye nirbəl' and 'səbəl', i.e. weak versus strong form of the noun. It is further categorized into weak form, ending with vowels and weak form, ending with consonants, e.g. 'lohə', 'gʰor', 'mitʰə' vs. 'loh', 'gʰor', 'mitʰ', meaning iron, horse, and sweet,

respectively. The strong form is formed by elongating the last sound of the word, e.g., gʰor-gʰorɑ. Second form, he named is, 'dirgʰə', i.e. long form. According to Aryani, it is achieved by adding /-yɑ/ or /-wɑ/ to the words end with weak vowels, e.g. gʰər-gʰərwɑ (home). Further, he mentions that if the last sound of the word is strong, first make it weak, and then add /-wɑ/ or /-yɑ/, e.g. 'gʰorɑ'-'gʰor'-'gʰorwɑ'. The third form is ət rikət

, i.e. redundant form. Aryani (ibid) says that this form is made by repeating the last prefix of the noun, e.g. məliyɑ- məliywɑ (gardener), gʰorwɑ- gʰorvwɑ (horse). It is clearly not the exact repetition of the last prefix. Arayni (ibid) fails to give any semantic account of the particle other than saying it long form or redundant morpheme.

Unfortunately, the explanation of the third form is little difficult to give here, due to its unavailability as a usable form in the language[1]. However, the third form might not be redundant, its semantics is motivated in terms of over generalizing the rule of definiteness in the language. So, as it has been mentioned that the elsewhere form of the particle is 'wɑ' (forms are subject to phonological conditioning); the third form is the derivation in achieving the definiteness. It can also be understood from the point of view of the acquisition of language[2]. Since the default or elsewhere form of the definiteness is '-wɑ', it is overgeneralized and used in some cases even if the other phonological variants of the definiteness marker have already been used.

Verma (2003), in the edited book 'The Indo-Aryan languages', describes noun in Magahi based on its final sounds and the derivation of the stems. She says that the most obvious form of the noun in Magahi is derived or formed by the suffixation of /-wɑ/ or it's variant /-yɑ/. They are phonologically conditioned; 'yɑ' is used when the word ends with the sound '-i', and the elsewhere form is '-wɑ'. She, first time, talks about the semantics of the particle and says, 'as translation implies, this suffix expresses definiteness'. She also mentions that similar phenomenon exists in Bangla, and not in Hindi. She mentions the fact that this derivation along with definiteness may carry 'diminution' or 'disparagement'.

The similar derivation of noun is seen in Bhojpuri. It is discussed in the same edited volume by Verma (2003). He discusses the form and semantics of '-wɑ' particle in Bhojpuri. He has given an elaborated explanation for this phenomenon. He, discussing the form and function of '-wɑ' in Bhojpuri, calls it a grammatical class which codes definiteness. He says that it has two phonological variants /-ɑ/ and /-yɑ/. Further, he notices the distribution of the three and says that /-ɑ/ has more restricted distribution, and occurs only when it satisfies two conditions. The first is the grammatical condition that the reference should be [+animate], and the second is that it should satisfy the phonological condition of having disyllabic structure. He further distinguishes between the additional semantics of the three variants, e.g., /-ɑ/, for him, adds the nuance of good-natured pejoration and a possible diminution. The suffix /-yɑ/ attaches to the feminine ending sounds /-i/ in the language[3]. These works are more on the distribution and forms of noun in Magahi and Bhojpuri. The underlying reasoning of the two forms of the noun, i.e. bare and marked have not been discussed in these works.

Alok (2012) understands the noun particle as a specificity marker in the language. Later, Alok (2014) claimed that it is an 'affective particle'. He maintains that there are two forms of noun in Magahi, 'base' and 'inflected'. He further claimed that /-wɑ/ is neither a topic marker nor a definite article like English 'the'. Whereas English definite article 'the' has both familiar and uniqueness reference, Magahi /-wɑ/ has only familiarity reading. Though the statement is not wrong, one cannot strongly deny the plausibility of having uniqueness reading of /-wɑ/ in a specific discourse. Additionally, the issue of true definiteness is a standing problem in the literature. And whether to consider 'uniqueness' as a true definite or 'familiarity' or both, is a

debatable question. Uniqueness is debated to have a conventional presupposition rather a conversational implicature (Roberts 2003). Uniqueness is the nature/property of the object rather a linguistic exercise. And, Contrary to Alok's belief, uniqueness has been treated as the 'weak article' in the literature, whereas the notion of 'familiarity/presupposition' as 'strong article' (Ebert 1975). I argue in favour of the school of thought which believes familiarity the sole requirement for definiteness.

Succeeding the concept of uniqueness, Alok denied the possibility of having /-wɑ/ as a functional head in the language. The problem cited was primarily syntactic and was seen from the minimalist point of view. He took the example of a noun phrase 'lǝlkɑ kit   ǝbwɑ' (the red book); and assuming /-wɑ/ a functional, the following structure surfaced.
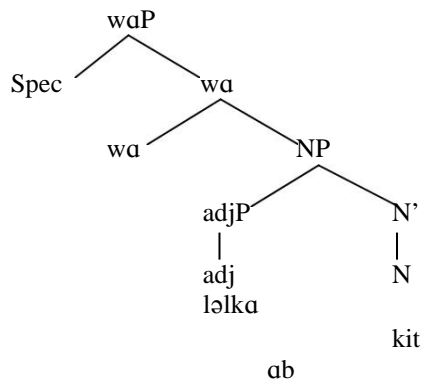
Fig. 1

The first possibility is that noun 'kit   ɑb' moves to /-wɑ/ to become 'kit   ǝbwɑ', N-raising. But there would then be a problem with the linear ordering. There remain two possibilities: one to move the whole NP to the Spec of wɑP, which unfortunately is not possible due to the anti-locality movement (it doesn't allow such short movement; it requires crossing at least one full phrasal boundary). A phrase can only move to another phrase, and not just some segment. So, this possibility is denied. Second, one can move the AdjP to Spec of wɑP, and N-to-wɑ which will produce linear ordering. But as Alok (2014) observes, there is no motivation for the movement, and in the syntax, it is necessary to have some semantic motivation behind the movement, and it cannot be motivated for linear ordering. So, this possibility is also denied. Though, I am hardly worried about the minimalist approach in understanding the head of the NP due to the various reasons, if moving the adjP in the spec of wɑP solves the problem one can think /-kɑ/ as a grammatical variant of /-wɑ/, which is only used with adjective. The problem in word ordering is also noticed in the case of Italian by Cheng & Sybesma (1999; 522), they have suggested a way out by saying that the N-to-CL movement should be covert, otherwise over movement results in ordering differences in adjectival modification in Italian. This could perhaps solve the problem of locating /-wɑ/ in the tree as a functional head. Or, one can think of lowering of /-wɑ/ to the noun, motivated by the enclitic nature of the particle. And, since the information in terms of /-kɑ/ is foregrounded, the semantics of /-wɑ/ becomes less strong. As it is a theoretically established claim that a week feature prefers to lower down rather invite or raise the host[4]. He argues that bare plural in Magahi yields unique reading, and definiteness

effect comes through bare nominal. This is empirically a flawed statement. Firstly, bare plural in Magahi yields indefinite, moreover, Magahi has the bare and marked plural (See Kumar 2018). Secondly, definiteness in Magahi comes from the presence of the noun particle /-wɑ/, and bare noun gives either the kind or indefinite reading on the argument position.

Alok (2014) further claims that it is an 'affective particle' and is generated in the base of the noun in the lexicon. He also claims that Magahi has maximal NP projection. So, the understanding is that there are two forms of the noun, base and inflected, which give different conceptualization and therefore are listed as two separate entries. The term affective particle in itself means the particle which basically talks about the attitude or emotion in the utterance. So, /-wɑ/ is an affective particle that doesn't project when it is merged with a noun. Now, this seems to be an explanation which takes us nowhere. Alok explains the phenomenon as an insertion in the lexicon. This rules out all the morpho-phonological and syntactic derivations. But stopping for a moment and analysing the issue that whether these explanations serve the bigger typological or even the specific language issues. Making the lexicon strong doesn't mean to burden the lexicon with the information which is not irregular, which is very systematic when it comes to the phonological rules, morphological rules, or syntactic rules.

Kumar (2017) has discussed some of the implications of the /-wɑ/ particle in the structure of the language. He, considering the fact that there is a terminological confusion, says it a definite determiner in the spirit of Verma (2003). He further talks about the definiteness of /-wɑ/ particle in view of Lyons (1999), and says that it has 'identifiability' property. 'Uniqueness' of the element can be understood in a discourse; the /-wɑ/ particle in a discourse definitely refers to a unique individual, and its use more specifically can be seen in the distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clause. Kumar (2018) further talks on how the semantics of this particle is able to create a three-way number distinction in Magahi. Magahi morphologically makes distinction between singular, plural, and general number. The plural is marked with /-ən/ morpheme with little morpho-phonological changes in the base; it generally gives the interpretation of indefinite. General number is unmarked in Magahi, i.e. the bare form of the noun at the argument position provides generic or kind reference. Singular is marked with the /-wɑ/ particle; it strictly adheres to the singular reference of the object unless marked with some other affixes. There are few more interesting structural implications of the particle as seen in Kumar (2017, 2018).

Apart from the above-mentioned structural implications, the noun particle classifies the noun class as well. It classifies the noun into two categories, i.e. abstract vs. concrete noun. The particle is not used with the abstract noun, e.g. '*ḍukʰwɑ' (sorrow) is not an acceptable word in the language. It can be attached to all the borrowed words. Apart from its structural uses, the particle has socio-linguistic implications as well, as noted by Verma (2003). Along with definiteness, it has a pejorative connotation. It is not used with the kinship terms which are entitled to have respect in the society. It is very interesting to study the language from the point of view of the reference and the identifiability. The particle, however, can be used with anybody for the restricted purpose. So, for a heated argument or for the purpose of disrespect, this can be used with higher kinship (Kumar 2015). Aikhenvald (2000: 82) mentions the classifier which shows similar semantics, i.e. it gives reference to the social status, and/or has restricted use with kinship terminologies. According to him, it is a widespread phenomenon in East and South Asian languages. In the case of Tibetan language, noun classifier refers to social-status (Delancy 1998, referred in Aikhenvald 2000). Becker (1975), in the case of Burmese, proposed that a wide range of socio-cultural factors and values are mirrored in classifier assignment. Barz & Diller (1985) too mention that in the languages like Assamese, Burmese, Thai and Vietnamese classifier is used for human classification.

Till now, we have no specific terminological adherence to the particle which can reveal its overall functional behaviour in the language. Hitherto, we have seen the scattered use of the particle and its implication separately in the structure. In this paper, we have tried to add the threads and understand its underlying importance in the noun phrase.

I might not be able to give an exact solution to the standing problem but definitely try to make the issue more problematic in a way that it shows a unitary path which can lead to the typological understanding of the particle rather language specific. I argue that this particle functions more as a bare definite classifier. So, I am claiming that the /-wɑ/ particle is a noun classifier in the language. It is a classifier by dint of its overall behaviour in the language.

As Allan (1976) puts that there are three main kinds of human interactions conveyed by the classifier; apart from physical and functional interaction, social interaction such as interacting with a human compared to a low status one is of the features of classifier (Allan ibid Pp125). Also, as discussed by Grinevald (1992), Aikhenvald (2000), and Singnoi (2008) in the case of Thai that noun classifier can be a referring and/or individuating items.

It functions as to individuate an object in the discourse. It, like D, having deictic function, picks out singular instances of whatever is denoted by N. No other terminology can capture its overall semantic and structural implication in the language. Moreover, the particle is treated as a definite bare classifier because it attaches with the noun without any numeral intervention, and yields definite reading.

The paper is pondering upon the syntactic and semantic distribution of /-wɑ/ in the language. A bare noun is a lexical noun; it lacks any meaningful morpho-phonological addition. Bare noun in Magahi specifically can be understood as the form of the noun without /-wɑ/ particle. As far as the reading of syntactic positioning is concerned, it has been tried to see the form and interpretation of the noun on its formal positioning, i.e. subject, direct object, indirect object, genitive, etc. Following Longobardi (1994), Chierchia (1998), Cheng & Sybesma (1999), Dayal (2004, 2009), etc., it is claimed that Magahi, like Cantonese, has a definite bare classifier in the form of /-wɑ/, however, has a different syntax. We have explored the issue by understanding the interpretation of bare or marked noun (with classifier) as definite, indefinite and generic.

3.   Bare Noun and its Interpretation

Though it's true that marked noun in the languages carries abundance of semantic information with it, a bare noun, in many languages, too carries a lot of information when it is realized in a sentence. There are some very central issues pertaining to this topic which need to be taken care of while describing it in a particular language. The issues are, like the interaction of bare NPs and/ or kind term with number morphology, the role of determiner and the reading of bare NPs; its generic, definite and indefinite reading; its (in)/definite interpretation also varies based on its syntactic position with respect to the verb and whether it is lexically governed or not, its semantic status as argument or predicate, etc. In some languages, bare noun cannot occur on the argument position, but, in some, it occurs in argument as well as in predicate position (Chierchia 1998). Overall, in the study of bare noun, what we really study is the interaction of bare noun with the study of generic meaning, number marking and definiteness (Krifka 2003, Carlson 1989, Delfitto 2006, Dayal 2004, etc.). The topic of bare noun cannot be dealt without discussing the work of Carlson (1977), who says that a bare NP may refer to three readings: kinds, generic and existential.

Longobardi (1994) in his study   generalizes the behaviour of bare noun according to its syntactic position in Romance and Germanic languages. The study says that the indefinite interpretation of bare noun is restricted to lexically governed position (especially, object position, in SVO languages, post-verbally).

By the discussion of bare noun, it can be concluded that a noun becomes an NP the moment it is realized in a linguistic discourse. Linguistically, there are two ways through which it is realized whether it is morphologically or syntactically or morpho-syntactically. The position D is a morpho-syntactic position which provides argumenthood to the noun. And, as the debate surrounding the treatment of article-less languages as non-DP or DP languages; in article-less languages this category is filled by either determiner or classifiers[5]. In many of the classifier languages, the noun occurs in a construction like [CLA+N/N+CLA] to refer to the definiteness, and it is similar to the English definite DPs. So, as proposed by Longobardi (1994), the category or position (D) is a type-shifter, and yields a definite interpretation in the case of definite DPs. This phenomenon of giving argument status to the bare noun is motivated by the iota operator (Chierchia 1998).

In the classifier languages, for the interpretation of noun, noun moves to the classifier position, i.e. N-CL movement happens, considering the function of i operator. In the case of the interpretation of bare noun as definite or generic, Longobardi (1994) says that the bare noun is not restricted to the lexically governed position but moves to the empty position D at either LF or PF (N-to-D movement happens). This movement puts two effects, one, since D is filled it is not distributionally restricted to the lexically governed position, and second, since D is filled, it will not give existential reading. In the case of classifier languages (CL+N/ N+CL), Tang (1990) assumes that classifier heads its own projection. Let's explore out the concerned language, Magahi.

4. Magahi

Magahi bare noun phrase includes only the noun or the form of the noun without /-wɑ/ particle or plural marking. The form has limited distribution in the language. Its distribution is restricted to its interpretation; a bare noun in Magahi has either generic or nonspecific indefinite interpretation, considering the form of the predicate and the syntactic position of the noun. Considering the problem of the interpretation of generic and definite, we have to be a bit careful here. Syntax does decide the interpretation of (in)/definite and generic. In the case of Magahi, the form of the verb decides the interpretation and the form of the noun, i.e. the habitual or existent verb takes the bare form of the noun and gives generic interpretation.

(3) ser ego   kʰət   ərnɑk jənɑwər howə həi
lion one-CL dangerous animal   happen   be.PRS.3NH
(The)/lion is a dangerous animal.

(4) u   kut   ɑ pəsənd   ne kərə həi
    he dog   like   Neg do.2   be.PRS.3NH
    S/he doesn't like dog.

(5) u (čɑr-go)   kuťɑ ke mərləii/mɑrə   həi
he (four-CL)   dog PP   beat.PRF.3NH/bear be.PRS.NH
He beat four dogs/beats dog.

Magahi bare noun cannot be interpreted as definite, it can be interpreted as generic and/or nonspecific indefinite. Indefiniteness is not subject to syntactic restriction as it is the case with Cantonese and Mandarin languages which are SVO. Above-examples show that the bare form of the noun in Magahi, particularly in argument position, always provides generic and/or

indefinite interpretation. It is on similar lines with Longobardi's (1994) analysis of Italian NP. Indefiniteness in Magahi is subject to the non-definite reference of the object. So, any numeral when not used as partitive is able to give indefinite reading[6]. Further problem arises due to the specific and non-specific reading of indefinite. Cheng & Sybesma (1999) explain that the indefinite bare noun is never specific, and NP with overt numeral (example 5) can have (non)/specific readings. Since numeral heads its own projection, and is a complete quantifier, therefore, in the case of overt numeral it can undergo quantifier raising, yielding specific reading. Bare noun, possessing empty numeral, lacks specific reading. The presence of any quantifier on the nominal makes it indefinite specific (Yadav 1996).

Magahi, being SOV language, lacks syntactic indefiniteness. The indefiniteness, as it has been discussed in the literature, results from the presence of numeral and classifier in the phrase. An indefinite is in fact a numeralP with empty numeral head (Bhattacharya 2001, Cheng & Sybesma 1999) in the case of bare noun yielding indefinite interpretation. Tang (1990) suggests that NumP can occur between the DP and CLP. Numeral has the capability of undoing definiteness. In Magahi, it has not been seen that the [N+CL] combination is used with numeral. Magahi has numeral classifier and the nouns occurring with the numerals are bare noun. Cheng & Sybesma (ibid.), in the case of Cantonese, suggested that numP and [CL+N] have empty numeral head and empty CL head respectively, i.e. in the case of bare noun having definite interpretation, it can opt for the N-to-CL movement, and in the case of nonspecific indefinite, it can resort to empty numeral. In Magahi, the presence of numeral gives the specific interpretation and non-specific is restricted to the bare noun or say an empty numeral head. In the literature, it is argued that since overt numeral is a full-fledged quantifier which goes for quantifier raising, it, therefore yields specific reading. In contrast to empty numeral, bare noun lacks QR option. If we think of noun in Magahi as a classifier phrase, there is a higher projection in the form of DP (Following Tang 1990). We can have the structure like
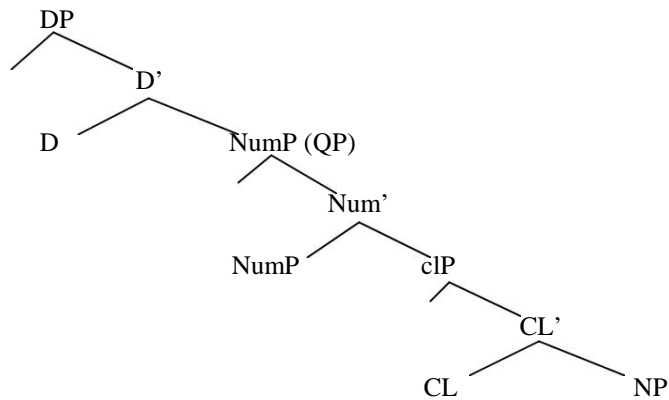
Fig. 2

This is just to show how number interacts with the other projection is a phrase, and how numP undoes definiteness in Magahi. So, in the case of definiteness, CLP moves to the DP, however, when there is an overt numeral or quantifier, this movement is denied, resulting indefinite interpretation. This is just an assumption, we have not yet decided the schema of Magahi NP. The projection of DP is motivated by Simpson (2005), however, also because bare noun in certain pragmatic have definite interpretation (especially, when there is a culturally specific terminology, or pragmatic specific reference, or some celestial bodies, etc.)

5. Bare/Marked Noun as Definite Reference

Article-less languages can be divided into two types: classifier languages and non-classifier languages. In non-classifier languages like Hindi, the interpretation of the bare noun as definite is not preferred at the initial position in a sentence, however, can be interpreted in the object level predicate. The interpretation of a bare noun in Hindi at the subject position is ambiguous between generic and definite (Dayal 2004). The interpretation also depends upon the case and postposition. In the classifier languages such as Cantonese, Bangla, etc. a bare noun doesn't infer the semantics of definiteness[7]. Definiteness is subject to the occurrence of the classifier.

Magahi bare noun is doesnot occur at the argument position. Every instance of common noun or proper noun is marked with the classifier which turns the bare noun into an argument. The occurrence of a bare noun, however, is not ungrammatical at the argument position, because then it refers to the variety more influenced by Hindi. In natural discourse, the occurrence of bare noun at the argument position is rare, if the reference is not for generic or kind. In the literature, it is argued that a noun like 'dog' belongs to the lexical category N which projects to the phrasal category NP. The N is taken as the complement by the category D which includes articles or quantifiers or for that matter classifier in this case. However, this can be understood as a relationship between an instance and its type, or in the words of Taylor (2002), argument-hood provides grounding to the entity which is abstract. Literature favours and contests that a noun needs determiner to be realized as an argument (Stowell 1991, Longobardi 1994). The cases where the bare noun occurs at the argument position is understood or assumed as the null D. There would be no syntactic and distributional restriction of the existence of bare NP argument as kind-referring NPs.

(6) ləikwɑ   u   əd   miyɑ-ke
    kĩtab(wɑ)   d   e
    d   eləi
boy.CL   that   man-PP   book(CL)   give give.PRF.3NH
The boy gave the book to that man.

(7) əre   čənd   ənwɑ   soniyɑ-ke
    bis   rupiyɑ   d   e
    d   ehi

VOC. Chandan.CL   soni.CL-PP twenty rupees   give give.IMPF.3NH
Hey, Chandan, give soni twenty rupees.

Interesting pattern surfaced in the above-example. In example (6), due to the ditransitive predicate, thereare three arguments, and all the arguments are supposed to occur with '-wɑ' classifier. According to Longobardi (1994), there are two prototypical argument positions in the example (6)- subject and direct object, and they necessarily be marked with an argument maker. We see that indirect argument is also marked; if unmarked, it gives indefinite interpretation of the reference. The bare occurrence of noun referring as indefinite is restricted to lexically governed position (Longobardi (1994). The question needed to be understood is that Longobardi has not discussed anything regarding the occurrence of argument maker (D/CL) even on the non-argument position. However, given the argumentation in Longobardi (1994), we cannot induce anything which can question the logic of Longobardi (ibid). We therefore, considering the wordless proposition of Longobardi, understand the occurrence of classifier (D like element) as further support for the argumenthood. Similarly, in example (7), the agent 'Chandan' is in vocative case, therefore, is not an argument[8].

Definiteness in Magahi is subject to [N+CL] form of the noun. This provides the singularity interpretation along with [+familiarity/presupposition].

6. Bare Noun and the Kind Reference (Plurals)

Though we have seen and discussed the interpretation of bare noun as generic interpretation, it has been seen in the literature that the interpretation of generic is also seen in the plural form of the noun,primarily, because it can have both definite as well as generic interpretation. Dayal (2004) explains that the difference between the definite generic and bare plural is explained or invoked by number morphology. Hindi bare plural can have generic, definite and indefinite readings. It has been noted that bare singular and bare plural conveys different types of generic reading. Bare plural is a kind-term which is an instantiation in a given world. Bare singular, on the other hand, is an abstract entity, and has no actual instantiation. In Magahi, the semantic of bare plural is no different to Hindi as discussed by Dayal (2004). It refers to the indefinite generic interpretation. Interestingly, Magahi offers marked plural as well. And, the marked plural has the semantics of 'inclusive' definiteness.

(8) huɑt   ləik-ən   kʰeli
                          hᵊi
there boy-PL   play   be.IMPF.3NH
There are boys playing there.

(9) huɑt   ləik-əw-ən   kʰəli
                              hᵊi
there   boy-CL-PL   play   be.IMPF.3NH
The boys are playing there.

The different forms bring different semantics as well. The noun phrase in example (8) refers to the plural form of child i.e. it is indefinite reference. In the words of Dayal , it is an instantiation of the abstract concept. Bare plural gives the semantics of kind and indefinite. Marked plural in Magahi behaves like the English definite plural, with regard to familiarity/identifiability. It would be little susceptible to say that the marked plural is the outcome of the process of addition of plural morpheme in the marked noun which is a definite classifier. This can be believed due to the familiarity function of /-wɑ/ particle with the noun in the language. It gives the semantics of inclusive definiteness. The interpretation of marked plural is familiarity, therefore, is definite[9]. This can also be understood that the linguistic strategy of plurality has robust use for definiteness, as it happens in the classifier languages like Persian.

7. Proper Name

Longobardi (1994) proposed the syntactic derivation of proper name; he says that a proper name is generated in N, and goes to N-to-D movement since D has the individualizing function. Cheng & Sybesma (1999) offered the same explanation for the case of Mandarin and Cantonese. Magahi differs with Cantonese at this point as well; Cantonese allows the occurrence of bare proper noun. The argument is "the proper name is driven by the nature of it, instead the presence of i operator" (Cheng & Sybesma 1999); so, if the proper name is of the category <e>, it has to move to the CL to satisfy the i-operator function.

In Magahi, almost every instance of proper name is accompanied by the classifier /-wɑ/, considering the socio-cultural use of the classifier. As we have discussed that the classifier has pejorative connotation in the language.

(10) rəjuɑ-ke   pɑpɑ   boləit   e
       hət   hⁱin

Raju-CL   father   call.IMPF be.IMPF.3H
Father is calling Raju.

(11) soniyɑ   goluɑ-ke   kʰɑilɑ
    d   ehi

        soni.CL   golu.CL-PP   meal   give.3.IMPF.NH
        Soni, serve Golu food.

(12) *suniləwɑ   bʰəiyɑɑilə
    hət   ʰi̠

        Sunil.CL   elder brother   come.PRF be.PRF.3H
        Elder brother, Sunil has come.

Magahi has a little complicated reasoning when it comes to the realization of proper NP. As we have discussed the socio-linguistic aspect of the marker (Alok 2014, Kumar 2015), the marker is limited to the persons who do not hold high positions in the social hierarchy. It indicates the semantics of disparagement and intimacy. The classifier is also not used with the kinship terminologies, and argument remains bare in the case of kinship words being the argument[10].
This doesn't, however, interfere much with the framework that has been adopted. The question of argumenthood is primarily concerned with the common noun. The syntax of the proper name then either fits with the Longobardi (1994) analysis or we can propose that there is the familiarity associated with the particle even in the case of proper name, but has restricted distribution, since it has social connotation[11].
We have seen that the occurrence of the bare noun is restricted to either the generic or kind reference or subject to lexically governed position yielding indefinite interpretation. We have also argued that the semantics of particle /-wɑ/ is equivalent to the semantics of 'strong article' which provides definiteness. The particle is able to make a class distinction i.e. abstract vs. concrete, i.e. it interacts with the classification of nouns. It has also social implication, it adheres to the semantics of intimacy and Honorificity. It has the referential property like D, it changes the status of noun from being predicate $\langle e, t \rangle$ to argument $\langle e \rangle$. Considering its overall implications in the language, I claim it as a classifier, specifically a definite bare classifier. The terminology doesn't cease its property of being a definite determiner (as claimed by Kumar 2017, 2018). Moreover, it behaves similar to Bangla, Cantonese, Assamese, Oriya, etc. but differs from them in not being the same classifier for numeral. Magahi, has different classifier for numeral, and for noun. Hmong (1999) argued that the function of numeral classifier goes beyond numeral for the semantics of individualization and classification. And, the noun which was otherwise highly indeterminate in Southeast Asian languages is specified by the use of classifier. In most of the languages, both the functions, i.e. individualization and referentialization, are achieved by the same morpheme and the same morpheme is used for numeral modification and referentiality. Magahi uses different morphemes for the two purposes. But the primary function of the classifier /-wɑ/ is referential.

The different interpretation of marked/unmarked nouns is shown in the table below.

	Indefinite	Definite	Generic
Bare N	+	-	+
N+CL	-	+	-

Next section is focused on understanding the syntax of the classifier from cross-linguistic point of view. Some recent frameworks have been applied to see whether it can fit the broader understanding of the syntactic patterns of classifier in South Asian language. No alternative account is offered in this paper; however, a road forward is proposed.

8. Discussion

Cheng & Sybesma (1999) claim that the Mandarin and Cantonese project a higher CLP where [CL+N] projects as head without any addition of NumP or DP. They also maintain the claim that CLP is equivalent to English DP, therefore, there is no need of a higher DP. If we consider, Magahi in the framework of Cheng & Sybesma (1999); it looks like

a. kit   əb-wɑ
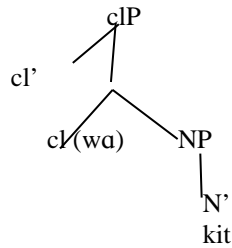
```
                          clP
                         /|
                   cl'  /
                       /|
                      / |
                 cl/(wɑ)  NP
                          |
                          N'
                          kit


                  ɑb
```

Fig. 3

The issue of linearity is not an issue. The NP can move to the specifier of the clP or cl can lower down to the N. This happens due to the enclitic nature of the classifier. It phonologically cannot stand alone, therefore, motivated to move or attract.

Simpson (2005) finds out that this explanation doesn't explain some basic facts of Chinese. For example, [CL+N] can be modified by the numeral in Chinese. And if the resulting structure [NUM+CL+N] is indefinite, this rightly contrasts with Cheng & Sybesma (1999) that CLP has default definite interpretation. Simpson (2005) further says that if we understand [CL+N] as inherently definite, equivalent of determiners, one could get two possible consequences, either it can be the case that definite determiner becomes a property of the whole nominal phrase leading to the definite interpretation of both [CL+N] and [Num+CL+N], or one can expect partitive interpretation of the numeral construction. In the case of partitive reading, number should have scope over the DP/clP. Cheng & Sybesma though have offered another structure whereby the NumP is projected just above the clPand, in the case of overt presence of number, the proposition gets indefinite reading.

In **Magahi**, the explanations of Cheng & Sybesma (1999), and counter example of Simpson (2005), both are relevant. Simpson argues against the Cheng & Sybesma's explanation based on the fact that Chinese allows the [Num+CL+N] combination, and following Cheng & Sybesma's explanation will lead it to the definite interpretation. In Magahi, [N+CL] combination doesn't combine with numeral in prototypical NP structure in the language and any attempt to do it, will lead to ungrammaticality. Even for the partitive construction, the classifier has to be deleted or left out. The combination, i.e. a noun with definite bare classifier in Magahi is strictly singular, and is definite (familiarity/identifiability).

(13) t   in-go
       kit   ɑb/*kit
                                               əbwɑ
       let   e   əihe
three-NCL book/book.CL   bring.IMPF   come.IMPF.3NH

Bring me the three books.

(14) t in-o
kit əbwən/ʔkit
ɑb
let e əihe

three-all book.CL-PL/book bring.IMPF come.IMPF.3NH

Bring me all the three books.

Magahi is very complicated compared to the Cantonese or for that matter Bangla. In the case of Magahi, we see the presence of double classifier, one as definite bare classifier and another as a numeral classifier. In the presence of numeral classifier, we cannot have definite bare classifier and, when number refers to the 'whole of something' through some morphological marker, definite bare classifier is needed. This suggests that when the number is accompanied with the numeral classifier, it strongly gives indefinite reading, however, when a definite interpretation is required, numeral classifier is deleted and morpho-phonological exclusive element is added in number. So, in this case, if we suggest a NumP functional projection, it should be in the spirit of Bhattacharya (2001) as a complex head which consists of num-CL.

Num-CL

Num'

N.+CL clP
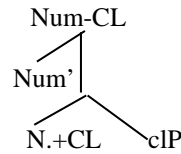
In the case of definite interpretation, the numeral is either absent or marked with some definiteness marker (example 14). However, the projection doesn't clearly entail the fact that how in the case of example (14) the derivation happens. We, for this paper, limited the analysis of indefiniteness and the projection of NumP to this extent only. However, one can consult the Chaco n(2011) for alternative account of the Bhattacharya (2001) complex functional head, and for the quantification approximate reading.

We are strictly not proposing any DP projection which can account for the definiteness of the clfP by raising it to the Spec of DP in the case of empty numeral head. For now, it has been assumed that noun gets its definiteness by the classifier in the clfP itself, and the presence of numeral+classifier undo the definiteness. However, the possibility of having a DP projection from Simpson's (2005) point of view is not immediately uncalled for. In the case of empty numeral, clfP/cl can move to the Spec of NumP and then to the DP for the sake of number and definiteness. The definite bare classifier of Magahi /-wɑ/, as we have discussed till now, has two important semantic contributions- [+singularity, and +definiteness (familiarity/presupposition)]. Since it is singular, we can assume that it interacts with the number and, it is singular in terms of the Cheng & Sybesma (1999) analysis of empty numeral. If we posit a three layers NP schema where DP, QP (a complex head, following Bhattacharya 2001) and CLP are the projections in the case of definite interpretation, the cl' will first move to the Spec of QP to check the number feature of the /-wɑ/, given an empty numeral head, it further moves to the Spec of DP to check the definiteness.

Li & Bisang (2011) further say that even if there is no definite article in Mandarin, its nominal has DP structure and is realized as demonstrative, proper name, etc. They say that in the case of [CL+N], the classifier heads the projection of DP. In the Spirit of Li & Bisang

DP
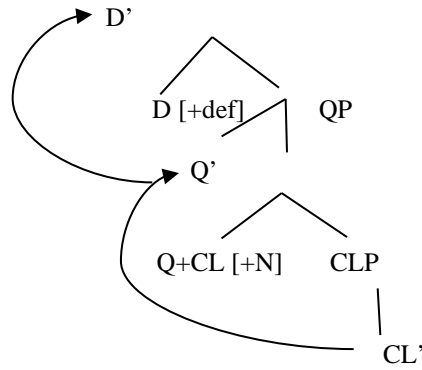
Fig. 4[12]

Magahi, being a head-final language, we see that noun is the last element in the phrase. In a prototypical case, it is the demonstrative which comes first in the NP proposition.

(15) u   t   ino   ləlkɑ
     kit   bwɑ
     let   e   əibe   kɑ
that three.all red.DD   book.CL gring.IMPF come.IMPF.3NH QN
Will you bring all the three red books?

The possibility of the occurrence of demonstrative at other positions in the above example (15) is either less acceptable or not acceptable. If we see the Li & Bisang (2011) proposal of having demonstrative in DP, there is no problem in having such projection. However, as motivated by Bhattacharya (1999) in the case of Bangla, and Thakur (2015) in the case of Hindi; demonstrative sits in the specifier of an XP level projection which is below the DP projection. Considering the space and scope of the paper, the further issues of projection of demonstrative have not been dealt. Also, because the syntax and semantics of demonstrative in this paper is not discussed in any detail, this also excludes the possibility of the discussion of the covert and overt D position and its further implication in the language.

Let's say, figure 4 is considered for the description of the Magahi Noun phrase, particularly, marked noun. It is very similar to Simpson (2005) analysis of Cantonese classifier. In this analysis, the head of determiner is the locus of (in)/definiteness. When the D is filled, it receives the definiteness interpretation and when it is empty, it receives indefiniteness. Li & Bisang (2011) argue that one piece of evidence that goes in favour of this explanation is the presence of classifier with proper name in Wu Chinese, where the [CL+proper name] is equivalent to a bare proper name. Longobardi (1994) argues that proper name generates in N but moves to D except when D is filled. In the case of CL+ proper name, it doesn't move. According to Cheng & Sybesma (1999), once the CL is filled, the CLPs receive either definite reading or generic reading, and are lexically not conditioned to government[13]. Similar conditions apply in the case of Magahi. The movement of cl-to-D, in the description of either Simpson (2005) or Li & Bisang (2011) may also be motivated due to the reason that in some cases the marked noun (classifier) doesn't produce definite reference (these cases can be attributed to the property of

no-movement of cl-to-D). However, for such a plausibility in Magahi, one has to think for more than one projection of DP. The lower DP may contain only the information regarding the N+CL and its interpretation as either of definite or not. Another similar motivation comes from analysis of Bangla NP by Chacon (2011). He proposes following Dasgupta (1983) and in the alignment of Simpson et al (2011), Dayal (2012), etc. that left-movement of NP in the nominal classifier phrase is motivated by definiteness. Unlike Bhattacharya (1999, 2000) who considers that it is a movement motivated by a classifier, the NP moves to the Spec of a complex head Num-CL. This has been challenged by Chacon (ibid), and he proposed that the moving site is the Spec of DP rather Spec of complex quantifier-classifier phrase. We have not considered the option of the movement of N to the left of the Num-Cla sequence. However, it, as suggested by Dayal (2012) in the case of Bangla, is a movement for definiteness.

The most natural order in the NP in Magahi is [Dem. +NumP + AdjP+ ClfP]. There is a conceptual problem is projecting a DP above clfP; the first problem is the conceptualization of clfP; the second is the conceptualization of DP in the given framework. If we have conceptualized a clfP based on the notion of Cheng & Sybesma (1999), we cannot have a higher projection in the form of DP. If we don't keep the notion of DP for the realization of noun, and only to the references, say it for demonstrative or possessive noun, there is no problem in having DP structure[14]. Classifier as a referential candidate, though an empirically strong claim, is not a universal characteristic (Jenks 2012). For the universalist and for that matter Cheng & Sybesma (2012), there is no harm in positing a DP above CLP, however, the motivation must be conceptually sound.

9. Conclusion

In Magahi, noun phrase (NP) is not the higher projection whether we consider the DP or not in the language. considering that DP projection in the language is not a problem, and further it helps in the realization of /-wɑ/ as both classifier and definite determiner. Bare noun, at the argument position, in the language is interpreted as either nonspecific indefinite or generic depending upon the form of the predicate. Marked noun (the form with the suffixed /-wɑ/) in the language is subject to definiteness; it has singularizing and an operator function which changes the type <e, t> to type <e> (Higginbotham 1985). We have argued and claimed that this is a classifier, more specifically a definite bare classifier in the language. We also posited a CLP whereby NP is selected by the CL for the definite interpretation. There are two forms of plural in the language; bare plural results the indefinite, and the marked plural definite (+familiarity, +maximality). Plural can occur freely in the language. It has been seen that the classifier has ambiguous interpretation with the proper or kinship names. It, more than definiteness, provides the social connotation, however, its presence with these elements makes the construction restricted. We have tried to offer a possible direction, following a typological direction. This is a working paper; therefore, it restricts itself in offering any rigid explanation though it has explained that noun phrase in Magahi has complex structure and there is the possibility of having more than one projection above the NP.

Abbreviation:
DD- Definite Determiner
PRS- Present Tense
PRF- Perfective
IMPF- Imperfective
CL- Classifier
NCL- Numeral Classifier

PL- Plural
H- Honorific
NH- Non-honorific
Neg- Negative Morpheme
PP- Post-Position
QN- Question Word
VOC- Vocative

End Notes

[1]There are some instances which are subject to regional and idiolectal occurrences. The third form is basically a form which is going towards the elsewhere form to achieve the definiteness.

[2] Though I don't have any empirical data to justify the claim; it can be understood as a working hypothesis.

[3]The association of the sound /-i/ with feminine is a question of the categorization of noun, though it doesn't strictly adhere to the semantic categorization. It also attributes the semantics of diminution to the inanimate noun.We have absorbed that the variants of /-wɑ/ particle functions as allomorphs. They are phonologically conditioned and are in complementary distribution. Due to the phenomenon of having -ɑ ending masculine reference and –i ending feminine in the language. The attachment of /-wɑ/, and /-yɑ/ gives an inkling of gender agreement. Also, the use of /-yɑ/, is used with feminine even if the words end with sound /-ɑ/, e.g., əurət - əurət iyɑ; sumən-sumniyɑ. This process is very productive, and is seen in the use. If it would be a regular phenomenon, these allomorphs will not only be limited to phonological conditioning but semantic conditioning as well. And this will produce a procedure under which the language can be a grammatical gender language. Since, I don't have ample amount of data to claim something very rigid, and also this is not the primary concern of the paper.

[4]Moreover, as claimed by Alok (2014) that adjective having uninterpretable phi-feature like gender, number also have +familiarity feature and, it is interpreted on noun. I disagree with Alok on this point as well. The suffix /-kɑ/ on adjective doesn't exactly have the same feature specification when it comes to the +familiarity marking. It has specificity, whereas /-wɑ/ has definiteness, as it is claimed in the literature. And, specificity and the definiteness is not quite the same (Ihsan & Puskas 2002)

[5]It is not implied that article-less languages are non-DP languages, in fact, my belief is entirely different. It is also not implied that only article languages project DP. Notwithstanding, keeping the debate in the literature alive (Boskovic 2008; Syed & Simpson 2017), a precautionary account is taken. In fact, Magahi does project higher projection, moreover, more than one DP is possible (Kumar 2019 forthcoming). However, for the sake of present understanding, non-article language can be divided into two types- classifier languages and non-classifier languages.

[6]Indefiniteness is again a very complicated concept. For that matter, every generic is a definite/indefinite. Further the presence/absence of numeral effects the reading of indefinite NPs, as in the case of empty numeral, we get nonspecific indefinite.

[7]Bare noun can yield definite reading in certain context, particularly, in the case of uniqueness derived from cultural/pragmatic or encyclopaedic knowledge.

[8]There are two complex issues at the play here, either the semantic proposition of proper name and the classifier has something to do with the name, because the classifier, as discussed, also has disparagement effect in the language, or one can argue that classifier doesn't behave the same way as the determiner (Wu& Bodomo 2009).

[9]For detailed discussion on Number morphology of Magahi, See Kumar (2018).

[10]One line of argumentation can be that Kinship term behaves more like a proper name, and assuming the argumentation of Longobardi (1994) and Cheng & Sybesma (1999) that a proper name moves to D/CL to satisfy the i-operator, similar case can happen in the case of Kinship term. Also, further data supports the claim, e.g. there are certain common noun in Magahi which can be interpreted like proper name in both the cases, i.e. marker with classifier (teacher) and unmarked (postman).

[11]The phenomenon of the occurrence of the definite bare noun at argument positions is complex and not yet a resolved issue. The movement hypothesis as postulated by both universalist and typologists is the best till date in which N-to-D/CL movement happens in the case of proper name or generic.

[12]We can think of the feature on Num^0 and D^0 as uninterpretable feature which must be checked in order to be valued and deleted. The movement can also be motivated for this reason as well.

[13]The problem with the above analysis is also about its universality characteristic. Jiang & Hu (2010) present the data from the language Yi, where CLPs can only be interpreted as indefinite, and occur freely to all positions. The nature of the data raises the question on status of the locus of definiteness D, and the occurrence of indefinite to the ECP restriction. Jiang & Hu (2010) claims that Yi, a Sino-Tibetan language, a SOV allows bare CLPs which can occur at both subject and object position and interpreted as indefinite. The various explanations try to find out the exact location of definiteness whether it is D or CL or something else, and the word order variation and (in)/definiteness. Jiang & Hu (2010) proposes an argumental operator Hypothesis. It is based on the claim that an expression which denotes definite, indefinite or generic is an argument. So, it says that argumental operator makes the phrase argumental. Argumetal operator takes type <e,t>, and returns a type <e> entity. It can apply to any level, i.e. NumP, CLP, bare NP level. Further, there are three types of argumental operators; definite, indefinite and generic.

$$XP$$

$$OP_{Gen/Def/Ind} \: XP \: [\text{Here XP could be NP, CLP, NumP}]$$
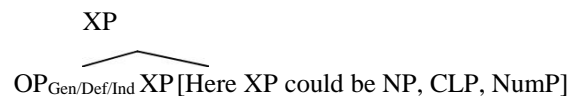
It says languages choose different operator on different levels. In this explanation the locus of the (in)/definiteness, and genericity is OP. So, in the languages that don't allow bare CLPs, such as Japanese, Korean, etc. the argumetal operator don't allow at bare CLP level. For languages like Cantonese only OP_{Def} applies at the bare CLP level. For the indefinite interpretation of CLPs in Cantonese and Mandarin, they assume an empty numeral 'one' in the structure, similar to Cheng & Sybesma (1999) explanation. So, indefinite are not bare CLPs but a numeral classifier phrase with empty numeral 'one'.

For Magahi, this explanation can work as well, for the bare CLPs one can say that OP_{Def} is at work. There is no bare CLPs indefinite reading. Bare noun is interpreted as either indefinite or generic. For The generic interpretation OP_{Gen} is at work.

[14] The debate surrounding whether an article-less language has DP or not is subject to not only the schema of NP but other structural plausibility. Magahi, positively, shows reasons to have a DP in its structure, however, is not an overtly discussed subject in the literature. The movement of noun, the semantics of adjective and determiners though hint in the direction of having a DP or DP like structure (Kumar 2019 forthcoming).

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