Definiteness, Specificity and DP Shells in Central Kurdish

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This study proposes that the Central Kurdish nominal phrase contains two DP layers, with one containing – and the other being contained by – the projection of Number (NumP). It argues that two markers of definiteness are realized in the nominal phrase, *-eke* (1a) and *–e* (1b).

(1) a. esp-**eke**   b. em   esp-**e**
         horse-DEF   'the horse'   this   horse-DEF   'this horse'

I argue that *–eke* realizes a different D, lower than the D spelled out by *-e*. The clearest syntactic evidence substantiating the two-DP-layer analysis is that the two Ds occur on different sides of Number.

(3) a. ew   esp-**an-e**   b. esp-**ek-an**
         that horse-PL-DEF 'those horses'   horse-DEF-PL 'the horses'

Semantically, the featural make-up of the two D categories is different: *–e* is arguably the spell-out of a D that merely bears specificity, while *–eke* realizes a D carrying definiteness proper, comprising both specificity anduniqueness. Here, definiteness is defined as the grammaticalization of specificity and uniqueness (See Enç 1991 and Lyons 1999).

Adopting Chomsky's (1995) Minimalist bottom-up derivational theory, the nominal phrases in (3a and 3b) are asumed to derive as shown in (4a and 4b), respectively.

(4)   a. [DP [NumP [NP ew esp]**i** –an   t**i**]**k** –e   t**k**]
        b. [NumP [DP esp**i** [DP -eke t**i**]]**k** -an   t**k**]

Accordingly, two structurally different DP projections occur in the Central Kurdish nominal phrase, with the projection of Number (NumP) intermediate between them.

References: • Chomsky, N. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge: MIT Press. • Enç, M. 1991. The semantics of specificity. *Linguistic Inquiry* 22: 1-25. • Lyons, C. 1999. *Definiteness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.