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# Definiteness and specificity in Abui

František Kratochvíl and Benidiktus Delpada<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

This paper discusses referential properties of articles in Abui. Abui deictic system (from which the articles were grammaticalised) makes a three-way contrast and alternates the viewpoint between the speaker and the addressee/hearer.<sup>2</sup> Discussions of definiteness revolve around the role of familiarity, and its status as a defining feature for definiteness and its relationship to uniqueness or identifiability (Gundel et al. 1993; Lyons 1999; Roehrs 2009, and many others).

Abui is a language with a deictic contrast in the definite articles (cf. Lyons 1999:55–56). The deictic contrast indicates whether the referent is discourse-immediate or not. Additional pragmatic functions, not unlike those in Bella Coola (Newman 1968; Davis and Saunders 1975) are also available, mapping the location of the referent in other dimensions, primarily in time and stance.

Systems with hearer-oriented articles are cross-linguistically rare but indicate that definiteness can be combined with other categories (Dryer 2014:241). Abui offers some insights about how the category of ‘familiarity’ may be structured. While

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<sup>2</sup> Languages with four or more deictic terms are rare, but if they occur, they typically involve the hearer as one of the points of reference (Diessel 2014:123).

Gundel et al. (1993) rank familiarity above the plain definiteness in their Givenness Hierarchy, in Abui, familiarity seems to run in parallel to definiteness and possibly extends to specificity. Another noteworthy property of the Abui system is the three-way distinction in indefinites, where specificity is marked and allows the viewpoint alternation as well.

Before presenting the Abui data, we first address the terminology here, in light of the recent discussion about the distinction between articles and demonstratives (Davis et al. 2014; Dryer 2014). We then present the most important points about definiteness and specificity debated in the literature. Section 1.2 places the Abui system in the context of the Timor-Alor-Pantar family, showing that complex systems are the norm for this family. Section 2 describes the referential properties of Abui NPs in various constructions discussed in connection to definiteness in the literature. We base our discussion on naturally occurring sentences, but systematically manipulate the articles to obtain full paradigms and to show the basic contrasts. The behavior of Abui articles in natural discourse is not discussed here, but has been discussed briefly in Kratochvíl (2015) and will be elaborated on in a separate paper.

### 1.1. Terminology and tests

The line between demonstratives and articles is blurred and subject of vivid discussion lately (Dryer 2013a-b, 2014; Davis et al. 2014). Taking these two positions as representative of the range of views, Table 1 highlights the overlaps and differences. It should be noted that the defining criteria for articles in Dryer's (2013a-b, 2014) are looser than those listed in Davis et al. (2014).

FEATURE	Dryer 2013a-b, 2014	Davis et al. 2014
MORPHOLOGY	free or bound form	bound form
SYNTAX	obligatory or optional	obligatory
FAMILIARITY	familiar	familiar
UNIQUENESS	unique	unique
DEMONSTRATIVES	included	excluded
CONTRASTS	anaphoric vs. shared knowledge	n.a.
SEMANTIC TESTS	n.a.	maximality (plurals and mass)

Table 1. Defining criteria for definite articles

If the definition by Davis et al. (2014) were followed here, the Abui forms could not be considered articles, because they are not obligatory. It will be shown below, that the use of Abui articles interacts with case marking and agreement, both of which are sensitive to referential properties of the marked arguments.

The broader definition used by Dryer (2013a, b; 2014) accommodates for the situation in many languages where the spatial-deictic forms (accompanied by a pointing gesture) are also used with nominals in contexts where English would use a definite article, rather than a demonstrative (Dryer 2013a). The definition of indefinite articles in Dryer (2013b) is also more flexible; it includes also the numeral ‘one’ marking NPs to signal indefiniteness (referent not known to the hearer).

Although Dryer’s framework does not explicitly list semantic tests, the typology of articles is constructed with reference to both individual languages as well as literature dealing with definiteness and specificity. We therefore examine the behavior of the Abui articles using the known tests (Partee 1972; Enç 1991; Gundel et al. 1993; Matthewson 1998; Lyons 1999; Von Heusinger 2002; Abbot 2004; Levinson 2004; Roehrs 2009, and others).

Definiteness is traditionally defined with reference to *uniqueness* and *familiarity* (Lyons 1999; Abbot 2004, and others). Noun phrases marked as definite (in English with *the*) denote entities known to both speaker and hearer (Lyons 1999:3). In earlier accounts of definiteness, such entities would be described as familiar, but the current consensus seems to be to anchor definiteness in a more general notion of *identifiability* (Lyons 1999:5). Definite noun phrases denote entities, which the hearer

can unambiguously identify. Since some definite noun phrases can refer to entities that are not identifiable, the notion of uniqueness has been introduced.

The notion of uniqueness has seen a similar revision. Initially, uniqueness was understood as the existence of one and only one entity matching a definite description (Abbot 2004:125). However, since Hawkins (1978), *uniqueness* has been replaced with *inclusiveness* – reference to the totality of entities or matter to which the descriptive content of the NP applies (Lyons 1999:11; Abbot 2004:126).

Certain syntactic environments have been shown to be sensitive to definiteness or specificity. We will discuss some of those environments here and some when presenting the relevant Abui data. Lyons (1999:16-17) discusses possessives, partitives, superlatives and existentials; in these constructions definite NPs pattern in the same way as proper names, possessed NPs, pronouns and NPs with universal quantifiers.

Definiteness is contrasted with indefiniteness and in some accounts also with specificity (Enç 1991, von Heusinger 2002). There are different views of the categorical status of *specificity*. Abbot (2004:144) considers specificity to be merely a pragmatic effect, while the underlying distinction is one of definiteness and indefiniteness. Specific description is defined as one where the speaker has a particular individual in mind (Abbott 2004:145). The classical example has two readings (from Partee 1972 via Abbott 2004:146).

- (1) John would like to marry a girl his parents don't approve of.

In the wide-scope reading, John's parents happen to dislike his girl. In the narrow-scope reading, John has picked a girl to offend his parents. The first reading has a more specific reference than the second. The ambiguity remains also when the tense and modality is manipulated:

- (2) John succeeded in marrying a girl his parents don't approve of.
- (3) John married a girl his parents don't approve of.

We will discuss the Abui equivalents of the above constructions in section 2.7. Von Heusinger (2002:246) summarizes informal characterizations of specificity in the

literature. The paper highlights speaker's certainty about the identity of the referent and the differences in identifiability between definite and specific descriptions (p. 249). Von Heusinger (2002:268) proposes that specific descriptions are referentially anchored to another object in the discourse. Further, specific NPs are not dependent on the matrix predicate and operators such as modal verbs and combine with *a certain* (Von Heusinger 2002:272). Lyons (1999:59) converges with the above descriptions and observes that marking of specificity is fairly widespread.

## 1.2. Demonstratives and articles in the TAP languages

In the Timor-Alor-Pantar family (TAP), the differences in ordering of NP constituents are minimal (Schapper 2014a:14). Uniformly, the NP final slot is reserved for referent tracking purposes by words labeled as demonstratives or articles. A prenominal deictic slot seems to be unique to Abui, and is therefore possibly a recent innovation.

### (1) proto-AP NP Template: Gen **N** Attr Num/Quant **Dem**

A number of features can be encoded by the Alor-Pantar demonstratives. In terms of Diessel's typology of demonstratives, features associated with deixis are the norm, but features of quality (ontology, animacy, humanness, sex, number, etc.) are absent. Visibility, knowledge, and viewpoint features embed perspectives of the speaker and hearer (Holton 2014:58; Schapper 2014b:310; and Kratochvíl 2014a:379).

language	DISTANCE	ELEVATION	VISIBILITY	KNOWLEDGE	VIEWPOINT	source
Western Pantar	+ (3-way)	+	+	-	-	Holton 2014:57-59
Teiwa	+ (2-way)	-	-	-	-	Klamer 2010:130-138
Kaera	+ (2-way)	?	?	?	?	Klamer 2014:117
Blagar	+ (2-way)	+	+	-	+	Steinhauer 2014:181
Adang	+ (2-way)	+	-	-	-	Robinson and Haan 2014:256-257
Abui	+ (3-way)	+	-	-	+	Kratochvíl 2011
Klon	+ (2-way)	+	?	?	?	Baird 2008:58-61
Kamang	+ (2-way)	-	-	+	-	Schapper 2014b:310
Sawila	+ (2-way)	-	+	-	-	Kratochvíl 2014a:376-377
Wersing	+ (2-way)	-	-	-	-	Schapper and Hendery 2014:469-470

Table 2. Features encoded by deictic words in Alor-Pantar languages

Western Pantar, Kamang, and Wersing have developed articles, transparently derived from demonstratives, typically tracking the definite-indefinite distinction. Definite and specific indefinite articles are known to originate in demonstratives (Diessel 1999:128; Heine and Kuteva 2002:109-111).<sup>3</sup> During the grammaticalisation, the generalization of meaning from spatial to discourse deixis often goes together with phonological reduction of the source form. The linear order however is universally preserved (Moravscik 2011:81-82). Because of this diachronic change pattern I conclude that the Abui prenominal spatial demonstratives are an innovation.

## 2. Referential properties of Abui Noun Phrases

In the context of complex systems of the Timor-Alor-Pantar family outlined above, the Abui system appears of to be of moderate complexity. This section outlines the referential properties of Abui Noun Phrases and marking of classic referential distinctions discussed in the literature, including Givenness Hierarchy (Gundel et al. 1993:275), possessed NPs, partitives, and combinations with Abui case markers (agentive *di*) and verbal agreement (head-marking).

Abui NP contains two slots that can be filled with deictic words, as shown in (4). Spatial-deictic forms occur in the prenominal slot (DEICT). Forms in the post-nominal slot point in discourse and interact with hearer's knowledge. A single NP may contain both DEICT and ART.<sup>4</sup>

- (4) Abui NP Template: DEICT GEN N ATTR NUM/QUANT ART

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<sup>3</sup> The rise of articles in some languages coincided with the disappearance of the case marking, but no direct causal relation between the two seems to exist (Lyons 1999:324-325). In AP languages, case generally not marked on demonstratives, so this is not relevant.

<sup>4</sup> The double-marked form is somewhat similar with the English ‘this X here’, except that the Abui forms in both slots must come from the paradigms given in Tables 3 and 4 respectively, while English uses the adverbial form *here* for the spatial deictic function. Abui possesses a separate paradigm of adverbial demonstrative forms (*ma* ‘be.PROX’, *ta* ‘be. PROX.AD’, *la* ‘be.MD’, *fa* ‘be.MD.AD’, and *ya* ‘be.DST’) which cannot occur in the DEICT slot of the NP.

A three-way distinction is made (proximal, medial, distal) with an additional dimension of viewpoint alternating between speaker and addressee (Kratochvíl 2007:162-163; Kratochvíl 2011:763-766; Dryer 2014:241). Elevation applies only to medial and distal forms.

## 2.1. Spatial deixis

The prenominal slot encodes spatial location of referents (Kratochvíl 2007:163). The inventory of deictic words that can occur in the prenominal position can be seen in Table 3. These forms combine with pointing gestures accomplished with fingers, hands, lips, eyebrows or chin (Levinson 1983:65-68; 2004:108). The shaded cells contain forms, which also occur in the phrase-final slot and will be discussed in 2.2.<sup>5</sup>

DISTANCE	VIEWPOINT (V)		ELEVATION	
	SPEAKER	ADDRESSEE	LOW	HIGH
PROXIMAL	<i>do</i> (PRX)	<i>to</i> (PRX.AD)	*	*
MEDIAL	<i>o, lo</i> (MD)	<i>yo</i> (MD.AD)	<i>ò</i> (MD.L)	<i>ó</i> (MD.H)
DISTAL		<i>oro</i> (DST)	<i>wò</i> (DST.L)	<i>wó</i> (DST.H)

Table 3: Abui prenominal deictic words

## 2.2. Articles

Abui articles are NP-final enclitics (in the current orthography, only the medial *o* is written together with the noun), which encode the referential status of the NP as either definite, specific, or indefinite and non-specific.<sup>6</sup> The articles are listed in Table 4.

<sup>5</sup> Although split-viewpoint systems are cross-linguistically rare, they are an alternative to systems conceptualizing space from egocentric perspective or from fixed coordinates of the environment (cf. Diessel 2014). The egocentric frame is multiplied to include the frame of the hearer, and presupposes therefore social cognition. The hearer frame is structured in the same way as the egocentric frame and could be therefore thought of as secondary (Diessel 2014:129-130). It will be interesting to study how the hearer frame is acquired by Abui children and affected in the ongoing language shift.

<sup>6</sup> Articles may undergo lengthening when the NP expresses a topical or agentive argument. The definite articles are grammaticalised from demonstratives; the specific articles from equative/similative demonstratives similar to the English *such* or the Slavic *kak ~ jak* (Arsenijević et al. 2014; Anderson and Morzycki 2015).

The definite articles preserve the deictic contrast between proximal and medial forms inherited from the demonstrative forms from which they were grammaticalized. Such systems, although not very common, are known in the definiteness literature. Lyons (1999:55-56) notes that distinctions of distance from the speaker and association with different person are occasionally found in simple definites, indicating the existence of [ $\pm$ PROX] feature independently of [ $\pm$ DEF]. Abui is a language where the same deictic features appear both on demonstratives and on the definite articles (grammaticalised from them).<sup>7</sup>

The addressee-based forms are part of the paradigm, but they no longer indicate that the deictic center is based in the addressee but rather familiarity, empathy, or noteworthiness, which will be discussed in more detail later. The indefinite cardinal article *nuku* originating in the numeral ‘one’ is also listed in the paradigm.<sup>8</sup> In addition, bare nouns can also have indefinite, non-specific reference. The definite and specific articles have undergone grammaticalisation into markers of relative and absolute tense, evidentiality and stance and became associated with the clause-final and sentence-final position when marking those categories (Kratochvíl 2011).<sup>9</sup>

IDENTIFIABLE FOR:	SPEAKER	ADDRESSEE	NEITHER
DEFINITE	<i>do</i> (PROX)	<i>to</i> (PROX.AD)	
	<i>o</i> (MD)	<i>yo</i> (MD.AD)	
SPECIFIC	<i>nu</i> (SPC)	<i>hu</i> (SPC.AD)	
INDEFINITE	<i>nuku</i>		

Table 4: Abui articles

<sup>7</sup> Newman (1969:304-305) shows that the feature [ $\pm$ VISIBLE] is maintained in both the article and demonstrative paradigms (weak and strong) of Bella Coola (also known as Nuxalk, Salishan, British Columbia, Canada). Davis and Saunders (1975:850-851) show that in addition to visibility, the Bella Coola contrast may encode deictic time.

<sup>8</sup> The numeral *nuku* ‘one’ is a regular reflex of the Proto-Alor-Pantar form \**nuk* ‘one’ (Holton and Robinson 2014:75). The specific articles are related to the equative and simulative demonstrative paradigm (ESD) *n-* ‘like.PROX’ ~ *w-* ‘like.MD’ ~ *h-* ‘like.DST’. The similarity between *nuku* and *nu* seems coincidental.

<sup>9</sup> Lyons (1999:60-62) discusses other languages that use definite articles to nominalize and to mark subordinated clauses. The grammaticalisation path from *determiners* to *tense markers* and higher categories is common and well attested (see for example Yap et al. 2011 and papers therein).

Demonstratives are considered definite, because their referent is identifiable (Lyons 1999:21). Their reference is not inclusive; it involves a contrast, clear or implied, between the intended referent and the potential set (Lyons 1999:17). The Abui definite articles mark not only that their referent is accessible to the hearer in the immediate or non-immediate context, but also whether or not the referent is familiar. Lyons (1999:21) points out that interpreting demonstratives is easier than inferencing simple definites because the speaker does the referent-identification for the hearer. Familiar articles in Abui highlight that the speaker may choose to do the referent-identification work from hearer's perspective. Familiarity, given a prominent role in the early accounts of definiteness, is given a systematic treatment in Abui.

In principle, we understand the notion of familiarity in terms of Gundel et al. (1993:278), as a special cognitive status, such that the hearer already has a representation in memory: in long-term memory if it has not been recently mentioned or perceived, or in short memory if it has. Referents marked as familiar may be previously mentioned by the hearer, or somehow associated with hearer's perspective. The interpretation is context-dependent and also interacts with the referential type (proper names vs. common nouns). The speaker may choose a familiar article to draw hearer's attention to a referent so that the common ground is updated with the presented information, or simply as an invitation to fill out the speaker's meaning (as the English *you know*).<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that familiarity is not treated as a scalar category in Abui, but the proximal and medial forms map the difference between immediate and non-immediate (usually past) context. The range of discourse uses of Abui familiar articles will be discussed in a separate publication.

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<sup>10</sup> Stubbe and Holmes (1995: 69) define the colloquial New Zealand English as a pragmatic device with two broad interactive meanings, quite similar to the Abui uses, namely: (i) a marker expressing speaker's confidence that the hearer shares the relevant knowledge, or reassuring the hearer of the validity of the proposition, and (ii) a marker of uncertainty about hearer's attitude or the linguistic precision of the description. Macaulay (2002) in a follow-up study of Scottish English highlights the fact that the use of *you know* may be quite idiosyncratic, and perhaps attributed to a personal speech style and the rhythmic organization of utterances (p. 765). The same study also shows that the use of *you know* does not appear to be primarily based on the assumption of shared knowledge (*ibid.*).

### 2.3. Referential properties of bare nouns, case marking and agreement

Referential properties of arguments and information flow are known to interact with their grammatical expression and trigger alternations in voice, case, and agreement marking (Hopper and Thompson 1980:253).<sup>11</sup> In Abui, only the specific and definite undergoer arguments (i.e. identifiable at least for the speaker) are indexed on the verb. Because the person indexing is obligatorily, the specific or definite reference of a noun can be inferred from the marking on the verb, as shown in (5). On the other hand, bare nouns without indexing have generic reference.

#### (5) Verbal agreement and definiteness

- a. *maama bataa faaqda*  
father [wood chop.IPFV]  
'father chops wood OR father is chopping wood'
- b. *maama bataa he-faaqda*  
father [wood 3.LOC-chop.IPFV]  
'father is chopping **the** wood, (a certain/known quantity of wood)'
- c. *kaai diking pee=ng mareei=ba arui kafia*  
dog fire.place near=SEE go.up.PFV=SIM [ashes scrape.IPFV]  
'the dog went up to the fireplace to scrape in ashes'
- d. *kaai diking pee=ng mareei=ba arui he-kafia*  
dog fire.place near=SEE go.up.PFV=SIM [ashes 3.LOC-scrape.IPFV]  
'the dog went up to the fireplace to scrape the ashes'

Undergoer arguments, which are possessed or contain a relative clause are interpreted as definite and have to be indexed on the verb, as in (6). Note than in (b), the structure is interpreted as a topic + comment sequence describing the settings of the prohibition expressed in the second clause. The leg is no longer an argument of the verb *kafia* 'scratch', although its reference remains definite.

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<sup>11</sup> Hopper and Thompson subsume definiteness and referentiality under their super-type of *Individuation* which also includes other contrasts such as proper vs. common nouns, animate vs. inanimate, concrete vs. abstract, singular vs. plural, and count vs. mass (1980:253).

(6) Verbal agreement and N + Rel

- a. *e-toku*    *ba yokung*    *nu*    *he-kafia*    *naha!*  
     [2SG.AL-leg    REL be.inflamed SPC] 3.LOC-scratch.IPFV not  
     ‘don’t scratch your inflamed leg!’

b. *e-toku*    *ba yokung*    *nu*    *kafia*    *naha!*  
     2SG.AL-leg TOP be.inflamed SPC<sub>RT</sub> scratch.IPFV not  
     ‘your leg is inflamed (so) don’t scratch (anywhere)!’

The same holds for the agentive arguments. Only specific arguments are marked with the agentive *di* (3AGT).<sup>12</sup> The adnominal pronoun functions as a personal determiner (Lyons 1999:141-145) and is interpreted as definite, being readily identifiable to the hearer.<sup>13</sup> The unmarked NP *moku loku* ‘children’ in (a) has a generic reading.

(7) Distribution of the agentive pronoun *di* (N *di*)

- a. ***moku loku kuul sakola he-sei***  
       [kid     PL]    must    school    3.LOC-come.down.IPFV  
       ‘children must attend school’                                      B3.3.2

b. ***moku loku di kuul sakola he-sei***  
       [kid     PL    3AGT]    must    school    3.LOC-come.down.IPFV  
       ‘the children must attend school’                              B3.3.2

The primary function of the pronoun *di* (3AGT) is to mark arguments characterized by volition and control, almost always animate. When these two conditions are not met,

<sup>12</sup> The third person pronoun *di* is innovated in Abui. The reconstructed pAP form is \**ga* (Holton et al. 2012:115), whose regular reflex in Abui should be \*\**ha*. It is possible that *di* (and *da* in some dialects) originates in the proximal demonstrative *do*.

<sup>13</sup> Third person adnominal pronouns *dia* (SG) and *dorang* (PL) are also found in local Alor Malay, calquing the structures of the local Papuan languages. Similar uses, although including also pronouns of first and second person are found also in Papuan Malay (Kluge 2014:333, 383).

the third person pronoun *hedo*, belonging to a ‘plain-case’ paradigm, can be used instead.<sup>14</sup> Further, the pronoun *di* is not compatible with generic reference, as in (8).

(8) Generic reference and the agentive pronoun *di* (N *di*)

- a. *war-tama maiye, kumal tafuda mong-e*  
dry.season when [mosquito be.all] die.IPFV-PROG  
'when it is dry season, mosquitoes will be dying' B7.61.2
- b. *tuntama do, kumal di ne-l=takei*  
night PROX [mosquito 3AGT] 1SG.LOC-GIVE=bite.IPFV  
'last night, the mosquitoes were biting me' B7.34.3

Topical, fronted NPs may combine with demonstratives, in addition to the topic marker *hel* (3.TOP), but remain to be indexed on the verb.

(9) Topical NPs marked with demonstratives

- kawen do, a ha-komangdi-a naha!*  
machete PROX 2SG.AGT 3.PAT-blunt.PFV-CONT not  
'don't you blunt the machete' EVY.1114

These and other types of differential argument marking are described in detail in Kratochvíl (2014c).

#### 2.4. Possessives and partitives

Abui marks possessed nouns with a prefix indexing the person and number of the possessor. Possessors marked in this way are animate or individuated and the construction has a definite reference. A juxtaposition of two nouns, shown in (a) below, has a similar meaning but is analyzed as a compound whose reference is not restricted.

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<sup>14</sup> As the term ‘plain’ suggests, the CV*do* pronominal paradigm is not marked for agentive case, and is compatible with both A and U arguments. As A argument, it is followed by *di* (3AGT); as U argument, it may be indexed on the verb with a person prefix.

## (10) Possessor marking

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a. <i>fala ameeng</i>                                     | b. <i>fala he-ameeng</i>                   |
| house thatch  | house 3.AL-thatch                          |
| ‘house thatches, roofing grass’                           | ‘the house roof, thatches (for the house)’ |
| c. <i>mok-fala he-cet he-t-adafi</i>                      |  |
| church  | 3.AL-paint 3.LOC-DISTR.PAT-peel.off.PFV    |
| ‘the paint on the church (in this village) is peeled off’ |  |

Other types of possessive constructions exist, which do not require the possessed entity to be definite. The reference is inferred using the possessive marking and articles. This is shown in (11), where the NP *hemayol* ‘their wifes’ in (a) is definite, the NP *seeng nu* ‘money’ in (b) is indefinite and specific, and the NP *seeng* ‘money’ in (c) is indefinite and non-specific.

## (11) Other possessive constructions

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| a. <i>Ne-naana loku tafuda he-mayol ho-pa.</i>           | D.HOPA1 |
| 1SG.AL-older.sibling PL be.all 3.AL-wife 3.REC-have.IPFV |         |
| ‘All my older brothers have their wives.’                |         |
| b. <i>Seeng nu ne-i nahा.</i>                            | D.NEI.1 |
| money SPC 1SG.LOC-own.IPFV not                           |         |
| ‘(That certain) money is not mine.’                      |         |
| c. <i>Seeng no-pa nahा.</i>                              | D.NOPA1 |
| money 1SG.REC-have.IPFV not                              |         |
| ‘I do not have (any) money.’                             |         |

Abui partitives consist of two juxtaposed phrases: the first is an NP defining the set, the second one a quantifier phrase specifying the part to be taken. The set is always definite, but the marking is variable. In principle, the article is optional in partitives with possessive marking, but obligatory in the remaining cases. The Abui corpus contains examples of partitives with both proximal and medial forms: the proximal form is common with *tafuda* ‘all’. However, even the addressee-based medial form *yo*

can be used, as shown in (12), from which I conclude that this form marks definiteness or at least is compatible with it, as we will discuss later.

## (12) Abui partitives

- a. *na e-feela nuku hoo-k=siyeei*  
1SG.AGT [2SG.AL-friend]<sub>set</sub> one 3.GOAL-BRING=meet.PFV  
'I met one of your friends.' E15BDD5
- b. *na ne-feela loku yo mingwaaha hoo-k=siyeei*  
1SG.AGT [1SG.AL-friend PL MD.AD]<sub>set</sub> some 3.GOAL-BRING=meet.PFV  
'I met several of my friends.' E15BDD7
- c. *na feela loku yo nuku hoo-k=siyeei*  
1SG.AGT [friend PL MD.AD]<sub>set</sub> one 3.GOAL-BRING=meet.PFV  
'I met one of the (those) friends.' E15BDD9

## 2.5. Abui articles used with unique reference nouns

Nouns with unique reference in the given context (both situational and general) such as *tuong* 'priest' or *raha* 'chief, regent' occur with and without articles. The reference is established in the given context. While the addressee-based forms highlight the familiarity of the referent (immediate or established in the past), the forms *nu* and *hu* force indefinite readings and presuppose a set containing other types. The form *hu* indicates, that the type is familiar, implying, that the hearer is familiar with the composition of the larger presupposed set.

(13) *Yaal do na mook heesiyeeli naha.* 'I didn't go to the church today.'

- a. *Tuong ha-riik-e.*  
priest 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
'The priest is ill.' E15BDD55
- b. *Tuong do ha-riik-e.*  
priest PROX 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
'The priest is ill.' E15BDD56

- c. *Tuong to ha-riik-e.*  
 priest PROX.AD 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
 ‘The priest (familiar) is ill.’ E15BDD57
- d. *Tuong=o ha-riik-e.*  
 priest=MD 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
 ‘That priest (discourse-old) is ill.’ E15BDD58
- e. *Tuong yo ha-riik-e.*  
 priest MD.AD 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
 ‘That priest (familiar, discourse-old) is ill.’ E15BDD59
- f. *Tuong nu ha-riik-e.*  
 priest SPC 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
 ‘A priest (among other people responsible for the service) is ill.’ E15BDD60
- g. *Tuong hu ha-riik-e.*  
 priest SPC.AD 3.PAT-ill-PROG  
 ‘The only priest (familiar type) is ill.’ E15BDD61

The same contrasts are found with other unique reference nouns such as *raha* ‘king, chief, regent’.

## 2.6. Abui articles used with proper names

Abui definite and specific articles can be used with proper names. For specific articles we have to assume that they are underspecified for definiteness given their compatibility with proper names, and should not be analyzed as true indefinite articles (cf. Lyons 1999:51). In (14) we give an example of a question where the article following the proper name is systematically manipulated and we indicate the consequences for the context in the translation line. The hearer-oriented articles indicate familiarity with the person and could also be translated as *our Fani*. Another possible context is one in which the person has just been mentioned. The specific articles force a set interpretation, where *Fani* is a member of a group and is coming.

## (14) Abui articles with proper names - questions

- a. *Ma, Fani do yaal ko di sei?*  
 PART PN PROX today FUT 3.AGT come.down.IPFV  
 ‘By the way, will Fani come down today?’ EVY.1310
- b. *Ma, Fani do yaal ko di sei?*  
 PART PN PROX.AD today FUT 3.AGT come.down.IPFV  
 ‘By the way, will (our) Fani come down today?’ EVY.1310A
- c. *Ma, Fani=o yaal ko di sei?*  
 PART PN=MD today FUT 3.AGT come.down.IPFV  
 ‘By the way, will Fani (we talked about) come down today?’ EVY.1310B
- d. *Ma, Fani yo yaal ko di sei?*  
 PART PN MD.AD today FUT 3.AGT come.down.IPFV  
 ‘By the way, will Fani (we know) come down today?’ EVY.1310C
- e. *Ma, Fani nu yaal ko di sei?*  
 PART PN SPC today FUT 3.AGT come.down.IPFV  
 ‘By the way, will Fani (among others) come down today?’ EVY.1310D
- f. *Ma, Fani hu yaal ko di sei?*  
 PART PN SPC.AD today FUT 3.AGT come.down.IPFV  
 ‘By the way, will Fani (and no one else) come down today?’ EVY.1310E

Another example of a proper names combined with articles can be seen in the comparative construction in (15). We find similar effects as above. In this context, the proximal articles may be also used in the situation where *Maifan* is physically present when the comparison is made, or that the speaker has some special connection with *Maifan*. Both specific articles presuppose a set of other children to which *Maifan* belongs.

## (15) Abui articles with proper names - comparatives

- a. *Lema moku fila, Maifan do fing.*  
 PN kid be.young PN PROX be.eldest  
 ‘Lema is older than (our - exclusive) Maifan.’ EVY.700A

- b. *Lema moku fila, Maifan to fing.*  
 PN kid be.young PN PROX.AD be.eldest  
 ‘Lema is older than (our - inclusive) Maifan.’ EVY.700B
- c. *Lema moku fila, Maifan=o fing.*  
 PN kid be.young PN=MD be.eldest  
 ‘Lema is older than Maifan (earlier mentioned or less well-acquainted).’ EVY.700C
- d. *Lema moku fila, Maifan yo fing.*  
 PN kid be.young PN MD.AD be.eldest  
 ‘Lema is older than Maifan (less well-acquainted to us).’ EVY.700D
- e. *Lema moku fila, Maifan nu fing.*  
 PN kid be.young PN SPC be.eldest  
 ‘Lema is older than Maifan (among other kids).’ EVY.700E
- f. *Lema moku fila, Maifan hu fing.*  
 PN kid be.young PN SPC be.eldest  
 ‘Lema is older than only Maifan (among other kids).’ EVY.700F

We conclude that the proper names show similar effects with specific articles as nouns with unique reference discussed in section 2.5. The combinatory properties of common nouns with articles will be discussed in detail in section 2.8.

## 2.7. Indefiniteness and specificity

As discussed in section 1.1, indefinite and specific referents are both not identifiable to the hearer. Lyons (1999:49-51) claims that languages that only mark definiteness are the most common. Marking of indefiniteness only, or of both indefiniteness and definiteness is also a frequent pattern. Markers of indefiniteness are commonly derived from the numeral ‘one’ and encode cardinality. In case of the English *sm* (reduction of *some*), vague number is encoded, in addition to indefiniteness (Lyons 1999:50).

In Abui, indefinite non-specific referents are expressed either as bare nouns, or with the indefinite article *nuku*. Indefinite specific referents take *nu* or *hu*.<sup>15</sup> An example of the bare noun expression contrasted with one with specific reference can be seen in (16). In both cases the speaker is looking for a *taangwaala* ‘mediator’ whose role in the Abui traditional legal system is similar to that of an attorney. In the first example, the speaker has no particular mediator in mind, any will do (narrow scope). In the second case, the speaker knows precisely which mediator, but does not expect the addressee to know (wide scope).

(16) Indefinite reference of bare nouns

- a. *Na taangwaala tahai.*      *Na dara nuku h-ieng naha.*  
1SG.AGT mediator      search.IPFV 1SG.AGT still one 3.PAT-find.IPFV not  
'I am looking for a mediator. I have not found any yet.'      E15BDD77
- b. *Na taangwaala nu hee-l=tahai.*      *Na dara h-ieng naha.*  
1SG.AGT mediator      SPC 3.BEN-GIVE=search.IPFV 1SG.AGT still  
3.PAT-find.IPFV not  
'I am looking for a mediator. I have not found him yet.'      E15BDD76

Another set of examples (paraphrases of Partee’s examples 1972), illustrating the difference in marking of specific and indefinite referents in Abui is given in (17). The indefinite referent of *Flores mayool* ‘Flores girl’ is marked with the indefinite article *nuku* which originates in the numeral *nuku* ‘one’, matching a common cross-linguistic pattern, pointed out by Lyons (1999:50). Where the speaker has a specific referent in mind, the specific *nu* is used. Despite its superficial similarity with *nuku*, this form has a different source, and is related to the demonstrative root *n-* with a meaning similar to the English ‘certain, such’.

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<sup>15</sup> In the literature, the two types of indefinites are sometimes referred to as narrow-scope vs. wide scope indefinites. We present equivalents of the scope contrasts discussed in Matthewson (1999:88–92), showing that the Abui articles encode a similar contrast.

(17) Indefinite reference with *nuku*

- a. *Ne-noo-mi=ng maraang na Flores mayool nuku*  
     1SG.AL-1SG.GOAL-be.inside=SEE come.up.IPFV 1SG.AGT place woman INDEF  
*hee-l=mia.*                   *Na dara nuku kaang baai*  
     3.BEN-GIVE=marry.IPFV 1SG.AGT still one be.good also  
*hoo-k=sei*                   *naha.*  
     3.GOAL-BRING-meet.IPFV not  
     'I want to marry a girl from Flores. I haven't met one yet.'           E15BDD83

b. *Ne-noo-mi=ng maraang na Flores mayool nu*  
     1SG.AL-1SG.GOAL-be.inside=SEE come.up.IPFV 1SG.AGT place woman SPC  
*hee-l=mia.*                   *Nido te-feela wan tuung yeekna.*  
     3.BEN-GIVE=marry.IPFV 1PL.EXCL.FOC DISTR.AL-friend already year be.five.IPFV  
     'I want to marry a girl from Flores. We have been friends for five years.'

Definite and specific referents differ in whether or not the speaker is certain about the identity of the referent. Similarly to the definites, specifics are linked to previously established discourse referents, but indefinites and non-specifics are not (Enç 1991:9). Further, specificity entails existence, which is why in some languages, such as Turkish, specific referents are incompatible with negative existentials (Enç 1991:14-16). Abui specific articles may occur in negative existentials but they always presuppose a set and are therefore similar to the Turkish determiners such as *birkaç* ‘some’ and *hiçbir* ‘any’ (Enç 1991:15). We interpret these constructions as partitives, where the article follows the set-defining phrase and is followed by an empty quantifier, which can be made overt.

(18) Negative existentials and specific articles

- a. *Faring wiil ha-du naha.*  
many child 3.PAT-have.PRF not  
‘Many (people) did not have (any) child(ren).’ SULTAN59

b. *Faring wiil loku ha-du naha.*  
many child PL 3.PAT-have.PRF not  
‘Many (people) did not have (any) children.’ SULTAN59A

- c. *Faring wiil nu Ø hadu naha.*  
many [child SPC]<sub>SET</sub> 3.pat-have.prf not  
‘Many (people) did not have (such) children.’ SULTAN59B
- d. *Faring wiil hu Ø ha-du naha.*  
many [child SPC.AD]<sub>SET</sub> 3.PAT-have.PRF not  
‘Many (people) just did not have children (had other things).’ SULTAN59C
- e. *Faring wiil nu nuku wala ha-du naha.*  
many [child SPC.AD]<sub>SET</sub> one only 3.PAT-have.PRF not  
‘Many (people) just did not have a single one of such children.’ SULTAN59D

Contextually identifiable referents (cf. Lyons 1999:3-6) are marked in Abui also with the specific article *nu*, as in (19). English uses in these contexts the definite article although the referents are not familiar to the hearer, but the physical situation makes them identifiable.

## (19) Situational uses of the specific article

- a. *Tila nu latukoi ming-fikda naha, di sik-i=he!*  
rope SPC very.much APPL-tighten.IPFV not 3.AGT snap-PFV=PROH  
Don’t tie the rope too tightly, don’t let it snap! EVY.689
- b. *Lukai-isi nu he-bakon-te!*  
pepper-fruit SPC 3.LOC-pluck.off.PFV-PRIOR  
‘Pluck those peppers!’ EVY.707

We have shown in section 2.3, that generic reference is encoded by bare noun phrases in Abui. Non-specific and specific indefinites are systematically distinguished by *nu/hu* vs. *nuku*. Situationally identifiable referents (definite in English) are marked as specific in Abui.

## 2.8. Givenness hierarchy

Gundel et al. (1993) consider familiarity and uniqueness to be distinct cognitive statuses, which are part of Givenness Hierarchy. The cognitive status of typical definite NPs is lower than that of *activated information* (marked with demonstratives)

and *information in focus* (marked with pronouns). The hierarchy is reproduced in Table 5.

COGNITIVE STATUS	English	Definition
IN FOCUS	<i>it</i>	the referent is in short-term memory and at the current center of attention
ACTIVATED	<i>that, this, this N</i>	the referent is represented in current short-term memory
FAMILIAR	<i>that N</i>	the hearer already has a representation in memory (in long-term memory if it has not been recently mentioned or perceived, or in short memory if it has)
UNIQUELY IDENTIFIABLE	<i>the N</i>	the hearer can identify the intended object on the basis of the nominal alone, but the identifiability does not have to be based on previous familiarity
REFERENTIAL	indefinite <i>this N</i>	the speaker intends to refer to a particular object; the hearer has or is able to construct a representation
TYPE IDENTIFIABLE	<i>a N</i>	the hearer is able to access a representation of object described

Table 5: Givenness Hierarchy (Gundel et al. (1993:275-280)

The contrasting sentences in (20) show the Abui equivalents of the dog-sentences from Gundel et al. (1993) exemplifying the Givenness Hierarchy. The sentences are modified to explore all possible contrasts in Abui. We start at the bottom of the hierarchy, with the examples of non-uniquely identifiable objects. Indefinite reference is marked with the article *nuku*. Specific referents (known to the speaker only) are marked with the articles *nu* and *hu*. The addressee-based form *hu* indicates that the hearer is able to identify the type and that the type is in some way noteworthy. This contrasts with the function of the specific articles with proper names and with nouns with unique reference, where the specific articles presupposed a set. With ‘noteworthiness’ I mean a category similar to the Slavic ‘dative of empathy’ (DE), related to the ‘ethical dative’ and ‘dative of interest’ in some Indo-European languages (Fried 2011).<sup>16</sup> The category has an interpersonal function and highlights to

<sup>16</sup> Dative of empathy (DE) is a special type of dative, resembling ungoverned datives (Dative of Interest), which ‘always mark human referents with some interest in the reported event’ (Fried 2011: 4). DEs ‘serve a discourse-deictic function in speaker-hearer relations’ (Fried 2011: 5), but unlike the Abui addressee-based forms, DEs are speaker-oriented.

the hearer what the speaker deems to be worth of hearer's interest, eliciting hearer's empathy and attention. The information in (e) below has a flavor of surprise on the side of the hearer and puzzlement about what happened and invites the hearer to reason about the event.

- (20) *El tuntama na taa beeka.* 'Last night I couldn't sleep.' (indefinite)

- a. *Kaai fala baleekna mia panen=ba n-ieng moopi naха.*  
[dog house surround.IPFV be.in]<sub>RC</sub> make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye sleepy.PFV not  
'A dog (next door) kept me awake.' E15BDD15
- b. *Kaai (nuku) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
[dog INDEF]<sub>NP</sub> make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
'A dog kept me awake.' E15BDD16
- c. *Heel kaai (nuku) (do) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
[3TOP dog one PROX]<sub>NP</sub> make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
'This dog (next door) kept me awake.' E15BDD18-9
- d. *Kaai nu (di) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
[dog SPC]<sub>NP</sub> 3.AGT make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
'A certain dog kept me awake.' E15BDD24
- e. *Kaai hu (di) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
[dog SPC]<sub>NP</sub> 3.AGT make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
'(Imagine) a dog kept me awake.' E15BDD25

As shown above, the definite NPs encode two different cognitive statuses: uniquely identifiable and familiar. Abui data shows that a further division is possible. The proximal forms seem to mark representations available in the 'immediate context', be it short-term memory or general knowledge. Medial forms portray the uniquely identifiable object as not being in the immediate context. The familiarity distinction is available to both.

- (21) *El tuntama na taa beeka.* ‘Last night I couldn’t sleep.’ (definite)

- a. *Kaai do (di) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
 [dog PROX]<sub>NP</sub> 3.AGT make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
 ‘The dog kept me awake.’ E15BDD20
- b. *Kaai=o (di) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
 [dog=MD]<sub>NP</sub> 3.AGT make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
 ‘That dog (previously mentioned) kept me awake.’ E15BDD22
- c. *Kaai to (di) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
 [dog PROX.AD]<sub>NP</sub> 3.AGT make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
 ‘The (familiar) dog kept me awake.’ E15BDD21
- d. *Kaai yo (di) panen=ba n-ieng ariidi.*  
 [dog MD.AD]<sub>NP</sub> 3.AGT make.PFV=SIM 1SG.INAL-eye open.up.PFV  
 ‘That (familiar) dog kept me awake.’ E15BDD23

The notions of ‘immediate’ vs. ‘non-immediate context’ appealed to above will be discussed in a separate publication focusing on natural discourse, and were sketched in Kratochvíl (2015). At this stage it will suffice to say that representations in ‘non-immediate context’ may also be created by accommodation of presupposition associated with the ‘familiar’ forms.<sup>17</sup>

Forms indicating activated cognitive status are shown in (22). One possibility is to use any of the deictic pronouns, discussed in section 2.1, providing the dog is visible, as in (a). The other option involves using a headless relative clause consisting of the classificatory posture verb *it* ‘be (for non-humans)’ followed by an article.<sup>18</sup> With proximal and medial articles, the dog is visible. With the specific article, the dog is absent, but the speaker is nodding towards dog’s location in the night, when it was barking. Finally, the agentive pronoun *di* can fully replace the NP, as in the English equivalent.

<sup>17</sup> ‘If at time *t* something is said that requires presupposition *P* to be acceptable, and if *P* is not presupposed just before *t*, then – *ceteris paribus* and within certain limits – presupposition *P* comes into existence at *t*.’ (Lewis 1979:340, via Abbott 2004:134)

<sup>18</sup> Many Papuan languages use posture verbs to classify nouns in context where English would use simply the verb ‘to be’ as in *there is a dog...* A recent summary of the known systems can be found in Rumsey (2002). The Abui facts are briefly outlined in Kratochvíl (2007:10).

The Abui forms exemplified above are arranged in a customized Givenness Hierarchy in Table 6.<sup>19</sup> For Abui, uniquely identifiable objects can be marked as familiar with the addressee-based forms. For specific reference (lower end of the same hierarchy), addressee-based form mark a form of familiarity which we term here as ‘noteworthiness’.

<sup>19</sup> The shorthand CLV stands for classificatory verbs (*it* ‘be put flat’, *mih* ‘be put upright’, *taa* ‘lie’, *mit* ‘sit’, *natet* ‘stand’ and *tili* ‘hang’).

COGNITIVE STATUS	Abui [speaker- viewpoint]	Abui [addressee- viewpoint]	Modified definition
IN FOCUS	<i>di</i>		the referent is in short-term memory and at the current center of attention
ACTIVATED [DEMONSTRATIVE]	<i>do, lo/o, ð, ó,</i> <i>wò, wó, oro</i>	<i>to, yo</i>	the referent is represented in current short-term memory and visible
ACTIVATED [RELATIVE CLAUSE]	CLV <i>do,</i> CLV= <i>o,</i> CLV <i>nu</i>	CLV <i>to,</i> CLV <i>yo,</i> CLV <i>hu</i>	the referent is represented in current short-term memory and visible or invisible
UNIQUELY IDENTIFIABLE (IMMEDIATE)	N <i>do</i>	N <i>to</i>	the hearer can identify the intended object on the basis of the nominal alone, but the identifiability does not have to be based on previous familiarity; the intended object is located within the immediate context (including general knowledge)
UNIQUELY IDENTIFIABLE (NON-IMMEDIATE)	N <i>o</i>	N <i>yo</i>	the hearer can identify the intended object on the basis of the nominal alone, but the identifiability does not have to be based on previous familiarity; the intended object is located outside the immediate context (but within the general knowledge)
REFERENTIAL	N <i>nu</i> <i>heel N do</i> <i>heel N o</i> <i>heel N nu</i>	N <i>hu</i> <i>heel N to</i> <i>heel N yo</i> <i>heel N hu</i>	the speaker intends to refer to a particular object and can indicate where it is located in the context; the hearer has or is able to construct a representation which can be marked as noteworthy
TYPE IDENTIFIABLE	N ( <i>nuku</i> )		the hearer is able to access a representation of object described

Table 6: Givenness Hierarchy (Gundel et al. 1993) for Abui

Arkoh and Matthewson (2013) discuss the uses of the familiar article *nu* in Akan. In Akan, the familiarity is only compatible with the definite reference, and incompatible with indefinites, where a dedicated article *bí* ‘a certain’ is used (p. 7). There is also a dedicated definite article *nó* covering the ‘uniquely identifiable’ category in the Givenness Hierarchy (Akhoh and Matthewson 2013:7). Unaware of another language with a similar split in the specific category, we use the label ‘noteworthiness’ rather than ‘familiarity’, which is traditionally understood as being restricted to uniquely identifiable referents.

### 3. Discussion

This paper mapped the uses of the Abui demonstratives and articles. The article paradigm encodes in a systematic manner definiteness, indefiniteness, and specificity. For definite reference, proximal and medial forms distinguish two degrees of distance in the ‘immediate context’. In addition, familiarity and noteworthiness are marked by hearer-oriented articles. Abui articles may co-occur with proper nouns and with some pronouns. The hearer-oriented forms have a variety of interesting discourse uses, often related to stance, which will be discussed in a separate paper.

The Abui system offers an insight into the category of familiarity, which is often taken to be another dimension of definiteness (Lyons 1999:6). Familiarity seems to be a separate category possibly also available for specific reference, allowing the speaker to express confidence that the hearer shares the relevant knowledge, or to reassure the hearer that he can do so. While in Akan, the familiar article *nv* introduces a presupposition that the relevant discourse referent is present in the common ground between speaker and hearer (Arkoh and Matthewson 2013), the Abui familiar articles have a greater range of functions. As pointed out by Stubbe and Holmes (1995) and Macaulay (2002) the English hearer-oriented ‘you know’ sometimes marks speaker’s uncertainty about hearer’s attitude, or about the precision of the description and their use could be quite idiosyncratic and dependent on personal speech styles. The same seems to be true for the Abui familiar forms.

Finally, Abui makes a three-way contrast in indefinites distinguishing formally indefinite non-specific referents (a.k.a. narrow scope indefinites, marked with *nuku*) from specific indefinites (wide-scope indefinites, marked with *nu* or *hu*).

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