Bare Singulars and Pseudo-Incorporation in Western Armenian

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Introduction

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- **Previous literature (Dayal 2004):** The singular (at least in English) is ambiguous between denoting a property of kinds and a property of objects.

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  - In WA, certain Pseudo-Incorporating (PI) nominal elements can only be modified by kind-level adjectives.
  - This cannot be captured by restricting what can undergo PI to kind-level denotations (cf. Sağ 2019), as object-level denoting nouns can also PI.
  - The modification restriction follows naturally if we assume that the bare singular always denotes a (property) of kinds in WA.

Covert plurals

- WA allows 'Num Noun' constructions of the form 'Num N_{sg}' (Bale et al. 2011, Bale & Khanjian 2014):

(1) jerek (had) aʃagerd
three (CLF) student

(2) jerek (had) aʃagerd-ner
three (CLF) student-PL

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- 'Num Noun' constructions like (1) (covert plurals) can trigger either singular, (3), or plural, (4), verbal agreement (Sigler 1997):

(3) jerek aʃagerd inga-v
three student fall-PST.3SG
'Three students fell'

(4) jerek aʃagerd inga-n
three student fall-PST-3PL
'Three students fell'

- **Focus:** Covert plurals that show singular agreement (non-agreeing)

Bare Sg Pseudo-Incorporate

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- Bare sg take low scope:

(6) John-ə manug tʃə tasdiajarage-ts
John-DEF child NEG educate-PST.3SG
'John did not educate any children' ($\neg > \exists$, *$\exists > \neg$)

DOM patterns

- Animate full DPs in WA are marked dative in object position (DOM):

(7) John-ə manug-i-n tasdiajarage-ts
John-DEF child-DAT-DEF educate-PST.3SG
'John educated the (unique) child'

(8) ??John-ə manug-ə tasdiajarage-ts
John-DEF child-DEF educate-PST.3SG
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Bare Sg and DOM

- Bare singulars resist the dative, even if animate:

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- So bare sg do not behave as full arguments. We can understand these patterns if we take bare sg to PI (Massam 2001).

Covert plurals PI

- Non-agreeing Covert plurals behave just like bare sg with respect to the PI diagnostics:
- (11) shows low scope:

(11) jerek aʃagerd tʃ-inga-v
three student NEG-fall-PST.3SG
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- **Conclusion:** Non-agreeing covert plurals undergo PI.
- **NB:** Non-agreeing covert plurals denote object-level properties.

Modification 1

- Bare Sg in WA allow modification only by kind-level adjectives (this observation is also made in Sağ 2019).

(13) jereg, John-ə fantasi/ # hin kirk garta-ts
yesterday, john-DEF fantasy/ # old book read-PST.3SG
'Yesterday, John read fantasy/ old book(s)'

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  - The bare sg is ambiguous between object-level and kind-level properties.
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- **However, WA allows PI of object-level properties**. Therefore, PI in WA cannot be restricted to just kinds.

Modification 2

- Covert plurals show the same restrictions with regards to modification as bare singulars.

(14) hink (had) jevropagan zinvor mertsə-ve-ts-av
5 CLF European soldier kill-PASS-AOR-PST.3SG
'Five European soldiers were killed'

(15) hink #(had) anoti zinvor mertsə-ve-ts-av
5 CLF hungry soldier kill-PASS-AOR-PST.3SG
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- **Claim:**
  - We **cannot** account for these patterns **by restricting PI** to just kinds.
  - But we **can** account for them **by restricting the bare sg** to just kinds (leaving PI unrestricted).

Analysis in a nutshell

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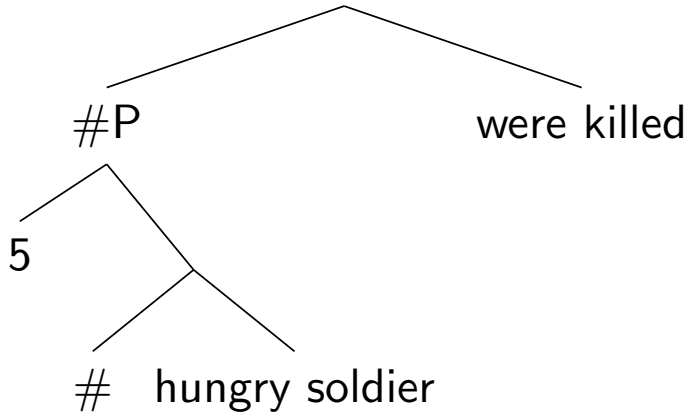
- When bare sg/covert plural without a CLF PI $\rightsquigarrow$ the kind needs to be instantiated. This is costly for non-well-established kinds.
- Covert plurals with a CLF $\rightsquigarrow$ the classifier is responsible for instantiating the kind directly. So no cost incurred during PI.

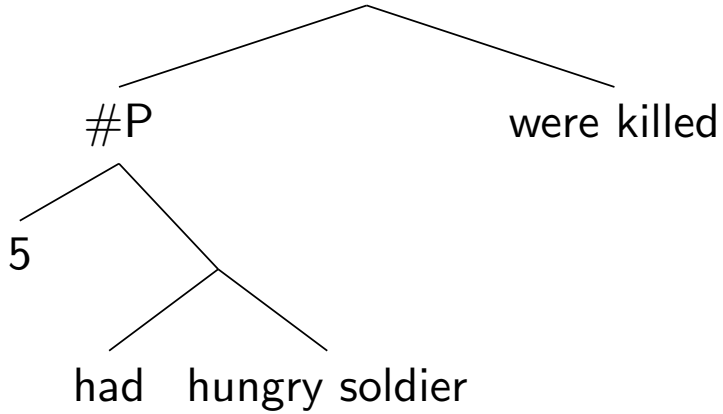
Some syntax

- We will assume the following syntax for covert plurals (evidence for this also comes from agreement, see Kalomoiros (forthcoming)):

(16)



(17)



Patterns:

- Recall the patterns we are trying to capture:
  - **Generalization 1:** Bare singulars, and covert plurals + kind level adjectives $\rightsquigarrow$ felicitous in an out-of-the-blue context.
  - **Generalization 2:**
    - Bare singulars, and covert plurals + object level adjective $\rightsquigarrow$ felicitous only if the context establishes the relevant subkind.
    - Covert plurals with an overt classifier are fine in an out-of-the-blue context regardless of adjective type.

Analysis: Preliminaries

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Analysis: Preliminaries

- **From Dayal 2004**: Bare sg denote properties of singular kinds. These are taxonomic individuals (technically groups in the sense of Landman 1989).
- **Diverging from Dayal**: At least in WA, bare sg only denote properties of kinds.
- PI is broken down into three components: **(1)** Restriction (Chung & Ladusaw 2004), **(2)** Sort Adjustment (if necessary), **(3)** Existential Closure.

Restriction: If α is branching node, and $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ the set of its daughters, where $[[\beta]] = \lambda x.P(x)$ and $[[\gamma]] = \lambda x_1 \ldots \lambda x_n.Q(x_1, \ldots, x_n)$, then $[[\alpha]] = \lambda x_2 \ldots \lambda x_n \lambda x_1.\ Q(x_1, \ldots x_n) \wedge P(x_1)$.

Analysis: Some tools

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(19) **DSKP:** Let F be a function of the form $\lambda x_1 \ldots . \lambda x_n . \alpha$, defined on object-level entities and where α is some formula. Let k be a singular kind. Then, restricting x_i $(1 \leq i \leq n)$ to k, i.e. $\lambda x_1 \ldots . \lambda x_i \ldots . \lambda x_n . \alpha \wedge x_i = k$, is equivalent to restricting x_i to the instantiations of k, i.e. $\lambda x_1 \ldots . \lambda x_i \ldots . \lambda x_n . \alpha \wedge belong - to(x_i, k)$

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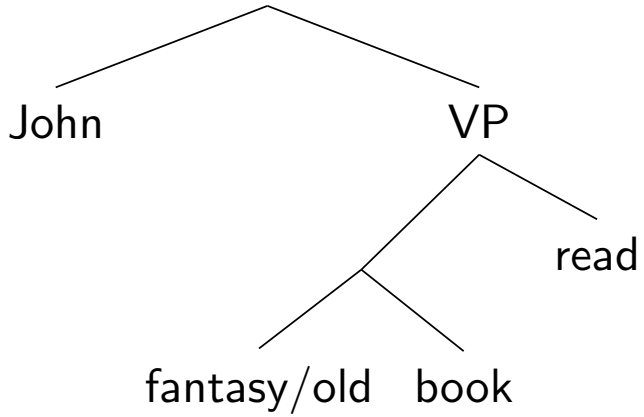
- The key is whether the $belong - to$ relation that instantiates the kind is established via DSKP or not.

Bare Singulars

(21)



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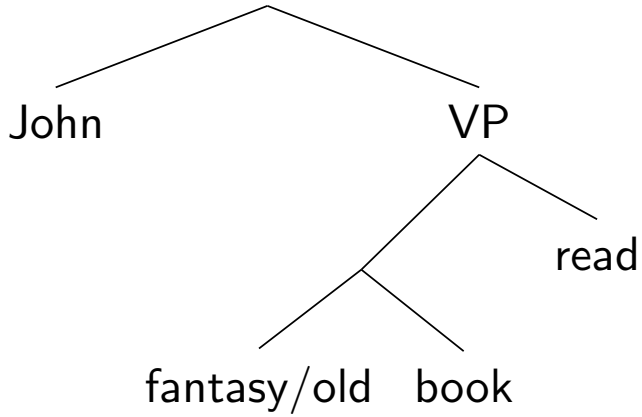

(22) $[[book]] = \lambda x.x = BOOK$

$[[read]](\lambda x.x = OLD\ BOOK) \xRightarrow{Restrict} \lambda y.\lambda x.read(y)(x) \wedge x = OLD\ BOOK \xRightarrow{DSKP} \lambda y.\lambda x.read(y)(x) \wedge belong - to(x, OLD\ BOOK) \xRightarrow{\exists - closure} \lambda y.\exists x[read(y)(x) \wedge belong - to(x, OLD\ BOOK)].$

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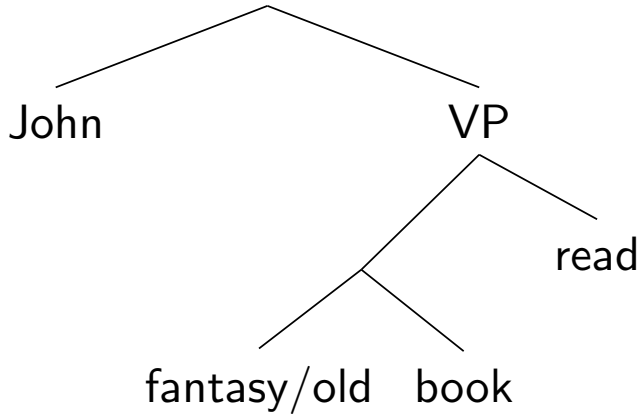

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- Because DSKP was used to instantiate a non-well-established kind that has no contextual support, a cost is incurred; thus 'old book' is infelicitous.

Covert plurals: covert classifier

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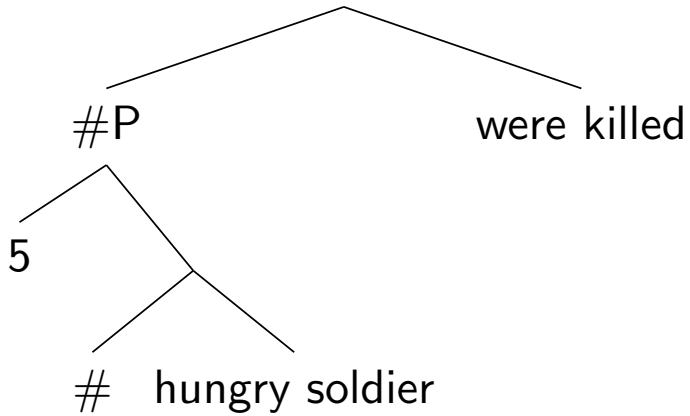

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(25) $[[soldier]] = \lambda x.x = SOLDIER$

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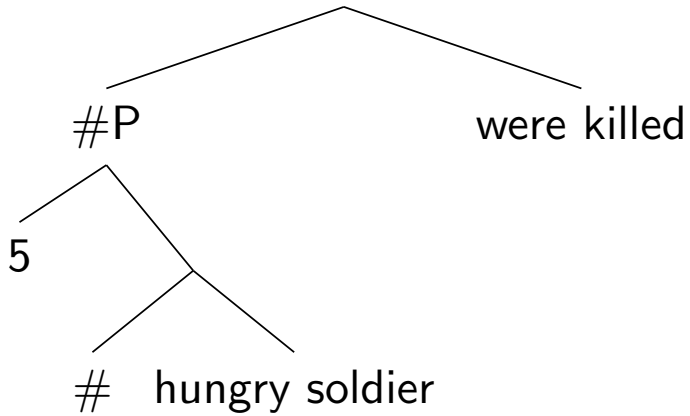

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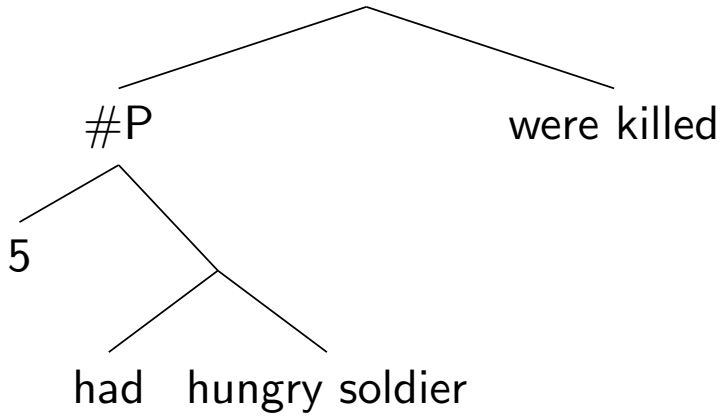
$[[\#]](\lambda x.x = HUNGRY\ \ SOLDIER) \Rightarrow \lambda x_e.x = HS \wedge |x| = 5 \xRightarrow{DSKP}$
$\lambda x_e.belong - to(x, HS) \wedge |x| = 5 \xRightarrow{Restrict,\ \exists} \exists x[belong - to(x, HS) \wedge |x| =$
$5 \wedge were - killed(x)]$

Covert plurals: overt classifier

(26)



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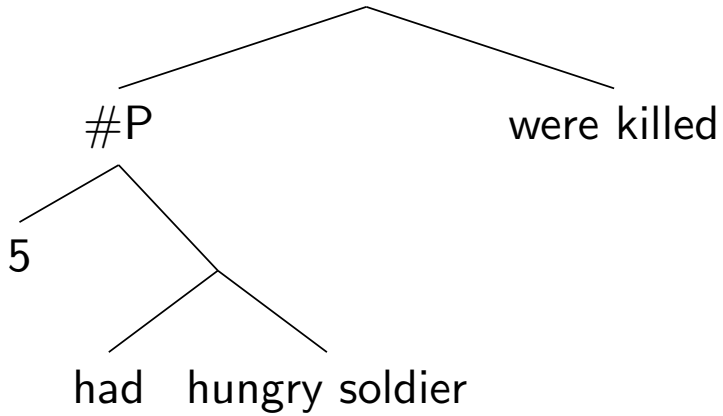

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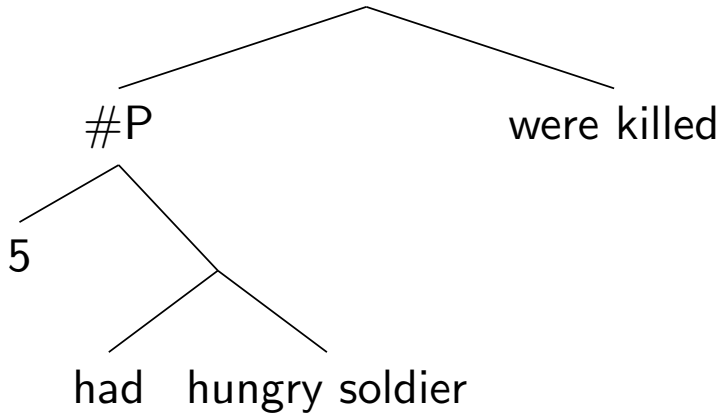

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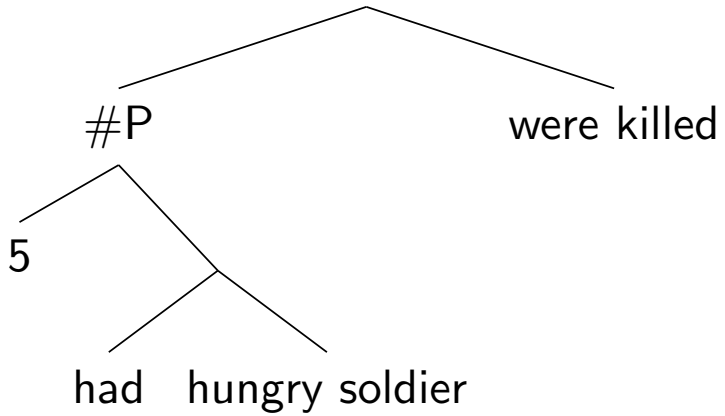

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- DSKP is not used here, so no contextual cost is incurred.
- So, we capture the patterns: Modification with object-level adjectives is costly, unless there is contextual support or an overt classifier.

Definites

▶ A definite in WA, [N-DEF], can mean either 'the N kind', (28), or 'the unique N':

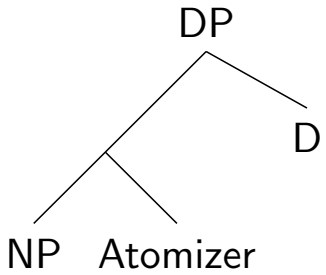
(28) John-ə ʃun-ə pənatʃəntʃe-ts
John-DEF dog-DEF make.extinct-PST.3SG
'John made the dog kind extinct'

(29) John-ə manug-i-n tasdiajarage-ts
John-DEF child-DAT-DEF educate-PST.3SG
'John educated the (unique) child'

Definites

- To capture this in the absence of ambiguity of the bare singular, we need a head to instantiate the kind:

(30)



(31) $\lambda P_{et}.\lambda x_e.belong - to(x, \iota y P(y)) \wedge Atom(x)$

- $[[child\ Atomizer]] = \lambda x_e.belong - to(x, CHILD) \wedge Atom(x)$
- This is the set of instantiations of the child-kind that are atoms.
- The definite article then will return the unique such instantiation if there is one; it will be undefined otherwise.

DSKP and subjects

- Given that DSKP is a general operation, one might expect that it has no positional restrictions.

(32) meɣu-??(mə) Marjam-i-n gə-xajte gor
bee-(INDEF) Mariam-DAT-DEF INDC-sting PROG
'A bee is stinging Mariam'

- (32) would appear to go against this idea.
- But it's plausible that bare singulars just cannot move to [Spec, TP] because they lack a D layer. Full DPs on the other hand can, but they do not require DSKP to compose with the verb.

DSKP and subject

- Covert plurals can be in [Spec, TP]. In that case, they show full agreement and take obligatorily high scope. In that case, DSKP seems to apply:

(33) ??hink anoti zinvor merts-ve-ts-an
five hungry soldier kill-PASS-AOR-PST.3PL
'5 hungry soldiers were killed'

(34) hink had anoti zinvor merts-ve-ts-an
five CLF hungry soldier kill-PASS-AOR-PST.3PL
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- One wrinkle is that (33) does not seem to improve in a context that supports 'hungry soldier' as a type.

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