

Definiteness in A'ingae and its implications for pragmatic competition

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Abstract

The expression of indefiniteness and definiteness presents great cross-linguistic diversity, which makes the task of establishing semantic/pragmatic framework that generalizes over all different definiteness patterns an important challenge for semantic theory. In this chapter, we focus on the expression of definiteness in A'ingae, an underdocumented and endangered language isolate of Amazonian Ecuador and Colombia. The overall definiteness pattern of the language is: bare noun phrases can be used in all of indefinite, unique, and anaphoric definite noun phrases, while a dedicated anaphoric marker of A'ingae, *tsa*, can only be used in anaphoric definites. This lack of complementarity between the unique and anaphoric forms in A'ingae challenges previously proposed frameworks that rely on pragmatic competition and therefore predict a strict division between the unique and anaphoric forms in other languages. We propose that an alternative semantic-based framework, not pragmatic-based, is necessary to synchronically capture different definiteness patterns cross-linguistically.

Keywords: Definiteness, Anaphora, Uniqueness, Bare nouns, Pragmatic Competition, Maximize Presupposition, Cofán

1 Introduction

1.1 Definiteness cross-linguistically

The contrast between definiteness and indefiniteness encodes the semantic feature of “uniqueness” and/or “familiarity” of noun phrases, although the exact definitions of these two types of noun phrases tend to have a blurry boundary. On an intuitive level, for example, in (1a), the entity “person” is considered new in discourse, as it has not been mentioned and is not familiar to the interlocutors in the discourse. On the other hand, “person” in (1b) needs to be already salient and familiar to the interlocutors for the definite marker “the” to be felicitous.

- (1) a. I met *a person* yesterday.
- b. I met *the person* yesterday.

For definite noun phrases like (1b), analyses of English definiteness have identified two different kinds of definite uses, as in (2-3).

- (2) *Unique* definite: the content of a noun phrase can only be attributed to a single entity (in a given context).
 - a. *the professor* in our class
 - b. *the Queen* of England
- (3) *Anaphoric* definite: a noun phrase refers to an entity previously mentioned in the discourse.
 - a. I saw a movie yesterday. *The movie* was bad.

As shown in the above examples, English *the* allows for both uniqueness and anaphoric interpretations, and there has been extensive debate over the relationship between the two notions in English. While the English pattern appears to be not uncommon, recent works by Schwarz (2013) and others have shown that a great many languages encode uniqueness and anaphoricity in distinct ways. For example, in Fering, Schwarz (2009) shows that two distinct determiners correspond to unique and anaphoric noun phrases: a “weak” determiner is only available for uniqueness uses, while a “strong” determiner is used for anaphoric contexts. A possibly more prevalent pattern cross-linguistically is the one Jenks (2018) presents for Mandarin Chinese in which bare nouns are used in situations supporting uniqueness, and demonstratives are used in situations that call for anaphoricity.

Common to the English, Fering, and Mandarin Chinese patterns as presented by these authors is a strict complementarity between the forms used in indefinite, unique, and anaphoric contexts. Focusing on the definites, this is to say that in a language which makes such distinction between the unique and anaphoric definite forms, the form that is used for unique DPs is not also available for anaphoric DPs. At the level of analysis, a leading idea has therefore been to derive this complementarity from ‘hard’ competition in which *Maximize Presupposition!* (or a similarly general pragmatic principle such as Jenks (2018)’s *Index!* principle) obliges the use of the anaphoric form where possible. Since complementarity is claimed to arise from pragmatic principles that are taken to be universal, such approaches therefore make a strong prediction that complementarity of this sort will also be universal.

In this chapter, we focus on the expression of definiteness in A’ingae, an endangered language isolate in the Amazonian Ecuador and Colombia. Empirically, we show that the A’ingae definiteness pattern quite systematically shows a lack of complementarity and therefore challenges theories relying on hard competition of this sort. Specifically, we show that the general pattern in A’ingae is that although bare noun phrases can be used in all of indefinite, unique and anaphoric definite noun phrases, A’ingae also has a dedicated nominal anaphoric morpheme, *tsa*, that is felicitous only in anaphoric definite noun phrases.

The chapter is structured as follows: after a description of definite noun phrases in A’ingae (§3), we present a few pragmatic competition principles from previous work that have aimed to generalize over the structure of definiteness cross-linguistically, and we argue that none of them permits the empirical pattern of A’ingae definite NPs (§4). We then sketch an alternative semantic analysis for A’ingae that eschews hard pragmatic competition (§5). While applying this sort of approach more broadly is left to future work, we conclude with some thoughts on how this approach could extend to other languages and the diachronic role of pragmatic competition under such a view (§6).

2 Background on A'ingae and the Cofán people

The Cofán, or A'i, are an indigenous people of Amazonian Ecuador and Colombia. The language of the Cofán people is A'ingae (ISO: `con`), a language isolate spoken by around 1,500 native speakers (Repetti-Ludlow et al. 2020). In current literature, the autonym “A'ingae” and the exonym “Cofán” are commonly used as names for the language. A'ingae is an understudied and severely endangered language, especially in Colombia. In both Ecuador and Colombia, Cofán territory and therefore lifeways are under threat from extractive industries such as oil and mining, as well more indirect threat from relatively newly built roads and colonization (see Dąbkowski (2021) for a recent summary).

A'ingae is a SOV language with flexible word order in matrix clauses. A'ingae morphology is robust and complex — its set of suffixes and clitics encodes a large number of semantic categories, including aspect, subject person and number, switch-reference, various modalities, and others. A more detailed overview of the A'ingae morphology can be found in Fischer & Hengeveld (in press), and a study on verbal morphology can be found in Dąbkowski (2019).

Of most direct relevance here is the structure of the nominal expressions, specifically in argument position. We provide a template for noun phrases in the language below in Table 1 where we point out the major components of a noun phrase in A'ingae. Determiner phrases in A'ingae have the order Det/Dem–Num–N. As shown in the table, adjectives and other modifiers may immediately precede or follow the head noun. Some example noun phrases are shown in (4).¹

-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Determiner	Possessor	Numeral	Other modifiers	Head	Other modifiers	Enclitics for number, size, etc.
Demonstrative Quantifier Definite <i>tsa</i> Indefinite <i>fae</i>			Adjective RC	Noun Ø	Adjective RC	Assoc. Pl. Augmentative Plural

Table 1: Template of major components of A'ingae noun phrases

(4) *Example noun phrases in A'ingae:*

- a. *biani-'sû ande*
far-ATTR country
'a far-away country'
- b. *hashe'ye-ndekhû-'ye*
old.man-PLH-HONR

¹In addition to the Leipzig conventions, the following glossing abbreviations are used: ADD 'additive', ANA 'anaphoric', AND 'andative', ATTR 'attributive', CMP 'comparative', CT 'contrastive topic', DS 'different subject', FRST 'frustrative', HONR 'honorific', ITER 'iterative', PEJ 'pejorative', PLH 'human plural', PLS 'plural subject, PROP 'property', PRSP 'prospective', REP 'reportative', SBRD 'subordinator', SS 'same subject', VER 'veridical'.

- ‘the late elders’
- c. va kuchhi na kû’-a=ma
 PROX pig meat red-ADJR=ACC
 ‘this red pig meat’
- d. ñu-tshi-a
 good-PROP-ADJR
 ‘a good one’

(Fischer & Hengeveld in press, (62, 96, 63, 69))

There are no numeral classifiers in A’ingae, though there is a robust group of classifier-like nominalizers that are noun-producing suffixes, most of which relate to the shape of an object (Fischer & Hengeveld, in press, p.22). A’ingae has a small repository of numerals in regular use (*fae’khu* ‘1’, *khuangi* ‘2’, and *khuanifae* ‘3’), with higher numerals most typically expressed with Spanish borrowings or more rarely with morphologically complex native forms. The language also has a relatively small number-marking system: there is a morpheme *-ndekhû* for human plurality that attaches to the head noun, and an associative plural suffix *-pa*. Outside of these plural morphemes, the number of an entity is not marked morphologically and is understood via context (or verbal agreement). There is an indefinite marker *fae* related to the numeral *fae’khu* ‘one’. The description and analysis of A’ingae indefinite and definite noun phrases will be the focus of §3.

Case marking is extensive in A’ingae, and case markers may be followed by additional morphemes related to information structure. A’ingae is a largely dependent-marking language with case clitics showing a nominative-accusative alignment. Argument roles, such as subject and direct object, are expressed through clitics that attach to the relevant NP and are not expressed on the verb.² For example in (5), the accusative marker *=ma* attaches to the object of the sentence *rande kuri-fi’ndi* ‘large (amount of) money’, and the dative marker *=nga* is attached to the recipient argument *ke* ‘2.sg’. More detailed discussion on case marking in A’ingae can be found in Fischer & Hengeveld (in press).

- (5) Rande kuri-fi’ndi=**ma**=ngi ke=**nga**=ja afe.
 big gold-CLF=ACC=1 2.SG=DAT=CT give.
 ‘I gave you big money (a large bill).’
 (Fischer & Hengeveld, in press, (42))

A’ingae also has marking for information structure and topic: *=ta* is tentatively analyzed as a marker for new topics, *=ja* is for contrastive topic. Word order in matrix clauses and second position clitics seem to have a connection with information structure too, but details of each of these elements await more detailed investigation.

Data presented in this chapter without citation is gathered through elicitation, primarily with one native speaker, Shen Aguinda, from the Ecuadorian community of Dureno, and a small portion of the elicited examples come from native speakers of Zábalo and Dovuno. All elicitations were conducted remotely over Zoom video conferences, and we

²In this chapter, we will use the term ‘DP’ to refer to maximal nominal expressions, since they can include a determiner. We leave to future work the precise syntactic analysis on the difference between ‘NP’ and ‘DP’.

primarily communicated with the consultants in Spanish, which is a language that is commonly used in the Cofán communities besides A’ingae. Other data comes from published sources as cited and otherwise comes from texts from the A’ingae Language Documentation Project (AnderBois & de Lima Silva 2017), and these natural data primarily come from Zábalo. For naturalistic examples, most of their citations are hyperlinked and lead to video fragments of the example within a larger narrative as presented on the A’ingae Language Documentation Project (2022) website, powered by LingView (Pride et al. 2020). Despite regional differences in where the data and consultant comes from, none of the main observations in this chapter differs across dialects to our knowledge.

3 Expressions of (in)definiteness in A’ingae

In A’ingae, indefinite, unique definite, and anaphoric definite noun phrases can all be encoded as bare noun phrases. However, there is also a dedicated nominal anaphoric morpheme *tsa* that can also be used in anaphoric definite noun phrases (as well as a dedicated indefinite determiner *fae*). Neither bare NPs or *tsa* can be used in the ‘exophoric’ contexts, where the reference is established through the referent being in the physical environment of the speakers — the proximal or distal demonstrative, *va* and *juva* respectively, must instead be used, and *tsa* is not felicitous in these deictic contexts. The overall pattern for the uses of bare nouns and *tsa* is summarized in Table 2 and the remainder of this section justifies these claims in detail.

Table 2: Summary of uses of bare noun and *tsa* in A’ingae

	indefinite	unique definite	anaphoric definite	bridging	exophoric
Bare noun	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>tsa</i>			✓		

3.1 Indefinite noun phrases

Indefinite noun phrases are encoded as bare noun phrases across different syntactic positions. In (6), the indefinite *pandu* (“fox”) is in the subject position, while in (7), the indefinite *kusina* (“kitchen”) is in the object position. In (6), “fox” is introduced for the first time in the story, so it is an indefinite noun phrase whose referent’s existence is introduced. (7) represents a specific context in which indefinite noun phrases tend to appear: existential predicates and predicates of coming into existence, as here. In (7), the sentence includes the action of “building,” which leads to the existence of a new item as the result of the “building” action. The phrase for the kitchen *kusina* is an indefinite noun phrase, encoded as a bare noun. In general, however, existential predicates are not necessary for bare nouns to be used in indefinite noun phrases in the object position.

(6) (*Context: Introducing the fox character in a story.*)

Pandu tsûifa’u jayiia.

pandu tsûi=fa’u jayi=’ya
fox walk=PEJ.ACC go.PRSP=VER

‘A fox walked by.’

(Kuke chiste FC 2:38)

- (7) Kusinavengi tsau’ña’je’fa.

kusina=ve=ngi tsau’ña-’je-’fa.
kitchen=ACC2=1 build-IPFV-PLS

‘We’re building a kitchen.’ (Construir una casa de conambo MM
1:54)

The nominal anaphor *tsa* is strictly limited to anaphoric contexts, so it is not felicitous in an indefinite noun phrase. In the context of (6), for example, adding *tsa* to the bare noun *pandu* ‘fox’ would suggest that the same fox has been mentioned in previous discourse, which contradicts the context of the sentence where the fox is introduced for the first time.

- (8) {*Tsa} pandu tsûifa’u jaiya.

{***tsa**} pandu tsûi=fa’u jayi=’ya
{ANA} fox walk=PEJ.ACC go.PRSP=VER

(Intended: Introducing the fox character in a story) ‘A fox walked by next to the hare.’

Finally, we note that the indefinite article *fae* can systematically be optionally inserted in indefinite contexts. To our knowledge, there is no interpretive difference between *fae* and bare nouns in such cases.

3.2 Unique definite noun phrase

Unique definite noun phrases have referents that are unique within a certain context, i.e. for singulars, only one individual within a given situation meets the descriptive content. Previous work has often distinguished two categories of unique definites: “globally” unique noun phrases that have a unique reference because of our knowledge of the world or common sense, and “locally” unique noun phrases that are unique given a narrower context, for example the interlocutors’ surroundings, personal experiences, etc. In A’ingae, both types of unique definiteness are encoded as bare noun phrases. For example, *kue’je* (“sun”) in (9) is a globally unique noun phrase, and it is presented as a bare noun in the sentence. The referent of “house” is usually not unique, but *tsa’u* (“home”) in (10) refers to the only salient house in the story that the speaker is trying to tell, and here *tsa’u* is also in its bare form.

As shown in these two examples, *tsa* cannot be used in any of unique definite noun phrases, such as “the sun” in (9) and “the house” in (10), because it is not felicitous in contexts that lack the anaphoric interpretation.

- (9) {*Tsa} kue’jenga khûtsiansi tsaja aceite yaya’pave daya’ya.

{***tsa**} kue’je=nga khûtsû-an-si tsa=ja aceite yaya’pa=ve
{*ANA} sun=DAT stand-CAUS=DS ANA=CT oil oil=ACC2
da-ya-’ya.
become-IRR-VER

‘Having been stood in the sun, it (mashed turtle egg) would turn into oil.’
(Charapa proyecto 1:07)

- (10) (Context: the house has not been mentioned before but is known to the speakers.)

Kuse vangakhe napi { *tsa } tsa’unga.

kuse va=nga=khe napi { *tsa } tsa’u=nga.
night PROX=DAT=ADD arrive { *ANA } house=DAT

I arrived at the house at night.

Because *tsa* requires an antecedent to be present in prior discourse, it is also not felicitous in generic noun phrases, which have been argued to connect to the notion of uniqueness. In (11), for example, the noun phrase “snakes” is a generic noun phrase that refers to the snake species, and here *tsa* is not felicitous – bare *iyu* has to be used. Although the example here has the plural form for “snakes”, the infelicity of *tsa* here in this generic noun phrase is not dependent on the plural marker.

- (11) { *Tsa } iyundekhûtsû tsai’jefa.

{ *tsa } iyu-ndekhû=ta=tsû tsai-’je-’fa.
{ *ANA } snake-PLH=NEW=3 bite-IPFV-PLS

‘Snakes bite.’

3.3 Anaphoric definite noun phrase

Anaphoric definite noun phrases have a referent that is known to the speakers because the referent has been previously mentioned. In A’ingae, anaphoric definiteness can be encoded as either a bare noun phrase or with the nominal anaphor *tsa*. For example, (12) shows that the anaphoric definite ‘book’ in the second sentence can be in either its bare form *tevaenjen* or in a noun phrase with *tsa*.

- (12) Chavangi fae tevaenjenma. {Tsa tevaenjen/Tevaenjen} panshaen karu.

chava=ngi fae tevaenjen=ma. {tsa tevaenjen/tevaenjen} panshaen karu.
buy=1 one book=ACC {ANA book/book} very expensive

‘I bought a book. The book was very expensive.’

Specifically for the nominal anaphoric morpheme, *tsa* is available in referring to individual entities both adnominally and pronominally — in (13), *tsa* can either co-occur with the noun *tevaenjen* or replace the noun entirely. In addition to referring to individuals and objects, pronominal *tsa* can also anaphorically refer to propositions conveyed by previous discourse, such as the proposition ‘Red apples are delicious’ in (14).

- (13) Chavangi fae tevaenjenma. {Tsa tevaenjen/Tsa} panshan karu.

chava=ngi fae tevaenjen=ma. {tsa tevaenjen/tsa} panshaen karu.
buy=1 one book=ACC {ANA book/ANA} very expensive

‘I bought a book. The book was very expensive.’

- (14) Kû’a manzanandekhûtatsû yayatshi’fa. Tsama atesûngi Juan ñanga kundasi.

kû’a manzana-ndekhû=ta=tsû yaya-tshi-’fa. **tsa**=ma atesû=ngi Juan
 red apple-PLH=NEW=3 good-PROP-PLS ANA=ACC know=1.SG Juan
 ña=nga kunda-si.
 I=DAT tell-DS

‘Red apples are delicious. I know that because Juan told me.’

When *tsa* is referring to a proposition, the exact proposition does not need to be linguistically explicit for *tsa* to be felicitous. The proposition can be part of the implicature of the preceding discourse. In (15), for example, *tsa* picks up the *combined* content of the two preceding sentences. This shows the flexibility of *tsa* as a propositional anaphor that can pick up pragmatic content salient from prior discourse, also observed in Morvillo & AnderBois (to appear), as well as complex discourse units, such as the conjunction of two propositions as shown in (15).³

- (15) (*Context: My friend and my brother don’t get along well.*)

Ña faengasûtsû ja’ñu ña’khû aña. Ña antiankhe ña’khû aña. Tsatsû aiyepa.

ña faengasû=tsû ja’ñu ña=i’khû aña. ña antian=khe ña=i’khû aña. **tsa**=tsû
 my friend=3 now 1.SG=INS eat my brother=ADD 1.SG=INS eat ANA=3
 aiyepa.
 difficult

‘My friend is going to have dinner with me. My brother will, too. That is difficult.’

A special case of an anaphoric reference is situations where an anaphoric noun phrase corefers with a previously mentioned indefinite phrase despite not being able to be bound to that indefinite phrase in standard ways that quantifiers usually would allow. An instance of such example comes from a covarying situation, or a “donkey” sentence. In these sentences, anaphoric definites receive quantificationally bound interpretations despite the absence of a c-commanding antecedent in the same clause. In a donkey sentence in A’ingae, the anaphoric definite noun phrase can be encoded as either bare or with *tsa*, as shown in (16) and (17). In this way, *tsa* patterns with pronouns and anaphoric definites in other languages rather than, say with adjectives like English *aforementioned* that more explicitly require prior mention as such.

- (16) Majan a’ima ke thû’senindangi (**tsa**) a’ima atheya.

majan a’i=ma ke thû’seni=ta=ngi (**tsa**) a’i=ma athe-ya.
 who person=ACC 2.SG call=LOC=NEW=1.SG (ANA) person=ACC see-IRR

³Many other works have investigated propositional anaphora more in depth, such as discussions on English “that” Snider (2017) and citations therein.

‘Whoever you invite, I will see that person.’

- (17) Pûi afafanga dûshûkhû kuraga, (**tsa**) dûshûtsû dyu’je.

pûi afa<fa>-’nga dûshû=i’khû kuraga, (tsa) dûshû=tsû dyu-’je.
each speak<ITER>-AND child=INS shaman (ANA) child=3 scare-IPFV

‘Every time a shaman talks to a child, the child gets scared.’

Jenks (2018) points out that, in Mandarin, both bare nouns and demonstrative phrases can be felicitous in certain anaphoric definites in the subject position. He argues that the availability of bare noun as anaphoric definites here is because the bare noun phrase serves as a continuing topic, therefore being an exception to the fact that bare nouns are not available in anaphoric definites in Mandarin. He then argues that the pragmatic function of topic marking overrides and neutralizes the effect of an indexical constraint in such environments.

In A’ingae, we see a slight tendency for anaphoric definite NPs to occur with the contrastive topic marker =*ja*, such as the subject of the sentence *ainja* in (18). Despite this, we also see anaphoric bare nouns in non-topic position (such as (19)). In addition, *tsa* is also felicitous in both topic and non-topic positions, as long as the discourse satisfies the anaphoric context. This indicates that the possible patterns of (in)definiteness in A’ingae are unaffected by any syntactic constraints, including a topic position.

- (18) *Context: The story is talking about a man and his dog in the previous sentences.*
Jata ainja tayu kuankuan kan’jeni ja’ya.

ja=ta **ain=ja** tayu kuankuan kan’jen=ni ja-’ya.
go=NEW dog=CT already Coancoan stay=LOC go-VER

‘The dog went right where the Coancoan lived.’

(Kuankuan kundasepa OCQ 4:44)

- (19) Fae tsandie tuyakaen fae pûshesû kanje’fa tsa’uni, tsa’ma ñangi afa pushesûkhû.

fae tsandie tuya-’kan-e fae pûshesû kanje-’fa tsa’u=ni, tsa-’ma
one man still-CMP-ADV one woman live-PLS house=LOC ANA-FRST
ña=ngi afa **pushesû=i’khû**
1=1.SG talk woman=INS

‘There is a man and a woman in the house. I talked to the woman yesterday.’

Finally, while *tsa* looks in several respects more like an English demonstrative than a definite article (e.g. pronominal uses, propositional uses), it crucially differs from demonstratives in English and Mandarin, for example, in deictic contexts. Whereas demonstratives like English *that* can be used exophorically, *tsa* is infelicitous in such uses. This pattern is not surprising given the evidence above that *tsa* requires an explicit anaphoric context to be felicitous, but contrasts clearly with demonstratives in many languages too. In an exophoric use, such as in (20), the speaker can use the noun phrase “that bird”

without any previous mentioning of the bird, because some extra-linguistic cue (e.g. the speaker's pointing gesture) is sufficient in signaling the referent of the noun phrase. In such exophoric contexts, the exophoric demonstratives *va* PROX or *juva* DIST are used instead.

- (20) Kanjan, {juva/*tsa} chhiririatsû vasia've chhaje
 kan=jan, {juva/*tsa} chhiriria=tsû vasia've chhaje.
 look=IMP {DIST/*ANA} bird=3 slowly fly
 'Look, that bird is flying slowly.'

3.4 Bridging definites

A special case of anaphoric definite noun phrases, "bridging" anaphora, is first discussed by Clark (1975) (see also Hawkins (1978)'s "associative anaphora" and Prince (1981)'s "Inferables"). In these constructions, as in (21-22) a definite noun phrase in the second clause refers back not to the entity mentioned in the first clause, but rather to some entity that is related to it in some way.

- (21) He drove his car down the street. *The steering wheel* was cold.
 (22) I read a book yesterday, and *the author* was on TV this morning.

Bridging definites therefore can be thought of as having both an anaphoric component (the previously mentioned car/book above) as well as a uniqueness component (the relation that connects the definite's descriptive content to the prior referent must allow the address to uniquely pick out the referent).

For languages that express unique and anaphoric definites distinctly, the question therefore arises of which form is used in instances of bridging. Interestingly, Schwarz (2013) claims that, for German and a few other languages, the answer depends on the nature of the bridging relation. In some cases, such as part-whole relations as in (21) and (23a), the uniqueness form is used, intuitively because the relation itself is manifest in the previously established situation. In cases like the producer-product relation in (22) and (23b), the bridging relation lies outside of the previously mentioned situation (i.e. the writing of the book occurred at another time and place).

- (23) a. Der Kühlschrank war so groß, dass der Kürbis problemlos
 the fridge was so big that the pumpkin without.a.problem
im/#in dem Gemüsefach untergebracht werden konnte.
in-the_{weak}/#in the_{strong} crisper stowed be could
 'The fridge was so big that the pumpkin could easily be stowed in the crisper.'
- b. Das Theaterstück missfiel dem Kritiker so sehr, dass er in seiner
 the play displeased the critic so much that he in his
 Besprechung kein gutes Haar **#am/an dem Autor** ließ.
 review no good hair **#on-the_{weak}/on the_{strong} author** left

‘The play displeased the critic somuch that he tore the author to pieces in his review.’

(Schwarz, 2013, (16ab))

There remain many empirical and analytical details to be further understood on such splits in bridging in German and elsewhere. In A’ingae, however, we find that bridging shows no such split. Bridging of both types of intuitive relations makes use of bare nouns: (24) is an example of part-whole bridging definite, where the nouns ‘head’ *tsuve* and ‘body’ *ai’vu* are part of the musk hog that was introduced in previous discourse; (25) is an example of producer-product bridging definite, where ‘singer’ *sethapuen’sû* in the second half of the sentence is the producer of its antecedent ‘song’ *sethapuen’chu*.

(24) *Context: A story about hunting a musk hog.*

Ma’the pu’taeña tsuveyeti pu’taeña asi’taemba ai’vuye pu’taeña.

ma’the pu’ta-en-ña **tsuve=ye=ti** pu’ta-en-ña asi’taen-pa
where pierce-CAUS-IRR head=ELAT=INT shoot-CAUS-IRR think-SS
ai’vu=ye pu’ta-en-ña
body=ELAT pierce-CAUS-IRR

‘“Where should I shoot it? Should I shoot through the head?” I thought, “should I shoot through the body?”’
(Caza y pesca OCQ 1:42)

(25) *Sethapuen’chutsû mendetshi, tsa’ma sethapuen’sûma atesûmbi.*

Sethapuen-’chu=tsû mende-tshi, tsa-’ma **sethapuen-’sû=ma** atesûmbi.
sing-SBRD=3 beautiful-PROP ANA-FRST sing-ATTR=ACC know-NEG

‘The song is beautiful, but I don’t know the singer.’

Given that we have already seen that bare nouns have both unique and anaphoric uses, it is perhaps unsurprising that they may be used in both cases. More strikingly, however, we find that *tsa* is unavailable in either type of bridging. Of specific interest are the producer-product cases, which have often patterned with the anaphoric definite morpheme in other languages. Intuitively, the singer hasn’t been explicitly mentioned before and so *tsa* is thus not available, as seen in (26).

(26) *#Sethapuenchutsû mendetshi, tsa’ma tsa sethapuen’sûma atesûmbi.*

#Sethapue-’chu=tsû mende-tshi, tsa’ma **tsa** sethapuen-’sû=ma atesûmbi.
sing-SBRD=3 beautiful-PROP but ANA sing-ATTR=ACC know-NEG

Intended: ‘The song is beautiful, but I don’t know the singer.’

In summary, we have presented empirical evidence for the pattern of definiteness in A’ingae: bare nouns are available in indefinite, unique and anaphoric definite noun phrases, while the nominal anaphor *tsa* is only felicitous in anaphoric definite noun phrases.

3.5 Lack of complementarity between unique and anaphoric forms

As shown previously in this section, the unique definite noun phrases in A'ingae can only be presented as a bare noun phrase, while the anaphoric definite noun phrases can be presented either as a bare noun phrase or a noun phrase with *tsa*. The crucial implication of this empirical pattern is the lack of complementarity between the unique and anaphoric definite forms in A'ingae.

As we discuss in detail below, this lack of complementarity presents a challenge to many recent cross-linguistic accounts, many of which propose “weaker” and “stronger” determiners meanings along with pragmatic competition between them obliging the use of the stronger anaphoric form where possible. In A'ingae, however, we have seen that there is a “strong” exclusively anaphoric form *tsa*, yet bare nouns are freely available in anaphoric contexts.

Before examining this challenge in more detail, we first note that A'ingae is not alone in having this empirical pattern of a lack of complementarity between the unique and anaphoric forms. Recent cross-linguistic works covering more languages have revealed that several other languages present similar empirical pictures: a lack of complementarity between bare nouns which also have uniqueness uses and dedicated anaphoric determiners. Among these languages are: Shan (Tai-Kadai family, Moroney 2021), Tumbalá Ch'ol (Mayan family, Vázquez Martínez & Little 2020, Little 2020), San Pedro Mixtepec Zapotec (Vázquez Martínez 2020), San Pedro Güilá Zapotec (Arrieta Zamudio 2020), and Tsotsil Sureño (Mendoza 2021). More detailed examples supporting the non-complementarity can be found in these cited works as well as Chapter 2 of Zheng (2022).

Common to A'ingae and the other languages cited here is the lack of complementarity between the unique and anaphoric forms of each language. This wide cross-linguistic empirical evidence on the lack of complementarity leads to a challenge to a commonly used strategy based on pragmatic blocking to analyze and predict the structure of definiteness cross-linguistically. In the next section, we will elaborate on some of these pragmatic-based theoretical frameworks. We will argue that such frameworks based on pragmatic competition do not account for the empirical pattern presented in A'ingae and the languages we have cited above, and then we will provide a preliminary alternative analysis for bare nouns and *tsa* in A'ingae that does not rely on pragmatic blocking but is instead rooted in the semantic (anti-)presuppositions of both forms.

4 Pragmatic blocking is incompatible with A'ingae definiteness

In the previous section, we have described the inventory of (in)definite expressions in A'ingae. Here, we turn to consider several recent pragmatic accounts that aim to explain aspects of such inventories and argue that for each account, patterns like the A'ingae one are unexpected.

4.1 Competition between covert and overt determiner form

One prominent framework using pragmatic competition to analyze definiteness patterns is that proposed in Chierchia (1998) and extended in subsequent work in Dayal (2004). These works focus on languages with definite uses of bare nouns, proposing that such languages utilize a semantic type-shifting operation to produce definite uses of bare nouns. In order to explain why such a type-shifter is only available in certain languages, they propose that this type-shifting is subject to a Blocking Principle:

- (27) *Blocking Principle:*
Don't do covertly what you can do overtly!

This blocking mechanism, then, specifically applies to the availability of overt articles vs. bare noun phrases in a language: if there are overt determiners, use this overt determiner instead of performing the type-shifting on a bare form. This is a competition in the sense of the Gricean maxim of manner, since the competition mainly applies to the form of determiners. The maxim of quantity is of secondary relevance here, because the competing forms must first be both usable in a given utterance to have the competition arise, but the primary explanatory force is manner-based.

In the A'ingae pattern, a direct counterexample to the predicted pattern under the Blocking Principle is the dedicated anaphoric marker *tsa*. In definite noun phrases, both bare nouns and *tsa* are available in anaphoric definite noun phrases, therefore the overt form, *tsa*, does not block the bare form.

Another potential instance that challenges whether Blocking Principle can be fully applied in A'ingae is the overt indefinite article, *fae*, which is related to the numeral *faekhû* 'one'. *Fae* is limited to indefinite contexts, while at the same time bare nouns are also available as indefinite noun phrases. In this chapter, we do not have detailed semantic analysis of *fae*, so the assumption here is that *fae* and indefinite bare noun phrases both only assert existence of the referent. If this is the case, then the availability of *fae* also contradicts the Blocking Principle, because the existence of the overt indefinite form *fae* does not block the bare nouns in indefinite noun phrases. However, if the semantics of *fae* is more complicated, such as *fae* contributing specificity or an epistemic meaning of some sort on top of existence of the referent, then the Blocking Principle from Chierchia and Dayal would be compatible. In this case, since the overt *fae* would be doing different work overtly than the covert operator, the principle would not be violated. However, we have not seen empirical evidence of such a "specificity" requirement in contexts where *fae* occurs, but careful scrutiny of the semantics of *fae* is necessary for future work.

4.2 Maximize Presupposition!

Another type of pragmatic competition that has been argued to apply to not only the domain of definiteness but also many other linguistic features is *Maximize Presupposition!* (Heim 1991; henceforth MP). MP is proposed as a general economy principle that chooses the form with stronger presuppositions among otherwise equivalent competing forms (see Bade (2021) for a recent survey of MP and its proposed application in other domains besides definiteness). MP directly concerns pairs of forms that differ minimally

in each form’s presupposition, where the “stronger” form triggers a semantic presupposition that the “weaker” form lacks. MP predicts that the weaker form is infelicitous in a context where the presupposition in question is already part of the common ground. On the other hand, in contexts where the presupposition is *not* part of the common ground, using the weaker form implicates that the presupposition is false or unknown.

MP was originally proposed to account for data like (28), where these sentences are not necessarily *false* but *infelicitous*. This infelicity is analyzed to *not* arise from a presupposition failure of the indefinite determiner “a” because of observations such as (29). The empirical generalization from data such as (28) is that these utterances already satisfy the presuppositions of “the” (the uniqueness of the sun in (28a) and the weight of the tent in (28b)), so using “a” is infelicitous because it is the weaker form without the uniqueness presupposition.

- (28) a. # A sun is shining cf. The sun is shining.
 b. # A weight of the tent is 5 kg. cf. The weight of the tent is 5 kg.
- (29) a. Robert caught a 20-foot catfish.
 does not presuppose: There is more than one 20-foot-long catfish.

In addition to its use in understanding the relationship between definites and indefinite in languages like English, MP-like reasoning has more recently been applied to understanding the relationship between uniqueness and anaphoric definites in languages making more fine-grained definiteness distinctions.

To get such an account off the ground requires a particular semantics of uniqueness and anaphoricity, one in which there is a relationship of asymmetric entailment between their respective presuppositions. While not explicitly adopting MP-based competition, Schwarz (2009) provides such a semantics in his account of ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ determiners in German (which mostly show complementarity as noted above). Specifically, Schwarz proposes that both unique and anaphoric definites presuppose the existence of a unique individual to which they refer, but that anaphoric forms contain an additional index argument that is not present in the unique definite form, therefore the anaphoric form’s presupposition entails that of the unique form.

Deriving from *Maximize Presupposition!* and building upon Schwarz’s analysis of the asymmetrical entailment relationship between unique and anaphoric definites, Jenks (2018) focuses on Mandarin Chinese and Thai and proposes a more specialized competition strategy based on pragmatic blocking, which he calls *Index!*. Jenks’ analysis for the unique and anaphoric forms in a language adopts the part of the analysis from Schwarz (2009) that treats the anaphoric form as having an additional index variable, and *Index!* states that an index should be represented explicitly whenever possible.

- (30) *Index!*
 Represent and bind all possible indices. (Jenks, 2018, (53))

Index! builds off of MP by connecting the “index” semantics of the anaphoric form with an asymmetrical entailment between the unique and anaphoric forms. Both forms presuppose the existence of a unique individual, but because the anaphoric form contains the additional index variable that makes the presuppositions of the anaphoric form

stronger than that of the unique form, the anaphoric form should be used whenever possible (Jenks, 2018, p.14). The anaphoric form entails the uniqueness form, but not the other way around.

In Mandarin, for example, Jenks argues bare nouns are—setting aside existential uses—allowed only in uniqueness contexts, while demonstrative phrases such as *zhe ge* and *na ge*, are obligatory in anaphoric definite phrases. *Index!* blocks the use of a uniqueness definite in anaphoric contexts due to the stronger presupposition of the competing anaphoric demonstrative. Jenks then argues that these demonstrative phrases are the dedicated anaphoric morphemes in Mandarin. In (31), for example, Jenks argues that the demonstrative phrase “*na ge*” is obligatory, because the noun phrase in (31b) is an anaphoric definite in non-subject position.⁴

- (31) a. Jiaoshi li zuo-zhe yi ge nansheng he yi ge nüsheng,
classroom inside sit-PROG one CLF boy and one CLF girl,

‘There is a boy and a girl sitting in the classroom...’
b. Wo zuotian yudao #(na ge) nansheng
I yesterday meet that CLF boy

‘I met the boy yesterday.’ (Jenks, 2018, (16))

Returning to A’ingae, we see that Jenks (2018)’s MP-based approach similarly faces a challenge. In particular, in anaphoric contexts, the Jenks/Schwarz semantics holds that the ‘weak’ definite bare nouns contribute uniqueness and therefore semantically are compatible with uniqueness of any kind. The anaphoric determiner *tsa*, by hypothesis, contributes uniqueness as well as an index argument. It therefore has a stronger presupposition and according to MP or the more specific *Index!* ought to be used when possible. While this blocking effect has a virtue in explaining the data presented by Schwarz (2009) and Jenks (2018) in which the uniqueness form is infelicitous in anaphoric contexts, here it incorrectly predicts that we ought to find blocking, such that the bare noun is not available in anaphoric contexts. We have seen this illustrated above in §3 and we see it again in (32). The preceding line in the story discusses a pack of peccaries and then we see anaphoric reference made to the aforementioned pack in consecutive lines, once with the bare noun, in (32a), and then once with *tsa* in (32b).

- (32) *Context: A story about a man hunting peccaries*
a. Napisi sūya tayuti ja vaeyitsū munda ja khen de sūya.
napi-si sū-’ya tayu=ti ja vae=yi=tsū **mūnda**
arrive-DS say-VER already=INT go already=EXCL=3 peccary
ja=khen=te sū-’ya.
go=QUOT=REP say-VER

⁴Jenks does point out one exception to the generalization of *Index!*, part-whole bridging cases, because the prior mention of an argument of the noun licenses the anaphoric form. See Jenks (2018) for detailed discussion.

‘When he came, he asked if the pack had already gone. “Just a moment ago,” they said.’

- b. Tsete tsa kuenza ûfambe pasaya tsumbate tse umbaemba jaya tsa mûndai’khû.

tse=te tsa kuenza ûfa=mbe pasa-’ya tsun-pa=te
 ANA.LOC=REP ANA old blow=NEG.ADV pass-VER do-SS=REP
 tse umbuen-pa ja-’ya **tsa mûnda=i’khû.**
 ANA.LOC follow-SS go-VER ANA peccary=INS

‘Since he hadn’t hunted anything, he decided to follow the peccaries.’
 (Kuankuan kundasepa OCQ 1:32)

Moreover, as noted above in §3.5, a number of other recent works present similar patterns of non-complementarity in which a dedicated anaphoric form and a more general uniqueness form are both available in anaphoric contexts. While the accounts of Schwarz (2009) and Jenks (2018) provide various ways to capture cross-linguistic variation, the hard competition of MP/*Index!* proposed by Jenks makes a strong cross-linguistic prediction that we will not find these sorts of instances of non-complementarity. Languages may differ in what denotations they have, but the pragmatic competition is precisely the part that is taken to be universal.

To summarize, in this section we have seen that the lack of complementarity shown by A’ingae bare nouns and *tsa* in anaphoric contexts presents a challenge to pragmatic competition based on *Maximize Presupposition* or its specific instantiation as *Index!*. We turn now to consider one other more recent pragmatic account in §4.3.

4.3 Bare Noun Blocking

We have seen thus far that the pattern presented by A’ingae definiteness poses a challenge to two different sorts of pragmatic competition-based accounts: Chierchia (1998) and Dayal (2004)’s Manner-based *Blocking principle* and Jenks (2018)’s Maximize Presupposition based *Index!*. In this section, we turn to consider one further competition-based proposal from Ahn (2019).

Motivated by recent empirical evidence from languages that do not present complementarity, this proposal essentially modifies the situation under which *Index!* occurs to be a condition that depends on the existence of a morphologically simplex pronoun in a language. Ahn claims that *Index!*-like blocking is found in all and only languages with morphologically simplex pronouns, a principle she calls “Bare Noun Blocking”:

(33) *Bare Noun Blocking*

If a bare argument language has morphologically simplex pronouns (‘simplex pronouns’) for 3rd person reference, bare nouns are blocked from intersentential anaphora involving one salient entity. (Ahn 2019, (25))

Ahn further proposes that the basis for this blocking principle originates from a Scale of Anaphoricity for all languages, which states that languages have different lexicalizations of definite features that result in different anaphoricity scales. Then, a *Don't Overdetermine!* principle chooses the form lowest on the scale whenever possible and blocks any redundant expressions when a simpler form is available. This competition mechanism, therefore, concerns not only the meaning of determiner forms in a language but also its internal syntactic structure.

- (34) English Scale of Anaphoricity: pronoun < definite description < demonstrative description (Ahn 2019, (82))
- (35) *Don't Overdetermine!*: a principle that chooses the lowest element in the scale of anaphoric expressions that can successfully resolve the referent. (Ahn 2019, (90))

If we take *Maximize Presupposition!* and the subsequent *Index!* as derivatives of the maxim of manner in informational status, the *Don't Overdetermine!* principle could represent a different type of maxim of manner in the morpho-phonological forms of referring expressions: whenever there is a simpler form, *Don't Overdetermine!* chooses the simpler form instead of the more complex one that holds the same level of determinancy. Although different from *Index!*, the *Don't Overdetermine!* principle and the *Bare Noun Blocking* prediction still do not result in a correct depiction of the pattern in A'ingae.

As shown in §3, *tsa* can be used pronominally, which means it has the function of a morphologically simplex pronoun in A'ingae.⁵ The existence of a simplex pronoun *tsa* (such as in (36) and (37)) does not block the existence of anaphoric bare nouns.

- (36) Chavangi fae tevaenjenma. {Tsa tevaenjen/Tsa/Tevaenjen} panshaen karu.

chava=ngi fae tevaenjen=ma. {**tsa** **tevaenjen**/**tsa**/**tevaenjen**} panshaen
 buy=1 one book=ACC {ANA book/ANA/book} very
 karu.
 expensive

'I bought a book. The book was very expensive.'

- (37) A'ima indi. Kukuya tsama an.

a'i=ma indi. kukuya **tsa=ma** an.
 person=ACC seize demon ANA=ACC eat

'The demon seized the man. The demon ate the man.'

(Fischer & Hengeveld in press, (56))

⁵An alternative possible analysis raised by Andrés Saab would be to analyze pronominal *tsa* as involving nominal ellipsis. However, we are not aware of any specific evidence that suggests that such examples do involve ellipsis and more generally, the existence of demonstrative-like elements with pronominal and adnominal uses is cross-linguistically common and not necessarily attributed to ellipsis generally. Finally, it is somewhat unclear whether/how an elliptical analysis would impact Ahn (2019)'s predictions.

In addition to pronominal uses of *tsa*, there are additionally several other morphologically simplex pronouns used for animates only: 3rd person singular *tise*, (38), and 3rd person plural *tise'pa* and *tsendekhû*⁶ as well as the pronoun *tisû*, which has impersonal and reflexive uses, but can also be used in extended uses in more ordinary pronominal cases even when no intra-sentential binder is present.

(38) **Tise** japa panzapa jiñanindate a'ikaen **tise** jiñane fûnduya.

tise ja-pa panza-pa jiña=ni=nda=te a'i-'kan=e tise
 3.SG go-SS hunt-SS come.PRSP=LOC=NEW=RPRT person-CMP=ADV 3.SG
 ji-ya=ne fûndu-ya.
 come.PRSP=ABL shout-IRR

‘He went hunting, and just as he was returning, he shouted about arriving like a person.’

(Tshararukuku kundasepa 0:33)

These examples indicate that Ahn’s more restricted pragmatic principle that depends on the existence of competing simplex pronouns still does not lead to the correct prediction of the coexistence of anaphoric bare nouns and *tsa* in A’ingae. On a broader picture, the incompatibility of Ahn’s proposal with A’ingae data suggests that, even with additional fine-tuning, pragmatic competition principles are challenged with predicting the right pattern in A’ingae (and likely in other languages mentioned in §3.5).

While we cannot rule out the possibility that there could be some other independent constraint on pragmatic competition that explains why it does not apply in A’ingae, it is unclear what such a constraint could be. Pronominal *tsa*, adnominal *tsa*, and bare nouns are all freely available in anaphoric contexts and while there are surely soft tendencies of when different forms are chosen by speakers, there remains optionality in a great many contexts in a way that appears quite unexpected for accounts based on hard competition. We have seen this optionality both in naturalistic data as well as felicity judgment tasks showing all three options to be felicitous in many cases.

5 Towards a semantic alternative to pragmatic competition

Thus far, we have seen that anaphoric contexts in A’ingae freely allow for the use of bare nouns, adnominal/determiner *tsa*, or pronominal *tsa*. The language (and seemingly the others noted in §3.5), therefore, appears to differ with the languages described by Jenks (2018) and Ahn (2019) precisely in the felicity of a more general uniqueness form alongside the dedicated anaphoric *tsa*. While their exact accounts differ in the details

⁶The plural forms *tise'pa* and *tsendekhû* appear to be morphological complex historically. In the case of *tise'pa*, it appears to consist of the singular *tise* plus the associative plural suffix *-pa*. However, it does not seem that this composition produces the correct synchronic meaning. For *tsendekhû*, Zheng (2022) argues that it historically consists of the singular *tise* plus the human/animate plural suffix *-ndekhû*. The reduced phonological form here suggests, however, that it is lexicalized synchronically as well.

of their pragmatic motivations, they each propose pragmatic mechanisms that are rooted in quite general principles. While many kinds of cross-linguistic variation can be captured with such frameworks, this particular kind therefore poses a seemingly intractable challenge.

Moreover, even for languages with apparent blocking such as Mandarin and German, several recent papers have suggested the empirical picture to be more complicated in ways that appear problematic. Dayal & Jiang (2021), for example, provide evidence that the complementarity between bare nouns and demonstratives in Mandarin may be less strict than *Index!* would dictate. In addition, Bremmers et al. (2021)'s corpus work on translated texts between Mandarin and German also shows that the distributions of German weak/strong articles and Mandarin bare nouns/demonstratives do not coincide precisely, which provides evidence from a different perspective that the split between Mandarin bare nouns and demonstrative phrases is perhaps not the same as the split in the German determiners.

If blocking-based pragmatic theories cannot capture this variation, then, it would seem we are left with the following picture: synchronically, grammars do not have 'hard' pragmatic competition in the domain of definiteness (though we presume they may have various forms of 'soft' competition); rather, it is the *semantics* that determines such patterns more or less in their entirety. For example, A'ingae *tsa*, Mandarin demonstratives, and German strong determiners must have a semantics that restricts their use to only anaphoric situations (as in the accounts in §4). However, we suggest the same must be true for weak definite articles and bare nouns as well: A'ingae bare nouns must have a semantics that allows them to be compatible with either unique or anaphoric situations (again setting aside existential/indefinite uses for the moment). German weak definites and Mandarin bare nouns, on the other hand, must also have a *semantics* that determines their distribution, i.e. one that is compatible with uniqueness uses but not with anaphoric ones (the complications just noted above notwithstanding).

Theoretically, the only potential downside of this semantically-based analysis is (arguably) a lack of parsimony. If the semantics of German weak articles is in some sense complementary to that of the strong articles, perhaps there is the intuition that this complicates the grammar more than necessary. The extent to which this is so, however, depends in part on how far one extends this approach, specifically if there are true cases of synchronic *Maximize Presupposition!* producing hard competition/blocking. Moreover, we may still understand a cross-linguistic tendency towards such complementarity between definite forms as the diachronic result of grammaticalization driven by soft competition synchronically – the crucial point here is that the only synchronic competition is a soft one, a preference of one definite form over another in certain contexts, instead of a hard exclusivity between definite forms as would be dictated by *Maximize Presupposition!*-related analyses. As the grammar of a language evolves over time, these soft preferences ultimately lead certain definite forms to surface only in certain contexts. We leave it to future work to develop such accounts for German, Mandarin, and other cases, though we note that Chapter 5 from Schwarz (2009) for German and Dayal & Jiang (2021) for Mandarin are arguably steps in this direction.

Although applying such an approach cross-linguistically may present substantial challenges in some cases, for A'ingae, things appear relatively straightforward, with a few pos-

sible analytical paths. First, one could imagine adopting the semantics of Jenks (2018) for Mandarin. The overt determiner *tsa* would have an anaphoric presupposition, ι^x , following Schwarz (2009) and Jenks (2018). Bare nouns in their definite uses presuppose uniqueness due to a covert type-shifter, ι , that contributes a uniqueness presupposition. They therefore are predicted to be usable both in uniqueness situations as well as in anaphoric ones (since no blocking principle obtains).

While adopting Jenks (2018)’s semantic proposal does work, there is another, arguably more parsimonious analytical option available. In Jenks (2018)’s analysis, as in many works on bare nouns, the overt noun is consistently combined with either an existential or uniqueness type-shifting operator. Having eschewed MP-style competition in the synchronic grammar, however, a simpler option appears possible. In this alternative, which we adopt here, we treat A’ingae bare nouns as always having existential semantics (i.e. asserting existence), so bare nouns only assert the existence of an entity having the appropriate nominal property. Crucially, though, bare nouns in A’ingae lack any sort of anti-uniqueness/novelty condition, so nothing prevents the existential claim from being met by a previously mentioned or present entity (indeed this is often the most natural interpretation when available). Unique and anaphoric uses, then, are simply particular ways in which the existential claim may be true, and bare nouns in A’ingae on this view uniformly lack any presuppositions or covert operators can therefore occur in both indefinite and definite uses. We can further note that cases of donkey anaphora similarly are predicted to be fine assuming that the existential’s contribution takes narrow scope (as independently seems to be the case). Finally, besides lacking any anti-familiarity or anti-uniqueness semantics, bare nouns also do not show any hard syntactic constraints for where they can be indefinite or definite.

This analysis of A’ingae bare nouns, where bare nouns have no presuppositions, is similar to the analysis given by Matthewson (1996) for Salish languages, where she argues that Salish determiners do not encode definiteness or specificity (see also Heim (2011) and Šimík & Demian (2020) for similar approaches to bare nouns). In Salish, the same determiner can be used in the reference to a novel or a familiar object, but this determiner cannot be considered as homophonous between the indefinite and the definite forms. Salish languages also lack quantificational determiners that presuppose existence.⁷

For *tsa*, on the other hand, the same analysis as above applies: it presupposes a referent that is unique and familiar in prior discourse, similar to Jenks’ ι^x rather than ι . There are of course thorny details about how to capture the micro-variation in bridging data as we presented in §3.4, and we will leave such analysis of bridging definiteness cross-linguistically to future work.

We illustrate our analysis of A’ingae bare nouns and *tsa* with (39) as an example. This example shows that all of pronominal *tsa*, adnominal *tsa tevaenjen*, and bare noun

⁷One crucial difference between Salish determiner system with the A’ingae one is that A’ingae has an additional indefinite marker, *fae*, that is only felicitous in indefinite uses. In order to capture the more limited distribution of *fae*, then, we would need to posit that unlike bare nouns, it has a lexically specified constraint of anti-uniqueness and anti-familiarity. We leave it to future work to flesh out such an account in detail, but note here that regardless of the approach to definiteness, this appears necessary since the competing overt form, *tsa*, only has anaphoric uses and therefore reasoning based on its non-use would derive too weak of an antipresupposition.

tevaenjen are available in the anaphoric noun phrase in the second sentence.

(39) Chavangi fae tevaenjenma. {Tsa tevaenjen/Tsa/Tevaenjen} panshaen karu.

chava=ngi fae tevaenjen=ma. {tsa tevaenjen/tsa/tevaenjen} panshaen
 buy=1 one book=ACC {ANA book/ANA/book} very
 karu.
 expensive

‘I bought a book. The book was very expensive.’

In the bare noun case, we treat the bare noun phrase as not having any presuppositions about its referent “book”, so the truth condition of the bare *tevaenjen* in the second sentence is met as long as a book exists that is expensive. This condition is met due to the first sentence, where the indefinite noun phrase *fae tevaenjen* asserts the book’s existence, so using bare *tevaenjen* in the second sentence is felicitous. That is to say, with the bare noun, the coreference is not semantically specified, but rather is purely a matter of pragmatics. However, the pragmatic mechanism needed is nothing that is not already needed in any language to resolve which prior discourse referent an anaphoric form refers to.

In the case of the *tsa* noun phrases, *tsa* returns a unique entity that both satisfies the noun predicate “book” and is familiar. In this case, the existence presupposition is satisfied by the indefinite *fae tevaenjen*’s assertion of existence. The uniqueness presupposition is also valid because the previous sentence is focusing on one particular book. Lastly, the familiarity presupposition is also fulfilled as the book from the first sentence is the same book as the one in the second sentence.

It is interesting to note that this analysis of A’ingae bare nouns has as its core an existential quantifier, which resembles the analysis of indefinite noun phrases in English with the determiner “a”. The crucial difference between English indefinite NPs and A’ingae bare nouns, however, is that English indefinite NPs have an additional anti-presuppositional feature that dictates that the use of an indefinite form presupposes the *non-uniqueness* of the referent. For A’ingae bare nouns, such anti-presupposition does not exist.

While there remain many important details to work out formally for such an account, our goal here is to give a general sense of what a semantic account could look like, having argued against accounts based on pragmatic blocking/hard competition. Whereas pragmatic accounts predict universal constraints on cross-linguistic variation, we have seen that A’ingae (and other languages) do not fit these proposed universals. The semantic account, on the other hand, is more permissive, allowing enough flexibility to capture the attested patterns with soft pragmatic competition providing a diachronic motivation for certain kinds of systems to be more common than others.

6 Conclusions and future directions

In this chapter, we have examined the expression of indefiniteness and definiteness in A’ingae. Empirically, we have shown that A’ingae bare nouns can be freely used in

indefinite, unique, and anaphoric uses. Despite this, A'ingae has dedicated indefinite and anaphoric definite morphemes, *fae* and *tsa* respectively.

While recent literature has uncovered a range of variation in the expression of definiteness cross-linguistically, the A'ingae pattern is striking in particular for the lack of complementarity between forms. Schwarz (2013), Jenks (2018), and other recent works have established the existence of dedicated anaphoric determiners not unlike *tsa*.⁸ However, the uniqueness forms in these cases often cannot be used in anaphoric cases.

Previous authors have often proposed to account for the apparent complementarity found in other languages through a sort of 'hard' pragmatic competition: Chierchia (1998) and Dayal (2004)'s Blocking Principle, Heim (1991)'s *Maximize Presupposition!* and Jenks (2018)'s instantiation of it as *Index!*, and Ahn (2019)'s *Bare Noun Blocking*. While the details of these analyses differ, we have argued that A'ingae (along with other languages cited in §3.5) violate the predictions of such accounts. Moreover, as they are based on putatively universal pragmatic principles, it seems unlikely that their presence or absence would itself be a matter of grammar.

Instead, we have suggested an analysis in which 'hard' pragmatic competition does not play a synchronic role in the expression of (in)definiteness. 'Soft' pragmatic competition based on similar principles may of course exert pressure diachronically towards determiner systems which display complementarity. However, hard constraints on where various determiners and other DP forms are synchronically due to the semantics, not pragmatic competition. Finally, we have briefly sketched what such a semantic account would look for bare nouns, indefinite *fae*, and anaphoric *tsa* in A'ingae.

Finally, we have argued that the lack of complementarity of (in)definiteness in A'ingae calls into question the role of *Maximize Presupposition*-like reasoning in this domain. In particular, we have argued that hard constraints on the use of specific forms in this domain are not the result of pragmatic competition, but rather semantics. Parallel arguments have been made in some other putative MP cases such as Bade (2016), who argues that apparently obligatory additive particles like English *too* are also not due to hard MP-based hard competition but other sources. While we leave a full consideration of the nature and scope of MP to future work (see also Bade (2021) and references therein), we hope to have shown that there is good reason to doubt that competition between definite expressions should be taken as an instance of general MP pragmatics rather than cross-linguistically variable semantics.

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⁸Though to reiterate, we have also found two important differences between *tsa* and the other such markers. First, *tsa* is never felicitous in bridging uses regardless of the specific bridging relation, whereas previously described anaphoric forms are often usable in a subset of bridging environments. Second, *tsa* lacks the deictic/exophoric uses that are possible with many similar forms (e.g. Jenks (2018) work on Mandarin).

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