Syntax and semantics of noun phrases in Selkup[1]

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1. Introduction

The study at hand aims at presenting a unified account of noun phrases in Selkup considering all Selkup dialects. The study is carried out based on two corpora: The *Selkup Language Corpus (SLC)* (Budzisch et al. 2019) and the *INEL Selkup Corpus* (Brykina et al. 2020) — all together they consist of 404 texts with 16,741 sentences and 94,553 tokens. The corpora cover the four main dialect groups: Northern, Central, Southern and Ket Selkup, a detailed account of the distribution of the data per dialect is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Distribution of the data per dialect

	Northern Selkup	Central Selkup	Southern Selkup	Ket Selkup
TEXTS	89	81	146	88
SENTENCES	5,030	3,975	5,003	2,733
TOKENS	29,368	24,690	25,456	15,039

The SLC corpus is based on data recorded from 1846–2014 by various researchers, with most texts having been recorded in the 1960, 70s and 80s, while the INEL Selkup Corpus takes field work notes of Angelina Kuzmina into account who has been carrying out her research mostly in the 1960 and 70s. The data set covers four genres: folklore texts (flk), narratives (nar), translations (trans/transl) and songs (song) with a strong focus on folklore texts and narratives. The genre is also visible in the denomination of the examples, being named the following way: an abbreviation for the speaker, the year of recording, a short title, the genre and the sentence number. In addition, the dialect of each

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text as well as the source corpus are indicated, making every example traceable in the data. As for the presentation of the examples, we largely keep interlinear glossing as well as the translations like in the source data; however, some minor unifications were made for the sake of better comprehension.

As mentioned, Selkup exhibits noticeable dialectal variation. However, noun phrases are treated rather uniformly in all dialects. Therefore, the dialectal provenance of each example is given, but we do not provide examples from all dialects for all relevant phenomena. If not indicated otherwise, the analyzed data shows no differences between the dialects in terms of the syntax and semantics of noun phrases.

The paper at hand is structured as follows: In Section 2, a concise overview of the necessary theoretical background and some general issues is provided. The main Section 3 deals with the syntax and semantics of noun phrases in Selkup, distinguishing bare noun phrases (3.1) and modified noun phrases (3.2) formally. As for the latter, adjectives, numerals and quantifiers, demonstratives, possessors as well as participles and relative clauses are examined; also discontinuous noun phrases (3.3) are touched upon. The final Section 4 summarizes the study and points to upcoming issues and related research questions.

2. Theoretical background and general issues

As the term *noun phrase* (NP) already suggests, noun phrases have a noun as their head, being, thus, organized around a noun. Thereby, the noun phrase can consist of only its head, yielding a bare noun phrase, or it can be further modified. Modification of the noun phrase can exhibit different grades of complexity: Either a single item, e.g. an adjective or a numeral, a full noun phrase or even a full clause can occur in the modifier position. Already here it can be said that noun phrases are principally head-final in Selkup, which conforms to its basic SOV structure. Apart from few idiosyncratic inconsistencies, there are two noticeable exceptions, namely the universal quantifiers *muntɨk* 'all' as well as *wes'* 'all; whole' and naturally discontinuous noun phrases; both of them will be discussed in detail at the appropriate place.

Since the term *noun phrase* itself is of generative origin, some introductory and disclaiming comments are in order here in this respect. In more recent generative literature — starting with Abney (1987) — the projection of a *determiner phrase* (DP) over the noun phrase is assumed. That is, the DP, whose head is e.g. an article or a demonstrative, is assumed to take the NP as complement. In more recent approaches, this assumption was challenged for articless languages, to which Selkup surely belongs, whereas other authors stick to the DP analysis also for those languages (see e.g. Bošković 2008, Bošković & Şener 2014 and Kornfilt 2018 respectively for argument of both sides). In this paper, we will not dig into the NP~DP discussion, although some Selkup peculiarities (e.g. modified possessors) might favor a DP analysis over an NP analysis (see Budzisch & Däbritz 2019). Neither will

we discuss the syntactic configuration of the noun phrase, nor movement processes within it from a derivationalist point of view, since that would go far beyond the scope of this paper. At relevant points, e.g. when discussing the quantifiers *muntik* and *wes'*, we might point to potentially upcoming questions in this respect, but the paper at hand should not be conceived as a generative approach to Selkup syntax. Given this, the term *modifier* is to be understood without any theoretical connotation, but simply designating any item that specifies a noun semantically further. Surely different types of modifiers may behave differently from a syntactic point of view; at relevant points, this will be noted and discussed if necessary, but not further analyzed from a derivational syntactic point of view either. Finally, it has to be noticed that both subject and object noun phrases can be realized covertly in Selkup, cf. example (1). We will not discuss such instances further here, since they naturally do not tell anything about the syntactic and semantic structure of the noun phrase itself.

(1) [Context: A woman and robber wanted to kill the woman's husband. But the latter understood the plan, got angry and now husband and wife are quarreling.]
I qwan-nɨ-t
and kill-CO-3SG.O
'And [he] killed [her].'
(Southern; INEL, PVD_1964_UnfaithfulWifeAndRobbers_flk.200)

Coming to the semantics of noun phrases, questions of scope as well as the complex of definiteness and specificity are of immediate relevance. The term *scope* is used in this paper in a very basic manner, not entailing any formal semantic consequences: A feature or an item X scopes over an item Y, if the latter is affected by the former's meaning or function. Thus, in the English noun phrase [*my husband's pyjama*] the noun *husband* is within the scope of *my*, but the noun *pyjama* is not, since the pyjama is owned by the husband, and not by the first-person speaker. *Definiteness* and *specificity* are two terms and concepts that have been dealt with extensively in theoretical literature from both semantic and a pragmatic perspective. Lyons (1999: 227) assumes definiteness playing a role "in guiding the hearer through the organization of information in a discourse", an assumption that can be expanded to specificity as well. As for definiteness, there are two main approaches to account for: Either a definite linguistic expression is viewed as designating a referent semantically unique in the given context of speech (e.g. Russell 1905, Hawkins 1978), or the referent of the definite linguistic expression is assumed to be familiar and/or identifiable for the hearer in the given context from a rather pragmatic point of view (e.g. Christophersen 1939, Heim 1982). More recent approaches (e.g. Lyons 1999, Löbner 2011) often try to unify both. Obviously, semantic uniqueness on the one hand and pragmatic identification on the other hand yield the same definiteness "status" for a referent in a given context in most cases. Here, rather the pragmatic approach is followed, if cru-

cial differences appear. It is widely known that many languages — including German, Swedish or Hungarian — express definiteness via articles; as was stated above, Selkup lacks articles, thus, definiteness has to be expressed by other linguistic devices, which will be named at appropriate points. Coming to specificity, this concept is surely connected to the concept of definiteness: Enç (1991: 23–24), analyzing definiteness rather as semantic uniqueness, assumes specificity involving "[...] a weak link, that of being a subset of or standing in some recoverable relation to a familiar object". The concepts of definiteness and specificity can well be illustrated by the patterns of differential object marking in Turkish in examples (2) to (5). In the examples (2) and (3), no clearly designated book is referred to, whereas in example (4) the speaker refers to a book of which s/he knows which one it is. In example (5), finally, the speaker refers to an aforementioned book.

(2) *(Ben) kitap oku-du-m.* (indefinite, non-specific)
1SG book read-PST-1SG
'I read a book/some books.' ~ 'I was book-reading.'

(3) *(Ben) bir kitap oku-du-m.* (indefinite, non-specific)
1SG one book read-PST-1SG
'I read a/some/one book.'

(4) *(Ben) bir kitab-ı oku-du-m.* (indefinite, specific)
1SG one book-ACC read-PST-1SG
'I read a (certain) book.'

(5) *(Ben) bu kitab-ı oku-du-m.* (definite, specific)
1SG this book-ACC read-PST-1SG
'I read this book.'
(Turkish; own examples)

Thus, both definiteness and specificity mark discourse referents with respect to their retrievability in a given speech situation. Roughly speaking, definiteness is thereby rather hearer-oriented, and specificity is often rather speaker-oriented: The Turkish examples (2) to (4) are indefinite, because the hearer of the utterance is not able to identify the book referred to in the given context, whereas s/he is in example (5), whence [*bu kitabı*] is to be analyzed as a definite expression. In turn, the examples (2) and (3) are non-specific, since the speaker refers to an arbitrary book, whereas in the examples (4) and (5) s/he has a certain book in mind, whence the relevant linguistic expressions are specific.

3. Syntax and Semantics of NPs in Selkup

From a formal point of view, noun phrases can be divided into two categories in Selkup: bare noun phrases and modified noun phrases, whereby the latter can be continuous and

discontinuous. Whereas bare noun phrases contain only the head of the phrase, modified noun phrases contain at least one modifying item, which can be according to Harder (2019: 42) pronouns, adjectives, numerals, quantifiers and participles. Most often, modifier and modified stand adjacently, but in few cases they can be separated from each other in the clause, yielding discontinuous noun phrases. Since the latter bear some specific challenges for their analysis, we will discuss them separately.

3.1. Bare noun phrases

Bare noun phrases contain only the nominal they are headed by. Often, the latter is a noun (6), but also adjectives (7), pronouns ((8) and (9)) and proper nouns (10) may occur. As can be seen from the examples, bare noun phrases are not constrained by the syntactic functions they fulfill.

(6) [*Qorqɨt*]$_{NP}$ [*n'oma-m*]$_{NP}$ *qo-ŋɨ-tɨ.*
bear hare-ACC sight-CO-3SG.O
'A bear saw a hare.'
(Northern; INEL, KNK_1965_BearAndHare_flk.003)

(7) [*Mutɨrona*]$_{NP}$ *i:-tɨ-ŋɨ-tɨ takoj.*
brave take-TR-CO-3SG.O such.R
'A brave [man] takes her, such [one].'
(Northern; INEL, NEP_1965_ThreeBrothers1_flk.013)

(8) *Nil'd'i-ŋ* [*me*]$_{NP}$ *i:l-uttə.*
such-ADV 1PL live-1PL.S/O
'So we live.'
(Southern; INEL, PMP_1961_MyDay_nar.011)

(9) *Tan* [*taw-ɨ-m*]$_{NP}$ *ütɨ-ǯi-l* [...].
2SG this-EP-ACC drink-FUT-2SG.O
'You will drink this [...]'
(Ket; SLC, AGS_1968_FairytaleSnake_flk.089)

(10) *Nača-ɣɨt* [*i:riša-nen*]$_{NP}$ *varka-ndə.*
there-LOC Irisha-ADE live-2SG.S
'You live with Irisha.'
(Central; INEL, KuV_196X_Questions_nar.009)

Coming to the question of definiteness, it can be said that bare noun phrases can be either indefinite or definite. Examples (6) and (7) illustrate indefinite noun phrases, since the given referents are neither inherently definite here, nor are they aforementioned or accessible in the given context. In example (8), the noun phrase is inherently definite given the usage of a personal pronoun (Lyons 1999: 134ff.). The same holds true for ex-

ample (9), as demonstrative pronouns are inherently definite (Hawkins 1978: 155). In example (10), the noun phrase is inherently definite as well, because a proper noun is used, which per default yields a definite noun phrase.

Example (11) is somewhat more complex inasmuch definiteness of the referents is established only via the context. Both the boy and ducks are aforementioned: Thus, the noun phrase [*kɨbajčep*] is unambiguously definite here. As for the subject noun phrase [*o:kɛr n'ab*], the case is more complicated, since its antecedent refers to a whole group of ducks. In the given context, however, the hearer cannot identify the duck referred to, although s/he knows that there is a group of ducks of which this particular duck is a member. Given this, the respective noun phrase has to be accounted for as indefinite. Thus, example (11) is a good case in point that definiteness and givenness often coincide, but not necessarily, since a given referent is indefinite here. Additionally, the subject noun phrase is non-specific, since the speaker refers to an arbitrary duck from the aforementioned group.

(11) [Context: A boy is in the taiga. Suddenly there are ducks flying.]
[*O:kɛr n'ab*]$_{NP}$ *ora-nɨ-d* [*kɨbajče-p*]$_{NP}$ [...].
one duck hold-CO-3SG.O boy-ACC
'One of the ducks picked the child up, [set him onto her own wing, raised him high above, and took him into the taiga].'
(Central; SLC, TTD_1964_WildDucks_flk.010)

3.2. Modified noun phrases

In contrast to bare noun phrases, modified noun phrases contain at least one modifying item that specifies the head noun further. In this paper, the modifiers occurring in Selkup are grouped as follows: adjectives, numerals and quantifiers, demonstratives, possessors, participles and relative clauses. In contrast to Harder (2019: 42), we do not treat modifying pronouns uniformly here, since they do differ in both their semantic and syntactic behavior as will be shown in what follows.

3.2.1. Adjectives

A frequent type of nominal modifiers are adjectives, which qualify the head noun and its properties in more detail. Adjectives immediately precede the noun they modify, and do not agree with it in case, number and possession.

(12) [*Kɨba tibe-qum*]$_{NP}$ *t'ärɨ-ŋ* [...].
small man-human say-3SG.S
'The boy says: [...]'
(Southern; INEL, PMP_1961_Fairytale_flk.284)

(13) *Tü-sa-ŋ* [*arɨn qu-la-ne*]$_{NP}$.
come-PST-1SG.S foreign human-PL-ALL
'I came to the strangers.'
(Ket; INEL, KMS_196X_Lifestory_nar.013)

In most cases, the usage of a modifying adjective has no impact on the definiteness or specificity of the noun phrase. There is, however, one important exception, namely superlatives. Superlatives single out one referent of a predefined set of referents, wherefore the named referent is per default unique in the given context and, thus, definite (Hawkins 1978: 234). In example (14), the protagonist has more than one daughter. Only with the usage of the superlative form [*poːs kɨpa*] the reference is unambiguous in the given context and, thus, the noun phrase is definite.

(14) *Näl'a-m-tɨ* *qural-tɨ-tɨ* *Ičа-nɨk,* [*poːs kɨpa näl'a-m-tɨ*]$_{NP}$
daughter-ACC-POSS.3SG go-TR-3SG.O Itja-ALL most small daughter-ACC-POSS.3SG
qural-tɨ-tɨ.
go-TR-3SG.O
'He sends a daughter of his to Icha, he sends his youngest daughter.'
(Northern; SLC, BEP_1977_Icha4_flk.035)

Additionally, there may be more than one adjective modifying the head noun. Although the occurrence of several adjectives may be constrained by semantic reasons — e.g. ?*big small reindeer* appears to be unlikely — adjectival modification of the noun phrase in Selkup is basically recursive. In the easiest case, both adjectives scope over the whole noun phrase as in example (15).

(15) [*Aša märqa säːqɨ saj-l'a-qɪ-tɨ*]$_{NP}$ *ukkɨrtɨk rɨpč'ɨ-mpɔː-qɪj.*
NEG big black eye-DIM-DU-POSS.3SG often blink-PST.NAR-3SG.S
'His small black eyes often were blinking.'
(Northern; INEL, KGE_1965_Lgov_transl.020)

If relational adjectives formed with the adjectivizer *-l' (-j)* are involved, however, questions of scope become more complicated. Example (16) resembles example (15), since both 'single' and 'Nenets' modify the tent, yielding a single Nenets tent and not the tent of a single Nenets. In example (17), however, the first adjective *tɔːl'* 'of the other side' modifies the house, and not the human, thus, it has scope only over the former. This is possible, since *mɔːtal'* also has a nouny origin and, thus, can be modified further (see also Budzisch & Däbritz 2019).

(16) [*Pɛlä-kɨtɨ-l'* *qälɨ-l'* *mɔːt*]$_{NP}$, *nɨːna tü-ntɨ.*
friend-CAR-ADJZ Nenets-ADJZ tent there come-INFER.3SG.S
'Just a single Nenets tent, he came there.'
(Northern; INEL, NEP_196X_NenetsAndWhiteBear2_flk.142')

(17) [...] [[*tɔ:-l'* *mɔ:t-a-l'*]$_{NP}$ *qup*]$_{NP}$.
to.the.other.side-ADJZ house-EP-ADJZ human
'["What are you searching for, old man?", asks] a human from the house across the road.'
(Northern; INEL, KAI_1965_OldManWithLittleMind1_flk.067)

3.2.2. Numerals and quantifiers

Ordinal numerals behave principally like adjectives; however, noun phrase modification with ordinal numerals is obviously not recursive due to semantic constraints. Example (18) exhibits an ordinal numeral in modifier position, again not agreeing with its head noun. If an ordinal numeral and one or more adjectives occur together as nominal modifiers, the former precedes the latter, although admittedly there are few instances like example (19) in the analyzed material. Nevertheless, this linear order can be explained: Ordinal numerals make a noun phrase specific per default, since their function is to identify the rank or the place of a given referent within a set of referents and, thus, the referent cannot be arbitrary anymore. Expectedly, an ordinal numeral has scope over the whole noun phrase it modifies[2], wherefore it strongly tends to appear before further modifying adjectives (cf. also English *the third black car* vs. ?*the black third car*).

(18) [*Tätti-md'elžä* *t'eli-t*]$_{NP}$ *man* *qättə* *ča:žə-za-ŋ.*
four-ORD day-POSS.3SG 1SG back travel-PST-1SG.S
'On the fourth day I came back.'
(Ket; INEL, SSF_1963_SquirrelHunting1_nar.026)

(19) [*Nagur-u-mžel* *waže-l* *laga-p*]$_{NP}$ *mekka* *m'e-i-t.*
three-EP-ORD meat-ADJZ heap-ACC 1SG.DAT give-EP-3SG.O
'The third piece of meat he gave me.'
(Central; SLC, SAG_1984_StoryAboutLife_nar.052)

Coming to cardinal numerals, Corbett (1978: 363) argues that their behavior tends to fall between that of nouns and adjectives. From a semantic point of view, cardinal numerals unlike adjectives surely do not specify the head noun further: Given the Northern Selkup noun phrase *nɔ:kir ɔ:tä* 'three reindeers', we do not get to know anything about the reindeers themselves, but simply that there are three of them. From a syntactic point of view, two characteristics of cardinal numerals account for their more nouny behavior:

[2] A reviewer suggested constructions such as *[nagur-u-mžel mɔ:t-a-l']$_{NP}$ qup* 'three-EP-ORD tent-EP-ADJZ human' = 'a person from the third tent', in which the ordinal numeral would modify only the adjacently standing noun. Since the analyzed data does not include relevant instances, we cannot contradict providing empirical data. Nevertheless, we would assume such constructions to be realized otherwise, e.g. via the usage of local cases. Further research is highly demanded in this respect.

On the one hand, they are — in contrast to modifying adjectives — again not recursive due to semantic constraints. On the other hand, cardinal numerals rather may govern the form of the noun they modify than agreeing with it in many languages (Corbett 1978: 363–364). Selkup, however, is not a case in point for the latter argument. Nouns modified by cardinal numerals are most frequently in their underspecified number form, which is homonymous to the singular (Kuznecova et al. 1980: 167). If the given noun phrase is not in subject position, the head noun may be inflected, whereby the cardinal numeral does not agree in case, cf. examples (20) and (22).

(20) *Tep-qi warga-di* [*oqqir mat-kɨt*]$_{NP}$.
3SG-DU live-3DU.O one house-LOC
'They live in one house.'
(Ket; SLC, TET_1979_TheHaresHouse_flk.014)

(21) *Täp-se ä-sa-n a:lbe* [*šittə qum*]$_{NP}$.
3SG-COM be-PST-3SG.S aside two human
'With him there were two people.'
(Ket; SLC, KMS_1967_Hunt_trans.080)

(22) [*Təttä surup-se*]$_{NP}$ *üb-ut.*
four wild.animal-COM leave-1PL.S/O
'We set off with four birds'
(Central ~ Southern; SLC, NN_1855_Hero3_song.242)

However, as was pointed out by Kuznecova et al. (1980: 169), after the numeral *šittɨ ~ šittə ~ šədə* 'two' dual forms of the head noun may occur as well, cf. example (23). Däbritz (2021) assumes animacy and humanness playing a role in this respect, whereby dual marking appears to be more frequent in case of human referents than in case of non-human referents. Additionally, in the material in Brykina et al. (2020) this phenomenon is most salient in Northern Selkup dialects.

(23) *To:na* [*šittɨ qum-o:-qɪ*]$_{NP}$ *ilɨ-mpɔ:-qɪ.*
that two human-EP-DU live-PST.NAR-3DU.S
'Those two people lived.'
(Northern; INEL, NEP_1965_OrphanBoyAndPanOldMan1_flk.136)

As for the linear order of cardinal numerals and adjectives, the most frequent pattern is expectedly the cardinal numeral preceding one or more adjectives.

(24) [...] *aj* [*ukkɨr n'äŋɨč'a qup*]$_{NP}$ *qom-ta.*
also one nude human appear-INFER.3SG.S
'One more naked man appeared [...].'
(Northern; INEL, KAI_1965_SylchaPylcha1_flk.072)

There are, however, some instances in the analyzed material, where the reversed pattern can be observed. Mostly, relational adjectives formed with the adjectivizer *-l' (-j)* occur in these instances, cf. example (25). Indeed the pattern appears to be not coincidental, given the syntactically parallel structure with possessors formed by the same suffix, cf. example (26) (see below for details of possessors in modifier position).

(25) *Paŋɨ-m-tɨt muntɨk mi-ŋɔː-tɨt* [*laŋa-l'*
knife-ACC-POSS.3PL all give-CO-3PL.S/O ide-ADJZ
qum-ɨ-l' nɔːkɨr timn'a-sɨ-t]$_{NP}$.
human-EP-ADJZ three brother-DYA-PL
'The three Khanty brothers gave all their knives.'
(Northern; INEL, SAI_1965_Palna_flk.078)

(26) *A* [*Palna-l' nɔːkɨr timn'a-sɨ-t*]$_{NP}$ *okoːt jaŋ əːtɨ-r-kɨ-sɔː-tɨt.*
and Palna-ADJZ three brother-DYA-POSS.3SG earlier RFL word-VBLZ-HAB-PST-3PL.S/O
'Palna's three brothers have discussed this earlier though.'
(Northern; INEL, SAI_1965_Palna_flk.079)

Additionally, there are two instances of a cardinal numeral following a negated adjective, cf. example (27). However, since this is attested only from one speaker, it remains a task for further research whether this is due to idiolectal variation or whether this is a common pattern.

(27) *A na sünt'eqa-m oral-gu qɨgɨ-di* [*az warq səɜt tibe-qum-ga*]$_{NP}$.
and this sparrow-ACC catch-INF want-3SG.O NEG big two man-human-DIM
'Two little boys were trying to catch the sparrow.'
(Southern; INEL, PMP_1961_ThreeBrothersAndPriest_flk.366)

A semantically rather heterogeneous group of nominal modifiers is formed by quantifiers. One group of them — *koči* 'much; many', *qɔːnak* 'few', *naššak* 'so much' — rather mechanically "replaces" a cardinal numeral not pointing to an exact number of referents, but to amount of referents which is evaluated as big or small by the speaker.

(28) [*Koči üːdɛ-p*]$_{NP}$ *öde-špüː-dɛt.*
much water-ACC drink-IPFV-3PL-S/O
'They drank much wine.'
(Central; SLC, TTD_1964_Frog_flk.063)

The other group of quantifiers are the universal quantifiers *muntɨk* 'all; whole', *wes'* 'all; whole' (< Russian *ves'* 'all; whole'), *ɨdɨ* 'every' and *košnɨj ~ kaʒnɨj* 'every' (< dialectal Russian *kažnyj* 'id.'), the former two yielding a collective reading, the latter two yielding a distributive reading. The distributive items *ɨdɨ* 'every' and *košnɨj ~ kaʒnɨj* 'every' — the latter being much more frequent — behave syntactically like adjectives not agreeing with

the head noun in case and number, cf. example (29). It would be expected that they precede further modifying adjectives, but within the analyzed material, no relevant instance could be found.

(29) *Tabə tu:bo-n* [*kašna pe-t*]$_{NP}$ *pat-ku-k.*
3SG oak-ILL every night-POSS.3SG go.down-ITER-3SG.S
'He went down to the oak every night.'
(Central; SLC, SDP_1964_FairytaleBlackZar_flk.705)

The collective universal quantifiers *muntɨk* 'all; whole' and *wes'* 'all; whole' are more complex with respect to their morphosyntactic behavior. First, the number form of the head noun varies depending on the noun's semantics: Count nouns tend to appear in the plural, mass nouns tend to appear in the underspecified unmarked form of nouns, which is homonymous to the singular form. Second, both quantifiers can either precede the head noun or follow it, cf. examples (30) to (33). In case of *muntɨk*, the latter pattern is most frequently found, whereas in case of *wes'* both patterns are rather evenly distributed.

(30) [...], [*muntɨk wəča-p*]$_{NP}$ *tattɔ:-tɨ!*
all meat-ACC bring-IMP.2SG.O
'[Mice of the haystack,] bring me all the meat!'
(Northern; SLC, BEP_1977_Itja3_flk.028)

(31) [*Qälɨ-t-ɨ-m muntɨk*]$_{NP}$ *qət-pa-tɨ.*
Nenets-PL-EP-ACC all kill-PST.NAR-3SG.O
'He killed all Nenets.'
(Northern; SLC, MIV_1977_TwoBrothers_flk.027)

(32) *Wes a:b-ɨ-l-de i* [*wes parü:de-p*]$_{NP}$ *ödü-l-de.*
all eat-EP-RES-3SG.O and all wine-ACC drink-RES-3SG.O
'He eats everything and drinks all the wine.'
(Central; SLC, SDP_1964_FairytaleBlackZar_flk.384)

(33) [*Olko wes*]$_{NP}$ *more-l'-ba.*
ice all break-INCH-PST.NAR.3SG.S
'The whole ice has broken.'
(Central; SLC, KFN_1967_HumanSizedPike_flk.004)

Obviously, the postposed position of the given quantifiers appears to contradict the otherwise strictly head-final structure of noun phrases in Selkup. That raises the question of their syntactic status with respect to the head noun. As can be seen in example (30), the noun *qälitɨm* is marked for plural and accusative case, whereas the quantifier *muntɨk* exhibits no number and case marking. Whereas the lack of number marking can also be explained by the inherent quantificational semantics, the lack of case marking shows that the quantifier indeed belongs syntactically to the noun. This stands to reason to analyze

the item as stranded (a.k.a. floating) quantifier, that is, being base generated in prenominal position and "stranding" in the clause, when the head noun moves.[3] This account easily explains both the variation with respect to the linear position of the quantifier and its usual modifier-like morphological behavior.

As for the semantics of noun phrases modified with universal quantifiers, there is no consensus in relevant research: According to e.g. Hawkins' (1978) uniqueness and inclusiveness account to definiteness, such noun phrases are to be analyzed as definite, since the usage of a universal quantifier prerequisites the inclusion of all possible referents in the given context into the set of referents referred to. Enç (1991: 10–11), however, assumes such noun phrases being indefinite, but specific. Here we follow Hawkins' (1978) approach and, thus, analyze all noun phrases in the examples (31) to (34) as both definite and specific.

3.2.3. Demonstratives

Noun phrase modification with a demonstrative is due to their semantics not recursive. Selkup exhibits the proximal demonstrative *tam*, the distal *to* as well as the anaphoric demonstratives *na* and *tina* — the latter is only found in Northern Selkup — which are used to refer to referents already introduced to the discourse. Example (34) and (35) exhibit demonstrative determiners, both not agreeing with their head noun. Demonstratives can, however, be used as demonstrative pronouns and then take case and number marking (cf. example (9) above). The proximal, distal and anaphoric demonstratives make the modified noun phrase definite per default, since their main function is to identify the referent in the (discourse) situation. However, example (36) shows the use of the demonstrative *nɨlʼčʼi* 'such', which precedes the head noun and does not agree with it, too, but does not mark the modified noun phrase as definite but rather as indefinite and non-specific.

(34) *Mat mɨd-o-m tü* [*to bleka-nd*]$_{NP}$ *onenže pire-ɣend pen-de.*
1SG liver-EP-POSS.1SG fire that side-ILL yourself stature-ILL.POSS.3SG put-IMP.2SG.O
'Put my liver to that side [the side further away] of the fire, opposite from yourself.'
(Central; SLC, ChDN_1983_GirlAndIce_flk.029)

(35) *Starik* [*na qum*]$_{NP}$ *nɨk tom-nɨ-t.*
old.man.R this human so speak-CO-3SG.O
'The old man, this man was saying so.'
(Northern; INEL, NEP_196X_SecondFairytale_flk.169)

[3] For the original generative account to quantifier stranding see Sportiche (1988) and Shlonsky (1991). Given the descriptive orientation of the paper at hand, the exact patterns of quantifier stranding in Selkup are not spelled out here. The observed patterns, however, stand clearly to reason that the given accounts can be adopted to Selkup as well.

(36) *Aj* [*nɨlʼčʼi əːtɨ*]$_{NP}$ *tap qən-kɨ-nɨ ippa qapija.*
again such word this leave-HAB-CO.3SG.S lie.3SG.S supposedly
'Again such words pass by, he was lying.'
(Northern; INEL, NEP_196X_NenetsAndWhiteBear2_flk.116)

A demonstrative can have scope over the whole noun phrase and is always preceding further modifying adjectives. Example (37) exhibits an example for that. However, when coming to modifiers with a nouny origin (especially possessors or relational adjectives), the matter of scope is more complex as these modifiers can be modified themselves by the demonstrative. In example (38), the demonstrative modifies the noun phrase [*iːma*] which itself modifies the noun phrase [*ira*] (cf. next section for possessors). This, however, does not entail that in possessive structures the demonstrative always modifies only the possessor; a frequent domain of this phenomenon are constructions with spatial expression, as shown in example (39).

(37) *Ukkɨr tot čʼonto-t* [*na wərqɨ nenä-kɨ-ntɨ*]$_{NP}$ *nɨlʼ ɛsaː* [...]
one whole middle-LOC.ADV this big sister-AUG-ILL so say.3SG.S
'Once he said to his elder sister: [...]'
(Northern; INEL, NEP_196X_SecondFairytale_flk.011)

(38) [[*Na iːma-n*]$_{NP}$ *ira*]$_{NP}$ *kos kunɨ uːčʼi-mpa.*
this woman-GEN husband INDEF where work-PST.NAR.3SG.S
'This woman's husband works somewhere.'
(Northern; INEL, KMG_1976_BriefVacation_nar.006)

(39) [[*Na šoːqor-t*]$_{NP}$ *paːr-o-nd*]$_{NP}$ *siga-l-ba-dɨt.*
this stove-GEN top-EP-ILL climb-INCH-PST.NAR-3PL.S/O
'She climbed on this stove.'
(Southern; SLC, TMR_1981_Robbers_flk.034)

3.2.4. Possessors

Noun phrases can also be modified with possessors, which can be expressed nominally (example (40)) and pronominally (example (41) and (42)). In Selkup, two cases (genitive and adessive; the latter only in non-Northern dialects) and a set of possessive suffixes or a combination of these two are used to mark the possessive relations (see Budzisch 2021). Due to their semantically restricted nature, modification with possessors is not recursive. Possessive relationships are unidirectional, since every item possessed linguistically only has one possessor (Taylor 1995: 201). This entails interpreting the whole noun phrase as definite, since it can be unambiguously matched to another referent (Lyons 1999: 124).

(40) *Ima* [*imaqota-t* *üŋkɨlsa:-qɨt*]$_{NP}$ *manni-mpa-tɨ.*
woman old.woman-GEN ear-LOC see-PST.NAR-3SG.O
'The woman looks into the old woman's ears.'
(Northern; SLC; BVP_1973_East_flk.038)

(41) [*Tat* *tol'ǯ'e-nd-ə*]$_{NP}$ *konne* *čanǯɨ-gu* *a:* *tan-wa-k.*
2SG.GEN ski-POSS.2SG-INS upwards go.out-INF NEG know-CO-1SG.S
'I cannot go up with your skies.'
(Central; SLC, MNS_1984_BrotherSister_flk.045)

(42) *Nänni* *tat* *i:-ča-l* [*meŋ-nan* *so:*
then 2SG take-FUT-2SG.O 1SG-ADE good
kündä *qorrä-m*]$_{NP}$.
horse stallion-NOM/ACC-POSS.1SG
'Then you will take my good stallion.'
(Ket; SLC, AGS_1968_FairytaleSnake_flk.057)

As can be seen from example (42), possessors expressed with a noun or pronoun precede modifying adjectives. Possessive modifiers usually have scope over the whole noun phrase, be the possessor expressed overtly (examples (40) to (42)) or only via the possessive suffix (example (43)). Again, the situation is more complex in case of multiple possessors and relational adjectives formed with the adjectivizer *-l'* (*-j*): Here, the linearly first possessor scopes only over the linearly second possessor (or relational adjective respectively), but not over the head noun.[4] In example (44), the pronominal possessor *man* has scope over *äsa* 'father' (additionally marked with a possessive suffix), but not over the reindeer of the father.

(43) *A* [*warg* *ne-m*]$_{NP}$ *ogol-a-lǯ-ha* *ud'a* *kwen-ba.*
but big daughter-POSS.1SG learn-EP-PFV-CO.3SG.S work go.away-PST.NAR
'And my older daughter got an education, she works, she left.'
(Central; INEL, YIF_196X_WorkAsPostwoman_nar.015)

(44) *Ama* [[*man* *äsa-nɨ*]$_{NP}$ *kura-mpɨl'*
mother 1SG.GEN father-GEN.POSS.1SG go-PTCP.PST
ɔ:ta-tɨ]$_{NP}$ *kuni* *mäkkä* *atɨ-lt-ätɨ.*
reindeer-POSS.3SG where.from 1SG.DAT be.visible-TR-IMP.2SG.O
'Mother, show me where my father's reindeer is.'
(Northern; INEL, TVP_1965_ThreeBrothersLapta_flk.006)

[4] A reviewer suggested constructions like [*man tɔ:-l' mɔ:t-ym*] '1SG.GEN side-ADJZ tent-POSS.1SG' = 'my tent on the other side', in which the personal pronoun *man* would scope over the whole noun phrase being the possessor of the tent. Not knowing the origin of the cited data, we cannot judge the given interpretation. In the analyzed corpus data, however, such examples cannot be found.

3.2.5. Participles and relative clauses

The last group of modifiers is formed by participles. Participles modifying a noun phrase can function like qualitative adjectives, eventually even being lexicalized. The latter pattern is illustrated in example (45), where the noun phrase [*surul'd'i kum*] means 'hunter'. Consequently, such noun phrases may be both definite and indefinite, as is the case with qualitative adjectives, too (see above). In example (45), the given noun phrase is indefinite, since the referent is newly introduced into the discourse, and it cannot be inferred from the context.

(45) *Amdi-s ando-ka-ɣan* [*surul'-d'i kum*]$_{NP}$.
sit-PST.3SG.S boat-DIM-LOC hunt-PTCP.PRS human
'There was a hunter sitting in the boat.'
(Ket; SLC, BNN_1971_EyesEars_flk.024)

Since participles are formed from verbal stems, they have an inherent argument structure, and can, thus, build clausal structures being referred to as relative clauses. The borderline between adjective participles and relative clauses is admittedly fuzzy, and the paper at hand does not aim at solving this issue, neither language-specifically nor cross-linguistically. As a rough tendency it can be said that the more lexicalized a modifying participle is, the less likely it forms a relative clause. For the purpose of this study, we take a rather broad perspective, and account for all modifying participles, which are not clearly lexicalized, as relative clauses. If the modifying participle is formed from a one-placed verb, like in example (46), the head noun is per default co-referential to the verb's only argument. In case of two-place or even three-place verbs, this may vary: Example (47) shows a relative clause, where the head noun plays the semantic role of an agent, and example (48) shows a relative clause, where the head noun plays the semantic role of a patient. Furthermore, the latter two examples show that Selkup allows for so-called heavy noun phrases in modifier position.

(46) [*P'argɨ-ndɨ sa:-ze*]$_{NP}$ *ando-m tö:-mba-t.*
seethe-PTCP.PRS gum-INS boat-ACC grease-PST.NAR-3SG.O
'He greased the boat with the boiling resin.'
(Southern; SLC, TMR_1981_AboutItja_flk.027)

(47) [*Mazɨm po:ne t'aš-ku-nd'i qu-la*]$_{NP}$ *ča:ʒə-n-dat.*
1SG.ACC out throw-ITER-PTCP.PRS human-PL go-CO-3PL.S/O
'There go the people who threw me on the street.'
(Southern; SLC, PMP_1961_ForestWoman_flk.304)

(48) [*Qwäryɨ-n ora-l-bädi qum*]$_{NP}$ *qa:lɨ-ŋ i:llɨ-l'e.*
bear-GEN hold-INCH-PTCP.PST human stay-3SG.S live-CVB
'The man, who got caught by the bear, stays alive.'
(Ket; SLC, KMS_1967_Bear_flk.014)

Two more comments are in order with respect to relative clauses: First, they can also be formed with interrogative pronouns functioning as relative pronouns. Given their divergent syntax including a finite verb form, they are not discussed here further. Second, the linear order of the constituents with a heavy noun phrase is not uniform in Selkup. Basically, relative clauses formed by modifying participles precede their head noun like in the examples shown above. There are, however, rather many counterexamples to this, exhibiting postposed relative clauses, cf. example (49). Their internal syntactic configuration does not differ in any way from preposed relative clauses, however, the question comes surely up, how to account for their postposed position from a derivational syntactic point of view. This, however, goes clearly beyond the scope of this paper.

(49) *A* [*na tibe-qum, qu-la-m pu-t-ka-ndi, ando-qɨn pal'd'i-ndi*]$_{NP}$, [...].
and this man-human human-PL-ACC cross-DRV-ITER-PTCP.PRS boat-LOC go-PTCP.PRS
'And this man, who takes the people across, who goes in the boat, [him does the boat take to the middle of the lake].'
(Southern; SLC, PMP_1961_Fairytale_flk.124)

Coming to the semantics of heavy noun phrases, there is basically no difference to simple modifying participles or adjectives. The noun phrase can be indefinite and non-specific as in example (50), where the given referent — the crane — is simply described in more detail by the relative clauses. However, much more frequently relative clauses serve to single out a referent from a set of referents, making it, thus, specific and/or definite.

(50) *Temdə qo-nǯu-r-nɨ-t:* [*üt-man ča:ča-ndə qarra, t'atče-k ča:ča-ndə*]$_{NP}$.
here see-IPFV3-FRQ-CO-3SG.O water-PROL go-PTCP.PRS crane near-ADV go-PTCP.PRS
'There he sees: A crane going through the water, [who is] coming closer.'
(Ket; SLC, BNN_1971_EyesEars_flk.012)

3.3. Discontinuous noun phrases

The term *discontinuous noun phrase* designates a noun phrase, in which modifier(s) and head noun do not stand adjacently. In the analyzed Selkup material, there are no unambiguous cases of discontinuous noun phrases what is not surprising given the observed lack of agreement within noun phrases: If a modifier would not stand adjacently to its head noun not agreeing with it, their syntactic affiliation within the clause could hardly be recovered. However, two more or less regularly observed patterns can possibly be accounted for as discontinuous noun phrases. As was described above, the universal quantifiers *muntɨk* 'all; whole' and *wes'* 'all; whole' do occur after the noun they modify. Moreover, it was argued that this position appears to be derived from another underlying structure, leaving the quantifier "stranded" in the clause. When accepting this account, the pattern also qualifies for a discontinuous noun phrase, since the basic order of modifier and head noun is interrupted. The same would hold true in the examples (51) and (52)

then, in which a qualitative adjective and a pronominal possessor respectively are realized after their head noun.

(51) *Qundar* [*qündi-la-m man-nan-i*]$_{NP}$ *wä:r-za-l?*
how horse-PL-ACC 1SG-ADE-ADJZ keep-PST-2SG.O
'How did you guard my horses?'
(Southern; INEL, PMP_1961_ThreeBrothersAndPriest_flk.058)

(52) [*Timn'a-mɨ werqɨ*]$_{NP}$ *qerɔ:-tɨt Volod'a-tqa.*
brother-POSS.1SG big call-3PL.S/O Volodya-TRL
'My elder brother is called Volodya.'
(Northern; INEL, TVP_1965_IWasBornInChaselka_nar.008)

However, we have to acknowledge that the above made statements are tentative inasmuch no deep derivational perspective is taken here. Further research, adopting such a perspective, would be needed in order to evaluate the given structures against a derivational syntactic background.

4. Conclusion

The paper at hand aimed at describing the basic patterns of syntax and semantics of noun phrases in Selkup. Not surprisingly, noun phrases can be bare and modified in Selkup; in the latter case no agreement of modifier and head noun is observed at all. The modifiers occurring in Selkup are adjectives, numerals and quantifiers, demonstratives, possessors as well as participles forming relative clauses. Thereby, noun phrase modification with adjectives and participles is recursive, whereas modification with other types of modifiers is not, what is surely due to the inherent semantics of the modifiers. Given this, it could be expected that the underlying syntactic structure is different, stipulating that adjectives and participles are realized in adjunct position, whereas numerals and quantifiers as well as demonstratives and possessors appear as phrasal heads. This, however, has to be empirically corroborated in further research. From a semantic point of view, it can be stated that bare noun phrases as well as noun phrases modified with adjectives, participles and cardinal numerals exhibit no constraints with respect to definiteness and specificity, which are either inherently marked or established via the context. Noun phrases modified with ordinal numerals are per default specific and in most contexts definite, too. Modifying universal quantifiers, demonstratives and possessors make a noun phrase definite in Selkup.

Adhering to underlying basic SOV word order, noun phrases are generally head-final in Selkup. There is one seeming exception, namely the universal quantifiers *muntɨk* 'all; whole' and *wes'* 'all; whole', which can be placed after the noun they modify. However, assuming them being "stranded" in the clause, they are no counterexample from a derivational syntactic point of view, but surely from a descriptive point of view. Generally, it

can be said that noun phrases in Selkup are structured as expected in an articless SOV language, namely exhibiting no agreement and being head-final. Additionally it is worth mentioning that noun phrases behave rather uniformly in all Selkup dialect groups, and no instances of systematic (or unsystematic) variation could be detected.

List of abbreviations

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ACC	accusative
ADE	adessive
ADJZ	adjectivizer
ADV	adverb
ALL	allative
AUG	augmentative
CAR	caritive
CO	co-affix (forming aorist tense)
COM	comitative
CVB	converb
DAT	dative
DIM	diminutive
DRV	(unknown) derivational suffix
DU	dual
DYA	dyadic kinship term
EP	epenthesis
FRQ	frequentative
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
HAB	habitual
ILL	illative
IMP	imperative
INCH	inchoative
INDEF	indefinite
INF	infinitive
INFER	inferential
INS	instrumental
IPFV	imperfective
ITER	iterative
LOC	locative
NAR	narrative
NEG	negative
NOM	nominative
O	objective conjugation
ORD	ordinal numeral
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
POSS	possessive suffix
PROL	prolative
PRS	present tense
PST	past tense
PTCP	participle
R	Russian code-switch
RES	resultative
RFL	reflexive
S	subjective conjugation
SG	singular
TR	transitivizer
TRL	translative
VBLZ	verbalizer

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