HALLDÓR ÁRMANN SIGURÐSSON

The Icelandic Noun Phrase

Central Traits

1 Introduction*

In this paper I describe central traits of the Icelandic noun phrase, NP (or "determiner phrase", DP). The presentation is 'analytically descriptive' rather than theoretical. That is to say, I do not address deeper theoreti-

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Abstract: Since Abney (1987), generative syntax has invested much interest in the structure of the Noun Phrase, producing numerous theoretical as well as descriptive studies. Within the field of Scandinavian Noun Phrase studies, Delsing (1993) was a groundbreaking work that has since been followed up by several important studies, including Vangsnes et al. (2003) and Julien (2005). This field of inquiry is enormous and largely unexplored, so, in spite of much progress, it still suffers from both too limited general understanding and much too limited knowledge of facts. This paper purports to partly improve this situation by describing the most central traits of the Icelandic noun phrase, mostly in fairly theory-neutral terms. Three phenomena are studied in particular. First, the order of elements in the NP, partly effected by two distinct leftward (Modifer+)Noun movements, to a Spec,G(enitive) position, yielding the type *'old books her'*, and/or to a higher, more leftward Spec,D(eterminer) position, yielding e.g. *'old books.the'*. Second, the adnominal genitive construction, which usually has the order Noun-Genitive, *'book her'*, instead of the general Germanic Genitive-Noun order, *'her book'*. While the head noun in the Genitive-Noun Construction is blocked from being definite across the Germanic languages considered in this article (*'*the her book' / *'her the book' / *'her book.the'*), this Genitive Definiteness Blocking often disappears in the Noun-Genitive Construction, which frequently either allows or requires the definite article (*'book.the her'*). Third, the preproprial article, both in the Noun-Genitive Construction (*'book.the her Mary'* = 'Mary's book') and elsewhere. The plural preproprial articles (or pronouns) are of special interest, because of their rather unusual properties (*'we Mary'* = 'Mary and I', etc.). I illustrate in some detail that the use of both the definite article in the Noun-Genitive Construction and of the preproprial article is triggered and conditioned by fine grained semantics, suggesting that the NP may have even richer structure than often assumed.
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cal issues, such as what might be the universal structure of NPs, why NPs are structured as they are, etc. Also, the comparative perspective of the paper is rather narrowly Scandinavian/Germanic. However, I do analyze much of the variation seen in the Icelandic NP/DP, and many of the facts discussed have not been previously noticed or analyzed in the literature (e.g. Magnússon 1984, Delsing 1993, Sigurðsson 1993, Vangsnes 1999, 2004, Vangsnes et al. 2003, Julien 2005).[1] This applies above all to the Noun Genitive Construction, discussed in section 3, and to the proprial article constructions, discussed in section 4.

Much as in related languages, Icelandic noun phrases are variously complex, as illustrated (in part only) in (1):

(1) a.	**Hún** hló. she laughed	pronoun
b.	**Kona** sat á bekk. woman sat on bench 'A woman sat on a bench.'	bare (indefinite) noun
c.	**Konan** hló. woman.the laughed	noun + definite article (*kona-n*)
d.	**Kona með grænan hatt** hló. woman with green hat laughed	noun + PP
e.	**Konan sem sat á bekknum** hló. woman.the who sat on bench. the laughed	noun + definite article + clause
f.	Sælir eru **fátækir**. blessed are poor (people)	adjective

The core constituent or the HEAD of an NP, is either a pronoun, as in (1a), or a (bare) noun, such as *kona-* in (1b–e). Exceptionally, the NP contains no overt noun or pronoun head, as in (1f) (where the NP may however be analyzed as containing a null noun head: [Adjective [Noun = Ø]]).

In addition to a head, the NP may contain a COMPLEMENT, such as the PP *með grænan hatt* 'with a green hat' in (1d) or the relative clause *sem sat á bekknum* 'who sat on the bank' in (1e). Also, an NP often contains one or more MODIFIERS, as the underlined words in (2):

(2) a. [Allir þessir duglegu **vísindamenn**] eru málfræðingar.
all.NOM these efficient scientists are linguists

[1] However, I do not discuss the order contraints on stacked adjectives and adverbs within the NP (see Scott 2002 on stacked adjectives).

b. Ég þekki [**þá** alla] mjög vel.
I know them all.ACC very well

In (2a), the noun head *vísindamenn* 'scientists' takes three modifiers to its left, that is: the indefinite pronoun or the universal quantifier *allir* 'all', the demonstrative pronoun *þessir* 'these', and the adjective *duglegu* 'efficient'. In (2b), the pronominal head *þá* 'they.ACC' takes the universal quantifier *alla* 'all.ACC' to its right. The definite article, such as *-n* in *konan* in (1d), is a DETERMINER, see section 2.1.

Icelandic has *no indefinite article*:[2]

(3) a. **Maður** kom gangandi.
man came walking
'A man came walking.'
b. Ég keypti **skemmtilega bók** í morgun.
I bought interesting book in morning
'I bought an interesting book this morning.'
c. Ólafur er **prófessor**.
'Ólafur is a professor.'
d. Það er **maður** í garðinum.
there is man in garden.the
'There is a man in the garden.'

In contrast, Icelandic has *two definite articles* (mutually exclusive), a suffixed one and a preposed free one. The *suffixed definite article*:

(4) a. Maður**inn** kom gangandi.
man.the came walking
'The man came walking.'
b. Ég keypti skemmtilegu bók**ina** í morgun.
I bought interesting book.the in morning
'I bought the interesting book this morning.'

In passing, notice that adjectives *agree in definiteness* with their noun: indefinite *skemmtilega* 'interesting' in (3a) but definite *skemmtilegu* in (4b). See further below.

The *preposed free article* is mostly confined to abstract nouns in formal written style; the minus sign in front of an expression indicates

[2] This might be one of the reasons why complex nominalizations have a rather limited domain in Icelandic as compared to the other Germanic languages (see e.g. Teleman et al. 1999, 3: 59 ff. on Swedish). However, this is but a hunch, so I shall not discuss it further.

that it is strictly speaking grammatical but marked or dispreferred in most situations:

(5) a. ??**Hinn** nýi bíll var dýr.
the new car was expensive
b. –**Hinn** aldraði þingmaður var uppgefinn.
the aged Congressman was exhausted
c. Ég aðhyllist **hina** athyglisverðu hugmynd um færslur.
I adhere-to the interesting idea about movements

Remarkably, the preposed article is only possible as preposed to an adjective, i.e. it is ungrammatical if the noun phrase contains no adjective:

(6) a. –hinn aldraði þingmaður vs. *hinn þingmaður
the aged Congressman
b. hina athyglisverðu hugmynd vs. *hina hugmynd
the interesting idea

Many other factors affect the distribution of the articles, but I shall not detail here. Most importantly, the preposed free article is almost nonexistent in common everyday language.

Icelandic nominals inflect for CASE (nominative, accusative, dative, genitive). This is illustrated below for pronominal subjects, in (7), and pronominal objects, in (8):

(7) a. **Hún** las bókina.
she.NOM read book.the.ACC
b. **Hana** vantaði bókina.
her.ACC lacked book.the.ACC
'She lacked the book.'
c. **Henni** leiddist bókin.
her.DAT bored book.the.NOM
'She found the book boring.'
d. **Hennar** gætti lítið á fundinum.
her.GEN noticed little at meeting.the.DAT
'She was hardly noticeable at the meeting.'

(8) a. Öllum leiddist **hún**.
all.DAT found-boring she.NOM
'Everybody found her boring.'
b. Mig vantaði **hana**.
me.ACC lacked her.ACC
'I lacked her.'

c. Ég heilsaði **henni**.
I.NOM greeted her.DAT
d. Ég saknaði **hennar**.
I.NOM missed her.GEN

The following nominals get case-marking:

(9) a. Personal pronouns
b. Other pronouns (interrogative, indefinite, possessive, ...)
c. Nouns (including names)
d. The definite articles
e. Numerals
f. Adjectives
g. Passive and other past participles of verbs
h. Adverbial nouns and NPs

As this would seem to suggest, Icelandic makes extensive use of NP-internal and predicative AGREEMENT in case (and usually also in number and gender):

(10) a. [All**ir** fjór**ir** sterkust**u** strák**arnir**] voru kosn**ir**. NOM.MASC.PL
all four strongest boys.the were elected
b. [All**ar** fjór**ar** sterkust**u** stelp**urnar**] voru kosn**ar**. NOM.FEM.PL
all four strongest girls.the were efficient

(11) a. Ég taldi [alla fjóra sterkust**u** strák**ana** verða kosna]. ACC.MASC.PL
I believed all four strongest boys.the be elected
b. Ég heilsaði [öll**um** fjór**um** sterkust**u** stelp**unum**]. DAT.FEM.PL
I greeted all four strongest girls.the

It is of particular interest to notice that POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS (often referred to as possessive adjectives) *agree* with their head nouns in case, gender and number:

(12) a. bók**in** m**ín** / bók**ina** m**ína** / bók**arinnar** m**innar** FEM.SG: NOM/ACC/GEN
book.the my, i.e. 'my book'
b. hest**urinn** m**inn** / hest**inum** m**ínum** /
hest**sins** m**íns** MASC.SG: NOM/DAT/GEN
horse.the my, i.e. 'my horse'

In contrast, ADNOMINAL GENITIVES *never* show agreement with their head noun, i.e., they always show up in an invariant form:

(13) a. bókin **hennar** / bókina **hennar** / bókarinnar **hennar**
book.the her.GEN, i.e. 'her book'
b. hesturinn **hennar** / hestinum **hennar** / hestsins **hennar**
horse.the her.GEN, i.e. 'her horse'

The agreeing poessessives are *minn* 'my', *þinn* 'your', the reflexive *sinn* 'his, her, its, their' and the archaic and honorific *vor* 'our'. Other adnominal relations of possession are expressed by non-agreeing genitive forms of the corresponding personal pronouns. This gives rise to the following split system of adnominal possessors (a split of this sort is a general trait of the Scandinavian languages, and similar splits are found in many other Indo-European languages):

(14) SINGULAR, NON-REFLEXIVE POSSESSORS:

a.	1sg:	*minn* 'my'	Agreement (*minn, mín, mínir,* etc.)
b.	2sg:	*þinn* 'you'	Agreement (*þinn, þín, þínir,* etc.)
d.	3sg.masc:	*hans* 'his'	Genitive
e.	3sg.fem:	*hennar* 'her'	Genitive
f.	3sg.neut:	*þess* 'its'	Genitive

(15) PLURAL, NON-REFLEXIVE POSSESSORS:

a.	1pl:	*okkar* 'our'	Genitive
b.	2pl:	*ykkar* 'your'	Genitive
c.	3pl:	*þeirra* 'their'	Genitive
d.	1pl.honorific:	*vor* 'our'	Agreement (*vor, vorir,* etc.)
e.	2pl.honorific:	*yðar* 'your'	Genitive

(16) REFLEXIVE POSSESSORS:

3refl.sg/pl:	*sinn* 'his, her, its, their'	Agreement (*sinn, sín, sínir,* etc.)

This system was more regular in Old Norse (see Guðmundsson 1972), where only the non-reflexive third person made use of genitives (*hans, hennar, þess, þeira*). It is rather peculiar that the 'possessor system' splits like this, between agreeing forms vs. non-agreeing genitive forms (for further discussion, see Julien 2005).

2 Noun phrase word order

2.1 An overview

The Icelandic NP may contain *prenominal* determiners and modifiers as well as *postnominal* genitives and complements:

(1) Determiners/modifiers – noun – genitives/complements

We can thus distinguish between the PRENOMINAL NP FIELD and the POSTNOMINAL NP FIELD. The order of elements in the Prenominal NP Field is normally Quantifier – Definite determiner – Numeral – Adjective(s) [– Noun], as illustrated in (2):

(2)

Quantifier	Definite determiner	Numeral	Adjective(s) (+ potential modifiers of As)	Noun
Allar	***hinar***	*þrjár*	*frægu*	*greiningar*
all	the	three	famous.DEF	analyses
Allar	***þessar***	*þrjár*	*frægu*	*greiningar*
all	these	three	famous.DEF	analyses
Allar	***þær***	*þrjár*	*frægu*	*greiningar sem ...*
all	those/the	three	famous.DEF	analyses that
Allar	***þínar***	*þrjár*	*frægu*	*greiningar*
all	your	three	famous.DEF	analyses
Allar	*hinar*	*þrjár*	*snjöllu og mjög frægu*	*greiningar*
all	the	three	clever.DEF and very famous.DEF	analyses
Allar	*þessar*	*þrjár*	*mjög frægu*	*greiningar*
all	these	three	very famous.DEF	analyses
Báðar	*þessar*	---	*frægu*	*greiningar*
both	these	---	famous.DEF	analyses
Sumar	---	---	*frægar*	*greiningar*
some	---	---	famous.INDEF	analyses
---	*Þessar*	*þrjár*	*frægu*	*greiningar*
---	these	three	famous.DEF	analyses
---	*Þessar*	---	*frægu*	*greiningar*
---	these	---	famous.DEF	analyses
---	---	*Þrjár*	*frægar*	*greiningar*
---	---	three	famous.INDEF	analyses
---	---	---	*Frægar*	*greiningar*
---	---	---	famous.INDEF	analyses
Allar	*þessar*	*þrjár*	---	*greiningar*
all	these	three	---	analyses
Allar	*þessar*	---	---	*greiningar*
all	these	---	---	analyses
---	*Þessar*	*þrjár*	---	*greiningar*
---	these	three	---	analyses
---	*Þessar*	---	---	*greiningar*
---	these	---	---	analyses
---	---	*Þrjár*	---	*greiningar*
---	---	three	---	analyses
---	---	---	---	*Greiningar*
---	---	---	---	analyses

Let us refer to this as the FULL CONCORD CONSTRUCTION, as all the modifiers of the noun agree with it in case, number and gender. Not all Icelandic NP constructions have concord or agreement of this sort, and hence it comes handy to have a term that distinguishes this construction from other NP constructions (see below).

Notice that Icelandic is unlike e.g. Swedish, but like Danish, German, English and so on, in not having two definite determiners in one and the same NP: ***Rauða bókin*** 'red book.the' (or possibly in literary or archaic style ***Hin rauða bók*** 'the red book', but definitely not ****Hin rauða bókin***). I'll return to this fact in section 2.2.

The initial Quantifier position and the Definite determiner position will here be referred to as the Q-POSITION and the D-POSITION, respectively. As seen in the table in (2), the D-position can be filled by several elements: the preposed free definite article *hinn, hinar* etc., the demonstratives *þessi, þessar* etc. or *sá, þær* etc., and possessive pronouns *þinn, þínar* etc. When the D-position is filled by some of these elements, the (non-genitive-containing) NP as a whole is definite, and, as seen, the adjective must then usually agree in definiteness; otherwise, the adjective is usually indefinite, like the whole NP.[3]

Notice that the demonstrative *sá* 'he.MASC (who), the one.MASC (who), the.MASC', *þær* 'they.FEM (who), those.FEM (who), the.FEM', etc., often requires that the noun head take a relative clause complement, *sem* ... 'that ...' or 'who ...':

(3) a. Allar **þær** þrjár frægu greiningar **sem** ...
all those/the three famous analyses that ...
b. **Sá sem** segir þetta hlýtur að vera gáfaður.
the-one who says this must to be intelligent
'He who says this must be intelligent.'

However, the 'explanation' or specification of the reference of the demonstrative is sometimes found in the preceding linguistic context, and then the demonstrative can be used on its own, as in (4a); in addition, as discussed by Julien (2005), it is used in elliptical NPs, as in (4b):

[3] However, there are two constructions where this correlation between an overt definite article (preposed or suffixed) and the definiteness marking of the adjective does not hold. First, in formal language, indefinite adjectives can be used in even definite NPs if they express a non-restrictive meaning: *rauður bíllinn* 'red.INDEF car.the', i.e. 'the car, which (by the way) was red'. Second, definite NPs with a definiteness marking of only the adjective are sometimes heard in colloquial Icelandic (where it seems to be gaining ground): *nýja plata Bjarkar* 'new.DEF record Björk.GEN' (i.e. Björk's new record').

(4) a. **Sá** hlýtur að vera gáfaður!
that-one must to be intelligent
'He must be intelligent!'
b. **Sá** rauði er bestur.
the red is best
'The red one is the best one.'

Personal pronouns cannot usually head a complex NP in Icelandic (as opposed to e.g. English and Swedish), at least not in formal language, but they can do so rather freely in colloquial Iclandic if they are modified by a deictic particle like *hérna* 'you know' (lit. 'here') or *þarna* 'there; you know':

(5) a. **Sá**/??**Hann** sem er að tala er Íslendingur.
the-one/he who is to talk is Icelander
'The one/He who is talking is an Icelander.'
b. **Sá**/??**Hann** í græna jakkanum segir þetta.
the-one/he in green jacked.the says this

(6) a. **Hann þarna** sem er að tala er Íslendingur.
he there who is to talk is Icelander
b. **Hann hérna** í græna jakkanum segir þetta.
he here in green jacked.the says this

Personal pronouns cannot usually take modifiers either:

(7) a. *þessar þrjár frægu þær
these three famous they
b. *frægur hann
famous he
c. *hann frægur
he famous

Numerals like *þrír* 'three' and quantifiers like *allir, báðir, sumir* and *flestir* 'all, every, whole; both; some; most' are exceptional in this respect, that is, they can easily modify pronouns.[4] As illustrated in (8), however, the pronoun shows a different behavior from that observed for nouns in that it must usually *precede* the quantifier (except when the quantifier is topicalized, in formal style, as in (8d) – as before the minus sign in front of an expression indicates that it is strictly speaking grammatical but marked or dispreferred in most situations):

[4] Quantifying adjectives like *margir* 'many' and *fáir* 'few' can also modify pronouns, albeit more reluctantly.

(8) a. Ég hef kosið **þá báða**. vs. *... báða þá
I have chosen them.ACC both.ACC
'I have voted for/chosen both of them.'
b. **Þeir** hafa **báðir** verið kosnir. vs. *Báðir þeir ...
(but: ?Þeir báðir ...)
they.NOM have both.NOM been chosen
c. Því hafa **þeir báðir** verið kosnir. vs. ... *báðir þeir ...
thus have they.NOM both.NOM been chosen
d. – Báðir hafa þeir verið kosnir.
both.NOM have they.NOM been chosen

(9) a. Þeir börðu **mig allan**. vs. *... allan mig
they hit me.ACC all.ACC
'They hit me all over.'
b. **Ég** var **allur** barinn. vs. *Allur ég ...
(and: ?*Ég allur ...)
I.NOM was all.NOM hit
'I was hit all over.'
c. Því var **ég allur** barinn. vs. * ... allur ég ...
thus was I.NOM all.NOM hit

(10) a. Ég kaus **þá þrjá**. vs. *... þrjá þá
I chose them.ACC three.ACC
'I voted for/chose the three of them.'
b. **Þeir þrír** voru kosnir. vs. * Þrír þeir ...
they.NOM three.NOM were chosen
'The three of them were voted for/chosen.'

Thus, it seems that the Q-position can be preceded by a Person position, hosting personal pronouns only.[5]

2.2 *Movement to the D-position*

As we shall discuss shortly, possessive genitives in Icelandic usually follow their head noun, giving rise to orders like 'opinion bishops.the' = 'the bishops opinion', very typical of Icelandic among the Germanic languages. The same usually also holds for possessive pronouns: 'analyses your', and so on:

(1) a. Allar hinar þrjá frægu greiningar **þínar** eru réttar.
all the three famous.DEF analyses your are correct

[5] This tallies well with the ideas developed in Platzack (2004). Notice that it suggests that third person is a 'true person' in personal pronouns only (cf. Sigurðsson 2004a).

b. Allar þær þrjá frægu greiningar **þínar** sem ég þekki eru réttar.
all the three famous.DEF analyses your that I know are correct
c. Báðar þessar tvær frægu greiningar **þínar** eru réttar.
both these two famous.DEF analyses your are correct

As seen (by the underlined elements), the definite determiner position is filled in all these cases, and therefore it cannot be filled by the possessive pronoun too:[6]

(2) *Allar þínar hinar þrjár frægu greiningar [__] eru réttar.

Thus, the possessive pronoun has no other alternative than to stay in its postnominal position.

Even though *indefinite* NPs do not have any overt element in the determiner position, a possessive pronoun (or a possessive genitive) has to stay in its postnominal position; as indicated, the underlined adjectives take an indefinite form here:

(3) a. Greiningar **þínar** eru ekki endilega réttar.
analyses your are not necessarily correct
'Your analyses are not necessarily correct.'
b. Frægar greiningar **þínar** eru ekki endilega réttar.
famous.INDEF analyses your are not necessarily correct
c. Allar frægar greiningar **þínar** eru ekki endilega réttar.
all famous.INDEF analyses your are not necessarily correct
d. *Allar **þínar** frægar greiningar eru ekki endilega réttar.
all your famous.INDEF analyses are not necessarily correct

However, if the NP is *definite* and contains no (other) element in the D-position, then the possessive pronoun may or must move there (notice the definite form of the underlined adjective):

(4) a. *Allar [__] þrjár frægu greiningar **þínar** eru ekki endileg a réttar.
all three famous.DEF analyses your are not necessarily correct
b. Allar **þínar** þrjár frægu greiningar [__] eru ekki endilega réttar.
all your famous.DEF three analyses are not necessarily correct

This is perhaps not surprising, as possessive pronouns are *inherently definite*. Similarly, the definite suffixed article – along with its noun

[6] However, the order possessive pronoun or demonstrative – article – adjective – noun, *þau hin stóru skip* 'those the large ships', etc., is attested in Old Norse (Nygaard 1906:51), one of many facts that suggest that the Old Norse NP/DP may have been structurally different from the Modern Icelandic one. For a critical discussion, though, see Rögnvaldsson (1995).

– preferably shows up in the D-position or in the specifier position of D (see below), i.e., in the second position, after the initial quantifier:

(5) a. ?Allar þrjár greingar**nar** eru réttar.[7]
all three analyses.DEF are correct

b. Allar [greiningar]**nar** þrjár [__] eru réttar.
all analyses.DEF three are correct
'All the three analyses are correct.'

c. [Greiningar]**nar** þrjár [__] eru réttar.[8]
'The three analyses are correct.'

Moreover, definite adjectives also preferably show up between the initial quantifier and a numeral:

(6) a. ??Allar þrjár **frægu** greingar**nar** eru réttar.[9]
all three famous.DEF analyses.DEF are correct

b. Allar [**frægu** greiningar]**nar** þrjár [__] eru réttar.
all famous.DEF analyses.DEF are correct
'All the three famous analyses are correct.'

c. [**Frægu** greiningar]**nar** þrjár [__] eru réttar.
'The three famous analyses are correct.'

Notice also that attributive adjectives must always be adjacent to their noun:

(7) a. *Allar **frægu** þrjár greiningar**nar** eru réttar.
b. *Allar greiningar**nar** þrjár **frægu** eru réttar.

Thus, instead of the order in (8), NPs that contain a suffixed article have the order in (9), where the 'definite determiner' is the suffixed article:

(8) Quantifier – Definite determiner – Numeral – **Adjective(s) – Noun**
(all – the(se) – three – famous – analyses)

(9) Quantifier – **Adjective(s) + Noun** + Definite determiner – Numeral
(all – famous+analyses+the – three)

[7] This word order is degraded for me, but it is accepted by some speakers (see Vangsnes 2004).

[8] In the absence of the universal quantifier, the order *þrjá greiningarnar* gets a partitive reading, 'three of the analyses'.

[9] This order becomes more acceptable with focal stress on the numeral, suggesting, in my view, that the numeral then moves to the left of the adjective and the noun (this increased acceptability with focal stress on the numeral is one of many facts that indicate that NP structure is more elaborated than assumed in the present, simple study).

One way of accounting for this variation is to assume that both adjectives and nouns move to a specifier position in front of the definite determiner in (9), as opposed to (8).[10] This is illustrated below, where the arrows indicate the source positions of the moved elements:

(10)

Quantifier	(Adj(s)+Noun) – Def det	Numeral	Adj(s)	Noun	X
allar	--------- --------- ***hinar***	*þrjár*	*frægu*	*greiningar*	*á málinu*
all	--------- --------- the	three	famous.DEF	analyses	of matter.the
allar	*frægu greingarnar*	*þrjár*	←	←	*á málinu*
all	famous.DEF analyses.the	three			of matter.the

As a matter of fact, the suffixed article, *-nar* etc., is historically derived from the free article, *hinar* etc., by truncation of *hi-* (or sometimes of only *h-*). As we shall see, however, there are indications that the suffixed definite article takes a 'higher' (a more leftward) position than other definite determiners, that is, the table in (10) needs further refinements.

Movement of adjectives along with nouns is, to my knowledge, unattested in most or perhaps all other Germanic languages.[11] Also, as mentioned in section 2.1, the Germanic languages show considerable variation with respect to overt definiteness marking, Icelandic being like Danish, German, English and so on, but different from Swedish, Norwegian, and Faroese, in not having two definite determiners (in one and the same NP). Swedish: ***Den röda boken*** 'the read book. the'. Danish: ***Den røde bog*** 'the red book'. Icelandic: *Rauða bókin* 'red book.the' (or possibly in literary or archaic style ***Hin rauða bók*** 'the red book').

Consider the Swedish facts in (11)–(12), where definite determiners are boldface:

(11) a. alla **dessa** tre röda böcker
all these three red books

[10] In Sigurðsson 1993, I argued that the movement is a complex head movement of A-N (for a related approach to certain word order patterns in the Hebrew NP, see Pereltsvaig 2006). In contrast, Julien (2005) and Vangsens (2004) argue for a remnant movement analysis. We need not take a stand on this issue here (both types of analyses have pros and cons that are irrelevant for our purposes).

[11] However, northern Swedish dialects have A-N compounds (*gammhuse* = old-house.the, i.e. 'the old house') that might be analyzed as undergoing movement in certain constructions (as pointed out to me by Marit Julien).

b. alla **de** tre röda böcker**na**
all the three red books.the
'all the three red books'
c. *alla röda böcker**na** tre

(12) a. böcker**na**
'the books'
b. ***de** (röda) böcker[12]
(intended reading: 'the (read) books')
c. **de** röda böcker**na**
'the red books'
d. *röda böcker**na**

Plausibly, the plain noun with a suffixed article (Sw. *böcker**na***, Ice. *bæku**rnar***, Da. *bøger**ne***) is derived by movement of the noun in fornt of the article (Delsing 1993, ch. 4). In all Scandinavian languages, except Icelandic, this noun movement is blocked by modifiers, and the definiteness is expressed by a free pre-modifier 'demonstrative' definite article instead. In addition, however, Swedish, Norwegian, and Faroese must spell out a suffixed article on the noun as well:

(13) a. rauðu bæku**rnar**	Icelandic
b. **de** røde bøger	Danish
c. **de** röda böcker**na**	Swedish

The double definiteness in Swedish, Norwegian and Faroese does not seem to add anything to semantic interpretation (see e.g. Stroh-Wollin 2003 on Swedish), and thus one of the articles seems to be added by a process of definiteness agreement in shallow morphology. If so, much of the cross-Scandinavian definiteness variation can be analyzed as in (14):

(14)

	(Adj(s)+Noun) – Def det	Adj(s)	Noun(+Def det)
Danish	bøger – ne		←
Icelandic	bæku – nar		←
Swedish	böcker – na		←
Danish	de	røde	bøger
(*Icelandic*	hinar	rauðu	bækur)
Swedish	de	röda	böcker – na
Icelandic	rauðu bæku – nar	←	←

[12] This is grammatical when the NP heads a relative clause ('the (read) books that/which ...).

2.3 *Partitivity*

When the Full Concord Construction (FCC) is headed or introduced by the universal quantifiers *allir* 'all, every(body)' or *báðir* 'both', it has an exhaustive, non-partitive meaning. However, when non-universal elements occupy the Q-position, FCC gets a *partitive reading*. Three types of non-universal placeholders of the Q-position may be distinguished:

A. A limited number of **existential quantifiers** in the plural, like *einhverjir* 'some', *sumir* 'some', *nokkrir* 'some, several'
B. **Quantifying adjectives** like *margir* 'many', *fáir* 'few' (sometimes referred to as 'midscalar quantifiers', see e.g. Haspelmath (1997:11) – but with many adjectival properties)
C. I addition, the **numerals** may be preposed to the quantifier position in case the adjective is in the superlative (or, more marginally, in the comparative)

The partitive reading of these types of FCC is illustrated below (the nouns and all their modifiers are in the nominative in all three examples):

(1) a. **Sumar** þessar frægu kenningar eru rangar.
some these famous.DEF theories are wrong
'Some of these famous theories are wrong.'
b. **Margar** þessar frægu kenningar eru rangar.
many there famous.DEF theories are wrong
'Many of these famous theories are wrong.'
c. **Fjórar** frægustu kenningarar eru rangar.
four famous.most.DEF theories are wrong
'Four of the most famous theories are wrong.'

As a partitive construction, however, FCC is rather marked. More frequently, partitivity is either expressed by the PREPOSITIONAL PARTITIVE CONSTRUCTION or by the GENITIVE PARTITIVE CONSTRUCTION; notice that there is no case agreement or concord between the initial quantifier and the rest of the NP, i.e. these constructions differ from the Full Concord Construction with respect to case concord:

(2) a. **Sumar** af <u>þessum frægu kenningum</u> eru rangar.
some.NOM of these.DAT famous.DEF.DAT theories.DAT are wrong

b. **Sumar** þessara frægu kenninga eru rangar.
some.NOM these.GEN famous.DEF.GEN theories.GEN are wrong
'Some of these famous theories are wrong.'

Notice that partitivity does not arise in FCC, when the NP is indefinite (has no overt definite determiner):

(3) a. Sumar frægar kenningar eru rangar.
some famous.INDEF theories are wrong
'Some famous theories are wrong.
b. Margar frægar kenningar eru rangar.
many famous.INDEF theories are wrong
'Many famous theories are wrong.

These clauses are just general statements about some and many famous theories, i.e. only one set of theories is involved in each clause, whereas a partitive statement is necessarily a statement about a subset or a subpart of another larger set or entity.

Swedish and German frequently apply no marking in the so-called PSEUDO-PARTITIVE CONSTRUCTION (see Delsing 1993:185ff.), as illustrated in (4):

(4) a. drei Flaschen wein, zwei Schachteln Zigarretten
b. tre flaskor vin, två paket cigaretter
three bottles wine, two packets cigarettes

Icelandic, in contrast, is like English in usually requiring a preposition here (the preposition, in turn, triggering dative case):

(5) þrjár flöskur **af** víni, tveir pakkar **af** sígarettum
three bottles of wine.DAT, two packets of cigarettes.DAT

Genitive marking (found in e.g. Russian) is only marginally possible here, and no marking at all (as well as dative marking without a preposition) is ungrammatical:

(6) a. ?þrjár flöskur víns, ??tveir pakkar sígarettna
three bottles wine.GEN, two packets of cigarettes.GEN
b. *þrjár flöskur vín/víni, *tveir pakkar sígarettur/sígarettum
three bottles wine.NOM/DAT, two packets cigarettes.NOM/DAT

It is interesting that Swedish needs neither case nor a preposition in this construction, while Icelandic is like English in requiring a preposition, in spite of its robust case system.

2.4 The postnominal field – and a closer look at the prenominal structure

It was mentioned above that possessive genitives usually follow their head noun in Icelandic. Various complements of nouns also follow the noun and also the genitive, if there is one. The normal order of elements in the Postnominal NP Field is thus as follows:

(1) [Noun –] Genitive – Noun complement

The genitive canonically expresses the possessor, while the head noun expresses the possession, that is, the ADNOMINAL GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION canonically expresses a POSSESSOR-POSSESSION RELATION (i.e. *Jón's car* expresses a relation between (the genitive) *Jón* as an owner and *car* as his possession). Possessor-Possession is only one of many types of semantic relations expressed by the Adnominal Genitive Construction, though.[13]

Noun complements are of various types, commonly prepositional phrases, relative clauses, declarative clauses or infinitives:

(2) a. allar þessar þrjár frægu hugmyndir **um málfræði**
all these three famous ideas about grammar
b. allar frægu hugmyndirnar þrjár **sem eru um málfræði**
all famous ideas.the three that are about grammar
c. allar þær frægu hugmyndir **að málfræði sé líffræðileg**
all the famous ideas that grammar is biological
d. öll sú fræga hugmynd **að kenna málfræði í háskólanum**
whole the famous idea to teach grammar in university.the

PP complements of nouns can be headed by any preposition, depending on the noun and its semantic relation to the complement. Some random examples:

(3) bók **um** málfræði 'a book about grammar'
bók **eftir** málfræðing 'a book by a linguist' (lit. 'after')
greining **á** vandamáli 'an analysis of a problem' (lit. 'on')
greining **í** málfræði 'an analysis in grammar'
vandamál **í** málfræði 'a problem in/of grammar; a grammatical problem'
samtal **við** Chomsky 'a conversation with Chomsky'
samtal **um** Chomsky 'a conversation about Chomsky'

In at least some nominalization constructions, however, *á* 'on' is a contentless, functional element, like English *of*:

[13] For a discussion of this issue in English, see Vikner and Jensen (2002).

(4) eyðileggingin **á** borginni, lesturinn **á** bókinni, kaupin **á** landinu
destruction.the on city.the, reading.the on book.the, purchasing.the on land.the
'the destruction of the city, the reading of the book, the purchasing of the land'

However, genitive marking is also possible here (but then the head noun must be formally indefinite, see below):

(5) eyðilegging borgarinnar, lestur bókarinnar, kaup landsins
destruction city.the.GEN, reading book.the.GEN, purchasing land.the.GEN
'the destruction of the city, the reading of the book, the purchasing of the land

Genitives usually intervene between the noun and its complement. This is illustrated below. The noun and its complement is underlined, whereas the genitive is boldface (elements that belong to the Prenominal NP Field are within parentheses; as usual, all nominals are case-marked, but only relevant case-marking is indicated):

(6) a. (allar þessar þrjár) hugmyndir **Jóns** um málfræði
(all these three) ideas.NOM Jón's.GEN about grammar
b. (þær þrjár) hugmyndir **Maríu** sem reyndust réttar
(the three) ideas.NOM María's.GEN that proved right
c. (sú) ályktun **sjöundu ráðstefnunnar í París** að fallmörkun sé mikilvæg
(the) conclusion.NOM seventh.DEF.GEN conference.the.GEN in Paris that case-marking is important 'the conclusion of the senventh conference in Paris that case-marking is important'
d. aðlögun **Íslands** að skilyrðum Evrópusambandsins
adaption.NOM Iceland's.GEN to conditions.DAT European Union's.GEN
'Iceland's adoption to the conditions of the European Union'

Having *general* noun-genitive order, Icelandic differs sharply from most other Germanic varieties. Compare:

(7) a.	**Peter's** solution of the problem	English
b.	**Peters** Lösung von dem Problem	German
c.	**Pers** lösning av problemet Per's.GEN solution of problem.the	Swedish
d.	Lausn **Péturs** á vandamálinu solution Pétur's.GEN of problem.the	Icelandic

Exceptionally, Icelandic allows the general Germanic order, mostly if the genitive gets a special focus (see below), but also in e.g. poetic lan-

guage: *Íslands fögru fjöll* 'Iceland's beautiful mountains.' Conversely, German has not only the general Germanic Genitive-Noun order *Peters Lösung* but also the 'Icelandic' Noun-Genitive order *Die Lösung des Professors* 'the solution the professor's.GEN'.[14]

A noun and its complement arguably make up a constituent, a complex NP: *Lausn á vandamálinu* 'a solution of the problem', *Aðlögun að skilyrðum* 'an adaption to conditions' and so on. Thus the Icelandic Noun-Genitive order is presumably derived by movement of the noun away from its complement (if there is one) to a position in front of the genitive,[15] as shown below for the example in (6a) above = (8):

(8) (Allar þessar þrjár) **hugmyndir** Jóns [__] um málfræði
(all these three) ideas.INDEF Jón's about grammar

I shall here refer to the landing site of the shifted noun as the specifier of the genitive or the SPEC/G POSITION.[16] If the noun is modified by an adjective, the adjective must move along with the noun into Spec/G, leading to the order Adj+Noun-Genitive ('red car Jón's), as will be illustrated shortly.

This movement to Spec/G is different from the movement of N discussed in section 2.2. above, as in (9):

(9) Allar [**greiningar**]nar þrjár [__] eru réttar.
all analyses.DEF three are correct
'All the three analyses are correct.'

That is, the movement in (9) is to a position in front of the D-position, a much higher (more leftward) position than the landing position in (8). I shall refer to this position as the SPEC/D POSITION (again in lack of a better term).

Movement of indefinite nouns to Spec/D (or to the D-position) is impossible:

[14] The 'Icelandic' Noun-Genitive order is also found in in formal, written Faroese (see Thráinsson et al. 2004) and in some Mainland Scandinavian varieties (Vangsnes et al. 2003, Julien 2005).

[15] Cf. Sigurðsson 1993. A movement approach to word order patterns of this sort was suggested already in Taraldsen 1990.

[16] In lack of a better term. For our limited purposes, the nature of the position in question, as well as the label assigned to it, is immaterial. What matters here is only the simple fact the order Noun-Genitive is derived by raising of the noun to a position, P, to the left of the genitive. For ease of exposition, I refer to P as 'Spec/G'. However, in minimal feature syntax as developed in Sigurðsson 2004a, 2004b, X-bar theoretic notions like 'head' and 'specifier' are meaningless.

(10) *allar **[hugmyndir]** þrjár [__] Jóns [__] um málfræði
all ideas three Jón's.GEN about grammar

In one (very interesting) respect, however, the two movements (of nouns in front of genitives and of definite nouns in front of determiners) are similar, namely such that an attributive adjective must precede N in both positions (i.e. in Spec/D as well as in Spec/G):

(11) a. Allar **[frægu hugmyndir]**nar þrjár [__] eru réttar. Spec/D
all famous.DEF ideas.the three are correct
b. *Allar **[hugmyndir]**nar þrjár **[frægu** __] eru réttar.

(12) a. Allar þessar þrjár **[frægu hugmyndir]** Jóns [__] eru réttar. Spec/G
all these three famous.DEF ideas Jón's.GEN are correct
b. *Allar þessar þrjár **[hugmyndir]** Jóns **[frægu** __] eru réttar.
c. **[Frægar hugmyndir]** Jóns [__] eru réttar. Spec/G
famous.INDEF ideas Jón's.GEN are correct
d. *[**Hugmyndir]** Jóns **[frægar** __] eru réttar.

The Icelandic order in (12a) and (12c) = (13d) differs sharply from the normal order in most other Germanic varieties:

(13) a. Jón's **famous ideas** are correct. English
b. Jóns **berühmte Ideen** sind rightig. German
Jón's.GEN famous ideas are right
c. Jons **berömda ideer** är rätta. Swedish
Jón's.GEN famous ideas are right
d. **[Frægar hugmyndir]** Jóns [__] eru réttar. Icelandic
famous ideas Jón's.GEN are correct

As indicated in (13d), the cross-linguistic variation is accounted for if *both* the noun and its attributive adjective are moved to Spec/G, in front of the possessive genitive, in Icelandic (cf. Sigurðsson 1993; for different approaches, see Julien 2005, Vangsnes 2004).

The order of elements in the whole NP, including both the prenominal and the postnominal fields, is thus as sketched in (14):

(14) Q – Spec/D – D – Num – Spec/G – G – (Adj+) Noun – Compl

Q	=	Quantifier position (Q-position)
D	=	Definite determiner position (D-position)
Num	=	Numeral
G	=	Genitive position (G-position)
Compl	=	Complement position

As we have seen, (Adj+)Noun usually must move to Spec/G in genitive constructions, ('new+book teacher's.the's'), and in most definite non-genitive constructions (Adj+)Noun moves into Spec/D ('new+book. the').

3 Variation in the Noun Genitive Construction

As we have seen Icelandic has a NOUN GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION, whereas most other Germanic varieties have a general GENITIVE NOUN CONSTRUCTION. That is:

(1) a. Most Germanic varieties: Genitive Noun (the teacher's book).
b. Icelandic Noun Genitive (book teacher's.the)

Definite nouns are normally excluded from the pre-genitive position, Spec/G, as opposed to indefinite nouns:

(2) a. *allar hugmyndir**nar** kennarans um málfræði
all ideas.the teacher's about grammar
b. allar hugmyndir kennarans um málfræði
'all the teacher's ideas about grammar'

However, the head-noun may be definite given that *the possessor is a pronoun or a name.*

(3) a. Allir bílar**nir** **þínir** eru gulir.
all cars.the your are yellow
'All your cars are yellow.'
b. Allir bílar**nir** **hans Jóns** eru gulir.
all cars.the his Jón's are yellow
'All Jón's cars are yellow.'

This will be discussed more closely below.

As we saw in section 2.2, there are reasons to believe that possessive pronouns may (and sometimes must) move to the D-position. Consider the contrasts in (4):

(4) a. Allir <u>þessir</u> þrír bílar **þínir** eru rauðir.
all these three cars your are red
'All these three cars of yours are red.'
b. Allir **þínir** þrír bílar [__] eru rauðir.
all your three cars are red

c. Allir bílar**nir þínir** þrír [__] eru rauðir.
all cars.the your three are red
'All your three cars are red.'

As before, we take examples like (4b) to indicate that the possessive pronoun may move from the genitive (G) position (the slot position) to the D-position. If so, however, examples like (4c) indicate that the suffixed definite article takes a position that is even higher (farther to the left) than the D-position. I assume that this higher position is the Spec/D position, also attracting nouns and adjectives. In contrast, *hans* 'his' in (3b) forms a constituent with the genitive *Jóns* (see below on the proprial article).

In (4a), then, the possessive pronoun occupies the normal genitive position, with the indefinite noun *bílar* moved to Spec/G, in the usual manner, whereas the possessive pronoun has been raised to the D-position in (4b) and (4c).

Given that the order of elements in the "full NP" is as sketched at the end of the previous section, we can analyze the variation in (3)-(4) as in (5), where the arrows show the source position of the moved elements. As stated above, I assume that the suffixed definite article is generated in Spec/D, to where it attracts (Adj+)Noun (alternatively, there is a 'head' position between D and Spec/D, hosting the suffixed article):[17]

(5)

Q	Spec/D	D	Num	Spec/G	G	(Adj+)Noun	Compl
allir	bílar$_i$-nir	þinir$_k$	---	---	←$_k$	←$_i$	---
allir	bílar$_i$-nir	---	---	---	hans Jóns	←$_i$	---
allir	---	þessir	þrír	bílar$_i$	þínir	←$_i$	---
allir	---	þinir$_k$	þrír	bílar$_i$	←$_k$	←$_i$	---
allir	bílar$_i$-nir	þinir$_k$	þrír	---	←$_k$	←$_i$	---

Next consider the variation in (6)–(7); as before, the minus sign in front of an expression indicates that it is strictly speaking grammatical but marked and avoided in most situations:

(6) a. –**Bók þín** er athyglisverð.
book your is interesting
'Your book is interesting.'

[17] In all the examples in (5), Spec/D could be occupied by an Adj+Noun, e.g. *nýju bílar-nir* 'new cars-the'.

b. **Bókin þín** er athyglisverð.
book.the your is interesting
'Your book is interesting.' / 'The book of yours is interesting.'

(7) a. **ÞÍN bók** er athyglisverð.
your book is interesting
'YOUR book is interesting (as compared to some other book(s)).'
b. ***ÞÍN bókin** er athyglisverð.
your book.the is interesting

As indicated by capitals, the word order in (7a) requires contrastive, focal stress on the possessive pronoun, for many or most speakers in many or most cases. – There are cases where no contrastive stress is required, though, but I shall not detail here.

In (6a), the possessive pronoun is arguably in the G-position, with *bók* moved into Spec/G, in the usual 'Icelandic manner'. In (6b), on the other hand, the possessive pronoun has presumably moved from the G-position to the D-position, with both the definite article and its noun in Spec/D. Evidence that both the pronoun and the suffixed noun take a 'high' position comes from the fact that they must both precede the numeral in examples like (4c). In (7a), the stressed possessive pronoun has also moved from G to D, leaving the noun behind in Spec/G. The order in (7b), in contrast, is ungrammatical, as the obligatory raising of the suffixed noun to Spec/D (cf. (6b)) does not take place. The grammatical orders in (6a,b) and (7a) are illustrated in (8):

(8)

Q	Spec/D	D	Num	Spec/G	G	(Adj+)Noun	Compl
---	---	---	---	$bók_i$	þín	$\leftarrow_i$	---
---	$bók_i$-in	$þín_k$	---	---	$\leftarrow_k$	$\leftarrow_i$	---
---	---	$ÞÍN_k$	---	$bók_i$	$\leftarrow_k$	$\leftarrow_i$	---

As we have seen, the Possessor-Possession Relation (*Mary's book*, etc.) is canonically expressed by the Noun Genitive Construction. There are however, many other ways of expressing the relation between a possession and a possessor and the Noun Genitive Construction also expresses many other semantic relations than the Possessor Possession Relation. Irrespective of which semanic relation it expresses, it shows substantial variation with respect to two factors: 1) the use of the *definite article* (suffixed to the noun), and 2), the use of the *(pre)proprial article* with the genitive.[18] The examples in (9) illustrate the basic possibilities:

[18] I adopt this term from Delsing 1993.

(9) a. Þetta er bók kennarans.
this is book teacher.the.GEN
'This is the teacher's book.'
b. Þetta er bók**in** mín.
this is book.the my.NOM
'This is my book.'
c. Þetta er bók**in hans** Jóns.
this is book.the his Jón.GEN
'This is Jón's book.'

English has no comparable variation, that is, one does not say, e.g., *my the book* or *his Jón's the book* (whereas some other Germanic varieties have similar constructions, as discussed by e.g. Vangsnes 1999, Vangsnes et al. 2003, Julien 2005). The 'genitive' is a plain *common noun* in (9a), a (case agreeing) *possessive pronoun* in (9b), and a *name* in (9c). Thus, we may distinguish between the COMMON-NOUN-GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION, the PRONOMINAL-GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION and the NAME-GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION.[19]

The type in (9a), with either Noun-Genitive or Genitive-Noun order, is common to all Scandinavian languages (although nearly extinct in colloquial Faroese and largely absent from some Mainland Scandinavian varieties), cf. e.g. Swedish *lärarens bok* 'the teacher's book'. Generally, in this construction, the genitive is incompatible with definite marking on the head noun, irrespective of whether or not the genitive itself is definite. This is illustrated for Swedish in (10) and for Icelandic in (11):

(10) a. lärarens bok / *lärarens bok**en***
teacher.the's book / book.the
b. en lärares bok / *en lärares bok**en***
a teacher's book / book.the
c. Islands fjäll / * Islands fjäll**en**[20]
Iceland's mountains / mountains.the
d. Sveriges regering / * Sveriges regeringen
Sweden's government / government.the

[19] More exactly: the Noun Common-noun-genitive Construction (book teacher's. the), the Noun Pronominal-genitive Construction (book.the my/his) and the Noun Name-genitive Construction (book.the his Jón's).

[20] However, this would be a possible compound: *Islandsfjällen*. Similarly in Icelandic: *Íslandsfjöll(in)*.

(11) a. bók kennarans / %bók**in** kennarans[21]
b. bók kennara / *bók**in** kennara
c. fjöll Íslands / *fjöll**in** Íslands
mountains Iceland's / mountains.the Iceland's
d. ríkisstjórn Svíþjóðar / *ríkisstjórn**in** Svíþjóðar
government Sweden's / government.the Sweden's

Even though the head is not marked for definiteness (with the suffixed article), the whole NP has a definite reading in all the examples except the b-examples (inasmuch as such examples are possible, they usually get a generic reading). The semantic relation between the head noun and the genitive is that of possession in the a- and b-examples, but the more general relation of location or belonging in the c- and d-examples. These relations are often expressed by non-genitive constructions, and when this is the case, the head noun must normally be marked for definiteness, if the NP has a definite reading, whereas it must commonly or generally not be so marked in adnominal genitive constructions This applies to all the Germanic languages, and this is illustrated in (12)-(14) for English, Swedish and Icelandic:

(12) a. **the** book of the teacher / vs. the teacher's (*the) book
b. **the** mountains of Iceland / vs. Iceland's (*the) mountains

(13) a. bok**en** som läraren har / lärarens bok(*en)
book.the that teacher.the has / the teacher's book(.the)
b. fjäll**en** på Island / Islands fjäll(*en)
the mountains of Iceland / Iceland's mountains(.the)

(14) a. bók**in** sem kennarinn á / bók(%in) kennarans
book.the that teacher.the owns / book(.the) teacher.the
b. fjöll**in** á Íslandi / fjöll(*in) Íslands
the mountains of Iceland / mountains(.the) Iceland's

The generalization that emerges is the following GENITIVE DEFINITENESS BLOCKING:

(15) Even if the whole NP has a definite reading, the noun head in the adnominal genitive constructions is generally blocked from being marked for definiteness

[21] This is allowed in some dialectal varieties, above all in Vestfirðir, I believe. This is indicated by the % sign.

However, there are some exceptions in the Noun Genitive Construction (as opposed to the Genitive Noun Construction). Inasmuch as German makes use of postnominal genitives, it escapes this definiteness blocking: *Islands (*die) Gebirge* 'Iceland's mountains', but ***die*** *Gebirge Islands*. Also, as we saw in (9b,c), Icelandic (as some other Scandinavian varieties) can escape or circumvent this blocking in the *Pronominal-genitive Construction* and in the *Name-genitive Construction* (and also dialectally in the Common-noun-genitive Construction, as we saw in (11a) and (14a)). Perplexingly, however, the properties of the head noun also matter: Definiteness marking is generally only possible for *concrete* nouns.

First, consider the Pronominal-genitive Construction:

(16) a. Þetta er bók**in** mín / ? ... bók mín.
this is book.the my / ... book my
'This is my book.'
b. Þetta er skoðun mín / * ... skoðun**in** mín
this is opinion my / ... opinion.the my
'This is my opinion.'

As seen, the concrete noun *bók* 'book' normally requires the suffixed definite article, whereas the abstract *skoðun* 'opinion' normally disallows it.

Second, consider the Name-genitive Construction:

(17) a. Þetta er bók**in hans** Jóns / ? ... bók Jóns.
this is book.the his Jón's / ... book Jón's
'This is Jón's book.'
b. Þetta er skoðun Jóns / * ... skoðun**in hans** Jóns.
this is opinion Jón's / ... opinion.the his Jón's
'This is Jón's opinion.'

If the head noun is concrete, both a definite article and a genitive proprial article are usually required, whereas neither is allowed if the head noun is abstract.

Short forms for family relations behave like names in the Name-genitive Construction: *mamma* 'mom', *pabbi* 'dad', *bói / bróí* 'brother', *systa* 'sister' (as opposed to the more formal *móðir, faðir, bróðir, systir*).[22]

[22] The same is true of fully spelled out words for family relations that are expanded by an epithet, like *stóri bróðir* '(my/our) big brother' and *litla systir* '(my/our) little sister'.

(18) a. Þetta er bók**in hans** pabba / ? ... bók pabba.
this is book.the his dad's / ... book dad's
'This is dad's book.'
b. Þetta er skoðun pabba / * ... skoðun**in hans** pabba.
this is opinion dad's / ... opinion.the his dad's
'This is dad's opinion.'

Third, consider the Common-noun-genitive Construction:

(19) a. bók kennarans / % bókin kennarans / *bókin hans kennara(ns)
book teacher's.the
b. skoðun kennarans / *skoðunin kennarans / *skoðunin hans kennara(ns)
opinion teacher's.the

In contrast to simple names, full names do not generally take the proprial article, neither in the Noun Genitive Construction nor elsewhere:

(20) a. ?**hún** María Pétursdóttir
she María Pétursdóttir
b. ?bókin **hennar** Maríu Pétursdóttur
book.the her María Pétursdóttir

In general, full names behave much like common nouns in the Noun Genitive Construction:

(21) bók Maríu Pétursdóttur / %bókin Maríu Pétursdóttur
/? bókin **hennar** Maríu Pétursdóttur

The generalizations that emerge from the preceding observations are as follows:

(22) If the noun in the (definite) Noun Genitive Construction is *abstract*, there is generally only one option. That is, the noun may usually not take the suffixed definite article and the proprial article is also excluded, irrespective of the properties of the genitive:
a. skoðun mín / *skoðunin mín
b. skoðun Jóns / *skoðunin hans Jóns
c. skoðun kennarans / *skoðunin kennarans

(23) If the noun in the (definite) Noun Genitive Construction is *concrete*, there are basically three sub-constructions, depending on whether the genitive is a pronoun, a simple name (or a short form for some kinship term) or a common noun (or a full name):

a. Pronominal-genitive:	bókin mín (book my), bókin hennar (book her)
b. Name-genitive:	bókin **hennar** Maríu (book her María's)
c. Common-noun-genitive:	bók kennarans (book teacher's.the)

Thus, the above mentioned Genitive Definiteness Blocking, which is a widespread phenomenon in adnominal genitive constructions in the Germanic languages, is relaxed, often obligatorily so, if *the head noun is concrete,* **and** if the *genitive is either a pronoun or a name* (including short forms for family relations). – There are however also cases where the types *bók mín* and *bók Maríu* are fully acceptable, see below.

The definite article correlates with several semantic primitives, including discourse topicality, specificity, individuality, uniqueness and identifiability (see Lyons 1999 for a general discussion of definiteness). In the Noun Genitive Construction, it correlates primarily with *specificity,* and, to an extent also, *expected identifiability.* Consider (24):

(24) Hvar eru bækurnar mínar?
where are books.the my
'Where are my books?'

This question can only be asked in a situation where the speaker has some specific books of his or hers in mind and where the speaker also expects the listener to be able to identify the books or the kind of books in question, on the basis of the situation, shared knowledge of the world, etc. It might be all the speaker's books (for instance if the speaker just had all his books moved somewhere), the books he or she just bought, etc.

The proprial article, in turn, is a marker of *familiarity or givenness.* It is only felicitous to say *hún María* 'she María' if one expects the listener to know and immediately identify the person in question. Consider (25):

(25) Hvar eru bækurnar hennar Maríu?
where are books.the her María
'Where are María's books?'

The suffixed article signals specificity – it must be a question of some specific books – and the proprial article indicates that the speaker expects the addressee to immediately recognize María.

Identifiability and familiarity are deictic features, relating to the present speech situation. In case the Noun Genitive Construction denotes an event or a situation that is abstract or absent from the

present speech situation both the suffixed noun article and the proprial article may be left out, usually preferably so (recall that the minus sign in front of an expression indicates that it is grammatical but marked or dispreferred in most situations):

(26) a. Bók Maríu um íslenska málfræði er athyglisverð. / –Bók**in hennar** Maríu um ...
book María's on Icelandic grammar is interesting
b. Allar bækur hans um listir hafa selst vel. / –Allar bæku**rnar** hans um listir ...
all books his on arts have sold well

As stated in (22) and (23), definiteness marking in the Noun Genitive Construction is above all sensitive to the distinction between *abstract* vs. *concrete* nouns: Pronominal genitives and simple name-genitives usually call for a definite marking of concrete nouns (book.the my, book.the her Mary), as opposed to abstract nouns (opinion my, opinion Mary). The distinction between 'abstract' and 'concrete' is not always crystal-clear, though. Certain nouns that basically denote an abstract social or personal relationship, so-called RELATIONAL NOUNS, can also have a more concrete meaning, referring to an individual that participates in the relationship in question (that is, these nouns become referential when they stand in a relation to another referent). This applies to e.g. kinship terms and notions like *boss, teacher, friend,* etc. If I say *Jón and Pétur are friends,* I am describing a relationship between two individuals, but if I say *My friend is visiting me over the weekend,* I am talking about a particular individual (who, in addition, stands in a certain relation to me).

Relational nouns show a heterogeneous behavior with respect to definiteness marking in the Noun Genitive Construction. Many such nouns behave like concrete head nouns in allowing or requiring the definite article and the proprial article:

(27) a. kennar**inn** þinn, kennar**inn hans** Jóns
teacher.the your, teacher.the his Jón's
'your teacher', 'Jón's teacher'
b. yfirmaður**inn minn**, yfirmaður**inn hennar** Maríu
boss.the my, boss.the her María's
c. kona**n** hans, kona**n hans** Jóns
woman.the his, woman.the his Jón's
'his wife', 'Jón's wife'

In examples of this sort, the article is a marker of uniqueness. If I say *Hún er kennarinn minn* 'she is my teacher' she is either my only teacher or the only one of my teacher's that comes into question in some particular situation. Otherwise, I have to specify further by saying e.g. *Hún er málfræðikennarinn minn* 'She is my grammar teacher'. — In contrast to *kennarinn minn, nemandinn minn* 'student.the my' is usually odd, as one usually has more than one students, whereas *besti nemandinn minn* 'best student.the my' is natural.

Kinship terms, in contrast, generally resist the definite suffixed article:[23]

(28) a. faðir minn, systir mín, pabbi minn
father my, sister my, dad my
b. *faðir**inn** minn, *systir**in** mín, *pabb**inn** minn

(29) a. faðir (hennar) Maríu, systir (hennar) Maríu, pabbi (hennar) Maríu
father (her) María's, sister (her) María's, dad (her) María's
b. *faðir**inn** (hennar) Maríu, *systir**in** (hennar) Maríu, *pabb**inn** (hennar) Maríu

As seen, it does not matter if the kinship noun is a short form (*pabbi*, etc.) or not (*faðir*, etc). As also seen, the proprial article is optional when the head noun in the Name-genitive Construction is a kinship term. Simplifying a bit, we can say that kinship term head nouns largely behave like abstract head nouns in the Noun Genitive Construction: *pabbi minn*, like *skoðun mín*, while they behave like names as genitives: *bókin hans pabba*, like *bókin hans Jóns*.[24] Other relational nouns that behave like kinship terms in this respect include *vinur* 'friend', *vinkona* '(female) friend', and the formal *eiginmaður* 'husband' and *eiginkona* 'wife' (in contrast to the less formal *maður* and *kona*, lit. 'man' and 'woman').

However, the suffixed article may be taken by even those relational nouns that otherwise resist it, if it can be interpreted as marking uniqueness. This is perhaps most natural with a superlative adjective or an ordinal number (such elements also marking or signalling uniqueness):

[23] This is also true of many Norwegian dialects (Marit Julien, p.c.).

[24] This is an interesting 'split', which is arguably a reflection of the split or complex semantics of kinship terms: they are labels for specific individuals (as seen from another individual's viewpoint), as well as terms for abstract relations.

(30)a. Hún var fyrsta ástin mín.
she was first.DEF love.the my
'She was my first love.'
b. Þú ert besta systirin mín.
you are best.DEF sister.the my
'You are my best sister.'

Let me summarize the most central observations and generalizations of this subsection:

- The Icelandic NOUN GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION is derived by raising of the noun (or Adj+Noun) across G to Spec/G:
skoðun kennarans [←__] 'opinion teacher's.the'.
- The general Germanic GENITIVE NOUN CONSTRUCTION shows a GENITIVE DEFINITENESS BLOCKING, GDF:
Iceland's **the mountains*;
GDF is not observed outside genitive constructions:
***the** mountains of Iceland.*
- The Icelandic Noun Genitive Construction shares this definiteness blocking in case the head noun is an *abstract* one:
*skoðun(*in) mín* 'opinion my', etc.
- However, in case the head noun is a *concrete* one, three sub-constructions can be discerned:
    - The Common-noun-genitive Construction, generally observing the definiteness blocking:
    bók(%in) kennarans 'book teacher's.the'.
    - Pronominal-genitive Construction, generally requiring the definite article suffixed to the head noun:
    *bók**in** mín/hans* 'book.the my/his'.
    - The Name-genitive Construction, generally requiring both the suffixed article on the head noun and the proprial article with the genitive name:
    *bók**in hans** Jóns* 'book.the his Jón's'.

Finally, some apparent exceptions to these generalizations were discussed. Many of these apparent exceptions involve kinship terms and other relational nouns as head nouns, that is, such nouns tend to behave like abstract head nouns, even when they refer to specific

individuals: *pabbi minn* 'dad my' (but ***kennarinn** minn* 'teacher.the my'). Conversely, concrete head nouns disprefer the article (suffixed to themselves) as well as the genitive proprial article in case the Noun Genitive Construction denotes an event or a situation that is abstract or absent from the present speech situation: *bækur(–nar) (–hans) Jóns um listir* 'books Jón's on arts'.

4 The proprial article

The proprial article is a very distinguishing trait of the Icelandic NP/DP, so a brief discussion of its distribution and properties is in place here. It is often taken by simple names and short forms of kinship terms, as we have seen:

(1) (hann) Jón, (hann) pabbi, (hún) María, (hún) amma
he.NOM Jón.NOM, he.NOM dad.NOM, she.NOM María.NOM, she.NOM granma.NOM

It follows that both simple names and short forms of kinship terms take the genitive proprial article in the Noun Genitive Construction, as we saw in the last section:

(2) bókin **hans** Jóns, bókin **hans** pabba
book.the his.GEN Jón.GEN, book.the his.GEN dad.GEN

As this suggests, the proprial article always agrees in case with the noun taking it. Also, as indicated by the parentheses in (1), the proprial article is usually optional in Icelandic (whereas proprial articles are obligatory in some Norwegian and Swedish dialects, see Delsing 1993:54, Vangsnes et al. 2003). The one exception is the Name-genitive Construction, where the genitive proprial article is obligatory in the presence of the suffixed article on the head noun but excluded in its absence:

(3) a. bók**in hennar** Maríu / *bók**in** Maríu[25]
book.the her María's / book.the María's
b. *bók **hennar** Maríu / bók Maríu
book her María's / book María's

[25] This is acceptable to some speakers, though, at least in the Vestfirðir part of Iceland. Importantly, these varieties illustrate that there is no relation of necessity between the regular definite article and the porprial article in the Noun Genitive Construction.

In contrast to short forms of kinship terms, other common nouns do not usually take the proprial article:

(4) ??hann kennari, *hann yfirmaður, *hann vinur, *hann faðir, *hún systir, *hún bók
he teacher, he boss, he friend, he father, she sister, she book

The same naturally applies to full names, the proprial article being a marker of familiarity or givenness:

(5) ??hann Jón Sigurðsson

However, if someone, as for instance the president, is commonly known by his or her full name, the proprial article is possible (but not always felicitous):

(6) hún Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, hann Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson

NPs with the proprial article can have various functions, as subjects, objects, etc.:

(7) a. **Hún** María kom í gær.
she María came yesterday
'Mary (you know) came yesterday.'
b. Við sáum **hana** Maríu í gær.
we saw her María yesterday
c. Er þetta ekki **hún** María?
is this not she María
d. Bréfið er frá **henni** Maríu.
letter.the is from her María
e. **Hún** Anna sendi **hann** Jón til **hennar** Maríu.
she Anna sent him Jón to her Mary

As seen in (7c), the proprial article is available in many predicative constructions, but, being a marker of familiarity or givenness, it is naturally excluded from naming constructions, nomination constructions and the like (cf. Delsing 1993:55, Matushansky 2004), as illustrated below:

(8) a. Leikarinn heitir (*hann) Jón.
actor.the has-the-name (he) Jón
b. Hún er kölluð (*hún) Sigga.[26]
she is called (she) Sigga

[26] This example is grammatical on a reading where "hún Sigga" is understood as a quotation.

c. Drengurinn var skírður (*hann) Pétur.
boy.the was baptized (he) Pétur
d. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson var útnefndur (*hann) Ólafur ársins.
Ó. R. G. was nominted (he) Ólafur year's.the
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson was nominated the Olaf of the year.'
e. Nafnið (*hann) Jón er algengt á Íslandi.
name.the (he) Jón is common in Iceland

As seen in the translation in (8d), the exceptional use of the definite article with names in English is not compatible with the use of the proprial article in Icelandic (and other Scandinavian varieties). Yet another basic fact worth noting is that the article is always preproprial, i.e. postproprial usage is never possible: *hún Anna*, but **Anna hún*.[27] In contrast, the definite article can be suffixed to names, exceptionally, as in (9):

(9) a. Þú ert fyrsta Maríanⁿ sem ég kynnist.
you are first.DEF María.the who I get-to-know
'You are the first María I get to know.'
b. Báðar Maríurnar eru íslenskar.
both Marías.the are Icelandic
'Both the Marías are Icelandic.'

The familiarity signalled by the proprial article is a deictic feature, relating to the speaker and the addressee. Speakers use it to signal that both they and the addressee are familiar with the person in question. Interestingly, the domain of the proprial article can be extended beyond names and short kinship terms if the NP in question contains features that refer to the speaker or the addressee, that is, either a 1st or a 2nd person feature:

(10) a. hún systir þín, hann vinur þinn, hann faðir minn
she sister your, he friend your, he father your
b. Það er bara hann ég.
it is only he I
'It is just me (myself)'.

Even so, the 'extra possibilities' provided by the person features are only limited:[28]

[27] On the other hand, the marked order *litla Anna* 'little Anna' is possible alongside of the more neutral *Anna litla*.

[28] On the other hand, one finds 'similar' examples with the suffixed article, *hann*

(11) ??hann yfirmaður þinn, ??hann kennari minn, *hún bók þín
he boss your, he teacher my, she book your

In passing, notice that using both a singular proprial article and the definite suffixed article with one and the same noun leads to sharp ungrammaticality.[29] Compare (12) to (10) above:

(12) *hún systir**in** þín, *hann vinur**inn** þinn, *hann faðir**inn** minn

It is also worth noting that there is *no neuter singular* proprial article, much as there are no neuter person names. This holds true even in cases where the use of a neuter proprial article would not be illogical, as illustrated by the following contrast:

(13) a. Hún dóttir þín kom hingað.
she daughter.FEM your came here
'Your daughter (you know) came here.'
b. *Það barn þitt kom hingað.
it child.NEUT your came here

So far, we have only considered singular proprial articles. Third person plural pronouns may also be used as proprial articles, even in the neuter:

(14) a. (**Þau**) Jón og María eru vinir.
they.NEUT Jón og María are friends
'Jón and María are friends.'
b. (**Þær**) Anna og María eru báðar kennarar.
they.FEM Anna and María are both teachers
c. (**Þeir**) Jón og Gunnar fóru saman út.
they.MASC Jón and Gunnar went together out

As indicated by the parentheses, the plural proprial article is usually only optional (much as in the singular).

Like the singular proprial article, the plural one is a marker of familiarity or givenness, but it does not alter the meaning or reference of the nouns it stands with. *Þau* in *þau Jón og María* indicates that the speaker assumes the addressee to know and easily identify the referents of *Jón and María*, but in all other respects *þau Jón og María* in (14a) means the same as the simple *Jón og María* would have meant.

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kennarinn okkar (= he teacher.the our), etc., but such examples usually involve dislocation: 'He (you know), our techer'.

[29] In the plural, on the other hand, using both articles is fully possible, see below.

However, Icelandic also has another closely related construction with less common and more striking properties. Compare (15) with (14a) above:

(15) a. María fór út. **Þau Jón** ætla að hittast.
María went out. they.NOM Jón.NOM intend to meet
'María went out. She and Jón are going to meet.'
b. Hvar er María? Ég hugsa oft um **þau Jón**.
where is María? I think often about them.ACC Jón.ACC
'Where is María? I often think about her and John.'
c. Hún fór heim. **Þeim Jóni** leiddist.
she went home. her.DAT Jón.DAT were-bored
'She went home. She and Jón were bored.'

As seen in the English translation, *þau Jón / þeim Jóni* 'they Jón' refers to 'María and Jón' or 'she/her and Jón'. Plausibly, the construction involves deletion (Josefsson 1993). One way of deriving the overt order of elements in the construction would be to assume [[hún [og Jón]] þau] ('she and Jón they') with deletion of the string *hún og* and subsequent raising of the pronoun or the article. For simplicity, however, I assume only deletion, as in (16):[30]

(16) [þau [~~hún [og~~ Jón]]]

This deletion construction is quite different from the plain proprial article construction:[31]

(17) [hann [Jón]]

If so, *þau* in (16) is more of a usual plural pronoun than an article, referring to or anticipating the constituent 'she and Jón', similarly as in examples like (18), with a right dislocated constituent (the underlined *hún og Jón*):[32]

(18) Anna er hérna. **Þau** komu hingað í gær, <u>hún og Jón</u>.
'Anna is here. They came here yesterday, she and Jón.'

However, the same applies to many instances of the singular proprial article:

[30] This indicates that the deletion applies to a constituent and a part of a different constituent (the cooordinator *og* being part of the second conjunct *og Jón*).

[31] Again, the analysis is probably too simple, but it serves to give a rough idea about the relevant differences between the constructions.

[32] On Dislocation in Icelandic, see Thráinsson (1979).

(19) **Hann** kom hingað í gær, Jón.
he came here yesterday, Jón

For ease of reference, I thus follow Delsing (1993:55, fn. 36) in referring to the pronoun in (14) as a proprial article, using the term 'proprial article' in the following descriptive sense:

(20) The ICELANDIC PROPRIAL ARTICLE is a personal pronoun that stands next to the left of a name or a relational noun, without there being any intonation break between the two.

When the need arises, we may distinguish between the different constructions in (16) and (17) by referring to them as the GAPPED PROPRIAL ARTICLE CONSTRUCTION vs. the PLAIN PROPRIAL ARTICLE CONSTRUCTION. Common to both constructions is that the proprial article indicates that the speaker assumes the addressee to know the referent(s) of the NP and thus to be able to easily identify *Jón* in both (16) and (17) without any previous mention.

The gapped and the plain constructions can look exactly the same:

(21) a. **Þau** Jón og María eru vinir. PLAIN
they.NEUT Jón og María are friends
'John and Mary are friends.'
b. Anna kemur líka. **Þau** Jón og María eru vinir. GAPPED
Anna comes too. they Jón and María are friends
'Anna is coming too.
She, John and Mary are friends. / She and John and Mary are friends.'

Usually, however, the gapped construction contains only one name: *Þau Jón, þær Anna, þeir Ólafur.*

In case the 'antecedent' of the proprial article is a conjoined phrase, the construction may become ambiguous, in examples like the following one:

(22) Anna og Pétur koma líka. **Þau Jón** eru vinir.
Anna and Pétur come too. they.NEUT Jón are friends
a. 'Anna and Pétur are coming too. **She** and John are friends.'
b. 'Anna and Pétur are coming too. **They** and John are friends.'

In the b-reading, the proprial article is closer than otherwise to being just a usual personal pronoun (referring to 'Anna and Pétur'), the coordinator *og* being the only deleted element. The structural difference between the two readings can be described as follows:

(23) a. [þau [[~~hún~~ [~~og~~ Jón]]]]
b. [þau [~~og~~ Jón]]

In the b-reading, however, there is a preference for spelling out the conjunction, thereby avoiding the ambiguity: *Þau og Jón eru vinir* ('they (she and Peter) and Jón, are friends').

The singular proprial article is confined to the third person, for natural reasons: *hann Jón, hún Anna* and even *hann ég* 'he me' or *hún ég* 'she me', but not, of course, **þú ég* 'you me' or **ég þú* 'I you'. In the plural, on the other hand, first and second person proprial articles are common:

(24) **Við Jón** erum ekki eins gamlir og **þið Pétur**.
we Jón are not like old and you Pétur
'I and Jón are not as old as you and Pétur.'

Using a plain coordinated structure like *ég og Jón* 'I and Jón' is grammatical too, but the corresponding proprial article construction is often or usually the preferred one.

Much as in the third person cases we have looked at so far, the deletion approach is easily applicable here:

(25) a. [við [~~ég~~ [~~og~~ Jón]]]
b. [þið [~~þú~~ [~~og~~ Pétur]]]

Similarly:

(26) Hún heilsaði okkur Jóni. [okkur.DAT [~~mér.DAT~~ [~~og~~ Jóni.DAT]]]
she greeted us.DAT Jón.DAT
'She greeted me and Jón.'

However, the deletion approach is not as straightforward in examples like the following ones, where the proprial article is taken by a plural relational noun, both the article and the noun being ambiguous between a singular and a plural reading:

(27) við bræðurnir
we brothers.the
a. 'I and my brothers'
b. 'I and my brother'
c. 'we and our brother's
d. 'we and our brother'
e. 'we, you(SG/PL) and I/we, who are brothers'

Similar multiple ambiguity is also found in the second and third persons, *þið bræðurnir* 'you brothers.the' and *þeir bræðurnir* 'they.MASC brothers.the', *þið systurnar* 'you sisters.the', *þið mæðgurnar* 'you mothers-and-daughters.the', *þeir feðgarnir* 'they fathers-and-sons.the', and so on. It is clear that more than one simple deletion is needed to account for the relations between these overt structures and the many underlying structures they represent.

I concluded section 2.4. by suggesting the following order of elements in the Icelandic DP:

(28) Q – Spec/D – D – Num – Spec/G – G – (Adj+) Noun – Compl

Q	=	Quantifier position (Q-position)
D	=	Definite determiner position (D-position)
Num	=	Numeral
G	=	Genitive position (G-position)
Compl	=	Complement position

It is not entirely clear where the proprial article and the names and nouns they modify fit into this description. At the end of section 2.1, we saw that the Q-position can be preceded by personal pronouns. Possibly, the proprial article takes this 'Person position', but I would not want to claim this to be the case.[33] NPs headed by names and name-like expressions have a reduced and a very special syntax, so it is not clear that they have the same structure as NPs in general (for discussion, see e.g. Anderson 2004, Matushansky 2004). Hopefully, future research will increase our understanding of this and many other aspects of NP structure that are still poorly understood.

5 Concluding remarks

In part, the NP shows a remarkable congruity across the Germanic languages. Consider the 'basic' order of elements within the Germanic NP, illustrated below:

[33] While *Þeir Jón* 'they Jón' is perfectly grammatical, as we have seen, *Þeir allir þessir frægu málfræðingar,* 'they all these famous linguists' is odd, to say the least (except with an intionation break after *þeir*), as opposed to *þeir ... allir* 'they ... all'.

(1)

	Q	D	Num	Adj	Noun	Complement
English	all	these	three	famous	linguists	from Germany
German	all	diese	drei	berühmte	Linguisten	aus Deutschland
Swedish	alla	dessa	tre	berömda	lingvister	från Tyskland
Icelandic	allir	þessir	þrír	frægu	málfræðingar	frá Þýskalandi

There are more similarities. Thus, pronouns generally either must or at least can precede quantifiers, as illustrated for English, German, Swedish, and Icelandic in (2):

(2) a. I know **them all**.
b. Ich kenne **die alle**.
c. Jag känner **dem alla**.
d. Ég þekki **þá alla**.

Strikingly similar facts are found for Romance languages, cf. e.g. the following ordering facts in French and Italian (the order noun-adjective is the unmarked one, but adjective-noun is also possible):[34]

(3) a. tous ces trois linguistes fameux de l'Allemagne
all these three linguists famous of Germany
b. tutti questi tre linguisti famosi della Germania
'all these three famous linguists from Germany'

Some of these and other similarities in NP syntax across the Germanic languages and their Romance cousins may have general, principled explanations, and some of them may perhaps be traced back to ancient parametric options. Present day knowledge of the putative principles and parameters that may be responsible for NP structure and NP structure variation is, however, extremely limited. Even the widely adopted assumption (Abney 1987 and many since) that NP structure obeys X-bar theoretic principles is inevitably going to meet the same scepticism as X-bar theory itself (Collins 2002, Sigurðsson 2004a, 2004b and others).

Icelandic shows two deviations from general Germanic/Romance NP ordering patterns that are quite special and are therefore of particular interest. First, in adnominal genitive constructions, both nouns and their modifying adjectives, **(Adj+)Noun**, move in front of the genitive:

(4) Allar þessar þrjár **snjöllu hugmyndir** Jóns [__] um málfræði
all these three clever ideas Jón's about grammar

[34] Thanks to Verner Egerland for these examples.

Thus, Icelandic usually has a NOUN GENITIVE CONSTRUCTION (*hugmyndir Jóns*) instead of the general Germanic GENITIVE NOUN CONSTRUCTION (*Jón's ideas*).

Second, in NPs that contain the suffixed definite article, the (Adj+)Noun moves still farther to the left, to a position in front of the article, between Q and D:

(5) Allar **snjöllu hugmyndir**nar þrjár [__] um málfræði
all clever ideas.the three about grammar

A question that immediately arises is whether there is any correlation between these two very similar movements. It is suggestive that both target a position in front of a special morphology, the genitive vs. the definite suffixed article, and it is also suggestive that adnominal genitives generally lead to a definite reading of NPs, but I refrain from speculating further here.

In this connection, it is nonetheless interesting to notice that the Germanic languages have a general DEFINITENESS BLOCKING in their Genitive Noun Construction; this is true of Icelandic to the extent it allows this construction (recall that the minus sign indicates that an expression is grammatical but dispreferred in most contexts):

(6) a.	Iceland's (*the) nature	(but: **the** nature of Iceland)	English
b.	Islands (*die) Natur	(but: **die** Natur auf Island)	German
c.	Islands natur(*en)	(but: **naturen** på Island)	Swedish
d.	–Íslands náttúra(*n)	(but: **náttúran** á Íslandi)	Icelandic

In the Noun Genitive Construction, this blocking either may or must be relaxed, as in German ***die** Natur Islands* 'Iceland's nature', ***die** Meinung des Professors* 'the Professors opinion'. In the Icelandic Noun Genitive Construction this relaxation is, however, subject to complex interactions of features like abstractness, specificity and identifiability, discussed in section 3. The major generalizations are a stated in (7):

(7) Overt definiteness marking is either preferred or required in the Icelandic Noun Genitive Construction if:
a. the **head noun** is *concrete*, ***and***
b. the **genitive** is either *pronominal* or *a simple name* (including short forms of kinship terms) – in this latter case, when the genitive is a simple name / short form of a kinship term, it usually has to take the *proprial article*

The proprial article is one of the hallmarks of the Icelandic NP, discussed in section 4. In particular, the GAPPED PROPRIAL ARTICLE CONSTRUCTION, as in (8), has interesting and rather unusual properties:

(8) a. **Þau Ólafur** eru vinir.
they.NOM Ólafur.NOM are friends (i.e. [they [[~~she [and~~ Ólafur]]]] ...)
'She and Ólafur are friends.'
b. Þú þekkir **okkur Ólaf** ekki. (i.e. ... [us [[~~me [and~~ Ólafur]]]])
you know us.ACC Ólafur.ACC not
'You don't know me and Ólafur.'[35]

While these 'simple' examples seem to be derived by a rather plain deletion, [þau [[~~hún [og~~ Ólafur]]]], etc., more powerful tools are needed to account for multiply ambiguous NPs where the proprial article is taken by a plural relational noun: *við bræðurnir* 'we brothers.the', etc. Other very characteristic traits of the NP in Icelandic, as compared to most other Germanic varieties, are its lack of an indefinite article and its extremely rich *quantifier-determiner-numeral-adjective-noun* concord in gender, number and case.

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[35] The reading 'us and Ólafur' is marginal only (for that reading *okkur og Ólaf* 'us and Ólafur' is preferable).

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