

Multiple Determination in a Balkan Sprachbund Context: Albanian and Balkan Slavic

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MULTIPLE DETERMINATION (MD) (aka Double Determination)

More than one indicator of definiteness within DP.

Many types; see e.g. Alexiadou (2014). We concentrate on one:

DEM + DEF (demonstrative + definite article/inflection)

... IN A BALKAN SPRACHBUND CONTEXT

Intensive language contact area in the Balkan peninsula, known for numerous shared grammatical features (as well as lexical borrowing) – affecting:

Balkan Slavic (Bulgarian, Macedonian & Torlak [=southeastern] BCMS)

Balkan Romance (Romanian, Aromanian, Meglenoromanian)

Romani in the Balkans (Vlax & Balkan Romani)

Albanian

Balkan Judezmo

Greek

West Rumelian Turkish & Gagauz

SYNTACTIC “BALKANISMS” INCLUDE: (among many others....)

- replacement of infinitive (finite verb with modal/subjunctive particle)
- postposed definite article (Albanian, Romance, Slavic)
- **Multiple Determination constructions** (e.g. Friedman 2006, Joseph 2019)

The convergence of the Balkan languages is striking – but the view of the Balkan Sprachbund as “one grammar with several lexicons” (Kopitar 1829:86) requires nuancing. As demonstrated in Joseph (1983), even core Balkanisms like infinitive replacement show varying manifestations in the different languages. True for MD as well: **All Balkan languages have some form of MD, but realization and place in the grammar varies.**

The Balkan MD continuum: (Friedman & Rudin 2019)

most pervasive/grammatically integrated > **GREEK** > **ROMANI** > **BALKAN ROMANCE** > **ALBANIAN** > **MACEDONIAN** > **BULGARIAN** > *least pervasive/most pragmatically conditioned*

Within this overall trend there are

- varying details of structure & usage in individual languages
- **a split into (at least) two distinct types of constructions**

The facts in a nutshell:

	MD with initial DEM	MD with AdjDEF / NDEF	MD with postposed DEM	DEM can move?	Affective semantics/pragmatics	style
Greek	obligatory	(both – but note article is not DEF inflection)	oblig.	yes	no	standard
Romani	optional					
Balkan Romance	no					
Albanian	optional	both	--	no	yes	Colloq. only
Macedonian	optional	both (limited)				
Bulgarian	optional	Adj only				

We briefly sketch the top half of the chart before looking in more detail at the bottom three.

GREEK: DEM can postpose; MD obligatory

1. a. *aftos o anthropos*
DEM DEF person
- b. *o anthropos aftos*
DEF person DEM
'this person'
- c. **aftos anthropos*

with adjective:

2. *to puli (afto) to mikro*
the bird DEM the small
'the/this small bird'

ROMANI (Agia Varvara): DEM can postpose; MD obligatory when postposed, optional otherwise

3. a. *kadava (o) manuš*
DEM DEF person
- b. *o manuš kadava*
DEF person DEM
'this person'

Kosovo Burgudži: MD optional

4. a. *kada phuro*
DEM old
'this old man' ("normal")
- b. *kada (o) phuro*
DEM DEF old
'this old man' ("possible")

BALKAN ROMANCE: DEM can postpose; MD iff postposed**Aromanian**

5. a. *aist om*
DEM person
- b. *omlu aistu*
person.DEF DEM
'this person'

Romanian

6. a. *acel om*
DEM person
- b. *omul acela*
person.DEF DEM
'this person'

Definite adjective also possible (multiple DEF inflection):

5. c. *omlu aistu bun(lu)*
person.DEF DEM good.DEF
'this good person'
- c. *omul acela bun(ul)*
person.DEF DEM good.DEF
'this good person'

(Note also "strong" vs. "weak" form of DEM *aist(u)/acel(a)*; also constructions like *omul cel bun*, with "adj. article" etc. – there's a lot more to say here!! Cf. e.g. Nicolae 2015)

SUMMARY: All of these (Greek, Romani, Balkan Romance varieties) are characterized by mobile DEM.

Obligatory MD in Greek strongly suggests an appositive construction with DEM as separate DP:

[DP N.DEF] [DP DEM] (Greek, possibly also Romani)
[DP DEM] [DP N.DEF]

In Balkan Romance, MD is likewise obligatory but only when DEM is postnominal. Various complications (e.g. DEM adjacent to N) make an appositive analysis less likely. Nicolae suggests N raises to D over DEM:

[DP N.DEF [D_{emP} DEM [... t ...]]] (Romanian?)

Pursuing this is beyond scope of this paper – but it is clear Balkan Romance MD as well as that of Greek & Romani is different from the Balkan Slavic & Albanian type ... to which we now turn.

MACEDONIAN examples from the “Bombi” (*Vistinata za Makedonija* ‘The Truth About Macedonia’ = Prizma 2015) – discussed in detail in Friedman 2019, Friedman&Rudin 2019.
Almost all pejorative (14) but can express pure personal involvement:

14. Zamisli ušte mi nema čestitano **toj idiotot**, čoveče.
think still me NEG.have congratulated that idiot.DEF person.VOC
‘Just think, that idiot still hasn’t congratulated me, man!’ (MR, 17.7)
15. **Ovoj našiov** čovek e tuka.
this our.DEF person is here
‘Our guy is [the one who is] here.’ (NTT, 22a.2)

Note: Macedonian DEM and DEF have 3-way proximity distinction.

-v- proximal / -t- neutral / -n- distal *Proximal is most frequent in MD*

●Of 101 MD constructions in (most of) the Bombi, only 3 are distal:

16. I go barav i **ona kopileno** Artan Grubi, drugar ti.
and him sought.1SG and that bastard.DF.DS A. G. friend your
‘And I also tried to get hold of that bastard, your friend Artan Grubi.’ (ZS, 22b.14)

●27 (less than 30%) are neutral:

17. Upis kje napraime kaj šo se **tie našite profesori**
registration FUT do.1PL.PRS where that are those our.DF.NL professors
‘We’ll do the [university] registration where our professors are [in control].’ (NTT, 22a.2)

●More than 2/3 are proximal: (**prox. = personal evaluation/involvement**)

18. A slušaj, **ovie našive polupismenive** što gledaat denes mu
and listen these our.DEF.PX semiliterates.DEF.PX that watch.3PL today him.DAT
se javile na Martin.
ITR called.PL to M.
‘Well, listen, those semiliterates of ours who are watching [the news] today apparently called Martin.’ (DPL, 24.11)

(Note: two definite suffixes in (18) – unique example in the Bombi, most consultants do not accept, though K. Čašule from Ohrid has a similar example.)

BULGARIAN (examples from social media) positive or negative affect, like Macedonian:

19. **Tazi nejnata banica** e straxotna!
that her.DEF banica is awesome
‘That banica of hers is awesome.’
20. Offf, **toja novija ajfon** ne e ništo osobeno.
oof this new.DEF iPhone NEG is nothing special
‘Oof, this new iPhone isn’t anything special.’

ALBANIAN MD generally seems to have affective function as well; a nuance of emphasis or emotion (Turano & Rrokaj 2000, Rexhina Ndoci p.c.; data from Buchholtz & Fiedler)

21. Po s’e kritikova **këtë mësuesën** në mes të fshatit, mos
if NEG.him criticize.1SG DEM teacher.DEF.ACC in middle PC village.GEN.DEF don’t
më thënçin Rremë Osmani.
me.ACC call.OPT.2PL R. O.
‘If I don’t criticize that teacher in front of the whole village, then my name isn’t R. O.’
22. **Ky dervishi** duhet të ketë ndonjë hall.
this dervish.DEF must DMS have.3SG.SBJV some trouble
‘This dervish must have some kind of problem.’

The three languages (Mac/Bulg/Alb) are thus very similar. However, there exist differences among them as well.

DIFFERENCE 1: basic word order

We've already seen ((10) repeated here) that word order difference in Albanian vs Slavic results in article on NOUN in Albanian but usually ADJECTIVE (prenominal modifier, including possessive) in Bulg/Mac.

10. a. *ky djali im* (Albanian)
 this boy-DEF my
 NOUN
- b. *tova moeto momče* (Bulgarian)
 this my-DEF boy
 ADJ
- c. *ova moevo momče* (Macedonian)
 this my-DEF boy
 ADJ
 ‘this boy of mine’

DIFFERENCE 2: definite noun and/or modifier?

In fact, there are further differences in whether N or Adj can be articulated, beyond those induced by word order.

Albanian has the freest distribution of definite article suffix with demonstrative: can occur on N and also adjective (MD with multiple articles)

23. *ky djali im i zgjuar* OR *ky djali im i zgjuari*
 this boy my PC clever this boy my PC clever.DEF
 ‘this clever boy of mine’ (where the adjective is optionally marked for definiteness)

Macedonian allows N.DEF as well as Adj.DEF
 – but generally not both at once.

24. *ovie našive profesori*
 ovie profesorive
 */?/?*ovie našive profesorive*

‘These professors of ours’

Bulgarian allows ONLY Adj.DEF
 -- never N.DEF

25. *tezi našite profesori*
 **tezi profesorite*
 **tezi našite profesorite*

DIFFERENCE 3: register

Balkan Slavic MD is colloquial

Albanian MD is standard, not marked as colloquial

Albanian thus has the widest occurrence of MD of the 3 languages, both grammatically and contextually.

AN AREAL CONCLUSION:

Both the unity and diversity of the non-appositive, affective MD construction shared by Balkan Slavic and Albanian **have a clear areal basis:**

UNITY: it occupies a **continuous territory** across the Balkans, while Romanian to the north and Greek to the south (as well as other Balkan Romance varieties and Romani) have different types of MD constructions.

DIVERSITY: **Macedonian is geographically and grammatically intermediate**; shares some features with Albanian (DEM N-DEF), some with Bulgarian (position of adjective), and is intermediate in terms of context of use as well. Macedonian dialects near Albania may be most like Albanian.

Greek, Romani, Balkan Romance	Albanian, Macedonian, Bulgarian
Syntactically conditioned: obligatory either in general (Greek) or when Dem is postposed. Required by appositive structure or by processes like raising of N to D.	Pragmatically conditioned: grammatically optional but used for a specific pragmatic effect (affective).

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***** APPENDIX *****

Appositive constructions do occur in Alb/Mac/Bulg. **FOR INSTANCE:**

BULGARIAN

tozi , profesora	/	profesora , tozi
DEM professor.DEF		professor.DEF DEM
‘that guy, the professor’	/	‘the professor, that guy’

These resemble other Balkan languages but differ from the MD construction of interest in Alb/Mac/Bulg, in several ways:

- **WORD ORDER VARIABLE**
- **REQUIRE COMMA INTONATION – TRUE MD HAS NO INTONATION BREAK**
- **DIFFERENT SYNTACTIC DETAILS, E.G. BULGARIAN CAN HAVE DEF NOUN**
- **INTERPRETATION IS CLARIFYING OR HESITATION, RATHER THAN AFFECTIVE**