

Bare Nominals, Classifiers and the Representation of Definiteness in Bangla

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1. Introduction

Bangla is an Indo-Aryan language spoken in the eastern part of India and in Bangladesh which makes use of classifiers in numerically-quantified noun phrases, as seen in (1). In such structures, the classifier regularly follows the numeral and precedes the noun:

- (1) a. Ek Ta chabi Numeral > Classifier > Noun
 1 CL key
 ‘a key’
- b. dOS Ta gaRi
 10 CL car
 ‘ten cars’

However, the neutral order of classifier > noun may be inverted in the absence of a numeral to produce sequences which are automatically interpreted as definite, as shown in (2). Such forms have often been referred to in the literature as instantiating a “bare classifier” pattern and show similarities with bare classifier patterns that have definite interpretations in other languages such as Vietnamese, Hmong, and varieties of Chinese (Bhattacharya 1999, Simpson et al. 2011, Chacón 2012, Dayal 2012, Li and Bisang 2012, Simpson 2013, Jiang 2014).

- (2) a. chabi Ta
 key CL
 ‘the key’
- b. gaRi Ta
 car CL
 ‘the car’

In addition to the much-referenced bare classifier pattern, definite noun phrases in Bangla can also be represented via the use of bare nouns with no classifier, as in (3), in a pattern that has not attracted much attention or careful study:

- (3) a. chabi
 key
 ‘a key’, ‘keys’ or ‘the key’
- b. gaRi
 car
 ‘a car’, ‘cars’, or ‘the car’

Such apparently optional variants to the bare classifier pattern raise the question of why Bangla should allow for two distinct ways to encode definite interpretations (aside from the use of demonstratives and certain other strong quantifiers), and whether the bare classifier and bare noun forms really are equivalent in meaning, or possibly communicate different aspects of what is broadly referred to as “definiteness.” In extensive discussions of the definite article ‘the’ in English, there has been disagreement over what component of meaning actually licenses the use of this element and whether “definiteness” requires a referent to have the property of being “identifiable” or “unique,” or perhaps both such properties (see Lyons 1999 for a useful summary, also Hawkins 1978, Donnellan 1966, Heim 1982, Roberts 2003, Sharvy 1980). Other cross-linguistic studies of definiteness have revealed that there are also languages which have more than just one definite determiner, and that each form is associated with different uses (Schwarz 2013). In Bangla, thus far, there has been no study of the alternations between bare classifier and definite bare noun forms which establishes the conditions under which these patterns occur, and speakers of Bangla, when asked, are themselves frequently unclear about why they select one or the other pattern to refer to definite entities. The investigation reported in this paper aims to shed further light on the ways that “definiteness” may be linguistically encoded across languages and will show that in Bangla both uniqueness and identifiability play a role in the use of bare classifier and bare noun patterns, and that selection of one form over the other also relates in a highly important way to the level of *activation* of the referent in the minds of participants in the discourse. The intricate interaction

of uniqueness, identifiability, and activation level found in the use of bare classifier and bare noun patterns in Bangla underscores the idea that definiteness is a multi-faceted notion whose complexity is partially masked in languages such as English which have a single article for use in all instances of definite reference, but is helpfully distinguished in other languages where multiple forms of definite reference are available.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 presents a detailed consideration of a range of contexts in which definite reference occurs—anaphoric linking, bridging cross-reference, visibly present entities, situational, inferred and global unique entities—and establishes what the common, dominant form of reference is in each particular context. This section also notes certain complicating factors relating to the use of classifiers in Bangla which impact the application of the bare classifier pattern with human referents. Section 3 then describes the roles played by activation level, identifiability and uniqueness of referent in the selection of the different forms of representation. This leads to the paper's analysis of the bare noun and bare classifier patterns in section 4 and a discussion of how the semantic and pragmatic properties affecting the two patterns interact with each other to result in actual language use and certain cases of apparent optionality in the choice of referential form. The cross-linguistic consequences of the study of definiteness in Bangla are then emphasized, along with mention of various questions that remain for future study.

2. Bangla: bare classifier and bare noun patterns in different licensing contexts

In studies of definiteness and its representation in different languages it has been common to consider a core range of contexts and relations in which definiteness marking occurs, for example, the use of a definite determiner such as English 'the' (Lyons 1999, Schwarz 2013, Arkoh and Matthewson 2013). Considering these contexts in Bangla as a way of probing potential differences in bare classifier/bare noun patterns, we will begin with those contexts in which speakers report a clear, strong preference for the bare classifier pattern, and where use of a bare noun is not felt to be appropriate. Subsequently, we will consider other contexts in which bare nouns may naturally

occur, and situations where it appears that either bare classifier or bare noun patterns may be acceptable. This will result in a broad set of generalizations on the use of the two forms and an analysis of the patterns in section 4.

2.1. Anaphoric definite reference

One very common context in which definite determiners occur across languages is in situations where the reference of an entity/individual is established via an anaphoric link with an antecedent that is linguistically present in the discourse, as in this English example (4):

- (4) Yesterday, at the demonstration, the police arrested a politician and a lawyer. The politician has already sued the police.

In Bangla, where there is such anaphoric linking to an antecedent previously introduced in the discourse, the bare classifier pattern is made use of, with one set of exceptions, commented on below, as shown in examples (5-6). In these examples the referents are inanimate (5) and non-human animate (6), and it would be very unnatural to use a bare noun to represent the definite referents in each of the second sentences.

- (5) kalke ram Ek Ta kalo Tupi ar Ek Ta Sada Tupi
yesterday Ram 1 CL black hat and 1 CL white hat
kinechhe. kalo Tupi *(Ta) or bORo hoechhe.
bought black hat CL his big be
'Yesterday, Ram bought a black hat and a white hat. The black hat is too big for him.'
- (6) Minar Ek Ta kukur ar Ek Ta beRal achhe. ami kukur
Mina-GEN 1 CL dog and 1 CL cat has I dog
*(Ta)-ke pOchhondo kori, kintu beral *(Ta)-ke amar
CL-ACC like do but cat CL-ACC I-GEN
khub Ek-Ta bhalo lage na.
very 1- CL good feel NEG
'Mina has a dog and a cat. I like the dog, but I don't like the cat too much.'

With human referents, there is an important complication to control for. Classifiers do not occur readily with human referents to whom respect is accorded, such as those in professions perceived to be higher-level and requiring education, e.g., lawyers, teachers, accountants, managers, presidents, police chiefs, etc. Classifiers only regularly occur with non-honorific referents, such as those carrying out lower-paid jobs requiring less qualifications, e.g., janitors, guards, drivers, waiters. When +honorific/respected referents occur in anaphoric relations, a bare noun has to be used for the definite reference, as use of a bare classifier pattern would sound disrespectful. This interfering sociolinguistic factor may tend to mask the correct generalization that anaphoric definite reference in Bangla requires the bare classifier pattern whenever it is genuinely available, as in (7), where the human referents are not accorded a high level of respect, and a bare classifier pattern must be made use of in the encoding of the anaphoric relation:

- (7) laibreri-te Ekjon notun mEthor ar Ekjon gard rakha hoechhe.
library-LOC 1 CL new janitor and 1 CL guard hire was
mEthor *(Ta) porisromi, kintu gard *(Ta) besh kuMRe.
Janitor CL hard-working but guard CL quite lazy
'The library hired a new janitor and a new guard. The janitor
is hard-working, but the guard is quite lazy.'

If the respect that is normally accorded a referent in a particular profession is exceptionally suspended, due to a speaker holding a negative attitude toward the referent, classifiers can and must be used with such referents in instances of anaphoric definiteness. If a negative-quality predicate is made use of, as in (8) with the second referent 'the officer,' this naturally licenses the necessary use of a classifier with a profession term that otherwise would not combine with a classifier. In contrast to the patterning with the negatively-presented referent 'the officer' in (8), note that the first anaphorically-linked referent in this example, 'the peon' refers to a profession that is *not* normally accorded a high level of respect. This would normally result in the use of a bare classifier pattern in instances of anaphoric reference. However, in (8) this referent is deliberately combined with a positive-quality predicate indicating respect or prestige. Such a manipulation of the predicate triggers the use of a bare noun form and a bare classifier form may not occur. The bare noun requirement

for the situationally respected ‘peon’ in (8) thus contrasts with the necessary bare classifier form for the negatively-viewed ‘officer,’ illustrating how speaker perception of a +human referent *in a particular context* is relevant for the use of the bare classifier in instances of anaphoric definite reference.

- (8) 1990 Sale Ofis-e Ek jon pion ar Ek jon Ofisar
 1990 year-LOC office-LOC 1 CL peon and 1 CL officer
 rakha hoechhilo. Sei peon ^(*Ta) Ekhon CEO hoe gEche,
 hire was that peon-(*Ta) Now CEO be went
 kintu officer ^(*Ta) khub kuMRe chhilo bole kono
 but Ofisar-(*Ta) very lazy was COMP any
 unnoti korte pareni.
 improve do NEG
 ‘The office hired a peon and an officer in the year 1990. The peon is now the CEO of the company; however, the officer was very lazy, so he could not get any promotion.’

2.2. Bridging cross-reference and definiteness by association

A second kind of relation which regularly results in the use of definite determiners in languages such as English is labeled “bridging (cross-reference)” or definiteness “via association” (Clark 1975, Lyons 1999). This refers to the establishment of an entity/individual as definite by virtue of a link to some other entity/group referred to in the discourse. The linking may be that of a part-whole relation, as in (9), or a creator-creation relation, as in (10):

- (9) I just bought a new Cadillac. The trunk is very large.
 (10) This is a really interesting book. The author is from Albania.

In Bangla, such definite reference makes use of the bare classifier pattern, as illustrated in (11) and (12):

- (11) ami amar saikel Ta bikri kore dichchhi.
 I my bicycle CL sell do give
sit Ta khub OSSostikOr.
 saddle CL very uncomfortable
 ‘I’m going to sell my bicycle. The saddle is very uncomfortable.’

- (12) tumi jodi second-hand gaRi keno,
you if second-hand car buy
injin Ta kintu chek kore nio.
engine CL but check do take
'If you buy a second-hand car, check the engine (beforehand).'

If a human referent in cases of bridging cross-reference is +respected and situationally presented in a positive way, a bare noun pattern regularly occurs, potentially overriding the bare classifier pattern which is otherwise required in bridging cross-reference. Example (13) combines the referent *chalok* 'driver' with a respectful attributive adjective *bhOdro* 'polite' and the respectful form of the verb *chhilen* 'was.' This results in a bare noun form naturally being used. By way of contrast, when the regular form of the verb *chhilo* 'was' occurs in (14), no special respect is signaled, and the less respected term for 'driver' is used (*Draibhar*), this results in use of the bare classifier pattern.

- (13) gOtokal ami Ek Ta tEksi nie rail station-e gechhiam.
yesterday I 1 CL taxi take rail station-LOC went
chalok khub bhOdro ar upokari chhilen.
driver very polite and helpful was-(+ CL)
'Yesterday I took a taxi to the train station. The driver was very polite and helpful.'

- (14) gOtokal ami Ek Ta tEksi nie rail station-e gechhiam.
yesterday I 1 CL taxi take rail station-LOC went
Draibhar Ta bhiSon ObhOdro chhilo!
driver CL very impolite was-(-HON)
'Yesterday I took a taxi to the train station. The driver was very impolite!'

Example (15a) refers to a 'bride' with a positive predicate ('being beautiful'), and this naturally causes the bare noun pattern to occur, encoding respect/politeness. In (15b), the predicate is changed to one which is culturally perceived to be negative ('having a dark complexion'), and this results in licensing of the bare classifier pattern.

- (15) a. gOtokal amra Ek Ta biyebaRi gechhilam.
 yesterday we 1 CL wedding-house went
kone khub Sundori chhilo.
 bride very beautiful was
 ‘Yesterday we went to a wedding. The bride was very
 beautiful.’¹
- b. gOtokal amra Ek Ta biyebaRi gechhilam.
 yesterday we 1 CL wedding-house went
kone-Ta khub kalo chhilo.
 bride-CL very dark was
 ‘Yesterday we went to a wedding. The bride was dark in
 complexion.’

2.3. The effect of visibility and pointing to a referent

A third general context in which a bare classifier pattern is naturally used for definite reference, and not a bare noun form, is instances where an individual/entity is clearly visible to the speaker and hearer, and the speaker draws attention to the presence of the referent, for example by pointing, or directing the hearer to look at the referent. This is illustrated in (16) and (17) with inanimate and non-human animate referents, and in (18-20) with human referents that are not automatically accorded special respect. When the physical presence of the entities in (16-20) is not emphasized, there is less natural pressure to encode them by means of the bare classifier form (for example,

¹ A reviewer of the paper notes that a special classifier form *Ti* could actually be used in (15a) in his/her idiolect. This classifier has less of the disrespectful overtones that the more general classifier *Ta* frequently may have, for many speakers. A second reviewer adds that *Ta* might perhaps also occur in certain instances of exclamation with human referents, such as (i).

(i) kone Ta je ki sundor chhilo!
 bride CL PRT PRT beautiful was
 ‘How beautiful the bride was!’

With *Ti*, and even *Ta* in special contexts of exclamation and assertions of affection or pity, the default pattern of bare classifier use with bridging cross-reference is therefore able to reassert itself, at least for certain speakers. As with anaphoric definite reference, when a bare classifier pattern is not blocked by non-syntactic, sociolinguistic factors, bridging cross-reference requires the use of the bare classifier form, and a bare noun pattern is inappropriate. Finally, it can be noted that the use of classifiers with human referents in general is a phenomenon that involves a number of subtleties, hence some speaker variation is expected. The variation of judgment regarding *Ta* and *Ti* are interesting, however the details concerning the difference between the two forms are beyond the scope of this paper.

contrast reference to ‘the driver’ in (20) with a bare classifier form with bare noun reference to ‘the driver’ in (28) when this referent is not currently visible).²

(16) Ramu and his son are repairing a bicycle. Ramu points to a hammer and says:

amake hatuRi Ta de-to.
I- ACC hammer CL give- TOP
‘Pass me the hammer.’

(17) At a zoo. Ramu says to his son:

oi dEkh! bagh Ta amader dekhchhe.
that look tiger CL us watching
‘Look over there. The tiger is watching us!’

(18) In a bank, during a robbery:

oi puliS Ta-ke dEkh. or kachhe bonduk achhe!
that police CL-ACC see his near gun has
‘Look over there, at the policeman. He has a gun!’

(19) The speaker and his friend are working late in an office building. Leaving the building, they see a body lying on the floor in the reception area, and the speaker says:

dEkh, garD Ta-ke ke guli kore diechhe.
See guard CL-ACC who bullet do gave
‘Look! The guard has been shot.’

(20) A car has crashed into a wall. The speaker and his friend are walking by. The speaker stops and looks into the car and says:

dEkh, Draibhar Ta ahoto. taratari ay, oke help kori.
See driver CL injured quickly come him help do
‘Look. The driver is injured. Quick, help him.’

2.4. Reference to individuals/entities with salient, non-anaphoric uniqueness

A fourth set of contexts which regularly trigger the use of definite determiners in languages having such elements involves reference

² Effects of uniqueness and mental activation level (of a referent) are also relevant here, as will be noted in subsequent sections.

to entities and individuals whose uniqueness is clearly salient. Here we will consider three different types of specifically unique referents and how they are represented in Bangla. The first type will be referred to as the category of “global uniques”—entities which are unique for everyone, for example reference to ‘the moon,’ ‘the sun,’ as in English (21):

(21) The moon is very bright tonight.

The second type of unique entity to be investigated is the set of “inferred uniques”—instances in which the speaker makes an inference that there is a unique entity of a certain type in a particular situation, for example:

(22) Where’s the entrance? (asked by a speaker approaching an unfamiliar building)

The third type of unique entity we will consider are cases of “situational uniques”—instances where the referent is the only instantiation of a particular type of entity (picked out by a noun) in a certain situation, but neither globally unique, nor simply inferred to exist in the situation. In such cases, the speaker has contextual knowledge that the referent exists and is unique in the situation, as for example in (23), where the speaker knows that someone present has brought along a camera, and this is the only camera that is present with the speaker and hearer(s).

(23) Where’s the camera?

Interestingly, in languages which have been found to have more than one definite determiner, anaphors and visible entities may often be encoded by means of one article, and elements whose uniqueness is salient and non-anaphoric may occur marked with a different article/mechanism (Schwarz 2013, Arkoh and Matthewson 2013). In order to investigate the representation of such referents in Bangla in a way that focuses specifically on their uniqueness, it is necessary to create contexts in which referents do not have any anaphoric linking to other elements and are also not visibly present, as such properties might independently trigger the use of a bare classifier pattern. Non-visible global and situational uniques with no anaphoric

linking therefore need to be considered, for example, via the use of questions such as ‘Where is the market?’ or ‘Is the moon visible tonight?’). Similarly, the investigation of inferred uniques as an isolated category requires establishing contexts in which referents are not licensed by bridging cross-reference due to the presence of a linguistically present link, which may automatically cause the bare classifier pattern to occur. Sections 2.4.1.-2.4.3. report on the results of considering the three sub-types of unique referents, once such controls are carefully applied.

2.4.1. *Global uniques*

Global uniques such as ‘the moon,’ ‘the sun’ are complex in the way reference is made to them in Bangla. The bare classifier pattern is required in examples such as (24) and (25) below, which are references to properties of global uniques made at particular points in time.

(24) gOto rate chaMd Ta jhOlmOl korchhilo.
yesterday night- LOC moon CL bright do
‘The moon was very bright last night.’

(25) ajke khub meghla. Surjo Ta kothay?
today very cloudy sun CL where
‘It’s very cloudy today. Where’s the sun?’

However, if a generic property is attributed to a global unique, the bare noun pattern, not the bare classifier pattern, must occur:

(26) chaMd prithibi-r upogroho.
moon earth-GEN satellite
‘The moon is a satellite of the earth.’

2.4.2. *Inferenced uniques*

As noted above, “inferred uniques” are instances in which the speaker infers the existence of a unique referent previously unfamiliar to the speaker. In order to focus attention purely on the effects of inferencing, we deliberately restrict our attention to situations in which this inferencing is made on the basis of non-linguistic evidence and not as a result of bridging cross-reference where a linguistic link is

present in the discourse, as this may automatically cause the use of a bare classifier pattern. Applying such a restriction, it is found that non-linguistically inferenced uniques are commonly represented by means of the bare noun pattern, and not the bare classifier pattern, as illustrated in examples (27-30):

- (27) Every day on planet Varg, a security vehicle delivers one new prisoner to guards from the camp. Today the vehicle drives up, the back doors open out and no-one is inside. The guard says:
kOedi kothay?
 prisoner where
 ‘Where is the prisoner?’
- (28) A car has crashed into a tree. A team of firefighters arrive at the scene and see that the car is starting to catch fire. They are concerned about the driver of the car, who they cannot see—they fear he might still be in the car and in danger. One firefighter shouts:
 ei, Draibhar kothay? ami-to kau-ke
 hey driver where I-TOP nobody-ACC
 dekh-te pachchhi na!
 see can NEG
 ‘Hey, where’s the driver? I can’t see anyone!’
- (29) The speaker and his friend enter a building they are not familiar with. The speaker says:
 oi-to lift. chOI age choddo tOla-y jai.
 that-TOP elevator let’s before 14th floor-LOC go
 ‘The elevator is over there. Let’s go up to the 14th floor.’
- (30) The speaker is talking to a school friend:
 amra prof. Roy-er Sathe dEkha korte gechhilam,
 we Prof. Roy-GEN with meet do went
 kintu jOkhon pouchholam, dekhlam dOrja bOndho.
 but when reached saw door closed
 ‘We went to see Professor Roy, but when we arrived (there), the door was locked.’

Note that if bridging cross-reference is in fact facilitated in the context in (30) by adding in the phrase *Prof. Roy-er OfiS-e* ‘to Professor

Roy's office', this will cause a switch in representation of 'the door' from bare noun *dOrja* 'door' to the bare classifier pattern *dOrja Ta* 'door CL'. However, purely inferred uniques which are not familiar to speaker/hearer and not licensed via bridging cross-reference (or other anaphoric linking or pointing to a visible referent) are regularly represented by means of the bare noun pattern.

2.4.3. *Situational uniques*

Situational uniques are instances where speaker and hearer are aware that there is a unique referent of a certain type in a particular situation, and this is not licensed by bridging cross-reference (via the presence of a linguistic link) or visibility/pointing (which automatically causes the bare classifier pattern to occur). Such purely situational uniques are frequently represented with the bare noun pattern, as illustrated in (31-33). In other instances, which will soon be discussed and exemplified in section 3, a bare classifier pattern may occur. Here we first make the point that the bare noun pattern frequently is both acceptable and very natural for situational uniques, returning to the issue of optionality of representation form below in section 3.

- (31) Ramu and Mina are walking in a dark wood. Ramu says:
tOrch kothay? ami bhebechilam oTa
 flashlight where I thought that
 tomar backpack-e rekhechhi.
 your backpack-LOC kept
 'Where's the flashlight? I thought I put it in your backpack.'
- (32) janla ki bOndho ache?
 window Q closed is
 'Is the window closed?'
- (33) Mina: ekhane amar Ek Ta chhobi tolo.
 here I-GEN 1 CL picture pick
 'Take a photograph of me here.'

Ramu: parbo na. kEmera bheNge gEchhe.
 can neg camera broken went
 ‘I can’t. The camera is broken.’³

Having documented the regular patterns of definite reference in the primary contexts of anaphoric linking, bridging cross-reference, visibility of referent, and salient uniqueness, we will now turn to consider the roles played by several other semantic and pragmatic factors in influencing the choice of bare classifier or bare noun patterns: activation level of the referent, identifiability vs. uniqueness, and potential familiarity of the referent.

3. General semantic/pragmatic interactions in the selection of referential form

The investigation of definite reference with situational uniques, in particular, brings to light certain important factors which have a general effect on speakers’ selection of bare noun and bare classifier patterns and in various instances license optionality in the use of these forms. We first discuss the issue of referent activation level in section 3.1., then the interaction of identifiability and uniqueness in 3.2., and finally the potential role played by referent familiarity in section 3.3.

3.1. Activation (level) of the mental representation of a referent

With the class of referents referred to as “situational uniques” in 2.4.3., it is frequently possible for either a bare noun or a bare classifier pattern to occur, and the choice of one pattern over another is critically dictated by the activation level of the mental representation of the individual/entity being referred to. If a speaker is actively thinking of an entity/individual before making reference to it, the bare classifier pattern is natural. For example in the situation described in (31), the speaker might have searched for the flashlight referred to for some time before asking the hearer ‘Where’s the flashlight?’ In such a context, where the mental representation of the referent has become highly activated before actual reference to it in speech, the bare classifier pattern will occur, as illustrated in

³ Note that if the camera referred to in (33) is visible to speaker and hearer, this will cause the bare classifier pattern to occur, as regularly occurs with visible entities which are referenced.

- (34) Ramu and Mina are walking in a dark wood. After searching for a while in his bag, Ramu says:
tOrch *(Ta) kothay? ami bhebechhila^m oTa
 flashlight CL where I thought that
 tomar backpack-e rekhechhi.
 your backpack-LOC kept
 ‘Where’s the flashlight? I thought I put it in your backpack.’

However, when reference to an individual/entity is more spontaneous and without prior activation of the mental representation of the referent, it is the bare noun pattern which is naturally licensed, as in the original representation of example (31).

Similar alternations can also be seen when a possessive pronoun occurs with a noun. The noun may either occur bare, or with a classifier. The former is appropriate in instances of spontaneous reference to an entity, the latter when the entity is activated in the mind of the speaker. Example (35) represents a situation in which Speaker B has not been thinking of his phone prior to Speaker A’s question, and the natural way of expressing ‘my phone’ is with a possessor followed by a bare noun (no accompanying classifier). Example (36), where a classifier occurs with the noun and possessor to represent ‘my phone’ is more natural in a context in which the speaker has been thinking about his phone for some time prior to mentioning it.

- (35) No pre-activation of the referent ‘my phone’.

A: amake kOI kOroni kEno?
 I-ACC call do-NEG why
 ‘Why didn’t you call me?’

B: amar phon bheNge gEchhe.
 I- GEN phone break went
 ‘My phone was broken.’⁴

⁴ Note that a bare classifier form may also be possible in this context if it is used in a special pragmatic way to communicate speaker affection toward the referent (‘the phone’).

(36) The referent ‘my phone’ is significantly activated in mind of speaker prior to utterance time.

dhur, kichchhu bhalo lagchhe na. amar phon Ta bheNge gEchhe.
 argh, nothing good feel NEG I-GEN phone CLbreak went
 ‘I’m in such a bad mood. My phone is broken.’

3.2. Uniqueness and identifiability

Different conditions on the use of bare noun and bare classifier patterns are imposed with regard to the properties of *uniqueness* and *identifiability*. When a bare noun occurs, it must be true that there is one and only one referent of the type referred to by the noun present in the situation or context under discussion, i.e., bare nouns can only refer to elements that are unique in the context being referred to (or a wider, global context). This is not necessarily the case with the bare classifier form, which instead imposes the weaker condition that a referent represented by a bare classifier form must be identifiable/identified in the mind of the speaker/hearer, as noted in (37).

(37) Uniqueness/identifiability conditions on the use of bare noun and bare classifier patterns

(i) A definite bare noun must be the unique instantiation of the type referred to by the noun in the context under discussion.

(ii) Use of a bare classifier pattern requires that the entity/individual being referred to be identified in the mind of speaker/hearer. Such a referent need not necessarily be the unique element of the type referred to by the noun in the context under discussion.

As a first illustration of the effects of (37), we can compare the earlier example (32), repeated below as (38), with its variant form in (39). In (38) the speaker makes reference to ‘the window’ with a bare noun pattern and this will only be felicitous in a context in which there is a single window in the structure where the speaker and hearer are located. If a bare classifier pattern is used to represent ‘the window’, as in (39), by way of contrast, there may be multiple windows in the structure where the speaker makes the utterance. However, in order for the bare classifier pattern to be felicitous, the speaker and hearer must know which window of all those present is being referred to—it must be identified in the mind of speaker/hearer:

(38) janla ki bOndho ache?
window Q closed is
'Is the window closed?'

(39) janla Ta ki bOndho ache?
window CL Q close is
'Is the window closed?'

Example (40) illustrates this further when a possessive adjective combines with a bare noun and a bare classifier pattern in two similar examples. In a context where the hearer is known to own multiple dogs, a bare noun form cannot be combined with a possessive adjective to refer to just one of these dogs (40b). However, a bare classifier sequence together with a possessor is legitimate in such a context, provided speaker and hearer know which of the multiple dogs is being referred to due to other aspects of the context (40a). Note that if there had been especially recent reference to the dog in question, and it was highly activated in the mind of the speaker and hearer, it would also be possible to use a bare classifier form in (40) without a possessor (i.e., *kukur Ta*), but not a bare noun form (*kukur*).

- (40) The hearer has three dogs. One of them was recently sick and needed some medicine from the vet. The speaker asks:
- a. tomar kukur Ta Ekhon kEmon achhe? bhalo hoe gEchhe?
your dog CL now how is good be went
'How's the dog/your dog now? Is he better yet?'
- b. #tomar kukur Ekhon kEmon ache? bhalo hoe gEchhe?
your dog now how is good be went
Intended: 'How's the dog/your dog now? Is he better yet?'

Similar patterns occur in (41-43). (41) and (42) are both unacceptable because a bare classifier pattern is used when the context strongly suggests that the hearer cannot identify the referent of the noun ('the tire' in (41), 'the arm' in (42)), hence the criterion of identifiability which regulates the use of a bare classifier pattern fails.⁵

⁵ Similarly, in contexts where there are multiple referents of the same type (body parts, wheels on a bicycle, etc.), and the particular entity being referred to is made identifiable by other explicit lexical specifications, the criterion of identifiability will be satisfied and a bare classifier pattern is accepted. For example, if the tire referred to in a situation such as (41) is specified being the 'back tire,' or the hand mentioned

- (41) #kalke ami jOkhon amar saikel-e chorChhilam,
 yesterday I when my bicycle-LOC was-riding
chaka Ta phuTo hoe gElo.
 tire CL puncture be went
 Intended: ‘When I was on my bicycle last night, the tire got
 a puncture.’

- (42) Doctor: onar ki hoechhe?
 he-GEN what happened
 ‘What’s his injury?’

Nurse: #hat Ta kata porechhe.
 hand CL cut dropped
 Intended: #‘The arm fell off.’

Contrasting with (42) above, example (43) shows that if speaker and hearer know which of a person’s multiple body parts (legs, hands, eyes, etc.) a speaker is specifically referring to (perhaps as the result of previous discussion or knowledge of an injury sustained by the hearer), use of a bare classifier is acceptable and licensed (and a bare noun pattern would not be possible, due to lack of uniqueness).

- (43) The speaker knows that the hearer has sustained an injury in a particular knee.

haNTu Ta kEmon achhe? haNTte OSubidhe hochchhe na to?
 knee CL how is walking trouble be NEG PRT
 ‘How’s the knee? Can you walk ok?’

Such bare classifier cases are reminiscent of examples such as (44) in English, commented on in Lyons (1999), where the definite article may be used in a situation in which reference is made to an element which is not necessarily the *unique* instantiation of the noun used in the context under discussion, but where aspects of the context allow the hearer to *identify* which of a set of multiple elements of a particular type is being referred to.

in a context such as (42) is specified as the ‘right hand,’ a bare classifier pattern is accepted. We thank an anonymous reviewer for adding this information. Note that, when the criterion of identifiability is satisfied, these constructions are comparable to cases of definiteness by association and bridging cross-reference (11/12), where a bare classifier pattern is accepted.

- (44) In a hallway where there are four doors and these are all closed. The speaker is dressed in a coat and a hat and has a suitcase in hand, ready to go out. Only one door leads outside the house. ‘Open the door for me please.’ (Lyons 1999)

We will return to the activation and identification conditions and uniqueness shortly in section 4, after first considering the potential role of *familiarity* in the alternation between bare noun and bare classifier patterns.

3.3. The potential role of familiarity in bare noun/bare classifier alternations

Studies of definite determiner choice in other languages have sometimes suggested that familiarity of the referent to speaker/hearer may play an important role in selecting one mode of representation over another (see especially Arkoh and Matthewson 2013 on Akan). In Bangla, there are indications that familiarity may also play a certain role in alternations between bare noun and bare classifier patterns.

Personal familiarity with the referent can be noted to act as a clear influence on the choice of referential form in examples (45) and (46). In definite reference to a newly-born child (‘the baby’), which is not yet familiar to its parents or to others, a bare noun pattern is natural (45), whereas reference to the same infant when it has become familiar to those around it more naturally results in the use of a bare classifier pattern (46).

- (45) A pregnant woman is rushed to hospital to give birth to her child. The husband arrives much later. When he gets to the delivery room, a nurse comes out from the room and says to the husband:

(apnar) bachcha 11.53-e jonmechhe.

your baby 11.53-LOC was.born

chele hoyechhe, 7lb ojon.

boy be 7lb weight

‘The baby was born at 11.53. It’s a boy and he weighs 7 pounds.’

- (46) The parent of a baby comes to collect it from a nursery where it is regularly cared for by others. When the parent arrives, the nursery care-giver says:

(apnar) bachcha Ta kaNdchhe.
 your baby CL crying
 ‘The baby is crying.’

Examples (47) and (48) present two other sets of contexts in which familiarity is a factor distinguishing between the use of a bare noun and a bare classifier pattern. In (47), if the speaker is a guest staying in the hearer Mina’s house, and unfamiliar with this house and its contents, it is natural for a bare noun rather than a bare classifier pattern to be used to refer to ‘the door’ and ‘the key,’ as in (47a). However, if the speaker is the hearer’s husband and familiar with the house and ‘the door’ and ‘the key,’ a bare classifier pattern may naturally occur instead, as in (47b):

- (47) a. ‘Mina dOrja bOndho, chabi kothay?’
 Mina door closed key where
 ‘Mina, the door is locked. Where is the key?’
- b. ‘Mina dOrja Ta bOndho, chabi Ta kothay?’
 Mina door CL closed key where
 ‘Mina, the door is locked. Where is the key?’

A similar patterning occurs in (48). If the speaker’s question ‘Where’s the car?’ occurs in a context where the hearer has come to pick the speaker up from an airport, and the speaker infers that the hearer has brought a car to the airport, but the speaker is not familiar with the car, a bare noun pattern is appropriate (48a). However, if this exchange occurs between a husband and wife familiar with the car, a bare classifier pattern may be used:

- (48) a. gaRi kothay?
 car where
 ‘Where’s the car?’
- b. gaRi Ta kothay?
 car CL where
 ‘Where’s the car?’

Two additional points need to be made here. First, while the bare classifier pattern may be the natural form for speakers to use in certain

instances where a referent is familiar to the speaker/hearer, it is not the case that use of a bare classifier pattern always implies personal familiarity of the speaker/hearer with an entity/individual prior to the speech time. In examples such as (49) below, the referent and its identity are not known to either speaker or hearer, and yet a bare classifier pattern is most natural, licensed directly by the relation of anaphoric reference.

- (49) Ram kalke Ek Ta goru bikri korechhe.
 Ram yesterday one CL cow sell did
 SOBai bolchhe goru Ta naki OSuStho chhilo.
 everyone is.saying cow CL PRT sick was
 ‘Ram sold a cow yesterday. They say that the cow was not healthy.’

Second, in contexts such as (47) and (48) where both the speaker and the hearer are familiar with the entities being referred to (‘the door,’ ‘the key,’ and ‘the car’), the speaker will not always make use of a bare classifier pattern, and a bare noun pattern is also possible. What dictates the selection of one pattern over another here, where the speaker and the hearer are familiar with the referent is the state of activation of the referent in the speaker’s mind. If the entities referred to are currently activated in the mind of the speaker, a bare classifier pattern will occur, while if reference to these elements is more spontaneous, corresponding to a sudden thought of ‘the key,’ ‘the car,’ etc., then speakers will naturally produce a bare noun form, as in (47a/48a). The effect of familiarity with situational uniques is therefore that a lack of speaker/hearer familiarity with a referent commonly results in use of a bare noun form, while the presence of familiarity with a referent permits either bare noun or bare classifier forms, depending on the current state of activation of the referent in the speaker’s mind at the time of speech.

4. Integrating the results: analysis and conclusions

With the discussion of uniqueness, identifiability, referent activation, and familiarity set out in section 3, and the documentation of contexts regularly licensing bare classifier/bare noun patterns made earlier in section 2, we are now in a position to put all of these pieces

of the bare noun/classifier paradigm together, summarizing what has been established and indicating how the various factors and constraints on definite reference interact with each other in Bangla, and how the system in Bangla relates to other languages with complex ways of representing definiteness.

First, we can now reconfirm (adding illustrative example numbers) what the set of environments is which regularly triggers the use of bare classifier or bare noun patterns, or alternatively allows for certain optionality of the form speakers use. Bare classifier patterns regularly occur in the contexts listed in (50):

(50) CONTEXTS RESULTING IN THE USE OF BARE CLASSIFIER PATTERNS

[1]Anaphoric definite reference.

A referent introduced in the discourse will automatically be referred back to with a bare classifier pattern. (5-7)

[2]Emphasized visibility and pointing to a referent.

A referent is identified due to its salient visible presence in a situation, and/or when the speaker points out the presence of the referent. This naturally causes the bare classifier pattern to occur. (16-20)

[3]Bridging cross-reference/definiteness by association.

The mental representation of an entity/individual is established by means of a link to some other referent present in the discourse, resulting in use of the bare classifier pattern. (12-13)

Bare noun patterns are found to occur regularly in the other contexts listed in (51):

(51) SITUATIONS RESULTING IN THE USE OF BARE NOUN PATTERNS

[1] Inferred uniques

The speaker makes an inference that a unique entity/individual of a certain type exists in the context on the basis of non-linguistic information, and this results in use of the bare noun pattern. Such contexts contrast with instances of bridging cross-reference, where the presence of an overt linguistic link causes a bare classifier pattern to occur. (27-30)

[2]+Respected human referents

If a referent is human and accorded respect, this combination of properties results in regular use of bare noun forms, and commonly over-rides otherwise normal patterns found in instances of anaphoric linking and visual reference, which trigger the use of bare classifier forms. (8)

Certain optionality in the selection of either bare noun or bare classifier forms is found in the contexts described in (52).

(52) SITUATIONS PERMITTING EITHER BARE CLASSIFIER OR BARE NOUN PATTERNS

[1] Situationally assumed/presupposed, non-visible referents

Reference is made to an entity/individual known to exist to speaker/hearer and expected to be present in the context, but which is not visible. A bare noun form will be selected if the mental representation of the referent is not activated at time of utterance (31-33). A bare classifier pattern will occur if the mental representation of the referent is significantly activated at time of utterance (34).

[2] Global uniques

Bare noun forms occur in generic statements (26), bare classifier patterns in episodic predicates with referents that are unique in a global context (24-25).

The general semantic properties of bare noun and bare classifier patterns have been observed to be as noted in (53).

(53) SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF DEFINITE BARE NOUNS AND BARE CLASSIFIER PATTERNS

Bare nouns in their definite interpretations can only be used to refer to an entity/individual which is the **unique** instantiation of the noun in the context of the utterance.

Bare classifier forms need not refer to an entity/individual which is contextually unique, but the entity/individual referred to by such forms must be **identified/identifiable**.

In connection with the different properties of bare nouns and bare classifier patterns indicated in (53), it can be noted that it is possible for a referent to be contextually unique but not identified/identifiable. An example of such a combination of properties occurred in (27), repeated below as (54).

- (54) Every day on planet Varg, a vehicle delivers one new prisoner to an internment camp. Today the vehicle drives up, the doors open out and no-one is inside. The guard says:
kOedi kothay?
 prisoner where
 ‘Where is the prisoner?’

It is also possible for a referent to be identified/identifiable but not contextually unique. This combination of properties occurred in examples such as (32), repeated below as (55).

- (55) janla Ta ki bOndho achhe?
 window CL Q closed is
 ‘Is the window closed?’

The properties of being +/-unique and +/-identifiable/identified are therefore independent of each other and may occur in different combinations, expressed by different overt patterns.

The observation that speakers frequently make use of bare nouns to represent referents that are situationally unique raises the following question about the connection of bare nouns to uniqueness. If a referent is indeed contextually unique, is it necessary for it to be represented with a bare noun in Bangla? The answer to this question is “no.” If a referent is contextually unique but also identifiable/identified, it can potentially be represented with a bare classifier pattern, as in examples such as (47b), repeated below.

- (56) ‘Mina dorja Ta bOndho, chabi Ta kothay?’
 Mina door CL closed key CL where
 ‘Mina, the door is locked. Where is the key?’

A second, related question concerns the connection of the property of identifiability and use of bare classifier form. If a referent has the property of being identifiable/identified, is it the case that it must

be represented with a bare classifier pattern? Here again the answer is “no,” and despite the frequent use of bare classifier patterns with referents that are identified in the minds of the speaker/hearer, such referents can sometimes be represented with a bare noun, if they are contextually or globally unique, as seen in examples such as (48a) and (26), repeated below as (57) and (58).

(57) gaRi kothae?
car where
‘Where’s the car?’

(58) chaMd prithibi-r upogroho.
moon earth-GEN satellite
‘The moon is a satellite of the earth.’

The commonly significant uniqueness property of bare nouns, and the identifiability property of bare classifier forms are therefore minimal *base conditions* for the use of such patterns. If such base conditions are satisfied, the relevant form is licensed to occur, but does not necessarily have to be made use of. In many instances, a referent may be both identifiable and unique, so either form is in principle licensed, and the choice of one form over another depends on a further important factor, the *level of activation of the mental representation of the referent*. Where there is a high level of activation, this naturally results in the use of a bare classifier form, whereas a low level of activation will cause the use of a bare noun pattern. Instances of anaphoric definite reference, pointing to a referent and bridging cross-reference are all contexts in which there is high activation of the mental representation of an entity/individual, and consequently result in very strong pressure to use the bare classifier pattern, accounting for the almost automatic use of bare classifier forms in these types of context. The activation level of a referent is therefore a property which has very significant effects on the representation of definite individuals and entities in Bangla, and is one which is formally independent of the uniqueness and the identifiability of the referent. It characterizes the current state of referents whose uniqueness and identifiability is otherwise determined, and does not alter such properties.⁶

⁶ The issue of activation levels of definite referents has not been discussed in detail in existing literature, to the best of our knowledge, though there is useful

Understanding fully how speakers of Bangla make regular, differentiated use of two types of representations for definite referents consequently requires one to realize that there is a complex interaction of different factors in the choice of surface form. First, the variable properties of uniqueness and identifiability of a referent in different combinations (+/-unique, +/-identifiable) will restrict and make certain representational forms available in principle, as the base conditions for use of bare classifier and bare noun patterns are satisfied, or not. Then the degree to which the mental representation of a referent is presently accessible to a speaker will act as a filter on the choices available, further promoting or restricting these possibilities, and resulting in the alternations actually found in Bangla speakers' discourse. Ultimately, then, the important conclusion is reached that *no single property in isolation* is responsible for the way that definite reference is regularly realized in Bangla, and it is only through investigating the *interaction of multiple relevant factors* that it is possible to see why speakers make the representational choices they naturally do in everyday speech.

Two final issues now remain to be commented on. First, we should ask what consequences and insights the study of Bangla may offer for the broader investigation and analysis of definiteness across languages, and why definite entities in certain languages may be represented in different overt ways. Second, with regard to Bangla, we need to ask whether the interaction of semantic and discourse factors described above on the basis of the data reviewed in sections 2-3 successfully accounts for all instances of variation in the use of bare classifier and bare noun patterns, or whether there are any departures from the basic system with alternations that are not regulated by such constraints.

relevant discussion in Gundel *et al.* (1993) and Lambrecht (1994). The Givenness Hierarchy (Gundel *et al.* 1993) includes an "Activated" state as a particular cognitive state available for the representation of definiteness in discourse representations. This state, where the referent is represented in current short-term memory, is ranked higher than other states associated with "unique identifiability" or "familiarity," and the "Activated" state is suggested to entail all lower states in the Givenness Hierarchy. This account predicts, in the case of languages that have definite articles, that an activated entity can be referred to with a definite article if the referent is identifiable from the context, and an indefinite article can be used to refer to an activated entity if the referent is unique in the context. Cross-linguistically, the different states described in the Givenness Hierarchy are associated with the use of different referential expressions. In general, the most activated entity is referred to by proximal or distal demonstratives. Lambrecht (1994) also discusses "activation" to be related to consciousness of the referent. In this work, such a notion is discussed in reference to a Topic Activation Scale. Higher levels of activation increase the likelihood of the accessibility of a referent as a topic.

Regarding the second question, it can be noted that there is in fact one particular set of definite nominals in Bangla whose representation by means of bare noun/classifier forms patterns in a way that is rather different from what has been described in the paper so far. What the investigation presented in the bulk of the paper has concentrated on is the representation of definite referents occurring in primary argument positions—as subjects and objects—and these cases are indeed governed by the principles discussed. However, when definite nominals are further embedded in oblique locative constructions, and encode the location or goal of the action of the verb, there is increased use of the bare noun pattern in ways which relate to the degree to which the referent may or may not be viewed as a natural physical location or goal of directed motion. As such cases appear to follow a rather different patterning from the core cases of noun phrases in primary argument positions, they will not be discussed here, but are documented in the Appendix to this article, and clearly deserve further examination. A second, more restricted alternation that the article's main proposals and analysis also do not cover is the use of bare nouns in generic reference to global uniques, as in example (26), as opposed to the use of bare classifier forms with episodic reference to the same entities (24-25). It is not clear how the difference in representation in generic vs. episodic contexts might be made to follow from the general constraints on bare noun/classifier use described in this article, or whether it should be treated as a different phenomenon. This will also need to be an area of investigation for further research.

Concerning the issue of the potentially broader, cross-linguistic consequences of the Bangla patterns and their analysis, we can note that the fine distinctions observed to occur in the representation of definite nominals in Bangla provide additional useful perspective on the much discussed general topic of definiteness and how such a property should be defined and conceived of in different languages. Analyses of definiteness in languages such as English with a single definite article have often been controversial due to the conflicting information which is associated with the overt marking of definiteness (Donnellan 1966, Hawkins 1978, Heim 1982, Roberts 2003). As Lyons (1999) has pointed out, use of the definite determiner 'the' is sometimes attributed to *uniqueness* and sometimes to *identifiability*, and researchers have argued about which property should be taken to define the notion of definiteness. The patterns presented

here from Bangla show that both uniqueness and identifiability are highly relevant for the notion of definiteness in distinct ways and are canonically represented by different surface forms. This empirical patterning in Bangla consequently adds support to the contention presented in Lyons (1999) and elsewhere that definiteness is a complex notion, and definite articles such as English ‘the’ may collapse and confuse the representation of two properties which the present study shows are more clearly separated out in Bangla. Intriguingly, the distinct uses of definite bare nouns and bare classifiers in Bangla also show strong parallels with the uses of different definite articles in varieties of Germanic such as Fering, and other languages with more than one means to represent “definite” entities/individuals (e.g., Akan, Lakhota, Hausa). This demonstrates that a classifier language such as Bangla which has neither definite or indefinite determiners is interestingly able to adapt another aspect of its functional inventory (the presence/absence of a classifier with a noun) to achieve highly similar results in the representation of different components of definiteness, suggesting that such referential complexity is significantly shared across languages at an underlying level, and simply realized by different overt mechanisms. Finally, the investigation of Bangla highlights the important role that referent accessibility and activation may play in the selection of different modes of representation of definite referents, in a way that has not been so reported in other languages with multiple definite determiner forms such as Fering.⁷ Though not specifically detected as a force influencing determiner choice in Fering, we believe that referent activation is a phenomenon which now merits more careful control and attention in studies of definiteness-marking and that it may turn out to have significance for the selection of variant modes of definite reference in languages other than Bangla.

Appendix: Definite entities occurring as locations and goals

Nouns which may naturally occur with a classifier in subject or object position in the bare classifier pattern may often behave differently when occurring as a location or as a goal of motion marked

⁷ Though see some discussion of differences between German and Akan in Arkoh and Matthewson (2013) which relate to how recent a referent must have been mentioned for it to allow for a certain kind of definiteness-marking.

with the postposition *-e* ‘to, in’. The complex patterns found when nouns/NPs combine with *-e* vary according to whether a noun is viewed as being a proto-typical location or not. Three types of noun can be distinguished with regard to the proto-typical location property and its effects on the representation of definite referents, as follows. First of all, when a noun is naturally conceived of as a location either towards which some movement may occur, or near/in which some entity may be positioned, as for example a building (‘hotel,’ ‘station’) or a room in a house (‘kitchen,’ ‘bathroom’), then a bare noun form is typically used in instances of definite reference when the noun represents the goal of some directed motion, or the location of some entity or action combined with *-e* ‘to; in’. Second, when a noun is *not* conceived of as a common reference point for the location of some entity or action (for example, the noun represents a person), it is found that a bare classifier pattern typically occurs, if the noun is temporarily presented as a location. In a third patterning, there are nouns such as ‘table’ and ‘chair’ which can be relatively easily viewed as locations for the positioning of objects, but which do not appear to be *primarily* conceived of as locations. Such nouns display an intermediate behavior, and a bare noun form commonly occurs when there is reference to the static location of objects relative to them, but a bare classifier form is more regularly used when they represent the goal of some directed motion. These three types of patterning are summarized in (59).

(59) Definite nouns combined with *-e* and the occurrence of bare noun/classifier patterns

Noun Type	Type A: nouns primarily viewed as locations	Type B: nouns primarily viewed as objects/individuals, not locations	Type C: nouns that can be conceived of as locations
Examples	bathroom, kitchen, hotel, station...	policeman, soldier, tiger, dog...	table, chair...
As the static location of an entity	bare noun	bare classifier pattern	bare noun
As the goal of some directed motion	bare noun	bare classifier pattern	bare classifier pattern

Illustration of some of the patterns observed is given in examples (60-63).

- (60) Mina: Ramu kothae? Gita: bathroom (*Ta)-e.
 Ramu where bathroom (*CL)-LOC
 Mina: ‘Where’s Ramu?’ Gita: ‘He’s in the bathroom.’
- (61) aj library (*Ta)-te ami amar bone-r Sathe dekha korlam.
 today library (CL)-LOC I my sister-GENwith meet did
 ‘Today I met my sister in the library.’
- (62) During a magic show in Las Vegas, a magician gives instructions to an audience volunteer/member of the audience:
 ekhane Ek Ta Tebil ar Ek Ta chear achhe. onugroho-kore
 here 1 CL table and 1 CL chair be please
 Tebil Ta-e Ek Ta boi ar chear Ta-e Ek Ta glas rakhun.
 tebil CL-LOC 1 CL book and chair CL-LOC 1 CL glass put
 ‘Here is a table and a chair. Please put a book on the table, and put a glass on the chair.’
- (63) gOtokal puliS rel station-er kache Ek Ta gari
 yesterday police rail station-GEN near 1 CL car
 ar EkTa Trak khuje pae gaRi Ta-te EkTa boma chhilo
 and 1 CL truck find get car CL-LOC 1 CL bomb was
 ar Trak Ta-te onek bonduk chhilo.
 and truck CL-LOC many gun was
 ‘Yesterday the police found a car and a truck near the train station. There was a bomb in the car and many guns in the truck.’

We will not attempt to probe this paradigm further here. To some extent the patterns found with definite locational/goal PPs are reminiscent of the phenomenon of *differential object-marking* in certain languages, where it is observed that the less likely a referent is to be an object, the more likely it is to be marked with case (Aissen 2003). In Bangla, it is observed that the less likely a noun is to be viewed as a typical location or goal, the more likely it is to occur with a classifier in the bare classifier pattern with *-e*. Alternatively, one might argue that it is the bare classifier pattern that is actually anticipated to occur with activated definite locations, and what is unexpected and therefore in need of some special explanation is the

use of a bare noun with referents such as ‘the hotel,’ ‘the bathroom,’ etc. in similar contexts.⁸ Investigating this topic will be the subject of a future study.

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⁸ Note that when proto-typical locational nouns occur in subject and object positions, they pattern just like other nouns, combining with classifiers in the bare classifier pattern, hence their special, puzzling behavior only surfaces when they appear specifically as locations and goals.

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