Additive and Associative Plural marking in Jamiekan

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In this paper, we show that plural marking in Jamaican Creole (hereafter referred to as Jamiekan) is sensitive not only to definiteness but also to the proper/common distinction. Specifically we show that plural marking on common definite nominals is construed as additive while plural marking on proper nominals is construed as associative, thus lending support to the idea that [proper] is a feature in D (Ghomeshi & Massam 2009).

   The word *dem* in Jamiekan is a multifunctional word which can function as the third person plural pronoun and also as a plural marker. This is shown in (1a) below, where the nominal phrase with which *dem* is construed is definite. In (1b) we see that *dem* does not occur with quantifiers or numerals and in (1c) we see that bare nouns can be construed as plural, i.e. have general number. Thus Jamiekan patterns with languages like Kambera (an Austronesian language) and Basque in marking number only on definite nominals (Corbett 2001:278-9)

1. a) di likl bad-brok pikni **dem**   c) pikni   iina di yaad
        DET little ill-mannered child   3PL   children in   DET yard
        'the little misbehaving children'   'children are in the yard'

   b) som/chrii likl bad-brok pikni (* **dem**)
       some/three little ill-mannered child   3PL
       'some/three little misbehaving children'

   In the examples above, *dem* is an additive plural, meaning that in (1a) it refers to a set where every member is a child. Jamiekan also has an associative plural construction in which a proper name is followed by *dem* to pick out not a set of people with that name but a set of people *associated* with the named individual (Durrleman-Tame 2008, Patrick 2004). Thus *Jan dem* means 'John and people associated with him such as his family and friends.' Cross-linguistically, associative plurals typically occur with proper names and sometimes also titles and kinship terms. It is not unusual for languages to use the same form for both additive and associative plurals (see Daniel and Moravcsik 2013) and in these cases the difference in interpretation of the plural marker has been linked to where it is merged. Specifically, it has been proposed that the associative is merged above DP and the additive below (see Nakanishi & Ritter 2009 for Japanese, Görgülü 2011 for Turkish).

   In line with this approach we propose that the interpretation of plural marking is defined not only in relation to D, but to the *kind* of D a nominal expression contains. Thus we assume that proper names are DPs containing a null singular definite determiner specified as [proper] (Ghomeshi & Massam 2009) and in combination with this feature *dem* contributes an associative reading. This predicts that where a name is used with a common determiner, the marker *dem* will be interpreted as additive, not associative, which is confirmed in examples such as the following:

2. di Jan dem tingk se   dem braita   dan evribadi els
    DET John 3PL think REL 3PL brighter than everybody else
    'The John's believe that they are smarter than everyone else.'

Our proposal highlights the interaction between the feature [proper] and plural marking in a way that has not yet been explored. In the paper we show the implications of this interaction for the associative reading of first and second person pronouns as well.

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