Articles in Rutul

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Rutul (Lezgic, East Caucasian), as other East Caucasian languages, is considered not to have any articles. There are contexts, however, in which numeral *sa* 'one' is functionally close to indefinite article and demonstratives *mi* 'this', *ha* 'that' and *ti* 'yonder' are functionally close to definite articles (the same is described for Archi (Kibrik 1977: 333) and Aghul (Ганенков и др. 2009)). The main goal of this study is to find whether they really can be called articles.

The study was carried out on texts collected in Kina village (Dagestan, Russia) during field sessions in 2016-2018 years and on elicited data.

Becker (2018: 45-58) gives criteria of distinguishing articles from similar categories: indefinite article from numeral 'one' and definite articles from a demonstrative.

According to Becker (2018: 56), there are four functions a numeral 'one'/indefinite article might have: (i) quantification, individuation; (ii) presentational, (iii) specific, (iv) nonspecific. If an item cannot encode specific or nonspecific elements, it is considered a numeral (or a numeral with an extended usage, if it also appears in presentational contexts), otherwise it is considered an article. Rutul *sa* 'one' is found in all four functions.

(i)   quantification, individuation

(1)   *ha-d*   **sa**   **edemi-je-d**   *gʷalaχ*   *diš,*   *ha-d*
     that-ATTR   one   man-OBL-ATTR   work   NO   that-ATTR
     xib-dɨ   *juqʼ-dɨ*   *edemi-je-d*   *gʷalaχ*   *w-iʔi*
     three-ATTR   four-ATTR   man-OBL-ATTR   work   3-COP1
     'It is not one man's job, it is a job for three-four people.'

(2)   *qʼʷaʕ-r χɨnɨχ*   *χa-ni*   *d-iʔi,*   **sa**   **χɨnχ-i-d**
     two-1 child   ASIDE.be-CVB   HPL-COP1   one   child-OBL-ATTR
     juqʼu-d   *sen*   *xu-d*   *sen=kal-dɨ*   *jiʔi,*   **sa=xa**
     four-4   year   five-4   year=SIMIL-ATTR   1.COP1   one=ADD
     tʼitʼ-e-χda   *gi-d,*   *kʼaʔ-dɨ*   *jiʔi*
     nipple-OBL-SUB   UNDER.be-ATTR   small-ATTR   1.COP1
     'There were two children: one was four-five years old, another was a nursing baby.'

(ii)   presentational

(3)   *nikʼalaj*   *waχt-inde*   *daʁɨstan-d-e*   **sa**   **ɢačaχ** *jiʔi-j*
     tsarist   time-TEMP   Dagestan-OBL-IN   one   outlaw 1.COP1-PST
     'In the Tsar times, there lived an outlaw in Dagestan.'

(iii)   specific

(4)   *salatʼ*   *hiši-r*   *iz-dɨ* *sus-u*
     interested   1.become.PFV-CVB   I-ATTR daughter.in.law-SUP
     sa   **mad-dɨ**
     one   other-ATTR
     'Another person has fallen for my daughter-in-law.'

(iv)   nonspecific

(5)   *gʷalaχ w-aʔa-r=a*   *sa   tike   xɨw-a-d*   *badana*
        job   3-do.IPFV-CVB=be   one   piece   bread-OBL-ATTR   for
        '(They) did a job to get a piece of bread.'

Becker distinguishes two types of articles that can encode indefinite referents: indefinite articles and presentational articles. *sa* is used in presentational contexts far more often than in the other ones (26 presentational contexts, 4 specific and 5 nonspecific), therefore *sa* should be considered a presentational article.

For demonstratives, Becker (2018: 47) establishes three possible functions: (i) deixis, (ii) anaphora, (iii) uniqueness. Only items that can encode uniqueness are considered articles. Rutul demonstratives are found in the first two functions but cannot encode unique entities.

(i)   deixis

(6)   **mi**   **muˤɢʷ** ɢina   w-iʔi,   **ha**   **muˤɢʷ** luček   w-iʔi,   **ti**   **muˤɢʷ**
        this   village K.   3-COP1 that   village L.   3-COP1 yonder village
        amsar   w-iʔi
        A.   3-COP1
        'This village is Kina, that village is Luchek, that village that is further is Amsar'.

(ii)   anaphora

(7)   *w-iʔi-d*   ***awtobus-a***   *s-ü<d>qʼu-r=a*
        3-come.IPFV-ATTR   bus-IN   PV-<HPL>sit.PFV-CVB=be
        a-ni   d-iʔi   *qʼʷaˤ-r ӡihil-er<...>*   *ӡihil   gada=xa*
        be-CVB HPL-COP1   two-H   young-PL   young   guy=ADD
        mi   uː   šuw   hakʼa-r=a   ***mi***   ***awtobus-a***
        this   above   what   4.hold.IPFV-CVB=be   this   bus-IN
        χi-ʁ-iχi-d   *hiši-r=a*
        PV-PV-1.stand.PFV-ATTR   1.become.PFV-CVB=be

        'In the moving bus there were two young people. <...> Young man stood in this bus, holding on to this thing above him.'

(iii)   uniqueness

(8)   *#muˤɢʷ-a*   *hile   w-iʔi   ha   mazdik?*
        village-IN   where   3-COP1 that   mosque
        'Where is the mosque in this village?' (Comment of the speaker: it means that it was previously spoken about the mosque)

Therefore, demonstratives should not be considered as articles in Rutul. However, there are some other tests that should be carried out to make a solid conclusion, such as bridging contexts (in terms of Evans, Wilkins 1998).

References

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