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ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-50427>
Book Section

Originally published at:

Pomino, N (2011). Number mismatches within the Italo Romance DP. In: Stark, E; Pomino, N. Proceedings of the V NEREUS International Workshop «Mismatches in Romance». Konstanz: Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft Universität Konstanz, 75-94.

Number Mismatches within the Italo-Romance DP

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1. Introduction and short overview

Plural and its formal marking in Romance is especially interesting for at least two reasons under a morphosyntactic point of view: On the one hand, Romance languages and varieties have different morphological processes for marking plural number on nominal categories, such as vowel alternation (e.g. It. *cas-a* ‘house’ vs. *cas-e* ‘houses’), sigmatic plural marking (e.g. Sp. *casa* ‘house’ vs. *casa-s* ‘houses’), addition of a vowel (e.g. Rom. *scaun* ‘chair’ vs. *scaun-e* ‘chairs’), substitution of the final syllable (e.g. Fr. *journal* [ʒur.nal] ‘newspaper’ vs. *journaux* [ʒur.no] ‘newspapers’) etc. (cf. Geckeler 1976, 1986 for a detailed overview). On the other hand, Romance languages and varieties show different “syntagmatic patterns” of plural marking within a “minimal DP”, which might consist, e.g., of a determiner, an adjective and a noun (D-A-N or D-N-A). Relating to this, we can distinguish four different patterns: In Standard Spanish, Standard Italian and Standard Portuguese, plural is marked on each of the three elements of the minimal DP, i.e. there is *full plural marking* (cf. (1a)). Other Romance languages and varieties, for example Maritime Provençal (MP) in (1b), allow *multiple* but not full plural marking, i.e. one out of the three elements (here: the noun) remains unmarked for plural. There are also cases of *simple plural marking* within the DP, where plural is formally marked only once, like, for example, in the variety spoken in Villafranca (Lunigiana, Italy) (cf. (1c)). And finally, cases can also be found where plural is not marked at all, but the whole DP receives nevertheless a plural interpretation (cf. the example (1d) of the variety spoken in Licciana).

(1) Syntagmatic plural marking in Romance (D-A-N or D-N-A)

(a) Type I: Full plural marking

Sp. l-a-s chic-a-s guap-a-s
det-F-PL girl-F-PL beautiful-F-PL
‘the beautiful girls’

It. l-e bell-e ragazz-e
det-F.PL beautiful-F.PL girl-F.PL
‘the beautiful girls’

Prt. a-s minin-a-s bonit-a-s
det.F-PL girl-F-PL beautiful-F-PL
‘the beautiful girls’

(b) Type II: Multiple plural marking

MP l-ei bell-ei fih-o
det-PL beautiful-PL girl-F
‘the beautiful girls’

(Blanchet 1999:89)

(c) Type III: Simple plural marking

Vill. l-a bēl-ĭ-a skarp-a
det-F.SG beautiful-PL-F shoe-F.SG
‘the beautiful shoes’

(Loporcaro 1994:37)

(d) Type IV: Zero plural marking

Licc. l-a bèl-a krav-a
det-F.SG beautiful-F.SG goat-F.SG
‘the beautiful goats’ (also: ‘the beautiful goat’)

(Rohlf's 1949:45)

The kind of agreement in (1a) and similarly the one in (1b) are conceived as redundant (cf. “[c]anonical agreement is redundant rather than informative” Corbett 2006:11, based on Moravcsik 1988:90), which means that there is a mismatch between morphosyntax and semantics, because plural even though formally marked several times is interpreted only once for the whole DP. The syntagmatic pattern in (1d) can also be understood as an example of a mismatch between morphosyntax and semantics, which is, however, of a different kind: The DP may receive a plural interpretation, but none of the DP-elements is formally marked for plural. The only case where morphosyntax and semantics seem to directly map is the pattern in (1c); here plural is interpreted only once for the whole DP and it is also marked only once within the DP. However, taking full plural agreement within the DP as the norm for Romance languages, we may also say that there is a case of mismatch in cases like the one in (1c), because one element marked for plural is combined with DP-elements which apparently appear in their singular form, internal agreement thus being defective.

This paper is part of a larger project (cf. Pomino forthcoming) which aims, on the one hand, at finding the triggering factors behind such cases of lack of plural marking or plural agreement, and, on the other hand, at providing a unified analysis of these different patterns. Due to limited space, the present paper is however limited to a critical discussion of several existing analyses in the literature and their possible application to the Romance varieties which have simple plural marking within the DP, i.e. varieties belonging to type III (cf. (1c)). With the exception of one variety (i.e. Afro-Yungueño, a basilect of Afro-Bolivian Spanish; cf. Lipski 2010), the varieties of type III display a lack of plural marking / agreement that is restricted to the feminine gender. But they also differ from one another with respect to whether plural is marked always on the same DP-element independently of the concrete position of the elements contained in the DP or not. In the Italo-Romance dialect of Filattiera (Fil.) (cf. (2a)), for example, the position of the adnominal adjective has no (direct) influence on plural marking within the DP, i.e. plural is always and only marked on the determiner. In contrast, in the dialect of Villafranca (Vill.) (cf. (2b)), there is simple plural marking on the adjective only if the adjective stands in prenominal position. If it appears postnominally, we still have simple plural marking, but on the noun (and no longer on the adjective).

(2) Subtypes of simple plural marking

(a) Type IIIa: e.g. Filattiera (Manzini & Savoia 2005:619)

prenominal A k-j-a 'brav-a 'dɔn-a
 dem-PL-F good-F woman-F
 ‘those good women’

postnominal A j-a s'karp-a 'ni:v-a
 det.PL-F shoe-F new-F
 ‘the new shoes’

Simple marking on D
 independently of the position
 of the adnominal adjective.

(b) Type IIIb: e.g. Villafranca (Loporcaro 1994:37)

prenominal A l-a bɛl̄-i-a skarp-a
 det-F nice-PL-F shoe-F
 ‘the nice shoes’

postnominal A l-a skarp-i-a nɔv-a
 det-F shoe-PL-F new-F
 ‘the new shoes’

Simple marking on A, if A in
 prenominal position.

Simple marking on N, if A in
 postnominal position.

Much work has been dedicated to how canonical agreement, i.e. mismatches between semantics and morphosyntax, can be formalized; less attention has been devoted instead to those instances where there is seemingly no mismatch. However, in these latter cases, we

have to ask whether morphology, syntax and/or semantics is/are responsible for the lack of number agreement. More precisely, is lack of agreement to be associated with the morphophonological status of the corresponding inflectional marker and / or of the respective category (= lack of plural marking)? Or is the partial or complete lack of agreement in these cases depending on the syntactic encoding of the relevant features and possible syntactic agreement configurations (= lack of plural agreement)? In this paper, it will be argued that lack of plural agreement can be formalized by modifying some aspects of probes (Chomsky 1998; cf. section 3.1), whereas the linear position of the plural marker is best explained by post-syntactic movement operations (cf. section 3.2).

The paper is structured as follows: In section 2, I will discuss four different analyses which have been proposed in the literature to account for lack of plural agreement and I will show why these analyses are not straightforwardly applicable to the Romance varieties at issue. In section 3, I will sketch an alternative analysis for the Italo-Romance data under investigation (cf. (2)), which shows that in these varieties there is neither a mismatch between syntax and semantics nor one between syntax and morphology. If one wants to refer to the notion of *mismatch* in these cases, we can only say that there is a mismatch between the hierarchical syntactic structure and the linear order (or the alignment) of the respective phonological material. The main hypotheses of my analysis will be summarized in section 4.

2. Existing analyses for lack of plural agreement or lack of plural marking

2.1 Lack of plural agreement due to morphological constraints

According to Ortmann (2004:231), “one main parameter that determines cross-linguistic variation with respect to plural marking within the DP is whether or not plural morphology is realized in contexts where the concept of plurality is already expressed by numerals or quantifiers”. In Standard Italian and English, for example, the presence of a numeral does not impinge on plural marking or plural agreement inside the DP (cf. *tre ragazze belle*, *three beautiful girls*). In contrast, other languages do not exhibit “redundant” plural marking in this context. In Hungarian, for example, there is an unmarked singular form and a marked plural form for nouns (e.g. *hajó* ‘ship’ vs. *hajók* ‘ships’) (cf. Ortmann 2000, 2004). However, when combined with a numeral or certain quantifiers which express plurality, the noun appears in its unmarked form, not in its plural form (cf. (3a)). Furthermore, even though adjectives can in principle bear a plural marker, e.g. in predicative function (cf. (3b)), attributive adjectives do not exhibit number agreement with the head noun (cf. (3c)).

(3) No multiple plural marking inside the DP (Hungarian) (Ortmann 2000:251-252)

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|--|
| (a) | öt hajó | (not *öt hajó-k) |
| | five ship.SG | five ship-PL |
| | ‘five ships’ | |
| (b) | A hajó-k gyors-ak. | [predicative adjective with a “silent” copula] |
| | det ship-PL fast-PL | |
| | ‘The ships are fast.’ | |
| (c) | gyors hajó-k | (not *gyors-ak hajó-k) |
| | fast ship-PL | fast-PL ship-PL |
| | ‘fast ships’ | |

From a typological point of view we can thus distinguish between languages which do not allow plural marking on the head noun in combination with numerals (e.g. Hungarian) and languages where the head noun is plural-marked in this context (e.g. Standard Italian, English) (cf. Ortmann 2000, 2004). Furthermore, in languages of the Hungarian-type, there is no redundant plural marking or no plural agreement at all within the DP (cf. (3c)), because,

according to Ortmann (2004:243), “the typology predicts that a language will not leave the head noun in the singular when combined with a numeral but otherwise display plural agreement between the noun and its modifiers”. In contrast, the other language type can be further subdivided into those languages which show agreement between the noun and its modifiers (e.g. Standard Italian) and those where plural is not marked redundantly on modifiers (e.g. English where neither the adjective nor the determiner inflect for number; with the exception of demonstratives).

Both language types may thus show instances of lack of plural agreement or plural marking, but the reasons for it are different. In the framework of recent Minimalist Syntax (Chomsky 1998), for example, the fact that English adjectives do not agree with the head noun in number can be explained, according to Baker (2008:153), by simply saying that adjectives (or the functional adjectival head F_A) do not have a number-probe which searches for a number feature to agree with. In contrast, this explanation will not suffice for Hungarian, because there are contexts where the adjective (and also the noun) clearly do inflect for number, i.e. they are not “defective” in the sense that they can never be marked for plural. For languages of the Hungarian type, Ortmann (2000:266) proposes an analysis in the framework of *Optimality Theory* and argues that there is a morphological principle or constraint, *No Plural Within a DP* (i.e. *PL(DP)), which avoids overt realization of plural.

(4) *PL(DP) (Ortmann 2004:235)

Avoid the realization of the specification [+pl] within the DP.

As shown in the input form in the tableau in (5), semantically and syntactically the Hungarian noun is clearly plural in numeral-noun combinations, but plural is not morphologically marked on the noun. This is due to the fact that the constraint *PL(DP) is ranked high in Hungarian: Candidate (5a) violates the constraint *PL(DP) so that candidate (5b) is preferred even if it violates other constraints.

(5) Constraint Evaluation for *öt hajó* ‘five ships’ (AGGR = aggregate) (cf. Ortmann 2004:238)¹

| $\lambda x^{<+pl>}$ [SHIP(x) & AGGR(x) & CARD(x)=5] | EXPRPLUR | *PL(DP) | MAX- HEAD(PL) | MAX(PL) |
|--|----------|---------|------------------|---------|
| a. <i>öt hajó-k</i> five ship-PL | | *! | | |
| ☞ b. <i>öt hajó</i> five ship | | | * | * |

The same holds for agreement between the noun and the adjective: Candidate (6d) is ruled out, because plural or plurality is not expressed in a plural context. All the other candidates violate the constraint *PL(DP), but it is the double violation of candidate (6a) which is fatal. Of the two remaining candidates, it is candidate (6c) which wins, because there is another constraint in Hungarian which demands that plural (if realized at all) is to be marked on the lexical head.

¹ EXPRESSPLURALITY = The semantic concept of plurality is expressed in the output; MAX(PL) = A specification [+pl] in the input has a correspondent in the output; MAX-HEAD(PL) = A specification [+pl] in the input has a correspondent on the lexical head in the output (Ortmann 2004:235).

(6) Constraint Evaluation for *gyors hajók* ‘fast ships’ (cf. Ortman 2004:242)

| $\lambda x^{<+pl>}$ [SHIP(x) & FAST(x) & AGGR(x)] | EXPRPLUR | *PL(DP) | MAX- HEAD(PL) | MAX(PL) |
|--|----------|---------|------------------|---------|
| a. <i>gyors-ak hajó-k</i> fast-PL ship-PL | | *!* | | |
| b. <i>gyors-ak hajó</i> | | * | *! | * |
| c. <i>gyors hajó-k</i> | | * | | * |
| d. <i>gyors hajó</i> | *! | | * | ** |

There are many Romance varieties (cf. Pomino in print) which leave the noun unmarked for plural when combined with a numeral which expresses plurality (cf. (7) for examples of Italo-Romance dialects belonging to type III). Furthermore, in some of these varieties there is no plural agreement at all within a “minimal DP” (cf. (8)). Thus, at first glance, it seems as if these varieties were of the Hungarian-type and could thus be explained in a similar vein.

(7) Type III: Numeral-noun-combinations (no plural marking on N)²

- (a) Fil. do brav-a dɔn-a
two good-F woman-F
‘two good women’ (Manzini & Savoia 2005:619)
- (b) Bed. do brav-a dɔnn-a
two good-F woman-F
‘two good women’ (Manzini & Savoia 2005:620)

(8) Type IIIa: Single plural marking on the determiner

- | | A-N | N-A |
|----------|---|---|
| (a) Fil. | k-j-a 'brav-a 'dɔn-a dem-PL-F good-F woman-F ‘those good women’ (Manzini & Savoia 2005:619) ³ | j-a s'karp-a 'ni:v-a det.PL-F shoe-F new-F ‘the beautiful shoes’ |
| (b) Bed. | kiʎ-a 'brav-a 'dɔnn-a dem.PL-F good-F woman-F ‘those good women’ (Manzini & Savoia 2005:620) | kiʎ-a 'dɔnn-a 'brav-a ⁴ det.PL-F woman-F good-F ‘those good women’ |

However, this assumption is not borne out, i.e. lack of plural agreement or plural marking within the DP in these varieties cannot be explained by means of the constraint in (4), because, assuming a high ranked constraint which avoids plural marking if plural is already (lexically) expressed, we could not correctly derive the data given in (9): if the constraint *PL(DP) were ranked high in these varieties, we would expect that the determiner should appear in its singular form, because plurality is already expressed by the numeral. However, as the examples in (9) clearly show, the numeral does not inhibit plural marking on the determiner.

² Fil. = Filattiera and Bed. = Bedizzano.

³ This segmentation, which is also assumed by Manzini & Savoia (2005) and Taraldsen (2009), is unusual inasmuch as the declension class marker is usually realised closer to the root (or stem) than the number marker, cf. e.g. Spanish *chic-a-s* vs. **chic-s-a*.

⁴ The plural marker *i* ([j]) leads to palatalization of the lateral, i.e. *l-* and *-i(a)* → *ʎa*.

- (9) Plural marking in combination with numerals (type III)
- (a) Fil. k-j-a tre dɔn-a
 dem-PL-F three woman-F
 ‘those three women’ (Manzini & Savoia 2005:619)
- (b) Bed. kiʎ-a tre dɔnn-a
 dem.PL-F three woman-F
 ‘those three women’ (Manzini & Savoia 2005:620)

To sum up, even though the Italo-Romance varieties of type III leave the noun unmarked for plural when combined with a numeral, they cannot be explained straightforwardly with the morphological constraint proposed by Ortman (2000, 2004), because there are instances of plural marking on DP-elements in numeral-noun constructions.

2.2 The Split-Concord Hypothesis

North-Eastern Central Catalan (NEC Catalan) is a further Romance variety where lack of plural marking is attested. In contrast to the Italo-Romance varieties mentioned so far, in NEC Catalan it is not only morphological and syntactic aspects, but also phonological ones that are considered responsible for the non-realization of the plural marker. Bonet et al. (2009) state that the consonant *s* is not realized on DP-elements if *s* is a plural morpheme (= morphological condition), if *s* stands between two consonants (= phonological condition) and if it would be attached onto a prenominal DP element (= syntactic condition). Thus, in (10a) the determiner and the prenominal adjective appear without a plural marker, because they are in prenominal position and because the plural marker would be in an interconsonantal position. In contrast, if plural-*s* appears before a vowel-initial element as in (10b), it is overtly realized. The example (10c) further shows that the noun and the postnominal adjective are marked for plural, whereas example (10d) illustrates that the non-realization of *s* is restricted to plural-*s*: The *s* on *fals* ‘false’ is not a plural morpheme, but part of the root.

- (10) Plural marking in NEC Catalan (Bonet et al. 2009:4s)
- (a) el bon vin-s [prenominal A]
 det.M.SG good.M.SG wine.M-PL
 ‘the good wines’
- (b) el-s antic-s amic-s [prenominal A]
 det.M-PL old.M-PL friend.M-PL
 ‘the old friends’
- (c) el vin-s blanc-s [postnominal A]
 det.M.SG wine.M-PL white.M-PL
 ‘the white wines’
- (d) un fals conseller [s is not a plural morpheme]
 one false.M.SG counselor.M.SG
 ‘a/one false counselor’

With respect to the lack of plural marking in (10a), Bonet et al. (2009) also propose an analysis in the framework of OT. Their analysis, however, differs considerably from that proposed by Ortman (2000, 2004) in that they additionally propose the *Split Concord Analysis*, which is based on the idea that there are two kinds of DP-internal agreement: syntactic N/NP-movement leads to agreement with postnominal elements in syntax (= syntactic agreement), and PF-agreement (or post-syntactic agreement) governs agreement of prenominal elements after the syntactic derivation. According to Bonet et al. (2009), postnominal elements as well as the noun itself already have specific inflectional endings after the syntactic derivation, whereas prenominal elements are still unspecified, i.e. all

inflectional endings can still be selected (cf. (11a) (Bonet et al. 2009:8). Thus, in the DP *un taps vells* ‘some old corks’, there are in principle four logical possibilities for the overt realization of the determiner (cf. (11b)): *uns*, where the plural marker is selected; *un*, where the singular marker (i.e. zero) is selected; *un*, where the whole inflectional slot is deleted; and *un*, where the plural marker is first inserted, but afterwards deleted phonologically.

(11) (a) Syntactic output (simplified)

$$\text{un-} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \emptyset_M, a_F \\ \emptyset_{SG}, S_{PL} \end{array} \right\} \text{ tap-}\emptyset_{M-S_{PL}} \quad \text{vell-}\emptyset_{M-S_{PL}}$$

(b) Possible combinations

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--|
| un-S _{PL} | tap-S _{PL} | vell-S _{PL} | (selection of the plural marker) |
| un- \emptyset_{SG} | tap-S _{PL} | vell-S _{PL} | (selection of the singular marker) |
| un | tap-S _{PL} | vell-S _{PL} | (deletion of the inflectional slot) |
| un- <u> </u> _{PL} | tap-S _{PL} | vell-S _{PL} | (phonological deletion of the plural marker) |

Based on an Optimality Theoretic approach, Bonet et al. (2009) assume that these four possibilities are evaluated post-syntactically according to the constraints mentioned in (12), which are ranked as given in (13). That is, in contrast to the analysis proposed by Ortman (2000, 2004), constraint evaluation is restricted to prenominal elements.

(12) Constraints for the evaluation of (11b) (Bonet et al. 2009:9f.)

- (a) CONC(ORD): If a N has an inflectional feature F, all other modifiers within the DP must have the inflectional feature F.
- (b) MATCH: No contradictory values of an inflectional feature F within a DP.
- (c) *FEAT(URES): No morphological expression of agreement features (Samek-Lodovici 2002:8).⁵
- (d) MAX(SEGMENT): Every segment of the input has a correspondent in the output. (No phonological deletion) (McCarthy & Prince 1995:264).
- (e) MAX(MPH): Every morpheme of the input has a correspondent in the output. (No morphological deletion)
- (f) *CsC: CsC sequences are banned.

(13) MAX(SEG), MATCH >> *CsC >> CONCORD, MAX(MPH) >> *FEAT (Bonet et al. 2009:11)

The evaluation process for *un taps* is shown in the tableau (14): The so-called faithful candidates (14a) and (14b) are outranked, because they either violate the constraint *CsC or the constraint MATCH. Candidate (14d) is ruled out due to the constraint MAX(SEG), which bans phonological deletion. Thus, the ideal candidate is (14c), even though it violates MAX(MPH) (= ban of morphological deletion) and CONC (= agreement is to be marked morphologically).

(14) *un taps* ‘some corks’ (Bonet et al. 2009:12)

| un- $\{\emptyset_{SG}, S_{PL}\}$ | tap-S _{PL} | MAX (SEG) | MATCH | *CsC | CONC | MAX (MPH) | *FEAT |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------|-------|------|------|--------------|-------|
| a. | un-S _{PL} tap-S _{PL} | | | *! | | | ** |
| b. | un- \emptyset_{SG} tap-S _{PL} | | *! | | * | | ** |
| c. | \hookrightarrow un tap-S _{PL} | | | | * | * | * |
| d. | un- <u> </u> _{PL} tap-S _{PL} | *! | | | | | ** |

⁵ The constraint *PL(DP) proposed by Ortman (2000, 2004) is a more specified variant of this constraint.

This analysis, which correctly predicts the data from NEC Catalan, is however not applicable to the Italo-Romance varieties showing lack of plural agreement. This is mainly due to the fact that the *Split Concord Analysis* cannot be maintained⁶ because N/NP-movement does not necessarily lead to agreement with postnominal modifiers (and lack of plural marking is not restricted to prenominal elements). In Filattiera and Bedizzano, for example, there is no prenominal/postnominal asymmetry, i.e. neither prenominal nor postnominal adjectives inflect for number (cf. the examples in (15)). Assuming, along with Bonet et al. (2009), that N/NP-movement leads to syntactic agreement, we would however expect the postnominal adjective to be marked for plural.

(15) Single plural marking on the determiner

| A-N | | | N-A | | |
|-----|------|---|------|--|--|
| (a) | Fil. | k-j-a 'brav-a 'dɔn-a dem-PL-F good-F woman-F 'those good women' (Manzini & Savoia 2005:619) | (a') | j-a s'karp-a 'ni:v-a det.PL-F shoe-F new-F 'the beautiful shoes' | |
| (b) | Bed. | kiʎ-a 'brav-a 'dɔnn-a dem.PL-F good-F woman-F 'those good women' (Manzini & Savoia 2005:620) | (b') | kiʎ-a 'dɔnn-a 'brav-a det.PL-F woman-F good-F 'those good women' | |

The main difference between NEC Catalan and these two varieties is that in the latter, nouns may be classified as defective (at least feminine nouns), whereas in NEC Catalan, nouns do inflect for number. Thus, one could be tempted to assume that the prenominal/postnominal asymmetry is restricted to those languages with non-defective nouns. But, in Maritime Provençal (cf. (16)), for example, the noun is also defective and nonetheless a prenominal / postnominal asymmetry is attested. In contrast to NEC Catalan, it is however the prenominal adjective which is marked for plural, whereas those adjectives which are postnominal never bear a plural marker. This means that Maritime Provençal has no “syntactic” agreement even though N/NP-movement takes place, but only post-syntactic agreement.

(16) Maritime Provençal (Blanchet 1999:89)

| A-N | | | N-A | | |
|-----|---|------|---|--|--|
| (a) | l-ei bèll-ei fih-o det-PL beautiful-PL girl-F 'the beautiful girls' | (a') | l-ei fih-o bell-o det-PL girl-F beautiful-F 'the beautiful girls' | | |

The fact that prenominal elements show plural marking could be explained by assuming that the constraint *FEAT(URES) is ranked low, but (similar to the analysis proposed by Ortmann 2000, 2004) it is not clear how the absence of plural marking on postnominal elements could be accounted for in this analysis. It seems that the defectiveness of the noun plays an important role in determining agreement with postnominal elements; it should be noted, however, that it does not impinge on N/NP-movement. That is, even though the noun does not inflect for number, N/NP-movement does take place.

2.3 A syntactic account of phrasal plural marking

Another language where plural is not overtly marked on every DP-element is Basque. In Basque, there is a completely unmarked noun form *etxe* ‘house’, which is classified as

⁶ The constraint *CsC is not relevant for other Romance varieties because lack of plural marking is not phonologically conditioned. Nevertheless, the other constraints as well as the general *Split Concord Hypothesis* should also be valid for the other varieties.

transnumeral, a singular form which is marked for definiteness *etxea* ‘the house’, and a plural form which is marked for definiteness and plural: *etxeak* ‘the houses’ (Iturrioz-Leza & Skopeteas 2004:1054-1055). Thus, when a noun is combined with an indefinite quantifier denoting plurality (e.g. *batzuk* ‘some’), the definite plural marker *-ak* cannot appear; the transnumeral form must be chosen instead (cf. (17a)). Along the same lines, the absence of *-ak* in (17b) is due to the absence of the feature [definite]; it has nothing to do with the avoidance of multiple expression of plural(ity) in numeral-noun constructions; because in a definite DP (17c) the plural marker appears combined with a numeral.

(17) Basque (Ortmann 2000:253, 2004:245)

- (a) *etxe txiki batzuk*
house small some
‘some small houses’
- (b) *hiru etxe*
three house
‘three houses’
- (c) *hiru etxe-ak*
three house-DEF.PL
‘the three houses’

Yet, in contrast to what is suggested above it is not the noun which is marked for plural, because “Basque nouns don’t inflect for number (just like English adjectives don’t either)” (Artiagoitia 2002:81); it is rather the whole DP which receives one single plural marking. That is, *-ak* seems to be a phrasal suffix or a phrasal clitic which attaches phonologically to the rightmost element of the DP irrespective of the lexical category: In (18a) it appears attached to the noun, in (18b) to the adjective and in (18c) to the demonstrative (cf. Artiagoitia 2002, Ortmann 2000, 2004). All these examples further show that there is no number agreement within the definite DP in Basque.

(18) No DP-internal number agreement (Basque) (cf. Ortmann 2004:245, Baker 2008:62)

- (a) *hiru etxe-ak*
three house-DEF.PL
‘the three houses’
- (b) *etxe gorri handi ederr-ak*
house red huge beautiful-DEF.PL
‘the red huge beautiful houses’
- (c) *katu lodi hori-ek*
cat fat that-DEF.PL
‘those fat cats’

Now for Basque, it is not clear whether syntax or morphology is responsible for the lack of plural agreement. According to Ortmann “[...] for Basque, the analysis of the plural construction is quite obvious: the plural marker is simply a phrasal suffix, attached to the whole noun phrase rather than to the noun” (Ortmann 2000:252). Adopting this analysis, the lack of agreement in Basque has nothing to do with the avoidance of multiple expression of plural(ity) or with the defectiveness of the involved elements, but depends instead on the morphological status of the (definite) plural marker.

Alternatively, we could consider a more syntactic explanation: based on the framework of recent Minimalism, Baker (2008:153) states that the variation with respect to agreement can be modeled by assuming that languages vary “[...] as to whether or not functional heads like F_A or F_N are generated above APs and NPs, and in part by saying that functional heads may or

in this kind of analysis, morphology plays only a minor or no role at all; D° -[pl, (def)] always receives the marker *-ak*, which is bound inside D° if D° has an overt realization (e.g. the demonstrative *hori*), or otherwise is bound to the next adjacent element, e.g. either by the adjective or by the noun. In other words, the appearance of *-ak* in DP-final position is due to the fact that it is the morphophonological realization of D° -[pl, (def)] and that D° is in DP-final position in Basque.

Baker's analysis cannot be applied straightforwardly to the Italo-Romance varieties of type III in (20) (= simple plural marking either on the noun or on the adjective depending on the position of the adnominal adjective), because, in contrast to Basque, in these varieties the noun is not (clearly) defective, i.e. at least in certain contexts the noun is the only DP-element which bears the plural marker. Furthermore, the main characteristic of the varieties in (20) is that it is precisely the determiner that cannot be marked for plural.

(20) Single plural marking on the noun (type IIIb)

- | | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|-----------|---------|-----------------------------|
| (a) Mul. | kl-a | dɔn-j-a | grand-a | [with postnominal A] |
| | dem-F | good-PL-F | woman-F | |
| | 'these good women' | | | (Manzini & Savoia 2005:622) |
| (b) Vill. | l-a | skarp-ɨ-a | nɔv-a | [with postnominal A] |
| | det-F | shoe-PL-F | new-F | |
| | 'the new shoes' | | | (Loporcaro 1994:37) |

In contrast, the Italo-Romance varieties of type III in (15) pattern with Basque in as much as they also have single plural marking on the highest DP element. That is, we could assume in line with Baker's analysis that in these varieties the noun is defective in the sense that it is not selected by Num° (= F_N); plural is rather directly encoded under D° . The adjective (i.e. F_A) agrees thus in gender with the noun, but cannot agree in number because the noun has no number feature.¹⁰ Yet, the main difference between these Italo-Romance varieties and Basque is that lack of plural agreement is restricted to feminine nouns, that is, masculine nouns clearly show the Standard Romance agreement pattern (= canonical agreement); cf. the example for Filattiera in (21).

(21) Filattiera: Masculine nouns (cf. Manzini & Savoia 2005:619)

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|-----------|----------|------------------------------------|
| (a) | k-i | ɔm-i | aut-i | (vs. singular <i>kl ɔm aut</i>) |
| | dem.M-PL | man.M-PL | big.M-PL | |
| | 'those big men' | | | |
| (b) | k-i | brav-i | ɔm-i | (vs. singular <i>kəl brav ɔm</i>) |
| | dem.M-PL | good.M-PL | man.M-PL | |
| | 'those good men' | | | |

Thus, if we were to adopt the analysis proposed by Baker (2008), we would have to state that feminine DPs and masculine DPs have different syntactic structures in these Romance varieties: feminine DPs would have no NumP and plural would be encoded exclusively under D° , whereas in masculine DPs a $\text{NumP}[-\text{pl}]$ would be present and plural agreement would take place. However, an analysis with a uniform DP structure would clearly be preferable.

2.4 A post-syntactic morphological account: deletion of the plural marker

For the variety of Colonnata (type III), for example, we can also observe that plural marking on nouns is in complementary distribution with plural marking on determiners, i.e. the noun bears a plural marker only if there is no other element inside the DP bearing a plural marker.

¹⁰ In contrast to Basque, in Filattiera and Bedizzano there is also no number marking on the feminine adjective in predicative function (cf. e.g. *l en auta* 'they(f.pl) are tall'; Manzini & Savoia 2005:619-621).

Thus, in numeral-noun combinations, the noun can be marked for plural (cf. (22a)), because there is no other element morphologically marked for plural, whereas in a context where the determiner receives a plural marker, the noun obligatorily appears unmarked for plural (cf. (22b) and (22c)). Thus, there are some restrictions with respect to the overt realization of plural on the noun.

(22) Type IIIa: Colonnata (Manzini & Savoia 2005:621)

- (a) tre dɔn-j-a
 three woman-PL-F
 ‘three women’
- (b) kiλ-a brava-a dɔnn-a
 dem.PL-F good-F.SG woman-F.SG
 ‘those good women’
- (c) kiλ-a ɔn-a grand-a¹¹
 dem.PL-F woman-F.SG big-F.SG
 ‘those big women’

This is exactly the line of reasoning adopted by Taraldsen (2009), who assumes the Standard Italian agreement pattern for Colonnata and argues that lack of plural marking on the noun goes back to a “deletion” rule. Based on a realizational approach to morphology, he proposes the Vocabulary Item in (23a), which, in his analysis, does not necessarily realize one single syntactic terminal node. It may rather realize a syntactic substructure, i.e. the number and the gender / word marker (WM) slot together (cf. (23b)).

(23) (a) Vocabulary Item (cf. Taraldsen 2009:4)

i ↔ {pl, m} (realizes a substructure, namely [Num [WM]])

(b) Morphophonological realization (X= k, ɔm or aut)

[X [pl [m]]]
 |
 i

e.g. k-i ɔm-i aut-i ‘those big men’

One important aspect of Taraldsen’s analysis is the *Superset Principle*, according to which a syntactic substructure can be realized by a Vocabulary Item only if this either has the same feature specification as the syntactic substructure or if the feature specification of the Vocabulary Item is a superset (not a subset) of the features encoded in the syntactic substructure.¹² So in (24), the VI /i/ aims at the realization of the substructure [pl [f]]; yet, as there is a mismatch with respect to gender, it cannot realize the whole substructure. The feature specification of the VI, however, is a *Superset* of the number slot and thus it can be inserted into this slot. The word marker is instead realized by /a/, so that each slot receives one separate exponent.

¹¹ Manzini & Savoia (2005:621) cite for Colonnata the following example in which the postnominal adjective is marked for plural in addition to the determiner.

(i) kiλ-a 'ɔn-a 'bɛl-j-a (vs. kiλ-a 'ɔn-a 'grand-a)
 dem.PL-F woman-F.SG beautiful-PL-F dem.PL-F woman-F.SG big-F.SG
 ‘those beautiful women’ ‘those big women’

However, the behaviour of the adjective *bela* ‘beautiful’ is also somewhat unusual in Standard Italian (e.g. “shortened form” in prenominal vs. “full form” in postnominal position). It is thus very likely that this specific adjective constitutes a lexical exception.

¹² Cf. “A vocabulary item A associated with the feature set F can replace a subtree X with the feature set F’ if and only if F is a superset of F’” (Taraldsen 2009:1).

(24) (a) Vocabulary Item (cf. Taraldsen 2009:2)

$i \leftrightarrow \{pl, m\}$
 $a \leftrightarrow f^{13}$

(b) Morphophonological realization (X= kil, ðɔn or bɛl)

$[X[pl[f]]]$
 $\quad | \quad |$
 $\quad i \quad a$

e.g. *kiɿ-a*, *ðɔn-i-a*, *bɛl-i-a*

In order to account for the lack of plural marking on the noun, Taraldsen (2009:2) assumes that the plural exponent is “deleted” or “delinked” on the noun if there is another DP element carrying the plural marker *-i-*; otherwise (e.g. in numeral-noun-combinations) the plural marker is not deleted. This idea is illustrated in (25): If the plural feature in masculine nouns is delinked, the marker /i/ still appears, because it is also linked with the gender feature. In contrast, if we delink the plural feature in feminine nouns, the plural marker does not surface, because it is exclusively linked with number.

(25) Delinking of the number exponent (cf. Taraldsen 2009:4)

| | |
|---|--|
| $[N[pl[m]]]$ $ \quad \diagup \quad $ $\quad \quad \quad $ $\quad \quad \quad i$ $\rightarrow \text{ɔmi}$ | $[N[pl[f]]]$ $ \quad \diagup \quad $ $\quad \quad \quad $ $\quad \quad \quad i \quad a$ $\rightarrow \text{ðɔna}$ |
|---|--|

One advantage of Taraldsen’s analysis is that he can explain why masculine DPs do not show lack of plural agreement and also why in Colonnata feminine nouns can bear a plural marker when combined exclusively with a numeral.

Apart from other shortcomings, which I am unable to discuss here for reasons of space, there remains one crucial point to be explained when we apply this analysis to other Italo-Romance varieties. Consider, for example, the data of Villafranca repeated in (26): In (26a), we could argue that the noun is unmarked for plural because the adjective already carries the plural marker, whereas in (26b) the noun is marked for plural because no other DP-element bears a plural marker. But, which factor determines that the adjective is marked for plural in (26a), but not in (26b)?

(26) Villafranca (Loporcaro 1994:37)

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------|---------|
| (a) prenominal A | l-a | bɛl- <u>i</u> -a | skarp-a |
| | det-F | nice-PL-F | shoe-F |
| | | ‘the nice shoes’ | |
| (b) postnominal A | l-a | skarp- <u>i</u> -a | nɔv-a |
| | det-F | shoe-PL-F | new-F |
| | | ‘the new shoes’ | |

Furthermore, Taraldsen’s analysis is not consistent with the diachronic explanation of this phenomenon: according to Rohlfs (1949:46-47), in the dialects of Lunigiana (e.g. Bedizzano, Filattiera, Mulazzo, Villafranca and also Colonnata) the feminine originally had an unmarked singular form in *-a* and a marked plural form in *-as* (stemming from the Latin accusative). After the loss of final /s/, there has been a “collapse” of the singular and the plural form, with both now ending in *-a*. In some areas in Lunigiana (and also in other regions), this collapse was avoided by introducing the Emilian plural ending *-i*. However, this ending appears only

¹³ This VI is not listed by Taraldsen (2009). But his analysis suggests that a VI of this sort must be assumed.

once inside the DP, for example, only on the noun (e.g. *la skárpiã nova* ‘the new shoes’; Bagnone, Rohlfs 1949:47), only on the determiner (*li kabra* ‘the goat’; Livigno, Rohlfs 1949:47) or only on the adjective (*kla bravja dõna* ‘these good women’; Mulazzo, Manzini & Savoia 2005:622).¹⁴ Under this perspective, simple plural marking in these varieties is not a case of deletion of agreement markers (or the reduction / avoidance of redundancy), but rather of the reintroduction of at least one plural marker within the feminine plural DP.

2.5 Intermediate summary

In this section, I sketched four different analyses proposed in the literature and discussed their applicability to the Italo-Romance varieties belonging to type III (cf. Pomino in print for more details and other varieties): Ortmann (2000, 2004) explains lack of plural marking in terms of a morphological constraint which avoids plural marking if plural(ity) is already expressed lexically and which leads to simple plural marking in the absence of such an expression. This analysis is not applicable to the Italo-Romance varieties at issue, because there are instances of plural marking within DPs containing a numeral (even though the noun remains unmarked for plural). The analysis of Bonet et al. (2009) differs from the one proposed by Ortmann mainly in the assumption that constraint evaluation affects only prenominal elements, as postnominal ones agree in syntax and are not evaluated post-syntactically (cf. the *Split Concord Hypothesis*). This hypothesis is based on the assumption that there is a prenominal / postnominal asymmetry within the DP. However, in contrast to what is proposed by Bonet et al. (2009), I showed that this asymmetry cannot be explained through N/NP-movement and thus questioned whether the *Split Concord Hypothesis* can be maintained at all. Baker (2008) assumes that lack of plural agreement (in Basque) depends mainly on the defectiveness of the corresponding noun and that the distribution of the plural marker depends on where [plural] is syntactically encoded. Yet, Baker’s analysis can only apply to those Italo-Romance languages which allow only simple plural marking on the determiner. However, as I argued, it is precisely in these varieties that lack of plural agreement is restricted to feminine DPs. That is, we would have to assume two different syntactic structures: one for feminine DPs and another one for masculine DPs. Finally, Taraldsen (2009) explains lack of plural marking within the DP by appealing to a post-syntactic morphological deletion or delinking rule. That is, under his analysis, plural agreement does take place, but the agreement marker is post-syntactically delinked and is not overtly realized if the noun is feminine. It remains however unclear why the plural marker is sometimes delinked on the adjective and sometimes not, at least in some varieties. I further argued that from a diachronic point of view Taraldsen’s analysis does not seem feasible, because in the Italo-Romance varieties of Lunigiana, the plural marker in feminine DPs is best analyzed as a reintroduction of a formal marker, not as the deletion of agreement markers. The advantage of Taraldsen’s analysis, however, is that in contrast to others, he offers an explanation for the fact that lack of plural marking is restricted to feminine DPs.

3. Possible alternative analysis for the Italo-Romance varieties with simple plural marking (type III)

In this section, I want to propose an alternative analysis to account for, on the one side, the restriction of lack of plural marking to feminine DPs in the Italo-Romance varieties of type III, and, on the other side, the varying linear position of the plural marker within the DP.

¹⁴ “Das Richtige hat zum ersten Mal Salvioni selbst gesehen, der [...] seine frühere Ansicht aufgab und in den Pluralformen auf *-a* altes *-as* erkannte. [...] Den störenden Zusammenfall zwischen Singular und Plural haben einige Orte in der Lunigiana dadurch beseitigt, daß sie unter dem Einfluß der emilianischen Pluralendung *-i* (*skarpi* ‘scarpe’) das Plural *-a* zu *-ia* umgestalteten. Bemerkenswert ist, daß [...] diese Endung nur einmal zum Ausdruck kommt“ (Rohlfs 1949:46-47).

3.1 Restriction of lack of plural agreement to feminine gender¹⁵

The hypothesis I want to advance for the varieties of type III is that DP elements can encode only one marked feature value. Thus, from the combinations in (27), only the first three are possible in these varieties.

(27) Hypothesis I: Nouns and adjectives can encode only one marked feature value.

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|---|--|
| (a) | [masculine, singular] | = | [gen _{default} , num _{default}] |
| (b) | [masculine, plural] | = | [gen _{default} , num _{marked}] |
| (c) | [feminine, singular] | = | [gen _{marked} , num _{default}] |
| (d) | *[feminine, plural] | = | *[gen _{marked} , num _{marked}] |

For adjectives and other DP elements carrying a probe (e.g. the determiner), this restriction can be explained by modifying some assumptions about probes. I assume that the phi-features on probes are not simply feature bundles, but are hierarchically structured. In the varieties at issue, the probe will search first for a gender feature to agree with (cf. (28)), whereas the probing for a number feature depends on the gender feature which has been instantiated as result of the first probing. If it is masculine (i.e. a default value), then number-probing will take place. If feminine is instantiated (i.e. a marked value), then the number-probe will be deactivated. In other terms, the instantiation of [feminine] blocks probing for number.

(28) (a) Masculine

$$\begin{array}{c} [\text{gen: }]_I \\ [\text{num: }]_{II} \end{array} \xrightarrow[\text{for gender}]{\text{probing}} \begin{array}{c} [\text{gen: m}]_I \\ [\text{num: }]_{II} \end{array} \xrightarrow[\text{for number}]{\text{probing}} \begin{array}{c} [\text{gen: m}]_I \\ [\text{num: pl}]_{II} \end{array}$$

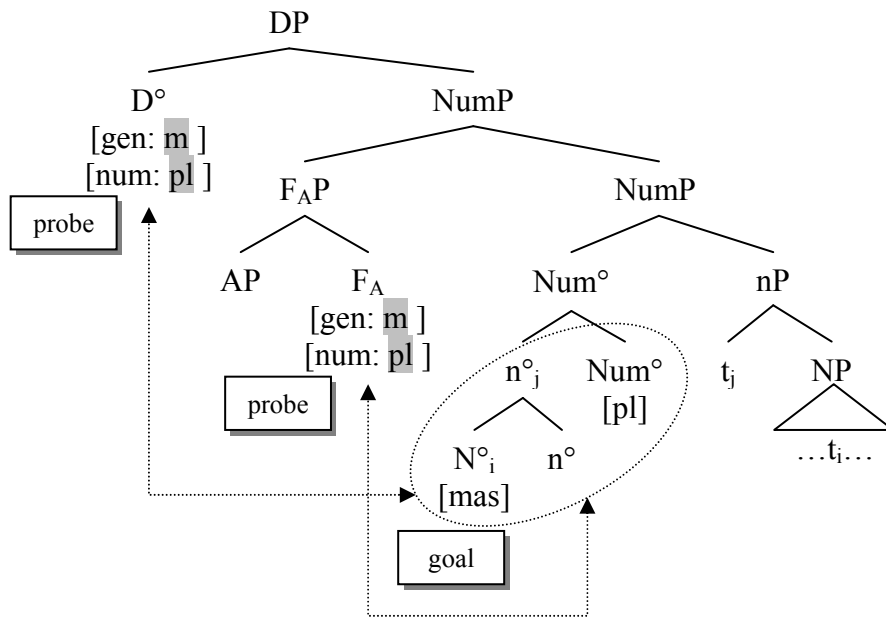
(b) Feminine

$$\begin{array}{c} [\text{gen: }]_I \\ [\text{num: }]_{II} \end{array} \xrightarrow[\text{for gender}]{\text{probing}} \begin{array}{c} [\text{gen: f}]_I \\ [\text{num: }]_{II} \end{array} \xrightarrow[\text{of number-probe}]{\text{deactivation}} \begin{array}{c} [\text{gen: f}]_I \\ [\text{num: }]_{II} \end{array}$$

The agreement pattern for masculine DPs, i.e. full plural marking (cf. (21)), can be explained with the derivation given in (29). Here I assume in line with many others that there are at least two functional phrases located between the DP and the lexical NP in Romance: “little nP” and NumP. I further assume that also the lexical AP is selected by a functional head, which I have labelled F_A in line with Baker (2008). Furthermore, I assume that the lexical noun moves first to “little n^o” and that the complex “little n^o” moves then further to Num^o and incorporates there. Now, let us assume that the adjective is left-adjoined to NumP in cases where it appears preminally. The functional adjectival head carries a number and gender probe and will search in the derivation for an appropriate goal. Assuming Baker’s modification of the c-command relation between the probe and its goal, the F_A agrees with the (lower) NumP and the ϕ -features entailed in the NumP will be instantiated in the probe on F_A . The determiner carries also a gender and number probe and there will be Agree between D^o and NumP. Again, masculine and plural will be copied onto the probe. This leads to a realization where the determiner, the adjective and the noun are overtly marked for plural.

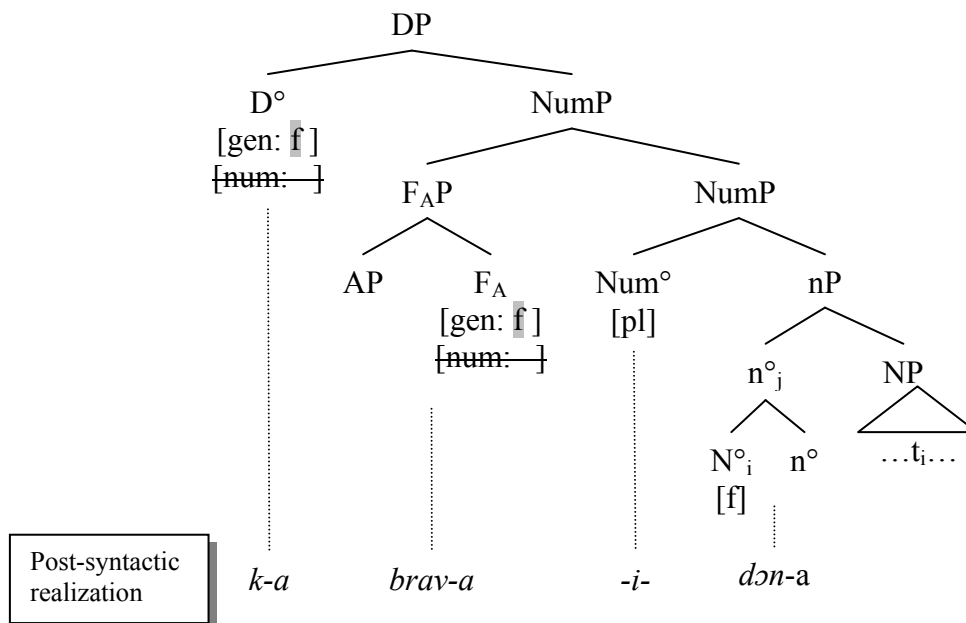
¹⁵ I will not discuss here the structural position(s) of adjectives within the DP. For sake of simplicity, I have chosen in what follows the “adjunct hypothesis” and allow the adjective to adjoin on the right as well as on the left of a functional category within the DP. I think that the hypothesis I want to advance here is independent of the structural position(s) of adjectives.

(29) Masculine DPs: *ki bravi omi* ‘those good men’



With respect to feminine DPs, I assume that feminine nouns, in contrast to masculine nouns, are not attracted by Num°-[pl] due to their marked gender feature (cf. (30)). Note that in (30), there will be no number agreement at all within the DP, because the instantiation of feminine on the probes (on A and D) blocks number-probing. Based on the framework of Distributed Morphology, I further assume that the syntactic structure in (30) is realized post-syntactically with the respective Vocabulary Items, e.g. *ka* for D° (i.e. for the demonstrative), *brava* for the adjective, *i* (or [j]) for the number-head, and *dɔna* for the noun.

(30) Derivation of a feminine DP



The element realizing Num° (i.e. *-i-*) is an affix which has to be bound from one of the other DP-elements. For this I assume that there are language-specific post-syntactic “alignment rules” which determine the appropriate host. The Italo-Romance varieties of type III differ from one another with respect to this point, as I illustrate in the next section. Before that, I want to emphasize that in this analysis there is neither a mismatch between syntax and

semantic nor one between syntax and morphology. There is, if at all, a mismatch between the hierarchical syntactic structure and the linear order (or the alignment) of the respective phonological material, which, as I will show in 3.2, is determined by some specific factors.

3.2 Alignment of the plural marker

The following table gives an overview over different DPs in Filattiera. As one can see, the affix which realizes Num^o is either bound on the definite article or on the demonstrative, i.e. the plural marker appears on the leftmost functional element which encodes definiteness and/or specificity. If such an element is not contained within the DP (cf. the last three examples), the plural marker is either deleted or not inserted at all. Thus it seems that in Filattiera (and in other Italo-Romance varieties belonging to this subtype, e.g. Bedizzano) the alignment of the plural marker is either somehow related to definiteness and/or specificity or simply to the highest functional projection of the DP.

(31) Type IIIa: Filattiera (Manzini & Savoia 2005:619-621)

| | D | Dem | Numeral | Q _{indef.} | Poss | A | Num | N | A | |
|----|----|-------|---------|---------------------|--------|-------|-----|--------|-------|--------------------|
| a. | ja | | | | | | ← | skarpa | ni:va | ‘the new shoes’ |
| | ja | | | | me | | ← | sorela | | ‘my sisters’ |
| | ja | | | | nōstra | | ← | sorela | | ‘our sisters’ |
| | | k-j-a | | | | brava | ← | dōna | | ‘those good women’ |
| | | k-j-a | tre | | | | ← | dōna | | ‘the three women’ |
| b. | | | do | | | brava | | dōna | | ‘two good women’ |
| | | | | tanta | | | | dōna | | ‘many women’ |
| | | | | pōya | | | | dōna | | ‘few women’ |

For the Italo-Romance varieties belonging to type IIIb (e.g. Villafranca) the picture is quite different, as the table in (32) show. The dialect of *Villafranca* clearly differs from the one in Filattiera with respect to the alignment of the plural marker: the realization of the plural head does not attach onto the leftmost element, but on the left-adjacent one (as a case of postsyntactic “movement under adjacency”), at least in the cases in (32a). In *tant-ĵ-a kōf-a bēl-a* ‘many beautiful things’, for example, the plural marker is bound by the left-adjacent indefinite quantifier, whereas in *tant-a bēl-ĵ-a skarp-a* ‘many beautiful shoes’ it is bound by the adjective (not by the indefinite quantifier), because in this case the adjective is directly left-adjacent to Num^o. Now, if the left-adjacent element is not an appropriate host for the plural marker, i.e. if the left-adjacent element is an element unable to inflect for number, the plural marker adjoins to the right on the noun (cf. (32b)) or it is deleted, given that plural or plurality is expressed lexically (cf. (32c)).¹⁶ Note that with the notion of strict adjacency we can explain why the prenominal adjective bears a plural marker, whereas the postnominal adjective is never marked for plural. In other words: As the prenominal adjective is left-adjacent to Num^o, it is marked for plural, whereas the postnominal one is never marked for

¹⁶ Cf. Maffei Bellucci (1977) for a similar description: “Relativamente all’occorrenza della marca di f.pl. /-ia/, mi sembra importante notare che, almeno in tutta l’alta e media Lunigiana, nei sintagmi composti da articolo, sostantivo e aggettivo o participio essa compare, di norma, una sola volta, quasi sempre in unione alla prima forma nominale. Direi anzi che, quando il concetto di plurale è già espresso – implicitamente o esplicitamente – sul piano semantico, la marca tende addirittura a non comparire affatto” (Maffei Bellucci 1977:93; my emphasis). [With respect to the appearance of the f.pl. marker /-ia/, it is important to mention that, at least in high and central Lunigiana, in a phrase composed of an article, a noun and an adjective or a participle it appears, in general, only once, nearly always on the first nominal form. I would rather say, when the concept of plural is already expressed – implicitly or explicitly – on the semantic level, the marker tends not to appear at all.]

plural, because in cases where the plural marker adjoins to the right, the noun and not the adjective is the right-adjacent element.

(32) Type IIIb: Villafranca (Loporcaro 1994; Maffei Belucci 1977)¹⁷

| Q _{def.} | D | Dem | Num | Q _{indef.} | Poss | A | Numb | N | A |
|-------------------|-----|--------|-----|---------------------|------------------|---------|------|------------|-------|
| a. | l-a | | | | | bēl-ĭ-a | ← | kōf-a | |
| | | | | tant-ĭ-a | | | ← | kōf-a | bēl-a |
| | | | | tant-a | | bēl-ĭ-a | ← | skarp-a | |
| | l-a | | | | nōstr-ĭ-a | | ← | kōf-a | |
| | | st-ĭ-a | | | | | ← | skarp-a | |
| b. tut | l-a | | | | | | → | sēr-ĭ-a | |
| | l-a | | | | | | → | kōf-ĭ-a | bēl-a |
| | l-a | | | | tō ¹⁸ | | → | skarp-ĭ-a | |
| | | | dō | | | | → | kampān-ĭ-a | |
| c. | | | dō | | | | ∅ | kampān-a | |

I leave for further research the question of how to define and implement whether an element is an appropriate host or not. Related to this I want to mention an apparent counterexample to the generalization made so far. In (33), number is not marked on the indefinite quantifier *pōga* ‘few’ (which, being an indefinite quantifier, should be a host for the plural marker just like *tanto* ‘many’ in (32b)), but on the demonstrative.

(33) Type IIIb: Villafranca; Counterexample to the generalization made in (32) (Loporcaro 1994; Maffei Belucci 1977)

| Q _{def.} | D | Dem | Card. | Q _{indef.} | Poss | A | Num | N | A |
|-------------------|---|-------|-------|---------------------|------|---|-----|-------|--------------------|
| | | keĭ~a | | pōg-a | | | ↓ | kōf-a | ‘those few things’ |
| | | ↑ | ← | ← | ← | ← | ← | | |

4. Conclusion

The analysis proposed here shows that lack of plural agreement in some Italo-Romance varieties is most probably not a purely syntactic phenomenon. Lack of plural agreement (in feminine DPs) can be explained syntactically by modifying some notions concerning probes, but the linear distribution of the corresponding plural marker, i.e. the question on which element plural is marked, is a post-syntactic phenomenon. With respect to the syntax, I have restricted the probing-possibilities in these dialects. More precisely: I have proposed to implement this by saying that (1) DP-elements can encode only one marked phi-feature, (2) phi-features are hierarchically structured (i.e. first gender-probing and only afterwards number-probing, whenever [masculine] is instantiated), and (3) the instantiation of [feminine] on a probe “blocks” further probing for number (= incompatibility restriction). The second part of the proposed analysis concerns only postsyntactic processes, which are well established in the framework of Distributed Morphology. The main argument is that due to

¹⁷ For reasons of space, the English translation of the examples could not be included into the table: (32a) ‘the beautiful things’, ‘many beautiful things’, ‘many beautiful shoes’, ‘our things’, ‘these shoes’; (32b) ‘all evenings’, ‘the beautiful things’, ‘your shoes’, ‘two bells’; (32c) ‘two bells’.

¹⁸ Note that in the variety at issue only the possessive of first and second person plural (e.g. *nostra* ‘our’, *vostra* ‘your’) can inflect with respect to gender and number of the possessed. All other possessives are invariant, i.e. the form *tō* corresponds to Standard Italian *tuo* (m.sg), *tuoi* (m.pl), *tua* (f.sg) and *tue* (f.pl) (cf. Maffei Bellucci 1977:51 and 93).

the morphological status of the inserted plural marker (= realization of Num^o), there is a post-syntactic movement operation. In the varieties belonging to type IIIa (e.g. Filattiera and Bedizzano), the plural marker is dislocated to the leftmost DP-element able to bind it. This may be associated with definiteness and/or specificity. If plural is already lexically expressed, either by a numeral or an indefinite quantifier expressing plurality, the plural marker is deleted or not inserted at all. For the varieties belonging to subtype IIIb, I have shown that the plural marker is generally bound by the element left-adjacent to Num^o. Only if the left-adjacent element is not able to inflect for number, the plural marker is dislocated to the right onto the noun or deleted if plural(ity) is already lexically expressed.

The proposed analysis needs further refinement with respect to which elements can be a host for the plural marker. Nevertheless, I have shown that the morphophonological status of the marker (and some alignment conditions) is the decisive factor for its corresponding distribution within the DP. That is, if one wants to refer to the notion of *mismatch*, we may say that there is mismatch between the hierarchical syntactic structure and the linear order (or the alignment) of the respective phonological material, but in the proposed analysis there is crucially neither a mismatch between syntax and semantics nor one between syntax and morphology.

5. References

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