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Agreement within DPs: a comparison between Aromanian and Albanian

Abstract

Agreement within DPs in Aromanian varieties spoken in Southern Albania is asymmetric, in the sense that, while gender and number occur on all elements, only the first one shows the case mark. Adjectives, which are post-nominal, do not present the mark of case. We analyze this distribution in comparison with Albanian varieties. In Aromanian only one form is clearly specialized for the case interpretation, while the so-called nominative and accusative are nothing but forms characterized by definite or indefinite morphology. In addition, morphological exponents manifest a wide syncretism, as in the Albanian varieties. The morpho-syntactic analysis, based on the Phase model, assumes that morphemes are endowed with interpretable content and morphology is part of the syntactic computation.

1. Nominal paradigms in two Aromanian varieties

We will investigate the distribution of agreement within the DP in the Aromanian¹ varieties spoken in southern Albania², more precisely the variety of Myzeqeja (Musachia), Rëmën, and that of the Korça ares, Fërshërot.³ In Aromanian, nominal paradigms differentiate the direct

¹ In Northern Macedonia and Albania, Aromanian has the status of a linguistic minority with the legal forms of protection. As other heritage languages, its transmission and use involve family members, friends, or the village circle, and are influenced by contact with Albanian, the public language (Stoica 2021). This explains the variability that may characterize the answers of our informants.

² As regards the geographical diffusion and number of Aromanian speakers, see Capidan (1932) and Caragiu Marioțeanu (1975, 2006).

³ The data we discuss have been collected through field research in Myzeqeja (Libofshë, L), Rëmën, and in the region of Korça (Plasë), Fërshërot. The last investigation was on 10-14 April 2024. We are very grateful to our informants, among others, Piro Mistaku of Libofshë, Leonida Kruti of Divjakë, and Vilma Veriga of Korça-Plasë. They collaborated providing a substantial contribution to the research, with suggestions, comments and grammaticality judgments that greatly improved our understanding of phenomena. Among my informants

form occurring in nominative or accusative contexts, from the oblique form, characterized by a specialized inflection (Capidan 1932, Caragiu Marioteanu 1975, Poçi 2009). In addition, oblique contexts require in any case the possessive introducer (PI), thus unlike Romanian and old Rumanian (cf. Pană Dindelegan et al. 2019, Maiden et al. 2021).

In what follows, we exemplify the systems of direct and oblique definite and indefinite forms, in the singular and in the plural for the Rëmën variety of Libofshë in (1)-(4) and Divjakë, and Fëreshërot variety of Korça in (5)-(8) (cf. Savoia and Badi 2024). The oblique joins together genitive and dative, a well-known Balkanism (Joseph 2020), which, as we will see, also characterizes Albanian. (a) exemplifies the definite form, with the so-called enclitic article, while (b) exemplifies the indefinite form preceded by the indefinite article *un/ unə* ‘a/ one’. (1a,b) and (2a,b) illustrate singular and plural direct contexts. The oblique contexts, provided in (3a,b) for the singular and in (4a,b) for the plural, are introduced by the P(ossessive) I(ntroducer). In some Aromanian varieties, this morphological element is combined with a morpheme agreeing with the embedded noun, as in Libofshë. The masculine nouns may show the palatalization of the final obstruent or nasal, as for instance in the case of *bərbat/ bərbats* ‘man/ men’, *mult/ mults* ‘much/ many’, *kən/ kən* ‘dog/ dogs’, etc. For the sake of legibility in the glosses the inflectional exponents have a descriptive label, in particular: *-u* = MSG/ OBL, *-a* = FSG, *-i/ l -* = DEF, *-i* = PL/FSG/OBL, *-ur-* = OBL.PL. *u* and *-a* introduce Definiteness: MSG/ FSG.DEF. The nature of the inflections will be reconsidered in subsequent sections.

(1)

- a. ari vənit / am vədzut fitfor-**u** /fət-**a**
 (s)he.has come /I.have seen boy-MSG.DEF girl- FSG.DEF
 ‘The boy/ the girl has come/ I have seen the boy/ the girl’
- b. ari vənit / am vədzut un fitfor /unə fət-ə
 (s)he.has come I.have seen a boy / a girl-FSG
 ‘The/ a boy / man / girl has come’, ‘I have seen the/ a boy / girl’

(2)

- a. arə vənit / am vədzut fitfor-**ĭ-i** /fət(ə)-**l-i**
 they.have come / I.have seen boy-DEF-PL /girl-DEF-PL
 ‘The boys/men/girls have come’/ ‘I have seen the boys/girls’
- b. arə vənit / am vədzut mults fitfor-**i** / mult fət-**i**
 they.have come / I.have seen many.PL boy-PL/ many girl-PL
 ‘Many boys/ girls have come’/ ‘I have seen many boys / girls’ Libofshë

of Albanian, I remember and thank the colleagues Eliana Laçe for Shkodër and Mimoza Rekaj for Gjirokastër.

(3)

- a. i o ded o fitfor-u / o bərbat-u / a li fət-i
to.him/her it I.gave PI boy-MSG /PI man-MSG / PI girl-OBL
'I gave it to the boy/the man/ the girl'
- b. i o ded o un fitfor / o un bərbat / a (li) un fət-i
to.him/her it I.gave PI a boy /PI a man /PI a girl-OBL
'I gave it to a boy/a man/ a girl' Libofshë

(4)

- a. i o ded o fitfor-Ŷ-u /o bərbats-ur-u / o fət-Ŷ-u
to.them it I.gave PI boy-DEF-OBL /PI men.PL-DEF.OBL
/PI girl-PL-OBL
'I gave it to the boys/the men/the girls'
- b. i o ded o ts-uŕ fitfor(-Ŷ)-i / o doi bərbats
to.them it I.gave / o mult fət-i
PI that-OBL.PL boy-DEF-PL /PI two man.PL
/ PI many girl-PL
'I gave it to these boys/ to two men/ to many girls'

The Korça variety in (5)-(8) shows a similar system, where the plural oblique has the exponent *-or*. The feminine has the exponent *-i* in the plural and the singular oblique. The result is that in the singular, *-i* can be doubled in definite forms, as in (8a), and corresponds to the plural in definite forms, as in (6a,b). Definite singular forms insert *-u* in the masculine and *-a* in the feminine singular, in (5a), while in the plural the exponent *-l-* occurs, palatalized in *-j-* in the masculine, in (6a). Unlike Rëmën, in Fërshërot the indefinite article has the oblique inflection *-ui* in the masculine and *-ei* in the feminine, which is combined with the indefinite forms of masculine nouns or the inflected oblique of feminine nouns, in (7b).

- (5) a. vini / vidzui fətfor-u /bərbat-u / fjat-a
(s)he came / I.saw boy-MSG/man-MSG/ girl-FSG
- b. vini / vidzui un fitfor / un bərbat / unə fjat-ə
(s)he came / I.saw a boy/ a man/ a girl-FSG
'The/ a boy / man / girl came' / 'I saw the/ a boy / man / girl'
- jə

- (6) a. 'vinərə / vidzui fətfor-jə / bərbats-jə / fət-i-l-i
 they.came / I.saw boy- PL.DEF / man- PL.DEF
 /girl-PL-DEF-PL
 'The boys/men/girls came' / 'I saw the boys/men/girls'
 b. 'vinərə / vidzui mults fitfor / mults bərbats/ mult-i fət-i
 they.came / I.saw many.PL boy/ many man.PL
 / many.PL girl-PL
 'Many boys/ men/ girls came' / 'I saw many boys/ men/ girls'

- (7) a. i det a (t) fitfor-u / a bərbat- u / a fət-i-i
 to.him/ her I.gave PI boy- MSG/ /PI man-MSG
 / PI girl-SG-OBL
 'I gave it to the boy/the man/ the girl'
 b. i det a un-ui fitfor / a un-ui bərbat
 /a un-ei fət-i
 to.him/her I.gave PI a-OBL.M boy/PI a-OBL.M man
 /PI a-OBL.F girl-OBL
 'I gave it to a boy/a man/ a girl'

- (8)
 a. lə det a fitfor-l-or / a bərbats-l-or / a fət-i-l-or
 to.them I.gave PI boy-DEF-PL.OBL /PI men-DEF-PL.OBL
 /PI girl-PL-DEF-PL.OBL
 'I gave it to the boys/the men/the girls'
 b. lə det a doi fitfor-l-or / a doi bərbats-l-or
 / a dau fət-i-l-or
 to.them I.gave PI two boy-DEF-PL.OB/ PI two man-DEF-PL.OBL
 / PI two girl-PL- DEF-PL.OBL
 'I gave it to two boys/ to two men/ to two girls'

Finally, the paradigm of Class III, from the third declension of Latin, presents the indefinite *-i* (sg) and the definite singular *-l-i*. The examples in (9) for *муѣѢ*- 'woman' come from Korça.

- (9) *singular*
 direct definite a. mujer-i-a kənə-l-i
 direct b. unə mujer-i un kən-i
 indefinite
 oblique c. a (li) mujer-i a t kən-i-l-i
 definite
 oblique d. a un-ei mujer-i / a un-ui kən-i
 indefinite

		<i>plural</i>	
direct definite	a'.	mujer-(i-l)-i	keɲ-je
direct	b'.	mult-i mujer	mults keɲ
indefinite			
oblique	c'.	a mujer-l-or	a keɲ-l-or
definite			
oblique	d'.	a dau mujer-l-u	a doi keɲə-l-u
indefinite			

Korça

The distribution of inflections is schematized in (10a,b) and (11a,b). The paradigm of PIs is provided in (10c) and (11c). The double slash // separates the exponents of the Class III when they are different.

(10) a. *Definite paradigm*

	MSG	FSG	MPL	FPL
Nom/Acc	-u // -l-i	-a	(Pal/Λ)-i	(-l/Λ)-i // -l-i
Dat/Gen	-u // -l-i	-i	-Λ-u/ (Pal)-ur-u/-ɣ-u	u/Λ/l-u/-ɣ-u-r-u// -l/Λ-u

b. *Indefinite paradigm*

	MSG	FSG	MPL	FPL
Nom/Acc	Ø // -i	-ə // -i	Pal/(-i)	-i
Dat/Gen	Ø // -i	-i // -i	Ø/Pal/i	-i

c. PI: ali / ___ N_{FSG}, o Libofshë

(11) a. *Definite paradigm*

	MSG	FSG	MPL	FPL
Nom/Acc	-u // -l-i	-a // i-a	-je	i/ə-l-i // i-l-i
Dat/Gen	-u // i-l-i	-i-i	-l-or/l-u	i-l-or/l-u

b. *Indefinite paradigm*

	MSG	FSG	MPL	FPL
Nom/Acc	Ø // -i	-ə/-e // -i	Pal/Ø	-i// Ø
Dat/Gen	Ø // -i	-i	-l-or/l-u	-l-u

c. PI: a(li) / ___ N_{FSG}, a(ɫ) / ___ N_{MSG}, a Korça

We can summarize the crucial points:

- ✓ The oblique interpretation is always associated with the presence of the PI; this agrees with the embedded noun, unlike canonical linkers
- ✓ Syncretism: The exponent -i occurs in indefinite singular direct and indirect forms, and in the direct singular and plural. -u is in turn associated with the masculine definite and the plural oblique.

- ✓ *-l-/-ɫ-* in the plural of definite forms can be associated with the definiteness, as we expect given their derivation from the Latin demonstrative **ille*. The exponent *-ur-* realizes the plural (as in Romanian, cf. Pană Dindelegan 2013).
- ✓ In all contexts, the oblique is associated with the PI, namely *o* for the masculine singular and the plural, and *a li* for the feminine singular, regardless of the definite or indefinite nature of the DP, in Rēmēn⁴, in (4a,b). In Fērshērot PIs are *a*, and variably *a li* before the singular feminine and *a t* before masculines, as in (8a,b).

The plural definite oblique shows a specialized inflection in which *-u* combines with the plural formative *-ɫ-*, *-r-*, in (4a), in Libofshë, and *-l-or* in Fērshērot in (8a).

2. Agreement asymmetries in DPs

In the Aromanian varieties, the agreement between determiner, modifier and noun shows an asymmetric distribution. Number and gender are expressed on all elements. Actually, what is often named nominative and accusative corresponds to nominal forms specified for gender and definiteness, as illustrated in (10)-(11). The only specialized exponent of case is the oblique, realized in the domain of D, i.e. by the definite noun or by a prenominal demonstrative/ modifier. Other modifiers and post-nominal adjectives generally agree only for gender and number but exclude the oblique inflection. The latter, therefore, is only registered on the first element in the DP. However, some clarifications are necessary, in particular about the alternative modifier ‘other’ and the demonstrative as a linker in combination with adjectives. As also documented in Capidan (1932), Aromanian preserves the two types of alternative modifiers documented in Old Romanian (Stan 2016a: 290 and following), namely *(a)yant/ alant* for the closed alterity and *alt* for the open alterity (Nicolae 2013: 300 and following). As discussed by Stan, both order and the agreement within the DP show a certain degree of variability.

(a)yant/ alant and *alt* may follow or precede the noun, although the prenominal position is preferred. The modifier *alt* introduces an indefinite reading, whereby the noun lacks definiteness morphemes, and preferably is post-nominal, as in (a), while *alant/ ayant* generally introduces a definite alternative, and generally is pre-nominal, as in (b). The data in (c) illustrate the combination with a prenominal

⁴ In these varieties the original **l* in simple onsets has changed to *y*. Thus, *ya* ‘to’ corresponds to original *la*, occurring in Romanian and other Aromanian languages.

demonstrative. The demonstrative can occur in post-nominal position where it introduces the adjective, in (d). In these contexts, it shows the case marker, if available, and the adjective can in turn be inflected for case. Examples distinguish direct from oblique forms.

- (12) Direct form (definite/ indefinite reading)- singular/ plural
- a.i vinərə mujər alt-i bərbats alts
 / alt-i mujər / alts bərbats
 They.came woman other-PL men.PL other.PL
 / other-PL woman / other men
 ‘Other women / other men came’
- a.ii vidzui (unə) alt-ə mujər-i / alt-i mujər-i
 mufat
 see-PAST-1SG an other-FSG woman-FSG / other-PL woman-PL
 beautiful
 ‘I saw another woman/ other beautiful women’
- b.i vini mujər-i-a alant / bərbat-u alant
 (S)he.came woman-SG-FSG.DEF other / man-MSG.DEF other
 ‘The other woman/ man came’
- c.i vini atsa alant mujər-i / atsel alant bərbat
 (S)he.came that.FSG other woman-FSG / that.MSG other man
 ‘That other woman/ that other man came’
- c.ii vidzui ats-a mujər-i alant mufat c.iii atse-li alant-i
 mujər(-li) mufat-i
 I.saw that.FSG woman-SG other that-DEF-PL other-PL
 beautiful woman(-DEF-PL)
 beautiful.PL
 ‘I saw that other beautiful woman/ those beautiful women’
- (13) Oblique (definite/ indefinite) singular/ plural
- a.i i-u ded a un-ei mujər-i a un-ui fitfər alt
 alt
 lung
 him.it I.gave PI a-OBL.F woman- PI a-OBL.M boy other
 OBL other tall
 ‘I gave it to another tall woman/ to another boy’
- b.i i-u ded al kən-i-l-i alant / alənt-ui kən-i
 him.it I.gave PI dog-SG-DEF-OBL / other-OBL.DEF
 dog-MSG
 ‘I gave it to the other dog’
- b.ii l-u ded alənt-or mujər mufat-i a mujər-lor
 mufat-i
 them.it I.gave other-OBL.PL woman PI woman-OBL.PL
 beautiful-PL beautiful-PL

c.i ‘I gave it to the other beautiful women / to the beautiful women’
lə ded atse-i-i mujer-i atse-lor alt-i/alant-i
 (alt) mufat mujer mufat-i
to.them I.gave that-SG.OBL that-OBL.PL other.PL
 woman-SG other woman beautiful-PL
 beautiful
‘I gave it to the other beautiful woman/ to these other beautiful women’

In summary, we have:

- ✓ In the indefinite direct context, the nominal base occurs, both preceded or followed by *alt*, in (12a.i); ϕ -features appear on 'other' and variably on the noun, in (12a.ii).
- ✓ In definite direct contexts, the agreement exponents appear on the first (on the left) element, as shown by the comparison in (12b.i). In the context of the initial demonstrative, the noun and the modifier generally have the indefinite (gender and number) morphology, as in (12c.i), although the definite morphology is not excluded, as in (12c.iii).
- ✓ Adjectives show the indefinite type of agreement (gender/number).
- ✓ The oblique in (13) shows that in definite contexts, the first element has the complete morphology of case, as in (13b.i).
- ✓ Again, the noun in second position has no case specification, (13b.i).
- ✓ The demonstrative in initial position has the case morphology, while the following elements only have gender/number morphology, as in (13c.i).

Both demonstrative and modifier are not introduced by PI; however the form *alant/ ayant* ‘other’ includes the PI as its initial morpheme.

The distribution of the Myzeqeja varieties is similar, as in (14)-(15).

- (14) Direct form (definite/ indefinite reading) - singular/ plural
- a.i ar vənɪt un bərbaɪt ɣant / unə muʝɛr-i ɣant-e
(s)he.has come a man other / a.FSG woman-FSG other-FSG
'Another man/ another woman has come'
- a.ii vedzui məʝɛr-i alt-ə
I.saw woman-FSG other-FSG
'I saw another woman'
- c.i ar vənɪt atseu kɛn-i / atsə-ɬ kɛɲ / atse-ɬə muʝɛr-i
they.has/ have this.MSG dog-sg/ that-PL dog.PL / that-PL
come woman-PL
'That dog has come / those doogs/women have come'

- (15) Oblique (definite/ indefinite) singular/ plural
- a.i i o ded o mults bərbats
to.him/her I.gave PI many.MPL man.PL
'I gave it to many men/ to many girls'
- b.i i o m datə o fitʃor-ʎ-u yants
to.him/her I have given PI boy-DEF-OBL other.PL
'I have given it to the other boys'
- b.ii i o ded a li mujər-i yant-ə
to.him/her I.gave PI woman-OBL other-FSG
'I gave it to the tall girl'
- c.i o ts-ui fitʃor mari
PI that-OBL.MSG boy big
- c.ii ots-uar fitʃor-ʎ-i yants
that-OBL.PL boy-DEF-OBL other.PL
- c.iii o ts-ui fitʃor-u
PI that-OBL.MSG boy-MSG
'I gave it to that big boy/ to that boy/ to those other boys'
- c.iv i o ded ots-uar fet-l-i mari / o fitʃor-ʎ-i mari
to.him/her I.gave that-OBL.PL girl-DEF-PL big /
PI boy-DEF-OBL big
'I gave it to those big girls/ to the big boys'
- c.v i o m dat ots-uor ɔmp-i / fitʃor-ʎ-i /
ots-uor mujər-i /-ʎ-i
them-it I.have given that-OBL.PL man.PL-PL / boy-Def-PL /
that-OBL.PL woman-PL/-DEF-PL
'I have given it to those men/ boys/ women'
- c.vi o yants fitʃor-ʎ-i
PI other boy-DEF-PL
- c.vii ots-uar fitʃor-ʎ-u yunts
that-OBL.PL boy-DEF-OBL tall.PL
'I gave it to the other boys / to those tall boys'

Again, indefinite contexts only present the gender/ number features, as (14a.i, ii); demonstratives generally saturate the definiteness, as in (14c.i). In oblique contexts, a definite noun in first position has the case exponents, as in (15b.1, ii), where the modifier following the noun agrees in gender/ number. The modifier *yant* takes the case, as in (15c.vi). (15c.i-v) shows that the demonstrative absorbs the case expression and allows the noun to realize definiteness, as in (15c.i,ii,iii,iv); the case on the noun is admitted, as in (15c.vii). (15a.i) illustrates the context where the PI introduces an indefinite, devoid of case.

In Aromanian varieties, between the noun and the adjective, the demonstrative *atseu* can variably occur, as a sort of Linker (cf. Manzini and Savoia 2018). It is interesting to observe the distribution of the case and other ϕ -features in DPs with Linker. The data, from Divjakë and Libofshë show that in these contexts the Linker has the morphology of definiteness and case, which apply to all elements, including the adjective, as clearly shown by the oblique in (16iii,iv).

(16) Noun – Linker - adjective

- i. ar vənitə fətə-l-i atse-l-i marə-l-i
They.have come girl-Def-pl that-DEF-PL big-DEF-PL
'The big girls have come'
- ii. Am vəzut fitfor-u atse-u yuŋg-u
I.have seen boy-MSG that-MSG tall-MSG
'I have seen the tall boy'
- iii. i u dau o fitfor-u-γ-u ots-u-γor marə-Ŷ-u
to.them it I.give PI boy-OBL-PL THAT-OBL.PL big-DEF-OBL
'I give it to the big boys'
- iv. i o m dat a li fet-i ats-ieŷ yuŋg-i /
o fitfor-u otsə-γ-ui yuŋg-u
them-it I.have PI girl-OBL that-tall-FSG /
given PI boy-MSG that-OBL.MSG tall-MSG
'I gave it to the other woman/ to those other men'

We synthesize the distribution of the case and gender, number and definiteness features in (17).

(17)

a. Definite forms	def N	M/A		D	M	N	A
definiteness	+	-		+	-	-/+	-
gender	+	+		+	+	+	+
number	+	+		+	+	+	+
oblique	+	-		+	-	- / +	-
b. Indefinite	N	M		Q/M	(X)	N (Lkr)	A/M
gender	+	+		+	+	+	+
number	+	+		+	+	+	+
oblique	+	-		+	-	-	-
c. Linker	N	Dem		A			
agreement features	+	+		+			
case	+	+		+			

What emerges is that oblique is regularly represented only on the first item within the DP, that is the definite noun or the demonstrative or another modifier in indefinite context. On the contrary gender and number are registered on all the elements, obviously compatibly with the relevant paradigms. Finally, oblique and definiteness are also allowed in the presence of an initial demonstrative.

3. The data of Albanian

Let us compare the nominal agreement of Aromanian with that of Albanian. In Albanian, nouns present an inflectional system in which gender and number categories are fused with definiteness and case, similarly to Aromanian. Analogously, the oblique includes genitive and dative. In the definite, gender separates feminine and masculine. In the indefinite, the oblique takes a specialized exponent, whereas nominative and accusative coincide (Solano 1972, Camaj 1984). The definite exponents of the main nominal classes are provided in (18a) and those indefinite in (18b). Plural exponents do not distinguish gender. The singular vocalic morphemes *-i/u*, *-a* and *-ε* are related to nominal classes and definiteness (including specificity), while the consonantal/syllabic endings *-n*, *-t*, *-s*, *-vε* and *-f* specify case and, in turn, definiteness.

(18) a. Definite inflections

	Masc sg	Fem sg	Neuter sg	Plural
Nom	-i	-a	-t	-a-t/-ε-t
Acc	-i-n	-ε/ə-n	-t	-a-t/-ε-t
Obl	-i-t	-ε/ə-s	-i-t	-a-vε(-t)/ -ε-vε(-t)

b. Indefinite inflections

	Masc/Neuter sg	Fem sg	Plural
Nom/Acc	∅	∅	-a/ -ε
Gen/Dat	-i	-ε	-a-vε/ -ε-vε
Abl			-f

Only the singular definite paradigm shows a clear distinction between nominative and accusative. The coincidence between nominative and accusative characterizes both the definite plural, and the indefinite, in which only the oblique has a specialized inflection.

In Albanian all the elements bear the exponent of case within DPs, in particular this characterizes the accusative singular and the oblique. Adjectives escape this requirement, only including gender and number,

as illustrated by the data of Gjirrokastër⁵, in (19) and Shkodër in (20). (19a.i,a.ii) illustrate the nominative, singular and plural, (19b.i,b.ii,b.iii) the accusative and (19c.i,c.ii) the oblique. The adjectives have gender/number exponents and are introduced by the pre-posed article, the Linker (cf. Franco et al. 2015), that distinguishes the nominative / accusative (19b), from the oblique (19c.i,c.ii). The latter separate the masculine oblique *tə* from the feminine oblique *sə*. The ‘other’ modifier, regardless of reading, generally occurs in post-nominal position, before the adjective, as illustrated in (19b.ii,b.iii,c.ii,c.iv).

(19)

- a.i *ərð-i* *a-i* *bur-i* (*tjetər*) *i* *mað* /
 aj-ə *gruaj-a* (*tjetər*) *ε* *mað-ε*
 came.3SG that-M man-MSG other Lkr big /
 that-F woman-FSG other Lkr big-F
 ‘That other big man/ that other big woman came’
- a.ii *ərð-ən* *ata* *bur-a-t* *ε* *tjerə* *tə* *mə'ðeɲ*
 came.3PL that.M.PL man-PL-DEF Lkr other Lkr big.M.PL
 ‘Those other big men come’
- b.i *patʃ* *atə* *dial-i-n* *ε* *mað* / *vaiz-ε-n* *ε* *mað-ε*
 saw.1SG that.ACC boy- Lkr big /girl-F-ACC Lkr big-F
 ‘I saw that big boy/ that big girl’
- b.ii *paʃ* *atə* *bur-i-n* *tjetər* *tə* *mað* /
 atə *grua-n* *tjetər* *tə* *maðε*
 saw.1SG that.ACC man-MSG-ACC other Lkr big /
 that.ACC woman-ACC other Lkr big
 ‘I saw that other big man/ that other big woman’
- b.iii *patʃ* *atə* *gra:-t* *ε* *tjer-a* /
 ata *bur-a-t* *ε* *tjer-a*
 saw.1SG that.F.PL woman.PL-DEF Lkr other-PL /
 that.M.PL man-PL-DEF Lkr other- PL
 ‘I saw the other women/ men’
- c.i *i-a* *ðatʃ* *ati-i* *bur-i-t* (*tjetər*) *tə* *mað*
 him-it gave.1SG that-OBL man-MSG-OBL other Lkr big
 ‘I gave it to that other big boy’
- c.ii *i-a* *ðaʃ* *asaj* *grua-s* (*tjetər*) *tə* *mað-ε*
 him-it gave.1SG that.F-OBL woman-DEF other Lkr big-F
 ‘I gave it to that other big woman’

⁵ In the examples in (29), the first singular of the past tense shows, according to the informants, the exponent *-tʃ*, more conservative and dialectal, or *-f*. The clitic cluster *i-a* ‘to them-it’ is the dialectal form, contrasting with the standard/ normative *u-a*.

- b.iii pɔʃ ata vɔiz-a-t ε mð-vi /
 ata diem-t ε mð-vi
 saw.1SG that.PL girl-PL-DEF Lkr big-PL /
 that.PL boy.PL-DEF Lkr big-PL
 ‘I saw those big girls / those big boys’
- b.iv pɔʃ ata vɔiz-a-t ε tjer-a tə mð-vi-a
 saw.1SG that.PL girl-PL-DEF Lkr other-pl Lkr big-PL
 ‘I saw those ther big girls’
- c.i i-a ðɔʃ asɔ-i vɔiz-ε-s tjetər tə mð-ε
 him-it gave.1SG that.F-OBL girl-F-OBL other Lkr big
 ‘I gave it to that other big girl’
- c.ii i-a ðɔʃ aty-nε diem-vε (tjerə) tə mð-vi
 him-it gave.1SG that.PL-OBL boy-OBL.PL other Lkr big-PL
 ‘I gave it to those other big boys’
- c.iii i-a ðɔʃ aty-nε vɔiz-a-vε (tjer-a) t mð-vi-a
 him-it gave.1SG that.PL-OBL girl-OBL.PL other-PL Lkr big-PL
 ‘I gave it to those other big girls’

In Albanian the post-nominal alterity element behaves like adjectives, so excluding the agreement in the case. This is made clear by comparing, for instance, (19a.i) and (19c.i), (20a.iii) and (20a.iv), (20b.i) and (20b.ii), (20c.ii) and (20c.iii). When an adjective follows ‘other’ the Linker *tə* is realized, instead of the agreeing form *i/ ε*. The nominative seems to escape this effect, whereby ‘other’ combines with the adjectival linkers *i* or *ε*, as in (19a.i) and (20a.i) (cf. section 5).

As recalled, the oblique morphology characterizes genitive/possession constructs both in Aromanian and Albanian. Thus, in contexts of possession the noun referring to the possessor has the oblique inflection introduced by the PI, as in dative, as in (21a,b) and (22a,b) for nominal contexts, and (21c) for predicative occurrences, respectively for Libofshë and Korça-Plasë.

(21)

- a. mən-a o fitʃor-u / a li fət-i
 hand- DEF.FSG PI boy-MSG / PI girl-OBL
 ‘The hand of the boy/ of the girl’
- b. kɔd-a o kən-l-i / o un kən-i
 tail-DEF.SG PI dog-DEF-OBL / PI a dog-OBL
 ‘The tail of the dog/ of a dog’
- c. aist esti o fitʃor-ʌ-u / o məjer-ʌ-u
 that is PI boy-DEF-OBL / PI woman-DEF-OBL
 ‘that is of the boys/ of the women’

Libofshë

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(24)

- (25)

- Possessives are introduced by the pre-posed article and the possessive of third person is the oblique of the third person pronoun, as in (26) and (27).

(26)

- ## Gjirokaštër

(27)

a.	libra-t	ε	ti-i	/sa-i
	dog.PL-DEF.M	PI	my-MPL	/your-MPL
	‘my/your dogs’			
b.	sər-a	o yu-i	/a je-i	/ o γ-ɔrə
	sister.DEF.FSG	PI him-OBL	/PI her-OBL	/PI them-PL.OBL
	‘his/her/their	sister’		Shkodër

The inflectional part of the possessive is complex. In Aromanian it includes the definiteness element *-l-* that we find in nominal paradigms. In Rēmën the original *-l* has been velarized into *-u* in the final position, as in (15a,c), while in the masculine plural palatalizes in *-ȱ*. Fërshërot has the realization *-ȱ*, cf. (16a,a').

4. The elementary relator, case and syncretism

Aromanian and Albanian show interesting correspondences in the nominal system:

- ✓ The case paradigm contrasts the oblique (including genitive and dative) to direct cases. The latter in Aromanian coincide with definite or indefinite forms inflected for gender and number.
- ✓ Similarly, in Albanian only the singular definite accusative shows a specialized inflection, i.e. *-n*; the plural again does not separate nominative and accusative occurrences, only characterized by gender and number properties.
- ✓ Possessors are introduced by an element. In Aromanian we find the PI, that is the combination of the preposition *a* with the pre-posed article, partially agreeing with the possessor.
- ✓ In Albanian we find a typical Linker, that is an article that agrees with the head noun. This Linker also precedes adjectives.
- ✓ The agreement within the D/N domain is different. In Aromanian only the element, noun or demonstrative/ modifier, that realizes the definite properties of the DP bears the oblique case exponent, while in Albanian all the elements have case exponents.

In many natural languages, genitives, datives, and locatives are realized by the same cases or adpositions, giving rise to syncretism phenomena. An idea, originally formulated by Fillmore (1968), is that dative and genitive are the inflectional equivalent of prepositions to, and of, etc. If inflections have an interpretable content, we can conclude that oblique has a relational content exactly like prepositions and dative and genitive as well as *di/ a can be analyzed as elementary relators* (Manzini et al. 2019, 2020). *An idea variously supported in literature*

is that ‘possession’ corresponds to the more elementary part-whole relation. Following Belvin and den Dikken (1997), we construe possessors as ‘zonally including’ the possessee and notate the ‘inclusion’ (or part-whole) relation as $[\subseteq]$, to suggest that a part/whole interpretation is involved in genitives/ datives. Therefore, possession on a par with location can be understood as a type of “zonal inclusion” (Manzini and Savoia 2011, 2018). The crucial example is provided by *di*, which includes apparently diverse readings (cf. section 2.1). On this basis, we analyse both basic preposition *a/di* and corresponding case morphology (dative/ genitive) as the elementary operator, in (28) (Savoia et al. 2020).

$$(28) \quad \mathbf{di/ a / oblique} = \subseteq$$

If we consider the PI *a*, we see that it can introduce both dative and genitive as in (3)-(4), (7)-(8), and (9); moreover, *a* can realize a locative reading with indefinite nouns of place, as *a kasə* ‘in the house’. *a* combines with the definiteness root *l-* (< Latin **ille*), generally associated with Romance articles, giving rise to the allomorphs *a l/a t/o* with the masculine nouns and plural and *a li* with the feminine. Thus, *a* can be analyzed as a realization of the elementary relation $[\subseteq]$, followed by a quantificationally specified form of the noun (the oblique), as in (29).

$$(29) \quad \mathbf{a} = [[\subseteq] \text{ (locative)}] / _ \text{ (deictic/ Q)} [[\mathbf{N}] \text{ (Oblique)}]$$

Some varieties associate an article with *a*, at least in some contexts, as in (30a,b,c).

$$(30) \quad \begin{array}{ll} \mathbf{a.} & \mathbf{li} \leftrightarrow \mathbf{a} _ [\text{FSG}] \\ \mathbf{b.} & \mathbf{t} \leftrightarrow \mathbf{a} _ [\text{MSG}] \\ \mathbf{c.} & \mathbf{o} = [\subseteq] / _ [\text{MSG/ PL}] \end{array}$$

According to some proposals in the literature, PIs combine the invariable base *a* with the definite article, whereby *al* is essentially an agreement head, taking a genitive in its Spec (Giurgea 2012). Cornilescu (1995, pp. 126-127) identifies *al* with a D marker. Other explanations assume that in *al* the preposition *a* combines with the enclitic article (cf. Grosu 1994, Cornilescu and Nicolae 2013). The invariable form *a* is attested in Old Romanian. Hence, if *a* corresponds to the Latin preposition *ad*, this explains why in Old Romanian *a* also introduced datives (Stan 2016b).

Linkers in Albanian have different properties from the PI, insofar as they do not include a preposition (Franco et al. 2015). We can treat them as simple D element endowed with ϕ -features agreeing with the head noun. Thus, the two construct show an interesting difference, in (31a) for the Linker in Albanian and in (31b) for the PI in Aromanian (cf. Manzini and Savoia 2018). As for the other, following the conceptualization of structures in Chomsky (2015: 7), whereby the category label is ‘the pair of agreeing elements’. We assume that in these languages the determiner (D) and the noun (N) can have a common realization, D/N.

- (31) a. dər-a ε vaiz-əs
‘the hand of the girls’

D/N	[Lkr/D	[_⊆	D/N
dər-a _φ	ε _φ		vaiz-əs _{φ,⊆}

- b. mən-a a li fət-i
‘the hand of the girls’

D/N	[_{P/⊆}	P	[Lkr	[_⊆	D/N
mən-a _φ		a	li _φ		fət-i _{φ,⊆}

In our analysis the Linker is an element of the domain of N, a bundle of ϕ -features introducing the DP and agreeing with the head noun. The PI is broken down in a prepositional part *a* and a D part, the latter agreeing with the possessor. Definite nouns are amalgamated with the definiteness element into a single complex form.

4.1. An approach to morphology and syntax

Our idea is that no traditional case specification is externalized by the noun exponents and that nominal inflections belong to very elementary semantic primitives associated with referentiality. Coming to the notion of case, we know that this feature, a classic category of the cartographic model, has a spurious status, in the sense that it is nothing but a manifestation of the agreement; inherent cases put other descriptive problems interacting with prepositions and the morpho-syntactic organization of the sentence. It is no accident that Chomsky (2021, p. 16) concludes that ‘Case doesn’t enter into semantic interpretation’ and is part of externalization. Actually, the distribution of nominal inflections and syncretism phenomena suggest that what is called case must be identified with bundles of nominal features, such as number, gender, definiteness, or syntactic operators.

In what follows we will consider the nominal morpho-syntax of Aromanian and Albanian, in both languages we find a similar type of case and gender/ number marking, through inflectional exponents, with a restricted occurrence of case, substantially in the oblique. The paradigms are comparable in many respects. In particular, a widespread syncretism involves the exponent *-i*:

- ✓ In Aromanian in the class III nouns covers three fundamental readings: the indefinite singular, Nom/Acc and Oblique, in (10b) and (11b), the definite singular in Nom/Acc and Oblique, in (10a) and (119a), and variably the definite and indefinite plural, with exclusion of the definite plural Oblique in (10a) and (11a), where the formatives *-l/ă-u/ -l-or* occur.
- ✓ In Albanian *(-i)* introduces a singularity in the singular masculine nominative and the oblique.

Thus, the syncretism encompasses, definiteness and the oblique reading both in Aromanian and Albanian, and plurality in Aromanian. As to plurality, in keeping with Chierchia (1998) and Manzini and Savoia (2018) we can think of plurality as a subset relationship of sets of individuals. The sub-set-of relation can be traced to the operator $[\subseteq]$, by its conceptual similarity with the part-whole relationship. This property can be also connected with the oblique (genitive/ dative), the content of which can be identified with the primitive operator $[\subseteq]$ (Manzini and Savoia 2011, 2018). It is reasonable, indeed, to assume that genitive and dative have the same semantic properties as the oblique introducers *of*, *to*. The analysis of the inflectional system of Latin and its complex syncretism case/plural, specifically on the exponents *-i* and *-s*, leads Manzini and Savoia (2011, 2014) to conclude that plural and oblique can be traced back to specialized readings of the same predicate $[\subseteq]$, as suggested in (32a,b):

- (32) a. PL = $[\subseteq]$ / R__
 As a property of the noun, plurality isolates a subset of the set of all things to which the noun (its Root) can be predicated (Chierchia 1998)
- b. Dative = $[\subseteq]$ / __ DP
 In genitive/ dative contexts the inclusion is read as subset-of-possessor relationship and its scope is either sentential, applying to the internal argument of the verb, or, in genitives, DP-internal.
 (Manzini and Savoia 2011, 2014, 2018)

This pattern is not exceptional, just think of the syncretism in Latin case inflections, analyzed in Halle and Vaux (1997), where, for instance, *-i* realizes the masculine plural and the genitive and dative

singular, and, similarly *-e* (<**ai*) feminine plural and genitive and dative singular, and so on. Also in Italian *-i*, typically associated with the plural, can characterize the 3rd singular person pronouns, cf. *egl-i/lu-i/le-i* ‘he/she’ *colu-i* ‘he’ and, in addition, the dative *gl-i* ‘to him/her/them’, the oblique including also the genitive, *a/di cu-i* ‘to/of which’, *altru-i* ‘of others’. Thus, we must conclude that inflectional exponents associated with the part-whole relation can be specialized for one or another reading, or, possibly for both.

Traditionally, number and person correspond to denotational primitives of nominal constituents, and in the generative framework they are treated as features (cf. Chomsky 1995). The case, a classic category of the cartographic model, has a spurious status, in the sense that it is nothing but a manifestation of the agreement; inherent cases put other descriptive problems, interacting with prepositions or the morpho-syntactic organization of the sentence. Indeed, Chomsky (1995) assumes that the feature of case is radically uninterpretable and essentially traceable to the agreement between the subject and the verb. It is no accident that Chomsky (2021: 16) concludes that “Case doesn’t enter into semantic interpretation” and is part of externalization. This issue is magnified by the fact that in the varieties we have presented, the same morphology is associated with gender/ number and definiteness and/ or the case. For instance, in Aromanian *-i* realizes both the plural and the oblique case, as in (10)-(11); in Albanian *-a* can realize the plural or the definite feminine nominative, *-i* the definite masculine nominative and the indefinite oblique, as in (18). In conclusion, case and other features seem to overlap. $\bar{U}$

Some morphological approaches separate the abstract representation of the syntactic relations and their implementation by morphological exponents. This is the case of Distributed Morphology, where subword elements (affixes and clitics) are ‘dissociated morphemes’, which convey information ‘separated from the original locus of that information in the phrase marker’ (Embick and Noyer 2001: 557). Manipulation rules (Impoverishment) operating on abstract bundle of features and Late insertion yield the surface realization. We adopt a different model, in which morphological operations are part of the syntactic computation and there is no specialized component for the morphological structure of words (Manzini and Savoia 2011, Manzini et al. 2020, Savoia et al. 2019; see also Collins and Kayne 2020). Lexical elements, including morphemes, have interpretive content. This hypothesis excludes powerful tools such as Late insertion (Halle and Marantz 1994) and the manipulation of terminal nodes. In this line, the agreement in sentence and within the DP is the manifestation of

the identity between referential feature sets corresponding to the same arguments. Moreover, if inflectional exponents are endowed with interpretive content, we must think that syncretism depends on such a content.

In keeping with Chomsky (2015, 2020, 2021), inflected words are yielded by Merge, by amalgamating morphemes, roots and affixes, i.e. sub-word elements, into a complex syntactic object. In these recent papers, Chomsky excludes head movement as a genuine syntactic rule and proposes ‘to drop the condition that Internal Merge (Movement) has to be triggered, so it’s free, like External Merge’. Chomsky (2021: 30, 36 ff.) concludes that ‘With head movement eliminated, *v* need no longer be at the edge of the *v*P phase but can be within the domains of PIC and Transfer, which can be unified. EA is interpreted at the next phase’. Thus, the inflected verb formed by Merge [INFL [*v*, Root]] is able to realize the properties of the C/T Phase (Chomsky 2021: 30, 36 ff.). In keeping with this conceptualization of the morphology-syntax relationship, the traditional head movement involving post-nominal articles and the gender/ number/ case inflection in NPs can in turn be seen as a type of amalgamation. The category-less root of nouns is interpreted as a predicate with one open argument place, which is ultimately bound by a D/Q operator, and categorizers such as *v*, *n*, *can be conceptualized* as the bundles of ϕ -features entering into the agreement operations (Manzini 2021, Baldi and Savoia 2022).

If we adopt the hypothesis that DP is in turn a Phase, in addition to CP and *v*P (cf. Manzini and Savoia 2011, Manzini et al. 2020), we can apply this analysis to the inflected noun and to the agreement within its DP. The distribution of nominal inflections and syncretism suggest that the case can be identified with bundles of nominal features, such as number, definiteness, or syntactic operators.

4.2. Albanian

Consider the inflection *-i*, introducing a singularity in the masculine nominative and the oblique. The coexistence of an interpretation of number, here singular, and oblique is not exceptional, as noted in the discussion around (32). We conclude that the part-whole relationship can license both plural and singular reference, insofar as the set can have one specific member. The selection restrictions that specify the distribution of exponents, are applied according to the *Elsewhere* principle, as in (33) for the genitive/ dative morphemes. The latter select for the sub-classes of nouns, *m/f*.

- (33)
- i, -s, -vε = [$\subseteq$]
 - a. -i $\subseteq$ $\leftrightarrow$ m_N] ____
 - b. -s $\subseteq$ $\leftrightarrow$ f_N] ____
 - c. -vε $\subseteq$ /-ui $\subseteq$ $\leftrightarrow$ N] ____

Both third person object clitics, in (34a,a',a''), and Linkers, (34b), are a subset of these morphemes.

- (34)
- a. Object clitics: *i* 'them/ to her, him, them',
ε/*a* 'her, him'
 - a'. ε/ *i* $\int$ ε
her/ him/ them see.PRES-3SG
'(S)he sees her/ him/ them'
 - a''. *i a* δ atʃ
to him/her/them-it give.PAST.1SG
'I gave this to her/ him, them'
 - b. Linkers: *i*_{MSG}, ε_{F/PL}, t(ə)/s(ə)_{OBL/DEF}

The element *-t* is systematically associated with the definite reading in oblique singular and in the plural. However, as a Linker, it introduces the oblique in addition to plural. This suggests the specification in (35a), where inclusion is optional. The exponent (-)ε of the indefinite singular oblique, also occurring as object clitic and Linker, seems to be an exponent of definiteness or specificity, DEF, as in (35b).

- (35)
- a. -t($\subseteq$),definiteness $\leftrightarrow$ R/Infl] ____
 - b. -ε_{DEF} $\leftrightarrow$ f_N] ____

The ability of *-a* to also specify both the feminine definite and the plural suggests a referential property, that we label [aggregate], that can be thought as the common core of mass and plural interpretation (cf. Chierchia 2010). This solution seems to capture the lexical nature of the feminine class, which includes many abstract and mass nouns, such as *ver-a* 'the wine' (cf. Savoia and Baldi 2022). Again, the plural agreement of the verb makes the plural interpretation explicit, as in (36).

- (36) -a_[aggr] $\leftrightarrow$ feminine N] ____

An interesting consequence of this analysis is that the so-called nominative is nothing more than a noun whose interpretive role is fixed by the agreement with the verb, substantially as in Romance languages.

$$(37) \quad \text{a.} \quad -n_{\sqsubseteq} \leftrightarrow_N](-i_{\sqsubseteq}/-\epsilon_{DEF})] _$$

(38) a.

-i _{SG / PL / OBL}	↔	N _{CLASS} /____
-a _{DEF}	↔	N(i) _{SG, F}]____
-je _{DEF}	↔	PL / M] ____
-l _{DEF} -	↔	(i) _{M, PL}] ____
-or/ -u _{OBL, DEF}	↔	N _{PL, ____}

b.

- i_{SG/ PL/ OBL} $\leftrightarrow$ N_{CLASS/}__
- a_{DEF} $\leftrightarrow$ N_{SG, F}]__
- A_{DEF} $\leftrightarrow$ PL / M] __
- l_{DEF}- $\leftrightarrow$ (i)_{PL}] __
- or/ -u_{OBL, DEF} $\leftrightarrow$ N_{PL},

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The element *-i* is associated with the oblique in the feminine singular and, in Rēmēn of Libofshë, also characterizes indefinite feminine plurals. In the Class III the definite masculine forms assume the exponent *-l-i* in the singular and differ from the feminine, which only introduces *-i*. As noticed, the natural solution is to relate the syncretism of *-i* (singular/plural, direct/indirect forms) to its operator content, as in (39a), and its distribution to (39b). In particular, *-u* covers the plural in obliques and the definiteness in the masculine singular of the type *fitfor-u* ‘the boy’ in (10) and (11). Manzini and Savoia (2010: 422), dealing with the transition from the Latin case system to Romance nominal systems, characterize the standard Romanian inflection *-i*, oblique singular and the nominative plural (masculine), ‘essentially like Latin *-i*, as a Q element [...] it will have the plural reading when taking scope over the words - or the possessive (dative/genitive) reading when taking sentential scope’. This property seems to be also implemented by other morphemes associated with the plural and/ or definiteness, as suggested in (39a). These exponents differ from each other according to different selection restrictions, in (39b,c,d,e).

- (39) a. $-i / -u / -or / \hat{\Lambda} = \text{subset-of-relation} / \subseteq$
 b. $i_{\subseteq} \leftrightarrow R _ \text{ or } l _$
 c. $-\hat{\Lambda}_{\text{DEF}, \subseteq} \leftrightarrow R_M _$
 d. $-u_{\subseteq} \leftrightarrow \text{PI } [[\text{DEF}, \subseteq] _]$
 e. $-or \leftrightarrow \text{PI } [[\text{DEF}, \subseteq] _] \text{ (sub-set of lexical items)}$

However, even the specialized oblique inflections of plural nouns, such as *-i/-u/ y-ur-u/ -l-or* in (10) and (11), are not able to license the part-whole relationship alone. They must be introduced by the prepositional element *a*. The latter can combine with non-specialized forms for oblique, such as *a fitfor-u / a un fitfor* ‘to/of the boy/ a boy’, in (3a,b), *a li mujër-i* ‘to/ of Art woman’ in (9). *a* is compatible with the specialized oblique form, if available, as in the plural and in the singular, cf. *a (li) fêt-i* ‘to/of the girl’, *a un-ei fêt-i* ‘to/of one-Obl girl’ in (7a,b), etc. In other words, *-i/-u/-or* do not have the strength to introduce the part-whole interpretation over DPs, unlike the preposition *di* ‘of’ or *a*. We may express this restriction by assuming that the specialized forms require *a*, as suggested in (40).

- (40) $-lor/-ur_{\subseteq} \leftrightarrow a \text{ (Art) Q } [N _]$

Thus, if we take the sentence *i o ded o bərbats-ur-u* ‘I gave it to the men’ (cf. (4a)), Merge (Chomsky 2015, 2019, 2021) yields the amalgamation between the root and the definite inflection, marked by *-ur-*, in (41a),

characterized as DEF, PL, with which $-u_i$ is combined, yielding the complex noun in (41b).

- (41) a. $\langle [R \text{ bərbats}], -ur_{\text{DEF,PL}} \rangle \rightarrow [\varphi [\text{bərbats}]-ur]$
- b. $\langle [\varphi \text{ bərbats}] -ur], -u_{\subseteq} \rangle \rightarrow [\subseteq [\varphi [\text{bərbats}]-ur-]u]$

The occurrence of the oblique inflection requires the introducer, here o (cf. (10c)), as in (42a); the insertion of sub-word elements depends on subcategorization restrictions as in (42b) and (42c). Merge is based on the agreement between the syntactic features, including $\bar{I}$, both within the noun and DP.

- (42) a. $\langle o_{\subseteq}, [\subseteq [\text{bərbats}]-ur-u] \rangle \rightarrow [_{PP} o_{\subseteq} [\subseteq, [\text{bərbats}]-ur-u]]$
- a. $-ur_{\text{DEF},\subseteq} \leftrightarrow R_M \text{ ___}$
- c. $-u_{\subseteq} \leftrightarrow \text{PI } [[_{\text{DEF},\subseteq}] \text{ ___}]$

The inflected noun realizes the referential properties associated with D in the DP, i.e. the class, definiteness, and number specifications applying to the noun, (43), within the Phase DP (hypothesizing that there is one), without assuming head-raising. The alternant o realizes the preposition that connects the noun to the event in the role of the beneficiary.

- (43)
- | | | | |
|-------|-------------------------|---------------|---|
| v.... | P/PI | D_{φ} | N |
| | $o_{\varphi/\subseteq}$ | | bərbats-ur-u _{DEF.M / \subseteq} |

In genitival contexts the part-whole reading is realized by the oblique form of the possessor, as in (21)-(22), or by the possessive pronouns, in (23)-(24); anyway, they are introduced by the PI.

5. The distribution of inflectional exponents

Typological and descriptive studies show that the nominal agreement (concordance) displays different patterns of realization between languages (Norris 2019). While Albanian varieties extend the ϕ -features agreement on all constituents within the DP except for the adjective, Aromanian varieties limit the agreement with respect to the features and the items involved:

- (i) In the sequences *determiner modifier noun (adjective)* gender and number are associated with all the items.

- (ii) Definiteness and oblique are generally associated with the first element, i.e. the definite noun or the demonstrative.
- (iii) In such contexts, exclusion from the noun is generalized but not mandatory.
- (iv) Adjectives are excluded from the case realization, except in contexts where they are introduced by the Linker.

Asymmetries in agreement distribution are diffused, although the crucial role of gender is systematically attested, whereby generally the case agreement implies that of gender. A different role is played by definiteness and case, which, as noted by Corbett (2006: § 4.4), give rise to unclear kinds of agreement. In the literature the asymmetry between the agreement properties of determiners - and nominal modifiers/ adjectives - and nouns have been brought to light (cf. Cinque 2009). Indeed, different types of splits emerge. Brazilian Portuguese varieties present an asymmetry in which plural inflection -s only occurs on the determiners or prenominal adjectives, as in *O-s/est-es/algum-s/un-s livr-o muit-o bonit-o* 'The/these/some book very nice'. Costa and Figueiredo (2002) adopt a distinction between dissociated and singleton morphemes, in the spirit of the DM treatment in Embick and Noyer (2001), whereby the plural in Brazilian Portuguese corresponds to a specialized interpretable morpheme (singleton), which combines only with the "element anchoring the information concerning number", namely Determiners. The distribution in which prenominal determiners and adjectives lack (a set of) agreement properties, like in the case of Cadore varieties in (1)-(2), is discussed in Bonet et al. (2015). Their idea is that pre-nominal agreement is due to a 'family of constraints' enforcing morphological agreement; on the contrary, postnominal agreement is syntactic in nature and triggered by Spec Head agreement. The hypothesis that different manifestations of agreement could be referred to different syntactic operations is pursued by several authors. A mechanism based on the split between different types of features, specifically marked vs. unmarked, is pursued in Pomino (2012) in order to account for the lack of number inflection in some Italian dialects.

Savoia et al. (2019), Manzini et al. (2020) discuss the data from the Rhaeto-Romance varieties of Cadore (Italy) which display an asymmetric distribution of plural feminine -s, occurring only on nouns and post-nominal/predicative modifiers (Pomino 2012, Bonet et al. 2015). Thus, in the feminine, the -a inflection characterizes pre-nominal modifiers also in plural DPs, hence separating plural expression in the D elements and on the noun, as in (45a,b).

(45)

- a. singular
l-a/ keel-a/ / kel autr-a femem-a
The-F/ that-F / that other-F woman-F
'The/ that/ that other woman'
- b. plural
l-a / kel-a / kel autr-a femem-e-s
the-F / that-F/ that other-F woman-PL-PL
'The / those / those other women'

Borca di Cadore

The proposed analysis is that *-a* has the necessary interpretive force to saturate the referential property of D. Phenomena such as the latter, suggest that prenominal elements in the DP contribute to fixing the referents to which noun applies. Thus, all determiners/modifiers select *-a*, i.e. the feminine inflection, as the denotationally strongest inflection, and not a 'weak' or default type of agreement. In Friulian, a similar contrast involves the expression of plurality in the DP. In the feminine, we find *-i* on D, articles and variably demonstratives, but *-s* on the other elements, as in (46a,b).

(46)

- | | | | |
|----|---------------|----|--|
| a. | singular | b. | plural |
| | l-a femem-a | | l-i femem-i-s / kest-i femem-i-s |
| | the-F woman-F | | the-PL woman-PL-PL / this-PL woman-PL-PL |
| | 'The woman' | | 'The women / these women' |
- Montereale

In these languages, *-i* is endowed with the strong properties required to lexicalize D. The idea is that the occurrence of agreement exponents takes into account the Phase organization of the sentence.

We assume a similar approach, whereby the lexical elements introduced in the derivation are endowed with interpretive content, associated with the externalization of the Phase. The notion of phase, and of complement of a phase as defined by the phase impenetrability condition PIC, is tied up with that of externalization. The idea is that the syntactic object constructed is sent to the SM (Sensorimotor) and C-I (Conceptual-Intentional) interfaces by the operation Transfer and is no longer accessible to later mappings to the interfaces. Following Manzini et al. (2020: 195), we assume that DP is a Phase, and that 'the asymmetries noted simply correspond to the distinction between head of a phase and complement of the phase, independently individuated by the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC)'. We may expect that the lexicalization of agreeing inflection is not necessarily consistent in

different Spell-Out domains, the complement of the head D and the domain of the head D. Although Agree is a syntactic universal, the externalization of the features can be (i) uniform in the entire Phase or (ii) uniform in the Spell-Out domain, as in (47a,b). Therefore, differences between the head (the demonstrative and other modifiers) and its complement (the NP and the material within its domain) are possible.

(47) Agree is externalized

(i) uniformly

(ii) uniformly in the Spell-Out domain

In Gheg and Tosk varieties, the agreement between determiners, quantifiers and noun also includes the case exponent, as in (19a,b,c) and (20a,b,c), thus satisfying (47i). Only post-nominal adjectives escape this condition, as seen in section 3, as they have gender/number exponents but do not register the case. The pre-posed article distinguishes the case, whereby the nominative (19a)-(20a) differs from the accusative (19b)-(20b), and from the oblique (19c)-(20c). The latter separate the masculine oblique *tə* from the feminine oblique *sə*. The modifier ‘other’ follows the noun, as adjectives.

Aromanian applies (47ii). Indeed, the domains of determiners and that of NP can be characterized by (partially) different subsets of features depending on whether they include the case and definiteness or not. The more evident generalization can be depicted by the contrast between (48) vs (49). In (48) all the ϕ -features are realized on the demonstrative associated with D. In the NP domain only gender and number are externalized to SM and C-I.

(48) *Spell-out domains: gender, number and case in D, gender and number in NP*

T	...	D		[_{NP} M		[N		[Adj
lə	ded	atse-lor _{ϕi,⊆}		alant-i _{ϕi}		mujer _{ϕi}		mufat-i _{ϕi}

‘I gave it to those other beautiful women’(13.c.i)

When definiteness and case are realized on the N, in (49a), the inflected noun realizes all the referential properties of the D domain, insofar as N is accessible to operations at the domain of D and transferred to SM and C-I systems. For the sake of clarity, we represent this by associating the noun with D. Such properties can be also realized by a pre-nominal modifier, as for instance *alant* in (49b). Again, N only presents gender and number. We remember, based on Chomsky (2015: 6), that structures

are the result of the labeling algorithm, which determines a property of the element, here ϕ -features, for externalization to C-I.

(49) *Spell-out domain of D: gender, number and case*

- a. T... [$\subseteq$ PI [D/N [M
 i-u ded a $\subseteq$ -l ϕ_i k ϵ n-i-l-i $\phi_i, \subseteq$ alant ϕ_i
 to.him-it I gave dog-MSG-DEF-OBL other
- b. T ... [$\subseteq$ D/M [N
 i-u ded alant-ui $\phi_i, \subseteq$ k ϵ n-i ϕ_i
 to.him-it I gave other-MSG.OBL dog-MSG
 ‘I gave it to the other dog’ (13b.i)

Amalgamation, in (50a-c) applies inserting the inflectional content of the lexical items and combining them by Merge. Merge combines the definite oblique noun with the PI, including the prepositional element *a* and the pronominal article *l* agreeing with the noun, modifier within the DP, in (49c). The derivation constructs syntactic objects labeled by agreeing ϕ -features (Chomsky 2015: 9 ff.) and interpreted as corresponding to the same referent.

(50) *Amalgamation process*

- a. $\langle \text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R, \text{i}_{\text{MSG}/\subseteq} \rangle \rightarrow [[\text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R] \text{i}_{\text{MSG}}]$
 b. $\langle [[\text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R] \text{i}_{\text{MSG}}], \text{l}_{\text{DEF}} \rangle \rightarrow [[[\text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R] \text{i}_{\text{MSG}}] \text{l}_{\text{DEF}}]$
 c. $\langle [[[\text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R] \text{i}_{\text{MSG}}] \text{l}_{\text{DEF}}], \text{i}_{\subseteq} \rangle \rightarrow [[[[\text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R] \text{i}_{\text{MSG}}] \text{l}_{\text{DEF}}] \text{i}_{\subseteq}]$
 External Merge within the DP
 c. $\langle [\phi \text{k}\epsilon\text{n-i-l-i}], \text{alant}_{\phi} \rangle \rightarrow [\text{DP } [\phi \text{k}\epsilon\text{nili } [\phi \text{alant}]]]$
 External Merge of the oblique
 $\langle \text{a}_{\subseteq} \text{l}_{\phi}, [\phi \text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R \text{-i}_{\text{MSG}} \text{-l}_{\text{DEF}} \text{-i}_{\subseteq}] [\phi \text{alant}] \rangle$
 $\rightarrow \text{a}_{\subseteq} \text{l}_{\phi} [[\phi \text{k}\epsilon\text{n}_R \text{-i}_{\text{MSG}} \text{-l}_{\text{DEF}}] \text{i}_{\subseteq}]$

Finally, let us consider the contexts in which a demonstrative is inserted between the noun and the adjective, as in (16iv) *i o m dat a li fet-i ats-ie i yung-i* ‘I gave it to the tall girl’. We must conclude that the demonstrative following the noun creates a new D domain, where, again, D must realize all referential features, including the case and definiteness, as in (51).

(51) *Spell-out domain of D: gender, number and case*

- T ... [$\subseteq$ PI [D/N [D [A
 i o m dat a $\subseteq$ -li $\phi_i, \subseteq$ fet-i $\phi_i, \subseteq$ ats-ie i $\phi_i, \subseteq$ yung-i ϕ_i
 to.him-it I have given to the tall girl’

Manzini and Savoia (2018) identify this Linker with a DP projection, as substantially assumed in (51). In other words, they are treated like

Albanian linkers, in (31a). A different analysis is necessary for the PI, as it includes a prepositional element and occurs only in oblique contexts, cf. 31b).

Finally, we return to the data of Gjirokastër in (19) and Shkodër in (20) concerning ‘other’ and post-nominal adjectives. We have already noted that postnominal elements do not agree in the case, except for the Linker, which shows the contrast between nominative/accusative and oblique. We conclude that the Linker is a head D, visible to the NP, as suggested in (52). Thus, Albanian limits (47ii) to the domain of the adjective, externalized separately from the first part of the DP.

(52) *Spell-Out domain of Adjective*

T ...	[	D	[NP	N	[	Lkr/D	A
pɔʃ		at _{φ,case}		vɔiz-ə-n _{φ,case}		ε _{φ,case}	mɔð-ε _φ

As we saw, ‘other’ is optionally preceded by a Linker only in the direct plural, as in (19a.ii) or (20b.iv), and only agrees in gender and number. Moreover, ‘other’ prevents the adjectival Linker from agreeing in the case and triggers the insertion of the invariant definiteness morpheme *tə*, for instance in (20b.ii), instead of *ε* in (20b.i). We must think that ‘other’ renders the Linker in the domain [Lkr [Adj]] inaccessible to N, and the agreement is not uniform. as suggested in (53) for (20b.ii) *pɔʃ at vɔiz-ə-n tjetər t mɔð-ε* ‘I saw that other big girl’.

(53) *Spell-Out domain of Adjective*

T...	[	D	[NP	N	[	M	[	Lkr	A
pɔʃ		at _{φ,case}		vɔiz-ə-n _{φ,case}		tjetər		t _φ	mɔð-ε _φ

We remember that in nominative contexts, ‘other’ admits the adjectival linkers *i* or *ε*, as in (19a.i) and (20a.i). As we have noted, the elements *i* and *ε* and nominative do not involve the notion of case in the proper sense. They only introduce definiteness and therefore they can be selected independently of the presence of ‘other’.

6. A brief conclusion

The aim of this article is to describe and explain the distribution of the agreement morphology in DPs in Aromanian, also in comparison with Albanian DPs. Sections 1, 2 are devoted to the analysis of the case/gender/number paradigms of Aromanian and Albanian varieties, of which section 4 proposes an interpretation based the idea that functional items are endowed with semantic content, substantially

traceable to elementary semantic predicates. This conceptualization brings to a reformulation of syncretism phenomena, in section 4.1. The asymmetries in the agreement within the DP, described in section 3 and discussed in section 5, are understood as a manifestation of differences in the occurrence of the agreeing exponents within different Spell-Out domains (cf. Savoia et al. 2019, and Manzini et al. 2020).

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