Two D heads: evidence from less commonly studied Romance varieties

Romance languages are mostly homogeneous in terms of the form of their definite articles, which typically display *l-* forms descended from Latin *ille*, as in French *le/la chat(te)* ('the cat'-m./f.) and standard Catalan *el/la gat(a)* ('the cat'-m./f.). Less widespread are Romance languages displaying *s-* forms descended from Latin *ipse*, as in Sardinian *su cane* ('the dog'-m.sg.), *sa mákkina* ('the car'-f.sg.; Blasco Ferrer 1986). Even more striking are the Romance varieties displaying a double system, such as Balearic Catalan (*s-* and *l-* forms) and French (but not Belgian) Picard (*ch-* and *l-* forms):

(1) a. *Sa* muntanya que veus   és molt alta. (Balearic Catalan)
         the.F mountain that see.2PSG is very tall
         'The mountain that you see is very tall.'
     b. Anem   a *la* muntanya.
         go.1PPL to the.F mountain
         'Let´s go to the mountain.'
(2) a. *ch'* pus riche (Boulogne Picard; Haigneré 1901)
         the.M most rich
         'the richest'
     b. *le* roy
         'the.M king'

Following Ledgeway (2012:103) for Balearic Catalan, we show that the two different forms are reserved for different types of DPs. Specifically, the Balearic *s-* forms appear in [+particularized] DPs and the *l-* forms in [-particularized] DPs. The [+particularized] DPs involve adjectival expressions, prepositional phrases, superlatives, and relative clauses; the [-particularized] DPs involve generics/uniques, titles, and collective nouns. We extend Ledgeway's characterization to varieties of Picard: *ch-* forms appear with [+particularized] DPs, *l-* forms with [-particularized] DPs.
　　　We take the Balearic Catalan *s-* and Picard *ch-* forms above to correspond to an upper DP layer and *l-* (in these two Romance varieties) to correspond to a lower DP layer (e.g., Zamparelli 2000 and later work):

(3) [$_{DP1}$ *ch-, s-* ……. [$_{DP2}$ *l-* [$_{NP}$]]]

　　　Several syntactic properties of DPs in these varieties support the analysis proposed in (3). First, we find that DP1 and DP2 may be spelled out in the same expression:

(4) *es l'amo, es l'avi* (*s-* + *l-*) (Balearic Catalan)
     'the mister', 'the grandfather'
(5) *ch' l'esprit, ch' l'infant* (*ch-* + *l-*) (Boulogne Picard; Haigneré 1901)
     'the spirit', 'the child'

Related to this, in Balearic Catalan DP1 *s-* forms may co-occur with a specialized personal article (*en/na*) that precedes only [+human] proper names:

(6) *es* conco *en* Toni (Menorcan Balearic Catalan)
     the uncle *en* Toni
     'Uncle Toni'

We take *en/na* to correspond to DP2.
　　　Second, there is evidence that vocatives, typically incompatible with definite DPs (**the waiter!*), appear with DP2 (*l-*) articles, but not with DP1 (*s-*) articles in Balearic Catalan:

(7) a. *s'avi! (Balearic Catalan)
     b. l'avi!
         'the-grandfather'

Although the evidence for DP1 and DP2 is more conspicuous in Romance varieties with a double system of definite articles, the analysis put forth here explains several otherwise recalcitrant facts in Romance languages with a sole definite article. One is the well-known feature of French vocatives, possible with an *l*- form (e.g., *au revoir les enfants!* 'goodbye children!'). According to our analysis, this *l*- article would correspond to DP2 and an isomorphic *l*- form to DP1.

In Sardinian, differential object marking (DOM) is possible only with DPs lacking a DP1 layer; that is, those DPs corresponding to DP2. How do we know this, given that the language exclusively displays *s*- definite articles? Jones (1999; and De Angelis 2017) illustrates DOM with DPs involving titles like 'king', 'doctor', 'boss' (see (8a)). In Balearic Catalan (8b), such DPs involving titles, which indicate [-particularized] unique referents, display *l*- (DP2) not *s*- (DP1) definite articles. So we can conclude that the examples with titles in (8a) also involve DP2. We also assume DP2 with proper names, which is why DOM is displayed in Sardinian in (8c). Vocatives are possible with *s*- articles in Sardinian, and it is reasonable to assume DP2 in these cases as well (recall (7)). As expected, DOM is not possible in cases with common nouns introduced by a definite article (8d), as these examples involve the higher article layer, DP1.

(8) a. Appu vistu *a* su re / su duttore / su mere. (Sardinian; Jones, fn. 5)
         have.1PSG seen *a* the.M king / the.M doctor / the.M boss
         'I have seen the king / the doctor / the boss.'

     b. *el* senyor director (Balearic Catalan)
         the.F mister director
         'Mr. director'

     c. Conosco *a* Juanne. (Sardinian; Jones, p. 122)
         know.1PSG *a* Juanne
         'I know Juanne.'

     d. Appu vistu (*a*) su frate de Juanne. (Sardinian; Jones, p. 123)
         have.1PSG seen (*a*) the.M brother of Juanne
         'I have seen the brother of Juanne.'

If on the right track, the analysis pursued here supports the idea of a more articulated DP, specifically as it concerns definite articles. It also calls for re-examination of the notion of 'argumenthood', and of Longobardi's (1994) seminal work on N-to-D raising of proper names. Under our approach, either DP1 or DP2 can potentially serve as an argument, and the raising to DP1 must involve the entire lower DP2, not merely the head. As a final point, we note that examination of these less commonly studied Romance varieties reveals patterns that would be missed by work that focused solely on the standard languages.

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