Number as an adjunct in Romance[*]

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Abstract

In this paper, we argue that Spanish (and other Romance languages such as Catalan), contrary to what has been believed up to now, patterns with languages such as Brazilian Portuguese and French. We present several different arguments to support our proposal that in the Romance languages we investigate plural marking is specified and interpreted on functional categories, namely on Determiners. We propose that in these languages plural marking is a syntactic adjunct to D (i.e., a categorized *d* root) by default, and to a categorized *n* root in marked cases. Manifestations of (plural) Number on other constituents within the nominal domain are to be considered solely as the output of morphophonological agreement or concord.

Keywords: pluralizer, adjunct, determiner, nominalizer, Romance

1. Introduction

Traditional grammars of Spanish (RAE 2009:127) consider that Number is interpreted on the Noun, and the morphological (plural, singular) marking on the Determiner is the result of an agreement process, which cannot go missing, as illustrated in (1).

(1) *los   libros /   *los   libro / *el   libros*   [Spanish]

the.PL book.PL   the.PL book.SG the.SG book.PL

'the books'

The reason for this position is related to the classical theory that Number makes a clear semantic contribution to the interpretation of Nouns (Bartsch 1973, Hausser 1974, Bennett 1975, Schwarzschild 1996, a.o.).

However, there are other Romance languages, such as Brazilian Portuguese (BrP) and French, in which, according to the literature (Delfitto & Schroten 1991, Bouchard 2002, Dobrovie-Sorin 2012, Cyrino & Espinal 2015) Number is encoded on D. One indication that this is correct is the following paradigm, where crucially the morphological marking for plural cannot occur only on the Noun in BrP.[1] As it is well-known, in French the distinction is instantiated only at the PF representation of the article: [lə] vs. [lé].

(2) *os   livros /   os   livro /   *o   livros*   [BrP]

the.PL book.PL   the.PL book.SG   the.SG   book.PL

'the books'

(3) *le   livre / les   livres*   [French]

the.sg book.sg the.pl book.pl

'the book, the books.'

In this paper, we argue that Spanish (and other Romance languages such as Catalan and some Lunigiana dialects[2]), contrary to what has been believed up to now, patterns with languages such as BrP and French. Thus, we will support the hypothesis that in Spanish Number merges as an adjunct on D (or *d*), and only in marked cases it merges with a nominalized root (i.e., *n*).[3] We will argue that manifestations of plural marking on other constituents within the nominal domain are the result of morphophonological agreement or concord. Thus, we will account for some interesting cases of variation within the Romance paradigm.

2. Number is encoded and interpreted on D

In this section, we present several arguments, some of them from the literature, and others from our own, in support of our hypothesis that Spanish

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[2] Lunigiana ia a geolinguistic domain extending over the borders between Liguria, Emilia and Tuscany.

[3] We will hereby do not distinguish between a morphosyntactic PL feature and a semantic LATTICE feature, as proposed by Heycock & Zamparelli (2005).

has Number specification and interpretation on functional categories, namely on D.

2.1. Arguments from the literature

(i) As shown by Bouchard (2002:42) for French, certain compound nouns are a V+N unit. Number is specified on the determiner, in order to convey the distinction between reference to an atom or to a plurality of atoms that have the property 'can-opener'. The same applies to Spanish, as (4b) illustrates.

(4)   a.   ***l'*** *ouvre-boîte* /   ***les*** *ouvre-boîte*

    b.   ***el***   *abrelatas*   / ***los***   *abrelatas*

    [Spanish]

        the.SG open.can.PL   the.PL open.can.PL

        'the can-opener (singular and plural)'

(ii) Longobardi (1994:620) points out the need of distinguishing between coordination of DPs and coordination of NPs in Italian. In the former case (5a), each DP refers to a different person, and the verb is in plural; in the latter (5b), reference is made to only one person that has two properties ('secretary' and 'collaborator') and the verb is in singular. Therefore, manifestation of number on the verb is dependent on the existence of a coordination of DPs, which is structurally higher than a coordination of NPs. The same is possible in Spanish, as illustrated in (6):

(5)   a.   ***La*** *mia segretaria* ***e*** ***la*** *tua*   *collaboratrice*

the my secretary   and the your collaborator

stanno/*sta   uscendo.

are/   is   going out

    b. ***La** mia segretaria **e**   tua   collaboratrice*

the my secretary   and   your collaborator

sta/*stanno   uscendo.

is/   are   going out

(6)   a. ***El**   propietario **y** **el**   gerente   de la   empresa*

the.SG owner.SG   and the.SG manager.SG of the   firm

viven/ *vive   en Andorra.

live.PL lives   in Andorra

'The owner and the manager of the firm live in Andorra.'

    b. ***El**   propietario **y**   gerente   de la   empresa*

the.SG owner.SG   and manager.SG of the firm

vive/   *viven   en Andorra.

live.SG live   in Andorra

'The owner and manager of the firm lives in Andorra.'

(iii) It is possible to conjoin determiners in French and indicate number

uncertainty (Bouchard 2002:43). The same is possible in Spanish.[4] In English,

by contrast, Plural is specified on the Noun as the translation of (8) shows.

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[4] A reviewer has pointed out to us the possibility that this might be a case of gapping. However, if this were the case, the example in (i) should be grammatical, contrary to facts.

    (i)   **Trae el diccionario$_i$ o los   e$_i$ que   encuentres.*

(7) *Vous prendrez **le ou les** garcons que vous trouverez.*

you take.FUT the or the.PL boys that you find

(8) *Trae **el o los** diccionarios que encuentres.*

bring the.SG or the.PL dictionaries that find

'Bring the dictionary or dictionaries that you find.'

(iv) Nominal ellipsis also shows that Number is specified in the Determiner not only in French and Walloon (Bouchard 2002), but also in Spanish (Torrego 1987, Kornfeld & Saab 2004).

(9) *Passe-moi **la verte**.*

give.me the green

'Give me the green one.'

(10) *Juan visitó a su tío y Pedro visitará a **los** de él.*

Juan visited to his uncle and Pedro visit.FUT to the.PL of he

'Juan visited his uncle and Pedro will visit his (uncles).'

Besides the arguments from the literature listed in this section, there are other reasons that lead to our main hypothesis that Number in Romance is encoded and interpreted on D. These additional arguments are presented in Section 2.2.

2.2. Additional arguments

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bring the dictionary or the.PL that find.SUBJ

(v) In regular relatives (modified DPs), the complement of the D is not an NP, but a CP. On the one hand, in free relatives the *wh*-phrase of the embedded CP has been proposed to move to [Spec, DP], considering that the head of DP is a silent D (Caponigro 2002). This movement followed by agreement has been postulated to explain the plurality of the *wh*-word. Consider the minimal pair in (11) from Spanish.[5]

(11) a. ***Quién*** *llegue antes…*

       whoever.SG arrive.SG before

       'Whoever arrives before…'

b. ***Quienes*** *lleguen antes…*

       whoever.PL arrive.PL before

       'Whoever arrive before…'

On the other hand, in semi-free relatives (12) (de Vries 2000), the D is not silent, there is no Noun to trigger plural agreement on the verb, and Number can only be specified and interpreted on D.

(12) ***Los*** **que** *lleguen antes…*

     the.PL that arrive.PL before…

     'The (ones) that arrive before…

(vi) *En*-anaphora in Catalan brings further evidence to our claim. The clitic *en* corresponds to a pro-N clitic (Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002), and it does not encode φ-features, in contrast to 3rd person clitics. As such, the structure in

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[5] A reviewer pointed out to us that the Spanish form *quienes* may be the result of agreement with a plural empty noun. However, it should be noted that no nominal form whatsoever is possible in this context, and therefore we cast aside this possibility.

(14), corresponding to the answer in (13b), shows that, even though the cardinal may encode a plurality of atoms, no morphosyntactic Number is encoded on the pro-N.

(13) Q. *Que porta   anells d'or*?

        that   wears rings   of gold

    A. *En porta   {tres, un}*.

        CL   wears three one

        'Does (s)he wear golden rings? (S)he wears {three, one}.'

(14) [$_{NP}$ ***En**_i*] *porta* [$_{CardP}$ *{tres, un}* [$_{NP}$ e$_i$]]

(vii) Number on the 1st person pronoun (15a), and on the article preceding non-Spanish words, locutions and last names (15b) further support our claim (RAE 2009:128-9).[6]

(15) a. ***Nos** el   Rey* (…) *ordenamos y   mandamos …*

        we   the   king   order.PL   and command.PL...

    b. ***los**   mea culpa* / ***los**   alto el fuego* / ***los**   Escobar*

        the.PL mea culpa the.PL ceasefire   the.PL Escobar

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[6] A similar phenomenon to the one shown in (15a) has been observed in Greek. Lekakou and Szendröi (2012:114) claim that in close appositives where a pronoun is syntactically combined with a full nominal DP the pronominal part is the unique head, as shown by the fact that verbal agreement is only possible with the pronoun. Consider (i).

    (i) ***Emis**   i glosoloji   piname/   *pinane*.SEP
        we.NOM   the linguists.NOM   are.hungry.1PL/   are.hungry.3PL
        'We linguists are starving/hungry.'

In contrast to Greek, in the Spanish example in (15a) no low boundary tone has to be pronounced at the end of *nos*, which suggests that *el rey* is not an apposition.

    For an analysis of first and second person pronouns (as opposed to third person pronouns) as Ds, see Ritter (1991) and Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002).

In the former example we assume a structure with two determiners, where only the highest one, specified for plurality, c-commands and constrains the form of the verb. In the latter, overt instantiation of plurality on the noun is extremely marked (e.g., ?*los mea culpas*, **los meas culpa*).[7]

(viii) Evidence from Afro-Bolivian Spanish (Delicado-Cantero & Sessarego (2011:43-4) shows that number can be specified on determiners of all types: "as a rule, the nominal and the adjectival stems remain bare, so that plural marking is non-redundant".

(16) a. **_Ejes_** _buen_   _amigo_ _mayó._

        this.PL good.ø friend.ø old.ø

        'These old good friends.'

    b. **_Muchos_** _hombre boliviano._

        many.PL man.ø   Bolivian.ø

        'Many Bolivian men.'

Independent data from other Romance languages further support the hypothesis of morphosyntactic Number on D.[8] Of special relevance are the

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[7] The plural of last names is possible if members of many families are referred to.
    (i)   _Los_   _Garcías_ _abundan_   _en España._
          the.PL   García.PL are common in Spain
          'The people named García are common in Spain.'

[8] Beyond the Romance paradigm Basque is a language where "The need to mark number on nouns explicitly by means of the plural marker [-k] forces the definite article [-a] to be also present" (Etxeberria 2014:19). Consider the data in (i).
    (i)   a.   _Anek_   _goxoki-**a**_   _jan_ _zituen._
              Ane.ERG candy.D.SG.ABS eat AUX
              'Ane ate the candy.'
        b.   _Anek_   _goxoki-**ak**_   _jan_ _zituen._
              Ane.ERG candy.D.PL.ABS eat   aux
              'Ane ate (the) candies.'
    (ii)   a.   **ikasle-**k*
            student.PL

data from some Lunigiana dialects (Manzini & Savoia 2005, Pomino 2012, Cavirani 2018), and some creole varieties (Haitian creole, Ritter 1992, Déprez 2006; Afro-Brazilian Portuguese creole, Ribeiro & Cyrino 2012).

(17) a. [λa   'dɔna]   Colonnata, new generations

the.PL   woman

'the women'

b. [k-j-a   'brava   'dɔna]   Filattiera

DEM.PL.FEM   good.FEM   woman

'those good women'

(18)   *liv*   **yo**   Haitian creole

book the. PL

'the books'

(19)   ***Os***   *fio*   Afro-Brazilian Portuguese creole

the.pl   son

'the children'

Given all of this evidence, our proposal that Number is encoded and interpreted on D seems to be confirmed. Below, we present our analysis of plural marking in Romance.

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b.   *ikasle-**a-k***
       student.D.PL
Note that (iib) is ambiguous between a definite and an indefinite reading (the students, students). Information structure serves to disambiguate (U. Etxeberria, p.c.).

3. Analysis

In order to analyze the data presented in Section 2 we start with Wiltschko's (2008:688) proposal according to which plural comes in many guises and does not universally merge with nouns (see also Déprez 2005, Dobrovie-Sorin 2012, Mathieu 2014, Alexiadou 2016). In fact, as represented in (20), plural can either be merged on the root, on little n, on the functional # head, or on D, within the nominal domain.[9]

(20)
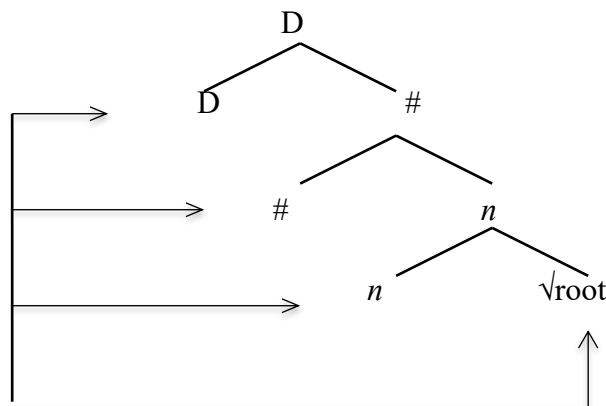
Furthermore, according Wiltschko (2008:688), plural can be merged either as a head (English) or as a modifier (Halkomelem). See (21).

(21)

    a.   b.

[9] Note that Wiltschko's (2008) # is associated with one of two values: SINGULAR, spelled out as Ø in English and Romance, or PLURAL, spelled out by means of some allomorph. By contrast, Borer's (2005) # is associated with quantity, spelled out by means of cardinals or quantifiers.

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        X: PLURAL                              y
       /        \                            /   \
  X: PLURAL      y                    PLURAL       y
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The tree in (21a) is hypothesized for English, where the plural marker merges as a head and has the syntax of heads, whereas the tree (21b) is hypothesized for Halkomelem, where a modifying plural marker shows the syntax of adjuncts.[10]

If we keep in mind the data presented in Section 2, we would like to put forward the hypothesis that in Romance the PLURALIZER is a modifier of D (or, alternatively, a modifier of a [Root + d]). Consider the tree in (22).[11]

(22)
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              D
            /   \
   PLURALIZER    D
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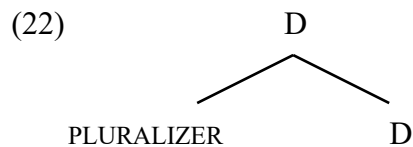
This means that, in the default case, plural marking, i.e. the PLURALIZER, is a syntactic adjunct to D, spelled out on the D head and realized by Vocabulary Insertion as –s in both BrP and Spanish.

In (22), since the PLURALIZER is merged as an adjunct, it is syntactically opaque; hence, the newly formed object has the same label as its host (D).

Some consequences that follow from this analysis are the following:

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[10] This structural distinction is motivated by the fact that plural marking shows a set of properties and distribution that differ in English and Halkomelem. These properties are mainly: obligatory plural marking and obligatory agreement (only in English), and plural inside compounds and plural inside derivational morphology (only possible in Halkomelem). We will consider how Romance languages behave with respect to these properties of plural marking below.

[11] See also Butler (2012) for the proposal of a DP-adjoined plural in Yucatec Maya.

- The PLURALIZER is morphosyntactically encoded and interpreted on D. Further instantiations of plural marking on nouns and adjectives within the nominal domain are the result of morphophonological agreement.

- The PLURALIZER is distinct from #:PL in that it does not introduce a feature to be valued at syntax.

This means that the operation of morphophonological agreement (i) is different from and is not the result of the syntactic operation Agree (as in Chomsky 2001), (ii) is optional, and (iii) takes place after Spell Out at PF. We hypothesize that some differences observed among Romance languages should be analyzed in terms of morphophonological agreement.

Consider first plural marking on nouns. We here repeat for convenience the BrP examples in (2), which contrast with the Spanish examples in (1).

(23)   *os   livros /   os   livro /   *o   livros*   [BrP]
        the.PL book.PL   the.PL book.SG   the.SG   book.PL
        'the books'

(24)   *los   libros /   *los   libro /   *el   libros*   [Spanish]
        the.PL book.PL   the.PL   book.SG   the.SG book.PL
        'the books'

It appears that plural marking is optional in BrP (French, Afro-Bolivian Spanish, some Lunigiana dialects and creole languages), but obligatory in Standard Spanish (Catalan and other Romance languages). We would like to claim that the PLURALIZER, by default, must modify D, and that

morphophonological agreement is optional or obligatory, depending on the language. But, this property has nothing to do with syntax.

Consider next the phenomenon of agree within the nominal domain, as exemplified in (25) and (26).

(25)   a.   *as*   *meninas*   *bonitas*   [BrP]

               the.PL   girl.PL   pretty.PL

       b.   *as*   *meninas*   *bonita*

               the.PL   girl.PL   pretty

       c.   *as*   *menina*   *bonita*

               the.PL   girl   pretty

               'the pretty girls'

(26)   a.   *las*   *camisas*   *blancas*   [Spanish]

               the.PL   shirt.PL   white.PL

       b.   **las*   *camisas*   *blanca*

               the.PL   shirt.PL   white

       c.   **las*   *camisa*   *blanca*

               the.PL   shirt   white

               'the white shirts'

These examples show that Standard Spanish (in contrast to BrP and the Afro-Bolivian Spanish data in (16)) requires number agreement between the D and the N within the nominal domain. This agreement requirement also applies to adjectives when they are present. However, as we have just said regarding the property of plural marking on nouns, we would like to address the phenomenon

of agreement within the nominal domain by claiming that the PLURALIZER, by default, is a syntactic adjunct to D, and that morphophonological agreement within the nominal domain is obligatory or optional depending on the language. No syntactic principle or well-formedness condition controls this variation.

Let us next consider the possibility of having plural markers inside compounds. Regarding this property we should consider that both BrP and Spanish show complex determiners with plurality inside the compound, as exemplified in (27a) for BrP and (27b) for Spanish.

(27) a. *quaisquer* b. *cualesquiera*

which.PL.want   which.PL.want

'whichever'   'whichever'

Following Harley's (2009) analysis of compounds, we assume that at the input structure for the Spanish complex D *cualesquiera* the root √CUAL is merged in complement position of a *d* functional head, and the *d*P it projects appears in object position of the root √QUIERA. Head movement of √CUAL into d_1, subsequently modified by the PLURALIZER, and later incorporated into the root √QUIERA derives the complex head [[[[√CUAL] d_1] PLURALIZER] √QUIERA], which later merges with a categorizing (quantifier-flavored) d_2, and head moves into it, creating the complex head][[[[√CUAL] d_1] PLURALIZER] √QUIERA] d_2]. This complex head is finally realized by Vocabulary Insertion as *cualesquiera*. The output structure of these operations is represented in (28).

(28)

d_2

√QUIERA d_2

d_1 √QUIERA   [+Q]

d_1 PLURALIZER   **quiera**

√CUAL d_1 **es**

cual   Ø
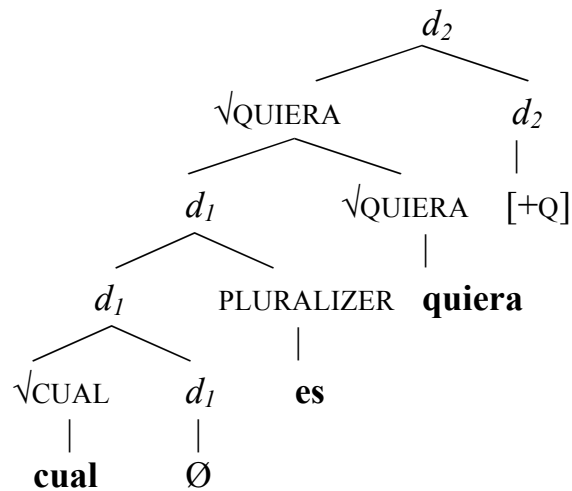
Also relevant to our analysis of Number as an adjunct is the consideration of data that include complex determiners, with articles and possessives. Consider in this respect the BrP paradigm in (29) and the Lunigiana data in (30) (from Cavirani 2018).

(29) a. (*as*) *minhas coisas*   c. (*a*) *minhas coisa*

       the.PL my.PL   thing.PL   the my.PL   thing

    b. (*as*)   *minhas coisa*   d. ??*as   minha coisa*

       the.PL my.PL   thing   the.PL my   thing

       'my things'

(30) a. Art.PL.FEM Poss.PL.FEM N.FEM   Colonnata

      [λa   'noʃtrja 'ka]

      'our houses'

    b. Art.PL.FEM Poss.FEM N.FEM   Filattiera

      [ja 'nostra so'rɛla]

      'our sisters'

    c.   Art.FEM Poss.PL.FEM N.FEM   Bagnone

    [la 'nɔstrja 'skarpa]

    'our shoes'

Following Despić (2015:211), we consider that the possessor is in a construction preceded by a separate DP (see also Szabolcsi 1983; Kayne 1994). "This step is motivated by the fact that there are languages in which possessors are preceded by articles (e.g., [29] and [30]). The English prenominal possessor is also preceded by D, but this D is not pronounced in English". See the structure that Despić postulates in (31).

(31)
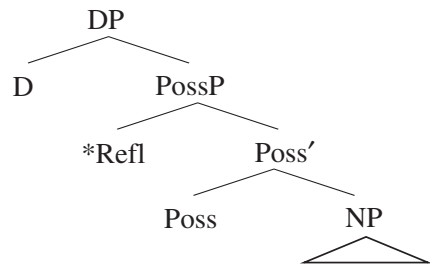
Our analysis of the data in (29) and (30) relies on the hypothesis that the real Determiner in this structure is the Possessive (like in English), and the article may be omitted, as shown in BrP (29a,b,c). Since the Possessive is the head of the D-Poss complex unit, it may be modified by the PLURALIZER, as shown in (32) for (29c).

(32)   [DP [D a] [PossP [Poss PLURALIZER [Poss minha]] [NP [N coisa]]]]

Under this approach the optional plural marker on the definite article in (29a, b) and (30a,b) would be the result of morphophonological agreement.
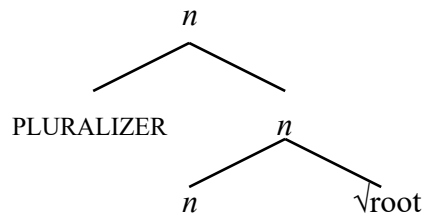
Let us now go back to the figure in (20). Recall that Wiltschko (2008) defends the proposal that in English plural is merged as a head on #, whereas in Halkomelem plural is merged as a modifier on a √root. In this paper we have argued that in Romance plural marking is a modifier on D. The question that remains is whether there are any cases left that would support the need to consider that plural can also merge as a modifier of categorized nouns (i.e., *n*). In fact, such data exist. Consider the paradigms in (33), (34) and (35), which illustrate different sorts of nominal compounds.

(33) a. *coração*   b. *coraçãozinho*   BrP

          heart.SG   heart.SG.diminutive

          'heart'   'little heart'

    c. *corações*   d. *coraçõezinhos*[12]

          heart.PL   heart.PL.diminutive.PL

          'hearts'   'little hearts'

(34) a. *trenes bala*   b. *grises perla*   Spanish

          train.PL bullet   gray.PL pearl

          'bullet trains'   'gray pearls'

(35) a. *malsdecap*   b. *maldecaps*   Catalan

          ache.PL.of.head   ache.of.head.PL

          'headaches'   'worries'

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[12] This example could be said to illustrate plurality inside derivational morphology. However, since it is widely accepted that inflection applies after derivation, we will consider that *coraçõezinhos* is a compound of two pluralized nominals.

These data, as well as those examples where plural shows only on the noun in early stages of the acquisition of BrP (e.g., *o livros* 'the books', Lopes 2006), and in some Lunigiana dialects (e.g., Amegliese *a fantja* 'the girls', Cavirani 2018), suggest that in marked cases plural is a syntactic adjunct to a root categorized as *n.* This hypothesis, which we think accounts for those cases where plural marking is not made extensive to the determiner, is represented in (36).

(36)

```
                    n
                  /   \
                /       \
       PLURALIZER        n
                       /   \
                     /       \
                    n        √root
```

To sum up, the existence of variation within a paradigm of languages that derive from Latin, a language that did not have articles, would be accounted for by postulating that plural marking is most commonly a syntactic adjunct to the D, and an adjunct to *n* only in marked, perhaps remnant, cases.[13]

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have argued that Number (PLURALIZER) in Romance is, by default, morphosyntactically encoded as an adjunct to the determiner root and morphophonologically instantiated as an option on other constituents

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[13] See Mathieu (2009) for analysis of the emergence of D in the history of French.

within the DP. In marked cases Number (PLURALIZER) is morphosyntactically encoded as an adjunct to the categorized nominal root.

This conclusion supports the claim made in the literature that plural comes in many guises (Déprez 2005, Wiltschko 2008, Dobrovie-Sorin 2012, Mathieu 2014, Alexiadou 2016) and that it is not necessarily realized under a Division (#) head, as seems to be the case in English (cf. Borer 2005).

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