UNEXPECTED PARTITIVE ARTICLES IN FRANCOPROVENÇAL*

Elisabeth Stark & Jan Pavel Davatz

Abstract. This contribution seeks to add to our knowledge on 'partitive articles' (like the French element *du* in *Je bois du vin*, 'I drink (some) wine') in a highly endangered language spoken in France, Switzerland and Italy, namely Francoprovençal. Based on recent fieldwork data (2017) from the Aosta Valley and data from the ALAVAL atlas project, we will discuss outliers in a geographical and syntactic perspective, i.e. occurrences of 'partitive articles' where they should not appear. This either because the regions and their respective varieties do not feature them according to the existing literature or because syntactic regularities known from Standard French do not admit them (under the scope of negation and after quantifying expressions). We will try to propose some explanations for the existence of these unexpected elements, both internal and external, i.e. via language contact, and argue more generally in favour of a more systematic consideration of rare elements in fieldwork data, which should not too readily be "explained away".

1. Introduction

The present contribution seeks to provide new insights into the geographical and functional distribution of so-called 'partitive articles' (henceforth PAs) in Francoprovençal varieties by identifying and discussing cases of PAs in contexts in which they are not supposed to be found. PAs are indefinite determiners existing in some Romance languages such as French and Italian that are used with singular mass nominals (1) and indefinite plural nominals (2):[1]

(1) Fr. Elle achète ***(du) pain**.
    she buy.PRS.3SG PA.MSG bread
  It. Compra **(del) pane**.
    she.buy. PRS.3SG PA.MSG bread

[1] Gloss abreviations used in the present paper: M = masculine, F = feminine, SG = singular, PL = plural, ART = article, PA = partitive article, PRS = present, PST = past, IMP = imperative, INF = infinitive, PTCP = past particple, 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, DAT = dative, CL = clitic (pronoun), NEG = negation.

Sp. Compra **pan**.
she.buy. PRS.3SG bread
'She buys bread.' (slightly adapted example from Stark 2008b:123)

(2) Fr. Je vois ***(des) étudiants** dans le bâtiment.
I see. PRS.1SG PA.PL student.PL in ART.MSG building

It. Vedo **(degli) studenti** nell' edificio.
I.see.PRS.1SG PA.MPL student.PL in.ART.MSG building

Sp. Veo (a unos) **estudiantes** en el edificio.
I.see.PRS.1SG to some.MPL student.PL in ART.MSG building
'I see (some) students in the building.' (example from Stark 2008b:124)

In (1), the masculin French noun *pain* ('bread') in direct object position is obligatorily marked by *du* when a mass reading is intended. Spanish lacks such an element altogether, and Italian uses it optionally, with some semantic nuances that still have to be understood in detail. Likewise, in (2), the indefinite plural argument *étudiants* ('students') has to be preceded by the plural form *des* of the French PA.[2] The Italian equivalent *studenti* can, but does not have to be marked by a PA (*del/della/dell'/degli/dei/delle*), with specificity effects being at stake (e.g. Zamparelli 2008). Spanish may use *(a) unos*, which most certainly triggers a specific reading and is syntactically optional.

According to the scarce literature discussing the features of this typologically highly marked element in Francoprovençal, a Galloromance minority language (Kristol 2014, 2016), there seem to be two different bundles ("types") of varieties: one type labelled "Francoprovençal A", which resembles French in displaying PAs marked for number and gender, and one type "Francoprovençal B", which features an invariable *de*-element homophonous with the preposition. Varieties of Francoprovençal A are located in the department of Haute-Savoie in France and in the western part of the canton of Valais in Switzerland (to the left of the red line in Figure 1), whereas Francoprovençal B varieties are found in middle Valais and in the Aosta Valley in Northern Italy (to the right of the red line in Figure 1):

Two important aspects distinguish the PA found in the varieties of Francoprovençal A from the French PA, the first being a strong argument against its presence as a result of language contact according to Kristol (2014:39): (i) the Francoprovençal PA is marked for gender not only in the singular ([dy] vs. [dla]), but also in its plural form ([de] vs. [dle]) and (ii) is used also in environments where Standard French does

---

[2] Note that, contrary to the singular form, where the feminine form *de la* opposes *du*, the plural form is unmarked for gender. Both the singular and the plural present a special form in case of vowel-initial nouns (*de l'* and [dez] opposed to regular [de], respectively).
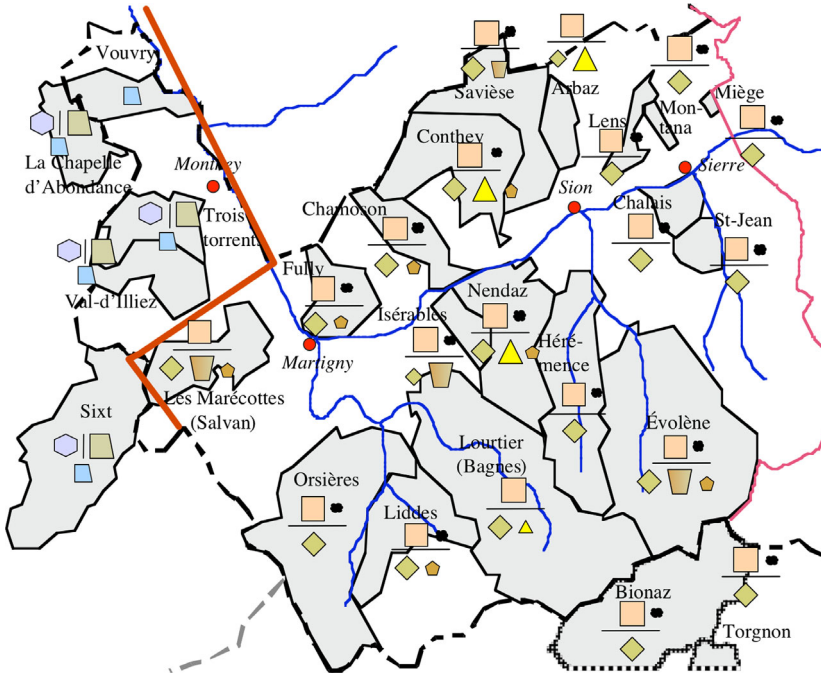
Figure 1. Distribution of Francoprovençal A and Francoprovençal B (http://alaval.unine.ch/atlas?carte = 21064)

not allow for it, i.e. in negative contexts and after quantifiers and other expressions of quantification. Consider (3) for an illustration of the latter:

(3) kã̃   iʁɔ   piɲa mɛdʒivɔ   pʁø **d le**   taʁtˈinɛ
     when be.PST.1SG little eat.PST.1SG much PA.FPL cake.FPL
     'When I was little, I ate a lot of cakes.' (Kristol 2014:40, own glosses and translation)

Given the lack of information concerning the frequency of this construction and possible implications for existing models of nominals with a fully-fledged PA (cf. e.g. Ihsane 2008, Stark & Gerards 2020), a thorough description and analysis of existing data is in order to shed light on this phenomenon of "syntactic unexpectedness". This is all the more interesting, as PAs after negation or quantifiers are by no means restricted to spare singular cases, but, at least in some varieties of Francoprovençal A, rather seem to represent a valid alternative to the "reduced" form *de*, which is the only grammatical option in Standard French.

   Next to this, the scrutiny of a database composed of recent Francoprovençal questionnaire data from an existing online corpus

(ALAVAL) and own fieldwork data collected in May 2017 allow for a second observation: fully-fledged PAs can also be found in varieties of Francoprovençal B, especially with feminine singular nouns.

   The article is organized along the following lines: Section 2 first provides some general background information on Francoprovençal, before presenting the state of the art regarding PAs in Francoprovençal and other minority Galloromance languages. Section 3 describes the database on which this paper is based as well as the methodology applied for the exploitation of the database. Section 4 presents the detailed results of the analyses of our database and Section 5 discusses the findings and proposes possible explanations. The new insights are finally summed up in a short conclusion, which also gives an outlook on subsequently needed research.

2. State of the art

The aims of this section are twofold: subsection 2.1. sets the background by sketching the historical, geographical and sociolinguistic situation of Francoprovençal as a non-standardized minority language, whereas subsection 2.2. gives a short overview of the current state of the art concerning the PA in Galloromance with a strong focus on the facts for Francoprovençal.

2.1. *Francoprovençal – the background*

The use of the Galloromance language Francoprovençal has always essentially been restricted to the domain of informal oral communication.[3] Despite – or, as one might object, probably due to – the fact that it used to be spoken in a considerably large continuous area covering parts of Eastern France, North-Western Italy as well as Western Switzerland and that it had several leading linguistic (micro-) centers like Lyon or Grenoble in France, Geneva, Fribourg or Sion in Switzerland or Aosta in Italy, it never became the official language of a regional or national unit and is therefore considered as highly endangered to this day, with its number of speakers having declined rapidly since the mid-nineteenth century. For Kristol, "Francoprovençal is not 'a' language, but a collection of speech varieties displaying a common linguistic typology yet an extremely high degree of dialect fragmentation" (2016:350). Since no Francoprovençal variety has ever been the official language of an independent political state, it does not come as a surprise that there is no feeling of a bigger language community among the speakers of Francoprovençal. They usually consider their language a dialect, a

---

[3] The first written documents date back to the 13th century, but they are very often a mix between French (varieties) and Francoprovençal (Kristol 2016:350).

patois, and are not familiar with the name 'Francoprovençal'. The term was created by the Italian linguist Graziadio Ascoli in 1873 and is thus a purely linguistic label without any popular tradition. Ascoli used it to denominate Galloromance varieties which are situated geographically between the domain of French and Occitan and which resemble French in terms of their consonants and Occitan (by then rather called 'Provençal') as to their vowel inventory (Bossong 2016:65).

Francoprovençal can, however, not only be described as a language sharing phonological features of both French and Occitan, but also typologically as a 'bridge language' between Italian and French. The building of the plural form of Francoprovençal nouns illustrates this in a clear way: Masculin nouns generally show no marking at all (comparably to Modern French) or, rarely, a sigmatic plural (like in Old French) (cf. 4), whereas feminine nouns often build their plural by means of a vowel alternation –*a*/–*e* (cf. 5), similar to Italian:

(4) ũ mũ'tɔ̃   dɛ mũtɔ̃ʃ[4]
    a heap   (some) heaps
    ũ burgɔ   dɛ burgɔ
    a spinning wheel (some) spinning wheels

(5) na mat**a** dɛ mat**ɛ**
    a girl   girls

The number of speakers of Francoprovençal has constantly dwindled over the last century, so that according to Zulato, Kasstan & Nagy today "Francoprovençal is endangered everywhere it is spoken" (2018:11). Following the same authors, there are roughly between 110000 and 160000 speakers left, the majority of which living in France or the Aosta Valley and only a small part in the Italian regions Piedmont and Apulia and in Switzerland (Zulato, Kasstan & Nagy 2018:13). In the latter, the active transmission of Francoprovençal ceased in most parts already by the beginning of the 20th century and went on for some more decades only in the rural areas. Hence, native speakers are nowadays generally older than 70 and/or found exclusively in small mountain villages. There is, however, the notable exception of the community of Evolène, where in many cases the language is still passed on to the next generation (cf. Kristol 2016:351). As for France, Francoprovençal varieties have disappeared from French cities like Lyon or Grenoble and are today also restricted to a few rural areas. Current figures suggest 35000

---

[4] The examples in (4) and (5) stem from the variety of Evolène (Pannatier 1995:102/103), which is in fact the only Francoprovençal variety having conserved sigmatic plural forms up to nowadays. Importantly, this marking is phonologically constrained, i.e., feminine nouns like *den* 'tooth' have a plural form *dẽs* 'teeth' (cf. also Jeanjaquet 1931:31f). Residues of a sigmatic plural are also attested in Francoprovençal varieties spoken in Piedmont (Jaberg 1911).

speakers in both departments of Savoie plus 25000 speakers elsewhere in France (Zulato, Kasstan & Nagy 2018:23). The situation in Italy, i.e. in the Aosta Valley, is somewhat different in that active language policy has led to the conservation and active use of Francoprovençal also among members of the latest generation.

A short view on the existing literature on Francoprovençal (varieties) shows that it deals mostly with traditional dialectological phonetic or lexical descriptions and stems from the first half of the 20th century. With the exception of some more recent work (e.g. Chenal 1986), it almost completely neglects syntax and morphosyntax. It is thus by no means exaggerated when Stark & Gerards (2020) refer to it as the "*parent pauvre* of the Romance language family" when it comes to the description of structural properties, which now urgently need to be systematically described and analyzed in order to complete the picture of the morphosyntax of (Gallo-)Romance languages.

2.2. *'Partitive articles' in Galloromance varieties*

As far as Galloromance is concerned, the typologically highly marked so-called 'partitive article', mentioned by Bossong as a typical feature of Romance (2016:69f), cannot only be found in Standard French, but also in various minority languages. While Southern Occitan dialects such as Languedocian and Provençal display an invariable element *de* deriving from the simple Latin preposition DE 'of, from',[5] some varieties of the Northern Occitan dialects Limousin and Auvergnat show a fully-fledged PA, i.e. the morphological fusion of *de* and the definite article with an indefinite interpretation. Limousin seems to display PAs all over the place, whereas varieties of the Auvergne are split between the southern/middle dialects showing invariable DE and a northern part with fully-fledged PAs (cf. Dauzat 1912:390). A recent grammar on Auvergnat insists on the following:

> Bien que les formes avec article soient construites de la même façon qu'en français, elles ne proviennent pas de cette langue, mais appartiennent au grand ensemble nord-occidental de l'espace gallo-roman (on les retrouve en limousin et partiellement en guyennais). (Bonnaud 1992:62)

> [Although the forms with the article are constructed the same way as in French, they do not originate from this language, but belong to the big North-Western aggregate of the Galloromance area (one finds them in Limousin and partly in Guyennais [= roughly Northern Gascon and northwestern parts of Languedocien])]

---

[5] This element is not entirely absent from Gascon, but its use seems to be restricted to cases of prenominal adjectifs (Kristol 2014:36) and connections with the pronominal adverb derived from Latin INDE 'thence' (Bossong 2016:69).

Consider (6) and (7) for an example of the invariable *de* in Languedocian and a fully-fledged PA in an Auvergnat variety respectively:

(6) Dounàs-me **de pan** [...] **d' amellas**
    give.IMP.2SG-1SG.DAT DE bread DE almond.PL
    'Give me (some?) bread [...], (some?) almonds.' (Thérond 2002:86;
    own glosses)

(7) kãt u fwe **do** vˈɛ̃ lə røzjo ply:ʒ
    when CL make.PRS.3SG PA.MSG wind the reed bend.PRS.3SG
    'When it is windy the reed bends.'[6]

Contrary to Standard French, where there is a considerable amount of literature concerning the semantic and distributional properties of the PA (cf. among others Dobrovie-Sorin & Beyssade 2004, 2012 or Ihsane 2008), little is known when it comes to its equivalent in minority Galloromance languages. Semantically, the singular PA in French and Italian is reported to take narrow scope with respect to other operators like negation or quantifiers, whereas the plural PA can also take wide scope (cf. Ihsane 2008, Cardinaletti & Giusti 2016). Despite the lack of literature on the semantics of Francoprovençal PAs confirming this, there is no reason to assume that Francoprovençal would behave any differently from the Standard Romance languages. In what follows, we will thus leave aside the semantics and focus on the regional or morphosyntactic distribution, where differences are more likely to appear.

According to Bossong (2016:69), French "has gone one step further [than Occitan or Gascon] insofar as nouns without an article are possible only under very limited conditions", implying thereby that bare nouns, i.e. nouns without any determiner, are (still) possible in Occitan or Gascon, whereas French does not allow for them at all in argumental position. Furthermore, he claims that Northern Occitan varieties are to be seen on a par with Italian, which differs from modern French by the fact that in the latter "the partitive has become obligatory in almost every context" (Bossong 2016:69).

The varieties of Francoprovençal remain completely absent from Bossong's description, which does not come as a surprise since there is hardly any literature on the existence, let alone the geographical distribution or distributional properties of PAs in Francoprovençal varieties. However, older data collected in the first decade of the last century and exposed in the *Tableaux phonétiques des patois suisses romands* (Gauchat, Jeanjaquet & Tappolet 1925) shows that they are attested with singular and plural nouns under different forms in many

---

[6] The example is taken from the SYMILA database (http://symila.univ-tlse2.fr/alf/phraserealisee/leipzig/lieu495, 20.06.2020).

Swiss Francoprovençal varieties. The dialects spoken in the cantons of Neuchâtel, Vaud and Fribourg all systematically display a fully-fledged PA (cf. the respective entries in Gauchat, Jeanjaquet & Tappolet 1925).[7] Interestingly, there seems to be variation among the varieties of the cantons of Geneva and Valais: Next to the ones showing a fully-fledged PA, there are also some varieties featuring only invariable *de,* which is, although its pronunciation seems to vary slightly from case to case, clearly distinct from the fused form of preposition *de* + definite article for all gender/number configurations.

More recent data focussing on the varieties spoken in the canton of Valais as well as in the neighboring regions of Haute-Savoie in France and Aosta Valley in Italy (gathered in the audiovisual Francoprovençal database ALAVAL (http://alaval.unine.ch/), cf. Section 3) suggest that there are, in fact, two different types of Francoprovençal when it comes to the system of indefinite nominal determination. In the only existing papers explicitly discussing the distribution of PAs in Francoprovençal, Kristol (2014, 2016) observes that the PA is absent from the Southern varieties spoken in France, the Eastern varieties in the Swiss canton of Valais and the ones in the Aosta Valley. These varieties show a grammaticalized invariable element *de* with indefinite mass singulars and indefinite plurals instead. A use of this element called "partitive DE" by Kristol and relabelled by us as "invariable DE" is illustrated in (8):

(8) ɛ   dɪmˈẽz mĩzjɔ̃   **dɛ   fĩlɔ̃**
     the Sunday eat.PST.3PL DE cake
     'On Sundays they ate cake(s).' (Kristol 2014:37; own glosses and translation)[8]

The varieties showing invariable DE can be opposed to the varieties spoken in the western part of Valais and the neighboring French area (i.e. the Chablais region) as well as the ones further to the north in Switzerland in the canton of Fribourg, which all have developed a 'partitive article':[9]

---

[7] 12, 13; 14, 15; 30, 31; 34, 35; 66, 67

[8] Note that with masculine nouns as in (8), the respective nominal can be interpreted as mass or count plural. This is due to the fact that number masculine nouns are – besides the (often non-obligatory) cases of *liaison* – never marked for number in Francoprovençal (for recent work on the realization of number marking on feminine nouns in the Francoprovençal varieties of Valais and the region of Lyon see Kasstan 2015:243–291). The only remarkable exception to this is the variety of Evolène, where plural is marked not only on feminine nouns, but also on many (yet by far not all) nouns by a sigmatic ending (cf. Pannatier 1995).

[9] In addition to these varieties and not mentioned by Kristol, PAs are attested also in the most Western part of the Francoprovençal area, where Francoprovençal is in contact with Auvergnat varieties. Navailh (2016:53) gives the examples of [**do** vwivr] 'aftermath' and [**da** ekla] 'wood shavings' from the *Atlas linguistique et ethnographique du Lyonnais* (ALLy) in order to illustrate the masculine singular and masculine plural form of the PA.

(9) ˈɑʋo   **d le**   **kwəˈzən**
     have.PST.1SG   PA.FPL   cousins
     'I had some cousins' (Kristol 2016:358; own glosses and translation)

Kristol observes an interesting correlation: The varieties exemplified in (9), i.e. the ones with a fully-fledged PA, show, similarly to Iberoromance or Italian, a gender distinction on the plural definite article ([*lu(z)*] for MPL vs. [*le(z)*] for FPL), whereas the ones with invariable DE have, just like French, only one single form for masculine and feminine plural definite articles ([*le(z)*]). He labels the former "Francoprovençal A" and the latter "Francoprovençal B" (see Table 1):

Table 1. Overview over nominal morphosyntax in Francoprovençal A vs. B

Francoprovençal A	Francoprovençal B
Fully-fledged PAs	Invariable DE
Gender distinction in plural determiners	No gender distinction in plural determiners
No case distinction in definite articles	(Partly) preserved case distinction in definite articles

As convincing as this correlation might seem at first glance, there are three important remarks in order with respect to it: (i) There are Francoprovençal varieties like e.g. the ones spoken in Tignes (cf. Duch & Béjean 1998) or La Giettaz (cf. La Giettaz-Savoie 2009) in the French department of Savoie, where gender is specified on the plural definite article, but which only show invariable DE;[10] (ii) there are varieties of so-called Francoprovençal A which show gender specification on the plural definite article and possess a fully-fledged PA, but without any gender marking on the plural PA (cf. e.g. Gilliéron 1880 for the variety of Vionnaz), and (iii) there are varieties like the ones spoken in the canton of Fribourg showing the same pattern as in French, i.e. a syncretism of masculine and feminine both within the plural definite article and the plural PA (cf. Haefelin 1876:77). We can thus state that (a) gender marking on the plural definite article does not imply neither the presence of a fully-fledged PA nor, if there are in fact PAs, gender marking on the plural form of the latter, and that (b) the absence of gender marking on the plural definite article does not imply the absence of PAs in Francoprovençal. Despite the just raised problems of such a partition into "Francoprovençal A" and "Francoprovençal B", we shall however adopt this terminology in what follows. However, we have to bear in

[10] The same seems to hold true for the variety of Evolène, which has only invariable DE but at the same time maintains (at least partly) a gender distinction in the plural definite article (cf. Kristol 2014:32, where this is not discussed any further though).

mind that this classification only applies to the varieties spoken in the Swiss canton of Valais, the French department of Haute-Savoie and the Italian Aosta Valley (see also Kristol's maps 2014).

2.3. *Problems and questions*

Having set the background by defining on the one hand the terms "Francoprovençal A" and "Francoprovençal B" and, on the other hand, presenting briefly the current state of knowledge on PAs in these two types of varieties, let us expose the two major issues we encounter when having a closer look at existing FrPr data:

(i) Detailed examination of recently gathered Francoprovençal data (i.e. data from the ALAVAL collected between 1994 and 2001 as well as additional data collected in own fieldwork in 2017) shows that PAs are found not only in varieties of so-called Francoprovençal A where they are expected, but also at the least sporadically in some dialects which are reported to belong to type B. These cases shall thus be referred to as "geographically unexpected 'partitive articles'".

(ii) In Francoprovençal A, PAs can be found frequently in contexts in which they are excluded in Standard French, namely after negations and quantifiers. In what follows we will speak of these occurrences as "distributionally unexpected 'partitive articles'".[11]

On the one hand, the present contribution aims at analyzing these cases of geographically unexpected PAs mentioned in (i) and tries to provide plausible explanations for their existence. On the other hand, the theoretical consequences of (ii) shall be discussed in detail by presenting different existing models of PA nominals and the respective challenges which these distributionally unexpected PAs pose for them. Ultimately, we propose a new (descriptive) model allowing to account for these occurrences of PAs.

3. Data and methodology

In this section we will first briefly describe the data this contribution is based on before passing on to a short description of our methodological approach leading to the results presented in the subsequent section.

---

[11] The fact that fully-fledged PAs can follow negations and quantifiers in these varieties was already observed by Kristol (2014:40). However, apart from giving an example, Kristol does not comment this any further nor does he provide any numbers concerning the frequency of the phenomenon. He limits himself to the observation that similar facts hold true for non-standard French (see also Stark & Gerards 2020 for an example of a PA after negation in colloquial Swiss French) and putting forward the lack of "normative influences [which could] have acted as a brake" as a possible explanation (Kristol 2016:358).

The data which we exploited is basically twofold: First and foremost, it is composed of the ALAVAL (*Atlas linguistique audiovisuel des dialectes francoprovençaux du Valais romand*) material, which is (partly) available online in an audiovisual database created by the University of Neuchâtel (http://alaval.unine.ch/). The ALAVAL comprises data which was collected by means of a questionnaire in 25 different communalities between 1994 and 2001. The vast majority of these 25 varieties, namely 21, are spoken in the canton of Valais in Switzerland. 2 additional communalities from the department of Haute-Savoie in France and the Italian Aosta Valley respectively complement the database. As there are two speakers for each variety, the ALAVAL consists of utterances from overall 50 different speakers.[12] Every utterance is transcribed into (a slightly adapted version of the) IPA.[13]

The data stemming from the ALAVAL are complemented by more recent data from 17 different speakers collected in own fieldwork in May 2017 in various villages in the Aosta Valley. These data were obtained – just like the one found in the ALAVAL – by using a questionnaire with 51 French sentences (14 of them *fillers*), which had to be translated by the informants into their local variety (for a detailed description of the fieldwork and the applied methodology see Stark & Gerards 2020).

Both types of data were inserted into the "DiFuPaRo-database", an sql-based database comprising sentences containing PAs from Franco-provençal, French (OFROM corpus – http://www11.unine.ch/) and Northern Italian dialects, which stem from the ASIt (http://asit.maldura. unipd.it/) as well as from more recent fieldwork. The relevant nominals are tagged according to 83 categories, among others, syntactic function of the respective nominal, phi features of the nominal and its different elements, morphological marking of number on N, presence of adverbials, negation and quantifiers etc. (cf. Davatz, Ihsane, Pinzin, Poletto & Stark 2019 where the structure of the database and its content is presented in detail).

For the present contribution we extracted three different data sets which all form part of the database described before. The first set consists

---

[12] With the exception of one variety where there were apparently only (two) male speakers left at the moment of the data collection, there is one female and one male speaker for every variety.

[13] The main modifications concern the vowel system, where special signs were introduced for vowels of an intermediate degree between the close-mid and open-mid pairs [e]/[ɛ], [ø]/ [œ] and [o]/[ɔ]: Dots below the signs for the open-mid vowels ([ɛ], [œ], [ɔ]) symbolize a slightly more closed pronunciation of the respective vowels. Furthermore, full and light nasalization are differentiated and characters for slightly centralized vowels of the front ([ɪ], [e], [ɛ]) and back series ([ʊ], [o], [ɔ]) have been created, marked by a dieresis (see p.26 in the Introduction to the ALAVAL on http://alaval.unine.ch/ for further details). Since the respective sounds do not form part of the phonological inventory of Francoprovençal but rather have to be considered as allophones, the respective diacritics have been removed during the import in the DiFuPaRo database to allow for a better readability.

of all the translations of a positive input sentence with a PA without any quantifier in the varieties of Francoprovençal B, i.e. all 18 Swiss varieties plus the two Aosta Valley varieties present in the ALAVAL as well as the various varieties the newer data stems from. Overall, input sentences with 57 different nominals were taken into consideration (of which 36 stemming from the ALAVAL). Since not all translations are sufficiently close translations of the input and therefore had to be discarded, the total of translated nominals building the first data set mounts up to 968 (corresponding to an average of about 17 translations of every input nominal). The different number/gender configurations are quite evenly distributed with a slight preponderance of feminine plural nouns. As Table 2 shows, most of the considered input nominals are in direct object positions (cf. 10), and only few of them function as prepositional or presentational complements:[14]

(10) lœɛ: zʊvˈœnœ   mˈɑːtɛ   ʃɛ   faʒˈãn   **dɛ trˈɛe**
      ART.PL young.FPL girl.PL REFL make.PST.3PL DE braid.PL
      'The young girls made each other/themselves braids.' (Montana, Valais)

Table 2. Distribution of the different input nominals taken into consideration

	Function of the nominal	Number of different nominals
MASC.SG.	direct object	11
	prep. complement	1
	pres. complement	1
FEM.SG.	direct object	8
	prep. complement	2
	pres. complement	1
MASC.PL.	direct object	9
	prep. complement	2
	pres. complement	3
FEM.PL.	direct object	13
	prep. complement	4
	pres. complement	2

[14] As the ALAVAL input sentences do not contain any PA-subjects, we decided not to include the results for the respective sentences tested in our fieldwork in the Aosta Valley for reasons of comparability. Taking into consideration the translations of these inputs would have led to a considerable distortion of the results as DE is, at least in the Aosta Valley varieties, almost systematically excluded from the subject position and replaced by the definite article in the translations made by the speakers (see Stark & Gerards 2020 for detailed results).

The second data set focuses on the PA after sentential negation (the cases of non-sentential negation were filtered out manually), where – contrary to Standard French – it does not seem to be excluded in the varieties of Francoprovençal A (Kristol 2016:358). As the numbers are considerably lower here, the data set was composed in a slightly different way: It is not based exclusively on the translations of input sentences, but includes every utterance with a (postverbal) negation made by the speakers of the varieties of Troistorrents, Val-d'Illiez, Vouvry (all three in the canton of Valais) and Sixt (Haute-Savoie).[15] Since we wanted to test the effect which negation has on the (form of the) PA, we didn't take into consideration sentences containing also a quantifying element.[16] Like-wise, sentences like *On ne voit plus souvent des éperviers* 'One does not see sparrowhawks often anymore', where the presupposition is maintained (= sparrowhawks can still be seen) and which are also perfectly grammatical in Standard French with a PA, are excluded from the second data set. Comprising no more than 62 nominals produced by our informants, this second data set on which our analysis is based is considerably smaller than the first one.

The third data set is concerned with quantifying elements after which, according to Kristol (2014:40), PAs can be found in the varieties of Francoprovençal A. It includes all the cases of a nominal quantity (i.e. a quantifying element including a determiner, like e.g. French *un peu* 'a little bit') or an adverbial quantity (i.e. a morphologically invariable quantifying element like French *beaucoup* 'many/much') found in a positive context in the data of the four varieties mentioned before.[17] As cases with a numeral have been excluded from this third data set,[18] it includes a relatively low number of 52 nominals produced by the informants in Francoprovençal.

As for data set 1, we first calculated the overall percentage of the use of a fully-fledged PA and detected the varieties of Francoprovençal B where it appeared at least once. We then calculated the percentages of the use of a PA in these varieties (cf. Table 3). In a second step, we grouped the

[15] The fifth variety in the ALAVAL belonging allegedly to Francoprovençal A, namely the variety of La-Chapelle-d'Abondance in Haute-Savoie, is not considered here, as the respective data are to a great extent ambiguous, if not to say contradictory, making a neat analysis impossible.

[16] There are 44 cases in the database where a negation and a quantifier co-occur. Only in 2 cases (= 5%) a PA is used instead of invariable DE, both of them show quantifying *bien* 'much/many'.

[17] Similarly to French, adjectival quantifiers (= quantifiers agreeing in number and gender with the noun like e.g. Italian *molto/molta/molti/molte* 'much/many') do not exist in Francoprovençal – neither with nor without invariable DE.

[18] It suffices to state here that there is no single case of a PA following a numeral in the data. Similarly, DE is completely out in the same context (see Stark & Gerards 2020). Francoprovençal thus behaves just like Standard French. Note, however, that in some non-standard varieties there seem to be cases attested like *J'ai deux de bonnets* 'I have two bonnets' (cf. Kayne 1977).

translated nominals according to the gender/number and the syntactic context of their 57 input nominals and calculated the respective percentages of the use of a PA (cf. Table 4). This should allow us to see whether phi-features or syntactic function facilitate the production of a fully-fledged PA instead of invariable DE. In a last step, we checked whether invariable DE and PA compete with other elements like the definite article in the translations of the input sentences and calculated their respective percentages of use according to the different gender/number configurations (cf. Table 5).

The methodology for the second and the third data set is similar to the one applied to the first data set: First, we calculated the overall percentages of fully-fledged PAs for each of the two data sets, we then zoomed in on the different varieties by calculating the respective percentages for every variety in order to check for significant geographical differences (cf. Tables 6 and 9). Just like with the first data set, we calculated the percentages for the different syntactic functions of the relevant produced nominals (cf. Tables 7 and 10). However, contrary to data set 1, where we differentiated the nominals according to gender and number, we had to refrain from taking into account the latter and content ourselves with the gender feature. This is due to the fact that with invariable DE following negation and quantifiers and a preponderant absence of number marking on the noun it is simply impossible to state whether a noun is singular or plural. Finally, we calculated the percentages of PAs with respect to other determiners (cf. Tables 8 and 11).

4. Results

The aim of this section is to present the results obtained by the analysis of the three different data sets presented in the previous section. Subsection 4.1. sums up the insights concerning the geographically unexpected PAs (based on the first data set), and subsection 4.2. is dedicated to the distributionally unexpected PAs. It is split up according to the distinction between the data sets two and three described above, meaning that the first part (subsection 4.2.1.) presents the results of the second data set, i.e. the results concerning PAs after negation, and the second part (subsection 4.2.2.) concentrates on the third data set, i.e. PAs after quantifiers.

4.1. *Geographically unexpected partitive articles*

The first result with respect to the geographically unexpected PAs is that we find a total of 25 occurrences of a fully-fledged PA in the translations of positive input sentences containing a PA, i.e. in 2.5 percent of the 968 nominals. (11) and (12) exemplify two such occurrences of fully-fledged

PAs, one from the data collected in the Aosta Valley (11) and own from a Swiss Francoprovençal variety stemming from the ALAVAL (12):

(11) ljø fe   kwijə **də la tsiʀ** avwe dɛz ɔɲˀõ
she make.PRS.3SG cook.INF PA.FSG meat with DE onion
'She cooks meat with onions.' (Saint Nicolas, Aosta Valley)

(12) **di tsɑːtˈæɲə** nẽ nɛ   ʒy   myndzˈa ʃʊˈɛ̃ː
PA chestnut(s) CL have.PRS.1SG have.PTCP eat.PTCP often
'Chestnuts, I have eaten often.' (Fully, Valais)

The example in (11) shows a use of a feminine singular PA clearly contrasting with the forms [dɛ] or [də] of invariable DE, which is used regularly in this variety. (12) is a case of a feminine plural noun preceded by the form [di], corresponding morphologically to the combination of the preposition *de* and the definite article. Again, the used form clearly contrasts with [dɛ] or [də] of invariable DE.

Having a closer look at the geographical distribution of these forms, we can state that fully-fledged PAs appear in 5 out of the 18 Swiss Francoprovençal B varieties as well as in the various varieties spoken in the Aosta Valley. Table 3 lists the respective varieties and their numbers of occurrences of a fully-fledged PA with the corresponding ratio of its usage:[19]

Table 3. Varieties of Francoprovençal B showing at least one PA

	Number of occurrences of PAs	Total number of valid translations	Percentage of usage of PA
Chalais	1	13	8%
Chamoson	1	35	3%
Fully	2	30	7%
Lens	3	30	10%
Miège	2	27	7%
Aosta Valley	16	412	4%

As can be read from the table above, PAs are not only completely absent in 13 out of the 18 Swiss Francoprovençal varieties, but also rare both in terms of absolute numbers of occurrences and of percentages of usage in the varieties where they appear sporadically. Interestingly, both

---

[19] Note that the different varieties of the Aosta Valley are subsumed under the label "Aosta Valley", which comprises thus the two Aosta Valley varieties of the ALAVAL (Bionaz and Torgnon) as well as the various varieties spoken by the informants of our fieldwork (see Stark & Gerards 2020 for further geographical details). This simplification is primarily for reasons of clarity in the presentation of the results.

the varieties of Fully and Chamoson and the varieties of Chalais, Lens and Miège are neighbors.[20]

The 25 occurrences of geographically unexpected PAs are distributed in the following way over the different syntactic contexts:

Table 4. Syntactic distribution of geographically unexpected PAs according to gender/number

	Direct object	Prepositional complement	Presentational complement	Total translations
MASC.SG.	3/140 (2%)	0/39	0/16	195
FEM.SG.	12/129 (9%)	8/51 (16%)	0/30	210
MASC.PL.	1/164	0/32	0/47	243
FEM.PL.	1/211	0/74	0/35	320

As can easily be seen from Table 4, the occurrences of fully-fledged PAs are restricted to direct objects and prepositional complements. Consider (13) for an example of the latter:

(13) ᶲo   pɑ nɛtɛjˈe   ɛ   bʷˈɔjæ awˈi **dœ l** ˈiwœ tˈaidə
     need.PRS.3SG NEG clean.INF ART.PL churn with PA.SG water tepid
     'You mustn't clean the churns with tepid water.' (Chamoson, Valais)

Moreover, a gender number bias seems to be at stake, more importantly than the syntactic function. Consider Table 5, which complements Table 4 by showing the different options the speakers use in the translations for a French input PA:

Table 5. Percentage of PAs in Francoprovençal B per valid translation

	PA	DE	Definite article / BN	Total translations
MASC.SG.	3 (1.5%)	157 (80.5%)	35 (17.9%)	195
FEM.SG.	20 (10%)	120 (60%)	60 (30%)	210
MASC.PL.	1 (0.4%)	199 (81.9%)	43 (17.7%)	243
FEM.PL.	1 (0.3%)	255 (79.7%)	64 (20%)	320

Apparently, the French feminine singular PA *de la* is – at least to some extent – prone to be translated by its morphological Francoprovençal

---

[20] In the case of the latter three villages, it has to be specified that the village of Montana, where no PAs are attested, lies between Lens and Miège. It is, however, situated at a much higher altitude than the other two villages.

equivalent instead of invariable DE, contrary to the contracted forms of masculine singular *du* and the plural *des* (= FrPR [du]/[dy] and [di], respectively). Interestingly, 2 out of the 3 cases of geographically unexpected masculine singular PAs are non-contracted forms as well, preceding a noun starting in a vowel (*de l'*). Finally, the definite article with an indefinite interpretation seems to be an alternative to the PA in the input sentence with both numbers and genders (cf. Cardinaletti & Giusti 2018 on similar observations in Italian dialects).

4.2. *Distributionally unexpected partitive articles*

The following two subsections present the results for dataset two and three from varieties of Francoprovençal A, i.e. the numbers for PAs after negation (4.2.1.) and after quantifiers (4.2.2.).

4.2.1. *Fully-fledged partitive articles after negation*

The first finding concerning the negative context is that there are overall 14 occurrences of a fully-fledged PA after negation in the 62 negated sentences building the second data set found in the varieties of Francoprovençal A, which corresponds to a rate of 23%. (14) and (15) give an example of a singular and a plural form respectively:

(14) ɪ mõ grã parˈã i mdˈivã pɑ **d la taʀt**
the my big parents CL eat.PST.3PL not PA.FSG cake
'My grandparents didn't eat cake.' (Sixt, Haute-Savoie)

(15) ma mjɪʁ gʁã ɛl ɑtʃɛtˈav pa **dle bʁˈöjɛ**
my mother big CL buy.PST.3SG not PA.FPL clothes
'My grandmother didn't buy clothes' (Val-d'Illiez, Valais)

A second important observation is that fully-fledged PAs can be found in all four varieties of Francoprovençal A in the context of negation, with the variety of Val-d'Illiez showing a particularly high rate of occurrences, as Table 6 illustrates:

Table 6. Varieties of Francoprovençal A showing PAs under sentential negation

	Number of PAs	Number of nominals under sentential negation	Percentage of usage of PA
Sixt	3	15	20%
Troistorrents	3	21	14%
Val-d'Illiez	4	11	36%
Vouvry	4	15	27%

The 14 cases of fully-fledged PAs found in the 62 relevant nominals appear in four different syntactic contexts (cf. Table 7). The respective percentages show that, similarly to French, the PA seems to be obligatory in predicate position also following a negative element and that negation does not seem to affect the presence of a fully-fledged PA when the latter appears with the complement of a preposition. Furthermore, there does not seem to be any kind of gender bias:[21]

Table 7. Percentages of PAs under sentential negation over the different syntactic contexts

	Direct object	Predicate	Prepositional complement	Presentational complement	Total utterances
MASC	3/18 (17%)	0	0	2/10 (20%)	28
FEM	3/20 (15%)	3/3	3/3	0/8	34

Finally, Table 8 shows that PAs are, although attested, still clearly less frequent than the French-like "reduced" form *de* under negation.

Table 8. Use of PAs compared to other determiners under sentential negation

	PA	DE	Definite article / BN[22]	Possessive	Total utterances
MASC	5 (18%)	16 (57%)	4 (14%)	3 (11%)	28
FEM	9 (26%)	19 (56%)	5 (15%)	1 (3%)	34

However, if we only look at the translations with a PA and *de*, we count 14 cases of a PA in 49 translations, amounting to a rate of 29%, which can by no means be described as exceptional.

4.2.2. *Fully-fledged partitive articles after quantifiers*
The rate of fully-fledged PAs after quantifiers is similar to the context presented before: Overall, we find 10 PAs in the 52 sentences showing a nominal under the scope of a quantifying element, corresponding to 19%. (16) and (17) show two cases with a singular and a plural noun respectively:

---

[21] Note that since it is impossible to determine number in cases of simple *de* after negation, there is only a gender and no number distinction in Table 8.
[22] The only occurrence of a bare noun can be found in a case of coordination, where French does not have *de* either.

(16) ɔ̃n ɪ me na kuʎˈɛ **d lɑ faʁnˈa**
one CL put.PRS.3sg a spoon PA.FSG flour
'One puts a spoon of flour [in it].' (Sixt, Haute-Savoie)

(17) ɔ̃ jˈɑdzɔ l ˈɛʁə tɑ̃ **d le pjˈɛʁɛ pɛʁ ɛ̃**
one time it be.PST.3SG so.many PA.FPL stone.PL around here
'Once there were so many stones around here.' (Val-d'Illiez, Valais)

Contrary to the context of negation, fully-fledged PAs do not appear in all the four varieties of Francoprovençal A, but are absent in the varieties of Troistorrents and Vouvry. Again, it is the variety of Val-d'Illiez that shows the highest rate of fully-fledged PAs:

Table 9. Varieties of Francoprovençal A showing PAs under the scope of a quantifier

	Number of PAs	Number of nominals following quantity	Percentage of usage of PA
Sixt	4	24	17%
Troistorrents	0	7	0%
Val-d'Illiez	6	16	38%
Vouvry	0	5	0%

Table 10 illustrates the distribution of the 10 cases of fully fledged PAs after a quantifier over the syntactic contexts. The respective percentages show that the fully-fledged PA appears slightly more frequently with feminine nouns (but absolute numbers are very low, so the scope of this descriptive statistics is quite limited):[23]

Table 10. Distribution of PAs under a quantity over syntactic contexts

	Direct object	Prepositional complement	Presentational complement	Total utterances
MASC	2/18 (11%)	0/1	0/3	22
FEM	5/22 (23%)	0/2	3/6 (50%)	30

Similarly to the context presented in the previous subsection, the fully-fledged PA is still clearly less frequent than French-like "reduced" *de*:

---

[23] As number marking on N is often absent or ambiguous, the number of the respective nominal is usually not possible to determine in this context. The distinction in Table 12 is thus limited to gender (cf. footnote 18 for the context of negation presenting the same problem).

Table 11. Percentages of PAs under quantity

	PA	DE	Definite article	Total utterances
MASC	2 (9%)	20 (91%)	-	22
FEM	8 (27%)	20 (67%)	2 (7%)[24]	30

   Taking together masculine and feminine nouns and prescinding from the two translations with a definite article, the rate of PAs adds up to 20% (10/50). Again, we take this number to be too important to be neglected or called simple outliers.

5. Discussion

In what follows, we will discuss the findings presented in section 4, which in both cases, geographically as well as distributionally unexpected PAs in our Francoprovençal data, challenge existing analyses to a certain point. We will start with the geographical issue in subsection 5.1. and turn then to morphosyntax in subsection 5.2.

5.1. *Geographically unexpected partitive articles*

The first explanation that comes to mind when 'system-external' elements are found in varieties is language contact. For the Aosta Valley, the Francoprovençal B varieties spoken there are close to Piedmontese dialects with fully-fledged PAs like Biellese (cf. data from the ASIt). For the Francoprovençal B varieties spoken in the Valais (Switzerland), this is more difficult to argue for, as there is no direct horizontal contact with Italian or Romansh varieties with PAs. We could, however, hypothesize that vertical contact with Standard French, actively mastered by all our informants and omnipresent in the media, is at stake. A different path of explanation that could be pursued is based on the observation (see subsection 4.2, Table 3) that gender or morphophonology might be a relevant factor in these cases, which are overrepresented with ‚analytical' PAs, i.e. feminine singular and masculine/feminine singular in front of vowels (French input *de la*, *de l'*). Further research is needed in order to determine whether the marked gender feature ‚feminine' represents in itself a trigger for deviating forms (see the observation in Pomino 2012 for number marking in Romance DPs with Tuscan and Ladin varieties with defective number marking on feminine nouns) or whether the non-fused forms trigger *verbatim* translations more than fused ones.

[24]Both occurrences of a definite article stem from cases of dislocation.

5.2. *Distributionally unexpected partitive articles*

As for fully-fledged PAs after sentential negation and quantifying expressions, ungrammatical in Standard French, language contact seems to be excluded at first sight. However, a closer look at spontaneous spoken French data from the OFROM corpus shows a more nuanced picture. Consider the following examples, where PAs instead of invariable DE follow the negation particle *pas* and the nominal quantifier *un peu* ('a little bit'):

(18) là-bas on   mange   pas **de la   tortue** comme elle
      there one eat.PRS.3SG NEG PA.FSG turtle like   she
      m'a   montré
      me.have.PRS.3SG show.PTCP
      'There they don't eat turtle as she has shown me.'

(19) bon   ça   fait   un **peu du**   déménagement hein
      well that make.PRS.3SG a   bit PA.MSG removal   right
      'Well that represents some removal, right.'

There are also PAs after quantifiers attested in Emilian dialects, typologically close to French (cf. Pinzin & Poletto 2019). As we did not yet evaluate the ratio of these cases in the OFROM data inserted in our DiFuPaRo-database, we do not know anything about the frequency of the phenomenon, one prerequisite of (pattern) borrowing.

Whatever explanation we may find for the existence of these structures, they challenge (at least) three analyses of the internal structure of indefinite nominals with PAs.

Let's first have a look at Ihsane's (2008) proposal. She locates PAs in a functional projection ("FP$_3$") above quantifiers, and the *de*-part of PAs, starting in a proper "*deP*" below "FP$_2$", moves, in complementary distribution to quantifiers, to "FP$_2$" below "FP$_3$" (Ihsane 2008:163) and merges then via incorporation in "F°$_3$" with the *le*-element, indicating number (not definiteness). Thus, as to their original merge position, the *de*-element of PAs and overt quantifiers are in complementary distribution, which is incompatible with the data presented in example (19) above:

As the most obvious way out could be the assumption of a reversed order of "FP$_2$" and "FP$_3$" in the derivation (like already assumed for quantifiers and number marking/classifying elements in Heycock & Zamparelli 2005, Stark 2008a, also in Borer 2005), which would, however, lead to a radical overgeneralization (= prediction of consistent cooccurrence of overt quantifiers and PAs), we do not see an easy modification of Ihsane' (2008) model in order to account for our data.

Next, Pinzin & Poletto (2019) propose the following two different structures (a) and (b) of Italian and French nominals with PAs, which they also comment in the following citation:

Table 12. Internal structure of French nominals with complementary distribution of quantifiers and PAs according to Ihsane (2008:163)

	Example	Quantity FP$_2$	Count FP$_1$	Lexical category NP
a.	beaucoup de pain	beaucoup	X	pain
b.	peu de pain	peu	X	pain
c.	beaucoup de livres	beaucoup	-s	pain
d.	peu de livres	peu	-s	pain

	Example	Number FP$_3$	Quant. FP$_2$	*deP*	Count FP$_1$	Lexical category NP
a.	du pain$_{quantit.}$	de + le$_{sing}$	de	de	X	pain
b.	du pain$_{non-quantit.}$	de + le$_{sing}$	X	de	X	pain
c.	des pains$_{quantit.}$	de + les$_{plur}$	de	de	-s	pain
d.	des pains$_{non-quantit.}$	de + les$_{plur}$	X	de	-s	pain

(a) Italian:

[$_{AmountP}$ [$_{Amount'}$ Amount° **DE+agr** [$_{GenP}$ [$_{Gen'}$ Gen° **t** [$_{divP}$ [$_{div'}$ div° [NP]. . .]

(b) French:

[$_{AmountP}$ [$_{Amount'}$ Amount° **DE+agr** [$_{GenP}$ [$_{Gen'}$ Gen° **t** [$_{divP}$ [$_{div'}$ div° **DE+agr** [$_{GenP}$ [$_{Gen'}$ Gen° **t** [NP]. . .]"

Both French and Italian PAs represent an inflected Genitive case, assigned by a functional element in the spine of the nominal: **[DE+agr]**
The difference is the element itself which assigns Genitive case:
Italian: <u>Genitive is assigned by Amount°</u> ("quantity" of X).
French: <u>Genitive is assigned in two positions: by Amount° and by div°</u> ("countedness" of X)

The absence of agreement in their model (= only *de* after negation and quantifiers) in French) is explained as follows:

> When AmountP is overtly occupied by another element, this interaction [= AGREE] should not be possible anymore and we should only find the "genitive" part of the PA (*DE*).

Pinzin & Poletto (2019) do not give any reason why the presence of an overt quantifier should block agreement – in fact, if we do not assume that, we can account for the cooccurrence of overt quantifiers and PAs. The assumption of parametrization is possible, of course, but in both cases, there should be an independent explanation of the correlations observed, in order to avoid a mere restatement of the facts.

   Finally, Stark, in Stark & Gerards (2020, section 2.2.), building up on Stark (2016), proposes, following and slightly modifying Borer

(2005:109), to consider *de* as a default head exponent in Div° (if no number marking on N e.g. by –*s* is available; see also Cardinaletti & Giusti 2015) and the ‚def. article'-element of PAs to be located in #P whenever empty (= no indefinite article, numerals, quantifiers in #P), see Figure 2:

```
                        #P
               ╱                 ╲
          #°                      DivP
       some              ╱                 ╲
       algunos      Div°                      nP
       les                               ╱         ╲
       beaucoup      −s              n°               √
                     de              −o          [GEN = masc]
                                                 wine
                                                 vin-
                                                 [vɛ̃]
```
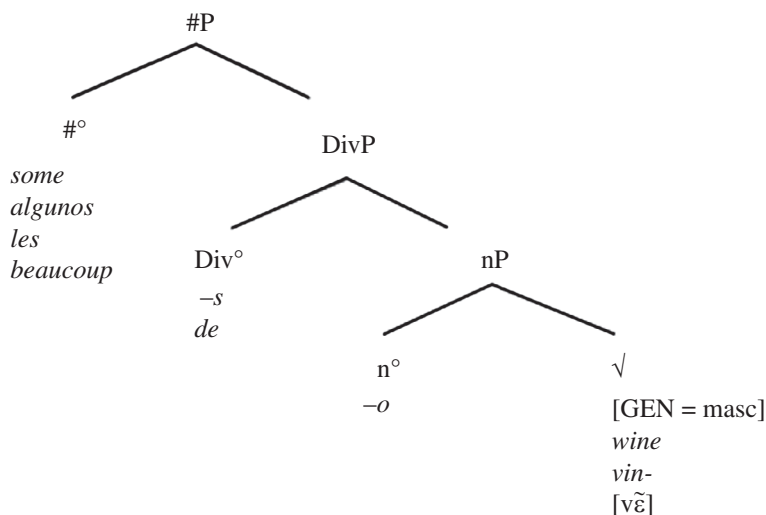
Figure 2. Structure of indefinite (quantified) nominals in English, Spanish and French

That means that in case no numeral or quantifier is inserted in #° (the ‚counting' or quantifying projection following Borer 2005), *le/la/les* are inserted as minimal elements expressing gender and number of the whole nominal (cf. also Ihsane 2008 for the assumption that *le/la/les* express number, also Mathieu 2009, Borer 2005:164 for the location of English *the*). Subsequently, Lowering (see Embick & Noyer 1999, 2001) takes place, like illustrated in Figure 3:

The most pronounced deviation from Borer's work is the assumption that DivP (her CLP) is always present and that *de* is the default exponent of Div°.

Details left aside (see Stark & Gerards 2020, section 2.2.), it is evident that also this model predicts that the PA cannot show up after negation particle *pas* or quantifiers, as the def.-article-element of PAs is in complementary distribution with overt quantifiers in the same syntactic slot, so that a structure like *beaucoup du* cannot be derived, and the assumption of different parametrizations for the absence or presence of *le/la/les* is impossible.

In contrast to the three preceding ones, a fourth analysis is compatible with the observed facts, i.e. the occurrence of fully-fledged PAs after negation particles and quantifiers: Cardinaletti & Giusti's (2006,
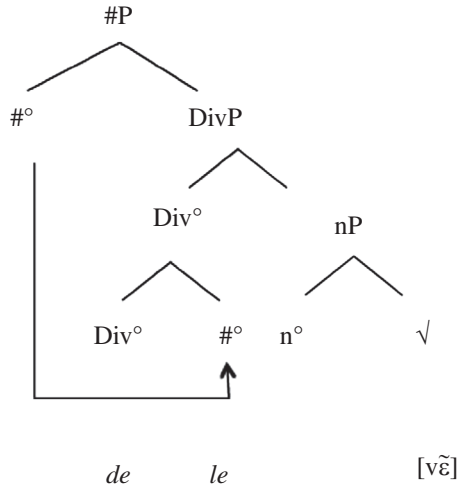
Figure 3. Indefinite nominals in French with Lowering of #° into Div°

2016:66f, 2018) model of complex nominals with determiners (DPs) and quantifiers (QP, with Q° taking an indefinite DP as its complement), see Figure 4:
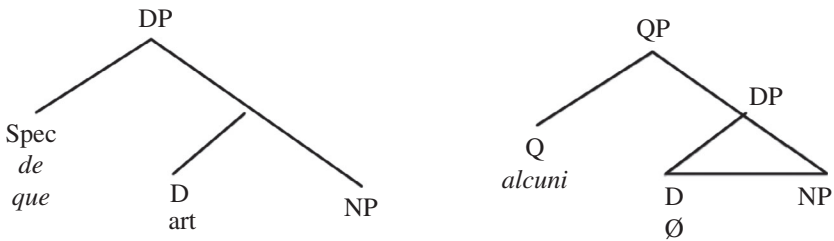

Figure 4. Nominal structure with *de* located in SpecDP and the definite article in D according to Cardinaletti & Giusti (2006, 2016, 2018)

This model relies on a parametrization of indefinite determination, like the one put forward in Cardinaletti & Giusti 2018, according to which different Italoromance dialects have i) no PA-like indefinite determiner and admit bare nominals in argument position (= SpecDP and D° empty); ii) have only invariable DE (= empty D°); iii) have definite articles with indefinite readings (= empty SpecDP); iv) have fully-fledged PAs (= SpecDP and D° filled). The last varieties are then those where structures like the ones presented in example (19) occur. However, the syntactic alternation between PAs and invariable DE depending on preceding overt quantification or negation like in Standard French cannot be predicted or explained by this model.

Parametrization could be however one possiblity to account for the observed variation, either for different varieties or for different gender/

number features of the noun, which could correlate with the presence (plural, feminine) or absence (singular, masculine) of an element in the D° slot.

One alternative might be to get back to Hagit Borer's work on naming, dividing and counting from 2005 (page 171), where she proposes to locate quantifiers, numerals and other counting elements either in the specifier position of #P or in its head, see Figures 5–7:
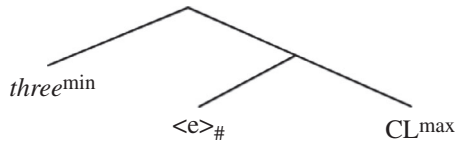
$$three^{min} \qquad <e>_\# \qquad CL^{max}$$

Figure 5. Numeral *three* in specifier position of #P

$$<e>_d \qquad \#^{max} (= three^{max}) \qquad the^{max} \qquad three^{min} \qquad <e>_\# \qquad CL^{max}$$
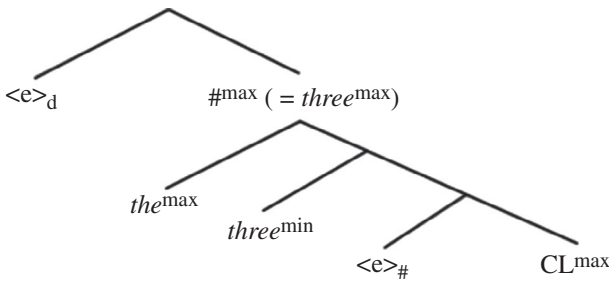
Figure 6. Numeral *three* in head position of #P

#P
Spec#P — #P
#° — DivP
Div° — nP
Div° #° n° √
beaucoup *le* *de* *le* [vɛ̃]

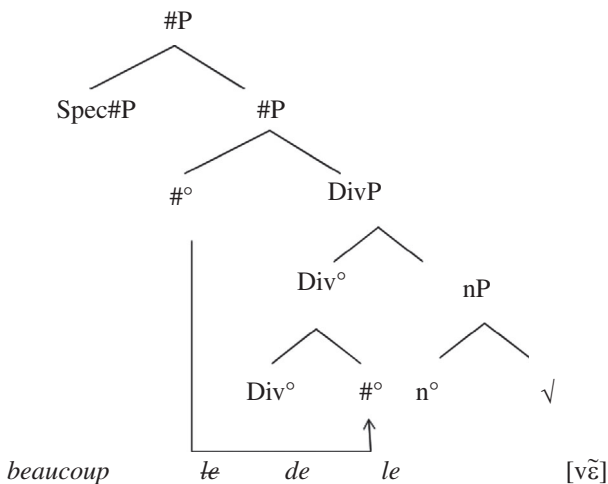**Figure 7.** Indefinite nominal in French with Lowering of #° into Div° and quantifier in Spec#P

Empirical evidence comes from Hebrew (see Borer 2005, chap. 7), but what is interesting for us is the fact that this varying behavior of quantifiers allows us to derive both variants (*beaucoup de vin*, with beaucoup in #°, and *beaucoup du vin* with *beaucoup* in Spec#P) after them:

Again, this modelling remains descriptive, not predictive or explanatory – but it might give a hint for new research in that we need to have a closer look at quantifiers in order to understand more about the indefinite determiners in (Gallo-)Romance.

6. Conclusion

A morphosyntactic investigation of minor Galloromance languages such as Francoprovençal turns out to be rewarding in multiple respects: First, the mere documentation of this endangered language and a detailed typological description enriches our knowledge of the world's languages in general and their system of indefinite nominal determination in particular. Second, the observation of internal variation (Francoprovençal A with fully-fledged PAs vs. Francoprovençal B with invariable DE like in many Occitan varieties) permits to raise awareness of non-standard systems, usually acquired naturally (vs. standard languages learnt at school), and their properties that have to be taken as the basis for our theoretical modelling. Third, less frequent strucures in corpora or fieldwork data, like the PA in Francoprovençal B and PAs after negation particles and quantifiers, need to be seriously taken into account (and not be 'explained away'), as they reveal patterns of variation of considerable importance to understand a language's grammar and its variability. They also might hint at language contact as a cause of their coming-into-being, but we have to be careful to avoid too quick and superficial conclusions (see Stark & Widmer 2020). Finally, the combination of cross-linguistic comparison, dialectological fieldwork and a solid theoretical foundation will hopefully help us learn more about the wealth of variation in nominal structures couched in one and the same functional spine.

Acknowledgments

References

Atlas Linguistique Audiovisuel du Francoprovençal Valaisan ; http://alaval.unine.ch.

ASIt: *Atlante Sintattico d'Italia* (http://asit.maldura.unipd.it/).

AVANZI, M., BÉGUELIN, M.-J. & DIÉMOZ, F. 2012–2019. *Présentation du corpus OFROM – corpus oral de français de Suisse romande*. Université de Neuchâtel; http://www.unine.ch/ofrom.

BONNAUD, P. 1992. *Grammaire générale de l'auvergnat à l'usage des arvernisants*. Chamalières: Cercle Terre d'Auvergne.

BORER, H. 2005. *In Name Only*. *Structuring Sense, vol. 1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BOSSONG, G. 2016. Classifications. *The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages*. eds. A. Ledgeway & M. Maiden, 63–72. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CARDINALETTI, A. & GIUSTI, G. 2018. Indefinite Determiners: Variation and Optionality in Italo-Romance. *Advances in Italian Dialectology*. eds. R. D'Alessandro & D. Pescarini, 135–161. Leiden/Boston: Brill.

CARDINALETTI, A. & GIUSTI, G. 2016. The syntax of the Italian indefinite determiner *dei*. Lingua 181:58–80.

CARDINALETTI, A. & GIUSTI, G. 2015. *Indefinite determiners in Italo-Romance: an insight from a lesser studied central Italian dialect*. Talk given at the CIDSM (Cambridge Italian Dialect Syntax Meeting) X. 22–24/07. Leiden.

CARDINALETTI, A. & GIUSTI, G. 2006. The Syntax of Quantified Phrases and Quantitative Clitics. *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*. eds. M. Everaert & H. van Riemsdijk, 23–93. Malden MA: Blackwell.

CHENAL, A. 1986. *Le franco-provençal valdotain*. *Morphologie et Syntaxe*. Aoste: Musumeci Editeur.

DAUZAT, A. 1912. Notes sur la syntaxe du patois de Vinzelles. *Annales du Midi: revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, Tome 24, N°95:382–396.

DAVATZ, J., IHSANE, T., PINZIN, F., POLETTO, C. & STARK, E. *DiFuPaRo Database: Opening the frontend*. Talk given at the PARTE workshop – Partitive case, pronouns and determiners: diachrony and variation. 03/09. Pavia.

DOBROVIE-SORIN, C. & BEYSSADE, C. 2012. *Redefining Indefinites*. Dordrecht: Springer.

DOBROVIE-SORIN, C. & BEYSSADE, C. 2004. *Définir les indéfinis*. Paris: CNRS Éditions.

DUCH, C. & BÉJEAN, H. 1998. *Le patois de Tignes (Savoie)*. Grenoble: Editions littéraires et linguistiques de l'Université de Grenoble.

EMBICK, D. & NOYER, R. 2001. Movement after Syntax. *Linguistic Inquiry* 32.4:555–595.

EMBICK, D. & NOYER, R. 1999. Locality in post-syntactic operations. *Papers in morphology and syntax*, MITWPL 34. eds. V. Lin, C. Krause, B. Bruening & K. Arregi, 265–317. Cambridge, MA: MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.

GAUCHAT, L., JEANJAQUET, J. & TAPPOLET, E. 1925. *Tableaux phonétiques des patois suisses romands*. Neuchâtel: Attinger.

GILLIÉRON, J. 1880. *Patois de la commune de Vionnaz (Bas-Valais)*. Paris: F. Vieweg.

HAEFELIN, F. 1876. *Recherches sur les patois romans du canton de Fribourg*. Leipzig: Teubner.

HEYCOCK, C. & ZAMPARELLI, R. 2005. Friends and Colleagues. Plurality, Coordination, and the Structure of DPs. *Natural Language Semantics* 13:201–270.

IHSANE, T. 2008. *The layered DP in French*. *Form and Meaning of French Indefinites*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

JABERG, K. 1911. Notes sur l's final libre dans les patois franco-provençaux et provençaux du Piémont. *Bulletin du Glossaire des patois de la Suisse romande* 10:49–79.

JEANJAQUET, J. 1931. Les patois valaisans: caractères généraux et particularités. *Revue de linguistique romane*, Tome VII, 23–51.

KASSTAN, J. R. 2015. *Variation and Change in Francoprovençal: A Study of an Emerging Linguistic Norm*. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis, University of Kent.

KAYNE, R. 1977. *Syntaxe du français: Le cycle transformationnel* [French syntax: The transformational cycle]. Paris: Editions du Seuil.

KRISTOL, A. 2016. Francoprovençal. *The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages*. eds. A. Ledgeway & M. Maiden, 350–362. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

KRISTOL, A. 2014. Les grammaires du francoprovençal : l'expression de la partitivité. Quelques leçons du projet ALAVAL. *La Géolinguistique dans les Alpes au XXe siècle : méthodes, défis et perspectives. Actes de la Conférence annuelle sur l'activité scientifique du Centre d'études francoprovençales "René Willien"*, 29–44. Saint Nicolas: Bureau régional pour l'ethnologie et la linguistique.

LA GIETTAZ-SAVOIE. 2009. *Le Patois Du Haut Val D'Arly : Sommaire*. Evian: Cleopas.

MATHIEU, E. 2009. From local blocking to Cyclic Agree: The role and meaning of determiners in the history of French. *Determiners. Universals and variation*. eds. J. Ghomeshi, I. Paul & M. Wiltschko, 123–157. Amsterdam: John Benjamin.

NAVAILH, T. 2016. *Morphosyntaxe des déterminants et du syntagme nominal en francoprovençal*. Master's thesis. Lyon: Université Jean Moulin (Lyon 3).

PANNATIER, G. 1995. Le patois d'Evolène. Synchronie et diachronie d'un parler francoprovençal vivant. Doctoral thesis. Neuchâtel: Université de Neuchâtel [unpublished].

PINZIN, F. & POLETTO, C. 2019. *Partitive Articles in French, Italian (and Northern Italian Dialects)*. Talk given at the PARTE workshop. 26/01. Zurich.

POMINO, N. 2012. Partial or complete lack of plural agreement. The role of morphology. *Inflection and word-formation in Romance languages*. eds. S. Gaglia & M.-O. Hinzelin, 201–229. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins.

STARK, E. & WIDMER, P. 2020. Breton *a*-marking of (internal) verbal arguments – a result of language contact? *Linguistics* 58.3:745–766.

STARK, E. & GERARDS, D. 2020. 'Partitive Articles' in Aosta Valley Francoprovençal – Old Questions and New Data. *Bare Nouns vs. 'Partitive Articles': Disentangling Functions*. ed. T. Ihsane, 301–334. Leiden/Boston: Brill (Syntax and Semantics).

STARK, E. 2016. Nominal morphology and semantics – Where's gender (and 'partitive articles') in Gallo-Romance? *Proceedings of the VII Nereus International Workshop "Clitic Doubling and other issues of the syntax/ semantic interface in Romance DPs"*. eds. S. Fischer & M. Navarro, 13–149. Arbeitspapier 128. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft, Universität Konstanz.

STARK, E. 2008a. The role of the plural system in Romance. *The Paradox of Grammatical Change. Perspectives from Romance*. eds. U. Detges & R. Waltereit, 57–84. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins (= Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 293).

STARK, E. 2008b. Typological correlations in nominal determination in Romance. *Essays on Nominal Determination. From morphology to discourse management*. eds. H. H. Müller & A. Klinge, 45–61. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins (= Studies in Language Companion Series, 99).

SYMILA – http://symila.univ-tlse2.fr.

THÉROND, G. 2002. *Eléments de grammaire languedocienne : dialecte languedocien cettois*. Puylaurens: Institut d'études occitanes.

ZULATO, A., KASSTAN, J. & NAGY, N. 2017. An overview of Francoprovençal vitality in Europe and North America. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 2018.249:11–29.

Elisabeth Stark
University of Zurich
Romanisches Seminar
Zürichbergstrasse 8
Zürich CH–8032
estark@rom.uzh.ch

Jan Pavel Davatz
University of Zurich
Romanisches Seminar
Zürichbergstrasse 8
Zürich CH–8032
jan.davatz@uzh.ch