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 Francoprovencal. 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 Francoprovencal 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 abbreviations 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 participle, 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, DAT = dative, CL = clitic (pronoun), NEG = negation.
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. 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 Gallo-Romance 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

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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) kē ɩᵣɔ pɪɲa mɛʤɪɲɔ ɬɾø d le tætˈine
    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. 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) û mûtɔ dœ mûtɔn⁴
    a heap        (some) heaps
û burgɔ dœ burgɔ
    a spinning wheel (some) spinning wheels

(5) na mata dœ matɛ
    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

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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 dës ‘teeth’ (cf. also Jeanjaquet 1931:311). 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’, 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 Languedocian])

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) Dounâs-me *de* pan [. . . ] d` amellas
give.IMP.2SG-1SG.DAT DE bread DE almond.PL
‘Give me (some?) bread [. . . ], (some?) almonds.’ (Thé rond 2002:86; own glosses)

(7) kât u fwe do vê la rôzjo ply:ʒ
when CL make.PRS.3SG PA.MSG wind the reed bend.PRS.3SG
‘When it is windy the reed bends.’

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

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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). 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) ε  dimˈɛz mizjɔ de filɛ
    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’.\(^9\)

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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 (cf. 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 vviTv] ‘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.
‘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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Francoprovençal A</th>
<th>Francoprovençal B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully-fledged PAs</td>
<td>Invariable DE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender distinction in plural determiners</td>
<td>No gender distinction in plural determiners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No case distinction in definite articles</td>
<td>(Partly) preserved case distinction in definite articles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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’”.

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.

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. Every utterance is transcribed into (a slightly adapted version of the) IPA.

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 Francoprovençal, 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 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.

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], [o]/[œ] and [o]/[ɔ]: Dots below the signs for the open-mid vowels ([e], [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 diacritic (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) lœ : żuz’ènœ m’a:te ŋe faž’ân de tr’eœ
  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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function of the nominal</th>
<th>Number of different nominals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MASC.SG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct object</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prep. complement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pres. complement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM.SG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct object</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prep. complement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pres. complement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MASC.PL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct object</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prep. complement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pres. complement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM.PL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct object</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prep. complement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pres. complement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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).

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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). 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. Likewise, 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. As cases with a numeral have been excluded from this third data set, 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
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 do la tsir avwe dez əŋəðə she make. PRS.3SG cook.INF PA.FSG meat with DE onion ‘She cooks meat with onions.’ (Saint Nicolas, Aosta Valley)

(12) di tsaːt’əŋə nɛ ne ʒy əŋəndz’a ʃʊ’ɛ: 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 [də] or [dɔ] 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 [də] or [dɔ] 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Number of occurrences of PAs</th>
<th>Total number of valid translations</th>
<th>Percentage of usage of PA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chalais</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamoson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lens</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miège</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aosta Valley</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.\textsuperscript{20}

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntactic context</th>
<th>Total translations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct object</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional complement</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentational complement</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total translations</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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) \(^{9}\)o pa \(\, ^{e}b^{w}\, ^{o}j\, ^{e}w^i\, ^{d}e^l\, ^{i}w^e\, ^{t}\, ^{a}i\, ^{d}o\) 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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PA</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>Definite article / BN</th>
<th>Total translations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASC.SG.</td>
<td>3 (1.5%)</td>
<td>157 (80.5%)</td>
<td>35 (17.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM.SG.</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
<td>120 (60%)</td>
<td>60 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASC.PL.</td>
<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
<td>199 (81.9%)</td>
<td>43 (17.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM.PL.</td>
<td>1 (0.3%)</td>
<td>255 (79.7%)</td>
<td>64 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

\textsuperscript{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) i mò grà par’ā i md’ivā pa d la tast
the my big parents CL eat.PST.3PL not PA.FSG cake
‘My grandparents didn’t eat cake.’ (Sixt, Haute-Savoie)

(15) ma mjùs grà el atʃet’av pa dle bu ōjɛ
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of PAs</th>
<th>Number of nominals under sentential negation</th>
<th>Percentage of usage of PA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sixt</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troistorrents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val-d’Illiez</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vouvry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.\footnote{Note that since it is impossible to determine number in cases of simple \textit{de} after negation, there is only a gender and no number distinction in Table 8.}

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct object</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
<th>Prepositional complement</th>
<th>Presentational complement</th>
<th>Total utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MASC</strong></td>
<td>3/18 (17%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2/10 (20%)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEM</strong></td>
<td>3/20 (15%)</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>0/8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, Table 8 shows that PAs are, although attested, still clearly less frequent than the French-like “reduced” form \textit{de} under negation.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>Definite article / BN\footnote{The only occurrence of a bare noun can be found in a case of coordination, where French does not have \textit{de} either.}</th>
<th>Possessive</th>
<th>Total utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MASC</strong></td>
<td>5 (18%)</td>
<td>16 (57%)</td>
<td>4 (14%)</td>
<td>3 (11%)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEM</strong></td>
<td>9 (26%)</td>
<td>19 (56%)</td>
<td>5 (15%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, if we only look at the translations with a PA and \textit{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:

\footnote{Note that since it is impossible to determine number in cases of simple \textit{de} after negation, there is only a gender and no number distinction in Table 8.}
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Number of PAs</th>
<th>Number of nominals following quantity</th>
<th>Percentage of usage of PA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sixt</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troistorrents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val-d’Illiez</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vouvry</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct object</th>
<th>Prepositional complement</th>
<th>Presentational complement</th>
<th>Total utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>2/18 (11%)</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>0/3</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>5/22 (23%)</td>
<td>0/2</td>
<td>3/6 (50%)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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).
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.

Table 11. Percentages of PAs under quantity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>Definite article</th>
<th>Total utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>2 (9%)</td>
<td>20 (91%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>8 (27%)</td>
<td>20 (67%)</td>
<td>2 (7%)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both occurrences of a definite article stem from cases of dislocation.

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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<sub>3</sub>”) above quantifiers, and the *de*-part of PAs, starting in a proper “*deP*” below “FP<sub>2</sub>”, moves, in complementary distribution to quantifiers, to “FP<sub>2</sub>” below “FP<sub>3</sub>” (Ihsane 2008:163) and merges then via incorporation in “F<sub>3</sub>” 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<sub>2</sub>” and “FP<sub>3</sub>” 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’s (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:
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: Genitive is assigned by Amount° (“quantity” of X).
French: Genitive is assigned in two positions: by Amount° and by div° (“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).

Pizin & 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 $\text{Div}^\circ$ (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 $\text{#P}$ whenever empty (= no indefinite article, numerals, quantifiers in $\text{#P}$), see Figure 2:

![Figure 2](image-url)

**Figure 2.** Structure of indefinite (quantified) nominals in English, Spanish and French

That means that in case no numeral or quantifier is inserted in $\#^\circ$ (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 $\text{DivP}$ (her CLP) is always present and that *de* is the default exponent of $\text{Div}^\circ$.

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,
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:

This model relies on a parametrization of indefinite determination, like the one put forward in Cardinaletti & Giusti 2018, according to which different Italo-Romance 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 possibility 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:

![Figure 5](image1.png)

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

![Figure 6](image2.png)

**Figure 6.** Numeral *three* in head position of #P

![Figure 7](image3.png)

**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 structures 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.

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