

VARIATION IN THE EXPONENCE OF DETERMINERS AND OTHER PRENOMINAL ELEMENTS

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1. Introduction

This talk has two parts:

Part I: concord asymmetries within the DP, with a focus on Catalan, Spanish and Asturian.

Part II: the allomorphy found with the definite determiner in Western (and Old) Catalan.

These two issues have in common their lying at the interface between morphophonology and syntax, and therefore can tell us something about this interface: from part I we can hopefully learn a little bit more about where and how concord within the DP takes place; and part II provides a test that can help us decide between different views of phase theory.

PART I: asymmetries in concord¹

2. Some relevant data

2.1 Number in North-Eastern Central (NEC) Catalan

In North-Eastern Central (NEC) Catalan an expected word-final *s* does not surface, under certain conditions when it would be preceded and followed by a consonant:

- (1) Phonological condition for *s* non-realization in NEC Catalan:
C__C

Some examples (Bonet, Lloret & Mascaró, BLM, to appear: (7)):

- (2) Non-realization in C__C context

NEC Catalan

- a. un_ meu_ companys
a my fellow-PL
'some fellows of mine'

Other Central Catalan varieties

uns meus companys

¹ Most of this part of the talk is from joint work with Maria-Rosa Lloret and Joan Mascaró (BLM).

- b. **el_ bon_ vins** **els bons vins**
the good wine-PL
'the good wines'
- c. **aquell_ llibres** **aquells llibres**
that book-PL
'those books'
- d. **quin_ nou_ problemes** **quins nous problemes**
what new problem-PL
'what new problems'

(3) Realization when *s* preceded or followed by a vowel

- a. **el-s antic-s amics**
the-PL old-PL friend-PL
'the old friends'
- b. **aquest-s estrany-s ulls** [əkɛdz əstràɲz úls]
this-PL strange-PL eye-PL
'these strange eyes'
- c. **quine-s male-s carreteres**
what-F.PL bad- F.PL road- F.PL
'what bad roads'

There is also a morphological condition for *s* non-realization.

(4) Morphological condition for *s* non-realization in NEC Catalan:
s must be the plural morph

Some examples (BLM to appear: (13)):

- (5) a. **un fals conseller**
'a false counselor'
- b. **no vén-s pas?**
not come-2.SG not
'don't you come?'

But there is also a syntactic condition for *s* non-realization.

(6) Syntactic condition for *s* non-realization in NEC Catalan:
Within the DP, *s* must be prenominal

Some examples (BLM to appear: (11)):

- (7) a. aquest_ cabells llargs tenyits
 this hair-PL long- PL dyed- PL
 'these dyed long hairs'
- b. el_ vins blancs aquells tan cars
 the wine- PL white- PL that- PL so expensive- PL
 'those so expensive white wines'
- c. quin_ camins bons desaprofitats
 what path- PL good- PL wasted- PL
 'what wasted good paths'
- d. dos-cent_ matriculats nous comprovats
 two-hundred registered-one- PL new- PL checked- PL
 '200 checked new registered ones'
- e. quant_ parents teus francesos
 how-many relative- PL your- PL French- PL
 'how many French relatives of yours'
- f. molt_ poc_ professionals bons presents
 much few professional- PL good- PL present- PL
 'very few present good professionals'
- (8) Summary of the conditions for *s* non-realization in NEC Catalan:
- phonological: C__C context, and
 - morphological: *s* must be the plural morph, and
 - syntactic: prenominal position within the DP

The combination of phonological, morphological, and syntactic conditions exclude an analysis of the NEC Catalan facts in terms of phonological deletion; it must be rather a failure of realization of the plural morpheme.

Failure of realization of agreement features within the DP in prenominal position is not a particular fact of the NEC Catalan dialect; it can be found, with different "flavors" in other languages and dialects.

2.2 Class Markers in Spanish

In Spanish the class-marker/gender morph alternation does not surface in prenominal position when the noun is masculine (this phenomenon is also found in Italian).

- (9) *prenominal: Ø* vs. *postnominal: -o*
- | | | |
|---------------------|-----|---------------------|
| a. un_ primer_ piso | vs. | un piso primero |
| a-Ø first-Ø floor-M | | a-Ø floor-M first-M |
| b. algún_ compañero | vs. | compañero alguno |
| some-Ø fellow-M | | fellow-M some-M |
| c. el buen_ caso | vs. | el caso bueno |
| a good-Ø case-M | | a case-M good-M |

Restrictions:

- No alternation (morph realized) when the noun is plural (or feminine):²

- (10) a. unos primeros pisos
 some-M.PL first-M.PL floor-M.PL
- b. una primera casa
 some-F first-F house-F

- The alternation is lexically restricted; only specific modifiers³ (undergoers) show it.

- (11) a. un_ primer_ piso vs. un_ piso primero
 a-Ø first-Ø floor-M a-Ø floor-M first-M
- b. un_ noveno piso **and** un_ piso noveno
 a-Ø ninth-M floor-M a-Ø floor-M ninth-M

Other examples that behave like *noveno*:

- (12) escaso margen *escás_ margen
 little-M margin-M
- pleno invierno *plen_ invierno
 full-M winter-M

2.3 Gender in varieties of Spanish

In all dialects of Spanish, feminine nouns that start with a stressed [á] trigger the appearance of the masculine definite article *el* 'the'.

² For ease of exposition I will ignore here invariable adjectives that also show an alternation, like *gran* (prenominal) vs. *grande* (postnominal).

³ The term *modifier* is used here in a broad sense to refer to any element that can potentially agree with the noun within the DP.

Disagreement is also found with *un* 'a', *algún* 'some', *ningún* 'no' (see, for instance, Harris 1987, 1989, 1991, or Álvarez de Miranda 1993). (Non-standard stress is provided in the examples.)

- (13) el águia fría
 the-M water-F cold-F
 el arma cargada
 the-M weapon-F charged-F
 el águila vieja
 the-M eagle-F old-F

Gender disagreement has several restrictions (examples from BLM to appear: (51)):

- (14) a. *Only stressed initial á*

la almendra	la actriz
the-F almond-F	the-F actress-F
la astucia	la hablante
the-F astuteness-F	the-F speaker-F

- b. *Only if adjacent*

la nueva arma
 the-F new-F weapon-F
 la única águila
 the-F only-F eagle-F

- c. *Only nouns*

la hábil _{Adj} maniobra	la _{Pr} arma _V
the-F skillful-F move-F	her-F arms 's/he arms her'
la antes _{Adv} mencionada	
the-F before mentioned-F	

- d. *Only in the singular*

las armas
 the-F.PL weapon-F.PL
 las águilas
 the-F.PL eagle-F.PL

e. *Exceptions*

la	Ágata	la	árabe _N
the-F	'proper name- F'	the-F	arab-F (woman)
la	háche	la	ástro
the-F	letter h- F	the-F	(movie-)star-F

Most studies have concentrated on issues such as the phonological conditioning of the process (an unwanted sequence [aá]), and the fact that stress need not be present on the surface), and also whether or not the surfacing article *el* is in fact the masculine article or an allomorph of the feminine article (see, among others, Zwicky 1985, Harris 1987, Halle et al 1991, Kikuchi 2001, Cutillas 2003).

What is of interest here is the extension of the phenomenon, in varieties of Spanish, to all prenominal elements within the DP, adjacent or not (examples from BLM to appear: (52a); more examples in Eddington & Hualde 2008).

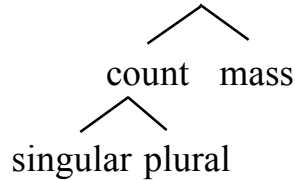
- (15) a. el nuevo arma secreta
 the-M new-M weapon-F secret-F
- b. todo el agua perdida
 all-M the-M water-F lost-F
- c. este ave migratoria
 this-M bird-F migratory-F
- d. un amplio área abierta al público
 a-M wide-M area-F open-F to-the public
- e. aquel área geográfica
 that-M area-F geographic-F
- f. el mismo agua parecerá fría
 the-M same-M water-F will-seem cold-F
- g. todo su área delantera
 all-M her-M/F area-F front-F

Summarizing, in this variety, the trigger of the disagreement is lexically restricted to common feminine singular nouns starting with a stressed [á]; the disagreement affects all and only prenominal elements.

2.4 Mass and Gender in Central Asturian⁴

(Central) Asturian has a mass/count distinction that is realized morphologically in nominal inflection.⁵ Mass is incompatible with number, possibly for semantic reasons.

(16)



(17) *Inflectional endings (leaving plurals and special cases aside)*

a. *Nouns*

-u → masculine count nouns	<i>fierru</i>
-o → masculine mass nouns	<i>fierro</i>
-a → feminine count nouns	<i>manzana</i>
→ feminine mass nouns	<i>manzana</i>

b. *Adjectives*

-u → masculine	<i>guapu</i>
-o → mass	<i>guapo</i>
-a → feminine	<i>guapa</i>

Within the DP when the noun has a mass interpretation, there is postnominal concord in mass.

(18)	<i>CountSg</i>	<i>Mass</i>
a. filu	blancu	filo blanco
	thread-M.SG white-M.SG	thread-M.MSS white-MSS
	'white thread (count int.)'	'white thread (mass int.)'
b. cebolla	blanca	cebolla blanco
	onion-F.SG white-F.SG	onion-F.MSS white-MSS
	'white onion (count int.)'	'white onion (mass int.)'

In prenominal position even if the noun has a mass interpretation, there is only concord in gender (and number).

⁴ See Bonet & Mascaró (2012) for a more detailed description and analysis of this case.

⁵ Sources of the data: Fernández-Ordóñez (2007), Neira (1976, 1978, 1991).

- (19)
- | | <i>Count Sg</i> | | <i>Mass</i> |
|----|---|--|--|
| a. | duru fierru
hard-M.SG iron-M.SG
'hard iron (count int.)' | | duru fierro
hard-M.SG iron-M.MSS
*duro fierro
hard-MSS iron-M.MSS
'hard iron (mass int.)' |
| b. | guapa manzana
nice-F.SG apple-F.SG
'nice apple (count int.)' | | guapa manzana
nice-F.SG apple-F.MSS
*guapo manzana
nice-MSS apple-F.MSS
'nice apple (mass int.)' |

(20) *Examples showing the prenominal-postnominal asymmetry*

- a. duru **fierro** ferruñoso
hard-M.SG iron-M.MSS rusty-MSS
'hard rusty iron (mass int.)'
- b. guapa **manzana** maduro
good-F apple-F.MSS ripe-MSS
'good ripe apple (mass int.)'

- (21)
- | a. Mass interpretation | b. Count interpretation |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| | |

2.5 Concord asymmetries within the DP in non-Iberian languages

Ladin de Fassa (Rasom 2008)

Number concord only postnominally with feminine nouns:

- (22) a. la piccola cèses de Fascia
the-SG little-SG houses-PL of Fascia
- b. la cèses piccole de Fascia
the-SG house-PL little-PL of Fascia

Moroccan Arabic (Shlonsky 2004, from other sources)

Concord with postnominal demonstratives; no concord with prenominal demonstratives:

- (23) a. l **wəld** had-a l **bənt** had-i lə **wlad** had-u
 the boy this-M.SG the girl this-F.SG the children this-M.PL
 'this boy' 'this girl' 'these boys'
 b. had l **wəld** had l **bənt** had lə **wlad**
 this the boy this the girl this the boys
 'this boy' 'this girl' 'these boys'

Abkhaz (Caucasian; Samek-Lodovici 2002, draft version, from other sources)

Full concord with the order $N > A$; no concord with the order $A > N$

- (24) a. la-k^oe bz'əya-k^oe
 dog-PL good-PL
 'good dogs'
 b. bz'əya la-k^oe
 good dog-PL
 'good dogs'

Komi (Uralic; Croft and Deligianni 2001, Vilkuna 1998)

Number concord only postnominally:

- (25) a. ydɔyd da permyd kerkajas
 big and dark house-PL
 'big and dark houses'
 b. kerkajas ydɔyd-ös da permyd-ös tydalisny
 house- PL big- PL and dark- PL be-visible-PAST1.3PL
 matyn n'in
 close already
 'houses, big and dark, could already be seen close by'

3. Interim summary: concord asymmetries in Iberian languages

- A. s non-realization in NEC Catalan (section 2.1; see (8)): the plural morph *s* fails to surface on modifiers when the following conditions are met:
- C__C context,
 - prenominal position within the DP.

- B. Spanish class markers in modifiers** (section 2.2): a class marker is absent in modifiers when the following conditions are met:
- a. Lexically restricted modifiers (e.g., *primer/primero* but *noveno*),
 - b. the noun is singular (and masculine),
 - c. prenominal position within the DP.
- C. Disagreement in varieties of Spanish** (section 2.3): modifiers disagree in gender with the noun and surface with default masculine when the following conditions are met:
- a. the noun is feminine and singular,
 - b. the noun belongs to a restricted set of common nouns that start with [á],
 - c. prenominal position within the DP.
- D. Mass and gender concord conflict in (Central) Asturian**: with mass nouns,
- a. Mass concord postnominally,
 - b. Gender concord prenominally.

5. Outline of an analysis

Nota bene: concord asymmetries within the DP seem to parallel agreement asymmetries at the clausal level between the subject and the verb, and for some researchers (Samek-Lodovici 2002, Shlonsky 2004) the mechanism is the same. The order subject-verb triggers systematic agreement, while the order verb-subject often triggers agreement failure (see Samek-Lodovici 2002 for a crosslinguistic survey and analysis). In what follows I will refer to some analyses of clausal asymmetries and their possible adaptation to DP-internal asymmetries.

Some hints about the way to go, and not to go:

- (a)** Since in NEC Catalan (A) the failure of realization of the plural morph has a phonological conditioning (C__C), failure must occur at PF.

The lexically restricted examples from Spanish (B, C) also indicate that concord failure could not be the result of the systematic application or non-application of some syntactic operation.

- (b)** But the domain of concord failure and the domain of systematic concord cannot be defined in strictly prosodic terms, because the size of the prenominal material can vary in prosodic weight.

- (c) We could try to adapt to DP-internal asymmetries the proposal based on initial prosodic constituents in Ackema & Neeleman (2003, 2004, 2012) for clausal asymmetries: syntactically all elements within the DP would agree with the noun. At PF, initial prosodic constituents (ϕ) would be created through the following constraint, based on work by Selkirk (e.g., Selkirk 2009):

- (26) Align the right edge of an XP with the right edge of a ϕ .

Afterwards a weakening rule would delete all instances of a given feature except the last one within a prosodic domain. The needed prosodic domains for concord asymmetries would be something as follows:

- (27) a. { Mod₁ Mod₂ N } { Mod₃ } { Mod₄ } prosodic bracketing
 b. [X⁰ X⁰ XP XP XP] syntactic XPs

Crucially, no XP boundary could occur between Mod_1 and N_i , which means that no Specifier should appear between the left edge of DP and the N_i . I am not aware of any analyses of DP structure with this property (see Bonet 2013, in press for further problems with this approach).

- (d)** One could think that what is relevant for the asymmetries is the linear relation between trigger and undergoer. Failure of agreement / concord would occur when the undergoer precedes the trigger.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| (28) a. More stable agreement | clause level: | subject | verb |
| | DP level: | noun | modifier |
| b. Less stable agreement | clause level: | verb | subject |
| | DP level: | modifier | noun |

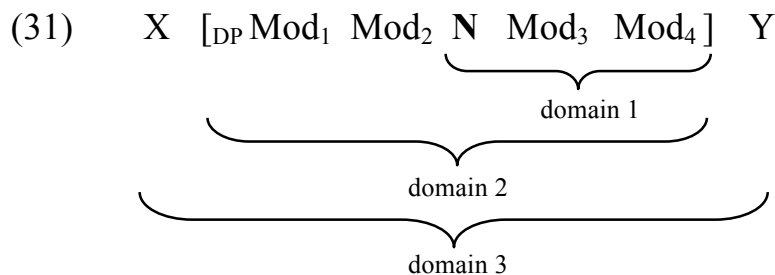
Other facts from colloquial Spanish would seem to support this idea:

- (29) a. Le dijo a los niños la verdad
 ACC.3.SG told-1.SG to the-PL child.PL the truth
- b. A los niños les dijo la verdad
 to the-PL child.PL ACC.3.PL told-1.SG the truth
 'I told the truth to the children.'

But linear relations would not be enough:

- (30) a. ¿Está fría, el **agua**?
is cold-F the-M water-F
b. *¿Está frío, el **agua**?
is cold-M the-M water-F
'Is the water cold?'

There seem to be three domains for agreement / concord, defined (at least two of them) in syntactic terms:



Domain 1: very stable agreement / concord (very local relations)

Domain 2: less stable agreement / concord (less local relations)

(Domain 3: stable agreement / concord)

Domain 1 can be identified with a Spec-Head relation, a very local relation (see, for the clausal domain, Guasti & Rizzi 2002, or Franck et al. 2006; for the DP domain, Nevins 2011; for both, Samek-Lodovici 2002, Shlonsky 2004).

Domain 2 is the DP (the TP for clausal cases?)

(The sketchy analyses that follow are framed in Optimality Theory (OT), a theory of ranked (universal) violable constraints.)

- (e) Samek-Lodovici (2002) proposes two markedness (or structural) constraints that enforce agreement at the clausal level (adapted here to the DP domain):

- (32) a. AGR_f: An agreement head H and a modifier must agree on feature *f* within the local projection HP (Head-Spec relation). [Domain 1]
b. EXTAGR_f: An agreement head H and a modifier must agree on feature *f* within the extended projection HP (the DP). [Domain 2]

These two constraints compete with another markedness constraint:

(33) NoFEATS: No agreement features.

The different rankings of these three constraints provide the basic typology found with respect to agreement / concord:

- (34) a. EXTAGR_f >> NOFEATS (AGR_f): full concord
 b. NOFEATS >> EXTAGR_f, AGR_f: no concord
 c. AGR_f >> NOFEATS >> EXTAGR_f: only postnominal concord

This approach would account fairly well for the asymmetries we have seen, except for the disagreement phenomenon in varieties of Spanish (section 2.3, and C). In this case, the presence of default masculine-related morphs in prenominal position is not triggered by all feminine nouns, but only by a subset of them. Therefore the phenomenon cannot be triggered solely by general constraints (see Bonet 2013 for discussion).

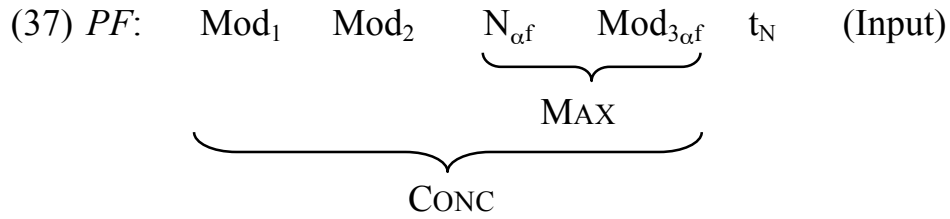
BLM's mixed syntax-PF proposal:

In several ways, the proposal is quite similar to Samek-Lodovici's. A crucial difference is the claim that postnominal concord is a syntactic operation (possibly via Spec-Head), not a PF one.

- (35) *Syntax*: Mod₁ Mod₂ N Mod₃ t_N
 | ↑
 agreement

At PF general concord within the DP is favored by a set of markedness constraints of the family $\text{CONC}(\text{ORD})$ (identical to Samek-Lodovici's EXTAGR_f). The N and postnominal elements are subject also to a MAX (faithfulness) constraint.

- (36) a. CONC(ORD): If a N has an inflectional feature f , all other modifiers within the DP must have the inflectional feature f .
 b. MAX: Every inflectional feature of the input has a correspondent in the output.



The *tableaux* that follow show the derivation of some of the asymmetries that were described in section 2.

- *s* non-realization in NEC Catalan (section 2.1, A):

(38) *un _ taps vells cars* 'some expensive old corks'

Input: un tap vell car	MAX (num)	*CsC	CONC (num)
PL PL PL			
a. un-s tap-s vell-s car-s		***!	
pl pl pl pl			
☞ b. un tap-s vell-s car-s		**	*
pl pl pl			
c. un tap vell car-s	**!		
pl			

- Mass and gender concord conflict in (Central) Asturian (section 2.4, D)

(39) *guapa manzana maduro* 'good ripe apple' (mass int.)

Input: guap- manzana madur-	MAX (mss)	CONC (gen)	CONC (mss)	MAX (gen)
f.MSS F.MSS				
☞ a. guap-a manzana madur-o		*	*	*
f f.mss mss				
b. guap-a manzana madur-a	*!		**	
f f.mss f				
c. guap-o manzana madur-o		**!		*
mss f.mss mss				
d. guap-o manzana madur-a	*!	*	*	
mss f.mss f				

- Disagreement in varieties of Spanish (section 2.3, C):
 - Syntax imposes a feature [feminine] to postnominal modifiers.
 - At PF before evaluation, the feature [feminine] of certain nouns is deleted (impoverishment).
 - With evaluation, CONCORD becomes irrelevant and default masculine is the optimal option.

PART II: DEFINITE DETERMINERS AND PHASES

6. Allomorphy in the definite determiner

In Old Catalan and many Western dialects the masculine definite article has two allomorphs: [lo] and [l] (see Colomina i Castanyer 2002 for details). Although the distribution of the allomorphs is phonologically predictable (Eduard Artés, work in progress), here I will assume that they are introduced through Vocabulary Insertion in a Distributed Morphology manner.

- (40) a. $D_{\text{def}} \Leftrightarrow \text{lo} / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \# _ C \\ C _ C \end{array} \right\}$
 b. $D_{\text{def}} \Leftrightarrow \text{l} / \text{elsewhere}$

- (41) a. Lo pa és bo
 the-M bread-M is good-M 'the bread is good'
- b. L' all és bo
 the-M garlic-M is good-M 'the garlic is good'
- c. Compren lo pa
 buy-3.PL the-M bread-M 'they buy the bread'
- d. Compren l' all
 buy-3.PL the-M garlic-M 'they buy the garlic'
- e. Compra l pa
 buy-3.SG the-M bread-M 's/he buys the bread'
- f. Compra l' all
 buy-3.SG the-M garlic-M 's/he buys the garlic'
- g. Diu que l pa és bo
 says that the-M bread-M is good-M
 's/he says that the bread is good'

7. Phases

Since Chomsky (1999/2001), much work has explored the notion of *phase*. Phases are specific syntactic phrases (XPs) that determine the part of syntactic structure that is sent to the interfaces for interpretation. The interface of interest here is PF.

Two points of debate:

(42) a. What XPs are phases?

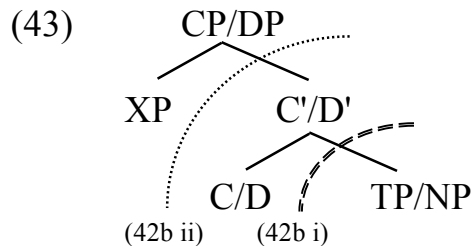
Some answers (relevant here):

Chomsky (1999/2001), and many others: **CP** (and also ν P)
Svenonius (2004), Heck et al (2008), Bošković (2012),...: also **DP**
Others: other XPs

b. What part of a phase is sent to the interfaces for interpretation?

Two basic answers:

- i. Chomsky (1999/2001), and many others: **the complement of the phase head.**
- ii. Some others for some phases (e.g. Newell 2008): **the phase head and its complement**



8. Phases and the definite determiner

Since the data corresponding to Western / Old Catalan dialects in (41) shows that the selection of the allomorph depends both on the following segment and the preceding segment, they are a good test case to answer the questions in (42). Both the preceding segment and the following segment should be present at the point of allomorph selection; they must belong to the same spell-out domain.

- Are DPs phases? If so, what is sent to PF?

(41c) **Compren** [DP l_D pa]

(41e) **Compra** [DP l_D pa]

If DP is a phase only the complement of D should be sent to PF (42b i); if the head D were sent to PF, (41e) would wrongly be predicted to be **Compra lo pa* (because the D would count as initial: #__C).

(44) Right derivation for (41e) *compra-l pa* (simplified)

Step 1: complement of D (NP) sent to PF

[NP pa]

Step 2: higher phase (CP?) sent to PF

[Comprá [DP D [NP pa]]

Step 3 (PF): allomorph selection

(default /l/; context not #__C, not C__C)

- Are CPs phases? If so, what is sent to PF?

(41g) **Diu** [CP que_C [DP l_D pa] és bo]

If CP is a phase, the head C must be sent to PF for interpretation with its nucleus (contra Chomsky 1999/2001 and much other work); otherwise the wrong sentence **Diu que lo pa és bo* will be obtained.

(45) **Wrong** derivation for (41g) **Diu que lo pa és bo* (simplified), if complement of C sent to PF

Step 1: DP phase, with complement of D (NP) sent to PF

[NP pa]...

Step 2: CP phase, with complement of C sent to PF

[DP D [NP pa]...]

Step 3 (PF): allomorph selection

(allomorph /lo/; context #__C)

Step n (after Spell-out of matrix CP)

**Diu que lo pa és bo*

(46) **Right** derivation for (41g) *Diu que·l pa és bo* (simplified), if head C and its complement sent to PF

Step 1: DP phase, with complement of D (NP) sent to PF
[_{NP} pa]...

Step 2: CP phase, with head and complement sent to PF
que_C [_{DP} D [_{NP} pa]...]

Step 3 (PF): allomorph selection
(default /l/; context not #__C, not C__C)

Step n (after Spell-out of matrix CP)
Diu que·l pa és bo

Conclusions:

- If DP is a phase only the complement of D must be sent to PF (42b i)
- If CP is a phase, the head C must be sent, together with its complement, to PF (42b ii).
- The right results can be obtained also in a "single output" model (Lidz & Idsardi 1998, Drummond 2011, and most pre-Minimalist work), but crucially only if Vocabulary insertion is done non-cyclically.

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