At the Left Periphery of the Romanian Noun Phrase

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1. Introduction

In this paper, I argue that parallel to sentences, noun phrase structure has left peripheral positions to host A-bar movement(s), which serve the function of complying with information structure.1 Following recent developments in generative syntax, I assume what Szendröi (2004:240) defines as T-model grammar, notably adopted in GB and more recently minimalist syntax. In this model PF does not feed LF but each of them are opposite interfaces fed by syntax. This implies that if information structure is relevant to LF, the features that trigger overt movement must be inserted earlier than the output to the PF module (spell-out), otherwise they could not be interpreted at the relevant LF level.

(1) Numeration/Lexicon
   \[ \begin{array}{c}
   S \\
   Y \\
   N \\
   T \\
   A \\
   X \\
   LF \\
   PF 
   \end{array} \]

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1 I thank Martine Coene, Liliane Tasmowski, Alexandra Cornilesescu, Carmen Dobrovie Sorin, Alex Grosu, Maria Iliescu, Maria Manoliu-Manea, Olga Tomic, and Melita Stavrou, as well as many other participants of the colloquium, for suggestive discussion and good company, which both made the colloquium a success in many ways, and my participation to it a great pleasure for myself. I also thank Anna Cardinaletti for discussion. I am indebted to Iulia Zagrean who rechecked the Romanian data with great patience. The usual disclaimers apply for what I am going to propose.
Minimalist proposals conceive syntax as a procedure which starts with an array (the numeration in (1)) of items taken from the lexicon, including functional categories and informational features such as [±Topic], [±Focus], all of which are constructed in the tree algorithm by a general rule of Merge. These features are merged in functional heads, which I call Top° and Foc°, following Rizzi (1997). I will give a more detailed introduction to the formalism in section 3, where I review recent proposals for noun phrase structure.

I will not enter into the debate on whether the T-model is superior to an I-model as in recent work by Erteschick-Shir & Strahov (2004:302). In the I-model in (2), information structure, and all movements triggered by it, is operated at p-syntax, a sublevel of PF, which in turn feeds LF2.

(2) I-model (Erteschick-Shir & Strahov 2004:302)

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s-synt
phonology:

p-synt
morphology
phonology

LF
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In the model in (2), it is not necessary to insert informational features such as [+Top] or [+Foc] at any level of s-synt. Displacement of elements at p-synt (a submodule of the phonological component) is visible at LF which is fed by it. However, it is not clear to me what triggers the movements of the elements in p-synt except for a teleological principle that displaces elements for them to be later interpreted as topical/focal.

Despite my neutrality, if my proposal is on the right track, it can be taken as a case study in support of the T-model in (1), since it hinges on the properties of s-synt, such as Rizzi’s (1997, 2004) criteria, whose satisfaction is the trigger of movement, and which views Merge as constrained by general syntactic principles.

I will adopt a split-DP hypothesis, parallel to Rizzi’s (1997) split-CP3. This hypothesis can capture two major areas of epiphenomena that have

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2 For a discussion on this fascinating issue, I refer the reader to Szendrői (2004).

3 An apparently similar line of research has been entertained by Bernstein (2001) for English and Romance, Puskas & Ihsane (2001) for French and Hungarian, Ihsane (2003) for Arabic, Abuh (2004) for Gungebe, and recently Svenonius (2005) on the more theoretical notion of “edge”. But these studies diverge sensibly from what I am going to propose here, in that they correlate the Topic/Focus positions inside the noun phrase with Topic/Focus
often been observed in the noun phrase. On the one hand, the occurrence of more than one functional element related to D can be accounted for by assuming that when the DP layer is split, it can host multiple occurrences of determiners. On the other hand, unexpected orders in the noun phrase can be captured by assuming A-bar movement of adjectival modifiers or genitival arguments to left peripheral positions. These movements can be triggered by the interpretive features [Topic], [Focus].

I believe that Romanian, in principle, offers a good case for both kinds of phenomena. In section 2, I will briefly review these two empirical areas in a cross-linguistic perspective. Then, after an introduction to the formalism in section 3, I will analyse the double determiner phenomenon in section 4 and conclude that the postnominal position of the demonstrative, and of marked postnominal adjectives, is triggered by leftward movement of these nominal modifiers to a Focus position, which is further crossed by N-movement to the highest functional head. In section 5, I will turn to the marked position of left peripheral adjectives and claim that prenominal adjectives inflected for the definite article are merged in SpecDP and receive a topic interpretation by virtue of lack of N-movement to D.

2. The empirical domain

In this section, I first determine the unmarked order of adjectival modifiers and observe marked options in Romanian compared with other Romance languages. Then, I turn to the unmarked position for the demonstrative and accept the claim put forth by Tasmowski (1990) that postnominal demonstratives in Romanian are pragmatically marked.

2.1. The (un)marked word order inside the noun phrase

If we want to investigate marked orders in the noun phrase, we first have to establish the unmarked one. This is crucial in a framework which views marked orders as triggered by informational features that must be
checked in the upper layer of the structure, and are therefore independent from other movements in the lower layers.

Lombard's accurate description (1974:98-9) of Romanian assigns a postnominal position even to adjectives that can be prenominal in the unmarked order of Italian or French. In (3)-(7) below we observe a continuum which views French in (a) as the language with more prenominal adjectives, Italian in (b) as intermediate and Romanian in (c) as more advanced in the postnominal positions of certain descriptive adjectives:  

(3)  
  a. bonne nuit  
  b. buona notte  
  c. noapte bună  
     "good night"  

(4)  
  a. le Moyen Age  
  b. il Medio Evo  
  c. evul mediu  
     "the middle ages"  

(5)  
  a. un bon garçon  
  b. un bravo ragazzo / un buon uomo  
  c. un băiat bun  
     "a good boy /om"  

(6)  
  a. une grande / petite maison  
  b. una grande / piccola casa  
  una casa grande / piccola  
  c. casa mare / mică  
     "a big / small house"  

(7)  
  a. une jeune fille  
  b. una ragazza giovane  
  c. o fată tânără  
     "a young girl"  

Notice that apart from (4), the definite article is not present in the cases above, so that we can exclude that its presence triggers N-to-D movement across all adjectival modifiers obtaining their postnominal position.

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4 Prenominal adjectives in Romanian and Italian in (3)-(7) would be grammatical but marked in a sense that is not easy to define. It can be stylistically marked (belonging to the high register) or informationally marked (with the adjective as either emphasised or given as a salient property of the referent of the noun phrase). I will leave this notion of markedness open even in sections 4-5.
As I have argued in previous work of mine (Giusti 1996) and joint work with Mila Dimitrova-Vulchanova (Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti 1998), if we abstract away from the properties of the Romanian enclitic article, Romanian and Italian substantially share the same noun phrase internal word order with interesting exceptions w.r.t. the position of adjectives and nouns. I will briefly review the data here.

In (8), we observe that a descriptive adjective such as *frumos* can be prenominal or postnominal irrespective of the proclitic or enclitic nature of the article. This is also the case in Italian, with the only difference that in this language the article is always proclitic, as is clear in (9):

(8) Romanian  
   a. un băiat frumos 
   b. un frumos băiat 
   c. băiatul frumos 
   d. frumosul băiat

(9) Italian  
   a. un/il ragazzo bello  
   b. un/il bel ragazzo

There are however adjectives that must be prenominal in both languages. These are ordinal adjectives such as *prim* “first” and *ultim* “last”, and the evaluative adjective *biet* (“pityful”). The strict parallelism is clear in (10)-(10’). Once again, abstraction from the enclitic nature of the Romanian definite article appears to be the correct move:

(10) Romanian  
   a. un prim/ultim/biet băiat 
   b. un sârac băiat

   Italian  
   a. un/il primo/ultimo/povero ragazzo 
   b. il/un povero ragazzo

   “the/a pitiful boy”        “the poor (not rich) boy”

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5 On the contrary, Italian *povero* parallel to Romanian *sârac* is ambiguous between the evaluative and descriptive interpretation. The ambiguity is resolved according to the position: in prenominal position (A) only the evaluative interpretation is possible while in postnominal position (B) the descriptive interpretation is obtained:

A                             B
(i)   sâracul băiat          vs.     băiatul sârac
    un sârac băiat          vs.     un băiat sârac
(ii)  il/un povero ragazzo vs. il/un ragazzo povero
     “the/a pitiful boy”    “the poor (not rich) boy”

The same holds for other adjectives, e.g. *frumos/bello* which has a different interpretation in prenominal vs postnominal position.

27
(10') Romanian a. *un băiat prim/ultim/biet
   *băiatul prim/ultim/biet
Italian    b. *un/il ragazzo primo/ultimo/#povero
   a/the boy first/last/pityful

The ungrammaticality of (10'a) shows that the enclitic article is on the first
lexical head in the noun phrase and does not itself produce a variation of the
word order triggering N-to-D movement. If this were the case, we would expect
a difference with the Italian data in (10'b), contrary to fact. N-movement across
adjectives is triggered by independent EPP features on N, presumably the
bundle of gender and number features, to be checked in the inflectional layer
of the noun phrase (cf. section 3) before spell-out.

The contrast between the two languages resides in movement of the
head noun just one further step across some high adjectives such as the
ordinal formed by al-lea and the vague quantifiers mulţi/puţini:

(11) Romanian a. al doilea băiat
Italian   b. il secondo ragazzo
   the second boy

(12) Romanian a. băiatul al doilea
Italian   b. *il ragazzo secondo

(13) Romanian a. mulţii băieţi pe care îi cunosc...
Italian   b. i molti ragazzi che conosco...
   the many boys that I know...

(14) Romanian a. băieţii mulţi pe care îi cunosc.....
Italian   b. *i ragazzi molti che conosco...
   the boys many that I know...

The order in (11) is unmarked in Romanian and the only possible one
in Italian; while the reverse order given in (12), is ungrammatical in Italian
and the unmarked one in Romanian. In (13) the prenominal position of the
vague numeral adjective is unmarked in Italian but marked in Romanian, for
which the unmarked choice is (14a), whose counterpart is totally ungram-
matical in Italian. At this point, we can hypothesise that the postnominal
position of al doilea and mulţii is derived by movement of the noun across a
position which is unavailable in Italian. I claim this is a Focus position
immediately lower than D.

As anticipated in fn. 4, both in Romanian and Italian, we observe the
prenominal position of a descriptive adjective in stylistically or informa-
tionally marked cases such as those in (15)-(17):

28
(15) a. un/acest mare domnitor
   b. marele domnitor
   c. un/questo/il grande comandante
      "a/this/the great leader"
(16) a. o/această tânără fată
   b. tânără fată
   c. una/questa/la giovane fanciulla
      "a/this/the young girl"
(17) a. un/acest bun prieten
   b. bunul prieten
   c. un/questo/il buon amico
      "a/this/the good friend"

I will capture the parallelism between the two Romance languages in section 5, by proposing that the Topic phrase is present in the DP area in both languages with the crucial difference that when it is present in Italian the DP must be split, while Top in Romanian can be associated to an unsplit DP.

2.2. The (un)marked position of determiners

If the unmarked order of the noun with respect to its adjectival modifier is perfectly parallel in Italian and Romanian, this is not the case for the distribution of the demonstrative. I claim in section 4, that the two languages are parallel except for one property: the presence of a Focus position in a split DP in Romanian. Let us start with the most obvious similarity shown in (18):

(18) a. această carte mare
   b. questo libro grande
      this book big

In (18a) no article can be optionally inserted in Romanian, as is also the case in Italian (18b). But in Italian, demonstrative and article are mutually exclusive, both competing for the initial position, as in (19):

(19) a. questo / il libro grande
   b. *questo il libro grande
   c. *il questo libro grande
   d. *il libro questo grande
   e. *il libro grande questo

Notice that apart from (19c), the ungrammatical orders are attested in other languages, and it is not obvious why none of them should be possible
in Italian. Furthermore, and more crucial for our discussion, it is not clear why only one of them should be possible in Romanian (20a) or Spanish (20b), while Greek appears to be more liberal (20c):

(20)  Rom.  a. cartea aceasta mare 
      Span. b. el libro grande este 
      Greek c. i) afto to vivlio to megalo
           ii) to vivlio afto to megalo
           iii) to vivlio to megalo afto
           "this big book"

I reckon that it is tempting to relate this phenomenon to another well known case of double definiteness in Balkan languages which is impossible in Italian, unless a strong pause is added, almost as in an afterthought, as shown in (21d):

(21) a. *il vecchio l’uomo 
    b. *l’uomo il vecchio 
    c. *l’uomo quello vecchio 
    d. l’uomo // quello vecchio

Double definiteness is notoriously present in some Scandinavian languages (22a), parallel to (21a), in Romanian (23a) parallel to (21b), and in Greek (22b)-(23b), again an apparently more liberal language:

(22)  Norw./Swed./Far. a. den gamle mannen
      Greek    b. o megalos (o) antras
(23)  Rom    a. bărbatul (cel) bătrân
      Greek    b. o antras o megalos

However, I believe that the phenomena in (22)-(23) are quite different from each other and are independent of those I am going to address. For this reason, I will not enter into the issue of the adjectival article in Romanian (23a) and its relation to the Italian case in (21c) or the Greek case in (23b).6

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6 Cf. Grohman & Panagiotidis (to appear) and the references quoted there.
7 Cfr. Delsing 1993 is the first to my knowledge to propose that the DP system in Scandinavian is split in two separate projections which sandwich all adjectival modifiers of the noun in the unmarked order. This is the crucial difference to the data we are dealing with here. I believe that it is not convenient to derive the unmarked order in Scandinavian by just assuming that all adjectives must be Topics, since they appear in the order expected by Cinque’s hierarchy while it is a property of topicalised elements to be able to appear in a freer order.
8 For a detailed and convincing treatment of this issue cf. Coene (1999) and the references quoted there.
In the languages in which the demonstrative can appear in more than one position, it is often the case that different positions have different informational interpretation. Tasmowski (1990) claims that the postnominal position of the demonstratives is interpreted as rhematic, presupposing a contrast with a set of other similar individuals or presupposing direct reference to an individual present in the external world (deixis). This is opposite to the anaphoric value of the demonstrative which refers to an individual already present in the discourse. We give here only two of the many examples in Tasmowski’s paper:

(24) a. (At the station:)
   this train is always late
   trenul ăsta întârzie întotdeauna
   #acest tren întârzie întotdeauna

b. buna deprindere de a circula încolo și încoace îți oferă (...) prilejul de a
   cunoaște tot felul de indivizi (...) de la care poți auzi felurite povestiri și
   întâmplări (...)  
   Ele, aceste povestiri, acele pasagere confesiuni, izvorăsc aproape de la
   sine.
   *?Ele, povestirile acestea, confesiunile acestea pasagere, (...).
   “The good habit to travel here and there offers you the possibility of
   meeting all sorts of people (...) from whom you can here stories and
   anecdotes. They, these stories, these transitory confessions, start all by
   themselves.”

If a prenominal demonstrative is “anaphoric/thematic/topical” while a
postnominal demonstrative is “deictic/rhematic/focal”, under the T-model in
(1) above, we are led to assume that they have associated features to be
checked in different positions. In the I-model (2), on the contrary, we are led
to assume that the relative precedence in the linear order is itself interpreted
differently at information structure. As anticipated above, I will pursue the
first kind of reasoning in the rest of the paper.

3. Parallelisms between noun phrase and sentence structure

Let us now sketch the framework for the analysis. In the last two
decades, research on noun phrase structure has found more and more
similarities in the functional structure of noun phrases and the sentence. This
holds in particular in three major portions of syntactic structure:
   • in the area of theta-roles assignment (Grimshaw 1990) and case
     assignment (Szabolcsi 1983, and many others) to the arguments;
   • in the area of adverbial/adjectival modification (Cinque 1995, 1999;
in the area of complementation/determination, where the article can be viewed as the complementizer of the noun phrase (Kayne 1994).

In these studies, however, it is often noticed that the noun phrase has reduced capacity of expansion with respect to the clause. Less adjectives than adverbs are supported in the modification area. Usually only one structural case (one genitive) can be assigned in the noun phrases as opposed to two structural cases (nominative and accusative) in the sentence. Only the declarative complementation is realized by the noun phrase (interrogative noun phrases cannot often satisfy the selection of interrogative verbs, cf. English *I wonder what answer). Very few languages have tense features on the noun. Only few languages, among which some of the Balkan area, have argument (possessive) clitics inside the noun phrase: Bulgarian clearly shows a possessive clitic which can also double a possessive DP inside the noun phrase, as argued for by Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (1999), Greek also has a possessive clitic with less liberal properties with respect to doubling, as argued for by Alexiadou & Stavrou (2000), while Romanian only has a relict of possessive clitics in Wackernagel position (cf. Cornilesco 1995).

The parallelism is thus imperfect but could be reduced to perfection in the sense of Chomsky (2005 and previous work) if the lack of sentential properties such as the presence of w/h, and Tense features, and of clitics are all reduced to a unique property that languages may choose not to realize in noun phrases. Luigi Rizzi (p.c.) points out that the w/h- and Tense features are strictly related and lack of one can directly be related to lack of the other. I believe the same is the case for the landing site of clitics which are obviously related to Tense heads in the sentence and have quite a different distribution in the noun phrase (cf. Giusti & Stavrou, in prep). Despite this is a fascinating matter, I will make abstraction of the properties of the inflectional area of the noun phrase briefly presented here in (25) below and concentrate on the positions in the complementation area.

Maintaining, mutatis mutandis, the hypothesis of a perfect parallelism, I propose that in the DP we have the same three layers that we find in the clause with a major difference directly related to the lexico-semantic

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9 Lecarme (1996) claims that Somali presents evidence for tense features inside the noun phrase. As far as I know this remains an isolated property of Somali, while it seems that in the languages under consideration the area of tense/aspect/mood specification in the clause corresponds to agreement for nominal features (number and gender) in the noun phrase.

10 Lack of [+Tense] specification appears to prevent wh-features in infinitival clauses in Germanic languages (cf. Giusti 1991) and in Romanian (cf. Giusti 1995). Under Rizzi’s suggestion, we would expect that Somali could also have w/h-features in SpecDP.
properties of the lexical head which are reflected in their inflectional properties and EPP features: V is inflected for tense and subject agreement while N is inflected for gender and number.

The three layers of the noun phrase are represented in (25) which represents the unmarked word order in the noun phrase. I exemplify the order of adjectival modifiers with Italian examples:

(25)

The order in Romanian is in principle the same as in Italian. But the Romanian noun phrase presents a number of side effects that must be kept aside. The position of the possessive in (26a) is informationally marked. In the unmarked order the possessive is in “Wackernagel position” preceded by a definite article (27):
I assume that the genitival article \( a + L \) in (26) forms a constituent with the possessor as the enclitic article does with prenominal adjectives \( \text{primele} \) and \( \text{ultima} \) in (27), in order for these APs to be inserted in SpecDP. The result of this requirement makes the position of the possesive irrelevant to discriminate between a high position in the Inflectional layer and a position in the DP layer. I will return to this problem in sections 4-5.

In order to follow up in the search of parallelisms between sentences and noun phrases, I hypothesise that the DP layer be more complex than in (25). In other words, we will provide evidence for a split DP parallel to the split CP proposed in Rizzi (1997). As regards clausal structure, according to Cinque (1990) the sentence hosts A-bar movements of two kinds: Topics which carry thematic information are merged in the peripheral position and bind a resumptive clitic which realizes the A-position, while a Focus which carries thematic information behaves as a wh-operator and is linked to its own trace in the A-position. In later work, Rizzi 1997 and many others after him, provide the cartography of the designated positions for these elements.

Previous literature on noun phrase structure has already observed that nominal structures have the first type of left peripheral elements. For example, (genitival) arguments may be fronted and may be resumed by a possessive clitic in Bulgarian (cf. Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti 1999), in Greek a possessor can be fronted and extracted but not doubled (cf. Horrocks & Stavrou 1987 and Giusti & Stavrou, in prep), while in West Flemish (cf. Haegeman 2000) genitival arguments may be fronted if doubled by a possessive adjective. These are clear examples of derived positions of possessors either internally merged to the peripheral position (as is the case for Greek, which does not allow a resumptive element) or externally merged at the left periphery of the noun phrase, as appears to be the case of Bulgarian and Germanic, with crucial differences between the two languages as to the resumptive strategy (possessive clitic in the former, possessive adjective in the latter). In this paper I will try to set the framework to investigate the cartography of the Romanian (split) DP.
Mimicking Rizzi’s (1997) split CP as in (28a), I hypothesise a split DP of the kind presented in (28b), where the Top and Focus positions are sandwiched between capital D which is the highest functional head and small d which is the lowest of the DP area:

b. DP > TopP* > FocP > TopP* > dP

Rizzi (1997)

Let us review some properties of the CP system in (29), as stated by Rizzi (1997):

(29) a. TopP and FocP are merged only if necessary.
b. If no TopP or FocP is merged, ForceP and FinP can be realized in a unique projection.
c. If ForceP and FinP are split, it is not often the case that both heads are realized by an overt element, in some cases one is zero and the other is overt.

Given (29), we expect that when Topic and Focus are not merged, DP and dP are realized as one and the same projection. I therefore propose to attribute the properties in (30) to the Split DP in (28b):

(30) a. TopP and FocP are merged only if necessary.
b. If no TopP or FocP is merged, DP and dP can be realized in a unique projection.
c. If DP and dP are split, it is not often the case that both heads are realized by an overt element, in some cases one is zero and the other is overt\(^{11}\).

But what are the different features of D and d that must be merged in one and the same element in such a case, but are split in case a Topic or a Focus projection is merged? In previous work of mine (Giusti 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997, 2002), I have proposed that the highest projection of the noun phrase, generally referred to as DP, is the realization of Case features assigned to the noun phrase constituent from outside the noun phrase structure. In this respect D is parallel to Force which realizes the selection of a higher head.

3.1. The DP projection

The features indicated as the Force of a sentence must either match the selectional requirements of a higher predicate, or the features of an element that they modify, as in relative clauses, which must match the nominal

\(^{11}\) I will slightly revise (30c) as to allow multiple features to be realized in one and the same head, thereby dispensing with merging empty functional projections.
features of the noun phrase of which it is a modifier. Adjunct clauses, which are usually introduced by subordinators such as because, since, when, while are possibly disguised headless relatives, with the subordinators licencing the empty head of the relative. Finally, matrix clauses in some languages can even lack the highest CP projection because they do not have to merge with any of the previously listed cases. In other languages they must comply with requirements that give rise to so called “root-phenomena”. In a parallel fashion, “root noun phrases” can be exemplified by vocative case, which is not embedded in any kind of predication, while argument noun phrases are assigned in the usual manner (Nominative Case in the specifiers of some head of the split IP, Accusative Case is assigned in SpecObjAgrP, Genitive Case assigned in a nominal SpecAgrP, and so on). We could therefore make the parallelism that the syntactic context imposes Force to a merged clause or Case to a merged noun phrase 12.

(31) \[ KP (= DP = FP^{\text{max}}) \]

(adapted from Giusti 1992-2002)

\[ \text{Spec} \]
\[ \text{OP} \]
\[ K' \]
\[ K^e \]
\[ \text{[Case]} \]
\[ \ldots \]

In Giusti (1993, 1995), I propose that the article is not the realization of a semantic feature (definiteness, or referentiality), but one possible morphological realization of (abstract) Case. The apparent semantic value of the article is to be attributed to a null operator (parallel to the one proposed by Campbell 1996) which is in Spec-head configuration with the article. The Specifier of KP (currently labelled as DP) is taken to be the relevant position for LF computation of the interpretation of the noun phrase, due to movement of an overt or covert operator, such as demonstratives or other operators. Given that it is the left edge of the noun phrase this proposal appears to be perfectly compatible with recent minimalist proposals which assume that EPP features become opaque after checking, while “left edges” are available at later stages (phases) of the derivation. I will stick to this proposal and refer the reader to my previous work for more details and, hopefully, convincing evidence of the “division of labor” between heads (in our case articles) and specifiers in functional projections (in our case demonstratives, possessives,

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12 In a “derivation by phase” we can imagine that these requirements are directly related to the properties of the operation Merge.
etc.) in the sense that heads are simply morphological uninterpretable features while Specifiers enter the LF computation.

This theory must however derive the generalization, already expressed in the generative literature, that heads and modifiers often appear in complementary distribution, even if they have dedicated positions. This is also the case of elements in CP, and DP is no exception. I assume an Economy Principle such as (32), which makes the merging of a functional head in the clause as a last resort procedure. The Economy Principle must be constrained by a parameter for the phonological realization of functional heads such as the one in (33), both stated in Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (1998) and Giusti (2002). This principle and the parameter associated to it are sufficient and at the same time necessary to capture the empirical fact that in some languages both head and modifier must be realized while in others they are mutually exclusive:

(32)  *Economy Principle:*

- Economize functional heads

(33)  A functional projection must be visible at all levels of representation by either

  a. making the specifier visible, and/or (according to parametric choice)
  b. making the head visible.

The interaction of (32) and (33) derives the contrasts in (20a-c) with no additional assumption. In Greek (34a), we observe that in DP both the specifier (the demonstrative *afto*) and the head (the article *to*) must be visible. The parametric choice for the Greek DP is therefore “(33a) and (33b)”, while for Romanian and Spanish the parametric choice is “(33a) or (33b)”. The cooccurrence of article and demonstrative in the latter languages is only possible because the demonstrative may not move to SpecDP in overt syntax. But when the demonstrative is merged to SpecDP the article cannot be merged in the head:

(34)  Greek  a. [DP afto [*Dp *(to)] [vivlio ...]]

Rom.  a. [DP [*Dp carte-a] [ aceasta ... ]]  
  b. [DP (*aceasta) [*Dp carte-a] [...] ]

Span.  a. [DP [*Dp el] [ libro [*este ... ]]]  
  b. [DP (*este) [*Dp el] [ libro [... ]]]

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13 Notice that this is already a welcome result in a framework that claims perfect parallelisms between the noun phrases and the clauses.
Notice that this proposal permits a unified treatment of demonstratives as XPs, not only across languages, which does not necessarily represent a welcome result in a minimalist theory of noun phrase structure\textsuperscript{14}, but more importantly in one and the same language, notably Romanian\textsuperscript{15}. I leave the question open of why movement to SpecDP can be procrastinated in Romanian and Spanish, and what position hosts the demonstrative in Romanian, since this will be the topic of section 4.

3.2. The defP projection

Let us now turn to the nominal counterpart of Fin. In the clause, Fin selects the tense specification of the verb. This has no direct parallel for noun phrases in the languages under consideration here, which have no tense inflection. What nouns display as regards their inflection is a word class marker. So if, say, the word marker (as W in Harris 1991 and Bernstein 1991) is the nominal parallel to verb-inflection, def is the head of the higher phrase that selects for such an inflection. Again this can be realized as the article, which often displays agreement phenomena with the noun, and in some languages triggers different inflection on adjectival modifiers. I will keep def in small key in order to keep in mind that it corresponds to little d in (28b) above.

\textsuperscript{14} I personally believe that if an element is a type of constituent in one language, the null hypothesis is to consider it the same kind of element universally, unless strong evidence of the contrary is found. I cannot find in principle any argument against an alternative approach which accounts for linguistic variation, that is, to assume that an element can be a head or a full constituent in different languages. For example Bouchard (2002) proposes to account for the prenominal vs postnominal position of adjectives by assuming that in languages which only allow the prenominal position the adjectives are heads and block N-movement, while in the other language type adjectives would be phrases thereby allowing N-movement across them. However, this kind of approach is incompatible with the proposal I have been working on which makes of the functional head-specifier distinction a distinction between interpretable and non interpretable features.

\textsuperscript{15} Alternative approaches such as Bernstein (1991) derive the different position of the demonstrative with different X vs XP status even in one and the same language, which I believe is not welcome. But I will leave this issue here and refer the interested reader to Giusti (1994), Bernstein (2001).
According to (30), KP and def\textbf{P} have no reason to split if they are adjacent. I also assume a bare phrase structure representation in which Unbounded Merge constructs unlabelled projections. Movement is the result of Internal Merge (namely merging of a copy of an element already merged). The PF component will realize only one instance of the element merged in several copies (cf. Chomsky 2005: 12).

In this framework, a simple noun phrase such as \textit{băiatul frumos} in (36a) has the usual structure with two functional projections: a lower one labelled as Agr\textbf{P} merged to host the adjective in its specifier (according to Cinque 1995) and a copy of the phi-features (gender, number and Case) in its head (following Giusti 2002), and a higher one labelled KP/def\textbf{P} hosting the enclitic article which triggers N-movement. This movement obeys locality and copies N in all intermediate functional heads. An indefinite noun phrase such as \textit{un băiat frumos} also has the usual structure, represented in (36b), with an additional projection in the inflectional layer to host the internal merging of N in the functional head immediately lower than K/def where the indefinite article \textit{un} is merged in turn. \textit{Un} is specified in the lexicon as a free morpheme.

Remember that in this proposal the semantics of the article is not due to the article itself but to a phonologically null operator OP in the spec of KP/def\textbf{P} which is the highest projection in the noun phrase and therefore a Left Edge in the sense that it is visible to the next cycle. Case features and definiteness specificity are also realized by a demonstrative, which I take to end up in the Specifier of KP/def\textbf{P}, being an overt OP(erator):

\begin{enumerate}
\item (36) a.
\end{enumerate}
The left edge of the KP/defP is the position in which a demonstrative must be interpreted at LF. In the unmarked case the demonstrative acest is internally merged in this position before Spell-out, as represented in (37):

(37)

In the next section we will see that a copy of the demonstrative in a lower position can be the one realized at the Spell-out interface.

4. The focus position

4.1. Postnominal demonstratives

In previous work, I assumed that the second position of the demonstrative in Romanian was an intermediate position towards SpecDP (Giusti 1993, 1994) or the final position which could be crossed by a one-step movement of the noun inflected for the definite article (Giusti 2000). Neither of these proposal are satisfactory in light of the minimalist program which bans optionality and teleology of movements. Here I will be inspired by Tasmowski’s (1990) claim, reviewed in (24) above, that the postnominal position of the demonstrative is interpreted as rhematic, as presupposing a
contrast with a set of other similar individuals or presupposing direct reference (deixis) to an individual present in the external world. I propose, accordingly, that the postnominal demonstrative in Romanian is in a Focus projection.

Under this perspective, in the unmarked word order the demonstrative straightforwardly moves to SpecDP as in (37). But if it is focussed, the KP/defP must split to host a landing site to check the [+Foc] feature present in the lexical array and associated to a constituent. The demonstrative internally moves to SpecFocP to check its [+Focus] feature, while the head noun moves to the higher K⁰. We could suppose going further in the option of bundling features together, that the DP layer in this case splits in a K/TopP and in a Foc/defP, as in (38). The structure in (38) raises a number of questions. First of all, how can the head noun move locally through the def/Foc head without receiving any Focus features? Or, alternatively, how can the head noun skip the def/Foc head without violating locality conditions on head movement? A possible solution is the assumption that features that are merged in the same head do not need to be checked in one and the same operation. We can therefore assume that the head noun checks uninterpretable EPP features (gender and number, here labelled as W), but leaves the interpretable [+Foc] features there to be checked criterially by the demonstrative internally merged in SpecFocP⁰:

(38) K/TopP
    Spec
      K/Top⁰
        [Nom]
      K/Top' def/FocP
        DemP
          def/Foc' [W], [Foc]
      AgrP
    AgrP

FocP in (38) is an A-bar position. It is not the external merge position of the demonstrative. As a matter of fact, Brugè (1996) has shown that the

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¹⁶ Notice that if the uninterpretable [W]-features and the interpretable [Foc]-feature were merged in two separate heads, the head noun would have to be internally merged in Foc⁰ without checking any feature, or alternately could not be merged there, both options being problematic for a blind theory of checking and internal merge of heads.
basic position of demonstratives across languages is very low, lower than all 
AgrPs hosting adjectives. Following her proposal, I take the demonstrative in 
Romanian to start in a low specifier position (lower than all adjectival modi-
fiers). From this position, if marked with [Foc] features, the demonstrative 
moves to SpecFocP and stops there in order to be interpreted at LF as bearing 
focal features. A KP must be projected, with a head which makes it visible 
(the article and the incorporated N), but its specifier must be available for 
further covert movement of the demonstrative (represented by the silent 
copy) which gives the noun phrase its referential interpretation.

The silent copy of acesta in SpecKP is also motivated by the 
impossibility of filling KP with an inflected adjective as in (39b), a 
movement that is usually allowed in the absence of the postnominal 

(39) a. băiat-ul (acesta) foarte frumos
    b. [foarte frumosul] (*acesta) băiat

The SplitDP analysis may also suggest a possible solution for the 
mysterious -a ending which we find on postnominal and pronominal demon-
stratives but not in prenominal ones. One could conjecture that modifiers 
used as pronominals also involve a Split DP even if this is not immediately 
obvious in our case at a first sight. According to Ntelitheas (2004: 4) 
“Nominal ellipsis involves two movement operations – NP – topicalization 
and modifier focalization. The process ends with phonological deletion of the 
NP in topic position (...)”. A demonstrative with a pronominal function 
(acesta, acela) is in SpecFoc/defP while the null remnant in SpecK/TopicP 
position.

The structure in (38) is confirmed by the different distribution of overt 
oblige case morphology on the demonstrative in prenominal (40) and post-
nominal (41) position:

(40) a. acestor lupi negri
    b. *acestor lupilor (negri)
    c. *acești lupilor (negri)

(41) a. lupilor aceștia (negri) (substandard, quite natural in the colloquial register)
    b. lupilor acestora (negri)
    c. *lupi acestora negri
    of/to these black wolves

In (40) the demonstrative in prenominal position is in SpecKP and is 
the only element that realizes such features, while in (41) we have two
possibilities. Either the demonstrative spelled-out in focus position does not carry case features, and Case is visible on N+art internally merged in K, as in (41a). Or the demonstrative redundantly carries Case features by virtue of the position of its silent copy in SpecKP, as is the case in (41b). (40c) and (41c) are ruled out by the fact that the element spelled-out in KP must realize Case features.

4.2. Postnominal ordinals and vague numerals

In section 2 above, we have noticed that only a limited number of prenominal adjectives may be crossed-over by N-movement and end up in postnominal position, thereby resulting in a marked order in which the nominal part constitutes the old information, the theme, while the postnominal part is the new information, the rhyme in the noun phrase. These are the vague numerals mulți, puțini, and Slavic ordinals such as al doilea in (42):

It is not obvious why the latinate ordinals prim and ultim do not easily focus contrary to the other ordinals of Slavic origin. This can be due either to their reduced prosodic weight with respect to al-lea ordinals, which are clearly more complex and even formed with the free morpheme al or to their morphosyntactic property of being inflected with the definite article, which must be checked in SpecKP. It is also quite unclear why vague numerals can focus (cf. băieții mulți in (14)) while regular numerals cannot (cf. *băieții trei), despite the fact that they do not inflect for the article, as in *treii băieți vs. cei trei băieți. I leave this question open.
5. The Topic Position

Let us now observe possible candidates for Topicalized elements in the Romanian DP. The first move is to observe what appears in the first position in the unmarked order, since this cannot be due to the insertion in the numeration of interpretive Top/Foc features.

Ordinal adjectives of latinate origin must be prenominal, as observed in sect. 4 above. By virtue of unbounded merge, Case features (which I take to be EPP features) can be merged in the highest functional head thereby agreeing with the AP. These adjectives also contribute to the referential interpretation of the noun phrase parallel to operators, and this is why they end up occupying the highest specifier, as in (43):

(43)

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ultimul/primul
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In (43), no overt movement from the inflectional layer to the complementation layer can be detected. If there is movement, it is vacuous, since the order of the modifiers does not change. For this reason, I claim that the highest specifier which hosts these APs satisfies the morphosyntactic requirements of case visibility (indicated by the label K) and of feature sharing (indicated by the label def). The Spec of K/defP also hosts the AP which is interpreted as a referential operator, to be computed at the LF interface.

With the presence in DP of the ordinal adjectives ultim/prim we obtain the unmarked order. This case must be kept distinct from marked prenominal positions such as marele domnitor, frumosul băiat, which represent a marked order, even if it does not violate the modifier hierarchy but only dispense with N-movement across the AP. This marked order is the result of the same process as in (43) above, with the additional presence of a [+Top] feature associated to the adjective in the numeration:
In (44) the [+Top] feature is merged with the AP in the highest projection (KP), which complies with the morphosyntactic requirements expressed in (32)-(33), above, according to which either the Specifier or the head must be filled in KP. This blocks N-movement to K. We assume that the DP is split, in order for the highest part of it to be distinct from the lower part which acts as its Comment. Here I assume that the AP is directly merged in SpecTopP, as adverbials are in the clause. It is not resumed by a clitic element inside the Inflectional layer just because there is no such adjectival clitic.

We expect the adjectives that appear in SpecTopP to be able to violate the adjectival hierarchy seen in section 3 above, as is the case in (45a), where the adjective *amabilele* is higher than the numeral adjective *trei*:

(45) a. amabilele trei scrisori primite ieri  
   nice-the three letters received yesterday  
   b. cele trei amabile scrisori primite ieri  
      the three nice letters received yesterday

The discourse setting appropriate for (45a), is that we not only have already introduced the three letters in the discourse but we have introduced their property of being pleasant, while in (45b) which represents the unmarked order, their property of being pleasant is not necessarily shared knowledge.

Furthermore, the Split DP hypothesis predicts the possibility to further split uninterpretable Case features with other interpretable features if they are cheked by different lexical items, this is the case in (46a) in which Case is checked by the demonstrative *aceste* in the highest functional Specifier, which I take to be SpecKP, while *amabile* can still be at the left of the numeral adjective *trei*, which I take to mark the inflectional layer. In (46b) I give the unmarked word order with the unsplit DP:
(46) a. \([K_P \text{aceste} \text{_defP}_\text{TopP amabile }\text{_Infl layer trei scrisori primite ieri }])\]
b. \([\text{DP aceste }\text{_Infl layer trei amabile scrisori primite ieri }])\]

The same considerations in the interpretation of the marked order of the adjectives apply, so that (46a) is parallel to (45a).

A final consideration regards the apparent impossibility in Rumanian to have a a Topic lower than the Focus in the nominal structure, as should be possible in the perfect parallelism between the sentence in (28a) and the noun phrase in (28b). This is shown in cases such as (47):

(47) a. \([K_P \text{TopP scrisorile }\text{_defP}_\text{FocP acestea }\text{_Infl layer trei amabile }])\]
b. \(^*\)[K_P \text{TopP scrisorile }\text{FocP acestea }\text{TopP}_\text{defP amabile }\text{Infl layer trei }]]\]

For the moment I have no reason for this fact apart from the well known defectivity of nominal structure with respect to clausal structure which has been discussed in section 3 above\(^{17}\).

6. Concluding remarks

In this paper I have sketched a proposal for a split DP layer in the Romanian DP in view of a more general project of considering the possibility of a split DP system, parallel to the split CP system.

From the theoretical point of view, I have offered an exercise in the T-model in which syntax feeds the phonological and the interpretive components, which are independent from each other. I have also provided a framework in which more than two features can be merged in the same functional head and checked at a different interface. Topic and Focus features are checked at the interpretive interface, while uninterpretable Case (K) or number and gender features (W) are checked before Spell-out. I can therefore reformulate (30c) as (48c), and further add (48d) to the properties of the left periphery of the noun phrase:

(48) a. TopP and FocP are merged only if necessary.
b. If no TopP or FocP is merged, DP and dP can be realized in a unique projection.
c. If DP and dP are split, either can host the interpretable Top or Foc features
d. [Top] is merged higher than [Foc] (at least) in the noun phrase.

\(^{17}\) But cf. Benincà (2001) who claims that this is also the case in the clause.
At this stage of the research, I am aware of having raised more problems than I can solve, but I believe that raising an issue in a renewed theoretical framework may be a necessary step towards a better understanding of general linguistic devices.

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