A Formal Analysis of Variation in Catalan Personal Articles

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Proper names are usually analyzed as nominal constructions that involve a DP projection. According to Longobardi (1994) proper names in Romance languages raise to the empty D in most cases:

(1) a. [$_{DP}$ D [$_{NP}$ Juan]] llegó tarde.   (Spanish)
     b. [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ Juan$_i$] [$_{NP}$ t$_i$]] llegó tarde.
                  'Juan   arrived late.'

In contrast, proper names in Mallorcan Catalan (MC) are introduced by a specialized article *en* (m.) or *na* (f.), which Longobardi labels 'expletive'. So the proper name in MC remains in situ and D is filled by this article:

(2) [$_{DP}$ [$_D$ en] [$_{NP}$ Joan]] va arribar tard   (Mallorcan Catalan)
         EN   Joan   arrived   late

In this presentation we will show that this proposal is insufficient. In fact, MC *en-na*, which we label a 'personal article', patterns with regular definite articles only in certain contexts, and otherwise it patterns with honorific titles. In contrast, Central/Oriental Catalan has a mixed system: the masculine form patterns with MC personal articles and the feminine form with regular definite articles. In what Ledgeway (2012:100) labels 'substandard Catalan', both feminine and masculine forms pattern with regular definite articles. We will show that the forms of the articles correlate with syntactic differences, which support the proposal that they correspond to different positions in the DP.

In MC, regular definite articles differ from personal articles in the following ways:
a) Personal articles cannot be pluralized but regular definite articles can:

(3) a. *ens*   vs.   *els*   (M.PL)   (Mallorcan Catalan)
     b. *nes*   vs.   *les*   (F.PL)
                  'the'

b) Prenominal adjectives (e.g., *propi* or *mateix*) cannot appear between personal article and noun, but can between regular definite article and noun:

(4) a. *en propi Pere   (Mallorcan Catalan)
     b. el propi professor
         'the same Pere/professor'

c) Personal articles cannot introduce relative clauses but regular definite articles can:

(5) a. *en Pere que va arribar ahir   (Mallorcan Catalan)
     b. el professor que va arribar ahir
         the Pere/professor that arrived yesterday

On the other hand, MC *en-na* shows parallelisms with honorific titles like Spanish *don-doña* (to which it is etymologically related). As we saw for *en-na* in (3)-(5), *don-doña* cannot be pluralized ((6a)), cannot be followed by a prenominal adjective ((6b)), and cannot introduce a relative clause ((6c)).

(6)   a. *dones, *doñas   (Spanish)
        b. *don mismo Luis
        c. *Don Luis que llegó ayer

In order to account for these facts we propose that personal articles like *en-na* and titles like *don-doña* must be analyzed as nominal classifiers occupying a Class(ifier) projection between D and N:

(7)   [$_{DP}$ D …… [$_{ClassP}$ CL *en-na* …… [$_{NP}$ N]]]

Crucial evidence in favor of postulating this more articulated structure is provided in (8), where both a definite article and a personal article are expressed: a prenominal adjective appears between the higher D head and the lower Classifier head.

(8)   el petit en Joan   (Mallorcan Catalan)
        the small EN Joan

The example recalls the use of multiple determiners in Scandinavian 'double definiteness' languages: one definite determiner introduces a prenominal adjective and another is associated

(as an enclitic) with the noun (see Julien 2005, Delsing 1993, Kester 1996, Vangsnes 1999, Santelmann 1993, Holmberg and Platzack 2005, among many others).

This Classifier position encodes syntactic and semantic values like [+human] and [-plural] as well as specifications concerning familiarity and title/honor. The development of *en-na* and *don-doña* from Latin *dominus* can be seen as an instance of grammaticalization of the functional head Class, which is consistent with the loss of number inflection (as with other cases of grammaticalization; Roberts 2007, Roberts and Roussou 2003). Our ClassP differs from that of Picallo (2008), which concerns the expression and interpretation of grammatical gender in Romance languages.

Although we treat *en-na* and *don-doña* as classifiers, there are differences between them:
a) Whereas *don-doña* is a title that expresses a kind of honorific treatment, *en-na* expresses familiarity with the referent: *en Chomsky* versus *Chomsky* indicates a difference in familiarity.
b) Whereas *don-doña* participates in lexicalization processes that include the proper name (*donjuán* 'womanizer', *don nadie* 'unimportant person', *dondiego* 'kind of plant'), parallel examples with *en-na* are not found.
c) Whereas *don-doña* can be used in vocatives, *en-na* cannot:
(9)   a. ¡Don Luis!   (Spanish)
        b. *¡En Pere!   (Mallorcan Catalan)
According to Bernstein (2008), vocatives are incompatible with elements that encode 3rd person, such as Romance *l-* determiners and *l-* pronouns, since this encoding clashes with the 2nd person nature of vocatives. The impossibility of *en-na* with vocatives suggests that 3rd person, as well as familiarity, is encoded with these elements as well. This contrasts with *don-doña*, which encodes honorific title but not 3rd person. Although under our analysis *el-la* (in D) and *en-na* (in Class) similarly encode 3rd person and familiarity, there is an important difference in the feature composition of the two functional heads: only the lower head (Class) encodes animacy.

As mentioned above, not all dialects of Catalan realize the Classifier position for all proper names. Thus, Central/Oriental Catalan limits its use to masculine proper names. For feminine proper names and nouns, it uses only the higher D head. For this reason, the feminine definite article always precedes a prenominal adjective in Central/Oriental Catalan, and cannot appear between the adjective and proper name:
(10)   a. La petita Joana (feminine)   (Central Catalan)
        b. *La petita la Joana
            the small (the) Joana
This cross-linguistic variation receives an explanation under our approach.

As expected, the feminine article *la* with proper names behaves like the regular definite article and differently from *en-na*: *la* can introduce relative clauses ((11)); and *la* can be pluralized when pluralization is required to indicate people with the same first or last name ((12)).
(11)   la (Joana) que va arribar ahir   (Central Catalan)
        the (Joana) that arrived yesterday
(12)   les Ripoll   [vs. *nes Ripoll]   (Central Catalan)
        the-F.PL Ripoll (= the female members of the Ripoll family)
And given the restriction with *l-*forms discussed above, vocatives are also excluded with *la*:
(13)   *¡La Maria!   (Central Catalan)
We can explain the loss of the feminine classifier form (*na*) in this variety if we assume that, a) the masculine form for the Classifier head is the underspecified form, and b) the Classifier head in this variety has lost the ability to host the necessary word marker (*-a* in *n-a*) to indicate feminine.

Finally, we include the colloquial informal register of Central Catalan (substandard), which has lost *en* as well as *na*. Under our account this suggests that this variety of Catalan has lost the Classifier head altogether. In this respect then, the system of definite articles in substandard Central Catalan is like that of colloquial Spanish. Variation in the determiner system results from the interaction of the availability of functional heads plus the sensitivity of these heads to the gender underspecification for determiners.

The incompatibility of the D and Classifier heads preceding the noun (**el en Joan*) is resolved if we combine our idea of a tight relationship between *en* and proper name with Longobardi's proposal about N-to-D movement of proper names. Specifically, we claim that *en Joan* raises to the DP projection.