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Multi-layered default in Ripano*

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Abstract

The paper deals with morphological and syntactic defaults in Ripano (Italo-Romance), using the toolkit of Network Morphology and Canonical Typology. Analyzing noun and adjective inflection, we propose a unitary inheritance hierarchy for nominals which features a general default plus overrides specifying class-specific rules of exponence. The hierarchy accounts for gender assignment along with inflectional classes, as Ripano has overwhelmingly overt gender. This also offers the link to the syntax, because in Ripano overt gender is not context-free but depends on syntactic context, a property never described for any other language of the world. We show that one can distinguish a normal vs an exceptional-case default and conclude on how these relate to the morphological default established in the inheritance hierarchy.

Key words:
default, inheritance, overt/covert gender, normal-/exceptional-case default, Italo-Romance, Network Morphology, Canonical Typology

1. Introduction

A prominent strand of research in theoretical morphology has focused on the notion of default as an effective tool in linguistic analysis, and has pointed to the occurrence of different types of defaults within one and the same system (cf. e.g. Corbett & Fraser 2000, Brown & Hippisley 2012, Aronoff 2013, Brown 2016, Gisborne and Hippisley 2017a-b). Following up along this research line, the present paper addresses the different defaults in the nominal morphology and morphosyntax of the Italo-Romance variety of Ripatransone (central Italy) whose quite extraordinary agreement system (by Indo-European standards) has been subjected to intensive study in both traditional dialectology

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and theoretical morphology/syntax (cf. e.g. Parrino 1967; Lüdtke 1976; Harder 1988; Ledgeway 2012: 299-310; D'Alessandro 2017, 2020; Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018).[1]

In §2, we propose an inheritance hierarchy for Ripano noun inflection which is fascinatingly more complex than that proposed for Russian, in the seminal study by Corbett & Fraser (1993: 126). This hierarchy, as usual in this kind of formalization of inflectional systems (cf. e.g. Brown & Hippisley 2012), provides for a morphological default. We then show (§3) that Ripano has two distinct syntactic defaults: a normal-case default and an exceptional-case default (Corbett & Fraser 2000, Evans et al. 2002: 119-123, Brown & Hippisley 2012: 86-106). The former must be understood in the light of the dependency of overt gender marking from syntactic context, a typological singularity of Ripano described in detail in Paciaroni & Loporcaro (2018), while the latter specifies the form selected in case of non-agreement (in the absence of an agreement controller) or for agreement with non-canonical controllers. In terms of exponents, the exceptional-case default is expressed with the same inflection as the morphological default, while the normal-case default has a dedicated morphological expression. §4 offers some conclusions.

2. Inheritance and default in nominal morphology

We start by setting up a hierarchy accounting for nominal inflection along the lines of Corbett & Fraser (1993: 126), (2000: 60), Brown & Hippisley (2012). For the inflection of nouns and adjectives the relevant morphosyntactic features are number and gender. Number has two values, singular and plural, while gender has four values: masculine, feminine, (mass) neuter and non-autonomous neuter, as schematized in (1) (where gender/number agreement with the head noun is manifested on the definite article):

(1) The gender system of Ripano

	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
N	l-ə	ˈpa	Ø	
	DEF-N.SG	bread(N)		
M	l-u	ˈka	l-i	ˈka
	DEF-M.SG	dog(M)	DEF-M.PL	dog(M)
NAN	l-u	ˈvrat:ʃa	l-ə	ˈvrat:ʃa
	DEF-M.SG	arm(NAN).SG	DEF-F.PL	arm(NAN).PL
F	l-e	ˈma	l-ə	ˈma
	DEF-F.SG	hand(F)	DEF-F.PL	hand(F)
	'the bread/dog/arm/hand'		'the dogs/arms/hands'	

There are three target genders contrasting only in the singular, since the (mass) neuter is number-defective, as usual in central-southern Italy (cf. Loporcaro 2018: 116-154). Besides, there is a

[1] Our data sources are three-fold: a) descriptive work by Parrino (1967), Lüdtke (1976), Harder (1988), Mancini (1993); b) texts by native speakers: Rossi (1999, 2007, 2008), Lambertelli (2003), Cardarelli (2010); c) our own fieldnotes collected during several trips to Ripa, from 2012 on. Unreferenced examples come from fieldwork (partly available online in DAI) and have been checked against the other sources. The data are given in a broad IPA transcription.

controller gender value, the non-autonomous neuter, as highlighted in the boxes:[2] the forms of the definite article selected by the noun 'arm' are the same occurring in the singular with masculine nouns and in the plural with feminine. As argued in Loporcaro & Paciaroni (2011), this class of nominal lexemes constitutes a fourth non-autonomous gender value in a sizeable group of dialects spanning central-southern Italy.

2.1. Noun inflectional classes

Moving on to morphological features, we will assume the analysis of Ripano noun inflectional classes (ICs) – defined as "set[s] of lexemes whose members each select the same set of inflectional realizations" (Aronoff 1994: 182) – presented in Paciaroni & Loporcaro (2018: 167-169), which we briefly recapitulate in what follows (with minor modifications). In the schema in (2) nouns are given in their form in isolation (termed "strong" paradigm;[3] capital letters stand for root forms, A≠B indicating non-phonologically conditioned allomorphy, A=A lack thereof):

(2) Noun ICs of urban Ripano. Strong paradigm (full inflection)

IC	ISC	SG	PL	example		gloss	gender
I		A-*e*	A-*a*[4]	ˈkaːse	ˈkaːsa	'house/-s'	F
II		A-*u*	A-*i*	ˈfijːu	ˈfijːi	'son/-s'	M
III	a.	A-*a*	A-*i*	ˈpaːt̪͡sa	ˈpaːt̪͡si	'father/-s'	M
	b.	A-*a*	B-*i*	ˈmeːsa	ˈmiːʃi	'month/-s'	M
	c.	A-*a*		ˈmɛːla	----	'honey'	N
IV	a.	A-*u*	A-*a*	ˈvratːʃu	ˈvratːʃa	'arm/-s'	NAN
	b.	A-*u*	B-*a*	ˈwoːvu	ˈɔːva	'egg/-s'	NAN
V		A	B	vaʃˈto	vaʃˈtu	'stick/-s'	M
VI		uninflected		ˈka	ˈka	'dog/-s'	M, F, N

There are six ICs which can be arranged into an inheritance hierarchy after that proposed for Russian by Corbett & Fraser (1993: 126) within Network Morphology. Such a hierarchy provides "for a *default* interpretation of lines of inheritance, such that within a family of nodes inheriting

[2] We follow Corbett (1991: 151) in assuming the target vs controller gender distinction: "controller genders, the genders into which nouns are divided" vs "target genders, the genders which are marked on adjectives, verbs and so on."

[3] Note that strong/weak are often used to qualify different inflectional classes hosting complementary sets of lexemes (as is the case e.g. with strong/weak Germanic verbs), whereas here, just as in the description of German adjectives, the terms are used to qualify two alternative inflections that one and the same lexical item takes in different syntactic contexts (the same terminology is used e.g. in Corbett 2006: 95f.).

[4] All -*a*'s in the inflections considered in (2) and the following paradigms (as well as the hierarchies in Figures 1-2) are phonemic /ə/'s, which may be realized phonetically as either [ə] or [a], depending on prosodic context. Elderly speakers of urban Ripano tend to realize -[ə] utterance-internally vs -[a] prepausally, and hence in citation forms: thus, local lexicographers and the descriptive literature on Ripano use this notation, which we follow here. By contrast, younger urban and rural speakers tend to generalize -[ə]. This -/ə/ contrasts today with final unstressed -/a/ (re)introduced recently, probably on the model of Standard Italian (cf. Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018: 150), which is never realized as -[ə] and occurs in the feminine singular of determiners, quantifiers and place names, but generally not in nouns and adjectives. Disregarding this detail, we use -*a* for simplicity throughout.

from the same source node, a member may be able to *override* the inheritance of a fact." (Brown & Hippisley 2012: 33; emphasis in the original). The inheritance hierarchy for Ripano nominals (i.e. nouns and adjectives, the latter addressed in §2.3) is displayed in Fig. 1 (where Roman numbers in the node labels correspond to ICs in (2)):[5]

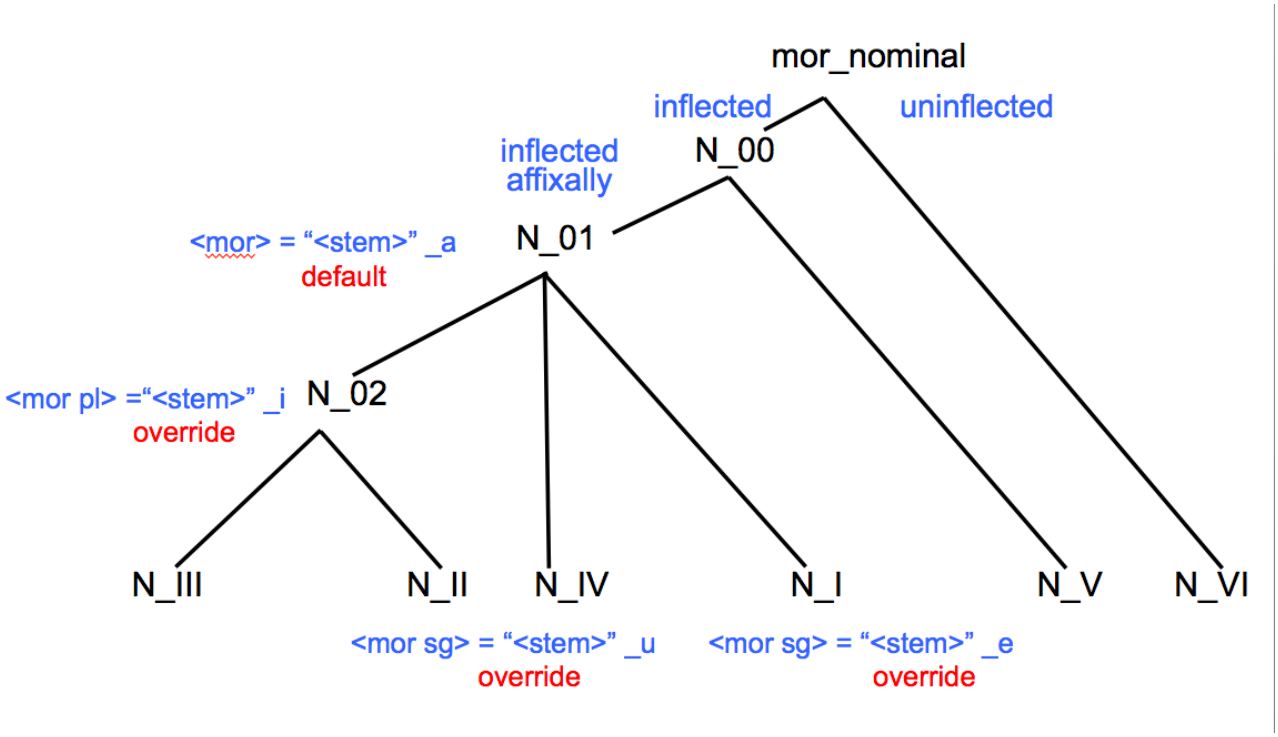

Figure 1: Inheritance hierarchy for Ripano nominals (strong paradigm)

The first branch ending with a terminal node (N_VI) accounts for indeclinables: the main structural criterion for inclusion in this class is that the stem ends in a stressed vowel which does not show any singular/plural alternation (more examples in (3)).[6] All remaining ICs inflect for number (apart from number-defective nouns, obviously, such as the mass neuters in ISC IIIc). The left branch first leads to a node that is labelled N_00 (inflected nouns). Here, the right branch leads to a terminal node N_V, an IC characterized by lacking affixal inflection and by the phonological property of final stress (cf. Rossi 2008: 18f.) – a property shared with class VI – but nevertheless displaying two contrasting forms for the singular vs plural cells, due to the occurrence of a stressed vowel alternation originally caused by metaphony and then rendered opaque as final vowels following /n/ or /r/ were deleted with the entire final syllable: e.g. *lu liˈmo/li liˈmu* 'lemon(M),-s', *lu məraˈto/li məraˈtu* 'bricklayer(M),-s' (compare Italian *limone*, *muratore*). The left branch N_01, on the other hand, dominates ICs displaying affixal inflection, and contains information on the singular and

[5] The top node is labelled MOR_NOMINAL rather than MOR_NOUN, since no separate node for adjectives, and hence, no branching between MOR_NOUN and MOR_ADJ needs to be part of the lexemic hierarchy for Ripano, for reasons explained in §2.3.

[6] Class VI also includes a few nouns (mainly loans) which end in an unstressed vowel (e.g. *ˈbːɔjːa* 'executioner/-s', *bːiˈkiːniˑ*).

plural default exponent, which is *-a* for both cells. The node N_01 dominates several other nodes: both N_I and N_IV inherit the default exponent *-a* in the plural, but the singular default form is overridden, the overrides being *-e* in N_I and *-u* in N_IV.[7] The node N_02, then, is defined by the override of the plural default value *-a*. This superclass subdivides into N_II and N_III, which inherit the plural exponent *-i* but remain distinct for the exponent of the singular, which is *-u* in N_II (override) and *-a* by default in N_III.

The same hierarchy effectively models gender assignment, as Ripano has (almost) generalized overt gender, the indeclinable class VI being the only one which hosts nouns of all three target genders:

(3) a. M *lu/li fəˈrːa* 'blacksmith', *kulaˈtu* 'colander, strainer', *kuntəˈði* 'farmer';
b. F *le/la bːəˈʃe* 'lie', *ˈma* 'hand', *pənˈtsjo* 'rent';
c. N *lə ˈfje* 'hay', *ˈgra* 'wheat', *saˈpo* 'soap', *ˈvi* 'wine'.

All remaining ICs (see the right-hand column in (2)), host nouns of just one gender, with the sole exception of IC III, which hosts both masculine (IIIa-b) and (mass) neuter nouns (IIIc). Since however mass neuters lack a plural form, this does not cause any deflection from overt gender: a noun whose paradigm reduces to an *a*-ending singular is neuter, while nouns with *a*-singular and *i*-plural are masculine.

The pervasiveness of overt gender makes the Ripano system more canonical than that of Italian – often quoted in the literature in Canonical Typology as a good approximation to a fully canonical system, especially as far as gender agreement in the noun phrase is concerned (cf. e.g. Corbett 2006: 9, Fedden & Corbett 2017: 2; *contra* Thornton 2019) – since Ripano come nearer "an ideal overt system" (Corbett 1991: 62), which "would have a marker for gender on every noun, with only one marker per gender" thus complying with *Criterion* 2 for canonical agreement:

(4) Canonical agreement typology *Criterion* 2 (Corbett 2006: 11):
"controller has overt expression of agreement features > controller has covert expression of agreement features"

On the other hand, canonical inflection (Corbett 2009; 2012: 197-199) would require for each lexeme to have a unique stem form across cells, and for each paradigm cell to host just one exponent. Thus, canonical overt gender, with a cumulative gender/number exponent as found throughout Romance (in itself a deviation from canonicity), in a three target-gender system with two number values such as Ripano would appear as follows:

(5) Canonical overt gender (hypothetical) with cumulative gender/number exponence

	SG	PL
N	A-*u*	
M	A-*o*	A-*i*
F	A-*a*	A-*e*

[7] Overrides "captur[e] inflectional classes, syncretism and deponency" (Brown & Hippisley 2012: 36).

Ripano, however, departs from canonicity since the morphology still makes more distinctions than required by the syntax, contrasting inflectional classes, while it fails "to make […] morphosyntactically relevant distinction[s] […] under particular (morphological) conditions" (Baerman et al. 2005: 2), i.e. shows syncretisms (s. (2) and the schema in (6):

(6) Strong paradigm: syncretism pattern A

	I	IV	II	III
SG	*-e*	*-u*	*-u*	*-a*
PL	*-a*	*-a*	*-i*	*-i*

The inflections seen in (2) – and modelled in Fig. 1 – are not constant across syntactic contexts, because M nouns (ICs II-III), as well as NAN nouns, as far as their M.SG forms are concerned (IC IV) display inflections different from those in (2) in a complementary subset of syntactic contexts (§3). This results in the weak paradigm in (7):

(7) Noun ICs of urban Ripano. Weak paradigm (reduced inflection)

IC	ISC	SG	PL	example		gloss	gender
I		A-*e*	A-*a*	ˈkaːse	ˈkaːsa	'house/-s'	F
II-IV	a.	A-*a*	A-*a*	ˈfijːa	ˈfijːa	'son/-s'	M
		A-*a*	A-*a*	ˈpaːʈ͡ʂa	ˈpaːʈ͡ʂa	'father/-s'	M
		A-*a*	B-*a*	ˈvratːʃa	ˈvratːʃa	'arm/-s'	NAN
	b.	A-*a*	A-*a*	ˈmeːsa	ˈmiːʃa	'month/-s'	M
		A-*a*	B-*a*	ˈwoːva	ˈɔːva	'egg/-s'	NAN
	c.	A-*a*		ˈmɛːla	----	'honey'	N
V		A	B	vaʃˈto	vaʃˈtu	'stick/-s'	M
VI		uninflected		ˈka	ˈka	'dog/-s'	M, F, N (= ['pa] 'bread')

Syncretism becomes more pervasive in (7), as schematized in (8) (to be contrasted with (6):

(8) Weak paradigm: syncretism pattern B

	I	III	II	IV
SG	*-e*	*-a*	*-a*	*-a*
PL	*-a*	*-a*	*-a*	*-a*

The sets of cells distinguished in the full paradigm are collapsed. First, nouns of ICs II (*ˈfiːjːu/ˈfiːjːi* 'son/-s'), III (*ˈpaːʈʂa/ˈpaːʈʂi* 'father/-s') and IV (*ˈvraːtːʃu/ˈvraːtːʃa* 'arm/-s') merge into one and the same class II-IV, which has just one form for both singular and plural. Second, this reduced inflectional form has the same *-a*, which was already shared by many inflectional classes in the full paradigm. We can consider this as a default and say that the (gender-)number morphological realization is almost neutralized. The inflectional system can be displayed, for the weak paradigm too, by means of the modified inheritance hierarchy in Fig. 2, which accounts for the loss of contrasts with respect to the one in Fig. 1:

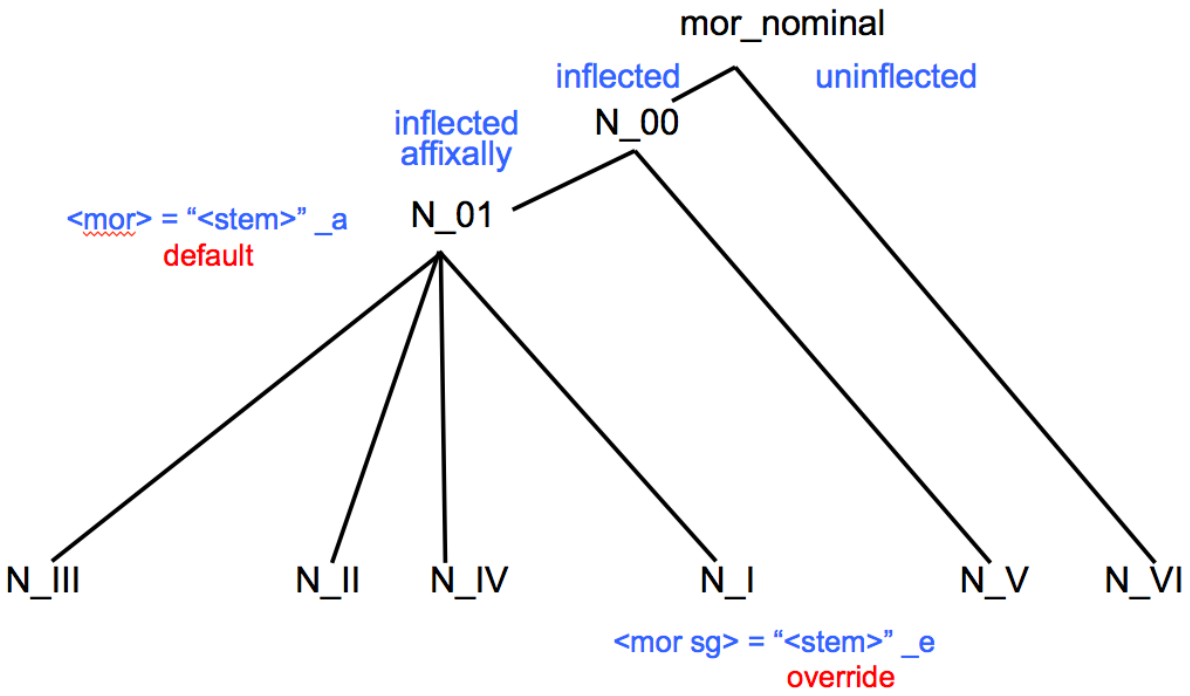

Figure 2: Inheritance hierarchy for Ripano nominals (weak paradigm)

The first two branchings, leading to N_VI and N_V, are unchanged, and so is the node N_01, specifying the default (*-a*) for both singular and plural forms of all affixally inflected nouns. Within this superclass, there is just one override left with respect to the more articulated hierarchy for strong inflection in Fig. 1: this specifies, at the node N_I, that class I (feminine) nouns have the exponent *-e* for the singular. All the rest is annexed to the province of the default exponent *-a*.

2.2. The rise of overt gender in Ripano

In Italian, the major IC responsible for inflection not being a reliable gender predictor is the *cane/-i* 'dog/-s' class (IC III in D'Achille & Thornton 2003: 213). This contains nouns stemming from Latin 3rd declension, which subdivide about fifty-fifty into masculines (e.g. *padre/-i* 'father/-s') and feminines (e.g. *volpe/-i* 'fox/-es'). In Ripano, the heir of Latin 3rd declension is IC III (in (2)): this has retained (mass) neuters (IIIc), which merged into the masculine in Italian, but lost all feminines, since these were systematically attracted into IC I (*ˈkaːse/-a* 'house/-s'), the heir of Latin 1st declension: *ˈ(v)orbe/-a* 'fox/-es', *ˈnɔtːe/-a* 'night/-s', etc. As for Latin 1st and 2nd declensions, which

were predominantly associated with feminine and masculine respectively, their diachronic successors in Ripano (IC I and II respectively) got rid of all exceptions.[8] One such exception in standard Italian is *mano/-i* 'hand/-s', the outcome of Lat. *manus/-us*, a 4th declension noun which merged into the productive successor of Latin 2nd declension and represents the only feminine noun in that IC. But in present-day Ripano Lat. *manus* became invariable *ˈma* due to regular sound change or was reassigned analogically to IC I (*mane/mana* in Rossi 1999: 46, 77), thus leaving exclusively masculines in IC II. On the other hand, analogical change redeployed all originally 1st declension masculines, such as those formed with the suffix *-ˈiʃta*, not into a newly created dedicated class as in Italian (*socialista/-i* 'socialist/-s') but rather into IC II: e.g. *kumːuˈniʃtu/-i* 'communist/-s' (Rossi 2008: 86, 168) (compare weak inflection in *lu/li kumːuˈniʃta* 'the communist/-s', *nu spetʃaˈliʃta* 'a specialist', Cardarelli 2010: 49).

This series of changes converged to yield the virtually perfect IC-to-gender predictability observed in the hierarchy in Fig. 1. All these changes, in turn, grafted onto a general reshuffling of inflectional endings – preceded by a stage in which all affixal endings except /a/ tended to merge into /ə/ – which favored the rise of the unusual agreement system addressed in §3.

2.3. Adjective inflectional classes

While "[w]e typically conceive of inflectional classes as discrete entities associated with one particular part of speech" (Brown & Hippisley 2012: 113), there are languages such as Latin "where it is difficult to identify specifically adjectival inflection, so that adjectival inflection is essentially taken from noun declensions" (Brown & Hippisley 2012: 124). This holds also for Ripano. Therefore, contrary to, say, Russian where the node MOR_NOMINAL dominates two separate nodes MOR_NOUN vs MOR_ADJ, the hierarchies provided exhaust the nominal portion of the lexemic hierarchy: simply, "the node ADJ can inherit via network relations from the inflectional class nodes defining noun morphology and add information about gender accordingly" (Brown & Hippisley 2012: 124). Hence, Ripano adjectives also (except the invariable ones, e.g. *ˈbːlu* 'blue') show two sets of inflections, selected in complementary syntactic contexts (see §3), with one set making more distinctions than the other.

Among affixally inflected adjectives, there are two minor classes containing very few items each, mostly conversions from nouns: one, exemplified with the adjective 'shabby (of people)' (*ʃaˈtːo* M.SG, *ʃaˈtːu* M.PL, *ʃaˈtːoːne* F.SG, *ʃaˈtːoːna* F.PL) combines N_V (masculine) and N_I (feminine);[9] the other is exemplified with the adjective *markiˈdːʒaːna* N (N_III), *markiˈdːʒa* M.SG/M.PL (N_VI), *markiˈdːʒaːne* F.SG, *markiˈdːʒaːna* F.PL (N_I) 'in/from the Marches'.

The major inflectional class combines N_III (neuter), N_II (neuter) and N_I (feminine). It subdivides into two subclasses depending on the presence/absence of stem alternation (cf. Harder 1988: 132-133). Tables (9)-(10) illustrate the two paradigms of the subclass without stem alternation:

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[8] Originally 2nd declension neuters were attracted into IC III, which has retained Latin (mass) neuters: *ˈɔːra* 'gold' (< Lat. AURUM).

[9] The neuter form in *-ˈoːna* is not used for semantic reasons.

(9) Adjective *ˈbːrutːu* 'ugly'

a. Strong paradigm (full inflection)

GENDER	NUMBER	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL
N	ˈbːrutːa	—
M	ˈbːrutːu	ˈbːrutːi
F	ˈbːrutːe	ˈbːrutːa

b. Weak paradigm (reduced inflection)

GENDER	NUMBER	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL
N	ˈbːrutːa	ˈbːrutːa
M		
F	ˈbːrutːe	

(10) Affixal marking of gender and number

a. Strong paradigm

	N	M	F
SG	A + *a*	A + *u*	A + *e*
PL	—	A + *i*	A + *a*

b. Weak paradigm

	N	M	F
SG	A + *a*	A + *a*	A + *e*
PL	—	A + *a*	A + *a*

Tables (11)-(12) illustrate the complementary subclass, exemplified with the adjective *ˈfwortu* 'strong':

(11) Adjective *ˈfwortu* 'strong'

a. Strong paradigm (full inflection)

GENDER	NUMBER	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL
N	ˈfɔrta	—
M	ˈfwortu	ˈfworti
F	ˈfɔrte	ˈfɔrta

b. Weak paradigm (reduced inflection)

GENDER	NUMBER	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL
N	ˈfɔrta	—
M	ˈfworta	ˈfworta
F	ˈfɔrte	ˈfɔrta

(12) Affixal and stem-internal marking of gender and number

a. Strong paradigm

	N	M	F
SG	A + *a*	B + *u*	A + *e*
PL	—	B + *i*	A + *a*

b. Weak paradigm

	N	M	F
SG	A + *a*	B + *a*	A + *e*
PL	—	B + *a*	A + *a*

Here stem alternation contributes to the contrast between different cells. The distribution of stem allomorphy is defined in terms of gender. In Network Morphology, this is expressed through "gender" being inserted as a last path extension:

(13) Brown & Hippisley (2012: 61):

"*Number and gender (a constraint on the full morphological model)*

In paths containing gender and number attributes, gender attributes will extend number attributes. (e.g. <mor sg masc>)"

Membership in inflectional subclasses is a lexical property, whereas the selection of the paradigm type (either strong or weak) depends on purely syntactic factors (§3).

The Italian counterparts of the adjectives in (9) vs (11), viz. *brutto* vs *forte*, belong to two different ICs (just like their Latin ancestors), which, contrary to Ripano, differ because the former, but not the latter, marks gender contrasts.[10] In Ripano, class-membership has been totally reshuffled, as all adjectives, whatever Latin class they stem from, mark gender affixally, as seen in (14):

(14) Ripano adjectives	from Latin Class 1	from Latin Class 2
+ gender marking via stem alternation (11)	*ˈbːwoːnu* 'good', *ˈfrisku* 'cool'	*ˈfwortu* 'strong'
– gender marking via stem alternation (9)	*ˈveːru* 'true', *ˈjustu* 'right'	*ˈfaːtʃəlu* 'easy', *ˈtriʃtu* 'sad'

Finally, the syntax of Ripano offers spectacular confirmation of the conflated MOR_NOMINAL node for nouns and adjectives. Indeed nouns not only select either the strong or weak paradigm depending on syntactic context but, in addition, undergo contextual agreement with the clause subject, in certain syntactic constructions, whatever their inherent gender. The constructions involved are exemplified in (15) with two agreeing nouns (one feminine and one masculine):[11]

(15) a. n ˈɔːm-a tʃ ˈa ˈseːt-u / ˈtjemb-u
INDF man(M)-nonF.SG has thirst(F)-M.SG / time(M)-M.SG
'a man is thirsty/has time'

b. n-e ˈfemːən-e tʃ ˈa ˈseːt-e / ˈtjemb-e
INDF-F.SG woman(F)-SG has thirst(F)-F.SG / time(M)-F.SG
'a woman is thirsty/has time'

These nouns take the same five-cell paradigm as the adjectives in (9), whenever required by subject agreement:

(16) Agreement on nouns in Ripano

a. *ˈseːte* 'thirst(F)'

GENDER	NUMBER	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL
N	ˈseːta	—
M	ˈseːtu	ˈseːti
F	ˈseːte	ˈseːta

b. *ˈtjembu* 'time(M)'

GENDER	NUMBER	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL
N	ˈtjemba	—
M	ˈtjembu	ˈtjembi
F	ˈtjembe	ˈtjemba

[10] Cf. Thornton (2019) and Bond (2019) for discussion within Canonical Typology of parallel data from Italian and Spanish, addressing the issue whether lack of gender agreement in Class 2 adjectives – which derives from reduced gender agreement in the Latin forerunner IC: *facilis* 'easy:NOM.M.SG = :NOM.F.SG vs *facile* 'easy:NOM.N.SG', as opposed to Class 1 *bonus*/*-a*/*-um* 'good:NOM.M.SG ≠ :NOM.F.SG ≠ :NOM.N.SG – is best analyzed in terms of syncretism or featural inconsistency.

[11] The DAI data (cf. Paciaroni 2020: §4.4.1.4) show that noun agreement, exemplified in (15) and described in the literature (cf. Parrino 1967: 161f., 166; Harder 1988: 245; Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018: 162f.), is not categorical: alternatively, the noun can stay in its gender/number-unmarked form.

Contrary to adjectives, there is no counterpart to (11) for agreeing nouns, since the stem allomorph is determined lexically.[12]

3. Two syntactic defaults in Ripano: preliminaries on Ripano syntax

In addition to the morphological default established in the inheritance hierarchies in Fig. 1-2, Ripano has two distinct syntactic defaults: a normal-case and an exceptional-case default (Corbett & Fraser 2000, Evans et al. 2002, 119-123, Brown & Hippisley 2012: 86-106). In order to introduce these, we must provide some background on the syntactic conditions on which selection of the two morphological paradigms (5) vs (7) (for nouns) and (9a)/(11a) vs (9b)/(11b) (for adjectives) depends (Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018 provide the full picture). The difference concerns only masculine agreement on adjectives and nouns belonging to classes II-IV (masculine and NAN nouns, which are concerned because of their M.SG forms). Consider the two sets of forms for masculine nouns, exemplified in context:

(17) a. ˈisː-u ˈɛ ˈfːijː-u/*-a də ˈbːrave ˈdːʒɛnde
3M-M.SG be.PRS.3 son(M)-M.SG/-nonF.SG of good people
'he is the son of honest people' (Rossi 1999: 173)

b. a ˈfatːa/-ə ˈlamb-i/*-a e ˈtːwoːn-i/*-a
AUX do:PTP.N.SG lightning(M)-M.PL/-nonF.SG and thunder(M)-M.PL/nonF.SG
'there was thunder and lightning'

(18) a. l-u ˈfijː-a/*-u ˈbːjelː-u/*-a/*-ə
DEF-M.SG son(M)-nonF.SG/-M.SG beautiful\M-M.SG/-nonF.SG
'the beautiful son'[13]

b. li ˈlamb-a/*-i e li ˈtwoːn-a/*-i
DEF.M.PL lightning(M)-nonF.SG/-M.PL and DEF.M.PL thunder(M)-nonF.SG/-M.PL
'there was thunder and lightning'

[12] This difference has a diachronic explanation. In *ˈbːwoːnu* 'good:M.SG' vs *ˈbːɔːne* 'good:F.SG' stem allomorphy arose from metaphony, which was triggered by final high vowels and hence applied in the Proto-Romance masculine * *ˈbɔːnu*, not in feminine * *ˈbɔːna*. Conversely, the Proto-Romance forerunners of the nouns of the relevant classes uniformly contained either high (* *ˈtɛmpu*/* *ˈtɛmpi* 'time/-s') or non-high vowels (* *ˈseːte*), which determined the application vs non-application of metaphony. The phonological process was already completed by the time contextual agreement was extended to nouns. The latter were not reshaped analogically either, which happened on the contrary to adjectives, that were subjected secondarily to non-phonologically determined extension of metaphony, as seen in (11): in fact, the Proto-Romance ancestor of *ˈfwortu* 'strong:M.SG', i.e. * *ˈfɔrte*, ending in a non-high final vowel, did not meet the structural description of metaphonic diphthongization.

[13] In Paciaroni & Loporcaro (2018: 154), (18a) reads erroneously *lu ˈfijː-u ˈbːjelː-u*, which is ungrammatical (because of *ˈfijː-u*) for all Ripano informants. We take this opportunity to flag this unfortunate error.

In addition to occurring in isolation, strong inflections are selected in a series of syntactic contexts, partly exemplified in (17), including occurrence as bare noun (predicative or argumental),[14] and occurrence after modifiers not agreeing in gender/number, the invariable complementizer *kə* (e.g. *kə ˈtːjemb-i/*-a* 'what times(M)-M.PL/-nonF.SG!'), the invariable quantifier *ˈkakːa* 'some' (e.g. *ˈkakː ˈwomːən-i/*-a* 'some men(M)-M.PL/-nonF.SG'), periphrastic quantifiers such as *ne ˈfreːke də* 'a lot of' (e.g. *ne ˈfreːke də ˈtwoːn-i/*-a* 'a lot of thunders-M.PL/-nonF.SG') and adnominal numerals (e.g. *do ˈpasː-i/*-a* 'two steps(M)-M.PL/-nonF.SG').[15] By contrast, (18a-b) exemplify the syntactic contexts in which overt gender marking is neutralized via extension of the default ending *-a* to masculine nouns. This happens whenever the noun is preceded by determiners or modifiers marked by gender/number: the list includes articles (definite and indefinite: e.g. *n-u ˈlamb-a/*-u* 'a-M.SG lightning(M)-nonF.SG/-M.SG'), demonstratives (e.g. *ʃt-u ˈlamb-a/*-u* 'this-M.SG lightning (M)-nonF.SG/-M.SG'), gender-variable quantifiers (e.g. *ˈtand-u ˈtjemb-a/*-u* 'so much-M.SG time(M)-nonF.SG/-M.SG'), and adjectives (e.g. *ˈbːjelː-u kaˈvalː-a/*-u* 'beautiful-M.SG horse(M)-nonF.SG/-M.SG').[16] Note that the condition that the modifier be gender/number-(in)variable refers to the paradigm as a whole, not to the individual form selected: thus, *kə ˈɔːm-u/*-a ˈbːrutː-u* 'what an ugly-M.SG/-nonF.SG man(M)-M.SG!' vs *l/n ˈɔːm-a/*-u* 'the/a man(M)-nonF.SG/-M.SG' contrast because *kə* is invariable while the articles are gender/number-variable as such, though the prevocalic singular form never shows gender agreement overtly (compare feminine *l ˈuːv-e* 'the grapes(F)').

As highlighted in Paciaroni & Loporcaro (2018: 175), Loporcaro (2018: 312), the context-dependency of overt gender is a unique peculiarity of Ripano. Compared with e.g. the different adjective inflectional paradigms of German, one must remark that context-dependency here concerns also agreement controllers, not only agreement targets.[17] The latter too show context-sensitive selection of the weak vs strong paradigms seen in (9)-(12) above. In (18a), in fact, the postnominal adjective *ˈbːjelː-u* takes strong inflection, and so does the prenominal adjective, if not preceded by a determiner marking gender and number:

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[14] A special case is that of the strong paradigm of agreeing nouns ((15)-(16)), whose gender/number values are selected contextually via subject agreement.

[15] The numeral 'one' is homophonous with the indefinite article and, like the latter, agrees in gender and number: consequently, it triggers weak inflection on the noun, contrary to all other adnominal numerals.

[16] Masculine plural determiners are exceptional in that, unlike determiners from all other paradigm cells, they invariably select strong inflection on the noun (see Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018: 172-174):

(i) j: ˈanː-i/*-a//ˈwort-i/*-a
DEF.M.PL year(M)-M.PL/-nonF.SG//garden(M)-M.PL/-nonF.SG
'the gardens/years'

[17] Also, contrary to German adjective inflection, selection of the weak paradigm is sensitive to the mere presence of a prenominal determiner, not to its (in)definiteness: thus, on the one hand indefinite/definite articles all induce weak inflection (e.g. *ˈtwoːn-u* 'thunder(M)-M.sg' vs *n-u/l-u ˈtwoːn-a/*-u* 'a-M.SG thunder(M)-nonF.SG'), on the other hand, definite modifiers such as possessives, being always postnominal, do not induce weak inflection unless the article co-occurs: e.g. *ˈnɔnː-u ˈmje* 'my grandfather(M)-M.SG' vs *l-u ˈnɔnː-a* 'the-M.SG grandfather(M)-nonF.SG', *l-u ˈfiːj-a ˈswo* '(lit. the-M.SG) his son(M)-nonF.SG' (Harder 1988, 137, Rossi 2008: 175).

(19) a. ˈjuːtə = ma ˈbːjelː-u/*-a/*-ə frəˈki
help.IMP.2SG=1SG.IO beautiful\M-M.SG/-nonF.SG child(M)
'help me, beautiful child!'

b. n-u / l-u ˈbːrutː-ə/*-u ˈka/ˈdisk-a
INDF-M.SG / DEF-M.SG bad-nonF.SG/-M.SG dog(M)/disk(M)-nonF.SG
'a/the bad dog/disk'

We now move on to illustrate the two syntactic defaults of Ripano.

3.1. Normal-case default

The *Criterion* 2 of the canonical typology of agreement, mentioned in (4), would prescribe that all nouns have overt marking of both number and gender. In Ripano we find such an overt marking only if a series of phonological, morphological, morphosyntactic and syntactic conditions are met, whereby purely morphological IC-based conditions and morphosyntactic ones go hand in hand, given the widespread occurrence of overt gender discussed in §§2.1-2.2. Firstly, one has to put aside uninflected nouns in class VI, which may belong to any gender: most of these can be singled out because of their phonological shape, since they are the only nouns in the language which end in a stressed vowel and do not show number alternation. Moving on to inflected nouns, all feminines (i.e. all nouns belonging to IC I) and masculines ending in SG /ˈo/ and PL /ˈu/ (belonging to IC V) satisfy Criterion 2 (in (4)) in a context-independent way: this follows from the identity of their inflected forms in both the strong and the weak paradigms (2) and (7). On the other hand, masculine nouns – as well as NAN nouns, due to their M.SG forms – do not show gender overtly in a context-independent way. Rather, as shown in (17)-(18), their gender (and, partly, number, depending on IC) is manifested overtly only in the strong paradigm. We conclude that the strong paradigm corresponds to the default, in a syntactic sense: more precisely, this is the normal-case default, since it is selected when the noun is used by itself, while selection of the weak paradigm is context-sensitive, subject to syntactic conditions (presence of a prenominal determiner/modifier marked for gender/number). Exemplifying with a class II masculine, the two defaults addressed so far look as follows:

(20) The two defaults for Ripano nouns

		SINGULAR	PLURAL	gloss
a.	morphological default	ˈfijːa	ˈfijːa	'son/-s'
b.	(syntactic) normal-case default	ˈfijːu	ˈfijːi	

Not unlike the default hierarchies in Fig. 1-2, also the normal-case default can be described in the same terms for adjectives too. In fact, also adjectives show strong inflection by (syntactic) default, i.e. when used in isolation and whenever not preceded by a gender/number-marked determiner, whereas the latter context – exemplified in (19b) – is the only one in which the weak paradigm is selected. Again, this contrast – schematized in (21a-b) – only concerns the masculine. However,

adjectives – and other agreement targets as well – differ from nouns in that they also show the exceptional-case default (in (21c)), to be addressed in §3.2:

(21) Three defaults for Ripano adjectives		SINGULAR	PLURAL	gloss
a.	morphological default	ˈbːjelːa	ˈbːjelːa/ˈbːjejːa[18]	‘beautiful’
b.	(syntactic) normal-case default	ˈbːjelːu	ˈbːjejːi/ˈbːjelːi	
c.	(syntactic) exceptional-case default	ˈbːɛlː-ə/-a	–	

3.2. Exceptional-case default

Exceptional-case default is relevant only for agreement targets. While the reader is referred to Corbett & Fraser (2000), Evans et al. (2002: 119), Brown & Hippisley (2012: 87) for the definition and formalization, suffice it to mention the kind of contexts in which such a syntactic default has been argued to occur: “The circumstances are, roughly speaking, all those where agreement is not controlled by a prototypical noun phrase (one headed by a noun or pronoun)” (Corbett & Fraser 2000: 71).[19] These include agreement with non-nominal controllers such as clauses, or non-

[18] The DAI data show a tendency to reduce stem allomorphy in the paradigm. Thus, in the M.PL there is variation between the expected stem *ˈbːjejː-* (with the palatalizing effect of *-i* on /l/) which is described in the literature (Harder 1988: 133) and attested in folk literature (cf. e.g.*’sti grisendèma è bbjéji prassà* ‘these chrysanthemums are very beautiful’, Rossi 1999: 80; *li bbjeja jestra suó* ‘his beautiful gestures’, Rossi 2007: 19), and the stem *ˈbːjelː-* without palatalization due to analogical extension of the M.SG stem.

(i) a. kə ˈwocː-i ˈbːjelː-i
what eye(M)-PL beautiful\M -M.PL
‘what beautiful eyes!’

b. l-i ˈbːjelː-ə
DEF-M.PL beautiful\M-nonF.SG
‘the beautiful …’

The youngest recorded speaker (born in 1996) in addition to the loss of palatalization (iia), also showed the elimination of the metaphonic diphthong [je] (iib-c) distinguishing the masculine from the feminine and (mass) neuter stem:

(ii) a. l-i ˈbːjelː-ə kaˈvalː-ə
DEF-M.PL beautiful\M-nonF.SG horse(M)-nonF.SG
‘the beautiful horses’

b. l-u ˈbːɛlː-ə kaˈvalː-ə
DEF-M.SG beautiful-nonF.SG horse(M)-nonF.SG
‘the beautiful horse’

c. l-i ˈbːelː/ˈbːejː ˈoːm-əni
DEF-M.PL beautiful man(M)-PL
‘the beautiful men’

[19] In a different terminological framework, for Aronoff (2013: 92) verb agreement when the subject is unspecified or otherwise agreement with a controller lacking relevant specifications falls under the label “orphan default”.

agreement (e.g. in an impersonal clause). In addition, "[e]ven if the agreement controller is a noun phrase headed by a noun or pronoun, there may still be problems involving gender agreement, caused by reference difficulties" (Corbett & Fraser 2000: 82). The two cases are exemplified with Russian in (22):

(22) a. byl-o xolodn-o Russian
was-N.SG cold-N.SG
'it was cold'

b. kto èt-o zdela-l
who this-N.SG did-M.SG
'who did this?'

Lacking any eligible agreement controller, as in impersonals ((22a)), Russian agreement targets take neuter endings by default, while masculine is selected in (22b), where the interrogative pronoun has unspecified human reference: the appropriate gender is unknown, as the person involved may be either male or female, but the referent – given the properties of *kto* – is known to be human, which rules out neuter agreement. Compare the Ripano counterparts:

(23) a. ʃt iˈmːɛrn-a nn a pjəˈvuːt-a pə ˈɲːɛnda
this winter(M)-nonF.SG NEG has rained-N.SG at all
'this (last) winter it did not rain at all'

b. sə dərˈm-jeːv-a ˈbːɛ su ˈlːu ˈljetːa
UHS sleep-IMPF-3N.SG well on that bed
'did one sleep well on the bed?' (Harder 1988: 197; our glosses, ML&TP)

(24) a. ki ˈmaɲː-a / ˈɛ rːiˈvaːt-a / ˈɛ ˈpːjand-a
who eat.PRS-3N.SG / is come-N.SG / is cried-N.SG
'who is eating/has arrived/has cried?' (Harder 1988: 160, 237-239)

b. ki s=a ˈmisː-a a ˈrːid-a[20]
who REFL=has put\M-N.SG to laugh-INF.N.SG
'who started laughing?'

Both the finite verb, which consistently shows gender, in addition to person/number, agreement, and the past participle in perfective periphrastics in (23)-(24) (see also the impersonal clause in (17b)) appear in the neuter, taking the same inflection *-a* as the morphological default (§2). The same happens to adjectives (see (21c)) whenever the agreement controller does not carry any gender specification:

[20] Note in passing that root-stressed infinitives can show subject agreement in number and gender. Since *ˈrid-a* in (24b) is the N form, it is impossible to decide whether there is agreement with the subject or the default form. That even infinitives can agree in gender is, again, an unusual property of Ripano (cf. Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018: 158).

(25) ˈkomːa ˈɛ ˈbːɛlː-a ˈji a l-u ˈmaːr-a
how be.PRS.3 nice-N.SG go.INF to DEF-M.SG sea(M)-nonF.SG
'how nice it is going to the sea!'

Use of the neuter in the unspecified human subject clause in (23b) can be contrasted with (26), where the verb agrees with the pronominal subject (either overt or silent: like Italian, Ripano is a pro-drop language):

(26) (ˈia) nən ˈdɔrm-u ˈmaŋg-u l-a ˈnɔtː-u
1SG NEG sleep.PRS-[1]M.SG not_even-M.SG DEF-F.SG night(F)-M.SG
'I don't sleep even at night' [Male referent] (DAI data; speaker AnIa)[21]

The fact that (exceptional) default agreement with non-canonical controllers takes this particular shape is due to diachronic persistence, as the ending *-a/-ə* is the exponent of the neuter, viz. the same gender value which occurred for exceptional-case default in Latin (cf. e.g. Loporcaro 2018: 22-26 on Latin and 233-235 on the diachronic continuity between form and function of the Latin and Romance neuters). While use of the neuter in impersonals such as (17b), (23) and (25) seems to be stable in present-day Ripano, its occurrence with the interrogative pronoun *ˈki* 'who', described as regular by Harder (1988: 160, 237-239) and Mancini (1993: 119), is vacillating: in our informants' answers alongside the conservative option (the neuter) we have recorded also use of the masculine, most probably due to interference from standard Italian which uses masculine in this context. This is exemplified in (27a-b), both stemming from one and the same informant (FiPi, born in 1953):

(27) a. ki s=ɛ ˈmːɔrt-ə
who REFL=is died\N-N.SG
'who has died?'
b. ki saˈrːa ˈmwort-u
who be.FUT-3SG died\M-M.SG
'who will have died?'

[21] *la ˈnɔtːu*, which has the form of a DP but means 'at night', takes on the *-u* ending via subject agreement. Outside this construction, the noun is a class I feminine: *l-a ˈnɔtːe*. Just like agreement in locative adjuncts (cf. Paciaroni & Loporcaro 2018: 165; Paciaroni 2020: §§4.4.1.3-4; Loporcaro, to appear), agreement in temporal adjuncts is also vanishing and exceedingly rare in today's Ripano. In our fieldwork, we were able to observe subject agreement on nouns in both contexts in just one speaker, AnIa, born in 1937 in the hamlet of San Rustico, whose dialect differs minimally from urban Ripano, e.g. in the inflection of feminine determiners and class I nouns.

4. Conclusion

We have isolated three types of default in Ripano, one morphological and two syntactic. The normal-case default contrasts with the other two in that it is maximally specified, while the syntactic exceptional-case and the morphological default converge to the same realization. For the former, this corresponds to the neuter ending, which has inherited this function from Latin. The morphological default, on the other hand, which can be synchronically modeled by means of the inheritance hierarchies in Fig. 1-2, has its diachronic roots in a stage in which all final unstressed vowels but /a/ merged into /ə/ – as is the case in the dialects spoken immediately to the south – to then be differentiated again through analogical change giving rise to the intricate agreement system of this fascinating language.

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