

Typological remarks on Sardinian: 1. Vowel harmony. 2. Sardinian in a correlative typology of the Romance languages.*

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1. Introduction

Romance languages are usually not very much in focus in work in linguistic typology. Going through the literature in this discipline, from influential monographs such as e.g. COMRIE (1981), CROFT (1990) or GIVÓN (1984) up to recent textbooks such as SONG (2001), one finds spare mentions of the Romance languages (mostly limited to the standard varieties of Spanish and French), usually to illustrate the fact that Romance displays uniform accusative/nominative alignment, just like Latin, and SVO order except for pronominal clitics.¹ In this connection, when discussing Greenberg's universal 25 («If the pronominal object follows the verb, so does the nominal object»), Romance is mentioned to show that the implication is not bilateral (cf. e.g. SONG 2001:54).² Spanish, besides, scores a fair amount of mentions thanks to differential object marking and *se*-passive – possibly together with Italian for the latter construction. With this, the list of mentions of Romance in the literature in general linguistic typology is virtually exhausted: the picture is not particularly exciting, and contributes *ex silentio* to propagate the idea of Romance as a rather dull and uninteresting version of Standard Average European.

Sardinian, as far as I have been able to see, is never mentioned in this literature. This is the product of its being Romance, plus its lacking the status of a standard language. Like all Romance 'dialects' thus it largely remains, as it were, below the threshold of perceptibility for large-scale typologising. Given this lack of concern from general typologists, typological studies on Romance, in general, and on Sardinian, in particular, remain mostly the territory of Romance scholars. Needless to say, Sardinian is duly mentioned in typological work specifically concerned with the Romance languages (e.g. KÖRNER 1982, 1987, ILIESCU and MOURIN 1991, BOSSONG 1998 to quote just a few) and there have also been attempts at a comprehensive typological characterisation of Sardinian (cf. BLASCO FERRER 2000).³

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¹ Incidentally, this view on alignment properties of Romance is oversimplified, as research in Romance syntax along the past two decades has shown (cf. §3).

² Here too there is some inaccuracy, as all Romance languages possess 'pronominal objects', which however unmarkedly *follow* the verb just like lexical NPs. What is inaccurately referred to as 'pronominal objects' in this literature is actually object *clitics*, that have entirely different

In this paper, I aim to make two contributions to the study of Sardinian in a typological perspective: the first concerns phonology, the second grammar. In §2 I will show that some central Sardinian dialects have developed a (rightward) vowel height harmony. This is a classical case of vowel harmony *stricto sensu*, much like that occurring, say, in Bantu languages. That is news for typologists, since in surveys of vowel harmony systems (cf. e.g. VAN DER HULST and VAN DE WEIJER 1995) Romance is only, if at all, mentioned because of metaphony processes (which operate, however, leftwards).⁴ In §3 I will discuss the position of Sardinian in the framework of an often-quoted typological generalisation concerning Romance languages, viz. the bipartition originally put forward by KÖRNER (1981). The discussion will show that Sardinian, upon closer consideration, is incompatible with Körner's correlations and, more broadly, that these rest on an arbitrary selection of the data available. A more complete empirical survey of the syntactic features at issue, it will be shown, yields an entirely different picture, in particular if placed appropriately within the perspective of a cross-linguistic typology of alignment systems.

2. Vowel harmony in some dialects of central Sardinia

To get started, consider the following examples from Shona, a Bantu language (zone S, GUTHRIE 1967-71) spoken in Zimbabwe:

(1) Vowel harmony in Shona (cf. HYMAN 1999, 2004):

- | | | | | |
|----|------------------|-------------------|------|------------------|
| a. | <i>kwir-is-a</i> | 'make climb' | -is- | causative suffix |
| b. | <i>buum-is-a</i> | 'make agree' | | |
| | <i>pamh-is-a</i> | 'make do again' | | |
| c. | <i>sek-es-a</i> | 'make laugh' | -es- | |
| | <i>om-es-a</i> | 'make to get dry' | | |

These data illustrate the behaviour of the causative suffix, that surfaces as either *-es-* or *-is-* depending on the quality of the root vowel. This exemplifies an often-observed situation in Bantu: verbal derivational suffixes harmonize their non-low vowel to the root vowel by height. While the standard Bantu reconstruction for Proto-Bantu suffixes of the kind exemplified in (1) is **-iC-* (or, symmetrically, **-uC-*), HYMAN (1999:273) argues for the opposite view:

«I propose that the applicative and stative suffixes reconstruct as **-ed-* and **-ek-*, respectively, which were "peripheralized" to *-id-* and *-ik-* in most Bantu languages except where "held back" by a preceding mid root vowel».

Many languages of the world show instances of (rightward) vowel harmony (henceforth **VH**) of this kind, in which the spreading feature is either height (like in Bantu) or frontness/backness (like in Hungarian or Finnish) or some other (e.g. lip rounding, combined with frontness/backness like in Turkish). Among these languages, Sardinian is usually not mentioned. Nevertheless, there are some dialects in the central part of the island that have developed a VH system very similar to

⁴ Metaphony occurs in Sardinian as well (cf. LOPORCARO 2003, with further references). On the whole, Italo-Romance provides many other instances of leftward harmony: cf. e.g. BONFADINI (1987:347-9) on the dialects of Val Cavallina, in the province of Bergamo (*kor'tel*

that found in Bantu. To understand exactly how this VH came into being, we first have to consider one of the main isoglosses splitting the two main dialect groups Sardinian subdivides into, viz. Logudorese, spoken in the central-northern part of the island, and Campidanese, spoken in the southern half.⁵ On the whole, Logudorese is more conservative, whereas Campidanese underwent several changes not shared by the former. One case in point is mid-vowel raising. As shown by the examples in (2), word-final mid vowels were raised to /i u/ in Campidanese, while they were preserved as such in Logudorese. From this, the two final vowel systems contrasted in (3a-b) arose:

(2) Latin	-i	-ε	-a	-ɔ	-u
Logudorese	'be:ni	'fra:ðε	'kɔ:z'a	'ap:ɔ	'lo:yu
Campidanese	'be:ni	'fra:ði	'kɔ:z'a	'ap:u	'lo:yu
	'come.2SG.IMP'	'brother'	'thing'	'have.1SG'	'place'

(3) a. Logudorese	-i	-ε	-a	-ɔ	-u
b. Campidanese	-i	-a	-u		

This change has led to establishing a series of systematic morphonological correspondences between the two major dialect areas. To mention just one example, the masculine plural ending in the major nominal inflectional class (arisen from the accusative form LUPOS of Latin 2nd declension, LUPUS, -I) sounds [-ɔz(ɔ)] in Logudorese and [-uz(u)] in Campidanese: e.g. Log. [is'trandzɔzɔ] vs. Camp. [is'trandʒuzu] < EXTRANEOS 'foreigners'.

The change was not so abrupt as the neat correspondences in (3a-b) would seem to suggest though. Rather, both medieval texts and modern dialects spoken around the border between the two areas show abundant evidence for a gradual spread of raising, that proceeded along different dimensions (cf. WAGNER 1939-40: 126-134, CONTINI 1987: 443-4, LOPORCARO 2003b). In some of these dialects, raising is subject of a phonological condition on the input, as it affects only one mid vowel. This is the case in Baunei (province of Nuoro), at the eastern end of the isogloss, where neither /-ε/ ((4)) nor /-ɔ/ ((5)) are raised word-finally:

- (4) Baunei. Outcomes of Latin -E:
 ['i:liʒε] 'ilex', ['rud:ʒε] 'cross', ['tultʃε] 'sweet';
 ['kla:ε] 'key'; ['ka:nε] 'dog' (pl. ['ka:nεzε]);
 ['set:ε] 'seven', ['bɛ:nε] 'well', ['sɛmpɛrɛ] 'always', ['mɔ:v'ɛrɛ] 'move'.

- (5) Baunei. Outcomes of Latin -O:
 ['kumbiðɔ] 'invite.1SG';
 ['ap:ɔ] 'have.1SG', [aŋ'daŋdɔ] 'going';
 ['tɛndʒɔ] 'hold/have.1SG', ['dʒɛ:ɔ] 'I', ['kɔm:ɔ] 'now'.

Between the two mid vowels there is an important asymmetry though. While /ε/ never raises (e.g. [bɛr'βɛ:zɛ] 'sheep.PL' < VERVECES, ['ka:nɛzɛ] 'dogs' < CANES), posttonic /ɔ/ is raised provided a morphological and a phonological condition are satisfied. The first condition imposes that the vowel occurs within the mpl ending /-ɔs/:

(6) Baunei. Outcomes of Latin -OS:

- a. ['fid:ʒuzu] 'sons', ['miuzu] 'my.MPL', ['is:uzu] 'they.M', ['kustuzu] 'these.M', ['fiyuzu] 'figs';
- b. [tra'b:al:uz'u] 'works', [is'trandʒuzu] 'strangers', [a'r:a:ruzu] 'rare.MPL', ['fraŋkuzu] 'liras', ['bal:uzu] 'dances', ['a:yuzu] 'needles', ['ma:nuzu] 'hands';
- c. ['atrɔz'ɔ] 'others.MPL';
- d. ['lɔ:ɣɔz'ɔ] 'places', ['ɔs:ɔz'ɔ] 'bones', ['bɔ:nɔzɔ] 'good.MPL', ['ɔ:ɣlɔzɔ] 'eyes', ['njɛd:ɔzɔ] 'black.MPL', [kalid:ʒɔ'nɛd:ɔzɔ] 'puppies'.

As for the phonological condition, this imposes categorical raising whenever the ending is preceded by a (stressed) high vowel in the stem ((6a)), whereas raising is categorically blocked when the preceding vowel is mid ((6d)). After low vowels, raising appears to be in the process of lexical diffusion ((6b-c)).⁶

The phonological condition mirrored in (6a-d) perfectly parallels the one seen in the Shona data in (1). In this variety of central Sardinia, however, morphological factors constrain the process, as apparent from the contrast between (5) and (6). Note that there is no inherent property of the specific morphemes involved in (5) (1st singular or gerund verbal endings, or final /-ɔ/ – not a separate morpheme itself – in adverbs or pronouns) vs. (6) (/ -ɔs/ plurals) that could explain their selective effect on raising, not even the fact that they have a distinct phonological shape (-V vs. -VC). Rather, what matters is simply their belonging to different morphological classes. In other words, once the change was started, it spread gradually and, in some dialects, affected morphological classes one after the other rather than all at once.

This becomes apparent if we compare the Baunei facts in (4)-(6) with those from the dialect of Sènéghe, spoken near the western end of the transition area, in the province of Oristano. Sènéghe offers the mirror-image of Baunei in this respect, as /ɔ/ is never raised in plural inflection ((7)), whereas it does undergo raising elsewhere ((8)):

⁶ Earlier records for the same variety give a larger set of [-ɔs] plurals. WAGNER (1941:39) presents [-ɔs] as the default case after stressed ['a], and mentions [us 'kaɖ:us] 'the horses' as exceptional. Some decades later, in the texts transcribed in BLASCO FERRER (1988: 32ff), one

- (7) Sènéghe. Outcomes of Latin -OS:
 ['fi:ɣɔzɔ] 'figs', ['is:ɔzɔ] 'they', ['mu:rɔzɔ] 'walls', ['kus:ɔzɔ] 'those';
 ['b:al:ɔzɔ] 'dances', ['at:irɔzɔ] 'others.M';
 ['krɔ:βɔzɔ] 'ravens', ['nɔ̃ɔzɔ] 'new.MPL'; ['b:ɛl:ɔzɔ] 'nice.MPL, ['nɛm:ɔzɔ]
 'none' < NEMO+S;
- (8) Sènéghe. Outcomes of Latin -O:
 a. ['ɪntru] 'inside', ['isku] 'know.1SG', ['su'z'u] 'above', [is'ku:ðu] 'beat.1SG' (< EXCUTIO);
 b. [ɔ'k:an:u] 'this year', ['kandu] 'when', ['fat:su] 'do.1SG', ['papu] 'eat.1SG', ['nasku] '(I) am born';
 c. ['b:at:ɔrɔ] 'four';
 d. ['dɛ:ɔ] 'I', ['ɛl:ɔ] 'then', [ari'zɛ:ɔ] 'yesterday' (< HERI SERO), [sɛ:rɔ] 'evening', [a'p:ɛrdzɔ] 'open.1SG', [fɛrdzɔ] 'wound.1SG', [ɔt:ɔ] 'eight', [s'ɔm:ɔ] 'the house' (< IPSA DOMO), [m ar:ɛ'ɣɔ:ðɔ] 'remember.1SG', [mɔrdzɔ] 'die.1SG'.

Within this morphologically defined domain, which is specular with respect to the one allowing raising in Baunei, the same phonological condition as in Baunei obtains: raising applies categorically after high vowels ((8a)), it applies almost categorically after /a/ ((8b)),⁷ and is excluded after mid vowels ((8d)). Final /ɛ/, unlike in Baunei, is also affected by raising, only after high vowels though, never after /a/:⁸

- (9) Sènéghe. Outcomes of Latin -E:
 a. ['su:i] 'sow', ['num:ini] 'name', [iŋ'gũĩ] 'there', ['tu:i] 'you.SG' (-V epithesis); [su 'βi:yi] 'the pitch', ['piski] 'fish', [ar'βil:i] 'April', [el:iyi] 'ilex', [ɔm:ini] 'man';
 b. ['kra'ɛ] 'key', ['fa'ɛ] 'fava bean', ['kã'ẽ] 'dog', [sa:mbɛnɛ] 'blood', [kan'ta'ɛ] 'sing' (1st conj. inf.), [fa'ɛðɛ] 'do' (2nd conj. inf.), [kɔyi'nandɛ] 'cooking' (gerund);
 c. [sɛ:nɛɣɛ] 'Sènéghe', [bɛr:ɛ] 'boar', [su m:ɛ'z'ɛ] 'the month', [fɛndɛ] 'doing', [sɛ'z'ɛ] '(you) are', [sɛt:ɛ] 'seven', [dɛ:ɣɛ] 'ten', [krɔ:βɛ] 'basket', [bɔ'ɛ] 'ox' (pl. [bɔɛz'ɛ]), [i'n:ɔ:ɣɛ] 'here', [an'dʒɔ̃'ẽ] 'lamb' (< *AGNIONEM, pl. [an'dʒɔ̃'ẽz'ɛ]), [nɔ̃'ẽ] 'nine'.

⁷ I recorded only one exception, (8c), which could perhaps be explained phonologically: the numeral ['bat:ɔrɔ] 'four' (from underlying /'bat:ɔr/ < QUATT(U)OR. Although not containing the plural morpheme /-ɔs/, this lexical item patterns like plurals in that it ends in -VC (plus an epithetic

The two dialects considered, spoken at the eastern and western extremes of the (3a)/(3b) isogloss, thus, show a complex interaction of phonological, morphological and lexical conditions on raising. Clearly, the relevance of morphological classes (with some instances of /ɔ/ being affected and some other not, depending on which kind of morpheme they occur in) and the pattern of lexical diffusion seen in (6b-c) (and, perhaps, (8b-c)) prevent these systems from developing a fully-fledged VH. However, in some dialects spoken in the central portion of the transition area the phonological condition on raising broke through, overriding morphology and lexicon. As a consequence, in these dialects all outcomes of Latin (and Proto-Sardinian) final mid vowels /ɛ ɔ/ consistently harmonize to the root vowel to their left, independently of morphological structure. This VH system has been described for the dialect of Làconi (province of Nuoro) in LOPORCARO (2003b). In (10)-(11) it is exemplified with just two verb inflections in the present indicative tense, the first containing /ɔ/, the second /ɛ/:

(10) Làconi. Outcomes of Latin -O:

- | | | | | |
|----|---------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| a. | ['bu:ɔ] | 'drink.1SG' | [o't:ɕiu] | 'kill.1SG' |
| b. | ['a:ɔ] | 'have.1SG' | ['andu] | 'go.1SG' |
| c. | ['bɔ:ɔ] | 'want.1SG' | ['dɛp:ɔ] | 'must.1SG' |

(11) Làconi. Outcomes of Latin -E(C):

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| a. | ['sku:ðizi] | 'beat.2SG' | ['lid:ɕizi] | 'read.2SG' |
| b. | ['prandɕizi] | 'cry.2SG' | ['pra:ɕizi] | 'please.2SG' |
| c. | ['pɔ:ðɛzɛ] | 'can.2SG' | ['tɛn:ɛzɛ] | 'hold.2SG' |

Raising is constrained in the by now familiar way: it applies categorically after all vowels ((10a-b), (11a-b)) except /ɛ ɔ/ ((10c), (11c)). This dialect, thus, displays a vowel harmony which perfectly matches the Bantu type exemplified with Shona in (1).⁹

The dialect of Meana Sardo, spoken some *** km. north of Làconi, shows exactly the same pattern of vowel harmony, as shown by the following examples for final /ɛ/ ((12)) and /ɔ/ ((13)), which involve different morphological classes:

⁹ Actually, some of the Bantu languages, including Shona, display an asymmetrical VH in which /o/ does not pattern like /e/ but it is raised after all vowels except /o/. Other Bantu languages, however (cf. HYMAN 1999), do have symmetrical VH just like the one found in Laconese. Cf. LOPORCARO (2003b) for discussion of the literature previously available on this dialect. WAGNER (1939-40: 132), (1941: 39) identified the phonological condition on raising in both the dialects of Làconi and Baunei. However, he described raising in both dialects as though it were

(12) Meana Sardo. Outcomes of Latin -E(C):

a. ['fɔltɛzɛ]	'strong.PL'	b. ['om:inizi]	'men'
[an'dʒɔnɛ]	'lamb'	[fra'ði]	'brother'
[an'dʒɔnɛzɛ]	'lambs'	[fra'ðizi]	'brothers'
['kɔ:ɛɛ]	'cook.INF'	['sku:ðiri]	'beat.INF'
['krɛ:rɛ]	'believe.INF'	['lid:ʒiri]	'read.INF'
[i'n:ɔ:ɛ]	'here'	[iŋ'ku:i]	'there (near the hearer)'

(13) Meana Sardo. Outcomes of Latin -O(C):

a. ['bɔ:ʒɔ]	'want.1SG'	b. ['istu]	'stay.1SG'
[fɔ'ɛd:ɔ]	'speak.1SG'	['lid:ʒu]	'read.1SG'
[kɔ'ɛndɔ]	'cooking'	[pa'p:andɔ]	'eating'
['dɔm:ɔ]	'home'	['intru]	'inside'
['bɔ:nɔzɔ]	'good.MPL'	['an:uzu]	'years'***VERIF.

Summing up, the Sardinian examples just discussed show that rightward VH, in Eurasia, is not a structural peculiarity of, say, Turkic or Uralic languages. Rather, it also occurs within the Romance family, as the product of regular sound change. The only difference is one of time-depth and, consequently, geographic extension: since the Romance instances of rightward VH are relatively recent (Campidanian raising dates back from the Middle Ages) and specific developments of just a handful of central Sardinian dialects.

The same goes for the other Italo-Romance cases of rightward VH reported so far, such as those found in the dialect of Piverone (eastern Piedmont; cf. FLECHIA 1898, LOPORCARO 1997) or in some Lombard varieties spoken in Switzerland (cf. SALVIONI 1892-94, LOPORCARO 2002). In Piverone, endings containing a non-low vowel alternate between high and mid vowel, the former occurring after a stressed (root) high vowel ((14a)), the latter elsewhere ((14b)):

(14) a. ['bryti]	'ugly.FPL'	b. ['ære]	'threshing-floors'
['kruwi]	'raw.FPL'	['kɔtʃɛ]	'cooked.FPL'
['tʃitu]	'silent.MSG'	['mæro]	'thin.MSG'
['byru]	'butter'	['ɔsto]	'innkeeper'

In the dialect of Claro, as well as in several other Italo-Romance varieties of the Cantons Ticino and Grigioni, the outcomes of PRom /a/ in the final syllable fully harmonise to the stressed (root) vowel: (Standard Italian counterparts are added for comparison.)

(15) a. Claro	b. Standard Italian	
[fi'nisili]	<i>finiscila</i>	'stop.2SG-it.FSG'
[ˈpensele]	<i>pènsala</i>	'think.2SG-her/it.FSG'
[ˈsɛˈrɛɛ]	<i>sèrrala</i>	'shut.2SG-it.FSG'
[ˈtaˈjala]	<i>tàgliala</i>	'cut.2SG-it.FSG'
[ˈʃpɔstɔlo]	<i>spòstala</i>	'move.2SG-it.FSG'
[daʒˈgropolo]	---	'disentangle.2SG-it.FSG'
[ˈkuntulu]	<i>(rac)cóntala</i>	'tell.2SG-it.FSG'

One thing that emerges from the above discussion is that, when typologising over structural features displayed by natural languages, it is unwarranted to draw conclusions – for instance, conclusions on the distribution of a given feature across geographical and/or genetic groupings – exclusively on the basis of (a sample of) standard languages, or even of 'regional' varieties (whatever that means) since this introduces an historical bias into structural classification. As I have shown, a claim such as 'Romance languages do not display (rightward) VH' turns out to be false, as soon as we expand our database to encompass all phonological systems, including those documented by those languages we happen to call, for historical reasons, 'dialects'. Romance languages never display VH in their *standard* varieties, and this has to do with the (historical) fact that VH arose in just some rural dialects, with no prospects of colonial expansion. But, once we have realised this, then the difference between Laconese and, say, Turkish (and the Turkic languages) reduces to a mere historical accident. It would be unjustified to let this accident condition our typology. In other words, should a typologist come out with a chart of (rightward) VH in which south-western Europe appears as a blank, he or she would be incurring a serious mistake.

A further, more specific point suggested from the above discussion concerns the relationship of VH and morphological type. Since the languages of Eurasia that display VH also happen to be mostly languages of the agglutinative type, one might be tempted to conclude that occurrence of VH and the agglutinative type intrinsically correlate, for structural reasons: morphotactic transparency would be a favourable condition for VH to arise. In a stronger version, VH could be thought to even *imply* agglutinative morphology.¹⁰ The data in (10)-(15) show that the stronger claim is untenable: VH may just as well come into being within inflecting languages, and even in ones whose index of synthesis approaches the isolating type, as is the case for most Northern Italian dialects. For Piedmontese and Lombard, in the varieties spoken in Turin and Milan respectively, BERRUTO's (1990) text counts give an index of synthesis of 1.40 and 1.34 respectively. As for the weaker claim, well, it may be that there is some correlation. But a caveat must be kept in mind: if regarded, as they should, as linguistic systems in their own right, the dialects of Laconi (central Sardinian), Piverone (Piedmontese) and Claro (Alpine Lombard) count as three separate instances of rightward VH, on a par with Proto-Bantu, Proto-Uralic and Proto-Turkic. The (admittedly enormous) difference between the two sets, if we take both dialectology and reconstruction seriously, reduces to one in numbers of speakers, which is in turn a consequence of the difference in time-

depth, combined with radically different historical circumstances (migrations and expansion).

This automatically raises another question. The reason why data like (10)-(15) are invisible to large-scale typologising resides in the well-established procedure of sampling. Of course, sampling is necessary for both practical and conceptual reasons. Yet, it is a fact that, by this procedure, standard Italian (or French, or Spanish) might be considered to be representative for something like the 'Romance type', and be fed into a database from which, in turn, the conclusion can be drawn that 'Romance does not have VH'. Obviously, this is an example of the distortions sampling can generate. I have no solution to offer, but I think there is here a genuine problem for specialist of linguistic typology to solve.

3. Sardinian in a correlative typology of the Romance languages

Recent overviews on Romance languages in a typological perspective (e.g. BOSSONG 1998:1008, ILIESCU 2003:66) usually mention Karl-Hermann Körner's theory, put forward in the 1980s in several publications (KÖRNER 1981, 1982, 1983, 1987, 1988).¹¹ According to this theory, Romance languages divide into two subgroups that contrast with respect to a bundle of allegedly correlated features. In the original proposal, developed in KÖRNER (1981, 1982), the criterial property for this subdivision is the occurrence of one of the two complementary features exemplified in (16a-b):

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------------------|---------|
| (16) a. | <i>Pilar no vio *(a) Pedro</i> | Spanish |
| | Pilar NEG saw PREP Peter | |
| | 'Pilar didn't see Peter' | |
| b. | <i>Marie a mangé *(du) pain</i> | French |
| | Mary has eaten PART-ART bread | |
| | 'Mary has eaten (some) bread' | |

Spanish exemplifies the «*a*-Sprachen», characterised by the occurrence of prepositional direct object (henceforth **DO**) marking. French, on the other hand, exemplifies the «*de*-Sprachen», characterised by the lack of prepositional DO marking and by the occurrence of the partitive article. The explanation proposed for this complementarity refers to a more or less 'subject-like' nature of different classes of direct objects, depending on their position on the animacy hierarchy. A more general point is also made: in Spanish (and the *a*-languages) subject is less prominent than in French (and the *de*-languages).

In the style of the correlation-based approach to language typology, it is suggested that other morphosyntactic properties correlate with the criterial ones justifying the distinction. These are two syntactic features that are crucial for the differentiation of Romance languages: the absence vs. presence of past participle (henceforth **PtP**) agreement in perfective periphrastics, and the occurrence vs. non-occurrence of a partitive clitic (French *en*, Italian *ne* etc.). Both properties are specified positively for French and negatively for Spanish:

- (17) a. *la porte, Marie l'a ouverte/*ouvert*
the door Marie DO-CLIT opened.FSG/opened.MSG
'(the door) Mary has opened it'
- b. *amis, j'en ai beaucoup*
friends I PART-CLIT have many
'(friends) I have many of them'

The criterial properties and the proposed correlates are summarised in (18), along with the languages Körner ascribes to the two subgroups:

(18)	a. <i>a</i> -Sprachen	b. <i>de</i> -Sprachen
CRITERIAL PROPERTY:	prepositional DO marking	partitive article
CORRELATES:	NO	YES
PtP agreement	NO	YES
partitive clitic		
LANGUAGES:	Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Engadinian S. Italian dialects, Sardinian	French, Occitan, Catalan, Italian, N. Italian dialects

In later work on the topic, the list of correlative properties ascribed to the two subgroups of Romance languages in (18a) vs. (18b) is widened to include occurrence vs. non-occurrence of subject clitics, *se*-passive etc. However, since the two subgroups remain the same, I will concentrate on the syntactic features listed in (18), that provide sufficient empirical material for the present discussion. We will see that the correlations proposed do not stand closer inspection. The case of Sardinian is perhaps the most suitable to illustrate this point. According to Körner, Sardinian belongs to the *a*-Sprachen. As shown in (19), it displays prepositional DO marking and it lacks a partitive article:¹²

- (19) a. *appo iðu a ppeðru* Logudorese
appu iðu a ppeðru Campidanese
have.1SG seen PREP Peter
'I have seen Peter'
- b. *appo maniyaðu ßane/*(d)essu ßane e bbia* Logudorese
appu ßappau ßani/(d)essu ßani ffetti* Campidanese
have.1SG eaten bread/PART bread only
'I have eaten only (some) bread'

In keeping with his overall distinction, Körner also claims that Sardinian belongs with Spanish, as far as PtP agreement is concerned. In his view, it is not by chance that

«im (nuoresischen) Sardischen die Partizipveränderungsmöglichkeit viel eingeschränkter sind als im (Standard-)Italienischen. So liegt bei sard. *áere* anders als bei ital. *avere* auch dann Unveränderlichkeit vor, wenn das Objektspronomen vorangeht» (Körner 1982:329) [in

(nuorese) Sardinian the possibility for the participle to vary is much more constrained than in (Standard) Italian. Thus, with the Sardinian auxiliary *áere*, unlike with Italian *avere*, invariability is found even when there is a preceding DO (clitic) pronoun].

The examples quoted to illustrate this, drawn from PITTAU's (1972 [1980²]:129, §195) grammar of Nuorese, are reproduced in (20):

- (20) *mi/ti/noz/boz* *a* *bbiðu*
1SG/2SG/1PL/2PL DO-CLIT has seen
'(s/he) has seen me/thee/us/you'

From these data, KÖRNER (1982:329) infers «a gering[e] Neigung des Sardischen zur Partizipkonkordanz» [a limited propensity of Sardinian to past participle agreement], justifying its placement within the (18a) subgroup. He adds, however: «dort weitere Einzelheiten, auch zu einer Besonderheit des Objektpronomens der 3. Person» [the reader will find there (in PITTAU 1972, M.L.) further details concerning a peculiarity of the 3rd person pronominal object (clitic, M.L.)]. These 'details' are reported in (21):

- (21) a. (*a issa*) *l'* *appo* *iḏa/*iḏu* Nuorese/Logudorese
 (her) 3FSG DO-CLIT have.1SG seen.FSG/seen.MSG
 'I have seen her'
- b. (*a iṣsozo*) *loz* *appo* *iḏozo/*iḏu*
 (them.M) 3MPL DO-CLIT have.1SG seen.MPL/seen.MSG
 'I have seen them.M'
- c. (*a iṣsaṣa*) *laz* *appo* *iḏaza/*iḏu*
 (them.F) 3FPL DO-CLIT have.1SG seen.MPL/seen.MSG
 'I have seen them.F'

With 3rd person direct object clitics PtP agreement is categorical in all varieties of Sardinian, just like in Italian, French, Occitan or (standard) Catalan.¹³ Comparison of Sardinian with standard Italian ((22)) shows that the contrast is the same structurally, as it cuts across verb persons in precisely the same way.

- (22) Agreement with direct object pronominal clitics:

	Standard Italian	Sardinian
1st person	\pm	-
2nd person	\pm	-
3rd person	+	+

The only difference resides in the concrete implementation of this contrast: in Italian, agreement is obligatory with 3rd person clitics and optional with 1st and 2nd person clitics, while in Sardinian 1st and 2nd person clitics cannot trigger agreement at all, whereas agreement with 3rd person is obligatory.¹⁴

Thus, Sardinian actually does have PtP agreement with object clitics, unlike Spanish and, as a consequence, Kørner's correlations begin to vacillate. Their shakiness becomes more evident as we move on to consider another of the features involved, viz. the occurrence vs. non-occurrence of a partitive clitic. Here the actual

data, not only from Sardinian but from a number of Romance varieties, disconfirm the correlations in (18). Sardinian ((23a)) has a partitive clitic, unlike predicted by (18), as do Engadinian ((23b); cf. Ganzoni 1983:69), and southern Italian dialects, exemplified with Neapolitan in (23b) and Sicilian in (23c):

- (23) a. (*féminaza*) *no nn'* *appo iðu* Sardinian
 (women) NEG PART-CLIT have.1SG seen.MSG
 '(women) I haven't seen any'
- b. (*dals cudeschs*) *quants and avais tut?* Engadinian
 (of books) how many PART-CLIT have.2PL taken.MSG
 '(books) how many (of them) have you taken'
- c. (*libbrə*)*kwandə n avitə pəʎʎatə* Neapolitan
 (books) how many PART-CLIT have.2PL taken.MSG
 '(books) how many (of them) have you taken'
- d. (*libbri*) *kwandɪ nni pəʃʃastɪ* Sicilian
 (books) how many PART-CLIT took.2PL
 '(books) how many (of them) have you taken'

All of these varieties belong in the (18a) category of *a*-languages, and are thus predicted not to possess a partitive clitic, contrary to fact. Note that, for Engadinian, the features which are relevant for the proposed correlations are explicitly discussed by Körner. For instance, Engadinian has prepositional DO marking, as shown in (24) (cf. ROEGIST 1979, STIMM 1986, 1987, LIVER 1999:158-9):

- (24) a. *hest tü vis al non?*
 have you seen PREP-the grandpa?
 'have you seen grandpa?'
Annina salüdaa l' ami da Tumasch
 Annina greets PREP the friend of Tom
 'Annina greets Tom's friend'

Note however that Engadinian has PtP agreement, again, in contradiction with its belonging to the *a*-languages group (data from GANZONI 1983:174):

- (25) a. (*la fnestra*) *Gian till' ha serrada*
 (the window) G. DO-3FSG-CLIT has closed.3FSG
 '(the window) G. has closed it'
- b. (*a nus*) *tü ans hast invidats*
 (to us) you DO-1PL-CLIT have invited
 '(a noi) you have invited us'

As for Neapolitan and Sicilian, included in (23) as representatives of southern Italian dialects, they both have (and always had) a partitive clitic (cf. LA FAUCI 1993 on Old Sicilian) but they part ways as far as PtP agreement is concerned:

- (26) (*a mmaría*) *l'aju vistu spissu* Sicilian
 (PREP Mary) DO-3FSG-CLIT have.1SG seen.MSG often

- (27) *aġġə kəttə /*kwəttə a pastə* Neapolitan
have.1SG cooked.FSG /cooked.MSG the pasta
'I have cooked pasta'
- aġġə rəttə /*ruttə a bbutteʎʎə*
have.1SG broken.FSG /broken.MSG the bottle
'I have broken the bottle'

While Sicilian has lost PtP agreement altogether, like Spanish, even with DO clitics ((26)), Neapolitan has preserved agreement even with lexical direct objects ((27)), where most Romance varieties have lost it since the Middle Ages.

Table (28) sums up the results of the present discussion:

(28)	Fre	Spa	Engad	Sardin	Neapol	Sicil
prepositional DO marking	–	+	+	+	+	+
partitive article	+	–	–	–	–	–
PtP agreement	+	–	+	+	+	–
partitive clitic	+	–	+	+	+	+

The neat contrast exemplified by French and Spanish for the four syntactic features considered actually dissolves into gradual parametric variation as soon as Sardinian and the other «*a*-languages» are examined more carefully. The only feature for which the contrast seems to resist is the occurrence vs. non-occurrence of the partitive article. However, a further expansion of the database shows that there are Romance varieties that are neither *a*- nor *de*-languages. Friulian is a case in point:¹⁵

- (29) a. *kwalkidun al a kopás / kopá i servidors*
somebody SUBJ-CLIT.3MSG has killed.MPL/killed.MSG the servants
'somebody killed the servants'
- b. *(i libris) iù vin lès /*lèt*
(the books) OBJ-CLIT.3MPL have.1PL read.MPL /read.MSG
'(the books) we read them'
- c. *(stelis) nd' ai viodût /viodudis tantis*
(stars) OBJ-CLIT.3MPL have.1SG seen.MSG /seen.FPL many
'(stars) I have seen many of them'
- d. *li ostarîis dulá ke si bevèva buna rabuèla*
the taverns where COMP one drank good ribolla (a wine sort)
'the taverns where one drank good ribolla'

(29a) shows that Friulian has no prepositional DO marking and has optional PtP agreement even with lexical DOs, while with DO clitics PtP agreement is categorical ((29b)). As shown in (29c), Friulian also has a partitive object clitic but, crucially, it does not need a partitive article, unlike French, to introduce an indefinite DO like 'good wine' in (29d).¹⁶

¹⁵ Data are from HAIMAN and BENINCÀ (1992:223) ((29a)), BENINCÀ and VANELLI (1984:188-189) ((29b-c)) and FRAU (1984:231) ((29d)).

¹⁶ In prescriptive grammars of Friulian the partitive article is proscribed as italianism.

Also concerning *a*-languages and the partitive article, anyway, a word of caution is in order. FORMENTIN (2005) in fact shows that a partitive article occurs in Old Neapolitan texts, although it later disappeared in that variety (unlike in French). This suggests that the diachronic dimension should be incorporated into the picture: Old Spanish, for instance, used to have both PtP agreement and a partitive clitic, which were subsequently lost.

In sum, the syntactic parameters involved in the correlations in (18) are actually much more complicated than implied by the oversimplified bipartition *a*-vs. *de*-languages. Having recognised this does by no means imply that we should renounce to sensible generalisations over the features at issue in a typological perspective. Quite on the contrary, a full appreciation of the real complexity of syntactic variation in space and time in the Romance-speaking world paves the way for interesting typological insights, as is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the study of PtP agreement. In fact, behind the plus-signs in (28) a much more complicate story hides, which is summarised in (30):¹⁷

(30) Past participle agreement in Romance:

		a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	g.
i.	DO clitic (<i>la mela</i>) <i>Gianni l'ha mangiata</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	–
ii.	direct transitive reflexives <i>Maria si è lavata</i>	+	+	+	+	+	–	–
iii.	indirect unergative reflexives <i>Maria si è risposta da sola</i>	+	+	+	+	–	–	–
iv.	indirect transitive reflexives <i>Maria si è lavata le mani</i> (subj.)	+	+	+	–	–	–	–
v.	indirect transitive reflexives <i>Maria si è lavate le mani</i> (DO)	+	+	–	–	–	–	–
vi.	transitives (DO) <i>Maria ha mangiato la mela</i>	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
vii.	transitives/unergatives (subj.) <i>Maria ha mangiato (la mela)</i>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

(30a): many southern Italian dialects (e.g. Neapolitan)

(30b): Standard Italian

(30c): Milanese, Romanesco

(30d): Sardinian, Engadinian, Valsuganotto, Alguerés

(30e): French, Grizzanese (Emilian), Perginese (Trentino)

-
- b. 'you have seen some girls'
tu às passât agn
 you have.2SG spent.MSG years
 'you have spent some years'

adding that «non è consigliabile usare le preposizioni articolate *dai, des* con valore partitivo, come in italiano (*tu às viodudis des fantàtis; tu às passât dai agn*)» [it is not advisable to use prepositions plus definite article (*dai, des*) with partitive function, like in Italian]. Be that as it may, it is a fact that Friulian lacks both a prepositional DO and a (*categorical* use of the) partitive

- (30f): Surmiran, Ampezzano (and most of Ladino and northern Veneto)
 (30g): Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Sicilian

This scale, built through dialect comparison in LOPORCARO (1998), also mirrors, to an extent, the steps of the diachronic development that Romance languages went through since the Middle Ages. In Proto-Romance, agreement was found in all the contexts listed in (30) and then it progressively faded, at a different pace in the individual languages. Note first that varieties purported to be of the same 'type' according to the bipartition in (18a-b) are actually dispersed over the whole scale: Italian and French are both *de*-languages, but the former preserves PtP better than the latter ((30b) vs. (30e)). As for *a*-languages, while Sicilian patterns with Spanish ((30g)), Neapolitan is most conservative ((30a)) and Sardinian occupies an in-between position ((30d)), as shown by the data in (31): (Examples are Logudorese, but the syntactic working of PtP agreement is homogeneous all over Sardinian.)

- (31) a. *Maria es paltiða*
 Mary is left.FSG
 'Mary left'
- b. *Maria z es samunaða*
 Mary REFL-CLIT is washed.FSG
 'Mary washed herself'
- c. *Maria z er risposta*
 Mary REFL-CLIT is answered.FSG
 'Mary answered herself'
- d. *Maria z a ssamunaðu zal manos*
 Mary REFL-CLIT has washed.MSG the hands
 'Mary washed her hands'
- e. *Maria a mmanigaðu (za minestra)*
 Mary has eaten.MSG (the soup)
 'Mary ate the soup'

This fine-grained picture of parametric variation has major consequences for the characterisation of Romance languages in terms of the typology of alignment systems. While handbooks depict Romance as a whole as a straightforward example of accusative/nominative alignment, on a par with Latin, work in Relational Grammar, starting with the seminal monograph by LA FAUCI (1988), has shown that in Proto-Romance a radical conflict arose between the alignment properties encoded by different syntactic features. While cross-referencing on finite verbs remained consistently accusative/nominative (a Latin inheritance), many other syntactic innovations which differentiated Proto-Romance from Latin displayed active/inactive alignment, as a subset of intransitive subjects patterned with DOs rather than with transitive subjects. The list of these syntactic properties includes auxiliary selection, PtP agreement, the syntax of the partitive clitic, causative constructions, impersonals, participial clauses, etc.

While this conflict in alignment can be reconstructed for Proto-Romance, the documented history of Romance languages is characterised by a drift towards restoration of the accusative/nominative contrast. The gradual restriction of PrP

of the gradual retreat of active/inactive alignment throughout Romance.¹⁸ Within this typological scenario, correlations between many of the features discussed so far find a natural place. The rise of overt morphological markers for DOs, for instance, is another manifestation of the shift back to accusative/nominative alignment (LA FAUCI 1991, ZAMBONI 2000:102-3). As such, it can cooccur with the loss of PtP agreement, like in Spanish, although the evidence from Sardinian (and Engadinian, southern Italian dialects etc.) shows that it need not be so.¹⁹

The point of method this discussion suggests closely parallels the one of §2. The amount of structural variation found across Romance languages is dramatically underrepresented in samples which reduce to only the major standard languages. The argument presented here, starting from Sardinian and gradually encompassing other Romance varieties, shows that any attempt at a typology of Romance is likely to be ill-founded, if it fails to take seriously into account the enormous treasure of structural diversity deposited in dialect variation.

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¹⁸ This point is made by RAMAT (1988:169-170), who refers to LA FAUCI's (1988) reconstruction of the diachronic development of alignment in Romance. This seems however to have been overlooked by specialists in typological research on Romance.

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