1 Overview

This talk will:

§2.1. Introduce the Mandinka affixal/enclitic article *-o*

§2.2. Outline my assumptions about basic word order facts in the Mandinka DP

§2.3/§3. Suggest that when the affixal article is absent, the DP layer is not projected (in line with assumptions about affixal article languages in general (Talić (2017) among others)).

§3.2. Discuss two environments in which affixal articles are predicted to be able to be dropped, but which do not allow dropping in Mandinka.

§3.2.1. Weak definites

§3.2.2. Superlatives

I will argue that there are independent reasons why Mandinka cannot drop the article in these environments, and must instead project DP.

§3.3. Suggest the loss of PL morphology indicates that DP has not been projected.

§4. Concludes.

2 The Mandinka DP & *-o*

2.1 *-o* and its properties

A property of all noun phrases in Mandinka is that their bare/citation form obligatorily ends in *-o*. (1)-(4) show human and non-human common nouns ending in *-o*, and (5)-(8) show derived nouns ending in *-o*.

(1)	*kambanoo*	(3)	*beroo*	(5)	*tiɲaroo*	(7)	*kiŋo*
	kambani-**o**		beri-**o**		tiɲa-ri-**o**		kiŋ-**o**
	boy-o		stone-o		destroy-NMLZ-o		bite-o
	'boy'		'stone'		'destruction'		'biting/bite (n)'

(2)	*kewoo*	(4)	*buŋo*	(6)	*keloo*	(8)	*kuuntiroo*
	ke-**woo**		buŋ-**o**		kele-**o**		kuuntu-ri-**o**
	man-o		house-o		fight-o		cut-NMLZ-o
	'man'		'house'		'fighting' (n)		'cut (n)'

When a noun is modified, *-o* occurs on the final element in the noun phrase.

(9)	buŋ fiŋ-**o**	(10)	kitabu koto-**o**	(11)	muru ɲiiɲaa koto fiŋ-**o**
	stone black-o		book old-o		knife beautiful old black-o
	'black stone'		'old book'		'beautiful old black knife'

Following Creissles (to appear), I characterize *-o* as a default affixal determiner that carries no particular semantic specification. For example, it occurs on nouns in definite (12), indefinite (13), generic (14), mass (15), and vocative (16) contexts.

(12) Til-**oo** funti-ta   bii
     sun-o   out-PERF today
     'The sun is out today.'

> **Definite**: Unique referent

(13) moo   ɗamaa be   buŋo kono.
     person many   LOC house in.

     Ke-w**o** niŋ musu-**o**   be donkiloo kaŋ
     man-o   and woman-o   dance

     'Many people are in the house. A man and a woman are dancing.

> **Indefinite**: Partitive Specificity

(14) wulu-**o**-lu ka   wuri nii   koŋkoo be   i   la
     dog-o-PL HAB bark when hunger ASP 3.PL OBL
     'Dogs bark when they are hungry.'

> **Generic interpretations**

(15) Fatu laafi-ta   keke-**o** la
     Fatu like-PERF milk-o OBL
     'Fatu likes milk.'

> **Mass nouns**

(16) Suŋkutu-**o**, í   lamoyi nte   la!
     girl-o,   2.SG listen 1.SG OBL
     'Girl, listen to me!'

> **Vocatives**

2.2   The internal structure of Mandinka DPs

Basic word order in Mandinka DPs:

(Demonstrative) N (A) (Num) D

This is a common word order that can be derived by NP movement with successive pied-piping of the modifiers to Spec-DP, on the assumption that the demonstrative is a DP adjunct (Bernstein, 1991).

(17)   a. niŋ beroo
       this stone.D
       'this stone'

b. [tree diagram: DP → DemP (*niŋ* / *this*) and DP; DP → nP (*beri* / *stone*) and D'; D' → D (*-o*) and NumP; NumP → Num and nP (trace t), with movement arrow from t to nP]
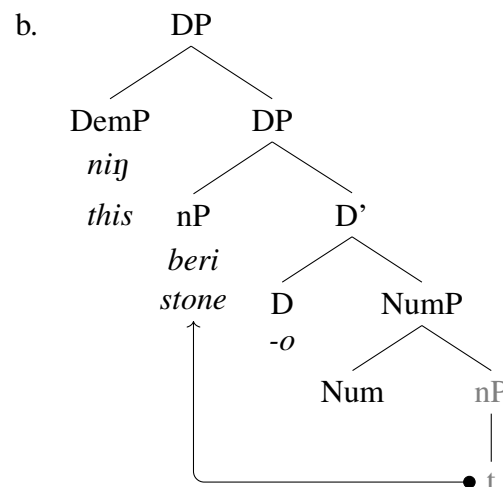
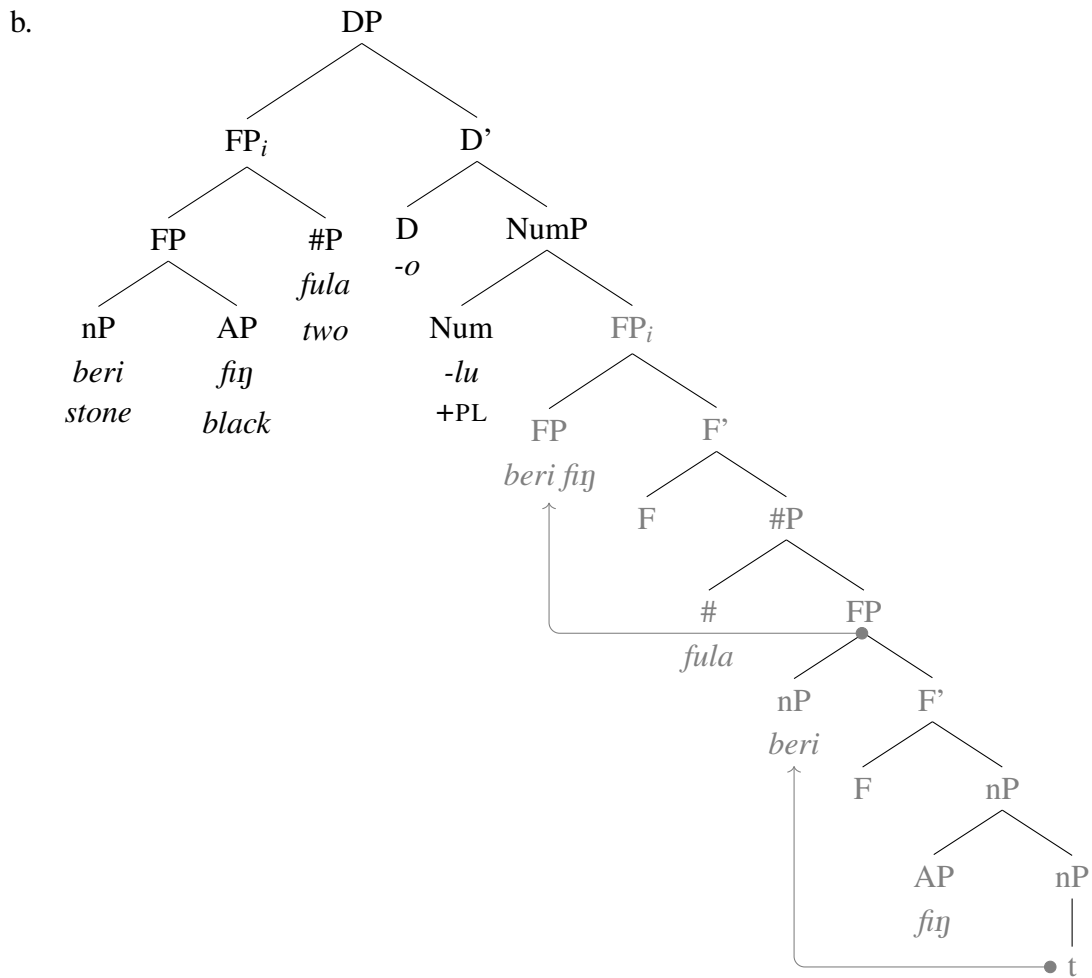(18) a. beri fiŋo
          stone black.D
          'a/the black stone'

b.

```
                              DP
                     ┌─────────┴─────────┐
                    FPᵢ                  D'
              ┌──────┴──────┐       ┌─────┴─────┐
             nP            AP       D          NumP
            beri          fiŋ      -o       ┌────┴────┐
            stone         black            Num       FPᵢ
                                       ┌────┴────┐
                                      nP        F'
                                      beri   ┌───┴───┐
                                             F      nP
                                          ┌───┴───┐
                                         AP      nP
                                         fiŋ      │
                                                  t
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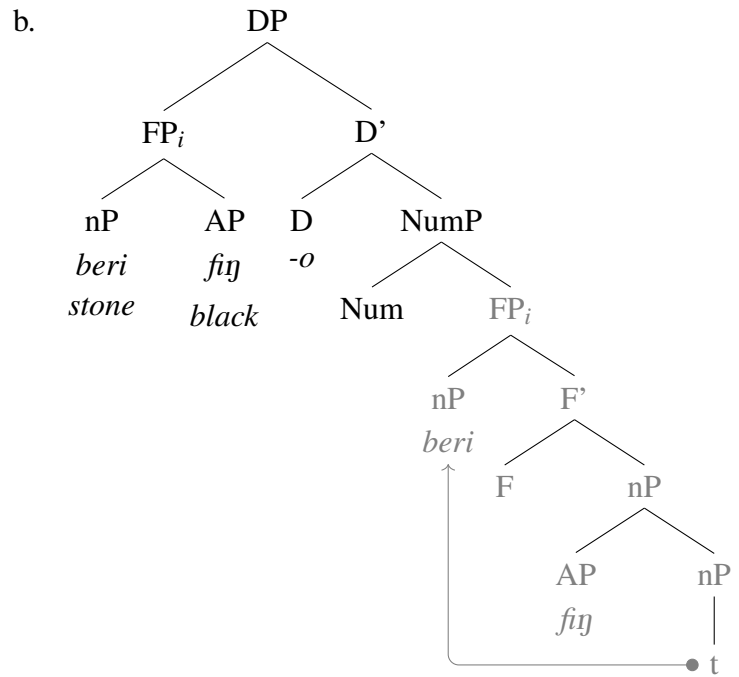
(19) a. beri fiŋ fulo-lu
          stone black two.D-PL
          'the two black stones'

b.

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                                   DP
                        ┌──────────┴──────────┐
                       FPᵢ                    D'
                 ┌──────┴──────┐         ┌─────┴─────┐
                FP            #P          D         NumP
           ┌─────┴─────┐     fula        -o    ┌─────┴─────┐
          nP          AP     two             Num          FPᵢ
          beri        fiŋ                     -lu      ┌────┴────┐
          stone       black                  +PL      FP       F'
                                                  beri fiŋ  ┌───┴───┐
                                                            F      #P
                                                               ┌────┴────┐
                                                               #        FP
                                                              fula   ┌───┴───┐
                                                                    nP      F'
                                                                    beri ┌───┴───┐
                                                                         F      nP
                                                                            ┌────┴────┐
                                                                           AP        nP
                                                                           fiŋ        │
                                                                                      t
```

2.3   Sometimes *-o* is optional

In almost all of the data presented so far, *-o* has been obligatory but there are contexts in which *-o* is optional: with **numerals** and **quantifiers**. Note that the loss of *-o* coincides with the loss of PL marking (*-lu*) too.

(20)   kitabu fula ∅
      book   two
      'two books'

(21)   beri   fiŋ   ∅ ʤamaa
      stone black   many
      'many black stones'

When *-o* does appear in these contexts, it is *not* semantically inert - it supplies definiteness.

(22)   kitabu ful**o**-lu
      book   two.D-PL

      '**the** two books/both books'

(23)   a.   beri   ʤamaa fiŋ**o**-lu
          stone many   black.D-PL
          '**the** many black stones'

      b.   beri   fiŋ**o**-lu   ʤamaa
          stone black-D-PL many
          'many of **the** black stones'

      c.   beri ʤamaa(**o**-lu)
          stone many(D-PL)

          '(**the**) many stones'

This is just like the French determiner (which is a free standing determiner) - it too only contributes definiteness in the same optional environments.

(24)   J'aime   **les** livres
      1.SG.like D   books
      'I like books.'

(25)   J'aime   ∅ deux livres
      1.SG.like   two   books
      'I like two books.'

(26)   J'aime   **les** deux livres
      1.SG.like D   two   books
      'I like **the** two books.'

2.4   French *v* Mandinka: two questions about ∅

1. What is ∅?

   - An empty D...?
   - The absence of D...?

2. Is ∅ the same in both languages? Are Mandinka and French noun phrases the same at the syntactic level in (21) and (26)?

The following discussion makes use of an important generalization, from Bošković (2008, 2012).
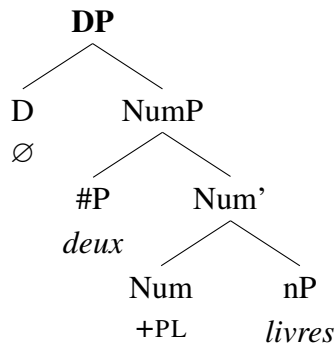
> ⇛ Languages with free standing definite articles (e.g. French) always project DP (**DP languages**).
>
> ⇛ Languages that lack articles entirely never project as high as DP (**NP languages**).
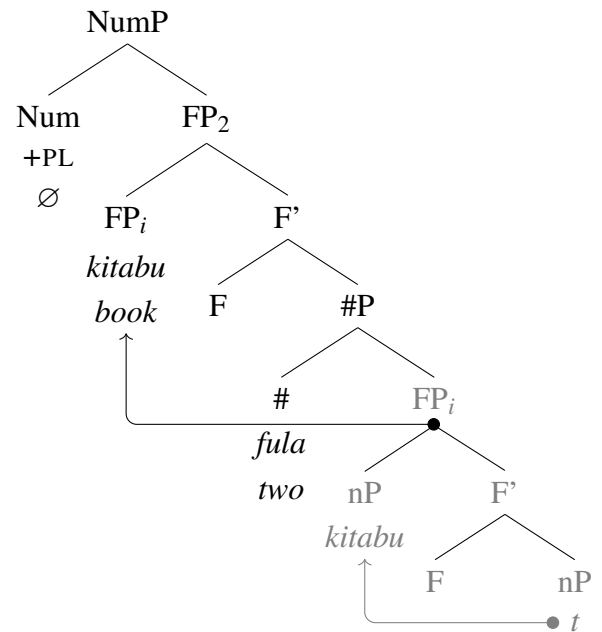
Talić (2017), Despić (2011) have suggested that affixal article languages sometimes behave like DP languages, and sometimes like NP languages.

   ⇛   Affixal article languages may not project DP in the absence of the article.

(27) French

DP
- D
  - ∅
- NumP
  - #P
    - *deux*
  - Num'
    - Num
      - +PL
    - nP
      - *livres*

(28) Mandinka

NumP
- Num
  - +PL
  - ∅
- FP$_2$
  - FP$_i$
    - *kitabu*
    - *book*
  - F'
    - F
    - #P
      - #
        - *fula*
        - *two*
      - FP$_i$
        - nP
          - *kitabu*
        - F'
          - F
          - nP
            - *t*

- Where FP$_2$ is is left vague - it could be low as in (29), it could be in some non-DP FP above NumP, it could be in Spec-NumP. Without evidence for other FPs, I leave it low.

- It is a hypothesis of affixal article languages that DP is not projected in (28). We must try to determine whether or not DP is present through a number of diagnostics.

3   Testing for DP structure

Work on affixal article languages (see Talić (2017) and the references therein) has identified various diagnostics showing the omission of an affixal definite article indicating the loss of the DP projection. These include:

⇛ Exhaustivity presupposition

⇛ Weak definites

⇛ Interpretation of superlatives

Only the first of these diagnostics will affirm the absence of DP in Mandinka.

3.1   Exhaustivity presupposition

Possessors may induce an exhaustivity presupposition only in DP languages (Bošković 2012). Both (29) and (30) may have the presupposition that the speaker has exactly three sweaters.

(29) *His three sweaters*

(30) *Mes trois pulls*

This is in contrast to articleless languages, like Mandarin Chinese, which never have an exhaustivity presupposition.

(31)   Zhangsan de   [san   jian   maoxianyi]   ✗ No exhaustivity
         Zhangsan DE.POSS three.CL sweater
         'Zhangsan's three sweaters.'

Bulgarian is an affixal article language. When the article is present, so is the exhaustivity presupposition (32); when the article is absent, so is the exhaustivity presupposition (33).

(32)   negovi-**te** tri   pulovera sa na legloto   ✓ Exhaustivity
        his.the   three sweaters are on bed.the
        'His three sweaters are on the bed.'

(33)   negovi tri   pulovera sa na legloto   ✗ No exhaustivity
        his   three sweaters are on bed.the
        'His three sweaters are on the bed.'

Bošković (2012), following Lyons (1999), suggests that it is the DP layer that contributes the exhaustivity presupposition (note it cannot be simply the presence *vs* absence of an article (29)/(30) *vs* (31)).

   ⇒   Affixal article languages project DP when the article is present, but lack DP when the article is absent. Only when the article is absent does the exhaustivity presupposition disappear.

Mandinka shows the same split as Bulgarian. When *-o* is used on a possessed NP, there is an exhaustivity presupposition. When *-o* is absent, there is no such presupposition available.

(34)   a. n   na   kitabu wule ful**o**-lu boj-ta   ✓ Exhaustivity
           1.SG POSS book red two.**D** fall   PERF
           'My two red books fell.'
        b. n   na   foto taŋ**o** boj-ta   ✓ Exhaustivity
           1.SG POSS photo ten.**D** fall-PERF
           'My ten photos fell.'

(35)   a. n   na   kitabu wule fula boj-ta   ✗ No exhaustivity
           1.SG POSS book red two fall   PERF
           'My two red books fell.'
        b. n   na   foto taŋ boj-ta   ✗ No exhaustivity
           1.SG POSS photo ten fall-PERF
           'My ten photos fell.' (If this was said, it would be assumed that you had more than 10 photos)

If the difference between (34) and (35) is not superficial but structural, (35) should lack a DP projection.

3.2   Other tests

I discuss two other diagnostics in Talić (2017) to determine whether or not the DP layer is present. Neither of them are applicable to Mandinka for independent reasons.

3.2.1   Weak definites

Talić shows that Icelandic, Bulgarian and Romanian (all affixal article languages) can omit their definite article in weak definites.

(36) *Icelandic*
Hann fór út í búð
he   went out in store

'He went to the store.'

(37) *Bulgarian*
(Toj) slusha radio
(he) listens radio

'He listens to the radio'

(38) *Romanian*
S-a   dus la pravalie
REFL-has went to store.INDEF

'He went to the store.'

The idea is that weak definites constitute a context in which the definite article is not providing its proto-typical interpretation (uniqueness/familiarity).

⇒ Affixal article languages can omit the DP layer when the definite article is not required for semantic interpretation.

Now consider Mandinka:

(39) Musa taa-ta   lopitaan**oo**/*lopitaani to
Musa go-PERF hospital.D/hospital   to
'Musa went to the hospital'

(40) Musa taa-ta   bitik**oo**/*bitiki to
Musa go-PERF store.D/store   to
'Musa went to the store.'

⇒ Mandinka cannot omit its article in weak definites. **Why not?**

I suggest that this is because Mandinka's article differs from the those of the affixal article languages in Talić (Romanian, Icelandic, Bulgarian) in being **default/expletive**.

⮩ In (36)-(38) the presence of the article is expendable - its presence would not provide its prototypical meaning and we can omit it (by not projecting to DP).

⮩ In (39) and (40), the article's prototypical meaning is not lost in the weak definite, since it does not provide definiteness in this context anyway.

⮩ Mandinka thus provides support for the view that an affixal article can only be dropped if (i) its presence *could* supply semantic information and (ii) that semantic information is not required.

3.2.2 Superlatives

The superlative is an environment in which a definite article is redundant. That is, *the* in (41) does not contribute uniqueness, but rather the superlative morphology *-est* is doing this instead (Heim, 1999).

(41) The rich*est* woman

Talić shows that some affixal article languages can omit the article in superlatives, which then has effects on the interpretation of the superlative construction.

> **The details...**
>
> (42) is an English superlative and it allows an **REF** interpretation (relative reading with external focus) but not an **RIF** interpretation (relative reading with internal focus). This is claimed to be true of all languages with free standing articles (DP languages).
>
> (42)   *John has the best albums by U2*
>   'John has better albums by U2 than anyone else does' (REF)
>   # 'John has better albums by U2 than any other band' (RIF)
>
> Languages without articles allow the **RIF** interpretation in addition to the **REF** interpretation. Affixal article languages may retain the article, in which case they only allow the **REF** interpretation, or drop the article, in which case they also allow the **RIF** interpretation too.

Mandinka does not seem to allow omission of the affixal article in superlatives. Crucially, this is even true with numerals where *-o* does supply definiteness.

(43)   Musa je   buŋ   koto-maa ful**o**-lu/*fula saŋ
        Musa ASP house old-SUPL two.D-PL/two buy

        'Musa bought the two oldest houses.'

This cannot be explained in the same way as weak definites - here *-o* does have semantic information to supply and so it should be redundant - therefore expendable - in (43). **Why isn't it?**

(43) is ambiguous between the superlative and the comparative.

(44)   Musa je   buŋ   koto-maa fulo-lu   saŋ
        Musa ASP house old-COMP two.D-PL buy
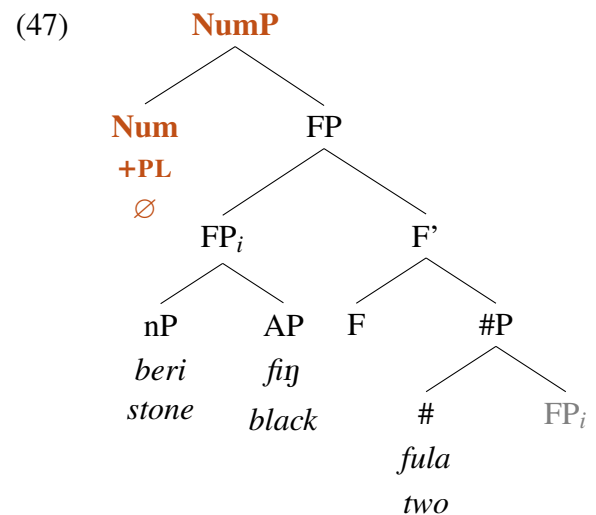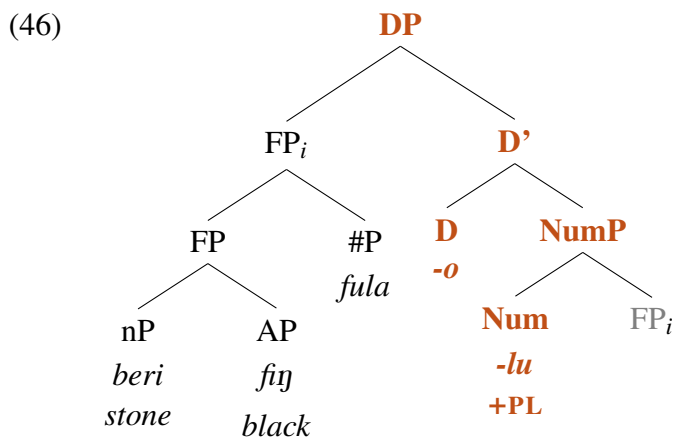
        'Musa bought the two **older** houses.'

➩ *-maa* is not superlative in the same sense as *-est* and is not providing the definiteness/uniqueness in (43), *-o* is;

➩ *-o* can then never be omitted in the superlative, since its definiteness is required for the superlative interpretation;

➩ If this is correct, it predicts *-o* should be optional on the comparative interpretation:

(45)   Musa je   buŋ   koto-maa fula saŋ
        Musa ASP house old-COMP two buy

        'Musa bought two **older** houses.'

3.3   *-o* and *-lu*

Finally, recall that when *-o* is optional, its absence co-occurs with the absence of plural morphology too. This might be another indication that the absence of *-o* is the absence of DP.

(46)

```
                    DP
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
        FP_i                    D'
     ┌────┴────┐         ┌───────┴───────┐
    FP        #P        D              NumP
 ┌───┴───┐   fula      -o          ┌─────┴─────┐
 nP      AP                      Num          FP_i
 beri    fiŋ                     -lu
 stone   black                   +PL
```

(47)

```
                 NumP
          ┌────────┴────────┐
        Num                 FP
        +PL          ┌───────┴───────┐
         ∅          FP_i            F'
                 ┌───┴───┐      ┌────┴────┐
                nP      AP     F         #P
                beri    fiŋ         ┌─────┴─────┐
                stone   black      #          FP_i
                                  fula
                                  two
```

A few ways the absence of PL morphology could be analysed:

1. Licensing of the PL suffix involves Num-D movement. If there's no D, Num has nothing to affix to and the exponent is unpronounced.

2. PL -*lu* is not actually a Num head, but there is a D.SG exponent -*o* and a D.PL exponent -OLU (see Ari Goertzel's talk at 3:45 today for more on this!).

4   Conclusion

- The Mandinka affixal article differs from other affixal article languages in the literature in being default/expletive.

- Despite this, I suggested that it still patterns with affixal article languages in the right contexts - namely when it supplies definiteness.

  - When -*o* is absent, the DP layer is not projected.
  - The lack of an exhaustivity presupposition when the affixal article is omitted implies the absence of the DP projection.
  - I suggested that the absence of PL morphology might also imply the absence of the DP layer.
  - The presence of -*o*/DP in weak definites and superlatives was shown to be required for independent reasons in Mandinka.

5   References

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