When your associates tag along: Associative plurality in Rural Iberian Spanish proper names

1 INTRODUCTION. Languages oftentimes distinguish between additive and associative plurals. The former denote a non-atomic set of individuals that all bear the relevant property (Link 1983, Chierchia 1998), whereas the latter refers to a group of individuals all associated with a single individual (the *focus*) who bears the relevant property (Daniel & Moravcsik 2013). The distinction may be morphologically marked, as in Hungarian (Corbett 2000), or not as in Turkish (Görgülü 2011). Based on a sample of 97 languages, Lewis (2021, 2023) observes that the lack of dedicated morphological markedness for associative plurals correlates with a lack of free-standing definite articles. This (i) predicts the Hungarian-Turkish split, and (ii) rules out languages that have definite articles but make no morphological distinction between additive and associative plural-marking. However, based on new data from 10 speakers, we **show that Rural Iberian Spanish (RIS), as spoken at least in Valladolid and Cuenca, is such a language:** a plural-marked first name with a plural definite article admits an associative reading (1).

(1) [Román, his wife María, and their kids are at the front door]
Llegaron lo-s Roman-es.
arrived.3PL the-PL Román-PL
'Román & his associates (i.e. his family) arrived.' #'More than one person named Román arrived.'

We show that ① the RIS pattern is a genuine counterexample to Lewis's generalization, and ② associative plural-marking is asymmetric between first and last names, in that the latter cannot be plural-marked (as in General Spanish, Camacho 2021).**We propose that ① is possible because names, unlike common count nouns, are singleton-denoting, which allows them to pattern counter to Lewis' generalization. We derive ② from a syntactic difference between first and last names, building on Camacho (2021).**

2 DATA. The associative plural interpretation is restricted to proper names: (1) vs. (2). Differential object marking is not enough to induce an associative interpretation; the plural-marked definite determiner is obligatory: (3). It can also occur with quantificational determiners such as *todos* 'all': (4).

(2) # Llegaron lo-s estudiant-es.
arrived.3PL the-PL student-PL
'The student & his associates arrived.'

(3) Vimos a #(lo-s) Roman-es allí
saw.1PL DOM the-PL Román-PL there
'We saw Román & his associates there'

(4) Todo-s lo-s Roman-es están aquí
all-PL the-PL Román-PL are here
'Román & all of his associates are here'

Plural-marked first names can appear as the *of*- complement in partitive constructions (5), and cannot serve as the antecedent of a sluiced *wh*-phrase (6). Both of these facts indicate that syntactic definiteness, as marked by the definite article, is obligatory (Jackendoff 1977, Chung et al. 1995 respectively). The associative interpretation is unavailable when the name is directly modified by cardinal-denoting expressions: (7). Only the additive interpretation (i.e. the '{2/ many} people whose name is Román') is available. High NP modifiers such as size adjectives (Scott 2002, Cinque 2010) can modify the name without blocking the associative reading. The adjective restricts the members of the group to only those who are tall, which need not include the focus: (8).

(5) Llegaron {algunos/ varios/ muchos} de lo-s Roman-es
arrived.3PL some.PL several.PL much.PL of the Roman-PL
'{Some/ A few/ many} of the group comprised of Román & his associates arrived'

(6) # Juan viajó con lo-s Roman-es, pero no sé con quiénes exactamente.
Juan travelled with the-PL Román-PL but not know.1SG with who.PL exactly
'Juan travelled with Román & his associates, but I don't know who with exactly'

(7) # Llegaron lo-s { 2/ mucho-s} Roman-es
arrived.3PL the-PL 2 much-PL Román-PL
'The {two/ many} people from the group comprised of Román & his associates arrived'

(8) Llegaron lo-s Roman-es alto-s
arrived.3PL the-PL Román-PL tall-PL 'The tall members of the group comprised of Román & his associates arrived'

The RIS patterns with first names are rejected by non-RIS Spanish speakers. *Last* names, though, can have an associative reading in General Spanish, as Camacho (2021) notes. However, in both General Spanish and RIS, the last name must be unmarked for number, and overt pluralization yields obligatory additivity: (9).

(9) a. Llegaron lo-s Altuve(# -s).
arrived.3PL the-PL Altuve -PL
'Altuve and his associates arrived.'

b. Llegaron los Altuve(-s).
arrived.3PL the.PL Altuve(-PL)
'The Altuves arrived.'

3 PROPOSAL. Lewis's (2021, 2023) analysis based on head movement from Num(ber) to a higher Associative head crucially relies on there being no D layer. The analysis cannot be extended to the the RIS data, given the obligatory requirement of the definite article. We propose instead that the relevant property of languages with free-standing definite articles is that *bare (common count) nouns cannot denote a singleton* – singleton reference requires a full DP, which requires Num (Borer 2005, Harbour 2007, Cowper & Hall 2012). We propose that the associative reading arises when the ordinary plural Num head combines with a singleton-denoting *n*P. The only singleton-denoting *n*Ps in a language like Spanish are proper names; thus only proper names admit an associative reading of the plural. Following Ghomeshi & Massam (2009), we assume that names are associated with a special *n* head, which we take to form a type-*e*-denoting *n*P: 'the individual that bears the name'. This *n*P can directly combine with D: (10). When the name is used predicatively, (i.e. denoting 'being named X' – as in additive plurals, relevantly), there is an additional *n* layer (Saab & Lo Guercio 2019, Jambrović 2023), responsible for making the first name count-like; we take this *n* to create a predicate of type $\langle e,t\rangle$ and impose a semi-lattice structure (Link 1983) on the name *n*P. The higher *n*P is then selected and restricted by the features on Num. The structure is in (11). If [-SG], Num restricts the *n*P to non-atomic pluralities (e.g. the sums of individuals named Román).

(10) $[_{\text{DP}}\ \text{D}\ [_{n\text{P}_e}\ n_{\text{name}}\ \sqrt{\text{Román}}]]]$

(11) $[_{\text{DP}}\ \text{D}\ [_{\text{NumP}}\ \text{Num}\ [_{n\text{P}_{\langle e,t\rangle}}\ n\ [_{n\text{P}_e}\ n_{\text{name}}\ \sqrt{\text{Román}}]]]]$

We propose that there is a third possible structure: the referential *n*P can combine with a Relator head R, as in (12). This produces the associative plural.

(12) $[_{\text{DP}}\ \text{D}\ [_{\text{NumP}}\ \text{Num}\ [_{\text{RP}_{\langle e,t\rangle}}\ \text{R}\ [_{n\text{P}_\text{e}}\ n_{\text{name}}\ \sqrt{\text{Román}}]]]]$

In the spirit of Nakanishi & Tomioka (2004), we propose that R composes with a human name singleton *s* and returns a set *S* consisting of *s* (the focus) and pluralities associated with *s*. The ordinary plural Num head (which triggers /*-(e)s*/ plural concord throughout the DP) combines with RP and operates as it normally does, restricting the set to only the pluralities. Finally, the definite article picks out the unique salient plurality. This correctly predicts that the focus need not belong to the group, as discussed for (8).

We assume that numerals are lower than Num (Sauerland 2003, Scontras 2013, Martí 2020, a.o.). This explains why (7) is unacceptable with the reading shown – the numeral is too low to scope over the group. (7) is also unacceptable with the interpretation '2 Románs and their associates arrived'; this is because R cannot compose with a non-singleton focus, as evidenced by its incompatibility with non-singleton names:

(13) # Llegaron lo -s ABBA (-s)
arrived.3PL the -PL ABBA (-PL)
'The members of the band ABBA and their associates arrived.'

Camacho (2021) argues that last names in associative plurals are noun-noun compounds with a silent group-denoting head. This accounts for the lack of plural marking – in Spanish, the non-head of noun-noun compounds does not participate in number concord – but it predicts that (7) should allow the interpretation '2 groups of Román's associates arrived', which is not available. We propose that last names are compounded with a semantically inert noun instead. In (9a), *n* directly combines with the root (12), and the last name adjoins to it – this proximity to the root makes concord unavailable. In (9b), the last name optionally adjoins to either of the *n*Ps in (11). When in the higher position, it is able to participate in concord.

4 OUTLOOK. We documented a novel pattern of associative number-marking in an understudied variety of Spanish. Our hypothesized crosslinguistic generalization is that plural on Num can be associative only with singleton-denoting *n*Ps which have undergone a group-forming operation via a Relator head. The data question surface-level typological generalizations and call for more detailed study of individual languages.

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