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# **Polish honorific markers as a window into person-feature valuation**

**FASL 28, Stony Brook, May 3-5 2019**

# The goal

- present novel evidence for Polish nominals being phases
- the logic of the argument:
  - DP-size but not nP-size nominal structure exhibits feature interactions with the interfaces
- => If a D-head interacts with the interfaces, it must be a phase-head and trigger spell-out
- empirical focus: syntactic variation in the domain of honorific markers (Pan/Pani)

# Polish nominal *Pan/Pani*

- translated as: ‘Mr’/‘Mrs’, ‘sir’/‘lady’, 2nd/3rd person pronoun  
=> 3 distinct syntactic environments
  - a regular R-expression
  - a pronominal
  - an adjective-like modifier (honorific)

# *Pan/Pani* as an R-expression

Nie znam tej **Pani<sub>j</sub>**, ale wiem, że ona<sub>j</sub> tu nie pracuje  
not know this Mrs<sub>j</sub>, but know that she<sub>j</sub> here not work  
'I do not know this lady but I know she does not work here.'

- root nominal, forming NP/DP
- inflected for phi-features and case => intrinsically valued phi-features
- can be modified by an adjective
- can serve as an antecedent to a pronoun

# R-expression => DP

a. Jan jak i **ten Pan** kichnęli głośno

Jan as and that Sir sneezed loud

‘John as well as this gentleman here sneezed out loud’

b. **Pani**, która poszła spać jest młoda

Mrs who went to sleep is young

‘Lady who went to sleep is young’

- can be coordinated with a proper name (a)
- modifiable by a relative clause (b)

=> regular R-expression => DP-type of nominal

# *Pan/Pani* as an NP-modifier

Nasza wspaniała **Pani** Dyrektorka poszła na emeryturę  
Our wonderful Mrs Director (fem) went on retirement  
'Our wonderful director retired'

- adjectival-like behavior
- number, gender, case concord with the root nominal => unvalued phi-features
- honorific meaning

# Adjacency requirement

(\*pani) ta (\*pani) nasza (\*pani) wspaniała (pani) dyrektorka (\*pani) generalna  
Mrs that Mrs our Mrs wonderful Mrs director Mrs general

‘That our wonderful Madame director General’

- must be adjacent to the nominal NP complex it modifies

# *Pan/Pani* as a name/DP-modifier

**Pan** Kowalski

Mr Kowalski

**Pani** Maria kichnęła

Mrs Mary sneezed.

- adjectival-like behavior
- number, gender, case concord with the root nominal
- honorific meaning



# Adjacency requirement

a. \* **Pani**, która poszła spać, **Genowefa** jest młoda

Mrs, who went to sleep Genevieve is young

b. **Pani Genowefa**, która poszła spać, jest młoda

Mrs Genevieve, who is young, went to sleep

- when *Pan/Pani* used as DP modifier, a relative clause must modify the complete DP (the head-nominal and the modifier)

# *Pan/Pani* as a pronoun

Wie **Pan** co  
know Mr what  
'You know what'

- contextually-determined phi-features (addressee, gender, number)

# *Pan/Pani* as a vocative

**Panie**<sub>j</sub>,            masz            pan<sub>j</sub>            papierosa  
Mr.<sub>vocat.sg.2nd.masc.</sub>    have<sub>.masc.sg.2nd</sub>    Mr.<sub>nom.masc.sg.2nd.</sub>    cigarette  
‘Mister, do you have a cigarette?’

- pronominal-like but perhaps not quite...

# Dual feature behavior

Panie <sub>j</sub> ,	<b>masz</b>	<b>pan</b> <sub>j</sub>	papierosa
Mr <sub>.vocat.sg.2nd.masc.</sub>	have <sub>.masc.sg. 2nd</sub>	Mr <sub>.nom.masc.sg.2nd.</sub>	cigarette
Panie <sub>j</sub> ,	<b>ma</b>	<b>pan</b> <sub>j</sub>	papierosa
Mr <sub>.vocat.sg.2nd.masc.</sub>	have <sub>.masc.sg. 3rd</sub>	Mr <sub>.nom.masc.sg.3rd.</sub>	cigarette

‘Hey Mister, do you have a cigarette?’

- the same nominal => variable agreement
  - a nominal-like 3<sup>rd</sup> person,
  - a pronominal-like 2<sup>nd</sup> person

# Person only variable

Szanowny Panie<sub>j</sub>, Szanowna Pani

a. macie szanowni **państwo**<sub>j</sub> papierosa  
have<sub>2nd.pl.</sub> respected Mr's<sub>2nd.pl.</sub> cigarette

b. mają szanowni **państwo**<sub>j</sub> papierosa  
have<sub>3rd.pl.</sub> respected Mr's<sub>3rd.pl.</sub> cigarette

'Hey dear Sir, dear Madam, do respected you/Sirs & Madams have a cigarette?'

- number, gender agreement constant
- person only varies

# Questions arising

- One or more representations stored in the lexicon?
- What mechanism underlies variable agreement?
- Why variation only in person valuation, not gender/number valuation?

# Proposal in a nutshell

- the same root (with gender, number from the lexicon)  
=> up to  $nP$  all uses share the same structure

# Proposal in a nutshell

- difference emerges at the DP-level:
  - modifiers: no DP, just  $nP$
  - R-expressions: D with unvalued person feature reset to default (3<sup>rd</sup> person) at the interface
  - pronouns/vocatives: person feature on D valued by the CI interface (at spell-out), otherwise reset to a morphological default => 2nd/3rd person



# Why is it important?

- if a feature value (person) in the extended nominal projection gets valued at spell-out, the nominal must form a phase  
=> a novel argument for phase-hood of Polish DPs, fundamentally distinct from arguments based on extraction properties (narrow-syntax locality)

# Emphasis on person features

- person feature must be licensed by the syntax-semantics interface (CI) (Zubizarreta and Pancheva 2017, Pancheva and Zubizarreta 2017 Kučerová 2018)
- for person feature to interact with the CI interface the feature must be located on a phase head
- if person feature valuation is tied to D  $\Rightarrow$  D is a phase head

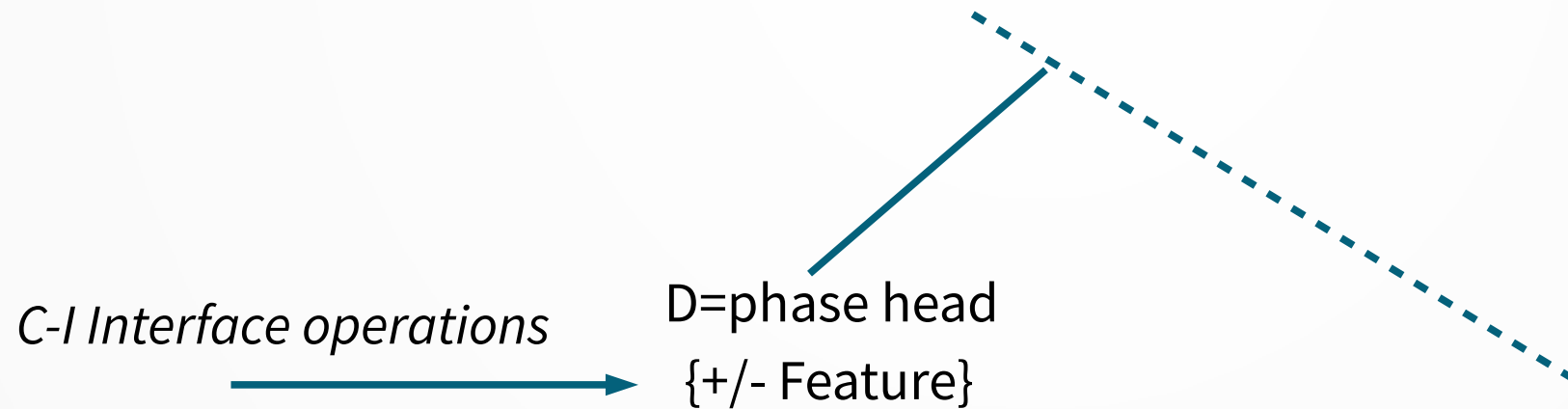
# A note on the extent of the argument

- we make **no** claims regarding:
  - whether Slavic, and specifically Polish, has overt determiners
  - whether Polish has a Determiner head in the same sense as English or Italian
- we make a claim that:
  - Polish nominal expressions are phases
  - In our proposal, D stands for a nominal phase head (this could even be a non fixed head, Bošković 2014)

# Preserving the Y model

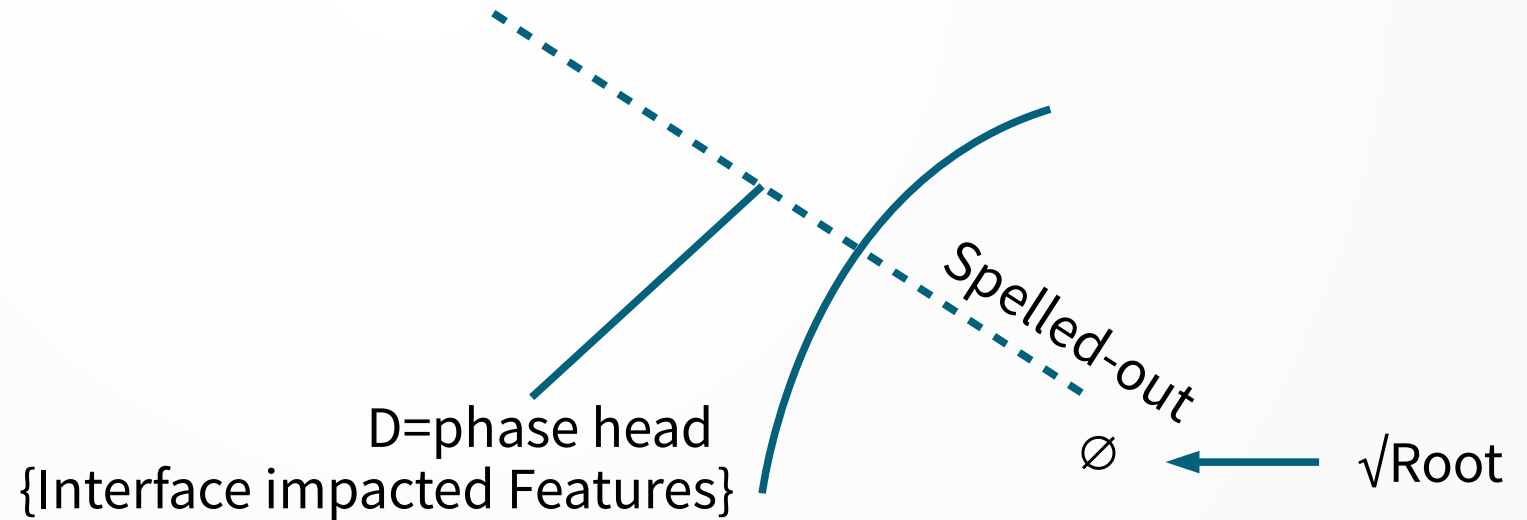
- the architecture we adopt preserves the Y model and exploits the inherent assumption that Spell-out is a window for interface feature interaction with syntactic structure
- we hypothesize that phase heads are inherently endowed with the ability to license features that can interact with interface operations

# Spell out and interfaces



- Spell-out: a window where interface operations can impact feature composition of heads
- nominals: interface interaction with the feature composition of **the phase head**

# Feature values manipulated at spell out



- our hypothesis is CI can manipulate features
- DM already does that by inserting root – its features go from zero to  $n$

# Derivational insight

- despite the syntactic variability, pan/pani syntactically identical to any other regular lexical noun in Polish  
=> honorific uses strictly based on a regular nominal structure

# Modifier structure

=> a truncated nominal that terminates at the **nP** level and is located at Spec-nP of head noun:

- this accounts for:
  - cannot be modified
  - obligatorily interpreted as a modifier
  - optional
  - adjacency requirement



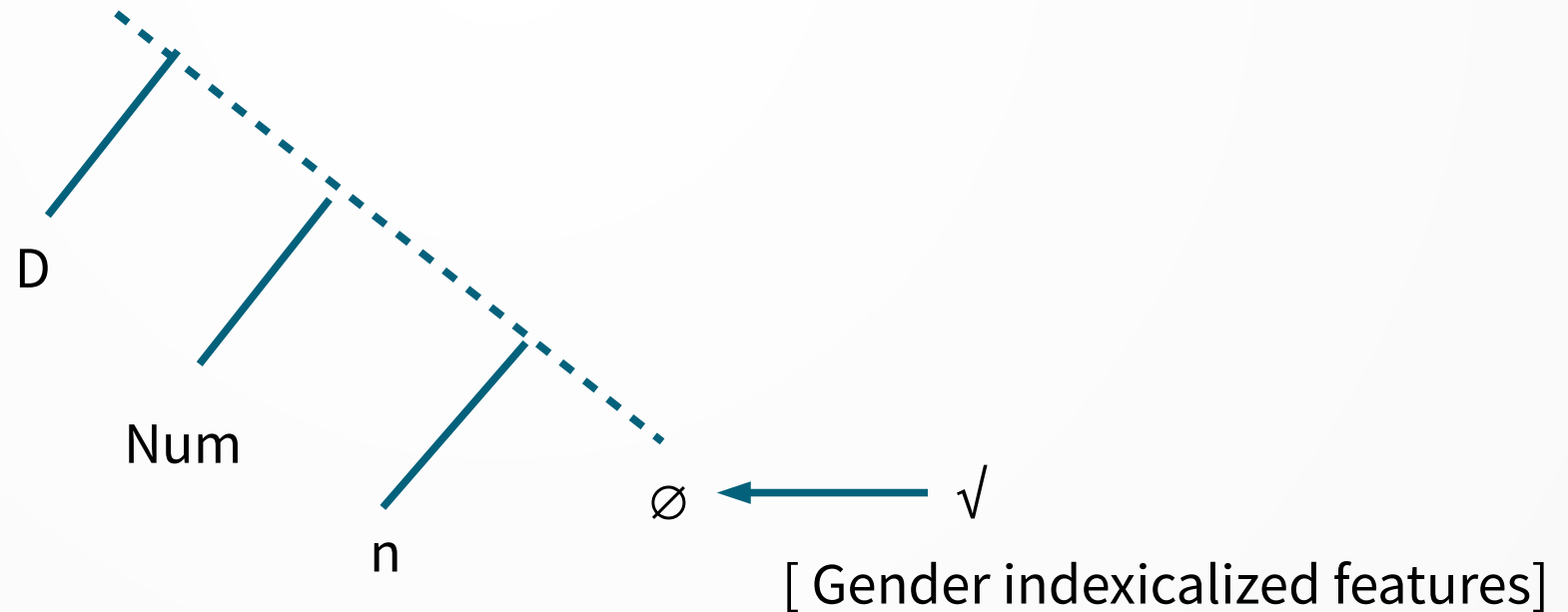
# R-expression vs pronominal

- => variation in the composition of the nominal projection's phase head (D)
- D => interaction with C-I interface => impacts the [+/- Person] feature on D

# D hosts +/- Person feature

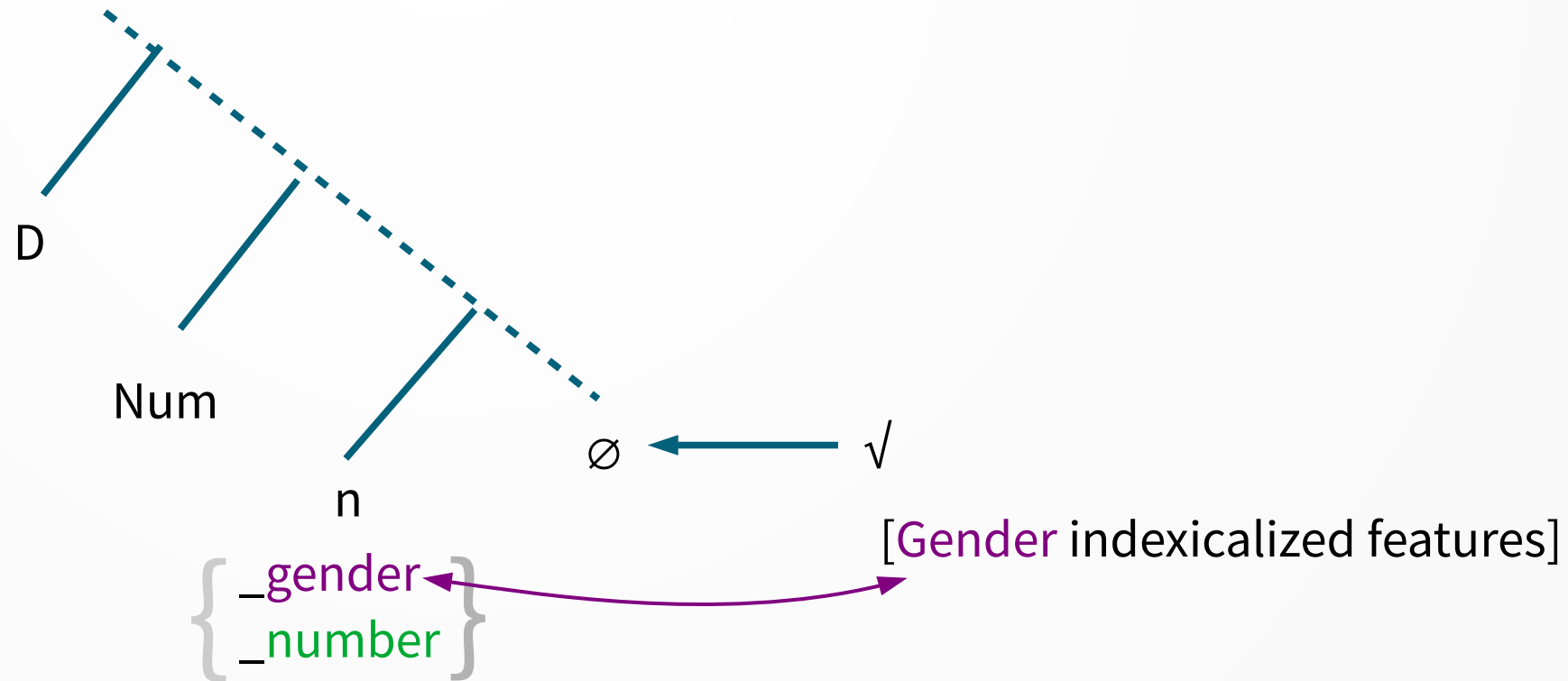
- person feature not an intrinsic property of a nominal representation stored in the lexicon (Ritter 1995; Béjar and Rezac 2003)
- **instead, person only comes to the derivation as part of D**

# Simplified nominal structure: root



- root => Late Inserted
  - gender: indexical information on the root, not a syntactic feature (Acquaviva 2014)
  - unvalued *n* features projected in syntax
  - indexicalized gender mapped during late insertion of the root onto *n*

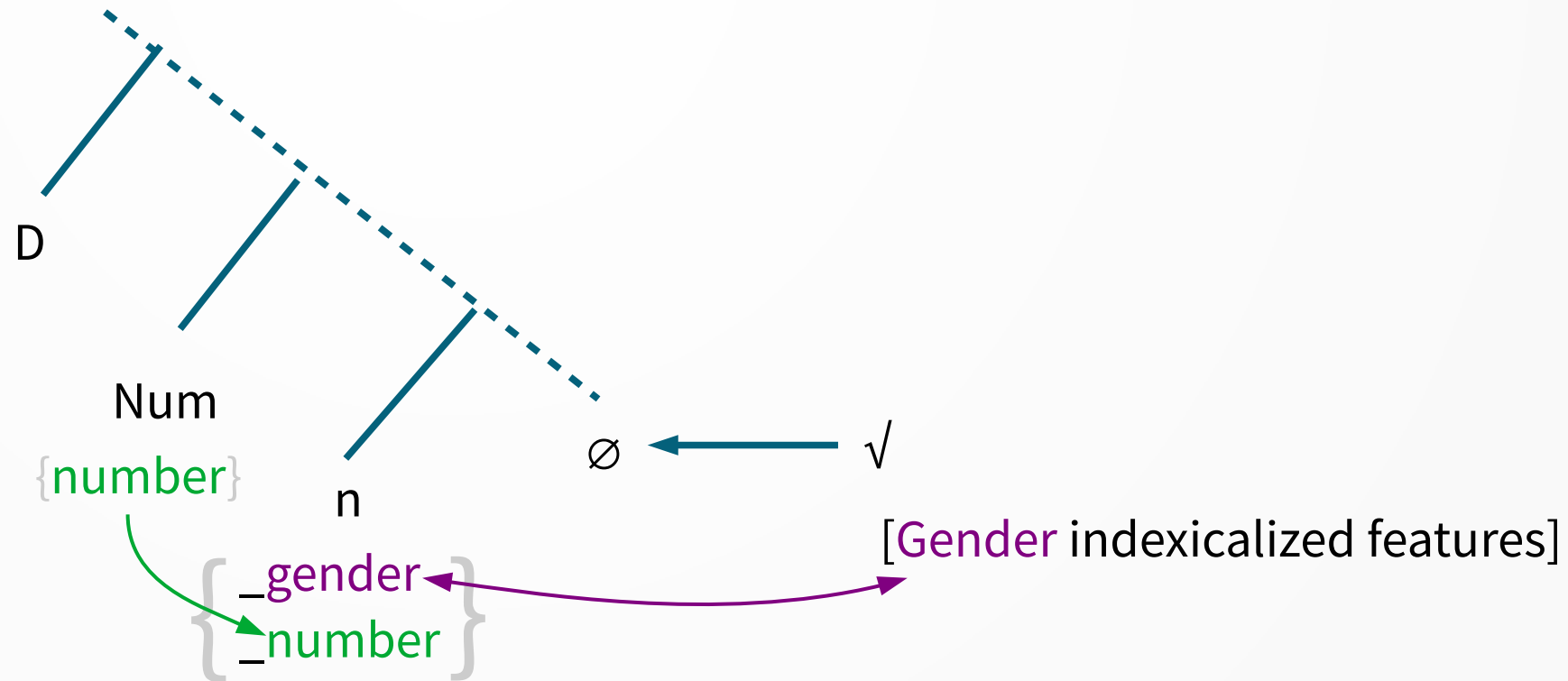
# Simplified nominal structure: n



- *n* merged as a bundle of unvalued  $\phi$ -features (gender and number)

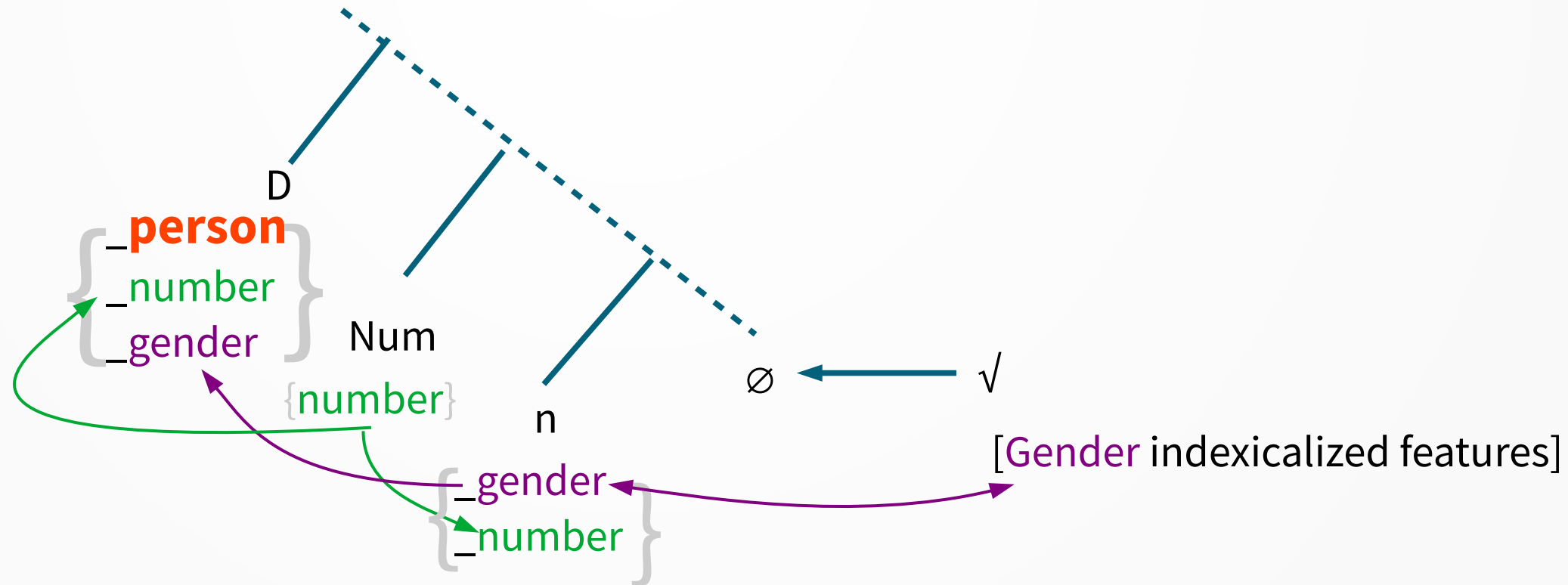
=> gender features matched via index on root

# Simplified nominal structure: Num



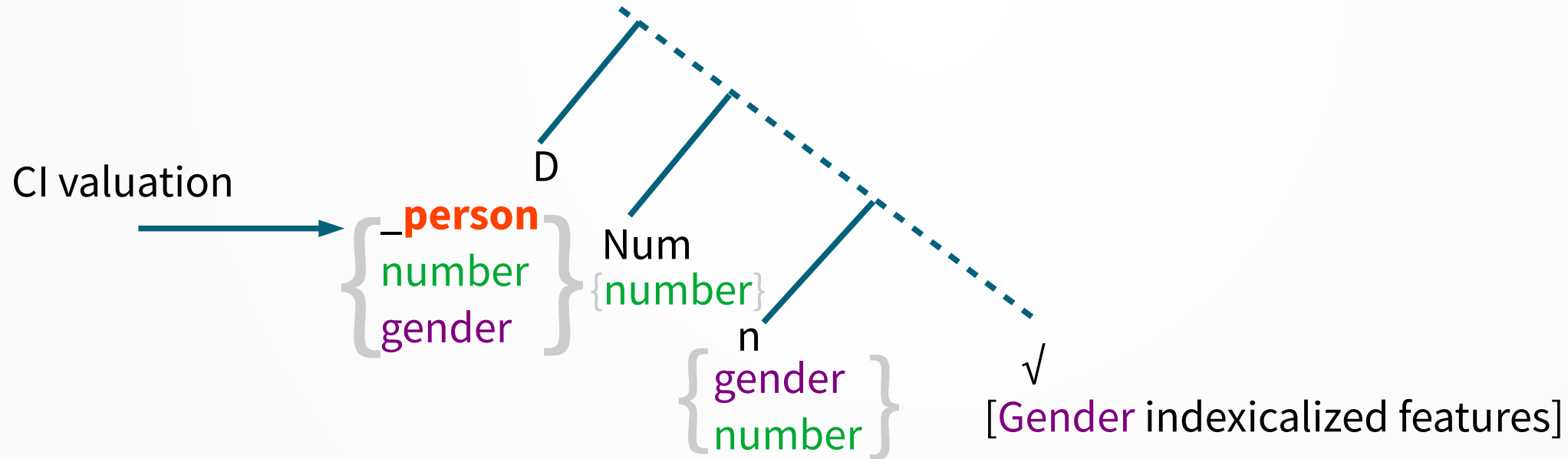
- *Num* merged as a valued number-feature  
=> by agree, as matching and valuation, number on *n* gets valued

# Simplified nominal structure: D



- D merged as a bundle of unvalued  $\phi$ -features and an **unvalued person** feature
- D triggers agree with Num and n  $\Rightarrow$  the unvalued number and gender feature on D get matched and valued by the valued features on Num and n

# Simplified nominal structure: person feature on D

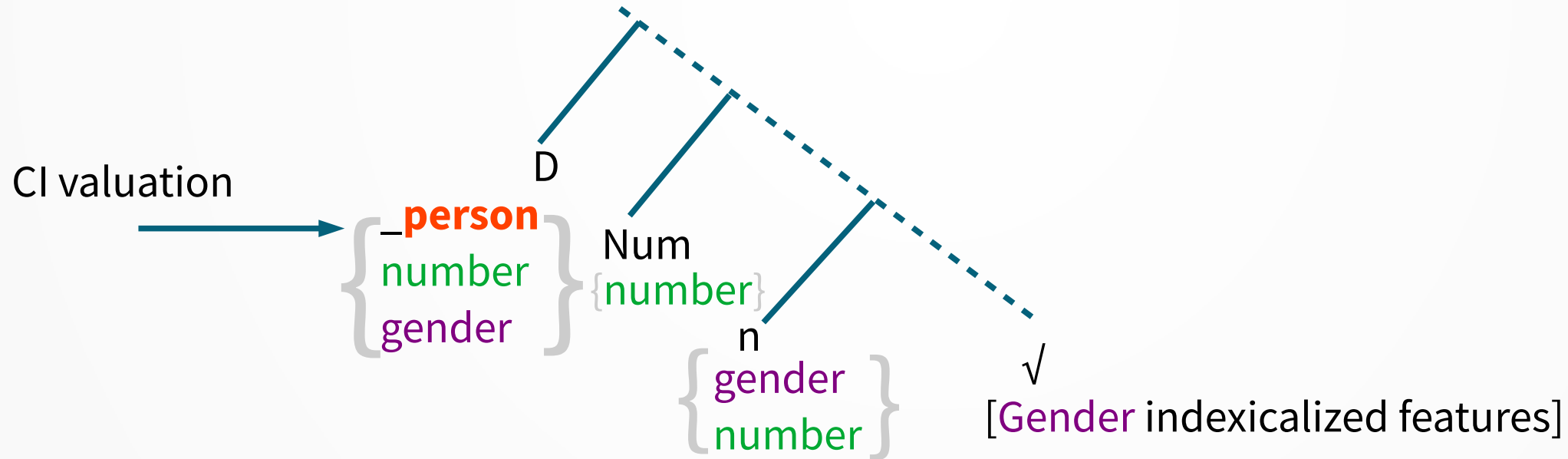


- the C-I interface has access to the whole Phase
  - ⇒ Spell out Domain & Phase head and its edge
- person requires syntax/semantics interface licensing

(Zubizarreta & Pancheva 2017; Pancheva & Zubizarreta 2017)

⇒ the C-I interface can manipulate PERSON features

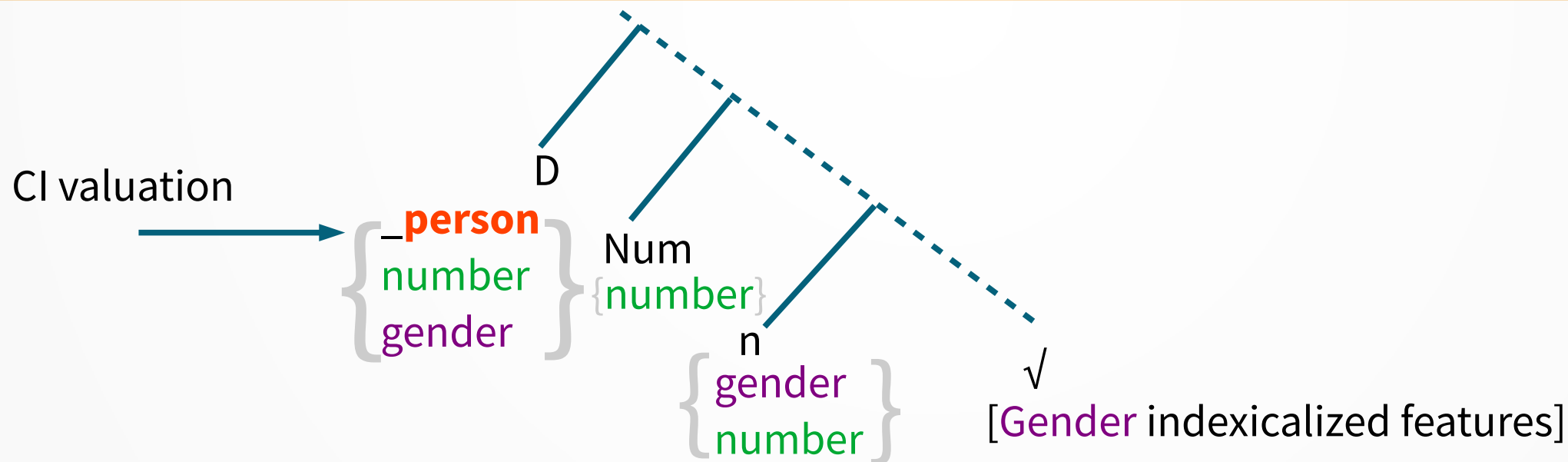
# Simplified nominal structure: person feature on D



- at spell-out, the person feature on D remains unvalued
- => the interfaces can supply a value



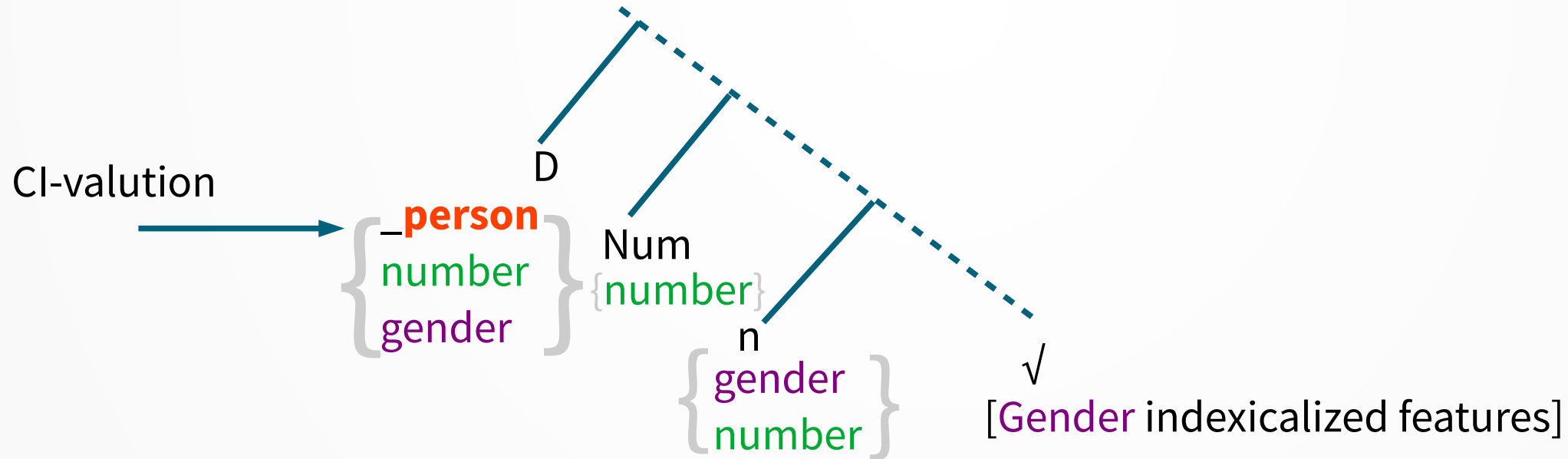
# CI-interface valuation



=> an unvalued  $\phi$ -feature on a phase head D can obtain its value via labeling of the phase by CI (Kučerová 2018)

=> CI valuation for unvalued person: [+/- participant]

# Morphology-interface valuation



- the morphology module then either realizes the syntactically unvalued feature as:
  - as the CI-informed value (+/-Participant → +/-Speaker, or +/-Hearer)
  - **morphological default** for person => **3rd person (pronominal/vocative usage)**

# Person feature on D => DP duality *Pan/Pani*

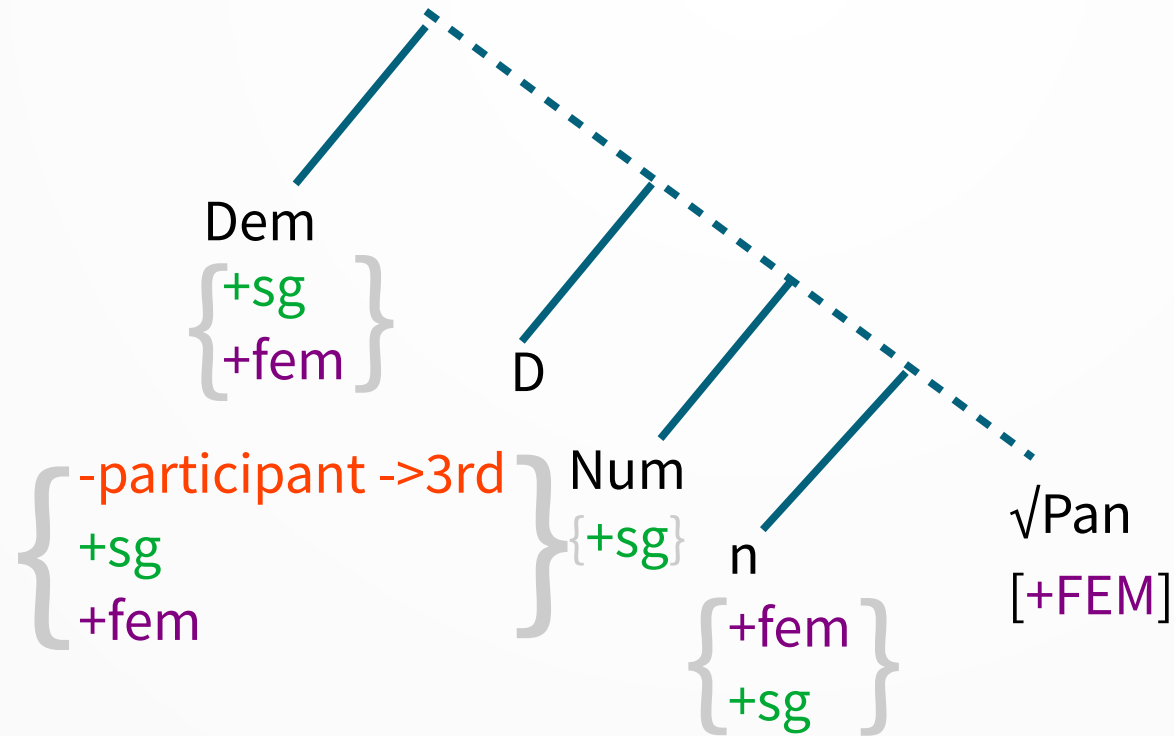
- CI-valuation of person features determines the type of expression a full DP *Pan/Pani* is:
  - [– **Participant** ] => R-expression
  - [ + **Participant** ] => pronominal-like usage and the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> person alternation
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> person: default; C-I uninformed valuation
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> person: marked; C-I informed valuation

# Pan/Pani as R-expression

Nie znam tej **Pani<sub>j</sub>**, ale wiem, że ona<sub>j</sub> tu nie pracuje  
not know this Mrs<sub>j</sub>, but know that she<sub>j</sub> here not work  
'I do not know this lady but I know she does not work here.'

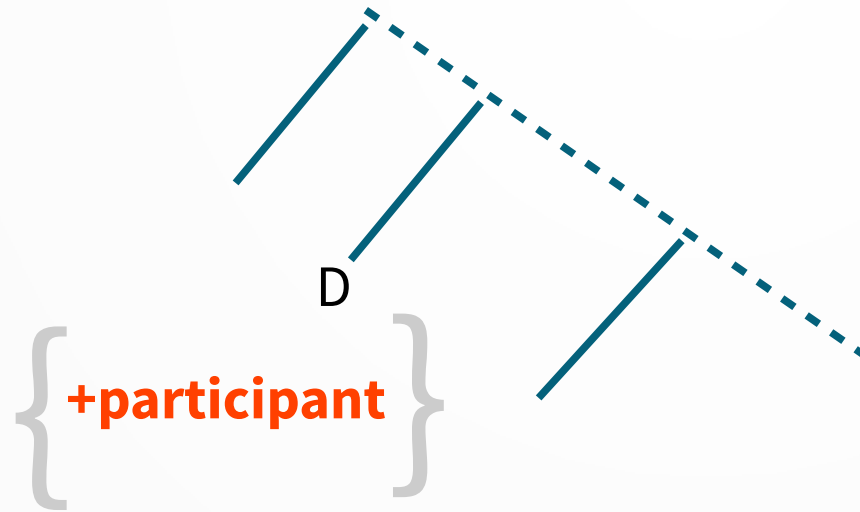
- unvalued person feature on D
- => CI value: [-participant] and the morphological default converge on 3<sup>rd</sup> person
- demonstrative in Spec-DP => concord with valued D

# Pan/Pani as an R-expression



- Tej Pani  
this lady

# [+ Participant]



- 3<sup>rd</sup> person default when C-I uninformed value
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> person when C-I informed value
- => pronominal-like properties
- => no demonstratives

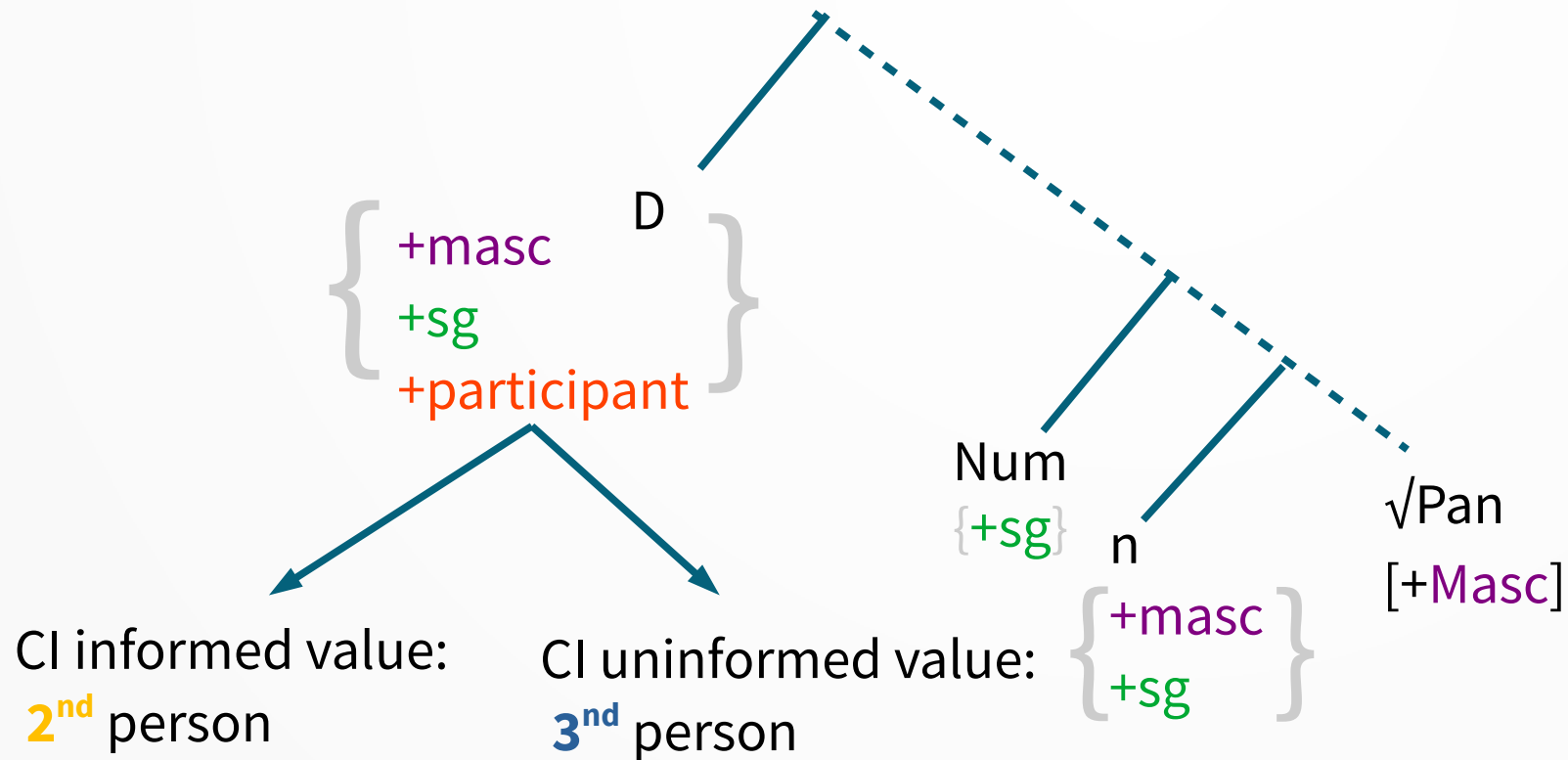
# [+Participant]

- R-expressions such as *pan/pani* => can be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person
- Vocative
- 3<sup>rd</sup> vs 2<sup>nd</sup> person agreement alternation

a. ( <b>Panie</b> <sub>j</sub> ),	masz	<b>pan</b> <sub>j</sub>	papierosa
Mr <sub>.vocat.sg.2nd.masc.</sub>	have <sub>.masc.sg. 2nd</sub>	Mr <sub>.nom.masc.sg.2nd.</sub>	cigarette
b. ( <b>Panie</b> <sub>j</sub> ),	ma	<b>pan</b> <sub>j</sub>	papierosa
Mr <sub>.vocat.sg.2nd.masc.</sub>	have <sub>.masc.sg. 3rd</sub>	Mr <sub>.nom.masc.sg.3rd.</sub>	cigarette

‘Hey Mister, do you have a cigarette?’

# *Pan/Pani* 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> person alternation



- **Panie** masz **pan** vs **Panie** ma **pan**

Mr(2nd) have (2nd) you vs. Mr (2nd) have (3rd) you



# Prediction: if DP is a phase, CI-valuation independent of the position in the clause

Szanowny Panie, chciałbym przedstawić **Pana** mojemu znajomemu  
respected Mr.voc.m. sg wouldlike 1.m.sg introduce Mr. acc.2.m.sg. my friend.dat  
'Sir I would like to introduce you to a friend of mine'

- if DP itself is a phase, it does not matter where in the structure such a DP is merged => CI valuation always possible

# No speaker/hearer head needed

- the proposal thus differs from proposals that require a syntactic association with some form of a speaker/hearer head in the left periphery of a clause (e.g., Sigurðsson 2004)

# Not every use of *Pan/Pani* involves a full phase

- *Pan/pani* can be a truncated **nominal nP**  
=> not a phase
- no +/- Participant alternation
- no independent reference
- used as a modifier
- distribution limited to vicinity of head noun

# Non-phase nominals

Nasza wspaniała Pani dyrektorka  
our wonderful Mrs director  
'our wonderful madame director'

- *Pan/Pani* marker as a modifier

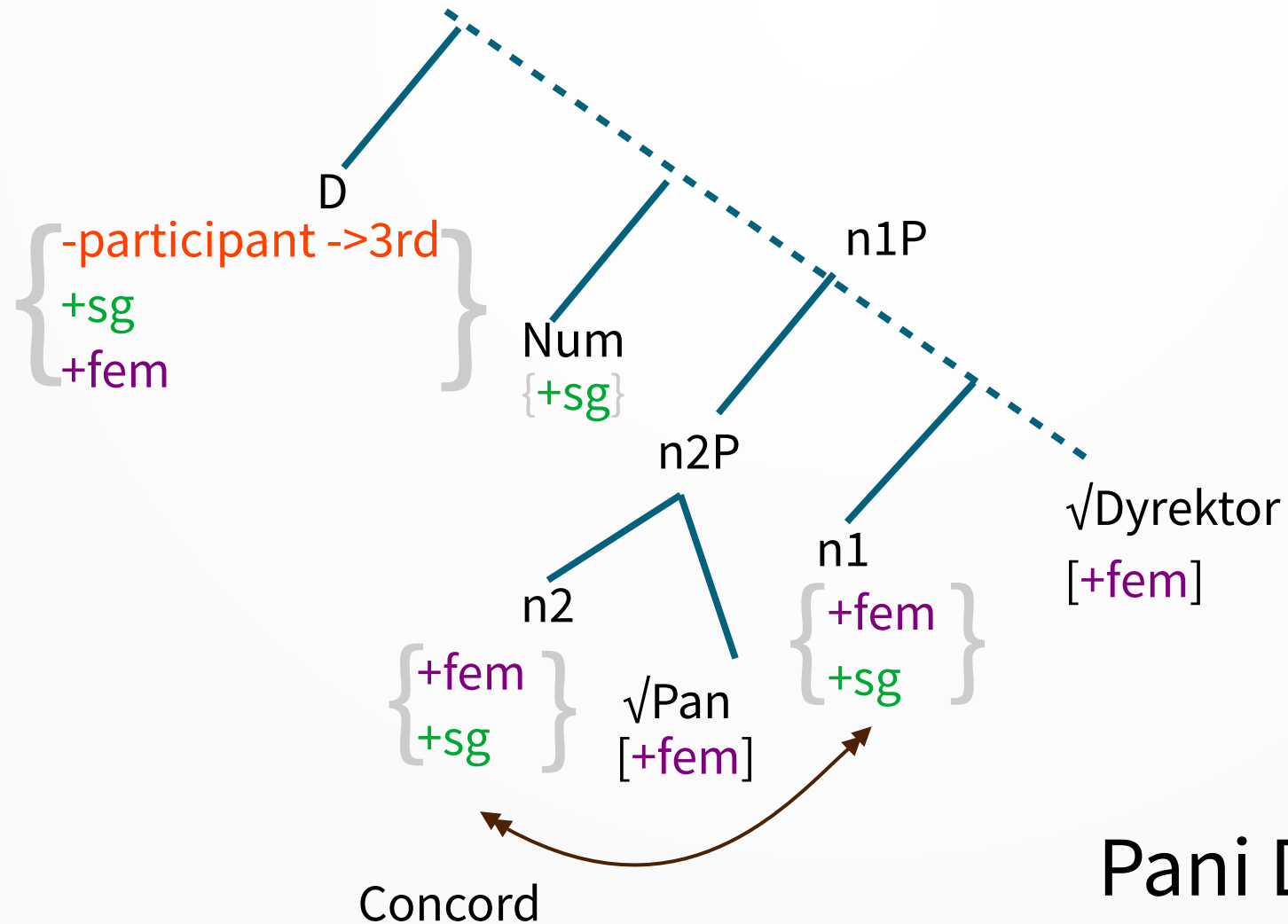
# adjacency restriction

- when used as a modifier the *nP* Pan/Pani has to be preceded by all modifiers but attributive adjectives:

(\*pani) ta (\*pani) nasza (\*pani) wspaniała (pani) dyrektorka generalna  
that<sub>.fem.sg.3rd</sub> our<sub>.fem.sg.3rd</sub> wonderful<sub>.fem.sg.3rd</sub> Mrs<sub>.sg.fem.3rd</sub> headmaster<sub>.fem.sg.3rd</sub> general<sub>.em.sg.3rd</sub>

- attributive adjectives: NP adjacent  
=> *pan/pani* as Spec-*nP*

# *Pan/Pani* as an nP modifier



Pani Dyrektorka

Madame Director

# Summary

- *Pan/Pani* => 3 distinct syntactic structures based on the same root and *nP*:
  - full DP [-person] → R expression
  - full DP [+person] → 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronominal type
  - *nP* → nominal modifier/honorific

# Consequences

- phase heads subject to interface feature manipulation
- novel methodology for determining a phase-status of a syntactic head, based on interactions with the CI module
- at least some Polish nominals are phases