

Los Herrero(s): Family names, plural marking, and head versus modifier position in Spanish

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In environments where nouns require plural marking in Spanish, family names can remain uninflected: *muchos herreros* ‘many smiths’, but *muchos Herrero(s)* ‘many Herreros’. I propose that *muchos Herrero* has a different syntactic representation than *muchos Herreros* on the basis of the semantic contrast between *los Herrero*, which can be interpreted as ‘the (unrelated) Herreros’ or ‘the (related) Herreros’, and *los Herreros*, which can only be interpreted as ‘the (unrelated) Herreros’. The family name does not inflect for number in *muchos/los Herrero* because it is a modifier of an elided head noun, and the ambiguity of *los Herrero*, or *los Ø Herrero*, stems from the multiple possible identities of this noun. If *los Herrero* contains the light, or rootless, noun PEOPLE, it has the reading ‘the (unrelated) Herreros’, and if it contains a silent kinship term like *familiares* ‘relatives’, *hermanos* ‘siblings’, or *primos* ‘cousins’, it has the reading ‘the (related) Herreros’. In support of this analysis, I show that constructions in which this kinship term is overt, such as *los primos Herrero* ‘the Herrero cousins’, display the prosodic, semantic, and syntactic properties of a single extended nominal projection. Finally, I argue that the family name takes the plural suffix in *muchos/los Herreros* because it is the head of the noun phrase in this case. Since there is no position available for a covert kinship term in *los Herreros*, it follows that this construction can only mean ‘the (unrelated) Herreros’.