

Differential Object Marking (DOM) with proper names in Romance languages

Javier Caro Reina
University of Cologne

javier.caroreina@uni-koeln.de

In this talk, I will examine the patterns of Differential Object Marking (DOM) with proper names and proper name classes in Romance languages. The languages selected include Asturian, Catalan, Corsican, Galician, Neapolitan, Portuguese, Romanian, Sardinian, Sicilian, and Spanish. The purpose of this talk is two-fold. First, it will be shown that in Romance languages DOM is sensitive to the Extended Animacy Hierarchy (Croft 2003: 130). For example, in Central Catalan we find DOM only with strong pronouns. In Corsican, Galician, and Portuguese DOM occurs with pronouns and proper names, but not with common nouns. In Asturian, Neapolitan, Romanian, Sardinian, Sicilian, and Spanish there is DOM with strong pronouns, proper names, and definite human nouns. However, definite human nouns are optionally marked in Asturian, Neapolitan, Sardinian, and Sicilian while they are obligatorily marked in Romanian and Spanish. Second, I will introduce a fined-grained classification of proper names based on animacy, potential agentivity, and identifiability, thereby distinguishing between deity names, personal names, kinship names, animal names, and place names. This classification contributes to a better understanding of the cross-linguistic patterns of DOM with specific proper name classes. For example, in Portuguese DOM is restricted to deity names. In Galician we find DOM with deity names, personal names, and kinship names. By contrast, in Sicilian DOM occurs with all proper name classes. Additionally, this classification helps to grasp DOM expansion and retraction. Thus, the patterns of DOM with proper names in Romance languages force us to revise the Extended Animacy Hierarchy decomposing the category of proper names into different classes according to animacy, potential agentivity, and identifiability, as shown in (1).

(1) Extended Animacy Hierarchy (revised)

first/second person pronouns > third person pronoun >
deity names > personal names, kinship names > animal names >
place names > human common noun > non-human animate common
noun > inanimate common noun

References: • Croft, W. 2003. *Typology and universals*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: CUP.