
Specificity with Clitic Doubling and Differential Object Marking in Romanian

Alina Tigău
Universität zu Köln
University of Bucharest
atigau@uni-koeln.de

Klaus von Heusinger
Universität zu Köln
kheusing@uni-koeln.de

This paper focuses on the contribution of Clitic Doubling (CD) and Differential Object Marking (DOM) with Romanian indefinite direct objects (DOs). Its aim is to separate the semantic import of the clitic from that of DOM, given that both mechanisms have been argued to be responsible for a specific interpretation (Dobrovie-Sorin 1990). We propose that CD is the sole trigger for specificity, while DOM is compatible with a specific reading, even though it does not trigger such an interpretation. As DOM expresses the argument status of the noun, a specific reading is typically associated.

These claims are supported by the different behaviour of single DOMed DPs vs. CD+DOMed DPs within contexts forcing non-specificity (contexts with *cel mult* 'at most', *cel puțin* 'at least', the distributive *câte*, the free-choice indefinite *oarecare* 'any' a.o.):

- (1) a. La alegeri orice alegător votează *câte* un candidat.
At elections any voter votes câte a candidate
'On the occasion of elections, any voter votes a candidate.'
- b. La alegeri orice alegător votează **pe** *câte* un candidat.
At elections any voter votes pe câte a candidate
- c. La alegeri orice alegător (?il) votează **pe** *câte* un candidat
At elections any voter (?him.cl)votes pe câte a candidate

The single DOMed DP (1b) behaves on a par with the unmarked indefinite (1a) and are both felicitous in the non-specific context; their CD+DOMed counterpart (1c) is specific and thus incompatible in the non-specific contexts giving rise to the infelicity of (1c). We propose an account of clitics as specificity triggers and of DOM as signalling that the noun denotes an individual. CD always triggers DOM since specific indefinites are always individual, but not each individual argument needs to be specific.

References: Dobrovie-Sorin, C. 1990. Clitic Doubling, Wh-Movement, and Quantification in Romanian. *LJ* 21: 351-397.