

**Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Konstanz**

*Arbeitspapier Nr. 119*

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP „SPECIFICITY AND THE EVOLUTION /  
EMERGENCE OF NOMINAL DETERMINATION SYSTEMS IN ROMANCE“**

Klaus von Heusinger, Georg A. Kaiser & Elisabeth Stark (eds.)

Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft  
Universität Konstanz  
Fach D 185  
D-78457 Konstanz

Germany

**Konstanz**

**Oktober 2005**

Schutzgebühr € 3,50

Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Konstanz  
Sekretariat des Fachbereichs Sprachwissenschaft, Frau Gabriele Fahmy,  
D 185, D-78457 Konstanz, Tel. 07531/ 88-2465

## Table of contents

Preface

Susann Fischer (Universität Stuttgart): Interplay between reference and aspect .....	1
Marco García García (Universität zu Köln): Differential object marking and informativeness .....	17
Klaus von Heusinger (Universität Stuttgart) / Georg A. Kaiser (Universität Konstanz): The evolution of differential object marking in Spanish .....	33
Daniel Jacob (Universität zu Köln): Adjective position, specificity, and information structure in Spanish.....	71
Guido Mensching (Freie Universität Berlin): Remarks on specificity and related categories in Sardinian .....	81
Carme Picallo (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) Some notes on grammatical gender and <i>l</i> -pronouns.....	107
Elisabeth Stark (Freie Universität Berlin): Typological correlations in nominal determination in Romance .....	123

# The evolution of differential object marking in Spanish

Klaus von Heusinger & Georg A. Kaiser

[www.ilg.uni-stuttgart.de/vonHeusinger/  
georg.kaiser@uni-konstanz.de](http://www.ilg.uni-stuttgart.de/vonHeusinger/georg.kaiser@uni-konstanz.de)

## 1. Introduction\*

In Spanish, the direct object can be marked or not by the marker *a*. The marker *a* is obligatory, optional or ungrammatical, depending on a variety of parameters. These parameters are the object of controversial discussions and of an immense descriptive and functional literature, often under the heading of “prepositional accusative” since the marker is homonym with the preposition *a* ‘to’. The prepositional accusative is discussed in the context of Spanish grammar (see Torrego Salcedo 1999 for an overview), in the broader context of Romance languages (see Rohlfs 1971, Bossong 1998) and from an even broader typological perspective that discusses the “prepositional” accusative in Spanish as an instance of Differential Object Marking or DOM, which is a widespread phenomenon among the languages of the world (Lazard 1984, Bossong 1985, Aissen 2003 among others). Bossong (1985) and others assume three main parameters that determine whether or not a direct object is marked: (i) animacy, (ii) referential category, and (iii) topicality. Animacy and referential category form each a scale with different values. Topicality is generally described as a simple feature  $\pm\text{top}$ . DOM-languages differ with respect to which parameters and to which particular (transition) point on the relevant scale they are sensitive to.

The distribution of DOM in one particular language often shows a variance that cannot be explained by the dependence on the mentioned categories; it is rather described by statistical observations and tendencies. This variance may have different explanations: (i) There are additional parameters that determine the use of DOM in that language and which are not yet fully described, or (ii) the conditions for DOM are in the process of evolution. This evolution can be a diachronic change that is still moving forward, or it can be the discrepancy between different regional or dialect versions of the language under investigation. In this paper, we try to show that these three aspects of the evolution of DOM are closely related to each other: First we show some data of the diachronic development of DOM from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish, we then report the observation from current literature that American Spanish has a more extended system of DOM than European Spanish, and finally we present some results from a test search in a very restricted corpus of informal American Spanish. The results give rise to some new research questions.

The diachronic evolution of DOM in Spanish can be illustrated by the change of the system from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish, as illustrated by the examples in (1) and (2). The examples in (1), taken from the *Poema de mio Cid* (12<sup>th</sup> century), differ from their corresponding translations in Modern Spanish in (2) with respect to the lack of the DOM marker *a* in front of the animate definite direct object, such as the possessive *mis fijas* in (1a), the definite *las fijas* in (1b), and the demonstrative *estas mis fijas* in (1c). Modern Spanish

---

\* This paper is the revised version of our talk given at the second Nereus-workshop “*Specificity and the Evolution / Emergence of Nominal Determination Systems in Romance*” at the Freie Universität Berlin in October 2004. It reports some intermediate results and new research questions of a joint project on DOM in Spanish. We would like to thank the local organizers, in particular Elisabeth Stark, for providing the pleasant environment for the workshop. We would also like to thank the audience for constructive and helpful discussions. We owe special thanks to Brenda Laca for giving us the manuscript of her paper “El objeto directo”, which is one of the main sources of data in our paper. Our special thanks go to Florian Freitag for his detailed and helpful comments on our English prose and the general structure of the paper.

obligatorily uses *a* in all these cases as shown in the corresponding examples of the modern translation in (2a) - (2c):

- (1) [+ animate, + definite] (Old Spanish, 12<sup>th</sup> cent.) (cf. Laca (to appear), 25, Melis 1995, 143)
- (a) En braços *tenedes* **mis hijas** tan blancas commo el sol. (Cid, 2333)  
 in arms have.PRES.2.PL my daughters as white as the sun  
 ‘In your arms you have my daughters, as white as the sun’
- (b) *Escarniremos* **las hijas** del Campeador. (Cid, 2551)  
 humiliate.FUT.1.PL the daughters of-the Battler  
 ‘We shall humiliate the Battler’s daughters’
- (c) Plega a Dios & a Santa Maria, que aun con mis manos  
 please.PRES.SUBJ.3.SG to God and to Saint Mary that still with my hands  
*case* **estas mis hijas** (Cid, 282)  
 marry.PRES.SUBJ.1.SG these my daughters  
 ‘May God and Saint Mary grant that I myself may yet arrange marriages for these my daughters’
- (2) [+ animate, + definite] (Modern Spanish) (translation A. Reyes, in: *Cantar de mio Cid*, Madrid: Espasa Calpe 1976 (Colección Austral))
- (a) *tenéis* **a mis hijas**, tan blancas como el sol, en vuestros brazos  
 have.PRES.2.PL A my daughters as white as the sun in your arms  
 ‘In your arms you have my daughters, as white as the sun’ (Cid, 2333)
- (b) y podremos *escarnecer* **a las hijas** del Campeador. (Cid, 2551)  
 and can.FUT.1.PL humiliate A the daughters of-the Battler  
 ‘We shall humiliate the Battler’s daughters’
- (c) ¡Oh, plegue a Dios y a santa María que pueda  
 oh please.PRES.SUBJ.3.SG to God and to Saint Mary that can.PRES.SUBJ.1.SG  
*casar* con mis propias manos **a estas mis hijas** (Cid, 282)  
 marry with my own hands A these my daughters  
 ‘May God and Saint Mary grant that I myself may yet arrange marriages for these my daughters’

Grammars of Modern Spanish state that the marker *a* is obligatory with animate definite direct objects, as in (3a). The same context without the marker is ungrammatical or illformed, as in (3b). Additionally, the marker also precedes animate specific indefinite direct objects, as in (4a), a context where we only rarely find the marker in Old Spanish. With animate (human) non-specific direct objects the marker is optional, but normally omitted, as shown in (4b). DOM is ungrammatical with inanimate direct objects, as in (4c):

- (3) [+ animate, + definite]
- (a) *Vi* **a la mujer**.  
 see.PAST.1.SG A the woman
- (b) \**Vi* **la mujer**.  
 see.PAST.1.SG the woman  
 ‘I saw the woman’

- (4) (a) [+ animate], [– definite], [+ specific]:  
*Vi* (a) **una mujer.**  
 see.PAST.1.SG A a woman  
 ‘I saw a (certain) woman’
- (b) [+ animate], [– definite], [– specific]:  
*Vi* (a) **una mujer.**  
 see.PAST.1.SG A a woman  
 ‘I saw some (or other) woman’
- (c) [– animate], [± definite], [+ specific]:  
*Vi* (\*a) **la / una mesa.**  
 see.PAST.1.SG A the a table  
 ‘I saw the / a table’

In Standard Spanish, animacy and specificity are the most relevant parameters for DOM, while definiteness is not a determining parameter. However, it has been observed in the literature that in several dialectal variants of Spanish, especially those from Latin America, the particle *a* can optionally precede an inanimate direct object if it is definite and specific, as *a las sierras* in (5a) or *al maíz* in (5b) or *al barquito* in (5c). These sentences are ungrammatical in Standard Spanish (see for a more comprehensive discussion, von Heusinger & Kaiser 2003, 56ff.)

- (5) [– animate], [+ definite], [+ specific]: (cf. Kany 1951, 2, Laca (to appear), 8)
- (a) *Vio* **a las sierras.**  
 saw.PAST.3.SG A the mountains  
 ‘S/he saw the mountains’
- (b) *Cosecharon* **al maíz.**  
 harvest. PAST.3.PL A-the corn  
 ‘They harvested the corn’
- (c) *Una vez, atravesando el Pont Neuf, vi* **al barquito** en cuestión.  
 once crossing the Pont Neuf see.PAST.1.SG A-the little-boat in question  
 ‘Once, when I was crossing the Pont Neuf, I saw the little boat in question’

We can informally summarize this impressionistic picture: The *diachronic* evolution of the marker *a* starts with animate and personal pronouns or proper names and develops along the Definite Scale to definite and finally to specific indefinite direct objects, as illustrated in (6a). The numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of uses of DOM in the given category in the Old Spanish *Cid*, according to Laca’s (to appear) analysis: 30% of animate definite direct objects and less than 8% of animate indefinite specific direct objects are marked with DOM. The simple arrow “↓” indicates no change and the double arrow “⇓” indicates a change of the conditions for DOM.

- (6) (a) Informal representation of the diachronic evolution of DOM (the marker *a*) along the Definiteness Scale for animate direct objects

+ animate	personal pronoun >	proper noun >	> definite NP	> indefinite spec. NP	> indefinite non spec. NP
Old Spanish ( <i>Cid</i> )	+	+	± (30%)	- (< 8%)	-
<i>evolution</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Modern (Standard) Spanish	+	+	+	+	±

The *synchronic* variation seems to extend the use of DOM from animate direct objects to inanimate ones. Standard Spanish does not allow DOM with inanimate direct object, while some American variants allow it optionally with inanimate definite specific direct objects, as summarized in table (6b).

- (b) Informal representation of the synchronic variation of the marker *a* according to the Definiteness Scale for inanimate direct objects

- animate	personal pronoun >	proper noun >	> definite spec. NP	> definite non spec. NP	> indefinite
Standard Spanish	∅	± <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-
<i>evolution</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
American Spanish	∅	±	±	-	-

This picture suggests that the diachronic evolution of DOM in Spanish is carried on in the American variants of Spanish, extending it to inanimate direct objects. It is interesting to note that specificity is the crucial link that allows DOM to apply in the inanimate domain. This was also the conclusion in von Heusinger & Kaiser (2003), who compared DOM in the nominal domain (“prepositional accusative”) with DOM in the verbal domain (“clitic doubling”).<sup>2</sup> We will, however, see that the picture is more complex. It seems that the evolution of DOM along one scale from one category to the next is “facilitated” by some transitional category. The type of the transitional category depends on the “goal” category.

The paper is organized as follows: In section 2, we give a brief introduction to DOM and its dependency on the Animacy Scale and the Definiteness Scale. Following Aissen (2003), we show that languages differ with respect to which parameter they are sensitive to and at which point the scale is divided. In some languages, DOM depends on two or more parameters. Therefore, we have to combine the given scales to a two or more dimensional space. In section 3, we present data for the diachronic evolution of DOM in Spanish from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish along the parameters discussed so far. A detailed analysis of the

<sup>1</sup> We do not know the conditions of DOM for proper nouns. DOM is obligatory for animate proper names and it is said to be optional for inanimate proper nouns. However, we can not exclude that such inanimate proper names are conceptualized as animate.

<sup>2</sup> There we assumed that DOM in Standard Spanish is controlled by animacy and specificity, while DOM in American Spanish is controlled by definiteness and specificity:

- (i) Informal representation of the synchronic variation between Standard Spanish and American Spanish:

Variant / category	animacy	definiteness	specificity
Standard Spanish	[+animate]	( )	[+specific]
American Spanish	( )	[+definite]	[+specific]

so-called optional cases will show that the evolution of DOM along the Definiteness Scale from proper nouns to definite NPs is facilitated by the transitional category topicality. First topical definite NPs are marked by DOM and then non-topical ones. In section 4, we discuss the further development of DOM in the synchronic variation between Standard Spanish and American Spanish. This time the evolution goes along the Animacy Scale from animate to inanimate (definite NPs). The transitional category seems to be specificity, rather than topicality, according to the data quoted in the literature. In section 5, we present some preliminary results from a very limited corpus search, and we illustrate the results with some tables. We discuss some contexts in detail and show that additional parameters such as clitic doubling interact with the overall picture. In section 6, we provide a preliminary summary and formulate further research goals.

## 2. Differential Object Marking (DOM)

Bossong (1985) coins the concept of “Differential Object Marking” or DOM for the observation that the direct object in languages without obligatory case marking may be marked by morphosyntactic means under certain conditions. Spanish does not have a case system to mark the different grammatical relations, such as subject, indirect object or direct object. Instead, it has developed other means to mark these relations: the indirect object is obligatorily marked by the marker *a* (homonym with the preposition *a* ‘to’)<sup>3</sup> and the direct object is marked by the same marker, but only under certain conditions. Cross-linguistically, there are at least three parameters that determine whether or not the direct object is marked (Bossong 1985, 3-8, who refers to Thomson 1912): (i) animacy, (ii) referential categories, and (iii) topicality. In the following we will concentrate on the former two parameters and discuss the question of topicality in the second part of section 3.

The two parameters animacy and referential category are composed of different values and therefore represented as scales, as in (7) and (8) (see Silverstein 1976, Comrie 1975, Lazard 1984, Bossong 1985, Croft 1988, Aissen 2003 for different version of such scales). Topicality has just two values:  $\pm$ topic. Grammatical processes that depend on such a scale often cut the scale at a certain transition point into two parts. However, it is not easy to determine the correct transition point. For example, the Animacy Scale has three values: human, animate and inanimate (see Silverstein 1976). This scale can either be divided in +human vs. -human (comprising non-human animate and inanimate) or in +animate (comprising human and non-human animate) vs. inanimate. DOM in Spanish is generally assumed to depend on the  $\pm$ animate contrast, but in some cases the  $\pm$ human contrast may also play a role (see discussion below).

- (7) Animacy Scale:  
human > animate > inanimate

human	animate	inanimate
+ human	– human	
+ animate		– animate

Besides the simple contrast between definite and indefinite, we also find different versions of the “Definiteness Scale”: The following is proposed by Aissen (2003, 437), who refers to Croft (1988). This scale integrates specificity into the Definiteness Scale by splitting the cell for indefinite NP into two. The whole scale can be divided into  $\pm$ definite or  $\pm$ specific; the latter is relevant for DOM in Turkish (see von Heusinger & Kornfilt (to appear)).

<sup>3</sup> Under certain conditions, *a* can be replaced by *para* ‘to’ (Campos 1999: 1550-1552).

- (8) Definiteness Scale (Aissen, 2003, 437):  
 personal pronoun > proper noun > definite NP > indefinite specific NP > indefinite non-specific NP

Pro >	PN >	Def >	Spec >	NSpec
+ definite			– definite	
+ spec				– spec

The Definiteness Scale in (8) cannot account for non-specific definite NPs, which play an important role in the extension of DOM in American Spanish (see section 4 below). Therefore, von Heusinger & Kaiser (2003) suggest regarding specificity as an additional dimension with two values, similar to the topicality dimension.<sup>4</sup>

DOM is used in languages to distinguish between the subject and the direct object if the direct object is too similar to a typical subject. What counts as “too similar” depends on the particular language. Thus DOM-languages differ with respect to which parameter they are sensitive to and at which point the scale is divided. In general, a high position on a scale tends to trigger DOM and a low position tends to block DOM. Aissen (2003, 450) cites the following languages that are sensitive to the Definiteness Scale, but differ in the transition point at which the scale is divided in triggering DOM and blocking DOM (excluding a space of optionality in these languages):<sup>5</sup>

- (9) Languages that realize DOM according to the Definiteness Scale:

	Pro >	PN >	Def >	Spec >	Nspec
Kalkatungu	–	–	–	–	–
Catalan	+	–	–	–	–
Pitjantjatjara	+	+	–	–	–
Hebrew	+	+	+	–	–
Turkish	+	+	+	+	–
Japanese	+	+	+	+	+

In Kalkatungu (Pama-Nyungan, Australia), no direct objects are marked, but all transitive subjects are (ergative case marking). In Catalan, the direct object is preceded by the marker *a* only if it is a (strong) personal pronoun. Proper names and definite NPs are not marked. Another Pama-Nyungan language of Australia, Pitjantjatjara, marks pronouns and proper name objects, but no definite NP objects. Hebrew marks all definite direct objects (personal pronouns, proper names and definite NP) and Turkish case-marks all specific direct objects, while Japanese marks all direct objects including non-specific indefinite ones. It is not clear whether Kalkatungu and Japanese are “good” DOM-languages since they do not show DOM contrasts; however, they might be first stages (Kalkatungu) or last stages (Japanese) in the evolution of DOM.

<sup>4</sup> There are additional reasons to assume a cross-categorization of  $\pm$ definite and  $\pm$ specific, such as the mood in the relative clause, as in (i) (see von Heusinger & Kaiser 2003, 61, for data from Spanish and von Heusinger 2002 for general conceptual considerations):

- (i) Cross-classification of definiteness and specificity

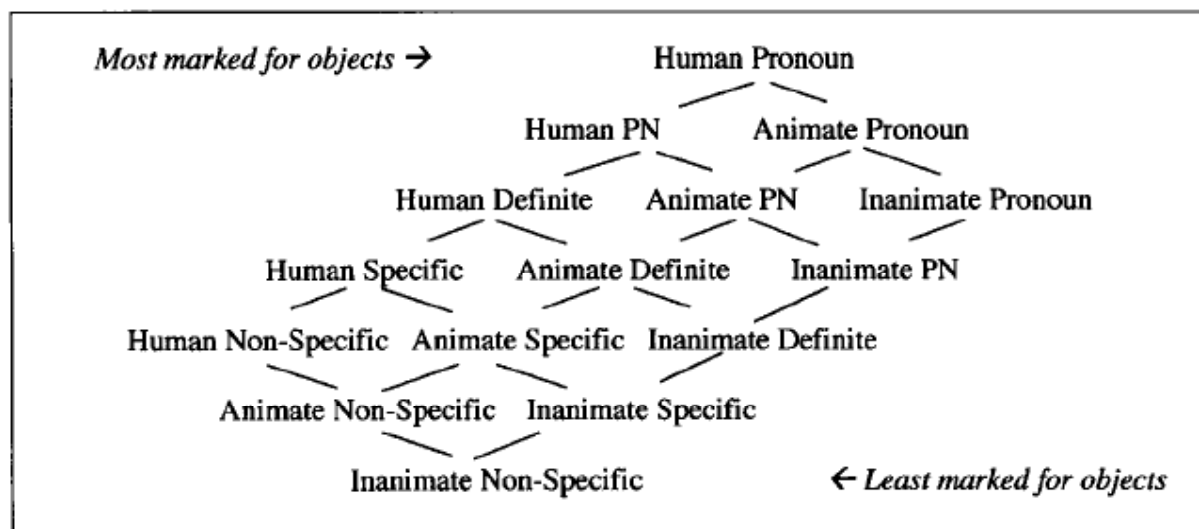
	[+ definite]	[– definite]
[+specific]	<i>la mujer que sabe inglés</i> thewoman who knows.IND English	<i>una mujer que sabe inglés</i> a woman who knows.IND English
[–specific]	<i>la mujer que sepa inglés</i> thewoman who knows.IND English	<i>una mujer que sepa inglés</i> a woman who knows.SUB English

<sup>5</sup> Bossong (1985, viii) reports that there are more than 300 languages known to be DOM-languages; he lists 30 in an appendix (1985, 177).



Languages also differ with respect to whether they express DOM according to one parameter (animacy, referential category, or topicality) or to more parameters. In the latter case, we get a more dimensional space, as it is the case in Spanish (for other cases see the list in Bossong 1985, 177). Aissen (2003, 459) combines the Animacy Scale and the Definiteness Scale by Harmonic Alignment to a two-dimensional space with a partial order, as in (10):

(10) Two-dimensional space of Animacy and Definiteness:



An alternative to (10) is the simpler representation (11), where the upper left corner is most marked for object and the lower right corner least marked for objects (see von Heusinger & Kaiser 2003 for an extensive discussion of different ways of combining two or more scales to one complex scale):

(11) Crossclassification of Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale:

	Pronoun >	Proper Noun >	Definite >	+Specific >	-Specific
human					
animate					
inanimate					

Both representations allow for equivalent descriptions of DOM in languages that depend on both parameters. While Aissen uses (10) for showing how the Old Spanish system extends to the Modern Spanish system, we prefer the crossclassification in (11), since this allows us to account for the introduction of new contrasts in that system.<sup>6</sup>

Spanish requires DOM for animate and specific direct object, as shown in the contrast in (12). For non-specific human direct objects, DOM is optional, as in (13a) (this seems indeed restricted to human objects, see Leonetti 2003 for details). Inanimate proper nouns are optionally marked by DOM (see Laca (to appear) for details).

<sup>6</sup> Aissen's classification cannot account for new parameters or a shift in the dependence from one parameter to another. She can only account for a shift along the two scales.

- (12) [+ animate, – definite, ± specific] (cf. Brugè & Brugger 1994, Leonetti 2003, 71)
- (a) [+ specific]:  
*Necesita a una enfermera que pasa la mañana con ella*  
 need.PRES.3SG A a nurse that spend.PRES.3.SG the morning with her  
 ‘S/he needs a nurse that spends the morning with her’
- (b) [– specific]:  
*Necesita una enfermera que pase la mañana con ella*  
 need.PRES.3SG A nurse that spend.PRES.SUBJ.3.SG the morning with her  
 ‘S/he needs a nurse to spend the morning with her’
- (13) [+ animate, – definite, – specific] (cf. Brugè & Brugger 1994, Leonetti 2003, 71)
- (a) *Necesitan (a) un ayudante que sepa inglés*  
 need.PRES.3PL A a assistant that speak.PRES.SUBJ.3.SG English  
 ‘S/he needs a nurse that spends the morning with her’
- (b) *Está buscando a alguien*  
 be.PRES.3SG looking A someone  
 ‘S/he is looking for someone’

We can summarize the findings in (14): The general condition for DOM in Modern Spanish is a specific and animate direct object; the marginal cases of optionality can only be explained by assuming that Spanish distinguishes between ±specific and ±human indefinite NPs. “Ø” indicates the lack of inanimate personal pronouns (= strong pronouns). If we leave the two optional cases aside, we can reduce the conditions for DOM in Spanish to ±spec and ±animate, as in table (14a), which is the commonly assumed generalization:

- (14) DOM in Modern Spanish: Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale combined:

Standard Spanish	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >	+ Spec >	– Spec
human	+	+	+	+	±
animate	+	+	+	+	–
inanimate	Ø	±	–	–	–

- (a) DOM in Modern Spanish: Simplified description:

Standard Spanish	+ Spec	– Spec
animate	+	–
inanimate	–	–

Besides the subtle interaction of animacy and definiteness with other factors, there is also a domain or space in which DOM is optional. This is either because we have not found the relevant or hidden parameters or because there is an irreducible variation. We will assume that the variability indicates an evolution in process, which is confirmed by the diachronic data collected by Melis (1995) and Laca (to appear), but also by the (impressionistic) data from American Spanish (Suñer 1988, Company 2002, quoted by Laca (to appear)), as discussed in the next two sections.

### 3. Diachronic evolution of DOM in Spanish

In the Romance language family, Spanish, Romanian and Sardinian show a broad use of DOM, Catalan and Portuguese show some minor effects, and some dialect variants of Italian and Retoromance show a variety of DOM effects.<sup>7</sup> We will concentrate on Spanish which shows DOM right from the beginning of its existence.

We will briefly sketch the differences between the use of the marker *a* in Old Spanish and Modern Standard Spanish (leaving out the different stages of its evolution, see Laca (to appear) for more details). This brief summary is based on the investigation of *Cid* by Melis (1995), the summary of the findings by Aissen (2003), and the detailed comparison of different stages of Spanish by Laca (to appear).

Like Modern Standard Spanish, Old Spanish shows DOM. DOM is obligatory with direct objects that are (strong) personal pronouns and proper names of both persons and animals (Melis 1995), see (15) and (16). Optional DOM holds for human and animate definite NPs, as illustrated in (17). There are also some cases of inanimate proper names (there are no inanimate personal pronouns). Non-definite direct (animate) objects never get DOM, as illustrated in (18).

- (15) Strong Pronoun (Old Spanish, 12<sup>th</sup> cent.) (cf. Ramsden 1961)
- (a) Dios *salve* a nuestros amigos e a **vós** más, señor (Cid, 3038)  
 God save.PRES.SUBJ.3PL A our friends and A you more lord  
 ‘May God save our friends and you above all, my lord’
- (b) e ssi fuéredes vençidos, non *rebtedes* a **nós** (Cid, 3566)  
 and if be.PRES.COND.2PL defeated not blame.IMP.2PL A us  
 ‘but if you are defeated you are not to blame us’
- (16) Proper Noun (Old Spanish, 12<sup>th</sup> cent.) (Laca (to appear))
- (a) *Matastes* a **Bucar** & arrancamos el campo (Cid, 2458)  
 kill.PAST.2.SG A Bucar and tear-away.PAST.1PL the field  
 ‘you killed Bucar and and we have won the battle’
- (b) con afân *gané* a **Valencia** (Cid, 1635)  
 with effort win.PAST.1.SG A Valencia  
 ‘after a great struggle I won Valencia’
- (17) [+ animate, + definite] (Old Spanish, 12<sup>th</sup> cent.) (Laca (to appear), Melis 1995, 145)
- (a) *Reçiba* a **mios yernos** commo elle pudier mejor  
 receive.IMP.2SG A my sons-in-law as he can.PRES.COND.3.SG better  
 ‘Let him give to my sons-in-law the finest possible welcome’ (Cid, 2637)
- (b) Ca yo *case* **sus fijas** con yfantes de Carrion (Cid, 2956)  
 for I marry.PAST.1SG. his daughters with Infantes of Carrion  
 ‘for I married his daughters to the Infantes of Carrion’

<sup>7</sup> See Rohlfs (1971), Roegiest (1979), Isenberg (1986), Laca (1987; 1995; to appear), Leonetti (1990; 2003), Pensado (1995), Picallo (1994) among other for Spanish; see Farkas (1978), Farkas & von Heusinger (2003) for Romanian, Stark (2002, 2003) for Italian, Reich (2003) for Brazilian Portuguese, Bossong (1982), Mensching (this volume) for Sardinian, only to name a minimal selection of the vast literature on these issues.

(18) [+ animate, – definite] (Old Spanish, 12<sup>th</sup> cent.)

- (a) Tanto *traen* las grandes ganancias, **muchos gañados de ovejas**  
 very bring.PAST.3.PL the big wealths many herds of sheep  
**e de vacas** (Cid, 480-481)  
 and of cows

‘They brought such great wealth, many herds of sheep and cows’

- (b) yo quieroles dar axuvar tres mill marcos de valor,  
 I will-them give dowry three thousand marks of value  
*darvos e mulas e palafres*, muy gruesos de sazón (Cid, 2571-2572)  
 give-you as well mules as palfreys very thick of ripeness

‘I wish to give them the sum of three thousand marks as a dowry,  
 I give you mules and palfreys, sturdy and in prime condition.’

We can summarize this observation in table (19). If we compare (19) with the situation in Modern Spanish, as in (14), we see that DOM has developed considerably to the right of the Definiteness Scale (while the Animacy Scale has not been affected from this extension, so far): from obligatory DOM for pronouns and proper nouns, and optional DOM for definite nouns in Old Spanish to obligatory DOM for specific NPs and optional DOM for non-specific indefinite NPs – all for animate direct objects (cf. Laca (to appear), 16).

(19) DOM in Old Spanish: Crossclassification of Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale

Old Spanish	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >	+ Spec >	– Spec
human	+	+	±	–	–
animate	+	+	±	–	–
inanimate	∅	±	–	–	–

(14) DOM in Modern Spanish:  
 Crossclassification of Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale

Modern Spanish	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >	+ Spec >	– Spec
human	+	+	+	+	±
animate	+	+	+	+	–
inanimate	∅	±	–	–	–

In order to understand this evolution of DOM we examine one case of optionality in more detail. Laca (to appear, 25) discusses the optionality of DOM with human definite direct objects. She notes that only a third of all instances are preceded by the marker *a* (36% or 13/36). 8 out of those 11 (we do not know where the two missing are) are cases of clitic doubling and / or preposing, as in (20) (her (56)). In contrast, most of the human definite objects without DOM are postverbal, as in (21) (her (57)):

- (20) Clitic doubling and topicalization in Old Spanish: (Laca (to appear))
- (a) Assi **las escarniremos alas hijas del Campeador** (Cid, 2555)  
 so them humiliate.FUT.1.PL A-the daughters of-the Battler  
 ‘So we shall humiliate the Battler's daughters’
- (b) **A mis hijas siruades** que vuestras mugieres son (Cid, 2581)  
 A my daughters serve.PRES.2.PL that your wives are  
 ‘Look after my daughters, for they are your wives’
- (c) **A las Sus hijas en braço las prendia** (Cid, 275)  
 A the your daughters in arm them held.PAST.3.SG  
 ‘He gathered his daughters in his arms’
- (21) Postverbal position of direct objects in Old Spanish (Laca (to appear)):
- (a) Plega a Dios & a Santa Maria, que aun con mis manos *case* **estas**  
 pray to God and to Virgin Mary that even with my hands marry.SUBJ these  
**mis hijas** (Cid, 282)  
 my daughters  
 ‘Pray to God and to Virgin Mary that I will marry my daughters with my own hands’
- (b) En braços *tenedes* **mis hijas tan blancas commo el sol** (Cid, 2333)  
 in hands hold.PRES.2.PL my daughters so white as the sun  
 ‘You hold my daughters so white as the sun in your hands’
- (c) *Escarniremos las hijas del Campeador* (Cid, 2551)  
 humiliate.FUT.1.PL the daughters of-the Battler  
 ‘We shall humiliate the Battler's daughters’

Laca (to appear, 25) summarizes her findings by stating that topicalisation together with clitic doubling favors, and the lack of clitic doubling disfavors DOM. Here she follows Melis (1995, 161) who summarizes her study of the marker *a* in the *Cid* with the thesis that topicalization is the driving factor for DOM.

This observation is confirmed cross-linguistically. For example, DOM in Turkish is realized by a case suffix that is obligatory for specific direct objects in the immediate preverbal position. DOM is always obligatory when the direct object is preposed – independently of the referential category (see von Heusinger & Kornfilt (to appear)). Bossong (1985, 135) formulates a similar rule for Persian, where topicality of the direct object requires DOM.

As already noted by Thomson (1912), Lazard (1984), Bossong (1985) and others, topicality is the third parameter governing DOM. We need a three-dimensional space for representing DOM in Old Spanish, as in (22):

- (22) DOM in Old Spanish:  
Crossclassification of Animacy Scale, Definiteness Scale, and Topicality

<b>+top</b>	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >	Indefinite
human	+	+	+	-
animate	+	+	+	-
inanimate	∅	±	-	-

<b>-top</b>	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >	Indefinite
human	+	+	-	-
animate	+	+	-	-
inanimate	∅	±	-	-

Even though topicality is an independent parameter for determining DOM, it is not clear whether we really need a three-dimensional space for DOM in Old Spanish. Topicality seems to play a role only for definite NPs. Therefore, we conclude that it is sufficient to assume that  $\pm$ top divides the cell for +definite NPs into two cells, as in (23):<sup>8</sup> We assume that topicality is a “facilitating” category for the extension of DOM into the definite NP-cell, since the extension starts with +top definite NPs, which is the situation observed on Old Spanish and described in (23).

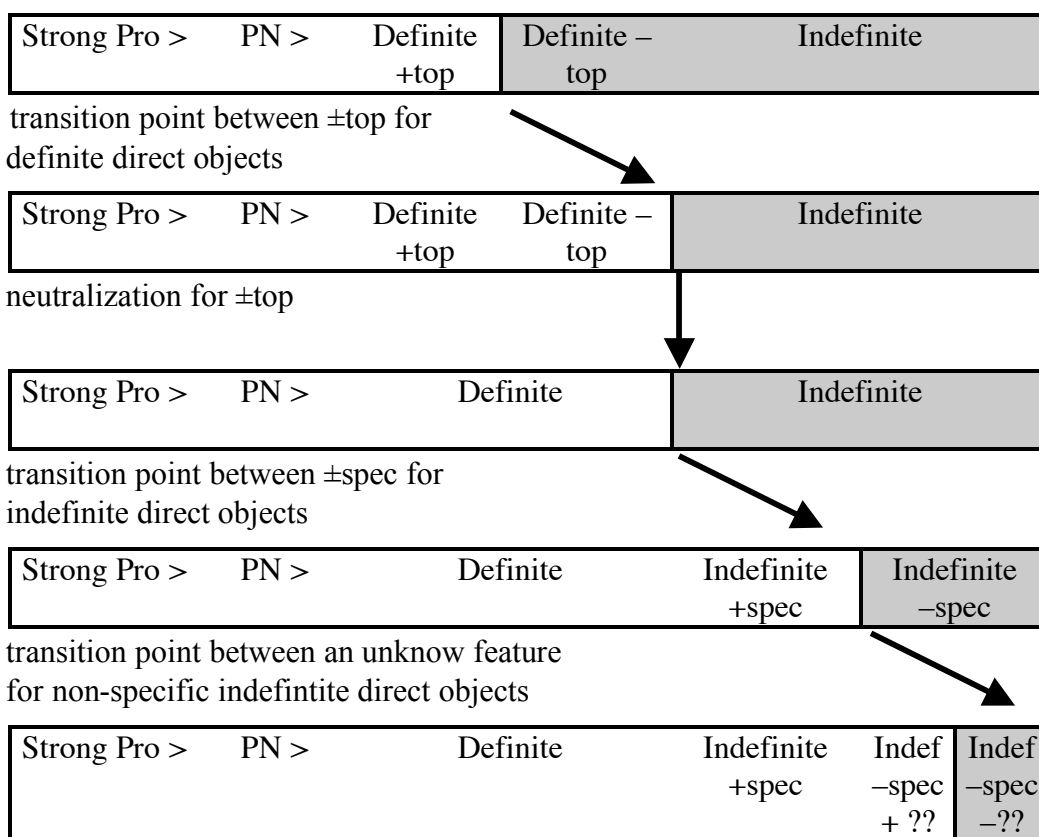
- (23) DOM in Old Spanish:  
Crossclassification of Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale, Topicality for +definite

Old Spanish	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >		Indefinite
			+top	-top	
human	+	+	+	-	-
animate	+	+	+	-	-
inanimate	∅	±	-	-	-

If we now try to describe the variance in the modern system, the architecture of the representation makes a difference. It seems that topicality does not play a role for the optionality of DOM for non-specific human direct objects. This means topicality is neutralized in the context of human direct objects (for animate and inanimate objects see below). An easy way to explain this change would be to assume that the contrast between +top and -top for definites was replaced by the contrast between +spec and -spec for indefinites. This would also mean that we can reduce the three-dimensional space to two dimensions, as in (14) above. We can now account for the evolution of DOM from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish, as in (24). The important point to note is that the transitional parameters, like topicality or specificity, only come into the play at the transition point. Those parameters do not influence other cells, above or below the transition cell. Once the transition progressed further, the additional parameter is neutralized and a new transition cell is reached. Again an additional parameter can ease the transition etc. However, it is unclear how we can account for the optionality of DOM for non-specific indefinite direct object. We can either say that this is just variability, or we can assume that there is an additional – yet unknown – feature that has the transitional function.

<sup>8</sup> In Aissen’s representation, we would always have to account for the whole three-dimensional space, even if it is obvious that not all cells are really needed. In our approach the specification of one feature can be restricted to one (or more) cells, but not necessarily to the whole space. This often seems to be the case for transitional cells.

## (24) Evolution of DOM from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish for animate objects



To summarize our findings so far: DOM in Spanish has extended from marking animate pronouns and proper names to marking animate and specific NPs. It seems that at one intermediate step there was a clear distinction between topicalized definite and non-topicalized definites. Once the evolution has affected the whole definite cell, topicality is neutralized. The next step of the evolution affects the indefinite cell. Here the additional feature  $\pm$ specific allows for a smoother evolution of DOM. This observation has led us to conclude that the evolution of DOM is facilitated by intervening or “transitional” categories such as topicality and specificity. These categories are only active for the category to which DOM is developing: topicality for definite NPs, specificity for indefinite NPs. We can only speculate why we find such pairs: Topicality expresses a prominent contrast that (most often) affects definite NPs, while specificity expresses a contrast that (most) often affects indefinite NPs.

#### 4. Synchronic variance in American Spanish

DOM developed from marking pronouns and proper nouns in Old Spanish to marking specific NPs in Modern Spanish. One question is whether DOM develops further – the optionality of the non-specific indefinite animate NPs seems to confirm such an evolution along the Definiteness Scale. The natural endpoint of such an evolution would be an obligatory case marker for animate direct objects. This, however, seems to be blocked in Spanish because of the homonym form of the indirect object, which is generally marked by *a*. We therefore conclude that the evolution of DOM in Spanish for animate direct object will not develop any further. However, the evolution of DOM along the Animacy Scale to inanimate direct objects seems possible and is confirmed by data from American Spanish, as presented in (5), repeated here as (25) – all these sentences are ungrammatical in Standard (European) Spanish. Inanimate direct objects can optionally be marked by DOM if they are definite and specific.

(25) [- animate], [+ definite], [+ specific]: (cf. Kany 1951, 2, Laca (to appear), 8)

- (a) *Vio a las sierras.*  
saw.PAST.3.SG A the mountains  
'(S)he saw the mountains'
- (b) *Cosecharon al maíz.*  
harvest. PAST.3.PL A-the corn  
'They harvested the corn'
- (c) *Una vez, atravesando el Pont Neuf, vi al barquito en cuestión.*  
once crossing the Pont Neuf see.PAST.1.SG A-the little-boat in question  
'Once, when I was crossing the Pont Neuf, I saw the little boat in question'

While we have described the evolution of DOM from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish as an extension along the Definiteness Scale, it seems that the synchronic variation affects rather the Animacy Scale, as illustrated in (26) and (27).

(26) DOM in Modern Spanish:  
Crossclassification of Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale

Modern Spanish	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >	+ Spec >	- Spec
human	+	+	+	+	±
animate	+	+	+	+	-
inanimate	∅	±	-	-	-

(27) DOM in American Spanish  
Crossclassification of Animacy Scale and Definiteness Scale

American Spanish	Strong Pro >	PN >	Definite >		Indefinite	
			+ spec	-spec	+spec	-spec
human	+	+	+	+	+	±
animate	+	+	+	±	+	±
inanimate	∅	±	±	-	-	-

These data raise at least three issues:

- (i) Are these data reliable and do they show an evolution, or are they just simple variations? Can we observe more such cases?
- (ii) If the table in (27) is correct, we have to assume that specificity is independent of the Definiteness Scale. This contradicts the Definiteness Scale and our assumption that specificity is a facilitating category for indefinite NPs;
- (iii) If there is a synchronic variation or evolution, can we account for a parameter that facilitates this shift?

In the discussion of the evolution of DOM from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish such facilitating parameters were topicality for the definite cell and specificity for the indefinite cell. For the synchronic variation, we have different options: definiteness for the +specific cell, topicality, clitic doubling, or specificity for the +definite cell.

In order to answer question (i) we have to exclude that the use of DOM is not triggered by other factors. Laca (to appear, 8; ex. (14)-(15)) discusses some of them. The inanimate definite direct objects in (28) are not preceded by the marker *a*, following the restrictions in Standard Spanish (see (26)). However, in (29a-d) the marker *a* is optional, violating the restriction just mentioned, which are overwritten by other factors, such as the lexical nature of



the verb, as in (29a), a secondary predication of the object, as in (29b), the preverbal (or topicalized) position, as in (29c), or the clitic doubling in Latin-American varieties of Spanish, as in (29d). The last two parameters already have been mentioned as potentially facilitating parameters, but the first two are of a different nature and should be excluded from further investigation.

- (28) [- animate + definite], no DOM (Laca (to appear), 8)
- (a) *Cosechó* (\*a) **la cebada**  
 harvest.PAST.3.SG A the barley  
 ‘He harvested the barley’
- (b) *Fotografió* (?\*a) **los árboles**  
 photograph.PAST.3.SG A the trees  
 ‘He took a picture of the trees’
- (c) El sol *iluminaba* (?\*a) **la sacristía**  
 the sun illuminate.PAST.3.SG A the vestry  
 ‘The sun illuminated the vestry’
- (d) *Abandonaron* (\*a) **los barquitos de papel**  
 abandon.PAST.3.PL A the little-boats of paper  
 ‘They abandoned the little paper boats’
- (29) [- animate + definite], but DOM (Laca (to appear), 8)
- (a) El girasol *supera* ?(a) **la cebada** en rendimiento  
 the sunflower surpasses A the barley in produce  
 ‘The sunflower surpasses the barley in the produce’
- (b) La tormenta *dejó* ?(a) **los árboles** sin hojas  
 the storm leave.PAST.3.SG A the trees without leaves  
 ‘The storm left the trees without leaves’
- (c) **A la sacristía<sub>i</sub>** *la<sub>i</sub> traspasaba* un buen sablazo de sol (Roegiest 1980:146)  
 the vestry her pierce.PAST.3.SG a good cut of sun  
 ‘A good cut of sun pierced the vestry’
- (d) **Los<sub>i</sub>** *dejaban* abandonados ?(a) **los barquitos de papel<sub>i</sub>**  
 them leave.PAST.3.PL abandoned A the little-boats of paper  
 ‘They abandoned the little paper boats’

Further factors that facilitate the use of DOM are discussed by Torrego Salcedo (1999) and García García (this volume). They include factors such as telicity, verbal meaning shift, and agentivity, all of which also trigger transitivity (see Hopper & Traugott 1980).

Even if we can exclude a certain kind of variation, we are still not in a position to answer either of the three issues raised above. We rather present and discuss some results from a test corpus search in the next section that allows us to formulate a more accurate research program in order to investigate the synchronic variation of DOM in American Spanish.

## 5. Some Observation from a Test Corpus Search

In order to test the hypothesis that DOM is developing to inanimate definite non-specific and to animate indefinite non-specific direct objects in Modern American Spanish, we have formulated two main questions and three minor ones. The main question A is whether we find DOM with *inanimate* definite specific direct objects in American Spanish. The main question B is whether this evolution also affects the animate indefinite non-specific cell, which in Standard Spanish rarely allows DOM: The prediction is that we find some examples for both cases. A minor question is whether there is a significant difference between DOM-marking of animate definite specific vs. *non-specific* direct objects. This is relevant to investigate whether specificity is a driving force or not. The literature discusses DOM-marking for animate definite non-specific direct objects controversially, generally it is assumed that such cases behave like the specific ones. A second minor question concerns the distribution between animate indefinite specific vs. non-specific direct objects. Here the assumption is that specific indefinites are obligatorily marked, while non-specific indefinites are optionally marked. The final minor question concerns the additional parameters involved in the DOM-marking.

Questions and predictions with respect to DOM-marking:

- A: Do we find DOM with inanimate definite specific direct objects?  
Prediction: yes, some for Modern American Spanish
- B: Do we find DOM with animate indefinite non-specific objects?  
Prediction: yes, some for Modern American Spanish
- C: Is there a difference between DOM-marking of animate definite specific and animate definite non-specific direct objects?  
Prediction: controversial in the literature for Standard Spanish, it is generally assumed that there is no difference (cf. Leonetti 2003)
- D: How stable is the distribution of DOM between animate indefinite specific objects (obligatory) and animate indefinite non-specific objects (optional)?  
Prediction: stable for Standard Spanish
- E: What additional parameter may interfere or determine DOM?

We have undertaken four test searches in very restricted corpora of different varieties of American Spanish. All corpora contain quite “informal” speech of speakers from four countries in South and Middle America:

- (i) Argentinian Spanish:  
We used a self-collected corpus of email messages sent to the editor of the Argentinian newspaper *La Nación* regarding a murder at a school in Buenos Aires.  
(Letters to the Editor of *La Nación* by Email Communication, 30.9.2004-6.10.2004  
<http://www.lanacion.com.ar/>)
- (ii) Uruguayan Spanish:  
We used a self-collected corpus of short stories, written mostly for children and dealing with animals and hunting for animals, from two Uruguayan writers, Horacio Quiroga (1878-1937) and Juan Carlos Onetti (1909-1994).  
([http://omega.ilce.edu.mx:3000/sites/fondo2000/vol2/30/htm/MCT\\_2.html](http://omega.ilce.edu.mx:3000/sites/fondo2000/vol2/30/htm/MCT_2.html))
- (iii) and (iv): Peruan Spanish and Mexican Spanish:  
we used informal interviews taken from the *Macrocorpus de la norma linguistica culta de las principales ciudades del mundo hispánico* from speakers in Lima and in Mexico City (Samper Padilla 1998).

We selected 10 common Spanish verbs that regularly take a direct object and that are not lexically determined whether or not they take the marker *a*: *adorar* ‘adore’, *amar* ‘to love’, *buscar* ‘to look for’, *conocer* ‘to know’, *encontrar* ‘to meet’, *llevar* ‘to take along’, *mirar* ‘to look at’, *traer* ‘to bring’, *ver* ‘to see’, *visitar* ‘to visit’. None of the corpus were tagged with any information we could have used for our search. Therefore we had to search by hand, which was even more complicated because we had to search for the different morphological shapes of the verbs (e.g. *ver*: *veo*, *ves*, *ve*, *vemos*, *veis*, *ven*; *veía*, *veías*; *vi*; *visto*; *viendo* etc.). All contexts in which the verb appeared were characterized according to the following parameters: Is there a direct object in that context; and if so is it animate or inanimate? Since clitic doubling is assumed to be a DOM-trigger, we also checked for this; and finally we sorted the occurrences according to the use of DOM or not.

- (30) Parameters of categorization
- a) direct object or not
  - b) animate or inanimate direct object
  - c) clitic doubling or not
  - d) object realized
    - (i) with *a* (= DOM)
    - (ii) without *a* (no DOM)
    - (iii) as cliticized pronoun

We have then listed all the information in the following table (31), where we have distinguished between  $\pm$  animate and then for each category between *DOM*, *no DOM*, *object clitic*, *clitic doubling with DOM*, and *clitic doubling without DOM*. We expected for the animate case direct objects with *a*, as well as without *a* since the category comprises definite and indefinite NPs that are specific or non-specific. For inanimate direct objects, the research hypothesis predicts some cases with *a*, reflecting the evolution of DOM in American Spanish. We also listed clitic pronominal objects, which appear quite often. Finally, we accounted for clitic doubling as well, since it is closely related to DOM. According to Bossong (1985) it is the verbal expression of DOM, while *a* is the nominal expression of it; others (Brugé & Brugger 1996) assume that the marker *a* depends on the occurrence of clitic doubling. In von Heusinger & Kaiser (2003) we have summarized the different assumptions and we concluded that at least clitic doubling and (nominal) DOM depend on similar parameters, the main difference, however, is that clitic doubling is not sensitive to  $\pm$ animate. This would predict that there exists DOM with clitic doubling in the animate case, while no DOM in the inanimate case, even with clitic doubling. If we find DOM with clitic doubling in the inanimate case, this would confirm the hypothesis of evolution in American Spanish.

(31) Expected object marking for the contrast  $\pm$ animate in American Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+animate					-animate					no di- rect ob- ject
		with <i>a</i>	without <i>a</i>	ob- ject = clitic	clitic doubl.		with <i>a</i>	with out <i>a</i>	ob- ject = cl	clitic doubl.		
					with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>				with <i>a</i>	with out <i>a</i>	
<i>verb</i>		yes	yes	yes	yes	no	SOME	yes	yes	SOME	yes	

Given our assumption that both specificity and definiteness are relevant – and independent – factors for the use of DOM in Spanish, we further refined our search with respect to these factors for both animate and inanimate direct objects. For animate objects, we selected three verbs (*conocer*, *encontrar* and *ver*) and analyzed the direct object marking in a more detailed

manner by distinguishing between definiteness and specificity. We predict that both factors influence the non-canonical use of DOM and lead to some variation:

(32) Expected object marking with +animate and  $\pm$ definite objects in American Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+animate														
		+definite										- definite				
		+specific					-specific									
		+a	-a	cl	cd		+a	-a	cl	cd		+a	-a	cl	cd	
			+a	-a				+a	-a				+a	-a		
<i>conocer</i>																
<i>encontrar</i>																
<i>ver</i>																
<b>total</b>		yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	S O M E ??	yes	yes	S O M E	yes	y e s	no	y e s	y e s

For inanimate objects, we looked for all ten verbs selected in our test search. What we would expect here is that DOM is used both with definite and indefinite objects, in particular, when they are doubled by a clitic pronoun. For inanimate definite direct objects we only expected DOM with specific objects, but not with non-specific ones.

(33) Expected object marking with -animate and  $\pm$ definite objects in American Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	-animate														
		+definite										-definite				
		+specific					-specific									
		+a	-a	cl	cd		+a	-a	cl	cd		+a	-a	cl	cd	
			+a	-a				+a	-a				+a	-a		
<i>verb</i>																
<b>total</b>		S O M E	yes	yes	S O M E	yes	no	yes	yes	S O M E	yes	S O M E	yes	no	S O M E	yes

In the following four sections we will present our results and discuss them in detail.

### 5.1 Spanish in Argentina

The first table summarizes the results of the evaluation of the use of DOM for all direct objects used with the ten selected verbs in the Argentinian corpus:

#### (34) Overall summary of contrast $\pm$ animate and DOM in Argentinian Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+animate					-animate					no direct object
		with <i>a</i>	with out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubling		with <i>a</i>	with out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubling		
					with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>				with <i>a</i>	without <i>a</i>	
<i>adorar</i>	1						1					0
<i>amar</i>	0											0
<i>buscar</i>	8	1	2				4					1
<i>conocer</i>	22			4	4		8	1				5
<i>encontrar</i>	16		1	7			5	2				1
<i>llevar</i>	12	1	2	3			5					1
<i>mirar</i>	8	1	1				2					4
<i>traer</i>	0						1					0
<i>ver</i>	32	1	2				9	1				19
<i>visitar</i>	1			1								0
<b>total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>

We observe some variance with respect to the use of DOM with animate direct objects. We have exactly the same number of instances where DOM is used as where it is not used, namely eight. However, there are no instances of DOM with inanimate objects, which means that the main prediction A is not confirmed.

The more detailed analysis for our three selected verbs shows that the omission of DOM for animate objects is restricted to *indefinite* objects:

#### (35) Summary of DOM with +animate and $\pm$ definite objects in Argentinian Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+ animate											
		+definite								-definite			
		+specific				-specific							
		+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a	cl	cd
			+a	-a			+a	-a			+a	-a	
<i>conocer</i>	8			4	4								
<i>encontrar</i>	8			7						1			
<i>ver</i>	3	1								2			
<b>total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>					<b>3</b>			

All three examples of the omission of DOM, one with *encontrar* and two with *ver*, are given under A-(1):

- A-(1a) he *encontrado* **personajes** **atrayentes**  
 have.PRES.1.SG met persons attractive  
 ‘I have met attractive people’
- A-(1b) al *ver* **una persona** *vestida de negro* *decimos* “*mira ese falopero*”  
 when see.INF a person clothed in black say.PRES.1.PL look this junky  
 ‘When seeing a person drawn in black we say look at this junky.’
- A-(1c) al *ver* **una persona** *con cresta* *decimos* “*mira a ese payaso*”  
 when see.INF a person with comb say.PRES.1.PL look A this clown  
 ‘When seeing a person with a comb we say look at this clown.’

Note that in all three cases the direct object is non-specific. According to our predictions and to what has been generally observed, this is a context where DOM is not required in Spanish. Thus, the omission of DOM is due here to the non-specificity of the direct object.

Interestingly, A-(1b) provides another instance for the absence of DOM. This is particularly interesting because the object (*ese falopero*) is not indefinite, but definite and animate. Therefore one should expect the use of DOM. Note that the very same person uttering A-(1b) also utters A-(1c) in the same context and in combination with the same verb (*mirar*). Here, however, s/he uses DOM before the direct animate object (*ese payaso*). The explanation for this difference we have is that *falopero*, which seems to be a fashion word in Argentina, may refer not only to somebody who is addicted to drugs but also to somebody who died because of drug abuse and who is collected by the Argentinian police in a black trash bag, a fact to which the characterization *vestida de negro* probably refers. Therefore the reason why *a* is omitted in front of *falopero* could be that the speaker would like to refer to a (almost) dead drug addict.

The remaining instances where DOM is omitted with animate objects in the Argentinian corpus provides evidence for other factors which determine the use of DOM with animate objects. For the verb *buscar* we find two cases:

- A-(2a) Estos pensamientos son una forma más de *buscar* **supuestos demonios** para  
 these reasonings are a form more to search supposed demons for  
 explicar problemas mucho más complejos".  
 explain problems much more complex  
 ‘These reasonings are more a form of looking for supposed demons in order to explain much more complex problems’
- A-(2b) acaso todavía no hemos aprendido que mientras pueda *buscar*  
 perhaps still not have.INF.1PL learned that while can.SUBJ.3.S search.INF  
**el culpable** en otro lado, ... nuestra conciencia de "gente normal"  
 the guilty on other side our conscience as people normal  
 estará más tranquila  
 be.FUT.3.SG more quiet  
 ‘Perhaps we have not learned yet that, while you can search the guilty on the other side, our conscience as ‘normal people’ will be better’

In A-(2a) the object is both indefinite and non-specific, which causes, as already seen in A-(1), the omission of DOM. In A-(2b), however, the object is definite, but it is also non-specific: the speaker does not refer to a specific guilty person, but to a non-specific (or generic) person. Thus, the reason why *a* is not used here is that the object is marked [–specific], which contradicts the general prediction in C.

Another factor involving variation with respect to the use of DOM is shown in A-(3), where a relative pronoun, being the object of the embedded clause, is used without *a*:

- A-(3) Opina que los niños **que** el padre *llevó* a Jordania están  
 thinks.PRES.3.SG that the children that the father take.PAST.3.SG to Jordan are  
 mejor sin su madre.  
 better without her mother  
 ‘S/he thinks that the children which the father took along to Jordan are better without her mother’

Here the omission of *a* is due to the fact that the relative pronom *que* is used instead of *quiénes* which would be the standard relative pronoun in this context and which would require the use of DOM. However, *que*, which is very frequent in colloquial speech, is normally used without any preposition, i.e. also without the DOM-marker *a* (Real Academia Española 1973: 529).

The remaining case where *a* is not used with an animate object is shown in A-(4):

- A-(4) Mañana cuando *lleve* **sus chiquitos** a la escuela preguntele  
 tomorrow when bring.PRES.3.SG your children to the school ask.IMP-her  
 a la profesora que hace ella en los casos que le detallé  
 to the teacher what does she in these cases that to-you spread.PAST.1.SG  
 ‘Tomorrow when you bring your children to school ask the teacher what she does in these cases I spread to you’

Here, the omission of *a* is quite surprising, since one would expect the possessive *sus chiquitos* to be human, definite and specific. However, it could be the case that the speaker intended to say that when the person brings *whatever* children s/he has to school s/he should ask the teacher.

As far as animate objects used in clitic doubling constructions are concerned, all instances we find contain the DOM marker *a*. All instances are restricted to preverbal animate object NPs used with the verb *conocer*:

- A-(5a) **a la forista**<sub>i</sub> **la**<sub>i</sub> *conocemos* hace mucho  
 A the participant of the forum her.CL know.PRES.1.PL makes long  
 ‘We have known the participant of the forum for a long time’
- A-(5b) **a la forista Shaki**<sub>i</sub> **la**<sub>i</sub> *conocemos* de hace mucho  
 A the participant of the forum Shaki her.CL know.PRES.1.PL of makes longtime  
 ‘We have known the participant of the forum Shaki for a long time’
- A-(5c) ... que **a la tal Shaki**<sub>i</sub> se **la**<sub>i</sub> *conozca* “de hace mucho”  
 ... that A the afore-said Shaki one her.CL know.SUBJ.3.SG of makes long  
 ‘... that one has known the afore-said Shaki for a long time’
- A-(5d) Y **a Zumbudrule**<sub>i</sub> me *gustaría conocerlo*<sub>i</sub> a través de sus opiniones  
 and A Zumbudrule to-me.CL would-like know-him.CL through his opinions  
 ‘I would like to know Zumbudrule by his opinions’

The results of our detailed analysis for the use of DOM with inanimate objects are given for all verbs in table (36):

## (36) Summary of DOM with –animate and ±definite objects in Argentinian Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	–animate													
		+definite								–definite					
		+specific				–specific									
		+a	–a	cl	cd		+a	–a	cl	cd		+a	–a	cl	cd
			+a	–a				+a	–a				+a	–a	
<i>adorar</i>	1		1												
<i>amar</i>	0														
<i>buscar</i>	4		1								3				
<i>conocer</i>	9		7	1							1				
<i>encontrar</i>	7		2	2							3				
<i>llevar</i>	5		5												
<i>mirar</i>	2		2												
<i>traer</i>	0														
<i>ver</i>	10		7	1							2				
<i>visitar</i>	0														
<b>total</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>							<b>9</b>				

As already mentioned, there are no instances of DOM with inanimate objects in the whole Argentina corpus. Most cases of inanimate objects are definite NPs or clitic pronouns, as exemplified in A-(6):

A-(6a) No *conocen* **la legislación** que los protege  
 not know.PRES.3.PL the legislation that them protect  
 ‘They don’t know the legislation that protects them’

A-(6b) ... los que no **la** *conocian*  
 those that not her.CL know.PAST.3.PL  
 ‘...those who don’t know her’

Examples for the occurrence of indefinite inanimate objects are given in A-(7):

A-(7a) ¿Alguien *conoce* **alguna dirección** ...?  
 somebody knows some address  
 ‘Does somebody know any address?’

A-(7b) y según parece ves **bastante tele**  
 and as seems see.2.SG enough television  
 ‘and as it seems you are watching TV quite often’

In sum, although we are dealing with very informal speech the Argentina corpus does not provide any example for the main prediction A showing an extension of the use of DOM. However we saw an interesting case of the lack of DOM with a non-specific definite animate direct object.



## 5.2 Spanish in Uruguay

Table (37) provides the results for the use of DOM in our corpus from Uruguayan Spanish:

(37) Overall summary of contrast  $\pm$ animate and DOM in Uruguayan Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+animate					-animate					no direct object
		with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubl.		with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubl.		
					with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>				with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>	
<i>adorar</i>	0											
<i>amar</i>	1						1					
<i>buscar</i>	15		3				4	3				5
<i>conocer</i>	13	3					7					3
<i>encontrar</i>	13	2		4			4	2				1
<i>llevar</i>	22	1	1	1			13	2				4
<i>mirar</i>	70	4		31	1		1	21	2			10
<i>traer</i>	4			1				2	1			
<i>ver</i>	56	11	3	14	1			14	1			12
<i>visitar</i>	1			1								
<b>total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>11</b>			<b>35</b>

As in the Argentinian corpus, we can observe here some variations with respect to the use of DOM. While the majority of animate objects are either clitic pronouns or nouns used with DOM, we have seven instances where DOM is not used with an animate object NP. Furthermore we find one case where *a* is used in combination with an inanimate object, which seems to confirm our main prediction A.

As far as *conocer*, *llevar* and *ver* are concerned, it is only the verb *ver* which occurs with animate objects lacking the marker *a*:

(38) Overall summary of DOM with +animate and  $\pm$ definite objects in Uruguayan Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+ animate													
		+definite								-definite					
		+specific				-specific									
		+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a
<i>conocer</i>	3	3													
<i>encontrar</i>	6	2		4											
<i>ver</i>	29	10	1	14	1							1	2		
<b>total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>							<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>		

In two of these cases, the omission of DOM is apparently due to the indefiniteness and – disputably – due to their non-specificity. Since both objects are preceded by a numeral and determined by a following relative clause one would rather assume that they are specific. This, however, depends on the final definition of specificity, which is not agreed upon in the literature. An additional factor that might inhibit a DOM-marking is the plural.

U-(1a) de lluvia me permitió *ver*, a la puerta misma de la carpa, **dos enormes**  
 at rain me allowed see.INF at the door same of the tent two enormous  
**víboras de cascabel** que se pasaban y repasaban una por encima de la otra,  
 rattlesnakes which REFL went and re-went one for over of the other  
 ‘As it was raining, I could see from the same door of the tent two big rattlesnakes  
 which were intertwining’

U-(1b) y *veo* **tres hombres** que vienen corriendo hacia mí  
 and see.pres.1.SG three men who come running against me  
 ‘and I see three men running towards me’

The third case where *a* is omitted with a definite direct object of the verb *ver* is shown in U-(1c):

U-(1c) Al *ver* **aquellos tres pichones** con su pelusa gris, ...  
 to-the see these three pigeons with their fluff gray  
 ‘upon seeing these three pigeons with their gray fluff, ...’

In our view, here, the non-use of DOM could be attributed to the fact that the object is not marked with the feature [+human], but with the feature [+animal] which sometimes could cause the omission of *a*. Note, however, that in all other cases where in the Uruguayan corpus an animal is used as direct definite object it is marked with *a*. See, for instances, the examples in U-(2):

U-(2a) ¿Ustedes creerán que *veía* **al tigre**?  
 you believe.FUT.3.PL that saw.1.SG A-the tiger  
 ‘Will you believe that I saw the tiger?’

U-(2b) En la oscuridad apenas alcanzaba a *ver* **al ciervo**  
 in the darkness hardly succeeded.1.SG to see.INF A-the stag  
 ‘In the darkness I could hardly see the stag’

As far as the omission of *a* with verbs other than *conocer*, *encontrar* and *ver* is concerned, we only find cases with indefinite and non-specific animate objects:

U-(3a) y subió a la superficie a *buscar* **otra presa**...  
 and rise.PAST.3.SG to the surface to search other prey  
 ‘and s/he rose to the surface to look for another prey’

U-(3b) a confundir a la Gracia que *buscaba* y elegía **hombres** y actitudes  
 and confound.INF A the Gracia that searched and chose men and activities  
 para las fotos, ...  
 for the photographs  
 ‘and confounding Gracia who was searching and choosing men and activities for the  
 photographs, ...’

- U-(3c) Al invadir una casa, se desparraman por todas partes, como  
 to-the invade.INF a house REFL disperse for all sides like  
 enloquecidas de hambre, *buscando* a la carrera **un ser vivo** que  
 mads of hunger searching in the race a being living that  
 devorar.  
 devour  
 ‘When invading a house they disperse to all sides, mad with hunger, looking quickly  
 for a living being to devour’
- U-(3d) El inglesito *llevaba* consigo **un perro foxterrier** que  
 the little-English-man take.PAST.3.SG with-himself a dog foxterrier which  
 como ustedes lo saben bien, son grandes cazadores de ratas, zorros, comadreas  
 as you it know well are great hunters of rats foxes weasels  
 ‘The little English man took along with him a foxterrier which is, as you know well,  
 a great hunter of rats, foxes and weasels’

We also find one case for the use of DOM with an indefinite animate object:

- U-(4) Triste cosa es, chiquillos, *ver* morir boqueando **a un animal**  
 sad thing is kids see.INF die.INF gasping A a animal  
 ‘a sad thing, kids, is to see an animal dying gasping and dying’

This could be a clear case providing evidence for the evolution of the use of DOM extending to other categories. We are dealing here with a non-specific animate object for which Standard Spanish rarely allows DOM, and we would predict that the use of *a* should occur more frequently.

Both clitic doubling constructions we find in our Uruguayan corpus contain object nouns which are, as expected, marked with DOM:

- U-(5a) y acaso alguna noche lo haya mirado como **la<sub>i</sub>**  
 and perhaps one night him have.SUBJ.3.SG looked-at as her  
*miraba* **a ella<sub>i</sub>**.  
 look-at.PAST.3.SG A her  
 ‘and maybe one night s/he would have looked at him as s/he looked at her’
- U-(5b) ella **me<sub>i</sub>** *veía* **a mí<sub>i</sub>** perfectamente,  
 she me see.PAST.3.SG a me perfectly  
 ‘She could me perfectly see me’

As far as inanimate objects are concerned the results are summarized in table (39):

## (39) Overall summary of DOM with –animate and ±definite objects in Uruguayan Spanish

verb	frequency	–animate															
		+definite								–definite							
		+specific				–specific											
		+a	–a	cl	cd	+a	–a	cl	cd	+a	–a	cl	cd	+a	–a		
			+a	–a				+a	–a				+a	–a			
<i>adorar</i>	0																
<i>amar</i>	1												1				
<i>buscar</i>	7		1	3									3				
<i>conocer</i>	7		6										1				
<i>encontrar</i>	6		3	2									1				
<i>llevar</i>	15		9	2									4				
<i>mirar</i>	24	1	19	2									2				
<i>traer</i>	3		2	1													
<i>ver</i>	14		7	1									6				
<i>visitar</i>	0																
<b>total</b>	77	<b>1</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>11</b>									<b>18</b>				

The hypothesis was that in American Spanish inanimate objects may have DOM. We found one instance of this with the verbs *mirar*:

- U-(5a) Entonces se *mira* con gran lentitud **a los pies** y alrededor de los  
 then REFL looks with great slowness A the feet and around PREP the  
 pies, hasta que se ve al animal  
 feet until that REFL sees A-the beast  
 ‘Then one looks very slowly at the feet and around the feet, until one sees the beast’

This single example of DOM with an inanimate direct object in our Uruguayan corpus is only an apparent example in favour of our prediction A according to which DOM is extending to inanimate definite specific direct objects in American Spanish. In our opinion, the use of *a* in front of the object *los pies* is due to the fact that the object is followed by a prepositional phrase *alrededor de los pies* (‘around the feet’). This triggers the use of *a*, intending the meaning of ‘looking to the feet’ rather than ‘looking at the feet’.

### 5.3 Spanish in Peru

Table (40) shows the results of the evaluation of our corpus from Peruan Spanish:

(40) Overall summary of of contrast  $\pm$ animate and DOM in Peruan Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+ animate					- animate					no direct object
		with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubl.		with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubl.		
					with <i>a</i>	with- out <i>a</i>				with <i>a</i>	with out <i>a</i>	
<i>adorar</i>	0											
<i>amar</i>	0											
<i>buscar</i>	14	1	2	3	1		6					1
<i>conocer</i>	107	14	1	13	1		58	4		2		14
<i>encontrar</i>	47	1	3	17		2	14			1		9
<i>llevar</i>	54	2	2	11	1		24	3				11
<i>mirar</i>	33						2					31
<i>traer</i>	8			1			6	1				
<i>ver</i>	122	1	2	9			59	7				44
<i>visitar</i>	17	2	2	3	1		7	1				1
<b>total</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>111</b>

In this search we found, again, some variation with respect to the use of DOM both with animate objects and inanimate objects. While there are 12 instances where DOM is not used with animate objects, we find 2 instances for the use of DOM with inanimate objects.

As far as our three selected verbs are concerned, all these instances of animate objects, except one, are with indefinite ones. This is shown in table (41):

(41) Overall summary of DOM with +animate and  $\pm$ definite objects in Peruan Spanish

verb	fre- quen- cy	+animate											
		+definite						-definite					
		+specific			-specific			+specific			-specific		
		+a	-a	cl	+a	-a	cl	+a	-a	cl	+a	-a	cl
<i>conocer</i>	29	6	1	13	1					7	1		
<i>encontrar</i>	21			17						1	3		
<i>ver</i>	12	1		9							2		
<b>total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>					<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>		

All six instances of indefinite objects without DOM are given in P-(1). Note that only in P-(1a) the non-specificity of the object is disputable, while in all other cases the objects are clearly non-specific, which still seems to trigger, as we have seen, the absence of DOM. The partitive construction in P-(1a) suggests a specific reading. However, it might also be possible that one or another of your friends had said this.

- P-(1a) He *conocido un amigo* de usted, que dice que quiere verla  
 have.PRES.1.SG known a friend of you who says that will.PRES.3.SG see-her  
 de todas maneras  
 of all manners  
 ‘I have known a friend of you who says that he will see her in any case’
- P-(1b) Y además N.N. por ahí ha estado *encontrando*  
 and furthermore N.N. for there have.PRES.3.SG been meeting  
**antecedentes judíos**  
 ancestors Jewish  
 ‘and furthermore N.N. has met there Jewish ancestors’
- P-(1c) casi a todos los sitios donde iba *encontraba personas* con  
 almost to all the places where go.PAST.3.SG meet.PAST.3.SG persons which  
 las cuales cambiar ideas sobre temas comunes  
 the ones exchange.INF ideas about subjects commun  
 ‘almost anywhere s/he went, s/he met persons which whom s/he could exchange  
 ideas about commun subjects’
- P-(1d) me impresionó mucho es *encontrar unos alemanes* muy diferentes  
 to-me impress.PAST.3.SG much is meet.INF some Germans very different  
 del estereotipo del alemán ...  
 of-the stereotype of-the German ...  
 ‘what impressed me was to meet some Germans who were very different from the  
 stereotypical Germans’
- P-(1e) En el invierno... *poca gente* se ve en las calles  
 in the winter few people one sees in the streets  
 ‘in winter one sees few people in the streets’
- P-(1f) ... que yo haya visto *alguno de gente*... lisiada  
 that I have.SUBJ.1.SG seen somebody of people fragile  
 ‘... that I have seen somebody of the fragile people’

However, what is particularly interesting in our little detailed research on *conocer*, *encontrar* and *ver* is that there is a number of indefinite animate objects used with DOM which exceeds the number of indefinite animate object without DOM. We found seven examples with *conocer* and one with *buscar*:

- P-(2a) Mi tía, bueno, que erala mayor, que tú sabes, sobreviviente, *conocía*  
 my aunt well who was the oldest what you know survivor knew  
**a todos.**  
 A all  
 ‘My aunt, well, who was, as you know, the oldest survivor knew everybody’
- P-(2b) porque ahí u... u... uno *conocía a todos*  
 because there one know.PAST.3.SGA all  
 ‘because there everybody knew each other’
- P-(2c) en el colegio no *conocí a ninguno* ...  
 in the school NEG know.PAST.1.SG A nobody  
 ‘in the school I didn’t know anybody ...’

- P-(2d) hasta ahora no *encuentro* a **nadie** que le haya convencido  
 until now NEG meet.PRES.1.SG A nobody that to-him have.SUBJ.3.SG convinced  
 esa obra.  
 this work  
 ‘until now I have met nobody whom this work would have convinced’
- P-(2e) conversé con gente, acá *conocí* a **un judío**, N.N.  
 talk.PAST.1.SG with people there know.PAST.1.SG A a Jew N.N.  
 ‘I talked with some people, there I knew a Jew, N.N.’
- P-(2f) ... *tuve* oportunidad de *conocer* a **muchos sacerdotes** y ...  
 have.PAST.1.SG opportunity to know A many priests and  
 ‘I had the opportunity of knowing many priests and ...’
- P-(2g) *conocí* también a **un hijo de N.N.**  
 know.PAST.1.SG also A a son of N.N.  
 ‘I also knew a son of N.N.’
- P-(2h) Y en Alemania *conocí* a **otro judío** también  
 and in Germany know.PAST.1.SG A other Jew also  
 ‘and in Germany I also I knew another Jew’

Note that examples P-(2a) – P-(2d) are instances where the indefinite object, being a pronoun, is standardly marked with DOM. In P-(2e), DOM would be possible in Standard Spanish since it is a specific object. However, in P-(2f) – P-(2h) we have non-specific objects marked with DOM. This could indicate that DOM is developing further in American Spanish as formulated in prediction B.

The only instance where a definite object is never marked by DOM is in relative clauses where the object is the relative pronoun *que*:

- P-(3) Los **que** *conocí* eran parientes...  
 those who know.PAST.1SG were relatives  
 ‘those who I knew were relatives’

As already mentioned, *que* is almost never used in Spanish with *a* nor with other prepositions. What is interesting, however, is that the very same speaker who utters P-(3) also uses *quién* as relative pronoun. In this case s/he *always* marks it with DOM, as exemplified in P-(4):

- P-(4a) ... con N.N., a **quien** yo apenas *conocía*,  
 with N.N. A whom I hardly know.PAST.1SG  
 ‘... with N.N. whom I hardly knew’
- P-(4b) ... un muchacho ... y, ¿no?, a **quien** yo no *conocía*,...  
 a boy and no A whom I NEG know.PAST.1SG  
 ‘... a boy whom I didn’t know’

There is also one case of clitic doubling with an animate object. It is, as expected, used with *a*:

- P-(5) A **este chico**, **lo** *conocí* ahí, en la Acción Católica  
 A this boy him knew.1SG there in the Acción Católica  
 ‘I knew this boy there in the *Acción Católica*’

The results of our research concerning inanimate objects in the Peruan corpus are summarized in table (42):

(42) Overall summary of DOM with –animate and ±definite and ±specific (Peru)

verb	frequency	–animate													
		+definite						–definite							
		+specific			–specific			+specific			–specific				
		+a	–a	cl	cd		+a	–a	cl	cd		+a	–a	cl	cd
			+a	–a				+a	–a				+a	–a	
<i>adorar</i>	0														
<i>amar</i>	0														
<i>buscar</i>	6		2								4				
<i>conocer</i>	64		48	4		2					10				
<i>encontrar</i>	17	2	5			1					9				
<i>llevar</i>	27		10	3							14				
<i>mirar</i>	2		2												
<i>traer</i>	7		4	1							2				
<i>ver</i>	66		38	7							21				
<i>visitar</i>	8		2	1							5				
<b>total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>3</b>					<b>65</b>				

What is remarkable here is that in two cases a definite inanimate object is marked with *a*:

- P-(6a) a cambio de lo cual iren la catedral el domingo a misa es *encontrar*  
 in contrast to the that go in the cathedral the sunday to mess is meet  
**al conjunto más grande** que yo haya visto, alguno de gente lisiada,  
 A-the union more big than I have.SUBJ seen some of people fragile  
 paralítica, manca, ciega  
 handicapped one-armed blind  
 ‘instead of going in the cathedral on sunday to the mess it is meeting the union that  
 is bigger than I have seen, some fragile, handicapped, one-armed, blind people,’
- P-(6b) ¿Y qué impresión ha tenido ahora al *encontrar a España* tan cambiada  
 and what impression have had now to meet A Spain so changed  
 incluso políticamente?  
 including politically  
 ‘and what impression do you have now when you encounter a so much changed  
 Spain, including politically?’

While P-(6a), where the use of *a* is due to the fact the speaker refers with *conjunto* to a group of *human* beings, cannot be considered as good instance of an evolution of the DOM-marker in American Spanish, this is not the case of P-(6b). Here the speaker refers to a country (*Spain*), which is specified by additional properties. Thus, the use of DOM is due to the fact that the object is marked with the feature [+specific]. Note that the very same speaker also uses *Spain* without DOM, but only when he refers to it in general, i.e. when it is non-specific:

- P-(7) Íbamos *conociendo España*  
 go.past.1.pl knowing Spain  
 ‘we went to get to know Spain’



The Peruan corpus also contains three cases of clitic doubling constructions with inanimate objects. But in contrast to what we would expect, there are no cases of clitic doubling triggering the use of DOM, as shown in P-(8):

- P-(8a) ... sitios donde **la religión**<sub>i</sub> **la**<sub>i</sub> *conocen* muy bien  
 places where the religion her know.PRES.3.PL very well  
 ‘... places where they know the religion very well’
- P-(8b) Por supuesto, **Estados Unidos**<sub>i</sub> **lo**<sub>i</sub> *conozco* totalmente casi, ¿no?  
 of course States United him know.PRES.1.SG completely almost no  
 ‘Of course I know the United States almost completely, don’t I?’
- P-(8c) porque **educación inicial**<sub>i</sub> **lo**<sub>i</sub> *habían encontrado* muy bien organizado  
 because education primary her have.PAST.3.PL met very well organized  
 ‘Because they have found a very well organized primary education’

The only thing which is remarkable here is that in P-(8b) and P-(8c) the clitic does not agree in number or gender with the doubled object, which is, however, not uncommon in American Spanish.

#### 5.4 Spanish in Mexico

The results of the evaluation of our corpus from Mexican Spanish are shown in table (43):

(43) Overall summary of contrast ±animate and DOM in Mexican Spanish

verb	frequency	+animate					-animate					no direct object
		with <i>a</i>	with-out <i>a</i>	object = clitic	clitic doubl.		with <i>a</i>	with-out <i>a</i>	object = cl	clitic doubl.		
					with <i>a</i>	with-out <i>a</i>				with <i>a</i>	with-out <i>a</i>	
<i>adorar</i>	3		1	1								1
<i>amar</i>	2											2
<i>buscar</i>	21	1	2	3				11				4
<i>conocer</i>	71	5	4	11		1	1	29	8			12
<i>encontrar</i>	33	3	5	5				11				9
<i>llevar</i>	94	6	2	31				45	3			7
<i>mirar</i>	44								2			44
<i>traer</i>	17		1	1				12			1	2
<i>ver</i>	216	13	9	21	3		2	55	11		1	101
<i>visitar</i>	4	2						1				1
<b>total</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>183</b>

In this corpus we find a relatively high number of instances of animate objects used without DOM. With inanimate objects there are three instances of DOM.

Most instances of the omission of DOM with animate objects can be observed in constructions with the three verbs we selected for our more detailed analysis. The results of this analysis are presented in table (44):

## (44) Overall summary of DOM with +animate and ±definite and ±specific

verb	fre- quen- cy	+animate															
		+definite								-definite							
		+specific				-specific											
		+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a	cl	cd	+a	-a		
			+a	-a			+a	-a			+a	-a					
<i>conocer</i>	21	5	3	11								1		1			
<i>encontrar</i>	13	2	1	5										1	4		
<i>ver</i>	46	11	2	21	1			1		1			2	6		1	
<b>total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>			

In total, there are 19 instances where DOM is omitted in constructions with *conocer*, *encontrar* and *ver*. Most of them are instances where the object is indefinite and non-specific. Some examples are given in M-(1):

M-(1a) porque como es un hotel, *ve* uno **gente** de diferentes clases ....  
 because as is a hotel see.3.SG one people of different classes  
 ‘because, as it is a hotel, one sees people of different classes ...’

M-(1b) Muchas veces *ve* uno **artistas**, cantidad de artistas ...  
 many times see.3.SG one artists quantity of artists  
 ‘Often, one sees artists, many artists ...’

M-(1c) y era para más emoción para los niños *ver* un **bebido**  
 and was for more emotion for the children see.INF a little-baby  
 ‘and children were moved when they saw a little baby’

There can also be found omission of DOM with definite objects, such as *el muchacho que tiene conflictos con la autoridad* in M-(2a). This is another instance of a non-specific definite direct object, comparable to the *el culpable* in A-(2b) above (even though it has a long relative clause). However, in the very similar M-(2b) the non-specific definite direct object is marked with DOM.

M-(2a) nosotros *encontramos* con frecuencia **el muchacho que tiene conflictos**  
 we meet with frequency the boy who has conflicts  
**con la autoridad**  
 with the authority  
 ‘we frequently meet the boy who has conflicts with the authority’

M-(2b) para *conocer* **a la persona** que Dios le destinaba...  
 to meet.INF A the person that God him destine.PAST.3.SG  
 ‘... to know the person God destines to him...’

Again, we find several instances of the non-use of DOM with an animate definite object when it is used as *que* introducing a relative clause:

- M-(3a) de irme con esta señori... señora, **que** no *conocía* yo.  
 to go-refl with this ma- madam who NEG know.PAST.1.SG I  
 ‘to go with this madam whom I didn’t know’
- M-(3b) ... que son los **que** había *conocido* en la preparatoria  
 ... who are these who have.PAST.1.SG known in the high school  
 ‘who are these whom I have met at high school’
- M-(3c) Maestro **que** yo *conocía* a través de mi hermano ...  
 master who I knew through my brother  
 ‘(the) master whom I knew through my brother’

There are three instances of DOM with indefinite objects. The direct object in M-(4a) is indefinite and probably non-specific, although this is disputable. *Otras gentes* in M-(4b), however, is clearly non-specific, confirming prediction B, while DOM is triggered by the indefinite pronoun *nadie* in M-(4c).

- M-(4a) *Encontré* **a muchos compañeros** que iban un año adelantados, ...  
 meet.PAST.1.SG A many fellow students who went one year in advance  
 ‘I met many fellow students who were one year in advance’
- M-(4b) ... o me iba **a un deporte a ver a otras gentes**,  
 ... or REF go.PAST.1.SG to a sport to see A other people  
 ‘or I went to a match in order to see other people’
- M-(4c) Pero yoya no *veo a nadie*  
 but I yet NEG see A nobody  
 ‘but I don’t see anybody yet’

The Mexican corpus contains also three cases of clitic doubling constructions with animate objects, two of them in combination with the verb *ver* and with DOM:

- M-(5a) Ella estaba angustiada y yo no hacía nada más que... más que estar  
 she was anxious and I NEG made nothing more than more than be.INF  
 con la pena de *verla<sub>i</sub>* **a ella<sub>i</sub>** tan mortificada  
 with the worry to to see-her A her so humiliated  
 ‘She was anxious and I did nothing more than worrying to see her so humiliated’
- M-(5b) y no el señor sentado en el salón y *viéndolo<sub>i</sub>* **a uno<sub>i</sub>** en el  
 and NEG the mister sitting in the saloon and seeing-him a somebody in the  
 escenario ...  
 stage  
 ‘and no, the gentleman sitting in the saloon and seeing somebody on the stage ...’

In both cases, the object is a pronoun, which regularly receives DOM marking, even when it is, as in M-(5b), an indefinite non-specific object.

What is more remarkable is the third clitic doubling construction with animate objects found in our Mexican corpus, since the (preposed) object is used without DOM:

- M-(5c) Ni **los mexicanos<sub>i</sub>** **lo<sub>i</sub>** *conocíamos*...  
 neither the Mexicans them know.PAST.1.PL...  
 ‘we didn’t even know the Mexicans’

Note that *los mexicanos* is non-specific, since it refers to the Mexicans in general, so what is indeed expected is the absence of *a*.

Table (45) finally resumes the results of the evaluations of the use of DOM with inanimate objects in the Mexican corpus:

(45) Overall summary of DOM with –animate and ±definite and ±specific (Mexico)

verb	fre- quen- cy	–animate													
		+definite								–definite					
		+specific				–specific									
		+a	–a	cl	cd	+a	–a	cl	cd	+a	–a	cl	cd	+a	–a
					+a	–a			+a	–a			+a	–a	
<i>adorar</i>	0														
<i>amar</i>	0														
<i>buscar</i>	11		6										5		
<i>conocer</i>	38	1	23	8									6		
<i>encontrar</i>	11		4	1									6		
<i>llevar</i>	48		28	3									17		
<i>mirar</i>	0														
<i>traer</i>	13		7			1							5		
<i>ver</i>	69	2	35	11			1			1			19		
<i>visitar</i>	1		1												
<b>total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>			<b>58</b>		

In total, we find three instances for the use of DOM with inanimate objects. But in all cases the use of DOM can be explained by the fact that the inanimate object is characterized by a meaning shift which implies an animate reading of it. The first case is provided in M-(6a):

M-(6a) con la señora M., la que me llevaba, digamos, a *conocer*  
 with the Mrs. M, the that me induce.PAST.3.SG, say.pres.1.sg to know  
**a sus amistades...**  
 A her friendships  
 ‘with Mrs. M who induced me, well, to get to know her friends’

In this case DOM is certainly triggered by the meaning shift from the plural reading of *amistades* (‘friendship’) (abstract) to particular persons or friends.

Both other cases of the use of DOM with a inanimate object are found in the same context in the following text passage:

M-(6b) En aquella época en que nacían mis hijas, no se acostumbraba que nacieran en... en el sanatorio, sino en la casa, fíjate. Y estaba el Sagrado Corazón, y abajo... una estatua de Beethoven; y yo muriéndome con la niña que venía, y *viendo a Beethoven*. Cuando *veo a Beethoven* digo: "¡Ay! Aborrezco a Beethoven"...  
 ‘in the time when my children were born, normally they weren’t born in the hospital, but at home, just imagine. And I was in ‘Sagrado Corazón’, and under a statue of Beethoven; and when I was dying with my daughter who arrived and looking at Beethoven. Whenever I see Beethoven I say: Oh, I hate Beethoven.’

Here we are dealing with the meaning shift between the statue of Beethoven and the person. Thus, we conclude that it is not a good case of DOM with an inanimate definite direct object. Additionally it is a proper name and we have seen that proper names get DOM more easily than lexical NPs.

### 5.5 Evaluation of the test searches

The test search in the four corpora produced some interesting results, gave us new insights and triggered new questions. One of our leading hypothesis to test was whether the American varieties would use DOM with inanimate direct objects and with animate non-specific indefinites. For both cases, Standard Spanish prohibits or rarely allows DOM. Relating to these two main questions we had formulated another three minor questions. In the following we give some preliminary results and comments to our questions and predictions discussed in the beginning of this chapter:

- A: Do we find DOM with inanimate definite direct specific objects?  
Against our prediction we found only very few instances of DOM with inanimate objects and moreover, most of those instances could be explained by independent parameters, such as animacy or meaning shifts.
- B: Do we find DOM with animate indefinite non-specific objects?  
We found some instances of DOM with non-specific indefinites. This might show some evolution of DOM in American Spanish, even though not fully anticipated. We had assumed above that this extension is unlikely to happen, since it would lead to a neutralization for the animate direct objects along the definiteness scale.
- C: Is there a difference between DOM-marking of animate definite specific and animate definite non-specific direct objects?  
Surprisingly we could observe that there is a clear difference between these cases – not always, but still statistically relevant. It is, however, unclear whether this is a feature of American Spanish or of Standard Spanish as well.
- D: How stable is the distribution of DOM between animate indefinite specific objects (obligatory) and animate indefinite non-specific objects (optional)?  
As already indicated in B, there is no such stability in American Spanish. The question is whether this is only the case for the American variety or for Standard Spanish as well.
- E: What additional parameter may interfere or determine DOM?  
Besides several other parameters mentioned above, we have seen that plural is an inhibiting factor for DOM. Furthermore, we could see an interesting interaction between agreement and DOM. The relative pronoun *que* does not allow for DOM, while *quién(es)* does.

The second issue concerns the relationship between clitic doubling and (nominal) DOM. The general observation is that clitic doubling always triggers DOM for animate objects, while it does not trigger DOM for inanimate objects. However, if DOM develops into the inanimate domain, we would also expect some cases of clitic doubling together with DOM. Unfortunately, we have only very few instances of clitic doubling both with animate and inanimate objects. While in the animate case, one object is used without DOM – which is due to its non-specificity –, there is no single case where DOM is used with an inanimate object in a clitic doubling construction – so the results are not conclusive at all. This encourages further investigation.

## 6. Summary

We have discussed the different parameters that determine DOM: the Animacy Scale, the Definiteness Scale, and topicality. Spanish is sensitive to all of these parameters, but in a different way: While the overall picture is shaped according to the Animacy Scale and the Definiteness Scale (only animate specific objects receive DOM), topicality plays a different role. In the evolution from Old Spanish to Modern Spanish, topicality was a “facilitating” category that eased the extension of DOM by dividing the definite cell into cells, one of which was the start for DOM. For the further evolution into the indefinite domain, the facilitating category specificity became active or relevant. While the extension of DOM along the Definiteness Scale came to a final point for Standard Spanish, American Spanish extends DOM along this scale to the non-specific indefinite cell, thus neutralizing the functional load of DOM for animate direct object. A second assumption was that American Spanish also extends DOM along the Animate Scale: it would allow for DOM with definite specific inanimate objects. In our quite restricted corpus search we have found no good occurrences of such cases. However, we found a higher variability in animate cases between definite specific and definite non-specific. Our test searches made clear that additional investigations are necessary that should combine corpus searches with grammaticality judgements of native speakers. Such an investigation will help us to understand the nature of DOM and its evolution in Spanish, but also the interaction between the different parameters determining DOM in general.

## 7. References

- Aissen, Judith 2003. Differential Object Marking: Iconicity vs. Economy. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 21, 435-483.
- Bossong, Georg 1985. *Empirische Universalienforschung. Differentielle Objektmarkierung in den neuiranischen Sprachen*. Tübingen: Narr.
- Bossong, Georg 1998. Le marquage différentiel de l'objet dans les langues d'Europe. In: J. Feuillet (ed.), *Actance et valence*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter [EALTEUROTYP 20-2], 193 - 258.
- Brugè, Laura & Brugger, Gerhard 1996. On the Acusative *a* in Spanish. *Probus* 8, 1-51.
- Company, Concepción 2002. El avance diacrónico de la marcación prepositiva en objetos directos inanimados. In: Bernabé, Alberto et al. (eds.) *Presente y futuro de la lingüística en España. Actas del II Congreso de la Sociedad Española de Lingüística. Vol. II*. Madrid: SEL, 146-154.
- Campos, Héctor 1999. Transitividad e intransitividad. In: I. Bosque & V. Demonte (eds.). *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española. Vol. 2: Las construcciones sintácticas fundamentales. Relaciones temporales, aceptuales y modales*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1519-1574.
- Comrie, Bernard 1975.. Definite and Animate Direct Objects: A Natural Class. *Linguistica Silesiona* 3, 13-21.
- Croft, William 1988. Agreement vs. Case Marking and Direct Objects. In: M. Barlow & C.A. Ferguson (eds.). *Agreement in Natural Language. Approaches, Theories, Descriptions*. Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 159-179.
- Farkas, Donka 1978. Direct and Indirect Object Reduplication in Rumanina. *Papers from the Seventeenth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society (CLS 14)*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 88-97.
- Farkas, Donka & von Heusinger, Klaus 2003. Stability of Reference and Object Marking in Romanian. Ms. Universität Stuttgart.
- García García, Marco (this volume). Differential Object Marking and Informativeness, 19-33.
- von Heusinger, Klaus 2002. Specificity and Definiteness in Sentence and Discourse Structure. *Journal of Semantics* 19, 245-274.
- von Heusinger, Klaus & Kaiser, Georg A. 2003. Animacy, Specificity, and Definiteness in Spanish. In: K. von Heusinger & G.A. Kaiser (eds.) *Proceedings of the Workshop "Semantic and Syntactic Aspects of Specificity in Romance Languages"*. Arbeitspapier 113. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft, Universität Konstanz, 41-65.
- von Heusinger, Klaus & Kornfilt, Jaklin (to appear). The case of the Direct Object in Turkish: Semantics, Syntax and Morphology. *Turcic Languages*.
- Hopper, Paul & Traugott, Elizabeth Closs 1980. Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse. *Language* 56, 251-299.
- Isenberg, Horst. 1968. *Das direkte Objekt im Spanischen*. Berlin: Akademie.

- Kany, Charles E. 1951. *American-Spanish Syntax*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, second edition.
- Laca, Brenda 1987. Sobre el uso del acusativo preposicional en español. *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 38, 290-312.
- Laca, Brenda 1995. Sobre el uso del acusativo preposicional en español. In: C. Pensado (ed.). *El complemento directo preposicional*. Madrid: Visor, 61-91.
- Laca, Brenda (to appear). El objeto directo. In: C. Company (ed.). *Sintaxis histórica del español. Vol 1: La frase verbal*. México: Universidad Nacional de México.
- Lazard, G. 1984. Actance Variations and Categories of the Object. In: F. Plank (ed.). *Objects: Towards a Theory of Grammatical Relations*. London: Academic Press, 269-292.
- Leonetti, Manuel 1990. *El artículo y la referencia*. Madrid: Taurus.
- Leonetti, Manuel 2003. Specificity and Object Marking: the Case of Spanish *a*. In: K. von Heusinger & G.A. Kaiser (eds.) *Proceedings of the Workshop "Semantic and Syntactic Aspects of Specificity in Romance Languages"*. Arbeitspapier 113. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft, Universität Konstanz, 67-101.
- Melis, Chantal 1995. El objeto directo personal en *El Cantar de Mio Cid*. Estudio sintáctico-pragmático. In: C. Pensado (ed.). *El complemento directo preposicional*. Madrid: Visor, 133-163.
- Mensching, Guido (this volume). Remarks on Specificity and Related Categories in Sardinian, 81-106.
- Pensado, Carmen (ed.) 1995. *El complemento directo preposicional*. Madrid: Visor.
- Picallo, Carme 1994. A Mark of Specificity in Indefinite Nominals. *Catalan Working Papers in Linguistics* 4, 143-167.
- Ramsden, H. 1961. The Use of *a* + Personal Pronoun in Old Spanish. *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 38, 42-54.
- Real Academia Española 1973. *Esbozo de una gramática de la lengua española*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.
- Reich, Uli 2003. Specifically Brazilian. In: K. von Heusinger & G.A. Kaiser (eds.). *Proceedings of the Workshop "Semantic and Syntactic Aspects of Specificity in Romance Languages"*. Arbeitspapier 113. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft Universität Konstanz, 119-132.
- Roegiest, Eugene 1979. A propos de l'accusatif prépositionnel dans quelques langues romanes. *Vox Romanica* 38, 37-54.
- Rohlf, Gerhard 1971. Autour de l'accusatif prépositionnel dans les langues romanes. *Revue de Linguistique Romane* 35, 312-334.
- Samper Padilla, José Antonio et alii. 1998. *Macrocorpus de la norma lingüística culta de las principales ciudades del mundo hispánico*. Las Palmas: Universidad Las Palmas.
- Silverstein, Michael 1976. Hierarchy of Features and Ergativity. In: R. Dixon (ed.) *Grammatical Categories in Australian Languages*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 112-171.
- Stark, Elisabeth 2002. Indefiniteness and Specificity in Old Italian Texts. *Journal of Semantics* 19, 315-332.
- Stark, Elisabeth 2003. Countability and Specificity in Old Italian. In: K. von Heusinger & G.A. Kaiser (eds.). *Proceedings of the Workshop "Semantic and Syntactic Aspects of Specificity in Romance Languages"*. Arbeitspapier 113. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft Universität Konstanz, 133-152.
- Suñer, Margarita 1988. The Role of Agreement in Clitic Doubled Constructions. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 6, 391-434.
- Thomson, Alexander 1912. Beiträge zur Kasuslehre IV. Über die Neubildung des Akkusativs. *Indogermanische Forschungen* 30, 65-79.
- Torrego Salcedo, Esther 1999. El complemento directo preposicional. In: I. Bosque & V. Demonte (eds.). *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española. Vol. 2: Las construcciones sintácticas fundamentales. Relaciones temporales, actuales y modales*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1779-1805.

