

**DISCURSOS TRADICIONALES
Y PARTICULARES**

Festschrift für Johannes Kabatek zum 60. Geburtstag

CRISTINA BLEORȚU

CARLOTA DE BENITO MORENO

DAVID PAUL GERARDS

PHILIPP OBRIST

ÁLVARO S. OCTAVIO DE TOLEDO Y HUERTA

ALBERT WALL

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DOM in Engadinese and the role of referentiality

Georg A. Kaiser, Klaus von Heusinger
Universität Konstanz, Universität zu Köln

INTRODUCTION

This paper contributes a new empirical observation on Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Romance, a topic that the honoree has also dealt with intensively (Kabatek 2016, Kabatek, Obrist and Wall 2021). We will focus on Engadinese Romance, and present a comparative corpus study, based on *Astérix le légionnaire* and its translations into Romance languages, two of which, Spanish and Engadinese, are considered DOM languages. *Astérix* is closely linked to the honoree's biography, because his father was the managing director of the Ehapa publishing house and in this function responsible for the Asterix translations into German for many years.

DOM IN ENGADINESE

The (differential) marking of (direct) objects under specific conditions is a property of many languages (Bossong 1985, 2021). Among the Romance languages, Spanish, Romanian and Sardinian and, to a lesser extent, Catalan, Portuguese and other smaller varieties display this property (Gerards 2023, Irimia and Mardale 2023). As for Raeto-Romance, DOM is only observed in Vallader and Putèr, the two varieties of Engadinese. All other varieties of Raeto-Romance as well as the surrounding languages German

and Italian do not show DOM. This is shown in (1), an example taken from the Bible (Genesis 4:1), where the (human) objects Eve and Cain only receive a special marker (*a(d)*) in Engadinese, but not in the other Raeto-Romance varieties, nor in German or Italian.

- (1) a. L'uman però cugnuoschet **ad** *Eva*, sia muglier, (Engadinese)
ed ella concepit e parturit **a** Cain
b. Adam ha giu *Eva* per dunna, ed ella ei vegnida (Sursilvan)
da spronza ed ha parturiu *in fegl* Cain
c. Adàm à cuneschiù *Dieva*, si fëna; (Dolomitic Ladin, Gardanese)
ëila à cunzepì y parturì Cain
d. L'om al cognossè *Eve*, la sò femine; chë e cjàpà (Friulian)
sù e e parturì Cain
e. Der Mensch erkannte *Eva*, seine Frau; sie wurde (German)
schwanger und gebar *Kain*
f. Adamo conobbe *Eva*, sua moglie, la quale (Italian)
concepì e partorì *Caino*
'Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain'

As in all other Romance languages with the exception of Romanian, the DOM marker in Engadinese is formally identical to the preposition marking the dative. Its use takes place along the (universal) animacy and definiteness scales (cf. von Heusinger and Kaiser 2003): The more animate and definite a (direct) object is, the more likely it is to be marked. In his study on DOM in Vallader, Stimm (1986), drawing on Bosson's (1985) inheritance scale, shows that the feature [+human] is largely a prerequisite for DOM in Vallader. Furthermore, DOM is mainly triggered when the direct object is a non-clitic personal pronoun, demonstrative pronoun or a proper name (without article) and often also when it is an indefinite and interrogative pronoun. Definite and indefinite noun phrases show optional marking depending on animacy and further referential properties (Stimm 1986, also Widmer 1980 and Roegiest 1986).

COMPARING ENGADINESE DOM WITH SPANISH DOM

In order to understand the language specific parameters for DOM in Engadinese, we analyzed a comparative corpus of the French text *Astérix le*

légionnaire and its translations into Romance languages (Kaiser 2024), which also includes the only translation of an Asterix volume into Engadinese. We identified in the Engadinese translation 38 full human noun phrases as direct objects, of which 25 have DOM. As illustrated in the following examples, DOM is used with a proper name (2), an indefinite noun (3) and an indefinite pronoun (4). The same can be observed in the corresponding sentences from Spanish:

- (2) a. cur cha nus at mnarons inavous **a tieu** *Tragicomix*...
 b. cuando te devolvamos **a tu** *Tragicomix*...
 ‘when we bring Tragicomix back’
- (3) a. Dalum cha nus vzarons **ad iin** *legiunari*
 b. En cuanto veamos **a algún** *legionario*
 ‘As soon as we see a legionary’
- (4) a. Eu cugnuosch **a minchün**, eu!
 b. y conozco **a todo el mundo**, yo!
 ‘I know everybody, I do!’

At the same time, both Engadinese and Spanish exhibit the omission of DOM in combination with [+human] nominal objects. This occurs in cases when the object is a bare plural as in (5) and (6). Bare plurals are on the right edge of the definiteness scale and therefore less likely to be marked by DOM.

- (5) a. sieus uffizchels da recrutamaint tscherchan *guerriers volontairs*
 b. sus reclutadores solicitan *voluntarios*
 ‘his recruiting officers go around asking for volunteers’
- (6) a. Schi, eu n’ha vis *prashuners* aint il achompamaint da Scipio...
 b. Sí, he visto *varios prisioneros* en el campamento de Escipión...
 ‘Yes, I did see some prisoners in Scipio’s camp...’

The more interesting cases are those in which both languages differ with respect to the use of DOM. In the cases where DOM only occurs in Engadinese, the Spanish translation uses a different construction that does not contain a (human) direct object noun, so that there is no case

in which DOM is used in Engadinese, but omitted in a comparable construction in Spanish. On the other hand, our corpus contains a total of seven cases, where we have a human direct object with DOM in Spanish, but without DOM in the same construction in Engadinese. These cases include a demonstrative direct object, as in (7), two definite ones, as in (8), and an indefinite one, as in (9). The other three instances include some collective nouns, which we cannot discuss here for reasons of space.

- (7) a. No stuvain arrestar *quists homens*
 b. Es preciso capturar **a** *esos hombres*
 'These men must be captured'
- (8) a. Daspö cura nu's salüda plü *la patruglia*?
 b. que ya no sabemos saludar **a** *la patrulla*?
 'Why aren't you saluting the patrol?'
- (9) a. Ils duos Gals sun its a tscherchar *ün ami*
 b. Los dos Galos se fueron a buscar **a** *un amigo*
 'The two Gauls have gone to look for a friend'

We think that the main reason for not using DOM with these direct objects is that their referents are nonreferential or non-specific. Sentence (7) refers to a situation where Caesar is told that some legionaries have left the fort without authorization. Thus, the demonstrative indicates an anaphoric link to a non-specific set of legionaries. In (8) the functional noun *patrol* has also a non-specific reading "whoever is doing the patrolling", and in (9) the indefinite is clearly non-specific, as it is in the scope of the intensional verb *to look for* (cf. Leonetti 2004). These examples suggest that Engadinese might be sensitive to the referential status of the direct object: Non-referential arguments lack DOM, even if they are definite or demonstrative. This claim, based on just three examples, of course still is speculative and needs a broader empirical coverage. Note, however, that there are isolated cases of definite human direct objects without DOM in Spanish, as in (10a) from P. Baroja, *El árbol de la ciencia*, p. 91, and in (10b) from A. Arguedas, *Raza de bronce*, p. 209:

- (10) a. Antoñito buscaba *la mujer rica*
 'Antoñito was looking for the rich woman'
- b. Los líricos no conocen *el indio*.
 'The lyricists do not know the Indian'

In contrast to Engadinese, this omission of DOM in Spanish is only possible if the reference is made to an ideal type or a conceptual object (Fernández Ramírez 1986: 196f.; Laca 1987: 303). We further think that these observations suggest that DOM has more progressed in Spanish than in Engadinese. Evidence for this is provided by the translations of the sentence in (1) in an Old Spanish and Old Vallader Bible: while in Old Spanish both direct (human) objects have DOM, this is not yet the case in Old Vallader (cf. also Stimm 1987):

- (11) a. Mo Adam cognoschet *sia muglier*, & ella concepit, é partorit *Cain*
(Vallader [1679])
- b. E Adán conoció **a** *Eva su mujer*, e concibió e parió **a** *Cáin*; (Old Spanish [1450])
‘Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain’

SUMMARY

In this paper, we have looked at the conditions for DOM in the Raeto-Romance varieties of Vallader and Putèr, spoken in the Inn Valley in Switzerland, which are the only varieties of Raeto-Romance that show DOM. On the basis of a parallel text study, we were able to show that in these varieties, the parameters for DOM are very similar to what occurs in Spanish, a typical DOM language. But we also saw an interesting contrast that we accounted for by assuming that Engadinese is sensitive to the contrast between a referential vs. a non-referential expression, independent of the definiteness status of the direct object. If correct, this is also an interesting finding for the grammaticalization process of DOM in Romance.

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