

Weak objects and nominal licensing

In recent years, it has been argued that differential object marking (DOM) is less uniform both cross-linguistically and intra-linguistically than previous theories accounted for (Irimia 2019, 2020; Saab 2021, *i.a.*). In this investigation, I argue that there are multiple licensing strategies for weak objects in Galician. In particular, I argue that differential object marking (DOM) is a necessary licensing strategy when cliticization is not realized. Building off of work by Ledgeway et al. (2019), I claim that this is due to their status as D^o elements rather than full DPs.

DATA: As highlighted in Author (2021a), Galician object nominals typically go unmarked regardless of word order (1).

- (1) a. Xan bicou Uxía SVO
Xan kiss.PST.3SG Uxía
'Xan kissed Uxía.'
- b. Meu pai_i atopamo-lo_i morto onte CLLD
my father find.PST.1PL-CL dead yesterday
'My dad, we found him dead yesterday.'
- c. Puñiran os pais os nenos VSO
punish.PST-PRFCT.3PL the parents the children
'The parents had punished the children.'

There are a select group of lexical items, however, that require overt licensing by way of DOM: all personal pronouns (2a); the quantifier *todos* ('all') (2b); the demonstratives *ese(s)* ('that'/'those'), *este(s)* ('this'/'these'), *aquel(es/as)* ('that'/'those'); and the polarity items *alguén* ('someone') and *ninguén* ('no one') (2c). It is also important to note that these lexical items must bear [PERSON] in order to receive DOM, a point I elaborate on below (cf. 2b & 2d).

- (2) a. Cada serán agardou *(a) eles
each evening wait.PST.3SG DOM they
'She waited for them every evening.'
- b. Tocou *(a) todos ó pasaren
touch.PST.3SG DOM all COMP pass.INF.3PL
'He touched everyone as they passed.'
- c. Foi ver *(a) alguén
go.PST.3SG see.INF DOM someone
'He went to see someone.'
- d. Tocou (*a) todos cando chegou
touch.PST.3SG DOM all when arrive.PST.3SG
'He touched all of them (e.g. the figurines) when he arrived.'

This contrasts with the behavior of quantifiers and the demonstratives when they select a DP complement, as these phrases behave as typical DP objects in Galician in not receiving overt marking (3).

- (3) a. Atopamos (*a) todo-los rapaces
find.PST.1PL DOM all-the boys
'We found all of the boys.'
- b. Viron (*a) esas mulleres
see.PST.3PL DOM those women
'They saw those women.'

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION: I make two theoretical assumptions. First, I assume that not all objects require licensing (i.e., not all DPs in a given derivation must enter into an Agree relation

with a functional head; Ormazabal & Romero 2007, Kalin 2018 Levin 2019, *i.a.*). However, those that do receive licensing should tell us something about the licensing requirements of a given language. This predicts that there is something unique about the class of lexical items listed above that distinguishes them in some way from other DP nominal objects in Galician.

Second, following evidence in Ledgeway et al. (2019), I claim that the difference between the group of words above and other nominal objects is that the former are structurally deficient (i.e., not DPs but D°s) whereas the latter are full-fledged DPs. These authors showed that certain dialects of Calabrese (Italian) only differentially mark certain lexical items they categorize as D°s when they bear [PERSON] (4), just as I show above for Galician.

(4) *Calabrese*

- a. Vitti *(a) idu / *(a) chidu / *(a) chistu
 see.PST.1SG DOM him DOM that DOM this
 ‘I saw him/that (man)/this (man).’
- b. Vitti chistu / chidu / *idu
 see.PST.1SG this that him
 ‘I saw this (thing)/that (thing).’

These elements and their requiring obligatory overt licensing pattern in a way with other D° elements, notably clitics. If cliticization is the result of agreement/overt licensing (Preminger 2014, 2019; Coone & Keine 2021; Deal, forthcoming), coupling the results above with this observation brings us to a conclusion about D° licensing in Galician; namely, all lone D° must be overtly licensed in the grammar either via Agree (e.g. cliticization) or obliquely (e.g. via DOM). This also predicts that neither cliticization nor oblique marking (e.g. differential subject marking; cf. Arkadiev & Teselets 2019) is necessary when these lexical items agree with T° as subjects, for example, due to the fact that this agreement satisfies their licensing condition (5).

- (5) Ninguén o merca
 no-one CL buy.PRS.3SG
 ‘No one buys it.’

Although restricted to a subset of the lexical items highlighted above, we see further morpho-phonosyntactic evidence for the hypothesis of these elements as D°s elsewhere in the grammar. In Author (2021b), I claim, building off of observations in Gupton (2010), that *alguén* and *ninguén* are D°s in a larger class of proclitic-triggering elements that also contains the negators *non* and *nin* (‘no’ and ‘neither’). Word-final /n/ in Galician is realized as a velar [ŋ] everywhere in the grammar (e.g. 6) unless it precedes vowel-initial D° clitics as in (5). Thus, (5) is phonologically realized as [niŋ.ɣe.no.mer.ka] in contrast to [nu.ʧaŋ.a.ɰo.pa.ra] in (6).

- (6) [No chan] a atopara
 on-the floor CL find.PST-PRFCT.1SG
 ‘I had found them on the floor.’

CONCLUSION: This investigation sheds light on a relatively non-explored area of DOM and gives explanatory adequacy for how different licensing phenomena of weak objects may behave cross-linguistically (cf. Irimia 2021, Pescarini 2019).

REFERENCES: Author. 2021. DOM and non-canonical word order in Romance: the case of Galician. *Bucharest Working Papers*. Kalin, L. 2018. Licensing and Differential Object Marking: The view from Neo-Aramaic. *Syntax*. Ledgeway, A. et al. 2019. Differential Object Marking and the properties of D in the dialects of the extreme south of Italy. *Glossa*. Gupton, T. 2010. *The syntax-information structure interface: Subjects and clausal word order in Galician*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Iowa.