

## DOM, object shift, and the Distinctness condition

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**GOAL:** In this investigation, I examine the use of differential object marking (DOM) in Galician as an interface strategy in order to prevent Distinctness violations (cf. Richards 2010) in VOS word orders where both postverbal arguments are full DPs. In addition to its word order constraint, unlike other Romance varieties (e.g. Spanish), I show Galician DOM only depends on an  $[\pm\text{ANIMATE}]$  distinction. I claim that this has theoretical implications for object shift in Romance, particularly the *VOS-VSO Generalization* (Gallego 2013).

**DATA:** The availability and use of non-canonical word orders in Romance have been a subject of much discussion in recent generative literature (Ordóñez 2007, Rodríguez Modóñedo 2007, Gallego 2013, Khouja 2019, Ormazabal & Romero 2019, Ordóñez & Roca 2019). The topic of DOM has often been coupled with VSO/VOS word orders, as different languages employ different morphosyntactic strategies for parsing these postverbal arguments. Specifically regarding  $[\text{+ANIMATE}]$  direct objects, Spanish, which allows both VSO (1a) and VOS (1b) orders, employs DOM unfailingly. Catalan, on the other hand, only licenses VOS (2a-b) order and lacks DOM completely with full lexical DPs regardless of animacy (2c).

- (1) a. Llevó Juan a las niñas.(VSO)  
       carry.PST.3SG Juan DOM the.FEM girls  
       b. Llevó a las niñas Juan. (VOS)  
       carry.PST.3SG DOMthe.FEM girls Juan
- (2) a. \*Portava en Joan les nenes (VSO)  
       carry.IMPV.3SG the.MASC Joan the.FEM girls  
       b. Portava les nenes en Joan (VOS)  
       carry.IMPV.3SG the.FEM girls the.MASC Joan  
       c. No conec (\*a) la Berta/aquesta zona  
       NEG know.PST.1SG DOM the.FEMBerta this.FEM zone

Like Spanish, Galician licenses both VSO and VOS orders (3); however, DOM is only employed in VOS orders in which both postverbal arguments are  $[\text{+ANIMATE}]$  (cf. 4a-b). This is confirmed upon observing that lack of DOM when the object but not the subject is marked  $[\text{+ANIMATE}]$  in VOS orders (5) (Freixeiro 2006).

- (3) a. Podou [a maceira] [o xardineiro] (VOS)  
       prune.PST.3SG the.FEMapple-tree the.MASC gardener  
       b. Podou [o xardineiro] [a maceira] (VOS)  
       prune.PST.3SG the.MASC gardener the.FEMapple-tree
- (4) a. Educan [os avós] [os fillos] (VSO)  
       educate.PRS.3PL the.MASC grandparents the.MASC sons  
       b. Educan [aos fillos] [os país] (VOS)  
       educate.PST.3PL **DOM**-the.MASC sons the.MASC parents
- (5) Impresionou [o presidente] [a nova] (VOS)  
       impress.PST.3SG the.MASC president the.FEMnews

**THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION:** Richard's (2010) Distinctness condition claims that two elements with identical labels  $\langle \text{DP}, \text{DP} \rangle$  or sublabels (i.e., features)  $\langle \phi_1, \phi_1 \rangle$  within the same phase cause ill-formed linearization statement, resulting in crashing at the interfaces. I claim that this should have a direct correlation to object shift in Romance, specifically to Gallego's (2013) *VOS-VSO Generalization*: any Romance language that licenses VSO also licenses VOS. This entails the availability of object shift to a peripheral specifier of  $v^*P$  (6).

- (6) a. Pintamos os cadros os artistas  
       paint.PRS.1PL the.MASC paintings the.MASC artists  
       b.  $[\text{TP} [\text{T} [\text{v}^* [\text{V pintamos}]]] [\text{v}^*P \text{ os cadros } [\text{v}^*P \text{ os artistas } [\text{v}^* \text{t}_{\text{pintamos}} [\text{VP t}_{\text{pintamos}} \text{t}_{\text{os cadros}}]]]]]$

I follow the idea that in Western Iberian Romance (WIR), subjects only appear in [Spec,vP] in postverbal subject constructions (i.e., they are base-generated topics in SVO orders; cf. Barbosa 1995, Raposo 2000, Fernández-Rubiera 2013). Assuming phase theory (Chomsky 2008 *et seq.*). Regarding the Distinctness condition, I claim that specific features of DP arguments in the same phase cause crashing at the interfaces in Romance. In Galician, I claim this feature is [+ANIMATE]. It follows that canonical SVO orders in WIR differ from Gallego's VSO/VOS approach in that in SVO orders the subject is transferred in a different phase than the object (7a-b); however, Gallego's theoretical analysis of languages that license VSO and vP-peripheral object shift create a problem for Richard's Distinctness assumptions in (7c-d), as this would result in an ill-formed linearization as in (8). Although Galician does license said vP-peripheral object shift (6), I claim that Galician employs a short internal vP scrambling position (López' (2012)  $\alpha$ P) in cases in which both arguments are [+ANIMATE] in VSO orders (9). In this instance of short scrambling to  $\alpha$ P, each argument is transferred in a different phase and no Distinctness violation arises.

- (7) a. Xan<sub>[+ANIMATE]</sub> axudou o neno<sub>[+ANIMATE]</sub>  
       Xan help.PST.3SG the.MASC boy  
 b. [<sub>TopicP</sub> Xan] |TRANSFER| [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>v\*</sub> [<sub>v</sub> axudou]]] [<sub>v\*P</sub> o neno [<sub>v\*</sub> *t*<sub>(axudou)</sub> ...]]]  
 c. Axudou [Xan<sub>[+ANIMATE]</sub>] [o neno<sub>[+ANIMATE]</sub>]  
       help.PST.3SG Xan the.MASC boy  
 d. [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>v\*</sub> [<sub>v</sub> axudou]]] [<sub>v\*P</sub> Xan [<sub>v\*P</sub> o neno [<sub>v\*</sub> *t*<sub>(axudou)</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> *t*<sub>(axudou)</sub> *t*<sub>(o neno)</sub>]]]]]

(8) <\*DP<sub>[+ANIMATE]</sub>, DP<sub>[+ANIMATE]</sub>>

(9) [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>v\*</sub> [<sub>v</sub> axudou]]] [<sub>v\*P</sub> Xan [<sub>v\*</sub> *t*<sub>(axudou)</sub> |TRANSFER| [ <sub>$\alpha$ P</sub> o neno [<sub>VP</sub> *t*<sub>(axudou)</sub> *t*<sub>(o neno)</sub>]]]]]

In VOS orders, however, object shift to [Spec,v\*P] seems obligatory given the Internal Subject Hypothesis (McCloskey 1997). Without DOM, I hypothesize that two postverbal [+ANIMATE] DPs would result in an ill-formed linearization at the interfaces. I claim that DOM plays a role in disambiguating these two arguments when both are found in specifiers of v\*P. Following López (2009) and Ledgeway et al. (2019), I claim that Spell-Out of DOM is *a*, the head of a KP (10).

- (10) a. Berraron aos rapaces as mestras  
       yell.PST.3PL DOM-the.MASC boys the.FEM teachers  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>v\*</sub> [<sub>v</sub> berraron]]] [<sub>v\*P</sub> [<sub>KP</sub> [<sub>K</sub> a [<sub>DP</sub> os rapaces]]] [<sub>v\*P</sub> as mestras [<sub>v\*</sub> *t*<sub>(berraron)</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> *t*<sub>(berraron)</sub> *t*<sub>(os rapaces)</sub>]]]]]

Furthermore, my claim that DOM in Galician is specifically linked to the [+ANIMATE] feature holds true when we take into account other featural constraints (e.g. [+SPECIFIC]) to which other languages are sensitive (e.g. Spanish) with respect to DOM (10a), whereas Galician is not (10b).

- (10) a. Busca a<sub>[+SPEC]/Ø<sub>[-SPEC]</sub></sub> una trabajadora María  
       search.PRS.3SG DOM/Ø a.FEM worker María  
 b. Procura a<sub>[±SPEC]/\*Ø</sub> unha traballadora María  
       search.PRS.3SG DOM/Ø a.FEM worker María  
       'María is looking for a worker.'

**CONCLUSION:** I claim that Galician does not follow the idea of DOM as merely a predicate/argument relation (i.e., predicate selection decides whether an object is DOM marked), *pace* the claims of Ormazábal & Romero (2019) but that this selective DOM is more akin to the claim made by Aissen (2003) in that the direct objects which most resemble typical subjects are those that get overtly case-marked.

**SELECTED REFERENCES:** Gallego, A. 2013. Object shift in Romance. *Nat. Lang. and Ling. Theory* 31, 409-451. López, L. 2012. Indefinite objects: Scrambling, Choice Functions, and Differential Object Marking. Cambridge: MIT Press. Richards, N. 2010. *Uttering Trees*. Cambridge: MIT Press.