

## Research Article

Monica Alexandrina Irimia\*

# Variation in differential object marking: On some differences between Spanish and Romanian

<https://doi.org/10.1515/opli-2020-0110>  
received June 4, 2018; accepted April 16, 2020

**Abstract:** Although differential object marking (DOM) has been studied from a multitude of perspectives, research into the types of variation it allows in closely related languages is still needed. This article examines DOM from the point of view of (micro)variation, focusing on two genetically related languages, namely, standard Spanish and Romanian. Both identities and points of divergence are discussed in detail and argued to result from a morphosyntactic parameter in the realm of differential marking. Following López [López, Luis. 2012. *Indefinite Objects Scrambling, Choice Functions and Differential Marking*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press], the Spanish special marker signals certain types of nominals which undergo short scrambling in order to have Case licensed. In Romanian, however, DOM is equated with an additional operation beyond the valuation of Case.

**Keywords:** differential object marking, microvariation, licensing, case

## 1 Introduction

Splits in the morphosyntactic realization of objects are very common crosslinguistically as instantiations of the phenomenon labeled *differential object marking* (DOM; Givón 1984, Comrie 1989, Bossong 1998, Lazard 2001, Aissen 2003, de Swart 2007, López 2012, Ormazabal and Romero 2013a, Bárányi 2017, Kalin 2018, Levin 2019, a.o.). A typical illustration is the animacy-based object contrast in Romance (Niculescu 1965, Rohlf 1971, Roegiest 1979, Bossong 1991, 1998, Torrego 1998, a.o.), encoded via a typologically common adpositional strategy.

DOM has been addressed both descriptively and theoretically, especially in individual languages. What is less understood, however, are the limits of this phenomenon, especially at the microvariation level. This article takes a step toward filling in this gap. Two prominent DOM varieties in Romance, namely, standard Spanish and Romanian, are compared in a comprehensive manner. A battery of formal diagnostics and contexts are examined, some of which are either novel or not usually discussed in the literature (such as strong quantifiers [SQs], elliptical contexts, bare quantifiers, weak quantifiers, DOM in comparative structures, DOM in partitives, etc.). The main observation is that the complexity and richness of the existing patterns as well as the wealth of data present a real touchstone for a unified analysis.

On the one hand, the investigation reveals non-trivial similarities between the two languages, motivating a common structural source. For example, DOM is sensitive to animacy/humanness, affecting nominals that are high on the animacy/definiteness scale (personal pronouns, proper names, etc.). Similarly, strong/universal quantifiers with an inbuilt animacy restriction need DOM in both Spanish and Romanian. Among other important DOM properties shared by the two languages, one can also list:

---

\* **Corresponding author: Monica Alexandrina Irimia**, Communication and Economics, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Reggio Emilia 42121, Italy, e-mail: [monica\\_alexandrina@yahoo.com](mailto:monica_alexandrina@yahoo.com), [irimiamo@unimore.it](mailto:irimiamo@unimore.it)

(i) contexts where animacy must be overridden, (ii) DOM is not a specificity nor a wide-scope strategy (see also López 2012 for Spanish or Cornilescu 2000 for Romanian, a.o.), and (iii) differentially marked nominals are accusative syntactically.

On the other hand, there are important differences. For example, one salient distinction is that animate lexical definites require optional DOM in Romanian but obligatory marking in standard Spanish. Another point of divergence refers to DOM use in clause union contexts; Spanish animate nominals carry obligatory marking in these configurations, while the same encoding is optional in Romanian. Moreover, the inventory of animacy-insensitive DOM is not homogeneous in the two languages. Telicity does not have an effect in Romanian, as opposed to Spanish, while DOM nominal ellipsis with SQs is not restricted to animacy in Romanian, as opposed to Spanish.

The results show that, although differential marking has the same general profile in the two languages, there are differences at both a finer and coarser level of resolution which cannot be captured under most of the current accounts. The desideratum to capture both commonalities and the loci of variation has motivated the need to address the morphosyntax of DOM instead of focusing only on its semantics (or pragmatics). Couched in a generative approach, namely minimalism, the gist of the proposal is that both commonalities and differences can be reduced to a morphosyntactic parameter. In Spanish, DOM-ed objects have a distinct position from non-DOM-ed objects specified with a Case feature and that escape (pseudo-) incorporation (López 2012). In Romanian, DOM-ed objects contain an additional feature beyond Case which needs an additional licensing operation in the syntax. A cluster of non-trivial differences has its source in this parametric distinction.

The article is structured in two main parts. The first contains the empirical database, comparing the two languages with respect to contexts where DOM is *obligatory*, *ungrammatical* and *possible* (Section 2). Comprehensive tables are provided illustrating the morphosyntactic configurations under examination. Section 3 demonstrates that DOM is not a specificity mechanism in neither of the two languages and summarizes both the similarities and differences. The second part is more theoretically oriented; Section 4 reviews two prominent accounts proposed for Spanish, namely Ormazabal and Romero (2013a) or López (2012), and the problems an extension of these formalizations raises for Romanian. A different account is formulated which derives the similarities and differences between the two languages on the basis of how the feature responsible for DOM interacts with Case. As further shown in Section 5, the solution resides in understanding what other categories, besides the differential objects, need licensing in a given language and how they are manipulated in morphosyntax. Section 6 concludes.

## 2 DOM and its contexts of use: the empirical data

We begin by illustrating the constraints on obligatory differential marking in both standard Spanish and Romanian. We take Spanish as a starting point, given that the special marker has been better studied in this language, not only empirically but also theoretically.

### 2.1 Obligatory differential marking in Spanish

In standard Spanish, differentially marked objects are introduced by the *prepositional* element *a*, which is homophonous with the dative<sup>1</sup> marker (Laca 1995, 2006, Pensado ed. 1995, Torrego 1998, Leonetti 2003, 2008, Bleam 2005, Ormazabal and Romero 2007, 2013a, Rodríguez-Mondoñedo 2007, López 2012, Fábregas 2013, a.o.).

---

<sup>1</sup> As discussed in more detail in the article, these objects show unambiguous *accusative* behavior. Thus, we will be glossing the accusative *a* as DOM. We will also refer to these objects as accusative *a* or the prepositional accusative. The *a* with indirect objects will be abbreviated as DAT (dative).

There are several well-defined contexts where direct objects cannot be used without the *a*-marker. These mainly signal *humanness/animacy*, with some configurations where the accusative preposition is also required on inanimates. As inanimates are also relevant for DOM in Romanian, we address them separately, in Section 2.3.

We start with personal pronouns, as in (1). Here the accusative *a* is obligatory. Note that in this context, clitic doubling is also necessary, but the clitic can only take accusative morphology. The dative form of the clitic is ungrammatical:

- (1) ‘Mónica \*(lo) vio \*(a) él // ‘Mónica **le** vio **a** él.<sup>2</sup>  
 Monica CL.3SG.M.ACC saw DOM he // Monica CL.3SG.M.DAT saw DOM he  
*Intended*: “Monica saw him.” *standard Spanish*

In (2) we see a proper name, and in (3-a) a run-of-the-mill referential definite animate. These classes must be accompanied by the differential marker. Inanimates, as in (3-b), are ungrammatical with DOM in regular transitive clauses of this type:

- (2) Juan visitó \*(a) Pedro.  
 Juan visited DOM Pedro  
 “Juan visited Pedro.” *Standard Spanish*
- (3) a. He encontrado \*(a) la niña.<sup>3</sup>  
 have.1SG found DOM DEF.F.SG girl  
 “I have found the girl.”
- b. He encontrado \*(a) el libro.  
 have.1SG found DOM DEF.M.SG book  
 “I have found the book.” *Standard Spanish* (Ormazabal and Romero 2013a, ex.1a,b)

Turning now to another obligatory context, we see in (4) SQs which either modify an overt animate determiner phrase (DP), as in (4-a) and (4-b), or have an understood animate antecedent, as in (4-c). Inanimates are not well-formed with differential marking in these contexts, as shown in (4-d). The behavior of SQs is a locus of variation from Romanian, as we show in Section 2.2:

- (4) *Standard Spanish – SQs*
- a. Juan vio \*(a) todas las chicas  
 Juan saw DOM all.F.PL DEF.F.PL girls.F.PL  
 “Juan saw all the girls.”
- b. Juan vio \*(a) la mayoría de las chicas  
 Juan saw DOM DEF.F.SG most of DEF.F.PL girls.F.PL  
 “Juan saw most of the girls.” (López 2012, ex. 21a, b; glosses adapted)
- c. Juan las ha felicitado \*(a) todas.  
 Juan CL.3F.PL.ACC has congratulated DOM all.F.PL  
 “Juan congratulated them all.” (animate antecedent only)

<sup>2</sup> Examples which do not have a cited source have been obtained either from native speakers or from the author’s native judgments. Sourced examples have been double-checked with native speakers.

<sup>3</sup> Note that in examples similar to (3), some speakers can omit *a*, constructing examples like (i). However, if the differential marker is dropped, the definite can only be interpreted non-referentially/non-specifically. Thus, the sentence in (i) can only refer to a type of girl, not to a specific girl. As we will see in the next section, this is an important difference from Romanian, where animate definites can obtain a specific interpretation even without the differential marker:

(i) He encontrado la niña (que buscas).  
 have.1SG found DEF.F.SG girl that search.2SG  
 “I have found the type of girl (you are looking for).” *standard Spanish*

- d. Juan vio **(\*a)** todos los libros.  
 Juan saw DOM all DEF.M.PL book.M.PL  
 “Juan saw all the books.”

Animate negative quantifiers tend to require special marking crosslinguistically, when functioning as objects (Bossong 1998, a.o.). Spanish is no exception, as we see below in (5-a) and (5-b). Existential quantifiers which have an animacy restriction on their domain of quantification also need the special marker, as in (5-c):

(5) *Standard Spanish*

- a. Juan no amó **(\*a)** ninguna mujer.  
 Juan NEG loved DOM no.F.SG woman  
 “John loved no woman.” (López 2012, ex. 25d, p.13)
- b. Juan no vio **(\*a)** nadie.  
 Juan NEG saw DOM nobody  
 “John didn’t see anybody.”
- c. Está buscando **(\*a)** alguien.  
 be.3SG look-for.GER DOM someone  
 “S/he is looking for someone.” (Leonetti 2003: 72–6)

An important observation made about animate indefinites is that they are affected by telicity. For many speakers, DOM becomes obligatory under aspectual boundedness. Some relevant examples are given below, from Torrego Salcedo (1999) and García García (2005). As we further discuss in Section 2.5, standard Spanish animate indefinites differ from animate referential definites as they are possible without accusative *a* when interpreted non-specifically, as in (6-a). However, when telicity is induced either by explicit adverbials (“in” phrases, as opposed to “for” phrases, Dowty 1979: 133ff., a.o.) or by predicates lexically specified for boundedness (6-b), the differential marker becomes obligatory, as illustrated in (6-b) and (6-c):

(6) *Standard Spanish*

- a. Besaron **(a)** un niño.  
 kiss.PST.3PL DOM a.M.SG child  
 “They kissed a child.”
- b. Besaron **(\*a)** un niño en un segundo.  
 kiss.PST.3PL DOM a.M.SG child in a.M.SG second  
 “They kissed a child in a second.” (Torrego Salcedo 1999: 1789)
- c. María insultó **(\*a)** un compañero.  
 Maria insult.PST.3SG DOM a.M.SG colleague  
 “Maria insulted a colleague.” (García García 2005, ex. 16)

Another context where differential marking is obligatory with animates comes from clause union (see López 2012 for pioneering discussion). In such configurations, the nominal normally acts as a shared argument of two predicates. We provide below two examples from nominals with adjectival ECM-*small clauses* (SCs). In these contexts, even if the shared argument is not (necessarily) interpreted specific,<sup>4</sup> it still needs DOM. As we discuss later in the article (Sections 4 and 5), this restriction is due to a specific syntactic configuration in these contexts.

<sup>4</sup> Note that the differential marker appears to be needed with shared animate nominals even in the absence of specificity. A modal adjective like *necessary* normally triggers a non-specific reading on its argument.

- (7) *Standard Spanish*
- a. Considero **\*(a)** un estudiante inteligente/necesario por  
consider.1SG DOM a.M.SG student intelligent.M.SG/necessary.M.SG for  
un proyecto.  
a.M.SG project  
“I consider a student intelligent/necessary for a project.”
  - b. Considero **(\*a)** un libro interesante.  
consider.1SG DOM a.M.SG book interesting.SG  
“I consider a book interesting.”

A preliminary summary of the Spanish obligatory contexts is given in Table 1. As a methodological background, we follow the procedures in recent parametric comparison research, especially Roberts (1998, 2012, 2017), the *Parametric Comparison Method* (Guardiano and Longobardi 2005, Longobardi and Guardiano 2009) or Ledgeway et al. (2019). Descriptively, we take the contexts/properties/characteristics discussed below to act as (surface) parametric points and thus as comparanda for the examination of the two languages discussed here. In Section 4, we show that most of the surface patterns (“parameters”) can be reduced to more basic featural or configurational primitives in the grammar. A semantic/morphosyntactic specification set positively for DOM is indicated with +, while the absence of the *a* marker for certain morphosyntactic specification is encoded as –. Contexts set as + also indicate *obligatory differential marking*.

## 2.2 Obligatory differential marking in Romanian

The use of a preposition<sup>5</sup> to signal certain classes of objects is a very robust differential marking strategy in Romanian too, as discussed in numerous contributions (Niculescu 1965, Farkaş 1978, Dobrovie-Sorin 1990, 1994, Mardale 2009, 2015, Cornilescu 2000, Tigău 2010, 2011, Hill 2013, Pană-Dindelegan 2013, Avram and Zafiu 2017, Irimia 2018, 2020, a.o.). The data, however, show some intricate loci of variation with respect to standard Spanish, which have yet to be exhaustively classified and analyzed. The obligatory contexts we begin with are the pronouns and proper names. Pronouns with direct object function must be clitic doubled, and the case morphology on the clitic can only be accusative, as we see in (8). This is similar to Spanish. Note, however, that Romanian diverges from Spanish in that clitic doubling is possible with differentially marked objects, more generally, not just with the pronouns.<sup>6</sup> In (8-b), we see an object proper name which is clitic doubled.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This preposition can have a locative meaning (*on*), as shown in (i-a), but is not homophonous with the dative. The latter preserves inflectional morphology in Romanian, as seen in (i-b). Historically, the differential marker was a directional.

- (i) a. A pus cartea **pe** masaă.  
has put book.DEF.F.SG on table  
“S/he has put the book on the table.”
- b. I-a dat cartea **fetei**.  
CL.3SG.DAT-has given book.DEF.F.SG girl.DAT.F.SG  
“S/he has given the book to the girl.” *Romanian*

<sup>6</sup> There are also contexts where clitic doubling is ungrammatical with DOM, for example, negative animate quantifiers. For lack of space we do not address clitic doubling in this article.

<sup>7</sup> For some speakers, in fact, proper names seem to be ungrammatical without accusative clitic doubling.

**Table 1:** Obligatory DOM – standard Spanish animates (preliminary)

Context	DOM – Spanish animates
Personal pronoun	+
Proper name	+
Referential definite animate	+
Animate SQs	+
Negative/existential quantifiers with animacy restriction	+
Animate (indefinites) in telic contexts	+
Animate shared objects in clause union	+

- (8) a. Maria **\*(m)**-a văzut **\*(pe)** mine.<sup>8</sup>  
 Maria CL.1SG.ACC-has seen DOM 1SG.ACC  
 “Maria saw me.”
- b. Maria **l**-a văzut **\*(pe)** Ion.  
 Maria CL.3SG.ACC-has seen DOM Ion  
 “Maria saw Ion.” *Romanian*

Turning now to referential and specific definite DPs, we get another difference. In Spanish, these classes need the obligatory prepositional marking, as illustrated in (3-a). In Romanian, on the other hand, animate definites can have a referential/specific interpretation even without the differential marker. Thus, both (9-a) and (9-b) are possible:

- (9) a. (L-) au lăudat **pe** studentul inteligent.  
 CL.3SG.M.ACC- have praised DOM student.DEF.M.SG intelligent.M.SG  
 “They have praised the intelligent student.”
- b. Au lăudat studentul inteligent.  
 have praised student.DEF.M.SG intelligent.M.SG  
 “They have praised the intelligent student.” *Romanian*

It is only *animates* that can take the differential marker in these types of contexts. Inanimate objects, no matter whether their interpretation is referential/specific, are *ungrammatical* with the differential marker in regular transitive clauses, as demonstrated by the example in (10). This is the exact same state of affairs as in the standard Spanish sentence in (3-b).

- (10) **\*(L-)** au lăudat **\*(pe)** romanul clasic.  
 CL.3SG.M.ACC- have praised DOM novel.DEF.N.SG classical.N.SG  
 “They have praised the classical novel.” *Romanian*

Another DOM-inducing example we mentioned for Spanish contains SQs accompanying an animate object, as in (4-a) or (4-b). In Romanian, DOM is possible with animates in this context:

<sup>8</sup> The tonic form of the pronoun must show accusative morphology for first and second persons in modern Romanian. Nominative inflection is ungrammatical, see (i-a). Dative inflection on either the clitic or the tonic pronouns equally leads to ungrammaticality, as illustrated in (i-b):

- (i) Maria **\*(m)**-a văzut **pe \*eu/✓mine**.  
 Maria CL.1SG.ACC-has seen DOM 1SG.NOM/1SG.ACC  
 Intended: “Maria saw me.”
- (ii) **\*Maria (mi)**-a văzut **(pe) mine/mie**.  
 Maria CL.1SG.DAT-has seen DOM 1SG.ACC/1SG.DAT  
 Intended: “Maria saw me.” *Romanian*

- (11) a. Ion le-a văzut **pe** toate fetele.  
 Ion CL.3F.PL.ACC-has seen DOM all.F.PL girl.F.PL.DEF.F.PL  
 “Ion has seen all the girls.”
- b. Ion a văzut (**\*pe**) toate filmele.  
 Ion has seen DOM all.N.PL movie.N.PL.DEF.N.PL  
 “Ion has seen all the movies.” *Romanian*

The differential marker also extends to elliptical contexts; here, an important difference is seen with respect to standard Spanish. If in Spanish examples of the type in (4-c) the presence of accusative *a* entails an animate understood referent, in Romanian the *differential marker must be used irrespectively of animacy*. These contexts are part of a larger class where the DOM preposition is obligatory irrespectively of animacy and will be further addressed in Section 2.3.

- (12) Le-am văzut **\*pe** toate.  
 CL.F/N.PL-have.1 seen DOM all.F/N.PL  
 “I saw them all.” *Romanian (animate or inanimate)*

Quantifiers restricted to animacy are another preferred DOM context. A unifying factor is that the negative *Q nimeni* (“nobody”), and the positive one *cineva* (“somebody”) need DOM in Romanian, just like in Spanish (5-a) and (5-c):

- (13) a. Nu am văzut **\*pe** nimeni.  
 not have.1 seen DOM nobody  
 “I didn’t see anybody.”
- b. Am văzut **\*pe** cineva.  
 have.1 seen DOM somebody  
 “I saw somebody.” *Romanian*

In both languages, the animate *wh* element *who* is ungrammatical without the accusative preposition, when used as an object:<sup>9</sup>

- (14) a. **\*Pe** cine ai văzut?                      b. **\*A** quien has visto?  
 DOM who have.2SG seen                      DOM who have.2SG seen  
 “Who have you seen?” *Romanian*                      “Who have you seen?” *Spanish*

The major difference between the two languages affects the negative quantifier in its adjectival form. The first sentence in (5) shows that the latter requires differential marking in Spanish, when its DP is animate. In Romanian, this restriction does not hold, as we show in more detail in Section 2.5 (where optional DOM is discussed).

The presence of demonstratives also appears to have an effect on the use of DOM. Both Romanian and Spanish patterns are alike in requiring DOM if demonstratives accompany animate nouns:

- (15) a. Am văzut-o **\*pe** această fată.  
 have.1 seen-CL.3F.SG.ACC DOM this.F.SG girl  
 “I have seen this girl.”
- b. Am văzut-(\*o) (**\*pe**) această carte.  
 have.1 seen-CL.3F.SG.ACC DOM this.F.SG book  
 “I have seen this book.” *Romanian*

<sup>9</sup> As these quantifiers cannot be analyzed in terms of specificity, we have unambiguous evidence that DOM is not a specificity-inducing mechanism. In Section 3, we present further motivation for this conclusion.

- c. He visto **\*(a)** aquella estudiante.  
 have.1 seen-CL.3F.SG.ACC DOM that.F.SG student  
 “I have seen that female student.”
- d. He visto **\*(a)** aquella calle.  
 have.1 seen DOM that.F.SG street  
 “I have seen that street.” *standard Spanish*

However, a difference arises with respect to demonstratives in elliptical constructions. The differential marker is obligatory with an animate antecedent in standard Spanish, as we see in (16). In Romanian, on the other hand, the demonstrative requires differential marking in elliptical structures irrespective of animacy. Relevant examples are provided in Section 2.3.

- (16) He visto **a** aquella.  
 have.1 seen DOM that.F.SG  
 “I have seen that one.” *Spanish, animate antecedent only*

The other two conditions for DOM in Spanish are telicity (6-c) and syntactic configurations where DPs act as shared arguments, such as (7-a). Telicity does not play a salient role in Romanian (with respect to the prepositional accusative), and animate shared arguments can be used without the differential marker in SCs, as seen in (17):

- (17) (Îi) consideră **(pe)** studenții români foarte  
 CL.3M.PL.ACC considers DOM student.M.PL.DEF.M.PL Romanian.M.PL very  
 inteligenți.  
 intelligent.M.PL  
 “S/he considers the Romanian students very intelligent.” *Romanian*

Before proceeding with the inanimates, we summarize the obligatory DOM contexts for both Romanian and Spanish, as restricted to animacy. The differences are signaled in boldface. We have also tagged the relevant examples, so that they can be easily tracked (Table 2).

## 2.3 Obligatory differential marking and inanimates

Although highly sensitive to animacy, DOM interacts with inanimates in very subtle ways across Romance varieties. Restricting our attention to standard Spanish, both Torrego Salcedo (1999) and García García (2007) discuss examples of the type below, which are generally subsumed under the telicity-inducing contexts.<sup>10</sup> We follow the same grouping here.

- (18) a. Un adjetivo acompaña/califica **a** un sustantivo.<sup>11</sup>  
 a.M.SG adjective accompanies/qualifies DOM a.M.SG noun  
 “An adjective accompanies/modifies a noun.”

<sup>10</sup> See also Fish (1967) and Weissenrieder (1991) for a comprehensive list of predicates involved in these patterns, as well as Martín (1999, 2005), or Rodríguez-Mondoñedo (2007), a.o.

<sup>11</sup> A clarification is in order here. These predicates are part of classes that appear to select lexical case morphology (dative, genitive, etc., as opposed to accusative) in many languages (see especially de Hoop 1996). A legitimate question would be whether the *a* marker indicates the dative in these examples. We have unambiguous evidence that *a* signals accusative morphology here, as clitic substitution only tolerates the accusative form in the relevant interpretation:

- (i) En esta receta, la leche **lo**/**\*li** puede sustituir.  
 in this.F.SG recipe DEF.F.SG milk CL.3M.SG.ACC/CL.3M.SG.DAT can.3SG replace  
 “In this recipe, milk can replace it.”



**Table 2:** DOM – standard Spanish and Romanian animates (preliminary)

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Personal pronoun	+(1)	+(8-a)
Proper name	+(2)	+(8-b)
<b>Referential definite animate</b>	+(3-a)	(9-b)
Animate SQs	+(4-a)	(11)
(Non-adjectival) Neg/Exist quantifiers with animacy restriction	+(5)	+(13-a)
<b>Adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animates</b>	+(5-a)	–
<b>Animate (indefinites) in telic contexts</b>	+(6-b)	–
<b>Animate shared objects in clause union</b>	+(7)	(17)
<b>Animate indefinites with specific readings only</b>	+(40)	–
Insensitivity to specificity (Anim Neg Q)	+(5)	+(13-a)
Accusative clitic	+(1)	+(8-a)
Clitic doubling of pronouns	+(1)	+(8-a)
<b>Clitic doubling of non-pronominal DP</b>	–	+(8-b)
<i>Wh</i> object animate	+(14-b)	+(14-a)
Adjectival demonstrative with animate DP	+(15-c)	+(15-a)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative with animate antecedent	+(16)	+(21)

- b. Los días siguen **a** las noches.  
 DEF.M.PL day.M.PL follow.3.PL DOM DEF.F.PL night.F.PL  
 “The days come after the nights.”
- c. El uno precede **al** dos.  
 DEF.M.SG one precedes DOM-DEF.M.SG two  
 “One precedes two.”
- d. En esta receta, la leche puede sustituir **al** huevo.  
 in this.F.SG recipe DEF.F.SG milk can.3.SG replace DOM-DEF.M.SG egg  
 “In this recipe, egg can be replaced by milk.”
- e. Esta cuesta supera **a** aquella.  
 this.F.SG slope outranks DOM that.F.SG  
 “This slope outranks that one.”

*Spanish* (Torrego  
 Salcedo 1999: 1788)

A rather ignored obligatory DOM configuration comes from some types of *equatives* (equality comparatives). An example is provided below:<sup>12</sup>

- (19) Ama los libros como **\*(a)** su vida.  
 loves DEF.M.PL book.M.PL as DOM her/his life  
 “S/he loves the books as (s/he loves) her/his life.” *Spanish* (Irimia 2018)

While telicity plays no role in Romanian, the obligatory use of differential marking irrespective of animacy is extremely robust in equatives. Two relevant examples are provided below; for more discussion, see Pană-Dindelegan (2013) or Irimia (2018, 2020).

- (20) a. L-am păstrat ca **\*(pe)** un dar.  
 CL.3SG.M.ACC-have kept as DOM a.N.SG gift  
 “I have kept it like/as (one would keep) a gift.”

<sup>12</sup> Equatives are discussed in some more detail in Section 5.

- b. Să luăm viața  
ca **\*(pe)** o încântare.<sup>13</sup>  
SUBJ take.SUBJ.1PL life.DEF.F.SG like/as  
DOM a.F.SG enchantment  
“Let’s take life as a fairy tale.” *Romanian*

Additionally, Romanian exhibits many other contexts where animacy plays no role in regulating differential marking, with the DOM preposition extending across the board to all direct objects (Cornilescu 2000, Pană-Dindelegan 2013, Avram and Zafiu 2017, Irimia 2020). Prominent are nominal ellipsis contexts, headed by demonstratives, as in (21-a) vs (21-b), the adjectival definite marker *cel*,<sup>14</sup> as in (22-a) vs (22-b) as well as the genitival linker *al* in (23-b),<sup>15</sup> with examples from Irimia (2020).

- (21) a. Ai cumpărat **\*(pe)** paltonul acela?  
have.2 bought DOM coat.DEF.N.SG that.N.SG.AUG  
“Did you buy that coat?” *Romanian*
- b. L-am cumpărat **\*(pe)** acest-a.  
CL.3SG.N.ACC-have bought DOM this-N.SG.AUG  
“I have bought this (one).” (referring to the coat)
- (22) a. Vrei **\*(pe)** paltonul roșu?  
want.2SG DOM coat.DEF.N.SG red.N.SG  
“Do you want the red coat?” *Romanian*
- b. Nu, îl vreau **\*(pe)** cel albastru.  
No, CL.M.SG.ACC want.1.SG DOM CEL.N.SG blue.N.SG  
“No, I want the blue one.” (referring to the coat)
- (23) a. Ai citit **\*(pe)** lucrările lui Hegel?  
have.2.SG read DOM work.F.PL.DEF.F.PL GEN.M.SG Hegel  
“Have you read Hegel’s works?” *Romanian*
- b. Nu, le-am citit **\*(pe)** a-le lui Chomsky.  
No, CL.F.PL-have.1 read DOM LK-DEF.F.PL GEN.M.SG Chomsky  
“No, I have read Chomsky’s.” (referring to the works)

<sup>13</sup> TV commercial for a type of cheese.

<sup>14</sup> CEL developed from the endophoric distal demonstrative *acel/acela*, the latter descending from the Latin complex demonstrative *ecce/eccum* (an adverbial reinforcer) + *illum* (distal demonstrative).

<sup>15</sup> Romanian has preserved inflectional morphology for the genitive, which is (partly) homophonous with the dative. Importantly, the genitive is subject to a strict adjacency constraint which requires it to immediately follow a noun with suffixed definiteness (i-a). The genitive is ungrammatical with forms that do not contain overt definiteness, for example, the indefinite in (i-b). Structures like (i-b) can only be made grammatical by the addition of a *linker* (abbreviated LK and whose spell out form is *a*) to which definiteness is suffixed, as in (i-c):

- (i) a. câine-**le** copil-u-**lui**.  
dog-DEF.M.SG child-M.SG-GEN.M.SG  
“the child’s dog”
- b. **\*un** câine copil-u-**lui**.  
a.M.SG dog child-M.SG-GEN.M.SG  
*Intended*: “a child’s dog/a dog of the child.”
- c. un câine **a-l** copil-u-**lui**.  
a.M.SG dog LK-DEF.M.SG child-M.SG-GEN.M.SG  
“a child’s dog/a dog of the child” *Romanian*

See also Cornilescu (1992), Giurgea (2008), a.o., for further discussion.

We have already presented another animacy-insensitive context, namely, the one led by the SQ *tot*, under nominal ellipsis.<sup>16</sup> We repeat here a relevant example:

- (24) Le-am văzut **\*(pe)** toate.  
 CL.F/N.PL-have.1 seen DOM all.F/N.PL  
 “I saw them all.” *Romanian (animate or inanimate)*

In Romanian, animacy can be overridden in yet other contexts, such as some types of partitives (25-a), D-linked pronouns (25-b) as well as relative clauses (25-c). These configurations do not trigger differential marking in standard Spanish with inanimates.

- (25) a. Am citit-o numai **\*(pe)** una dintre cărțile  
 have.1 read-CL.3SG.F.ACC only DOM one.DEF.F.SG from books.the.F.PL  
 recomandate.  
 recommended.F.PL  
 “I have read only one of the recommended books.”  
 (Avram and Zafiu 2017, ex. 13)
- b. **\*(Pe)** care l-ai cumpărat?  
 DOM which CL.3SG.M.ACC-have.2SG bought  
 “Which one have you bought?” *(animate or inanimate)*
- c. cartea **\*(pe)** care am citit-o.<sup>17</sup>  
 book.DEF.F.SG DOM which have.1 read-CL.3F.SG.ACC  
 “the book I read” *Romanian*

To summarize, both Romanian and standard Spanish exhibit a differential marking strategy which affects animates under certain conditions. Descriptively, when animacy is at stake, this special morphology follows the referential hierarchies known as *scales* (Aissen 2003, a.o.); DPs ranked at the higher end of *scales* are more prone to carry the prepositional marker (pronouns, proper names, human DPs, etc.). However, one important problem with scales is that animacy must be overridden in well-defined *structural* configurations.

- (26) *Person/Animacy:*  
 1/2 < 3 < proper name < human < animate < inanimate
- (27) *Specificity/Definiteness:*  
 pronoun < name < definite < specific indefinite < non-specific

There are also non-trivial differences in the DOM profile of the two languages. On the one hand, Romanian animate referential definites are possible without the prepositional marker, and indefinite animates can obtain specific readings in the absence of DOM. Telicity effects, as well as “prepositional accusative” selection by

<sup>16</sup> The elliptical SQ is ungrammatical with differential marking under some types of propositional ellipsis or when it tracks non-individuating entities in the singular; in these contexts the universal quantifier shows up in the neuter singular form *tot*. We present two contexts below:

- (i) a. Nu cred **\*(pe)** tot ce îmi spui tu.  
 not believe DOM all.N.SG what I.DAT tell.2SG you  
 “I don’t believe everything you are telling me.”
- b. Ion mănâncă **\*(pe)** tot (din farfurie).  
 Ion eat.3SG DOM all.N.SG (from plate)  
 “Ion eats everything (off the plate).”

<sup>17</sup> Some speakers do omit the differential marker in relative clause contexts. Descriptive grammars attribute such omissions a sub-standard status, and the lack of differential marking is strongly frowned upon.

certain predicates, irrespective of animacy are also not operative in Romanian. On the other hand, Romanian exhibits a large group of contexts, mainly related to nominal ellipsis and D-linking, where DOM is obligatory irrespective of animacy. These latter contexts are not matched by the Spanish data. In Table 3, we summarize the results obtained from the comparison of obligatory DOM in both Romanian and Spanish.

## 2.4 Where the differential object marker is ungrammatical

According to the literature, in Spanish there are five important contexts that do not tolerate the differential marker: (i) existential configurations, (ii) complements of predicates like *tener* “have” under an individual-level interpretation, (iii) bare plurals, irrespective of animacy, (iv) quantifiers with a restriction on inanimacy, and (v) objects of unaffected predicates with inanimate subjects. Romanian shows a very similar picture, and we illustrate the two languages in parallel. In (28), we provide an existential sentence,<sup>18</sup> which in Spanish is constructed with the verb *haber* “have”:

- (28) En el patio hay \*(a) un niño.  
 in DEF.M.SG yard have.3SG DOM a.M.SG boy  
 “There is a boy in the yard.” (López 2012, ex.44, p. 20)

An individual-level interpretation with a possessive transitive predicate like *tener* “have” is seen in (29-a). Note that, if the predicate is constructed as stage level, expressing a temporarily restricted eventuality,<sup>19</sup> the differential marker is possible (29-b):

- (29) a. María tiene \*(a) tres hijos.  
 Maria has DOM three children  
 “María has three children.”  
 b. María tiene (a) un hijo en el ejército.  
 María has DOM a.M.SG son in DEF.M.SG army  
 “María has a son in the army.” (López 2012, ex.45, p. 20/ex. 48, p. 21)

We now turn to Romanian existential clauses, as in (30-a), where the prepositional accusative is indeed impossible. Transitive possessive clauses in (30-b) also have the same behavior as in modern Spanish. Under an individual-level reading, differential marking is out. The stage-level interpretation allows the differential marker with animates, which moreover can only have a specific reading. This is the same picture as in standard Spanish:

- (30) a. Sunt (\*pe) copii la școală.  
 be.3PL DOM children at school  
 “There are children at school.”  
 b. Ion are (\*pe) copii.  
 Ion have.3SG DOM children  
 “Ion has children.”

<sup>18</sup> A question could be why we are discussing existential predicates, given that in (28) the DP *un niño* (“a boy”) is normally assumed to be a *subject*. As the differential marker only affects *objects*, its absence in contexts like (28) would be as expected. However, various discussions have demonstrated that DPs in existential sentences (ES) have an *object* behavior, at least in some varieties of Spanish (and across Romance, more generally). For example, Rodríguez-Mondoñedo (2007) shows that ES DPs exhibit object agreement and can be resumed by *object clitics* in non-standard Spanish. Similar observations can be found in Fernández-Soriano and Táboas-Baylin (1999: 1754–9), Suñer (1982), and Torrego (1984), a.o.

<sup>19</sup> See Bleam (2005) or Klein and de Swart (2011) for further discussion about the differences between the two readings and the ways in which such distinctions affect the presence/absence of the differential marker.

Table 3: DOM – standard Spanish and Romanian (preliminary)

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Personal pronoun	+(1)	+(8-a)
Proper name	+(2)	+(8-b)
<b>Referential definite animate</b>	+(3-a)	(9-b)
Animate SQs	+(4-a)	(11)
(Non-adjectival) Neg/Exist quantifiers with animacy restriction	+(5)	+(13-a)
<b>Adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animates</b>	+(5-a)	–
<b>Animate (indefinites) in telic contexts</b>	+(6-b)	–
<b>Animate shared objects in clause union</b>	+(7)	(17)
<b>Inanimates with certain classes of verbs/telicity</b>	+(18)	–
Equatives (irrespective of animacy)	+(19)	+(20)
<b>Animate indefinites with specific readings only</b>	+(40)	–
Insensitivity to specificity (Anim Neg Q)	+(5)	+(13-a)
Accusative clitic	+(1)	+(8-a)
Clitic doubling of pronouns	+(1)	+(8-a)
<b>Clitic doubling of non-pronominal DP</b>	–	+(8-b)
<i>Wh</i> object animate	+(14-b)	+(14-a)
Adjectival demonstrative with animate DP	+(15-c)	+(15-a)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative with animate antecedent	+(16)	+(21-b)
<b>Nominal ellipsis demonstrative irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(21)
<b>Elliptical adjectival definite irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(22-b)
<b>Elliptical genitive linker irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(23-b)
<b>Strong partitive irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(25-a)
<b>D-linking irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(25-b)
<b>Relative pronoun irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(25-c)

c. Ion îi are **pe** copii.

John CL.3M.PL.ACC have.3SG DOM children

“John has the children (known to the speaker/hearer).” *Romanian*

Two examples with bare plurals where the Spanish *a*-marker is ungrammatical are given below. As already mentioned, animacy is irrelevant in these configurations. For many speakers, (31), which contains an animate DP, is as ill-formed as the inanimate in (32):

(31)	Busco	(*a) traductores.	(32)	Busco	(*a) libros.
	search.1SG	DOM translator.PL		search.1SG	DOM book.PL
	“I am looking for translators.”			“I am looking for books.”	

Romanian bare plurals can be constructed with the prepositional accusative for some speakers. Sentence (33) contains an example:<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> In Romanian, definiteness morphology (which is suffixal) is blocked under a preposition, if the DP does not contain overt modification. The differential marker, being prepositional, is subject to this constraint, as we show in (i). Crucially, the definiteless noun in (i-a) is interpreted as *definite*, as indicated in the translation. This raises the question of whether what looks like a bare noun in (33) is a true bare noun or a concealed definite:

- (i) a. (L)-am văzut **pe** ✓copil/\*copilul.  
CL.3SG.M.ACC-have.1SG seen DOM child/child.DEF.M.SG  
“I have seen the child.”
- b. (L)-am văzut **pe** \*copil/copilul inteligent.  
CL.3SG.M.ACC-have.1SG seen DOM child/child.DEF.M.SG intelligent.M.SG  
“I have seen the intelligent child.”

- (33) <sup>2</sup>Universitatea (i)-a invitat **pe** profesori vestiți la ceremonie.  
 university.DEF.F.SG CL.M.PL.ACC-has invited DOM professor.M.PL famous.M.PL at ceremony.  
 “The university has invited famous professors to the ceremony.” *Romanian*

In (34), we present two examples with quantifiers whose domain of quantification is restricted to inanimates. DOM is ungrammatical in these contexts in Spanish:

- (34) No he visto (**\*a**) nada. (35) He visto (**\*a**) algo.  
 not have.1.SG seen DOM nothing have.1SG seen DOM something  
 “I haven’t seen anything.” “I have seen something.” *Spanish*  
 (García García 2007, ex. 2a)

As the two examples below show, the same pattern holds in Romanian:

- (36) Nu am văzut (**\*pe**) nimic. (37) Am văzut (**\*pe**) ceva.  
 not have.1 seen DOM nothing have.1 seen DOM something  
 “I didn’t see anything.” “I saw something.” *Romanian*

Differentially marked objects are also impossible in various transitive sentences with an inanimate subject. The two Spanish contexts below illustrate an important contrast, which can be summarized as follows – unaffected predicates with inanimate subjects do not permit special marking on their animate objects. The same restriction is active in Romanian.

- (38) a. La diva conoce **a** muchos aficionados.  
 DEF.F.SG diva knows DOM many.M.PL aficionado.M.PL  
 “The diva knows many aficionados.”  
 b. La ópera conoce (**\*a**) muchos aficionados.  
 DEF.F.SG opera knows DOM many.M.PL aficionado.M.PL  
 “The opera knows many aficionados.” *Spanish* (Torrego  
 Salcedo 1999: 1786)
- (39) a. Diva (ii) cunoaște (**pe**) mulți fani.  
 diva.DEF.F.SG CL.3.PL.ACC knows DOM many.M.PL fan.PL  
 “The diva knows many (specific) fans.”  
 b. Opera (**\*ii**) cunoaște (**\*pe**) mulți fani.  
 diva.DEF.F.SG CL.3.PL.ACC knows DOM many.M.PL fan.PL  
 “Opera knows many fans.” *Romanian*

Table 4 summarizes the ungrammaticality contexts presented in this section.

---

We know that example (33) contains a bare noun because both definites and bare nouns are possible with DOM in the plural, if the noun is modified. Thus, example (ii), which contains overt suffixed definiteness, is also possible:

- (ii) Universitatea (i)-a invitat **pe** profesorii vestiți la  
 university.DEF.F.SG CL.3M.PL.ACC-has invited DOM professor.M.PL-DEF.M.PL famous.M.PL at  
 ceremonie.  
 ceremony  
 “The university has invited **the** famous professors to the ceremony.”

**Table 4:** Ungrammatical DOM – Romanian and standard Spanish

Context	DOM Romanian	DOM Spanish
DPs in existential sentences	–(30-a)	–(28)
Objects of possessive transitives: individual level	–(30-b)	–(29)
Bare plurals inanimate	–	–(32)
Bare plural animates with specific readings	(33)	–
Negative/existential quantifiers with inanimacy restriction	–(37)	–(35)
Objects of unaffected predicates with inanimate subjects	–(39-b)	–(38-b)

## 2.5 Optional DOM

The most relevant cases of optionality are seen with indefinites. A typical remark made about standard Spanish is that animate indefinites do not obligatorily need the differential marker.

Traditionally, the presence vs absence of the marker has been connected to specificity. As the received wisdom goes, if the nominal is interpreted as non-specific, DOM cannot be used. However, if the animate indefinite is interpreted as specific, DOM is assumed to be obligatory. Contrasts like the one between (40-a) and (40-b) are clear in the language:

- (40) a. *María buscó a una gestora che habla alemán.*  
 María searched DOM a.F.SG manager that speaks.IND German  
 “Maria looked for a manager that speaks German.”
- b. *María buscó una gestora che \*habla/✓hable alemán.*  
 María searched a.F.SG manager that speaks.IND/speaks.SUBJ German  
 “Maria looked for a manager that could speak German.” *Spanish*  
 (López 2012, ex. 38a, b, p. 18)

In (40-a), the prepositional accusative tolerates the indicative mood, which is connected with a presuppositional (specific) interpretation of the DP. In other words, (40-a) can mean that María has looked for a specific manager who actually speaks German. The non-DOM-ed DP, illustrated in (40-b), on the other hand, is only possible with the subjunctive mood. As we have mentioned above, the subjunctive mood is a marker of non-specificity (and non-actualization) in Spanish (see especially Rivero 1979). Thus, the animate object *una gestora* “a manager” cannot be interpreted as specific in the Spanish example (40-b).

The PE prepositional marker is also optional with animate indefinites in Romanian. But the presence of PE is not always connected to specificity. The specific reading might be prominent in examples like (41-b), but it can be missing in many other contexts, which are summarized in the next section. Moreover, differently from Spanish, non-DOM animate indefinites *can* receive a specific interpretation without PE. Thus, the contrast between (41) and (40):

- (41) *Romanian*
- a. *Ion admiră o femeie.*  
 Ion admires a.F.SG woman  
 = “Ion admires a woman.” *(unknown to the speaker/hearer)*  
 = “Ion admires a specific woman.”
- b. *Ion (o) admiră pe o femeie.*  
 Ion CL.3F.SG.ACC admires DOM a.F.SG woman  
 “Ion admires a (specific) woman.”

Other contexts of optionality come from existential quantifiers that alternate between the so-called *weak* and *strong* readings (see especially Milsark 1979, Diesing 1992 or de Hoop 1996). The weak reading is

related to non-specificity, while the strong one normally entails specificity. The specific interpretation on the animate needs differential marking (42-b):

- (42) a. Juan vio muchas chicas (en la calle).  
 Juan saw many.F.PL girl.F.PL in DEF.F.SG street  
 “Juan saw many girls (on the street).”
- b. Juan vio *\*(a)* muchas chicas (en la calle).  
 Juan saw DOM many.F.PL girl.F.PL in DEF.F.SG street  
 “Juan saw the many specific girls (on the street).” *Spanish*
- (43) a. Am văzut multe fete.  
 have.1 seen many.F.PL girl.F.PL  
 “I saw many girls.”
- b. (Le-)am văzut **pe** multe fete.  
 CL.3F.PL.ACC-have.1 seen DOM many.F.PL girl.F.PL  
 “I saw many (specific) girls.” *Romanian*

This type of alternation can be resolved as follows: specific readings can be subsumed under the already existing SQs; non-specific interpretations need to be encoded as DOM restriction in the table containing ungrammatical contexts (Table 4).

Lastly, the differential marker is optional with Romanian definite animates, as we have seen in examples like (9-a) and (9-b).

A conclusion frequently drawn on the basis of contrasts seen with inanimates and strong/weak quantifiers is that DOM is a *specificity*-inducing mechanism. This statement, however, requires more attention. A careful examination of the data indicates, in fact, that DOM is insensitive to specificity in the two languages discussed here (see also López 2012).

### 3 DOM and specificity

That differentially marked objects are not restricted to specificity can be demonstrated by a variety of diagnostics. For example, as Rodríguez-Mondoñedo (2007) or López (2012) have shown, objects introduced by *a* can act as antecedents for a discourse anaphor, similar to the non-*a* objects. The same observation is valid for Romanian.

Additionally, both types of objects can appear in configurations that contain the subjunctive mood, a marker of *non-specificity* (Rivero 1979). Moreover, the differential marker can also co-occur with the quantifier *cualquier* “no matter who.” Note that in Spanish the latter quantifier tolerates only the subjunctive mood:

- (44) a. María buscó **a** una gestora cualquiera que  
 María looked-for DOM a.F.SG manager no-matter-who that  
 \*habla/✓hable alemán.  
 speaks.IND/speaks.SUBJ German.  
 “María looked for a manager (no matter who) that could speak German.”  
 (López 2012, ex. 38a, p. 18) *Spanish*
- b. L-am întrebat **pe** un om oarecare.  
 CL.3M.SG.ACC-have.1 asked DOM a.M.SG man no-matter-who  
 “I have asked a random man.” *Romanian*

Insensitivity to specificity also predicts that differentially marked objects do not need to take the widest scope. This is actually borne out by the data; the same conclusion is also supported by López (2012), some of whose examples we address below. To better understand the point, we can start the discussion by first exemplifying contexts where differentially marked objects *do* take wide scope with respect to other quantifiers.



The sentence in (45) contains an *a*-marked indefinite which can be interpreted as having wide scope over the conditional. One of the possible readings of (45) is that Bert will get offended, if Lud invites a specific philosopher (that might be known just to Bert and Lud).<sup>21</sup>

- (45) Si Lud invita **a** un filósofo, Bert se ofenderá.  
 if Lud invites a.DOM a.M.SG philosopher, Bert SE offend.FUT.3SG  
 = “If Lud invites a philosopher (no matter which one), Bert will be offended  
 (Bert wants to be the only philosopher at the party.” ( $\exists > \rightarrow$ )  
 = There is a specific philosopher such that if Lud invites him, Bert will be offended.  
 ( $\rightarrow > \exists$ ) (López 2012, ex. 25e, p. 13)

Given that the narrow scope is also possible, we cannot conclude that the differential marker is an *absolute scope widening* mechanism.<sup>22</sup> Contributions by Leonetti (2003), Rodríguez-Mondoñedo (2007) as well as López (2012) have brought to the fore numerous examples with differentially marked quantifiers in object position which cannot take wide scope over higher quantifiers (e.g., those in subject position). An example with a DOM universal quantifier restricted to narrow scope is provided below:

- (46) Un hombre ama \*(a) toda mujer.  
 A.M.SG man loves DOM every.F.SG woman  
 “A man loves every woman.” (López 2012, ex.7, p. 2)  
 ( $\exists < \forall$ ) (\* $\forall < \exists$ )

We have concluded that if *tod* modifies an animate noun, the differential marker is always obligatory, as in (4). However, despite the obligatory presence of DOM, the quantifier cannot take wide scope with respect to the existential in the subject position. It seems warranted to follow López (2012) on the observation that accusative *a* can widen scope only if merges with an indefinite. Thus, *a* cannot be unambiguously associated with specificity or widest scope.

<sup>21</sup> That differentially marked indefinites can take scope over conditionals is problematic under classical theories of Q(quantifier) R(aising). As discussed in detail in Reinhart (1997), QR equates the scope of an operator to its c-command domain and is sensitive to islands. Conditionals are islands for movement, as shown in the examples below, where extraction out of a conditional results in ungrammaticality.

- (i) \*Which dress<sub>i</sub> will Maria donate if she buys e<sub>i</sub>?  
 (ii) Which dress<sub>i</sub> will Maria donate after buying e<sub>i</sub>?

This suggests that the mechanism regulating wide-scope DOM readings out of conditionals is of a different nature. Reinhart (1997) proposes instead a *semantic procedure*, *choice function* (CH). Its basic role is to turn an indefinite from its “regular”  $\langle e, t \rangle$  type (as a property) to type  $\langle e \rangle$ . The choice function is in fact a variable that can be bound by an existential quantifier. As the position of the latter is not fixed in the tree, a DP containing a choice function can receive various scopes depending on the precise location where it is bound. We use below the entry from López (2012, ex.15a, p.7) to exemplify the representation of an indefinite taking scope above the conditional.

- (iii) If Lud invites a philosopher, Bert will be offended.  
 $\exists \mathbf{f}$  [CH( $\mathbf{f}$ )  $\wedge$  [Lud invites  $\mathbf{f}$  (philosopher)  $\rightarrow$  Bert will be offended]]  
 “There exists a (choice function that picks out a) philosopher such that if Lud invites the philosopher picked out by the choice function, Bert will be offended.”

For further discussion about *choice functions*, see Reinhart (1997), Kratzer (1998) as well as Winter (2007). We, however, do not provide a more detailed discussion about indefinites and whether other mechanisms might, in fact, be more adequate than *choice functions*. Romanian indefinites (can) take wide scope and show insensitivity to islands even in the absence of the differential marker. The exact nature of these mechanisms requires a comprehensive discussion, going beyond the data at hand and the space in this article. It also does not necessarily solve independent problems raised by definites, which also trigger a variation locus between Romanian and Spanish, and we do not discuss it further.

<sup>22</sup> Similarly to what we saw about specificity, the differential marker induces specificity in some contexts but is also well-formed in non-specific configurations.

In fact, as Rodríguez-Mondoñedo (2007), López (2012), a.o., and others have noticed, there are also contexts where differentially marked objects can only be interpreted with narrow scope and must take scope under negation. A relevant example is (47), which conveys that there is no woman that John loved.

- (47) Juan no amó **a** ninguna mujer.  
 Juan NEG loved DOM no.F.SG woman  
 “John loved no woman.” *Spanish* (López 2012, ex. 25d, p. 13)  
 \*  $\exists > \neg$   $\neg > \exists$

Absence of wide scope and specificity with DOM is clear in Romanian, too. We provide the example below from Cornilescu (ex. 32), where a non-specific, narrow scope interpretation of the DOM indefinite is natural and easily available:

- (48) Fiecare parlamentar l-a numit secretar **pe** un  
 every member of parliament CL.3M.SG.ACC-has appointed secretary DOM a.M.SG  
 prieten.  
 friend  
 “Every member of parliament has appointed a friend (of his) as a secretary.”

These types of contexts confirm the following two assumptions with respect to Romanian and Spanish: (i) differential marking is not a specificity-inducing mechanism;<sup>23</sup> (ii) the differential marker is not a scope-widening device either. We can add these specifications to our list of similarities and differences, as illustrated in Table 5, which encodes two other DOM properties: syntactic behavior of the marked objects and their interpretation below the external argument (the latter is discussed in Section 4.3). We summarize below (in Tables 7 and 8) the accusative diagnostics for both Spanish and Romanian.<sup>24</sup>

### 3.1 Summary

The parameters summarized in Table 5 encode both important similarities and several differences with respect to differential marking in Romanian vs standard Spanish. We begin with the similarities signaled in Table 6.

While differential marking is crucially sensitive to animacy in both languages, there are also syntactic contexts where this restriction must be lifted – telicity (6-c), as well as aspectual restrictions imposed by certain classes of predicates in Spanish (18), or nominal ellipsis contexts with SQs, adjectival (22-b), and possessive determiners (23-b) in Romanian. When it comes to animates, both languages obligatorily mark personal pronouns and proper nouns, the animate negative quantifier, *wh* elements restricted to animacy, the universal quantifier with animate DPs, demonstratives with animate DPs as well as strong readings of weak quantifiers with animate DPs. In both languages, the prepositional accusative is *not* a specificity or a wide-scope-inducing mechanism. On the morphosyntactic side, both languages use what looks like “non-canonical” prepositional morphology to signal objects in prototypical transitive clauses. Crucially, such objects syntactically behave like true accusatives, as opposed to datives or adjunct PPs (Tables 7 and 8).

The differences, in turn, are grouped together in Table 9. The most salient contrast is that Romanian referential definite animates *are possible* without the prepositional accusative. This is precisely the contrast illustrated by (3-a) and (9-b). Moreover, animates do not have to be obligatorily marked in syntactic contexts such as SCs, as seen in (7-a) from Spanish when compared to the Romanian (17). Second, the inventory of animacy-insensitive differential marking is not homogenous in the two

<sup>23</sup> We are not claiming that additional morphology on the object is always insensitive to specificity crosslinguistically. In some languages, differential morphology or object agreement can be restricted just to specificity (e.g., Turkic, Bantu, Neo-Aramaic languages, etc.).

<sup>24</sup> Some of which have been modeled after Bárány (2018).

Table 5: DOM – standard Spanish and Romanian (final)

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Personal pronoun	+(1)	+(8-a)
Proper name	+(2)	+(8-b)
<b>Referential definite animate</b>	+(3-a)	(9-b)
Animate SQs	+(4-a)	(11)
Non-adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animacy restriction	+(5)	+(13-a)
<b>Adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animates</b>	+(5-a)	–
<b>Animate (indefinites) in telic contexts</b>	+(6-b)	–
<b>Animate shared objects in clause union</b>	+(7)	(17)
<b>Inanimates with certain classes of verbs</b>	+(18)	–
Equatives (irrespective of animacy)	+(19)	+(20)
<b>Animate indefinites with specific readings only</b>	+(40)	–
Insensitivity to specificity (Anim Neg Q)	+(5)	+(13-a)
Accusative clitic	+(1)	+(8-a)
Clitic doubling of pronouns	+(1)	+(8-a)
<b>Clitic doubling of non-pronominal DP</b>	–	+(8-b)
<i>Wh</i> object animate	+(14-b)	+(14-a)
Adjectival demonstrative with animate DP	+(15-c)	+(15-a)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative with animate antecedent	+(16)	+(21-b)
<b>Nominal ellipsis demonstrative irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(21-b)
<b>Elliptical adjectival definite irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(22-b)
<b>Elliptical genitive linker irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(23-b)
<b>Strong partitive irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(25-a)
<b>D-linking irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(25-b)
<b>Relative pronoun irrespective of animacy</b>	–	+(25-c)
Specific readings of animates with stage-level possessive <i>have</i>	+(29-b)	+(30-c)
<b>Animate bare plurals</b>	–	(33)
Strong readings of weak Qs with animates (DPs or under ellipsis)	+(4-a)	+(43-b)
Accusative syntax	+(Table 7)	+(Table 8)
Interpreted lower than the external argument	+(59)	+(60)

Table 6: DOM similarities – standard Spanish and Romanian

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Personal pronoun	+(1)	+(8-a)
Proper name	+(2)	+(8-b)
Animate SQs	+(4-a)	(11)
(Non-adjectival) Neg/Exist quantifiers with animacy restriction	+(5)	+(13-a)
Equatives (irrespective of animacy)	+(19)	+(20)
Accusative clitic	+(1)	+(8-a)
Clitic doubling of pronouns	+(1)	+(8-a)
<i>Wh</i> object animate	+(14-b)	+(14-a)
Adjectival demonstrative with animate DP	+(15-c)	+(15-a)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative with animate antecedent	+(16)	+(21-b)
Specific readings of animates with stage-level possessive <i>have</i>	+(29-b)	+(30-c)
Strong readings of Qs with animates (DPs or under ellipsis)	+(4-a)	+(43-b)
Accusative syntax	+(Table 7)	+(Table 8)
Interpreted lower than the external argument	+(59)	+(60)

languages. We have mentioned that Romanian inanimates are not robustly affected by telicity, differently from standard Spanish examples of the type in (6-c) or (18). On the other hand, there are several configurations in Romanian which require differential marking for both animates and inanimates, the

**Table 7:** Prepositional ACC and IOs in standard Spanish

Diagnostic	Accusative (ACC)	PREP ACC	IO
Clitic doubling		ACC	DAT
Clitic doubling restricted to pronouns		✓	*
Sensitivity to animacy		✓	*
Hosting a reduced relative clause	✓	✓	*
Passivization	✓	✓	*
Controlling secondary predicates	✓	✓	*/??
Case retained under nominalization	*	*	✓

**Table 8:** Prepositional ACC, IO and LOC in Romanian

Diagnostic	ACC	PREP ACC	IO	Locative (LOC)
Clitic doubling		ACC	DAT	*
Differential morphology		ACC	DAT	*
Tonic form of personal pronouns		ACC	DAT	*
Sensitivity to animacy		✓	*	*
Hosting a reduced relative clause	✓	✓	*	*
Passivization	✓	✓	*	*
Controlling secondary predicates	✓	✓	(Possible only in restricted contexts)	
Case retained under nominalization	*	*	✓	*

**Table 9:** DOM points of divergence – standard Spanish and Romanian

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Referential definite animate	+(3-a)	(9-b)
Adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animates	+(5-a)	–
Animate (indefinites) in telic contexts	+(6-b)	–
Animate shared objects in clause union	+(7)	(17)
Inanimates with certain classes of verbs	+(18)	–
Animate indefinites with specific readings only	+(40)	–
Clitic doubling of non-pronominal DP	–	+(8-b)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative irrespective of animacy	–	+(21-b)
Elliptical adjectival definite irrespective of animacy	–	+(22-b)
Elliptical genitive linker irrespective of animacy	–	+(23-b)
Strong partitive irrespective of animacy	–	+(25-a)
D-linking irrespective of animacy	–	+(25-b)
Relative pronoun irrespective of animacy	–	+(25-c)
Animate bare plurals	–	(33)

most salient being nominal ellipsis with SQs (12), the augmented demonstratives (21-b), the adjectival (22-b) and genitive (23-b) determiners, relative pronouns (25-c), D-linking (25-b) as well as certain types of strong partitives (25-a). These latter contexts are strictly sensitive to animacy in standard Spanish.

The comparison of two closely related varieties provides important hints into the nature and limits of complex categories such as animacy, referentiality, and morphological case. One of the challenges is finding a formal mechanics that is flexible enough as to derive both the similarities and the differences. In Section 4, we propose an analysis which takes into account a typology of argument licensing strategies in the two languages. The account is couched in the generative formal tradition, more specifically minimalism.

## 4 Analysis

### 4.1 Case and incorporation

In the previous sections, we have illustrated several contexts where the oblique differential marker is obligatory, irrespectively of its “canonical” features. For example, we have seen that in standard Spanish SCs (or more generally clause union configurations, López 2012), animate nominals require the presence of the differential preposition, irrespectively of whether their interpretation is specific or not. In the example below we repeat a DOM indefinite which can be interpreted as non-specific, especially if the embedded predicated is intensional (“necessary”):

- (49) Considero **\*(a)** un estudiante inteligente/necesario por un  
 Consider.1SG DOM a.M.SG student intelligent.M.SG/necessary.M.SG for a.M.SG  
 proyecto.  
 project  
 “I consider a student intelligent/necessary for a project.” *Spanish*

Crosslinguistically, SCs are contexts that regulate the distribution of nominals; the latter might need certain pieces of structure in order to be grammatical in such configurations. One plausible way to explain this (morphological) restriction is to equate it to a more abstract requirement on nominals. Generally, this more abstract need is related to Case.

In recent formal analyses, the larger structure in differential objects has been associated with the presence of an uninterpretable Case ([uC]) feature on the nominal, as schematically represented in (51) vs (50). Following strict minimalist conditions on narrow syntax derivations as well as legibility conditions imposed by interfaces where uninterpretable (Case) features cannot be read, the latter must be eliminated under checking by appropriate heads in the sentential domain (Chomsky 2000 et subseq.).

Under several accounts (Ormazabal and Romero, 2007, 2013a, López 2012, Kalin 2018, Levin 2019, a.o.), what unifies special marking on certain classes of objects is precisely their requirement to enter into a ( $\phi$ -) relationship with functions heads ( $v$ , T, C, etc.) in the clausal spine. This permits the valuation of their [uC] feature. Nominals that do not take the differential marker are generally assumed to lack an [uC] feature, even being predicates of type  $\langle e, t \rangle$ . They do not need licensing and, in fact, undergo (pseudo-)incorporation with  $V^{25}$  (Ormazabal and Romero 2013a, Bárány 2018, a.o.). The split is illustrated below:

- (50) *(pseudo)-incorporation*      (51) *Differentially marked objects*
- 

### 4.2 López (2012)

However, assuming that all nominals that do not show up with differential marking lack [uC] (and must undergo incorporation) is problematic, at least for languages like standard Spanish. As we have seen throughout the article, Spanish nominals come in various sizes. They can be bare, can show an indefinite or definite morpheme, and, additionally, can present the differential marker. The latter is independent of definiteness/indefiniteness. If we examine contexts that signal the presence of an [uC] feature on the

<sup>25</sup> For Romance it is the D head that (pseudo-)incorporates into V (see López 2012 for extensive discussion).

nominal, such as SCs we just mentioned, we notice a more complex picture. As already seen in (7), inanimates are used in SCs without the differential marker. Crucially, what cannot be missing is the definite/indefinite marker. We repeat the relevant example here:

- (52) Considero (**\*a**) un libro interesante.  
 consider.1SG DOM a.M.SG book interesting.SG  
 “I consider a book interesting.” Spanish

Contexts like (52) indicate that *at least some types of non-differentially marked nominals* must contain an [uC] feature. This is exactly the same conclusion López (2012) reaches. The more specific claim is that such nominals check their Case after their D incorporates into V and raises to *v*. Differentially marked nominals, on the other hand, require short scrambling to the specifier of  $\alpha$ , an intermediate functional projection between V and *v*, as shown in (54-a). In that position, the objects carrying an [uC] feature can be probed by *v* and have their accusative feature valued.

[uC] valuation is based on *feature sharing*, one of the outputs of the *Agree* operation. This operation can value or covalue all the features specified on the two items that are part of the relevant operation. As a result of its application, uninterpretable features ([uf]) are valued and removed from the derivation. The formalization of *Agree* used by López (2012) is as in (53); a restriction López (2012) introduces is that *Agree* (a, b) must be strictly local, in the sense that it can only affect the specifier of the complement of the probe.

- (53) Agree ( $a_{[f]}$ ,  $b_{[uf]}$ ) → ( $a_{[f]}$ ,  $b_{[f]}$ ) (López 2012: ex. 8, p. 35)  
 (54) a. DOM raising b. DOM – Accusative case checking

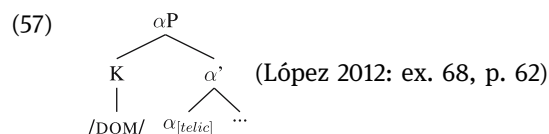
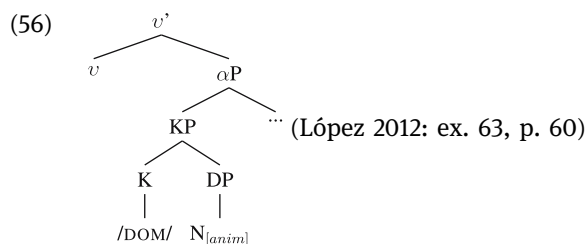


For López (2012), the case feature in K is associated with a choice function switching the semantic type of the nominal from  $\langle e, t \rangle$  to  $\langle e \rangle$ ,<sup>26</sup> as shown in (55). Moreover, the choice function can only be interpreted in a position above (existential closure at) VP.

- (55) Choice function in K  $KP_{\langle e \rangle} = (DP)$  (López 2012: ex. 13, p. 78)  
 $K_{\langle \langle e, t \rangle \rangle \langle e \rangle} \quad DP_{\langle e, t \rangle}$   
 |  
 f

The oblique preposition is inserted at PF when certain conditions are met, for example in the context of an animate feature, as illustrated in (56), or in the context of a telic feature (which, as discussed in the previous section also affects inanimates of the type in (6-c) or (18)), as seen in (57):

<sup>26</sup> For quantifiers, the type is more complex.



### 4.3 Romanian DOM: some problems

Turning now to Romanian, with respect to contexts that signal the licensing of an [uC] feature on nominals, such as SCs,<sup>27</sup> we noticed that differential marking is not obligatory with definite animates. We repeat in (58-a) a relevant example. Differential marking is obligatory with those nominals which must carry it even in regular transitive clauses, irrespective of SCs. In (58-b), we see a sentence with the animate negative quantifier in an SC; as expected, DOM is obligatory. This demonstrates that DOM is not a reflex of SC structure in Romanian.

- (58) a. (Îi) consideră **(pe)** studenții români foarte  
 CL.3M.PL.ACC considers DOM student.M.PL.DEF.M.PL Romanian.M.PL very inteligentî.  
 intelligent.M.PL  
 “S/he considers the Romanian students very intelligent.”
- b. Nu consideră **\*(pe)** nimeni foarte inteligent.  
 not considers DOM nobody very inteligent.M.SG  
 “S/he doesn’t considers anybody very intelligent.”
- Romanian*

Crucially, what cannot be missing with object nominals of the type in (58-a) are the definite or the indefinite markers.<sup>28</sup> Knowing that these latter elements are normally in  $D^0$ , the reasonable conclusion to make is that the [uC] feature is in  $D^0$  in Romanian. This provides initial support to an analysis along the lines we just presented above from López (2012). Thus, differential marking is not simply the distinction between case-marked and caseless (incorporated) nominals. However, the Romanian data demonstrate that not all the predictions made by López’ analysis, as sketched above, hold. There are differences with respect to the position of differentially marked objects and with respect to syntactic effects involved in DOM.

Another observation López (2012) made is that differentially marked objects cannot c-command the external argument (EA). In typical examples like (59), the differential object quantifier cannot bind a variable in the postverbal subject.

<sup>27</sup> Assuming that object (pseudo-)incorporation can only take place in a complement position to V, the nominal in SCs is prevented from undergoing this operation. No matter whether *consider-A* contexts are seen as projecting small clauses or as constructing V-A complex predicates (Williams 1983, a.o.), the nominal will not be in a complement position to V at any point in the derivation.

<sup>28</sup> As expected, mass nouns which *can* be used bare as complements of transitive predicates must carry the definite marker in SCs, irrespectively of whether they receive a definite interpretation. The contrast below is telling:

- |  |  |                 |
|--|--|-----------------|
| (i) Ion consideră miere-*(a) sănătoasă.<br>Ion considers honey-DEF.F.SG healthy.F.SG<br>“Ion considers honey healthy.” | (ii) Ion mănâncă miere.<br>Ion eats honey<br>“Ion eats honey.” | <i>Romanian</i> |
|--|--|-----------------|

- (59) Ayer vio su<sub>\*i</sub> padre **a** cada<sub>i</sub> niño.  
 yesterday saw his father DOM every boy  
 “Yesterday his father saw every boy.” *Spanish* (López 2012, ex. 13 adapted)

The same observation holds for Romanian differential objects which are not clitic doubled:<sup>29</sup>

- (60) A văzut tatăl său<sub>\*i</sub> **pe** fiecare<sub>i</sub> copil ieri.  
 has seen his father DOM every boy yesterday  
 “Yesterday his father saw every boy.” *Romanian*

These facts provide strong support to the conclusion that differentially marked objects do not c-command the external argument. This implies that, in non-dislocated configurations, they are not found in a position above the external argument. However, the Spanish ones are not found *in situ* either. López (2012) assumes that Spanish differentially marked objects undergo short scrambling to the specifier of  $\alpha$  (the locus of both accusative and dative case assignment in a language like Spanish). This explains why the Spanish differentially marked objects *do* c-command the indirect object. In the Spanish example below, we notice that a differentially marked object allows a quantifier-variable interpretation when paired with the indirect object. That is, a reading under which prisoners are matched to their own sons is possible. This precise reading seems to be absent if the direct object shows up without the differential marker, according to López (2012).

- (61) *Context: What did the enemies do? The enemies delivered X to Y and Z to W, but...*  
 Los enemigos no entregaron a su<sub>i</sub> hijo **a**/Ø ningún<sub>i</sub> prisionero.  
 the enemies NEG delivered.PL DAT his son DOM/Ø no prisoner  
 “The enemies did not deliver any prisoner to his son.” (López 2012, ex. 18, 41)

For Spanish, short scrambling to the specifier of  $\alpha$ , as in (54), explains quantifier binding from DOM into the IO and DOM presence in a position that c-commands the IO.

Analyzing Romanian now, if we test the binding relations between direct objects and indirect objects, the facts are not as clear as in Spanish. Using the same context as in (61), several conclusions emerge. First, binding from the differentially marked object into the IO does not go through for most speakers (62-a). The quantifier-variable interpretation improves (at least for some speakers) if the differentially marked object is clitic doubled, using the accusative clitic. Accusative clitic doubling and differential marking must be distinguished as two separate mechanisms (see also Cornilescu (2000), a.o.);<sup>30</sup> as such, these examples indicate that although DOM is lower than the EA it is not necessarily higher than the IO. Crucially, binding from the IO into the DOM-ed nominal does go through, irrespectively of the linear position of the IO and the differentially marked object:

- (62) a. Inamicii nu (i-)au înmânat fiului său<sub>\*i</sub> **pe**  
 enemies.the.M.PL not CL.3SG.DAT-have delivered son.DAT.M.SG his DOM  
 niciun<sub>i</sub> prizonier.  
 no prisoner  
 “The enemies did not deliver any prisoner to his son.”

<sup>29</sup> Note that binding of a variable inside the subject by the DOM quantifier becomes possible if the latter is also clitic doubled, using the accusative form of the clitic:

- (i) L-a văzut tatăl său<sub>i</sub> **pe** fiecare<sub>i</sub> copil ieri.  
 CL.3M.SG.ACC-has seen father his LOC=DOM every boy yesterday  
 “Yesterday his father saw every boy.” *Romanian*

As expected, differentially marked objects that are subject to clitic doubling under right dislocation also allow binding into the EA. Clitic doubling is independent of DOM and we do not discuss it further in this article.

<sup>30</sup> Remember that there are several contexts in Romanian where differential object marking is required, while accusative clitic doubling is impossible. Among these are the animate negative quantifier, illustrated in (13-a) or the animate *wh* element, presented in (14).



- b. ?Inamicii nu i l-au înmânat  
 enemies.the.M.PL not CL.3SG.DAT CL.3M.SG.ACC-have delivered  
 fiului său; **pe** niciun; prizonier.  
 son.DAT.M.SG his DOM no prisoner  
 “The enemies did not deliver any prisoner to his son.”
- c. (L)-a dat **pe** copilul său; fiecăru; părinte.  
 CL.3M.SG.ACC-has given DOM child.the.N.SG his each.DAT.SG parent  
 “S/he has given each child to his/her parent.” Romanian

To summarize what we see in Romanian: (i) there are diagnostics supporting the connection of DOM with case licensing of nominals, as in (58-b); (ii) however, examples with definite animates in SCs allow us to safely conclude the [uC] feature is introduced in D<sup>0</sup> and is independent of differential marking; (iii) differentially marked objects do not take scope over EAs and IOs. The last property indicates that the position of Romanian DOM is not easy to identify. But this creates a tension with the first property – it is clear that DOM is related to nominal licensing, but it does not seem to be the only possible licensing mechanism for nominals. The question is how exactly to tell DOM apart.

Let’s see if we can apply a morphological explanation to DOM. Under this hypothesis DOM and the non-DOM definites carrying an [uC] feature have the same syntax. What sets DOM aside is just a special spell out form triggered by some features like animacy, etc., whose set turns out to be slightly different in Romanian as opposed to Spanish. Knowing that DOM indeed shows variation in the class of elements that it can signal, this idea could be motivated. The problem with this hypothesis is twofold; on the one hand, it makes wrong predictions when it comes to syntactic effects triggered by DOM; on the other hand, it leaves many DOM contexts unexplained, such as the apparent optionality with definite animates.

One important observation with respect to (Romanian) DOM is that it gives rise to co-occurrence restrictions. For example, in Romanian, DOM-ed nominals are not possible with possessor dative forms of (reflexive pronominal) SE. We illustrate a relevant example in (63):

- (63) Ion **își** ajută (**\*pe**) un prieten.  
 Ion SE.DAT.SG helps DOM a.M.SG friend  
 Intended: “Ion helps a friend of his.” Romanian

These types of effects, which remind the Person Case Constraint (PCC),<sup>31</sup> cannot be derived in the morphology. This implies that DOM gives *rise to syntactic effects which are distinct from the result of [uC] valuation*. In Section 4.4, we present an analysis that, on the one hand, can reconcile all these properties and, on the other hand, is able to formally derive the differences from Spanish.

#### 4.4 Licensing beyond Case

The gist of the proposal, building on Jaeggli (1982),<sup>32</sup> is that Romanian DOM involves an additional licensing operation beyond the valuation of [uC] itself. At Phonetic Form (PF), the result of this additional licensing operation is the spell out of the oblique marker on differentially marked objects. The conclusion we draw from Romanian is that, in general, D<sup>0</sup> acts as a phase edge, and requires licensing, as it hosts the [uC] feature. Any additional feature will require *additional licensing*. Additional features are contributed

<sup>31</sup> See Ormazabal and Romero (2007) or Ormazabal and Romero (2013a) for a detailed discussion about animacy-related oblique DOM and PCC effects in Spanish varieties.

<sup>32</sup> We take from Jaeggli (1982) the intuition that an important aspect of DOM resides in the need of more than one (intepretable) feature inside the nominal to be obligatorily case licensed. Kalin (2018) contains a proposal that equates DOM to the need of obligatory licensing of nominals with interpretable features, but the system developed there does not capture the Romanian data.

**Table 10:** Person and animacy (building on Harley and Ritter 2002, a.o.)

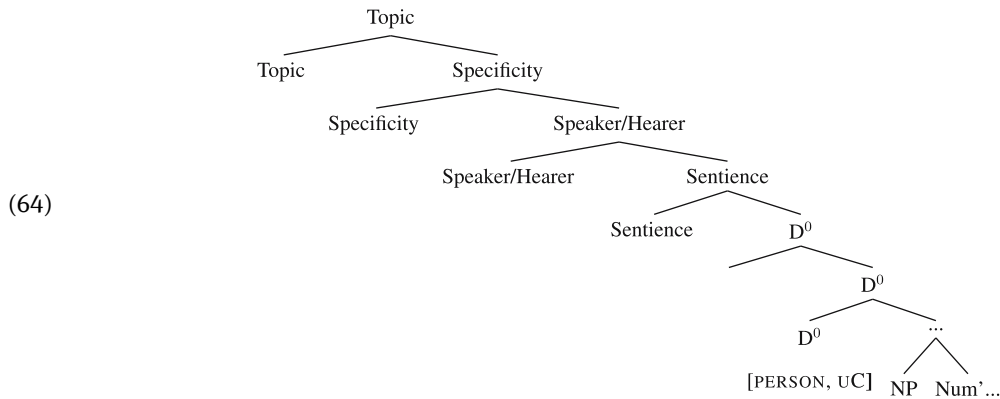
Person/animacy	Features
First person	[+PERSON]/[+PARTICIPANT] (speaker)
Second person	[+PERSON]/[+PARTICIPANT] (addressee)
Third person if +human, +animate	[+PERSON]/[+PARTICIPANT]

either by: (i) a [+PERSON] specification on a sentience-defining projection above  $D^0$ , which encodes the difference between animates and inanimates as well as the relevance of animates in the discourse (see also Cornilescu et al. 2017) or (ii) by features on projections that are merged above  $D^0$ , and which are needed in the construction and interpretation of various classes of quantifiers, nominal ellipsis, etc. Therefore, a nominal can contain more than one feature that requires licensing (see also d’Alessandro 2017, a.o. for other languages). The result is that a DP can enter into multiple licensing operations such that all the features can get licensed (see also Béjar and Rezac 2009).

We also take at face value the recent hypotheses that Universal Grammar (UG) contains more than one licensing strategy, namely, licensing linked to  $\phi$  features and  $\delta$  licensing.  $\delta$  is a grammaticalized discourse specification linked to an A-feature (Miyagawa 2010, 2017, Belletti 2018, a.o.). The two features will be abbreviated as  $\phi$  and a  $\delta$ .

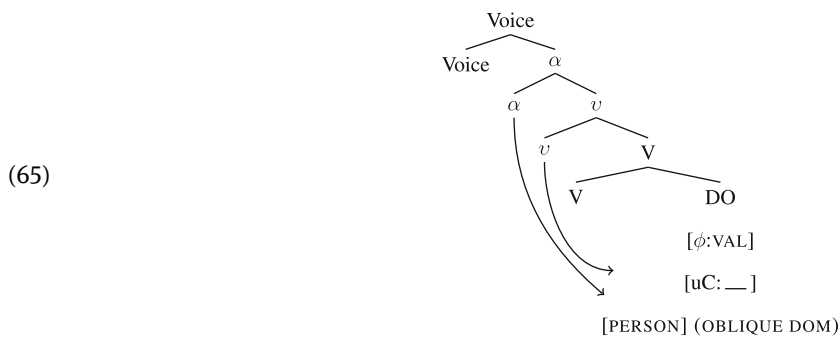
Another aspect that needs clarification is the role of PERSON features. Following Bernstein (2008), Longobardi (2008), a.o., definiteness (“strong” D, more generally) is connected to a [PERSON] feature, signaling that a nominal is not a predicate but rather a participant in the event. On the other hand, researchers such as Richards (2008), Cornilescu (2000), or Adger and Harbour (2007), a.o. have connected a [PERSON] feature to animacy, as shown in Table 10. As both views seem to be correct, we propose that they can be reconciled in the following way: the multifaceted behavior of [PERSON] is the result of the position in which this feature merges. For example, if merged in the Sentience projection above  $D^0$  (as in 64, following and adapting Zubizarreta and Pancheva (2017)), it will be interpreted as related to animacy.

Connected to these observations, we also make use of a second line of research into DOM, namely, approaches that link it to a syntax–pragmatics interface phenomenon; DOM is generally assumed to signal topical DPs or the so-called secondary topics (Leonetti 2008, Iemmolo 2010, Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011, d’Alessandro 2017, Belletti 2018, Khouja 2019, a.o.). In Romanian, the connection to secondary topics is not straightforward in all instances differentially marked objects can be insensitive to information structure. For this reason, it seems more plausible to assume that *animacy* can be a separate category, but relevant to the syntax–pragmatics interface. From this perspective, the above mentioned connection of animacy to [PERSON] feature, possibly further connected to individuation (see also Ledgeway et al. 2019, a.o.) makes better predictions. Putting together decompositions in the higher DP left periphery (Ihsane and Puskás 2001, Harley and Ritter 2002, Ihsane 2008, Kučerová 2018, a.o.), we propose an expanded DP structure as in (64):



Crosslinguistically, a locus of variation is given by whether sentence bundles topic/specificity features or not (Mursell 2018, a.o.). In Romanian, sentence can be realized without topicality. If  $D^0$  licenses a referential interpretation of its associated noun (following Longobardi 2008), it is clear that sentence requires a referential category; but it is not a marker of specificity or presuppositionality, *per se*. However, given that  $D^0$  contains an [uC] feature that requires valuation any A-feature above  $D^0$  will require a separate Agree/licensing operation. This implies that the additional feature will require the presence of an additional licenser, beyond the regular probe which values the [uC] on  $D^0$  (following Jaeggli 1982, see also Kalin 2018).

We use a more refined decomposition of the architecture of transitive predicates. Following Legate (2014), we assume that their structure involves not only an abstract light verb ( $v$ ) but also Voice, the functional projection introducing the external argument. Similarly to López (2012), we also make use of the abstract functional category  $\alpha^{33}$  between  $v$  and voice, as in (65):



The model assumed here presupposes some other ingredients. First, Agree can be established at a distance (see also Chomsky 2000, a.o) and can apply cyclically, so as to ensure the valuation of all relevant features (Béjar and Rezac 2009, a.o.).<sup>34</sup> Second, there can be more than one structural accusative (Starke 2017) and, thus, more than one probe involved in the checking of accusative case. And third, DOM is linked to a *last resort* licensing mechanism (Jaeggli 1982, Kalin 2018, a.o.). In a nutshell, under our account, DOM differences between standard Spanish and Romanian are a result of the following macro-parameter:

- *Standard Spanish*: DOM nominals containing an [uC] feature undergo short scrambling to the specifier of  $\alpha$ , an intermediate functional projection between V and  $v$ . The DOM preposition is just a morphological reflex of the presence of certain features, such as animacy, etc. (López 2012).
- *Romanian*: DOM and non-DOM nominals containing an [uC] feature might not need scrambling but have a distinct internal syntax. DOM-ed nominals contain an additional discourse-related [PERSON] feature, which requires licensing beyond [uC]. At PF, the locative preposition signals the additional licensing operation.

Before moving on to the detailed analysis of (micro)variation, a few remarks are in order about Cornilescu's (2000) alternative account, which also attributes an important role to [+PERSON] in the Romanian prepositional DOM. Although different in both the mechanics and the analysis, the discussion in this article is indebted to some crucial intuitions in Cornilescu (2000). The gist of Cornilescu's (2000) proposal is that DOM is connected to *semantic gender* in Romanian. Besides categories that obligatorily contain a semantic gender specification (the *wh-cine* "who", the negative Q *nimeni* "nobody"), there are also instances where *grammatical* gender features are interpreted as *semantic* gender. For Cornilescu

<sup>33</sup> We assume that this is a functional head in the low VP discourse-related periphery (see especially Belletti 2004, a.o.) that can license (features on) internal arguments, which are not otherwise licensed by  $v$  or Voice. In some languages, for example Spanish,  $\alpha$  bundles applicative and telic functions (see López 2012). In Romanian, it seems to be a discourse-related head that acts as a last-resort licenser for features that are left after the initial agree relation by  $v$ , which is the main licenser in this domain.

<sup>34</sup> Thus, we agree with accounts under which the Activity Condition does not hold.

(2000), animacy as a reflex of semantic gender equals to featural specification as [-Neuter]. More specifically, the preposition *pe* is viewed as a functional head specified with the feature [-Neuter], according to the criterion in (66):

- (66) The preposition PE is not selected in the accusative if a DP is specified for semantic gender as [-Person], that is, [+NEUTER] or [ $\alpha$  PERSON]. PE is the obligatory otherwise. (Cornilescu 2000, 4')

It follows that, for Cornilescu (2000), DOM is expected to be ungrammatical with propositional ellipsis, as the latter cannot be reduced to semantic gender. This seems to go through in some contexts, such as (73). However, once propositional ellipsis is examined in more detail, it appears that DOM is not necessarily sensitive to the absence of a [+NEUTER] feature. The example below, obtained from ordinary speech, has the uninflected form *asta* tracking propositional ellipsis but also the propositional ACC.<sup>35</sup>

- (67) a. Au evadat iar criminalii.  
 have.3PL escaped again murderers.DEF.M.PL  
 “The murderers have escaped from the prison yet again.”
- b. Ei, n-o mai cred **pe**-asta.  
 wow, not-CL.3F.SG more believe DOM-this.DFT  
 “Wow, I don’t believe this (i.e., that the criminals have escaped again).” *Romanian*

Another problem is how to extend this analysis to DOM partitives of the type in (25-a), which contain an overt lexical head, irrespective of animacy. The present analysis does not equate [+PERSON] to semantic gender. In fact, a [+PERSON] specification can have a variety of sources. What is relevant for Romanian [+DOM] is not the animate semantic gender but rather an additional feature beyond [uC] in D<sup>0</sup>.

## 5 Addressing (micro)variation

We can now explain how the macro-parameter discussed above derives both similarities and differences with respect to DOM in standard Spanish and Romanian. We will start with contexts where special marking is obligatory on the object. As we have seen in the previous sections, these classes are not completely uniform in the two languages. While it is true that there are many points of convergence, we also notice important differences. Let’s address first commonalities in obligatory marking. We repeat the relevant table below, namely Table 6 (repeated as Table 11).

Among these properties, an important part support the accusative syntax: doubling by accusative clitics, the accusative form of tonic pronouns as well as other accusative syntactic diagnostics (summarized in Tables 7 and 8). The analysis proposed above explains the accusative behavior under the assumption that differential marking is the spell out of accusative [uC] and [PERSON] features on the relevant nominals. The position of the  $\alpha$  licenser, below the EA introducing head, derives lack of binding into the EA.

Moving on with personal pronouns and human proper names, these are classes where animacy<sup>36</sup> is obligatory and which cannot be of type <e, t> when argumental. Under López’ (2012) assumptions, these

<sup>35</sup> The additive operator *mai* seems to have a contribution to the presence of PE. This is even clearer in contexts which also have an additional additive operator, spelled out by *și* “and”:

- (i) Am mai auzit-o și **pe** asta.  
 have more heard-CL.3F.SG.ACC and DOM this.DFT.AUG  
 “Now I heard even this.”

In fact, a preliminary investigation shows that native speakers tend to prefer PE marking on the propositional demonstrative in this context.

<sup>36</sup> In both Romanian and standard Spanish, tonic forms of third person pronouns cannot be used with inanimate reference (as direct objects).

categories are correctly predicted to be ungrammatical without DOM in Spanish. For Romanian, the obligatory animacy of these classes and its relevance in the discourse motivate the assumption that they contain a [+PERSON] feature merged above  $D^0$ . Given that the initial licenser ( $\nu$ ) checks the [uC] feature on  $D^0$ , an additional licenser is needed for the [+PERSON] feature. Thus, obligatory marking is derived. Animate SQs receive a similar explanation. With respect to their containing a feature above  $D^0$ , note that such quantifiers must be constructed with definite nominals in both Romanian (11) and Spanish (4-a). In their elliptical animate reading, what gets deleted at PF is only the definite nominal.

The non-adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animacy restriction include elements such as *nobody* or the strong variant of *somebody*. The negative *nobody* has an animacy restriction in its domain of quantification. Moreover, it is specified as a universal quantifier. Thus, it can be assumed that the animacy component, read as [+PERSON], is merged above  $D^0$ . This predicts obligatory DOM for both Romanian and Spanish. In the same line, following canonical assumptions in the literature (Milsark 1979, de Hoop 1996, a.o., for a few classical titles), the strong variant of positive quantifiers is not of  $\langle e, t \rangle$  type. It can also be safely assumed that they contain a [+PERSON] feature (equated with animacy) merged above  $D^0$ . Thus, differential marking is needed. The same reasoning extends to strong readings of weak Qs with animates (DPs or under ellipsis), to direct object animate *wh* elements and to the demonstratives with an animacy restriction. Turning now to possessive *have*, López (2012) has convincingly argued that this predicate can project two types of structures: a locative one where the direct object is of type  $\langle e, t \rangle$  and a transitive one where the direct object is of type  $\langle e \rangle$ . This predicts that the latter sub-type, if animate, can take DOM.

Let's examine now the equatives, where DOM can be obligatory, irrespectively of animacy. One important observation is that in these configurations the preposition is not a *lexical* marker introducing the standard. These comparatives are not *phrasal* in Romanian or Spanish. Unambiguous evidence comes from obligatory grammatical function tracking. For example, in both languages the differential marker disappears if the antecedent and the standard function as subjects.<sup>37</sup> Grammatical function tracking is sufficient to demonstrate both the structural nature of DOM and the clausal (non-phrasal) status of the equative in Romanian. Moreover, this type of case identity restriction is seen in other VP ellipsis contexts. Some authors have proposed that case identity is in fact one of the conditions of the licensing of ellipsis (see Chung 2003, and more recently Takita 2015). The condition Takita (2015) introduces is the following:

(68) Case-oriented syntactic identity (Takita 2015: ex. 24)

If a DP is extracted from an ellipsis site, and if the head that case licenses the DP is contained in the ellipsis site, the case licensing head in the ellipsis site must have an identical head in the antecedent that case licenses the correlating DP.

Another observation, made by Irimia (2018), is that these comparatives have reduced clausal structure. The interpretations provided by native speakers signal the use of the so-called *evasion* strategies.<sup>38</sup> The two evasion strategies seen with these comparatives are: (i) reduced syntactic structure (absence of C, T projections) in the comparative which forces obligatory mismatched temporal/aspectual interpretations (i.e. readings of the type “as one would V  $DP_{obj}$ ”) and (ii) copular clause (“as if it were a DP”). Thus, an equative comparative projects one of the structures below:

(69) *Evasion strategies for DOM comparative structures* (Irimia 2018, ex. 18)

- a. [... as [ $_{Top}Obj$   $Top_{CaseAcc}$ ] ...]  
 b. [... as [ $_{Top}DP$   $Top_{CaseAcc}$ ] ...]

<sup>37</sup> In Romanian, if the associate is an indirect object, the standard must show obligatory dative case, as seen below. As a reminder, dative case is not homophonous with prepositional DOM in Romanian:

(i) I-au dăruit cadouri ca **unui** rege/\***un** rege/\***pe** un rege.  
 CL.3SG.DAT.M-have given gift.PL as/like a.DAT.SG king/a.NOM.SG king/DOM a king  
 “They have given gifts to him as (one would give gifts) a king.”

Romanian

<sup>38</sup> *Evasion strategies* are necessary when strict syntactic and semantic parallelism cannot be obtained between the antecedent and the constituent undergoing ellipsis, as it would violate other principles of grammar.

Table 11: DOM similarities – standard Spanish and Romanian

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Personal pronoun	+(1)	+(8-a)
Animate proper name	+(2)	+(8-b)
Animate SQs	+(4-a)	(11)
(Non-adjectival) Neg/Exist quantifiers with animacy restriction	+(5)	+(13-a)
Equatives (irrespective of animacy)	+(19)	+(20)
Accusative clitic	+(1)	+(8-a)
Clitic doubling of pronouns	+(1)	+(8-a)
<i>Wh</i> object animate	+(14-b)	+(14-a)
Adjectival demonstrative with animate DP	+(15-c)	+(15-a)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative with animate antecedent	+(16)	+(21-b)
Specific readings of animates with stage-level possessive <i>have</i>	+(29-b)	+(30-c)
Strong readings of Qs with animates (DPs or under ellipsis)	+(4-a)	+(43-b)
Interpreted lower than the external argument	+(59)	+(60)

As the case-licensing head is contained in the ellipsis site, the object will have to undergo extra-licensing so its case licensing head is similar to that of the antecedent. An additional  $\delta$  head is recruited which will license the object as a last-resort strategy (confirming the last-resort nature of the differential preposition). The structure of reduced comparatives makes plausible the assumption that the additional licenser is a low Topic head (see Belletti 2004 for the low information–structure periphery). Thus, a secondary licensing account also predicts these puzzling data at least for Romanian. In Spanish, such objects must undergo obligatory scrambling to a position where their [uC] must be checked. This, once again, predicts the presence of the differential marker (Table 11).

## 5.1 Differences in obligatory DOM contexts

As illustrated in Table 9 repeated as Table 12 the most important differences in obligatory DOM contexts result from: (i) obligatoriness of the differential marker with animate definites which are interpreted referentially in Spanish, as opposed to optionality in Romanian, (ii) DOM obligatoriness with inanimates in telic contexts in Spanish, and (iii) DOM obligatoriness with inanimates in a variety of nominal ellipsis contexts in Romanian.

The hypothesis that DOM results from an additional licensing operation in Romanian explains its optionality with animate definites (which receive a referential interpretation). The differential marker tracks an animacy specification (encoded as [+PERSON]) only if the latter is relevant in the discourse and merged in the derivation. Structurally, the [+PERSON] feature is introduced above  $D^0$ , beyond the [uC] feature. In Spanish, animate definites with a referential interpretation will be obligatorily marked, as they are never of <e, t> type and cannot undergo incorporation. Thus, there is no other option for them. The same explanation holds for animate DPs in clause union contexts.

Turning to Spanish telic predicates, the short scrambling operation opens the possibility for their objects to be interpreted in the specifier of  $\alpha$ . The scrambling operation is made available by the aspectual structure of the relevant predicates; telicity requires direct objects to be of a certain semantic type (<e, t> is excluded) and appears in a position above VP (see also López 2012 for detailed references). In Romanian, on the other hand, short scrambling does not signal DOM; from this it follows that telicity is not relevant to the special marker.

An independent parameter underpins the distinct behavior of animate indefinites with specific readings. In Spanish, these contexts require obligatory differential marking, as these objects are animate

**Table 12:** Obligatory DOM: points of divergence – Spanish and Romanian

Contexts and characteristics	DOM Spanish	DOM Romanian
Referential definite animate	+(3-a)	(9-b)
Adjectival Neg/Exist quantifiers with animates	+(5-a)	–
Animate (indefinites) in telic contexts	+(6-b)	–
Animate shared objects in clause union	+(7)	(17)
Inanimates with certain classes of verbs	+(18)	–
Animate indefinites with specific readings only	+(40)	–
Clitic doubling of non-pronominal DP	–	+(8-b)
Nominal ellipsis demonstrative irrespective of animacy	–	+(21-b)
Elliptical adjectival definite irrespective of animacy	–	+(22-b)
Elliptical genitive linker irrespective of animacy	–	+(23-b)
Strong partitive irrespective of animacy	–	+(25-a)
D-linking irrespective of animacy	–	+(25-b)
Relative pronoun irrespective of animacy	–	+(25-c)
Animate bare plurals	–	(33)

and at the same time subject to a choice function which shifts their type from  $\langle e, t \rangle$  to  $\langle e \rangle$ . In Romanian, however, indefinites can obtain a specific reading even without the presence of a differential marker and irrespective of animacy. This is due to the fact that Romanian indefinites can be subject to other interpretive mechanisms beyond *choice functions*. For example, Romanian indefinites can undergo quantifier raising more easily. Clitic doubling of non-pronominal DPs also results from yet a different parameter; as discussed by Ormazabal and Romero (2013b), a.o., clitics have a distinct structural makeup and a different nature in the two languages (pronouns vs determiners).

The remaining points of variation group together contexts where DOM is obligatory only in Romanian. We will show below how the additional licensing hypothesis proposed for Romanian derives them. We begin with nominal ellipsis contexts with demonstratives, as in (70):

- (70) a. Ai cumpărat **(\*pe)** paltonul acela?  
 have.2 bought DOM coat.DEF.N.SG that.N.SG.AUG  
 “Did you buy that coat?”
- b. L-am cumpărat **\*(pe)** acest-a.  
 CLT.3SG.M/N.ACC-have bought DOM this-N.SG.AUG  
 “I have bought this (one).” *Romanian (referring to the coat)*

In (70-a), the demonstrative is used as an adjective, modifying the DP *paltonul*. As the head noun is inanimate, prepositional ACC is *not* possible. In (70-b), the demonstrative is used as a pronoun in a nominal ellipsis construction, which contains a null *pro* head and tracks an inanimate antecedent. Nominal ellipsis of this type requires *obligatory* prepositional ACC, irrespective of animacy. Two other categories in the language show the same constraint as the demonstratives. These are the so-called adjectival demonstrative CEL, and the genitive linker *a* which contains a suffixed definite determiner under nominal ellipsis (see especially Cornilescu 2005, Cornilescu and Nicolae 2012 for a detailed discussion of these categories). The examples in (71) and (72) illustrate the similarity with the elliptical demonstratives:<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The universal quantifier *toți/toate* “all<sub>M/F.PI</sub>” also requires the obligatory prepositional marker under ellipsis. This analysis proposed here extends to it too.

- (71) a. Vrei (\*pe) paltonul roșu?  
want.2SG DOM coat.DEF.N.SG red.N.SG  
“Do you want the red coat?”  
b. Nu, îl vreau \*(pe) cel albastru.  
No, CL.3M.SG.ACC want.1.SG DOM CEL.N.SG blue.N.SG  
“No, I want the blue one.” (*referring to the coat*)
- (72) a. Ai citit (\*pe) lucrările lui Hegel?  
have.2SG read DOM work.F.PL.DEF.F.PL GEN.M.SG Hegel  
“Have you read Hegel’s works?”  
b. Nu, le-am citit \*(pe) a-le lui Chomsky.  
No, CL.3F.PL-have.1 read DOM LK-DEF.F.PL GEN.M.SG Chomsky  
“No, I have read Chomsky’s.” *Romanian (referring to the works)*

Once again, if the head noun is present, the differential preposition will behave according to animacy. In (71-a) and (72-a), the head noun is inanimate, thus the ACC preposition is not tolerated. In (71-b) and (72-b), where CEL and the genitive linker are used under ellipsis, the ACC preposition becomes obligatory irrespective of animacy. An explanation for these patterns has to obviously be tied to the internal structure of nominal ellipsis. An important observation is the following: when ellipsis affects *propositional content*, PE is normally absent with the demonstrative, as in the example below (adapted from Cornilescu 2000):

- (73) Eu am spus (\*pe) asta: să mergem la cinema.  
I have.1 said DOM this.DFT.AUG SUBJ go.SUBJ.1PL at cinema  
“I said this: Let’s go to the cinema.” *Romanian*

Ellipsis of propositional content is signaled by a morphologically default demonstrative form, in this case one that looks like the feminine (*asta*). Under the *additional licensing* proposal put forward in this article, these patterns are accounted as follows. Based on the extensive discussion in Cornilescu and Nicolae (2012, p. 1084), as well as Nicolae (2013), nominal ellipsis is decomposed in the syntax into several components: (a) a contrastive focus position at the left periphery of the DP (where the remnant moves) and (b) *ellipsis sites that function as definite descriptions* (see also Elbourne 2013). More precisely, in the case of nominal ellipsis, a nominal phrase (NP) agrees with a definite category. As a result, it may be marked with the feature *anaphoric* ([+a]) and deleted at PF. Robust evidence for the latter assumption comes from the presence of overt definite morphology in elliptical contexts in Romanian. Using examples provided by Cornilescu and Nicolae (2012), we notice that the overt counterpart of a demonstrative ellipsis with definite DPs is marked by a double-definite construction.<sup>40</sup> See the examples in (74) and (75) (their 25, p. 1084):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (74) aceste <del>a</del> de pe masă.<br>these.AUG.F.PL of from table<br>“these from the table.” | (75) cărțile aceste <del>a</del> de pe masă.<br>books.DEF.F.PL these.AUG.F.PL of on table<br>“these books from the table.” |
|---|--|

Also note that demonstratives under ellipsis always take the augmented form (the *-a* ending), which is assumed to be related to definiteness and also to a PERSON specification.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Another piece of evidence comes from indefinites that show an obligatory definite suffix under ellipsis:

- (i) Am scris unu-**l**.  
have.1 written INDEF.M/N.SG-DEF.M/N.SG  
“I wrote one.”

(Closest translation to English, but note that examples of this type do not necessarily involve numerals.)

<sup>41</sup> Based on their position and morphology, adjectival demonstratives come in two classes in Romanian: (a) those that follow a definite noun and must take the augmented form (i); (b) those that precede an indefinite noun and cannot take the augmented



Let's examine first a non-elided demonstrative structure, as in (76). What we see here is a definite noun followed by the demonstrative adjective in its augmented form. As already mentioned, these configurations are characterized by the so-called *double definiteness*. The adjectival demonstrative contains a definiteness feature which is however valued via concord with the definiteness in  $D^0$  (in the same way as the gender and number features on the demonstrative). The possibility of concord *excludes the need of an additional licenser*:

- (76) Ai cumpărat (\*pe) paltonul acela?  
 have.2 bought DOM coat.DEF.N.SG that.N.SG.AUG  
 “Did you buy that coat?” Romanian

The question is how the additional feature gets licensed in elliptical contexts where the anaphoric definite feature in  $D^0$  gets deleted. Obligatory deletion of  $D^0$  blocks the application of concord (the feature in  $D^0$  is marked for deletion and the result of concord cannot be computed). Thus, the additional [+PERSON] feature needs an independent licensing mechanism. A sentential licenser could be used, but the initial one (*v*) is needed by the accusative case feature in  $D^0$ . From this, it follows that an additional licenser must be recruited, explaining obligatory differential marking. The same *a* element, specified with a [+PERSON] feature, is seen in the elliptical genitives. Thus, we end up with a [+PERSON] feature beyond  $D^0$  in these cases too. And structures containing *cel* will be reduced to the same problem: an additional [+PERSON] feature (visible as *-l*, otherwise the definite marker) beyond  $D^0$ .

A complication with partitives is that they have an overt lexical noun. We have seen that in Romanian, when lexical N is present, its non-animacy cannot be overridden (the contrast between the (a) and (b) examples in (21), (22), and (23)). As inanimate Ns need to be specified as lacking [+PERSON] in order to derive these contrasts, an analysis that ties the prepositional marker to semantic gender (Cornilescu 2000) will incorrectly predict such examples to be ungrammatical.

Building on the analysis proposed by Enç (1991), we show that *secondary licensing* can straightforwardly derive these patterns. Enç (1991) addresses types of partitives which are interpreted as specific (the so-called *strong partitives*). Although it has been repeatedly shown that not all partitives are specific crosslinguistically, in the Romanian DOM partitives, the indefinite can only be interpreted specific. This makes an analysis along Enç (1991) lines suitable for the data at hand. For Enç (1991) partitive specifics contain two referential indices, as in (77), which following Heim (1988) correspond to discourse referents. All DPs (NPs in Enç's 1991 terminology) are specified with a pair of indices. The first is responsible for the definiteness of the DP, while the second index accounts for its *specificity*. More precisely, the second index can constrain in what way the referent of the DP is related to other discourse referents. Generally, a DP is interpreted as specific “if and only if its second index is definite” (Enç 1991: 7). As we can see in the example we repeat below, Romanian DOM specific partitives carry overt *definiteness* morphology suffixed to an indefinite stem.<sup>42</sup>

- (77) Am citit-o numai \*(pe) un-a dintre cărțile  
 have.1 read-CL.3SG.F.ACC only DOM one-DEF.F.SG from books.the.F.PL  
 recomandate.  
 recommended.F.PL  
 “I have read only one of the recommended books.” Romanian  
 (Avram and Zafiu 2017, ex. 13)
- (78) Specific partitives (Enç 1991, ex. 22)

form (ii). Adjectival demonstratives which do not follow a definite noun cannot take the augmented form. See especially Giusti (1993, 2002) or Giurgea (2008):

(i) copilu-\*(l) acest-a                      acest-\*(a) copil.  
 child-DEF.M.SG this.M.SG-AUG      this.M.SG(-AUG) child  
 “this child.”                              “this child.”

<sup>42</sup> Thus, these examples are morphologically similar to the elliptical “definite” indefinites illustrated in fn. 40.

Every  $[_N P \alpha]_{\langle ij \rangle}$  is interpreted as  $\alpha(x_i)$  and  
 $(x_i) \subseteq (x_j)$  if  $NP_{\langle ij \rangle}$  is plural,  
 $\{x_i\} \subseteq (x_j)$  if  $NP_{\langle ij \rangle}$  is singular.

In the case of indefinites, the index  $j$  must obey the novelty condition (the context cannot already have a referent  $(x_j)$ ). The new referent that is introduced into the domain will have “ $(x_i)$ , the referent of the NP, as its subset” (Enç 1991). Given that the index responsible for the specificity of indefinites is interpreted above  $D$  (where definiteness is), it results that in this configuration there are *two* features that require licensing (definiteness and specificity). Thus, an additional licenser must be made available. The same structure is seen with the so-called D-linked *wh* elements as in (25-b), which are interpreted as specific partitives. Unsurprisingly, they require obligatory DOM, irrespectively of animacy, as they too contain more than one feature that requires licensing.

## 5.2 Optional and ungrammatical DOM

In Section 2.5, we have listed the contexts where the prepositional marker appears to be *optional*. Typical representatives are definite animates in Romanian as well as the weak determiners in both languages, when used adjectivally with an animate lexical noun. In the latter environments, if the head noun is animate, the prepositional marker can be absent without giving rise to ungrammaticality. With prepositional DOM, the quantified DP is normally interpreted as “specific”. Under nominal ellipsis, DOM is only possible if the understood antecedent is animate. When the marker is absent, a weak, non-specific interpretation arises. The alternation between a “specific” (also called “strong”) and a non-specific (“weak” reading) is typical of weak quantifiers (see Milsark 1979, de Hoop 1996, a.o.). For Romanian, we propose that the alternation is connected to the type of structure these elements project. Weak quantifiers do not have a full DP structure, while the strong ones do (see also Cornilescu 2000). On SQs, a [+PERSON] feature merged above  $D^0$  will be interpreted as *a restriction on the domain of quantification* of Q, resulting in an *animacy restriction*. As a result, the nominal will end up containing two features and an additional licenser will be needed. A similar type of explanation can also be attempted for the relative pronoun *care* “who/which”. In normative grammars, its use is banned without PE irrespectively of animacy. However, in colloquial speech, the prepositional accusative marker is easily omitted:

- (79) cartea (pe) care am citit-o.  
 book.DEF.F.SG DOM which have.1 read-CL.3F.SG.ACC  
 “the book I read.” *Romanian*

For Spanish, the strong reading entails that such quantifiers are not of type  $\langle e, t \rangle$ . Thus, they will have to raise to the specifier of  $\alpha$  and, if animate, they will carry the differential marker.

Turning now to configurations where DOM is ungrammatical, Section 2.4 (Table 4) has listed the following: objects in existential sentences, objects of possessive *have* with individual-level readings, inanimate bare plurals, negative/existential quantifiers with an inanimacy restriction, and objects of unaffected predicates with inanimate objects. Here the object nominal can only be of  $\langle e, t \rangle$  type, excluding DOM.

## 6 Conclusion

In this article, we have taken some steps towards probing the limits of variation in DOM. We have provided comprehensive descriptions of DOM contexts in two robust prepositional accusative languages, Romanian

and standard Spanish. We have noticed that this phenomenon shows both non-trivial similarities and steady points of variation. On the similarities side, in none of the two languages is DOM connected to specificity or a wide-scope-inducing mechanism. Moreover, sensitivity to animacy is a constant. The differences boil down to extensions to inanimates as well as points of optionality.

On the theoretical side, we have proposed that the full microvariation picture can be best explained as deriving from a morphosyntactic parameter. Following López (2012), Spanish DOM signals the presence of features such as animacy/telicity on nominals whose [uC] specification needs valuation via short scrambling. In Romanian, on the other hand, DOM exhibits syntactic differences with respect to other nominals with [uC] features and which must equally escape (pseudo)incorporation. Romanian DOM signals instead the licensing of an additional feature beyond [uC] in  $D^0$ . This simple parametric choice has non-trivial consequences on the categories that show differential marking in each of the two languages, explaining both similarities and differences in a systematic manner.

## 7 Abbreviations

1/2/3	first/second/third person
ACC	accusative
AUG	augmented
CL	clitic
DAT	dative
DEF	definite
DFT	default
DOM	differential object marking
DP	determiner phrase
EA	external argument
ES	existential sentences
F	feminine
GEN	genitive
GER	gerund
IMPF	imperfective
IND	indicative
INF	infinitive
IO	indirect object
LK	linker
M	masculine
N	neuter
NEG	negation
NOM	nominative
NP	noun phrase
PART	partitive
PCC	Person Case Constraint
PF	Phonetic Form
PP	prepositional phrase
PST	past
PL	plural
SC	Small Clause
SE	(reflexive, medio-passive, impersonal) pronominal element in Romance
SG	singular
SQ	strong quantifier

SUBJ subjunctive  
 UG Universal Grammar

**Acknowledgements:** I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for the very constructive feedback and the suggestions provided. A big thank you also goes to Pino Longobardi and Anne Tamm for extensive discussion, as well as to the native speakers who have helped with the data. I am particularly grateful to Helle Metslang and to Kasia Grzegorek for their kindness and patience throughout this process. Parts of this research have been funded by a research grant from the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. All errors are my own.

## References

- Adger, David, and Daniel Harbour. 2007. "The syntax and syncretisms of the Person Case Constraint." *Syntax* 10(1): 2–37.
- Aissen, Judith. 2003. "Differential object marking: iconicity vs. economy." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 21(3): 435–83.
- Avram, Larisa, and Rodica Zafiu. 2017. "Semantic hierarchies in the evolution of the differential object marking in Romanian." In *Sintaxa ca mod de a fi. Omagiu Gabrielei Pană-Dindelegan, la aniversare*, ed. Alina Dragomirescu, Alexandru Nicolae, Camelia Stan and Rodica Zafiu, 29–42. București: Editura Universității din București.
- Bárány, András. 2017. *Person, Case and Agreement. The Morphosyntax of Inverse Agreement and Global Case Splits*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bárány, András. 2018. DOM and dative case. *Glossa* 3(1): 97:1–40.
- Béjar, Susana, and Milan Rezac. 2009. "Cyclic Agree." *Linguistic Inquiry* 40(1): 35–73.
- Belletti, Adriana. 2004. "Aspects of the low IP area." In *The structure of CP and IP. The cartography of syntactic structures*, ed. Luigi Rizzi, 16–51, vol. 2. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Belletti, Adriana. 2018. "On the *a*-marking of object topics in the Italian left periphery." In *From sounds to structures. Beyond the veil of Maya*, ed. Roberto Petrosino, Cerrone Pietro, and Harry van der Hulst, 445–66. de Gruyter. Mouton.
- Bernstein, Judy B. 2008. "English *th*-forms." In *Essays on nominal determination. From morphology to discourse management*, ed. Henrik Hök Müller, and Alex Klinge, 213–33. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bleam, Tonia. 2005. "The role of semantic type in differential object marking." *Belgian Journal of Linguistics* 19: 3–27.
- Bossong, Georg. 1991. "Differential object marking in Romance and beyond." In *New Analyses in Romance linguistics*, ed. Dieter Wanner, and Douglas A. Kibbee, 143–70. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bossong, Georg. 1998. "Le marquage différentiel dans les langues de l'Europe." In *Actance et valence dans les langues de l'Europe*, ed. Jack Feuillet, 193–259. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2000. "Minimalist inquiries: the framework." In *Step by step. Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, ed. Roger Martin, David Michaels, Juan Uriagereka, and Samuel Jay Keyser, 89–155. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Chung, Sandra. 2003. "Syntactic identity in sluicing: how much and why." *Linguistic Inquiry* 44(1): 1–44.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1989. *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cornilescu, Alexandra. 1992. "Remarks on the determiner system of Rumanian: the demonstratives AL and CEL." *Probus* 4(3): 189–260.
- Cornilescu, Alexandra. 2000. "On the interpretation of the prepositional accusative in Romanian." *Bucharest Working Wapers in Linguistics* 2: 91–106.
- Cornilescu, Alexandra. 2005. "Demonstratives and minimality." *Bucharest Working Wapers in Linguistics* 7(1): 102–17.
- Cornilescu, Alexandra, and Alexandru Nicolae. 2012. "Nominal ellipsis as definiteness and anaphoricity. The case of Romanian." *Lingua* 122(2): 1070–111.
- Cornilescu, Alexandra, Anca Dinu, and Alina Tîgău. 2017. "Experimental data on Romanian double object constructions." *Revue Roumaine de Linguistique* LXII(2): 57–77.
- d'Alessandro, Roberta. 2017. "When you have too many features: auxiliaries, agreement and clitics in Italian varieties." *Glossa* 2(1): 1–36.
- Dalrymple, Mary, and Irina Nikolaeva. 2011. *Objects and information structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- de Hoop, Helen. 1996. *Case configuration and noun phrase interpretation*. New York: Routledge.
- de Swart, Peter. 2007. *Cross-linguistic variation in object marking*. Utrecht: LOT Publishers.
- Diesing, Molly. 1992. *Indefinites*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Dobrovie-Sorin, Carmen. 1990. "Clitic doubling, *wh*-movement and quantification in Romanian." *Linguistic Inquiry* 21(3): 351–97.
- Dobrovie-Sorin, Carmen. 1994. *The syntax of Romanian. Comparative studies in Romance*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Dowty, David. 1979. *Word meaning and Montague grammar*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Elbourne, Paul. 2013. *Definite descriptions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Enç, Mürvet. 1991. "The semantics of specificity." *Linguistic Inquiry* 22(1): 1–25.
- Farkaș, Donka. 1978. "Direct and indirect object reduplication in Romanian." In *Papers from the 14th Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*, ed. Donka Farkaș, Wesley M. Jacobsen, and Karol W. Todrys, 88–97. Chicago: CLS.
- Fábregas, Antonio. 2013. Differential object marking in Spanish: State of the art. *Borealis: An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics*, 2(2):1–80.
- Fernández-Soriano, Olga, and Susana Táboas-Baylin. 1999. "Construcciones impersonales no reflejas." In *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española*, ed. Ignacio Bosque, and Violeta Demonte, Vol. 2. Las construcciones sintácticas fundamentales. Relaciones temporales, aspectuales y modales, 1721–78. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe.
- Fish, Gordon T. 1967. "A with Spanish direct object." *Hispania* 50(1): 80–5.
- García García, Marco. 2005. "Differential object marking and informativeness." In *Proceedings of the Workshop Specificity and Evolution/emergence of Nominal Determination Systems in Romance*. *Arbeitspapier 119*, ed. Georg A. Kaiser, Klaus von Heusinger, and Elizabeth Stark, 29–42. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft: Universität Konstanz.
- García García, Marco. 2007. "Differential object marking with inanimate objects." In *Proceedings of the Workshop Definiteness, Specificity and Animacy in Ibero Romance Languages*. *Arbeitspapier 122*, ed. Georg A. Kaiser, and Manuel Leonetti, 63–84. Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft: Universität Konstanz.
- Giurgea, Ion T. 2008. *Recherches sur la structure interne des pronoms et des expressions nominales sans nom exprimé*. Doctoral Dissertation. Paris: Université Paris 7 Denis Diderot.
- Giusti, Giuliana. 1993. *La sintassi dei determinanti*. Padua: Unipress.
- Giusti, Giuliana. 2002. "The functional structure of noun phrases. A bare phrase structure approach." In *Functional structure in DP and IP*, ed. Guglielmo Cinque, 54–90. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Givón, Talmy. 1984. "Direct objects and dative shifting. Semantic and pragmatic case." In *Objects. Towards a Theory of Grammatical Relations*, ed. Frans Plank, 151–83. London: Academic Press.
- Guardiano, Cristina, and Giuseppe Longobardi. 2005. "Parametric comparison and language taxonomy." In *Grammaticalization and parametric variation*, ed. Carme Picallo, Monteserrat Battlori, and Francesc Roca, 149–74. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harley, Heidi, and Elizabeth Ritter. 2002. "Person and number in pronouns: a feature-geometric analysis." *Language* 78(3): 482–526.
- Heim, Irene. 1988. *The semantics of definite and indefinite noun phrases*. New York: Garland.
- Hill, Virginia. 2013. "The direct object marker in Romanian: a historical perspective." *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 33(2):140–51.
- Iemmolo, Giorgio. 2010. "Topicality and differential object marking: evidence from Romance and beyond." *Studies in Language* 34(2): 239–72.
- Ihsane, Tabea. 2008. *The layered DP. Form and meaning of French indefinites*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Ihsane, Tabea, and Genoveva Puskás. 2001. "Specific is not definite." *Generative Grammar in Geneva 2*: 39–54.
- Irimia, Monica Alexandrina. 2018. "When differential object marking is obligatory: some remarks on the role of case in ellipsis and comparatives." In *Proceedings of the Penn Linguistics Conference*, ed. Ava Irani, and Milena Šereikaitė, 105–14, vol. 24(2). University of Pennsylvania.
- Irimia, Monica Alexandrina. 2020. "Types of structural objects. Some remarks on differential object marking in Romanian." In *Case, agreement and their interactions. New perspectives on differential argument marking*, ed. András Bányi and Laura Kalin, 76–126. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Jaeggli, Osvaldo. 1982. *Topics in Romance syntax*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Kalin, Laura. 2018. "Licensing and differential object marking: the view from Neo-Aramaic." *Syntax* 21(2): 112–59.
- Khouja, Marta. 2019. "DOM as a syntax-pragmatics interface marker. Evidence from Catalan." *Linguisticae Investigationes* 42(1): 56–81.
- Klein, Udo, and Peter de Swart. 2011. "Case and referential properties." *Lingua* 121(1): 3–19.
- Kratzer, Angelika. 1998. "Scope or pseudo-scope? Are there wide-scope indefinites?" In *Events and grammar*, ed. Susan Rothstein, 163–96. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Kučerová, Ivona. 2018. "ϕ-features at the syntax-semantics interface: evidence from nominal inflection." *Linguistic Inquiry* 49(4): 813–45.
- Laca, Brenda. 1995. "Sobre el uso del acusativo preposicional en español." In *El complemento directo preposicional*, ed. Carmen Pensado, 61–91. Madrid: Visor.
- Laca, Brenda. 2006. "El objeto directo. La marcación preposicional." In *Sintaxis histórica de la lengua española*. Primera parte. La frase verbal. Volumen I, ed. Concepción Company, 423–475. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/Fondo de cultura económica.
- Lazard, Gilbert. 2001. "Le marquage différentiel de l'objet." In *Language typology and linguistic universals. An international handbook*, ed. Martin Haspelmath, Ekkehard König, Wulf Österreicher, and Wolfgang Raible, 873–85, vol. 2. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Ledgeway, Adam, Norma Schifano, and Giuseppina Silvestri. 2019. "Differential object marking and the properties of D in the dialects of the extreme South of Italy." *Glossa* 4(1): 51:1–25.
- Legate, Julie Anne. 2014. *Voice and v. Lessons from Acehnese*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Leonetti, Manuel. 2003. "Specificity and object marking: the case of Spanish *a*." In *Proceedings of the Workshop Semantic and Syntactic Aspects of Specificity in Romance languages. Arbeitspapier 113*, ed. Klaus von Heusinger, and Georg A. Kaiser, 67–99. Konstanz: Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft.
- Leonetti, Manuel. 2008. "Specificity in clitic doubling and in differential object marking." *Probus* 20(1): 33–66.
- Levin, Theodore. 2019. "On the nature of differential object marking. Insights from Palauan." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 37(1): 167–213.
- Longobardi, Giuseppe. 2008. "Reference to individuals, person and the variety of mapping parameters." In *Essays on Nominal Determination. From Morphology to Discourse Management*, ed. Henrik Hök Müller, and Alex Klinge, 189–211. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Longobardi, Giuseppe, and Cristina Guardiani. 2009. "Evidence for syntax as a signal of historical relatedness." *Lingua* 119: 1679–706.
- López, Luis. 2012. *Indefinite Objects: Scrambling, Choice Functions and Differential Marking*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Mardale, Alexandru. 2009. "Un regard diachronique sur le marquage différentiel de l'objet en roumain." *Revue Roumaine de Linguistique* LIV(1–2): 65–93.
- Mardale, Alexandru. 2015. "Differential object marking in the first original Romanian texts." In *Formal Approaches to DPs in Old Romanian*, ed. Virginia Hill, 200–45. Leiden/Boston: Brill.
- Martín, Juan. 1999. "The syntax and semantics of Spanish accusative *a*." In *Advances in Hispanic Linguistics: Papers from the 2nd Hispanic Linguistics Symposium*, ed. Javier Gutiérrez-Rexac, and Fernando Martínez-Gil, 469–85. Cascadilla Press.
- Martín, Juan. 2005. "Aspectual organization and [ $\pm$ ] accusative case checking in Romance." In *Romance languages and linguistic theory 2003*, ed. Ivo van Ginneken, Twan Geerts, and Haïke Jacobs, 177–96. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Milsark, Gary Lee. 1979. *Existential sentences in English*. New York: Routledge.
- Miyagawa, Shigeru. 2010. *Why Agree? Why Move? Unifying Agreement-based and Discourse-Configurational languages*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Miyagawa, Shigeru. 2017. *Agreement beyond phi*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Mursell, Johannes. 2018. "Object agreement in Swahili is topic agreement." *Jezikoslovlje* 19(3): 427–55.
- Nicolae, Alexandru. 2013. *Types of ellipsis in Romanian*, Doctoral Dissertation. University of Bucharest and University of Cambridge.
- Niculescu, Alexandru. 1965. "Obiectul direct prepositional în limbile române." In *Individualitatea limbii române între limbile române*, ed. Alexandru Niculescu, 77–99. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.
- Ormazabal, Javier, and Juan Romero. 2013a. "Differential object marking, case and agreement." *Borealis: An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics* 2(2): 221–39.
- Ormazabal, Javier, and Juan Romero. 2013b. "Non-accusative objects." *Catalan Journal of Linguistics* 12: 155–73.
- Ormazabal, Javier, and Juan Romero. 2007. "The object agreement constraint." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 25(2):315–47.
- Pană-Dindelegan, Gabriela. 2013. "The direct objects." In *The Grammar of Romanian*, ed. Gabriela Pană-Dindelegan, 125–44. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pensado, Carmen. ed. 1995. *El complemento directo preposicional*. Madrid: Visor.
- Reinhart, Tanya. 1997. "Quantifier scope: how labour is divided between QR and choice functions." *Linguistics and Philosophy* 20: 335–97.
- Richards, Marc. 2008. "Defective agree: Case Alternations, and the prominence of Person." In *Linguistische Arbeits Berichte (volume on Scales)*, ed. Marc Richards, and Andrej L. Malchukov, 137–161, vol. 86. Universität Leipzig.
- Rivero, María Luisa. 1979. "Referencia y especificidad." In *Estudios de gramática generativa del Español*, ed. María Luisa Rivero, 123–61. Madrid: Catédra.
- Roberts, Ian. 1998. "Review of Harris and Campbell 1995." *Romance Philology* 52: 363–70.
- Roberts, Ian. 2012. "On the nature of syntactic parameters: a program for research." In *Parameter theory and language change*, ed. Charlotte Galves, Sonia Cyrino, Ruth Lopes, Filomena Sandalo, and Juanito Avelar, 1–37. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Roberts, Ian. 2017. "Introduction." In *The Oxford handbook of universal grammar*, ed. Ian Roberts, 319–34. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rodríguez-Mondoñedo, Miguel. 2007. *The Syntax of Objects. Agree and Differential Object Marking*. Doctoral Dissertation, Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut.
- 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: 312–34.
- Starke, Michal. 2017. "Resolving DAT = ACC ( $\neq$  GEN)." *Glossa* 2(1): 104:1–8.
- Suñer, Margarita. 1982. "Impersonal *haber* in non-standard Spanish." *Cornell Working Papers in Linguistics* 3:94–107.
- Takita, Kensuke. 2015. "Strengthening the role of case in ellipsis." *Nanzan linguistics* 10: 75–106.

- Tigău, Alina M. 2010. "Towards an account of differential object marking in Romanian." *Bucharest Working Papers in Linguistics* 12(1): 137–58.
- Tigău, Alina M. 2011. *Syntax and interpretation of the direct object in Romance and Germanic languages*. București: Editura Universității din București.
- Torrego, Esther. 1984. "Algunas observaciones sobre las oraciones existenciales con haber en español." *Estudis gramaticals* 1: 329–39.
- Torrego, Esther. 1998. *The dependencies of objects*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Torrego Salcedo, Esther. 1999. "El complemento directo preposicional." In *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española. Vol. 2. Las construcciones sintácticas fundamentales. Relaciones temporales, aspectuales y modales*, ed. Ignacio Bosque, and Violeta Demonte, 1780–805. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.
- Weissenrieder, Maureen. 1991. "A functional approach to the accusative *a*." *Hispania* 74(1): 146–56.
- Williams, Edwin. 1983. "Against small clauses." *Linguistic Inquiry* 14(2): 287–308.
- Winter, Yoad. 2007. "Choice functions and the scopal semantics of indefinites." *Linguistics and Philosophy* 20: 399–467.
- Zubizarreta, Maria Luisa, and Roumyana Pancheva. 2017. "A formal characterization of person-based alignment." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 35(4): 1161–204.