

Differential Object Marking in Romanian and Binding

Edgar Onea & Daniel Hole
University of Stuttgart

In this paper we discuss a well known but hitherto insufficiently understood contrast regarding differential object marking (DOM) with “pe” in Romanian, namely, the fact that in possessor raising constructions as in (1) “pe” is blocked even though the triggering features: definiteness and animacy are present.

- (1) Ion și-a văzut(*-o pe) prietena cea mai bună.
Ion himself has seen her DOM girlfriend.DEF the most good
'John saw his best friend.'

We will explain this effect by showing that “pe” marked direct objects in Romanian must be moved at LF to a position higher than the highest argument position occupied by dative arguments, and arguing that this movement would trigger an impossible binding configuration if a pronoun were to be raised from a “pe” marked direct object DP to a dative position.

In addition we will show that the movement analysis of DOM we propose not only explains this particular puzzling blocking effect but also generalizes to a number of other cases including the interpretation of “pe” marked indefinite direct objects, which have often been analyzed as specific in the literature.