MANIFESTATIONS OF DIFFERENTIAL OBJECT MARKING: FROM BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE TO PREPOSITIONAL ACCUSATIVES

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Abstract. The null object/overt pronoun split in Brazilian Portuguese has been assimilated to differential object marking in some functionalist accounts (Schwenter and Silva 2002, Schwenter 2006). This paper examines further arguments for this connection; we evaluate a battery of more formal diagnostics under which the Brazilian Portuguese data pattern similarly to canonical instances of prepositional marking across Romance (Romanian, Spanish etc.). The application of other tests weakens the assumption of a unique licensing position for differentially marked objects in Romance languages.

Keywords: Brazilian Portuguese, Differential Object Marking, null object.

1. INTRODUCTION

Several Romance varieties exhibit a split in the morpho-syntactic marking of objects, broadly regulated by features like animacy and salience (Torrego 1998, Rodríguez-Mondoñedo 2007, López 2012, etc.). More specifically, the *human* (and specific) object in the Spanish example in (1a) must take the preposition *a*[3]. Inanimate objects, as in (1b), do not normally take the *a* marker. This split is known as *differential object marking* (DOM).

(1) a.	He	encontrado	*(a)	la	niña.	*Spanish*
	have.1.SG[4]	found	DOM	the.F.SG	girl	
	'I have found the girl.'					

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[3] In Spanish, the DOM preposition (spelled out as *a*) is homophonous with the dative marker. We will be glossing *a* as DOM when it introduces animate accusative objects, and as dative when the syntax and semantics signal an indirect object.

[4] Abbreviations: ACC = accusative, CLT = clitic, DAT = dative, DOM = differential object marking, F = feminine, FUT= future, M = masculine, NEG = negative, N = neuter, PL = plural, SG = singular.

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b. He encontrado (*a) el libro.
have.1.SG found DOM the.M.SG book
'I have found the book.' (Ormazabal and Romero 2013, ex.1 a, b)

Recent discussions (Ormazabal and Romero 2013, a.o.) reduce this contrast to the distinction between Case/licensed objects (those obligatorily introduced by *a*) and the Caseless/unlicensed ones. Furthermore, in many formal accounts (López 2012, a.o.) licensing is intimately connected to the spell-out of an adposition.

A series of functionalist contributions (Schwenter and Silva 2002, Schwenter 2006) assimilate the split between null objects and overt pronouns in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) to differential object marking of the Spanish type in (1). The BP sentences under (2) serve as an illustration. The antecedent in (2a) contains an inanimate with a non-specific interpretation[5], and only a null object is allowed in the embedded clause. The (specific) human antecedent in (2b), on the other hand, is normally tracked by an overt pronoun.

(2) a. A estudante vai devolver o livro que trate da vida depois que ela ler **Ø**/***ele.**
the student go return the book that treats of.the life after that she read /it
'The student is going to return whatever book that deals with life after she reads(it).'
b. A estudante levou o menino para o cinema depois que ela beijou***Ø/ele**.
the student took the boy to the cinema after that she kissed /him.
'The student took the boy to the cinema after she kissed him.'

The paper has two main goals. Firstly, we address several formal tests that support grouping BP and adpositional DOM under the same broad umbrella. Secondly, we show that this unification has important consequences for our understanding of DOM syntax. Differential marking does not *necessarily* signal the interpretation of marked objects in an intermediate position between VP and *v*P, as recently proposed by López (2012).

The structure of the paper is as follows. In section 2 we introduce the BP data. In Section 3 we examine the most canonical instances of adpositional DOM in Romance and compare them to the BP overt pronominal contexts. Section 4 addresses other obligatory DOM instances, as well as configurations that block DOM, underlining their similarity to the null object/full pronoun split in BP. In section 5 we address the licensing of DP ellipsis in BP; this process indicates that objects resumed by pronouns in BP must raise out of VP, but can also be above the external argument, and *v*P. Section 6 concludes.

[5] The way in which the definite is interpreted has consequences on the marking. If the speaker has in mind a specific inanimate entity, the overt pronoun might be required, as seen in (4). Similarly, some Spanish speakers can drop DOM under a 'non-specific' reading of definite animates (cf.1a):
i) He encontrado la niña que buscas. *Spanish*
have.1.SG found the.F.SG girl that search.2.SG
'I have found the (non-specific/type of) girl you are looking for.'

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2. BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE OBJECTS UNDER ELLIPSIS

Brazilian Portuguese allows null objects with special properties that differentiate them from the various types of null objects allowed in other languages (Cyrino and Lopes, 2016). It has long been noted (Cyrino 1994, a.o.) that the antecedent of the null object is normally [-animate], as in (2a) vs. (2b), and (3a) vs. (3b)[6]. However, a full pronoun might be used when the antecedent is an inanimate DP with a specific reading (4a), and it is the only possibility if it is a specific animate (4b):

(3) a. A estudante levou um livro para a biblioteca depois que ela leu **Ø**.
the student took a book to the library after that she read
'The student took a book to the library after she read (it).'

b. *A estudante levou um menino[7] para o cinema depois que ela beijou **Ø**.
the student took a boy to the cinema after that she kissed

(4) a. A estudante levou um (certo) livro para a biblioteca depois que ela leu **ele**.
the student took a certain book to the library after that she read it
'The student took a (specific) book to the library after she read (it).'

b. A estudante levou um (certo) menino para o cinema depois que ela beijou **ele**.
the student took a certain boy to the cinema after that she kissed him
'The student took a (specific) boy to the cinema after she kissed him.'

Besides sensitivity to animacy, anaphoric null objects in BP have additional special properties that set them apart from similar classes in other typical null object languages. We show in Section 3 that these precise characteristics unify them with prepositional DOM. First, BP null objects occur in islands for movement, unlike in European Portuguese (Raposo 1986) or Chinese (Huang 1984). Moreover, their antecedent cannot be a subject, unlike in Turkish (Öztürk 2008). Finally, they allow strict and sloppy readings, a property related to ellipsis (Fiengo and May 1984, a.o.). The latter characteristic is illustrated in sentence (5), which is ambiguous – in the strict reading Pedro's friend left Pedro's car in the street; in the sloppy reading, Pedro's friend left his (own) car in the street[8].

[6] The examples are given with indefinite antecedents, but BP also allows definite null objects with the same properties, as already seen in the examples above in (2).

[7] As will be seen in examples like (7), animates do not obligatorily require the overt pronoun. If they receive a non-specific or non-presuppositional interpretation, the null object can be used. The problem with examples like (3b) is that some (extensional) predicates do not easily accept objects that do not presuppose existence.

[8] BP also allows *v*P (V-stranding) ellipsis, in which case the verb is the same in both clauses (i); see Cyrino and Matos (2005) for a distinction between *v*P ellipsis and null objects in BP:
(i) Pedro escondeu seu dinheiro no armário, e sua mãe também escondeu ___.
Pedro hid his money in.the closet and his mother too hid
'Pedro hid his money in the closet and his mother did too.'

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(5) *Pedro guardou um carro na garagem, mas seu amigo deixou* ***Ø*** *na rua.*
Pedro put a car in.the garage but his friend left in.the street
'Pedro put a car in the garage, but his friend left (it) in the street.

Because of these properties, such anaphoric null objects have been analyzed by Cyrino (1994) as DP ellipsis – that is, as inaudible DPs that have identical antecedents.

Importantly, island insensitivity, as well as interactions with animacy (and specificity) are well-known characteristics of Romance DOM (see also López 2012). It is no surprise that the following question has been asked in functional and descriptive accounts: can the BP overt pronoun/null object split instantiate a genuine manifestation of DOM? Section 3 starts by mentioning the descriptive observations in Schwenter and Silva (2002) and Schwenter (2006), who assume an informal connection of this type. Then, we show that our use of more formal diagnostics strengthens the intuition that the two processes can be unified.

3. NULL OBJECTS VS. OVERT PRONOUNS IN BP

Within a functionalist framework, Schwenter and Silva (2002) and Schwenter (2006) have claimed that the null object/full pronoun pattern contrast in BP is reminiscent of Spanish DOM. The authors base their conclusion on an investigation of the PEUL[9] corpus. The research has examined the occurrence of null object vs. full pronouns according to features like animacy and specificity. Objects that are conjunctively animate and specific are more likely to require the full pronominal. These results confirm the observations in Cyrino (1994) who has also shown that a conjunctive set of features involving animacy and specificity is usually required for the full pronoun in BP[10]. On the other hand, DOM in languages like Spanish has been traditionally assumed to identify objects that are simultaneously *animate* and *specific* (Torrego 1998, Leonetti 2008, a.o.). We have already seen this in (1), and fn. 5. These observations support, at least superficially, the connection between full pronominals in BP and prepositional differential objects.

To exclude the possibility of a *v*P ellipsis analysis for sentences like (5), a different verb (*guardou* 'put/kept', *deixou* 'left') is used in each clause, and a PP is present. These elements demonstrate that ellipsis affects only the object, and not the whole *v*P.

[9] PEUL (Programa de Estudos do Uso da Língua – *Program of Studies on the Use of Language*) is a group of researchers investigating variation and change in Rio de Janeiro. More information can be found at *www.letras.ufrj.br/peul*.

[10] But, as we show below in (7), BP null objects can track [+animate] antecedents only if the latter are non-specific. See the discussion in the text below.

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An important problem is that, when investigated more comprehensively, adpositional DOM can also signal configurations where typical features like animacy/specificity are overriden[11] (see some of the diagnostics in Section 4). Recent explorations of these contexts conclude that prepositional DOM cannot be (just) a reflex of animacy/specificity, but has a more abstract nature. As already mentioned, for Ormazabal and Romero (2013) it is the need of certain objects to be licensed. López (2012) proposes that prepositional DOM signals objects that are found in a certain syntactic configuration (irrespective of animacy, etc.). Adjusting classical insights that go back to Kayne's (1975) Generalization, Irimia (2017 a, b) also assumes that DOM is triggered by the need to license more than one feature in a given DP (going beyond animacy/specificity, etc.).

In light of these remarks, the functionalist observations above need to be revised. The question would be whether the full pronoun/DOM unification still holds. The more detailed examination of BP we have undertaken reveals that: i) a conjunctive set of features is not always necessary for the overt pronoun, in the sense that full pronouns might track objects that are just [+spec] or [+anim]; ii) there are also contexts where the full pronoun needs to be used in the absence of animacy and specificity. Using more formal diagnostics, we do show that the unification proposed by Schwenter (2006) holds. However, it is not surface manifestations like *animacy* and *specificity* that group BP overt pronouns and prepositional DOM as incarnations of the same phenomenon. It is rather more abstract structural specifications that unify the two classes. Both BP overt pronouns and prepositional DOM signal structurally complex objects that cannot undergo incorporation and are subject to distinct licensing operations.

In this section we address contexts where the conjunction of [+anim] and [+spec] does not hold, in the sense that only one of these features is relevant. Configurations where animacy and specificity are overriden are analyzed in Section 4. To better illustrate the facts, we compare BP with Romanian, another robust prepositional DOM language. Romanian is a more adequate candidate than Spanish and further helps with understanding the BP data as: i) specificity can have more than one source, and thus there could be specific animates which do not need DOM; ii) the split between animacy and specificity is more clear cut than in Spanish, and thus more similar to BP.

We have shown that, traditionally, prepositional DOM is assumed to be triggered by a *conjunctive set of features* (Torrego 1998, Rodríguez – Mondoñedo 2007, López 2012, etc.), which include *animacy* and *specificity*. If examples like the Spanish (1a)[12] might make this conclusion opaque, the facts are clear-cut in

[11] These contexts include negative quantifiers, non-specific ECM objects, inanimate *wh*-objects, etc. (see Torrego 1998, Ormazabal and Romero 2013, López 2012, Irimia 2017, etc.)

[12] See also the remarks in footnote 5. Fn. 16 provides further evidence from animate indefinites which in Spanish have to be interpreted specific to be differentially marked.

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Romanian. We present first the contrast between Spanish (6a) and Romanian[13] (6b, c) regarding definite animates[14]:

(6) a. He encontrado *(a) la niña. *Spanish*
have.1.SG found DOM the.F.SG girl
'I have found the girl.' (Ormazabal and Romero 2013, ex.1 a)

b. Ai văzut copil=u=l frumos. *Romanian*
have.2.SG seen child=M.SG=the.M.SG lovely.M.SG
'You saw the lovely child.'

c. (L)-ai văzut *(pe) copil=u=l frumos [15].
CLT.3.M.SG.ACC-have.2.SG seen DOM child=M.SG=the.M.SG lovely.M.SG
'You saw the lovely child.'

In examples (6b), and (6c) we see that a definite animate can be used with or without DOM in Romanian. Crucially, differential marking is not *optional*. There is a difference in interpretation between the two sentences – informally, in (6c) there is an entailment that the object is anchored to the speaker, while (6b) contains a definite object. Therefore, the animacy and definiteness cluster of features is not signaled by DOM in (6b). A certain type of specificity, when attached to animates, appears to be what triggers DOM in (6c). We can also see from these examples that *animacy per se is not sufficient for differential marking,* as opposed to Spanish (1a). This is similar to BP where null objects are possible when they track definite animates, as in (7). Note that the definite is not interpreted as *specific* in this example (see also fn. 5).

(7) Eu conheço ***o menor infrator***$_i$ deste país. Visitei Ø na prisão.
I know the juvenile offender of-this country. visitei in-the prison
'I knew (the prototype of) the juvenile offender of this country. I visited him in prison.'

Another conclusion we draw from BP is that *specificity* per se is also not enough for the full pronoun. This is again different from Spanish, but similar to

[13] Farkas (1981/1985), Dobrovie Sorin (1994), Cornilescu (2000), von Heusinger and Onea (2008), Mardale (2007), (2014), Tigău (2010), etc.

[14] We illustrate singular definite nouns to make the point stronger. Bare plurals (animate) do not require DOM in Spanish or Romanian, if interpreted non-specific . The same holds in BP:

i) Os policiais agridem presos antes de prender Ø. *BP*
the policemen hit prisoners before of arrest
'Policemen hit prisoners before arresting them.'

[15] We are using overt modification in the examples in (6b, c), as Romanian prepositions show a (morphological) blocking effect with definiteness (see also Mardale 2007). If the definite noun is unmodified, the overt definite enclitic is not possible after the DOM preposition. However, the noun in (i) can be interpreted as definite.

ii) (L)-ai văzut pe copil/*pe copilul. *Romanian*
CLT.3.M.SG.ACC-have.2.SG seen DOM child/ DOM child=SG.M=the.M.SG
'You saw the child.'

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Romanian. In Romanian an indefinite animate can be interpreted specific regardless of differential marking (8a)[16,17]. Differential marking can, of course, be added as in (8b), but the interpretation obtained requires a type of D-linking/speaker-anchoring specificity, similarly to what we saw above in (6b) vs. (6c). Crucially, specificity in (8a) has a different nature (probably quantificational, see also Farkas 1981/1985) than the differential marking specificity, which might not have a quantificational source (see also López 2012, a.o.).

(8) a. Ion a văzut un om. *Romanian*
John have.3.SG seen a.M.SG man
= 'John saw a specific man'
= 'John saw some man or other.'

b. Ion (l)-a văzut **pe** un om.
John have.3.SG seen DOM a.M.SG man
'John saw a specific man.'

The BP data we have analyzed match more closely Romanian DOM than the Spanish variant. The only puzzling context could be that of specific inanimates which in BP can accept an overt pronoun, as we saw in (4a). Under a perfect match one would expect specific inanimates to also accept differential marking in prepositional DOM. Interestingly, this requirement does not go through in canonical extensional contexts in Spanish/Romanian (1b), providing an apparent counter-example. However, it has been shown that Spanish differential marking can be required even on (specific) inanimates in various licensing contexts, as seen in the ECM configuration below from Ormazabal and Romero (2013)[18]. As all apparent 'exceptions' with Romance prepositional DOM have rarely been investigated in detail, the BP overt pronominal with specific inanimates might not actually be a counter-example.

[16] Note that in Spanish animate indefinites cannot be interpreted specific without DOM. This indicates that quantificational specificity is probably lacking with Spanish indefinites, as opposed to Romanian and BP.

i) Maria busca una gestora.
Maria search a.M.SG manager.
= 'Maria is looking for a manager (some manager or other).'
'Maria is looking for a specific manager.'

[17] This also holds with inanimates, as seen in the following example:

i) Maria a vrut să citească o carte (anume) în avion, dar şi-a dat seama
Maria has wanted to read a book (specific) in plane, but SE.DAT-has given thought
că a uitat-o acasă. *Romanian*
that has forgot-CLT.3.SG.F.ACC home
'Maria wanted to read a specific book on the plane, but realized she had left it home.'

[18] See also Cornilescu (2010) for examples with inanimates and DOM in Romanian. There is also the observation that, diachronically at least, DOM is subject to various extensions. For example, at some stages the prepositional accusative also marked specific inanimates in Romanian (Hill and Mardale 2017). Moreover, inanimate objects under (comparative) ellipsis also use DOM across Romance (Irimia 2017a, Irimia 2017b, Irimia and Guardiano 2017).

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(9) El mago hizo levitar a las sillas. *Spanish*
The magician made levitate DOM the.F.PL chairs
'The magician made the chairs-DOM levitate.'

Table 1 below summarizes the findings listed above; the correlations observed here motivate unifying BP overt pronouns with prepositional DOM.

Table 1

Null object/pronoun in BP vs. prepositional DOM

	Definite animate non-specific	Definite animate specific (D-linked)	Indefinite quantificational inanimate, specific	Indefinite specific: D-linked
BP	null object	**Pronoun**	null object	**Pronoun**
Romanian	bare definite	**DOM**	bare indefinite	**DOM**
Spanish	bare definite (fn.5)	**DOM**	not possible	**DOM (ECM)**

In light of these observations, two of the 'special' properties of BP null objects become less mysterious: i) animacy restrictions; ii) no matrix subject as antecedent (see also Cyrino 2017). These specifications also characterize prepositional DOM, but are unexpected in canonical null object languages (as we mentioned above).

4. DOM DIAGNOSTICS

We have mentioned in Section 3 that the DOM preposition does not only signal contexts where animacy and specificity are salient. An examination of relevant environments where such features can be overriden once again indicates parallelism between prepositional DOM and overt pronominal objects in BP, as illustrated in Table 2[19].

Table 2

(Other) DOM obligatory contexts

DOM contexts	**Adpositional DOM Romance**	**BPovert pronominal**
insensitivity to islands	YES	YES
personal (animate) pronouns	YES	YES
(animate) proper names	YES	YES
animate and specific object	YES	YES
wh-object D-linking (irrespective of animacy)	YES	cannot be tested
nominal ellipsis	YES	YES
(specific human) indefinite with intermediate scope	YES	YES

[19] In Table 2, we have also kept the specificity+animacy diagnostic as part of a comprehensive picture of DOM.

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In both BP and adpositional DOM the distinction between marked/unmarked objects shows insensitivity to islands. For BP, this has already been seen in example (2b). The overt pronoun is linked to its antecedent across a constituent that normally functions as an island (embedded adjunct clause). Similarly, in Spanish (or Romanian) the scope of DOM is not restricted to an island; this is illustrated with the Spanish sentence in (10), where the DOM existential takes scope over the conditional:

(10) Si Lud invita a un filósofo, Bart se offenderá.
If Lud invite.3.SG DOM a.M.SG philosopher Bart SE offend.FUT.3.SG
'If Lud invites a philosopher, Bart will be offended.' ∃> → (López 2012, ex. 6a)

Another context where differential marking appears to be obligatory are personal pronouns. In standard Romanian (just like in Spanish), if the object is a pronoun which tracks an animate/proper name, etc., the ACC adposition is necessary[20]. As expected, a pronoun is also required in BP[21], in exactly the same context (11c vs. 11d).

(11) a. *(L)-ai lăudat *(pe) el. *Romanian*
CLT.3.M.SG.ACC-have.2.SG praised DOM he
'You have praised him.' (referring to an animate entity)
b. L-ai cumpărat (*pe el).
CLT.3.M/N.SG.ACC-have.2.SG bought
Intended: 'You bought it.' (referring to an inanimate entity)
c. Maria elogiou ele depois que a Sonia beijou *ø / √ ele. *BP*
Maria praised he after that the Sonia kissed /him
'Maria praised him after Sonia kissed him.' (referring to an animate entity)
d. Maria elogiou ele depois que a Sonia beijou ø / √ ele.
Maria praised 3.SG after that the Sonia kissed /it
'Maria praised it after Sonia kissed it.' (referring to an inanimate entity)

Examples with proper names are given in (12) from both Romanian and BP:

(12) a. Ai văzut-(o) *(pe) Maria. *Romanian*
have.2.SG seen-CLT.3.F.SG.ACC DOM Maria
'You saw Maria.'
b. Maria beijou Pedro depois que a Sonia elogiou *ø / √ ele. *BP*
Maria kissed Pedro after that the Sonia praised / him
'Maria kissed Pedro after Sonia praised him.'

[20] Clitic doubling is also required in Romanian, as seen in (11a).

[21] Relics of the older prepositional Romance strategy are still preserved with 1st and 2nd person pronouns (i) in BP. As expected, a full pronoun is required in contexts similar to (11b), see (ii):
i) Pedro elogiou *(a) mim depois que a Sonia beijou *Ø / √ me.
Pedro praised DOM me after that the Sonia kissed /me
'Pedro praised me after Sonia kissed me.'
The reluctance of pronouns to lose older differential marking strategies is not surprising.

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Another very interesting context where the ACC marker appears to be obligatory in DOM languages are (non-specific) animate negative quantifiers, as in (13) (Torrego 1998):

(13) Nu ai văzut *(pe) nimeni. *Romanian*
not have.2.SG seen DOM nobody
'You haven't seen anybody/You saw nobody.'

Similar negative quantifier contexts are more difficult to test in BP due to the interaction with parasitic gaps. An example is provided in (14), as an illustration[22]:

(14) O juiz não sentenciou ninguém depois que o juri não julgou
the judge not sentenced nobody after that the jury not find
*ø / √ eles culpados. *BP*
/ them guilty.
'The judge did not sentence anybody after the jury found (nobody) guilty.'

BP *wh*-objects and nominal ellipsis are given in (15), with the caveat that the pronoun could also arise in these instances as a result of a parasitic gap configuration[23].

(15) a. A. Quem comprou e quem leu que livro?
who bought and who read what book
B. A Sonia comprou o vermelho depois que a Filomena leu ?Ø/√ ele.
The Sonia bought the red after that the Filomena read /it
'Sonia bought the red one after Filomena read it.
b. Que rapaz a Maria beijou depois que a Sonia elogiou √Ø / ?ele?
which boy the Maria kissed after that the Sonia praised him
'Which boy did Maria kiss after Sonia praised?'

In Romanian DOM is necessary in nominal ellipsis (16b) and animate *wh*-objects (16c). Similarly, the marking also shows up with D-linked *wh*-objects, irrespective of animacy (16a); this latter context cannot be tested in BP, as D-linked *wh*- are absent.

(16) a. *(Pe) care ai cumpărat-o? *Romanian*
DOM which have. 2.SG bought-CLT.3.F.SG.ACC
'Which one did you buy?' (animate or inanimate)
b. A cumpărat-(o) *(pe) cea roşie.
have.3.SG bought-CLT.3.F.SG.ACC DOM that.F.SG red.F.SG
'S/he has bought the red one.' (animate or inanimate)

[22] As negative quantifiers do not normally allow clitic doubling in prepositional DOM, these examples might also demonstrate that the BP overt pronoun does not correspond to clitic doubling in languages like Romanian or Spanish.

[23] Distinguishing between these two possible sources in these contexts is beyond the scope of this short paper.

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c. *(Pe) cine (*l)[24]-ai văzut?
DOM who CLT.3.M.SG.ACC-have.2.SG seen
'Who did you see?'

Lastly, in both BP as well as the prepositional DOM, a marked object can be interpreted specific, even when it does not exhibit highest scope (that is, it can function as an intermediate scope specific). In this respect, Romance behaves differently from other differential object marking languages where an intermediate scope might not be possible with marked objects[25]. Relevant examples are in (17):

(17) a. Fiecare senator l-a angajat pe un prieten.
every senator CLT.3.M.SG.ACC-have.3.SG hired DOM a.M.SG friend[26]
'Every senator hired a friend.' (every > a) *Romanian*

b. Todo senador contratou um amigo depois que a mãe dele
all senator hired a friend after that the mother his
recomendou *ø / √ ele. *BP*
recommended /him
'Every senator hired a friend after his mother recommended him.' (every > a)

In both Romanian and BP the most natural reading of the object in (17) is one in which the indefinite is specific, but takes narrow scope with respect to the universal. Thus these sentences do not (necessarily) imply that every senator hired the same specific friend.

Turning now to contexts in which differential marking is blocked, it is by now unsurprising to see a perfect match between BP and other Romance. The most important diagnostics are listed in Table 3, while an example with animate narrow scope NPs under *have* is included in (18). Remember that the null object cannot refer back to subjects[27] in BP; we have also seen examples with (non-specific) inanimates which do not accept the overt pronoun in BP (2b) or the prepositional accusative in Spanish (1b).

Table 3

Contexts that block DOM

Impossibility of DOM	Prepositional Romance	BP
Subjects	YES	YES (no null object)
Nominal predicates	YES	YES
Narrow scope NPs with have	YES	YES
Non-specific inanimates	YES	YES
Pseudo-incorporated objects/objects with light verbs	YES	YES

[24] Note that clitic doubling is ungrammatical if the *wh*-object is human. See Dobrovie-Sorin (1994) for detailed discussion.

[25] See also Baker and Vinokurova (2010).

[26] Cornilescu (2000: ex. 32b).

[27] Some Italo Romance varieties appear to allow DOM-homophonous marking even with subjects. These contexts require a more detailed investigation to determine their 'subjecthood' status, and will be ignored here for lack of space.

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Example (18) illustrates the ungrammaticality of DOM with narrow scope NPs under *have*, as well as the impossibility of overt pronouns in the same contexts in BP.

(18) a. Are (*pe) copii. *Romanian*
have.3.SG DOM children
'S/he has children.'

b. A. Eu não sabia que você gostava de crianças. *BP*
I not knew that you liked of children
'I didn't know you liked children'.

B. Sim, eu até tenho *elas.
Yes, I even have them
'Yes, I even have some.'

Identical behavior under a variety of diagnostics which signal DOM strengthens the hypothesis that the BP null object/overt pronominal split can be unified with prepositional DOM. Next section also shows that the BP data also give an important hint into the syntactic positions of differential objects.

5. SYNTACTIC POSITIONS FOR DOM

As already mentioned in Section 2, Cyrino (1994) has proposed that an ellipsis analysis is best equipped to account for BP null objects. Properties like strict/sloppy readings can be straightforwardly derived under this view. In this section we further show that an ellipsis account can also give a hint into the syntax of these objects.

Ellipsis must be licensed by a functional head; for example, English VP ellipsis is licensed by V in T (Lobeck 1995). Building on previous work that shows that in BP, contrary to European Portuguese, the verb moves to an Aspectual head to license VP ellipsis (Cyrino and Matos 2005, Cyrino 2013), Cyrino (2016) proposes that the same licensing mechanism is available for the null object in BP. The difference from VP ellipsis is that object DP ellipsis is licensed by the V in a lower aspectual head located between vP and VP, the AspectInner (MacDonald 2008).[28] The proposed structure for BP null objects in (19a) is given in (19b):

(19) Null object:
a) Ela tem lido o livro para as crianças e ele tem também lido ___ para as mães
She has read the book to the children and he has too read to the mothers
'She has read the book to the children and he has also read it to the mothers.'
b) [$_{CP}$ … o livro para as crianças…] … ele [$_{T}$ tem] [$_{VPaux}$ tem [$_{AdvP}$ [$_{Adv}$ também] [$_{Asp\ PerfP}$ lido [$_{vP}$ [$_{AspInn}$ [AspInn+V <lido> [$_{VP}$ <V> para as mães]]]

[28] From a different perspective, Lopes (2015), based on Cyrino (1994), Cyrino and Matos (2005), Cyrino (2013), and Cyrino and Lopes (2016), provides a phase-based treatment for VP ellipsis and null objects in BP.

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If null objects are DP ellipsis licensed by the lexical V in AspInn, and null objects are only possible when the antecedent is [-animate], the impossibility of certain null objects has to be linked to the fact that DP ellipsis is not licensed. The question is thus: why are animates such that they cannot be licensed under ellipsis? We propose that the answer resides in i) the syntactic composition strategies for categories like 'animacy', and ii) the position of such objects.

More specifically, we connect the syntactic realization of animacy to the presence of a [+Person] feature in the composition of DPs. Following Cyrino (2016), [±Person] features are inherent to different nominals, as seen in Table 4 below (see also Richards 2008, 2015):

Table 4

Reverberations of the 'Person' feature in syntax

1st/ 2nd person	[+Person]
3rd person animate	[–Person]
3rd person inanimate	'Person-less'

Animacy in syntax can be implemented as the result of the movement of a [+Person] or [–Person] DP to the specifier of functional category (call it $F_{[Person]}$) that has an uninterpretable ([uPerson]), probably to value Case (see also Ordoñez and Roca forthcoming). DPs that are [–animate] (ie, those that are Person-less) and non-specific do not move out of VP, since they are φ-incomplete, and they value Case in-situ (by the φ-incomplete probe v, as in Rodriguez-Mondoñedo 2007). The comparison with (non-specific) inanimates which require null objects, as in (4a) indicates that the animacy projection ($F_{[Person]}$) must be above AspInn, as otherwise DP ellipsis would be licensed (and animates would also be subject to ellipsis, contrary to fact). However, the question must be made more precise – what is the exact licensig site?

A relevant test would be one which could probe the location of such objects with respect to external arguments (which in BP are in [Spec, vP]). López (2012) uses precisely this type of diagnostic to motivate the conclusion that DOM must be in a position above V but below vP. As seen in Spanish example (20), the differential object can't scope over EA.

(20) [Context: So, what happened yesterday?]

a) Ayer no atacó su_{*i} propio padre a $ningún_i$ niño. *Spanish*
yesterday NEG attacked his own father DOM no boy.

b) $[_v$ v $[_{\alpha P}$ DO.DOM α $[_V$ V <DO>]]]

In BP, however, animate DPs appear to be higher than the EA. The animate object *nenhum filho* 'no child', obligatorily resumed by a full pronoun *eles* 'them' in example (21) can bind the anaphor *o proprio pai deles* 'their own father' in the external argument.

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(21) Ontem o (proprio) pai deles$_i$ não atacou nenhum filho$_i$
yesterday the own father their NEG attacked no boy
e além disso a mãe elogiou eles. *BP*
and besides of-that the mother praised them
'Yesterday their own father attacked the children and their mother didn't help them.'

If animates are licensed in a position above AspInn, what about specific inanimates? In examples like (4a) BP specific inanimates may also be backtracked by overt pronouns. As there is no ellipsis, they too must be licensed in a position above AspInn. Preliminarily, that position cannot be the specifier of $F_{[Person]}$, as we are assuming that only objects which contain a person feature can appear there[29].

But if specific animates are interpreted in a position above EA in BP, López's (2012) assumption is weakened. What BP shows instead is that differential objects cannot be incorporated under VP; beyond that, there is variation in their syntactic position. These findings are compatible with Cornilescu's (2000) or Chung and Ladusaw's (2003) model where marked objects signal just the absence of Restrict/Incorporation and not a specific position above VP. The binding test illustrated above also seems to go through in Romanian, similarly to BP, further strengthening this conclusion. In (22) we contrast a DOM animate with a non-DOM (specific) indefinite animate (22b) and a non-DOM definite animate (22c). DOM (22a) shows the same binding facts as in BP, indicating that it might be interpreted above EA.

(22) a. Tatăl lui/său$_i$ (îl) laudă pe (un) copil$_i$.
father.the M.SG his (CLT.3.SG.M.ACC) commends DOM (a.M.SG) child
'His own father commends a child.'

b. Tatăl lui/său$_{*i}$ laudă un (anume) copil$_i$.
father.the.M.SG his commends a (specific) child
'His father commends a child.'

c. Tatăl lui/său$_{*i}$ laudă copilul$_i$.
father.the.M.SG his commends child.the
'His father commends the child.'

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this short paper we have put to test Schwenter's (2006) hypothesis that the Brazilian Portuguese null object/overt pronominal contrast in anaphoric contexts illustrates a reflex of the differential object marking phenomenon across Romance. We have used more formal diagnostics which appear to support this claim. Another

[29] Unless specificity can be structurally decomposed into a *person* feature (among other features). But this is in a sense harder to implement in our particular case, as specific inanimates will end up having both a [person] feature (due to their specificity) and a [personless] feature (the latter due to their being inanimate). A more refined discussion of the types of specificity is needed, but cannot be included in this short paper for lack of space.

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finding we have discussed refers to the syntactic position of differentially marked objects (building on López 2012); we have shown that in Brazilian Portuguese overt pronominals can track categories which take scope over the external argument; thus if the overt pronoun in Brazilian Portuguese can be independently unified with prepositional DOM, it follows that the interpretation of differential objects is not only restricted to an intermediate position between VP and *v*P.

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