QUANTIFIER-VARIABLE RELATIONS IN ROMANIAN PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

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Abstract. This paper explores the syntactic and semantic properties of objects of prepositions in Romanian. What is peculiar about these objects is the fact that they cannot be headed by overt definite determiners, unless they are modified. I will propose that this restriction can be accounted for under the following assumptions: (i) overt definite Ds are quantificational and as such they must raise at LF; (ii) bare objects of prepositions are DPs headed by a null determiner; (iii) the null D does not undergo raising at LF; (iv) Romanian prepositions are inherently definite and as such they have a blocking effect on the raising of the overt definite D at LF. However, prepositions do not interfere with covert definite Ds, which do not raise, and modifiers have a remedial effect by virtue of the fact that they introduce a situation variable.

1. The facts

Romanian prepositions (Ps) have a peculiar selectional property: unless they are modified, DPs with an overt definite D cannot be taken as an object by Romanian Ps[1].

(1) a. Am văzut o pisică pe **acoperiş**. (Romanian)
have-I seen a cat on roof.
'I saw a cat on the roof.'
b. *Am văzut o pisică pe **acoperiş-ul**.
have-I seen a cat on roof-the.
c. Am văzut o pisică pe **acoperişul de acolo**.
have-I seen a cat on roof-the of there.
'I saw a cat on the roof over there.'

This restriction does not apply to other Ds, but only to the definite one, as shown in (2):

(2) a. pe **două/ multe** acoperişuri (Romanian)
on two/ many roofs
b. pe **acest** acoperis
on this roof

This shows that Romanian prepositions single out the overt definite D, since the latter is the only one that they are incompatible with.[2]

[1] There is one exception to this: the preposition *cu*/'with', which can be followed by a definite object. I don't quite know how to account for this exception. I will restrict myself to noticing that under the view advocated here, that definiteness is a feature of lexical items, and so this exception is not problematic in principle. Since lexical items are the locus of idiosyncratic features, one expects variation among various lexical instantiations of the same category.

[2] The notion of a definite DP includes, apart from DPs headed by the definite determiner, DPs with a demonstrative, proper names, or personal pronouns. DPs headed by a definite D form a natural class both semantically and syntactically. Syntactically, as pointed out by Halefom (1991) and Giusti (1992), the definite article heads the highest DP projection, to the exclusion of all the other determiners and quantifiers. Semantically, Löbner (1985) proposes a diagnostic he terms 'consistency', that separates true definites from demonstratives. In contrast with demonstratives, NPs preceded by the definite determiner *the* in English yield only a contradictory reading when a predicate and its negation are applied to it.

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2. Analysis

I will start by splitting the problem into two questions: (i) first, why are overt definite Ds incompatible with prepositions in Romanian, and (ii) second, what is it about modifiers that redeems the structure.

2.1 Romanian prepositions and overt definite Ds

To answer the first question, I will assume without any further discussion that definite DPs headed by overt Ds are quantificational (see Isac 2006 and references therein) and I will propose that Romanian prepositions are definite in the same way as overt definite Ds are. The immediate consequence is that prepositions will induce a minimality effect on overt definite Ds that must raise at LF. This explains why (1b) is ungrammatical: the DP headed by the overt definite D must raise at LF, but since the P has quantificational features of the same nature, the raising of the definite D is blocked and this results in ungrammaticality. In the discussion that follows I will refer to the quantificational feature of definite Ds and of Romanian Ps as [+def].

The obvious question now is how come (1a) is grammatical? Notice that the interpretation of the bare object of preposition can be definite[3]. Given their argument status, their interpretation as definite objects, and an assumed isomorphism between syntax and semantics, I will take such 'bare' objects of prepositions to be syntactically DPs (as opposed to NPs). The prediction of the proposal above is that such bare objects of Ps should be non-quantificational. If they had been quantificational, we would expect the P to have the same blocking effect as it has with overt definite Ds.

In what follows, I will show that such objects can be shown on independent grounds to be non-quantificational. The approach I will take is to test whether definite DPs headed by null Ds have properties that cluster together with quantifier raising (QR), namely island constraints, WeakCrossOver effects, and scope ambiguities.

2.1.1 Bare objects of P: Extraction out of islands

Definite bare objects of Ps in Romanian appear to be indifferent to islands. The examples in (3) show that the definite bare object of a P has no problem taking wide scope over the whole sentence.

(3) a. Cunosc [trei jucători care au fost dați afară din **echipă**].
know-I three players who have been kicked out of team.
'I know three players who have been kicked off of the team'.
[there is a team]$_1$[three students]$_2$[I know e_2 who have been kicked off of e_1]

b. Mulți s-au supărat [(pentru) că Petre a uitat de **aniversare**].
many got upset because Petre has forgotten of anniversary.
'Many people got upset because Petre forgot about the anniversary'.
[there is an anniversary]$_1$ [many got upset [because Peter talked about e_1]]

(i) #The boy is sleeping and the boy is not sleeping (Löbner 1985)
That boy is sleeping and that boy is not sleeping

[3] We are leaving out other possible interpretations. According to Longobardi (1994), (2001), bare nouns can also have an existential and a generic reading. However, under none of these interpretations can the bare noun be quantificational, so such cases are uninteresting for us.

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(3) thus shows that a QR analysis for bare objects of prepositions in Romanian cannot be maintained. The same kind of conclusion is corroborated by other types of evidence, that involves WCO and clitic doubling, as discussed below.

2.1.2 Bare objects of P: Weak Cross Over (WCO)

An additional argument that bare objects of Ps under their definite interpretation do not undergo raising at LF is that these objects do not give rise to WCO violations.

(4) Colegul ei_i s-a îndrăgostit de $[fată]_i$ (Romanian)
colleague her SE-has fallen-in-love of girl.
??'Her colleague has fallen in love with the girl'. (?? in English, OK in Romanian)

Unlike quantificational XPs, the nominal following the preposition in (4) does not move at LF, does not leave a variable behind, and thus does not induce any WCO violation.

2.1.3 Bare objects of P: clitic doubling

A third argument that bare objects of Ps in Romanian do not undergo QR is that they pattern with proper names, rather than with quantified expressions as far as clitic doubling goes. Clitic doubled direct objects must always be preceded by the preposition *pe/*'on' in Romanian and clitic doubling is grammatical only with certain types of objects. In particular, clitic doubling is incompatible with quantificational objects and is obligatory with referential objects, like proper names. This is shown in (5).

(5) a. (*L_i-)au acceptat pe $oricine_{i/}$ $cineva_i$ la facultate.
him-have.3.pl. accepted PE anybody/ somebody at University
'They accepted everybody in the University'.
b. *(L_i-)au acceptat pe $Petre_i$ la facultate.
him-have.1.sg accepted PE Petre at University.
'They accepted Petre in the University'.

In contrast with quantified objects - (5a), and similar to proper names -(5b), (6) shows that if the preposition *pe* takes a bare object, the respective object can, and in fact, must, be clitic doubled.

(6) *(L_i-)au acceptat pe $bãiat_i$ la facultate.
him-have.3.pl accepted PE boy at university.
'They accepted the boy in the university'.

2.1.4 Bare objects of P: scope ambiguities

A fourth way to test whether definite DPs headed by null Ds have quantificational properties is to check whether they interact scopally with other quantified expressions present in the same clause. If a sentence containing both the definite DP headed by a null D and another quantified expression is ambiguous and if the two interpretations are expressible in terms of the relative scope of the two relevant expressions, then this would be an indication that both the definite DP headed by the null D and the other quantified expression undergo raising at LF. If no interaction is observed, one might conclude that the definite DP headed by null D does not raise at LF and therefore that it does not have quantificational properties.

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The sentence in (7) contains a definite DP headed by a null D (i.e. *cos*/'basket') and a quantified expression (*toti copiii*/'all the kids'), and has two interpretations, as indicated in (7a,b).

(7) Toți copiii au învățat să arunce la **coș** din alergare.
all kids-the have learned to shoot at basket from running.
'All the kids have learned how to shoot at the basket while running (do a layup)'.
a. for each kid, there is a possibly different basket
∀x, kid (x), ∃y, basket (y) [x has learned to shoot at y]
b. there is a certain basket, the same for all the kids
∃y, basket (y),∀x, kid (x) [x has learned to shoot at y]

This is obviously problematic, since it seems to indicate that definite DPs headed by null Ds raise at LF, and this conclusion conflicts with the conclusions drawn above on the basis of island effects, WCO, and clitic doubling.

In order to solve this problem, I will propose that the scopal behavior of DPs headed by silent definite Ds is only apparently ambiguous, and that the apparent ambiguity is due to the fact that the bare noun could in principle have two types of null determiners: either a definite one, or an indefinite one. The two interpretations in (7) could thus correspond to the two types of null Ds and not to two possible interpretations of one and the same null D.

To sum up this section, I will conclude that bare objects of prepositions are non-quantificational, and as such they do not get interfered with by the [+def] feature of the P.

2.2 Modified objects

Let us now see how the assumption that Romanian Ps have a [+def] feature accounts for the fact that the definite D can be overt if the object of the P is modified, as in (1c). The approach that I will support in this paper starts from the observation that the contrast between (1b) and (1c) is not singular. As noted by Dayal (2004), there are several other cases, such as English 'any' (cf. also Dayal 1995, 1998), Italian bare plurals in subject and object position, or plural definites with a generic interpretation in English, in which an unavailable reading for a noun phrase is made available by the addition of a modifier. Dayal argues that all these cases are not instances of formal licensing since the licensee takes scope over the licensor, rather than the other way round. Rather, the 'licensing' properties of the modifier stem from the interaction between the semantics of modification, the host NP, and other elements in the structure.

I will adopt the same general idea in order to account for (1c). In particular, I propose that overt definite Ds are existential quantifiers that must bind two types of variables: an individual variable, and a situation variable.[4] I use the term 'situation' to mean simply a state of affairs, with a certain spatio-temporal specification. I thus want to remain neutral with respect to such notions as agentivity or to the distinction between states and non-states. Having definite Ds range over both individuals and situations amounts to saying that the function of a definite description is to supply a uniquely identifying specification of a certain individual from two points of view: it is the unique individual that has the property expressed by the nominal complement of D, and that at the same time satisfies the condition expressed by a certain situation, with a certain spatio-temporal profile. This view is reminiscent of

[4] Allowing situation variables implies of course taking situations as basic entities in the domain of discourse, along with individuals. This proposal is similar to what Dayal (1995, 1998) proposes for English 'any', and Heim 1990 for 'every' phrases.

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Russell's (1905) analysis of definite descriptions. In Russell's view, a logically valid analysis of definite descriptions can be given only in the context of the full sentences in which they occur. Thus, a sentence like (8a) is analyzed as (8b,c).

(8) a. The dog stole a piece of chicken.
b. $\exists$x (dog (x) &
$\forall$y (dog (y) $\rightarrow$ y=x) &
stole (x, a piece of chicken)
c. there is an individual x which satisfies the condition of being a dog, and any y satisfying this condition is identical with this individual (so that x is the only individual satisfying this condition), and this individual satisfies the condition of having stolen a piece of chicken.

Let us now see how this proposal can be tied up with the modified objects of P. I will start with the simple case of non-modified definite DPs. In these cases, the definite D scopes over the individual variable supplied by the NP complement to D in the overt syntax, but not over any situation variable. Assuming that what motivates QR at LF is the need for a quantifier to acquire scope over its variable, and assuming that the definite D needs to scope over a situation variable, definite DPs must raise at LF in these cases in order to get scope over the situation variable introduced by the verbal predicate. On the other hand, if the definite DP contains a relative clause, as in (1c), the definite D doesn't need to raise at LF, since it scopes over both an individual variable and a situation variable in the overt syntax. The noun supplies the individual variable, and the relative clause modifying the noun provides the situation variable. Notice that this does not imply that definite DPs that introduce a spatio-temporal variable are not quantificational. For an XP to be quantificational is for that XP to have a quantifier feature. It is true that the presence of a quantifier feature in an XP usually triggers QR at LF. However, if the variable is somehow already provided within the XP, then no QR needs to apply at LF, even though the XP continues to have a quantifier feature and thus to be quantificational. Thus, all definite Ds are quantificational. What can vary is the size of the domain of quantification: the whole sentence or just the DP.

2.2.1 Predictions

There are several predictions that such an analysis makes.

First, we expect to see the same kind of contrast in other environments which are criterial for QR, namely WCO and clitic doubling. The discussion below shows that this expectation is fulfilled. As shown in (9), (10) unmodified definite DPs headed by an overt D give rise to WCO violations and cannot be clitic doubled in Romanian.

(9) *Colegul ei$_i$ s-a îndrăgostit de [**fata**]$_i$ (Romanian)
colleague her SE-has fallen-in-love of girl-the.
??'Her colleague has fallen in love with the girl'.

(10) *L$_i$-au acceptat pe [**băiatul**]$_i$ la facultate. (Romanian)
him-have.3.pl accepted PE boy-the at University.
'They accepted the boy in the University'.

Both of these facts can be accounted for by an analysis under which definites headed by overt Ds must raise at LF and leave a variable behind. In both of these contexts a pronoun ends up coindexed with a variable that it c-commands, which is an illicit configuration. If our

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analysis of overt definite Ds as quantifiers that need to bind two types of variables is correct, and if our analysis of modifiers as XPs that can introduce situation variables is also on the right track, we expect that DPs with relevant modifiers should behave differently from non-modified ones in both WCO and clitic doubling contexts. If the modifier supplies the situation variable within the DP, there is no need for the DP to raise at LF and the prediction is that no WCO violation will occur and that clitic doubling should be possible. Both of these predictions are borne out, as illustrated in (11) and (12).

(11) Colegul ei_i s-a îndrăgostit de [**fata de peste drum**]$_i$ (Romanian)
colleague her SE-has fallen-in-love of girl-the of over street.
??'Her colleague has fallen in love with the girl across the street'.

(12) L_i-au acceptat pe [**băiatul de peste drum**]$_i$ la facultate.
him-have.3.pl. accepted PE boy-the of over street at University
'They accepted the boy across the street in the University'.

Second, our analysis predicts that DPs that contain N modifiers that are not c-commanded by the definite D will still have to raise, even if the modifier introduces a situation variable. This is because the definite D will not have scope over the situation variable in the overt syntax and so it will have to raise at LF to `see' the situation variable. This prediction is supported by the contrast in (13) below.

(13) a. Her_i mother loves [the girl who made all of us miserable]$_i$.
b. ??Her_i mother loves [the girl]$_i$, who made all of us miserable.

Under the assumption that restrictive relative clauses modify NPs, whereas appositive relative clauses modify DPs, restrictives, but not appositives will be in the c-command domain of the definite D. Hence, the situation variable introduced by a restrictive relative clause will be in the scope of the definite D in the overt syntax, and the definite D won't raise at LF and no WCO effects arise. This is shown in (13a). In contrast, the situation variable introduced by an appositive relative clause is not in the scope of the definite D in the syntax and the definite D must raise at LF in order to acquire scope over this variable. Raising of the definite DP at LF creates WCO, as confirmed by (13b).

Third, we predict that N modifiers that do not introduce a situation variable will not allow definite Ds to stay *in situ* at LF and in these cases the definite DP will be expected to raise and potentially induce WCO effects. The contrast in (14a, b) is revealing in this sense. The grammaticality of (14b) depends on the possibility of having a criminal who is despised in a particular time frame and place. This spatio-temporal interpretation is not available with an adjectival modifier like 'despicable' in (14a), but becomes available if the same property is expressed with a relative clause, as in (14b). Assuming that clauses always introduce a situation variable, under the guise of the event expressed by the verbal predicate, the contrast between (14a) and (14b) follows[5].

[5] Dayal (1995, 1998) proposes that the distinction betweeen modifiers that introduce a situation variable and those that don't is matched by a syntactic difference between postnominal and prenominal modifiers, respectively. Moreover, since postnominal modifiers are phrasal according to Sadler and Arnold (1994), only phrasal modifiers are assumed to introduce an independent spatio-temporal variable. However, the following examples show that there is no necesssary correlation between the syntactic position (pre- or post-nominal) of a modifier, its phrasal nature and its ability to introduce a situation variable.
(i) a. His mother hates the self-appointed judge.
b. His mother loves the so-called/alleged criminal.

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(14) a. ??His mother loves the despicable criminal.
b. His mother loves the criminal who most of us despise.
c. His mother loves the despicable criminal over there/ in the corner.

Notice that (14a) improves if a PP modifier is added, as in (14c). This is because the PP in (14c) adds a spatial variable that the definite D can quantify over and thus the DP is not forced to raise at LF.

The same kind of prediction is confirmed for objects of Ps in Romanian: modifiers that do not introduce a situation variable are expected to leave the ungrammaticality of an example like (15a) unchanged. (15b) confirms this expectation.

(15) a. *Nimeni n-a răspuns la întrebarea.
nobody not-has answered to question-the
'Nobody has answered the question.'
b. *Nimeni n-a răspuns la simpla întrebare.
nobody not-has answered to simple-the question
'Nobody has answered the simple/mere question.'

3. More on modifiers and situation variables

One may wonder whether the ability to introduce a situation variable is really the deciding factor for the (un)grammaticality of (15). The more so as the landscape of adjectives in Romanian is quite complex. I will show below that none of the properties of Romanian adjectives can explain the facts above.

Romanian adjectives can occur either prenominally or postnominally. As pointed out by Cornilescu (2004), there is a correlation between the syntactic position and the semantic interpretation of the adjective in the sense that the two positions are assumed to belong to different semantic types: prenominal adjectives are of type <<e,t>, <e,t>>, while postnominal adjectives denote sets of type <e,t>, and are intersective.

(16) a. o singură fată b. o fată singură
an only girl a girl lonely
'only one girl' 'a lonely girl'

Embedding such modified nouns as objects of prepositions shows that prenominal adjectives yield an ungrammatical result, in contrast to postnominal ones.

(17) a. *Ne făceam griji pentru singura fată.
us made worries for only-the child
?'We were worrying for the only child'

In (i), the definite DPs contain a prenominal, non-phrasal modifier, and yet they do not induce a WCO effect. This shows that these modifiers are able to introduce a spatio-temporal variable, even if they are prenominal and non-phrasal.

Semantically, it seems that certain classes of modifiers, such as predicative modifiers, or deverbal modifiers, or stage-level modifiers, are more likely to introduce a situation variable. However, none of these distinctions robustly corresponds to the distinction between modifiers that introduce a situation variable and those that do not. This can be seen, for example, in (ib), where the modifiers are non-predicative, and yet they do allow the definite DP to stay in situ.

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b. Ne făceam griji pentru fata singură.
us made worries for child-the alone
'We were worrying for the lonely child'

It is tempting to think that the relevant criterion for the acceptability of such modified objects of Ps is whether the respective adjective is postnominal or not.However, (18), which contains a prenominal modifier, is grammatical.

(18) N-am răspuns la aşa-zisa invitaţie.
not-have-I answered to so-called-the invitation
'I haven't answered to the so-called invitation'.

A comparison between (18) and (17) shows that the distinction between predicative and non-predicative adjectives is also irrelevant for the acceptability of sentences such as (17b), since both (17b) and (18) are grammatical, in spite of the fact that (17b) contains a predicative adjective and (18) a non predicative one. The predicative nature of the adjective in (17b) is supported by the grammaticality of (19a), while the non-predicative nature of the adjective in (18) is supported by the ungrammaticality of (19b).

(19) a. Fata e singură.
girl-the is alone
'The girl is alone'.

b. *Invitaţia e aşa-zisă.
invitation-the is so-called
*`The invitation is so-called'.

Finally, let us consider the distinction between stage level and individual level adjectives.

The contrast below seems to show that individual level adjectives do not license the overt definite D in the object of the P.

(20) a. ??M-am îndreptat către tânărul beţiv/parşiv/inteligent.
myself-have-I directed towards young-the drunkard/ shrewd/ intelligent
'I went towards the young drunkard/shrewd young man/ intelligent young man'

b. M-am îndreptat către tânărul furios/ fericit.
myself-have-I directed towards young-the furious/ happy
'I went towards the furious/ happy young man'.

However, in a generic context, where stages become irrelevant, objects of Ps modified by individual level adjectives become acceptable.

(21) Să te ferească ăl de sus de omul beţiv/ parşiv.
may you protect that of above of man-the drunkard/ shrewd
'May God protect you from drunkards/ shrewd people.'

In a generic context, it is much easier to partition the set of men into men who have the property of being drunkards and men that don't have this property. What seems to play a role is the availability of a contrasting set. (21) above says that God should protect you from men who are drunkards/ shrewd, as opposed to men who are not. In fact, under a contrastive setting, even (20a) above becomes acceptable.

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(22) Context: [Am auzit fără să vreau conversația dintre doi tineri.
I overheard a conversation between two young men.
Unul părea a fi deosebit de inteligent.]
One of them seemed particularly intelligent.
M-am îndreptat către tânărul inteligent şi ...
myself-have-I directed towards young-the intelligent and ...

Thus, the stage/individual level distinction is not crucial for determining whether a modifier can license the overt definite D or not.

The contrast that we proposed above, between modifiers that do and modifiers that don't introduce situation variables, cuts across all the distinctions discussed above. Notice for instance, that (17a) improves with the addition of a modifier that introduces a situation variable, as in (23).

(23) Ne făceam griji pentru singura fată care rămăsese acolo.
to-us made worries for only-the girl who had remained there
'We were worrying for the only girl who had remained there'

Similarly, individual level adjectives acquire the ability to license the overt definite D if they are introduced by '*cel*'. As proposed by Cornilescu 2004, '*cel*' is a predicative head that forces the projection of a small clause structure and a clausal structure always introduces a situation variable.[6]

(24) a. ??M-am îndreptat către tânărul beţiv/parşiv/inteligent.
myself-have-I directed towards young-the drunkard/ shrewd/ intelligent
'I went towards the young drunkard/shrewd young man/ intelligent young man'
b. M-am îndreptat către tânărul cel beţiv/parşiv/inteligent.
myself-have-I directed towards young-the CEL drunkard/ shrewd/ intelligent
'I went towards the young drunkard/shrewd young man/ intelligent young man'

I will conclude that objects of Ps in Romanian cannot be overtly definite unless they are modified by a modifier that introduces a situation variable. An overt definite D is a quantifier that ranges over two types of variables: individual variables and situation variables. In the absence of a modifier, the overt definite D must raise at LF in order to acquire scope over a situation variable. Romanian Ps block this kind of movement because they have similar quantificational properties to definite Ds and thus they induce Relativized Minimality effects. In the presence of a modifier that introduces a situation variable, the definite D does not need to raise, since both variables that it needs to bind –the individual variable and the situation variable- are supplied within the DP.

Before concluding, I would like to discuss a seemingly problematic example.

[6]However, *cel* is not a reliable test for distinguishing the adjectives that can license an overt definite D, since there are adjectives that do not go with *cel* but that do introduce a situation variable.
(i) *N-am răspuns la invitația cea aşa-zisă.
not-have.1.sg answered to invitation-the CEL.sg.fem. so-called
'I didn't answer to the so-called invitation.'
(ii) N-am răspuns la aşa-zisa invitație.
not-have.1.sg answered to so-called-the invitation.
'I didn't answer to the so-called invitation.'

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(25) Am cumpărat cadouri pentru amândoi copiii/toți copiii.
have-I bought presents for both children-the/all children-the
'I've bought presents for both children/all the children'.

In (25), the object of the P bears an overt definite D, even though the DP contains no modifier that could supply a situation variable for the overt definite D to bind. Normally, the definite D will need to raise to acquire scope over a situation variable. However, the P [+def] feature on the P should block this raising, if our analysis is correct. There are two crucial observations here. First, the overt definite is embedded within another quantifier, '*amândoi*'/ both or '*toți*'/all. As proposed by Giusti (1992, 2002), Cardinaletti and Giusti (1990), Zamparelli (1995), and others, strong quantifiers like *all* or *both* head a projection which is outside the DP, as in (26) below.

(26) [$_{QP}$ all [$_{DP}$ the [$_{NP}$ children
[$_{QP}$ toti [$_{DP}$ copii-i [$_{NP}$ ~~copii~~

Second, Romanian prepositions do not block the raising of other quantifier features other than [+def]. This is confirmed by (27) below, which shows that Romanian prepositions can take bare quantifiers as complements.

(27) la cineva/nimeni (Romanian)
at somebody/ nobody
cu cineva/nimeni
with somebody/ nobody

I will thus propose that definite DP in (25) can dodge the blocking effect of the P by raising as part of the QP headed by '*amândoi*'/ both or '*toti*'/all. Questions remain as to how the definite D can scope over the situation variable. Sequences of two quantifiers embedded under each other are particularly challenging (see Dowty 1986 and Winter 2001 for a discussion of the collective and distributive readings of sequences such as 'all the students'). One possibility could be that the definite DP raises out of the raised QP and acquires scope in the usual fashion. Another possibility could be that only the definite D raises and undergoes absorption with *toți*/ 'all' or *amândoi/ 'both'*, over a shared restrictor and nuclear scope. Alternatively, one could claim that definite DPs headed by overt definite Ds undergo type shifting when embedded under another quantifier in order to match the semantic selectional properties of the higher quantifier. Similar solutions have been proposed for sequences such as 'the two students', by Partee (1987) and Winter (1997), among others. Under this hypothesis, definite DPs would no longer be quantificational when embedded under another Q. I will not take a stand in this paper and will leave this for further research. What matters for us is that (25) is not necessarily a counterexample to the claim that Ps in Romanian have a [+def] feature, since the definite is embedded in these examples under another quantifier, and since Ps do not interfere with other quantifiers apart from the definite D. (25) is however potentially problematic for the view that overt definite Ds are always quantificational. Depending on what type of analysis is found for such sequences, one might have to weaken this claim so as to allow definite DPs headed by overt Ds to type shift in these contexts.

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4. Conclusions

In this paper I proposed that the difference between overt and covert (definite) Ds does not reduce to a PF difference, but to a difference in morpho-syntactic features and implicitly to a semantic difference as well. More specifically, I argued that the two differ in the presence or absence of a quantificational feature. Null definite Ds were shown to lack this feature.

I also identified and analyzed an additional factor that influences the syntax and semantics of definite DPs, namely modification. Definite DPs headed by overt Ds can occur as objects of prepositions in Romanian only if they are modified, whereas definite DPs headed by covert Ds can always be objects of prepositions, regardless of whether they are modified or not. The same contrast can be observed in other contexts such as WCO and clitic doubling environments. In order to account for this contrast I proposed that definite Ds are quantificational in a double sense: they must bind not only an individual variable but also a situation variable. Given that some modifiers introduce situation variables (as proposed by Dayal 2004), the expectation is that DPs modified by such modifiers should behave differently. Modified definite DPs supply both types of variables inside the DP and thus these DPs do not need to raise at LF. Hence, no minimality effects are triggered when such DPs are objects of prepositions in Romanian, clitic doubling is possible and no WCO violation occurs.

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