

## The internal structure of the vocative phrase

Current formalizations of the pragmatics-syntax interface promote the idea that speech acts (e.g., injunctions) are intrinsically verb-like and project their own predicative domain that reflects the discourse set-up (i.e., identifying speaker, addressee and subject matter); this domain is independent of the argument structure of the verb in the utterance (Speas & Tenny 2003 a.o.). Within such pragmatic predication, vocatives are seen as arguments of the speech acts, being licensed in the same way indirect objects (IO) are licensed within the argument structure of the verb (Haegeman 2010; Hill 2007, following analyses in Coene et al. 2005; Longobardi 1988, 1994; Moro 2003; Szabolcsi 1994).

This paper assumes the above account for how vocatives are inserted in the clause, and follows with this observation: It has been shown that IOs (unlike direct objects) need “linkers” to attach them to the argument structure (e.g., *to* in *I talked to him*). The questions we raise (and address) are: What are the “linkers” attaching vocatives to speech acts? Do such “linkers” affect the vocative noun phrase internally?

First, we identify the “linkers”, which are particles exclusively used for the identification of the addressee in a variety of languages (e.g., Bulgarian *-be*, Romanian *măi*, Umbundu *a-*; eg. *măi (Ioane)* ‘Particle Ion-Voc’ ). As for their properties, tests on word order and constituency show that these particles must dominate the vocative noun, are adjacent to it, may agree in gender and number with the noun, and attract the movement of the noun to their level. Semantically, their function is to identify the addressee and the relation between the speaker and the addressee (i.e., +/- familiar); syntactically, they allow the addressee noun to be interpreted in relation to the speech act. We call these particles Role markers, and show that they project to phrase level. Within a Role Phrase (RoleP), the vocative noun receives values for Case, specificity/reference, and familiarity degree. E.g., Umbundu *Pedro* is not interpreted as a vocative unless it has the prefix *a-* (*a-Pedro!*); if *Pedro* is a friend, the familiar Role for masculine may also occur (*epa a-Pedro!*); this is not possible if the address must be formal or if the noun is feminine (*a-Maria!* vs. *\*epa a-Maria!*). In sum, considering that noun phrases (NP) are included in Determiner Phrases (DP), the DP is read as a vocative only when it is licensed by a RoleP (i.e., RoleP>DP>NP). Cross- and intra-linguistically, Role is always present in the structure of vocatives, although it may be lexical or non-lexical (e.g. English).

Second, we look at the impact of Role on the internal organization of the DP. This impact concerns the way in which the syntax maps the features of Role and the features of the DP. On the basis of cross-linguistic data, we establish that Role maps [specificity] and [familiarity], in addition to D features (i.e., [definiteness] and [agreement] (number, gender, Case)); each feature may have a +/- setting. We argue that the range of syntactic operations that can cover all these feature combinations is limited to three: (i) D movement to Role; (ii) deletion of the DP field, and N movement to Role; (iii) rolled-up movement of NP/DP to RoleP. Although all three operations must be possible in any language, preference (= frequency) differs according to the type of definite article in the language. E.g., Romanian, where the definite article is enclitic on the noun, prefers D to Role; English, where the definite article precedes the noun, prefers N to Role or the rolled-up option. This syntactic analysis accounts for restrictions within vocative phrases w.r.t. to adjectival modifiers to nouns, productivity of adjective nominalization, and the fact prepositional phrases used as vocatives are unaffected by RoleP.