

Review by Joost Zwarts

Does the paper make a novel contribution to the understanding of the topic under investigation? [max 250 words]*

Yes, the paper presents novel data from two Romance varieties and argues that they present a particular type of 'non-maximal definites': not 'short weak definites' (about which quite a lot has been written), but 'representative object interpretation definites' (which have received much less attention). The paper also documents a range of properties about these Romance ROI-definites (previously unknown) that contribute in an important way to our knowledge of definiteness.

Is the empirical content of the paper sound (i.e. the data are collected and presented properly, the experiments are well designed, the statistics is well done, the examples contain no spelling mistakes, etc)? [max 400 words]*

The paper involves languages and methods that I am not thoroughly familiar with. But the linguistic data are presented carefully, the corpus method is explained well, the statistics is presented in an explicit way. I have comments about a few aspects that are relatively minor:

- The Old Spanish recipe data would have been even more convincing if it could be ruled out that the special definites refer anaphorically to ingredients specified earlier in the recipe.
- Some symbols ended up as small boxes in the Francoprovençal data.
- An example of the Dutch ROI bare plural would have been welcome.

Is the argument coherent and sound, with no major flaws and/or shortcomings, within the context of the theoretical assumptions made by the author? [max 500 words]*

Yes, in general the message of the paper is unfolded in a good way.

The combination of two very different data sets (in terms of language and methodology) is a strength of the paper (because we get evidence for the same thing from two directions), but it also makes the argumentation slightly vulnerable. 3.1 and 3.2 approach the topic quite differently. Section 3.1 explicitly argues that the relevant Old Spanish definites are of the ROI type and not the SWD type, which nicely fits with the theoretical context that precedes. Section 3.2 does not approach the data in that way at all. This reduces the coherence of the argumentation.

Another remark is that the paper brings up quite a lot of properties of definites without ever going into them very deeply. This is ok for the general argument of the paper, but it also creates a danger of superficiality. One particular instance of this is the use of the notion 'habitual' (with quotes in the text) for certain sentential contexts in which a definite can occur. It is never really explained what this means, how it relates to cooking contexts, to 'non-perfective' contexts. Another example is the notion 'expert talk' (also with quotes in the text) involving certain definites. At points a bit more explanation would have helped to make the argument stronger.

Are there any relevant scholarly works that have been overlooked by the author? If the answer is YES, please provide the full references.*

As far as the general theoretical side is concerned, my answer is NO. I can not judge this for the Romance literature about definites or the varieties involved.

Have you seen this paper, its content, the proposed analysis, or the conclusions published in other venues? [If your answer is YES, please add the relevant reference.]*

No, I haven't

If you accept the paper with minor revisions, please list the revisions you would advice (you are not required to proofread the paper) [max 500 words]

I have already mentioned some points: explain 'habitual', 'expert talk' better, wrong symbols in some examples, example of Dutch ROI bare plural, more information about the structure of the recipes, some changes in the text to increase the way 3.1 and 3.2 cohere with each other.

Also: explain the abbreviations in the tables of Section 3.2.