

Types of Romanian vocatives and types of interpretation*

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Summary

- Romanian has **up to 4** different formal types of vocatives (+/- suffixal definite article, +/- vocative ending) [+/- **def** +/-**voc**]
- We investigate the correlations between these formal types and the main semantic types of vocatives: calls (divided into ‘selecting’, corresponding to Schaden’s (2010) identificational vocatives, and ‘non-selecting’), addresses, evaluatives
- Conclusions: a special structure, at the level of the VocP, must be assumed for
 - **identificational** vocatives (who select the [+**def** -**voc**] form) and
 - **evaluative** vocatives (who select the [+**def** +**voc**] form),
 - as opposed to non-selecting calls and addresses
- This provides support for treating the differences between various types of vocatives in terms of syntax and compositional semantics, rather than relegating them to discourse pragmatics

1. Vocatives in Romanian: morphological patterns

In Romanian, nouns functioning as vocatives can either lack a determiner or bear the suffixal definite article and may either show dedicated vocative endings or appear in the nominative-accusative form => up to 4 different forms:

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| (1) | a. băiat | [-def -voc] | <i>unmarked indefinite</i> |
| | boy | | |
| | b. băiet-e | [-def +voc] | <i>marked indefinite</i> |
| | boy-VOC | | |
| | c. băiat-u’ | [+def -voc] | <i>unmarked definite</i> |
| | boy-the | | |
| | d. băiat-ul-e | [+def +voc] | <i>marked definite</i> |
| | boy-the-VOC | | |

N.B. The so-called ‘nominative-accusative’ form, in (1)a and (1)b, should be considered a morphological default: it occurs on DP-internal items
- in contexts when the determiner carries the unambiguous genitive-dative (‘oblique’) morphemes and there is no case concord¹:

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------|---------|----------|----------|
| (2) | a. acest-Ø | băiat-Ø | acești-i | băieți-i |
| | this-MS | boy-MS | this-MP | boy-MP |

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¹ Case concord in Romanian is very impoverished: nouns and adjectives have case concord for the oblique only in the FS and use an ambiguous marking, identical to the plural; this marking only occurs when there is a determiner carrying the unambiguous oblique marking:

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| (i) | această fată; | (ii) acest-ei fet-e | (iii) acest-e/acest-or fet-e |
| | this-FS girl-FS | this-FS.OBL girl-e | this-FPL/-OBL girl-FPL |

The unambiguous oblique morpheme can be iterated only in instances of co-occurrences of certain functional items, as in (iv) (see Barbu 2009, Giurgea 2024), e.g. *mult-or alt-or-a* ‘to/of many others’.

On the co-occurrence of vocative endings, which is very restricted, see Croitor & Hill (2013).

b. *acest-ui băiat-Ø* *acest-or băieṭ-i*
 this-MS.OBL boy-MS this-MP.OBL boy-MP
 ‘to/of this boy’ ‘to/of these boys’.

- when there is a prepositional case marker (on the alternation between inflectional and prepositional case marking in Romanian, see Cornilescu 2001, 2003, Mardale 2007, Dobrovie-Sorin et al. 2013, Pană Dindelegan 2013: 269–270):

- (3) a. *vânzarea {alcool-ul-ui / de alcool-Ø}*
 selling-the alcohol-the.MS-MS.OBL of alcohol-MS
 ‘the selling of alcohol’
 b. *dat {băieṭ-i-l-or / la trei băieṭ-i}*
 given boy-MP-the-OBL.PL DAT three boy-MP

Not all nouns have all four forms:

- pl.: no [-def +voc] form; the only marked form contains the definiteness morpheme (this form is identical to the plural oblique morpheme):

- (4) *băieṭ-i-l-or*
 boy-MP-the-VOC

- f.sg.: there is a dedicated vocative ending *-o*; it is traditionally analyzed as part of the [-def] inflection (GLR 1963 I: 84)², but can also be analyzed as representing the [+def +voc] combination (Gaster 1891:CXIV). Evidence for the latter view, anticipating section 4: *-o* occurs in the evaluative type, where for the masculine only the [+def +voc] type is allowed:

- (5) a. *Măgar-ul-e!* / # *Măgar-e*
 donkey-the-VOC donkey-VOC
 ‘You swine!’
 b. *vac-o*
 cow-*o*
 ‘You cow!’

Moreover, *-o* cannot be repeated in case concord, unlike MS *-e*, and seems to be restricted to nouns (when it occurs)

- (6) a. *iubit-e* (*bunic-ul-e* / *bunic*)
 beloved-MS.VOC grandfather-the-VOC grandfather
 b. *bunic-o* / *iubito* (**bunic-o* /**bunică*)
 grandmother-*o* beloved-*o* grandmother-*o* / grandmother

- even among m.sg. nouns, some lack the [-def +voc] form: nouns with the stem ending in a stressed vowel, e.g. *ero-u* ‘hero’, as well as many nouns with monosyllabic stems

2. Main types of vocative uses

- **Calls vs. addresses** (Zwicky 1974):

- calls: the vocative is used to establish the addressee

- (7) [context: no previous conversation, out-of-the-blue] (call) (Zwicky 1974:787)
 Hey **lady**, you dropped your piano

- addresses: the vocative is already established; the vocative can be used “to maintain

² Historically, it is, indeed, not definite. It was borrowed from Slavic.

or emphasize the contact between speaker and addressee” (Zwicky 1974), or to describe the relationship between speaker and addressee (Portner 2008)

(8) I'm afraid, **sir**, that my coyote is nibbling on your leg. (address)

- **Schaden** (2010):

- identificational: the vocative is used to single out an addressee from a bigger group of potential addressees

(9) [context: potential addressees = {George, Harriet, Gregory, Margaret}]
George, could you pass me the salt, please?

- activational: the vocative is used to keep the addressee active

(10) [context: in the middle of a conversation between the little Red Riding Hood and the wolf disguised as her grandmother]
Grandma, what a big nose you have

- predicational: the vocative assigns a property to the addressee:

(11) **Dear friends**, let us go inside!

Our Romanian data supports the relevance of the identificational type => 2 type of calls:

- *selecting calls*, where the intended addressee is singled out in a group of several potential addressees: only the [+def] type is allowed:

(12) [context: a teacher in front of a class, no specific student as addressee]

a. Băiatul din prima bancă, a început ora!
boy-the from first-the bench has started class-the
'The boy in the first row – the class has started!'

b. # Băiatule/ # Băiete/ # Băiat din prima bancă, a început ora!
boy-the.VOC/boy.VOC/boy from first-the bench has started class-the

- *non-selecting calls*: allow other types of vocatives:

(13) [out-of-the-blue, no previous conversation]

Băiatu' / Băiete, ți-a căzut ceva!
boy-the/ boy-VOC CL.2S.DAT-has fallen something
'(Hey) boy! You dropped something!'

- Among vocatives that are not used as calls, our Romanian data as well as data from other languages indicate that an important distinction is between evaluative and non-evaluative vocatives (more relevant syntactically than the distinction predicational vs. activational):

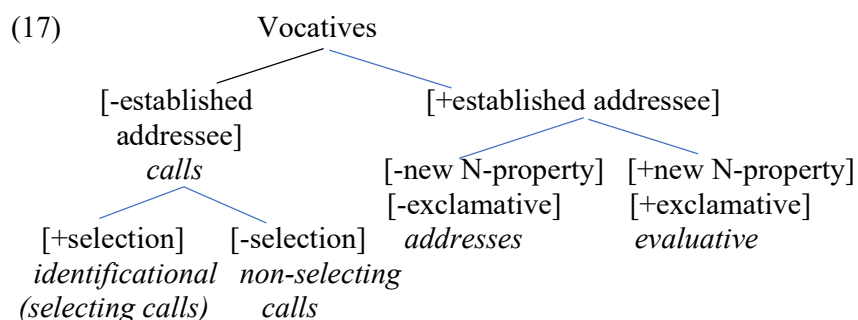
- (non-evaluative) addresses: the predicate assigned to the addressee does not bear communicative focus, is rather backgrounded, felt like an aside

(14) a. Tell me, **John**, when will we have more time together?
b. Tell me, **my friend/dear friend**, when will we have more time together?

- evaluative: the predicate is new information, is foregrounded, and is interpreted like exclamatives (Gutzmann 2019; see also Welte's 1980 term 'exclamational vocative') => the vocative can constitute an utterance by itself, without being felt as incomplete, see (16):

- (15) a. What have you done, **you fool**?
 b. Ce-ai făcut, **prost-ul-e?** (Ro.)
 what-have.2S done stupid-the.MS-VOC
- (16) A: Le-am mâncat eu, ție nu ți-au mai rămas.
 3FP.ACC-have.1 eaten I you.DAT not CL.2S.DAT-have.3P more left
 'I ate them, there are no left for you.'
 B: Măgarule!
 donkey-the.VOC
 'You swine/asshole!'

=> our classification:



3. Identificational Vocatives in Romanian and the Person feature

3.1 The data

- (18) [context: a teacher in front of a class with many students; two of the students are brothers and are talking to each other during the lesson]
 a. Frații, fiți atenți!
 brothers-the be.2P attentive
 'Hey brothers, pay attention!'
 b. # Frați /#Fraților, fiți atenți!
 brothers / brothers-the.VOC be.2P attentive

The variant in (18)b is appropriate only if the intended addressee is already clear in the situation (for instance, the teacher has approached the brothers and is facing them while speaking).

- The verb of a subject relative clause inside an identificational vocative can appear in the 3rd person.

- (19) [Context: a teacher + the students in the class, no particular student as addressee (previous to the utterance)]
 Băiatu' care se uită pe telefon, ia ieși la tablă!
 boy-the who REFL looks on phone PART go-out to blackboard
 'The boy who's looking to his cell phone, come to the blackboard!'

The other formal types of vocatives require 2nd person inside a subject relative clause:

- (20) a. Soldat care {ai fost / *a fost } în Vietnam, meriți această recompensă.
 soldier who have.2S been / has been in Vietnam deserve.2S this reward
 ‘(You) soldier who has been to Vietnam, you deserve this reward.’
- b. Băiatule /Băiete care {te visezi / *se visează} scriitor, începe să
 boy-the.VOC/boy.VOC who REFL dream.2S REFL dream.3S writer start.IMPV SBJV
 citești!
 read.2S
 ‘You boy who dreams of being a writer, start reading!’
- c. Băiete care {te uiți / *se uită} pe telefon, ia ieși la tablă!
 boy-VOC who REFL.2S look.2S REFL.3 looks on phone PART go-out to blackboard

(N.B.: The vocatives illustrated in (20) are not calls. As they are not evaluative either, they belong to the address type. In addresses and non-selecting calls, modification is less common, because it does not help to identify the addressee, as it does in (19). However, relative clauses may appear, if the information they introduce about the addressee is relevant for other purposes)

=> interim generalization:

- (21) a. Vocative nominals in the identificational use are regular definite DPs
 b. Nominals specially marked as vocatives either by vocative morphology or by occurring bare (without an overt D) are not acceptable in the identificational use

- Exception to the DP not being marked as addressee: if the identification of the proposed addressee is achieved via *deixis*, the form that is used is not a demonstrative, but rather a 2nd person pronoun:

- (22) a. Tu_[voc], ce ascunzi sub foaie?
 you what hide.2S under sheet
 ‘You, what are you hiding under the sheet?’
- b. *{Ăsta_[voc]/Ăla_[voc]}, ce ascunzi sub foaie?
 this.MS/that.MS what hide.2S under sheet
- c. [Tu care ești mai înalt]_[voc], îmi trebuie cineva care să ajungă la bec.
 you who are more tall me.DAT needs somebody who SBJV reaches to light-bulb
 ‘You who are taller, I need someone who can reach the light bulb’

This is one of the few situations when pointing is essential in establishing reference and can therefore be considered to contribute directly to the denotation of an expression. This also characterizes deixis found with demonstratives, deictic adverbs and personal pronouns referring to humans (see Wolter 2006, Ahn 2019, 2022)

In (22)a, *the property that identifies the addressee is, obviously, not provided by the person feature of the pronoun*, but by the pointing gesture and by the [+singular] and [+human] features of the pronoun

=> the obligatory 2nd person feature is a formal property that signals the vocative use of the DP. This feature is imposed to the DP by the configuration in which it occurs, a configuration that is responsible for the identificational vocative reading.

With this (important) exception, identificational vocatives behave as regular definite DPs, see - definites without an overt N but with overt descriptive material:³

³ The empty N can have an antecedent – representing nominal ellipsis – or not, being interpreted as +human, +human+female or -animate, depending on f-features, see Giurgea (2013) for details.

- (23) a. [Cei de la geam], de ce vă jucați? (Hill 2014:64, ex. 15a)
 the.MP of at window why REFL.2PL play.2P
 ‘Those by the window, why are you playing?’
 b. Cei din ultima bancă, se vede la tablă?
 the.MP of-in last-the bench REFL sees at blackboard
 ‘Those in the last row, can one see what’s on the blackboard?’
 c. Al doilea, vino mai aproape! (Croitor & Hill 2023:819, ex. 47b)
 ORD second come.IMPV.2S more close
 ‘The second one, come closer!’

- definites in languages which are claimed to disallow [+def] vocatives:

- (24) a. The students from France, where is your translator? (Hill 2014:43, ex. (1)d)
 b. The students who just arrived, you must stay in this room. (Hill 2014:43,ex.(1)e)
 c. The first one in line, I’ll give you my orders (Hill 2014:68)
 d. (Tutti) gli studenti francesi, dov’è il vostro bagaglio? (Italian, Hill 2014:120)
 all the students French where is your luggage
 ‘(All) the students from France, where is your luggage?’
 e. I epivates xoris isitirio perimenete ti sira sas. (Greek, Hill 2014:222)
 the passengers without ticket wait.IMPV.2P the turn your
 ‘Passengers without tickets, wait your turn.’
 f. I protoetis fitites, elate edo! (Gr., Espinal 2013:119, citing Stavrou, ms.)
 the first.year students come.2P.IMPV here
 g. [context: an exhibition. Three men are standing in front of a picture looking at it.
 The man in the middle is wearing a green jacket. A wants to talk to this man]
 Der Mann mit der grünen Jacke! Ihr Auto wird gerade abgeschleppt! (Ge.)
 the man with the green jacket your car is.being just.now hauled-off
 ‘The man with the green jacket! Your car is being hauled off just now.’
 (D’Avis & Meibauer 2013:198)

- Non-selecting calls: [-def] and [+voc] vocatives are allowed, contrary to selecting calls:

- (25) Chelner! Nota, te rog.
 waiter bill-the you.ACC pray.1SG
 ‘Waiter! The bill, please!’
 (26) [context: no previous conversation, the addressee is an unknown person]
 Băiete, ți-a căzut ceva din rucsac.
 boy-VOC CL.2S.DAT-has fallen something from backpack
 ‘Boy! Something fell from your backpack.’

- for some nouns, the use of the [+def] form is impossible:

- (27) a. [context: out-of-the-blue]
 # Chelneru’! Nota, te rog. (non-selecting call)
 waiter-the bill-the you.ACC pray.1SG
 b. [context: a director gives instructions to the actors; one of the actors impersonates a waiter]
 Chelneru’, stai mai la stânga! (selecting call)
 waiter-the stay.IMPV.2S more to left

- (28) a. [context: out-of-the-blue]
 {Copii! /#Copiii}! Ce stradă e asta? (non-selecting call)
 children children-the what street is this
 ‘Children! What street is this?’
- b. [context: in a room with several persons, both children and adults]
 Copiii! Să mergem afară! (selecting call)
 children-the SBJV go.1P outside
 ‘(The) children, let’s go outside!’

=> the special identificational structure is not used for non-selecting calls

- [+def] vocatives may also occur in non-selecting calls and addresses, but in that case, they are subject to strong lexical restriction – compare (29) with (27)a and (28)a:

- (29) [context: no previous conversation, the addressee is an unknown person]
- a. Băiatu’, ți-a căzut ceva din rucsac.
 boy-the CL.2S.DAT-has fallen something from backpack
 ‘The boy, he has fallen something from his backpack.’
- b. Domnu’, v-ați uitat pălăria pe bancă!
 mister-the CL.2P.DAT-have.2P forgotten hat-the on bench
 ‘Mister, you left your hat on the bench!’

Zwicky (1974), Portner (2007): vocatives in addresses are in general subject to lexical restrictions; Portner (2007) relates this to the fact that the meaning contribution of addresses consists, at least in part, in describing the relationship between speaker and addressee => sociopragmatic issues are involved

3.2 Analysis

3.2.1 Previous literature

- sentential positions above the left periphery: VocP (Moro 2003), addrP (Portner 2007)
- both a VocP on top of DP and a dedicated sentential position in the Speech Act layer above ForceP (Hill 2007, 2014, 2022, Haegeman & Hill 2013, Stavrou 2014)
- a VocP on top of DP, without dedicated sentential positions (Espinal 2013) or without deciding on the issue of such positions (Roehrs & Julien 2014, Julien 2016, Gutzmann 2019)
- Giorgi (2023):
 - calls – extrasentential, discourse projections integrated only at the level of micro-discourses; a dedicated head for this type of discourse projections
 - addresses – parenthetical syntax: specifier of a prosody-oriented head, projected above the left-periphery, which assigns the comma intonation; sentence-internal positions are derived via movement

3.2.2 Our assumptions for the Romanian data

- The structural differences between the various vocative types can be described at the level of a VocP above DP. Only referring to sentential positions is not sufficient.

- (30) [_{VocP} (Vocative particles) [_{Voc⁰} [(D) NP]]]

- Evidence for a Voc layer:

Marked vocatives are ruled out in coordination, unlike unmarked vocatives⁴:

- (31) a. Băieți și fete, veniți încoace! / Băieții și fetele, veniți încoace!
 boys and girls come.2P hither boys-the and girls-the come.2P hither
 ‘Boys and girls, come here!’
 b. ?? Băieților și fetelor, veniți încoace!
 boys-the.VOC and girls-the.VOC come.2P hither
 c. Copii și părinți, liniște că sosește moșul!
 children and parents quiet that arrives old-man-the
 ‘Children and parents, keep quiet, cause Santa is approaching!’
 d. ?? Copiilor și părinților, liniște că sosește moșul!
 children-the.VOC and parents-the.VOC quiet that arrives old-man-the

Under the assumption that marked vocatives raise to Voc⁰ (as proposed by Hill 2014), this contrast can be explained as follows:

- coordinated marked vocatives => coordination of VocPs
- each Voc⁰ identifies the addressee with the referent of its DP complement or assigns to it the property expressed by its NP complement => conflicting specifications of the Addressee
- coordinated unmarked vocatives => coordination of NPs under a single Voc

- (31) a. [_{VocP} Voc [_{NP} [_{NP} băieți] & [_{NP} fete]]]
 b. # [_{VocP} [_{N+D+Voc} băieți-l-or][_{DP} t_{N+D}]] & [_{VocP} [_{N+D+Voc} fete-l-or][_{DP} t_{N+D}]]

If vocatives had just been DPs in the Spec of a dedicated sentential projection, this contrast would be hard to account for. Movement of N/D from the Spec of Addr (or another sentential head) to Addr⁰ is not a licit operation in the current syntactic framework

3.2.3 Proposal

- (32) a. Identificational vocatives involve a special head Voc_{ident} that selects a DP
 b. This DP must be referential and definite because it is interpreted as providing the identification of the Addressee of the following utterance:
 Voc_{ident} updates the context *c* to a context *c'* such that Addressee(*c'*) = [[DP]]

N.B. The context is defined with respect to **the entire set of potential addressees**, which may be described using the notion of **Ratified Recipient** (see Goffman 1981, McCawley 1999). Ratified recipients (RRs) include all the accepted participants to the conversation, who can hear the message and are accepted by the speaker as recipients of the message, but are not necessarily addressees. The concept of *selecting call* can be formalized using the concept of RR, requiring that the proposed Addressee belongs to a larger set of RRs:

- (33) Voc_{ident} combined with a DP that denotes an entity *x*, in a context *c*,
 - updates the context *c* to a context *c'* such that Addressee(*c'*) = *x*
 - Presupposition: $x \in RR(c) \wedge \exists y(y \in RR(c) \wedge y \neq x)$

Addresses and non-selecting calls involve different heads:

- (34) Voc_N: selects for NP (-def -voc)

⁴ The only exception to this generalization that we are aware of is *doamnelor și domnilor* ‘ladies and gentlemen!’ (lit. ‘ladies-the.VOC and gentlemen-the.VOC’), which is a formulaic expression. Under the account proposed here, we might analyze this expression as an instance of raising of a coordination of marked DPs to SpecVocP.

- Voc_N*: selects for NP and triggers movement to Voc (-def +voc)
 Voc_D: selects for a definite DP (+def -voc)
 Voc_D*: selects for a definite DP and triggers movement to Voc (+def +voc)

On the Person feature in identificational:

(i) In identificational:

- (35) a. Subject relatives inside identificational vocatives allow 3rd person verbs (ex. (19))
 b. Pronominal identificational vocatives, where identification relies on deixis, must be 2nd person (ex. (22))

- An embedded subject relative clause allows both 3rd person and 2nd person:

- (36) Băiatu' care {se uită / te uiți } pe telefon, ia ieși la tablă!
 boy-the who REFL.3S looks REFL.2S look.2S on phone PART go-out to blackboard
 'The boy who's looking at his cell phone, come to the blackboard!'

- Pronouns where pointing is the identificational device must be marked 2nd person:

- (37) Tu[_☞]/*Ăla[_☞], ce ascunzi sub foaie?
 you that-one what hide.2S under sheet
 'You, what are you hiding under the sheet?'

Analysis:

- (38) Person is valued on Voc_{ident} (presumably because this head introduces the Addressee)
 [_{VocP} [[2nd][Ident-Update]]_{Voc-Ident} [DP]]
 (39) Pronominal D always has Person; in this case it is unvalued, receiving a value via Upward Agree (as proposed by Kratzer 2009 for 'fake indexicals')
 (40) Non-pronominal D may lack Person altogether; 3rd Person is a default form:
 a. [_{VocP} [Voc_{ident}[+2nd]]] [DP [D THE+Gender+Number+Person>2nd [NP NP_{Person>2nd} CP]]]
 b. [_{VocP} [Voc_{ident}[+2nd]]] [DP [D THE+Gender+Number [NP NP CP]]]

4. Evaluative vocatives

Evaluative vocatives require the [+def +voc] type:

- (41) a. [context: the speaker blames the addressee for his behavior]
 Măgarule! / #Măgare! / #Măgar! / #Măgaru'!
 donkey-the-VOC donkey.VOC donkey donkey-the
 'You swine!'
 b. {Prostule! / *Prost! / *Prostu'! }, de ce i-ai spus?
 stupid-the-VOC stupid stupid-the why 3S.DAT-have.2S said
 'You stupid, why did you tell her?'

Compare (41) with an actual address to a donkey:

- (42) Iepurele își suflecă urechile și îi zice prietenului său:
 rabbit-the CL.REFL.3.DAT bents years-the and CL.3S.DAT says friend-the.DAT his
 - Ptiu, ptiu, ai încurcat-o măgare!
 INTERJ have.2S messed-it donkey-VOC

‘The rabbit bends his years and says to his friend: ugh, you messed it up, donkey!’
 (<https://adevarul.ro/stiri-locale/suceava/cele-mai-bune-bancuri-cu-regele-animalelor-cum-1882475.html>)

- the use of a [+def +voc] form allows an evaluative reading even for nouns not marked in the lexicon as epithets (just like the type *you linguist!* in English and German, see d’Avis & Meibauer 2013, Gutzmann 2019):

- (43) a. **Doctore!** Ce are copilul? (address)
 doctor.VOC what has child-the
 ‘Doc! What’s wrong with the child?’
 b. [context: the Addressee, who is not a doctor, has often given good medical advices to the Speaker; the sentence is uttered after the treatment recommended by the Addressee for an ear inflammation]
Doctorule! Pare că știi toate bolile. (evaluative)
 doctor-the-VOC seems that know.2s all diseases-the
 ‘You doctor! You seem to know all the diseases.’

Analysis

(i) The intuitive reason for overt marking: the predicate assigned to the hearer is new information, not entailed by the common ground of the conversation => overt marking makes clear that the NP is predicated of the hearer.

Compare the use of 2nd person pronouns in languages that do not have vocative morphology:
 - English:

- (44) a. Yu idiot! You bastard! (lexical epithets)
 b. You linguist! You philosopher! (contextual evaluative use) (Gutzmann 2019:21)

- German: the structure [Pronoun + Epithet] can also occur in argument positions:

- (45) a. Hast **du Idiot** schon wieder vergessen, das Licht auszumachen? (Ge.)
 have.2s you idiot already again forgotten the light off-to-switch
 ‘Did you forget again to switch off the light, you idiot?’ (D’Avis & Meibauer 2013)
 b. **Du Idiot**, Morgen hat die Post doch geschlossen! (Gutzmann 2019:192)
 you idiot tomorrow has the post but closed
 ‘You idiot, the post office is closed tomorrow!’
 c. **Du Idiot!** (Gutzmann 2019:191)
 you idiot
 (45) a. [D_{pron} [NP]] (argument positions)
 b. [Voc [[D_{pron} [NP]]]] (vocative use) (Gutzmann 2019)

- Scandinavian, Frisian, some Dutch dialects, and Brazilian Portuguese: Possessive Pronoun + Noun (see Corver 2008, d’Avis & Meibauer 2013, Julien 2016):

- (46) a. Men här kan du ju inte parkera, **din idiot!** (Sw., d’Avis & Meibauer 2013:201)
 but here can you PART not park your idiot
 ‘But here, you can not park, you idiot!’
 b. Seu idiota! (Brazilian Portuguese, Corver 2008:52)
 your.MS idiot
 ‘You idiot!’

The constructions in (46) arguably rely on binominal quality constructions. Interestingly, we have not encountered constructions of the type [Noun 2nd-Person-Poss]. The binominal construction of Romanian, which shows this order, cannot occur as an evaluative vocative:

- (47) Ce văd aici, {prostule / *prostul de tine}?
 what see.1S done stupid-the.VOC stupid-the of you
 ‘You fool, what do I see here?!’

=> We speculate that the Poss.Pron. raises to make the Voc-layer visible, just like the personal pronoun in (45)'

=>

- (48) Common property of marked evaluative constructions cross-linguistically:
 the Voc layer must be made visible, because the assignment of the NP property to the Addressee is not an established fact
 (i) Voc may be made visible via overt morphology (Romanian)
 (ii) Voc may be made visible via a personal pronoun raised to Voc or SpecVoc

Note that Romanian cannot use a pronoun, which shows that the evaluative structure does not necessarily take the form of a predicational structure [[Pronoun] [Noun]]:

- (49) Tot o mai crezi, (*tu) prostule?
 still her more believe.2S you.2S stupid-the.VOC
 ‘Do you still believe her, you stupid?’

(ii) Why only [+def +voc]?

- Many evaluatives rely on adjectives, and most evaluative nominalized adjectives lack a [-def +voc] form:

- (50) a. Ce faci, {scump-u-l-e / scump-ul meu / *scump-e} ?
 what do.2S dear-MS-the-MS.VOC / dear-the.MS my / dear-VOC
 ‘How are you, dear /my dear?’
 b. Vino la poză, {frumos-u-l-e / *frumoas-e}!
 come.IMPV.2S to photo beautiful-MS-the-MS.VOC / beautiful-MS.VOC
 ‘Come to the photo, you handsome!’

=> Proposal:

- (51) Evaluative vocatives rely on a n-head specialized for evaluative adjectives
 This head lacks the [-def +voc] form (morphological gap), the only marked form being [+def +voc]

This head, which we will call n_A, is used with nominal roots in order to yield the epithet reading

- (52) a. [n_A] [prost] ‘stupid’ adjectival epithet
 b. [n_A] [măgar] ‘donkey’ lexicalized nominal epithet
 c. [n_A] [doctor] ‘doctor’ contextual nominal epithet

Formal implementation of the intuition that [-voc] forms are not used because the assignment of the property to the Addressee is not manifest:

- (53) Those Voc heads that do not trigger Voc marking, i.e. Voc_N and Voc_D, introduce the presupposition that the NP-property holds about the Addressee (or, in case of DP complements, that the Addressee is identical to the referent of the DP) – possibly, by selecting a DP or NP with interpretable (valued) 2nd person:

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