

Bare singulars: Variation at the syntax-semantics interface

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In this talk we argue that there are syntactic and interpretive possibilities for Romance bare singular nominals (BSNs) beyond those contemplated in Chierchia (1998), Longobardi (1994, 2003, 2005), and Munn and Schmitt (1999). Specifically, verbs can select for BSNs with or without a Det(eterminer) projection, and with or without a Num(ber) projection – each of these correlating with a different semantic interpretation – and can combine with them either via function application, via semantic incorporation (Van Geenhoven 1996) or, in the case of the simplest bare singulars, via a version of pseudo-incorporation (Dayal 2003). Our proposal will maintain a transparent syntax-semantics mapping for bare nominals, according to which determinerless, numberless Ns denote properties of kinds; Ns under a determinerless NumP denote properties of individuals; and Ns under a numberless DP with null D have a kind denotation.