

Discourse properties of indefinites and bare singulars in Brazilian Portuguese: a production study

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Introduction This paper investigates the referential properties of bare singulars in Brazilian Portuguese, which have been hypothesized to be highly productive in argument position (Pires de Oliveira 2014, Pires de Oliveira and Rothstein 2011). The literature on referentiality on Spanish has claimed that indefinites (as in 1), but not bare nouns (as in 2), can establish and introduce new referents in the discourse and be anaphoric to pronouns as in (1) (Heim 1982, Kamp 1981). This restriction of bare nouns is explained by a bare nouns' property to make reference to a type of individual and not to an entity (Espinal 2010). Under this view, bare nouns are claimed to lack the ability of introducing new referents. For that reason, bare nouns would elicit full DPs as their anaphoric expressions as in (2) (Oggiani 2011, Aguilar 2014). The goal of this study is to verify whether this holds for Brazilian Portuguese because in this language, and not in the other one, bare nouns are productive constructions.

1. Berta alquiló **un apartamento**. En un día **lo** pintó para mudarse lo antes posible.
Berta rent an apartment. In one day she painted it so she move in as soon as possible
'Berta rent an apartment. In one day she painted it so that she could move in as soon as possible.'
2. Berta alquiló **apartamento**. En un día pintó **el apartamento** para mudarse lo antes posible.
Berta rent apartment. In one day she painted the apartment so she move in as soon as possible
'Berta rent an apartment. In one day she painted it so that she could move in as soon as possible.'

(Oggiani, 2011; p.59 – Appendix 2)

Study: materials and methods A total of 40 Brazilian Portuguese speakers answered a production task where two conditions were manipulated: noun type (bare nouns/indefinites) and verb type (have-predicate/non-have-predicate). All of the sentences had the target noun in object position in the first sentence. Participants were presented with two sentences and had to produce a continuation for the second sentence that retaken the target noun on the first sentence (as in *Maria alugou apartamento. Em um dia, Maria: (pintar)* 'Maria rent an apartment. In one day, Maria: (to paint)'). Indefinites were used as controls given that the literature claims that pronouns and clitics can be anaphoric to indefinites, but not bare nouns (Oggiani 2011, Aguilar 2014). **Results** The results suggest that full DPs were the preferred anaphoric expression for both bare singulars and indefinites in Brazilian Portuguese (bare nouns: 57,5% and indefinites: 61,7%) but that clitics can also be anaphoric to bare nouns (30%). It differs from Spanish because clitics were the preferred anaphoric expression for both types of nouns followed by full DPs (Oggiani 2011). Finally, it was observed no effect of the type of verb suggesting that differently from Spanish, bare singulars in Portuguese are not restricted to have-predicates.

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