Distribution and interpretation of the alleged neuter definite article "lo" in Spanish*

Ana Aguilar Guevara
(in collaboration with Mayra García Rodríguez)

National Autonomous University of México

*This work was supported by UNAM-PAPIIT (project IA401116 “Definitud regular y defectiva en la lengua natural”)
1) Me preocupa lo rojo de tu ojo derecho.
   me worry LO red of your eye right
   `I'm worried about the redness in your right eye`
Lo is considered a neuter definite article

Although

I. Spanish does not currently have neuter grammatical gender

II. Lo usually cannot accompany nouns

III. It is unclear whether lo is a determiner

IV. Lo does not only occur in nominal domains

V. It is not always evident that its meaning contribution is definiteness
More illustrations of *lo*

which in one way or another are problematic for the caracterizacion of the particle as a neuter definite article

2) Me encanta **lo verde del aceite de oliva**
   me love   LO green of oil   of olive
   `I love the greenness of olive oil’

3) Me preocupa **lo de Juan**.
   me worry      LO of Juan
   `I'm worried about Juan’s situation’

4) Eso es **lo que me dijeron**
   That is   LO that me said
   ‘That is what they told me’

5) ¿Te contó Lía **lo desafinado que canta Fer**?
   You told   Lía LO out-of-tune that sings   Fer
   `Did Lía tell you how out of tune Fer sings?’

6) Lola no duerme **lo suficiente**
   Lola not sleep   LO enough
   ‘Lola doesn't sleep enough’
Aim of this talk

To provide a general overview of the different uses of lo.
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
4. Conclusions and plans for future research
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
4. Conclusions and plans for future research
Three relevant changes from Latin to Spanish

I. Loss of case system

II. Loss of neuter gender

III. Emergence of definite articles
Loss of case system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin noun <em>periculum</em> ‘danger’</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominative</strong></td>
<td>Periculum</td>
<td>Pericula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genitive</strong></td>
<td>Periculi</td>
<td>Periculorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dative</strong></td>
<td>Periculo</td>
<td>Periculis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accusative</strong></td>
<td>Periculum</td>
<td>Pericula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ablative</strong></td>
<td>Periculo</td>
<td>Periculis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocative</strong></td>
<td>Periculum</td>
<td>Pericula</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish noun <em>peligro</em> ‘danger’</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>****</td>
<td>Peligro</td>
<td>Peligros</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loss of neuter gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin noun gender system</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>Neuter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amicus</td>
<td>Rosa</td>
<td>Periculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish noun gender system</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amigo</td>
<td>Rosa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loss of neuter gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin neuter nouns</th>
<th>Spanish nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Periculum ‘danger’</td>
<td>Peligro ‘danger’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mare ‘sea’</td>
<td>Mar ‘sea’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellum ‘war’</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emergence of definite articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin demonstrative pronoun ´that´</th>
<th>ille, illa, illud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SING.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM.</td>
<td>ille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN.</td>
<td>illius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT.</td>
<td>illi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC.</td>
<td>illum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL.</td>
<td>illō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLUR.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM.</td>
<td>illī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN.</td>
<td>illōrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT.</td>
<td>illīs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC.</td>
<td>illōs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL.</td>
<td>illīs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish definite articles</th>
<th>M.</th>
<th>F.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SING.</strong></td>
<td>el</td>
<td>la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLUR.</strong></td>
<td>los</td>
<td>las</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emergence of definite articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin demonstrative pronoun ´that´</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ille, illa, illud</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M.</th>
<th>F.</th>
<th>N.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SING.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM.</td>
<td>ille</td>
<td>illa</td>
<td>illud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN.</td>
<td>illius</td>
<td>illius</td>
<td>illius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT.</td>
<td>illī</td>
<td>illī</td>
<td>illī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC.</td>
<td>illum</td>
<td>illam</td>
<td>illud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL.</td>
<td>illō</td>
<td>illā</td>
<td>illō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLUR.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM.</td>
<td>illī</td>
<td>illae</td>
<td>illa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN.</td>
<td>illōrum</td>
<td>illārum</td>
<td>illōrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT.</td>
<td>illīs</td>
<td>illīs</td>
<td>illīs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC.</td>
<td>illōs</td>
<td>illās</td>
<td>illa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL.</td>
<td>illīs</td>
<td>illīs</td>
<td>illīs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish definite articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SING. el</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLUR. los</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

lo
Neuter forms in Spanish

I. Demonstrative pronouns

- Proximal *esto* (from neuter *istud*)
- Distal *eso* (from neuter *ipsum*)
- Distal *aquello* (from *eccum* + neuter *illud*)

II. Personal pronouns

- Nominative *ello* (from neuter *illud*)
- Accusative *lo* (from neuter *illud*)

III. Definite article

- *Lo* (from neuter *illud*)
I. With demonstrative pronouns

7) Me gusta **esto** pero **eso** no. **Aquello** también me gusta.
   "I like this but not that. I like that too’

II. With personal pronouns

8) Tengo dolor de cabeza pero **ello** no impedirá que vaya a la fiesta. No se **lo** digas a nadie.
   "I have a headache but that will not stop me from going to the party. Don’t tell (it to) anyone.

III. With the definite article

9) ¿Supiste **lo** de Juan, **lo** que le pasó en Montevideo?
   "Did you hear about Juan’s matter, about what happened to him in Montevideo?"
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?

*lo* is a pronoun (Leonetti 1999; RAE/ASALE 2009)

- It cannot accompany regular noun phrases:
  
  10) *Juan preparó lo pizza.*
      Juan prepared LO pizza

  Therefore, it cannot be a determiner.

- The other forms performing neuter reference in Spanish (*ello ‘that’, *aquello ‘that’, *eso ‘that’, *esto ‘this’, accusative *lo ‘it’*) are all pronouns.
Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?

*Lo* is a determiner (Alcina y Blecua 1998; Leonetti 1999; RAE/ASALE 2009; Di Tullio y Malcuori 2012)

- It cannot be alone: *me gusta lo *(bello)*
- It seems adequate to assume a complete paradigm of determiners corresponding to the nominative third-person pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Determiner</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>el</td>
<td>él</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>la</td>
<td>ella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuter</td>
<td>lo</td>
<td>ello</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?

*Lo* is not a determiner (Alcina y Blecua 1998; Leonetti 1999; RAE/ASALE 2009; Di Tullio y Malcuori 2012)

- Just like the other definite articles in Spanish, *lo* creates (semi-)free relative clauses in combination with a dependent relative clause:

11) a. **Conversé con el que ganó el Oscar.**
    Chatted with the_MASC that won the Oscar
    `I talked to the male person who won the Oscar`

   b. **Juan insultó a la que votó por Trump.**
    Juan insulted to the_FEM that voted for Trump
    `Juan insulted the female person who voted for Trump`

   c. **Juan no creyó lo que dijo Lola.**
    Juan not believed LO that said Lola
    `Juan didn't believe what Lola said`
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
   a. Referential *lo*
   b. Quantitative *lo*
   c. Exclamative *lo*
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Outline

1. Emergence of the \textit{lo} particle
2. Is \textit{lo} a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of \textit{lo}
   a. Referential \textit{lo}
      i. Phrases referring to inanimate objects
      ii. Phrases referring to matters
      iii. Phrases referring to properties
   b. Quantitative \textit{lo}
   c. Exclamative \textit{lo}
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
   a. Referential *lo*
      i. Phrases referring to inanimate objects (usually identified in the grammars, e.g. RAE/ASALE 2009)
      ii. Phrases referring to matters (not identified before)
      iii. Phrases referring to properties (identified as from McNally & Swart, 2015, and de Swart, McNally, and Richtarcikova, 2018)
   b. Quantitative *lo* (usually identified in the grammars, e.g. RAE/ASALE 2009)
   c. Exclamative *lo* (usually identified in the grammars, e.g. RAE/ASALE 2009)
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Outline

1. Emergence of the lo particle
2. Is lo a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of lo
   a. Referential lo
      i. Phrases referring to inanimate objects
      ii. Phrases referring to matters
      iii. Phrases referring to properties
   b. Quantitative lo
   c. Exclamative lo
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Examples

12) Lola va a arreglar lo despintado de la pared.
Lola goes to fix LO unpainted of the wall
`Lola is going to fix the unpainted part of the wall´

13) A mi solamente me gusta lo de enmedio.
To me only me like LO of in-the-middle
`I only like what is in the middle´

14) Lo que tú estás pensando es falso.
LO that you are thinking is false
`What you are thinking is false´
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Type of constituent formed

- Determiner phrases performing both argumental and predicative functions:

15) **Lo que tú estás pensando** es falso.
   LO that you are thinking is false
   `What you are thinking is false`

16) Eso, **lo que tú estás pensando**, es falso.
   That, LO that you are thinking is false
   `That, what you are thinking, is false`
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Composition

I. Lo + adjective phrase (in masculine and singular)

17) Yo suscribo lo propuesto.
   I subscribe LO proposed
   ‘I subscribe what has been proposed’

II. Lo + dependent relative clause

18) Está nevando, lo cual me hace muy feliz.
   It’s snowing LO which me make very happy
   ‘It’s snowing, which makes me very happy’

III. Lo + prepositional phrase headed by de ‘of’

19) Lava a mano lo de seda que tiene Lía
   wash by-hand LO of silk that has Lía
   ‘Wash by hand the silk clothes that Lía has’
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Interpretation

Lo podrido => the maximal portion or plurality displaying the property of being rotten in the domain of evaluation.

‘LO rotten’
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Testing definiteness

20) a. Borra lo podrido
   ‘Erase the rotten parts’

b. # Borra lo podrido
   ‘Erase the rotten parts’

c. # Borra lo podrido
   ‘Erase the rotten parts’
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

In different definite uses

- Immediate situation
  21) (uttered in front of an unpainted wall)
  Lola va a arreglar lo despintado
  Lola goes to fix LO unpainted
  `Lola is going to fix the unpainted (part)`

- Larger situation
  22) (uttered in this room)
  No quiero saber lo que se diga del Papa
  Not want know LO that IMP say of the pope
  `I don’t want to know what it may be said about the Pope`
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Lo can be replaced by neuter demonstratives

26) Lola va a arreglar esto despintado.  
Lola goes to fix this unpainted  
`Lola is going to fix these unpainted parts`  

27) A mi solamente me gusta eso de enmedio.  
To me only me like LO that of in-the-middle  
`I only like what is in the middle`  

28) Lo aquel que tú estás pensando es falso.  
Lo that that you are thinking is false  
`What you are thinking is false`
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Lo can be replaced by neuter demonstratives

29) Lola va a arreglarlo esto despintado.
Lola goes to fix LO this unpainted
`Lola is going to fix these unpainted parts´

This is also possible with the regular definite articles

30) Lola va a arreglar el este techo.
Lola goes to fix the this roof
`Lola is going to fix this roof´

31) Lola va a arreglar las esas bicicletas.
Lola goes to fix the those bicycles
`Lola is going to fix those bicycles´
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Lo can be accompanied by the quantifier *todo* ‘all’

32) Lola va a arreglar **todo lo despintado**.
Lola goes to fix all LO unpainted
`Lola is going to fix all the unpainted parts´
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Lo can be accompanied by the quantifier todo ‘all’

32) Lola va a arreglar todo lo despintado.
  Lola goes to fix all LO unpainted
  ‘Lola is going to fix all the unpainted parts’

This is also possible with the regular definite articles

33) Lola va a arreglar todo el techo.
  Lola goes to fix all the
  ‘Lola is going to fix the whole roof’

34) Lola va a arreglar todas las bicicletas.
  Lola goes to fix all the bicycles
  ‘Lola is going to fix all the bicycles’
Outline

1. Emergence of the $lo$ particle
2. Is $lo$ a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of $lo$
   a. Referential $lo$
      i. Phrases referring to inanimate objects
      ii. Phrases referring to matters
      iii. Phrases referring to properties
   b. Quantitative $lo$
   c. Exclamative $lo$
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Lo-phrases referring to matters

Examples

35) ¿Supiste lo de Noah?
know LO of Noah
`Did you hear about Noah´s problem/situation/news...´

36) Lo del Papa Francisco es cierto.
LO of-the pope Francisco is true.
`The matter (gossip) about Pope Francis is true´
**Lo-phrases referring to matters**

Type of constituent formed

- Determiner phrases performing both argumental and predicative functions:

37) **Lo del Papa Francisco** es cierto.
   LO of-the pope Francisco is true.
   `The matter (gossip) about Pope Francis is true´

38) Eso, **lo del Papa Francisco**, es cierto.
    That, LO of-the pope Francisco, is true.
    `That, the matter (gossip) about Pope Francis is true´
Lo-phrases referring to matters

Composition

Only *Lo* + prepositional phrase headed by *de* ‘of’:

39) ¿Supiste **lo de Noah**?
   know LO of Juan
   ‘Did you hear about Juan’s problem/situation/news...’
Lo-phrases referring to inanimate objects

Interpretation

Lo de Noah  =>  *the maximal plurality of Noah´s affairs in the domain of evaluation*
‘LO of Noah’
Lo-phrases referring to matters

Testing definiteness

40)  a. (uttered in a context in which everyone just heard that Juan got divorced)
    Lo de Juan era esperable.
    LO of Juan was expected.
    ‘Juan´s situation was expected’

b. (uttered in a context in which nobody but the speaker knows that Juan got divorced, and the speaker
    Is aware of that)
    # Lo de Juan era esperable.
    LO of Juan was expected.
    ‘Juan´s situation was expected’

c. (uttered in a context in which everyone learns that Juan got divorced five minutes after it is
    announced to everyone that he got the Nobel Prize, and the speaker is aware of that)
    # Lo de Juan era esperable.
    LO of Juan was expected.
    ‘Juan´s situation was expected’
Lo-phrases referring to matters

In different definite uses

- Immediate situation

41) (uttered in this room by Ana)

Lo de Bert es una excelente noticia.
LO of Bert is a excellent news.
`The matter about Bert is excellent´

- Larger situation

42) (uttered in front of an unpainted wall)

Lo del Papa Francisco es cierto.
LO of-the pope Francisco is true.
`The gossip about Pope Francis is true´

- Anaphoric

43) Juan recibió malas noticias y Martín también. Juan got bad news and Martín too. LO of `Juan received bad news and Martín did too`

Lo de Juan es muy grave.
LO of Juan is very serious.
`Juan's thing is very serious´

- Bridging

NA ?

- Kind reference

NA ?
Lo-phrases referring to matters

Lo can be replaced by neuter demonstratives

44)  \( \mathcal{L} \) eso del Papa Francisco es cierto.

LO that of-the pope Francisco is true.

`The matter (gossip) about Pope Francis is true´
Lo-phrases referring to matters

Lo can be accompanied by the quantifier todo ‘all’

45)  **Todo lo del Papa Francisco** es cierto.
       All    LO of-the pope Francisco is true.
       ‘The whole matter (gossip) about Pope Francis is true´
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
   a. Referential *lo*
      i. Phrases referring to inanimate objects
      ii. Phrases referring to matters
      iii. Phrases referring to properties
   b. Quantitative *lo*
   c. Exclamative *lo*
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Examples

46) Michael finalmente enseñó lo Corleone
   Michael finally showed LO Corleone
   ‘Michael finally showed his Corleoneness’

47) Lo claro del mar Caribe ofrece visibilidad total
   LO clear of-the sea Caribe offers visibility total
   ‘The clearness of the Caribbean Sea offers total visibility’
Lo-phrases referring to matters

Type of constituent formed

- Determiner phrases performing both argumental and predicative functions:

48) Michael finalmente enseñó lo Corleone
    Michael finally showed LO Corleone
    ‘Michael showed his Corleoneness’

49) Eso es lo Corleone
    That is LO Corleone
    ‘That is the Corleoneness’
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Composition

- *Lo* + adjective phrase/noun phrase behaving like an adjective phrase + prepositional phrase (obligatory unless the linguistic context provides the information they convey)

50) A Lola le molesta lo antivegetariano de Juan
    To Juan him emerge LO antivegetariano of Juan
    ´Lola dislikes Juan´s anti-vegetarianism´

51) Michael finalmente enseñó lo Corleone
    Michael finally showed LO Corleone
    ´Michael showed his Corleoneness´
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Interpretation

lo claro del Mar Caribe => the (unique?) property of being transparent displayed by the Caribbean Sea
‘the clearness of the Caribbean Sea’
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Testing definiteness

52) (uttered in a context in which the speaker is having a conversation about the fact that he is considering to live in Colonia Doctores in México City and everybody knows that it is a dangerous neighborhood)

¿Cómo ves lo peligroso del barrio?
‘How do you see the danger in this neighborhood?’

53) (uttered in a context in which the speaker is having a conversation about the fact that he is considering to live in Colonia Doctores in México City and no one but him knows that it is a dangerous neighborhood)

# ¿Cómo ves lo peligroso del barrio?
‘How do you see the danger in this neighborhood?’
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Lexical selection

- There is at least a verb, salirle (‘emerge’ + dative clitic), selecting complements referring to properties:

54) A Juan le salió lo antivegetariano/animal/ cavernícola/hombre/vikingo

To Juan him emerge LO anti-vegetarian/ animal / caveman /male /viking

´Juan´s anti-vegetarian/animal/caveman/male/viking aspect emerged´

- Interestingly, the adjective/noun heading the phrase combining with lo has to agree in gender and number with the noun phrase doubling de dative:

54´) A mis hermanas les salió lo antivegetarianas/*o/*0

To my sisters them emerge LO viking_FEMPl/Mas/SNG

´My sisters´ anti-vegetarian aspect emerged´
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Lo cannot be replaced by neuter demonstratives

55)  # Michael finalmente enseñó lo eso Corleone
     Michael finally showed LO that Corleone

56)  # Lo Eso claro del Mar Caribe ofrece visibilidad total
     LO that clear of-the sea Caribe offers visibility total
     ′The clearness of the Caribbean Sea offers total visibility
Lo-phrases referring to properties

Lo cannot be accompanied by the quantifier todo ‘all’

58)  # Todo lo claro del Mar Caribe ofrece visibilidad total  
     All LO clear of-the Caribbean Sea offers visibility total

57)  # Michael finalmente enseñó todo lo Corleone  
     Michael finally showed all LO Corleone
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
   a. Referential *lo*
      i. Reference to inanimate mass/plural objects
      ii. Reference to matters
      iii. Reference to properties
   b. Quantitative *lo*
   c. Exclamative *lo*
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Quantitative *lo*

Examples

58) Juan trabaja **lo suficiente como para merecerse descansar hoy**.
Juan works **LO enough as to deserve to rest today**
`Juan works hard enough to deserve to rest today´

59) Lola trabajó **lo menos posible**.
Lola worked **LO little possible**.
`Lola worked as little as possible´
Quantitative *lo*

Type of constituent formed

- Adverb phrases of quantity

60) Lola come *lo necesario*
   Lola eats LO necessary
   `Lola eats what is necessary (to not to be malnourished)`

61) Juan hizo la cena *lo mejor posible.*
   Juan made the dinner LO better possible.
   `Juan cooked dinner as well as possible`
Quantitative *lo*

Composition

- *Lo* + adverb phrases meaning ‘enough’ (*necesario, bastante, suficiente*) or ‘as much/little/good/bad... as possible’:

62)  Lola ahorró **lo bastante como para poderse comprar una casa**.
    Lola saved *LO enough like to can buy a house.*
    ‘Lola saved enough to buy a house’

63)  Lola trabajó **lo menos posible**.
    Lola worked *LO little possible.*
    ‘Lola worked as little as possible’
Quantitative *lo*

Interpretation

*lo necesario* $\Rightarrow$ *the degree of a predicate meeting a particular standard of comparison*

*LO enough*

*lo menos posible* $\Rightarrow$ *the smallest degree possible*

*LO little possible*
Outline

1. Emergence of the lo particle
2. Is lo a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of lo
   a. Referential lo
      i. Reference to inanimate mass/plural objects
      ii. Reference to matters
      iii. Reference to properties
   b. Quantitative lo
   c. Exclamative lo
4. Conclusions and questions for future work
Exclamative *lo*

Examples

64) Me impresiona *lo bonita que es tu hermana*.
   me impress LO pretty that is your sister
   `It impresses me how pretty your sister is`  

65) Es increíble *lo terriblemente agudo que habla Lola*.
   Is incredible LO terribly sharp that speaks Lola
   `It's incredible how terribly sharp Lola speaks`
Exclamative *lo*

Type of constituent formed

- Exclamative sentences preferably occurring in embedding contexts:

66) a. ¿¡Lo terriblemente agudo que habla Lola!?
   LO terribly sharp that speaks Lola
   `How terribly sharp Lola speaks!`

   b. Es increíble lo terriblemente agudo que habla Lola.
   Is incredible LO terribly sharp that speaks Lola
   `It's incredible how terribly sharp Lola speaks'
Exclamative *lo*

**Composition**

- *lo* + adjective/adverbial phrase designating a gradable predicate + (obligatory) relative clause modifying it:

67) Me impresiona **lo bonita que es tu hermana**.
   me impress LO pretty that is your sister
   ‘I’m impressed by how pretty your sister is’

68) Es increíble **lo bien que baila Lola**.
   is incredible LO well that dances Lola
   ‘It’s incredible how well Lola dances’
Exclamative *lo*

Interpretation

Lo bonita que es tu hermana => the (affecting) degree in which your sister is beautiful

`How beautiful your sister is’
Outline

1. Emergence of the *lo* particle
2. Is *lo* a determiner or a pronoun?
3. Three uses of *lo*
4. Conclusions and plans for future research
Conclusions

- There are five uses of *lo* semantically and morphosintactically differentiated:
  - Referential *lo*
    - *Reference to inanimate objects*
    - *Reference to matters*
    - *Reference to properties*
  - Quantitative *lo*
  - Exclamative *lo*
- Definiteness is clearly involved in the three referential uses (a bit questionable in the case of phrases referring to properties) but not in the quantitative and the exclamative use (perhaps yes, if we think in terms of unique/maximal degrees).
Plans for future work

- To carry out a diachronic study to identify how the different uses of *lo* emerged in the language and understand better the synchronic relation between them.
- To associate a semantic theory to the referential uses of *lo* (adopting and adapting McNally & de Swart, 2015, seems to be a promising plan, although Villalba, 2009, and Villalba & Bartra-Kaufmann, 2010, should also be considered).
- To develop a semantic theory for the quantitative use of *lo* (to our knowledge, almost nothing has been said about this use).
- Exclamative *lo* is at the moment out of the scope of this project. Also, is the one that has received more attention so far and some semantic analysis are already in the market (see, for example, Gutiérrez-Rexach 1996, 1999, 2001 and Villaba, 2008).
References


Gracias