

vinagre/pensions in/at vinegar/hostels 'in vinegar/hostels' Sancho Cremades 2002). Both weak nominals and axial terms are introduced by the preposition *a* (5), never by the preposition *en*. This fact points to the definite nature of axial terms, even in those PPs in which the determiner is not overt as in (1).

- (6) a. *a/*en casa /comarques /el metge /la universitat*
 At/in home provinces the doctor the university
 b. *a/*en dins /fora /el costat de /la dreta de la capsa*
 at/in inside out the side of / the right of the box

4. The analysis draws on Matushansky & Zwarts's proposal of axial terms as weak nominals. More specifically, I argue that axial terms are interpreted as DPs that have a definite kind interpretation (Borik & Espinal 2015). However, an analysis of axial terms as entity denoting categories falls short to account for their fundamentally relational nature. In order to avoid this problem, I assume, following Bassaganyas-Bars (2016, 2017) that relational nouns are not semantically (or syntactically) different from sortal nouns, in that they are intrinsically non-transitive (cf. Le Bruyn 2016), although they are pragmatically associated with a relation between two entities. The predicative part-whole/possessive relation between the axial term and the DP that appears in the complement of the complex PP is brought about by a functional head denoting an inalienable possessive relation between an entity and a kind. The analysis of complex PPs for Catalan (1) and (2) is depicted in (6) and (7), respectively.

(7) [_{PP} [_P *a*] [_{DP} [_D [_n DINS]]] [_{NP} [_n ~~DINS~~] [_{PP} [_P *de*] [_{DP} *la capsa*]]]]]

(8) [_{PP} [_P *a*] [_{DP} [_D *el*]] [_{NP} [_n COSTAT] [_{PP} [_P *de*] [_{DP} *la capsa*]]]]]

4. The analysis outlined allows us to explain the morphosyntactic properties of Complex PPs across Romance languages. First, it accounts for the parallel distribution that weak nominals and axial terms show in Romance languages. Thus, in those languages with *a/en* alternation both weak nominals and complex PPs with axial terms feature the same preposition: Fr. *en ville* in city vs. *à l'hôpital* at the hospital vs. *en tête de* in head vs. *a la tête de* at the head. Second, it accounts for the fact that Complex PPs show a possessive morphosyntax, which can be of two sorts depending on the language and on the type of ground, a preposition of partitive semantics, OF (9b), or a preposition of locative semantics, AT, (9a). Locational and genitive possessives, which can be associated with the pattern in (9a) and (9b), are two common strategies to express possession across languages (Stassen 2009, 2013).

(9) a. *Gianni era nascosto dietro (a)l'albero* (Tortora 2006)
 G. was hidden [behind a the.tree]

b. *Mario è dietro di/*(P) lui.* (Ursini 2015)
 Mario is behind of/*(P) him

5. **Conclusion.** The analysis outlined is superior to those that analyse axial terms as functional heads or as relational (predicative) nouns, in which the existence of a possessive predicative preposition is unexpected. Moreover, it accounts for the similar properties that weak nominals and axial terms display in Romance languages. Finally, an analysis of axial terms as nominals provides a new insight into the nature of axial terms, weak nominals, and to the syntax and semantics of prepositions of location and possession in general. **Selected references:** AGUILAR-GUEVARA, A. 2014. *Weak definites. Semantics, lexicon and pragmatics*. Utrecht, The Netherlands: Universiteit Utrecht dissertation. MATUSHANSKY, Ora & Joost ZWARTS. 2018. The partial nominality of Axial Parts. Handout. SVENONIUS, Peter. 2010. Spatial P in English. In *Mapping Spatial PPs: The Cartography of Syntactic Structures* 6, 127–160. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.