

John Benjamins Publishing Company



This is a contribution from *Nominalization in Asian Languages. Diachronic and typological perspectives*.

Edited by Foong Ha Yap, Karen Grunow-Hårsta and Janick Wrona.

© 2011. John Benjamins Publishing Company

This electronic file may not be altered in any way.

The author(s) of this article is/are permitted to use this PDF file to generate printed copies to be used by way of offprints, for their personal use only.

Permission is granted by the publishers to post this file on a closed server which is accessible to members (students and staff) only of the author's/s' institute, it is not permitted to post this PDF on the open internet.

For any other use of this material prior written permission should be obtained from the publishers or through the Copyright Clearance Center (for USA: www.copyright.com).

Please contact rights@benjamins.nl or consult our website: www.benjamins.com

Tables of Contents, abstracts and guidelines are available at www.benjamins.com

Expressing exclamatives in Malagasy*

Eric Potsdam

University of Florida

This paper explores the syntax and semantics of the exclamative clause type in the Austronesian language Malagasy. Cross-linguistic considerations, distributional facts, and language-internal morphosyntax provide evidence that Malagasy exclamatives are syntactically nominal. All exclamatives are noun phrases, as in the English *The things that he says!* Unlike English, Malagasy has no clausal exclamatives. Based on the Malagasy data, the paper proposes that the exclamative force of nominals, in Malagasy and other languages, is located in the determiner layer of the structure.

1. Introduction

It is conventional in speech act theory to distinguish between an utterance's sentential force and its illocutionary force (Austin 1962; Searle 1969; Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990; Zanuttini & Portner 2003; Collins 2005; and others). Illocutionary force is the force associated with the speaker's intention in producing a sentence, independent of the utterance's form. It relates to the utterance's communicative intent. The sentential force is the force conventionally associated with a sentence by virtue of its form. Sentential force "describes the way a syntactically-determined clause type (declarative, interrogative, imperative, etc.) is used in a certain communicative context" (Heusinger & Schwabe 2002). A sentence's sentential force can reinforce its illocutionary force, or not. For example, *Pass the salt!* has both the sentential and illocutionary force of a command. The intention of the speaker is to command the addressee to do something, giving it the illocutionary force of a command. Its sentential force is that of a command as well because syntactically, it is an imperative clause type (Potsdam 1998), which is the canonical expression of a command in English. *Could you pass the salt?*, on the other hand, has only the illocutionary force of a command. In the relevant use, it (politely)

*I would like to thank my Malagasy consultants, Bodo and Voara Randrianasolo. I am also grateful to two anonymous reviewers, the volume editors, and the audience at the Beyond Focus and Ergativity in Austronesian Workshop at ZAS Berlin for insightful comments. This work was supported by NSF grant BCS 0131993.

commands. It is not an imperative however and does not have the syntactic form conventionally associated with commanding. Its sentential force is that of a question due to its form.

This distinction between sentential and illocutionary force can be applied to exclamatory utterances. I define *EXCLAMATIONS* as expressive utterances that have the illocutionary force of exclaiming, regardless of their form. They “express a speaker’s emotive attitude towards a certain state of affairs that is not in accordance with his or her expectations” (D’Avis 2002: 26). Exclamations that additionally take a certain canonical syntactic form in a language have the sentential force of exclaiming and I call them *EXCLAMATIVES*. In English, exclamatives have a range of syntactic expression (see Elliott 1974; Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996a; Huddleston & Pullum 2002; and others for discussion) but clausal exclamatives are typically marked with *such*, *so*, *what* *a*, *how*, or subject-auxiliary inversion:

- (1) a. He’s such a good cook!
- b. It’s so hot in here!
- c. What a day (I had)!
- d. How ugly that is!
- e. Can he eat a lot!
- f. Are you in for it!
- g. The things I do for that boy!
- h. You wouldn’t believe [the bickering that goes on].
- i. Its amazing [the difference].
- j. The cost of these clothes!

The examples illustrate not only diverse syntactic forms but also different types of exclamatives. Exclamatives need to be kept distinct from the larger, also not well defined, class of expressives, which may include interjections, declaratives, and other forms. I take as a defining property of exclamatives that they have propositional content that is assumed by the speaker to be true (Elliott 1971, 1974; Grimshaw 1979; Sadock & Zwicky 1985; Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996a, 1996b; Zanuttini & Portner 2000, 2003; Michaelis 2001; Villalba 2003; Portner & Zanuttini 2004; Collins 2005; Miró 2006; Rett 2006; and many others). That is, exclamatives presuppose that the proposition they express is a background belief, known by the speaker and addressee. This presupposition arises because exclamatives express an emotional reaction to or evaluation of a proposition, which is therefore likely to already be in the common ground. Declaratives, in contrast, are informative about the content of a proposition.

Exclamatives are not prominent in typological work (with the exceptions of Elliott 1974; Sadock & Zwicky 1985; and Michaelis 2001). Nevertheless, I believe that there are tendencies in the grammatical expression of exclamatives. One pattern that is evident from the English data is that exclamatives are expressed with either clauses, (1a–f), or noun phrases, (1g–i). This, I believe, is cross-linguistically true

and numerous languages allow both clausal and nominal exclamatives with seemingly identical interpretation:

- (2) ENGLISH
 a. What strange things he says!
 b. The strange things (that) he says!
- (3) FRENCH
 a. (*Qu'est-ce*) *que tu as de beaux biceps!*
 'What fine-looking biceps you have!'
 b. *Les beaux biceps que tu as!*
 'The fine-looking biceps you have!'

This paper explores certain aspects of the syntax and semantics of nominal exclamatives, a "clause" type that has received little attention in the literature. The exploration is based on the Austronesian language Malagasy, a language that shows only nominal exclamatives.

The paper is organized as follows. I begin with an exploration of exclamatives in Malagasy. Section 2 discusses syntactico-semantic characteristics of exclamatives and shows that the construction under investigation in Malagasy has the sentential force, not just the illocutionary force, of an exclamative. Section 3 investigates the syntactic structure of these exclamatives and argues that, despite surface appearances, they are nominal exclamatives. Clausal exclamatives are unavailable in Malagasy. Section 4 turns to more specific questions regarding the interpretation of nominal exclamatives. Section 5 concludes.

2. Malagasy exclamatives

Malagasy is an Austronesian language spoken by approximately 14 million people on the island of Madagascar. Malagasy is a predicate-initial language, with the subject appearing in clause-final position. A variety of phrase types, VP, NP, AP, or PP, can be predicates and there is no copula:¹

- (4) a. [*mamaky boky*]_{VP} *ny mpianatra*
 read book the student
 'The student is reading a book.'

1. I use the following abbreviations in glossing:

1/2/3	person	DEM	demonstrative	DAT	dative
ACC	accusative	DET	determiner	DEIC	deictic
ART	article	DIR	directional	EXCL	exclamation

- b. [vorona ratsy feo]_{NP} ny goaika
bird bad voice the crow
'The crow is a bird with an ugly voice'
- c. [faly amin' ny zanany]_{AP} Rasoa
proud PREP the child.3POSS Rasoa
'Rasoa is proud of her children.'
- d. [any an-tsena]_{PP} Rakoto
PREP ACC-market Rakoto
'Rakoto is at the market.'

Typical exclamatives in Malagasy are given in (5) and take the general form in (6).

- (5) a. izany sotrohin' i Paoly!
DEM drink.PASS DET Paul
'What/How much Paul drinks!'
- B izany ngidi-n' ireo voankazo ireo!
DEM bitterness-LNK DEM fruit DEM
'How bitter that fruit is!'
- c. izany ahaingan' ny f-amakia-ny boky!
DEM quickness the NMLZ-read-3SG book
'The quickness of her book-reading!'
'How quickly she reads!'
- d. izany ao ambanin' ny fandriana!
DEM LOC under the bed
'The things under the bed!'

- (6) demonstrative (*izany*) phrase (VP, NP, PP)

They consist of the demonstrative *izany* followed by a phrase. In (a), this phrase is a VP, in (b,c) it is an NP, and in (d) it is a PP. Malagasy has a large number of anaphoric demonstrative pronouns/determiners. They indicate the distance of the speaker from the object and whether or not the object is visible. *Izany* is the vaguest of these demonstratives, indicating that the object is invisible and an indefinite distance away (see Section 4 for further discussion).²

FOC	focus	OBJ	object	Q	question
GEN	genitive	PASS	passive	REL	relativizer
LNK	linker	POSS	possessor	SG/PL	number
LOC	locative	PREF	prefix	SPEC	specifier
NEG	negative	PREP	preposition	SUFF	suffix
NMLZ	nominalizer	PROG	progressive	TOP	topic.
NOM	nominative	PROX	proximate		

2. Rajaonarimanana (1995: 48) asserts that the object is “invisible, singulier, distance indéfinie—une zone plus ou moins étendue”.

It is not immediately evident what the grammatical analysis of this construction is. It has both plausible nominal and clausal syntactic parses. In Section 3, I turn to this question and argue that the examples in (5) are noun phrases. Malagasy has no clausal exclamatives. Before doing this however, I show that the data under investigation are true exclamatives. That is, they have exclamative sentential force and not simply exclamatory illocutionary force. This will be accomplished by appealing to widely accepted semantic characteristics of exclamatives. These diagnostics are not particular to Malagasy and can be used quite generally to identify exclamative clauses.

It is widely recognized that exclamatives have two properties: FACTIVITY and SCALARITY (Elliott 1971, 1974; Grimshaw 1979; Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996a, 1996b; Michaelis 2001; Zanuttini & Portner 2000, 2003; Villalba 2003; Portner & Zanuttini 2004; Collins 2005; Miró 2006; Rett 2006; and others). Factivity is the property that exclamatives presuppose their propositional content. Scalarity refers to the property of degree exclamatives that they express extreme degree evaluation.³ These two criteria will confirm that the Malagasy construction under investigation is a dedicated exclamative clause type.

Exclamatives presuppose their propositional content. This is a consequence of the fact that exclamatives express the speaker's emotional attitude towards a situation. The situation needs to be assumed to also be known by the hearer so that the speaker can issue an affective response to it. It is thus presupposed and not asserted.

There are a number of diagnostics in the literature based on this property that can be used to test whether something is an exclamative. Grimshaw (1979) discusses the fact that exclamatives can often be embedded.⁴ They are restricted to being embedded under factive predicates like *be amazing*, which presuppose the truth of their complements, (7). Embedding of exclamatives under other kinds of predicates which do not require a presupposed complement is ill-formed, (8).

- (7) *mahatalanjona/mahatsiravina/maharikoriko* [izany sotrohiny]
 amazing/shocking/disgusting DEM drink.PASS.3SG
 'It's amazing/shocking/disgusting how much he drinks.'

- (8) **antenaina/heverina/inoana* [izany sotrohiny]
 hope.PASS/think.PASS/believe.PASS DEM drink.PASS.3SG
 '*It is hoped/thought/believed how much he drinks.'

3. See Michaelis and Lambrecht (1996) and Michaelis (2001) for further functional-pragmatic criteria.

4. It is unclear whether this is true universally. Daniel Kaufman (personal communication) reports that it is not possible in Tagalog.

In addition, exclamation marks are ill-formed as an answer to a question. This follows because the propositional content of an answer is asserted, not presupposed. The utterances in (9) are individually acceptable but they do not form a coherent discourse:

- (9) a. *nisotro toaka betsaka ve Rabe omaly?*
 drink alcohol much Q Rabe yesterday
 'Did Rabe drink a lot yesterday?'
 b. *#izany nosotrohiny!*
 DEM PAST.drink.PASS.3SG
 'How much he drank!'

Scalarity indicates that exclamation marks quantify over a degree which is high relative to some contextually determined value. Exclamation marks express emotion on the part of the speaker regarding this high degree. The Malagasy utterances under consideration show this property. First, they allow three types of degree interpretations found in degree exclamation marks. These are labeled in Rett (2006) as amount, gradability, and kind interpretations. The amount interpretation quantifies over quantities, (10). The gradability interpretation quantifies over degrees of a gradable property such as height, goodness, badness, etc., (11). Lastly, the kind interpretation quantifies over kinds of individuals, (12) below. In each case, the most salient interpretation depends largely on context. Amount, gradability, or kind are not explicit in the linguistic signal.⁵

- (10) a. *izany ronono sotrohiny!*
 DEM milk drink.PASS.3SG
 'How much milk he's drinking!'
 b. *izany herim-pon' ny miaramila!*
 DEM courage the oldier
 'How much courage the soldiers have!'
 (11) a. *izany ahavon' ny tendrombohitra!*
 DEM height the mountain
 'How high the mountain is!'
 b. *izany boky tsara vakia-ko!*
 DEM book good read.PASS-1SG
 'What a good book I'm reading!'
 (12) a. *izany boky vakiany!*
 DEM book read.PASS.3SG
 'The (kinds of) books he reads!'

5. Most of the examples are thus ambiguous. I do not exhaustively gloss them but, instead, simply give one possible interpretation supplied by my consultants.

- b. *izany ao ambanin' ny fandriana!*
 DEM LOC under the bed
 'The (kinds of) things under the bed!'

One consequence of the scalarity property of exclamatives is that they are not acceptable with non-gradable predicates. Examples are infelicitous if the property is not a gradable one. This is the case for English and Malagasy:

- (13) a. *#izany fahavitana!*
 DEM NMLZ.be.completed
 'How completed it is!' (ok: What a completion!)
- b. *#izany fahavakian' ilay fitaratra!*
 DEM NMLZ.break that mirror
 'How broken that mirror is!' (ok: 'How that mirror shattered!')

Finally, scalarity entails that true exclamatives will not be embeddable under predicates which don't imply an extreme degree. This also holds for the Malagasy construction:

- (14) a. *mahatsiravina [izany sotrohiny]*
 incredible DEM drink.PASS.3SG
 'It's incredible how much he drinks.'
- b. *#tsy mahatsiravina [izany sotrohiny]*
 NEG incredible DEM drink.PASS.3SG
 '#It's not incredible how much he drinks.'

I conclude that the Malagasy data are true exclamatives. The construction has the sentential force of an exclamation and is not just a nominal/clause with exclamatory illocutionary force. In the next section, I turn to the syntax of these utterances.

3. The nominal status of Malagasy exclamatives

In many languages, the clausal or nominal status of an exclamation is straightforward. Morphological or syntactic cues make the syntax clear. For example, nominal exclamatives may have an unambiguous determiner, some kind of exclusively nominal morphology such as gender concord, or noun phrase word order. Clausal exclamatives cross-linguistically use *wh*-phrases or complementizer-like elements. In some languages, however, the underlying syntax is not immediately evident. This is the case for the Malagasy data, repeated below, with additional examples.

- (15) a. *izany sotrohin' i Paoly!*
 DEM drink.PASS DET Paul
 'What/How much Paul drinks!'

- b. *izany ronono sotrohin' i Paoly!*
 DEM milk drink.PASS DET Paul
 'What/How much milk Paul drinks!'
- c. *izany ngidi-n' ireo voankazo ireo!*
 DEM bitterness-LNK DEM fruit DEM
 'How bitter that fruit is!'
- d. *izany aha-mena-n' ny masoandro!*
 DEM NMLZ-red-LNK the sun
 'How red the sun is!'
- e. *izany a-haingan' ny f-amakia-ny boky!*
 DEM NMLZ-quick the NMLZ-read-3SG book
 'The quickness of her book-reading!'
 'How quickly she reads!'
- f. *izany ao ambani-n' ny fandriana!*
 DEM LOC under-LNK the bed
 'The things under the bed!'

(16) demonstrative (*izany*) phrase (VP, NP, PP)

Such examples have two possible syntactic parses, as clauses or nominals. A clausal analysis of these data would work as follows. As schematized in (17), the demonstrative pronoun *izany* is the subject and the remainder phrase is the predicate.

(17) [[*izany*]_{SUBJECT} [VP/NP/PP]_{PREDICATE}]

Examples (15 a,c) would have the analysis in (18).

- (18) a. [[*izany*]_{SUBJECT} [*sotrohin' i Paoly*]_{PREDICATE}]
 DEM drink.PASS DET Paul
 Lit.: 'That is drunk by him!'
- b. [[*izany*]_{SUBJECT} [*ngidin' ireo voankazo ireo*]_{PREDICATE}]
 DEM bitterness DEM fruit DEM
 Lit.: 'That is the bitterness of those fruit!'

As we saw above, Malagasy allows non-verbal predicates so there is nothing unusual about the lack of a copula. What is perhaps unusual is the subject-initial word order. Canonical clauses in Malagasy are predicate-initial as seen in (4) and (19a). Subject-initial clauses are generally ill-formed, (19b).

- (19) a. *miasa ny zazalahy*
 work the boy
 'The boys are working.'
- b. **ny zazalahy miasa*
 the boy work

Subject-initial word order is not completely impossible however. It is seen in a number of environments: small clause complements to perception verbs, (20) (Pearson 2005), after certain clausal conjunctions, (21), and in contrastive environments, (22) (Keenan 1976; Paul 2001; Pearson 2001).

- (20) *nahita [ny mpianatra namaky boky] Rabe*
 see the student read book Rabe
 'Rabe saw the student read(ing) a book.'
- (21) a. *tsy miasa androany Rabe...*
 NEG work today Rabe
 'Rabe is not working today ...'
- b. *satria [ny vadiny marary]*
 because the spouse.3SG sick
 'because his spouse is sick'
- c. *satria [marary ny vadiny]*
 because sick the spouse.3SG
 'because his spouse is sick'
- (22) a. *inona no ataon' ny ankizy?*
 what FOC do.PASS the children
 'What are the children doing?'
- b. *ny zazalahy miasa, ny zazavavy matory*
 the boy work the girl sleep
 'The boys are working and the girls are sleeping'

The exclamative subject-predicate word order in particular could be assimilated to the construction in (22), which is used when two subjects are contrastive (although not exclamative).

The alternative, nominal analysis assigns a structure to the exclamatives as in (23). The initial demonstrative *izany* is a determiner that is followed by a noun phrase.

- (23) $[[izany]_D [VP/NP/PP]_{NP}]_{DP}$

The analysis assigned to (15a,c) is as in (24). In the clear cases, the determiner is followed by something that looks like a noun phrase headed by a noun, (15b–e) and (24b). This noun may be either a lexical noun such as *ronono* 'milk' and *ngidy* 'bitterness' in (15b,c) or a derived noun such as *aha-mena* 'NMLZ-red' *a-haingana* 'NMLZ-quick' in (15d,e). In cases like (15a,f) or (24a), there is possibly a null noun head or direct complementation between the determiner and the VP/PP. I briefly return to this issue below.

- (24) a. $[[izany]_D [sotrohiny]_{NP}]_{DP}$
 DEM drink.PASS.3SG
 Lit.: 'that amount/stuff drunk by him!'

- b. $[[izany]_D \ [ngidin' \ ireo \ voankazo \ ireo]_{NP}]_{DP}$
 DEM bitterness DEM fruit DEM
 Lit.: "that bitterness of the fruit!"

In what follows, I present evidence in favor of the nominal analysis for Malagasy. The evidence is of two types. Section 3.1 presents cross-linguistic considerations that favor a nominal approach. Section 3.2 presents syntactic evidence internal to Malagasy.

3.1 Cross-linguistic considerations

Weak evidence against a clausal analysis for Malagasy exclamatives comes from the observation that cross-linguistically, clausal exclamatives often contain a *wh*-phrase or complementizer like element. This is illustrated in (25) for several languages. The *wh*-phrase/complementizer is bold-faced.⁶

- (25) a. **How** happy she looks!
 b. **What** a jerk he is!
 c. ITALIAN
***Che** caro **che** è!*
 What expensive that is
 'How expensive it is!
 d. GERMAN
***Wen** der alles eingeladen hat!*
 who he all invited has
 'Who all he has invited!' (D'Avis 2002: 5)
 e. CHINESE
*Ta shi **duo(me)** hao de yi ge ren aa!*
 he is how.much good DE one CL person EXCL
 'What a nice person he is!' (Oda 2002: 99)
 f. JAPANESE
*John-wa **nante** kasiko-i-no-des-yoo!*
 John-TOP WH intelligent-PRES-FIN-FOC-MOOD
 'How intelligent John is!' (Ono 2006: 6)
 g. RUSSIAN
***Kakoi** xorošij čelovek Ivan!*
 what good person Ivan
 'What a nice person Ivan is!' (Oda 2002: 100)

6. Old Japanese, Classical Tibetan (Janick Wrona, personal communication), and Mandinka (Miro 2006) have clausal exclamatives that do not have *wh*-phrases or complementizers.

h. THAI

Nit dii ?aray kàràat nán!
 Nit nice what size that
 'What a nice person Nit is!'

(Oda 2002: 100)

i. TURKISH

Ne hoş bir insane John!
 what nice a person John
 'What a nice person John is!'

(Oda 2002: 100)

j. FRENCH

Que tu as de beaux biceps!
 that you have nice biceps
 'What nice biceps you have!'

k. CATALAN

Quin pastís tan dolç que ha fet en Ferran!
 what cake so sweet that has done the Ferran
 'What a sweet cake Ferran made!'

(Miró 2006: 2)

In Malagasy, however, I was unable to elicit any exclamations that involved wh-phrases or complementizers. The Malagasy wh-phrases are listed in (26) and its complementizers are in (27). It is evident that the demonstrative *izany* is not related to any of these elements.⁷

- (26) a. *inona* 'what'
 b. *ahoana, manahoana* 'how'
 c. *ohatrinona* 'how much'
 d. *iza* 'who'
 e. *oviana* 'when'
 f. *(t)aiza* 'where'

- (27) a. *fa* 'that'
 b. *raha* 'if'
 c. *hoe* 'whether'

7. The only possibility is that it is a combination of *iza* 'who' + *ny* 'the'. This is unlikely as *iza* 'who' does not occur with a determiner and, if it did, the determiner would be initial: **ny iza*.

An anonymous reviewer suggests an explanation for the lack of clausal exclamatives employing a wh-phrase: On one view, Malagasy does not have embedded wh-interrogatives of the kind familiar from English and European languages. Embedded wh-questions are expressed either with a headless relative clause (Keenan 1976: 266) or a main clause wh-interrogative preceded by the complementizer-like element and quotative particle *hoe* (Potsdam 2007). If clausal exclamatives cross-linguistically are built on embedded wh-interrogatives, then Malagasy has nothing from which to create a clausal exclamative.

At the same time, nominal exclamatives are well-attested cross-linguistically and do not use a *wh*-phrase.⁸

- (28) a. ENGLISH
The things that he eats!
- b. FRENCH
Les beaux biceps que tu as!
the nice biceps that you have
'What nice biceps you have!'
- c. JAPANESE
hikkirinashi-ni naru denwa!
continuously-DAT ring telephone
'The telephones that don't stop ringing!'
- d. CATALAN
Les bestieses que diu aquest còmic!
the stupid.things that says this comedian
'The stupid things this comedian says!' (Miró 2006: 3)
- e. OLD JAPANESE
punapito-wo miru-ga tomosi-sa
boat.people-ACC see-GEN enviable-NMLZ
'How enviable it is to see the boat people' (Wrona, this volume: 428)
- f. TURKISH
gittikleri yerler!
go.PAST.RP.PL.OBJ place.PL
'The places they go!' (Michaelis 2001: 1048)
- g. SETSWANA
mo-dumo o ba o dirang!
CL-noise REL they OM make.PROG
'The noise they make!' (Michaelis 2001: 1048)

Nominal exclamatives seem to be particularly common within Austronesian. Moyse-Faurie (2011: 128) indicates that "Nominalised exclamative clauses may be considered the prototypical expression of exclamation in Polynesian languages, and in some Kanak languages". The nominal status of such exclamatives is indicated in two ways in the data below, from Moyse-Faurie (2011). There is either a determiner (glossed ART

8. Some examples contain a relativizer which is part of the relative clause inside the nominal.

or SPEC below, following the original source), as in (29), or nominalizing morphology (glossed PREF), as in (30)⁹.

(29) a. MAORI

te ataahua o tērā kōtiro!

ART beauty POSS DEIC girl

‘What a beautiful girl! (Lit.: the beauty of that girl)’

(Foster 1987: 118; cited in Moyse-Faurie 2011: 120)

b. SAMOAN

le aka a le ali’i!

SPEC laugh POSS SPEC guy

‘Look, how the guy is laughing! (Lit.: the laughing of the guy)’

(Mosel & Hovdhaugen 1992: 521; cited in Moyse-Faurie 2011: 120)

c. TUVALUAN

te mmoko mai o te matagi!

SPEC cold DIR POSS SPEC wind

‘The wind feels so [nice and] cool! (Lit.: the coolness of the wind)’

(Besnier 2000: 40; cited in Moyse-Faurie 2011: 119)

(30) a. IAAI

caa û-nââk-iny miitr!

NEG PREF-tough-SUFF meat

‘Isn’t this meat tough! (Lit.: not the toughness of the meat)’

(Ozanne-Rivierre 1984: 115; cited in Moyse-Faurie 2011: 128)

b. WEST UVEAN

fale-leu fagamalie de fua nei

PREF-ripe well ART fruit DEIC

‘How ripe this fruit is!’

We can see the use of both elements in the Malagasy example in (31). *Izany*, I am proposing, is a determiner, and the phrase following the determiner is a nominalized adjective with a possessor.

(2) *izany aha-mena-n’ ny masoandro!*

DEM NMLZ-red-LNK the sun

‘How red the sun is! (Lit.: That redness of the sun!)’

3.2 Syntactic evidence

Syntactic evidence internal to Malagasy also supports a nominal analysis. The exclaimatives under investigation have the distribution of nominals, not clauses. As we have already seen, exclaimatives may occur embedded under factive predicates. This is also

9. Examples (29a–c) and (30a) were also cited in a paper on “Nominalisation and exclamation” presented by Claire Moyse-Faurie at the Conference on Oceanic Linguistics (COOL-7) in 2007.

true of Malagasy, where exclamatives may occur in a variety of subordinate positions. Example (32) demonstrates that they may appear in subject position.

- (32) a. *mahagaga an-dRaso* [*izany sotrohiny*]
surprise ACC-Raso DEM drink.PASS.3SG
'How much he drinks surprises Raso.'
- b. *henoko* [*izany ahaingan' ny famakiany boky*]
hear.PASS-1SG DEM quickness DET read.NMLZ.3SG book
'I heard about how fast she reads.'
- c. *mahatalanjona* [*izany ditran' ny alika*]
amazing DEM stubbornness DET dog
'How stubborn the dog is is amazing.'

Clauses may also appear as subjects in Malagasy; however, they usually have an introductory complementizer, which is impossible here:

- (33) **mahagaga an-dRaso* [*fa/hoe izany sotrohiny*]
surprise ACC-Raso that/whether DEM drink.PASS.3SG
'How much he drinks surprises Raso.'

More telling, exclamatives can occur as objects of the general preposition *amy*, (34). Observe the preposition in the English translation. Clauses, as far as I am aware, do not occur in this position.

- (34) a. *tsiravina ami-n'* [*izany sotrohiny*] *aho*
shocked PREP-LNK DEM drink.PASS.3SG I
'I am shocked at how much he drinks.'
- b. *zendana aho ami-n'* [*izany ahavon' ny tendrombohitra*]
astonished I PREP-LNK DEM height the mountain
'I am astonished at how high the mountain is.'

A further piece of distributional evidence in favor of the nominal analysis is that exclamatives can be fronted. Malagasy has two fronting constructions in which the subject of the clause is preposed and followed by either the particle *dia* to mark topic or *no* to mark focus. Both constructions are possible with exclamatives:

- (35) a. *nampalahelo ahy* [*izany fahantran' ny olona*]
sadden me DEM poverty the people
'How poor the people are saddened me.'
- b. [*izany fahantran' ny olona*] *dia* *nampalahelo ahy*
DEM poverty the people TOPIC sadden me
'How poor the people are, it saddened me.'
- c. [*izany fahantran' ny olona*] *no* *nampalahelo ahy*
DEM poverty the people FOCUS sadden me
'It's how poor the people are that saddened me.'

Complement clauses, in contrast, do not front with these constructions:

- (36) a. *nampalahelo ahy [fa lasa Rabe]*
 sadden me that gone Rabe
 'That Rabe is gone saddened me.'
- b. **[fa lasa Rabe] dia/no nampalahelo ahy*
 that gone Rabe TOPIC/FOCUS sadden me
 'That Rabe is gone, it saddened me. /It's that Rabe is gone that saddened me.'

I conclude that the external distribution of exclamatives supports a nominal analysis over a clausal one.

Exclamatives also do not have the internal structure of a clause. For example, contrary to the clausal analysis, *izany* in exclamatives does not behave like a subject. It cannot front with the topic and focus particles introduced above, (37). These constitute well-known subjecthood tests in Malagasy (Keenan 1976). This is expected if *izany* is only a determiner within a noun phrase.

- (37) a. *izany (ronono) nosotrohiny!*
 DEM milk PAST.drink.PASS.3SG
 'How much (milk) he drank!'
- b. **izany (ronono) dia/no nosotrohiny!*
 DEM milk TOPIC/FOCUS PAST.drink.PASS.3SG

Lastly, the construction as a whole does not behave like a clause in that sentence-level particles like *tena* 'really, indeed' and *toa* 'seem' cannot appear in exclamatives:

- (38) a. *tena nisotro toaka betsaka izy*
 really PAST.drink alcohol much he
 'He really drank lots of alcohol.'
- b. **izany tena nosotrohiny!*
 DEM really PAST.drink.PASS.3SG
 ('How much he really drank!')
- (39) a. *toa nisotro toaka betsaka izy*
 seem PAST.drink alcohol much he
 'He seems to have drunk lots of alcohol.'
- b. **izany toa nosotrohiny!*
 DEM seem PAST.drink.PASS.3SG
 ('How much he seems to have drunk!')

I conclude that Malagasy exclamatives do not have the internal syntax of a clause.

3.3 The internal structure of nominal exclamatives

Accepting that Malagasy exclamatives are nominal, what is their internal structure? In the transparent cases, there is a determiner followed by an NP with an overt noun head. This NP may consist of just a noun, (40), a noun with a possessor, (41), or a noun

with a relative clause, (42).¹⁰ Note that the optional relativizer *izay* is generally possible in the latter examples.

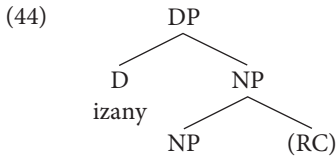
- (40) a. *izany trano!*
 DEM house
 'What a house!'
- b. *izany korontana!*
 DEM mess
 'What a mess!'
- c. *izany Rasoa!*
 DEM Rasoa
 'How [pragmatically appropriate adjective] Rasoa is!'
- (41) a. *izany ngidin' ireo voankazo ireo!*
 DEM bitterness DEM fruit DEM
 'How bitter that fruit is!'
- b. *izany ahaingan' ny f-amakia-ny boky!*
 DEM quickness the NMLZ-read-3SG book
 'How quickly she reads!'
- c. *izany aha-tsara-n-tarehi-n-dRasoa!*
 DEM NMLZ-good-LNK-face-LNK-Rasoa
 'How pretty Rasoa is!'
- d. *izany ditran' ny alika!*
 DEM stubbornness the dog
 'The stubbornness of the dog!'
- (42) a. *izany sakafo [rel. clause nohaniny]!*
 DEM food PAST.eat.PASS.3SG
 'The food he ate!'
- b. *izany zavatra [rel. clause sotrohiny]!*
 DEM thing drink.PASS.3SG
 'The things that he's drinking!'
- c. *izany boky tsara [rel. clause (izay) vakiako]!*
 DEM book good REL read.PASS.1SG
 'What a good book I'm reading!'

The NP may not have another determiner, since *izany* functions as the determiner for the whole phrase:

10. I assume that these examples are genuine exclamatives based on their interpretation and native speaker intuitions.

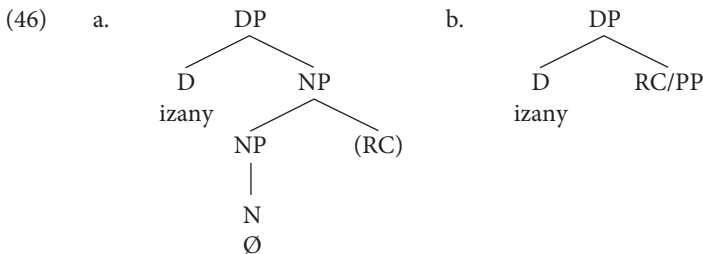
- (43) a. **izany ny f-amakian' ny mpianatra boky*
 DEM the NMLZ-read the student book
 'How quickly the students read!'
- b. **izany ilay/ny trano!*
 DEM that/the house
 'What a house!'

To this point, we have a noun phrase with the unexceptional structure in (44).



Many of the exclamatives do not have a head noun however, (45). In these cases, there are at least two options. There could be a null head noun modified by a relative clause (RC), (46a). Alternatively, the determiner *izany* could directly take the relative-clause like element as its complement, (46b), with no mediating head noun.

- (45) a. *izany sotrohin' i Paoly!*
 DEM drink.PASS DET Paul
 'What/How much Paul drinks!'
- b. *izany ao ambanin' ny fandriana!*
 DEM LOC under the bed
 'The things under the bed!'



Both options are a priori plausible and I will not decide between them here. The issue is not specific to exclamatives. Malagasy shows wide use of “headless” nominalizations throughout the grammar. There is currently very little work on nominal structure in Malagasy (see Ntelitheos 2006). For simplicity, I will assume the null head structure in (46a) in what follows.

4. Localizing the exclamative force

A primary question that arises in the analysis of nominal exclamatives is where the exclamatory sentential force comes from, if anywhere. The literature suggests three lines of thought: Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996a, 1996b offer a Constructional approach. Nominal exclamatives are representative of at least two constructions: a Metonymic NP Construction, which “licenses a reading of a definite NP in which a definite NP ‘stands for’ a proposition that invokes some degree of a scalar property” (Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996b: 237), and the Abstract Exclamative Construction, which requires that exclamatives display a small set of semantico-pragmatic properties (Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996b: 239). Takahashi (1997) critically evaluates their analysis and I will not discuss it here.

An alternative suggested, but rejected, in Michaelis and Lambrecht (1996a) is an ellipsis analysis in which nominal exclamatives are derived from full clauses. Thus, they propose that (47) could be derived from either (48a) or (48b). A problem that they point out is that there are multiple sources for a given nominal exclamative; however, such an exclamative does not seem to be genuinely ambiguous, only vague. The ellipsis operation that would be necessary to get from (48) to (47) seems unmotivated.

(47) The NERVE of that man!

- (48) a. I can’t BELIEVE the NERVE of that man!
b. It’s INCREDIBLE the NERVE of that man!

Instead, they suggest that the affective judgment in (47) could be “pragmatically inferred” (Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996a: 388) without deletion.

I will investigate a third alternative, pursued in Portner and Zanuttini (2004) (henceforth P&Z). They propose that a clause-like meaning is achieved through a compositional semantics. The exclamative interpretation is due to an exclamative morpheme E present in the syntactic structure. Portner and Zanuttini locate E in the relative clause that is included in the nominal:

(49) The things [E that he says]!

They argue that English nominals are only exclamative when they contain a relative clause. Their judgments are that only (50a) can be an exclamative; that is, it is exclamatory by virtue of its structure. (50b), in contrast, is an exclamation only. Its force is determined pragmatically, via the context.

- (50) a. The strange people who come from Italy!
b. The/Those strange Italians!

To illustrate further, they claim that *The height of the building!* can be an exclamation expressing surprise or astonishment over the height of the building; however, it is an

elliptical sentence fragment and, hence, not an exclaimative (P&Z 2004: 5). Examples like (50a), by contrast, are not felt to be elliptical.

They support their claims with agreement and pronominalization facts in embedded contexts. When a true exclaimative is embedded it behaves morphosyntactically like a proposition. In English, exclaimatives embedded in post-predicate position are pronominalized with the singular subject *it* because of their propositional meaning. This is true not only for clausal exclaimatives, (51a), but also nominal ones, (51b). In support of the claim that nominals without a relative clause are not exclaimatives, P&Z (2004: 6) claim that they do not license *it* as a subject, (51c). They conclude from these data that the relative clause is necessary to turn a nominal into an exclaimative. It is the exclaimative morpheme E in the relative clause that gives the nominal a propositional interpretation.¹¹

- (51) a. It's amazing [what strange things he says].
- b. It's amazing [the strange things he says].
- c. *It's amazing, the Italians.

I would like to propose an alternative analysis for the location of the E morpheme based on the Malagasy data. Unlike English, a relative clause does not seem to be required for a nominal exclaimative. The examples in (52) appear to be simple noun phrases.¹²

- (52) a. *izany herim-pon' ny miaramila!*
 DEM courage the soldier
 'The courage of the soldiers!'
- b. *izany korontana!*
 DEM mess
 'What a mess!'
- c. *izany Rasoa!*
 DEM Rasoa
 'How [pragmatically appropriate adjective] Rasoa is!'
- d. *izany ao amin ny paosi-tranony!*
 DEM LOC PREP the closet.3SG
 'The things in his closet!'

This suggests that the exclaimative morpheme cannot necessarily reside in the relative clause and it must be possible to locate it within the nominal itself. I propose that the

11. I, and others, do not share this intuition that a relative clause is necessary for a true exclaimative interpretation. For the purposes of what follows, however, I accept the generalization.

12. As before, I assume that the examples are genuine exclaimatives based on their interpretation and native speaker intuitions. (d) might contain a reduced relative clause; however, this is much less likely for the other noun phrases.

exclamative interpretation lives in the determiner. The main argument for this view is that the determiner in nominal exclamatives is restricted cross-linguistically. This is clearly the case for Malagasy, which I illustrate below, but it is also the case for other, unrelated languages.¹³

Malagasy has a large number of demonstratives, given in Table 1. These elements can be used as determiners introducing a noun phrase, (53a), or they can be used alone, as pronominals, (53b).

Table 1. Malagasy demonstratives (Rahajarizafy 1960: 24)

	Visible		Invisible or vague
	SG	PL	
Near	ito, ity	ireto	izato , izaty
Far	itsy	iretsy	izatsy
Very far	iry	irery	izary
Indefinite	io, iny	ireo , ireny	izao, izany
	–	-re- infix	-za- infix

- (53) a. *faly izany zaza*
happy DEM child
‘That child is happy.’
b. *ratsy izany*
bad DEM
‘That’s bad.’

The demonstratives differ along three dimensions: number (singular vs. plural), distance of the object from the speaker, and whether or not the object is visible. As can be seen in the last row of the table, the two final columns are derived from the visible singular forms by infixation of some CV element. Malagasy also has a determiner *ny*, which roughly translates as ‘the’. Rajemisa-Raolison (1969: 54) indicates that only the bold-faced demonstratives can be used in exclamatives. The other demonstratives are not possible. Although there is some pattern, the choice seems somewhat arbitrary. For example, of the two near singular demonstratives, *ity* is a possible exclamative determiner but *ito* is not. When the infix *-za-* ‘INVISIBLE’ is inserted however, *i{za}ty* is not

13. P&Z (2004: 5–6, 9) in fact suggests that English nominal exclamatives can only contain *the*, citing the contrast in (i) with an exclamative interpretation.

(i) The/??Those strange people who come from Italy!

If this is a real contrast, it would support the claim that determiners are restricted in nominal exclamatives.

possible as an exclamative determiner but *i⟨za⟩to* is. (54) confirms that the definite determiner *ny* ‘the’ is also not possible with nominal exclamatives, nor is the absence of a determiner.

- (54) a. **ny ahavon’ ny tendrombohitra*
 the height the mountain
 b. **ahavon ny tendrombohitra*
 height the mountain
 ‘The height of the mountain!’ not acceptable as an exclamative

In addition, Malagasy has a framing demonstrative construction in which any of the above demonstratives occurs at the beginning and the end of the noun phrase:

- (55) a. *ireo olona ireo*
 DEM person DEM
 ‘those people’
 b. *izao holazaiko izao*
 DEM FUT.say.PASS.1SG DEM
 ‘what I will say’
 c. *izany vaovao mampalahelo izany*
 DEM news sadden DEM
 ‘the sad news’
 d. *izany tenin’ ny Ntaolo izany*
 DEM word the ancestor DEM
 ‘the words of the ancestors’

This framing use of the demonstratives is also impossible with an exclamative meaning:

- (56) **izany herim-pon’ ny miaramila izany*
 DEM courage the soldiers DEM
 ‘The courage of the soldiers!’ not acceptable as an exclamative

I conclude that the choice of determiner, as well as its particular syntax, determines the availability of an exclamative meaning. This suggests that the exclamative morpheme is associated with the determiner.

This determiner restriction in nominal exclamatives occurs in other languages. In Spanish, there is an invariant determiner-like element *la de* which occurs with nominal exclamatives of amount, (57). *La de*, which may be a contraction of *la cantidad de* ‘the quantity of’, does not inflect for gender or number and is restricted to exclamatives.¹⁴ One might expect to find exclamative-specific determiners in other languages as well.

14. I thank Maria Biezma for discussions about the Spanish data.

- (57) a. *la de cosas que come Juan!*
 DET thing.FEM.PL that ate Juan
 'How much Juan ate!'
- b. *la de libros que leyó Juan!*
 DET book.MASC.PL that read Juan
 'How many books John read!'

In Russian, there are both proximal and distal demonstratives that inflect for case, number, and gender. Nominal exclamatives require the proximate nominative forms, (58). Nominals with distal demonstratives or no demonstrative cannot be used as exclamatives, (59).¹⁵

- (58) a. *(ox už) èti deti!*
 oh yet DEM.PROX.NOM.PL children.NOM.PL
 'The children!'
- b. *(ox už) èta kurica!*
 DEM.PROX.F chicken
 'The chicken!'
- c. *(ox už) èto suščestvo!*
 DEM.PROX.N creature
 'The creature!'
- (59) a. **deti!*
children.nom
 not acceptable as an exclamative, only as a vocative
- b. **te deti!*
 DEM.DIST.NOM.PL children.NOM.PL
 'those children'
 not acceptable as a exclamative, only as an answer to a question

As in Malagasy, the demonstrative pronouns do not have deictic force in the nominal exclamatives. In Russian, demonstratives and possessives cannot co-occur:

- (60) a. *ja videl *ètix/?tex ejo detej*
 I saw DEM.PROX.ACC.PL/DEM.DIST.ACC.PL her children.ACC
 'I saw her children.'
- b. **èti ejo deti ploxo sebj veli*
 DEM.PROX.NOM.PL her children badly self conducted
 ('Her children were badly behaved.')

15. I thank Maria Polinsky for discussions about the Russian data.

This restriction is lifted when the demonstrative occurs in a nominal exclamative:

- (61) *èti* *ejo deti!*
 DEM.PROX.NOM.PL her children.NOM.PL
 'These children of hers!'

This very small sample of languages suggests that there is indeed something special about the determiner in nominal exclamatives that contributes the exclamative force. If this hypothesis is correct, it sets up a reasonable parallel with clausal exclamatives. The exclamative force of a clausal exclamative is often taken to reside in the complementizer domain, which is the clausal parallel to the determiner domain in nominals. At the same time, it is not unexpected that there may be languages that do not have nominal exclamatives. This can be attributed to them not having the lexical resources in their determiner system. Hindi seems to be one such language.¹⁶

5. Conclusion

This paper has used exclamative constructions in Malagasy to point to the importance of nominal exclamatives to the study of clause types. Although largely ignored in the literature, nominal exclamatives are the dominant, and sometimes only, realization of exclamatives in some languages. Such nominals are true exclamatives given the semantic and syntactic tests in the literature.

It is clearly not an accident that nominals and nominalizations are so widely used to encode exclamatives. One question for investigation is why clauses and nominals are so consistently co-opted for this function. In starting to address this question, I briefly explored the issue of where in a nominal exclamative the sentential force was located. There are numerous possible answers to this question and I suggested a compositional approach in which the exclamative force was isolated in the determiner. Additional work is needed to flesh out this proposal and evaluate it against a wider range of languages and data.

References

- Austin, J.L. 1962. *How to Do Things with Words*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
 Besnier, Niko. 2000. *Tuvaluana: A Polynesian Language of the Central Pacific*. London: Routledge.
 Chierchia, Gennaro & McConnell-Ginet, Sally. 1990. *Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics*. Cambridge MA: The MIT Press.

16. I thank Rajesh Bhatt for discussions about the Hindi data.

- Collins, Peter. 2005. Exclamative clauses in English. *Word* 56: 1–17.
- D'Avis, Franz-Josef. 2002. On the interpretation of wh-clauses in exclamative environments. *Theoretical Linguistics* 28: 5–31.
- Elliott, Dale E. 1971. The Grammar of Emotive and Exclamatory Sentences in English. Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University.
- Elliott, Dale E. 1974. Toward a grammar of exclamations. *Foundations of Language* 11: 231–246.
- Foster, John. 1987. *He whakamārama. A Full Self-Help Course in Māori*. Auckland: Reed.
- Grimshaw, Jane. 1979. Complement selection and the lexicon. *Linguistic Inquiry* 10: 279–236.
- von Heusinger, Klaus & Schwabe, Kerstin. 2002. Preface to the special edition on information structure and sentence type. *Theoretical Linguistics* 28: 1–4.
- Huddleston, Rodney & Pullum, Geoffrey K. 2002. *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Keenan, Edward L. 1976. Remarkable subjects in Malagasy. In *Subject and Topic*, Charles N. Li (ed.), 247–301. New York NY: Academic Press.
- Michaelis, Laura A. 2001. Exclamative constructions. In *Language Typology and Language Universals*, Martin Haspelmath, Ekkehard Koenig, Wulf Oesterricher & Wolfgang Raible (eds), 1038–1050. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Michaelis, Laura A. & Lambrecht, Knud. 1996a. The exclamative sentence type in English. In *Structure, Discourse and Language*, Adele Goldberg (ed.), 375–389. Stanford CA: CSLI.
- Michaelis, Laura & Lambrecht, Knud. 1996b. Toward a construction-based theory of language function: The case of nominal extraposition. *Language* 72: 215–247.
- Miró, Elena Castroviejo. 2006. Wh-exclamatives in Catalan. Ph.D. dissertation, Universitat de Barcelona.
- Mosel, Ulrike & Hovdhaugen, Even. 1992. *Samoan Reference Grammar*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.
- Moyse-Faurie, Claire. 2011. Nominalization and exclamation in Oceanic languages. In *Topics in Oceanic Morphosyntax*, Claire Moyse-Faurie & Joachim Sabel (eds), 111–136. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Ntelitheos, Dimitrios. 2006. The Morphosyntax of Nominalizations: A Case Study. Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA.
- Oda, Toshiko. 2002. Exclamatives and negative islands. In *Chicago Linguistic Society 38–2: The Panels*, Mary Andronis, Erin Debenport, Anne Pycha & Keiko Yoshimura (eds), 97–110. Chicago IL: Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Ono, Hajime. 2006. An Investigation of Exclamatives in English and Japanese: Syntax and Sentence Processing. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park.
- Ozanne-Rivierre, Françoise. 1984. *Dictionnaire Iaai-Français (Ouvéa, Nouvelle-Calédonie)*. Paris: Peeters-Selaf.
- Paul, Ileana. 2001. *Ve* as a second-position clitic. *Oceanic Linguistics* 40: 135–142.
- Pearson, Matthew. 2001. The Clause Structure of Malagasy: A Minimalist Approach. Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA.
- Pearson, Matthew. 2005. The Malagasy subject/topic as an A' element. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 23: 381–457.
- Portner, Paul & Zanuttini, Raffaella. 2004. The semantics of nominal exclamatives. In *Ellipsis and Nonsentential Speech*, R. Elugardo & Robert J. Stainton (eds), 57–67. Boston MA: Kluwer.
- Potsdam, Eric. 1998. *Syntactic Issues in the English Imperative*. New York NY: Garland.
- Potsdam, Eric. 2007. Malagasy sluicing and its consequences for the identity requirement on ellipsis. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 25: 577–613.

- Rahajarizafy, R.P. Antoine. 1969. *Essai sur la grammaire malgache*. Antananarivo: Imprimerie Catholique.
- Rajaonarimanana, Narivelo. 1995. *Grammaire moderne de la langue malgache*. Paris: L'Asiathèque.
- Rajemisa-Raolison, Régis. 1969. *Grammaire malgache*. Fianarantsoa: Librairie Ambozontany.
- Rett, Jessica. 2006. Exclamatives are degree constructions. Handout, Rutgers Linguistics Conference 1.
- Sadock, Jerrold & Zwicky, Arnold. 1985. Speech act distinctions in syntax. In *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, Vol. 1, Timothy Shopen (ed.), 155–196. Cambridge: CUP.
- Searle, John. 1969. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Takahashi, Mineko. 1997. A critical review of a construction grammatical analysis of the concealed exclamation. *Sophia Linguistica* 41: 149–169.
- Villalba, Xavier. 2003. An exceptional exclamative sentence type in Romance. *Lingua* 113: 713–745.
- Wrona, Janick. This volume. A case of non-derived stand-alone nominalization. In Yap, Grunow-Hårsta & Wrona (eds).
- Zanuttini, Raffaella & Portner, Paul. 2000. The characterization of exclamative clauses in Paduan. *Language* 76: 123–132.
- Zanuttini, Raffaella & Portner, Paul. 2003. Exclamative clauses: At the syntax-semantics interface. *Language* 79: 39–81.

