

Impersonal uses of 'person' in Romance and Slavonic: grammaticalization of noun-based impersonals in European Portuguese and Bulgarian
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In previous literature, there are sporadic mentions of the uses of the word for 'person' as human impersonal or indefinite pronouns in languages situated in the outskirts of the SAE language area. However, the distribution and grammatical status of such uses remains poorly documented and there are few data-based studies on the phenomenon. The present paper examines the distribution, grammatical status and pragmatic functions of the lexeme for 'person' in European Portuguese and Bulgarian. We explore the hypothesis that the development of such impersonal uses, approaching the *man*-type impersonals found in Germanic languages, occur in these languages due to both cultural and structural factors. We suggest that the impersonal/generic uses of the second person singular may constitute a face-threatening act and is thus avoided due to pragmatic reasons in both speaker communities being studied. On the other hand, despite being classified as non-null subject languages, both European Portuguese and Bulgarian both display a high rate of expressed subjects, which might be a structural factor favoring the development impersonal pronouns. We test these hypotheses regarding European Portuguese in a corpus of speech data (ca. 77.000 words), which we contrast with similar speech data from Peninsular Spanish, a closely related language that in its present stage has no noun-based impersonal constructions. For Bulgarian, we analyze the distribution of the two impersonal constructions in a speech corpus (c. 100 000 words) of spontaneous conversations. The results are contrasted with a similar speech corpus of Croatian, another South Slavic language with no reported use of the *man*-impersonal. Based on the corpus data, we claim that there is a similar distribution between the two impersonal strategies favoring the *man*-type in both European Portuguese and Bulgarian, mirrored by an inverse distribution in Peninsular Spanish and Croatian, respectively.