

Extraction evidence on the syntax of Xhosa nominal expressions

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Because Xhosa lacks overt marking(s) of (in-)definiteness comparable to English *a* and *the*, the size and category of nominal expressions is unclear: are they DPs, NPs, or something in between? I present syntactic tests proposed in Bošković (2005, 2011) and apply them to Xhosa. I show that Xhosa does not pattern with DP-less Serbo-Croatian in having free extraction from nominals. Object marking makes possible extraction from Xhosa nominals, but only of prenominal demonstratives. I argue that (i) Xhosa nominals are phasal DPs and (ii) agreement can “unlock” a phase for extraction from its edge -- not for extraction from its interior (Van Urk & Richards 2015).