Summary: Grammaticalization of indefinite pronouns through human nouns (e.g. HOMO, PERSONA) is a very common path within the Romance languages. Catalan also knows the grammaticalization of HOMO to an indefinite pronoun (although it is used more often in rather formal texts and depicts a marked use in other texts), while today’s Catalan uses other strategies such as the passiva reflexa and third person plural. Well then, what have been the individual stages in the different languages? Why did Spanish start to use other strategies although the first steps of the HOMO-grammaticalization can be proved in medieval Spanish?

This article is the product of a comparative corpus study. The period that has been studied is the 13th century. We want to show the state of the grammaticalization in Catalan, Spanish and French within that very period, demonstrate differences regarding the context (assertive vs. non-assertive), the syntactic position and modifications, and give a possible explication for the stopped HOMO-grammaticalization in Spanish.

Keywords: Human impersonal pronouns, grammaticalization, Spanish, French, Catalan, 13th century, HOMO