

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi's important study of the argument structure of lexical projections, in particular of Noun Phrases, makes substantial advances in this relatively neglected area. Working within a Government and Binding framework, the authors present strong new arguments in favour of the existence of empty categories, and evidence for the correct understanding of word order parameters and of Chomsky's Projection Principle. In particular, they elaborate and discuss a number of tests intended to define under which lexical and syntactic conditions an empty pronominal subject may or must occur in a Noun Phrase. The levels of structural attachment of the arguments of a head noun are carefully established by supporting assumptions made in this domain with independent evidence.

As well as its theoretical advances, this book provides a descriptive analysis of nominal structure in Romance, and compares it with corresponding structure in Germanic languages. It offers a valuable introduction to Italian phrase structure.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN LINGUISTICS

General Editors: B. COMRIE, C. J. FILLMORE, R. LASS,
D. LIGHTFOOT, J. LYONS, P. H. MATTHEWS,
R. POSNER, S. ROMAINE, N. V. SMITH, N. VINCENT

The syntax of Noun Phrases

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*In this series*

-
- 22 DIETER WUNDERLICH :
*Foundations of linguistics**
- 24 ANNETTE KARMILOFF-SMITH :
*A functional approach to child language**
- 25 PER LINELL :
Psychological reality in phonology
- 26 CHRISTINE TANZ :
Studies in the acquisition of deictic terms
- 30 KRISTJAN ARNASON :
Quantity in historical phonology
- 31 JOHN LAVER :
The phonetic description of voice quality
- 32 PETER AUSTIN :
A grammar of Diyari, South Australia
- 35 MARTIN ATKINSON :
*Explanations in the study of child language development**
- 36 SUZANNE FLEISCHMAN :
The future in thought and language
- 38 WILLIAM A. FOLEY
and
ROBERT D. VAN VALIN JR :
*Functional syntax and universal grammar**
- 39 MICHAEL A. COVINGTON :
Syntactic theory in the High Middle Ages
- 40 KENNETH J. SAFIR :
Syntactic chains
- 41 J. MILLER :
Semantics and syntax
- 42 H. C. BUNT :
Mass terms and model-theoretic semantics
- 43 HEINZ J. GIEGERICH :
Metrical phonology and phonological structure
- 44 JOHN HAIMAN :
Natural syntax
- 45 BARBARA M. HORVATH :
Variation in Australian English: the sociolects of Sydney
- 46 GRANT GOODALL :
Parallel structures in syntax: coordination, causatives, and restructuring
- 47 JOHN M. ANDERSON
and
COLIN J. EWEN :
Principles of dependency phonology
- 48 BARBARA A. FOX :
Discourse structure and anaphora
- 49 LAUREL J. BRINTON :
The development of English aspectual systems
- 50 DONNA JO NAPOLI :
*Predication theory**
- 51 NOEL BURTON-ROBERTS :
The limits to debate: a revised theory of semantic presupposition

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- 52 MICHAEL S. ROCHEMONT
and
PETER W. CULICOVER:
English focus constructions and the theory of grammar
- 53 PHILIP CARR:
Linguistic realities: an autonomist metatheory for the generative enterprise
- 54 EVE SWEETSER:
From etymology to pragmatics: metaphorical and cultural aspects of semantic structure
- 55 REGINA BLASS:
Relevance relations in discourse: a study with special reference to Sissala
- 56 ANDREW CHESTERMAN:
On definiteness: a study with special reference to English and Finnish
- 57 ALESSANDRA GIORGI
and
GIUSEPPE LONGOBARDI:
The syntax of Noun Phrases: configuration, parameters and empty categories

Supplementary volumes

- BRIAN D. JOSEPH:
The synchrony and diachrony of the Balkan infinitive
- ANNETTE SCHMIDT:
Young people's Dyirbal: an example of language death from Australia
- JOHN HARRIS:
Phonological variation and change: studies in Hiberno-English
- TERENCE MCKAY:
Infinitival complement clauses in German
- STELLA MARIS BORTONI-RICARDO:
The urbanization of rural dialect speakers: a socio-linguistic study in Brazil
- RUDOLF P. BOTHA:
Form and meaning in word formation: a study of Afrikaans reduplication
- AYHAN AKSU-KOÇ:
The acquisition of aspect and modality: the case of past reference in Turkish
- MICHEAL Ó SIADHAIL:
Modern Irish: grammatical structure and dialectal variation
- ANNICK DE HOUWER:
The acquisition of two languages from birth: a case study

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE SYNTAX OF NOUN PHRASES

*Configuration, parameters and
empty categories*

ALESSANDRA GIORGI

*Istituto per la Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica,
Trento, Italy*

and

GIUSEPPE LONGOBARDI

*Associate Professor of General Linguistics,
Università di Venezia, Italy*

Foreword by Guglielmo Cinque



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.orgInformation on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521379021

© Cambridge University Press 1991

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1991

Reprinted 1996

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library**Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Giorgi, Alessandra

The syntax of Noun Phrases: configuration, parameters, and empty categories /
Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi : foreword by Guglielmo Cinque.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in linguistics : 57)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-521-37004-3. – ISBN 0-521-37902-4 (pbk.)

1. Grammar, Comparative and general – Noun phrase. 2. Grammar, Comparative and general – Syntax. 3. Generative grammar.

I. Longobardi, Giuseppe. II. Title. III. Series.

P271.G56 1991

415 – dc20 90-34062 CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-37004-2 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-37902-1 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel timetables, and other factual information given in this work is correct at the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	<i>page xi</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xiv</i>
Introduction	1
1 The study of Noun Phrases	1
2 Theoretical background	6
1 On NPs, θ-marking and c-command	22
Introduction	22
1 ‘Dummy’ prepositions	23
2 Subject–object asymmetries	26
3 On Case-marking	36
4 On some expected principle C and B violations	40
5 On ergative Nouns	46
6 Evidence from NPs for the notion of Complete Functional Complex	50
2 Extraction from NP and the proper notion of head government	57
Introduction	57
1 Cinque’s generalization	58
2 On deriving Cinque’s generalization	63
3 The Possessivization Principle	66
4 Movement through Spec vs opacity	71
5 Government into Spec	73
6 Extraction from inverted subjects	80
7 Scope ambiguities	89
8 Nouns and Verbs as governors	91
9 The Consistency Principle	95
10 Uniqueness and minimality	100
11 Specifiers and extraction in APs	105
12 The definition of government	108
Appendix: On some apparent violations of Cinque’s generalization	110
3 NP parametrization: the Head–Subject hypothesis	113
Introduction	113
1 The definition of the directionality parameter	116
	<i>ix</i>

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

2	Prenominal and postnominal Genitives	119
3	The distribution of predicative Adjectives	122
4	The distribution of referential Adjectives	125
5	Directionality in Noun compounds	129
6	Uniqueness of the argument in Spec	132
7	Control	134
8	Binding	137
9	The Affectedness Constraint	140
10	Markedness and the position of German	146
11	The possessive parameters	153
12	The structural properties of the possessive	161
	Appendix: The Head–Subject parameter across categories	171
4	Null pronominals within NPs and the syntax of DPs	176
	Introduction	176
	1 Additional arguments for the existence of null subjects within NPs	177
	2 Control of null subjects in sentences and Noun Phrases	181
	3 Control under reconstruction	185
	4 The subject with ‘unaffected’ objects	187
	5 The PRO theorem	191
	6 A pronominal empty object	192
	7 The syntax of DPs	198
	<i>Notes</i>	206
	<i>References</i>	270
	<i>Index</i>	279

Foreword

Alessandra Giorgi's and Giuseppe Longobardi's articles collected here are not merely a contribution to the syntax of the N(oun) P(hrase). They provide a general and clear introduction to many areas of Romance syntax and of the theory of empty categories in the 'principles and parameters' framework. They should thus be appreciated by both researchers and advanced students interested in these topics.

The specific merits of their contribution are many. For one thing, it is in part as a consequence of these articles, which have been circulating in prepublication form for some years, that the syntax of the NP has become again a central topic of enquiry. In the two decades following Chomsky's fundamental 'Remarks on Nominalizations', the NP had received surprisingly little attention in the literature, despite its centrality and complexity, inferior only to that of the clause itself.

Another important outcome of their work is the unprecedented variety of aspects of the internal structure of NPs which have been brought under analysis and illuminated, often for the first time.

Third and foremost is the quantity of genuine contributions to linguistic theory which emerge from this in-depth analysis of the NP.

In this brief presentation, I will limit myself to mentioning the particular theoretical contributions which, to my mind, are among the most significant results of their detailed work on NP structure. As will become clear, they are quite exceptional in number and quality.

The first concerns the internal articulation of the NP. On the basis of systematic subject/object asymmetries in the domains of Binding Theory and pronominal binding (by a quantifier), Giorgi constructs a solid case for hypothesizing a fully hierarchical structure within the NP.

From these asymmetries she also draws decisive evidence that the notion of c-command relevant to Binding Theory is the one making reference to 'the first branching category' (Reinhart 1976) rather than 'the

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Foreword*

first maximal projection' (Aoun and Sportiche 1982); an important confirmation of Chomsky's (1986b, 8) conjecture.

Besides motivating the transparency for c-command of NP-internal Case-marking prepositions (in Italian) and the existence of ergative Ns, chapter 1 contains another important theoretical contribution: an *empirical* argument to favour the 'least Complete Functional Complex' of Chomsky (1986a) as the local domain for the Binding principles A and B over previous definitions of that domain.

Longobardi's analysis of extraction from NP in chapter 2 also contains a number of non-trivial implications for linguistic theory. The obligatory movement through Spec in extraction from NP in Romance, motivated on ample empirical grounds, is shown to follow naturally from a fundamental difference in the government properties of Ns and Vs. The analysis also provides a persuasive argument for the conclusion, recently adopted by many investigators, that head government must be satisfied 'over and above antecedent government' for any non-pronominal empty category (cf. Chomsky 1986b, 83).

Longobardi also shows that the Spec of VP-adjoined maximal projections must not be taken to be properly governed (head-governed) although the maximal projections themselves are properly governed.

Two new treatments with wide-range typological implications of Ross's Left Branch Condition and Emonds's and Williams's principles blocking further canonical recursion on the non-recursive side conclude the chapter.

In chapter 3, Giorgi and Longobardi lay out a parametric theory of word-order differences between the Romance and Germanic NP. They show how various apparently unrelated differences can be traced to a single abstract directionality parameter: the different underlying position of the subject (on a left branch under Spec, in Germanic, and on a right branch in Romance). Their analysis opens up the possibility that the directionality parameter extends to the other maximal projections, with very important typological consequences for the analysis of the two language families.

At the end of the chapter, Giorgi and Longobardi single out some further, minor, parameters across Germanic and Romance which concern the categorial status of the possessive.

In this chapter, and more systematically in chapter 4, ample and fine-grained evidence is discussed for another theoretically relevant question: the presence of a PRO subject within NPs; a question often and

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-37902-1 - The Syntax of Noun Phrases: Configuration, Parameters and Empty Categories

Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Foreword

inconclusively debated in the previous literature. They manage to show that a PRO subject *can* at least be present within the NP, and, for a particular class of Ns, even that it *must* be present.

As this cursory review of only its most important contributions suggests, Alessandra Giorgi and Giuseppe Longobardi's volume will constitute a mandatory reading for anyone interested in the properties of NP structure. But it is also not hazardous to forecast that it will influence many aspects of our current conception of linguistic theory.

Guglielmo Cinque
Venice, 20 April 1989

Acknowledgments

The contents of this book were mostly inspired by the works of N. Chomsky, R. Kayne and G. Cinque; our intellectual debts to them, however, go far beyond the limits of the present work.

Special thanks for judgements, comments and encouragement are due to J. Higginbotham and M. Kenstowicz, who were visiting the Scuola Normale in Pisa at the time this research was being completed.

For the invaluable help provided by their comments and criticism on an earlier draft of the manuscript, we are also grateful to A. Battye, L. Burzio, G. Cinque, D. Lightfoot, N. Vincent and an anonymous referee.

We have also profited from discussions with and received comments and judgements from many friends and colleagues: M. Ambar, M. Anderson, J. Aoun, A. Belletti, P. Benincà, P. M. Bertinetto, H. den Besten, H. Borer, P. Bottari, L. Burzio, A. Cardinaletti, C. Ciociola, D. Delfitto, V. Demonte, V. Deprez, C. Dobrovie Sorin, L. Gràcia, A. Gorecka, G. Graffi, J. Grimshaw, J. Guéron, L. Hellan, M. L. Hernanz, T. Hoekstra, H. Hoji, A. Holmberg, K. Koch-Christensen, H. Lasnik, M. Luján, M. R. Manzini, H. Obenauer, M. Prinzhorn, D. Pesetsky, P. Pica, J. Y. Pollock, T. Reinhart, L. Renzi, E. Reuland, H. van Riemsdijk, E. Ritter, L. Rizzi, I. Roberts, M. Rochemont, T. Roeper, A. Szabolcsi, B. Schein, U. Shlonsky, D. Steriade, T. Stowell, T. Tappe, T. Taraldsen, J. Toman, E. Torrego, G. Webelhut, K. Wexler, E. Williams; to all of them we are much indebted.

Finally, the friendship of Lluïsa Gràcia, Hans Obenauer, Barry Schein and Donca Steriade has supported us throughout the preparation of this book, as well as on many other occasions. We thank them heartily.