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## CATEGORIAL FEATURES

Proposing a novel theory of parts of speech, this book discusses categorization from a methodological and theoretical point of view. It draws on discoveries and insights from a number of approaches – typology, cognitive grammar, notional approaches and generative grammar – and presents a generative, feature-based theory.

Building on up-to-date research and the latest findings and ideas in categorization and word-building, Panagiotidis combines the primacy of categorial features with a syntactic categorization approach, addressing the fundamental, but often overlooked, questions in grammatical theory.

Designed for graduate students and researchers studying grammar and syntax, this book is richly illustrated with examples from a variety of languages and explains elements and phenomena central to the nature of human language.

PHOEVOS PANAGIOTIDIS is Associate Professor of Linguistics in the Department of English Studies at the University of Cyprus.

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# CATEGORIAL FEATURES

## A GENERATIVE THEORY OF WORD CLASS CATEGORIES

PHOEVOS PANAGIOTIDIS

*University of Cyprus*



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## Preface

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The project resulting in this monograph began in 1999, when I realized that I had to answer the question of why pronouns cannot *possibly* be ‘intransitive determiners’, why it is impossible for Determiner Phrases (DPs) consisting of a ‘dangling D head’ (a turn of phrase my then PhD supervisor, Roger Hawkins, used) – that is, made of a Determiner without a nominal complement – to exist. The first answer I came up with was Categorical Deficiency, extensively argued for in Chapter 5. Back then, however, Categorical Deficiency of functional heads was just an idea, which was expounded in my (2000) paper. The case for it was limited to arguments from biuniqueness and the hope was that it would eventually capture Head Movement. The paper was delivered at the April 2000 Spring Meeting of LAGB, in the front yard of UCL, in the open: the fire alarm, this almost indispensable element of British identity and social life, went off seconds after the talk started. It did not look good. However, Categorical Deficiency did find its way into my thesis and the (2002) book version thereof.

There were more serious problems, though: I quickly realized that ‘uninterpretable [N]’ and ‘uninterpretable [V]’ mean *nothing* if we have no inkling of the actual interpretation of ‘interpretable [N]’ and ‘interpretable [V]’. This inevitably brought me to the question of the nature of categorial features and what it means to be a noun, a verb and an adjective. Surprisingly, this was an issue very few people found of any interest, so for a couple of years or so I thought I should forget about the whole thing. This outlook changed dramatically in 2003, when Mark Baker’s book was published: a generative theory of lexical categories with precise predictions about the function and interpretation of categorial features. On the one hand, I was elated: it was about time; on the other, I was disappointed: what else was there to say on lexical categories and categorial features?

Quite a lot, as it turned out. Soon after my (2005) paper *against* syntactic categorization, I had extensive discussions with Alan Bale and, later, Heidi Harley. These were the impetus of my conversion to a syntactic decomposition

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approach. At around the same time, Kleanthes Grohmann and I thought it would be a good idea to see if his Prolific Domains could be shown to be co-extensive to the categorially uniform subtrees making up mixed projections (Bresnan 1997).

It is easy to figure out that I have incurred enormous intellectual debts to a number of people; this is to be expected when working on a project stretching for well over a decade. Before naming names, however, I have to gratefully acknowledge that parts of this project were generously funded by Cyprus College (now European University Cyprus) through three successive faculty research grants, between 2003 and 2006.

Moving on to people now: Paolo Acquaviva, whom I met in 2009 at the Roots workshop in Stuttgart, made me regain faith in my project and provided me with priceless insight on where we could go after we finished with categories and how roots really mattered. I owe to David Adger some pertinent and sharp questions on Extended Projections, feature (un)interpretability and mixed projections. Relentless and detailed commentary and criticism by Elena Anagnostopoulou go a long way, and they proved valuable in my sharpening the tools and rethinking all sorts of ‘facts’. Thanks to Karlos Arregi I had to seriously consider adpositions and roots inside them. Mark Baker, talking to me in Utrecht in 2001 about the book he was preparing, and discussing nouns and verbs in later correspondence, has been an inspiration and an indispensable source of encouragement. Thank you, Hagit Borer, for asking all those tough questions on idiomaticity. I am truly indebted to Annabel Cormack, who significantly deepened (or tried to deepen) my understanding of the foundational issues behind lexical categories and their interpretation. Discussing roots and categorizers with David Embick in Philadelphia in 2010 served as a one-to-one masterclass for me. Kleanthes Grohmann – enough said: a valuable interlocutor, a source of critical remarks, a true collega. Heidi Harley, well, what can I say: patience and more patience and eagerness to discuss pretty much everything, even when I would approach it from an outlandish (I cannot really write ‘absurd’, can I?) angle, even when I would be annoyingly ignorant about things; and encouragement; and feedback. Most of what I know about Russian adjectives I owe to Svetlana Karpava and her translations. Richie Kayne has been supportive and the most wonderful person to discuss all those ‘ideas’ of mine with throughout the years. Richard Larson, thank you for inviting me to Stony Brook and for all the stimulating discussions that followed. Winnie Lechner helped me immensely in investigating the basic questions behind categorization and category and his contribution to my thinking about mixed projections was momentous and far-ranging. Alec

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Marantz took the time and the effort when I needed his sobering feedback most, when I was trying to answer too many questions on idiomaticity and root interpretation. Discussions with Sandeep Prasada, and his kindly sharing his unpublished work on sortality with me, provided a much-needed push and the opportunity to step back and reconsider nominality. Gratitude also goes to Marc Richards, the man with the phases and with even more patience. Luigi Rizzi has been a constant source of support and insight, through both gentle nudges and detailed discussions. David Willis' comments on categorial Agree and its relation to movement gave me the impetus to make the related discussion in Chapter 5 bolder and, I hope, more coherent.

I also wish to thank the following for comments and discussion, although I am sure I must have left too many people out: Mark Aronoff, Adriana Belletti, Theresa Biberauer, Lisa Cheng, Harald Clahsen, Marijke De Belder, Carlos de Cuba, Marcel den Dikken, Jan Don, Edit Doron, Joe Emonds, Claudia Felser, Anastasia Giannakidou, Liliane Haegeman, Roger Hawkins, Norbert Hornstein, Gholamhosein Karimi-Doostan, Peter Kosta, Olga Kvasova, Lisa Levinson, Pino Longobardi, Jean Lowenstamm, Rita Manzini, Ora Matushansky, Jason Merchant, Dimitris Michelioudakis, Ad Neeleman, Rolf Noyer, David Pesetsky, Andrew Radford, Ian Roberts, Peter Svenonius, George Tsoulas, Peyman Vahdati, Hans van de Koot, Henk van Riemsdijk.

I also wish to thank for their comments and feedback the audiences in Cyprus (on various occasions), Utrecht, Pisa, Potsdam, Jerusalem, Patras, Paris, Athens and Salonica (again, on various occasions), Cambridge (twice, the second time when I was kindly invited by Theresa Biberauer to teach a mini course on categories), Chicago, Stony Brook, NYU and CUNY, Florence, Siena, Essex, Amsterdam, Leiden, York, Trondheim, Lisbon and London.

Needless to say, this book would have never been completed without Joanna's constant patience and support.

My sincere gratitude goes out to the reviewers and referees who have looked at pieces of this work: from the editor and the referees at *Language* who compiled the long and extensive rejection report, a piece of writing that perhaps influenced the course of this research project as significantly as key bibliography on the topic, to anonymous referees in other journals, and to the reviewers of Cambridge University Press. Last but not least, I wish to express my gratitude to the Editorial Board of the Cambridge Studies in Linguistics for their trust, encouragement and comments.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this book with sincere and most profound gratitude to my teacher, mentor and friend Neil V. Smith.