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Argument structure of nouns in Catalan : summary

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SUMMARY

Argument Structure of Nouns in Catalan

This book analyzes the structure of noun phrases in Catalan from a theoretical and descriptive perspectives, with the main purpose of determining and systematizing the properties of the argument structure of nominals in Catalan. It also intends to offer a general view of its syntactic materialization in Catalan and to offer some explanation to the main regular patterns.

The research is based on the assumption that some names, such as verbs, project an argument structure, and noun phrase is conceived as parallel to verb phrase, with complements that are lexically required and syntactically determined by nouns. The parallelism is obvious from the perspective of generative theory, since the projection of these lexical categories is, in both cases, linked to a functional head (inflection in the case of verb phrase; determiner in the case of noun phrase). The movement of the lexical head to the functional nucleus that occurs within the noun phrase (inserted in DP) clearly resembles the one occurring within the verbal phrase (which is inserted in IP).

This word tries thus to justify the reasons why it is possible to consider that nouns admit an argument structure, as well as to describe the main characteristics of these nouns and of their arguments. In summary, it tries to provide an answer to the following question: "How do nominal arguments in Catalan syntactically materialize?" Nonetheless, in order to solve this interrogation, three secondary questions need to be answered:

a)   Which are the nouns that admit arguments in Catalan?

b)   How are nominal arguments realized in Catalan? What do realizations depend on?

c)   What is the order of the argument complements of the nouns when more than one argument appears in the same phrase?

To solve these enquiries, data from more than 200 nouns has been used. It was obtained from the Corpus textual informatitzat de la llengua catalana (CTILC), a corpus prepared as part of the lexicographical activity of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans. The selection of the nouns under analysis was based upon the lists in "Els substantius d'acció i efecte en català"

(Xavier Rull), "Los nombres eventivos no deverbales en español" (Gabriela Resnik) and "Els noms psicològics en català: un estudi descriptiu" (Olga Fullana). The selection of nouns intended thus to cover a broad range of nominal categories so as to ensure that a complete and exhaustive analysis were carried on.

As for the class of names that support argument complements, the results show that argument structure is linked to eventive structure —therefore, nouns admitting arguments are, basically, eventive names.

In relation to the argumentative structure of nouns in Catalan and the factors that have an influence over it, results show that four types of nominal arguments (external, *promoted,* internal direct and internal indirect or oblique) must be distinguished in Catalan, and that the realization of such arguments depends basically on three factors: (1) the type of argument; (2) the number of arguments made, and (3) the thematic properties and the case.

Finally, regarding form of the arguments, the work proves that the unmarked realization of the nominal arguments is that of genitive in external, promoted and internal direct arguments, whereas indirect internal or oblique arguments are usually realized by other types of prepositional phrases. However, the first three classes of arguments admit also different realizations, which are studied in detail, as well as the use of the *per part de* ('by') as an agent, the possessives and the clitics.