

## Negation and NPI composition inside DP

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### 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In European Portuguese, the indefinite quantifier *algum* ('some') is a weak positive polarity item (PPI) that seems to turn into a strong negative polarity item (NPI) when it surfaces in post-nominal position:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) a. *Algum animal vive aqui.*  
some animal lives here  
'Some animal lives here.'  
b. *Animal algum vive aqui.*  
animal some lives here  
'No animal lives here.'

Old Portuguese does not display such correlation between DP-internal word order and polar interpretation. In fact, in Old Portuguese *algum* was a bi-polar polarity item (Martins 2000) that would receive a positive or negative reading as a function of being part of a non-negative or negative sentence and independently of being prenominal or post-nominal.

'Nominal negative inversion' with *algum/alguno* is also found in Spanish (which however differs from Portuguese in some respects), but is not a grammatical option in most Romance languages.

The goal of this paper is threefold. I will seek to understand how word order brings up the polar contrast illustrated in (1) above, how the negative interpretation associated with post-nominal *algum* arose in the course of time, and how exactly Portuguese and Spanish compare to each other with respect to the innovative structure. The three questions are naturally interrelated. The specific contours of the connection will hopefully be made clear throughout the paper.

I will propose that the sequence [N+*algum*] in contemporary European Portuguese is an NPI built in the syntax through incorporation of the noun and the indefinite quantifier in a DP-internal abstract negative head positioned above NumP, as illustrated in (2). Cyclic head-movement determines that N carries along to the incorporation site the indefinite quantifier

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<sup>2</sup> Adopting the typology of polarity items put forth in Martins (2000), I will be using the term "NPI" to cover both "weak NPIs" and "strong NPIs", the latter corresponding to what many authors strictly designate as "n-words". This is a terminological option with no particular theoretical implications with respect to the matters discussed in the paper.



2. ‘Nominal negative inversion’ in European Portuguese

The indefinite quantifier *algum* entails a positive or a negative interpretation depending on whether it surfaces in prenominal or post-nominal position. The examples in (4) and (5) illustrate how word order lies behind the contrast in interpretation and take as term of comparison the regular PPI/NPI pair *alguém/ninguém* (‘somebody/nobody’).

- (4) a. *Alguém* vive aqui.  
           somebody lives here.  
       b. *Ninguém* vive aqui.  
           nobody lives here
- (5) a. *Algum animal* vive aqui.  
           some animal lives here.  
           ‘Some animal lives here.’  
       b. *Animal algum* vive aqui.  
           animal some lives here  
           ‘No animal lives here.’

As for the interaction with sentential-negation, the inverted sequence [N+*algum*] displays the preverbal/postverbal asymmetry characteristic of European Portuguese n-words, so it obligatorily co-occurs with the predicative negation marker *não* (‘not’) when postverbal but excludes the predicative negation marker when preverbal, as illustrated by (6) and (7).

- (6) a. *Não* vive aqui *ninguém*.  
           not lives here nobody  
       b. \**Vive* aqui *ninguém*.  
           lives here nobody  
       c. *Ninguém* vive aqui.  
           nobody lives here  
       d. \**Ninguém* *não* vive aqui.  
           nobody not lives here  
           ‘Nobody lives here.’
- (7) a. *Não* vive aqui *animal algum*.  
           not lives here animal some  
       b. \**Vive* aqui *animal algum*.  
           lives here animal some  
       c. *Animal algum* vive aqui  
           animal some lives here  
       d. \**Animal algum* *não* vive aqui.  
           animal some not lives here  
           ‘No animal lives here.’

Like the pronominal n-word *ninguém* (‘nobody’), but unlike the adjectival n-word *nenhum* (‘not one’), post-nominal *algum* blocks plural inflection, as exemplified in (8). Moreover, it must be strictly adjacent to the noun, as shown in (9).

- (8) a. *Alguns animais* vivem aqui.  
 some-PL animals live-3PL here  
 ‘Some animals live here.’  
 b. \**Animais alguns* vivem aqui.  
 animals some-PL live-3PL here  
 ‘No animal lives here.’
- (9) a. \**Animal selvagem algum* vive aqui.  
 animal wild some lives here  
 ‘No wild animal lives here.’  
 b. \**Animal do deserto algum* vive aqui.  
 animal of-the desert some lives here  
 ‘No animal of the desert lives here.’

All the facts can be shown to essentially follow from the structural analysis given in (2) above. The sequence [N+*algum*] behaves like strong NPIs such as *ninguém* (‘nobody’) because it is in fact an NPI built in the syntax with the contribution of the DP-internal Neg-head. Plural inflection is blocked because, by hypothesis, whenever NegP is part of the DP, Pl(ural)P is not projected. The strict adjacency requirement between the noun and post-nominal *algum* is the regular outcome of cyclic head movement.<sup>5</sup> I will now introduce further empirical evidence to support the idea that whenever ‘nominal negative inversion’ takes place, the sequence [N+*algum*] is the NPI, not the indefinite quantifier by itself.

The availability of the DP internal negative head makes ‘nominal negative inversion’ extensible to the negative indefinite *nenhum* (‘not one’). In what follows, I will look at the parallel grammatical effects of word order alternation for *algum* and *nenhum*, though only the former exhibits polarity reversal dependent on word order.<sup>6</sup>

#### A) Pronouns vs. full DPs

Post-nominal *algum* and post-nominal *nenhum* are allowed in contexts that require pronominal quantifiers (if available) and exclude full DP quantificational expressions. The fact that the sequences displaying ‘nominal negative inversion’ (i.e. [N+*algum*]/[N+*nenhum*]) pattern with pronouns is evidence in favor of their analysis as a NPI unit composed in the syntax.

- (10) [A] O que é que o João gosta de ler?  
 the what is that the João enjoys of read  
 ‘What does João enjoy reading?’

<sup>5</sup> I will not discuss in this paper the syntax of adjectives, but the simpler assumption would be that adjectives are always maximal projections, not heads – cf. Alexiadou, Haegeman and Stavrou (2007) for references.

<sup>6</sup> The NPI *nenhum* can be post-nominal in a structure that does not involve ‘nominal negative inversion’ (therefore does not include NegP), but solely emphasis on the NPI. In this paper, I will not pay attention to this other DP-structure displaying what could be called ‘emphatic inversion’. This type of inversion is also available in Spanish, while ‘nominal negative inversion’ with *nenhum* is not.

- [B] a. Ele não lê *nada*.  
 he not reads nothing  
 b. \*Ele não lê *nenhuma coisa*.  
 he not reads not-one thing  
 c. Ele não lê *coisa nenhuma*.  
 he not reads thing not-one  
 d. Ele não lê *coisa alguma*.  
 he not reads thing some  
 e. \*Ele não lê *alguma coisa*.  
 he not reads some thing  
 ‘He doesn’t read anything.’

B) Negative answers to polar questions

The sequences [N+*algum*]/[N+*nenhum*] may constitute a well-formed negative answer to a polar question, while the non-inverted sequences are excluded in the same context. The contrast can be explained under the view that ‘nominal negative inversion’ joins the indefinite quantifier and the noun into a single negative word that may then enter the paradigm of possible polar answers (depending on the degree of referential vagueness of the noun).

- (11) [A] Vais lá amanhã?  
 go-2SG there tomorrow  
 ‘Are you going there tomorrow?’  
 [B] a. Não.  
 No.  
 b. De *maneira nenhuma*.  
 of manner not-one  
 c. De *forma alguma*  
 of form some  
 d. \*De *nenhuma maneira*.  
 of not-one manner  
 e. \*De *alguma forma*.  
 of some forma  
 ‘Not at all.’

C) Count vs. mass nouns

‘Nominal negative inversion’ with *algum* and *nenhum* interacts with the mass/count distinction on nouns, apparently blocking the count interpretation, as exemplified in (12) and (13) below.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Judgments vary across speakers with respect to the requirement that ‘nominal negative inversion’ obtains with mass nouns such as ‘fear’, ‘luck’, ‘water’. For speakers that judge sentences (i-b), (i-d) and (ii-b) as ungrammatical, the availability of the NPI unit formed in the syntax seems to have the same type of blocking effect attested in example (10-B-b) above. The judgments given below are my own.

- (i) a. Não temos {*medo nenhum/sorte nenhuma*}.  
 not have-1PL {fear not-one/luck not-one}  
 b. \*Não temos {*nenhum medo/nenhuma sorte*}  
 not have-1PL {not-one fear/not-one luck}.  
 c. Não temos {*medo algum/sorte alguma*}.  
 not have-1PL {fear some/luck some}

The fact that ‘nominal negative inversion’ makes nouns be interpreted as mass can be derived as a consequence of the absence of the head Pl(ural) in the DP structure. According to Borer (2005) nouns denote masses by default. That is to say, in the absence of any grammatical specification contributed by syntactic structure above NP, nouns are unspecified for any properties, including the mass/count property, and are interpreted by default as mass. It is the Pl(ural)/Cl(assifier) head that has the function of portioning-out noun’s denotations making the count interpretation available. Whenever Pl(ural)/Cl(assifier) is absent, nouns are interpreted as mass.<sup>8</sup>

- (12) a. A chave não entra na fechadura de  
the key not enters in the lock of  
*nenhuma maneira*.  
not-one way  
‘The key doesn’t enter in the lock in any possible way/position.’
- b. A chave não entra na fechadura de  
the key not enters in-the lock of  
*maneira {nenhuma/alguma}*.  
way {not-one/some}  
‘The key doesn’t enter in the lock at all.’
- (13) a. Ele não come *nenhuma fruta* (excepto  
he not eats any fruit (except  
*cerejas*).  
cherries)  
‘He doesn’t eat any kind of fruit (except cherries).’
- b. Ele não come *fruta {nenhuma/alguma}*.  
he not eats fruit {not-one/some}.  
(#excepto *cerejas*).  
(#except cherries)  
‘He doesn’t eat fruit at all (except cherries)’

#### D) Gradable quantifiers

Quantifiers like *muitos* ‘many’ and *poucos* ‘few’ admit degree modification. In Portuguese also *nada* can behave as a gradable quantifier (see example (14)). In the sequence [*coisa+alguma*], [*coisa+nenhuma*], the noun *coisa* (‘thing’) can be modified by

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- d. \*Não temos {*algum medo/alguma sorte*}.  
not have-1PL {some fear/some luck}  
‘We don’t have any fear/luck (at all).’
- (ii) a. As flores não têm *água nenhuma*  
the flowers not have water not-any
- b. \*As flores não têm *nenhuma água*.  
the flowers not have not-one water  
‘There is no water (at all) in the flowers’ vase.’

<sup>8</sup> The Number Phrase (or Quantity Phrase) is responsible for the assignment of quantity to stuff (i.e. masses) or for the counting of portioned-out stuff. ‘Cl(assifier)’ is in Borer’s system what we are calling here ‘Pl(ural)’.

the superlative suffix *-íssima* ('-est'), deriving *coisíssima nenhuma* (although *\*coisíssima* is ill-formed by itself). Crucially, the sequence *\*nenhuma coisíssima*, with pronominal *nenhum*, is sharply unacceptable (see examples (15)-(17)). These data support the idea that 'nominal negative inversion' with *algum/nenhum* gives rise to a NPI unit that changes some of the original properties of its constitutive parts.

- (14) a. Ainda não fiz *nadíssima!*  
yet not did-1SG nothing-est  
'I haven't done anything at all yet!'  
b. Não sabe nada, *nadíssima.*  
not knows nothing nothing-est  
'He doesn't know anything, anything at all.'
- (15) a. Nunca recebi favor do Sr. D. Pedro II  
never received-1SG favor of-the Sir Pedro II  
nem ele me deve *coisíssima alguma.*  
nor he me-DAT owe thing-est some  
'I have never been favored by the king *D. Pedro II*,  
neither does he owe me anything at all.'  
b. Não preciso dela para *coisíssima alguma.*  
not need-1SG her for thing-est some  
'I do not need her for anything at all.'  
c. Não têm préstimo para *coisíssima nenhuma.*  
not have utility for thing-est not-one  
'They are of no use at all.'
- (*Corpus do Português*, 19th/20th centuries)
- (16) a. Não senti dores, não senti nada.  
not felt-1SG pains not felt-1SG nothing  
Não senti *coisíssima nenhuma.*  
not felt-1SG thing-est not-one  
'I didn't feel pain, didn't feel anything. I didn't feel  
anything at all.'  
b. Não me tem doído *coisíssima nenhuma.*  
not me has ached thing-est not-one  
'I haven't been feeling any aches or pains anywhere.'
- (CORDIAL-SIN)
- (17) a. *\*Não me tem doído nenhuma coisíssima.*  
not me has ached not-one thing-est  
'I haven't been feeling any aches or pains anywhere.'  
b. *\*Não têm préstimo para nenhuma coisíssima.*  
not have utility for not-one thing-est  
'They are of no use at all.'

### 3. From Old Portuguese to Modern Portuguese

Old Portuguese (i.e. the Portuguese language up to the 16<sup>th</sup> century) does not display the correlation between DP-internal

word order and polar interpretation described in the previous sections. In Old Portuguese *algum* ('some') was a bi-polar polarity item (Martins 2000) that would receive a positive or negative reading as a function of being part of a non-negative or a negative sentence, and independently of being prenominal or post-nominal. Examples (18a-b) show that *algum* could be prenominal or post-nominal and receive a positive interpretation. Examples (19a-b) illustrate how it could as well have a negative interpretation irrespective of word order.

- (18) a. Se aqui ficardes em esta furesta, taste  
 if here stay-2PL in this forest soon  
 vos poderia v̄ir ende mal *algũũ*  
 you-DAT could come from-that harm some  
 'If you stay here in this forest any longer, soon some harm may come to you.'  
 (*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 64)
- b. o coraçom me diz que vos  
 the heart me-DAT tells that you-DAT  
 há de contecer *algũũ mal*  
 is to happen some harm  
 'The heart tells me that some harm is coming to you.'  
 (*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 227)
- (19) a. E ele *nom* respondeu a *cousa algũa* que  
 and he not answered to thing some that  
 lhe dissesse, ca era mui sanhudo  
 him would-say-3SG because was very angry  
 'He did not answer to anything that he was asked because he was so angry.'  
 (*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 82)
- b. outra vez *nom* façades tam gram braveza nem  
 other time not do-2PL so great violence nor  
 tam gram crueza como fezestes, ca  
 so great cruelty as did-2PL because  
*nom* vos pode ende v̄ir *algũũ*  
 not you-DAT can from-that come some  
*bem*, mas todo mal  
 good but all evil  
 'Don't be so wild and cruel next time since that will not bring you any good, but only evil.'  
 (*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 146)

The emergence of 'nominal negative inversion' with *algum* appears to be a side effect of a series of changes that led to the loss of the Old Portuguese 'free inversion' attested in (18)-(19) and had the general effect of tying the polar value of *algum* to a particular placement with respect to the noun.

After the 14<sup>th</sup> century the availability of bare nouns was mostly restricted to singular mass nouns and plurals. This had



the effect of excluding (or strongly reducing the occurrence of) sentences like (20a-c) below. As a result of the change, words with a ‘vague’ referential import like *cousa/rem* (‘thing’), *gente* (‘people’), *omem* (‘man’), that could alternate freely with NPIs like *nada* (‘anything’) and *nenhum* (‘anybody’) under the scope of negation (see (21)) either gradually decreased in their use or started to co-occur more frequently with an indefinite quantifier, as shown in (22). The rise in frequency of sentences like (22a) – with post-nominal *algum* – made them salient enough for ulterior reanalysis.

- (20) a. E eu vos levarei a lugar u  
and I you will-take to place where  
pensarám. bem de vós  
will-think-3PL good of you  
‘I will take you to a place where people will value you.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 131)
- b. Nom ia a lugar que nom achasse  
not went-3SG to place that not found-3SG  
novas que dũus que doutros  
news that of-one-PL that of-others  
‘He wouldn’t go to any place where he wouldn’t have news of (some of) them.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 147)
- c. Nunca achei cavaleiro, fora el, que me  
never met knight except him that me  
vencesse  
defeated  
‘I have never come across a knight that could defeat me, except him.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 201)
- (21) a. E caeu em terra morta que nom  
and felt-3SG in ground dead that not  
fallou mais *cousa*.  
spoke-3SG more thing  
‘And she felt dead so that she wasn’t able to say anything else.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 95)
- b. E ainda mais digo que jamais nom  
and still more say-1SG that never not  
tornarei aa corte por *cousa*  
will-come-3SG to-the court for thing  
que avenha  
that happens  
‘And I will never come back in court for any reason whatsoever.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 36)

- c. Nom comi    nem bevi            nem achei    gente  
not ate-1SG nor drank-1SG nor met-1SG people  
que me        quisesse    receber    em sua  
that me-ACC want-3SG take-INFIN into their  
companha.  
company  
‘I was never able to eat or drink, neither have I met  
anybody who would give me any shelter.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 318-19)
- d. houve tam gram ledice        que o nom poderia  
had-1SG so big happiness that it not could  
homem contar  
man tell-INFIN  
‘He showed such great happiness that it is impossible  
to anybody to describe it.’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 233)
- (22) a. e desy êtrarão            pella        casa    muyto  
and then entered-3PL across-the house very  
maravilhados, porque nella não viram *cousa*  
marveled because in-it not saw-3PL thing  
*allgũa*  
some  
‘As they entered the house, they were astonished to  
find out that it was empty.’  
(*Conde D. Pedro de Meneses*. Brocardo 1997: 251)
- b. primeiramemte o serviço de Deus que outra  
first the service of God than other  
*allgũa coisa*  
some thing  
‘The service of God is to be put before any other  
thing.’  
(*Conde D. Pedro de Meneses*. Brocardo 1997: 204)
- c. ate’quy ão temos feita *nenhũa coisa*  
until-here not have-1PL done not-one thing  
em que possamos (...) ser prezados  
in that can-1PL be praised  
‘Up until now, we have not done anything that  
deserves to be praised.’  
(*Conde D. Pedro de Meneses*. Brocardo 1997: 387)
- d. E porque ão vyram *cousa nenhũa* (...)  
and because not saw-3PL thing not-one  
torno-se a galliota  
returned-3SG-himself to-the boat  
‘And because they did not see anything, he went back  
to the boat.’  
(*Conde D. Pedro de Meneses*. Brocardo 1997: 380-81)

By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the ‘free’ post-nominal placement of the indefinite quantifier *algum* was lost, so

sentences like (23b) below ceased to be a grammatical option. This was maybe the effect of the loss of middle scrambling both at the clausal and the DP level (cf. Martins 2002).<sup>9</sup> Later, the earlier bi-polar polarity items like *algum* evolved to weak PPIs, as part of a more general drift of both positive and negative polarity items (Martins 2000), and were therefore excluded from negative-concord contexts, so sentences like (23c) disappeared as well.

- (23) a. Des onte ao serão ouvemos *algũa folga*  
 since yesterday at night had-1PL some rest  
 ‘Since yesterday night, we had some rest.’
- b. Des omte ao serão ouvemos *folga algũa*  
 since yesterday at night had-1PL rest some  
 ‘Since yesterday night, we had some rest.’
- c. Des omte ao serão *não* ouvemos *algũa*  
 since yesterday at night not had-1PL some  
*folga*  
 rest  
 ‘Since yesterday night, we did not have any rest.’
- d. Des omte ao serão *não* ouvemos *folga*  
 since yesterday at night not had-1PL rest  
*algũa*  
 some  
 ‘Since yesterday night, we did not have any rest.’  
 (Examples adapted from *Conde D. Pedro de Meneses*. Brocardo 1997)

The loss of ‘free inversion’ with *algum* would have made sentences like (23d) also unavailable had a reanalysis process

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<sup>9</sup> The change also affected the indefinite *outro/outros* (‘other/others’), which is rarely attested in post-nominal position after the sixteenth century.

In the sixteenth century we can still find examples of post-nominal *algum* with positive meaning (that is to say, sentences like (23b)), which disappear when ‘free inversion’ is lost:

- (i) Desta gente *refresco* *algum* tomámos  
 from-this people refreshment some had-1PL  
 e do rio fresca água  
 and from-the river fresh water  
 ‘This people offered us some refreshment, and we got some fresh water from the river.’  
 (*Corpus do Português*: Luís de Camões).
- (ii) Que chove quando não quero / e faz  
 that rains when not want-1SG and does  
 um sol das estrelas / quando *chuva alguma*  
 a sun of-the stars when rain some  
 espero  
 want-1SG  
 ‘It just rains when I do not want (because it damages the crops) and is sunny and dry when some rain would really be needed.’ (*Corpus do Português*: Gil Vicente).

not taken place.<sup>10</sup> Under the analysis put forth in this paper, the fact that UG makes available a Neg-head as part of the functional structure of the DP allowed the reanalysis of the Old Portuguese structure with NP-scrambling represented in (24) as the European Portuguese structure with ‘nominal negative inversion’ represented in (25).<sup>11</sup> The change is plausible from an acquisition perspective as it does not imply any backtracking from earlier decisions (cf. Fodor (1998), Dresher (1999), Lightfoot (1991, 1999)).<sup>12</sup>

(24) Nom falou [DP... [NumP [NP *cousa*]<sub>i</sub> [Num’ *alguma*  
not spoke thing some  
[NP ~~*cousa*~~<sub>i</sub> ] ] ] ]

(25) Não disse [DP... [NegP [Neg’ [ *coisa*<sub>i</sub>*alguma*]<sub>k</sub> [NumP [Num’  
not spoke thing some  
[~~*coisa*~~<sub>i</sub> *alguma* ]<sub>k</sub> [NP ~~*coisa*~~<sub>i</sub> ] ] ] ] ] ]  
‘She didn’t say anything.’

#### 4. Contrasting Portuguese with Spanish

In Spanish, negative inversion with *alguno* (‘some’) is available and blocks plural inflection like in Portuguese, as illustrated in (26) and (27).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> I am well aware that I am oversimplifying when referring to Old Portuguese inversion with *algum* as ‘free inversion. Nonetheless, space considerations preclude me from further develop this point here.

<sup>11</sup> As expected under the proposed analysis, the Old Portuguese type of nominal inversion represented in (24) did not block plural inflection:

- (i) a. De meu padre sabedes ou ouvistes  
of my father know-2PL or heard-2PL  
*novas algũas?*  
news some-FEM-PL  
‘Have you heard of my father?’  
(*Demanda do Santo Graal*. Nunes 2005: 81)
- b. e que roubavam nossos regnos e  
and that robbed-3PL our kingdoms and  
faziam outras *coussas algũas* desonestas  
did-3PL other things some-PL dishonest  
‘They would rob the kingdom and do some other dishonest things.’  
(*Corpus do Português*: fifteenth century)

<sup>12</sup> When the structure represented in (24) ceased to be acquired, there were two logical possibilities. Either it would be reanalyzed or would be lost. Portuguese displays the former path, Galician and Catalan the latter. So contemporary Galician and Catalan totally exclude post-nominal *algún/algun*, although Old Galician and Old Catalan allowed it. As pointed out to me by Manuel Pérez Saldanya, this may well be a consequence of the particular unfavorable sociolinguistic conditions of Galician and Catalan in sixteenth century Iberia and afterwards, as the structures we are discussing presumably mostly belonged to high register style.

<sup>13</sup> The examples in this section come from Rigau (1999:337), Sánchez-Lopez (1999:2597-2598), and Montse Batllori (p.c.).

Besides negation proper, also ‘modal’/‘weak negative’ contexts (cf. Bosque (1996), Giannakidou (1994, 1997), Milner (1979), van der Wouden (1997), among others) license post-nominal *alguno*, as illustrated below.

- (26) a. No he visto *película alguna* esta semana  
 not have-1SG seen movie some this week  
 I haven't watched any movie this week.'
- b. La *asamblea* no planteó *problema alguno*  
 the assembly not raised problem some  
 a la propuesta.  
 to the proposal  
 'The assembly didn't raise any objection against the proposal.'
- (27) a. No hay *solución alguna* para ese dilema.  
 not is solution some for that dilemma  
 'There is no solution for such dilemma.'
- b. \*No hay *soluciones algunas* para ese dilema.  
 not is solutions some-PL for that dilemma  
 'There aren't any solutions for such dilemma.'

Spanish crucially diverges from Portuguese, however, in that 'nominal negative inversion' with *alguno* is only licensed under the scope of negation, typically in post-verbal position, as illustrated in (28) and (29).<sup>14</sup>

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This is not the case in contemporary European Portuguese because n-words, including [N+*algun*] systematically behave as strong NPIs (see Martins 2000). In seventeenth and eighteenth century Portuguese, however, the Spanish patterns exemplified in (i) below are also attested.

- (i) a. Jamás mi país le ha prohibido a  
 never my country him-DAT has forbidden to  
*nadie* que viaje a *lugar alguno* que desee.  
 nobody that travel to place some that wish  
 'My country has never forbidden anyone to travel anywhere one may wish.'
- b. Durante la peregrinación, constantemente nos  
 during the pilgrimage constantly ourselves  
 sacábamos nuestros zapatos (...) antes de  
 took-off-1PL our shoes before to  
 entrar a *lugar alguno*  
 enter in place some  
 'Throughout the pilgrimage, we would always take our shoes off before entering any (sacred) place.'
- c. tendrá, por mala que sea, más  
 it-will-have though bad that it-may-be, more  
 entradas que *otra alguna*  
 entrances than other some  
 'Poorly acted as it may be, it will still have more public than any other (theater representations).'

(Google search, 30/12/2010)

<sup>14</sup> Spanish also differs from Portuguese in that it does not impose strict adjacency between post-nominal *alguno* and the noun. While prepositional modifiers are not allowed to intervene between the noun and the indefinite quantifier (see (i) below), evaluative adjectives may and relational adjectives must intervene (see (ii) and (iii) below). I will not deal here with the issue of adjectives. A possible way to derive the contrast between Spanish and Portuguese is to take Spanish *alguno* to merge in Spec,NumP

- (28) a. No fue necesaria *ayuda alguna*.  
 not was necessary help some  
 b. \*Ayuda alguna (no) fue necesaria.  
 help some (not) was necessary  
 ‘It wasn’t necessary any help.’

- (29) a. No vive aquí *persona alguna*.  
 not lives here person some  
 b. \*Persona alguna (no) vive aquí.  
 person some (not) lives here  
 ‘Nobody lives here.’

The distribution of [N+*alguno*] in Spanish, typically occurring in postverbal position, is reminiscent of the distribution of bare nouns discussed by Longobardi (1994). A hypothesis to account for the contrast between Portuguese and Spanish then comes to mind. The restricted distribution of [N+*alguno*] in Spanish would be a consequence of the need to license the null Determiner in a structure like (2) above. Since European Portuguese escapes such restriction, that would indicate that in Portuguese Neg-to-D movement can take place to fill in the D position. If this hypothesis can be shown to be on the right track, in European Portuguese the final step of the

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and therefore be left behind when the noun cyclically moves to incorporate in the DP-internal Neg-head.

- (i) a. No conozco libro alguno de matemáticas  
 not know-1SG book some of mathematics  
 que discuta este teorema.  
 that discusses this theorem  
 b. \*No conosco libro de matemáticas alguno  
 not know-1SG book of mathematics some  
 que discuta este teorema.  
 that discusses this theorem  
 ‘I am not aware of any book of mathematics that might discuss this theorem.’
- (ii) a. No asistí a conferencia alguna  
 not attended-1SG to lecture some  
 interesante.  
 interesting  
 b. No asistí a conferencia interesante  
 not attended-1SG to lecture interesting  
 alguna.  
 some  
 ‘I did not attend any worthy lecture.’
- (iii) a. \*No hay avería alguna eléctrica en  
 not is failure some electrical in  
 este barrio.  
 this neighborhood  
 b. No hay avería eléctrica alguna en este .  
 not is failure electrical some in this  
 barrio  
 neighborhood  
 ‘There isn’t any electrical failure in this neighborhood.’

change will be a case of upward reanalysis along the functional hierarchy in the sense of Roberts and Roussou (2003).

Now, if the change in Portuguese in fact proceeds in two steps, we expect to find evidence that at some point in the course of time, Portuguese was like contemporary Spanish. This prediction is born out as seventeenth and early eighteenth century European Portuguese behaves just like Spanish in not allowing the sequence [N+*algum*] except when it is licensed by negation (or related ‘modal’ contexts) in complement position, namely post-verbally or after the preposition *sem* ‘without’.

The *Corpus do Português* indicates that the second step of the change occurred after the seventeenth century. I could not find any example of post-nominal *algum* in preverbal subject position or other position outside the scope of negation throughout the seventeenth century (although the corpus provides 470 examples of post-nominal *algum* for this period). Very few examples of post-nominal *algum* outside the scope of negation appear in the eighteenth century. One has to wait until the nineteenth century to easily find attestations of the innovation.<sup>15</sup> Eighteenth and nineteenth century examples are given in (30) and (31) respectively. Bear in mind that all these sentences are currently excluded in Spanish.<sup>16</sup>

- (30) *Coisa alguma* há mais deliciosa que a  
thing some there-is more delicious than the

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<sup>15</sup> The data found in the diary of *Conde da Ericeira*, ranging from 1729 to 1737, point in the same direction (cf. Lisboa, Miranda and Oliveira (2002, 2005, 2007)), showing that in the first decades of the eighteenth century the split between Portuguese and Spanish had not become visible yet. There are 57 occurrences of post-nominal *algum* in the diary (among the total number of 1.064 occurrences of *algum*) and no single example of post-nominal *algum* except in complement position under the scope of negation.

<sup>16</sup> The fact that at a certain point in its diachronic development, Portuguese was like contemporary Spanish has two interesting consequences: (i) it enables us to attain a better understanding of seventeenth and early eighteenth century Portuguese by exploring contemporary Spanish; (ii) it comes out as a natural result that the grammar of contemporary European Portuguese that I have described may not be shared by all speakers. In fact, some European Portuguese speaker’s judgments fit better within a Spanish-type grammar. This more conservative European Portuguese grammar seems however to be marginal. The data found in the *Corpus do Português* show that there are no occurrences of post-nominal *algum* but adjacent to the noun in the twentieth century, once Brazilian Portuguese texts are excluded. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a few examples appear, as exemplified in (i) below.

- (i) *sem nenhuma da solenidade do antigo,*  
without none of-the solemnity of-the ancient  
*nem elegância moderna alguma*  
nor elegance modern some  
‘Without any of the ancient solemnity or modern refinement.’  
(*Corpus do Português*: Almeida Garrett, 19th century)

sua alegria, nem mais penetrante que a sua  
her joy nor more penetrating than the her  
ternura.

tenderness

‘There is nothing more pleasant than her joy nor more moving than her tenderness.’

(*Corpus do Português*: eighteenth century)

(31) a. *Coisa alguma* escapou!

thing some escaped

‘Nothing was left.’

b. *Namorado algum*, dos mais ardentes,

lover some of-the more ardent

palpitou com tanta febre no antegozo

palpitated with such fever in-the anticipation

de uma aventura.

of an adventure

‘No lover was ever so deeply excited with the anticipation of an affair.’

c. *Em época alguma* tinham os criados

in time some had the servants

conhecido Maurício tão caseiro.

known Maurício so domestic

‘Never before had the servants seen Maurício so domestic.’

(*Corpus do Português*: nineteenth century)

In the turn from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, just after the second step of the change comes into view and sets Portuguese apart from Spanish, there is a striking rise in frequency of post-nominal *nenhum* in European Portuguese. From 16% of the total number of examples of adjectival *nenhum* in the eighteenth century, the frequency of the post-nominal placement raises to 43% in the nineteenth century and approaches 50% in the twentieth century, in *Corpus do Português*. This rate reaches up to 68% in the corpus FLY, a corpus of personal letters written in the context of war, migration, imprisonment and exile from years 1900 to 1974. These data appear to reveal that once Neg-to-D movement is available in European Portuguese grammar, its range extends from *algum* to *nenhum*. At this point, inversion with the latter (i.e. [N+*nenhum*]) becomes an unmarked option, displaying the morphological and semantic effects discussed in section 2.

As expected, Spanish does not behave like Portuguese with respect to post-nominal *nenhum/ninguno*. Not only it does not display the type of word order effects discussed in section 2 (compare (11) above with (32) below, for example) but it only allows post-nominal *ninguno* as a marked option (some type of extraposition) with an emphatic import, as illustrated in (33).



Much is left to be said with respect to nominal inversion with *nenhum* in Portuguese, which is here identified as a topic for future research.

- (32) [A] Vas      allá   mañana?                   (Spanish)  
           go-2SG there tomorrow  
           ‘Are you going there tomorrow?’  
       [B] a. \*De   manera   ninguna.  
               of   manner not-one  
           b. De   ninguna   manera.  
               of   not-one   manner  
           ‘Not at all.’
- (33) a. No   tenemos   ningún   miedo.                   (Spanish)  
           not   have-1PL   not-one   fear  
       b. No   tenemos   miedo   ninguno. (marked/emphatic)  
           not   have-1PL.   fear   not-one  
           ‘We don’t have any fear (at all).’

5. Conclusion, with a brief note on Italian and French  
 This paper starts from the observation that in contemporary European Portuguese there is a correlation between DP-internal word order and polar interpretation when the polarity item *algum* (‘some’) is involved – e.g. *algum animal* (‘some animal’) vs. *animal algum* (‘no animal’). So while in prenominal position *algum* is a regular weak PPI, post-nominal *algum* can only have a negative interpretation (‘no’). To be more precise, ‘nominal negative inversion’ with *algum* gives rise to the unit [N+*algum*] that behaves as a strong NPI. This was not the case in Old Portuguese, and more generally in Old Romance. The investigation pursued in the present paper addressed the following questions: 1. How is the NPI [N+*algum*] formed in the syntax? 2. How has the negative interpretation associated with post-nominal *algum* arisen in the course of time? 3. How exactly Portuguese and Spanish compare to each other with respect to the innovative structure? The structural representations showed in (34) to (36) below summarize the proposed answers. While ‘free inversion’ in Old Portuguese (and presumably Old Romance in general) would be a type of scrambling at the DP-level (see (34)), with no specific effect on polar interpretation, the reanalysis of this former DP-structure (often attested under the scope of sentential negation) as a DP containing a Neg-head gave rise to ‘nominal negative inversion’ (see (35)), hence tying the polar value of *algum* to a particular placement with respect to the noun. This initial step of the change is shared by Portuguese and Spanish. Later, European Portuguese evolved a step more and diverged from Spanish. This second step of the change is shown in (36) and can be understood as a case of upward



Italian is particularly interesting because only singular *alcuno* turned into an NPI, while plural *alcuni* is still a PPI. Under the hypothesis that ‘nominal negative inversion’ with *alcuno* was available at some stage in the history of Italian and played a role in the change, the facts fall into place, because the restriction to singular is precisely an effect of the particular structure involved in ‘nominal negative inversion’, with DP-internal NegP blocking the projection of Pl(ural)P.

The Italian data displayed below illustrate the polarity contrast between *alcun(o)* (sg., ‘any’) and *alcuni* (pl., ‘some’). Moreover, the data show that *alcuno* must be licensed under the scope of negation (like post-nominal *alguno* in Spanish), and that *alcun(o)* (‘any’) differently from *alcuni* (‘some’) can be post-nominal (though it does not display the type of word-order-dependent contrasts discussed in section 2 with respect to European Portuguese).

- (37) a. *Alcuni animali* vivono qui.  
           some-PL animals live-3PL here  
       b. Qui vivono *alcuni animali*.  
           here live-3PL some-PL animals  
       c. *Alcuni animali* non vivono qui.  
           some-PL animals not live-3PL here  
       d. \**Animali alcuni* vivono qui.  
           animals some-PL live-3PL here  
       e. \*Qui non vivono *alcuni animali*.  
           here non live-3PL animals some-PL  
           ‘Some animals {live/don’t live} here.’
- (38) a. Qui non vive *alcun mammifero*.  
           here not lives any-SG mammal  
           ‘No mammal lives here.’  
       b. Non viveva lì *animale alcuno*.  
           not lived there animal any-SG  
           ‘No animal lived there.’
- (39) b. Non c’è stata *alcuna obiezione*.  
           not there-is been any-FEM-SG objection  
       c. Non c’è stata *obiezione alcuna*.  
           not there-is been objection any-FEM-SG  
           ‘There wasn’t any objection.’
- (40) a. \**Alcun mammifero* (non) vive qui.  
           ALCUN mammal (not) lives here  
       b. \**Mammifero alcuno* (non) vive qui.  
           mammal ALCUNO (not) lives here  
           ‘{Some/No} animal lives here.’

Martins, A. M. 2015. Negation and NPI composition inside DP. In: Theresa Biberauer & George Walkden (eds.), *Syntax over Time: Lexical, Morphological and Information-Structural Interactions*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press. 102-122.

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