UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

FACULDADE DE LETRAS

BARE NOUNS IN EUROPEAN PORTUGUESE

Nuno João Verdial Rosa Soares

Orientadoras: Professora Doutora Maria Inês Pedrosa da Silva Duarte

Professora Doutora Maria de Fátima Favarrica Pimenta de Oliveira

Tese especialmente elaborada para obtenção do grau de Doutor no ramo de Linguística, na especialidade de Linguística Portuguesa

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To Elsa de Sousa Verdial

and Hélio Fernando Verdial Rosa Soares

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Abbreviations

A' chain – A(rgument)-bar chain

A' movement – A(rgument)-bar movement, movement to a non-argument position

A' position – A(rgument)- bar position, non-argument position

AgrP – Agreement Phrase

AgrSP – Subject Agreement Phrase

A-topic – Aboutness topic

AvoidF – Avoid Focus constraint (Schwarzwild, 1999)

AP – Adjective Phrase

BNP – Bare Plural Noun Phrase

C – Complementizer (head)

C- Principle – or C-Condition of the Binding Theory

CG – Common Ground

CP – Complementizer Phrase

C-Topic- Contrast topic

C/T – Complementizer/Tense (Chomsky, 1995)

D – Determiner (head)

Det – Lexical determiner

D-linked – Discourse linked

DO – Direct Object

DP – Determiner Phrase

ex. - example

ECP- Empty Category Principle (Rizzi, 1986)

EPP – Extended Projection Principle (Chomsky,1982)

EP – European Portuguese

∃ - Existential quantifier

Fin – Finiteness (head) (in Split CP – Rizzi, 1997)

F-closure – Focus closure (Schzwarzchild, 1999)

Force – Force (head) (in Split CP, Rizzi, 1997)

GB – Government and Binding

Gen – Generic operator

GLP – Gramática da Língua Portuguesa (2003)

G-topic – Given topic

I – Time interval

I_0 – Moment of utterance

I-level – Individual-level

ι - Definiteness operator (Chierchia, 1998)

K-level – Kind-level

IP – Inflection Phrase

LD – Left dislocation

Max – Definiteness operator (Zamparelli, 2002)

MoodP – Mood Phrase

N – Noun/ Head noun

N-to-D – noun head raises to Head DP

Num – Head number

NumP – Number Phrase

O – Object

pro – Null Subject in a finite clause

Pl – Plural/ Plural feature

PP- Preposition Phrase

PredP – Predicate Phrase (Delfitto, 2002)

QP – Quantifier Phrase

S (moment) – Moment of speaking (Kempchinsky, 2009)

S – Subject

S-level – Stage-level

Spec – Specifier

TopP – Topic Phrase

TP – Tense Phrase

Type e – Type of individuals

Type t – Type of truth values

Type $<e, t>$ – Type of functions from individuals into truth values

U - Utterance

vP – Verb Phrase (with transitive verbs, DP checks agreement features in Spec, vP, formerly AgrSP)

V – verb (head)

VP – Verb Phrase

wh-phrases/questions – phrases headed by what, where, who, how, which, or why

W – (World), Modality feature (Kempchinsky, 2009)

$W_{(R)}$ – Real World (Kempchinsky, 2009)

$W_{(SU)}$ – World of speaker's reality (Kempchinsky, 2009)

Abbreviations used in glosses

1 – first person

2 – second person

3 – third person

CL – clitic

CLpass – passive clitic

DEF – definite

DEM – demonstrative

Det – determiner

FEM – feminine

FUT – future

IND – indicative

INDEF – indefinite

IMP – imperfect

NEG – negative / negation

PART – partitive

PARTI – participle

PAST – past PERF

- perfect

PL – plural

POSS – possessive

PREP - preposition

PRES – present

PRO – pronoun

REFL – reflexive

SG – singular

SUBJ – subjunctive

Resumo

Esta dissertação tem como objectivo descrever as condições de ocorrência – sintácticas, semânticas e discursivas – de sintagmas nominais simples em posição de sujeito pré-verbal em português europeu.

Os sintagmas nominais simples (em inglês, Bare Noun Phrases) ocorrem em diversas línguas com distribuições nem sempre coincidentes. Estes nominais, particularmente os massivos e os contáveis no plural, podem ocorrer em inglês e nas línguas românicas (com excepção do francês) quer como argumentos quer como predicados.

No que diz respeito às posições argumentais, as línguas românicas permitem a sua ocorrência como sujeitos pós-verbais e como objectos, enquanto em inglês os nomes simples ocorrem aparentemente sem restrições. Este contraste sintáctico tem efeitos na interpretação: em posição pós-verbal os nomes simples são lidos (preferencialmente) como existenciais, enquanto a posição pré-verbal pode permitir quer uma leitura existencial quer uma leitura genérica. A primeira questão a este respeito decorre de uma assimetria (a possibilidade versus a impossibilidade de ocorrência em posição pré-verbal), mas também da relação entre a distribuição as leituras obtidas.

A maioria dos estudos sobre sintagmas nominais simples concentra-se no inglês e parte da relação estabelecida por Carlson (1977) entre as leituras destes nominais como sujeitos e os tipos de predicado com que ocorrem naquela língua. Assim, a leitura genérica é obtida com predicados de espécie e a leitura existencial com predicados de estádio. Com predicados de indivíduo, a leitura é ambígua. A solução para o problema desta ambiguidade motivou a investigação posterior. Autores como Dayal (1992), Longobardi (1994), Chierchia (1998), Crisma (1999), Lai-Shen & Sybesma (1999), Schmitt & Munn (1999), Delfitto (2002), Zamparelli (2002), Déprez (2003), Krifka (2003), entre outros, propuseram análises com base nas línguas românicas (incluindo o português do Brasil), nas línguas germânicas, nos crioulos, no chinês e no híndi.

A discussão teórica centrou-se na necessidade de fazer intervir operadores capazes de ajustar os nomes simples, entendidos por Carlson como nomes de espécie, às propriedades dos predicados, mas também se debruçou sobre a estrutura do domínio nominal. À excepção da proposta de Chierchia (1998) sobre a não projecção de um sintagma de determinante por um princípio de economia, é quase consensual que os sintagmas nominais simples projectam esse sintagma e que a posição D (núcleo do sintagma) vazia é a chave para as leituras obtidas quer em inglês quer nas outras línguas, nomeadamente as românicas.

Assim, Longobardi (2008) propõe que, na posição D, se verifiquem traços de Pessoa e parametriza as línguas de acordo com a necessidade de verificar esses traços. Em inglês, os nomes simples podem subir para D, nas línguas como o italiano pode ser inserido um determinante, presumivelmente expletivo. Delfitto (2002), na linha das propostas de Longobardi (1994) e seguintes, e retomando a ideia de Contreras (1986) de regência própria, considera que os nomes simples são quantificadores generalizados (e não nomes de espécie) que, em inglês, podem subir para D e, nas línguas românicas, só sobrevivem se essa posição for regida por um verbo ou por uma preposição. A subida de N(ome) para D em inglês permite a leitura genérica; a posição D vazia, licenciada e legitimada por um verbo ou uma preposição permite apenas a leitura existencial. A leitura existencial dos sintagmas nominais simples com predicados de indivíduo em inglês deve-se, segundo Delfitto (2002), à possibilidade de reconstrução no interior do sintagma verbal. Esta análise, que propõe a intervenção de outros mecanismos sintácticos, mantém no entanto a condição de regência pelo verbo e consequente leitura existencial do sintagma nominal.

Delfitto (2002) considera ainda que, no caso dos predicados de indivíduo não permanentes, a presença de uma oração relativa licencia e legitima o D vazio, de acordo com a análise de Kayne (1994) e Bianchi (1995) das orações relativas. Nestes predicados, existe quantificação sobre eventos resultante da presença de um quantificador não ligado, de que resulta uma leitura genérica da frase, mas não do sintagma nominal sujeito em posição pré-verbal.

O português europeu é uma língua românica que se comporta de uma forma geral como o italiano, tal como ele é descrito por Delfitto (2002). Oliveira & Cunha (2003), aliás, demonstram que os nomes de espécie em português europeu dependem crucialmente da presença de um determinante definido. Assim, os nomes simples não são nomes de espécie nem podem ter leituras genéricas. Ocorrem geralmente em posições pós-verbais e têm uma leitura existencial.

O facto de ser possível encontrar ocorrências de sintagmas nominais simples em diferentes contextos sintáctico-semânticos e discursivos em português europeu contraria aparentemente a descrição feita na literatura. Os sintagmas nominais simples em posição de sujeito pré-verbal em português europeu podem ocorrer como tópicos marcados, em frases que parecem constituir juízos categóricos, com leituras não existenciais com predicados de espécie ou de indivíduo ou em frases caracterizadoras. Ocorrem também, mas com leituras existenciais, em frases que parecem constituir subtópicos discursivos em contextos descritivos, como 'scripts', no sentido de Fillmore (1985).

Quando ocorrem com leituras não existenciais, os contextos aproximam-se do discurso dos provérbios, tal como é descrito por Lopes (1992). Lopes (1992) refere-se à leitura genérica destes sintagmas (no caso, no singular) como uma consequência de não estar presente nenhum determinante lexical.

A diferença maior, porém, é que os sintagmas nominais simples que ocorrem em provérbios são tipicamente singulares. E a presença de número morfológico permite estabelecer diferenças cruciais entre sintagmas plurais e sintagmas singulares. Estes últimos não podem ocorrer com predicados de espécie nem com predicados de estádio estativos e remetem sempre para leituras prototípicas. Os sintagmas plurais denotam um conjunto de átomos não-específico que permite a sua ocorrência numa maior diversidade de contextos.

A consideração de que a informação de número é também crucial para a descrição dos comportamentos dos nomes simples, tendo em conta trabalhos como o de Swart, Winter & Zwarts (2007) ou o de Espinal (2010), entre outros, leva-nos à adopção de uma projecção de número (Ritter, 1991) no interior do sintagma do determinante para a qual o nome se move para verificar traços como [contável] (Crisma, 1999) e [plural]. Esta projecção será também necessária no caso de nomes simples no singular em posição de sujeito. A posição D contém traços não verificados de Pessoa (Longobardi, 2008), Referência ou Definitude que, em português europeu, não são verificados por subida de N para D.

A sobrevivência dos nomes simples em posição pré-verbal depende da sua combinação com os tipos de predicado e também com os valores de aktionsart, de forma muito semelhante ao proposto por Oliveira, F. et al. (2006), em que o traço [±habitual] determina a possibilidade ou a impossibilidade de subida do sintagma sujeito para uma posição pré-verbal (Spec, TP ou, como aqui é proposto, TopP). No caso dos sintagmas nominais simples com leitura não existencial, é possível que o traço seja [+gnómico], considerando as observações feitas para os contextos proverbiais por Lopes (1992).

A proposta de que os sintagmas nominais simples, quando ocorrem com predicados com um traço aspectual [+gnómico], se deslocam para uma posição na periferia esquerda da frase tem duas motivações: a primeira é que a posição é não argumental e foge à restrição de regência ou comando-c assimétrico de um verbo ou de uma preposição, permitindo uma leitura não existencial do nome; a segunda é que os traços não verificados em D, que permanece vazio, são legitimados por um traço da posição TopP, nomeadamente o que corresponde a 'acerca de / quanto a', de acordo com a proposta de Reinhart (1981) para os tópicos marcados.

Embora os sujeitos em português europeu sejam tópicos não marcados, tal como argumentam Costa & Duarte (2002), as características sintácticas e semânticas dos nomes simples e dos contextos em que ocorrem permitem que se movam por razões discursivas, fazendo parte da gestão do campo comum ('common ground management') aos participantes, tal como é definido por Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010). Estes sintagmas são ou tópicos 'acerca de' (em inglês 'aboutness topics') ou tópicos contrastivos (Büring, 1999), e ocorrem fundamentalmente em frases raiz ou subordinadas epistémicas. São assim crucialmente distintos dos sintagmas definidos em posição de sujeito pré-verbal, que não dependem dos mesmos constrangimentos discursivos.

A disponibilidade de uma leitura não existencial dos nomes simples como sujeitos de predicados de actividade depende também de um efeito de paralelismo: nomes simples como objectos facilitam a leitura não existencial dos nomes simples sujeito que ocorram com predicados com valor [+ gnómico].

A construção de Topicalização, tal como é descrita por Duarte (1987 e 1996), parece poder acomodar a descrição sintáctica do comportamento dos nomes simples em posição pré-verbal com uma leitura não existencial. A disponibilidade desta construção em português explica o contraste com línguas como o espanhol e o italiano, que dela não dispõem.

Em contextos descritivos, os nomes simples no plural ocorrem como subtópicos de um 'script' (Fillmore, 1985), ou seja, informações decorrentes de uma situação estereotipada. De acordo com Abbot, Black & Smith (1985), os ' scripts' organizam-se numa hierarquia em que os níveis mais baixos têm uma relação de partonímia com os níveis mais altos. Assim, uma situação explícita ou implícita permite a introdução de informação explícita de um nível mais baixo não passível de ser inferida. As inferências, no sentido de Johnson-Laird (2013), mais propriamente as induções, conduzem a uma das conclusões possíveis da premissa expressa pelo tópico discursivo mais amplo.

Assim, os sintagmas nominais simples podem ser também elementos mais baixos de uma hierarquia que pode ser inferida ou inferências possíveis de um elemento mais alto na hierarquia. São lidos como existenciais e reconstruídos numa posição pós-verbal. As frases que integram são juízos téticos. A posição pré-verbal confere-lhes proeminência e a sua posição em Spec, TP decorre também de uma acumulação de eventos ou estados ou de uma conexão lógica em que o conector é nulo, sendo a relação (paratáctica) com o contexto sintáctico decorrente da hierarquia de significado possibilitada pelo 'script'. Nestes casos, quando os nomes simples co-ocorrem com o presente do indicativo, este nunca tem um traço [+gnómico].

Na maioria dos casos de subordinação adverbial (central ou periférica) ou em orações relativas, a leitura existencial preferencial dos sintagmas nominais simples em posição de sujeitos pré-verbais sugere a possibilidade de conjunções ou conectores com algum conteúdo lexical poderem ter as mesmas propriedades que os verbos e as preposições e licenciar o D vazio numa relação de comando-c assimétrico.

Quanto aos modificadores do nome, não parece ser possível generalizar a teoria de Delfitto (2002) aos adjectivos e aos sintagmas preposicionais. De acordo com a análise proposta por Miguel (2004), só os adjectivos que ocorrem apenas numa posição pré-nominal (como 'mero') não podem modificar nomes não definidos; são portanto incompatíveis com nomes simples. Todos os outros podem ser modificadores de nomes simples, embora, se considerarmos a sugestão de Lopes (1992), o adjectivo pós-nominal crie uma subespécie, podendo assim ser facilitador de uma leitura não-existencial do nome. Os adjectivos que ocorrem em posição pré-nominal, embora possam também ocorrer numa posição pós-nominal, desencadeiam leituras existenciais preferenciais, tal como sugere Demonte (1999).

As orações relativas, de uma forma geral, melhoram também, em português europeu, a aceitabilidade dos nomes simples em posição de sujeito pré-verbal com predicados de espécie e de indivíduo (faseáveis ou não faseáveis, de acordo com a terminologia proposta por Oliveira, & Cunha, 2003, na sequência de Cunha, 1998) e de estádio (à excepção dos locativos). Assim, a proposta de Delfitto (2002) apresenta fragilidades que impedem a sua adopção sem uma investigação mais aprofundada.

A aceitação de nomes simples (não modificados) em português europeu em posição de sujeito pré-verbal por falantes nativos justifica-se em contextos discursivos determinados e depende ou do licenciamento do D vazio por uma categoria com conteúdo lexical ou da sua ocorrência como subtópico discursivo numa sequência explícita ou inferida, ou ainda do movimento para uma posição não-argumental. Tipicamente, estas condições estão ligadas aos tipos de predicado com que ocorrem, e sobretudo ao seu valor aspectual [±gnómico]. Se ocorrerem como verdadeiros argumentos, obtêm uma leitura existencial. Caso contrário, a sua leitura será aparentemente genérica.

Palavras-chave: genericidade, tipos de predicado, eventos, estados, predicados, aktionsart, especificidade, contável, definitude, determinante vazio, número, periferia esquerda, comando-c assimétrico, frase raiz, subordinação, tópico marcado, contraste, gestão do campo comum, partonímia, inferência.

Abstract

This dissertation aims describing the syntactic, semantic and discursive conditions of occurrence of pre-verbal Subject Bare Noun Plurals in European Portuguese.

Bare Noun Phrases occur in several languages though their distribution varies. Mass and plural count nouns may occur in English and in Romance languages (except French) either as arguments or as predicates.

In what argument positions are concerned, Romance languages allow for their occurrence as post-verbal Subjects and as Objects, unlike English where Bare Nouns apparently occur in an unrestrained way. This syntactic contrast has interpretation effects: in post-verbal position, Bare Nouns get a preferential existential reading, while those which occur in pre-verbal position may get either an existential or a generic reading. The first issue concerning these nominals is thus the asymmetry regarding their occurrence in pre-verbal or post-verbal position and the readings they get accordingly.

Most works on Bare Noun Phrases is focused on English and has Carlson (1977) as their origin: Bare Noun Plural readings depend on the type of predicate they occur with. Kind-level predicates trigger a generic reading while Stage-level predicates trigger an existential reading of the Bare Noun. Individual-level predicates may trigger either a generic or an existential reading. Solution for this ambiguity problem became an issue for further investigation. Authors such as Dayal (1992), Longobardi (1994), Chierchia (1998), Crisma (1999), Lai-Shen & Sybesma (1999), Schmitt & Munn (1999) Delfitto (2002), Zamparelli (2002), Déprez (2003), Krifka (2003), among others put forward a number of hypotheses for Romance languages (including Brazilian Portuguese), Germanic languages, Creole languages, Chinese and Hindi.

Theoretical discussion focused on the need to adjust Bare Nouns (which, according to Carlson are always Kind nouns) to the properties of predicates and on the structure of the nominal domain as well. Apart from Chierchia (1998) who claims, based on economic principles, that a Determiner Phrase does not need to be present, most authors use the Determiner Phrase as the key to the readings Bare Nouns may get.

Thus, Longobardi (2008) suggests that the Person feature must be checked in the D position. So, languages vary according to a parameter: those in which nouns must check this feature and those which insert lexical determiners in the D position, arguably expletive determiners.
Delfitto (2002), along the lines of Longobardi (1994) and the following, uses Contreras (1986) hypothesis of proper government and describes Bare Nouns as generalized quantifiers (and not

Kind nouns) which in English may raise to D, getting a generic reading, unlike in Romance languages where they only survive in governed positions (either by a verb or a preposition), getting an existential reading. According to Delfitto (2002), when Subject Bare Nouns get an existential reading in English, they are supposedly reconstructed inside the Verbal Phrase and the empty D is through other syntactic mechanisms licensed. Thus the c-command restraint for existential readings holds throughout languages.

In the case of non-permanent Individual-level predicates, Delfitto (2002) suggests that a relative clause (along the lines of Kaye, 1994 and Bianchi, 1995) may license and legitimate the empty D. An unbound (overt or covert) quantifier allows for a generic reading of the sentence (through quantification over events), although it does not change the existential reading of the Subject.

European Portuguese is a Romance language that generally behaves like Italian as described by Delfitto (2002). In fact, Oliveira & Cunha (2003) give full evidence that the occurrences of Kind nouns in European Portuguese crucially depend on the presence of a definite determiner. Thus, Bare Nouns are not Kind Nouns and can never be assigned generic readings. They occur in post-verbal positions and get an existential reading.

However, Bare Noun Phrases may occur in different discourse, syntactic and semantic contexts and that apparently contradicts the above mentioned analyses. Pre-verbal Subject Bare Nouns may occur in European Portuguese with Kind- and Individual-level predicates and characterizing sentences – as categorical judgements – getting a non-existential reading by being marked topics. But they also occur, getting an existential reading in sentences where they are discourse sub-topics in descriptive contexts, like 'scripts' in Fillmore (1985) sense.

When they get a non-existential reading, contexts in which they occur are similar to proverbial sentences, as they are described by Lopes (1992). Lopes (1992) suggests that the generic reading of these phrases is a property of a determiner-less phrase.
Bare Noun Phrases occurring in proverbs are typically singular ones, though. And morphological number is crucial for describing the different properties of both singular and plural Bare Nouns. Bare Singulars cannot occur with Kind-level or Stage-level state predicates and they always get a prototypical reading. On the other hand, Bare Plurals always denote a non-specific set of atoms which allows them to occur in a larger variety of contexts.

Following works like those of de Swart, Winter & Zwarts (2007) or Espinal (2010), I assume number information is crucial for the analysis of Bare Nouns. So, I also adopt a Number Phrase

(Ritter, 1991) as part of the Determiner Phrase, where the noun moves to in order to check [count] (Crisma, 1999) and [plural] features. Number Phrase is also present in the cases of Bare Singular Subjects. The D position contains non-checked features of Person (Longobardi, 2008), Reference or Definiteness which, in European Portuguese, are not checked by N(oun)-raising to D.

The survival of the pre-verbal position of Bare Nouns depends on the combination with both akstionsart values and types of predicates with which they occur, in a similar way Oliveira, F. et al. (2006) suggest. The [±habitual] feature determines the possibility or the impossibility of movement of the subject Noun Phrase to a pre-verbal (Spec, TP or, in this case, Top, P) position. In what Bare Nouns getting a non-existential reading are concerned, the [+ gnomic] feature must be present, according to the analysis of Lopes (1992) for proverbial contexts.

The suggestion that Bare Noun Phrases occurring with predicates with a [+gnomic] feature move to the left-periphery has two motivations: first, this position is a non-argument one and thus escapes the government or asymmetric c-command by a verb or a preposition constraint, allowing for a non-existential reading of the noun; secondly, the non-checked features in the empty D position are legitimated by a feature in TopP, namely the 'aboutness' feature, according to Reinhart (1981) for marked topics.

Though Subjects in European Portuguese are non-marked topics, as suggested by Costa & Duarte (2002), the syntactic and semantic properties of Bare Nouns and of the contexts in which they occur allow them to move for discourse purposes. They are a part of 'common ground management', along the lines suggested by Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010). These phrases are 'aboutness topics' or 'contrast topics' (Büring, 1999), and they occur in root-sentences or epistemic subordinates. They are thus crucially distinct from definite phrases in preverbal Subject position which do not rely on discourse restraints.

The availability of a non-existential reading of pre-verbal Subject Bare Nouns of activity predicates also depends on a parallelism effect: Bare Nouns as Objects facilitate a non-existential reading of a Subject Bare Noun when occurring with a [+ gnomic] feature predicate.

The topicalization construction, as described by Duarte (1987 e 1996), corresponds to the syntactical behavior of Bare Nouns in pre-verbal position getting a non-existential reading. The availability of this construction in Portuguese explains the differences with Spanish and Italian, where topicalization is not available.

In descriptive contexts, Bare Plurals occur as sub-topics of a 'script' (Fillmore, 1985), i.e. they are information resulting from a stereotype situation. According to Abbot, Black &Smith (1985), 'scripts' are structured in a hierarchy. Lower levels are in a partonimy relation with higher levels. Thus, an explicit or implicit situation allows for the inclusion of low-level explicit information which may not be inferred. Inferences, in the sense of Johnson-Laird (2013), especially inductions, lead to one of the possible conclusions for the premise expressed by the broader discourse topic.

Thus, Bare Noun Phrases can be pieces of a lower level rank in a hierarchy which may be inferred or the possible inferences of higher rank information. They get existential readings and are reconstructed in a post-verbal position. The sentences in which these Bare Nouns occur are thetic judgements. The pre-verbal position makes them prominent and their position in Spec, TP is allowed by an accumulation of events or states or by a logical connection in which there is no lexical connector. The paratactic connection follows from the meaning hierarchic created by the 'script'. In these cases, when Bare Nouns co-occur with the Indicative Present, it does not have a [+gnomic] feature.

In most cases of adverbial subordination (central or peripheral) or in relative clauses, the preferred existential reading of Bare Nouns as pre-verbal Subjects suggests that some conjunctions may have lexical content and be able to c-command the empty D.

As for modifiers, Delfitto (2002) analysis cannot be extended to adjectives or Preposition Phrases. According to Miguel (2004), only pre-nominal adjectives which can never be post-nominal (like 'mero') are not able to modify non-definite nouns. They cannot thus occur with Bare Nouns. All other adjectives can. If we take Lopes (1992) suggestion to be true, post-nominal adjectives create a sub-kind, and they may facilitate the assignment of non-existential reading to the Bare Noun. Post-nominal adjectives which may also occur in pre-nominal position trigger a preferred existential reading (Demonte, 1999).

Relative clauses generally improve the acceptability of Bare Nouns as pre-verbal Subjects in European Portuguese. But they do it generally, i.e. also with Kind-level, non-phase (Oliveira, & Cunha, 2003) Individual-level predicates or Stage-level (non-locative) predicates. Thus, Delfitto (2002) suggestion can hardly be generalized to all types of modification.

The acceptance by native European Portuguese speakers of pre-verbal (non-modified) Subject Bare Nouns follows from special discourse contexts and depends either on the licensing of the empty D by a category with some lexical content or by the occurrence of the Bare Noun as a discourse sub-topic in an explicit or inferred sequence. When it gets a non-existential reading,

the Bare Noun has moved to a non-argument position. Typically, these differences relate to the types of predicate they occur with and to a [±gnomic] feature. If they occur as true arguments, they get, as expected, an existential reading. If they are allowed to move up, Bare Nouns will get a non-existential reading.

Introduction

Bare Noun Phrases (BNPs) are apparent Noun Phrases (NPs) distinct from Determiner Phrases (DPs) in languages such as English and European Portuguese. They are mass or plural count nouns (both referring to pluralities).

The first researches on BNPs looked into their distribution in English according to the different types of predicates they occur with and to the readings they were assigned (in preverbal position): generic, existential or ambiguous reading, i.e. either generic or existential (Carlson, 1977).

Ambiguity being a major issue, two different approaches tried to account for it. The Carlsonian analysis claims that nouns always refer to Kinds and the readings they get in sentences are assigned by properties of the predicates which trigger distinct semantic operations. The ambiguity theory (Diesing, 1992) suggests that BNP readings are always unspecified and are only assigned through sentential mechanisms. When a BNP is mapped into the nuclear scope, it gets an existential reading, but if it is mapped into the restrictor, it is bound by a generic operator which assigns it a generic reading.

Syntactic research accommodates the differences between English and Romance languages (where BNPs only occur in post-verbal position) looking into both sentential properties and the nominal domain in those languages.

In a «proper government» (Contreras, 1986) configuration (under «head-government» by a verb or a preposition), BNPs can occur in Romance and get an existential reading. They cannot occur «ungoverned» though and they are never assigned a generic reading.

The DP analysis (Abney, 1987) allowed for the claim that BNPs are DPs with an empty D position (Longobardi, 1994, Delfitto 2002). Crucially, either D hosts a determiner or N raises to D. The empty D can be licensed by a lexical category asymmetricaly c-commanding it. In English, generic readings of BNPs are obtained (they undergo type-shifting) through N-to-D raising. The need to check a reference or person feature in D (Longobardi, 2008) also in Romance languages calls for the insertion of a determiner in D.

Number is also important when considering BNPs, which are crucially different from Bare Singulars. Bare Singulars occur in many languages, including in EP, with different readings and distributions not always similarly to BNPs. DPs project a Number Phrase (Ritter, 1991), where BNPs get plural features (de Swart et al., 2006). Bare Singulars can arguably dispense a [-Plural] feature.

In Romance languages, modification by relative clauses or by adjectives is felt to improve the acceptance of BNPs in preverbal Subject position (Delfitto, 2002) with some type of predicates (what Oliveira & Cunha, 2003 call individual-level, phase predicates). There is at present no coherent (i.e. valid to all types of modification) analysis accounting for this effect.

The analyses for Romance languages apparently hold for European Portuguese. However, there are contexts where BNPs are preverbal Subjects (they share matching person and number features with the verb). Native speakers are not unanimous in what these occurrences are concerned, which points to one of two hypotheses. One is that BNPs are marginal strategies for unspecified reference. They are minimal units only allowed in informal speech. The other hypothesis is that BNPs are strategies for special discourse contexts and according to their requirements they can get either existential or non-existential readings. Theses contexts are not always immediately available (i.e. some discourse situation must be triggered). Discourse contexts trigger the speaker's degree of acceptance of the BNP occurrence.

Thus, considering the theoretical approaches, my research questions about preverbal Subject BNPs in European Portuguese are the following:

A. With respect to the nature of BNPs
   1. Do BNPs always display the same features and are their readings assigned by each syntactic-semantic context in which they occur?
   2. Are BNPs DPs projecting a NumP, and, crucially, which features are found in D?
B. With respect to BNPs licensing conditions
   1. Are BNP occurrences subject to the same syntactic requirements as in other Romance languages?

2. Why does modification improve BNPs acceptance/grammaticality?

3. Are BNP licensing conditions the same in root and in non-root clauses?

C. With respect to types of predicates and aktionsart

4. Which semantic features are crucially responsible for the readings BNPs are assigned?

5. How do semantic features interact with syntax and discourse to allow for the occurrence of BNPs?

D. With respect to Discourse

6. Are there any discourse properties which rescue BNPs, allowing them to get readings according to interpretation needs?

This dissertation is organized in four chapters aiming to answer these questions.

Chapter one reviews theoretical insights on BNPs.

It starts with Carlson (1977) description of the behaviour of Subject BNPs in English according to the types of predicates they occur with and reviews Contreras (1986) suggestion of government of an empty category in the NP.

Abney (1987) DP analysis re-focused the research on BNPs. There are two divergent analyses: BNPs are NPs (there is no need to license an empty category) or they are DPs with an empty D position (which needs to be licensed)

Neo-Carlsonian works such as Chierchia (1998) and others try to clear cut differences among languages according to parametric values: languages that allow BNPs as preverbal Subjects, BNPs being thus NPs, and those that do not and need to have a lexical determiner filling a D position. Longobardi (1994) and following works claim that in Romance languages BNPs are DPs, they project NumP, and D must be licensed if they are to be arguments. BNPs in English are also DPs and N raises to D to check person features.

In what European Portuguese is concerned, Oliveira & Cunha (2003) give strong evidence for only definite DPs being capable of Kind reference. So, EP BNPs would not refer to Kinds and if they are grammatical they would always be assigned an existential reading.

Even though many of the linguistic tools used to account for the phenomena are conditioned by the state of the art (or by different or competing theories), the most prominent issues regarding the structure of the DP are number features, noun movement, type-shifting, quantification properties of the noun, Head government or c-command, empty categories, incorporation, unselective binding, modification of the noun, genericity, aktionsart, information structure.

My comments on these issues consider that EP data does not always match the data of other Romance languages, i.e. there are contexts that are ungrammatical in Spanish or in Italian but are apparently acceptable in EP.

Chapter two is concerned with native EP speakers' acceptance of preverbal Subject BNPs.

In order to get stronger evidence about the acceptability of preverbal Subject BNPs by native EP speakers, a set of three tests was conceived and applied to 62 native EP speaking subjects. The tests, with BNPs as pre-verbal Subjects of root-sentences, cross different types of verbs with different types of predicates.

In the first test, subjects were asked to distinguish the grammatical sentences from the ungrammatical ones. In the second test, they were asked to assign a reading to the sentences they found grammatical. And in the third test they were asked to confirm their judgements when a broader context was added.

Though there was some variation in judgements, results showed that only with Stage-level predicates (mainly space-time limited) do speakers generally judge preverbal Subject BNPs to be ungrammatical.

Preverbal Subject BNPs are otherwise accepted, with a preferable non-existential reading and that is a clue to the hypotheses concerning their survival.

Chapter three deals with the questions raised in the first chapter considering the native speakers' judgements presented in the second chapter.

EP BNPs structure is looked into in order to find evidence for the existence of an empty D position consistent with an existential reading assignment. The preverbal position being awkward confirms the need for complying with EP syntactic requirements, presumably the same of other Romance Languages.

If lexical definite determiners are in D position to check features such as definiteness, specificity, genericity or reference, then either EP BNPs are allowed to raise to D or else they are presumably always unspecific and existential. Or, they do not project DP at all. I look for evidence that BNPs project at least NumP. That would allow BNPs to refer vaguely to a set, unlike Bare Singulars, even if they are not true Kinds. If BNPs have always non-specific features, or are always generalized quantifiers as Delfitto (2002) claims, then they will get their readings from different configurations. Then, in a way, the Carlsonian theory would be proven right.

Modification issues are also at stake. Arguably, relative clauses modify BNPs occurring with Individual-level phase predicates (which allow for a mechanism of unselective binding) will license the BNP and assign it an existential reading. Different Mood features (differences between the subjunctive and the indicative moods in the relative clause) are not neutral in what the licensing of BNPs is concerned.

Quantification over events/states can possibly be an adequate mechanism for other types of predicates compatible with a covert/overt 'often'-type adverb.

Unmodified EP BNPs, though, should (as in other Romance languages) also need to be licensed through c-command by a functional/lexical category (to check features such as reference/person in Longobardi, 2008). Is it possible that other lexical categories, either than verbs and prepositions, are also able to do it?

In Diesing (1992) analysis, types of predicates (Kind-, Individual- and Stage level), but also effects of aktionsart, namely the ones caused by event or non-habitual/non-gnomic features (forcing existential readings) are considered to be responsible for the mapping of BNPs into the nuclear scope of the sentence. Habitual/Gnomic features (allowing for non-existential readings) only allow for full DPs, which are mapped into the restrictor (and get generic readings).

The Romance analysis (either Carlsonian or the ambiguity theory) is expected to hold for 'out-of-the-blue' root-sentences. I argue that the apparent generalized ban against EP

BNPs as preverbal Subjects can be circumvented if one looks into discourse requirements.

Chapter four considers examples such as the following (i)-(viii), which cannot be accounted for by Delfitto's analysis or any other previously reviewed. I will then explore the hypothesis (following the literature) that BNPs either require syntactic licensing or they are not arguments.

(i)   ?Linces estão em vias de extinção.

'Bobcats are almost extinct.'

(ii)   Cobras são répteis.

'Snakes are reptiles.'

(iii)   ?Rosas querem água.

Roses want water

'Roses need water.'

(iv)   Se dinossauros estão extintos, que interesse podem ter para a Biologia?

'If dinosaurs are extinct, how can they be of interest to Biology?'

(v)   Houve um longo silêncio. De repente, pedras caíram do céu.

'There was a long silence. Suddenly, stones fell from the sky.'

(vi)   ?Pessoas interessantes estão em vias de extinção.

'Interesting people are almost extinct.'

(vii)   ?Gatos rafeiros metem-se em todo o lado.

'Ordinary cats enter everywhere.'

(viii)   Elefantes que atravessem pelo canal são inteligentes.

Elephants that cross PRES SUBJ through the canal are intelligent.

The hypothesis is that pre-verbal Subject BNPs occur according to discourse purposes. Different syntactic and semantic configurations are required and they are responsible for the readings they get.

I look for evidence that show that with non-event predicates (in habitual/gnomic contexts) BNPs can get non-existential readings, by moving to a position in the left periphery as an escape-hatch. Topicalization structures are further looked into (following for EP, Duarte, 1987, 1996) and the discursive requirements they meet, i.e. if

it can be claimed that they serve a discourse strategy (entailing contrast, in the sense of Büring, 1999, or aboutness, close to what is suggested by Reinhart, 1981).

Preverbal Subject BNPs can occur in subordinate clauses (adverbial or in complements) referring their existence in a possible world or in the speaker's description of states/events. Does CP play a role in their licensing and does interpretation straightforwardly follows the configuration they are in?

If they get an existential reading, then the same mechanisms would hold in these contexts: with non-existential readings we are considering BNPs in non-argument positions and, with existential readings, it is an intervening c-command mechanism which licences BNPs.

Descriptive, cumulative contexts (paratactic sequences) also assign preverbal Subject BNPs a preferred existential reading. Is there some elided syntactic licensor? BNPs occur as parts of an expressed or inferred discourse topic (presumably in a hierarchy organization as in a script in the sense of Abbot, Black & Smith, 1985 or as frame representations in the sense of Fillmore, 1985). Thus, arguably, also in these cases, BNPs stay in Spec, TP.

Chapter four aims to give evidence for BNPs always being subject to the same syntactic constraints and semantic requirements regardless of contexts. Discourse requirements explain their acceptability and the readings they get.

Finally, I consider Delfitto (202) hypothesis that modification of the noun (adjectives as well as relative clauses) in licensing a preverbal Subject BNP with Individual-level phase predicates (in root sentences). Adjective modification contexts are looked into. Miguel (2004) analysis of different types of adjectives is commented along with the apparent inconsistency of a generalized hypothesis about modifiers.

Chapter I

Syntax and semantics of bare plural nouns:
theoretical insights

1. Introduction

This chapter is organised considering the contributions found in the literature for a syntactic and semantic analysis of Bare Plurals (henceforth BNPs) both in the nominal and sentential (Tense) domains.

Most studies on BNPs consider the differences between English and Romance languages, namely in what preverbal Subjects are concerned: English BNPs may have generic or existential readings as preverbal Subjects while it is commonly accepted that in most Romance languages, BNPs can only be post-verbal Subjects and get an existential reading. Full definite DPs can be generic preverbal Subjects, under the appropriate conditions, throughout all Romance languages, namely European Portuguese (from now on EP).

In English, the two possible readings in (i) have suggested two different analyses: the Carlsonian (BNPs always denote Kinds) and the ambiguity theory (BNPs get their readings from sentential properties). Anyway, the contrast between (i) and (ii) suggests that BNPs cannot be preverbal Subjects in all languages.

(i) Flies die in the North Pole. (existential/generic reading)

vs.

(ii) ?Moscas morrem no Polo Norte.

The contrast between (iii) and (iv) suggests a sentential difference with (i), i.e. BNPs occur as Subjects according to the sentential properties of languages: in languages such as EP, they only occur post-verbally getting an existential reading:

(iii) No Polo Norte, morrem moscas. (existential reading)
in the North Pole, die flies
'In the North Pole, flies die.'

vs.

(iv) As moscas morrem no Polo Norte. (generic reading)

   the flies die in the North Pole

   'Flies die in the North Pole.'

Why should these contrasts happen?

Does the answer lie in the difference between the full preverbal DP in EP vs. the BNP in English, i.e. are nouns always Kinds in English and properties in EP (all nouns being of the same nature)? If so, when they get different interpretations in English they must undergo type-shifting under special semantic and syntactic conditions. That should also be the case for occurrences of BNPs in EP which are not existentially interpreted.

Another possible claim is that the nature of nouns is irrelevant. Their mapping into either the scope of the verb or of a generic operator is the key for their reading.

The mapping theory, known as the ambiguity theory[1], claims that the noun can either be mapped into the restrictor or into the nuclear scope. In the latter case a noun in the nuclear scope is bound by existential closure. Whenever a noun rises to the restrictor, it is bound by a *default Gen* quantifier. The predicate and the presence of overt/covert quantifiers assign the noun either a generic or an existential meaning.

Delfitto (2002) claims that in Romance languages such as Italian, the presence of an overt/covert quantifier acts as an unselective binder over objects and events allowing BNPs to occur as preverbal Subjects, even if the quantifier does not assign the BNP a generic reading. He suggests that modification improves BNPs grammaticality in that position, but BNPs keep an existential reading. Both the presence of a quantifier and that of modification as mechanisms allowing BNPs to be preverbal Subjects in Romance languages are somewhat puzzling and are not straightforwardly answered by either theory.

The DP hypothesis strengthened the Carlsonian theory, providing a syntactic basis for the semantic mechanism of type-shifting: N-to-D raising.

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[1] Following the 'unselective binding' suggestion of Heim (1982)

So, the weak reference capacity of BNPs[2] together with the DP hypothesis brought a possible explanation for differences among languages: there is an empty D in argument positions, where reference must be checked. The difference is then accounted for in the following way: in English, N can raise to D, contrary to what happens in Italian or Spanish. So in which contexts is the empty D licensed? Which conditions must be met? Are the EP occurrences of BNPs captured by these analyses? Thus, the primary goal of this chapter is to find in which syntactic configuration(s) are EP BNPs allowed to occur, considering their internal structure and the readings they are assigned.

With respect to the semantics of BNPs, theoretical concepts such as 'kind' and '(in)definiteness', 'generic' and 'existential sentences/contexts', 'information structure', 'specificity', 'semantic number' and 'type-shifting' (which is mostly a syntactic operation, since it must rely on operators which have to be hosted by syntactic positions) are looked into.

Finally, when considering BNPs, it is mandatory to look into the behaviour of Bare Singulars (like 'Cão come carne'/Dog eats meat), for a number of reasons. The most important one lies in the fact that most languages that have determiners and mark the plural morphologically do not allow Bare Singulars to survive as arguments. Why should this happen? In the cases where they are allowed to occur, like in some discourse genres (in particular in proverbs), which features of the nominal or of the sentence allow them to survive?

Some of the most prevalent conceptions on Bare Singulars, namely their relation to definite singulars are also taken into account.

2. Semantic issues

2.1. Reference to Kinds

2.1.1. The work of Carlson

The seminal work of Carlson (1977) described BNPs (Bare Plurals) in English as non-quantified expressions referring to Kinds. The main point is that regardless of the

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[2] Cf, e.g., Raposo & Miguel (2013)

sentence they occur in, they are always Kinds and refer to species. Whenever they have an existential reading, it always derives from the primitive Kind one. Predicates, in turn, may refer to Kinds, Individuals or Stages (temporally limited).

'To be extinct' and 'to invent' ('Dinosaurs are extinct', 'Marconi invented the radio.'), for example, trigger a Kind reading respectively to their Subject and their Object. Any predicate which can only apply to a species is then a Kind-level predicate:

(1) Dinosaurs are extinct.

(2) *The dinosaurs we found yesterday are extinct.

An Individual-level predicate may however occur with both species and individuals:

(3) Dogs bark.

(4) Fido barks.

Stage-level predicates were, from the start, an issue. In fact, most of them allow for ambiguous readings of the Subject ((5) is the classic example):

(5) Typhoons arise in the South Pacific. (existential/generic reading)

To explain the ambiguity, Carlson (1989) had to resort to a binary Generic Operator considering a tripartite structure ((Gen) (restrictor) (nuclear clause)): the operator could bind the element in the restrictor and another element on the nuclear clause, even though the latter could only obtain an existential reading[3].

One of the most important observations made by Carlson (1977) was that BNPs had always narrow scope, contrary to indefinites:

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[3] According to Oliveira (1997), EP codifies the two meanings in the syntax. The sentence with a generic interpretation of the DP would have a full definite pre-verbal DP as Subject, while the one with an existential interpretation would have a post-verbal BNP (see the introduction to this chapter and Chapter III):

(i)   Os tufões aparecem nesta parte do Pacífico.
           'The Typhoons arise in this part of the Pacific'

(ii)   Aparecem tufões nesta parte do Pacífico.
          Arise typhoons in this part of the Pacific.

(6) Mary wants to meet doctors. / A doctor is hard to find. (Any doctor)

(6a) A Maria quer conhecer médicos. / É difícil encontrar um médico.

(7) Mary wants to meet a doctor. Doctors are hard to find (Any doctor OR the one she has heard about)

(7a) A Maria quer conhecer um médico. Médicos são difíceis de encontrar.

(6a) and (7a) are the EP equivalents to (6) and (7). Both BNPs and indefinites behave as their English counterparts.

Another of Carlson's observations concerns anaphoric binding:

(8) Mary buys scientific books because they have important information.

(8a) A Maria compra livros científicos porque (eles) contêm informações importantes.

(9) Books have much information, so Mary usually buys them/one every week.

(9a)?Livros têm muita informação, portanto a Maria compra-os/um todas as semanas.

Example (8a) shows that EP behaves exactly like English, except for the fact that the Subject pronominal may be replaced by *pro*, EP being a Null-Subject language. In (9a), if the BNP is accepted as preverbal Subject, the anaphora is perfectly grammatical. According to Carlson's analysis, the definite pronoun picks a Kind noun, while indefinites (like 'one') refer to a specimen of the Kind.

This analysis was apparently satisfactory for English even if it could not totally solve ambiguity problems. However, it does not explain why there is also ambiguity in the cases of singular indefinites which can also bind pronouns:

(10)   I want to buy a scientific book, because it must have much information I need.

(10a)   Quero comprar um livro científico, porque deve ter muitas informações de que preciso.

Again, (10a) is perfect in EP.

However, one of the major issues is that in many languages BNPs do not behave as Kinds[4], at least in all contexts. EP is one of them[5].

2.1.2.   Parametric Variation - Chierchia (1998)

Chierchia (1998) is one of the most important studies about BNPs. This analysis crucially establishes what Chierchia calls the Nominal Mapping Parameter, which explains variation among languages.

The Nominal Mapping Parameter describes languages according to their possibility of having BNPs as arguments and/or as predicates. English would then be a [+argument, +predicate] language, while Romance languages would be [-argument, +predicate] languages. At the same time he argues that argument BNPs do not project D, because of economy principles.

Chierchia's analysis relies on the differences between singular and plural count/mass nouns. The nature of these nouns and their occurrence with different types of predicates will lead to type-shifting operations which explain the readings they are assigned.

According to this analysis, determiners act as operators and, if they exist in a language, then they will block the presence of any covert operator, namely those Chierchia suggests (the down and the up operator, plus the combined Derived Kind Predication).

This theory has been supported or criticized either by theoretical reasons or because it does not comply with the evidence provided by several languages, namely by Brazilian Portuguese[6].

It is also important to notice that Chierchia's theory on the distinction between count nouns and mass nouns[7] only allows the latter to be originally Kinds – they are individual concepts, «functions from worlds (or situations) into pluralities, the sums of all instances of the Kind» (Chierchia, 1998: 349). And not all nouns refer to Kinds:

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[4] Notice that in some cases modified BNPs, namely by relative clauses, behave quite closely to Kinds:

   (i)   Dançarinos que saibam dançar bem estão em vias de extinção.
                'Dancers who can dance properly are almost extinct.'

[5] For the idea that BNPs in Romance languages are always properties, cf. Dobrovie-Sorin & Beyssade (2004)
[6] Cf. Schmitt & Munn (1999, 2000)
[7] For critical reviews on these ideas, cf. Delfitto (2002), Krifka (2003), and Dayal (1999)

'For simplicity's sake, let us assume that such individual concepts are members of the domain of individuals (i.e., they live in the domain of quantification U). Not all individual concepts are going to be Kinds. Only those that identify classes of objects with a sufficiently regular function and/or behavior will qualify. Moreover, Kinds, as noted above, will generally have a plurality of instances (even though sometimes they may have just one or none). But something that is necessarily instantiated by just one individual (e.g., the individual concept or transworld line associated with Gennaro Chierchia) would *not* qualify as a kind.' (Chierchia, 1998: 350). Kinds though may only have one member or none at all like dodos.

In short, it is according to the ability of each type of noun to refer or to be connected to a property and being thus able to be a referring expression or a predicate that they may undergo type-shifting to match the properties of the predicate or to get special interpretations.

Determiners like 'the' work as the operator iota, which maps a predicate to an individual, and 'a/an' the operator ∃, which maps a predicate to a quantifier, are overt markers. Any language that displays such words has to use them in the intended contexts. This is the substance of the so-called Blocking Principle: if a language has overt means to express type-shifting then they must be used.

So, mass nouns denote Kinds and do not need type-shifting, whereas count nouns can refer to Kinds by type-shifting by the 'down operator' which requires a plural form. This is what happens in Kind predications. As for characterizing statements (or Individual-level predicates, for that matter), the need for a restrictor for their quantificational operator can be assured by a kind-denoting NP if it is shifted to the corresponding property by the 'up operator'.

The mechanism suggested for the existential reading of BNPs is the Derived Kind Predication, which is a rule triggered as late as possible in the derivation and it is just a way of avoiding the mismatch between the BNP and the predicate. The BNP undergoes several type-shifting operations in order to get an existential reading.

The problem is that this mechanism is rather complex and does not solve the problem of ambiguous readings[8].

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[8] See Krifka (2003) for a revision of this theory, namely the idea that the up operator is not needed.

2.1.3. Kind terms in EP – Oliveira & Cunha (2003)

In EP, BNPs do not refer to Kinds. Thus, which DPs get true generic readings? Oliveira & Cunha (2003) consider the relationships between Kind terms and Types of predicates. Their first assumption is that there is nothing in the structure of Nominals in EP which indicates they can get Kind readings.

According to them, BNPs are not Kind terms in EP, as one can conclude from the following sentences:

(11)   Baleias são mamíferos de grandes dimensões

        'Whales are large dimension mammals.'

(12)   ?Elefantes estão extintos.

        'Elephants are extinct.'

(13)   ?Elefantes são inteligentes. / Elefantes são seres inteligentes

        'Elephants are intelligent.' / 'Elephants are intelligent beings.'

(14)   ??Elefantes comeram a erva do parque[9].

        'Elephants ate the grass in the park.'

The first example is a definition, where one BNP, or even a Bare Singular, may occur. In the other examples, the Kind reading would only obtain if a lexical determiner was present. EP speakers may assign these BNPs a non-existential reading which results from a discourse strategy that considers background information (most probably with a pause after the noun) – 'about Whales/Elephants'.

Although most BNPs as Objects have an existential reading like in many other languages, with some dispositional state predicates, they can be Kind terms (i.e. get a generic reading). This issue will be discussed further on:

(15)   Ela adora gatos (siameses)

        'She loves (Siamese) cats.'

(16)   Ele detesta coelho[10].

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[9] This sentence may be acceptable, but only in special contexts (see Chapter IV)

[10] The opposition singular/plural (Coelho/Coelhos) entails another lexical difference: if accepted, the singular is always read as a mass noun.

he hates rabbit

'He hates rabbit meat.'

Bare Singulars are also considered by Oliveira & Cunha (2003). There are two possibilities for them to be Subjects: either modified in characterizing sentences (17) or in definitions (18) (examples from Oliveira e Cunha, 2003):

(17)   Criança pequena faz asneiras.
         'Small child behaves badly.'

(18)   (Define baleia.) Baleia é um mamífero que vive no mar.
         (define whale.) whale is a mammal that lives in the sea
         '(Define Whale). A Whale is a mammal that lives in the sea.'

Regardless of some lack of unanimity among EP speakers about the judgements of sentences (11) to (14)[11], BNPs are not Kind terms in EP.

Oliveira & Cunha (2003) consider the readings of definite and indefinite nominals as Subjects and Objects in EP. They conclude that definite plural nominals are the best candidates to being Kind terms.

(19)   As baleias estão em vias de extinção. (Kind reading)
       the Whales are almost extinct
       'Whales are almost extinct.'

Indefinites are mostly accepted in taxonomic readings (20) or with a prototypical reading (21):

(20)   Uma baleia está em vias de extinção. (a sub-kind of whale)
          'A whale is almost extinct.'

(21)   Um homem não chora.
         'A man does not cry.'

_____

[11] See Chapter II.

They hypothesize that there is a relationship between Kind terms and the types of predicate they occur with, i.e., Kind terms need particular types of predicates but they can also interact with other predicates in order to get the right readings.

In fact, Oliveira & Cunha (2003) claim that in addition to being Subject of Kind-level predicates, Kind terms are Subjects of Individual-level predicates and they present three linguist contexts as evidence for their claim: a) habitual constructions, b) the opposition *ser/estar*, c) the difference between 'phase' and 'non-phase'states. With habitual sentences, the Kind reading is possible, as shown in (22):

(22) A(s) águia(s) faz(em) o(s) ninho(s) na montanha.
      the (pl) eagle(s) make(s) its (their) nest(s) in the mountain

With 'ser', as opposed to 'estar', one can also get the Kind reading:

(23) Os elefantes são fortes. (I-level predicate)
      'Elephants are strong.'
                vs.
(24) # Os elefantes estão fortes.(S-level predicate)
      'Elephants are strong (these days).'

As for the opposition 'phase'/'non-phase' states, whenever there is a modification of the aspectual grid of predicate, i.e. some I-level predicates (namely phase predicates) in some contexts are not states but events, the Kind reading gives place to an existential reading:

(25) Os lobos são agressivos
      'Wolves are aggressive.'
(26) #Os lobos estão a ser agressivos.
      'Wolves are being aggressive.'

Oliveira & Cunha use Kratzer (1995) idea that whenever the generic operator applies to stage predicates, it will include their spatial-temporal argument in its scope giving rise

to characterizing sentences. Thus, events and phase states are not compatible with Kind terms.

Analysing some predicates like 'almost extinct' or 'abound', Oliveira & Cunha notice they have some characteristics of Individual-level predicates, namely they accept the presence of aspectual auxiliaries such as 'passar a' ('start to'):

(27)   Os lobos passaram a estar em vias de extinção na Serra da Estrela.
       'Wolves became almost extinct in Serra da Estrela.'

The relationship between Kind terms and types of predicate is formulated as (28) (Oliveira & Cunha 2003: 74) (my translation):

(28)   A (definite) nominal can get a Kind reading iff the predication in which it occurs has (at least some) features of Individual-level predicates.

In what BNPs are concerned, it is crucial to establish a difference between definite DPs as Kind terms and BNPs. BNPs in EP may indeed occur with Individual-level predicates, mostly with a contrastive reading:

(29)   Elefantes são inteligentes. (, girafas não).
       'Elephants are intelligent. (, giraffes are not).'

In these cases, BNPs seem to get a Kind reading. In other cases, they generally get an existential reading:

(30)   Águias fazem (os) ninhos nestas montanhas.
       'Eagles make (their) nests in these mountains.'

That is, either there are Eagles making nests in this mountain or the species (by opposition to other species) make them. Notice that the contrastive reading of the BNP must be available for the BNP to have a non-existential reading.

On the contrary, the existential readings are not always available when BNPs are preverbal Subjects:

(31) *Cães estão no meio da rua.
      'Dogs are in the middle of the street.'
             vs.
(32) Estão cães no meio da rua.
      are dogs in the middle of the street
      'There are dogs in the middle of the street.'

So, BNPs may get a sort of Kind reading, and they do survive as existential preverbal Subjects. However, in both contexts, special conditions must be met.

2.1.4.   Indefinite Definites – Zamparelli (2002)

Another hypothesis about the nature of BNPs (following a 'unified'/Carlsonian theory) is to consider them indefinites across languages. If BNPs are weak indefinite expressions in English as well as in Romance languages, what can explain the differences between English and Italian, for example, or how can Italian express the same meanings as English without resorting to BNPs?

Zamparelli (2002), basically adopting a Carlsonian line of reasoning, compares the behaviour of Italian definite DPs with the one English BNPs show in similar contexts, mainly as Subjects. His initial observation takes into consideration the fact that BNPs in English cover the readings BNPs (as Objects), partitive NPs and definite DPs have in Italian.

He considers four types of tests based on the nature of the predicates that license a Kind reading for their Subjects: Kind-level predicates (33); Taxonomic Properties of Kinds (34), Quantificational Properties (35), and Characterizing sentences (36). Adopting the idea that in the first three contexts, BNPs in English are Kinds and, in the fourth, they are indefinites bound by a Generic operator over situations, Zamparelli (2002) claims that plural definite DPs in Italian may have both the generic and the existential reading of English BNPs (his examples):

(33) Domestic dogs evolved from Jackals./I cani si sono evoluti dagli sciacalli.

(34) Dogs come in many sizes./I cani si trovano in varie taglie.

(35) Dogs are common in this region./I cani sono comuni in questa regione.

(36) Dogs bark at the moon./I cani abbaiano alla luna.

Definite DPs in Italian may get either an indefinite or definite reading. When they get the latter reading, they correspond to English plural definites, not to English BNPs. Zamparelli suggests that, for definite readings in Italian, a *Max* operator (similar to Chierchia's 'ι operator', see 2.1.2) intervenes (*Max* returns the single largest element in a set or picks out the largest plural individual in the denotation, being undefined when no such element is present). Presumably, the definite determiner in English operates the same way.

Assuming that Italian indefinite definites, i.e. definite DPs that have an indefinite reading, behave exactly as English BNPs, which theory would be the best to account for these similarities? For Zamparelli, the ambiguity hypothesis would state that the definite article in Italian has three possible meanings: the generic, the indefinite and the one denoted by *Max*. Another possibility would be that definites never denote Kinds and are interpreted as *Max* in the sense that the referred X means *the X that may exist*. A third possibility would be that they can either have a kind-denotation or an object one and their reading results from being bound in characterizing sentences by an unselective adverb, which would derive from one of the other denotations, perhaps by type-shifting. The main reason why Zamparelli insists on a global analysis of this issue is the fact that in spite of their reading as definite, including features such as uniqueness or familiarity, Italian definites may also get an indefinite reading when there are difficulties in establishing a context. In these cases, definites would refer to objects and never to Kinds. In fact, English definite in these contexts have never indefinite readings, and the Italian definites would correspond to BNPs in English. In addition to this argument, he uses the context of existential sentences where it is possible to have definite nominals in Italian[12]. These observations argue for the ambiguous analysis.

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[12] Sentences such as:

(i)   C'è Gianni/il mio cane in giardino
        'There is Gianni/my dog in the garden.'

Considering Chierchia's analysis of BNPs, Zamparelli focuses on the scope properties of nominals. Thus, existential BNPs have narrow scope, but that will change it if they have as complements full DPs or proper names which cancel Kind readings and turn the narrow scope properties into wide scope properties (his examples):

(37) Gianni stà cercando [parti di nave].
     'John is looking for [ship parts].'
                vs.
(38) 'John is looking for [parts of the Titanic].'

Derived Kind Predication, it is argued, is then the necessary step to an existential reading, when the Kind reading is cancelled. It follows from Chierchia's theory that if all existential readings having narrow scope derive from Kinds, and if BNPs in Italian have those readings, then they must derive from Kinds too. But the generic meanings in Italian are expressed by definites. So why cannot English do the same? Because of the 'Avoid Structure' principle (Chierchia 1998): BNP is the simplest way. And in Italian the empty D must be licensed.

Zamparelli shows that, even when modified, Italian BNPs are never Kinds (except in the taxonomic sub-kind denotation), i.e., they cannot occur with predicates which would have Kinds as their arguments and their narrow scope properties do not derive from a kind meaning. He claims that that is due to 'lack of referentiality' which must be linked

---

(ii)   Nell'età di Romulo c'erano già i senatori.
         'In the time of Romulus there were already senators.'

One should notice that these effects can be observed in EP in both structures with Estar (To be –stative) or Haver (Há = there is), they are better though with plural DPs:

(iii)   Estão os Silvas/os meus cães no jardim
         are the Silva/the my dogs in the garden
         'The Silva/my dogs are in the garden'.
(iv)   No tempo de Rómulo já havia (??os) senadores.

As expected, the post-verbal Subjects, especially definites, can only be interpreted as new, that is, as informational focus. The definite is never interpreted as indefinite.

In (iv), though, the definite article could only be possible in a sort of collective interpretation of a pre-established group, not necessarily a Kind. The BNP is obligatorily assigned an existential interpretation.

to the absence of a lexical element in D at LF. The rigid designator, the article or the proper name is the only one that may trigger that mechanism if it is pied-piped out of the sentential operators (trough covert movement after spell-out):

(39) [John]$_i$ [a piece of paper that Mary gave him yesterday]$_j$ [t$_i$ is looking for t$_j$] = John is looking for a piece of paper that Mary gave him yesterday.

Narrow scope can only obtain when there is no element present in D.

The main point though is that, for Zamparelli, definite expressions both in English and in Italian may denote entities called Kinds. Nouns denote either sets of individuals or sets of kinds (taxonomic readings). The definite determiner provides for the kind meaning in Italian and returns the largest possible sub-kind.

He adds then that whenever definites are not assigned an indefinite reading, they do not occur with predicates which allow Kind readings. The generalization follows Zamparelli (2002:19):

(40) «A definite noun phrase in Italian may have an indefinite meaning only when (in some context) it can have a kind-level meaning.»

This allows him to overrule the ambiguity theory: the blocking of the generic reading does not allow the existential reading to survive. Hence, only definite readings are possible. The existential reading should then derive from the Kind reading.

The existential reading can be obtained when there are no contexts for *Max*, but also in special informational structures. Considering the classic ambiguous example 'hurricanes arise in this part of the Pacific', the author suggests that the existential reading is obtained because they are 'born object-level indefinites' moved to a focus position.

Following Laca (1990), Zamparelli claims that BNPs receive an existential reading if they are part of the utterance rheme and a quasi-universal reading if they are part of the theme. In Italian the existential reading of the NP in the theme is accomplished via the definite article.

Interestingly, definites in some Romance languages do not show the behaviour of Italian definite DPs. In fact, as the author acknowledges in a footnote, EP does not allow

indefinite readings of definite NPs (the examples in EP (41)-(46) correspond to the Italian counterparts):

(41) Todas as semanas, o meu Web site é atacado #pelos hackers/por piratas.
Ogni settimana, il mio sito web viene attaccato da[gli hackers]
'Every week, my web site is attacked by [the hackers].'

(42) A casa é porquíssima. Na cave há *os ratos e debaixo do lava-louças vivem *as baratas.
La casa è sporchissima. In cantina ci sono[i topi] e sotto il lavello vivono [gli scarafaggi]
'The house is filthy. In the basement there are [the mice] and under the sink live [the cockroaches]'

(43) Qual é a tua profissão? Fotografo *os pássaros.
Che fai per mestiere? Fotografo [gli uccelli]
'What do you do for a living? I photograph [the birds]. '

(44) Com estes problemas, tive de deixar de beber *o café. Por outro lado, o chá facilita-me a digestão.
Con questi disturbi ho dovuto smettere di bere [il caffè]. [Il tè] invece mi facilita la digestione.
With this condition I had to stop to drink [the coffee]. [The tea] instead helps my digestion.

(45) O João está tão pálido que parece ter visto *os fantasmas.
Gianni è cosi pallido che sembra abbia visto [i fantasmi]
Gianni is so pale that it seems he has seen [the ghosts]

(46) Em 1986, #/?os ladrões esvaziaram o meu apartamento.
Nel 1986 [il ladri] hanno svuotato il mio appartamento.
In 1986 [the thieves] have emptied my apartment.

In (46), the ungrammaticality may be due to several factors. One of them is that the lack of referentiality for the DP (it is not read as Kind and it has perhaps an unspecific definite reading) would lead a EP speaker to prefer another type of structure (Em 1986, assaltaram-me a casa – In 1986, my house has been robbed)), that is, a BNP could be

acceptable if the information was about the burglars. The sentence with the definite DP would presuppose something like: I have been robbed (and the burglars emptied my apartment).

The definite with some 'indefinite' flavour may occur in EP in contexts where the referent has an unspecific reading. Constructions (such as in (46a)), in which the Subject does not have a phonetic content and gets an arbitrary reading allow for the occurrence of definite unspecific DPs as a discourse cataphora). We may hypothesize that in some contexts, i.e. not generally, considering BNPs in EP can hardly be preverbal Subjects, definite DPs may, as a last resort, get unspecific readings:
:

> (46a) Assaltaram-me a casa/ A minha casa foi assaltada. Os ladrões/Eles
> levaram tudo.
> robbed 3 PL- CL 1 SG the house ('Someone robbed my house.') / my house was
> robbed. the burglars/they took everything.

If, however, this is a case of associative anaphora, the DP can only get a specific reference, i.e. it can hardly be an indefinite definite.

Furthermore, the Spanish examples Zamparelli provide for a contrast with the Italian ones, but also with EP (cf. (41) and (42) above), (Zamparelli, 2002:23, 24):

> (47) Cada semana, mi página Web es atacada por los hackers/*los bribones
> desconocidos/bribones desconocidos).
> 'Every week, my web site is attacked by the hackers/the rascals.'
> unknown/ rascals unknown

> (48) La casa está sucísima. En el sótano hay (*los) ratones, y bajo la fregadora
> hay (*las) cucarachas.
> 'The house is filthy. In the basement you have (the) mice and under the
> sink you have (the) cockroaches.'

The EP counterparts to (47)-(48) overrule the presence of an article. Definite articles cannot generally be considered a strategy for indefiniteness in EP. Zamparelli (2002) notices that with mass nouns in Spanish the definite determiner cannot mark

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indefiniteness (cf. (92) 'Estoy enfermo y he dejado de beber (*el) café' - I am sick and I stopped drinking (the) coffee).

The data above show that there is not a general Romance strategy then. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that definites in EP can be non-specific[13]:

> (49) Ouvi dizer que os meteorologistas afirmam que vai haver muitas mudanças climáticas.
>
> 'I heard that the meteorologists affirm that there will be many climate changes.'

The definite determiner may have three readings: a generic one ("most meteorologists"), a definite one ("those meteorologists we have been speaking about"), or a non-specific (in the sense that reference is, at least, vague) one somewhat close to an arbitrary Subject:

> (50) Eles dizem que vai chover. (eles=vaguely, the meteorologists)
>
> 'They say it's going to rain.'

As mentioned before, Zamparelli notices that in some cases in Italian the indefinite meaning can be expressed by definites, BNPs or partitives. However, it is not enough to say that there is some sort of connection between the Subject and the Object (a parallelism effect, which will be discussed later on):

> (51) Il cancro al pulmone colpisce {i fumatori/fumatori/dei fumatori}.
>
> 'O cancro do pulmão ataca {os fumadores/fumadores/?alguns fumadores}.'[14]
>
> 'The lung cancer strikes {the smokers/smokers/some smokers}.'

According to Zamparelli, the sentence proves that the first nominal expression is a Kind and the verb requires an object-level Object which is bound by a Generic operator. The

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[13] Cf. Donnelan (1966) for attributive and referential use of definite expressions, according to the speakers' intentions and truth/false values that can be assigned to them.

[14] It is acceptable with the 'Pretérito Perfeito Simples do Indicativo'- 'Simple Past Perfect', but not with a generic interpretation and only in some contexts.

Kind Subject DP and the verb (with a habitual feature) may establish a semantic link with the Object, if it is also a definite DP: the sentence gets a generic reading. The Object definite DP gets a generic or universal reading.

If definite Objects are also indefinite in EP, the only difference with BNPs is just that the latter can refer to a sub-set of smokers or a contrast, i.e. 'smokers, not others'. Which is the preferred reading of the BNP in (51)?

2.2. The ambiguity analysis – Diesing (1992)

The idea that nouns are basically Kinds or basically properties which undergo type-shifting is challenged by the ambiguity theory: nouns get readings according to the restraints of predicates.

The central idea of this theory is that BNPs are indefinites. Diesing (1992) holds that, depending on the predicate, indefinites (hence, BNPs too) will be mapped into the restrictor and bound by a Gen(eric) operator or into the nuclear scope where they are bound by existential closure.

According to Krifka (2004b), this approach solves the problem of the classical example «Typhoons arise in the South Pacific»: a pitch accent in the Subject marking it as focus triggers a Kind reading of the BNP. If the locative is the default, the BNP gets an indefinite reading.

The Kind reference initial idea is basically opposed to the ambiguity theory in what information from the lexicon is concerned: BNPs are always Kinds. But if the evidence of other languages does not confirm that BNPs always refer to Kinds[15], then they are always indefinites and it is their mapping that assign them a reading.

However, this approach still does not account for variation among languages. This is why, in some way, it was necessary to turn to a parametric theory, and adopt the concept of type-shifting.

In what EP is concerned, preverbal Subject BNPs can get an existential reading (52), even when they are unmodified preverbal Subjects. And if they are not Kinds they can still be preverbal Subjects of sentences usually referred as characterizing (53). In the latter case, should they also be mapped into the restrictor regardless of being only

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[15] Cf. Dubrovie-Sorin & Laca (2004) for evidence in Romance languages.

apparently Kinds? And the possibility in EP of having BNPs as Objects with a generic reading (54) will cause theoretical problems:

(52) Ouviu-se um estrondo. Pássaros voaram assustados.
'A bang was heard. Birds flew frightened.'

(53) Cães gostam de carne.
'Dogs like meat.'

(54) Adoro cavalos.
'I love horses.'

Objects cannot generally be mapped into the restrictor. So, which features allow the BNP to be mapped into the restrictor and get a generic reading? This issue will be further looked into.

2.3.   Semantic Number and Information Structure – Krifka (2003)

Number, regardless of its nature, is always associated to BNPs. Considering that superficial number is a morphological requirement of some but not in every language, semantic number must be looked into.

According to Krifka (2003), the grammatical number of the noun is a matter of syntactic agreement with a number word. The evidence that supports this idea is that decimal fractions always trigger plural agreement (also in EP):

(55) American households have, on average, zero point seven cats/*cat and one point zero dogs/*dog.
'Os lares Americanos possuem, em média, zero vírgula sete gatos/*gato, e um vírgula zero cães/*cão.'

In some languages like Hungarian, there are distinct plural forms for count nouns, but they lack agreement with number words.

So, Krifka concludes that NPs consisting of count nouns with a superficial number agreement denote predicates that are quantized (Krifka, 2003: 193): «if the NP seven cats refer to an entity x, then it cannot apply to proper parts of x, or to individuals that have x as a proper part.».

Krifka adds that in the case of BNPs what is at stake is a semantic plural: plural morphology creates a property because the number argument is not filled overtly. As for semantic singular, uniqueness presuppositions with respect to a given situation have to be taken into account – Bare Singulars are more specific than Bare Plurals. So, whereas singular count nouns are functions from members to predicates, the other expressions are predicates.

He suggests that articles and true quantifiers are the heads of DPs, and number words are specifiers of count nouns. DPs can thus be directly combined by functional application with verbal predicates and be referring expressions or quantifiers, while NPs are predicates that cannot directly be combined with verbal predicates, hence the need for type-shifting, which must be triggered locally.

This approach aims at explaining why DPs are arguments and NPs are not. But it really does not suggest how type-shifting is codified in syntax. It also overlooks different ways of codifying number within the DP across languages: does D contain number features which can be transmitted to N or be triggered in N by default, as in the case of BNPs?

One contribution to the discussion on type-shifting is related to the information structure of the sentence. For Krifka (2003), the down operator (Chierchia's intentional operator that allows Bare Nouns to denote Kinds (Chierchia, 1998)) can only act when the nominal predicate is a topic. In fact, he claims that kind-referring readings require a prosodic structure typical for topic-comment structures. Thus kind-referring readings of Objects are overruled, excepted if there is a way to map Objects into topic positions.

In episodic predicates the topic is the situation, not the Subject, contrary to what happens with state predicates[16].

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[16] Krifka (2003: 21): «In Krifka (2001) I argued that indefinite NPs in the restrictor have topicality features, and that the restrictor is a topic. The topicality requirement for restrictors can explain the widespread use of definite articles in Romance languages, which is probably due to the fact that de-accenting cannot be used as freely as in English to mark topicality.».

(56) Dogs are widespread. (the existential reading is obtained by type-shift)

(57) Dogs bark.

.

In EP, the preverbal Subject position is commonly regarded as a (non-marked) topic position and that is perhaps another explanation for the unavailability of that position for EP BNPs. The topic position and interpretation is perhaps the reason why some speakers may assign a non-existential meaning to any sentence with a preverbal Subject BNP. The question to be asked is not whether EP BNPs undergo type-shifting but whether they can be mapped into the restrictor.

3. Syntactic issues

3.1. BNPs and the Nominal Domain

The concept of Bare Noun is first related to the observation of languages which have both nominal expressions with and without overt determiners. English was the first language to be considered and most works still consider it in a comparative perspective.

If, for a start, the studies on other languages are disregarded, there are two main contributions for today's literature on the subject: one regarding the issues related to the readings of Bare Plural Nouns as Subjects, which are mainly pursued in a semantic perspective, and syntactic oriented proposals for the nominal domain including a D position selecting an NP, a sort of functional head similar to I or C (Abney 1987). The combination of these two lines of research has been fruitful, mainly when trying to establish the nature of D and its role at the C-I interface level[17].

In early studies in Generative Grammar[18], it was suggested that lexical determiners would be only surfacing in Surface structure and codifying features inherent to Ns, like [±singular], [±masculine], [±definite]. Later on, determiners were considered as units in the lexicon projected in Syntax in [Spec, NP].

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[17] Cf. Chomsky (1995:168, 169): «The performance systems appear to fall into two general types: articulatory-perceptual and conceptual-intensional. If so, a linguistic expression contains instructions for each of these systems. Two of the linguistic levels, then, are the *interface levels* A-P and C-I, providing the instructions for the articulatory-perceptual and the conceptual-intensional systems respectively. Each language determines a set of pairs drawn from the A-P and C-I levels. The level A-P has generally be taken to be PF; the status and character of C-I have been more controversial.»

[18] e.g. Postal (1966), Raposo (1972).

When comparing BNPs with other NPs, the question is what in the structure could explain the difference between these nominals and those with overt determiners. Abney (1987) proposal for a (full) DP had two main motivations: to establish a parallel between the functional projections of both VPs and NPs and to solve the apparent inconsistency of having a head (a determiner) in a Spec position [Spec, NP]. Thus, the structure [DP [D [NP N]] was proposed and accepted even if, when considering BNPs, it is pertinent to ask whether D is really empirically motivated.

Evidence from proper names in most languages would advise against the latter option. The fact that there are languages without determiners (like the Slavic languages, Hindi[19], Chinese[20] and most creoles) is also an important issue. Nevertheless, the behaviour of BNPs across languages and especially the differences between the argument and non-argument status of these NPs/DPs together with the asymmetries they display when they occur in Subject and Object positions have had some consequences for the analysis of the nominal domain.

Szabolcsi (1987) and Stowell (1989) gave the motto for further research by suggesting different structures according to the argument status of the Nominal expression: a DP could be an argument, but an NP could not[21]. Accepting this conclusion entails that Subject and Object BNPs have to be DPs across languages[22], even if the D is not overt (lexically and phonetically). But what exactly is D needed for?

This question is crucial to define in what way D interacts with the rest of the sentence, and also provides a principled explanation to Stowel's and Szabolczi's claim[23]. Number also plays a major role in the structures: it distinguishes Bare Plurals (BNPs) from Bare Singular Nouns and provides them the plurality information which

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[19] Cf. Dayal (1999).

[20] Cf. the analysis for Mandarin and Cantonese by Cheng & Sybesma (1999) which suggests a Classifier position in much the same way as Longobardi does for a D position.

[21] The English data, however, do not to fully support this claim. In fact, in some predicative contexts a lexical Determiner is required:

   (i)   Boys love **games**

              vs.

   (ii)   John is ***(a) teacher**.

[22] It is also generally accepted that, semantically, NPs are properties not individuals/entities.

[23] Cf. Dubrovie-Sorin & Laca (2003) and Laca (2013) for the idea that Ns referring to properties can be arguments in a different perspective.

enables them to have scope properties and be bound by quantification over individuals/objects.

As for the second question, the issues regarding Subject/Object asymmetries, namely the close relation between the survival of Object BNPs and their existential readings in Romance remain at the centre of current theories, mostly related to the existence of an empty D which must be governed. In some cases there is an attempt to assign the empty D features which are checked under the right configuration.

The properties of the predication, especially the type of predicate, and also the information structure of the sentence have also drawn much attention. The predicate and the relation the BNP has with it account both for Subject/Object asymmetries – i.e. restrained occurrence of preverbal Subjects vs. free occurrence of Objects – and for the readings assigned to the BNPs. So, most insights need to combine syntactic and semantic mechanisms and diverge mainly on the role they assign to predicates: either assuming that BNPs just adapt to the sentence features and receive a reading accordingly or that they are basically the same entities which may change because of the semantics of the predicates they occur with under special conditions.

In any case, though there are not that many studies on BNPs with a syntactic focus, it is crucial to establish which assumptions or consequences of their syntactic structure are suggested together with the semantic approaches.

3.2. The Government Requirement - Contreras (1986)

Assuming that BNPs structure involves a D position entails that no lexical material is merged in this position or else moved to it, that is, D is empty. According to Rizzi's (1986) definition of the Empty Category Principle (ECP), empty categories need a local licenser and their features must be recoverable. So *ECP* requires that:

> (58) «An empty category [*e*] must be:
>   a) formally licensed
>   b) properly identified – by default or by contextual identification.»

The first part of this principle[24] led Contreras (1986), previously to the D hypothesis, to assume that in Spanish, BNPs were NPs with an empty Quantifier Phrase in Spec, NP position; hence they could be Objects (as opposed to Subjects) because the empty QP, was formally licensed and properly identified by the verb, hence, properly governed, as (58) requires.

He assumed Kayne's (1981a,b)[25] definition of government:

> (59) «A lexical category governs its sisters and the categories immediately dominated by its sisters. A lexical category can govern across one, but no more than one, maximal projection.»

According to Contreras, the main reason why the Subject position cannot be governed in Spanish is, according to him, because Spanish is a VOS language, and the preverbal Subject is adjoined to the right, so it is not governed. This is also valid to Subjects of passive sentences unlike those of unaccusative verbs which are generated as Objects. As for topics, Contreras considers they do not obey the ECP.

These ideas would account for the following paradigm (Contreras 1986: 25), his examples (1) to (3):

> (60) (a) Quiero café.
>
>   1SG want coffee
>
>   'I want coffee.'
>
>   (b) Falta café.
>
>   3SG lack coffee
>
>   'There is no coffee.'
>
>   (c) *Me gusta café[26].

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[24] See also Aoun & Sportiche (1983), Lasnik & Saito (1984), and Chomsky (1981, 1986) for previous definition of the ECP.

[25] These papers were republished in Kayne (1984).

[26] The EP counterparts are perfectly acceptable:

  (i)   Quero café

        1SG want coffee

        'I want coffee.'

  (ii)   Gosto de café.

3SG please me coffee

'I like coffee.'

Whereas the empty QP was properly governed in (60a,b),[27] and the ungrammaticality of (60c) would derive from the fact that it was not. Proper Government would require a category V(erb) or P(reposition) to govern the NP under the following configuration (Contreras, 1986):

(61) $[_{x'} X [_{NP} [_{QP} e] N']]$

So, only governed positions allow for the presence of BNPs and, also following Kayne, nouns, being [+N categories], are not proper governors, which would explain that N could not govern the empty category.

More important than the structure of the NP, the issue of government was the crucial tool used in GB theory to captures the asymmetric distribution of subject and object BNPs in Romance.

Contreras assumes that the empty category is of Q nature, but only the sentence configuration explains why some BNPs survive and others do not. Both in Spanish and EP, the empty category is not lexically governed if the BNP is a preverbal Subject and that explains the asymmetry between Subject and Object positions[28].

Contreras' analysis has to be adjusted considering the DP hypothesis. The empty Q category is then replaced by D, head of a DP containing N, and it is D that must be

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       1SG like of coffee

       'I like coffee.'

 (iii)   Falta café.

       3SG lack coffee

       'There is no coffee'.

 (iv)   Agrada-me café.

       3SG please me coffee

       'Coffee pleases me.'

Sentence (iv) is perfect if it is an answer to 'what pleases you?'.

[27] For two main reasons: 1st – the similarity between these structures and those with Quantifiers; 2nd – the fact that verbs like 'terminar' ('finish') do not allow either the presence of a quantified Object mass noun or the mass noun alone.

[28] Contreras also acknowledges some problems regarding conjoined Subjects and Focus constituents (in EP, some examples would be 'Homens e mulheres trabalharam bem/'men and women worked hard' and 'Só cobras passam por aqui /'only snakes pass through here'), which can be BNPs, a fact that his analysis does not account for.

governed. In Contreras terms, D should be governed, which may lead to assume that the existence of an empty D is crucial for the analysis.

The Subject/Object asymmetry is thus clear. Government, in fact, explains why in languages having overt determiners, BNPs are almost unrestrictedly Objects, with the exception of French. In this language, it is assumed that the determiner codifies the grammatical feature of number, and that would be fundamental when BNPs are concerned.

However, the analysis of Contreras does not explain the behaviour of BNPs in languages where they can be Subjects, except if we assume that in some languages the Subject is governed by the verb to the left, crossing only one functional projection, or if we take Rizzi's second part of the *ECP* constraint: an empty category must be properly identified – by default or by contextual identification.

In fact, most authors will assume Head government - regardless of its definition -, as the right mechanism for Object BNPs (or post-verbal Subjects[29] of unaccusative or unergative verbs) to be licensed, even if it does not explain why it is not a sufficient condition to license Bares Singulars. Some authors (like Delfitto 2002, Espinal 2010, Laca 2013) consider incorporation is needed to license e.g. Bare Singulars (in the case of the latter), the nature of which depends on the properties of the predicate and of the predication. In any case, (morphological or semantic) plurality is taken to play a central role in BNPs licensing and interpretation.

3.3.   BNPs as DPs

3.3.1.   N raising to D - Longobardi (1994, 1999, 2005, 2008)

In order to prove the need for government and the importance of an empty D position, as well as to explain the apparent differences between English and Italian, Longobardi (1994) describes the behaviour of BNPs in the former language as undergoing covert movement to D, contrary to what would happen in Italian in what common nouns are concerned.

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[29] Cf. Laca (2013) for the idea that government does not explain the impossibility of examples such as

(i)   *Están extinctos dinosauros.
             are extinct dinosaurs
             'Dinosaurs are extinct.'

The main idea is that BNPs in English behave like proper names contrary to Italian, where a determiner-less proper name would cross an adjective but a BNP would not.

Example (62) is crucial (Longobardi 1994:20); his example (30):

(62)
a. L'antica Roma fu la città più importante del Mediterraneo

   The ancient Rome was the most important city of the Mediterranean

b. *Antica Roma fu la città più importante del Mediterraneo

   Ancient Rome was the most important city of the Mediterranean

c. Roma antica fu la città più importante del Mediterraneo

   Rome ancient was the most important city of the Mediterranean

d. La Roma antica fu la città più importante del Mediterraneo

   The Rome ancient was the most important city of the Mediterranean

Common nouns in these contexts can never occur without a determiner or rise above the adjective[30]. The determiner in (62a) is analysed as an expletive, since it has no semantic content.

Thus, D is the place for reference and argumenthood and the position is always occupied (through Move or Merge) – either by an N or by a Det. This line of reasoning crucially relies on the assumption that the position of adjectives is a reliable test for word order inside the DP – they are assumed to be generated at or moved to the left of Ns (in Romance languages, Ns have to move further up to get other features, namely Number). There would not be any covert movement in Italian, because, assuming a version of the Earliness Principle, Longobardi postulates that, if proper names can move to D overtly, they must do so and do not postpone the movement to the covert component of grammar.

On the basis of the contrasts in (62), Longobardi (1999) suggests the following generalization:

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[30] The analysis of the AP adopted here presupposes that, in Italian, 'antica' structurally occurs in the same fix position, (cf. Giorgi & Longobardi 1991), i.e. in Spec,NP. N must raise to a position above NP (arguably NumP) to check morphological features. In EP, BNPs may rise above the adjective, though.

(63) «Proper names may occur without a phonetically filled D if and only if generic nouns may do so in a grammatically unconditioned way (i.e. in virtually all contexts).»[31]

Thus, in Italian 'generic nouns' cannot occur with an empty D. With both generics and proper names the Italian definite would be an expletive. The structural configuration would imply mechanisms such as CHAIN/chain to establish the relationship between the N and the D position occupied by a determiner.

Regardless of the analysis Longobardi presents, which also includes the idea that only modified BNPs may be Subjects in Italian, but only with existential readings [32], the question still is what does the D position encode – argumenthood?, reference?, genericity?

Longobardi (2008) provides an answer to this question, through the following hypothesis: D contains [person] features like personal pronouns, typically 3rd person pronouns.

In this work, Longobardi has a starting point: Carlson's concept that individuals can be Kinds or objects, but he also refers to properties which he defines as failing to be located with respect to speech act roles. He adds that the capacity to refer is common to nouns and pronouns ('potentially individual-referring'). The capacity to refer requires a functional projection, namely DP and only holds for arguments, in the line of previous works. To summarize his ideas Longobardi presents a Topological Mapping Theory (Longobardi: 2008:5):

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[31] Notice that these 'contexts' are mainly related to Subject positions and tend to disregard predicate features. Though quite powerful, this generalization is more a description of the English grammar (as observed by Delfitto, 2002, exception made to some proper names in English that need to have a phonetically filled D) and thus a relatively simple way of distinguishing it from other grammars. This means that grammars are either like English or they are something else. It may and it does imply a sort of antithetic behaviour of languages such as Italian in order to fix a parameter. Furthermore, it is one of the pillars which opposes, in parametric terms, English to Romance Languages in general, with the exception of French whose main peculiarity relies in a morphosyntactic detail: nouns in that language do not have plural features – which is not altogether the case (irregular plurals, audible final 's' in liaison contexts, for instance – so they crucially rely on the phonetically filled D. Note also that in English it is normally the other way round (except for the case of demonstratives): nouns are the hosts of plural features. Delfitto (2002) acknowledges the importance of these features even if only in his analysis for existential readings of BNPs.

In any case, French proper names generally occur without an overt determiner (with the exception of some geographic names), contrary to EP, for instance. This clear-cut distinction implies that EP can never have BNPs with generic interpretations.

[32] Longobardi also notices that, with some individual-level predicates (those which denote 'non-permanent' properties), BNPs survive.

(64) «Denotation Hypothesis: Individuals are denoted in D»

(65) «Licensing Condition : Arguments denote individuals, as constants or variables»

(66) «Definitions:

a. Constants have a fixed referential value, thus denote one and only one individual (Kind or Object)

b. Variables are bound by (co-indexed with) an operator and range over a set of values, thus denoting a set of individuals (kinds – for taxonomic readings – or objects).»

From this theory he deduces the following theorem (Longobardi: 2008:6):

(67) «An argument is a constant if and only if D contains α, α, a potentially individual-referring expression (otherwise: an argument is a variable).»

Given the lack of evidence in English for all the functions of D in Romance, Longobardi suggests the following parameter: English is a weak reference language contrary to Italian. He maintains the mechanism of covert movement to explain why Ns do not raise to D in English until LF. The following general condition accounts for the BNPs' behaviour in Germanic (Longobardi: 2008:11):

(68) «Economy: overt chains are a Last Resort, covert chains are licensed if they affect the interpretation.»

To the question of whether one can have either DPs or NPs as arguments, considering D may occur without content (neither phonological, nor interpretative), based on the data presented by Crisma (1999)[33], Longobardi (2008) suggests that the opposition is not an argument/non argument one, but rather an opposition between individual--denoting and property-denoting expressions.

Furthermore, he considers the case of pronouns which are not apparently subject to parameterization: in all languages they surface in D. Longobardi then argues that D is

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[33] See next section.

the person Head, as it contains the [person] feature. Considering that adjectives may occur before the pronoun[34], he suggests that they are generated like nouns and then rise to Spec, DP. He also claims that person, if and only if present, overtly attracts pronouns.

So, (64) should be rephrased as (69) (Longobardi 2008:17)

(69) «Individuals are denoted through the person feature.»

Person is thus crucial for the identification of individuals, not properties.

The person Head is universally occupied by pronouns and, for interpretive reasons, it can be subject to a parameter in what Ns are concerned (Longobardi 2008:19, 20):

(70) «Certain languages refer to individuals (Romance) by overtly associating the lexical content of nouns to person (strong person), others (English) do not (weak person).»

Longobardi (2008) concludes by saying that Person, along with Gender and Number are functional projections of the N that have immediately understandable content, contrary to others like [±referential] or [±argument]. This goes along the lines of recent theoretical studies together with the idea that parameterization is a property of functional heads and not of lexical ones. Thus he proposes a final 'schemata' (Longobardi 2008:25):

(71)
a. An interpretable feature may be grammaticalized/ extragrammatical.
b. If grammaticalized, a feature may trigger: overt/covert Move.

The assumed DP structure is (72):

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[34] Examples in (i):

(i) Poveri noi. / Poor us.

This does not hold for EP, where an adjective can only precede a pronoun if a preposition intervenes:

(ii) Pobres de nós. / *Pobre nós.
poor of 1PL

(72) $[_{DP}[_{D[\pm person]}][_{NumbP} [Numb[_{GendP}[Gend[_{NP} [N]]]]]]]]$

Longobardi's work does not add any considerations with respect to the structure of BNPs, DPs or NPs as non-arguments. They are properties and thus they do not rely on D to refer either to objects or to Kinds. The fact is that D may be needed to host a lexical determiner in predicative contexts and it can only be regarded as some sort of operator marking other features[35], i.e., it is the determiner together with the verb that create the interpretation while the D position is still marked [-person].

And a question remains: what is the nature of the relationship between DPs (their licensing and interpretation) and other features of the sentence?

3.3.2.   Empty D in Germanic - Crisma (1999)

Along the line of Longobardi's analyses (and contrary to Chierchia 1998[36]), Crisma (1999) goes further on generalizing the DP analysis for BNPs suggesting that argument NPs are always DPs and claiming that there is evidence for overt movement in Germanic languages. In order to support this claim, she considers genitive structures, as well as the behaviour of BNPs and adjectives.

First, Crisma lists potential counterexamples in the Germanic languages to a DP analysis: there is no overt N-to-D movement with proper names; the s-genitive is an XP, thus it cannot occupy the D position, and does not occur with overt determiners; some Scandinavian languages display a definiteness suffix morpheme, lower than D, but excluding the presence of a definite article; Germanic languages use BNPs in broader contexts; Icelandic uses argument Bare Singulars unrestrictedly.

This kind of evidence goes along with Chierchia's (1998) reasoning: Germanic languages are [+argument, +predicate] languages, i.e., they can have BNPs as arguments. However, evidence from Old English and Swedish shows that in the presence of an adjective, proper names behave like in Italian: the adjective follows the noun when there is no determiner present (Crisma 1999:111) (her examples):

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[35] Cf. De Swart et al. (2006)

[36] For Chierchia (1998) the DP projection needs not be always projected.

(73)

    a.   Jag har sett den allsmäktige Gud

         'I have seen the almighty God.'

    b.   Jag har sett Gud allsmäktig(e)

         'I have seen God almighty.'

    c.   *Jag har sett den Gud allsmäktige

         'I have seen the God almighty.'

    d.   ?*Jag har sett allsmäktige Gud

         'I have seen almighty God.'

When an overt determiner occurs, it does not have any semantic content. Furthermore, in German, proper names can be preceded by articles but these must be present when there is an adjective. Crisma suggests that even without any overt movement to D, the relation between N and D is blocked by the adjective[37] when there is no overt determiner present. These examples are only true in contexts where the N has an argument function.

In the case of languages where there is a definite suffix[38], the insertion of a determiner is needed each time the N is modified by an adjective, but only when it is an argument[39]. That proves that it is not the adjective that licenses the determiner.

As for the genitive construction, Crisma (1999) notes that (i) it excludes the presence of a determiner, (ii) it provides the N with its definite value, and (iii) it occupies the leftmost position in the nominal group.

According to Crisma, these properties must always correlate assuming that the genitive occupies the D position. Using evidence from German, she notices that when

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[37] Notice that the 'adjective' argument does not hold in modern English, even though Crisma provides examples in Old English and a residual Biblical example – «The *almighty God/vs. God almighty». Even though she provides no answer to the fact that Modern English has no such alternate structures, I think that it is related to the weakening of the determiner in this language, contrary to what happens in other Germanic Languages.

[38] Quoting Delsing (1993), Crisma argues that the article is thus expletive, in Norwegian:

   (i)   Bil-en

         Car-DEF

         'The car'

   (ii)   Den stora bil-en vs. *stora bil-en

         the big car-DEF

[39] Crisma notices that the definite suffix is allowed in vocatives, but it cannot occur with determiners, which proves that only DPs can be arguments (assuming that the suffix occurs in a lower position than D).

the genitive occurs in the right position it needs to have a lexical determiner or it behaves like a BNP (Crisma 1999: 116) (her examples):

(74)

a. Ich habe Marias Buch gelesen.

I have Mary's book read.

'I read Mary's book.' (definite reading = there is only one relevant book)

b. *Ich habe Buch Marias gelesen.

c. Ich habe das/ein Buch Marias gelesen

'I read the/a book by/belonging to/etc. Mary.' (the definite value depends on the choice of the determiner)

(75)

a. Ich habe Marias Bücher gelesen.

I have Mary' books read.

'I read Mary's books.' (with definite reading =all of Mary's books)

b. Ich habe Bücher Marias gelesen.

'I read books by/belonging to/etc. Mary.' (with indefinite reading =not necessarily all of Mary's books)

c. Ich habe drei/die Bücher Marias gelesen.

'I read three/the books by/belonging to/etc. Mary.' (the definite value depends on the choice of the determiner)

The contrast between (74b.) and (75b). also provides us information about number: only plural BNPs may survive when the genitive is on the right. Bare Singulars do not have what is needed to survive (they crucially contrast with plural BNPs).

If the genitive moves in (74a.) and (75a.), the definite feature of the genitive is checked against the definite feature of the DP. When it does not happen, a lexical determiner is needed. This means that there is an empty D position in the case of BNPs, which get, in fact, an existential reading (they would get a generic reading if they would raise to D).

So, the D position (a Number position too?) is needed either for checking the definite genitive features or, when left empty, it keeps the typical non-specific property of BNPs.

Crisma (1999: 116) concludes that «either the genitive moves to the leftmost position of the Noun Phrase, and then 'functions as an article'; or the genitive remains low, and then the determiner is required (unless the Noun Phrase qualifies independently as a 'Bare [plural/mass] Noun).». So, the properties of the genitive construction must correlate to determination requirements.

It is apparently more difficult to argue in favour of the non-existence of a D position in this latter context, unless we would say that the DP is projected only when needed. The fact that in Icelandic (a language that allows Bare Singular count nouns to occur without restrictions) the genitive may occur to the right without determiner and that only in languages where the three properties mentioned correlate, like in German, shows that the attraction of the genitive is a property of the left periphery of the N. D is needed to convey, in a local relation, a definite value to the whole DP. So, when the genitive is attracted to the left, a functional position, namely D, is projected, containing an empty determiner. This analysis holds only for arguments, though.

Considering that there are less restrictions than in Romance languages for the occurrence of BNPs in Germanic languages, Crisma still holds that there is evidence showing that in the latter the absence of the determiner has properties of the presence of an empty category (cf. examples (74) and (75) above), i.e. of an empty D. So, she suggests that the second part of Rizzi's ECP holds for Germanic languages, namely the identification of two features: [± definite] and [± count].

With respect to the first feature, Crisma states that without determiners, nouns are never ambiguous between definite and indefinite[40]. Languages with articles have the feature [± definite]. In the absence of a definiteness marker, determiner-less nouns are indefinite, a value which is recovered by a default reading strategy analogous to that of recovering the φ-features of an expletive *pro*.

The 's-genitive' definite and the definiteness suffix of Swedish may recover the definite value of the feature. According to her analysis, the genitive agrees by rising to a Spec position, to check case, with a head D or lower than D. The presence of a

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[40] Notice that this is not true for most creole languages. Aspectual features or word order within the sentence will solve ambiguity issues.

feature in Spec allows for the recovery of the value of the same feature on the agreeing head.

As for the [± count] feature, it can be marked by an 'indefinite' article or by plural morphology. The genitive, when indefinite, also locally conveys its value to the NP. A singular count noun needs a singular count genitive to get a count reading. The presence of an indefinite article thus serves the purpose of distinguishing a count from a non-count reading. Definite singular count nouns are always ambiguous in what this feature is concerned, which proves that the D position can only encode one of the two features [± count] or [± definite]. Consider her example (Crisma: 1999):

(76)
   a. John insists that we buy the shark he saw at the Aquarium to keep it in the swimming pool.
   b. John insists that we buy for dinner (all) the shark he saw this morning at the market.

These examples correspond to the features conveyed by the definite article in EP. In fact, the definite article may be [±count] ((76) a./b. =(77) a./b.):

(77)
   a. O João insistiu que comprássemos o tubarão que ele viu no Aquário para o pôr na piscina. (one definite specimen)
   b. O João insistiu que, para o jantar, comprássemos (todo) o tubarão que ele viu esta manhã no mercado. (the (whole) definite (piece of the) specimen)

When Crisma postulates the existence of these features in D, she does not suggest whether they must be checked in D or in any other inner position.

Considering that these features are only determined by the nominal domain, and that we must take all circumstances into account, the whole picture suggested by Crisma is the following: (in Germanic, at least) when a singular nominal is definite, it is ambiguous between count and non-count (its reading being recovered by context),

when it is plural, it is count; when it is indefinite, it is count, when it is plural, if bare, it is count and indefinite, by default.

So, there is not a full range of combinations for each nominal, i.e. [+def, +count], [+def, -count], [-def, +count], [-def, -count], as I summarize below:

	Definite	Count
✓	+	+
*	+	-
✓	-	+
???	-	-

However, the ungrammatical combinations in Germanic are possible both in English and in EP, as shown in (78) and (79) (Portuguese examples in (79) correspond to English ones in (78):

(78)

a. The shark/the rice [+def, ±count]

The shark attacked. The rice is being cooked.

b. The sharks [+def, +count]

The sharks ate the sardines.

c. A shark [-def, +count]

A shark destroyed the fishing nets.

d. Sharks [-def, +count]

Sharks are big fishes.

e. Shark/rice [-def, ±count] (when possible, namely as Object, or as in cases of unique reference)

Shark/Rice is very common in Japanese cuisine.

(79)

a. O tubarão/o arroz [+def, ±count]

O tubarão atacou. O arroz está a cozer.

b. Os tubarões [+def, +count]

67

Os tubarões comeram as sardinhas.

c. Um tubarão [-def, +count]

Um tubarão destruiu as redes de pesca.

d. Uns tubarões[-def, +count]

'Some sharks'

Uns tubarões, que estavam perto, devoraram o cardume.

'Some sharks nearby devoured the school.'

e. Tubarões [-def, +count]

'Sharks'

Tubarões são peixes grandes.

f. Tubarão/Arroz [-def, ±count] (when possible, namely as Object, or in prototypical readings)

'Shark'/'Rice'

Tubarão/Arroz é comum na cozinha japonesa.

(80) is a possible cartographic representation of Crisma's analysis for Germanic languages, where XP is the (functional) projection where the [±count] features are checked:

(80) $[_{DP} D_{[\pm definite]} [_{XP} X_{[\pm count]} [_{NP} N \ldots$

The description of BNPs features cannot explain alone the different readings they get in English: if the N rises to the D position, it gets a definite reading, if it rises to an intermediate position (XP), does it get an indefinite reading, by default? Why should it be so? What could motivate the movement of N? Not its features alone. Representation (81) would be a worse option, considering that in the presence of a definite determiner, N would had no need to rise, the definite determiner being ambiguous between a count and a non-count reading, the XP position would be pointless and the generic reading of the BNP would be assigned trough *Agree* with the features in the empty D position. The existential reading would be assigned in the very same way. In any case the features in XP below could not be morphological. It must be expected that the plural features are checked in the same position that [±count] features are checked:

(81) $[_{DP}$ D $[_{XP}$ X $_{[\pm count]}$ $[_{WP}$ W $_{[\pm definite]}$ $[_{NP}$ N…

In (82) the representation suggests only one position for the lexical determiner. BNPs would rise to D, if they had to check these features, but what about the differences between readings, how would the position alone determine the reading of the BNP?:

(82) $[_{DP}$ D $\big[$ $_{[+def, +count] / [+def,\pm count] / [-def,+count] / [-def, -count]^{41}}$ $\big]$ $[_{NP}$ N…

Crisma does not refer the case of Bare Singulars, which may not always be [-count][42]. Should it be understood that the [±count] feature is checked in a Number projection, considering morphological number exists both in Romance and Germanic languages, often present both in the noun and the determiner (namely in German)? The [+count] feature is the default feature which is expected if there is a Number Phrase also responsible for morphological number. So can the representation be like (83)? The N has to rise to Num, and the survival of the BNP still depends on the licensing and interpretation of the D position:

(83) $[_{DP}$ D $_{[\pm definite]}$ $[_{NumP}$ Num $_{[\pm count]}$ $[_{NP}$…

If, on the other hand, one accepts [+person] or [+argument] as the inherent features of the D position, would that mean that [+definite] is similar to them? Then, existential BNPs can never move to or be merged in D, hence, the possibility of intervention of type-shifting. The representation is:

(84) $[_{DP}$ D $_{[+person, +definite, +generic]}$ $[_{NumP}$ Num $_{[\pm count/+indefinite]}$…

Existential NPs would never move above the Num head where they check their count features, generics must otherwise move up.

The absence of a determiner in the case of BNPs makes this movement mandatory: kind BNPs move to D, if one assumes that Kinds are often expressed by definite

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[41] Crisma does not refer to the feature combination in italic.
[42] E.g. 'Woman needs man and man must have his mate'

nominal expressions. Other authors (namely Zamparelli, 2002 and Oliveira & Cunha 2003[43]) advocate this hypothesis for Romance languages in which the definite determiner is in the D position where it checks the features ([+generic], [+definite]). In any case, for the followers of the Carlsonian theory, further mechanisms must be taken into account, namely the *Agree* operation, with or without Move, involving feature matching between uninterpretable features. On the contrary, followers of the ambiguity theory claim that it is the sentential structure and not the DP/NP one which is relevant for covert movement triggering a particular interpretation of the BNPs.

3.4.   Number Phrase

Number is, as it was mentioned above, one of the issues concerning BNPs, namely because of the syntactic contrasts between Bare Singulars and BNPs. If morphological plural number, in the case of count nouns, conveys indefinite/non-specific features and if one accepts D as the position which conveys definitness/specificity, then NumP is needed as an intermediate projection between DP and NP. Regardless of other layers or the need for them (cf. Zamparelli 2000) or even the possibility of having a Quantifier Phrase (or a quantifier head) instead of DP, which is in some way already suggested by Contreras (1986), the Num projection is the best way to explain both the differences between Bare Singulars and BNPs and the non-specific properties of the latter.

Ritter (1991) first suggested a NumP to distinguish Hebrew's construct Noun Phrase from the free-state Noun Phrase, both expressing the genitive. In the first case, a superficial head-noun (in a Spec position) referring an object is followed by its possessor, which, according to Ritter should be able to asymmetrically c-command it. So, arguably, N raises to D to identify it and to be able to assign case to the Subject:

> (85)   Parat ikar
>
>   cow farmer
>
>   'A farmer's cow'
>
> (86) $_{DP}$[D parat$_i$ $_{NP}$[ikar N'$_{[-i]}$]]

---

[43] See Section 2.

In the case of the free-state Noun Phrase, the N cannot rise to D, because the D position is filled with the definite article. So, N rises to the head of NumP to amalgamate or check its number features (considering plural and word formation processes in Hebrew), as shown in (87):

(87) Ha-axila shel Dan et ha-tapuax

the-eating of Dan of the-apple

'Dan's eating of the apple'

(88) DP[D ha NumP [Num axila_i NP[shel Dan [-_i] N' et ha-tapuax]]]

The difference between definite and indefinite marking is also noticeable. Indefiniteness is non-marked and allows N to rise (if NumP is always projected, N must undergo cyclic movement and check its number features in that position). Definiteness is marked by a determiner, which presumably gets a number feature through Agree. Hebrew also uses Bare Singulars to refer to Kinds and that contradicts Chierchia (1998) claim and leads the research towards another issue: the differences between Bare Singulars and BNPs and between the lexical articles system in each particular language.

Brito (1993) suggested a Num projection for EP DPs.

3.4.1. Bare Singulars: the Morphosyntax of Number and the Free Agreement Parameter – Munn & Schmitt (2000), and proverbial sentences – Lopes (1992)

Munn & Schmitt (2000) considers Chierchia's Nominal Parameter to be inaccurate both because it states that Bare Singulars cannot refer to Kinds and because it predicts that in contexts where BNPs can freely be arguments they can also freely be predicates. Using evidence from Brazilian EP, other Romance languages and English, these authors suggest that the Free Agreement Parameter (Bobaljik 1995) accounts for the difference between languages. Mirroring what happens at sentential level, where one can find Agr (uninterpretable) and T (interpretable) fused (as in English) or separated (as in Romance), Munn & Schmitt suggest the same principle should be applied to the nominal domain.

English shows no agreement within the NP (except for demonstratives) while in Romance D and N agree in gender and number. According to Munn & Schmitt, the structures describing both cases are respectively the following:

(89) $[_{DP} D [_{NumP/Agr} Num [_{NP}...]]]$

(90) $[_{DP} D [_{AgrP} Agr [_{NumP} Num [_{NP}...]]]]$

One of the major consequences of this analysis is that a language that has a split Num/Agr allows each head to function independently and be selectively present.
Basically, this would explain why in predicative contexts, Romance languages can do without Num and have bare singulars, contrary to English which must always project the fused Num/Agr. In order to prove this claim, they show that in English, contrary to Romance, NPs in predicative position must agree with plural Subjects. The following examples illustrate this claim:

(91)   Ninguém poderá usar-nos/usá-lo como testemunha.

(92)   Nobody will be able to use us as *witness/witnesses.

(93)   Nobody will be able to use him as *witness/a witness

Furthermore, they claim that the plural marking in predicates in English shows that Number has a semantic effect. Portuguese and Spanish can do without interpretable number. Considering the example given, that claim does not hold for EP, except if 'witness' is only a property. Their observation is also true, if the singular noun is 'exemplo'/'example' or 'regra/rule', which denote a property (cf. the EP and the English counterpart):

(94)   Ninguém poderá usar-nos/usá-lo como exemplo/regra/desculpa.

(95)   Nobody will be able to use us as *example/*rule/
         *excuse/examples/rules/excuses.

(96)   Nobody will be able to use him as *example/*rule/*excuse/an
         example/a rule/an excuse.

In what Objects are concerned, Munn & Schmitt (2000), following previous work (Munn & Schmitt 1999), consider evidence from Brazilian Portuguese and show that Bare Singulars behave like BNPs in English. They mention the following properties (their examples (7)b, (8)b,(9)b, (12)b, (23)b and (32)):

(97)   Existential reading (Subject and Object):

a. Chegou criança.

    arrived 2SG child

    'A child arrived.'

b. Ele comprou computador.

    he bought computer

    'He bought a computer/computers'

(98)   Generic reading allowed (Subject and Object):

a. Criança lê revistinha.

   child read 3SG comic book

  'A Child/children read/s comic books.'

b. Beija-flor é ave.

   humming bird is bird

  'A humming bird/Humming birds is/are a bird/s.'

(99)   Always narrowest scope (opaque reading)

a. Pedro quer encontrar policial.

   Pedro wants to meet policeman

  'Pedro wants to meet a policeman/policemen.'

(100)   Not restricted to canonical types:

Caderno sem capa colorida estava em liquidação ontem

notebook without colored cover was on sale yesterday.

'A notebook/Notebooks without a colored cover was/were on sale yesterday.'

(101)   Not interpreted as mass nouns.

*Ouro pesa duas gramas.

gold weighs 2 grams

               vs.

Criança pesa 20 quilos nesta idade

child weighs 20 kilos at-this age

'A child/children weigh/s 20 kilo at this age.'

Their claim is that there is an empty D in Brazilian Portuguese structures such as these (like in English for BNPs), but it is allowed to have an absent interpretable number (like in other Romance languages). They present evidence to show that Bare Singulars lack Number (their examples (41)a., (41)c., (42)c. and (43)c.):

(102)   Bare Singulars (like BNPs) do not trigger a terminative reading:

a. Eu escrevi carta por duas horas.

   I wrote letter for two hours

   'I wrote a letter/letters for two hours.'

b. #Eu escrevi carta em duas horas.

   I wrote letter in two hours

   'I wrote a letter/letters in two hours.'

(103)   Like BNPs, Bare Singulars do not license 'each' and unlike BNPs, they
      are not compatible with 'different':

a. Os países da EU mandaram delegado *cada.

   the EU countries sent delegate each

   'The EU countries sent a delegate/delegates each.'

b.??Eles escreveram livro diferente.

   they wrote different book

   'They wrote a different book/ different books.'

Lastly, the behavior of coordinate Bare Singulars in sentences such a (104), which cannot have the interpretation 'the same people who were friends were also relatives', leads them to suggest (105) as the structure of Bare Singulars (Munn & Schmitt 2000:13):

(104)   Eu encontrei amigo e parente no aeroporto.

I met friend and relative in the airport

'I met friends and relatives at the airport.'

(105)   [$_{DP}$ D[$_{AgrP}$ Agr [$_{NP}$]]]

Bare Singulars are not interpreted as Kinds in EP. As shown in (106), Kind-level sentences with Bare Singulars in subject position are ungrammatical:

(106)   *Dodó está extinto.

dodo is extinct

'A Dodo/Dodos is/are extinct.'

The unacceptability of such a sentence is evidence enough to distinguish Bare Singular occurrences in EP from BNPs in English, which can occur without restraints. Bare Singulars in EP, as already shown, get a prototypical reading and the Kind-level sentence cannot apply to a single individual, even if it is representative of a Kind. Bare Singulars have neither the generic reading of a definite Singular nor the existential reading of an indefinite:

(107)   *Dodó está doente.

dodo is sick

'A Dodo/Dodos is/are sick.'

According to Lopes (1992), Bare Singulars (mainly modified) occur rather frequently in EP proverbs and denote prototypes. Proverbs are texts which can occur isolated or within larger discourse sequences. They are generally gnomic sentences which provide for the generic reading of the Bare Singular noun in a compositional way. The absence of a determiner is also crucial for the proverbial reading. We may then hypothesize that whenever these two conditions (Bare Singular Subjects and gnomic reading of the predicate) are met, sentences are proverbial or law-like.

Lopes (1992:70) also notices that (my translation) «in proverbs, properties which are not *a priori* recognized as essential or characteristic of a species are automatically promoted to prototypical properties of that species only because they occur within the frame of a generic utterance.» This means that a generic sentence will induce the prototypical reading generally connected to Bare Singulars, at least when they are Subjects.

Also according to Lopes (1992:89), (my translation), «in Portuguese [EP], common nouns as Subjects only occur without determiners when they get a generic reading.» (we shall return to Lopes, 1992 analysis in Chapter III).

The examples provided by Munn & Schmitt for Brazilian Portuguese generally correspond to the 'proverbial' reading. The occurrence of Bare Singulars as Objects can be explained in a different way: either they are massified or semantically incorporated on the verb (Cf. Espinal, 2010). Furthermore, notice that in examples like (98a) ('Criança lê revisitinha'), the Subject is also a Bare Singular and parallelism seems to be mandatory in these cases. We shall return to these issues in Chapter IV.

The main problem of the analysis of Munn & Schmitt is how to account for the existence of competing structures in Brazilian Portuguese, i.e., definite nominals can also refer to Kinds, and indefinite Singulars can refer to taxonomic categories. Why should a language have two options to express the same meaning? Perhaps in the case of Brazilian Portuguese, there are competing grammars, which may explain these apparently synonymous forms[44].

3.4.2. Number: Reference to capacities vs. BNPs – De Swart et al. (2006)

Though looking into predicates, De Swart et al. (2006) study a special class of Nominals, the ones which refer to capacities (mainly nationalities, professions, religious beliefs), which behave differently from other nouns in predicative contexts. Consider (108)-(109):

(108)   Il est professeur/ el es professor vs. He is a teacher.

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[44] For further analysis of Brazilian Portuguese BNPs, see Muller (2002).

(109)   *Il est garcon/*él es niño/*he is boy[45]

Looking at data from Dutch (see (110)), De Swart et al. (2006) show that when the above mentioned special class of nouns is the predicate of a copular sentence, it may be a Bare Singular even though the Subject is plural:

(110)
a. Jan en Sofie zijn leraar.

    Jan and Sofie are teacher

    'Jan and Sofie are teachers.'

b. *Jan en Sofie zijn een leraar.

    Jan and Sofie are a teacher

c. Jan en Sofie zijn leraren.

    Jan and Sofie are teachers

    'Jan and Sofie are teachers.'

These are typically Bare Nouns in Germanic and Romance languages and the authors consider them as sortally distinct from Kinds even though they are both entities of type *e*, and predicates. They differ from other types of nominals (definite, indefinite or BNPs), which are not interchangeable with them in the same contexts with the same meaning. Using examples from Hebrew, Brazilian Portuguese and Haitian Creole, the

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[45] Notice that in EP, this kind of context is also possible with some sort of modification:

(i)   Ele é rapaz para se calar / de poucas palavras / ser solteiro.

         he is boy for 3 SG-SELF to shut /of few words / to be single

         'He is capable of saying nothing / doesn't speak much / to be single.'

Modification may allow for the survival of the Bare Singular, but a post-nominal adjective confers it a contrastive interpretation, which could be obtained by the BN without modification (Ele é rapaz, não rapariga- he is a boy, not a girl) and have an interpretation similar to an indefinite DP, while the other modifiers in (i) refer to what the de Swart et al. (2006) refer to as a capacities.
It is also noticeable that a sentence like (ii) is also possible:

(ii)   O bebé é menino.

         the baby is boy

         'The baby is a boy.'

Common nouns are arguably predicates in EP.

authors attempt to prove that in structures involving reference to capacities, the behaviour of these nominals is not the same of other nominals, namely in what number is concerned.

They assume that the NumP projection denotes an *<e,t>* type, while the NP projection denotes *e*. They present the following hypothesis (De Swart et al 2006: 33):

> (111)　«Capacity nouns in Romance and Germanic languages denote capacities – entities of type *e* that are distinguished from kinds. Capacities can be mapped into kinds using kind coercion and to sets of ordinary entities using the CAP operator. Kinds, as in other theories, can be mapped to sets of entities using the realization operator REL.»

De Swarts et al. (2006) assumption is that the layered DP structure is as follows:

> (112) [$_{DP}$...D [$_{NumP}$...Num [$_{NP}$...N]...]...]

NP is unspecified for number, it contains the complements of the noun and it is very restricted in what adjectival modification is concerned. NumP encodes the number inflection and allows for modification – adjectives, PPs and relative clauses). This projection 'factors out' the number information of the NP as a separate syntactic element. The Num head is for morphological number and not for numeral expressions[46]. The DP level involves the presence of determiners, quantifiers and genitive possessives. So a further assumption is (De Swart et al 2006:18):

> (113)　«Bare Nominals project NPs, marked nominals have at least a NumP projection.»

In their sense, Bare Nominals are Bare Singulars and marked nominals include BNPs. It follows that BNPs always involve NumP. Num expresses Carlson's realization operator REL. So, NumP, the projection that maps properties into instantiations of objects (*e* (*e,t*)), can take Kinds, but not capacities, as arguments.

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[46] Presumably these occupy a QP projection. Cf. Krifka (2003).

In the first place, De Swart et al (2006) generally associate the Number Projection to morphological features, which also convey semantic information, according to them. As BNPs involve such a projection, they allow type-shifting.

If one adopts De Swart et al (2006) approach, the need for an extra-projection, DP, when there is no lexical material to fill it remains unmotivated. A possible answer is that the plural features are not enough to assign different interpretations (Kind, generic, existential, or others) or to license the distribution of BNPs. Hence, the D position would still be the key for the survival of BNPs, as the Subject/Object asymmetry strongly suggests: BNPs contain an empty D position which needs to be licensed.

3.4.3.   The Plural Parameter – Déprez (2007)

Déprez (2007) ascribes a particular important role to morphology: the richness of plural morphology determines the projection of NumP, which in turn plays an important compositional role in the interpretation of nominals.

In order to improve Chierchias' work, she proposes a Plural Parameter (following Déprez 2003, 2004) which distinguishes languages that obligatorily project NumP (+PL) from those that do not (-PL). The latter are said to have an underspecified form for number. Notions such as mass and count are assumed to be of lexical nature while countability and uncountability are structural and compositional.

Déprez (2007) argues that nouns always denote Kinds and NumP retrieves instantiations of the Kind (objects or sub-kinds) and imposes a measure function on these instantiations. NumP can have two possible distinct realizations:

(114)

1. «It can be a pure instantiation of the Carlsonian realization rule R (without stages) from kinds to objects and generalized to taxonomic sub-kinds, that has as output the set of objects (or sums of objects) or sub-kinds (or sums of sub-kinds) instantiating a given kind in a given world.

2. It can be the Carlsonian realization rule associated with a measure function that has as output a countable property. Following (Krifka 1995), a measure function (OU= Object Unit) is assumed, which, when applied to a Kind and an

Object, delivers a Number, denoting the number of objects instantiating the Kind in a given world.»

[–PL] languages fall into the first case, and the second case describes [+PL] languages. Crucially, the counting function introduces a number argument which needs to be saturated by some element. This element can be a numeral or an indefinite or the plural morphology on the noun.

According to Déprez (2007), this Plural Parameter has three direct semantic consequences (quoting):

(115)
1. «Only [–PL] languages allow direct access to the basic kind denotation of nouns. For [+ PL] languages, access to kind denotation requires the presence of a relevant operator.
2. Only [–PL] languages can have bare nominals that are underspecified for number and thus compatible with either a plural or a singular construal depending on contextual factors.
3. In [+PL] languages, in the absence of relevant morphology, bare 'singular' Nominals, i.e. NumPs that contain an unsaturated counter, are excluded.»

Evidence for this theory comes from the analysis of the behaviour of nominals as predicates in Haitian Creole. Haitian only needs an overt copula in sentences with full nominals, that is, when a determiner precedes the nominal predicate, as shown in (116):

(116) [$_{IP}$ Jan I [$_{PredP}$ se [$_{NumP}$ Num [$_{NP}$ chapentye]]]]
'Jan is a carpenter.' (an entity, a noun)

Déprez (2007) claims that a PredP hosts the movement of a predicate if there is no determiner present, as shown in (117):

(117) [$_{IP}$ Jan I [$_{PredP}$ chapantye$_i$ [$_{NumP}$ Num [$_{NP}$ t$_i$]]]]
Jan is carpenter (a quality, a property close to an adjective)

'Jan is a carpenter.'

One of the strictest predictions of the parameter is that in [+PL] languages, the need for saturation of the number argument will prevent the existence of Bare Singulars, which contain a non-bound variable.

As for Kind readings, they must involve a semantic operator. In Romance languages, the reading is obtained through the presence of a definite determiner. In English, however, Déprez assumes that a null operator is licensed which must retrieve the meaning of a Kind from that of a 'predicative' NumbP. This is however difficult to prove, and fails to provide an elegant explanation for [+PL] languages.

If plural definite determiners can also mark the Kind reading, one could argue that the fact that in English determiners do not have morphological number will perhaps ask for the intervention of the null operator.

However, the possibility of having Bare Singulars in EP as preverbal Subjects, though quite limited, contradicts the Plural Parameter, unless there is a stipulation for a null NumP to be present:

(118) Político sabe viver.

politician knows to live

'A politician knows how to live.'

In any case, the emphasis given to the internal structure of the DP and the need to check features inside this domain is only part of the problem. Indeed, the relationship of the DP with the rest of the sentence must still be accommodated, in particular in what concerns the tense-aspectual properties of the whole vP.

An interim conclusion is that the NumP projection is empirically motivated and accounts for morphologic and semantic features. It is a way of explaining the constraints syntax imposes on BNPs. Projecting NumP is the first requirement to refer to either Objects or Kinds. Furthermore, the importance of a DP projection, namely of an empty D, is the clue to the asymmetries between (non-governed) Subject and Object and the relation between generic readings (N-to-D raising) and an unoccupied D position.

So, whatever structure is predicted for BNPs, NumP is a part of it. The question of not projecting it, namely in what Bare Singulars are concerned, is disputable, even by economy principles, in Chierchia's terms. Bare Singulars (in languages where there is plural morphology) (marked as count by the lexicon) project NumP [-plural] which disallows it (as preverbal Subject) to occur with Kind-level predicates and to have exactly the same readings as BNPs in Object positions. In the latter case, however, its occurrence may rely on properties of verb selection (in the case of the Catalan examples of Espinal 2010 - see below -, NumP is apparently not projected) or just to obtain other interpretations, such as the mass interpretation of singular count nouns:

(119) Comi ananás.

I ate pineapple

'I ate some pineapple.'

(120) Há mouro na costa.

there is Moor on the coast

'There is something suspicious happening.'

3.4.4. Number Neutrality and NumbP – Espinal (2010)

Espinal (2010) uses the concept of Number Neutrality to describe Bare Singular (count) Nouns which can be objects in Catalan and Spanish and may be interpreted either as singulars or as plurals, respectively (121) and (122) (her examples (1) and (2):

(121) Tinc pis.

1SG have apartment

'I have an apartment / apartments.'

(122) Lleva jersey.

3SG wears pullover

'S/he wears a pullover / pullovers.'

She claims that «the noun forms a complex predicate with the verb». This is also possible in EP, under the same conditions (a sort of 'have' relation is implied):

(123) Ela usa saia.

      she wears skirt

      'She wears skirts.'

(124) Ela procura parceiro.

      she looks for partner

      'She is looking for a partner.'

      vs.

(125) *Ela limpa carro.

      she cleans car

      'She cleans cars.'

      BUT

(126) Ela limpa muito carro.

      she cleans many car

      'She cleans a lot of cars.'

Espinal uses the idea of 'Number Neutrality', which is a semantic concept applied to languages where there are overt determiners or other marks of singular and plural, but may accept nouns which can either denote singularities or pluralities. The definition she uses is as follows (Espinal, 2010: 985):

(127) «By number neutrality we understand here compatibility with atomicity as well as non-atomicity entailments coming from the predicate or from the context.» (Farkas and de Swart, 2003:14)

Considering data from Catalan, from the fact that these nominals cannot occur either in Subject position or in indirect object position and are not associated to a marker of atomic reference (a determiner), one can infer that they cannot occupy a D position. So, the configuration Espinal suggested for these nouns is [NP N].

She claims that Bare Singular Objects are properties which modify the verb and are interpreted as assigning a sort of 'have' predication to the Subject of the clause, i.e. as already mentioned, the noun forms a complex predicate with the verb.

NumP is needed to check clear interpretations about the denotation of the noun. It must then contain features like [±singular]. Whenever this distinction does not apply, Num is

not projected. In fact, Espinal claims that these Bare Singular Objects are underspecified for number, as if the speaker does not want to commit him/herself either to a definite/indefinite object or to a singular or plural one.

The present work is not primarily focused on these occurrences of Bare Singulars, but the number issue is crucial. For Espinal, there are several differences between Bare Singulars and BNPs: the latter are not so restrictedly selected by the verb (even though they may show the same properties of pseudo-incorporated nominals in the case of Objects), and they denote always sums of atoms.

In any case, the stipulation must be that D is only projected when Num is too. Taking Longobardi (2008) into account, the cases studied by Espinal being properties do not need to project D.

In the case of plural BNPs, Number must be at least a syntactic projection where morphological features are checked.

3.5. Type-shifting as a syntactic-interpretive mechanism – Delfitto (2002)

One of the most comprehensive works about BNPs is Delfitto (2002). His main idea is that languages like English, that allow N raising to D, will have BNPs with Kind interpretations as Longobardi had stated. This syntactic operation would thus encode type-shifting.

According to this proposal, nouns are predicative categories (formal type $<e,t>$) while Kind-referring nouns are names of complex objects (formal type e). In English, BNPs can covertly undergo N raising to D and type-shifting applies. In fact, they raise in order to get that interpretation. In Italian, Ns never undergo type-shifting.

For the existential type-shifting to take place in English, its syntactic encoding must follow two conditions (Delfitto:2002:92):

(128)

«1. D must be identified as ∃ by means of an event predicate under lexical government;

2 The range of Ǝ (atomic, non-atomic or mass) must be identified by means of covert feature movement to the D position. Features moved are either [mass] or [plural].»

Delfitto (2002:94) argues that his analysis has conceptual advantages:

(129)

a) «N-to-D raising in one or other of its syntactic manifestations underlies both interpretations (generic and existential) of Bare Nouns, the generic interpretation obtains by N-raising and the existential interpretation by feature raising.

b) The existential interpretation of null determiners is parasitic of the operation of existential closure of the event variable proper to event predicates and represents in fact another case of unselective binding.»

So, basically, inside the nominal domain, we can only expect to have movement if type-shifting is needed, and Delfitto claims that that is always the case in English, contrary to what happens in Italian.

Type-shifting is thus a syntactic operation motivated by the need for a special interpretation which can only be obtained if a language displays the right configurations.

Under Delfitto (2002) approach, apparently, EP, like Italian, can never have type-shifting, since there can never be N-to-D raising. The possible cases of generic meaning of Subject BNPs would be inherited from the sentence and that of the Object of some verbs would have other explanations.

3.6. The role of modification - Delfitto (2002), Kayne (1994) / Bianchi (1995)

With I-level non-permanent predicates, modification allows for existential interpretations of BNPs as Subjects in Italian.

For Delfitto (2002)[47], modification does not license the BNP, it is the syntactic configuration of modification which demands the presence of a D.

In order to prove his idea, he uses the raising analysis of restricted relatives which was first presented by Kayne (1994) and was later improved by Bianchi (1995): relatives clauses correspond to a CP selected by a D, along the lines of (130) (Bianchi 1995):

(130) [DP [D CP [N [DP D[…]]]]]

The modified N in Spec, CP (actually also a DP) checks its features against those of the D above it. That amounts to say that there is an empty D position which is needed so that features are checked under the right configuration, type-shifting being dispensed with. As Bare Nouns modified by adjectives and PPs also improve the interpretations of Subject BNPs in Italian, Delfitto claims that a similar analysis is needed for these structures.

However, evidence for the presence of a CP projection in both adjective and PP modifiers is hard to find. Indeed, BNPs with pre-nominal adjectival modifiers get a different interpretation from the one assigned to the Nouns with a post-nominal adjective. As illustrated in (131) and (132), whereas the former are preferably interpreted existentially, the latter, if accepted, are assigned a non-existential interpretation:

(131) Lindas raparigas passeiam na Primavera. (preferably, existential interpretation, sub-kind reading)
'Beautiful girls take walks on spring time.'

(132) Raparigas lindas passeiam na Primavera. (if acceptable, non-existential interpretation)
girls beautiful take walks on spring time
'Beautiful girls [usually] take walks on spring time.'

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[47] Krifka (2003) has a different account of the role of relative clauses in licensing BNPs, based on information and prosodic structure: the complex modified BNP forms a Prosodic Phrase, which is necessary for it to be interpreted in the restrictor of a quantifier.

The idea that the relative clause configuration licenses an interpretation of the Subject BNP with I-level non-permanent predicates only is empirically challenged by examples (131) and (132). (133) has an S-level locative predicate and (135) a K-level predicate. The tense of the main clause causes – the Simple Past in (133), i.e. the reference to events prior to the moment of enunciation vs. the occurrence of the gnomic Present in (134) restrains the time reference of the relative (which assigns a sub-kind reading to the BNP). The choice of the Indicative/Subjunctive mood, tense and the type of predicate assigns one reading over the other:

(133) ?Políticos que (dizem/*digam/) disseram (/*tenham dito a verdade) estiveram hoje num debate na televisão. (existential interpretation)
politicians that tell (IND PRES/ SUBJ PRES/) IND PAST (/ SUBJ PAST) the truth were on a TV debate today
'Politicians that (tell/may tell/) told (/might have told) the truth were on a TV debate today.'

vs.

(134) Políticos que ?dizem (/??digam/ ??disseram/??tenham dito a verdade) estão em vias de extinção. (non-existential interpretation)
politicians that tell IND PRES (/ SUBJ PRES/ IND PAST/ SUBJ PAST) the truth are almost extinct
'Politicians that tell (/may tell/told/might have told) the truth are almost extinct.'

Modification by adjectives should be looked into more carefully, because it is, perhaps, a matter of syntactic configuration. Not all (adjectival) constructions allow BNPs to survive the same way relative clauses do. The semantic features of adjectives may not be decisive for the licensing of BNPs and Delfitto (2002) can be right in stating that it is a matter of syntactic configuration[48].

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[48] On the other hand, Krifka (2003) may be right, if one assumes that the prosodic structures associated with some adjectives are different from the ones associated to others.

3.7. Main syntactic final questions on the nominal domain

BNPs issues go far beyond the nominal domain and include the entire sentence and its syntactic and semantic features.

The main questions to be asked about the structure of the DP (especially in EP) and the features it contains at this point are:

1. If D is such an important category, perhaps the head of a phase[49], must it not always be projected?

2. Does the structure [DP D [NumP Num [NP]] account for BNPs in EP?

3. Which features, both syntactically and semantically relevant, should be further added?

4. BNPs issues in the sentential context – Delfitto (2002)

4.1. Subject / Object asymmetries

In what Spanish and Italian are concerned, ever since Contreras (1986), as seen before, the literature has made a clear distinction between BNPs in Subject and in Object position. In what the Subject position is concerned, it is however necessary to separate preverbal from post-verbal behaviour and among the latter, there are also differences according to what type of verb is involved.

Contreras had already observed that ergative verbs[50], which he assumes to undergo no movement, may have BNPs as Subjects, contrary to passive sentences.

If EP data are taken into consideration, at least in what passives are concerned, BNPs may be Subjects in preverbal or post-verbal position:

> (135) ?Mendigos foram expulsos da Baixa./ Foram expulsos mendigos da
> Baixa.
> 'Beggars were cast away from Down Town.' / were cast away beggars
> from Down Town.

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[49] In Chomsky (1999)'s terms.
[50] From Burzio (1986) on, Subject of ergative verbs are taken to be generated in Object position.

(136) ?Mendigos chegaram à cidade.

‘Beggars arrived in town.’

The preverbal position serves a discourse purpose: the sentence is not about the event (a thetic judgment) but about the Subject (a categorical judgement). According to authors such as Kuno (1972), Sgall et Hajičova (1974) and Reinhart (1983), topics may be identified by means of a test: if a constituent may occur in a sentence with a declarative verb and as Object of ‘about’, then it is a topic.

Typically, EP preverbal Subjects are grammatical topics (not forcefully marked topics) and sentences should express categorical judgements (which express two separate acts: who is the Subject and what the predicate expresses about the Subject[51]). Topics are given information, as generally preverbal Subjects are - (137) applies to the sentence with a preverbal Subject in (135) and (138) to (136):

(137) The speaker declares about beggars that they were cast away.

(138) The speaker declares about beggars that they arrived in town.

In post-verbal position, Subjects enter presentation structures which express thetic judgements (they involve an act: "recognition or material rejection of a judgement"[52]). They cannot be identified by the test that identifies categorical judgements and they are information foci.

Post-verbal positions with unnacusative verbs are, as expected, perfectly grammatical:

(139) Chegaram crianças aqui às 10h (e não havia nada preparado).

arrived children here at 10 o’clock (and nothing was ready)

‘Children arrived here at 10 o’clock (and nothing was ready).’

The acceptance of preverbal BNPs, which, regardless of their position (Spec,TP, most probably) is interpreted existentially, may depend on restrictions on topic positions. Thus, the felicity of the examples above depends of the discourse and situation context, even with existential interpretation. This issue will be discussed latter.

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[51] Kuroda (1972/3:154)
[52] Kuroda (1972/73:154)

4.2. Incorporation

Except for the case of French, the data from most languages studied up to now confirm that BNPs can be Objects. This is also the case for PPs, even in French, but not always when they are datives.

Authors such as Dayal (1999) and Delfitto (2002) have presented an analysis of Object BNPs as being pseudo-incorporated in the verb. The issue of (pseudo)incorporation, which tends to include a semantic component – the Object is, in some way, a part of the meaning of the verb - , involves D or N, depending on the authors.

For Delfitto (2002:105), D-incorporation is the syntactic correspondent to the process of semantic incorporation described by Van Geenhoven (1996): the verb is interpreted as expressing an existential Quantifier of the form "Ǝ, x" as a part of its lexical meaning with the incorporated noun expressing the restriction of the existential quantified variable. Incorporated BNPs are predicative categories ($<e,t>$). If incorporation is a last resort strategy, it does not need to apply to modified nouns, keeping thus the analysis referred above, even if there is no apparent semantic need for it, except because the D position may individuate the Object in some way:

> (140) Ele lê revistas.
>
>   'He reads magazines.'
>
> (141) Ele lê revistas que tratam de assuntos científicos.
>
>   'He reads magazines that deal with scientific issues.'

Delfitto also analyses Objects as undergoing some sort of incorporation, that is, D incorporates into the verb and, under government, the NP reading is existential. Notice that incorporation dispenses with the requirement of licensing the empty D, even by means of a relative clause. However, there is a condition to be met for incorporation to apply: the verb must be an event one.

Here lies one major question. It is true that in English 'someone who sells books' is 'a bookseller' and that a structure containing a verb and an object BNP is an activity. However the problem is more complicated.

First of all, it seems one cannot simply say that 'activities' are incompatible, in English and in EP, with telic adverbs or even punctual ones, as 'in 3 hours' or 'at 4 o'clock':

(142) He writes/wrote books in 3 hours.

(142') Ele escreve/escreveu livros em três horas.

(143) Henry VIII kills/killed Catholics at 4 o'clock.

(143') Henrique VIII mata/matou católicos às 4h.

When there is quantification over events (which may include the adverbs), the predicate can be read as 'book writing in 3 hours, at least once' or 'Catholic killing at 4 o'clock, at least once'. In (142), it is possible to have a distributive reading of the BNP (each of his books are/were written in 3 hour). It is the aspectual features of the verb (a habitual feature?) and not only the adverbs which provide the variable. It is true, however, that activities are not compatible with telicity. But what does that suggest? Semantic incorporation? And what about states, like 'to love'?

Secondly, syntactic incorporation would imply the formation of a complex predicate which should not allow for a number of contexts (topicalizations (144), (145), cleft-sentences (146), (147), which imply N-movement and pre-nominal adverbs and adjectives (148)):

(144) Mapas, já examinei.

    'Maps, I've already examined.'

(145) Chocolate, compro quando posso.

    'Chocolate, I buy when I can.'

(146) São laranjas o que ele compra.

    'It is oranges what he buys.'

(147) O que eu escrevi foram artigos de jornal.

    'What I wrote were some newspaper articles.'

(148) Foram dados comovidamente belos, mas dolorosos, exemplos de dedicação.

    'Deeply impressive beautiful yet painful examples of dedication were given.'

I may presume that, following Espinal (2010) analysis, the number present in the BNP allows for some features regarding information structure to be checked in syntactic positions which assign them prominence and arguably their co-indexed traces are kept under c-command of the verb. As for modification, if, in (148) all adjectives are adjuncts to NumP, for instance, the D position can still be incorporated in the verb. However, incorporation cannot occur in syntax and would have to be delayed until after spell-out.

The DP analysis for Objects is maintained by Delfitto as a more elegant way of acknowledging that there is always a D present. D is the functional position used for sharing features. If incorporated into the verb, it does not allow type-shifting. The question is why should this only work with event verbs? This means that stative verbs may allow BNPs in EP to survive as Objects and get an existential interpretation just through government of the empty D. In any case, Object BNPs are not our main concern except for what they can reveal about preverbal Subject BNPs, and it is the event character of the predicate that disallows generic interpretations of Subject BNPs. Aspectual features of the sentence must provide the answer to both the distribution and interpretation of BNPs.

4.3.   Subjects: distribution and interpretation

The availability of preverbal Subject BNPs in a language depends both on the licensing of the empty D (or N-to-D raising) and on the semantic features of predicates.

For Delfitto (2002:84), the parameter is clear: in Romance languages there can never be preverbal Subjects BNPs without modification, contrary to what happens in English. In some cases, Individual-level non-permanent predicates get a generic interpretation because they are bound by a (covert) unselective quantifier. There is thus quantification over events:

> (149) Uccelli di zone paludose sono (spesso) intelligenti.
>   'Birds of marshy areas are (often) intelligent.'

That amounts to say that a quantifier may be present or implicit and the interpretation of the sentence is that the birds display an intelligent behaviour. It must then be accepted that a type of predicate which may trigger the existence of a quantifier of this sort binds a variable in D. These Individual-level predications differ from others because they are not interpreted as permanent properties of individuals, instead they are what Cunha (1998, 2004) calls phase states[53] of these individuals. The unavailability of such a quantifier makes the sentence unacceptable. In the example, 'dark' cannot be interpreted as an instance of the individual, or of some of the individuals of the species, so it cannot allow for the presence of a quantifier over events (Delfitto:2002:83):

> (150) *Uccelli/Un uccello di zone paludose sono/è (spesso) scuri/scuro.
> 'Birds of marshy areas are (often) dark.'

This sentence is analysed by Delfitto (2002) as equivalent to one having a singular indefinite (as observed by Longobardi 1999), and is presented as evidence that the BNP has not a truly generic, kind interpretation.

4.4.   Types of predicates

Delfitto (2002) goes further in the analysis of the properties of predicates, establishing a difference between eventive and non-eventive predicates. With non-eventive predicates, there is a PredP projection to which the Subject must rise. Its trace in Spec, VP is interpreted as predicational and triggers a 'lambda-abstract' operation, which must be interpreted as a property set:

> (151) $[_{\text{PREDP}} \text{DP} \, [_{\text{VP}} \, t_i \, [\lambda\text{-abstr}] \, V]]]$

So, in English sentences like

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[53] An I-level predicate can be phase (to be intelligent) or non-phase (to be tall). One of the differences between them is the possibility of the former to occur with the progressive form (Cunha, 2003):

    (i)   John is being intelligent
                       vs.
    (ii)   *John is being tall

(152) Firemen are altruistic.

(153) Firemen use special equipment.

the trace in Spec, VP prohibits the reconstruction of the Subject and the noun must raise to D. In Italian, a lexical Determiner is inserted. In both languages, the BNP gets a Kind interpretation. It is important to notice that this interpretation is possible because there is a connection between what Delfitto calls 'the imperfective' marking of the predicate and the structure of the DP – the habitual feature of the predicate, in (153)[54]. In (154), one can assume an implicit quantifier ('firemen often use special equipment'), which unselectively binds D.

As for sentences such as

(154) Firemen extinguished the fire

it is the so-called 'perfective' aspect (non-habitual feature) of the predicate which encodes a propositional interpretation of the DP and does not project PredP allowing the Subject to be reconstructed inside the VP, presumably in Logical Form. Head government by the verb would thus be the formal configuration required in order to transmit the semantic content of the existential operator associated with the event verbs to the empty D-slot, in a configuration like (155):

(155) $[_{TP}\ldots V_{i[event]}\ [_{VP}\ DP\ V_i]]]$.

The need for an event verb to legitimate existential closure is illustrated by a minimal pair:

(156) *Teo odia cani.[55]

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[54] Oliveira et al. (2006) argue, for definite DPs, that the [+hab] feature of the predicate triggers movement of the Subject DP to Spec, TP. If the feature is not available, movement is motivated for strict syntactic reasons.

[55] The problem, in what EP is concerned, is that verbs like 'odiar', to hate, do not pattern with their correspondent in Italian (cf Oliveira (1998)). Most Objects BNPs in EP have an existential interpretation, presumably because they are Head governed, but as in English and in EP, the interpretation of the Objects of these verbs seems generic. What happens in English? The generic interpretation results from N-to-D raising and consequent type-shifting, and the BNP must be mapped into some place outside VP. According to Delfitto's analysis, in EP, that should not happen. Some idiosyncrasy of theses verbs in EP

'Teo hates dogs.'

(157) Teo possedi cani.

'Teo owns dogs.'

Assuming that all conceptual issues are solved, Delfitto still does not solve other possible values of the present tense either than the ones that give rise to the generic interpretation. It is acceptable to have eventive interpretations of the present tense in contexts where a story is being told, that is to say, when the present tense enters in a description of a succession of facts - the historical present (normally connected to some past marker (sometimes an adverb, like 'ontem'- 'yesterday or 'em 1500' –'in 1500' in (158)):

(158) Em 1500, navios portugueses descobrem o Brasil e a rota das Índias inclui, desde então, o Novo Continente.

'In 1500, Portuguese ships discover Brazil and, since then, the route of India includes the New Continent.'

Then, pragmatic context will prevent the projection of PredP.

4.5.   Existential interpretation and Locative Argument

As for the possibility of interpreting BNPs existentially in sentences such as 'Firemen are available', Delfitto resorts to a locative argument.

The first observation about this kind of sentence is that the class of non-verbal predicates which accepts the existential interpretation is very restricted and it is not really sensitive to the boundary between stage- and individual level predicates.

Quoting Higginbotham & Ramchand (1996), he claims that predicates expressing properties of a generally transient nature (normally Stage-level) tend to resist to existential interpretation (as 'Firemen are available' vs. 'Firemen are athletic').

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must be looked into or else, given the claimed impossibility of type-shifting by N-to-D raising in Romance, and the impossibility of an implicit Q-adverb in the sentence, some other mechanism should have to intervene to produce the right interpretation.
In any case the verb 'possuir', 'to own' can hardly be considered in EP an event predicate.

Those which have existential interpretation crucially involve a notion of space-time locative in their interpretation in the form of a space-time proximity to the speaker:

> (159) There are some firemen available[56].

Delfitto (2002) also considers Kratzer (1995) hypothesis: event predicates generally take an extra space-time argument. So, he suggests that it is not the Subject BNP but the empty locative argument that undergoes movement to Spec, PredP and it is interpreted as subject of the predication, satisfying the requirement, encoded by morphology, that the VP is interpreted as an unsaturated function.

Examples such as (160) and (161) show that the existential reading is never available when there is no copula:

> (160) I consider firemen available/on strike. (generic reading only)
>
>   vs.
>
> (161) I consider firemen to be available/on strike. (ambiguous)

For Delfitto, structures involving inverted Subjects (with transitives and most unergatives verbs) are generally bound to interpretations where they are necessarily assigned narrow focus, like Objects, cf. the EP example:

> (162) Procuraram marinheiros diligentes partes de navio abandonadas. (not
>   specific ones)
>   looked sailors diligent parts of ship abandoned.
>   'Industrious sailors looked for abandoned ship parts.'

---

[56] The aspectual EP opposition between 'ser' and 'estar' is perhaps the reason why there are no ambiguity in equivalent sentences. In fact, sentences with 'estar' are sometimes quite close to existential sentences with 'haver', in those cases the subject will surface post-verbally:

(i)   Estão gatos no jardim = Há gatos no jardim.
         are cats in the garden
         'There are cats in the garden.'

However, locative 'estar' crucially differs from 'haver' because it accepts definite expressions and universal quantifiers.

In Italian, sentences where the Subject is preverbal are presentational (they answer the question 'what has happened?') and when it is post-verbal are hidden clefts. The class of predicates normally associated with widest focus interpretations are presentational (Delfitto: 2002:130):

>   (163) Abigail ha abbaiato.
>
>   Abigail has barked
>
>   'What happened was that Abigail barked.'
>   (164) Ha abbaiato Abigail.
>
>   has barked Abigail
>
>   'It was Abigail that barked.'

On the other hand, certain event predicates (including unaccusatives and a subset of unergatives) are compatible with the occurrence of the space-time argument that they select as an empty category:

>   (165) È arrivato Teo.
>
>   has arrived Teo
>
>   'There arrived Teo.'

These sentences imply an argument expressing speaker-orientation, i.e. the sentence is produced considering the spatial coordinate of the speaker, 'here'. This does not happen with a preverbal Subject.

Delfitto argues that when the Subject is preverbal, it moves to satisfy EPP. The post-verbal position of the Subject is rightward movement to assign focus.

In short, he claims that the locative has a clitic status in free inversion languages, like Italian, and can cross the Subject position by exploiting head-movement. The locative must, of course, be selected.

This is what may explain the existential interpretation of the English Stage-level sentences and the VS distribution in Italian, which by independent reasons- namely the need for government- are also assigned an existential interpretation.

4.6.　Topics

Most of the existing literature disregards the possibility of having Subject BNPs as marked topics. Delfitto (2002) clearly states he will not deal with the question of the left periphery. Zamparelli (2002) merely exemplifies the possibility of having them as Foci or Topics.

Contreras (1986) claims that there are 'external' and 'internal' topics, respectively (166) and (167):

> (166) En cuanto a los estudiantes, Marta es mi mejor alumna.
>
> 　　'As for the students, Martha is my best pupil.'
>
> (167) (En cuanto a) estudiantes, no creo que vengan.
>
> 　　'(As for) students, I do not think they will come.'

He does not deal with external topics since they are not co-indexed, i.e., their interpretation relies on pragmatic considerations. As for internal topics, he assumes that the co-indexing takes place at LF and that they are base generated. He notices, however that in some cases, BNPs cannot be topics:

> (168) *Estudiantes, no creo que hayan leído este libro.[57]
>
> 　　'Students, I do not think they have read this book.'

To account for the ungrammaticality of (166), he proposes a Parallelism Condition which requires the co-indexed variable to have the same structure as the topic, in a structure such as $[_{NP} [_{QP} e]$ students$]_i ... [_{NP} [_{QP} e] e]_i$. (168) is thus overruled.

The author finally distinguishes the case of pseudo-topics, which are the result of movement, hence subject to ECP, from the case of topics – see the contrast between (169), with a pseudo-topic, and (170), with a topic:

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[57] Notice that the equivalent in EP is better, and is, at most, a slightly marginal topic construction:

> (i)　　　Estudantes, não creio que tenham lido este livro, (professores, talvez tenham)
> 　　　　'Students, I don't believe that they have read this book, (teachers, perhaps they have).'

The interpretation is preferably a contrastive one.

(169) *Café es caro.

      'Coffee is expensive.'

(170) Café no hay

      coffee there is not

      'Coffee, there is not.'

Contreras's analysis does not hold for EP. (169) is perfectly acceptable in this language and perhaps topic constructions in Spanish do not have the same properties as the EP ones. This issue will be further looked into.

5. Summing up

The fact that BNPs as Objects are generally read existentially throughout languages such as English and Romance languages proves that, under the scope of the verb, they undergo existential closure. In EP, post-verbal Subjects have the same interpretations as generally Objects have.

Assuming that there is an empty D position that must be c-commanded by a lexical category or otherwise licensed (by N-to-D raising, for instance), BNPs in EP cannot normally occur in preverbal position.

If N-to-D raising is a necessary condition to obtain a Kind interpretation through type shifting, then the non-existential interpretations that are assigned to preverbal Subject BNPs in some contexts in EP are not truly generic interpretations. And preverbal Subject BNPs which are assigned an existential interpretation must get their licensing from other mechanisms.

In any case, the preverbal position of BNPs, which is not a canonical position for BNPs, relies on their nature in EP, on compositional mechanisms with tense and aspect (perhaps mood) features of the predicate and on special discourse conditions which may allow these operations.

These are the issues next chapters will deal with. Basically, BNPs in EP behave as in Spanish and Italian, but there are contexts where EP BNPs escape the restraints BNPs have in other Romance languages.

Chapter II

BNPs in root-sentences - testing native speakers

Although it is quite common to run into occurrences of BNPs both in oral and written[1] speech, they are generally considered marginal and often ungrammatical as preverbal Subjects in EP, as described in the literature.

EP native speakers, even those highly trained in Portuguese grammar, when asked to judge sentences in which BNPs occur in preverbal Subject position, hesitate about their grammaticality. In order to circumvent this difficulty, a test was designed to get data allowing more empirically motivated answers to the following questions:

1. Are BNPs possible candidates to be preverbal Subjects in root sentences, contrary to what happens in most Romance languages?

2. If so, are they acceptable depending on the type of predicate and/or the properties of the verbs they occur with?

3. When informants accept BNPs in preverbal Subject position, is there a preferred reading (existential or generic/non-existential) assigned to them or can they get both readings?

4. May a context variable be responsible for a better acceptance (or trigger a particular reading) of preverbal Subject BNPs?

A. Methods

1. The informants

Group 1 - The teacher's group

A group of thirty-one teachers of Maths, Physics and Chemistry, Fine Arts, History, Philosophy, Geography, Biology, Computers, Physical Education, and Basic Education, aged 35 to 55 years old, native EP speakers answered the tests.

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[1] E. g., «Crianças *à noite* dormem» (my italic), ('Children sleep at night') Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*, «Calor sobe no Continente: guardas florestais patrulham matas» ('Heat goes up in the Continent: forest troopers patrol woods') Newspaper Headline.

The group is heterogeneous with respect to the birthplace (within Portugal) of its members.

These informants were chosen because they are high-educated speakers and they usually use formal language (in a normative perspective). Teachers of Portuguese and Foreign Languages were excluded in order to avoid the analytic view they often adopt regarding language, considering also that the ultimate goal of the tasks could not be explained.

Group 2 – The university students' group

A group of thirty-one university students of the Faculty of Arts, all native EP speakers (with different geographical origins), aged 20 to 25 years old, also answered the tests in order to discard 'age' as a relevant variable, i.e. to discard the possibility that BNPs are going through syntactic-semantic change.

The birthplace of informants was not considered relevant, because there was no hint about any dialectal variety favouring the presence of BNPs as Subjects (which, as far as linguistic studies report, does not exist in Portugal).

Some interpretation issues were not fully controlled, namely the ones concerning knowledge of the world, i.e. whether those particular plants referred to by the BNPs in the examples could or could not be assigned some properties. Nevertheless, subjects were told to disregard that variable and just look at sentences as speakers of EP.

In order to find answers for the above mentioned questions, three tasks were designed and applied.

2. The Tasks

The first issue, however, was to choose the appropriate Subject noun, i.e., it had to fill three conditions: a) to have the least possible associations to common knowledge, which might limit speakers' judgements regarding what could or could not be predicated about that referent; b) to be underived, to avoid possible (morpho)syntactic complexities due to the derivation process; and c) to be an object-denoting noun referring to an animal or a plant, allowing for the co-occurrence with a larger number of verbs and predicates. The choice fell on the name of a flower 'antúrio' (anthurium, a flower of the araceae

family) which is not as common as 'rose', for example, which could more easily favour the intervention of cultural judgements.

Secondly, the set of tasks was conceived as follows:

Five types of predicates were defined[2]: a) Kind-level predicates, b) Taxonomic reading predicates, c) Space-limited reading predicates, d) Characterizing reading predicates, e) Stage-level predicates. Types b), c) and d) are frequently considered to facilitate non-existential readings. Types b) and c) are Kind-level predicates which denote sections within a set. Type d) are Individual-level predicates and are analysed as triggering a generic reading of the whole sentence, even if the Subject has not a Kind reading.

For each one of the above mentioned predicates, four types of verbs were considered: copulatives, transitives, unaccusatives and unergatives.

The attempt to cross syntactic and semantic properties, i.e. all types of predicates with all types of verbs was not always possible: Kind-level predicates and those which allow a taxonomic reading cannot be found with all types of verbs. The choice of transitives was also limited: direct transitives can only be characterizing reading predicates. Sixteen sentences were produced.

3. Procedures

Each of the members of the first group of informants had to fill in the tasks sheets and hand them over in a maximum period of 24 hours. The second group was gathered in a classroom and fulfil the tasks in about one hour time and hand the sheets over immediately after.

4. The analysis of the results

Viewing that there were no complex crossing of variables to analyse, answers per group were counted and a percentage was found considering the whole of that group. My goal was to establish the degree of acceptance of the sentences and the readings of the BNPs and a simple method provided the necessary information.

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[2] These concepts were reviewed in the preceding chapter, namely in the review of Zamparelli (2002).

The grammatical judgment task

The first task is a grammatical judgment task: informants were asked to choose between the acceptability and the non-acceptability of the sixteen sentences at stake randomly mixed with ten other distractor sentences, five of which were grammatical ((1), (6), (14), (20) and (26)), the other five being ungrammatical ((4), (11), (12), 18) and (23)), in EP.

The sixteen sentences all included different types of predicates and of verb classes (as mentioned in the section above). The Present Tense should facilitate non-existential readings of the Subject BNP. The sentences with verbs in the 'Pretérito Perfeito Simples do Indicativo'- 'Simple Past Perfect' were expected to overrule preverbal Subject BNPs. Distractor sentences (38.5% of the sentences), including five grammatical ones (19.2% of the sentences) should avoid that the only focus of the subjects were the sentences which were being tested, thus allowing for more reliable judgements.

The task was designed only to know whether BNPs could be preverbal Subjects in EP and if so, whether they were free to occur with all types of verbs and predicates or there were preferred types of verbs and predicates with which BNPs were perceived as grammatical preverbal Subjects.

The subjects were given the following instruction:

Para cada uma das frases, assinale com um X na coluna respectiva o seu juízo sobre a gramaticalidade da frase: OK – frase boa / * - frase má.   *For each one of the sentences, mark with an X on the respective column, according to the grammaticality of the sentence: OK – good sentence / * - bad sentence.*

And they filled in the following inquiry:

FRASE/SENTENCE	OK	*
(1) Alguns destes antúrios não são grandes, mas deviam. *'Some of these Anthuriums are not big, but they should be.'*		
(2) Antúrios são divisíveis em três subespécies. *'Anthuriums can be divided into three sub-kinds.'*		
(3) Antúrios brilham ao sol. *'Anthuriums shine in the sun.'*		
(4) A quem é que, antúrios, tu achas que o João oferece?		

'To whom, Anthuriums, do you think John offers?'		
(5) Antúrios são comuns nas regiões do norte. *'Anthuriums are common in the North.'*		
(6) Chegamos à conclusão de que antúrios cujo preço seja mais alto são feios. *'We reached the conclusion that Anthuriums whose price is higher are ugly.'*		
(7) Antúrios crescem em todo o lado. *'Anthuriums grow everywhere.'*		
(8) Antúrios ocorrem em vários tamanhos. *'Anthuriums come in several sizes.'*		
(9) Antúrios brilharam mais do que o costume. *'Anthuriums have shined more than usual.'*		
(10) Antúrios abundam nos bosques. *'Anthuriums are abundant in the woods.'*		
(11) A Ana colheu antúrios em três anos. *'Ann has picked Anthuriums in three years.'*		
(12) Nunca regam-se antúrios no Inverno. *'Never water Anthuriums in the Winter'*		
(13) Antúrios gostaram de água morna. *'Anthuriums like warm water.'*		
(14) O Zé ocupou-se de antúrios durante três anos. *'Joe took care of Anthuriums for three years'.*		
(15) Antúrios multiplicam-se nos campos. *'Anthuriums multiply in the fields.'*		
(16) Antúrios estiveram viçosos. *'Anthuriums were blooming.'*		
(17) Antúrios atraem todo o tipo de insetos. *'Anthuriums attract all kinds of insects.'*		
(18) Já te disse que as flores que as pessoas mais gostam delas são antúrios? *'Have I ever told you that the flowers people like [them] the most*		

are Anthuriums?'		
(19) Antúrios dividem-se em três subespécies. *'Anthuriums are divided into three sub-kinds.'*		
(20) Todos os antúrios se vendem a bom preço. *'All of the Anthuriums are sold at a good price.'*		
(21) Antúrios são plantas esguias. *'Anthuriums are long thin plants.'*		
(22) Antúrios cresceram em toda a parte. *'Anthuriums grew everywhere.'*		
(23) Os antúrios estão murchos, mas não o deviam. *'The Anthuriums are withered, but they should not be [it].'*		
(24) Antúrios são plantas. *'Anthuriums are plants.'*		
(25) Antúrios espalham-se pelas planícies. *'Anthuriums spread in the plains.'*		
(26) Quem é que tu disseste que, antúrios, não comprava? *'Who did you say that Anthuriums didn't buy?'*		

The comprehension task

Task number 2 included the sixteen sentences (i.e. without distractor sentences) and the informants were told to choose one of two possible readings: the existential or the non-existential one. In case they did not accept a sentence, they should not choose any reading.

First, the task should enable the confirmation of the judgements produced in task number 1. It would also confirm whether preverbal Subject BNPs, when judged to be grammatical, were normally read as non-existential, and on the other hand, when the predicate triggers an existential reading of the BNP, whether the BNPs were also judged to be grammatical as preverbal Subjects.

The subjects were given the following instruction:

Para cada uma das frases, de (1) a (16), assinale com um X a interpretação, a) ou b), que lhe parece mais correcta. **Não assinale nenhuma opção, caso considere que a frase não é correcta.**

And they were asked to fill in the following inquiry:

(1) Antúrios são plantas.
Anthuriums are plants. The kind 'Anthuriums' is a kind of plant. / There are Anthuriums which are plants.
a) A espécie 'antúrios' é um tipo de planta. □
b) Há antúrios que são plantas. □

(2) **Antúrios são divisíveis em três subespécies.** *Anthuriums can be divided into three sub-kinds. The kind 'Anthuriums' can be divided into three types/There are Anthuriums which can be divided into three types.*
a) A espécie 'antúrios' pode ser dividida em três tipos. □
b) Há antúrios que podem ser divididos em três tipos. □

(3) **Antúrios dividem-se em três subespécies.** *Anthuriums are divided into three sub-kinds. The kind 'Anthuriums' is divided into three types. / There are Anthuriums which are divided into three types.*
a) A espécie 'antúrios' divide-se em três tipos. □
b) Há antúrios que se dividem em três tipos. □

(4) **Antúrios ocorrem em vários tamanhos.** *Anthuriums come in several sizes. The kind 'Anthuriums' is not characterized by its size. / There are Anthuriums which are not characterized by its size.*
a) A espécie 'antúrios' não se caracteriza pelo tamanho. □
b) Há antúrios que não se caracterizam pelo tamanho. □

(5) **Antúrios são comuns nas regiões do norte.** *Anthuriums are common in the North. The kind 'Anthuriums' exist abundantly in the North. / There are Anthuriums in abundance in the North.*
a) A espécie 'antúrios' existe em abundância nas regiões do norte. □
b) Existem antúrios em abundância nas regiões do norte. □

(6) **Antúrios espalham-se pelas planícies.** *Anthuriums spread in the plane. The kind 'Anthuriums' spreads in the plane. / There are Anthuriums that spread in the plain.*
a) A espécie 'antúrios' espalha-se pelas planícies. □
b) Há antúrios que se espalham pelas planícies. □

(7) **Antúrios multiplicam-se nos campos.** *Anthuriums grow extraordinarily in the fields. The kind 'Anthuriums' multiplies in the fields. / There are Anthuriums that multiply in the fields.*
a) A espécie 'antúrios' reproduz-se com facilidade nos campos. □
b) Há antúrios que se reproduzem com facilidade nos campos. □

(8) **Antúrios abundam nos bosques.** *Anthuriums are abundant in the woods. The kind 'Anthuriums' is frequent in the woods. / There are Anthuriums which are frequent in the woods.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' é frequente nos bosques. □

b) Há antúrios que são frequentes nos bosques. □

(9) **Antúrios são plantas esguias.** *Anthuriums are long thin plants. The kind 'Anthuriums' is characterized by its long stem. / There are Anthuriums which are characterized by their long stem.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' caracteriza-se pelo seu caule longo. □

b) Há antúrios que se caracterizam pelo seu caule longo. □

(10) **Antúrios atraem todo o tipo de insectos.** *Anthuriums attract all types of insects. The kind 'Anthuriums' attracts all types of insects. / There are Anthuriums which attract all types of insects.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' atrai todo o tipo de insectos. □

b) Há antúrios que atraem todo o tipo de insectos. □

(11) **Antúrios crescem em todo o lado.** *Anthuriums grow everywhere. The kind 'Anthuriums' grows everywhere. / There are Anthuriums that grow everywhere.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' cresce em qualquer parte. □

b) Há antúrios que crescem em qualquer parte. □

(12) **Antúrios brilham ao sol.** *Anthuriums shine in the sun. The kind 'Anthuriums' is characterized by shining in the sun. / There are Anthuriums that are characterized by shining in the sun.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' caracteriza-se por brilhar ao sol. □

b) Há antúrios que se caracterizam por brilhar ao sol. □

(13) **Antúrios estiveram viçosos.** *Anthuriums were blooming. The kind 'Anthuriums' was blooming. / There were Anthuriums that were blooming.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' esteve viçosa. □

b) Há antúrios que estiveram viçosos. □

(14) **Antúrios gostaram de água morna.** *Anthuriums liked warm water. The kind 'Anthuriums' liked warm water. / There were Anthuriums that liked warm water.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' gostou de água morna. □

b) Há antúrios que gostaram de água morna. □

(15) **Antúrios cresceram em toda a parte.** *Anthuriums grew everywhere. The kind 'Anthuriums' grew everywhere. / There were Anthuriums that grew everywhere.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' cresceu em toda a parte. □

b) Há antúrios que cresceram em toda a parte. □

(16) **Antúrios brilharam mais do que o costume.** *Anthuriums have shined more than usual. The kind 'Anthuriums' has shined more than usual. / There were Anthuriums that have shined more than usual.*

a) A espécie 'antúrios' brilhou mais do que o normal. □

b) Há antúrios que brilharam mais do que o normal. □

The felicitous judgment task

Task number 3 included the same sentences produced in non-existential-induced contexts- assertion-comment (including the BNP). Should the informants accept each sentence, they would have to assign the BNP a reading (an existential or a non-existential one or else choose to accept the sentence without assigning the BNP any particular reading, considering contexts may allow diverse options).

The sentences and the options (non-existential – A, or existential – B) were presented in the same order as the ones in the previous task.

Task number 3 was designed to further confirm the grammaticality of preverbal Subject BNPs, and to check whether the assigned readings would still hold in case of a broader context, namely, if BNPs were introduced as discourse topics, would it facilitate their survival as preverbal Subjects? This task would allow, at the same time, to get clearer data about the reading s these BNP were assigned.

Subjects were given the following instruction:

Em cada um dos diálogos, de (1) a (16), existe uma frase a negrito.
Considerando o contexto do diálogo, assinale com um X a coluna que corresponde ao seu juízo sobre a sua correcção: NÃO – não aceita a frase/ SIM – aceita a frase e escolhe uma das três opções (A, B ou C).
In each one of the dialogues, from (1) to (16), there is a sentence written in bold.
Considering the context of the dialogue, mark with an X the column that corresponds to your judgement about its correction: NO – you do not accept it/YES – you accept the sentence and you choose one of the three options (A,B, or C).

And they were asked to fill in the following inquiry:

(1)
Locutor A: - Fui à lota à procura de antúrios, mas não encontrei nenhum.
Locutor B: - Idiota: **antúrios são plantas!**
Speaker A: I went to the fish market looking for Anthuriums, but I haven't found any.
Speaker B: Fool: Anthuriums are plants!

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios' é um tipo de planta.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que são plantas.**	**C** **Outra interpretação** *Other* reading

(2)
Locutor A: - Chama-se antúrios a todas estas flores diferentes?
Locutor B: - Claro: **antúrios são divisíveis em três subespécies**, não são todos iguais.
Speaker A: Do you call Anthuriums to all these different flowers?
Speaker B: Of course: Anthuriums can be divided into three sub-kinds they are not all the same.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **pode ser dividida** **em três tipos**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que** **podem ser** **divididos em três** **tipos.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(3)
Locutor A: - Chama-se antúrios a todas estas flores diferentes?
Locutor B: - Claro: **antúrios dividem-se em três subespécies**, não são todos iguais.
Speaker A: Do you call Anthuriums to all these different flowers?
Speaker B: Of course: Anthuriums are divided into three sub-kinds, they are not all the same.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **divide-se em três** **tipos**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que se** **dividem em três** **tipos**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(4)
Locutor A: - Chama-se antúrios a todas estas flores diferentes?
Locutor B: - Claro: **antúrios ocorrem em diferentes tamanhos**, não são todos iguais.
Speaker A: Do you call Anthuriums to all these different flowers?
Speaker B: Of course, Anthuriums come in different sizes, they are not all the same.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **não se caracteriza** **pelo tamanho.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que** **não se caracterizam** **pelo tamanho.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(5)

Locutor A: - Já tinhas visto tantos antúrios?
Locutor B: - Era de esperar: **antúrios são comuns nas regiões do norte**.

Speaker A: Had you ever seen so many Anthuriums?
Speaker B: I was expecting to: Anthuriums are common in the North.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) A espécie 'antúrios' existe em abundância nas regiões do norte.	B (existential) Existem antúrios em abundância nas regiões do norte.	C Outra interpretação *Other* reading

(6)
Locutor A: - Já tinhas visto tantos antúrios aqui no sul?
Locutor B: - Era de esperar: **antúrios espalham-se pelas planícies**.
Speaker A: Had you ever seen so many Anthuriums here in the South?
Speaker B: I was expecting it: Anthuriums spread in the planes.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) A espécie 'antúrios' existe em muitas partes das planícies.	B (existential) Existem antúrios em muitas partes das planícies.	C Outra interpretação *Other* reading

(7)
Locutor A: - Já tinhas visto tantos antúrios?
Locutor B: - Sim: **antúrios multiplicam-se nos campos**.
Speaker A: Had you ever seen so many Anthuriums?
Speake B: Yes: Anthuriums multiply in the fields.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) A espécie 'antúrios' reproduz-se com facilidade nos campos.	B (existential) Há antúrios que se reproduzem com facilidade nos campos.	C Outra interpretação *Other* reading

(8)
Locutor A: - Já tinhas visto tantos antúrios?
Locutor B: - Sim: **antúrios abundam nos bosques**.

Speaker A: Had you ever seen so many Anthuriums?
Speaker B: Yes: Anthuriums are abundant in the woods.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **é frequente nos** **bosques.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que são** **frequentes nos** **bosques.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(9)
Locutor A: - Os antúrios não cabiam na caixa pequena.
Locutor B: - Era de esperar: **antúrios são plantas esguias.**
Speaker A: The Anthuriums didn't fit in the small box.
Speaker B: You should know: Anthuriums are long thin plants.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **caracteriza-se pelo** **seu caule longo.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que se** **caracterizam pelo** **seu caule longo.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(10)
Locutor A: - Aqueles antúrios estavam cobertos de melgas.
Locutor B: - Era de esperar: **antúrios atraem todo o tipo de insetos.**
Speaker A: Those Anthuriums were covered by mosquitos.
Speaker B: You should know: Anthuriums attract all types of insects.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **caracteriza-se por** **atrair todo o tipo** **de insetos.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que se** **caracterizam por** **atrair todo o tipo** **de insetos.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(11)
Locutor A: - Tive de mandar limpar o jardim. Estava cheio de antúrios.
Locutor B: - É natural: **antúrios crescem em todo o lado.**
Speaker A: I had to get the garden cleaned. It was filled with Anthuriums.
Speaker B: That is normal: Anthuriums grow everywhere.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **caracteriza-se por**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que se** **caracterizam por**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação**

crescer em qualquer parte.	crescer em qualquer parte.	*Other* reading

(12)
Locutor A: - Ontem os antúrios tinham um brilho fantástico.
Locutor B: - É verdade, sabes, **antúrios brilham ao sol.**
Speaker A: Yesterday, the Anthuriums had a fantastic glow.
Speaker B: It's true, you know, Anthuriums shine in the sun.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **caracteriza-se por** **brilhar ao sol.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que se** **caracterizam por** **brilharem ao sol.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(13)
Locutor A: - Os antúrios não florescem nesta altura?
Locutor B: - É verdade, ainda ontem **antúrios estiveram viçosos**.
Speaker A: Don´t the Anthuriums bloom in this time of the year?
Speaker B: It's true, Anthuriums were yesterday still blooming.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **esteve viçosa.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que** **estiveram viçosos.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(14)
Locutor A: - Os antúrios pareciam gostar da água que ficava nas mangueiras.
Locutor B: - É verdade: **antúrios gostaram de água morna.**
Speaker A: The Anthuriums looked as if they liked the water left in the hose.
Speaker B: It's true: Anthuriums liked tepid water.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) **A espécie 'antúrios'** **gostou de água** **morna.**	**B (existential)** **Há antúrios que** **gostaram de água** **morna.**	**C** **Outra** **interpretação** *Other* reading

(15)
Locutor A: - Há antúrios em todos os jardins.
Locutor B: - Tens razão: **antúrios cresceram em todo o lado.**
Speaker A: There are Anthuriums in every garden.
Spekar B: You're right: Anthuriums grew everywhere.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) A espécie 'antúrios' cresceu em toda a parte.	**B (existential)** Há antúrios que cresceram em toda a parte.	**C** Outra interpretação *Other* reading

(16)
Locutor A: - O brilho dos antúrios sempre foi extraordinário, mas ontem...
Locutor B: - É verdade: **antúrios brilharam mais do que o costume.**
Speaker A: The Anthuriums glow has always been extraordinary, but yesterday…
Speaker B: It is true: Anthuriums have shined more than usual.

NÃO NO	SIM – YES		
	A (non-existential) A espécie 'antúrios' brilhou mais do que o normal.	**B (existential)** Há antúrios que brilharam mais do que o normal.	**C** Outra interpretação *Other* reading

Finally, to force a Stage-level reading in the preceding tasks, the Past Tense was chosen and that fact could prevent to draw generalized conclusions about the sentences considering the Present Tense was used in all the others. Four copulative sentences in the Present Tense including different type of adjectives (three of them derived from transitive, unaccusative and unergative verbs) were then presented to one of the groups in a similar way task number 2 was:

The grammatical judgment task with stage-level predicates

Informants were given the following instructions:

Para cada uma das frases, de (1) a (4), assinale com um X a interpretação, a) ou b), que lhe parece mais correcta. **Não assinale nenhuma opção, caso considere que a frase não é correcta.**
For each one of the sentences, (1) to (4) mark with an X the reading*, a) or b), which seems more correct. **Do not choose any option if you think the sentence incorrect.***

And they were asked to fill in the following inquiry:

(1) **Antúrios estão viçosos.** *Anthuriums are blooming. The kind 'Anthuriums' is blooming. / There Anthuriums which are blooming.*
   a) A espécie 'antúrios' está viçosa. □
   b) Há antúrios que estão viçosos. □

(2) **Antúrios estão ocultos.** *Anthuriums are hidden. The kind 'Anthuriums' is hidden. / There are Anthuriums which are hidden.*
   a) A espécie 'antúrios' está oculta. □
   b) Há antúrios que estão ocultos. □

(3) **Antúrios estão crescidos.** *Anthuriums are grown. The kind 'Anthuriums' is grown. / There are Anthuriums which are grown.*
   a) A espécie 'antúrios' está crescida. □
   b) Há antúrios que estão crescidos. □

(4) **Antúrios estão desmaiados.** *Anthuriums are fainted. The kind 'Anthuriums' is fainted. / There are Anthuriums which are fainted.*
   a) A espécie 'antúrios' está desmaiada. □
   b) Há antúrios que estão desmaiados. □

B. The results

Table 1. Level of acceptance throughout the tasks (%) – types of predicate.

Type of predicate	Grammatical judgment task		Comprehension task		Felicitous judgment Task	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
1 Kind-level	93,5	96,8	96,8	100	96,8	93,5
2 Taxonomic reading	86,3	89,5	95,2	93,5	92,7	89,5
3 Space-limited reading	60,2	58,1	82,8	73,1	82,8	69,9
4 Characterizing reading	82,3	88,7	91,9	92,7	89,5	87,1
5 Stage-level	41,9	50,0	80,6	75,8	75,0	58,9

Table 2. Level of acceptance throughout the tasks (%) – Verb classes.

Verb classes	Grammatical judgment task		Comprehension Task		Felicitous judgment Task	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
1 Copula	76,1	73,5	92,3	84,5	85,2	74,2
2 Transitive	66,9	74,2	87,1	88,7	87,1	79,8
3 Unaccusative	65,3	71,8	83,9	84,7	83,1	76,6
4 Unergative	68,8	77,4	90,3	83,9	89,2	82,8

Table 3. Grammatical judgement vs. felicitous judgement tasks – non-existential reading, according to types of predicate (%).

Types of predicate	Grammatical judgement task		Felicitous judgement Task	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
1 Kind-level	100,0	96,8	93,3	96,6
2 Taxonomic reading	89,0	86,2	81,7	84,7
3 Spatial-limited reading	89,6	92,6	83,1	90,8
4 Characterizing reading	76,3	73,9	73,0	63,0
5 Stage-level	56,0	29,8	53,8	37,0
6 Stage-level (Adjectival predicates)	-	-	19,6	-

Table 4. Grammatical judgement vs. felicitous judgement tasks – non-existential reading, according to Verb classes (%).

Verb classes	Grammatical judgement Task		Felicitous judgement Task	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
1 Copulatives	77,6	72,5	75,8	71,3
2 Transitives	82,4	72,7	75	71,7
3 Unaccusatives	77,9	78,1	72,8	72
4 Unergatives	78,6	62,8	73,5	66,2

B1. Differences between groups

Regarding differences between Groups 1 and 2, some remarks must be made.

With respect to differences of acceptance, Group 1 tends to accept slightly better than Group 2 space-limited and stage-level sentences in context. In fact, contrary to Group 2, there are more differences between acceptance judgements in the grammatical judgement task and those in the other two tasks, especially with Stage-level sentences which are accepted only by 41,9 % of the speakers in the former but accepted by a much larger number in the remaining tasks.

Considering preferences in readings, in Group 1, more than 50% of the speakers assign non-existential readings to stage-level sentences, contrary to circa one third of those in Group 2.

I believe, though, I do not have evidence to claim/suggest that the acceptance of the occurrence of BNPs is changing or subject to a process of change. Even if there is some hesitation in assigning readings to stage-level sentences, which are by far the less accepted type of sentences allowing preverbal Subject BNPs.

B2. Acceptance throughout the tasks

B2.1. Verb classes

Considering the results on table 2., syntax barely interferes with the judgements throughout the tasks, since most of the speakers accept BNPs in root sentences

regardless of the verb class they include and their judgement may only be slightly changed throughout the three tasks. However, the fact that there is only one case (group 1 accepts fully sentence (1) in the first task) which is unanimously accepted clearly points out to some degree of marginality of BNPs in preverbal positions.

Finally, even if not statistically relevant, it is interesting that it is the copula that allows a wider acceptance of the sentences, due perhaps to being close to equality[3] or defining constructions, which allow for the presence of BNPs.

B2.2. Types of predicates

Taking into account table 1., semantics does play a special role in the acceptance of BNPs. Acceptance tends to degrade from Kind-level defining sentences – characterizing sentences (as the more generally accepted) – to stage-level sentences, which are hardly accepted even in their Present Tense form. Tense and Aspect must then play a decisive role in speakers' judgements. Contrary to what is found in the literature (e.g. Chierchia 1998), space-limited sentences do not facilitate the occurrence of BNPs (cf. Kind-level sentences reach levels of acceptance above 90% and Characterizing sentences only reach 90% of acceptance in the Comprehension task).

Preverbal Subject BNPs in Stage-level sentences are almost ruled out, even if Tense ([+Past]) improves speakers' judgements. Whenever readings assigned to these sentences they balance between non-existential, which can result from a previous conditioned answer (in most of the sentences accepted, the preferred reading of the BNP is non-existential) or by some prominence effect that dismisses the existential reading, and an existential reading forced by the predicate, in spite of all the other constraints. Nevertheless, BNPs with Stage-level predicates are, as expected, existential: non-existential readings around 50% or less (below 40%) show chance answers or largely rejected sentences, the results with adjective predicates getting an even larger rejection score (19.6%). Considering that in task number 1 the sentences with Stage-level predicates were accepted also by 50% or less of the subjects, their expected ungrammaticality also holds.

It is also relevant that speakers' judgements tend to improve a lot (in task number 2, 80,6% of the answers in Group 1 accept BNPs as preverbal Subjects with Stage-level

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[3] Sentences which are proverbial or proverb like, a maxim. These sentences are generally referred to as paremiologies.

predicates, contrary to 41,9% in task number 1) when allowed to assign any reading, which points out to some degree of difficulty in processing these constructions 'out of the blue'.

B3. Preferred reading*s*

From table 3., we can draw the conclusions that non-existential reading is the preferred reading for BNPs in these sentences. The only clear difference concerns stage-level predicates, to which speakers tend to assign an existential reading. In characterizing sentences though, the non-existential reading is less chosen than expected, a result that was not improved in broader contexts.

Although Group 2 tends to assign to preverbal Subject BNPs of unergative verbs a non-existential reading, the existential reading increases when compared to other types of verbs, which may be due to semantic reasons (some features of the predicate are judged to be Stage-level, and this is not related to the type of verb).

Statistically these results cannot be considered relevant, mainly because the sample may be considered insufficient. Even if these results mirror the overall grammatical judgement of EP speakers over these sentences, it is still necessary to deal with the fact that acceptance of preverbal Subject BNPs *per se* does not provide any contrast with sentences with full DPs. Nevertheless, the preferred non-existential reading is an interesting piece of information, because it points out to a tendency to exclude existential readings being assigned to BNPs outside the scope of the verb, perhaps because a preverbal position tends to favour a prominence which is not really compatible with the existential reading.

It is also interesting to notice the fact that the broader (contrast) context introduced in task 3 does not improve the acceptance of sentences (or to change the assigned readings). However, assuming that there may be differences between production and comprehension tasks involving theses type of sentences, the findings are accounted for.

C. Summing up

The first conclusion to be drawn from the data presented above is that preverbal BNP Subjects are (at least marginally) allowed in EP root sentences. The survival of these

preverbal BNP Subjects depends on the type of predicate and they mainly get a non-existential reading. Preverbal BNP Subjects of Stage-level sentences – generally, with an existential reading – are an exception. These sentences show that even though Subject BNPs are in fact determined by semantics they are not generally given the possibility (contrary to English) to have different readings according to the type of predicate they occur with.

It is true that, when accepted as Subjects in stage-level sentences, BNPs in EP are assigned an existential reading, but perhaps one must assume that they simply cannot by themselves assure the survival of that structure. Features like Aspect and Definiteness or Specificity should then be matched together.

A general observation from the results of the tasks could be the following:

(i) BNPs survive in preverbal position iff they receive a non-existential reading through some features of the predicate, existential reading being altogether ruled out.

But the generalization above would not really consider all of the details involved.

One final question is why should EP allow these Subjects to occur since the determiner system would provide the perfect structures to convey the intended meaning? Are BNPs a piece of the determination system which is triggered only in special contexts or are they a sort of residue of an old grammar which strives to still compete with the synchronic/present system?

Other contexts of occurrence of BNPs together with definite and indefinite DPs must be considered.

Chapter III

The romance behaviour of BNPs in EP

1. Introduction

Considering the speakers' judgments described in the previous chapter, it cannot be stated that there is a generalized ban against BNPs in preverbal Subject position in EP. The tests, though, put forward a number of questions related to the syntax and semantics of BNPs, which may be better answered to when considering all contexts of occurrence of BNPs. In fact, EP is a Romance language, hence it is expected that BNPs' behaviour in that language is not different from the one displayed by BNPs in other similar languages, especially Italian and Spanish.

Like in Italian and Spanish, BNPs in EP generally occur as internal arguments (under the scope of a verb or a preposition).

The behaviour of Bare Singulars sheds also some light into these issues. Bare Nouns – both singular and plural – are often associated with proverbs and law-like sentences, but they are not competing forms: the [±plural] feature crucially distinguishes them.

Even if proven that discourse genres and discourse in general (in the sense of a set of organized elements involved in the production and comprehension of an assertion with a certain intention), is crucial, the nature of BNPs must be considered and the requirements of EP syntax must be met.

So, in this chapter the contexts of occurrence of Bare Nouns in root sentences are described, testing the analyses found in the literature – mainly by Delfitto (2002) - for other languages, namely Italian and English.

2. Non-argument[1] occurrences of Bare Nouns: BNPs as NumPs

2.1. Titles and labels

A first remark is that Bare Nouns in EP, both singular and plural, are quite common as titles or labels:

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[1] That is *non-verbal* arguments.

(1) Guerra e Paz

    'War and Peace'

(2) Amor em tempos de cólera

    'Love in the Time of Cholera'

(3) Viagens na Minha Terra

    'Travels in my Homeland'

(4) Feijões

    'Beans'

(5) Peixe

    'Fish'

One of the main characteristics of these contexts is that they simply identify the content of the object, i.e. the book or the box, for example. They do not refer to an event or an object individually (in fact, (4) is often found as a singular, massified, similar to (5)). It is a form of intensional reference such as the one found in the entries of dictionaries. Class inclusions or definitions are also usually expressed by BNPs:

(6) Baratas são carochas.

    'Cockroaches are black beetles.'

(7) Letras são tretas.

    'Letters are nonsense.'

(8) Cadeiras são móveis[2].

    'Chairs are pieces of furniture.'

(9) Átomos são as unidades mínimas de matéria definidas por Demócrito.

    'Atoms are the minimal units of matter defined by Democritus.'

    Bare Singulars can occur in defining sentences[3]:

(10)   Copo é *(um) recipiente.

    'Glass is (a) recipient.'

(11)   Futebol é festa.

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[2] Example of Nunes Correia (2002)

[3] Mass nouns behave like plural count nouns.

football is party

'Football is fun.'

The Bare Singular as preverbal Subject is accepted either having a reading similar to a singular indefinite or a reading similar to a definite and it is not possible to have one Bare Singular (count) Noun as Subject and another as predicate of the same sentence (cf. (10)).

2.2. Predicates

In most predicative constructions, BNPs denote properties and are the only possible NPs to occur:

(12)   As baleias são (*os/ #uns) mamíferos.

the whales are (DEF PL/INDEF PL) mammals.

(13)   Os Avis, (*os/ *uns) reis de Portugal, construíram o império.

the Avis, (DEF PL/INDEF PL) kings of Portugal, built the empire

Contrary to English, their presence is also mandatory in the case of the assignment of professions[4], both singular and plural:

(14)   Ele/s é/ são (#os/ #uns) médico/s.

he/they is/are (DEF PL/INDEF PL) doctor/s.

Their behaviour is close to adjectives and they are predicates.
.

2.3. N Complements and modifiers

Bare Nouns (singular or plural) are frequent in many adnominal forms in EP:

(15)   Em casa de rapazes não há ordem.

_____
[4] Cf. De Swart et al. (2006), Chapter I.

in house of boys NEG is order

'In a boy's home, there are no rules.'

(16)   Ele substituiu os canos de chumbo da casa de banho.

he replaced the pipes of lead of the house of bath

'He replaced the lead pipes of the bathroom.'

(17)   Eles deram um aperto de mão.

they gave a squeeze of hand

'They shook hands.'

(18)   Um cão com pulgas é um incómodo.

'A dog with fleas is a nuisance.'

(19)   Esteve cá hoje a mulher sem nome.

was here today the woman without name

'The no-name woman was here today.'

(20)   O amigo fez-lhe um empréstimo a (um) custo zero.

the friend made him a loan at (a) cost 0

'His friend loaned him money free of charge.'

In most cases (except (20) which can have an indefinite determiner), there could never be a determiner present, because these PPs are frozen expressions which only allow modification. Nevertheless in some cases they have a definite reading and some others have an indefinite one. It is evidence that (in)definiteness is not the distinctive feature of Bare Nouns.

PPs which complement or modify names are only dependent on prepositions, contrary to verb complements and modifiers which may be sensitive to tense/aspect.

2.4. N-like constructions

There are also constructions – N-like constructions - with both singular and plural Bare Nouns in EP which clearly compete with indefinite full DPs, when referring to qualities:

(21)   Pavão assim gosta de se exibir em todo o lado.

'A peacock like that likes to show off everywhere.'

(22)   Casas como essas/ dessas custam caro.

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'Houses like that are expensive.'

(23)   Ele é do género advogado.

         'He is the lawyer type.'

(24)   Ela teve uma reacção (do) tipo gorila.

         'She reacted like a gorilla.'

The examples point out to prototypical characteristics. Interestingly, only (21) could be replaced by a full indefinite DP. But, if the NP were plural, only a BNP would be possible. Bare Singulars in cases like (23) are 'hedges' in the sense of Brown & Levinson (1978:145): "a particle, word or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or a noun phrase in a set; it says of that membership that it is partial or true only in certain respects, or that it is more true and complete than perhaps might be expected." And for Chafe & Nichols 1986: 270) a hedge indicates that "the match between a piece of knowledge and a category is less than perfect."

2.5. Noun Appositive Relative Clauses

Another instance of non-argument Bare Nouns occurs in relative clauses which work as a comment:

(25)   O João conheceu a(s) mulher(es). Mulher(es) [essa(s)] que seria(m) a(s) sua(s) futura(s) colega(s).

        John met the woman/women. Woman/women [DEM] FEM which would be his future co-worker(s)

       ' John met the woman/women. She/ They would be his future co-worker(s).'

This construction is only possible with a NP raising above the Demonstrative, if present. It is the antecedent of the relative sentence which could be paraphrased either by (25a) or by (25b):

(25a) [Ess]a(s) mulher(es) seria(m) a(s) sua(s) colegas(s).

        'The [That/those] woman/women would be his co-worker(s).'
(25b) [Ess]a(s) mulher(es), que seria(m) a(s) sua(s) colega(s), …

'The [That/those] woman/women, which would be his co-worker(s), …'

Most of the predicate occurrences of Bare Nouns contrast with the occurrences of full DPs (when they are possible), as if they could only denote qualities (or in some cases, capacities, as de Swart et al., 2006 describes the assignment of professions). However, to claim that there is no projection above NP is too strong.

That claim cannot account for the differences between singular and plural Ns in how to obtain number. This issue will be further looked into in 3.2.

Finally, example (25), especially when the demonstrative is present, arguably proves that the N can raise to higher positions within the nominal domain. Demonstratives are normally analysed in EP (Brito in Mateus et al.: 2003, 349) as definite determiners, i.e. D hosts them. So, considering that in these constructions BNPs (and Bare Singulars) are neither indefinite nor unspecific, we assume that they may raise to a higher functional position similar to D (where they can check reference).

3. Bare Nouns as arguments: BNPs as DPs

When comparing examples from EP and English, it is clear that BNPs do not behave the same way, i.e., EP BNPs, in preverbal position, do not survive in all contexts the English BNPs do, cf. the English (26)-(28) and the corresponding EP (29)-(31):

(26)   Dinosaurs are extinct.

(27)   Lions have manes.

(28)   Dogs are in the garden.

(29)   (Os) ?dinossauros estão extintos.

    '(The) dinosaurs are extinct.'

(30)   (Os) ? leões têm jubas.

    '(The) lions have manes.'

(31)

    (a) (#Os) *cães estão no jardim.

    (The) dogs are in the garden.

    (b) Estão (#os) cães no jardim.

    are dogs in the garden

'There are dogs are in the garden.'

These examples allow for four different observations:

First, an English BNP may either correspond to a full DP or a BNP in EP;

Second, both with Kind-level predicates and with characterizing sentences ((26)-(27) and (29)-(30)), the EP equivalent to an English BNP is a Definite DP;

Third, the EP strategy for an existential reading as in (31) is also a BNP, but in a VS order, i.e., the syntactic configuration which encodes both the possibility of the occurrence of a BNP and the assignment of an existential interpretation to that BNP;

Fourth the definite preverbal DP in (31) cannot get a generic interpretation, or an existential one (it only conveys a definite interpretation).

These examples provide full evidence for the Romance behavior of EP BNPs: they cannot be preverbal Subjects and, as post-verbal Subjects, they get an existential interpretation. Thus, BNPs in EP are apparently never ambiguous between two interpretations, unlike English ones. In Diesing (1992) sense, they are mapped into the nuclear scope of the sentence and they are under the scope of an existential operator. In what syntax is concerned, BNPs must be Head-governed, or asymmetrically c-commanded by a lexical category. That is the licensing condition for an empty D category, according to Contreras (1986), Longobardi (1994) and Delfitto (2002).

The question is whether an analysis along the lines of a 'unified theory' (Neo-Carlsonian) may be put forward, i.e. EP BNPs are always of the same nature?

3.1. Evidence for which semantic theory?
3.1.1. The 'unified theory'

Delfitto (2002) subscribes a 'unified' theory when claiming that all Ns (in all languages) are predicative categories which can be generalized quantifiers when occurring in the right configuration (under government or when modified with I-level non-permanent predicates) or as Kinds if they are able to raise to D (following Longobardi, 1994). As Romance BNPs can never raise to D, which is the only way to get a Kind interpretation, Delfitto (2002) hypothesis is that Argument BNPs in Romance languages are not Kinds, hence if they cannot be interpreted as generalized

quantifiers (having an existential interpretation), they do not survive. So, the relationship BNPs establish with predicates does not alter the interpretations assigned to them in Romance, contrary to what happens in English[5].

However, Bare Plurals in EP may get either an existential (Prédios ruiram. Cães uivaram. Pássaros voaram – 'Buildings collapsed. Dogs howled. Birds flew.') or a non-existential reading (Cães comem carne. – 'Dogs eat meat.') - contrary to what is said to happen in Italian (and in English) – and sentences are not ambiguous between the two interpretations. Does that mean that in some contexts N raises to D in EP?

There is a main factor in the assignment of a reading to BNPs: the kind of predicate they co-occur with, and verbal aspect, i.e. aktionsart. In fact, the same kinds of predicates or the same aktionsart values that allow definite DPs to have a non-existential interpretation also provide the best conditions for BNPs to get it (as examples (32) to (38) and (32a) to (38a) show).

Kind-level and Individual-level non-phase (in the sense of Oliveira e Cunha, 2003) predicates, though selecting definite DPs with a Kind reading, do not exactly exclude BNPs:

(32)　　?Cães estão em vias de extinção.

'Dogs are becoming extinct.'

(33)　　Cães são mamíferos.

'Dogs are Mammals.'

(34)　　Cães são mamíferos que só comem carne.

'Dogs are mammals that only eat meat.'

(35)　　?Cães dividem-se em várias raças.

'Dogs are divided in several breeds.'

(36)　　?Cães são comuns em todo o mundo.

'Dogs are common all over the world.'

(37)　　Cães comem carne.

'Dog eats meat.'

(38)　　*Cães estão de guarda ao palácio.

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[5] In order to explain the possible existential meaning of Subject BNPs in English, Delfitto (2002) will resort to the projection of an extra argument which is mapped into the restrictor, while the BNP stays under the scope of the verb. Cf. Chapter I.

'Dogs watch over the palace.'

(32a) Os/?Uns cães estão em vias de extinção.

'The/Some dogs are becoming extinct.'

(33a) Os/*Uns cães são mamíferos.

'The/Some dogs are Mammals.'

(34a) Os/*Uns cães são mamíferos que só comem carne.

'The/Some dogs are mammals that only eat meat.'

(35a) Os/?Uns cães dividem-se em várias raças.

'The /Some dogs are divided in several breeds.'

(36a) Os/Uns cães são comuns em todo o mundo.

'The/Some Dogs are common all over the world.'

(37a) Os/Uns cães comem carne.

'The/Some dogs eat meat.'

(38a) #Os/#Uns cães estão de guarda ao palácio.

'The/Some dogs watch over the palace.'

All sentences are judged according to a possible non-existential reading. The Stage-level predicate 'estar' – with a locative meaning - forces an existential reading in (38a) and overrule the BNP in (38). Whenever the indefinite determiner is allowed, it triggers a sub-kind interpretation, namely in (32a), (35a), (36a) and (37a), i.e. a sub-kind of dogs is picked up from the whole set of dogs.

Thus, types of predicates and aktionsart determine the interpretations of Subject BNPs. As for the apparent similar non-existential reading of both full DPs and BNPs, they must be deeper looked into: either full DPs and BNPs are competing forms and the D position is filled by the definite determiner in full DPs and by the N in BNPs (triggering a Kind interpretation of the NP) or they are not exactly competing forms, the D position remains empty in the case of BNPs (D must be licensed in some way) and their interpretations must rely upon broader contextual conditions.

If full DPs and BNPs are competing forms, this has to be true for all syntactic and semantic contexts, since there is no evidence that there are special syntactic or semantic requirements for some contexts and not others that favor the presence of either a full DP or a BNP. Subject judgements presented in the previous chapter show that, in preverbal position, BNPs tend to be assigned a non-existential reading and

they usually get an existential one if they are in post-verbal position, as it is generally described in the literature. They also show that Stage-level (mainly with 'estar') predicates the preverbal position is not easily available to BNPs. So, apparently, full DPs and BNPs are only competing forms when they can be assigned a non-existential interpretation.

When considering BNPs occurrence in descriptions such as (39), they are assigned an existential interpretation and they are not competing with full DPs:

(39) A esplanada continua cheia. Famílias aproveitam o sol, velhotes apreciam a companhia uns dos outros, jovens chegam e partem, um ou outro cliente lê tranquilamente.
'The terrace is still full. Families enjoy the sunshine, old people look happy in each other's company, young people arrive and leave, some of the clients read peacefully.'

Here, the existential interpretation of the BNPs is the only one available. The occurrence of these BNPs, though, is made possible by context – they refer to a subset of a general discourse topic – 'the terrace is still full'. Full DPs in these contexts would not have exactly the same interpretation. This issue will further be looked into.

A brief comparison between full plural DPs and BNPs judgements can be summarised in table I:

Table I – Syntactic-semantic judgements of plural NPs as preverbal Subjects in EP

	Bare		Plural Definite		Plural Indefinite	
Types of sentences	**Non-ex**	**Ex**	**Non-ex**	**Ex**	**Non-ex**[6]	**Ex**
Kind	?	?/*	Ok	*	Ok	?
Defining	Ok	?/*	Ok	*	*	*
Taxonomic	?	?/*	Ok	*	?	?
Space-limited	?	?/*	Ok	*	Ok	?
Characterizing	Ok	?/*	Ok	*	Ok	Ok
Stage	*	Ok/?[7]	*	*	*	Ok

---

[6] Indefinite plurals can only have non-existential interpretation if they are understood as referring to sub-kinds.
[7] Out of context, BNPs in these sentences are hardly accepted.

I thus suggest an intuitive general condition (Condition A) ruling the distribution of BNPs:

Condition A

> If there is a Plural BNP as Subject of a sentence, (assuming BNPs can refer) then the referent GENERALLY designated by the BNP NORMALLY have the property assigned by the predicate (as Kind definite DPs); OR the EXISTENTIALLY non-definite designated referents are involved in a specific situation interpreted as a subset description of a general discourse topic.
>
> The property assigned in the first case is felt as a feature inherent to that referent in as far as the speaker's knowledge of the world goes.

As it is acknowledged, BNPs in EP, unlike those of English, though they may accept different readings according to the type of sentence in which they occur, they allow for both non-existential and existential readings. They seem to be a last resort for marking particular meanings / features (in a common sense): non-specific set, vagueness, shared information, contrast.

In other terms, the predicate can select a BNP to convey non-specificity which can turn out to get either a non-existential or an existential reading according to the nature of its aktionsart features. The absence of an overt determiner normally prevents definite interpretations. The presence of number features may also trigger a collective interpretation. As BNPs always refer to sums of atoms/individuals (Chierchia, 1998, Delfitto 2002), a collective reading is expectedly possible.

3.1.2.   BNPs, event quantification and the ambiguity theory

Other evidence provided by Delfitto (2002) to argue for the differences between English and Italian BNPs with Kind-level predicates does not exactly correspond to EP BNPs. Take the examples given for Italian and their counterpart in EP:

(40)   #Pommodori di grandi dimensioni sonno stati introdotti in Europa nel XV secolo. (only existential reading, pragmatically awkward)

‘Tomatoes of big size have been introduced in Europe in the XV century.’

(41) Tomates de grandes dimensões foram introduzidos na Europa no século
       XV.

(42) #Pommodori di grandi dimensioni diventano più saporiti man mano che si
       va a Sud. (only existential reading, pragmatically awkward).
       'Tomatoes of big size taste nicer if one drives south.'

(43) Tomates de grandes dimensões tornam-se mais saborosos à medida que se
       vai para sul.

In Italian, according to Delfitto (2002), BNPs are not allowed in preverbal position
regardless of the type of predicate, and when marginally accepted they can never be
interpreted as Kinds. The examples show that N does not raise to D in Italian.

In EP, however, (41) and (43) may be acceptable, even if they are not Kinds. The
BNP may get a sub-kind interpretation in descriptive discourses (41) or may be a
previously introduced topic (43). The sub-kind reading is also assigned by the
modifier (cf. Lopes, 1992).

Delfitto (2002) notices also that when sentences (characterizing sentences) include or
may include a quantifier adverb like 'often' (44), the BNP may get a generic reading
but this is not possible with some Individual-level predicates (permanent or non-
phase), even when they are modified as (45).

(44)   Pássaros de zonas pantanosas são (frequentemente) inteligentes.
         'Birds from marshy areas are (often) intelligent.'

(45)   Pássaros de zonas pantanosas são (frequentemente) escuros/grandes.
         'Birds from marshy areas are (often) dark/big.'

So, in EP, a sentence like (44) is about occurrences of birds being intelligent (the
BNP does not refer to the Kind 'birds'). However, sentences like (45), with a non-
phase Individual-level predicate which are ruled out in Italian are acceptable in EP.

EP also displays of verb 'estar', which limits the assignment of a property to an
individual, i.e. 'birds are at present intelligent/dark/big'. It is not compatible (with
these predicates) with the adverb 'often' and in contexts such as (44) and (45),
sentences would be ungrammatical. The differences between 'ser' (permanent to be)

and 'estar' (transient to be) are responsible for the inexistence of ambiguity between Individual- and Stage-level readings.

EP would then provide evidence to support the ambiguity theory (interpretations would mostly depend on contexts) even though it really does not contradict a unified view of the nature of BNPs, if one looks at syntax as the responsible for blocking their semantics by overruling BNPs in non-governed positions in Romance languages. Notice that only broader discourse contexts allow sentences like (44) and (45).

In fact, as already noticed by Oliveira (1997), EP can have the following alternation:

(46)   Os tufões aparecem nesta parte do Pacífico. (generic reading)
         'Typhoons arise in this part of the Pacific.'

(47)   Nesta parte do Pacífico aparecem tufões. (existential reading)
         'In this part of the Pacific arise typhoons.'

That amounts to say that BNPs can only occur in governed positions having an existential reading. Preverbal Subjects must be full DPs relying on a definite determiner to get a generic reading.

Existential constructions or unergative verbs, when they accept BNPs (at least without a broader context) as preverbal Subjects, are indeed grammatical with BNPs as post-verbal Subjects, as already noticed.

(48)   ??Clientes telefonaram.
         customers phoned

(49)   Telefonaram clientes.
         phoned clients
         'Customers phoned.'

If one accepts the occurrence of BNPs in preverbal positions in EP especially with Kind-level and Individual-level predicates (which are not event predicates), it is important to understand what kind of mechanism allows them to survive.

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EP does not allow type-shifting (N-to-D raising): typically, Kind interpretations of DPs with any kind of predicate rely on the presence of a full determiner. And BNPs do not exactly compete with generic DPs.

So, though the constraints of the predicate and sentence distribution (the main issue for the 'ambiguity theory') may be an adequate description of what happens to BNPs in EP, that can be circumvented in some contexts, i.e. BNPs may be allowed to survive in preverbal positions. As for the true nature of any BNP (the main issue of the 'unified theory'), BNPs in EP may have the same nature and acquire their interpretations by matching their features with those of the sentence, i.e. Tense - ±Past, and aktionsart - ±eventive or ±habitual/±gnomic. Mood should also be considered, the Indicative being preferred in the case of non-existential readings.

The main point of Delfitto (2002) is that BNPs are generalized quantifiers in both English and Italian. As previously mentioned, the mechanism of type-shifting is available if N-to-D raising is allowed, which is possible in English but not in Italian. If preverbal Subject BNPs in EP are not Kinds either, and if it is only the lexical determiner which works as an intension operator conveying the generic meaning, then their survival must escape a strict Head-government requirement or at least be licensed otherwise, contrary to what happens in Italian.

Anyway, BNPs are not NPs in EP (as in Italian and English) and they have, at least, one functional projection:

(50) $_{FP}$ [F [$_{NP}$ N]]

3.2. The functional structure of BNPs: DP or NumP?
3.2.1. Evidence from Bare Singulars

Works on Bare Nouns in Western European Languages mostly consider their plural form, mainly because they are more likely to survive than their singular counterparts. Even in English[8], Bare Singulars are not quite often looked at. Most of the occurrences

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[8] There are examples of Bare Singular occurrences as preverbal Subjects in English, such as

   (i)   Child is father of Man (William Wordsworth, *Ode on intimations of immortality*)
   (ii)   Passion will not kill, heart attack might.
   (iii)   Pharaoh commands the army.

in that language would perhaps be attached to a lexical feature – uniqueness. Count Nouns which only have one possible referent may occur as Bare Singulars in the same contexts as plurals do. But this is not always the case:

(51)   *(The) Sun is shining. vs. Stars are shining.
(52)   *(The) King is dead. vs. Kings are dead.
(53)   *(The) Earth is alive. vs. Planets are celestial bodies.

In EP, however, Bare Singulars have a preference for law-like or proverbial type contexts when they are preverbal Subjects and they tend to get qualities or mass-like nouns readings in Object positions. What is puzzling is that Subject BNPs are also associated with those contexts. In Proverbs, Bare singulars are in fact most common in all Romance languages (including French).

In this regard, it is crucial to look at Bare Singulars preferred contexts, mainly, proverbs. Lopes (1992) analysis of proverbs in EP provides a thorough explanation (within a semantic, pragmatic, textual and lexical framework) for the readings of both Bare Singulars and the sentences in which they occur. The author considers (Lopes, 1992:11, my translation) that «proverbs (are) utterances that describe general, habitual or constant states of affairs, and so they are a privileged context to consider different linguistic supports of nominal and verbal genericity.»

In what nouns are concerned, she claims that without a determiner (normally Bare Singulars) they get a generic reading. A determiner-less noun is always a proper name of an entity (a kind) or, when modified, a derived kind (a sub-kind). In that sense, relative clauses are descriptive and they do not specify, i.e. they do not add space-time information about their referent (cf. (56)). The relative clause and the noun are a derived kind and there is no conditional sentence implied. Lopes (1992) analysis does not take into account the structure of the nominal domain or any general syntactic constraint for the occurrence of Bare Nouns in preverbal position in EP. Proverbs are mainly considered as a genre (a hybrid one, since they are not altogether homogenous and their features vary according to communicative intentions and discourse contexts). Thus, Lopes (1992) is mainly concerned with semantic, discourse and lexical issues, which

nevertheless provide some crucial insights on BNPs occurrences as we will further show.

In her line of reasoning, the absence of a determiner means that we are referring to a type-entity and not to a particular or episodic instance of that entity. So reference is not incomplete, it is intentionally unspecific (Lopes, 2009:100). Considering that she generally deals with Bare Singulars, can this also be the case for BNPs?

All the sentences below are grammatical in EP and are proverbial type or law-like. (56) and (57) are even quite used in colloquial everyday speech. All examples are characterizing sentences:

(54)   Criança pequena gosta de colo.

            small child loves PREP lap

            'A small child loves laps.'

(55)   Criança à noite dorme. [Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*]

            child at night sleeps

            'A child sleeps at night time.'

(56)   Cão que ladra não morde.

            dog that barks NEG bites

            'A barking dog does not bite.'= 'Someone who speaks too much is harmless.'

(57)   Galinha de campo não quer capoeira.

            chicken of the country chicken NEG wants coop

            'A country chicken does not like coops.'= 'Someone who loves fun hardly likes discipline.'

(58)   «Político só sabe o preço do papo-seco em tempo de campanha para se esquivar a pergunta de jornalista malandreco», [Luís Pedro Nunes, «Única», *Expresso*, 6/11/2010, p.108]

            politician only knows the price of small bread when he is in campaign in order to avoid question of nosy reporter

            'A politician only knows the price of small bread when he is in campaign in order to avoid the questions of some nosy reporter.'

The proverbial nature of these sentences – stated as a valid natural or moral law and often using metaphors to describe typical behaviour - relies on an interpretation condition, as A, above, that I can roughly formulate as B:

Condition B

> If a Singular BNP is the Subject of a sentence, then the referent TRULY designated by the BNP must have the ONE property assigned by the predicate;
> The property is UNIQUE to that referent.

Following Lopes (1992), it should be further added that most often, in proverbs, Bare Singulars occur with a gnomic (non-episodic) Present, a timeless Present (Lopes, 1992:107). The aspect features suggested by the author are ±contingent, ±occasional for states, and ±punctual, ±telic for events, i.e. in proverbs, - contingent and – occasional or – punctual and – telic are the expected aspectual values of the predication. The gnomic value (which is the result of lack of time in the predication) may correspond to features like +duration and +frequency.

In what Modality is concerned, Lopes (1992) considers epistemic and deontic values of proverbs. Epistemic (necessary) values are primordial, in the sense that each piece of common wisdom points out to an authority argument valid in all possible worlds considered, as far as both the speaker and the addressee are concerned. The Indicative Mood is also expected to be present, considering that it expresses a neutral attitude, a description of the state of affairs (Lopes, 1992: 147). It is also crucial to consider illocutionary acts (direct but also indirect ones) in proverbs as so much as they intend to act upon discourse, i.e. what is being said but also on other people's behaviour. Illocutionary modality provides for the distinction between descriptive and normative proverbs in her analysis.

Typically, Bare Singulars occur in those contexts Lopes (1992) describes and their occurrence triggers a proverb-like reading. In the absence of the features the author describes, Bare Singulars will not survive. Issues like common knowledge and inferences (frame representation and scripts) Lopes (1992) refers to are also at stake and shall be considered in Chapter IV in what BNPs are concerned.

The question is then do BNPs trigger exactly the same expectations as Bare Singulars? Condition A states that they can get either a non-existential or an existential reading. That is apparently the main difference with Bare Singulars. BNPs are not prototypes and are not generally used to create stereotype situations.

Conditions A and B are too wide to provide a proper analysis of the behaviour of BNPs. The difference (as nominals) between Singulars and Plurals is that Bare Singulars cannot refer to sets or sums of atoms and proverbial texts seldom take BNPs as preverbal Subjects.

Plural BNPs consider the largest possible number of individuals but they may refer to a single individual (see example (74) bellow). Bare Singulars cannot refer to pluralities.

There is however a remark to be made about sentences (54)-(58) if: there is an Object NP in the rest of the sentence, it tends also to be (a) bare (singular).

It is true that in (54), «gostar de colo» = to like being held at someone's lap is an idiom[9], but the actual point is that what is grammatical in these expressions in EP is the presence of a Bare Singular (cf. «#gosta do colo» = loves the lap would have to consider a definite, specific description - both speaker, the child and someone's lap would be present in the moment of utterance) either singular or plural, though the plural is pragmatically awkward («gosta de colos» = loves laps,) and does not mean exactly the same[10].

In (57) the Object BNP could never have a Det («a/uma capoeira» = the/a coop). Only the BNP may convey the idea of any kind of coop, which is understood as a metaphor for being held prisoner.

These proverbial type sentences can actually include full DPs also: «gosta de/do colo de/da mãe» (=likes (his) mother's lap) ou «quer a/uma/Ø capoeira larga» (=wants its coop to be large/a large coop). In any case, either with specific or unspecific interpretations the presence of full DPs adds some sort of variation to a proverbial typically short sentence[11]. The proverbial interpretation tends to be degraded.

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[9] In the sense that it can hardly be modified without changing its general meaning and it cannot be a full DP.

[10] See Chapter I, Espinal (2010)

[11] By short I mean a Singular BN Subject, a verb and its internal arguments, with as few modifiers and quantifiers/determiners as possible. For further consideration, see Lopes (1992).

Bare Singulars, however, cannot be preverbal subjects in most contexts:

(59)   *Cão está em vias de extinção.

         dog is becoming extinct

(60)   (?) Cão é um mamífero.

         dog is a mammal

(61)   Cão é (um) mamífero que só come carne.

         dog is (a) mammal that only eats meat

(62)   *Cão divide-se em várias raças.

         dog is divided in several breeds.

(63)   *Cão é comum em todo o mundo.

         dog is common all over the world.

(64)   ?Cão come carne.

         dog eats meat

(65)   *Cão está de guarda ao palácio.

         dog watches over the palace

The same sentences with a definite determiner will produce the following judgements:

(59a) O cão está em vias de extinção.

   'The dog is becoming extinct.'

(60a) O cão é um mamífero.

   'The dog is a mammal.'

(61a) O cão é um mamífero que só come carne.

  'The dog is a mammal that only eats meat.'

(62a) O cão divide-se em várias raças.

   'The dog is divided in several breeds.'

(63a) O cão é comum em todo o mundo.

   'The dog is common all over the world.'

(64a) O cão come carne.

   ʹ'The dog eats meat.

(65a) O cão está de guarda ao palácio.

   'The dog watches over the palace.'

And with an indefinite determiner:

(59b) ?Um cão está em vias de extinção.

'A dog is becoming extinct.'

(60b) Um cão é um mamífero.

'A dog is a mammal.'

(61b) Um cão é um mamífero que só come carne.

'A dog is a mammal that only eats meat.'

(62b) *Um cão divide-se em várias raças.

'A dog is divided in several breeds.'

(63b) ?? Um cão é comum em todo o mundo.

'A dog is common all over the world.'

(64b) Um cão come carne.

'A dog eats meat.'

(65b) Um cão está de guarda ao palácio.

'A dog watches over the palace.'

Judgements on these examples are summarised in table II:

Table II – Syntactic-semantic judgements of singular NPs as preverbal Subjects in EP

	Bare		Definite		Indefinite	
Types of sentences	**Non-ex**	**Ex**	**Non-ex**	**Ex**	**Non-ex**	**Ex**
Kind	*	*	Ok	*	?	*
Defining	?/Ok	*	Ok	*	Ok	*
Taxonomic	*	*	Ok	*	*	*
Space limited	*	*	Ok	*	??	*
Characterizing	Ok	*	Ok	*	Ok	Ok
Stage	*	*	*	*	*	Ok

The column marked as Ex(istential) refers to the property of individualization a determiner has: indefinite and definite singular DPs may refer to a singular individual either by introducing it in discourse (with specific or unspecific interpretation) or just by

pointing at a known referent. If the determiner does not match the semantic properties of the sentences, it is naturally overruled. The indefinite determiner cannot refer to a Kind (as in (59b)) if accepted, it refers to a sub-kind. The definite determiner does not usually get an indefinite meaning and it is hardly understood as 'existential'.

The main point here is that Bare Singulars can never refer individuals as such but they compete with full DPs in defining and characterizing sentences if a prototypical reading is needed.

3.2.2. Bare Singulars and Mass Nouns

The occurrence of Bare Singulars is restricted to environments where one points out a distinctive characteristic of a prototype. As if its singularity has a double meaning: the singular form represents a unique characteristic defined by the property assigned by the predicate. Whenever that characteristic is felt like accidental or involves an individual as part of a group, or plurality, or shared property, the Bare Singular cannot survive.

Bare Singulars do not share the exact same properties as mass nouns:

(66)   Arroz é comum em todo o mundo.
         'Rice is common all over the world.'

(67)   *Cão é comum em todo o mundo.
         dog is common throughout the World

The non-atomised quality of mass nouns allows sentences in which at least one of its interpretations is allowed - a plural or a partitive one – that conveys a quantity which is not present in Bare Singulars.

When Bare Singulars are Objects they are either mass nouns or NPs (in the sense of Espinal, 2010).

(68)   O João andou a apanhar laranja.
         'John has been gathered orange.'

(69)   (No que diz respeito a fruta,) prefiro banana.
         '(In what fruit is concerned,) I prefer banana.'

The apparent mass value of Object Bare Singulars points out to some asymmetry with the Subject position. If mass nouns can occur as Subjects and Bare Singulars have an apparent mass value, then Bare Singulars should be able to occur as Subjects too.

This may also be related to some lexical properties, even with DO, namely with the noun «casa» ('house'/'home')[12], but also with other nouns (72):

(70)   Eles procuraram casa em toda a cidade.

           'They looked for a house all over town.'

(71)   Comprei casa em Lisboa.

           'I bought a house in Lisbon.'

(72)   Eles têm som surround / internet / hipertensão / dificuldade em respirar / equipamento de pesca / tenda de campismo

           they have surround sound/ internet/ hypertension/ difficulty in breathing/ fish gear / camping tent.

As it is acknowledged, Bare Singulars in EP, unlike those in other languages (in Kriol, for instance) do not accept different interpretations according to their context of occurrence. They are not ambiguous, adjusting to their environment, but rather, they force a special interpretation just by their single presence. I suggest they are a last resort for particular meanings / features (in the common sense): prototypical or 'high degree', embodiment of the purest qualities defining the object which naturally or consequently include the one assigned by a predicate that has a generic or habitual interpretation.

In other words, the predicate may select a Bare Singular to convey this singularity in proverb-like contexts. The absence of an overt determiner blocks definite or specific interpretations. In the absence of number features, the Bare Singular triggers a singular interpretation which is only valid for object-denoting nouns not regarded as members of a set (which may generically[13] be described by some defining properties).

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[12] See Longobardi (1997) and Espinal (2010).

[13] By 'generically', I assume that a set of objects may have some primary characteristics which belong to the whole kind denoted by the noun, or to each and every member of the set, and others which are common among those members even if they are not always predominant. As Lopes (1992) states, genericity allows for exceptions, i.e., assertions are 'generally' true/untrue.

Bare Singulars in EP do not universally refer to kinds. Again, Bare Singulars never refer to plural individuals[14]. This is probably also a clue for what happens in Brazilian Portuguese.

3.2.3. The features in D

Longobardi (2007) claims that the D position is the site for checking person features, and that it includes referentiality[15]. Does this suggest that BNPs are in fact NumPs? They keep their referential capacity if an anaphora test is used to prove it:

(73)   Cães$_i$ adoram carne$_j$. Eles$_i$ preferem-na$_j$ sempre a outros alimentos.

        'Dogs$_i$ love meat$_j$. They$_i$ always prefer it$_j$ to other type of food.'

Does this means that they refer and that they are DPs?

The need for a Number position is not questionable in languages such as EP, in which rich morphology plays a syntactic and semantic role.

In fact, BNPs are never understood as singular and do not display the behavior of other singular constructions. The only exception to a singular interpretation is achieved through a predication of activity:

(74)   Agora lês livros, é?

     'And now you read books, do you?'

In the example above, 'livros' may be referring to a single book, i.e. only a single book is being read, but the speaker is really talking about the activity of reading, and

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[14] In coordinated Nouns, it is possible to have Bare Singulars referring to individuals existentially, even getting a definite reading:

    (i)   Pai e filho caminhavam lentamente.

          'Father and son walked slowly.'

Notice, however, that the verbal agreement is plural (for independent reasons), and the context is a description possible to find with BNPs. In these contexts, Bare Singulars refer to precise definite individuals.

See Roodenburg (2005) for an analysis that claims these constructions in French to be equivalent to English BNPs.

[15] See Chapter I.

saying something close to 'you are a book reader, now'. But even so, (74) may be contradicted by an answer like 'no, I am reading just this one'. Though there is the possibility of a single interpretation, the plurality feature is not absent, i.e. 'I'm not reading BOOKS, I'm only reading this one' or, in fact, not reading any book at the present moment. These utterances mainly rely on extra-linguistic contexts.

What is also noticeable is that in EP there are a number of occurrences of Bare Singulars which prove the existence of a projection NumP:

(75) Cão de caça não come coelho.

     hunting Dog does not eat rabbit

     'A hound does not eat rabbits.'

The characterizing sentence above allows only for one interpretation of the Bare Singular, as it was shown: it is a prototype and it refers to each and every dog (which is a dog), never to a plurality. This is evidence to saying that at least BNPs need a NumP containing a [- singular] feature.

In predicative constructions BNPs can be either singular or plural and are never mistakable, even when referring to capacities or in constructions which are apparently ambiguous between the singular and the plural:

(76) O João é professor.

     'John is teacher.'

(77) Eles são professores. vs. *Eles são professor.

     'They are teachers.' vs. they are teacher

(78) Tenho conta em vários bancos. Tenho contas em vários bancos.

     have 1SG account in several banks. have 1SG accounts in several banks

     'I have an account in several banks.' 'I have accounts in several banks.'

Example (78) relies on the quantificational locative expression 'in several banks'. The distributive interpretation for the singular means that someone has an account in more than, say, two banks, and for the plural, that one may have more than one account in each of the banks referred.

According to Espinal 2010, Bare Singular Objects are underspecified for number. Then, perhaps when BNPs are predicates, they get their number feature by an Agree operation. When they are arguments, however, BNPs denote pluralities, and crucially have distinct interpretations from Bare Singulars.

It is possible to associate the features in NumP to the selection of a [+Pl] NP in some contexts, namely with Kind-level predicates:

(79) ?Baleias azuis estão extintas.
      whales blue are extinct 'Blue
      whales are extinct.'
(80) *Baleia azul está extinta.
      whale blue is extinct

BNPs in argument position cannot be regarded as just predicates which, in the proper sentential configuration, may become arguments. In fact if one considers that a referential feature (or a Person feature, in Longobardi, 2007 terms) is only active in argument positions, then, BNPs cannot be only NumPs because NumP per se lacks to convey other features.

The structure of EP BNPs is then the one in (81):

(81)   DP[D NumP[Num NP [N]]]

N raises to NumbP to check the plural feature. Mass nouns, though singular, are perhaps merged in that position. D remains unspecified. Following what I believe to be Crisma (1999) suggestion I repeat here the configuration as (82):

(82)   DP[D [+person, +definite, +generic] [NumP [Num [±count/+indefinite]···

Notice that this configuration, namely because of the features checked in D, implies that lexical indefinite determiners would also be in NumP.

BNPs are [-specific] according to the following definition of Definiteness and Specificity of Ionin, Zubizarreta & Philippov (2009), definition (3), though not necessarily [+indefinite]:

(83)   «Definiteness and Specificity: Informal definitions

If a Determiner Phrase (DP) of the form [D NP] is . . .

a. [+definite], then the speaker and hearer presuppose the existence of a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP.

b. [+specific], then the speaker intends to refer to a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP and considers this individual to possess some noteworthy property.

[We are adopting the standard Fregean analysis of definites and the standard quantificational analysis of indefinites (see Heim (1991) for a detailed discussion of these definitions). Our definition of specificity is based on Fodor and Sag's (1982) proposal concerning speaker intent to refer. The definition that we use involves the additional concept of noteworthy property, as developed in Ionin (2003a).]»

The absence of a determiner or quantifier in the D position in EP prevents the possibility of having a specific referent in any position in the sentence:

(84) Cães ladram à lua.

'Dogs bark at the moon.' (most dogs, not any group of dogs in particular)

(85) Eu vi aligatores na Florida.

'I saw alligators in Florida.' (some alligators, not any group of alligators in particular)

In the case of Bare Singulars, there is no longer a reference to a single object but rather a concept, a sort of character defined by a characteristic in a sentence. A true individual cannot thus be singled out, except by an implication: if it is an X then X must be Y, e.g. if it is a barking dog then it won't bite.

In the case of BNPs, plurality confers the possibility of referring to individuals as groups in particular moments in time as well as to their properties or characteristics as

groups. As they are unspecific, though, in the sense that they never refer to well established individuals in the universe of discourse, they are good candidates to being topics, which constitute a general subject matter (*cats, THAT is interesting* and not *cats, THOSE are interesting*) and a sort of undistinguished sum of individuals. This issue will further be looked into.

3.2.4.   The import of the features checked in the D position

According to most theories, D hosts the person feature or the reference feature and may be the appropriate site for operators or type-shifting. This is thus a general accepted concept among those who claim a DP projection for a BNP. Its non-projection should only hold for a property, a predicative interpretation. For most authors, a definite determiner is an operator in a D position and if its presence is enough to ensure an interpretation, then, its absence must also play a role in interpretation.

This is indeed what happens in predicative contexts, where the presence of a definite determiner creates a single reference:

(86)   A Ana é professora.
       Ana is teacher
       'Ana is a teacher.'
(87)   A Ana é a professora.
       'Ana is the teacher.'

According to Longobardi (2007), D is the site for person features, and Delfitto (2002) claims that, when raising to D, NPs undergo type-shift. And, in any other case, the D position must be licensed under the right configuration. This is, after all, the idea of Contreras (1986) about *proper government*, which mainly defines verbs and prepositions as proper governors, as previously mentioned.

The D position must then be the head of a functional projection (since Abney 1987), where a feature, needed to establish reference, must be checked by merging in D a lexical determiner, moving an N to it or be governed and share its features with N through an Agree operation .

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D has a Person (or a definiteness (Crisma, 1999) feature which must always be checked, as Delfitto (2002) claims.

The feature in D, however, will not be fully interpreted if there is no lexical material occupying the D position, i.e., if either a (definite) determiner or a noun are not present. Thus the D position may be licensed but, when empty, it will not be able to convey either a definite or a Kind meaning.

3.2.5. N-to-D raising and Proper Names: an inconclusive diagnosis test for EP

Proper names as well as vocatives have definite meanings. Vocative forms in EP can only be Bare Nouns, as in English, and unlike French (where the determiner is associated with number marking), that also allows definite DPs in these contexts. In these contexts (Longobardi, 1994), NPs are in non-argument positions and are perhaps exempt from projecting DP (in the French case, the determiner is arguably an expletive):

(88)   Rapaz(es), chega/cheguem aqui.
           'Boy(s), come here.'
(89)   Garçon, viens ici.
           'Boy, come here.'
(90)   *(Les) garcons, venez ici.
           'Boys, come here'

That is also true with proper names, which are generally used with determiners in other contexts, unlike in (91):

(91)   João, dá-me o livro.
           'João, give me the book.'

The determiner in EP is unnecessary with deictic reference. However, proper names preceded by definite articles, in standard EP, are used as address forms:

(92)   Mário Soares, o senhor/*(o) Mário Soares já comentou este assunto.

              Mário Soares, DET sir/DET Mário Soares already commented this issue

              'Mário Soares, you have already made some comments on this issue.'

The need for the determiner in the presence of the addressee in (92) also marks the difference between vocative and Subject positions. Proper names of people can be used determiner-less if there is some distance with the speaker: s/he must be referring to some historic or fictional character or metonymically to his/her work. In these cases, the absence of a determiner creates a pragmatic effect of reference to a non-participant in the universe of that specific discourse situation.

The presence/absence of a determiner with proper names is also an issue in other Romance languages. And in order to establish a connection between the proper syntactic configuration and the availability of the interpretation at an interface level, Delfitto (2002) crucially relies on an empty D position and Longobardi (2001b:360) generalization, already referred to and repeated here, is taken as having a major descriptive force:

(93)   «Proper names may occur without a phonetically filled D, iff generic nouns
       may do so in a grammatical unconditioned way (i.e. in virtually all contexts).»

Italian proper names may undergo movement crossing an adjective or otherwise stay *in situ*[16] and form a CHAIN with an expletive determiner:

(94)   Roma antica è stata distrutta dai barbari.

             Rome ancient was destroyed by the barbarians.

             'Ancient Rome was destroyed by the barbarians.'

(95)   Roma antiga foi destruída pelos bárbaros.

(96)   Camaresi vecchio è un amico.

             Camaresi old is a friend

             'Old Camaresi is a friend.'

---

[16] Perhaps rasing to NumP.

(97)   *Camaresi velho é um amigo.

(98)   L'antica Roma è stata distrutta dai barbari.

              *(A) antiga Roma foi destruída pelos bárbaros.

              the ancient Rome was destroyed by the barbarians

              'Ancient Rome was destroyed by the barbarians.'

(99)   Il vecchio Camaresi è un amico.

              *(O) velho Camaresi é um amigo.

              the old Camaresi is a friend

              'Old Camaresi is a friend.'

Proper names may raise over the adjective in EP, but the natural sentences in EP would be the equivalent to the Italian ones (except for (97)). EP allows for both (94) and (98), but 'Roma antiga' ('ancient Rome') is almost a frozen expression, i.e. only cities can be referred to by 'NP Ancient', being 'ancient' the only adjective available in similar constructions. Predicative adjectives such as 'medieval', 'imperial' or 'insular' cannot occur in pre-nominal position, but they can occur in a post-nominal position without a lexical determiner. Will that allows accepting N-to-D raising in such cases?

Modified proper names in EP normally occur in the presence of a lexical determiner. First, because adjectives may imply the constitution of a new referent intended as different from the one denoted by the Name alone. Adjectives alone cannot individuate the referent. The same is true for relative clauses or PPs. There is a requirement of specificity which cannot be satisfied by the sole presence of modification which generally cannot be provided by the name alone, either.
So EP proper names have two types of specificities, although they behave differently from their counterparts in most Western languages, they really do not behave as common nouns. As for geographical proper names, even in English, they do not always behave as other names (cf. 'the Thames', for example').

This is a clear test for EP, as shown above. In fact, whenever proper names are modified they will specially need a determiner in order to individuate the referent or else the modifier will be considered a surname which will still occur under the exact

same configuration as any other proper name, i.e. it may occur determiner-less only in discourse contexts where it is clearly understood as unique and pragmatically 'distant' from the speaker:

(100) (*O) Camões escreveu *Os Lusíadas*.

(the) Camões wrote *Os Lusíadas*

(101) (*O) Galileu é o pai da Ciência moderna.

(the) Galileo is the father of modern science

(102) ??(O) Pedro é meu amigo.

(the) Pedro is my friend

(103) (O) Diogo Velho ajudou o rei.

(the) Diogo Old helped the king

(104) *(O) velho Diogo ajudou o rei.

(the) old Diogo helped the king

(105) (A) Coimbra Antiga tinha tradições.

(the) Coimbra Old had traditions

(106) Eça, os alunos lidam com ele na escola.

Eça, students deal with him at school

(107) *(O) Pedro, os alunos falam com ele na escola.

(the) Pedro, students speak with him at school

Longobardi's generalization correctly predicts that EP never allows N-to-D raising and, consequently, in Delfitto's terms, EP BNPs never undergo type-shifting. Following the analyses which account for Italian data (mainly Chierchia 1998 and Delfitto 2002), it would be expected that BNPs in EP would never refer to Kinds or survive without modification[17] as preverbal Subjects.

Example (107) shows that determiner-less proper names do not behave as BNPs, as they are not always good candidates to being marked topics. In fact, a person's birth name is ungrammatical in a LD construction contrary to a BNP:

(108)   Alunos, falo com eles na escola todos os dias.

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[17] Issues concerning modification will be further dealt with in the Chapter IV.

students, I talk with them at school every day

The relationship between Proper Names and BNPs in EP needs further research.

3.3. Evidence from Subject/Object Asymmetries
3.3.1. Post-verbal positions of BNPs and Head-Government
3.3.1.1. Post-verbal Subjects

In EP, as long as there is a possibility of having a post-verbal Subject, namely with unaccusative and inergative verbs, both BNPs and Bare Singulars ((111)) may occur:

(109)   Caíram raios em várias casas da aldeia.

fell thunderbolts in several houses of the village

'Thunderbolts stroke several houses of the village.'

(110)   Estão pessoas no jardim.

are persons in the garden

'There are people in the garden.'

(111)   Caiu mesa, caiu cadeira. Caiu tudo.

fell table, fell chair. fell everything

'The table fell, the chair fell. Everything has fallen.'

(112)   Ouvem-se passarinhos aqui logo de manhã.

hear 3 PL CLpass birds here early in the morning

'One hears birds here first thing in the morning.'

Notice that in (111), the Bare Singular can only occur in a sequence of events, which implies a sort of pluralisation of nouns. In examples such as (109) and (110) this order is the unmarked one. The existential interpretation is what is expected[18]. Indefinite Subjects in null-Subject languages tend to occur in post-verbal positions. Interpretations are preferably non-specific and new information is about the event, not the BNPs.

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[18] In (109), even if the sentence had habitual or generic features, the BNP would still get an existential reading:

(i)   Sempre que há trovoada, caem raios na Terra.
      'Whenever there is a storm, thunderbolts fall upon Earth.'

In the case of the passive form in (112), when the Subject precedes the verb, the BNP will get a non-existential interpretation:

    (113)   Comem-se flocos ao pequeno-almoço.

                eat 3PL CLpass flakes for breakfast

                'One eats flakes for breakfast.'

    (114)   Flocos comem-se ao pequeno-almoço.

                flakes eat 3 PL CLpass for breakfast

                'Flakes are eaten for breakfast.'

The difference between both sentences is the prominence of information attached to the BNP, i.e., (113) expresses a thetic judgement while (114) apparently expresses a categorical judgment.

3.3.1.2.   Objects[19] and Adjuncts

As DO, plural BNPs normally get existential readings, they are non-specific and they may also have a contrastive interpretation:

    (115)   Ela lê jornais (não revistas).

                'She reads newspapers (not magazines).'

    (116)   Eles compraram livros (não cadernos).

                'They bought books (not notebooks).'

In (115), the present tense induces a habitual interpretation together with a contrastive one: 'she is a newspaper reader, not a book reader'. It is true, though, that contrast may fall on the verb tense, meaning she reads, but she didn't use to.

When occurring as prepositional Objects, BNPs are also always unspecific and they are more acceptable when modified or someway else determined:

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[19] I do not discuss the case of light verbs.

(117)   Doei as obras a ?universitários (especializados no autor).

‘I donated the works to scholars (experts on the author).’

(118)   Falei com ?alunos (que me procuraram)/ (e com professores).

‘I spoke to students (who approached me)/ (and with teachers).’

(119)   Espalhei os papéis por ?mesas (e cadeiras).

‘I spread the papers out on tables (and chairs).’

(120)   Tratou de ?assuntos (importantes).

handle 3 SG PREP affairs important

‘S/he handled important affairs.’

With prepositioned adjuncts their behaviour is the same:

(121)   Não vou à praia com miúdos, só com adultos.

‘I do not go to the beach with kids, only with adults.’

(122)   A casa desmoronou-se em segundos.

‘The house fell apart within seconds.’

The BNP in (122) is accepted by lexical reasons, i.e., because ‘seconds’ refers to well established units of measurement. A lexical requirement may also be needed in some adnominal constructions.

In the case of agent by-phrases, there may also be a contrastive interpretation, though that is not mandatory:

(123)   A nau foi assaltada por piratas (não por corsários).

‘The vessel was robbed by pirates (not by buccaneers).’

EP, as has been said, may have BNPs in Object positions, as post-verbal Subjects or as complements of prepositions, arguably because the D position is protected by a Head-governor.

I will not be considering most complements of prepositions which are quite common and sometimes became frozen expressions. On the other hand, it is crucial to look closer at BNPs which occur as Objects or as post-verbal Subjects:

(124) Os exploradores viram leões na savana.

'The explorers saw lions in the savanna.'

(125) A Maria conheceu estrangeiros na festa.

'The Maria met foreigners at the party.'

(126) a. Chegaram refugiados toda a semana.

arrived refugees all the week

'Refugees arrived all through the week.'

b. ??Refugiados chegaram todas as semanas.

refugees arrived all week

'Refugees arrived all through the week.'

(127) a. Telefonaram compradores para saber o preço da jóia.

phoned buyers to find out the price of the jewel

'Buyers phoned to find out the price of the jewel.'

b. ??Compradores telefonaram para saber o preço da jóia.

'Buyers phoned to find out the price of the jewel.'

In what Objects are concerned, the configurations for transitive verbs are as follows:

(128) $[_{TP} ...V_i [_{vP} ...[t_i [_{VP} ...t_{i...DP...}]]]$

As for Subjects, BNPs survive post-verbally also in governed positions in a configuration like the ones proposed by Costa & Duarte (2002:170), where AgrSP, would be replaced by C/T and TP by vP, according to more recent literature:

(129) $[_{AgrSP} V\text{-AGR} [_{TP} DP \, t_V [_{vP}...$

(130) $[_{AgrSP} V\text{-AGR} [_{TP} t_V [_{vP} DP \, t_V...$

Configuration (130) obtains with unergative verbs like (131):

(131) Telefonaram amigos.

phoned friends

'Friends phoned.'

When the verb licenses the empty D position, the BNP is assigned an existential reading. In the specific case of post-verbal Subjects, the VS(O) order has also implications in the syntax-discourse interface, i.e. the BNP is never a topic but it can be a focus if its position is in Spec, vP, like (129) (cf. Costa & Duarte 2002). In any case, the BNP is not removed from the scope of the verb and if does get any prominence, it will be in a special discourse case.

In the case of Objects, either full DPs or BNPs, they (almost) never get a generic reading. Being in the scope of the verb, the verb assigns the BNP an existential reading.

3.3.1.2.1. Objects of Dispositional State Verbs

With dispositional verbs, Objet BNPs seem to be interpreted generically:

(132) Adoro laranjas.
        'I love oranges.'

These verbs may have some feature which makes them different from other transitive verbs. In fact[20], the Subject is an experiencer and the DO, the theme, is supposedly interpreted as new. However, the DO may be interpreted as what the sentence is about. Consider the following examples:

(133) Eu detesto flores.
        'I hate flowers.'
(134) Ele adora laranjas.
        'He adores oranges.'

These verbs, like 'amar' (to love) or 'odiar' (to hate), - dispositional states – cannot apparently assign existential interpretations, but they assure the unspecific meaning of the BNP, contrary to what happens with a full DP:

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[20] See Belleti &Rizzi (1988) for a possible explanation under the thematic theory.

(135) Eu detesto as flores. (the ones we have been talking about)

'I hate the flowers.'

The determiner in (135) is hardly interpreted as an intensional operator. These verbs should in fact be more closely looked at. When the OD is topicalized (136), a non-existential reading can still be assigned to the topic. If we assume that they are structurally or semantically closed to verbs like ' to please', we can suggest that the OD of verbs like 'adorar' (to adore) behaves like the Subject of sentences like (137) and so it gets a non-existential reading:

(136) Flores, detesto.

flowers, detest 1SG

'Flowers, I hate them.'

(137) Flores agradam-me.

'Flowers please me.'

BNPs apparently only behave differently when they are Objects of these types of verbs.

Would it be possible to claim that these verbs are not able to Head govern the empty D?

According to Oliveira (1998), these examples are restricted to this type of verbs and she discusses the relationship between the definite article, the generic meaning and the mapping of the generic (definite) DP in EP into the restrictor.

The generic or Kind interpretation of Subjects is normally associated with full definite DPs and it is possible that definite DPs also get a generic reading as Objects of these verbs (examples from Oliveira, 1998):

(138) Detesto as bebidas alcoólicas, *mas gosto de vinho do Porto.

hate1SG the drinks alcoholic, but like 1SG of wine of the Port

'I hate alcoholic drinks, but I like Port wine.'

(139) Detesto bebidas alcoólicas, mas gosto de vinho do Porto.

hate 1SG drinks alcoholic, but like 1SG of wine of the Port

'I hate alcoholic drinks, but I like Port wine.'

The difference between the two DPs, according to Oliveira (1998) – the definite and the BNP – would intuitively be that in (138) 'If I hate alcoholic drinks I hate all types of alcoholic drinks or instances of them', while in (139) would be that 'If I hate alcoholic drinks, I hate most of them or most types of alcoholic drinks'.

On the other hand, BNPs should always be mapped into the nuclear scope and get an existential interpretation. According to Oliveira (1998), in what BNPs as Objects are concerned, there is no ambiguity – either they are mapped into the restrictor or into the nuclear scope- there is only the possibility of being mapped into the restrictor in the case of these verbs, admitting the hypothesis of a null definite determiner (proposed by Raposo, 1998).

The case of these dispositional state verbs is indeed particular, namely because in (138), the definite DP is better understood as a universal quantifier, while the BNP in (139) has a possible generic reading in the sense that it admits exceptions and still keeps the truth-value of the assertion.

Thus, we may conclude that what is at stake is the nature of generics. In EP, can a typical existential DP – a BNP – be always underspecified and thus get an existential interpretation by default when governed, but also be assigned other interpretations according to the features of the governors?

3.3.1.2.2. Incorporation

In order to deal with scope effects of BNPs, Delfitto (2002) argues that the narrow scope properties of BNPs are restricted to Direct Object BNPs. Preverbal Subjects do not display that characteristic. He then associates that fact with a mechanism of identification of the empty D position, which turns those BNPs from properties into generalized quantifiers. The empty D would incorporate on the verb in order to be identified. Only modified BNPs would not need to be incorporated because D is identified by the modification configuration.

The need to license in some way the empty D proves the claim that all argument BNPs are originally generalized quantifiers (type-shifting or N-to-D raising being altogether ruled out in Italian). Accepting the syntactic incorporation of the empty D

in EP, though, needs further stipulations. Namely, because there may be lexical material intervening between the verb and the BNP:

(140) O cão comeu depois/bem ossos enormes.

      the dog ate next/well bones huge

      '(Next), the dog ate (easily) huge bones.'

Incorporation is not a possibility in what regards post-verbal Subjects. It is true that in some sentences the Direct Object forms a unit with the predicate (in activities, with verbs in the present tense with habitual aspect, where the most common interpretation would be something like 'he sees birds'= 'he is a bird seer'), but this is not true for Subjects BNPs which are supposedly licensed under V government.

(141) Chegam emigrantes.

      arrive emigrants

      'Emigrants arrive.'

Notice, however, that the incorporation of D into V may be probable in the cases of characterizing sentences, which denote activities, as I mentioned previously (=Whales are seal eaters):

(142) ?Baleias comem focas.

      'Whales eat seals.'

It is then possible to claim that incorporation takes place at an interpretative level, hence all material intervening between the V and the BNP are adjuncts invisible to the identification mechanism, i.e. incorporation will take place after spell-out.

The same would hold for post-verbal Subjects, since these sentences express thetic judgements, i.e., the predication is not about the Subject, so, we are dealing with sentences (like (143) which generally answer the question 'what happened?' and not 'who arrived?'. In informal speech the verb may even dispense with agreement features:

(143) Chegou o rapaz, a rapariga e o irmão.

came 3 SG the boy, the girl and the brother.

'The boy, the girl and her/his brother came.'

(144) O rapaz, a rapariga e o irmão *chegou/chegaram.

the boy, the girl and her/his brother came 3 SG/came 3 PL

The syntactic and semantic characteristics of BNPs explain their distribution and provide different evidence for the syntactic position of Subjects in EP. In fact, the information structure to which each position of the BNP is related to and its syntactic distribution are important. Even though there is no exact match between a non-existential interpretation and a preverbal position, the post-verbal position is preferably associated to an existential interpretation and thus to the formation of a unit with the verb regardless of being an Object or a Subject. This should even hold for sentences where the BNP, either Subject or Object is interpreted as a contrast focus. This hypothesis though proves to be a further obstacle to syntactic incorporation:

(145)   Eu li REVISTAS (não livros).

'I read MAGAZINES (not books).'

(146)   Chegaram ESPANHÓIS (não italianos).

came SPANIARDS (not Italians)

'There arrived SPANIARDS (not Italians).'

3.4. Focus and modality adverbs

Head-governed positions trigger existential interpretations of BNPs. The contrastive focus marker 'só' ('only') can license an existential BNP with a Stage-level locative predicate (150). But different predicates keep assigning different readings. The contrast feature implies that the BNP referent is part of a larger set including other referents to which predication cannot be applied. The BNP certainly does not refer to a Kind but to a sub-kind or to all those members of a species present at a certain moment in a certain time. In that sense, in none of these sentences do BNPs really refer to Kinds but to the existing members of that Kind at a given circumstance.

(147) (Aqui) ?só raposas estão extintas.

    '(Here) only foxes are extinct.'

(148) Após a colisão, só dinossauros estavam extintos.

    'After the collision, only dinosaurs were extinct.'

(149) (Neste bosque) só raposas comem lebres.

    '(In these woods) only foxes eat hares.'

(150) Só lobos estão nos bosques.

    'Only wolves are in the woods.'

The licensing of the empty D allows the features conveyed by the predicate to survive, but, nevertheless, it is an existential interpretation that prevails: there are entities x that exist together with other entities in y and in y only x are extinct/eat/are. It is noticeable that Bare Singulars may also occur:

(151)   Aqui só entra vagabundo / Só vagabundo entra aqui.

        here only enters bum / only bum enters here

        'Here only bums come.'

Also in negation contexts, both BNPs and Bare Singulars are allowed:

(152)   Aqui, raposas não estão extintas.

        here foxes are not extinct

        'Foxes are not extinct here.'

(153)   Aqui não entra vagabundo.

        here NEG enters bum

        'Bums do not enter here.'

Adverbs such as 'talvez' ('perhaps', 'maybe') occur only with subjunctive verbal forms, which confer uncertainty to the predication. Do they also trigger a non-existential interpretation of the Subject BNP?:

(154)   (Talvez) ?Lobos (talvez) estivessem extintos.

wolves maybe be SUBJ PAST extinct

'Wolves were perhaps extinct.'

(155)   (Talvez) ?Lobos (talvez) fossem vegetarianos.

wolves maybe be SUBJ PAST vegetarians

'Wolves were perhaps vegetarians.'

(156)   (Talvez) ?Lobos (talvez) caçassem em grupo.

wolves may hunt SUBJ PAST in group

'Wolves perhaps hunted in groups.'

One would, though, imply some contrast too. In fact, sentences would be more natural if there were followed by an adversative sentence:

(157)   Lobos talvez estivessem extintos, (mas) o medo deles (, de certeza,) não estava.

'Wolves were perhaps extinct, (but) the fear they caused (certainly) was not.'

The adverb triggers the subjunctive form which implies possibility but also requires a broader context, another event or state. That fact also holds for focus adverbs by the simple fact that some contrast must always present. That implies that, as preverbal Subjects, BNPs may survive under the scope of contrast or modal adverbs, which may license the empty D, but they still need a sequence of events or states to be fully interpreted.

3.5. Preverbal position in root-sentences: Subject landing sites

3.5.1. Subject positions

The non-existential interpretation of BNPs regardless of the type of sentence in which they occur is an option if they are Subjects in preverbal position. The mechanism of government together with the possibility of moving the BNP (to satisfy EPP, in English, or to match discourse requirements, in EP) accounts for the existential interpretations, when they are possible.

According to Costa & Duarte (2002) there are three possible landing sites for Subjects in EP, but there is only one for preverbal Subjects: Spec, AgrP[21]. They assume for this matter that EPP-checking is universal and that all functional heads bear an EPP feature[22]. In EP, in tensed clauses, the verb raises to T and it is also assumed that there is a local constraint which derives the effect of the EPP parameter, Attract Closest X[23]. The DP moves because the verb moves to T and this will satisfy EPP-checking. The sentence will be a categorical judgement and the Subject will be a topic or non-topic according to inherent semantic properties or discourse context. This will explain the derivation of the SVO order. According to the authors, the configuration is the following:

(158) [$_{\text{AgrSP}}$ DP Agr [~~EPP~~] [$_{\text{TP}}$ t$_{\text{DP}}$ V-T [$_{\text{VP}}$…

However, the possibility of having preverbal BNP Subjects can only be maintained under this view if semantic requirements are fulfilled and if some licensing mechanism is available.

The possibility of type-shifting through visible or invisible operators in D is a good explanation for the licensing of BNPs in languages such as English. As for Romance languages, Delfitto (2002) claims that there is no possibility of having BNPs in Romance languages as preverbal Subjects, because they never raise to D. Regardless of other mechanisms that may allow the generic interpretation of the sentence, the main point is that, in EP, BNPs may occur as preverbal Subjects without modification as in English. They do not raise to D, even when they get a quasi-generic or non-existential interpretation, mainly because the preferred contexts imply more than just one sentence (or presuppose another sentence):

(159) Dinossauros estão extintos, galinhas não.

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[21] From a more recent theoretical point of view, C/T would be the higher functional position in a sentence.

[22] Costa & Duarte (2002) assume the following formulation:
    (i)   EPP Parameter:
              EPP can be checked either by an XP in Spec, YP or a raised head

[23] Attract Closest X (ACX):

If a head K attracts X, no constituent Y is closer to K than X (Pesetsky & Torrego (2000)).

'Dinosaurs are extinct, chicken are not.'

(160) Dinossauros estão extintos, tigres de dentes de sabre estão extintos, tudo isso está extinto.

'Dinosaurs are extinct, saber-tooth tigers are extinct. All of that is extinct.'

(161) Mamíferos sobrevivem. Dinossauros extinguem-se.

'Mammals survive. Dinosaurs are extinct.'

This means that BNPs do not have true Kind readings in EP. They look like generics mainly in these contexts, but the licensing of the empty D is not obtained through N-to-D raising. That is in fact Delfitto (2002) analysis for Italian BNPs.

4. Aspect, tense and the underspecified features of Bare Nouns
4.1. Aspect and distribution of BNPs

Without further context, the non-durative value of *pretérito perfeito simples* (simple past perfect), rules out the presence of BNPs:

(162)   *Cão/Cães *foi/*foram mamífero/s.
          'Dog/Dogs was/were mammal/s.'

(163)   *Cão/Cães *gostou/?gostaram de carne.
          'Dog/Dogs love/loved meat.'

Thus the first condition for the survival of preverbal Subject BNPs is the durative aspect of the sentence. But duration per se is not enough to describe their behaviour. They do not survive with all stage-level predicates either.

The same sentences with the *pretérito imperfeito* (imperfect past), which has a durative aspect, are still odd:

(164)   ?? Cão/??Cães era/m mamífero/s.
          'Dog/s used to be/was/were a mammal/mammals.'

(165)   ??Cão/?Cães gostava/m de carne.
          'Dog used to love/loved meat.'

Aspect is crucial for the interpretation of Subjects. Full definite DPs in EP are Subjects with different aspectual features values, and they get different readings accordingly:

(166)   Os dodós estão extintos. (generic reading only)
         the Dodos are extinct.
         'Dodos are extinct.'
(167)   Os crocodilos vivem na água. (definite/generic reading)
         the crocodiles live in the water
         '(The) Crocodiles live in (the) water.'
(168)   Os gatos estão na varanda. (definite reading only)
         'The cats are in the balcony.'

Apart from the reference of each DP, which is also responsible for the whole meaning of the sentence, the predicate is the main condition for the reading assigned to the Subject. This observation was the starting point for the work of Carlson and one of the main issues about BNPs in English: the way BNPs are distributed in the sentence, the matching of their features with those of the predicate and the assignment of different readings, as previously mentioned.

Most works, namely Diesing (1992) claim that with Stage-level predicates Subjects undergo existential closure while with Kind-level and Individual-level predicates Subjects are mapped outside the domain of the predicate (the nuclear scope) and bound by a generic operator.

The relevant problem to solve here is how to account for the cases of different interpretations in EP. Both the verb and the DP move for morphological and interpretation reasons but the BNP is not bound by a Generic operator. The aspectual features of the verb are still nevertheless crucial to the readings BNPs are assigned.

4.2. Lambda-Abstraction and the D position

Delfitto (2002), considering these issues of government and aspect, claims that in the case of non-event predicates, the Subject must move to an extended projection (Spec, PredP – Predicate Phrase), leaving a trace in Spec, VP which is interpreted as

predicational, triggering the application of lambda-abstraction, which applies to the term in Spec, PredP. This term should be interpreted as a property set. There can be no reconstruction of the Subject in Spec, VP and the only alternative for the BNP to survive is to raise to the empty D position:

(169)   [$_{PredP}$ DP$_i$[λ- abstraction] V$_j$ [$_{VP}$ t$_i$ V$_j$ [- event]…

This corresponds to an impossible choice in Romance languages. The impossibility is overcome by the presence of the intensional determiner:

(170)   Os bombeiros são altruístas. (generic /definite reading)
         the firemen are altruistic
         'Firemen are altruistic.'

Sentence (171) contradicts the need for the determiner in EP. But it is true that the BNP cannot get a generic reading the way the DP does in (170).

(171)   ?Bombeiros são altruístas. (hardly existential reading)
         'Firemen are altruistic.'

In the case of English, the type-shift induced by N-to-D raising would also be derived by the functional content of the head Pred, which requires that its arguments must have intensional content.
EP generally behaves like the other Romance languages: N-to-D raising does not apply and the lexical determiner, most of the times, is inserted. Thus, (172) represents Romance languages, (173) represents English:

(172)   [$_{PredP}$ Pred [$_{DP}$ [Det…NP [λ- abstraction]…
(173)   [$_{PredP}$ DP [NP [λ- abstraction]t$_i$ Pred [$_{VP}$ [t$_i$]…

Again, in English, the BNP crucially survives because of the N-to-D raising possibility.

4.3. Quantification adverbs, aspect and the licensing of D

Delfitto (2002) claims that the same syntactic configuration can be applied to sentences where there can be a quantification adverb (overt or covert). In the case of the example below, the interpretation produced is something like 'the property of x such that most situations in which x performs its typical activity are situations in which x use special equipment, is a property of firemen' (Delfitto2004:90):

(174)   Firemen (often) use special equipment.

In these sentences with predicates which do not display 'constant' properties, the preferable reading is also a generic one, but Delfitto claims that D, though licensed by the quantifier, cannot be assigned a Kind interpretation in Romance languages. In the sentence below then, there is no generic reading of the BNP:

(175) ?Bombeiros usam equipamentos especiais.
        firemen use special PL equipment PL.

According to Delfitto's analysis, the relative clause in (176) and the adjective in (177) would provide D with the syntactic requirements it needs to be licensed, even if it not assigned a generic reading:

(176) Bombeiros que sejam/?? são profissionais usam equipamento especial.
        firemen that be SUBJ 3 PL/ IND 3 PL professional use special equipment
        'Firemen who really are/are professional use special equipment.'
(177) ?Bombeiros voluntários usam equipamento especial.
        'Volunteer Firemen use special equipment.'

Finally, the question of ambiguous sentences in English, where the Subject BNP can either get an existential or a generic reading, is solved by Delfitto (2002) through extra-sentential mechanisms, i.e., if the verb is interpreted as 'perfective', the Subject can be reconstructed inside the VP, hence there is no N-to-D raising, as shown in (178):

(178)   [$_{TP}$ $_{DPi}$ V_j [$_{VP}$ t_i V_j [+ event]…

4.3.1.   Q-adverbs and the acceptance of Individual-level sentences

In what concerns unbound adverbs, if they imply duration, their occurrence also improves the grammaticality of Kind-level and Individual-level sentences in EP. Even in sentences like (181) with event predications:

(179)   ?Lobos estiveram sempre próximos da extinção.
           'Wolves were always near extinction.'
(180)   ?Lobos foram sempre carnívoros.
           'Wolves were always carnivorous.'
(181)   ?Lobos sempre mataram ovelhas.
           'Wolves always killed sheep.'

If one is to accept that some predications imply the presence of a Q-adverb which unselectively binds the BNP and acts over time or events, like Delfitto (2002) claims, then again what one gets is a generic sentence where the adverb is able to bind a variable in the BNP:

(182) ?Cães são (frequentemente/sempre) inteligentes.
     'Dogs are (often/always) intelligent.'

For Delfitto (2002), the English characterizing sentence has a Kind BNP (N raises to D) and the binding of the variable is needed only to assure the generic interpretation of the sentence. In Italian, however, in such sentences, the adverb plays a major role. The adverb chooses the BNP as its argument and the predication is about events, instances of what the BNP refers to. This line of reasoning seems quite appropriate, but all the examples presented in Italian have a special characteristic: they are modified. The last two examples supposedly prove that BNPs pattern with indefinites and they have not generic interpretations in contexts where an adverb cannot be licensed (examples are here repeated):

(183) ?Uccelli di zone paludose sono spesso intelligenti/*scuri.

    'Birds from marshy areas are often intelligent/dark.'

(184) *Un uccello di zone paludose è scuro.[24]

    'A bird form marshy areas is dark.'

(185) a. Elefanti di colore Bianca passerano il Giudizio Universale alle 5.[25]

                             vs.

    b. 'White-coloured elephants will undergo Final Judgement at 5 o'clock.'

    (generic reading of the BNP)

The point is that the non-existential interpretation of BNPs in Romance languages relies on the generic interpretation of sentences provided that they include an overt or covert adverb of quantification over events or situations. Considering the example in (183), Delfitto (2002) sates that the informal truth-condition for its interpretation is as follows (Delfitto (2004:86)), as previously mentioned:

(186) «The kind of birds has the property that many situations that contain some birds (as an instantiation of the kind) are situations in which those birds behave intelligently.»

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[24] Notice that there is a slight difference concerning EP. The singular indefinite would be more acceptable with an adverb such as 'normally':

    (i)   Um pássaro de zonas pantanosas é normalmente escuro.
                               vs.

    (ii)   Pássaros de zonas pantanosas são (normalmente) escuros.

The adverb in (i) disallows any ambiguity, i.e. one cannot read the sentence as a predication on any individual or sub-kind only. In (ii), the adverb is not just optional, it allows for a 'general' interpretation which takes exceptions.

[25] The contrast effect may very well work in EP allowing the sub-kind interpretation. Notice that the future tense may facilitate the interpretation:

    (i)   Elefantes brancos irão ao Juízo Final às cinco, os laranjas já terão sido todos condenados.
                'White-coloured elephants will undergo Final Judgement at 5 o'clock, the orange ones will all have then been convicted.'

So, the difference between English and Italian would be that the Subject of the predication in English is 'the kind of birds' and the Italian is 'each of the many situations containing birds'.

Furthermore, contradicting Chierchia (1998), Delfitto (2002), claims that some predicates involve some form of lexical quantification over events, as the ones in (187):

(187) Da queste parti, ragazze in minigonna sono rare/diffuse/scarse/abbondono.

Nesta zona, raparigas de minissaia são raras/imensas/poucas/abundam.

'In this area, girls in miniskirt are rare/widespread/scarce/abound.'

So, even though the Romance BNP is not a Kind, it can get a generic reading because the quantifier both licenses the empty D and quantifies over times/events.

The process of licensing the empty D is thus fully achieved by the presence of a modifier according to Delfitto's analysis.

There are in EP counterexamples to this hypothesis, that is, sentences without overt quantification over events:

(188) Elefantes brancos irão ao juízo final às 5.

'White Elephants will undergo Final Judgment at 5 o'clock.'

The modified BNP has a sub-kind Interpretation, but it can have both a non-existential and an existential reading. The non-existential one is even preferable, if the BNP represents known information with a contrast (cf. fn. 25). The existential interpretation is acceptable in an enumeration context.

The following classic example may also be acceptable in EP under these conditions:

(189) Madrigais são (canções) populares.

'Madrigals are popular (songs).'

It is expected that "Madrigals are popular songs" should be accepted as it is a definition that needs that a property is assigned to the BNP.

So, even if it is true that in sentences which allow or require the presence of a quantificational adverb, the BNP more easily survives and gets the generic reading of the sentence, we must look for another syntactic mechanism namely allowing for contrast or aboutness, by which in 'permanent' Individual-level sentences (non-phase predicates), BNPs survive and still keep the generic reading of that sentence,

4.4. Generalized type-shifting in English and the aspectual features on the verb

Considering the following sentences,

(190)   Firemen extinguished the fire.

(191)   * (Dei) pompieri hanno spento l'incendio.

(192)   #Bombeiros extinguiram o incêndio.

Delfitto claims that the D cannot be licensed under reconstruction in Romance (nor can there be type-shifting), but he claims that the existential interpretation of English BNPs is also due to type-shifting: generalized quantifiers express relations between sets of individuals, so D must be licensed but also identified as a relational object with the form $\exists x$. The identification of the empty D as a generalized quantifier «involves information about the kind of relation expressed and information about the kind of entities among which the relation is claimed to hold.» (Delfitto 2002:92). Thus, he claims that a feature ([mass] or [plural]) undergoes covert movement to D. The identification of D as existential under government of an event predicate is expected since that operator binds the event variable associated with those predicates. The default quantificational interpretation of the event variable proper to event predicates triggers the movement of the features to the D position. This would explain why, in Italian, one cannot have (193), which has the formal configuration required for the transmission of the existential content but with non-event predicates there is no content to be transmitted (examples are here repeated):

(193) *Teo odia cani
       'Teo hates dogs.'

171

(194) Teo odeia cães.

The BNP is not governed by an event predicate and it cannot be identified. However the counterexample given by Delfitto (see Chapter I) is far from being clear:

(195) Teo possede case.

   'Teo owns houses.'

(196) Teo possui casas.

'Possedere' (like 'possuir') is not an event verb either.

There are other issues related to these examples. First, that in Romance, the definite determiner is an intensional operator generally also used to mark a generic interpretation; Secondly, Italian has a tripartite determiner system (definites, indefinites and partitives); and finally, verbs such as 'odiare' may have special features, for instance, the assignment of theta-roles, which can imply that for the reading of the DP (namely overruling BNPs but accepting definite DPs) , it must be raised outside the scope of the verb and mapped into the restrictor, which would force the presence of a definite determiner in Italian.

In any case, the fact that the Subject BNP cannot be reconstructed in Italian inside the VP in an event predication is crucial to describe the differences between Italian and English. That means that the Spec, VP demands that the D position has a content, which can only be provided if the features [mass] or [plural] are allowed to raise to it, which Delfitto argues that it is impossible to happen in Romance languages.

However, BNPs can be post-verbal Subjects of eventive verbs in EP (arguably, their most natural position) and in a preverbal position they are also assigned an existential interpretation if the sentence as a non-durative aspect.

(197) De repente, voaram pombas / pombas voaram.

   suddenly, flew pigeons/ pigeons flew.

   'Suddenly, there were pigeons flying/ (some) pigeons flew.'

Their existential interpretation can only be explained by a default mechanism triggered under government. Reconstruction can only have some descriptive force if

one accepts the existential binding of the variable needed to identify the BNP is only possible under the scope of the VP. In that case, reconstruction would predict that preverbal and post-verbal positions of the BNP are interpreted exactly the same way. The prominent status of the preverbal BNP does not alter its existential interpretation, which might be assigned by the VP and linked in a chain configuration.

An unselective binding quantification over events or a functional governor may also assure its default existential interpretation. What the non-durative feature of the verb prevents is a generic, quasi-generic or non-existential interpretation of the preverbal BNP:

(198) Pássaros voam, mas morcegos e outros mamíferos também. (non-existential reading only)

'Birds fly, but bats and other Mammals fly too.'

Is the durative aspect of the verb able to trigger further movement of the BNP?

4.5. The Preverbal position and information requirements

It must be noticed that in languages such as EP only Subject DPs in preverbal position can have a non-existential interpretation. The generic interpretation of BNPs is connected to the initial position which is discursively prominent. It is thus a discourse requirement.

Delfitto (2002) has thus a point when stating that Romance BNPs cannot get generic readings because they cannot raise to D, leaving this position ungoverned, and being prevented to be preverbal Subjects in the absence of any other syntactic mechanism able to license it.

Another important issue at stake is to establish if there is any particular aspectual feature that prevents BNPs to raise to a preverbal position or in which ways can this prohibition be circumvented.

(199) ??Ratos estão no jardim.

'Mice are in the garden.'

(200) ??Ratos enormes estão no jardim.

'Huge mice are in the garden.'

(201) ??Ratos que devoram tudo estão no jardim.

'Mice that devour everything are in the garden.'

(202) ??Turistas passaram a fronteira às 10h.

'Tourists crossed the border at 10 o'clock.'

(203) ??Turistas alemães passaram a fronteira às 10h.

'German tourists crossed the border at 10 o'clock.'

(204) ??Turistas que adoram as nossas praias passaram a fronteira às 10h.

'Tourists that love our beaches crossed the border at 10 o'clock.'

Preverbal Subject BNPs (in the absence of further context) with non-durative predicates or Stage-level locative predicates are hardly acceptable in EP. When modified by a relative clause, they may improve, but they are only fully acceptable under a lexical condition: the modified BNP must be accepted as a possible sub-kind (cf. Lopes, 1992) and, even so, an enumeration must be present. Contrast, however, is always awkward with Stage-level 'estar' predicates:

(205) ??Gatos estão no jardim, cães não.

cats are in the garden, dogs NEG

'Cats are in the garden, dogs aren't.'

(206) ??Gatos estão doentes, cães não.

cats are sick, dogs NEG

'Cats are sick, dogs aren't.'

Most likely the feature that prevents BNPs from being raised is connected with Stage-level predicates and not especially with aktionsart. In any case, aktionsart features can prevent the occurrence of preverbal Subjects BNPs in an 'out of the blue' context. BNPs are generally accepted if they are in some descriptive context:

(207) Foi uma noite calma: Turistas passaram a fronteira às 10h. Comerciantes passaram à meia-noite.

'It was a calm night: Tourists passed the border at 10 o'clock. Traders passed at midnight.'

These sentences do not favor any sort of topic interpretation. They are most likely thetic judgements. They are better understood under a sort of discourse umbrella, in the case of the example, 'the night at the border'. These issues will be discussed later.

4.6. Tense and Aspect features and the distribution of Subject DPs in EP
4.6.1.   Aspectual Classes

All theoretical issues about BNPs use concepts connected with nominal expressions such as definiteness, specificity, scope and quantification.

The readings BNPs are assigned crucially depend on tense and aspect (mainly aktionsart) of the predicate.

The interpretations of BNP, throughout the literature, regardless of the nature each theory assigns to NPs, must always in some way depend upon the predicate they occur with. If aspectual categories, in the lines of, e.g. Vendler (1957) proposal, have some descriptive adequacy, there is hardly a precise way of understanding the behavior of BNPs in EP:

> (208)   *Gatos estão doentes. (STATE)
>
>   'Cats are sick.'
> (209)   ?Bebés bebem leite.(ACTIVITY)
>
>   'Babies drink milk.'
> (210)   ?Carpinteiros fabricam as portas dos apartamentos novos.
>
>   (ACCOMPLISHMENT)
>
>   'Masons make the doors of the new apartments.'
> (211)   ?Professores chegam às 11h. (ACHIEVEMENT)
>
>   'Teachers arrive at 11 o'clock.'

These examples show that only states overrule BNPs as preverbal Subjects. In the sentences where BNPs are acceptable, both readings of BNPs are available.

Bare Plurals are also said to be compatible only with atelic predicates. So BNP should be odd if occurring with aspectual auxiliaries that describe the internal duration of some situation. However, aspectual auxiliaries that normally describe the internal duration of

some situation are not altogether banned in a descriptive context. In (212) both auxiliary verbs refer to a moment within the process, contrary to what happens in (213), which refers to a moment after the event, BNPs getting an existential reading:

(212)   Cães começam a/ acabam a/de comer carne.
        'Dogs start/ have just finished eating meat.'

(213)   Cães deixam de comer carne.
        'Dogs are no longer eating meat.'

On the other hand, considering the nature of predicates in the Carlsonian sense – Kind-level, Individual-level and Stage-level predicates - there is not a clear answer to the role of predicates in the acceptance of BNPs in EP:

(214)   (?)Dodós estão extintos.
        'Dodos are extinct.'

(215)   (?)Gatos são meigos.
        'Cats are gentle.'

(216)   *Cães estão doentes.
        'Dogs are sick.'

Unexpectedly, if considering that the examples are states, Kind-level predicates and Individual-level predicates are able to accept BNPs as Subjects with a non-existential interpretation and only Stage-level predicates rule out any occurrence of a BNP. However, aspectual values may be altered by their relation with tense values. In fact, the presence of the *presente do indicativo* (indicative present) with events induces a habitual/gnomic reading which confers the predicate a state interpretation.
The present tense can also trigger a non-habitual interpretation if the context is a report context of event. If the *pretérito perfeito simples do indicativo* (indicative simple past) occurs, for instance, the non-habitual feature arises. Under those circumstances, the equivalents to (214)-(216) provide further information about this issue:

(217)   ??/*Dodos estiveram extintos.
        'Dodos were extinct.'

(218)   ?? Gatos foram meigos.

(219)   'Cats were gentle.'

(220)   *Cães estiveram doentes.

            'Dogs were sick.'

Only Individual-level phase predicates can accept BNPs as Subjects though with an existential interpretation, Cats had a gentle behavior, and only if the sentence is a part of a broader context (a succession of events, for instance).

If one tries to cross all these variables, it can be said that with state predicates, if they are Kind-level or Individual-level in the present tense, Subject BNPs are read non-existentially, with event predicates (which are Stage-level), they may be read existentially. Are there predicates totally ruled out?

4.6.2.   Feature Geommetry – a more precise description

To describe the relation of syntax and semantics of definite DPs in EP, Oliveira et al. (2006) cross some of these concepts distinguishing along the lines of Cunha (2004) (and Dowty 1979) phase and non-phase predicates.

According to Oliveira et al (2006) a non-phase state behaves differently from a phase in six contexts: non-phase sates do not occur with progressive forms (221), or with the imperative (222), with agent oriented adverbs (223), with sentences selected by verbs like 'persuadir/pedir' (persuade/ask) (224) with 'habitualmente' (usually) (225) or with a higher temporal subordinate (226) (Oliveira et al. 2006, 146-147), contrary to phase states[26]:

(221) *Joe is being English[27]./Joe is being careful.

(222) *Joe, be English!/Joe, be careful!

(223) *Joe was intentionally English./John was intentionally careful.

(224) *Mary asked Joe to be English./Mary asked Joe to be careful.

(225) *Joe is usually English./Joe is usually careful.

(226) *When Joe was born, he was English./When Joe arrived in town, he was careful.

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[26] Examples translated.

[27] It is not grammatical if it is a nationality adjective (Oliveira et al, 2006).

They suggest that the [±specific] feature of the DP combines with the features of the predicate inducing either generic or existential readings. The tense node would include a combination of tense and aktionsart features providing it with a predicate value. Tense can be [posterior], [habitual] or [anterior] and aktionsart can be [phase] combined at the predicate level (the nature of predicates) with [individual] or [stage], together with [state] which distinguishes sate from event predicates.

Oliveira et al. (2006:10), suggest the following features for predicates and verbal tenses (predicates are merely illustrative):

kind-level, e.g. (*estar*) *extinto - ((to be) extinct)*:

[+ state], [- ind], [- stage]

individual-level non-phase, e.g., (*ser*) *alto - ((to be) tall)*:

[+ state], [+ ind], [- stage], [- phas]

individual-level phase, e.g., (*ser*) *cuidadoso - ((to be) careful)*:

[+ state], [+ ind], [- stage], [+ phas]

stage-level non phase, e.g., (*estar*) *avariado - ((to be) broken)*:

[+ state], [- ind], [+ stage], [- phas]

stage-level phase, e.g., *gostar - (to like)*:

[+ state], [- ind], [+ stage], [+ phas]

stage-level event, e.g., *comer - (to eat)*:

[- state], [- ind], [+ stage]

Presente (Present): [+ hab], [- ant], [post]

Pretérito perfeito (Perfect Past): [hab], [+ ant]

Pretérito imperfeito (Imperfect Past) (tense value): [+ hab], [+ ant]

If BNPs occurring with predicates with these features are tested, it is easier to distinguish how they behave (the predicates used are the ones provided by the examples above):

Kind-level: [+ state], [- ind], [- stage]

(227) ?Dinossauros estão extintos.

Dinosaurs are extinct.

Individual-level, non-phase: [+ state], [+ ind], [- stage], [- phas]

(228) ?Escandinavos são altos.

Scandinavians are tall.

Individual-level, phase: [+ state], [+ ind], [- stage], [+ phas]

(229) ?Enfermeiros são cuidadosos.

Nurses are careful.

Stage-level, non-phase: [+ state], [- ind], [+ stage], [- phas]

(230) ??Televisões estão avariadas.

Televisions are broken

Stage-level phase: [+ state], [- ind], [+ stage], [+ phas]

(231) ?Crianças gostam de doces.

Children like sweats.

Stage-level, event: [- state], [- ind], [+ stage]

(232) ?Elefantes comem erva.

Elephants eat grass.

Presente (Present): [+ hab], [- ant], [post]

(233) ?Mamíferos bebem leite.

Mammals drink milk.

Pretérito perfeito (Simple Perfect Past): [hab], [+ ant]

(234) ??Mamíferos beberam leite.

Mammals drank (Perfect Past) milk.

Pretérito imperfeito (Imperfect Past) (tense value): [+ hab], [+ ant]

(235) ?Mamíferos bebiam leite.

Mammals drank (Imperfect Past) milk.

All the examples allow for non-existential interpretations of the BNPs, except for (230) and (234) where the only possible interpretation is existential. In the presence of the present tense the habitual (gnomic also?) reading is induced, which may also allow for the acceptance of event predicates: there is a succession of events such as the ones described by the sentence.

The [+habitual] feature is the key to Oliveira et al. (2006) analysis, because, according to it, when it is active, it blocks the existential interpretation and the Subject cannot occur post-verbally:

(236)*Gostam os gatos de leite.

like 3PL the cats milk

(237)*Gostam gatos de leite.

like 3 PL cats milk

The preverbal position of Subject DPs getting an existential reading is due to strict syntactic reasons (Oliveira et al 2006:155-156).

The main point for BNPs however has to do with the fact that they are not specific. Thus, with Kind-level predicates, non-phase Individual-level predicates, DPs can get generic readings and there is no characterizing interpretation. The same will happen with phase Stage-level and event predicates if verbs are in the present tense or in imperfect past, acquiring thus the [+hab] feature. Verbs in the simple past normally assign existential readings to DPs, i.e., in all contexts where there is absence of the [+hab] feature, the generic reading will not be assigned.

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The occurrence with other predicates is ruled out.

When in preverbal positions, DPs have existential readings 'by default'. The generic interpretation is obtained through the predicate value whenever it conveys the [+hab] feature together with the appropriate akstionsart features – kind-level, non-phase individual-level, non-phase stage-level and event stage-level.

Quantification over events introduced by the [+hab] feature does not hold for phase predicates which only allows for existential interpretations of the Subject DP.

Thus, assuming Oliveira et al. (2006) analysis, the aktionsart features are acquired in VP. V rises to vP which inherits its features. Tense features are associated to T, which passes them to V either by Agree under c-command or by raising of v-to-T. If the DP raises at least to Spec, vP, it can be read generically with State non-phase predicates or else whenever [hab] is active. The event character of predicates together with an inert [hab] feature will prevent the possibility of a generic interpretation.

The behavior of DPs and BNPs as Subjects are alike, considering that the latter are always non-specific and the empty D must in some way either be licensed by Head government or escape that requirement raising to a position where reference may be allowed to be weaker, that is the BNP will not refer to any particular sum of atoms/individuals, nor really to the set of these atoms/individuals.

So, the general constraints on the occurrence of preverbal Subject BNPs are tied to the need for government of the empty D position, which can happen through the presence of a functional/lexical head or through some covert mechanism implying accumulation or situational detailing, when the predicate has an inert [hab] feature or else, acquire an aboutness feature implied by the [+hab] feature and be legitimated in a left-periphery position of the sentence.

5. Summing up

In EP, BNPs are always non-specific DPs (also projecting NumP) and their plural features are crucial for weak reference to a set of individuals.
The empty D may survive by Head-government or asymmetrical c-command, that is, mainly under the scope of verbs and prepositions.

When predicates, they survive as expected, maintaining a non-specific nature. However, BNPs may be acceptable in EP as preverbal Subjects, both with existential and non-existential interpretation.

Head-government by other categories either than verb or preposition-government may provide an answer to existential interpretations, but the non-existential interpretations must have other explanation. We must then look for clues for both non-existential and existential interpretations of preverbal Subject BNPs.

As for non-existential interpretations, arguably related to a left-peripheral position, it is crucial to notice that BNPs are good candidates to all types of Topics in EP:

(238)   Quanto a plantas, é preciso consultar um botânico.
         'In what concerns plants, it is better to talk to a botanist.'
(239)   Filmes estrangeiros, estamos a ver o filme até ao fim e não sabemos de
         que se trata (GLP, p.492).
         'Foreign films, we are watching the film until the end and we never know
         what is all about.'
(240)   Lobos, ouvi dizer que eles mordem tudo quando têm fome.
         'Wolves, I heard they will bite everything, when they're hungry.'
(241)   Rosas, colhi-as aos molhos ontem.
         'Roses, I picked them by the thousands yesterday.'
(242)   Italianos, conheço.
         'Italians, I know.'

Contrary to full indefinite DPs, BNPs can be read as known information (even definite, in the sense of Ionin, Zubizarreta & Philippov, 2009) whether they are analysed as being generated *in situ* or dislocated. Non-existential interpretations are predominant. In (241) and (242), the existential interpretation is assigned by the verb to the Object position, and the BNP is either reconstructed for interpretation reasons in post-verbal position or forms a chain with the clitic pronoun. BNPs are thus grammatical left-peripheral constituents.

The aboutness feature of these constructions is present in the contrast interpretation of sentences such as:

(243)   (Quanto a cães) Cães comem carne (,enquanto gatos comem peixe).
          '(As for dogs) Dogs eat meat (while cats eat fish).'

As for existential interpretations, BNPs are acceptable as Subjects of passive sentences, even though they need a broader context:

(244)   ?Leões foram avistados perto da Cidade do Cabo.
          'Lions have been seen near Cape Town.'
(245)   ?Coelhos são comidos por (/??pelas) raposas.
          'Rabbits are eaten by (/the) foxes.'

These Subjects get their readings as any other preverbal Subject: the type of predicate, the tense and aspect features of the verb assign the existential (244) /non-existential (245) readings.

BNPs do not get the same reading as they get in the post-verbal position, which implies that namely (245) cannot be syntactically related to a position under the scope of the verb. And the existential interpretation in (244) may not be accounted for by reconstruction effects: context may be the responsible for its acceptance.

In example (246), BNPs are perfectly acceptable:

(246)   (Não podemos fazer nada). Cães estão de guarda ao palácio. Homens
          armados percorrem as ruas. (Não podemos fazer nada.)
          '(There is nothing we can do.) Dogs are watching over the palace. Armed
          men watch the streets. (There is nothing we can do.)'

BNPs have existential interpretations when co-occurring with limited descriptions of individuals. In these cases, though, they are not like definite DPs in a sense that they never refer to previously determined individuals. They are equivalent to an existential sentence beginning by 'there are'. Their interpretation depends on a lexical or thematic relationship with previous or following information. They cannot be replaced by

indefinite DPs and, contrary to the latter, they do not introduce really new referents into discourse, they behave as details or specifics of a description that is somewhere also introduced:

(247)　　(Não podemos fazer nada). #[28]Os/ ??uns cães estão de guarda ao palácio. #Os/ ?? uns homens armados percorrem as ruas. (Não podemos fazer nada.)

'(There is nothing we can do.) The/ some dogs are watching over the palace. The/ some armed men watch the streets. (There is nothing we can do.)'

The presence of the definite determiner would certainly imply that those referents are definite, specific expressions, unlike BNPs.

It is interesting that there are sentences with generic interpretations in theses contexts. Consider (248) where the speaker is talking about what he believes to be a teacher's quality:

(248)　　(Professores têm de ser rápidos.) Primeiro dia de aulas. Combinei boleia com colegas. O João avisou que não vinha. A Maria esqueceu-se. O trânsito estava insuportável. Furei um pneu. Corri para o autocarro. Roubaram-me a carteira. Acabei por correr e chegar ao toque da campainha. (Professores têm de ser rápidos, realmente.)

'(Teachers have to hurry up.) First day of school. Some colleagues of mine were supposed to come with me. John called to cancel. Mary forgot. Traffic was awful. I got a flat tire and run to the bus. Somebody stole my wallet. I ended up running and arriving just when the bell rang. (Teachers do have to hurry up.)'

Discourse is then the key word for production of these BNPs (the so-called generic reading of (248) may be explained as a closing or opening argument in the sense of Lopes, 1992).

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[28] # is used to mark unintended interpretations. In this case, the definite determiner can here only refer to previously referred objects, i.e. it is not equivalent to the BNP.

With non-existential interpretation, a sentence with a BNP Subject surfaces as a consequence, a conclusion for a description. It is a sort of summary of an idea. The sentence may also be a sort of sentential topic, an idea which is explained afterwards, with examples if need be. The context may favour their presence, but it is the kind of predicate which assigns their interpretation.

Chapter IV will thus discuss the syntactic-semantic-discourse interface.

Neither Chapter three nor Chapter four are particularly focused on issues which I believe would prove valuable to the analysis of BNPs nature, distribution and interpretation.

Thus, in what the nature of the nouns in EP is concerned, differences between mass and (and both singular and plural) count nouns should be further looked into. A deepened research can shed light on both morphologic/syntactic and semantic number and establish a more distinct configuration of the nominal domain.

The claim that mass nouns correspond to plural count nouns also neglects the differences between mass nouns such as 'oil' and 'freedom' which display different properties, e.g. those concerning the possibilities of being re-categorized as count nouns or their different quantification properties.

Further studies on the structure of nominal domain concerning the differences between object-denoting nouns and the different meanings and properties of de-verbal nouns can account for the range of acceptance of BNPs. In fact, if we are to consider the possibility of DPs having structures similar to TPs, analyses of larger structures or at least of the possibility of checking more diverse features must be put forward.

Thus, suggestions for the structure of the nominal domain such as those of Zamparelli (2000) and Déprez (2007) should be more closely looked into. The correlation of BNPs to tense and aspect features are a clue for claiming the need for other functional projections within the structure of EP DPs.

Also the nature of Bare Singulars, the contexts in which they occur, and their contrast with BNPs as Subjects, Objects or Predicates may be a clue for the structure of these NPs/DPs and for the features that must be checked.

Though the proverbial discourse contexts provide relevant information about Bare Singulars, I believe a broader research will account for the 'Brazilian case' considering EP data.

The role of prepositions in the licensing of BNPs and Bare Singulars is far from being clear. The Head-Government mechanism per se does not account for differences between such a wide range of occurrences (in verb and noun complements, in by-sentences, in datives, in verb and noun modifiers) and their acceptance variation among native speakers. BNPs do not occur freely within PPs.

Finally, a diachronic research on the emergence of determiners and their distribution in Portuguese and on the codifying of different features throughout the History of the language would provide for a better insight on the EP determiner system. Shall a null determiner (as Raposo 1977b claims) be considered to be a part of the Portuguese Determination strategies, a trace of an old grammar?

Chapter IV

The interface syntax, semantics and discourse

1. Introduction

1.1. Previous Remarks: the non-explained contexts

Delfitto (2002) analysis suitably accounts for the nature and the behavior of EP BNPs, as described in the previous chapter. In 'out of the blue' contexts, the following properties briefly describe BNPs in EP:

A. BNPs as Arguments are generalized Quantifiers that never undergo type-shifting[1]. BNPs can never have a Kind reading when they survive.

B. BNPs can only survive if the D position is governed[2] (regardless of the theoretical mechanism which formalizes this operation), i.e., under c-command by a verb or a preposition. They must be licensed, legitimated and identified.

C. BNPs can also survive if they are modified (with I-level phase predicates), if we assume a Kayne/Bianchi analysis for relative clauses[3], i.e. the D is properly licensed by the relative clause, getting an existential reading. Modified BNPs may be interpreted generically (though they are never Kinds) if the whole sentence is assigned such a reading and an unselective binder is overtly or covertly present. We then face quantification over events, not over objects.

However, this analysis does not account for two contexts of preverbal Subject (non-modified) BNPs in EP.

The relevant contexts are:

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[1] Type-shifting, though semantically driven, must have syntactic motivation: it only obtains when N raises to D, as it happens in English (Delfitto 2002).

[2] BNPs distribution is constrained by ECP, like *wh*-traces in English, which must be governed (Delfitto 2004:75)

[3] Kayne´s (1994) account of adjectival modification derives it from relative clause reduction.

1. *The Non-existential Reading: Preverbal Subjects – Kind-level/Individual-level and Characterizing sentences vs. Stage-level sentences*

 i. ?Baleias estão em vias de extinção./?Ursos são peludos.
  'Whales are almost extinct.'/'Bears are hairy.'

 ii. ?Gatos têm bigodes.
  'Cats have whiskers.'

 iii. #*Coelhos estão no meu jardim/doentes.
  'Rabbits are in my garden/are sick.'

2. *The Existential Reading: Preverbal Subjects of Descriptions*

 iv. Ouviu-se um tiro. Pessoas correram em todas as direcções. Pardais voaram. Era o caos.
  a shot was heard. people ran PERF in all directions. sparrows flew PERF. it was IMPERF chaos.

Furthermore, the analysis must also explain the acceptability of BNPs as Subjects of non-root clauses (v)-(vi):

 v. Se cães ladram, algo se passa. (existential reading)
  'If dogs bark, something is going on.'

 vi. Conheço uma aldeia onde rosas crescem nas paredes das casas. (existential reading)
  'I know a village where roses grow on the walls of the houses.'

And the modification issues – relative clauses (vii)-(viii) and Adjectives (ix)-(x), with Individual-level predicates:

 vii. Carros que tenham/?têm um motor velho são portugueses. (non-existential/existential reading)
  cars that have SUBJ 3 PL/IND have 3PL an old engine are Portuguese

 viii. Pássaros que cantem/?cantam são inteligentes. (non-existential/existential reading)

birds that sing SUBJ 3PL/sing IND 3PL are intelligent

ix.   ?Aves domésticas são estúpidas. (non-existential reading)

Birds domestic are stupid.

'Domestic birds are stupid.'

x.   ?Aves minúsculas são alegres. (non-existential reading)

birds very small are joyful.

'Very small birds are joyful.'

1.2. The organization of the chapter

This chapter is organized in order to answer the following questions.

    A. Are Subject non-existential BNPs marked topics, thus escaping the c-command requirement and thus non-existentially interpreted?

    B. Do descriptive discursive contexts license Subject BNPs with existential readings in a Head governed configuration?

    C. What are the differences between the syntactic and the discourse features of non-root and root clauses that may be responsible for the acceptability of preverbal Subject BNPs?

    D. Is modification a central issue in the licensing of the empty D and the acceptability of preverbal Subject BNPs?

The contexts of occurrence of BNPs in EP and the judgements of native speakers have led us to conclude they behave like BNPs in other Romance languages do, such as Spanish and Italian: they denote properties and thus they are never Kinds and never undergo type-shifting (Chierchia 1998, Delfitto 2002).

So, along the lines of Contreras (1986), Longobardi (1994), Delfitto (2002), among others, I also claim BNPs survive as arguments when assigned an existential reading under Head-government or asymmetrical c-command (Cf. Chapters I and III).

Only Head-government licenses the empty D position in EP and allows for the occurrence of argument existential BNPs.

Furthermore, lexical definite determiners are crucial to generic readings in EP (Oliveira 1997, 1998, Oliveira & Cunha 2003, 2011), of a preverbal Subject DP, but BNPs may get (at least) a non-existential reading under certain syntactic and semantic conditions.

This suggests the possibility of raising to a position in the left periphery of the sentence, thus avoiding the need for Head-government.

So, it is a combination with other syntactic properties of EP sentences, namely the possibility of having marked topics, that may explain the occurrence of preverbal BNPs as (apparent) Subjects in Kind- and Individual-level and characterizing sentences in this language, and that will take us to present Duarte (1986, 1997) analysis of marked topic constructions, namely topicalization and to discuss Costa & Duarte (2002) and Barbosa (1995, 1998) analyses for Subject positions in EP. The exceptionality of these constructions as well as the properties they share with the marked topic constructions in EP lead us to claim, contrary to Barbosa (1995, 1998), that this is an escape hatch for BNPs and not a general property of Subjects in EP.

To discuss the marked topic hypothesis, I will look closely into Frascarelli & Hinterhölz (2007), Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) analyses of the properties of different topic constructions, including Topicalization.

I will argue then that the D position and the features, such as (non-) specificity, which must be checked in the nominal domain (Longobardi 1994, 1999, 2001, 2008) and Delfitto (2002) are a major key for describing BNPs behavior: in EP BNPs are always, by default, unspecified DPs.

Their non-specificity is still a prevalent feature in the cases of descriptive contexts, which behave as multiple coordinated sentences and occur as discourse subtopics, as in scripts, in the sense of Abbot, Black & Smith (1985). Inferences connected to the knowledge of the World (Johnson-Laird, 2013) establish a coherent link between sequences.

In what modification issues are concerned, in some contexts, BNPs occurrences are more acceptable when modified, but that modification is a sufficient condition to license BNPs is by far too large a statement and a most intricate issue.

The acceptability of modification by adjectives does not create the same effects as relative clauses do in the acceptance of BNPs as preverbal Subjects. It is then possible that, as Krifka (2004) suggests (without formalizing), prosodic prominence, in what relative clauses are concerned, has a role to play in the acceptance of modified BNPs.

2. ('Subject') BNPs in Topicalization constructions in EP

BNPs can surface in preverbal positions if there is a co-referential pronoun as Subject, but hardly immediately following the topic:

(1) ??Políticos$_i$, eles$_i$ falam só do que lhes interessa.

    'Politicians, they speak only about what they are interested in.'

(2) ?Políticos (,) falam só do que lhes interessa.

    'Politicians (,) speak 3PL only about what they are interested in.'

These topic constituents are not easily acceptable in non-habitual contexts:

(3) *Professores$_i$, eles$_i$ trabalharam muito.

    'Teachers,they worked a lot.'

(4) ??Professores (,) trabalharam muito.

    teachers (,) worked 3rd PL a lot

For some speakers[4] who do accept sentences like (4), the BNP can even have a non-existential reading. When a BNP is a (marked) topic/Subject, its reading is preferably different from that of an indefinite quantifier like 'some' and closer to 'all', considering the members of a pre-defined set. The preverbal position together with non-specific character of BNPs entails the apparent non-existential reading.

But what is the difference between the definite DP and the BNP in the sentences below?

(5) Os cães comem carne, os gatos, peixe.

    the dogs eat meat, the cats, fish

    'Dogs eat meat, cats eat fish.'

(6) Cães (,) comem carne, gatos (,) peixe.

    dogs eat meat, cats, fish

    'Dogs eat meat, cats eat fish.'

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[4] Cf. Chapter II

In the (5), there is a true Kind reading of the BNP which is a Subject, and in the second case, there is a marked topic with an apparent generic reading because it gets a contrastive feature from the functional projection in which it is merged or moved to.

Full generic Subject DPs in Kind-reading sentences do not necessarily entail ($\rightarrow$) comparison to other Kinds, contrary to BNPs (i.e. they may not be a question which entails a sub-question, in Büring, 2003 terms):

(7) Os dinossauros estão extintos. $\rightarrow$ #Os mamíferos não (estão extintos).

   'The Dinosaurs are extinct.' $\rightarrow$ 'The mammals are not (extinct).'

(8) Dinossauros (,) estão extintos. $\rightarrow$ OK Mamíferos (,) não (estão extintos).

   'Dinosaurs are extinct.' $\rightarrow$ 'Mammals are not (extinct).'

(9) Os dinossauros estão extintos. $\rightarrow$ #Os dodós estão extintos também.

   'The Dinosaurs are extinct.' $\rightarrow$ 'The Dodos are also extinct.'

(10)   Dinossauros (,) estão extintos. $\rightarrow$ OK E dodós estão extintos também.

   'Dinosaurs are extinct.' OK$\rightarrow$ 'And Dodos are also extinct.'

Thus, even when the event feature of the predicate would prevent BNPs to survive in preverbal positions, for some speakers, as observed, a contrast feature (or a continuing cumulative or refutation assertion) would allow them a last chance of survival: moving to a left-peripheral position where they c-command an empty category (a trace/ a copy) which is co-indexed with the BNP in the topic position. The latter will then occupy the operator position which confers them a 'contrastive' value. This is what is expected in habitual contexts where there is a generalized acceptance of BNPs in preverbal (supposedly Subject) positions.

It is thus necessary to accept the movement of the BNP from a position of Subject to the left periphery.

In Duarte (1996), there are no references to Subjects as marked topics, but BNPs as possible topics largely correspond to the following properties of Topicalizations she presents (p. 327-332) (my translation):

   a. «There is an empty category in the comment where in the non-topicalized counterpart should occur the topicalized constituent:

(11)   Gatos$_i$, [-]$_i$ bebem leite

'Cats drink milk.'

b. The topic displays a high degree of syntacticisation – it exhibits referential, categorical, casual and thematic conformity with an obligatory empty constituent within the comment:

(12) [DP NOMINATIVE EXPERIENCER Cães,] [DP NOMINATIVE EXPERIENCER Cães] ouvem sons que nós não ouvimos.
'Dogs hear sounds we do not hear.'

c. It is not restricted to root sentences:

(13) Podes crer que elefantes$_i$, [$_i$] são inofensivos.
'You must believe elephants are harmless.'

d. The relationship between the topicalized constituent and the empty category has the properties of a long distance dependency, in derivational terms, topicalization is unbound:

(14) A Maria disse-me que [Alemães, o João tem a certeza [que [-] adoram batatas]]].
Maria told me that Germans João is sure that love 3PL potatoes.

e. Topicalized constituents cannot occur in adjacency to non-finite sentences:

(15) Mamíferos, o João afirmou terem pêlos.
mammals, João said have INF 3PL hairs
'Mammal, João said they have hairs.'

(16) *O João afirmou mamíferos, terem pêlos.
João said mammals, have INF 3PL hairs
'João said mammals, they have hairs.'

f. Topicalization is sensitive to the referential nature of the topicalized constituent.

g. The empty category in the comment legitimates parasitic gaps.

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h. Topicalization is iterative (17), it is compatible with Wh-movement (18), and its application is unlimited (19):

(17) Ratos, queijo, comem sempre.

mice, cheese, eat 3PL always

(18) Patos, o que disseste que [patos] comem?

ducks, what did you said eat 3PL?

(19) Porcos, disseram-me que a Maria jurou que [porcos] devoram tudo.

pigs, told 3PL that Maria swore that devour 3PL everything

'Pigs, I've been told Maria swore they devour everything.'

i. In root sentences (18), it occurs at the left of the constituents in Spec, CP, while in non-root sentences (19), it occurs at the right of C and of constituents in Spec, CP;

j. It is sensitive to islands, but it does not always create topic islands;

k. Unlike Wh- movement which triggers proclitic constructions, with topicalization the clitic pronouns occur in the expected contexts:

(20) Que te deu/*deu-te a Maria?

what CL 2SG gave 3SG/gave 3SG CL 2SG Maria

'What did Maria give you?'

(21) Livros, dão-me/*me[5] dão sono.

books, give 3PL me/ CL1SG give 3PL sleep

'Books make me sleepy.'

l. In EP, topicalized constituents contrast predications while in other Romance languages nominal constituents are contrasted:

(22) Dinossauros estão extintos, (mas) mamíferos não.

'Dinosaurs are extinct, (but) mammals (are) not.'

(23) #Dinossauros estão extintos, (e/mas) não mamíferos.

'Dinosaurs are extinct, (and/but) not mammals.'»

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[5] In Brazilian Portuguese, this would be the preferable construction.

The properties for which I have not given examples are not compatible with Subject positions. And it is also true that, for most examples, a definite DP would replace felicitously the BNP.

If movement to a topic position provides an escape hatch for 'Subject' BNPs in EP, it must be asked why it is not the case in English and in other Romance languages. In English, EPP will prevent these constructions to occur, i.e. a Subject BNP cannot be raised to a leftmost position leaving a trace, simply because there is a need for a lexical Subject in a sentence:

(24)   *Dogs$_i$, [-]$_i$ eat meat.

(25)   Dogs, they eat meat.

This is also the case for French:

(26)   Les/Des chiens, ils mangent de la viande.
        the/some dogs, they eat PART Det meat

(27)   *Les/Des chiens$_i$, [-]$_i$ mangent de la viande
        the/some dogs eat PART Det meat

It is also a fact that the descriptions concerning English state that topicalization is not compatible with wh-movement, which perhaps amounts to saying that in the EP case the position for the BNP is other than its English counterpart (see Haegeman, 2002 discussion on which positions topics may occur within Rizzi, 1997 Split CP according to interpretation needs).

As for Spanish and Italian, in these languages there is not a topicalization construction. That can perhaps explain the fact that in Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007) corpora (see bellow) there are mainly clitic resumptive structures as contrast and shifting topics. When there is topicalization, there is a contrastive focalization which implies a phrase contrast (cf. (22) vs. (23)), i.e. it differs from EP in its interpretation.

Interpretation is thus the key for the presence of a BNP as an apparent Subject, a true topic in preverbal position.

Duarte (1996) considers topicalization in EP as a case of scrambling defined as a movement by successively cyclic adjacency to IP/CP, because it is compatible with wh-movement and it is iterative. However, this movement should obey two conditions: a) be a last resort, b) procrastinate, and Duarte (1996) claims that they apply for interpretation reasons which can trigger the movement to A' positions. Formally, she states that EP choses the following values for the relevant parameters (quoting):

(28)

(i) Target-positions for visible syntactic movement: IP, CP

(ii) Bounding nodes for subjacency: DP, CP

(iii) Condition on Movement by Adjacency –movement can only target an XP non θ-marked

(iv) Reanalysis, in LF, of the adjacency positions: the target positions for movement by adjacency of XPs in visible syntax are reanalyzed as operator positions.

Though Duarte (1996) is concerned with non-subject constituents, these parameters hold for topic/Subject BNPs.

Topics will be adjuncts in a sisterhood relationship with the comment in a structure as follows (Duarte in Mateus et al.:2003:500), where XP is the Topic constituent:

(29) $[_{IP/CP}$ XP $[_{IP/CP}…]]$

The question is that an operator position and A'-movement are generally connected to CP positions and not to IP. The arguments presented by Duarte (2003:500) for not proposing a TopP are related to two properties: these constructions license parasitic gaps and are not especially sensitive to topic islands. Neither of them is verifiable with Subjects.

The fact that generally full Subject DPs do not need to raise outside IP (to CP) to get a topic interpretation does not hold for BNPs, which is predictable if the D position where reference or definiteness must be checked is not licensed.

EP BNPs, when they are true Subjects, can only be interpreted existentially under the proper conditions. If (apparent) Subject BNPs get another reading, they acquire a

'contrast' or 'aboutness' reading which can only be licensed within a CP outside the comment.

In the proper semantic conditions, the BNP targets a position other than TP. It raises for interpretation / discourse reasons.
The empty D will then receive a contrast/aboutness reading and has no need for any lexical operator which would to confer it an existential one.
The idea of contrast (also possible accumulation or enumeration contexts) generally improves the possibility of occurrence of Bare Singulars in these positions:

(30)   Leão come carne de búfalo. (Leopardo, também/Chita, não)

        lion eats buffalo meat. (leopard, also/ cheetah, no)

        'The/A lion eats buffalo meat. The/A Leopard, also/ The /A Cheetah, doesn´t).'

(31)   */??Elefante está em vias de extinção. (Baleia, também/ Águia, não)

        elephant is almost extinct. (whale, also/ eagle no)

        'The elephant is almost extinct. (The/*AWhale, also/ The/*A Eagle, is not.'

Example (31), for instance, is ungrammatical only because Bare Singulars cannot refer to a Kind, not even a set, though it could be understood as prototype, a statement regarding «the true elephant». Contrast/aboutness does not save the sentence.

3. Marked topics vs. Subjects?

The marked topic hypothesis for the non-existential readings of preverbal 'Subject' BNPs has been suggested and refuted in the literature. The adjunction hypothesis claims that EP is a VSO language and all preverbal Subjects are marked topics and the standard analysis claims that preverbal Subjects are generally topics in EP and thus there is no need for movement to (or merge in) the left-periphery.

3.1. Pronominal Agr and Topic positions – The Adjunction Hypothesis

Barbosa (1995,1998) claims that Agr varies according to [±pronominal] parametric variation. According to her, in the case of Null Subject languages, Agr is pronominal and the canonical Subject position is post-verbal. In order to have preverbal Subjects,

according to the so-called 'Adjunction hypothesis', syntax in those languages allows for only two possibilities:

1. The Subject is base-generated in an adjunct position, and is clitic-left dislocated, doubled by a *pro* which is the real Argument of the verb (Barbosa 1998:60)

(32)   [$_{IP}$ Subject$_i$ [$_{IP}$ [I'…*pro*$_i$]…]]]

2. The Subject is extracted from the post-verbal position via A'- movement, by Focus movement of the verb:

(33)   [$_{CP}$ Subject focus [$_{C'}$ V t]]

In the latter case, the Subject bears contrastive focus and it reconstructs[6].

BNPs as Subjects are generally post-verbal and so they would directly correspond to a VSO order. The different readings assigned to full DPs and BNPs in that order would rely on the empty D position of the latter. Movement of the BNP to an adjunct position would not allow it to be governed, but being generated in a CP position as a focus could be an answer.

The Adjunction hypothesis should then also explain the following examples, according to configuration (33):

(34)   O país tem campos onde flores crescem sem controlo.
       'The country has fields where flowers grow without control.'
(35)   ?Cães ladram.
       'Dogs bark.'
(36)   ?Dodós estão extintos.
       'Dodos are extinct.'

Example (34) has a preverbal Subject BNP with an existential reading in a non-root sentence, while in (35)-(36) BNPs apparently get generic readings.

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[6] Along the lines of Cinque, 1991 (Barbosa, 1998:41).

Contrary to what happens to full DPs, the preverbal position is not canonical for BNPs, and, per se, does not assign any reading, as it is expected, considering that the empty D features must be checked either by N-to-D raising or by Head-government. However, according to Barbosa (1995, 1998), in (34)-(36), configurations imply that C c-commands the empty D without any further distinction in what reading assignment is concerned. In this case, the Adjunct theory does not add any theoretical advantage to the analysis of BNPs as preverbal Subjects of non-root sentences.

The main issue is, however, the case of the non-existential reading in (35)-(36). First of all, it must be assumed that, as Barbosa (1995, 1999) claims, for all Subjects under this configuration, the BNPs get a contrastive accent always. The fact that with Kind-and Individual-level predicates and characterizing sentences the BNP has an aboutness feature (see section bellow) or implies a contrast may lead us to view it as a marked topic construction. That is certainly not a specificity of BNPs and not a general possibility for DPs. In fact, all DPs may get a contrastive accent as preverbal Subjects:

(37) OS LEÕES caçam em grupo, as panteras não.
      THE LIONS hunt in group, the panthers no
      'LIONS hunt together, panthers don't.'
(38) OS DINOSSAUROS estão extintos, outros grandes répteis não.
      THE DINOSAURS are extinct, other big reptiles no
      'DINOSAURS are extinct, other large reptiles aren't.'

The standard analysis explains why there is no possibility of having preverbal Subject BNPs without a mechanism of government or, only as a last resort, movement to a non-argument position where there is no need for licensing the empty D. If one is to accept that those possibilities are always available, it is hard to understand why BNPs do not behave similarly to other DPs.

The VSO order and the SVO order mark different readings, but in fact the preverbal Subject has always a prominent feature and even with QPs, a contrast accent may be possible:

(39) ALGUNS CÃES estão no jardim.
      'SOME DOGS are in the garden.'
(40) UM CÃO está no jardim. (Os outros, não)

'A DOG is in the garden. (The others are not)'

Actually, one can even have an accent on the quantifier alone, or on just one syllable:

(41)   ALGUNS professores ensinam.
         'SOME teachers teach.'

(42)   alGUNS cães são perigosos.
         'SOMe dogs are dangerous.'

However, not all preverbal Subject BNPs with non-existential readings need a contrast accent, even though they recover previous information:

(43)   Em suma, após a devastação das florestas de bambu, ?pandas estão em vias de extinção, não é?
       'In short, after the devastation of the bamboo forests, Pandas are almost extinct, isn´t it?'

The reading of the BNP is a clue: preverbal Subject BNPs need special contexts to be read generically and the adjunct hypothesis, contrary to the standard analysis, does not provide any satisfactory explanation for them: the movement configuration ((32) above) does not provide a governed position where the empty D could be licensed and the BNP might target. And even if the government requirement was to be discarded, what would differentiate, in terms of reading assignment, a Subject BNP from a full DP in preverbal position?

If the BNP was to be generated within a CP (configuration (33) above), there should be a contrastive accent which is also not necessarily needed if a non-existential reading is to be assigned to the BNP, and, in any case, that would not explain why there would be a BNP and not a generic full DP in that position either. The D position would escape from the need to be governed if the BNP moves to CP, which is a non-argument position.

Configuration (33) would explain the existential reading under the empty D government requirement in contexts where there is a lexical governor in CP, but again there is no need for a contrast accent and that possibility is explained straightforwardly in non-root sentences by the standard theory.

If the empty D government requirement was to be discarded, the same configuration

(33) would all the same keep the ambiguity of readings (existential and generic) for preverbal BNPs and all the work was to be decided by the predicate, which, though playing a crucial role, cannot provide, as shown above, a straightforward explanation for both the distribution and reading of preverbal Subject BNPs.

The contrast reading or an aboutness information status of preverbal Subjects is crucial for the survival of non-existential preverbal BNPs and so the configuration in which they occur is simultaneously their last resort.

3.2. Preverbal Subjects – The Standard Analysis and the marked topic hypothesis

Duarte & Costa (2002) convincingly argue against Subjects in EP being (clitic-) left dislocated. They present a number of facts (related to Agreement, syntax and interpretation) proving that Subjects are either in Spec, AgrP, Spec, TP or Spec, VP according to their distribution and their reading.

In fact, interpretation has a special role in these issues. First of all, because preverbal Subjects are generally interpreted as topics in the sense that a predication is made about them, i.e. there is almost always an aboutness feature associated with the Subject. There are however, cases where the preverbal Subject in not interpreted as a topic. According to Duarte & Costa (2002) the interpretation of topic or non-topic when the Subject moves to Spec, AgrP (obtaining a categorical judgment) «depends on its inherent semantic properties and/or on the properties of the discourse context.» (Duarte & Costa (2002:171) unlike what happens if the Subject is post-verbal (in Spec, TP or in Spec, VP) which can never be interpreted as a topic (the sentence being a thetic judgement).

Considering the contexts of occurrence of BNPs as Subjects in EP, they get a topic interpretation and may raise according to discourse requirements. In sentence (44), the BNP could only get a non-existential reading if a contrast may follow ('ideals remain', for instance), or survive with an existential reading in an enumeration descriptive context.

But, generally, BNPs are only allowed to survive in post-verbal positions without any information prominence and this may be what really happens if they form a syntactic unity with the verb (a thetic judgment).

One must notice, however, that preverbal Subject prominence does not mean exactly that the sentence is about that Subject. Both sentences (44) and (45) bellow, may answer the question 'What happens (then)?', and not 'Who dies?'. The sentences may both be thetical judgments.

(44) Pessoas morrem (todos os dias).
    'People die (everyday).'

(45) Morrem pessoas (todos os dias).
    die people (everyday)
    'There are people dying (everyday).'

The BNP in both sentences may get an existential reading. Without a contrast context – which would allow for a non-existential reading of the BNP - the verb gets an event/non-habitual interpretation and the BNP is read as existential. So discourse can save the existential preverbal BNP: it raises to Spec, TP for interpretation purposes and is accepted as an expansion of some discourse element previously presented, a catastrophic situation, for instance.

The arguments presented by Duarte & Costa (2002) do not contradict altogether the possibility of having Subjects in marked topic positions. In fact, they accept that possibility in the cases of hyper-raising such as the following:

(46) Os homens parece que viram um monstro.
    the men seems that saw 3PL a monster
    'It seems the men saw a monster.'

It is also argued by Duarte & Costa that there is a definiteness effect which overrules the presence of indefinites in theses constructions:

(47) *Umas meninas parece que estão doentes.
    some girls seems that are sick 3PL
    'It seems that some girls are sick.'

BNPs can occur in these contexts, even though they do not qualify as definites:

(48) Casamentos parece que duram pouco ultimamente.

marriages seems that last 3PL short lately

'It seems marriages do not last long lately.'

(49) Gatos parece que bebem leite.

cats seems that drink 3PL milk

'It seems that cats drink milk.'

The contrast between (47) and (48)-(49) may have something to do with quantification in the DP domain. The plural form of BNPs, contrary to, say, Bare Singulars (cf. (50)-(51)) or (full) indefinites, insures their acceptability reinforcing simultaneously the idea that the D position is empty and they project NumP.

The presence of full indefinite determiner/quantifier features must be combined with those of the topic position. On the other hand, a Bare Singular, having a [-plural] feature faces some restrictions – it may never refer to a set, it refers to an individual as a prototype and that causes constraints on their occurrences:

(50)   *Casamento parece que dura pouco ultimamente.

marriage seems that last 3SG short lately

'It seems a marriage does not last long lately.'

(51)   ??Gato parece que bebe leite.

cat seems that drink 3SG milk

'It seems that cats drink milk.'

In other words, it is possible to admit that the empty D fully shares the features of the topic domain contrary to what happens in the presence of some lexical determiners/quantifiers. The vagueness expressed by the empty D and the [+plural] feature of BNPs matches the aboutness (also vague) feature conveyed by the topic XP position: 'As for X, X being a definite DP, or at least not a full indefinite one'.

As for the fact that in EP preverbal Subjects do not normally raise for an A'-position and considering the contexts in which BNPs may occur in a preverbal position, it must be assumed that syntax may allow BNP raising for discourse reasons.

Duarte (1994) claims that non-Subject constituents may be raised to a position outside IP due to the unavailability of Spec, AgrSP, which is a target for movement of the

Subject in order to check weak N features. In fact, this is the position for what the author calls a [+top] Subject. What Duarte (1994) argues, however, has to do with the fact that most of preverbal Subjects are indeed topics in the sense that their relation to the predicate is one of topic-comment type, that is, the predicate is about the Subject.

These considerations do not exclude the possibility of having Subjects interpreted as marked topics, as previously mentioned.

If all this is true, why should a Subject BNP be risen to or base generated in a position within CP? The solution has to do with a combination of discourse and syntax and semantic requirements: the non-specific feature of BNPs allows it to be picked as question to be put into discussion among the participants on a conversation, either as new or salient previous information. BNPs are introduced into discourse as an updating mechanism: they are 'labels' to which general properties may be assigned as a way of monitoring/assessing what is being stated.

4. Marked topics: interpretation and discourse requirements

Unmodified preverbal Subject BNPs with non-existential readings are not in Subject position, i.e., they are neither in Spec, TP nor in Spec, vP, but in a position inside CP (while the verb remains in TP).

This is the only solution for BNPs to survive in preverbal position with a non-existential reading: they are marked topics and display the agreement features of the Subject.

The topic position is to be considered as a particular case of escape-hatch. It is thus a syntactic possibility in EP serving discourse purposes.

As it was already shown in Chapter III, BNPs are good candidates for all types of marked topics at the left periphery of the sentence, examples are here repeated:

(52)   Quanto a plantas, é preciso consultar um botânico.
       'In what concerns plants, it is better to talk to a botanist.'

(53)   Filmes estrangeiros, estamos a ver o filme até ao fim e não sabemos de que se
       trata (GLP, p.492).
       'Foreign films, we are watching the film until the end and we never know what
       it is all about.'

(54)   Lobos, ouvi dizer que eles mordem tudo quando têm fome.

'Wolves, I heard they will bite everything, when they're hungry.'

(55)   Rosas, colhi-as aos molhos ontem.

'Roses, I picked them by the thousands yesterday.'

(56)   Italianos, conheço muitos.

'Italians, I know a lot of them.'

According to Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007), who argue for a systematic correlation between discourse roles and grammatical properties (both phonological and syntactic) of marked topics encoded in a strict hierarchy of functional heads in the C-domain, topics will surface at the leftmost or at the rightmost positions according to their interpretation[7]. They suggest the following structure:

(57)   [ShiftP [+aboutness] ContrP [FocP [FamP* [IP

The asterisk means that familiar topics can be recursive, but shifting and contrastive topics cannot (unlike Rizzi, 1997, who only considers one kind of topic).

The semantic definitions they adopt for each kind of topic are the following (Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007: 87, 88):

a)   «Aboutness topic: a particular constituent newly introduced, newly changed or newly returned to (quoting Givón, 1983), a constituent which is proposed as a matter of standing and current interest or concern (quoting Strawson, 1964);

b)   Contrastive topic: an element that induces alternatives which have no impact on the focus value and creates oppositional pairs with respect to other topics (quoting Kuno, 1976 and Büring, 1999);

c)   Familiar topic: a given or accessible constituent (quoting Chafe, 1987), which is typically realized in a pronominal form (quoting Pesetsky, 1987). When a familiar topic is textually given and d-linked with a pre-established aboutness topic, it is defined as a continuing topic (quoting Givón, 1983). These topics do not provide any instruction to the reader they refer with a retrieval function to Common Ground content.»

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[7] Their phonological behavior must also be taken into account.

According to the authors, contrastive topics are not to be mistaken for contrastive foci because they do not have quantificational properties and only need to oppose to other topics. They are always outside the scope of negation. For this matter they present the following contrast:

(58) a. Non ho dato un libro a Gianni.
        'I didn't give a book to Gianni.'
      b. Non gli$_k$ ho dato un libro a Gianni$_k$.
        'I didn't give a book, to Gianni.'

(58) a. negates the whole predication while the topic in (58) b. is excluded from negation. Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl state that contrast is a feature that is licensed in an A'-position in the C-domain.

They also state that the aboutness feature is a syntactic one and continuing topics (such as familiar topics, in Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010, given topics) are associated to it through Agree. Topic categories are compositional.

As for clitic-resumed topics, they argue, considering reconstruction effects, they are merged in a position in the C-domain. Non clitic-resumed topics are moved to the C-domain and reconstructed within the sentence for interpretation. In the spontaneous speech (Italian) corpus which they analyze, however, both shifting and contrastive topics are clitic-resumed, which makes them indifferent in syntactic terms, i.e. it is the interpretation they get that distinguish them and not their syntactic properties.

A major contribution to defining each kind of topic is made through phonological means: they show specific prosodic features which distinguish them from each other. The present dissertation on EP has no phonological basis. EP prosody and phonology is different from Italian, and experimental data would shed some light on the differences between aboutness, or shifting, contrastive topics and familiar/given topics.

Even though phonological evidence can more clearly establish whether BNPs can be any kind of topic or if they may be only used in some particular configuration, it is expected that both syntax and the interpretation interface should be able to provide an answer to this question.

Thus, the main point is to establish whether the grammatical preverbal Subject BNPs are in fact marked topics. Their being merged or moved to a position inside CP licenses the empty D or exempts it from playing a major syntactic role. Considering that topic is a non-argument position, D is exempted from being licensed.

Arguably, the topic BNP would be merged in CP and reconstructed inside VP (which would end up in their getting an existential reading). Even in a CP position, if the BNP is reconstructed inside VP, it can never get a true generic reading.

4.1. Syntactic properties and discourse purposes of Topics

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) (following Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007) look into the different types of marked topics in order to account for the differences between Italian and English topics. They look for a thorough syntactic and semantic explanation for the behavior of different types of topics in those languages.

They address the issue of topics as a (non-) root-phenomenon and come up to what they call an 'Interface Root Restriction' (Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010: 73):

(59)   «Interface Root Restriction

Information structure phenomena that affect the conversational dynamics (CG management) must occur in clauses endowed with illocutionary force that implement a conversational move, i.e. a non-reported speech act.»

This restriction allows them to distinguish the different types of topics according to their syntactic context. In fact, only aboutness topics are restricted to root sentences (they must be hosted by (or conjoined to) a clause endowed with illocutive force", (Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010: 73). Given (familiar) topics have a free distribution (they may even occur in central adverbial clauses). Contrastive topics are restricted to clauses that express propositions, and that means that they are not exclusively a root-phenomenon.

English is said to dispense with familiar topics (that is why English does not allow them to occur in central adverbial clauses), to choose LD for aboutness topics and topicalization for contrastive topics. In Italian, the preferred construction (the only one, actually) is CLLD.

EP preverbal Subject BNPs can apparently be aboutness topics (60), contrastive topics (61) or familiar/given topics (62):

(60) Dinossauros, extintos, estão, mas a sua popularidade está bem viva.
      'Dinosaurs, extinct, they are, but their popularity is well alive.'

(61) Cães comem carne, gatos, peixe.
      'Dogs eat meat, cats, Fish.'

(62) (Os) pássaros canoros são alegres: pintassilgos, rouxinóis, canários.
      Rouxinóis e canários são maravilhosos…pintassilgos cantam menos bem.
      'Singing birds are joyful: goldfinches, nightingales, canaries. Nightingales and canaries are wonderful… goldfinches do not sing so well.'

The possibility of occurrence of BNPs as any kind of topic seems to weaken any contribution of Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) to EP BNPs readings and distribution, i.e. BNPs are perhaps not related to just one position inside the CP domain. Example (62) may also be an aboutness or a contrastive topic: notice that the authors add that 'givenness' may be found in C-Topics, as they relate to a contextually salient set of alternatives and that A-topics can be given or not (Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010: 54, fn 21).

The free distribution of given (familiar) topics –unless they are full pronouns or clitics - may hold for Subject/topic BNPs, with one restriction- their non-specificity. They are never specific or definite (discourse constraints ban them in the case of (63)), otherwise, if they may remain unspecific, as in (64)-(65), they are acceptable. In (64), though, the first occurrence of 'livros' may be interpreted as non-existential, while the second one is interpreted as existential (because it co-refers to the first occurrence). In (65) both occurrences of 'mamíferos' are interpreted as non-existential. In (66), all BNPs get an non-existential reading. Their readings are mainly dependent on the predicates they occur with. BNPs occur as descriptions of members of a previous referred set, i.e. in an inclusion relation to the set, as sub-kinds.

(63) (Os) animais de estimação são sempre boa companhia. Vejamos os cães, por exemplo. Um homem tem gatos$_k$ e cães$_i$. Vê televisão, enquanto

#cães_i/ aqueles fielmente se mantêm ao lado. #Gatos_k/ estes estão com ele ou não.

'Pets are always good company. Consider dogs, for example. A man has cats and dogs. He watches TV, while dogs/ those will faithfully stay with him. Cats/these may or not be around.'

(64) (…) Livros_i sempre foram para mim uma companhia indispensável, ao contrário de outros interesses que tenho. Adoro cinema e também não passo sem música.

Mas, livros_i, vão comigo para todo o lado.

'(…)Books always were an indispensable company to me, contrary to other hobbies I have. I love cinema and cannot do without music.

Books, though, go with me everywhere.'

(65) Mamíferos são animais de sangue quente. Nem todos os animais o são, répteis, não o são, por exemplo. Mamíferos, porém, não precisam de se aquecer ao sol.

'Mammals are warm-blooded animals. Not all animals are warm-blooded, Reptiles, for instance, are not. Mammals, however, do not need to warm up in the sun.'

(66) Muitos mamíferos são animais domésticos. Cães são guarda e companhia. Ovelhas dão leite e lã. Cavalos têm força. (E) Gatos, bem, gatos são fofos.

'Many mammals are domestic animals. Dogs protect and keep company. Sheep provide milk and wool. Horses are strong. (And) Cats, well, cats are cute.'

Most probably, though, in (64)-(66), BNPs are contrastive topics: they are always interpreted as possible answers to a general question and may raise further sub-questions (see next section).

According to Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010), when topics occur in central adverbial clauses they are given (familiar) topics. This restraint for other kinds of topics may serve us as a hypothesis for conditions on the occurrence of BNPs in subordinate clauses.

Furthermore, topic (Subject) BNPs in EP may occur in a LD construction when conveying aboutness, but the contrast reading is available only through topicalization, which would point out to a behavior similar to English topic constituents. In (67), the contrast feature is conveyed by the second topic. In (68), the contrast topic degrades the acceptance of the pronoun:

(67) LD

Leões, zebras, acho que eles caçam (coelhos, não/ # linces caçam coelhos).

lions, zebras, I think that they hunt (rabbits, no/ bobcats hunt rabbits).

'Lions, zebras, I think that they hunt (rabbits, they do not/ bobcats hunt rabbits).'

(68) Topicalization

Golfinhos, acho que (??eles) são inteligentes, tubarões, não.

dolphins, I think that (they) are intelligent, sharks, no.

'Dolphins, I think that (they) are intelligent, sharks, are not.'

However, I cannot consider BNPs in an LD construction, unless I could claim that LD may exist even when there is no pronoun in the comment. LD cannot thus be taken into consideration. If BNPs are aboutness topics in EP, then they will resort to topicalization.

The issues concerning information structure at an interface level that Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) consider (see next section) – namely those put forward by Reinhart, Büring and Krifka' works – allow us to hypothesize that, in most occurrences (namely in root or root-like sentences), topic/Subject BNPs in EP are contrastive topics.

4.2. Conversation Common Ground, Conversation Ground Management and Topic configurations - Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010)

Conversational Common Ground, as Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 45) present it, is «the set of propositions that are taken to be presupposed, up to that point, by all the participants of a conversation».

Taken that the meaning of a sentence is its update potential (a function from an input context to an output context), «the updating effect of an assertion is that the asserted proposition, when accepted by all the participants, is admitted into the common ground, and thus discards from the input context all the possible worlds that are incompatible with it (technically, by intersection), yielding a 'shrinked' output context.».

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) call Common Ground the set of presupposed propositions (following Stalkner, 1978), but also the possibility of new or familiar referent being introduced in a conversation (following Heim, 1982) as well as a mechanism of 'question under discussion stack', keeping track of questions introduced in the course of the conversation (following Roberts, 2004). They call «propositional Common Ground» to the first component, and state that «topics have been analyzed as instructions to the hearers on where the propositional content expressed by the assertion act should fit in the CG.».

They consider the works of Reinhart (1981), Büring (2003) and Krifka (2007). By reviewing these works and make them adequate to the analysis of different types of topics, they aim to establish a direct relation between conversational purposes or intentions and syntactic constructions.

4.2.1. The file card metaphor vs. the 'Question Under Discussion': different contributions to Common Ground Management

According to Reinhart (1981), the topic is the entity that the sentence is about and the propositional CG is divided into subsets of propositions stored under defining entries. – topic denotations. This idea basically follows Heim (1982) «file card» metaphor. «The sentence topic identifies the entry under which the proposition expressed in the sentence should be stored in the CG.» (Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010: 46):

(69)   Reinhart's 'file card' definition (Reinhart 1981:25)
         «To say that a sentence S uttered in a context C is about α_i, i.e. that the pair $<\alpha_i,$
         $\phi>$ of Possible Pragmatic Assertions$_{(s)}$ is selected in C, is to say,
         (i)   First, that if possible, the proposition ϕ expressed in S will be asserted by
                  the hearer in C with respect to the subset of propositions already listed in
                  the context set under α_i,,

(ii)   Second, that if φ is not rejected it will be added in the context set under the entry $α_i$.»

The metaphor is straightforwardly related to the management of a library: each new piece of information (in this case a potential NP topic) must be stored under a certain title, and each participant will deal with it according to a Common Ground and thus accept it (or reject it).

Büring (2003) analysis, on the other hand, considers mainly contrastive topics: discourse is conducted by «strategies of inquiry» - «sets of questions hierarchically ordered by entailment relations» (Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010:5). The conversational CG monitors the discourse. When a question is introduced, it has to be answered or be presently unanswerable. It is «the question under discussion (QUD)». If unanswerable, it will be put aside along as the sub-questions it entails. The hierarchical entailment structure is directly expressed by dominance relations. Contrastive topics show how the asserted proposition fits into a strategy of inquiry. This includes a «CT-congruence» that states that a declarative sentence including a contrastive topic is the answer to a set of alternative of explicit or implicit questions which are a strategy to solve a super-question. The example given is the following (Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010: 47):

(70)   [FRED]$_{CT}$ ate [the BEANS]$_F$

The strategy would consist in replacing the focused term with a wh-word, fronting it and yielding the question: «What did Fred eat?». Then a set of alternative questions is formed by replacing the contrastive topic with an alternative set of questions of the form «what did x eat?».

According to Krifka (2007: 5, 6), CG content is different from CG management because the first refers to the truth-conditional information accumulated up to a point in a conversation while the second determine the way CG content develops through the sequence of conversational moves performed by the participants. Thus, Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 48-49) conclude that Reinhart's and Büring's approach to the topic issue both describe dimensions of the CG management and «are not mutually exclusive, but complementary».

Those «two types of topics can actually co-occur.», i.e., they represent different strategies: namely that topics may or may not just introduce contextually adequate

information or else they represent a way of managing information according to sets of alternatives which must be assessed throughout the conversation. In other terms, Reinhart would be describing aboutness/given topics, while Büring describes contrastive topics.

If non-existential BNPs are introduced by a strategy of contrast, they are a way of updating information. Büring (2003: 20) states that « A thorough look of descriptions of topic markings in various languages reveals that differences like these [e.g. special word order and associated markers] abound making it impossible to talk about properties of 'topics' in general. An investigation of a suspected topic-marking in a given language should therefore start, not by assuming that, since it is a topic, it has a particular cluster of properties, but by establishing their exact specific properties independently». However he holds to a first property of topics (Büring, 2003: 20): being definite. Are BNPs always definite?

4.2.2. The singularity of given topics and the non-root phenomenon

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 54) characterize a given topic (a familiar topic) as a given constituent in the sense of Schwarzschild (1999: 11, ex. (25)):

(71)   «Given Constituent

Definition of GIVEN (final informal version):
An utterance U counts as *GIVEN* iff it has a salient antecedent
A and
a. if U is type e, then A and U co-refer;
b. otherwise: modulo "-type shifting, A entails the Existential
F-Closure of U.»

To illustrate, Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 54), ex. (15), (16)) provide the following example:

(72)   A: John [VP ate a green apple]
         B: No, he [VP ate a RED apple]

(73) $\exists x[x$ ate a green apple] (=$\exists$ lifting of the antecedent VP) entails
         $\exists Y[\exists x[x$ ate a Y apple] (=$\exists$-F-closure and $\exists$- lifting of VP)

And they (Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010: 54) explain that the existential F-closure of U results from replacing the Focus marked phrase (*RED*) with variables and existentially closing the result. «Existential type-shifting is required if U is not of type t. In speaker B's utterance, in order to determine that the VP counts as GIVEN, it is necessary to lift it to type t by existential closure of the external argument position: the result is entailed by the antecedent VP in speaker A's statement also lifted to type t. (Lifting to type t is obviously required in order for entailment to be defined.).»

Givenness is established through entailment, i.e. it is necessary for the participants to establish which is new and which is given information, and 'new' means 'precise'. Truth conditions are established along the conversation in the example, but this issue of 'givenness' may be considered when, in a discourse, sentences follow as a way of 'making more precise' the previous or the following sentences. I will return to this issue in the case of BNPs in descriptive contexts.

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 54) conclude that «Givenness is calculated on the basis of the CG content, marking a contextually entailed element, and it does not affect the conversational dynamics.». And they add: It is therefore clear that the G-topic does not pertain to CG management.».

In fact, Shwarzchild (1999:142) suggests a speaker's constraint on given material:

«Even if it is too broadly stated, (4b) [Prominence indicates novelty] does have some truth to it, and this will be explained in terms of a constraint, AVOIDF. This constraint has the effect of requiring a speaker to refrain from accenting material that is given. In many but crucially not all cases, the presence of such a constraint allows a hearer to conclude that if material is in fact made prominent, it must not be given. »

At an interface level, G-topics' distribution is predictably freer, according to Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010), than that of other topics and they may occur in central adverbial clauses. The distinction made by Haegeman (2004:169-70) between central and peripheral adverbial clauses, according to which the first «do not have illocutionary potential and are integrated in the speech act conveyed by the associate clause, while peripheral adverbial clauses have root properties and are endowed with a Force Projection» is crucial to the analysis.

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) state that the occurrence of G-topics, in CLLD constructions in Italian, and not occurring at all as such in English, (explainable by the need for the existence of a Fin Projection, lower than a Force Projection in Italian and non-existent in English –Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010: 50 and Haegeman: 2002) allows them to be recurrent and independent of the root restrain.

Givenness, however, is not an exclusive property of G-Topics and may pertain to CG management: remember that C-topics are «typically given, as they relate to a contextually salient set of alternatives», even though «their update potential is provided by contrast» and A-topics can also be given (Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010, fn. 21). So, it is the fact that G-topics may occur in all types of embedded sentences and that they are not found in English that is crucial for this analysis of different types of topics.

4.2.3. A-Topics and LD, C-Topics and Topicalization – the case of English

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) convincingly argue that in English the LD construction and the Topicalization construction have different roles: the first one instantiates an A-topic and the second one a C-topic. And they show that, as expected, A-topics are independent from the illocutionary force of the following sentence, contrary to C-topics. For this matter they present the following examples (Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010: 69), ex. (47)-(48):

(74)   a. This book, leave it on the table!

        b. *This book, leave on the table!

        c. Those petunias, did John plant them?

        d. *Those petunias, did John plant?

        e. Those petunias, when did John plant them?

        f. *Those petunias, when did John plant?

Topicalization is subject to usual constraints on movement:

(75)   a. This book, I accept the argument that John should read *(it).

        b. This book, I wonder who read *(it).

They consider Krifka (2007: 25-26) suggestion that the A-Topic constitutes a speech act on its own: «topic selection is a speech act itself, an initiating speech act that requires a

subsequent speech act like an assertion, question, command, or curse about the entity that was selected».

This direct relation between types of topics and topic constructions in English apparently proves that, in this language, only LD is really a 'root phenomenon', in spite of the possibility of having A-topics in some embedded sentences (namely in 'almost asserted clauses' or belief reports).

Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) follow Rizzi (1997) split CP: each constituent has a position within it. However, in what contrast is concerned, foci and topics cannot co-occur because that is a feature which is checked in just one position.

(76) Não falo de todos os habitantes da casa. Animais, só cães são cinco.
'I am not speaking of all the inhabitants of the house. Animals, just dogs, there are five.'

(77) Não sei o que achas sobre fruta nacional, cereja ou maças. Cerejas, o que é que pensas a esse respeito?
'I do not know what you think about national fruit, cherries or apples. Cherries, what do you think about that?'

In order to accept Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl analysis, we should have to say that 'Animais', in (76) must be an aboutness (shifting) topic, otherwise, a contrastive topic and a contrastive focus would co-occur in the C-domain. In the case of (77), it is hard to say whether 'cerejas' is a contrastive or an aboutness (shifting) topic. But, since it precedes the wh- constituent, it is an aboutness topic.

However, the fact that only aboutness topics are a 'root phenomenon' that convey 'new information' and that it is clear that BNPs are aboutness topics only when some other element in CP has a contrast feature, leads us to reaffirm the following hypothesis:

BNPs are just like other DPs and may indistinctively be any kind of topic, but they are preferred as a strategy to convey contrast:

They are never accepted in 'out of the blue' contexts, contrary to what may happen with most aboutness Topics. They can occur in non-root contexts, especially in belief sentences and peripheral adverbial clauses.

4.2.4. BNPs as given (familiar) topics.
4.2.4.1. Rightmost position topics and familiarity –

According to Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007: 98), there is evidence that a right-hand topic is not moved to a lower TopP projection and then reconstructed within the root sentence for interpretation because of scope properties, as the example proves (cf. the example in EP):

(78) [$_{GP}$ [$_{IP}$ Maria$_k$ lo ha presentato [ad ogni ospite$_j$][$_{TopP}$[il suo$_i$ vicino di tavola]t$_{IP}$]
    (?i≠j, i=k)
    Mary has presented to each guest POSS 3SG table neighbor
    'Mary has presented to each guest his/her table neighbor.'

(78') [$_{GP}$ [$_{IP}$ Maria$_k$ apresentou(?-o) [a cada convidado$_j$][$_{TopP}$[o seu$_i$ vizinho de
    mesa]t$_{IP}$] (?i≠j, i=k)

Furthermore, a pronoun in topic position is c-commanded by a DP in the IP domain:

(79) Sicuramente Maria$_i$ partirà presto, lei$_j$ (i=j)
    certainly, Maria leave. FUT 3SG soon, she
    'For sure, Maria will leave soon.'

 (79') ??Com certeza, a Maria partirá em breve, ela.

They claim this movement of the IP is motivated by an EPP feature in the C-domain causing IP-inversion. This feature must be checked to yield new interpretative options (scope or discourse-related properties).

This analysis also concludes that this kind of topics cannot convey contrast or aboutness, as the following example shows (Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl, (2007: 99):

(80) *Io ho due fratelli: lo$_i$ vedo spesso Luigi$_j$, mentre non lo$_k$ vedo mai, Mario$_l$. (i≠j,
    k≠l)
    I have two brothers: PRO 3SG often Luigi, while no PRO 3SG see ever, Mario
    'I have two brothers, Luigi, I do not see often, while Mario, I do not see ever.'

 (80') ??Eu tenho dois irmãos: vejo-o$_i$ frequentemente, ao Luigi$_j$, embora não o$_k$ veja
    nunca, ao Mário$_l$. (i≠j, k≠l)

The crucial example for this matter seems to be the one, drawn from their corpus, which is evidence for the difference between familiar and contrastive topics:

(81)   Non è questione che il tempo$_i$ non te l$_j$'ho dato,

     not be-3SG question that the time not to.you it(CL) have.1SG given

     io te l$_k$'ho dato, il tempo$_l$. (i=j, j=k, k=l)

     I to.you it(CL) have.1SG given the time

     'The point is not that I didn't give you the time. I DID give you the time.'

(81')   O problema não é que (??o) tempo$_i$ não to$_j$/te tenha dado, eu dei-to$_k$/te, ??(o/todo o tempo) tempo$_l$. (i=j, j=k, k=l)

Notice that the example in EP would prefer a topicalization instead of CLLD, a BNP in the first sentence and a full DP in the second. The second occurrence of the BNP is about an already established referent, a definite determiner or a quantified DP ('todo o tempo'- 'all the time') would be more natural.

The authors assume that IP-movement targets a projection in the C-domain to meet some interface requirement concerning focus and contrast, considering that the verb gets a contrastive value in the second occurrence.

The point is that familiar/given topics play a different role from the one assumed by contrastive topics. If syntax causes the IP-movement to meet a discourse requirement, it follows that the difference between a contrastive feature and familiar/given one may motivate the process.

In what rightmost positions are concerned, non-modified BNPs in EP are not generally good candidates to being topics (especially when they are Subjects), though Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007) analysis of leftward movement for the IP seems, as we have seen, to be motivated:

(82)   *Vi (muitos), ratos.

     I saw (a lot), mice

(83)   *Vi-os, ratos.

     I saw them, mice

(84)   *Vi isso, ratos.

I saw that, mice

Non-modified Subject BNPs can hardly be topics in the rightmost position:

(85) *Comem ratos, gatos
      eat 3PL mice, cats

(86) *Nascem aos milhares, ratos.
      born 3PL by the thousands, mice

If the point is only if there is the possibility of having something inside the IP that can c-command the empty D of the BNP, then it is true that an empty category could never do it and, the examples above are expectedly ungrammatical.

Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007) claim that when d-linked with a pre-established aboutness topic, they are continuing topics:

(87) Quanto a animais domésticos, são bons companheiros, *(os) cães.
      'As for domestic pets, they are good company, (the) dogs.'

Considering the examples above, what is apparent, in the first place, is that syntax does not allow (unmodified) BNPs in these positions. Full DPs would be perfectly acceptable. That is expectable once it is proven that there is no syntactic device that legitimates the empty D. It cannot be in a lower topic position otherwise it would be possible to reconstruct it. On the other hand, there is no possibility of having the BNP as preverbal Subject after reconstructing the IP that has been moved, because, again, it would need either a governor or an escape-hatch.

4.2.4.2. Remnant movement and ellipsis

Duarte, Santos & Abalada (2015), based on data from a corpus of spontaneous adult speech and experimental data from children on comprehension, of topicalization and other contexts, argue against the analyses by remnant movement and direct merge. For these authors, the right peripheral material is part of the second member of a bi-clausal structure in which the redundant part of the second CP has undergone ellipsis. They reject the idea that previously to the ellipsis there is A'-movement of the peripheral sentence to a left-peripheral position within the second CP.

These authors describe the existing asymmetries between post-verbal and right-topicalized Subjects, in one hand and between left-dislocated structures and right-peripheral ones, on the other.

The syntactic differences between post-verbal Subjects and right-peripheral ones regard, first of all, the contrasts they show in what principle C of Binding Theory is concerned. In fact, right-peripheral Subjects are free contrary to post-verbal ones. Secondly, right-peripheral Subjects occur with tag-questions. The third difference is the restrictions on the occurrence of indefinite DPs as right-peripheral material. And the last one is that strong pronouns cannot easily be post-verbal Subjects.

Furthermore, there are significant differences between left-peripheral and right-peripheral contexts, namely the impossibility of occurrence of negative quantifiers in the left-periphery, the licensing of variables by the left periphery, and the fact that a Bare Noun does not occur in the right-periphery.

Following Reinhart (1981), for English; Duarte (1987, 1996, 2013), for EP; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007), for Italian and German; Brunetti (2009), for Italian, the authors assume that the left-periphery may code both given and new information whereas the right-periphery only codes given information. They also adopt De Cat's (2002, 2007) analysis for French which considers that contrast or emphatic values are licensed in the left-periphery. Duarte (2013) has also shown for EP that material in the right periphery is a definite expression with a given status throughout discourse.

One crucial piece of information is that children do not have comprehension issues in what right-peripheral Subjects are concerned, which points out to a more simple syntactic analysis of right-peripheral Subjects, contrary to remnant movement to the left. The fact that a wh-question may precede the right-peripheral DP is also a problem for a remnant movement analysis, as it implies a more complex derivation which is odd again considering that child understand and produce such syntactic contexts.

In what direct merge is concerned, the main difficulty has to do with Principle C, as already referred: post-verbal Subjects and right-peripheral ones cannot be in the same structural position otherwise a right-peripheral pronoun would also be ungrammatical.

Thus, Duarte, Santos & Abalada (2015) suggest that right-peripheral structures are derived from a bi-clausal structure in which part of the second CP undergoes ellipsis

after the DP has moved to the left (Spec, CP2). CP2 was then previously merged to a parallel position to CP1 and, PF will later erase the redundant material of CP2. They basically use Ott & de Vries (2016) analysis which is as in (88), (Duarte, Santos & Abalada, 2015, ex. (47)):

(88)

$$[_{CP1} \ldots \text{correlate} \ldots] \underbrace{[_{CP2} dXP \langle [\ldots t \ldots] \rangle]}_{\text{elliptical clause}}$$
$$\underbrace{\phantom{[_{CP1} \ldots \text{correlate} \ldots]}}_{\text{host clause}} \qquad\qquad (\langle \ldots \rangle = \text{PF-deletion})$$

According to this analysis, peripheral material is the remaining part of a parenthetic structure and the erased material can be recovered (following Marchant 2001, 2004), being licensed by the structural and semantic parallelism that exists in both CPs.

Though elegant, Duarte, Santos & Abalada (2015) analysis does not account for the unavailability of BNPs in the right-periphery. In fact, BNPs may also convey given information and, in that sense, they get an existential reading. The only probable reason is that there is no way to Head-govern or directly c-command the empty D, which is the primary condition for BNPs survival: having the empty D licensed and getting an existential reading. And if the right-peripheral DP moves to Spec, CP2, it will not move to a topic position either, because that would allow it to survive and get a non-existential reading. It is also a fact, though, that modified BNPs, with a sub-kind reading are acceptable:

(89)   Eles gostam de sardinhas, (os) gatos siameses/ gatos desses.
         They like sardines, (the) Siamese cats/ cats like those.
(90)   Eles gostaram das sardinhas, (os) *gatos siameses/ (os) gatos *da vizinha.
         They liked the sardines, (the) Siamese cats/ (the) neighbor's cats.

Contexts like (89) suggest that the modified BNP is in a topic position, i.e. in a higher position within CP2 and gets a non-existential reading. BNPs with existential readings like in (90) though are overruled because the empty D has to be licensed. There is no licensor in CP1 and the modifier is not able to do it either.

But why is it possible to have modified BNPs and not unmodified ones as Subjects in the right-periphery? Most probably because of their information status: BNPs are neither definite nor specific, so they do not fully recover previous information, they behave like indefinites in (91).

(91)   Eles gostaram das sardinhas, *uns gatos.

         They liked the sardines, some cats.

4.3.   CLLD or Topicalization?

The availability of Topicalization, LD and CLLD in EP dismisses most of the clear-cut distinctions made by Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) and Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010), which associate aboutness with LD and contrast with Topicalization in what English is concerned. The unrestrained possibility of CLLD in Italian in different subordinate clauses does not hold for EP (regardless of other discourse constraints), where there is preference for topicalization. Take Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) examples (9) and (10) (EP counterparts in italic):

(92)   a. L'unica persona che a Gianni, non gli ha mai fatto un favore (Cinque, 1990:58 (1b)

           the only person that to Gianni not to-him has ever done a favor

           *A única pessoa que ao Gianni, nunca (*lhe) fez um favor*

          the only person that to Gianni never (to-him) did a favor

         b. Non so proprio chi, questo libro, potrebbe recensirlo per domani

           I don't know who this book could review-it for tomorrow

           *Não sei realmente quem, estes livros, poderia rever/*revê-los para amanhã*

           'I really don't know who these books could review/review-them for tomorrow.'

(93)   a. Se gli esami finali non li superi, non otterrai il diploma

           if the final exams not them-pass.2SG. not obtain.FUT.2 SG the degree

           Se, os exames finais, não (?os) fizeres com aproveitamento, não obterás o diploma

           if the final exams not (them)-do.FUT.SUBJ.2SG. with success, not

obtain.FUT.2SG the degree

    b. Che questo problema gli studenti non l'abbiamo potuto risolvere, mi sembra impossible

that this problem the students not-it have.3PL can.PARTI solve to-me seems impossible

Que, este problema, os estudantes não (o) tenham conseguido resolver, parece-me impossível.

that this problem the students not(-it) have.3PL can.PARTI solve seems to-me impossible

    c. È strano che questo problema gli studenti non l'abbiamo potuto risolvere

it's strange that this problem the students not it-have.3PL can.PARTI solve

É estranho que, este problema, os estudantes não (o) tenham conseguido resolver

it's strange that this problem the students not it-have. PRES SUBJ.3 PL can.PARTI solve

Topicalization is the construction in which ´Subject' BNPs are expected to occur, CLLD being, obviously, completed overruled: Subjects are not replicated by clitic pronouns.

4.3.1.   CLLD versus Topicalization: adverbial clauses, embedded clauses and interpretation

The issues concerning non-root clauses, namely the differences between 'central' and 'peripheral clauses' (Haegaman: 2002) and root-like clauses (namely, belief-clauses (Bianchi & Frascarelli: 2010)) do straightforwardly explain the behavior of Subject BNPs in EP in some contexts. Others however are less clear.

Bianchi and Frascarelli (2009) claim that topics in central adverbial clauses (those which, according to Haegeman (2002: 61), 'structure the event expressed in the associated clause'), though not possible in English, are common in Italian, since, in the latter language CLLD is available.

Haegeman (2002) uses Rizzi (1997) analysis of the left-periphery to state that Force is indispensable for topics in English and central adverbial clauses lack that position.

Peripheral adverbial clauses, those which 'express propositions that are to be processed as part of the discourse background for the proposition expressed in the associated clause' (Haegeman 2002:61), will behave as root-clauses.

Bianchi and Frascarelli (2009), in spite of acknowledging the fact that it is not clear why CLLD may dispense with Force or that either Fin and Force may apparently be a position for CLLD topics in Italian, gather evidence in the Frascarelli & Hinterholzl (2007) corpus to prove that only given (familiar) topics are common in central adverbial sentences in Italian, contrastive Topics being much odder (aboutness topics are altogether ruled out). The unavailability of CLLD in English and the fact that this language makes use of other structures to express givenness explain the differences between the two languages.

In the previous section, it was shown that EP does not always resort to CLLD and may prefer topicalization. In what BNPs are concerned, CLLD is not available, so topicalization is the only apparent solution for their survival in non-root clauses:

(94)   Algo não está bem quando cães preferem vegetais a carne.
        'Something is not right when dogs prefer vegetables to meat.'

(95)   Se dinossauros estão extintos, os grandes lagartos estão bem vivos.
        'If dinosaurs are extinct, big lizards are still very much alive.'

(96)   Ainda que gatos gostem de beber leite, preferem comer carne.
        'Though cats like drinking milk, they prefer eating meat.'

(97)   Gatos adoram peixe, enquanto cães preferem carne.
        'Cats love fish, while dogs prefer meat.'

Examples (94)-(95) show that BNPs survive in central adverbial sentences and (96)-(97) that they can also occur in peripheral adverbial sentences. Notice that (97) is very close to a coordination construction: Cats love fish and dogs prefer meat.

Are these, really instances of topicalization?

The order of clauses is not irrelevant: BNPs are expected to obey Principle C of Binding Theory and be free, so if a co-indexed pronoun or *pro* was in the associated clause which precede the BNP, the sentence would be ruled out, i.e. if in (96) the associated clause was to precede the adverbial one, no co-indexing between *pro* and the BNP would be possible.

In what concerns the different properties of central and peripheral adverbial sentences, Haegeman (2002) lists some conjunctions (like 'while', 'as', 'because', 'so that' and 'if') that may head both central and peripheral adverbial clauses, those which can only head central adverbial clauses ('before', 'after', 'until') and those which can only head peripheral adverbial clauses ('whereas', 'although', 'given that'). She does not go into the nature of conjunctions and all the issues concerning the position in the left periphery of each of these clauses depends on the degree of syntactic and semantic dependence on the associated clause.

It is not without a considerable degree of uncertainty that I can establish a correspondence between English conjunctions and EP ones without having compared each for their properties, however some do behave quite similarly and those are the ones used here.

According to Haegeman (2002), the possibility of coordinating adverbial clauses, the existence of temporal subordination of the adverbial clause, adjunct scope over the clause, negation, focus, interrogative scope, prosody and orthography, VP-ellipsis and sloppy identity, allowing parasitic gaps are properties of central adverbial sentences.

On the other hand, properties such as containing expressions of epistemic modality, echoing a speaker (they encode a speech act), may include tags and rhetorical questions, may have imperative force are distinctive of peripheral adverbial clauses.

As expected, the ban on topics in English peripheral adverbial clauses is less strong than in central ones.

Though important to understand why topics are not free to occur in non-root sentences in English, the different properties of adverbial clauses are not decisive to EP BNP: if they are topics, they should get a non-existential reading.

The fact that in adverbial sentences BNPs seem to be existentially interpreted may be related to more than one reason:

First of all, BNPs are never Kinds, so, when they occur in space-time limited contexts they are preferably interpreted as a subset of all the existing members of a class (cf. Chierchia 1998: Da queste parti, ragazze in minigonna sono rare/ 'Girls in miniskirts are rare here').

Secondly, the 'givenness' feature implies an existence feature. The referent has been previously introduced or inferred.

Thirdly, it is possible that in some of the subordinated constructions, the BNP is not a topic, but rather a Subject. Some conjunctions may be governors. The acceptability of

some sentences may depend on the conjunction that, governing the empty D, allows the BNP to survive. In any case, it is also possible that some lexical feature of some conjunctions may be equivalent to verbs or prepositions as Head governors. As C heads they asymmetrically c-command the BNP in Spec, TP and assign it an existential reading.

In any case, all issues regarding subordination and EP BNPs will be further looked into.

Bianchi and Frascarelli (2009) notice that in the Italian corpus, contrastive topics are only marginally found and barely accepted by speakers in central adverbial clauses: central adverbial clauses lack illocutive force and given topics do not pertain to Common Ground Management. Again, the apparent possibility of occurrence of BNPs in both kinds of adverbial clauses – some seem more acceptable than others - does not allow us to draw any further conclusions.

In what 'almost-asserted clauses' are concerned, Bianchi and Frascarelli (2009:29) use the notion of 'quasi-subordinate clause' suggested by Dayal and Grimshaw (2009:2): 'a clause that participates dynamically in the discourse in the same way as a main clause'. This holds for 'belief-reports'. In this case, one expects that even aboutness topics can occur (in English, typically, we shall find a LD, but it can also occur in EP, as already noticed):

(98)   Acho que, vespas, mel, (elas) não produzem.
          'I think, wasps, honey, they don't make.'

Interesting enough, these occurrences legitimate the hypothesis that aboutness topics are indeed generated in the leftmost position in the periphery and are more loosely syntactically attached to the main clause. Different configurations may be proposed to these topics. The topic occurs in a paratactic head (Krifka, 2001) being the head, an implementation of a speech act conjunction (Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 69):

(99)   ΠP [Shift^0 [Shift^0 DP Bill$_k$[Π0 [AssertionPMary kissed him$_k$]]]]]

To overcome the difficulty of projecting paratactic heads within CPs, and according to Meinung (2004:76), Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010: 70-71 suggest that 'root-like embedded clauses move and adjoin to a position which is in the immediate scope of the main assertion operator, so as to be turned into speakers assertions'. This would explain that

in the occurrence of two quantifiers ('One compiler said/that, every one of these entries, he would thoroughly revise it') none has scope over the other, because they are both in parallel branches of the structure, Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010: 76, 79, ex. (44) and (51)):

One compiler said [that every one of these entries, we should thoroughly revise it].:

(100)   Speech ActP [SA^0 (assertion) SA' [CP_k One compiler said $_{tk}$ < [CP_k that every one of these entries]]]

In what topic/Subject BNPs in EP are concerned, either configuration would license their occurrence. The possibility of having Subject BNPs as aboutness topics in an LD construction with non-existential reading apparently proves that CP1 does not c-command CP2 as Bianchi and Frascarelli (2010) suggest.

Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) never refer to relative clauses. This is also a context of occurrence within an embedded clause. In what BNPs are concerned, when acceptable, they get existential readings:

(101)   Lisboa, onde gaivotas convivem com pombos em harmonia, é uma
          cidade com imensas espécies de aves.
          'Lisbon, where seagulls live with pigeons in harmony, is a city with
          many species of birds.'
(102)   No dia em que gatos ladrarem, ele vai-te devolver o dinheiro.
          the day in which cats bark FUT SUBJ, he will give back CL 2nd SG the
          money
(103)   Carros que portugueses ?compram/comprem são baratos.
          cars that Portuguese people buy FUT IND/ FUT SUBJ buy are cheap.

Sentences with the relative pronoun 'que' (that) and the indicative mood, like in (103) are always more degraded. This seems to point out to a mechanism of head government present when relative words like 'onde/where' (101) or the relative pronoun 'que' (that) is preceded by a preposition (102). They asymmetrically c-command the BNP and may be considered Head governors.

If we take belief-reports to have a different configuration, as previously claimed, (104) with non-existential reading would be predictable (notice, however that an LD construction is possible, cf. (105)):

(104)   Creio que dinossauros estão extintos.
         I believe that dinosaurs are extinct
         'I believe dinosaurs to be extinct.'

(105)   Dinossauros, creio que eles estão extintos.
         dinosaurs, believe 1st SG that they are extinct
         'Dinosaurs, I believe they are extinct.'

I will return to these contexts.

4.4. Parallelism and non-existential readings

A topic/Subject BNP with a non-existential reading with transitive verbs requires the Object to also be a BNP:

(106)   Gatos comem peixe.
         'Cats eat fish.'

(107)   ??Gatos comem o peixe.
         'Cats eat the fish.'

The latter example is only grammatical in a descriptive context, i.e. in a discourse situation where other elements are added as in a list.
This parallel effect implies that the structure is required to be as simple as possible but also that the contrast feature may also apply to the Object:

(108)   Gatos comem peixe, não carne, leões comem carne, não peixe.
         'Cats eat fish, not meat, lions eat meat, not fish.'

Thus, characterizing sentences with topic/Subject BNPs may imply that the Object will also get a contrast reading, i.e. as a focus.
Notice that there is no requirement for Subjects to be BNPs when Objects are:

(109)   Os políticos fazem grandes obras.

          the politicians do great works

          'Politicians do great works.'

(110)   As grandes obras criam grandes mitos.

          the great works create great myths

          'Great works create great myths.'

               vs.

(111)   ?Políticos fazem as grandes obras.

          'Politicians do the great works.'

(112)   ?Grandes obras criam os grandes mitos.

          'Great works create the great myths.'

What is here called parallelism may indeed be a sort of requirement for proverbial or law like sentences. An Object BNP (along with the Subject BNP) may trigger a generic reading of the sentence:

(113)   Vegetarianos comem os legumes. (BNP existential reading – in a

          descriptive context)

          'Vegetarians eat the vegetables.'

                    vs.

(114)   Vegetarianos comem legumes. (Subject BNP non-existential reading –

          contrast reading in marked topic construction)

          'Vegetarians eat vegetables.'

In these cases it is easier to accept the (semantic) incorporation analysis suggested by Delfitto (2002). The predicate is an activity: meat eating, books reading, etc.. BNPs are then topics to which a property is assigned through a predication, and that property is conveyed by the verb and the Object together. That does not prevent the count BNP to be plural or be perceived as a sort of mass noun.

I believe this is what happens in Brazilian Portuguese in sentences like (115), Munn & Schmitt (2000), example 7(b), here repeated:

:

(115)   Criança lê revistinha.

child reads magazine

'Children read magazines.'/ 'A child reads magazines.'

(116)   Adolescente consome computador.

teenager consumes computer

'Teenagers consume computers.' / 'A teenager consumes computers.'

Sentence (116) has a (marked) topic-comment relation. It is not a usual sentence in EP, but, in the proper context, i.e. in a conversation about computers and teenagers, it would be metaphorically acceptable.

In these contexts, as it was already shown, Bare Singulars can occur as prototypes (cf. Lopes, 1992). If one claims that the parallelism requirement is applied as a formal rule, the Bare Object will show no marks of Number, or be considered a mass noun. The incorporation of the BNP transforms the whole predicate into an activity:

(117)   Cão esfomeado até come osso, se preciso for.

dog starving even eats bone, if need be SUBJ FUT

'A starving dog will even eat bones, if need be.'

The dog is pictured as a possible bone eater. Even if the plural Object is more natural, the example with the singular is not odd.

It is also possible to have clear transformation of a count noun into a mass noun in contexts such as (118):

(118)   Quando cheguei à praia, estava cheia: era criança por todo o lado.

when I arrived at the beach, it was full: was child everywhere

'When I arrived at the beach, it was full: children were everywhere.'

Perhaps this strategy is more common in Brazilian Portuguese than it is in EP. A parallelism requirement may also apply in the European variant. Examples where there is no parallelism, such as (119)-(120), are not mentioned in the literature on Brazilian Portuguese:

(119)   Criança lê revistinhas.

child reads magazines

'Children/ A child reads magazines.'

(120)   Crianças lêem revistinha.

          children read magazine

          'Children read magazines/ a magazine.'

In the last example, the Bare Singular would keep the activity meaning. It could get a distributive reading, as in a situation where there are several children in a room, each reading his/her own magazine. This could be a possibility if both the Subject and the Objects were Bare Plurals in a sentence describing a similar situation.

So, the parameters, in a loose sense, (±plural Subject, ±plural Object/mass Object) all apply, preferably, in proverbial-like contexts with a parallelism requirement.

4.5. Summarizing topic/Subject BNPs – the 'generic' reading

BNPs are allowed in preverbal positions getting a non-existential reading if they are Subjects of habitual predicates when they are marked topics. In these cases, they may be allowed to raise to a CP position for interpretation/discourse reasons.

The TopP which is their landing site provides an 'aboutness' feature, normally associated to a non-specific feature of the BNP. Whenever there is no other phrase being marked with contrast, the BNP is contrastive. Contrast may improve utterances with Bare Singulars and with event predicates. The aboutness/contrast feature dispenses with any lexical content for the legitimization of the empty D.

Furthermore, since these topics are not arguments (the argument being an intermediate link in the A'-chain headed by the topic), they do not obey the Head government requirement. The empty position in Spec, TP is A'-linked to the BNP in Spec, Top. The BNP first moves to Spec, TP in order to satisfy the EPP and check Agreement features with the verb.

Arguably, BNPs are all generated within VP and they are always generalized quantifiers (in the sense of Delfitto, 2002).

In English, the Subject position cannot be empty as a requirement of EPP, in Italian or Spanish, even in contrastive contexts, the Topicalization process has other properties. It is what is generally called a contrast focalization which does not imply predication contrasts.

The configuration for EP would be the following for root sentences:

(121) $[_{TopP}$ [contrast/aboutnes] $BNP_{i[unspecific]}$ $[_{TP}$ t_i V_j $[_{vP}$ [habitual/gnomic] t_j…

When there is an Object, though not a generalized constraint, it is preferably a BNP too.

Aboutness can also be the BNP feature, but, as shown, this is only clear either in an LD construction, in the presence of a focus marker or a wh-constituent.

In the absence of one of the features required, the sentence will be overruled by discourse reasons: BNPs may raise to CP when they occur as apparent Subjects of non-event predicates escaping the government requirement and, by their non-specificity match an aboutness or contrast feature within a left-peripheral position.

To which position do BNPs move? Arguably to Spec, Fin, like in Italian.

However, according to Rizzi (1997), in 'belief reports' (such as (98) above, 'Acho que, vespas, mel, (elas) não produzem.' I think, wasps, honey, (they) don't make.') topics follow the complementizer in Italian. But Rizzi does not suggest different discourse purpose types of topics (unlike Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007 and Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010). So, he claims that C is in Force and a topic DP is in Spec, TopP. Spec, FinP is not considered by him to be a target for movement (or merge) for topics.

5. Existential readings of preverbal Subject BNPs. Head government and discourse requirements

5.1. Subordination: syntactic contexts and discourse requirements

Exploring the issues on disjoint Subjects in subordinate subjunctive clauses, Kempchinksy (2009), mainly from Spanish data, considers three types of predicates: desiderative and directive (e.g. 'querer' – to want), implicative/causative (e.g. 'forçar' – to force) and factive/emotive predicates (e.g. 'lamentar' – regret). The author follows Portner (2005) analysis on imperatives. Thus, while simple imperatives denote a property to be added to the addressee TO-DO list, complements of desideratives denote events or states of affairs which do not obtain in the actual world W, in the moment of speaking S. These represent possibilities on the TO-DO list of the referent of the matrix Subject.

Kempchinsky (2009) is mainly concerned with structures with disjunctive Subjects, i.e. in which the Subject of the matrix cannot be co-referent to the one of subordinate clause. In order to look for an explanation to the constraints on the occurrence of conjoint reference she also looks into the semantic value of the subjunctive form and to Modality.

Thus, the author follows Quer (1998) stating that the subjunctive mood signals a shift in the model of evaluation of the truth of the proposition. Truth is relativized to models within a context and to individuals. In embedded situations, the individual anchor is the speaker and the relevant model is the epistemic model of the speaker and the world in which the proposition is assigned a truth value is the world of reality according to the speaker (W_R (speaker)). In the case of intensional predicates which typically select for subjunctive complements introduce a set of future worlds which are anchored to the matrix Subject.

Along with Bianchi (2001), Kempchinsky (2009) uses the concept of external/internal logophoric center which mainly distinguish situations in which the cognitive state is the common ground shared by the participants in the discourse from those which establish a subordinate cognitive state which corresponds to the perspective of the internal Subject. The internal logophoric center introduces a new model of evaluation for the subordinate proposition, a model where there is an alternative world or a set of possible worlds. The absence of a Modal element turns the so-called W(orld) argument a default value: the actual world.

The structure proposed by Kempchinsky (2009) includes, in a split-CP, a Force and a Fin Projection along with a Mood Projection (higher than FinP).

This structure along with the need to check features such as (un)interpretable W mainly serves the purpose of describing the constraints on co-referent Subjects and contexts where these constraints do not hold.

In what BNPs are concerned, the co-occurrence with subjunctive forms and modal verbs is from the start one of the main observations of this research. It is the unspecific feature of these DPs regardless of their readings that matches the setting of a possible world or set of possible worlds.

(122)   Quero que médicos (não enfermeiros) se ocupem dos idosos.

1SG want that doctors REFL (NEG nurses) occupy PRES SUBJ of the elderly

'I want doctors (not nurses) to take care of the elderly.'

(123)   Mandou que soldados invadissem o forte.

    3SG Ordered that soldiers invade PAST SUBJ the fort

    'He ordered soldiers to invade the fort.'

(124)   Lamentas que flores tenham pólen (e te causem alergias).

    2SG flowers have SUBJ have pollen (and CL you 3PL cause allergies)

    'You regret that flowers have pollen (and cause you allergic reactions).'

Only (124), as expected, may assign a non-existential reading to the BNP. In (122) and (123) we could even have a contrast, like 'not nurses', 'not volunteers among the populace' but that possibility would not change the BNPs readings. In fact, a wish or an order cannot turn the proposition expressed by the subordinate into a generic sentence. But a factive/emotive predicate basically expresses the speaker's opinion of the World such as he believes it to be or as a response to the addressee's assertion. Its evaluative force prevails over the subordinate. The subjunctive form is lexically selected by the matrix verb (Kempchinsky, 1999: 1807):

«I suggest a similar [the result of grammaticalization of the default modal base for the propositional evaluation of these complements as W(Su)] grammaticalization for subjunctive complements to factive-emotive predicates in non-alternating dialects, where W(Su) as the value for the W feature in Force can be informally interpreted as ''the set of propositions which are true in the actual world incorporated into the subject's understanding of the actual world''. As complements to factive predicates, these propositions are evaluated in WR; as complements to emotive predicates, these propositions are evaluated in W(Su), which is identical to WR.»

The fact that, according to the author, these subjunctive forms do not have uninterpretable W features allows them to behave like desideratives or causatives in what disjoint reference is concerned. This analysis does not have immediate further implications to BNPs occurrences. It is probable that the BNP moves to Spec, MoodP, but, in order to get a non-existential reading, the empty D must be invisible to c-command from lexical material in the matrix sentence, i.e. either the configuration is similar to what Bianchi & Frascarelli (2010) suggest to 'belief reports' (i. e. epistemic verbs) or BNPs readings should be existential.

With epistemic predicates ('belief reports'), the assertion depends on the speaker's point of view and even the indicative is interpreted according to the semantic value of the predicate. In an informal way, the speaker asserts the knowledge s/he has of the world. The subordinate indicative depends on the way his/her assertion is evaluated considering the actual world.

(125) Acho que dinossauros estão extintos, (tanto quanto eu sei…/que eu saiba…)

I think dinosaurs are extinct (as far as I know/ that I know PRES SUBJ know of)

So, though modality may favor the presence of Subject BNPs, the point is that, in any context, it is the perspective of the speaker that is under evaluation. The epistemic value of the predicate is common to non-existential BNPs and proverbial Bare Singulars (cf. Lopes, 1992). The difference is that with BNPs the assertion is often more likely 'probable' than 'necessary'.

Again, these issues are connected with discourse and the vagueness effect brought by the occurrence of the BNP calls for the evaluation of the participants in the situation. It is a Question Under Discussion (in Büring, 2003 terms).

This is also what happens with BNPs within subjunctive relative clauses: they point out to possible worlds contrary to indicative clauses and they are much more acceptable having a preverbal Subject BNP as in (103), here repeated:

(126) Carros que os portugueses ?compram/comprem são baratos.

cars the Portuguese buy IND/ buy SUBJ are cheap

The presence of a subjunctive form changes the reading of a Kind-level, an Individual-level predicate or a characterizing sentence from an assertion to a probability/possibility.

This also holds in what adverbial sentences are concerned. The unspecific BNP referent is being questioned in the Common Ground Management, both in indicative and in subjunctive sentences:

(127)	Se dinossauros estiverem/estão extintos (como dizes), então dificilmente

saberemos tudo sobre eles.

if dinosaurs are extinct FUT SUBJ/ PRES IND (as you say), then we will hardly

know everything about them.

(128)	Porque cães comem carne, como sabes, eu gasto muito dinheiro no talho

em compras para o meu cão.

'Because dogs eat meat, as you know, I spent lots of money at the butcher's in

stuff for my dog.'

The general reading of preverbal Subject BNPs in non-root sentences is existential. I assume that they are under a head governor (a conjunction, an adverb or a pronoun) and they are introduced as instances of a higher discourse topic, i.e. they occur as descriptive (existential) elements of a previously information, stated or inferred.

In the case of coordination and of some cases of subordinate clauses, the BNP, in the right semantic context, still gets a preferable non-existential reading. The non-existential reading is only available in non-c-commanded positions, i.e. in marked topic positions. Thus, any configuration where the BNP is c-commanded will imply its existential reading. I then assume that it cannot have a head governor and the CP2 in which it occurs is merged in adjacency to a CP1 in a higher position than its potential governor (a conjunction with lexical content). In what discourse is concerned, BNPs are not the most relevant piece of information and these contexts are closely related to more loosen syntactic ones: that is the case of descriptions.

5.2. Descriptions and 'scripts'

The survival of BNPs in descriptive contexts seems quite close to what happens with coordination and with modification by some types of adverbial clauses:

(129)	Ouviu-se um estrondo. (E) pássaros voaram.

'There was a bang. (And) birds flew.'

(130)	Quando se ouviu o estrondo, pássaros voaram.

'When the bang was heard, birds flew.'

If the examples were of 'overt' coordination or subordination, the BNPs would also be grammatical. The meaning of the sentence, with a BNP in a prominent position is clear: in a succession of events/states, the Subject is taken to be more salient than the event/state. Speakers do not take AvoidF (Schwarzchild, 1999) into account, because these BNPs are not given information, they instantiate previous information but they do not exactly recover it.

However, in these contexts, BNPs are normally interpreted existentially.

Sentences are always interpreted as a sort of consequence or an amplification of the event/state previously described:

(131)   Todos estavam contentes. Crianças riam. Adultos dançavam.

         everyone was happy. children laughed. grown-ups danced.

         'Everyone was happy. There were children laughing. There were grown-ups dancing.'

(132)   Tudo estava bem/??Todos estavam contentes. Riam crianças. Dançavam adultos.

         everything was well/ everyone was happy. laughed children. danced grown-ups

         'Everything was well/ Everyone was happy. Children laughed. Grown-ups danced.'

In (132) the preverbal Subject BNP is odd if the introductory sentence, the discourse topic, refers to people, but all the subsequent sentences are topic-less, i.e. at least one of the following up sentences has a post-verbal Subject, they are thetic judgements.

Two properties of these constructions are the similarity with coordination and the prominence of the Subject over the event/state.

It is acknowledged that in 'accumulation' readings, such as with coordinated Bare Singulars, it is possible to have them as Subjects with existential meaning.

(133)   Pai e filho caminharam ao longo da praia.

         'Father and son walked along the beach.'

(134)   Pai(s) e filho(s) adoram-se.

'Parents/Father(s) and son(s) love each other.'

It is interesting to notice that in (133), the specific reading of the BNP is a puzzle: Bare Singulars do not refer the same way BNPs do and so their readings may vary, i.e. contrary to BNPs, they are not always unspecific. The responsible for this is the absence of a [+number] feature, which also conveys the possibility of reference to a single individual, contrary to BNPs, which can only consider the individual in terms of its membership in a set.

In (134), the plural option may be interpreted generically, i.e. in a Topicalization configuration. Its existential reading will depend upon the context and the aspectual features of the verb – with an event/non-habitual feature, the BNP will get an existential reading, but hardly in an 'out of the blue' context. Again, the existential reading will depend upon a context, a descriptive one.

BNPs can survive with habitual predicates in enumerations:

(135)   Pais saem para o trabalho, filhos vão para a escola, avós apostam em
          viver mais tranquilamente.
          'Parents leave to work, children go to school, grand-parents are engaged
          in living more quietly.'

One of the requirements for these contexts is lexical: BNPs have lexical connections (in the example, family relationships) which allow for an inference: they are part of a unit. But the [habitual] feature is not enough for BNPs to get non-existential readings. Habitual features may apply to an individual/ to individuals:

(136)   A Maria e o Jorge saem para o trabalho, o João vai para a escola e a
          Amália e o Aníbal apostam em viver mais tranquilamente.
          'Maria and Jorge leave to work, João goes to school and Amália e Aníbal
          are engaged in living more quietly.'

In these contexts, BNPs get an existential reading even in the presence of the present tense. In the case of example (135), BNPs can seem to be specific, if it is a situation which is well described, the life of a particular family, for instance. The whole situation

would be perfectly natural if a sentence such as 'In that family everyone has his daily routine' would either precede or succeed the sequence.

If there is an event/non-habitual feature in the present tense (descriptive present, but also narrative present) which is common in descriptions, the generic reading is altogether banned.

Whenever there is a context where the BNP gets a non-existential reading, it is quite plausible that it is a proverbial sentence (cf. Lopes, 1992), a sort of summarizing topic:

(137) A senhora dava aulas de manhã, atendia alunos à hora de almoço, reunia com a comissão às 16h e nunca ia para casa antes das 20. Professores têm uma vida difícil.
'The lady taught classes in the morning, met students at lunch time, had committee meetings by 4 o'clock and never went home before 8 p.m.. Teachers lead difficult lives.'

BNPs survive in these contexts as well as in those where they seem coordinated to expand a discourse topic. Whenever they occur in sentences which do not enable them to get non-existential readings, i.e. with event/ non-habitual/non-gnomic predicates, we cannot say then that they are marked topics:

(138) O meteorito embate na Terra. A superfície treme e uma bola de fogo alastra ao longo das florestas e das planícies. Os seres vivos quase desaparecem. ?Dinossauros extinguem-se. (#mas mamíferos, não)
'The meteorite hits the Earth. The surface shakes and a ball of fire spreads through forests and planes. Living beings almost disappear. Dinosaurs become extinct. (Mammals do not)'

The discourse requirement (descriptive expansion of a topic) changes the aspectual feature of the present tense: The last sentence has a Kind level predicate which does not quite get a generic reading, because the verb actually describes an event (it is happening now).

So, if the analysis is correct, the apparent generic meaning of BNPs in sentences within descriptive contexts corresponds to what is expected. If the aspect feature of the

predicate allows it, they will survive, and be interpreted as marked topics which will be subsequently developed or previously described as long as they are interpreted as a summing up sentence, like some proverbs. If not, they get an existential reading and survive as members of an enumeration, as an expansion of a given discourse topic, but also an introduction or a closing up summary for a discourse unit.

In short, the cumulative contexts are able to legitimate BNPs but they will favor existential readings. In order to get a non-existential reading in these cumulative contexts, one should have to consider a list of properties, such as in (139) in which 'então' recovers previous discourse information:

(139)   Então, cães comem carne, gatos bebem leite, cavalos puxam carroças. É isto?

'So, dogs eat meat, cats drink milk, horses pull carts. Is that it?'

These however are not descriptive contexts. Descriptive contexts are sequences of events/states, typically within some discourse unit built on paratactic constructions which are related lexically (such as (135), where Family is the key DP and 'has a daily routine'). The sentences with preverbal Subject BNPs are subsets of a larger pre-established (given) set.

The present tense, in these contexts has a deictic value either being anchored in a temporal adverb or by expressing (at least partially) an overlap between the interval of the enunciation and the moment described (cf. Lopes, 1992: 106).

The difference between them and the non-existential readings of BNPs with the present tense is that «when a sentence A, with a verb in the present with a gnomically interpretation is true in a certain time interval I, then it is true in all sub-intervals de I e $I_0 \in$ I, its boundaries not being established.», (Lopes, 1992: 107, my translation).

We can consider, as Lopes (1992) did for proverbial texts, that these 'descriptive contexts can be better understood if we consider 'frame representations' or 'scripts'.

Fillmore (1985:232-233) claims that "In addition to seeing frames as organizers of experience and tools for understanding, we must also see frames as tools for the description and explanation of lexical and grammatical meaning (...) As an account of the larger understanding process, claims about the importance of knowledge structures

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can hardly be controversial. What is controversial, however, is the suggestion that such knowledge belongs in linguistic description. In frame semantics it is held to be necessary to give an account of such knowledge in describing the semantic contribution of individual lexical items and grammatical constructions and in explaining the process of constructing the interpretation of a text out of the interpretation of its pieces".

Speakers store information that allows them to make pertinent contextual inferences.

Abbot, Black &Smith (1985), following Schank and Abelson (1977:181), describe a type of contexts similar to these descriptions and call them scripts. A 'script' «is an organization of information that allows access of relevant information during reading while ignoring irrelevant information. Scripts are intended to represent knowledge about events so well practiced in everyday life that their performance is stereotyped.».

Scripts are organized hierarchically and the time sequence in which they occur also plays an important role in the way they are organized.

The authors distinguish, in the hierarchy script headers, scene headers and scene actions and, according to them people can infer higher labels from the information in lower ones but not the opposite. The connection between nodes in a script is not taxonomic but partonomic, i.e. each scene action is a part of a scene header which in turn is a part of a script header. Theirs is an experimental work which tests the ability of readers to store different information in a story. And their conclusions allow us to extend their observations to the inferred information (in the sense of Johnson-Laird, 2013): people make deductions or inductions (sometimes abductions) from premises and that is what happens to the descriptive contexts where preverbal Subject BNPs occur.

Thus, inferences can be of two sorts: a deduction, when one reaches a conclusion that refers to the same possibilities all the premises do (or at least includes them all in what it refers to), or an induction, when one reaches a conclusion that refers to only some of the possibilities to which the premises refer, although it may add some new possibilities too.

A special case of induction is abduction, a shortcut to explain according to world's knowledge something which does a deduction seems unable to do (if a pilot falls from a plane without a parachute, he will die/ this pilot didn't. Deduction: he had a parachute. Abduction: e.g., perhaps the plane was on land (people take the first premise to happen linearly before the second) (Johnson-Laird, 2013).

As Abbot, Black & Smith (1985) claim, it is hard to deduce detail from a general label (deduction needs a systematic creation of models in the Johnson-Laird sense), because every different model should be carefully considered. On the other hand, to draw a conclusion from the observation of details (to induce) is easier and it is what people tend to do. The news, for instance, is an abstract script which is inferred from each piece of information we are given and BNPs are perfect to convey the opening titles and subtitles of this type of discourse. The inferred premise is 'I have some news from you about car accidents': 'Acidentes são cada vez mais frequentes' – 'Accidents are increasingly frequent'.

So, considering 'frame representations' or 'scripts' as means of storing and linking information in a hierarchy, BNPs accommodate either as introducing a discourse topic or expanding it. The reader or the addressee infers, according to stored knowledge what the relation between the sequences is. Lexical meanings are also triggered that way, i.e. metaphorical or metonymical meanings of lexical items are expectable or inferred in context.

This means that syntax allows BNPs to be Subjects under discourse requirements only because the sentences in which they occur are a part of a larger discourse topic. They are members of a set that includes different instances/elements which cannot be deduced from the higher node, they must be introduced and then checked for coherence. That is perhaps why when BNPs are non-existentially interpreted in these contexts they either introduce the script or summarize at the closing part of the speech as a comment.

6. A final issue: modification - syntax or information structure?

According to Italian authors (Chierchia 1998, Delfitto 2004), modified BNPs can be legitimate preverbal Subjects, at least with Individual phase predicates or in characterizing sentences. Delfitto (2002) claims that the syntactic configuration of restrictive relative clauses licenses the empty D and, for the matter, he uses Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (1995) analyses that seem to prove his claim. This analysis claims that a restrictive relative clause corresponds to a CP selected by a determiner. So, the

Object DP is successively raised to Spec, CP and the nominal complement of the relative determiner to Spec, DP in the following configuration:

(140)   [$_{DP}$ Det [$_{CP}$ [$_{DP}$ [$_{NP}$ N [$_{DP}$ t$_{NP}$]]$_i$ [$_{IP…}$ t$_i$]]]]

The question is which features trigger movement. According to Bianchi (1995), some of the nominal features realized in the determiner must be checked against the nominal features of some lexical category.

Delfitto (2002) adopts the idea that functional categories are extended projections of lexical categories (cf. van Riemsdijk, 1998 and Grimshaw, 1991) and claims determiners are projections of the category N. The N must then be in a position where D checks its features. The D will then share features like plural/mass with the N without need to resort to N-to-D raising.

The analysis seems to work well in what restrictive relative clauses are concerned. There is a theoretical issue, however: if the empty D checks its features against the features of the empty D in the relative clauses, which features are they?

In any case, Delfitto (2002) adds the possibility that modification with prenominal adjectives have the same analysis, if the latter need also to check nominal features. He does not add any comment on other modifiers.

If I were to adopt this view, I should have to propose similar analyses to all the examples below:

(141)   Flores que tenham muitas cores são atraentes para os insetos
flowers that have SUBJ many colors are attractive to insects.

(142)   Flores, que dão cor aos jardins, atraem insetos.
flowers, which give color to gardens, are attractive to insects.

(143)   Flores coloridas são atraentes para os insetos.
flowers colored are attractive to insects.
'Colored flowers are attractive to insects.'

(144)   Verdes plantas atraem insetos.
'Green plants are attractive to insects.'

(145)   Flores com muitas cores são atraentes para os insetos.

'Flowers with many colors are attractive to insects.'

Notice that Delfitto (2002) only considers examples like (141), (144) and (145). In fact, the restrictive relative analysis should only apply to (141) and (143):

The question is that examples (141) - (145) have modified BNPs which allow for generic readings in EP, but (144) does not seem to be grammatical 'out of the blue'.

What must be said, then, is that the generic reading of the sentence is not compatible with the specific reading (cf. Demonte 1999) of the BNP provided by the pre-nominal adjective and that mismatch causes an interpretation flaw.

(146)   Lindas flores atraíram insetos.

'Beautiful flowers attracted insects.'

Even though (144) also needs a descriptive context, the unambiguous perfective (event/non-habitual) form of the verb turns the existential reading much more acceptable (again in a descriptive context).

The answers for the different behavior of adjectives must come from the configuration for each type of adjective. Do pre-nominal adjectives block the access to the D position, i.e. do not allow BNPs to be Subjects of Individual-level predicates which imply binding by an unselective quantifier? That would amount to say that only post-nominal adjectives may be analyzed in Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (1995) terms. But even relative clauses do not always clearly legitimate BNPs.

6.1. Modification – Relative Clauses
6.1.1.   Indicative

Non-restrictive relative clauses are allowed to modify preverbal Subject BNPs:

(147)   (Os) Cães, que são animais domésticos, detestam viver fechados.

'Dogs, which are domestic animals, hate leaving in closed spaces.'

a.   (Os) Políticos, que são pessoas que mudam muito de opinião, são muito selectivos no que diz respeito a restaurantes.

'Politicians, who are people that often change their opinion, are

very selective in what restaurants are concerned.'

In what modification by relative clauses is concerned, in EP, it improves the acceptability of BNPs and their readings mostly depend on the type of predicate of the root sentence.

The question is whether Tense/Aspect prevails over other mechanisms. The imperfect past allows for non-existential readings, the simples past do not:

(148)   ??Gatos que comem cereais comeram fequentemente fruta vermelha.
           (existential reading)
           cats that eat cereals often ate PERF red fruit

(149)   Gatos que comem cereais comiam frequentemente fruta vermelha.
           (habitual, BNP sub-kind reading)
           cats that eat cereals often ate IMP read fruit

Though the legitimation and consequent existential reading is acquired through the licensing of the empty D, its reading may apparently change if the habitual/gnomic habitual feature of the verb allows the BNP to raise further up to a topic position for discourse reasons. And in that case, modification is not syntactically needed.

6.1.2.   Subjunctive

The use of Subjunctive forms in the relative clause, stating a condition that also implies the use of imperfective forms in the root sentence, may force (as already shown) a non-existential reading. In these cases, following Lopes (1992), the relative clause classifies rather than states a condition, i.e. (150) is not 'if I pick roses, I'll put them in a vase', but rather establishes a sub-kind of roses (the ones I pick):

(150)   Rosas que eu colha ficam em jarras na sala. (any one that I pick)
           roses that I pick SUBJ stay in vases in the living room
           'Roses that I do pick are put in vases in the living room.'

(151)   Pessoas que gostem de cinema vão a todas as estreias.
           people that like SUBJ cinema go to all the premieres

'People who do like cinema go to all the premieres.'

(152)   Cães que venham da China precisam de uma autorização especial de
          entrada.

          dogs that come SUBJ from China need a special permit to enter the
          country

          'Dogs that do come from China need a special permit to enter the
          country.'

However, BNPs behave like Indefinites and singular BNs:

(153)   (Uma) rosa que eu colha fica numa jarra na sala.

          (a) rose that I pick SUBJ stays in a vase in the living room

          '(A) rose that I do pick is put in a vase in the living room.'

(154)   (Uma) pessoa que goste de cinema vai a todas as estreias.

          (a) person that likes SUBJ cinema goes to all the premieres

          '(A) person that does like cinema goes to all the premieres.'

(155)   (Um) cão que venha da China precisa de uma autorização especial de
          entrada.

          (a) dog that comes SUBJ from China needs a special permit to enter
          the country

          '(A) dog that does come from China needs a special permit to enter the
          country.

And like definite DPs, they are also able to refer to sub-kinds:

(156)   As rosas que eu colha ficam em jarras na sala.

          the roses that I pick SUBJ stay in vases in the living room

          'The Roses that I do pick are put in vases in the living room.'

(157)   As pessoas que gostem de cinema vão a todas as estreias.

          the people that like SUBJ cinema go to all the premieres

          'The people that do like cinema go to all the premieres.'

(158)   Os cães que venham da China precisam de uma autorização especial de
          entrada.

          the dogs that come SUBJ from China need a special permit to enter

the country

'The dogs that do come from China need a special permit to enter the country.'

The presence of the Subjunctive form may apparently facilitate a non-existential reading. Is it possible that the Subjunctive, having a modal force, binds the empty D? Or, by creating a sub-kind BNPs display the same properties as indefinites?

Modals, namely deontic, also allow BNPs to survive, but not always:

(159)   Fascistas deveriam estar extintos.
        'Fascists should be extinct.'
(160)   ??Pessoas/Vegetarianos deveriam comer comida saudável.
        'People/Vegetarians should eat healthy food.'
(161)   Pessoas obesas deveriam comer comida saudável.
        'Obese people should eat healthy food.'
(162)   ?Cães deveriam estar na sala.
        'Dogs should be in the living room. '
(163)   ?Bancos/Bancos destes deveriam ter costas.
        'Stools/Stools like these should have backs.'

Modals per se are not able to bind all BNPs with all kinds of predicates. In most cases, if they are law-like statements they imply a contrast or an aboutness feature.

In the case of a subjunctive relative clause, it refers to possible events/states and the vagueness effect matches more easily the features of the BNP, triggering a non-existential reading, or more precisely a sort of universal reading: all those possible referents in all those possible situations.

6.2. Modification - Adjectives

As for adjectives, it has already been stated that they are not all good candidates to the licensing of BNPs. Pre-nominal adjectives are not restrictive: they mainly facilitate existential readings of the BNPs (Cf. Demonte, 1999), but readings can change according to aktionsart:

(164)   Grandes figuras desempenharam papéis importantes nessa época. (existential reading)

'Great characters played important roles at the time.'

vs.

(165)   Grandes figuras desempenham papéis importantes. (non-existential reading)

'Great characters play important roles.'

Post-nominal Adjectives, on the other hand, may also allow for the two readings:

(166)   Pessoas importantes desempenharam papéis fundamentais no processo. (existential reading)

persons important played fundamental roles in the process

'Important people played fundamental roles in the process.'

vs.

(167)   Pessoas importantes desempenham papéis fundamentais. (non-existential reading)

persons important play fundamental roles

'Important people play fundamental roles.'

Considering that both event and non-event predications seem acceptable, the examples presented apparently prove that the existence of a (covert) Q- adverb by itself can bind the variable in the BNP and the presence of the adjective may be relevant if it licenses the empty D, according to Delfitto (2002). Then, pre-nominal adjectives are like any other modifier.

On the other hand, Kind-level predicates also allow modified BNPs as Subjects, even though there are constraints in their distribution:

(168)   Baleias grandes estão extintas.

whales big are extinct

'Big whales are extinct.'

(169)   ?Grandes baleias estão extintas.

'Big whales are extinct.'

The D position licenses the D position regardless of the adjective in (168) but in (169) the adjective assign the nominal expression a sub-kind reading and that may be a constraint if the modified BNP does not refer to an established or possible sub-kind.

However, if Delfitto (2002) analysis is right, that also happens with post-nominal Adjectives. However, it is the predicate that has a generic reading, not the Subject. The only way to explain the contrast between (168) and (169) should consider the possibility of analyzing the adjective and the BNP in (169) as a sort of cluster in a Head position blocking the possibility of licensing the empty D which is supposedly needed to legitimate the BNP.

Notice though that (168) is as grammatical as (169) or, as a matter of fact, as a sentence with the same BNP without modification, if the Subject is interpreted as a marked topic.

Adjectives may then facilitate existential readings of the BNP in the appropriate contexts depending on the type of adjective. However they are not indispensable.

Again, non-existential readings are not triggered by the adjective but, in these sentences, they result of discourse needs. Like in any other habitual context which may allow a non-existential reading, the modified BNP is a marked topic.

The case of pre-nominal adjectives which are seemingly better candidates to legitimate BNPs as Subjects of event/non-habitual predicates is perhaps evidence for Delfitto's theory, even though they are not restrictive modifiers:

(170)   Jovens atletas assistiram ao jogo.
         'Young athletes watched the game.'
(171)   Atletas jovens assistiram ao jogo.
         athletes young watched the game

In (170) or (171) the acceptability does not obtain from the adjective, but from the possibility of having the sentence in a descriptive context.

In sum, does the adjoined position of the adjective really have the possibility of licensing the empty D with an existential reading? Has the adjective the possibility of checking nominal features like restrictive relative clauses do as Delfitto (2002) claims? That would be expected, but the adjective does not play any part on the acceptability BNPs. BNPs either have existential readings in descriptive contexts or

non-existential readings when they are marked topics. In (172), the latter reading is obtained:

(172)   Grandes homens também fazem grandes asneiras.
          'Great Men also do great mischiefs.'

6.3. Differences between Adjectives and the licensing and legitimation of the empty D position

Adjectives are not altogether a uniform class (cf. Demonte (1999), Miguel (2004)). Post-nominal restrictive adjectives can be analyzed (not without controversy) as reduced relative clauses and, in some way, license and legitimize the empty D, as we have seen.

Adjectives in EP may have the following configurations: (173) being a post-nominal adjective, (174) a pre-nominal extensional adjective, (175) a pre-nominal intensional adjective, and (176) an ADJ_0 adjunct to N_0 (Miguel, 2004: 95, 97, 98). As Miguel (2004) claims (and I adopt here), (176) is selected by D (with a lexical content, presumably), which explains why examples like (177) are ungrammatical:

(173) $[_{DP} [D[_{NumP} [Num N_i] [_{NP} Adj [N[e]]_i….$
(174) $[_{DP} [D [_{NumP} Adj [_{NumP} Num N_i [_{NP} Adj [_{NP} [_{NP} N t_i…]]]]]]$
(175) $[_{DP} [D [_{AP} [A Adj [_{NumP} Num N_i [_{NP} [N [e]_i]]$
(176) $[_{DP} D [_{NP} N ADJ_i-N_j …]]]$

Adjectives as 'mero' or 'mísero' which are two of the few that cannot occur in post-verbal position, can hardly be acceptable with phase or non-phase Individual–level predicates (or almost barely acceptable in any context):

(177)   ??Meros soldados são altos.
          'Mere soldiers are tall.'
(178)   ??Meros conhecidos são (muitas vezes) simpáticos.'
          'Mere acquaintances are (often) nice.'

The lack of lexical content in D may straightforwardly overrule these adjectives in out-of-the-blue contexts. They are not, though, completely awkward in broader contexts.

As it was already shown, pre-nominal adjectives, whatever their nature is, tend to trigger existential readings of the BNP. This existential feature may also be circumvented by discourse. Regardless of being 'epistemic', 'intensional' or 'extensional', the readings they get are a result of the predication. In both (179) and (180) the modified BNPs do not survive solely on Q-adverbs, otherwise, how can (181), though metaphoric, be explained?

(179)   ?Grandes mamíferos são (sempre) imponentes.
         'Big mammals are (always) impressive.'
(180)   Supostos autores de crimes são (sempre) alvo de atenção.
         'Alleged criminals (always) get special attention.'
(181)   Presumíveis colaboradores estão em vias de extinção.
         'Presumable collaborators are almost extinct.'

Does the licensing of the empty D in sentences where there could be no unselective binding (namely Kind-level and Individual-level non-phase predicates) also happens? These adjectives, though, do not have the same possibility as relative clauses:

(182)   Cães que tenham sido/foram criados para andar ao colo são
         pequenos.
         dogs which have been/were bred to carry on your lap are small.

Nor do they behave like post-nominal adjectives:

(183)   Paredes brancas são bonitas.
         walls white are beautiful
         'White walls are beautiful.'

Pre-nominal adjectives may occur in perfective sentences in a much more natural way, as mentioned:

(184)　　　Jovens realizadores fizeram filmes magníficos.

　　　　　　'Young directors made magnificent movies.'

Pre-nominal adjectives do not improve the acceptability of BNPs with Stage-level locative predicates:

(185)　　　??Belas raparigas estiveram no terraço.

　　　　　　'Beautiful girls were on the roof top.'

Does the ban on pre-nominal Adjectives occurring with stative 'to be' ('estar') locatives suggest that the adjective blocks any means of licensing the empty D or this is only a semantic issue? According to Miguel (2004) adjectives are never in the D position. So, unless it could be stated that they license the empty D in the same way relative clauses do, like Delfitto (2002) claims, then the modifier analysis must be reviewed.

It is then the interaction between the DP and the predicate which allows or disallows the presence of a BNP as a preverbal Subject, according to discourse requirements.

(186)　　　Anda todo o mundo sem resposta: (velhos) políticos estão aborrecidos

　　　　　　uns com os outros, (novos) empresários não aparecem, os que

　　　　　　governam não entendem de nada.

　　　　　　'Everybody is without answers: (old) politicians are upset with each

　　　　　　other, (new) businessmen do not show up, those who rule know

　　　　　　nothing about the world.'

Thus, adjectives per se do not generally improve the acceptance of BNPs.
When they modify BNPs in contrast contexts, they are, according to their semantics an important part of that contrast. In a descriptive context, they are less relevant:

(187)　　　Paredes brancas sujam-se facilmente. (As de cores escuras, não./ Aliás,

　　　　　　tudo o que é branco se suja com facilidade.)

　　　　　　'White walls get easily dirty. (Those of darker colors don't./ In fact, all

　　　　　　that is white gets easily dirty.)'

(188)   Festa no terraço: belas raparigas falam com os namorados, crianças riem,

velhos amigos encontram-se, dançarinos trazem movimento à sala.

'Party at the roof top: beautiful girls talk to their sweethearts, children

laugh, old friends meet, dancers bring swing into the living room.'

The contrast on the property denoted by the adjective favors the idea that they are classifiers, they create sub-kinds.

In contrast contexts (like (187)) the property denoted by the adjective may be chosen to be further commented and not the BNP turning it salient in Conversation Management.

So, the preverbal position of the BNP is always motivated by discourse. Adjectives do not provide a generic reading for the BNP but they can confer the BNP a sub-kind reading. In any case, the apparent licensing of the empty D never occurs in 'out of the blue' contexts.

As for relative clauses, Delfitto (2002) analysis may be proven right, but if Krifka (2004), though not really exploring the issue, is not fully wrong, then prosody has a word to say on this matter (along the lines of works such as those of Frota & Vigário, 2001, on prosodic weight). Apparently heavier modifier phrases tend to improve the acceptability of BNPs:

(189)   Homens com cabelos enormes viviam nos vales perdidos.

'Men with long hair lived in the lost valleys.'

(190)   Homens que caçavam mamutes viviam nos vales perdidos.

'Men who hunted Mammoths lived in the lost valleys.'

(191)   ?Homens primitivos viviam nos vales perdidos.

'Primitive men lived in the lost valleys.'

(192)   ??Homens viviam nos vales perdidos.

'Men lived in the lost valleys.'

Though none of the examples would be acceptable out of a descriptive context, BNPs modified by adjectives and non-modified BNPs tend to be degraded.

There must be a formalization of these issues and, unless all modifiers could be described the way Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (1995) describe relative clauses, enabling

the licensing of the empty D, a purely syntactic hypothesis does not capture all that is at stake.

7. Summing up

BNPs in EP are DPs with a Number Projection. The Number Projection provides the NP the [+plural] feature it needs to be recognized as count or non-count, which means that mass nouns are so marked from the lexicon.

The D is the locus for specificity which, in EP, can only be checked by the insertion of a lexical determiner. However, in order for BNPs to survive, the empty D must be Head governed or asymmetrically c-commanded and identified by either a lexical category – a verb, a preposition, or a C lexical head. This mechanism assigns the BNP an existential reading.

Modification, especially by restrictive relative clauses, may also license BNPs assigning them an existential reading in Individual-level phase predications. However it is difficult to claim that all types of modification behave the same way and discourse requirements still need to be met.

The apparent generic reading of BNPs is acquired whenever they are allowed to raise to a left-periphery position thus escaping the c-command demand of argument positions and dispensing the licensing of the empty D.

Tense and Aspect features of the predicate behave differently towards the [-specific] feature of the BNP: the [+habitual/+gnomic] feature and the [- event] feature will allow the BNP to move further to a left-periphery position which will convey it a non-existential reading, while the [-habitual, +anterior or +posterior] aspect/tense features together with the [+event] feature allows the BNP to survive in a preverbal position if and only if it is head governed and the identification requirements are met.

In both situations described above, discourse dictates the motive for the survival of BNPs: the need to have the BNP as prominent information.

Finally, the special status of non-existential contexts, namely the case of characterizing sentences, often triggers a mechanism of parallelism between Subject and Object, being them both BNPs. That amounts to saying that the Subject BNP and the predicate form a semantic unit which must be triggered by the presence of a BNP in a preverbal position (the Object BNP never requires a Subject BNP).

Thus both nouns are read as unspecific and it is likely the verb is required to incorporate the Object obtaining an activity reading, describing a succession of events/states.

In short, semantic plurality is the key to explain BNPs' apparent generic reading. First, morphological number alone does not fully establish reference. Secondly, quantification over events may provide a general reference – in a series of events, x (x being objects of the same nature, taken individually, in a distributive reading) behaves (almost) always the same way. This confers the BNP a reading close to a Kind.

Even preverbal Subject BNPs existentially interpreted crucially rely on some quantification: a succession of events or a sum of connected information organized in a 'script'.

EP BNPs' properties correspond to the descriptions of Romance BNPs but BNPs survive in sentences according to what is specific of EP syntax-semantics-discourse requirements, namely the availability of Topicalization in this language.

The vague reference they are able to convey (which does never correspond to a Kind term behavior unlike definite DPs, cf. Oliveira & Cunha, 2003) allow BNPs when raised to a Top position, to get a reading close to generic. In this dissertation I thus chose to call it 'non-existential'. The exact (possible) projection(s) within the split CP (I prefer to merely suggest TopP) needs further research.

This chapter raises questions about four issues which also need further research.

The first one is the Subject/Object asymmetry. Issues concerning the occurrence of BNPs with light verbs, problems of contrast detected with Indirect Objects, mechanisms of incorporation were not deep looked into.

The relationship between Subject BNPs and Object BNPs (and Bare Singulars also) in the same sentence, the so-called parallelism cases, must be further analyzed – which features match and which positon(s) is (are) responsible for the demands of that matching? Is there an implication relation (if feature X in WP, then Y, or Z in KP)?

Parallelism is not apparently syntactically motivated, so which links must there be between Subject, Verb and Object and in which syntactic configuration are they? Do Subject and Object BNPs share the same properties? Can we accommodate here the case of Objects of dispositional state verbs (like 'detestar', to hate)?

The second one concerns issues on subordination and discourse, which are the most challenging ones.

Subordination and the issues raised by Kempchinksy (2009), namely the role of the Subjunctive, are also promising. She suggests a structure within CP in the matrix clause and in the subordinate. What must be the configuration in which MoodP and TP need to check common features? In languages such as EP, TP also includes Aspect. So, what is the necessary configuration in order for BNPs features to match aspect and mood features and get an existential reading? Or, does the checking of the uninterpretable W feature (which allows the speaker to read the sentence as referring to worlds different from the actual world) is the only device needed for the occurrence of a preverbal Subject BNP?

In any case, it can be claimed that there is no movement of the NP to a D position and that fact must be regarded as a constraint to further movement of the DP, which is syntactically allowed for interpretation reasons, i.e., syntax allows movement when semantic (pragmatic) features of the sentence match the non-specificity of the BNP.

The third one regards paratactic structures. Though subordination and topicalization are also discourse issues and so both are arguably encoded in the left-periphery of the sentence, parataxis needs also to be looked into. In which way, in any discourse context, do people infer information? Can we predict which kind of hierarchy allows for the occurrence of BNPs in a larger structure? Can this hierarchy be established only through memory (knowledge of the world and of recently acquired information) and would this explain, for instance, the News openings (not the titles, which are labels) with existential preverbal Subject BNPs?

The fourth and last one is modification. What will shed some light into the analysis is that some prepositioned modifiers (or complements) of the noun can have different roles in licensing the empty D, as is the case of adjectives.

It is not the semantic properties of the adjectives that are responsible for the grammaticality of preverbal Subject BNPs. It is perhaps their syntactic configurations, or more precisely, a similar syntactic property and semantic features. A thorough comparison between all noun modifiers and their properties will better describe what is syntactically at stake in the survival of preverbal Subject BNPs.

Prosody should not either be unconsidered: the 'weight' of the constituent often plays a role (as Krifka (2004) noticed):

(i)   (?)Pessoas tristes gostam de fado.
      people sad like fado
      'Sad people like fado.'

(ii) Pessoas que se sentem tristes gostam de fado.
      'People that feel sad like fado.'

(iii) Bananas para comer com pão ficam nestas cestas.
      'Bananas that one eats with bread are to be put in these baskets.'

Notice that some compound nouns (BNPs) are good candidates to being Subjects:

(iv) Tigres de dentes de sabre estão extintos.
      'Saber toothed tigers are extinct.'

(v)   Bolas de Berlim têm muito açúcar.
      ball of Berlin have much sugar
      'Doughnuts have much sugar.'

(vi) Papagaios de papel rasgam-se com facilidade.
      parrots of paper tear REFL with ease
      'Paper flying kites tear apart easily.'

A study in the interface prosody-syntax should also help to clear out the issues on prominence (perhaps along the line of Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007), namely in what topics are concerned. Is it structural or has prosodic weight got something to do with it?

Conclusions

The present dissertation deals with the nature and the licensing conditions of pre-verbal Subject BNPs in European Portuguese as well as with semantic properties requirements of the predicates with which they occur and the specific discursive contexts in which their occurrence is acceptable.

The properties of these structures are (mostly following Delfitto, 2002):

(1) Bare Plural Noun Phrases are sums of individuals that never have specific readings:

    (i)   Gatos (que venham da China) bebem leite de soja. (any cats)

           Cats (that come SUBJ PRES from China) drink soya milk

(2) Bare Singular Noun Phrases, lacking number information, are prototypes (Lopes, 1992). They mainly occur in modified (proverbial contexts) when they are assigned a distinctive property. They have a definite meaning (i.e. the previously mentioned dog and cat in the examples bellow) when they are coordinated.

    (i)   Palhaço que ria muito tem sucesso.

           Clown that laughs SUBJ PRES much has success

           'A Clown who laughs a lot is successful.'

    (ii)   Cão e gato comem carne.

           Dog and cat eat meat

           'The dog and the cat eat meat.'

(3) Bare Noun Phrases are Determiner Phrases, but N never raises to D and thus it is not able to check a person/reference/generic feature.

    (i)   (Os)?Cães estão extintos. (Kind-level predicate)

           'Dogs are extinct.'

(ii)   (Os)?Cães são inteligentes. (Individual-level phase predicate)

'Dogs are intelligent.'

(4) When the predicate selects a quantifier (overt or covert), an unselective binder, it can apparently bind the variable in the modified BNP. The reading obtained is about events, i.e. instances of what is denoted by the predicate, and not about the properties of the pre-verbal Subject BNP (a sum of each time small dogs bark to cats in (i)). The binder is not present in (ii):

(i)   Cães pequenos ladram (sempre) aos gatos.

Dogs small bark (always) at the cats.

'Small dogs always bark at cats.'

(ii)   ??Cães pequenos estão doentes. Dogs

small are (non-permanent) sick.

'Small dogs are sick.'

(5) The nature of the predicates with which the BNPs co-occur as pre-verbal Subjects allows them to behave as full DPs as long as the D position is otherwise licensed – especially through modification by relative restrictive clauses, and also by some adjectives, but not generally ((ii) has metaphorical interpretation).

(i)   Pessoas *(que fumam) estão em vias de extinção.

'People (who smoke) are almost extinct.'

(ii)   Pessoas *(simpáticas) estão em vias de extinção.

People (nice) are almost extinct

'Nice people are almost extinct.'

Notice that, according to Delfitto (2002), an unselective binder only binds the variable in D in sentences with Individual-level phase predicates if a modifier is present so that the D is licensed.

In EP, however, unmodified BNPs are accepted in these sentences with exactly the same (non-existential) reading, which suggests that another configuration is at stake. Furthermore, the unselective binder cannot account for contexts where BNPs occur with Kind-level sentences ((i) and (ii) above). The interpretation of non-modified preverbal

subject BNPs in Kind-, Individual- and characterizing sentences is thus very much the same.

Thus, suggesting that the same interpretation (a non-existential one) deriving from different syntactic mechanisms would be more complex and would go against economy principles.

The properties listed above correspond to BNPs behavior across Romance languages. The constraints however only hold in root sentences ('out-of-the-blue' sentences). Considering that the EP data apparently contradict some of these properties, we sketched the following condition:

Unmodified BNPs occur as pre-verbal Subjects in EP as long as they serve discourse purposes, according to the semantic features of the verb, namely the aspectual ones, and they are either syntactically licensed or moved to a position that dispenses with licensing.

Thus, unmodified BNPs may occur when raising from TP to a Top position, where their unspecific feature is checked against an aboutness/contrast feature (Reinhart, 1981, Büring, 1999). These contexts always imply that previous information is shared among participants in the Common Ground Management (in the sense used by Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010) and preferably entails a contrast. The predicate must have a +habitual/+gnomic feature. The preferred tense is the timeless Present (which confers a generic feature to the whole sentence).

    (i)   Dinossauros$_i$, [-$_i$] estão extintos (, mamíferos não).

               'Dinosaurs are extinct (, Mammals are not).'

If the predicate has a –habitual/-generic feature, non-modified Subject BNPs can raise to TP if there is a C projection (overt or covert) that licenses the empty D (cf. (i)). BNPs will get a salient status as an element in the description of a situation from which their interpretation cannot be detached (ii):

    (i)   O Alentejo é uma região onde planícies se estendem a perder de vista.

               'Alentejo is a region where planes sprawl endlessly.'

(ii)   Tudo estava calmo. [c [-] under-specified] De repente, cadeiras voaram pela sala.
         O truque era fabuloso.
         All was calm. Suddenly, [c [-] under-specified] chairs flew in the room. The trick
         was amazing.

The unspecific character of BNPs allows for the 'vague' reference which can accommodate the two readings (the existential and the non-existential).

Descriptive situations are compatible with all predicates in sequences (becoming instances of a higher discourse topic as in a script, in the sense of Abbot, Black &. Smith, 1985 or 'frame representations' in the sense of Fillmore, 1985). The present tense in these contexts gets a direct descriptive reading (as Lopes, 1992, suggests, contrary to a timeless present):

(i)   Tudo está aparentemente pacífico. Um meteoro choca com a Terra. (De
        repente,) Répteis estão extintos, mamíferos estão extintos, pássaros estão
        extintos, todos os animais estão extintos.
        'Everything is apparently peaceful. A meteor collides with Earth. Reptiles
        are extinct, Mammals are extinct, Birds are extinct, all animals are extinct.'

Paratactic sequences seemingly behave as coordinate sentences or adverbial subordinates which imply, in some contexts, consequence interpretations (if X and Y, therefore Z) and there is an elided ConjP (with the properties described by Colaço, 2005) or a CP which license the BNP.

For the native EP speakers that accept the possible topic reading with non-generic/non-habitual features, only Stage-level predicates locatives being completely overruled, BNPs can occur in the presence of a contrast interpretation:

(ii)   Cães uivaram, *(lobos não).
        Dogs howled, (wolves, not)
        'Dogs howled, (not wolves).'

I personally accept this contrast only in a descriptive context, since contrast here, out-of-the-blue, is one induction (one of many possible ones, in the sense of Johnson-Laird, 2013): some event caused some animals to howl. Whenever contrast is not clearly

available, speakers generally assign the BNP an existential interpretation. In any case, the simple past ('pretérito perfeito simples'), as in (ii), always assigns the BNP an existential reading.

In short, though the features of the verb (or of the whole predicate) are responsible for possible BNPs movement, their features never change. BNPs do not undergo type-shift (they do not change from an existential to a kind reading because of movement within the DP), and if in some cases they do not get an existential reading, they are never kind terms.

For interpretation reasons, a BNP moves to the left periphery where it may convey contrast/aboutness (with an apparently similar reading to definite generic DPs) or stays in Spec, TP, licensed by Head-government or asymmetric c-command by a lexical category getting an existential reading (as in subordination contexts, namely with subjunctive verb forms).

The occurrences in subjunctive subordinates anchor the assertion in the beliefs of the speaker and the unspecific feature of the BNP may have to match with a W feature (in Kempchinsky, 2009 sense) which is either a possible world or the actual world the way the speaker views it (namely in epistemic subordinates).

In descriptive contexts, the paratactic sequences where BNPs are part of an inferred or previously mentioned context (as in 'frames' or 'scripts' as described for proverbs by Lopes, 1992), the existential reading is motivated by hierarchy and quantification (accumulation of instances from a broader discourse topic).

It is far from being clear why parataxis apparently circumvents syntactic constraints (such as c-command and feature checking under an asymmetric c-command configuration) to serve discourse purposes. Context and pragmatics alone cannot altogether disregard syntactic requirements. There are semantic constraints on the readings these BNP are assigned. The sententious possible readings (and accordingly, non-existential readings) at the beginning or at the end of sequences follow the pattern of proverbs described by Lopes (1992: 340): they are evaluation comments which subsume the following/previous sequence.

In short, the answers to my research questions are the following.

A. With respect to the nature of BNPs,

    1. Do BNPs always display the same features and are their readings assigned by each syntactic-semantic context in which they occur?

BNPs are always unspecific regardless of their distribution. They do not pick any precise referent from the set they refer to. When modified, they get a sub-kind reading as singular indefinite DPs do. The [-specific] feature allows them to be underspecified for discourse purposes. When they are under V c-command, where they are always grammatical in EP, and they have always narrow scope (they never refer to specific individuals or sets, even in the case of dispositional state verbs, such as 'detestar' – to hate, cf. Oliveira, 2002).

    2. Are BNPs DPs projecting a NumP, and, crucially, which features are found in D?

Contrary to Bare Singulars, which are prototypes and occur preferably in proverb-like sentences, BNPs refer to pluralities and crucially depend on number. Evidence for this claim is that a Bare Singular cannot occur with K-level predicates contrary to a BNP. The need to project DP is motivated by BNPs lack of generic/definite behavior proper to definite generic DPs. The features in D head being definiteness, reference or genericity, which may be checked by definite determiners, straightforwardly predict that BNPs do not raise to D and so they keep their unspecific features, under a configuration as (i):

(i) $[_{DP} D_{[+person, +definite, +generic]} [_{NumP} Num N_{i[\pm count/+indefinite]} [_{NP} [N_i [\ldots$

If we consider that only DPs are arguments, and if BNPs were mere NPs, they could not be either Subjects or Objects. The asymmetry between Subject and Object positions does not follow from considering different structures to a BNP according to its distribution. Neither can we assume, for economy principles, that DP is not projected when it is not necessary. Contrary to predicate NPs, BNPs can be recovered by a pronominal anaphora with the same morphological features, i.e. BNPs denote referents not properties.

B. With respect to BNPs licensing conditions
    1. Are BNP occurrences subject to the same syntactic requirements as in other Romance languages?

In out-of-the-blue sentences, BNPs apparently behave like in Italian or Spanish (except in what dispositional state verbs are concerned). Syntactic requirements like the need for the empty D to be licensed under c-command by a verb or a preposition must be met.

Modification by a relative clause with I-level (non-permanent) predicates does improve the acceptability of BNPs as preverbal (existential) Subjects.

    2. Why does modification improve BNPs acceptance/grammaticality?

Modification in general does not improve the acceptability of pre-verbal Subject BNPs. As Delfitto (2002) claims, relative restrictive clauses with I-level non-permanent predicates do. In those contexts, an unselective quantifier binds the variable in the empty D and arguably the relative clause features license it. The BNP still gets an existential reading and the predication has an interpretation of quantification over events. However, relative clauses improve the acceptability of BNPs with other predicates (namely Kind-level ones) and indicative vs. subjunctive mood is not neutral in those cases.

So, relative restrictive clauses, PPs and some adjectives also convey a sub-kind reading allowing the BNP to survive with an empty D.

    3. Are BNP licensing conditions the same in root and in non-root clauses?

Syntactic and semantic licensing conditions hold for any occurrence of BNPs. Existential BNPs are licensed under c-command of a lexical/functional category or if they are taken to be a part of discourse topic or to be otherwise syntactically connected through subordination to the matrix proposition. Notice that, in that sense, modification is also able to license BNPs as sub-kinds, i.e. parts of a set or subsets.

Escaping the c-command requirement through topicalization in gnomic/habitual contexts conveys them a quasi-generic reading.

C. With respect to types of predicates and Aktionsart

4. Which semantic features are crucially responsible for the readings BNPs are assigned?

Preverbal Subject BNPs get existential readings when occurring with predicates with transient features, such as [punctual], [eventive], [non-habitual]. Even being prominent, they are most probably reconstructed inside VP and thus they are thetic judgements.

With predicates which display features such as [gnomic] and [habitual], they get a non-existential reading. Their interpretation is a categorical judgement in so far the predication is about them.

Types of predicates are affected by aktionsart, mood and tense. Since BNPs in EP are not Kind Nouns, the non-existential reading crucially depends on the features of the predicates.

Crucially, parallelism also plays a role with activity predicates: the Object BNP forces a gnomic reading of the predicate and a contrast/aboutness (non-existential) reading of the Subject BNP (which arguably raises to TopP), unlike a full Object DP, which favours a descriptive reading of the Present Tense and turns to existential the reading of the Subject BNP (which stays in Spec, TP), creating a context of a piece of information in a larger discourse frame.

A clear non-existential reading of preverbal Subject BNPs obtains when the verb is in the indicative mood, in the present tense (also in the imperfect past – 'pretérito imperfeito') with a habitual or gnomic value. In all other possible contexts, BNPs tend to get an existential reading, as expected if we take Delfitto (2002) claim that they are generalized quantifiers.

5. How do semantic features interact with syntax and discourse to allow for the occurrence of BNPs?

Syntax and semantics constraints are always the same in what BNPs are concerned. However, discourse plays a decisive role. In what syntax is concerned, CP is called for, i.e. the left-periphery being the configuration where syntax codifies discourse is relevant to the occurrences of BNPs with non-existential readings in Topic positions (non-argument positions, escaping the c-command requirement). The gnomic/habitual feature of the predicate triggers that possibility.

But CP is also crucial for subordination contexts in which the c-command requirement may apply or not, according to the lexical content of C or the subordination syntactic-semantic link (as with epistemic verbs which select indicative complements that instantiate two different speech acts (Krifka, 1981 quoted by Bianchi & Frascarelli, 2010) or that require that both CPs are in a sisterhood relation, triggering topic as an escape-hatch). C-commanded positions trigger existential readings connected to event or non-habitual features of the predicate.

    D. With respect to Discourse

        6. Are there any discourse properties which rescue BNPs, allowing them to get readings according to interpretation needs?

With non-existential readings, BNPs are a part of Common Ground Management and are perceived by the participants as Questions under discussion. They most frequently get contrast readings.

Subordination contexts, having discourse purposes, may select BNPs for referring unspecific sets and tend to assign them existential readings.

Descriptive contexts are paratactic. Connections (including logic relations, possibly inferred lexical conjunctions) are made between sequences of events. These sequences imply the existence of a hierarchy of stored information like 'frame representations' or 'scripts'. Though prominent, BNPs are not really given information. They are parts of a larger discursive topic. Their truth-value is checked both against the higher discourse topic and the reader/addressee knowledge of the World. In that sense, they are specifications but also accumulated pieces of information which, in some sense, correspond to a quantification operation.

In short, this dissertation, though mainly confirming for EP the analysis Delfitto (2002) suggests for Italian, goes further into issues concerning the role of the left periphery in the licensing of BNPs and the discourse requirements which allow BNPs to survive. Looking into the interface character of their contexts of survival deepens the traditional root-analysis and provides evidence for both syntactic requirements and semantic constraints and discourse purposes.

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