1. Introduction

The present paper can be viewed as a response to the theory of Noun Phrases developed in Giorgi and Longobardi (1991), henceforth referred to as G&L. Since they put forward certain universal claims concerning the syntactic properties of NPs, it is worth checking some of the consequences and predictions of their theory against additional data, including examples from Polish, a language whose NPs are in many respects similar to Italian NPs.

I will start by quoting the essential elements of the theory to which I will refer in my paper.

(1) Configurational Hypothesis (G&L:2):

A. It is possible to identify, within NPs, definite θ- (and non θ-) positions at various levels of hierarchical attachment: whenever an element of the N frame appears in a position arguably different from the one where it should be projected at D-structure, its displacement must, then, be governed by the general conditions holding on antecedent-trace relationships created by ‘Move’; moreover the binding of anaphors and pronouns in NPs obeys the same constraints as observed in clauses.

B. The θ-structure of Ns (their θ-grid and the conditions on θ-assignment) strictly parallels that of Vs, so that the differences appearing on the surface must be due to the intervention of other modules of grammar which determine some systematic variation.

Next, on the grounds of binding evidence, G&L propose a 3-layer structure of an Italian NP:

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1 This paper was presented at the 27th International Conference on Cross-Language Studies and Contrastive Linguistics in Rydzyna, December 9-11, 1993. I would like to thank the participants of that conference for helpful comments and discussion.
Two important parameters are introduced: 'Head-Complement' and 'Head-Subject'. Internal arguments are projected to the right of the head in Romance and in Germanic; external semantic functions are licensed at D-structure on the right in Romance but on the left in Germanic, as represented in a simplified way in (3).

(3) The Head-Subject Hypothesis

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Spec} & N' & \text{External argument} \\
\text{Possessive} & N & \text{Internal argument} \\
N'' & \text{Possessive modifier} \\
N''' & \\
\end{array}
\]

In Italian NPs, all the occurrences of arguments to the left of N are the result of movement to Spec (core case of movement), which together with the Possessivization Principle quoted in (4) is supposed to account for the distribution of arguments and for the binding facts in Italian.

(4) Possessivization Principle: (G&L:68)

The unique phrase allowed to appear as a possessive is the hierarchically highest genitive argument of an NP.

I will attempt to apply the line of G&L's reasoning for Polish, to see what the theory predicts. In so doing, inspired by some facts noticed in Polish NPs, I will argue that despite its elegance, some elements of G&L's theory make wrong empiri-
The interpretation by Przybost of this poem
or: The interpretation of this poem of Przybost

b. szkic pałacu tego słynnego architekta
sketch palace-gen this-gen architect-gen
The sketch drawing of the palace of that famous architect
(the drawing is by that architect or the palace belongs to that architect)

c. portret kobiety Leonarda da Vinci
portrait woman-gen Leonardo da Vinci-gen
The portrait of a woman by Leonardo da Vinci'
or: The portrait of Leonardo da Vinci's woman'

There is also a subject-object asymmetry with respect to binding, as was shown by Willim (1989) and is illustrated in (13-14). Examples in (13) illustrate the basic facts concerning the NP internal binding in Polish, i.e. the complementary distribution of anaphors and pronouns. Examples in (14) indicate that the postnominal genitive can bind an anaphor only if it corresponds to the external argument. If it identifies an internal argument, then it cannot be the antecedent for an anaphor embedded in the matrix NP. In (15) I have put some examples, which, if acceptable, prove that in Polish, as in Italian, the relative linear order of two genitive post-nominal satellites is flexible.

(13) a. książka Moravi, o sobie,
'Moravia's book about himself'
b. jego, książka o sobie,
'his book about himself'
c. *jego, książka o nim,
'his book about him'
d. jego, list do siebie,
'his letter to himself'
e. *jego, list do niego,
'his letter to him'

(14) a. Podróż Janka, do swoich rodziców
trip John-gen to self-poss parents-gen
'John's trip to his parents'
b. odwiedzenie dzieci, do *swoich/ich rodziców
visiting children-gen to self-poss parents
'Sending (of) the children to their parents'
c. rozmowa z Janem, o *swoim/jego, zachowaniu
a talk with John, about self's/his behaviour

(15) a. ?portret swojego ojca Rembrandta
Rembrandt's portrait of his father

In Polish NPs two postnominal genitive complements are also possible, as is illustrated in (11-12). In (12) the NPs are ambiguous, but on one of the possible readings, two distinct postnominal arguments can be identified. The difference between Italian and Polish is that in Italian the genitive case is mediated by the preposition di, while in Polish it is an inflectional ending.

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b. opis Litwy Mickiewicza
   'the description of Lithuania by Mickiewicz'

c. opis swojej ojczyzny Mickiewicza
   'opis Mickiewicza swojej ojczyzny
   'The description by Mickiewicz of his mother-land'

So, both in Italian and in Polish there is evidence for assuming two postnominal satellites differing in prominence, which can be represented by different levels of attachment. At least so far, I have tried to show that following G&Ls line of reasoning, Polish and Italian are very similar. Now I will try to argue that the theory does not really work for Polish. I will also show where it breaks down for Romance languages. In view of striking similarities between Romance languages and Polish, I suspect that some of the claims of the Configurational Hypothesis are universally incorrect.

3. Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis

First, let us concentrate on the Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis, an integral part of the Configurational Hypothesis. The Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis states that Verbs and corresponding Nouns define the same θ-role from their grid as the external one. Such an external θ-role is the only one assigned outside N', in NPs, or outside VP in clauses; the other θ-roles will be assigned internally, within N' and VP respectively.

While G&Ls arguments for the subject-object asymmetries in NPs and consequently for the general internal structure presented in (2) seem to be well founded and also consistent with the results of Willim's (1989) work on binding in Polish, the claim that those asymmetries support the Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis does not find an empirical support either in Romance languages or in Polish. As stated at the outset of G&Ls book, the major debate about the nature of syntactic processes in NPs and their parallelism with the corresponding clauses or VPs concerns the relation exemplified by the famous examples quoted in (16):

(16) a. The barbarians destroyed the city.
   b. The city was destroyed by the barbarians.
   c. The barbarians' destruction of the city.
   d. The city's destruction by the barbarians.

Note, however, that all the arguments for the claim that Agent is assigned the N' post nominal external position under N'' come from a special class of nominals, namely the description type, which have the result interpretation and have been recognized as different from event (or action) nominals by various linguists in various languages, including Romance, English and Polish (compare Grimshaw 1990, Zubizarreta 1987, Rozwadowska 1991). So, while it is true that the author or creator argument of nouns such as in (5-13), for binding reasons, and in view of its surface structure realization as second postnominal: genitive complement, can be argued to originate under N'' in D-structure, it is questionable that true

Agents in nominals clearly related to verbs (such as the destruction type) are assigned to that position. The facts point out to the contrary. Moreover, the data are consistent both in Romance and in Slavic languages. Let us compare the description type nominals presented above and further illustrated for French and Spanish in (17) with true event or action nominals illustrated for Polish in (18) and for Romance languages in (19).

(17) a. La description du paysage de Pierre (Fr.)
   'La descrizion del paysage de Pedro (Sp.)
   'Pierre's description of the landscape'
   b. Sa description du paysage (Fr.)
   'Su descrizion del paysage (Sp.)
   'his description of the landscape'

(18) a. *Zniszczenie Rzymu barbarzyńców
   'destruction Rome-gen barbarians-gen
   b. Zniszczenie Rzymu przez barbarzyńców
   'the destruction of Rome by the barbarians'
   c. *Ograbienie wsi żołnierzy
   'plunder village-gen soldiers-gen
   d. Ograbienie wsi przez żołnierzy
   'the plunder of the village by the soldiers'
   e. *Ocena uczniów nauczyciela
   'evaluation students-gen teachers-gen
   f. Ocena uczniów przez nauczyciela
   'the evaluation of the students by the teachers'

(19) a. La destruction de la ville par les soldats (Fr.)
   'La destructor de la ciudad por los soldados (Sp.)
   'The destruction of the city by the soldiers'
   b. *La destruction de la ville des soldats (Fr.)
   *La destructor de la ciudad de los soldados (Sp.)
   'the soldiers' destruction of the city'

I do not have a relevant Italian example for this kind of contrast, as there is not a single event nominal explicitly presented in the book. However, in the context of the discussion of the Possessivization Principle, it is implied (G&L:60) that the event interpretation of the nominal descrizione is triggered by the presence of the Italian by-phrase. In view of that, we may probably safely assume that the contrast is true of Italian as well.

We can then conclude that in fact there is a distinction between two kinds of arguments of certain nominals in Romance languages and in Polish, yet it is not the case that the nominals derived from verbs support the Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis. Quite on the contrary, given the availability of the external argument position in nominals in general, the absence of Agents in that position seems to argue rather for the non-correspondence. The correspondence in the case
of the *description* nouns seems to be due to the availabilty of the result interpretation, which makes them similar to concrete or relational nouns. Note that the result nominals have been argued to have no argument structure by Grimshaw (1990). Similarly, simple event nominals, illustrated for Polish in (14) above, lack the argument structure. It seems to be incorrect then to select result or simple event nominals as the basis for exploring the Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis, which presupposes the existence of argument structure for both the verbs and the nominals derived from them.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the discussion so far is then that the Thematic Correspondence Hypothesis, which is one of the crucial elements of the Configurationality Hypothesis, does not hold.

4. Evidence for Complete Functional Complex

It is widely recognized that nouns can identify a generic semantic relation of any kind indicating some connection between the noun and the external satellite. Among others, this satellite can represent a possessor. With the so called *picture* nouns (such as *picture, photo, book, letter*), the external satellite is usually ambiguous between the possessor reading and the author reading. In addition to that, those nouns also have an internal argument (the addressee in the case of letter, the topic of writing in the case of book). As shown by G&L for Italian (ex. 20), and by Willim for Polish, with the external argument interpreted as the author, the presence of an anaphor is always admitted. However, according to G&L, in Italian, if both the possessor and the author are present, we get the paradigm illustrated in (21-23).

(20)

a. la finta lettera di Gianni a se stesso
   ‘Gianni’s false letter to himself’

b. la sua, finta lettera a se stesso
   ‘his false letter to himself’

(21)

a. la preziosa lettera di Leonardo agli Sforza del Museo Pallavicini
   ‘the valuable letter of Leonardo to the Sforzas of the Pallavicini Museum’

b. la sua, lettera di Maria a se stesso
   ‘his (poss) letter by Maria (agent) to himself’

(22)

a. *la sua, lettera di Maria a se stesso
   ‘his (poss) letter by Maria (agent) to himself’

b. la sua, lettera di Maria a lui
   ‘his (poss) letter by Maria (agent) to him’

(23)

a. *il suo, libro di Moravia su se stessa,
   ‘her (poss) book by Moravia (agent) about herself’

b. il suo, libro di Moravia su di lei
   ‘her (poss) book by Moravia (agent) about her

Polish NPs behave in an analogous way:

(24)

a. fałszywy list Janka do siebie/do swojej, matki
   ‘Gianni’s false letter to himself’ (to self’s mother)

b. jego, fałszywy list do siebie/do swojej, matki
   ‘his false letter to himself (to self’s mother)’

c. *jego, list Marii do siebie,
   ‘his (poss) letter by Maria (agent) to himself’

d. jego, list Marii do niego
   ‘his (poss) letter by Maria (agent) to him’

(25) β is a Complete Functional Complex iff it meets at least one of the following requirements:

a. it is the domain in which all the θ-roles pertaining to a lexical head are assigned

b. it is the domain in which all the grammatical functions pertaining to that head are realized (where the R-relation counts as the structural subject of the NP)

In the case of a verbal head, conditions (a) and (b) are simultaneously satisfied. In the case of a referential NP, the least CFC will be the minimal projection which satisfies either (a) or (b).

What this approach misses, however, is that if the Least Functional Complex includes the Possessor argument when the Author argument is absent, the expected binding does not hold either. It is true both of the *picture* nouns and ordinary referential nouns. There seems to be a clear complementary distribution between the (a) and (b) examples below:

(26)

a. Książka Chomskiego, o sobie,
   ‘Chomsky’s (author) book about himself’

b. Książka Chomskiego, o nim,
   ‘Chomsky’s (possessor) book about him.’

(27)

a. list Marii, do siebie/do swojej, matki
   ‘Mary’s letter to herself/to self’s mother’

b. list Marii, do niej,
   ‘Mary’s (possessor) letter to her’
The (a) examples imply the authorship and admit the possesive anaphor in the complement, while the (b) examples are acceptable only if the authorship is excluded and the genitive complement is understood as the mere possessor of the head noun referent. However, the (b) examples also satisfy the definition of the LFC, and thus the facts are contrary to the predictions. That the binding conditions in NPs escape the configurational definitions is further supported by (28-29) below, which are structurally identical to the (a) examples in (26-27) but whose interpretations are different:

(28) ?? List Marii, od swojej, matki
    List Marii od jej matki/od jej nauczycielki
    Mary's letter from self's/her mother

(29) *Półka Janka, ze swoimi, książkami
    John's shelf with self's books

Also in Italian (according to Antonio Sanfilippo, p.c.) the binding relation between suo and the anaphor in (7) (repeated as (30) below), when suo is given a possesive interpretation is not possible unless di se is used in place of se stesso.

(30) il suo libro su se stesso
    jego książka o sobie
    his book about himself

G&L themselves say that in constructions such as in (20), with the genitive argument interpreted as bearing a specific θ-role (namely agent, i.e. author) the presence of an anaphor is always admitted. Then they discuss the cases where both the author and the possessor are present, but do not present any nouns which have only the possessor argument. Given the analogy with Polish and the lack of binding for possessors, even in the absence of the author, I do not think that the introduction of the Complete Functional Complex is a remedy.

My observations are consistent with Hellan's (1988) findings for Norwegian. He argues that NP-internal binding is sensitive to the so called role-command. The relevant contrast is quoted in (31-32) below:

(31) a. Jon's bok om seg selv solgte godt
    Jon's book about himself sold well
b. Her ser vi kongens gave til sin folk
    Here see we the king's gift to his people

(32) a. *Jon's venner fra sin studietid skrev en vacker nekrolog over ham.
    'Jon's friends from his time of studying wrote a nice obituary on him'
b. *Jon's egne boker i ryggsekkken sin ble for tunge for ham.
    'Jon's own books in his backpack got too heavy for him'
    (Hellan 1988:154)

Hellan proposes the rule in (33):

(33) In NP-internal binding of a seg-reflexive, a host of the reflexive and the binder must be semantic co-arguments.

Semantic co-arguments are NPs which are either theta-role related to the same noun, or relation-bound to the same noun. Author and topic would thus be relation-bound arguments to the noun book, while donator and recipient would be relation-bound arguments to the noun gift. Neither the time of friendship in (31a) nor the possessor and location in (31b) are relation-bound to friend and book respectively.

As Hellan points out, a role-command effect may also be spotted in the non-ambiguity of examples like (34): although it is generally possible to interpret a postnominal 'av NP' as Agent, the examples in (34) allow only the interpretations indicated in the glosses:

(34) a. Kongens bilde av sin hoffmaler henger i hallen.
    'The king's picture of his court painter hangs in the hall'.

b. Jons begravelse av sine naboker brakte tører frem i manges øyne
    'Jon's burial of his neighbours brought tears into many's eyes'.

c. Den gamle bydels odegjørelse av sin antikvar ble forbigått i tauset
    'The old town-part's destruction of its antiquarian was passed in silence'.

Another problem with the overall configurational theory as developed by G&L is that the movement from the postnominal position to Spec, which they propose for any satellite appearing prenominally, does not provide an explanation for all the facts either. The Possessivization Principle amounts to claiming that the movement of any postnominal argument satisfying the hierarchy condition is uniquely to Spec position. Hence, binding from that syntactic position should not be sensitive to the type of the argument filling it. As example (30) above indicates, even for Italian the binding from Spec position is sensitive to whether the argument filling it is a mere possessor or whether it is a relation-bound argument.

5. NP-internal movement

As far as Polish is concerned, the movement solution to the prenominal position (whatever position we want it to be) viewed as the core case of movement does not seem to find any empirical support. First, the examples in (35-36) show that with possessors or relation-bound external arguments, it is possible to invert the order inside the NP, irrespective of whether we deal with a lexical or pronominal NP satellites. The alternation looks rather like a surface reordering than a core case of movement. Second, the pronominal realization of internal arguments illustrated in (37) is impossible at all (the existence of this kind of movement would be the crucial argument for postulating move-α within NPs), even in the absence of other arguments.
b'. *ich odwiedzenie do rodziców sprawi nam trochę kłopotu
(taking to the parents will cause us some trouble)

c. *ich, odwiedzenie do swoich rodziców sprawi nam trochę kłopotu
(taking to self’s parents will cause us some trouble)

If the configurational account of binding in terms of CFC supplemented with
the movement to Spec was entirely correct, we would expect (38c) with the
indicated binding to be possible. I think that the reason why sometimes the internal
argument may appear prenominally as the 3rd person possessive pronoun must
be due to the fact that it is morphologically identical to the postnominal genitive
form and that it does not show adjectival agreement (in contrast to the other
pronominal possessives). In view of the relatively free word order in Polish NPs
some kind of surface reordering can be taking place here.

In Italian, prenominal realization of the internal argument is possible, as is its
functioning from that position as a binder for an anaphor appearing postnominally.
It is restricted though only to nominals with the event interpretation. Postulating
movement to the prenominal Spec position as an explanation of NP-internal bind-
ing is undermined by the fact that it would explain only one subclass of construc-
tions in Italian (namely those with the prenominal internal argument in the absence
of other arguments). In view of the fact that other subclasses of Italian NPs, as
well as Polish and Norwegian NPs indicate that NP internal binding is non-con-
figurational, the solution appealing to the CFC supplemented by Possessivization
Principle seems to be missing the point, or at least it is insufficient.

6. Conclusions

In view of the whole discussion so far, which has shown that at least as far as
binding is concerned it is rather thematic prominence than structural prominence
which is responsible for NP-internal binding, the motivation for purely structural
definition of the most prominent argument as the subject of NP becomes much
weaker. It seems that the notion of the structural subject in NPs is not relevant
for binding, an area which has often served as a test for configurations. One of
the motivation for introducing a structurally defined position of the subject of
NPs was the subject-object asymmetry with respect to binding. It happens though,
as was shown for various languages in this paper, that in more complicated cases
binding is sensitive to thematic nature of NP satellites. It is also a fact that in the
simple cases, the structural prominence of the ‘subject’ argument happens to
instantiate a thematic prominence at the same time. Why not claim then that it is
only the thematic prominence (in the sense of Hellan or some similar approach)
at the level of argument structure which is responsible for NP-internal binding.

Furthermore, as was also shown above and discussed in more detail in Roz-
wadowska (1991), the ‘subject’ or ‘external’ argument position, strangely enough,
though universally, does not accommodate Agents of transitive predicates, contrary
to expectations.

Moreover, as far as Polish is concerned, it would be very difficult to decide
whether the subject of NP should be to the right or to the left of the head. Lexical
satellites suggest the former, pronominal satellites the latter. Lack of evidence for
NP-internal movement of nominal arguments and for Spec position in Polish in
general complicates the issue even more. 2

Therefore, I would be inclined to suggest that mapping rules in nouns may
involve subcategorizing for internal arguments, but that they need not refer to the
syntactic notion of the subject of NP defined as a unique structural position. The
Head-Complement parameter is set to the right in all the groups of languages
discussed (i.e. Romance, Germanic and Slavic). NPs can be modified in various
ways, including the most prototypical possessor. That modifier may assume differ-
ent interpretations and forms. Depending on whether it is a thematic or relation-
bound argument with respect to the modified noun, it may or may not be an an-
tecedent for an NP-internal anaphor. The syntactic behaviour of that modifier is
usually similar to other modifiers (e.g. adjectives). That's why we observe surface
order flexibility (note its lack in the case of subcategorized complements).

More general conclusion is that since different aspects of the Configurational
Hypothesis find consistent empirical support neither for Polish nor for Romance
and Germanic, it is tempting to suggest that NPs are radically different from VPs
or clauses and are governed by separate mapping rules of a slightly different nature.
Also, it seems that NP internal binding differs from binding in clauses. In other
words, the Configurational Hypothesis does not hold.

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2 Witkoś (1993) presents a neat configurational theory of Polish NPs, which is different from G&L's
theory. On his theory, the subject of the Polish NP is always generated to the left of the head N, and
the surface order is due to the Head to Head movement. Unfortunately, his 'Ghost Phrase approach'
in its present state, despite its intrinsic attractiveness, cannot provide a solution to the problems raised
in my paper either because of its strictly configurational character.