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Sommario/riassunto	This study investigates the acquisition of Functional Categories (e.g., INFL (AGR, TNS), DET, COMP) from the perspective of self-organization in generative grammar. Language is conceived of as a dynamical system which evolves in time and bifurcates when critical thresholds are reached. The emergence of syntax as evidenced by the acquisition of Functional Categories is the major bifurcation in child language acquisition. Target values of syntactic parameters are attractors which children approach on individual trajectories. A proposed tripartite scenario of change - from a simple stable state A, via symmetry-breaking in a liminal phase B characterized by variation, to a new complex stable state C - accounts for the dynamics in early grammatical development. Traditional generative issues, such as the acquisition of case-marking, finiteness, V2, and wh-questions, are discussed as well as new issues, such as functional neologisms, and sentential blends. Dynamical notions like precursor, oscillation, symmetry-breaking, and trigger are important explanatory tools. The growing child phrase marker is a fractal mental object which represents syntactic information by way of self-similar extended projections. The

book addresses researchers in language acquisition from various theoretical camps: generative, functional, connectionist, by giving new answers to old questions in the light of a novel challenging theory: self-organization.
