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| 1. Record Nr. | UNISA990001274520203316 |
| Autore | PASCOLI, Giovanni |
| Titolo | Poemetti latini / Giovanni Pascoli ; a cura di Luciano Vischi |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa | Milano : Mondadori, 1947 |
| Descrizione fisica | 127 p. ; 20 cm |
| Collana | Edizione scolastica Mondadori |
| Collocazione | VI.3.A. 2039(V A 122) |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Italiano |
| Formato | Materiale a stampa |
| Livello bibliografico | Monografia |
| 2. Record Nr. | UNINA9910464724503321 |
| Autore | Ott Dennis <1983-> |
| Titolo | Local instability [[electronic resource]] : split topicalization and quantifier float in German / / Dennis Ott |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa | Berlin ; ; Boston, : De Gruyter, 2012 |
| ISBN | 1-283-62873-2
3-11-029095-2
9786613941183 |
| Descrizione fisica | 1 online resource (184 p.) |
| Collana | Linguistische Arbeiten, , 0344-6727 ; ; 544 |
| Disciplina | 435 |
| Soggetti | German language - Locative constructions
German language - Syntax
German language - Quantifiers
German language - Grammar
Minimalist theory (Linguistics)
Electronic books. |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Inglese |
| Formato | Materiale a stampa |
| Livello bibliografico | Monografia |
| Note generali | Originally presented as the author's thesis (doctoral-Harvard University) under the title: Local instability: The Syntax of Split Topics, |

2011.

Nota di bibliografia

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Nota di contenuto

Front matter -- 0 Acknowledgments -- Contents -- 1 Introduction: Aims and Scope -- 2 Split Topics: Empirical Properties and Theoretical Problems -- 3 The Syntax of Split Topics: A Novel Approach -- 4 An Extension to Quantifier Float -- 5 Conclusion and Outlook -- References -- Index

Sommario/riassunto

This monograph argues for a novel approach to split topicalization and quantifier float in German, based on the premise that syntactic structure-building proceeds solely via free application of Merge. Following recent developments in the pursuit of a more principled theory of syntax, it is argued that the stipulative notion of 'projection' ought to be dispensed with: syntactic objects created by Merge are not headed, and endocentricity arises due to a simple search algorithm. When this algorithm fails, specifically in symmetric {XP,YP} structures, an unlabeled constituent results; where a label is required, such structures are locally unstable. It is argued that both split topics and floated quantifiers are the result of this kind of local instability: when an exocentric predication structure is merged in argument or adjunct position, XP must be displaced at the phase level to allow for determination of a label. It is this symmetry-breaking movement that yields the 'split constituent' in surface form. Based on careful empirical scrutiny of two recalcitrant problems for syntactic theory, the present work adduces substantial support for a 'minimalist' grammatical architecture devoid of phrase-structural residue.
