

November 9, 2004

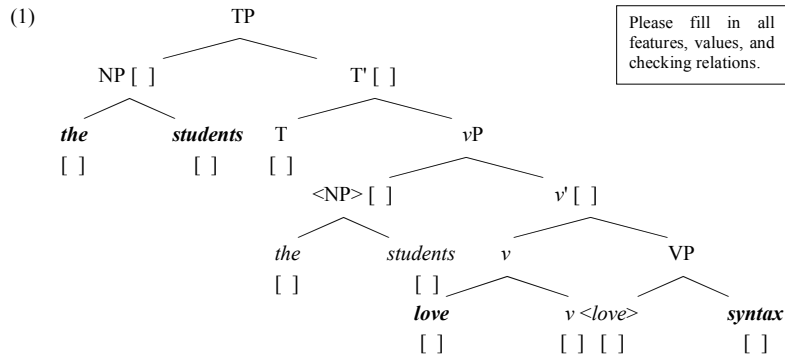
CLASS 16: SUBJECTS, CASE & EPP

THE PROPOSAL IN A NUTSHELL

Today's class deals with the fact that **sentences have subjects** (what is called the **EPP**, for *Extended Projection Principle*), the fact that all nominals or **NPs must be Case-marked**, that **subjects are different from objects**, and that **the finite verb form agrees with the subject**.

We achieve all this by building on our **theory of feature checking** and expand it further:

- **EPP:** T needs a specifier [Spec,TP] (“subject”) **T[μ N*]**
- **Case:** all nominals have case (e.g. NOM, ACC) **T[NOM], v[ACC]**
- **agreement:** subject and finite “verb” agree in phi-features **T[$\mu\phi$:], N_{subject}[ϕ : VAL]**



A **locality condition** ensures that only the closest elements enter into an Agree-relation:

- (2) **Locality of Matching**
 Agree holds between a feature F on X = X[F], and a matching feature F on Y = Y[F], iff [= if and only if] there is no intervening Z with matching feature F, i.e. Z[F].
- (3) **Intervention**
 In a structure [X ... Z ... Y], Z intervenes between X and Y iff X c-commands Z and Z-commands Y.

These two conditions ensure that the **object doesn't satisfy the EPP**, i.e. move to [Spec,TP].

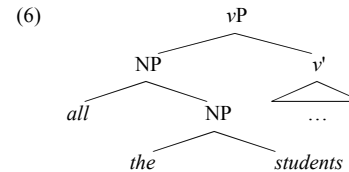
- (4) a. He has <he> kissed her.
 b. * Her has he kissed <her>.

EMPIRICAL BENEFITS

This approach gives us a **lot of facts about English grammar** straightforwardly:

- **quantifier stranding:** a quantifier within a subject NP may be stranded or left behind

- (5) a. [All [the students]] have < [**all** [**the students**]] > enjoyed syntax.
 b. [The students] have [all < [**the students**] >] enjoyed syntax.
 c. *[All] have < [**all** > [the students]] enjoyed syntax.



- **expletive constructions:** expletive *there* may fill the subject position with NP *in situ*

- (7) a. **A unicorn** appeared here in our garden.
 b. **There** appeared a unicorn here in our garden.
 c. ***A unicorn** appeared **there** here in our garden.
 d. **There** appeared **a unicorn**, didn't **there** / *it?

- **all NPs bear case:** a nominal without (abstract) case leads to ungrammaticality

- (8) a. **He** kissed **her**.
 b. * **Him** kissed **her**.
 c. * **Him** kissed **she**.
 d. * **He** kissed **she**.

- **subject-verb agreement is on T:** no other element can agree in phi-features with T

- (9) a. The student **has** found syntax quite amusing.
 b. * The student **have** found syntax quite amusing.
 c. * The students **has** found syntax quite amusing.
 d. The students **have** found syntax quite amusing.
 e. Syntax **is** / ***are** great.

SUMMARY POINTS

1. **Finite T bears [NOM]** (Agree with subject) and **v bears [ACC]** (Agree with object).
2. **Finite T bears [μ N*]** causing Merge into [Spec,TP] (expletive or NP-agent/"subject")
3. **Agree is constrained in locality** so that it applies to the closest matching feature only.
4. **Case-features are always uninterpretable** on both elements, shortcut T[CASE], N[VAL].
5. **All nominal expressions bear phi-features N[ϕ]**; some are relevant for Agree with T.