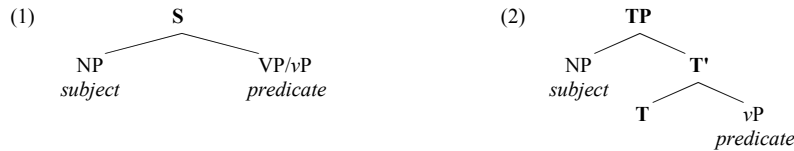


November 2, 2004

CLASS 9: PHRASES, CONSTITUENTS, STRUCTURE

“SENTENCE”

A **sentence is more than a VP** (or vP, rather) — information like **tense, aspect, agreement** plays a role here (and even more: inversion, complementizers, and so on). In previous classes we assumed a **simple sentence structure**: “A sentence consists of a subject and a predicate” — but so far, our *predicate* contained the *subject* (verb / agent)! So, we’ll extend (1) to (2):



And hence we’ll explore the **nature of T**, the **role it plays in (morpho-)syntax**, and all else.

S(ENTENCE) = T(ENSE) P(HRASE)

1. Modals are in a position in the sentence associated with tense features.
2. Emphatic do is in the same position, as is non-finite (infinitival) to.
3. This position is outside vP, but follows (the surface position of) the subject.
4. Morphological tense marking may appear in this position.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| (3) What John <i>should do</i> is [kiss Mary]. | [pseudocleft] |
| (4) (John wants to kiss Mary,) and [kiss Mary], John <i>should</i> . | [VP-fronting] |
| (5) John said he would kiss Mary and [kiss Mary] he <i>did</i> . | [VP-fronting] |
| (6) John [kissed Mary] and Bill <i>did</i> [\emptyset] too. | [VP-ellipsis] |
| (7) John wants [<i>to kiss</i> / *kissed / *may kiss Mary]. | [infinitival clause] |

Cross-linguistic evidence shows that tense (and aspect) markers may occur exactly here:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| (8) mi ben e waka. | [Sranan, an English- |
| I [PAST] [PROG] walk | based creole spoken |
| ‘I was walking.’ | in Surinam] |

We now have evidence for a new hierarchy among the **projections** discussed so far: **T > v > V**.

CHECKING AND VALUING FEATURES

We now want to extend our **checking theory** to relate **tense features** on T and the verb v.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (9) a. T[PAST] ... V + v[PAST] | c. *T[PAST] ... V + v[PRES] |
| b. T[PRES] ... V + v[PRES] | d. *T[PRES] ... V + v[PAST] |

(10) **The Checking Requirement**

Uninterpretable features must be checked, and once checked, they can delete.

(11) **Agree**

An uninterpretable feature F on a syntactic object X is checked when X is in a c-command relation with another syntactic object Y which bears a **matching** feature F.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| (12) a. T[PAST] ... V + v[u PAST] | c. *T[PAST] ... V + v[<u>u</u> PRES] |
| b. T[PRES] ... V + v[u PRES] | d. *T[PRES] ... V + v[<u>u</u> PAST] |

Within the **valuation approach** to feature checking we explore here, T bears a tense feature with a value, while v bears an uninterpretable tense feature without a value (unvalued); under Agree (c-command), T values a matching (tense) feature on v and checks it (uninterpretable).

- (13) T[tense : PAST] ... v[~~u~~tense :] → T[tense : PAST] ... v[utense : PAST]

(14) **Agree**

In a configuration X[F : VAL] ... Y[uF :]

where ... represents c-command, then F checks and values uF, resulting in:

$$X[F : VAL] ... Y[~~u~~F : VAL]$$

This means that if two matching features are **both unvalued**, Agree/checking can’t apply. Likewise, if a feature is a privative (and doesn’t need a value), checking works “as usual.”

- (15) [uF ;] ... [uF :] [checking can’t take place]

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| (16) a. [F] ... [uF] → [F] ... [u F] | [e.g. c-selectional features] |
| b. [<u>u</u> F] ... [uF] → [u F] ... [u F] | [??? |

AN EXTENSION TO TENSE AND ASPECT

Assume that **V adjoins to v**, and that v carries an uninterpretable inflectional feature [uInfl]; **auxiliaries** may also mark **aspect** (i.e. **perfect** and **progressive**), so they bear [uInfl] as well:

- (17) T[tense : VAL] ... (Perf[Perf, uInfl :] ...) (Prog[Prog, uInfl :] ...) v[uInfl :]

(18) **Hierarchy of Projections**

T > Perf > Prog > v > V