2

Agree, Move, A-dependencies

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I introduce the general framework of analysis. I start by laying out my assumptions on clause structure (section 2.2). Then I introduce the operation Agree as feature valuation and Case assignment is defined as an agreement operation (section 2.3). Section 2.4 spells out the problem of locality of A-dependencies and articulates the strictly local approach sketched in Chapter 1. In section 2.5 I argue that Agree and Move should be considered two distinct operations and I go on to discuss superraising. Section 2.6 discusses the nature of morphosyntactic features, their functioning in $C_{HL}$ and how and when they are deleted and spelled out. Section 2.7 shows some exempla. Section 2.8 presents the conclusions.

2.2 Clause structure and selection

I adopt Chomsky’s (1995) proposal that external arguments are introduced by a functional category, a light verb represented as $v$ (for similar ideas, see Kratzer 1996, among others ultimately rooted in Larson 1988).

What does $v$ select for as a complement? The traditional assumption is that it should be a VP. Likewise, $D$ selects for an NP:
However, it is worth considering Marantz’s (1997) recent proposals concerning the morphology–syntax interface (and adopted in Chomsky 2001b).

Marantz argues against the Lexicalist Hypothesis – or more appropriately, he complains that Lexicalism died a while ago but most of us did not read the obituary and missed the funeral. Two lexicalist assumptions that Marantz rejects are crucial for our purposes. The first is that the lexicon is a computational space, separate from syntax, in which words are formed by putting together different bits and pieces, including roots with an inherent category label. The second assumption is that syntax does not see these bits and pieces, only the resulting lexical item with the category label attached to it. Instead, Marantz proposes a “narrow lexicon” composed of roots and bundles of grammatical features. The roots enter the computational system – there is only one for morphology and syntax – without a category label and take the complements that they select. Then they are themselves selected by a functional category. If the functional category is a v, the resulting structure will be a verbal phrase. If the functional category is a D, the result will be a nominal phrase.

Thus, if //buy// is selected by v, it is going to be a verb, whereas if it is selected by D, it is going to be a noun. Functional heads – Tense, Comp, Det – are feature bundles that have fairly fixed selectional requirements.

However, Marantz’s proposals seem hard to implement, particularly considering the existence of inherent features. The Spanish word for