Towards a 'Minimalist' Theory of Case

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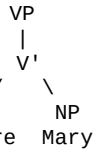
I. Case and Government

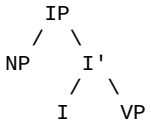
(1) α governs β if every XP dominating α also dominates β and vice versa: XPs are 'barriers' to government.

(2) Case assignment requires government.
(3) a The object of a transitive verb is Accusative.
b The subject of a finite clause is Nominative.

(4) V governs its complement

(5)


(6) 'Infl' governs its Specifier.
(7) John will win

(8)


(9) On the 'split Infl' hypothesis, with Tense and Agreement each heading its own projection:

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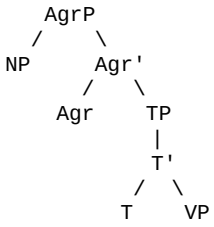
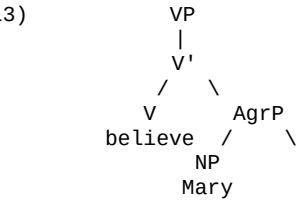


II. Questions about Government

(11) The subject of the infinitival complement of certain verbs is Accusative. IP, unlike other XPs, is not a barrier to government. V 'exceptionally' governs into IP:

(12) ... believe Mary to be a genius

(13)


(14) Configuration of Accusative checking: V-Complement
(15) Configuration of Nominative checking: SPEC-AGR
(16) Configuration of 'Exceptional Case Marking': ???

III. A 'Minimalist' Answer

(17) Another 'split' in Infl: In addition to subject agreement (AGR_S), object agreement (AGR_O). Then ECM can, via NP movement, also be assigned in a SPEC of AGR configuration:

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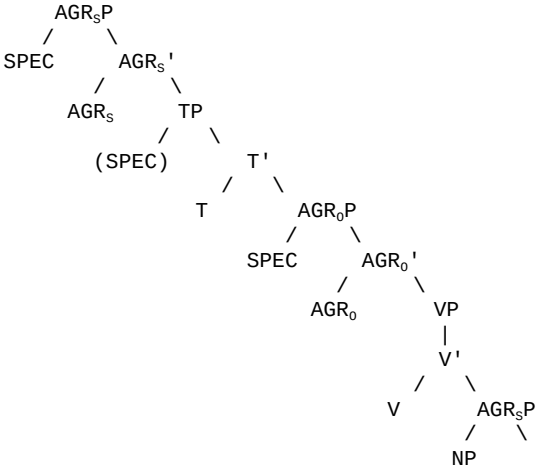
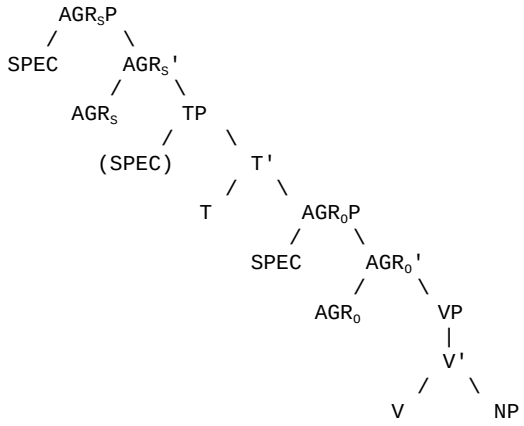


(18) Now Accusative, Nominative, and ECM are all assigned in X'-configurations: Head-Complement for the first, SPEC-head for the others.

(19) But now we can do even better: If ECM is SPEC-head, standard Accusative can be as well (and should be, since there is no known morphological or other difference between them).

(20)

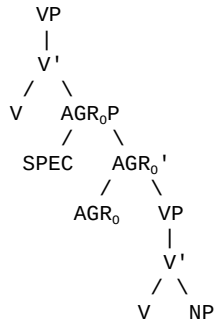


(21) We have seen a good conceptual argument for this approach, and in a minute, we will see powerful empirical evidence for it. But first, we have to deal with a seemingly devastating empirical problem.

(22) *I Mary believe to be a genius
(23) *We Mary admire

(24) Two possible solutions:
a. The NP moves, but in LF, so you can't hear the movement (like QR, or WH-movement in Chinese).
b. The NP moves, and the V moves to a still higher position.
(25) One additional 'split', the 'split VP hypothesis' could make solution (b) work.

(26)



IV. Evidence for the AGR$_0$ Theory
A. C-command phenomena

(27) i. Y is in the domain of X only if Y is c-commanded by X.
ii. X c-commands Y iff the first branching node dominating X also dominates Y.

(28) The lawyers criticized each other
(29) *Each other criticized the lawyers

(30) ?The DA proved [the defendants to be guilty] during each other's trials
(31) ?The DA [accused the defendants] during each other's trials
(32) ?*The DA proved [that the defendants were guilty] during each other's trials

(33) No one saw anything
(34) *Anyone saw nothing
(35) The DA accused [none of the defendants] during any of the trials
(36) ?The DA proved [none of the defendants to be guilty] during any of the trials
(37) ?*The DA proved [that none of the defendants were guilty] during any of the trials

B. Ellipsis

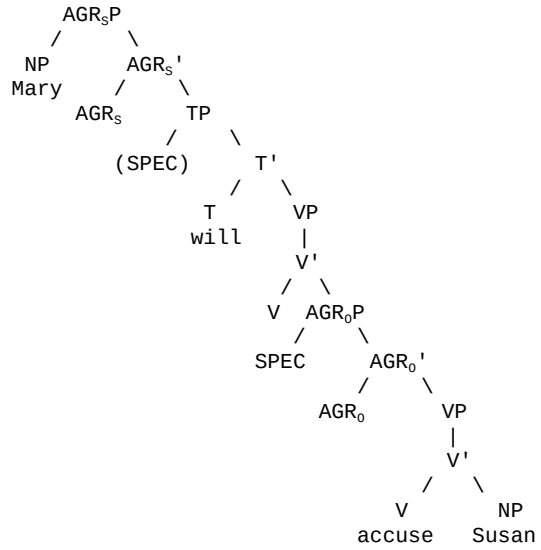
(38) VP Deletion:
(39) John accused Bill and Mary will ~~[$_{VP}$ accuse Bill]~~ too

(40) V Deletion?:
(41) John accused Bill and Mary will ~~accuse~~ Susan

(42) The DA proved the first defendant to be guilty and the Assistant DA will ~~prove~~ the second defendant ~~to be guilty~~
(43) More than just V can be deleted, but seemingly not the entire VP, in this construction (called 'Pseudogapping'). Further, superficially, it seems that what is deleted is not even a constituent.

(44) An analysis of Pseudogapping: Raise the 'remnant' NP to SPEC of AGR$_0$, and delete the 'lower' VP that it has left behind:

(45)


AGR$_S$P
NP
Mary
AGR$_S$'
AGR$_S$
TP
(SPEC)
T'
T
will
VP
V'
V
AGR$_O$P
SPEC
AGR$_O$'
AGR$_O$
VP
V'
V
accuse
NP
Susan