On Having Arguments and Agreeing: Semantic EPP

Jonny Butler, University of York
jrcb100@york.ac.uk
www-users.york.ac.uk/~jrcb100

Introduction:

'EPP-features are... non-semantic... though the configuration they establish has effects for interpretation' (Chomsky 2000)

But if they have semantic effects, why are they nonsemantic?

... What if ..?

— EPP-features *are* semantic?

— like this:

$[\text{EPP}] = [\Lambda] = \lambda$

— And they bind argument variables?

— which are like this:

$\theta = [\text{ID}] = \mathtt{x}$

(cf. Adger & Ramchand 2003)

Which is to say:

EPP-features instantiate predication (Williams 1980; Rothstein 1983; Heycock 1991; Åfarli & Eide 2001)

— by means of predicate (λ) abstraction (Heim & Kratzer 1998; Nissenbaum 1998; Sauerland 1998)

— which is represented in the syntax by two features, [Λ] and [ID] (Adger & Ramchand 2003).

So:

$[\Lambda] \ldots [\text{ID}]$

$\hookrightarrow$

maps to

$\downarrow$

$\lambda \ldots \mathtt{x}$

$\hookrightarrow$

V — introduces θ ($=$ [ID])

v — introduces [EPP] ($=$ [Λ])

[Λ] binds [ID] ($=$ predicate)

Predicate satisfied by DP ($=$ argument)

$=$ vP

(derivation steps 1 & 2)

T — introduces [EPP] ($=$ [Λ])

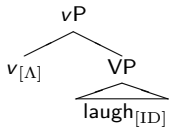
$T_{[\Lambda]}$ forms a dependency with $v_{[\Lambda]}$ via AGREE — so

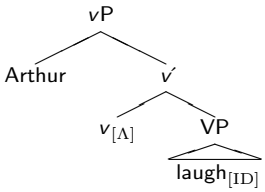
$T_{[\Lambda]}$ ends up abstracting over [ID] too

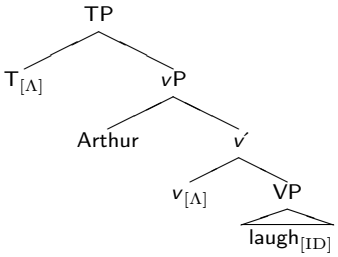
DP is Remerged ($\longrightarrow$ INTERPRET EVERYTHING — well, everything interpretable (derivation step 4) — cf. Sportiche 2002)

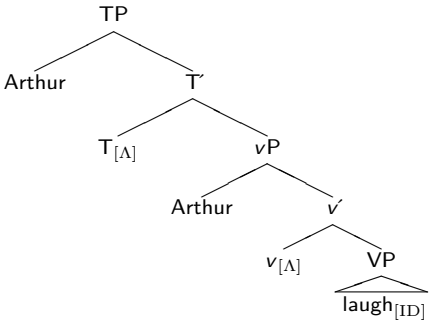
$=$ TP

A Derivation:









$= \lambda$. laugh (x)

$= \lambda$. [laugh (x)] (Arthur)
$=$ Arthur laughs

$= \lambda$. Arthur laugh (x)

$= \lambda$. [Arthur laugh (x)] (Arthur)
$=$ Arthur is such that Arthur laughs

No [Λ]? Don't worry — we have many other binders to meet your needs:

GEN ... [ID] $=$ PRO_{ARB}

$\hookrightarrow$

CONTROL ... [ID] $=$ $\text{PRO}_{\text{Control}}$

$\hookrightarrow$

$\exists$ ... [ID] $=$ Passive subject

$\hookrightarrow$

References Adger & Ramchand 2003. 'Merge and Move: wh-dependencies revisited' ms; Chomsky 2000. 'Minimalist Inquiries' in *Step by Step*; Heim & Kratzer 1998. *Semantics in Generative Grammar*; Heycock 1991. *Layers of Predication*; Nissenbaum 1998. 'Movement and derived predicates' MITWPL 25; Rothstein 1983. *The Syntactic Forms of Predication*; Sauerland 1998. *The Meaning of Chains*; Sportiche 2002. 'Movement types and triggers' TiLT; Williams 1980. 'Predication' LI 11; Åfarli & Eide 2001. 'Predication at the Interface' ZASPiL 26