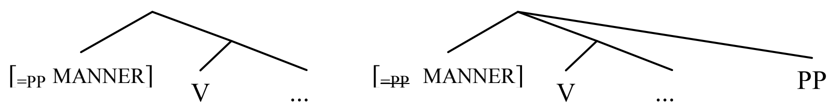
(56) *Heaviness*

When a constituent licensed in a functional position is a (nested) complex phase, namely when it bears select features, it would rather be processed in a phase-peripheral position (i.e. on the right).[89]

The intuitive motivation of this definition is to reduce complexity (cf. §3.4), by marginalizing nesting. At this point it is unclear whether this is just a preference or a constraint[90]. Following Bianchi and Chesi (2006), I will tentatively assume that the nested phase-head bears some select feature (e.g. a *manner* phase-head as in (57).a selects a PP as an argument) and, coherently with *Phase* projection, this feature introduces the required SD at the end of the matrix phase (keeping however its nested relationship with this superordinate phase as in (57).b[91]:

(57) a. b.



Since [manner] is a functional specification of the verbal phase, it has to be computed while this superordinate phase is still open (thus the adjunct is a genuinely

[89] A little modification of this definition (i.e. the removal of any reference to the licensed/functional position) would predict heavy NP-shift as well, but this can not be discussed here (see Chesi 2012).

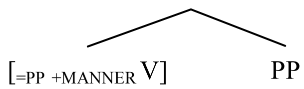
[90] Notice that some important constraints (e.g. right-roof constraint) would be readily predictable by (56), as discussed in Chesi (2012).

[91] This is necessary in order to prevents the computation of the matrix phase from being interrupted. We have to assume that the top-down projection of this functional specification will follow the top-down projection of the head of the matrix clause.

nested phase, as expected). Only the special (complex) structure of this functional projection is responsible for the right-hand position of the selected PP.

Note that the right-hand modifier is *not* selected by the lexical head (unlike Larson 1988)[92]; hence, it is not a sequential phase but a nested one. On these lines, it is possible to capture the unexpected behaviour of some right-hand modifiers which seem to be transparent for extraction (e.g. (51)) by assuming a minimal difference between (57).b, where the island PP is "projected" by the functional specification, and (57).c, where the PP is a sequential phase because the select feature is specified on the verbal head:[93]

(57) c.



Finally, we need to account for the cross-linguistic variation of strong islands (52). An interesting unconventional solution is suggested by Choi & Yoon (2006): while in English predicates select their arguments (*P(redicate)-centered* language), in Japanese arguments select their predicates (*A(rgument)-centered* language). The idea of inverse selection is very powerful (and, potentially, very restrictive) but I do not have enough space here to explore many possible implications. Let me simply

[92] This way the modifier is structurally superior to the VP-internal constituents; this avoids a number of problems with a generalized Larsonian "adjunct as complement" analysis (see Bianchi 2001, among others, for discussion).

[93] The idea that a selectional specification for a manner PP can be associated directly to a lexical head is made plausible by the existence of "selected adjuncts" (cf. Rizzi 1990): e.g., a verb like *behave* requires a manner specification; a verb like *weight* requires a measure specification of a certain kind; a verb like *be born* requires a locative or temporal specification, etc.

highlight that in order to accommodate this parameterization within the present model we simply need to allow nominal phases, by means of their case-marking, to project, intersectively, their top-down requirements: that is, a nominative and an accusative nominal phase would conspire so as to project a transitive verbal phase (or rather, the minimal set of verbal shells constituting a sequential-selected verbal phase). From this perspective, case-marked nominals are not strong islands. On the other hand, adjuncts do not select any verbal phase, but they simply license a functional specification of a verbal-phase (in accordance with functional hierarchy discussed in 2.2.4, they lay on the left of the verbal-head). Then we expect adjuncts but not case-marked arguments to behave as nested phases, namely as strong islands.

4.3 Concluding Remarks: Implementing Structure Building Operations

Defining Structure Building Operations means describing an effective way of putting together the building blocks of the linguistic system. Here I assumed these to be part of our linguistic competence: these Structure Building Operations should also be available for any processing task, crucially both for parsing and for generation. Empirical and theoretical details were provided showing that, given a precise definition of parsing and generation, structure building operations such as Merge, Move (Chomsky 1995-2008) and the notion of Phase (Chomsky 1999, 2008) are necessarily part of the grammar. Their effective applicability is however tied to the nature of the process (that, for complexity and explanatory reasons, has been shown to be derivational, top-down, and left-right, Phillips 1996). This "new" perspective required a redefinition of these main components of the grammar: Merge reduced to Lexical Insertion, Movement has been implemented (from left to right) using a Memory buffer, Phases are reinterpreted as complete top-down expectations provided with a single independent (phase by phase) feature-driven memory register. Moreover, these operations have to make an intense use of rich feature structures that have to be encoded within the grammar (cf. Cartographic

Approach, Belletti, Ed. 2002, Cinque 1999, Ed. 2002, Rizzi 1997, Ed. 2002, 2004 and related work). Many other empirical phenomena has been analyzed in literature, and evidence has been provided, showing that a better explanation can be found adopting a top-down, left-right Minimalist derivational approach as the one discussed in this book. Notably *covert movement* and the *right roof constraint* (e.g. *Quantifier Raising* in Bianchi & Chesi 2010), *rightward movement* and its peculiarities, contrasting with the unboundedness of leftward movement (e.g. E*xtraposition* and *Heavy NP-shift* Chesi 2012), the *Leftness Condition* on *quantificational binding* (Bianchi & Chesi 2010), the directional asymmetries in pronoun-antecedent connections (*backward* vs. *forward anaphora*) (Bianchi 2009). Many more consequences of this derivational shift need to be assessed yet, but the encouraging results suggest us that we are exploring the *right* branch of this research tree.

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