

Go, and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me, where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil's foot,
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.
John Donne, *Song*

Chapter 2: V-Raising and NP-Licensing

2.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to some basic aspects of Romanian syntax, discusses word order licensing, and sets out important theoretical assumptions which serve as working tools throughout this dissertation.

The chapter is organized as follows. Section 2.1 illustrates word order in the Romanian simple clause. In section 2.2, we investigate the build-up of the Romanian IP, with special reference to the position of the lexical verb and clitic material. We maintain earlier analyses which show that the lexical verb always raises to I° in Romanian (e.g., Cornilescu 1997, Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a, Motapanyane 1995, Ștefănescu 1997) and argue that this is due to a strong [+V] feature, which we reanalyse in section 2.3 as the EPP feature of Romanian. We further show that all elements comprising the Romanian IP are syntactic clitics (see also Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a), which we analyse as specifier-less heads. We suggest that some of these specifier-less heads project independently as XP, while others project together with verbal heads.

Starting with section 2.3, the rest of the chapter focuses on noun phrase licensing in Romanian. The central assumption is that Romanian NPs check Case in their initial merge positions, with no movement involved at any level of representation. We further investigate the nature of the EPP feature in Romanian. Given that the EPP feature is universally a selectional feature (cf. Chomsky 1998), it will require checking in a strict locality relationship, which we assume to be a Spec-Head or head-adjunction configuration, an option we suggest is parametrized across languages according to EPP type. We propose that the realization of the EPP feature is possible as a nominal feature (i.e., D-type EPP feature), as a verbal feature (i.e., V-type EPP feature), or as a combination thereof. We claim that Romanian has a V-type EPP feature, satisfied by verb raising and head-adjunction onto the inflectional domain. Sections 2.4 – 2.5 discuss structural and semantic restrictions in unaccusative and passive constructions in Romanian and reinforce the working assumptions set out in section 2.3.

We conclude that structural Case is not checked as a result of specific configurations, but as a consequence of the presence of specific functional categories in the clausal architecture. Furthermore, Romanian lacks a preverbal IP-related canonical subject position.

2.1 Remarks on word order in the Romanian clause

The Romanian declarative clause has relatively ‘free word order’, in the sense that it allows for all of the word order combinations exemplified in (1).

- (1) a. VSO:
- | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|-----|----------|------|-------|
| A | mîncat | Ion | plăcinta | cu | mere. |
| AUX.3SG | eaten | Ion | pie-the | with | apple |
- ‘Ion has eaten the apple pie.’

b. VOS:

A mîncat plăcintă cu mere Ion.
AUX.3SG eaten pie-the with apple Ion
'Ion has eaten the apple pie.'

c. SVO:

Ion a mîncat plăcintă cu mere.
Ion AUX.3SG eaten pie-the with apple
'Ion has eaten the apple pie.'

d. OVS:

[Plăcintă cu mere]_i a mîncat-o_i Ion.
[pie-the with apple] AUX.3SG eaten-CL.3SG.ACC.F Ion
'Ion has eaten the apple pie.'

e. SOV:

Ion [PLĂCÎNTA CU MERE]_i a mîncat-o_i.
Ion [pie-the with apple] AUX.3SG eaten-CL.3SG.ACC.F
'It is the apple pie that Ion has eaten (not something else).'

f. OSV:

[Plăcintă cu mere]_i ION a mîncat-o_i.
[pie-the with apple] Ion AUX.3SG eaten-CL.3SG.ACC.F
'It is Ion that has eaten the apple pie (not somebody else).'

Noun phrases which appear to the left of the verb (referred to as preverbal) are, however, constrained by interpretation. In (2), for example, the indefinite object is ungrammatical in the preverbal position, unless it is contrastively focused (which we mark by upper case letters).¹

(2) a. UN FILM a văzut Victor.
 a movie AUX.3SG seen Victor
 'It is a movie that Victor has seen (not something else or not more than one).'

¹ For an analysis of the Romanian preverbal field, see chapter 5.

- b. * Un film a văzut Victor.
 a movie AUX.3SG seen Victor
 ‘Victor saw a movie.’

Furthermore, irrespective of their syntactic function, preverbal NPs are constrained by a *specificity* requirement unless contrastively focused. Specific NPs include definite NPs or indefinite NPs with either a referential, a partitive, or a generic collective reading. We term these indefinites ‘strong’, following de Hoop (1995). Consider (3) for illustrations.²

- (3) a. definite NP:
 Prietena mea a obținut o bursă în Franța.³
 friend.F.-the my AUX.3SG obtained a fellowship in France
 ‘My friend got a fellowship in France.’

² The specificity requirement holds for both unergative and unaccusative preverbal subjects in Romanian, as illustrated in (ia) and (ib), respectively.

- (i) a. (*Cinci pisici) au mâncat (cinci pisici).
 (five cats) AUX.3PL eaten (five cats)
 ‘Five cats ate.’
 b. (*Cinci pisici) au plecat (cinci pisici).
 (five cats) AUX.3PL left (five cats)
 ‘Five cats left.’

SV would be licit in the above examples only if the subject NP could be understood partitively (i.e., as specific); in this case, there would be a set of known cats, out of which five are involved in the above predications. In other words, until and unless the NP is somehow topical/‘anchored’ in the discourse, it cannot appear preverbally (see also Casielles 1996 and Zubizarreta 1998, for Spanish). Another way of anchoring preverbal NPs is by using locative phrases (usually in descriptions). Notice in (ii) that in the absence of these locatives the NPs would be ungrammatical in preverbal position.

- (ii) a. Țigănci vînd flori *(pe la colțuri de stradă).
 gypsies sell.3PL.PR flowers on at corner of street
 ‘Gypsies sell flowers at street corners.’
 b. Copii bat mingea *(pe stradă).
 children beat.3PL.PR ball-the on street
 ‘Children play ball on the street.’

³ In Romanian, definite marking on feminine nouns in the singular is achieved by vowel alternation from *-ă*, a stressed schwa, which marks the bare form, to *-a*, an open rounded back vowel, which marks the definite enclitic.

b. referential indefinite NP:

O prietenă de-a mea e lingvistă.
a friend.F of-GEN.F my is linguist.F.

‘A friend of mine is a linguist.’

c. partitive indefinite NP:

Doi pești sunt negri (, al treilea e roșu).
two fish are black (, the third is red)

‘Two fish are black (the third is red).’

d. generic collective NP: ⁴

Trei pești sunt mai scumpi decât doi.
three fish are more expensive than two.

‘Three fish are more expensive than two.’

We take the semantic restrictions operative in the Romanian preverbal field to be indicative of a topical domain.

Post-verbal noun phrases, on the other hand, are not semantically constrained, a point we return to in section 2.4.1. VS(O) sequences are unmarked and highly productive in Romanian and, in contrast to Italian and Spanish, in Romanian they are not restricted to tensed clauses. In Romanian, certain infinitival clauses permit a Nominative subject (i.e., clauses selected by an

⁴ De Hoop (1995) includes bare generics among strong NPs. However, preverbal generics in Romanian have to be marked for definiteness, since bare NPs cannot be interpreted as strong, a property shared with other Romance languages:

a. Cerbii au coarne.
stags-the have antlers

b. * Cerbi au coarne.
stags have antlers
‘Stags have antlers.’

c. Balenele sunt mamifere.
whales-the are mammals.

d. * Balene sunt mamifere.
whales are mammals
‘Whales are mammals.’

aspectual matrix verb, as well as subject and adjunct infinitival clauses). Whenever a Nominative subject is present in infinitival clauses, it can only surface post-verbally, as shown below:

- (4) a. [(*Ea) a-i spune (ea) asta]
 [(*she.NOM) INF-CL.3SG.DAT tell (she.NOM) this]
 va cere mult curaj.
 FUT.3SG ask much courage'
 'It will take a lot of courage for her to tell him this.'
- b. Mihai a plecat [înainte de (*scrisoarea) a
 Mihai AUX.3SG left [before of (*letter-the.NOM) INF
 sosi (scrisoarea)].
 come (letter-the.NOM)
 'Mihai left before the letter came.'

In our discussion of noun phrase movement we refer to positions that are pre- or post-verbal. The term 'verbal' needs clarification since, in Romanian, it is not confined solely to the verb. Rather, it covers the whole verbal complex, namely, the verb together with any type of clitic that incorporates into it. Romanian has a series of morphemes that syntactically cliticize onto the inflectional domain to which the lexical verb raises: subordinate particles (infinitive and subjunctive), negation, auxiliaries, unstressed pronouns, and adverbial intensifiers (or phrases thereof).⁵ These elements share several important properties related to their special privileges of occurrence. For example, they cannot be separated from their syntactic host by a full phrase (see the examples in 5, in which the verbal complex is underlined), and they display a rigid ordering (cf. Dobrovie-Sorin 1990a, 1994a).

⁵ See section 2.2.2 for some clarifications.

- (5) a. A (* Mihai) venit (Mihai) ieri.
 AUX.3SG (* Mihai) come (Mihai) yesterday
 ‘Mihai came yesterday.’
- b. Profesoara n-ar mai (* mereu) fi (mereu)
 Teacher-the not-AUX.COND.3SG more always be always
 aici dacă...
 here if...
 ‘The teacher wouldn’t always be here any more if ...’
- c. Să (* Mioara) nu citească Mioara scrisoarea!
 SUBJ (* Mioara) not read.3SG Mioara letter-the
 ‘Don’t let Mioara read the letter!’

In main clauses, the fixed linear order varies with the presence of an auxiliary in the manner outlined in (6) and exemplified in (7): in the presence of an auxiliary, the feminine pronominal clitic appears immediately to the right of the lexical verb, being divorced from the pronominal cluster.⁶

- (6) a. Neg - Pron. cluster - Adv (intensifier-type) - *fi*- V⁷
 b. Neg - Pron. cluster - AUX - Adv (intensifier-type) - *fi* - V - Pron.3.SG.ACC.F

- (7) a. Azi Victor nu i-ar mai fi
 today Victor not CL.3SG.DAT.-AUX.COND.3SG. more FI
dat-o.
 given-CL.3SG.ACC.F
 ‘Today, Victor wouldn’t have given it to her.’

⁶ The ‘particle’ status of the Romanian auxiliary has long been recognized by traditional grammars.

⁷ *fi* ‘be’ is an uninflected perfective marker.

- b. Nu le-o mai prea citesc
 not CL.3PL.DAT-CL.3SG.ACC.F more very read.1SG.PR
 zilele astea.
 days-the these
 ‘I don’t usually read it to them these days.’

In subjunctives and infinitives, the respective modal particles precede the sequence in (6) as shown below.

- (8) a. *să* (SUBJ.) - Neg - Pron. cluster - Adv (intensifier-type) -*fi*- V
 b. *a* (INF.) - Neg - Pron. cluster - Adv (intensifier-type) - V

In section 2.2.2, we return to the elements that make up the Romanian verbal complex. For now, however, it suffices to say that the position of noun phrases with respect to the verb, refers to the entire verbal complex as described above.

To sum up, noun phrases in Romanian surface post-verbally in the default cases. The VS(O) derivation is the unmarked one in Romanian, and any derivation that departs from the basic VS(O) has to be accounted for. Preverbal noun phrases are widely used, but carry significant semantic contribution, to which we return in chapters 4 and 5.

2.2 Verb raising and the split IP hypothesis

The empirical data presented above have been analysed in a number of ways, the general consensus being that the lexical verb always raises out of the VP to a functional head in Romanian (Cornilescu 1997, Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a, Motapanyane 1995, Ștefănescu 1997, among others). Support for such an analysis is taken from the position of VP adverbs and floated quantifiers with respect to the lexical verb. The examples in (9a-c) are based on similar ones in Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a).

- (9) a. [IP Elevii mei vād [VP des [VP t_s t_v filme bune]]].
 students my see.3PL.PR often films good
 ‘My students often see good movies.’
- b. * [IP Elevii mei [VP des [VP t_s vād filme bune]]].
 students my often see.3PL.PR films good
 ‘My students often see good movies.’
- c. [IP Elevii mei au scris [VP toți t_s t_v versuri]].
 students my AUX.3PL written all poetry
 ‘My students have all written poetry.’
- d. * [IP Elevii mei au [VP toți t_s scris versuri]].
 students my AUX.3PL all written poetry
 ‘My students have all written poetry.’

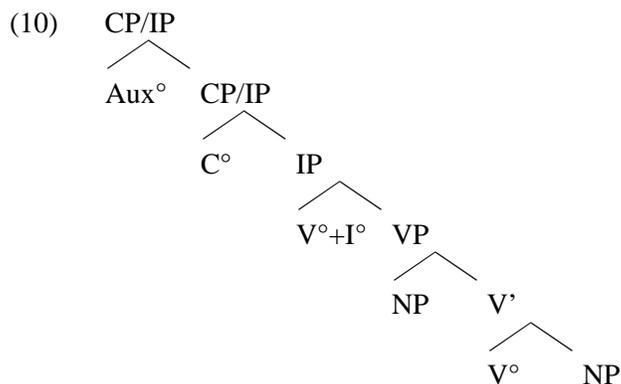
On the assumption (cf. Emonds 1975, Pollock 1989) that certain adverbs (9a-b) and floated quantifiers (9c-d) are generated immediately in front of the VP, the Romanian data in (9) show obligatory raising of the lexical verb, irrespective of whether an auxiliary is present, as in (9c-d), or not, as in (9a-b). In the absence of verb raising (9b, 9d), the sentences are ungrammatical. Crosslinguistically, there seems to be considerable independent motivation for V° to I° raising (cf. Belletti 1990, Emonds 1978, Pollock 1989, Shlonski 1996, Suñer 1994 among many others), and we adopt previous analyses that assume the lexical verb raises to the Inflectional domain in Romanian without further comment.

2.2.1 Brief overview of previous analyses

Several proposals have been made with respect to the landing site of the raised verb and the functional projections relevant to the build-up of the Romanian IP. Dobrovie-Sorin (1990a, 1994a), Rivero (1994), and Cornilescu (1997) argue for verb raising to the highest functional

node within the IP, irrespective of whether an auxiliary is present or not; for Dobrovie-Sorin and Rivero, this is the T/Agr head, for Cornilescu, it is the Mood head, argued to be available in both root and embedded sentences.

Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a) suggests that Romanian does not present clear evidence in favour of the idea that AgrP and TenseP are two distinct maximal projections and argues that AGR may be viewed as an affix that is nominal in nature on a par with pronominal clitics. Therefore, AGR is taken to adjoin to Tense and verb raising takes place to the T/Agr head (i.e., Infl). Since the author argues that the Romanian auxiliary is base-generated fully inflected cliticized to CP/IP, auxiliaries do not interfere with verb raising. The Romanian IP for Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a:17) is as in (10), with lexical verb movement to the lower IP in the auxiliary biclausal structure.



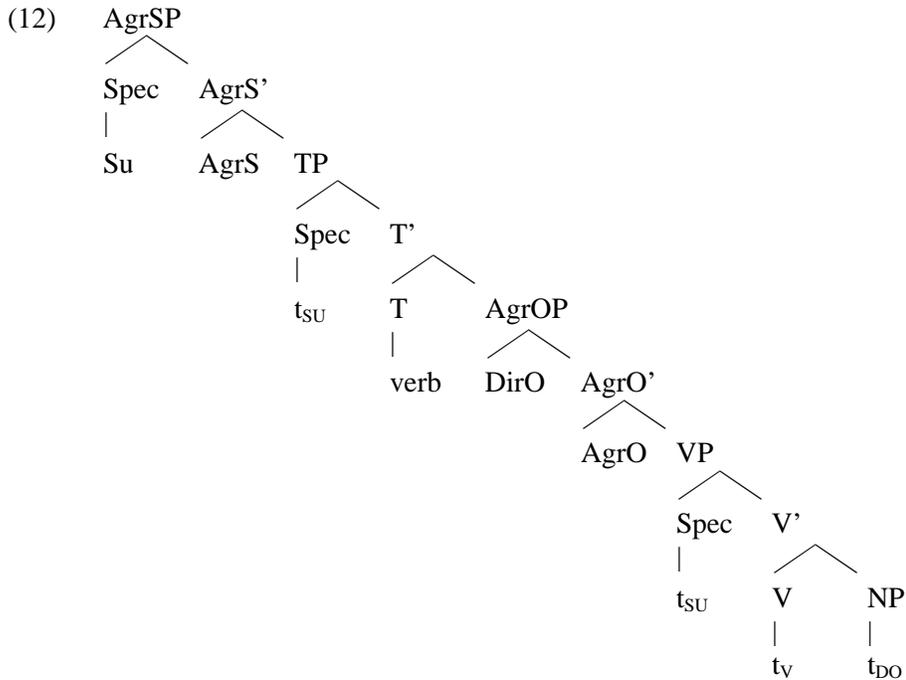
Cornilescu (1997) argues that there is both morphological and syntactic evidence for a split IP in Romanian that accommodates at least the verbal categories of Mood, Tense, and Aspect, hierarchically ordered as in (11). The author suggests an analysis in which the finite verb raises and adjoins overtly to M° in all types of Romanian clauses.

- (11) MoodP > AgrSP > TenseP > AspP

Motapanyane (1995) and Ștefănescu (1997), on the other hand, argue that a distinction should be kept between structures involving an auxiliary and simple structures. In simple

structures, the finite verb is assumed by both authors to raise to the highest functional head. This is the AgrS head in Motapanyane’s analysis and the Person head in Ștefănescu’s. We consider each analysis in turn.

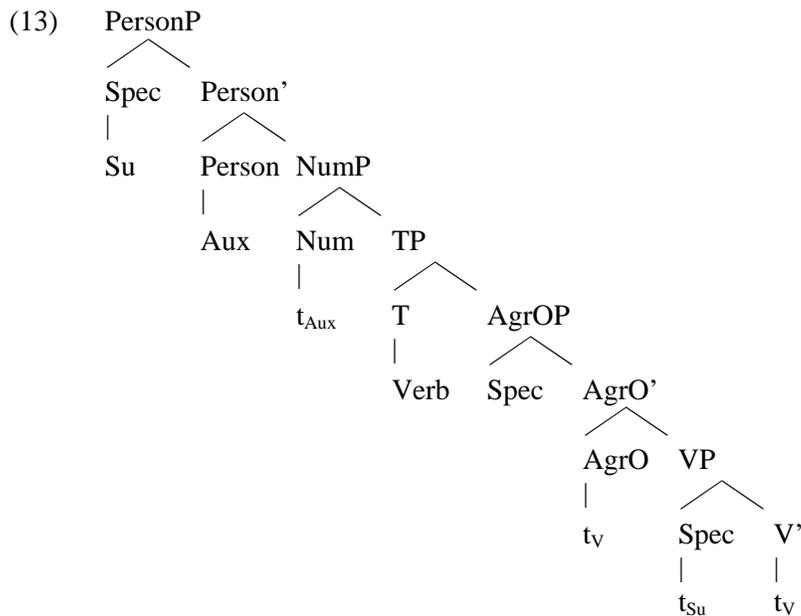
In complex structures, Motapanyane analyses the auxiliary to be base-generated under Tense and to move to AgrS to check its agreement features; the lexical verb then raises only as high as the Tense head and left-adjoins to the auxiliary trace. The adjacency requirement between the auxiliary and the lexical verb is captured in Motapanyane by positing that subjects can never surface in Spec,TP, a constraint attributed to the Extended Projection Principle (EPP).⁸ Motapanyane’s exploded IP is reminiscent of Pollock (1989) with AgrS being the highest functional head in the Romanian declarative clausal architecture, as shown in (12).⁹



⁸ Motapanyane’s (1995) analysis for Romanian mirrors Belletti’s (1990) analysis for Italian, in assuming that the EPP feature is present on AgrS and that subject NPs will be attracted into Spec,AgrS.

⁹ Motapanyane (1995) argues that the existence of Mood as a syntactic head is limited to subjunctive and non-finite clauses.

Ștefănescu (1997) further splits the AgrSP into a Number Phrase and a Person Phrase, for which the author argues there is both dialectal and diachronic evidence. In this analysis, the auxiliary is base-generated in the Number head and overtly moved to the Person head by head-to-head-movement. The lexical verb will only raise as far as the Number head where it left-adjoins to the trace of the auxiliary. To capture the obligatory auxiliary - verb adjacency, the author retains Dobrovie-Sorin's (1994a) suggestion that not all functional heads have Specifiers and adopts the necessary assumption that the NumberP does not project a Specifier position. The declarative IP is then split as in (13).¹⁰



¹⁰ Ștefănescu (1997) argues there is good reason to believe that AgrOP is also split into a Person phrase and a Number phrase in Romanian but does not use a 'split' notation; for details and a more extensive discussion we refer the reader to Ștefănescu (1997).

2.2.2 The verbal complex revisited

We concluded section 2.2 by adopting V° to I° raising in Romanian, which we exemplified with main clause contexts. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that the lexical verb raises into the functional domain even in non-finite contexts; consider the infinitival examples in (14).

- (14) a. [IP A rosti [VP adesea t_V asemenea cuvinte]], e dureros.
INF utter often such words, is painful
'It is painful to often utter such words.'
- b. *[IP A [VP adesea rosti asemenea cuvinte]], e dureros.
INF often utter such words, is painful
'It is painful to often utter such words.'

In the topicalized infinitival subject clause in (14), the VP-adjoined adverb *adesea* 'often' cannot surface preverbally, which we take to indicate verb raising to the inflectional domain. The challenge then is to decide what the lexical verb targets within the Romanian IP. In order to do so, we first need to address the status of the elements that are part of the Romanian verbal complex.

In section 2.1, we showed that the elements under consideration require a syntactic host (i.e., a domain of cliticization), so they lack the freedom of and cannot be viewed as 'words'. The question is whether these morphemes should then be treated as affixes or clitics. In this section, we investigate some of the properties of the morphemes contained within the Romanian IP and conclude that they are all clitics. A distinction needs to be made between 'syntactic' and 'phonological' clitics. Besides certain positional restrictions, phonological clitics usually manifest a restricted form from their uncliticized counterparts and can trigger/undergo phonological irregular allomorphy (cf. Spencer 1991). Syntactic clitics are primarily characterized by the requirement that they attach to a specific syntactic host (i.e., by a 'domain of

Depending on the theoretical approach adopted, the negative affix *ne-* in (18b), can be taken to display a morphologically subcategorized position to which a given root element must raise (in this case, the V + adverb complex), in order to saturate the affix. This negated verb complex would then raise to the position hosting the gerundive affix *-ind*, itself unsaturated. Alternatively, in minimalist terms, the entire gerundive form, *nemaicitind* ‘not reading anymore’ is analysed as inserted fully inflected from within the lexicon. Since at Spell-Out, it precedes pronominal clitics, the inflected verb will have raised to check its morpho-syntactic gerundive feature in C° (or M°). Though we adopt this latter perspective, the essence of our story is not theory dependent. As a sentence negator, we assume the free negative morpheme *nu* ‘not’ to be a syntactic clitic whose domain of cliticization is IP.

Insofar as subordinate particles are concerned, namely subjunctive *sã* and infinitive *a*, we assume they cannot be viewed as affixes since they appear to the left of clitic material. However, we have seen that pronominal and auxiliary clitics do not block verb raising to their left, while the subjunctive particle *sã* has been argued (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a) to block head-movement in examples such as (19) below (i.e., the verb cannot raise to Comp because of the intervening head, *sã*).

- (19) a. *Sã* *se* *întîmple* *ce* *s-o* *întîmpla!*
 SUBJ SE happen what SE-CL.3SG.ACC.F happen¹³
 ‘May whatever happen, happen!’
- b. * *Sã* *întîmplă-se* *ce* *s-o* *întîmpla!*
 * SUBJ happen-SE what SE-CL.3SG.ACC.F happen
 ‘May whatever happen, happen!’

¹³ *se* ‘SE’ is a pronominal clitic used in middles, passives, and some impersonal structures. It is a homonym of the reflexive in Romance but should be kept distinct from the latter (cf. Dobrovie-Sorin 1994b).

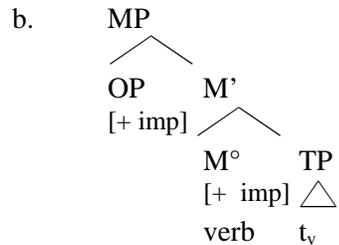
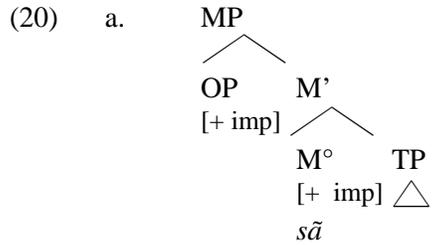
- c. *Întîmplă-se sã ce s-o întîmpla!
 happen-SE SUBJ what SE-CL.3SG.ACC.F happen
 ‘May whatever happen, happen!’
- d. Întîmplă-se ce s-o întîmpla!
 happen-SE what SE-CL.3SG.ACC.F happen
 ‘May whatever happen, happen!’

(19a) is a grammatical 'surrogate' imperative sentence (i.e., an imperative realized with the subjunctive, rather than with imperative morphology), in which the pronominal clitic *se* is situated above the lexical verb. In (19b-d), the lexical verb has raised above this pronominal clitic. In this case, the only grammatical imperative sentence is (19d), in which there is no subjunctive *sã* morpheme.

Notice that examples such as (19) only show that *sã* is in complementary distribution with lexical verb raising in imperative sentences. This need not imply that *sã* blocks head movement, as suggested by Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a). Under whatever theory of cliticization we adopt, it would be undesirable to have certain clitics block head movement while others fail to do so. We suggest that *sã* does not, in fact, block head movement. Rather, the presence or absence of *sã* in sentences like (19) is directly dependent on their imperative status. We assume that in imperatives, a null imperative operator will have to check its feature against a head marked for [+ imperative]. We further assume that the inflectional head hosting the [+ imperative] feature is the M(ood) head, which also serves as a host for the subjunctive particle *sã*. Since the operator is null, the [+ imperative] feature will require a lexical host for retrieval at PF (phonological interface). This lexical host is either *sã* or the raised verb, as illustrated in (20).¹⁴

¹⁴ Notice that this complementarity of distribution is unavailable in interrogatives;

- (i) a. Cine sã vinã?
 Who SUBJ come.3SG.
 b. *Vinã cine?
 come.3SG.PR who
 ‘Who should come?’



Adverbial intensifiers pose independent problems. Morphemes of the *mai* ‘more’ type are carried along by the verb across pronominal clitics, as in (18b) or (21) below.

- (21) Mai lasã-mã în pace!
 More let.2SG-CL.1SG.ACC in peace
 ‘Let me be for once!’

It would be tempting to analyse them as affixes, or base-generated directly onto the verb (cf. Rivero 1994), but complications arise. Example (22), with the adverbial preceding the clitic pronoun, while colloquial cannot be viewed as ungrammatical, which suggests a certain clitic-like flexibility.

- (22) # Mai mã lasã în pace!
 More CL.1SG.ACC let. 2SG in peace
 ‘Let me be for once!’

This suggests that the lexical verb does not raise to M° in Romanian interrogatives. We return to this discussion in chapter 4.

Moreover, while *mai* ‘more’ is usually well-behaved and respects the word order arrangement in (6), following pronominal clitics and preceding the uninflected perfective marker *fi* ‘be’, see (23a), other adverbial intensifiers sometimes show unexpected word order idiosyncrasies. For example, in (23b), *tot* ‘still’ follows the perfective marker, while in (23c) it precedes the clitic auxiliary. In (23d), certain adverbial intensifiers precede pronominal clitics, while *mai* ‘more’ occupies its usual position.

- (23) a. Ar mai fi (*mai) citit.
 AUX.COND.3 more FI (*more) read
 ‘He would have read some more.’
- b. Ar (*tot) fi tot citit.
 AUX.COND.3 (*still) FI still read
 ‘He would have still read (continuation refers to reading).’
- c. Tot ar fi citit.
 still AUX.COND.3 FI read
 ‘He would still have read (continuation refers to modality).’
- d. Prea tot l-ar mai fi pupat.
 much still CL.3SG.ACC.M-AUX.COND.3 more FI kissed
 ‘The fact that she kept on wanting to kiss him was a bit exaggerated.’

Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a) analyses short adverbs as clitics base-generated adjoined to Infl, between the auxiliary and the verb, while Motapanyane (1995) assumes adverbial intensifiers to be clitics occupying specifier positions of functional heads hosting the verb. However, if Spec,T(ense)P can be occupied by adverbial intensifiers, it is unclear why this position would not be available to Romanian subjects. As we have seen in section 2.1, this option is unacceptable since noun phrases cannot interfere with the morphemes that make up the verbal complex. In addition, it would be hard to formalize further movement of the adverb + verb complex (a problem also apparent in Dobrovie-Sorin), required in examples such as (21). XPs (i.e., the TP

formed by the verb in T° and the short adverb in Spec, TP) cannot move into head positions (i.e., C° or M°). Neither of these analyses can fully account for the word order idiosyncrasies of adverbial intensifiers in Romanian. What we suggest, in view of the examples in (23), is that adverbial intensifiers are clitics that adjoin directly to the verbal head they modify. While certain adverbials can only modify aspectual heads (i.e., *mai* ‘more’), in view of their semantics, others can modify higher functional heads (23d).¹⁵ It will become apparent when we define clitics below why adverbial intensifiers participate in verb movement and cannot be skipped, on a par with pronominal or auxiliary clitics.

The examples in (23) indirectly introduce the issue of *fi* ‘be’ (perfective). This aspectual marker appears in complementary distribution with the present perfect auxiliary and is invariable.¹⁶ It has been analysed as being part of a discontinuous morpheme together with the past participle inflection (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a), and as base-generated as a complement to T° (Motapanyane 1995). Although an affixal analysis is extremely tempting, examples such as (23b) in which a short adverb can intervene between *fi* and the past participle suggest a clitic status.

We conclude that there is sufficient reason to adopt a clitic analysis of the morphemes that enter into the build-up of the Romanian verbal complex. For all of these clitics, the domain of cliticization is the IP to which the lexical verb always raises.¹⁷

¹⁵ The difference in short adverb positioning in (23) resembles scope issues. When short adverbials scope over the whole verbal complex they may appear higher up in the clitic complex, when they scope exclusively over V, they are positioned lower.

¹⁶ For a detailed description see Dobrovie-Sorin (1990a, 1994a).

¹⁷ It is generally assumed (Belletti 1982, 1990, Koopman 1984, Kayne 1991, and so on) that verbs that fail to move to Infl cannot serve as hosts for clitics, a constraint which is also operative in Romanian. The examples in (i) show that the lexical verb in-situ is an insufficient host for the Romanian clitics:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----|------------------------|------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| (i) | a. | *Pot | [_{VP} îl | mai | vedea]. |
| | | can.1SG.PR | [_{VP} CL.3SG.ACC.M | more | see] |
| | b. | Îl | mai | pot | [_{VP} vedea]. |
| | | CL.3SG.ACC.M | more | can.1SG.PR | [_{VP} see] |
| | | ‘I can still see him.’ | | | |

Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a: 47) defines syntactic clitics as “X° elements that do not project a maximal category” and are “generated in adjunction positions to Infl or any Inflⁿ projection that presents no (Spec, Iⁿ)”. This additional stipulation is necessary because some clitics are taken to adjoin directly to Infl (for example, short adverbs), while others are taken to adjoin to IP (for example, pronominal clitics). While considered X° (zero-level) elements, according to Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a), clitics cannot be viewed as occupying head positions since, by definition, they do not project maximal categories. What the author is trying to capture, is the fact that, clitics do not have specifiers and that some of them are carried along in verb raising, while others can be skipped.

Minimalist theory permits us to refine these concepts in a manner which brings them into line with more general rules of phrase structure and rids them of the unnecessary complications posed by phrasal adjunction. Under minimalism (Chomsky 1995, 1998), specifier positions are not automatically present with the merging of a new head and are, in fact, absent, unless created by additional requirements (see section 2.3.2).¹⁸ Maximal categories, on the other hand, are obligatory. Consequently, X° categories which do not project specifiers will nevertheless be maximal, meaning that they will be an XP and an X° simultaneously. Let us define X° categories. According to Chomsky (1995:9), they are zero-level categories which can either be a head, or a category formed by adjunction to a head X, which projects. For example, the zero-level projection of the T head (i.e., T°), has V and perhaps more adjoined to it. Syntactic clitics can then be viewed as heads (understood as terminal elements) without a specifier. We suggest a

In (i), the modal verb *a putea* ‘can’ selects a bare infinitive (i.e., a bare VP) and none of the clitics can surface on the lower verb since syntactic clitics in Romanian need to be associated with the IP.

¹⁸ In the Minimalist theory, specifiers are projected/created whenever zero-level categories have uninterpretable features that:

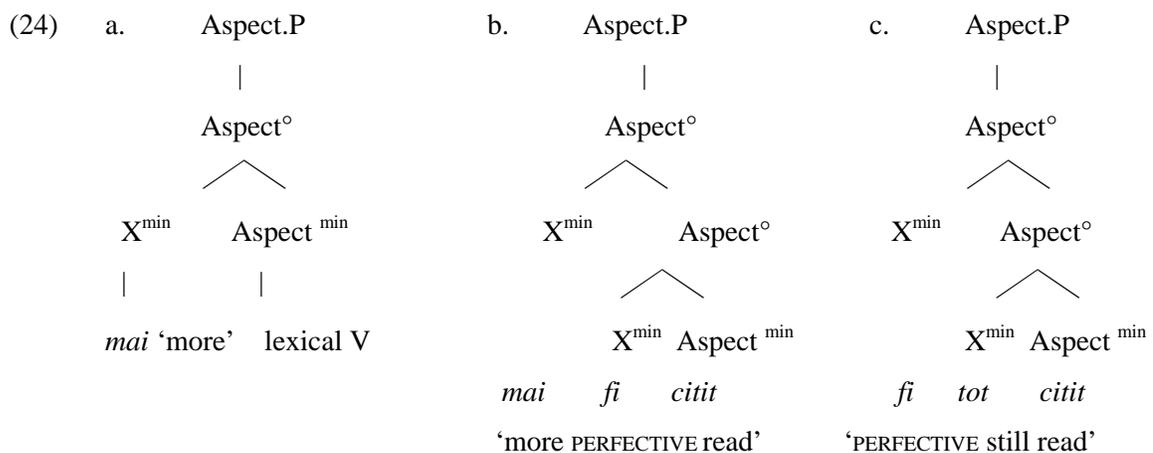
(i) need to be checked prior to Spell-Out;

(ii) can only be checked as a result of Move XP (i.e., Agree + Merge XP).

The above conditions entail raising of XPs into a specifier relationship to the head whose features match that of the raised XP.

distinction between adverbial intensifiers and the perfective marker *fi* ‘be’, as opposed to the rest of the Romanian syntactic clitics (i.e., subordinate particles, the free negative morpheme, pronominal clitics and auxiliaries).

We take adverbial intensifiers and the perfective marker *fi* ‘be’ to be terminal elements of the category X^{\min} which adjoin to functional verbal heads and form X° which projects, as in (24). We label these types of clitics as ‘clitic₁’. Clitic₁ never projects its own XP.¹⁹



Essentially, adverbial intensifiers may adjoin to a verbal head within IP (usually Aspect, in view of their semantics) but do not, themselves, project. The perfective marker *fi* ‘be’ also adjoins to the Aspect head without independently projecting. In order for Aspect[◦] to be projected, the lexical verb needs to raise out of the VP and head-adjoin onto the Aspect terminal element. The structure in (24) can account for why adverbial intensifiers have an affixal flavour, in that they are carried along in verb raising structures (and not skipped on a par with pronominal clitics and auxiliaries). Since the resulting structure is an X° element, it will move as such.

¹⁹ Remember that we have established these morphemes are clitics (in view of their flexibility), so they cannot be inserted on the verb, but have to be base-generated in positions that are within the Inflectional domain. Essentially, we assume that clitic adverbs adjoin to heads, in a manner that mirrors XP-adjunction of adverbs that are XPs. See also Travis (1988) for a proposal in which adverbs may be adjoined to functional heads.

Apart from adverbial intensifiers and perfective *fi* ‘be’, Romanian syntactic clitics are heads of the X° category. We label these clitics as ‘clitic₂’. We assume clitic₂ always forms maximal categories (XPs). These maximal categories lack specifiers, as exemplified in (25).²⁰

(25)	a.	Mood.P Mood [°] <i>a</i> (INF), <i>sã</i> (SUBJ)	b.	Neg.P Neg [°] <i>nu</i> ‘not’	c.	Agr.P Agr [°] <i>am</i> ‘AUX.1SG’
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This analysis correctly captures Chomsky’s (1995) definition of clitics as both X° and XP elements. Moreover, it explains why pronominal and auxiliary clitics are not carried along by the verb: they are not part of the same zero-level category. However, there remains the more general problem of head movement. The Head Movement Constraint (cf. Chomsky 1986, Travis 1984) should guarantee the locality of head movement and disallow ‘skipping’ of heads (empty or filled) as in LHM constructions. More on this in the next section.

In this section, we have clarified the status of the free morphemes entering the build up of the Romanian IP. In the next section, we show the whole structure of IP and discuss lexical verb movement.

2.2.3 Verb raising: a minimalist account

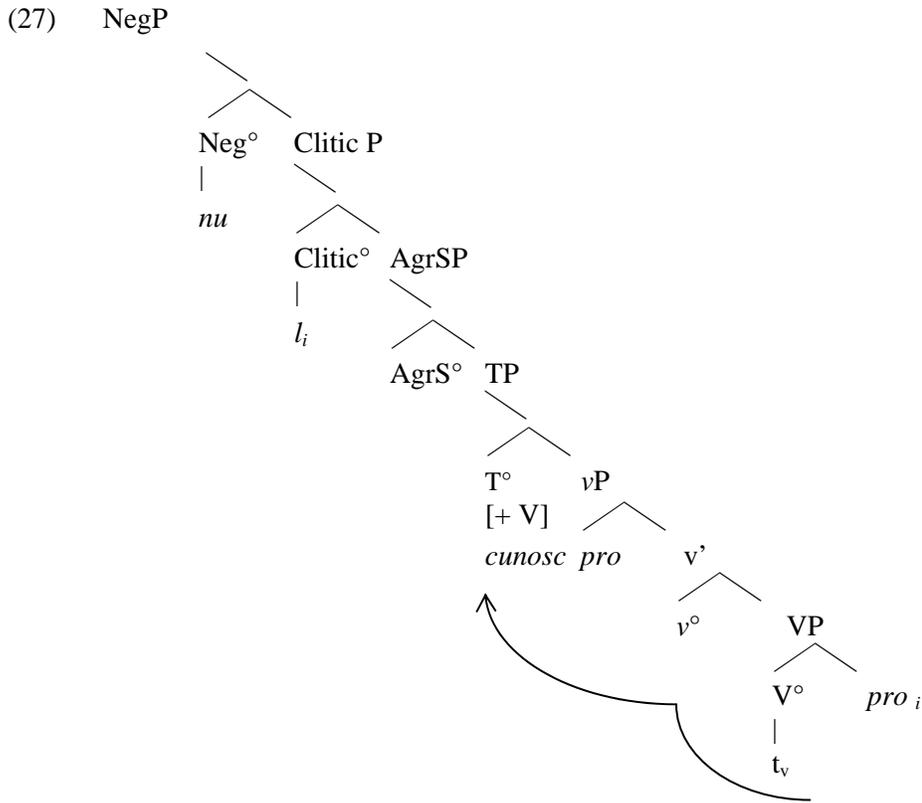
At the beginning of the previous section, we assumed lexical verb raising to the inflectional domain in Romanian and embarked upon a discussion referring to the status of the morphemes that pertain to the verbal complex. We concluded they are best analysed as clitics (as

²⁰ The issue of specifiers is rediscussed in subsequent chapters. While these XPs never project specifiers as a result of their intrinsic requirements, the highest functional head within IP can license specifiers in specific circumstances. These circumstances involve the presence of additional formal features, such as [+ wh] and [+ focus], incorporated onto the highest functional head and necessitating checking in a specifier-head relationship.

opposed to affixes) and defined them as heads which project maximal categories without specifiers (with the exception of adverbial intensifiers and perfective *fi* 'be' which do not project, but adjoin to other verbal heads). In this section, we discuss verb raising in connection to the clitic structure assumed above, as well as the need for a split IP (or lack thereof).

We retain previous observations (see section 2.2.1.) that there is evidence for a split IP in Romanian. As a result of our discussion on clitics, we take IP to consist of various combinations of the following maximal phrases: MoodP > NegP > CliticP* > AgrSP > TP > AspectP (see also chapter 1, section 1.3). For example, for the negated simple structure (without an auxiliary) in (26), we assume the syntactic tree in (27).

- (26) Nu-l cunosc.
 not-CL.3SG.ACC.M know.1SG
 'I don't know him.'



Romanian is a null-subject language (i.e., a language in which the subject need not appear) and a *pro* (small ‘pro’) is assumed in the canonical subject position (for details see section 2.3.2). Pronominal clitics are coindexed with *pros* in object position (a relationship we return to in subsequent chapters). Let us now concentrate on the verb. In minimalism, transitive verbs involve a ‘light verb’ (vP) shell. Cross-linguistically, the null light verb is assumed to be affixal in nature, so the lexical verb raises and adjoins to it. In Romanian, T° has strong verbal features ($[+V]$) and attracts the X° head which contains the lexical verb (in this case, the $[V^\circ + v^\circ]$ complex). Lexical verbs in simple structures are inflected for subject agreement. Consequently, an $AgrS^\circ$ head is projected in the derivation as the head in which subject agreement (ϕ -) features are checked. The question, however, is whether in (27) we need to postulate further verb movement to $AgrS^\circ$, or whether the ϕ -features can be checked via some sort of feature percolation mechanism once the verb has raised to T° . We suggest that no further verb movement is involved. $AgrS^\circ$ and T° are adjacent heads, both verbal, both nonsubstantive (i.e., functional), with matching features and no intervening specifier. Both Agr° and T° are L-related to the verb (cf. Chomsky and Lasnik 1993), and the ϕ -features of Agr° are shared by the lexical verb in T° . In effect, the two heads become undistinguishable and vacuous movement is as unnecessary as it is undesirable (since under Minimalism movement should be in principle avoided).²¹ The lexical verb (now the $[V^\circ + v^\circ]$ complex) will only raise as far as the first I° head, in this case, the Tense head. This idea of

²¹ Our intuitions have been previously captured by Dobrovie-Sorin’s (1994a) hypothesis that Agr and T form a merged projection of the T/Agr type in Romanian. In a more general context, ‘matching’ or ‘merging’ of functional categories has been proposed by Culicover (1999), Giorgi and Pianesi (1997), and Haider (1988). Crucial to all of these analyses is the absence of specifier requirement between two merged/matched functional projections and feature sharing. Alternatively, we can argue along the lines of Chomsky (1995) who suggests that strong features can be also checked by *attraction*, rather than movement. Attraction is a strictly local operation whereby a head can only check the feature of the head or specifier of its complement. Chomsky (1995) introduces attraction to account for English interrogative sentences with an interrogative subject, in which there is no evidence for subject wh-movement from Spec,IP to Spec,CP. Chomsky’s checking via attraction has been further expanded by Bobaljik (1995), who assumes that all local relations, including the head complement relation, are potential checking relations.

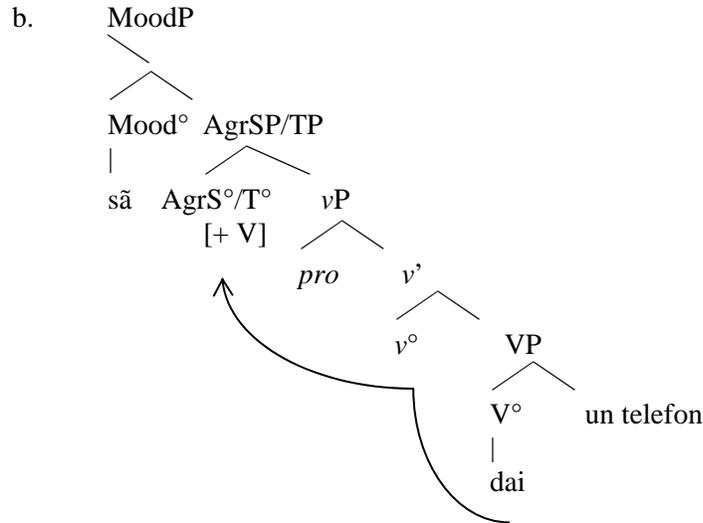
The lexical verb (i.e., the past participle) raises and adjoins to the light verb and further to the perfective morpheme *fi* 'be', base-generated under Aspect. T° in Romanian has strong verbal features which need to be checked for the derivation to converge. However, the verb has already raised within IP, namely as far as Aspect (merged in the derivation as a result of *fi*) and we assume there is no need for further verb raising to T° for checking of the strong verbal feature to occur. Lack of a specifier position between TP and AspectP in effect collapses the two verbal heads, as previously discussed for AgrS° and T°. ²²

Notice that we do not assume a uniform clause structure (cf. also Grimshaw 1991, Wurmbrand 1998). Rather, we suggest that the build-up of the Romanian IP can vary depending on clause type, so that only the functional categories for which there is empirical evidence are present. This is consistent with the fact that grammatical structure should be kept to a minimum, which follows from the more general condition of economy. ²³ A further example is the subjunctive sentence in (30a), represented in (30b), in which the IP splits into Mood, Agreement, and Tense.

- (30) a. Să dai un telefon.
 SUBJ give2SG a phone
 'Make a phone call.'

²² In structures without an Aspect phrase, the [V° + v°] complex will raise as far as T°, since the strong [+ V] feature cannot remain unchecked.

²³ See also Rizzi's (1995/97) 'Avoid structure' principle.



In (28)-(30), the raised lexical verb does not move above the Tense head. In simple structures, AgrS° is not distinguished from T°, while in complex structures, AgrS° is occupied by the auxiliary inflected for agreement. In structures where there is evidence for an Aspectual head, as in (29), the lexical verb will be able to check the strong verbal features on T° directly from the Aspect head. Our analysis, in effect, has a ‘shortest move’ flavour, which is in keeping with minimalist assumptions introduced in Chomsky (1993) and subsequent work.

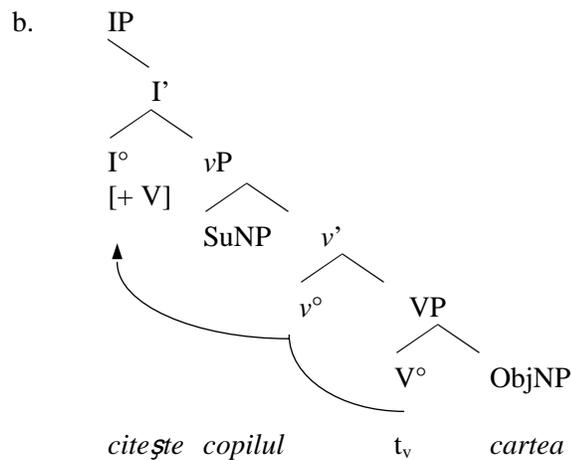
Our next observation refers to the nature of the Romanian split IP.²⁴ The Romanian IP does not allow for intermediary specifier positions, since it is made up entirely of the clitic system discussed in the previous section. Absence of specifier positions entails absence of noun phrases within IP. Consequently, noun phrase movement will never target positions within the IP. For the purposes of noun phrase movement then, we can reduce the verbal heads within the Inflectional domain to a single one, namely I°.^{25, 26}

²⁴ See Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a) for a discussion on the difference between IP in Romanian as opposed to the other Romance languages.

²⁵ Such an account is also supported by the fact that the entire verbal complex (i.e., verb + clitics) behaves like a single morphological unit. To exemplify, we use an ellipsis test, following Rivero (1997), to determine what counts as a morphological complex. In Romanian, deletion in coordinate structures can only apply to the verbal complex as a whole, and never to parts of it.

Given that I° always consists of T° which hosts a strong [+ V] feature, we can say that I° has a strong [+ V] feature which will always attract lexical verb raising. A sentence such as (31a) will be syntactically represented as in (31b).

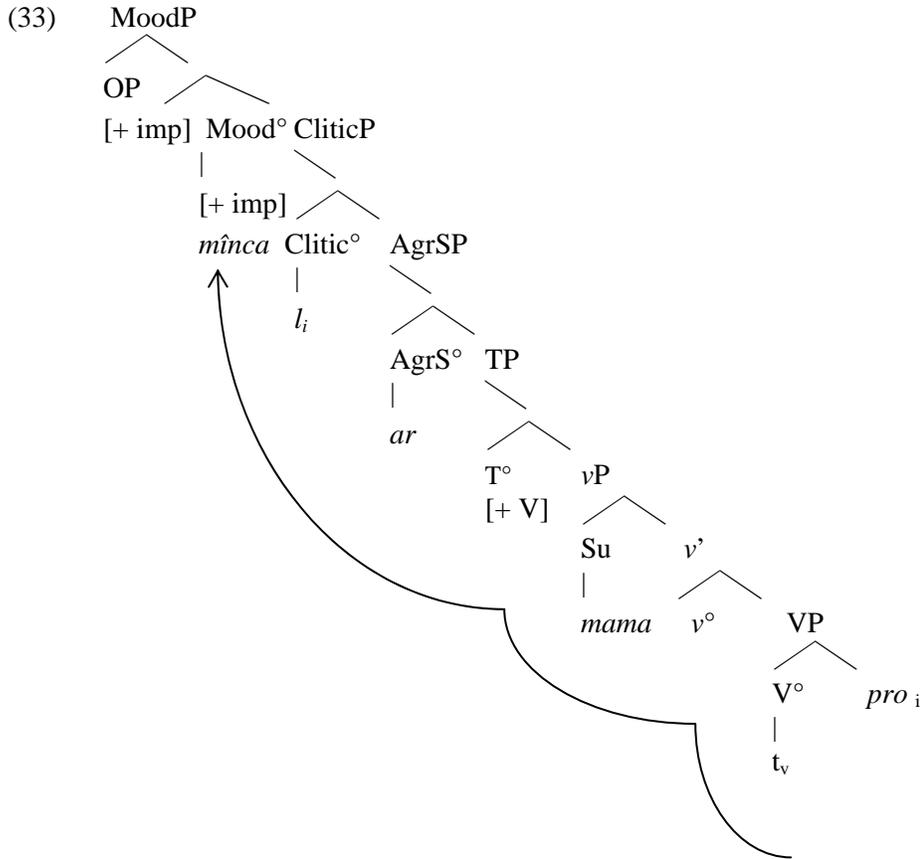
- (31) a. Citește copilul cartea.
 read.3SG.PR child-the book-the
 ‘The child is reading the book.’



Let us now return to Long Head Movement (LHM) structures. Romanian shares with the Balkan languages and earlier stages of some Romance languages the property of non-finite verb raising (i.e., participial and infinitival forms) to a position across the inflected auxiliary. This type of movement, defined as Long Head Movement (LHM) by Rivero (1989, et seq.), has been the focus of discussion of several authors (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a, Lema and Rivero 1991,

-
- (i)a. M-a văzut citind și m-a auzit cântînd.
 CL.1SG.ACC.-AUX.3SG seen reading and CL.1SG.ACC.-AUX.3SG heard singing
 b. M-a văzut citind și *(m-a) auzit cântînd.
 CL.1SG.ACC.-AUX.3SG seen reading and *(CL.1SG.ACC.-AUX.3SG) heard singing
 ‘He saw me reading and he heard me singing.’

²⁶ Recall that we do not follow Chomsky (1995, 1998) in using T° as the umbrella term for Inflection, but prefer I° (see chapter 1, section 1.3). There will be several instances when reference will be made to the split IP. In particular, when we discuss LHM structures, feature syncretism, object *pro* licensing, among others.



In LHM structures, we posit an empty operator OP in the specifier of the Mood phrase. This operator (responsible for the specific illocutionary force) needs to be licensed by an overt element in M° , so verb raising applies.²⁷ The question is, how is it that verb movement is possible in the manner suggested in (33), where two heads have been skipped. Given the Head Movement Constraint (cf. Chomsky 1986, Travis 1984), which argues for locality of head movement, we would expect such a derivation to result in ungrammaticality. However, it does not. We propose that all the verbal heads that enter into the Romanian IP configuration are in a local relationship with each other and implicitly equally accessible. We suggest this ‘symmetric equidistance’ to be due to: (i) the fact that the Romanian IP consists exclusively of clitic as opposed to lexical material, and (ii) the absence of IP-internal specifiers ensured by (i). We assume such an IP to

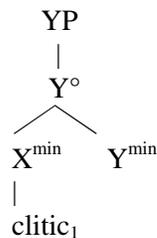
²⁷ Notice that category matching/merging cannot apply in this case, since the feature [+ imperative] is not shared by any of the other functional heads.

have equally accessible heads. In conclusion, skipping heads within the Romanian IP does not count as a Head Movement Constraint violation. In (33), the empty [+ imperative] feature in M° requires a lexical host, so verb raising to M° applies. As a result of their clitic status, neither the pronominal, nor the auxiliary in (33) can move to M° , the only candidate being the lexical verb in T° .²⁸

2.2.4 Summing up

To conclude this section, we point out the following. The morphemes that enter into the build-up of the Romanian verbal complex are syntactic clitics, rather than affixes. We defined clitics as terminal elements and distinguished between two types in Romanian:

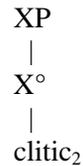
(i) clitic₁:



- includes short adverbs and the perfective marker *fi* ‘be’.
- represents a terminal elements of the X^{min} type which adjoins to functional verbal heads, forming a zero-level category (i.e., Y°) that projects as a specifier-less category.

²⁸ Our analysis is in the spirit of Rivero (1997), who argues that only languages with functional auxiliaries (i.e., auxiliaries which lack lexical status) display LHM. However, our assumptions can also account for why pronominal clitics are skipped.

(ii) clitic₂:



- includes pronominal clitics, auxiliaries, the negative morpheme *nu* ‘not’, and the infinitival and subjunctive mood markers (*a* and *să*, respectively);
- represent terminal elements of the X° type and project maximal categories without specifiers.

The essence of clitic-hood is its licensing domain and its head status. Unlike affixes, which are base-generated onto the lexical verb, clitics are functional morphemes (i.e., IP-related). Moreover, while affixes are inserted as part of and together with their lexical host, clitics are heads inserted into the derivation independently of their lexical host. However, in contrast to words, clitics need a well-defined syntactic host and cannot move; their flexibility of position (see, for example, pronominal clitics in Romance) is always the result of other elements moving around them.

Insofar as the Romanian IP is concerned, we suggested it consists of a series of heads, all of which lack specifiers. Furthermore, the Romanian IP was argued to enable head-merge/collapse (with relevant consequences for feature checking and movement) and Long Head Movement, due to the absence of IP internal specifiers and clitic status of IP-related morphemes. We assumed a strong [+ V] feature on the Romanian T° head which always triggers lexical verb raising to the Inflectional domain, but only to the closest Infl head. Such an approach unifies, in a sense, the spirit of several previous proposals made for IP in this language: the split-IP hypothesis (Cornilescu 1997, Motapanyane 1995, Ștefănescu 1997), the non-distinct nature of AgrP and TenseP in Romanian (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a), the non-unitary target of lexical verb raising (Motapanyane 1995, Ștefănescu 1997). However, it maintains a distinct flavour by favouring

head-merge over vacuous movement, by assuming symmetric equidistance of heads, and by viewing clitics as heads projecting XPs.

2.3 Subject positions and NP licensing

In the Generative framework, an NP is licensed (i.e., ‘visible’), if it is theta-marked and Case marked (with either structural or lexical Case). Subjects are generally assumed to be base-generated in Spec,VP (Koopman and Sportiche 1991), which is a theta-marked, Case-less position. In a language such as English, the subject NP moves to the Specifier of IP where it is assigned Nominative Case in a Spec-Head agreement configuration, which is a form of “feature sharing” (Chomsky 1986: 24).

In section 2.1, we showed that word order sequences in the Romanian preverbal field are not in fact ‘free’ from an interpretive point of view, which suggested that the unmarked word order (in the sense of neutral) in Romanian is VSO²⁹. Therefore, post-verbal subjects have been generally assumed to reside in their base-generated position (i.e., Spec,VP) (see Cornilescu 1997, Dobrovie-Sorin 1990a, 1994a, Motapanyane 1989, Ștefănescu 1995, 1997), at least prior to LF.

2.3.1 Brief overview of previous analyses

Initially, in-situ subjects were analysed as acquiring Nominative Case under government by the verb that had raised to Inflection (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a, Motapanyane 1989). Later studies, adopted a checking analysis in which Spec,VP cannot be viewed as a Case position. Motapanyane (1995) argues that Nominative Case checking for post-verbal subjects takes place at LF. She proposes that subjects raise to Spec,IP (Spec,TP in her analysis) covertly - this position

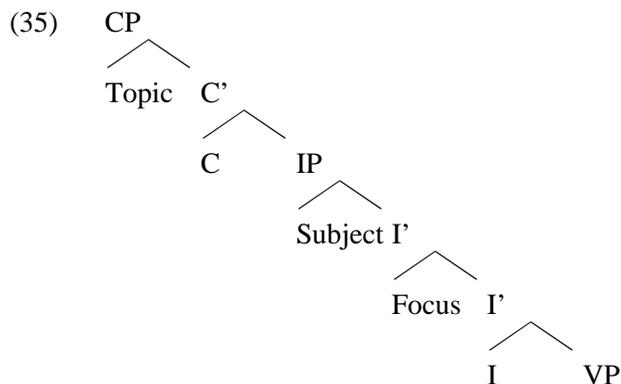
²⁹ This is not to say that VSO is the underlying word order in the Romanian clause structure. As we have seen in the previous section, there is evidence to suggest that Romanian is underlyingly SVO, but that the verb always raises and incorporates into I^o (or a head thereof, depending on the analysis adopted).

being unavailable to subjects in the overt syntax as a result of the EPP constraint. Cornilescu (1997) offers two alternative analyses for in-situ lexical subjects: they may either raise at LF to a subject-Case position (which for the author is Spec,AgrSP in the default case), or they can acquire Case in Spec,VP by coindexation with *pro*, an expletive licensed by the Romanian Agr head. On the other hand, Ștefănescu (1995) argues (on the basis of control and binding facts) that Nominative Case checking can only be overt in Romanian and that consequently, the subject does not raise out of Spec,VP at LF. The author suggests a solution along the lines of Chomsky (1986) and Rizzi (1986a), who discuss A-chains created by head movement of the finite verb to Inflection. V° -to- T° raising creates a chain in which the head and the tail of the chain are coindexed, thereby enabling the NP in Spec,VP to check the strong case feature of T° , by transitivity.

Also debated is the status of the landing site of raised subjects. Dobrovie-Sorin (1994a) assumes that the preverbal subject has been assigned Nominative Case in Spec,VP and has further moved to Spec,IP which is a Topic position (a non-argumental/non L-related position). In Dobrovie-Sorin's account, this is the position which also hosts topicalized elements such as object NPs and adverbials, as in (34).

- (34) a. Mîine vor veni cei mai de seamă musafiri.
tomorrow FUT.3PL come those more of important guests
'The most important guests will come tomorrow.'
- b. Nimic nu știți.
Nothing not know.2PL.PR
'You know nothing'
- c. Ion nu vine.
Ion not come.3SG.PR
'Ion isn't coming'

Motapanyane (1994a-b, 1995) argues against a non-argumental preverbal subject position and keeps distinct the position occupied by the fronted subject NP from that of topicalized and contrastively focused elements. The author assumes that movement of the subject NP to the preverbal position creates A-chains since it does not interfere with movement to Focus. The preverbal subject is taken to land in the highest Specifier of the functional projection hosting the raised finite verb, an argumental position located between Topic and Focus. The distinction between the functions of preverbal positions is then established as follows: topicalized elements appear in Spec,CP, a position which also hosts wh-elements; the subject position is the argumental Spec,IP (in a non-split IP) and the focus position is adjoined to I', immediately below, as in (35).



Cornilescu (1997) analyses the preverbal subject position as non-L-related (in the spirit of Dobrovie-Sorin 1994a). Moreover, this author argues that there are two post-verbal subject positions available in Romanian, both of which are available at Spell-Out and both of which are argumental (i.e., Spec,AgrSP and Spec,VP). Cornilescu draws on morphological and syntactic evidence, largely basing her analysis on a comparison of clitic doubled subjects in Romanian with their counterparts in different Italian dialects. Following the theoretical assumption that weak pronouns and clitics have to occupy their Case-checking position before Spell-Out (cf. Cardinaletti 1996), subject clitics are taken to indicate the AgrS and the Nominative Case position

in the Romanian clause. While full NP subjects can appear both pre- and post-verbally, clitic subjects are constrained to occupy the post-verbal position as in (36), in which the lexical verb is assumed to have raised to M° , above AgrS° .

- (36) a. Vine el tata.
 come.3SG.PR he-SuCL father-the
 ‘Dad’ll come.’
- b. * El vine tata.
 he-SuCL come.3SG.PR father-the
 ‘Dad’ll come.’
- c. Tata vine el.
 dad-the come.3SG.PR he-SuCL
 ‘Dad’ll come.’

Since the subject clitic in (36) is taken to occupy Spec,AgrSP , (36) is analysed as evidence for the existence of two post-verbal argumental subject positions in Romanian (i.e., Spec,AgrSP and Spec,VP).³⁰

In conclusion, there seems to be ongoing debate as to the syntactic positions occupied by both preverbal and postverbal subjects in Romanian, as well as the mechanisms of structural Case assignment.

2.3.2 EPP, Case-licensing and Minimalism

In order to account for the empirical data briefly introduced in section 2.1, in which we showed the preverbal field to be semantically constrained by a specificity requirement, we

³⁰ Rizzi (p.c.) remarks that, in other Romance languages, the postverbal subject in (36c) would be stressed. Given that in the Romanian example in (36c) the postverbal pronoun is also stressed and given that stressed pronouns are not clitics, *el* 'he' should probably not be analysed as a subject clitic in this instance.

propose an analysis which essentially favours the (initial) view of generative theory that thematic and Case positions may coincide. We make the following crucial theoretical assumption related to the Case licensing of Romanian NPs:

- (37) Romanian NPs check Case in initial Merge positions
(i.e., in their base-generated, thematic position).

There are several corollaries derived from the assumption in (37):

- (i) Romanian NPs never move/raise for Case-checking purposes, not even in unaccusative or passive structures.
- (ii) Case checking is always a pre-Spell-Out mechanism (cf. also Ștefănescu 1995, but contra Cornilescu, 1997, Motapanyane 1995).³¹
- (iii) Romanian lacks a preverbal Nominative Case position (i.e., a Spec,IP Case-related position).

The theoretical assumption in (37), alongside its three corollaries can be formalized in a number of ways. In what follows, we offer an implementation that relies on the nature of the EPP feature in Romanian.

Contrary to previous assumptions, current research (Adger 1996, Bittner and Hale 1996, Chomsky 1998) inclines to view structural Case as a syntactic feature that is incapable of inducing movement. Case gets assigned/checked/erased (depending on the theoretical framework) as a result of structural factors that exist independently of Case itself. In his 1998 paper (henceforth, MP98), Chomsky claims that Case checking is “ancillary” to other feature-checking mechanisms. This much we fully adopt, especially since it seems to have support from previous

³¹ Aside from the empirical data to be discussed in section 2.5, this corollary is supported by the theory-internal assumption that Case, as a semantically vacuous uninterpretable feature is unavailable to LF operations.

work (e.g. ‘Dependent Case Theories’,³² cf. Harley 1995, Massam 1985, among others). Notice, however, that once we adopt this view and assume that Case (in and of itself) is insufficient to determine the noun phrase’s structural position, we also commit ourselves to the possibility that Case is assigned in-situ. In other words, we cannot a priori exclude a language in which structural Case is assigned/checked/erased in Merge positions (i.e., the position in which the noun phrase is introduced from the lexicon into the derivation). While in the MP98 this option is not considered, since Chomsky discusses English, in which subject NPs move for independent reasons, we argue that it holds for Romanian. Specifically, as claimed in (37), Romanian NPs check Case in Merge positions.

Let us first familiarize ourselves with the claims made in MP98 regarding structural Case. Consider the example in (38) from Chomsky (1998:36), also discussed in chapter 1, section 1.2.

(38) an unpopular candidate T-was elected t

Chomsky assumes three kinds of uninterpretable features, i.e., features that need to be checked in order for the derivation to converge, in the structure in (38): (i) the agreement features of T° (i.e., the phi-set), (ii) the EPP feature of T° , and (iii) the structural Case feature of *an unpopular candidate*. Of the above features, only (ii) is assumed to require dislocation/ "second Merge" (i.e., that something be moved and merged as Spec,TP). (i) identifies T° as the target of dislocation, (ii) requires dislocation, and (iii) identifies *an unpopular candidate* as a candidate for such merger and dislocation applies (i.e., the subject NP surfaces as Spec,TP). EPP is a selectional feature, namely a feature that requires checking in a Spec-Head configuration, so it seeks an XP to merge with the category it heads. Phi-features and structural Case are uninterpretable features but not

³² The term ‘Dependent Case Theories’ was first introduced by Richards (1997) who uses it as an umbrella-term to refer to different theories that “deny the premise that particular morphological cases are linked to particular AgrPs. Rather, the case that appears on a given NP is determined by which other structural cases have been checked in that clause” (Richards 1997:97).

selectional features. Unlike the EPP feature, these never induce movement. Chomsky suggests we consider the phi-features as a ‘probe’ that seeks a ‘goal’, namely, “matching features that establish agreement” (1998:37). For the phi-set of T° in (38), there is only one choice matching its features: the phi-set of *candidate*. Once it has located its goal, the probe is assumed to erase under matching. Correlatively, the structural Case of *an unpopular candidate* also erases (under matching with the probe). This is the essence of the operation Chomsky terms “Agree’: the erasure of uninterpretable features of probe and goal. However, since the EPP of T° has to be satisfied, the phrase *an unpopular candidate* pied-pipes and merges as the specifier of T° . The operation ‘Move’ (composed of ‘Agree’ and ‘Merge’) eliminates all uninterpretable features and the utterance in (38) is grammatical.

Let us next review the essence of the EPP feature. The EPP started out as expressing a theory-internal general principle which required that all functions must be saturated (Chomsky 1986). More specifically, given that all X° were seen to require Spec,XPs, the EPP engendered a specifier position on IP, which was otherwise not forced by the theta-related Projection Principle. Under Minimalism such a requirement is no longer tenable, since specifiers are not obligatory. The EPP was therefore reformulated as a [D] feature on I° which was checked as a result of Merge (‘there’-insertion) or subject Move into Spec,IP (Chomsky 1995). Chomsky (1998) argues that the EPP cannot, in fact, be stated as a [D] feature, since true [D] relates to referentiality/specificity in some sense. It is now maintained as a selectional feature, uninterpretable and nonsemantic, satisfied only as a result of dislocation; specifically, movement and second Merge of the subject NP as Spec,IP (Spec,TP in Chomsky’s notation). The EPP is still seen as a feature that refers to the Extended Projection Principle, in the sense that it determines positions not forced by the Projection Principle. Chomsky (1998) suggests the EPP may be universal, though he fails to discuss the implications for VSO languages.

What is the status of the EPP feature in languages such as Romanian, in which the subject noun phrase does not surface in the preverbal field (unless interpreted as contrastive focus, topic

or otherwise constrained by factors other than subjecthood), in which the default order is VSO, and the verb is in I°? There are two logical possibilities to this question. One is to argue that the EPP feature is altogether absent in these languages (cf. McCloskey 1997, for Irish), the other to maintain the EPP feature, but to argue it is checked in a manner other than by subject insertion into Spec,IP (cf. Massam and Smallwood 1996, for Niuean, Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1999, for Greek). Massam and Smallwood (1996:2) suggest that “a predicate is a projection with an open place which must be satisfied in the syntactic component”. In other words, predication cross-linguistically involves obligatory checking of a privileged feature. The authors argue that in English, the equivalent of the notion of ‘open place’ (i.e., the privileged feature) is the strong [D] feature, absent from Niuean. In Niuean, on the other hand, the open place is satisfied by a strong [T] feature checked off by predicate movement, realized as head adjunction to T or as movement to the specifier of T, depending on whether the predicate is X° or XP. In Niuean then, it is V-fronting that satisfies EPP. Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1999) also argue that, in Greek (and possibly null-subject languages in general), the EPP feature is satisfied by verb-movement and never by Move or expletive insertion. These authors, however, assume that EPP is synonymous with a [D] feature for all languages. This [D] feature is satisfied either by a subject in Spec,IP or by the presence of subject agreement on the verb in I° (i.e., null-subject languages).

We assume that uninterpretable formal features (FFs) are essentially of two kinds: (i) selectional (or strong) and (ii) non-selectional (or weak), an option parametrized across languages and FF type. Non-selectional features will be defined as features which check/erase in-situ, without dislocation, as a result of the operation Agree, which only requires feature matching (i.e., identity) and closest c-command. Selectional features will be defined as features which can only be checked in a strict locality relationship, which we assume to involve either a Spec-Head *or* a head-adjunction configuration, depending on whether the respective formal feature triggers movement of an X° or an XP. Notice that we depart from Chomsky (1998) in that we assume both the Spec-Head configuration *and* the head-adjunction configuration to be indicative of a

feature checking relationship. By definition, selectional features will require agreement (i.e., feature matching) and movement (i.e., ‘second Merge’). We propose that parametric variation across languages is dependent on the nature of uninterpretable features. These assumptions are consistent with economy conditions since they eliminate movement unless absolutely necessary: movement is not an intrinsic requirement of feature-checking, but a result of parametrized formal feature properties. Crucially, under these assumptions, formal feature-checking will always be overt.

Insofar as the EPP feature is concerned, we follow Chomsky (1998) who claims it to be a selectional feature cross-linguistically. Specifically, we view the EPP feature as a non-thematic position licenser, which is universally present on I° , being, in effect, the ‘privileged feature’ of Massam and Smallwood (1996). It therefore requires obligatory checking in a manner that will ensure the realization or validation of positions not forced by the Projection Principle, but by dislocation/movement and second Merge. Under our proposed feature dichotomy, selectional features may be checked either as an instance of the Spec-Head configuration or as an instance of head-adjunction. Consequently, the EPP feature on I° may be in principle checked by verb raising to I° or by subject NP dislocation to Spec,IP, depending on the nature of this feature. Specifically, we suggest that the EPP feature is not universally synonymous to [D] (cf. Massam and Smallwood 1996, but contra Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1999).³³ In Romanian, for example, we assume the EPP feature to be equivalent to a strong [V] feature on I° . This strong [V] feature attracts verb movement to I° , thus ‘activating’ the IP domain.

To conclude, we assume a universal EPP feature whose realization is parametrized across languages. Languages seem to vary as to whether they require [D], [V], or [T] as their EPP

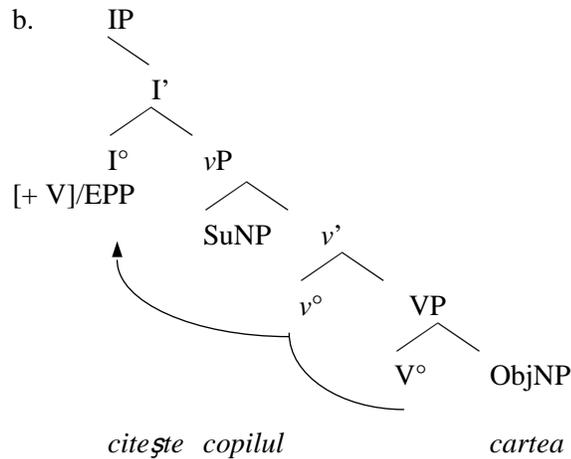
³³ One argument comes from the fact that V-movement seems to be able to satisfy the EPP feature in languages that lack strong subject-verb agreement (i.e., Celtic and Arabic), or in contexts that lack agreement in languages that otherwise manifest agreement (for example, there is evidence for V° -to- I° raising in Romanian infinitives, which otherwise lack agreement; for an illustration see example (14), section 2.2.2).

(selectional/privileged) feature. Let us call these T-type, D-type, and V-type EPP languages. In T-type EPP languages, such as Niuean (cf. Massam and Smallwood 1996), the EPP is erased by selecting the predicate and merging it as Spec,IP (when the predicate is realized as XP), or as I° (when the predicate is realized as X°). We suggest that T-type EPP languages do not in fact represent a third category, but rather, an underspecification for a [D] or a [V] feature. Furthermore, languages such as French, which require verb raising to I° (Pollock 1989), alongside subjects in Spec,IP and expletives, presumably have a 'mixed' type EPP (i.e., both a D-type and a V-type EPP feature). Nevertheless, in D-type EPP languages, such as English, the EPP feature is erased by selecting an agreeing XP (i.e., the subject) and merging it as Spec,IP. In V-type EPP languages, such as Romanian, the EPP selects the lexical verb which always undergoes raising to I°. ³⁴

Let us now consider in more detail the claim made in (37) that structural Case is checked in Merge positions. Under the assumption that Romanian is a V-type EPP language, the EPP feature is checked by verb raising and never by NP raising. Since uninterpretable Case features are not selectional (following Chomsky 1998) and a D-type EPP feature is absent in Romanian, structural Case is checked solely as a result of the Agree operation (i.e., without movement/'second Merge'). In a sentence such as (31), repeated here as (39), we assume I° to have a strong [+ V] feature (i.e., in effect, the EPP feature) which triggers lexical verb raising, as well as uninterpretable phi-features (which need to be erased), but no [D] features.

- (39) a. Citește copilul cartea.
 read.3SG.PR child-the book-the
 'The child is reading the book.'

³⁴ It is possible that the D-type versus V-type EPP language-distinction is dependent on whether the EPP feature is affixal in nature or not. V-type EPP languages would then have an affixal EPP feature.



Following MP98, the subject NP *copilul* ‘the child’ in (39) has uninterpretable Nominative Case features which need to be erased. We assume that uninterpretable Nominative Case in (39) is erased as a result of the operation Agree and that structural Case is a non-selectional feature. Recall from chapter 1 (section 1.2) that in order for erasure to obtain under Agree, the uninterpretable features of a probe (P) and a goal (G) must match under the structural requirements in (40), following Chomsky (1998:38).

- (40) (i) Matching is feature identity
(ii) D(P) is a sister of P
(iii) locality reduces to “closest c-command.”

Specifically, for Matching to induce Agree, G must (at least) be in the ‘domain’ D(P) of P and satisfy locality conditions. In our case, the P are the uninterpretable phi-features in I° and the G is structural Nominative Case on *copilul* ‘the child’. According to the assumptions in (40), the domain of I° in (39) is the vP. All of the conditions in (40) obtain between the P and G in (39), so the operation Agree will apply and both the uninterpretable phi-features of the Probe (I°), as well as the uninterpretable Case feature of the Goal (subject NP) will be eliminated. Since only the EPP feature is selectional and the nature of this feature in Romanian is a strong [V] and not a

strong [D], the subject will not further merge as Spec,IP. The effect of a convergent derivation thus being obtained, the sentence in (39) is grammatical with no specifier of IP projected.³⁵

This analysis can felicitously account for Nominative Case in-situ, while at the same time capturing the intrinsic link between lack of subject externalization in the usual EPP sense and lexical verb-raising to I°.

So far, we have only discussed structural Nominative Case. For structural Accusative Case, we assume a similar mechanism of Case licensing as the one proposed for Nominative Case. Traditionally, Accusative Case was assigned to the direct object noun phrase by the transitive verb selecting it. Following the split-IP hypothesis initiated by Pollock (1989) and its powerful proliferation in the late-1980s and early-1990s, the category of AgrOP was introduced (Chomsky 1993, among many others) as the locus of Accusative Case-checking. By analogy with subject raising to Spec,AgrSP, the object noun phrase would raise to Spec,AgrOP at some point in the derivation (at s-structure or LF) and check its Accusative Case. The AgrOP projection has since been renamed in Minimalism (cf. Chomsky 1995) and with the introduction of the ν P-shell, the strong D-feature (once a property of the AgrO head) has been bestowed upon the light verb itself. Moreover, if in the earlier versions of Minimalism (Chomsky 1993, 1995), Case-checking was possible exclusively in a specifier-head relationship, MP98 seems to tacitly renounce this idea insofar as Nominative Case is concerned. With the demotion of Case and the assertion that there is “nothing special” about the specifier-head relationship, Chomsky (1998) paves the way for Accusative-Case assignment (erasure) in-situ. If subjects raise to Merge as Spec,TP in order to satisfy the EPP feature of T°, what do objects do? Little is said about them apart from the Germanic object shift structures (to which we return in chapter 3), in which interpretational requirements seem to force object dislocation and “second Merge” as Spec, ν P. The question then

³⁵ The example in (39), involves a transitive predicate. A question arises as to whether Agree can obtain (i.e., whether the prerequisites in (40) are met) for other types of predicates and structures. We defer this debate until after we discuss unaccusatives and passives in the following sections.

is whether *all* objects are involved in “second Merge” to Spec, ν P, or, whether this has any direct import on structural Accusative Case. We suggest a negative answer and assume that all Case features are non-selectional.

Recall the theoretical assumption introduced in (37) that, ‘Romanian NPs check Case in Merge positions’. This assumption adopts the view that structural Case does not in-and-of-itself induce dislocation.³⁶ Consequently, we do not take Romanian objects to move for structural Accusative Case checking, but propose erasure of the uninterpretable Accusative Case features via the mechanism of Agree outlined above for Nominative Case. Reconsider now the example in (39). The light verb ν has uninterpretable Accusative features that match the uninterpretable Accusative features of *cartea* ‘the book’. VP is a sister of ν P, and thus in its domain. Since the conditions in (40) are satisfied, Agree obtains between P (‘reads’) and G (‘the book’) and all uninterpretable Case features are erased, so the derivation can converge without the additional requirement of noun phrase movement.³⁷

To sum up, this section discusses EPP realization and Case-licensing in Romanian and introduces the selectional versus non-selectional formal feature dichotomy, which is crucial to further investigations in this dissertation. Generally speaking, we propose that feature checking is exclusively overt, but does not always entail movement. We assume two types of formal features: (i) non-selectional features, which check in a less local relationship and do not trigger movement; (ii) selectional features, which check in a strict locality relationship. The strict locality relationship involves a specifier-head configuration or head-adjunction, both of which always trigger movement.

³⁶ See also Adger (1996) who suggests that case has no interpretive force. The author argues that case is required to license an NP, but is insufficient to determine the NPs structural position.

³⁷ Note that indirect objects will not interfere with structural Case, given that they are morphologically Case-marked in Romanian.

We further propose that Romanian noun phrases are licensed (i.e., theta-marked and Case-marked) in their base-generated (Merged) positions. We formalize this assumption using a somewhat modified version of MP98. We retain two crucial assumptions from MP98: (i) that EPP is a selectional feature, triggering dislocation, and (ii) that structural Case checking is ancillary to other feature checking mechanisms. We depart from Minimalist assumptions by assuming that EPP is parametrized cross-linguistically, at least as a [D] or as a [V] feature. We suggest the EPP is absent as a [D] feature, but present as a [V] feature on the Romanian Inflection. Consequently, lexical verb raising to I° always applies in Romanian. Since I° lacks a strong [D] feature in Romanian and Case is felicitously checked as an instance of the operation Agree, which does not require dislocation, Nominative subjects stay in situ. To conclude, NPs in Romanian do not move for Case checking or for EPP. In the following two sections, we discuss unaccusative and passive structures in Romanian for further insight into the assumption made in (37) and the more general issue of noun phrase movement.

2.4 Unaccusatives

In this section, we introduce unaccusative structures and discuss the NP-licensing conditions which obtain in these structures. Specifically, we argue that structural Nominative Case is licensed exclusively via Agree in all types of predicates, unaccusatives included. More generally, we claim that noun phrases in Romanian do not move for the purposes of Case checking or EPP erasure, irrespective of predicate type. This follows since we do not assume interpretational constraints (required for NP movement into the preverbal field in Romanian) to be Case or EPP related. In a theoretical system, such as the Minimalist program, in which morpho-syntactic feature-checking is a prerequisite to convergent, and therefore interpretable

derivations, movement for EPP checking should not be semantically constrained (i.e., should not depend on scope properties, on definiteness or other semantic restrictions).³⁸

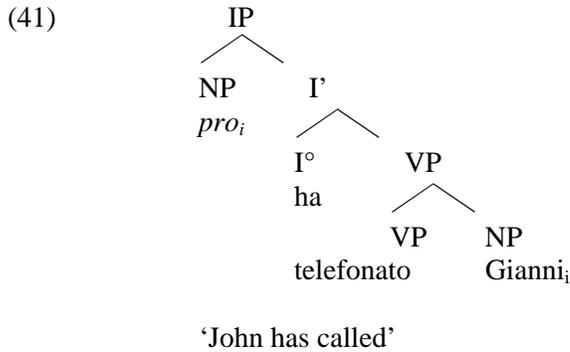
2.4.1 The Romance data

Interpretation aside, the subject is free to precede or follow the verb in all Romance *pro*-drop languages.³⁹ Pre-minimalist studies on post-verbal subjects in Italian and Spanish (Belletti 1988, 1990, Burzio 1986, Rizzi 1982, 1986a,b, 1990, Zubizarreta 1992, among others) have generally assumed distinct thematic and case positions for ‘inverted’-subjects (i.e., subjects in VS structures). As their name suggests, these subjects, while generated in Spec,VP, further move and adjoin to VP (or IP in Spanish, according to Zubizarreta 1992), the essential claim being that they cease to occupy an argumental position (by PF). Case-licensing is satisfied under government by Inflection (Belletti 1988, Zubizarreta 1992), or, as an instance of Case transmission resulting from coindexation with *pro* in Spec,IP (Burzio 1986, Rizzi 1982, 1986a). This is illustrated with the Italian example in (41):

³⁸ In English, for example, Spec TP, created as a result of EPP feature-checking hosts subjects of any semantic property. Such ‘canonical’ subject positions are devoid of interpretational constraints.

³⁹ Some restrictions do apply. For example, V(O)S structures in Italian are sensitive to the nature of the material intervening between the subject and the verb. Zubizarreta (1992) shows that post-verbal subjects are disallowed with an intervening temporal adverbial or definite direct object, as in (i) and (ii).

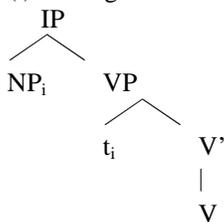
- (i) a. Ha scritto una lettera Gianni.
has written a letter John
‘John has written a letter.’
b. ??Ha scritto la lettera Gianni.
has written the letter John
‘John has written the letter.’
- (ii) a. Vince sempre Gianni.
wins always John
‘John always wins.’
b. ??Ha telefonato ieri Gianni.
has telephoned yesterday John
‘John called yesterday.’



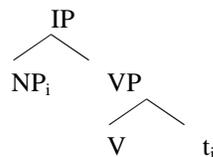
The story above, however, only holds of transitives and the class of intransitive verbs labelled unergatives.⁴⁰ With unaccusative verbs, the postverbal subject has been shown to occupy a position that is not VP/IP adjoined, but VP-internal. Since Perlmutter (1978), a series of tests have been used to establish the class of unaccusative verbs. For Italian, one such test involves the pronominal clitic *ne* ‘of them’. *Ne* ‘of them’ appears in preverbal position but it binds a quantifier like *molte* ‘many’, *tre* ‘three’, and so on, in direct object position. This is exemplified in (42).

⁴⁰ Cross-linguistically, the singleton argument of verbs traditionally labelled ‘intransitive’ has been shown to lack a uniform behaviour (see Burzio 1986, Levin & Rappaport-Hovav 1995, Moro 1997, Perlmutter 1978, etc.). Rather, the NP argument sometimes behaves like a subject, sometimes like an object, depending on the verb type. There is syntactic evidence that some intransitives internally theta-mark their unique argument, while others externally theta-mark it. The latter class of intransitive verbs has been labelled *unergative* and is assumed to have a D-structure configuration like the one in (ia), while the former class of intransitive verbs has been labelled *unaccusative*, and is assumed to have a D-structure configuration like the one in (ib); the D-structure configuration of transitive verbs is illustrated in (ic). We maintain a tripartite division into unergative, unaccusative and transitive predicates (recast in a Minimalist structure as in (45) above), unless irrelevant.

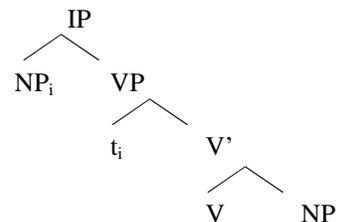
(i)a. unergatives



b. unaccusatives



c. transitives



- (42) a. Maria ne inviterà molti. (Italian)
 Mary CL-of them invite.FUT many
 ‘Mary will invite many of them.’
- b. * Maria ne parlerà a molti. (Italian)
 Mary CL-of them talk.FUT to many
 ‘Mary will talk to many of them.’

In (42a), the post-verbal quantifier is in direct object position and *ne*-cliticization is grammatical; in (42b), however, the post-verbal quantifier is an indirect object and *ne* cannot occur. On the basis of examples such as (42), it has been concluded that *ne*-cliticization is a property of the post-verbal NP in direct object position. Consider next the examples in (43) involving subject noun phrases of intransitive verbs.

- (43) a. Ne sono arrivati tre / molti. (Italian)
 CL-of them are arrived three / many
 ‘Three/many of them have arrived.’
- b. * Ne hanno parlato tre / molti. (Italian)
 CL-of them have spoken three / many
 ‘Three / many of them have spoken.’

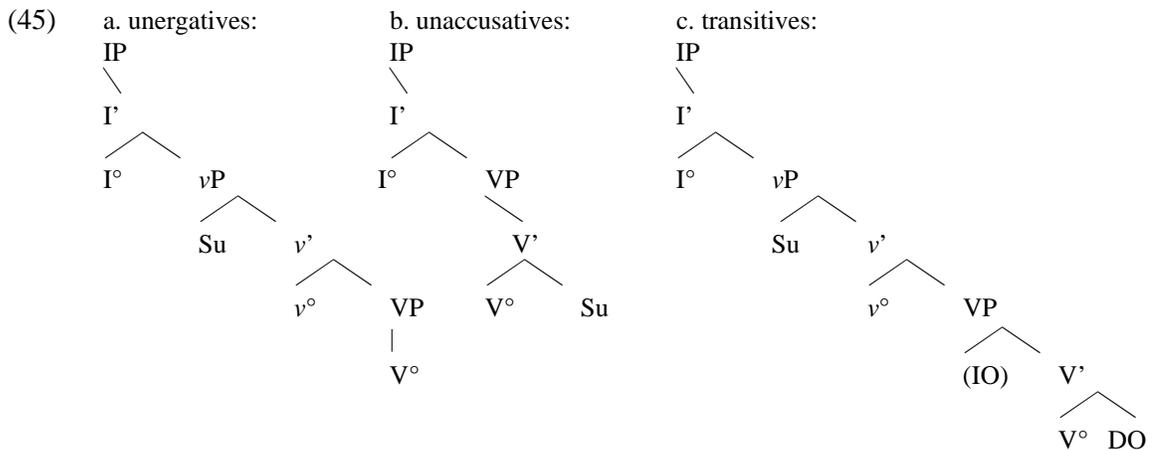
The examples in (43) point to the fact that *ne* ‘of them’ can bind the post-verbal subject of unaccusative intransitives but cannot bind the post-verbal subject of unergative intransitives. Furthermore, the verbs which allow *ne*-cliticization from the post-verbal subject coincide with those selecting the auxiliary *essere* ‘be’ and display past participle agreement. These facts suggest that two post-verbal subject positions need to be kept distinct for Italian: the argumental direct object position, in the case of unaccusative verbs, and the VP-adjoined position, in the case of unergative and transitive verbs (Burzio 1986, Moro 1997, Rizzi 1982, 1990, among others).

2.4.2 Unaccusatives and Minimalism

There is significant empirical evidence that the distinction into unergative and unaccusative intransitives holds across languages (see Moro 1997, Rappaport-Hovav 1995, among others). In both cases, however, the singleton argument of the verb is marked for Nominative Case, irrespective of whether it is base-generated as an external or as an internal argument. The absence of Accusative Case-marking on the internal argument of unaccusatives is necessarily linked to the failure of the respective verb to assign an external theta-role. This correlation has been formalized in the principles and parameters framework by Burzio (1986). His much-debated and well-known Generalization is presented in (44).

(44) A verb assigns Accusative Case to its object if and only if it theta-marks its subject.

Burzio's Generalization in (44) has been captured in the Minimalist framework by postulating the absence of a ν P shell (cf. Chomsky 1995). In other words, while for transitive and unergative verbs the VP merges as a complement of an abstract light verb ν , which requires a subject noun phrase to merge as Spec, ν P, with unaccusative verbs, the VP will merge directly as a complement of the I° (T° in Chomsky's analysis) head. This is represented in (45), along the lines of Chomsky (1995).

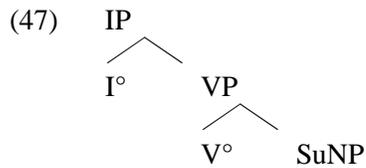


In all of the three types of structures in (45), the subject noun phrase is marked for Nominative Case. Under Minimalism, which assumes a selectional EPP feature associated with I^o, the subject noun phrase will have to raise and merge as Spec,IP. In the previous section, we argued for a parametrized EPP feature and concluded that only D-type EPP languages, in which the EPP feature must be checked by a noun phrase, involve raising of the subject noun phrase and ‘second Merge’ as Spec,IP. For Romanian, however, we postulated a V-type EPP feature, checked by verb raising to the I^o head. This correctly captures the empirical facts and the neutral VSO word order. Consequently, in section 2.3.2., we concluded that the uninterpretable Nominative Case features of the subject noun phrase of transitive predicates can be erased, via Agree, and no further dislocation is required. We suggest the same analysis can be adopted for bona fide intransitives (i.e., unergatives), since the subjects of these predicates Merge in the same position as that of transitive verbs. The question would then be, whether Agree can also be operative with unaccusatives and, consequently, ensure Nominative Case licensing of unaccusative subjects without any dislocation. We suggest an affirmative answer and claim that the conditions for Agree (cf. MP98) postulated in (40) and repeated here as (46) obtain for unaccusative predicates too.⁴¹

- (46) (i) Matching is feature identity
(ii) D(P) is a sister of P
(iii) locality reduces to “closest c-command.”

In (45b), the uninterpretable phi-features (Probe) on I^o match the uninterpretable Case-features (Goal) of internal the subject, so that (46i) is satisfied. Since intermediary X’ projections are in effect invisible, (45b) is synonymous to (47).

⁴¹ This assumption is also supported by the empirical data discussed in section 2.4.3, where it will be argued that lack of any definiteness effect on in-situ subjects of unaccusative structures follows once we assume Nominative to be checked in that position.



In (47), the domain of the Probe I° , namely the VP, felicitously includes the Goal, namely the NP. All the prerequisites outlined in (45) obtain between the Probe (I°) and the Goal (the subject NP). Consequently, the operation Agree will apply and erase all uninterpretable features between Probe and Goal, without any noun phrase movement. We conclude then that Nominative Case is always erased in Merge positions in Romanian.

The empirical facts also support the above analysis. On a par with other predicates, subjects of unaccusative verbs do not show any definiteness effect and cannot move into the preverbal field unless they can be interpreted as specific. Consider, for example, (48), in which there is no definiteness effect present on the unaccusative subject left in-situ.

- (48)
- a. Vine un tren.
 come.3SG.PR a train
 ‘A train is coming.’
- b. Vine trenul.
 come.3SG.PR train-the
 ‘The train is coming.’

Correlatively, consider the examples in (49). The indefinite subject *un tren* ‘a train’ (49a-c) and the bare subject *zăpadă* ‘snow’ (49d-f) cannot move into the preverbal field, unless contrastively focused (49c, 49f).

- (49)
- a. Vine un tren.
 come.3SG.PR a train
 ‘A train is coming.’

- b. * Un tren vine.
 a train come.3SG.PR
 ‘A train is coming.’
- c. UN TREN vine (nu un camion).
 a train come.3SG.PR (, not a truck)
 ‘It’s a train that’s coming, not a truck.’
- d. Cade zăpadă pe străzi de trei zile încoace.
 fall.3SG.PR snow on streets of three days since
 ‘It has been snowing for the past three days.’
- e. * Zăpadă cade pe străzi de trei zile încoace.
 snow fall.3SG.PR on streets of three days since
 ‘It has been snowing for the past three days.’
- f. ZĂPADĂ cade mereu (nu ploaie).
 snow fall.3SG.PR always (,not rain)
 ‘It’s snow that’s always pouring, not rain.’

However, the SV word order sequence becomes grammatical once the subject NPs are marked for definiteness. Consider (50).

- (50) a. Trenul vine în cinci minute.
 train-the come.3SG.PR in five minutes
 ‘The train comes in five minutes.’
- b. Zăpada cade pe străzi de trei zile încoace.
 snow-the fall.3SG.PR on streets of three days since
 ‘It has been snowing for the past three days.’

The next section offers some more insight into these problems.

2.4.3 Unaccusatives and the definiteness effect

Recall our discussion of Italian VS structures in section 2.4.1. We saw that postverbal subjects were accounted for in two different ways, depending on the nature of the verb. With unergative and transitive verbs, it is assumed that the subject NP right-adjoins to the VP, while with unaccusatives, the subject NP is in an argumental, VP-internal position, since extraction from within the NP is fully grammatical (see (43)).

Rizzi (1986b) notices, however, that the nature of the subject NP in unaccusative structures (as well as in passives) is sensitive to whether or not the post-verbal subject is followed by a subcategorized complement of the verb. Consider the Italian examples in (51) and (52) taken from Rizzi (1986b: 418): in (51), in which a complement of the verb is present, the unaccusative subject cannot be definite; this semantic restriction is absent when there is no complement (52).

- (51) a. E'entrato un ladro dalla finestra.
'Came in a thief from the window.'
- b. ?? E'entrato il ladro dalla finestra.
'Came in the thief from the window.'
- c. E'caduto un missile in giardino
'Fell down a missile into the garden.'
- d. ?? E'caduto il missile in giardino
'Fell down the missile into the garden.'
- (52) a. E'entrato il ladro.
'Came in the thief.'
- b. E'caduto il missile.
'Fell down the missile.'
- c. Gli parla la maestra.
'The teacher speaks to him.'

The examples in (51) point to the fact that, with unaccusatives, there is a definiteness effect on the subject NP in VSXP structures in Italian (captured through Case theory in Belletti 1988), similar to the French subject inversion construction with expletive ‘il’ in (53).

- (53) a. Il est arrivé une fille.
‘There has arrived a girl.’
- b. * Il est arrivée la fille.
‘There has arrived the girl.’

However, (52a-b) show that there is no definiteness constraint when the unaccusative subject NP is not followed by any VP-internal material, just as there is no definiteness constraint on inverted subjects in non-unaccusative predications in Italian (52c).

Rizzi (1986b) suggests that even with unaccusatives, the post-verbal subject can be actually found in two different structural positions in Italian, one that is VP-internal (as in (51)) and triggers the definiteness effect, the other VP external (as in (52a-b)), namely VP-adjoined and with no definiteness effect. In other words, the definite subject can be ‘rescued’ by raising out of the VP in (52) but not in (51). Rizzi (1986b) does not investigate the consequences or whether VXPS would be licit in (51), thus saving the definite subject. The point remains, however, that definite subject cannot stay VP-internally in Italian.

We can sum up then by saying that two post-verbal subject positions are available in Italian: one that is VP-internal (i.e., the direct object position) and argumental, and another that is VP-external and adjoined (i.e., non-argumental). The former is available exclusively to the argument of unaccusative verbs and is constrained by the definiteness effect, while the latter can accommodate inverted subjects of all types of predicates.

Insofar as Romanian is concerned, we have shown in (48) that there is no definiteness effect on postverbal subjects of unaccusative predicates. In contrast to the Italian data in (51), the

same absence of any definiteness effect holds even in the presence of other verbal arguments (i.e., VP-related complements). Consider (54).

- (54) a. A intrat un hoț / hoțul pe fereastră.
 AUX.3SG entered a thief / thief-the on window
 ‘A / The thief entered through the window.’
- b. A căzut o bombă / bomba în grădină.
 AUX.3SG fell a bomb / bomb-the in garden
 ‘A / The bomb fell in the garden.’
- c. A vorbit profesoara cu Victor.
 AUX.3SG talked teacher-the with Victor.
 ‘The teacher talked with Victor.’

We assume that in the above examples, the subject noun phrases of (54a-b) are in direct object position, being subjects of unaccusative predicates, while the subject of (54c) is in the specifier of the light verb *v*, being the subject of a transitive verb. The lack of any definiteness effect on the subjects in (54) might come as a surprise, since V/*v*P-internal subjects are generally assumed to be under the requirement of a ‘weak’/indefinite interpretation (Belletti 1988, Diesing 1992, Milsark 1977, Rizzi 1986b, among many others). Consider the English examples in (55), in which the VP-internal subject in (55a) cannot take the definite marker.

- (55) a. There is (* the) milk in the fridge.
 b. The milk is in the fridge.

We suggest that the lack of definiteness effects on VP-internal subjects in Romanian is intrinsically linked to the absence of a D-type EPP feature and the fact that Nominative Case is checked/erased in-situ. There is no preverbal ‘canonical’ subject position in Romanian. In effect, there is no ‘canonical’ subject position at all in Romanian since subjects in this language are

licensed in their base-generated (initial Merge) position, which vary depending on predicate type. Consequently, we expect these positions to be devoid of any semantic restrictions.

2.4.4 Summing up a V-type EPP language

To conclude, we summarize three essential properties that distinguish Romanian (and, presumably other V-type EPP languages) from D-type EPP languages:

(i) Postverbal subjects occur with all types of predicates, whereas in English, for example, they can only occur with intransitives (cf. Levin and Rappaport 1995). This is illustrated in (56) with three different types of predicates: an unergative (56a), an unaccusative (56b), and a transitive (56c).

- (56) a. A sunat fiecare copil să spună că întârzie.
 AUX.3SG called each child SUBJ tell that is-late
 ‘Each child called to say s/he was late.’
- b. A venit Mihai.
 Aux.3SG come Mihai
 ‘Mihai has come.’
- c. Pe mama a îmbrățișat-o Victor.
 PE mother-the AUX.3SG hugged-CL.3SG.ACC.F Victor
 ‘Victor hugged mother.’

(ii) The VS word order does not display any definiteness effect, unlike their counterparts in D-type EPP languages (among others English, French, and Icelandic in expletive constructions). Reconsider the examples in (56).

(iii) Unlike bare plurals in English, bare plurals in Romanian can only occur postverbally. Given that bare plurals are not strong NPs, their absence in SV structures indicates that the

initial/preverbal field is interpretationally constrained by a specificity requirement (see 57).⁴²

- (57) a. Latrã cîini.
 bark.3PL.PR dogs
- b. * Cîini latrã.
 dogs bark.3PL.PR
 ‘Dogs are barking.’

The fact that noun phrases are fully licensed (theta- and Case-marked) in initial Merge positions, grants these positions a default status in the syntactic tree. Consequently, these positions should, by definition, be devoid of any interpretational effects. Since for languages with a D-type EPP feature on I° (such as English, and presumably French and possibly Italian, among many others), the default subject position is in Spec,IP, we expect interpretational effects to be absent on Spec,IP subjects but present elsewhere, for example, VP-internally, as in (55).

Furthermore, there is evidence from Condition C effects that postverbal subjects are not preposed even at LF in Romanian (see also Zubizarreta 1998:109 for a similar test on Spanish).⁴³ Consider the examples in (58).

- (58) a. Azi [profesorul lui Victor_i] I_i-a lăudat.
 today [teacher-the his Victor] CL.3SG.ACC.M-AUX.3SG praised
 ‘Victor_i’s teacher praised him_i today.’
 [coreference okay]

⁴² The same observation has been put forth for Spanish by Casielles (1996) and Zubizarreta (1998). Consider the examples in (i) borrowed from Zubizarreta (1998:109).

- (i) a. A menudo juegan niños en este parque.
 often play children in this park
 ‘Children often play in this park.’
 b. * Niños a menudo juegan en este parque.
 c. * A menudo niños juegan en este parque.

⁴³ Recall that Condition C of Binding theory postulates that R-expressions (e.g. names) are referentially free (i.e., should lack a c-commanding antecedent in any category), Chomsky (1981). For more on Binding Theory, see chapter 1, section 1.2.

bearing the external thematic role), often referred to as ‘demotion’, as follows: from the bearer of the default Nominative Case in the ‘active’, in the ‘passive’, the logical subject shifts to being the bearer of a marked type of case (oblique), or even to being suppressed.⁴⁴ This is usually coupled with a shift in the status of the grammatical subject (i.e., the element which agrees with the finite verb/auxiliary) from ‘active’ (i.e., ‘the doer’) to ‘passive’ (i.e., the ‘undergoer’), as a consequence of what is often referred to as logical object ‘promotion’. The logical object in passives acquires the morphosyntactic properties associated with the NP bearing the external thematic role in the active voice (i.e., that of grammatical subject). The ontologic content remains identical in both active and passive, but the morphosyntactic treatment of the logical arguments changes. This shift of perspective imposed by the speaker on the discourse is intrinsically related to the type of verbal morphology (Active, usually unmarked, versus Passive, usually marked).

2.5.1 Passive constructions in Romanian

In Romanian, two types of ‘passive-like’ constructions fit the requirements outlined above for what counts as passive and, logically speaking, they are both equivalent to the –EN passive in English. One is realized with affixal morphology, the other with the clitic *se*. The two

⁴⁴ It is essential that the logical subject starts out with Nominative Case. Logical subjects bearing lexical (inherent) case cannot be demoted; consider the examples below, in which the logical subject is the preverbal clitic, inherently marked as Accusative in (i), and as Dative in (ii):

- | | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|
| (i) | a. | Mă | doare | în gât. | (Active) |
| | | CL.1SG.ACC | hurt.3SG.PR | in throat | |
| | | ‘I have a sore throat.’ | | | |
| | b. | *Sunt | durută | în gât. | (Passive) |
| (ii) | a. | Îmi | șade | bine cu blugi. | (Active) |
| | | CL.1SG.DAT | stay.3SG.PR | well with jeans | |
| | | ‘Jeans suit me.’ | | | |
| | b. | *Sunt | șezută | bine cu blugi. | (Passive) |

The examples in (i)-(ii) show that unless the external theta-role is associated with the default Case (i.e., structural Nominative), passivization cannot occur in Romanian.

types are exemplified in (59) and (62) below. We will consider each type in turn; consider first

(59):

- (59) a. Mihai a citit cărțile.
 Mihai.NOM AUX.3SG read books-the
 ‘Mihai has read the books.’
- b. Au fost citite cărțile (de Mihai).
 AUX.3PL been read.F.PL books-the.NOM (by Mihai)⁴⁵
 ‘The books have been read (by Mihai).’
- c. Cărțile au fost citite (de Mihai).
 books-the.NOM AUX.3PL been read.F.PL (by Mihai)
 ‘The books have been read (by Mihai).’

(59b-c) are the passive versions of the active sentence in (59a); in this case, the passive is affixally realized (i.e., as an instance of past participle morphology on Romanian 'be'). In (59b-c), the logical subject *Mihai* has been demoted, while the logical object *cartea* ‘the book’ has been assigned Nominative Case (as shown by plural agreement on the finite auxiliary in the passive voice). Notice that the underlined promoted logical object can (59c) but need not (59b) be preverbal. In fact, parallel to the rest of the subjects in Romanian, the promoted logical object can only appear preverbally with neutral intonation (i.e., without pitch accent), if specific. Consider the passive sentences in (60); (60a) with the bare plural Nominative NP in post-verbal position is well-formed, while (60b), with the bare plural Nominative in preverbal position, is ungrammatical.

⁴⁵ Structural Nominative Case is not visible on full NPs (i.e., it is not distinct from Accusative). However, the agreement on Inflection indicates that the logical object has been promoted to grammatical subject in the passive voice. For illustrative purposes, Nominative Case will be indicated throughout this section.

- c. * Mere se mănîncă (de toată lumea).
 apples.NOM. SE eat.3SG.PR (by all people-the)
 ‘Apples are being eaten by everybody.’

In (61)-(62), the logical subject is again demoted, to the discourse-prominence benefit of the direct object. In Romanian the affixal passive construction is in free variation with the *se* passive, both being in effect instances of canonical passive, as shown in (63)⁴⁷.

- (63) a. affixal passive:
 Au fost închise porțile (de către soldați).
 AUX.3PL been locked gates-the.NOM (by the soldiers)
 ‘The gates have been locked (by the soldiers).’
- b. *se* passive:
 S-au închis porțile (de către soldați).
 SE –AUX.3PL locked gates-the (by the soldiers)
 ‘The gates have been locked (by the soldiers).’

Examples such as (63), showing the Romanian affixal passive in free variation with the *se* passive suggest that, syntactically speaking, a unitary analysis should be available for both of these

⁴⁷ The *se* passive is not generally used when the promoted logical object is an animate NP, since it would give rise to ambiguity between a passive and a reflexive reading. In these cases, only the -EN canonical passive is used.

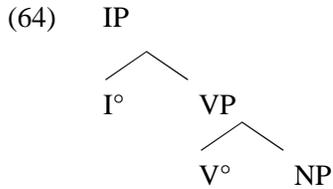
- (i) Hoții au închis copiii în casă.
 thieves-the AUX.3PL locked children-the in house
 ‘The thieves have locked the children inside the house.’
- (ii) Copiii au fost închisi în casă
 children-the.NOM AUX.3PL been locked in house
 (de hoți)
 (by thieves)
 ‘The children were locked inside the house (by thieves).’
- (iii) Copiii s-au închis în casă.
 children-the.NOM REFL- AUX.3PL locked in house-the’
 ‘The children have locked themselves inside the house.’
 ‘ * The children were locked inside the house (by X).’

constructions. We assume that clitic *se* essentially plays the same role that passive morphology does in the ‘canonical’ passive; namely, it ‘absorbs’ the external theta-role and Accusative Case (see, for example, Baker, Johnson and Roberts 1989). Moreover, notice that the same interpretational requirements hold for both types of passive structures. In order to be able to raise to the preverbal (IP-related) position, the Nominative NPs have to be specific (see 60b and 62c). The default position of the logical object ‘promoted’ to grammatical subject, is the postverbal one. We now need to address the nature of this postverbal position in the syntactic tree, alongside the Nominative Case-licensing mechanism.

2.5.2 Passives and Minimalism

We have seen that in passives, the noun phrase marked for Nominative Case can surface pre- or post-verbally. The preverbal position is semantically restricted in the same manner as was discussed to be relevant for all active voice predicates. In section 2.4.4., we concluded that there is no preverbal canonical subject position in Romanian. Theoretically, this follows from the specifics of the EPP feature in this language. Therefore, for the purposes of Nominative Case-licensing, we are only interested in the postverbal position. The logical direct object (turned grammatical subject) of passives is merged as a complement of the verb. The issue we are concerned with is whether this object noun phrase can check/erase Nominative in-situ, or whether it needs to move to a derived position in order to do so.

Passives are derived unaccusatives. The morphosyntactic properties of the passive verb make it incompatible with an external argument, to the benefit of the internal argument, merged in direct object position. Consequently, on a par with unaccusatives, we assume a structural representation for passives as in (64), in which the light *v*P-shell is absent.



Under a representation as in (64) for the Romanian passive, we suggest that Nominative Case-licensing/checking for the noun phrase obtains in its direct object Merge position. The line of argumentation is identical to the one used for subjects of unaccusatives. In (64), I° has uninterpretable phi-features (P) which need to be erased. These features match the uninterpretable Case-features (G) of the direct object noun phrase. The operation Agree (cf. MP98) is a necessary and sufficient condition for erasure of uninterpretable elements to obtain between a probe and its goal. Since in (64), the conditions for Agree obtain (see discussion in section 2.4.2), all uninterpretable features are erased and convergence of the derivation is guaranteed without any noun phrase movement. This analysis is also supported by the fact that the preverbal passivized NP is semantically constrained.

We shall try to simplify the technicalities of our Case-licensing analysis in the concluding remarks of this section. In the meantime, let us see whether the claim we have made for passives, namely that the object noun phrase is case-licensed without raising, is supported by empirical data.

There is evidence from Binding phenomena that supports our analysis. Let us consider the active examples in (65) and their passive counterparts in (68), involving the ditransitive Romanian verb *a dăru* ‘to give/bestow upon’.

(65) Active Voice:

	Pictorul _i	a	dăruit		
	painter-the	AUX.3SG	given		
[_{VP} t _i t _{V°+V°}	[fiecărui copil] _j	t _{V°}	portretul	lui _{i/j}].	
[_{VP} t _i t _{V°+V°}	each.DAT child _j	t _{V°}	[portrait-the	his _{i/j}]ACC]	
‘The painter _i gave each child _j his _{i/j} portrait.’					

The possessive pronoun *lui* ‘his’ in (65) can refer either to *pictorul* ‘the painter’ or *fiecărui copil* ‘each child’. While NPs can be coreferential with a (non-c-commanding) pronoun, see (66a), a quantified noun cannot simply be coreferential with a pronoun, but has to bind it, see (66b).⁴⁸

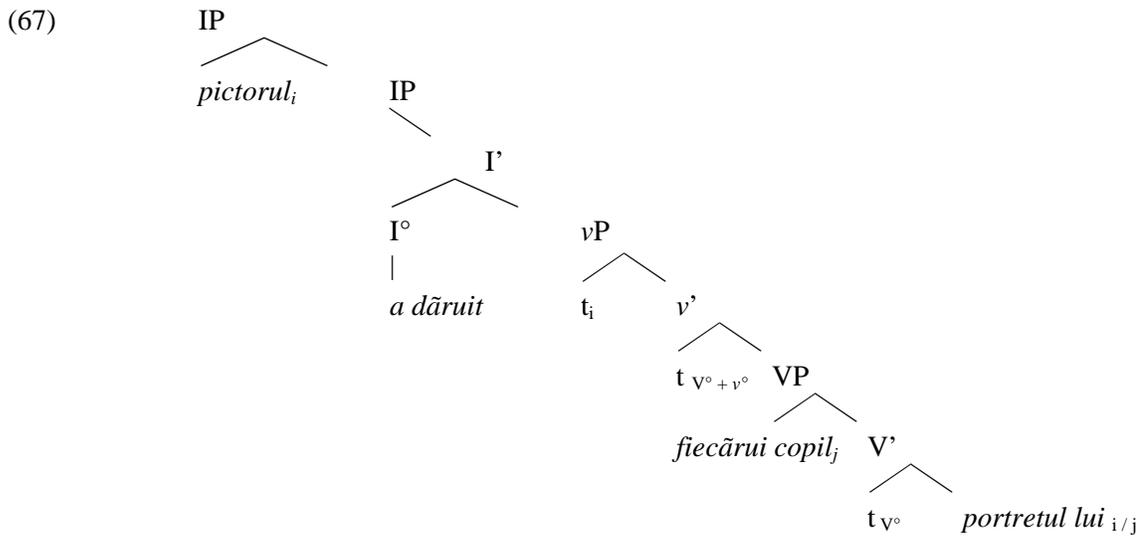
- (66) a. Mihai_i was excited and he_i was happy.
 b. * [Every boy]_i was excited and he_i was happy.
 c. [Every boy]_i thought he_i was happy.

Since binding involves a c-command relationship, (66b) is ungrammatical precisely because the pronoun fails to be c-commanded by the quantifier. It then follows that in (65), the possessive pronoun *lui* ‘his’ is c-commanded by the quantified indirect object. This is confirmed by the structural representation of (65), illustrated in (67).

⁴⁸ The examples in (i)-(ii) also crucially point to the fact that quantifier binding is sensitive to c-command rather than just linearity (we thank Jila Ghomeshi for pointing (i) out to us).

- (i) English:
 * [Pictures of [every boy]_i] impressed his_i mother.
- (ii) Romanian equivalent of (i):
 *[Fotografiile [fiecărui băiat]_i] au impresionat-o
 pictures-the each.DAT boy AUX.3SG impressed-CL.3SG.ACC.F.
 pe mama lui_i.
 PE mother-the his

See also Reinhart (1983:122) who argues that a pronoun must be c-commanded by a quantifier in order to be interpreted as a variable bound by that quantifier.



Let us next consider the passive counterpart of the example in (64).

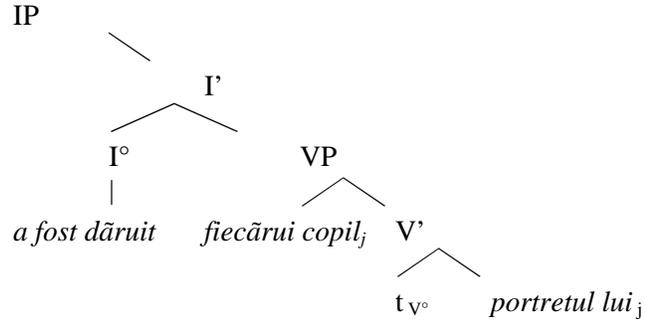
(68) Passive Voice:

a. A fost dăruit
 AUX.3SG been given
 [_{VP} fiecărui copil_j t_{v°} portretul lui_j].
 [_{VP} each.DAT child_j t_{v°} [portrait-the his_j]NOM]
 ‘His portrait has been given to each child.’

b. Portretul lui *_j a fost dăruit
 [portrait-the his *_j]NOM AUX.3SG been given
 [_{VP} fiecărui copil_j t_{v°} t].
 [_{VP} each.DAT child_j t_{v°} t]
 ‘His portrait has been given to each child.’

The Binding relations between the quantified indirect object NP and the possessive pronoun are identical in the active sentence and its passive counterpart in (68a). In this case then, the direct object (now a grammatical subject) is still c-commanded by the indirect object, as in (69), and coindexation is legitimate.

(69)



In (68b), on the other hand, the Nominative argument has raised above the indirect object (presumably to an IP-adjoined position; see chapter 5) and is no longer c-commanded by the quantified object and anaphoric binding is ruled out. Consequently, coindexation is ungrammatical.⁴⁹

Notice that the same c-command constraints are observed with the *se* passive; consider the examples in (70).

- (70) a. S-a dăruit
 SE-AUX.3SG given
 [VP fiecărui copil_j t_{v°} portretul lui_j].
 [VP each.DAT child_j t_{v°} [portrait-the his_j]NOM]
 ‘His portrait has been given to each child.’
- b. Portretul lui *_j s-a dăruit
 [portrait-the his *_j]NOM SE-AUX.3SG given
 [VP fiecărui copil_j t_{v°} t].
 [VP each.DAT child_j t_{v°} t]
 ‘His portrait has been given to each child.’

The fact that the c-commanding relationships need not change in the transition from active to passive, suggests that there is no reason to assume that the Nominative object raises out

⁴⁹ The ungrammaticality of examples such as (68b) also serves as an argument against LF raising for Nominative Case checking. If LF raising were involved, we would expect (68a) to be equally ungrammatical.

of its initial Merge position for the purposes of Case-licensing at any level in the derivation (i.e., not even at LF).

To conclude, in Romanian, ‘promoted’ object noun phrases do not raise in passive structures for Case-associated reasons.

2.6 Summing up NP-licensing in Romanian

The somewhat technical analysis adopted for explaining structural Case-licensing facts in Romanian is, in fact, extremely simple. Whenever a lexical verb selects a singleton argument, this noun phrase has to bear Nominative Case-features. As in all nominative-accusative language, Romanian has Nominative Case as its default structural Case.

The above remark can be elegantly accounted for in terms of ‘Dependent Case Theories’, proposed and developed by a number of authors to account for Case (Harley 1995, Massam 1985, *inter alia*). These theories argue that the Case that appears on a noun phrase is determined by which other structural Cases have been checked in the clause. In a nominative-accusative language, Nominative Case must always be assigned to some nominal, preferably (but not always) the subject. Only after Nominative has been assigned, can Accusative be assigned to the next structurally Case-marked nominal, and so on. We assume Nominative Case to be assigned to the NP closest to I° (in terms of c-command); counting therefore proceeds downwards. In (71), we exemplify this Case-assignment algorithm with Harley’s (1995:161) ‘Mechanical Case Parameter’.

(71) ‘The Mechanical Case Parameter’

- a. If one case feature is checked structurally in a clause, it is realized as Nominative (mandatory case);
- b. If two case features are checked structurally in a clause, the second is realized as Accusative;

- c. If three case features are checked structurally in a clause, the second is realized as Dative and the third as Accusative;
- d. The mandatory case in a multiple-case clause is assigned in the top/bottom AgrP.

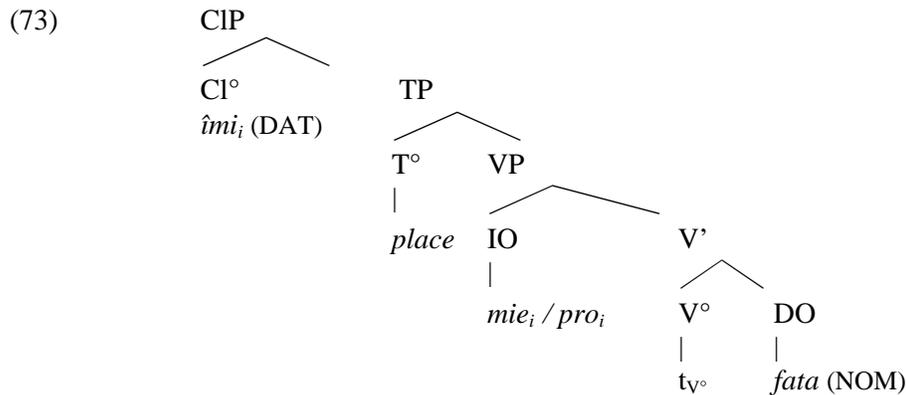
The parameter in (71d) distinguishes between nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive languages. In nominative-accusative languages, Nominative Case is assigned to the first case-bearing nominal in the clause, while in ergative-absolutive languages absolutive case is assigned to the last case-bearing nominal.

It seems that a Dependent Case theoretical approach would be able to account for the behaviour of unaccusative and passive structures cross-linguistically. Nominative would be assigned to the object, as the subject is absent. Moreover, this approach can successfully account for structures involving logical subjects marked with lexical (non-structural) Case in which Nominative Case is assigned to another argument. Consider the Romanian example in (72).

(72) Îmi place (mie) (* pe) fata.
 CL.DAT.1SG. like.3SG (me.DAT) (* PE) girl-the.NOM⁵⁰
 'I like the girl.'

In (70), the logical subject is the clitic, inherently marked for dative case. Consequently, the direct object *fata* 'the girl' can be marked with structural Nominative (rather than, Accusative) Case. (72) is structurally represented as (73).

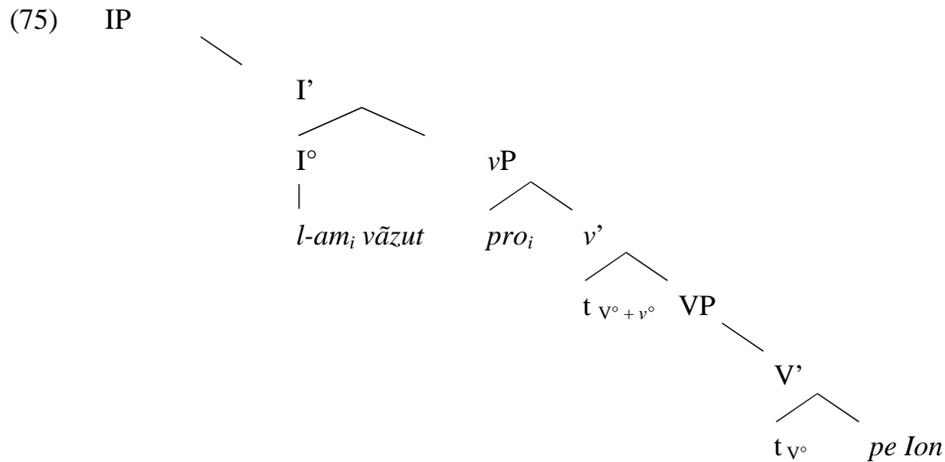
⁵⁰ 'PE' is a dummy preposition associated with Romanian [+ human] direct objects. Authors disagree whether it marks Accusative Case, specificity, presuppositionality, or a combination thereof. The ungrammaticality of 'PE' in (70) indicates the absence of Accusative Case on the NP *fata* 'the girl'.



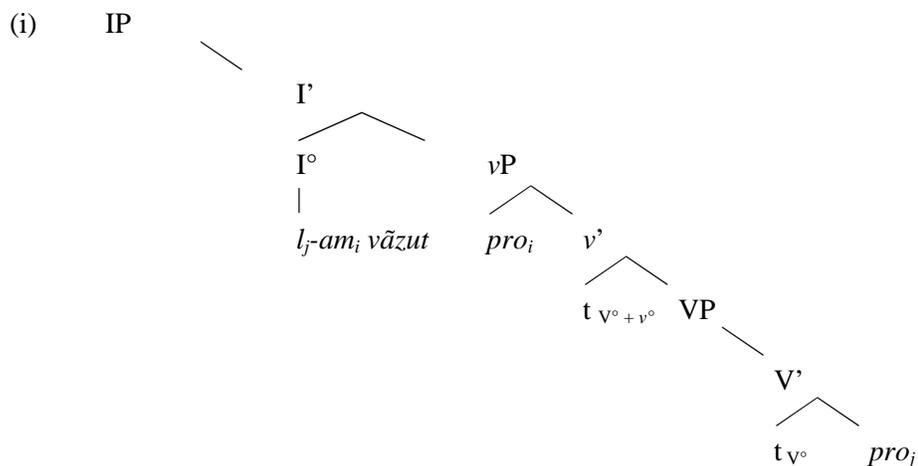
Case-licensing then is not dependent on a specific location either in Dependent Case Theories, or in the MP98. Considering that in earlier generative theory, structural Case was defined as being assigned in a specific syntactic configuration, what is the significance of structural Case once we have deprived it of its ‘structural’ aspect? We suggest structural Case is best viewed along the lines of Kratzer (1994:116), as “Case that is assigned by inflectional (functional) elements”, rather than Case that is assigned in a specific syntactic configuration. The fact that, in Romanian, Case-licensing takes place in Merge positions, is then an immediate consequence of the fact that Case-features cannot induce movement in and of themselves, correlated with the absence of a D-type EPP feature on the Romanian Infl.⁵¹

One last issue remains to be addressed. What is the status of ‘pro’ in Romanian? In generative theory, small ‘pro’ is an empty (i.e., phonetically null) noun phrase, base-generated in the canonical position of the arguments it stands for. It is in complementary distribution with lexical noun phrases and has a local identifier, usually an inflectional element, which is overtly marked for phi-features. For example, subject ‘pro’ is taken to be identified and coindexed with

⁵¹ Notice that, even though we posit Case checking in initial Merge positions, we do not assume structural Accusative or structural Nominative Case to be assigned by the selecting lexical (substantive) head X°. Structural Case can only be assigned/checked by inflectional (non-substantive) heads: I° for Nominative, and v° for Accusative. This is, in effect, the essence of structural Case.



To sum up, we proposed that in Romanian noun phrases check structural Case in Merge positions (i.e., in their base-generated, thematic position), irrespective of the predicate type (i.e., transitive, unaccusative, unergative). Case-checking in Merge is a direct consequence of lexical verb raising to v° and I° in Romanian. Verb movement, due to a selectional V-type EPP feature on I° , triggers the overt presence of phi-features in I° and Case-features in v° , which agree with the Nominative Case-feature of the subject and the Accusative Case-feature of the object,



respectively. The mandatory/default structural Case in Romanian is Nominative Case (in the sense that it is the first structural Case to be assigned/checked in the derivation).⁵³

Structural Case, as an uninterpretable formal feature is non-selectional and therefore does not trigger dislocation of the noun phrase when checked. We showed that Binding mechanisms point towards Case checking as a pre-Spell-Out mechanism, which is consistent with our claim that all feature-checking is overt. Lack of a D-type EPP feature on the Romanian Inflection, alongside structural Case-checking in Merge positions, guarantee the absence of a preverbal IP-related canonical subject Case position in this language, whose consequences for the Romanian clause structure will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Moreover, we claim that Romanian lacks a unique subject position.

⁵³ This is not synonymous with saying that I° compulsorily discharges Nominative Case. For example, the sentence in (i) is felicitous without Nominative. Our point is that Nominative is the first structural Case to be assigned to a Case-less NP/ *pro*.

- (i) Îmi place în Winnipeg.
CL.DAT.1SG like.3SG in Winnipeg
'I like it in Winnipeg.'