CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Aspect is an area that syntacticians, until recently, have tended to shy away from. This is largely because, as a topic, aspect lends itself more to the domains of semantics (to determine its meaning) and morphology (to determine its realization). At the outset, we should distinguish between two uses of the term ‘aspect’. Smith (1991) refers to these two uses as VIEWPOINT ASPECT and SITUATION ASPECT. Viewpoint aspect is morphological or grammatical aspect such as imperfective/perfective. For many syntacticians, dealing with viewpoint aspect simply involves creating another head within the inflectional domain of a clause. This head would be used to house relevant morphological material that would then feed into the semantic component (see e.g. Zagona 1993, Stowell 1995). Situation aspect refers to Aktionsart or aspectual verb classes such as Accomplishment, Achievement, Activity, and State (see e.g. Vendler 1967). It is much less clear that this sort of aspect has a place in the syntax since it is rarely morphologically realized and its interpretation depends on a number of elements such as the choice of verb, type of object, type of prepositional complement, etc. The purpose of this book is to provide evidence that both types of aspect are syntactically encoded, though by different means. Viewpoint aspect will, for the most part, be realized as a functional category on a head within the inflectional domain of the clause. I will argue that situation aspect is also realized (sometimes through computation of local information) on a head but within the lexical domain of the clause, i.e. within vP. Because of the difference in realization of these two types of aspect, viewpoint aspect will sometimes be referred to as grammatical aspect, functional aspect, or OUTER ASPECT while situation aspect will be referred to as lexical aspect or INNER ASPECT.
1.1 ASPECT AND SYNTAX

With only a cursory look at aspectually related phenomena across a variety of languages, one comes across cases where aspect (of both types) and syntax interact. Below I give just a few examples, first cases where Outer Aspect may affect or be affected by syntax and then cases from the domain of Inner Aspect.

1.1.1 Outer Aspect and Syntax

There are clear ways in which Outer Aspect and syntax interact, many of which have been noted in the literature. Taking examples from the domain of case assignment, we can see below that a difference in case may indicate a difference in viewpoint aspect (from Comrie 1976: 8).

(1) **FINNISH**

a. hän luki kirjan
   he   read book-ACC
   ‘He read the book.’

b. hän luki kirjaa
   he   read book-DAT
   ‘He was reading the book.’

In (1a), the direct object is in the accusative case, and in (1b) it is in the partitive case, and the result is an imperfective reading. If the determination of case depends on syntax, one could use the change of case in (1) as an indication of a change of syntax. It is imaginable, however, that the explanation lies in the realm of semantics. The meaning of partitive case would ensure that only some of the action measured out by the object would have come to pass giving the impression of imperfective aspect. The following Hindi example (from Mahajan, 1990: 76,78), however, presents an different type of case distinction and one that would be more difficult to handle within the semantic component.
(2) **HINDI**

a. raam roTii khaataa thaa
   Ram(M) bread(F) eat_IMP.M be_PST.M
   ‘Ram (habitually) ate bread.’

b. raam-ne roTii khaayii thii
   Ram(M)-erg bread(F) eat_PERF.F be_PST.F
   ‘Ram had eaten bread.’

Here, when the verb is in the imperfective as in (2a), the subject receives nominative (null) case and the verb agrees with it. When the verb is in the perfective, however, as in (2b), the subject receives ergative case and the verb agrees with the object. It is not uncommon to have a language split between a nominative/accusative case system and an absolutive/ergative case system depending on the Outer Aspect of the predicate (Dixon, 1994). Here it is less clear that a case change on the Agent is directly related to the semantics of the situation. If, on the other hand, we want to link the difference in case-marking to a difference in the syntax, functional aspect must play a role in the determination of phrase structure.

1.1.2 Inner Aspect and Syntax

The aspectual class that a predicate belongs to may also affect case marking. One example comes from case-marking of the object in Japanese as we can see in the examples below (from Uesaka 1996: 102 and Y. Hirakawa 1994:4).
The relevant fact is that only stative predicates may assign nominative (ga) to their objects.

Case assignment has been an integral part of the Chomskian paradigm since the late 70’s. Case was seen as a (sometimes) overt reflex of structural configuration. Case is assigned (or checked) by a particular head in a particular relationship with a DP. If this is so, then a shift in Case can be seen as a reflex of a shift in configuration. A shift in Case which co-occurs with a shift in aspektual verb class suggests that the aspektual verb class of a predicate must be encoded by the syntactic structure in some way. The purpose of the research presented here is to determine how Outer Aspect and Inner Aspect are encoded in the syntax.

### 1.2 INNER ASPECT

Within the context of making a clearer link between aspect (Outer and Inner) and phrase structure, I will be proposing the following representation of the extended projection of V. The crucial characteristics of this phrase structure are:¹

1. The VP is layered as in Larson (1988).
2. Lexical heads within the VP reflect semantic structure as in Hale and Keyser (1993, 2002).
3. As in Hale and Keyser’s work, a lexical item is a phrasal idiom that spans these heads.

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¹ I will not discuss the articulation of CP at all, and will only touch on the articulation of TP when discussing Outer Aspect.
(ii) There is a functional category (Aspect) within the layered VP (vP), i.e. embedded in syntactic representations of the lexical entry.

(iii) There is a functional category (Event) directly above the VP (vP) that marks the edge of the event.

Arguments for this structure will come from a variety of directions that will be discussed throughout the book, though I will give a brief introduction to some of the main claims in the sections below leaving longer discussions for later chapters. The structure is given below.
There are two VP shells in the sense of Larson which I label $V_1$ and $V_2$. Between these two shells is an inflectional (functional) category, ASP. Above these two shells is another functional category E(vent). Outer Aspect (OASP) takes scope over this entire event (EP). $V_1$ is a lexical category that introduces the external argument and when it does it has a meaning similar to CAUSE. ASP, depending on its feature content, has a meaning similar to BE/BECOME. $V_2$ introduces the Theme argument and the endpoint of the event, XP.

Now I outline some of my arguments for such a structure, and some of the consequences. Evidence for this articulated VP structures comes in three forms. First, I claim that object movement, already well-established in the current syntactic literature, may be to a position with the VP$^2$, below the merged position of the external argument. This alone does not argue for the structure proposed in (4) since the object could be adjoining to $V_2P$ below the external argument. The second form of argument comes from evidence that aspectual morphology may appear below $V_1$. Putting these two observations together, I propose that the derived object has moved to the specifier position the aspectual head. Lastly, I claim that this articulation of VP structure finds semantic support in the computation of Aktionsart where the information of the subparts of the VP correlate with the subparts of predicate class information. Further, predicate class information will form part of the lexical entry, and therefore be encoded within the VP. A brief introduction to the type of data to be examined for each of these claims is given below.

1.2.1 Derived objects

While the existence of derived objects has become an accepted part of current Chomskian syntax, there is a debate as to the landing site of object movement. In Chapter 2 I argue that at least one landing site for this movement is below the merged position of the external argument. A variety of cross-linguistic data is given to support this hypothesis.

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$^2$ VP is a label used for many disparate constituents with current literature. I will use it to designate the VP of the late 1980’s, the projection that contains all the merged arguments of the verb. This is probably closest to current vP (Chomsky 1995), PrP (Bowers 1993), VoiceP (Kratzer 1996), ExtP (Pylkkänen 2002). When discussing only the lower portion of the this constituent, I will specify it as $V_2P$. Further discussion of these various versions of VP structure is saved until Chapter 4.
such as applicatives in Bahasa Indonesia, topicalization in Kalagan, and low object shift in Swedish.

Here, I show briefly the topicalization facts from Kalagan. The topic is given in bold in the following sentences. I argue that what has been called topicalization is, in fact, partial A-movement to the landing site within the VP. A variety of DPs can undergo this process, triggered by the appropriate morphology on the verb. When the topic is either the Agent (as in (5a)) or the Theme (as in (5b)), there is no change in word order. What is more interesting for my concerns are the examples in (5c-e) where an element other than the Agent or Theme is the topic. In this case, the element has shifted to a position between the Agent and the Theme.

(5) Kalagan

a. Kumamang aku sa tubig na lata kan Ma’ adti balkon na lunis
   AT-get I water with can for Father on porch on Monday
   ‘I’ll get the water with the can for Dad on the porch on Monday.’

b. Kamangin ku ya tubig na lata kan Ma’ adti balkon na lunis
   TT-get I water with can for Father on porch on Monday

c. Pagkamang ku ya lata sa tubig kan Ma’ adti balkon na lunis
   IT-get I can water for Father on porch on Monday

d. Kamangang ku ya Ma’ sa tubig na lata adti balkon na lunis
   BT-get I Father water with can on porch on Monday

e. Kamangan ku ya balkon sa tubig na lata kan Ma’ na lunis
   LT-get I porch water with can for Father on Monday

The first step in my articulation of the VP consists, then, of hypothesizing the existence of a landing site for DP movement within the VP.

draft: 8/10/06
1.2.2 Aspectual morphology

Given that movement of the object DP within the VP is similar to movement of the subject DP, one might wonder if this movement is to some position similar to Spec, TP. In other words, is there some functional head within the VP which is responsible for the movement? I argue that there are morphological reasons to believe (a) that there is an inflectional category within the VP and (b) this non-lexical category is Aspect. In this section, I mention briefly two languages that provide some support for this view, Tagalog and Navajo.³

First, Tagalog has a morpheme, pag-, that introduces the external argument in a lexical causative construction. We can see an example of this below (from Maclachlan, 1992).

(6) TAGALOG

\[\sqrt{\text{tumba}} \quad \text{fall down}\]
\[\text{t-um-umba} \quad X \text{ fall down}\]
\[m\text{-}\text{pag-tumba} \quad Y \text{ knock } X \text{ down}\]

I propose that the prefix pag- occurs in V₁ where it introduces an external argument. Things become interesting when aspectual morphology is added to these forms. Tagalog has two aspectual morphemes. One is n-/-in- encoding the fact that the event has begun (+start) and the other is a reduplicative morpheme encoding the fact that the event is incomplete (+incomplete). The former appears above pag- as expected given its inflectional status. What is surprising is that the reduplicative morpheme occurs between the pag- prefix and the root. This is outlined below where (7) gives the paradigm and (8) gives a breakdown of the imperfective form that contains both morphemes.⁴

³ The morphological analysis of the aha- construction in Malagasy discussed in Chapter 6 provides further support.

⁴ The m-/-um- topic marker (TM) is typical of the morphology of Western Malayo-Polynesian languages like Tagalog, Malagasy, and the Kalagan data we saw earlier.
(7) ASPECT1 (outer aspect): +/-start +start -in-/n-
ASPECT2 (inner aspect): +/-incomplete +incomplete reduplication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>START</th>
<th>INCOMPLETE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nagtutumba Imperfective

(8) nagtutumba  $n$  +  $m$  +  pag  +  RED  +  V

IMPERFECTIVE  ASP1  +  TM  +  PAG  +  ASP2  +  V

In my view of Tagalog morphology, pag- is in $V_1$, the root is in $V_2$, and the reduplicative morpheme is in Inner Aspect. Pag-, in fact, is part of the lexical entry for the Tagalog word meaning ‘to drop’ (pagtumba), yet inflectional morphology can appear within this lexical item.

Navajo, like Tagalog, allows inflectional material to appear between parts of a lexical entry. For example, the lexical entry for ‘to pray’ is given as so…di…zin (see Speas 1991: 205ff). These three discontinuous bits appear in positions 1, 6, and 9 on a template of the sort given below. Navajo’s morphology is much more complex and is often presented in templatic form such as the template given below (see Speas 1991: 205ff emphasis mine: LDT).

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5 A discussion of what is considered to be a lexical entry will be introduced at the end of this chapter and discussed more fully in Chapter 6, section 6.8.1xx.
(9) Navajo Verbal Morpheme Order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADV</th>
<th>ITER</th>
<th>DIST-PL</th>
<th>D-OBJ</th>
<th>DEIC-SBJ</th>
<th>ADV</th>
<th>MODE</th>
<th>SBJ</th>
<th>VOICE/TRNS</th>
<th>STEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1= **ADVERBIAL**: manner, direction ... also indirect object pronoun  
2= **ITERATIVE**: aspeсtual/adverbial prefix  
3= **DISTRIBUTIVE PLURAL**: plural and distributive, ‘each one separately’  
4= **DIRECT OBJECT**: number and person of direct object  
5= **DEICTIC SUBJECT**: indefinite (someone) or fourth person (people in general)  
6= **ADVERBIAL**: adverbial/aspectual notions  
7= **MODE**: core of tense system  
8= **SUBJECT**: person and number of subject  
9= **voice/trans**

Within the idiosyncratic parts of the lexical item, then, we find the more productive, more inflectional material such as subject and object agreement as well as aspeсtual and tense information. A simplification of the template is given below where the functional material and the lexical material distinguished.

(10) **Template**

![Template Diagram](image)

I claim that, as with the Tagalog data, it is the Inner Aspect position that can explain the discontinuous nature of the lexical item.

### 1.2.3 Computation of Aktionsart

Once I have presented syntactic and morphological arguments to support the articulated VP structure of (4), I propose that this phrase structure mirrors event structure and provides a configuration off of which Aktionsart can be computed. There is basically an event “spine” within this structure which consists of the lexical heads plus the elements in
a Spec, head relationship with Inner Aspect, an event related category. This event spine has two parts — the idiosyncratic part of $V_1$ and $V_2$ (and $P$) and the more productive part of Asp. The idiosyncratic part represents the lexical entry (and its arguments).\(^6\)

(11) Event Spine within VP

The productive part is where part of the computation of Aktionsart occurs, more specifically the computation of telicity. Chapter 4 outlines how this computation works, but I give a brief overview here. Vendler (1967) famously characterizes four predicate classes — States, Activities, Accomplishments, and Achievements. The table below shows how he uses features to create a typology of events.

\(^6\) Note that this limits the number of arguments to three. This issue is discussed in Chapter 6, section 6.5xx.
I propose that the four classes may be represented by the structure in (4), with two VP shells. What will distinguish them is the value of $V_1$ and $\text{Asp}$. $V_1$ carries the information related to PROCESS and $\text{Asp}$ carries the information related to DEFINITE. The value of $\text{Asp}$ is particularly complex as it itself requires a computation of the elements within its domain. This domain is within the projection of $\text{Asp}$ and includes its specifier, the head of its complement, and the complements of the head of its complement. We see this on our event spine below.

This picture captures various observations about event computation. External arguments will be outside of the computation of telicity (definiteness). Further, only Themes that are in the Spec, $\text{Asp}$ position will be taken into consideration. This is meant to account for the observation that there is an interaction between accusative case assignment and whether DP can measure out the duration of an event. Evidence given in Chapter 5, section 5.2xx shows that these accusative DPs that measure an event do this from a VP internal position. Lexical aspect, then, is aspect that is syntactically positioned within the
lexical domain of phrase structure (i.e. not the inflectional domain) and which computes over lexical categories such as V and P.

1.3 OTHER CLAIMS

Throughout the book, while gathering evidence for the Inner Aspect position, other issues arise. In the process of investigating the internal make-up of the VP, I am led to fine-tune other grammatical concepts. Two that I introduce here are the inventory of syntactic categories and the role of the lexicon in the syntactic computational component.

1.3.1 Lexical and functional categories

In the study of syntactic categories, there had generally been agreement that there are two broad types of categories, lexical categories and functional categories (see e.g. Abney 1987). Lexical categories introduce arguments, functional categories introduce features. Recently, however, there has been a blurring of the lines. The Minimalist Program has features driving movement and appearing on all heads. Further, in a neo-Davidsonian semantic framework, arguments are often introduced by functional heads such as Voice (Kratzer 1996) or Ext (Pylkkänen 1999). I stay more traditional in terms of only allowing lexical categories to introduce arguments. This has the consequence that \( V_1 \) must be a lexical category. One further reason making this distinction between lexical and functional comes from the Navajo data seen above where the lexical entry consists of three positions on the template. These three positions are the lexical heads within the articulated VP, including the head \( V_1 \). \( V_1 \), while being lexical, is closer to a light verb (or what I call later a functor verb following Ritter and Rosen (1993). It is lexical, nevertheless.

I do introduce a new type of functional category, however, which is event-related. On the tree given in (4), E(vent) and Asp are two examples of event-related categories. The primary function of an event-related category is to theta-bind, in the sense of Higginbotham (1985), an event variable in the head of its complement. While this is the

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7 In Chapter 7, I allow Inner Aspect to introduce an argument, but we will see how this type of argument is different from arguments that are part of the lexical entry of the root.
primary function, as with most categories, modifiers can be adjoined to this head and thereby modify the event (or sub-event).

1.3.2 The role of the lexicon

Some of the discussion above raises questions about the role of the lexicon in the computational component (syntax). For example, the Navajo lexical entries appear to have syntactic parts that do not compute compositionally in the semantics. How is it that the lexicon is able to have subparts of an entry appear in syntactic heads? These syntactic subparts of a lexical entry are evident not only in the Navajo data, but in a more startling and syntactic manner in serial verb constructions and inherent complement constructions. As expressed by Hale and Keyser (1993:96), “[i]n many languages a large percentage of verbal lexical items are overtly phrasal”. Examples of each construction are given below.

(14) **Serial Verb Construction:** Fon

KOoku sO asO do tavo-ji 
Koku take crab put table-on

‘Koku put the crab on the table.’

(15) **Inherent Complement Construction:** Fon

Àriǹlá dó àwù 
Arinhola do shirt

‘Arinhola got dressed.’

The lexicon has to have access to some part of the syntactic component. Using the ideas of Hale and Keyser (1993), I propose a domain of L(lexical)-syntax distinct from the domain of S(syntactic)-syntax, i.e. there is a domain of syntax (within the VP) that has certain idiosyncratic characteristics of the lexicon, as well as of the syntactic computational system. I differ from Hale and Keyser in that I assume that the external argument is in the domain of L-syntax, but I otherwise agree that processes that occur above the VP must be part of S-syntax. More specifically, I posit E as the boundary
between L-syntax and S-syntax. What this means procedurally is that at E, the computational system can return to the lexicon to match the lexical heads that have been merged against the lexical items in the lexicon. The semantics of the lexical item will be attached at this point. Further, a different type of phonological process may apply here. Once beyond E, the computational system works productively with no recourse to the idiosyncrasies of the lexicon. This accounts not only for differences in lexical (L-syntax) causatives and productive (S-syntax) causatives, but also a type of anaphor binding in Tagalog discussed in Chapter 4.

E also represents the edge of an event. One difference that has been pointed out in the characterization of lexical causatives and productive causatives is the fact that lexical causatives encode one event while productive causatives may encode multiple events. This distinction was made famous in Fodor’s (1970) article detailing how kill an L-syntax causative is different from cause to die an s-syntax causative. How events are represented morphologically is distinct from what they represent semantically. English is fairly transparent in how it maps words to events — two events are generally represented by two words, one event by one word. It is this one-to-one mapping that allows Carter (1976) to ask about the limits on a word in English. In fact, what he is discussing is also a restriction on the argument structure of one event. For this reason, I distinguish between E-words (those lexical items that are constructed below E), and M-words (those lexical items that are one morphological whole). Languages vary dramatically on how M-words are mapped to E-words as the constructions in the table below show.

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8 Obviously the morphological component that appears at Spell-Out will have to have access to idiosyncratic morphological forms. For example, +past when attached to sing will result in sung not singed. However, the semantics will still be compositional. It is not this sort of idiosyncrasy, then, that is crucial in determining the domain of L-syntax (and lexical entries), but rather an idiosyncrasy that is part of the morphological component.
1.4 SOME CONSEQUENCES

Now that some of the main claims have been set up, I turn to consequences of these claims that are discussed. These are presented in the last two chapters of the book, Chapter 7 and Chapter 8. By having the structure that has been proposed, by allowing this structure to represent event structure, and by accepting that the lexicon can interact with the structure below E, certain accounts present themselves for otherwise puzzling processes.

1.4.1 The Structure of Achievements

In Chapter 7 I investigate the structure for Achievements, one of Vendler’s predicate classes. I use the morphology of Malagasy and Tagalog to probe the structure, particularly the make-up of $V_1$ and ASP, the two categories most closely tied to these classes. I draw several conclusions. One is that the $V_1$ in transitive Achievements in these languages is stative and ASP simply encodes the endpoint of a change of state. This raises the question of how the external argument of a transitive achievement is merged into the structure. A case of morpheme deletion in Tagalog is brought to bear on this issue. As mentioned above, I analyze the Tagalog prefix $pag$- as being in $V_1$ in Tagalog lexical causatives. Further, I argue that $pag$- is deleted in cases where the argument that it introduces remains in situ. When this account of morpheme deletion is applied to the
case of Tagalog achievements, the conclusion we are led to is that the external argument of a transitive achievement is in Spec, A\textsuperscript{sp}.

While this result may appear controversial, I argue that it explains the non-agentive nature of these external arguments, a particular morphological paradigm in Tagalog verb forms, and the realization of tense in Malagasy. Also, a larger outcome of this is that Achievements are given firmer footing as a linguistically relevant and structurally identifiable aspectual predicate class.

1.4.2 Coercion

The final task of this book is to look at cases of coercion within the context of the structure that is presented and the interpretation that it is given. There are certain tests that are used to determine membership in Vendler’s predicate classes. One of the problems with these tests is that English predicates are particularly flexible. By imagining appropriate contexts, one can make awkward sentences much better. Two examples are given below.

(17) a. We are solving the problem.
   b. Mary ran in three minutes.

(17a) should be ungrammatical because an achievement predicate (-process) is appearing in the English progressive. (17b) should be bad because an activity verb (-definite/telic) is appearing with a frame PP. However, we can imagine (17a) as describing the process leading up to solving the problem, and we can imagine (17b) as either describing the amount of time leading up to the point when the running started, or describing a well-defined task (running one lap, doing the morning run). In these cases we are coercing the predicates from being one type of predicate to being another. An achievement can be coerced to behave like an accomplishment as in (17a) and an activity can be coerced to behave like an accomplishment as in (17b).

The question is whether coercion is grammatically encoded and how. De Swart (1998) has suggested that coercion occurs through covert aspectual operators. I follow de Swart’s analysis and propose further that these operators have syntactic content,
appearing as zero morphology in the event spine. More specifically, the progressive is able to appear in (17a) because a zero morpheme appearing in \( V_1 \) has created an accomplishment out of an achievement.

This has particular import for my proposals, since I claim that case variation may only be driven by changes in situation aspect, i.e. Inner Aspect. The Finnish and Hindi examples given at the beginning of this chapter, then, appear to be counterexamples. I argue, however, that the apparent connection between Outer Aspect and Case change in these examples is mediated by a coercion effect. Outer Aspect forces the appearance of particular zero morphemes in the situation aspect domain thereby affecting case assignment. My evidence for this is the fact that Outer Aspect changes can effect a shift in meaning — a shift that in other languages must be encoded with different choice of lexical items. An example is given from Hindi below. In the progressive (imperfective), the meaning is like ‘look for’ in English, an activity predicate. In the perfective form, the meaning is like ‘see’ in English, in this case an achievement.

(18)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a.</th>
<th>siitaa-ne laRkaar dekhaa</th>
<th>(Mahajan 1990: 103)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sita-ERG boy(M) saw-M</td>
<td>‘Sita saw the boy.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b.</th>
<th>siitaa laRkaar dehkr ii hE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sita boy(M) see-PROG-be-F</td>
<td>‘Sita is looking for a (suitable) boy (to marry).’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The meaning shift forced by the Outer Aspect in this case, is reflected in a shift of situation aspect, which, in English, is reflected by a change in lexical item. I claim that all of this indicates a shift in the L-syntax, represented within the VP, below E. Now we can keep the hypothesis that case changes always reflect a shift in situation aspect and changes within the VP domain.
1.5 A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Before turning to the body of the research, I present some of my thoughts on methodology. I clearly have faith in cross-linguistic research. Many of the issues that are raised here show up better in some languages rather than others. I use the helpful languages to gain information about the less helpful languages. However, working on languages that are not one’s own leads to problems. Working on multiple languages and making cross-linguistic claims leads to other problems. My belief, though, is that all of these are outweighed, however, by what is gained.

That having been said, I return to the problems. For example, I use morpheme deletion in Tagalog to support a morpheme analysis from Malagasy. This line of argumentation carries with it the assumption that the morphology is being used in a similar fashion. Clearly this is not always the case. For example, the morpheme meN- in Bahasa Indonesia, while being similar to Malagasy maN-, is different in important ways. I trust the reader to keep in mind the danger at the same time as keeping in mind the possible gains.

Further, many of the languages that I use are understudied though there is recent improvement. This should not take away from the importance of the generalizations that they bring to the literature. Of course one needs to be wary of false generalizations, but this is always the case whether the language being studied is Malagasy or English. Restricting language generalizations to data from well-studied languages is obviously not the direction to take.

Also, as with any body of research, the assumptions I make might be controversial. What I call a subject in Malagasy and Tagalog is viewed as a topic by many researchers such as Pearson (2001). What I assume it a lexical causative morpheme in Tagalog is analyzed as an anti-EPP marker by Rackowski (2002). I try to point the reader to competing claims when possible.

One final point that needs to be made is that this is primarily syntactic research. I look at all the issues through a syntactician’s eyes. The issues, though, require assumptions to be made about morphology and semantics. I do both with no apologies. I
remain hopeful that the assumptions I do make can be developed using the appropriate expertise.