Thus "all clauses are IP constituents, headed by an overt or covert INFL constituent "(A.Radford,1997: 99) and "all nominals are D-projections ,comprising either an overt or covert pronominal determiner (like *he* or *PRO*) used without a complement ,or an overt or covert prenominal determiner(like *the* or ∅) used with a noun expression as its complement." (A.Radford,1997: 99) Therefore," empty categories play a central role in the grammar of English." (A.Radford,1997: 99)

Exercises

1.Draw tree diagrams to represent the structure of the following sentences, presenting arguments in support of key assumptions made in your analysis. Discuss the features carried by the italicized items, and say how they are checked.

(i) Students *hate* the lectures.
(ii) He *had* a car.
(iii) The suspect denied that he had *stolen* the jewels.
(iv) I feel sure she will try to come *to* the meeting.
(v) It is *getting* harder to gain admission to university.

Model answer

In sentence (i), both nominal expressions containing an overt determiner (i.e. *the lectures*) and the bare nominal determiner (i.e. *students*) are determiner phrases ,and they differ only in respect of whether they are headed by the overt third person determiner *the* or the covert third person determiner ∅. Thus, *the lectures* is a DP formed by merging the determiner *the* with the noun *lectures* , *students* is a DP formed by merging the null determiner ∅ with the noun *students*. Afterwards, we merge the verb *hate* with the DP *the lectures* to form the VP *hate the lectures*, merging this VP with an