

Introduction

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Lexical Specification and Insertion

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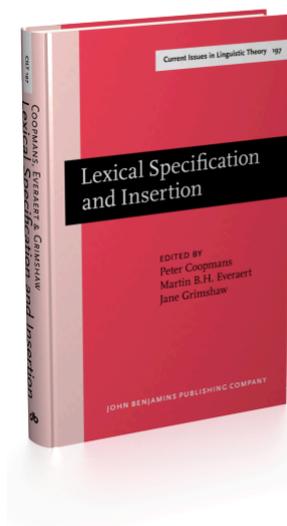
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Introduction

The papers in this volume address the general question what type of lexical specifications we need in a generative grammar and by what principles this information is projected onto syntactic configurations, or to put it differently, how lexical insertion is executed. Many of the contributions focus on the particular question what the syntactic consequences are of choices that are made with respect to the lexical specifications of heads.

The traditional assumption is that ‘lexical insertion’ means replacing a X^0 position in a Phrase-marker by a lexical formative. Simultaneous insertion of more than one X^0 , as in the case of phrasal idioms, is probably exceptional. Lexical formatives contain inherent and contextual features. Through the projection of the contextual features of a X^0 (= head) the structural properties of phrases are determined. Although the Projection Principle is taken to be one of the core principles of UG, very little explicit discussion is devoted to determining what contextual features we have and what ‘projection’ actually means and how it is executed.

Since Chomsky’s (1965) *Aspects* several forms of lexical encoding have been proposed in the literature. Without claiming to be complete, we can name ‘subcategorization’, ‘selectional restrictions’, ‘theta grid/argument structure’, ‘predicate argument structure’, ‘grammatical function assignment’, ‘lexical conceptual structure’, ‘event structure’, aspectual structure, etc.. It is clear that some of these notions are mutually incompatible, others are not, and that, furthermore, there is redundancy.

In *Aspects* two types of contextual features were distinguished: selectional restrictions (in the form of ‘syntactic features’) and (strict) subcategorization. The content of the notion ‘syntactic feature’ has never been developed in full detail in

generative grammar. Within Principles and Parameters theory, part of the empirical content of selectional restrictions is taken over by theta-grid specifications, or S-selection (Chomsky 1986). Still, another part of what could be called 'syntactic features' cannot be reduced to theta-specification and is, therefore, hardly discussed in the literature (but see Wechsler 1995). Compared to selectional restrictions, subcategorization restrictions have been discussed in much more detail. There is a line of research that has tried to diminish the role of subcategorization as a form of lexical specification. In the Aspects framework subcategorization determined how many argument positions there are, the syntactic categories of these argument positions and the ordering of these positions. It has been suggested that part of the categorial information could be reduced to thematic information through the formulation of Canonical Structural Realization rules (Pesetsky 1982). In this way lexical specification is limited to S-selection and some general principles of Case theory.

Since the introduction of theta theory, considerable attention has been paid to this module of grammar. It is often assumed that the theta specification of a predicate in terms of a theta grid should be enriched by additional marking of theta roles as direct/indirect, external/internal (Williams 1981, Marantz 1984) or in terms of hierarchical structuring (Grimshaw 1990). On a more fundamental level the question remains how theta-roles are to be defined. They could be viewed as abstract markers of thematic content (Chomsky 1981) or they could be defined structurally on a deeper semantic level, a lexical conceptual level (Jackendoff 1990), and then mapped onto a syntactically visible level of lexical representation, the theta-grid (Zubizarreta 1987, Levin & Rappaport-Hovav 1994). Hale and Keyser (1993) propose a configurational theta-theory, a framework within which arguments combine with predicators creating different combinatorial options. Borer (1994) pursues an approach where no hierarchical or thematic information is associated with arguments in verb entries. Arguments receive their interpretation by being in particular syntactic specifier positions.

Despite the work that has been done, it is still very much open to debate to what extent the lexical specifications that have been offered in the literature are necessary and sufficient to fully specify the structural configurations in which a head can appear. The contributions in this volume are aimed at getting a better grasp of these issues. Specific issues that are addressed are: How are theta roles mapped onto syntactic configurations? Through specific realization rules, universal mapping principles, or through the mediation of aspectual marking? Are thematic roles primitives or derived? To what extent are the types of lexical specifications autonomous, or are they linked? For instance, is theta-specification linked to aspectual information or to specifications of Case information? How is, in general, the projection part of the Projection Principle executed? Do we need a lexical

specification of aspectual information, and if so what would such a specification look like? To what extent can subcategorization be reduced to other selectional properties of predicates? What are the primitives of Lexical Conceptual Structure?

The division of labor between the lexicon and syntax is a recurrent theme in the contributions to this volume. Together the contributions present an intriguing picture of what we know, but also of what is still mysterious about the lexicon-syntax interface.

David Adger & Catrin Sian Rhys show how modularizing the grammar facilitates the elimination of redundancy in the lexicon. They argue that we should have no disjunction in lexical specification and that categorially mixed projections are illegitimate. They illustrate this on the basis of a non-disjunctive analysis of English *-ing* nominalizations, separating the morphology and syntax into autonomous components of the grammar (cf. Borer 1984) and adopting the theory of Extended Projection developed by Grimshaw (this volume). Differences between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds are derived from differences in argument structure, and they show how the interaction of their theory of lexical specification with an extended version of the Theta Criterion derives complement marking phenomena and the licensing of subjects.

Hans Bennis investigates possible argument structures of adjectives. He demonstrates that there exists an interesting, but limited amount of variation in the way arguments are aligned in adjectival phrases and that a major part of the theory on the projection of arguments within verbal projections can be transferred to adjectival projections. He discusses adjectival predicates that involve the attribution of mental properties and psychological adjectives (cf. Cinque 1990). Bennis claims there are basically two types of adjectival constructions. Either the external argument is realized as the subject (Possessor), or an internal Theme appears as the subject. The internal arguments can be externalized by different operations. An approach along these lines allows him to make generalizations about thematic roles, in such a way that the interpretation of a particular role is derived from structural and aspectual properties. Bennis thus argues that there is no longer any need for labels of the type Agent, Possessor and Experiencer.

Frank Drijkoningen addresses the classification of verbs in terms of their thematic roles by discussing verbs assigning the Experiencer role. The fact that Experiencers may function either as an Object or as a Subject forms a challenge for any theory integrating the Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis (cf. Baker (1988)) or some theoretical variant of it. Drijkoningen argues that thematic constancy of experiencer predicates and the UTAH can be maintained in spite of a certain

amount of surface disparity and in spite of a certain amount of subtle meaning differences. One of the major implications of the proposal is that thematic roles are combined with aspectual roles, and the question is discussed whether the aspectual dimension could not take over from the thematic dimension in general.

Daniel Everett's paper investigates the lexical classification of clitics, either as independent words or as affixes, as a way to understand the lexicon-syntax interface. In his paper Everett explores a set of hypotheses which account for this ambiguous behavior of nominal clitics. His basic proposal is that clitics, pronouns, and nominal affixes (i.e., agreement) are epiphenomena and are therefore neither entered in the lexicon nor referred to by grammatical rules. Such terms merely label grammatical relations in the sense of Chomsky (1981), i.e., they are just theoretically inert names given to configurational relationships. If he is correct, then labeling particular syntactic phenomena as 'clitics' (or 'pronouns' or 'affixes') can only obscure the empirical issues underlying this label. The three principal theses Everett defends are: (i) that N-features (e.g. person, number, and gender) are entered separately in the lexicon but pronouns, pronominal clitics, and pronominal affixes are not; (ii) that pronouns are N-features in A-positions (whether lexical categories or functional categories), while some affixes and all clitics are N-features stacked in A'-position; (iii) that clitics are N-features adjoined to a word, while affixes are N-features included within a word.

Jane Grimshaw discusses the extension of the standard principles of X-bar theory to many elements such as Determiners and Complementizers which previously fell outside it. Syntactic categories are divided into two groups, lexical categories and functional categories, and lexical categories and their projections characteristically occur enclosed within functional projections, as complements to functional heads. If we posit heads and projections of two different kinds, the issue arises what combinations are possible. Can any lexical head take any functional projection as its complement? Can any functional head take any lexical projection as its complement? The key idea explored in Grimshaw's paper is that a proper subset of the logically possible combinations have a special property: they form what will be called 'extended projections'.

Hubert Haider investigates the observation that the VP-internal basic on patterns of non-verbal elements are cross-grammatically invariant. Taking this as an empirical base, he claims that the structure of A-structure, the discharge conditions, and the structure of the resulting projections are universal. The superficial differences between OV and VO systems originate from a single option: the directionality parameter of licensing. The organization of A-structure in the

lexical entries consists in the combination of operators, whose structural order is determined by a universal Conceptual Representation structure, with language-specific linking devices. A-structure is uniformly discharged on a universal structural configuration, right branching projections, with one parametric option: progressive or regressive licensing. If a progressively licensing head discharges its A-structure on a right branching configuration, the theta criterion triggers the projection of a head chain. A regressively licensing head is able to project its A-structure while resting in situ.

Lars Hellan & Mila Dimitrova-Vulchanova explore the hypothesis that from the meaning of any verb-root in a given language one can largely predict in which morpho-syntactic environments the verb-root can occur, given the array of patterns available in the language. They argue that such a hypothesis can be framed only in conjunction with the identification of a set of lexical semantic factors serving as the basis for the predictions in question. Assuming the hypothesis that a verb's choice of environments in active, passive and absolutive constructions is largely predictable from its meaning, their purpose is to identify one of the main factors of verb meaning from which such predictions can be made, namely that of 'criteriality'. The empirical evidence they bring to bear on this issue comes from English and Bulgarian.

Johan Kerstens' paper is concerned with the thesis that the language system avails itself of variable phi-features. He shows that these variables, which range over features for number, gender and Case, may be part of the lexical specification of elements such as determiners and pronouns. In effect these variable features define a class of specifiers of the functional projection AGRP, whose ultimate feature specification is determined through the process of spec,head agreement. Part of the argument is the assumption of a restrictive theory of Case which takes the Case module to be on a par with the binding system. The argument supports the view that the language system is a system of principles and parameters, and that the different setting of parameters not only makes the difference between languages but also makes the difference between subsystems of one language.

Marie Labelle presents an analysis of a number of French denominal verbs (such *entreposer* or *fleurir*) in which the noun on which the verb is built corresponds to a displaced entity or to the final location of some entity. Basing herself on the work of Jackendoff (1990) she develops an analysis of these verbs which accounts for the relation between their conceptual structure, their morphological structure and their argument structure. Her careful examination of denominal verbs provides us with interesting hypotheses regarding potential primitives for word meaning and

shows that it is possible to predict the syntactic realization of the arguments of these verbs.

Rita Manzini investigates the problem of sentential complementation with respect to the selection of an embedded subjunctive by certain classes of matrix verbs. She argues that in general a subjunctive is an indefinite T bound by an intensional operator in a syntactic dependency. Like other syntactic dependencies, this relation is sensitive to islands and to parasitic gap-like configurations. The fact that certain classes of lexical predicates trigger the subjunctive can then be imputed to the fact that such predicates embed intensional operators. Moreover, Manzini argues that the well-known interaction of subjunctives with polarity items, reflexives and disjoint reference follows from this model and from independently needed assumptions.

Malka Rappaport Hovav & Beth Levin's main purpose in their paper is to investigate the lexical- semantic determinants of unaccusativity. They take the position that unaccusativity is semantically determined as their starting point, on the assumption that much is to be learned if one tests the limits of this hypothesis (cf. Levin & Rappaport 1995). In their paper they clarify the relative contributions of the aspectual notions which are claimed to be implicated in the classification of single argument verbs. On the basis of a study of a range of different types of intransitive verbs, they suggest that the rules responsible for argument expression, and hence for the classification of verbs, do not make reference to either agentivity, telicity, or stativity. Rappaport-Hovav and Levin claim that agentivity is subsumed under a notion of immediate cause, while telicity is subsumed under the notion of directed change. They formulate explicit linking rules which are responsible for the classification of verbs as unergative or unaccusative, and show how these rules interact. Finally they argue that stativity is not relevant for the classification of verbs with respect to the Unaccusative Hypothesis.

Thomas Roeper focuses on the empirical domain of the different types of nominals: nominalizations, gerunds, and bare nouns. Each exhibits its own interpretive properties which reflect their structural origins. He provides evidence that each level of the DP is a possible projection from the verb: DP/NP/ N. The distinctions can either be directly projected, under economy of representation, or the result of incorporation. He argues that some nominals are really nominalizations of VP that retain structure and arguments, while others are, in effect, nominalizations of V, which retain thematic roles, but not arguments. Both cases are distinct from pure results. The existence of several nominal categories entails differences in binding, extraction, and control. The distinctions, when examined carefully, show that both

Theta-control (Williams 1994) or Implicit Role Control (Roeper 1993) and Syntactic control of PRO are necessary.

Bożena Rozwadowska presents an analysis of Polish nominalizations in which she addresses the question of the distinction between nouns and verbs with respect to the argument rules and theta-assignment properties. She demonstrates that neither a configurational approach nor a thematic approach provides consistent predictions for all the nominalizations. She argues that Grimshaw's (1990) theory of Event Structure is superior to the former theories, but still insufficient to cover psych-nominals and intransitive complex event nominals. To accommodate all the generalizations that are presented in her paper she proposes to distinguish between external (non-psych) events and internal (psych) events. She argues that the difference between the two is in event identification, or in other words, in locating the events, and that the realization of arguments in nominals is sensitive to the event identification or event construal.

Margaret Speas investigates the Lexical Parameterization Hypothesis. In particular, she is concerned with 'nonconfigurationality' as a challenge to this hypothesis. Her Pronominal Argument Hypothesis locates the variation in properties of pronominal morphemes, with the result that in certain languages overt nominals are base-generated in adjoined positions, and are interpreted by rules of construal which associate them with pronominal arguments licensed by morphology on the verb. Speas' goal is to shed light on the nature and validity of this hypothesis by investigating properties of Navajo, which has been claimed to be a language in which all arguments are pronominal. Speas observes that because of Navajo's extremely rich morphology, one can easily be drawn to the view that syntactic structure is not as important in Navajo as it is in a language like English, and hence that the way in which lexically specified argument structures are projected onto syntax differs parametrically from English. In her paper, however, she argues that overt NPs in Navajo are in A-positions, and hence that Navajo is not a Pronominal Argument Language, but instead has the same settings as English does of the principles that constrain the projection of argument structure.

Carol L. Tenny explores the issue of modularity in lexical representations. Her paper presents an approach to lexical specification in which Aspectual Structure is represented in modular fashion, as distinct from (Lexical) Conceptual Structure. Aspectual Structure is represented through aspectual roles, lexically specified aspectual role grids, and assignment of aspectual roles by predicates to certain of their internal arguments. Universal linking constraints are stated over Aspectual Structure and event structure, while language-particular constraints may be stated

over the additional thematic material found in (Lexical) Conceptual Structure. Both kinds of lexical information are important in determining a predicate's properties and behavior. The case of the contact locative alternation she discusses illustrates the interaction between Aspectual or event structure on the one hand, and conceptual or thematic information on the other hand.

Angeliek van Hout discusses the lexicon-syntax interface and proposes an approach to projection based on the view that a predicate's lexical specification includes its basic event structure and a set of event participants. Projection of argument positions onto syntax is triggered by the requirement that event structure is syntactically identified, event participants in argument positions satisfying that requirement. In such an approach a verb gets projected onto syntax in different frames, frames being related to different event structure types. Argument structure by itself is thus not a separate (syntactic) level of grammar. The mapping from lexical semantics to syntax is direct; the notions of linking and projection have collapsed. Reduction of item-specific lexical information in the lexicon is one of the main consequences of Van Hout's approach advocated. She illustrates the proposal with pseudo-transitives, derived particle verbs, prefixed verbs, unergative-unaccusative pairs and the causative-inchoative alternation in Dutch and Russian.

Joost Zwarts addresses an important aspect of argument structure: the distinction between external and internal arguments, as proposed in Williams (1981). He argues that the notion external argument actually covers two more primitive notions: referential argument and prominent argument. The referential argument of a category is non-thematic: it corresponds to the 'reference' of that category in an intuitive sense. Two clear examples are the referential argument R for nouns and the event argument E for verbs. The prominent argument is thematic: it is the thematic role that is most prominent in the thematic hierarchy and event structure. Motivations for the distinction between referential and prominent arguments are drawn from three different areas: (i) the relationship between functional and lexical categories, (ii) the thematic representation of modification, (iii) the general formulation of theta-marking.

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