
Preface

The core idea of this work, the Morphology-Syntax Mapping Hypothesis, was initially presented in the syntax seminar of fall, 1996, in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and later in the 1997 LSA Summer Institute. It surely has traveled a long way to become a book. On the one hand, it is such a relief to know that I can put it behind me now; on the other, the long course taken is also the primary reason that few most recent works find their place in the text—the references pretty much reflect what the first complete draft of the book looked like.

Like numerous works before it, this book tries to figure out the puzzle of the relation between word formation and sentence formation. The theme of the book is that some mutually opposing ideas regarding the puzzle not only can be reconciled into a single (and simple) theory but also should be. Though such an approach is not often taken in modern linguistics in the face of competing theories, it has repeatedly proven to be the right one in other fields of science that study complex natural systems. An example from biology is briefly mentioned in the last chapter of the book.

Ideas come and go (and, sometimes, come and go again). Few people have the privilege of finding their largely intact ideas a permanent place in the ever-evolving base of knowledge. Still, what I have argued for in this book is what I believe at the moment to be the best solution to the above-mentioned puzzle. And for this personal accomplishment, I owe my intellectual debts to the following three scholars, listed chronologically according to the time their thoughts influenced me: Jim Higginbotham, Richard Larson, and Mark Baker.

Jim's theory of thematic operations showed me the explanatory power of a simple computational system that is not intrinsically part of syntax.

This is the origin of my doubt that anything that can be accounted for syntactically is automatically a syntactic phenomenon. From Richard, I learned to dissociate the essence of a theory from the technical implementations of that theory. Ever since, I have felt blessed not to be tied unnecessarily to specific technical apparatuses while adopting or expressing an idea in my research. Mark's influence on me is everywhere. Though this book articulates a theory that disagrees with his in many fundamental ways, it is built on his numerous insights and his rich reservoir of data. Without his work in morpho-syntax, this book would not have been possible.

My special thanks go to Anne Mark. Without her superb editorial work, this book would have looked very different, and that difference would be one that I am glad no one else has the opportunity to see.

With this opportunity, I also want to share an anecdote. While trying to explain to my daughter what the title of my book means, I jokingly said $X^0 = 1$. Though the algebraic equation is no part of linguistics, it occurred to me that it does have a symbolic meaning for my book. After all, not only is the book concerned primarily with things happening at the X^0 level of the language faculty, but its central theme is to argue that at this level, the two mechanisms typically viewed as conflicting alternatives to each other, that is, head movement in syntax and lexical word-formation operations, are actually the coexisting and interactive factors of one simple interface system that could not exist without either one of them. In other words, X^0 is a place where "opposing" syntactic and lexical factors unite into a single component of language, which I call the morphology-syntax interface. In this sense, my book might be appropriately summarized as $X^0 = 1$.