The general objective of this work has been to present a syntax of predication and the inversion of the predicate around its subject, putting its emphasis on meaningless elements (meaningless in the sense of having no semantic load) that play an essential role in the establishment and syntactic manipulation of predication relationships: relators and linkers.

Chapters 2 and 3 of this study developed the hypothesis that all subject-predicate relationships are syntactically mediated by a relator, and argued that subject-predicate relationships are both configurational and fundamentally nondirectional. While Napoli’s (1989) approach to predication is both nondirectional and nonconfigurational, and Rothstein’s (1983) configurational approach to (primary) predication explicitly includes a directionality clause stipulating that the predicate must follow the subject, this study has presented an extended argument for the view that predication relationships are systematically established in a relator phrase, with the predicate originating either as the complement of the relator (with the subject in the relator’s specifier), as in the familiar small-clause structure, or as the specifier of the relator (with the subject occupying the relator’s complement position). Against this background, chapter 2 looked not only at core cases of predication (both primary and secondary) but also at the syntactic representation of topicalization, focalization, and adverbial and adjectival modification. In chapter 3 I explicitly refuted claims to the effect that “bare” small clauses or “bare” copular sentences exist, insisting on an asymmetrical and underlyingly predicational approach to all copular sentences (including what have variously been referred to as equative or identifying/identificational copular sentences) and reducing the typology of copular sentences of Higgins 1979 (or the expanded version of Declerck 1988) to just two types (see also Verheugd 1990): Moro’s (1997) canonical and inverse copular sentences, the latter derived in syntax via Predicate Inversion.
With Predicate Inversion thus introduced, chapter 4 put the focus on the restrictions on inversion of the predicate around its subject and the distribution of linker elements surfacing between the inverted predicate and the subject. It presented an in-depth analysis of the syntax of Predicate Inversion (including Copular Inversion, Locative Inversion, “beheaded” Locative Inversion, and Dative Shift constructions), showing that Predicate Inversion constructions in general involve A-movement of a null-headed small-clause predicate around the subject, with the licensing requirement imposed on the null head of the predicate giving us the trigger for Predicate Inversion. It was shown that the grammar solves the locality problem facing A-movement of the predicate around its subject in either of two ways (raising of the predicate head to the relator, or raising of the relator to the small-clause external linker), giving rise to two different types of Predicate Inversion constructions with predictably distinct syntactic behaviors.

The discussion in chapter 5 of predication and Predicate Inversion in the nominal domain, the most extensive case study featured in the book, addressed, among other things, the syntax of wh-interrogative and wh-exclamative DPs, cases of DP-internal adjectival predication, possessed noun phrases, and relative-clause constructions, but its main focus was on the syntax of qualitative binominal noun phrases such as a jewel of a village and an idiot of a doctor. I argued at length that while all qualitative binominal noun phrases share the fact that the first noun phrase serves as the predicate of the second, one type of qualitative binominal noun phrase (the attributive type) base-generates the surface order of predicate and subject in a predicate-specifier structure and the other type (the comparative one) is derived from a predicate-complement structure via Predicate Inversion. Both types of qualitative binominal noun phrase give rise to a “nominal copula” (English of) between the predicate and the subject: in the predicate-specifier type, this copula is the lexicalization of the relator, while in the predicate-complement type, whose derivation involves Predicate Inversion, the nominal copula is a spell-out of the small-clause external linker. The case study of qualitative binominal noun phrases thus lent support to the nondirectionality of predication, highlighted the pervasiveness of predication and Predicate Inversion in the grammar, and by identifying a copular element inside the nominal phrase and analyzing its distribution, it both furthered the parallelism between clauses and nominal phrases and vindicated the view that copular elements are meaningless spell-outs of functional heads inside or immediately outside small clauses (RELATORS and LINKERS).
The opening paragraph of this study emphasized that these were neither the first nor the last words written on predication. It is my hope, however, that the previous pages have made a contribution to the ongoing discussion of predication relationships and their syntax by seeking to establish a number of important points, which I will present here as bullet statements summarizing the exposition in the preceding paragraphs:

- Predication relationships are asymmetrical but nondirectional, projected in syntax in either of two ways—the predicate-complement or predicate-specifier structures.
- All predication relationships are mediated in syntax by a relator; consequently, all predication relationships are asymmetrical.
- Predicate-complement structures may serve as input to the syntactic process of Predicate Inversion, a movement operation raising the predicate to an A-specifier position above the base position of its subject.
- Inversion of predicate and subject is subject to locality conditions that can be met in either of two ways—via raising of the predicate head to the relator, or via phase-extending movement of the relator to a small-clause external functional head, the linker.
- Predication and Predicate Inversion exist both in clauses and in nominal phrases; their workings are identical in the two structural domains.
- Copular elements manifest themselves as spell-outs of relator and linker heads; since such heads are found both in clauses and in nominal phrases, copular elements exist in both structural domains.

Whether or not a relator is spelled out depends on an interplay of factors in which the structural environment of the relator plays a key role. The linker is generally forced to be spelled out whenever the language has an element to lexicalize it, to signal the application of phase-extending head movement, on which successful application of Predicate Inversion depends.

Relators and linkers are the vital syntactic cement of predication relationships and the inversion thereof. Studying the behavior of these elements has proved beneficial in bringing forth new perspectives on time-honored questions about predication and the distribution of copular elements, and in opening up new empirical domains of investigation. Pursuing these perspectives will doubtless further our understanding of the many questions surrounding the syntax of equation, (pseudo)clefting, relativization, and possession as well.