Contents

General preface x
Preface and acknowledgments xi
List of abbreviations xiii

1 The role of word meaning in syntax 1
  1.1 The syntax–lexicon interface 1
  1.2 Predicate argument structure and its discontents 2
  1.3 Organization of the book 5

2 Word meaning 6
  2.1 Introduction 6
  2.2 Words and senses 6
    2.2.1 Homonymy, polysemy, and generality 6
    2.2.2 Linguistic tests for distinguishing senses 10
    2.2.3 Caveats and complications 12
    2.2.4 Disjunctive and conjunctive senses; facets 14
  2.3 Polysemy and sense extension 16
    2.3.1 Systematic polysemy 16
    2.3.2 Pragmatic roots of polysemy 17
    2.3.3 Sense extension in the grammar 19
      2.3.3.1 Sense enumeration 19
      2.3.3.2 Lexical rules 20
      2.3.3.3 Lexical licenses 22
      2.3.3.4 Coercion 22
      2.3.3.5 Type presupposition accommodation 24
    2.3.4 Copredication and dotted types 26
  2.4 Vagueness and related problems 29
    2.4.1 Aristotle and Eubulides 29
    2.4.2 Semantics of gradable predicates 31
    2.4.3 Approaches to vagueness 32
    2.4.4 Prototypes and their relation to vagueness 36
    2.4.5 Normative aspects of word meaning 40
    2.4.6 Sense spectra and gradient senses 42
    2.4.7 Probabilistic grammar and mixed categories 46
  2.5 World knowledge in word meaning 51
  2.6 Conclusion 55
# CONTENTS

3 Argument alternations and cognates
  3.1 Introduction 56
  3.2 Argument selection 57
    3.2.1 Variable polyadicity and subject-object asymmetry 57
    3.2.2 Object selection 60
  3.3 Object omission and demotion 63
    3.3.1 Object drop 63
    3.3.2 Antipassive 68
    3.3.3 The conative alternation 70
    3.3.4 Dependencies between an object and its co-complement 71
  3.4 Causative, inchoative, and result state alternations 74
    3.4.1 Introduction 74
    3.4.2 Causativization and anti-causativization 76
      3.4.2.1 Non-directed causative alternations in English 77
      3.4.2.2 Anticausatives 84
      3.4.2.3 Middles and passives 86
      3.4.2.4 Morphological causativization 89
    3.4.3 Inchoatives and statives 91
  3.5 Alternations involving multiple arguments 92
    3.5.1 Direct and oblique arguments 92
    3.5.2 Locative alternations 93
  3.6 Unaccusativity 98
    3.6.1 Properties of unaccusatives 99
    3.6.2 Auxiliary selection 102
    3.6.3 Split ergativity 104
    3.6.4 Syntactic accounts of unaccusativity 109
  3.7 Lexicalization of events 110
    3.7.1 Typology of motion and manner lexicalization 110
    3.7.2 Manner–result complementarity 116
  3.8 Category conversion 119
    3.8.1 Deverbal nominals 119
    3.8.2 Denominal verbs 128
  3.9 Conclusion 134

4 Lexical semantic structure 135
  4.1 Introduction 135
  4.2 Thematic roles 136
    4.2.1 Basics of thematic roles 136
CONTENTS

4.2.2 Pāṇini's kārakas 137
4.2.3 Thematic roles in modern generative grammar 139
4.3 Proto-roles 142
4.4 Decomposition approaches 144
  4.4.1 Ontology of meaning units 146
  4.4.2 Situation aspect (Aktionsart classes) 150
  4.4.3 Aspectual–causal decomposition 153
  4.4.4 Argument mapping based on aspectual–causal decomposition
    4.4.4.1 Role and Reference Grammar 157
    4.4.4.2 Systems based on depth of embedding 161
    4.4.4.3 A templatic approach 161
  4.4.5 The lexical decomposition controversy 165
4.5 Mereologies, scales, and affectedness 173
4.6 Conclusion: the problems of polysemy and vagueness 182

5 Argument mapping approaches 187
  5.1 Introduction: lexical and phrasal approaches to argument realization 187
5.2 Lexical approaches to mapping 187
  5.2.1 The LFG lexicon 187
    5.2.1.1 Predicate argument structure 187
    5.2.1.2 Early LFG valence-changing rules 189
    5.2.1.3 Lexical Mapping Theory 190
    5.2.1.4 Syntacticized argument structure 196
  5.2.2 The HPSG lexicon 199
    5.2.2.1 Basics of the formalism 199
    5.2.2.2 Valence and argument structure 203
    5.2.2.3 Passive and lexical rules in HPSG 205
    5.2.2.4 Lexical rules in Sign-Based Construction Grammar 208
    5.2.2.5 Word meaning and argument linking in HPSG 210
    5.2.2.6 Diathesis alternations in HPSG and SBCG 214
5.3 Constructional approaches 218
  5.3.1 Introduction 218
  5.3.2 Lexical mapping with argument structure constructions 219
6 The lexical–constructional debate 228

Stefan Müller and Stephen Wechsler

6.1 Introduction 228

6.2 The pendulum of lexical and phrasal approaches 230

6.2.1 GPSG as construction grammar 231

6.2.2 Problem 1: morphological derivation 233

6.2.3 Problem 2: partial fronting 234

6.2.4 Problem 3: cross-linguistic comparison 237

6.3 Arguments for constructional models 237

6.3.1 Usage-based theories of language 238

6.3.2 Coercion 240

6.3.3 Simplicity and polysemy 242

6.3.4 Retaining the input in the representation 244

6.4 Language acquisition 245

6.4.1 The acquisition of patterns 245

6.4.2 Challenges for patterns: discontinuities and unexpressed arguments 246

6.4.3 The acquisition of dependencies 248

6.5 Abstract light verbs 250

6.5.1 Neo-Davidsonianism 250

6.5.2 'Little v' and idiom asymmetries 253

6.5.3 Deverbal nominals 255

6.5.4 Idiosyncratic syntactic selections 259

6.5.5 Is there an alternative to lexical valence structure? 262

6.6 Evidence for lexical approaches 263

6.6.1 Valence and coordination 263

6.6.2 Valence and derivational morphology 269

6.7 Arguments based on (the lack of) interactions with syntax 270

6.7.1 Introduction 270

6.7.2 want + HAVE and other verbs of possession 273

6.8 Conclusion 279

7 Some battlegrounds in the theory wars 280

7.1 The dative and benefactive alternations 280

7.2 Resultatives 289

7.2.1 Explananda 289

7.2.2 Complex predicate accounts 291
CONTENTS

7.2.3 Complex predicates with scalar semantics 296
7.2.4 Light verbs and small clauses 300
7.3 German applicatives 305

8 Postscript 313

References 319
Index of authors 347
Index of subjects 352