Denis Bouchard

THE SEMANTICS OF SYNTAX

A Minimalist Approach to Grammar

Contents

Acknowledgments xiii

| 1.1 | Global Approaches to Meaning 5 | |
|-----------|---|----|
| 1.1.1 | The Linking Problem 8 | |
| 1.1.2 | The Effect of Globality on Polysemy: Generalized Homonymy | 11 |
| 1.1.3 | Descriptive Adequacy in Lexical Semantics 11 | |
| 1.1.4 | Summary of Global Approaches to Meaning 15 | |
| 1.2 | A Selective Approach to Meaning 16 | |
| 1.3 | A Minimalist Approach to Grammar 20 | |
| 1.4 | Effects on Autonomy 25 | |
| 1.5 | Effects on the Relationship between Form and Meaning 28 | |
| 1.5.1 | Fuzziness and Categorization 28 | |
| 1.5.2 | Selective Semantics and Choice of Primitives 37 | |
| 1.5.2.1 | General Guidelines 38 | |
| 1.5.2.2 | The Inadequacy of Theta Theory 41 | |
| 1.5.2.2.1 | Sense and Reference 42 | |
| 1.5.2.2.2 | The Substantive Content of Theta Roles is Situational 44 | |
| 1.5.2.2.3 | The Paraphrase Methodology 46 | |
| 1523 | The Inadequacy of Theories of Centrality of Space 47 | |

1.5.2.4 The Pervasiveness of Polysemy 521.5.2.5 Three Arguments for Theta Theory 54

2.1 Syntax and Compositionality 742.1.1 Syntactic Nodes and Compositionality 75

1.5.2.6 Consequences for the Choice of Primitives 59

1.5.4 The Meaningful Content of the Formalism 64
1.6 Appendix: Newton, the Ancients, and Grammar 68
2 Selective Semantics and Syntactic Correspondence 72

1.5.3 Formal Differences between G-Semantics and S-Semantics 60

PART I: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORM AND MEANING

1 The Semantics of Syntax: Defining the Object of Inquiry 3

viii Contents

| 2 | 2.1.1.1 | No Vacuous Projection 77 | |
|--|---------|---|--|
| 2. | 1.1.1.1 | Testing Nodes for Content: Pragmatic Anaphora 79 | |
| 2. | 1.1.1.2 | Evidence for the Content of Intermediate Nodes 80 | |
| 2. | 1.1.1.3 | Projection in Syntax 82 | |
| | 2.1.1.2 | A Comparison with Standard X-bar 85 | |
| 2. | 1.1.2.1 | The Notion of Maximal Projection 88 | |
| 2. | 1.1.2.2 | Specifiers, Complements and Semantic Combination 89 | |
| | 2.1.2 | Syntactic Structures and Compositionality 91 | |
| | 2.2 | Correspondence and Identification 93 | |
| | 2.2.1 | Chunking 94 | |
| : | 2.2.1.1 | Constraints on Chunking 97 | |
| : | 2.2.1.2 | Deriving the Constraints on Chunking 98 | |
| : | 2.2.1.3 | The Origins of Chunking 101 | |
| | | Realization as Syntactic Constituents 102 | |
| | | Binding in Semantic Representations 103 | |
| | | Minimalism and G-Semantics 108 | |
| | | A Constrained Class of Transformations 109 | |
| | | Constraining the Formulation of Ts vs Their Application 110 | |
| | | Modularity Does Not Further Constrain Rule Formulation 110 | |
| | | Move α and Wh-Question Formation 111 | |
| | | Traces Do Not Constrain the Theory 113 | |
| ; | | Triggers in Modular Grammar are Not More General 113 | |
| | 2.3.4 | Minimalist Syntax, Semantics and Mapping 114 | |
| PART II: SELECTIVE SEMANTICS AND THE LEXICON 117 | | | |
| 3 A | Case | Study of Six French Verbs 119 | |
| | 3.1 | Six Verbs of Movement in French 121 | |
| | 3.1.1 | Venir 121 | |
| ; | 3.1.1.1 | Use 1 of Venir: Movement 121 | |
| ; | 3.1.1.2 | Use 2 of Venir: "Progredience" with an Infinitival Phrase 129 | |
| 3. | 1.1.2.1 | Two Constraints on Progredience 130 | |
| 3. | 1.1.2.2 | The Structure of the Progredience Construction 132 | |
| 3. | 1.1.2.3 | Explaining the Constraints 133 | |
| | | Use 3 of Venir: Origin 136 | |
| | | Use 4 of Venir: Extension 138 | |
| | | Use 5 of Venir: Expressing Time 139 | |
| | 3.1.1.6 | Use 6 of Venir: End-reaching (venir à) 144 | |
| | | | |

Contents ix

| 3.1.1.7 | Use 7 of Venir: Involvement 145 |
|----------|---|
| 3.1.1.8 | Use 8 of Venir: Availability 147 |
| 3.1.1.9 | Use 9 of Venir: Measure, Comparison 147 |
| 3.1.1.10 | Conclusion on the Uses of Venir 148 |
| 3.1.2 | Aller 149 |
| 3.1.2.1 | Use 1 of Aller: Movement 149 |
| 3.1.2.2 | Use 2 of Aller: Progredience 151 |
| 3.1.2.3 | Use 3 of Aller: Extension 152 |
| 3.1.2.4 | Use 4 of Aller: Expressing Time 152 |
| 3.1.2.5 | Use 5 of Aller: Involvement 158 |
| 3.1.2.6 | Use 6 of Aller: Attributive 159 |
| 3.1.2.7 | Use 7 of Aller: Evaluative 160 |
| 3.1.2.8 | Conclusion on the Uses of Aller 163 |
| 3.1.3 | Arriver 166 |
| 3.1.3.1 | Use 1 of Arriver: Movement 170 |
| 3.1.3.2 | Use 2 of Arriver: Happening 171 |
| 3.1.3.3 | Use 3 of Arriver: Continuance 171 |
| 3.1.3.4 | Use 4 of Arriver: No Internal Development 171 |
| 3.1.3.5 | Use 5 of Arriver: Existence 172 |
| 3.1.3.6 | Use 6 of Arriver: Expectation and Accessibility 173 |
| 3.1.3.7 | Use 7 of Arriver: Stativity 174 |
| 3.1.3.8 | Use 8 of Arriver: Incompatibility with the Origin Use 175 |
| 3.1.3.9 | Summary of Arriver 175 |
| 3.1.4 | Partir 175 |
| 3.1.5 | Entrer 180 |
| 3.1.6 | Sortir 183 |
| 3.1.7 | Strict Compositionality and Movement 189 |
| 3.1.7.1 | Summary of Strict Compositionality and Movement 196 |
| 3.2 | Transitivity 199 |
| 3.3 | Choice of AUX 207 |
| 3.3.1 | General Properties of Choice of AUX 207 |
| 3.3.1.1 | Previous Analyses 207 |
| 3.3.1.2 | A General Account of the Distribution of ETRE and AVOIR 211 |
| 3.3.1.3 | AUX Choice in Ten Constructions 213 |
| 3.3.2 | Choice of AUX and Past Participle Agreement 223 |
| 3.3.2.1 | Spec-Head Agreement and Scientific Reductionism 223 |
| 3.3.2.2 | Agreement as a Derivative Property of Coindexation 225 |

x Contents

| | 3.3.2.3 | Past Participle Agreement and Coindexation 227 |
|---|-------------|--|
| | 3.3.2.4 | Sylleptic Agreement as Empirical Support for a Coindexation |
| | | Analysis 230 |
| | 3.3.2.5 | A Correlation between Choice of AUX and Participle |
| | | Agreement 233 |
| | 3.3.2.6 | Conclusion of Choice of AUX and Past Participle Agreement 236 |
| | 3.3.3 | Summary of Choice of AUX 236 |
| | 3.4 | Stative Reading of the Participle 236 |
| | 3.5 | Impersonal Constructions 243 |
| | 3.6 | The Residue of Tier Theory 252 |
| | 3.7 | Conclusion 253 |
| P | ART III: | SELECTIVE SEMANTICS AND SYNTAX 255 |
| 4 | Psych V | /erbs 259 |
| | • | Psych Verbs and Constrained Movement: the Problem 259 |
| | | Two Problems with Treating EO Verbs as Special 265 |
| | 4.2.1 | Productivity 265 |
| | 4.2.2 | The Thematic Analysis of Psych Predicates 269 |
| | 4.3 | What a Psych Construction Is 272 |
| | 4.3.1 | A Psy-chose in Contact with an Intentional Subject 272 |
| | 4.3.2 | Classes of Psych Constructions 275 |
| | 4.3.3 | An Intentional Concept as a Psy-chose 278 |
| | 4.3.4 | Agentivity in Terms of Intentionality 280 |
| | 4.3.5 | Summary of the Psych Construction 284 |
| | 4.4 | Syntactic Properties of Psych Constructions 284 |
| | 4.4.1 | Binding of Direct Object Anaphors 285 |
| | 4.4.2 | Backward Binding of a Reflexive 295 |
| | 4.4.3 | Passivization 302 |
| | 4.4.4 | Progressive 310 |
| | 4.4.5 | Nominalization 313 |
| | 4.4.5.1 | Two Unsatisfactory Analyses of Psych Verb Nominalization 314 |
| | 4.4.5.1.1 | Grimshaw's Analysis and External Argument R 314 |
| 4 | 4.4.5.1.1.1 | R and Nonthematic Argument E 318 |
| 4 | 4.4.5.1.1.2 | R and NPs as Predicates 323 |
| 4 | 4.4.5.1.1.3 | R and Adjectival Modification 324 |
| | 4.4.5.1.2 | Pesetsky's Analysis—Zero Affix CAUS 329 |
| | 4.4.5.2 | A Better Analysis: The Status of Affectedness in the Grammar 332 |
| | | |

Contents xi

| 4.4.5.3 | Zero Morpheme SUG 340 |
|---------|---|
| 4.4.5.4 | Summary 343 |
| 4.4.6 | Compounding 345 |
| 4.4.7 | Imperative 352 |
| 4.4.8 | Proarb as Subject 354 |
| 4.4.9 | Embedding in a Causative 357 |
| 4.4.10 | Interaction with Adverbs like "Personally" 360 |
| 4.4.11 | Extraction from the Direct Object 363 |
| 4.5 | Conclusion 382 |
| 4.6 | Appendix: Lexical Redundancy Rules 385 |
| | |
| Verb Mo | ovement 387 |
| | Introduction: Verb Movement and Selective Semantics 387 |
| | The Data: The Agr Account 388 |
| | Problems with Agr 394 |
| | The Structure 395 |
| | The Agr Node 397 |
| | The Position of the Adverb 398 |
| | The Position of NEG 400 |
| | The Binding of the E Variable by a Tense Operator 404 |
| | DO-Support as a Language-Specific Rule 405 |
| | Strong/Weak: A Morpho-syntactic Distinction 406 |
| | A Proposal 406 |
| | Tense as the Most Prominent Projection of the Sentence 407 |
| 5.3.1.2 | Two Factors That Determine the Position of Adverbs and |
| | Negation 408 |
| | Adverbs in Tensed Clauses 411 |
| | Adverbs in Infinitival Clauses 419 |
| | Negation in Tensed Clauses 422 |
| | Negation in Infinitival Clauses 425 |
| | Dialectal Variation in the Distribution of French pas 427 |
| | Diachronic Change in the Status of <i>ne</i> and <i>pas</i> 429 |
| | Summary of the Morpho-syntactic Analysis 434 |
| | Inversion in Interrogatives 435 |
| | Some Theoretical Assumptions 436 Inversion as T in COMP 436 |
| • | |
| | Complex Inversion as Double Case Marking 437 |
| 5.4.2 | Inversion in English 438 |

5

xii Contents

5.4.3 Inversion in French 4405.5 Conclusion 448

Afterword 449

Notes 451

References 503