Contents

Series Foreword xi
Acknowledgments xiii

Chapter 1
A Learnability Paradox 1

1.1 Argument Structure and the Lexicon 3

1.2 The Logical Problem of Language Acquisition 5

1.3 Baker's Paradox 7

1.4 Attempted Solutions to Baker's Paradox 8

Chapter 2
Constraints on Lexical Rules 45

2.1 Morphological and Phonological Constraints 45

2.2 Semantic Constraints 47

2.3 How Semantic and Morphological Constraints Might Resolve Baker's Paradox 51

2.4 Evidence for Criteria-Governed Productivity 52

2.5 Problems for the Criteria-Governed Productivity Theory 56

Chapter 3
Constraints and the Nature of Argument Structure 62

3.1 Overview: Why Lexical Rules Carry Semantic Constraints 62

3.2 Constraints on Lexical Rules as Manifestations of More General Phenomena 65

3.3 A Theory of Argument Structure 70

3.4 On Universality 94

Chapter 4
Possible and Actual Forms 98

4.1 The Problem of Negative Exceptions 98

4.2 Transitive Action Verbs as Evidence for Narrow Subclasses 104

4.3 The Nature of Narrow Conflation Classes 106

4.4 Defining and Motivating Subclasses of Verbs Licensing the Four Alternations 110

4.5 The Relation Between Narrow-Range and Broad-Range Rules 152

Chapter 5
Representation 165

5.1 The Need for a Theory of Lexico-semantic Representation 166

5.2 Is a Theory of Lexical Semantics Feasible? 167

5.3 Evidence for a Semantic Subsystem Underlying Verb Meanings 169

5.4 A Cross-linguistic Inventory of Components of Verb Meaning 172

5.5 A Theory of the Representation of Grammatically Relevant Semantic Structures 176

5.6 Explicit Representations of Lexical Rules and Lexicosemantic Structures 209

5.7 Summary 245

Chapter 6
Learning 247

6.1 Linking Rules 248

6.2 Lexical Semantic Structures 253

6.3 Broad Conflation Classes (Thematic Cores) and Broad-Range Lexical Rules 265

6.4 Narrow Conflation Classes and Narrow-Range Lexical Rules 269

6.5 Summary of Learning Mechanisms 281

Chapter 7
Development 282

7.1 Developmental Sequence for Argument Structure Alternations 283

7.2 The Unlearning Problem 290

7.3 Children's Argument Structure Changing Rules Are Always Semantically Conditioned 295

7.4 Do Children's Errors Have the Same Cause as Adults'? 317

7.5 Acquisition of Verb Meaning and Errors in Argument Structure 325

7.6 Some Predictions About the Acquisition of Narrow-Range Rules 347

7.7 Summary of Development 350

Chapter 8
Conclusions 352

8.1 A Brief Summary of the Resolution of the Paradox 352

8.2 Argument Structure as a Pointer Between Syntactic Structure and Propositions 353

8.3 The Autonomy of Semantic Representation 356

8.4 Implications for the Semantic Bootstrapping Hypothesis 360

8.5 Conservatism, Listedness, and the Lexicon 364

8.6 Spatial Schemas and Abstract Thought 370

References 375
Notes 392
Index 404