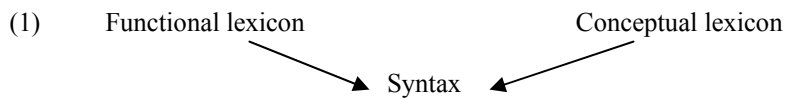


8. CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation we have proposed a model of lexical category determination based on argument structure information. Basic assumptions can be summarized as follows. There are two types of lexicons – functional and conceptual whose outputs become inputs to syntax as shown in (1).



Members of the conceptual lexicon (or simply lexicon) are category-less roots which encode concepts. For each concept its thematic properties are specified in terms of θ -features [$\pm c$] and [$\pm m$] forming feature clusters. Each feature cluster corresponds to an argument of a predicate that is conventionally saturated by merging a DP in the syntax. Thematic properties of a concept determine whether it will merge in the syntax as a noun, adjective or verb. Non-predicative concepts associated with \emptyset arguments will be categorized as nouns, predicative concepts with one argument as adjectives and predicative concepts with more than one argument as verbs. Thematic properties (number of arguments) are rooted in causal relations into which concepts enter: necessary/sufficient conditions associated with a given concept are translated as θ -feature clusters. This approach to categorization can be summarized as below.

- (2) Inherent meaning of a concept (causal relations) \rightarrow thematic properties
 (number of arguments) \rightarrow category

The proposed model presents an extension of the Theta system. As such, it contains some inevitable deviations from the original framework. In TS it is argued that a concept must first undergo lexicon marking (including merging indices and Case) before it can be subjected to any type of computation (lexical or syntactic arity operations). Here we have assumed that unmarked concepts can undergo lexicon-internal derivation. In particular, in chapter 5 it was argued that neither lexical nominalization nor lexical adjectivization have the ability to eliminate accusative case feature. Therefore the only way to derive nouns and adjectives from e.g. agentive verbs is by applying m-reduction to a pre-marked concept.

Another deviation is making allowances for introducing syntactic argument structure with the help of functional projections as is done within Distributed Morphology. This helps account, among other things, for the distribution of possessors and benefactives and restrictions on arity operations with the latter. In addition, it makes it possible to maintain the empirically motivated distinction between lexical verbs whose arguments are specified in their lexical θ -grid and syntactic (i.e. unergative denominal) verbs whose arguments are introduced functionally.

In the beginning we have set out to derive, in a principled manner, various asymmetries among the three categories – thematic, morphological and syntactic.

We hope to have succeeded in showing that morphological and syntactic asymmetries can be drawn from thematic properties while thematic asymmetries are retraceable to causality. In particular, the long standing Case/Tense constraint taken since antiquity to be reflective of the noun/verb opposition follows from the present assumptions. Nouns are typical Case-bearers because they are arguments par excellence. As for Tense, verbs and adjectives are predicative categories, nouns are not. Being predicative, verbs and adjectives can supply an event variable which makes them compatible with the projection of Tense. Nouns, on the contrary, can only become associated with an event variable through a verbal copula. Unless co-occurring with a copula, they cannot be embedded under Tense directly.

Thus, by making full use of computational resources offered both by the lexical and syntactic modules (instead of employing just one and crippling the other), the present approach chooses to walk the middle road between DM and TS.