The research reported in this book is an attempt to meet semantics on its own terms and assess the contribution it makes to the overt syntactic patterns of English. Like much other recent work in linguistics, it developed out of a realization that many current problems cannot be solved insightfully within the linguistic theory provided by Chomsky's Aspects of the Theory of Syntax, because they involve semantics too deeply.

Most people working on these problems seem to have taken the approach of allowing more semantic factors to enter into the formulation of transformational rules. This approach has developed into the theory of generative semantics, which claims that syntax and semantics are inseparable and homogeneous. However, a small group of linguists, myself included, have adopted a different hypothesis—that if rules of semantic interpretation can be formulated properly, their properties and the properties of the semantic representations they derive can be used to account for these semantic phenomena, leaving the syntactic component as free of semantic intervention as it was in *Syntactic Structures*.

This book is a consolidation of about five years of research on such an interpretive approach to semantics. While it is hardly a complete formulation of a grammar of English, work has progressed far enough that the outlines of the theory are clear, and enough interesting problems have been dealt with to demonstrate the viability of the approach. It is my hope that the publication of this material will stimulate further research and bring about a more widespread understanding of the interpretive theory.

Portions of this book have previously appeared in earlier form in my doctoral dissertation, "Some Rules of Semantic Interpretation for English" (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1969), and in my papers "An Interpretive Theory of Negation" (Foundations of Language, 1969) and "An Interpretive Theory of Pronouns and Reflexives" (Indiana University Linguistics Club, 1968). However, the analyses presented here differ substantially in many respects from the earlier versions, partially to meet criticisms of unclarity and empirical error, and partially to make possible a more generally coherent theory.

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And now, ladies and gentlemen, on with the show.

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