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The theory of linguistic structure first presented in Chomsky's monumental unpublished *The Logical Theory of Linguistic Structures*, and modified later in his *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, has never received published treatment in its full form. Rather, this theory of syntax has seeped through the seams of various papers on syntax and the theory of syntax, and has been passed by word of mouth from linguist to linguist, receiving variously accurate renderings at each retelling. Linguistics has become in several essential aspects like the oral tradition of the Indian grammarians, except that the attention to detail of Panini is nowhere evidenced.

It is my intention to place into written form, accessible to the reader with no previous training in linguistics, an account of the main features of Chomsky's theory of syntax. I hope that an account of this theory will be of more than historical interest, despite the rapid developments in linguistic theory since the publication of *Aspects* in 1965. The theory discussed in this book has served in most cases as a yardstick against which various proposed innovations have been measured, although frequently the measurement is to be stated in units of distance from the theory.