LAD Conferences

L a b o r a t o i r e   d e   r e c h e r c h e   s u r   l e s   a s y m é t r i e s   d ' i n t e r f a c e s

Juan Uriagereka, University of Maryland

Where does the Recursion buck stop?

How far down into the fabric of language does recursion go? Compounds are a natural domain to pose this question, particularly within a Bare Phrase-Structure (BPS) approach to syntactic relations. The syntactic structure of compounds of the 'pick-pocket' sort is quite reasonably of the standard (head, complement) form, which one starts derivations with in syntax. But most other compounds, like the familiar 'black-bird', seem considerably more elusive in this regard. They appear to involve a notion 'head' as originally discussed in Di Sciullo and Williams (1987), but at the same time it is hard to see exactly how that notion can be formally characterized within BPS parameters. Moreover, in deciding how to proceed, it may be important to review arguments, one way or the other, for whether these sorts of constructions are productive, systematic and transparent (the hallmarks of syntax). This is research in progress, which ought to be of interest regardless of what we find the best answer to these questions happens to be. The goal is to address some foundations of syntactic structuring and whether they extend to the morphological domain - and if so, to what extent.

Juan Uriagereka, teaches syntax at the University of Maryland. He has written or edited eight books and is the author of some ninety shorter contributions. He has given a couple of hundred talks in four continents and is the main advisor of twenty doctoral students. He is interested in the biolinguistics program from various perspectives.

Representative Publications

Of Minds and Language (Forthcoming) with M. Piattelli-Palmarini and P. Salaburu (co-eds.)
Syntactic Anchors - On Semantic Structuring (Forthcoming) Cambridge.
Rhyme and Reason (1998), with a foreword by M. Piattelli-Palmarini, MIT Press, 720 pp.
'The Evolution of the Narrow Faculty of Language: The skeptical view and a Reasonable Conjecture' (2005), with M. Piattelli-Palmarini, in D. Delfitto, G. Graffi and S. Scalise (eds.), ***Lingue e Linguaggio***, special issue on Language Evolution.
'Progress in the Simulation of Emergent Communication and Language' (2002), ***Mind and Language***, with K. Wagner, J. Reggia and G. Wilkinson.
'Cyclicity and Extraction Domains' (2000), with J. Nunes, ***Syntax***.
'Indefinite Se' (1996), with E. Raposo, ***Natural Language & Linguistic Theory***.
'Aspects of Clitic Placement in Western Romance' (1994) ***Linguistic Inquiry***.

Anna Maria Di Sciullo, www.interfaceasymmetry.uqam.ca
CRSH, FQRSC

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