

Deriving variation in syntactic structure

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4:05 p.m. Matherly 18

This talk presents a new approach to deriving cross-linguistic and intra-linguistic variation in the amount of syntactic structure over which syntactic elements are distributed. Cartographic approaches to the syntactic structure assume that all languages have all the same functional heads, and that cross-linguistic variation lies in their overt/covert nature and the ability for elements to be merged into those projections, while anti-cartographic approaches propose that the presence of particular heads is a point of parametric variation. I present data from the Niger-Congo language Wolof which challenge both views, showing that cartographic and anti-cartographic effects should be derivable in one and the same language, and more importantly, in the same part of the structure, and I develop a mechanism which achieves this.

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