

What are core linguistic principles?

by Professor Stephen Crain, MACCS, Macquarie University

Date: March 10, 2010 (Wednesday)
Time: 9:30am - 11:30am
Venue: NAH 12, New Asia College,
Chinese University of Hong Kong

Abstract

There are two views about the distinction between core versus peripheral linguistic properties. Advocates of Universal Grammar contend that the difference between core and periphery is significant, with core properties having several characteristics that are not shared by peripheral constructions of individual human languages. By contrast, advocates of usage-based accounts contend that the distinction between core and periphery has little merit, since human languages differ so extensively, and the same mechanisms that language learners exploit in acquiring peripheral constructions also suffice to learn core properties of human languages. I will discuss the major differences between these viewpoints, focusing on one property of human languages -- downward entailment -- and two human languages, Mandarin Chinese and English.

ALL ARE WELCOME

