



9th Research Seminar

Tuesday, 28 April 2009

11.30-13.30 and 16.00-18.00

Facultade de Filoxía e Traducción
University of Vigo

the research network consisting of the research groups
based at the Universities of Santiago de Compostela and Vigo

Variation, Linguistic Change and Grammaticalization (USC)
Spoken English Research at the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC)
Language Variation and Textual Categorisation (UVigo)
Methods and Materials for the Teaching and Acquisition of Foreign Languages
(UVigo)

is pleased to announce the following research seminar:

“Cartography, intervention and the left periphery in English”

Professor Liliane Haegeman, University of Ghent

Abstract:

Starting from the idea that all structure is formed according to the X-bar format it will be shown that the simple clause structure in terms of CP-IP-VP is insufficient to capture the empirical data of English. The lectures will focus on the CP layer and will provide arguments for decomposing CP into an articulated hierarchy of functional projections which encode concepts related to information structure/discourse anchoring. After a general presentation of the articulated CP as proposed in Rizzi (1997) additional evidence will be provided from English to support the proposal.

The cartographic approach to clause structure has elaborated a highly articulated template of projections in the CP domain. However, the status of the template in linguistic theory may be questioned. In particular the question arises whether, for instance, the sequence Topic > Focus does not follow direction from Information Structure, old information preceding new information. Alternatively, the sequence can be made to follow from an enriched theory of intervention (Abels 2008, Haegeman 2008). In this respect the status of the lower topic, following Focus, raises interesting questions. It will be shown that the availability of the lower topic

in some languages and its absence in others can be derived from intervention effects.

Some clause types seem to have a reduced left periphery (adverbial clauses are a case in point). Two approaches to account for this reduced left periphery will be examined, one closely cartographic which postulates that the relevant domains are reduced and lack a particular stretch of the CP-layer, another which explores a theory of intervention to derive the observed patterns.

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