

Merge α and Superpositioned Labels**Koji Fujita (Kyoto University)**

Free and blind application of Merge (Merge α) gives rise to a variety of phrase structures out of the same set of lexical items. Among others, the distinction between what I have called Pot-Merge and Sub-Merge (following P. Greenfield's seminal work on cognitive development) plays a major role in biological and evolutionary studies of the faculty of language as a human autapomorphy. In this talk I will explore the possibility that this same distinction is also useful in explaining some linguistic phenomena, thereby corroborating this approach on theoretical linguistic grounds, too. For this purpose, I will make a crucial use of Label indeterminacy for a set formed by Sub-Merge, as in $\{\{\alpha X^0 Y^0\} \dots\}$. In such a case, Label of α can be in a state of superposition, oscillating between two (or more) potential values to be fixed at the interfaces. I will suggest that certain linguistic facts, including Japanese direct and indirect passives, variable auxiliary selection patterns, transitivity alternation of verbs and the like, now follow from Label of α in a systematic way.

References:

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