Chains in Minimalism

Yokohama National University
Yokohama, Japan

Call for Papers

Invited Speakers: Cedric Boeckx, ICREA/Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Norbert Hornstein, University of Maryland

Submission Deadline: December 10, 2010

This international workshop, which will be held at Yokohama National University (YNU) in Japan (about a one hour journey from Tokyo), is part of a four year research project, now in its final year, on "The Role of Chains and their Mechanisms of Interpretation in Minimalism," funded by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. The 2 day workshop will feature talks by some of the project members as well as by two invited keynote speakers. In addition, a number of slots will be made available for paper-presentations solicited through this open call for papers and selected based on anonymous review of abstracts by two or more reviewers.

The concept of 'chain' has long played a central role in the theory of generative grammar. Yet the precise nature of chains is still not well understood. Furthermore, within minimalism, many new questions about chains have been raised, including concerns about their very existence as syntactic objects. Our research project is focused on trying to address and answer the following sorts of questions:

(1) Do chains exist? Is there empirical evidence for the existence of chains as syntactic entities of some sort?
(2) To what degree, if any, does the notion of chain play a crucial role in the analysis of particular linguistic phenomena, e.g., control, anaphora, quantifier scope ambiguities, reconstruction, speaker preferences, locality of movement, resumption strategies, etc.?
(3) If chains exist, what kind of objects are they? How should they be defined? What are the computational mechanisms underlying chain formation?
(4) What role, if any, do chains play at the interfaces? What are the mechanisms of chain interpretation at, say, PF or LF (or their variants in terms of multiple spell-out models)?

We welcome abstracts for 30 minute talks (followed by 10 minutes for questions) on topics dealing with any of the questions posed above, or other issues related to the nature of chains, their empirical motivation and their place within minimalist theorizing.

Abstracts should be no longer than two pages in length (including examples and references), using 12-point type with single-spacing and margins of at least 2.5 cm. Submissions are limited to a maximum of one individual and one joint abstract per author. The body of the abstract should not indicate the name(s) of its author(s). Abstracts should be submitted as a PDF file by way of the Easy Abs system hosted by Linguist List, which can be accessed via the following link:

http://linguistlist.org/confcustom/chains2011

If you encounter any technical difficulties when trying to submit your abstract via Easy Abs, please contact the workshop organizers by email prior to the abstract submission deadline.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide any sort of financial assistance to those whose abstracts are accepted and who wish to present their papers at the workshop (though we will do our best to assist you in making your travel arrangements, finding your way to and from the workshop site, and so on).

If the number and quality of papers stemming from the workshop is high enough, we would like to submit a proposal for a related volume to one of the major academic publishing houses. In that event, full versions of your papers, if you wish to submit them, will be subject to a separate review process.

Important Dates:
Submission Deadline: December 10, 2010
Notification of Acceptance: January 7, 2011
Workshop Dates: February 12-13, 2011

Research Project Members:
Roger Martin (Principle Investigator, YNU)
Yoshio Endo (Co-Investigator, Kanda U. of International Studies)
Tomohiro Fujii (Co-Investigator, YNU)

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Workshop Organizers:
Roger Martin (YNU)
Tomohiro Fujii (YNU)