In Search of Epistemic Primitives in the English Resource Grammar

GERALD PENN

(University of Toronto)

The English Resource Grammar (ERG) is possibly the largest publicly available generative grammar of English or any other language. It is based upon typed feature structures, but its use of formal devices is otherwise very sparing - by design, in fact. To the careful student of semantic typing and frames, the ERG is nevertheless a fascinating sort of zoological garden, in which we can see direct evidence of the need for some of these devices through the encodings that its authors have had to resort to, in order to preserve its (dare we say) minimalist design principles. In this talk, we'll take a brief tour of this zoo, and discuss what it would take to enrich the range of formal devices in a scalable and efficient manner.