

Heinz Giegerich (Edinburgh): Compounds in no-man's land

In this talk I hope to shed new light on the lexicon-syntax 'divide' assumed in Lexicalist formal grammar.

I argue that complex nominals of the attribute-head kind, where attribution is associative (rather than ascriptive) and/or where the attribute is a noun, are lexical in some respects while in other respects they are structurally accessible by syntactic operations and hence part of the syntax. They are hence formed in a part of the grammar where the lexical and the syntactic module overlap – a no-man's land in the grammar governed by competing sets of principles.

This analysis, which concerns the 'mainstream' NN/AdjN compounding pattern of English, settles the infamous 'compound-or-phrase' question: they are both. It also makes the right ordering predictions: ascriptive adjectival attribution is purely syntactic and hence predicted to occur 'outside' associative or nominal attribution; and it creates space for probabilistic stress predictions within the formal model.

An important part of the argument will arise from an analysis of 'anaphoric' compounds found in BBC News web-site headlines such as *Boat wreckage fisherman rescued*; *Gay clergy book row priest removed*; *Badger pilot cull start sparks anger*, *New city school plans unveiled*.