

Copular clauses

Caroline Heycock

Abstract

The typical predicate in a clause in natural languages is a verb. But in language after language it is also possible for other categories to act as predicates, including—surprisingly given their “typical” use as arguments—noun phrases. This course will introduce students to some of the syntactic and semantic issues that arise when we look at copular clauses in any kind of detail. While a good deal of the exemplification will be from English, we will also be looking at copular clauses crosslinguistically, and students will be strongly encouraged to bring data from the languages that they are familiar with. The course presupposes some familiarity with syntactic concepts and argumentation, such as would be covered in an introductory course on syntax, but students will not need to have taken advanced courses, or to have previous knowledge of the particular subject area of the course. We will make new discoveries as we go along!