

FIU Linguistics Colloquium Series

Department of English



“ON ENGLISH SUBJECT CONTACT RELATIVES AND MANDARIN EXISTENTIAL CODA CONSTRUCTIONS”

(Yaobin Liu, joint work with Russell Tanenbaum)

February 4, 2020 | FIU Modesto Maidique Campus | GL 100A | 1:00 PM



English Subject Contact Relatives (SCRs) (Jespersen 1961) and Mandarin Existential Coda Constructions (ECCs) (Huang 1987) share the same string pattern. SCRs are a feature of casual registers of multiple varieties of English, from Appalachia to Belfast, while ECCs are widespread in Standard Chinese. Besides their shared appearance of a (somewhat reduced) post-nominal relative clause, SCRs and ECCs have three common properties which separate them from canonical relative clauses (RCs) and suggest a deeper level of parallelism between them. In this talk we look at these shared properties and propose a unified structure to account for the noted parallelism.

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