



Comparative Syntax and English *is to*

Professor Richard S. Kayne (New York University)

Descriptive adequacy in the case of comparative syntax involves discovering generalizations over cross-linguistic differences and similarities. Explanatory adequacy in the case of comparative syntax involves trying to understand, in general UG terms or beyond, why a given cross-linguistic correlation should hold in the first place. The primary importance of comparative syntax lies in the fact that it provides us with new kinds of evidence bearing on questions concerning the general character of the language faculty. Figuring out what cross-linguistic generalizations hold and why exactly they hold helps to narrow down the set of hypotheses that we entertain about the language faculty. In this talk, I will be interested in looking at the implications of English *is to* (as in *You are to return by midnight*), from a (Romance and Germanic) comparative perspective.

Date: May 16, 2012 (Wednesday)

Time: 11:00am - 12:30pm

Venue: Swire Hall 2, Fung King Hey Building, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Photo by Cynthia Munro Pyle (2007)

Richard S. Kayne is the author of *French Syntax* (1975), *Connectedness and Binary Branching* (1984), *The Antisymmetry of Syntax* (1994), *Parameters and Universals* (2000), *Movement and Silence* (2005) and *Comparisons and Contrasts* (2010). He has received a B.A. summa cum laude in mathematics from Columbia University in 1964, a Ph.D in linguistics from M.I.T. in 1969, a Doctorat ès Lettres from the University of Paris VIII in 1976, and honorary doctorates from the University of Leiden in 1995 and from the University of Bucharest in 2011. He has taught at the University of Paris VIII, M.I.T., and the CUNY Graduate Center, and is currently Silver Professor of Linguistics at New York University.

All are welcome

