

Poverty of inheritance: Plato's problem and its kin

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For several decades, the explanatory target of generative grammar was (supposed to be) a solution to the logical problem of language acquisition. “Having solved Plato’s problem”, as the minimalists (used to) assert, the focus has moved to issues revolving around language evolution. In this talk, I’ll provide a brief overview of this historical development, point out the many problems this shift faces for linguists, and provide a strategy that I claim is bound to be more productive.