



## **WORKSHOP ON FORMAL GRAMMAR AND SYNTACTIC VARIATION: RETHINKING PARAMETERS.**

The aim of this workshop is to explore the explanatory power of formal approaches to syntactic variation. The workshop will bring together scholars working on some of the issues that are being addressed within the generativist Principles and Parameters framework, such as the extent to which the conceptual apparatus and analytical tools of the Minimalist Program can account for variation phenomena, the specification of the locus for variation, and the compatibility of formal and non formal analyses of variation. In particular, we are interested in papers that address one or several of the following (or related) issues:

1. Do parameters (i.e. clusters of related syntactic properties) really exist? (cf. Newmeyer 2005, Roberts & Holmberg 2005, Biberauer 2008)
2. Which is the locus of syntactic variation? Is parametric variation restricted to the (functional) lexicon (cf. Borer 1984, Wexler & Manzini 1987, Fukui 1988, Ouhalla, 1991)? Are there, in addition, “grammatical” parameters, with global effects on the grammar of a language (Baker 2008)? Are “semantic” parameters also to be found in the mapping to the conceptual-intentional system? (Chierchia 1998).
3. Are there macroparameters (Baker 1996, 2008)? Can they be fully reduced to microparametric variation (Kayne 2005)?
4. Is there a parameter hierarchy (Baker 2001, Newmeyer 2005)? What form does it take, if any?
5. Is the variation space limited by “parameter schemata” (Longobardi 2005)?
6. Which is the status of parameters in the architecture of the language faculty? How is parametric variation to be viewed, in particular, under the current minimalist assumption of an underspecified UG? (i.e. are parameters primitives of UG or rather represent emergent properties of the language system? Kandybowicz 2009, Boeckx to appear, Berwick & Chomsky to appear)?
7. Are formal and non-formal theories of syntactic variation compatible (Adger & Smith 2005, Barbiers 2005)?

### **ORGANIZERS**

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### **CONFERENCE VENUE**

The conference will be held at the **Universidad Autónoma de Madrid** on **27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of October**. Information on the venue (registration, accommodation and so on) will appear in a second circular.

### **INVITED SPEAKERS**

Prof. David Adger (Queen Mary, University of London)  
Prof. Ian Roberts (University of Cambridge)

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Full papers will be allowed 30 minutes plus an additional 10 minutes for discussion. Abstracts of a maximum of 2 pages in length (including references) should be submitted by e-mail (contact address [variation.uam@gmail.com](mailto:variation.uam@gmail.com)) before the **15<sup>th</sup> of May**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out on **30<sup>th</sup> of June 2011**, together with the second circular.