

ESF Exploratory Workshop on
**Exploring the roots of linguistic diversity:
Bilingual perspectives**

Bellaterra (Spain), 20-23 September 2010

Convened by:

Cedric Boeckx^①

① ICREA/UAB (CLT Centre de Lingüística Teòrica
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 08193 Bellaterra (Spain))



The European Science Foundation (ESF) is an association of 79 Member Organisations devoted to scientific research in 30 European countries. The Mission of ESF is to provide a common platform for its Member Organisations in order to advance European research and to explore new directions for research at the European level. Through its activities, the ESF serves the needs of the European research community in a global context.

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The Exploratory Workshops scheme is one of the key instruments of the Science Strategy “pillar”. Each year, ESF supports approximately 50 Exploratory Workshops across all scientific domains. The focus of the scheme is on workshops aiming to explore an emerging and/or innovative field of research or research infrastructure, also of interdisciplinary character. Workshops are expected to open up new directions in research or new domains. It is expected that a workshop will conclude with plans for specific follow-up research activities and/or collaborative actions or other specific outputs either within the frame of ESF (e.g. prepare the ground to develop a [Forward Look](#), a [Research Networking Programme](#) or a [EUROCORES](#) proposal; publication of a Policy Briefing...) or for submission to the EU 7th Framework Programme or to other European or international funding organisations.

European Science Foundation

1 quai Lezay Marnésia
BP 90015
67080 Strasbourg Cedex
France
Fax: +33 (0)3 88 37 05 32
<http://www.esf.org>

ESF Exploratory Workshops:

Farzam Ranjbaran
Scientific Coordinator

Valerie Allspach-Kiechel
Senior Administrator
Tel: +33 (0)3 88 76 71 36

Isabelle May
Senior Administrator
Tel: +33 (0)3 88 76 71 46

Email: ew-office@esf.org
<http://www.esf.org/workshops>

Convenor:

Cedric Boeckx,
ICREA Research Professor
Cedric.Boeckx@uab.cat

CLT Centre de Lingüística Teòrica
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Departament de Filologia Catalana
Edifici B
Campus UAB
08193 Bellaterra (Barcelona)
Spain

Main Objectives of the Workshop:

The proposed workshop intends to bring different perspectives to bear on the issue of linguistic variation in the context of biolinguistics (an emerging interdisciplinary approach to the study of human language and its biological foundations). The aim is to develop a new theoretical framework to understand the nature and limits of language variation, and explore ways of testing it empirically. The need for such a workshop reflects recent theoretical changes in linguistics (the result of increased interdisciplinarity), as well as empirical findings that cast doubt on the standard account of language variation known within theoretical linguistics as the 'Principles-and-Parameters' approach.

Additional information:

The workshop intends to bring to the attention of linguists (and other scientists interested in the nature of linguistic diversity) new sets of phenomena, methods, hypotheses, and ideas that will lead to a better integration of linguistic theory with other fields trying to uncover the biological basis of language ("biolinguistics" in a broad sense). The hope is for this workshop to provide the beginning of an attempt towards a more fruitful integration (a more productive kind of interdisciplinarity).

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Monday 20 September 2010

Arrival day

Informal get-together (time/place: TBA (somewhere close to the hotel, downtown Barcelona)) - Dinner

Tuesday 21 September 2010

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 09.00-09.20 | Welcome by Convenor
Cedric Boeckx (ICREA/UAB) |
| 09.20-09.40 | Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)
Hanne Ruus (Copenhagen University, ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH)) |
| 09.40-14.00 | Morning Session |
| 09.40-10.40 | Developmental plasticity and linguistic variation
Guillermo Lorenzo (U. Oviedo) |
| 10.40-11.40 | The Acquisition of Linguistic Variation: Parameters vs. Micro-cues
Marit Westergaard (U. Tromsø) |
| 11.40-12.00 | <i>Coffee / Tea Break</i> |
| 12.00-13.00 | Variation (and change) are lexical: the reality of the lexicon
M. Rita Manzini (U. Florence) |
| 13.00-14.00 | Micro-variability in the linguistic expression of thought and affect: Some evidence from Dutch
Norbert Corver (U. Utrecht) |
| 14.00-15.30 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 15.30-20.00 | Afternoon Session |
| 15.30-16.30 | Unity & Diversity in Human Language: A Biological Perspective
Tecumseh Fitch (U. Vienna) |
| 16.30-17.30 | Grammars, genes, and history
Giuseppe Longobardi (U. Trieste) |
| 17.30-18.00 | <i>Coffee / tea break</i> |
| 18.00-19.00 | Explaining Diversity in Geminate Consonant Inventories:
An Evolutionary Approach
Juliette Blevins (Max Planck, Leipzig) |
| 19.00-20.00 | Neural representation and processing of linguistic variation
Itziar Laka (U. Basque Country) |
| 21.00 | <i>Dinner</i> |

Wednesday 22 September 2010

- 09.40-14.00** **Morning Session**
- 09.40-10.40 **The fixing problem**
Marc Richards (U. Leipzig)
- 10.40-11.40 **On materialization**
Halldor Sigurdsson (U. Lund)
- 11.40-12.00 *Coffee / Tea Break*
- 12.00-13.00 **Reconciling Macro- and Microparametric Variation**
Ian Roberts (U. Cambridge)
- 13.00-14.00 **Case and Universal Grammar**
Artemis Alexiadou (U. Stuttgart)
- 14.00-15.30 *Lunch*
- 15.30-20.00** **Afternoon Session**
- 15.30-16.30 **Choice, chance and necessity: variation and stability in grammar**
David Adger (Queen Mary, U. London)
- 16.30-17.30 **The Socio-Syntax of Development: A View from the Gen-CHILD Project**
Kleanthes K. Grohmann (U. Cyprus)
- 17.30-18.00 *Coffee / tea break*
- 18.00-19.00 **On the informativeness of agrammatism for linguistic variation**
Silvia Martinez Ferreiro (UAB)
- 19.00-20.00 **Presentation 8: Where to go from here**
Discussion on follow-up activities/networking/collaboration
monitored by **Carme Picallo** (UAB)
- 21.00 *Dinner*

Thursday 23 September 2010

Morning *Departure*

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Objectives of the ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH)

The main tasks of the **ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH)** are:

- to encourage interdisciplinary work through the independent evaluation of collaborative research proposals emanating from the scholarly community;
- to identify priority research areas and to play an integrative and co-ordinating role by creating links between research communities which in the Humanities are often small and fragmented.
- to contribute to the development of the ESF science policy agenda and to provide expert advice on science policy actions at the European level in the field of its responsibilities.

The Committee is well aware that the ESF is the only European Agency where the Humanities have a place next to the other sciences and where European projects are reviewed, developed and subsequently operated.

The Committee considers it all the more important to be heard as the voice of the Human Sciences in Europe and to continue pleading for a more prominent place for the Humanities in the European landscape.

ESF Humanities Unit:

Nina Kancewicz-Hofman
Head of Unit

Arianna Ciula
Science Officer

Irma Vogel
Senior Administrator

Marie Suchanova
Administrator

Tel: +33 (0)3 88 76 71 83

Email: humanities@esf.org

<http://www.esf.org/human>

Provisional List of Participants

Convenor:

1. **Cedric BOECKX**
ICREA Research Professor
CLT Centre de Lingüística Teòrica
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Departament de Filologia Catalana
Edifici B
Campus UAB
08193 Bellaterra (Barcelona)
Spain
Cedric.Boeckx@uab.cat

ESF Representative:

2. **Hanne RUSS**
Institut for Nordiske Studier og
Sprogvidenskab
Department of Scandinavian Studies and
Linguistics
Copenhagen University
Njalsgade 120
2300 Copenhagen
Denmark
haru@hum.ku.dk

Participants:

3. **David ADGER**
Department of Linguistics, School of
Modern Languages
Queen Mary, University of London
Mile End Road
London E1 4NS
United Kingdom
d.j.adger@qmul.ac.uk
4. **Artemis ALEXIADOU**
Institut für Linguistik: Anglistik
Universität Stuttgart
Keplerstr. 17
70174 Stuttgart
Germany
artemis@ifla.uni-stuttgart.de
5. **Juliette BLEVINS**
Department of Linguistics
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary
Anthropology
Deutscher Platz 6
04103 Leipzig
Germany
Blevins@eva.mpg.de

6. **Norbert CORVER**
Department of Dutch Studies
Utrecht University Trans 10
3512 JK Utrecht University
The Netherlands
N.F.M.Corver@uu.nl
7. **Tecumseh FITCH**
Dept. of Cognitive Biology
University of Vienna
1090 Vienna
Austria
tecumseh.fitch@univie.ac.at
8. **Kleanthes K. GROHMANN**
Department of English Studies
University of Cyprus
75 Kallipoleos
P.O. Box 20537
1678 Nicosia
Cyprus
kleanthi@ucy.ac.cy
9. **Itziar LAKA**
Linguistics and Basque Studies
Faculty of Arts
University of the Basque Country
UPV/EHU
Paseo de la Universidad 5
01006 Vitoria-Gasteiz
Spain
itziar.laka@ehu.es
10. **Guiseppe LONGOBARDI**
Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità
'Leonardo Ferrero'
University of Trieste
Via del Lazzaretto Vecchio 6
34123 Trieste
Italy
longbard@units.it
11. **Guillermo LORENZO**
Depto. de Filología Española / Área de
Lingüística General
Universidad de Oviedo
Campus "El Milán",
33011 Oviedo
Spain
glorenzo@uniovi.es

12. **Maria Rita MANZINI**
 Dipartimento di Linguistica
 Università degli Studi di Firenze
 P.zza S.Marco
 50121 Firenze
 Italy
mariarita.manzini@unifi.it
13. **Silvia MARTINEZ FERREIRO**
 CLT Centre de Lingüística Teòrica
 Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
 Departament de Filologia Catalana
 Edifici B
 Campus UAB
 08193 Bellaterra (Barcelona)
 Spain
Silvia.MartinezF@uab.es
14. **Carme PICALLO**
 CLT Centre de Lingüística Teòrica
 Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
 Departament de Filologia Catalana
 Edifici B
 Campus UAB
 08193 Bellaterra (Barcelona)
 Spain
Carme.Picallo@uab.es
15. **Marc RICHARDS**
 Institute of Linguistics
 University of Leipzig
 Beethovenstraße 15
 04107 Leipzig
 Germany
richards@uni-leipzig.de
16. **Ian G. ROBERTS**
 Department of Linguistics
 Faculty of Modern and Medieval
 Languages
 University of Cambridge
 Sidgwick Avenue
 Cambridge CB3 9DA
igr20@cam.ac.uk
17. **Halldor SIGURDSSON**
 SOL, Centre for Language and Literature
 Lund University
 Box 201
 221 00 Lund
 Sweden
Halldor.Sigurdsson@nordlund.lu.se
18. **Marit WESTERGAARD**
 CASTL
 Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences
 and Education
 University of Tromsø
 9037 Tromsø
 Norway
marit.westergaard@uit.no

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