

GLOW 2013 Workshop II

April 2

SYNTACTIC VARIATION AND CHANGE

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Submission of abstracts: <https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=glow36>

Since the introduction of the principles-and-parameters theory of universal grammar (Chomsky 1981), comparative studies of syntactic phenomena have been a constant domain of inquiry from both a synchronic and a diachronic point of view. A dominant hypothesis during the 80s and early 90s was that linguistic variation is due to varying settings of parameters that determine clusters of surface properties (see e.g. Rizzi 1982, Baker 1989, Holmberg & Platzack 1995 for synchronic studies and e.g. van Kemenade 1987, Falk 1993 and Roberts 1993 for diachrony). The hypothesis predicts there to be clusters of surface effects of these deep-lying parameters in the languages of the world. However, few attempts to identify universally valid macroparameters have been completely successful, and in many cases, grammatical properties do not seem to be linked to each other in the way that was originally suggested; the linguistic reality is simply too complex to be governed by a limited set of macroparameters (see e.g. Newmeyer 2004, Roberts & Holmberg 2005 and Baker 2008 for discussion).

Over the last decades, the focus of interest has changed from macroparameters to microvariation, and considerable progress has been made in the microcomparative work on closely related languages (or dialects) (see e.g. Kayne 2000). Large projects such as ASit on Italian dialects, FRED on English dialects, SAND on Dutch dialects, and ScanDiaSyn on Scandinavian (to name but a few) have collected a large amount of new data that has enriched the theoretical discussion of a wide range of syntactic phenomena (including e.g. doubling, negative concord, noun phrase syntax and verb placement).

The questions of synchronic syntactic variation and parameters are obviously closely tied to questions of syntactic change. However, the diachronic origin of the observed microvariation has received rather little attention. Theoretically oriented research on syntactic change has focused on questions regarding the relationship between acquisition and change (e.g. Lightfoot & Westergaard 2007), as well as grammaticalization in terms of economy principles (e.g. van Gelderen 2004). An old matter of dispute is the question of how the gradualness of change from a diachronic perspective is represented in the formal and intrinsically non-gradual grammatical system: in terms of competing grammars (Kroch 1989 etc.) or as variation within one single grammar (Koopman 1990, Lightfoot 1991 etc.). There have, however, been few explicit attempts to address the problem of the apparent gradience of on-going change within the microcomparative paradigm.

A better understanding of both synchronic and diachronic variation, and the relation between the two, is clearly a prerequisite for more general theoretical insights in the field of syntactic change. Earlier historical studies on syntactic change now need to be re-evaluated and framed in different terms, and the variation revealed in the synchronic dialect studies needs to be related to diachrony. The results from the dialect projects clearly raise the

questions: how did the observed differences between closely related varieties emerge, and how can they be explained?

The workshop will provide a forum for discussing questions of syntactic variation and change. We hereby call for abstracts for papers that address the questions of how syntactic differences between varieties emerge, and how they can they be explained. Priority will be given to papers that address theoretical issues of linguistic change on the basis of microcomparative (historical as well as contemporary) data.

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References

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Submission Guidelines

Submission procedure: All abstracts (including abstracts for the workshops) must be submitted online through *EasyChair*:

<https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=glow36>

The abstract deadline is **November 15, 23:59 CET**.

Notifications of acceptance/rejection will be sent out on January 20.

Format: Abstracts (for oral presentations and posters) must not exceed two A4 pages in length. This includes data and references. Submissions must be consistent with the following format:

- 2.5 cm (1 inch) margins on all four sides. On A4 paper, these margins produce a 160mm x 247mm text box. Submitters whose computers are set up for other paper sizes should adjust their margins accordingly to produce a text box of this size. This is especially important for the legibility of the Spring Newsletter.
- Font size no smaller than 12pt, with single line spacing; no more than 50 lines of text per page, including examples. Times New Roman.
- Examples must be integrated throughout the text of the abstract, rather than collected at the end.
- Nothing in the abstract, the title, or the name of the document should identify the author(s).
- At most two submissions per author, at most one of which can be single-authored. The same abstract may **not** be submitted to both the Colloquium and a workshop.
- Only submissions in **.pdf** format will be accepted.

Additional note: Named abstracts and the Spring Newsletter

If your paper is accepted for presentation at GLOW 36, you will be asked to submit a non-anonymous version of your abstract for publication in the GLOW Spring Newsletter.

In case any problems arise, please contact the organizers (glow36@nordlund.lu.se) and the Newsletter Editor (richards@em.uni-frankfurt.de).

It is particularly important for publication purposes that all non-standard (nonopen source) fonts in the named version of accepted abstracts be either properly embedded into the PDF file or else avoided altogether.