

## **Cambridge Comparative Syntax 8 (CamCoS 8)**

Co-organised by the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University

Dates: 2-4 May 2019

Venue: St John's College, Cambridge

After the success of the seven previous CamCoS conferences (see: <http://recos-dtal.mml.cam.ac.uk/conference>), we are delighted to announce **CamCoS 8**, which will again be co-hosted by the **University of Cambridge** and **Anglia Ruskin University**.

### **Conference theme: Comparative perspectives on phases**

Since Chomsky (2000) first proposed that the syntactic derivation proceeds in phases, there has been a vast array of work on this topic (see Fox & Pesetsky 2000, Legate 2003, Gallego 2010, 2012, Citko 2014, Bošković 2013, 2014, 2016 amongst many others). Much of this has focused on identifying exactly which clausal phrases count as phases, with the proposed answers varying from: every phrase (Müller 2010), CP and vP (van Urk 2015, Georgi 2017), just vP (Rackowski & Richards 2005), or more nuanced possibilities (Den Dikken 2007, Gallego 2007, Wurmbrand 2012, Harwood 2015, Ramchand and Svenonius 2014, Bošković 2014, Sailor 2014, Aelbrecht & Harwood 2015). Various phasal diagnostics have been proposed, including new evidence for successive cyclicity (Biberauer & D'Alessandro 2006, van Urk 2015, van Urk & Richards 2015). There has been some debate, with an emerging consensus, that there is also a nominal phase (Svenonius 2004, Butler 2004, Bošković 2013, Syed & Simpson 2017), and a (parameterised) PP phase (Abels 2003, 2012, Citko 2014). While it seems fair to say that we are far from reaching a consensus on these issues, it is also true that these explorations of phases as a construct have triggered much interesting and intricate work on locality. The time is now ripe to compare the various formulations of phases and see what insights emerge from focused comparative investigation.

Phase-based approaches can also account for the Condition on Extraction Domain (CED) with additional assumptions (see Chomsky 2001, Gallego & Uriagereka 2007, Chomsky 2008), but, because phases permit movement through their edges, additional restrictions must be placed on movement itself in order to explain other extraction restrictions (see Amaechi and Georgi, to appear). One very fruitful proposal of this kind is Antilocality. This ban on movement which is too local has been argued to provide an explanation for a wide range of extraction restrictions (Bošković 1994, Grohmann 2000, Murasugi and Saito 1995, Ishii 1997, Abels 2003, Erlewine 2016, Douglas 2017). An alternative approach pursues the idea that there is a bottleneck at the phase edge in some languages, so that movement of one phrase to the phase edge blocks extraction of lower material (Aldridge 2004, Coon et al. 2014, Holmberg et al. 2018). It remains unclear whether both kinds of accounts are required or whether one can reduce to the other (see Douglas et al. 2017 for discussion). Restrictions on A-movement have also been given a phase-based explanation (Sheehan & Cyrino 2018).

In investigations of antilocality, a crucial idea is the proposal that phases are dynamic or context-sensitive. Bošković (2013, 2014, 2016) has argued that in languages with determiners, DP is a phase, whereas in languages which lack D, NP is a phase. There is some evidence that this holds also at the vP level (Wurmbrand 2013, Bošković 2014, Harwood 2015). Gallego (2007) and Den Dikken (2007) independently argue that phases can be extended where a phase head undergoes head-movement. What is not clear yet is whether this

dynamic status of phases is sufficient to account for all kinds of cross-linguistic variation regarding A-bar extraction, or whether additional parameterisation is required.

Phase-based accounts have also been given for **binding** (Lee-Schoenfeld 2004, 2008, Canac-Marquis 2005, Heinat 2006, Hicks 2006, 2009, Despić 2015, Bošković 2016), **ellipsis** (Gengel 2013, Yoshida & Gallego 2013, Bošković 2014, Aelbrecht 2016, Wurmbrand 2017) and **case assignment** (Baker 2015). Finally, there has been extensive work on long-distance Agree, raising the question whether the domains for agree and movement are the same or different (Bhatt & Keine 2017). A closely related question is the status of other kinds of long-distance A-dependencies and what they mean for phase theory (Bobaljik & Wurmbrand 2005, Wurmbrand 2017, 2018, Fong 2018).

Despite all this interest, many within generative grammar have also been sceptical about phases, seeing them as nothing more than a minimalist translation of barriers (Boeckx & Grohmann 2007). Some work has argued explicitly against phases (Torr 2012). It remains to be seen, however, how phenomena such as left-branch extractions, *that*-trace effects, anti-*that* trace effects and island conditions can be handled in a model without phases. We welcome contributions which directly address this issue, and others, including:

- Which phrases count as phases?
- How dynamic are phases? Is there an upper/lower limit on them?
- Is this subject to variation across languages? If so, how? And what are the implications for acquisition, on the one hand, and change on the other?
- Which version of the PIC is correct, if either?
- Are passive/unaccusative vPs also phasal?
- How can phases account for movement restrictions?
- How do phases work in instances of long-distance A-dependencies such as agreement and restructuring phenomena such as long passivisation?

### **Invited speakers**

Ángel Gallego (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Doreen Georgi (Potsdam)

Coppe van Urk (Queen Mary, University of London)

Susi Wurmbrand (Vienna/Harvard)

### **Call for papers**

Given this year's 'Phases' theme, we particularly invite abstracts for 30-minute presentations with a **comparatively oriented** focus on phases. In addition, we also welcome abstracts on any topic in comparative generative syntax. As always, we are particularly interested in papers explicitly addressing parametric issues and/or offering comparative analyses (synchronic or diachronic) of previously un(der)studied varieties and/or phenomena, and papers concerned with "bigger picture" questions, such as what insights modern comparative generative syntax might offer in relation to linguistic typology, syntax-interface mappings, and our understanding of language as a cognitive system. We also encourage papers concerned with methodologies for modern comparative generative syntax.

Anonymous abstracts should not exceed two pages (12-point Times New Roman font, with single spacing and margins of at least 2.54cm/1 inch), including examples and references. They should be uploaded in pdf format via EasyAbstracts (<http://linguistlist.org/easyabs/camcos8>).

The **submission deadline** is Thursday, **31 January 2019**.

For more information, please contact Theresa Biberauer ([mtb23@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mtb23@cam.ac.uk)) or Michelle Sheehan ([michelle.sheehan@anglia.ac.uk](mailto:michelle.sheehan@anglia.ac.uk)).

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