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THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

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Individual Membership is open to anyone qualified or active in applied linguistics. Applied linguists who are not normally resident in Great Britain or Northern Ireland are welcome to join, although they will normally be expected to join their local AILA affiliate in addition to BAAL. Associate Membership is available to publishing houses and to other appropriate bodies at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Institution membership entitles up to three people to be full members of BAAL.

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Dear all,

Welcome to the Summer 2009 issue of BAALNews.

One of the main functions of BAAL is to represent and promote the interests of its members to academic and governmental bodies of various kinds. In this issue you will find a good example of this work in the form of a report on the UK Higher Education Research Assessment Exercise 2008 Process, co-authored by representatives from the Education, English, European Studies and Linguistics panels.

The current issue also features the usual variety of news features and book reviews, as well as a humorous piece from Michael Swan that could just as easily have graced the pages of the mighty *Journal of Irreproducible Results* (<http://www.jir.com/>).

One article that is sadly lacking from BAALNews 92, however, is an obituary for Tim Johns, news of whose passing came too late for the inclusion of a suitable tribute in this issue. Needless to say, this omission will be redressed in the Autumn edition of the Newsletter. In the meantime, please visit the website <http://www.eisu.bham.ac.uk/timjohns.shtml> if you would like to find out more about Tim's extraordinary life, achievements and contribution to the field of Applied Linguistics.

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Report from BAAL Chair January to May 2009

I start with two announcements of good news:

Ken Hyland has accepted BAAL's nomination to be co-editor of *Applied Linguistics* when Guy Cook's term of office comes to an end in June, and the nomination has been confirmed by the Advisory Panel. (The Advisory Panel consists of representatives from AILA, AAAL, BAAL and Oxford University Press.) We look forward to welcoming Ken to our AGM in September, and wish him every success in his new role. I would also like to extend to Guy warm appreciation of the support he has given Applied Linguistics over the past five years through his work as editor of 'our' journal. He leaves the journal in a position of strength, upon which Ken will no doubt build.

I am also delighted to report that Professor Ros Mitchell, of the University of Southampton, has been elected Chair of the newly re-named University Council of General and Applied Linguistics (formerly the Linguistics Strategy Group). As a member of the RAE 2008 Linguistics panel, Ros is ideally placed to lead this group in representing our diverse discipline. We wish her the congratulations of the BAAL membership.

Further activity since January:

- Several BAAL members expressed concern about the ESRC's plans for revising their

postgraduate funding strategy. I would like to thank Marilyn Martin-Jones for taking a lead in formulating a BAAL response, along with Nik Coupland and Ben Rampton. The response that went forward to the ESRC highlighted the need to continue to support the work of disciplines that may not have the advantage of size within their own institutions but may nonetheless be pockets of excellence.

- Members with the energy to follow the long-running saga of communications with the Home Office re the failure of last year's Brumfit Scholarship awardee to obtain a visa will be pleased to know that we finally received advice from them as to what information is needed in invitations to future award holders. Following the advice of members at the 2008 AGM, Mr Mirhosseini has been invited to attend the 2009 Annual Meeting, and we hope that this time his visa application will be successful.
- Thank you to everyone who contributed to a response from BAAL to the University Council for Modern Languages about Modern Languages in the RAE. (You will find a report of these responses in the next article in this issue of BAALNews.) It was interesting that whereas the question that was posed to us was whether it was important to have expertise from all languages on the panel, BAAL

members indicated that what mattered to them was expertise on subject areas such as Applied Linguistics and Translation.

- A further thank you to applied linguists who served on RAE panels in the 2008 exercise and who have contributed comments on the process to a joint report published elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Many members also responded to a call for views on the ESRC's policy on ethics. Matters such as the confidentiality of video material and the level of risk attached to work with children of school age were raised.

A clear theme emerges from the above: BAAL is often asked to respond to calls for information and opinion from the various funding councils and other bodies. Members are very generous with their time and expertise, but it would be useful to have a more defined group of people who could be called on at short notice when particular matters were at issue. At our last meeting, the Executive Committee endorsed a proposal to establish a BAAL 'Research College', whose members would commit to responding speedily to requests such as those mentioned above. I shall be attempting to set this up over the summer, but meanwhile if you have ideas about it do get in touch.

Susan Hunston

1. Approximately how many publications came under your remit during the RAE process? Was this more than your panel had foreseen? Did you have to ask for help in doing the reading, and if so did you get it?

Jill Bourne (Education panel)

There were a large number of (broadly defined) applied linguistics papers as you might imagine. There were no particular issues arising from the volume.

Ron Carter (English panel)

There were a very large number of outputs submitted to the English Language and Literature sub-panel (which was itself one of the largest sub-panels in Panel M), reflecting the extent of work in language studies, linguistics and applied linguistics undertaken in a growing number of English departments and schools across the country. It should be noted that some of the largest concentrations of research in linguistics did not submit to the Linguistics sub-panel. 87 institutions submitted work to the English sub-panel. Approximately 12% of the outputs reviewed by the English sub-panel (there were over 7,000 in total) were in the broad field of language studies and general and applied linguistics, with a significant concentration in applied linguistics, (as commonly understood). Thus, almost 1,000 outputs were reviewed. A very supportive sub-panel working environment ensured that all reading could be undertaken unproblematically, although the whole panel agreed that

workloads were very high. In addition, there were numerous cross referrals to the English panel in general and applied linguistics from other sub-panels including Linguistics, European Studies, Modern Languages, Media Studies and Education. I also acted as a Specialist Advisor to the Linguistics sub-panel.

Jim Coleman (European Studies panel)

Numbers of outputs read is confidential, and in any event European Studies was in a different position from other panels. Initially, sub-panel membership included just one linguist – myself – compared with five in 2001. By the time a second applied linguist was appointed, HEIs may have decided to submit elsewhere. Where outputs had to be referred out, it was not because of workload but because specialist expertise lay with other Sub-Panels, or with Specialist Advisers, of whom some were and some were not members of other Sub-Panels. I acted as Specialist Adviser for two other Sub-Panels.

Ros Mitchell (Linguistics panel)

The Linguistics panel received submissions from 25 institutions, and a total of 1,172 outputs altogether (slightly more than in 2001, but not a radically changed picture). As the panel expected, a substantial minority of the outputs could be construed as ‘applied linguistics’, but the reading load was not unreasonable. The main constraint was the commitment made by the panel, in the

interests of fairness, that anyone submitting 3 or more outputs should have their work read by at least two different people. This meant that some applied linguistics work was cross referred to applied linguists serving on other Subpanels (English, Education, European Studies). In effect these people were used to supplement the applied linguistics expertise within the Linguistics panel.

2. How did your panel identify publications as falling within the Applied Linguistics remit? (Did your panel use the term ‘Applied Linguistics’ or something else?)

JB

The panel did not usually talk about applied linguistics per se.

RC

Yes, the term ‘applied linguistics’ was widely used.

JC

As each output came up for discussion, members with relevant expertise offered to read it. Allocations were made with a view to maximising equity of workload. Some outputs were read by two members. I don’t recall any specific mention of Applied Linguistics.

RM

The Chair had a good knowledge of subpanel members’ expertise, and made proposals for first readers of individual outputs accordingly. However these proposals were always negotiable in line with members’ own perceptions, and a high proportion of outputs (30%) were double-read. The term

‘applied linguistics’ was used, but terminology relating to more specific sub-areas of AL was actually more useful in these discussions.

3. Was cross-referral between panels useful or otherwise?

JB

I think it was useful. There was a moderate amount of cross-referral both into and out of the panel.

RC

Very useful, as it enabled specialist expertise from other sub-panels to be drawn on. English cross-referred a number of outputs to other panels, including several to the Linguistics sub-panel.

JC

The mechanics of cross-referral were very clunky indeed. But the process was essential in many domains of European Studies.

RM

Cross referral was very useful, allowing the Linguistics Subpanel to draw on applied linguistics expertise on several other Subpanels.

4. In your opinion, was the quantity and quality of work in Applied Linguistics sufficient to warrant pushing for a dedicated AL panel in the next RAE / REF exercise?

JB

If the field is to gain greater recognition in its own right as an area of research, I think it would be worth trying to get a dedicated AL panel in the REF, if panels

still exist then. That would also enable there to be more feedback on work in the field in the overall statements.

RC

Yes. It is hard to define where the lines are drawn between general and applied linguistics but the figures for MA courses and research students in applied linguistics should be able to be collected and they will provide convincing evidence for the significant growth of applied linguistics (and rapidly growing membership of BAAL) that everyone is noticing.

JC

I have no overview of the overall number of outputs concerned: BAAL could usefully undertake a census of submissions once they are published. But I feel that the discipline was fragmented, with some domains such as Translation Studies under-represented across panels.

RM

Clearly a very large amount of applied linguistics work was submitted to RAE 2008, and it is disappointing for applied linguists that the area was not more 'visible'. Submissions were scattered across several sub-panels, with perhaps the largest number going to English. Now that the full submissions have been published (available since 30 April at www.rae.ac.uk), it will of course be perfectly possible to audit the full field and track down where the work of all those BAAL members was submitted! However paradoxically, the stronger applied linguistics research becomes, in both quantity and quality, the less likely it may be that disciplines such as

English, Education, Linguistics, Languages etc will be willing to 'let go' and accept the emergence of a new independent area.

5

6. Overall, did the quality of the outputs give cause for celebration, or concern, about the state of Applied Linguistics in Britain today?

JB

I would say the descriptions of the best and poorest work seen which is given in the Education overall statement would also apply to work in Applied Linguistics.

RC

There were high levels of quality across the field with applied linguistics contributing to the high levels of performance recorded in the field of English Language and Literature.

JC

There was much excellent work in the area: quality gives no reason for concern.

RM

The applied linguistics work submitted to Linguistics was fully comparable in quality to the rest of the field, and included some very exciting and original work.

7. Do you have any comments on future RAE / REF exercises that might be useful to BAAL members?

JB

It was a huge amount of work, and I am not sure that it achieved the best

outcome for research in Education, including submissions in applied linguistics. I would be interested in understanding more transparently future systems of moderation between panels.

RC

The peer review process is cumbersome (and expensive) but should be kept in place as it allows crude metrical measures to be contextualized. I think there are distinct advantages in there being an applied linguistics sub-panel. Of course, it is sometimes hard to draw neat lines between general and applied linguistics. However, the sheer size of the current applied linguistics constituency and its continued exponential growth merits a separate dedicated sub-panel or separate outsourcing for quality judgments, not least because it would allow a distinctive and unified voice to collate the work across the several current separate sub-panels where applied linguistics is submitted. Much depends though on how panels, if they will exist at all, are configured in REF.

JC

Like other Sub-Panels, we noted a mismatch between the prestige of the outlet and the quality of the outputs. Top-rated journals published mediocre work, monographs might be Unclassified, while book chapters might be 4*. I think we felt the necessity of the peer review process. In any case, a convincing model for REF has yet to emerge.

All the research suggests that metrics are least applicable to SSH subjects, because of (1) type of outlets including a substantial proportion of books (2) languages of output and the pro-English bias of citation indices (3) inadequate coverage by existing indices. The volte-face by ERIH is extremely welcome in this regard. There is also a wide variation in typical research income across the disciplines to which Applied Linguistics research could be submitted, e.g. Education mean income £186K per FTE in RAE 2008 vs. French £22K, and in PGR numbers. This means that high-level aggregation, which seems to be the only level at which some form of REF reliability can be achieved, could in the medium to long term be extremely damaging to some areas of the discipline as HEIs strategically disengage from low-scoring domains. Despite the reliability and validity of judgments within RAE 2008 Sub-Panels, and to a large extent within Main Panels, many

see evidence of ‘tactical grade inflation’ across Main Panels: the attitude that ‘my discipline is more excellent than yours and deserves a bigger share of the cake’ can only be encouraged by metrics, to the detriment of SSH subjects. We need to continue to call for a substantial role for peer review.

Light-touch peer review may in practice mean a merging of panels into an overview panel, and perhaps an outsourcing of quality judgments to complement the metrics. In any case, Applied Linguistics needs to liaise with similar bodies in Linguistics, Education, Languages, Social Sciences, etc., and to address today’s and tomorrow’s research

assessment issues rather than yesterday's.

RM

If BAAL is keen to raise the profile of the area in future RAE/ REF exercises, it would be sensible to audit the RAE submissions now published, and identify the volume of applied linguistics work which was actually submitted to the various subpanels. This exercise could take account of research income, research student numbers etc, which can be attributed to applied linguistics, alongside research outputs. The evidence could then be used to inform debate e.g. to argue for a separate AL subpanel next time around (assuming subpanels or something like them do survive).

Otherwise, BAAL needs to stay engaged in the policy debates around the shape of future exercises, and in particular to join those lobbying in support of an element of peer review. Ensuring equivalence of standards across panels/ disciplines is a tricky ongoing problem, which needs vigilant monitoring whatever method is used (peer review and/ or metrics). A concerted approach along with other learned societies in cognate disciplines will be essential.

Peter Martin

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden death, on Friday 24th April, of Peter Martin, a dear friend and colleague, who made a considerable contribution to the study and understanding of applied linguistics.

Peter Martin was Professor of Education and Linguistics at the University of East London. He taught at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in the UK and in Brunei, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Saudi Arabia. He previously worked at the University of Brunei Darussalam (1985-1998), and at the University of Leicester (1998-2005).

Peter Martin's research interests and publications centred around multilingualism, and the relation between language, culture and identity. His early work, which emerged from a period of employment in Southeast Asia, looked at linguistic and sociolinguistic issues in multilingual settings, and particularly multilingualism in educational contexts. This research included analysis of classroom interaction, especially bilingual classroom interaction, language policy, planning and practice, and new Englishes. His later work focuses on multilingual classroom ecologies and on complementary schools in England. He completed two ESRC-sponsored studies on multilingualism in complementary schools, both rated 'Outstanding' by the funding council. The first of these studies investigated Gujarati complementary schools in Leicester, while the second extended to Bengali, Chinese, Turkish and Gujarati schools in

Birmingham, Manchester, London, and Leicester respectively (and involved the University of Birmingham, Birkbeck College London, Kings College University and the University of East London). The latter study (i) explored the social, cultural and linguistic significance of complementary schools both within their communities and in the wider society; (ii) developed innovative ethnographic team methodologies used in the previous project in Leicester, and (iii) contributed to policy and practice in the inclusion of complementary schools in the wider educational agenda. Peter Martin also worked on the interface between language policy and practice in classrooms in post-colonial contexts. A further strand of his research was on the sociolinguistics of Austronesian language communities in Borneo, and the compilation of a dictionary of Kelabit (a minority, unwritten language, spoken by around 5,000 people in the uplands of Borneo). Peter Martin's research has developed and extended our understandings of multilingualism, language education, and language in society. His teaching enriched the learning and lives of generations of students. As a colleague and friend he was endlessly generous, kind, and good-humoured. He will be greatly missed.

Peter Martin is survived by his wife, Ubong, and his four children, Anis, Lian, Supang and Sarah.

Angela Creese

Summer Newsletter

MEETINGS SECRETARY REPORT

Erik Schlee, University of Manchester, 14 May 2009

BAAL 2009 Newcastle (3rd–5th September)

BAAL 2009 will be held at Newcastle University. The conference theme is “Language, Learning and Context”. Plenary speakers are David Crystal (Bangor University), Bethan Benwell (University of Stirling) & Liz Stokoe (Loughborough University), and Pauline Rae-Dickins (University of Bristol).

The conference will be organised by the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences (SECLS), and the Centre for Research in Linguistics and Language Sciences (CRiLLS). More information about the conference can be found here: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ecls/news/conferences/BAAL2009>.

336 abstracts were submitted to the conference organisers, and 182 were accepted. The conference organisers made an effort to raise the profile of posters at their conference and will organise a large poster presentation session. There will also be a prize for best poster displayed at the conference. The winner will receive £50 and a book.

BAAL gives two international scholarships (one of which is the Chris Brumfit award) and ten UK student scholarships. This year there were 46

international scholarship applications and 30 UK applications. A scholar from Serbia, Ksenija Bogetic, received the International Scholarship, and one from Egypt, Muhammad Abdel Latif, was selected for the Chris Brumfit award.

As in previous years, the 2009 meeting in Newcastle will result in a CD-ROM with extended abstracts (ca. 1,000 words) of accepted papers, as well as pictures and other impressions from the conference.

BAAL 2010 Aberdeen (9th–11th September)

BAAL 2010 will be held at Aberdeen University. The conference theme is “Applied Linguistics: Global and Local”. The conference will be organised by the School of Language and Literature and the Centre for Linguistic Research. The University campus is located close to the city centre in the historic Village of Old Aberdeen and within easy reach of railway and bus stations. Aberdeen airport is served by regular flights from cities across Britain and Europe.

Membership Secretary's Report

BAAL

Thank you for renewing your membership: proof is your reception of this Newsletter! Getting renewals in from members can be a long-drawn out procedure. In the first instance an email reminder is sent at the beginning of December and some of you respond promptly, for which we are very grateful! Several email reminders were then sent at the beginning of the year. Last year we offered a 5% reduction if you renewed before 31 January 2009. This had some effect but still left nearly • of the renewals outstanding at the end of that deadline. Where emails bounced we sent out reminders by post along with those to people who do not have an email address (very few now). Reminders went out again in April, this time by post to over 1/3 of the membership, who still had not renewed.

As you can imagine this is costly in terms of hours and postage which is ever increasing. So at the BAAL Executive Meeting in April we decided to try a somewhat different approach to annual BAAL membership renewals:

- All members will receive email reminders only, i.e. there will be no further reminders sent out by post. You may receive up to 3 email reminders.
- All members who join or renew by Direct Debit will continue to enjoy a 5% reduction on their membership fees, as shown below and in the new membership application/renewal forms. This will apply to individual members only at this time.

These decisions have been made because of the time and costs involved in persistently reminding people to renew, especially by post.

The solution for the individual member is to sign up for Direct Debit, of course. 100 members have done so, so far. We hope that you will do so, if you haven't already, the next time you receive your renewal reminder.

Lynn Erler

Type of Membership	Numbers 1 May 2009
Individual (full rate)	359
Individual (direct debit)	100
Individual (reduced rate for unwaged, retired)	38
Individual (reduced rate for students)	145
Institution (3 persons in a named Department)	16
Associate (e.g. publisher)	11
Total membership	669

TRAJECTORIES OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

It has long been realised that conceptualisations of SLA are highly metaphorical in character: language learners may see themselves as playing, working, discovering, travelling, feeding, constructing, interacting, negotiating and many other things (apWilliams 1984). It is also a matter of common experience that instruction works best where learners' and teachers' metaphors are in harmony (Anderssen 2001): game-like practice activities are frequently resisted by students who conceptualise language learning as a matter of hard work, while conversely, students who feel that a language is learnt mainly through conversational interaction tend not to take kindly to the systematic study of language forms.

A recent study in this area (Carruthers et al. 2008) has looked at three different conceptual frameworks (CFs) which are prevalent in current theorising about instructed SLA, with a view to comparing their possible impact on learners' achievement. While such comparisons are notoriously resistant to quantitative treatment, they can none the less throw up interesting results which may suggest profitable directions for more rigorous further enquiry. The following is an informal outline account of the study; readers who would like detailed information are referred to Carruthers et al.'s paper.

Forty-eight lower-intermediate learners of English were divided into three groups on the basis of a preliminary questionnaire and interview, whose

purpose was to ascertain whether their thinking about language learning tended to favour a dynamic-topological conceptual framework, a narrative identity framework, or an integrated-constructional framework (see below). Each group was assigned to a team of teachers whose conceptualisation of language learning corresponded, broadly speaking, to that prevalent in the group. Groups were each given three two-hour orientation sessions whose purpose was to explore and elaborate the key ideas of the relevant CF, and to consolidate the group's positive stance vis-à-vis the framework. Students then received 24 hours of appropriately designed CF-congruent instruction, spread over six weeks. A control group was given 30 hours of conventional language lessons. Pre- and post-tests were administered; these were identical for all four groups.

CF1: dynamic-topological

In this framework, learning is conceived of primarily as a dynamic progress along a constantly evolving complex of ecological trajectories (Brik and Tajin 2005). The context and process of learning (and indeed of all communication) are seen as being in a continual state of flux, analogous to the circulation of liquids or gases in the physical world, but more appropriately modelled in an abstract phase space using concepts from sociological telemetry, topology, four-dimensional fluid dynamics, ballistics and other relevant disciplines (Wasserspeier and Gargolla 2007a, b). Learners in the CF1 group were encouraged throughout the study to conceptualise their 'journeys' through the semiotic fluid in visual

terms, constructing maps of their trajectories first in two or three dimensions, and then later with the aid of möbius strips, klein bottles, nesting toroids and other dimensionally indeterminate matrices. Several students produced impressive work; one indeed gained a prize from a major art foundation for an Escher-like wallpaper pattern showing herself and her fellow-students trapped in an eddy under a morphosyntactic waterfall.

CF2: narrative-identity

Scholars who espouse this framework concur in seeing the modern self as a conglomeration of mutually permeating and reinforcing narratives, in which centrifugal and centripetal discursive dynamics contribute to the formation of shifting multiple identities (Lametta, Spekulatorius and Glühwein 2006). The language-learning context necessarily requires the learner to confront, negotiate, situate and integrate further multiple identities which may be in conflict both with each other and with those rooted in earlier narratives (Carbonara 2008). Students in the CF2 group took part in a series of game-like activities in which they were given multiple ID cards (one or more for each sociolinguistic macrocontext) and required to act out scenarios designed to foster an ethnographic exploration of their individual and social language learning, seen primarily in terms of narrative-identity construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. The insights gained from this work are well exemplified in a comment made by one of the students towards the end of the study: "In the pub I am Chiquita and I can say 'bugger'. In Mr Gallbone's

office I am Miss Carambo and I cannot say 'bugger'." Problems were few, though the researchers report one case of identity theft which deprived the student in question of all but two of his personae, leaving him as 1) an Inuit shaman and 2) a shoplifter named Agnes, about whom little information could be gleaned beyond the fact that she had a pet crocodile.

CF3: integrated constructional

The powerful analytical tools developed in connection with recent work on Construction Grammar are increasingly being extended beyond the lexico-syntactic domain to handle discursive-rhetorical dimensions of communication, enabling researchers for the first time to bring under one conceptual roof the structural features of both the linguistic and the non-linguistic constituents of interactive discourse. It was the ground-breaking realisation by von Muesli (2005) that a remark about the weather, a conversation about the weather, and the act of talking about the weather are all examples of constructions, and can be handled jointly by an integrated system of analytical categories, that effectively set the stage for current work in this area. The framework, though complex, is intuitively compelling, and corresponds well to the naive instinct of many learners and teachers that, as FitzRabitt (1974) put it many years ago, 'Actually, everything is pretty much the same'. Students in this group followed a programme in which they 1) interacted in simple communicative tasks, 2) worked in groups to reconstitute and transcribe their interactions, 3) identified and analysed the constructions used, and

finally 4) examined the roles that these constructions play in a multi-dimensional functional-cognitive space, establishing how individual linguistic features can be construed as micro-systems embedded in larger discursual and interactive edifices in whose architecture the speakers themselves, and their ongoing interactions as they repeatedly co-construct their reciprocal positioning, are constitutive structural elements.

Results

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the post-test results were consistent with Kant's characterisation of the nature of scholarly activity in Prolegomena VI-2: 'Was man dreinsteckt, das zieht man natürlich wieder raus' (roughly: 'One gets out what one puts in'). The CF1 group did somewhat better than the others at diagramming information-flow and making origami representations of aspect- and time-relations. CF2 subjects scored particularly well on measures relating to story-telling and lying. The CF3 students showed impressive progress in social integration, which the researchers attribute to the fact that they spent a great deal of time in discussion trying to decide what a construction was. Overall, however, no significant difference was observed in the total scores of the three experimental groups. The control group, for reasons which are unclear, did substantially better on those components of the test which measured improvement in language knowledge and skills.

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Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching: Theoretical, Methodological, and Pedagogical Perspectives.

Johannes Eckerth & Sabine Siekmann (eds.). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2008. pp. 313. ISBN 978-3-631-57330-3 (pbk).

Most of the contributions to this edited collection are based on papers presented at the 2005 conference of the German Association for L2 Research. Eckerth's introductory chapter on approaches to task-based teaching, learning and research (hereafter TBL as an umbrella term), is followed by five papers on 'Classroom-based Research', two on 'Language and Cognition' and two on 'Task-based Assessment'. As so much published classroom-based research on TBL is based on studies in Anglophone contexts, it is refreshing to see the wide range of L2s (German, Spanish etc.), language levels, and geographical contexts (New Zealand, Japan, Germany etc.) of these studies, as well as the variety of research methods employed.

Eckerth sets the scene with his own overview of current theoretical positions on TBL. After sketching out four principal theoretical orientations to task-based research (negotiation of meaning, performance-based task analysis, consciousness-raising, sociocultural theory), he argues the case for the task to assume the central role in SLA research of providing a conceptual link between L2 teaching and research. He also discusses 'three critical issues and challenges' (p.24): the task-exercise distinction, the construct validity of the concept of task and the specification of

learning outcomes. He argues that the first distinction lacks a stable psycholinguistic reality for learners, who often interpret tasks as they see fit rather than execute them in the way task designers expect (Breen 1987). He also supplements Seedhouse's (2005) case for increasing construct validity through assimilating a conversational analytic approach into the TBL research framework, and by arguing that sociocultural, and what he calls SLA-specific discourse analytical, approaches can play a similar role. On learning outcomes, while acknowledging that research has provided valuable information about probable task outcomes, Eckerth asserts that since task types and conditions are not deterministic, we still need to learn more about task processes. He considers the focus on task processes to be the distinguishing feature of most papers in this volume, which deal more with 'the linguistic and cognitive processes (my italics) involved in task performance' (p.19) than with the linguistic and interactional *products* of tasks.

Of the classroom-based papers, Schart reports on his own action research study of a German TBL course for Japanese beginners. The data collected took many forms (interviews by the co-researcher, students' emailed comments, teacher-researcher's diary etc.) and the author provides a case study of a teacher's investigation of the very local reasons why his implementation of TBL was not as successful as anticipated. Pesce investigated thirteen learners of L2 Spanish in German HE doing two

consecutive tasks focusing on verb tenses: a gap-fill CLOZE and a narrative task. One group (deductive) received prior instruction in the form of teacher rule presentations whereas the other (inductive) engaged in rule discovery activities. All students did pretests, and immediate and delayed posttests. The data analysed included interactive conversational protocols (ICPs), students' written products and post-task interviews. One result, which should be viewed cautiously because of the small sample size and the (apparently unacknowledged) effect of the same students performing tasks consecutively, was that the CLOZE engendered more explicit focus 2 on form than the meaning-focused narrative task. Another was that students tended to score higher in the delayed than in the immediate posttests, potentially explicable by the interesting possibility that the tasks prompted autonomous study of the target forms before the delayed test. Pesce also noted that self-discovery in the inductive group did not seem to cause deeper cognitive processing of the forms. One interviewed student claimed that it can be difficult to unlearn an incorrectly scaffolded rule, which is consistent with Swain's (1998) finding that the outcomes of Language Related Episodes (LREs) tend to 'stick'.

In a study involving fifty six EFL learners on a university access course in New Zealand, Ishii introduces the concept of the 'dia-log' - a blend of error log and dialogue - a collaborative means of sustaining learners' attention to a form the teacher has corrected in

their written output. All the students do a type of text reconstruction task known as Dictogloss (Wajnryb 1990) individually rather than collaboratively. The experimental group worked with 'dia-logs', worksheets on which dyads collaborated to complete a series of consciousness-raising tasks based on a form one of them had used incorrectly in the Dictogloss text. Grammar tests revealed no significant differences between the experimental group and a control group. However, once proficiency levels were factored into the analysis of the experimental group, higher proficiency learners were shown to have made more language gains, and their ICPs revealed that they engaged in more metatalk than their lower proficiency counterparts. This suggests that 'dia-logs' may stimulate more advanced learners into better long term retention of corrected forms.

Eckerth's meticulous study of intermediate and advanced students of German looked at dyads doing unfocused (meaning-oriented) and form-focused consciousness-raising (CR) tasks. The research design included a pretest and immediate and delayed posttests. Part of the latter was tailor-made (Swain 1998), i.e. based on 'individual learner hypotheses' (p. 108) about forms untargeted in the task-as-workplan (Breen 1987) but generated as part of the learners' own agenda (Fortune 2005) in the task-in-process. As well as providing strong confirmation of the acquisitional potential of CR tasks, the most important of several interesting findings were (i) that the language-focused tasks engendered as much meaning

negotiation as the meaning-focused ones, (ii) that there were many targetlike outcomes and few (1%) non-targetlike outcomes to learner-generated focus-on-forms, thereby allaying the fears that learners often scaffold non-targetlike language (Pesce above), and (iii) that unresolved focus-on-forms are sometimes the genesis of further learning opportunities after task completion.

Siekman, working from the perspective of sociocultural theory, studied six dyads studying German in a US university doing WebQuests, a very structured sequence of meaning-focused online tasks. She used specialist software to capture on-screen action and dyadic verbal exchanges, and then analysed the data to investigate how the learners scaffolded knowledge and oriented themselves to the task. Her innovative data coding scheme involved not just the identification of LREs but codes which describe cognitive and affective strategic behaviours. The affective codes allowed the very different task orientations of dyads to be explored, thereby setting out an alternative means of exploring this subject to Storch's (2002) work on dyadic collaboration. The division of cognitive behaviour codes into higher level categories of scaffolding - other-, self- and collaborative - was less than convincing, although it was note worthy that instances of self- and collaborative- far outnumbered those of other-scaffolding. This novel approach could provide an alternative window through which to view scaffolding, although the distinction between self- and collaborative scaffolding could present

massive coding difficulties.

Of the two papers on language and cognition, Kruger takes a constructivist perspective in her case studies of two intermediate/advanced learners of German at a Canadian university doing a language task, while Heine adopts a cognitive processing view of the role of the L2 when students do a content-based task in a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) setting in Germany. Kruger's elaborate framework is used to analyse think aloud protocols of learners doing a reading-based vocabulary task. She makes use of the term 'Language Learning Habitus' (Bourdieu 1977) to describe the space into which learners incorporate external factors (e.g. family roots etc.) to provide two insightful, contextualised analyses of the factors, internal and external, which affect on-task performance. Heine synthesised a dual model of task solving containing two separate but inter-related sectors, the conceptual and the linguistic-rhetorical, and developed coding categories to analyse TAPs of learners doing a geography task in L2 English. For me, her most fascinating conclusion was that L2 use can cause 'deeper reflection about the content' (p.222) than L1 use, which, of course, lends strong support for CLIL and L2 immersion education.

Like Heine, Vollmer's work is part of a large CLIL (English medium of instruction) project in German secondary schools. His long paper develops a model of subject-specific competence, and a battery of content (in this case geography) tasks to assess

this competence. On piloting the tasks, no significant differences were found between bi- and monolingual pupils' solutions to geography problems. Moreover, although the L2-using students encountered some linguistic difficulties, they tended to develop effective compensatory strategies (cf. Heine above). All students, however, exhibited academic literacy problems, a finding which also adds further weight to the case for the adoption of CLIL.

Kessler's paper, drawing upon Pienemann's (2005) psycholinguistically-oriented work on interlanguage development, is less about assessment per se than about forging links between task-based language profiling and pedagogy. The author claims that such profiling provides information which allows teachers to form appropriate classroom dyads in which the linguistically stronger learner is well placed to scaffold the language development of the other, thereby creating a clear link between assessment and pedagogy.

This stimulating collection of papers contributes considerably to TBL research and complements collections such as Bygate et al (2001). The classroom studies should prove useful both to TBL researchers and to students of SLA. Heine and Vollmer's papers will be of particular interest to those working in a CLIL context.

Alan Fortune

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Speech Production and Perception.

M. Tatham & K. Morton. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. ISBN-10: 1-4039-1733-7 paperback. pp: 326. Paperback £22.99, Hardback £64.

Speech production and perception (hereafter abbreviated to SPP) is a technical subject that has two aspects – physical and cognitive. The former deals with the acoustic signals of speech, the latter with the mental processes that are claimed to underlie both production and perception. Both aspects receive comprehensive coverage in this scholarly work.

The book has three parts. The first is focused on speech production theory, is 163 pages long, and comprises five chapters. The second part is about speech perception theory, is 68 pages long, and has three chapters. The last part is entitled ‘Areas of Focus, Modelling and Applications’ has 63 pages and four chapters. The bibliography is an impressive ten pages long. There is also a subject as well as a name index. The preface tells us the intended audience are intermediate and postgraduate students and researchers. The authors also assume readers will have knowledge of the elementary material underlying the book (xviii). With this in mind, let’s consider its content.

The first chapter rightly, and very usefully, presents the historical background to the explanations that will follow. It outlines the basic beliefs of what is now called Classical Phonetics, describing the differences between it and the new approach – Cognitive

Phonetics. The authors make it clear that they are adherents of the modern, cognitive approach. First chapters are always important: they set the tone and provide the foundations upon which following chapters will build. This one is reassuring. We realise right from the outset that the writers know where they are in their field.

The second chapter describes the phenomenon of coarticulation. As a linguist who is not a specialist in this field, I began to wonder why so much attention was given to this aspect of speech production. I referred back to the Preface and found that it has been the biggest area of research in SPP for the last 50-odd years (xvii). This fact could have been repeated. I would also have welcomed an account of who chose this term and why. Coarticulation describes the knock-on effect of an articulatory action upon surrounding segments in a stream of speech. But, as I read on, I began to wonder how appropriate the word is, especially its prefix which suggests a much more limited effect. This chapter, as well as others, provides plenty of examples to illustrate or support what is being discussed.

The third chapter is on coarticulation theory. It’s the longest in the book – 56 pages. It lists the main theories and contrasts them. The information is sure to be very useful to the target audience, although I must confess to a preference for chapters that fit into reading slots of about forty minutes. Throughout this chapter as well as others there is good use made of diagrams. There are also reproductions of waveforms and

spectrograms of speech that illustrate the topics under consideration.

The fourth chapter is on speech motor control. It is a solid account of how things stand in the debate. Reading of all the differences of opinion, it made me think how ironical it is that linguists in other fields often cite phonetics as the most scientific branch of linguistics. Several times in the book the question of the 'reality' of the representations of the speech signal and its mental counterpart arise (for example, pp. 6 12-14, 36, 206/7). I like it when writers begin to think about the philosophical grounding of the concepts they are using. It reminded me of a similar struggle I had with words like 'representation' (see especially the last chapter of Sharpe 2009). To some extent, the authors have to do this because their entire thesis rests upon the nature of how language is mediated. In this case, a great deal hangs upon how clear 'the material symbol of the phoneme' is (Trubetzkoy in Cassirer 1944: 126). The clearer it is the less cognitive processing seems to be required. This shifts explanations away from active to passive models of mediation. The authors argue for an active role and supply a model of it.

The fifth and last chapter of Part One is about speech production and prosody. It is equally competent, but I was disappointed to find no mention made of tonal languages. They do, after all, comprise almost one third of the world's languages. I wanted to know how tones that change the meanings of the same sounds (usually syllables) were treated. It's interesting to read that tone still escapes a complete explanation. The

authors adopt an original position on how tone can be modelled. At the conclusion to Part One, even generalists will realise that the authors are first-division players in SPP.

The second part is about speech perception theory, the other side of the coin. Although the writing style is consistent with the first part, I sensed a change of 'voice' and imagined the other writer handling this part. It begins with a chapter entitled, 'Dynamic Model Building and Expressive Content'. There is a detailed discussion of the reality of models and a number of other issues which begin to give us a feel of where the authors' model of SPP, called the Tatham-Morton model, stands in relation to other theories.

Because chapter seven is about speech perception and prosody, there is repetition of earlier content on prosody, albeit expressed differently. This may be an inevitable pitfall of co-authorship, but the next chapter reveals another reason. Chapter eight is on speech production for perception. Here the writer has to recap on some of the issues covered earlier. It is difficult to quantify how much overlap occurs throughout the book and how much could have been edited out. On the one hand, it's useful to read similar material seen from a different perspective, but, on the other, the book as a whole would have benefited from an editor making some judicious cuts.

The third part has four chapters, the first on modelling the cognitive and physical applications, the second on speech technology, the third on second-

language acquisition and the last on speech disorders. This part would be useful for those working in related fields, especially if they want a linguistic perspective on what they are doing.

To conclude, this is, without a doubt, a fine work. It provides a comprehensive overview of the subject. My favourite chapters were 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8. There, I found what I was after and, in other places, more than I expected. I have no hesitation in recommending it to those interested in the field.

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Tokyo

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Contents

Editorial	1
Executive Committee	2
Chair's Report	3
Report on the RAE 2008 Process for BAAL	5
Obituary	10
Meetings Secretary's Report	11
Membership Secretary's Report	12
Tongue-in-cheek	13
Book reviews	17
Publications received	24
Information for contributors	26
BAAL funding summary timetable	27
How to join BAAL	28
BAAL Application and registration form	29

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