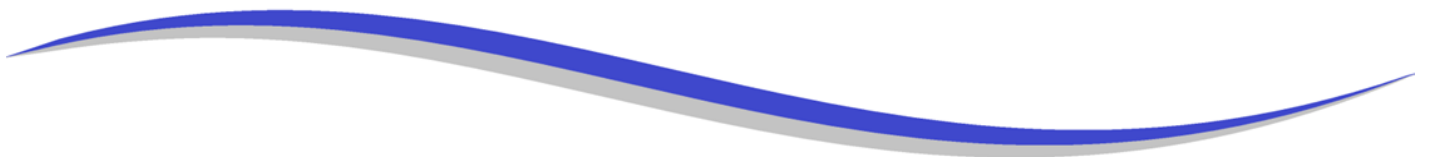




# **BAAL News**

**Issue 106**  
**Winter 2015**



***British Association for Applied Linguistics***

**Promoting understanding of language in use.**

<http://www.baal.org.uk>

Registered charity no. 264800



## Editorial

Dear BAAL members,

Welcome to number 106 of the BAAL newsletter. Three calls for papers and participation - for our annual conference at Aston University in September as well as two BAAL/CUP seminars - highlight that 2015 is yet another year of exciting activities. Reports from seminars and workshops provide an overview of the various events that took place last year - and demonstrate the diversity of our organisation. As usual, the newsletter includes a number of book reviews. If you are interested in reviewing a publication, please contact our Reviews Editor— details at the end of the reviews section.

Over the coming year, the newsletter will go through another transformation. To enable us to feedback to our members the various activities within BAAL more quickly, we are moving towards a 'rolling' distribution of news and events via our website. A first step toward this is the creation of a separate 'newsletter' section on our website: <http://www.baal.org.uk>. We will announce details about the new format in due course.

With best wishes,

***Sebastian Rasinger***

Newsletter Editor



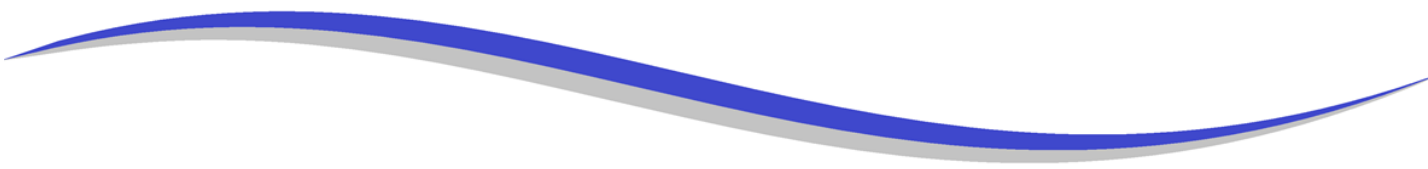
## BAAL-Routledge Applied Linguistics Workshop 2014

### Language learning in contexts of cultural diversity

I was delighted to be awarded funding to organise the inaugural BAAL-Routledge Applied Linguistics Workshop 2014, which took place on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October at King's College London (Centre for Language, Discourse and Communication). The event was intensive and extremely rich, resulting in a flurry of ideas for potential directions. As intended, the workshop brought together a mix of established scholars and PhD researchers to report on current research activities and to share theoretical perspectives in a convivial and fully participatory day. Twenty-three scholars attended, representing 15 universities, mostly from England but also from Cyprus (European University of Cyprus) and Brazil (State University of Ponta Grossa). During the workshop six papers were presented and there were spaces for group discussions during which all participants shared their work and discussed themes arising. The discussions continued well into the evening over dinner.

The aim of the workshop was to examine what language learning means in diverse contexts where there is not an obvious communicative imperative, which refers especially to contexts where the language learnt is not English. The huge, perhaps disproportionate attention paid to English in applied linguistics research masks the complex status of other widely taught second and foreign languages, often jostling for power in micro-political contexts as well as the global language market, drawing on a wider range of discourses to justify their position than those of necessity and practicality which feed the insatiable demand for English. That said, as became clear throughout the day, any discussion of motivation to learn languages other than English takes, by default, English as a contextual frame, in the same way that discussion of local languages in post-colonial settings is necessarily framed by the historically instituted parameters of hegemonic languages.

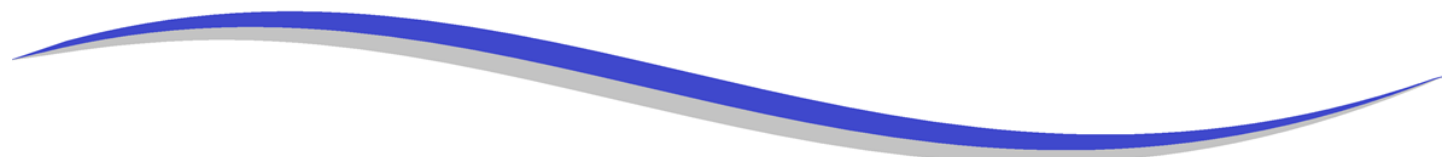
Many of the workshop participants are familiar with the context of modern foreign language education in England, working or having worked as teachers themselves and now working in teacher education, and three of the six papers referred to this context, which we recognised as an arena ripe for new research directions. Frequently reported as being 'in crisis' because of falling take up at key transition stages (to GCSE, to A level, to university) the study of modern languages in England brings into relief the competing agendas promoting and constraining perceptions of languages and reasons to learn them. After introductions from myself (Coffey) and then from Martin Edwards on behalf of BAAL, I gave a paper reviewing the buzz around the 'crisis' in UK's modern languages as attested by the extensive number of commissioned reports examining drop-off at key transition points along the educational pathway. In parallel with commissioned reports, a number of academic studies have investigated student choices, most often through methodologies aimed to measure reported attitudinal factors bearing on student choice e.g. preferences for particular languages, gender distribution, attitude to teachers. I presented some recently collected data and preliminary findings from student discussions across the independent and maintained school sectors (in London) and offered some possible directions for future research, critiquing the conventionalised distinctions between instrumental, integrative, intrinsic etc. in favour of a broader social model of multi-dimensional support strategies such as those developed in the educational resilience literature. In his following presentation David Block (ICREA / Universitat de Lleida) showed that social class remains under-examined and under-theorised in language learning research, and he reviewed conceptualisations of social class as a research frame, both generally and as these have been applied to applied linguistics, pointing to the potential for further development. Katya Saville is conducting her doctoral research (at the Institute of Education) into bilingual schools. A fast growing phenomenon already well



established in Canada, parts of Europe (especially Spain) and growing globally, bilingual education remains extremely limited in England. Katya presented data illustrating how, despite the discourse of ‘inclusion’ and ‘bilingualism for all’ bilingual free schools may in fact be strengthening social reproduction of a linguistic elite in dominant languages, rather than challenging existing discourses of bilingualism and language learning for a privileged few, in a privileged few languages. After lively group discussions, which continued through lunch, we heard from Ben Rampton (KCL) and Constadina Charalambous (European University of Cyprus) who are conducting a three-year project (with Panayiota Charalambous, not present) into the teaching of Turkish in Greek-Cypriot schools. This initiative taps into the ambivalence of language learning to develop understanding and to arm oneself through learning the ‘language of the enemy’. Drawing on the literature on ‘securitization’, which addresses the discursive processes around the construction of an existential threat, Rampton and Charalambous’ extensive data set reveals the challenges teachers confront – and strategies developed to deal with these – when teaching in a post-conflict setting. Aparecida de Jesus Ferreira (UEPG – State University of Ponta Grossa) presented autobiographical data from foreign language (English, French, Spanish) teacher trainees in Southern Brazil, framed by critical race theory, to highlight the (in)visibility of race in the construction of teachers’ identities in the Brazilian context. The final paper of the day was given by Florentina Taylor (York), presented evidence that while perceived *personal* relevance predicted take-up (of languages at GCSE), wider *societal* relevance did not. Florentina then reported on an intervention initiative to promote favourable attitudes to modern languages, reiterating the need for such interventions and measures of their impact.

Before bringing the event to a formal end we reviewed the content of the day in groups, noting down key thematic strands and suggestions for how further work can be taken forward. A key theme that emerged from the papers and discussions included how we frame *values* in applied linguistics and with what warrant e.g. how universal are the goals of language learning in terms of stated intercultural aims?, and how are discourses around interculturality appropriated (or not) in zones of intergroup conflict? Given the concern over take-up of languages in UK schools and universities, marked by increasing social inequity, a related question was: what are the theoretical and methodological frames we can use to examine and challenge the study of modern languages as an elite project? While our discussion of take-up had referred primarily to UK school settings there are clear implications for language learning and social justice as a broader, global issue, an agenda which requires us to examine – and articulate – our ethical commitment to claims linking language learning to personal well-being, educational chances, inclusion and social cohesion. Linked to these broadstroke aims is a pressing need to interrogate the nomenclature which ring-fences our disciplinary boundaries (MFL, modern languages, foreign languages, ELF, EAL, education, applied linguistics etc.), not just as categorical terms but as fields of established norms in which the distribution of resources is heavily constrained. Germane to this interrogation is our relationship with other disciplines within and beyond linguistics: do we compete, for instance, with STEM subjects or can we forge alliances with other curriculum areas? Clearly, the impact of pedagogy, though not a central theme of the workshop, is always shaped by wider beliefs about the value and status of language learning in a given context, and one that cannot be researched in isolation.

It is too soon to know exactly what outcomes will issue from our first encounter. Beyond the rich exchange on the day the personal contacts made seem very promising for collaborative writing and research. There is likely to be an edited international collection of empirical and theoretical papers problematising the ethics-values aspects of language learning. A number of delegates also suggested we form a colloquium at next year’s BAAL conference. Some writing collaborations are also being planned. A number of us agreed that there is a need for some more diachronic data to



track what languages mean in young people's lives over time. Such data has the potential to build on and extend existing approaches to bridge the attitude measurement data, which is overwhelmingly synchronic, with the rich insights gained from retrospective autobiographical accounts. A next stage would be to develop a multi-layered, intersectional frame of sustainable interventions to support language learning in the lives of participants from different demographic groups. One envisaged outcome of the workshop is therefore to bring together the expertise of a network of UK-based researchers to prepare a bid for funding to produce and trial such a frame. Overall, this was a wonderful day; many thanks to all who participated and of course to BAAL and Routledge for sponsoring this important networking opportunity for scholars with shared interests.

*Simon Coffey, King's College London (Centre for Language, Discourse and Communication)*

## **BAALnews Submission Deadlines**

As always, the BAAL newsletter is looking forward to receiving submissions from members, be they reports from event, research developments, or discussion points. BAALnews is published twice a year: a winter issue, and a summer issue.

Please note that the submission deadlines for forthcoming issues are:

Summer 2015 (appears in August 2015): 15 July 2015

Please submit all material by email, with the subject line 'BAAL news' to:

[sebastian.rasinger@anglia.ac.uk](mailto:sebastian.rasinger@anglia.ac.uk)

Unless there is a very special reason, please submit material in Times New Roman, 12pt, left aligned (not justified). Please do not use text boxes, or try to format your contribution in any other way, as this complicates the reformatting. Thank you.

# 48th Annual Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics

## CALL FOR PAPERS



BAAL 2015 will be held at Aston University in the heart of Birmingham. It is organised by CfL (Centre for Forensic Linguistics), CLERA (Centre for Language Education Research at Aston) and InterLand (Interdisciplinary Research into Language and Diversity) and hosted by the School of Languages and Social Sciences.

Aston is ideally situated for all the Second City has to offer in culture, shopping and entertainment. You can listen to world-class music at Symphony Hall, explore a unique collection of Pre-Raphaelite art at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, and enjoy classic and contemporary drama at the newly-refurbished Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Or why not visit the recently-opened Library of Birmingham, voted Britain's favourite new building? Birmingham is famous for its Bull Ring Shopping Centre, and home to exciting markets and the dazzling Jewellery Quarter. It has a great food scene, including the Balti Triangle and a wide range of eating options in the beautiful canal area. Conference accommodation is in the new Aston Conference Centre, within easy reach of all the conference events. We promise a memorable social programme to include our gala dinner at Aston Villa football ground and entertainment with a regional flavour.

## Plenary speakers



*Professor Adrian Blackledge*  
University of Birmingham, UK



*Professor Angela Creese*  
University of Birmingham, UK



*Professor Penelope Eckert*  
Stanford University, USA



*Professor Rick Iedema*  
University of Technology, Sydney,  
Australia



## Local organising committee contacts

Any BAAL conference queries: [baal2015@aston.ac.uk](mailto:baal2015@aston.ac.uk)

Dr Fiona Copland ([f.m.copland@aston.ac.uk](mailto:f.m.copland@aston.ac.uk))

Dr Erika Darics ([e.darics@aston.ac.uk](mailto:e.darics@aston.ac.uk))

Professor Tim Grant ([t.d.grant@aston.ac.uk](mailto:t.d.grant@aston.ac.uk))

For further information, see the conference webpage [www.aston.ac.uk/baal2015](http://www.aston.ac.uk/baal2015) which will be regularly updated.

## Call for papers and submission guidelines

One definition of theoretical and linguistic creativity is when the rules of language are bent, distended or stretched to breaking point. Language is only creative when we break the rules: change grammatical order, use ingenious metaphors, puns and wordplay. Similarly, with linguistic theory. We only move on as a discipline when a theorist contests received wisdoms, entrenched paradigms, and established methods. The focus of this 'Breaking theory' conference is to critique current theories and, crucially, to engage in creating new ways of imagining, theorising and practising applied linguistics.

We especially welcome papers that question orthodox schools of thought in our field, and help us to think beyond them. As a profession, we will look to the future to speculate what the new directions in applied linguistics might be. Abstracts are welcome in any area of applied linguistics and should be interesting and innovative in some way. They should be scholarly and of academically good quality and indicate clearly objectives, method(s), and results where appropriate. Abstracts which address the conference theme will be particularly welcome.

### DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ABSTRACTS: 31 March 2015

To submit your abstract please follow the steps below:

1. Go to the following link [www.aston.ac.uk/baal2015](http://www.aston.ac.uk/baal2015) and click on 'Submit papers'. Then click on 'create an account' to register with the system. You will be sent an e-mail to confirm your account registration. Click on the link to confirm the account, allowing you to proceed to the next stage of the submission process.
2. Go back to the abstract submission page, log in to the submission system and start the submission process by clicking on the 'New Submission' tab. An e-mail confirmation of receipt of abstract will be sent to you immediately. Your contact details will be included in the book of abstracts unless you opt out during the submission process.

If you are unable to submit your abstract online, contact Alex Ho-Cheong Leung (BAAL Membership Secretary) at [alex.ho-cheong.leung@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:alex.ho-cheong.leung@northumbria.ac.uk)





## ABSTRACT TYPE:

Indicate the type of abstract that you are submitting during the submission process:

<b>Individual presentation for parallel sessions</b>	Individual papers have 25 minutes: <i>20 minutes for the presentation</i> <i>5 minutes for questions</i>
<b>Special Interest Group (SIG) track presentation</b>	<p>If you believe your paper is of interest to a SIG track, you may want to submit it to one of the SIG tracks (all individuals, whether or not officially SIG members, are eligible). The SIG may then wish to include your paper in a track at the annual meeting. Submitting your abstract to a SIG track may or may not lead to your paper being included in a SIG track and has no impact on abstract acceptance to the conference. BAAL has nine Special Interest Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) <i>Linguistic Ethnography Forum,</i></li><li>(2) <i>Corpus Linguistics,</i></li><li>(3) <i>Language Learning and Teaching,</i></li><li>(4) <i>Language in Africa,</i></li><li>(5) <i>Gender and Language,</i></li><li>(6) <i>Vocabulary Studies,</i></li><li>(7) <i>Testing, Evaluation and Assessment,</i></li><li>(8) <i>Intercultural Communication,</i></li><li>(9) <i>Language and New Media</i></li></ul> <p>If you would like to be considered to be included in one of the tracks, please tick the relevant SIG in the TOPICS section.</p>
<b>Poster</b>	We encourage the submission of abstracts for posters, and continue to regard them as a valuable contribution to conference. All posters will be listed in the book of abstracts, and there will be a dedicated area and time slot for discussion of poster presentations. There will also be a £50 prize for best poster displayed at the conference.
<b>Colloquium presentation</b>	<p>Colloquium introduction and individual papers within the colloquium must be submitted separately, due to technical constraints. The organiser of the colloquium should first submit the colloquium title and introduction along with an overview of paper titles in the colloquium (max 450 words). The paper abstracts of the colloquium should then be submitted by the organiser one by one, entitled "Paper X of <i>colloquium title: paper title</i>" followed by the abstract (max 300 words per abstract). Colloquia have half a day and a minimum of four papers. Colloquia proposers should plan their half day in four slots, in step with the individual paper slots. If they wish to have a larger number of papers, they may fit two papers into what would normally be a single slot. Colloquia papers should cohere. The order of the papers should not be changed after acceptance.</p> <p>SIGs may also choose to submit a colloquium: please indicate after the colloquium title if you are submitting on behalf of a SIG.</p>





## Scholarships

BAAL is offering up to four full conference scholarships for students or early career researchers (defined as persons who are within 2 years of PhD completion) from any institution, who have had a paper or poster accepted for the 2015 Annual Meeting and who would otherwise be unable to attend. An additional scholarship, the Chris Brumfit scholarship, is usually targeted at delegates from outside Britain who would not otherwise have funds to attend the BAAL Annual Meeting. The scholarships cover up to £1,000 of costs, including the conference fee, accommodation and travel. BAAL does not provide additional living subsidies when the sponsored scholar is at the conference. Applicants should submit an abstract in the usual way, indicating clearly on their submission that they wish to be considered for a scholarship, and which one (students/ early career researchers or Chris Brumfit). Candidates may

## Conference prizes

**Poster prize** - A prize will be given to the best poster presented at the conference. The local organising committee will select poster prize judges from the plenary speakers and leaders of invited colloquia. The winner receives £50.

**The Richard Pemberton best postgraduate paper prize** - The postgraduate development and liaison co-ordinator together with an ordinary member of the BAAL Executive Committee will draw up a short list and co-ordinate judges for the Richard Pemberton best postgraduate paper prize. The winner receives £50.

**ALL PRESENTERS HAVE TO BE BAAL MEMBERS BY THE TIME THEY REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE.**



## BAAL-CUP Seminar

# Learning and Teaching for Right to Left Scripted Languages: realities and possibilities

**Leeds Metropolitan University and National association of Teachers of English and Community Languages (Natecla)**

The idea and need for a seminar such as this had been germinating for quite some time now. It was felt that while there is a well established and visible body of research investigating modern foreign languages such as French, German and Spanish which informs the teaching and learning of such languages, a volume of research to inform the teaching of languages such as Urdu and Persian was not sufficiently visible at practitioner level in the UK.

Parallel to the lack of research informed teaching and materials development for right to left scripted languages such as Urdu and Persian, a sizeable demand for classes in such languages exists. According to the 2011 census, Urdu is the fourth most commonly spoken language in the UK, with Arabic as the 7th most commonly spoken language in UK. However, there doesn't seem to be as clear a path from research to the teaching of languages such as Persian and Urdu as foreign or second languages. At the same time, there is a growing diaspora who use these languages parallel to which lies an interest in the communities these diasporas have settled in. Anecdotal evidence shows providers of services used by diaspora communities enrolling in classes for Urdu, Persian and Arabic. Another growing group of learners is individuals in intercultural relationships and their families who enroll in classes for these languages. It is not clear how well the needs of these groups of learners are being met.

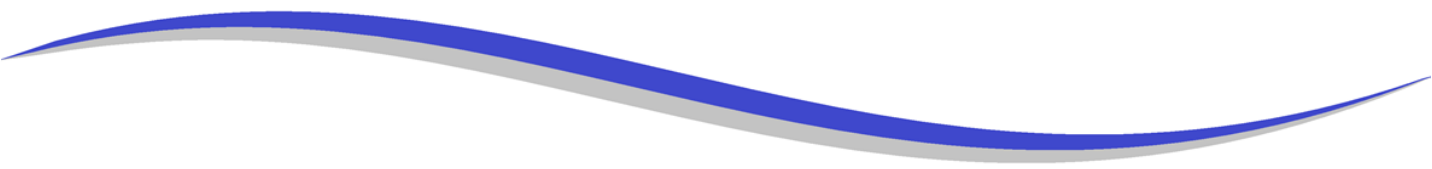
All three languages share a right to left script, a common alphabet with minor differences as well as lexis and grammar. It was felt that there is a need to gather researchers and practitioners to bring together successes and issues in research and teaching related to right to left scripted languages.

The seminar aimed to start a conversation among researchers, practitioners and language users about researching and teaching right to left scripted languages. An important aim was to have a voice from learners at the event.

Anticipated outcomes are:

- to bring together teachers, learners, managers and researchers, exam boards and publishers
- a collection of papers and articles relating to issues and good practice in the learning and teaching of right to left scripted languages. These could be published on an online site in keeping with debates around free-access.
- Papers for the seminar were invited to address three broad themes
- domains of use for right to left scripted languages with particular attention to UK contexts
- materials for learning and teaching right to left scripted languages
- research related to the learning and teaching of right to left scripted languages

The conference was held in partnership with Natecla and publicised through Baal, Natecla, ESOL research list, the Linguist List and Leeds Met mailing lists. Sixteen abstracts were received and after review by conference reviewers, twelve were accepted for presentation. Abstracts came from scholars based at UK universities, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Papers presented covered a wide range from corpus research, the use of authentic materials, role of film in



intercultural communication and learner motivation to the use of technology in learner resources. The seminar was opened by Dr Jacqueline Stevenson, Professor of Education and Childhood at Leeds Metropolitan University. The opening keynote was by Dr. Sharon Handley, Dean of Humanities, Manchester Metropolitan University. Dr. Handley talked about languages of the wider world and their role in global citizenship and shared projects which showed the role of languages in connecting different communities and sharing heritage. The closing keynote was by Dr John Morley, Director University-Wide Language Programmes, University of Manchester, UK and Kim Parkinson, Greater Manchester Police. The closing keynote was a very useful reminder of the learner experience in a learning right to left scripted language. One hoped that teachers present in the room were taking note of what learners can cope with in terms of vocabulary load and the importance of recycling and transfer.

There was a great buzz at lunch with forty four delegates present and there were requests to repeat the event. Comments from feedback for the event were overwhelmingly positive: 'Excellent experience to learn/explore different aspects of teaching and learning of second/ third language', 'good contacts, good diverse range of approaches and interests, 'thanks for organising, much needed'. From conversations over lunch, we felt that what delegates appreciated particularly was this bringing together of teachers, learners, materials writers and researchers.

Overall the conference was an opportunity to find out about areas of need for improving access to and quality of teaching and learning of right to left scripted languages. Power points are available at <http://natecla.org.uk/> and conference proceedings will be available in early 2015.

### ***Bibliography:***

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## BAAL-CUP Seminar Call for Participation

### *(De)Constructing Englishes: Exploring the implications of ontologies of the language for learning, teaching, and assessment*

**York St John University**

**24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

#### **Keynote speakers**

Prof. Suresh Canagarajah (Pennsylvania State University)

Prof. Andy Goodwyn (University of Reading)

Dr Claudia Harsch (University of Warwick)

Prof. Jennifer Jenkins (University of Southampton)

Dr Graeme Trousdale (University of Edinburgh)

This seminar is intended to share diverse understandings of the ontological status of 'English' and to stimulate debate regarding the ways in which the language can be most effectively conceptualised for L1 and L2 learning, teaching, and assessment. The emphasis will be on finding areas of common ground through constructive interaction and debate between scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds and theoretical frameworks. In addition to the keynote papers, there will be shorter papers by five Early Career Researchers or PhD students nominated by the principal speakers. By the end of the seminar we would hope to have identified key issues of agreement and disagreement, and to have formulated ideas about how awareness of these issues might inform, confirm, or contest aspects of current policy and practice.



## Organising committee

Vicky Crawley, Clare Cunningham, Christopher J Hall, Indu Meddegama, Rachel Wicaksono

The seminar is organised by [LidIA](#), the Language and Identities in InterAction Research Unit of the [Department of Languages and Linguistics](#) at York St John University.

## Call for participation

Participation in the seminar is restricted to fifteen places and is by application (see below). Registration costs £85.00 and the fee includes coffee/tea breaks and lunch on all three days, a barbecue supper on Wednesday evening, and seminar materials. Because we hope that delegates will contribute to the discussion as it unfolds over the duration of the event, we are not offering a single-day rate. Two bursaries of £200.00 each will be available for student members of BAAL.

Delegates will need to cover their own travel and accommodation costs; however, subsidised accommodation (approx.. £23.00 per night, incl. breakfast) is available on campus. A list of B&Bs and hotels is available from the organisers. A seminar dinner will be held at historic Gray's Court on Thursday evening, for an additional fee of £40.00 + drinks.

To apply for a place, please send an email with the following information to Chris Hall at [baalcup@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:baalcup@yorks.ac.uk):

Name, institution, position (for academic staff) or programme (for students), email address

Statement of interest, relevant area(s) of expertise and possible contribution\* (max. 200 words)

Willingness to serve as a discussant\*\* for [name of keynote]

BAAL member?

## Deadline for applications: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February

\* We intend to publish an edited volume based on the seminar papers and discussion. Participation in the seminar will not guarantee an invitation to contribute a chapter, but we are keen to invite delegates who have a special interest in the seminar topic and might be in position to contribute to the volume.

\*\* Discussants will be expected to identify and address key emergent issues following each session (which comprise keynote paper, paper by ECR/PhD student, general discussion) and to briefly re-present conclusions prior to a final panel discussion.



## BAAL-CUP Seminar Call for Papers

# The Language of Money and Debt: the view from the ground

**7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015.**

**University of Roehampton, Whitelands College**

## Call for Papers

As money becomes more abstract and financial matters more opaque, it is important to pay attention to the language that ordinary people use to talk about, think about and make decisions about money and debt. While the language of government and financial institutions is connected to everyday talk about money, understanding lay discourses of money may nevertheless be a productive way to solve the financial problems that real people face. We therefore invite all interested researchers to contribute to this seminar examining the language of money using the tools of Applied Linguistics. We welcome research on the themes below incorporating the techniques and perspectives of work in literacies (including CMC and digital literacies), discourse analysis conversation analysis, language teaching, pragmatics and stylistics or other related approaches.

## Confirmed Keynote Speaker

Dr Liz Morrish, Nottingham Trent University, “The Neoliberal University and Applied Linguistics”

## Deadline for abstracts/expression of interest

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015.**

All abstracts should be in pdf or word document using font size 12 and should be emailed to Annabelle Mooney ([a.mooney@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:a.mooney@roehampton.ac.uk)) and Evi Sifaki ([e.sifaki@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:e.sifaki@roehampton.ac.uk)) with BAAL/CUP Money seminar in the subject line. Notification of accepted abstracts will be by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015.

The seminar will take place at the University of Roehampton, Whitelands campus from 10:30 am on 7<sup>th</sup> September until 5pm 8<sup>th</sup> September. Papers will be allocated 30 minutes, including discussion time. Registration will be £35 and £25 for students/unwaged. A dinner at the end of the first day will be arranged at a local restaurant (max £20) which we hope all delegates will be available to attend. 2 BAAL student bursaries are available.

For full call details, please see <https://languageofmoneyanddebt.wordpress.com/>



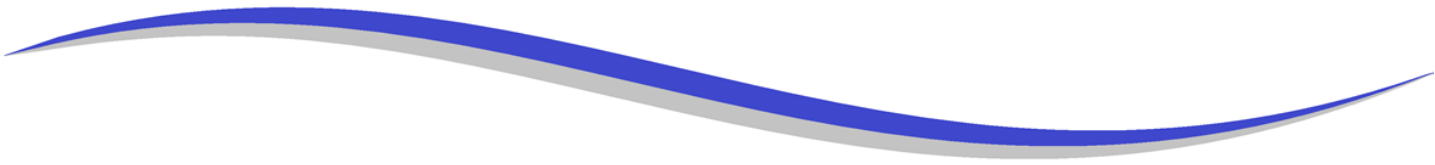
## Languages in the UK: Bridging the gap between the classroom and the community in language learning

On May 29 and 30, 2014, the seminar *Languages in the UK: Bridging the gap between the classroom and the community in language learning*, organised by BAAL member Dr. Cassie Smith-Christmas, was hosted at Lews Castle College, University of the Highlands and Islands. The seminar had three main objectives: 1) to discuss a core concern of language learning and teaching: how to facilitate community language use through classroom learning 2) to provide a forum for researchers and practitioners of English language-learning in the UK, community languages such as Cantonese and Urdu, and UK autochthonous minority languages such as Welsh and Scottish Gaelic to discuss the challenge of turning classroom learning into community language use and 3) to increase potential impact of academic work by providing an opportunity for dialogue between academics, practitioners, and community-led language initiatives. A total of nine papers addressing these objectives were delivered over the two days and an hour-long roundtable discussion was held at the close of the seminar. The seminar drew a total of sixteen participants from thirteen universities across the UK.

The seminar opened with Professor Rosamond Mitchell of the University of Southampton's keynote talk *Children's multilingual development in classroom and community: what SLA research can tell us*, which discussed the trajectory of SLA research from its initial focus on L2 acquisition by (mainly) previously-monolingual speakers to considering more complex multilingual learning settings and multilingual competencies. Rosamond's talk was followed by the paper session entitled "English Language Learning in the UK." The first paper in this session was delivered Dr. Rola Naeb, Northumbria University, Professor Martha Young-Scholten, Newcastle University, and Enas Filimban, a PhD student at Newcastle University. The paper was entitled *Developing individualised technology-enhanced language learning for low-literate ESOL learners* and discussed the contribution that software centred on grapheme-phoneme correspondences can make in facilitating language learning of low-literate second language learners. The second paper in the session was delivered by Katharine Swinney, a PhD student University of Sheffield, and was entitled *Community Collaborative research: How is English learned in the classroom used in the wider community?* Her paper detailed the results of a survey carried out in Burngreave, Sheffield, which asked international immigrants about their experiences of community-led English language learning initiatives.

The second paper session of the day was entitled "Welsh Language Learning in the UK." The first paper was delivered by Abigail Ruth Price, a PhD student at Bangor University. Her paper was entitled *Welsh abandonment beyond the classroom: exploring male adolescents' attitudes and behaviour towards Welsh*, which concluded by discussing the need for more grassroots media and arts initiatives so that adolescents view Welsh more as an informal mode of communication and not primarily as a school-based language. The second paper of the session, entitled *Teaching Welsh to immigrants: new pathways to citizenship in Wales*, was delivered by Gwennan Higham, a PhD student at Cardiff University. Gwennan's paper neatly addressed two of the three main strands of the seminar- ESOL and autochthonous minority language learning-by discussing the challenges faced by international immigrants in learning Welsh and the impact their ESOL tutors may have on their access to Welsh language-learning.





The final paper session of the first day was entitled “Gaelic Language Learning in the UK.” The session began with a presentation by Ingeborg Birnie, a Soillse PhD student at the University of Aberdeen. Inge’s paper was entitled *GME as a language intervention strategy – an analysis of the Highland Council area* and it discussed how a mathematical modeling approach could be used to determine how many new Gaelic speakers would be needed in the Highland Council area, one of the main areas of Gaelic speakers in Scotland, in order to sustain a bilingual population through means of Gaelic immersion education. The second paper in this session was presented by Dr. Timothy Currie Armstrong, a Soillse Research Fellow at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and was entitled *The Playground as a Bridge: Activists building consensus on the language policy and ethos of a new Gaelic immersion school*. Timothy’s paper discussed the struggle that parents had in establishing the Gaelic immersion school in Edinburgh and showed how ideological conflicts and language policy hierarchies unfold in the school environment. The final paper was presented by Nicola Carty, a Soillse PhD student at the University of Glasgow. Entitled *Engagement with Glasgow Gaelic community as a means of Gaelic Language Learning*, Nicola’s paper discussed the role that orientations toward ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ Gaelic varieties, as well as interviewees’ feeling of inclusion in the Glasgow Gaelic community, may impact Gaelic language fluency.

The second day of the seminar began with the second plenary delivered by Professor Wilson McLeod, University of Edinburgh. His talk entitled *Gaelic in Scotland: adult language learning and Gaelic language communities* was centred on a collaborative project funded by a Soillse Small Research Grant with BAAL members Dr. Bernadette O’Rourke, Heriott-Watt University and Stuart Dunmore, University of Edinburgh. Wilson’s talk discussed the different language learning trajectories of urban adult Gaelic learners and the challenges they face in using Gaelic in their communities. The final plenary talk was delivered by Professor Kenneth MacKinnon, University of Aberdeen, who acted as discussant in facilitating synthesis of the three main emergent themes from the seminar: 1) the challenges of overcoming the negative impacts of certain mainstream cultural discourses (e.g. negative attitudes towards immigrants, anti-minority language discourses) in terms of language learning 2) the differences between minoritised languages that have high levels of institutional and/or national support and those that do not and 3) the centrality of the relationship between language and identity and between language and integration. One of the further outcomes of this seminar is that there was interest in forming a ‘Minority Languages’ BAAL SIG group.

*Cassie Smith-Christmas*

*University of the Highlands and Islands*



## Book Reviews

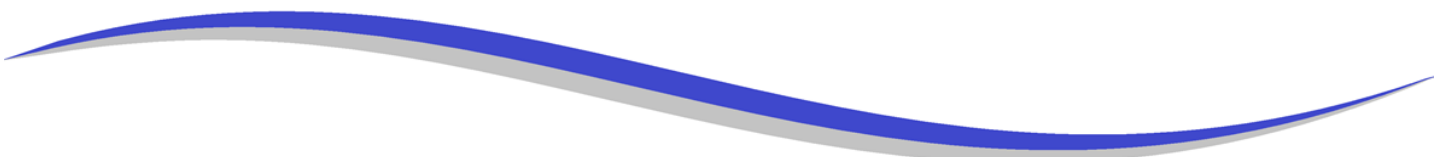
**Martin, J. R. & Rose, D. (2008). *Genre relations: Mapping culture*. London: Equinox. ISBN 978-1-845553-048-8. 289 pages.**

*Genre relations* provides an accessible introduction to the “Sydney School” approach to genre theory. This approach arose out of a desire to demystify the kinds of texts that were being written in primary and secondary or high schools. The subtitle of *Mapping culture* should be read as referring to the conceptualisation of genres as enacting “the social practices of a given culture” (Martin and Rose, 2008, p. 6). In some ways this book can be seen as a companion work to Nesi and Gardner (2012) who are similarly setting out to use genre as a way of demystifying writing, though in a Higher Education context.

Chapter one describes the theoretical framework and provides a useful introduction to systemic functional linguistics for those who are not familiar with Halliday’s work. In this view, texts are embedded in what is described as the context of situation and the context of situation is a realisation of the context of culture. Text and situations are complex so situations need to be described in terms of the three social functions of language, enacting speakers’ relationships known as the tenor, construing their experience known as the field, and weaving these together into coherent discourse known as the mode. At the level of text, these three functions are realised through the meta-functions of the interpersonal, the ideational and textual respectively. Within Martin and Rose’s version of systemic functional linguistics, genre is positioned at the level of culture.

Martin and Rose’s understanding of genre shares with New Rhetoric and ESP notions of genre the idea that genres are functional categorisations of texts (Hyon, 1996) but differentiates itself from those views in that their approach is social rather than cognitive, social semiotic rather than ethnographic and interventionist rather than critical.

The rest of the book describes four meta-genres or families of genres, stories, histories, reports/ explanations, and procedures/ procedural recounts. I will illustrate their approach using the example of stories. The starting point is Labov and Weletzky’s (1997) description of a narrative as consisting of an orientation, a complication, an evaluation and a resolution. However, based on previous research into narratives, Martin and Rose identify five kinds of stories which all start with a description of someone’s experience, recounts (where there is no response to the record of events) (Martin & Plum, 1997), anecdotes (where there is a positive or negative reaction), exempla (where there is some kind of judgement), observations (where there is an appreciation) (Jordens & Little, 2004), narratives (where there is an evaluation and a resolution) and accident news stories (text rather than time organised) (Iedema, 1997). These genres are generally exemplified by English language texts related to indigenous people who were removed from their families as children but there are also examples of newspaper articles and translated texts. Indeed Martin and Rose argue that several of these genres, and in particular narratives and exempla are common in other languages (Rose, 2005). The reliance on research carried out, often by one of the authors but reported elsewhere, allows for a detailed description of the families of genres and meta-genres that Martin and Rose have identified. This makes this work less useful than Nesi and Gardner (2012) to someone who would like to apply this framework to texts which may or may not fit in within one of the genres Martin and Rose identify, but it does provide detailed analyses of texts within each genre and points researchers towards the primary research, much of which could



usefully be better known.

This book will be useful to researchers of genre and also to students and teachers who are using genre analysis for academic or professional purposes.

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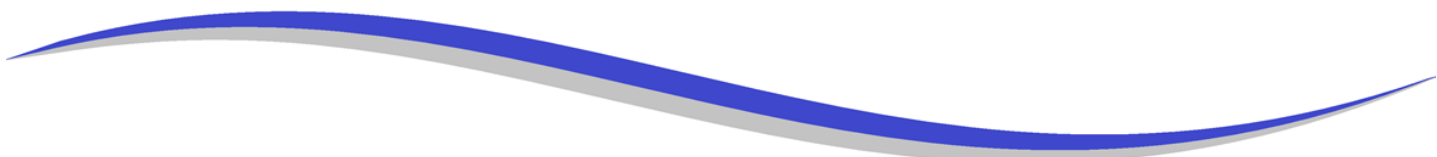
**Richard Badger, University of Leeds**

**Smith, J. J. (2009). *Old English: A linguistic introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-0-521-86677-4. 199 pages + xii**

Old English (OE) is the language of Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles. To the modern English speaker, trying to understand the spoken language is much like watching an episode of the TV series *The Killing* without the subtitles. Yet it preceded the Middle English of Chaucer and the Early Modern English of Shakespeare, and although Jeremy J. Smith emphasises the strangeness of Old English, he provides a "way in" to the language which is very appropriate for any applied linguist.

As Smith explains in the preface, this book bridges a gap between basic primers in Old English and classic texts organised on more traditional lines. He also sees that book as synthesising "long-established and more recent scholarship" (p. ix). As such, I found the approach very similar to that taken in "modern day" linguistics.

The book is designed for a wide audience, from undergraduate to postgraduates. The goal is for the reader to attain a good understanding of all aspects of the language, with the view of reading texts in the original. It could be used as a coursebook, or as a reference guide. The book is organised along lines familiar to applied linguists, including the structure, spelling and sounds, lexicon and grammar of OE.



Smith begins the book with a fascinating history of OE, “About Old English”. However, this chapter also includes an all-important description of the evidence for the language: what we know about OE, and how we know it. This is one of the strengths of this book: although the language is covered in detail, at no point does Smith overstate how much we know. For instance, when a pronunciation is contested or is specific to a particular variety of OE, readers are made aware of it without impeding understanding the main point.

In keeping with his goal of making the book accessible to all, the second chapter, “Describing Language”, reviews all the terminology necessary for the reader. This will be familiar to linguists of any description, such as allophone, phrase, and subject-verb agreement. Smith also introduces relevant concepts for OE, such as accusative and nominative case. Throughout, he does so through examples of both OE and Present-day English (PDE), making the chapter feel familiar despite the strangeness of OE.

In the third chapter, rather than beginning a detailed description of syntax or lexicography, Smith gives us our first taste of the language with OE and PDE versions of the Lord’s Prayer. He uses this short and familiar passage to demonstrate OE grammar and pronunciation. Two further short texts serve to illuminate other features. I found this approach very gratifying, as it immediately makes the abstract rules of the language lively and real.

In the next three chapters, Smith describes the spelling and sounds, lexicon and grammar (syntax and inflexional morphology) of the language. This is the “meat” of the book. Each chapter begins with a description of the feature in PDE. For example, in the chapter on inflexional morphology, we are shown how OE’s complex case system differs from PDE “pig, pig’s, pigs, pigs”. Smith gives examples from OE, but chooses them well, so that words are familiar: “hund” meaning “dog”. As most readers of this book will be interested in the broader historical perspective, Smith discusses how OE has evolved and compares it to other Germanic languages such as Gothic. Thus, as mentioned above, we have both the features of the language and their historical context. Considering that the above-mentioned section comprises two and a half pages of the book, this is an impressive achievement in brevity and readability.

Each chapter ends with exercises which could be used in the classroom as essay questions or for discussion. In addition, the book also includes a comprehensive appendix. This includes OE texts, such as extracts from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Beowulf and the Lindisfarne gospel. This is followed by a substantial OE-PDE glossary, a glossary of key terms and further passages and discussion questions. For someone new to OE, I certainly felt that everything I needed to get started in the language was present.

“Old English: A Linguistic Introduction” is both a comprehensive and impressively concise introduction to the earliest form of our language. By beginning with a comparative perspective with Present-day English, the familiar aspects of the language are emphasised, allowing us to focus on what is different and hard. The use of accessible examples of Old English throughout makes the book enjoyable to read. Finally, the historical and evidence-based standpoint gives the reader confidence that assertions made in the text are justified and at no point overgeneralised. Supplemented with longer readings and a full OE-PDE dictionary, this would make an ideal text for a course on OE or a reference guide for scholars of all levels of experience.

**John Bankier, Lancaster University**



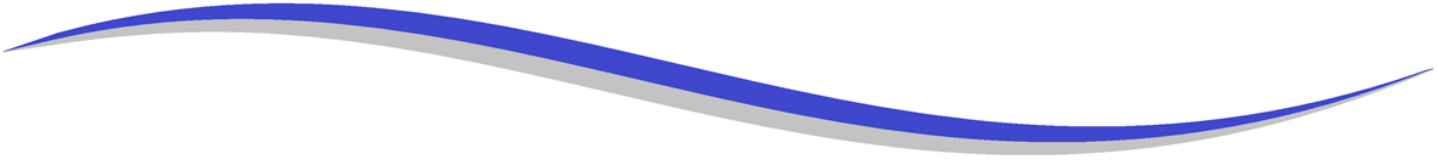
**Seedhouse, P., Walsh, S. & Jenks, C. (2010). *Conceptualising “learning” in applied linguistics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 978-0-230-23254-9. 291 pages.**

The BAAL/CUP seminar in Newcastle in 2008, on which the chapters in this book are based, must have been an unusual debate: the seminar brought together participants with very different approaches to SLA research to discuss what it means to ‘learn’ a second language. Following on the seminar, the overarching goal of this book is to put forth a conceptualisation of learning that disciplines as apparently divergent as cognitive psychology and social/socio-cultural might subscribe to (2010, p. 2). Seedhouse notes in his concluding chapter that researchers often confine their attendance to conferences with like-minded colleagues, and this has created a division in the field between those focused on cognitive aspects of SLA research and those focused on social aspects (p. 240). If the reader of this review is guilty as charged, then this volume offers an opportunity to find out how other researchers investigate SLA and to reexamine what ‘learning’ is.

The first three chapters offer frameworks to include different conceptualisations of learning. Vivian Cook argues that constructs of ‘second’ and ‘language’ in SLA need to be defined before discussing ‘learning’. He offers six definitions of language, labeling them Lang<sub>1</sub> through Lang<sub>6</sub>. For example, Lang<sub>3</sub> is a view of language as a set of sentences, while Lang<sub>4</sub> is a perspective of language as “a cultural product shared among a group” (p.11). Cook then turns to the concept of ‘second’ and urges a greater distinction be made among the various contexts in which languages are learned. In Chapter 3, Rod Ellis looks for a solution to the debate between the two main branches of SLA, cognitive and social. Two possible ways forward include epistemic relativism (i.e. consumers of theory should decide what is relevant to their context), and a composite theory (i.e. a sociocognitive theory of language learning). In Chapter 4, Diane Larsen-Freeman’s starting point is to define what is being learned before considering what learning is. She adapts Sfar’s (1998) acquisition and participation metaphor for language as ‘having language’ vs. ‘doing language’. She suggests that midpoint on this continuum between having and doing language is Complexity Theory, which views language as “an open dynamic system of language-using patterns” (p. 56).

The next two chapters offer cognitive perspectives of learning. Manfred Pienemann gives an overview of Processability Theory, which focuses on learners’ grammar development. In this view, language learning consists of two parts: “the development of language-processing procedures that permit new linguistic forms to be processed, and the discovery of new linguistics forms” (p. 69). Pienemann suggests that different theories of language learning require different conceptualisations of learning. Irina Elgort and Paul Nation clearly situate their position on L2 learning within the cognitive tradition, focusing on changes that take place cognitively and factors affecting those changes. Their chapter on second language vocabulary acquisition addresses representational knowledge (e.g. phonological, orthographic and semantic) and functional knowledge (receptive and productive). They advocate a return to deliberate learning strategies, which fell out of favour with the Communicative Approach, and supplementing these with meaning-focused learning opportunities. (See Nation’s ‘four strands’ approach, 2008).

The next several chapters look at learning from a social/sociocognitive perspective. Simona Pekarek Doehler shows what Conversation Analysis (CA) can add to our understanding of SLA, related to process and product. She points out that current work in this area is focusing on L2 development; future work could include longitudinal studies on interactional development. Continuing with the CA perspective, Seedhouse and Walsh look at how L2 learning relates to classroom interaction. They define learning as “a change in a socially-displayed cognitive state” (p. 127) and use examples from CA extracts to illustrate this. They suggest the CA approach of focusing on learning processes and



socially shared cognition could be usefully combined with cognitive approaches that focus on the individual. Jenks' chapter uses CA to investigate English used in online voice-based chat rooms. CA extracts illustrate how participants learn language through interaction. Jenks takes the strong view of CA-for-SLA, that is, abandoning cognitive approaches and assuming a social conceptualisation of language learning.

Amy Synder Ohta's chapter also takes a socio-cultural approach to learning, which she defines as "a process by which the L2 becomes a tool for the mind and for social interaction" (p. 163). She examines the learning process through learners' self-report to investigate the limits of social interaction, including their "inaudible voices": what is not observable in conversations. Constant Leung comments on current policy in England concerning English as an Additional Language (EAL). The policy draws on the work of Krashen and Cummins, and has far reaching consequences, as 40% of pupils in urban areas are EAL users. He highlights the danger of equating participation with understanding and learning and advocates an integrated view of engagement and cognition. In Chapter 12, Joachim Appel investigates the relationship between participation and foreign language learning: while participation can support learning, in some cases it can actually restrict it. His data suggests that instructed language learning could be seen as an example of social cognition: the knowledge of several people, including the teacher, contributes to the task solution.

Returning to the cognitive tradition, Florence Myles situates her research interest in the route of L2 development. Her chapter's aim is to draw a conceptual map of SLA, and in doing so, identify research questions that need to be addressed: to understand how second languages are learned, we need to document linguistic development and learners' processing capabilities; we also need to investigate the role of individual differences, input and interaction and social environment. In this light then, cognitive and sociocognitive approaches are not incompatible but focus on different aspects of language learning. In the final chapter, Seedhouse offers a summary of the various positions on learning taken: what is common in all the definitions is that change is involved. Because learning can be conceptualized differently, Seedhouse suggests a protocol for future studies: to specify eight points, including what is meant by 'language' and 'learning', and how learning is evaluated.

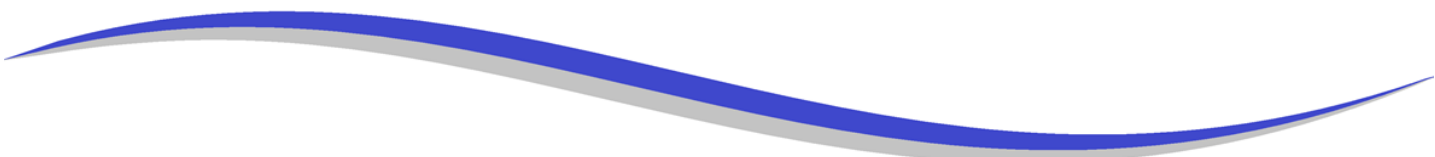
Before I came across this volume, I had read a recent study by Elgort (2011) in which she clearly defined what it meant for a vocabulary item to be 'acquired'. I remember remarking how useful this articulation was, as we often assume that our notion of a construct is shared or understood. Perhaps it was Elgort's participation in the BAAL/CUP seminar that prompted her to include the definition in her study. Certainly, these chapters invite the reader to reexamine deceptively 'straightforward' concepts like 'second', 'language' and 'learning'. In that respect, this collection offers stimulating reading for researchers, regardless of learning model.

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**Kimberly Klassen, Kansai Gaidai University and Cardiff University**





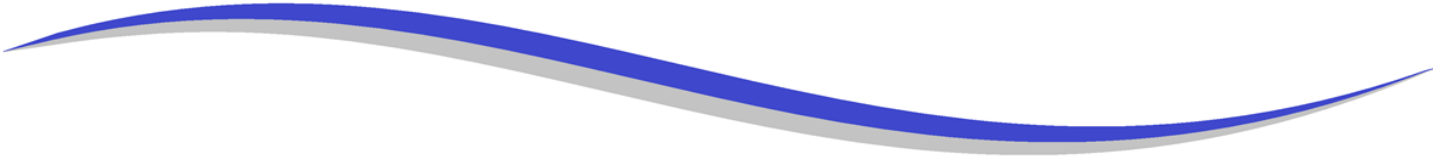
Ellis, R., Loewen, S., Elder, C., Erlam, R., Philp, J. & Reinders, H. (2009) *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. ISBN-13:978-84769-175-0 (hbk).

Before reading this book I thought I had a fair idea of the difference between implicit and explicit knowledge in language learning: to borrow the Rumsfeldian dictum, explicit is what you know you know, and implicit is what you don't know you know, right? Not so easy. This book reports on the Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden project and does a superb job in offering a state-of-the-art review of implicit and explicit L2 learning and methodological approaches to measure implicit and explicit knowledge. After Ellis' thorough theoretical introduction to the terminology and problems of this research field, the main part of the book is divided into three sections, representing aspects of the Marsden project: Part II discusses various methods of measuring implicit and explicit knowledge; Part III discusses different applications of this difference for SLA teaching and assessment; Part IV presents various applications of this difference to form-focused instruction (FFI); in Part V, Ellis provides a critical and self-critical summary and outlook.

In more detail: The Introduction discusses ways of interpreting the distinction between implicit and explicit, a distinction that has been around in SLA and cognitive psychology for some time. Both disciplines conceptualize the difference between implicit and explicit knowledge in terms of (a) demands on central attentional resources and (b) learners' ability to say what they have learned; however, the very distinction of two learning systems would be disputed by some. One major research difficulty lies in the fact that explicit knowledge is far easier to gather and observe; yet, many SLA theories, above all, *both* innatist and connectionist views, assume that most learning is implicit. What little we know little about the interface between declarative memory and procedural memory suggests anything but a 1-to-1 mapping.

Part II starts with Ellis' chapter (*Measuring implicit and explicit knowledge of a second language*) discussing the problems of measuring implicit knowledge. Evidence from neuroscience, cognitive science and experimental cognitive psychology point to a mismatch between explicit and implicit knowledge: as a learners' ability to correct an incorrect sentence in L2 is higher than their ability to explain the rules behind it, we understand that our glimpse of what students really know remains conservative. So the Marsden study set out to test the hypothesis that native speakers have less explicit knowledge and more implicit knowledge than L2 learners, using grammatical judgement tests; the hypothesis was indeed confirmed but remains valid for grammatical knowledge only. Erlam's chapter (*The elicited oral imitation test as a measure of implicit knowledge*) recounts her research using a working language memory task designed to test learners' ability to automatically self-correct. While such tasks might offer great scope for testing L2 proficiency, it remains debatable, however, that the highly formalized task design used here (with instruction inadvertently inviting access to explicit knowledge) really did test implicit knowledge. Loewen's chapter (*Grammaticality judgement tests and the measure of implicit and explicit L2 knowledge*) addresses the question what type of knowledge the grammaticality judgement tests frequently used in L2 really test, and why native and L2 speakers might differ in these. The findings not only confirm that native speakers outperform L2 speakers in a number of such tasks, but also suggest some cognitive processing differences in that L2 speakers, scoring worse under a time constraint, improved when under no time constraint, whereas the time-limited advantages in L1 speakers suggest they performed these tasks mostly relying on implicit knowledge. The following chapter by Elder (*Validating a test of metalinguistic knowledge*) scrutinises test batteries of metalinguistic knowledge, based on the hypotheses that explicit metalanguage relates to method of learning (formal/informal) and other forms of explicit knowledge, e.g. as evidenced in ungrammaticality tests. As these hypotheses were largely confirmed, these tests were confirmed as valid measures of underlying metalinguistic knowledge.





Part III (*Applying the measures of implicit and explicit L2 knowledge*) attempts to find real world applications, starting with Ellis' chapter (*Investigating learner difficulty in terms of implicit and explicit knowledge*) on the link between the notion of 'difficulty' of acquisition (in terms of frequency, salience, regularity) and processability. As results clearly indicate a link between 'difficulty' and implicitness or explicitness, Ellis argues that instruments testing implicit knowledge for very specific linguistic features could help to determine SLA learner stages accurately. Pursuing this line of argument, Elder and Ellis' chapter (*Implicit and explicit knowledge of an L2 and language proficiency*) demonstrates how implicit and explicit knowledge do not relate to standard proficiency measures in the same way. Philps (*Pathways to proficiency: learning experiences and attainment in implicit and explicit knowledge of English as a second language*) demonstrates the interrelatedness of different measures of implicit knowledge. Erlam, Philp & Elder's chapter (*Exploring the explicit knowledge of TESOL teacher trainees: implications for focus on form in the classroom*) find low levels of explicit grammatical knowledge in both native and non-native trainee English teachers.

Part IV contains four chapters on the effects of form-focused instruction on implicit or explicit knowledge, addressing different methods of focusing on form. Of the four methods (manipulating input, direct instruction, manipulating production option or feedback), only the first is implicit. Chapter 10 (Erlam, Loewen & Philp: *The roles of output-based and input-based instruction on the acquisition of L2 implicit and explicit knowledge*), compares input - and output-based ways of teaching the indefinite article, show that implicit FFI can indeed benefit both types of knowledge. The following chapter (Loewen, Erlam & Ellis: *The incidental acquisition of third person –s as implicit and explicit knowledge*), examining incidental learning through FFI, could not corroborate incidental learning through exposure to this grammatical form, while Chapter 12 (Reinders & Ellis: *The effects of two types of input on intake and the acquisition of implicit and explicit knowledge*) compares effects of instructional input (enriched vs enhanced input) in a number of grammatical tests. The findings of chapter 13 (Ellis, Loewen & Erlam: *Implicit and explicit feedback and the acquisition of L2 grammar*), comparing the effect of implicit and explicit corrective feedback, suggest advantages of explicit feedback. In the concluding chapter (*Retrospect and prospect*), Ellis upholds the two main hypotheses of this book, namely that the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge is fundamental in understanding L2 acquisition, and that this distinction can help designing better language testing instruments. While the Marsden project has made advances in understanding the difference between the two types of knowledge, we are far away yet from using this knowledge to advance language testing, and further still from everyday classroom teaching applications.

**Ursula Lanvers, Open University**



**Taylor, J. R. (2012). *The Mental Corpus: How Language is Represented in the Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 978-0199290819. 336 pages.**

Taylor's book represents an attempt to overthrow the generative model of language, which suggests that linguistic knowledge is made up of a store of words plus a set of grammatical rules, and replace it with a system based on the metaphor of a mental corpus – a store of words and constructions compiled and encoded through everyday exposure to language events. The book is engaging to read, particularly when Taylor sets about bringing together evidence to support his thesis; and its thorough arguments against generative ideas would also make it an interesting counterpoint to introductory texts in applied linguistics.

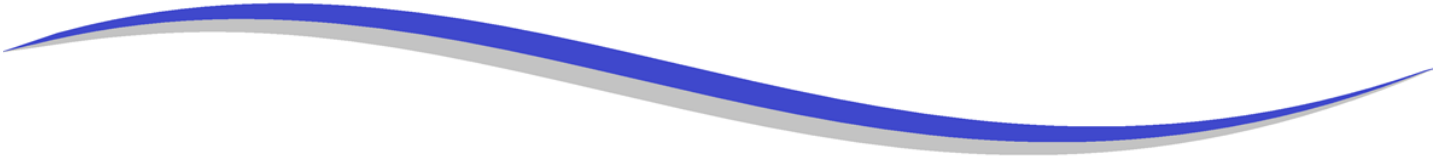
The book is (implicitly) divided into two parts. The first, ranging from chapters one to five, lays out Taylor's objections to the generative model. These focus on the generative model's inability to explain the ubiquity of idiomatic language found in everyday speech. Taylor argues that the generative accounts tend to explain idiomatic, non-compositional language usage as belonging to a finite list of exceptions to an otherwise comprehensive set of generative rules. In opposition to this idea, Taylor offers a wealth of examples suggesting that "a very great deal, perhaps even the totality, of what occurs in a language can be rightly said to be 'idiomatic'" (p. 282). As such, this type of language use needs to take a central place in linguistic theory, rather than being relegated to the periphery.

Taylor uses the word *much* as one example. He argues that the syntactic properties of this word, particularly when used in various idiomatic constructions, cannot be predicted from generative syntactic rules – it displays a far wider range of properties than any prototypical adjective or pronoun, for instance. There are two implications here: firstly, that words used in context contain vastly more idiosyncrasy than the generative model can explain; and secondly that any model of language development and use will need to be able to accommodate the large amount of data which people require in order to use words like *more* in idiomatic ways. The book here benefits greatly from Taylor's preference for real-world examples, which are largely derived from the British National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English; or from the Internet.

The second part of the book moves away slightly from the focus on the generative model to look at what a "mental corpus" metaphor might mean, and what evidence presently supports it. Taylor highlights the importance of constructions in his theory and advocates a frequency-based account of language acquisition in which structural priming through exposure to input acts as a learning mechanism (Bock & Griffin, 2000). Taylor then goes on to tackle the traditional generative stronghold of linguistic creativity, suggesting that blending theory is able to account for linguistic creativity without the need for recourse to generative rules.

A wide range of sources are drawn on in these chapters, from corpus evidence to garden-path sentences and priming studies. One of the strong points of this part of the book is the use of data from both historical corpora, such as the TIME corpus, and a number of languages and varieties of English. This diachronic perspective is helpful in particular when Taylor comes to discuss the relationship between innovation and language change.

Nonetheless, there is a sense at times that Taylor seems more interested in finding fresh ways to attack the generative position than in laying out a firm foundation for his own "mental corpus" view. An example of this is Chapter 10, on polysemy. Here, Taylor spends the vast majority of the chapter considering various positions on the topic, leaving only a short section at the end of the chapter advocating a context-dependent view of polysemy. As a result, there is at times a feeling that the book offers a series of tantalizing snapshots of a theory of the mental corpus, without ever



reaching the status of a coherent model. In Taylor's defence, he does suggest (p. 263) that he views the "mental corpus" as a metaphor rather than a model of language. Nevertheless, this lack of definition is a minor frustration throughout the second half of the book, and may lead readers to wonder whether it stems simply from the author's choice of content or, more seriously, from a general lack of evidence supporting his view.

Connected to this issue is Taylor's preference for making his views on any given topic clear only after discussing alternative approaches – meaning, for example, that readers must wait until the final chapter of the book for a succinct overview of what the mental corpus stands for. Students, in particular, might find this aspect of the book's design frustrating. Perhaps a more sympathetic approach might have been to have offered a summary of the strengths of Taylor's position before the detailed discussions found in the second half of the book.

In general, however, this book is a well-written, accessible, and often compelling account of a very exciting new view of language. Researchers and theoreticians in many areas of Applied Linguistics will find a wealth of ideas brought together in a stimulating and coherent (if occasionally under-specified) way, and students will benefit from the lively discussion and counterpoint Taylor offers of some of the key topics in this field.

**Peter Thwaites, Yeungnam University, Korea, and Cardiff University**

## Publications received

The following books have been received for review. If you would like to review one of these books, **or any other book of your interest**, please contact Dr Christopher J Hall, the Reviews Editor, Department of Languages and Linguistics, York St John University, Lord Mayor's Walk, York, YO31 7EX. Your review should be submitted as an email attachment in MS Word to [c.hall@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:c.hall@yorks.ac.uk) within two months of receiving the book.

Burke, M. (Ed.) (2014). *The Routledge handbook of stylistics*. London: Routledge.

Jenks, C. J. (2014). *Social interaction in second language chat rooms*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Merrison, A. J., Bloomer, A., Griffiths, P. & Hall, C. J. (2014). *Introducing language in use. A coursebook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Routledge.

Simpson, P. (2014). *Stylistics. A resource book for students*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Routledge.

Strauss, S. & Feiz, P. (2014). *Discourse analysis. Putting our worlds into words*. London: Routledge.

Truscott, J. (2015). *Consciousness and second language learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Whong, M. (2011). *Language teaching: Linguistic theory in practice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Woodrow, L. (2014). *Writing about quantitative research in applied linguistics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.



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The aims of the Association are to promote the study of language in use, to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and to provide a common forum for those engaged in the theoretical study of language and for those whose interest is the practical application of such work. The Association has over 750 members, and awards an annual Book Prize. Individual Membership is open to anyone qualified or active in applied linguistics.

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