BAAL News

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Autumn 2012
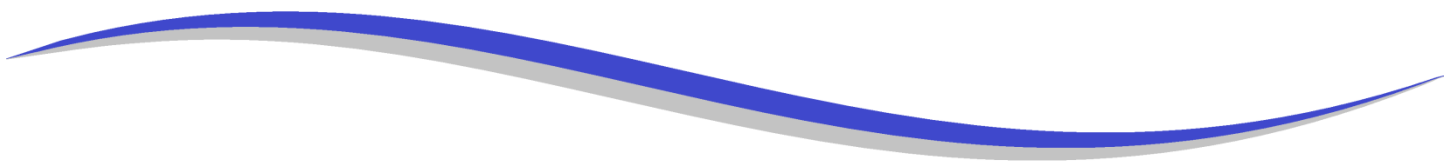
Editorial

Dear BAAL members,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the BAAL Executive Committee, who were elected at the last AGM in Southampton in September: Greg Myers takes over from Guy Cook as Chair of BAAL for the next three years. Fiona Willians joins the EC as Postgraduate Development and Liaison Coordinator, and Li Li and Steve Morris as Ordinary Members.

On behalf of the EC, a big thank you to those who have left the EC at the end of their term: Guy Cook as outgoing Chair, Majid Fatahipour (Postgraduate Development and Liaison) and Tess Fitzpatrick and Joan Cutting (ordinary members).

The current issue of the newsletter contains a report from the Language in Africa SIG event, four book reviews, and a call for applications for our Applying Linguistics Fund.

As before, the newsletter relies heavily on your contributions. In early 2013, we will launch a new initiative which will aim at increasing the number of contributions from BAAL members – more about this in the next issue.

With best wishes,

Sebastian Rasinger
Newsletter Editor

BAAL Executive Committee 2012/2013

Chair	Greg Myers	Web Editor	Martin Edwardes
Secretary	Caroline Coffin	Ordinary Member	David Evans
Treasurer	Michael Daller	Ordinary Member	Li Li
Media Coordinator	Tony Fisher	Ordinary Member	Steve Morris
Meetings Secretary	Dawn Knight	Ordinary Member	Hilary Nesi
Membership Secretary	Jo Angouri	Ordinary Member	Bernadette O'Rourke
Newsletter Editor	Sebastian Rasinger	Ordinary Member	Jeanine Treffers-Daller
Postgraduate Development & Liaison Coordinator Fiona Willans		Co-opted Member - CLIE Representative Esther Daborn	
Publications Secretary	Steve Walsh		
Seminars Coordinator	Caroline Tagg		
Special Interest Groups Coordinator Tilly Harrison			

For EC contact details, please see
http://www.baal.org.uk/committee.html

Richard Pemberton Prize 2012

The winners of this year's Richard Pemberton prize, awarded at the Annual Conference in Southampton for the best student presentation are:

Daniel Lam, University of Edinburgh. *'Hey, you've missed out a point!': Co-construction of interactional competence through contriving disagreement in peer group speaking assessment* .

Evita Willaert, Ghent University. *'Interaction for transfer': flexible approaches to multilingualism and their pedagogical implications for classroom interaction in linguistically diverse mainstream classes.*

BAAL Book Prize 2012

Graham Hall. 2011. *Exploring English Language Teaching: language in action.* Routledge.

'This is a textbook of substance, introducing a wide range of topics. Its major achievement is to make what could be a disparate set of topics cohere into a single argument, and to cover each area in just the right amount of detail to prepare the reader for further study. As a textbook in a popular field it covers some familiar ground, but its ability to draw disparate threads together makes it a tour de force. Some of the activities and exercises are also highly original and go beyond the standard 'relate this point to your own experience' type.' (BAAL Book Prize Reviewer)

Call for funding applications: *Applying Linguistics*

The BAAL Applying Linguistics Fund supports members by offering up to £10,000 for carrying out activities which link research and application. Applications are invited from full or student* members of BAAL. Funded activities can take place in the UK or overseas.

The fund will be available for a single activity or a series of connected activities that bring BAAL members (including students) together with research users (e.g. policy makers, teachers, companies, lawyers, police, community groups, health workers).

Examples of activities might include:
- workshops or other dialoguing events
- focus groups/interviews with research users
- collaborative preparation of materials for training or dissemination
- production and distribution of flyers
- attendance at research users' meetings to present findings

Activities will take place between June 2013 and May 2014.

Successful applicants will be required to produce a short report of 1000 words for the BAAL website and the BAAL conference on completion of the activities.

Criteria for selecting proposals:
1. Relevance of the activity to the user group.
2. Evidence of enthusiasm and intention to participate from the user group for the activity e.g. letter of support.

3. Quality of the activity proposed: achievable goals; realistic costing; nature of the activity.
4. Clear and realistic expectations of the nature of the link between research and application through detailed outputs and outcomes.

Funding amount: you may apply for the full amount of £10, 000 or for smaller amounts depending on the scale of your activity. In any one year there will be a fixed amount of £10,000 available.

Funding applications should not exceed four A4 pages and applicants must show how their application meets the criteria. The lead applicant should also enclose a summary CV of no more than one page.

Please note, applicants must specify any existing funds already received or applied for which relate to their application.

Deadline for applications:

31st March 2013
Please send applications to: Hilary Nesi
(h.nesi@coventry.ac.uk)

Decisions will be made by the Executive Committee at its meeting in May 2013.

The Social Life of Language and Language Development in Africa

The annual meeting of the Language in Africa SiG was held at SOAS on May 5th, 2012. There were 9 individual papers and a plenary talk by Jo Westbrook of the University of Sussex. Thirty-seven people attended.
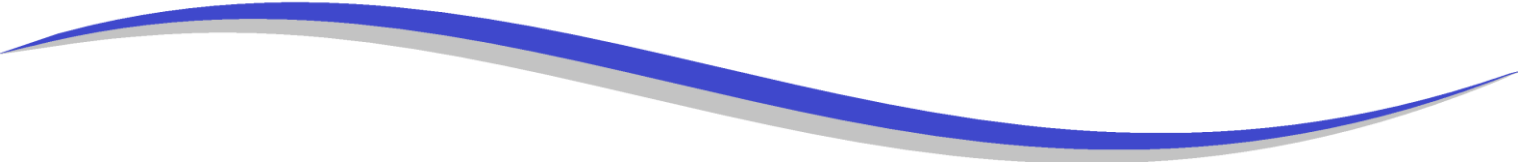
The theme of the conference was purposefully wide, in order to embrace social perspectives on language as well as the education and development themes that have tended to predominate. It is worth stressing that the areas of interest identified in LiASIG's revised Constitution include African sociolinguistics (broadly defined) as well as language in education in Africa.

In a highly interactive plenary, Jo Westbrook described the 'Teacher Preparation in Africa' Project, led by the Centre for International Education, University of Sussex, which focused on the teaching of reading and mathematics in six sub-Saharan countries. Against the background of a documented increase in illiteracy rates among school-age children, this study examined initial teacher education and followed newly qualified teachers in order to study the links between teacher-training and classroom practice. The main message was that to change teachers' thinking it is first necessary to change their practice. It was found that pre-service teacher training emphasises bottom-up decoding rather than teaching reading for meaning and the 'orchestration' of reading skills. Teachers need to develop certain skills, such as how to promote greater participatory learning as well as how to use code-switching as a resource in the classroom. A number of examples of good practice were observed, mainly from experienced teachers who use a wider range of approaches to teaching reading, encourage participation and

differentiate pupils. Teacher training programmes need fundamental revision so that tutors and trainee teachers understand the reading process and have a chance to reflect on their practice.

In this context, it is important to bear in mind that teachers' beliefs and practices in the classroom are constrained by official language-in-education policies. Jo Shoba described autobiographical interviews with teacher educators in Ghana, where official language policies have veered between support for MT and the present 'straight-for-English' policy in schools. Signs announce 'Speak English' or 'Vernacular forbidden', and this policy is often enforced via corporal punishment. Her study revealed conflicting attitudes among teacher-educators towards the use of MT in the classroom. Pragmatic use of codeswitching was favoured by some, but not by others, and the interviewees varied widely in terms of their personal investment in English or indigenous languages. Overall, a sense of disempowerment in relation to language policies was evident.

Developing an effective model of bilingual education and providing teachers with appropriate resources is by no means easy. Rosemary Wildsmith-Cromarty reported an experiment in Natal which found that providing Multilingual Resource Books for teachers in isiZulu did not result in better scores. Mere awareness of isiZulu scientific terminology (much of it previously unfamiliar to teachers) did not bring improvements in student performance. This revealed problems in the translation of concepts at a deep level, and of the need for agreed standard forms; teachers from other regions lacked proficiency in the language, or used alternative dialects. Furthermore, teachers'

lack of subject and pedagogical content knowledge in teaching maths and science were revealed, reinforcing the message that change of language of instruction from English to MTs is not in itself adequate for successful learning.
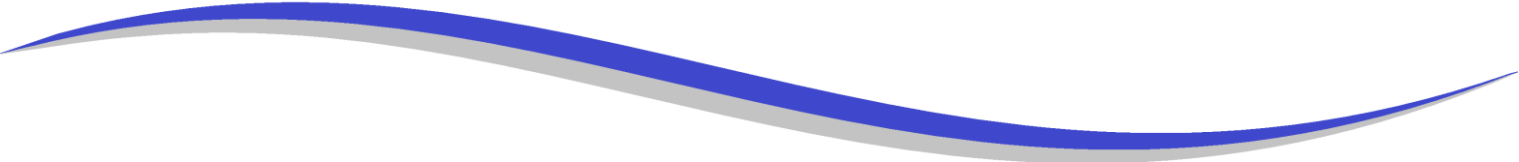
These problems were echoed in Janine Peters' study of the views of South African teachers. Her interviews with teachers revealed how classroom realities and inadequate teacher training together stand in the way of effective implementation of the official policy of multilingualism and biliteracy in MT and English. The policy of using English as medium of instruction from Grade 3 discriminates against speakers of African languages; these languages are limited to providing basic communication skills (BICS) rather than cognitive-academic language proficiency (CALP). In rural schools, there is a lack of materials in African languages. Additionally, teachers' lack of training in bilingual teaching methods means that the educational potential of code-switching is not realised. The outcome is depressingly low levels of literacy and school achievement.

Annette Islei presented similar findings from Uganda, and a research proposal. There, a major curriculum innovation for the first 3 years of Primary education has been introduced, and along with it the systematic use of local languages during the day, and English only in the English lesson. The innovation has suffered from lack of reading materials and limited teacher training. Schools have to negotiate parents' expectations, and government requirements, as well as lack of resources, so developments in teacher training have to take a range of constraints into account. From initial lesson observations, she queried some of the design features of the new Thematic curriculum, especially the exclusive immersion technique in teaching English, and their effect on experienced teachers' methods. The new curriculum needs support – and one means is through developing university 'upgrading' courses for in-service teachers, using action research methods.

English-medium textbooks produced in the US, ill-adapted to African contexts, are generally ineffective in promoting literacy in Africa. Canadian researchers Marlene Asselin and Ray Doiron reported on a Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE) initiative in Ethiopia which has resulted in establishing reading rooms in rural communities and in the production of over 300 book titles in local languages. Through the involvement of Regional Education Bureaus, local people are trained in authoring, illustrating and editing. The books include culturally relevant stories, information books, and supplementary curriculum texts in maths, science and English. She noted that the scheme would benefit if the books were also used in teacher education, and librarians received training; however, they are a highly valued resource in the rural communities, and are used by teachers and students to support the Ethiopian primary school curriculum, which is delivered in a wide range of regional languages.

Barbara Graham also presented a positive experience in the development of reading materials in local languages. She has been involved in an initiative spearheaded by the Pokomo community in the Tana Delta area of Kenya to provide books in their language and additional teacher training to support their use. Although the local languages should be used for the first three years of primary education, local constraints (mixed student intake, parents' attitudes, and examinations in English), and the dominant positions of Kiswahili and English, heavily limit their use. An experimental reading and writing club produced insights into the ways in which the three languages, Pokomo, Kiswahili and English, can be used to develop children's reading and writing skills in a multilingual context, and the potential for introducing these methods into pupils' regular classes.

In his talk, Eddie Williams addressed wider themes of education and development, noting that although governments make claims for the instrumental role of English in promoting unification and economic development, English at the same time increases social divides helps maintain elite groups. He pointed to the wide lack of the required English proficiency as a factor limiting the impact of education on 'human needs development', which includes issues like control of family size and custody of the environment. In contrast, the creative semiotic appropriation of English is evident in linguistic landscapes, for example in signs ('Harrods of Lumumbashi') or classroom graffiti ("I am braindevil").

The theme of linguistic landscapes was also addressed by Lutz Marten, who drew attention to the increased presence of African languages in media, music, film and education in the 21st century, against the background of domination by ex-colonial languages. Variation in language ecologies shapes patterns of complementarity in the creation of public messages. African languages are used to convey the main message in multilingual advertising and commercial texts in countries like Tanzania, South Africa, or Ethiopia, with English present as 'fragments'. In contrast, in Zambia, fragments of African languages are used to give a local cultural identity and symbolic value to more global messages presented in English.

The complementary use of African languages and English or French was the theme of an experimental linguistic study presented by Elvis Yevudey. The international research project 'Creoles at Birth?' is led by Margot van den Berg at the University of Nijmegen, Netherlands, in collaboration with Evershed Amuzu, University of Ghana, and Komlan Essizewa, Universite de Lome.   Comparison of bilingual performance using Akan and Gbe languages and English/French sheds light on structural and functional aspects of linguistic

borrowing. Interesting comparisons can be made between the development of creoles with African substrates, such as in the Surinamese language Sranan Tongo, with superstrate inputs from English and Dutch.

Feedback on the day was very positive. There was a feeling among some that for future meetings, discussion and reflection through workshop groups would be preferable to offering a fairly dense series of presentations. Clearly, for this to happen, the organisers need to plan ahead, and it also would be helpful if abstracts are received somewhat earlier.

Four points for readers of this report: we are keen to give a platform for reports of 'research in progress'; we encourage post-graduate student presentations; we are interested in submissions on sociolinguistic and sociocultural topics with an African theme; and presenters from Africa are particularly welcome. Please do spread the word around the institutions in the UK and Africa who you are connected with – and ask them to mail annetteislei@gmail.com.   You may also contact Annette if you would like to join the SIG. Current membership stands at 23 members from BAAL.

Through our website http:// liasig.wordpress.com we are also developing a network with academics in Africa, and post-graduate students returning to Africa from the UK, in order to support research collaborations.

Ross Graham
Convenor – LiASIG

Book Reviews

Cognition, a broader term for referring to mental
processes, is considered to be a crucial area of
interest in a number of disciplines such as
psychology, education, linguistics, psychiatry and
anthropology. The increasing interest in the nature
of those processes is evident in the number of
publications that appear in the disciplines listed
above. From a linguistic perspective, although
research first started in the 1970s, there is renewed
interest due to recent developments as evident in
the last issue of the International Association of
Applied Linguistics (AILA) review volume 23,
entitled *Applied Cognitive Linguistics in Second
Language Learning and Teaching* which focused on
the interplay of cognition, linguistics and second
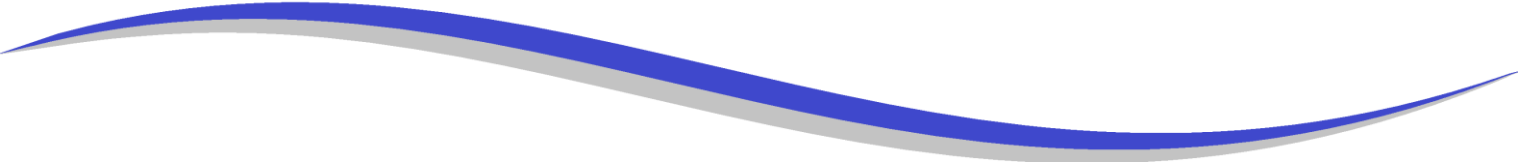language learning and teaching.

Cognition can be dealt with from different
perspectives for each discipline. The book reviewed
here focuses on cognition with respect to the
demanding and complex task of writing. The
volume is the 20th addition to the series *Studies in
Writing*, the international book series on written
production. It is edited by Torrance, Van Waes and
Galbraith all of which have produced considerable
research on both cognition and writing. The book
consists of 21 chapters which are broken down into
an introduction and three sections.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the book by the
editors. Unlike what some readers might have
expected, there is no general introduction to
cognition. Rather, it is very succinct and outlines the
cognitive models of writing processes from the
early 1970s to date. Since cognition and writing are
not exemplified in detail, readers must already have
some background knowledge in the topic.

Section 1 is entitled *Interactions among Writing
Processes* and is the longest section as it contains
nine chapters. Chapter 2 discusses the use of an Eye
and Pen device used for the synchronous recording
of writing and eye activity in order to study parallel
processes and pausing. In Chapter 3 the authors use
time measurements in order to examine language
production at the word and sentence level. Chapter
4 examines the cognitive cost of motor execution
on the production of written texts. The study
presented in Chapter 5 uses keystroke logging to
shed light on the encoding problems of students
with dyslexia. Chapter 6 is on Geographical
Information Systems (GIS) which, according to the
authors, can be used as an analytical tool for
various disciplines as they facilitate the
examination, representation and analysis of data.
Chapter 7 investigates how verbal and visual
working memory affects the production of writing
tasks by means of placing concurrent cognitive
loads. In Chapter 8, the author assesses the
cognitive effort made by students with different
working memory spans when note-taking. In
Chapter 9 the authors claim to offer two ways in
which more dynamic models of writing can be
investigated compared to previous research as well
as a more fine-grained categorisation of generating
activities. Finally, Chapter 10 investigates the
writing processes of skilled bilingual writers in both
their L1 and L2 so as to draw a comparison.

Section 2 is on the *Effects of Writing on Cognition*
and consists of 6 chapters. What is special about
this section is that it offers an interesting twist on
the subject as most research studies tend to focus
on how cognition affects writing rather than the
opposite. The study in Chapter 11 deals with the
verbal recall of knowledge and whether speaking

and writing are equivalent with respect to the diagnosis of knowledge. The study examines everyday situations out of the confines of the laboratory. In Chapter 12 the author tested kindergarten children to investigate whether writing affects phonological awareness in Spanish. In Chapter 13, the authors claim that in order to examine effectively the relationships among development, writing, and learning, it is necessary to compare novice and experienced writers within one single study. Therefore, they tested those two groups so as to investigate the use of writing as a learning tool and how this writing ability is affected by the participants' developing skills. In Chapter 14 the author presents the Inventory of Processes in College Composition, developed based on psychometric processes, as well as an approaches-to-writing model. Chapter 15 involves a study of the intertextual processing strategies underlying discourse synthesis in an authentic academic context. The analysis of the data yielded a comprehensive taxonomy of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The final chapter of this section researched the cognitive processes involved in preformulations in press releases. The author combined pause analysis with both concurrent and retrospective protocols.

Section 3 is the shortest section. It includes 5 chapters on *Writing Media.* The first three chapters present research on speech recognition software. In Chapter 20, a computer-based assessment system, CEKOS, is used to examine the effects of different modes of instruction on the process of hypertext writing and the resulting knowledge. The final chapter of the volume reports on a web-based system, Col·laboració, which supports collaborative writing activities online by providing co-authors with different mechanisms.
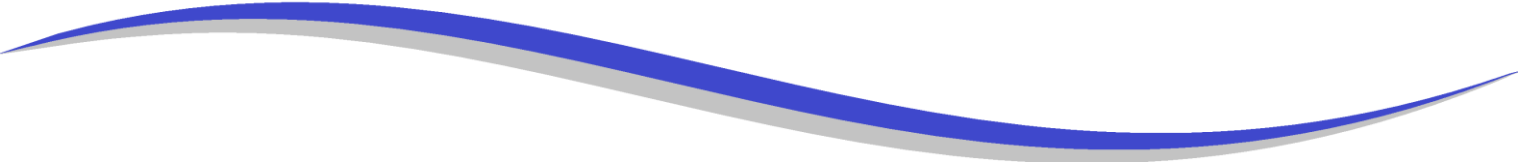
Overall, this book offers an extensive coverage of research on cognition and writing. Its main strength lies in some characteristics shared by the majority of studies included in this volume. First, most studies combine effective classic research methods such as concurrent and retrospective protocols with modern software for data collection and analysis. Such software and programs include, for instance, Scriptlog, CLAN, JEdit, Scriptcell etc. In addition, a very interesting feature was cross-referencing to other studies within the same volume. This strong rapport among studies helped authors make a strong case and reinforce cohesion and coherence across the three sections. Readers will also be surprised by the wide range of designs in the studies (from simple case studies to large scale projects) as well as the wide spectrum of participants including kindergarten children, elementary school children, university students and adult professional writers. The duration of the studies is also impressive with a study (chapter 19) covering 30 years of technology use. Special value also lies in the fact that all studies identify research gaps and offer directions for future research.

Considering the strengths of this book I believe that it is essential reading for people across a number of disciplines dealing with cognition and writing such as linguistics, psychology and education. Yet, this book should not be considered as an introduction to cognition and writing. As it draws on many disciplines, the non-specialist reader who does not have a sound background on the topic might struggle with most chapters so it would be preferable to start with more introductory books on cognition/writing as this is definitely a volume of advanced research. All in all, I would highly recommend this book to people working in related disciplines.

Erifili Roubou
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

The volume represents a collection of papers presented at a BAAL/CUP seminar ('Theoretical and methodological approaches to gender and language study') that took place in November 2005 at the University of Birmingham, UK. As two of the editors (Sunderland and Litosseliti) explain in the introductory chapter, the organising principle of the volume is the research *approach*, which 'spans theory and research practice' (p. 1). The editors distance themselves from the practice of choosing a research approach after deciding on a topic of interest, research questions and type of data desired. This, they explain, would regard approach as a *tool*. Their preference is rather to emphasise the *methodological* and *conceptual* values of an approach, with its theoretical and epistemological underpinnings.

The book is organised accordingly, each section beginning with a chapter that lays the foundations of an approach which is then illustrated by subsequent chapters. The extent to which this is the case is left for the reader to decide, but some of the sections (clearly, 'Queer Theory'; perhaps even 'Sociolinguistics and Ethnography' or 'Corpus Linguistics') appear to disregard the principle of selecting an approach on the basis of its conceptual and methodological underpinnings rather than considering it a research tool. There is also clear overlap between the sections, due to the use of multiple methods in many of the illustrative studies.
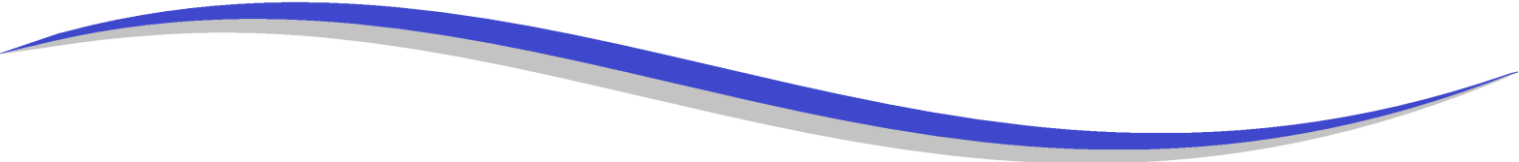
A brief summary of the seven sections is presented below.

I. Sociolinguistics and ethnography (4 chapters). In the introductory chapter, Joan Swann and Janet Maybin explain that sociolinguistic research can take both quantitative and qualitative approaches, but in recent years there has been a move towards more local explorations of language of gender, with less scope for generalisations. Anna Kristina Hultgren then argues in favour of correlational sociolinguistics (using 'sex' as a binary variable in statistics) and illustrates the approach with data from call centres in the UK and Denmark. In her reflexive account of an ethnographic sociolinguistic study, Louise Mullany then discusses the quandaries of conducting research that has practical significance for participants. She describes the complex negotiations of access and methodology that she needed to perform in order to study managerial discourse in two professional organisations. Next, Pia Pichler emphasises the importance of the participants' perspective of their own 'locatedness in sociocultural space' (p. 56), and combines spontaneous conversation data with ethnographic-style interviews in her study of gender, ethnicity and religion with a small group of teenage British Bangladeshi girls.

II. Corpus linguistics (3 chapters). After Paul Baker presents an overview of previous corpus linguistics research with its strengths and weaknesses, illustrated with a frequently cited lexical example, Kate Harrington depicts some of the dangers of quantitative corpus methodologies, which can perpetuate stereotypes contrary to reality. The warning is supported by an analysis of naturally occurring informal conversations. In chapter 8, Rosa M. Jiménez Catalán and Julieta Ojeda Alba present statistical data to suggest girls in a Spanish primary school have a more varied EFL vocabulary and are more prolific in writing than boys.

III. Conversation analysis (2 chapters). Celia Kitzinger explores the value of conversation analysis for feminist research and, generally, for any research concerned with power and oppression, exemplifying her approach through a study of

conversational interruption and overlaps. In the next chapter, Elizabeth Stokoe demonstrates the utility of studying gender categories in interaction within a conversation analytic and ethnomethodological approach.
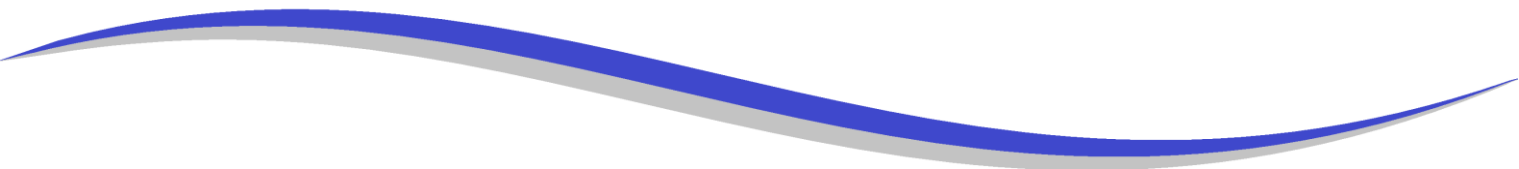
IV. Discursive psychology (2 chapters). Having introduced the field of discursive psychology and contrasted it to conversation analysis, Nigel Edley and Margaret Wetherell argue in favour of a research approach that can illuminate how people construct gender categories and are constructed by them as gendered beings. They use examples from an older study of men and masculinity (interviews with the sixth form of a UK boys' school conducted in the 1990s). In chapter 12, Laurel D. Kamada combines discursive psychology with feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis in order to explore the ways in which six Japanese-Caucasian girls construct and combine their multi-ethnic gendered identities in spontaneous conversation.

V. Critical discourse analysis (3 chapters). Ruth Wodak examines controversial issues in feminist critical discourse analysis – in particular isolating gender as a variable and defining/ studying context. Following her illustrative discussion of migrant identity, she argues that gender ought to be contextualised and regarded in relation to a variety of factors. Veronika Koller then makes the case for cognitive critical discourse analysis, which combines critical discourse analysis with cognitive semantics, in particular metaphor. She exemplifies her approach by examining the conceptualisation of women executives in business magazines and lesbian magazines. In chapter 15, Konstantia Kosetzi argues in favour of performing critical discourse analysis on fictional works which – she explains – often offer a good representation of real discourse. Her examples are taken from a Greek fictional TV series about financially independent and sexually liberated women in search of Mr Right.

VI. Feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis (2 chapters). The approach is introduced by Judith Baxter, whose declared aims in writing the chapter are: to explain and popularise the approach; to challenge more established approaches to discourse analysis; and to introduce ground-breaking research on FPDA presented by five speakers at the BALL/CUP seminar on which the volume is based. In the following chapter, Harold Andrés Castañeda-Peña illustrates the approach by analysing denotation and connotation in an EFL lesson videotaped in Colombian kindergarten.

VII. Queer theory (2 chapters). In her introduction, Helen Sauntson explains that queer theories do not have a rigorous methodology, which is why their usefulness for systematic language and gender analysis 'may initially seem questionable' (p. 278). The solution she proposes is to use Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) 'tactics of intersubjectivity' framework, which she illustrates by exploring an online corpus of 'coming out' stories. The same framework is used by William L. Leap, who reinterprets extracts from one of his earlier publications. Commenting on the story of an 18-year-old Black African man interviewed by a female friend about his first visit to a gay club in 1995, Leap suggests that the man would probably never tell his story in similar terms to another interviewer or at a later point in time. This perspective – regarding gender as constantly in formation – is a merit attributed by Leap to queer theory.

While clear efforts were made to maintain cohesion, the volume has an air of partisan tension, some authors (e.g., Kitzinger) presenting their approach as *the* solution to some of the criticisms levelled at language and gender research, while others use the opportunity to settle older critical disputes (e.g., Edley & Wetherell; Leap). Baxter declares that one of the main aims of her chapter is 'to contest the authority of the more established theoretical and methodological approaches

represented in this collection' (p. 243). The reader will certainly appreciate the variety of approaches in the book, but one does wonder whether a more positive attitude to pluralism wouldn't have served the volume better, especially that most contributors emphasise the need for language and gender research to move beyond a focus on difference.

Despite small areas of contention, however, Harrington et al. (2008) will clearly be of use to researchers, academics and postgraduate students with an interest in language and gender.

Reference:

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2004). Theorizing identity in language and sexuality research. *Language in Society*, *33*(04), 469-515. doi: 10.1017/S0047404504334020

Florentina Taylor
University of York

Crystal, D. (2011), *Internet Linguistics*. **Oxon: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-60271-6 (pb). 192 pages. £16.99**
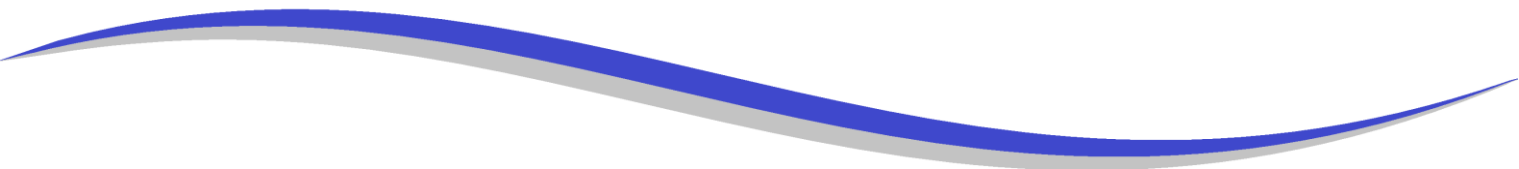
On reading *Internet Linguistics*, two key questions emerge, feeding into each other in a continual loop. Firstly, what does an analysis of Internet usage tell us about language? And secondly, how can linguistic research help us to develop a more efficient, reliable and safer Internet?

Unlike some of Crystal's other publications, there is no clear central tenet in this book. In his 2006 work *The Fight for English*, for example, his thesis -that for hundreds of years the language has changed and evolved, despite some very vocal opposition- is maintained throughout. In *Internet Linguistics*, by contrast, the remit is so broad -encompassing advertising, search engines, online chat, Twitter, foreign languages, accessibility and even the potential for intercepting paedophiles- that it is not surprising that a coherent central thesis is missing. In place of this is a repeated motif: that there are huge gaps in our understanding of language in relation to the Internet, and a lot more research is necessary. What this book attempts to do is to highlight those areas which are ripe for further investigation.

Some parts are highly controversial, but persuasively argued. Early on, Crystal maintains that abbreviations have been in use for hundreds of years without ill effects on literacy standards, and therefore people who worry about schoolchildren using text-message language in their essays are fretting unnecessarily. There are surprises, too: later on he shows that Chinese is fast catching up with English as the top Internet language (the former's share of Internet users in 2010 was 22.6%; the latter's was 27.5%).

A particularly strong area is Crystal's discussion of the limits of search engines in their current state. Although linguists will be well aware that using a search engine is a language skill rather than a technical one -involving as it does the judicious selection of key words- even the most carefully refined and filtered search can be a frustrating and sometimes fruitless experience owing to the program's inadequate grasp of polysemy and nuances of meaning (for example *charge* can be associated with cost, battle, electricity or crime). Crystal argues that linguists have a vital role in developing a more systematic lexical taxonomy: one which will enable search engines to list results with a stronger sense of relevance. This will also have positive implications for online advertising: when there is an over-dependence on isolated key words, devoid of context, the result can be ad placements which are grotesquely inappropriate. Crystal cites

several examples, such as an advert for cheap gas next to a site about Auschwitz, or one for kitchen knives next to a report concerning a stabbing.

However, this insistence that we should take into account context, polysemy and ambiguity in meaning is later contradicted to some extent. In a fascinating chapter about how forensic linguistics can be used to identify the potential grooming of minors by predatory adults, Crystal demonstrates what he calls a "lexical scale of suggestiveness" for online chat (Level 1 words are the most innocent, Level 5 the most suggestive), with each utterance contributing to a cumulative score. An inbuilt program would issue the child with a warning if it perceived the conversation as heading in a sinister direction. Intriguing and potentially valuable as this is, however, I have several reservations.

Firstly, the individual words which Crystal lists as examples on his scale are isolated and without context. For example, the word *bedroom*, which he flags up as a fairly suggestive Level 4 word, could be innocently used by a child or teenager talking about their décor, and could feasibly come up in several utterances. Therefore, the classification of the words cannot be an exact science: *meeting* is given a Level 5 ranking but *legs* is only Level 2, yet one can imagine contexts whereby the latter might be used far more suggestively than the former. Secondly, he seems to place too much faith in the sophistication of the software to identify which conversations are risky, but as he himself recognizes in his chapter on search engines, computer programs lack the linguistic subtlety of a human. To be blunt, could a program really be trusted to carry out the child protection job effectively? Thirdly, there are privacy issues at stake here: innocent conversations could potentially be monitored and flagged up.

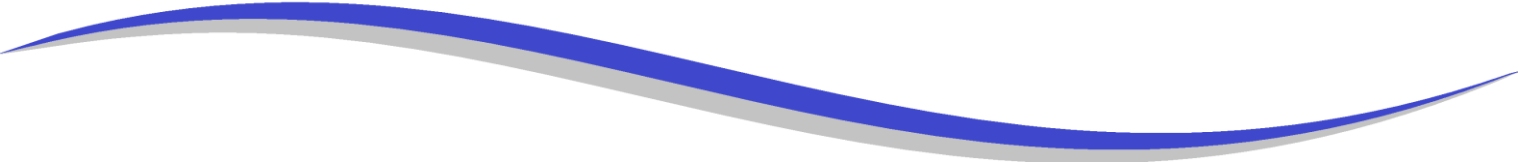By no means should these apparent contradictions and complications be considered a fatal weakness:

on the contrary, they lend support to Crystal's point that there is so much more scope for research. It is true that in places he tends towards the descriptive rather than the analytical - particularly early on in the book, when his examination of features such as instant messaging dialogues does not present any insights which are particularly striking. It would have been fascinating, for example, to read an analysis of why comment threads on channels such as YouTube so often descend into personal abuse, and of the psychological impact that this kind of language has on its readers. What about the difference between a traditional business letter and an email: to what extent has there been a standardisation of norms and conventions in the latter, and what has been the effect on both sender and recipient? And has Internet communication led to a greater level of informality in general – and if so, how has this affected our social interaction and notions of hierarchy?

Although, disappointingly, none of the above are examined in the book, Crystal does at least pave the way for future research by highlighting the rich and largely unexplored linguistic world that the Internet throws up. *Internet Linguistics* is clearly an academic publication, targeted at language and media students rather than a general readership. Nevertheless, it is delivered in the writer's trademark engaging and accessible style and, while it does not eschew jargon totally, it is judicious in its use of esoteric language. I would certainly recommend this book as a starting point for anyone who plans to investigate new trends in language, multimodality and the influence and possibilities of the new media.

Karen Harris
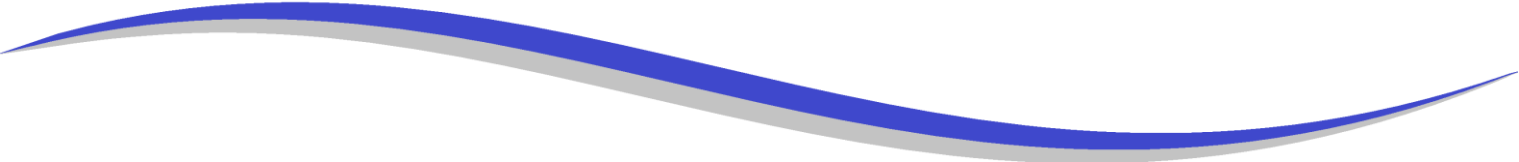East Finchley School of English, London

Rogerson-Revell, P. 2011. *English phonology and pronunciation teaching.* London: Continuum. ISBN: 978-0826443564, Hardcover: 368 pages, £65.00, Paperback, £19.99.

The renewed focus on second language (L2) pronunciation instruction after a period of relative neglect has largely arisen from a growing acknowledgment among applied linguists and practitioners of L2 teachers' responsibility to help their learners be intelligible to their interlocutors, since struggling to be understood can be both personally and professionally detrimental to L2 learners. This shift has brought with it the concomitant need to train a new generation of teachers in L2 phonetics/phonology to address students' communication needs, although pronunciation has yet to establish itself as a staple of teacher training programs. In particular, teachers need guidance on which L2 pronunciation features to prioritise in instruction and how to integrate a focus on pronunciation with other skills in the communicative classroom. Rogerson-Revell's volume is a welcome contribution in that it aims to address these issues to a target audience of L2 teachers while exposing them to basic principles of English phonetics and phonology. Her work is situated in the global reality of "English as an International Language" (EIL) and is written primarily with this context in mind (i.e., learners' predominantly interacting with other L2 speakers as opposed to with native English speakers). No prior knowledge of phonetics and phonology in the target readership is assumed. Thus, the book is marketed as an introductory text for EFL teachers or as reference material for teachers or teacher trainers.

The book is divided into fifteen chapters and additionally consists of audio recordings on the publisher's website, a short bibliography of L2 pronunciation resources (websites, CD-ROMs, and textbooks), an answer key to exercises, a glossary of mostly phonetic terms, and an index. The first two chapters broadly address the role of pronunciation in L2 teaching and learning, instructional goals and models, variables that affect phonological attainment, and L2 pronunciation acquisition processes. Research evidence that pronunciation errors often lead to communication breakdowns forms the basis of the author's argument for why the instruction of pronunciation is important in our increasingly globalised world. Arguably, readers may have benefited from a historical overview of L2 pronunciation instruction at the outset of the book (rather than in Chapter 14) to help situate them in key issues, including the need to justify a focus on pronunciation in the first place. The next four chapters are dedicated to segmental aspects of pronunciation, with numerous figures illustrating the place of articulation or tongue position for individual sounds. Phonetic and phonemic transcriptions are briefly covered in the last of these chapters (Chapter 6). However, because phonemic symbols are used as early as Chapter 3 to illustrate physiological mechanisms, the explanation regarding transcriptions may come too late for a reader who is unschooled in this area. Similarly, the author does not elucidate that vowel chart categories are an approximation of the vocal tract, which may not be obvious to a non-pronunciation expert. Overall, the organization of the content, including only clarifying terms or concepts after they have already been alluded to several chapters earlier (e.g., functional load), works against the author's claim that the book constitutes a systematic introduction to L2 phonology, although the glossary is a useful resource for the most technical concepts.

Chapter 7 continues with an overview of syllables and syllable-structure errors and is punctuated with "Phonology Review 1" in Chapter 8, which consists of comprehension checks based on key concepts and transcription practice. This is followed by treatment of prosodic aspects of speech in the next

three chapters (word stress, features of connected speech, and intonation), which are the subject of "Phonology Review 2." Finally, the last three chapters collectively focus on pronunciation activity types for use in the classroom, diagnosing pronunciation problem areas to target learners' needs, and developing instructional targets. The book concludes with a description of transfer errors for segmental and prosodic phenomena for 11 world languages based on contrastive analysis, including complete vowel and consonant inventories. This resource on crosslinguistic influence is useful for L2 teachers conducting needs analyses, although it is less comprehensive than Swan and Smith's (2001) book on learner interlanguage in terms of language coverage.

Rogerson-Revell's volume constitutes an important effort to enhance L2 teachers' awareness of key issues in L2 pronunciation and uses British rather than American varieties of English (mostly Received Pronunciation) as the point of reference. However, there are some major limitations. Perhaps the most striking is that the references are largely dated and the authors' explanations often do not take stock of recent developments in L2 pronunciation research and teaching. For example, whereas four out of 18 pronunciation textbooks that the author provides in a list of further resources were published before 1980, only three were published after the turn of the century, the latest of which was in 2005. A similar picture emerges with respect to research citations. For example, the author draws heavily on Jenkins' (2002) Lingua Franca Core as the basis for her suggestions of which pronunciation features L2 teachers in EIL settings should target, although this "pronunciation syllabus" has been vastly underresearched. Thus, using Jenkins' work as the basis for setting instructional priorities without adequately drawing on the growing body of L2 pronunciation research on the features that most contribute to intelligibility (e.g., Field, 2005) places too much emphasis on inadequately substantiated claims and does little to bridge the gap between research findings and pedagogical practice.

Another limitation is that the author is not authoritative in guiding teachers about crucial points, including that intelligibility is the essential baseline goal of L2 pronunciation instruction, regardless of whether the learner's primary goal is to sound like a native speaker, "to increase *intelligibility*, to increase *fluency* or to increase *impact*" (make an impression on the audience; Rogerson-Revell, p. 246, original emphasis). Without a requisite level of intelligibility, all other learner aspirations fall flat, due to the communication breakdowns that arise. Notably, some of the author's messages are inconsistent or misleading. For example, although she suggests eliciting both an extemporaneous speech sample and a read-aloud passage for diagnostic purposes, which is consistent with the consensus view, her subheading "Collecting *a* speech sample" (p. 254, added emphasis) contradicts this point. Some major omissions that are of potential value for teachers include chapters on pronunciation assessment, materials design, and the use of technology in teaching pronunciation. Thus, although a valuable reference book, it is unclear what novel contribution this book makes other than that it centres on British rather than American English. Teachers would be well-advised to consult Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, and Griner's book (2010), now in its second edition, for a more cutting-edge resource guide that is up-to-date in its discussion of pronunciation issues and is more strongly informed by empirical research.

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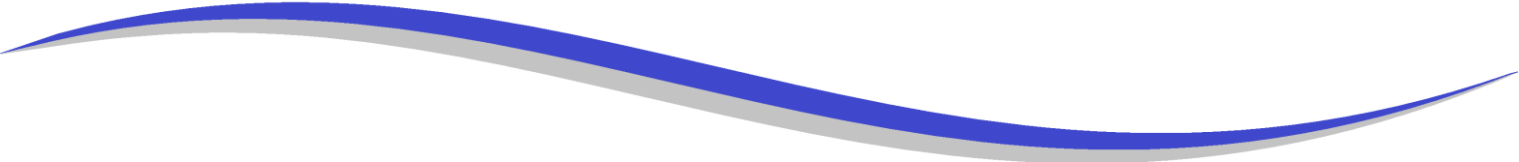Hood, S. (2010) Appraising research: evaluation in academic writing. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

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