Association for Written Language and Literacy
Ассоциация письменного языка и письменности
Ενωση για τη γραπτη γλωσσα και τη βασικη εκπαιδευση
书面语言和识字协会
Association for Written Language and Literacy

AWLL Newsletter: Number 2: 15 September 2015

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On distribution of second AWLL newsletter [Terry Joyce (newsletter editor)]

Although this second AWLL newsletter is, regrettably, being distributed rather later than initially planned (due to unavoidable circumstances), as some measure of compensation, I am extremely pleased to be able to devote much of it to announcing the tenth AWLL workshop, by including both its first formal call for papers and some early supplementary information from AWLL president and AWLL10 local organizer Anneke Neijt. This newsletter also includes a short report from Martin Neef on an exciting, ongoing project of compiling a Dictionary of Grapholinguistics. It also continues two features from the first newsletter of thought-provoking quotations and observations and miscellaneous matters, offering reminders of future conferences and workshops of potential relevance and interest.

The AWLL newsletters seek to facilitate the continual sharing of information and research discussions between our biannual workshops gatherings. Thus, they are, naturally, highly dependent on your contributions of ideas and items of news, which I would be most happy to receive at any time (with deep thanks in advance!).

First call for papers for AWLL10 [Anneke Neijt]

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Understanding writing systems:

From core issues to implications for written language acquisition

Tenth International Workshop on Writing Systems and Literacy

Nijmegen, The Netherlands, May 12th-13th, 2016
Centre for Language Studies, Radboud University Nijmegen

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

This workshop is the tenth in a series of international meetings devoted to the issue of writing systems. Earlier themes have been 'What Spelling Changes' (1997), 'Writing Language' (2000), 'From Letter to Sound' (2002), 'Mapping Graphemes onto Phonemes' (2004), 'Constraints on Spelling Changes' (2006), 'Typology of Writing Systems' (2008), 'Units of Language - Units of Writing' (2010), 'The Architecture of Writing Systems' (2012) and 'Orthographic Databases and Lexicons' (2014). Previous meetings were held in Antwerp (Belgium), Braunschweig (Germany), Brighton (UK), Cologne (Germany), Nijmegen (The Netherlands) and Oldenburg (Germany). The tenth gathering will take place in Nijmegen.

The writing systems workshops offer a forum for discussion between researchers from a range of different countries and linguistic backgrounds, working in a variety of fields of writing research such as theoretical or computational linguistics, psycholinguistics, language typology and language education.

The focus of this landmark tenth workshop continues to identify and explore the core issues for understanding writing systems, with special emphasis on how writing and reading are learned or literacy is acquired. Especially welcome are contributions on the following questions:

- What are the core issues for understanding writing systems? Which aspects of writing should be considered as more peripheral?
- What does the development of writing systems tell us about these core issues? For instance, how do new technologies, like computer-mediated communication, influence writing systems and how do they impact on literacy acquisition?
- How can cross-linguistic studies help to distinguish between the universal and language-specific aspects of writing systems?
- When and how is the written form of a language acquired? Are key factors such as phonological awareness, orthographic depth, and morphological awareness relevant for both young and adult learners and for both L1 and L2 literacy acquisition?
- To what extent is the distinction between rule-based and stored information relevant for understanding writing systems, their acquisition and differences between writing systems?

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The workshop will include a plenary discussion session on research issues and other topics concerning the written form of languages. We welcome suggestions for topics to be discussed.

INVITED SPEAKERS: Geoffrey Sampson [University of South Africa], Ineke van de Craats [DigLin, Radboud University Nijmegen] and Anna Bosman [Behavioral Science Institute, Radboud University Nijmegen].

PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Lynne Cahill [School of English, University of Sussex], Terry Joyce [Tama University, Tokyo], Martin Neef [Universität Braunschweig], Anneke Neijt [Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen] and Beatrice Primus [University of Cologne].

LOCAL ORGANIZERS: Anneke Neijt and Mijntje Peters.

IMPORTANT DATES:

First Call for proposals: September 2015.

Second Call for proposals] December 2015.

Submission deadline: January 15th, 2016.

Notification of acceptance: February 15th, 2016.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: Authors should submit abstracts of no more than 300 words (Font: Times New Roman 12, line spacing: 1.5). Speakers will have 30 minutes for their presentation, and 15 minutes for discussion and questions. Please submit abstracts electronically (rtf, pdf, doc, docx).

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AWLL WEBSITE: http://faculty.tama.ac.jp/joyce/awll/index.html

TWITTER: @awll

FACEBOOK: Association for Written Language and Literacy

PARTICIPATION: Researchers who would like to attend the workshop without presenting a paper are also welcome. Registration details will be made available nearer the date of the workshop. The workshop program and the abstracts of the accepted papers, along with travel and accommodation information will be circulated electronically well before the workshop.

Early supplementary information about AWLL10 [Anneke Neijt]

Our next workshop – the fields of psychology, computational linguistics and language acquisition are combined by our three invited speakers.

We are extremely happy to welcome three invited speakers: Anna Bosman and Ineke van de Craats, who I know very well because both are from Radboud University, and Geoffrey Sampson (from the University of South Africa), who I have met only once before.

Anna Bosman studied psychology and special education; she is an expert in the field of spelling acquisition and dyslexia and a stimulating and thought-provoking presenter. She gave a colorful exposé on how a changed spelling affects reading at one of our earliest workshops. Her message: no need to worry - readers are slower at first, but they regain their speed quickly!

No doubt, Geoffrey Sampson's presentation will be equally provocative. His field of expertise is computational linguistics, with a keen interest on the cognitive aspects of language processing. I

met Geoffrey at a Machine Translation conference, not knowing that we would meet again 25 years later because of our shared interests in writing systems. A second, enlarged edition (http://www.grsampson.net/WS2flyer.html) of Geoffrey's well-known book *Writing Systems* has recently come out.

Ineke van de Craats combines knowledge of the syntactic aspects of first and second language acquisition with a keen interest in literacy acquisition. She is one of the founders of the Digital Literacy Instructor DigLin, a Computer-Assisted Language Learning system (http://diglin.eu/). Her first DigLin presentation was an eye-opener for me: what a pleasure! This is the way to learn how to read and write in order to gain access to the literate world.

Nijmegen again will be the venue of our next and tenth workshop. The location will be Huize Heyendael, Radboud University's conference house at the campus, with a beautiful room that allows for 45 participants. Looking forward to your contributions, and I hope to meet you at our next workshop: Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands, May 12th & 13th 2016.

Huize Heyendael

Compiling a Dictionary of Grapholinguistics [Martin Neef]

With this note, I would like to share news of an ongoing project to compile a new dictionary of terms for the field of written language and literacy. Since 2012, the first entries for the dictionary have been published in electronic form. The dictionary is part of the 'Dictionaries of Linguistics and Communication Science' series published by de Gruyter, Berlin. The Editors-in-Chief of the series, Stefan J. Schierholz and Herbert Ernst Wiegand, have devised a concept for dictionaries that combines semantic definitions, comprehensive information of broad scope, and a richly linked structure. They have divided the fields of linguistics and communication studies into 25 sub-fields, with a single volume devoted to each sub-field. Among them is the study of written

language and literacy, or, in other terms, writing and its use. The editors of that volume, Martin Neef (TU Braunschweig, Germany) and Rüdiger Weingarten (University of Bielefeld, Germany), adopted the handy title 'Grapholinguistics' for the project, with the assumption that such a dictionary has the potential to establish a coherent term for the field in question. And, such a unifying name may, in turn, have the potential to strengthen the visibility of scientific endeavors within this area. The primary language of the publication is German. When the project started some ten years ago, the editors chose the, then, rather unusual term of 'Schriftlinguistik' as its name; a term that has since become widespread and established within German-speaking linguistics.

The Dictionary of Grapholinguistics, as a collaborative work of more than fifty authors, is envisioned to consist of approximately 1,400 entries, covering the research areas of orthography, graphematics and graphetics, history of scripts and writing systems, paleography and material aspects, typography, typology, transliteration and cryptography, as well as diverse aspects of the field of literacy, such as reading and writing as well as the acquisition and the breakdown or loss of those competencies. Entry terms and their definitions are given in both German and English. Each entry article provides thorough explanations of all aspects of the entry term, as well as bibliographic information and a rich network of several types of cross-references. Currently, 620 full articles and more than 480 cross-reference articles are available in electronic form under http://www.degruyter.com/view/db/wsk. Upon completion of the electronic dictionary (scheduled for 2018), a printed version is also planned. There are also plans for a full English version of the dictionary, but that would call for the help of international colleagues; something that could be achieved with the support of the Association of Written Language and Literacy.

Thought-provoking quotations and observations [2]

In the first AWLL newsletter, this section opened with Dan Sperber's (2002) intriguing claim that writing "will be replaced by the automatic transcription of speech – whereas reading is here to stay"; taken from his "The future of writing" essay reflecting on how technology influences text (http://www.dan.sperber.fr/?p=75). Technical modes of writing are also a central concern of the work that opens this section of the second newsletter. While granting that the juxtaposition is not totally without issues, still, Sonja Neef's (2011) challenging exposition on writing, or more specifically on the act (*hand*lung) of handwriting, would seem to evoke somewhat different conceptualizations of writing. The central thesis of her book is:

> that there is no definitive dichotomy between printed script in the sense of mechanical, technical or digital writing techniques on the one hand, and handwriting in the sense of an individual, unique and singular trace on the other, but that the principles of 'imprint' and 'trace' are always historically and systematically bound up with one another. ... 'Imprint' and 'trace' then represent the two basic principles of handwriting, conceptual opposites facing each other diametrically but both nevertheless always affecting the practice of handwriting.

(Neef, 2011: 20)

Neef, Sonja. (2011). *Imprint and trace: Handwriting in the age of technology* (translated by Anthony Mathews). London: Reaktion Books [German original, 2008, *Abdruck und Spur: Handschrift im Zeitalter ihrer technischen Reproduzierbarkeit.* Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos]

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character **1** One of the elementary signs of a writing language, e.g. a letter, a cuneiform sign or a hieroglyph. **2** The series of elementary signs peculiar to any writing; a set of letters. **3** A single sign of the Chinese writing system. Chinese characters are internally structured configurations of basic strokes to be written in a fixed sequence. Character dictionaries in China, Korea and Japan are organized on the basis of the compositional principles of Chinese characters. (Coulmas, 1996: 72)

Coulmas, Florian. (1996). *The Blackwell encyclopedia of writing systems.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Miscellaneous matters

Calls for various related conferences, events, special issues

Written and Spoken Language as Modalities
Konstanz, Germany; 24-26 February 2016
Contact: Martin Evertz martin.evertz@uni-koeln.de

British Dyslexia Association 10th International conference: Moving Forward: Challenges and Transitions
The Kings Centre, Oxford, UK; 10-12 March 2016
http://www.bdainternationalconference.org/

International Workshop on Reading and Development Dyslexia
Bilbao, Spain; 5-7 May 2016
http://www.bcbl.eu/events/IWORDD2016/en/

FLAIRS-2016 Special Track of AI and NLP of Ancient Languages
Key Largo, Florida, USA; 16-18 May 2016
https://sites.google.com/site/flairs2016stnlpal/

Screen-Based Multimodal Interactions
Lyon, France; 6-8 July 2016
http://impec.sciencesconf.org/resource/page/id/8