

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 4: 15 May 2018

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

The main purpose of the AWLL's periodic newsletters is to partially bridge the gaps between its regular international workshops, in the interests of facilitating more continuous sharing of research information and discussions. Very much in keeping with that spirit, this fourth newsletter both looks back to the last workshop – with a brief report of AWLL11 held last August in Nagoya, Japan – and, in particular, looks forward to the next workshop – with the first call for papers for AWLL12 to be held next year in the UK. It also includes a message from Dorit Ravid, the general editor of *Written Language & Literacy*, concerning its recent editorial change.

As the third newsletter launched *Introducing writing systems* – as a forum for developing and sharing comprehensible introductions to particular writing systems in the form of short serialized jottings – this fourth newsletter continues with a second piece on the Japanese writing system, with the first of a few inter-related installments about the visual complexity and internal structures of kanji. This newsletter also includes the regular sections of *Thought-provoking quotations and observations* – which this time features a little matching quiz related to some punctuation marks – and *Miscellaneous matters* – with information about upcoming conferences of potential interest.

It is very much hoped that this fourth AWLL newsletter will be of interest to you. Any comments, ideas, or items for future newsletters are always most welcome; just email them to terry@tama.ac.jp.

Past newsletters are available at <http://faculty-sgs.tama.ac.jp/terry/awll/newsletters.html>

Brief report about AWLL 11 [Terry Joyce, Hisashi Masuda & Chikako Fujita]



AWLL's 11th International Workshop on Writing Systems and Literacy, with the theme of *Writing systems: Past, present (... and future?)*, was held at Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan over 29-31 August 2017. AWLL11 was privileged to welcome three invited speakers - Florian Coulmas (University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany), Dorit Ravid (Tel Aviv University, Israel) and David Roberts (independent researcher, Togo, West Africa) – who together also graciously initiated and facilitated the final panel discussion session with an interesting discussion about the diversity observed within writing systems.

Given that all previous AWLL workshops have been held within Europe (including Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom), AWLL11 was the first AWLL gathering to take place within Asia in Japan. To mark this important geographic expansion for AWLL workshops, the AWLL11 programme also included the first themed symposium session, dedicated to the Asian writing systems of China, Japan and Korea. Chaired by Hye Pae (University of Cincinnati, USA), the symposium consisted of four short talks; an introduction talk by Hye Pae, one on the Chinese writing system by Alexandra Gottardo (Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada), one on the Japanese writing system by Terry Joyce (Tama University, Japan), closing with one on the Korean writing system by Hye Pae.

Moreover, as AWLL11 benefitted from a slightly expanded programme consisting of 2.5 days, it was still possible to include 16 oral presentations and 9 poster presentations (over two 75-min sessions), in striking an apt balance between experiencing many interesting presentations and affording sufficient opportunities for discussion among the 39 participants from 15 different countries (including Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Spain, Taiwan, Togo, UK, and USA). With the extended programme, it was also possible to further facilitate positive interactions, by being able to include both a more causal

buffet-style workshop reception on the evening of day 1 and a traditional Japanese cuisine workshop dinner on the evening of day 2.

Consistent with AWLL's tradition of regarding its business meetings as an important part of the workshop programmes, to encourage all participants to join in, AWLL11 conducted its business meeting at the end of the second day, and it was most heartening that the majority of workshop participants attended and positively contributed. As important announcements of changes to the AWLL board, firstly, Terry Joyce and Lynne Cahill acknowledged, albeit with regret, Martin Neef's intention to step down and expressed their sincere appreciation for all his efforts, and, secondly, also welcomed Dorit Ravid as a new board member. Summaries of other matters discussed can be found in the approved AWLL11 business minutes file at the AWLL website.

We would like to express our special thanks for the considerable support that we received from Taeko Ogawa, particularly responsible for arranging the workshop dinner of wonderful Japanese cuisine, from Koji Miwa, for taking some many interesting photographs throughout the workshop (many posted to the AWLL website), and from Keisuke Honda, with general preparations and tidying up. Finally, we would like to express our deep gratitude for all the AWLL11 workshop participants for coming to Nagoya and for helping to make AWLL11 such a positive experience.

Postscript: As guest editors for the AWLL11 special issue of *Written Language and Literacy*, Terry Joyce and Robert Crellin are currently reviewing the initial selection of interesting manuscripts submitted from many of the workshop participants.

The workshop programme with abstracts of all of the presentations is available at:

<http://faculty-sgs.tama.ac.jp/terry/awll/wsMaterials/AWLL11-2017-ProgrammeAbstracts.pdf>

A number of photos of the workshop, mostly kindly taken by Koji Miwa, can be found at:

<http://faculty-sgs.tama.ac.jp/terry/awll/wsMaterials/AWLL11-2017-Photos/AWLL11-2017-Album.html>

The minutes of the AWLL11 business meeting, held during the workshop, are also available at:

<http://faculty-sgs.tama.ac.jp/terry/awll/wsMaterials/AWLL11-2017-BMMinutes.pdf>

First call for papers for AWLL12 [Robert Crellin & Anna Judson]

Diversity of writing systems: embracing multiple perspectives

12th International Workshop of the Association for Written Language and Literacy

Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge

Tuesday 26 – Thursday 28 March 2019

First call for papers

The Association of Written Language and Literacy's twelfth gathering (AWLL12), organized in conjunction with the Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge, will focus on the wealth of diversity within the world's historical and contemporary writing systems. The conference sets out to offer an opportunity for exchange between a wide range of scholars interested in writing systems and written language, in order to foster greater mutual understanding of their multiple perspectives on the typological, structural, historical, sociocultural, technological, and individual variety present within writing systems. Abstracts are therefore welcome from researchers working on reading and writing within any academic discipline, including, but not limited to, linguistics, psychology, archaeology, sociology, education and literacy, technology, digital humanities, and computer science. PhD students and early-career researchers are also especially encouraged to apply.

Key issues to be addressed include:

- What fundamental principles underlie the structure and function of the world's historical and contemporary writing systems? Is a single unified typology of writing systems possible or are separate taxonomies preferable?
- What linguistic and psychological processes are at work in the adaptation of one writing system to another? How are these affected by the cultural and social context of the adaptation?
- What linguistic, psychological, cultural and social, and technological factors bring about diversity within writing systems? How do such factors influence literacy acquisition and shape the use of writing?
- How can studying the development of historical writing systems enhance our understanding of contemporary writing systems? How can contemporary research on reading and writing contribute to the study of historical writing systems?
- How are the world's writing systems likely to develop in the future? What principles should guide orthography development for as yet unwritten languages?

The 2.5-day programme will include two keynote lectures, a symposium focusing on research into ancient Mediterranean and Chinese writing systems at Cambridge, oral and poster presentations, and a panel discussion.

Keynote speakers

Sonali Nag, University of Oxford (Research interests: literacy and language development and the relationship between writing systems and learning, particularly in South and South-East Asian languages).

Kathryn Piquette, University College London (Research interests: Egyptian and Near Eastern writing and art, and the development and application of advanced imaging techniques for the elucidation of 'visual' culture from the wider ancient world and beyond).

Local organisers

Robert Crellin and Anna Judson (University of Cambridge, U.K.)

Programme committee

Lynne Cahill (University of Sussex, U.K.), Robert Crellin (University of Cambridge, U.K.), Terry Joyce (Tama University, Japan), Anna Judson (University of Cambridge, U.K.), Dorit Ravid (University of Tel Aviv, Israel)

Abstract submission

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted as a PDF attachment to AWLL12.2019@gmail.com by September 30th 2018. Please indicate whether you would prefer to be considered for an oral presentation (20-25min) or a poster presentation (maximum size portrait A0 or landscape A1). Applicants will be notified on the acceptance of their abstracts by the end of November 2018.

Details of registration for presenters and for others wishing to attend without presenting will be circulated along with the final programme after this date.

Further information

Conference website: <https://awll12.wordpress.com/>

AWLL website: <http://faculty.tama.ac.jp/joyce/awll/index.html>

Twitter: @awll2014

Facebook: Association for Written Language and Literacy

If you have any queries regarding the conference please contact the local organisers, Anna and Robert, at AWLL12.2019@gmail.com. For queries about AWLL, please contact Terry Joyce, at terry@tama.ac.jp.

Message about recent editorial change for *Written Language & Literacy* [Dorit Ravid]

Dear all,

I am delighted to inform you that I was appointed the General Editor of the *Written Language & Literacy* journal on January 1st, 2018. In that capacity, I would like to welcome on board our new Assistant Editor, Dr. Elitzur Dattner from Tel Aviv University, and three new Associate Editors – Professors Terry Joyce (Tama University, Japan), Rachel Schiff (Bar Ilan University, Israel), and Liliana Tolchinsky (University of Barcelona, Spain). Together, this WLL team represents the broad range of topics the Journal encompasses across formal and empirical linguistics, written language, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, language-related technologies, cultural settings of language, and linguistic literacy and education.

I would also like to thank Professor Beatrice Primus and Dr. Martin Evertz from the University of Cologne, Germany, for their services as General Editor and Assistant Editor, respectively, over the period of 2015-2018. During that time, the Cologne team has been responsible for the publication of 30 articles across 5 issues. These included two Special issues – one in Volume 18 (2), 2015, on *The Historical Sociolinguistics of Spelling* (guest editors - Laura Villa and Rik Vosters); and one in Volume 20 (1), 2017, on *Orthographic Databases and Lexicons* (guest editors – Lynne Cahill and Terry Joyce). Beatrice and Martin have also overseen the editing of a new special issue which is published later this year.

Yours sincerely

Dorit Ravid

Tel Aviv University, Israel





Introducing writing systems: Japanese [2] [Terry Joyce & Keisuke Honda]

The first part of this series briefly explained the basic dual-reading system of both Sino-Japanese and native-Japanese pronunciations being associated with 漢字 /KANJI/*. Two other closely-related aspects of kanji that contribute the JWS's complexity are their considerable numbers and the range of their visual complexity. While we will defer fuller comment about the numbers of kanji in contemporary use to a later newsletter, it is useful to immediately mention two sets of special significance. The first is the official 常用漢字表 /JŌYŌKANJIIHYŌ/ 'characters for general use', revised in 2010 to consist of 2,136 kanji, and the second is the Japanese Industrial Standard (JIS) JIS X 0208, which specifies the 6,355 kanji (2,965 level 1 and 3,390 level 2 kanji) that are installed as standard on computers, mobile phones and smartphones. Having briefly referenced these two key benchmarks, this second installment turns to make an initial foray into the internal structure of kanji, which will extend across a couple of installments outlining the principles of kanji formation.

All kanji consist of some number of 画 /KAKU/ 'strokes' (referring, inclusively, to any dot, line or continuous form that entails a change in direction) and all kanji occupy the same sized *block* of space, regardless of the number of strokes involved. Looking at the distribution in the numbers of strokes for the jōyō kanji, one finds that it is approximately normal, ranging from one to 29

strokes with a mean of 10.5 (*SD* 3.8), a medium of 10, and a mode of 11 strokes. Accordingly, at the lower extreme, there are two 1-stroke kanji, 一 /ICHI/ ‘one’ and 乙 /OTSU/ ‘second in rank; latter; strange’; at the upper extreme, there is one 29-stroke kanji, 鬱 /UTSU/ ‘gloom, depression’; and around the center, there are 216 10-stroke, 217 11-stroke and 211 12-stroke kanji.

To put these stroke numbers into a clearer perspective, however, it is also vital to bear in mind that most kanji strokes are arranged, or grouped together, to form conventional patterns, such that the majority of kanji possess internal structure. For example, Joyce et al. (2014) report that 91.3% of jōyō and 92.6% of JIS level 1 kanji conform to the three basic configurations of (1) left-right, (2) top-bottom and (3) enclosure-enclosed (as illustrated below, albeit with just two of the few possible enclosure configurations), with the left-right pattern being the most common representing 54.6% and 56.1%, respectively (the remainder were classified as being non-divisible).

- 1  話 /WA/ ‘conversation; say’ = 言 /GEN/ ‘words, language’ + 舌 /ZETSU/ ‘tongue’
- 2  胃 /I/ ‘stomach’ = 田 /DEN/ ‘field’ + 月 /GETSU/ ‘moon’
- 3  囲 /I/ ‘surround’ = 匚 ‘box or country radical’ + 井 /SEI/ ‘water-well’
-  問 /MON/ ‘question; ask’ = 門 /MON/ ‘gate’ + 口 /KŌ/ ‘mouth’

The contrast between 匚 and 口 above is not just about size, but relating to the principles of kanji formation, which will be explained over the next few installments. Some reoccurring patterns of strokes are simply that, just elements common to some kanji, while others are also independent kanji themselves.

All complex systems depend on simpler elements! More next time!

* It was not, however, further clarified that 92% of jōyō kanji have between 0-2 *on* and 0-2 *kun* pronunciations, including 741 (35%) with just one *on* reading (Joyce et al. 2014). While it will occasionally be expedient to list all official readings and meanings when introducing a kanji, usually it will only be appropriate to single out a particular pronunciation and some core meanings. However, from this piece onwards, we will also adopt one common convention for distinguishing between the readings; namely, SMALL CAPS = *on* and lowercase = *kun* (and all words within phrase examples).

Thought-provoking quotations and observations [4]

This time, as a way of briefly introducing ten of the chapters of Keith Houston’s (2013) *Shady characters: The secret life of punctuation, symbols and other typographical marks* (which also includes a *Preface*, an eleventh chapter entitled *Irony and sarcasm*, an *Afterword*, and copious notes), in a somewhat more whimsical vein, this section partially adopts the format of a mini-matching quiz.

In the interests presenting as a mini-matching quiz, naturally, the ordering of both the featured characters and the corresponding chapter titles (the character names) have been randomized, and, while most are likely to be very familiar and straightforward, it should also be immediately stressed that, although many have alternative names, these are being matched with the names that Houston adopts as his chapter titles (to avoid a simple matching to title use, one chapter title is modified to the alternative name that Houston also uses, and, as Houston acknowledges, as the length of a dash varies according to function, the dash character included

below is just one of a small set; the em dash).

Can you connect the dots to match each character to its name?

&	•	• The Interrobang
-	•	• The Dash
“ ”	•	• The Pilcrow
¶	•	• The Hyphen
☞	•	• The Octothorpe
@	•	• Quotation Marks
* †	•	• The Ampersand
‡	•	• The Manicule
#	•	• The ‘at’ Symbol
—	•	• The Asterisk and Dagger

Albeit with varying degrees of collaborating evidence, each of Houston’s ten chapters on a specific character (pair or set) seeks to unravel both the fascinating development of a character’s visual form and the etymology of its name. Thus, as Houston (2013: 245) comments in the Afterword, his book ...

as it turns out, is not just about unusual marks of punctuation, nor even punctuation in general. In following the warp and woof of individual shady characters throughout their lifetimes, it is the woven fabric of writing as a whole that emerges. And in today’s writing, the printed and electroluminescent characters we read on a daily basis and the scrawled handwriting that occupies the diminishing gaps between computer monitors, tablet computers, and smart-phone screens, this history stares right back at us.

[Answers to the matching quiz appear at the end of the newsletter]

Houston, Keith (2013). *Shady characters: The secret life of punctuation, symbols and other typographical marks*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Miscellaneous matters

Calls for various related conferences, events, special issues

25th Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium (SILS2018)

Lethbridge AB, Canada; 07-09 June 2018

Contact: Inge Genee; info@sil2018.ca

<http://www.sil2018.ca>

/grafematik/ 2018 Graphemics in the 21st century—From graphemes to knowledge

IMT Atlantique, Brest, France; 14-16 June 2018

<http://conferences.telecom-bretagne.eu/grafematik/>

1st Cognitive Science of Culture workshop: “Literacy: an acculturation of the brain”

Lisbon; 21-22 June, 2018

Contacts: Susana Araújo

<http://www.psicologia.ulisboa.pt/1wcsc/>

Scandinavian Workshop on Applied Eye Tracking (SWAET)

Copenhagen, 23-24 August 2018

Contacts: Valentina Belfiore (belfiorev@yahoo.de), Emmanuel Dupraz

(Emmanuel.Dupraz@ulb.ac.be) or Theresa Roth (rotht@staff.uni-marburg.de)

Writing conventions and pragmatic perspectives: Workshop of the Indogermanische Gesellschaft

Brussels; 13-14 September, 2018

Contact: Laura Winther Balling; swaet2018@cbs.dk

<http://www.tilmeld.dk/SWAET2018/swaet.html>

WoRLD: Workshop on Reading, Language and Deafness

San Sebastián, Spain, 18t-20 October 2018

<http://www.bcbl.eu/events/world2018>

MICAH : 13th Mainz International Colloquium on Ancient Hebrew (& Cognate Languages)

Mainz; 2-4 November, 2018

Contacts (All questions and matters of general concern): 2018-MICAH@uni-mainz.de

<https://www.micah.hebraistik.uni-mainz.de/micah2018>

Names in Writing

Gothenburg, Sweden; 29-30 November 2018

Contact: namniskrift@sprak.gu.se

<http://sprak.gu.se/english/research/conferences/names-in-writing>

Also, of potential interest, *Stephen Fry’s Great Leap Years – the stories behind inventions*, particularly episode 2 – “A Faustian Pact” about the creation of the Gutenberg Press.

<http://www.stephenfry.com/greatleapyears/>

“The podcast explores topics ranging from the rise of humankind as the inventor, to the astonishing combination of persistence, investment and inspiration it took to create the Gutenberg Press and the communication technologies that created our world. It tells the story of how our lives have been transformed by a fascinating and compelling mixture of human decision and vision, greed and need.”

Matching quiz answers (in order of Houston's (2013) chapters:
¶ The Pilcrow; ¶ The Interrobang; # The Octothorpe; & The Ampersand; @ The 'at' Symbol;
* † The Asterisk and Dagger; - - The Hyphen; — The Dash; ■ The Manicule; “ ” Quotation Marks

AWLL board

Terry Joyce (president), Lynne Cahill (vice-president), Dorit Ravid
AWLL website: <http://faculty-sgs.tama.ac.jp/terry/awll/index.html>;
On Facebook and Twitter [@awll]

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