

## CHILTON RESEARCH ASSOCIATION PROGRESS REPORTS

*Several members of BAAL have expressed interest in the activities of the Chilton Research Association for Psycho-Pedagogical Orientation. Unfortunately, for administrative reasons our next collection of Working Papers will not now be published until May 2011. In the meantime, however, we hope that the following internal progress reports, dealing with those of our current projects which have a pure or applied linguistics focus, may go some way towards satisfying members' desire for information.*

### **Real Applied Linguistics** (report by Steve Weston-Garsh and Carpathia Andrews)

Applied Mathematics is mathematics applied to disciplines which are not themselves part of mathematics: for instance engineering, biology or ballistics. Applied Linguistics will come of age and become a genuine applied science when it achieves a similar status: that is to say, when linguistics can be applied to the elucidation of problems in areas which are not themselves concerned with language. With this aim in view, the RappLing research group is exploring the interfaces between linguistics and a number of other fields of study. Taking the theory of chess as a starting point, and building on the work of Grendelova and her colleagues at the Dept of Environmental Linguistics in the former Gospel Oak Polytechnic (now the University of Hampstead Heath), we have formulated a provisional model which exploits a familiar set of linguistic propositions to powerful explanatory effect. Thus, Hausengel's Second Theorem (to cite one example among many) states: "All chess pieces are identical at a deep level, and move in the same way ('Move Omega'). Surface differences arise from the accidental characteristics of the individual pieces, and have no importance as regards the theory of the game." Work currently in preparation will investigate the potential applications of formal and functional linguistic models to traffic management, southern European penal systems and rice farming.

### **The Other Input Modes** (report by H. Vederici for the Materials Development Team)

Work on learning styles, to the extent that it has concerned itself with input modes, has hitherto focused largely on the visual and auditory channels. Tactile, olfactory and gustatory learners have received relatively little attention, despite some promising explorations in the 1960s (one thinks of Gorbach's work on edible cuisinaire rods, Lucas's scratch and sniff cue cards, and Bangalo's short-lived experiments with alphabet soup). Recent work in cognitive linguistics, with its emphasis on the grounding of language in physical experience, has revived interest in these areas, and our team is preparing a range of sense-specific teaching materials. 'Starters', a new beginners' course, will be published by Didcot Academic Press later this year. Projected titles for 2011-12 include 'Read and Digest', 'Touch up your Grammar' and 'A Nose for English'.

### **The English Verb: Phase 1** (report by Dolly McPotter)

I am carrying out an analysis of the semantic and pragmatic features of English verbs of delayed, interrupted or aborted movement in the light of recent research addressing the inferentially driven interplay between peripheral and central interpretive systems. Individual verbs are seen as occupying a rich cognitive space within the epistemic macrostructure, with which they interact in intricate ways. The insights generated by the study are forcing a radical reconceptualisation of the gerund.

**A Nineteenth-century Lingua Franca** (*report by Horace Raskolnikov*)

This study explores a little-known but fascinating episode in linguistic history. During the Napoleonic wars, there was a pressing need in continental Europe for an efficient vehicle of communication between military units which occupied an area stretching from Gibraltar to the North Cape, and whose officers and men spoke twenty or more distinct languages. Under the chairmanship of Admiral Pinard Durobinet, a subcommittee of the Académie Française devised a French-based lingua franca: 'Français Langue Universelle des Forces de Frappe' (FLUFF), which proved so effective as to become the standard language used for land- and sea-based operations throughout Napoleon's empire and allied territories. Contacts between opposing forces inevitably led in the course of time to borrowings from FLUFF into English military parlance (e.g. *veille*, *reconnaissance*, *battalion*, *lieutenant*). Maritime language shows a similar pattern of borrowing (e.g. *frigate*, *corvette*, *careen*, *capstan*), and our research in this area is benefiting considerably from collaboration with scholars engaged in the NAVALFLUFF project at Greenwich Meridian University..

**New light on Zantoc** (*report by Lt-Colonel A. A. Savage for the Endangered Linguists Group*)

Zantoc, a language of the upper Orinoco with around 10,000 speakers, is notorious for the descriptive problems that it has posed to generations of linguistic field workers. Zantoc is unique among languages of the region, and indeed among world languages, by virtue of the striking degree of variability that it exhibits in both grammar and lexis. Syntactically it can be analysed as both nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive, depending primarily (according to one influential hypothesis) on the stress pattern of the verb involved. No consistent word-order patterning has been identified. Morphology is not only word-specific, but also contextually variable in complex ways. Lexically, Zantoc appears to have an almost unlimited range of synonyms available to encode any given concept: these obey very unclear distributional constraints, and are in many cases so infrequently attested as not to be susceptible to analysis. During last summer's expedition, however, new light was dramatically thrown on the Zantoc enigma. Towards the end of a convivial evening, a group of our younger native informants confessed that Zantoc was in fact made up in its totality by its 'speakers' in their interactions with visiting linguists, who have been their main source of income for the last half-century. The language has now been reclassified as a verbal installation and has qualified for a UNESCO grant..