

### **French Lexis Group:**

*workshop held at the University of Nottingham on 31 March 1995*

The morning sessions were devoted to papers by Geoffrey Bremner and Keith Foley. Geoffrey outlined the origins of the Aberystwyth Word Lists and presented their aims and objectives and achievements. Keith presented an overview of current types of neologisms, focussing on neologistic innovations. The afternoon was given over to a general discussion of the issues that the FLG needs to address.

1. Establishing a database: Malcolm Offord agreed to create a database from the material already in the AWL and to update it as new material is reported.
2. Reference texts: ideally all neologisms should be checked against the big four bilingual dictionaries: Harraps, Collins-Robert, Oxford-Hachette, Larousse. Only neologisms not figuring in any of these should be reported.
3. Source texts: mainly newspapers and magazines, but no source should be rejected. It would be useful to know what newspapers and magazines were purchased by Departments, so that an inventory of available sources could be compiled.
4. Presentation of material: when recording material it would be convenient if a common system could be adopted. The following template is suggested (it is possible that not all features will be relevant in all cases): neologisms ♦ wordclass ♦ meaning ♦ field ♦ label ♦ style ♦ label ♦ quotation ♦ source
5. Sending of material: to Malcolm Offord, French Department, The University of Nottingham, NOTTINGHAM, NG7 2RD (e-mail: Malcolm.Offord@nottingham.ac.uk; telephone: 0115 9514996; fax: 01 15 951 49 98).
6. Contacting dictionary-makers in UK, France, Canada and US: contact will be made with the principal dictionary-makers to see if cooperation is possible and to avoid duplication of effort.
7. Next meeting: University of Strathclyde at a date in 1996 to be agreed.

Your help would be appreciated in the following areas:

1. It would be extremely helpful to know what French-language publications (newspapers, magazines, etc) your institution holds.
2. I should also be grateful a) if you could commit yourself to taking on responsibility for a particular newspaper or magazine or other type of publication and scan it at a regular basis and b) if you could let me know what decision you make, so that I can coordinate efforts and avoid unnecessary and undesirable duplication. Of course, unsystematic hunting is also very welcome, so long as source and other details are provided.
3. Please start rolling the neologisms in.

**Re-mapping Modern Languages III**  
**Part I: Friday 5 May 1995**  
**University of London, Institute of Romance Studies**

Professor Carol Sanders who had organised this third conference on the theme « Re-mapping Modern Languages » introduced the first part: *Language Matters in the Modern Languages Degree*. She highlighted the continuing importance of its language element: although Modern Languages degrees have changed dramatically in the past 25 years both in focus and in content all our disciplines depend crucially on language. Questions of language and power are crucial to an analysis of political discourse, linguistic policy, matters of identity and language, cultural studies which have made a point of highlighting cultural forms outside the mainstream. Quoting from the third *cours* of the *Cours de linguistique générale* which defines linguistics as a discipline concerned with language in all its manifestations, she suggested that current preoccupations were foreshadowed by Saussure.

The first session was devoted to *Semiotics in the Media*. Ulrike Meinhof presented the first paper, « Discourse Analysis and TV » in which she sought to show the role television can play in re-mapping modern languages. She suggested television is relevant not only as an institution but also as a *révélateur* of a multitude of social and cultural practices. It is also an immense resource of communication practices and of foreign language texts: discourse analysis can do something with both. Most of television is multi-modal by definition; viewers are part of the equation and insert their own meanings; hence discourse analysis in relation to the media has to be multimodal. Referring to Raymond Williams' description of television as a form of flow, which presents a problem of analysis, she proposed the introduction of the notion of genre, borrowing Stephen Neal's proposition to see genre as a pact between producer-text-reader. Discourse analysis can help us to get a grip on the blurring at the margins of genre and of intertextuality as a form of leakage between genres. Understanding formats and patterning, genre not only helps understand television culture, but makes language accessible since the viewer's expectations about patterns and format serve as prior knowledge which speeds up the understanding of the language contents.

Lieve Spaas sought to answer the question of her title: « Film: a text? » with the help of Christian Metz's book, *L'énonciation impersonnelle ou le site du film*. She pointed out that ever since Alexandre Astruc's reference to « la caméra-stylo » (1948), the connection between a more personal approach to film-making as a form of personal writing has been made. Although film is not a language, the *fait filmique* can be located; it is a *fait social* and the tools of linguistics allow us to analyse the film as if it were one. She concluded on Metz's own two concluding points: that there is always *énonciation* (hence something to analyse); but the *site de l'énonciation* is problematic and the unwillingness to disbelieve on the part of the viewer is an obstacle to analysis.

*Language and/of Politics* followed with two papers: Helen Drake on « Political discourse and European integration: the case of Jacques Delors »; and Clare Mar-Molinero on « The Politics of language in Spain ». The former put her paper in context by referring to politics as a question of language: witness the process of re-writing clause 4 of the Labour party or again the intensity of focus on the ritual debate between the two main contenders in the French presidential elections. Helen Drake showed how, within the context of the European Union, a new polity and an experiment, language was both instrumental, often used as a fixing tool, and served as a means of allowing serious differences to co-exist between different member states. She suggested that an analysis of Jacques Delors' discourse can help understand how his image was constructed. His discourse presented itself as a rational, straightforward, didactic discourse with three dominant metaphors: Delors the doctor; Delors the artisan; Delors the visionary. A sensitivity to the language of politics as well as a knowledge of one other of the community languages represent one way towards developing an insightful approach to politics.

Clare Mar-Molinero slanted her title towards the policy issues surrounding Spanish, taking into account not only Iberian concerns, but also Latin American ones and those of Hispanic communities in the United States.

She sought to address a number of concerns — language and nationalism; linguistic rights; language policy; Language Planning; literacy — through three specific examples: the 1978 Spanish Constitution and the article on linguistic rights; Catalan language education policies; literacy in Latin America. Her analysis of the relevant article in the Spanish Constitution highlighted the ambivalences of the actual words used and the tensions inherent in concepts of territoriality, rights and equality of citizens. Politics and law come uncomfortably close together, as exemplified most vividly by the Catalan case. As to literacy campaigns in Latin America, they posed the choice of language: empowerment helped awareness of difference, hence the conflict over languages and linguistic imperialisms, as well as questioning notions of literacy (as opposed to orality) and concepts of time, for instance, which are coloured by cultural perceptions and imposed notions.

*Teaching Translation* opened with Debra Kelly's paper, « Identity problems / identifying problems: Reading and teaching French Theory in translation » which focused principally on French feminist theory. Who is reading theory in translation? how are they reading it? questions highlight a sensitivity to where one speaks from. A commitment to teaching literature in French itself raises issues of identity for English speakers for whom writing, engaging with a French text implies being at one remove.

Michael Worton's « Speaking (on) Theory: teaching and translation — or teaching as translation » addressed the notion of between-ness and the crucial question of identity bound up in and with language as exemplified in the transitive use of verbs such as *dire* and *parler* (eg. *dire le sexe; parler femme*). Language is the way we construct ourselves individually and collectively. Michael Worton posed theory as concerned with comprehension, and different in that sense from comparative studies or comparative literature which take a transcendental stance. The space between culture and language was the most interesting and worth exploring to his mind — or again, negotiating the space between foreignness and familiarity. He saw interpretation as an act of translation whilst translation is an act of interpretation. Interpretation/translation is a performative act rather than an explanatory one: knowledge shines through the gaps in the system.

The day's final session, *Linguistic Analysis of Literature* started with Teresa Bridgeman's paper on how and why pragmatics can be applied to written discourse and attempted to bring together linguistics and literature. It posed the question of whether the concept of generic identity can be sustained in literature. Bridgeman addressed the issue in particular of interaction between reader and writer and submitted that written texts will show traces of both following kinds of assumptions and constructions: readers inferring the presence of an authorial voice and writers anticipating readership; readers inferring the intentional authors and authors speculating on known reading habits.

Barry Ife concluded the day with a modestly titled paper, « Doing things with Cervantes » which, rather less modestly, took his audience into an exploration of spaces and concepts beyond the known natural world. « Things » were done particularly to *Persiles y Sigismunda* and focused specifically on one aspect of the narrative, one character and one issue: that of plausibility. Dr Ife's paper dwelt on the questions posed by the break of the narrative pact, the rupture with the collaborative element of fiction represented by the Rutilio episode, asking particularly what is the challenge issued by Cervantes to the reader? A parallel between the diabolic pact and the narrative pact was drawn: if Cervantes is breaking the narrative pact, what sort of a pact is he replacing it with?

Gabrielle Parker Middlesex University

### **Languages for Engineering and Science: LSP Theory and Practice**

**Report on AFLS Workshop, University of Limerick, 28-29 April 1995**

Forty participants attended the most recent AFLS workshop, *Languages for Engineering and Science: LSP Theory and Practice*, which was held in Killaloe, Co. Clare, Ireland. The workshop was hosted by the University of Limerick and was officially opened on Friday evening by Colin Townsend, Dean of Humanities. In his welcoming words, he highlighted the important role which the newer non-traditional universities have come to play in the Irish and British contexts, outlining in particular the impact of LSP research and teaching on the development of courses which combine professional requirements in language and the students' diverse specialisms. The session which followed concentrated on the issue of culture in the LSP course, with Catherine Reuben giving a very lively talk on inter-cultural awareness and Angela Chambers presenting an overview of research into culture and language acquisition which would provide a framework for the papers which followed.

Saturday's agenda was very busy with eleven papers. The morning session focused on research into special language and, following coffee, attention turned naturally to course design. During this first session, papers were presented on subjects as varied as CALL in the LSP course, subject-language integration in LSP course design, scientists studying languages, and the learner-centred curriculum. The papers demonstrated well the variety of approaches adopted in the effort to define special language areas and to structure courses in response to the needs of the LSP learner. During the afternoon session, notable contributions were made by Jim Coleman who presented preliminary results of research currently being undertaken to identify the profile of scientists studying languages and by Robin Adamson who spoke on the language and structure of *cours magistraux*. Further papers presented theoretical frameworks which attempt to bridge the gap between language and specialisms.

The informal and relaxing surroundings of Killaloe allowed the participants plenty of time to become better acquainted with one another and to exchange ideas and information on their own areas of research. Much of the credit and thanks for the convivial atmosphere throughout the two days must undoubtedly go to the local organiser, Frederic Royall. Participants welcomed the proposed publication of the papers and look forward to future AFLS-sponsored seminars on related themes.

Jean E Conacher