

## AFLS Workshop reports for 2006

### AFLS Workshop at Aston University (Birmingham) 9-10 June 2006

#### Retour aux variétés avancées dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères

C'est cette «invitation au voyage» qu'avaient lancée les 9 et 10 juin Emmanuelle Labeau (Aston University) et Florence Myles (University of Newcastle) à des universitaires de Belgique, Chypre, Espagne, France, Grande-Bretagne, Irlande, Roumanie, Suède et des Etats-Unis. La rencontre s'est ouverte sur un survol d'Inge Bartning, professeur à l'Université de Stockholm et pionnière des études sur l'«apprenant avancé»: *The advanced learner ten years later – a state of the art review*. Les orateurs invités incluaient aussi Richard Towell (University of Salford) et David Birdsong (University of Texas in Austin). Le professeur Towell, ancien président de l'AFLS dont les professeurs de français en Grande-Bretagne connaissent bien la grammaire, a traité des *Factors governing the development of fluency in advanced learners of French*. Quant au professeur Birdsong, en visite à Aston University dans le cadre du Distinguished Scholars Visiting Scheme, il a présenté ses études de pointe en psycholinguistique dans une conférence stimulante: *Age and Ultimate Attainment in L2A: Behavior, Brain, and Biology*.

En plus d'excellentes présentations, les participants ont apprécié la gastronomie locale et le soleil omniprésent: de quoi dissiper tous leurs préjugés sur l'Angleterre!

La conférence, organisée en collaboration avec l'Association for French Language Studies, bénéficiait du soutien financier de l'Institute for the Study of Languages and Society et d'Aston Staff Development.

Une sélection d'articles, évalués chacun par deux membres du comité scientifique composé de spécialistes internationaux (voir ci-dessus), sera publiée à la fin 2007 dans la série *Contemporary studies in Descriptive Linguistics* de Peter Lang. Ne la manquez pas!

Le comité scientifique

Inge Bartning (Stockholm University),  
 David Birdsong (University of Texas at Austin)  
 Jean-Marc Dewaele (Birkbeck College)  
 Julia Herschensohn (Washington)  
 Alex Housen (VUB, Brussels)  
 Martin Howard (Cork)  
 Maria Kihlstedt (Paris 10)  
 Emmanuelle Labeau (Aston University)

Florence Myles (Newcastle)  
Clive Perdue (Paris 8)  
Vera Regan (UCD, Dublin)  
Suzanne Schlyter (Lund)  
Richard Towell (Salford University)  
Daniel Véronique (Aix)

Emmanuelle Labeau  
Aston University

**AFLS symposium at University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, 3-4 November 2006**

**Pragmatique comparée à la croisée des chemins: Cadres du discours et perceptions culturelles/Cross-Cultural Pragmatics at a Crossroads: Speech Frames and Cultural Perceptions**

[http://www.ilt.uea.ac.uk/news\\_events/crossculturalpragmatics.htm](http://www.ilt.uea.ac.uk/news_events/crossculturalpragmatics.htm)

The purpose of this interdisciplinary symposium, organised under the aegis of the AFLS with funding from the British Academy, the *Institut Français* and the Society for French Studies, was to bring together, under the umbrella of cross-cultural pragmatics, researchers from domains particularly sensitive to cross-cultural issues, to promote the cross-fertilization of ideas and theoretical approaches, and explore key concerns associated with verbal communication across language, culture and acquisitional divides.

The symposium attracted 39 delegates from Australia, Canada, France, Ireland, Italy, the UK and the United States. There were 28 papers in all, including three by keynote speakers in plenary sessions, and 25 in parallel sessions corresponding to the following strands: discourse in professional and media contexts, mediation and interlanguage. Four bursaries were applied for by, and awarded to, research students (one from Canada, one from France, two from the UK).

The three keynote addresses were intended to represent complementary perspectives and to provide a framework for the event, and did so very successfully. Helen Spencer-Oatey (Cambridge University), in her paper on the pitfalls and possibilities of cross-cultural research, gave an overview of these questions from the perspective of Anglo-Saxon research. Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni (University of Lyon 2, France) dealt comparatively with a specific aspect, terms of address, within an interactional discourse perspective. The third plenary paper, by Declan McCavana (Ecole Polytechnique, Paris), dealt with non-standard varieties and provided fascinating insights into taboos and national obsessions across French

and English, from an essentially lexicological point of view.

The varied yet very cohesive programme of papers, all of high standard, generated stimulating interaction among the delegates. It confirmed the need for more coordinated research efforts in the field, and has laid the foundation for the development of an international cross-cultural pragmatics research network with partners from UEA and other HE centres in the UK and France. Proposals are in preparation for two publications, the first a selection of papers to be submitted to *JFLS* for a thematic edition, the second a collection of essays to be submitted to Cambridge Scholars Press.

Marie-Noëlle Guillot

Roger Baines

University of East Anglia