

Newsletter

European Society for Cognitive Psychology

Haren, 11th November, 1988.

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a busy few months since I last got in touch with you. Much has happened and as you will read for yourselves a lot more is going to happen! The next important event in the life of our Society will be the appearance of our new Journal in March next year. Michael Eysenck and his colleagues have been very busy and the first number is already more or less ready. The standard of articles submitted has been very high - which is obviously very gratifying. There is one small problem, however. Michael would like to receive more submissions from researchers living on the mainland of Europe - so get busy!

Our second Summer School, this time on Perception, takes place in July, 1989. Please put up the enclosed poster in a suitably prominent position in your departments and do all you can to encourage good students to apply. Three workshops are also being arranged and you will find all the relevant details further on in the Newsletter.

I have one less pleasant piece of news to pass on. Dr. Ivan Sipos of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava died earlier this year. Those of us who had the pleasure of meeting him in Madrid will realise the large gap he leaves in his department.

As you will see from the new membership book, our numbers continue to grow. I've suddenly become a very popular person in our department - everyone wants to have the lovely foreign stamps I keep getting in my mail! Though I have listed all the names I've received, not everyone has paid their dues! If you are one of the guilty ones please do so as quickly as possible. As you can imagine, the costs of sending this Newsletter and printing the membership books is a costly business. (Members from countries in Eastern Europe will find details of how to pay further on in the Newsletter.)

The conference in Cambridge was a great success - those of you who missed it should make sure that you keep dates free in September, 1990 so that you can come to the next one which will take place in Italy. Our thanks have to go to the Cognitive Section of the BPS who were our hosts in Cambridge. They, and in particular John Richardson, did an excellent job and it will be good to continue to strengthen our links with this group.

Remember to hang up your poster!
With Best Wishes,

Janet L. Fawcett

Janet came up to me. She gave me a look that would make a bishop kick a hole in a stained-glass window.

"Me and the boys got a job for you, Phil", she said.

"What you got in mind?", I drawled, as I completed a travel expenses claim. Private Eyes like me usually get Lost Animals and messy divorces to handle. This better be something big.

"We want you to go to Cambridge and.." She paused and looked around. She lowered her voice and came closer. "We want you to find out about European Cognitive Psychology."

I felt like a nouvelle cuisine cook in a university refectory.

This was a hopeless case. Big Max had got wise and gone to Australia; they said Phil would soon be off to the States. Was there anybody left? Would they spill the beans?

When I got to New Hall I could see this was a class joint.

Security was tight: the light switches in the rooms were cunningly hidden and although they gave you two beds you needed the nerves of a mountain goat to get from one to the other. There was this dame sat at a desk who looked like she knew the score. "Can I help you?", she said. She gave me the sort of look that funding agencies give philosophers.

"I want to register", I said.

Then I went to these papers. They'd invited three wise guys to give us the works. Sanford kicked off on Discourse, then Wagenaar on Eye witness procedures and Mehler on infant language learning. Mehler said some babies could tell the difference between French and Russian when they were only four days old. I know some forty-year-olds who can't do that.

I thought I'd check out this speakeasy where Al and Wayne were drinking a bottle of whisky. These guys really had class but only one bottle of whisky. The next day my throat felt like a Skinner box that had been used to train a skunk.

They told me there was a good Face Recognition Symposium, mainly because there were so many new faces.

So off to the APU barbecue. Some dude sure knew how to cook a mean sausage. The Rioja had more distinctive features than a Georgian phonologist. People sprawled out on the grass: there were more bodies on the ground than at the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. I tried a little conversation with this dame, but she pretty soon told me I wouldn't reach the 10% significance level on a one-tail test.

The last day came and I still hadn't figured out who was Mr. Big, but then we had this presentation. It had all been organized by John Richardson: now there's a guy with real class.

Philip Smith
(with a little help from Raymond Chandler)

SUMMER SCHOOL ON VISUAL PERCEPTION, 2nd - 15th July, Umea

The European Cognitive Psychology Society will be holding its second Summer School on 2nd to 15th July 1989 (teaching starts 3rd July), in Umea, organised by Vicki Bruce (Nottingham) and Lars-Göran Nilsson (Umea). Although last year's Memory summer school will be a hard act to follow, we are now quietly confident that the Umea school will be a great success, and that we too will be able to have nostalgic and boozy reunions with our students and teachers at future ESCPS conferences. Our guest lecturers are Richard Gregory, Gunnar Johansson and Marc Jeannerod, and we have assembled an impressive list of lecturers and tutors from across Europe (see and display the enclosed poster please). Our next task is to attract good student applicants-please do everything you can to publicise the school and encourage your young researchers to apply. Students should be postgraduates or recent postdoctorals working in visual perception or related fields (it would be perfectly OK for someone who wanted to move into perception from another area to apply). We seek

as broad a representation from different European countries as possible, though all teaching will be in English, so students should be able to cope with lectures in English. The aim of the Summer School will be to stimulate and educate the students with lectures and tutorials from distinguished European researchers, and also to encourage the students themselves to participate by presenting their own research: students will be encouraged to come prepared to give a short paper presentation (or to bring with them a poster to display if they prefer not to speak). We hope that, like last year, the event will serve to foster contacts and sow the seeds for future collaboration between our young European researchers. One very enjoyable aspect of this year's Cambridge conference was seeing students from last year's summer school planning and discussing joint research plans. Last year about 40 students attended, though demand far outstripped the number of places available. We will be aiming to keep the size about the same this year. Students' travel and accommodation will be subsidised through sponsorship but there will be a fee for attendance at the summer school - probably around 1500 kroner (approx £150).

For further information and application forms (which should be returned by 28th February) please contact Vicki Bruce, Dept Psychology, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

Vicki Bruce

Membership fees for members from Socialist Countries

A bank account for members from socialist countries has now been opened. The address and number is:

to: GES KOG PSYCH LZG,
Account no. 5621-37-12
at: Staatsbank der DDR, Krf. Leipzig

The annual fee including payment for the Journal of the Society is 80 Mark of the GDR.

As far as remittance modalities are concerned, members are requested to turn to their respective national banks.

In the event of difficulties, please write to:

Prof. Dr. H.-G. Geissler
Sektion Psychologie
der KMU Leipzig
Tieckstr.2
Leipzig DDR-7030

A FAST Initiative in Cognitive Science

About two years ago while I was on a visit to the U.S., I received a totally unexpected call from Brussels. The European Community section concerned with Forecasting and Assessment in Science and Technology (FAST) was planning to set up a small group to consider the question of whether the EEC should in future provide research funding for cognitive science. Would I and/or colleagues at the APU be prepared to help? I said I thought we would, and in due course discovered that FAST had opted for a policy of attempting to identify a single group in each of four areas of cognitive science, then tasking that group to find five or six reviewers to provide an overview of the area. Having discussed the matter with my colleagues at the APU, everyone agreed that we ought to do what we could, but no-one else agreed to do the organising.

I arrived at the first meeting to find that the three areas selected were Human-Computer Interaction, represented by Jens Rasmussen from Denmark, Logic and Linguistics, represented by Helmut Schnelle from FRG, and the Neurosciences represented by Michel Imbert from France. The idea was that we should provide a series of reviews of specific areas of cognitive science, which would then be used in an attempt to persuade the European Community that this was an area of considerable scientific potential and industrial importance.

Unfortunately the time-scale was extremely short if our report was to arrive in time to have any influence, and the next week or two made very clear the problems of trying to persuade people to produce overviews of their areas under unreasonably tight time constraints. I discovered that my powers of persuasion fell off rapidly with distance, and unfortunately we ended with reviewers that were less internationally dispersed than

we would have chosen. Reviewers were asked to write about their own area of research from their own viewpoint, attempting to make a convincing case for its importance and relevance to cognitive science and its potential for industrial development. They were not asked to provide "scholarly" overviews, but rather to make a case for their particular area of cognitive psychology.

We ended up with agreements to write chapters on Vision (Roger Watt and Brian Rogers), Speech and Hearing (Anne Cutler and Roy Patterson), Psychoacoustics (Leo Noordman), Learning and Memory (Bill Philips and myself), Thinking and Reasoning (Jonathan Evans) and the relationship between AI and Cognitive Psychology (John Fox). It was agreed that motor control and neuropsychology would be covered within the neurosciences section by contributors agreeable to both neuroscientists and cognitive psychologists.

Having finally cajoled everyone into hurriedly writing a first draft chapter, we then discovered from the organiser of the network, Niels Ole Bernsen, that the Community had already conceded the point, and had agreed that the ESPRIT programme should have attached to it a section concerned with basic research. This would cover cognitive science, artificial intelligence and microelectronics. It would not be the responsibility of FAST, although in fact Bernsen subsequently transferred and took over the running of this initiative.

Where did that leave our hastily prepared overviews? We were still committed to provide them, although it must be said that some of the urgency went out of our activities. What should happen to the resulting reviews? Should we submit them and forget them, or attempt to publish them more widely?

On the one hand, we felt that some of our colleagues might be interested in personal overviews of particular fields, but on the other we were concerned that they might be misperceived as either broad and scholarly overviews of European cognitive psychology, or perhaps worse that they might be seen as attempts to dictate European funding policy. The FAST Initiative had no research funding power, and has no influence over the subsequent ESPRIT decisions, whatever they may prove to be.

Anyhow, for better or worse we decided to go ahead, and our efforts will be appearing as one of five volumes to be published by Erlbaum as "Research Directions in Cognitive Science: A European Perspective. Volume 1: Cognitive Psychology". If you are interested in what the various reviewers said about their particular areas, have a look at it, but please don't expect an "Annual Review" article, or a guide to extracting money from ESPRIT.

All in all, my first encounter with EEC science policy has been stranger than I anticipated, but I think I am glad I accepted the job of co-ordinating reviews for FAST, who lived up to their acronym by achieving their goal almost before we reviewers had started!

Alan Baddeley

MRC Applied Psychology Unit, Cambridge

(I got in touch with Erlbaum who informed me that Volume 1 is scheduled to appear in late March and will cost £24.95 - J.L.J.)

Workshop on Word and Sentence Recognition

Zadar, Yugoslavia

28-30th August, 1989

This Workshop will be organised by Georgije Lukatela helped by three representatives of the University of Belgrade and a local organiser from the Psychology Department in Zadar (which is on the Adriatic coast). It is Professor Lukatela's intention that the Workshop should offer an opportunity for vehement confrontation of different views on lexical access (for example, the direct vs. the phonologically mediated access), on contextual effects (for example, prelexical vs. postlexical), on the role and impact of Grammar and Syntax (for example, integrated vs. modular processing), and so on. Each presentation and discussion should be accessible to all participants and should not be limited by severe time constraints. The number of individual papers should be, therefore, strictly limited and not exceed eight papers a day. Since the Workshop will last for approximately three days, the total number of presented individual papers should not exceed 20.

Proposals are invited for papers from the area of visual and sentence recognition (including neuropsychology and development). Each proposal should consist of a brief abstract (of between 130 and 150 words) and a detailed summary (of between 2000 and 3000 words), together with the name, affiliation, and complete postal address of the author(s). Individual papers will be allocated 60 minutes (30 minutes for presentation and 30 minutes for discussion in the Workshop programme).

Four copies of each proposal should be submitted by 5 May, 1989 to the Workshop Organiser: Prof. Georgije Lukatela, Elektrotehn. fakultet, Bul. Revolucije 73, Beograd, Yugoslavia. The author(s) will be notified of the possible acceptance of the paper by 15 June, 1989.

Development of Graphic Skills Conference

In the summer of 1989, from July 24 to 26, a meeting on The Development of Graphic Skills (DOGS) will be held at the University of Trondheim in Norway. Trondheim is one of the northernmost cities in Norway, renowned for its cathedral as well as beautiful surrounding mountain and fjord scenery. Going to the DOGS could be a good starting point for a Scandinavian holiday!

The conference is being organised under the auspices of the International Graphonomics Society by Professor Nils Sovik of the University of Trondheim Institute of Education and Dr. Alan Wing of the Cambridge MRC Applied Psychology Unit. It is intended that the theme of development be taken in a broad sense. Thus it is hoped that there will be sessions, not only on the obvious topics of children's handwriting and drawing, but also, for example, on the evolution of the written alphabet, on handwriting as a function of age and experience, and on the problems encountered in learning to read handwriting. The meeting should thus be of interest to educationalists, paleographers, and researchers in the field of machine recognition of handwriting as well as to experimental psychologists interested in cognitive and motoric aspects of drawing and writing. It is intended to publish part or all of the conference proceedings.

The basic conference fee will be NOK 700 and both cheap(ish) University accommodation (NOK 150, NOK 300 per night) and more luxurious hotel accommodation (NOK 550 per night) will be available. If you would like to know more and/or receive the Announcement and Call-for-papers (the deadline for receipt of abstracts for formal papers is DECEMBER 15) please contact:

Dr. Alan Wing, MRC Applied Psychology Unit, 15 Chaucer Road, Cambridge, CB2 2EF, U.K. (TEL: Cambridge (0223) 355294) (EMAIL: alanw@mrc-apu.cam.ac.uk)

Workshop on Working Memory

An informal workshop on the topic of working memory will be held on Schiermonnikoog from the early evening of Friday, 21st April until after breakfast on Monday, 24th April, 1989. Schiermonnikoog is a small, traffic-free island off the north coast of The Netherlands. Participants will meet up in Groningen and then travel together by bus/car, boat and finally bicycle.

It is anticipated that the group will be small - we are thinking of around 20 people - and the idea is to have short presentations and lots of time for discussion. The programme will be very informal and the organisers will ensure that time for activities such as cycling around the island, visiting the bird sanctuary or righting the world over a bottle of wine are included!

Accommodation will be in a traditional island farmhouse which has been reconstructed for use as group accommodation. It can best be described as being comfortable, but simple! (it will, however, be possible to arrange an hotel for anyone who so wishes). One further advantage is that we will all have the opportunity of helping with the cooking!

The workshop will be organised by Graham Hitch of Manchester University, Bob Logie of Aberdeen University and Janet Jackson of Groningen University. If you are interested in taking part in this venture would you send both your name and the topic you would be interested in discussing to Dr. Graham Hitch, Dept. of Psychology, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL.

Conference on Inferences and Interpretation

The Society for General Psychology of the DDR is organising a conference on "Inferenz- und Interpretations-Prozesse". The main language of the conference will be German. It will be held on 20-23 March, 1989 in Bad Saarow am Scharmützelsee which is close to Berlin. Topic areas include: analysis of inferences and interpretation processes; modelling; development, learning and IDs in such processes.

This announcement is rather late in appearing, so if you wish to attend, please contact the following person as quickly as possible. Dr. Michael Zießler, Bereich Psychologie, ZKI der AdW der DDR, PSF 1298, Kurstraße 33,