**BAAL Corpus Linguistics SIG**
Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2004 at Birmingham University

Chair: Paul Thompson

1. Hilary Nesi was appointed to take minutes for the meeting

2. **Review of procedures for establishing a SIG.**
   The BAAL guidelines for establishing a SIG were circulated. This first meeting of the Corpus Linguistics SIG was in September 2003, at the BAAL Annual Meeting. The Chair explained that documentation now has to be prepared in time for the Annual Meeting in September 2004. BAAL will decide whether we should become a fully-fledged SIG on the basis of the Chair's report to the Annual Meeting.
   If approved, a SIG committee will be formally elected in September.

3. **Formalisation of the Corpus Linguistics SIG**
   Paul Thompson called for volunteers to form a working party to draw up a Corpus Linguistics SIG draft constitution. The draft constitution of the Linguistics Ethnography Forum (LEF) was provided as a model, together with a list of the roles and responsibilities of LEF Co-ordinating Committee members. Once drafted, the new SIG constitution will be circulated for members' comments, via the mailing list.
   It will also be necessary to set up a bank account and signatories.

   Paul Thompson has already met John Field (BAAL SIG Co-ordinator) and Ben Rampton (LEF Chair) to discuss issues relating to the role of the Corpus Linguistics SIG.

   SIGs are expected to hold at least two events per year. Normally these will be in the spring and at the Annual Meeting in September. Proposals for papers to be presented at the Annual Meeting can be marked as related to a SIG; they will be reviewed in the normal way, but in addition will be reviewed by one or more SIG representative.
   It was agreed that we should avoid having a small group within the SIG who accept and reject all related events and papers. We need to establish a fair procedure, involving knowledgeable reviewers but preventing the formation of cliques.
   It was agreed that there should be a statement in the constitution regarding reviewing procedure.

   The SIG must also decide how SIG-related papers should be scheduled during the Annual Meeting – eg back-to-back (enabling SIG members to attend on a single day), or spread out across the entire conference (as is the practice at the IATEFL conference).
   Michael Stubbs commented negatively on the effect of grouping SIG papers at the German Association conference.

The meeting agreed that there was a danger that back-to-back scheduling might turn the Annual Meeting into a collection of exclusive mini-conferences, rather than an opportunity to find out about a broad range of research.
This year themed papers will be grouped together, but scheduling will be reviewed at the BAAL Business Meeting.

The Corpus Linguistics SIG has already submitted a proposal for a colloquium at this year's Annual Meeting.

4. **The purpose of the Corpus Linguistics SIG.**
Michael Stubbs suggested that the purpose of the SIG should be to discuss how to make progress in the field of Corpus Linguistics, and to identify problems and potential solutions. The Chair called for discussion of purposes via the mailing list. We are quite a diverse group, and we need to create a focus on which all our interests can converge.

We might create a theme for the spring meeting. There may also be more meetings per year, with funds handled through the SIG account, and financially successful events subsidising less financially successful events.

5. **Modes of communication**
Five modes of communication were identified: the SIG meetings, the BAAL Newsletter, the mailing list, a web-based discussion list and a website. The website can publish event programmes, abstracts of SIG related papers and minutes of SIG meetings. It can also provide a link to other corpus linguistics resources on the web.
At the first meeting of the SIG in September 2003 David Oakey volunteered to set up the website.

6. **Any other business**
BAAL will provide a start-up allowance of £200 against receipted expense claims. We agreed that a bank account should be opened as soon as possible in order to manage funds for future events. Paul Thompson suggested that we should buy a domain name for the SIG website (eg baalcorpussig).

HN 20/4/04