**Report on** ‘**Practical applications of regular expressions’**

The second BAAL Corpus Linguistics SIG event for 2016 was held on Saturday December 10 at Coventry University, with talks on the general theme of regular expressions. We aimed to provide information and networking opportunities for applied linguists compiling their own corpora, and/or seeking new ways to interrogate corpus data. Of course there is already help available on this topic – for example from stackoverflow.com – but the regular expressions websites generally assume some programming expertise, and they don’t necessarily focus on the sort of problems that beset BAAL members. The speakers at our event talked us through procedures for creating corpora from online forums (John Williams), using the MAT Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (Andrea Nini), uploading corpora to SketchEngine and conducting complex queries (Miloš Jakubíček), and developing an online academic writing tool (John Blake). They were on hand throughout the day to discuss their work, and regular expressions issues, with participants, and the schedule provided lots of time and space for the general sharing of ideas, worries, problems, and solutions.

In all there were 25 participants at this event, mostly based in the UK, but also from further afield. John Blake deserves a special mention – he came straight from Birmingham airport in his snow boots and waterproof trousers. There had been a heavy snowstorm in Aizu, Japan, the day before, and he had had to walk five miles through the snow to catch his flight.

All four speakers have kindly made their slides available on <http://baal-clsig.weebly.com/past-events.html>. In addition, John Williams has provided a Unix tutorial and other materials relating to the ongoing Citizen Science Project at the University of Portsmouth. Andrea Nini’s MAT program is freely downloadable from <https://sites.google.com/site/multidimensionaltagger/>, and SketchEngine offers open resources at https://the.sketchengine.co.uk/open/ (as many of you will know).

Thanks to everyone who took part for making this a most informative and enjoyable day.