



Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor (RaAM)

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## Annual Report 2011-12

### Introduction

The Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor was formed in 2006, after an inaugural meeting at the RaAM6 conference at the University of Leeds. It was registered as a charity the following year. Its key objective is to foster research into metaphor and other figures of speech, thought and communication. To this end, it facilitates a full conference every two years and a specialised seminar in the intervening years. In addition, RaAM offers financial support to researchers without the funding to disseminate and discuss their research, academic support (in the form of online resources and electronic networking and discussion facilities) and social support (a newsletter and Facebook group). In order to carry out the organisational work, there is a small Executive Committee, which meets once or twice a year. Procedures for bidding to hold specialised seminars and conferences have been established and refined through experience, so that an efficient and effective system is now in place which allows sufficient time for forward planning.

### Executive Committee (EC)

At the end of the financial year 2011-12 the EC comprised

Post	Person	Country
Chair	Alan Cienki	Netherlands
Secretary	Graham Low	UK
Treasurer	Mark Lee	UK
Web Editor	Tony Berber Sardinha	Brazil
Conference Secretary	Alice Deignan	UK

Newsletter Editor	Lettie Dorst	Netherlands
Postgraduate Liaison & Development Officer	Ewa Biernacka	UK
Ordinary member (UK)	Jeannette Littlemore	UK
Ordinary member (international)	Irene Mittelberg	Germany

For information, four posts came up for re-election at the 6 July 2012 AGM. The EC after the AGM comprises

Post	Person	Country
Chair	Alan Cienki	Netherlands
Secretary	Graham Low	UK
Treasurer	Mark Lee	UK
Web Editor	Tony Berber Sardinha	Brazil
Conference Secretary	Alice Deignan	UK
Newsletter Editor	Lettie Dorst (re-elected)	Netherlands
Postgraduate Liaison & Development Officer	Ewa Biernacka (re-elected)	Poland
Ordinary member (UK)	Andreas Musolff (new)	UK
Ordinary member (international)	Gill Philip (new)	Italy

RaAM is acutely conscious of the need to minimise EC expenses and running costs, and thus makes use of meeting locations central to members, and electronic conferencing (Skype) where viable. Moreover, RaAM only funds partial expenses for the EC, so EC members are hereby thanked for the considerable time and effort spent over the year. In 2011-12 the mid-year EC meeting was not needed, thereby saving travel and accommodation expenses.

## Membership

The RaAM membership figure at 28 June 2012 was 103 (65 senior members, 35 students, 3 retired), though people were continuing to join or rejoin between then and the AGM.

## Conferences and seminars

2011 saw the RaAM Specialized Seminar “Metaphor across Time and Genre” in the medieval town of Almagro, Spain, hosted by the University of Castilla La Mancha (5-7 May). The seminar adopted a format of having plenary papers rather than parallel sessions, and was generally very successful. The seminar included 27 oral presentations and 21 posters. An edited book of the Proceedings is being published. On the downside, the student bursaries

offered by RaAM were not in fact applied for, so greater co-ordination between the EC and Local Organising Committees (LOC) is needed in future. The university arrangement by which the seminar was made possible preclude the LOC from giving part of any money balance at the end to RaAM, so the income for 2011-12 was considerably lower than for 2010-11 (see below).

The 2012 RaAM9 conference was held at the University of Lancaster, UK, 4-7 July. The theme was “Metaphor in Mind and Society” and the dates 4-7 July. There was lengthy and detailed liaison between the Conference Secretary and the Local Organizing Committee. The conference will be discussed in the 2012-13 report.

The EC endorsed the seminar “Metaphor in social interaction: Culture, genre and discourse communities”, which took place within the 44th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (SLE) at the University of La Rioja, Spain, 8-11 September 2011.

RaAM also endorsed the “Metaphor Lab Winter School” on Metaphor Identification and Analysis held at the VU University, Amsterdam, 23-27 January 2012. The EC was able to offer £447 (500 euros) funding for student bursaries. A short planning session for follow-up by participants of the Winter and Summer Schools will be held at Lancaster, immediately after the RaAM9 conference.

Bids were received during the year for both the 2013 Specialized Seminar and the 2014 RaAM10 Conference. The EC awarded these as follows to:

*2013 Seminar (Faculty of English, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland)*

Theme: Metaphor & Emotions. Date: 2-3 May 2013.

*2014 RaAM10 conference bid (Dept of Education, Psychology & Philosophy, University of Cagliari, Italy)*

Theme: Metaphor in Communication, Science and Education. Date: 23-27 June 2014 (tbc)

The EC at its 4 July 2012 meeting agreed to offer (1) £1000 of matched funding for PhD students wanting to attend the 2013 seminar and (2) a similar £1000 matched funding for students and £2000 for needy non-students, especially academics from developing countries, attend the 2014 conference.

## **Financial summary**

As the RaAM bank account is in the UK, figures below are in UK pounds. The RaAM financial year runs 4 April – 5 April.

### *Income*

Membership (and other)	2446
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Income from savings	3
Total income	2449
<i>Payments</i>	
Website hosting	(103)
RaAM insurance	(431)
EC running costs	(1611)
Seedcorn research grants (& transfer charges)	(1047)
Student Bursaries for Metaphor Lab	(447)
Total payments	(3639)
Balance	<u>(1190)</u>
Cash from 2010-11	13048
Final position 4/5/2012	<u>11858</u>

RaAM's financial position remains healthy, and it will be able to offer student bursaries in 2013, and a new round of seedcorn research grants in 2014, as well as cover projected EC expenses. The income was lower than in 2010-11, largely due to the absence of money from seminars, but the negative balance should be seen in a positive light, as spending some of the unexpectedly large income from the previous year.

RaAM does not currently have a formal policy for holding and using financial reserves. However, the EC has attempted to maintain a judicious policy of expenditure, keeping about £5,000 in an easily accessible a savings account, and a final balance of around £10,000, so that RaAM remains solvent despite annual fluctuations in income from membership fees and/or conferences/seminars, but can still respond rapidly to either suggestions for funding new activities, or to emergencies of various sorts. As RaAM develops, it may become necessary to develop a more formalised policy.

### **Membership fees**

The aim is to keep RaAM membership fees within the ability of students to pay, as well as encouraging them to join for more than a year (e.g. the year of conferences). In 2011, the fee structure was revised, to have one-year and three-year rates. It will take more than a

year to establish the success of a three-year rate, but current evidence suggests that it is proving popular.

### **Public benefit activity**

It is RaAM policy that the conference bursaries it funds (or co-funds with Local Organising Teams) for PhD students, and the Early Career Research Paper prize are open to non-members of RaAM.

The 2012 Conference presentation prize (funded by Cambridge Scholars Press and again not restricted to RaAM members) was won by Peter Richardson for his presentation, “Clear paths: A study of the interaction between metaphors related to movement and certainty in Christian and Muslim testimonials”.

The 2012 Early Career Research Paper Prize had 6 applications. The winner was chosen by a jury co-ordinated by Irene Mittelberg and was Dennis Tay Zhiming (National University of Singapore). His prize-winning paper was:

Tay, D. (2012). Applying the notion of metaphor types to enhance counseling protocols. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 90(2), 142–149.

In the Autumn of 2011, four seedcorn funding grants were offered to facilitate metaphor research and development projects. Four bids were received and all were considered worthy of funding. One holder subsequently had to withdraw and the money was divided equally between the other three. The funds were awarded to:

- Paola Alarcón and Claudio Díaz (Universidad de Concepción, Chile), “Chilean student-teachers’ metaphors about the role of teachers as professionals”
  
- Stephen Pilhaja (Open University, UK), “Metaphor use in dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims in YouTube videos”
  
- Susan Ryland (independent artist-researcher) and Helen Thomas (Lancaster Univ.), “Soundings: Thought over time”.

At its meeting on 4 July 2012, the EC decided to try, if money was available, to offer seedcorn grants on a biennial basis and to offer them in the year of the RaAM conferences. That means that the next grants will be offered in 2014, not 2013.

New ideas for funding metaphor-related activities are welcomed.

## **Website, database and electronic resources**

The new RaAM website and members database were developed during the year and are almost ready to go live (remaining work mostly involves integrating the two). It is anticipated that both will be operative in Autumn 2012.

The Facebook group, set up for PhD students, had an administrative hiccup in 2012, losing all members when Facebook changed its interface. However, it has been reborn and had 53 members as at 28 June 2012. The e-mail listserv that RaAM established in 2010, Metaphor-L, has continued to provide a means for those interested in metaphor research to post questions and news. It is moderated by a student volunteer, Austin Bennett, in consultation with the Chair of RaAM.

Two editions of the RaAM newsletter were sent out in 2011-12. The format was largely the same as that of previous newsletters. Although informal feedback from readers has been very positive, it is currently hard to track how many members actually read it. It is hoped to be able to track readership better when the new website and database are operative. As ever, members are encouraged to send in contributions.

The RaAM website holds details of research projects by members and suggested readings for those doing doctoral research. Members are encouraged to update these.

RaAM has continued with its policy of archiving websites of conferences and seminars, and the Almagro seminar site has now been archived.

Graham Low & Alan Cienki, July 2012