

## **Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLIE)**

### **Meeting 96**

1.30 – 4.45, Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Room UG9, British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London, SW1A 2BN

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/new/Images/home-spring-gardens-map.gif>

#### **Present:**

Dick Hudson (Deputising as Chair, LAGB), Eddie Williams (BAAL), Esther Daborn (BAAL, CLIE secretary), Jo-Ann Delaney (NATECLA), Jonathan Gibson (ESC), Judith Broadbent (LAGB, Deputising for Vivienne Rogers), Kate Board (CILT), Keith Davidson (NATE), Melissa Cudmore (BC), Tim Shortis (co-opted),

### **1. Membership and apologies**

The Chair (DH) welcomed those present, thanked MC for arrangements to hold the meeting at the British Council, and noted apologies from

Ben Rockcliffe, (TDA), Caroline Coffin (BAAL), Catherine Walter (co-opted), Charlotte Franson (NALDIC), Graeme Trousdale (Chair, LAGB), Guy Cooke (BAAL), Ian Brinton (EA), Jonnie Robinson (BL), Kate Saunders, (BDA), Kersti Borjars (LAGB), Mahendra Verma (co-opted), Patricia Ashby (LLAS), Richard Aplin (ALA), Sue Ellis (UKLA), Sue Holley (DE), Terry Lamb (ALL and LDDP), Urszula Clark (BAAL), Vivienne Rogers (LAGB), Willem Hollmann (LAGB),

Introductions included a significant exchange of information about the British Council's growing interest in ESOL/EAL in UK.

1.1 New secretary and new co-opted member of the committee. The Chair (DH) thanked CW for all her sterling work as secretary; he was glad to be able to welcome CW as a co-opted member of the committee, in her absence; he welcomed Esther Daborn (ED) to her first meeting as CLIE secretary; he extended best wishes to UC for a good recovery.

### **2 Minutes of Meeting 95**

Minutes of Meeting 95 represent notes significantly modified by JAD, SE, TS. The minutes were agreed. DH expressed the wish that TS would be able to present more on the new requirements for Spoken Language Study in GCSE English Language. Boards are creating materials of doubtful value. We note with concern the close relations between publishers and exam boards. How can quality be assured? It was agreed that further discussion would be helpful.

**Action (ED):** New GCSE requirements for the Study of Spoken Language to be included as an agenda item for next meeting.

### **3 Matters arising**

3.1 Mtg 95, Item 3.1: TDA have set up a website for new tutors of PGCE English. DH had been trying to negotiate with TDA about content, and had had a positive response. But now funding for English has been pulled. It is not clear what has happened to funding for MFL. TDA is currently not spending money. They will be in limbo until it is clear how they can work with new government policy. This matter is referred to by KD in his NATE report.

**Action (DH):** DH will write to JB at TDA to ask for clarification

3.2 Mtg 95, Item 3.2, CLIE paper on *Standard English* (DH, WH): Paper is now finished and loaded on to CLIE website. Thanks to all who have helped.

3.3 Mtg 95, Item 3.3: Audit of grammatical knowledge (DH): DH carried out a test in 12 institutions in 2009 to get an idea of what school leavers know. Results showed less than in 1986, despite the fact that grammar now has a higher profile in schools.

DH drew our attention to the TES 5<sup>th</sup> Nov article by DH and Dan Clayton on this topic. It was suggested that capital could be made of the fact that the current schools minister 'likes grammar'. JB added that this would be a good opportunity to raise our concern about lack of guidance on assessing the study of spoken language. KB requests scanned copy of the article for background reading. KD suggested it would be helpful to point out that 'standard' language should not be confused with 'standards'.

**Action (DH):** DH to write to the Schools Minister at the Dept of Education, raising concerns over grammatical knowledge. DH to enclose the TES article and the Standard English document.

3.4 Mtg 95, Item 9: Future agenda item on primary languages (DH). It was agreed that we should have foreign languages at Primary School as an agenda item when the Curriculum Review is announced. Both primary and secondary languages will be 'looked at'. Schools who have introduced languages in primary are backpedalling due to lack of money, so in many cases languages are alongside RE and Sport in terms of priorities. However, situations for Primary and Secondary are different, due to different requirements for pedagogy. Various questions were raised: Is there a link between foreign language teaching and literacy? Why is everyone else in the world better at language teaching than we are? Possibly because English is a core academic subject in other countries. Foreign languages are not core subjects in the UK.

**Action (ED,KB):** KB offered to invite someone to talk about Languages in Primary for Feb Meeting

#### **4. Linguistics Olympiad (DH)**

DH reported on the Linguistic Olympiad which in 2010 involved 600 kids at 2 levels. In 2011, the 2<sup>nd</sup> round will take place in Edinburgh. 14 new schools now registered. The 2011 International Olympiad will be in US. The 2012 meeting will be in Slovenia. DH might host the International Olympiad in 2013, in which case he needs to raise money to the tune of £40 – 50,000. It is necessary to find a patron to assist with fund raising, so he is thinking of the Olympic gold medalist, a graduate of UCL, Christine Ohuruogu. The Linguistic Olympiad Committee is a sub committee of CLIE

JAD added information about the Language Olympics which is all done on line. It arose from a collaboration between ALL and the Language Perfect company (NZ), built up by someone who wrote a computer programme for vocabulary learning that keeps a record of how many words you have learned. Possible training?

#### **5. PGCE report (TS)**

TS provided an update on the PGCE recruitment report profiling students accepted into PGCE secondary English training. There are concerns that many with qualifications in English literature are being offered places, whilst those from Undergraduate programmes in Language and Linguistics are not necessarily being accepted. Findings from the report have been presented to the NATE ITE steering committee. Tim Shortis and Julie Blake, the authors, presented to the BEERA conference SIG, to the research strand of NATE in July, and on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov will raise this at the NATE Annual symposium.

TS and JB wrote an article for NATE's academic journal. It is the second article based on the PGCE report and aims to probe more tentative findings. For example, it appeared that in larger centres with a profile of considerable experience and large numbers, and networked with scholarly journals, there might be greater likelihood of the student teachers being conceptualised as a broad-based cohort coming into the profession that could cope with the broad diversity of teaching needed in English.

In a small PGCE department the default position tended to be that a degree in English literature is an essential requirement to teach English.

The impact of this report is anecdotal as there is no formal forum. Apparently, many English teachers now feel less threatened by linguists. But at the same time, some HMIs take the historical view that a degree in English Literature is a prior requirement for teaching English. Although they appreciate the need for knowledge of language, there is still the view that an English Literature degree is better.

A bi-product of this survey was the realisation that those teaching on the PGCE do not have a database of their own constituency. The only funded opportunity for them to come together is at meetings to discuss literacy strategy. Many tutors are quite isolated, particularly in smaller centres. As the report has produced a significant database of PGCE programme leaders and admissions tutors, there was considerable discussion of the desirability of setting up a mail list so that this group can communicate with each other.

**Action (JG & TS):** JG & TS to explore the potential further development of this database to enable PGCE tutors to communicate with each other via a mail list, referring to MC if needed, as she offered to provide a 'fair collection notice' (as used by the British Council) for users to sign.

## **6. Reports from member organisations for information**

6.1 BAAL: offered information on the new executive committee.

6.2 NATE (see separate report): KD pointed out the information on the NATE conference and recent work from Debbie Myhill, whose research shows that right kind of grammar teaching can improve writing.

6.2 NATECLA: concerns raised about the latest news that funding for adult ESOL would be for 'settled' ESOL communities.

6.3 ALA (see separate report): The ALA press release reported on their conference in Germany.

6.4 UKLA (see separate report): this was accompanied by a flyer (attached) with information about Sue Ellis and Elspeth McCartney's book *Applied Linguistics and Primary School Teaching*, CUP 2011,

6.5 ALEL (see separate report): An update on Advanced Level English Language led to discussion about an examiner highlighting potential ethics problems with collecting fieldwork data: is there sufficient guidance?

6.6 Other items considered included the NALDIC conference flyer and the UCGAL news letter (both attached).

**Action (ED):** Include on next meeting agenda the issue of ethics and confidentiality in language investigation for A Level English language fieldwork.

## **7. Dates for future meetings**

7.1 The February meeting has been fixed for 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011, 1.30-4.45

7.2 The May meeting has been fixed for 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011, 1.30-4.45

Both meetings will be kindly hosted by the British Council, by arrangement with MC.

## **8. Plans for meeting Number 100 of CLIE (February 2012)**

Suggestions were invited for ways of marking the 100<sup>th</sup> meeting of CLIE. Members suggested a number of topics, formats, and venues for consideration

Some examples to cover all kinds of language teaching: changes in schools over the last 30 years; a retrospective seminar; a conference for teachers in schools; a road show; a virtual seminar; raising standards for performance in talk;

Invitees? Senior examiners; publishers; David Crystal; Lyd King.

The timing might be opportune, 18 months from now, on a Monday, to use the British Library main lecture room and break out rooms

**Action (ED):** Include on agenda for next meeting

## **9 AOB**

9.1 DH mentioned that there will be a meeting this week of English Language academics to discuss writing an 'unofficial benchmark' for English Language degrees. Currently they are rather mixed between linguistics and creative writing. Some English Language degrees look at real data, while others are oriented more to pure linguistics. The participants will attempt to pull this together.

**Action:** (ED) Include report on next meeting agenda for information

**10 Invited speaker:** Angela Gayton, University of Edinburgh, gave a presentation entitled 'Edinburgh Language Ambassadors: an overview'. [The powerpoint show is on the CLIE website.]

She reported on visits to first year high school classes in Edinburgh made by her team of 25 ambassadors (Edinburgh Undergraduates studying languages and staff from the International Office). The aim is to raise the profile of languages and add a careers focus by engaging students in various motivating and fun activities: German X factor, Chinese horoscopes, Italian Art, Arabic Calligraphy, Famous French people, Spanish cookery.

Her interesting presentation was well received. Members asked a number of questions, including how her initiative fitted in with current practice. Members also offered several suggestions of how she might consider further development of the work she described.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm