

Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLiE)

Meeting 103

1.30 – 4.45, Friday 15th February 2013

The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

Minutes

1. Membership and apologies

Attendees: Esther Daborn (BAAL, CLiE chair), Vivienne Rogers (LAGB, CLiE secretary), Dick Hudson (LAGB), Mahendra Verma (co-opted), Catherine Walter (co-opted), Sue Ellis (UKLA), Graeme Trousdale (LAGB), Nicole King (HEA), Keith Davidson (NATE), Willem Holmann (LAGB), Wasyl Cajkler (ALA), Melissa Cudmore (B C), Jonnie Robinson (BL), Caroline Coffin (BAAL)

Apologies: Jo-Ann Delaney (NATECLA), Simon Coffey (BAAL), Charlotte Franson (NALDIC), Dan Clayton (co-opted), Ursula Clark (BAAL), Sue Holley (DfE), Jim Houghton (ISMLA), Terry Lamb (co-opted), Kate Board (CfBT) Ian Brinton (EA), Dan Clayton (co-opted)

1.1 ED opened the meeting by noting that the committee would like to thank Graeme Trousdale for all his work chairing and Dick Hudson for his great helmsmanship. Vivienne Rogers will now take over as secretary and has offered to give up her role as webmaster.

1.2 Welcome to Nicole King and thanked for sending deputy with information for CLiE about funding at last meeting.

1.3 ED highlighted a number of organizations who either don't have a contact listed or who have not been taking an active part:

- a) ALL? ED action from meeting 102 to see if they want to send someone but no response. WC offered to contact Wendy or Linda to follow up. **(Action: WC)**
- b) TDA? Suggestion was made that we abandon it as Ben Rockcliffe's email doesn't work and TDA is mainly now about recruitment.
- c) British Dyslexia Association. Suggestion made to remove BDA from membership list – **Action ED/VR to send a letter saying that we are thinking of removing from the list.** ED: contact John Hopper to try to get attendance **(Action: ED)**
- d) NAAE: position to fill – **Action ED/VR to send letter suggesting removal. (Action ED/VR)**
- e) Dan Clayton (co-opted): He emailed to say can't come to meetings for the foreseeable future but would be happy to stay on the list and be involved. As he has been very visible on the list, the consensus was to keep him on the list. **(Action: ED/VR to contact and pass on this information)**

1.4 NK raised the point that we need more flexibility in who comes from an organisation. GT suggested there was a need for more teachers on the committee.

Action ED/VR: Put membership on the agenda for consideration of membership/co-option and whether it is for a limited period of time.

2. Minutes of Meeting 102

2.1 Re: item 9.4. CLiE is not going to pursue HEA funding for tweets

2.1 Re item 5.10: There is not much happening re: position paper on phonics as the position is not clear. It is not an appropriate time to report.

2.1 Re: item 9. There is a typo in minutes – Filippo not Filippe (Action: GT to amend, email to VR for website).

3. Matters arising from Meeting 102 minutes

3.1 Continuation of Matters Arising from Meeting 101 minutes

3.1.1 Re: 3.5 VR to contact SC about his contact list for MFL training providers. **(Action: VR)**

see item 2.1.

3.1.2 Re: 9.6 MFL/Linguistics research digest. Item carried forward. **(Action: DC, SC, VR)**

3.2 Matters arising From meeting 102 minutes
3.2.1 Re: 5.8 Item carried forward to May. VR to email with doodle poll re: dates. We have a room offered at KCL. MC offered British Council to host as it will coincide with a big exhibition on the value of English to the UK. **(Action: VR)**

3.2.2 Re: 6.4 VR didn't send ALL sponsorship materials to GT **(Action VR)**

3.2.3 Re: 7.1 Jo-Ann is now a follower of CLiE on twitter. Item resolved.

3.2.4 Re: 7.2 VR to put 'Follow us on Twitter' on website. Also meeting minutes will now be put as 'draft' on website, rather than leaving till approved at following meeting. **(Action: VR)**

3.2.5 Re: 7.3 ED has checked the CLiE terms of reference and confirmed we have to work as a network for the exchange of information. **(Action completed)**

3.2.5 Re: 7.5 ED has contact details for Claire Acevedo and we hope she will come and speak to us at some point.

3.2.6 Re: 9. ED contacted Filippo Nereo (HEA Languages) to see if he would like to join us. Nicole to speak to him to encourage him to come. Awaiting his response.

4. Reports from member organisations for information (CLiE members)

- a) see CLiE website for links to member associations

KD will circulate NATE notes (see appendix at the end of minutes). KD also highlighted two points:

- GCSE English language fiasco: legal challenge to the Summer 2012 results now rejected by the High Court

E Bacc, with single-board subjects: both shelved - not rejected; supposed subject tightening up still targeted for first teaching in September 2015 - in advance of confirming the revised KS4 framework **(Action: KD)**

- b) Nicole King, HEA (English) activities

NK informed the meeting that there has been a shift in emphasis at HEA from disciplines to more generic focus. NK encourages not only to look at her and Fil's newsletters but also **the generic** areas, e.g. internationalisation. Members are encouraged to get in touch if they are having a conference. NK would like to encourage people to think about seminars or workshop you want

to do so that when the funding call opens in August/Sept you are ready. Keep track of funding page on HEA website. Events – some will charge. Nicole and Fil very willing to have informal conversations to encourage applications for funding.

GT: is there a specific stream that link academics with undergrad students?. NK: not a specific stream but HEA very positive re: student engagement – could fund workshops or seminars or projects (particularly in how we teach them). Need to show how it will benefit the broader community, e.g. website etc. Need to be completed within a particular fiscal year (end of July).

- c) Westminster Education Forum Keynote Seminar, 'Reviewing the new Languages Curriculum'

WC has asked for funding from his university. He will let us know next week. If no one else can go, CW has offered. **(Action: WC)**

We would like feedback to the list on the event.

- 5. Asset Languages campaign (TL)

Report to the list – ED to ask TL to do that. **(Action ED)**

- 6. A-level related

- a) CLiE representation to exam boards for A-level Eng Lang review (UC)

In the absence of UC, WH reported his impression that things have slowed down. Fluid situation – update at next meeting. **(Action WH/UC)**

- b) A/AS level in Linguistics British Council / British Academy interest in supporting A-level linguistics (GT, MC & ED)

British council: Following on from the discussion about A/AS level linguistics in November, ED had contacted MC to explore British Council interest in sponsoring research to establish school interest in A/AS level linguistics.

MC indicated that she could put CLiE in touch with two people who could help us get feedback from headteachers on questions. It would be done at Pro bono level. One additional contact suggested was Neil Sheldon, at Manchester Grammar School who is involved with UKLO.

DH/GT /WH reported some developments in the discussion of an A-level linguistics that had happened in parallel to the CLiE discussion from the November meeting discussion. Neil Sheldon has discussed such an A-level in Linguistics with the OCR through a fortunate series of circumstances. DH, GT, and WH have been supporting Neil in his communication with them. This might conceivably also have an impact on the way they consider the possibility of, and the committee's involvement in, such an A-level

Action DH to send email to MC re: OCR.

Two issues: 1. is there the interest, 2. Are there the teachers? (For information: Education Session in LAGB at SOAS on 29/30 August will be on feasibility of doing A-level linguistics. It's free to attend).

Q: is there scope for more linguistics in English Language A-level? A: depends on the teacher. The softer the 'English language' studies then the more space for A-level linguistics.

Action: GT/DH/WH to report back on any developments from Neil Sheldon re: OCR next meeting. A-level linguistics will return as a standing item on the CLiE agenda.

British Academy grant – report should be available before the next meeting. Should be finished by 31 March. Will be asking for more money on 1 April.

7. Curriculum developments

7.1 SPaG @ KS2 & 3 (DH/WC) There have been numerous pre-meeting exchanges on the CLiE list about the new SPaG @ KS2 & 3 tests.

There was general concern about the purpose of the test. WC is not sure about the purpose of the test – very vague. Mix of testing meta-language and use – so there are multiple answers. They are being used in schools and roadshows are taking place – one day courses 'Mind your GAPS'.

DH – very easy to find problems but are we against the idea of the test?

KD: yes

SE: Scotland doing something different – they want a test bank for teachers (c. 2000 items) where the onus is on the student/teacher and they will sit the test but it's a teaching test so the right answer pops up with an explanation. Students can sit it as many times as needed. It is not punitive. At the end they must have a certain percentage in order to pass. Test aimed at 16 year olds. Later on this will be for school children. Test in England is different.

CC: issue that the content is completely de-contextualised.

GT: should our children be able to recognise a noun as something they know.

CC: need clarity for its purpose.

KD: it's about teachers not about the students.

DH: we have been arguing that writing skills should be explicit and what this is testing is whether children know what an exclamation mark is.

SE: the issue is about how policy is implemented. Track record is that you get lip service to the policy and kids and teachers see it as being uninteresting.

DH you can't test explicit understanding without asking explicit questions.

SE: easy to look at the linguistics that needs to be taught but the problem is in what ways is that understood by a 6 year old, 8 year old, 10 year old. We know policy is translated into practice and recognise the different types or variations in children knowledge.

CW: TN group on morphemes.

SE: it's not about how you would talk to a child about that.

CW: they produced materials about the role of morphology in spelling.

SE: now they can only do synthetic phonics in KS1 & 2.

KD: teachers need to know more about language before they can do this.

JR: while we can criticise the test, what do we do about supporting teachers

GT: need to think about what we do practically.

DH: no mileage about telling the DFS that they have got it wrong.

SE: need to include linguists and people in curriculum design.

DH: they have consulted both.

SE: still not connecting with the problems on the ground.

DH: what we have is a compromise between what Gove would like and what we would like . In part due to our work. What we can do is to tweak and improve it.

CW: so what can or should we do?

DH: issue: narrowness of scope. Actually 5 questions repeated over and over again. 3 questions about spotting a word class. Don't need to be as narrow as that. We could offer our services to broaden scope. DH offered and they said they already have people on their list.

CW: How do they do it other countries? Need we re-invent the wheel or do we look at our neighbours?

SE: need something that is seen to be useful and supportive of the subject and the teachers.

CC: needs to be meaningful and motivated.

SE: very few good models for teachers. Need to make sure that anything we recommend is for all children – the kids who are isolated not just those that go to university. Need grammar to support literacy development.

CC: in Australia they have new system that seems to be very successful.

CW: maybe one way is for this group to apply for a grant to bring together models from different countries.

Action: SE, ED, CW and CC to form a sub group to develop a proposal before May meeting and present (item on May agenda).This could then be put in for funding from HEA (English or Languages) in Aug/Sept. Report by November meeting.

Suggestion: Offer government the idea of developing a teaching question bank. Maybe ask Nicole? Is this something for CLiE website? Could we gamify it for the children?

Action: VR to design a form for website for students to upload questions for the question bank. Item on May agenda7.2New NC KS1-3

220 pages includes English and MFL

Lots of new things but KS4 not done yet. KS3 is very brief. All detail in KS 1&2.

Appendix 2: grammar and punctuation. Will be part of statutory NC. Glossary won't be stat. Quite a few things need to be changed in the consultation. Glossary has been very well received.

Action: DH to circulate links.

Invite CLiE to look and respond to DH with comments.

7.3. UC May 'How language Works: the teaching of language and literacy across school subjects at key stage 3.

UC project – will talk about in May. **(Action: UC)**

8. UKLO update (GT)

British Academy project: draft report is complete. Working on executive summary and materials for teachers. Ends 31 March. Will send copy to CLiE.

Materials for UKLO training for teachers: UG students have been trained on questions on each level. Students are developing supporting materials. GT will send link when online. **(Action: GT)**

9. UKLO2013: tripled entry from last year. Most growth is at foundation and intermediate levels. Hopefully this will feed into the advanced level in a few years. Round 1 has taken place. Markathons are taking place. Round 2 will be held at the end of March. ILO in Manchester in July. The balance between state and private schools is swinging slowly in favour of state schools. Last year 3 independent school candidates to 1 state school but now less than 2:1. It is moving in the right direction. There are more candidates in UKLO than any other country.

10. CLiE profile: Twitter, buttons on the website (WH / ED/ VR)

Work in progress – talk about it in May. **(Action: WH, ED, VR)**

11. Members spot: future plan? 2 x 10 minutes on current projects. This meeting: Education Scotland grammar for teachers & the applied linguistics knowledge primary teachers need (SE).

Suggestion: have a member spot to contribute something about their research or interests. GT offered to talk about the project with his students at May meeting. **(Action: GT)**

SE suggested members have a look on the school of education at Strathclyde website for info on the projects there: http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/schoolofeducation/education_projects/ **(Action: ALL)**

12. AOB

ED reported that she had received a request to join CLiE from Ian Cushing – grateful for application but no space for a co-opted member at present. It was accepted that it would be desirable to increase the number of practising teachers on the committee. The issue of will be an item on May meeting. **Action: ED to circulate his CV.**

13. Date of meeting 104 and the next 3: Meeting 104, 24th May 2013? Venue KCL?

Meeting 105: Nov 8th/15th? Venue BC?

a. Meeting 106: Feb 2014 7th/14th? Venue KCL?

b. Meeting 107: May 16th/23rd? Venue BC?

Doodle for all dates. **(Action: VR)**

Appendix: Nate Notes, KD

New NATE membership package

- New publications in association with Routledge include Martin Illingworth and Nick Hall, *Teaching English Language 16-19*
- New professional journal, *Teaching English*, February 2013
- Research journal, *English in Education*, retained
- Newly designed website (nate.org.uk), new e-mail newsletters

Exams

- GCSE English fiasco: judicial statement awaited on the joint legal action against Ofqual, AQA and Edexcel - boards had warned Ofqual of potential problems
- HMC (independent schools) report on the quality of marking in the GCSE and A level exams - 'persistent and widespread incompetence in marking'
- EBacc projected for 2015, five core subjects, including revised EBacc English - to be franchised to one board only - widely rejected by the profession
- Separate AS and A levels, subject to final assessment also to be introduced in 2015, also widely rejected
- Current GCSEs and AS-A level to be retained in Wales - the Northern Ireland authority (CCEA) due to report in June
- New A level in Creative Writing, in development for some years, to be offered, with Ofqual accreditation, by AQA from September - intended to appeal to a wide range of students

Curriculum

- Draft Primary Curriculum (Summer 2012), widely criticised for reductive approach to language learning - as reinforced by:
- Year 6 Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) tests (45-minute grammar test and a 15-minute spelling test) to replace the SAT Writing paper:
 - 'Back will come months of exercises and drills in "grammar" for which there is absolutely no evidence that it helps with writing or reading - or indeed that most Year 6 pupils actually understand it' (Michael Rosen in *The Guardian*)
 - part of 'a worryingly coherent programme... of neo-elementary schooling dominated not by the understanding of key concepts or the fostering of personal qualities but by knowledge of content' (Colin Richards in the *TES*)
- Draft Secondary Curriculum (as leaked to the *TES* in November) skeletal compared with previous versions of the English orders, and with the draft Primary Curriculum, but still manages to be old-fashioned and often irrelevant - not compulsory for the majority of schools, and so with a strong risk that it will be determined by the assessment

English PGCE courses

Cuts announced in November as part of the government's move towards more school-based training are putting a number of courses under threat of closure and threatening to unbalance the whole teacher training system;

'An ideological move by the government that is not based on evidence. It's a move to make teaching an apprenticeship profession and to deprofessionalise it.' (Simon Gibbons, NATE Chair)