

Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLiE)

Meeting 104

1.30 – 4.45, Friday 17th May 2013

King's College London, Department of Education & Professional Studies,
Waterloo Campus, Franklin Wilkins Building (Waterloo Bridge Wing)

Minutes

Attendees: Esther Daborn (BAAL, CLiE chair), Dick Hudson (LAGB), Graeme Trousdale (LAGB), Ursula Clark (BAAL), Simon Coffey (BAAL), Keith Davidson (NATE), Willem Holmann (LAGB), Pamela Frame (for Jo-Ann Delaney, NATECLA), Nick Mair (ISMLA Chair), Catherine Walter (co-opted),

Apologies: Vivienne Rogers (LAGB, CLiE secretary), Caroline Coffin (BAAL), Sue Ellis (UKLA), Nicole King (HEA), Charlotte Franson (NALDIC), Jonnie Robinson (BL), Ian Brinton (EA), Wasyl Cajkler (ALA), Melissa Cudmore (B C), Terry Lamb (co-opted), Dan Clayton (co-opted), Mahendra Verma (co-opted),

1. Opening and apologies

ED welcomed the attendees, thanked SC for hosting and the hospitality, and noted apologies, as above.

2. Minutes of Meeting 103

The minutes were accepted.

3. Matters arising from Minutes of Meeting 103

3. 1.Item 1.3a WC to contact ALL re sponsoring a representative to attend CLiE – see Item 4.1 Membership below.

3.2. Item 1.3c ED has contacted the BDA to suggest removal but no reply. Another mail to be sent by ED suggesting removal after the next meeting in November 2013. **(Action ED)**

3.3. Item 1.3d ED contacted NAAE: no reply so we will remove them as well **(Action ED)** I. did not contact John Hopper (DfE) but will ask him to come to the meetings **(Action ED)**;

3.4. Item 1.3e ED has contacted Dan Clayton and he is happy to remain on the list. GT raised the issue of people being on the list but not being active members of the Committee by attending meetings. CW suggests that we should have a Friends of CLIE list for former members who are still interested. DH points out that we still have such a list.

3.5. Item 1.4 Action completed: Membership on the agenda this meeting.

3.6 Item 3.1.1 VR did contact SC re his contact list for MFL training providers. It turns out that SC doesn't have such a list, but that there is an MFL list that he can publicise things on for us. This is sufficient for our purposes as we do not need the exact names. Point resolved.

3.7 Item 3.1.2 related to Jim Hutton's idea for an intro to culture of the language for schools. SC has not resolved this yet but will update us when he has managed to address it. There was some discussion on how to do this, with both CW and NM arguing for a form of crowd sourcing. GT pointed to the Linguistics Research Digest for English language Teaching maintained by Jenny Cheshire, and Sue Fox (Queen Mary) and Paul Kerswill at (York) <http://linguistics-research-digest.blogspot.co.uk/p/about.html>

3.8 Items 3.2.2+3.2.4 VR actions done

3.9. Item 4a. KD done

3.10. Item 4.c WC attended Westminster Education Forum Seminar and sent us a report indicating that it was rather unsatisfactory. We thank WC for going and for his report. No further action. SC went to a similar event at the end of 2012 and also felt it was unsatisfactory.

3.11 Item 5. ED presented Terry Lamb's update on the campaign for Asset languages. In summary, Nick Clegg got involved in the Asset issue and was quite supportive, writing to Gove. However, Gove was rather dismissive. Clegg invited TL and colleagues from Languages Sheffield to visit his advisor in London. Again lots of sympathy. Then OCR pulled Asset without giving anyone further chance to object.

The next step is a proposal to make use of the Ladder and resources by suggesting that the University offers some recognition of Asset achievement in the region. Learners will be able to get at least a certificate from us. This will be a pilot for other universities to do the same. Nick Clegg's office has indicated it is also interested in and has confirmed that they will ask DfE to get involved.

DH mentioned a meeting with Elizabeth Truss where she stated she wasn't aware of Language Ladder. Nick mentioned a lot of interest in Asset and suggested that CLIE should support this at the appropriate time. ED raised the issue of Twitter, which we could use for reporting on issues such as this, and DH mentioned the questions asked in the House of Lords by Lord Randolph Quirk, which he asked on the basis of CLIE concerns (communicated through DH). **Action Tweet?**

3.12. Item 6. Dealt with in Meeting 104 Agenda item 6.

3.13. Item 7. Dealt with in Meeting 104 Agenda item 8.

3.14. Item 7.1 DH links circulated.

3.15. Item 8. UC reported on an EAL driven CPD-driven initiative called *How Language Works*, which supports subject teachers to teach 'objective' writing within subjects as part of the teaching of that subject (e.g. explanations, reports). The project is working well, with student confidence rising. There are negotiations with the EDF and Bell Foundation for a project that would allow the wider circulation of these materials in the UK context.

ED asked whether this is connected with the European project on genre called 'Teacher education for literacy across Europe' (Sue Ellis, Clare Acevedo [who is speaking at CLIE 106]). UC said that it does not but added that the possibility of links should be explored.

DH asked about funding. UC suggested that there is funding for part of the programme but not for the follow-up training. CW pointed to research she has carried out on what makes teacher development work, which she will circulate. **Action CW**

DH is asking for more details about CPD in schools (figures per school, per teacher) with a view to possible future CLIE activities in this area. DH mentioned that David Crystal, Ron Carter and a few others are being hired by schools to give day-long workshops. Various members of the committee expressed their concern about the quality of the teaching that schools are buying in (e.g. a self-proclaimed expert named Pie Corbett), as this is entirely unregulated. UC will find out how this generally works and report back to the committee. **Action UC**

3.16. Item 10. Work in progress.

3.17. Item 11. Action completed. GT spoke at member spot

3.18. Item 12. Action completed. Further discussion at Item 4.

4. Membership

4.1 ALL have now found a part-time German teacher to come to CLIE. We will invite them. **Action ED**

4.2 Length of term for co-opted members. CW pointed out that the major decisions about CLIE are taken by BAAL and LAGB. These societies decide how long their representatives stay on the committee. CW argued that the other constituent associations should decide who should represent them. There was general consensus about this. Co-opted members are slightly different. ED suggested inviting co-opted members for 3 years, with BAAL and LAGB to ratify this at their general meetings in September. **Action ED/GT**

4.3 Teacher representation. GT raised the issue of teacher representation. DC has effectively resigned as a co-opted member, which has opened up a slot for an A-level language teacher. Julie Blake would be a possibility. KD wonders whether she could instead replace him as a NATE rep. CLIE thanks KD for his long involvement and wise advice to CLIE. GT said that if Julie Blake accepts the invitation to join as the NATE rep then we could consider inviting someone else to join as a co-opted member to represent the A-level language community. **Action KD/ED**

4.4 NM suggested inviting someone in their second/third year of teacher training. ED suggested that this would be useful for a single item in a single meeting. CW suggests setting up a panel that we could consult as and when necessary. We could send a few relevant issues to NATE/NATECLA/NALDIC which they could then distribute to their lists. SC offers that he may sound out the modern language teachers he coordinates. **Action SC**

4.5 Joining by request. ED had circulated the CV of a person requesting to join CLIE. CW warned against setting a precedent for members joining through non-regular channels. GT suggested that we can invite him at some point to give a talk. DH said he could also get more involved in UKLO if he likes. **Action ED: inform the enquirer**

5. Reports from member organisations for information (CLIE members)

See 3.11 and 3.12 above for notes on Westminster Education Forum Seminar and TL's update on the Asset Languages campaign

6.A-Level exam boards

6.1 UC talked about her response to Pearson. CW praised UC's submission. When the response from Pearson arrives UC will send it around for possible input from members. She expects to be contacted by AQA and Edexcel soon. The committee decided that it would be good to approach the other exam boards. **Action ED: ask list members for contacts on exam boards; if no response then ED to contact the boards**

6.2 DH also raises the issue of publishers, who often make ill-informed decisions about commissioning textbook authors. KD extends the issue to exam boards as well, and also mentions Julie Blake whose book *The Full English* has given her much relevant experience. In terms of how to organise this, Nick suggests going through the exam boards. **Action ED: ask members via the list for contacts at publishers in the education department and at exam boards**

7 A/AS Level linguistics.

7.1 Not much news. Bert Vaux (Cambridge) has now been included in the discussion. GT reminded members that the A-Level Lx is the topic of the EC session at the LAGB meeting at SOAS. KD reminded members that the A-level will be a 2-year course, and a separate, stand-alone AS level. KD suggested that initially just designing an AS level might be an option.

7.2 MC has not reported back on head teachers' views on the subject.

7.3 NM mentioned that Peter Downes (ASCL; ex-Manchester Grammar foreign languages; ex-Head Examiner) would be a good adviser for state schools on the A-level linguistics. (He has done this for KS2.) **Action ED: compose the questions to ask him, check with DH/GT and pass them on to NM who will approach Peter Downes.**

8. Funding application to HEA: models for teachers, e.g. 'teaching' question bank

Nothing to report except that the named members are keen to continue.

9. UKLO update

GT: Round 2 went very well —so well that we will be sending 2 teams to the international event (22-26 July 2013). They will be tutored by students from Edinburgh. The BritAc project is finished, with the full report and training materials (some of them prepared by undergraduates at Edinburgh) being available from the news section of the UKLO website. Future developments: materials, funding → nothing to report on yet, but the BritAc will likely decide on the basis of the final report.

DH talked about statistics, which were less overwhelming than expected (by the teachers), with a 50% increase rather than 200%. This is still satisfactory, especially since most of the growth was at foundation level. We even had 48 children from years 5-6, so the competition is attracting more entrants in earlier years.

CW suggests that the British Council might help to make more publicity. NM suggested that students might talk through the solution of some problems, covering different levels of difficulty. GT: This is indeed intended.

10 CLiE profile

Still work in progress. **Action: ED will email her list of buttons to the CLiE list.** ED also mentioned the paper offered by Sue Ellis, outlining the limited empirical evidence on which the current government position on phonics is based, to go up on the CLiE website **Action: VR upload the paper.** DH: this should be done in such a way that comments from BAAL/LAGB members may be added.

11. Members spot

GT: Students at Edinburgh originally got involved with the UKLO marking, then training. The Edinburgh students' society has set up an outreach sub-committee who intend to go out to schools to speak to teachers and students about what a language/linguistics University degree is like. At Strathclyde there is a group of 'student ambassadors' who go to schools to talk about foreign languages. They have a website where schools can book them. GT wishes to look into setting up a similar system in Edinburgh. The talks of the Edinburgh students would be built around UKLO/ILO questions, tailored to the level of the pupils in question. Another project is one where the students wish to approach schools with the offer of discussing subjects (such as biology) in terms of linguistics. GT hopes that eventually the activities of the Edinburgh students may be used as the model for students elsewhere.

12. AOB

12.1 NM wishes to contact every MP in the UK and ask them about the importance of language and language learning: response to be put on the Speak to the Future website. He wondered whether committee members could get students to contact MPs; see the 'They work for us' website for a model. **Action: NM to email the letter to CLiE members**

12. 2. NM concerned that in Primary schools heads are only concerned with Maths and English, and wondered whether we would like to support the effort to raise the profile of (M)FL and get students into languages and linguistics in this manner. The ministerial advisory group, modern languages experts group (who are reviewing the new National Curriculum at the moment) are meeting on 17/05. We could email NM, who can then forward that to relevant parties. **Action: DH to draft an email about CLiE and why the committee should be involved in the discussion on linguistics/modern languages, email it around to CLiE and then on to NM for 19/05.**

12.3 CW: Mark Steele wrote an article in the Guardian (17/05) about SPaG.

12.4 NM provided a lot of information about problems with the reliability of FL exams at GCSE and A-levels. Unpredictable results lead to students not selecting FLs. He also mentioned the gender gap.

12.5 UC: EAL Roundtable organised by British Council and Bell Foundation, discussed issues in EAL. ED contributed a question: now that many schools are multilingual, Shouldn't EAL adopt EAP

approach at school level (which is successfully used at tertiary level)? Outcome: a series of seminars will be set up, with working papers possibly to come out of it as well.

13. Date of CLIE 105 Nov 22nd Venue needed for CLIE 105 and CLIE 106, **Action ED ask MC**; CLIE 107: SC has agreed to host again at KCL.

DRAFT