

COMMITTEE FOR LINGUISTICS IN EDUCATION

Minutes of Meeting no. 56

Monday 9 June 1997

at The University of London Institute of Education

Present: Nicola Woods (Chair); Roz Ivanic (Secretary); Tom Bloor (co-opted); Jenny Cheshire (co-opted); Henrietta Dombey (NATE); Charlotte Franson (NALDIC); Dick Hudson (Chair of LAGB); Ann Miller (ALL); Joe Reynolds; Helen Sunderland (NATECLA); Linda Thompson.

1. **Apologies:** Stef Bell (NAAE); Kersti Borjars (LAGB); Greg Brooks (BAAL); George Keith (co-opted); Gunther Kress (co-opted); Jane Medwell (UKRA); Brian Street (co-opted); Larry Trask (Treasurer - provisionally).

2. **Minutes of Meeting 55: any amendments**
George Keith was named twice under 'apologies'; paragraph numbering needs to be corrected under item 6.

3. **Matters arising**
re: Items 6.3 - 6.9. Roz mentioned her concern that we are not kept informed of latest national developments at SCAA, OFSTED, TTA and DFEE. It was suggested that we should use the Web to access their latest reports and publications.

ACTION Roz and Nicola identify and use these web-sites
ACTION All if you receive these documents, please inform Roz and / or Nicola so they keep up to date

4. **Dates of future meetings and choice of speakers**
4.1 The meeting at BAAL in Birmingham in September proved impracticable.
4.2 The dates of future meetings therefore were agreed as:

- 12 Nov. 1997 - London: Greg Brooks to speak on 'Trends of literacy standards in Britain since 1948'
- 16 Feb 1998 - London - Charlotte Franson to speak about the work of NALDIC
- 14 - 16 April 1998 - at LAGB meeting in Lancaster - (see minutes of item 4.3 below)
- 22 June 1998 - London -

4.3 We had a long discussion about the idea of revisiting the topic of the Brookes and Hudson paper 'Do linguists have anything to say to teachers?' (as published in Carter 1982)

- *Dick:* Did it have any impact? *Henrietta:* Yes
- *Reasons for going ahead:* It would bring it back to people's attention, it's still timely; find out how much agreement on points listed last time
- *How to do it?*
- Invite comments on the original document from a small number of linguists, with a view to writing a short addendum.

- Do it as a special session at LAGB (is there a time-slot for April)? As a day event on its own? As a colloquium at the next meeting of LAGB and / or BAAL? as an e-mail / web-site discussion?

- Republish in a form for teachers.

• *Issues: Linda:* We must think through how, if at all, we can establish whether this is something teachers want; and how we can get its outcomes to them.

- Will we re-run the questions about what teachers want to know too?

ACTION: Nicola coordinate suggestions as to what, if anything we want to do.

All let Nicola know your views on this.

5. **Statement of accounts** - Postponed as Larry could not attend.

6. **Reports from representatives of organisations**

6.1 Roz reported on conference in Manchester on Teaching and Learning Punctuation

6.2 Jenny gave advance notice of Sociolinguistics Symposium 12 at the Institute of Education, University of London 26 - 28 March 1998.

6.3 Charlotte gave advance notice of

- a BAAL Seminar organised by Arturo Tosi at Royal Holloway College, London 18 - 19 September 1997 'Rethinking Language Education' and

- a NALDIC conference at SOAS 8 November 1997 on Bilingual Research Agendas, All discussed recent activities of the Basic Skills Agency.

6.4 How do their initiatives link with and build on the National Literacy Project and the work of NATECLA?

• Concern at their lack of consultation, collaboration and cross-reference to other related work in the field of literacy education.

• Should CLIE send a response to their new document: ESOL and Primary Schools Good Literacy Practice?

• Yes, it is our responsibility to collate and send views; the BSA National Strategy

SHOULD be informed by theory and research in the fields of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics on literacy and how it should be taught.

ACTION: Roz: get a copy of this National Strategy document to everyone.

Nicola: coordinate a reply

All let Nicola know what you would like included in this reply.

7. **Update on committee membership**

7.1.1 Roz reported that a recent meeting of the BAAL Executive Committee discussed our request to increase the number of co-opted members on the Committee, and agreed that increase in membership should be achieved by increasing representatives of parent organisations as well. To comply with this decision, the Committee agreed the following change in Item 4 of the Terms of Reference

4. Membership

Each of the sponsoring organisations shall annually nominate (delete: three; replace with four) members, one of whom shall be a member of the committee of the sponsoring organisation, to the Committee. The Committee so appointed shall be empowered to co-opt representatives of other appropriate associations for periods of three years (renewable). Up to (delete: three; replace with four) individuals may be co-opted on the same basis.

ACTION: Nicola: Propose this change to LAGB too.

- Long-term: keep raising the issues
 - AGREED ACTION:**
 - All:** send concerns to Nicola; **Nicola:** collate these.
 - Nicola and Roz:** offer support to SCAA for revisions of the tests
 - Henrietta:** find out what other tests are being piloted by SCAA at the moment
10. **A.O.B.**
Nothing more
11. **Annie Grant from the TTA talked about the draft proposals for the Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for primary English.**
- The TTA is a QUANGO, run by a politically appointed board
There will be new TTA board members with the new government.*
- Writing the ITT for Primary English National Curriculum:*
Annie received written responses suggesting from many quarters, and had just finished collating these.
The secretary of State (then Gillian Shepherd) specified the headings to be used.
Annie's aim was to satisfy three criteria:
based in research, acceptable to the profession and politically acceptable
- Her comments on the final draft*
- The QTS requirements frame the specific proposals for English.
 - There's no mention of bilingual pupils as the document just aims to set out the 'core' curriculum.
 - There's an imbalance between attention to KS1 and KS2;
 - not enough use of research on KS2 reading and writing of non-fiction;
 - she's adding a bit more about KS2, including something on 'audience'.
 - IT is still bolt-on, but she's tried to integrate it better.
 - She's added a section on 'students not yet fluent in English' (p.14), based on the Labour government's literacy task-force document.
 - She's tried to build in more of a sense of 'development'.
- Discussion*
It seems that what is meant by 'Standard English' is taken as given.
Spoken and written language seem to be confused as regards what counts as 'Standard'
Annie: This will be in the 'guidance' ('Guidance' doesn't have to go through the board, only to elaborate on things agreed by the board)
- The future:* How can CLIE help develop the secondary English proposals from the start?
- The meeting ended with some CLIE members looking at the actual wording of specific sections with Annie, and thanks to her for the extremely interesting session.

- 7.1.2 In order to comply with this change, Jenny Cheshire offered to attend as the fourth LAGB representative and Tom Bloor offered to attend as the fourth BAAL representative.
- 7.2 New representatives: of NAAE: Stef Bell;
of NATECLA: Helen Sunderland (welcomed as a new member to this meeting)
- 7.3 Other organisations still in the process of being invited: BSA; BDeaf A; BDyslexia A.; ALA;
- 7.5 *Ann:* We should also approach The National Association of Language Advisors to send a representative - **ACTION: Roz**
Dick: We should make contact with parallel committees concerned with education of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Associations in other countries:
U.S. - Committee for Language in the School Curriculum
Australia - any?
ACTION: Dick to send Nicola these contacts
8. **Leaflet describing CLIE to send to inquirers**
We discussed a draft of this and changes were suggested. Please see attached redraft, which is the version I am currently sending out.
9. **The recent KS3 tests of Knowledge About Language**
In May 1997 14 year-olds took national tests (SATs), under the auspices of SCAA, which included a test of K.A.L. The Committee discussed these tests and the latest state of play with developing them.
Dick reported that SCAA and UCLES are open to advice on both testing and teaching 'grammar'. Teachers have nothing but the tests and the National Curriculum as guidance.
There is one more year of piloting.
UCLES have been commissioned to develop the test, but recognise they need help.
Dick: Should we write to SCAA and offer to hold a joint seminar between them and CLIE?
Henrietta: It requires a huge programme of research before doing this. It is 'Steer by examination'. It is taking on the spirit of Geoff Williams' approach without the machinery.
-(?) - 'A watered-down functionalism'.
Linda: It's not only a problem of content but also the way the test is constructed.
Some specific comments on the pilot test:
- Questions are vague - e.g. 5b
- The definition of phrases is unclear.
- Item 2 contains covert teaching
- Suggested action:*
write and ask what we can do to help: offer our services
- Constructive point-by-point suggestions of what the test should be like, followed up by offering to have a meeting.
 - e-mail Nicola a note of what we see as the key issues to consider
 - NOT just complain
 - The Committee must maintain an independent voice
 - Short-term: help them get the test up and running