

Dear CLIE member

Here's a provisional agenda for the upcoming meeting. I'm afraid Nicola and I have not been able to communicate about it for various reasons, so we may need to adjust the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

Please also bring **the minutes of Meeting 60** which I sent you recently.

If you are unable to attend, please convey your apologies to me or to Nicola.
See you on Wed 17 Feb. In haste

Roz

COMMITTEE FOR LINGUISTICS IN EDUCATION
meeting no 61

Wednesday 17 February 1999
2.00 - 4.45 p.m

at The Institute of Education, University of London
20, Bedford Way, London
Room 628

AGENDA

1. **Welcomes, Introductions and Apologies for absence**
2. **Minutes of Meeting 60: any amendments**
3. **Matters arising**
4. **Dates of future meetings and choice of speakers**

16 June 1999

dates for the year 1999 - 2000
5. **CLIE Membership**
6. **Reports from representatives of organisations (All)**
Regular item on the agenda: a time when those attending inform each other about news, events and issues in the organisations which they represent which concern Linguistics in Education. If you are attending, please could you bring items to contribute here, including any 'visual aids' such as flyers, copies of publications. If you cannot attend, please could you let Roz know of anything which we should mention here in relation to the organisation you represent. (*If you weren't at the last meeting, see minutes for an idea of the sorts of things to contribute to this.*)

- 6.1 **Conference on the theme of 'The teaching of grammar in English and Modern Foreign Languages'**
To receive and discuss a written report of this one-day conference organised by QCA, 2/2/99 to which Dick was invited (attached).
- 6.2 **Other reports from Dick** (attached).
7. **Raising the profile of Linguistics in Education within BAAL and LAGB**
- 7.1 **Plans for BAAL**
A colloquium organised by Alison Sealey, entitled
Relationships between Applied Linguistics and Current Developments in English Language Teaching in English Schools
- 7.2 **Plans for LAGB**
A session organised by Ewa, Kersti and Dick at the next LAGB meeting:
April 9th, during the LAGB conference at Manchester University.
Language at school: A place for linguists?
2.00 Alastair West (Qualification and Curriculum Authority). The Curriculum.
2.40 Chris Brumfit (Univ of Southampton). Teacher preparation.
3.20-4.00 Discussion
8. **Insights coming from linguistics which we consider to be of use to education**
a discussion aimed at extending and elaborating points raised at 8.1 last meeting.
9. **Some specific recommendations for action in order to make the work of professional linguists of use to education**
(developing from 8.3. last meeting)
10. **A.O.B.**
11. **Speaker and discussion**

If you need to get in touch with Nicola or Roz, our contact details are:

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**Report on a one-day conference organised by QCA, 2/2/99, on the theme
'The teaching of grammar in English and Modern Foreign Languages'**

It was a good meeting overall, though some of the presentations were poor.

There were about 100 people there, all by invitation, but I was the only academic linguist - also a few educational and applied linguists, notably Ron Carter and Roz Mitchell. We had a number of plenary presentations which purported to be on the grammatical knowledge needed by pupils in Eng and MFL (Modern Foreign Langs) and by teachers, but I didn't think they really got to the main points (with the exception of a couple of talks by teachers, Kathy Wicksteed (MFL) and Kevin Eames(Eng)). These points did come up when we broke into discussion groups and workshops, and in a plenary discussion, and Ron Carter raised several in his closing talk. There was really very little argument or disagreement, maybe because we were all carefully chosen, but the high-level presence from QCA (Geoff Lucas = Head of Corporate Policy Division, and David Hawker = Head of Curriculum and Assessment Division) seemed to accept the general spirit of the meeting, so it could well turn into some kind of official policy. I think it's safe to say that everyone there agreed on the following:

1. Explicit and more-or-less systematic teaching of grammar is already established as a good thing in English teaching, and MFL teaching is becoming more open to it.
2. English and MFL teachers should cooperate both at national and schoollevel.
3. The main block in teaching grammar is teacher ignorance.
4. Central intervention (e.g. from QCA) will be needed to coordinate grammar teaching across English and MFL.
5. The whole scene is already changing fast and dramatically thanks to the National Literacy Strategy, which has already defined the technical grammatical terminology that children must learn in primary school.

Other reports from Dick

Re the NLS, I heard a splendidly enthusiastic workshop presentation on it from one of the national coordinators (Sue Hackman), who said that grammar is very high profile, and very popular with pupils (though less so with teachers). Teaching includes pupil investigations, where pupils induce rules e.g. for punctuation. Interestingly, she also reported that there doesn't seem to be a serious ability divide among pupils in their ability to cope with grammar, in contrast with spelling and punctuation. As from this year, every primary school in the country is applying the National Literacy Strategy (one hour per day on language, including grammar), but some schools are now in their third year, so the first cohort (with NLS from age 5) to watch are those who will hit secondary school in 2002 (and universities in 2010). My question: will secondary schools be able to cope with this interest and expertise in language? How can linguists help them?

Incidentally, I also met Peter Downes, from the Nuffield Languages Inquiry, who told me that he felt confident that they would recommend Language Awareness in the primary school; the NLI is apparently supported by QCA and other government bodies.

There are no QCA plans to publish the proceedings of this meeting, but they have got various relevant publications in the pipeline, including Grammar Papers 2 (various practical applications), in 6/99, and plans for schemes of work for grammar at KS3.

Nice to know that grammar is flavour of the month. Long may it last! But we linguists need to get our act together, otherwise it'll all happen without taking account of us. Ron Carter made a strong plea for more descriptive work on e.g. grammar of spoken language and non-narrative texts.

Richard (= Dick) Hudson

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