

# COMMITTEE FOR LINGUISTICS IN EDUCATION

Minutes of Meeting no. 65 (*DRAFT - Long version for members*)

Wednesday 21 June 2000

at The University of London Institute of Education

## 1. Introductions and apologies for absence

*Present:* Mary Auckland (RCSaLT), Henrietta Dombey (NATE), Richard Hudson (LAGB), Roz Ivanič (BAAL: Secretary of CLIE), Ewa Jaworska (LAGB), Alison Sealey (BAAL), Nicola Woods (LAGB: Chairperson of CLIE).

*Apologies:* Richard Aplin (ALA), Sue Barry (LAGB), Deborah Cameron (co-opted member), Charlotte Franson (NALDIC), Pam Hulme (UKRA), Constant Leung (BAAL), Brian Street (co-opted).

## 2. The Minutes of Meeting 64

2.1 Some small corrections were tabled.

2.2 It was suggested that further details should be given about Madeleine Lindley, whose death was reported in the minutes of the last meeting. These were supplied by Henrietta:

‘UKRA is sad to announce the recent death of Madeleine Lindley. She was a splendid bookseller with a missionary interest in children’s literature and books on literacy and on education in language and literacy.’

## 3. Matters arising

None.

## 4. Dates of future meetings and choice of speakers

4.1 Provisional dates for next academic year were agreed in principle:

Thursday, 2 November 2000

Speaker: Alan Moyds (Nuffield Foundation)

Topic: *???*The National Languages Inquiry

**ACTION: Roz to check this with Richard.**

Thursday, 22 February 2001

Speaker: *???*Ron Carter (University of Nottingham)

Topic: *Where is linguistics in education going? A personal view*

**ACTION: Roz to contact RC to confirm this. Offer Wednesday instead if that would suit him better.**

Thursday, 21 June 2001

No speaker - time for open Committee discussion

## 5. CLIE membership: update

5.1 It was reported that Deborah Cameron (Institute of Education) had been invited to become a co-opted member of the committee and that she had accepted.

5.2 It was announced that from Autumn 2000, representation of BAAL would be as follows: Roz Ivanič (newly appointed Chair of CLIE), Constant Leung, Teresa O’Brien (The University of Manchester) and Alison Sealey.

5.3 It was announced that from Autumn 2000, representation of LAGB would be as follows: Sue Barry, Anthea Gupta (University of Leeds), Dick Hudson and Ewa Jaworska (newly appointed Secretary of CLIE).

5.4 It was announced that the new President of LAGB is Andrew Spencer (University of Essex) and that a new Chair of BAAL will be appointed in September. The holders of both posts are ex-officio members of CLIE.

5.5 It was agreed that it would not be appropriate to invite the National Literacy Strategy team to appoint a representative to CLIE, since the committee should be engaging in independent discussion of government initiatives.

5.6 It was noted that the representatives of many organisations are not attending CLIE meetings.  
**ACTION: Roz to telephone them in the new academic year to see whether they are able to continue acting as representative, and if not, if someone new could be appointed to represent their organisation.**

## 6. Reports from representatives of organisations

### 6.1 LAGB

(a) The LAGB Education Committee was established at the Spring Meeting, April 2000 at UCL. Its main function at present is organising the 'Linguistics at School' special sessions.

(b) Linguistics at School: *Grammar teaching and the development of writing skills*.  
Special session at the LAGB Autumn Meeting, 7-9 September 2000 at the University of Durham.  
The session is on Friday, 8 September, 2-4 p.m. and is open to everyone interested. The provisional programme:

Jim Crinson (Collingwood Primary School, North Shields): *A view from a primary school*  
Geoff Barton (Thurston Community College, Suffolk): *A view from a secondary school*  
Raphael Salkie (Brighton): *A critical view from teacher training*

(c) Dick presented a paper 'Grammar teaching and writing skills: the research evidence'.  
The paper makes the point that although there is no clear conclusive research, the idea that grammar teaching has a positive effect on writing skills is evidenced through the available research to an extent greater than is commonly expected. The paper can be downloaded from the following site:  
<http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/writing.htm>

(d) Sue Barry sent information from the British Association for Academic Phoneticians (BAAP) about the new Education SIG of the International Speech Communication Association: visit [www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists](http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists) and then select and click on *isca-edusig*. BAAP web page: <http://pitch.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/baap/>.

(e) A brief note from the LINGUIST list was circulated (copy attached) on Montessori Grammar Tools: shapes for children to play with represent the syntactic components of sentences, suggesting that these might not help language development, but they might help the development of explicit knowledge about grammar.

(f) A copy of an extract from the *TES* (21 April 2000) was circulated, reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of six different revision textbooks for GCSE English.

(g) The journal *Syntax in the Schools* from the US-based Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (ATEG) was mentioned, particularly a recent article in it by Alison Sealey, 'Grammar in the schools: notes from the British front', *Syntax in the Schools* 16.3 (Winter 2000). See <http://www2.pct.edu/courses/evavra/ATEG/index.htm>

### 6.2 NATE

Henrietta reported on two articles in the latest edition of *English in Education* 34.2 (2000):

(a) by Peter Daw about the gap between 'standards' and reality in subject knowledge for secondary teachers of English, proposing a more dynamic conception of teaching in this area, and noting that

the focus on knowledge about language is leading to a neglect of knowledge about children's literature.

**ACTION: Ask A. West (QCA) about the developing response to the NLS and disseminate what he says via Edling.**

(b) by Roger Hancock about interviews with children on how they respond to NLS.

6.3 RCSaLT will be holding a conference 'Sharing communication' on 17-19 April 2001 in Birmingham. Phone 0207 378 7414 for details.

6.4 Other

(a) A publication by John Keen 'Frameworks for language study at A-level'.

**ACTION: Have discussion in CLIE about the current specification for A-level English Language.**

(b) An article in *Reading* by Graham Frater on the way in which lessons planned according to the NLS Framework are too decontextualised.

(c) There is likely to be little support for extending NLS to KS (23+) 4. Teachers are antagonistic to the NLS style of training: they are nervous about KAL, but at the same time see themselves as specialists who are not invited to bring their own knowledge. (See also Item 7.3 below.)

(d) The new TTA 'grammar' training will include such things as teaching about main and subordinate clauses for KS2 teachers. (See also further comment under Item 7.3 and Item 10.)

(e) The following materials for teachers were recommended by way of exchange of information about good practice: 1997 'Eng. for Primary Sch. Teachers'

- (i) Wray & Medwell book for self-study material although it says little about syntax.
- (ii) D. Crystal with G. Barton (1996) *Discover grammar*. Longman.
- (iii) The Internet Grammar of English at the Survey of English Usage, UCL. See <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/internet-grammar/>

It was suggested that the ideal materials would be ones which succeed in relating discourse structure, syntax and morphology to texts actually written by children.

## 7. Reports on latest news of the TTA Literacy Tests and other TTA/NLS matters

7.1 Roz reported that the BAAL members of CLIE had met with representatives of the TTA twice to discuss the literacy tests:

- a) in March to go through the points raised in the letter which was sent in December,
- b) in June to discuss with Denis Vincent and Greg Brooks how the grammar component of the tests are progressing.

Those present at these meetings had felt that they were an opportunity to air views but there was no certainty that they would lead to any positive outcome.

7.2 The TTA want to use real examples in these tests. Members of CLIE discussed whether it would be possible to build up a corpus of usage. It was suggested that Alison Wray's corpus of student writing errors might be useful for this purpose.

7.3 Dick reported on the development of:

(a) training materials for non-specialist English teachers at KS3;

(b) NLS for KS3 to be piloted in 2000/01 in selected schools with Year 7 pupils;

(c) materials for the teaching of writing at KS2, in the form of about 160 double-page spread lesson plans on different topics, which are currently being piloted ready for general distribution to schools in September;

(d) training in 'grammar teaching' for teachers of Years 5 and 6 and teacher trainers.

Some members commented that these initiatives were changing teacher education into 'training'.  
(See also further comment under Items 6.5 (c), (d) and Item 10 below.)

8. **The QCA publications *Not whether but how: teaching grammar in English at Key Stages 3 and 4* and *The grammar papers*.**

Members did not have time to enhance their earlier observations on these publications. The publications have perhaps now been superseded by more urgent topics for discussion.

9. **Non-RP accent and phonics (SB)**

*Agenda item 9 was postponed for discussion at a future meeting.*

However, Sue Barry had sent a note of additional references on this topic, which is attached.

10. **The National Literacy Strategy**

Some members observed that

- a) the framework is leading to teachers focusing on formal properties of texts rather than what the texts are achieving as purposeful communication;
- b) the view of what counts as good writing which is implied by the way people interpret the NLS framework is that it can be reduced to formal features.

**ACTION: This needs further discussion in CLIE**

(See also further comment under Items 6.5 (c), (d) and Item 7.3.)

11. **RAE panels dealing with language-and-education (BS)**

12. **Ideas about how to do the 12 hours of KAL on ITT courses (HD)**

*Agenda items 11 and 12 were postponed for discussion at a future meeting.*

13. **A.O.B.**

**The 'overlap day' between BAAL and LAGB meetings at Reading in September 2001.**

Dick Hudson had been approached as Chair of LAGB by Jill Bourne as Chair of BAAL to discuss what the two organisations should be arranging for the overlap day, and also possibly for meetings between the two organisations prior to that. This matter was briefly discussed after some members of the committee had left, and it was agreed that CLIE should not attempt to take responsibility for organising events on matters not directly relating to the business of CLIE. That is, CLIE should restrict itself to responsibility for events concerned specifically with linguistics in education. Overlap activities in general are in the hands of BAAL & LAGB Heads and Meetings Secretaries.

RI & EJ, 16/10/00