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MINUTES OF MEETING 81

2 November 2005 at 2pm

Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL

1. **Present:** Dick Hudson (RH) (LAGB) (Chair), Catherine Walter (BAAL) (Secretary), Graeme Trousdale (LAGB), Theresa Lillis (BAAL), Terry Lamb (ALL), Charlotte Franson (NALDIC), Keith Davidson (NATE), Tim Shortis (Co-opted), Brian Street (Co-opted), Mahendra Verma (Co-opted)
Apologies for absence: Susan Barry, Billy Clark
2. **Minutes of the last meeting:** misspelling 'probslems' p. 3; otherwise accepted as a true record
3. **Matters arising**
 - 3.1. CW to email CLIE URL to all members **Action: CW**
 - 3.2. Item 5, NALDIC: CF noted the Common European Framework-based proficiency benchmarks for children and adults whose L1 isn't English, which has gone through fairly unproblematically. UK compares unfavourably here.
 - 3.3. Item 3: no response from British Dyslexia Association or subject centres. **Action: CW to write again** ✓
 - 3.4. Item 5, LAGB report, A-level linguistics: no ideas have come forward about getting this onto FL agenda.
 - 3.5. Debbie Myhill to speak on grammar teaching at February meeting.
4. **PGCE English and language-based degrees.** (RH had tabled an exchange of correspondence between him and Gerry Swain; 3 English PGCE course leaders; and Jacquie Nunn [Assistant Director ITT of the TDA])
 - 4.1. There is a problem in polling PGCE admissions tutors generally on their policies towards accepting graduates with language-based degrees on their courses: there is no simple way of getting materials round to these tutors.
 - 4.2. At a meeting of the HEFCE Subject Centre for LLAS, the question was posed whether it was better for the Subject Centre to take over this initiative; but it was agreed that it was best to let CLIE continue.
 - 4.3. We've had replies from several key people who say there's no problem: no one demands a degree in English literature as such. However, 3 out of 4 of them expect language graduates to have some expertise in literature, only one said no literature expertise was necessary. TS: teachers of up to KS4 say that the canonical literature / literature criticism / literary theory not an issue: it is more a question of sensitivity to texts etc. GT pointed out that students who hadn't done any language seemed in Nunn's letter to be OK. TS said that

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perhaps Nunn should be written to. Questions to be asked include: why is the standard allocation of language tuition for PGCE English one day?

- 4.4. There are elements of language degrees that could be argued as relevant to appreciation of literature: discourse in some linguistics courses, discourse and stylistics in English language courses. But RH says that a typical linguistics graduate would have trouble saying anything sensible about a text. BS: Perhaps we should produce a one-page document spelling out what we think we know, and sending it to PGCE admissions tutors? RH says there might be the possibility of an email distribution via Gerry Swain. RH could show a draft to the people we have already been in contact with.
- 4.5. TL: re subject knowledge: when recruiting in PGCE courses, tutors have to do quite a detailed audit of subject knowledge of each student, because development of knowledge is supposed to be part of the course (per OFSTED). It would be good to see what different institutions are auditing and how they are developing knowledge (often done through self-study and independent learning). For example, TL, on the MFL PGCE in Sheffield, sends students recommendations before the course; students are then asked to keep a log before and during the course of what they are doing to develop their knowledge. (In MFL most graduates have literature degrees, but very little literature is taught in schools, even at A-level.) English is supposed to be doing the same thing, but it sounds as if they are not doing it so comprehensively. TDA doesn't dictate to admissions tutors, but does require this audit process and requires support of beginning teachers (BTs). So we should find out how Eng PGCE admissions tutors do this audit. CF: is there an argument with the Literacy Strategy moving up the years that English PGCE holders need a knowledge of language.
- 4.6. CW: should we also talk to Ofsted? BS: We should produce a separate document for Ofsted. Note John Gordon's point in the correspondence that one way of developing subject knowledge is that he aims to have a cohort with a range of degree specialities, and for the cohort to share knowledge among themselves during the year: this peer support aspect should go into the paper we're doing for the PGCE tutors. GT: we ought to find out what English and linguistics courses at universities are doing to contribute to PGCE courses; at Edinburgh there is a module in PGDE and/or CPD for people who want to become English teachers, but don't have KAL. RH: perhaps we should ask what parts of linguistics PGCE tutors might be interested in. TL: Enhancement of subject knowledge is the biggest source of anxiety for students in PGCEs; ~~so perhaps we should play a bit safe because we don't know how to find ways of providing KAL.~~ We might consider offering support, perhaps through the TDA, for courses across the country: support that they could offer to their students for autonomous learning in linguistics *and* in literature, so that both literature and linguistics graduates can be supported on PGCE courses. The TDA might fund this. TL: Cf. science PGCEs, which have to do a lot of support, e.g. in physics for PGCE students who have done biology. (Note that the QCA is now talking about the 'English family of subjects'.)

Action: RH to draft a reply to Jacquie Nunn and circulate for comments.

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Action: RH to write to Ofsted to ask them about the audit of subject knowledge for English PGCE. ✓

Action: TS and BS to draft a letter which would be sent to Gerry Swain to distribute to PGCE tutors; and to circulate the draft for comments. ?

Action: TL to find out what's on the TDA websites that are designed to support new PGCE tutors in other subjects to see whether we might consider doing something in this area, and to circulate the results. ?

Action: TS to draft a short questionnaire to find out what KAL PGCE tutors would like linguistics departments to provide. ?

5. Reports from member organisations and individuals.

5.1. LAGB report had been sent sent with the agenda of the meeting. It consisted of two brief papers for the QCA English 21 inquiry (on narrative in English teaching, and on the Knowledge About Language needed by teachers in 2015) which can be found on the LAGB Education Committee website at <http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/ec/ectop.htm>.

5.2. NALDIC: There is a problem with ^{direct provision} EAL/being eroded, whereas over 10% of the school population are bilingual to some degree. The EAL profession is greying because there is no career route. TL: Only 28% of new teachers in their first year of teaching feel prepared for working with children with EAL. Could CLIE bring this to the attention of the DfES? CW: we might want to address this as an issue of ways we could enhance achievement. CF: we should lobby the TDA for more space in ITT for EAL, and for a specialist qualification. BS is working with ^{collaboration with KCL} Ben Rampton to develop materials in other curriculum subjects with support for EAL learners: there must be lots of these small initiatives going on around the country: could we not share good practice and common knowledge?

Action: RH/CW/CF: This topic to be on the agenda for 2006 summer meeting as a discussion topic, led by CF. ✓

5.3. ALL: current priorities include looking at primary KS2 developments; problems with uptake at KS4; and FE and adult education. ALL is still represented in various DfES stakeholder groups, CILT, Subject Centre and similar bodies. There is to be a conference in April in Manchester. ALL is deeply involved in organising the Language Alliance (a critical friend of the DfES, following the National Languages Strategy). ALL maintains close links with embassies, and could use these links if CLIE wanted a speaker from one of the embassies.

6. **How can CLIE improve the flow of information from linguistics to education?** GT: is there enough interest in linguistics departments in what is happening in school-level education? RH: most linguists don't see themselves as part of the educational world: that's why CLIE exists. Is there anything we can do to help the flow of information? GT: could LAGB & BAAL hold an event that could bring together linguists and teachers? RH: a one-off event is perhaps not the answer. TL: University language departments are becoming more interested in widening participation: are linguistics departments doing the same? This might be a way of involving them in schools more. Again, the TDA websites

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constitute a potential way in. On the languages website, the mentors in Terry's schools are being asked to encourage their students to use them.

Action: RH/CW: This to be a future agenda item ✓

7. AOB

7.1. **Framework for languages in KS2:** TL: The final framework reflects a controversy in the DfES about whether KS2 FLs should be about French (so as to link with the secondary schools), or about learning to learn languages (so that the children they should be learning something completely different).

Action: TL to disseminate links ?

Action: RH/CW: This topic to be on the agenda for 2006 spring meeting ✓

7.2. **BSL in schools:** CW: BAAL member Gary Quinn has proposed that CLIE apprise itself of the status and role of BSL in UK schools.

Action: CW to organise for Gary or another deaf studies colleague to attend ✕
spring 2006 meeting as observer and to present at the autumn 2006 meeting

8. Future meetings

Wednesday 15 February 2006, Room 691, Institute of Education, University of London

Wednesday 24 May 2006, Room 691, Institute of Education, University of London