

**LAGB Annual General Meeting
University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 31 August 2006, 4.30 p.m.**

Minutes

1. Apologies for absence
Ad Neeleman

2. Approval of the minutes of the AGM held at the University of Cambridge, 1 September 2005 (circulated)
Approved

3. Matters arising from the AGM 2005
 - 3.1. Electronic distribution of LAGB materials (Membership Secretary to report)
The Meetings Secretary reported a problem with the current electronic list in that only 10 per cent of the members are on the list and most of the people who are on it are not members. At present it is very difficult to communicate with membership. In order to improve the situation, he proposed to add all members' addresses to the new list and to discontinue the old list maintained by Doug Arnold. It was agreed that the list would contain only members and that only members can post to the list. B.Clark suggested that LAGB abstracts should be put on the website in the future. The suggestion was approved as steps had been taken already to implement this.

 - 3.2. Funding for postgraduate conferences (President to report)
The President expressed the Committee's concern with the growing number of postgraduate conferences and the fact that very similar talks are presented at them, which suggests that there is no good reason for proliferating them. She reported that she had written to all of the organizers and heads of relevant departments suggesting cooperation between northern and southern sites respectively but received no response. It was agreed that the conferences that are currently recipients of the LAGB funding would now be funded in alternate years, retaining the same overall budget, and that the situation would be monitored. One graduate student expressed a view that some of the conferences do differ in theoretical orientation and may be useful to retain.

 - 3.3. Recognition of electronic databases of language material as academic publications (President to report)
No comments have been received from the membership in the past year.

 - 3.4. International linguistics association and links with African associations (President to report)
The president was approached by a linguistic association in Africa with a request for support. She will contact the extant international linguistics organization (CIPL) to discuss the possibility of support for African associations.

4. President's report
All matters of business were discussed under separate points above.

5. Reports of other Committee members
 - 5.1. Treasurer's report

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2005, pointing out that they end before the new (increased) membership fee came in. The Association made a profit of c. £800 but this was mainly due to the profit from the Cambridge meeting (c. £4,500). Income decreased slightly as compared with 2004, mainly due to the fees due from late payers. He predicted that around £3,000-4,000 will be gained from the increase in membership fee. There was a slight increase of expenditure on printing and stationery, we also spent more on conference grants and conference speakers and workshops. The cost of the upkeep of the website went down thanks to the change of the site.

5.2. Honorary Secretary's report

No matters for report were conveyed.

5.3. Membership Secretary's report

Membership Secretary reported that the Association has 572 members, 150 of which are students. Over 400 members subscribe to the Journal of Linguistics. 50 new members joined in 2006. About 160 members are late with paying. Membership Secretary will encourage payment by direct debit and will try to set up credit card payment (the matter is to be looked into by the Membership Secretary and the new Treasurer).

P. Rowlett suggested that CUP should stress the special deal on the Journal of Linguistics obtained through LAGB membership.

Assistant Secretary pointed out that postgraduate conferences were active in advertising LAGB membership to graduate students: A member of the LAGB committee is invited to give a presentation on LAGB and benefits of membership. LAGB publicity is also distributed at all other conferences supported by the Association.

5.4. Assistant Secretary's report

The Assistant Secretary reported that in order to speed up the award of conference bursaries she would suggest a one-month deadline for responding to a conditional offer: proofs of membership or unwaged status would have to reach her within one month from the request.

5.5. Meetings Secretary's report

Meetings Secretary confirmed the venues for the next two conferences: 2007 King's College London and 2008 University of Surrey. He reported the current problem with powerpoint facilities: providing them in all rooms is costly: c. £1000 per conference. Since powerpoint is becoming a popular method of presentation and facilities are normally expected by speakers to be provided at conferences, the President is to email the membership, proposing paying for the facility as part of the standard conference expenditure. The decision will be made after an email consultation.

6. LAGB comments on the European Reference Index for the Humanities (President to report)

European Science Foundation intends to set up ranking of journals in the humanities and asked AHRC for consultation. Consultation document was sent, ranking a long list of journals. The President coordinated comments from membership and wrote the LAGB response, indicating that more time was required for conducting a proper consultation. Subsequently, AHRC was going to respond to ESF that a more proper consultation was required and LAGB registered an interest in being involved. The President stated that she was in favour of a more thorough consultation because some

form of list of quality journals is inevitable. The President responded to the question on the impact of this list saying that it may have impact on the RAE.

7. DfES Consultation on Reform of Higher Education Research Assessment and Funding (President to coordinate).

The President invited views to be submitted through the website. STEM and non-STEM disciplines are currently distinguished. According to this proposal, STEM disciplines are not to fall under RAE but have a metrics-based assessment instead. Non-STEM subjects are to continue with RAE. On the metrics model of assessment, the funding is to be decided by a subset of metrics: research income and success rates, measured in various ways (number of PhD students, staff, etc). The President summarised and discussed the questions on the DfES questionnaire. Responses have been received from N. Vincent, R. Kempson and D. Adger. The issue to resolve is how different we want to be from STEM subjects. In this context, the President pointed out that the speed with which the research results are published is slower in the humanities. The coordinated response is due by 4 September. The President invited views to be conveyed to her before that date.

D. Brown pointed out that there is a potential danger that STEM subjects may get more funding from the government. D. Hudson expressed the view that we should welcome the STEM/non-STEM distinction. The President observed that STEM/non-STEM would prevent cross-feeding between panels because, for example, computational linguistics would be classified as 'STEM' and would be assessed by different criteria. She concluded that an element of peer review is important. D. Brown observed that the quality of the data for the metrics system is not sufficiently reliable at the moment. He also suggested that all staff should be submitted to RAE.

8. Appointment of Meetings Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer

No nominations for Meetings Secretary and Assistant Secretary were received. Dr Patrick Honeybone and Dr Kasia Jaszczolt were prepared for stand for re-election and both were elected to serve another term of three years. The President thanked Dr Dunstan Brown for his very extensive work for the Association as Treasurer, pointing out his work on changing the website provider and investigating various ways to improve the Association's budget. There was one candidate for the Treasurer: Dr Hans van de Koot, who was elected and to whom the office was handed over at this point.

9. Education Committee / CLIE report

Professor Dick Hudson reported that Dr Sue Barry is standing down as member of the Education Committee and invited volunteers to replace her. He encouraged members to look at the EC website that includes LAGB language facts sheets. The education Committee is building a website on the linguistics of French, German and Spanish. Other services to the linguistics community are summarised in the EC report: <http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/ec/report068.htm>.

The President encouraged members to contribute to facts sheets and thanked Dr Sue Barry for her work on the EC.

10. LAGB representative on the Linguistics Strategy Group (Dr Billy Clark to report)

B. Clark recommended visiting the website of the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies and consulting the report of the Linguistics Strategy Group there. LSG meets 3 times a year and encourages interests in linguistics in schools. He

reported that learned societies were very positive about the LSG's impact and wanted the work to continue. There are events to generate interests in language studies.

He also reported that one of the current concerns of the LSG is the declining number of staff submitted for the RAE. It was also pointed out at one of the meetings that panels seem to be more reluctant to award 4, 5, 5* to Linguistics than to other subjects. P. Rowlett pointed out that the results may be misleading because the number of submissions was counted rather than the number of submitted staff. D. Hudson replied that the number of submitted authors indeed goes down. A discussion followed on the distribution of submitted authors across departments in the unit of assessment. The President summed up that we needed more reliable data and that the problem needs to be discussed before the October meeting of LSG.

11. Venues for the 2008 and 2009 (Anniversary) meetings (Meetings Secretary to report)

The University of Surrey was confirmed for the 2008 meeting. The Meetings Secretary reminded the membership that in 2009 there would be the 50th anniversary of LAGB and the fact should be celebrated. Suggestions for the venue included Oxford (however, there was an LAGB meeting there recently), British Academy (noting, however, the high cost of accommodation in London), and Edinburgh. It was agreed that the Anniversary would be celebrated at the University of Edinburgh. A discussion followed on the possible themes and invited speakers. The possibility was discussed of inviting talks on the history of various areas on linguistics in the UK in the past 50 years. D. Hudson suggested involving the Henry Sweet Society. The Membership Secretary and the President suggested forming a small working party that would take care of the organization of the commemoration. This group would include a representative of the LAGB committee, a representative of the Journal of Linguistics, and one or two other members to be approached by the President. I. Roberts suggested inviting founding members free of charge and offering them a session for a discussion. A special volume to commemorate 45 years of the Journal of Linguistics is also planned.

12. Future guest speakers (President to report)

For 2007 there are two confirmed speakers: Elan Drescher and Hans Kamp. The Committee invited suggestions for 2008, by email to KB within three weeks. The following suggestions were made at the meeting, in the order of supporting votes: Paul Kiparsky, Bernard Comrie, Ray Jackendoff, Geoffrey Pullum, François Recanati.

13. Future language tutorials and workshops (President to report)

A tutorial in Archi was agreed on for 2007.

14. Themed sessions (President to report)

Discussion was postponed.

15. AOB

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 6.35 p.m.