

LAGB Annual General Meeting
University of Salford, 6 September 2012, 4.30 p.m.

Minutes

1. Apologies for absence

David Willis, Ruba Khamam.

2. Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without modifications.
There were no matters arising.

3. Officers' reports

3.1. Meetings Secretary's report

- ⤴ The 2013 Annual Meeting will take place at SOAS in London, 28-31 August (Wednesday through Saturday).
- ⤴ Peer reviewing of abstracts, which started with the 2012 Meeting, is planned to continue.
- ⤴ All agreed that it would be desirable to broaden the range of subfields represented at the Annual Meeting (cf. recent "high syntax factor"), to better reflect the LAGB membership and UK linguistics more generally.
- ⤴ Themed sessions will be encouraged, in order to attract people who might not otherwise attend. A call for themed sessions will come out earlier than the main call for papers.
- ⤴ The 2014 Annual Meeting will be held at Oxford University.
- ⤴ For the 2014 Meeting, the Association proposed to launch a 1½ day summer school preceding the workshop/conference, primarily aimed at postgraduate students. The plenary speakers (among others) will be invited to give classes, which would increase students' interaction with them.

3.2. Membership Secretary's report

- ⤴ Membership is healthy and stable, with 490 active members. This is comparable to 558 members in 2011 and 540 in 2010 once we consider that the new database no longer counts lapsed memberships (about 100 in 2011).
- ⤴ 64 new members joined the Association in 2012 (cf. 62 in 2011 and 53 in 2010).
- ⤴ Current numbers:
 - Waged members: 208 with JL subscription, 165 without
 - Unwaged members: 63 with JL, 46 without
 - UG members: 8
- ⤴ Colleagues are encouraged to advertise the new discounted UG membership package to students; emails will be sent out with more information. The ULAB representative volunteered to help get the word out to undergraduates.
- ⤴ MA students should also be encouraged to join as unwaged members.
- ⤴ All who register as non-members for future LAGB meetings will automatically become members.

3.3. Treasurer's report

- ⤴ Total assets over liabilities: £23.5K (£25K/£1.5K). This was £30K in 2010.
- ⤴ There was a shortfall in 2011 of £5.3K, associated largely with one-off £3.2K development costs for the website and with increased donations (e.g. £1K for UKLO).
- ⤴ Income from subscriptions was £14.1K, compared with £13.4K in 2010.
- ⤴ Total income was £14.2K (cf. £17K in 2010).

- ⤴ Total expenditure was £19.5K (cf. £17.4K in 2010).
- ⤴ The accounts of the past six years have all been externally audited.
- ⤴ New signatories: A resolution was passed that Yuni Kim and Ad Neeleman be added as signatories to the Association's Royal Bank of Scotland accounts, with the signing mandate remaining unchanged, and that Hans van de Koot and Kersti Börjars be removed as signatories from these accounts.

3.4. President's report

- ⤴ Following a call to members, 11 nominations were made to the AHRC for membership of peer review panel D. Nine nominations were successful. As Linguistics was previously underrepresented on the peer review panels, this is a positive development for the field.
 - New assessors: Klaus Abels (UCL), Peter Ackema (Edinburgh), Eric Atwell (Leeds), Ricardo Bermúdez-Otero (Manchester), Karen Corrigan (Newcastle), Luisa Martí (Kent), Andrew Nevins (UCL), Irina Nikolaeva (SOAS), Vieri Samek-Lodovici (UCL).
- ⤴ It was noted that the new peer review system for the Annual Meeting should contribute both to the quality of abstract selection, and to the standing of the conference. Reviewers came from both inside and outside the UK. The current intention is to continue with the system.

4. New committee members

- ⤴ Hans van de Koot is stepping down as Treasurer. It was noted that he has done much valuable and excellent work during his 6 years in this role, and he was thanked by the President and all attendees on behalf of the Association.
- ⤴ Yuni Kim, the current Interim Assistant Secretary, will take over as Treasurer.
- ⤴ Christian Uffmann will take over as Assistant Secretary.

5. Online voting

- ⤴ Permission was solicited and granted to set up an electronic voting system as part of the LAGB website. Because the AGM takes place only once a year, and is often not attended by a majority of members, the idea is that online voting would allow proposals to be put to the membership more frequently and effectively.
- ⤴ The issue of who will see the votes (for example when voting for future speakers) was raised and noted.

6. Future direction of the LAGB

6.1. Membership fees

- ⤴ The committee put to the AGM some proposals to raise the profile of the Association, involving the conference as well as the possible mini-summer school. It was noted that the proposed increase in activity would require additional funds.
- ⤴ During the last six years, the LAGB has relied on conference profits to avoid deficit. When the conference does not make a profit, reserve funds are drained, which is not a sustainable setup in the long run.
- ⤴ Additional membership fees would permit expansion of the Association's activities and also reduce the need to rely on the conference making a profit. It was felt that the alternative way to raise funds, i.e. a rise in conference fees, would have a negative impact on the conference.
- ⤴ It was noted that current LAGB membership fees (waged: £20/year, unwaged: £10/year) are lower than those of comparable organizations such as the LSA, BAAL, DGfS, and AVT.
- ⤴ The AGM approved new proposed membership fees of £40 (waged) and £15 (unwaged), with a 10% discount for five-year waged memberships.

6.2. Upgrades to the Annual Meeting

- ⤴ Proposals for enhancing the Annual Meeting:

- Investing more in the first-day workshop (e.g. inviting more speakers)
- Organizing a final-day workshop, parallel to the first-day one
- ⤴ These upgraded workshops may make it possible to attract a wider range of linguists, and perhaps also attendees from other fields. As a test, an upgraded first-day workshop on the topic of “Primate Grammar” will be organized for 2013 at SOAS in conjunction with Philippe Schlenker’s invited talk.
- ⤴ An LAGB summer school preceding the Annual Meeting, to be piloted in 2014 along the lines described in the Meetings Secretary’s report (§3.1), would fill a gap as there is currently no national training for PhD students in linguistics.

6.3. General discussion about the Annual Meeting

- ⤴ The Meetings Secretary thanked all who had served as abstract reviewers for this year’s conference.

The following ideas were expressed, suggestions made, and points raised by members:

- ⤴ **Scope.** While there is a need for a national linguistics community complementary to BAAL, conscious action is needed to broaden the perceived scope of the LAGB to all areas of (non-applied) linguistics. SLE for example has achieved this kind of diversity.
- ⤴ There is the question of what a generalist conference should strive for not just with respect to within-discipline diversity, but also perhaps as a bridge to other disciplines.
- ⤴ Themed sessions and invited talks were felt to be promising means toward attracting a wider range of linguists. In addition to formally invited talks, it was suggested that people could be approached informally and encouraged to submit an abstract or proposal for a themed session, to indicate explicitly that the LAGB is interested in the kind of work that they do (especially where this may not be obvious based on recent conferences). There would need to be an understanding that submissions are then peer-reviewed, but this could still be a way to get a wider variety of abstracts. Various options were discussed regarding reviewing procedures for themed sessions with multiple abstracts.
- ⤴ Funds and scheduling permitting, there could be two or so UK linguists invited per year to give a plenary talk (since invited speakers have traditionally been from outside the UK).
- ⤴ It was observed that conference fees could be lowered if more people attend, since a significant proportion of the conference fee tends to come from fixed costs.
- ⤴ A student representative noted that a summer school could be useful in that it would give students a chance to learn about topics outside their research specialty. The classes would ideally not be too simple or introductory, but still aimed at non-experts in the subfield.

7. Future meetings and speakers

- ⤴ Invited speakers for 2013:
 - Henry Sweet Lecture: Philippe Schlenker (Institute Jean-Nicod/NYU)
 - LAGB Lecture: Jonathan Bobaljik (UConn)
- ⤴ The 2013 language tutorial will be given by Justin Watkins on Ritual Sumtu Chin.
- ⤴ For 2014 there will be an electronic vote on invited speakers, to increase involvement of members. Adam Albright (MIT) and Paula Fikkert (MPI-Nijmegen) were put forward as candidate speakers, and attendees also nominated Janet Pierrehumbert, Angelika Kratzer, and Elena Anagnostopoulou. There was a suggestion to consider more scholars from countries such as Italy or Greece.
- ⤴ Online voting will take place within the next month or two.

8. Education Committee Report

Graeme Trousdale delivered the following report on the activities of the Education Committee.

In our role on the Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLIE), members of the EC:

- ⤴ submitted a document on the teaching of phonics, and the chair of CLIE signed an open letter prepared by the UK Literacy Association
- ⤴ developed a new website as part of the celebrations of our 100th meeting which took place in February this year
- ⤴ attended meetings to discuss revisions to the A-level curricula
- ⤴ took part in the working group to reconsider the teaching of language in the National Curriculum for English
- ⤴ are looking at ways of using new media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) to promote the work of CLIE
- ⤴ are looking to work with HEA to develop materials to encourage students to do undergraduate degrees in linguistics.

The UK Linguistics Olympiad (UKLO) goes from strength to strength. Key developments in the past year include:

- ⤴ a tremendous success at IOL in Ljubljana, where every one of our four competitors won a medal
- ⤴ the involvement of linguistics undergraduates from University of Edinburgh as tutors of the IOL team in the month preceding the competition
- ⤴ a significant increase in participation in UKLO (2000 candidates in round 1 - twice as many as last year – from 300 registered schools - six times as many as last year)
- ⤴ the introduction of a new level aimed at younger pupils (in terms of relatively young competitors, we had 93 entries from Year 7, and even had one from Year 4)
- ⤴ a grant of £10K from the British Academy for a review of the way we work and how we might improve our performance
- ⤴ a grant of £42K from the Leverhulme Trust to support the 2013 IOL, which we have agreed to host in Manchester
- ⤴ a new website, and presence on Facebook and Twitter
- ⤴ the introduction of 'markathons', in which a department recruits volunteer students for a communal mass marking session (typically fuelled by departmentally funded pizzas)
- ⤴ an expanded committee, giving us a great deal more expertise and an encouragingly wide age range, from undergraduates to retirees.

For more on CLIE, please see www.clie.org.uk

For more on UKLO, please see www.uklo.org

- ⤴ Graeme thanked the LAGB for supporting the Education Committee, and the LAGB Committee and all attendees thanked the EC for their excellent work.

9. Any other business

There was no other business.

Yuni Kim

Outgoing Assistant Secretary, LAGB

12 September 2012