

FINAL Minutes of the BAAL AGM 2015

Aston University, Birmingham

Friday 4th September 5.30-6.30pm

1. Introduction and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the AGM. Esther Daborn was confirmed as minute taker.

Apologies noted from: Steve Morris, Gary Quinn, and Sebastian Rasinger, Maria Needham.

Present: Greg Myers, Dawn Knight, Martin Edwardes, Elvis Yevudey, Li Li, Jo Angouri, Esther Daborn, Tilly Harrison, Alex Ho-Cheong Leung, Ursula Lanvers, Sue Wharton, Bernadette O'Rourke, Fiona Copland, Guy Cook, Li Wei, M. Martin Jones, Catherine Wallace, Caroline Tagg, Joan Cutting, Florentina Taylor, Sue Garton. Zoe Handley, David Graddol, Liviana Ferrari. Chris Hall, Khalid Alahmed, Karin Tusting, Graham Turner, Tess Fitzpatrick, Robert Sharples, Michael Kranert, Richard Badger, Keiko Tsuchiya, Ana Pellicer-Sanchez, Svetlana Vetchinnikova, Dale Brown, Walter Davies, Simon Fraser, John Knagg, Susan Hunston, Glen Hadikin

The Secretary reminded the meeting that the officer reports were available separately on the BAAL website, and would not be read into the minutes.

2. Revisions to minutes and action points from the 2014 AGM

There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted and action points were noted.

3. Chairs report

The Chair, Greg Myers, went through the main points in his report, noting changes in BAAL activities that constitute the role BAAL plays in the world of Applied Linguistics. The good signs are that membership numbers are up, the number of SIGs is rising, and conferences get good attendance. The challenges are in the changes to the newsletter, which is going digital, and the costs of running the conference, which are rising. One of the most important constants in BAAL activity is the behind the scenes work liaising with other organisations mostly concerned with policy setting and campaigning; for example, working with members linked to other organisations, such as Li Wei, chair of UCGAL.

4. Treasurer's report

The Treasurer's report was circulated. In his absence, Steve Morris, Treasurer, had asked GM to speak to the meeting on his behalf. BAAL is always working on ways of generating more income and in general terms that is not a cause for concern. What is of concern is the conference losses of the last two years. We need to account for these losses.

What led to the losses was not a decrease in attendance. Attendance goes up and down, but remains fairly healthy year to year: for example, Heriot Watt 359, Warwick 231, Aston 320.

The problem seems to have been how the money was collected by the company InAnyEvent: their control of the system between registrations and payment went awry. Some attendees had letters asking for payment when they had paid. Heriot Watt lost £9,000. After Warwick there was similar confusion, with people being asked for payment when they had paid. An additional problem last year at Warwick was that a) many places were booked at the gala dinner that were not taken up and

b) expensive plenary travel had to be authorised for medical reasons. That was a matter of principle and GM would have done that this year should the need have arisen.

GM invited comments.

Guy Cook: changing the conference to a one day or online format would not be a good way forward. It is not just the papers, but the opportunity for socialising and networking that is valuable.

Hopefully the conference finances should sort themselves out. There are other ways of generating income: for example a subscription rate graded according to earnings; and the cost of the conference could go up slightly. At the moment, SIG members do not have to be members of BAAL. Perhaps they should be asked to join?

GM: this might mean that the membership of SIGS would go down. In fact some SIGS are all BAAL members, while others are not.

Fiona Copland: many people are brought into contact with BAAL through the SIG activities. For example, the LEF SIG has a 700 strong membership.

5. Report from Applied Linguistics Editor (Anna Mauranen)

The new editor, Anna Mauranen, has no report from OUP to provide statistics, but has sent this information about a forthcoming special issue and a summary of acceptance rates.

5.1 A special issue with invited statements that discuss defining the field is coming out in September. For that special issue, AM did a quick survey of topics covered in the journal in the first five years and the last five years of the journal. Invitees were Guy Cook, Roger Shuy, Elaine Tarone, Claire Kramsch, Tim McNamara, Chris Candlin (who was not able to participate because of illness) and Ros Mitchell (who accepted the invitation but decided not to participate at the last minute).

5.2 Acceptance rates are sent out every month and here below is an acceptance rate report.

Accept or Reject Final Decision	# of Manuscripts	% of total (# of Manuscripts)
Accept	69	21.10%
Reject	258	78.90%

6. BAAL Fellows update

Membership Secretary, Jo Angouri, confirmed that this new category of membership, BAAL fellow, will now be established. Following the procedure of constitution, this category was announced at the 2014 AGM. The details of how it will work will be confirmed after the BAAL EC meeting in January 2016.

Discussion items

1. Diversity representative job description

The Secretary, Dawn Knight, had circulated details of this job description on BAAL mail and GM invited comments from the meeting. DK explained that this role will be part of an ordinary member role. GM added that this is because we want to see how the role works over 2 years in order to decide whether we confirm it in constitution. As there were no comments, GM asked the meeting for approval of this as a working description. Approval was given.

2. Format of the annual conference

The EC has been discussing and inviting views on possible changes in format for the annual conference with a view to ensuring that a good range of Applied Linguists are attracted to the conference. There have been proposals relating to a) timing and duration and b) the format of sessions included.

For example, the timing and duration suggested for Birmingham 2017 is to start on a Wednesday evening and run over 2 full days.

The other area for variation is in the format of sessions. The Birmingham format would have a more limited selection of papers. Other suggestions relate to more invited papers rather than open submission; more posters; different roles for SIGS; use of other media and so on. GM invited views on how we want the conference to develop.

Rob Sharples: the senior Applied Linguists should be asked why they are not here.

Walter Davies: September is a good time for folk to come over from Japan.

Susan Hunston: a 'work in progress' type of presentation might be a category that could be signalled differently

Zoe Handley: there is often a clash with EUROSLA

Alex Ho-Cheong Leung: we do try to find out EUROSLA dates, but they are quite movable and not always announced well in advance.

Caroline Tagg: the price is too expensive, especially for one day

Fiona Copland: the Aston organising committee made the decision to make the 3 days cheaper than 2 to encourage delegates to come for longer. Early bird rates were very good. Even so, 12- 15 folk just arrived and paid on the day.

GM invited any more comments on length

Graham Turner: history shows that the conference is not broken, so energy should be put into developing other activities during the year. For example, on line events would be cheaper. Perhaps SIGS could experiment with different options.

Karin Tusting: LEF runs an annual 'e seminar' which is very successful and a good way of bringing people into a debate. Many people would not come to conference if they were not able to present a paper.

Michael Kranert: in many cases funding is not available to post graduates if they cannot present.

Joan Cutting: maybe we should have a shorter conference, not fewer nights.

Susan Hunston: booking rooms for 2 days instead of 3 is more efficient because it is common to be charged a whole day rate for a half day booking.

GC: lots of online events would be good. But we do not wish to lose the conference

GM: there could be different functions for meetings through the year...

Tilly Harrison: there could be a SIG conference with just tracks. This is what happens at IATEFL; a very large conference, but people are happy in their SIG.

GT: the balance in the programme between SIGs and other parts of conference is pretty good.

KT: the theme of this conference made it interesting and accessible to a wider range of Applied Linguists. . Some folk who haven't come for years came. The website was up early, the conference was well marketed, and it had an accessible theme.

Marilyn Martin-Jones: Aston should be congratulated on running the finances themselves because this is very costly in effort and time. The additional responsibility they have taken on is much appreciated. (Much nodding as the meeting agreed!)

Chris Hall: Would the EC be consulting with broader membership on these ideas?

GM: Yes. This will be done through BAAL mail

GT: is there a media officer?

DK: the post is vacant

GT: it would be useful if the media officer could highlight something within the conference that can be disseminated to the wider world. For example, it could be something that happened, or something that was discussed.

GM thanked the meeting for their comments.

3. *Conference proceedings*

GM reported that the question is whether conference proceedings should be produced or not. Discussion at BAAL EC had produced a more or less equally split vote at BAAL exec (6 for and 5 against), so need wider discussion.

David Graddol: the proceedings are a struggle to produce, but sometimes had good reputational impact. The key is in editorial selection. Good plenary speakers could be asked to submit an article.

KT: in the current academic climate, it is hard to get people to submit articles to proceedings because they do not get points in the REF.

GC: does the same comment apply to this as to newsletter? Is it better to drop 'proceedings' rather than let them peter out? Are we fighting against the inevitable?

Sue Garton: in terms of effort vs. benefit it appears to be a no brainer.

GM thanked the meeting for their comments.

4. BAAL newsletter

The BAAL newsletter is getting smaller and smaller. We are moving towards a 'rolling' distribution of news and seminar events via the BAAL website, where a separate 'newsletter' section will be created in due course. Apart from book reviews, nearly everything goes out on BAALmail now, so one of the tasks for the incoming newsletter editor will be to archive some items on BAALmail.

5. Poster prize:

The poster prize results are

Runners up:

- i. Linda Backman, Abo Akademi University, Finland: *Approaching Identity: Four Kinds of Interviews*
- ii. Caroline Tagg and Esther Asprey: *Messaging in the Midlands Dialect and Diversity as Resources for Creating Digital Intimacy, Solidarity and Trust*

First prize: Hirokazu Nukuto, Kansai University Graduate School, Japan: *Interlanguage Pragmatic Development and Socialization in Negotiating Participation and Role: A Case Study of a Japanese Student in a Cross-Cultural Group Discussion*

Elections to the Executive Committee

On behalf of BAAL DK thanked

- Greg Myers, outgoing Chair.
- Esther Daborn, CLiE Chair
- *Sebastian Rasinger*
- *Tilly Harrison – 2 terms*
- *Maria Leedham*
- *Gary Quin*

New members

1. Chair:

Professor Tess Fitzpatrick, Cardiff University. Professor of Applied Linguistics, School of English, Communication and Philosophy; Deputy Head of School; Director, Centre for Language and Communication. In accepting the post, Tess Fitzpatrick made the following statement.

'I would like to thank the EC for nominating me to this post. Although the nomination is unopposed, I think it is appropriate for me to say a few words to introduce myself as the incoming Chair of BAAL.

For many years I have been an active member of BAAL; I have attended eleven annual conferences, organised the BAAL conference in Swansea in 2008, and served two previous terms on the EC. My membership of the BAAL community has been a valuable aspect of my own professional experience, and I am delighted to be taking on this new role. I am looking forward to working with the EC and the wider membership, and I am committed to acting strategically and thoughtfully in the service of the membership and the discipline.

It is appropriate now, as always, for the Executive Committee to scrutinize the function, relevance, visibility and identity of our organization; Greg Myers' account of BAAL's necessary function and ongoing challenges, in his final Chair's Report, offers a constructive platform for this work. Attention to the identity of BAAL starts with attention to the identity and focus of the 956 current members, and there were certainly clues to this in the positivity and dynamic interactions, as well as in the integrity of the academic papers, at the Aston conference last week. BAAL exists beyond the three days of the annual conference, though, and the EC will be building on the work of previous Chairs to enhance year-round provision to BAAL's membership, to preserve the features of the organization which the membership most values, and to take on the challenge to re-conceptualise and re-shape where appropriate.

Before closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Greg Myers, the outgoing Chair, for his careful and judicious leadership of BAAL over the last three years, and to thank Esther Daborn, Tilly Harrison, Maria Leedham, Gary Quinn and Sebastian Rasinger for the time and energy they have committed to BAAL during their service on the EC. I would also like to thank Fiona Copland and the Aston team for the work they put into making BAAL 2015 such a successful and enjoyable conference.

I am very much looking forward to working with you all. '

2. **Newsletter Editor: Bettina Beinhoff**, Anglia Ruskin University.
In her absence, BB had sent a statement to be presented to the meeting, outlining her experience relevant to this role and some goals. She is Communications Officer for the Language and New Media SIG and has experience of working with publishing software, copy-editing texts for publication. She is keen to develop the BAAL newsletter by making it more reader friendly online and by investigating the accessibility across multiple platforms.
3. **Media Coordinator: Claire Hardaker**, Lancaster University
In her absence CH had sent a statement to be presented to the meeting, outlining her experience relevant to this role and some goals. She sees value in her previous experience giving interviews for the press, radio, and television, featuring in documentaries, writing articles and op-eds for a number of national broadsheets, creating press releases, and handling a very wide range of interview-types. Tasks she sees as useful in this BAAL role are to proactively develop and present the image of BAAL to the wider public. One route might be through press-releases for SIG events and BAAL funded projects.
4. **SIG Coordinator: Caroline Tagg**, Birmingham (about to move to the Open University). CT said that she was very interested in taking on this role of organising and guiding SIGS.
5. **Diversity Representative: Florentina Taylor**, Greenwich. FT said that she was deeply involved in supporting people to be the best on their own terms. Establishment of this role demonstrated that there is more in BAAL than just presenting papers and being a member of the audience.
6. **2 Ordinary Members:** There were 3 people standing for the **2 Ordinary Member places** as (GC pointed out) GM should be an ordinary member, by default. The three proposed were Zoe Handley (York); Fiona Copland (Stirling); and Glenn Hadikin (Portsmouth). Each made a two minute speech before voting forms were passed out. Results to be announced at the closing ceremony.

AOB

GT: can we know who is continuing on the BAAL EC? GM went through list:

Dawn Knight (secretary); Steve Morris (Treasurer); Jo Angouri (Membership Secretary); Li Li (BAAL Seminar co-ordinator); Elvis Yevudey (PG Liaison and development officer) ; Martin Edwardes (Web editor), Alex Ho-Cheong Leung (Meetings Secretary), Bernadette O'Rourke (Publications Secretary); Ursula Lanvers (ordinary member), Sue Wharton (ordinary member),

There being no other business the meeting ended at 18.40

Appendix 1 Reporting items

(Written) Reports from officers

- Chair's report (Greg Myers)
- Secretary's report (Dawn Knight)
- Treasurer's report (Steve Morris)
- Meetings Secretary's report (Alex Ho-Cheong Leung)
- Membership Secretary (Jo Angouri)
- Postgraduate Liaison and Development Officer's report (Elvis Yevudey)
- Publications Secretary's report (Bernadette O'Rourke)
- Newsletter Editor's report (Sebastian Rasinger)
- Web Editor's report (Martin Edwardes)
- SIG Coordinator's report (Tilly Harrison)
- BAAL/CUP Seminars Co-ordinator's report (Li Li)
- CLIE report (Esther Daborn)