

Linguistic Ethnography Forum

CONVENOR'S REPORT
to
BAAL Executive Committee
July 2007- July 2008

1. Aims

The UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum (LEF) was set up in March 2001, and we aim

- * to bring together researchers conducting linguistic ethnography here and abroad, and
- * to explore a range of past and current work, to identify key issues, and to engage in methodologically and theoretically well-tuned debate.

2. Organisation

During 2007-2008, the committee has been:

Convenor:	Prof Ben Rampton (ben.rampton@kcl.ac.uk) 2007-09
Treasurer:	Dr Theresa Lillis (t.m.lillis@open.ac.uk) 2006-08
Communications secretary:	Dr Jeff Bezemer (j.bezemer@ioe.ac.uk) 2006-08
Meetings coordinator:	Prof Angela Creese (a.creese@bham.ac.uk) 2006-08
Ordinary members:	Dr Janet Maybin (j.maybin@open.ac.uk) 2006-08
	Dr Vally Lytra (vally.lytra@pobox.com) 2007-09

3. Email list and membership

Our email list (ling-ethnog@jiscmail.ac.uk) is counted as our membership, and members are asked every year if they want to continue on the list. Membership currently stands at 231, with members coming from 22 countries (about half from the UK, a quarter from North America and 5-10% from mainland Europe). There were 202 members in July 2007, 173 in July 2006, 160 in July 2005, 146 in July 2004, and 129 in July 2003.

4. Web-site

We continue to maintain a website, which we regularly update with news of forthcoming events and details and papers from recent ones. See <http://www.ling-ethnog.org.uk>

5. Finance

As of 31/05/08, our balance stands at £1,504.72.

6. Activity during 2007-08

6.1 Publications

Two publications appeared this year:

6.1.1 *Special issue of Journal of Sociolinguistics entitled 'Linguistic ethnography: Links, problems & possibilities' (Vol 11/5, November 2007):* This contains:

- an introduction by Karin Tusting & Janet Maybin
- 5 papers: 'Neo-Hymesian linguistic ethnography in the UK' (Ben Rampton), 'Nexus analysis: Refocusing ethnography on action' (Ron Scollon & Suzie Wong Scollon), 'Relationality in sociolinguistics: A dialogue with linguistic ethnography' (Lukas Tsitsipis), 'Linguistic ethnography in realist perspective' (Alison Sealey), 'A step to far?: Discursive psychology, linguistic ethnography and questions of identity' (Margaret Wetherell)
- 2 discussant commentaries: 'On the scope and depth of linguistic ethnography' (Jan Blommaert), 'Reflections on linguistic ethnography' (Martyn Hammersley)

6.1.2 *Contribution to The Encyclopaedia of Language & Education: Volume 10 of The Encyclopaedia of Language & Education* (edited by Nancy Hornberger and published by Springer/Kluwer), which focuses on methodology and carries a paper by Angela Creese entitled 'Linguistic Ethnography'.

6.2 *Meetings*

During 2007-08, LEF was closely involved in four academic meetings that, and three of these involved dialogue with groups representing different traditions of enquiry (a healthy sign that LE is developing its external profile and that it continues to look outwards). The events were:

6.2.1 *Negotiating Multilingual Identities in Educational Settings* (BAAL Annual Meeting, University of Edinburgh, 6th September 2007. Organiser, Adrian Blackledge). This colloquium presented four ethnographic studies, each of which investigated identity negotiation of multilingual learners in educational settings. 'Erosion of language-ideological based pupils' identities in a Dutch multicultural primary classroom' (Massimiliano Spotti & Sjaak Kroon); 'Multilingual identities in higher education: Negotiating the 'mother tongue', 'posh' and 'slang'' (Siân Preece); 'Multilingual children negotiating complex identities in ideological worlds' (Adrian Blackledge, Shahela Hamid, Li Wei, and Chao-Jung Wu); "'I can come to the meetings but can I join the club?'" Experiences of bilingual students in vocational classrooms in an English FE college' (Barbara Majer)

6.2.2 *Linguistic ethnography and Socio-Cultural Psychology in conversation: A workshop on educational dialogue and classroom interaction*, jointly sponsored by the ESRC-RDI 'Ethnography Language & Communication' Research Training Programme and the Open University. Open University, 16 February 2008. Organisers: Adam Lefstein, Janet Maybin and Ben Rampton). This workshop sought to foster the dialogue between LE and SCP. There were c. 40 participants, and presentations, discussions and responses were led by Neil Mercer (Cambridge), Christine Howe (Cambridge), Adam Lefstein (IoE), Ben Rampton (King's College London), Janet Maybin (OU), and Kris Gutiérrez (UCLA).

6.2.3 *Multimodality and ethnography: Working at the intersection* (jointly sponsored by the BAAL Multimodality and Linguistic Ethnography SIGs. Open University, 26th February 2008. Organised by Kate Pahl, Rosie Flewitt and Lesley Lancaster. The questions addressed at this seminar included: (1) How can research methodologies be enhanced by combining multimodal and ethnographic approaches?; (2) How does a focus on the affordances of different modalities usefully extend and enhance the 'thick description' demanded by fine-grained ethnography? (3) How does incorporating visual/material cultural methodologies enhance ethnographic research? There were presentations and discussions led by Kate Pahl (Sheffield), Lesley Lancaster (Manchester Metropolitan), Sarah Pink (Loughborough), Alison Clark (Roehampton), Rachel Hurdley (Cardiff), and Rosie Flewitt (OU), Jennifer Rowsell (Rutgers).

6.2.4 *Ethnographies of literacy/ Ethnographies de l'écrit : An Anglo-French Dialogue*. Organised by the Literacy Research Centre, Lancaster University, and co-sponsored by UK LEF. Lancaster. 8 May 2008). This seminar brought together members of the Lancaster LLRC, UK LEF and the *Anthropologie de l'Écriture* group based at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* in Paris. There were 23 participants, with presentations from Béatrice Fraenkel, Uta Papen, Karin Tusting, Nathalie Joly, David Barton, Aissatou Mbodj-Pouye, Julia Gillen, Nigel Hall and Philippe Artières. There is a fuller report of the event in BAAL News # 89, Summer 2008.

6.2.4 *Upcoming and future meetings*: There will be a track of Linguistic Ethnography papers at the 2008 BAAL Annual Meeting in Swansea on 13 Sept 2008, with contributions from Angeles Clemente, Michael Higgins, Meredith Izon, Mukul Saxena, Peter Sercombe and James Simpson. During 2008-09, the ESRC-RDI programme 'Ethnography Language and Communication' is planning to run up to six events with details posted at www.rdi-elc.org.uk. This schedule involves: three one-day workshops, on 'Asylum and Migration' (Sat 15 Nov 2008 in London), on 'Health' (Jan/Feb 2009) and on 'New Media' (autumn 2009); a one-day seminar on 'Teaching and Learning Linguistic Ethnography' (spring 2009); and two one-day event Master Classes (with speakers to be confirmed). There is also a conference on 'Advances in Ethnography, Language and Communication' at Aston University on 20 September 2008, organized by 'graduates' from the first 5 day course on 'Key Concepts and Methods' (the keynote speakers are Celia Roberts and Janet Maybin).

6.3 *ESRC-RDI 'Ethnography, Language & Communication'* (www.rdi-elc.org.uk)

'Ethnography Language & Communication' is a 3 year advanced methods training course for doctoral and post-doctoral social science researchers UK-wide, funded with £100,000 from the ESRC's Research Development Initiative from January 2007 to December 2009. We have now run two 5-day courses on 'Key Concepts and Methods', attended by c.55 researchers in all, several data sessions, a workshop on classroom discourse (6.2.2), and there are also a number of events are planned for 2008-09 (see 6.2.4 above). The programme team consists of Ben Rampton, Celia Roberts (KCL), Adam Lefstein, Jeff Bezemer, Carey Jewitt (IoE), and Jan Blommaert (Jyväskylä), and it is administered by Melissa de Graaff (KCL). The advisory board consists of Julia Bailey, Mike Baynham, Gunther Kress, Marilyn Martin-Jones, Janet Maybin, Andrew Pollard, Brian Street, Karin Tusting, Margie Wetherell and Helen Wood.

7. BAAL

LEF has developed well over the year, strengthening its institutional base and engaging with new and different constituencies. As ever, our identity as a BAAL Special Interest Group continues to be of considerable value, and we would like to thank the BAAL Executive for its ongoing support.

Ben Rampton (Convenor)
on behalf of the UK LEF Coordinating Committee
15 July 2008