

Item 10j: Linguistics

Liaison with associations of linguistics in the UK and possible cross-initiatives

As the UCML representative for Linguistics, I was invited to the **Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLiE)** meeting on 7th February 2020, where I brought greetings from UCML and I was briefly asked to present UCML recent initiatives.

At the meeting, I had the chance to establish a connection with Dr Jonathan Kasstan, who is leading the **Linguistics in Modern Foreign Languages Project**. As you may remember from my previous reports, the [Linguistics in Modern Foreign Languages](#) aims to assess the potential for the inclusion of linguistic topics in the Further Education MFL curriculum. As we know, current syllabi make a sharp distinction between language and content, the latter referring to literature, film, history and culture. This differs from many university courses in which linguistic content is fundamental.

The Project engages students with linguistics and deepen their interests in language, including its historical, cultural and social reflexes. It also aims to see what effect the exposure to these topics may have on the students' language attitudes and their confidence levels with speaking/writing another language.

The Project is concerned principally with taking drastic action to address a crisis in MFL teaching and learning, and its ultimate aim is to drive stronger uptake and results in MFL study, and to enthuse and better prepare candidates for entry into MFL at university by bringing about a change in the curriculum. A pilot was schedule for 2020, but it may be put on hold given the current situation.

I have expressed my personal interest in the project, and I suggested that **Dr Kasstan could maybe come to UCML next General Meeting** and explain to us what the outcomes of the projects are, and to what extent UCML could benefit from them. I finally said that CLiE, Dr KAsstan and UCML could collaborate to produce materials for school teachers on linguistics and on linguistic approaches to language teaching.

At the Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLiE) meeting on 7th February 2020 the **Research in Primary Languages (RiPL) White Paper** was also presented. Sponsored by the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL) and written by Bernadette Holme and Florence Myles, RiPL 2019 White Paper on *Primary [Languages Policy in England – The Way Forward](#)* – presents the results of an extensive survey on primary schools and languages. Its main outcome is to evaluate the implementation of the 2014 statutory requirement to teach a foreign language in primary schools in England and to share priorities for future development. It also includes a set of recommendations to operationalise the solutions proposed in the White Paper in relation to time allocation, primary languages pedagogy, ITE and CPD provision, curriculum planning, assessment and reporting, transition arrangements, and the use of digital technology.

Recently, I also got in touch with the chair of **BAAL Dawn Knight** to report to BAAL on UCML activities and vice versa, putting Chairs in contact when issues or debates overlap.

BAAL next General Meeting will be held in November at Northumbria University and its theme will be *Challenges and opportunities in Applied Linguistics*. I hope I will be able to go to the Meeting, and then report to UCML November 2020 Exec.

Ideas for further discussion

As you may remember from my previous reports, I would like to invite UCML Exec to open up a discussion on the introduction of **signed languages** in FML curricula, and possibly join BAAL's campaign for a legal recognition of signed languages in Higher Education across the UK.

I am also very keen to explore the possibility to collaborate with BAAL on the possibility of introducing some basic concepts of **neurodiversity** and **neurolinguistics** in FML language teaching and setting up training sessions (**CPDs**) for **language teachers** on this matter.

Finally, before the end of my mandate I would like to conduct a **survey on the provision of linguistics/modules on linguistics in FML** departments/schools. I kindly ask Elena to help me finalise the survey and send it to all departments across the country. I would like to collect the data by the end of this academic year, and possibly present them at UCML November Exec Meeting.

Report from Dr Federico Faloppa, UCML Linguistics representative