

## Linguistic Ethnography Forum

# CONVENOR'S REPORT to BAAL Executive Committee July 2004- July 2005

### 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

From September 2005, all members of the Coordinating Committee will be elected for (twice renewable) terms of 2 years. The CC currently consists of:

Convenor:	Prof Ben Rampton ( <a href="mailto:ben.rampton@kcl.ac.uk">ben.rampton@kcl.ac.uk</a> ) 2004-2005
Treasurer:	Dr Richard Barwell ( <a href="mailto:richard.barwell@bristol.ac.uk">richard.barwell@bristol.ac.uk</a> ) 2004-05
Communications secretary:	Dr Karin Tusting ( <a href="mailto:k.tusting@lancaster.ac.uk">k.tusting@lancaster.ac.uk</a> ) 2004-06
Meetings coordinator:	Dr Angela Creese ( <a href="mailto:a.creese@bham.ac.uk">a.creese@bham.ac.uk</a> ) 2004-06
Ordinary members:	Dr Janet Maybin ( <a href="mailto:j.maybin@open.ac.uk">j.maybin@open.ac.uk</a> ) 2004-06
	Dr Vally Lytra ( <a href="mailto:vally.lytra@pobox.com">vally.lytra@pobox.com</a> ) 2004-05

### 3. Email list and membership

Our email list is counted as our membership, and members are asked every year if they want to continue on the list. Membership currently stands at 160, of whom approximately a quarter are based abroad. There were 146 members 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 of recent ones. See <http://www.ling-ethnog.org.uk>

### 5. Finance

Our balance currently stands at £842.25, and auditable accounts for 2004-2005 have been submitted to the BAAL Treasurer.

### 6. Activity during 2004-2005

#### 6.1 Publications

In January 2005, the Coordinating Committee produced a discussion document which explored some of the origins, affiliations and distinctiveness of linguistic ethnography in the UK (*UK Linguistic Ethnography: A Discussion Paper*, at <http://www.ling-ethnog.org.uk>). This was circulated to everyone on our mailing list, as well as to 80-90 researchers world-wide. The text certainly didn't try to tie all the issues up (and it didn't represent a consensus even within the Coordinating Committee). But it has provoked quite a lot of useful discussion, both here and abroad. It provides the point of departure for our colloquium at the 2005 BAAL Annual Meeting (see 6.2 below), and although these debates are very rewarding in themselves, more formal publications may emerge in due course.

#### 6.2 Meetings

Following the policy discussion reported in our last Annual Report, we have expanded the range of formats for LEF meetings, and this year, instead of a two-day residential seminar in the Spring, we have been organising a number of one-day events. Our calendar of past and forthcoming meetings is as follows:

- o *10 September 2004*: A day-long colloquium at the 2004 BAAL Annual Meeting in London, covering two linked themes: 'Time, the global and the local: Theoretical and methodological

- explorations' (with papers by 5 researchers mainly based in the UK), and 'Ethnographies of communication in multilingual spaces' (papers by 5 researchers in Europe & the US).
- *Saturday 26 February 2005*: A one-day event on 'Ethnography in Multilingual Urban Settings', held at the School of Education, Birmingham University. There were three presentations, focusing on researcher-researched relations, the professional identities of bilingual primary teachers, and the racialisation of language in British political discourse.
  - *Saturday 18 June 2005*: A one-day event held in the School of Education, University of Bristol, with papers and a good deal of wide-ranging discussion around 'Studying children's language and practices and cultures outside school', 'Insider researching – is an identity crisis inevitable?', and 'Ethnographic-style bilingual interviews'.
  - *Tuesday 13 September 2005*: A one-day event on 'Bakhtin, language and discourse' held at King's College London, jointly organised by the KCL Discourse and Social Interaction Network ([www.kcl.ac.uk/dsi](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/dsi)). Presentations on "Journey with Bakhtin on the path of linguistic anthropology", on 'Speech genres and 'evaluation' in socialisation and identity", and a 'what would Bakhtin say?' data session.
  - *Thursday 15 September 2005*: A colloquium entitled "Linguistic ethnography and the social sciences" to be held at the 2005 BAAL Annual meeting in Bristol. Using our discussion paper as a point of departure (6.1 above), the aim is to situate linguistic ethnography in a wider academic context, and the scheduled contributors from outside LEF are Margaret Wetherell (discursive psychology), Martyn Hammersley (sociology & education), Lukas Tsitsipis (linguistic anthropology), and Alison Sealey (applied linguistics & critical realism).
  - *Saturday 4th March, 2006*: A one-day event to be held at The Open University, Milton Keynes, on "Methodological issues in Linguistic Ethnography".
  - We are also currently discussing the possibility of holding a linguistic ethnography workshop at Sociolinguistic Symposium 16 in Limerick in 6-8 July 2006. The theme of this will be "What counts (and doesn't count) as ethnography in language research", and if this comes off, it will be the 14<sup>th</sup> that we have organised since our inception in 2001.

## **7. ESRC Consultation**

During the year, the ESRC carried out a consultation on its data strategy, and in conjunction with the Literacy Research Centre at Lancaster University, Karin Tusting responded on LEF's behalf.

## **8. BAAL**

Our identity as a BAAL Special Interest Group continues to be of enormous value to us, and this year we are particularly grateful to the BAAL Executive for its generous agreement to waiving the Annual Conference registration fee for speakers invited to our September colloquium.

Ben Rampton  
on behalf of

UK LEF Coordinating Committee

(Richard Barwell, Angela Creese, Vally Lytra, Janet Maybin, Ben Rampton, Karin Tusting)

11<sup>th</sup> July 2005