

AULC
The Association of University Language Centres in the UK and Ireland
Inaugural Meeting
University of Bristol 16 - 17 April 1999

University Language Centres:
“Strength through Diversity”

Friday 16 April 1999

The inaugural meeting was attended by over 40 people representing 28 institutions of Higher Education.

Introduction and welcome by Ray Satchell, Director, University of Bristol Language Centre and AULC Chair.

Ray Satchell, Chair of AULC and host to the AULC Inaugural Meeting at Bristol University, opened the meeting by welcoming all AULC members. He emphasised that the new Association of University Language Centres was to represent all aspects of Language Centres in Higher Education including those of EFL, with an added European dimension via AULC membership of CERCLES. The research aspects of many Language Centres would also be recognised with a member of the AULC Executive having been asked to represent AULC on the RAE Panel.

To date there were 65 member institutions. The newly elected Executive had so far worked to provide web pages and Mailbase mailing lists for members.

Plenary Speaker 1: Professor David Bickerton, Secretary General of CERCLES

Professor Bickerton gave a slide presentation from past CERCLES bulletins depicting a variety of Language Centres in various settings throughout Europe. CERCLES members now had access to web pages and the CERCLES Bulletin on-line.

Historically, CERCLES had come about through language centres in Europe being bound by common interests, aims and responsibilities. Member Centres are based in the Higher Education sector and generally have an academic/research function. In particular, it was noted how the massive demands for English Language teaching abroad had lent great importance to Language Centres, with language teaching now not just aimed at the language specialist alone. By 1970, a total of 30 language centres in institutes of higher education had been set up throughout Europe; from the period from 1970-90 this total rose to some 300.

CERCLES was proposed as an organisation in 1989 and founded in Strasbourg in 1991.

The UK, with 65 members of CERCLES is now permitted 3 places on the Co-ordinating Committee. It was noted that anyone from AULC could stand to be elected to the Co-ordinating Committee for 2000 [a two year mandate].

For further information on CERCLES please go to:

<http://www.cercles.org/>

Plenary Speaker 2: Robert Holkham, Project Manager DTI Languages for Export

Robert Holkham gave a talk and slide presentation on the National Languages for Export Campaign. For further information please go to:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/pip/29lanexp.htm>

Main Business - Report from AULC Executive

Much had been achieved since the election and first meeting of the AULC Executive including the establishment of a database of all AULC members, the creation of Mailbase lists, the opening of an AULC bank account and the design of some initial AULC web pages [to be found at www.aulc.org]. An application had also been made to HEFCE to request that a member of the AULC Executive be included on the RAE panel. It was noted that AULC was also represented at the European Languages Council, BALEAP, and CERCLES. The AULC Executive had also been approached to take part in negotiations regarding bids for the subject centres due to replace the CTIs once funding for these had dried up.

Each member of the Executive then introduced themselves [see AULC web pages for Executive members' details].

Venue for the next AULC meeting : this was due to be held at Edinburgh University in December 1999 and at University College Dublin in 2000.

It was noted that AULC would register under the Data Protection Act.

Report back from Special Interest Groups

The moderator or elected chair reported back from each of the individual SIG meetings. These were:

- The Learning Environment [Technical and Resources] – Moderator: Roger Frisby, Middlesex University. The name **Technical and Resources** was the name adopted for this SIG. For further information see:

http://www.aulc.org/tech_sig.html

- Learning and Teaching – Moderator: Marina Mozzon-MacPherson, University of Hull. This group decided on the name **AULC-TALK (Teaching, Advising and Learning Kollaboratively)** for their SIG. For further information see:

http://www.aulc.org/talk_sig.html

- Management and Administration – Moderator: Nick Byrne, London School of Economics. Members decided on the title **Structures, Organisation and Strategies** [also known as SOS]. For further information see:

http://www.aulc.org/sos_sig.html

- Research – Moderator: Edith Esch, University of Cambridge. For further information on this SIG see:

<http://www.aulc.org/research.html>

Saturday 17 April 1999

AULC logo display and vote on logos

Several members bravely volunteered to try out their artistic abilities on the audience by agreeing to sketch some suggestions for a new AULC logo for all to see and judge. After a brainstorming session, ideas emerging seemed to suggest that the most appropriate logo should incorporate the following elements:

SIMPLICITY
VERSATILITY
CLARITY
LANGUAGE
INTERNATIONAL
OPEN
COMMUNICATION
MODERN
DYNAMIC
TIMELESS
TRANS-NATIONAL
TECHNOLOGY

A vote was held and the most popular three logo suggestions would consequently be submitted to students at the London School of Printing to use as a basis for an actual logo design. Once these designs were ready they would be displayed on the AULC web pages and members would be given a chance to vote for their preferred design. This would then be adopted as the AULC logo.

Demonstration: Remote access servers, Layer 4 switching technology, video-conferencing and real time satellite [multi-feed arrays] led by Brian Mills from BCI.

The Learning System at Lincolnshire and Humberside University: a web based learning system – Andy Hagyard, University of Lincolnshire and Humberside

Language Learning and the Internet – Gilles Couzin, University of Bristol

Close

Ray Satchell concluded that the meeting had been a most successful one, both dynamic and participative. Thanks were then extended to all participants and speakers. The meeting was then officially closed.