BAAL Language in Africa SIG

Constitution

August 12th 2015

1. Aims

The overarching goal of the LiA SIG is to provide a forum for the exploration of applied linguistics topics in African contexts.

There are three main aims, two of which reflect the kinds of research topic which are of central interest within our forum, and a third which reflects our commitment to providing networking for scholars in Africa to connect with scholars based in the UK or elsewhere.

1. To examine how educational, political and social contexts affect the learning and teaching of languages in Africa, and learning through more than one language. Studies may focus on practices in the local context (formal or informal sectors), language planning and policies in relation to education, or the cultural politics of language teaching.

2. To investigate various sociolinguistic aspects of language in use in Africa. Relevant topic areas include the following:
   - Languages in contact: code-switching, new 'mixed codes', cultural diversity and language ecologies, language maintenance and shift.
   - Nativized Englishes in Africa and attitudes to these and to external models
   - Stylistic aspects of language in use – registers, genres and the 'expressive inventories' available to speakers and writers
   - Language and identity, including studies of gender and ethnicity
   - Critical discourse studies in specific African contexts or dealing with representations of Africa
   - The effects of globalization and new communication technologies.

3. To support and promote the work of African scholars and others engaged with language issues inside African institutions and NGOs, as well as those currently studying in the UK. The main purpose of this is the exchange of information, and understanding

others' interests and agendas. We are committed to providing information about research projects that focus on developing knowledge and skills inside Africa.

2. Activity

LiASIG will hold at least one 'event' each year, where 'event' may refer to a themed conference, workshop or e-seminar. The AGM will be held at the LiASIG conference or in a scheduled slot at the BAAL Annual Meeting.

LiA maintains a website (www.liasig.wordpress.com) and a mailing list.

3. Membership

LiA welcomes all researchers with an interest in applied linguistic and sociolinguistic issues to do with language in Africa, and will consider all those on its mailing list as LiA members. Upon registration members will be asked for their consent for their contact details and research interests to be published on the SIG website.

LiASIG membership is free of charge, but fees may apply to attend academic meetings. Payment of the fee by non-members does not enable BAAL membership. LiASIG will encourage its members to consider BAAL membership. BAAL membership gives SIG members the right to vote on ballots to elect a new Committee.

4. Organisation

LiA is run by a Co-ordinating Committee (CC) that consists of a minimum of four members. This will consist of at least a Convenor, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. Other officers may be elected to named positions as needs arise, and the CC may also have 1-2 elected Ordinary Members. The CC may also co-opt a third Ordinary Member, who may remain as a co-opted member for one year.

5. Responsibilities in the Co-ordinating Committee

The CC is responsible for facilitating and overseeing the activities of LiA (facilitating and publicising LEF events; liaising with the local organisers of seminars; maintaining financial accounts; servicing business meetings, etc.).

As a SIG within BAAL, the activity of LiA must be broadly congruent with the BAAL Constitution, and regardful of BAAL guidelines on the organisation of SIGs as in the SIG Handbook.

The CC must submit:

a) an Annual Report to the BAAL SIG Coordinator by August 15th every year

b) a full, accurate and auditable financial statement to the BAAL Treasurer by June 30th every year.

The CC should also ensure that all SIG activities are regularly publicised and reported on through the BAAL Newsletter, the BAAL Website and BAALmail.

6. Election of the Co-ordinating Committee

Members of the Coordinating Committee are elected for a period of two years. CC members are eligible for re-election, but the continuous tenure of any Officer shall be limited to three terms of office.

• The quorum for an AGM election is five, including at least two committee members.
• Voting at General Meetings shall be by secret ballot. In the event of an equality of votes, the Convenor may give a second or casting vote; the Convenor's decision on the result of any vote shall be final.
• If any office falls vacant between Annual General Meetings, the remaining officers can invite another LiA member to take up the vacant post for that period until the next General Meeting.

The Convenor and Treasurer must be members of BAAL.

7. Dissolution
In the event of the LiA SIG ceasing to operate, any funds held will be paid back to BAAL, unless the BAAL membership agrees at the BAAL AGM that it is unnecessary to do so.

8. Amending the LiA Constitution
This constitution may be amended by a majority vote at any quorate Annual General Meeting, provided that written notice of the proposed amendments are given to the Convenor in good time and then relayed to the membership at least fourteen days before the Meeting.

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