

Minutes of the 2017 business meeting of the Association for Written Language and Literacy

AWLL board: Terry Joyce (president) [attending], Lynne Cahill (vice-president) [attending],
Martin Neef (secretary) [absent]

Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan, 30/08/2017

Business meeting chaired by Terry and Lynne

These minutes are based on both the meeting agenda and notes kindly taken by David Roberts,
as confirmed by AWLL board.

Approximately 29 of the workshop participants joined the business meeting.

Agenda

1. Terry Joyce expressed thanks to Hisashi Masuda and Chikako Fujita
2. Announcements concerning the AWLL board
3. Comments about Written Language and Literacy's (WLL) special issue for AWLL11
4. Currently reviewing AWLL membership procedures
5. Discussions about the next AWLL workshop (AWLL12)
6. AWLL newsletters and other outreach forums
7. その他 /sono hoka/ 'other matters'?

1. Terry Joyce expressed deep thanks to his local co-organizers, Hisashi Masuda and Chikako Fujita, for their constant help and support, as well as thanking Taeko Ogawa and Koji Miwa

2. Announcements concerning the AWLL board

Martin Neef kindly rejoined the AWLL board as secretary at AWLL10, but he has decided to step from that role at this time. While regretfully accepting Martin's decision, Terry and Lynne expressed their sincere appreciation for all his support since AWLL10, particular as a member of the programme committee for AWLL11.

Dorit Ravid has kindly agreed to join the board, which will continue to consider ways of encouraging wider participation within AWLL operations, particular from younger researchers, possibly in the form of new support roles.

3. Comments about Written Language and Literacy's (WLL) special issue for AWLL11

AWLL continues to benefit from its connection to the journal of Written Language and Literacy (with a number of the journal's editorial roles undertaken by AWLL members), as a selective collection of papers from the AWLL11 workshop will be published as a WLL special issue. As the workshop's local organizer is usually the first guest editor, after seeking the

support of a second guest editor, Terry will contact AWLL11 participants to invite manuscript submissions in due course.

4. Currently reviewing AWLL membership procedures

As first raised during AWLL10's business meeting, AWLL board continues to invite suggestions about what kind of membership system AWLL should adopt for the future. For a long time, membership application has been essentially just a form of subscription for the WLL journal (albeit it at a discounted rate), because, crucially, AWLL receives no financial income from the current membership arrangements. Although the procedures were apparently established with the good intentions of promoting the WLL journal, it has become increasingly obvious that this membership setup is being seen by many as a barrier to becoming an AWLL 'member', as echoed by a number of the AWLL11 participants.

Accordingly, Terry and Lynne repeated their request for suggestions for a suitable system to adopt, such as a two-tier membership (i.e., with or without the discounted subscription to WLL), which could provide AWLL with a modest source of financial support for its future workshops and other activities.

5. Discussions about the next AWLL workshop (AWLL12)

As articulated during the business meetings at both AWLL10 and AWLL11, reflecting a strong sentiment for AWLL workshops to be held more frequently than the traditional cycle of every 24 months or so, there continues to be considerable support for seeking to establish a cycle of approximately every 18 months or so going forward. Given this background, the AWLL board have been particularly concerned to schedule AWLL12 at a time that could contribute to establishing such a cycle as soon as possible.

Since AWLL10, the board has been in regular discussions with one candidate local organizer for AWLL12. However, following an announcement around June 2017 for the Grafematik2018 conference (<http://conferences.telecom-bretagne.eu/grafematik/>) to be held in France in June of 2018, AWLL board is currently carefully considering candidate dates for AWLL12.

6. AWLL newsletters and other outreach forums

AWLL board would like to continue the distribution of periodic newsletters to a mailing list that has been compiled of researchers working in various related disciplines. However, stressing how these newsletter always need news items, the board also renewed its open invitation to everyone to contribute items; not limited to just reports of relevant events or research developments but open to all forms of writing about and discussions of writing systems and literacy matters.

Moreover, as the AWLL board would also like to continue developing AWLL's social media presence through its Facebook page and Twitter feed, Terry and Lynne would particularly welcome hearing from anyone interested in getting involved in such outreach activities. Comments were again made about the possibilities of creating some kind of blog, which could potentially complement the newsletters.

7. その他 /sono hoka/ 'other matters'?

Although this final item of AWLL's business meeting is where the meeting chair(s) traditionally open the floor to any comments from participants, as it is often the case, discussions at this stage frequently return to earlier agenda items of particular importance. At AWLL11's business meeting, these were principally further comments about agenda items 4 about membership system, item 5 about future AWLL workshops, and item 6 about newsletter and other outreach forums.

In terms of the membership system, a few participants echoed the point that a discounted subscription for WLL journal alone is not a strong incentive for becoming a member, especially for younger researchers. However, as these comments also raise important questions about what benefits could be included within an 'annual' membership fee (such as 'right' to attend workshops or discounts on workshop registration fees), again, Lynne called for suggestions that the AWLL board can consider in its ongoing deliberations of this important matter.

Further comments about future AWLL workshops included additional voices supporting the establishment of an 18-month cycle (as two-years is too long but every year also seems too frequent, so 18-months seems a good compromise) as well as support for continuing to alternate between holding in Europe and other geographical locations, as established with AWLL11 being the first AWLL workshop to be held outside of Europe.

Related to mutual information sharing, mention was made of "Scriptish", which is a discussion list dedicated to writing systems, and Terry advised that a link to its sign-up page can be found at the AWLL website's list of related links. On opening the AWLL website, Terry also introduced the ORBWLL page, which is a bibliographic database that he has been gradually compiling for some time (more as time-consuming hobby!), and some interest in contributing to its future compilation was gratefully noted.

And, as with all AWLL business meetings, it then became necessary to close the lively discussions in order to move to venue for the workshop dinner.