



**BALID**

British Association for  
Literacy in Development

## Annual Report 2017 – 2018



*Literacy in practice, Bo, Sierra Leone*

## Report from the Chair

The BALID committee has continued to be very active throughout the last year. Events have included Informal Literacy Discussions (ILDs) which began in November with *Literacy with the San, Namibia*, led by Candi Miller. This was followed in December by two ILDs: *Figured Worlds: An Ethnographic Study of Literacy Practices in a Village Community in Malawi* led by Ahmmardouh Mjaya, and *Lend me your Ears: When and why adults may read aloud rather than in silence*, led by Sam Duncan. The final ILD, in April was *Orality meets literacy in Manjaku of Guinea-Bissau*, led by Jill Karlik. Since 2011, 30 ILDs have now taken place with 25 different speakers, with two more ILDs planned in October and December 2018.

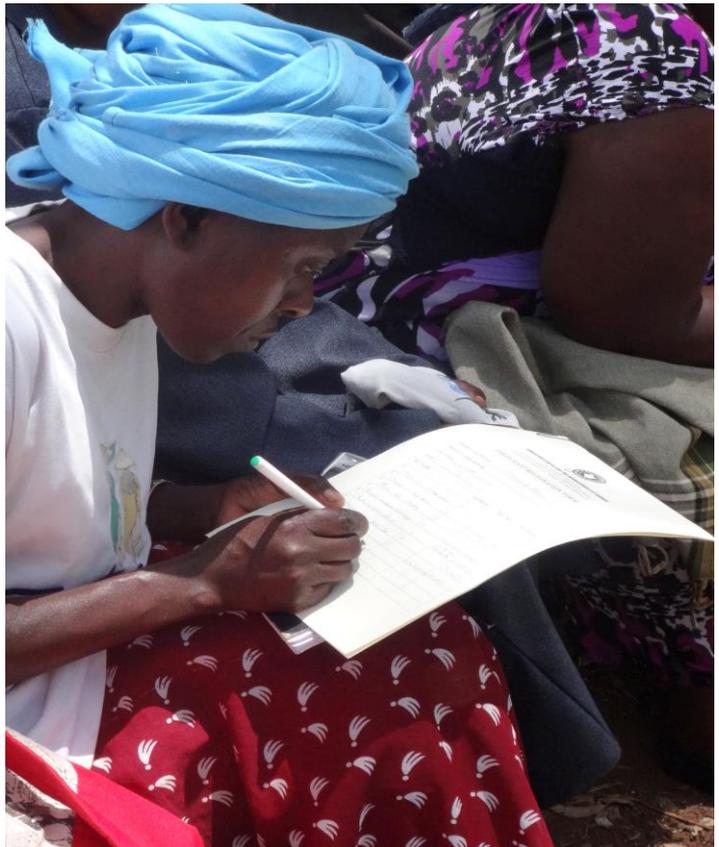
BALID members have contributed to several seminars in memory of Professor Brian Street over the last year, including those at the University of East Anglia and at the University of Sussex. These were poignant events, reminding us all of the immense richness and depth of the contribution made by Brian across international development and higher education. We continue to be reminded of Brian's influence at each of our events and will be remembering him in our own way, through dialogue and stories, at our AGM on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018.

For the last three years, BALID has hosted a significant event each year. In 2018, this was *Models of Literacy Learning*, which was co-hosted by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and attracted many new participants. The keynote speakers were Professor Leketi Makalela, from Witwatersrand University, South Africa and Professor Friederike Lüpke from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Both gave stimulating presentations which triggered valuable debate around models of literacy learning.

In addition, BALID has led two symposia this year; the first at the World Literacy Summit in Oxford in March, entitled *Tackling the literacy challenge*, and the second at the British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE) conference in York in September, entitled *Adult Literacy and Development: Structural Problems and Innovative Responses*. Both were well attended and provided an opportunity for BALID members to engage with a wider audience. The symposium at BAICE was coordinated by Marta Paluch, who joined the BALID committee last year and has brought new ideas and connections to the committee. Invitations were sent out to contribute to the symposium which resulted in more applications than we could include, indicating a strong level of interest in the field.

More details on our ILDs and other events are included later in this report and also on the BALID website ([www.balid.org.uk](http://www.balid.org.uk)).

Looking back over the year, BALID has succeeded in attracting some excellent speakers from the UK and overseas and the committee is grateful for the contribution of all of our presenters. Active participation and encouraging dialogue have been consistent features of BALID events which have been valued by participants. Feedback has been positive with reports of people changing their practice or exploring new concepts following inspiring discussions. Membership of BALID has risen slightly and our finances remain stable.



Special thanks are due to Juliet McCaffery (secretary), Mary Anderson (website and ILDs), Tara Furlong (IT and link person with RaPAL), and Ian Cheffy (treasurer). We have also benefited from the experience and commitment of Marta Paluch over the last year. We are grateful for her work coordinating the joint-hosted event at Sussex University and the symposium at BAICE and we hope that she will remain connected with BALID in the future, even though she has resigned from the committee. We continue to be grateful to Professor Alan Rogers for his encouragement and commitment. We hope he will be able to join BALID events in the future. At the AGM in November, we will be appointing a student representative to the committee

Thanks once again to all who continue to support BALID in a variety of ways.

If you would like to be involved in the next stage of development of BALID, please do get in contact. There are going to be changes in the committee members and genuine opportunities for new faces to be actively involved at all levels.

*Katy Newell-Jones: Chair*

## Report from the Secretary

BALID is very important to me which is why I continue as secretary. Both nationally and internationally, the recognition of the importance of opportunities for adults to learn, or to improve their literacy skills, has declined over recent years. In part, this is perhaps because assessing progress, except by any but the most rudimentary testing is difficult, so funders, particularly governments, find it difficult to judge the impact of their financial expenditure.

Our late president, Professor Brian Street and others viewed literacy as a social practice and believed that the impact of literacy instruction should be assessed by the impact on the community – in other words, whether those attending could manage their day to day needs for reading and writing more effectively. This is difficult to measure, but as our publication *“Theory and Practice in Literacy and Development”* (BALID 2017) and the works by Street, Rogers and others show, this can be done; however, researching the impact is more time consuming and expensive than simply testing at the end of a course.

BALID exists to support the work of literacy and also numeracy organisations by sharing information and experience. Our Informal Literacy Discussions share work on, and insights into, literacy very effectively, and we very much appreciate those who present at these. They are both fascinating and invaluable and we hope that in the future more people will attend. This year we organised two seminars and a symposium at the BAICE conference. We hope to do more of this in the future, and we are seeking ways to access some financial support. In previous years we were able to organise a training course for those involved in literacy provision, either teaching or managing, and more recently we received funding for consultancy work for UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL).

Officers and committee members work entirely voluntarily because they believe in the importance of literacy. As secretary, I really appreciate and want to thank the committee members, Katy Newell-Jones, Ian Cheffy, Mary Anderson, Tara Furlong, Alan Rogers and Marta Paluch for all the invaluable work they did last year.

*Juliet McCaffery: Secretary*

## Report from the Treasurer

I am glad to report that the BALID finances continue to be in good shape, with reserves not only sufficient for our immediate needs but also offering some possibility of investment for the future.

Overall income amounted to £1,827 in total as can be seen in the accompanying report by Mr Ray Douglas, the independent examiner of the BALID accounts. This included an exceptional amount of £841 reimbursed to BALID by members attending the World Literacy Summit in recognition of the payment by BALID of the registration fees for the summit which was done in order to obtain the lower group registration rates. "Normal" BALID income thus amounted to £986.

Of this, it is encouraging to note that membership subscriptions reached £400, the highest level for many years. Registration fees for the Models of Literacy Learning seminar at the School of Oriental and African Studies amounted to £460, which, thanks to the generous hosting of the event by SOAS, resulted in a surplus of £188 over the costs for that meeting. The remaining income consisted of sales of the BALID ILD book, a contribution to an ILD from a non-member, a gift for the Brian Street memorial fund, and various miscellaneous items, including a donation to BALID and a reimbursement of a payment made in error.

Overall expenditure amounted to £2,067, the largest element of this relating to registration fees to World Literacy Summit paid on behalf of members as explained above. Expenditure on the Summit also included £90 for publicity material used at the event. Other expenditure included £405 on revisions to the BALID ILD book and its republication, £326 on room hire and other expenses associated with the 2017 AGM, £301 on speaker expenses, £80 for committee travel expenses, and £23 for transactions not itemised elsewhere.

This year, BALID expenditure exceeded income by £240 resulting in a reduced final bank balance of £2,514 compared with the previous financial year, but such variation should not be seen as significant.

It should be noted that the current BALID reserves include restricted funds of £200 given in memory of Brian Street and £334 as the remainder of the grant provided by BAICE for the Bridging the Gap seminar in 2015; both of these remain to be spent in an appropriate manner.

I am once again grateful to Mr Ray Douglas for his willingness to carry out an independent examination of the BALID accounts and I am happy to propose that he be reappointed for the coming financial year.

*Ian Cheffy: Treasurer*

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 August 2018**

	2018 £	2017 £
<b>Income</b>		
ILD Contributions and Book Sales	88	213
Memberships	400	330
Gifts (re Brian Street 2017 only)	5	195
Weaving Literacy Seminar	841	1,565
SOAS Meeting	460	-
Share of UIL Consultancy	-	830
Interest and Bank Compensation	-	202
Donation from LWG Prior to Winding-up	-	1,067
Miscellaneous	33	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<u><b>1,827</b></u>	<u><b>4,402</b></u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
AGM / Seminar Expenses	326	301
World Literacy Summit (Weaving Literacy Seminar 2017)	932	1,869
ILD Book	405	839
Bank Charges	-	20
Committee Travel Expenses	80	282 *
Other Meeting and Admin Expenses	301	145
Miscellaneous	23	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u><b>2,067</b></u>	<u><b>3,456</b></u>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year</b>	<u><b>-240</b></u>	<u><b>946</b></u>
Balances brought forward	2,754	1,808
<b>Balances carried forward</b>	<u><b>2,514</b></u>	<u><b>2,754</b></u>

**Balance Sheet at 31 August 2018**

	£	2017 £
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Balance at Lloyds Bank	2,594	3,036
<b>Less: Current Liabilities</b>		
Accrued committee expenses (2017 adjusted)	80	282 *
<b>Net Current and Total Assets</b>	<u><b>2,514</b></u>	<u><b>2,754</b></u>
<b>Reserves carried forward</b>	<u><b>2,514</b></u>	<u><b>2,754</b></u>

\* 2017 comparatives adjusted by £282 for expense accrual omitted from accounts.

Hon Treasurer .....  
I P Cheffy

Date ..... 4.11.18

**Report of the Independent Examiner**

I have carried out an informal examination of the simplified accounts set out above, which are in agreement with the books and records according to the explanations given to me. An adjustment has been made to the 2017 figures in respect of committee travel expenses of £282 incurred in 2017, paid after the year end, but omitted from the accounts.

Hon Independent Examiner .....  
R L S Douglas

Date ..... 4.11.18

## **Committee Members Sept. 2017 – Aug. 2018**

Chair:	Dr Katy Newell-Jones
Secretary:	Dr Juliet McCaffery
Treasurer:	Dr Ian Cheffy
Website, ILDs, Publicity officer:	Dr Mary Anderson

### **Individual committee members**

Professor Alan Rogers

Dr Marta Paluch

2 vacancies

### **Organisational committee members**

RaPAL with key contact Tara Furlong

2 vacancies

### **Student representative on the committee**

The BALID committee has decided to appoint a student representative to the committee from November 2018. We are delighted that Lorena Sanchez has agreed to become the student representative and this will be confirmed at the AGM in November.

### **Associate membership**

The BALID committee is delighted to announce the introduction of a new category of membership open to those involved in literacy who are living and working outside the UK and who subscribe to the vision of BALID.

Associate membership of BALID offers:

- Recognition as a member of the BALID literacy in development community.
- Priority notification of BALID events and publications.
- Opportunities to contribute to BALID's AGM and strategic direction.
- Reduced fees for BALID events.
- Opportunities to share work through the BALID network and website.

BALID Associate Membership is offered by invitation to inspirational practitioners, researchers and policy makers, outside the UK, supporting the development of literacy in its broadest sense.

Individuals involved in literacy in development who would like to be considered as a BALID Associate Member are invited to express their interest. Please email [secretary@balid.org.uk](mailto:secretary@balid.org.uk) or see the BALID website [www.balid.org.uk](http://www.balid.org.uk).

Current Associate members:

- Ms Ulrike Hanemann – formerly Senior Programme Specialist, Literacy and Basic Skills Programme, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), Hamburg.
- Dr Willy Ngaka – Dean of the Uganda Technology and Management University Graduate School and founder of the Uganda Rural Literacy and Community Development Association (URLCODA).

## **Strategic Partnerships**

BALID continues to collaborate with a range of organisations and higher education institutions. This year events have been run in partnership with the University of East Anglia, the University of Sussex, the School of Oriental and African Studies, and the UCL Institute of Education. We also continue to collaborate with the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL), BAICE and RaPAL (see below for a brief report on the latter).

### **BALID and RaPAL**

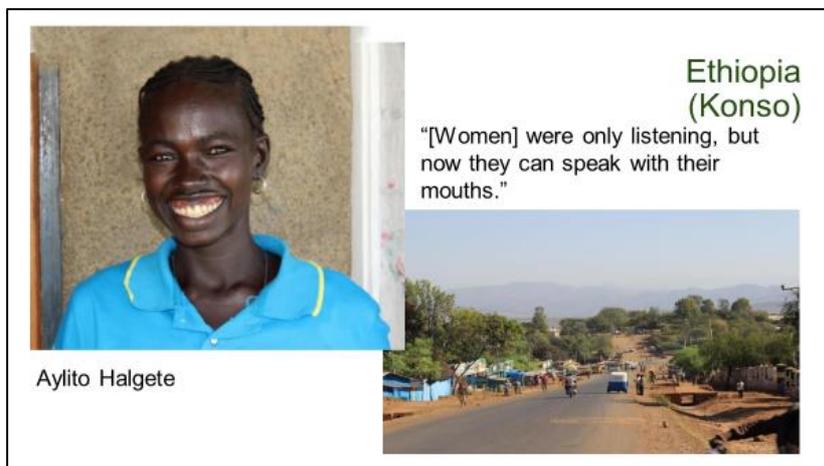
Collaboration between BALID and RaPAL in 2018 has built on the RaPAL *Global Literacies* conference held in 2017 and the following journal edition to which BALID committee members contributed significantly, and on co-working with UCL IOE in respect of hosting events looking into 2019. Sam Duncan, RaPAL's Regional Advocate at the time, contributed *ILD 29 Lend me your Ears: When and why adults may read aloud rather than in silence* after the BALID AGM 2017. Tara Furlong, RaPAL's Chair, sits on the BALID Committee and participates in BALID meetings, events and other project work such as reporting on BALID's *Models of Literacy Learning* seminar held in May. In September 2018, a tribute to the work of Brian Street was held at the University of Sussex to coincide with International Literacy Day, where Tara contributed a reflection on *Literacy as Social Practice in vocational and professional contexts* as part of the BALID panel discussion. Liaison with Sam Duncan, whose other commitments obliged her to step down from a formal role in RaPAL at this time, continues. Sarah Freeman, RaPAL's Treasurer, has been invited to contribute to BALID events next year. A wider network of RaPAL members and past office holders participate in BALID events.

*Tara Furlong: BALID Committee Member and Chair of RaPAL*

## Key events 2017-18

### WORLD LITERACY SUMMIT, Oxford, 25th-27th March 2018

Our BALID symposium at the *World Literacy Summit in Oxford* was extremely well received. It was entitled 'Tackling the Literacy Challenge through Context-Specific Approaches'. Ian Cheffy spoke about the difference that literacy makes to the lives of adults in several African countries; Katy Newell-Jones spoke about the power of embedding literacy in other realms of life, including land rights, health and female genital cutting; and Juliet McCaffery addressed the issue of literacy amongst marginalised communities, including Australian aboriginal, European Roma, and Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England.



A case study from Ethiopia from Ian Cheffy's presentation (left)

Literacy embedded in land rights programme in Rwanda from Katy Newell-Jones' presentation (right)



Traveller's site from Juliet McCaffery's presentation (below)



More details of all these events and hyperlinks to the presentations can be found on the BALID website, [www.balid.org.uk](http://www.balid.org.uk).

## **MODELS OF LITERACY LEARNING seminar, SOAS, 17th May 2018**

This half-day seminar at SOAS University of London attracted some 30 participants. Our panellists were Professor Friederike Lüpke, who co-hosted the event, and Professor Leketi Makalela of the University of the Witwatersrand. The seminar provided a forum for exploring models of multilingual literacy learning, and their purpose, function and impact on communities. Professor Lüpke presented on the Crossroads project in Senegal, which develops language-independent literacies for inclusive education in multilingual areas (LILIEMA). Professor Makalela presented on projects with the Balang Foundation, and HUMEL (Hub for Multilingual Education and Literacies).



The full report of the seminar is available on the BALID website. The report outlines the presentations; practical and academic queries and critiques of the studies put forward by experienced practitioners in the field; and includes a brief discussion of the themes which emerged. Themes ranged from diverse underpinning theoretical frameworks to practical considerations, and included language versus literacy, fixity versus fluidity, and teachers, training and learning resources. Participants' expectations and feedback are included in the report. A video of short highlights from the seminar as part of a playlist of the event is available on YouTube: [goo.gl/9D4Rqt](https://goo.gl/9D4Rqt).

*Tara Furlong*

## LITERACY AS SOCIAL PRACTICE, University of Sussex, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Louise Gazeley, Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Research at the University of Sussex, and Marta Paluch from BALID organised this seminar at the University of Sussex to remember Brian Street, who taught at the university for 20 years until he moved to King's College, London. The seminar was timed to coincide with International Literacy Day.



It was a wonderful celebration of International Literacy Day and the seminal work of Brian Street, who impacted the development of New Literacy Studies and was influential in its continuing importance to literacy education today. The event brought together academics, researchers and practitioners interested in working with a social practice approach to literacy education, and speakers included Professor Anna Robinson-Pant (*pictured above*), UNESCO Chair for Adult Literacy and Learning for Social Transformation at the University of East Anglia, and Dr John Pryor of the University of Sussex. The titles of the panel contributions were:

- Literacy as social practice in vocational and professional contexts;
- The contribution of Brian's theory to practice; and
- The literacy dimension in community development projects.

In the afternoon BALID Committee members Katy, Juliet and Tara reflected on the influence which Brian had had on them.

**BAICE CONFERENCE *Comparative Education and Development Alternatives*,  
University of York, 12th-14th September 2018**

The BALID symposium held at the BAICE conference was entitled *Adult Literacy and Development: Structural Problems and Innovative Responses*. It was organised by Marta Paluch and chaired by Juliet McCaffery. Some 20 people attended and heard the following presentations, which were followed by lively discussion:

- *I Read and Write in My Own Language': A Case Study of a Non-Formal Indigenous Language Literacy Programme in Mexico*. Lorena Sanchez, UCL Institute of Education
- *Literacy Resources for Refugee and Immigrant Adults: Addressing a Critical Need* Martha Young-Scholten, University of Newcastle
- *An Analysis of Mid-Term Withdrawals by Facilitators in Some Adult Literacy Learning Programmes*. Abiy Menkir Gizaz and Turuwark Zalalam Warkineh, Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia
- *Adult Literacy Facilitators' Collaborative Learning on a Pilot Literacy Project in Guatemala*. Marta Paluch, University of Sussex.

## **Informal Literacy Discussions (ILDs)**

The BALID committee organised a very interesting programme of Informal Literacy Discussions, which are briefly summarized below.

### **ILD 28: Helping hunter-gatherers to become ‘paper people’: Literacy challenges among the San in Namibia\_ (November 2017)**

Candi Miller of the University of Wolverhampton had us all enthralled as she told us about her work with the San in Botswana, facilitating literacy activities and the creation of a radio soap, which empowers and affirms their culture rather than threatening it.

### **ILD 29 (double-bill, December 2017)**

- **Figured Worlds: An Ethnographic Study of Literacy Practices in a Village Community in Malawi** presented by Ahmmardouh Mjaya (University of East Anglia). Ahmmardouh presented his research on the everyday literacy experiences and understandings of community members in their lived worlds, including the role of artefacts in literacy practices. He argued that what literacy-mediating artefacts allow the community members to become is more important than what they actually do.
- **Lend me your Ears: When and why adults may read aloud rather than in silence** This was presented by Sam Duncan (Reading Aloud in Britain Today, UCL Institute of Education). After introducing the project, Sam argued that reading aloud in a widely-unacknowledged range of contexts must be considered an aspect of literacy development.

### **ILD 30: Orality meets literacy in Manjaku of Guinea-Bissau (April 2018)**

Dr Jill Karlik of the University of Leeds led this interesting discussion about the issues that arise when an essentially oral culture begins to embrace literacy. Each medium of communication is a genre with its own conventions, and literacy raises many issues, especially concerning orthography.

Our ILDs provide an informal setting for extremely lively discussion and learning, and they are open to students, researchers, NGO staff and anyone interested in literacy. We always welcome new participants as well as those who are established in the field. As our chair's report has noted, we are appointing a student committee member to our committee and we have various other initiatives in hand that we believe will broaden our reach.

*Mary Anderson*

## Looking forward – concluding comments from the Chair

After some excellent discussion in recent months on key challenges in literacy, BALID ends the year with plans under development for some inspiring events in 2018-19, including a conference exploring relationships between literacy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). 2018-2019 will also see a strengthening of our institutional relationships, including with the UCL Institute of Education (IOE), and Research and Practice in Adult Literacy (RaPAL).

In recent years, BALID has broadened its remit to include literacy for all ages, whilst retaining a specific interest in adult literacy. BALID is also looking to secure some funding for research into literacy in development.

Looking forward, BALID faces some significant challenges. Despite recent new initiatives, for some years now we have offered a range of literacy in development events which have appealed to a relatively small group of people. However, we are in the fortunate position of having more people interested in leading ILDs than resources to host them. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge.

There is a need for significant changes, new ways of working and new faces if BALID is going to take forward the agenda of literacy in development and respond to the expressions of interest in the future.

We hope that the addition of a student representative and associate membership, together with a call for those working in literacy to engage with BALID, will help us to extend our reach and draw new people into the network in 2018-2019.

*Katy Newell-Jones: Chair*

