

Annual Report 2011, Berlin

The network sessions were generally quite well attended with an average participation of over 20 -- roughly the same as in the previous ECER conference. We filled 17 sessions all told thanks to using parallel sessions for some symposia and papers.

The presentations in the network were mainly conventional paper presentations again this year but there were also three symposia sessions. Papers were grouped according to common interests on reviewing where possible. We did not use themes formed in advance of the conference submission procedure, aside from the general conference theme, to steer submissions and reviewing.

The parallel sessions were a problem attendance-wise. One parallel session was always quite poorly attended and we prefer not to have them. Solutions discussed to avoid them have been four presentations per 90 minute session if needed and harder reviewing of submissions to the network. There was one session that had a joint interest with Didactics. Net 19 organised and presented this session alone though. We look forward to more joint sessions in the future and are happy to cooperate with any other network on this matter.

Ethnography is becoming a common research approach in educational research in Europe. Joint sessions are a benefit to improving the quality of the approach. Bob Jeffrey and Sofia Marques da Silva led a successful session in this year's Emerging Researcher pre-Conference. Some students from this session attended some of the network 19 main conference sessions as well as the network meeting, mentioning interest in participating in Network activities.

The business meeting was well attended and (a) proposals were made to have joint sessions with a new network Sociology of Education and Paolo Landri offered to liaise with the convenors. We were also asked by ECER to provide information on an impact report of our network's activities. Some saw this as the beginnings of a performativity exercise and deprecated it. However, (b) in reviewing our extensive publishing activities -- journal and book series, our sister annual conference in Oxford, our sponsoring of specialist conferences, our website and network email lists -- we concluded that this would be an easy report for the convenors to write. (c) There was also a suggestion for joint workshops and the convenors will consider this proposal. The invitation came from Dr. Bálint-Ábel Bereményi. Network 5, 7, 14 and 19 will participate under the topic methodology and education. (d) It was also noted that there were too many papers given in the network which had limited or negligible ethnographic content. Whilst realising that it is sometimes difficult to discern from abstracts the extent of ethnographic engagement, the meeting urged the convenors to be more rigorous about accepting papers. There was the usual inconclusive discussion about tough refereeing of abstracts and being open to emerging ethnographic members. (e) The meeting deplored the timing of sessions at 8.30 in the morning because delegates were scattered across Berlin and unable to make this early start. One 8.30 session had to be abandoned and another only had 8-9 there but in the continuing session later in the morning over 50 attended.

(f) At the meeting the attending network participants reluctantly accepted the resignation from the convener group of Bob Jeffrey from the Open University. Bob was one of the founding convenors in the network and the organiser of the inaugural network meeting in Lahti in 1998. His service to the network and ECER has been exceptional. (g) Finally the meeting extended on behalf of lead-convener Dennis Beach a strong vote of thanks to Bob Jeffrey and Sofia Marques for taking over the management of net activities at this year's conference after Dennis's late withdrawal due to extensive knee surgery.