

IPA NEWS

News of the International Phonetic Association

General Meeting 1999

12.45 Tuesday 3 August, at ICPHS '99 in San Francisco

The President, Professor John Ohala, took the chair

1 Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the General Meeting of 15 August 1995 in Stockholm were circulated and agreed as a correct record.

2 Matters arising

Secretary John Esling clarified (re. item 5 of the above minutes) that the student subscription rate is one-half the annual regular rate. In a debate among Council in 1996, it was agreed not to revise the by-laws to impose any limit on the allowable number of years student status can be claimed.

3 President's Introduction

President John Ohala introduced the main agenda by reviewing the accomplishments of the Association in the past four years: the creation of automatic Life membership status for members who have paid regular annual dues for 30 years, the corresponding termination of granting of Emeritus status, the resolution to adopt the ICPHS as the official meeting of the IPA and to pursue a formal association between the Permanent Council of the ICPHS and the IPA, the resolution to pursue publication of the *Journal of the IPA* with Cambridge University Press, and the completion and publication of the long-awaited *Handbook of the IPA*.

4 Secretary's Report

The Secretary reported the following:

(a) A number of resolutions were put to Council between 1995-1999 and approved: (i) By-law 2 was amended to replace Emeritus status with automatic elevation of any member to Life status after 30 years of annual dues payments; (ii) The IPA agreed to co-sponsor ICPSLP '98 in Sydney; (iii) The IPA agreed to co-sponsor ICPSLP 2000 in Beijing; (iv) Council approved the plan to pursue amalgamation with the ICPHS Permanent Council and adoption by the IPA of the ICPHS as its quadrennial meeting; (v) Council approved the initiative to pursue negotiations with Cambridge University Press to publish *JIPA*.

(b) The IPA worldwide-web site set up by IPA Historian Mike MacMahon in Glasgow has expanded substantially since 1996. It includes charts, forms, information on recordings, fonts and IPA examinations, and links to other phonetic sites and to the *Handbook*.

(c) E-mail has become the principal means of communication within the Executive and Council. Resolutions are voted on by e-mail, while elections are still conducted by secret postal ballot.

(d) The *Handbook of the IPA* was completed in the past year. CUP had bid successfully for the project in 1996 and met all of our criteria. Francis Nolan wrote the Foreword and edited the material in Parts 1 and 3 in response to comments on the draft text published in *JIPA* after the 1995 Congress. John Esling edited Parts 2 and 3. The book is authored by the IPA, and royalties accrue to the IPA annually from CUP. The Executive approved preparation of the accompanying audio recordings for electronic distribution; this work is largely completed.

(e) Current (paid-up) membership has remained at about the same level as in 1995: 525 individual and 313 institutional members. Although ordinary subscriptions fell off in 1997, additional renewal reminders were sent to lapsed members on the occasion of Council elections in 1998. Most respondents opted to renew as of 1998 and 1999. It is expected that as journal production becomes more regular, the incidence of lapsed subscriptions will decline.

(f) The series of ballots in the year leading up to the General Meeting followed the timetable set out in the by-laws.

(g) Some 20 requests from publishers and/or authors for permission to reproduce the chart of the IPA have been received and authorized.

5 Treasurer's Report

(a) Treasurer Ailbhe Ní Chasaide presented financial records for the four years 1995-1998. Although the balance in the accounts is still healthy, there is a clear loss-making trend. The Association's expenditure exceeds its income and therefore reserves are being gradually eroded. Total assets in 1995 of £34,162 may have been artificially high due to *JIPA* being seriously behind schedule. It is anticipated that expenses will increase over the next few years. The financial assistance required for the Treasury will need to be increased somewhat and editorial activities will require a reasonable level of assistance.

(b) The Treasurer announced the intention to implement the increase in subscription rates proposed and accepted in principle at ICPHS '95 in Stockholm. The proposal was to increase the base rate from £13/\$25 to £18/\$30 for individual members. At current exchange rates, these values will be adjusted to £19/\$30 (29 Euros) and put to Council for ratification. The Treasurer proposed to review finances again within two years to determine whether a further increase might be required.

(c) The Girobank and Leeds University bank accounts are virtually never used; it was proposed that they be closed. As for the National Westminster accounts, the Capital Reserve account, which earns 3.85% interest but attracts DIRT (Deposit Interest Retention Tax), performs slightly better overall than the Business Reserve account which

attracts no DIRT but earns only 2.7%. It is not clear to the IPA's accountant where the IPA is registered and consequently whether and where DIRT is payable. It may be that the Association should seek a formal tax exemption.

(d) The Treasurer requested additional funds to cover 10 hours per week assistance at IR£12 per hour = IR£6240, approximately Stg£6000; an increase from 8 hours per week, IR£4992 per year.

6 Editor's Report

Editor Martin Barry reported that seven issues of *JIPA* had been produced in four years, and thanked Carolyn Cook for her assistance. The Editor apologized for any delays in publication, and recommended that more than one editor should be responsible for sharing the sizeable load of work. The Editor and Secretary have submitted a proposal to CUP to publish *JIPA* beginning in 2001. A revised proposal will be prepared and submitted to CUP by the new Executive.

7 Election results

The Secretary announced that the following had received most votes in the ballot of Council members and were duly elected: Klaus J. Kohler (President), Francis J. Nolan (Vice-President), and the following had been elected unopposed: John H. Esling (Secretary), Ailbhe Ní Chasaide (Treasurer). No nominations had been received for Editor; an alternative solution will be sought immediately by the Executive.

8 Address by incoming President

The new President thanked the Council for their confidence in him and gave his assurance that he will strive to fulfil what the International Phonetic Association can duly expect from its President: to uphold its principles, to increase its membership to the benefit of all members and to serve the membership and the cause of Phonetics. He recognized the contribution of the previous executive in the shaping of the future of the IPA.

He observed that the IPA is not only an international but also a multilingual community, and that it lives on a plurality of languages to the extent that in the elections of Council members the representation of linguistic variety has been an important issue for quite some time. But never since the days of our founding fathers, Paul Passy, Henry Sweet and Wilhelm Viëtor, has there been such a plurality at the executive level as now.

The new President stressed his allegiance to the tradition of the British School of Phonetics and to the powerful paradigm for the description of languages developed within this tradition. It has culminated in the *Handbook of the IPA*, which had its beginnings at the 1989 Kiel Convention organized at Kiel University in Germany. Having hosted that convention, the new President regards his mandate as a continuing challenge for him.

A number of areas define the direction of phonetic research. The early emphasis on phonology and transcription in phonetic descriptions of the languages of the world, and on the teaching of pronunciation in foreign languages, remains important, but the Association's activities have also broadened in scope, as represented in *JIPA*, to combine symbolic with speech signal analyses and to include questions of language typology and universals, speech therapy, forensic phonetics and speech technology. This is the direction the Association should strengthen even more in the future, especially as the International Congresses of Phonetic Sciences are going to be the Congresses of our Association in the future and the Permanent Council will be incorporated into the IPA as its committee. This will give the IPA a unique opportunity to become the recognized scientific body for basic research in phonetic science with strong ties to a large spectrum of applications. It is this basic research aspect in all matters of the spoken medium of language as our scientific core that will uniquely distinguish the IPA from other associations in which applied science is often primary.

There is yet another area our Association should take a focal interest in: phonetics and phonology above the word and the sound patterns of connected, especially spontaneous speech in a variety of languages of the world. Future policy will promote an extension of work on the typology of word-level sound structures to a complementary assessment of phonetic-phrase-level processes in a multilingual perspective. The incoming President promised to emulate the example of other scientific organizations in instituting workshops on significant topics in phonetic research, under the sponsorship of the IPA. One such workshop might be on sound patterns of unscripted speech.

9 Votes of thanks

The outgoing President (and host of the San Francisco Congress) thanked the members of Council and the officers of the Association for their contributions between 1995 and 1999, and congratulated the newly elected members and wished them well over the next four years.

10 Other Business

There was no time for other business.

11 Closing

The President closed the meeting with an invitation for the Association to re-convene during the next International Congress of Phonetic Sciences in 2003 in Barcelona, at a meeting to be chaired by the new President, Klaus Kohler, to whom he offered his congratulations and best wishes.

The meeting closed at 13.50