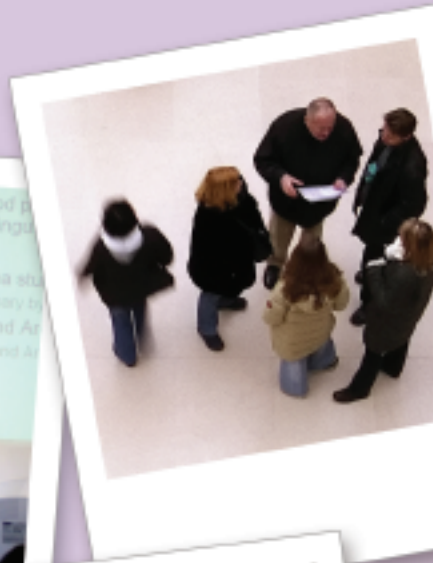




**LLAS**  
Languages  
Linguistics  
Area Studies

# LLAS DIGEST 2006

Articles, projects and resources from the  
Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies





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# LISTENING TO THE STUDENT VOICE

AS READERS will see from the accounts of our activity reported here, the Subject Centre is now providing a broader range of information and support than ever. In addition to our support for learning and teaching, we are helping to explore the shape and future of research in our areas, and engaging with decision-makers in respect of policy that affects the academic community in Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies.

Nonetheless, the aim of providing students with a richer and more effective experience of learning remains at the heart of the Subject Centre's work. But our relationship with students is an indirect one. We do not teach or offer programmes, but seek to achieve our aim through the services we offer to the academic community.

An important part of our work has always been to assist colleagues across the UK to attract more students into studying our subjects at university level. We are continuing to develop materials that colleagues can take into schools on their outreach visits, and help them provide fuller and more targeted presentations. Our most recent CD presentation on 'Why study languages?' includes video sequences that convey the views of students, and shows their enthusiasm and achievements. We have found this to be strikingly effective, since our students remain our best ambassadors. And we hope in future to offer a clearer sense of what students are saying about all of our subject areas.

Listening to the student voice is an increasingly recognised dimension of higher education

In order to give more effective assistance to teachers and support staff, the Subject Centre is currently exploring ways in which we can gain better access to the views and aspirations of students. The tools for achieving this will include the familiar ones of surveys and questionnaires, including a closer analysis of the national student satisfaction surveys. However, we have generally found the more qualitative approaches to be more informative, and shall hope to develop opportunities for individual interviews and group discussions.

Listening to the student voice is an increasingly recognised dimension of higher education. This is prompted, in part, by the growing financial commitment that students must individually make to their studies. But ultimately it rests on the fundamental insight that education is a process of dialogue, in which students and teachers learn from each other.

MICHAEL KELLY  
Director, LLAS

## LANGUAGES UPDATE

The Subject Centre has organised a diverse range of events in languages over the past year. These include:

### Higher Education and the National Languages Strategy

*September 2005*

This seminar was organised in partnership with the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies and used as its starting point Hilary Footitt's research report, *The National Languages Strategy in Higher Education (2005)*. The event provided an opportunity for heads of department and deans of faculty to explore effective responses to the recommendations in the report and also focused on the role of modern languages in facilitating the development of international strategies in higher education institutions.

### Routes into reading

*October 2005*

This one-day conference presented the outcomes of the Subject Centre's recent research into attitudes to reading among languages undergraduates and a study of transition into the HE study of English Literature conducted on behalf of the English Subject Centre. It also included presentations on strategies and ideas for creating interest and enthusiasm among students for the study of foreign literatures.

### Looking ahead: specialist language degrees in higher education

*November 2005*

This seminar was organised in conjunction with the Association for Language Learning and examined current trends and curriculum innovation in schools in order to inform the future design of specialist language degrees.

### Reaching out in languages: schools and universities together

*March 2006*

This workshop was organised jointly with Leeds Metropolitan University. It aimed to encourage the sharing of good practice in schools and universities working together to raise the profile of languages and to ease the transition from school to university for languages students. It also examined strategies for higher education to reach out and keep languages alive in areas where both schools and universities are facing particularly difficult challenges.

Our plans for next year will include continuing to develop our work on the transition between school and university. We will also be carrying out some small-scale research into the provision of ab initio language degrees.

ANGELA GALLAGHER-BRETT

## LINGUISTICS UPDATE

The Subject Centre's Specialist Advisory Group for Linguistics continues to meet three times a year under its new Chair, Paul Rowlett (Salford). The minutes of these meetings together with a full list of members are available on our linguistics page at [www.llas.ac.uk/linguisticsitem.aspx?resourceid=604](http://www.llas.ac.uk/linguisticsitem.aspx?resourceid=604)

We recently welcomed four new members to this group, Jean Peccei (Roehampton), Geoff Hall (Swansea), Lynne Murphy (Sussex) and David Hornsby (Kent). Under the auspices of this group a very successful event on teaching translation was run by Andrew Rothwell at Swansea University. This event covered issues such as what aspects of Linguistics might be included in a translation programme together with sessions on constructing terminologies, using translation tools and working in the translation industry. For a full report see [www.llas.ac.uk/events/archive](http://www.llas.ac.uk/events/archive) (20 January 2006).

Plans for future events are underway; topics proposed include Sociolinguistics, Phonetics and Language skills. The Subject Centre is also sponsoring a session at the autumn meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain (LAGB) [www.lagb.org.uk/bl.htm](http://www.lagb.org.uk/bl.htm)

In addition to this group, the Subject Centre supports two other Linguistics Special Interest Groups: the Linguistics

Strategy Group and the Linguistics A level Group. The Strategy Group is comprised of representatives from all UK linguistics associations and works to promote the teaching and awareness of this subject both within HE and in other areas (e.g. the media). It has been investigating the health of the discipline in HE, using data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and will continue to monitor student numbers via the Subject Centre's annual analysis of HESA data in languages and linguistics. It is currently starting work on some promotional materials for Linguistics which will update previous materials developed by the Subject Centre.

The Linguistics A level SIG has been working in collaboration with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and other bodies to put forward a proposal for an A level in Linguistics. This would be distinct from the current English Language A level and would be both a complement to it and a more direct route into linguistics in HE. Updates on this initiative are regularly made to the Linguistics Specialist Group and can be found in the minutes published on the Subject Centre website.

Dates and venues for all forthcoming linguistics events can be found on our website.

ALISON DICKENS

## AREA STUDIES UPDATE

The past academic year has been spent consolidating previous progress. A workshop *Sharing good practice in teaching Area Studies* was held in November 2005.

Participants at Area Studies workshops find the topics covered and the possibilities for networking very helpful.

Exciting opportunities have emerged through paying more attention to the links between Area Studies teaching and research. I was able to give a presentation about the work of LLAS at an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) / Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) sponsored conference *The Future of Interdisciplinary Area Studies in the UK*, held at the University of Oxford in December 2005. This

conference demonstrated the breadth of intellectual interest in Area Studies in UK higher education and has enabled LLAS to reach a wider audience.

The Subject Centre's relationship with the UK Council for Area Studies Associations (UKCASA) continues to bear fruit. A UKCASA led conference on globalisation, planned for Spring 2007, promises to excite the interest of those teaching and researching in Area Studies.

The Subject Centre's July 2007 conference on linking teaching and research will provide even more opportunities for Area Studies.

JOHN CANNING

## LESS WIDELY USED LESSER TAUGHT LANGUAGES

### Establishment of a Subject Centre Special Interest Group for those teaching LWULT languages

The HEFCE-commissioned Roberts Report into strategically important and vulnerable subjects ([www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05\\_24/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_24/)) identified a number of Less Widely Used Lesser Taught (LWULT) languages as being strategic and vulnerable. In response to this, the Subject Centre has convened a Special Interest Group (SIG) to bring together representatives of these strategic and other LWULT languages. The aims of the SIG are:

- to act as a forum for the exchange of ideas on issues relating to LWULT languages
- to advise the Subject Centre on opportunities relating to teaching and learning in LWULT languages
- to contribute to Subject Centre activities in the area of LWULT languages

The first meeting of the SIG for LWULT Languages was hosted by the 'Languages of the Wider World' Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) at University College London on 21 March 2006. The meeting was attended by 16 participants including representatives from the Subject Centre, the two language CETLs ('Languages of the Wider World' and 'Dynamic Multimedia Teaching and Learning') and higher education teachers of African, Asian, Celtic, Chinese, Dutch, Eastern European, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Scandinavian languages.

LWULT languages have particular needs which vary from language to language. However, the SIG was able to identify and prioritise a number of common issues and needs including:

- development of shared pedagogical strategies
- collaboration in materials development
- commissioning of Subject Centre Good Practice Guide articles on LWULT languages pedagogic strategies and materials
- development of an online grammar resource to address UK students' lack of grammatical knowledge
- compiling 'thriving' strategies for department heads and programme leaders
- profiling success and sharing experiences, e.g. in ab initio teaching and managing diverse ability
- staffing issues - maintaining morale; staffing succession in teaching and research
- widening participation and outreach - there is a lot going on in this area but people are not aware of what others are doing so information and coordination are crucial
- information about employment outcomes and careers, e.g. research on employment destinations of LWULT languages graduates, developing case studies and sharing information with schools

The Subject Centre plans to organise two meetings a year for the SIG for LWULT languages and the next meeting will be in the autumn term 2006.

PAULA DAVIS

## AHRC REVIEW OF RESEARCH IN MODERN LANGUAGES

### Background to the project

In 2005 the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) invited proposals to undertake a review of research in modern languages. Part of a second series of reviews commissioned by the AHRC, the purpose is to provide an in-depth analysis of modern languages, identifying patterns, developments and emerging issues in order to better inform future funding decisions and strategic interventions.

The LLAS Subject Centre in conjunction with the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML) placed a successful bid. The project started in January 2006 and is led by Professor Michael Kelly, Professor Roger Woods, Professor Anny Brooksbank Jones and Professor Dana Arnold.

### Aims of the project

The overall aim of the review is to ascertain the 'health' of modern languages in UK universities, providing a robust and comprehensive mapping of current research, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. It will identify levels of research activity, the numbers of researchers working or studying in UK universities and the volume of published outputs, over the period 2000-2005. The review will analyse the content of research considering the particular languages and areas studied as well as the disciplinary focus, methods, objects and periods of research. The team aims to identify patterns within the institutional location of research; the demographic structure of researchers; the availability and variety of outlets for publication and the character and extent of interdisciplinary activity. The relative contribution of the AHRC to supporting modern language research will be identified, as will that of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and, where possible, that of other research funding bodies in the UK, including the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust. The review aims to compare this picture of current research with patterns over the previous 15 years, since the first Research Selectivity Exercise (1986), and with research in modern languages in other countries.

### Activities of the project team

The project team has assembled a substantial body of quantitative data, including reports and award listings from the funding councils, Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) results, figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), lists of UK journals and publishers and published research surveys. At the start of the project we established a Consultative Network comprising senior representatives of subject associations and research organisations in modern languages. On 30th March 2006 we held our first Senior Consultative Workshop at the School of Advanced Studies,

University of London. Consultants were invited to consider the quantitative data and the accuracy of the picture it presented. They were asked to comment upon a series of key trends identified from the data, evaluating the extent of these trends within their own subject area. The Workshop highlighted the uniqueness of modern language research in the UK, not least due to the wide variety of subjects covered within the overall discipline. Recent modern language research has crossed the boundaries of languages and linguistics to consider, amongst other subjects, history, culture, society and philosophy. Researchers are collaborating with academics outside the UK yet preserving the distinctiveness of UK research through its strong interdisciplinary focus.

Some aspects of modern languages within UK Universities over the last five years have been identified as less healthy, for example departmental closures and falling student numbers. To ascertain how this has affected researchers, the project team has devised a questionnaire circulated to Heads of Department or equivalent in UK universities. Respondents have been asked to provide their assessment of changing patterns within their institution, including the profile of new appointments, the emergence of new research centres, retirement figures and doctoral take-up. The experience of younger members of the academic community is being assessed through a DELPHI study. Nineteen researchers from the rising generation are contributing to this questionnaire-based study, which identifies emerging issues, priorities and likely future directions in modern languages research.

### Future work

The final report, due in September 2006, will provide a picture of current research in modern languages in its historical and comparative contexts, together with information derived from the DELPHI study, Head of Department questionnaires and from the Consultative Workshops. The report will focus on how the discipline has changed in the recent period, and how is it likely to change in the future. It will be presented to the AHRC Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) who will be responsible for making recommendations to the AHRC.

### Further information

Subject Centre:

[www.llas.ac.uk/projects/mlresearchreview.aspx](http://www.llas.ac.uk/projects/mlresearchreview.aspx)

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC):

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/researchreviews/modern\\_languages.asp](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/researchreviews/modern_languages.asp)

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/research\\_reviews.asp](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/research_reviews.asp)

ELEANOR QUINCE

# LANGUAGES AS A STRATEGIC AND VULNERABLE SUBJECT

OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS, representatives from LLAS, the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML) and CILT, the National Centre for Languages have been working with representatives from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to consider how we might best offer support to students and teachers of modern languages in higher education.

Many readers will be familiar with Hilary Footitt's report *Higher Education and the National Languages Strategy* which included a number of recommendations for stimulating demand for modern languages and supporting departments. In June 2005, HEFCE published the Roberts report *Strategically important and vulnerable subjects* in which Modern Languages were identified as strategic and vulnerable. The funding council has recognised the requirement for higher education to play a key role in raising the country's linguistic capability and is therefore supporting the development of the **Routes into Languages** Programme.

Routes into Languages is an outreach programme aimed at stimulating demand for language learning through a programme of linked initiatives. The programme also aims to enhance the contribution of languages in developing a more highly skilled and competitive workforce.

The Steering Group developing the bid are proposing a number of research projects and a programme of outreach activities delivered regionally and in partnership with Aimhigher. The aim is to test different kinds of activity for promoting languages and assess how they can best be organised.

Additionally, there is a proposal that work be carried out to promote and support the translation and interpreting industries to address the worrying lack of translators and interpreters who are native speakers of English.

This programme will be pilot scheme in the first instance; and it is hoped that more funding will become available in 2010 to make an impact across the whole of England.

By the time this Digest goes to press, a meeting will have been held in London to discuss the Routes into Languages programme in detail. A representative from each HEI with languages provision will be invited to attend and offer feedback on the proposals. The Steering Group then plan to submit a proposal to HEFCE in Autumn 2006.

The programme also aims to enhance the contribution of languages in developing a more highly skilled and competitive workforce



## THE ACADEMY'S SECOND BIRTHDAY

**FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS**, the Subject Centre has been part of the Subject Network of the Higher Education Academy. The Academy was set up in May 2004 from a number of government-funded organisations and initiatives, with the aim of providing a single body to support the enhancement of learning and teaching in UK Higher Education. Two years on, its role has taken a clearer shape.

The Academy has continued and developed the network of 24 Subject Centres, which provide discipline-based support to the academic community in their different subject areas. It took over responsibility for accrediting training and development programmes for teachers and support staff in HE. And it has developed a number of new roles, of which three will be of particular interest to colleagues: institutional support, pedagogical research and coordination of initiatives.

HE institutions are for the most part well experienced in developing their own educational provision. However, the rapid growth in the size and complexity of HE means that new structures and functions are being generated to cope with it. Functional responsibility for the student experience is distributed over a growing number of people, from senior managers such as Pro-Vice Chancellors to discipline or Faculty-based coordinators. Numerous units have been established, with portfolios ranging from education development to learning technology. There is an urgent need for these people and units to work together to develop more effective practices. The Academy is the obvious agency to enable this, and has already begun to establish networks in these areas, to facilitate discussion, to share experiences, and to identify areas where concerted development activity needs to be focused.

It is a well-known paradox that higher education is the leading locus of research but undertakes relatively little research into its own educational role. This is a particularly damaging state of affairs when there is an increasing need for research to inform academic direction and financial investment in our education. At a general level, it is important for professional educators to have access to research that will enable them to carry out their work as effectively as possible. In a hard-nosed sense, the Treasury requires more strongly evidence-based submissions to the public sector spending round, and similar requirements are

expressed by other funding bodies. The Academy has made it a priority to lead the development of research and evaluation to improve the quality of the student learning experience, not least by identifying and promoting key issues, and synthesising current knowledge in the area.

There is finally a rapid growth in the use of projects and short-term initiatives to provide the impetus for change and innovation in higher education. These have taken many forms in recent years, from the Fund for the Development of Learning and Teaching (FDTL) to the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), and including the National Teaching Fellows and the JISC elearning initiatives. A persistent problem with this approach is that the benefits of the schemes have evaporated all too rapidly when the short-term funding finishes. The Academy, and the Subject Centres within it, are increasingly taking on the role of disseminating the benefits of these initiatives and in many cases finding ways of maintaining the momentum of the more successful ones.

It is still early days to evaluate our long-term success in these important areas, but it is already clear that, to paraphrase Voltaire, if the Academy did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. And there is no doubt that other countries are looking at us with some envy, and developing their own plans for travelling a similar path.

MICHAEL KELLY

# LEARNING MODERN LANGUAGES

**MODERN LANGUAGES** are frequently described as being in crisis as, for example, in Hilary Footitt's (2005) report on the National Languages Strategy in Higher Education for the DFES. The statistics for applications to study modern languages at university continue to give cause for concern despite the many and various initiatives to encourage young people to take up a modern language or develop a language they already know.

Evidence is regularly presented of the educational, economic and employment benefits of studying modern languages. Indeed, one of the best publications on this subject is the aptly named '700 Reasons for Studying Languages', by Angela Gallagher-Brett, of LLAS ([www.llas.ac.uk/700reasons](http://www.llas.ac.uk/700reasons)).

I would argue also that there is a dimension to modern language learning that has not yet been properly addressed: the ethical dimension. In macro-political terms, there is no greater challenge (and opportunity) than globalisation. This is reflected in our universities by an increasing emphasis on internationalisation. In the UK, internationalisation is often conceived as attracting ever more international, i.e. overseas, high-fee paying, students, with occasional gestures made to internationalising the curriculum and possibly engaging pro-actively with the Bologna process - which is certain to have an increasingly important impact on the education that we provide as well as on the employment prospects of our graduates. However, to see internationalisation in economic or employment terms is to take a rather venal view of the potential.

Internationalisation for universities should be much more about promoting a sense of global citizenship, social justice and environmental responsibility. This may seem an overly bold - or even old-fashioned, moral - aspiration for today's universities, but it seems to me imperative that we take a lead in transforming globalisation from an essentially economic phenomenon into a genuinely inter-cultural and human one.

We know that our students today are less political than they were in the 1960s and 1970s: they demonstrate less and occupy fewer buildings today. On the other hand, many of them care deeply about human rights and the environment. In our modern language courses, we can build on this, since our courses have at their centre a concern with cultural difference and diversity, with communication, and with history. We should perhaps insist more on the need to explore and embrace difference, going beyond the various oppositional logics that so often inform discussion of cultural otherness. In his essay on Hölderlin's late hymn 'Der Ister' (The Danube), Heidegger argues that we can say 'the same' only if we think 'different', and we can only think 'different' if we already assume some 'sameness'<sup>1</sup>.

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MICHAEL WORTON

Vice-Provost and Fielden Professor of French Language and Literature University College London

<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger 'Hölderlin's Hymne 'Der Ister', Vol. 53 of the Gesamtausgabe, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984, p. 155.

Heidegger argues that every language is in itself and for itself in need of translation into itself as well as to and from a foreign language. This means that every speaker of a language simultaneously is at home in and exiled from his or her language. All of us in modern language studies therefore live and work in a permanent engagement with otherness and with the problematics and possibilities of finding identities through linguistic and, more broadly, cultural exchange. This places modern language study absolutely at the heart of what one could call moral globalisation.

To think and to present modern language studies in this way is bold but risky. However, it is surely much more important to make ethical arguments about the value of modern language study than to be playing a constantly defensive game of justifying it through instrumentalist arguments. In our universities, we want to attract and to teach the leaders of tomorrow. By emphasising the key role

of modern languages in recognising and embracing difference, we will be able to attract those students who most want to embrace the challenge of global citizenship, to make a difference and to give leadership, whether this be within their family, their local community, their workplace or even their country.

For too long, we have been defensive in modern language departments and have been fighting what are essentially rear guard actions against falling rolls. As HEIs develop their international strategies, we have a significant opportunity to re-position ourselves at the centre of institutional missions. More importantly, we will expand the horizons - and the vision - of our students, who will choose to study modern languages not just for the reasons that we all know, but because they want to be part of creating a new positively global world.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING AND LEARNING

**IN LLAS DIGEST 2005** I reported on the formation of a Special Interest Group on interdisciplinary teaching and learning across the Subject Centre Network. At the time of writing that article this group was still exploring possible ways of moving forward.

Since September 2005, there has been substantial progress in supporting interdisciplinary teaching and learning across Subject Centres. LLAS is now the lead Subject Centre on a Higher Education Academy 'devolved project'. With funding from the Academy, we are now running a programme of activity in partnership with other Subject Centres.

The core of the project involves running two events and funding two projects. The first event was called *Disciplines in Dialogue*. One representative from every discipline in the Subject Centre Network was invited to an experimental workshop, which employed a problem-based learning approach to considering issues around the environmental sustainability of the 2012 London Olympics. As well as exploring problem-based learning, the workshop helped participants to explore ways in which different disciplinary knowledges could be applied to the social, cultural, economic, physical and environmental dimensions of the Olympic project. After the workshop participants were asked to write a short essay on what they considered

interdisciplinary teaching and learning to mean to their discipline. These essays, along with a report of the workshop are currently being published in an online book which will be available soon.

The second event is an international conference on interdisciplinary teaching and learning which will be held at the University of Birmingham on 13-14 July 2006. Keynote speakers include Dr Lori Breslow, Director of the Teaching and Learning Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Professor R J Ellis, Head of the Department of American and Canadian Studies at the University of Birmingham.

Funding has also been available to undertake two small-scale projects. The first of these projects is an investigation into the internal economy of the university. This will be undertaken by Dr Neill Thew, University of Sussex. A second project led by Dr Angelique Chettiparambrajan Rajan, University of Cardiff, will be a literature review of interdisciplinary teaching and learning. The findings of these projects will be published in November 2006.

We hope that further funds will be available for supporting interdisciplinary teaching and learning for the 2006-2007 academic year.

JOHN CANNING

# EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ESD continues to be a key theme in the work of LLAS. In September 2005, following on from our small project, we ran a workshop *Enhancing environmental awareness through Languages, Literatures and Area Studies* in partnership with the English Subject Centre. ESD continues to be a key priority for the Academy and the project has continued this year operating on a devolved basis led by the Philosophical and Religious Studies (PRS) Subject Centre. At the time of going to press, LLAS is set to take a leading role in the organisation of a series of interdisciplinary seminars on ESD.

ESD is a highly controversial aspect of LLAS's work. When the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) published their paper calling for the embedding of ESD in the curriculum, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Central England wrote, "Since when has it been the duty of universities to promote a particular religious or pseudo-scientific analysis of what is essentially a political issue?" (Knight 2005). Discussions with colleagues and policy makers always occur in a milieu in which both enthusiasm and scepticism abound.

The first source of controversy concerns what ESD is. I discussed this issue at greater length in LLAS Digest 2005 where I drew attention to the possible links between ESD and cultural sustainability and language and culture loss.

A second source of controversy centres around the argument that ESD is not simply a question of engaging with environmental issues in the curriculum, but that it is an ideological belief or value system which is scientifically, and socially or economically misguided. In contrast, for others it represents a key mission of higher education (see Kreber 2005, p. 398). Practitioners, they argue, should not only endeavour to make students aware of environmental issues, but should also persuade students to change their own behaviour in order to ensure future global sustainability.

It is this necessity for a change in behaviour that causes discomfort to many - particularly those with an openness to ESD who nevertheless maintain some degree of scepticism. When does teaching become preaching? Where does the boundary between expressing one's own opinion and indoctrination lie? Can we exhort students to follow our own example? The middle ground seems difficult to maintain. It can seem that defending a middle ground position is like standing around in a burning building wanting to tell others that they need to get out, but not wishing to be seen as presenting a particular view on the subject. Granted, the timescale for response may be very different, but I do think that the analogy is appropriate. Sitting around asking how we can embed ESD in the curriculum leads to despair amongst those who believe that we need to see changes in everyone's behaviour, rather than

new learning outcomes, 'sustainable development' modules or producing 'sustainability literate' graduates who will drive 4x4s and travel around the world by aeroplane.

Despite the surge of activity over the past two years Brian Chalkley, Director of the Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) urges academics to see ESD as a marathon, rather than a sprint.

*"Many questions remain unanswered. Who will deliver the funding councils' ambitions within institutions? Who will offer guidance on the relationship of sustainability policies to teaching and learning? How will understanding be developed among university leaders, pro-vice chancellors for learning and teaching, educational developers and staff responsible for curriculum design and delivery? How will the voices of students and employers be heard?" (Chalkley 2006 pp 12-13).*

David Orr ventures that a genuine liberal education will lead to people who are "not merely well read, but ecologically literate citizens who are able to distinguish health from its opposite and live accordingly. Above all, they will make themselves relevant to the crisis of our age" (cited in Kreber 2005). Kreber has a warning for those who see themselves as being engaged in the scholarship of teaching:

*"If we consider the scholarship of learning and teaching by and large as a form of teaching that helps students think within the discipline - and even if we can prove through peer reviewed research that we are successful with our endeavours - we run the risk of losing sight of the larger purposes of education" (Kreber pp. 397-398).*

Few take the view that the environment is not a 'crisis of our age' therefore to argue that languages, linguistics and area studies have nothing to contribute to addressing this crisis can only be detrimental to the health of these disciplines. The policy makers and funding councils have a longstanding commitment to ESD; it is not a question of whether ESD is going to be important, but what shape ESD takes.

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JOHN CANNING

## A WIDER PERSPECTIVE AND MORE OPTIONS

Investigating longer-term employability in the humanities

The Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies worked in collaboration with the Subject Centres for English and History, Classics and Archaeology to produce a piece of research into the longer-term employability of graduates of these discipline areas. This work was published in February 2006.

Many surveys are carried out to show the destinations of graduates immediately after leaving university, and we have a clear picture of the types of industries they go into. However little research has been done into how Humanities degrees are meeting the needs of employers by equipping graduates with the skills and experiences they need later in life.

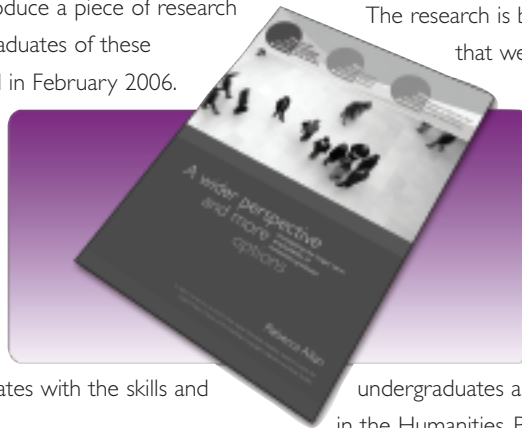
The principle objective of the research was to ascertain how graduates feel their degrees have prepared them for the world of

work, looking particularly at the personal attributes and skills they have gained as well as specific subject knowledge.

The research is based on in-depth interviews with graduates that were intended to discover what graduates

learnt during their university experience and how they feel this has steered the direction their careers have taken and consequent decisions. The earliest graduate was from the 1970s with the most recent one finishing her degree in 2004. The report will be of interest to careers advisers, programme planners,

undergraduates and anyone considering undertaking a degree in the Humanities. Printed copies of the report can be ordered at [www.llas.ac.uk/publications](http://www.llas.ac.uk/publications)



REBECCA ALLAN

## HARD GOING BUT WORTH IT

A snapshot of attitudes to reading among languages undergraduates

This project set out to obtain information by means of questionnaires on students' attitudes and approaches to foreign language reading (including the study of literature) and their pre-university experiences of L2 reading. It followed a request from the Subject Centre's Specialist Interest Group in Literature and Culture.

Approximately 600 students from seven UK universities took part in the research. These included both pre-and post 1992 institutions. Languages covered by the survey were Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

Findings suggested the following:

- Most students enjoyed reading in both L1 and L2, although this enjoyment did not necessarily extend to academic reading
- A majority of students expressed willingness to read literature but newspapers and magazines were preferred to other genres
- Students believed that reading in L2 brought linguistic, cultural and general knowledge benefits
- Many students were ambivalent about their linguistic competence and judged the level of their reading more harshly than their overall competence

- Students overwhelmingly reported that vocabulary was the main difficulty encountered in L2 reading and they provided a range of strategies for dealing with this difficulty
- Students had vastly differing experiences of L2 reading prior to university with about one third claiming to have had access to literature
- Students in year 4 of their degree programmes were more confident that they were doing well in reading and expressed more positive attitudes about most aspects of it than students in the first year
- Students with prior knowledge of the language were more confident in all year groups than ab initio students, although they did not necessarily have more positive attitudes
- Male and female students expressed preferences for different types of reading

The Subject Centre has produced a report on this project, which includes a series of recommendations and implications of the research. This is available from [www.llas.ac.uk/publications](http://www.llas.ac.uk/publications)

ANGELA GALLAGHER-BRETT

## SUPPORTING NEW STAFF

### An overview of past and future activities

The Subject Centre, in its partnership with CILT, the National Centre for Languages, has been involved in several activities and initiatives over the last year intended to support new academic language-teaching staff in higher education.

#### Starting out in the HE languages department

A joint CILT/Subject Centre workshop, held at CILT, 10 November 2005

This one-day workshop was aimed at university academic staff who are new to teaching languages in higher education. The course aimed to cover a range of topics, both pedagogical and more general, facing new language teaching staff.

To open the day, David Newton, Higher Education Development Officer at CILT, gave a presentation entitled "CILT, Subject Centre and Online Support for Language Teachers", in which he summarised the support, training, publications and information available to university language teachers from CILT, the National Centre for Languages, the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies and other organisations. It also provided information about useful websites, email discussion lists and other online resources.

"Supporting New Academic Staff (SNAS): Enhancing support for the disciplinary focus on professional courses", presented by Ruth Hale from the Higher Education Academy, was a comprehensive but concise overview of the SNAS project. This project arose from a desire expressed amongst Course Tutors and Subject Centres to share information about subject-specific resources and guidance on how to use generic resources to support new academic staff in specific disciplines. See page 13 for more information about the SNAS project.

John Klapper, Professor of Foreign Language Pedagogy at the University of Birmingham gave a presentation entitled "Subject-specific support for Modern Languages staff and the DELPHI Project" in which he introduced participants to specific pedagogical materials relating to teaching languages designed as an orientation session for the new teacher. The DELPHI Project (Developing Language Professionals in Higher Education Institutions) is a project run by the University of Birmingham, the aim of which is to develop web-based professional development materials for language teaching.

To give a different perspective, Darren Paffey, a postgraduate who teaches at the University of Southampton, presented "Mission Possible! Combining HE Teaching with Academic Research", a personal account of the issues, difficulties and joys experienced in the first year of teaching in HE whilst combining this with research.

The final presentation of the day was hosted by various staff from the Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching at University College London, the Department of Russian at University College London/School of Slavonic and East European Studies and the University of Sussex. "Teaching Languages at University: UCL - A Case Study" considered the support needs of language teachers in a multi-faculty, research-intensive university. Acknowledging the wide range of different roles that language teachers may have in higher education, this session detailed ways in which their diverse support needs can be met, highlighting problematic areas, suggesting strategies that teachers may find useful, and offering information on courses and resources.

## Supporting New Academic Staff (SNAS) Project

The SNAS Project, run by the Higher Education Academy is divided into three strands, two of which the Subject Centre is currently involved with.

### **Strand 1 - Discipline-specific resources and guidance**

Aimed at providing short and snappy resource lists of discipline-specific and generic resources to provide a starting point for new academic staff, CILT and the Subject Centre are currently working together to improve both the range and number of resources in this database. The Subject Centre's own website hosts the Materials Bank and Good Practice Guide, which will provide a basis for the items to be included in SNAS.

### **Strand 2 - Mechanisms for staff engaged on programmes to share discipline specific pedagogy**

An online community will be piloted in 2006 for PGCert Programme Leaders to develop strategies for providing subject specific support, networking and resources for new academics on these courses. Selected Subject Centres will be invited to contribute to the community in the summer of 2006.

### **Strand 3 - Linking teaching with discipline research**

Linking teaching and research is a 'hot' topic in the UK and internationally. Many institutional, national and international conferences are dedicated to, or have sessions on, this topic. Moreover, HEFCE have recently announced additional funding to support teaching informed by research, for 2006-08. These and other initiatives are likely to create a demand from subject communities for subject-based resources and guidance. The SNAS Strand 3 initiative provides a framework and support for the remaining Subject Centres to engage with this topic and for the Centres which engaged with the earlier project to extend and update their resources should they wish. The outputs from this strand are to consist of a number of representative case studies, followed by an interpretative essay about the nature of the teaching-research relationship in their subject communities. It is hoped that the Subject Centre will be able to link this work with its 2007 conference on this topic.

DAVID NEWTON

# CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

In October 2005, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned the Subject Centre to carry out a mapping exercise into cross-sector collaboration between universities and schools in England in promoting the take up of languages. The study was commissioned in response to recommendation 10 of the Footitt report<sup>1</sup> (2005) and aimed to identify and encourage the sharing of good practice by:

- surveying the current range of language outreach activities
- mapping current outreach provision
- identifying which outreach activities have the greatest impact

The project drew on three main sources of information:

- analysis of a questionnaire survey with respondents from schools and universities
- case study interviews
- background research into outreach activities in languages and other subject areas

## Conclusions/key findings

### Range of activities

We found evidence of much excellent cross-sector collaboration involving a wide range of activities. The key findings from the questionnaire survey were:

- most common cross-sector collaboration activity: initial teacher training
- the activity perceived to be the most useful: collaborative staff development/in-service training
- most common aim: promoting languages
- most common difficulty: lack of time

### Coordination

- Many outreach activities are ad hoc, uncoordinated, and dependent upon enthusiastic staff and students
- There is insufficient time built into the school and university academic timetable for outreach activities
- Consortium/strategy groups at regional level are a useful means of coordinating outreach activities
- In universities, language departments are able to benefit from using the expertise of widening participation and schools liaison teams

- There is a role for a dedicated member of staff in higher education institutions to coordinate language outreach activities, preferably someone with school teaching experience

### Awareness

- Colleagues outside the Specialist Language College secondary sector report lack of information about outreach activity as being a major difficulty
- There is some confusion over the range of schemes on offer (e.g. the range of 'student ambassador' schemes)
- Outreach activities need to reach parents as well as school students
- Information about activities carried out by individual higher education institutions is not always easy to find on institutional websites

### Fitness for purpose

- Schools want outreach activities that are integrated into the curriculum
- Schools and universities do not necessarily share the same outreach aims and it is important for universities to take schools' needs into account
- Good practice occurs where there is a team of enthusiastic staff providing fun, relevant, educational activities for school students

### Evaluation

- There is little formal evaluation of the impact of outreach activities, so methods need to be developed for measuring impact/long-term tracking of students

### Sharing good practice

- Languages shares many common issues with other subjects, such as the Physical Sciences, and can learn lessons from other subject areas as well as other sectors
- More events to encourage the sharing of ideas, expertise and good practice across different subject areas and sectors would be welcomed by those involved in cross-sector collaboration

The full report, containing many examples of good practice and detailed case studies is downloadable from [www.llas.ac.uk/resources/publications.aspx](http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/publications.aspx)

### Reference:

<sup>1</sup>Footitt, H., 2005, The National Languages Strategy in Higher Education (Nottingham: DfES)

PAULA DAVIS



# STUDENT ESSAY COMPETITION

This essay was the winning entry in the Subject Centre's student essay competition

## How does your experience of your course compare with any expectations you may have had?

Before coming to university, I was determined to ensure that the establishment I chose was the right one for me, in terms of location, accommodation, and, in particular, the languages course. For this reason, I made sure I visited each university I applied to and completed a thorough tour, as well as amassing as much information as possible about the universities and their courses from prospectuses, newspapers and the internet, and by asking advice from parents, teachers, and languages students. All this led me to believe that there was a very wide range of universities and courses available to me, with great variation between them.

I chose Bath University because, having researched the course, I learned that a strong emphasis was placed on the use of language in business and everyday routine. I wanted to be able to use my language frequently in my future career, rather than complete my degree and get a job where I would not be using my skills.

For this reason, I also disliked the heavy focus on literature that many other universities incorporate into their course structure, preferring to concentrate on more practical and functional areas of study.

I therefore found the idea of studying both cultural and political modules in the course appealing, modules which I felt would build on my existing interests, and open up new ones. I also discovered that students had the option to

choose some modules from outside the course, such as in Economics or Politics, to increase their knowledge in a specialist area, which was an attractive prospect because of my interest in politics, which I hope to pursue further through my language course.

In terms of language learning, being new to the Italian language, I expected to advance at speed through the course, progressing very quickly, especially as the department's stated aim was to bring all students (both those who had completed Italian A-level and those who had started ab initio) to the same level by the end of the second year- a challenge indeed!

I also discovered that students had the option to choose some modules from outside the course, such as in Economics or Politics, to increase their knowledge in a specialist area, which was an attractive prospect

GEMMA BROWN  
1st Year Undergraduate, University of Bath

This was the first marked difference between my expectations and my actual experience of the course: in the event, we got off to rather a slow start, focussing at first on the spoken rather than the written aspect, which I found hard to manage as I find writing things down usually helps me to learn more effectively. However I soon realised the value of learning orally before writing, as this gave teachers more opportunity to practice oral language with us in the classroom (this was sorely needed!) whereas students could develop their written knowledge more easily independently.

This was another element of the course which I had not expected: obviously I realised that some degree of work would have to be completed in my own time, but not to the extent of, for example, learning grammar from a book on my own. The total amount of weekly classes was around what I had anticipated, but I had not realised how much work would have to be done individually. This was a shock to the system at first, a sharp contrast to sixth form studies! However I began to enjoy discovering things for myself, relishing the sense of achievement this brought.

On this note, I had expected to undertake in-depth study of grammar, which takes place through weekly lectures and smaller classes in the course, but I had certainly not expected to have so many holes in my knowledge! I believed that I had already attained a good grasp of grammar through my previous language studies. However I had, and still have, several gaps which needed filling in. Moreover, I enjoy grammar lessons more than I expected, finding the science of language an interesting concept.

In both the Cultural and Political modules, I was surprised to find that they were not quite what I had expected. Cultural Studies contained a strong literary element that I had not counted on, as I had expected to be concentrating on the lifestyles of France and Italy. However I am enjoying this part of the course more than I had imagined, and I have realised that one can build up a good idea of a nation's culture through the media of literature and film. Having said this, I was relieved to find that after the first year it is possible, as I had anticipated, to move away from the literary aspect and delve into other areas of culture.

Politics and Society is an intensive history course, and I was surprised by the speed at which we were taken through a large period of Italian and French history: we went through

one hundred years of history in eight weeks, with a one-hour lecture each week, and the rest we must find out for ourselves, compared to A-level History, where we studied a period of perhaps ten years in great detail for a whole term. This difference suited me as I find it more useful and interesting to cover a larger area of history, and I felt it gave me a greater knowledge of the backgrounds of each country. However I was disappointed that no current politics would be covered in the first year, which is my real interest.

So far I have not mentioned European Studies, an integral part of the course at Bath. I had expected to enjoy this

aspect greatly, and I do: I believe we should make more effort to be part of Europe, and I think this aspect of the course is helping me feel more European, rather than simply British. Something which I had not expected was to be participating in seminars so early in the course: indeed, in week three of the Semester, I found myself giving a group presentation on Europe in front of twenty students. Ours was the first seminar, and although a frightening prospect, I was glad to

find that I would gain valuable skills both through the course content and the methods of learning.

If a student's experience of higher education is different from what they had expected, all I can say is, whatever you feel is lacking in the course, it is your responsibility to pursue it as an individual. Some of my experiences may not have been quite what I had anticipated, but I can make up for this by studying, joining a group or reading on my own about the areas I am interested in. Higher education provides great opportunities to gain further insight into your interests and these should be taken up. Your course is what you make it!

I enjoy grammar lessons more than I expected, finding the science of language an interesting concept

# NEW ON THE LLAS WEBSITE

ALISON DICKENS AND JOHN CANNING

## Good Practice Guide

[www.llas.ac.uk/gpg](http://www.llas.ac.uk/gpg)

The Good Practice Guide (GPG) has been a key part of the LLAS website since 2001. It began as a project financed by additional funding from the Learning and Teaching Support Network. Since 2003 it has been funded from LLAS core funding.

From 2001 until 2005 the GPG was overseen by an editorial board independent of LLAS. With support from LLAS staff, the board commissioned and reviewed articles covering key topics in the fields of Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies. Case studies of practice were also commissioned from time to time.

Over time it was becoming increasingly difficult to find contributors to fill remaining gaps in the GPG's coverage and fewer articles were being added. By last year it had become evident that change was needed to ensure the longer-term sustainability of the GPG. It was agreed that LLAS academic coordinators would now form the editorial board, unsolicited contributions would be welcomed and articles would be anonymously peer reviewed. Where possible we will continue to commission and pay for 'top-level' overview articles.

We feel that these changes will benefit the LLAS community in a number of ways. Firstly, the movement to peer review has provided a transparent, rigorous and familiar publication process. Secondly, the GPG is now open to wider range of contributors. Postgraduate students and new teaching staff, as well as established practitioners are now able to reach a wider audience with their work. Thirdly, the web-based format facilitates the publication and cross-referencing of articles covering the whole depth and breadth of teaching and learning in Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies.

To submit an article to the GPG, please consult the guidelines at [www.llas.ac.uk/gpg](http://www.llas.ac.uk/gpg)

### Recent GPG articles

#### Online teaching skills for language tutors

Regine Hampel and Ursula Stickler

Online teachers need different skills than those normally employed by tutors trained to teach languages in a face-to-face classroom and they also require different skills compared to online teachers of other subjects. Research shows that the medium influences the form of communication and interaction (see Hutchby 2001). The asynchronicity of communication in written conferencing and the lack of non-verbal clues in audio-conferencing are examples of new challenges for online language tutors.

### Global perspective in Area Studies

Jenny Lunn

Higher Education is under pressure to produce graduates with the knowledge and skills for working in a globalised environment and with the values and attitudes to behave as global citizens. Are Area Studies students developing these 'global perspectives' through their studies? A scoping study at the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) has investigated the current status of the global dimension. The research project examined how global perspectives are manifest at three different levels within Higher Education: disciplines/subject areas, departments/teaching teams and institutions. In Area Studies, the picture is generally encouraging, with many of the building blocks for developing and strengthening global perspectives already in place. The long-term objective is for a holistic approach where all the components contributing to global perspectives are integrated and embedded into the ethos, structures, activities and daily life of higher education institutions.

### Facilitating reflective learning: an example of practice in TESOL teacher education

Angela Pickering

Reflective learners are said to demonstrate self-awareness and motivation, awareness of the process of learning and independence. However, some learners can find the process of reflection problematic. In this case study the author describes the impact of a specific reflective 'tool', the Statement of Relevance, on a language teacher education programme. The potential of this tool to help learners work autonomously is outlined, to qualitatively enhance learners' reflection, to enable reluctant reflectors to develop the tendency to habitually look for learning from a variety of knowledge sources, and to enable learners to predict future needs more successfully.

### An Introduction to South Asian Studies in the United Kingdom

Vibha Arora

The efflorescence of South Asian Studies in higher education is evident in the range and number of taught and research degrees, the number of language courses, and the popularity of South Asian options within other courses that are offered by colleges and universities in the United Kingdom. This article gives an overview of the range of options available to a student at the undergraduate, postgraduate and research degree level, lists the major centres of teaching and research on South Asian Studies, indicates the range of resources available for research and highlights the principal networks of academic exchange and research in the United Kingdom and the world.

### Canadian Studies Teaching in the UK

Terry MacDonald

An overview of the nature and content of Canadian Studies (including Québec Studies) teaching and research in British and Northern Irish universities, with sections on each designated centre, their specialist disciplines and the courses they offer. These are mainly in history, politics, literature, geography, film, and aboriginal studies, often as part of a comparative programme.

### Case study: The role of the moderators in focus group interviews: Practical considerations

Angela Pickering and Catherine Watts

Focus group interviews are an increasingly popular, albeit poorly documented, tool in education research. This case study details the author's first experiences of using a focus group interview in a small-scale qualitative inquiry and documents some of the practical issues surrounding the responsibilities of focus group moderators. A redefinition of the facilitative, recording, checking and analytical roles of the Moderator and Assistant Moderator is considered.

### Case Study: Supporting student learning in level 1 linguistics

Liz Morrish

This case study evaluates the impact of an enhanced portfolio of learning support materials deployed in the LING 101: Introduction to Language and Linguistics module at Nottingham Trent University.

## Materials Bank

[www.llas.ac.uk/mb](http://www.llas.ac.uk/mb)

This year, the Subject Centre funded six materials development projects and a materials case study. These projects have yielded the following materials that have been added to our materials bank [www.llas.ac.uk/mb](http://www.llas.ac.uk/mb)

### University of York: German and Spanish

The materials developed by a team led by Emma Marsden consist of listening and reading exercises based on the principles of processing instruction developed by VanPatten (1996). This is fully explained by Emma in the accompanying introduction to her materials. Here is an extract:

*"Processing instruction aims is to design tasks such that learners have to show that they have attended to the meaning of specific target features when they are reading or hearing sentences in the target language. These target features are those which a) appear to be slow to be acquired in production, b) have differences with the learners' L1 and/ or c) are likely to be 'ignored' by learners when they normally hear or read the languages because the features are communicatively redundant (i.e. there are other clues in the input which communicate the same meaning, e.g. intonation, syntax, lexical items)."*

This project has created a set of exercises for German and Spanish which help learners to acquire redundant or problem forms by focusing learners' attention on them.

#### **University of Bristol: English for Academic Purposes**

The materials developed by Roger Smith at the University of Bristol Language Centre are designed to develop the academic skills of international students. They are presented as learning objects which are small, interactive units of learning that can stand alone or can be built upon to form courses or modules. These objects deal with a number of topics of interest to international students but could also be of interest to home students as well. Topics include:

- Essay writing
- Plagiarism
- Scholarly practice
- Exam answers

They are based around a series of audio recordings which include lectures, student-teacher tutorial interactions and international student reflections.

The learning objects are compatible with any web-based (html) application.

#### **University of Central Lancashire: British Sign Language**

The materials developed by Mark Heaton and colleagues at the University of Central Lancashire consist of a series of photo stories designed to provide visual scenarios that enable students to practise their skills in 'real-life' situations. These materials were developed in response to a need for a greater range of such scenarios than are currently available. The team now have plans to enhance these materials with some short video scenes.

#### **Anglia Ruskin University: English Grammar Exercises**

A team of developers led by Jill Cosh have created a package of web-based English Grammar exercises using the authoring tool Hot Potatoes. This simple-to-use tool developed by the University of Ontario enables teachers to create interactive exercises in a variety of formats (multiple choice, cloze, matching) that provide instant feedback to the learner. The materials for English Grammar use these multiple formats to provide exercises on nouns, word class, noun phrases, verbs, adverbs and sentence structure. Also included are diagnostic and revision exercises. These exercises can be used independently by learners and can be added to a VLE or other web-compatible learning system.

#### **University of Nottingham: le varietà dell'italiano**

Cecilia Goria and colleagues in the Italian department at Nottingham University have developed web-based activities to present intermediate-advanced students with material that exemplifies varieties of Italian. These materials are based around the following topics: La lingua della pubblicità. La

lingua dei giovani, L'italiano parlato e scritto, Tecnologia, L'italiano regionale. They provide introductory audio recordings and text-based exercises.

#### **University of Portsmouth: Giving a presentation**

The resource developed by Rosemary Jane and colleagues is intended to help international students develop their presentational skills. The materials are presented in the form of a video which demonstrates a 'model' presentation which is segmented into its component parts, each of which is accompanied by a commentary. Although this is a resource for international students much of the material will be of equal use to home students.

#### **University of Edinburgh: The Book in Middle French**

These materials developed by Charlie Mansfield have taken a learning object approach to providing an introduction to the medieval book. They are in a web-based (html) format but have been specially designed to function on PDAs (personal data assistant) and mobile phones. They include graphics and short interactive exercises.

#### **Donations to the Materials Bank**

We continue to welcome donations of copyright-free/cleared materials to the Materials Bank and are very grateful to Nuria López, Noelia Alcarazo and Anna Vives of the University of Nottingham for their pack of materials for Spanish oral classes. This pack consists of ideas and activities for oral classes aimed at students at all levels - beginners, intermediate and advanced.

We would also like to thank Andrew Quilley for donating the Russian Keyboard Tsar which is a tool designed to teach touch typing in both English and Cyrillic. The program, developed by a team at the University of Leeds led by Dr Sarah Hudspith, consists of a series of exercises that gradually build up familiarity and proficiency in touch typing. Users are given feedback on speed, accuracy and most common errors at the end of each exercise, and are encouraged to reach a certain level of accuracy before proceeding to the next exercise.

All resources can be found at [www.llas.ac.uk/mb](http://www.llas.ac.uk/mb)

# PEDAGOGIC RESEARCH PROJECTS

During the 2005-2006 academic year, LLAS funded six pedagogic research projects. Practitioners were able to bid for up to £4,000 to undertake an investigation into a facet of learning and teaching in Languages, Linguistics or Area Studies.

Each project explores an important and timely challenge in higher education and the findings and recommendations of all the reports will be useful to colleagues in all our subject areas.

These are available on the LLAS website at [www.llas.ac.uk/prf2005.aspx](http://www.llas.ac.uk/prf2005.aspx)

**A case study of the effects on student attainment, and on retention of personal development planning (PDP) via departmental mechanisms for improving student learning and through the institutional Progress File**

Sue Beigel, University of Chester

**SS4LL (Study Skills for Language Learners): An integrated learner training programme**

Juliet Laxton and Kirsten Söntgens, University of Southampton

**East Asian Learners' response to intercultural themes as part of the year abroad in the UK**

Tricia Coverdale-Jones, University of Portsmouth

**A survey of the ways universities cope with the needs of dyslexic foreign language learners and, in consultation with tutors and learners, the piloting of appropriate assessment methods**

Jenny Hill and Jannie Roed, University of Sussex

**Investigating the pedagogical challenges and opportunities of field trip modules in Area Studies**

John Bentley, Jude Davies and Alasdair Spark, University of Winchester

**New online learning spaces: Task design and implementation for a synchronous audiographic online learning environment**

Regine Hampel, The Open University



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Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies  
University of Southampton  
Highfield  
Southampton  
SO17 1BJ

Tel: 023 8059 4814  
Fax: 023 8059 4815  
Email: [llas@soton.ac.uk](mailto:llas@soton.ac.uk)  
Web: [www.llas.ac.uk](http://www.llas.ac.uk)