

Making connections, dealing with transition

Turning ideas into action and creating exciting language opportunities for schools and young people

Routes into Languages will increase the number of young people learning modern languages and this publication gives just a few of the exciting initiatives which the universities of Yorkshire and the Humber are pursuing to this end.

As Lord Dearing has said: "Change does not have to be bad news... However developments lying ahead for education provide a challenging time."

We are ready for the challenge.

The Yorkshire and The Humber Consortium, led by the University of Hull, has won £600,000 in funding to improve language opportunities in this region. Our responsibility is to make sure that every child in this region has the chance to learn a modern language and see the relevance of intercultural understanding in today's world.

We believe that if young people are to have the economic and social opportunities they are entitled to – languages have a key role to play. We will meet the challenges as they present themselves.

The educational establishments that make up Routes into Languages (the eleven Yorkshire Universities, the Regional Language Network for Yorkshire and The Humber and Comenius Centre for Yorkshire and The Humber) are tackling the problem of decreasing numbers of young people studying foreign languages head on. Initiatives stretch across the age range from an Italian club at primary school level to undergraduate support for Year 11 and Year 13s as they revise for their summer exams.

Languages bring people together and link into every area of academic study and business success. We believe that they are worth fighting for.



The strength of this partnership lies in the development of partnerships between different stakeholders including young people, their parents and teachers, university lecturers and the employers who need modern language expertise if they are to develop international standing.

We will stop at nothing! James Bond Days to help Year 8s glimpse the importance of languages in a spy's life, on-line tutoring for students who need support from a university modern languages department, cross-curricular programmes to show how languages are relevant to everything from philosophy to business studies, business champions by which I mean commercial organisations who will invite young people to visit them and see first hand how important modern languages are to commerce. Our role is to use the considerable expertise at our disposal in the universities, schools and businesses of this region to make languages a rich and exciting option for young people. And we mean to do this.

Dr Marina Mozzon-McPherson
Consortium Director

"I am delighted that this University has been so active in promoting languages and is leading the consortium for Yorkshire and Humberside to promote the take up of languages in schools through the Routes in Languages scheme.

"The Institute of Directors has argued the case to me for low levels of skill in several languages for meeting and greeting and getting around and has made a case for formal recognition through the GCSE for it.

The other approach is to build up competence in one language, not as an academic study but as a competence, and I know that this has taken off in a substantial way in higher education as students reflect on the reality of a world economy... Languages also add to the fun of life.

Lord Dearing January 2008

The University of Hull

The Modern Languages Department at Hull University was delighted to welcome more than 300 Year 11 and sixth form students from all over the region to three days of tutorials, seminars and lectures recently to help them boost their grades for the summer examinations.

"Teachers told us that this was extremely helpful as we made speaking the language concerned a priority (French, German and Spanish) and it helped with confidence," said a modern languages lecturer. The work was recorded and the students were able to take their recording away with them.

"It was also a big boost for our own undergraduate ambassadors who saw with their own eyes that education is a two way thing and that they have as much to give as to receive. Our ambassadors regularly visit schools in the area from the primary school upwards and are keen to play their part in modern languages learning."

The undergraduate ambassadors assist at language and cultural events at the University but they also go out to schools – for example, making an appearance at the John Leggott Sixth Form College in Hull where more than 300 students from 10 different schools considered different career options.

Student ambassador Samantha Ashton explained: "I gave a short presentation for the students explaining why I chose to study languages, why Hull and where it might take me."

The Modern Languages Department has recently hosted a Going Global event for more than 70 gifted and talented pupils. Carol Wade, languages co-ordinator at St Bede's School in Bradford, said "This was a great event! The boys were stretched both academically and socially – they saw how they could use strategies from one language to another; they were thinking like linguists!"

The event gave students an opportunity to explore the culture and history of Venice, work with native speakers from a number of different countries, and explore material related to their school syllabus and try out a range of less familiar languages such as Russian and Chinese.

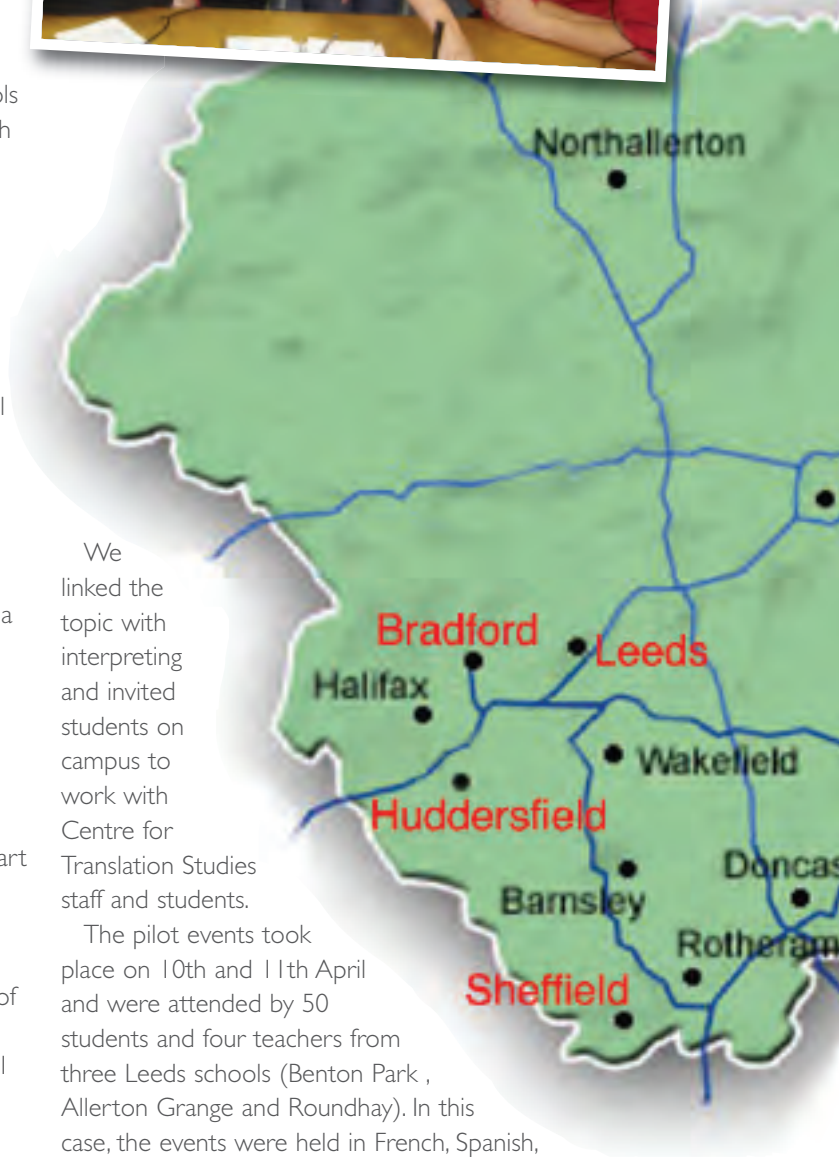
The Modern Languages Department is working on more cross-curricular use of languages in sport, film and performing arts.

Kelvin Hall is a school also working with the University as part of the HEFCE-funded Routes into Languages programme, Yorkshire and The Humber Consortium. The whole Modern Foreign Languages Department at Kelvin Hall are remarkably successful at teaching German, French and Spanish, with 85% of Year 9 pupils taking a language GCSE, and more boy-friendly MFL accreditation courses being introduced like NVQ Levels 1 and 2 in Business Language and the FCSE which is trialled this year. Kelvin Hall are very enthusiastic about support from the Modern Languages Department at Hull University and the help it received from its students with Easter revision classes for its MFL pupils this Easter.

The University of Leeds

EU Languages Days

The EU Languages Days were created to support secondary school teachers in Leeds who wanted to raise students' awareness of the EU as part of their AS and A2 language studies.



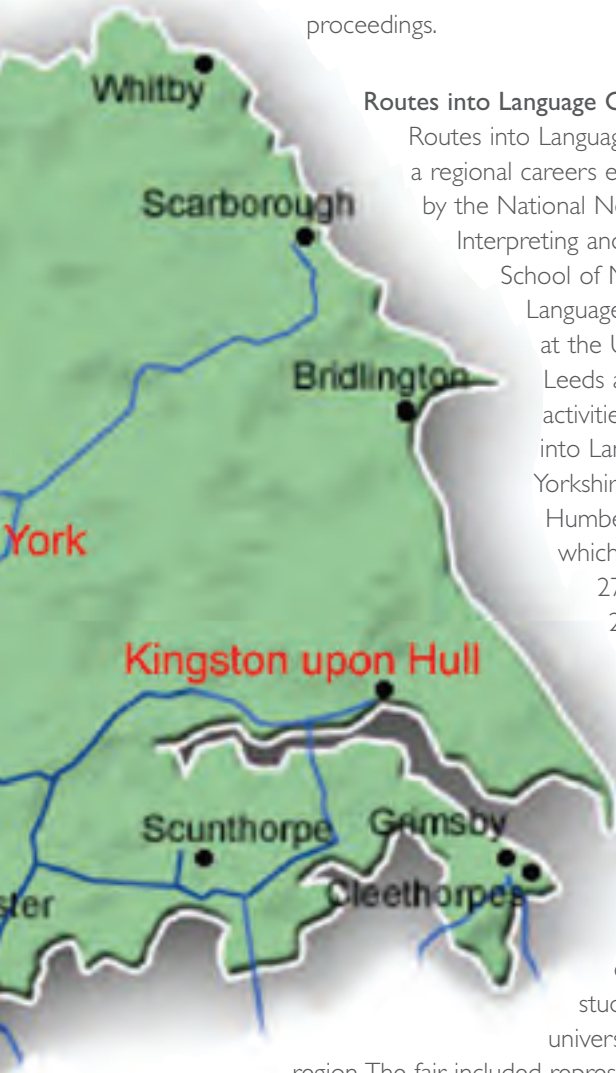
We linked the topic with interpreting and invited students on campus to work with Centre for Translation Studies staff and students.

The pilot events took place on 10th and 11th April and were attended by 50 students and four teachers from three Leeds schools (Benton Park, Allerton Grange and Roundhay). In this case, the events were held in French, Spanish, German and English but in the future other languages could easily be added.

Both days started with an introduction to the university and to interpreting. There were short talks from postgraduate interpreting students about studying languages and students

were taught to use the conference interpreting facilities in preparation for later activities. The event also included a comprehensive, interactive talk in English about the EU (history, members, multilingualism, institutions, key treaties and decision-making) and about being an EU interpreter and extensive work on socio-economic aspects of EU membership such as immigration, the Euro, public opinion. Students and teachers were enthusiastic; teachers felt they could use the information they had learnt to teach the topic in school and requested electronic copies of the PowerPoint presentation used.

During the mock conference which followed, students took on a variety of roles: as delegates giving their opinions, as conference interpreters working from their target languages into English and as listeners relying on their fellow students in order to be able to follow proceedings.



Routes into Language Careers

Routes into Language Careers was a regional careers event organised by the National Network for Interpreting and by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Leeds as part of the activities for Routes into Languages

Yorkshire and The Humber. The event, which took place on 27th February 2008, included material about jobs for linguists and attracted people from local schools and colleges and students from universities across the

region. The fair included representatives from the European Commission Directorate General for Interpretation, GCHQ, KPMG Luxembourg, Twin UK and Top Language Jobs. There were also four panels: two alumni panels discussing careers with languages and careers in interpreting/translation, and two panels of keynote speakers discussing interpreting and working for international organisations. The event was webstreamed, and was viewed by people in the UK, Italy and France.

Leeds Metropolitan University

Yorkshire cricketer Steve Patterson has been learning Spanish at Leeds Met and now plans to play his part in encouraging young people in the region to see the value of learning a language too.

The fast bowler explained: "For me learning a language is both relaxing and exciting. When I'm waiting to bat I can be listening to some Spanish on my i-Pod or reading an article on the internet. I think it's important to take the time to learn languages. Language skills can increase your job prospects and open opportunities for you across the globe. Spanish is spoken in much of Central and Southern America and once my cricket career is over I want to live and work abroad and learning the language is key to making that a reality."

Principal Lecturer and Head of Languages at Leeds Met, Graham Webb added:

"Steve had some one to one tuition here and we sponsored his Mount Everest climb.

"We are delighted that he is planning to visit Sports Specialist College Priesthorpe School in North Leeds, Ermysted's Grammar in Skipton and Skipton Girls' High."

Steve plays for Yorkshire alongside Darren Gough, Michael Vaughan and Matthew Hoggard. As a fast bowler he has to keep his fitness and concentration levels up during the long hard cricket season but during the winter break he just loves to travel. "That's why I'm learning Spanish," he said.



The University of Sheffield

Students from the School of Modern Languages at the University of Sheffield have participated in two Routes into Languages events this Spring. A team of twelve students joined in visits to two local schools, Brinsworth Comprehensive School and Wisewood School where they spent half a day talking with students from Year 9 about their experiences of learning a foreign language, with a particular emphasis on French. The Y9 students were just about to make their final choices for GCSE/NVQ programmes at Key Stage 4, so it was an excellent opportunity to raise their awareness of the importance, and the fun involved in language learning. Altogether over 200 students at the two schools got the opportunity to meet the University of Sheffield students and ask them questions about why and how they had learned a language and why they enjoyed it so much they wanted to continue the study beyond school level.

For the university students themselves, it was a valuable, if slightly alarming experience initially. Many of them came from very good schools where the study of foreign languages was well supported

and it was quite an eye-opener to visit schools where students are far less well motivated in their language learning. It also enabled them to articulate why what they are doing is important in the broader context, and to see the passion of the teachers in the schools and their strategies for motivating their students.

These visits are based on previous activities at these two schools, who enjoy a good relationship with the University, and where activities have resulted in dramatic take-up of languages at GCSE (so much so that at Brinsworth the French exchange visit for GCSE students was heavily over-subscribed). Future events involving the two schools will be planned and will focus on the opportunities that can be opened up by continuing language study alongside other subjects, such as science or IT.

Sheffield Hallam University

One hundred Year 9 pupils have been involved in Spread the Word: Language Works!

Sheffield Hallam works with a number of schools on projects and events aimed at encouraging students to continue to study languages and this Language Awareness Initiative is now an annual event.

Pupils from local and regional schools have helped make this a flagship event in the academic calendar year. The two one day events encourage pupils to take part in fun, educational and interactive teaching sessions which allow them to see first hand the benefits of being able to speak another language. As well as having to organise an overseas business trip, school groups have to deliver presentations in French, German, Spanish or Italian, on the attractions of Sheffield for students, tourists and businesses in front of teachers and other pupils.

But the work does not stop there! Sheffield Hallam is also working with two local schools, Yewlands and Sheffield Park Academy, on two events to increase cultural awareness and encourage the continuation of language study.

Year 9 pupils from Sheffield Park will be 'shadowing' current students on a typical day at university and will be required to write a profile and present their work back in school. The Year 8 group at Yewlands are producing a languages DVD filmed at the school to be showcased later in the year at Sheffield Hallam.

The Comenius Centre for Yorkshire and The Humber

Comenius Yorkshire and The Humber will play an active part in helping teachers create routes into languages. Our main role will be to maintain networking, information sharing and dissemination.



We support teachers delivering the National Languages Strategy as the local representative of CILT, the National Centre for Language Learning.

Acting at the heart of language teaching in this region, we provide and share information about language learning. At our centres in York, Leeds and the East Riding we offer resources, training, advice & support to teachers, language advisers, strategy managers and other key partners. For more information about the wide variety of training we offer, please visit www.yorkcomenius.org.uk

Regional Language Network Yorkshire and The Humber

The Regional Language Network Yorkshire & The Humber (RLNYH) is delighted to be a key partner in the Yorkshire Universities' Consortium Routes Into Languages programme.

We offer ongoing advice, based on experience as an 'expert body' for the development of international communication skills on behalf of Yorkshire Forward.

We also encourage and develop the engagement of internationally active employers who are prepared to work with education partners. Our brief is to bridge the gap between business and education and to inspire and motivate young people to continue to learn languages post-14.

The RLNYH will utilize its successful track record of running the national 'Business Language Champions' project across Yorkshire & The Humber. We are the most successful region in the UK in this respect; we have the greatest number of companies of any region working with schools to realize the following objectives:

- support for teachers to help students to see how vital language skills are for international business
- raising awareness about how home-grown language skills can enhance competitive advantage

The type of support offered through a Business Language Champion partnership varies according to the size and capacity of the business partner. It ranges from providing guest speakers for educational events, to providing authentic documents for a learning environment, to supporting on-going project activity throughout the year.

Through carefully structured Business Language Champion collaboration we have seen an increased take-up in language learning in schools. In some cases student numbers have more than doubled.



Yorkshire Universities

Yorkshire Universities fully supports the Routes into Languages programme, and its aim to encourage the take-up of language courses in the region.

We are delighted by the way that parents, teachers, student ambassadors and potential students are being involved in encouraging young people to consider languages.

We were actively involved in preparing the bid for funding from the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund towards activities in the Yorkshire region. HEFCE has identified languages as a vulnerable subject and raising awareness of the value of languages is a way of combating this.

The successful bid is already making a positive contribution towards encouraging young people to study languages as well as raising awareness of the role of languages in HE as a driver of economic and civic regeneration, in Yorkshire and nationally. We welcome would-be students, parents and teachers and hope they will visit our institutions special events and to see the opportunities for language learning.

Yorkshire Universities' role is to act as a facilitator and enabler on behalf of the 14 Higher Education Institutions in the region, to engage at a regional level with key partners representing a collective policy perspective and coordinating delivery of a range of projects.

We seek to complement and add value to the work of individual Higher Education Institutions.

Recent project activities have focused on widening participation in Higher Education for young people, promoting innovation amongst Yorkshire's business community and encouraging retention of graduate talent in the region through employment and enterprise

York St. John University

In our first year of Routes Into Languages, York St John University is working in a number of ways with local schools. Our aim is to meet their particular requirements as far as possible. For Archbishop Holgate School Year 10, we are running language taster sessions along with a tour of the University and a meeting with student ambassadors. We are also looking at a range of languages which are not usually taught in schools, including Mandarin, Greek and Russian. For Fulford School Year 12 we are offering a workshop about studying languages at university and careers with languages. York College have requested sessions with their A level students around languages at university including British Sign Language. We look forward to expanding these partnerships and developing new ones in the year ahead.

The University of Bradford

Bradford University students are working with language students of St Bede's Catholic Grammar School in Bradford with some exciting and highly educational results.

Carol Wade, head of Spanish at the school said "Natalia Marmól Andrade, who is a

postgraduate in the department of Languages and European Studies came into school and worked with 45 Year 10 students! Our students really appreciate this opportunity.

Natalia ran group workshops where the boys had the opportunity to speak in Spanish using the tenses - preterite/perfect

and near future - which they have learnt this year. They found it gave them a real buzz and all commented that it had been challenging but very exciting to see how much they could understand. They found real delight in being understood and being able to understand a native speaker. We would certainly run such a session again!"

At the same school 13 students are preparing for their Unit 4.2 interpreting exam which forms part of their Spanish A level syllabus. "We are delighted they have been invited into the University to use the Interpreting suite," said Carol.

Natalia commented: "The students were very nervous at the beginning, but after some warm-up language exercises, they soon started to relax and enjoy themselves. Using the booths at the University gives them a taste of what it's like to be a real conference interpreter so it can be a really inspiring for anyone thinking about a career as a professional linguist".

Natalia and fellow postgraduate student, Martin Pickles, are leading the sessions in the Interpreting Suite for which students from St Bede's relinquish their sports afternoon. "We have two separate sessions and each one will last 45 minutes.

It greatly supports their confidence and speed at consecutive interpreting," said Carol. "I cannot thank Natalia, Martin and Anne White, Head of Languages and European Studies, University of Bradford enough!"

Martin and Natalia both plan to follow careers in interpreting and recently acted as interpreters for the Nobel peace prize winner, Rigoberta Menchú, when she was guest of honour at the University of Bradford's annual PeaceJam event.



Photo courtesy of Pyotr Kornakov

Forthcoming events

Dissemination Event

2nd July, 2008

11.00am – 13.30

Yorkshire Rail Academy,
National Railway Museum, York
Introduction to Routes into Languages,
aimed at all those interested in
promoting languages.

Official Launch of Routes into Languages, Yorkshire and The Humber Consortium

19th September, 2008

For more information visit

www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/yorkshire

National Networks

National Network for Interpreting

www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk

National Network for Translation

www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/translation

Research Projects

www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/research

Keep in touch

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The University of Huddersfield

Huddersfield University is planning to produce a series of student profiles, using students who are currently undergraduates and, if feasible, alumni members as the subjects.

The profiles will be both audio visual recordings and written testimonies in which people give an account of their language learning experiences and motivations.

"We intend using the profiles on the website, at open days, visits to schools/colleges and other recruitment events," said Dr Malcolm Pollard, Modern Languages Co-ordinator.

"We also intend to produce leaflets that target young learners of languages and set the general reasons for language learning in a local context."

The University's student ambassadors scheme in the area of languages is being developed. There is a training programme in place and students with good communication skills and lots of enthusiasm are being invited to participate in the next round for 08-09.

"There are also plans to launch a competition for school pupils in 08-09 but that is in the discussion stage at present," said Dr Pollard.

The Open University

As part of the Routes into Languages initiative, the OU cordially invites head of modern languages from Yorkshire Schools to an Open Day at the OU regional centre in Leeds on Thursday July 10th from 10am - 3pm.

Together we would like to explore ways in which we might support your students.

The programme includes:

- a brief introduction to the project and a description of what the University can offer
- a chance for you to respond and make suggestions
- a hands-on opportunity in the IT suite to try "Lyceum", the OU's synchronous conference system, enabling participants to "meet" online, speak and engage in a range of activities.

A team of Associate Lecturers in French, German, Spanish and Italian will guide you through the system.

Lunch will be served and there will be an opportunity to network and ask questions.

The University of York

York University is reaching out to students at local schools to help them develop routes into modern languages. In March, for example, a group of student language ambassadors (final year students from French, German and Linguistics degree courses) visited Fulford School, York to speak to Year 9s about their experience of language learning, living/studying abroad and plans for future careers involving languages.

The University is currently planning to create a Languages Club with Fulford School, aimed at a wide range of ages and designed to raise pupils' interest in studying languages. The format is intended to be a 30-minute session with pupils on a weekly basis. This session will involve some language tutors/students and will cover both languages taught at school level as well as less taught languages such as Mandarin Chinese, Japanese and Arabic. The development will get underway after the main examination period, when students and staff have more time to devote to it.

The University hopes to extend these activities to other schools in York and to invite pupils to campus-based activities to celebrate languages and culture. University students and tutors will be involved and we plan to begin with languages like Mandarin, Chinese and Japanese.