

Success and a new challenge

Over the last three years, the Routes programme has mounted a massive assault on the indifference which seems to surround modern foreign language education in England's educational system. Routes represents an astonishing collaborative effort: 76 universities based in 9 Consortia and 2 Networks, with the Consortia covering the English regions and the Networks for Translation and Interpreting working nationally. With further funding from HEFCE and BIS, the successful delivery of the whole programme will continue until Easter 2011.

As of the end of July 2009, the 9 Consortia had reached 65,400 school students through 691 events and involved 1,023 student ambassadors. The 2 Networks had reached 7000 participants through 150 events. The range of activities is vast, adapted to the needs of each region by the Consortia and addressing national issues in Translation and Interpreting for the Networks. The role of student ambassadors has been critical and they meet with universal acclaim wherever they go. Linkage of languages with media and sporting activities has been very successful. Mentoring of students in schools has been widespread. Many employers have been supportive in taking out the message of how important languages are to their industries, especially at this time when exports are key to future prosperity.

Michael Worton in his 2009 report recommended that the Routes programme should be further funded. Baroness Coussins in the Times of May 18th has emphasised the need to continue

to support languages.

However, the last government allowed the legislation which would have made languages obligatory in primary schools to fall in the last days of Parliament and the coalition government has not included legislation relating to languages in its proposals. The new challenge is to convince those now in power to make the changes necessary to restore languages to the position they should hold in the education system. All those involved in Routes have a vital role to play in doing so.

Professor Richard Towell

Chair of the Steering Group for Routes into Languages



Routes into Languages South Student Ambassadors have fun with a Score in French day

myth busting

myth 13:

Everyone speaks English

43% of web users do not speak English at all.

Source: Global Reach

myth 14:

English is the favoured language for business

While the majority of the Internet's content is English, English is not the preferred language for the majority of Internet users.

Source: www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk

Continuing on from our last newsletters...

myth 15:

English is a global language

Over 75% of UK export trade in 2006 was with countries where English is not spoken as a first language.

Source: CBI

National activities: working together to enthuse language learners

Routes into Languages receives further funding

We are delighted to announce that Routes into Languages has received further funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to enable all 9 Regional Consortia in England and both National Networks to continue working until 31 March 2011. Our sincere thanks to everyone involved in Routes into Languages for their commitment and hard work. If you would like to know how to get involved in the Routes into Languages regional

and network activities please contact your relevant Regional Consortia at:

www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/consortia

National Networks:

National Network for Translation

www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/translation

National Network for Interpreting

www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/interpreting

Spotlight on the West Midlands

Following the success of our cross consortium Sixth Form conference last June, the West Midlands developed several new initiatives for 2009-2010 to support Sixth Formers and encourage them to continue with language learning after school or college.

Feedback from the conference showed that, in general, students were not aware of the wide range of options available if they wanted to keep up with their languages at university. The reality is that many Higher Education Institutions now offer a wide range of language learning opportunities, ranging from individual modules as part of other subject awards and short courses to full degrees and extra-curricular opportunities to ensure we do not lose potential language undergraduates; it is essential that they are aware of the opportunities available to them in HE.

We thought carefully about how to fill this information gap before Routes West Midlands partner, Language Networks for Excellence got to work on designing a guide for students and their parents. The aim of the guide is to increase awareness of the opportunities for continuing with languages at university and explain the importance of developing language skills. The guide also contains case studies of undergraduates who have studied languages at university in a range of different, and often less traditional, patterns and programmes.

Also brand new for this academic year was our Language Shadow Scheme. The scheme offers Sixth Formers across the region the opportunity to spend a day shadowing a current language undergraduate in one of our 6 Routes into Languages partner institutes. Participants attended lectures, were given a tour of the campus and a free lunch in the student café, not to mention the chance to grill their undergraduate on what life as a language student at university is really like. One student who took part this year said that the experience had "totally sold languages" to her. The scheme was also extended to staff to help understanding and better transition between A-Level and university study for students and staff in both sectors, all of whom can benefit from the discussions, the links and the up-to-date understanding of standards, practices and issues.

To find out more about Routes in the West Midlands and to get a copy of our "Languages in HE" guide, please contact Project Manager Kat Stevenson at k.e.stevenson@aston.ac.uk



Spotlight on the South

The Routes into Languages team in the South has been working hard to offer students a variety of innovative and exciting activities to inspire continued language study. These have ranged from undergraduate student ambassadors visiting schools to talk about the benefits and importance of studying languages to larger-scale events combining languages and other subjects such as media, sport and business. The University of Brighton, along with the University of Winchester; Canterbury Christ Church University and Southampton Solent University, ran a number of projects on the theme of Languages on Film, encouraging students to write, perform and produce short films in a foreign language. Not only did this give them the chance to practise their language skills and learn new vocabulary, but it also provided an opportunity to work in a university environment and see how languages can be used outside the classroom. This project has since been short listed for a European Award for Languages.

The University of Southampton continued the theme of taking languages out of the classroom by hosting a large inter-school Score in French! football tournament. This project provided all schools involved with approximately 30 hours of football-themed French teaching materials (intended for use with years 8 and 9) which were used either in class or in after-school clubs as preparation for the tournament. The main aim of the tournament was to encourage pupils to use the French they had learned so as not to speak in English whilst on the pitch, or else they would face being sent off! Other language activities related to this event included: writing and performing a school song; performing a cheerleading routine; designing a team kit; taking part in a football quiz. As a result of the popularity and success of this event, the materials have since been translated into Spanish

and it is hoped they will be available in more languages soon.

Moving from football fields to workplaces, the Universities of Reading, Surrey, Portsmouth and Oxford Brookes have all been involved in hosting World of Work (WoW!) events to highlight the value, importance and necessity of language skills at work. Students were able to hear representatives from local businesses such as Microsoft and BBC Monitoring speak about how languages are used in their place of work. Students then went on to either participate in a business-related exercise such as designing promotional materials in the target language for a new company or take part in a taster session in a language they had not studied before.

Many other events and activities have been launched, such as a 6th form languages mentoring scheme offered by Royal Holloway, University of London and e-mentoring projects co-ordinated by the Universities of Southampton and Portsmouth. The e-mentoring project proved extremely popular and subsequently won a European Award for Languages last year. A very popular activity available across the region is The Gold Award for Languages, which encourages students to complete a work experience challenge, a community challenge and a personal challenge. Currently managed by colleagues at the University of Southampton and Canterbury Christ Church University, the award has been completed by a number of students who will soon be awarded their certificates at upcoming presentation ceremonies.

To find out more about the activities on offer in the South please contact Project Co-ordinator Clare Forder at c.l.forder@brighton.ac.uk



Students operating the camera, sound and lights at the Languages on Film day held at the University of Brighton



Forthcoming events

NVQ Languages Event

20 July 2010

CILT, London

This one day course aimed at Heads of Languages, Languages Teachers in primary or secondary schools, ASTs, Languages Advisers and LA 14-19 Advisers, aims to give the latest information on NVQ Languages for those already teaching the course or considering introducing it.

www.cilt.org.uk/events/product.aspx?id=53

Languages for the 21st century: training, impact and influence

1-2 September 2010

University of Sheffield

The conference aims to show-case new training provision, techniques, technologies, methodologies and research in language teaching, with an emphasis on the advanced or research-focussed learner.

www.llas.ac.uk/events/6142

The Languages Show

15-17 October 2010

Earl's Court, London

This three day exhibition and seminar programme offers a range of opportunities for visitors. Routes will be exhibiting, visit us on stand 515.

www.thelanguagesshow.co.uk

Keep in touch

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Building on strong foundations

As we approach the end of the initial 3 year programme of work, the National Network for Interpreting and the National Network for Translation can celebrate the news that they have been granted an extension to continue until March 2011, along with the Regional Consortia.

While it's an obvious benefit that the Networks can run more events and develop further resources to raise awareness of the opportunities for careers in translation and interpreting, the extension will enable them to offer added value through the continued coordination of their activities with the nine Regional Consortia.

The additional eight months will allow the Networks to feed into careers information, advice and guidance at a critical time for options and university applications, giving them the potential to influence yet another year group of current or future language learners.

The timing couldn't be better for the National Network for Interpreting and the National Network for Translation. With a competition for English mother tongue translators at the European Commission due to go live in June, the job market is buoyant for graduate linguists with an interest in the profession. In times of recession, businesses tend to seek new markets and the global recession and a relatively weak pound mean that export markets are ripe for us to exploit. UKPLC needs translators and interpreters to facilitate these export discussions and subsequent contracts.

All the Network partners already work very closely with employers to ensure their high-quality courses are mapped to the skills and knowledge needed to become work-ready translators and interpreters but the coming months will present an additional opportunity to review their employer engagement activity and ensure that advice on the jobs market, and the skills and knowledge required to work in the translation and interpreting professions, is fully up-to-date. It will also give the Network partners and the Routes Programme team some time to think about the next steps for the Networks and what the future post-March 2011 might hold.

Anne Marie Graham

CILT, the National Centre for Languages

Success at the European Award for Languages 2010

We are thrilled to announce that the Routes North West team have received a European Award for Languages for the Teacher Training strand of the COLT project. The team are delighted to have received the award which provides external ratification of the excellent work done by the COLT team.

Congratulations also to the Routes South team who were highly commended for their event, Languages on Film. School pupils in the South received a taste of the movie business working with undergraduates from the University of Brighton to produce creative film clips in German, French and Spanish demonstrating how languages can be embedded into other areas of the curriculum.

Huge congratulations to both teams for the recognition given to their projects.



Programme Manager, Heather McGuinness and NW Director Sharon Handley with members from the NW team