

Making our mark – celebrating the success of the first year

Over 10,000 young people took part in events organised by The Routes into Languages Consortium for Yorkshire and the Humber this year, far exceeding the 7,000 suggested in the original bid.

In the first year of the Consortium, 40 schools have already been involved with an exciting portfolio of activities delivered throughout the year aimed at balancing the requests and needs of schools at a particular point of the learning cycle, and introducing some new, innovative ways to experience language learning. This can be something as obvious, but previously under developed, as combining language study with other specialist subjects or making school revision sessions particularly effective with student ambassadors on hand. We have also helped with recording of GCSE orals on MP3 players and set up online discussion (Online Tandem) between a school student and a university student whose first language is the one the school student would like to improve.

The Consortium partners have invested time and resources in training student ambassadors and they have then gone into schools and colleges to work with targeted year groups, classes or small groups to both



It is clear that student ambassadors have a major role to play – young people who are still at school like to meet them and teachers have told us about the subsequent buzz and excitement generated after a visit, which sustained interest and motivation in the subject.

encourage and support their language learning and provide positive role models. In other cases, they were shadowed at university for 'a whole day in the life of a university language student'. The range of students selected played a major part in the success of this. We did not use only native speakers, or students who are taking languages as a degree. We carefully balanced gender (as much as possible we tried to have male and female role models), disciplines (students with management, law, politics, engineering, sports science etc and one or two languages) and experiences (students in their second or final year; mature students who had taken a year out prior to university; part-time students who already use their languages as they study for their degree).

We are investing resources in Year 2 to create an **online collection of stories, and perspectives from student ambassadors** which all partners can use. Parents, teachers and

pupils can also download these materials from our Routes Interactive Map and access them in different formats such as PowerPoint presentations and DVDs. The latter will contribute to the sustainability element of the project beyond 2011.

Cross curricular activities are vital and we have concentrated on: Hospitality; Events Management and Business Studies; Performing Arts (Drama, New Media and Music); Sports.

In all these areas, we ran successful events which are likely to be repeated and replicated across the region. **The Routes Launch at The Deep** showed how effective this could be in the Performing Arts. Students from Longcroft School, Beverley, gave a performance which linked languages with drama. Their singing in French, German and Spanish was enjoyed by over 220 guests.

Sports were an underlying feature of activities from Leeds Metropolitan as well as other Consortium partners who have made links with local football teams. The Premier League Team, Hull City, were a key sponsor of the September Consortium launch. An Olympics Week run by Kelvin Hall (Hull) was a successful activity which saw the whole school involved plus 10 university students and 6 language tutors.

Use of non-native-speaking sports celebrities, and clips from existing comedies and films involving foreign language scenarios as a key to 'get by' communications, have also proven successful. Languages enrich and enhance other subject areas, they play a major role in making a young person's experience of the world enjoyable, and they enhance the potential for fulfilling employment. We have worked hard to show students how relevant languages are in other subjects and in the next year we are planning to do even more. The Consortium is planning an Active Languages event in July in collaboration with the Youth Sport Trust. Schools will bid for a sum of Routes funding to develop activities around languages and sport. Outcomes will be available on our website and showcased at an event in the autumn of 2009.

Event Management was the focus of EuroFest's trade fair simulation theme in which YR10 students had to create and sell a new product. Students and staff from the Consortium, business people and local authority officers were invited to attend the fair and purchase the product. A panel of judges drawn from the invitees judged the performances and assigned a score. Prizes were awarded at the end of the Fair, prior to lunch. The event was co-ordinated by the University of Hull in partnership with Selby College, the RLNYH and North Yorkshire EBP, and will take place again in June. EuroFest will be expanded this year and a learning package will be developed to allow for transferability of this activity across the region and beyond.

The presence of the RLNYH as a major partner allowed us to canvass the support of 20 Business Language Champions



who were invited to take part in many of the Why Study Languages/ Languages at work events. Having identified, and worked with these Language Champions, we shall now launch a new scheme 'adopt a school' / 'adopt a business', which will allow specific schools to call on the experience and expertise of a particular Business Champion and map how languages are used in that business. Given that the number of schools has already doubled, we shall endeavour to increase the number of companies prepared to join the scheme.

The stories gathered by students and business people will form part of downloadable clips and a PowerPoint presentation which teachers can use in motivational talks and option evenings with parents, and can access when they cannot benefit from the actual presence of a business in school.

In July we organised **an event for teachers**. RLNYH, Comenius and the consortium lead institutions set the agenda for the event and focused on three strands: 1. Teachers' needs; 2. Employability and the Curriculum; 3. Inspiring Learners: what we can do together. This is to become a yearly event. In Year 2 this will focus on languages and other specialisms and on the outcomes from our **Yr 1 Competition 'The World in Your Region'**.

The work on **the Interactive Map and the Route Planner** will provide the focus of the next two years of the project. The latter will contribute to giving a Regional brand to the project. The outcome of the regional competition (**The World in Your Region**) will allow us to gather valuable data on languages in the region and attitudes towards different cultures. Over the next two years, we intend to build on the successes of the first year of the project and inspire young people to continue with their language learning.

This newsletter gives you a flavour of all the exciting activities which universities and schools in the region are undertaking. Enjoy the reading!

The University of Hull

Hull University turned the world around in December 2008, crossing cultures and slipping from one language into another in the process; the event was organised by Excellence Hub in conjunction with Routes into Languages. There were two distinct aims for the event - to provide revision sessions for GCSE and A level pupils in French, German and Spanish and also to offer language taster sessions in Russian, Chinese and Italian.

Over 40 students were welcomed to the University by Dr. Marina Mozzon-McPherson. This was followed by a lecture from Dr Michael Lumsden on "No Offence: Talk across Boundaries." This lecture opened up a variety of topics for discussion including issues like etiquette and protocol, linguistic and cultural boundaries and boundaries of social distance and power. Many students commented that it helped their understanding on the use of language and communication, which is not something they'd thought about before and how interesting and useful it was to gain more insight into such issues.

In the language sessions which followed, students looked at chivalry and values in French, considering these themes in Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings. Finally discussion turned to "The perfect partner." German language sessions included "Das sinkende Schiff," looking at descriptions and guessing who was being described, including some celebrities. In the Spanish session - the subject under discussion was El Tiempo Libre when the students discussed free time activities/hobbies, travel, sports, likes and dislikes.

Routes into Languages: Languages Matter, Languages Pay was the subject for the concluding talk by Dr Mozzon-McPherson in the afternoon. "Why studying languages matters", "How languages give anyone a competitive edge" and "How young Brits have to work to keep up with their European peers who generally speak two or more languages" – were covered and resulted in some thoughtful discussion, with many student commenting how useful it was to discover what careers a language degree could lead to. The lecture was followed by a lively, interactive quiz, before student went off to taster sessions in Russian, Chinese and Italian which proved very popular. The day ended with a campus tour for parents and a brief talk about Routes into Languages.

Student comments included: "It's taught me the basics of a new language and changed my ideas about the importance of languages"; "I've learnt a lot of new things... and the day has been unlike anything I've done before. I found the course challenging as well as interesting;" "It challenged me to use my knowledge...I was surprised by my own capabilities. I learnt something of the science of linguistics and understood more

about language and business. It challenged me as it got me out of my comfort zone."

More events designed to lift as many young people as possible out of their comfort zone and into the global world of modern languages took place at the end of March and beginning of April.

Online Tandem Learning Scheme

The Routes into Languages programme at Hull is fostering an on-line personal tutoring scheme.

The Online Tandem Learning Scheme is a reciprocal language exchange between two native speakers who want to learn more about each other's language and culture. Supported by student ambassadors studying at the university, they correspond with pupils studying beyond GCSE in schools which have registered with the scheme. Since November '08, the scheme has managed to attract over 70 pupils in more than 10 schools.

This builds on the success of European Award for Languages 2007 (Hull University was the winner for its innovative online tandem scheme), and extends beyond the original Gifted and Talented initiative which began in 2002.

The online relationship is mutually beneficial in that pupils get to practise their language skills, and students have contact with British native speakers, and consequently both get to learn more about each other's language and culture. Pupils manage to improve their fluency and feel more confident, as well as being able to find out about life at university from a student's perspective.

Students in schools/colleges are offered the opportunity to take part in a five-week online tandem in French, German, Italian or Spanish. The scheme runs online using the University of Hull's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Ebridge, (a safe, password protected environment).

The scheme is easily accessed and provides the language students with a great opportunity to take more responsibility for their own learning in a relaxed, friendly environment. Topics that can be covered include: getting to know each other; current affairs; places to see; people to know; cultural differences. Although English can be used, the majority of communication has been in a foreign language.

Feedback from pupils is very enthusiastic. For example, Charlotte, a 16 year old commented: "The scheme has been really beneficial for me and it made learning fun! I actually wanted to speak German! It has widened my vocabulary because I looked up words I didn't know but I also picked up words. It also just generally improved my skills because I got practice at writing German and looking at the grammar points."

To take part in the online Tandem Scheme, contact d.esnault@hull.ac.uk

The University of Leeds

Leeds University hosted a day to raise awareness of the range of varied and exciting career opportunities open to linguists and to inspire young people to continue studying languages at all levels.



Held on February 24th, this was the second major National Network for Interpreting (NNI) and Leeds Routes into Languages collaborative event. It was organised in conjunction with the University of Leeds Careers Centre.

The organisers said they were delighted to welcome 40 Year 11-13 pupils from Allerton Grange, Benton Park, Pontefract New College, and St Bede's. They took part in an interpreting taster run by Catriona MacLeod on behalf of the NNI. This gave the pupils the opportunity to work in different languages in the purpose built interpreting booths at the University. They met current University of Leeds language students and got a 'students' eye' view of life as a Language undergraduate.

Judging by the comments, the pupils enjoyed this opportunity. Comments included: "More people should try interpreting because it's great" and "Talking to the student guides was very informative."

After lunch pupils joined undergraduates and went to meet a number of interesting employers at the Careers Fair. These included the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, GCHQ, the Directorates General for Interpreting and Translation (European Commission) and the World Meteorological Organisation among others. The Regional Language Network Yorkshire and the Humber stand attracted much attention from students too. The careers fair was followed by a discussion panel on careers for people with language skills and gave those attending the chance to hear from employers and alumni of different universities who now work for national and international organisations, businesses and NGOs.

It is estimated that the event was attended by about 400 Leeds and regional university students. The event was streamed live on the NNI website and was watched by 124 people in Cyprus, France, and Germany and around the UK (in Cambridge, Leeds, Leicester, Manchester, Sheffield, Oxford and York).

Leeds Metropolitan University

Leeds Met is delighted to be working with Benton Park School, Rawdon and David Young Community Academy, Seacroft, to discover new routes into language.

Chinese New Year Celebrations on January 29th, created a splendid opportunity to help students at these schools become more aware of the significance of the Chinese community. To see in the Year of the Ox with us, over 64 pupils attended workshops on language, taiji, calligraphy and paper-cutting. Our Leslie Silver International Faculty was the venue for taster sessions in these creative arts and we also organised a Chinese language session. To finish off the day everyone was given an impressive martial arts demonstration in T'ai Chi and wushu.

Pupils plus teachers were given the chance to learn some martial art moves, how to say all the colours in Chinese and they also created paper Chinese character symbols of the annual seasons.

Some of the pupils already learn Chinese at their school and were keen to use their language skills, as well as find out more about Chinese culture and share in celebrating the Chinese New Year.

One pupil from Benton Park High School summed up the day, "I've really enjoyed this afternoon at Leeds Met. I've learnt lots of new stuff and how to say 'Happy Birthday' in Chinese. It's been a really fun day." A teacher from Benton Park School added: "All of our students really enjoyed themselves. Student Ambassadors were extremely helpful and helped our students get the most out of this occasion."

Regional Language Network, Yorkshire and the Humber

The Regional Language Network Yorkshire & Humber (RLN YH) has been working across the region to show students at school how languages can change the world and galvanise their future in conjunction with its Business Language Champions (BLC).

In January, China Enterprise Day was held at Queensbury School, supported by China Britain Business Council (BLC) in collaboration with Young Enterprise. Students were introduced to Chinese language and culture by local Chinese university students. The school students then responded to a business challenge from CBBC and came up with a range of exciting shoe designs to market to China, which were put to a panel of judges from CBBC, RLN YH and a local Chinese business representative. The winning teams were awarded certificates and all teams took away prize chocolates for their effort and application.

A 'Languages for work and film' day was held at the Showroom Cinema (BLC), Sheffield in February. Schools from across the region attended this inspiring day, which included demonstrations of screen subtitling from the University of Sheffield and business briefings by three additional Business Language Champions - Leadergen, Careers Europe and Gripple.

Students then worked in groups to come up with ideas for making a two minute foreign language film, samples of which were pitched to the BLC 'dragon's film den' for a chance to be awarded £3M to make their film. Despite the fictional financial award, the ideas created were extremely creative, exciting and entertaining. After lunch, students enjoyed a special screening in one of the Showroom cinemas of 'Comme une image' ('Look At Me').

Students were also encouraged to follow up on the event by further developing their ideas for a two minute foreign language film and submitting it to the Showroom Cinema for the Showcomotion Festival for Young People International Film Awards June 2009.

The RLNYH is currently working with the International Business Communications project (ex 'VIPs' - www.sheffieldvips.com/) to consider recruiting further Business Language Champions from the project's bank of employer support. The Business Language Champions project links employers and school or colleges so that the students have a chance to see first- hand how modern languages benefit industry.

Sheffield Hallam University

Schools Sponsorship Initiative

Sheffield Hallam University is delighted to launch the Schools Sponsorship Initiative, which is providing funding to the sum of £1000 to selected schools to take Y9 and Y10 pupils on school trips abroad with three day language study trips to Paris, Berlin and Barcelona already in the pipeline.

So far, The Kingstone School (Barnsley), Sheffield Park Academy and Notre Dame High School in Sheffield, have signed up and it was hoped that two additional schools currently engaged in language outreach activity with Sheffield Hallam would join the Initiative.

The funding can be allocated to subsidise existing trips or to establish new ones. Preparation began in February for trips to take place in the summer term this year. The funding is designed to reduce the costs for pupils and parents, enabling more pupils to take part.

Schools were presented with the cheques and travel guides in a school assembly in March/April. Schools which take part in the scheme have to submit a photo that best captures an experience/activity of the visit. The winning photo will be turned in to a poster and presented to the winning group/individual.

Language Days

Sheffield Hallam University delivered its 4th annual Language Days for Y9 pupils from 12 local schools on consecutive Fridays in January. Schools participating included; Aston Comprehensive, Sheffield Park Academy, Abbeydale Grange, The Kingstone

School, Matthew Humberstone, King Edward VII, High Storrs, Newfield, Saint Pius and Silverdale. In total 127 pupils and 12 teachers participated in the events, taking part in language sessions in Spanish, French or German.

Pupils took



part in a word origins quiz and had the opportunity to speak to current language students. They went on to plan a business/family trip abroad (researching flights and hotels and finding out cultural information about the particular city) and delivered group presentations in their chosen language. One teacher commented: "This was a wonderful opportunity for students to stretch themselves linguistically and to present in front of a large audience of teachers and pupils from other schools. It was a very useful experience."

York St John University

With the help of local schools, York St John University (YSJU) has been able to show young people what studying a modern language as an undergraduate would be like, practically demonstrating routes into languages. We have also been delighted to receive numerous invitations to visit schools and groups to talk about what studying modern languages entails and why it is so vital today.



The transition from school to university can appear daunting and the more we can do to make this move easier, the better. Our student ambassadors have been invaluable in helping with this work and we have also organised taster sessions in new languages – Japanese and Mandarin being particularly popular.

There are clear signs that Routes into Languages Yorkshire and Humber is having an impact around the region. For example, we were asked to send a Japanese tutor to visit a group in Hornsea to talk about her translation and interpreting services. This was part of an Enterprise and Languages/Languages at work project

and we were delighted to help. Following a KS3 teachers' event at YSJU, we were also invited to Risedale School in Catterick to give a talk about Why Study Languages. We also took part in a Languages Promotion event at Fulford School; this was preparation for students who would soon be making their GCSE choices. The school had set up Thinking Skills activities, based on languages and these were extremely effective in demonstrating the variety of skills which language learning create and develop. Former students who had gone on to study modern languages came back for this event and some who wished they had taken the opportunity to study modern languages at school. One former student said that sadly she was now missing out at Masters Level in Environmental science, as she was not eligible to take part in international placements abroad.

We shall continue promoting languages through the consortium network.

The Open University

Modern language students from Minsthorpe Community College, near Pontefract have had the chance to see modern languages at work. When they visited Ancon Building Products in Sheffield recently, they saw first-hand how language skills can help generate new orders and protect employment.

The trip was organised by the Open University as part of the Routes into Languages project, which encourages language learning beyond secondary education.

Associate lecturer from the Open University Margaret Senior, is currently working with GCSE French and German students at Minsthorpe Community College on behalf of the project, and together with Class Teacher Jennifer Read and Staff Tutor for Languages for the OU in Yorkshire, Helga Adams, they were amongst the staff who accompanied the 14 Year 11 students who take French GCSE this year.

Ancon is well placed to demonstrate the value of languages in the workplace. The company manufactures a wide range of steel products for masonry and concrete construction which it exports worldwide. It has distributors throughout Europe and sales offices in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

Mr Hervé Poveda, Manager of Ancon's UK-based Products for Structural Concrete sales division, gave a presentation in French which students interpreted into English. They were encouraged to introduce themselves and ask questions in French to Mr Poveda and to three British employees who work in the company and use European languages as part of their everyday work. The students also completed various activities which included following a French product enquiry through to the final invoice.



Mr Poveda said, "In the business world, language barriers can limit sales growth. It is essential that Ancon is able to communicate, from the UK, with its colleagues and customers overseas. The foreign language skills of our staff are invaluable and our export sales continue to grow year-on-year."

Margaret Senior, speaking on behalf of the Open University

and the Routes into Languages project, commented: "Ancon was able to show the relevance of language learning to the world-of-work, something which is difficult to achieve from the classroom. The students thoroughly enjoyed their time at the business and embraced the opportunity to practise and develop their French language skills."

The aim of this visit was to show students how modern languages can be used in industry and provide them with an opportunity to practise and extend their French languages skills in a business environment. Judging by the student comments afterwards, the objectives were more than achieved. Comments included: "It has made me more aware of how languages are used in industry;" "It has shown me how useful languages are in the workplace;" "It has made me want to study languages after high school" and "I enjoyed the chance to practise my spoken French in a situation I could not have had otherwise."

The OU hopes to run the project again next year.

The University of York

University students have a major part to play in encouraging students who are still at school, to weigh up their educational options. York University was delighted when five Language Student Ambassadors agreed to visit Fulford School in February to talk to 30 Year 9 pupils about the value of studying languages at GCSE and beyond. The university students came from a variety of degree programmes (Language and Linguistics with French and German; History with French; History with Spanish) and most had completed a year abroad as a part of their course. They spoke to the pupils at Fulford about their decision to study languages, their experience of their course and time spent abroad, and of how languages were an important part of their career plans. The school reported that the visit was very successful and that it was excellent for the pupils to have contact with young people who were enthusiastic and excited about language learning.

Later that month, three final year German students from the department of Language and Linguistics also visited Fulford School to talk to 30 pupils currently studying German who were in the process of making A-Level choices. The aim was to encourage these pupils to continue to take German at A-Level and beyond, and to see how German could be a key part of their future studies and career. After the visit, the school reported that there was a marked increase in interest in German, with a number of pupils asking further questions and wishing to know more about taking German further.

From 10 March, York University ran a lunchtime languages club at Fulford School in which two groups of pupils met to study Arabic for three weeks, followed by three weeks of Chinese.

The University of Bradford

Bradford University's Language Centre is working with St Bede's School in Bradford to build up interest in modern languages. One of the highlights was a "Japanese Day" in early February. This was the work of principal tutor, Saeko Woodhead, with the help of students Akie Umeno, Junko Sato and Chikako Uda. It was followed by a "Chinese day" organised by principal tutor Wanyu Zheng assisted by Chen Zhang and Fei Fei Ma.

It is very clear that students enjoy opportunities like this. "I thought the trip was great fun and would love to do it again" said one. Dr Tim Green, Head of the University Language Centre at Bradford University's School of Lifelong Education and Development said: "The students learnt how to write and say their names in both languages. They were very enthusiastic and went on to learn how to exchange basic greetings. We enjoyed putting on these days and the students got a lot of out them."

Both days were attended by 12 Year 7 pupils who learnt a little about the culture of these countries and had a chance to sample Japanese and Chinese food and drink.

Two Bradford University representatives, Bernie Arauz and Dr Maria Sanchez, have also been visiting St Bede's on a weekly basis for Spanish conversation sessions. "The students find the conversation classes relevant and interesting and they are really motivated by all the activities" said Bernie. "They are so enthusiastic ... they just want to talk and talk and talk!" said Maria.

Bradford University's Language Centre also ran "Spanish Days" for Year 11 pupils on the 4th and 11th March.

The University of Huddersfield

Thanks to the Modern Languages Centre at Huddersfield University, students at Crossley Heath School, Halifax, enjoyed an exciting assembly about the opportunities that studying modern languages can offer people in life - both personally and professionally.

Dr Malcolm Pollard, Modern Languages Co-ordinator of the Modern Languages Centre, University of Huddersfield, was talking to students at the school about the ways in which languages can be life enhancing. He included in his talk information about the jobs market and how language skills enhance choice. Malcolm also talked about the global trend in employment. He explained that modern languages can also enhance intellectual and cultural experience as well as provide much richer experiences when travelling.

Final year student Katherine Bulman, who is taking a BA Hons International Business (including advanced post-A level study of French) also talked to the students who are considering their GCSE options. Katherine described some of her own language learning experiences and talked about the year she spent in

Forthcoming events

West Yorkshire Professional Teacher Placement Day, in conjunction with RLN YH

4th June,
Novotel Leeds

Eurofest

25th June
Selby College

Active Languages

8th July
University of Leeds

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

Online:

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Join our mailing list:

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France as part of her degree. Katherine said: "I felt visiting the school was an excellent idea and jumped at the chance to encourage school children to study languages. I know from my personal experiences how valuable a second language is and would recommend it to anyone. It was so nice to see a school so enthusiastic about languages and the facilities available to the children were fantastic. There was a really good response from the pupils in the assembly about studying languages further and I believe this has come from the school's enthusiasm for languages."

The Year 8 students are already studying French, German and Spanish.

Crossley Heath encourages students to make language choices a year early.

Links into Languages



Links into Languages is a consortium of LLAS, SSAT and ALL, that has been commissioned by the

Department of Children, Schools and Families to set up a network of Regional Support Centres for languages across the English regions. It will build on the infrastructure of cooperation established by *Routes*. Led by the Subject Centre (LLAS) at Southampton, its aim is to build a physical and online learning community of language teachers, educators and all those working in the world of languages across primary, secondary and further education institutions. It will develop increased access to support services, including information, advice, networking, project funding and professional development opportunities.

Working in partnership with other providers, including CILT, the National Centre for Languages and all the major stakeholders, Links will seek to ensure that those working in the field of languages have clear information, advice and guidance about all the support services available.

Links Regional Centres will be a nationally co-ordinated network of support centres based in universities in each of the nine English regions. Each Links Centre will offer a training and drop-in centre for meetings, networking and access to resources, and will seek to bring together all those working with languages in the region. In each region, a network of *Links Local Centres* will provide local access to the Links Professional Development programmes, a venue for meetings, information-sharing and networking.

Links Professional Development will offer a high quality, coherent and accessible professional development programme for all the people who work in the world of languages. Courses will be based on a common core designed to address shared national priorities, and regional programmes tailored to meet regional and local needs. They will be delivered by a network of the most experienced trainers in the field.

The *Linkedup award* scheme will offer funding opportunities for networks and development projects carried out by the teaching community. It will fund more than 100 projects that address issues of concern to teachers.

Michael Kelly

The University of Hull is the regional centre for Links in Yorkshire and the Humber. For further information, please contact Dr Marina Mozzon-McPherson at the University of Hull, linksyorkshireandthehumber@hull.ac.uk