

Chairman's Report

Duncan Byrne

Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

More experienced colleagues than I tell me that secondary teachers have been dealing with constant change ever since GCSE was introduced during the eighties, but the review of A Level and GCSE in quick succession will make the next 3 or 4 years particularly hectic. Decisions over the choice of new specification are being made and I am aware of widespread dissatisfaction about the new A2 modules due to what is seen as dilution of the intellectual element represented by the study of literature. Two colleagues I met recently praised the merits of WJEC and it's a pity that the specification hasn't had a broader airing considering the attractive literature and film options at A2. In addition, there are indications that Pre-U is not likely to have the clientèle base that might have been anticipated. The grammar test and English-language literature essay seem to appeal to many who prioritise grammatical rigour and who recall the complexity of essay that the best A Level students could produce before target language cultural essays. However, personally I feel that, unless the maintained sector buys into Pre-

U, the independent sector risks marginalising itself by adopting what will be seen as an elitist examination. There is already so much media spin against our schools that it is contrary to our best interests to abandon A Level in what will be seen as arrogance by our critics.

The QCA consultation over GCSE subject criteria for new specifications to be taught from September 2009 took place during the Autumn. Geoff Plow, our Examinations Officer, and I put together an ISMLA response to the QCA consultation and I outline the key points we raised below:

- The revised subject criteria for GCSE are less specific and prescriptive. This could well be a positive development, leading to the creation of distinct specifications that give schools a real choice. However, the ball is firmly in the awarding bodies' court; we hope that they are imaginative in beating a path away from the strictly transactional nature of current GCSE, to assist us in capturing the enthusiasm of our pupils so that they see GCSE as an intermediate step towards A Level;
- To this end, we encourage awarding bodies to include cross-curricular strands in their specifications;

- We were strongly opposed to the proposal that tiering (Foundation and Higher papers) should be discontinued. At present, our most able candidates (those whom we would hope will continue to A Level) are subjected to patronising content and questions in listening and reading comprehensions at Higher Level. This would inevitably increase with a single untiered paper, harming the credibility of MFL in the eyes of able students and potentially affecting further the low national take-up of MFL post-16.

- We supported the proposal that dictionaries should be available for student use in controlled assessment activities. We consider that dictionary use is an essential skill in language learning. Depriving candidates of dictionaries is a restriction akin to taking away a test-tube from Science candidates in practicals.

Just prior to going to print, the finalised criteria were published rather unnoticed on 21st December. The most notable change from the draft criteria is that foundation / higher tiering will be retained and we are delighted that our views have been taken into account.

I would like to bring your attention to a decision made by JCO (Joint Council for Qualifications), which will impact on public oral examinations from this year. All oral examinations will now have to be completed by 15th May, whether internally or externally examined. This is two teaching weeks earlier than in the past, and could have a significant effect on schools who use external examiners. Many of us know how difficult it is to find an available day for an external examiner to come to our school, as there seem to be too few to go around. In the past, external oral examinations might take place as late as the second week of June, but with an earlier cut-off date, the fear is that external examiners' timetables will soon fill up, leading some to offer dates prior to the Easter holiday: something of a rude awakening for students who had anticipated much more time for planning. ISMLA has campaigned in the strongest terms against these changes alongside ALL, but to no avail. It is, however, something to be aware of. It is unlikely to impact too much on schools who examine all their candidates internally, but those who use external examiners might consider in the future planning March orals, particularly when the Summer

Term starts later than it does in 2008.

The Autumn has seen ISMLA involved in two major projects, one annual but the other a new initiative. The Language Trends survey, undertaken jointly with CILT and ALL was the fifth edition and the full report can be found at:

http://www.cilt.org.uk/research/language_trends/2007/secondary.htm

The most interesting finding from an independent sector perspective concerned the continuing broadening of the language 'offer' of our schools, with Italian, Russian and Mandarin becoming more and more prevalent (although often outside the timetable). Secondly, ISMLA was represented by David Cragg-James at the initial meeting of REAL (le Réseau Européen des Associations de professeurs de Langues) in Paris, looking at how to facilitate collaboration between language teachers across the European Union. He has written in detail elsewhere in the newsletter but I would also encourage you to find out more at

http://www.ciep.fr/expert_langues/etrangeres/real.php .

ISMLA's attention turns at the beginning of every year to our Annual Conference, which will be held on Saturday 2nd

February at University College School, Hampstead. I sincerely hope that we will be able to welcome as many delegates as were seen at the record-breaking conference at City of London Boys' School in 2007 and urge any late applications to be made as soon as possible via dbyrne@supanet.com

I am pleased to announce a varied programme, full details of which can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. Our keynote speaker is Dr Amanda Barton, of Manchester University, whose areas of interest are gender differences in language learning and motivation. She is the author of *Getting the Buggers to Learn Languages*, a title she disowns! Dr Barton is a very entertaining speaker who offers a myriad of easy, imaginative ideas with which to pep up our teaching. Our second plenary speaker is Dr Jane Jones, of King's College London, who has worked on the renowned 'Inside the Black Box' series on Assessment for Learning. Again, her focus will be firmly on practical ideas for implementing good AfL techniques in the classroom. We are pleased also to welcome Mr John Dunston, Headmaster and ISI inspector speaking about the post-2006 regime of ISI inspections from a modern languages perspective and Rachel Hawkes with a much more light-hearted session on

integrating song and rhythm into languages teaching. We conclude with our traditional subject-specific sessions which this year include a Japanese taster.

I hope to see very many of you at UCS on 2nd February and conclude by wishing you a very happy New Year.

REAL report

David Cragg-James

Exhibition Organizer

ISMLA Committee

Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogiques (CIEP), Sèvres, Paris

September 17th and 18th 2007

62 European associations of language teachers from 25 countries took part in this seminar intended to conclude REAL1, a project funded by the European Commission to explore the establishment of a European network of language associations, and to inaugurate, again with EC funding, REAL2.

The idea for the project was conceived independently by ALL and by CIEP - a public French state-funded entity with a brief to foster international cooperation in the field of education and to report on innovation in the field of language teaching. Both organisations had applied to Brussels for funding for a REAL project, and Brussels had responded by suggesting they talk to each other, an encounter which later resulted in the funding for REAL1, conducted by 9 European national partner organisations - umbrella and single language, from, in addition to France and

ISMLA

welcomes any articles, reports and other contributions that would be of interest to members.

Please contact

Thomas Underwood

for further details
(See inside cover for contact information).

Articles for the Summer Edition of the Newsletter should be with the editor by Friday 18th April 2007.

the UK, Spain, Germany, Italy, Romania, Iceland and Poland.

Such a network would be an interface between work carried out in the European field and Brussels.

The Project identified over 200 language associations throughout the EC/EFTA area and attempted to ascertain their response to the REAL idea via a survey. There were some 138 responses, overwhelmingly positive, and there remained associations still to respond or still to receive a survey. It was estimated that the associations responding represented some 174,000 language teachers. Such a response meant that REAL2 would go ahead, and the cooperation of all participants was requested in disseminating information about REAL, via calling-cards, the web-site, etc., with a view to establishing REAL in the awareness and consciousness of members and potential members.

The Organisers had no pre-conceived ideas concerning the nature of the network, the term being neutral, save that it would complement and not replace existing structures /associations, themselves acting as intermediaries between their members and the network. The European Commission is destined to play a significant

role in the language policies of member states, and REAL, as an interface between work carried out in the European field and Brussels, would inform teachers on European proposals and mechanisms as well as influencing the language policies of European and national authorities. Linda Parker (ALL) stressed the potential power of REAL at the national and European level, possessing a voice in Brussels not available to existing international associations of language teachers. The European Commissioner for Multilingualism (Leonard Orban) in an address read to the conference stressed the positive role REAL could play in 2008 when a new strategy on multilingualism would be presented to the national Secretaries of State for Education.

The aims of REAL as represented by the results of the survey must encompass: the sharing of good practice, the sharing of information, the informing of teachers and associations, the promotion of multilingualism and cultural diversity, acting together to promote relevant European policies, the influencing of language policies,

the continuous professional formation of teachers.

Questions/comments from the floor at various stages during the seminar highlighted:

the lack of contact with the vital primary sector - (accepted),
the question as to whether non-linguistic cultural associations had a rôle to play in REAL - (open),
whether non-European associations might be members - (probably not, although they might be associated in various ways - a question of funding!),
whether European associations representing teachers of non-European languages might be members - (yes!),
whether individuals might be members - (there might be legal problems in drawing up the relevant statutes, but the question remained open),
whether the seat of the organisation had to be in France - (not necessarily; CIEP could withdraw when the network was up and working, although the facilities available at CIEP pointed to the desirability of the network's retaining France as the seat, at least during the 3 years of REAL2),
whether, in the event of REAL2 assuming a visible, concrete, non-virtual form - probably the form which is likely to be of most interest to associations

and of most influence in Europe - the membership fee eventually payable per organization/individual? would reflect the national variations in the cost of living - (yes! GDP would be a likely tool in fixing fee payable.),
the need to bear in mind the position of isolated teachers with no structured organization - eg. Welsh, possibly Gaelic, "community languages",
the distinctive features of REAL - European aspect, ability facilitated through funding to act/influence at the European level, covers monolingual as well as plurilingual associations, able to act for all.

The results of the workshops, on Information, Innovation, Training of Teachers, and Sustainability would provide the organizers/steering group with material needed to 'concretize' the network and its aims and objectives, and with a context for its funding bid.

Information.

Disseminated to whom? Member associations and their national authorities, other subject associations, parents, student teachers, media, other partners - eg. Cultural associations.
How? E-mail, web-sites, (editorial role highlighted), discussion fora, hard copy, face to face, newsletters.

What? Methodology and motivational strategies - strategic, exchange of information on association management, conference and association database, information on European policy, information on tools and initiatives, comparative educational and didactic information, press releases and position statements, response to consultations, information fostering multilingualism and supporting all languages.

Where? Blogs, fora on various themes/topics.

Innovation.

As a centre for the dissemination of educational innovation in Europe, REAL should become a platform for the exchange of ideas on, for example, methodology, ICT, assessment and testing, young learners, primacy of oral interaction, motivation, communication, ways of informing, cooperation and mobility, as well as on good practice, between teachers, and as an intermediary for the needs of educational authorities.

Among the most interesting relevant innovations at the European level were highlighted: early learning, the Common European Framework (CEF), certification, e-Twinning, life-long learning, Content and

Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and EMILE. Innovation and good practice should be shared by teachers' meetings, by the net, by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz, and by the European Label (for innovative projects in language teaching and learning) - the outcome intended being reflection, then change, then improved practice. REAL should encourage the mobility of teachers with innovative ideas, set up frameworks for teachers' meetings, possibly international and cross-cultural and establish an editorial committee.

Training of Teachers

Under this heading a distinction was made between what already happens in member countries, (not elaborated upon here, although not all happen in the British context,) and what the workshop might wish to see. The training offered must be stronger and better than what member organizations can achieve on their own; there is little point otherwise in such collaboration. The following were proposed:

- a web-site
- support for smaller associations and/or countries
- the creation of a people/resource database

the establishment of a fund to aid exchanges
the exchange of good practice
the dissemination of information on projects, and of documents already in existence.
the disclosure of the various teachers' conditions of work pertaining - analysis of conditions and levels
creation of a training model and development of training quality criteria - a common training framework
constant attention to the goal of multilingualism

Sustainability

This group examined the possible forms of REAL and how to ensure its sustainability, particularly at a financial level. It was considered that a visible association would have more political weight than a virtual, would attract external funding - at least in the short term, would be more transparent in its structure and membership, and would be easier to sustain, despite the obvious requirement for funding, despite its apparently failing to take into consideration existing structures/international federations, and despite its apparent obscuring by those existing organizations. These last two drawbacks being less of a problem in the event of a federative structure, the workshop's consensus seemed

to favour the idea of a federation. Such a federation would require statutes and funding.

It was estimated for example that the annual cost of running a web portal would amount to approximately 116.000 Euros and 156,000 Euros to set up, European funding perhaps being available for the latter. French, German, English and Spanish would be the working languages, translation into other languages provided by member associations at no cost. It was hoped that funding for REAL2 at 50,000 Euros per year for three years would be obtained; thereafter funding might be possible as an operating grant for REAL3, REAL4. Membership fees were unlikely to be payable ab initio.

Work ahead. How will REAL2 be different? - a truly multilingual and European network, and a strong voice for teachers across Europe. In Year 1 of future funding REAL2 will endeavour to give a form to the network, production of newsletters, opening membership to little-taught languages, production of a Yearbook; in Year 2 to create an internet site/web portal, and in Year 3, to put some flesh on the activities proposed, all with a view to extending membership via the quality of the information disseminated.

It is envisaged that the initial work will involve fairly heavily some 10 or more members of an inner circle, perhaps largely identical with the organizers to date. A second circle would involve other associations wishing to be involved at this level, perhaps for sounding-out on ideas, for comments on proposals, etc. British associations wishing to be involved at this stage at either of these levels might contact Linda Parker at ALL, remembering that selection criteria must be in force to ensure reflection of REAL's diversity. An outer circle at this stage might involve all associations responding, responsible for the promotion and implementation of projects, as well as for the dissemination of the REAL idea.

It was recommended to the ISMLA Committee:

- that ISMLA confirm to Linda Parker (ALL and Steering Group) its support for and willingness to be involved in the actualization of REAL

- that ISMLA offer its immediate involvement at the second level (last para.)

Both recommendations were accepted by the committee.

Geoffrey Plow, as ISMLA Awarding Bodies Liaison Officer, is happy to act as a focus for communication for schools if they feel they have experienced difficulties over public exams at GCSE, AS or A2.

If a school has made an official comment to a Standing Joint Committee, he would be especially grateful to receive a copy of the form sent, so that correlation of any trends across the whole ISMLA membership may be made easier.

Geoffrey is happy to respond at any time to any comment made by an ISMLA member school in relation to public exam matters.

Please keep in touch with Geoffrey at

gaplow@hotmail.com, or via:

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Exam News

Dr Geoffrey Plow
University College School

Standards at GCSE, and the extent to which it is possible to make valid comparisons between grades awarded in different subjects, came to the fore as 2007 ended. One year on from Lord Dearing's review of modern foreign languages, the *Independent* noted that there are over 1000 secondary schools in England where fewer than one in four pupils takes a GCSE in modern foreign languages (15/12/07). Dearing's report made comments which bore on this state of affairs. Stopping short of suggesting that a modern foreign language should be made a compulsory component at Key Stage 4, Dearing's report instead saw the issue of year-on-year severe grading in MFL GCSE as worthy of immediate attention. QCA's own report, arising from this recommendation, was passed on to government education ministers. The essence of their response has been that they now accept the reality of severe grading in MFL.

Remedying this problem has been a slower matter than those involved with the Dearing review had hoped at the time. We can anticipate hearing a great deal more on the subject.

Helen Myers, this year's president of ALL, has spearheaded the drive to bring these matters to public attention (you can read more at [www.all-](http://www.all-london.org.uk/severe_grading.htm)

[london.org.uk/severe_grading.htm](http://www.all-london.org.uk/severe_grading.htm)); David Laws, Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Education, has placed a question in the House of Commons about overall numbers doing MFL, on Helen's and others' instigation. ISMLA will continue to be closely involved with future initiatives in lobbying ministers and shadow ministers.

In the interim, do pass on any observations you have to gaplow@hotmail.com

And do read what the *Independent* said on 15 December: (http://news.independent.co.uk/education/education_news/article3253071.ece). If, in keeping with what Isabella Moore of CILT has to say, any independent school perceives that good GCSE results can by and large be achieved more easily in other subjects than in MFL, we need to know, so that the evidence submitted to government agencies can be that much more comprehensive.

Having read all that, you may think the focus is all wrong. You may be well into thinking about new A levels, with little

immediate concern for GCSE matters. Tell ISMLA of any insight, anomalies, observations or omissions that have occurred to you in the last couple of months, as the awarding bodies have outlined their new A-level courses.

Modern Languages Balloon Debate

Julia Whyte

Saint Francis College

Since 2003 the Modern Languages Staff at the Princess Helena School near Hitchin (Members of ISMLA) have organised a very successful Balloon Debate on a two yearly basis in the first week of November. They send invitations to schools in the area both from the Independent and Maintained sector. It is open to Sixth Formers in Upper and Lower Sixth and the categories are in French, German and Spanish. Teachers from the schools are invited onto a panel of judges. Our school, Saint Francis College, Letchworth, has participated in this fun event on every occasion.

Pupils have to choose a personality, living or dead, real or fictitious, from French, German or Spanish culture and give a two to three minute speech on why his or her character should be allowed to stay in the hot air balloon. Following the speech, questions are invited from the audience (mostly other sixth formers and their teachers) and the judges. Whereas the contestants have prepared their

speeches the questions put to them often put them very much on the spot: this can be a deciding factor in the judges' final decision when it comes to choosing the winners.

This year's debate led to some very interesting presentations in all three languages. The range of personalities was wide, though with the inevitable overlaps, and included the French rugby player, Chabal, Josephine Baker, Che Guevara, Mafalda (a character from a Latin American cartoonist), Sophie Scholl and Leni Riefenstahl.

The overall standard was very high and it was heartening to see so many Sixth Formers prepared to get up before an audience and talk in their chosen A level language: some even did two speeches in two languages! It is also a good opportunity to meet with other teachers of languages in the area and for pupils from different schools to get together. It also has the advantage of helping the Lower Sixth prepare themselves for their examination and indeed some of them go on to use what they prepared for the Balloon debate as a basis for an oral in the actual speaking paper.

The Princess Helena College staff are always very welcoming and put on a very impressive tea as well which helps everyone to socialise. This is an event that perhaps other schools could consider running.



Mary Glasgow 14-19 Prize - Applications now open!

Applications are now open for the Mary Glasgow 14-19 Curriculum Prize 2008. The prize, awarded annually by the Mary Glasgow Language Trust, is presented for successful curriculum innovation in languages in the 14 -19 sector.

In 2007, the £5000 prize was awarded to Sheffield LEA's Vocational International Project (VIPS). This highly successful scheme brings together schools and local businesses to teach languages with a strong business focus. The winning project was able to demonstrate real quality in both planning and teaching, and has successfully encouraged more young people in Sheffield to continue with languages after the age of fourteen.

In 2008 the Mary Glasgow Trust will award up to four prizes of £5000 each to projects which lead to a higher take-up of language learning after the age of fourteen, and which serve as inspiration for other schools and colleges.

The Mary Glasgow Trust is looking for projects which:

aim to do something new and different. This could apply to how students learn, what they learn, who they learn from or with, how their learning is timetabled, where they learn or how their work is assessed.

are clearly directed at making learning more engaging and more successful for young people who otherwise would be likely to stop learning a language at 14.

lead to a recognised form of accreditation, or develop an alternative model of accreditation that can be benchmarked against the National Qualifications Framework and has the potential to be validated by an awarding body

The closing date for applications is 15 February 2008. For further details and application forms, email Ann King, Hon Secretary of the Mary Glasgow Trust.

(ann@annking.co.uk)



The Consejería de Educación

José Antonio del Tejo

Spanish Education Counsellor

The Consejería de Educación is the Education Office of the Spanish Embassy in UK and holds the official representation of the Spanish Department for Education and Science.

Unlike the Cultural Office of the Embassy or the Instituto Cervantes, who both run and sponsor all kinds of events for the promotion of Spanish culture, the Consejería Educación uses most of its resources and expertise in support of the teaching of Spanish at all UK schools, regardless of sector or status. It should be stressed at this point that all our services and programmes are available to both maintained and independent schools alike.

In terms of promotion, the Spanish strand campaign of Languages Work: Spanish, operated by CiLT, is a powerful tool to make the case for Spanish with headteachers, parents and students. The resources available include leaflets with relevant information, posters, case studies and PowerPoint

presentations which can be downloaded from <http://www.languageswork.org.uk/spanish>.

The Consejería de Educación also runs several competitions and schemes to identify excellent practice in schools. HODs can nominate their Spanish language assistant for the Auxiliar del Año competition and the school itself can aim at the status Spanish School of the Year. The scheme, which started two years ago, has been very successful in acknowledging recognition to outstanding practice in schools, both in primary and secondary. In 2008 the award will be extended up to five primaries and five secondaries.

More recently the competition to select the UK representative in the Ruta Quetzal - BBVA was completely revamped and managed to gather huge interest from schools all over the country. Independent schools were massively present in the pool of thirty finalists who spent a day in London and the lucky winner, just as those in the three former editions, Jessica Sandelson comes from an independent school: the City of London School for Girls.

The Arsenal Spanish Double Club, a programme to teach Spanish and football in Key

Stage 3, has been in operation since September and threatens to win the Premier League. You do not need to be an Arsenal fan though to engage in this programme which tries to combine and integrate language and football practices.

For those schools offering Spanish in Sixth Form the Consejería may provide the support of a Spanish language adviser who can visit the school to brief the students on current issues in Spain and Latin America which are relevant to the Spanish curriculum like immigration, environment, tourism, etc.

The Consejería collaborates with many local agencies in teacher training events and runs a major seminar which this year will take place in London on March 15th. A draft programme for Spanish Workshops is already available online and includes 20 different workshops for primary, secondary and adults teachers of Spanish.

Since 2006 an agreement with the Instituto Cervantes allows more than 100 UK primary teachers each year to take free online Spanish courses provided that the head of the school states their intention to introduce or increase the teaching of Spanish.

The Spanish Department for Education and Science also offers teachers of Spanish grants for summer courses in Spanish Universities (Santiago, Salamanca, Granada, Madrid y Santander). The 2008 programme will be launched in March.

The Consejería de Educación website <http://www.mec.es/exterior/uk> offers free resources to teach Spanish. The electronic magazine Tecla is undoubtedly the most popular resource with more than 30,000 hits a month. Tecla features three original texts each month along with learning activities that can be downloaded and photocopied at no charge. A new modern layout and also contributions from local leading practitioners add to the success of this magazine which is currently the most visited webpage of the International Department of the Spanish Department of Education.

The Consejería is also very pleased to offer monthly articles by the Spanish leading newspaper EL PAÍS that enable the UK student to be in touch with the latest developments in several areas of interest for the examinations.

The PDF document, designed by EL PAÍS, offers activities produced by the Consejería team of language advisers which are in line with those recurrent in the examination papers.

Acti/España, a compilation of activities designed and piloted by language assistants, are both available in pdf and paper format.

The choir of the Spanish School in Portobello road recorded a splendid CD with 14 original Spanish songs for children which comes with a booklet with the lyrics and teaching ideas. The CD and booklet, Canciones Populares Infantiles Spanish in Primary, can be purchased from our resource centre at the Consejería London.

Also available from the resource centre is *Si, sí, sí*. This new interactive resource has been produced in collaboration with Richmond Local Authority and offers a wonderful tool to introduce Spanish to younger children, ideally Key Stage 1, through five minute micro modules.

The resource centre at the Consejería in London and those in Edinburgh and Manchester offer individual advice and information to teachers and students and hold an extensive collection of Spanish modern

films that can be borrowed by schools.

If you want to receive a regular update with events, news and publications about Spanish you can add your name to the Consejería email distribution list by writing to:
info.uk@mec.es.

French TV5 and using authentic resources

20 March 2008
Wolverhampton

A full day event from TV5, delivered entirely in French, to enable teachers and tutors to find out about authentic resources available, and gain an understanding of how they can be utilised.

Contact Anita Ojela on 01902
518 969

cilt.org.uk

ISMLA National Conference

Sat 2nd February 2008

University College School

9:15 Registration and coffee. Exhibition in the Great Hall opens

10:00 **Welcome by Mr K. Durham**, Headmaster of UCS

10:10 **Dr Amanda Barton**
Manchester University

Tackling demotivation in language learning

11:10 Annual General Meeting

11:30 Coffee served in the exhibition area

12:00 *A choice of sessions*

John Dunston

Headmaster, Leighton Park School

ISI inspections and MFL: everything you always wanted to know but never dared asked

Or

Rachel Hawkes

Assistant Principal and Head of Language College,
Comberton Village College

Using song, rhythm, music and movement to accelerate language acquisition

13:00 Lunch followed by coffee in the exhibition area

- 14:30 **Dr Jane Jones**
Senior Lecturer and Head of MFL Teacher Education,
King's College London
- Assessment for Learning: enriching the MFL community
of practice and progressing learning*
- 15:30 Language specific sessions
- German**
Dr Sheila Watts
Newnham College, Cambridge
Why lovers of German should not fear the 21st century
- Spanish**
Sebastián Bianchi
LTO in Spanish, University of Cambridge
Rediscovering Spanish America in the classroom
- Italian**
Ernestina Meloni
American School, London
Teaching Italian film
- French**
Olivier Bosc
Advisor to the French Minister of Culture
An insight into French society under Sarkozy
- Japanese**
Andrew Hunt
Whitgift School
*Why your department should consider offering
Japanese?
(to include a taster session)*
- 16:30 Tea in the exhibition area and departure

Sixth Form Debating Competition

John Wilson

Cheadle Hulme School

On Saturday, 17th December a hugely successful debating competition in French and German was held at Cheadle Hulme School. The participating schools were Bolton Boys', King's School Chester and the hosts Cheadle Hulme School. The sixth form students from each school displayed tremendous enthusiasm for speaking the languages and the linguistic competence was excellent throughout. The two notions for debate were "Homosexual couples should be able to get married and have/adopt children" and "Smoking should always be banned in public places". The German competition was won by The King's School, Chester and the French by Cheadle Hulme School.

We had been inspired to host this competition in the Northwest after the debates we saw at the last ISMLA Conference. We look forward to hosting next year's event and encourage schools to provide teams. The date has already been set for Saturday, 15th November, 2008. At the next event we intend to run a

Spanish competition also. Please feel free to contact me to express your interest. (wilsonj@chschool.co.uk)

Second Language Exchanges

John Young

Priory Preparatory School, Banstead

Over the last 2 years Priory Preparatory School in Banstead, Surrey, has enjoyed an association with the Windthorst Gymnasium in Meppen, in Northern Germany. In 2006 a party of Yr 7 boys made a visit there, staying in a youth hostel near the School. Daily activities were organised, to include time spent in classes, a mayoral reception, disco and barbecue, canoeing, a visit to a zoo in Emmen in Holland, sport, swimming etc. This visit was repeated in 2007, and was again thoroughly enjoyed by all participants, and followed by a successful return visit to Banstead by a group of students and their teacher.

This may all sound like a typical inter-school exchange arrangement, but the focus of our collaboration was mutual investigation into the acquiring of FRENCH as a foreign language. While my Yr 7 boys

were in Meppen they took part in French lessons there. This was a good opportunity to compare the efforts of British schoolchildren to learn French with that of German schoolchildren, and it was encouraging to see that, in this case at least, we did not lag behind the linguistic skills of our European friends in second language acquisition in the way that we, as a nation, are frequently said to.

I have taken Yr 7 groups to France in the past, but at the age of 11 - 12 our pupils were frequently bewildered by the range of vocabulary interspersed with idiom that they heard from native speakers; unless these native speakers were particularly sympathetic and capable of choosing accessible vocabulary spoken at slower-than-normal speed and with clarity, this experience could be discouraging to young learners. By collaborating with German learners of French, all communication was carried out in second-language French, which is of course far more comprehensible than native-speaker French. Neither the German pupils nor the English pupils found any of the French used overly difficult to comprehend, and both sides were able to put the French that they had learned into

practice. French, became the 'lingua franca' for a week and the medium for communication. Experiencing success (rather than times of bewilderment) in communicating in French was extremely motivating for these young learners, and they felt very able and willing to put their French to practical use in classroom role-plays and dialogues.

Such role-plays were 'directed'; for example the German class and the English pupils were organised into small mixed (German and English) groups and asked to prepare a role-play on, say, 'purchasing clothes', the dialogue to include polite greetings, asking for clothes, complaining about size/colour, asking the price, haggling, paying and farewells. With apologies to the total-target-language enthusiasts, the directions were given in both German and English for the sake of clarity and to enable the pupils to get straight into the task. This the groups did with good-natured enthusiasm and eventually performed, in turn, their finalised role-plays.

I was delighted with the way that second-language French, at this important developmental stage, was used to the obvious appreciation of both sides in the venture; neither side felt the 'intimidation' that is often felt

when confronted by native speakers and the pupils used their knowledge of French willingly and confidently with each other.

Speaking a foreign language is a skill, and just as we only arrange football matches against pupils of our own age and stage of development, so I am convinced now that using French with other learners of French as a second language is an appropriate way to foster an appreciation of that language at this stage. We would not send our Yr 7 School team to play Chelsea, and similarly, confronting our pupils aged 11 - 12 with native speakers could prove daunting.

There are other points worth mentioning with regard to our collaboration with Windthorst Gymnasium:

- Our pupils get to experience a European country other than France (we do arrange trips to France as well, of course).

- Meppen is situated close to the Dutch border making day-trips into Holland an easy proposition.

(These 2 points make it clear that such a trip broadens our pupils' perception of Europe as a whole, rather on focussing on France alone).

- As we are in Windthorst Gymnasium on a daily basis we enjoy opportunities to participate in other lessons, namely Latin, English, Drama and Games, and to experience, therefore, a large part of a German School's curriculum.

- Our pupils get to experience life in a School that starts at 07.55 and finishes at 1.10, working through with only occasional short breaks and no lunch-hour. An interesting comparison!

- My discussions with my German counterpart in Meppen involve approaches to, and the solving of difficulties in teaching French as a second language, as this is what she is doing too. Our conversations about this topic are always very fruitful in terms of exchanging views and ideas. When I have taken a group to a French school, discussions with French teachers do not address issues regarding the ACQUISITION of French, as native speakers do not always fully comprehend learners' problems.

- I am able, in School, to point out to pupils that an ability to speak French enables communication not only with the French but also with ANYONE who has learnt that language; Priory Preparatory School has a British Council-

sponsored link with Gymnasium Number 2 in Yaroslavl, just North of Moscow, and we exchange pupils' work completed in French. French therefore enables our pupils to communicate with Russians. From this, our pupils see real benefits of studying French and are thus greatly motivated as they enjoy corresponding with French, German and Russian pupils in French.

- Finally, for purposes of comparison with another country's approaches to the study of French, it is interesting to see how much French a German pupil learns over any given period. It would appear that Germans are expected to assimilate far more vocabulary than English pupils, a point which I strongly feel has been grossly overlooked in this country in recent years of obsession with National Curriculum, and, particularly, National Curriculum Levels, whose 'can-do' statements indeed indicate what a student is capable of doing, but with no reference to 'how well', nor within what range of vocabulary; students satisfying the criteria for, say, a 'Level Three' are awarded that level irrespective of whether they are operating within a vocabulary of 200 words or 2000 words.

I can honestly recommend this experience of trying out French in a country other than France. I am fortunate enough to have a good friend of long standing (Frau Ingrid David, Head of English at Windthorst Gymnasium) teaching second-language French in Germany, which makes the organisation of exchange visits so much easier; all aspects of our trips are discussed easily by phone, texts or e-mails and then put in place, and when matters such as Youth Hostel accommodation, or bus-hire, excursions and activities are organised by ourselves rather than a profit-making Tour Operator the costs of such ventures are brought down dramatically. Try it and see!



Young Törless Der junge Törless

New German Cinema
Film
Tuesday 31 January 2008, 7pm
Goethe-Institut London
Box Office: 020 7596 4000

Area 8 MFL conference

Woodhouse Grove School
Bradford on March 7th 2008

8.45am Arrival and registration from: Coffee available.
Resources Exhibition open until 14.30

9:15am **Welcome**

9:20 am **Session 1**

Introducing Bilingualism - the Hockerill Model

Mike Ullman

10:20 am Coffee Break and Resources Exhibition

10.45 - 11:45am **Session 2: Split session**

Literature and Film in the Sixth Form

V Wasner or

Speaking Progression Using Rap, Rhyme and Song

Carole Nicholl

11.50am - 12:50pm Lunch and Resources Exhibition

12.55 - 13:55pm **Session 3**

Language Talks - French / German / Spanish / Italian

14.00 - 14:20pm Tea + Resources Exhibition (Closes 14:30)

14.25 - 15:25pm **Session 4**

20 Short Activities to get pupils talking - with free resources you can use tomorrow

Nick Mair

16:00pm Departure

We are grateful to ISMLA for their generous support of this event.

Jenny Davey (Area 8 MFL Secretary)

TPU Vocab League Encouraging the learning of vocabulary through competition.

Thomas Underwood
University College School

Seven years ago in the middle of a Year 11 German lesson, just after we had completed the weekly vocabulary test, one of the boys (an avid Manchester United fan) came up with the idea that we should create a 'league' system within the class, as there was a good deal of healthy competitiveness between the pupils. From that moment on the Vocab League was born and I have been amazed since at how seriously the boys have taken this challenge, even the weaker pupils, and the interest that it has evoked.



Each class and pupil of mine sits a vocabulary test once a week, always out of twenty. In September I ask them all to

come up with a 'team name' (for example 'Waddling Wombats', 'L'Oréal Madrid' or 'Dynamo Kebab') and each point they score in the vocabulary test counts for points in the league. We thus have ten games (or 200 points) up until Christmas, where new leagues are created for the Spring term. The aim of many of the boys is to make the prestigious Super League, and numerous pupils will go all term without dropping a point. The Vocab Cup also runs in the second term and as this progresses we have 'live' matches at lunch times, pitting boys from different classes against one another. The 'live' final is normally well attended and I had to wonder what over 60 boys / supporters were doing watching a vocabulary test during the final last year!

The most laborious task for me is the inputting of data into Microsoft Access every Friday after school and this can easily take an hour or two, especially after marking the tests. The leagues are then put on-line and also displayed in the classroom. This area is always the first port of call for pupils entering the classroom and it is noticeable that Sixth Formers take the competition as seriously as any other year. Last year I introduced a 'Hall of Fame' for boys who have maintained an

excellent average over at least three years or who have won either the Super League or the Vocab Cup. Amazingly I have received e-mails from old students asking whether or not they should be included!

Up to now I have found this to be a stimulating way for the boys to learn and consolidate vocabulary, to focus their minds on impending tests and to aid me with a weekly routine for all classes. The enthusiasm and appreciation of the pupils is the driving force behind the Leagues and I hope it will long continue





TPU VOCAB LEAGUE



Hall of Fame

Name	Years	Major Achievements	Average Test Scores
Suren de Saran	2001-	Super League 2004, 2005, 2007	19.94
Daniel Eisenberg	2006-	Vocab Cup 2007	19.90
Daniel Cohen	2002-2006	Super League 2003	19.85
Jonathan Lau	2001-2006	-	19.60
Nevah Francis	2001-2004	Super League 2002	19.51
Ed Bailey	2003	-	19.40
Daniel Shindler	2003	-	19.40
Yael Coffer	2002-2006	-	19.39
William Lander	2001-2003	Super League 2003	19.30
Bergamin Russell	2003-2004	-	19.13
Adrian Woodman	2000-2004	-	19.10
Jack Parker	2001-2003	Vocab Cup 2002	18.90
Edmund Perry	2000-2004	-	18.90
Patrick Campbell	2002-2004	Vocab Cup 2004	18.80
Alexander Silvester	2002-2006	-	18.80
Alisdair Zucker	2000-2005	-	18.75
Jonathan White	2000-2004	-	18.70
Stephen Yang	2000	-	18.63
Emilio Galan	2003-2005	Vocab Cup 2005	18.60
Felix Graf	2000-2004	-	18.58
Daniel Conway	2000-2003	Vocab Cup 2003	18.10
Martin Connors	2000-2006	Super League 2004	17.30

To qualify for the Hall of Fame :-

- Minimum 3 years participation in the Vocab League.
- Minimum average of 18.5 over the three years!

* Automatic entrance to Super League and Vocab Cup winners!

TPU VOCAB LEAGUE

SUPER LEAGUE

COMING SOON...

16 Teams

Top teams (10) in each league qualify, plus the next best 6 from across all the leagues.
The rest will make up Banters, Igge, Nord + Sud and French A+B divisions



Position	Name	Initials	Year	Played	Last Game	Total
1	Les Nimrog	DC	8frs	9	19	179
2	Sexy Lerox	AG	8frs	9	18	175
3	Team Green	NC	8ger	9	20	175
4	Entre deux et loup	AL	8frs	9	20	174
5	F.C Pizza Muz	MO	8ger	9	20	170

Position	Name	Initials	Year	Played	Last Game	Total
1	Slipnot Anthemz	AL	8ger	9	18	148
2	Soviet Dumpingsz	AA	8ger	9	19	148
3	Holdingsz	JH	8ger	9	18	146

Position	Name	Initials	Year	Played	Last Game	Total
1	Team Ed	EB	8ger	8	20	150
2	Vocab Cup Champ	ES	8ger	8	19	150
3	Axtrorkill	SY	8ger	8	19	150
4	BIG TINGS R. GWAN	S&S	8ger	8	19	150
5	The Twin Cats	DS	8ger	8	20	150
6	Footy Freaks	JW	8ger	8	20	150

Position	Name	Initials	Year	Played	Last Game	Total
1	le fardapozosao intelligent	MFD	8frs	8	20	160
2	Pysomania Chaosz	SE	8frs	8	20	157
3	Reax	AK	8frs	9	19	154
4	Charles Chelsea's Sheriff	CG	8frs	8	20	153

Le McDo en France - C'est tout ce que j'aime ?

Christopher West-Sadler
Leicester High School

A Strasbourg, l'année prochaine il aura lieu un drôle d'anniversaire, celui des trente ans des 'arches dorées' Hexagone. Comment sera-il vu au pays réputé dans le monde entier pour sa gastronomie et sa haute cuisine, l'opposée de la nourriture dite malbouffe offerte par l'empire *McDonaldien* ?

Plus précisément que représente le McDo en France et quelles sont les opinions des Français à son égard ?

A en croire les polémiques d'un certain M. Bové, surtout célèbre le 12 août 1999, pour son démontage délictuel du restaurant McDonald's en chantier à Millau, ce fast-food affreux est peu éthique, contraire aux valeurs agricoles françaises et non voulu par les Français. Sans blague ! Mais est-ce que c'est vrai ? Les Français le détestent-ils vraiment ?

Actuellement, où que vous aillez en France vous pourriez repérer un exemple de l'illustre fournisseur du Royal Cheese, en tout cas il existe 1045

restaurants où travaillent plus de 44,000 employés. Pas vraiment les indices d'un manque de *McDophiles*. Soit les établissements sont vides, soit les Français y mangent et avec appétit.

Comment se peut-il que dans le pays renommé pour ses petits cafés et bistros disposants de bons repas, savoureux, régionaux et bon marché, les habitants puissent se soumettre à ces 'menus' qui sont, selon l'association *Aquerem* (l'association pour la qualité de l'environnement de la région mantaise), '*homogènes et sous-culturels, dangereux pour la santé*' ? En effet, bien qu'il y ait de nombreux exemples d'homogénéité à travers le monde aux restaurants McDonald, on y trouve des variations importantes régionales. A titre d'exemple, les établissements français proposent : le croque - monsieur, la salade niçoise, l'*Evian*, le *Badoit* et le café *Jacques Vabre*, 100% arabica !

Au niveau linguistique, il est aussi intéressant d'étudier la façon dont l'on essaie de créer l'illusion que les repas proposés font partie d'une sorte de gastronomie que l'on peut 'déguster' sur place :

'Vous commencez par choisir une douceur sucrée ou salée...'

'Faites le plein de vitalité avec la salade Niçoise et ses morceaux de thon sur un lit de crudités.'

'Laissez-vous séduire par la salade Greque et ses délicieux dés de feta.'

Dans d'autres pays francophones tel que le Québec, on se donne plus de mal à franciser le menu par exemple le *Quarter Pounder with cheese* devient le *Quart de livre avec fromage* et le *Happy Meal* devient le magnifique *Joyeux Festin*. Leurs cousins français pourraient quand même faire un effort !

Bien entendu, sur le plan gastronomique, il existe bien des gens qui ne sont guère dupés. Il suffit de constater les nombreux *blogueurs* et articles contre la McDomination. Considérons l'exemple d'un habitant de Sarlat dans le Périgord lors de l'arrivée éventuelle d'un restaurant McDonald :

'Un McDo à Sarlat.....Diable ! C'est la révolution ou quoi ? Mais que se passe t-il ? La Boétie réveille toi, ils sont devenus fous!

Trêve de plaisanterie ; Oui MacDo est le chancre de la malbouffe standardisée façon

US. Ce n'est pas dans ces endroits que nos enfants découvriront les goûts, les saveurs et surtout apprendront à connaître ce terroir périgourdin si réputé.'

En revenant, à cette question des trente ans du McDo français, peut-être bien les anti-mondialistes en profiteront pour tirer la sonnette d'alarme une autre fois d'une dite menace néfaste contre le patrimoine français. Parlerons-nous des avantages économiques incontestables dès son arrivée en France où de sa création importante d'emplois pour les Français ? Il me semble bien plus probable que dans la plupart des cas, les nombreux habitués du McDo du coin 'dégusteront' leur menu 'Best of' sans y penser mais tout de même sans oublier un petit café Jacques Vabre pour terminer.

Auf den Spuren des Nibelungenliedes

Stefanie Schmiedel
Northwood College

„Terra X“, eine wissenschaftliche Serie auf dem zweiten Fernsehkanal im deutschen Fernsehen, sorgt für eine neue Welle der Begeisterung für das

mittelhochdeutsche
Heldenepos.

Die älteste und populärste Version des Nibelungenlieds wurde 1755 zufällig vom Arzt Johann Jacob Obereit in der Bibliothek eines reichen Patienten wiederentdeckt. Fast 10 000 Zeilen in 37 Aventüren erzählen von der heidnischen Vergangenheit germanischer Stämme, die Ende des vierten Jahrhunderts im Wirrwarr der Völkerwanderung umkommen. Das Werk ist aufgrund seiner sprachlichen und inhaltlichen Gestaltung eine Sensation. In der sogenannten „Nibelungenstrophe“ verfasst, erzählt es in Strophen mit je vier paarweise reimenden Zeilen von Liebe, Hass, Rache, Treue, Ehre und vom Untergang der Burgunder. Sie waren ein Germanenstamm, der sich zu Beginn der vierten Jahrhunderts um die Stadt Worms herum ansiedelte.

Das Nibelungenlied ist in zwei Teilen angelegt. Im ersten Teil (Aventüren 1- 19) erfährt der Leser über das Leben und den Tod des Drachentöters Siegfrieds, der bis zur heutigen Zeit das Ideal eines deutschen Helden verkörpert. Im zweiten Teil (Aventüren 20 - 39) wird der Untergang der Burgunder im Hunnenland, dem heutigen Ungarn, beschrieben. Das gesamte Werk wurde um 1200

im Raum Passau aufgeschrieben, wahrscheinlich nachdem umherziehende Sänger die Sage mehrer Jahrhunderte lang an Königshöfen vortrugen. Es steckt voller historischer Indizes, zum Beispiel der Nennung der damals bekannten Seidenproduktionsstätten „Zazanc“ und „Azagaug“. Auch die Reiseroute der Nibelungen zu Kriemhilds Hochzeit mit Attila im Hunnenland wird präzise geschildert - es geht von Worms entlang der Donau über Passau nach Österreich.

Im Volksmund wird auch heutzutage noch viel aus dem Nibelungenlied zitiert. So spricht man häufig von „Nibelungentreue“ wenn jemand auch unter schwierigen Umständen sein Versprechen hält oder von „Kriemhilds Rache“ wenn sich eine Frau übermäßig rachsüchtig zeigt. Auch der sagenumwobene Schatz der Nibelungen wird heute noch im Rhein gesucht.

Mehr Informationen über die Nibelungen finden Sie unter
- www.nibelungenmuseum.de
- <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nibelungen>
- www.zdf.de - Suchen Sie „Terra X“ und „Nibelungen“

Reviews

... à la française

Authentik Language Learning
Resources Ltd
ISBN 978-1-905275-25-0

Since the decision to make modern languages optional in KS4 came into effect in 2004, publishers have had to look for new markets, and Authentik have scored a real hit when it comes to '... à la française', a photocopiable resource featuring 30 cross-curricular lessons for KS2. This is an extremely impressive resource that has been carefully and imaginatively planned.

The aim of '... à la française' is a bold one: namely, to help teachers in the aim of "embedding the learning of French in the wider primary curriculum". It starts from the premises that languages are best learned by using that language as part of a thinking process, and that there needs to be focus on content as well as on skills. Multimedia lessons are provided in Mathematics, Art, Music, Geography, Science, History and PE, and range from consolidation of basic numeracy and reading maps to work on child labour in 19th century France and magnetism. Inspection of the materials

shows immediately the thought that has gone into the lesson plans. A Music lesson on orchestral instruments presents key vocabulary with a powerpoint presentation before positioning the instruments in orchestral formation and then practises the grammar point je joue du / de la /des before moving onto the expression of opinions (J'adore / j'aime aussi / je déteste / je voudrais jouer) in line with the requirements of the KS2 framework. The variety of resources is extensive. In addition to attractive copymasters for teacher and pupil, a CD-ROM is provided with powerpoint presentations and audio files that help the teacher in delivering a multimedia lesson.

One of the features of cross-curricular teaching is that team teaching may be involved, or else a non-specialist may be delivering the language element. Some are vehemently against this; I rather like the fact that this reinforces the idea that foreign languages are not just spoken by linguists but rather by educated people of whatever specialism. Even if mistakes are made in the delivery of French, should we not be putting the emphasis on communication rather than accuracy at this early stage of language development? Support is given to teachers for whom

French may not be a specialism by the provision of detailed target language instructions for pupils. In addition, there is a clear list of essential vocabulary to accompany each task: a vital cog in ensuring that the teacher feels confident in the material that he or she is to deliver.

Cross-curricular embedding of language learning into the broader curriculum requires innovative leadership and considerable groundwork, but the '... à la française' photocopiable resource pack can help bring a vision to reality by providing scenarios that have been well thought-through and lovingly assembled. I cannot recommend it highly enough to you.

Duncan Byrne

Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

BBC Active talk 2

BBC Languages

Spanish 978-1-4066-1294-3

French 978-1-4066-1287-5

Italian 978-1-4066-1290-5

Although the BBC is best known for its resources for adult learners, the Talk2 series struck me as being of potential use for secondary language teachers, either in the classroom or as part of an independent study

programme, perhaps using a multimedia language lab.

I have reviewed the French, Spanish and Italian versions of Talk2, which are aimed at those who have some linguistic knowledge. As such, it could be use as a means of extension in years 8 and 9, but, as it was originally intended to be of use to adults travelling abroad, the largely transactional topic areas correlate exactly with those of GCSE and the course covers the essential vocabulary and roleplay scenarios very thoroughly. It is probably the listening material that I envisage to be of most use to young learners. English is generally used as the language for instructions; the course therefore lends itself to independent study as students can readily access the exercises. The listening passages avoid over-complexity (the drawback of many a GCSE textbook), are relatively short but practise the key vocabulary of the topic very intensively, and therefore constitute an ideal extension or reinforcement activity particularly when independent learning may be taking place.

There is nevertheless a variety of other attractive activities for the secondary teacher: grammar exercises are well constructed, but short enough to prevent them becoming the

sole focus of a lesson; written tasks are very well suited to the demands of Higher Level GCSE; and there are interesting reading comprehensions on topics of cultural interest. The latter are clearly aimed at the adult learner wishing to discover more about the culture into which he may be travelling, but are also the type which motivate able teenage learners, bored of the 'death by 100 baguettes' approach of GCSE.

The problem of integrating such a resource into a scheme of work remains. Although the cost (£14.99) is much reduced in comparison with previous generations of adult language-learning resources, budgets will rarely allow a class set to be purchased for an additional resource such as this. The audio recordings may therefore perhaps be the easiest part of the course to use. However, it also strikes me that this could be just the thing for a motivated child seeking to teach himself an additional language, or else in preparation for a 6th form GCSE or IB ab initio course. There is certainly a great deal of potential in the resources created by the BBC, but creativity will be needed by a school seeking to integrate Talk2 into a broader Scheme of Work. With sufficient vision and planning time, elements of Talk2 combined with the

excellent resources on the www.bbc.co.uk/languages website (particularly Ma France) could greatly enhance our traditional GCSE fare.

Duncan Byrne

Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

Authentik AS and A2 Level Listening Comprehension Practice Tests 2008

Ian Rodmell

Authentik Language Learning
Resources Ltd

ISBN: 1905275129

The Authentik AS and A2 level listening packs are an extremely useful tool for teachers who want to give their class regular listening practice without relying too much on past exam papers. Each booklet is easy to use and contains about 15 recordings on a CD which can equally be used with a CD player in class or in a language lab. Each booklet is clearly laid out with separate sets of photocopiable questions aimed at AS or A2 level candidates, a mark scheme and a transcript. Each excerpt is also clearly labelled with the length of

recording and track number on each transcript in the booklet, enabling the teacher to find the required excerpts quite easily before playing it to the class. As the difficulty level goes up more recordings are solely aimed at A2 level students.

The topics are varied, the recordings clear and the questions properly challenging without being obscure. The variety of questioning techniques used also means that 'Authentik' listening packs are more than a collection of past examination papers as they can be used as a preparation for all exam boards and, above all, to improve the students' listening skills in many topic areas. There is no doubt that this is an excellent set of resources in which every language department should consider investing. The packs are reasonably priced and can be used year after year to build an impressive range of topics. If there was any weakness at all in the 2008 edition, it was in the choice of topics at A2 level. The international context did not seem to feature too highly in any language and there were not enough texts on the environment or the international context in the German booklet. However, 'Authentik Listening Comprehension Practice Tests 2008' is an extremely

worthwhile investment and we are looking forward to updating our files with new recordings every year.

May I also stress that the AS and A2 Reading Examination Tests and the GCSE equivalent reading and listening examination booklets are equally useful.

Patrick Le Berre
Highgate School

SPANISH
Sub-editor required!

To write one article on recent Spanish cultural, social or political developments for each edition of the ISMLA newsletter.

If you are interested please contact

Thomas Underwood
(See inside cover for contact information)

With thanks to Christopher West-Sadler for taking up the French writing role and to Stefanie Schmiedel for her continued efforts in German.



The Language World conference and exhibition 2008 will take place from 11-12 April at the Examination Schools, University of Oxford.

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