

Chairman's Report

Duncan Byrne

Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

September for ISMLA means not just a new set of enthusiastic classes, but also the first newsletter of the academic year and annual membership renewal. We have been delighted in the last two years to raise our membership numbers to record levels, and I hope that you will recommend ISMLA to colleagues in schools who have had no previous contact with us. We endeavour to ensure that membership costs only a nominal fee, so that no department feels unable to join. September in recent years has also brought the Languages Trends survey, run jointly by ISMLA, CILT and the Association for Language Learning (ALL). This survey has been of real importance to the languages community: I see its findings quoted on a weekly basis. Surveys are sent to a representative sample of about a third of schools in both independent and maintained sectors. If one arrives in your pigeon-hole, I encourage you to complete it, as the collated data have proved to be of real value to a number of language organisations in lobbying the DCSF and QCA.

Since the Annual Conference in February, there have been several changes to the ISMLA committee. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Peter Such who has stepped down from the committee. Peter was a founder member of ISMLA in 1992, and recently representative for the South-West. Few teachers understand the world of modern languages as well as he does, and his wealth of experience has been of great value to generations of ISMLA members. In recent years, Peter has organised training events for member schools in his region, and addressed the Oakham conference in 2006. Although he will no longer be contributing to ISMLA's work, Peter remains heavily committed to modern languages in his role as examiner for Common Entrance.

We welcome three new members who broaden the range of languages represented by the committee: Andrew Hunt is Head of Japanese at Whitgift School and takes over the London and South-East regional post from Astrid McAuliffe, who nevertheless remains Vice-Chair; Helena Gonzalez, from Mount St Mary School, adds some Spanish representation; and Peter Langdale, from Merchant Taylors' School, will be known to many readers

following his hosting of the 2005 ISMLA conference.

I am delighted to be able to announce a date for your diaries. Our next annual conference will take place on Saturday 2nd February at University College School, Hampstead, London to christen the school's brand new languages centre. Full details and application forms will be sent out at the beginning of November, and I look forward to seeing many of you on this occasion. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the committee if you have any concerns or ideas. We are particularly keen to receive newsletter articles from members. Reports of new initiatives will be of considerable interest to readers, and Thomas Underwood, the Newsletter Editor, would very much like to recruit French and Spanish sub-editors. The sole responsibility of such a post is to write a short article in the language on any aspect of contemporary society or culture once a term. I know from feedback that this section of the newsletter is much appreciated by ISMLA members - I have frequently used the articles with Sixth Form classes - and I would encourage you to get in contact with Tom if you can fill this void.

I wish you a most successful term.

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
Spring Edition of
the Newsletter
should be with the
editor by Monday
31st December
2007.**

The new(er) A levels in MFL

Geoffrey Plow
University College School

Introduction

The school year just finished has been dominated by review and overhaul: Dearing has surveyed the MFL scene, steps have been taken to finalise the new A level specifications, Pre-U has been promoted. In addition, by the time you have this in front of you, the deadline for submitting responses in regard to the revised GCSE criteria (14 September) will have passed.

Below is an overview, as 22 August 2007, of the papers to be offered by the five awarding bodies at A level from next year. In formulating these papers, the boards have been mindful of the need to drop from six units to four, to eliminate coursework and to work within the stipulation that the assessment objective insisting on explicit assessment of knowledge of the target language country/community was to disappear.

This has led to a tight fit, with limited room to accommodate all the elements which the boards' customers traditionally

want. The titles of the examination papers, as listed below, will tell us little about the decisions the boards have made. However, here is a notional check-list of questions to bear in mind when you are reading specifications and specimen papers to see what a given board has chosen to do.

Check-list

- What has happened to the listening component in the board's new specification? It has been generally accepted that listening should continue to be assessed at AS and A2. Lengths and levels of listening material on offer vary, however.
- Has the board decided to use the A2 oral as an outlet for the discussion of literature and culture? This had become difficult or impossible in recent years, given the need to adhere to specific A2 topic areas and to the requirement that material presented should be 'recent'. How has the board you are reviewing used the greater flexibility now possible? Is the A2 oral the only place in the board's specification where the cultural component is accommodated?

- Has the board 'pruned' or 'crammed'? It seems clear that some boards have opted to strive to maintain as much as possible of the existing syllabus material. Others have (possibly as an explicit selling point) trimmed both syllabus material and assessment loads. How many hours' testing will candidates be exposed to with the board whose specification you are looking at?

- Has the board you are reviewing foregrounded or virtually abandoned the literature/culture component? If it is still there, has it persisted with set texts/films? (Do you want set material?)

- How wide is the range of test-types the board has opted for in the papers devoted to the understanding and production of written language? Is it varied - or too bitty?

These are obvious considerations - possibly too obvious - but listing them does potentially allow a more focused and, I hope, a quicker trawl through the various specifications and specimen papers (the job after that is to persuade your examinations officer to let you do what you want to do).

Papers offered

AQA (www.aqa.org.uk)

AS: Listening, Reading & Writing
AS: Speaking
A2: Listening, Reading & Writing
A2: Speaking

CCEA (www.ccea.org.uk)

AS: Part One - Listening
AS: Part Two - Speaking
AS: Reading and Extended Writing
A2: Part One - Listening
A2: Part Two - Speaking
A2: Reading and Extended Writing

OCR (www.ocr.org.uk)

AS: Speaking 1
AS: Listening, Reading & Writing 1
A2: Speaking 2
A2: Listening, Reading & Writing 2

Edexcel

(www.edexcel.org.uk)

AS: Spoken Expression and Response in German
AS: Understanding and Written Response in German
A2: Understanding and Spoken Response in German
A2: Research, Understanding and Written Response in German

WJEC (www.wjec.co.uk)

AS: Oral

AS: Listening, Reading & Writing

A2: Oral

A2: Listening, Reading & Writing

This year

While it's likely that INSET on A levels, Pre-U and the like will claim our attention in the coming school year, the next wave of change - to GCSE - will also prove important. The notion of 'controlled assessment', designed to replace coursework at GCSE, will need to be finalised by QCA and then made more concrete by awarding bodies.

For details on this development, see

www.qca.org.uk/qca_11551.aspx



Vive la France à Besançon!

Wednesday 17 - Saturday 27
October 2007, Centre de
Linguistique Appliquée,
Université de Franche-Comté,
Besançon, France

€1700 (grant available - see
website)

cilt.org.uk

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:

*Dr Geoffrey Plow
University College School
Frognaal
London NW3 6XH*

[020 7433 2302]

Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics

Duncan Byrne

Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

During the second half of August, British journalists start to behave in a manner reminiscent of our pupils during the final week of summer term. The publication of GCSE and A Level results sends them into a frenzy of over-excitement, in which all common sense is abandoned in the quest for a few attention-grabbing statistics. I was amused, irritated and even angered by the meaningless statistics and misinformed comments regarding modern languages that were splashed over front pages of tabloids and broadsheets alike, and this article aims to clarify the situation.

Like it or not, data analysis has become part of a teacher's daily existence; I'm sure that many Heads of Department reading these words will have received detailed analysis of their department's examination results. The problem with statistics is that they need clear interpretation to avoid being abused. School management is very aware of the need to assist teachers in drawing conclusions from the data - the vultures in the Mathematics department will swoop on any ambiguity to tear its conclusions apart. The press, however, has no such fear of reprisal. It seeks statistics that create an impact on its readers, knowing that very few will understand the subtleties that lie beneath. The aim of this article is to reveal the truth behind modern languages exam statistics in the hope that this will leave you better informed when discussing your results with school management.

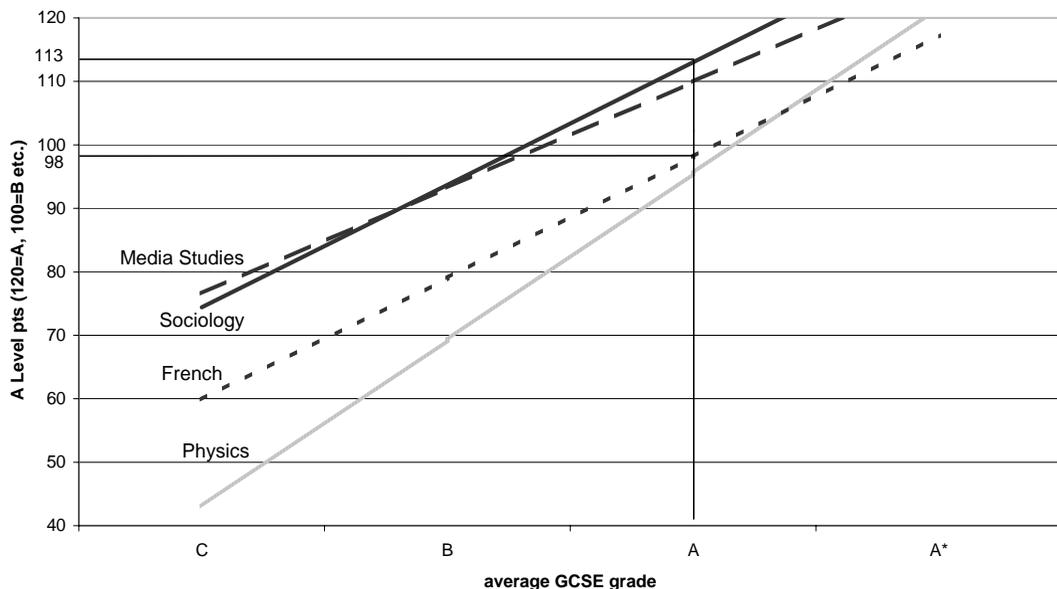
The first calumny I read this year was in the Telegraph on Thursday 16th August (A Level results day). I would like to think that Professor Alan Smithers, of the University of Buckingham, was misquoted in claiming that "the private schools' rise in performance was largely down to their students' subject choices:

'These schools would offer subjects like further maths and physics and modern foreign languages - subjects where there are a high percentage of A grades'."

So independent schools do well because all our pupils do Maths, Physics and Languages? Absolutely not! There is strong evidence collated by a number of bodies that a modern language is one of the hardest subjects in which to achieve a comparable grade to one's other A Levels. It is

true that a high percentage of candidates in languages achieve an A grade, but this is due to the fact that your average modern languages A Level student is well above average in terms of general ability; weaker pupils don't tend to choose our subject, often having heard that it is 'difficult', and the reduction in lower ability candidates for languages explains the phenomenon whereby A Level entries in French and German have halved in the past fifteen years.

Data are collected each year, comparing grades achieved by A Level candidates with their average grade at GCSE two years previously. The correlation between these two measures has proved to be very close over the years, and statisticians are able to work out a regression line for each subject that shows the average achievement at A Level for a pupil with a given set of GCSE results.



This graph shows the regression line for French compared with three other subjects. I have illustrated that a candidate achieving straight As at GCSE would on average achieve an A

Level UCAS pts score of 98 (i.e. just below a B), whereas the same average candidate would achieve 113 (almost an A) in Sociology. You can also see that an average candidate with Bs at GCSE will on average achieve a C in French (80 pts), whereas (s)he would be close to a B in Sociology or Media Studies. This shows scientifically that French is a more difficult subject than Sociology, and indeed virtually all others bar Physics!

A second professor attracted my displeasure in a letter to the Times on Saturday 18th August. Professor Sir Brian Thwaites argued that the higher percentage of top grades in languages meant that they were 'easier' and that all subjects should have the same percentage of candidates achieving each grade (i.e. 10% achieving A, 20% B etc.). Once again, this view is nonsensical, as it takes no account of the different academic profile of students who opt for A Level subjects. The maintained sector is already finding that A Level modern languages are increasingly the preserve of the elite, and artificially reducing the number of pupils achieving top grades would lead to even fewer candidates presenting themselves.

My final gripe concerns a GCSE statistic that appeared in the Sunday Times on 19th August. What is worse, the journalist in question had phoned me two days before and I had explained that his statistics were of no significance. According to the Sunday Times, GCSE modern languages are 'easier' because the pass rate for French last year was 99.4% as opposed to 'only' 98.1% for all subjects, and therefore hardly anyone fails. I don't know anyone in education who considers a GCSE G grade a pass; the maintained sector is concerned with A*-C percentages and I have, I admit, very little idea of the level of language required to achieve an F or G grade. It strikes me, however, that those who fail GCSE outright must either write nothing of relevance or not even attend the exam. It would not therefore be surprising that the fail percentage in French or German is minimal now that languages are optional at GCSE in the maintained sector; pupils with no motivation for language learning are no longer forced to study a language against their will. I hope that my foray into statistics-speak in the middle of this article remained comprehensible and I thank you for allowing me the cathartic release of my irritation about ignorant journalism. I would, however, be delighted to assist any ISMLA member who would like any further explanation of the statistical trends presented to them by their Directors of Studies.

Canning House Essay Competition 2008

Canning House is pleased to announce the 2008 Essay Competition for students of Spanish and Portuguese. The competition is open to all full time students in secondary education in the United Kingdom aged between 17 and 19 years on 31 December 2007. Entrants are required to write an essay of 750 - 1,000 words, in Spanish or Portuguese, on the following subject: "The environment in Latin America: an asset for the rest of the world". The closing date for entries is 14 December 2007.

Three prizes will be offered for essays in Spanish, and one for an essay in Portuguese:

1st Prize for Spanish: A cheque for £250 and a return ticket to a Latin American country of the winner's choice.

2nd Prize for Spanish: A cheque for £150.

3rd Prize for Spanish: A cheque for £100.

Prize for Portuguese: To be confirmed - details will be posted on our website later in the year.

Full details will be posted on the Canning House website over the summer (www.canninghouse.com); in

the meantime, a full set of rules and an entry form can be requested by emailing culture@canninghouse.com.

New German Ab Initio Degree Course at Aston University

The School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University in Birmingham is now offering a German "ab initio" Programme, a new style degree course for students interested in studying German, but who do not have an A level in the subject. The programme is another way of encouraging modern language learning for students who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

The course is four years, full-time, and will start for the first time in October 2007. It features a specially designed intensive German course in the first year, as well as a compulsory integrated full year abroad in a German-speaking country in the third year. The German ab initio course is combined with either another language (English, French or Spanish) or European Studies leading to a joint honours degree.

More information on the German ab initio website:
<http://www.aston.ac.uk/lss/academic/micgroups/german/abinitio/>

Choose Your Own Adventure

Extended Reading in German

Thomas Underwood

University College School

Whilst sat in an INSET talk two years ago and reflecting on new additions to my website and something for my Year 10 German set, I allowed my mind to wander and I came up with the idea of writing an interactive 'Choose Your Own Adventure' story, based on the various Usborne books that I used to enjoy reading when I was younger. I wanted something appealing to boys, with a possible competitive element and of course the chance for them to read a wider range of German and pick up new vocabulary. The timing was convenient for me too; shortly after Easter we began to lose a few exam classes and I had more time during the week and indeed whilst invigilating internal exams to come up with a design and write the story.

A Choose Your Own Adventure story always commences with the same premise but after the reader makes a choice, the plot branches out and unfolds, leading to further options and eventually multiple possible endings. It all began with the basic scenario of the reader

waking up late and then attempting to get his first lesson (German) on time. In fact I soon realised that this was to be quite a sizeable task, since each part of the story would require the reader to make choices that would incorporate various strands. For example, there is one situation where the reader's sister is hogging the bathroom and you are offered the option either to bribe her with your pocket money or, secondly, not wash for the day. Unsurprisingly most of the boys chose the latter! So the story begins with the first scenario but then doubles to two, which doubles to four and so on. Ultimately it reached 64 different strands and this was where my imagination and patience began to run out and it was time to put an end to the story. Only very few of the strands reach a successful conclusion, whilst the others inform the reader that they have failed (although if the reader has chosen options such as staying at a friend's to play computer games or breaking a window in the playground, they can hardly expect much more) and that they must re-start.

Du musst pünktlich in der Schule sein - Windows Internet Explorer

TPU http://www.tpuerman.co.uk/adventure/b2a1.htm

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Links TPU TPUGerman.co.uk ISMLA Telegraph Spurs Sky Sports Spurs

TPU Du musst pünktlich in der Schule sein

Ein ganz normaler Schultag

Feiled ! Feiled ! Feiled ! Feiled ! Feiled ! Feiled !

Du entscheidest dich durch den Wald zu fahren. Es ist aber noch ein bißchen dunkel* und es ist deswegen* schwer weit zu sehen. Ganz plötzlich* fährst du gegen einen Baum* und du verletzst* dich am Bein* Leider gibt es auch im Wald kein Signal für dein Handy und du muusst den langen Weg nach Hause zu Fuß gehen.

Deine Mutter ist auch erschüttert* und sie nimmt dich ins Krankenhaus, wo du den ganzen Tag bleibst und auf einen Arzt wartest.



Keine Schule für dich heute!!

Start again?

dunkel - dark

Done Internet 100%

By the beginning of the summer holidays I was satisfied with what I had prepared on paper and the next step was to convert to web pages that link together, giving each strand a different file name. This was a fairly laborious, although not overly difficult task, once I had created a template for each page. I then set about finding a corresponding image for each

page, as well as a sound file, when required. For example, on one page the reader is chased down the street by a dog and this is accompanied by a barking sound. The web pages were soon up and running and I was pleased with the results.

The final verdict, of course, had to come from my pupils and their reaction was extremely

Du musst pünktlich in der Schule sein - Windows Internet Explorer

TPU http://www.tpugerman.co.uk/adventure/b.htm

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Links TPU TPUGerman.co.uk ISMLA Telegraph

TPU Du musst pünktlich in der Schule sein

Ein ganz normaler Schultag

TPU TP TPU TP TPU TP TPU TP

Der Wecker* klingelt. Mein Gott! Es ist acht Uhr! Du hast verschlafen. Du musst dich beeilen*.

Du ziehst deine Schuluniform an und du läufst* ins Badezimmer. Aber du hast Pech*! Deine Schwester duscht sich*.



Was machst du?

**Du bietest* deiner Schwester dein Taschengeld um ins Badezimmer gehen zu können.
Du willst dich heute nicht waschen!**

r Wecker - alarm clock

sich beeilen - to hurry up

100%

positive and they were very keen to crack the puzzle.

I initially wrote the story for pupils in Year 10 and 11, but my beginners in Year 9 were also eager to be involved. Given that the story is online, it lends itself well to being set as an additional homework task - with the healthy competitive element whereby the first pupil

to e-mail me a winning page wins a prize. The one main problem I encountered early on was that some of the more IT-savvy pupils were hitting the 'back' button and retracing their steps far too often in the quest for one of the winning pages (I have to own up to doing that once or twice too with the paper copies). Fortunately I have recently found a piece of

code which prevents this and I have now installed it onto each page.

One lunchtime in the autumn term, a Year 9 pupil who was also in my Form, came to see me to inform me that he had been sent out of the IT room. This came as a big shock as he is one of the most sensible and dedicated pupils I have come across. I asked him what crime he had committed and he replied that he had been reading and playing the story when he landed on the winning page. The subsequent music and Darth Vader 'Congratulations' voice-over must have surprised both him and the IT Master!

www.tpugerman.co.uk

or direct link:
www.tpugerman.co.uk/adventure/front.htm



**FRENCH and SPANISH
Sub-editors required!**

To write one article on recent French / 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)





LANGUAGE WORLD 2008:

'Pulling the threads together'

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

We are delighted that several well-known key figures in the world of languages have already agreed to take part in the event, including our Patron, David Crystal and Dr Lid King, the National Director of Languages.

We would like to encourage as many people as possible to suggest "threads" for Language World 2008 and in particular to suggest speakers and contributors whom they feel could help others. You might also like to offer a contribution yourself, from a full 50 minute talk to being part of a "show and tell" session - any anything in between that you can think of!

Contributions which include examples from current innovative practice in all sectors, and the principles that underpin them, are especially welcome. Within the overall theme will be the following topics:

Curriculum innovation and design

The place of languages in the whole curriculum
Cross-curricular collaboration
Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)
Enrichment courses
Flexible courses

International dimension

How Internationalism in the curriculum supports language learning
International initiatives:
overseas trips and links
(including the use of ICT) to support language learning

Reaching new learners

Inclusion
Vocational language courses
Promoting languages

Teaching "new" languages

Extending the range of languages on offer
The impact of languages new to the curriculum
Community languages

Cross-sectoral partnerships

School-university initiatives

Employers and schools/colleges working together

We would also welcome contributions which cover the following areas, bearing in mind the overall theme of 'pulling together the threads'

Creativity

Motivation

E-learning

Primary, in particular, links between languages and the wider primary curriculum

KS2-3 transition

KS3, KS4, 14-19 (including KS5)

Further Education

Adult Education

HE, in particular, collaborative initiatives between universities and schools and ITT

Contributions are welcome from teachers and specialists in languages education in the UK and overseas (expenses will be covered from the UK port of entry).

To contribute a session at Language World, please provide a title and 100-word description, which makes clear (1) the objectives for the session and (2) the benefit to delegates along with a 100-word biographical description, by Friday 31 August. Please indicate any preference you may have about the date you would like to speak on. Please email your contribution to SheilaJ@ALL-languages.org.uk

or fax to Sheila James on 01788 544149. If you've already sent a suggestion to us, we will contact you in the autumn if your contribution has been accepted into the conference programme.

Please note that contributions to the conference programme should not promote a commercial product or service; promotional presentations are available for individuals and companies wishing to promote a particular product.

Sheila James, Association for Language Learning, 150 Railway Terrace, Rugby CV21 3HN
Tel. 01788 546443,
Fax. 01788 544149
www.ALL-languages.org.uk



National Schools Film Week
Monday 15 - Thursday 18
October 2007
Goethe-Institut London
and Curzon Soho

Languages work video competition

Have you ever wondered what more you can do to help your students get the point of learning another language? Here's a way of getting them involved in creating video clips that present the arguments they find most convincing...with some fantastic prizes on offer, including the possibility of a trip to Spain or Germany with your pupils. And they'll have the opportunity to get their clips screened in prestigious London venues like the Institut Français, the Instituto Cervantes or the Goethe Institut, and rub shoulders with celebrity judges and supporters at an award ceremony in 2008.

You may already know the Languages Work CD, which contains a compilation of video clips and interviews with people such as Gary Lineker talking about the importance of language learning. One of our projected activities for this year is to refresh this material. Although the material has been well used and highly successful, we want to take a different approach this time.

We want to get students actively involved in producing the resource, capitalising on young people's fixation with

websites such as YouTube. We want to run a competition, open to 11-19 year olds (and perhaps older), to produce a short video clip showing why 'languages work'.

The competition, run by CILT, is open to individuals and to groups, and uses YouTube as a platform to display entries for ease of participation. It's an idea for an extra-curricular project or for a day off-timetable like the European Day of Languages. Or make use of your FLA or beginner teacher to get pupils working on their ideas. For further details go to www.languageswork.org.uk or see our microsite at www.youtube.com/routesintolanguages - we've highlighted some existing video clips there you may find interesting!

An example of this is a goldfish swimming in a bowl. A cat approaches and looks as if it is going to pounce. Tension mounts. Suddenly the goldfish 'barks' and the cat runs away. The conclusion: being bilingual can get you out of some tricky situations.

We think young people will come up with some creative and imaginative ideas, and the process of doing so would help them think about the value of speaking another language.

Additionally, by publishing their clips on YouTube, our message would get additional exposure direct to our key target audience. The resulting material would be made by and for its target audience of teenagers and the process as much as the product is designed to get them thinking more positively about the value of languages.

The competition will be widely publicised and students could produce material informally on their mobile phones or in a more structured way through teacher-led activity such as that described in CILT's new publication on Digital video (NPF6, Lights, Camera, Action!) due to be published shortly. The competition could provide a focus for activity on the European Day of Languages, or for student 'Language Ambassadors' working with schools through the Routes into Languages programme.

All suitable clips would be embedded on the Languages Work website and, depending on the quality of the material, we would decide whether to publish them in CD format in the 2008-09 financial year. If there were some particularly good ideas, the clips could be re-made in a higher quality format if necessary. We would be looking to award prizes in

several categories as well as choosing an overall winner.

We would hope to involve celebrities and high profile supporters of languages such as our Embassy and Cultural Institute partners in publicising the competition, and as well as in the judging and presentation of prizes. If successful, the competition could become an annual event and grow considerably in aspiration. I do hope that you will encourage your pupils to participate in a competition that fits well with how they choose to communicate with one another.

Teresa Tinsley
Director of Communications
CILT, the National Centre for Languages
Teresa.tinsley@cilt.org.uk
Tel. 020 7395 0817

Potential Reviewers!

Are you keen to review any new material that we receive from publishers (reviewers may keep the resource for the department)?

If the answer is "yes", please contact Thomas Underwood,

Review

Montana Lingua

ISBN 978-3-00-020817-1

French, German, Swedish and English

This journal has previously reviewed the Soccerlingua resources produced through European Union Sokrates funding in time for last summer's World Cup in Germany. The same team has now completed another project of language activities for outdoor education. The idea seems a good one; after all, 'cultural' trips to neighbouring countries where all pupils stay en masse in a centre are extremely popular. The books contain 24 off-the-peg activities and language games for the outdoors to last between 30 minutes and a whole day.

I should stress that the books are not sets of copyable worksheets for pupils. Instead, they are written in adult French, German etc. and are intended to be the teacher's guide; he or she will need to adapt instructions (written or oral) to the group concerned and produce any handouts required. The books are accompanied by a CD-ROM that explains the philosophy being the project and shows pupils actually doing the activities to

give the teacher confidence that they actually work! The range of activities is extensive, from simple games where pupils follow a series of instructions to find their 'treasure' to physical challenges and artistic, literary and dramatic productions based on observations of their surroundings.

Having looked at the resources in some detail, I am impressed at the care that has been taken in their preparation; sound educational principles underpin each activity and the variety of language required by the learners to carry out the activities is fairly minimal to enable them to focus on the key grammatical structure at the root of the task. Of course, as with any 'non-standard' activity, the success of these outdoor games relies heavily on the relationship between the class and the teacher / leader, and particularly on how successful he or she has previously been in establishing the target language as a means of communication in the classroom. Nevertheless, Montana Lingua is an extremely attractive resource that provides excellent ideas either for teachers leading group excursions or for those creative souls who are keen to get their pupils out of the classroom and speaking the language around the school grounds. I could

imagine the English-language resources being of use to teachers in boarding schools with EFL pupils, particularly at an early stage of their schooling.

For further details, please contact Richard Weaver at richard.weaver@soccerlingua.net.

Duncan Byrne
Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

"En septembre préparez-vous à vivre rugby"

Thomas Underwood
University College School

La Coupe du Monde de rugby se tiendra en France du 7 septembre au 20 octobre 2007 et le message du Comité d'organisation est clair; il veut faire de cet événement une immense fête tout en promouvant le pays et le sport. C'est la première fois que le tournoi a lieu dans un pays non-anglophone, permettant à la France de faire découvrir ses richesses culturelles au monde. Une audience de 4 milliards de téléspectateurs est attendue, sans compter les plus de 2,2 millions de billets qui seront vendus pour assister en direct

aux matchs. 10 villes accueilleront les matchs dont Bordeaux, Lens, Lyon, Toulous, Paris, Nantes et Saint-Étienne. Ajoutons aussi deux villes jumelées, Edimburg et Cardiff. La Coupe du Monde de football en 1998 n'était devenue une affaire nationale qu'à partir des deux dernières semaines. En revanche, celle du rugby va être célébré dès le premier match, et même avant.

La fête se prolongera bien au-delà du stade.; les villes vivront au rythme de la Coupe du Monde tout au long du tournoi. Au coeur d'entre elles, de nombreuses animations favoriseront les échanges interculturels. A Marseille, par exemple, chaque quartier revêtira les couleurs d'une nation de rugby différente et représentera sa culture au travers de festivités typiques (repas). Les animations s'étendront aussi aux alentours des stades ou les supporters pourront profiter entre autres de jeux, musique et ateliers 'face painting' pour s'imprégner de l'atmosphère. Durant la compétition, une série d'initiative du ministère des Affaires étrangères contribuera à rendre l'événement inoubliable.

Le Comité d'organisation a en tête plus de 2,200 projets d'accompagnement comprenant l'accueil des supporters,

l'animation autour des matchs, la promotion de rugby et les initiatives culturelles. Parmi les projets principaux on pourra compter : les Timbres Coupe du Monde, Beach Rugby, une Fête de Voisins, projet Ovale et le Pacte écologique de la Fondation Hulot. "Le Kit de survie" a été créé aussi pour faciliter les rencontres des visiteurs. Ce Kit donne l'information sur la compétition, les villes hôtes et bien sûr un guide conversation en français. Un autre projet, "Parlez-vous Rugby", initié par le British Council, a pour but d'inciter les jeunes à faire du rugby une langue internationale (voir www.ffr.fr pour plus d'infos).

N'oublions pas l'objectif primordial de l'équipe française: renouveler l'exploit des footballeurs en 1998. L'Angleterre a décroché le titre lors de la dernière coupe du monde en Australie, les favoris cette fois-ci sont néanmoins les néo-zélandais et les australiens. Reste donc à savoir qui va gagner la compétition et si elle sera à la hauteur de nos attentes. Actuellement, on met la touche finale aux préparations et on peut être certain que les amoureux du ballon ovale seront au septième ciel en France cet automne.

"Na Tazzulella" 'e café

Ernestina Meloni

American School London

Nero, dolce e bollente come lo voleva Edoardo De Filippo, oppure lungo come lo bevono gli americani ed ancora veloce espresso al bar, in piedi davanti al bancone o casa dopo pranzo e dopo cena con gli amici: il caffè é una bevanda che fa parte integrante della giornata degli italiani.

Ma il caffè non é solo una bevanda é cultura, un modo di vivere. Dietro ad ogni tazzina che ci servono al bar o ci offrono a casa c'è un po' di storia e tradizioni da conoscere. Il caffè segna l'inizio di una giornata, la pausa a metà mattino, la fine dei pasti, tiene sveglio nelle lunghe notti estive: si beve il caffè per per rilassarsi, riprendere fiato e riposarsi o per ricaricarsi, svegliarsi e rinfrescarsi. Il caffè é una sostanza cosiddetta "nervina" ed ha delle proprietà terapeutiche. Aiuta a sconfiggere lo stress mentale e fisico che é tipico della nostra società. Agisce sui centri nervosi provocando un senso di benessere generale, aiutando ad essere vigili ed attivi sul lavoro, non solo fisico ma anche e soprattutto in ciò che richiede prontezza di riflessi.

Tale effetto viene dalla caffeina, che agisce sul sistema nervoso e provoca il risveglio delle facoltà mentali, allontana sonnolenza, noia, stanchezza fisica e psichica, stati depressivi e potenzia la capacità della memoria, dell'apprendimento, dell'intuizione e della concentrazione, facilita la percezione degli stimoli sensoriali. Naturalmente non bisogna esagerare ma uno o due caffè al giorno non porta nessuna forma di asseffuazione.

Anche in Italia la moda dei caffè "fantasiosi" sta prendendo piede e anche i puristi della tazzina si stanno convertendo al modello delle catene di caffè che offrono le più svariate combinazioni per tutte le misure e dai mille gusti. Naturalmente gli italiani prediligono ancora la colazione al bar e il tradizionale caffè bevuto di fretta in piedi o il cappuccino con il cornetto per la solita pausa di mezza mattina ma c'è anche spazio per le novità e adesso anche gli italiani si concedono bevande nuove ed avventurose.

Nascono così bar e sale da caffè che offrono ciocchino o budinone o zabamello, la bevanda a base di caffè, cacao, scaglie di cioccolato, caramello e zabaione famosa nei tanti bar della catena Segafredo Zanetti. Inoltre vanno di moda i shakerati al cocco, cioco moka,

i vaniglia moka, i macchiatoni i meringotti e moccambotti, bicchieri extralarge di frappissimo, a base di caffè crema, ghiaccio tritato e sciroppo alla nocciola che si trovano sempre più spesso in molte città italiane. Anche Illy, con i suoi nuovi bar chiamati Espresso offre per l'inverno una serie di ricette speziate, miscugli stravaganti con cioccolato, caramello o correzioni al ginseng, cannella o anice stellato elaborate dall'Università del caffè.

Chi ama queste bevande esotiche? Soprattutto i giovani tra i 20 e 30 anni e il pubblico femminile, sempre pronto a sperimentare, esplorare e scoprire novità. Diversi tipi di caffè per diversi momenti della giornata: caffè lunghi o di varie misure, da bere in compagnia o preso in tazze di carta con dotte citazioni stampate, frullati e frapuccini.

Inizialmente si pensava fosse una moda del momento o comunque solo un prodotto di nicchia e invece pare che abbiano avuto un gran successo ed ora anche alberghi e centri di benessere presentano le loro creazioni. E allora ... beviamoci questo caffè !!!



Einblick in das Leben der Anderen

Stefanie Schmiedel
Northwood College

Spätestens seit Ulrich Mühle für seine Rolle des Stasihauptmanns Gerd Wiesler einen Oscar gewann, ist sowohl in Deutschland als auch im Ausland eine neue Debatte über das wahre Gesicht des ehemaligen Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit (MfS) der DDR entfacht. Diese wurde weiter erhitzt, als im Juli in der Magdeburger Stasiaußenstelle Unterlagen gefunden wurden, die Grenzbeamten befahlen, auch auf flüchtende Frauen und Kinder zu schießen. Nun fordern einige Historiker und Menschenrechtler, dass die 91.000 hauptamtlichen Stasimitarbeiter, die nach dem Ende der DDR in großer Mehrheit straffrei geblieben waren, auf diesen Schießbefehl hin neu verhört werden sollen. Seit 1990 wurden die Ausmaße der Handlungen des „Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit“ (kurz „Stasi“) zum schockierenden Kapitel gesamtdeutscher Geschichte. Viele schriftliche Stasiunterlagen wurden von Stasimitarbeitern kurz vor dem Mauerfall vernichtet. Trotzdem sind bisher 39 Millionen Karteikarten und 180 Kilometer

Akten aufgefunden worden, die seit dem Inkrafttreten des Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetzes (StUG) 1991 der Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung stehen. Dieses Gesetz gestattet jeder Person Einsicht in Unterlagen, Mitschriften und Protokolle, die ihren Namen enthalten, gibt aber auch Auskunft über den „IM“ (informeller Mitarbeiter der Stasi oder auch Spitzel). Im Jahre 2000 hatten bereits 1.3 Millionen Privatpersonen einen Antrag darauf gestellt, ihre Unterlagen einzusehen. Das Stasimaterial wird von der „Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR“ (BstU), Marianne Birthler, verwaltet. Die Institution ist deshalb allgemein als „Birthler Behörde“ bekannt.

17 Jahre nach der Wiedervereinigung hat man endlich eine Lösung für die 16.000 Säcke mit zerrissenen Stasiunterlagen gefunden, die die Bundesregierung in Gebieten der ehemaligen DDR sicherstellen konnte. 30 Leute bräuchten für das Zusammenfügen per Hand 600 bis 800 Jahre. Am Berliner Fraunhofer Institut soll deshalb jetzt ein Computer mit Scanner entwickelt werden, der identische Seitenränder, Tinte- und Papierarten zusammenbringt. Man erhofft sich Vieles von der

Rekonstruktion dieser Stasi-Unterlagen, zum Beispiel, dass ehemalige Stasispitzel enttarnt und zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden können.

Währenddessen verfolgen in Nürnberg Beamte ihre Aufgabe,

zerrissene Stasi-Unterlagen mit der Hand zusammenzufügen. In 10 Jahren haben sie bereits 323 Säcke voller Papierschnipsel rekonstruiert.

Die Webseite der Birther-Behörde ist unter www.bstu.de/ zu finden.



**All reviews
now online.**



Association
for
Language
Learning

ÖSTERREICH-TAG

Saturday, 13 October 2007
Austrian Cultural Forum, London

**FREE TO MEMBERS OF ALL AND
THE AUSTRIAN CULTURAL FORUM**

in association with

austrian cultural forum

and the

**Bundesministerium für Bildung,
Wissenschaft und Kultur, Wien
(BMBWK)**

DAS ZUKUNFTSMINISTERIUM

bm:bwk

PROGRAMME

10.00 – 10.30 Uhr Eröffnung
„Kultur und Sprache“: Aktuelles aus dem
DaF-Bereich
Trude Höllerbauer

10.30 – 10.45 Uhr
„Die Farben der Bücher“

10.45 – 11.45 Uhr
„Geschichten liegen auf der Straße...“
Lesung
Jutta Treiber

11.45 – 12.45 Uhr Mittagspause

12.45 – 14.15 Uhr 3 Arbeitsgruppen

„Szenische Darstellung und andere
Aktivitäten im DaF-Unterricht“
Arbeit mit Texten von Jutta Treiber
Jutta Treiber

„Alltag einmal anders!“
Michaela Gigerl

„Ein Tag Honig, ein Tag Zwiebel“
Redewendungen/Sprichwörter aus Österreich
und anderen Kulturen im Sprachunterricht
Thomas Fritz

14.15 – 14.45 Uhr Kaffeepause

14.45 – 16.15 Uhr Wechsel der
Arbeitsgruppen

Den TeilnehmerInnen werden Lehrmaterialien
aus Österreich zur Verfügung gestellt.

Association for Language Learning
150 Railway Terrace, Rugby CV21 3HN
Tel: 01788 546443 Fax: 01788 544149
Email: info@ALL-languages.org.uk
Registered Charity No: 1001826