Title of Project | Language Learning through Theatre and Translation
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Project Reference | CTF12/01
Project Leader | Professor Catherine Boyle
Lead Department | SPLAS
Other contributors/Departments | Mariví Rodríguez Quiñones, SPLAS

French; German

PROJECT DETAILED

Outputs: What has been produced?

A theatre company made up of students – UG, PGT & PGR – across Modern Foreign Languages has been created. Called King’s Moving Theatre Translation Company, we will continue our work next academic year. In the workshops we have produced: a number of translations from French, Spanish, German and Portuguese; a set of games that develop techniques for translation and cultural transmission; a coherent group that works well together and has grown in confidence; an event for sixth form pupils, organised with Widening Participation. Mariví Rodríguez Quiñones is working on a PhD thesis based on this experience, and we are writing up this experience as a working paper.

Outcomes/Impact: To what extent have you achieved the original aims of the project? Please include examples where possible.

Our aims were very ambitious and we have, in some ways, exceeded them and in others still have to achieve them. Because of the way the project developed and the exceptional engagement of the students, we changed focus slightly to concentrate on the performative aspects of a very wide spectrum of texts – poetry, theatre, short story, song. We developed a KEATS page, which we are using to test techniques and modes of sharing our work. This will be the key to the further dissemination of the methodologies developed. We had a very successful event with sixth formers and this constituted a core opportunity for testing the work, through working, in a tight programme, with key approaches to translation and this was our opportunity for presenting our key performative output: a complex translation of a poem from French into English, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Italian, Farsi and Luxembourgish. Perhaps, however, the key impact will be the continuation of the project with the aim of a full production of a translation.

Supportive factors: What were the main factors that contributed to the successful outcomes of the project?

The key factor is commitment. This means that the students, as they began to engage with the challenges of the methodology, started to contribute with ideas, games, suggestions for translations, critique, exercises. There was a real sense of a community of learning and practice. The funds provided by the CTF allowed Mariví Rodríguez Quiñones to concentrate time every week to the planning of the workshops.

Challenges: Have you experienced any barriers or challenges in developing your project? What could be done to support innovation in the curriculum?

Time is always the challenge and student commitments. So, plans for the exam semester had to be delayed.
because it was difficult for students to commit at the same time. This has meant that we have two outputs to deliver: the conference and a full production. These were too ambitious for this period of time, and I put off doing the conference because I wanted to be sure that we were offering something distinctive and of which students felt confident and in control. So, a longer period of time is necessary and it would be great for that to be supported.

In the short term, and since the project will continue, I am asking for remaining funds to be rolled over so that we can: a) organise the conference (I now have more contacts for this and a good working relationship with Widening Participation and K+ that will improve the scope of the conference); b) have student ambassadors who will help to update KEATS the page so that we use that for the written outcomes and for future teaching.

**Recommendations:** Based on your study, what recommendations would you make for improving the curriculum and student experience generally? Are there any wider implications of your project for the College/University undergraduate and/or postgraduate curriculum? In particular what would be the implications of introducing your innovation on a large scale across a range of disciplines?

The key recommendations / comments that come out of this for me are: maintain the demand that students work to become independent thinkers who are aware of the 'apprenticeship' they are undertaking in understanding their field in depth, communication and agency. The key innovation here is that the place of subjectivity and physical presence in learning has been explored every week, and students relate to this in terms of what they then bring back to the classroom. Asking students – at all levels – to think about how to improve their knowledge and how to translate it independently teaches them about their place in academic and other communities. Their engagement with school pupils was a chance to develop confidence and to test their ability to put our methods into practice and to conceptualise the implications. I need to work on this in order to incorporate it into the curriculum, but have been developing one module – Translating Cultures through Theatre – that tests the theories in the classroom.

**Dissemination:** How has the project been shared with colleagues within and beyond the institution?

Colleagues from all MFL departments have participated in the workshops. Our conference, which we will plan for next academic year, will share the project with educators and students from secondary and higher education.