

Department of Education Newsletter

Issue 7 Summer 2012

Welcome to the Department of Education Newsletter

I hope you had a relaxing break over the Easter vacation.

As you will see in the newsletter, last term has been particularly busy. You will find updates on several of our research projects, a report on the evidence Paula Mountford gave to the Government Select Committee on the future of teacher training, and updates on a wide variety of other staff activities.

I would particularly like to congratulate Vanita Sundaram and Gill Hampden-Thompson on their VC's Teaching Award for their work on the Department's widely-praised Volunteering and Enrichment programme.

I would also like to welcome Helen Laycock and Hayley Houghton to the Department as members of the support staff team. We also say goodbye to Kath James after 20 years in the department, who will be missed by us all.

Judith Bennett, Head of Department



Department News

Teacher training excellence at York: the evidence

In March, the House of Commons Select Committee on Education visited York to take evidence as part of its investigation into 'attracting, training and retaining the best teachers'. Because of the excellence of its teacher training programme, the University of York was invited to give evidence to the Committee.

Paula Mountford, Director of ITT in the Department of Education said "The University of York recruits very high quality candidates in a range of categories academically—we look at their ability and aptitude. That has been maintained over a number of years and is echoed by the gradings from two recent Ofsted inspections. We were graded as outstanding, and you cannot get that grade without the quality of your candidates, and then your trainees and the finished products at the end of that year. Once high-quality people begin training in a demanding professional arena, now at master's level, the demands upon them are huge. I

think it takes three to five years to develop a great teacher.

When selecting candidates, we use five criteria. We are looking for professional knowledge and for organisation, communication, problem solving and reflection. Part of what makes us an effective HEI in leading and facilitating teacher training is that partnership working is at the core of what we do. We work with all the York schools as well as with schools from Doncaster up to Middlesbrough, from the coast over to Harrogate. It is the quality of the experiences and opportunities to work with schools, together with the trust and relationships built up over time, with which we are particularly blessed.

Key quotes from the report published on 1 May 2012 included: *'The evidence has left us in little doubt that partnership between schools and universities is likely to provide the highest quality initial teacher education....'*

For the full article please go to: <http://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/features/teaching-training-excellence/> on the University's features page.

Vice-Chancellor's teaching awards for Education staff

Vanita Sundaram and Gill Hampden-Thompson, together with Kate Harper in the Careers Service, have won a Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Award. These awards are given for outstanding contributions to teaching, and Vanita, Gill and Kate won their award for the Volunteering and Enrichment programme they have developed for the Department's undergraduate programme.

<http://www.york.ac.uk/education/undergraduate/developing/>



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Study shows arts education benefits at-risk youth

A new international study shows teenagers and young adults of low socio-economic status involved in arts activities have better academic results and higher career goals.

The study, which was carried out in the United States and was co-authored by **Dr Gillian Hampden-Thompson**, Department of Education, used four separate longitudinal studies to track children, teenagers, and young adults who had high or low levels of arts engagement in or out of school. Those activities included coursework in music, dance, theatre, or the visual arts; out-of-school arts lessons; or membership, participation, and leadership in arts organizations and activities, such as band or theatre.

The findings are published in a new US National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) report, *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*. The report can be found at <http://www.arts.gov/>.

Research says 'fee refugee' fear may be exaggerated

Research conducted in the Department has questioned the claim that changes to higher education student funding lead to a 'flight from fees'. In an article published by the *British Educational Research Journal*, **Paul Wakeling** and Katie Jefferies investigated cross-border movement of undergraduate students from the UK home nations and the Republic of Ireland 2000 – 2010 to see whether changes to tuition fees in the different countries altered student behaviour. There was little evidence that students were voting with their purse. Most changes in student migration seemed to be the result of long-term trends, with fee levels having little apparent effect. In some cases, patterns were the reverse of what might be expected.

Participation rates in Scotland, for instance, dipped below England, even though there were no fees for Scottish students studying at home. Katie, who is a third-year undergraduate on the BA Educational Studies, worked on the project as part of her second-year 'volunteering and enrichment' programme.

Creating Citizenship Communities: what do schools do to help young people understand and take part in society?

New findings from a national survey (conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) in partnership with the Professor Ian Davies, Dr Gillian Hampden-Thompson, Dr Maria Tsouroufli, and Dr Vanita Sundaram) of school coordinators and leaders on community cohesion and citizenship illustrate the need for more to be done to help young people understand and become involved in society.

The report that surveyed school coordinators and leaders on community cohesion and citizenship concludes that there is a need to co-ordinate work in schools by:

1. developing more liaison between citizenship education teachers and those responsible for whole school initiatives to promote community engagement;
2. helping teachers to build on young people's existing knowledge and expertise in community matters to help them understand and act more effectively in society.

The *Creating Citizenship Communities through New Approaches to Learning: Survey of School Coordinators and Leaders on Community Cohesion and Citizenship* conducted by the NFER and the Department of Education, University of York can be accessed at <http://www.york.ac.uk/education/research/cresj/citizenship-communities/>.

Staff stories

Kath James says thank you and goodbye

In 1992 I was appointed as a lab technician in Science Education, which at that time was based in the Chemistry Department. Life was much simpler then - most communication was by yellow memo, there was very little email and computers were used for word processing. Since then the technology has moved on from BBC computers and Apple Mac Classics to PCs, laptops and notebooks. We have all become so dependent on email and the internet that when it fails we become helpless! With the development of all this technology I became the 'person to be consulted' when things went wrong. I'm still not sure how that happened. My 20 years in the Department have certainly been an education for me. During this time I have worked with staff, students and visitors from many parts of the world and have made some great friends. I will miss you all but I look forward to my new life of retirement and having time to take up some new interests.

Thanks for all the presents and cards. (kathjames57@gmail.com)
Best wishes Kath

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'MARVELS OF MALAWI' or Martin's travels

As an itinerant (supposedly retired) academic it is my privilege to travel to the far corners of the globe. This is my eighth year of attending the annual conference of the Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics Science and Technology Education, this year held in Malawi. After the conference I travelled to a village project south of the lake – a distance of 100 miles. A battered pick-up truck ('matola') stopped and I clambered in. The other occupants were two locals, 10 plastic drums of diesel and two sacks of maize. There was room for four more people. By the junction with the tarred road (25 Km) there were 20 of us! After finding a breakfast I was found a 'good' matola. However, the driver was stoned on 'dacha' (cannabis) and drove at 120 km/h along roads thronged with women, children, goats, cows and bikes, puffing away with the radio blaring. I closed my eyes for most of the way until we came to an abrupt halt at a police check. It turned out our driver's licence was 'out of date' and the police wanted a 'donation' to continue to Mangochi.

Eventually at Mangochi I was greeted by 100 cycle taxis plying for trade, one of which attempted to take me to the bus stop, balancing my case on the handlebars, with me perched on the luggage rack! To much screaming and side-splitting laughter from the other taxi guys, he hit a rut, we both came off – his back wheel wrecked in the process. Luckily a minibus spotted me and took me on the next town of Ulongwe – a relatively comfortable ride. There is no road from Ulongwe to the village. Cycle taxis ply the walking track for the final 17km. I decided to splash out on two cycle taxis, one for me and one for the case. I chose two excellent fellows, Yollo and Richard, who puffed and panted their way transporting my weighty bulk and case – but then we came to a little river! Unfortunately the little river had turned into a raging torrent, washing away the only bridge. How to get across? "He will take you"! This meant a piggy-back from a 5'4" man of steel. When I finally arrived at the village, after slipping off the bike a couple of times into muddy maize fields, my host Enoch asked politely if I had had a good journey, "Yes, very interesting" was my typically, stoic British reply!

Martin Braund, Honorary Fellow

Staff Stories

Dr Sarah Olive has been awarded World Universities Network (WUN) research mobility funding to travel to the University of Bergen in May. She will be hosted by Professor Stuart Sillars, from the Department of Foreign Languages. Immediate outcomes of the trip will include a day workshop for school teachers from Bergen, a co-authored article for the British Shakespeare Association publication Teaching Shakespeare, and the development of a third year empirical dissertation topic on Shakespeare for EAL (English as an Additional Language) students.

Danijela Trenkic was elected Secretary of the European Second Language Association (EUROSLA) last autumn (at the annual conference which was held in Stockholm), to serve on the Executive Committee for the next two years. EUROSLA is an international association of scholars with interest in second language learning. EUROSLA's annual conference in 2014 will be held in York.

More info on their website <http://eurosla.org/home.html>.

Visitors to the department

A delegation from Bilkent University School of English Language (Turkey) visited the department on the 13th of March and spoke to postgraduate students about EAP (English for Academic Purposes) teaching opportunities available in their institution. Ranked in the top 400 world universities by Times Higher Education, Bilkent has 12,000 students who take a variety of courses in English and the School of English Language prepares them for their studies.



The way back – after the river had returned to normal levels!

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Research News

Projects

Congratulations to members of Education and the IEE, including **Ian Abrahams**, **Judith Bennett**, **Peter Rudd** and **Pam Hanley** who have won funding from the Wellcome Trust and for their project on the Evaluation of Primary Science CPD.

Ian Abrahams has also been awarded funding from the Nuffield Foundation to work on their Practical Work for Learning project.

Leah Roberts and **Emma Marsden** have won funding from the British Academy for their project on 'Charting the first hours of foreign language learning in the classroom: An experimental study with English-speaking novice learners of Polish'.

IRIS is now a 'British Academy Research Project', providing long term funding reviewed every 5 years. The funding is to refine, disseminate, and analyse a database of instruments and materials used to collect data in second language research. See www.iris-database.org (**Emma Marsden**, Alison Mackey, and the IRIS team).

Publications

Roberts, L. (2012). Psycholinguistic techniques and resources in second language acquisition research. *Second Language Research*, 28, 113-127.

Szcepek Reed, B. 2012. A conversation analytic perspective on teaching English pronunciation: The case of speech rhythm. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 22(1), 67-87.

Bassetti, B. and Masterson, J. (2012, online first) Effects of removing morphemic information and adding interword spacing on reading in Chinese experienced and inexperienced readers. *Reading and Writing*. 10.1007/s11145-012-9358-7

Taylor, F., Marsden, E., Roosken, B., Busse, V., & Gagova, L. (2012). Student and teacher identity perceptions in four European countries. Presented at the 46th Annual IATEFL Conference, 19-23 March, Glasgow, UK.

External Activities

Robin Millar and **Mary Whitehouse** gave a presentation at the Association for Science Education Conference on "An outcomes-led approach to curriculum planning" in Liverpool, 5-6 January.

Rachael Sharpe and **Ian Abrahams** gave an invited paper entitled "Getting practical: An evaluation" at the Association for Science Education annual conference in Liverpool, 5-6 January.

Ian Abrahams gave an invited paper entitled "The 'Getting Practical' evaluation and its relevance to initial teacher education in science" at the Association for Science Education annual conference in Liverpool, 5-6 January.

Leah Roberts presented 'Establishing referential dependencies in real time second language processing' at the Behavioural Science Institute, Radboud University Nijmegen, on 13 January.

Annie Hughes gave a talk called 'How can we find out what is really going on in our young English learner class?' at the 28th English Teachers Association Switzerland AGM and Convention in Yverdon-les-Bains on 29th January.

Paul Wakeling co-hosted and gave the opening presentation at the conference Widening Participation to Postgraduate Education: Access after the White Paper, which was held at the Royal Institute of British Architects, London on 16 February. The event was a joint initiative with the Open University's Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum.

Sarah Olive gave a paper on 'Using contemporary culture to teach Early Modern Drama: Shakespeare v Lady Gaga' at the British Shakespeare Conference, Lancaster, 24 February.

Danijela Trenkic gave a talk on "Errorless vocabulary learning" at the "Second language acquisition: A view from Europe" conference at the University of Essex, 28 February.

Martin Braund gave an address at the University of Londrina, Brazil entitled, 'Learning Outside the classroom'. He also led a research seminar on 'Drama in Science Teaching'.

Ian Davies made two presentations at the East China University of Political Science and Law (Shanghai, China) in March. He lectured on 'researching citizenship education' to an audience of academics and on 'teaching citizenship education' to teachers and other professionals.

Sarah Olive presented a paper on 'Shakespeare as icon and icon-maker in 21st century British television' at the Renaissance Reincarnation conference, University of York, 17 March.

Florentina Taylor, **Emma Marsden** and colleagues from Fontys University (the Netherlands), Carl von Ossietzky University (Germany) and University of Sofia (Bulgaria) presented an invited paper at the Psychology of Language Learning Symposium - the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language conference in Glasgow, 19-23 March.

Florentina and Emma also promoted the IRIS digital instrument repository at the IATEFL pre-conference research day to an enthusiastic international audience.

Beatrice Szcepek Reed, Liz Haddon, Darren Reed: 'Masterclass learning: An interdisciplinary perspective.' Presented at the 3rd Reflective Conservatoire Conference, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 17-20 March.

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Robin Millar gave an invited plenary lecture on 'Rethinking science education: Meeting the challenges' at The Prince's Teaching Institute Summer School for Science and Mathematics, held at the Møller Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge, 25 March.

Richard Ogden and **Beatrice Szczepek Reed**: 'Expecting the unexpected: Glottal stops in English and German.' Presented at the Annual Conference of the British Association of Academic Phoneticians (BAAP), University of Leeds, 25-28 March.

Florentina Taylor and **Emma Marsden** presented a paper 'Pupil perception of Modern Foreign Language lessons and GCSE uptake' at Language World, the annual conference of the Association for Language Learning, at the University of Manchester, 30-31 March.

Sarah Olive presented a paper on 'Fabricating evidence: fictionalizing an Early Modern play in murder mystery drama' at the Popular Fiction conference, University of Newcastle 14-15 April.

What's going on! Departmental Seminars

Wednesday 16 May, 1.00 - 2.00
Investigating the use of interactive whiteboards in speaking tasks in the English classroom

Zoe Handley

Wednesday 6 June, 1.00 - 2.00
In pursuit of the learnable: Learning and teaching practices in musical masterclasses

Beatrice Szczepek Reed (Education), Darren Reed (Sociology), Liz Haddon (Music)

Wednesday 27 June, 1.00 - 2.00
Executive functions: controlling the learning brain'

Jonathan Sharples (Institute for Effective Education)

Language Education Summer Seminar Series

9 May, 1.15 - 2.15, Room: BB/002
Experiencing supervision: two case studies of MA dissertation writers
Nigel Harwood (University of Essex)

23 May, 12.15-1.15, Room: BB/002
From Roughneck to Romeo: Case Studies in ESP Materials Development
Lewis Lansford (Freelance Materials Developer)

Centre for Language Learning Research Seminar

13 June, 15.15 - 16.15, ARRC Auditorium (Alcuin Research Resource Centre)
A comparison of urban and rural learners' motivation to learn English in Indonesia
Dr Martin Lamb (University of Leeds)

Staff changes

This term we welcome Helen Laycock as Administration Assistant, who joined us on 10 April and Hayley Houghton who joined us on 18 April as IT Support Officer.

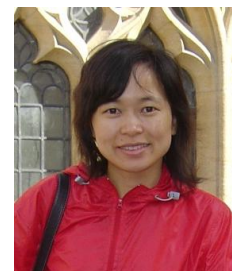
We said goodbye to Kath James who retired at the end of March after 20 years with the Department.

CELT News

Bill Soden and Helen Alcelik from the Centre for English Language Teaching represented the University at a national gathering of lecturers in English for Academic Purposes at the University of Kent on 25 February. Bill and Helen gave a presentation on Tracking International Students' Experience, with particular reference to their academic skills development.

CELT Open Day

CELT had an 'Open Day' on 22 March, with poster displays showing the extent of CELT's work and a series of short presentations on aspects of English Language Teaching. A highlight of the afternoon was a colloquium on the subject of English standards across the world. The colloquium panel included speakers from Groningen University (NL), Oslo and Akershus University College and Zhejiang University of Science and Technology, China.



CELT welcomes Dr. Xuefen Chen as its new visiting Scholar. Xuefen will be with CELT until March 2013 and is studying cultural implications in English for Academic Purposes.

CELT has (at last) launched its new website: not only does the site conform to the University norm; the site has been completely redesigned to reflect the structure and nature of CELT's work (<http://www.york.ac.uk/celt>). The latest edition of CELT's own Newsletter can be downloaded from the new site at <http://www.york.ac.uk/celt/news/newsletter/>.

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Contact details:
helen.parker@york.ac.uk

University magazine

Contact details: magazine@york.ac.uk

Department of Education

Tel: +44(0)1904 323460

Website:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/education/>