

Recent Publications – Abstracts and Weblinks

AHRC (2017) [New Research will demonstrate the value of language-led research](#)

The six selected projects are:

- **Multilingualism in Early Modern Literary Culture**
Dr Peter Auger & Dr Sheldon Brammall, University of Birmingham
This project will bring together early modernists working in modern languages, English, Neo-Latin and history to develop interdisciplinary perspectives on the contexts and applications of multilingualism in early modern literature.
- **Space to Speak: Non-Han Fiction and Film in China and Beyond**
Dr Sarah Dodd, University of Leeds
Emerging from previous AHRC-funded research on new Chinese writing at Leeds, this project will examine how contemporary authors and film-makers in China's borderlands are negotiating with standardised Mandarin and their own minoritised languages in their work, in order to find their own linguistic and artistic space.
- **The Creative Web of Languages**
Dr Erika Fülöp, University of Lancaster
This project studies the works of multilingual digital artists and seeks to understand the web's political and cultural potential in supporting multilingual and multicultural identities.
- **Evaluating the effectiveness of e-mentoring and a digital languages resource for foreign language learning in Wales**
Professor Claire Gorrara, Cardiff University
This research programme will investigate the effectiveness of e-mentoring and a digital languages resource in improving intercultural understanding and multilingual literacy in Year 9 pupils in ten secondary schools in Wales that are either in poorer areas, have low uptake of modern languages GCSEs or both.
- **Watching the Transnational Detectives: Showcasing Identity, Internationalism and Language Learning on British Television**
Dr Rachel Haworth, University of Hull
This project will examine the ways in which British television viewers respond to languages and multiculturalism in a range of well-loved crime dramas from France, Italy and Germany. It explores the impact these series have on audiences' perceptions of nationhood, foreign languages and cultures, and language learning.
- **"¡Yo soy Fidel!": Post-Castro Cuba and the Cult of Personality**
Dr James Kent, Royal Holloway, University of London
Following the death of Fidel Castro in 2016, the world's media projected iconic images of the former Cuban leader, underscoring Cuba's long and complex relationship with photography. Drawing on fieldwork and practice-led research, this project will consider the ways that iconic Cuban images are produced and consumed in different transnational contexts.

Alberta Teachers Association (2017) [Literature Review on the Impact of Second Language Learning](#)

This literature review investigated whether and how learning a second language affects language learners. It focused on research in the following areas: **cognition, academics, personal life, society at large, economics** and **intercultural understanding**. In addition, special attention was paid to the extent to which students with exceptionalities and other language learners are able to acquire additional languages. Learning languages takes time and effort, and the amount of time it takes depends on a number of factors. Some of these include the learning context, learning goals and the age of the learner, to name just a few. Most often, learning a second language has a positive impact on the language learner. At times, however, learning languages may pose challenges. The research presented here focuses both on the benefits and the challenges associated with learning a second language.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2017) [America's Languages: Investing in Language Education for the 21st Century](#)

In this report, the Commission on Language Learning recommends a national strategy to improve access to as many languages as possible for people of every region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background—that is, to value language education as a persistent national need similar to education in math or English, and to ensure that a useful level of proficiency is within every student's reach.

Some Key Findings:

- The ability to understand, speak, read, and write in world languages, in addition to English, is critical to success in business, research, and international relations in the twenty-first century.
- The United States needs more people to speak languages other than English in order to provide social and legal services for a changing population.
- The study of a second language has been linked to improved learning outcomes in other subjects, enhanced cognitive ability, and the development of empathy and effective interpretive skills. The use of a second language has been linked to a delay in certain manifestations of aging. [...]
- One of the biggest obstacles to improved language learning is a national shortage of qualified teachers. [...]
- Native American languages are distinct in political status and history, and are the object of school- and community-based reclamation and retention efforts aligned with the Native American Languages Act of 1990.

BAAL Publications

In addition to other items, the following conference proceedings are now available online:

- Andrew Harris & Adam Brandt (Eds.) 2010/2017. Language, Learning, and Context. Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, 3-5 September 2009, Newcastle University.
- Martin Edwardes (Ed.) 2009/2017. Taking the Measure of Applied Linguistics. 41st Annual Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, 11-13 September 2008, Swansea University.
- Martin Edwardes (Ed.) 2008/2017. Technology, Ideology and Practice in Applied Linguistics. 40th Annual Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, 6-8 September 2007, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK.

BAAL Language Policy SIG: [Minutes of AGM](#) (as part of BAAL Conference 2017)

British Academy (2017) [The Right Skills: Celebrating Skills in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences \(AHSS\)](#)

The arts, humanities and social sciences help us to understand ourselves, our society and our place in the world. They are vital to our ability to understand and learn from the past and analyse the present, in order to innovate and build for the future.

The services sector represents 80% of the UK's economy, and it has a crucial role to play in the UK's current and future economic growth. The financial services, legal services, professional services such as IT, accountancy and architecture, heritage, hospitality, retail and advertising, and the rapidly growing creative industries, depend on the skills which study of the arts, humanities and social sciences develops. These are areas in which the UK has a strong competitive advantage, and which can contribute to raising the productivity of our economy and to growing the nation's overall wealth.

We need a better understanding of whether the UK has the right balance of skills for the future. So it is timely to hold a debate about the place of education and skills in securing prosperity for society. It is critical that the arts, humanities and social sciences are included at the heart of this debate.

This is the first overarching study of the skills developed through the study of the arts, humanities and social science. In this report we identify the skills which are innate to the study of these disciplines, and look at the contribution which their graduates make, to the economy through the employment routes they take and in other ways they engage with society.

The study is underpinned by a body of evidence which includes new analyses of data on employment outcomes of graduates and focus groups with students, as well as existing literature.

British Council (2017a) [Languages for the Future \(2nd report\)](#): The foreign languages the United Kingdom needs to become a truly global nation

Press Release Statement: Languages for the Future identifies the priority languages for the UK's future prosperity, security and influence in the world. It updates the British Council's 2013 report. The report considers the outlook for the supply and demand for language competence in the years ahead and looks at the linguistic dimension of a variety of economic, geopolitical, cultural and educational factors, scoring languages against these. As in the 2013 report, the same five languages top the list: Spanish, Mandarin, French, Arabic and German. They appear some way ahead of the next five, which are: Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Japanese and Russian. The report argues that, in a new era of cooperation with Europe and with the rest of the world, investment in upgrading the UK's ability to understand and engage with people internationally is critical.

British Council (2017b) [Language Trends 2016/17](#)

Press Release Extracts: Analysis of examination statistics in the Language Trends Survey 2017 – now in its fifteenth year – highlights that in summer 2016, 65 per cent of pupils in Inner London took a language GCSE compared to just 43 per cent in the North East. More than that, participation rates over the last three years indicate that London is the only part of the country where the percentage of pupils taking languages to GCSE is currently increasing. Access to language learning differs along socio-economic lines too. Pupils in schools in more deprived areas are less likely to sit a language GCSE or to be given the chance to study more than one foreign language. These pupils are also more likely to be allowed to drop languages after only two years or even to be withdrawn from language lessons altogether [...]

At secondary level, some state schools with very low uptake in languages say they are successfully increasing numbers, stimulated by the EBacc measure. Meanwhile 38 per cent of state schools are planning for numbers to increase year on year [...]

There is a marked decline in the number of pupils studying more than one language, particularly in the independent sector where 45 per cent of schools report a decrease in dual linguists. Fewer opportunities to talk with native speakers and experience other cultures first hand – such as through school exchanges or hosting language assistants in the classroom – is also seen to be negatively impacting languages uptake in schools. There is some concern that this may be exacerbated even further by the UK's decision to leave the European Union [...]

British Council (2017c) [Language Trends Wales](#)

British Council Wales has published its third Language Trends Wales report, which finds that teachers are ‘extremely worried about the future of modern foreign languages’.

Headline statistics from the report include:

- More than a third of Welsh schools now have less than 10% of Year 10 (14-15 year olds) studying a modern foreign language.
- 44% of schools have fewer than five pupils studying a foreign language at AS level and 61% have fewer than five foreign language pupils at A level
- 64% of MFL departments have just one or two full-time teachers, with one third depending on non-British EU nationals for their staff
- Take up of modern foreign languages is continuing to fall in years 10 and 11 indicating that numbers will decline further in 2017 and 2018

British Council (2017d) [Next Generation UK](#)

The UK’s decision to leave the EU has left many young people feeling uncertain about the future and with questions about how the UK’s place in the world may be recast. While some perceive an opportunity to carve out a new future, others are anxious that Brexit will diminish the UK’s influence on the global stage. With the backdrop of this moment of transition, the British Council commissioned Demos to undertake independent research for Next Generation UK, aiming for honest dialogue about the challenges facing young people in the UK, as well as exploring ways in which they can still have opportunities and agency as local and global citizens.

The report is organised according to three key research themes around which we have explored youth attitudes and aspirations: the UK’s place in the world, political and social engagement, and opportunities in education and work.

Collen, I., McKendry, E. and Henderson, L. (2017) [The Transition from Primary Languages Programme to Post-Primary Languages Provision](#). Belfast: NICILT

Key Findings:

- There is no evidence of successful transition arrangements from primary to post-primary education for modern languages in Northern Ireland;
- Year 8 pupils in the study start their language learning from scratch, even when they have been taught a language at primary level;
- There is great variety in who is delivering primary languages, and the teacher’s competence, leading to wide spread variation in pupils’ experiences;
- Children perceive languages to have low status at primary school compared to their first year of post-primary education;
- There is appetite amongst head teachers to co-operate within cross-phase Area Learning Communities (ALCs) to develop primary teacher capacity. However, all principals state that conditions need to be right for this to happen; there needs to be

adequate time allocation, quality of delivery and it is important that head teachers are afforded the autonomy to drive primary languages in their ALC in a way that they see fit.

CBI/Pearson (2017) [Helping the UK thrive: Education and Skills survey 2017](#)

The report finds that 47% of employers were dissatisfied with graduates' foreign language skills, a decrease on 2016 (48%), and 2015 (54%). In the same time, their dissatisfaction with the foreign language skills of school and college leavers has risen (in 2017 66% of employers were dissatisfied with these skills). As in 2014, 2015 and 2016, French, German and Spanish continue to be the European languages most in demand - rated as useful to their business by 51%, 47% and 45% of employers.

New American Economy (2017) [Not Lost in Translation: The Growing Importance of Foreign Language Skills in the U.S. Job Market](#)

In today's globalised world, businesses need employees who can serve customers not only in English, but in a wide range of other languages as well. [...] Given this, it is not surprising that by 2020, proficiency in more than one language will be among the most important skills a job seeker can have. [...] Previous attempts to understand the increasing demand for foreign language skills have been limited in scope. Many existing studies focus on demand for bilingual workers in fields like translation, interpretation, and language instruction—jobs in which language skills are clearly necessary. Other research has focused exclusively on Spanish-English bilinguals, or has relied on small-scale survey data. Such work does not accurately reflect the rich diversity of today's labour and consumer market. It also fails to provide meaningful insights into how immigrants or their children could help to fill the growing demand for foreign language employees. This study aims to overcome the limitations of past research, providing valuable insight into how the demand for bilingual workers has grown at both the state and national levels. We also explore demand for workers who speak specific languages including Arabic, Korean, or French.

Open University (2017) [Video Recordings of Conference](#)

Full recording of the OU digiLAL 2 Research Conference is available online with free access. You will find talks by:

- Dr. Felix Kronenberg (Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, USA), on games in language learning: Language Learning in Digital Gaming Spaces
- Professor Stephen Bax: Research in the School of Languages and Applied Linguistics: aspects of digital language use and language learning
- Dr. Ursula Stickler, Dr. Caroline Tagg, Dr. Nathaniel Owen: Language learning and ageing: cognitive and social benefits of online forum interactions for older learners
- Dr. Caroline Tagg and Dr. Philip Seargeant: Social media and the future of open debate: implications for critical digital literacies in education

- Dr. Tim Lewis: NOT the Interaction Hypothesis: How foreign language learning takes place in e-Tandem exchanges
- Dr. Qian Kan and Professor Stephen Bax: Researching an app for learning Chinese characters

To access the recording please copy and paste this link into your browser window: stadium.open.ac.uk/2916

University of Manchester (2017) [Cross-Language Dynamics](#) Film Projects

Applications were invited from students and recent graduates of the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology at the University of Manchester for the production of short films that connect to the research themes of the AHRC consortium 'Cross- language dynamics: re-shaping community.' The films were funded by the consortium's Translingual Strand led from the Institute of Modern Languages Research at the School of Advanced Study, London.

Welsh Government (2017) [Global futures: two years into our plan](#)

Strategic action 1: We committed to: "promote and raise the profile of modern foreign languages as an important subject not only at Level 2 (GCSE) but also as a longer term choice which can lead to exciting and valued career opportunities".

Through the Global Futures partnership of schools and colleges, regional education consortia, Higher Education Institutions, and language institutes, there has been increased support for languages and the promotion of languages as an opportunity for young people to progress and open up career opportunities.

Strategic action 2: We committed to: "build capacity and support the professional development of the education workforce to deliver modern foreign languages effectively from Year 5 onwards, enabling all learners to benefit from the bilingual plus 1 strategy via: Professional Development for the education workforce, review of the Initial Teacher Education or training (ITET) and pioneer schools network".

We have developed school-to-school support for the provision of languages and provided a range of professional learning opportunities for teachers of modern foreign languages.

Strategic action 3: We committed to: "providing enhanced learning opportunities to engage and excite learners".

We have developed new approaches to improve engagement with learners, which will enable them to experience different ways of studying languages and therefore providing a more exciting learning path. By offering a range of languages and learning via different methods and in different environments, we have promoted language learning as a viable and exciting option to study. Through our Global Futures partners, including the language institutes, the British Council and Confucius Institutes, we have provided opportunities for languages which aim to increase uptake, improve engagement, and raise attainment

White, L. T (2018) [Explaining the Moral Foreign-Language Effect](#)

In 2014, University of Chicago psychologists Sayuri Hayakawa, Boaz Keysar, and their colleagues reported a fascinating finding: When confronted with the “footbridge” version of the well-known trolley problem, bilingual participants were much more likely to choose the utilitarian option—push the man off the bridge to save the lives of five other people—when they considered the problem in their second, non-native language.

The researchers offered a clever explanation for the finding: Pushing a man to his death is emotionally distasteful, even when five lives are saved. But an idea expressed in a foreign language has less emotional impact than the same idea expressed in one’s native language. [...]

But researchers identified an equally plausible explanation: Using a foreign language requires more cognitive effort, which causes the “chooser” to slow down and think more deliberately, more rationally. In the trolley problem, the utilitarian option—pushing the man off the bridge to save five lives—is the more rational option.

Three months ago, Hayakawa, Keysar, and their colleagues reported the results of six experiments involving more than 1,300 bilingual participants. The experiments were designed to identify which explanation for the MFLE—feeling less or thinking more—is the more plausible account [...]