

Focus on Qualified Teacher Status

CILT has been working with teacher training providers to try and facilitate access to Qualified Teacher Status for teachers of community languages. An event was held at CILT on 22 March 2004 to give information about how teachers can work towards QTS. On these pages are details of a PGCE course that has been running since September 2003, another that is due to begin in September 2004 and details of PGCE courses offered throughout the country. Details of how to gain Qualified Teacher Status are on CILT's community languages website: www.cilt.org.uk/commlangs.

PGCE Key Stage 2/3 Languages in the Community, London Metropolitan University

This new and innovative one-year course was set up in September 2003 within the traditions of diversity and the multicultural ethos of London Metropolitan University. It was established to address a need to recruit bilingual teachers who reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of London schools. The course aims to train teachers to teach in multicultural, multilingual classrooms as class teachers or specialist teachers in primary and/or language specialists in secondary schools, enabling them to teach a community language and work with EAL pupils. The course has a strong commitment to urban education and while preparing students to work with all children, emphasises the strengths and needs of bilingual pupils. The course places a particular emphasis on the transition between primary and secondary phases hence the importance of language development across the curriculum is emphasised. The course also aims to bridge the gap between L1 and L2 acquisition across primary, secondary and supplementary schooling, hence working to achieve greater coherence in language education. Our particular focus is Year 6 to Year 7 transition exploring how we can effectively maintain consistent and coherent language development for bilingual pupils.

The central theme of this course is bilingualism and the role of language as a powerful tool for all learning. We place a particular emphasis on the role of languages in development both at macro and micro levels. Our conviction

that bilingualism enhances academic achievement is fundamental to the philosophy of the course.

It is with this in mind that we place a particular emphasis on teaching in supplementary schools, as well as primary and secondary mainstream schools. As part of a requirement for the course, student teachers will work in supplementary schools as well mainstream schools. Here, despite great commitment to and often much success in developing children's understanding and learning through L1, schools are often left to their own devices and teachers mainly working on their own, feel isolated and with very little link with the mainstream schools. The course therefore provides an opportunity for closer links to be developed between mainstream and supplementary schools. Experience of supplementary school teaching provides students with enormous opportunities to reflect on their own experiences as learners in their own community languages as well as help them develop as professionals of both worlds.

The course comprises two main parts. The first part of the course focuses on primary education and looking at learning. Student teachers need to prepare for subject knowledge as primary class teachers with an emphasis on language. Student teachers are also

given a number of tasks to complete during their primary practice, e.g. a case study of a bilingual learner. One of the aims of the primary practice is to equip student teachers to have the necessary skills to become mainstream class teachers. It is often quite common that bilingual teachers are in a supporting role and are perceived by staff or pupils to be ancillary, not a 'real' teacher, which lowers the status of their language and the community in the eyes of the pupils. The second part of the course looks at teaching and learning in secondary and supplementary schools, again using language development as the main focus for its input and helping students to develop their skills to become language specialists and teach their community languages. Secondary and supplementary practice which follows the primary practice runs for nine-and-a-half weeks.

At this stage, the student teachers have just completed their first main teaching practice in primary schools. Overall this practice has gone really well. Personally, it has been heartening to see the development of the confidence of the student teachers teaching whole classes in primary schools, using their bilingualism as a tool in delivering lessons effectively. As tutor as well as an observer, it has been really exciting to see student teachers' specialisms making

New PGCE in Japanese, Mandarin and Urdu

The University of Sheffield will be introducing a full-time PGCE course in Japanese, Mandarin and Urdu from September 2004. Applicants will preferably have some additional knowledge of French or German to be able to teach beginners in these languages. If not, please contact Terry Lamb to discuss possibilities (t.lamb@sheffield.ac.uk).