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Commitment to teaching practice and teaching-related research

By taking a blended-learning approach to my classes on the linguistic history of the German-speaking lands, I am able to enhance student interaction and engagement with authentic audio-visual materials to an extent not possible with traditional approaches to teaching, thereby improving students' understanding of what is often an unfamiliar subject, and increasing their employability through skills embedded into the curriculum.

Evidence of the design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study

I integrate innovative learning techniques – both synchronous and asynchronous – into course units. Before the revision and examination period, for example, I organise a trip to the John Rylands Library (Manchester), providing students with a guided tour of the historic building, and access to special collections of rare early German prints e.g. Luther/Gutenberg bibles. This stimulates independent thought and study skills: students interact with primary materials, and develop a better understanding of concepts discussed in class. This has motivated students considerably, with some now expressing an interest in using the resources for their undergraduate dissertations.

Evidence of excellence in teaching and/or supporting student learning

I talk to students about their knowledge of other foreign languages to help them understand sound changes in German. For example, I bring in the expertise of Polish/Italian speakers when explaining the weakening of unstressed vowels in the history of German, as Polish/Italian have retained full stressed vowels.

In response to student concerns regarding accessibility of books, I utilise *Google Books* and *Google Viewer*, integrating e-resources into Blackboard's VLE, now ensuring constant accessibility of texts for all students. This brings significant benefit to students with limited mobility in particular.

The year before I took on responsibility for teaching historical linguistics, 5% of students agreed or mostly agreed in the unit evaluation questionnaire that online resources had significantly enhanced learning. By implementing the methods described above, that figure is now 92%.

Evidence of excellence in assessment and giving feedback to learners

A university teaching event introduced me to *Turning Point voting pads*. Integrated into my teaching, they ensure that lessons and assessments are interactive for all students. Seeing *group*, not individual, responses to multiple-choice questions on powerpoint slides, students can judge their level within the cohort, and receive immediate detailed feedback from me tailored by the results shown on the slide. The technology ensures assessments are marked consistently and fairly, and individual scores extracted and delivered with feedback to students via Blackboard more clearly and

quickly than traditional methods. Finally, this assessment method does not disadvantage students with learning difficulties, e.g. Dyslexia, as lengthy handwritten essays are not required.

Student feedback revealed a desire for detailed feedback without attending face-to-face meetings. Inspired by research into audio feedback e.g. Lunt & Curran (2009), I set about extending this to audio-visual feedback, combining detailed voice-overs with videos displaying student essays (submitted electronically), drawing attention to points discussed with electronic 'highlighters'. Video screen-casts (using Screencast-O-Matic.com which had been demonstrated at the HEA e-Learning symposium in 2009) are now sent to students electronically. Students appreciate their portability and usefulness for revision. The e-submission of essays also offers added value in terms of enhanced security: no tampering with papers between submission/marking is possible; and enhanced feedback, traditional feedback often only consists of unexplained wavy lines/single words in the margin. After attending the HEA event in March 2010 on *Methods for Pedagogic Research* I intend to conduct research into the wider impact of this feedback, developing my findings into an article for submission to a teaching and learning journal.

The year before I took on responsibility for teaching historical linguistics, 10% of students agreed or mostly agreed in the unit evaluation questionnaire that feedback had been helpful. By implementing the methods described above, that figure is now 84%.

Evidence the integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning

My lectures on linguistic purism are informed by recent scholarship, e.g. McLelland 2005, 2009; Jones 2009, investigating keywords in the history of German. However, these works are not typically stocked by British libraries, and therefore remain inaccessible to students. In computer sessions, however, students now have access to recently digitised *complete* and *original* versions (i.e. not edited versions in modern print) of these texts, e.g. the 1811 publication of Adelung's *Dictionary* available from the Bavarian State Library. By working through prepared question sets, students hone the sort of analytical skills required of a historical linguist.

I have liaised with the Manchester 'GerManC' team currently assembling a major corpus of Early Modern (1650-1800) German texts to give a guest lecture so students learn about ongoing research in the field, and have access to rare authentic texts being entered into the corpus. Students have access to the partial corpus with which they run their own (structured) searches and attempt to draw conclusions in much the same way as a 'real' linguist.

Finally, I integrate my research into lectures, using powerpoint and its audio-visual animations to help students understand concepts otherwise difficult to grasp. By playing audio samples of isolated German dialects recently elicited during fieldwork, students' attention can be maintained and memory recall of the key linguistic changes supported.

Evidence of evaluation of practice and continuing professional development

I welcome all feedback on my teaching as a mechanism for communicating concerns, and monitoring student satisfaction, so I can make regular improvements to teaching. I have developed a questionnaire on Blackboard to elicit qualitative feedback to compliment the numerical feedback currently supplied via end-of-unit- questionnaires.

In addition to professional development activities, I follow the BBC's flagship technology programme *Click*, where I learned of the *Timeglider* software for developing interactive historical timelines which I am currently developing for students.

Finally, I am committed to enhancing the student learning experience outside of my own institution. My abstract for the *Visual Sources* conference in March 2010 (supported by the North-West Network of Historians and History Subject Centre) was recently peer-reviewed and accepted. My application to the German Academic Exchange Service to establish a national forum for German Studies promoting research-led teaching and disseminating best practice is under review. I am also leading discussions as Board Member of the Greater Manchester Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence to establish funds to encourage innovations in teaching practice.

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