

Expansion of Language Training for Russian and East European Studies (REES)

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The project was aimed at the development of comparable courses in four East European languages that could be used in language training at REES Oxford and other CEELBAS universities: Polish, Czech, Serbian and Ukrainian. With this aim the project leader:

- prepared course designs for Polish, Czech, Serbian and Ukrainian using the existing REES Russian language courses as a template, as well as using the resources available through the CEELBAS language repository and collaboration with CEELBAS partner universities and beyond;
- consulted Polish, Czech, Serbian and Ukrainian language teachers at CEELBAS partner-universities (Urszula Chowaniec, Marta Jenkala, Jelena Calic from UCL and Ludek Knittl from Sheffield);
- discussed the resulting course designs at the 2012 Annual Convention of American Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies;
- used the feedback to review the course designs for Polish, Czech, Serbian and Ukrainian, as well as Russian;
- developed the course designs for Polish, Czech, Serbian and Ukrainian in the WebLearn virtual learning environment.
- will run a trial of one of these courses at REES (Oxford) in Michaelmas Term 2013, subject to the need in non-Russian Slavonic language training in 2013-2014.

The above have allowed the project to address the need to expand the language training programme at Russian and East European Studies at Oxford (as well as other CEELBAS universities). Russian language courses (beginner, intermediate, advanced) were designed during Phase 1 of the CEELBAS project to meet the needs of REES MPhil students and to form a core part of the REES interdisciplinary area studies postgraduate programme. The REES language core course provides a language basis for interdisciplinary (social sciences and humanities) study and research.

The collaboration between CEELBAS partner universities within the framework of this project has contributed to the sharing of best practice and encouraged a strategic approach to language training development. The discussions and talks with the world's leading linguists, language specialists and researchers in the field at the ASEEEES 2012 convention encouraged a collaboration between researchers in other REES fields and language specialists in relation to the goals of this project; they also helped to promote CEELBAS internationally as a leading hub for language training and material development for the study of its region, and to raise awareness of the existence and further development of the CEELBAS language repository.

The project has assisted in enhancing language training in Russian and East European Studies and potentially other area studies programmes (Chinese Studies, Japanese Studies, Arabic Studies, etc.) offered at the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies (SIAS, University of Oxford).

The project has contributed to reducing fragmentation and strengthening national provision in 'strategically important but vulnerable' languages. It has also, ultimately, assisted in delivering the CEELBAS's objective of providing highly trained regional experts who have the capacity needed to play a key role in the study of Central and Eastern Europe.

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