

# A MANIFESTO FOR LINGUISTICS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING



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[www.linguisticsinmfl.co.uk](http://www.linguisticsinmfl.co.uk)

# OUR PROJECT

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- **Aim:** enhance **uptake** and **results** in languages by incorporating some **linguistics** into language teaching.

A pupil's definition of linguistics (post mini-course introduction):

"Linguistics allows you to **understand languages** better from **how they were formed, how they changed through time** due to specific history and also how they change from geographical areas. Linguistics include the study of syntax, semantics, phonetics and phonology and **makes you think more about your own language and the differences and similarities between other languages** (from both the same language tree or others)."

# WHO ARE WE?

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Michelle Sheehan,  
Newcastle (PI,  
Portuguese, French,  
Spanish)



Alice Corr,  
Birmingham (Spanish,  
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Anna Havinga, Bristol  
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Susana Lopes  
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Claire Robinson  
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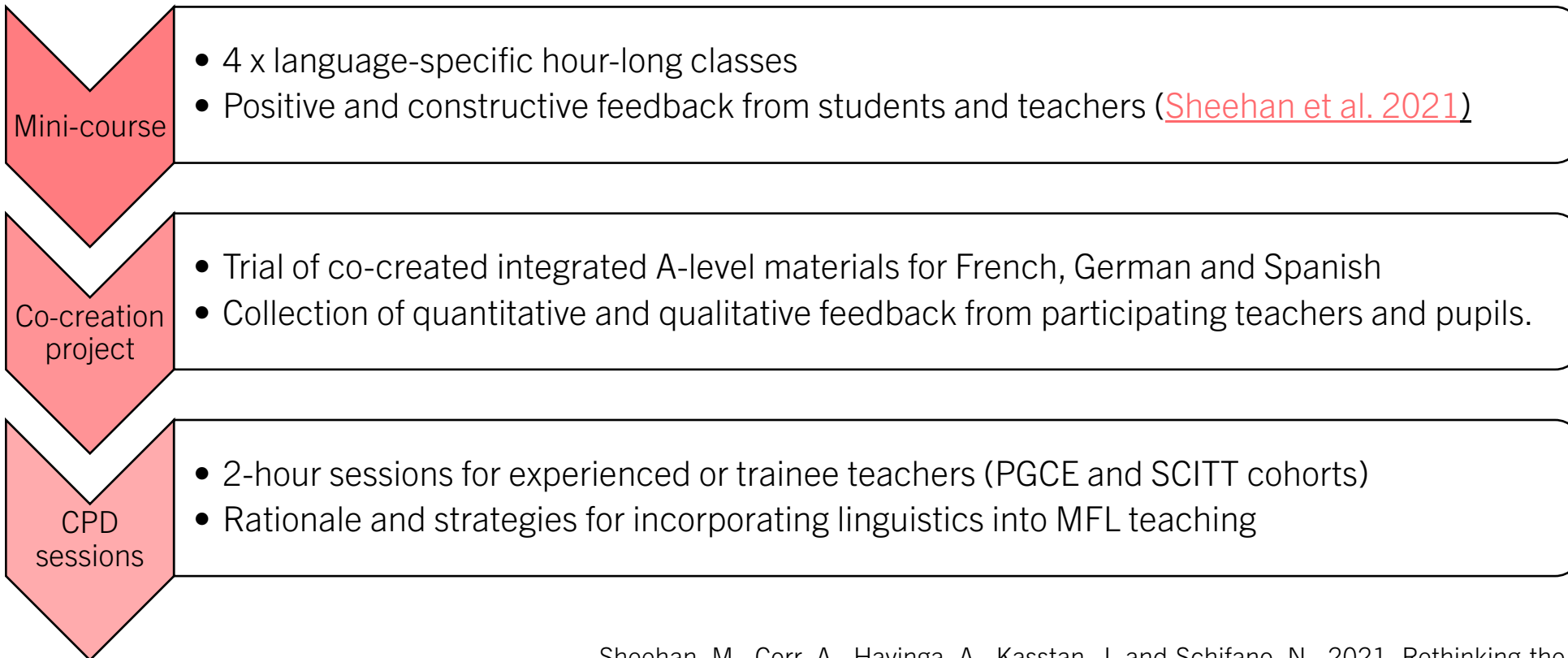
Janette Swainston  
(French teacher)

Christina Westwood  
(German teacher)



# WHAT WE HAVE DONE (SO FAR)

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Sheehan, M., Corr, A., Havinga, A., Kasstan, J. and Schifano, N., 2021. Rethinking the UK Languages Curriculum: Arguments for the Inclusion of Linguistics. *Modern Languages Open*, (1), p.14. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.3828/mlo.v0i0.368>

# CO-CREATION PROJECT: CLASSES

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- Regional languages of France
- Case studies: Breton and Francoprovençal
- Linguistic discrimination
- French outside France

- Attitudes to linguistic diversity in Spain
- Attitudes to language change
- Online communication
- Language and gender

- Regional variation in German
- German in digital media
- Kiezdeutsch (an urban multiethnolect)
- German outside Germany

## Étude de cas : Breton (profil sociolinguistique)



Manifestation 30 novembre 2019 pour la défense des langues régionales (France 3 Bretagne)<sup>25</sup>

Bernd Riexinger

Der ehemalige #VW-Chef #Winterkorn, der wegen dem #Dieselskandal angeklagt wird, bekommt für seine "Verdienste" 3100€ #Rente pro Tag. Andere schufteten ihr Leben lang und fallen in #Grundsicherung. Betrüger in Nadelstreifen dürfen nicht belohnt werden!

4:00 am · 10 Apr 2019

## Online-Kommunikation

Sehen Sie sich die beiden Bilder an. Das erste ist ein Tweet des deutschen Politikers Bernd Riexinger. Das zweite ist eine Unterhaltung zwischen zwei Freunden auf WhatsApp.

- **Wo weichen diese Beispiele von den Regeln der Standardsprache ab?**
- **Welche typischen Merkmale der Online-Kommunikation können Sie finden? Erstellen Sie eine Liste.**

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## ¿Hoy cómo se dice?

1. SOCRUS NON SOCRA → *suegra*
2. MENSA NON MESA →
3. VIRIDIS NON VIRDIS →
4. RIVUS NON RIUS →
5. AUCTOR NON AUTOR →
6. SPECULUM NON SPECLUM →



# FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

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Studying **different versions of French** instead of the one 'accepted' exam-ready version.

Normally we focus on grammar, vocab and exam-based skills, not **wider language learning**.

Enabled a **wider variety of opinion** and means for **debate**.

The class I took **changed my perspective of languages as a whole**.

Actually **useful for genuine use** in speaking Spanish.

It made me realise that the French I study is just a small part of the **linguistic heritage** which makes up France and other francophone countries.

It gives me a **more humanistic perspective** as opposed to just learning vocabulary.



# FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS

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[L]inguistics **reduces the gulf between the knower and the 'non-knower'** and therefore increases the wish to learn.

**Linguistics is a leveller**, and a formidable skill to learn.

They enjoyed the pursuit of the **intellectual challenge**. And that applies I guess to **students from all across the board**.

**Mathematicians and scientists** as well are looking for formulae.

It was very **inclusive**.

They were interested and they understood, and I think what they really got is the **no judgment**.

# STUDENT (N=65) AND TEACHER (N=17) FEEDBACK

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- 100% of teachers felt **confident** teaching the classes.
- 88% of teachers agreed / strongly agreed that the lessons were **helpful** to their students.
- 85% of students agreed / strongly agreed that the content was **interesting**.
- 72% of students agreed / strongly agreed that it is **useful** to study linguistics when learning a language.
- **Most** participating students and teachers agreed / strongly agreed that **linguistics should be taught as part of MFLs** in schools.
- **Potential barriers** to the inclusion of linguistics as a component of MFL A-level: mainly time (N=12) and lack of presence of linguistics in teacher training courses (N=6).

# MANIFESTO THEMES

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- Employability and skills development
- Social inclusion
- Multilingualism
- Motivation
- Transitions
- Curriculum and assessment design



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Increase and diversify **dissemination** of findings in linguistics and **work collectively to promote** use of linguistics-based materials (**DfE, APPG, NCLE, universities, subject associations**)
- Make the case to publishers, exam boards, school/department leaders and teachers that **linguistics topics** fit well within existing specifications and encourage introduction of linguistics components (**DfE, APPG, NCLE, subject associations, universities, teachers**)
- Consider linguistics and linguistics-informed approaches in **curriculum and assessment design** (**DfE, NCLE, exam boards, publishers**)
- Embed linguistics in ITT and CPD (**teacher training providers, DfE, NCLE, schools**)
- Encourage **collaboration** and **co-creation** projects between academics and teachers as well as MFL and English teachers (**universities, schools, subject associations**)

# LAUNCH ENDORSERS



ἵπποπόταμος  
WoLLoW the HiPPo



# CONTACT AND FUNDERS

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