



Dr Catherine Franc
Miss Annie Morton

Project: Monitored Independent Learning in Large Cohorts

School: School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures

Course: FREN10210 French Language **No. of students:** 200 **Level:** UG

Themes: Student Engagement, Feedback, Multimedia

TESS 2011

Teaching Enhancement and Student Success

TESS is a University-wide initiative, funded by the Faculty of Humanities. Working with the Faculty eLearning Teams, academics set up projects aimed at developing course content specific to their needs, through eLearning tools and skills development.

What was the problem?

Students not engaging sufficiently in the building blocks of language learning – grammar and phonetics; Limited class time to devote to such time-consuming basic elements; ILP encouraged with a week by week schedule of activities across all four skill areas, including reflective tasks and action planning, building toward a portfolio of tasks but students still not working regularly or systematically; 200 students means we cannot take in and mark or assess ILP.

How successful was the solution?

We are still at an early stage in the creation of our exercises; much of the work will be carried out over the summer but colleagues who have seen the grammar exercises say this is a completely new and very effective approach to annotating language work on screen and providing feedback. Project already presented at Conference in Newcastle (May 2011) with online publication and possible published conference proceedings. We will be unable to measure success until we have finished the creation phase, created the tracking system within Blackboard and piloted the Monitored ILP.



What did the students think?

Our project will be piloted next year, and evaluated via a questionnaire regarding their perception of the experience, the system usability, as well as actual results in the short, mid and longer term.

How was the problem solved?

General: A strand of monitored ILP to complement the existing programme; Weekly grammar and phonetics exercises to be created on Blackboard and tracked by the system; Exercises live for 10 days to encourage regular working; 90% of tasks must be completed over the year. If not, students will have 10% deducted from overall Fren10210 grade Minimum work for Language Tutors to check stats on Blackboard.

Grammar: Combination of self-tests and short translations envisaged; Wanted this to be attractive and user friendly, as well as 'trackable' through BB (initial attempts using Raptivity but incompatible with our BB needs); Feedback easily built into self-tests, more problematic with translation; Have produced a test translation with a several pronged feedback attack: - immediate feedback underneath explaining the targeted points in written form - one click to a staged student copy annotated using OneNote on a tablet with stylus pen, then corrections added with pen and recorded in real time using Jing screen capture; one click to a mini-tutorial created using PowerPoint narration tool with rehearsed timings built-in; one click to the grammar explanations sheet used in class for this theme.

Phonetics: We are creating a language lab environment in BB using digital recorders and flip cameras; Little or no access to language lab facilities in the School; other ideal software solutions much too costly; Students will have weekly repetition exercises using either Wimba voice tools/Audacity/Sanako and will record themselves in order to compare their production with the original; This will be accompanied by video clips of tutors mouths making the sounds, as well as by inserted graphics of what is going on inside the mouth.

