

## ***Language Acts and Worldmaking*** **Small Grants Scheme**

### **Call for Proposals: *Languages Memory***

*Languages Memory* is the theme for the first *Language Acts and Worldmaking* conference, due to be held in Bush House, London, 13-14 June 2018. We would like to extend these ideas to our latest call for small grants proposals. Through both the conference and our small grants scheme we want to enliven our awareness of the ways in which languages are experienced, practised, taught and researched. We will reflect upon the place of language learning and engage with the material and historical force of languages in the world. We are looking for proposals that relate to these issues, thinking across the six research strands of our project. Possible themes for you to explore are:

- Worldmaking and languages
- History, legacy and future of UK, EU and international languages policies and comparative perspectives
- Language ideologies and pedagogies
- Languages in moments of crisis
- New ecologies of memory
- Digital methods and memory practices in relation to Modern Languages
- Technologies of language learning across time
- Languages and coloniality; the postcolonial and the transnational
- Languages and the archive; mnemonics and memory palaces
- Lost languages, linguicide and future languages
- Remembering language as play
- Diasporic communities and language memory

We welcome applications for workshops, conferences, public events, or other projects that resonate with theme of *Languages Memory*. We are looking for imaginative and innovative proposals and encourage you to respond to the theme of *Languages Memory* in an open and creative manner. We are especially looking for proposals that work with other Higher Education institutions, cultural organisations, and/or private enterprise. In the first instance, please indicate who you might like to work with in your application and we will help broker these relationships.

Successful applications will be invited to present their work at a *Language Acts and Worldmaking* showcase event later in the year.

To submit a proposal, please complete the small grants application form and return to us at: [languageacts@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:languageacts@kcl.ac.uk)

For more details of the project, please visit our website: [www.languageacts.org](http://www.languageacts.org)

If you have any questions about the call for small grants proposals, please mail us at: [languageacts@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:languageacts@kcl.ac.uk)

## **About *Language Acts and Worldmaking***

Language Acts and Worldmaking explores the ways languages affect how we think and feel about ourselves, about other people, and about the world around us.

Through six different research strands, we study how we learn languages, teach languages, and engage with our own culture and the cultures of others through languages.

### **Our Research:**

The six research strands provide different, but overlapping, perspectives on how language acts in worldmaking. When woven together, these strands illustrate the materiality and historicity of the languages we use and take us on a journey from the early Middle Ages to the contemporary world, from medieval Islamic al-Andalus to the former colonies of the Hispanic and Lusophone global empires.

#### **1. *Travelling Concepts* (Vakil, Weiss)**

The Iberian Peninsula is both the originator and product of a polycentric process of global colonization; its history constitutes a workshop for questioning how language constructs the world. In a journey that takes us from Brazil to China, and through multiple languages, we investigate the ideological work performed by the vocabularies that historically cluster around Iberia, whether embedded in individual words, phrases or extended literary forms (narrative, lyric, history). Concepts such as 'global', 'culture', 'civilisation', 'tolerance', 'Europe' and the binary East/ West are central to the way Iberian history has been imagined both inside and outside the Peninsula, from the Middle Ages to the present day.

#### **2. *Translation Acts* (Boyle)**

In Translation Acts, the focus is on the creation of dramatic narratives through theatre in translation and performance. We take up travelling concepts like 'global' and 'tolerance' and explore our lived experience of them. Using the creative capacity of theatre to be world-inventing, creating known and imagined worlds on stage, we question how ideas and beliefs cross cultures, time and space and how we act through the languages we use and create. In our practice we will use participants' innate and learned language knowledge to translate and recreate theatre texts in ways that will radically intervene in our understanding of cultural co-existence in the present.

#### **3. *Digital Mediations* (Spence)**

Digital Mediations explores interactions and tensions between digital culture and Modern Languages research. We examine how digitally mediated culture—whether emerging as born digital artefacts or digitised remediations of pre-digital objects—is constructed, and ask what kinds of 'translation' are enacted as information enters and leaves the digital sphere. We research the interactions from multiple perspectives, reviewing methodologies for studying digital content from a multilingual perspective, while appraising the extent to which digital data, as a complex cultural product in its own right, represents a meaningful record accessible to Modern Languages research and learning.

#### **4. *Loaded Meanings* (Pountain)**

Loaded Meanings invites reflection on the nature of language and its historical development by investigating the linguistic consequences of the single most important cultural contact

observable in the history of the languages of western Europe, namely, the dissemination of 'learned' borrowings (words borrowed directly from or coined on the basis of Latin or Greek) in Ibero-Romance. Originally introduced in the written language of the culturally élite, a large number of these words have become part of frequent everyday usage and so lie at the heart of ordinary speakers' 'worldmaking'.

### **5. *Diasporic Identities* (Alvarez, Astruc)**

This strand takes an applied approach by working with language teachers, active worldmakers who move seamlessly between different linguistic and cultural worlds. Their inner selves, their personal and professional identities, are moulded and enriched by their experiences of diaspora. Highly skilled at worldmaking, teachers draw on their own rich linguistic and cultural resources for translating and re-making cultural concepts. Through this research, we seek to understand how teachers see themselves in their role as mediators between languages and cultures and how they perform this role in their teaching practice. This research also entails a critical appraisal of the institutional and political issues around the provision of modern language teaching in the UK from the perspective of the teachers.

### **6. *Language Transitions* (Kelly, de Medeiros)**

This work takes a research-informed approach to the practical aspects of learning and teaching modern foreign languages and cultures. It targets transitions—those border zones of learning between stages that have become more of a hindrance than a stepping stone for so many language learners—by working on the curriculum at university level, by working with the curriculum at school level, and by trialling transition and foundation courses that allow entry at each further level languages study. It also seeks to empower young students to use their innate language-learning skills, including the mobilisation of their bi- and multi-lingual home experiences.