



REPORT FORM FOR NETWORK ACTIVITIES

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Confidential

1. Lead Applicant

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Present appointment and employing institution

Lecturer in Russian, University of Birmingham

Role in activity

Principle Coordinator

2. Activity details

Type and title of activity

Type of Activity: Language Project, Title, Development of Web-based element of Intermediate Russian Oral Course for Postgraduate Students Project Number: CN08BH-2
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Location

University of Birmingham

Date

From: Jan 2009	To: Jan 2010
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Brief Description of activities carried out (please include or attach a confirmed list of participants)

A course template and materials were developed and produced for 2 hours/week of online tutor-supported Aural study as part of the course "Intermediate Russian: Fieldwork Oral/Aural Skills" (22 week course) by Dr Claire Wilkinson, Project Officer. This project is the first stage of developing an intermediate oral Russian course with full virtual learning environment (VLE) support and could subsequently be extended to include materials for a 2+2, two-hour classroom oral component and two-hour online self study materials to create a 20-credit Master's level course.

PART I: Aural self-study course with tutor support (11-12 Weeks – 22/24 hours of material + self study)

The aim of this part of the course is to develop students' active listening language capabilities to provide an adequate level of linguistic competence to begin fieldwork. *The course is not intended to fully prepare students for*

fieldwork, but rather to develop linguistic “survival” strategies to assist them in orientating and functioning in a Russophone environment in which they are undertaking field research. The course is designed for students who have studied Russian on a beginners course including approximately 22 hours of oral class work as well as an introduction to verb form and cases.

The project developed a series of 12 2-hour online study sessions designed to develop fundamental passive aural and written skills through the use of a communicative approach. Crucially, the course is designed to make students aware of the strategies they can employ to enhance their ability to comprehend spoken Russian. As a “passive” skill (although listening comprehension is a far from passive activity in reality), it is possible to enhance students’ abilities relatively rapidly. The structure of each session is designed to promote the use of “top-down” skills to improve comprehension, such as drawing on prior knowledge to predict content, using non-linguistic cues such as setting and gestures and making decisions about what information is relevant.

The course is divided into 2 thematic blocks, which broadly reflect the fieldwork experience:

Sessions 1 – 6: Acclimatisation and orientation in the fieldwork location
Sessions 7 - 12: Research orientation: surveying the field

PART II (dependent upon further funding) will provide the following:
Sessions 13 - 16: Making contacts and arrangements
Sessions 17 – 21: Engaging with informants
Session 22: Fieldwork simulation (mock assessment)

Each session takes the following basic format, consisting of a series of fieldwork-orientated listening topic-based tasks:Pre-listening tasks:

Pre-listening predictive task based on a short summary of the given topic.
Vocab review and consolidation.

Listening exercises:

Gist questions to be completed in English, facilitating student’s ability to identify cues/indications of key information.

Listening comprehension.

Exercises reproducing key information in Russian (cloze exercise, reinforcing vocabulary introduced earlier plus other core vocabulary).

Gap-fill in English.

Summary.

Post-listening exercises:

Based on self-review of answers to listening exercises using transcript and translation of the video clip.

Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have developed skills enabling them to:

- 1) Understand a variety of spoken Russian texts relating to fieldwork-related topics.
- 2) Be able to identify specific information and record that information in a timely manner.
- 3) Summarise in English main points of the text.
- 4) Record in Russian key signposting sections of an aural text.
- 5) Act reflexively and predictively when encountering new aural texts and develop strategies to cope with unusual registers and lexis.

3. Achievement of stated aims and objectives

Please summarise how the stated aims and objectives of the activities proposed have been achieved and how these have helped to further the aims and objectives of CEELBAS.

PART I of the project – to provide a complete aural course for postgraduates preparing for fieldwork has been completed and will be available for all CEELBAS institutions to use. It has been road-tested by PG student users and therefore provides a model of best practice for further courses in fulfilling CEELBAS's aim of furthering the provision of Russian language training for postgraduate students.

CREES's expertise in developing Russian courses and materials for PGs is second to none in the UK. The project is unique and innovative in that it provides the first aural course for PG students preparing for a broad range of fieldwork activities; it can be simultaneously used as a self-study or teacher supported course providing a flexibility that CEELBAS institutions need given the varying resources available for PG language support.

4. Outcomes

Please indicate the outcomes and 'value for money' of activities carried out.

The main outcomes of the project are a robust template for an aural tasks course, and the materials, texts, and translations for a one-semester course itself.

The template can be easily adapted by CEELBAS institutions (see below). This is itself is a very good use of resources and 'value for money' in that it allows any individual or group to adapt the course for existing competencies, or even different languages.

The second outcome is a series of 12 aural texts comprising over an hour of listening material, transcripts for each text, translations for each text, and a stand-alone self-study course of exercises accompanying each text, which, equally can be easily adapted for support by a teacher.

Value-for-money of the project can be demonstrated by the comprehensive nature of the materials created, the flexibility of the course for adaptation for class or self-study, the practical, student-centred course design in an area of urgent need in PG language provision, and finally, the 'off-the-shelf' template structure allowing replication for different levels and languages.

Template follows:

Intermediate Russian for Fieldwork: Aural Tasks Template

A: Prelistening tasks

1. A brief written introduction to video/audio clip topic is provided. On the basis of this short description and before watching the clip, answer the following questions, making notes as necessary.

- a. what sort of information is likely to be provided (figures/statistics? dates? facts? opinions?)
- b. what types of people are likely to be present? (experts? professionals? people with a particular occupation? men? women? children? minorities?)
- c. what questions are likely to be asked?
- d. what sort of views/opinions are likely to be expressed and by whom?
- e. what linguistic register(s) is/are likely to be used?
- f. write down 8-10 words in Russian that you think are likely to be used in the clip

2. Review and familiarise yourself with the vocabulary list below:

[key words and phrases provided with English equivalent – max 30 – written only, no recording]

B: Listening tasks

1. Watch the clip through from beginning to end without stopping. Write down your immediate impressions: what is the gist of the clip? What is particularly noticeable about the people or place?

2. Play the clip again and check you've found all the words in the vocabulary list.

3. Answer the following questions. You may play the clip as many times as you wish.

[Listening comprehension questions – max 15]

4. Write down the words/phrases that support the following statements:

[10 statements in chronological order]

5. Complete the gap fill below

[2 paras/150 word Russian gap fill]

6. Using the table below, create a summary of the clip and key words and/or facts. Write in Russian where possible, then supplement your answers in English if necessary [table will need to be larger]. You may listen to the clip as many times as you wish and your answers can be in note form.

Время	Кто?	Где?	О чём?	Ключевые слова или факты
0:00-				

1:00				
1:00- 2:00				
2:00- 3:00				
3:00- 4:00				
4:00- 5:00				

C: Post-listening tasks

1. Working with the transcript provided, play the clip one more time and correct/add information to your answers to the exercises in part B.
2. Using the translation provided, check your answers to the exercises in part B.
3. Look back on your answers to exercise A1. Were your predictions correct? If not, consider how you would answer the questions in hindsight.
4. What further questions could you ask the people featured in the clip? Write them down in Russian.
5. What other words/phrases would it have been useful to know? Write them down in Russian and English.

5. Breakdown of total costs for workshops (please attach evidence of expenditure)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Key speakers (Travel, accommodation and subsistence)	
Postgraduate participation	
Room/equipment hire	
Administration costs	
Printing and publicity (including conference packs)	
Other (please specify	
Total expenditure	
Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS	

6. Breakdown of total costs for projects (please attach evidence of expenditure)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Staff costs	£4861.82
Equipment/technical costs	
Administration costs	
Other (please specify	
Total expenditure	£4861.82
Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS	£4861.82

7. Dissemination and further research

Please give details of dissemination of the outcomes of the workshop/project and any further research planned.

All project materials, rubric and template will be available online for use by CEELBAS institutions, either in a dedicated web-space or the CEELBAS site itself.

8. Signature and date

Applicant's signature

Jeremy Morris
Date: 05/02/2010

Institutional authorisation (if required)

Position:
Date:

Institutional CEELBAS Network Primary Contact

Tricia Carr
Date:

This form must be accompanied by an invoice from the applicant's institution, supported by receipts or other evidence of the expenditure incurred.

Please send the completed form to: CEELBAS Administrator, SSEES, UCL, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT and by email to: ceelbas-network@ssees.ucl.ac.uk.

