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National University
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CENTRE FOR LANGUAGE STUDIES

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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CENTRE FOR LANGUAGE STUDIES FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Centre for Language Studies (CLS) was established in July 2001 by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) to streamline and better facilitate language teaching and learning. CLS serves all three divisions of the FASS – Asian Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences. The members of the Centre are the language teachers within FASS who have been brought together to allow the teaching of foreign languages to be seen as a distinct part of the Faculty's programme and to maximize the pedagogical and research talents that the Faculty has in the area of language teaching. We have at present some 40 full-time and 65 part-time academic staff in the CLS. Altogether, twelve languages can be studied: Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese. The modules are available to Arts students as part of their major requirements (Area Studies students) and as unrestricted electives outside of their major. In addition, they are also offered to students in the University's Student Exchange Programme and to cross-faculty students who may read them as breadth modules outside of their faculties.

Why is the CLS committed to teaching and research?

Teaching and research are the twin pillars of the Centre's efforts to create an impact on both the university landscape and the international language education community.

CLS endeavours to follow and actively contribute to best practices in University foreign language teaching. The highly positive student feedback is indicative of the high standards of teaching that we have attained. We are committed to maintaining and continuously raising these standards by seeking new, innovative approaches to teaching and encouraging our teachers to develop themselves professionally. We have made significant inroads into the application of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to language learning. Comprehensive course websites have been created to provide students with a multitude of interactive self-access resources.

CLS subscribes to the belief that quality research will lead to improvements in the quality of teaching. To create a healthy research culture and to facilitate the translation of research into better practice, we actively encourage staff as well as invite international scholars of good standing to deliver lectures and conduct seminars and workshops under the Centre's auspices. Our staff engage in research in second and foreign language education, focusing on both theoretical and applied research. We encourage especially the study of the application of new technologies to second and foreign language teaching and learning as well as their impact on teaching methodology, curriculum development and learning processes. The CLS publishes a peer-reviewed academic journal, the Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, in the Internet at the URL: <http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg>.

What are the benefits of language learning?

Foreign language learning has been the cornerstone of the efforts of all major civilizations in history to reach out and make contact with other civilizations. In today's fast globalizing world where international boundaries no longer constitute barriers to the movement of people, knowledge of foreign languages is an important asset which helps unlock doors. Learning a foreign language cultivates an open and inquisitive mind and provides deeper insights into the life, culture and business practices of the foreign country. Foreign language proficiency will provide students with an important research tool for all disciplines. It will naturally also improve their mobility after graduation and allow them to pursue further studies or advance their careers abroad. Employment prospects both in the public and private sectors (IE Singapore, EDP, MFA, STB, multinational corporations, Singapore companies seeking to expand overseas etc.) are bright for graduates with working knowledge of a foreign language.

What you might want to know about language classes

Employing progressive and learner-centred teaching methodologies, foreign language courses at the CLS have surprised many students who expected to be mere passive listeners in class, doing no more than just note-taking. Instead CLS language students have always found their classes to be a refreshing change from their usual routine and very much unlike their other courses. Students are actively involved in various classroom activities that allow them to interact with fellow students and their teachers. Partner and group work are standard features of the language classes which are usually restricted in size to ensure maximum individual attention and interaction. Language proficiency is built up gradually through communication and the application of structures, vocabulary and strategies acquired in class. The CLS is extremely pleased about frequent student reports that they never cease to look forward to their next language class.

How do I find out more about the CLS and its language modules?

Latest information on the Centre's staff and activities can be found on the CLS website: <http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/cls>. Information on individual language programmes can be found at: <http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/cls/langmod.htm>.

Or you may wish to call at the CLS General Office in AS 4, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (please refer to address on the front leaf). You are also welcome to send your enquiries by e-mail to the respective language convenors and management support officers listed on the back of this brochure.



▼ Students on Immersion Programme in Thailand

▲ Communicative Activity in a Language Class

