

Press Release

16/03/2012

*Language learning: transforming tomorrow!*

**What's the future for language learning in the UK?**

We'll be asking guests from the worlds of education, business, politics and the media about the challenges ahead for languages at Language World, the UK national conference for language teachers. Our panel debate, *'Future perfect?'* takes place from **2:15 – 3:45pm** on **Friday 30 March** at the **University of Manchester**.

Chair **Rosie Goldsmith** is a proud champion of languages and a journalist specialising in arts and international affairs, and our panelists will be actor **Larry Lamb**, known for his TV roles in Eastenders and Gavin and Stacey; **David Kennedy**, head teacher of the John Warner School in Hertfordshire; **Lizzie Fane**, founder of [Thirdyearabroad.com](http://Thirdyearabroad.com); and **David Smith**, Head of the English Interpreting Unit at the European Commission in Brussels.

Larry Lamb is passionate about the importance of languages learning, especially for disadvantaged young people. "I'm a working-class boy from North London and learning languages opened up the world for me," he says. He is deeply concerned about the diminishing opportunities available for students for all walks of life to learn languages. "You can't put a price on it. If ordinary children are discouraged from learning languages, it weakens our society." Rosie will also interview Larry in a special one-on-one interview on **Saturday 31 March** at **9:50am**.

**Language World** is one of the biggest annual events for teachers of languages and brings together all that's best in the world of language teaching: top thinkers speaking on topics close to their hearts, leading practitioners sharing their latest resources, policy makers explaining the thinking behind recent developments and passionate teachers ready to share ideas and exchange views. Amid the current Curriculum Review, it encourages delegates to get connected, shape the debate, and to become part of the future of language learning.

**ENDS**

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**Notes to Editors:**

1. **The Association for Language Learning (ALL):** is the UK's major professional association for teachers of foreign languages, with around 5,000 members in all educational sectors. [www.all-languages.org.uk](http://www.all-languages.org.uk)
2. **Language World:** is ALL's national conference. Delegates are language teachers and language teaching professionals from all over the UK. In 2012, the event is being held at the University of Manchester on Friday 30 and Saturday 31 March. <http://tiny.cc/LW2012>
3. **Rosie Goldsmith:** is a journalist specialising in arts and current affairs, in the UK and abroad, who speaks French, German, and Italian. She has travelled the world, covering events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of apartheid in South Africa, and human rights in Egypt, and has presented flagship BBC radio shows like Front Row, A World In Your Ear and Crossing Continents. <http://www.soundsright.biz/about-us/about-us>
4. **Larry Lamb:** speaks five languages – learnt at school, evening classes, and work – and has spoken up for children learning languages on the daytime TV show, *Loose Women*. He hopes to use his celebrity status to support languages further, particularly in the current debate about languages in the National Curriculum. [http://www.dawbell.com/clients/larry\\_lamb](http://www.dawbell.com/clients/larry_lamb).
5. **Lizzie Fane:** is the founder of ThirdYearAbroad.com, an online support network for students who work, study or volunteer abroad during their degree course, and has recently founded LANGSA, the Language Graduates' and Students' Association, to give young language enthusiasts the opportunity to come together and inspire other people to learn languages, based on their experiences. <http://www.thirdyearabroad.com/>
6. **David Kennedy:** is Headteacher of the John Warner School. Since then the school's headline rate of 5 A\*-C GCSEs has risen from 13% to 92% and the school has more than doubled in size with a large sixth form. He believes that language education is an essential means of equipping young people for future success. <http://www.johnwarner.org.uk/>
7. **David Smith:** is Head of Directorate General for Interpretation's English Unit at the European Commission. David is currently involved in a campaign to encourage multi-linguists to become interpreters for the EU. [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/about-dg-interpretation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/about-dg-interpretation/index_en.htm)