



IBIS – Initiative for Bilingual Studies

IBIS aims to develop and organize a course of study which determines and addresses the scientific and linguistic challenges of a globalized society and its communication and integration requirements. This joint project of two faculties (English Studies/ History) strives to understand, describe and practise intercultural learning in teaching and research fields within the context of a common European identity.

IBIS promotes the professionalization of English, the lingua franca of our times. On the one hand, we encourage the education of English language practitioners – both students in teacher-training as well as BA- and MA students. On the other hand, we conduct psychological fundamental research on multilingualism as well as determining the indicators and parameters for empirical ascertainment which are essential in order to develop competences in this field.

IBIS advances the intercultural competence of all parties involved: The close link to the learner's own culture and cultural identity is a benefit of bilingual education. The implementation of bilingual education into the subject of history facilitates the development of an identity apart from one's own nationality. In comparing the foreign view to the individual perspective, the learner can better come to terms with a foreign culture, while differences as well as interrelations become apparent. Thus, the pupils learn to act appropriately in a multicultural environment and strengthen their own personal cultural identity.

History Happens

History Happens is currently the primary IBIS project and is sponsored by the program „Denkwerk“ of the Robert-Bosch-Stiftung. The project strives to link the University of Cologne with schools in the Cologne region and is under the auspices of Prof. Dr. Christiane M. Bongartz (University of Cologne, Department of English Linguistics and dean of the “Philosophische Fakultät”) and Myrle Dziak-Mahler (Department of History). Pupils, teachers and student teachers have the opportunity to participate in lectures and further education resources of the university. They also take part in the development of instructional material for bilingual history classes and its subsequent evaluation. In addition, diagnostic methods for individual 2nd language acquisition are tested and evaluated in close cooperation with selected schools.

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awarded with the
European Language Award 2007

