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| Institution: University College London |
| Unit of Assessment: 28 – Modern Languages and Linguistics |
| Title of case study: Internationalising Dutch Studies |
| <p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research on the discipline of Dutch Studies conducted at UCL contributed to recommendations from the Raad voor de Nederlandse Taal en Letteren (Council for Dutch Language and Literature), providing policy advice to the Committee of Ministers overseeing the Dutch Language Union, the intergovernmental organisation responsible for the internal and external language policies of the Netherlands and Flanders. This in turn led to a new policy of the Dutch Language Union, which influences a €12 million annual budget supporting Dutch language infrastructure across the world. It also led to substantial worldwide debate amongst university teachers and to changes in how these subjects are taught and researched.</p> |
| <p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Two studies undertaken at UCL by Jane Fenoulhet (joined UCL 1983; Senior Lecturer 1992-2009; Professor since 2009) sought to elucidate the structure of the discipline of Dutch Studies. They focused particularly on the nature of the boundary between the disciplines of history and literature and the role of literary history in the curriculum and in research carried out by Dutch Studies departments. Two key aims of the research were i) the internationalisation of university curricula in Dutch Studies by using post-structuralist theory to challenge assumptions about the rigidity of these disciplinary boundaries, thus paving the way for a more fluid conceptualisation of Dutch Studies, and ii) to provide a critical perspective from outside the Netherlands and Flanders [b], [d].</p> <p>An early study (2004, [a]) contrasted internal and external perspectives on Dutch literary history, while subsequent research (2005–6) explored a historiographical shift to narrativism and renewed interest in the historical context of literature in the last decades of the twentieth century [b]. It examined the prefaces and introductions to histories of Dutch literature since 1925 to track shifts in the relationship of historicist thought to the study of literature. Demonstrating the fluidity of this relationship, the research recommended a renewed emphasis on cultural, social and political history within the Dutch Studies curriculum worldwide. A more practical study demonstrated the role that literature and literary history can play in university curricula outside the Netherlands and Flanders [c]. Thus the follow-up study (2007–8) focused on disciplinary practices outside the Netherlands and Flanders, using the UK as a case study [d]. Using research undertaken by Professors of Dutch Studies at the University of London between 1919 and 1970, this genealogical study again focused on the boundaries between the disciplines of history and literature. More specifically, it tracked their separation from the nineteenth-century area of study known as Letters/ Letteren – which persisted longer in the Netherlands than in the UK – into distinct academic disciplines. The study linked the increasing professionalisation of history to the denigration of historical work within Dutch Studies in London, a shift which correlated with its disappearance from the Dutch Studies curriculum in the field generally.</p> <p>Fenoulhet proposed the reinsertion of history into Dutch Studies and, ultimately, the latter's reconceptualisation as a multidisciplinary practice. She further suggested that Dutch Studies as institutionalised in the 'home' countries of the Netherlands and Flanders – where the study of Dutch beyond the borders was referred to as 'extra muros' and traditionally viewed as insignificant to the practice of the discipline 'intra muros' – should adopt a more outward-facing and international perspective.</p> |
| <p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <p><u>All publications listed underwent rigorous peer review</u></p> <p>[a] Jane Fenoulhet, 'Canon? Welke canon?', in Arie Gelderblom et al., <i>Neerlandistiek de grenzen voorbij. Handelingen Vijftiende Colloquium Neerlandicum</i>, Woubrugge: Internationale Vereniging voor Neerlandistiek, 2004, pp. 113–122. http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/han001200301_01/han001200301_01_0009.php</p> <p>[b] Jane Fenoulhet, 'Tijdgebonden. De onmisbaarheid van geschiedenis in het literatuurcurriculum'</p> |

Impact case study (REF3b)

in Kris Steyaert (ed.), *n/f 7. De historische dimensie in de neerlandistiek*. Association des néerlandistes de Belgique francophone, 2007. pp. 55–71.

<http://www.anbf.be/nl/publicaties/tijdschrift-nf/2007-nf-7-historische-dimensie-neerlandistiek>

[c] Jane Fenoulhet, 'Toch canoniek ? Naar de integratie van literatuur in het universitaire Nvt-curriculum', in Jane Fenoulhet et al., *Neerlandistiek in contrast. Bijdragen aan het zestiende Colloquium Neerlandicum*, Amsterdam : Rozenberg, 2007, pp. 371–380.

http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/han001200701_01/han001200701_01_0029.php

[d] Jane Fenoulhet, 'Disciplinaire spanningen: De Londense leerstoelen' in Matthias Hüning, Jan Konst & Tanja Holzhey (eds.), *Geschiedenis van de extramurale neerlandistiek in Europa*, Münster: Waxmann, 2010. pp. 305–318. REF2 submission.

[e] Jane Fenoulhet and Jan Renkema (eds.), *Internationale neerlandistiek: een vak in beweging*, Gent: Academia Press, 2010. Available on request.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Dutch is a mid-sized European language with about 22 million native speakers, but historical reasons have led to it having a global profile. The language is taught as far afield as Georgia, South Africa and Indonesia, and in most cases is largely dependent on support from the Dutch Language Union (DLU, or Nederlandse Taalunie). This is a unique intergovernmental treaty organisation which sets the language policies of its Dutch-speaking member countries, and provides financial and logistical support to teaching and research in Dutch Studies around the world. The research described above catalysed a global paradigm shift in the disciplinary conceptualisation of Dutch Studies, both among practitioners and in the DLU itself. Via this influence on the Dutch policy body, the research informed the deployment of a 5-year budget of some €60 million, thereby shaping the ways in which lecturers at approximately 220 faculties of Dutch in 43 countries [p. 2, see 1 in section 5] define, teach and research this discipline.

Fenoulhet's research was the basis for her contributions as one of a team of four academics commissioned in 2008 by the Raad voor de Nederlandse Taal en Letteren (RNTL), to investigate the position of Dutch Studies both within and beyond the 'home countries' of the Netherlands and Flanders in Belgium, and to give policy recommendations on the future of the discipline. The findings in the report were supported by a practitioner survey and an academic conference, and were based in part on Fenoulhet's earlier study of the development of Dutch Studies.

The report resulting from that commission was generated specifically to provide policy advice to the Netherlands' Committee of Ministers, which oversees the work of the Dutch Language Union. Through this report the RNTL, which sets the DLU's policy direction, sought to revitalise a discipline which was increasingly seen by its practitioners as divided and stagnating, and especially to redress the disjuncture between *intra muros* (that is, 'home countries') practitioners, regarded as occupying the centre of the disciplinary field, and those *extra muros*: practitioners operating in its periphery. Publications arising from the research described in section 2 had, in fact, already emphasised the importance of supporting two-way academic exchange between *intra* and *extra muros* practitioners, and suggested pathways to achieve this. Fenoulhet et al's recommendations for a move to an *international* or *transnational* (rather than a merely national[istic]) approach within Dutch Studies – as well as for the steps required to effect this – were incorporated wholeheartedly into the RNTL policy advice document *Naar een internationale en interdisciplinaire neerlandistiek*, published in March 2009 [2] and submitted to the Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth and Sport [3].

This document prompted a paradigm shift in the field of Dutch Studies, notably the International Association for Dutch Studies, a key channel for the distribution of funding from the DLU and crucial player in catalysing change in Higher Education teaching and research. The recommendations to which Fenoulhet's work contributed enabled the DLU to instigate long-desired change in the field. The DLU has subsequently integrated these recommendations into policies and work plans.

Policy reorientation at the DLU

Policy recommendations in the RNTL document linked to Fenoulhet's research include: [2]

Impact case study (REF3b)

- Stimulating international cooperation and developing joint curricula (3.1.1)
- Reducing administrative obstructions to cooperation between universities (3.1.2)
- Furthering international collaboration in teaching (3.1.3)
- Supporting the research community outside Netherlands and Belgium (3.2.1)
- Supporting journals of international Dutch studies (3.2.2)
- Supporting joint PhD supervision (3.2.3)
- Encouraging/ supporting opportunities for public and international research (3.2.4)

The extent of the DLU's policy reorientation relating to its definition and promotion of Dutch Studies was demonstrated by its new efforts to support debate and dialogue, on an equal footing, between practitioners *intra* and *extra muros*. The RNTL policy advice document was launched by the Chair of the RNTL and the Director-General of the DLU in August 2009 at the University of Utrecht, at the 17th conference of the International Association of Dutch Studies, a body part-funded by the DLU, which supports Dutch Studies teaching around the world. Following recommendation 3.2.4, and in recognition of its importance for the direction of the discipline as a whole, the Association devoted to it a special issue of its journal *Internationale neerlandistiek* ('International Dutch Studies'), formerly known as the *Neerlandica extra muros* (the journal for 'outsiders'; renamed 2008) [4], funded by the DLU.

Furthermore, Fenoulhet and the chair of the Association selected key papers from the 2009 conference which represented the multidisciplinary way forward for Dutch Studies. These formed the first volume in a new series entitled *Lage Landen Studies* (Low Countries Studies), intended to provide publication opportunities for researchers practising the new transnational discipline. Volume 1, edited by Fenoulhet and Renkema, bears the programmatic title *Internationale neerlandistiek: een vak in beweging* (International Dutch Studies: a discipline on the move [e]). By 2013, six volumes had been published, demonstrating the lively response from the field. [4]

Changes in policy on the support and practice of Dutch Studies

The DLU's reorientation led to several specific changes in the ways in which Dutch Studies are funded and designed. In 2010, Fenoulhet was appointed as the only international academic advisor to the 12-member RNTL policy advice body, with a watching brief covering Dutch Studies as a worldwide academic subject [5]. Many of the recommendations she has made both in her research outputs and within that forum are reflected in subsequent decisions taken by the RNTL, including in its new five year plan (2012) advising on priorities for the allocation of its budget of €60 million during 2013–17 [5]. Thus, for example, despite budgetary cuts prompted by the financial crisis the plan includes, as a key innovation, the provision of funding for digital access, a priority which reflects recommendation 3.2.1 that the needs of professionals outside the Dutch language area be supported through the provision of an excellent digital infrastructure. In 2012, for example, the DBNL was (the digital library of Dutch literature, an important resource for Dutch Studies worldwide) granted €[text removed for publication] in the DLU budget [6].

The current five-year plan also give a high priority to support for literary translation through support for the expansion of a new bi-national Masters in Literary Translation at the Universities of Utrecht and Leuven, to be launched in September 2013, and to include the participation of Dutch Studies outside the language area [10]. UCL and the University of Münster were proposed as initial international partners. International meetings to discuss these developments were funded by the DLU via the Expertisecentrum Literair Vertalen (Centre of Expertise in Literary Translation) [5, p. 58–9] from 2012.

Following the revision to its approach to the promotion of Dutch Studies in 2010 [7], the DLU made available funding opportunities according to the needs of international Dutch Studies. Support to encourage contacts between researchers inside and outside the language area was developed, for instance, a fund to enable research visits to the Netherlands or Flanders of up to 6 months to fulfil the objectives of supporting young researchers, promoting Dutch Studies and contribute to its independence internationally, and promote accredited departments [7].

Changes in how Dutch Studies is practised

The DLU's change in orientation led to support for new forums where practitioners from around the world could engage in dialogue, on an equal footing regarding the future of their field. The open

discussions facilitated by these forums are also a pathway for broader change within the discipline, prompting a move towards collaboration for which the report proposed channels and the DLU's changed priorities provide material support [11]. See, for example the digital platforms hosted by the International Association for Dutch Studies: in particular, the platform on Internationale Historische Neerlandistiek which hosted informal international debate among colleagues and ultimately gave rise to volume 6 in the *Lage Landen Studies* series, *Beatrijs de wereld in*, a study of translations of the medieval Dutch text in several European languages [11].

In 2010, the University of Amsterdam launched the peer-reviewed English-language *Journal of Dutch Literature*, in line with recommendation 3.2.2. As its website states: 'With its methodological and frequently interdisciplinary approach, the journal places Dutch literature in an international context, treating literary phenomena against the broader perspective of international literary research' [8], an approach that accords entirely with Fenoulhet's research and policy recommendations. Similarly, an international interdisciplinary conference (the 18de Colloquium Neerlandicum) held at the University of Antwerp in August 2012 with funding from the DLU [9] aimed to stimulate relevant changes in teaching. The conference included a programme of facilitated discussion on the nature of the Dutch Studies curriculum at universities around the world, and its future shape to ensure the internationalisation of the material taught as well as trans-national co-operation between universities [9].

There have been significant changes since 2009 in the extent of and significance attached to translation studies. Previously frequently considered peripheral to Dutch Studies, its role in intercultural exchange is now accepted, as is the role of departments outside the language area which are now seen as capable of producing good translators. In the current 5-year plan [5 p58-9], literary translation is identified as a site of dynamic exchange which strengthens the study of a language and culture. Since the publication of that report:

- In 2012 Utrecht, Ghent and other universities launched talks on developing a new joint masters programme in literary translation. [10]
- At UCL itself, in 2012 the DLU, via the Steunpunt Literair Vertalen, supported a workshop on Literary Translation, to bridge the gap between university study and literary translation as a career. Fourteen students from all over the UK were selected. The DLU, through the Expertisecentrum Literair Vertalen, contributed 40% of the total costs which came to €10,000.[10]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[1] Worldwide reach of the DLU: <http://bit.ly/16G6mvf>.

[2] *Naar een internationale en interdisciplinaire neerlandistiek*. 'Towards an international and interdisciplinary Dutch Studies' PDF available on request.

[3] Advice to the Flemish Minister of Culture, Youth, Sport (19 March 2009). <http://bit.ly/18NV3it>.

[4] Emmeline Besamusca, Arie J. Gelderblom en Jan D. ten Thije (eds.) Special issue of *Internationale neerlandistiek*, no. 48, Dec. 2010. Link leads to the introduction: <http://bit.ly/GzCpAS>. Six issues of *Lage Landen Studies*: <http://bit.ly/1eZf1uW>.

[5] RNTL advisory board (at 31 July 2013): <http://bit.ly/1dVJwyR>. Fenoulhet's position confirmed by Secretary to the RNTL and letter of appointment. Policy document 2013-2017: <http://bit.ly/GzOGor>.

[6] €950K support for DBNL in 2012 corroborated by Secretary to the RNTL.

[7] Grant structure: <http://bit.ly/GzOlfM>. Support for international academics: <http://bit.ly/1dVJDKS>.

[8] *Journal of Dutch Literature*. <http://bit.ly/16G6D19>.

[9] 18th conference, with DLU ('Nederlandse Taalunie) funding: <http://bit.ly/1g30vBg>. Refer to 30–31 August in the Conference programme: <http://bit.ly/1hki6GO>.

[10] Ghent-Utrecht literary translation collaboration: <http://bit.ly/18NVHws>. Leuven-Utrecht Joint Masters in Literary Translation: <http://bit.ly/1g30Dkr>. Draft MoU between UCL and Utrecht.

[11] Confirmed by the Chairman, International Association of Dutch Studies.