



On March 16th 2015, we had the opportunity to present at our Department's 'Language Studies' PhD Conference. Our colleagues from the Departments of Modern Languages, Institute of Education and Psychology at the University of Reading also participated as presenters.

It was a valuable process to prepare our slides carefully, which developed through the course of the spring term of 2015. The fact that we rehearsed our presentations in front of our DELAL colleagues before the Conference provided us with helpful comments.

We expected the day to be long and stressful, since it was scheduled to start from 9am to 6 pm. However, it was a fruitful and interesting experience, and we were well refreshed with tea and coffee during the day, as well as being given a delicious lunch!

We were exposed to different ideas and cultural backgrounds, such as Saudi Arabia, Namibia, Botswana and Poland. The presentations covered a variety of topics, including bilingualism, computer-mediated communication (CMC), language impairments, phonological variation and corpus-based learner language analyses. We particularly enjoyed that we presented to our lecturers and colleagues from different language-related fields, a fact that not only provided us with useful and enriching feedback, but also prepared us for future Conferences with broader audiences. Out of this experience, we also practiced our presentation skills, learned how to manage our time and anxiety and how to efficiently respond to possibly challenging questions.

How one student prepared:

"I started with looking at the Table of contents in my proposal. Under each title, I thought of the most important aspects that I want to talk about. I turned those brainstormed items into an organized outline and started to develop the outline into a presentation. This way, I focused on the major items in my study without going into details."

Importance of rehearsing:

"I cannot stress enough the importance of rehearsals with some audience. I also tried to record myself when rehearsing to criticize myself."

Enjoying the variety

"What I enjoyed can be summarized in one word, 'variety': variety was found in people presenting, countries presented, fields explored, research questions raised and approaches chosen."

Read more about another student's experience in her blog here:

<https://germanintheuk.wordpress.com/2015/03/17/conference-proceedings/>



fruitful, interesting, responding, topics, audience, preparation, practice, cultures, useful, efficient, enriching, managing, variety

