

# AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF STATE SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS (ACSSO)

The national voice of parents of children in Australia's public schools and their school communities

## LANGUAGES EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

Volume Two Number One: 7 February 2008

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<http://www.languageseducation.com/news1080207.pdf>

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### ***Languages Matter!***

*We welcome all our readers to the International Year of Languages 2008 and its unifying global theme: "Languages Matter!"*

*Articles in this first issue for 2008 include:*

- *International Mother Language Day 21 February – and a national school resource project for the International Year of Languages 2008*
- *Michael Clyne on our opportunities to open up the world for our young people*
- *An Asian window on the languages education situation in Australia*
- *UNESCO update on its role to support, promote and coordinate International Year initiatives around the world*
- *Australia and the International Year of Languages*
- *Tales From Here and There: stories from the world press on languages learning activities*
- *Conferences and events coming on in 2008*

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### **International Mother Language Day: 21 February 2008**

The United Nations has proclaimed 21 February of each year as International Mother Language Day. The theme of International Mother Language Day is the linkages between mother tongue and multilingualism.

Languages play an important role in the integration process in all aspects of public life. However, hundreds of the world's 6,000 languages are absent from the public arena and fifty per cent are in danger of disappearing altogether.

To celebrate International Mother Language Day 2007, ACSSO launched an information leaflet in English, "It is important to keep your first language". While Australia is one of the most multi-lingual countries in the world, with some 70 indigenous languages and 200 other languages in addition to English, the enormous potential of this rich heritage of languages can only be achieved by passing on those languages to the next generation.

As a project for the International Year of Languages 2008, based on last year's research findings, we will shortly be producing this Leaflet in the following community languages:

- Arabic
- Mandarin
- Vietnamese
- Greek
- Italian

You can now order appropriate quantities of each of these various languages versions of the leaflet, free of charge. Orders for the leaflet in English will be supplied immediately. Orders for the leaflet in each of those five other languages will be posted out as soon as they become available in a few weeks. And pre-orders from schools responding to our 2007 research will also be supplied when those additional languages versions become available.

To Order: send an email to [info@languageseducation.com](mailto:info@languageseducation.com), stating:

- Contact Name
- School or Organisation Name and Mailing Address
- Number of Leaflets in each of the languages you require to meet your school or community needs

English languages versions are available immediately. Others will be sent as soon as they are available.

And if you email us an article and photos of your school's International Mother Language Day 2008 celebrations, we will feature these in future newsletters and on our Website.

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## **Diverse language skills will open the world to Australians**

*Michael Clyne, The Age, January 2, 2008*

IN 2008, the International Year of Languages and the European Year of Inter-cultural Dialogue, many countries will be reflecting on their achievements in these areas and what can be done better.

On such occasions, Australia is often cited as a nation that has achieved a unique identity based on cultural diversity, successful integration, harmony, and inclusiveness.

Now that we can again feel "relaxed and comfortable" to talk about our cultural diversity, we too should take stock. We will have an opportunity to consider how we, as individuals and as a nation, make the most of our language resources and how we communicate with and about those of other cultural backgrounds.

About 400 languages (indigenous, community and sign languages) are spoken in Australian homes, and Australians have daily grassroots experience that makes them

more aware of others' cultural values and communicative behaviour. It is these resources that could make us an important link between Asia and Europe.

Despite this, we are not encouraging enough younger Australians to maintain and develop their bilingualism or to acquire a second language. Half the children in compulsory education in Australia are not being taught a language other than English in a mainstream school. The majority of those taking another language are in programs with inadequate time allocation, often taught by teachers with insufficient training or language proficiency. Many schools discourage students from proceeding with a language beyond year 8, and the retention rate to year 12 is only about 13% nationally, but 22% in Victoria, largely thanks to a high retention rate in independent schools.

In the past decade, the number of languages offered in Australian universities has fallen from 66 to 29, and the situation of some of these is precarious.

The marginalisation of language teaching is often justified by the need to concentrate on English literacy. International and local evidence shows that bilingualism and appropriate early second language study actually enhance English literacy skills.

If allowed to develop in a balanced way, bilingualism brings many cognitive benefits and assists in the learning of additional languages. The impoverished "core curriculum" favoured by the previous government — comprising English literacy, mathematics, science and perhaps Australian history — would not equip future generations for their place in the world, or indeed this nation.

We are out of step with most other countries. In most of Europe and much of Asia, two languages in addition to one's first are an essential goal of the curriculum. For instance, Finland, which consistently outperforms Australia in comparative measures of educational attainment, including literacy tests, does not have problems with a "crowded curriculum" although students take three languages throughout their schooling and about half study a fourth language.

In a report commissioned by the British Council, based on language need projections over the next decades, English linguist David Graddol predicts a bleak future for monolingual English speakers.

State and federal governments should collaborate in a program to raise the availability and quality of learning in languages other than English at school and university and promote motivations for it. The welcome expansion of Asian language programs (in Mandarin, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean) needs to take place without further weakening the study of other languages, including European languages still of value to the nation.

The new Government also intends to charge a National Curriculum Board with deciding if languages should be compulsory. "Compulsoriness", which has a negative connotation in Australia, seems mainly an issue with languages; it is taken for granted for mathematics, science and other core learning areas. Unless languages are compulsory from prep to year 10, like other core areas, they will not be taken seriously.

If we have a national curriculum, it is essential that languages be strengthened in all states including ones, such as Victoria, where they are relatively better off.

With Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister the emphasis may change. During the election campaign he demonstrated his understanding that language is both a means of communication and a symbol of shared identity by speaking to the Chinese Premier and TV viewers in Mandarin.

The International Year of Languages is an opportunity for the new Government to act on a number of issues. It needs to review the citizenship test introduced by the previous government and to fund the teaching of English as a second language for adults, for a language test is no substitute for the best possible opportunities to acquire the national language.

It also has to overcome the political correctness that developed during the Howard era by reinstating the term "multicultural" to facilitate renewed public discourse on our national demographics and culturally inclusive national identity.

Federal and state governments need to consider ways to harness Australia's intercultural communication experience and multilingual resources for Australia's economic benefit as well as for the good of individuals, families and communities. This will involve collaboration with education institutions, ethnic communities, families, and business.

*Michael Clyne is professorial fellow in languages and linguistics at the University of Melbourne and an emeritus professor at Monash University.*

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## **AS OTHERS SEE US**

### **Language Lessons the Buzz Down Under**

*K. C. Boey, New Sunday Times, Straits Times, 9 December 2007*

Kevin Rudd caused a stir at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Sydney last September when, as leader of the Opposition, he upstaged then prime minister John Howard in welcoming Chinese President Hu Jintao to Australia in Mandarin - first at the public lunch reception, and then in private talks.

Detractors accused him of grandstanding. Supporters of language learning applauded the example he sets as a role model to Australians.

The Chinese media could not get enough of Rudd. National broadcaster China Central TV chased down Rudd for an interview via satellite, conducted substantially in Mandarin, while he was on the campaign trail.

The week after the election the "advertisement" for multilingualism of the new prime minister would have been the talk during breaks at the National Seminar on Languages Education, long previously scheduled for Melbourne.

Back home in Garran, ACT, Professor Pierre Ryckmans would have looked on with approval of the honours student Rudd whom he supervised at the Australian National University. He told New Sunday Times he holds him in high regard.

The language lobby has argued long and hard about the "national scandal" of a monolingual Australia, where children spend less time on learning languages than students in any other member country of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Concerned groups include business, and parents and educators of children, from primary to university level.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in a blueprint on Skills for a Nation, released in April, called for the compulsory learning of a foreign language for children "from 7 years of age or earlier".

The Australian Council of State School Organisations, representing parents of children in state schools, has joined in this call.

So, too, have arts deans of the top Group of Eight (Go8) universities, who, at a meeting in June issued a paper, Languages in Crisis.

But not all educators share this view. The Australian Primary Principals Association, in its most recent curriculum charter, makes learning a language other than English (LOTE) optional.

Faced with an already overcrowded curriculum, the principals argue, only those pupils who show satisfactory progress in core subject areas should take on a foreign language.

They may well feel vindicated by an OECD report over the week showing Australian children slipping in the reading and mathematics scale even though they remain in the global top 10, above the OECD average.

But language advocates, rather than seeing added pressure on the children, see language learning as an aid to cognitive skills.

In Victoria, two schools taking part in a bilingual schools pilot project where mathematics and science are taught in a language other than English, have found the pupils have improved in overall achievement, and in literacy and numeracy standards.

As one principal told The Age, "there is a confidence and a sense of self-esteem among the students that creates an engaged atmosphere in the school".

Yet, as the other principal says, "other schools can only do the same if there is national leadership".

This is where Rudd warms the heart of Lia Tedesco, president of the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations, in the media exposure that a national leader brings to the subject.

“His standing in the community gives us an opportunity to use him as a role model,” Tedesco, principal of the South Australian Government’s School of Languages in Adelaide, tells the New Sunday Times.

Beyond the benefits of language learning as a tool for education, there are geopolitical, economic, strategic and cultural imperatives in an outward-looking Australia.

It is for this that language educators are encouraged by the place that Rudd’s Labor Party has given to language learning in the “education revolution” that it brought to the election.

Tedesco, however, worries it may be too narrow if the government carries through with its singular focus on Asian languages (see Labor Release on a National Asian Languages & Studies in Schools Program at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0507/msedutloo100.php>).

Read entire article:

[http://www.nst.com.my/Current\\_News/NST/Sunday/Focus/20071208185557/Article/index.html](http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/Sunday/Focus/20071208185557/Article/index.html)

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## **INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF LANGUAGES 2008**

### **UNESCO website**

UNESCO has begun the development of its proposed international co-ordination Website, including a basic information kit, at this URL:

[http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=35344&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35344&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

We will bring you further updates in subsequent editions of this Newsletter as information is provided to us from our colleagues at UNESCO

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### **IYL 2008 in Australia**

#### ***Fanfare for the Cervantes Institute – Opening in Sydney 2008***

Update from Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade: Australia welcomed the launch of the Spanish Government’s Asia Pacific Action Plan 2005-2008 which set out practical areas for increased Spanish engagement in the Asia-Pacific region. Under the plan, Spain will open a Cervantes Institute in Sydney in 2008, a development which will make a major contribution to expanding knowledge in Australia of modern Spain, its language and culture. ([http://www.dfat.gov.au/GEO/spain/spain\\_brief.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/GEO/spain/spain_brief.html))  
Succour in store for Spanish: (Bernard Lane “The Australian”, 2 May 2007)

WHEN the history of Hispanic culture in Australia is written, there will be a stark division between the periods before and after the arrival of the Cervantes Institute. That's the opinion of the University of Queensland's Alfredo Martinez Exposito. Like his colleagues in Spanish across the country, he's excited by news that at long last Australia is to join the global network of Cervantes Institute centres. A counterpart of sorts to the Alliance Francaise, the institute is the Spanish government's torchbearer for the language and cultures of the world's 450million Spanish-speakers.

"Many Cervantes Institute centres are incredibly active in the promotion of the cultures of Spain and Spanish-speaking countries, with public talks, film festivals, exhibitions, and so on," Martinez Exposito says. "I am sure that the Sydney centre will soon establish itself as a beacon of Sydney's cultural life and my hope is that this will somehow benefit the rest of Australia as well."

The Madrid headquarters of the institute has sent Isidoro Castellanos to begin preparations for the new centre. He's a more than willing conscript, having spent most of the 1980s in Sydney happily teaching and promoting Spanish.

But Sydney will be Australia's first Cervantes centre, not its last. Castellanos says other cities could get centres in the medium term and there may be some kind of presence beyond Sydney in the short term.

After the opening of four new centres in Brazil, where Spanish is an official language, the institute comes to Sydney as part of its Asia-Pacific expansion plan. Last year it set up in Beijing. This year Shanghai, Tokyo and Delhi also get new centres.

Castellanos is quick to dispel any misconception that the institute could be a vehicle for some kind of standard Spanish, as spoken in the heart of Castille, for instance.

"In our centres we have Chilean teachers, we have Colombian teachers ... we don't have any problems or difficulties because Spanish is one language with different variations and all of them are good," he says. And if demand exists, the institute also will offer classes in the three other official languages of Spain: Catalan, Galician and Basque.

A Basque program in an Australian university would be quite a novelty.

(Read entire article at:  
<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,21654648-12332,00.html>.)

See also a second article further exploring the advantages and Australia's growing links with Spanish speaking countries, at:  
<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,21655176-12332,00.html>

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## **RESOURCES**

**“Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education”**

*(Second Edition) – Howard E.R et al, 2007*

The Guiding Principles is now available in its second edition from the Centre for Applied Linguistics

The Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education was developed as a tool to help dual language programs (two-way immersion, heritage language, foreign language immersion, or developmental bilingual programs) with planning and ongoing implementation. Grounded in evidence from research and best practices, the guiding principles address program issues in seven strands: Assessment and Accountability, Curriculum, Instruction, Staff Quality and Professional Development, Program Structure, Family and Community, and Support and Resources.

The guiding principles were based on the Framework of Best Practices for New Mexico Dual Language Programs and were adapted by a national panel of dual language experts and reviewers.

The second edition includes Kathryn J. Lindholm-Leary's literature review, Effective Features of Dual Language Education Programs: A Review of Research and Best Practice.

This document is accessible online at <http://www.cal.org/twi/guidingprinciples.htm> together with associated resource documents - Educators, researchers, and the general public may make single or multiple copies of the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education. Print copies can also be purchased online from the CAL site.

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## **INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES**

### **Indigenous Language Program Achieves Results in Sydney High School**

Activities based on learning, speaking, music and dance in the Dharug language have improved student participation and positive outlook.

ABC News video at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2007/12/04/2109099.htm>

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### **Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL)**

The Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages was established in 1994 to address the issues of language loss and is the state body responsible for coordinating Community Language Programs throughout Victoria. These programs are run through local Indigenous Organisations that report regularly back to VACL.

The Corporation is focused on retrieving, recording and researching Aboriginal languages and providing a central resource on Victorian Aboriginal Languages with

programs now looking at educational tools to teach the Indigenous community about language.

Find out more and subscribe to newsletter at:

<http://www.vaclang.org.au/index.aspx>

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## **“Taming the Cobra: English, Multilingualism, and Language Education in South Africa - A Comparison with Canada”**

**by Ruth Epstein, 1999**

*We came upon and read with interest this 1999 research study of the lessons to be drawn through comparative consideration of the position on indigenous languages in both Canada and South Africa, under threat from the dominant colonial language... It refers obliquely to the situation of Australia. The Conclusion section is reproduced below to whet your appetite.*

This paper has outlined the situation of endangered languages and how the situation affects and has been affected by government policy and by education. What has happened to languages in nations such as Canada should provide a warning to South Africa. One can hope that purely on the basis of numbers and forces that have kept South Africa’s traditional languages alive in the face of past challenges, they will continue to exist and thrive.

It is likely, however, that an active rather than a passive approach must be taken to maintain and develop these languages. The most important first step is awareness of non-English speakers that their languages, cultures and identity are in danger and are worth preserving.

Because in the modern world it is the languages with no economic power that are the most likely to be marginalized, what is crucial is for those holding political and economic power to give status to other languages. It is also important that English is taught in ways that empower learners.

Read the whole report at:

[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/15/e4/31.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/15/e4/31.pdf)

Ruth Epstein has also subsequently published “Roots & Wings: Teaching English as a Second Dialect to Aboriginal Students – A Review of the Literature” (2003) – a study to promote the teaching of English in ways that enable indigenous students to “maintain their roots and develop their wings....” This can be accessed at:

[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/1b/0a/ec.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1b/0a/ec.pdf)

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## **USA: Navajo Language-Learning Software to be Developed as Next Stage of Endangered Language Program**

*Las Cruces Sun-News (NM) January 6, 2008*

A group of linguists, editors and native speakers are starting a yearlong project to develop the first software system to teach the Navajo language.

The software will be owned by the Cornville, Ariz.-based organization Navajo Language Renaissance, and will be used to supplement Navajo language classes on and off the reservation.

Lorraine Manavis, a language professor at San Juan College who is helping with the software system, said it will not replace classroom learning of Navajo.

"It will be another avenue to learn, an enhancement of the classroom experience," she said.

Navajo is one of five endangered languages adopted by the Virginia-based Rosetta Stone. The software will not be part of Rosetta Stone's commercial lines.

Editors, linguists and non-native speakers will review the software before its scheduled release date later this year.

The college hopes to use the software to entice more students for the program, said Lisa Wilson, dean of the School of Humanities.

Rosetta Stone launched its Endangered Languages program in 2004 to help revitalize native dialects, said Marion Bittinger, manager of Rosetta Stones Endangered Language program.

The Endangered Language program already has completed basic software programs for Mohawk, Alaskan Inupiac and Labrador, an Eskimo language.

[http://www.lcsun-news.com/ci\\_7897918](http://www.lcsun-news.com/ci_7897918)

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## **HERE AND THERE**

### **US District Looks to Restart 'Dual-Language' Program**

*Austin American Statesman (Texas) January 2, 2008*

The Austin school district, one of the largest districts that serves English learners, is considering restarting a dual-language program. Instead of targeting only English-language learners, the Austin school district is planning to provide English and Spanish services for both English and non-English speakers.

Across the country, such programs, which proponents say promote bilingualism, are gaining in popularity, with about 330 nationwide in 2007, according to the Center for Applied Linguistics, a language research and education group based in Washington.

Students who have experienced dual-language programs find them to be more motivating than ESL programs because everyone is learning another language. Experts say if dual-language programs are implemented properly, students in bilingual settings often outperform students in monolingual settings.

Read entire article:

<http://www.statesman.com/news/content/news/stories/local/01/02/0102duallangua ge.html>

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## **Dual-Language Program has Success — and Limits**

*Chicago Tribune January 3, 2008*

Parents from Channing Elementary, a local school with a successful dual-language program in the Elgin-based Unit District 46, are pleading with board officials to expand the program into middle school. Many of the children who are now in sixth grade first started the program in 2000 when they began Kindergarten.

According to Ernest Gonzalez, principal at Channing Elementary, this program has been "very academically and socially successful" for students. Local board officials are listening to parent concerns and will meet to decide further actions.

"The dual-language program gives my daughter an opportunity to have an edge," said Caty Hernandez, whose daughter is a 3rd grader at Channing. "It sets the standards higher and helps our kids to become part of a multicultural, multilingual world. Continue this program!"

Read entire article: [http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-dual\\_03\\_bothjan03,0,6173129.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-dual_03_bothjan03,0,6173129.story)

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## **Bridging Cultures, and Taking Arabic to Iowa**

*New York Times January 2, 2008*

Kalona Elementary School, a rural school near Iowa City, Iowa, has a new teacher, Zahra Al-Attar, who has begun teaching Arabic to elementary students. Thanks to local teacher, Susan Swartzendruber, the district applied and received funding from the Foreign Language Acquisition Program, a new federal grant which provides money for schools "to teach languages of strategic importance."

Not only has this experience bridged cultural gaps by breaking down stereotypes, but it has provided positive learning experiences for all involved.

Read entire article:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/02/education/02education.html?\\_r=1&ref=education&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/02/education/02education.html?_r=1&ref=education&oref=slogin)

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## **Interest in Mandarin Chinese Language Grows**

*Quad City Times (USA) January 7, 2007*

Due to China's economic influence and the Summer Olympics that will be happening this summer in Beijing, a booming interest nationwide has developed among Americans to learn the language and the Chinese culture.

In fact within the past two years, the number of programs offered across the country K-12 has doubled to nearly 550 programs. According to some educators, Americans are not learning Chinese fast enough because there are not enough teachers to meet the demand.

This includes non-credit classes — taught for “fun” and enrichment — by an instructor from the Confucius Institute, which is affiliated with the University of Iowa. The Institute, headquartered in Beijing, is a program sponsored by the Chinese government as an aggressive way of promoting its culture and language throughout the world.

In only three years, 210 institutes have opened around the world, a majority of them partnered with universities, including more than 50 in the United States, said Rebecca Kessler, who is with the Iowa City location and recently returned from a visit to China. The Iowa City location opened in March 2006 and offered its first language class in the Quad-Cities during January 2007. Another is scheduled to begin Jan. 28.

<http://www.qctimes.com/articles/2008/01/07/news/local/doc478068873c532049930216.txt>

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## **CONFERENCES & EVENTS**

### **“Multilingualism & the Information Society”**

*15 – 16 May 2008, Melbourne*

Fourth in the series, Open Road 2008 will be a major two day conference presented by Vicnet, a division of the State Library of Victoria in Melbourne, 15-16 May 2008

A unique, biennial conference held in Melbourne, Open Road brings together Australian and international participants, providing an excellent opportunity to discuss and showcase innovative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) developments in the area of multilingualism.

Open Road 2008: Multilingualism and the Information Society will explore, discuss and showcase the latest use of ICT in linguistic and cultural development, in delivering information to culturally and linguistically diverse communities and in developing and promoting multilingual and multicultural societies.

Open Road 2008 will provide innovative presentations, case studies and workshops in the eve of the World Information Society Day celebrated worldwide on 17 May.

The Open Road Conference Committee is seeking expressions of interest from you and your organisation in participating in a tradeshow at the Open Road Conference 2008.

Contact: [conference@openroad.net.au](mailto:conference@openroad.net.au) Email the Open Road Conference committee at [conference@openroad.net.au](mailto:conference@openroad.net.au) or contact Andrew Cunningham on + 61 3 8664 7430 for further information.

PLEASE VISIT: <http://www.openroad.net.au/conferences/2008/>

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## **New Zealand Language Teachers Biennial Conference**

***6 - 9 July 2008, Wellington NZ***

Now calling for refereed papers and non-refereed presentations.

Further details at <http://www.nzalt.org.nz/conference> or contact

- Sue Sutherland ([suesuethe1@yahoo.com](mailto:suesuethe1@yahoo.com) [suesuethe1@yahoo.com](mailto:suesuethe1@yahoo.com)) or
  - Philippa Doig ([philippa.doig@xtra.co.nz](mailto:philippa.doig@xtra.co.nz) [philippa.doig@xtra.co.nz](mailto:philippa.doig@xtra.co.nz))
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## **"Pedagogies of Connection: Developing Individual & Community Identities"**

***9 – 12 July 2008: Alice Springs Convention Centre***

- 9 July – One Day Symposium: "Keeping Language Diversity Alive"

This one day symposium explores the complex issue of keeping Indigenous and other community languages alive. Four expert presenters investigate the reasons for language decline and extinction, the processes in place for language maintenance, and its importance for the expression of community, culture and sense of identity. The positioning of the symposium prior to the 'Pedagogies of Connection' Conference highlights the dynamic relationship between English language teaching and maintenance of language diversity.

- 10 - 12 July 2008 Conference

The focus of this conference is on the potential for TESOL pedagogies to make connections among individuals and communities. The conference will explore a range of TESOL pedagogies and their influences on the development of identities and relationships in diverse TESOL settings. This will include discussion of the role of language and culture within pedagogy. The keynote speakers are international leaders in the field, and conference participants will comprise TESOL educators and researchers from around the globe.

Further Information: <http://www.tesol.org.au/conference/index.html>

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## **“Languages: The New World Currency” August 7-9, 2008 Hobart**

### ***Modern Language Teachers Assoc of Tasmania State Conference***

Conference strands:

1. Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning
2. The Languages – Literacy Connection
3. Innovative Classroom Practice including ICT

Presentation proposals, entitled ‘Call for Papers’, are to be sent by e-mail or post to the Conference Academic Registrar before the last day of April, 2008:  
Suzette Holmes Geilston Bay High School 271 East Derwent Highway Geilston Bay, Tasmania 7015 E-mail: [suzette.holmes@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:suzette.holmes@education.tas.gov.au)

Proposals must include the suggested title; preferred length of session (45 min or 90 min); abstract of about 1/2 page; and full contact details.

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## **Immersion Education: Pathways to Bilingualism & Beyond**

***St. Paul, Minnesota USA October 16-18, 2008 Deadline for abstract submissions: February 15, 2008***

Language immersion education has emerged as a uniquely constituted, highly effective program model for launching students on the road to bilingualism, multilingualism and intercultural competence. School-based immersion programs follow a variety of paths, including one-way foreign language immersion, two-way bilingual immersion, and indigenous immersion for language and culture revitalization. While each pathway targets distinct socio-cultural contexts and educational needs, all are grounded in a set of core characteristics with a strong focus on subject matter learning as well as language development.

Under the leadership of two national centers in the U.S., CARLA (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota) and CAL (Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C.), this third international conference on immersion education brings these pathways together to engage in meaningful

dialog and professional exchange across languages, levels, learner audiences, program models and sociopolitical contexts.

CARLA and CAL are currently seeking proposals for papers, discussion sessions, and symposia on aspects of language immersion education related to four overarching conference themes:

- \*Immersion Pedagogy
- \*Culture and Identity
- \*Policy and Advocacy
- \*Program Design and Evaluation

In addition to basic, applied and evaluation research, conference organizers welcome a range of practitioner perspectives including immersion teachers, administrators, curriculum coordinators, parents and specialists who work in immersion programs. Papers, presentations, discussion sessions, and symposia may report on data-based research, theoretical and conceptual analyses, or best practices in language immersion classrooms.

Further information:

<http://www.carla.umn.edu/conferences/immersion2008/call.html>

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