



CONTACT

The Newsletter for the ACT Modern Language Teachers' Association

The ACT MLTA Works 4U!

August

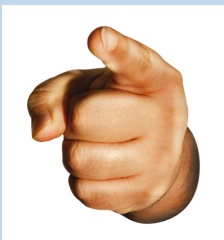
2010

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Special points of interest:

- ◆ Feature article—Reports from 3 ACT MLTA members
- ◆ Professional Standards Project—Stream C Report and Photos



We want YOU! See page 2 for more details

President's Report

Dear members,

In this edition of Contact, we have some very exciting news for you, particularly if you are eager to be involved in activities the ACT MLTA is undertaking for the rest of the year.

Let me share my joy in announcing that **we were successful bidders to host the AFMLTA Conference in 2013!**

We have been given the honour (or shall I say task!) to organise the next AFMLTA Conference. If you are looking for a challenge outside of your teaching, look no further, we have a job for you! We will be setting up a Conference Committee that will be responsible for organising the 2013 AFMLTA Conference in Canberra. What skills do you have to offer?

In 2011, the AFMLTA Conference will be in Darwin, New Zealand in 2012 and then Canberra in 2013 to coincide with Canberra's centenary. This is the year when lots of big events will happen in Canberra to celebrate its 100 years. We will be taking the stage in July.

So do not be shy, do not wait to be asked for help, every skill you have will be useful. Tell us what are you good at (communicating with participants, using IT, preparing speeches, writing to presenters, organising entertainment, finding great international speakers on languages education, finding sponsors, placing material into Conference bags, answering questions etc.). If you cannot offer your skills

yet, we may still need you over the coming years.

Firstly, what can you do this year? There is a competition for you and your students in relation to the Conference's theme and logo design, see advert on page 2 for details.

It's the time of year once again when the FIPLV scholarship becomes available. Have you already planned a trip overseas and need some extra funds to make it happen? You should apply for the FIPLV scholarship which the ACT MLTA offers every year to active members. For more details, see page 4.

We are looking forward to the ACT MLTA Conference in November (our 4th event in line with MLTA Works 4 U) which will be hands on by actively preparing effective assessment tasks and writing rubrics for each of the strands. There will be plenty of workshops for primary, high school and college level and a special one for bilingual schools. It will be a short and sweet conference starting with breakfast and finishing with lunch. See below for more details.

And now enjoy Contact and stay in contact, as **MLTA Works 4 U.**

Meri Dragicevic

President MLTA ACT Inc.

2010 ACT MLTA Conference – Saturday, November 6th

NOVEMBER 2010						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5 6th
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Usually, the ACT MLTA conference is scheduled in Term 3 of each year, however, this year it will be in Term 4 due to the Tony Liddicoat Conference.

The topic for the conference will be Assessment: Rubrics and Tasks. It will be a half day conference with the venue to be announced later.

Put November 6th in your diary now and stay tuned for more details.

AFMLTA Biennial Conference in Canberra 2013

As mentioned in the president's report, Canberra has won the AFMLTA conference for 2013. Although this seems like a long way away, the planning needs to get started now.

Before the Darwin Conference in July 2011, we need to have posters, a theme and a logo to promote Canberra for 2013. We could like to ask you to help us!

You and your students have the wonderful opportunity to assist the ACT MLTA and win some great prizes in doing so. All you have to do is come up with a catchy slogan and logo for our conference. It needs to include something about language learning and might include something about Canberra's centenary, which will be in the same year.

The 2009 AFMLTA conference in Sydney used the following design as their conference theme and logo:



Do not feel pressured into creating something this professional, we are just looking for ideas at the moment and giving you and your students the chance to be a part of the planning and win some great prizes at the same time.

There are three categories for which we are offering prizes: teacher, student and school. Each category has a first, second and third place. Prizes include:

- ⇒ Students: (\$100, \$75 and \$50),
- ⇒ Schools where winning students attend will receive a cash donation to the school's language programme: (\$100, \$75 and \$50),
- ⇒ Teachers: Dendy Movie Tickets

The ACT MLTA committee will make the final decision and may choose to use any or none of the entries for the conference. Work, once submitted, will become the property of the ACT MLTA.

To enter, simply mail your A4 or A3 designs to the ACT MLTA before:

Friday 15th October

**ACT MLTA Inc.,
GPO Box 989,
Canberra ACT 2601**

We look forward to seeing your ideas and suggestion for the theme and logo of our national conference.

Regards,

Natalie Stewart

Vice-President

AFMLTA Conference 2013 Working Committee



It is such a wonderful opportunity to have the Australian AFMLTA conference during our Canberra centenary year but organising a nationwide conference is a large task for our small state so we need your help!

We would like to invite all members to join us in preparing for the conference by members offering their skills and time to a worthy cause.

We need to start planning straight away and any help you can offer would be greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in helping (even if you have no idea what you could help with, email us and we will find something for you to do!), please email natalie.stewart@ed.act.edu.au. We hope to see lots of people getting involved!

AFMLTA 18th Biennial Conference in Darwin 2011

The AFMLTA is currently calling for papers to be presented at their 2011 Conference in Darwin for the dates of 6th-9th July, 2011. The themes of AFMLTA2011 are:

- * Enrich: Linguistic and Intercultural Understanding
- * Consolidate: Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- * Aspire: Excellence in Pedagogy, ICT use and Future Focus

The deadline for papers is 31st October, 2010.

If you have a paper you would like to present or would like more information on the conference, please visit the following website: www.afmlta2011.com.au



FIPLV Congress 1988 Scholarship

Applications Now Open

What is the FIPLV Congress 1988 Scholarship?

This scholarship was established after the success of the 1988 FIPLV World Congress on language learning which was hosted by the ACT MLTA Inc. It provides financial assistance for teachers wishing to further their professional development by means of travel and associated experiences of educational programs or to develop a special language program.

Who can apply?

Any ACT MLTA Inc. member who:

- ◆ is an **active member** of the ACT MLTA Inc. and who has been a financial member for at least two years prior to applying for the scholarship;
- ◆ intends to continue to work as an ACT language teacher;
- ◆ will use the scholarship within twelve months of receipt of the award;
- ◆ will submit a report of his/her activity for publication in the CONTACT newsletter for the benefit of members of the ACT MLTA Inc.

How to apply

Send your application to the selection committee, including the details below and any other relevant information. Applications should be no more than 3 pages in length. Please include:

- * Full name, and date of birth;
- * Current school;
- * Language teaching experience;
- * Outline of previous overseas experience of any kind;
- * Number of years as an individual, financial member of the ACT MLTA Inc.;
- * Outline of any contribution made to teaching languages beyond the applicants own school;
- * Details of the proposed activity including dates, costs and other any other assistance required.

Who is on the selection committee?

Five members of the executive committee of the ACT MLTA Inc. will read all applications and select one or more or none. This scholarship is offered annually but is not always awarded. It may be awarded to more than one applicant, in which case the sum shall be divided appropriately. The executive fixes the sum annually.

All applicants will be notified of the result. The names of the successful applicants will be forwarded to the Treasurer of the ACT MLTA Inc. The decision of the selection committee shall be final and no correspondence will be entered into in respect of any decision made. The committee shall not publish their reasons for any decision reached or any aspect of the scholarship selection process.

Where to send your application?

FIPLV Congress 1988 Scholarship

ACT MLTA Inc.

GPO Box 989

Canberra ACT 2601

2009 FIPLV Scholarship winner Tina Rodriguez (in red) who used her scholarship money to travel to Italy.



Closing Date: 15th October 2010

AFMLTA Professional Standards Project - Stream C

Canberra, 13 May, 21 May and 9 June 2010

In term 2, eleven language and culture teachers of the ACT (seven of whom were previously involved in the PSP's earlier streams) participated in the PSP—Stream C workshops. The prime goal of this stream was to give participants time to reflect on their own practice in light of what is expected from an accomplished teacher (as described in the AFMLTA Professional Standards).

Thanks to the Australian Government's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the developers of the PSP kit from the University of South Australia, presenters Gillian Cordy, a guest from NSW MLTA, and Meri Dragicevic, President of the ACT MLTA covered four prescribed modules:

- ◆ situating language assessment practices;

- ◆ ways of assessing;
- ◆ considering evidence of language learning;
- ◆ assessment as inquiry in languages education.

Copious amounts of discussion went on about the latest socio-cultural educational theory, assessment tasks and formative assessment, investigation into teaching practices and teachers' accountability. The presenters were, objectively, able to provide good sources of effective reporting strategies that provide accurate evidence of student learning outcomes.

The group of teachers analysed assessment tasks provided in the PSP kit as well as teachers' own examples. Teachers were prepared to discuss their own examples of tasks used, seeking comments from other participants,

reflecting on the comments offered and accepting them for personal reflection.

The group agreed that there is currently no consistency in assessing, marking and evaluating students' learning and that this is an area that should be very carefully looked at by each of us individually, but particularly when the Draft of the National Curriculum for Languages becomes available for discussion.

The topics in this workshop proved so important to teachers (and nevertheless a hugely underestimated part of teachers' training) that the ACT MLTA Conference in November will be targeting formative assessment in the classroom and the development of marking rubrics for each school sector (primary, high, college) for every language taught in the ACT education system.



MLTA Members Promote Languages Teaching at the University of Canberra



The University of Canberra Campus

Languages Education in the ACT

On February 16th I was pleased to have the chance to speak to UCAN students about working for the Department as a Language Teacher. This session included discussion about some of the important initiatives in languages education including developing intercultural understanding and using the Quality Teaching framework to enhance teaching and learning.

We talked in depth about the support structure for languages teachers in the ACT including the language specific networks, other external organisations & the various professional associations.

In looking at opportunities available to language teachers (and pre-service teachers) we focussed on the Endeavour Language Teachers' Fellowships and the various NALSSP projects that support teacher development.

At a school level we focussed on curriculum, resourcing programs and the time allocations required for all government school language programs from 2011 and the importance of languages advocacy within the community. We also touched briefly on how the Professional Standards can be a tool for setting professional pathways goals.

This year it has been very encouraging to

see that a number of UCAN students have taken the opportunity to attend our PD days (Indonesian & Japanese) and have had the chance to network with other practising teachers of their language.

Kristina Collins

Curriculum Exec Officer Languages ACT
DET

A Lesson in Quality Teaching and Assessment

As part of a conversation I had with Marina Houston at the MLTA 'Meet and Greet' I was invited to host a session with her Language and English Graduate Diploma students.

The topic of my session was on Quality Teaching and Assessment. This topic is very important to me. Having completed my Post-Graduate Diploma in Quality Teaching, and realising the difference it makes in assessment, I am always keen to share my knowledge.

I won't bore you with the details of the lesson but I know that all of the students learnt a bit more about what good assessment looks like. We also looked at what 'easy marking' assessment is and how, although it has its role in our busy schedule, does not allow the students to fully express their ideas. I also discussed the importance of Explicit Criteria and how this can be used as both a teaching

and learning tool. These are also ideas that are outlined in the PSP workshop on Assessment.

It was a great opportunity to meet the students both as a French teacher and as Vice-President of the ACT MLTA. I have since then had the opportunity to see a few of these students doing their stint in schools and they have expressed their thanks at making Quality Teaching a bit easier to understand.

Natalie Stewart

ACT MLTA Vice-President

Pre-service Teachers, Icell and the Role of Experienced Educators

In May this year I was a guest speaker (in a series of speakers) invited to share my language teaching experience with the University of Canberra's School of Education's language students. On reflection I found it extremely challenging to try and impart a very condensed view of the scope of language teaching to this extremely engaged group of adult learners. The near two hour tutorial flew by much too quickly and I felt that I had barely touched the surface when the time came for me to leave. Although there were only eleven language students in the tutorial it was not surprising that some of the students were not only bilingual but clearly had three if not four languages in their language repertoire. The range of languages present included Japanese and Indonesian as the top two followed by Chinese, Italian French, Spanish, Malaysian, Russian and even Tetum. We could easily add to the language proficiency list if we considered including Dr Marina Houston and my own language skills to the count.

The experience was an honour and thoroughly enjoyable but without some reservation...

Here is some interesting data on education courses which you may not have been aware of.

The University of Canberra is one of approximately forty Australian universities and institutions of higher education currently offering pre-service education courses in teaching.

The *Final Report* conducted by the ACER *Review of Teacher Education for Languages Teachers 2005* investigated that around thirty-four of these universities and tertiary institutions offer an option to study languages teaching.

In Australia, prospective language teachers undergo teacher preparation training in one of three models. The two most common to the University of Canberra are the Post graduate Diploma of Education, a one year course in addition to a languages based degree; and the four year course where languages methodology and study is integrated in the education degree where a level of methodology instruction is offered through the Faculty of Education.

Education courses predominantly contain core elements which students must satisfy. However, as higher education institutions are fairly dynamic places in a competitive market invariably this leads to some differences in pre-service courses from state to state.

Marina is the lecturer in charge of language teacher preparation at the University of Canberra. In the ACT a large part of the teaching and learning component of language preservice teachers' education is to gain an understanding of the ACT Curriculum Framework P-10 *Every Chance to Learn*. The framework requires teachers to include in their planning and delivery 'Intercultural awareness' as essential for student learning outcomes.

"The notion of building 'intercultural competence' has emerged as a key development in languages learning in the 21st century. Writers like Kramsch and Byram make the critical distinction between simply knowing about another culture and knowing the culture from within through the language. This work has been strongly carried forward in Australia by a number of academics, including Scarino, Liddicoat, Crozet and Papademetre. The extent to which the concept is reflected in most teacher education courses is yet to be determined."

Final Report - ACER Review of Teacher Education for Languages Teachers 2005.

Weaving the concept of Intercultural competence into the understanding of prospective language teachers in a one year course designed to prepare teachers for the classroom is indeed a challenge. Experienced language teachers have, by and large embraced the learning of Intercultural Language as it makes for a more inclusive and authentic approach to language learning. However, there was healthy debate even among the preservice teachers about how is it possible to explicitly teach the notion of the 'third place' and 'to know the culture from within the language' whilst providing enough time to teach the language component of the course. I was encouraged by the fact that Marina was holding a copy of *Teaching Invisible Culture: Classroom Practice and Theory* 2003 in her hand and I saw the questions and the debate put forth around Intercultural Language teaching and learning as a great opportunity for learning. It was clear that the students were definitely engaged in knowing more about, and on a journey to understanding Intercultural language teaching and learning. It did not matter that answers could not be provided at that time. It was the opportunity for discussion that was important. The answers will come with experiential learning and in putting the concepts into practice.

Teacher education courses are designed to equip students with a tool kit of knowledge and understanding which include the following:

- Professional knowledge: lesson designing and planning, implementing curriculum (the know, understand and do) including reflective practice
- Professional practice: assessment, strategies to engage and motivate students, incorporating ICTs and classroom management
- Current issues in the teaching and learning of languages in schools
- Research on the principles and theories of second language acquisition

Second language learning pedagogy –

theories and practices.

At the UC, student numbers in languages education is not sufficient to cater for language specific methodology training. Generic language training at the university can be supplemented and enriched by the expertise of mentor teachers in schools. It is vital that experienced language teachers become mentors to help their peers develop an understanding of the characteristics/nuances specific to the teaching and learning of a particular language and how it relates to that culture.

Each year the UC approach schools seeking placements for their preservice teachers. It is essential that experienced language teachers contribute to the capacity building for our system by becoming much needed mentors to future preservice teachers. There is a growing need for quality language teachers as the supply for teachers in some languages is clearly unmatched by the increased demand. This is of notable concern and a growing trend in many jurisdictions. In the ACT the Department of Education and Training's implementation of the languages policy from 2010 is clearly progressive and as a result has created strong demand for quality language teachers. Mentoring preservice teachers is a rewarding experience and a responsibility I urge you all to share.

Kratay Visityuthasart is an ACT school leader of languages and social sciences currently working in the Staffing and Recruitment Section of the ACT Department of Education and Training.

The Final Report: ACER Review of Teacher Education for Languages Teachers 2005

Teaching Invisible Culture: Classroom Practice and Theory, Chantal Crozet and Jo Lo Bianco. Language Australia 2003



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL UNIVERSITY

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THE ACT MLTA WORKS 4 U!

AFMLTA

For further reading about languages teaching in Australia,
please visit the following website:

<http://www.afmlta.asn.au/>

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Are you doing something interesting at your school with your languages teaching? We would LOVE to hear about it!

We have so many experienced and dedicated language teachers in the ACT and they should definitely be promoted and acknowledged for their amazing work!

If you are doing something special at your school, the members of the ACT MLTA would love to hear about it. You might even inspire someone to have a go at something different too. You might like to ask a student to write a review of their learning in class!

We would love to hear about any schools going overseas this year also.

Please forward all anecdotes and photographs to the Contact editor:

Shannon White

shannon.white@ed.act.edu.au

We look forward to hearing your stories!

The ACT MLTA Works 4u!