

CONTACT

The Newsletter for the Modern Language
Teachers' Association of ACT Inc.

Report from Veronique Canellas, President MLTA ACT Inc.

Welcome to the second edition of Contact for 2015 and once again a very productive semester in the world of languages education. The second half of the year has been busy with many meetings, the Joe Dale Workshop and the Mini-Conference on CLIL.

In June 2015, the MLTA ACT Inc. wrote to the Hon Christopher Pyne MP expressing our concerns about the cessation of the Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships (ELTF) program. We encouraged all our members to write letters to the Hon Christopher Pyne MP and to local members, which many of you did. We thank you for your united voice expressing concerns about the withdrawal of such a valuable program for language teachers in Australia. The MLTA ACT Inc. received a response from the Federal Minister for Education and Training. The response has been included in this edition of CONTACT for your information. The good news is that language teachers seeking an in-country professional learning experience are able to apply for financial support through the Endeavour Executive Fellowships which is available to high achievers in business, industry, education or government. Information about this fellowship can be found at www.internationaleducation.gov.au. I strongly encourage you to consider applying for this alternate Fellowship.



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The ACT MLTA WORKS4U!

Modern Language Teachers' Association ACT Inc.

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The Joe Dale Workshop on 'Harnessing Google in the Languages Classroom' was held on 25 July at Daramalan College. This workshop was TQI Accredited and proved to be very popular with our members due to its cutting edge subject. Many schools in the ACT are using Google Apps or moving in this direction. It was only fitting that the MLTA ACT Inc. supports its members in learning about Google and how to integrate it into the languages classroom.

The annual MLTA ACT Inc. Mini-Conference was held on Saturday 15 August at ACU and the theme was CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). Dr Simone Smala, an expert in this field from the University of Queensland presented the engaging workshops. Once again the Mini-Conference was TQI accredited and was well attended by members and non-members. Participants enjoyed the breakfast provided beforehand and networking opportunities throughout the morning.

Applications for Round Two of the FIPLV Congress 1988 Scholarships were opened to MLTA ACT Inc. members in September 2015. The Executive received two outstanding applications and both members were offered a scholarship to cover the cost of in-country language lessons – one to be undertaken in Rome and one in Costa Rica. These members will provide a report for Contact and conduct a presentation in 2016.

Australian Curriculum Update

On 18 September 2015, a Media Release was made by ACARA Communications and Strategic Relations. It stated that the eight learning areas of the Australian Curriculum were endorsed, one of which was Languages. There are now eleven Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum: languages for Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese.

For the full Media Release article, please access:

http://www.acara.edu.au/news_media/acara_news/acara_news_2015_09.html - 210509181



Further to this announcement, the updated Australian Curriculum website (version 8.0) was released on 20 October 2015. The previous version (version 7.5) of the Australian Curriculum will continue to be available until the end of 2016 to allow for the transition period. When users log onto the Australian Curriculum website they will be asked to choose which version they wish to access. It appears that there are no changes in version 8.0 for languages.

Information on all changes to the Australian Curriculum can be found on:
<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/home/whats-changed>

Discovering the ESA Language Learning Space – lls.edu.au

The AFMLTA, in partnership with ESA, have made available FREE resources on the Language Learning Space through Webinar Series. Two have already been held, one for primary language teachers on 18 August and one for pre-service language teachers on 21 October. Links to recordings of all webinars are available at:

https://www.mltav.asn.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=350&Itemid=100134

The final webinar is targeted at secondary language teachers and will take place on 23 February 2016. The webinar is free and will be held from 4-5pm EST and conducted using Adobe Connect. To log-in, go to <http://connect.vic.edu.au/afmltalls/>

The webinars focus on the student resources available at lls.edu.au for Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese including game-based challenges, in-country based tutors, alignment with the Australian Curriculum, teaching resources, free language apps and a comprehensive professional learning program for ALL teachers of languages.

Professional Learning

In 2015, the Executive of the MLTA ACT Inc. is extremely proud to have provided its members with the opportunity to attend three separate professional learning sessions totaling 13 hours of TQI accredited PL. This included five hours at the AFMLTA/MLTA Ready?Set?Go! Workshop held on Saturday 14 March; five hours at the Joe Dale Workshop on Saturday 25 July and three hours at the Mini-Conference on Saturday 15 August.



Summary

All 2015 MLTA ACT Inc. memberships will expire on 28 February 2016, please ensure that your contact details, including your email, are up-to-date as it is important for you to receive information about your membership, upcoming events and professional learning opportunities. Any changes to your contact details should be forwarded to the MLTA ACT Inc. Secretary, Yvonne Webber at yvonne.webber@ed.act.edu.au

CLAIM THE DATE : The first MLTA ACT Inc. event for 2016 will be the **'Meet and Greet'**. The date for this event has been set aside for Thursday 25 February 2016. The Venue is TBC.

Please consider sharing the wonderful, engaging and exciting work you do in your schools with other members of the MLTA ACT Inc. by writing an article for the next edition of Contact in 2016.

As an Association which represents its members, we value suggestions and we will do our outmost to provide you with what you are seeking in terms of professional learning and for the direction of the MLTA ACT Inc.

It is well known that teachers are the first to identify pivotal and vital professional learning that is needed to improve teaching practice and to develop personal growth as educators. The Executive Committee would like to encourage you to email any suggestions for future professional learning to veronique.canellas@act.gov.au

I would like to thank the diligent committee of the MLTA ACT Inc. for their tireless work and dedication to the Association. Many have professional responsibilities, as well as personal commitments and circumstances beyond their normal teaching loads. They always come together to make the MLTA ACT Inc. such a successful and well respected Association and to build on the hard work and tradition set by former committees.

The MLTA ACT Inc. Executive and Committee would like to thank you for the ongoing support of the Association and would like to wish you and your families a very relaxing festive season filled with happy memories.

20th National AFMLTA Languages Conference Pedagogies for a Plurilingual Australia Melbourne 9-12 July 2015

Patricia Blumstein, French teacher, Telopea Park School

The 2015 20th biennial AFMLTA conference in Melbourne gave me an overview that was empowering as well as insightful especially on how much the thinking regarding language education has evolved over the last three conferences, from the Darwin Conference in 2011 (Enrich Consolidate Aspire) through to the Canberra Conference in 2013 (Inspire Innovate Interact) to this conference (Pedagogies for a Plurilingual Australia).

Language learning for Diane Larsen-Freeman (Professor Emerita of Linguistics, University of Michigan) is 'Language Development' rather than 'Language Acquisition'. Language Development is a complex adaptive system, an on-going process, a heterogeneous, dynamic, organic process with fluctuation and variation depending on environmental contexts and demands. Language Development is a non-teleological system, it is not an aggregative process, it is not an end-result system with all learners having the same norms and aiming at the same competence; learners make their own paths. Language teachers need to develop capacity rather than teach competence.

"An alternative view sees language as an open system, always changing, never fixed, and the language resources of speakers as a dynamic network of language using patterns -emergent, mutable and self-organizing. Their development within language learners, then, is not an act of conformity, but rather is expanded by continuing dynamic adaptiveness to a specific present context." (Larsen-Freeman, 2009)



Michele Endicott in her presentation *Killing two birds - Developing the AC General Capability - Literacy* while teaching a language highlighted the connections of specific language scopes with English strands. The Literacy continuum is a direct correlation between additional language learning and increased knowledge and understanding of one's first language. Michele Endicott recommended and quoted from two resources:

Derewianka, B. (2011) *A new grammar companion for teachers* Newtown, NSW PETAA

Humphrey S., Droga L. Feez S. (2012) *Grammar and meaning*. Newtown, NSW PETAA

Jo Lo Bianco in his usual amazing, eloquent, direct manner delivered an uplifting presentation on how to overcome the impossible, how to defeat 'impossibilising', how to acknowledge and benefit from the challenge of social multilingualism for education delivery, when governments, education authorities and mainstream groups believe that an education system, a school, a child, a town and a nation are more efficient, competitive, and effective if they have only one language.

Education systems only offer a small fraction of the many languages spoken by students in their homes.

We need more flexibility in language education.

What is at stake:

Culture, language and human rights, the preservation of mother tongues - Sustainability of languages are at stake.

Joe Lo Bianco gave many examples of his involvement in language policies in South East Asia (Malaysia, Myanmar/Burma).

In contrast, two presentations sadly showed how much disdain still prevails against plurilingualism.

Torres Strait language teaching - D'Aeitti, Willcocks

Although we were told that the Queensland government encourages teaching in a way that is culturally responsive, we heard that in the Torres Strait, teachers are asked to use English only in class, denying the use of Kriol and Yumplatok.

In her impromptu presentation *Make the invisible visible* - Florence Boulard - (James Cook University, Townsville) revealed that the Australian Curriculum as we know highlights the Asian perspectives, but obliterates countries on the East side of Australia, namely the French Pacific islands.

Finally, on the whole, presenters called for Action Research, dissemination of findings (MLTA Journals, Conference presentations), networking and more involvement protecting the sustainability of all languages and of language teaching and learning .

Natalie Stewart, French Teacher, Canberra High School

Visiting Melbourne to attend the AFMLTA Conference was the highlight of my PL this year. After the previous event being here in Canberra and being the Conference Convenor meant I had little time to actually enjoy what was on offer. This time I was able to relax and learn some new things.

What I wanted to share with you are two sessions I attended on the same theme. The first was A Whole School Approach to Learning a Language and the second was Young Language Ambassadors. (Currently the AFMLTA system is down so I cannot give you their names; check the program later when available if you want more detail.) Both focused on the theme that we are so often involved in as language teachers, promoting our subject.

The first session was all about how you can add value to the language learners in your classroom. The presenter talked about all of the things that the languages department and school do to encourage language learning. These included: Study Tours, Immersion Day, Competitions each term (Poster/Art/Singing/Cake Making), Teddy Bear Exchange, year 7 Intro evening, Christmas in July for parents and students with food and entertainment in TL, Magnets, Bookmarks and having their presence everywhere. He gave out samples and showed how we could also achieve this in our school.

After leaving this session I thought to myself why did I attend? I was grateful for having seen what he had achieved but I also know at my own school we offer Study Tours, Year 8 Trips, Languages Evening, Year 10 Immersion Day, Competitions and we try to be in every newsletter. So what was I hoping for? The Holy Grail of Language Teaching of course! How could I get more students in my classes to love language learning?

The second session was from a University Lecturer from James Cook University who set about trying to introduce Language Ambassadors to the schools in her area. She invited Primary and Secondary schools to send 2 or 3 students to a whole day learning how to be an ambassador for languages. She taught them about advocacy and had guest speakers who shared how they use languages in their job as well as gave them ideas on how they as students could promote languages in their schools. A worthwhile cause and having more than one person flying the languages flag is always helpful.

Something I have always wondered as a Languages Teacher is: Am I doing enough to promote my language? What I learnt from these sessions is that I probably am. Whilst I may not have Youth Ambassadors or the exhaustive list of events from the first session, I know that we do as much as we can to promote languages in our school and at the end of the day that has to be enough.

So I hope you as a reader can also be satisfied that the hours you put in to encourage language learning at your school is also enough.

Larissa Shihoff, Italian Teacher, Telopea Park School

The AFMLTA Conference in Melbourne provided a valuable forum for discussion about the Conference topic: Pedagogies for a Plurilingual Australia.

Thanks to the ACT MLTA I was able to attend the Conference during my winter stand down period. I enjoyed all the plenary sessions and a number of interesting individual presentations as well as the opening drinks at the immigration museum and an Italian language teacher dinner.

As an Italian teacher struggling to ensure my 100ish students at Telopea leave high school with even a hint of Italian bilingualism (albeit often a third or fourth language for many of them), I was curious to begin the discussion of the benefits of a plurilingual Australia.

Diane Larsen Freeman (Michigan and Pennsylvania University) made an inspiring beginning to plurilingual pedagogies, focusing on the necessity for teachers to think of developing **language capacity** in students, rather than **teaching competence**. This approach stemmed from her understanding of language learning as '*second language development*,' rather than '*language acquisition*'; a term to better reflect its fluid and continuous nature rather than as an end point, as implied by the word acquisition. She spoke of the need to view language as a self-modifying, emerging system where the developmental change process is never complete and neither is the learning (Larsen Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p.115).

Again, according to the Council of Europe (Lenz & Berthele, 2010):

"Plurilingual education in a narrower sense emphasizes the ability to mobilize the language repertoire as a whole, to use existing competences transversally, i.e. to recombine existing knowledge and skills in any language(s) in order to respond flexibly to needs that arise in a multilingual environment.

Objectives regarding plurilingual competence (in a narrower sense) may have to do with:

For Larsen Freeman plurilingual pedagogy should provide the space for plurilinguals to "*draw on diverse linguistic competences, heightened multilingual awareness, discursive and pragmatic knowledge of learners and the overall fund of knowledge*" (Moll and Gonzalez, 1997). She encouraged us to help students learn to negotiate in translingual contexts and create multilingual spaces (Helot, 2014) using strategies, such as these:

- Have students read a text in their home language before reading one on the same topic in the target language
- Provide many opportunities for low-stakes writing in which students can use whatever language they wish
- Have students present in one language and analysis in another
- Design some projects/ activities so that they culminate in a bilingual project.

Scott Dinham's presentation from a Melbourne University perspective was also valuable, albeit focused on the broader ideals of quality teaching and leadership as the basis for improving student outcomes, within which, leadership should address cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic and learning diversity in the school community. He spoke also of an increasing need for teachers to be able to 'diagnose' individual student learning and provide 'prescriptions' for improvement in the manner of health professionals. I appreciated his observation that often teachers are required to cater for individual students and to personalize learning, yet have not generally been shown or taught how to do this. For successful teacher education he highlighted the importance of the clarity of goals, modelling of good practices by expert teachers, frequent opportunities for practice and continuous formative feedback and coaching and structured opportunities to reflect on practice with an eye to improving it [Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2005)].

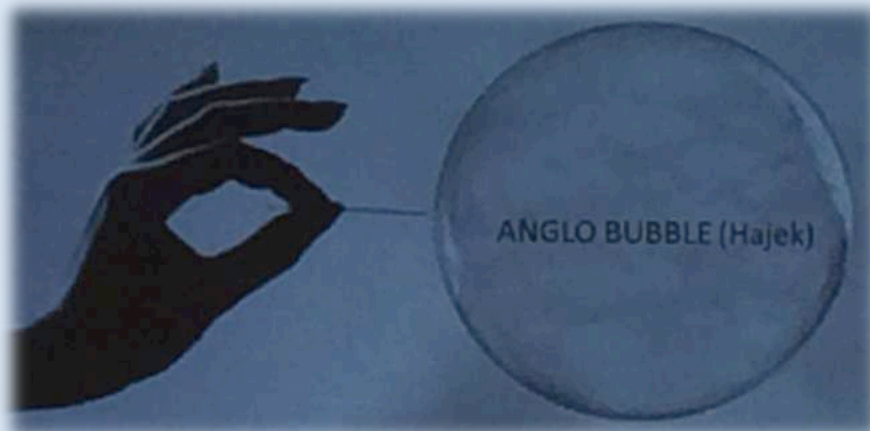
Over the course of the Conference I was able to update my own learning, attending a variety of individual presentations with regards to ACARA (Maria Callaher); new digital platforms such as kahoot (getkahoot.it) triptico (on google chrome) and Quizlet and teaching with authentic audio-visual texts (Marc Grossman – see You Tube "La ville la plus agréable au monde"); as well as interesting practical and academic discussions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Education and how allowing students to use Language A (creole) in the classroom can facilitate deeper learning and encourage metalinguistic discussion and greater language experimentation (Karen D'Aletti & Richard Willcocks).

There was an enriching presentation by Jane Orton on **powerful instruction** in classrooms where content, cognitive demand, classroom interactions and uses of assessment should provide students with intellectual challenges conducive to student's linguistic development (Schoenfeld, 2014).

Jo Lo Bianco's Myanmar model for language delivery was an impressive feat of plurilingualism, as was his idea of the inevitability of language learning becoming enshrined as an international right in International Law.

Many presentations, including his, had criticism of weak language education policies, both in the New Zealand (Georgina Ma & Christine Biebricher) and Australian context, where bilingualism is not taken seriously in both countries.

Underlying the shifting and contradictory government policies towards language development are the damning statistics of Australian school leavers – only 10-14% complete high school/college with a second language.



The Conference provided a couple of social gatherings – the opening night at the immigration museum with Acting premier Mr Merlino and a language based dinner. Both were pleasant without being remarkable.

However, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend the AFMLTA Conference. Thanks ACT MLTA!

Musings on Diane Larsen-Freeman Keynote: 'Plurilingualism: The Theory is the Easy Part!'

Annemarie Power, Spanish Teacher, Telopea Park School

At the biannual AFMLTA conference in Melbourne this year we were all treated with a most engaging keynote address by Diane Larsen-Freeman. I will provide some personal musings on some of the salient points raised by Freeman-Larsen. There is much more that I will omit, it was a really fantastic lecture. I would like to thank the MLTA ACT for the FIPLV scholarship I received to attend, without that support my attendance would not have been possible.

➤ *Today's students need a variety of language, but also a variety of registers.*

Register has always been an important aspect of language. In the language I teach, Spanish, register is hugely important but can vary widely from country-to-country. Equipping students to understand the concept of register and that language use must accommodate different contexts is an important part of language teaching. In our online world register is constantly evolving with new technologies; as students are leaving digital footprints from very early ages, any reflection on appropriate language use online is always beneficial, whether in their L1 or L2.

➤ *A goal of competence in L2 is important rather than native speaker proficiency.*

Students often ask me 'Will I reach such-and-such level in Spanish by the end of High School?' They want to be confident that the effort they are putting in will yield results. This is natural. However, I think Larsen-Freeman's point that competence in the language rather than native speaker proficiency is a useful strategy to guide students' expectations.

➤ *L1 is always present but may be invisible during L2 learning.*

Students are constantly comparing the language they are learning to their L1. We see this all the time as teachers; when my students use English sentence structure in place of Spanish (as in the case of noun and adjective placement) I observe L1 in their L2 learning. Larsen-Freeman reminded us of the important role of L1 in language learning. She described L1 as an important tool, emphasised its place in identity and the integral place it occupies in the students' very being. Language is what makes us, us. The L1 is the language of thought and so it occupies a very important place in the classroom. Why not use L1 to scaffold learning? A nuanced approach is required but L1 is both a language and a cognitive resource which can be used to aid teaching and learning.

➤ *Idea of Language Development versus Language Acquisition.*

Larsen-Freeman let us know about her preference for the word 'development' over 'acquisition' as acquiring implies an end where development implies a process. As we all know, no one ever really completely acquires a language, there is always space to keep learning. Also, acquire brings a connotation of language as a 'thing' whereas it really is a window and an opportunity for understanding others.

- *Fallacy of Scope and Sequence and the idea of linear progression.*

Larsen-Freeman used the apt analogy of comparing language learning to a jigsaw puzzle rather than a brick wall. As new competencies, vocabulary and grammatical structures are added to the student's repertoire they change and enhance the picture they are making. Their language process is not a wall formed brick by brick from the foundation to the top of the wall. It should be considered a much more scattered and organic process, as in putting together a jigsaw.

- *Teaching does not cause learning, learners make their own paths.*

This comment is always important to keep in mind, and I found it a useful reminder. Fostering students' ability to make their own paths and encouraging them in these independent endeavours is just as important as creating carefully scaffolded learning opportunities.

- *Any language practice that is new to a person is cognitively challenging.*

This is a salient message to keep in mind for the classroom. It is easy to forget how demanding it can be to learn a new language. And there is so much variation from student to student in this respect. There is a lot of work happening when they learn new vocabulary and structures. It is important to give them the time to do this so that they are not overloaded.

- *Language development is not teleological.*

Another superb analogy from Larsen-Freeman illustrated how language is not teleological (teleology is a reason or explanation for something in function of its end, purpose, or goal). Language development is not the vase which is formed by the potter, formed with the end purpose in mind, the extrinsic function guiding its creation from clay to vase. It is, rather, more like a heart, formed by the intrinsic needs of the body, continually adapting to its environment, with its cells being constantly renewed and changing, even after reaching its full size. As Larsen-Freeman stated 'language is more like an organism than an artefact' and it has no end point, even when a very high proficiency is gained by a student, their language development continues to occur.

And here are a few one-liners from Larsen-Freeman without reflections:

- *Teach learners not only languages.*
- *The rules are arbitrary use reasons rather than rules.*
- *We need to have a framework of what is difficult from the learners' perspective.*
- *Plurilingualism is dynamic and social.*
- *As a learner uses language, they change the language, or, the act of playing the game has a way of changing the rules. Language is dynamic and fluid.*
- *Language maintains its identity even though it changes, English from Chaucer is very different to English today, but, nevertheless, both are English.*
- *A plurilingual approach is based on interaction between languages in the learner's linguistic repertoire.*
- *Engage learners in activities that are rich in affordances. Opportunities are affordances only when the learner uses them.*

French Network

Myriam Davies, French Teacher, Aranda Primary School
MLTA ACT Vice-President, French Network Leader

Term 2 Professional Development

The French Teachers Network is lucky to have built strong relationships with the Alliance Française over the years, and for the second consecutive year, was able to benefit from the Alliance Française expertise in training teachers. On Saturday 12 September, in Term 3, French teachers gathered at Aranda Primary school for a whole day PD on IWB and technology. They revisited, for some, or discovered, for other, tools and strategies that promote students' engagement and facilitate lessons delivery. Teachers worked collaboratively, shared ideas and resources and enjoyed a fantastic French lunch. Overall, it was a very enjoyable, productive and worthwhile day, with lots of hands-on ideas and solutions to invigorate classrooms.

French Poetry Competition

In its 6th year now, the Annual French Poetry Competition is running stronger than ever, with for the first time, entries in every categories. During term 3, teachers willing to enter their students in the poetry Competition receive a list of French selected poems to teach their students. The focus is on pronunciation, intonation and expression while making connections to the art of poetry reciting in French school, where traditionally French students recite weekly a poem that they have learnt by heart. This ancient, but still well-alive, practice, allows generations of students to connect around well-known poems and delivers a common cultural background, as well as developing understanding of poetry forms and conventions.

This competition is a competition for Primary School students and is open to every school in ACT, regardless of sector. There are different poems for different year group, and two strands: Francophone and non-francophone. Non-francophone students are the majority of our students, they have up to an hour of French a week depending on the school. The Francophone strand is for students who are either French and speak French at home or who attend a French school. The majority of them come from Telopea Park School, but some of them attend other public schools in ACT. Teachers are required to do the first selection and choose their best two students for each year level and record them on a USB. The recordings are then given to the judge, who is usually the Education officer at the French Embassy and who has the hard task of selecting a 1st prize and second prize for each year level. Selected winners are then invited with their family to a Prize ceremony at the Alliance Française where they recite their poems and receive a prize, donated by the French Embassy.

This competition would not be happening if it wasn't for the continuous support of the French Embassy, the Alliance Française and the French primary school teachers of Canberra, and I would like to pass my thanks to them again for their commitment and enthusiasm.

Sister-school relationship with Tomioka-Higashi JHS

Shizuko Barber, Japanese teacher, Alfred Deakin High School

Alfred Deakin HS accommodated 30 students from our sister school, Tomioka-Higashi JHS in Tokushima, Japan at the beginning of Semester 2, this year. It was such an excellent opportunity for students from both schools to have first-hand cultural experience and language use. Students from both schools learnt enormously from each other in terms of language and culture. On the last day, students cried just before the Tomioka-Higashi JHS students departed which demonstrated the bond they had built up over the four nights / five days stay. Our sister-school visits started five years ago and we now travel over 8000 km to see each other every second year. We are going to visit them in Tokushima next year.

Certainly, this program is aimed at their language and cultural learning; however, it definitely results in more than that. The feelings of friendship and the close relationships that people experience while they are young, remain into adult years. The importance of this for maintaining better relations between people going into the future is immeasurable; you become convinced of this when you see their tearful farewells!



Saint Francis Xavier - Italian Study Tour 2015

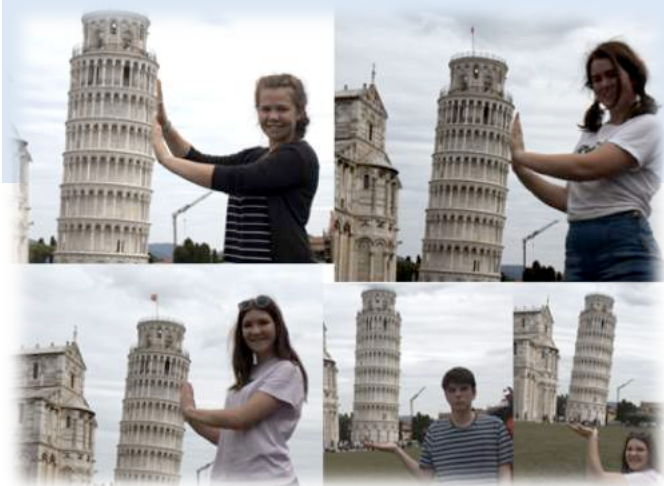
Tina Rodriguez, Italian teacher, St Francis Xavier College

The SFX 2015 study tour to Italy was a little different and, from all accounts, it was a roaring success. The idea to give both students of Italian and students of Visual Art an opportunity to travel and discover Italy was proposed and discussed about 18 months ago. The interest in the tour was overwhelming. We ended up with 13 students of Italian and 11 Visual Art students going on the tour. Our 18-day itinerary was jammed packed with travelling, site seeing, eating, talking, enjoying each other's company and, of course, experiencing Italian culture first hand. The impact on students learning Italian was enormous! Being immersed in the language and having the opportunity to interact with Italians has given these students a deeper understanding of the language – which for me, as their language teacher, is a great joy. The Visual Art students for their part were constantly exposed to endless visual beauty everywhere they turned: famous artworks in galleries, beautiful churches and other buildings and the amazing ancient architectural masterpieces! No doubt, this will also have an impact on their artistic skills!

It was in 2009 that I received an FIPLV scholarship to forge a relationship with two schools in Italy and I am very pleased that we were again hosted by these schools. For many students the home-stay element was a highlight. The generosity of the families to open their home to our students was wonderful. *Il Liceo Bagatta* in Desenzano, a linguistic school hosted the Italian students and *Il liceo Olivieri*, an art school in Brescia hosted the Art students. The activities organised by the coordinating teachers in both schools were way beyond our expectations and for this, we are truly grateful. Our hope is to continue this relationship for our next trip in 2017.

Another highlight for us was our stay in Rome. We stayed in a wonderful monastery run by nuns. They absolutely adored us and they certainly looked after us! The Sunday that we were there happened to be a 'free' day and so they suggested we should go to the markets, (which we did) and then go to St Peter's Square to see the Pope's usual Sunday address and benediction at noon (which we did!). It was a very moving, almost surreal, experience for all of us.

All in all it was a very successful trip both in terms of organisation and language and culture immersion.



Having Fun in Pisa



Rome

Excursion to ANU : What's in a language?

Gaelle Tregoning, French Teacher, Daramalan College

On Tuesday 8 September 2015 a group of 36 Daramalan College students went to ANU to get an engaging, interactive and first-hand taste of University language studies. The day featured short presentations from ANU leading experts in languages and interactive language activities.



By Melissa Fawke

"The ANU invited students in year 10 and 11 from around Canberra to attend mini lectures and workshops where ANU language teachers introduced their courses. We also discussed the kinds of degrees in which you can do languages units. I found this day really interesting because I plan on doing a bachelor of languages when I am older. The day started off with a lecture from Dr Taylor Mc Comas. He showed us why he loves learning languages including a very entertaining visual demonstration where he had volunteers mimic the Chinese characters for *man*, then *to follow* and finally *crowd*.

Chinese characters are like mini pictures. You can also think of them as Legos. If you're good at stacking Legos, you'll be good at Chinese....However, memorizing Chinese characters does train you with multi-dimensional thinking. We also got to study an Asian language (I did Japanese) and a European language (I did German) and a third language (I did Greek). In the afternoon, there was a discussion between students and lecturers on a world topic or Linguistics. We also had the opportunity to interact with other language students from around Canberra during the marketplace lunch.

I found it to be a really important and useful day to attend, being a Language student who hopes to study at the ANU in the future."



By Cailey Snabel

"I had a fantastic day at ANU on 8 September, attending the Languages showcase called "What's in a Language?"

My favourite activity of the day was the student exchange panel. The panellists ranged from a student who had been to Qatar (smartly dressed and hilarious who illustrated a picture of a buzzing society and a challenging language) to a student who had lived in Japan for years (red-haired and smiling, she talked about the business advantages of learning a language and Japanese salsa bars, which are a thing, I swear). I'm sure it inspired a lot of people to learn a language (maybe motivating a few people to stay in college...). It certainly reminded me of all the reasons I love – and believe in – learning a language (travel, travel, travel)."

Brainless activities to engage students in Indonesian class.

Lies Price, Indonesian Teacher, Palmerston District Primary School

To engage students at the end of the day, sometimes what we need as teachers is a lesson that is less academic but which can still engage them in the language. Using scissors, hands and paper, here is a fun activity for them: This activity can extend student's fine motor skills, develop concepts like colour or number for younger children, students can see processes like gluing in action and help older students to figure out how to express ideas and concepts visually. Based on my own experience, students are more likely to engage in the classroom if we incorporate craft activity and, most importantly, they will do it without complaining.

Integrated colour and number

You need:

Scissors

Glue

Template

Lead pencil

Paper (black, brown, yellow, purple, light blue, pink, green and light orange)

Language feature:

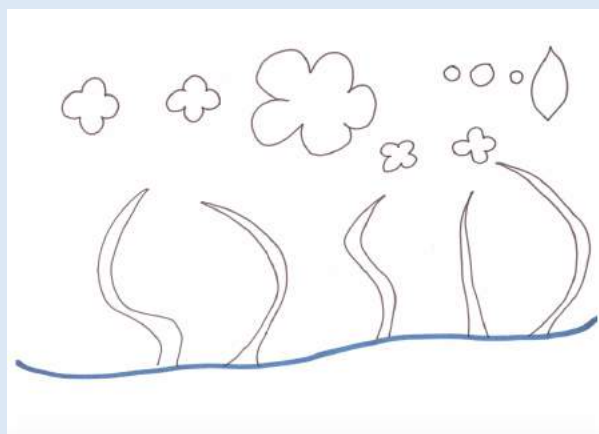
Ini lima bunga Daisy (Write on top of the black paper)

Biru muda, merah muda, kuning, ungu, dan jingga muda. (write on top of flower and follow the shape of the flower)

Hijau (write on stem or leaf)

Coklat (write on ground soil)

Variety: We can change Lima with different number, but you need to adjust the number of the flowers. We also can use different colour for the flower.



AIYEP Exchange at St Clare of Assisi Primary School

Margo Smith, Indonesian teacher, St Clare of Assisi Primary School

Mandra & Fita joined Margo Smith at St Clare's. Mandra was at the school for 3 weeks while Fita was there for 1 week. They generously shared their dance movements and clapping sequences, and contributed to the classes on Tues, Wed and Thurs with songs, and pronunciation practice. As well as their contribution to the Bahasa Indonesia primary classes, they both shared their knowledge of voice and choir with the SCA music classes.



MLTA ACT 2015

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For further reading about languages teaching in Australia, please visit the following website:
<http://www.afmlta.asn.au/>



@MLTAACT



MLTA ACT Inc.

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 MLTA ACT Inc. 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:

Ludivine Le-Gal

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We look forward to hearing your stories!



The ACT MLTA WORKS4U!

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