

CONTACT



MLTA-ACT INC. NEWSLETTER

VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello MLTA ACT members and colleagues,

Welcome to the second issue of CONTACT for 2025. A heartfelt thank you to our Editor, Myriam Davies, for compiling this issue and for her dedicated work in organising and following up on contributions. I invite you to take some time to explore what has been happening across our vibrant language teaching and learning community.

As noted in previous newsletters and emails, MLTA ACT does not currently have a President. I accepted the role of Vice President with the intention of supporting and mentoring a new member of the Executive team. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to our committee members who stepped up to take on various tasks during my leave of absence from May.

We were delighted to see so many of you at our recent PL sessions, and particularly pleased that a small group was able to attend the talk delivered by the representative of the Embassy of Indonesia. It was a fascinating presentation that offered valuable insight into the role of diplomatic missions within both the Canberra community and the broader education sector. We hope to welcome representatives from other diplomatic missions in the coming year.

We encourage all members to give back to our community by sharing photos and articles related to your language teaching experiences. We love seeing what is happening in your classrooms and schools, and we value the exchange of ideas, tips, lessons and professional insights. Information about professional learning opportunities and events for 2026—both in Canberra and interstate—will be shared soon.

On behalf of the MLTA ACT committee, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Prudence Roveta

Vice President and Immediate Past President



Term 3 PL at Burgmann Anglican School
- Forde campus

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MLTA ACT Inc. (Modern Language Teachers' Association of the ACT)

Don't forget to join us at our EOY Christmas drinks and get together at Mercure Hotel, Ainslie Ave on THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER from 4.30- 6pm. Complimentary drink voucher on arrival. Those who wish to have dinner after drinks are welcome to stay on and eat in the Bistro.

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY EVENT FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS

By: Frank Keighley

MLTA ACT held an event on Friday 17 October to celebrate World Teachers' Day. The event took place in the Courtyard Restaurant at Mercure Hotel (formerly Olims) from 4:00 pm for 4:30 pm to 6 pm



There was a keynote by Mrs Lintang Paramitasari, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Canberra, on the theme of the value of language learning. Points made by Mrs Paramitasari were well received by those present. Those points included:

- Languages education is facing challenges
- Indonesian Embassy is keen to support Indonesian language learning.
- Learning another language enables understanding of a different perspective.
- English alone is not enough in a globalised world.
- When you hear your language, you feel at home.
- Guru Bantu Bahasa Indonesia 70 university students from Indonesia helping in NSW, Vic, SA, ACT , and soon in NT and Tasmania.
- Music festivals, cultural performances, are supported by the embassy, for example on the next day.
- Language is not only about speaking but also about connecting'
- Appreciation for the work of language teachers.



After the keynote, this event followed a TeachMeet format. Frank Keighley presented an overview of the state of play with senior secondary languages.

This was a members-only event, for which there was no registration fee. Finger food, tea and coffee were provided from 4 pm, and members each received a voucher to present at the bar to receive a drink of their choice. It was good to see about 20 members attending, which matched our catering provisions perfectly.

2025 MINI-CONFERENCE - TERM 3

Language Framework Redevelopment -

By: Orion Lethbridge, Gungahlin College

It was my privilege to facilitate a discussion at the MLTA Mini-Conference about what language teachers would like to see in the redevelopment of language curricula in the ACT.

The emphasis of our discussion was on priorities for the BSSS Languages Framework redevelopment, but the discussion itself ranged more widely, with teachers collectively interested in seeing language pathways, programs, and curricula running the full gamut of primary and secondary education (K-12).

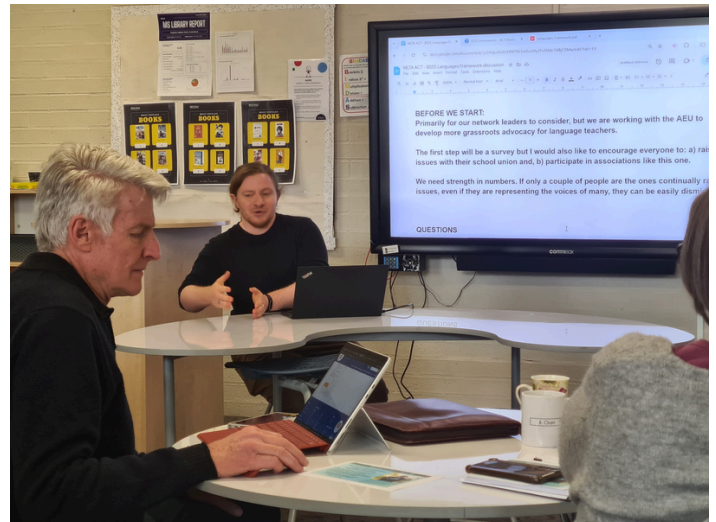
A summary of key points of the discussion is as follows.

Point 1: Teachers would like to see more descriptive curricula, with clear and concrete content guidelines for teachers.

The general consensus in our group discussion was that although teachers recognise the challenges of overly prescriptive curricula, the current BSSS Languages Framework and its associated courses went too far in the opposite direction. Teachers expressed frustration about the lack of descriptive curricula for specific languages, since all languages have unique features.

On this point, teachers raised concerns about the “hyperlocal” nature of language programs in the ACT. Participants identified that they have to work in an isolated way to decide on “reasonable content” in their language area. Teachers generally agreed that this sense of isolation occurs due to the combined impact of a range of issues, particularly:

- lack of descriptive curricula;
- individual teacher workloads;
- class structure issues (e.g. combined classes);
- faculty-based assessment schedules;
- faculty-based rubrics;
- faculty-based task requirements.
- The “hyperlocal” nature of language programs across the ACT presents workload issues for teachers and means that students are not necessarily receiving equitable opportunities in their language learning and assessment. Because many programs are run by a single teacher, there is also risk of program loss if that teacher’s circumstances change.



- **Point 2:** Teachers are concerned that “analysis and critical thinking”-focused achievement standards are not appropriate for assessing language learners.
- Teachers feel that students want to learn languages in order to be able to understand and communicate ideas. Teachers reflected that the goals of language learning are comprehension, proficiency and fluency. Teachers therefore want to assess how well students can understand the target language, and how much they can express in the target language. To some degree, students must therefore be assessed on their knowledge.
- **Point 3:** A return to assessing macro skills for Beginning and Continuing language learners
- In connection to Point 2, the general view of teachers who attended the session was that open-ended or inquiry-type assessment tasks are inappropriate for the needs of beginner or intermediate language learners, who rely on comprehensible input for meaningful language acquisition. For a range of reasons, teachers have found the Inquiry task particularly problematic for both teachers and students. On the other hand, some teachers find this task type useful when assessing heritage or advanced language learners.
- The Draft Languages Framework (from 2027) is now available for public consultation at the BSSS’ website on the Curriculum Development page. Feedback can be provided via this form until Friday 6 February 2026. MLTA members are encouraged to review the framework and provide their feedback to the BSSS.

2025 MINI-CONFERENCE - TERM 3

Exploring AI Tools in the Language Classroom

Gaelle Pajot, Merici College and Myriam Davies, Aranda Primary School

On Saturday 9 August 2025, we presented a practical session on integrating AI tools into language teaching at the mini MLTA conference. We showcased four accessible tools designed to support planning, differentiation and student engagement:

- QuestionWell: instantly generates quizzes, comprehension questions and exit tickets from any text, helping teachers create quick formative assessments.
- Sono AI: produces clear, natural-sounding audio in a range of languages and voices, ideal for custom listening tasks like songs.
- Brisk Teaching: a browser extension that adapts materials for different proficiency levels, simplifies texts, creates rubrics and even generates short podcasts to support lesson content.
- Roxxem Live: an interactive platform where language students can learn and practise songs in Spanish, German, Chinese, English and French, offering a motivating way to reinforce vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.

Attendees had dedicated time to explore each tool, trial classroom applications and share ideas on incorporating AI effectively into their language programs.



ROXXEM SONG EXPERIENCE

By: Peggy Halas, Canberra High School

After the MLTA PL session, I decided to try two new tools in my classroom. I used Roxxem and Suno to create a song for my Year 7 class to help them remember the names of animals in French. This class is such a lovely group, so I wanted to make it personal and engaging. I wrote the lyrics using vocabulary they already know and even included their names to make it special. Then, I used Suno to compose music for the lyrics, the result was a sweet song with a very catchy tune. Next, I turned my song into a youtube video (using AI generated images), I imported the video song into Roxxem and I added lyrics so the students could play interactive activities on this specific song.

I'll never forget the first time I played the song in class. My students were all busy designing posters for their 'lost animal' project when the music started. One by one, little heads popped up as they heard their names in the song! I also slipped in a few sentences about my cat since I often talk about him.

By the end of the lesson, we had listened to the song three times, and the students were so excited they asked for the YouTube link to share with their families. They loved playing Roxxem's game where they click the correct word they hear and I found that working with a homemade song was making the game more accessible for their level of skills.

Some students told me they had the song stuck in their heads all weekend!

I'm not a musician, so I'm grateful to have discovered these tools. They helped me achieve two important goals: reinforcing specific vocabulary and strengthening student-teacher relationship in our class.

I plan to create a song for each topic we will study next year and I am now in a quest for efficient AI video tools to match images to the lyrics.

Here are link to the song in Roxxem : <https://app.roxxem.com/videos/68d12de32188f6524b170008/dans-la-classe-de-madame-halas-ai>

FRENCH SECTION

By Myriam Davies, Aranda Primary School

MLTA ACT French Section - Semester Highlights

This semester showcased two key initiatives that strengthened pathways, celebrated student creativity, and deepened our community partnerships.

Promoting French at University – ANU Collaboration (Term 3)

In Term 3, we partnered with the Australian National University for the French Connections event, an engaging morning designed to inspire high school learners to pursue French beyond Year 12.

The response was exceptional: 110 high school students, 7 teachers, 21 current ANU French students, and 3 alumni came together for a dynamic program. Activities included speed-chatting with ANU students and graduates, Q&A discussions about studying French at university, insights into global opportunities, and a session on multilingualism in the age of AI. This collaboration continues to be one of our strongest avenues for encouraging language continuity across the ACT.

Bon Appétit Cooking Competition (Term 4)

In Term 4, we wrapped up the year with our Bon Appétit cooking competition. While entries came only from primary students and from only one school this round, the quality and enthusiasm were outstanding. Students showcased creativity, confidence, and cultural pride through their video submissions.

We are grateful to France at Home for generously donating the student prizes—support like this helps our learners feel recognised and motivates them to keep engaging with French language and culture.



Looking Ahead – FATFA 2026

As we move forward, planning is underway for the FATFA National Conference in November 2026, hosted here in Canberra. The theme, **(un)Knowing & (un)Learning**, promises a bold and thought-provoking program. The French Section is excited to contribute to this significant national event and to continue elevating French language education across Australia.

FATFA & MLTA ACT French Section

present



Conference 2026



SAVE THE DATE



[un] knowing
[un] learning

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE LEARNING

27-28 November 2026
ANU Canberra



LANGUAGES NEWS FROM MERICI COLLEGE

By Tina Rodriguez, Studies Coordinator for Languages, Merici College

2025 has been an exceptionally full and rewarding one for Merici College Languages Department, marked by a wide range of programs and events that celebrated both language learning and cultural exchange.



ITALIAN SISTER-SCHOOL EXCHANGE

A particular highlight was the visit from our Italian sister schools, Il Liceo Bagatta and Il Liceo Fermi, located in the Lake Garda region of Northern Italy. From 29 August to 5 September, we were delighted to host 3 teachers and 27 students, including 6 boys, whose presence generated great excitement among our Merici community. They visited iconic places such as the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, the National Museum and the Australian War Memorial. We are looking forward to visiting them in Italy in 2027.

HISPANIC DAY

Another key event of the year was the annual Hispanic Day, hosted by Canberra Girls Grammar School and Lake Ginninderra College. Merici Senior and Year 10 Spanish students actively participated in workshops and presentations run by Spanish-speaking embassies, gaining valuable cultural insights and strengthening their language skills.



PRIMARY SCHOOL VISITS

Year 8 students of Chinese enjoyed a unique opportunity to visit St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, where they read stories and sang songs in Chinese with the primary school students. Year 7 Italian students visited Good Shepherd Primary school where the Merici students had to read their bilingual booklet (Italian/English) about animals that they have created to the kindergarten students. This initiative not only enhanced their own language learning but also created a meaningful bridge between our schools.

END OF YEAR 10 LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Traditionally, at the end of year 10, as a way of marking the end of the compulsory 4 years of learning a language, teachers planned some exciting cultural activities:

Students of Chinese: a day trip to visit the Tan Nien Temple in Wollongong

Students of Spanish: creating their own fresh tacos

Students of Italian: pasta making presentation

Students of French: Crepe making



Pasta making



Wollongong



Taco making

INDONESIAN – MELROSE HIGH SCHOOL – MUHIBAH ANGKLUNG

By Rebecca Battaglini & Nor Idris, Indonesian Teachers, Melrose High School



On 3rd September, students of Indonesian across the ACT gathered at Melrose High School to watch an incredible performance by “Muhibah Angklung”. The group was visiting from Indonesia and the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia hosted a “Schools Concert” so that students could enjoy their music and dancing brilliance. The morning also featured special guests Dr Siswo Pramono and General the Honourable David Hurley, who addressed the students gathered and commended them for their dedication to studying Indonesian. Angklung are traditional bamboo instruments that make a sound when shaken. After some amazing songs and dances from the group, all 200 students in the audience were then given an angklung each, and within five minutes, they all played together “Waltzing Matilda”! It was an amazing event. We thank the Indonesian Embassy for their enthusiastic and on-going support of Indonesian learning in the ACT.



REFLECTIONS FROM THE 2025 AFMLTA CONFERENCE – ADELAIDE

by Myriam Davies, Aranda Primary School

In July, I attended the AFMLTA National Conference in Adelaide — a vibrant event bringing together language educators from across Australia. It was a wonderful opportunity to share ideas, reconnect with colleagues, and engage in deep conversations about the future of language education. The discussions between sessions were often just as valuable as the presentations themselves, filled with practical ideas, shared challenges, and a renewed sense of community among teachers.

One of my standout presentations was Janet Schneider's "Relevant, Relational, and Responsive Classrooms." Her session was inspiring and thought-provoking, reminding us that relevance, safety, and genuine relationships lie at the heart of effective language learning. Her message about adapting our teaching to meet the needs of this generation's learners resonated deeply. Another highlight was Professor Angel M.Y. Lin's keynote address, "From Algorithms to Affect: Rethinking Language Teaching in the Age of AI." Lin's talk offered a fresh and balanced view of artificial intelligence in education — emphasising that while AI can support our work, it can never replace the human, emotional, and cultural dimensions that make language learning truly meaningful.



While many sessions were engaging and insightful, the 30-minute presentation format felt rather restrictive. Several presenters struggled to reach their main points before time ran out, and in some cases, the level of expertise varied more than expected. It highlighted the need for a clearer balance between accessibility for general attendees and the professional depth that experienced educators seek.

The conference dinner was a joyful celebration of community, complete with laughter, dancing, and meaningful conversations. It was also the occasion to honour two remarkable leaders in languages education: Dr Sherryl Saunders, recipient of the 2024 AFMLTA Medal, and Professor Lesley Harbon, recipient of the 2025 AFMLTA Medal. Their lifelong contributions — spanning classroom teaching, research, mentoring, and national advocacy — were warmly acknowledged by colleagues. Their achievements are a powerful reminder of the dedication, vision, and perseverance that continue to shape the future of languages education in Australia.



Overall, the AFMLTA Conference was an enriching experience — equal parts inspiration and reflection — reinforcing how vital it is for language educators to keep learning, connecting, and growing together.



Myriam Davies and Prue Roveta

DRAMA AND PUPPETS AT TELOPEA PARK SCHOOL

By Isabelle Reynier, Telopea Park School

As part of a theatre project, the Year 6 students at the Franco-Australian School of Canberra brought to life several scenes from Jean-Gabriel Nordmann's book "Le long voyage du pingouin vers la jungle" (*The long trip of the penguin in the jungle*).

They painted the sets, created the puppets – mainly using papier-mâché – and learned their lines. We then filmed the performance.



FUTURE OF A CENTRAL DELIVERY MODEL FOR SENIOR SECONDARY LANGUAGES

By Frank Keighley

As things stand at present (December 2025), there is no avenue for any student going into Year 11 next year to study their language of choice if it is not offered at their day school. Our seven years with CAL were designed as a proof of concept for a central delivery model to supplement day school programs, and when we handed over to CIT Solutions, we thought CITSOL would be a safe pair of hands to assure program delivery into the future.

As MLTA members know, CIT Solutions was shut down by CIT and that has ended the provision model with them. We sent a submission to the government proposing a simple and effective way to address the situation (a pdf copy is available on a link from the CAL website at <https://cal.act.edu.au> - see the post of 6 November there), but the education minister, in a response on 17 November, advised that the government has no plans to adopt the proposal.

A petition was posted on the ACT Legislative Assembly website, which at its closing on Tuesday, 2 December had received 582 signatures. Details are at <https://epetitions.parliament.act.gov.au/details/e-pet-077-25>

The final sitting of the assembly was held this week from Tuesday to Thursday 2-4 December. Most members of the assembly (but not the cabinet) were in consensus on the need to progress the issue and get something done. Despite the high level of public support, the Education Minister reiterated that the government has no plans to facilitate continuation of centrally delivered senior secondary language courses.

The minister in responding to the matter in the assembly yesterday rightly observed that I would be disappointed by the government's response. I am now planning to confer with interested parties on possible next steps. Any input from MLTA members would be welcome.

CANBERRA SANSKRIT SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

CELEBRATING LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT

By Ravi Krishnamurthy, Principal & Founder

As the Principal and Founder of the Canberra Sanskrit School, I am thrilled to share our recent achievements, joyful moments, and exciting updates that showcase the heart and soul of our growing community.

Canberra Sanskrit School (AMAN) Receives 2025 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year High Commendation!

We are delighted to share that Cultural Crescendo, the cultural youth wing of the Canberra Sanskrit School operating under AMAN, has been honoured with a High Commendation Award at the 2025 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year ceremony held today at the Belconnen Arts Centre!

The Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards recognise exceptional young Canberrans (aged 12–25) who make meaningful contributions to our community across culture, education, science, sport, environment, and personal development.

This recognition is especially significant for the Canberra Sanskrit School, as it reflects our commitment to:

- Empowering young people through cultural learning and leadership
- Championing youth voices in the ACT's multicultural landscape
- Creating vibrant opportunities for artistic expression and community engagement
-

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Australian Catholic University for sponsoring this award and for their ongoing support of youth excellence in the ACT.

Cultural Crescendo's achievement reinforces the vital role the Canberra Sanskrit School plays in preserving language, culture, and creative expression for future generations.



(From left to right - Master Dev, Mr Ravi Krishnamurthy, Miss Akshitha, Hon Mr Michael Petterson, ACT Minister for Youth Affairs)

PRIX DU CIVISME AT ALFRED DEAKIN HS

By: Claire Smith, Alfred-Deakin High School

Year 9 and 10 French students from Alfred Deakin High School, who volunteer through the LiFT (Learning Independence through Friendships and Trust) mentoring program, were nominated for the Prix du Civisme, an award kindly organised by the ANMONM (Association Nationale des Membres de l'Ordre National du Mérite) in Sydney.

These students have demonstrated exceptional initiative and compassion by dedicating their time to supporting The Woden School, a specialist public school in Deakin that caters for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, autism, and complex learning needs. Through their regular visits, the LiFT volunteers have built meaningful friendships, fostered inclusion, and embodied civic values that closely align with the spirit of the Prix du Civisme.

Meeting at least once a fortnight, the Alfred Deakin students serve as mentors, peers, and friends to the Woden students. Together, they participate in shared activities and conversations that promote social connection, celebrate diversity, and create a strong sense of belonging. This partnership not only enriches the lives of the Woden students but also enhances the volunteers' own interpersonal skills, empathy, confidence, and resilience.



The Woden School's focus on developing independence, life skills, and inclusion is greatly strengthened by the involvement of the LiFT volunteers. The relationships formed through this program bring genuine joy to both groups of students and promote mutual understanding and respect.

These young volunteers give their time beyond the curriculum, motivated by a desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others and to contribute positively to their community. Guided by values of inclusion, connection, and compassion, they model civic responsibility both within their school and beyond.

Their commitment through the LiFT program reflects the courage, humanity, and solidarity that sit at the heart of the Prix du Civisme. By building friendships across schools and empowering young people of all abilities, the Alfred Deakin students have demonstrated the powerful contribution young people can make to their communities and have shown themselves to be true role models of active citizenship.



FRENCH AT NORTH AINSLIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

By: Chrystel Wille, North Ainslie primary school



Year 3 and Year 4 enjoyed learning about food this semester.

They shared their favourite food, learnt about fruits and vegetables.

They discussed the colour and size which help them to write a poem during the Writers and Artists festival week.

We can't speak about fruits without learning about Paul Cézanne, the famous French painter!

Have a look at our poems and some of our fabulous nature morte "still life".

We also created our own bingo cards and played "Loto".



les fruits

Rouge comme les pommes

Vert comme les kiwis

Jaune comme les bananes

Violet comme les prunes

Orange comme les abricots

Rouge comme les cerises

Rouge comme les fraises

Orange comme les Oranges

Orange comme les pêches

Vert comme les poires

Vert comme les pommes

Bleu comme les myrtilles



A simple game to design is "le jeu des 7 familles" or "happy families".

After learning the vocabulary about classroom stationery, year 4 created their own family and played this fabulous game with their friends! We had so much fun!



I TOOK A LITTLE TRIP ...

J'AI FAIT UN PETIT VOYAGE ...

Prue Roveta, Burgmann Anglican School

FRENCH TEACHERS' IMMERSION TRIP TO FRENCH POLYNESIA

UN VOYAGE D'IMMERSION POUR PROFESSEURS DE FRANÇAIS EN POLYNÉSIE FRANÇAISE



FATFA (Federation of Associations of Teachers of French in Australia) organised an unforgettable trip to French Polynesia to give its teachers the chance to experience the language and culture firsthand. Because members of the MLTA ACT French Section are automatically members of FATFA, I was fortunate to join twelve other French teachers from across Australia on this incredible professional and cultural adventure during the September–October school holidays. The Embassy of France supported the initiative by awarding bursaries to help teachers attend. It was an inspiring reminder of the rich opportunities available through FATFA - opportunities we encourage all members to take part in for future activities and exchanges!



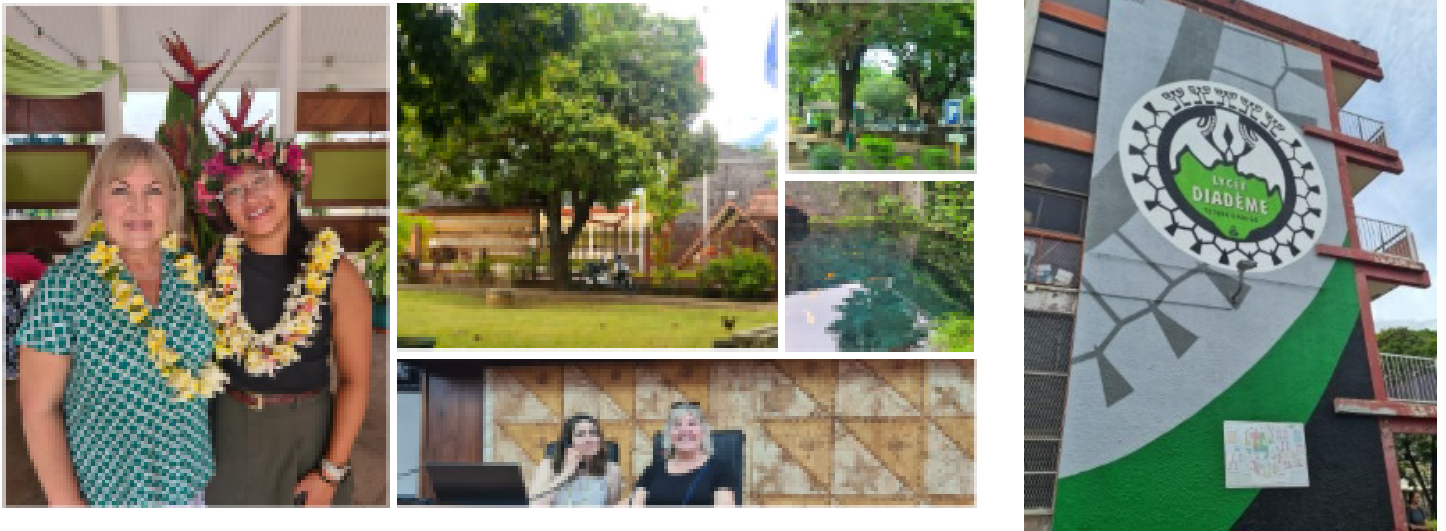
The group was made up of teachers of all ages and stages—early career language teachers, highly experienced colleagues, and teachers of students from Kindergarten through to College. Participating in PL over an extended period is always a terrific way to connect with colleagues who share the same interests, passions, experiences and the challenges peculiar to language education.



I TOOK A LITTLE TRIP ... (CONTINUED)

J'AI FAIT UN PETIT VOYAGE...

Prue Roveta, Burgmann College



Our immersion consisted of a week at the Université de Polynésie française in Pape'etē on the island of Tahiti Nui. We attended classes for five days at the university, complemented by cultural activities throughout our nine or so days. We learnt about the evolution of Polynesian languages and their connections to other languages from Madagascar to Taiwan to Easter Island and everywhere in between, as well as aspects of Polynesian culture across the seven different island groups of FP. We were wonderfully looked after by the International Relations section of UPF, with support from both staff and students. Some of our guides were teachers from local écoles, lycées and collèges. Temiti took us to the Lycée Diadème, where we were very impressed by the students in the English classes working within a new program focusing on Australia. It was eye-opening in many ways.

There is far too much to include in detail... We visited l'Assemblée de la Polynésie Française, le Musée de Tahiti et des Îles—where we saw the anchor from the Endeavour—explored gardens and beaches around the island, and enjoyed a day trip to the island of Moorea. The pâtisseries were wonderful, so distinctly French with the addition of tropical flavours. And yes—it was very humid, reaching 100% humidity in our first few days! It was a delightful mix of French and Tahitian cultures and lifestyle: fine food enjoyed while wearing t-shirts, shorts, and thongs!

