

NZALT Victoria LangSem 2007 – Report to the Ministry of Education

Date: 26 June 2007

We had an excellent one day conference yesterday, 25 June. The attendance far exceeded my expectations, mainly because a large number of Year 7 and 8 teachers attended. LangSem numbers in previous years have been around 80 but this year we had 130 and I refused a few teachers in the last days before the conference date because the hotel said they could cater for 140 (participants and exhibitors) only. The venue was stretched because I had originally told them 80-100 participants but they coped extremely well.

The evaluation forms are positive – although many teachers would have liked more practical ideas instead of the research based keynote speaker and Secondary Futures Trust in the afternoon. Many teachers said the day had been useful and had re-enthused them. My own feeling is that a blend of theoretical and practical ideas is the right mix for a regional LangSem.

There were two standout features of NZALT Victoria LangSem 2007. A large number of Y7-8 teachers attended and we included a Latin section for the first time. Latin has been aligned with Classical studies in recent years but teachers may have more in common with other teachers of languages, than with teachers of Classical Studies. I hope both these features will grow in future years.

1. Participation numbers:
45 teachers Years 7-8.
83 teachers Years 9-13
1 researcher from Victoria University and 1 lecturer from Massey Wellington
Total 130

We also had nine exhibitors: seven booksellers and two organisations for exchanges and school trips overseas

2. Ministry of Education funding of \$1000 was put towards the venue, the Mercure Hotel at 345 The Terrace. This hotel offered us nine different spaces for different languages in addition to a large room for the one plenary session that included all participants. At different stages of the day we had Y9-13 teachers in six different groups: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Latin. Y7-8 teachers participated in the first plenary, then had language specific sessions until the end when Noeline Grant, Regional Languages Adviser, ran a generic session for all Y7-8 teachers. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Noeline who fully convened the Y7-8 section. In Wellington it is extremely difficult to find a venue that has a large space for 100+ people and also lots of break out rooms for all our different languages.
3. Ministry funding was acknowledged in my welcome speech at the start of the conference and the Ministry logo was included on the programme and the evaluation form issued to participants on the day. I would have used it more widely, had I been able to access the Ministry logo sooner.

4. I had great difficulty contacting the correct person at the Ministry to enquire about the logo and Ministry participation. My letter from the Royal Society identified Luke Thoms. I received an email from his letter box putting me on to Carolyn Baxter – she had also left the Ministry. Then I contacted Glenda Koefoed whom I know slightly. She put me on to Heather Hayden who put me on to Dee Millar who proved to be a person who could give me the Ministry logo and did so almost instantly. All of this took some weeks and I wasn't able to find out whether the Ministry wanted to set up a display or send someone apart from Glenda Koefoed who presented for Year 9-13 Japanese teachers in the morning slot.

I am very grateful to the Ministry of Education for supporting NZALT Victoria's LangSem and look forward to receiving the \$1000 subsidy.

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