



New Zealand Association of Language Teachers

Report on

Waikato LANGSEM 2007

Friday 7th September 2007

Hamilton Airport Motel Conference Centre

Waikato LangSem was held at the Hamilton Airport Motel Conference Centre on 7th September 2007. The convener was Jeanne Gilbert in her role as Adviser in Learning Languages at School Support Services, University of Waikato and the organiser was David Hall, NZALT Regional Officer for the Waikato and Treasurer for Waikato NZALT, from St Peter's School Cambridge. LangSem was expertly and "interculturally" hosted on the day by Vicki Cotton, President of NZALT Waikato.

LangSem 2007 information was foreshadowed on the NZALT website and in emails sent to schools in term two by the Waikato Learning Languages advisers. Information and registration forms were sent to full primary schools, intermediates and secondary schools in the Greater Waikato area, including Gisborne, in week two, term three. Fees were set at the following rates: early bird (by 10th August) - \$70 for NZALT members, \$90 for non-NZALT members; full registration - \$80 for NZALT members, \$100 for non-NZALT members; \$20 for student teachers. Reminder emails were sent out via participation lists before due dates, however late registrations continue to feature.

The final programme and the biodata about the presenters and conveners were sent out prior to LangSem and were also available on the day.

Section conveners were:

French: Shirley Bain, Adviser in Learning Languages, SSS, Tauranga Office, UoW.
German: Vicki Cotton, Sacred Heart Girls' College
Japanese: Robert Aldridge, St Paul's Collegiate
Spanish: Maria Blé-Herrero, Lecturer, Spanish, UoW
Yrs 7 & 8 (curriculum levels 1 + 2) -
Jeanne Gilbert, Adviser in Learning Languages, SSS, Hamilton Office, UoW.

There were 108 participants at Waikato LangSem 2007:

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| French | 23 |
| German | 5 |
| Japanese | 18 |
| Spanish | 11 |
| Years 7 & 8 | 36 |
| Advisers & Presenters | 15 |

The programme began at 9.00 after a welcome by the NZALT Waikato president, with a plenary session presented by Dr Jonathon Newton, School of Linguistics and Applied language Studies (LALS), Victoria University of Wellington - Topic: "What does it mean to teach and learn an additional language interculturally?" This session began with the proposition: "*it is not extravagant to say that the most important goal of foreign language education is to help learners grow out of the shell*"

of their mother tongue and their own culture” Kaikkonen, 2001 p.63. Three main themes were introduced and expanded: “What is intercultural language teaching and learning?”; “What are the objectives of intercultural language learning?”; “How to teach and learn intercultural?” Teachers were invited to explore the concepts of intercultural awareness and the pathways to intercultural competence through knowledge of and practice in the “third place”. The powerful conclusion included quotes from NZ students and from Dellit, 2005: “*Ignoring culture does not leave a vacant cultural space which can be filled in later. Rather, it leads to a cultural space which is filled in by uninformed and unanalysed assumptions*”. A wealth of information on intercultural language teaching and learning can be found at the following site: <http://www.iltlp.unisa.edu.au/default.html>
Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice Project (ILTLP)

This full plenary was followed by a short up-date by Glenda Koefoed of the Ministry of Education.

In addition to the plenaries, the LangSem 2007 programme incorporated target language sessions, sessions specifically designed for curriculum levels 1 + 2 and a generic programme line, which offered choices about the NZ Curriculum, NCEA unit standards, NCEA scholarship, software, power point in the classroom and the MOE Immersion Scholarships.

These interesting and innovative presentations and workshops were facilitated by National Advisers in French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Chinese, as well as the two Waikato Learning Languages Advisers, section conveners and Waikato teachers. Presenters included Judith Geare from the Goethe Institut; Margaret Hardiman and Glenda Koefoed, Senior Advisers, Languages, at the Ministry of Education; Richard Steel, National Assessment Facilitator in the Secondary Assessment Team of Qualifications Division at NZQA; Adèle Scott, NZALT President (2007-2009) and Senior Lecturer, Pre-service Primary and Secondary Teacher Education, School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Massey University College of Education; Wendy Thomson, Coordinator of the Ministry of Education-funded Teacher Professional Development Programme in Languages Years 7-8; and Robyn Rae, New Beginnings.

The day was concluded with a short marketing address by Adèle Scott, President NZALT, a lucky prize draw and the poroporaki by our local president.

The professional dedication and efforts of all those involved in the organisation and presentation resulted in an extremely valuable day of professional learning and networking. All facilitators and presenters were acknowledged and thanked on the day. The organiser and conveners based at schools have received payment (see organiser’s financial report).

The evaluations (collations attached) were very positive and there is a clear desire for more professional days such as LangSem. Convener feedback received was also positive with constructive suggestions.

The Hamilton Airport Motel Conference Centre, is a pleasant and professional venue for such a conference, with an adequate number of breakout rooms. Overall numbers for LangSem 2007 were 4 more than in 2005, with a small increase in the yr 7 & 8 section. This venue therefore continues to best meet our needs space-wise, in comparison to all other venues. Service from conference staff was professional on the day and while the catering was high quality, we will make suggestions about serving the food on longer tables to aid a speedier flow past the food.

During the day teachers were able to inspect and buy resources provided by: Aquila Books, Heineman Publishers, Educational Travel International and New Beginnings. Grateful thanks to Educational Travel International, New Beginnings, Aquila and Heineman Publishers for the prizes for the final session.

BUDGET:

The \$1000 sponsorship from the Ministry of Education was not applied for. The manager for 2009 will need to check MOE deadlines for this assistance in the year **prior** to LangSem.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In response to the success of the day and the overwhelming enthusiasm in the evaluations it is proposed that:

- LangSem 2009 be placed on an NZALT Waikato agenda, middle 2008, to call for convener and organiser.
- The organiser (and convener, if not an adviser), be paid at \$x per registration, GST inclusive (to be negotiated)
- Subject conveners be appointed early in 2009 and those conveners who are teachers be paid per subject area according to funds available at the time.
- Inclusion of Maori in the Mainstream and Pasifika languages be considered
- Hamilton Airport Motel Conference Centre is a valuable venue, but other venues could be researched during 2008.
- A programme be organized, incorporating praxis to meet current needs, with a focus on classroom interactive strategies and the opportunity for target language immersion and transition networking.
- Length of day and programme slots be reviewed - should we reduce the number of sessions down to 4 and make them longer?
- Teachers be forewarned to check NZALT website for information and programme confirmation
- Teachers be reminded that the financial organization is run by a teacher on behalf of NZALT, and that they should make every endeavour to pay promptly.
- Any profits made should be invested in the professional development award fund for NZALT teachers in the Greater Waikato area.

I would like to conclude with a personal thank-you to David Hall for his commitment to this project, his wonderful organisation, ICT superiority and flair, ready hospitality, friendship and humour. It has been a pleasure to continue to co-construct LangSems with him.

Jeanne Gilbert
Convener