

Canberra Region Languages Forum Update

December 2015

1. University Languages Portal Australia

A one-stop shop listing which languages are available at which Australian universities, whether they are available online, and how to enrol in language courses offered at other universities around the country. All universities and all languages, including indigenous languages and the less commonly taught languages, are listed.

Primarily designed to help students, the portal provides information about why studying a language is a great thing to do. The initial focus (due to funding limitations) is on introductory-level subjects, but entries indicate whether more advanced levels are available. The portal also points out the benefits of language learning for performance in other academic areas and future employability, and gives information about tertiary bonus schemes for languages.

Funded by the Australian Government's Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) and supported by the Languages and Cultures Network for Australian Universities ([LCNAU](#)) and the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language

Explore the portal at <http://ulpa.edu.au/>

The developers welcome feedback – what works, what doesn't and what you would like to see included. Please provide any comments to anya@unimelb.edu.au

2. Canberra languages teacher wins national award

Sarah Payne, Head of Languages and teacher of French and German at Canberra Grammar School (CGS), has been awarded the Patji-Dawes Award for outstanding achievements in language teaching. She was selected from an impressive list of nominees for this inaugural national award. Her nominator, a previous student at CGS, flew over from the UK where he now works to be present at the conferral of the award in Sydney by Robert Dessaix on 25 November 2015.

The Patji-Dawes award is an initiative of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language through its Communications and Outreach Program. This program includes a commitment to improving levels of multilingualism and mastery of other languages in Australia through understanding and public debate on how we learn (and teach) second and other languages most effectively. See <http://www.dynamicsoflanguage.edu.au/get-involved/outreach/dawes-award/> for more details.

3. Other news from the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language

The Centre's first seminar of 2016 at the ANU will be held on 29 January 2016. The speaker is Dr Morten Christiansen, Director of the Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory at Cornell University.

The Wellsprings Forum Dialogues will be held at ANU during the first week of February. They will include public lectures, commentary and discussion on the theme: 'What is different about the sociolinguistics of small-scale communities'.

- Monday 1 Feb: Peter Trudgill, "Complexity in small languages: what is the evidence?"
- Tuesday 2 Feb: James Stanford, "Investigating language variation and change in small communities"
- Wednesday 3 Feb: Peter Trudgill, "Complexity in small languages: how can we account for it"
- Thursday 4 Feb: James Stanford, "Sociolinguistics of Sui clans and other communities of descent"

- Friday 5 Feb: Peter Trudgill, James Stanford, Nick Evans: "Synthesis and discussion"

Open to all – but please register with Bianca.Hennessy@anu.edu.au by 15 December 2015 for planning and catering purposes.

For more information: <http://www.dynamicsoflanguage.edu.au/whats-on/events/>

4. Cuts in staff and language courses at the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP)

Up to 40 academics could be axed from the Australian National University's esteemed School of Culture, History and Language as it faces a budget deficit of \$1.5 million this year.

Read more: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/staff-and-budget-cuts-at-esteemed-anu-college-of-asia-and-the-pacific-20151102-gkojpp>

Note: Originally slated to take place from 1 December, within days of this front page story in the Canberra Times, the Dean of CAP announced that her 'change management proposal' had been postponed until February 2016.

For more commentary on the CT article, see

more: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/comment/lessons-in-change-for-australian-national-university-amid-need-for-asiapacific-college-20151105-gkras4.html#ixzz3r3kxm8og>

5. Australian curriculum languages

The updated Australian Curriculum website (version 8.0) has now been released. Curricula for [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Indonesian](#), [Italian](#), [Japanese](#), [Korean](#), [Modern Greek](#), [Spanish](#), [Vietnamese](#) have now been endorsed and are available at <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/languages/preamble>

Each language curriculum includes an interesting 'Context Statement' which looks at

- the place of that language and culture in Australia and in the world,
- its place in Australian education,
- the nature of language learning for that language and
- the diversity of learners of the language in Australian schools.

Curricula for Hindi and Turkish, plus the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages, will go to the Education Council for endorsement in early December. Once endorsed, the curricula will be made available on the Australian Curriculum website.

Draft curricula for Auslan and Classical Languages will go out for consultation in the second quarter of 2016.

6. A new resource site for language teachers

Google+ Community OzLangED, a space is for language educators, especially those in Australia, to share ideas and resources.

Created by Kati Varela, a French and Spanish teacher in Sydney, the space is organised so the resources and discussion points can be categorised as exclusively relevant to a particular language or useful for several languages. Other languages can easily be included later on. For details: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/109904448482806550521>

7. Publicise languages at the multicultural festival in Canberra

The ACT Bilingual Education Alliance (ACTBEA) will again have an information stall at the National Multicultural Festival in Civic on Sunday 14 February 2016, 11am-4.30pm.

This is a great opportunity to publicise the benefits of knowing more than one language and any language program or activity you are involved in; the festival is visited by thousands of people each year.

If you would like to help staff the stall and share your enthusiasm and knowledge, and/or if you have brochures or pamphlets about a language program you would like to display, please let us know at canberrabilingual@gmail.com

NOTE: ACTBEA gratefully acknowledges the support of the ACT Government's 2015-16 Participation (Multicultural) Grants Program) for funding its activities at the festival.

8. Calling rappers and slam poets in various languages

Do you know anyone into rapping or performance poetry in other languages? Plans to celebrate International Mother Language Day on Sunday 21 February 2016 include a spoken word event after the traditional language walk. If you are involved in rapping or performance poetry in another language, or know of anyone – particularly young people - who might be interested in participating, please contact languagesact@gmail.com.

9. ACT Mandarin Blueprint

The ACT Mandarin Blueprint, which aims to enhance the learning of Mandarin and promote understanding of Chinese culture in ACT schools, was officially released on 15 October 2015. The blueprint gives an overview of the current initiatives and future plans of the many organisations in the ACT involved in the teaching and promotion of Mandarin and Chinese culture. For a copy of the Blueprint, see http://www.det.act.gov.au/teaching_and_learning/mandarin-blueprint

A list of the recipients of ACT Government Mandarin Culture and Language Grants announced as a part of the Blueprint - together with a brief description of their projects - can also be seen at that site. The 21 recipients include mainstream and community language schools, other community organisations, and the ANU.

10. Japanese book club for kids

The Kangaroo Pocket Bunko (Bunko means 'mini-library' in Japanese) has been operating since May 2015. The Club aims to help maintain and develop the bilingual ability of children aged between 0 and 12 years of age and to help develop and enhance an understanding of both Japanese and Australian cultures.

For details email Maki Christie (yonemaki0923@hotmail.com) or visit them on FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/%E3%82%AB%E3%83%B3%E3%82%AC%E3%83%AB%E3%83%BC%E3%83%9D%E3%82%B1%E3%83%83%E3%83%88%E6%96%87%E5%BA%AB-1053332551349182/>

11. Alliance Française Canberra

The Alliance offers French courses for all ages, an extensive cultural and events program, a library and other services. Subscribe to their newsletter or follow the Alliance on Facebook to keep up with news and events. For more information see: <http://www.afcanberra.com.au/>

12. Learn Mandarin over summer in Tasmania

Expressions of interest invited from professionals or other adult members of the public interested in taking a course in foundation Chinese (Mandarin) in Hobart.

Jan 11-15 2016 Week One, Jan 18-22 2016 Week Two

Cost \$300 per week . Basic conversation, pinyin and character recognition included.

For more information: Hingor Chung (hingor.chung@education.tas.gov.au) or Eve Xia (eve441375788@gmail.com)

13. Articles that may be of Interest:

- Myth: young people have abandoned language learning: Fact: applications to language degrees have plummeted – but students are finding novel ways to learn
http://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/nov/02/myth-young-people-have-abandoned-language-learning?CMP=share_btn_link
- Speaking two languages can double hopes of stroke recovery November 20, 2015
http://www.canberratimes.com.au/execute_search.html?text=learning+languages&ss=canberratimes.com.au
- Indonesian language study headed for extinction at Australian Universities:
<http://www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/dont-let-indonesian-language-die-bowen/news-story/1e91f4d10e972a2d4ef1625169669699>
- Aboriginal languages will become a new HSC subject from 2016, a decade after the NSW indigenous languages policy was introduced.
<http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/aboriginal-languages-to-become-new-hsc-subject-20151130-glbs3w.html>

FEEDBACK ON UPDATES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE UPDATES WELCOME

Copies of previous Forum Updates are available at

<http://canberralanquages.blogspot.com/p/forum-updates.html>