

Canberra Region Languages Forum Update

February 2014

1. Languages at the Multicultural Festival, Friday 7 to Sunday 9 February

Hear some of the many languages spoken in the Canberra area while enjoying cultural performances, multicultural food and festival parades. For details of what is happening where and when, download the program from <http://multiculturalfestival.com.au/festival-program/>

a) Children's sanctuary and Kids' Fringe Saturday 8 February

Coming with children? Be sure to visit the free activities especially for them in Civic Square, in front of the Canberra Theatre, on Saturday 8 February, beginning at 10am. See http://actbilingual.weebly.com/uploads/4/4/9/1/4491774/childrens_festival_program.doc for the full day's program.

There will also be some multilingual art and craft activities, story book reading in French, German, Italian and/or Swedish, and you can have your name written in different languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Hindi. Contact Canberrabilingual@gmail.com for more details.

b) Languages Information Stall Sunday 10 February

Come and meet others interested in promoting languages and find out about local initiatives at the ACT Bilingual Education Alliance (ACTBEA) stall on Sunday 10 February from 11am-4.30pm. The stall will be on London Circuit opposite the North Building and CMAG (stall number E9).

ACTBEA is happy to display any brochures or pamphlets to publicise particular language programs and activities in which you are involved. Just bring them along to the stall or email Canberrabilingual@gmail.com to make prior arrangements. If you have an hour or to help staff the stall, please also let ACTBEA know. This is a great opportunity to get your message across to the wider Canberra community.

For more information about ACTBEA see the website at <http://actbilingual.weebly.com/>

2. Language programs in the Canberra area enrolling now

a) FOR ADULTS

- **Short courses at CIT Solutions** (shortcourses.cit.edu.au)
Auslan, Arabic, Croatian, Dari, Dutch, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Welsh; and Mandarin, Swedish and Swahili for tourists.
- **Recreational Evening Classes**
 - Lake Ginninderra College (<http://www.lakenitelearning.com.au/program.htm>)
Arabic, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai
 - Erindale College (<http://erindalecep.com.au/lan.html>), Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Spanish
- **Centre for Continuing Education ANU** (Arabic, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Mandarin, Modern Greek, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese) see <http://www.anu.edu.au/cce/languages/>
- **Polyglot Club**
Conversation groups in French, Spanish and German every Monday evening 5.30pm in the Fellows bar at ANU (NOTE different venue for special event Monday 10 February).
For more details email tim.gulliver@hotmail.com

b) FOR CHILDREN

- **German programs for children**

- A wide variety of programs, including playgroups (for children and their parents/carers), playschool, after school music program, and Pfadfinder scout groups. Both German-speaking and beginners catered for. For more information see www.spielwelt.org.au
- German Language School. Offers more formal languages classes. For further details see <http://www.actgermanschool.org.au/childrens-division>

- **Language programs for children in over 30 other languages**

Find links to language-based playgroups, school and after-school programs at <http://actbilingual.weebly.com/language-programs-for-children.html>

3. Language Walk, Friday 21 February 2014, from 5.30pm

The International Mother Language Movement invites you to its Language Walk. Join organisers at Reconciliation Place (behind Questacon), Lake Burley Griffin at 5.30pm to walk 1.5km along Lake Burley Griffin to celebrate International Mother Language Day.

To download poster, see:

http://actbilingual.weebly.com/uploads/4/4/9/1/4491774/language_walk_poster.jpg

4. Interested in interpreting and translating?

The ACT branch of AUSIT (the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators) is planning to hold a workshop/mini-conference at Bruce CIT on Saturday 29 March 2014. Come along to hear from NAATI about certification and improving skills, together with other items for both novice and experienced interpreters and translators. There will also be a chance to hear about possible training and support for those involved in, or interested in getting involved in, community interpreting.

For more information about the workshop and general queries about AUSIT, contact:

- Mohammed Qassar: mqassar@hotmail.com or 0405 484 058,
- Patricia Alvarez de Ellison: palvarezdeellis@yahoo.com.au or 0404 071 407 or
- Mécia Freire: mecia.freire@bigpond.com or 0417 386 269

5. Endangered Language and Cultures blog

A blog about linguistics, language documentation, research technology, and other things to do with endangered languages and cultures. It is predominantly written by linguists, including Jane Simpson from ANU here in Canberra and Peter Austin from SOAS in London, archivists from PARADISEC, and a whole slew of guest contributors.

You can find the blog at <http://www.paradisec.org.au/blog/>

6. Millions awarded for research on languages

The Australian Research Council has awarded \$28 million over seven years for a Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language. Collaborating institutions will contribute a further \$9 million. The Centre will bring together researchers in linguistics, speech pathology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, bioinformatics and robotics from the ANU, other universities in Australia and overseas, and partners from other institutions including AIATSIS and the Max Planck Institute Child Study Centre.

The Centre Director and research leader (Nick Evans), Deputy Director (Jane Simpson) and main administrative team are based at the ANU.

There will soon be a webpage giving more information. In the meantime, here are some quotes from the overview of what is planned:

The Centre will address several questions:

- How do languages evolve?
- How different can languages be?
- How do our brains acquire and process them?
- How can technologies deal with the complexity and enormous variability of language in human information processing?
- What can Australia do to increase its linguistic abilities at a time of increasingly multilingual demands in trade and information?

The Centre will bring together the world's top researchers to transform the language sciences. In 7 years, a new vision for our understanding of language and languages will emerge. It will lay the groundwork for future research. It will enhance Australia's linguistic resources – an underrated aspect of our informational resources - and help secure the linguistic and cultural heritage of Indigenous and regional communities.

Ideally, in 20 years' time Australia will be transformed into a nation of polyglots comparable to the Netherlands, or Singapore. But we can only do this with a radically improved understanding of how languages are learned from infancy through to adulthood, and through new approaches to learning second or third languages whose pedagogy is built on the language sciences.

Among the many research areas and other activities planned, the Centre will run a 10-day Summer School to help make its research visible and accessible to the public, industry, government and international researchers. Part of the summer school will be a 2-day Outreach Event offering workshops providing professional development credits to school teachers, early childhood professionals, speech pathologists, and Indigenous language and health workers. Input from industry or end-user groups will also be solicited in special sessions.

FEEDBACK ON THESE UPDATES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE UPDATES WELCOME

Copies of previous Forum Updates are available at

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