

ACT Bilingual Education Alliance (ACTBEA) Update

July 2014

1. AUSTRALIAN K-10 CURRICULUM FOR CHINESE, FRENCH, INDONESIAN AND ITALIAN NOW ONLINE

The Australian Curriculum for Chinese, French, Indonesian and Italian for Foundation (Kindergarten) to Year 10 is now available for use in schools. For more details see <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/languages/preamble>.

The Chinese curriculum has three learner pathways: for second language learners and background language learners from K to 10, and for first language learners in Years 7–10.

Still under development are curricula for Arabic, German, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese, plus the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages. Arabic and Vietnamese will be geared towards learners with some background in the language while the remainder are pitched to second language learners.

Funding for five additional languages – Turkish, Hindi, AUSLAN, and Classical Greek and Latin – has been provided by the Australian Government.

2. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA FOR LANGUAGES EDUCATION

Minister Pyne outlined the government's agenda for languages education at the Adelaide Language Festival in May 2014. Commitments and plans include:

- 40% of Year 12 students studying a foreign or classical language within a decade
- Strengthening links with Indonesia and other Asian countries
- Early Learning Languages Australia: a one-year trial of online foreign language learning for children in preschool programmes
- Prioritising development of the national languages curriculum for foreign languages in mainstream schools by 2015 (see Item 1 above)
- Research by the Asia Education Foundation into ways to encourage more secondary students to continue learning a foreign language in Years 11 and 12
- Improving teacher training to put a focus back on languages
- A target of 40% of recruits into the Teach for Australia program to specialise in foreign languages
- Continuing Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships that offer language teachers a three-week immersion program in their language home country
- Launch of New Colombo Plan, offering scholarships and grants to undergraduate students for study and internships or mentorships in the Asia-Pacific region.

For full copy of the speech, see <http://ministers.education.gov.au/pyne/opening-address-adelaide-language-festival>

3. COMMUNITY INTERPRETER TRAINING

Interested in preparing for the NAATI para-professional interpreter test and gaining accreditation as a community interpreter? Come along to an information session about a course at CIT, Reid Campus, planned to start in September 2014.

When? 6pm – 7pm Thursday 31 July **OR** 3pm – 4pm Saturday 2 August

Where? 2nd Floor, Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic

The course fee (\$100) is greatly subsidised by funding from the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), and scholarships will be available for the NAATI test. Once accredited, course graduates will be required to register with the OMA so that their services can be called on by ACT government departments.

Language requirements: Proficiency in dialect/standard form of target language plus proficiency in English, equivalent to Level 6 in the IELTS General Training scale (i.e. a competent user of English).

The information sessions will be run by CIT Solutions and the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF), and will cover course aims, format, and how to apply for a place.

For more information and/or to register for one of the information sessions, contact: antje.klupsch@cit.edu.au

4. LOVE 2 READ and THE READING HOUR

- Share a book with a child for 10 minutes a day – one hour a week – and give them the gift of reading.
- Take part in the reading hour, Tuesday 19 August, 6pm – 7pm

Reading in any language can help literacy skills in English. It also strengthens and develops the other language/s involved - reading aloud and talking about books exposes children to more diverse vocabulary, ideas and language structures than many other situations. Visit www.love2read.org.au for ideas about discovering and rediscovering the joy of reading and how to get involved in reading hour events.

To read along with a book in Mandarin, tune in to community radio 2XX (98.3FM) at 6.30-7pm on Friday nights. This Friday (1 August), you can hear the Chinese version of 'Go to sleep, Russell the Sheep' by Rob Scotton 小羊睡不着. For more information and details of future programs see <http://learningmandarin.weebly.com/weekly-radio-show.html>

5. TWO INTERESTING ARTICLES

How we kill languages and fail our cleverest children, by Misty Adoniou, University of Canberra.

Misty points out that one third of children in Australia enter kindergarten with sound early knowledge of a non-English language, and the cognitive stimulation that derives from this knowledge. "However, this potential is rarely realised; their knowledge of their home language is usually neglected, and becomes stunted over time. Instead, it should be cultivated, as part of these students' academic learning". She goes on to outline some ways that this could be done, including:

- bilingual education programs,
- specialist language teachers in primary schools to advise classroom teachers
- teaching assistants who speak students' home languages
- working with parents to support home language learning
- linking families to community language schools.

"At the same time, teacher educators should be building home language awareness into courses, across all subject areas. Taken together, these measures are likely to encourage bilingual students to pursue formal languages studies in later years, to build students' self-esteem, to sustain children's bonds with their parents, and to develop a valuable economic resource."

For copy of full article <http://theconversation.com/how-we-kill-languages-and-fail-our-cleverest-children-29137>

The Importance of Literacy in the Home Language: The View From Australia by Susana Eisenclas, Andrea Schalley and Diana Guillemin, School of Languages and Linguistics, Griffith University, Brisbane.

The authors investigate the impact of (il)literacy in the home language on the academic, affective, and social development of bilingual/multilingual children. They propose adapting classroom programs to help communities, families and educators at the local level to strengthen students' home-language literacy and proficiency in order to improve overall literacy and academic outcomes for Australian home-language speakers.

For copy of full article <http://sgo.sagepub.com/content/3/4/2158244013507270>

6. ANU LANGUAGE TEACHING FORUM: PERSIAN LANGUAGE ONLINE - OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Wednesday 6 August 2014, 4.15 – 5.15 pm
- Al Falasi Theatre, CAIS, Building 127, Ellery Crescent, ANU

Digital learning, whether online, offline, or a blend, has become a major debate for universities worldwide and challenged the traditional model of university instruction. In 2013, the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (CAIS) at ANU began to teach Persian and Arabic online. What model was adopted and why? How can technology simplify, create and deepen the language learning experience and instil cultural appreciation and affection at the same time as developing verifiable linguistic knowledge and skill? What was the student experience and how did students perform? Come along to find out and join in the discussion.

This is one of a series of free public seminars in the ANU Language Teaching Forum.

For more information and to join the mailing list for future talks, contact

- Dr Gabriele Schmidt, gabriele.schmidt@anu.edu.au
- Dr Duck-Young Lee, duck-young.lee@anu.edu.au
- Ms France Meyer, france.meyer@anu.edu.au

7. SKYPE PROMISES TO BREAK THE LANGUAGE BARRIER?

See a demonstration of skype-based interpreting of a simple conversation at <http://techday.com/the-channel/news/microsoft-breaks-language-barrier-with-skype-demo/188237/>

FEEDBACK ON THESE ACTBEA UPDATES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE UPDATES ARE WELCOME

Copies of previous Updates can be downloaded from the ACTBEA website at <http://actbilingual.weebly.com>