



July 6, 2008

25/2008

## **E-Language**

### **GREAT NUMBERS EXPERIENCE SUCCESSFUL VICTORIAN STATE COMMUNITY LANGUAGES SCHOOL CONFERENCE**

Close to 400 community languages school teachers / instructors and administrators representing more than 25 communities attended the Victorian State Community Languages Schools Conference at the Sidney Myer Asia Centre, University of Melbourne on Saturday July 5, 2008. The Conference was organised by Community Languages Australia and The Ethnic Schools Association of Victoria (ESAV).

Entering the building from 8.30am on a brisk Saturday morning participants were greeted by the African trio – ONE AFRICA .Their lively music certainly set the upbeat mood for the Conference.

Registration handled by ESAV Executive Office Fahry Abubaker and his team of able helpers was quick and easy.

Community Languages Australia, Executive Director Stefan Romaniw opened the Conference, highlighting the commitment and endeavour of those attending – as being replicated every week by teachers - instructors and administrators to give students the opportunity to foster language and culture through quality programs.

Tassos Douvartzides President of AFESA also welcomed participants by asking different language groups to greet the conference in their own language.

Key Note speaker Dr. Ken Cruickshank from the University of Wollongong speaking about - ***Changes in the children's use of their languages in the home and the impact of travel, internet and cable TV*** set the tone with his strong presentation. The importance of languages is changing. It's becoming a way of life through technology, travel and the communication coming into the home. We need to seize the opportunity. Technology is around us, we just need to know how to use it to be an asset in the teaching and learning of languages. Computers and internet are now an integral part of education and he called on the Federal Government as part of the Education Revolution to provide computers to all community languages school in Australia.

His presentation was referred to throughout the conference and was topic of discussion during breaks.

Carol Kelly Assistant General Manager, Targeted Programs Branch gave a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) perspective on languages, the commitments, the range of providers, the need to work in partnership and also to build bridges through community partnership. An interesting statistic Carol provided was as follows;

2 out of 5 students who commence in the early years in a community language school go onto to complete VCE in the language; whilst only 1 in 12 do so in mainstream schools.

The presentation gave food for thought as how to provide effective languages education provision in the future.

Stefan Romaniw presented a brief overview of the activities provided by the ESAV and Community Languages Australia in the areas of representation, coordination, quality frameworks and delivery. Participants were requested to complete a survey as part of the presentation on the future needs and directions of the ESAV and Community Languages Australia. These will now form the basis for some research as to what are the needs of the schools, future funding directions, support for Community Languages Australia and ESAV plus other issues. The responses give a wide area of options, suggestions and outline needs.

Strong support for coordination, quality assurance and national involvement are seen as critical. Results will be published shortly.

Schools wishing to contribute to the survey have to **July 28, 2008** to send their forms back. This invitation is opened to all, not only those who attended the conference.

Jan Molloy from the Immigration Museum presented the many dimensions the Immigration Museum can offer community languages school. A strong partnership will be formed with schools. Workshops are being held at the Museum on August 8 and September 9, 2008. You are invited to send your representatives. Contact Jan at the Museum.

Olena Radievska, Ukrainian Education Council of Australia launched an interactive book that was recently been completed.

A buffet lunch gave participants the opportunity to move around and meet many others. Whilst the lunch lines were long they were also full of excitement and discussion and listened to the music of Hot Club Swing duo.

*After lunch the workshops started – A real buzz in the building! Strong presenters, enthusiastic participants.*

*The workshops were most inspiring – It's not often that at the end of a one day Conference nearly all participants are still there at closing time !– The presenters must be doing something right!*

- **VELS Assessment –**  
Dr. Margaret Gearon, Monash University
- **Strategies for Teaching Intercultural Knowledge and Language Awareness**  
Maree Dellora, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
- **Using Technology in the Community languages school classroom**  
▪ Nick Bogiannidis, Hailey bury College
- **Designing your curriculum – A Practical Approach**  
▪ Marijka Cikoja Principal, Ukrainian School, North Melbourne
- **Community languages school and mainstream school working in partnership**  
▪ Tassos Douvartzides, Principal - Omiros College and Jenny Wallace, Principal - Brunswick Special Developmental School
- **Multiple Intelligences and Multi Age Classroom**  
Teresa De Fazio , Victoria University
- **Australian Football League (AFL) – Classroom ideas and resources,**  
Nick Hatzoglou AFL

The day came to an end and parties bid each other farewell. Some agreeing to meet at the National Community Languages Schools Conference on October 4, 2008 in Perth, others inviting each other to visit schools, others just saying – Same place, same time Next year!

### **Sponsors and Supporters**

We acknowledge and thank our sponsors and supporters:

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) Victoria  
Department of Education and Workplace Relations (Commonwealth)  
Victorian Multicultural Commission  
Multicultural Arts Victoria  
LMERC – Jenny for being their all day with the exhibition.  
Staff at the Asian Centre - Many thanks (Tony)