



Centre for Communication Research

An AUT Key Research Institute

Annual Report

2004

INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Communication Research (CCR) was inaugurated in 2001, and in 2003 became one of nine AUT Key Research Institutes receiving increased funding support. In 2004 it was an independent unit within the Faculty of Arts, reporting to the Associate Dean (Research). The Centre involves staff and students from the Schools of Art and Design, Communication, Languages and Social Sciences in its activities.

The goals of CCR are to:

- undertake and stimulate research in communication (broadly interpreted) among AUT staff and students
- raise the research capability of and mentor AUT staff and students in the area of communication
- present and publish the findings of communication research conducted at AUT
- win funding to support research in communication
- develop collaborations and relationships with other centres of research excellence in communication.

The Centre is characterised by a range of disciplinary, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research practices with special interests in critical perspectives on communication, culture and identity, sociolinguistics and language learning, multilingual and multicultural Auckland, visual and material analysis, creative industries and media discourses. The Centre fosters a collegial environment that encourages research projects in its strategic areas of interest, mentoring less experienced staff and postgraduate researchers. It encourages research which

addresses issues of both practice and theory, the local and the global, and engagement with socially important research questions.

The Centre's development strategy focuses on three areas – developing research collaborations within and beyond AUT, developing editorial and publications capability, and gain external funding.

From 1 February 2005 schools of the Faculty of Arts were regrouped into two new faculties, Applied Humanities and Design & Creative Technologies. CCR is located administratively within the Faculty of Applied Humanities, but continues to involve staff in the Schools of Art & Design and Communication Studies, which have become part of the Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies.

PERSONNEL

CCR Board

Allan Bell	(Chairman)
Charles Crothers	Professor of Sociology, School of Social Sciences
Lynn Grant	Senior Lecturer, School of Languages
Sharon Harvey	Assoc. Dean Arts, Research
Mark Jackson	Senior Research Lecturer, School of Art and Design
Barry King	Head of School of Communication Studies

CCR staff, 2004

Allan Bell

Professor of Language and Communication
Director, Centre for Communication Research

Katalin Lustyik, Post-doctoral research fellow, began her two-year appointment in February 2004, researching children, media and globalisation in New Zealand.

Sharon Lammas, Administrator, ensured the smooth running of the Centre and its administrative needs. She also acted as liaison between the CCR Board, Research Fellows and PhD staff.

George Major, Research Assistant, assisted Allan Bell with his investigation into the language used in Speights and Tui beer advertisements, and acted as administrator when that position was vacant.

Philippa Smith, Research Coordinator, worked in several areas including the Television Violence Project, updating the Centre website, editing material from the Pasifika Languages Project for inclusion on the website, investigating external funding opportunities for the Centre, and writing her own paper on *The Charismatic Documentary Presenter and The Power of Persuasion*.

Susan Shaw, Editorial Assistant, has responsibility for copy-editing of the *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. Her proofing and copy editing skills were also utilised by other researchers affiliated to the Centre.

2004 Research Fellows

John Bitchener, Senior Lecturer, MA coordinator, School of Languages,
 Heather Devere, Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences
 Lynn Grant, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages
 Albert Refiti, Senior Lecture, Spatial Design, School of Art & Design

2003 RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

The following research fellows completed work on their 2003 fellowship work in early 2004:

John Bitchener, School of Languages, .2 time proportion (1 semester)
 Writing up journal articles and one empirical study for publication in the field of second language acquisition and learning.

Pat Strauss, School of Languages, .4 time proportion.
 An investigation into the language challenges facing EAL undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Faculty of Science and Engineering at the AUT.

Nancy De Freitas, School of Art and Design, .2 time proportion.
Collaboration as Research Method in the Visual Arts: An analysis through active documentation of the collaborative component of a current practice based research project, *Weight of the Human Heart*.

2004 RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

CCR advertised a contestable process for Research Fellowship appointments for 2004. These were available for Faculty of Arts staff who proposed a programme of research for which the Centre would fund a proportion of their time. The 2004 fellows were:

John Bitchener, Senior Lecturer, MA co-ordinator School of Languages
.3 time proportion
Second language acquisition and learning
Image-text analysis of non-English speaking tourist destinations

Two pieces of research were undertaken in 2004. The first study in conjunction with Dr Helen Basturkmen at the University of Auckland focussed on supervisor and student perceptions of the writing difficulties of postgraduate EAL thesis students. The project discovered that there is a mismatch between the two parties concerning the cause of the most problematic issues that emerge when the students write the Discussion of Results section of their thesis. The first article from this study has been submitted to *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*. Last November, the findings were presented at the AARE Conference in Australia and at the Tertiary Writing

Network at Victoria University of Wellington. An abstract has been accepted for the IAWE Conference at Purdue University in Indiana in July this year.

The second study with Dr Elizabeth Grierson critically investigated the way tourist texts (written and visual) construct and present China to the grassroots traveller as a non-English speaking destination. The study found a number of differences in the focus taken by the publications of Gecko and Intrepid. An article based on the study - 'Tourist texts: An image-text analysis of non-English speaking tourist destinations' - is currently under review with the *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations*. An abstract has been accepted for presentation at the Language and Global Communication Conference at Cardiff University in July this year. Second articles on both studies are currently being written.

Lynn Grant, Senior Lecturer, School of Languages

.2 time proportion

Researching and Teaching Figurative Language.

A corpus search of the British National Corpus (BNC) in order to establish the frequency of one category of idiomatic multiword unit, that of 'figuratives' (figurative idioms), was the main focus of this research. Because of the extremely large number of 'figuratives' that exist in English it proved impossible to establish the frequency of all of them, so the research had to be a small scale study. With this in mind, more than 1000 figuratives were selected for the corpus search, based on frequency indicators in two idiom dictionaries, in two journal articles and Dr Grant's own instinct as a language teacher. Findings based on the corpus search revealed that while some 'figuratives' thought to be frequent **are** frequent, others are not. This information will be of interest to language teachers and researchers, therefore the next stage will be to incorporate the research into a journal article.

Heather Devere, Senior Lecturer, Social Sciences

.3 time proportion

Cross-Cultural Discourses on Friendship

This research was an investigation of the ways in which people from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds interpret the concept of friendship. Peer group conversations were held in English between colleagues from thirteen different cultures who are working and studying in New Zealand. The cultural backgrounds of those involved are: Pakeha New Zealander, Sri Lankan, German, Indian, Iraqi, Korean, Trinidadian, Japanese, Chinese, Maldivian, Italian, Samoan and Maori New Zealander. The discipline backgrounds include anthropology, economics, education, ethics, history, linguistics, political science, psychology, sociology and theology. The group explored the use of the term 'friendship' and interrelated concepts and discussed the way in which linguistic and traditional differences and similarities link into the political, religious and social histories of the cultures. The research demonstrates that, while subtle differences in meaning and use of the term friendship contribute to distinctions between different traditions, the similarities in understandings about what constitutes friendship that are shared lend optimism to initiatives which help to provide a more central place for friendship in the concept of the political. There will

be several research outputs from this study, including a paper accepted for the European Consortium on Political Research special session on the Politics of Friendship to be held in Granada in April 2005.

**Albert L Refiti, Senior Lecturer, Spatial Design,
School of Art and Design**

.3 time proportion

Fale: Polynesian Architecture and Identity Construction

The aim of this research project was to identify and explore the architectural and formal possibilities of the Samoan faletele or guesthouse. Five existing examples - measured and surveyed in 1998 - were modelled on the computer to ascertain what methods and calculations used to form the shape of the roof and the relative size of the floor plate. This combined with interviews with two traditional architects were employed to construct an idea of how the form of the house is determined by certain factors that is unique to each architects design. The translation of existing measurements and photographs to computer CAD drawings has been completed. The 3-D computer models and the physical model are almost completed. Two outcomes produced so far include a chapter in a book published in Austria, and a paper delivered at the Victoria University Pacific Architecture Colloquium at Te Papa Museum in August 2004 (due for publication in 2005).

POST DOCTORAL FELLOW

Katalin Lustyik

Research during 2004 related to children, media and globalization in New Zealand: In what ways have the locally available global television channels dedicated to children, such as Disney, Nickelodeon and the Cartoon Network, been influential on children's culture in New Zealand? To what extent do the changes in children's television follow global trends or in what ways is the New Zealand case unique?

This project, which is on-going, aims to be a multi-disciplinary work developed at the crossroads of critical media studies and childhood studies strongly shaped by sociology, history, anthropology, psychology and cultural studies. In 2004 it involved the collection of data from a range of sources: (1) *regular monitoring of children's television programmes*: both free to air (TV2 and TV3) and on SKY, and in particular Nickelodeon programmes, (2) *monitoring of television-related websites targeting children*: including TVNZ and TV3, and Nickelodeon's new regional website. (3) *gathering information* from events organized for children in New Zealand, as well as from trade magazines, television guides, national and international newspapers and public domain information on media corporations (esp. Viacom and Walt Disney). The data are employed in a qualitative sense.

Data is also being gathered from children and parents via in-depth ethnographic interviews (family as unit of analysis) in a tradition of work that attempts to interpret the experiences of New Zealanders as they inhabit the technologies, artefacts, and

practices of the global media age. Going in to the field takes the discussion on the globalization of children's culture in the case of small nations such as New Zealand beyond anecdotes and industry related facts. Information has also been gathered from 'professionals,' people involved in children's media culture, as producer, policy maker, researcher, educator or activist, with the aim of gathering valuable insights from those whose work is connected to children's media in New Zealand.

The manuscript titled "Providing local content but raising a global consumer. Children's television in transition in Central-eastern Europe" was submitted to the *European Journal of Communication* in September, 2004. The paper argues that *Minimax*, a regional television channel dedicated to children, on the one hand, is a response aimed at protecting national cultural identity, and on the other hand, is the challenger of the traditional conceptualization of the child viewer.

The year's outputs are listed under the CCR 2004 outputs.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

Work on the \$180,000 project on Television Violence in New Zealand, conducted mainly in 2003, was completed in 2004 with the release of the project report by the Minister of Broadcasting (see below).

Blackwell Publishing funded copy editing and proofing of the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* with approximately NZ\$3000.

Subscriptions to *Access* journal funded the production and publishing of the journal.

LINKS WITHIN AND BEYOND AUT

Television Violence Project

While this Government-funded research project investigated violence on New Zealand television during 2003, the publication of the research in 2004 heightened the Centre's profile as well as that of AUT. The 261 page document produced collaboratively between researchers from different schools within AUT and externally through UNITEC, had been embargoed until the Government Working Party presented its report to the Minister of Broadcasting which was based on the commissioned research. The Government Working Party organised a news conference at the Beehive in Wellington on April 1, which included Associate-Professor Barry King (AUT) and Dr Geoff Bridgman (UNITEC), both associate directors of the project. The Centre produced its own news release which highlighted salient points of the research namely that New Zealand television screened a similar amount of violence to that shown in the United States and the United Kingdom, and that promotions for later adult programmes might feature several violent incidents and be broadcast in children's viewing time. The Government Working Party published its report *Towards Precautionary Risk Management of TV Violence in New Zealand* and also posted it on a specially set-up website www.tv-violence.org.nz, alongside the

Centre's research report, *Television Violence in New Zealand: A study of programming and policy in international context*.

The news media gave wide coverage of the research project's results based on interviews with Associate-Professor King and Dr Bridgman, and television violence became a popular topic on broadcast talkback and news programmes. In particular AUT was highlighted as the academic institution responsible for the research. While media coverage began mainly as news items, it later spread to editorials, opinion pieces, letters to the editor and comment from columnists which extended over a three week period. Acknowledgement was also made by overseas academics who contacted the Centre either to inquire about the research or advise of similar research that had been carried out in their own countries.

The Television Violence research team was nominated for and won the AUT Vice-Chancellor's award for excellence in collaborative research in 2004.

Seminar on The Media Worlds of Children (17 November, 2004)

Katalin Lustyik, co-organizer along with Geoff Lealand (Screen & Media Studies, University of Waikato), Ruth Zanker (New Zealand Broadcasting School, CPIT).

This seminar provided an opportunity for all of those with an interest in researching and learning about children's media culture, as well as those producing well-researched and creative children's media, to gather and share ideas. It was well timed because it coincided with TVNZ's recent announcement of substantial funding for children's television, TVNZ's recently appointed Children's Programming Commissioner was able to speak at the event and it took place a day before the NZ Film and TV Industry conference in Auckland. Over 60 people gathered to hear presentations on recent research, and plans for new children's television programming at TVNZ and Maori Television.

After introductions from Allan Bell (AUT) and Suzy Cato (*Suzy's World* and *You and Me*) Geoff Lealand described research approaches which seek insights into children's media use, using drawings and children's talk; Katalin Lustyik provided an overview of the globalizing tendencies of Nickelodeon; Gareth Schott (Screen & Media Studies, University of Waikato) made a strong plea for incorporating digital games in all discussions about children's media; and Ruth Zanker reflected on the difficulties and possibilities of producing local children's media, in a global environment. There were short presentations from other researchers, such as Brian Finch (School of Education, Massey University).

Continuing the dialogue, Di Schnauer (Corporate Marketing Manager, TVNZ) described new educational initiatives being explored by TVNZ, and newly-appointed TVNZ Children's Programming Commissioner Annie Murray talked of her plans. Nicole Hoey (Cinco Cine Films) and Matai Smith (host of *Pukana*) described the special joys of making television for Maori children, and Tawini Rangihau set out the plans of the Maori Television Service to provide for their youngest viewers.

Pasifika Languages in Manukau

Following on from this three year research project (2001-2003) which assessed the health and maintenance of Pasifika languages in Manukau, work was undertaken during 2004 to put information, research results and associated articles on to a website to provide community access. The Centre for Communication Research, AUT is the host website for this information and the completion of this work, some of it bi-lingual, is expected in early 2005. An informal but valuable relationship was established with the Pasifika Advancement Office at AUT when seeking advice on the production and dissemination of material based on the Pasifika languages in Manukau research.

Website

Since its inception in 2002, the Centre for Communication Research has undergone a number of changes. As a result the Centre's pages on the AUT website required updating and expansion and this was achieved during 2004 with a complete revision and expansion of the site, which went live during the year. Links on the website enable direct access to other associated groups such as the schools for Communication Studies and Art and Design, and publications such as the Pacific Journalism Review and the Journal of Sociolinguistics. Because of the implementation of new projects and other activities such as visiting speakers, conferences and publication of articles in Working Papers and Access, the updating of the website will be a continuing process for the Centre.

Other collaborations

Through collaborative research projects and scholarly activities, the Centre maintained its links internationally with the Universities of Brighton, Cardiff and Glasgow, and nationally with Universities of Waikato, Victoria, Canterbury, and Auckland, as well as working partnerships in research projects with Manukau Institute of Technology.

The Centre's postdoctoral fellow Katalin Lustyik made important connections with academics from the University of Waikato and the Christchurch Broadcasting School when she co-organised the seminar on children's media at AUT. She also reinforced existing links with colleagues at the University of Colorado in the United States by co-authoring some papers and presenting to postdoctoral students during a visit there.

In the area of globalisation, a proposal has been developed for collaboration between CCR, the Global Studies Association (UK), & Globalism Institute (RMIT, Melbourne).

Visitors

Links beyond AUT were fostered in 2004. Visitors included Dr Nuria Lorenzo-Dus, from the Centre for Applied Language Studies, Swansea University in the United Kingdom. Nuria assists Prof Meara in running the distance PhD programme, and she teaches on undergraduate modules, co-ordinates the sociolinguistics and discourse strands and is the Chair of CALS Learning and Teaching Committee. She is also

reviews co-editor of the international journal of applied linguistics *System* and her research interests focus on cross-cultural pragmatics, media discourse, linguistic presentation of identity in L1 / L2, and oral proficiency assessment.

Professor Paul Kerswill from Lancaster University, a leading British sociolinguist, was a visitor to the Centre in October. He gave a lecture co-hosted by the Department of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, University of Auckland.

Professor Leslie Sklair, Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics, was due to visit CCR in October to give a series of talks about *Generic globalization, capitalist globalization, alternative globalizations, How do buildings communicate?* and *Iconic architecture and global cities and Capitalist Globalization and/in China*. This visit however was postponed due to illness.

PUBLICATIONS

Journal of Sociolinguistics

This Journal is co-edited by Allan Bell and Nikolas Coupland, Centre for Language and Communication Research, Cardiff University. It is published by Blackwell Publishing (UK and US), and has had strong growth in international subscriptions over the year.

The journal publishes 640 pages per year in four issues. One of these is a theme issue, which in 2004 was on *The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence*. The articles covered a broad range of topics in a variety of sociolinguistic contexts, from the study of an emerging dialect of English in an immigrant community in the American South, to the examination of the acquisition of a French sociolinguistic variable by university students in Britain.

Copy-editing and proofreading of the Journal is undertaken at AUT by Susan Shaw, editorial assistant within CCR. Scholars from around the world submit articles for publication, although only a minority of submissions are accepted for publication. In 2004 an increasing number of submissions were received at the Auckland office from Europe, Asia, the US, Australia and New Zealand. The office sends articles out for assessment by peer-review, with constant interaction between the editors and senior scholars around the world, especially those on the Journal's Editorial Board.

Access journal

Access is published by CCR under the editorship of Elizabeth Grierson. During 2004, Dr Grierson succeeded in bringing publication of *Access* closer to schedule after it had fallen behind in the period before she took over as editor. The subscription list continues to grow, and the quality of the issues published in 2004 has received recognition.

Following the death of French philosopher Jacques Derrida on 9 October Dr Grierson called for submissions for a Special Issue in his honour to be published during 2005.

It will focus on his contribution to contemporary philosophy, cultural criticism, arts, humanities, education, language and subjectivity.

Elizabeth Grierson continues as editor of *Access* in 2005 after her move to a senior position at RMIT University in Melbourne, and *Access* continues to be published through CCR.

DIRECTOR'S ACTIVITIES

Supervisions

Ruth Thomas, School of Communication Studies (PhD, primary supervision): investigating how journalism students are socialized into production of the genre of news discourse.

Ineke Crezee, School of Languages (PhD, primary supervision): investigating attrition of English and reversion to Dutch by elderly Dutch immigrants to New Zealand.

Shanjiang Yu, School of Languages (PhD, secondary supervision): language maintenance and shift among young Chinese immigrants in Auckland.

Frank Smedley, School of Languages (MA, primary supervision): English-Tagalog code-switching in internet blogs.

Supervisions by other staff involved in CCR are listed under their teaching Schools.

Teaching

Allan Bell taught on the MA (Applied Language Studies) in the second semester, paper 168103, Language & Society, and the Advanced Social Linguistics option of the Specialty Reading paper 168105.

Teaching by other staff involved in CCR is listed under their Schools.

Other Director activities

Allan Bell's role within the Centre for Communication is multi-faceted and he is called upon to take on a variety of other activities besides teaching and supervision.

Involvement with academic journals extends beyond that of Allan Bell's constant editorial and reviewing work for the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* which he co-edits. He reviewed for several other journals, the Lottery Research Committee, and the North American sociolinguistics conference NWAV and is on the editorial boards of *Discourse Studies*, *Access*, *Pacific Journalism Review* and *NZ Studies in Applied Linguistics*. Allan Bell co-edited a book on *Languages of New Zealand*, with Ray Harlow of Waikato University and Donna Starks of the University of Auckland, which went to press during the year. It will be published in 2005. Two of his articles completed in 2004 will appear in the 14-volume *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* to be published by Elsevier.

Mentoring is another important part of the Director's role. In particular Allan Bell read and commented on draft papers by CCR staff and research fellows before submission, and gave similar guidance to other Faculty of Arts staff members in their research work. He also examined PhD theses for the Universities of Auckland and Canterbury. Advice on research projects from academics in New Zealand overseas was sought from Allan Bell in his areas of expertise (principally media language and discourse), and he contributed to a panel at the AUT Research Development Symposium. The *Sunday Star-Times* interviewed Professor Bell for an article about the accents of NZ hip hop artists in television advertisements.

Assisted by George Major, Allan Bell conducted a research project concerning beer advertising billboards in 2004. Billboards for Lion Red, Speights and particularly the Tui *Yeah Right* billboards, were collected and their language analysed. The Tui advertisements with their standard format of a statement followed by the ironical 'Yeah Right' coda are a particularly rich site of cultural referencing and stereotyping. A paper was presented on the preliminary analyses of this material at the NZ Language and Society conference in Palmerston North (see outputs).

Allan Bell was re-appointed as a member of the PBRF national panel in Social Sciences and other Cultural/Social Studies.

CONCLUSION

2004 was a year of consolidation and expansion for CCR after the major Television Violence project the previous year. The Centre's work was strengthened by the addition of the Postdoctoral Fellow, and the Research Fellows made a major input to the research capacity of the Centre, the Faculty and AUT. The international standing of CCR has been enhanced by the contributions of its staff in publications and editorial capability, and it has made a marked contribution to AUT's research effort in its mentoring work and new research undertakings.

Allan Bell
Director
28 February 2005