



Applied Linguistics in Aotearoa New Zealand

Ko te rōpū rapu reo o Aotearoa: Kua kī te kete, he nui ngā hua

3rd Writing SIG Symposium

The ALANZ Writing Special Interest Group (SIG) is a community of researchers who are interested in analysis of written text, writing practices or processes, teaching and/or learning of writing at any level in English, Māori, or any Pacific language. The SIG has an online community, as well as an annual symposium and occasional publication opportunities. Membership of the SIG is free to all members of ALANZ.

Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington

Kelburn Campus

August 28th 2026 – 9am to 5:30pm



9:00-9:15am Welcome (MY501)	
<u>Panel session (MY501)</u> <u>9:15-10:30am</u> Writing for government in New Zealand Invited speakers will provide insight into writing practices in the New Zealand public sector Speaker 1: Dr. Emily Greenbank, Ministry of Social Development Speaker 2: Dr. Diego Navarro, Tertiary Education Commission Speaker 3: Dr. Cherie Connor, New Zealand Qualifications Authority Speaker 4: Dr. Matt Packer, Victoria University of Wellington	
10:30-11:00am morning tea (MY501)	
Parallel sessions <u>Session A (MY501)</u> <u>11:00-11:30</u> Comparing orthographic overlap against sentence embedding approaches to measure text similarity in international trade agreements Written treaties underpin the global trade regime. Measuring similarity between them is key to tracking how that regime evolves. We compare classical text overlap metrics against large language model embeddings, finding that LLMs offer little advantage over text overlap baselines. Dr. Stephen Skalicky & Dr. Matthew Castle, Victoria University of Wellington	
<u>Session A (MY401)</u> <u>11:30-12:00</u> ‘Api o Fōliga: Samoan Language on Social Media This presentation examines how social media platforms, particularly Facebook, are shaping contemporary written Samoan. Dr. Sadat Muaiava, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>Session B (MY402)</u> <u>11:30-12:00</u> From Novice to Genre Researcher: Developing Disciplinary Writing and Identity in an EGAP Pre-Sessional Portfolio This presentation outlines a portfolio-based design that reframes students as “genre researchers,” using investigative tasks to build an evidence-based understanding of disciplinary writing and develop emerging disciplinary identities. Luke Coldham-Fussell, University of Auckland

<u>Session A (MY401)</u> <u>12:00-12:30</u> Māori vocabulary in tertiary English language academic writing Domestic tertiary students often codeswitch between English and Māori in their academic writing. This presentation analyses the Māori vocabulary used by such students in their English language academic texts submitted during undergraduate study. Dr. Rachael Ruegg & Kanaueha Wessels, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>Session B (MY402)</u> <u>12:00-12:30</u> What makes them different? Identifying features of written texts across academic fields Disciplinary texts are not written in the same way. This presentation identifies key linguistic features of Computer Science and Media Design texts and discusses how these features may influence text readability. Xina Jin, Victoria University of Wellington
12:30-1:30 Lunch (MY501)	
Parallel sessions	
<u>1:30-2:00</u> Teaching difficult histories and teaching language to adolescents This presentation provides an example of curriculum that creatively uses language as a foundational mechanism to help young people engage constructively with ‘contested’ and ‘difficult’ histories. Clare André, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>1:30-2:00</u> Whose Voice Is It? Identity, Confidence, and Authorship in Contemporary L2 Writing This presentation examines how L2 writers engage with technological supports to bridge the gap between their current linguistic resources and the writers they hope to become. Findings highlight the evolving relationship between language, confidence, ownership, and the development of voice Olivia Kennedy, Nagahama Institute of Technology, Japan Sandy Healy, Kyoto Institute of Technology, Japan
<u>2:00-2:30</u> Writing Matters, But Not to Everyone: English Writing Perceptions in an EMI STEM University This presentation examines how domestic STEM undergraduate students and faculty at an EMI institution in South Korea perceive the importance and development of English writing skills. Drawing on interview data from an English language needs analysis, stakeholder perceptions are discussed. Jennifer Manning, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>2:00-2:30</u> Data literacy: A peer activity to check understanding and writing clarity This presentation will outline a peer clarity-checking activity developing both English language and written data description skills. The activity merges individualised content, guidance from example texts, peer feedback, and second language learning techniques to elicit feedback on writing clarity. Tim Edwards, Victoria University of Wellington

<u>Session A (MY401)</u> <u>2:30-3:00</u> Writing Text for a Graded Digital Roleplaying Game This presentation explores ways of writing text for a digital roleplaying game for second language learners. Games are not intrinsically engaging. A developer must make intentional writing decisions to increase the chances that their text will be comprehensible and interesting to the player. Paul Johnson, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>Session B (MY402)</u> <u>2:30-3:00</u> How Might Audio Feedback Restore Flexibility, Connection, and Nuance in Constraint-Heavy Teaching Environments? This talk reflects on student responses across three cohorts where audio, written, and Zoom feedback were offered as standard options, with particular attention to the stability of student preferences and what this suggests about how modality choice shapes feedback engagement in writing pedagogy. Rebecca Freeman, Massey University
3:00-3:30 Afternoon tea (MY501)	
<u>3:30-4:00</u> Academic publishing in the periphery: Insights from Sri Lanka This presentation identifies challenges of academic publishing in Sri Lanka, including weaknesses in scholarly writing in English in this context. It suggests the need for in-depth applied linguistics studies to investigate these problems and outlines a qualitative research project currently in progress. Suharshi Perera, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>3:30-4:00</u> Investigating the Validity of an Integrated Reading-to-Write Task in a Doctoral PELA Context This presentation reports on the validation of a revised integrated reading-to-write task in a doctoral Post-Entry Language Assessment (PELA) in New Zealand. Using many-facet Rasch analysis and correlational evidence, it explores task, rater, and scoring effects and their implications for assessment validity. Viola Lan Wei, Dr. Morena de Magalhães, & Dr. Rosemary Erlam, University of Auckland
<u>4:00-4:30</u> Reconceptualizing Hype in Academic Publishing: Integrating Linguistic, Systemic, and Technological Layers This presentation reconceptualizes hype in academic publishing as a multi-layered phenomenon shaped by linguistic choices, systemic evaluation metrics, and generative AI. Analyzing these intersections, it offers concrete recommendations for balancing persuasion with epistemic depth in scholarly communication. Mohammad Azizi, Victoria University of Wellington	<u>4:00-4:30</u> Reporting verbs: treasure troves of possibility or minefields of misinterpretation This presentation will discuss categories and functions attributed to reporting verbs in academic writing resources, including conflicting advice which sometimes misconstrues the nuance involved in such choices, and pedagogical implications. Natalia Petersen, Victoria University of Wellington
4:30-5:30 Farewell and ALANZ Writing SIG discussion (MY501)	

Abstract reviewers: Dr. Patrick Coleman, Dr. Matt Packer, Dr. Rachael Ruegg

Event sponsors: Applied Linguistics in Aotearoa New Zealand Ltd (ALANZ) & Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington

Invited speakers:

1. **Emily Greenbank** is a Senior Analyst (Research and Evaluation) in the Employment Insights team at the Ministry of Social Development, where she has worked for three years. Before joining MSD, Emily completed a PhD in Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, examining how former refugees navigate employable identities in the New Zealand labour market, and later held a Rutherford Postdoctoral Fellowship continuing research in this area. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, identity, power discourse analysis, employability, and migration. She has also taught linguistics and writing at university level.
2. **Diego Navarro** is a senior advisor at Te Amorangi Mātauranga the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). The TEC is a public agency that leads the government's relationship with the tertiary education sector, invests government funding in tertiary education organisations and provides career services from education to employment. Specifically, I advise on and support the operational design and implementation of the new Tertiary Research Excellence Fund (TREF). My academic background is in applied linguistics and intercultural communication.
3. **Cherie Connor** works for the Quality Assurance Division of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) which regulates all non-university tertiary education. She is currently the Team Leader of Operational Support and Assurance. Prior to this role, she was the Team Leader of the Assuring Consistency team which sought to understand outcomes for graduates across a range of under-graduate qualifications. Before her five years at NZQA, she spent 20 years at Te Herenga Waka in various roles at the English Language Institute within LALS.
4. **Matt Packer** is a lecturer in the writing programme at Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington, based in the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies. Prior to joining the programme, he served at the Waitangi Tribunal Unit, where he worked as a report writer and analyst. His research interests include the pedagogy of writing, the challenge of GenAI in teaching writing, and the mimetic theory of René Girard.