

Harmony Day Video, Alice Springs Language Centre

Brenda Austen, Assistant Principal, Alice Springs Language Centre, NT

Students of Languages at Centralian Middle School showcased their language skills in a video which was screened at a school assembly on Harmony Day 2018.

Video link (YouTube)

Senseis' Voices team interviewed with Ms Brenda Austen, Assistant Principal of Alice Springs Language Centre, who planned and organised the making of the video.

1. What is the video for?

- It was made to showcase the languages and cultures that we are teaching through Alice Springs Language Centre (ASLC) on the Harmony Day 2018.
- The primary aim of the video is to let the students tell the story and for them to showcase their language skills. It was shown at school assemblies as a way of involving parents in language education, by letting them see the students actually speaking in the languages, in the same way as how they often see the children's skills in other learning areas, such as sports and arts.
- Students who were too shy to speak in front of the camera showcased other parts of learning – the culture – such as through calligraphy.

2. What were the reactions?

- They were all positive and enthusiastic.
- The Principal and the other teachers were very amazed and impressed because they never saw the students speak in the languages and they had never seen what kind of skills the students were developing in the language classes.
- Parents were likewise. Every time I met the parents outside of school, such as at the local supermarket, everybody made very positive comments. They were really impressed and surprised, and they were very proud of the children.

– The students were proud of their achievements in the end. Making the video clip boosted their confidence and drive to continue studying the language. All of the students who were in the video clip have chosen to continue with language learning in senior school, and most of them are going on study tour to Japan in 2020. They are inspired to learn more about the language and the culture.

3. What are the focused points in the video making?

– The main focus is to let the students demonstrate and show what they can do by using the language. I think this is the most powerful way to get the whole school community involved and more engaged in language education, rather than simply talking about the benefits of language learning. The video shows that the students are having fun, engaging with the language and that they are comfortable speaking the language.

– It is important to have students speaking in the language and to make the language the dominant thing, and English second by putting subtitles. Through subtitles, the audience such as the parents and other teachers could understand what was being said and experience language learning second-hand, and got a feeling of what it is like to be in that situation.

– I always tell the students that the native speakers, for example Japanese people, really appreciate that you are trying to learn the language. It is OK to make mistakes in learning a foreign language, and it is important to laugh at YOURSELF about your mistakes. It is one of the reasons why we did the bloopers at the end, so that people can realise that they don't have to take themselves too seriously, and it is more important to just try and have a go.

Remarks:

I would like to acknowledge and appreciate Ms. Tara Welch, the administration officer at Alice Springs Language Centre who helped with subtitles, production and editing the video clip.

We will collaborate with a local production company to produce a professional video clip in the coming year to promote language education in Alice Springs.

Interviewed on: Friday, 27 September 2019

Interviewer: Michie Akahane Suparman

Edited by: Senseis' Voices team

Links

<https://youtu.be/kWwpfD7JEUk>
