

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023**  
**Linguistic Society of New Zealand**

This has been a devastating year for linguistics in Aotearoa.

At the AGM last year, we discussed concerns about decreasing student numbers at many of our universities and reductions in staff that had already occurred, leading to higher workloads.

In 2023, several of our universities underwent far-reaching restructuring and staffing reduction processes, leading to the loss of many linguists within our programmes.

As the Linguistic Society of New Zealand, we tried to support each other and our discipline by writing an open letter to the Minister of Education and Tertiary Education Commission, and by writing in the media about the value of linguistics for Aotearoa.

Nevertheless, the result is that many colleagues have left our universities, either through voluntary redundancy or the disestablishment of their positions.

Entire subfields of linguistics have been wiped out at some universities, long established research programmes face an uncertain future, and it is as yet unclear how our full range of courses will be taught in a context of radically reduced staffing levels.

Some of these processes remain ongoing and it is not clear what will remain of our teaching and research programmes after these processes conclude in early 2024.

We have been encouraged by the solidarity and support we have found with each other during this distressing experience.

All of our programmes are facing financial challenges due to a range of factors:

- Decreasing local student numbers
- Slow return of international students
- Rising cost of living leading more potential students to work instead of studying
- The international post-COVID economy

Before we can plan ahead to meet these challenges, we need to wait for the dust to settle. I wish us all a restful break over the summer as we recover and regroup to approach the coming year.

Julia de Bres  
President