



Associação de Lingüística Aplicada do Brasil

Prof. Dr. Daniel Perrin
Secretary General of AILA

RE: Letter of Intent to host AILA World Congress in 2017

Dear Prof. Daniel Perrin,

After discussion with Prof. Dr. Martin Bygate, with the executive board of the Brazilian Association of Applied Linguistics (ALAB) and with various prominent Brazilian applied linguistics researchers, I submit this letter of intent to express ALAB's commitment to hosting the **AILA WORLD CONGRESS 2017** in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in July/August 2017.

It is a consensus among Brazilian applied linguists that the research exchange resulting from an event of this scope brings unquestionable benefits to all involved parties as well as impacts on research and publications.

As a moderator of the dialogue with Brazilian scholars who may be involved in the organization of the Congress, I raised three basic issues:

- ✓ benefits the Congress would bring to the Applied Linguistics field in Brazil;
- ✓ possibility of getting funding with Brazilian research agencies;
- ✓ viability of finding a venue to host about two thousand participants.

Opinions regarding the first issue converged on the belief that hosting AILA World Congress with ALAB's 11th National Congress of Applied Linguistics¹ can bring considerable benefits to the area both nationally and internationally. In addition to the invaluable opportunity for research exchange, two particular positive effects underlined were:

1. The changing of traditionally European, North-American and Asian venues to Latin America and the consequent opportunity for South American applied linguists have their studies known as well as evaluated by international partners.
2. A unique opportunity for Brazilian undergraduate and graduate students to be in touch and share knowledge produced worldwide in the field. There are over 1000 graduate students in applied linguistics in Rio alone, and research in the field of Applied Linguistics extends into its transdisciplinary areas (Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Education, Language Teaching, Teacher Education, Genre Studies, Gender Studies, Language and Work, Discourse Analysis,

¹ Like the AILA Congress, ALAB's National Congress of Applied Linguistic is triennial is held in July/August, and happily our cycles coincide.

just to mention a few) .

In spite of the fact that talking about funding is still premature, this topic was also raised. The applied linguists consulted on this issue agree that important Brazilian federal research agencies like CNPq (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico) and CAPES (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior) as well as state agencies such as FAPERJ (Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro) may be willing to provide financial support for an AILA World Congress, since these agencies have a record of supplying funding for Applied Linguistics events held by ALAB and/or recognized Brazilian researchers and institutions.

In terms of costs, and taking into account that the possibility of funding is at this point merely speculative, ALAB'S executive board estimates an average figure of US\$250 (two hundred and fifty American dollars) for registration. Even without other funding sources, this figure would cover all central conference costs and still allow at least 100 scholarships which we would like to make available for Brazilian postgraduate students, who would not be able to afford the standard rate. Given the large number of post graduate applied linguistics students, we feel this would be an important consideration closely related to the justification for bringing AILA to Brazil. This initiative would of course be separate from the support that AILA's Solidarity Fund also provides.

Regarding the third issue – the venue - several options were considered. Among them, ALAB has chosen Rio de Janeiro for the reasons cited below:

1. It is a central route in Brazil with a wide range of air and ground transportation facilities. The city has two airports with good taxi and bus services that could be used for transportation from the airport to the hotels/conference venue. In addition, ALAB can also hire a travel agency to arrange transport from airport to the hotel and from the hotel to the conference location for guest speakers.
2. It has a vast hotel network as well as huge convention centers such as Centro de Convenções Sul América and Rio Centro able to host two thousand participants comfortably. These two centers have a physical structure composed of halls, exhibition and meeting rooms that would accommodate an average of forty parallel sessions. Another possibility is having a university: UFRJ or PUC-Rio, as the venue. However, this would require that the Congress were held in July since it would be impossible to arrange so many rooms for parallel strands outside vacation period.
3. Rio has four public universities involved with studies in Applied Linguistics: Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Universidade Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro as well as a private one: Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro holding graduate courses in *Letras* (*Letras* is the huge area related to the studies of languages [modern and ancient], literature, linguistics and responsible for mother and foreign language teacher education) and Postgraduate Programs (Master and Doctoral degrees) in Applied Linguistics (UFRJ), Linguistics (UERJ) and Language Studies (UFF and PUC-Rio). Together these institutions offer a potentially vast local committee who could be directly involved in the organization of the event. Given that

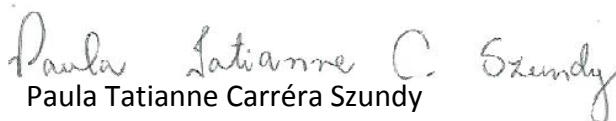
there are many scholars researching in Applied Linguistics in other Brazilian regions, not to mention those in South American countries, an AILA World Congress could count on at least one thousand participants from South America.

4. Rio has a privileged landscape and has always been a very famous touristic attraction worldwide due to its natural beauty (Copacabana, Ipanema, the Christ, Sugar Loaf Mountain, etc), exciting night life (the pubs at Lapa, Santa Teresa and other districts playing samba, bossa nova, the night clubs, etc) and also its social contrast (glamorous life in the south zone, millionaires' properties contrasting with slums, etc).
5. It will have held the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympic Games in 2016, events that, besides contributing to increase the touristic appeal, will certainly bring improvements in the city infrastructure.

Finally a comment on the possible timing: as noted above, ALAB's National Congress of Applied Linguistic is held every three years. It usually brings together approximately seven hundred Brazilian researchers in all areas of Applied Linguistics. As the 9th Congress will take place from the 26th to the 29th of July, 2011, our 2017 Congress would be our 11th, and so could be held jointly with AILA in July/August 2017.

In closing, I would like to thank AILA (both the Executive Board and the EBIC) for considering ALAB a possible partner to host AILA World Congress in 2017 and once more emphasize our enthusiasm to meet all necessary requirements for such an important project.

Sincerely,


Paula Tatianne Carréra Szundy

ALAB President, 2009 - 2011