

Journalism in the 2000s: increasing diversity and bad grammar

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Chinese journalist Lincoln Tan got so sick of being declined job interviews by newspapers after moving to New Zealand just over a year ago, he set up his own newspaper.

Speaking to the Journalism Education Association of New Zealand annual conference, held on 1-2 December this year in Christchurch, Tan proudly held up a copy of the first anniversary issue of his bilingual Chinese and English-language newspaper *iBall*.

The success story, in large part owing to the former Singaporeans success in convincing the *Christchurch Star* to distribute the publication inside their paper, was an inspiring part of a conference wrestling with many of the big issues facing journalism in the 2000s.

Over a packed two days, delegates from each of New Zealands journalism training institutions thrashed out a vast variety of subjects supporting a conference theme of The practice of journalism in an increasingly diverse society.

Tan spoke of the business opportunities being missed by mainstream journalism. New Zealand has more than 20 Chinese, eight Korean and two Japanese newspapers. But apart from the *New Zealand Herald*, which a few years ago had dabbled in publishing a Chinese monthly, no other mainstream media company had even considered buying into a lucrative market.

Many speakers dealt with the detail of the publishing. Journalism Training Organisation executive director-elect Jim Tucker, currently serving a short-term contract as chief reporter at the *Sunday Star Times*, spoke of his concerns over the poor standards of grammar and the structure of story writing among todays journalists.

His comments were echoed by all delegates, though the point was also strongly made that the biggest problem facing todays newspapers was the lack of reporting staff able to *find* the news, to *break* *Waikato Times*