



Curtin University

English language, academic literacies & the internationalisation of the curriculum nexus

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Some terms / acronyms used

- **ESL/ EAL** (English as a second/additional language)
- **L1/ L2** (first/second language speakers)
- **EGL** (English as a global language)
- Academic literacy/literacies
- **ALL** staff – Academic Language & Learning specialists
- Discipline specific/ specialist/ technical language

Overview

- The university context of the 21st century
- Implications of internationalisation
- English as a global language (EGL) and the implications for the ‘international’ university
- Addressing the issues – past & future
- A multi-layered model of language development provision (MMLDP)
- Conclusion & discussion

University context of 21st century

- **Massification** of tertiary education
- **Internationalisation**
Both leading to complex diversity of the student body
(cultural, linguistic, socio-economic)
- Elitist view of tertiary education vs massification - changing perceptions of 'university education'
- Online and multi-modal delivery of 'instruction'
- Need for **everyone** to develop intercultural communication skills
- University education seen (rightly) as a gateway to a host of benefits and life chances.

Student diversity in the 'international' university

Worldwide statistics

- Global mobility of students has quadrupled over last 3 decades
- 3.3 million international students all over world in 2010 (OECD) stats

Statistics in Australia

- 335,273 or over 28% of uni. student population international (2010)
- 307 TNE programs in 1996 grew to 1002 (2007)

Statistics at Curtin

- 6,828 international students in 1999
- 11,313 international students in 2002
- 19,872 international students (out of 46,634) in 2010

Many international students ESL/EAL

- Still belief that all we have to do is raise IELTS levels and tertiary entrance scores.
- Might help attract “better” students - but very, very few of them.
- Minimum level of linguistic proficiency in language of instruction is absolutely essential – otherwise we are being unethical and setting students up to fail
- Under government regulation and AUQA/ TEQSA universities obliged to provide language and learning support.

The tertiary context of the 21st century, means that

- English is a global language + language of instruction
- **All** students (local + international) need academic literacy/
literacies
- **All** students need to be inducted into discipline discourse in area
of study
- Staff need to be overtly aware of own discipline discourse
- Little doubt about correlation between facility with language and
success in tertiary studies

The position of English, the language of instruction for many.....

The way it has turned out, English has become a world language in both senses of the term, international and global: international as a medium of literary and other cultural life; global, as the co-genitor of the new technological age, the age of information[...] That was not the case 50 years ago and it may well not be the case 50 years from now; but for the moment, that is how it is.

(Halliday, 2003, 216)

English as a global language (EGL) & universities

- The global student = **all** students
- EGL means most interactions in future will be
 - L1 -> L2
 - L2 -> L2
- This does **not** mean making ESL students 'native speakers'
- But developing **all** students to become better at English as a global language (EGL), i.e. intercultural communication

Broader implications

In current and future study and work contexts means **all** students need to:

- become better at **negotiating meaning**
- develop **accommodation** strategies
- be able to deal with different **varieties of English**
- expect and be able to cope with different **English accents**
- develop **interpretability** as well as **intelligibility** skills
(Candlin 1982, Scollon & Scollon 1995)
- develop **intercultural communication** skills

Helping students to develop essential EGL communication skills

- Facilitating the development of **EGL skills**
 - English proficiency to high levels
 - Cultural understanding
 - National/regional varieties of English
 - Accents
 - Intercultural communication skills

What has been the Australian response to internationalisation of education?

Student support - significant increase particularly aimed at international students:

- in the number of units/departments which provide support
- number of ALL staff (around 500 in Australia)
- other support services (psychological, social etc.)

Staff development - comparatively little

- Any exciting/ significant developments in this area usually due to committed individual academics
- Staff development & academe

Language development in a tertiary context – what we need to keep in mind.....

- **Entry level** proficiency means just that
- Development required for **all** students
- Development, **not remediation**
- **EAL students** have other different/ particular needs
- What is good teaching for EAL students is **better teaching for all**
- Development support needed **throughout** a tertiary course (ie at all levels).

What academic staff can do about language.....

- As teachers, be aware of how we use language (especially in speech)
- Be aware of Australian idiom and how & when we use it
- ***Purpose*** and ***audience*** in all T & L communication
- Be knowledgeable about language needs of EAL/ESL students – indeed, all students
- Be aware of the language demands & academic discourse qualities of our discipline

In an “internationalised” university, staff:

- Are **knowledgeable** about other **languages and cultures**
- Have an **understanding of linguistic needs** of international students
- Make the effort to **understand different accents & pronounce names** of all students as they should be
- **Have & update training** in intercultural communication skills and internationalisation of curriculum
- Teach a broad curriculum that includes **international perspectives in all disciplines**
- Deliberately **structure learning** to promote the development of intercultural communication skills

Is embedding language development the answer?

What do you understand by the term?

What do you think it means in regard to providing students with language development and support?

A definition of embedding language development

Embedding support for language development means providing a **variety** of strategies and opportunities within the curriculum, from entry to completion of a course of study, which will enable **all** students to continue to develop their linguistic proficiency in English.

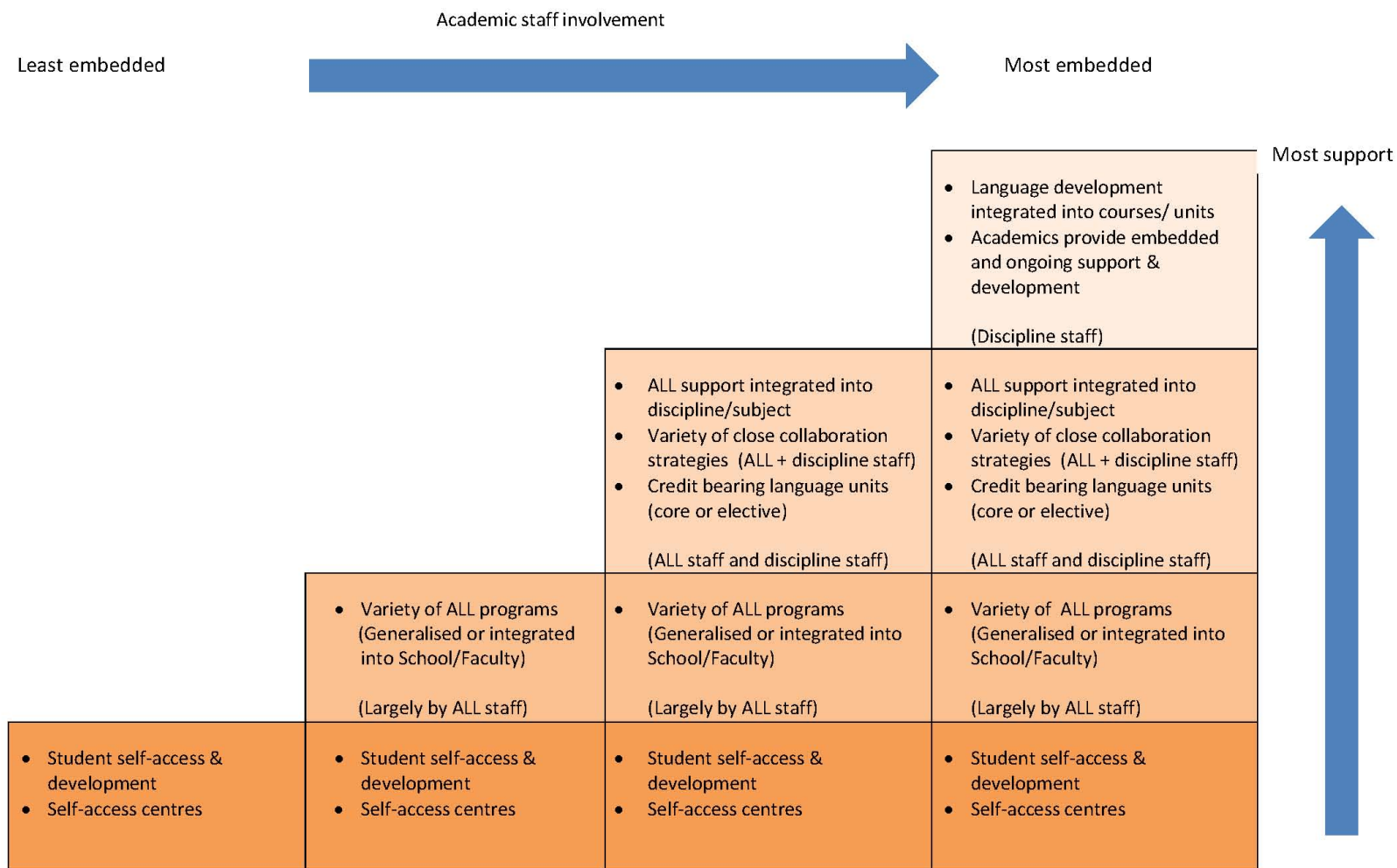
NB: curricular and extra-curricular strategies possible

And at the university level.....

Have a number of strategies and provisions that can meet the complex variety of student needs

A Multi-layered Model of Language Development Provision (MMLDP)

EMBEDDED LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT CONTINUUM



This model

- Includes a **variety** of strategies/methods
- Assumes **all strategies** needed to cater for the range of student diversity & needs
- Allows for **broadest coverage** for student development at **all levels** of their course
- Requires **staff development**

Conclusion

So.....

- What is your university doing well already?
- What else do we need to do?
- What are other universities doing?
- Where do we need to go from here?

Feedback

This is the research area for my OLT Fellowship

If you wish to contact me to discuss any issues or if your institution is interested in some staff development, please contact me as below:

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