ABSTRACTS

THE BUYERS AND SELLERS OF KNOWLEDGE: CHANGING IDENTITIES OF ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTRES IN THE AGE OF GLOBALISATION

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Over the last decade an increase in demand for access to tertiary qualifications from Australian universities has led to a questioning of language proficiency levels necessary to successfully undertake tertiary studies. This increase in demand is both externally driven, through the forces of globalisation and the marketing of degrees and internally motivated through the lure of revenue available from the enrolment of full fee-paying students.

The broadening of the student profile as a result of these changes has led to a scrutiny of language proficiency levels on entry and in relation to assessment procedures.

The tension between the need to offer courses to as wide a range of students as possible, to provide necessary support for those students and to ensure the maintenance of appropriate standards of scholarship places academic language and learning centers at the heart of an important debate over the direction of higher education in Australia in the 21st century.

This paper will present preliminary data and examine some of the issues related to the role of academic language centers in meeting the needs of students and faculties in a climate of pressure on the minimum language requirements for tertiary study at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The paper concludes with a recommendation that coordinated research needs to be undertaken across the tertiary education sector to monitor the progress of overseas full fee paying students entering via various pathways and determine the best practices for academic learning centers to meet their needs.

ACADEMICALLY SPEAKING: NEW IDENTITIES OR OLD REALITIES?

Alex Barthel
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Many students who come from language backgrounds other than English have considerable difficulties in speaking English. Difficulties exist at the discourse, the interactive, the morpho-syntactic as well as at the suprasegmental and paralinguistic levels.

This paper examines some of problems in spoken English faced by university students . Particular emphasis is placed on the problems faced by students from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The presentation gives a brief analysis of the causes of the main pronunciation problems of South East Asian students.

Students of South East Asian backgrounds, speak languages (Cantonese, Vietnamese, etc.) which are based on suprasegmental and paralinguistic codes considerably different from English. This results in them having more serious pronunciation problems than students who speak languages, closer to English at the suprasegmental level (Danish, Dutch, German, etc.).

A range of academic contexts, formal and informal, where spoken language is the main communication channel is examined: these include seminar presentations, tutorial participation, casual conversation and 'administrative negotiations'. The role of formal tuition in spoken communication (at discourse, suprasegmental and segmental level) and several options to integrate the development of spoken discourse skills into courses will be discussed.

MAPPING THE CONCEPTUAL WORLD OF THE STUDENT WRITER

Colin Baskin

James Cook University, Cairns Campus

This paper is positioned within ongoing debates about the meaning and role of academic literacy in shaping and framing the academic and professional writing practices of student writers. It explores the relationships between literacy, individual writers and the academy, and points to the way that particular student groups describe academic writing practices, and in turn act upon their descriptions. The key to understanding what-counts-as-academic literacy is grounded in the social processes and practices that organise the 'everyday' world of the student. This world is explored initially through a content analysis of 175 student responses to 'what counts as good academic writing' and is confirmed using factor analysis. The emerging conceptual map represents an aggregated description of 'what-counts-as-good-academic-writing'. This description of good academic writing captures certain aspects of inter-subjectivity amongst student writers – its form, purpose and structure. Once embedded, this inter-subjectivity further enables student writers to collaborate in the construction of knowledge and practice relating to academic literacy. In mapping the conceptual world of the student writer, the paper offers a view of academic literacy as a socially constructed and signifying space. It is within this institutional space that opportunities reside for students to assume 'powerful' and/or 'less than powerful' identities' as writers and as members of the academic community.

"FINDING YOUR WAY": AN ONLINE PACKAGE FOR OFFSHORE STUDENTS

Colin Beasley and Jon Watts

Murdoch University

Increasing numbers of overseas students, many of whom speak English as a second or other language, are enrolled at Australian universities through twinning arrangements between Australian and Asian higher education institutions. These students usually study one or two years of their Australian degree at the twinned institution offshore and then come to Australia to complete their degrees. However, many of these students experience considerable difficulty adjusting to the transition to living and learning at their Australian university. This presentation details a collaborative online project between a language and learning professional and a disciplinary specialist to help prepare offshore international students for their later study onshore at the authors' university. The project explores notions of culture and cultural change and focuses on understanding and navigating differences between national cultures, and also between educational cultures so that students can better understand and meet the academic expectations of students in Australian universities. Although the project focuses initially on the needs of overseas students entering the authors' university in the second or third year of a degree majoring in media and communication studies, it hopefully can be used as a model for the development of equivalent packages for international students in other courses of study.

INTEGRATING ESL IN THE CURRICULUM AND IN THE FACULTY

Tracey Bretag

University of South Australia

Although content-based ESL has been advocated by practitioners in the field for over 15 years, very few universities in Australia offer such courses for credit*. One reason for the paucity of integrated ESL courses in most universities is that current tertiary infrastructures preclude effective inter-faculty collaboration. Content specialists usually work in their particular departments, and language instructors are most often found in separately housed student support centres. Researchers who advocate a content-based ESL curriculum invariably highlight effective inter-faculty collaboration as being central to the success of the course. This paper will provide a brief overview of the development of content-based ESL courses in the School of International Business at the University of South Australia, and suggest ways that similar courses could be established in other institutions.

ENHANCING ESSAY FEED-BACK USING 'MINDTRAIL' SOFTWARE: EXACTLY WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT?

Margaret Cargill

Adelaide University

As part of my changing identity as an LAS lecturer, I find myself working with lecturers to help them provide students with worthwhile feedback on essays. This is a demanding task, particularly when classes are large. Comments in the margins take time to write, and markers often find themselves repeating comments on many papers. With multiple markers, consistency of approach to feedback is elusive. 'Mindtrail'" software offers lecturers the opportunity to construct a detailed 'knowledge tree' based on their assessment criteria, so that when assessing an essay a marker can select appropriate marks and comments from a pre-existing bank, with the option of editing bank items if necessary. This process leads to the production of a detailed printed report for each student, which may include directions to appropriate learning development resources. Limited initial experience with this software during 2000 suggested that its use could improve the degree to which first year students improved their marks on a re-submittable essay. However, it was unclear what component/s of the new approach were making the difference. This presentation reports on a small comparative study in Semester 1, 2001 which aimed to differentiate between the effect of using the software to provide printed reports to students, and that of using the same detailed criteria but marking the assignments 'by hand'. As well as reporting on the study findings, the presentation introduces the software package and discusses its strengths and weaknesses as a tool for providing essay feedback in the university context.

STUDENT IDENTITIES IN TIMES OF CHANGE

Erst Carmichael

University of Western Sydney

Student identities undergo enormous change on entry into the university system. Many find the change in expectations from high school or TAFE overwhelming and the alienation of a large institution adds to this. Our work as LAS advisers, whether as lecturers/tutors in discipline specific contexts, generalists in workshop situations or one-to-one teachers of tertiary literacy/numeracy, is limited to some extent because we are part of the institution. With the move toward technologising and globalising university study it is increasingly important that new students have access to a non-threatening, informal learning situation that will provide them with non-institutional, student driven support. Such a program exists at UWS and has been found to provide first year students with sufficient encouragement to continue with their courses, and often to develop their understanding of academic expectations, despite the chaos of the ongoing restructuring situation they find themselves in. Much of the peer mentor program at UWS has been co-ordinated by the Learning Centre, and has been a rewarding experience for those involved.

FROM MYSTERY TO MASTERY

Kate Chanock

La Trobe University

The identity that universities assign to their students is a mystifying one; it moves continually from novice to expert, from out-group to in-group and back, sometimes by shifts so subtle that students have trouble recognizing them, sometimes by sickening lurches from which they have difficulty recovering. For example, students are expected to write as experts, but are marked as novices. They are expected to "invent the university" (Bartholemae 1985) when they could be oriented to its culture. They are asked for creativity but penalized for departing from convention. This paper looks at the various ways in which university teaching positions the learner, and the alienating effects of inconsistency in this regard. It goes on to suggest ways in which LAS advisers might help to clarify the students' role as novice members of a discipline, and introduce some discussion of this into mainstream teaching practices.

HALL OF MIRRORS: REFLECTIONS ON A MULTI-CAMPUS LANGUAGE AND LEARNING PROGRAM

Rosemary Clerehan, Christine Orsmond and Anne Wilson
Monash University

This paper presents a broad picture of a multi-campus language and learning program which operates across six Australian campuses and one South African campus, with links to still another in Malaysia. The model of delivery which has been adopted is a "mixed model", incorporating aspects of all four models identified as operating in the Australian context (McLean, Surtie, Elphinstone & Devlin, 1995).

The paper considers how the program has evolved since its expansion to all campuses in 1996, taking into account theoretical, pedagogical, policy, political and strategic perspectives. The ways external and internal forces act and interact on the service will be examined. A particular focus of the paper is how these forces might shape a language and academic skills program which echoes the Australian model on an "overseas" campus. A language and academic skills program is clearly affected by changing identities of many kinds, but can also be an agent of change.

The question is raised as to how a changing identity might be managed to facilitate maximum opportunity for program growth and development. The paper suggests finally that, with our understanding of the relationship of the generic to the specific (Taylor, 2000), language and learning units are well-placed to adapt to the kinds of change described.

CHANGING IDENTITIES: LAS ADVISERS

Gail Craswell and Annie Bartlett
The Australian National University

Language and Academic Skills (LAS) advising in Australia has, in the last ten years, emerged as an identifiable profession within the tertiary education sector. That emergence has been the result of intense research and reflection, not only in terms of advisers' roles and status, but also in terms of understanding the students with whom we work and their LAS needs. The resultant changes have challenged and extended our fundamental conceptions of the roles and status of LAS advisers, their practice and profession. However, such changes have been largely undocumented, and, arguably, little attention has been given to developing a comprehensive framework for LAS pedagogy. In tracing the emergence of the LAS profession and evaluating the changing identity of LAS advisers in terms of their roles and status, we attempt to reconceptualise the LAS profession with a view to emphasising its multidisciplinary nature. We also take the preliminary step of outlining, in this discussion paper, a framework for LAS pedagogy.

ROLES, RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: CHANGING LECTURER AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Fiona Cotton
University College, UNSW, ADFA

When students' and teachers' beliefs and expectations about their respective roles and relationships are significantly different, misunderstandings may occur which can have a negative impact on academic outcomes (Harris and Thorpe, 1999; Barker, 1997) and can seriously undermine a student's sense of identity. This paper discusses the results of a survey administered at the start of first semester to twenty -nine international postgraduate coursework students and twenty of their lecturers, which identified a number of differences in belief between the lecturers and students about their respective roles and responsibilities. Written comments by both lecturers and students , which indicate that expectations may be mismatched, are compared. Some ways in which academic skills advisers might assist students to become aware of these differing expectations and adjust to a new cultural context are discussed.

CHANGING IDENTITIES: LANGUAGE & ACADEMIC SKILLS

Prem S. Dean

National University, California, USA

Events in communication have historically made a tremendous impact on the world around us. Both the telegraph and telephone had significant ramifications on global awareness. With their creation, they changed forever our lives and how we communicate. Today, in the 21st century, as the world embraces unprecedented advances in communication technology, we are seeing the creation of a culture born with a global identity unlike any we have seen before. The changes in the way we communicate globally have necessarily affected the language and academic skills necessary to succeed in today's world. Just as technology is in a state of constant metamorphosis, so are the skills needed to utilize it. Education is, and has always been, the purveyor of change. It is incumbent upon educators not only to understand the immensity of the changes occurring in our global communication, but also to be able to recognize how this communication affects the changing identities and need of instruction in language and academic skills, and to be able to meet the challenge of the 21st century.

MAKE LIKE A CHAMELEON

Kate Deller-Evans, Chris Klinger, Salah Kutieleh, Robyn Najar, Valli Rao, Elizabeth Weatherford, Peter Zeegers

It is a paradoxical statement that perhaps the one constant in our identities is change. Higher education is experiencing a period of unprecedented transformation and identities within universities are responding accordingly. While academics are facing the question of changing identities, learning advisers seem to be facing the challenge in double measure. Not only do we face with the rest of the university community the challenges posed by issues such as globalisation, restructuring and new technologies, we also have to address the question of what do we hope to achieve as a result of chameleon-like behaviour? For example, the perception of Learning Centres as peripheral to the student learning, or Centres which are academic units grounded in learning/teaching and research. The relationship between the identity of Learning Centres and the identity of Learning Advisers is a pivotal issue to this.

This presentation, will discuss one example of the impact of the changing identity of Learning Advisers on the identity of a Learning Centre. The change has resulted in the Learning Centre moving away from an auxiliary unit into an academic unit grounded in both learning/teaching and research. As a result of this, there has been a change in how the university community perceives the Learning Centre and its role in education. For example, greater diversity in student support, greater involvement in the teaching of credit courses, broader scope for program development and postgraduate supervision. In this presentation we will also discuss the impact of these changing identities in terms of the future pathways they appear to be leading us into.

TEACHING GENRES IN THE DISCIPLINES : CAN STUDENTS LEARN THE LABORATORY REPORT GENRE ON-SCREEN

Helen Drury

University of Sydney

Successful written communication in the disciplines is highly valued in tertiary assessment processes and is a preparation for professional life. Yet, the challenge remains to find an effective way of teaching this skill within varying discipline and institutional contexts. As institutions try to meet the needs of a changing student population, online forms of "learning" have been welcomed. However, can this mode provide students with new insights into how to write the genres of their disciplines and facilitate their understanding of the purpose and context of different text structures?

Online courseware that aims to teach writing skills needs to be informed by both applied linguistics and learning theories. Within applied linguistics, genre based approaches to teaching the language of the disciplines are now widely accepted. This approach can provide learners with generalised, systematic

guidelines about how to create meaningful and purposeful texts, although each student will create their own individual text. Genre theory has also been used to describe and develop approaches to teaching writing which emphasize a communicative, purposeful and socially based theory of learning.

This paper will illustrate the application of genre theory in the design of an on-screen program which aims to teach students how to write a laboratory report in three different disciplines, namely, biology, biochemistry and chemical engineering. This program provides guidelines, models, interactive exercises and feedback and takes into account the genre variations between these disciplines. Outcomes of a pilot evaluation of part of the program will be discussed.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS CUSTOMERS: THEIR EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

Julianne East

La Trobe University

Currently in Australia, higher education is urged to operate more commercially, and in these times of change students are identified as customers. University marketing promises quality of service and there is vigorous competition for the enrolment of international students. In this paper it is argued that universities are now expected to change to meet students' needs and that international students in their identity as customers will have expectations and perceptions of quality service. While much is written about the needs of international students, little has been written about how international students perceive their experience and there is only limited research on international students as customers. The paper reviews customer concepts in universities and reports on the perceptions of a group of La Trobe University international students. The data were gathered from group discussion, questionnaire and interview. The students had much to say that was insightful about what they value about the Australian university experience and what they expected of this experience. They wanted to be assured of the quality of the teaching, wanted the University to respond to their educational needs, wanted to improve their English language skills and wanted to experience Australian culture and mix with local students. Not surprisingly, there were gaps between the students' expectations and what they perceived to be the quality of the educational service that they actually received.

TRAVELLING UP THE LIFELONG LEARNING CURVE: A REGIONAL ODYSSEY

Bronwyn J. Ellis

University of South Australia

Providing language and learning support on a regional campus of a metropolitan-based university over the past twelve years has entailed witnessing and responding to myriad changes: in the support unit structure and nomenclature, the institution, the campus, the student body, the region. There has been a continual rethinking of role and focus for the campus itself and its staff. Changing layers of discourses have included: equity, inclusivity, student-centred learning, flexible delivery, internationalisation and economic rationalism. The paper considers the impact of these changes in emphasis on work in language and academic skills support and the tensions between competing discourses. It highlights the importance for those involved in academic skills development to be themselves lifelong learners, able to respond to new needs in changing circumstances. This is, in fact, an imperative, if they are to continue to assist students to be engaged in a transforming learning experience.

BEYOND BIRMINGHAM: LAS ADVISER AS INDEPENDENT SUBJECT SPECIALIST?

Jan Fermelis
Deakin University

The controversial issue of whether EAP should be 'common core' and/or 'subject-specific' is closely allied to those of where the identity of LAS advisor is positioned on the continuum between general academic and specific, and whether the LAS support is best located within the faculty or provided in a language centre context. This paper argues that it is possible for the LAS adviser to effectively occupy a more independent, subject-specific position which goes beyond that outlined in the Birmingham model of co-operation, collaboration and team-teaching (Dudley-Evans & St John 1998, Dudley-Evans 2001). The case of one Australian university is described and analysed in terms of its business faculty-based language and academic support program, which includes unit-for-credit study and an extensive program of regular, subject-specific tutorials, and which was established in response to the perceived needs of its high population of international students. In some instances the LAS support has extended even further, and incorporated the undertaking of one-to-one tutorial sessions, mainstream subject tutorials, and subject lectures. This has been interpreted as a reflection of the LAS adviser's evolution as de facto subject specialist and also recognition by local students of the additional dimensions to content delivery able to be provided by the LAS subject specialist. It is suggested that there are precise professional and situational requirements for this level of teaching independence to function appropriately and effectively, but that the academic skills and pedagogic qualities of the LAS adviser are able to greatly enrich the total teaching-learning experience. The question is finally raised as to where exactly the demarcation lies in such cases between the identities of LAS adviser and independent subject specialist.

FEAR INTO FUN — LEARNING BY LISTENING, HEARING, ACKNOWLEDGING AND UTILISING ABORIGINAL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE

Russell Gluck, Tammy Anderson, Jaymee Demos, Rachael Challenor, Liana Fenton-Kerr, Wilma Vialle
University of Wollongong

This paper reports a process of creating safe places to learn through encouraging people to speak, be heard and acknowledged. The process dissolves students' fears with fun. It is raw, in your face and 'off-the-wall', theoretically sound, practical and most importantly underpinned by the intention of 'brokering' relationships that value and benefit all stakeholders in the learning environment.

10am — at Russell's office in the Aboriginal Education Centre. The cry is heard "I can't do this assignment, I haven't got a clue what they want or how they want it. I just don't think like they do. I sit in *their* lectures, tutorials, and do the reading. I try and play *their* game — *shit it's just not happening*!" Panic, fear of failure, being failed and self-loathing for taking the risk to study is full-on. 'I should never have come here! God! The Uni made a mistake letting me in! And now everyone is going to find out! Shit I could just run away and die!

10.15am — the student and Russell are singing, dancing, drawing and, acting out.

11.30am — they appear to be having fun. It sure as hell is noisy as the process spills out of the office into the passageway.

Noon — the assignment is within reach.

End of week — the event is triangulated with other students' experiences and used to reflect on the curriculum process.

Following Friday — the rich data contained in the students' experiences is used to broker relationships with the subject coordinator to benefit all learners and teachers.

NUMERACY IN THE WORKPLACE: THE CASE OF NURSING AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING ASSISTANCE

Barbara A Giorgio

Australian Catholic University

Mohan Chinnappan

University of Wollongong

Historically, nursing was seen as vocational not academic. As a relatively recent arrival in the university sector, nursing represents the increasing diversification of knowledge as vocational disciplines become academic. The problem of standards in a field like nursing is compounded by a significant increase in resident and overseas non-native speaker and mature age student enrolments. There seems to be a consequent misalignment between the demands of the workplace and these students' levels of numeracy and literacy. The most widely documented consequence of a lack of nursing competence is in drug administration errors. While nurse educators carry the major responsibility for training nurses, academic advisors play a significant role. Students feel overwhelmed by the linguistic and mathematical demands of medical discourse and are anxious about the real possibility of failure. Lecturers are overwhelmed by the sheer neediness of these students, and are frustrated by the magnitude of their problems. Academic advisors need to be more multi-skilled than ever in meeting the demands placed on them. They have to identify the knowledge gaps, bridge theory and practice and support both linguistic and mathematical problem solving. The present study investigates the nature of the knowledge gaps these nursing students present with when attempting to solve drug calculation problems. The results indicate an inability to conceptualize the problem both mathematically and linguistically. Some recommendations are made for the continuing language development of these students such that they might graduate, well equipped to meet the demands of the future health-care work-place.

INSTITUTIONAL BENEFITS OF CURRICULUM INTEGRATED LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Greg Hampton

University of Wollongong

Previous studies of the impact of curriculum integrated learning development at the University of Wollongong have indicated that such programs significantly improve students' tertiary literacy. In the broader institutional context of teaching and learning policies and processes of quality assurance, such programs might also be expected to contribute to student progress, retention and completion rates. The impact of learning development programs on these indicators at the University of Wollongong was evaluated by monitoring the academic progress and retention of cohorts of commencing students. In some faculties, participation in the programs was significantly associated with improved retention and pass rates. The benefits of such programs to the institution are elaborated in terms of an institutional strategy for facilitating students' transitions throughout the stages of their undergraduate degree.

MAKING CONNECTIONS:THE CHANGING IDENTITY OF LEARNING SUPPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Margaret Hicks and Rigmor George

University of South Australia

As universities move into the 21st century they are experiencing many changes including globalisation, corporatisation, internationalisation, the introduction of new technologies and increased accountability. This has led to a more diverse student population, an increase in technology facilitated delivery, more corporate styles of institutional management, higher staff/student ratios and closer links to industry-based needs. These changes have had an impact on all university staff and students and have required staff who work in learning support and professional development units to reconfigure their work in ways which are more strategic.

In response to these changes, the student support area at the University of South Australia underwent a significant change at the beginning of 2000. This not only involved a renaming of the centres but a change in the practices of all professional staff within this group (learning advisers, counsellors, careers staff, international student advisers and professional developers). This paper will outline the reasons that led to this move and how Senge's notion of the 'learning organisation' has been used as a theoretical framework to develop the change. A description of the changes that have taken place will be given and in particular the work of learning advisers will be highlighted.

MOVING FROM FACE-TO-FACE TO ONLINE WORKSHOPS TO SUPPORT NESB STUDENTS IN THE CLINICAL PRACTICUM: INTRODUCING A MORE CRITICAL APPROACH

Virginia Hussin

University of South Australia

Students in the clinical practicum need to engage with the multiliteracies and multi-layered identities of the workplace, the community and the academic institution. Here multiliteracies are framed as, 'social practices that are complex, multifaceted and ideologically loaded' (Baynham 1995, p. 8). The focus of this paper is the support work done by a Learning Adviser with non-English Speaking Background students in the Health Sciences to help develop oral communication and workplace literacy for the clinical placement. The paper describes the face-to-face workshops which use 'orders of discourse' (Fairclough 1995) in their design and which focus on the development of 'communication strategies' in spoken interactions (Faerch & Kasper 1983; Tarone 1983). The paper then identifies some of the features of the online versions which, while encouraging interactivity and responding to a cohort of students who increasingly require flexibly delivered modes of support, present particular challenges.

The paper draws on the writing of critical literacy researchers to address the question: How can 'critical literacy' approaches be incorporated into online student support work? In particular, the paper uses the New London Group's Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (2000) to analyse two online workshops, finding examples of the first and second stages of this pedagogy, 'situated practice' and 'overt instruction' but further opportunities for the development of the important third and fourth stages of 'critical framing' and 'transformed practice'.

INTERDEPENDENT ACADEMIC IDENTITIES: LANGUAGE AND LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND THE SUBJECT WHO WRITES.

Bronwyn James
University of Wollongong

David McInnes
University of Western Sydney

Starting with questions of how a language and learning practitioner might assist a student to write in ways demanded of them by a university, we argue that writing pedagogies at an undergraduate and postgraduate level must take account of and work with the complex of informing and transforming conditions of student identity and subjectivity.

The identities-in-practice of language and learning practitioners have an interdependent relation to the identities-in-practice of the students with whom they work. In exploring this interdependence and its implications for writing pedagogy, we draw a distinction between the writing subject (a self that writes like an academic) and the subject who writes (an idea of self which exceeds the notion of the writing subject through a recognition of the subject's embodied, affective and gendered history). We argue that consideration of the pedagogical interdependence needs to be seen through the experience of students as more than simply writing subjects. To do this, we work with an idea of the subject who writes.

A crucial question in our consideration is, are new and developing subjectivities, as produced in and through the university context seamless and replicable or do they embody and challenge traces of the emotional, cognitive and experiential history of the individuals learning to be academics?

We take an approach which allows us to explore the ways in which institutions attempt to 'discipline' students into their disciplines and we make the claim that this experience of being 'disciplined' is one which (for the subject who writes) exceeds linguistic, cognitive and textual competence.

FROM THE INSIDE OUT: CHANGING OUR IDENTITY

Gwynneth Jansen
Manukau Institute of Technology

The post-compulsory education and training (PCET) sector in Australasia is in a state of flux. This fluidity is often seen as threatening, sweeping student support services aside in its wake. There is, however, another way to view the new environment. The more fluid an environment is, the more likely it is that opportunities will present themselves and that worthwhile changes can be made provided an appropriate analytical tool is used. This paper begins with a brief overview of the changes in the PCET sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand and describes some of the implications for academic support services. In the second section the paper will describe how to use Johnson and Scholes' (1997) cultural web analysis as a tool to document an organisation's culture. The final section will discuss how the team at the Learning Centre at Manukau Institute of Technology in South Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand used this tool to examine and change the centre's identity to become an academic partner rather than an institutional casualty.

GENERIC ATTRIBUTES: AN AGENDA FOR REFORM OR CONTROL?

Janet Jones
University of Sydney

In the last decade, the concept of a set of generic skills, qualities and attributes that support lifelong learning has become firmly placed on the national and international higher education agenda. Higher education institutions in the UK, Canada, the USA, South Africa and Australia, in response to external pressures from the employment and government sectors, have been involved in major efforts to improve the quality of graduate outcomes. Whether this effort has been, or indeed should be, driven by educational, economic, political or social factors is a complex issue and one which continues to stimulate considerable debate across the higher education, employment and government sectors. Critics argue that the pursuit of the goal of graduates with desirable generic attributes and skills, equipped to participate effectively in society for life, is either unrealistic (Kemp and Seagraves 1995; Drummond, Nixon & Wiltshire 1997; Preston 1999) or a 'wasteful chimera-hunt'…which 'should now be abandoned' (Hyland and Johnson 1998, p.163). However, institutional policies and statements of generic attributes have led to changes in the curriculum and pedagogy of both academic departments and learning centres, as universities race to redefine their concept of 'graduateness' to stake out their market niche. This paper is intended as a background paper on key issues in the generic attributes agenda in Universities in Australia. The impact of this agenda on learning centres will form the basis for discussion at the conference presentation.

STAFF AND STUDENT ROLES IN CENTRAL AND FACULTY-BASED LEARNING SUPPORT: CHANGING PARTNERSHIPS

Janet Jones, Helen Bonanno andKaren Scouller
University of Sydney

The changing face of universities today reflects their various responses to pressures both external and internal to the institution. External pressures include the exponential expansion of knowledge and the new technologies, the marketisation of education, combined with shrinking government funding and increased accountability. Within the university, factors such as increasing student diversity and internationalisation, institutional devolution and restructuring along with decreased funding and a renewed focus on quality assurance in teaching have changed the way learning centres and their staff support students at a central level and within faculties. This paper will use case studies of the work of the Learning Centre at the University of Sydney to explore some of the challenges facing both forms of learning support and the responses we are making to these challenges. In the provision of central learning support our responses have included the evolution of a comprehensive and more flexible program and the increased refinement of skills development and learning pathways. The changing nature of Faculty requests for student learning support has meant a shift away from an 'ideal' model where learning development is embedded into the subject curriculum. This has resulted in a degree of compromise in the way in which we deliver learning support to Faculties and in the partnerships we create.

THE PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE OF ONLINE ESL CREDIT SUBJECTS

Jennie Lynch
La Trobe University

The identities of both lecturers and students in Universities are being challenged as their roles in the teaching and learning process are changing. This paper examines how Internet Based Learning can provide for best practice within three principles of learning: fostering a critical and reflective approach to learning, encouraging independent and collaborative learning and motivating students. It reports on the reflections of both students and lecturer in an IBL credit subject at La Trobe University. It concludes that there is a degree of conflict between the pedagogical and practical issues in IBL.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY

Rosalind Martins

University of Western Sydney

As university students, particularly non-recent school leavers, re-position their lives according to the challenges of higher education, there are concurrent changes to their sense of identity. This paper reports on a case study of three students, their experiences of tertiary study, and their sense of identity. There are many different theoretical frameworks that can be used to investigate the experience of higher education on the construction of identity; this paper looks at how the case study data provides links to several areas, including issues of gender, socioeconomic and educational disadvantage and empowerment. Some of these issues are introduced in the light of the students' changed and evolving perspectives on their lives.

STUDENT IDENTITIES IN TIMES OF CHANGE

Bernadette McGowan, Ann-Marie Parkes, Robyn Lance, Beverley McVilley, Jan Manners, Michelle Frank, Stewart McKinney, Roz Dunn

Charles Sturt University

Charles Sturt University, a multi-campus, regional university, comprises diverse student cohorts. It is the role of the Learning Skills Advisers (LSAs) to meet the learning needs of the student body. In order to address these needs effectively, student identities need to be recognised and acknowledged. Internationalisation, globalisation, increased accountability and online services require different responses from universities in the way they foster and encourage lifelong learning within learning communities. This paper will be co-written by team players from the Wagga Wagga, Goulburn, Albury, Bathurst, and Dubbo Campuses. Each member will contribute information and anecdotal evidence regarding respective student cohorts and, due to the knowledge obsolescence of five years, will reflect upon past, current and predicted programs in relation to acknowledging changing student identities and, hence, meeting changing student needs.

Student cohorts to be discussed will be restricted to include Distance Education students and International students. External contexts, in combination with developments in related fields, have an impact on our identities as LSAs within our institutions. Learning Skills Advisers are now further challenged by the inconstant identities of learners during this time of continuous change.

AN AUTHORITATIVE CURRICULUM IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

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Ironically, employers perceive that university graduates are deficient in independent and critical thought, the very skills that many universities abandoned in their attempt to vocationalise themselves. While vocationalising, universities have also shifted to a consumer-based model of educational delivery. These changes have been occurring within a complex of events and discourses, such as globalisation, reduced government expenditure on education, changed patterns of labour formation, technological development, and neo-liberal individualism. Unfortunately, anti-intellectual managerialism, credentialism, and inappropriate neo-liberal ideology have forced upon academics quite inappropriate models of what a university should be. Nevertheless, this current "universities crisis" has forced a reconsideration what it is that universities are supposed to do. Historically, they have been centres of learning, research sites, and credentialing authorities. This paper suggests that universities must re-consider their role in the credentialing process in terms of their fundamental roles of contributing to an intelligent and informed citizenry; providing intellectual and artistic development, engagement and reflection; and developing versatile intellects. More specifically, the paper identifies higher order cognitive skills of synthesis and evaluation, as well as a coherent program of moral awareness that should be built into a university curriculum.

LAS CENTRE IDENTITIES AND PRACTICES WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION: FRAGMENTS FOR NEGOTIATION

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The teaching of language and academic skills is diffused across higher education insitutions and is not uniquely located in LAS. This means that a discussion about identities and futures of 'LAS' in times of change is in itself problematic. Likewise, the discourses around centre identities within faculties, the role of technology and the web, and responses to an increasingly diverse student body float across insitutions with no privileged convergence on LAS. So it is necessary first to acknowledge that 'our' identity is still very much open to negotiation and contestation and that the insitutional fragmentation of LAS practices has consequences for a workable identity and a coherent response to times of change. I use a recent shift from New Zealand to Australia across two language centres, some postructural 'scaffolding', and representations of current practices and discourses to try to locate some responses to these questions and their implications for LAS professional identity practice, and organisation within institutions.

CHASING THE LEARNING CURVE: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT STAFF WHO WORK WITH INDIGENOUS TERTIARY STUDENTS IN OFF CAMPUS STUDY CENTRES

Suzanne Mills
University of South Australia

Off campus study centres have played a crucial role in providing supportive learning environments for Indigenous students in regional centres throughout South Australia for over two decades. Many of these students have achieved university access via special entry procedures, they are of mature age and have cultural, community and family commitments that make moving to city campuses difficult. While students undertake their programs via flexible learning, each study centre is to some extent a microcosm of the distant metropolitan university. Academic support staff work with students enrolled in an expanding range of programs to facilitate the development of academic and linguistic skills that pave the way towards independent learning. However, the learning environment itself is undergoing rapid and continuous change with increasing reliance on new technologies in teaching and access to learning resources. The challenges faced by off campus staff in keeping abreast of the new technologies while at the same time continuing to foster the development of students' academic skills in these dynamic circumstances are outlined. Strategies developed by staff are considered in terms of their intercultural context.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CRITICAL VOICE IN THE WRITING OF INTERNATIONAL POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Jane Moodie
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International postgraduate students from non-English speaking backgrounds are sometimes highly regarded experts who are experienced writers of academic genres in their first language. It can be very difficult for them to maintain that expert identity in their writing in English as they are often uncertain about what is an appropriate voice to adopt as a student in a western academic environment. Their lack of familiarity with the expectations of their new discourse communities makes it particularly difficult for them to write reviews of the literature where they need to express critical evaluation and to make appeals to values shared with their readers. These difficulties are demonstrated in a case study of an Indonesian postgraduate student in the Engineering Faculty at Monash University. Issues in the development of a critical voice in this student's writing are discussed.

FROM OPERATIVES TO STRATEGIC PARTNERS:CHANGING IDENTITIES OF LAS ADVISERS

Judith Morgan

Monash University

As tertiary education organisations continue to shape themselves within the corporate bureaucratic model, anecdotal evidence suggests that LAS staff are frequently being identified as belonging in the base sector of the managerial pyramid, that is as operatives or first line managers, principally focused on the technical aspects of producing the finished product. This perception also suggests that LAS lecturers work consistently within a behaviourist, objectivist paradigm, as ' mechanics of knowledge transfer' (von Glasersfeld, 1995b). The first section of this paper discusses a thesis writing program for a small cross cultural group of honours students from a School of Network Computing. The program aimed at not only developing the academic writing and presentation skills of the students to support them through the thesis writing process, but also establishing within the group a strong sense of collegiate, a sense of identity as young scholars. To achieve this aim, the principles of radical constructivism (von Glasersfeld, 1995b, 1996; Mayer, 1996, Gergen, 1995; Driver et al., 1994) were incorporated into the teaching program. The program concluded with a formal conference, organised by the students at which they presented their research proposals. The second section of the paper analyses the effectiveness of the program based on the evaluative responses of students, supervisors, other academic staff who had attended the student conference, and the LAS lecturer. The paper concludes with the argument that this model can assist in changing the perception of LAS staff as operatives or technical experts to that of strategic partners working with faculties, departments and schools to develop a sense of community and commitment within their postgraduate students.

A TEXT-BASED APPROACH TO TEACHING DOCTORAL WRITING WORKSHOPS

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Academic literacy and learning centres seem to be contributing increasingly to the education of postgraduate research students, often through writing workshops. In this paper we argue that research education can be enhanced through text-based workshops which involve facilitating inquiry about the choices writers make and the effects of these choices on readers. The paper draws on a current research project that investigates professional doctorate writing. This research has emerged from our experiences over three years of designing, delivering and evaluating doctoral writing workshops in the professional doctorate program of the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health at the University of Technology, Sydney. We describe the pedagogic approach we have developed and illustrate this approach through a sample workshop task. Of particular interest in this task is how students negotiate their own changing identities in their texts as they shift toward writing for academic as well as professional readers. This paper may interest those who work with students who are undertaking research degrees or degrees linked to professional practice. More generally, it may interest those who use student texts in teaching writing.

DOING IT TOGETHER: THE PAINS AND GAINS OF COLLABORATING TO PRODUCE ONLINE RESOURCES

Kerry O'Regan

University of South Australia

One of the recent changes within the University of South Australia has been the re-invention of teaching and learning support together with counselling services to form a unit called Learning Connection. Another major change has been an increasing emphasis on online provision of services and resources. These two changes have themselves brought subsequent changes in work practice for Learning Advisers within the University. The requirement to produce online resources has brought what we do very much

into the public domain; no longer is our work something that takes place privately between individuals behind closed doors. Online workshops and downloadable resources are there for the world to see and are vigorously promoted by Learning Connection to the University community. The pressure to quickly produce a comprehensive suite of high quality online resources led the Learning Advisers' team to work collaboratively on their production. This has raised a number of professional issues in terms of principle and process including: articulating and resolving implicit and explicit views of teaching and learning; developing effective ways of writing collaboratively and of respectfully engaging in extensive and rigorous peer reviews; and resolving the tensions associated with intellectual property and individual, group and corporate ownership of the materials produced. This paper draws on some of the literature relating to collaborative writing and peer review; relates the experiences of those involved in the process of collaborative production at the University of South Australia and suggests ways in which this process may involve minimal pain and maximal gain.

CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Steve Price

Monash University

This paper offers tentative remarks on the possible role certain acts may have in the process of student identity formation and discourse acquisition. These acts will be referred to as *performative* acts, even though they are not identical with Austin's (1975) definition of a performative. This paper attempts to show some limitations of approaches that focus on the ways in which social and ideological structures and concomitant distributions of power embedded in discourse content and form position learners as they engage with a particular discourse. Such approaches focus on the subjective effects of such positioning, and therefore argue that an awareness of those effects can empower the individual to free themselves from such subjective effects and take up identity positions more to their choosing. By identifying the identity positions a text implicitly confers on reader and writers (and others) by the selection and organisation of its content, a reader enabled to resist that positioning. Understanding and awareness thus bring emancipatory potential. However, the position advanced in this paper is that performative acts do not find representation in the content and form of a discourse. They are acts that operate at an intersubjective level and enable the response to the discourse itself, and as such, precede and are not mediated by the discourse content or form itself. Such positioning then is not identified through the process of awareness usually involved, for instance, in the writings on critical language awareness that focus on the way in which identities and social positioning is embedded in discourse content and form.

LOSING IDENTITY: A TEMPORARY PROBLEM FOR SINGLE-SEMESTER EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Mary Lou Ridsdale

Swinburne University of Technology

I cannot be myself, let alone write for academic assessment. I've sort of lost myself". These remarks of an Australian study-abroad student in France are a painful reminder that one semester, or even one year, is a very short time to create an identity in a foreign language. This short presentation does not report formal research but is based on discussions with two students on one-semester study-abroad programs - an Australian in France and an Italian in Australia. Relatively short-term periods of undergraduate study in foreign countries are becoming a feature of international education the world over, and this presentation provides something of a reality check on the excitement and optimism which participants usually feel before they become immersed in the foreign culture and language.

NEW IDENTIY - A DOUBLE EDGED SWORD

Sue Shaw and Jan Regan
Southern Cross University

This paper reports on an initiative undertaken by Learning Assistance at Southern Cross University. This initiative was undertaken in an attempt to cope with an ever increasing demand for student support with no commensurate increase in staff, and to respond to evidence which suggests that students need to learn academic skills in context - in context of culture, university, discipline and particular assignment task. In close collaboration with a subject lecturer, a process-based model was developed to enable students to learn the necessary skills to produce an academic essay while engaging in the process of completing a real assignment task. This provided the students with an opportunity to understand the purpose of the skills being taught within the context of their study. Two sets of sessions were designed in conjunction with the lecturer and held in the students' tutorial times with the lecturer present. Thus any questions about content were able to be answered by the lecturer. A workshop format was used so that students were actively engaged in the task. The initial session was used for discussion of the process and analysis of the question for content and directional words. Included was an examination of the explicit marking criteria as well as the tacit expectations implied in the unit objectives and by studying at university in a Western culture. Examples of former assignment responses to the same or similar task including examples which scored highly and examples which did not score well were used. A follow up session was run six weeks later where students brought along their completed assignments for directed peer and self-review.

LANGUAGE USE IN CHANGING IDENTITIES: FROM HANDMAIDEN TO COLLABORATOR

Jan Skillen, Bronwyn James, Alisa Percy and Neil Trivett
University of Wollongong

In recent times, learning developers have been involved in a shift from the periphery of academia to the middle, from the peripheral business of universities to the core business, and from outside curricula to inside curricula. These shifts have been concurrent with changing our identities within our institutions and within academia and making that change visible. One mechanism for making that change visible to others is the language which we use to represent what it is we do and who we are: that language effectively constructs our identities in the minds of others. This paper looks at the words we use about ourselves that can inadvertently enrol others into seeing us as handmaidens rather than as collaborators.

STARTING A COURSEWORK POSTGRADUATE DEGREE: THE NEGLECTED TRANSITION

Mandy Symons
University of Queensland

The focus of most research into student transition relates to the important transition that students face when they move from high school to first year at university. This particular transition is also the focus of much support given by Learning Assistance units, both in terms of workshops and academic preparation programs offered, and individual consultations. From my experience of working as a learning adviser with postgraduate students over a number of years it has become apparent that the transition to higher degrees (both coursework and research) can prove to be just as daunting a transition. The problems faced by students making the transition to coursework postgraduate degrees were examined in 2000 at Glasgow University. A questionnaire, interviews and focus groups were used to gain a picture of this transition at Glasgow University. The results suggest that students face significant problems when beginning a coursework degree related to the worry about expectations, the 'step-up' in standards, the break from study they have had due to time in the workforce, and in some cases because they are moving into a new discipline area.

LAS ADVISERS AND THE CHANGING IDENTITY OF THE WORKPLACE: THEIR SOURCES OF STRESS AND THE STRATEGIES THEY USE TO COPE

Robyn Thomas and Bernadette Bennett
La Trobe University

Research on stress in the workplace reveals that work related stressors are complex and include inter-relating factors such as: restructuring of the workplace, management issues, changing work profiles, job security, workloads, working conditions, relationships at work, home-work interface, career development, and individual personalities. From a questionnaire, LAS advisers were asked to identify the key stressors associated with the changing identity of their workplace and to indicate some of the strategies they use to manage their work related stress. Factors contributing to LAS advisers' stress relate to: institutional changes; a perceived lack of commitment by managers to the work of LAS advisers; attempting to provide an equitable level of service within a context of shrinking resources; the conflict and ambiguities inherent in the LAS support role while trying to meet the needs of teaching staff and students; the lack of time for research; and the high number of student contact hours. Strategies frequently used by LAS staff to manage workplace stress include: ensuring that they take lunch breaks, spending time with colleagues and liaising with teaching staff. In the questionnaire LAS advisers were asked to nominate changes in the work place that they believe would lessen stress. The most commonly desired change was for an increase in resources for LAS work.

CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES: CHANGING PRACTICE

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UNITEC Institute of Technology, Auckland

Technological developments are having a significant impact on many aspects of higher education. This paper outlines some of the impact of these developments on academic learning support provision in higher education, particularly issues concerning the challenges and benefits of providing academic learning support online. The paper provides recommendations for addressing these issues in ways that help ensure the successful integration of technology and academic learning support. It also considers the potential impact of technological developments on the position and practice of learning advisers working in higher education.

MAKING THE TRANSITION TO STUDYING IN ENGLISH: IS EXTRA TIME IN EXAMINATIONS FOR NESB STUDENTS A DESIRABLE OPTION?

Kate Wilson
University of Canberra

Studying in a foreign language is an enormous challenge. The extent of this challenge is reflected in the performance of NESB students. Particularly in their first semesters at university, NESB students have a higher failure rate than their ESB classmates and to be under-represented at the high end of the grade spectrum. Over time, as they adjust culturally and acquire greater tertiary literacy skills, their performance tends to improve. Examinations, in particular, tend to discriminate against NESB students who take longer to process text in English than their ESB classmates. Allowing NESB students extra time in examinations for their first three semesters would appear to be a logical and equitable solution which would go some way towards addressing the disadvantage that they experience. However, there are strong bastions of resistance to this idea within universities: many academics and administrators do not accept the concept of positive discrimination; others claim that university admissions requirements should exclude students who have limited English literacy skills; others claim that allowing extra time for some students is too complex administratively. Indeed, there may be more constructive ways to address the disadvantages faced by NESB students. This paper will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of allowing NESB students extra time in exams as a way of helping students make the transition to studying in a foreign language.