Journal of Academic Language & Learning
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2018, A48-A63. ISSN 1835-5196

Association for Academic Language and Learning

Whole of institution academic language and learning practice: Systemic implications

Susan Hoadley and Kerry Hunter

Academic Learning and Language, University of Technology Sydney, Ultimo NSW 2007, Australia

Email: susan.hoadley@uts.edu.au and kerry.hunter@uts.edu.au

(Received 13 September, 2017. Published online 10 February, 2018.)

According to Biggs (1993) higher education can be understood as a system of nested sub-systems and good pedagogical practices need to be capable of working throughout this system. As academic language and learning has changed from focusing on specific (groups of) students to whole of institution approaches (Harper, 2013), academic language and learning practices now have to occur throughout the systems of higher education. In undertaking these practices, academic language and learning practitioners have had to adapt to specific disciplines, different learning and teaching environments as well as a range of professional and institutional roles. In this paper, we map the practices of an academic language and learning unit throughout the sub-systems of a large metropolitan university, comparing and contrasting areas where academic language and learning practices are successful with areas where there are gaps and deficiencies. Using actor and agency theory, we discuss factors and parameters that contribute to the success of academic language and learning practices (Fenton-Smith & Gurney, 2016) and also how these differ depending on the location of the practice within the system. We also identify and discuss the multiplicity of identities academic language and learning practitioners have to adopt (Webb, 2001) and transition between in order to function successfully throughout the system. Finally, we draw conclusions in relation to the extent to which changes in academic language and learning practices have been a result of, or have driven, systemic change, and conversely, whether they have simply been absorbed by the system, reverting to the status quo (Biggs, 1993).

Key Words: actors, agency, identity, language development, systems theory, whole of institution.

1. Introduction

According to Biggs (1993) good pedagogical practices need to be viable within and throughout the system and sub-systems of education. This can be recognised in academic language and learning (ALL) as the transition from focussing on practices aimed at specific (groups of) students to whole of course (Harris, 2016) and whole of institution (Harper, 2013) approaches. Whole of institution ALL requires practitioners to move between and operate at multiple levels of and different contexts across the system(s), adapting to different disciplines, learning and teaching environments as well as institutional contexts. At the same time, the identities of ALL practitioners have had to evolve, as foreshadowed by Webb (2001), such that practitioners have to adopt and transition between different identities in order to function successfully throughout the system(s).

However, whole of institution academic language and learning is challenging to achieve and maintain. Due to the systemic properties of universities, components of the system interact to form barriers to changes such as the implementation of ALL practices. Further, whilst ALL practices implemented in one component of the system may result in systemic change throughout the system, they may also be lost by "the system reverting to status quo" (Biggs, 1993, p. 76), something most ALL practitioners will have experienced.

In this paper, we examine the whole of institution ALL practices at a large, Australian, metropolitan university to establish to what extent they are successful and what contributes to this success. We define successful ALL practices as those that occur frequently or typically, are widespread (across faculties and the institution) and/or have significant impact (high staff uptake, high numbers students reached or quantifiable results on student performance). We begin by providing some background to the ALL unit that has most responsibility for ALL practices across the institution (Section 2). We continue by outlining a whole of institution definition of language development in higher education (Section 3) and describe the different components of this approach (Section 4). In section 5, we map the practice of the ALL unit specifically, through and across the systems of the university. In section 6, actor and agency theory is used as a framework to discuss the factors and parameters that contribute to the success of ALL practices, followed by a discussion of the identities of ALL practitioners (Section 7) and some final conclusions (Section 8).

2. Background of the Academic Language and Learning (ALL) unit

The Academic Language and Learning (ALL) unit was formed in 2012 as a result of an institutional change project that aimed to "strengthen and diversify the forms of English language proficiency, academic literacy and professional communication skills support" to meet the needs of the changing demographics of students (internal change document). The key outcome of the project was the restructure of a single, primarily student facing unit into two separate units: a central unit to provide English language and academic literacy support to students and the ALL unit to embed ALL in the curriculum. Both units ultimately report to the same deputy vice chancellor (DVC), however, the student facing unit is part of the student services area, whereas the ALL unit is part of the central learning and teaching area.

The ALL unit's brief is to collaborate with discipline academics to embed academic language, professional communication skills and discipline-specific discourse in the curriculum in accordance with with the institution's English language policy (University of Technology, 2010). The ALL unit is staffed by language (and literacy) academics, who generally also hold qualifications in education. The purpose of the collaborative model is to enable the tacit knowledge of discipline-specific language held by discipline academics to be made explicit though the expertise of the language academics, as shown in Figure 1 (Jacobs, 2005).

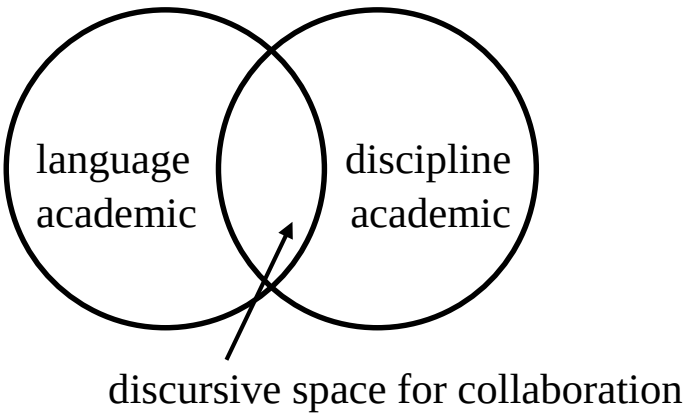

Figure 1. Collaborative model of academic language and learning practice.

As originally conceived, the ALL practitioners in the unit were to work collaboratively with discipline academics on the design of courses, subjects, assessment tasks and learning materials. Activities were to include: identifying opportunities for academic literacy and language development throughout the curriculum; improving the clarity of assessment tasks and criteria; working with subject teaching teams to develop skills in providing effective feedback on writing; and developing resources to support students' academic reading, writing, speaking and listening in the context of the discipline (internal change document). The ALL practitioners were able to provide a limited amount of teaching support, for example through collaborative teaching, guest lectures or subject specific adjunct (additional, non-compulsory) workshops, in order to maintain their awareness of students' needs, support professional development of academics and enable new resources to be deployed. The ALL unit currently consists of six ALL practitioners working across all the faculties in the institution. The ALL practitioners are allocated to work with one or two faculties but are physically located together, as a team, in the central learning and teaching area.

3. Whole of institution definition of language development

According to Harris and Ashton (2011), the definition of English language proficiency (ELP) that is used within an institution has significant impact. Consistent with the aims of the change project, we use the term language development (in higher education) and define this as encapsulating academic language, discipline-specific discourse and professional communication against a background of (English) language development (Figure 2), to reflect a holistic and developmental approach following O'Loughlin and Arkoudis (Arkoudis, Baik, & Richardson, 2012). Whilst our definition of language deveopment shares much with most models of English Language Proficiency (ELP), which include academic literacy and professional communication, as well as general communication (Harper, 2013), this broad understanding of ELP is not shared beyond academic language and learning circles.

In addition, using the term language development avoids the use of the word English in ELP, which causes many discipline academics and students to disengage with ALL activities. The explicit identification of discipline-specific discourse and professional communication means that language development involves discipline academics and must be embedded in courses, and in turn subjects (Harris, 2016). This is particularly important given that our ALL practice relies on a collaborative model that requires participation by discipline academics across the institution. Many students enter the university with high English skills, but still need to develop specific academic language skills (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012).

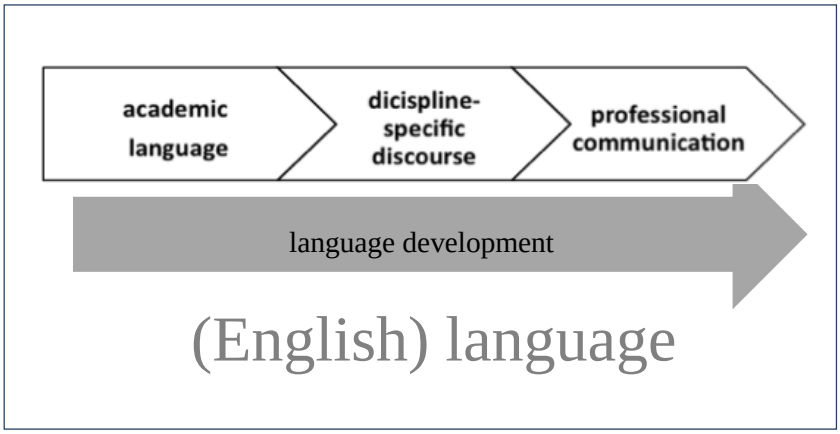

Figure 2. Language development in higher education.

Our definition of language development in higher education recognises the concept of student transitions (Taylor, Millwater, & Nash, 2007; Wood & Solomonides, 2008) and the need to move

through a continuum from entry to exit (Arkoudis et al., 2012). Each student's language development at university will depend both on their (English) language skills and the way academic, discipline and professional language are understood and developed in their course. Some students need to explicitly develop their general (English) language proficiency in order to underpin the development of their academic, discipline and professional language. Other students will be able to develop their academic, discipline and professional language, within the context of the courses and subjects they undertake.

4. Whole of institution approach: Generic to embedded cline

Supporting students through the transitions implied in our definition of language development requires a combination of practices as shown in Figure 3. Central to the whole of institution approach are three categories of practices, which are identified as non-integrated, integrated and embedded informed by Jones, Bonanno, and Scouller (2001) and Harris and Ashton (2011). Above and below the three types of approaches are post-enrolment language assessment (PELA) and communication graduate attributes, which represent the students' starting point and the intended outcome respectively. PELA at UTS is a university wide online activity (i.e. OPELA) designed to give students some feedback on their current academic language skills; faculties respond to results in ways they deem suitable for their disciplines. The column on the far right of Figure 3 recognises that institutional and academic leadership influences language development across and beyond the institution.

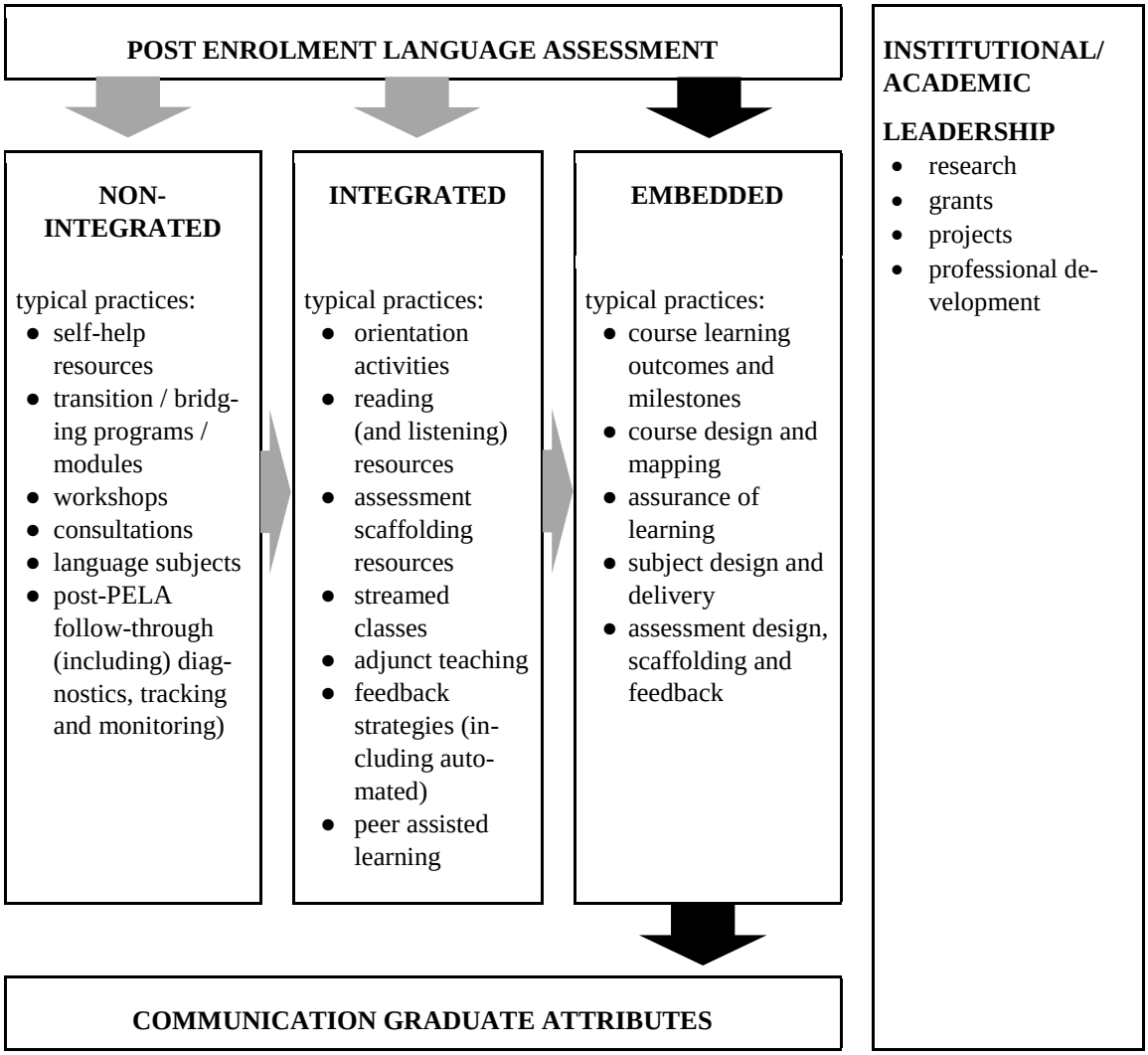

Figure 3. Whole of institution language development approach.

As indicated by the black and grey arrows in Figure 3, different students, informed by feedback from the PELA (Harris, 2013), will take different pathways in their language development to achieve the communication graduate attributes. At the same time, different practices are provided by different areas and staff across the institution. This is discussed in more detail in relation to the three categories of practices in the following paragraphs.

Embedded practices (Figure 3) reflect the fact that language development underpins all students' achievement of communication (and other) graduate attributes. These practices are part of the core learning and teaching activities of faculties, primarily course and subject design and delivery, and are the responsibility of discipline academics within faculties. As such, embedded practices are experienced by all students during their course, regardless of feedback from the OPELA, as indicated by the darker arrows. However, students will experience these practices as part of the discipline curriculum, rather than explicit language development. ALL practitioners collaborate with discipline academics primarily on the development of these practices, although they may also be involved in delivery in collaborative and guest teaching.

Integrated practices (Figure 3) are discipline-specific or discipline contextualised practices that are visible as language development. While integrated practices as such may not be compulsory or taken up to the same extent by all students, there is a tendency for them to be brought into the subjects for all students, and hence become embedded practices. The OPELA plays an important role for the institution in driving the provision of these practices and for students in indicating that they need to use the integrated practices (Harris, 2013). For most integrated practices, ALL practitioners collaborate with discipline academics, with ALL practitioners having a greater share of the responsibility. However, ALL practitioners cannot implement integrated practices without the agreement and cooperation of the discipline academics who coordinate subjects and courses.

Non-integrated practices are more generic language development support, mainly provided by professional staff as language and learning practitioners in the central student facing unit. However, the university library also develops and provides resources, as well as offering some workshops. The ALL practitioners collaborate with both areas in developing non-integrated practices. Again, the OPELA plays an important role in indicating to students that they need to use non-integrated support and also has the potential to ensure such support is used by the students who most need it, through ongoing monitoring (although this is not done currently).

5. Mapping ALL practice

As shown in Figure 4, we conceptualise our institution as an open, complex, dynamic system of nested micro-systems and map the practices of the ALL unit through and, where appropriate, across the systems (Tables 1-3), following Biggs (1993). In Tables 1-3 we identify the ALL practices that take place, where they occur and the extent to which they are successful as perceived by the ALL unit. The ALL practices listed in the left column of the tables are derived from routine and ad hoc institutional reporting required of the ALL unit. The perceived success of these practices, indicated by ticks (one to three), is based on the ALL unit's estimations of frequency or typicality of occurrence, how widespread the practice is, and potential impact on students (indicated by staff uptake, numbers of students reached and quantifiable results). These estimations are informed by ALL reporting, as well as discussions within the ALL unit. The aim is to provide a contrastive overview of ALL practices and their impact throughout the system, particularly in relation to bringing about systemic change (Biggs, 1993). In addition, we consider the extent to which ALL practices are impeded by other components within the system (Biggs, 1993).

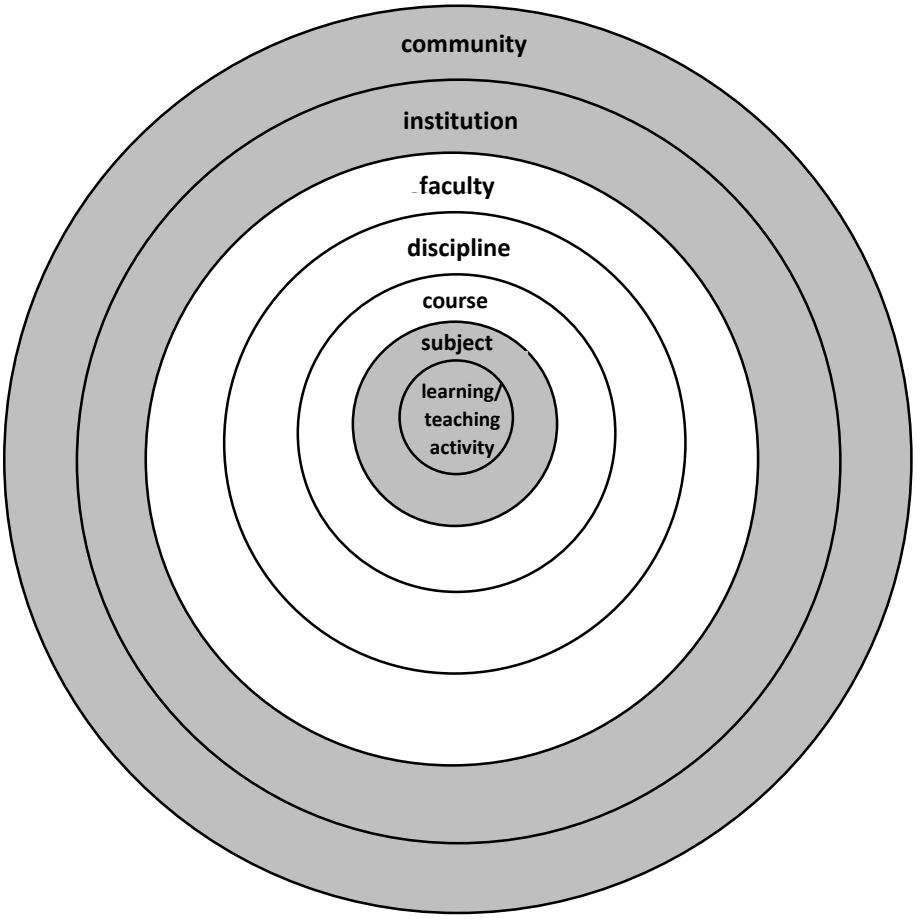

Figure 4. Higher education institution as a system of systems.

5.1. Community and institution systems

The two outer systems, as shown in Figure 4, are the community and institution systems and the mapping of the ALL practices in these systems is shown in Table 1. In the community system, ALL practices consist of participation in associations (e.g. AALL), boards and committees etc; research activities including projects and grants; and community engagement as public commentators or invited speakers. The most significant practices at this level are research activities, driven by community and institutional expectations of academics, which have become institutionalised through performance review and employment criteria. Notably, these research expectations have brought about systemic change in ALL practices throughout the systems of the institution, with language and learning initiatives frequently being conceptualised, funded and managed as research projects.

In the institutional system, the ALL practices generally have reasonable impact with the management of the institution wide OPELA having high impact. The OPELA drives language development activities through the inner systems and hence has brought about systemic change. Other ALL practices in this system include participation in institutional fora, such as committees, working groups and communities of practice (e.g. first year experience) and research activities that go across the institution (e.g. writing analytics research). Professional development sessions are important for the reputation, profile and connections of the ALL unit. Although the sessions are considered to have good impact on the staff who attend the sessions, attendance is limited when considered in relation to the number of teaching staff in the institution. Partly in response to this limited attendance, the ALL unit has started to communicate practices and provide resources for teaching staff online at an institutional level. Some resources for students are produced at this level, driven by demand from discipline academics for resources to address common language and learning issues (e.g. reading) encountered in the inner systems. These resources have good

impact both in terms of their immediate adoption by academics and also their scope for further discipline-specific development by ALL practitioners in collaboration with discipline academics.

Table 1. ALL practice in community and institution systems.

Community	
associations/committees/boards/networks	✓
invited speaker/public commentator	✓
research/grants/projects	✓✓
Institution	
post enrolment language assessment	✓✓✓
committees/fora/working groups	✓✓
professional development (sessions/resources)	✓✓
research/grants/projects	✓✓
resources for students	✓✓

✓ - occurs but in a limited fashion and/or with limited impact

✓✓ - occurs relatively often or typically and has reasonable impact

✓✓✓ - occurs frequently or is widespread and high impact

"resources" includes online resources/modules and curation

5.2. Faculty, discipline and course systems

Within the institution system is the faculty system (Figure 4). It is in this system and the nested micro-systems that ALL practices are mapped separately for each faculty as shown in Tables 2 and 3. Despite the relative independence of the faculties and their significant differences, ALL practices in one faculty affect ALL practices in another, either informally, where a practice is taken up voluntarily (e.g. resources sites for faculty staff within in the learning management system), or formally where a practice is identified within the institutional system and mandated for all faculties (e.g. format of OPELA feedback to students).

Moving inwards from the faculty system we deviate from Biggs (1993) in that we conceptualize discipline and course systems (Figure 4). The mapping of the ALL practices in all three of these systems is shown in Table 2. It is worth noting that the distinction between the discipline and course systems is less clear for some disciplines where there are fewer courses, so almost a one-to-one relationship between the discipline and the course (e.g. nursing), than for other disciplines where there is a one-to-many relationship between the discipline and the courses (e.g. management).

As can be seen in Table 2, a common feature of ALL practices in the faculty, discipline and course systems is that, notwithstanding some exceptions, they typically occur in limited fashion or have limited impact, if they occur at all. This is in contrast to the community and institution systems (Table 1), where, in the institutional system particularly, ALL practices are consistently considered to have a reasonable impact. Furthermore, in the subject and learning and teaching activity systems, discussed below, ALL practices are also much more prevalent and more frequently have reasonable or high impact. Whilst this might be expected, given the dominance of subjects as organising and operationalising structures in universities, the limited ALL practice in the faculty, discipline and course systems indicates a disequilibrium for which accommodations will need to

be made in other components of the system (Biggs, 1993). However, such accommodations do not address the need for effective ALL practices throughout all the systems of the institution.

Table 2. ALL practice in faculty, discipline and course systems.

	Arts & Social Sciences	Business	Design, Archit. & Building	Eng. & IT	Health	Law	Science
Faculty							
accreditation support (internal/external)	-	✓✓	-	✓	-	-	✓✓
faculty fora	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓
professional development (sessions/resources)	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
research/grants/projects	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
resources for students	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
strategy development	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
Discipline							
discipline fora	✓	-	-	-	✓✓	-	-
professional development (sessions/resources)	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓
resources for students	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓✓	✓
Course							
accreditation support (internal/external)	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
curriculum design/ alignment/mapping	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓
professional development (sessions/resources)	-	-	-	-	✓✓	-	✓
resources for students	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	-	✓
research/grants/projects	✓	-	-	✓✓	✓✓	-	✓
teaching adjunct	✓✓✓	-	-	✓✓	-	-	✓✓✓
English language development strategies	✓	-	-	-	✓✓✓	-	✓

✓ - occurs but in a limited fashion and/or with limited impact

✓✓ - occurs relatively often or typically and has reasonable impact

✓✓✓ - occurs frequently or is widespread and high impact

"resources" includes online resources/modules and curation

There are also some significant differences in ALL practices across the faculties in the faculty, discipline and course systems. In the Science faculty, most of the ALL practices occur, at least to

some extent, in all three systems, and Science has the highest level of ALL practices overall. For the Health faculty, which has the second highest level of ALL practices, course level practices are particularly significant, perhaps driven by the introduction of English language requirements for nursing graduates. ALL practices in Arts and Social Sciences are also notable at course level, with course level adjunct teaching (i.e. additional, non-compulsory workshops) in particular considered to have a high impact. In contrast, for Business most ALL practices are located in the faculty system, driven by the requirements of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AASCB) accreditation. Whilst both Engineering and Information Technology and Law are highly vocational, the ALL practices in each are somewhat contrastive. For Engineering and Information Technology the ALL practices that occur are in the faculty and course system, whereas for Law they are in the discipline system. This contrast reflects the fact that Engineering and Information Technology offers more, as well as more diverse, courses than Law, which offers fewer courses and is more homogeneous. In Design, Architecture and Building, ALL practices in the three systems are limited to developing strategies to implement the OPELA and subsequent online resources for students for a single course.

5.3. Subject and learning and teaching activity systems

The inner systems in our conceptualisation (Figure 4) are the subject and learning and teaching activity systems. The distinction between these two systems is the extent of the ALL practices within the subject. For some subjects the ALL practices may relate to a single learning and teaching activity (for example a single assessment task) and so are mapped to the learning and teaching activity system (Table 3). In contrast, for other subjects the ALL practices may relate to all or a significant part of the subject (for example overall subject design, support for multiple assessment tasks or broad aspects of the subject such as orientation activities) and so are mapped to the subject system (Table 3).

As foreshadowed in the previous section, there is a high level of ALL practices in the subject and learning and teaching activity systems, and these practices generally have reasonable or high impact (Table 3), as frequently reported by discipline academics and students. ALL practices in the subject system allow for a more systematic, developmental approach than in the learning and teaching activity system. However, ALL practices in both systems generate change across the systems, when practices are shared within the ALL unit and used in other subjects in other faculties, as well as through the outer systems, by highlighting issues that need to be addressed in other systems. For example, resources and activities for scaffolding assessment tasks are shared and adapted within the ALL unit for use in different (disciplinary) contexts, and this shared understanding enables the ALL unit to influence the development and provision of support in the outer systems, such as resources provided by the Library.

Given the nature of the distinction between the subject and learning and teaching activity systems, there is significant overlap between the practices in the two systems (Table 3). The two differences are subject design, which is necessarily in the subject system, and research activities, which tend to be conceptualised and initiated in the subject system. Just as assessment drives learning for students (Ramsden, 1992), it also drives ALL practices in the subject and learning and teaching activity systems, with significant practice in the area of assessment design and scaffolding, which also manifests as resources for students and teaching. The ALL practices in both the subject and learning and teaching activity systems generally involve close collaboration with discipline academics, and hence provide opportunities for one-to-one professional development (mentoring).

Across the faculties (Table 3), Science again has the highest occurrence of ALL practices and the most with high impact. Arts and Social Science and Business have a similar occurrence and impact, as well as quite similar distribution across the two systems. Engineering and IT is distinctive in the occurrence and impact of ALL practices in the subject system as compared to the learning

and teaching activity system. Health also has significantly more ALL practice in the subject system with resources for students and adjunct teaching particularly having a high impact. In Law, the occurrence and impact of ALL practices is notably consistent across the two systems and the type of practices. The limited impact of ALL practices in Law is perhaps a reflection of the student cohort (OPELA indicates that very few Law students need language development support), the effect of previous ALL practices on the language development capabilities of Law academics and the fact that Law is the smallest faculty. Design, Architecture and Building has the least occurrence of ALL practices, which are predominately within the learning and teaching activity system.

Table 3. ALL practice in subject and learning and teaching activity systems.

	Arts & Social Sciences	Business	Design, Archit. & Building	Eng. & IT	Health	Law	Science
Subject							
subject design	-	✓	-	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
assessment design/scaffolding (inc feedback)	✓✓	✓✓	-	✓✓	-		✓✓✓
professional development (sessions/resources)	✓	✓✓	-	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓
research/grants/projects	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓✓
resources for students	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	-	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
teaching adjunct	✓✓	✓	-	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
teaching collaborative	✓✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
teaching guest	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning and teaching activity							
assessment design/scaffolding (inc. feedback)	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	✓✓	✓✓✓
professional development (sessions/resources)	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	-	✓	✓✓
resources for students	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓
teaching adjunct	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓✓✓
teaching collaborative	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	✓	✓✓
teaching guest	✓	✓✓	-	-	-	✓	✓

✓ - occurs but in a limited fashion and/or with limited impact

✓✓ - occurs relatively often or typically and has reasonable impact

✓✓✓ - occurs frequently or is widespread and high impact

"resources" includes online resources/modules and curation

6. Factors and parameters contributing to the success of ALL practices

We now discuss the factors and parameters that contribute to the success of ALL practices throughout the system(s) of higher education as we have conceptualised them, using the taxonomy of actors and agency developed by Baldauf and colleagues (Chua & Baldauf, 2011; Zhao, 2011;

Zhao & Baldauf, 2012). Our discussion is informed by Fenton-Smith and Gurney's (2016) approach, namely that the complexities inherent in language policy, planning and implementation in higher education can be better understood though the critical lens of agency, which they describe as "the various levels and forms of power invested in the range of actors involved in policy and planning" (p. 74). Of particular interest to us also is Fenton-Smith and Gurney's focus on "where agency does not lie (but ought to)" (2016, p.74). Further, we investigate the actors and the power relations between them (Foucault, 1984) that are vital to ALL practice.

Baldauf and colleagues (Chua & Baldauf, 2011; Zhao, 2011; Zhao & Baldauf, 2012) identify four categories of actors and the nature of their agency. The four categories are: people with power; people with expertise; people with influence; and people with interest. We consider people with power to include those who possess codified authority to implement policies including those at the executive level of universities; people with expertise to have specialised knowledge ie language (and literacy) academics and discipline academics; people with influence to have high standing within a community and have some capacity to influence or determine behaviour of others, for example a well-regarded academic or professional staff member; and people with interest to have language expectations and practices that influence decisions, for example students, parents, employers and the community more broadly (Fenton-Smith & Gurney, 2016).

At the community and institution level, ALL success is mostly determined by the people with power. In the community system, whilst policymakers are removed or distant from directly affecting ALL practice or practitioners, policies about language have the power to force change through institutions, as codified power resonates through them in response to overt policy (Fenton-Smith & Gurney, 2016). In our institution system, powerholders are crucial to the initiation and success of ALL practice. In fact, as discussed, the ALL unit was created as a result of an institutional project, which was driven by a DVC to address changing demographics of students and associated pressure from the community system. While ALL practitioners have limited relationships with powerholders in the community system, as people with expertise we have agency with those in power in our institutional system. For example, we have been called upon to manage and implement university wide ALL practices, such as OPELA. Yet even with that agency, the success of ALL activities is subordinate to institutional directives and expertise is easily disregarded. Further, the perpetuation of top down policies usually depends upon key personnel as powerholders, and so ALL practices may be ephemeral due to change in institutional hierarchy. Such changes leave many ALL initiatives across the university in a state of flux (Harris, 2016; Harper, 2013).

Also of interest in the community and institution systems are people with interest, such as students, parents, employers and the community more broadly. Whilst Zhao (2011) finds this category to be "neglected" and Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016) find them absent from their data, at our institution students have become people with agency through views expressed in institutional and external student feedback surveys, such as Quality Indicators in Learning and Teaching (https://www.qilt.edu.au), which are highly valued by the current DVC with responsibility for ALL. Media can also directly impact ALL practice by reflecting the concerns of employers and the broader community, as well as drawing attention to issues in graduate language skills.

At the faculty, discipline and course level, we identify Associate Deans Teaching and Learning, Course Co-ordinators and Heads of School as those with power. However, despite calls for a greater focus on course design and delivery (e.g. Hoadley & Sabri, 2017; Treleaven & Voola, 2008), since this level is not where teaching and learning is primarily operationalised the people with power have limited agency. Further, the people with power at this level often do not directly communicate with the ALL practitioners as expertise holders and so the ALL practitioners have limited agency. As a result, ALL practices are somewhat limited unless there are particular specific drivers, such as English language requirements in Health and accreditation requirements in Business. In Science, there are Associate Heads of Teaching and Learning who are in a position

to direct focus on language and learning and this may contribute to the greater prevalence and success of ALL practices at this level. We determine people with influence and people with interest to be largely absent from these systems, thus where agency does not lie but ought to (Fenton-Smith and Gurney, 2016) again due to the fact that teaching and learning is largely not operationalised at this level.

At the subject and learning and teaching activity level, we regard the discipline academics who coordinate subjects~~,~~ and the ALL practitioners~~,~~ as being in shared power relations, each having agency due to their specific expertise. The positioning, or power relations of discipline academics and ALL practitioners is dependent on perceived status at the university. Collaborative research publications and projects as well as prestigious, well publicised awards raise the ALL practitioners status. Additionally, identifiable positive outcomes (grades, quality of written assignments) mean that discipline academics become people with influence in championing ALL practices, thereby contributing to their success. However, recognition of ALL expertise varies between and within faculties, and there does seem to be an assumption of a hierarchically superior role by the discipline academics as people with power, as Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016) found. Subject coordinator autonomy potentially limits the success of ALL practices, as there is generally no requirement for discipline academics to comply with recommendations from the ALL practitioners and again, a change of personnel can result in abandonment or truncation of ALL practices.

Overall, although the range of actors and sources of agency at the subject and teaching and learning activity level is more complex than at the other two other levels, it is within these systems that ALL practices are currently most successful. Whilst it is still the case that the success of practices at this level is dependent on the power of those coordinating the subjects, unlike the other levels, people with influence have agency, and further this is where the agency of people with interest, primarily students, manifests, as this is where teaching and learning is carried out. This aligns with Benzie, Pryce and Smith's (2017) finding that a top down attempt to embed academic literacies was problematic because the approach lacked consideration of power and discourse and "could not encompass questions such as who could effectively contribute to bringing about change and their individual values, motivations and experiences" (p. 238).

7. Adopting and transitioning between identities

We now discuss the identities the ALL practitioners in our unit adopt to operate successfully throughout the university. In her plenary address at the Changing Identities LAS conference 2001, Webb suggested "there are probably countless different interpretations of the professional ontogenesis of the LAS field" (para. 34). Further, "as boundaries between groups shift and merge and sometimes melt, the possibilities of meta-professional convergence between ALL professionals and other groups are exciting". Since this insightful plenary, ALL practice has evolved in that the meta-professional convergence referred to as emerging has become commonplace in regard to collaborative work with discipline academics and other education professionals. These convergences indeed "benefit the co-production of new understandings" (Webb, 2001, para. 36), yet the identities of ALL practitioners are not constant, nor are the locations they practice in (Bennett et al., 2015; Percy, 2015).

Webb (2001) provided what she called a rough sketch of LAS, now ALL's, ontological evolution, describing ALL professionals as remediators, mediators, integrators and transformers (Table 4.). We find our ALL unit adopts three of these four identities at different times and within different locations. However, we do not identify as remediators because we integrate and embed the development of academic, discipline specific and professional language within disciplinary contexts, addressing all students in diverse student cohorts. As Webb considered future identities desirable for ALL practitioners she put forward three ways she thought we would like to be known: as partners in the transformation of university teaching and learning, as catalysts for systemic change and as facilitators of organisational learning (Table 4).

Table 4. ALL practitioner identities.

Identity	
Remediators	Supporting minority in an elitist system
Mediators	Ameliorating disadvantage in diverse student cohorts
Integrators	Integrating skills with content
Transformers	Learning as reading and writing
Partners	Collaborating with disciplinary academics to transform university teaching and learning
Catalysts	Instigating (systemic) change in teaching and learning practice
Facilitators	Coaching/mentoring professional development in teaching and learning

To use the Health faculty as an example of Webb's established identities, the ALL practitioner adopts mediator, integrator and transformer identities. For safety reasons, nursing students' English language levels need to be assessed before clinical placement and those with low levels of English attend a Clinically Speaking program designed and taught by the ALL practitioner as mediator, ameliorating disadvantage for international students (San Miguel & Rogan, 2015). Workshops across the first year nursing course target specific assessments, where the ALL practitioner is integrator, integrating the required skills with content. First year language based subject tutorials (driven by OPELA) have been developed for discipline academics to deliver, thus the ALL practitioner is transformer, learning as reading and writing (San Miguel, Townsend, & Waters, 2013).

Whilst we can relate to and use the identities described by Webb, we find the distinction between the different identities we adopt is somewhat blurred, with ALL practices requiring multiple identities, often simultaneously. An example from Science demonstrates the ALL practitioner as both Transformer and Partner, with an ALL Reading in Science online module collaborative developed to align with tutorials for all first year students (Davila & Griffiths, 2016). Further, the quantifiable outcomes of the module has led to writing and academic integrity modules being developed and implemented across first and second year science, as well as in other faculties. Thus, the ALL practitioner is a catalyst, instigating change in learning and teaching practices.

As catalysts of systemic change we identify ALL unit practices such as the development of a language feedback framework, originally designed for the Health faculty and adapted for use across the university in a variety of formats, having the potential to bring about a change in assessment feedback practices in all faculties. Also significant is the ALL unit's management of OPELA across the university, which drives language development activities through the inner systems and hence has brought about systemic change.

We have interpreted Webb's organisational learning as professional development, and in this respect the ALL practitioners are facilitators as we conduct workshops and produce resources for staff; contribute to learning and teaching blogs; and mentor teams or individuals in integrating and embedding language development. As evident in the subject and learning and teaching systems, our partnerships in the transformation of university teaching and learning are widespread and have high impact. To use a Business School example, the ALL practitioner collaborated in transforming a Capstone research subject using a program based on the Crick Learning for Resilient Agency profile (CLARA) (Foley, Edwards, Cheng, & Hunter, 2016).

8. Conclusion

The primary mandate of the ALL unit as originally conceived was to collaborate with discipline academics to embed ALL in the curriculum. However, given a broader definition of whole of institution language development, in fact ALL practices extend across embedded, integrated and non-integrated approaches, as well as management of OPELA and institutional and academic leadership in language development. This much broader mandate requires the ALL unit to work with staff across many different areas in the university, as well as discipline academics. Mapping the practices of the ALL unit onto the system(s) of the university (Biggs, 1993) indicates that the most successful ALL practices take place in the subject and learning and teaching activity systems, which accords with the original mandate of the unit. ALL practices in the institutional system are also reasonably successful. However, ALL practices are least successful in the faculty, discipline and course systems. We link the relative success of ALL practices in the different systems to the agency (Fenton-Smith & Gurney, 2016) of the people with power in the systems and the relationships that the ALL practitioners have with them. ALL practitioners primarily have agency as people with expertise. Despite a relative lack of power, the identities of ALL practitioners have evolved so that we are now partners, catalysts and facilitators, and further, we move between and combine these with the roles of mediator, integrator and transformer (Webb, 2001) in our practice.

From our mapping of ALL practices we find that changes in ALL practice are driven by as well as drive systemic change. Such change is top down, bottom up and rhizomic (Benzie et al. 2017), as change occurs across and between systems. The limited ALL practices in the faculty, discipline and course systems needs to be addressed, as it is currently being compensated for by practices in the subject and learning and teaching activity system(s) in particular, as well as non-integrated approaches in other areas of the university. Whilst increasing accreditiation requirements have driven some ALL practice in these systems, faculty, discipline and course approaches to ALL (as well as learning and teaching more broadly) need to be internally mandated and supported through policy and resources, so that the people with power in these systems (ie Associate Deans Teaching and Learning, Course Co-ordinators and Heads of School) and ALL practitioners with expertise have a greater agency.

Overall, it is evident that ALL practices occur throughout and across the systems of the university, and bring about change in other parts of the system. As such ALL practices are becoming systemic in their own right. This is an important development, as it means ALL practice is more resilient to adverse actions by people with power and less likely to be absorbed by the system reverting to the status quo (Biggs, 1993).

Finally, in this paper we have sought to provide a whole of institution analysis of ALL practice, however, we recognise that it is based our perceptions of our own practices within one institution. As such, there is scope for research to explore our findings with other stakeholders and across other contexts.

References

Arkoudis, S., Baik, C., & Richardson, S. (2012). *English language standards in higher education: from entry to exit*. Camberwell, Vic: ACER Press.

Baldauf, R. B. (2012). Narrowing the English proficiency gap: A language planning perspective. *US–China Foreign Language, 10*(11), 1695–1703.

Bennett, R., Hobson, J., Jones A., Martin-Lynch P., Scutt, C., Strehlow, K., & Veitch, S. (2015). Being chimaera: a monstrous identity for SoTL academics. *Higher Education Research & Development, 35*(2), 217-228. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2015.1087473

Benzie, H. J., Pryce, A., & Smith, K. (2017). The wicked problem of embedding academic literacies : exploring rhizomatic ways of working through an adaptive leadership approach.

Higher Education Research & Development, *36*(2), 227–240. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1199539

Biggs, J. (1993), From theory to practice: a cognitive systems approach, *Higher Education Research and Development*, *12*(1), 73–85.

Chua, C. S. K., & Baldauf, R. B. (2011). Micro language planning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning: volume 2* (pp. 936–951). New York, NY: Routledge.

Davila, Y., & Griffiths, N. (2016). Read to succeed: developing academic and professional STEM communication practice. In *Proceedings of the Australian Conference on Science and Mathematics Education, The University of Queensland, Sept 28th to 30th, 2016*. Retrieved from https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/index.php/IISME/article/viewFile/10801/11343

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (2010). *English Language Standards for Higher Education*. Retrieved from http://www.aall.org.au/sites/default/files/FinalEnglishLanguageStandardsMay2012.pdf

Fenton-Smith, B., & Gurney, L. (2016). Actors and agency in academic language policy and planning. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *4208* (December 2015), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2016.1115323

Foley, C., Edwards, D., Cheng, M., & Kerry, H. [Hunter, K.] (2016). *Learning Power: a new and alternative pedagogical learning approach.* The 26th Annual Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education Conference, Sydney.

Foucault, M. (1984). *The history of sexuality: An introduction* (Vol. 1) Transl. from the French by Robert Hurley. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Harper, R. (2013). From principles to practice : Implementing an English language proficiency model at UniSA. *Journal of Academic Language & Learning*, *7*(2), 150–164.

Harris, A. (2013). Identifying students requiring English language support : What role can a PELA play? *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, *7*(2), 62–78.

Harris, A. (2016). Integrating written communication skills: working towards a whole of course approach. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *21*(3), 287–300. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2016.1138456

Harris, A., & Ashton, J. (2011). Embedding and integrating language and academic skills : An innovative approach. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, *5*(2), A73–A87.

Hoadley, S., & Sabri, J. (2017). Program curriculum alignment: Designing for success. In L. N. Wood & Y. A. Breyer (Eds.), *Success in higher education: Transitions to, within and from University* (pp. 287–300). Singapore: Springer.

Jacobs, C. (2005). On being an insider on the outside: new spaces for integrating academic literacies. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *10*(4), 475–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510500239091

Jones, J., Bonanno, H., & Scouller, K. (2001). Staff and student roles in central and faculty-based learning support: Changing partnerships. In U. Fischer, B. James, A. Percy, J. Skillen, & N. Trivett (Eds.), *Changing Identities: Proceedings of the 2001 Australian Language and Academic Skills Conference*. Wollongong: Learning Development, University of Wollongong. Retrieved from http://learning.uow.edu.au/LAS2001/selected/jones_1.pdf

Percy, A. J. (2015). A critical turn in higher education research: turning the critical lens on the Academic Language and Learning educator. *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, *36*(6), 881-893. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2014.904069

Ramsden, P. (1992). *Learning to teach in higher education*. London: Routledge.

San Miguel, C., & Rogan, F. (2015). Assessing students' English language proficiency during clinical placement: a qualitative evaluation of a language framework. *Nurse Education Today*, *35*(6), 771–776. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2015.02.014

San Miguel, C., Townsend, L., & Waters, C. (2013). Redesigning nursing tutorials for ESL students: A pilot study. *Contemporary Nurse*, *44*(1), 21–31. https://doi.org/10.5172/conu.2013.44.1.21

Taylor, P. G., Millwater, J., & Nash, R. (2007). Talking about transitions: the value of a conceptual approach. In *Enhancing higher education, theory and scholarship, Proceedings of the 30th HERDSA Annual Conference, Adelaide, 8-11 July 2007* (p. 547).

Treleaven, L., & Voola, R. (2008). Integrating the development of graduates attributes through constructive alignment. *Journal of Marketing Education*, *30*(2), 160–173. https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475308319352

University of Technology Sydney. (2010). *English language policy*. Sydney: University of Technology Sydney. Retrieved from http://www.gsu.uts.edu.au/policies/english-language.html

Webb, C. (2001). Plenary address: language and academic skills advisers: professional ontogenesis. In U. Fischer, B. James, A. Percy, J. Skillen, & N. Trivett (Eds.), *Changing identities: Proceedings of the 2001 Australian Language and Academic Skills Conference*. Wollongong: Learning Development, University of Wollongong. Retrieved from http://learning.uow.edu.au/LAS2001/index.htm

Wood, L. N., & Solomonides, I. (2008). Different disciplines, different transitions. *Mathematics Education Research Journal*, *20*(2), 117–134. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03217481

Zhao, S. (2011). Actors in language planning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning: volume 2* (pp. 905–923). New York, NY: Routledge.

Zhao, S., & Baldauf, R. B. (2012). Individual agency in language planning: Chinese script reform as a case study. *Problems & Language Planning*, *36*(1), 1–24.