Preparing Students Before and After University Entry:

Direct Entry and Ongoing Support Courses at Macquarie University

Cintia Agosti
Lisa Barrett
NCELTR’s Mission Statement

“To provide leadership to the English language teaching community and promote excellence in English language education through innovative and quality programs, services, products and research”
Academic and structural factors that can cause pressure

• Prevalent views on language teaching and learning methodologies
• Availability of resources
• Relationships between stakeholders
• Stakeholders’ needs and demands
ESP programs at ELP

• Language as a social semiotic (Halliday & Hasan, 1985)

• Discourse communities
  * Academic culture (Tickoo, 1994: 42-43)
  * Disciplinary culture (Flowerdew and Miller, 1995:346)
Status of ESP at Australian Universities

• “A preparatory or subsidiary activity for truly academic studies, [or]...as a legitimate pursuit in its own right which can co-exist on equal terms alongside other aspects of professional preparation”

  (Malcolm, 1994:14)

• “Subject” teachers might have no professional respect for ESP programs

  (Hall and Kenny, 1988:30)
Status of ESP at Macquarie University

Language learning is a process
  * that requires time, effort and practice
  * is different to that of acquiring theoretical concepts
Results of academics’ perceptions

Ready acceptance of

* the learner-centered, task based approach used at ELP

* Staff selection principles

* The “native speaker mystique” (Tickoo, 1994: 43)

* “The system of squandered bilingualism” (Wong, 2000: 126)
Students’ Needs Analysis

- Interviewing prospective students
- Interviewing academic staff
- Resource gathering
Keeping conflict to a minimum

- Involve members of staff
- “Communal proprietorship” or “team responsibility” (Hall and Kenny, 1995: 28)
  * Commitment
  * Modifications or elimination
- Weekly meetings
Chronology of the development of Direct entry programs at ELP

- Direct Entry English Program (DEEP)
- Business Preparation Program (BPP)
- Accounting Preparation Program (APP)
- English for Business and Information technology (EBIT)
- Translation and Interpreting Preparation Program (TIPP)
Direct Entry English Program (DEEP)

- Alison Glover (DOS)
- Dr. Nicholas Cope
- English for Academic and Professional Development (EAPD) 1996-1997
- Nov. 1997 DEEP Pilot delivery
- IELTS inconsistent with ELP’s language learning and teaching approach (task-based and project-based vs. “teach and test” cycle)
- Marketing issues
Business Preparation Program (BPP)

• Marion Moore (DOS)
• 2/3 students Division of Economics and Financial Studies
• Cintia Agosti and Claire Hicklin - October 2000
• Prof. Peter Eddey (Dtor. Graduate Accounting and Commerce Centre)
• Assoc.Prof. Jill McKinnon (Dept. Accounting and Financial Studies)
• Discipline specific skills (Case study analysis, business report writing, short answer exam techniques)
Accounting Preparation Program (APP)

- Adapted by Lindsay Thorpe and Howard Doyle - July 2001
- Mary Dale, Assistant Director of PGDip. in Accounting /MACC
- Needs
- Timetabling
English for Business and Information technology (EBIT)

- Claire Hicklin & Cintia Agosti - October 2000
- Prof. Jim Piper, Head of the Division of Information and Communication Sciences (ICS)
- Prof. Josef Pieprzyk, Head of the Computing Department and Director of the Centre for Advanced Computing - Algorithms and Cryptography.
Translation and Interpreting Preparation Program (TIPP)

• Claire Hicklin, Anna Anyszwaska and Cintia Agosti (Nov. 2003)
• Dr. Joanne Jeong, acting convenor for the M. App. Ling (T & I)
ELP Academic English Language Support Programs at Macquarie University (MU)

• Department of Accounting & Finance
  • Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting (PGDA)
  • Masters of Accounting (MACC)
• Macquarie International Office (MI)
• Macquarie Graduate School of Management (MGSM)
• Centre for International Communication (MUCIC)
Degrees of Language Support Offered by ELP

- Highly integrated academic support
- Integrated academic support
- Contextualised academic support
- Language audit and assessment support
Academic English Language Support for PGDA / MACC

• Commissioned
  • August 2002 by Elaine Evans, Senior Lecturer

• Program Development
  • First two deliveries (Oct. 2002-March 2003)
    » Ben Fenton-Smith, ELP Teacher
  • Second two deliveries (May - Oct. 2003)
    » Suzanne Mead, ESP Project Convenor
    » ELP Teachers
PGDA / MCAA Courses Participating in the ELP Language Support Program

• Corporate Accounting (ACCG 855)
  • Claire Locke / Emma Holmes, Lecturers

• Financial Marketing & Policy (ACCG 858)
  • Gary Morris, Lecturer

• Current Issues in Accounting (ACCG 859)
  • Elaine Evans, Senior Lecturer

• Principles of Accounting (ACCG 861/862)
  • Mary Dale, Professor
Integrated Academic Support for PGDA / MACC Courses

• One compulsory workshop a trimester
• Workshops conducted in lecture time
• Support for main assessment task
  • ACCG 855 - report writing
  • ACCG 858 - oral presentations
  • ACCG 861 - language assessment & introduction to ESP language support
  • ACCG 862 - professional letter writing
Highly Integrated Academic Support for a PGDA / MACC Course

- **Current Issues in Accounting ACCG 859**
  - Elaine Evans, Senior Lecturer
- **4 workshops a trimester**
- **Non-compulsory but expected**
- **Workshops tailored to assessment tasks**
  - essay writing
  - essay assessment criteria
  - essay reference skills
Afternoon Workshops

- Developed by Siddhi Japee, ELP
- First delivery January 2003
- Non-compulsory
- Offered to all PGDA/MACC students
- Discipline-specific EAP support
- Text types and skills addressed based on ELP- and student-perceived needs
Afternoon Workshops

- **Contextualised EAP support given for**
  - essay writing
  - research projects
  - research, referencing, bibliographies
  - case study analysis

- **Support is also given for**
  - reading comprehension
  - listening & note-taking
  - exam preparation
IAPE Course for Macquarie International

- Commissioned
  - January 2003 by Stephen Briggs & Jorge Baron, Study Abroad/Exchange Programs, MI
  - 2 deliveries

- Program Development
  - Lisa Giammarco, ELP Teacher
The IAPE Program

- For undergraduate exchange students to MU
- 12-week course (96 hrs) for 3 credit points
- Contextualised EAP support
- Text types addressed:
  - summary
  - annotated bibliography
  - argument essay
  - case study analysis
  - critical review
  - written report & oral presentation
The IAPE Program

• Focus on cultural & academic expectations
• Aims:
  • Introduce students to the different cultural & academic expectations of Australian universities
  • Discuss differences in learning & teaching styles
Academic English Language Support for MGSM

• Commissioned
  • First commission - 1999
  • Second commission - July 2002

• Program Development
  • Marion Moore (DOS), Sue Lubbers (PD Convenor), 1999
  • Sue Lubbers (Head of ELP)
  • Claire Hicklin & Cintia Agosti (ELP teachers)
  • Additions & alterations made by Anna Anyszewska and David Williams
MGSM Workshops

- Saturday workshops
- Non-compulsory
- Over 50% of students native speakers
- Text types & skills addressed:
  - discussion & argument essays
  - reports
  - case studies
  - data commentaries
  - referencing
Academic English Language Support for MUCIC

- Commissioned
  - January 2003 by Narren Chitty, MUCIC
- Program Development
  - ELP teachers write and deliver programs individually on an independent contract basis
  - ELP provides periodic language assessment support
Goals of ELP’s ESP Programs

• Highly integrated & contextualised into university academic programs
• Professional development
• Employability = proficiency in technical skills + professional communication skills
• Internalisation of this concept on the part of students
Final Thoughts

• ESP programs are not readily transferable
• Teachers need to be flexible in their approach to ESP programs
• Learners’ needs should be the starting point for program development
• Developers must have an understanding of the academic and disciplinary cultures within which the programs must be run
• Developers must work in collaboration with subject specialists