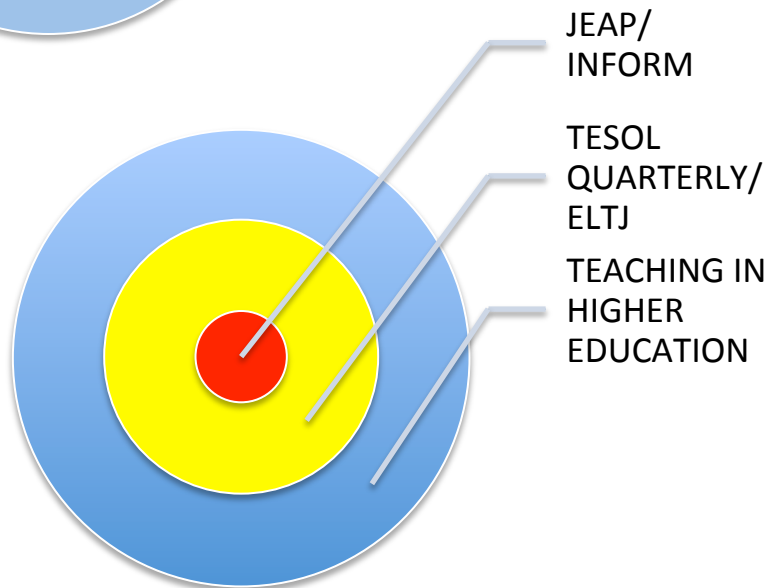# From isolation to integration: Academic Language and Literacy for all
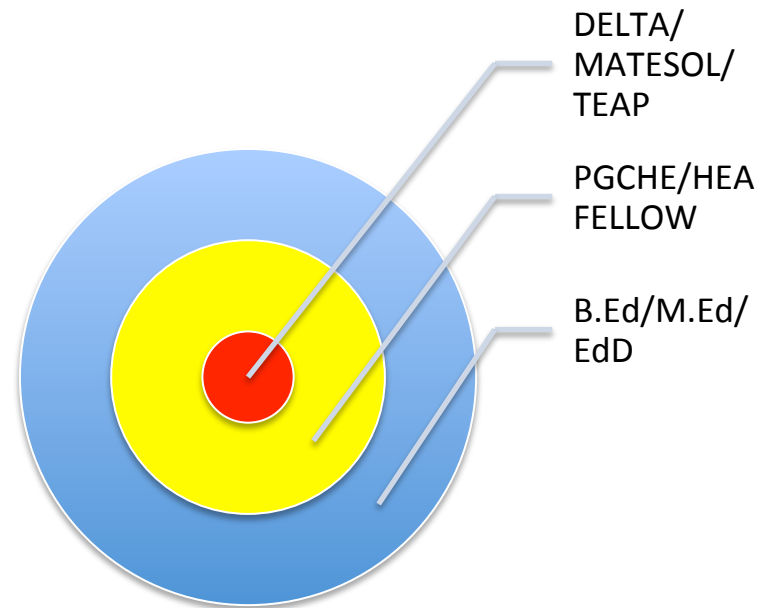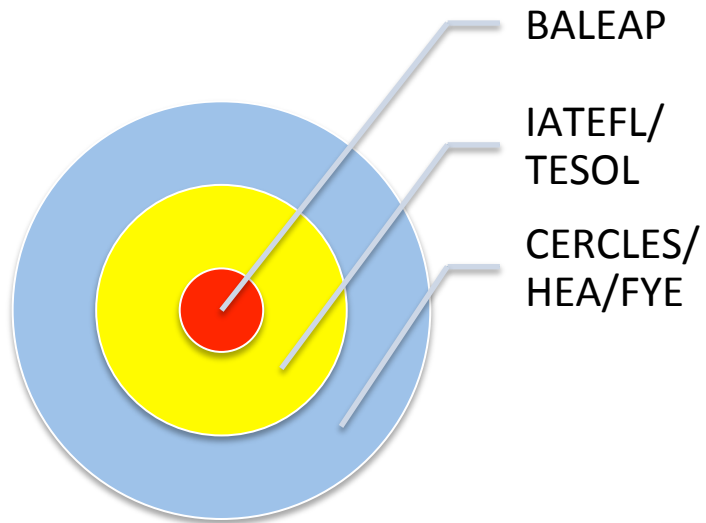
BALEAP conference 2015

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3 DEGREES OF ISOLATION EXPERIMENT

BALEAP

IATEFL/
TESOL

CERCLES/
HEA/FYE

DELTA/
MATESOL/
TEAP

PGCHE/HEA
FELLOW

B.Ed/M.Ed/
EdD

JEAP/
INFORM

TESOL
QUARTERLY/
ELTJ

TEACHING IN
HIGHER
EDUCATION
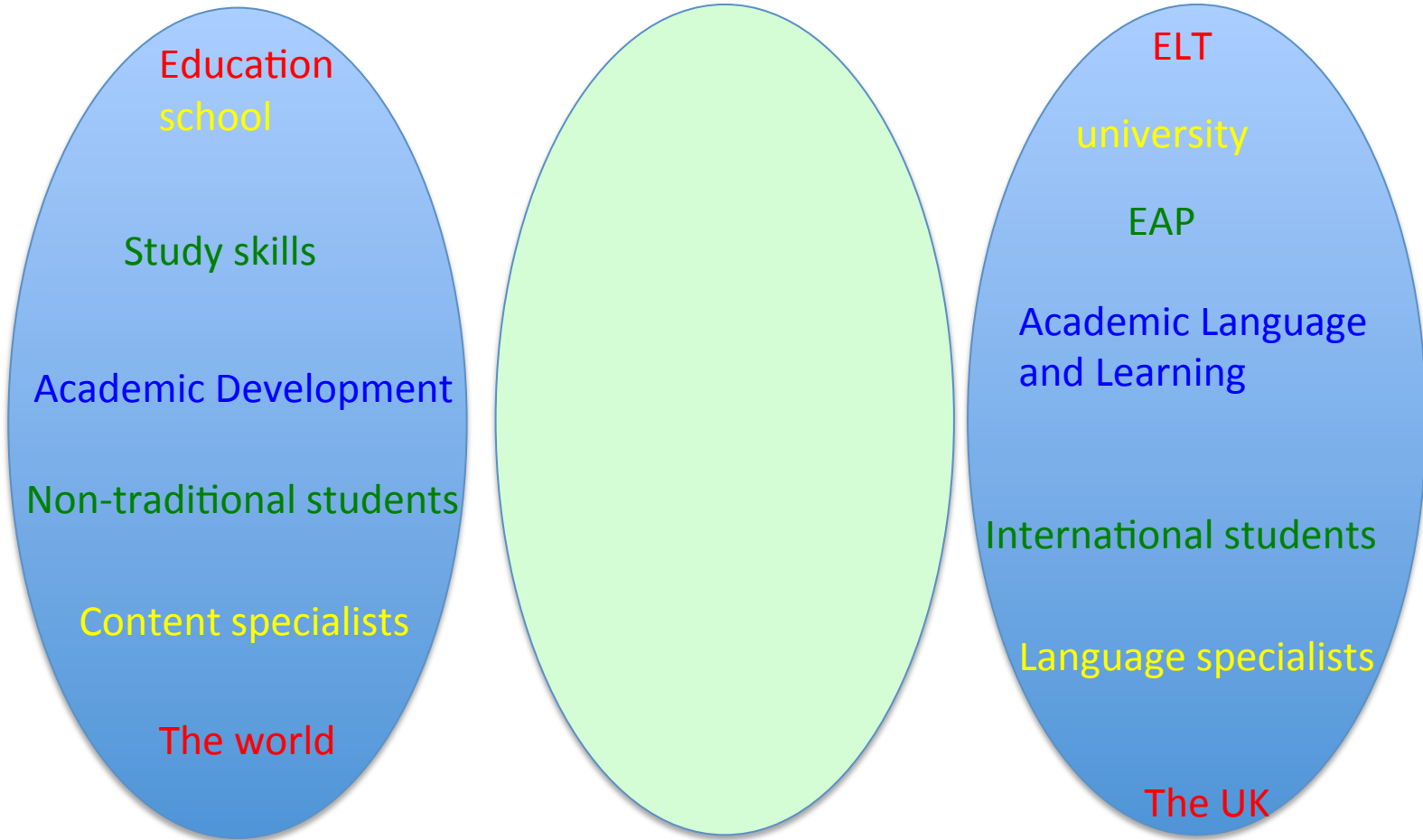
Jade McKay & Marcia Devlin (2014) 'Uni has a different language … to the real world': demystifying academic culture and discourse for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Higher Education Research & Development, 33:5, 949-961,

- Demystifying the culture essentially means making the implicit explicit to students.
- this is not about 'dumbing down' the curriculum or student learning. Rather, it is about making explicit what students do not know and cannot know until they are told.
- they should not be viewed as underprepared or intellectually deficient
- not be singled out based on an assumed deficiency
- Research shows that a proficiency in academic discourse is more likely to translate to success at university
- the need for staff to understand potential gaps in cultural knowledge:
- just trying to de-code the assessment criteria is an issue
- Staff also alluded to their intense workloads and the many constraints on their time while trying to be available to provide students with the extra support they may require
- 'discourse guide' Mercer 1995
- 'organizer of excursions into the discourse community' (Northedge (2002),p. 253).

Same issues as with NNES – not deficit, need to embed, academic workload
'The majority of staff interviewees (17 out of 26), however, stressed the need for such support to be embedded in the curriculum and to be normalised for all students.'

Left ellipse:
- Education
- school
- Study skills
- Academic Development
- Non-traditional students
- Content specialists
- The world

Right ellipse:
- ELT
- university
- EAP
- Academic Language and Learning
- International students
- Language specialists
- The UK

LEARNING, ENGLISH, AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

ALL FOR ALL

THE CONSTRUCT

- Oller (1979) US = global language proficiency
- Cummins (1980) Canada
  - *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS)
  - *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP)
- Hulstijn (2011) Netherlands
  - *basic language cognition* (BLC) and *higher language cognition* (HLC)
- Murray (2014) Australia
  - Proficiency + academic literacy + professional communication skills
- 'Although domestic students will come with varying degrees of literacy, and international students with literacy skills they have developed within their own education systems, few if any students, whether native speakers or NESB, domestic or international, will come adequately equipped with the specific set of academic literacy practices they require for their particular degree.'
- Developmental not deficit – adding a layer not filling a gap

Newton2014 ant-plagiarism training

- findings suggest that it is confidence in writing in English, not language background per se, which influences students' ability to reference appropriately and engage in the assignment preparation skills necessary to reduce instances of inadvertent plagiarism. In effect, putting the focus on self-perceived confidence in writing in English rather than language background draws attention to the fact that ESB students may also struggle in this area.

Webb (2001)

- Role of the learning advisor in Australian HE
  - Remediator
  - Mediator
  - Integrator
  - Transformer

Percy (2011)

Historical development of learning advising in Australia

- Therapeutic intervention for the '***academic casualty***'

- Educational intervention for the '***social casualty***'

- Curriculum intervention for the '***lifelong learner***'

- Pedagogical/administrative intervention for the '***graduate***'

What's our job?

- 1974, Gordon Taylor was employed as Monash University's first 'remedial' English language teacher to 'help students whose difficulties with reading, note-taking, writing, or other linguistic skills may impair their efforts to make the most of their knowledge'

- As early as 1978, Taylor had contended that because 'induction into a discipline's mode of thinking and analysis can only be performed in language' (p. 34), the ALL practitioner could 'assist tutors in "interpreting" the idiosyncratic language of many texts and monographs

- any form of progressive language education in the academy ideally moves beyond working with the student alone to working with staff on teaching and learning issues.

Badenhorst et al (2014) Canada

- the 'problem' shifted from 'what's wrong with the student' to 'what features of the curriculum are preventing students from succeeding' (Lillis and Scott 2007).

AUSTRALIA LEADS THE WAY

- Good practice principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities (DEEWR, 2009).
- the current set of English language standards for higher education providers, suggest that attention be paid to the language proficiency of all students (Arkoudis et al., 2012)
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF, 2013) requires universities to demonstrate policy, process and outcomes in relation to their students' development of knowledge, skills and application at the appropriate degree level. Of the various 'skills' identified in the AQF, communication, interpersonal skills and higher order thinking are paramount.
- deploy them in ways that embrace their capacity for systemic, developmental, pedagogical, professional and organisational change rather than for the redemption of individuals alone
- experience with students and expertise in language can be used to the benefit of all.

Murray (2013) PELAs

- While subject lecturers can reasonably be expected to have an implicit knowledge of the academic literacies and communication skills they need to impart to their students, many will require professional development by English language and communication specialists to help them articulate and acquire a good understanding of the literacy practices and communication skills they demonstrate unconsciously on a daily basis, along with the associated pedagogies for their delivery.

- access or enabling programmes and English language centres being located within a single unit in a number of institutions (such as the universities of Newcastle and Southern Queensland in Australia) eg Bath name change

- promises to raise interesting if challenging questions that demand creative solutions.

Smit (2012) South Africa

- the need for higher education to find a way to respond to the very real issues faced by diverse incoming students, without succumbing to deficit thinking, can hardly be overstated

Wingate & Tribble (2012)

- UK
- Study skills for home students
- EAP for international students
- There is clearly a need to develop a theoretical and practical 'mainstream' approach to teaching writing that takes into account the complexities of academic writing and the diverse backgrounds of students at UK universities.
- Academic Literacies proponents might not be fully aware of the contributions EAP has made to the theory and practice of academic writing (Tribble 2009, 403).

CELFS @ UOB

- Chemistry/Physics lecture experience of huddles/AWL
- In-sessional -> LEAD -> ALL -> ADD
- Message -> moves -> mechanics for PP, EFM, Law PGT
  - Study skills approach lacks language
- Intro law experience of common issues
- EFYE experience – 2 Belgian colleagues (UGRU Arabic)
- UG Law ALL for ALL feedback of students & tutors
  - Not just LSES but all students in transition even A*
- Comments from UTF needs analyses (BCFN/Chemistry)
  - Common core for pick 'n mix
- Scaling issues so need to include staff – TIS CREATE

TIS PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- REALLY GOOD, FEEL LIKE I HAVE SOME TASKS AND WAYS TO HELP <u>ALL</u> MY STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THE WORK.

KEY REFERENCES

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