AUSTRALIAN
LEARNING
&TEACHING
COUNCIL

Promoting excellence in higher education

Addressing the ongoing English language growth of international students

Resource Document

2010

Lead Institution:
Monash University

Partner Institutions:
Edith Cowan University
The University of Melbourne
Macquarie University
Deakin University

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Project website:
http://www.elg.edu.au

MONASH University

ECU EDITH COWAN

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Contents

The project report and some resources are also available
on the ALTC's website, www.altc.edu.au

Appendix 5: Online Questionnaire

Students accessing the ELG website are invited to participate in the research. They are provided with information about the project ('Participant Information') before proceeding to the following Selection Criteria page.

SELECTION CRITERIA

For this research, we are seeking participants who are international students whose first language is NOT English and who are studying here in Australia at one of the 5 universities sponsoring the research. If you do not fit this category, you will be unable to go further than this page. Please confirm the following:

1. I am an International Student ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. I am from a non-English speaking background (ie. my first language is NOT English) ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. I am currently enrolled at :

      ☐ The University of Melbourne

      ☐ Monash University

      ☐ Deakin University

      ☐ Macquarie University

      ☐ Edith Cowan University

Students meeting the selection criteria are directed to the online Participant Information (pdf) and Consent Form. After confirming their consent to participate, students are directed to enter their Student ID and Date of Birth and their identities are authenticated by their respective universities. Once authenticated, students are directed to the introductory page for the Online Questionnaire.

Students not meeting selection criteria or users whose authentication is rejected are directed back to ELG home page: 'Thank you for your interest in the ELG project and feel free to access the front page and its resources.'

Appendix 6: Explanatory Text for ELG Webpages

HOME PAGE

Member Login

All participants in the research will be asked to set up a user profile. You will need your User Name and Password to:
- return to complete the survey after a break (including time-outs)
- participate in the ELG Discussion Board Forum
- communicate with the ELG Project Manager to arrange interviews or make other enquiries.

STUDENT REGISTRATION

Before you complete the survey, we need to confirm that you are currently enrolled at one of the participating universities, by verifying your student ID and Date of Birth. This information will be linked with your Consent Form to confirm with your university that you have agreed to participate in this research. Please be assured that your private details will be de-identified by your university before release to the ELG research team.

 [once confirmed]

Thank you – your enrolment has been confirmed.

Now please take a minute to set up your User Profile. You will need your User Name and Password to:
- return to complete the survey after a break (including time-outs)
- participate in the ELG Discussion Board Forum
- communicate with the ELG Project Manager to arrange interviews or make other enquiries.

SORRY PAGE

We are sorry, but you do not appear to meet the criteria to participate in this research. Please feel free to explore the Resources page and return to the ELG website for updates throughout 2008/09.

If you believe that you DO meet the criteria and have been incorrectly excluded from participating in the research, please contact the ELG Project Manager:

Denise Mulligan
Email: **denise.mulligan@calt.monash.edu.au**
Mobile: 0434 436 999

Appendix 7: Information for Participants

Note: We recommend you print out or save this *pdf* file onto your computer for your own future reference.

This project is being conducted by researchers across five Australian universities: Monash University, The University of Melbourne, and Deakin University in Melbourne; Edith Cowan University in Perth; and Macquarie University in Sydney.

Who are we inviting to take part in this research? INTERNATIONAL students whose first language is NOT English and who are studying at undergraduate (bachelor or honours) or postgraduate (coursework or research) level at the above universities.

What is the aim/purpose of the research? Our aim is to identify strategies that assist students to develop their English language and academic skills as they progress through their studies in Australia. In particular, we want to collect information about what international students do to grow and improve their English and how this correlates with success at university.

Possible benefits Taking part in the study will help you learn more about how you can succeed at university. You will also be helping Australian universities to better assist International students to develop their English language skills and therefore improve their experience of study in Australia. At the end of the research, the information provided by students on the strategies they find useful to improve their English and academic performance will be developed into a CD ROM, which will be available free to all students taking part in the study.

Participants will also have on-going access to this website, which provides tips on proven strategies to improve your language and study skills. You can also communicate with other students about their successes, experiences and difficulties via a discussion board/forum.

What does the research involve? The research involves a series of online questionnaires which can be reached from this website. The first is a very brief Selection Criteria questionnaire, which will confirm whether you fit the criteria for participating in this research (this will take just a minute to complete). We will also ask you for your Student ID and Date of Birth so that your enrolment with your university can be confirmed (this is called 'Authentication'). You will then be able to complete the English Language Growth (ELG) survey, which consists of eight sections. The survey asks you to tell us about your language and education background, how you feel about your language learning experience, and what sorts of things you do to practise and improve your English, and to learn in general. The survey will take about 40 minutes to complete in full, or you can complete it in stages when you have time. You can answer most questions by ticking boxes. Some questions also give you the chance to describe in your own words some of the strategies you use.

When you have completed the ELG survey, you will be asked if you agree to your answers being matched with your Grade Point Average (GPA), an average of your grades that is stored with your academic record.

Your private details are fully protected in this process: your Student ID and Date of Birth (DOB), and your survey responses and GPA will be de-identified before being submitted to the research database. No-one—including the researchers—will know who you are. By matching your survey responses with your GPA we will be able to develop resources on teaching and learning methods that are known to improve students' results.

The English Language Growth website also allows you to join an online discussion board/forum using a User name and password, or to take part in an individual or focus group interview. Interviews will be arranged to take place at your own university. You may also be asked to participate in an audio or video-recording to talk about how you developed your English language skills. These audio/video files will form part of the online/CD ROM resources of the project so it may be possible for someone to identify you, but you can choose a pseudonym if you prefer. As with all other aspects of this research, you are under no obligation to participate in an audio or video session.

How much time will the research take? The survey should take about 40 minutes in total to complete – some people might do it more quickly and others might take longer. You can stop in the middle if you don't have much time and return later to finish. You can access the website and survey questionnaires at any time that suits you. Interviews will take 30-45 minutes to complete.
Inconvenience/discomfort This research is NOT related to your units of study or course. Whether you participate or not, will have no effect on your results or student record. We hope that you will find that taking part in the project will improve your chances of success in your studies. However, if you

have concerns about the research process, please contact the lead researcher or the Ethics Office at your university (see details below). If you feel concerned about your progress in your studies, we can provide you with information about support services on your university campus.

Can I withdraw from the research? Being involved in this study is voluntary and you do not have to participate. If you do participate, you may only withdraw from the online survey stage prior to all sections being submitted. Once you have submitted the completed ELG survey, your ID and DOB are de-identified and cannot be located for extraction (that is, we have no way of linking you to your responses). Remember, at this point you <u>can</u> choose whether or not to have your survey responses matched to your academic results (GPA). You are welcome to browse the website before you decide. Contributors to the discussion board/forum will need to consent in advance to their anonymous contributions being used for the research and resource development. Students who agree to take part in a video interview can, of course, be identified in subsequent resources from the project if they so wish, but students are under no obligation to take part in a video session, and those who do are able to select a pseudonym, and may later choose to withdraw their contribution <u>before publication</u>. Students are under no obligation to take part in a video session.

Confidentiality No individual data from the survey or results from matching to academic results (GPA) will be revealed and no survey respondents will be identified at any point during the study or in future reports, presentations, and publications. Identifiable data (i.e, student ID and DOB) will be deleted once the de-identification process has occurred. Data is potentially identifiable only if this personal data is kept.
The publication of any data collected from interviews, focus groups or the discussion board will also be de-identified. This data is separate from the survey instrument and cannot be linked to your ID, DOB, GPA or survey responses. The discussion board is only accessible to those who have completed the survey and have therefore agreed to participate in the study.

Storage of data Storage of the data collected will adhere to Monash University regulations and will be kept on Monash University premises. Databases will be maintained on a secure server for the duration of the study and deleted at the end of the study. The data will then be transferred to DVD in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for a further 3 years.

Use of data for other purposes The data from this study may be used for additional purposes, such as for published guidelines for university teaching staff in general to better assist international students. As above, all information will remain anonymous.

Results Each participant will be able to request via the ELG website a free DVD presenting the findings of the research, developed into easy-to-use strategies for improving English language and academic skills.

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator at your university:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted, please contact the relevant Ethics Committee, quoting the relevant Project No:
Monash University Dr Judith Rochecouste Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching Building C, Level 3 – PO Box 197 CAULFIELD EAST VIC 3145 Tel: (03) 9903 2794 Fax: (03) 9903 2325 Email: judith.rochecouste@calt.monash.edu.au	Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans Building 3e Room 111—Research Office Monash University CLAYTON VIC 3800 Tel: (03) 9905 2052 Fax: (03) 9905 1420 Email: scerh@adm.monash.edu.au Project No: CF08/112-2008000062
Edith Cowan University Professor Rhonda Oliver Department of Regional Professional Studies Robertson Avenue BUNBURY WA 6230 Tel: (08) 9780 7761 Fax: (08) 9780 7800 Email: rhonda.oliver@ecu.edu.au	Human Research Ethics Committee Building 1, Block B, Level 3, Room 333 Edith Cowan University 100 Joondalup Drive JOONDALUP WA 6027 Tel: (08) 6304 2170 Fax: (08) 6304 2661 Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au Project No: 2957 OLIVER
Deakin University Dr Zosia Golebiowski Faculty of Arts & Education, 221 Burwood Highway, BURWOOD VIC 3125 Tel: (03) 9244 3841 Fax: (03) 9244 6752 Email: zosia@deakin.edu.au	Executive Officer—Human Research Ethics Research Services Division Deakin University 221 Burwood Hwy BURWOOD VIC 3125 Tel: (03) 9251 7123 Fax: (03) 9244 6581 Email: research-ethics@deakin.edu.au Project No: EC 139-2008
Macquarie University Dr Stephen Moore	Research Ethics Officer - Research Office Level 3, Research HUB, Building C5C

Department of Linguistics, Building C5A, Room 560, Balaclava Road, NORTH RYDE NSW 2109 Tel: (02) 9850-8742 Fax: (02) 9850-9199 Email: Stephen.Moore@ling.mq.edu.au	Macquarie University NORTH RYDE NSW 2109 Tel: (02) 9850 7850 Fax: (02) 9850 4465 Email: ethics.secretariat@vc.mq.edu.au Project No: HE22AUG2008-R06027
The University of Melbourne Dr William Martin Davies Teaching and Learning Unit Faculty of Economics and Commerce Royal Parade, PARKVILLE, VIC 3010 Tel: (03) 8344 5727 Fax: (03) 8344 8597 Email: wmdavies@unimelb.edu.au	Secretary—Behavioural & Social Sciences Human Ethics Sub-Committee University of Melbourne EthicsLevel 5, Alan Gilbert Building, 161 Barry Street, University Square, CARLTON, VIC Tel: (03) 8344 2067 Fax: (03) 9347 6739 Email: ajcall@unimelb.edu.au Project No: 0830008

Appendix 8: Consent Form for Students

(This form was completed online)

I agree to participate in the English Language Growth research project specified above. I have read and understood the Information for Participants, which I have downloaded for my records. **I understand that by completing and submitting the survey questionnaires I have accepted to participate in the study.**

I understand that my data (student ID and DOB) will be de-identified throughout the research and that, once I have completed the survey, I will be asked if I agree to have my online survey data linked to my academic results (Grade Point Average) for the future development of teaching and learning methods. **I understand that I can accept of refuse to do this.**

I understand that, once completing the online survey, I will also have the option to be interviewed and/or take part in a focus group discussion and that **I can accept or refuse to do this**.

Some students who take part in individual or focus group interviews may also be asked to take part in a video interview. The video will be used for student and staff resources that aim to assist other students to improve their English language use at university. This does mean that I can be identified, however I can chose to have a pseudonym. **I understand that I can accept or refuse to do this.**

I also understand that once completing the online survey, I will be able to contribute to an online discussion board/forum on ways to improve my English language skills. This will require me to conform to the discussion board guidelines and includes consenting to my anonymous contributions being used as research data. I understand that the discussion board is not a 'help line' or a counselling service and that these or similar services are available at my own university.

I understand that any data or information that the researchers extract from the research (online survey, interviews, focus groups, discussion board, chat room) for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

I understand that all de-identified data and data from the surveys and interviews will be kept in a secure storage and accessible only to the research team. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research.

☐ I HAVE READ THE ONLINE INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS AND THE CONSENT FORM AND WISH TO PROCEED.

☐ I DO NOT WISH TO PROCEED.

Appendix 9: The ELG Survey (online)

Welcome to the English Language Growth survey, which consists of 8 questionnaires in sections as follows:

[Table table illustrating structure of the survey]]

Instructions:
- Most questions can be answered using a tick-box.
- Some questions allow you to respond in your own words (max 2000 characters).
- Some words or phrases that appear in colour are explained in a text bubble that will appear if you run your cursor over them. If you have trouble understanding other words, you can check them by using the online dictionary link that appears in the top right corner of each page.
- Sections are different lengths, so some will take longer to complete than others. Trials indicate some students complete the survey in as little as 15 minutes, others take up to an hour.
- If you run out of time, you can stop at the end of any section and return later to complete the remaining sections. NOTE: all sections must be completed in the order presented.
- Your answers are submitted to the ELG database as you complete each section.
- When you have submitted all 8 sections we will ask for your permission to link your answers with your Grade Point Average (an average of your academic results). This is optional.
- You will then be provided with access to an entry form, to go in the draw for an iPOD Nano 4GB

To start Section One, click here…………..

QUESTIONNAIRE BEGINS…..

SECTION ONE: ABOUT YOU AND YOUR LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

First we would like to ask some simple questions about your background, including how long you have been using English as your second language.

1. Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Year of Birth: [DROP DOWN LIST]

3. Your country of birth [DROP DOWN LIST – MOST COMMON PLUS 'OTHER: please specify' –]

4. What was your first language? [DROP DOWN LIST – MOST COMMON PLUS 'OTHER: please specify' –]

5. Other language/s you speak with a reasonable level of proficiency (apart from English) [DROP-DOWN LIST]

6. How did you first learn English?

☐ Informally (eg. through social interactions with family, friends, work colleagues, the internet)

☐ Formally (eg. language lessons at school/college in my home country, private lessons).

☐ Other (provide details): _____

7. How long have you been learning English (<u>both</u> formally or informally) as a second/other language?

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1-2 years ☐ 3-4 years ☐ 5-6 years ☐ 7 years or more

8. How many years of <u>formal English language instruction</u> have you undertaken <u>in total</u>?

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1-2 years ☐ 3-4 years ☐ 5-6 years ☐ 7 years or more

9. How many months/years of <u>formal English language instruction</u> have you undertaken <u>in Australia</u>?

☐ None at all ☐ Less than 3 months ☐ 4-6 months ☐ 7-11 months ☐ 1-2 years ☐ More than 2 years

10. When did you arrive in Australia to commence your current studies? (include any preparation studies such as ELICOS, Foundation, etc BEFORE you started in your current course): [drop-down menus for YEAR and MONTH]

11a.Is this the first time you have lived in an English speaking country? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

11b.If NO - <u>Previous</u> periods spent <u>living in an English speaking country</u> (including Australia):

> From (year): To (year): [DROP DOWN LIST]
> From (year): To (year): [DROP DOWN LIST]
> From (year): To (year): [DROP DOWN LIST]

12a. Were you required to sit an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test before being issued with an Australian student visa? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

12b. (If Yes POP UP) What was your overall IELTS score at the time you were granted an Australian student visa? [_____] If you can recall your individual band scores, please enter them here—Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing]

13. Do you live in student accommodation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Do you share accommodation with:

> People who speak the same language as you? ☐ Yes ☐ No
> People who <u>only</u> speak English? ☐ Yes ☐ No
> People from several different language backgrounds? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. What language do you <u>mainly</u> speak <u>at home in Australia</u>:

☐ English ☐ My first language ☐ Another foreign language

16a. Do you have a paid job in Australia? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16b.If YES—what language do you <u>mainly</u> speak <u>at work in Australia</u>?

☐ English ☐ My first language ☐ Another foreign language

Thank you – please continue to Section 2 to tell us about your course and its English language requirements (13 questions)

SECTION TWO: YOUR COURSE AND ITS ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS

This set of questions asks you about your current course, how you satisfied the English entry requirements, and how you rate your English competence (abilities) in relation to the demands of your course.

1. Area/field of study: (DROP DOWN MENU – BROAD FIELDS)

2. Major/Minor: [text box]

3. Level of studies:
☐ Undergraduate
☐ Honours
☐ Postgraduate coursework
☐ Postgraduate research

4. Current Year Level of study: [DROP-DOWN MENU: First Year; Second Year ; Third Year, etc up to SixthYear]

5. I satisfied the English Language Entry Requirement for my course by successfully completing (select one):

☐ IELTS – [POP-UP if ticked] Was this the same as the IELTS score you used for visa entry to Australia?
☐ Yes *If Yes, visa score is transposed*
☐ No *If NO – [POP-UP]*
What was your overall IELTS score for course entry? _____
If you can recall your individual band scores, please enter them here —
Speaking,
Listening,
Reading,
Writing.

☐ TOEFL [POP-UP if ticked] My TSE score was _____/ My TWE score was___

☐ An English Language Test run by my current University

☐ An intensive English Language program in Australia (eg. English Language Bridging Course, ELICOS)

☐ A university preparation course or pathway program (eg. Foundation Studies, IBT Diploma, Monash College diploma)
[POP-UP if ticked]
☐ Was this in Australia? or
☐ Overseas? *(please tick one)*

☐ Secondary/high school English or English Literature (eg. WA TEE, SACE, ESL, GCE O level, HKCEE, 1119 English)

☐ A Diploma/Advanced Diploma at a college / polytechnic/ TAFE where English was the language of instruction.

☐ A higher education award at a university where English was the language of instruction.

☐ Other   (Please specify …………………………………………………..)

6. Compared with <u>native English-speaking students</u> in my course, I think my English skills <u>when I started my course in Australia</u> were:

	Poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent
Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Speaking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Compared with <u>native English-speaking students</u> in my course, I think my English skills <u>now</u> are:

	Poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent
Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Speaking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Compared with <u>other non-English speaking background students</u> in my course, I think my English skills <u>now</u> are:

	Poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent
Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Speaking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements <u>when considering your current university studies</u>:

SCALE: Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neutral / Agree / Strongly Agree

9. When someone speaks to me in English I can understand everything they say.

10. I have trouble understanding my lecturers/tutors/ supervisor because they speak with an Australian accent.

11. I have trouble understanding my lecturers/tutors/ supervisor because they speak with a foreign accent.

12. I can easily understand academic books and articles written in English.

13. I feel confident that I can make myself understood when I speak English.

14. I feel confident that I can clearly express myself when I write English.

15. I find that my level of English is good enough to AT LEAST PASS my course.

16. I find that my level of English is good enough to PERFORM WELL in my course.

17. Are there other things you would like to say about the English language demands of your current course? [TEXT BOX]

Thank you – please continue to Section 3 to tell us where and when you use English (15 questions)

SECTION THREE: WHERE AND WHEN YOU USE ENGLISH

In this section we want to find out about the contexts (where and when) in which you use English at this time in your life, and how comfortable and willing you are to do so. Please consider the following statements and rate how often they are true for you:

SCALE: Never /   Rarely / Sometimes /   Often / Always /   Not applicable

1. I automatically use English in my daily life in Australia.

2. I feel comfortable starting conversations in English, even with people I don't know very well.

3. When I am with English speakers, I will:
    a) introduce myself.
    b) try to find out about them.
    c) avoid them.
    d) only speak when someone speaks to me.

4. I feel comfortable to write notes, messages and letters in English.

5. I feel comfortable speaking English with friends:
    a) from the same language background as me.
    b) from other non-English language backgrounds.
    c) are native speaker of English.

6. I feel comfortable speaking English with other students:
    a) from the same language background as me.
    b) from other non-English language backgrounds.
    c) who are native speakers of English.

7. I feel comfortable speaking in English about my field of study:
    a) in front of a whole class.
    b) in small tutorial groups.
    c) with my lecturers/tutors/supervisors.

8. I feel comfortable speaking English in an informal gathering where both English and non-English speaking people are present.

9. Even when I make mistakes when speaking English, I am confident enough to keep trying to communicate.

10 I speak more English in my part-time job than I do at university.

The following questions will give us a better understanding of the opportunities you have for using English. Please give your best estimate in each case.

11. On a typical day, for how many hours/minutes would you speak English (tick one in each)?

a) During the week at university:	☐ Not at all ☐ Less than 30 minutes ☐ 30-60 minutes ☐ 1 -2 hours ☐ 2-3 hours ☐ More than 3 hours
b) At your part-time job: ☐ Not applicable	☐ Not at all ☐ Less than 30 minutes ☐ 30-60 minutes ☐ 1 -2 hours

	☐ 2-3 hours ☐ More than 3 hours
c) At home in the evening:	☐ Not at all ☐ Less than 30 minutes ☐ 30-60 minutes ☐ 1 -2 hours ☐ 2-3 hours ☐ More than 3 hours
d) On the weekends at social, cultural, religious or sporting activities:	☐ Not at all ☐ Less than 30 minutes ☐ 30-60 minutes ☐ 1 -2 hours ☐ 2-3 hours ☐ More than 3 hours

12. On a typical day, how many people would you talk with in English (tick one in each box)?

a) During the week at university	☐ None ☐ 2-3 people ☐ 4-5 people ☐ More than 5 people
b) At your part-time job ☐ Not applicable	☐ None ☐ 2-3 people ☐ 4-5 people ☐ More than 5 people
c) At home in the evening	☐ None ☐ 2-3 people ☐ 4-5 people ☐ More than 5 people
d) On the weekends at social, cultural, religious or sporting activities	☐ None ☐ 2-3 people ☐ 4-5 people ☐ More than 5 people

13. What language do you <u>mainly</u> use to communicate with friends and family from your home country?

a) by email	☐ my first language ☐ English ☐ another second language ☐ I don't communicate this way
b) by SMS	☐ my first language ☐ English ☐ another second language ☐ I don't communicate this way
c) by MSN	☐ my first language ☐ English ☐ another second language ☐ I don't communicate this way
d) on the phone	☐ my first language ☐ English ☐ another second language ☐ I don't communicate this way

14. What languages do you use to communicate with friends from other countries?

a) by email	☐ my first language ☐ English ☐ another second language

	□ I don't communicate this way
b) by SMS	□ my first language
	□ English
	□ another second language
	□ I don't communicate this way
c) by MSN	□ my first language
	□ English
	□ another second language
	□ I don't communicate this way
d) on the phone	□ my first language
	□ English
	□ another second language
	□ I don't communicate this way

15. Are there other things you would like to say about where and when you use English, or how you feel about using English? [TEXT BOX]

Thank you – please continue to Section 4 to tell us about strategies you use to improve your English (27 questions)

SECTION FOUR: STRATEGIES YOU USE TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

In this set of questions we would like to find out if you use any particular strategies to help you to improve your English. Here is a list of things you might do. Please tell us how often you use these strategies, if at all.

SCALE: Never /   Rarely / Sometimes /   Often / Always

1. When I hear or read a new English word or phrase, I try to remember it by:
   a)   using it in a sentence.
   b)   visualing an image or picture of how to spell it.
   c)   connecting the word or phrase to an image which it represents.
   d)   making a picture in my head of a situation in which the word or phrase might be used.
   e)   using the word or phrase in a rhyme or with related words.
   f)   writing it down on a list.
   g)   physically acting out its meaning.
   h)   remembering where I first saw it (eg. on the page, on the board, in an advertisement, on a label, etc.).
   i)   saying or writing it several times.
   j)   creating a wall chart of new words or phrases.
   k)   Other: *please specify*: …………………………..

2. I watch English language TV shows and movies and/or multimedia.

3. I listen to local English language radio stations.

4. In addition to my course requirements, I read as much as I can in English, such as:
   a)   newspapers/magazines
   b)   novels or non-fiction books
   c)   other: *please specify* …………………..

5. When I read in English:
   a) I skim the text quickly first and then go back and read carefully.
   b) I read slowly and translate words/sentences back into my own language.

6. I use the following English dictionaries or phrasebooks (electronic or printed)

when I read or write in English:
   a) An "English Learners' Dictionary".
   b) A bilingual dictionary.
   c) A phrase book.
   d) A general English dictionary.
   e) A thesaurus.

7. I refer back to my English grammar books to check my grammar, spelling, etc.

8. I work out the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.
   a) When I do NOT understand something in English, I guess what it means.
   b) I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words I learn in English.
   c) I read English without looking up every new word in a dictionary.
   d) I try to understand new English words from their context.
   e) If I can't think of an English word, I use another word that I think means the same thing.
   f) I focus my attention on a person's pronunciation when they talk to me in English.
   g) I focus attention on trying to understand the meaning when someone talks to me in English.
   h) I try to find out new ways to improve my English.
   i) I force myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
   j) I write a journal (notes) about any English language problems I experience or mistakes I make.
   k) I talk to other people about any problems I have with using English. [if Sometimes/Often/Always: Who do you usually talk to? [text box]]
   l) I ask people to slow down or say things again when I do not understand what they are saying in English
   m) I ask native English speakers to correct my grammar or pronunciation when I speak.
   n) I try to learn about Australian culture.
   o) I participate in campus activities where I can mix with English-speaking students.
   p) I participate in a social/sporting club or community group where I can mix with English-speaking people.

25. Which ONE of the four English language skills do you think you need to improve most this year? (select only one)

Reading ☐	Writing ☐	Speaking ☐	Listening ☐

26. How many hours per week do you spend outside your classes further developing your English language skills (other than by social conversation)?

None ☐	1-2 hours ☐	3-4 hours ☐	5-6 hours ☐	7 hours + ☐

27. Are there other things you would like to say about strategies you use to develop your English skills? [TEXT BOX]

Thank you – please continue to Section 5 to tell us about the help you get to improve your English (15 questions)

SECTION FIVE: HELP YOU GET TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH
In this set of questions we want to find out what sort of help is provided at your University and in your course to improve your language and communication skills, and how often you use or experience it. Please tell us how often you access or receive help in any of the following ways, if at all:

SCALE: Never /   Rarely / Sometimes /   Often / Always /   Not available

1. I use the following language and communication skills support services <u>provided by my University/faculty</u>:

a) Short courses (4-6 weeks) on topics such as reading, writing, pronunciation, oral presentations.
b) Small group workshops.
c) One-to-one tutorials for help on preparing assignments and/or oral presentations.
d) Informal discussions with native English speakers.
e) Intensive language courses during semester breaks.
f) Regular tutorials or other integrated support for ESL students taught within my degree program.
g) Provision of lists of technical words and definitions for each subject.
h) An editing and proofreading service for correcting written assignments.
i) Other services *(please specify)*: [TEXT BOX]

2. Are there other forms of language/communication skills support that you believe your university SHOULD provide?

☐ Yes Please specify: [TEXT BOX]   ☐ No

SCALE: Never /   Rarely / Sometimes /   Often / Always /   Not available at my University

a) My lecturers/tutors/supervisors write helpful advice for improving my English on my assignments.
b) My lecturers/tutors/supervisors give me useful feedback on improving my English after my oral presentations.
c) My lecturers/tutors/supervisors help me find support so that I can improve my English.
d) My written assessments include marks for good English.
e) The content of my course/studies helps me to improve my English.
f) The assessment tasks in my course (assignments, group work, presentations, etc) help to improve my English.
g) I have many opportunities in my course to interact with English-speaking students.
h) The social opportunities at university help me to improve my English.
i) My course provides opportunities for small group work and class discussions.
j) Participating in tutorial classes/labs/seminars helps me to improve my English.
k) Attending lectures/seminars helps me to improve my English.
l) Overall, my course is helping me to develop:
    I.   my reading skills.
    II.   my speaking skills.
    III.   my writing skills.
    IV.   my listening skills.

15. Are there other things you would like to say about the help you get to develop your English skills through your University or course of study? [TEXT BOX]

Thank you – please continue to Section 6 to tell us about strategies you use to enhance your academic performance (32 questions)

SECTION SIX: STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE YOUR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

In this section we want to find out about those things that you might find useful/may have found useful in the past in helping you to perform well at your studies (eg. understanding lectures/tutorials, completing your assignments/written work). Here is a list of things you might do. Please tell us how often you would use these strategies, if at all:

SCALE: Never /   Rarely / Sometimes /   Often / Always /   Not applicable

1. **I form or join a study group made up of students from the same language background as me to help understand and complete assignments.**

2. **I form or join a study group made up of students from mixed language backgrounds to help understand and complete assignments.**

3. **I discuss my understanding of readings or lectures with English speaking friends.**

4. **I discuss my understanding of readings or lectures with friends from non-English speaking backgrounds.**

5. **I ask my English-speaking friends to check my completed assignments for errors.**

6. **I read my assignments out loud to help me identify my errors.**
7.
8. **When I write an assignment:**
   a) I copy sections from text books.
   b) I copy sections from my lecture notes.
   c) I try to use my own words to write about the ideas I have learned from textbooks and lectures.
   d) I read each sentence/paragraph through to myself as I write.
   e) I ask academic support people for help.

9. **I read written comments on my work from lecturers/supervisors very carefully and make sure I understand what I need to improve next time.**

10. **I listen again to audio or video recordings of my lectures.**

11. **I follow the lecture on a handout and add my own notes.**

12. **I rely on friends to give me their notes of lectures.**

13. **I don't attend lectures but read the material instead (eg. Lecture notes on online, assigned readings, etc).**

14. **I write notes in my own language in the margins of material I read.**

15. **I write summaries of readings and keep these as notes.**

16. **I learn by going over new materials again and again until I have memorized them.**

17. **When learning new material, I try to find links to what I already know.**

18. **I try to do all of my assignments as soon as possible after they are given out.**

19. **I review things during the semester so I am ready for the exams.**

20.I only study for exams just before they happen.

21.I prepare for exams by memorizing everything I can.

22.I work hard on a topic to completely understand it before I move on to something else.

23.I only study what is really needed to pass my course, not everything that is recommended.

24.After a lecture, tutorial or lab class, I read my notes to make sure they are clear and that I understand them.

25.After a lecture, tutorial or lab class, I check my notes with friends to see if I have understood everything.

26.I test myself (ask myself questions) on important subjects until I understand them completely.

27.I try to write down and remember exactly the statements and ideas presented by my lecturers.

28.I do the set reading and/or prepare in other ways before classes.

29.I come to classes with questions that I would like answers for.

30.I like to develop my own opinions about the content knowledge in my course.

31.I complete academic tasks (eg. learning new material, writing an assignment/paper) by breaking them into smaller goals.

32.**When I have a problem understanding something in my course, I ask my lecturer/tutor/supervisor for help.**

37. Are there other things you would like to say about strategies you use to support your academic performance? [TEXT BOX]

Thank you – please continue to Section 7 to tell us what motivates you to develop your English skills (8 questions)

SECTION SEVEN: YOUR MOTIVATION FOR DEVELOPING YOUR ENGLISH SKILLS

In this set of questions we want to find out how strongly you feel about developing your English skills (proficiency) and the reasons why (that is, your 'motivation'). Please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

SCALE:
Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neutral / Agree / Strongly Agree

1. Continuing to develop my English is important to me because:
   a)   it will improve my opportunities for future employment.
   b)   I want to apply to be a permanent resident in Australia.
   c)   it will help me to mix socially with other English-speaking people.
   d)   it will help me to get the most out of my studies in Australia.
   e)   it will help me to better understand Australian life and culture.
   f)   I will be seen as well-educated.

2. Continuing to develop my English is NOT a high priority for me.

3. The more I get to know English-speaking Australians, the more I want to be fluent in their language.

4. I really enjoy using English.

5. I prefer to spend my time on the content of my course rather than developing my English.

6. I want to become so good at English that it comes easily to me.

7. I only want to learn enough English to complete my course.

8. Are there other things you would like to say about your motivation for developing your English skills? [TEXT BOX]

Thank you – please continue to Section 8 to tell us about your beliefs about learning English (14 questions)

SECTION EIGHT: YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING ENGLISH

In this set of questions we want to find out about your beliefs about learning English.
Please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

> *SCALE:*
> *Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neutral / Agree / Strongly Agree*

1. **English is an easy language to learn.**

2. **I believe that I can become highly proficient in English.**

3. **It is easier to speak than to listen to English.**

4. **It is easier to read English than to speak it.**

5. **It is easier to write English than to read it.**

6. **You need to know about English-speaking cultures in order to understand English.**

7. **Developing my vocabulary is an important activity for improving my English.**

8. **Developing my grammar is an important activity for improving my English.**

9. **Learning a language is different from learning other academic subjects.**

10. **It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.**

11. **You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.**

12. **It is important to repeat and practise a lot when learning a language.**

13. **If beginning students are allowed to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later.**

14. **Are there other things about learning English that you think are important for international students to know? [TEXT BOX]**

Survey complete – thank you for your kind cooperation.

Appendix 10: Student Interview Schedule

INTRODUCTIONS/BUILDING RAPPORT– NAME, AGE, COURSE, COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

SUGGESTED TOPIC AREAS & QUESTIONS (try to keep it as a casual conversation):

English Competence & Achievement Level
- Did you feel prepared for the English language demands of your courses?
- Did you expect to have to continue to build your English skills after commencing your course?
- Which skills (eg speaking, writing, reading, listening) have been the easiest/which the hardest to develop?

Strategies Used to Improve English
- What strategies (things that you do to improve your English) have been most successful in developing your English language skills since you commenced your studies in Australia? Why?

Use of English

Prompts: Do you have Australian friends? Do you read for pleasure/relaxation in English?

Do you watch TV or go to movies? What language do you speak in your accommodation here in Australia? Do you have a job?

- What aspects of your university course in Australia have helped/not helped the growth of your own English language skills? (We are using the word 'growth' to mean 'improvement' in this study)
- What do you think universities can do to give international students greater opportunities to use/develop their English skills?
- Is there anything about your work and living arrangements while studying in Australia that has helped/not helped your English skills development?
- What effect, if any, does the use of electronic communications, especially SMS and email, have on the development your English skills?

Beliefs About Learning English
- How important is it for you to understand something about the culture of a country when you are learning that language?
- What particular aspects of Australian culture have been most difficult / most important to understand?

Strategies to Support Academic Learning
- Has your ability in English influenced the way you study and learn in your course?
- Do you use the same study strategies when studying a course in your home language?

Support Used to Improve English
- How helpful do you think the English language and study skills support services are at your university?
- What would encourage international students to use the English language and study skills support services more?

Appendix 11: Consent Form for Interviews and Focus Groups

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the researchers for their records

I agree to take part in interviews for the English Language Growth research project as indicated below. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Information for Participants, which I have kept for my records. I agree to take part as follows (tick either yes or no for ALL the following statements):

I agree to be interviewed individually by the researchers ☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree to take part in a focus group interview with other students ☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped ☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree to make myself available for a further video-taped interview if requested ☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree that my interview data can be used in future research ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ **I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and I can withdraw at any stage of an interview or focus-group without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.**

☐ I understand that any data that the researchers extract from the interview / focus group for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

I understand that my video-tape and/or audio-tape may be used on a student website and/or DVD. I agree that

i) my real name ☐   OR   ii) a pseudonym ☐

can be used to introduce my video-recording.

☐ **I understand that data from the interview/focus group will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5-year period unless I consent to it being used in future research.**

Please provide your contact details – we will be in touch:

Full name: …………………………………………………………

Your University:………………………………………………….

Phone number:……………………………. Email: …………………………………

Appendix 12: Staff Interview Schedule

Preliminaries – discipline area, year level/s, international student cohort description for the unit/course with the greatest proportion of international students (where from, first language, etc).

- What are your overall expectations of students enrolling in your unit/course in terms of their communication skills? Are there particular communication skills that your unit/course is designed to develop?

- What sort of written tasks do your students need to complete (reports, lab reports, essays, tute papers, lecture notes)?

- What sort of difficulties do you find students have with written tasks in this unit/course? (may be related to either language or study skills)

- What about NESB international students in particular?

- What sort of oral performance/presentation requirements do students need to meet?

- Have you found that NESB international students have any difficulties in this area?

- What are the reading demands of your unit/course? Have you found that NESB international students have any difficulties in this area?

- What about their ability to listen and participate in class? What are your expectations in this area? What issues do you see arising?

- How common is it for your different cohorts of students—local, NESB, international – to collaborate in any assessments? Has this been successful? If no – how do you think this can be improved? Do you encourage cross-cultural collaboration?

- What sort of language learning strategies would you like to see your international students engage in to improve their outcomes in your unit/course? Can you suggest any that would be particularly useful for your unit/course?

- What sort of academic learning strategies would you like to see your international students engage in to improve their outcomes in your unit/course? Can you suggest any that would be particularly useful for your unit/course?

- Do you find that NESB international students approach you for assistance easily? If no – What would you like to see them do?

- How do you accommodate the particular needs of NESB international students in your teaching style? For example, do you tape-record/Pod-cast your lectures? Do you know how many students are downloading the audio files? Do you provide notes/powerpoint handouts to assist in note taking? Do all students use them?

- Have you/do you supervise any international research students? What are your experiences with their English language learning strategies? What would like to see them do?

Appendix 13: Teaching Staff Resource

Executive Summary

Introduction

This resource is the outcome of a project to assist international university students whose first language is not English with their own ongoing English language development, and to assist staff in understanding and addressing these students' linguistic and academic needs.

The project was funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) and has involved five Australian universities: Monash University, The University of Melbourne and Deakin University in Melbourne, Edith Cowan University in Perth, and Macquarie University in Sydney.

With consideration of academic workloads, this teaching resource has been designed as a quick reference list for scanning and possibly implementing. The full report on the English Language Growth Project can be downloaded from our website www.elg.edu.au/dvd/. The website also provides an extensive resource for students.

Background

There has been ongoing concern at universities across Australia about the English language proficiency of many international students. This concern is linked not only to the entry levels of proficiency but also to the exit levels. These concerns therefore also impact in the broader workforce community. Even though Australia enjoys a high standing internationally in education provision and Australian universities are increasingly embracing globalisation and recognising the importance of satisfied graduates as effective ambassadors of their institutions, many negative experiences of international students continue to attract the attention of the media, which regularly publishes signs of dissatisfaction of this student cohort.

Australian universities, or private providers aligned with them, generally offer preparatory English courses to bring international students' language skills up to a level where they can adjust rapidly to the heavy literacy demands of their academic study. Not every student however will have the time, inclination, or financial resources to attend such classes and many will enter university unaware of the further English language growth that is required in order to achieve in their studies.

It is acknowledged that international students' dissatisfaction with their learning experience in Australia is influenced, to a significant degree, by socio-cultural and language factors, as well as educational issues. Nonetheless, given our ethical responsibility to provide all students with equitable education outcomes, this project sought to investigate how international students can improve their English language competence, and whether there are particular learning strategies that place students 'at risk' or others that can enhance their opportunities for academic success.

Data for this study were gathered by way of a set of online questionnaires which were accessed through a dedicated website. Students were asked to provide responses to questions about their language and education background, how they felt about their language learning experience, and what sorts of things they did to

practise and improve their English, and to achieve academically. The questionnaire also provided opportunities for students to relate their experiences more freely in open-ended questions. Quantitative data from the survey was correlated with students' Grade Point Averages (or normalised equivalent measure from participating universities) to investigate any learning strategies that enhanced or hindered linguistic and academic development. The students' extensive responses to the open-ended questions also provided us with a rich body of qualitative data. Both the qualitative and quantitative findings, described extensively in the major report for the ALTC, provided the content for a student resource on CD ROM.

The findings of our study have enabled us to make a number of recommendations, which are provided at the end of the major report.

Consistent with many studies that have investigated links between language learning behaviours, attitudes and academic success, we found only a few significant relationships, and those we did find were weak at best. As many others before us have found, academic success is linked to a plethora of variables, of which learning strategy use and affective variables represent just a few. Nonetheless, we are able to suggest some factors that might be considered to enhance international students' experience and success at Australian universities.

At the same time we acknowledge that most Australian universities are already responding to their international students' needs in ways that support our findings. Indeed, for many teaching and support staff at universities, the recommendations proposed here are nothing new. Nonetheless, we hope that as a result of this study, universities are able to refine their support for international students to address what may be a new focus or direction.

Key recommendations for teaching staff

- Provide a supportive learning environment
- Provide a range of resources and teaching activities to support learning
- Make students aware of what support is available and encourage them to seek it
- Model culturally-appropriate language production
- Model and encourage different learning strategies and approaches
- Help students to make links with what they already know
- Overall assist students to develop a deep level of understanding
- Encourage student attendance

Assisting Learning Strategy Development

Our findings show that many international students struggle to adapt to the academic literacy demands of their host universities – a finding that is strongly supported by the literature. The following table contains ideas as to what teaching staff at universities might do to help international students from non-English-speaking-backgrounds (NESB) to continue to develop their English, and in doing so, assist them to overcome this struggle. These suggestions have emerged directly from the findings of our research and/or from the literature we have reviewed (see sections 2, 4 and 5 of our report). They are intended as suggestions

and are by no means exhaustive. Many will seem quite obvious and most, but not all staff, are doing these already.

We encourage staff to build upon what we offer to develop a set of strategies that address the individual needs of today's diverse student cohorts and that are appropriate to their specific learning contexts.

Many international NESB students feel nervous or uncomfortable using English in class.
- Provide a supportive environment for students by ensuring their contributions in class are valued – even if you disagree or don't completely understand what they say, thank them for 'having a go'.   - Be approachable – students report that asking their lecturers for help is an important strategy for them to use – make this easier for them to do.   - HOWEVER, also be aware that student silence does not necessarily equate to reticence: In many cultures silence is part of communication and can actually be a sign of respect, reflection or even disagreement.
Many NESB students struggle to make sense of what they hear or read in class.
- Provide adequate support to ensure that students truly are 'getting' the intended meaning of what they hear and read. For instance, set up situations where they must share and negotiate meaning with others in a non-threatening way. This can be done using discussion boards, Wikis, informal peer mentoring (either face to face or online) or through information gap or jigsaw[1] pair or group work activities.   - In pair/group work situations set up situations where students who need to develop their English are the 'experts' (because they are the holders of the key information) and their partner or other group members are the 'novices'. This encourages their active participation in class and helps them to make connections with their background knowledge.   - Also ensure that all the key information is available – preferably in a variety of forms (e.g., on Blackboard, in text books, on powerpoint and handouts). International students who have the opportunity to prepare before class, will get more out of what they hear/read in class.   - Variety is important to cater for different learning styles and to prevent boredom (see note below – "Death by Powerpoint")   - Make key concepts clear and give several different examples to make the point.   - Provide good quality, clear and informative powerpoint slides or handouts to scaffold the students' understanding.   - Avoid the use of jargon or introduce and explain or provide a definition

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[1] Information gap and jigsaw activities come from ESL teaching methodology approaches, but work equally as well with universities students from a English as well as non-English speaking backgrounds. They involve setting up tasks where each member of a pair or group has some, but not all the information to be conveyed. Each member has slightly different information (eg. in a group of 4 there will be version A, B, C and D) – only when all bits are conveyed can the full version be put together – hence the name 'jigsaw' task.

of key terms in your unit material.

- Use frequent discourse markers (e.g., Next I will talk about…; Now the second important point is…; Finally we need to think about…).

- Make it clear when you are changing topic – in that split second the student may miss the transition.

- Explain analogies and metaphors.

- Allow all students time to process and develop understanding – simply telling someone something doesn't automatically translate to understanding. Break up long 'input sessions' with activities, videos, etc., that reinforce what is said.

- Set guide questions that assist students to process information and read with a specific focus during their out of class study.

- Provide a model for reading effectively. For example, explore set readings together and examine issues, such as the difference between fact and opinion (culturally this can differ); examine the way a text is constructed, i.e., to persuade, to critique, to evaluate, etc; look at the vocabulary used and how it reflects both the discipline area, prepare a glossary of difficult terms to speed up students' reading.

- Encourage students' use of reading strategies such as: making notes; underlining and highlighting important information; writing questions and notes in the margin in order to better understand the text (glossing); transferring key points into diagrams, charts or figures (e.g., concept maps); and evaluating the usefulness of the text they are reading against some negotiated or established criteria. This could be done by providing 'tips' on your unit outline or on Blackboard. Don't assume that all students will know to how do these things – many 'poor readers' are simply unaware of such strategies.

Many students struggle with listening to the accents of teaching staff (Australian and non-Australian accents).

- Ensure that important information is available in a variety of forms.

- Be sensitive to newly arrived students – remember what it feels like when you visit places where different languages are used – even the same language spoken with a different accent can throw even the most accomplished travellers.

- If you are aware that you speak quickly – slow down a bit – but not unnaturally so (because it is important that students become used to the pattern of Australian English).

- Speak clearly and open your mouth (it is surprising the number of university teaching staff who fail to project their voices).

- Try to avoid shouting (they have English as a second/additional language, they are not hearing impaired!)

- Frequently check student understanding – but don't just ask "Do you understand? " or "Do you follow?" – students will agree to avoid loss of face. Instead ask questions so that you can monitor their understanding.

- Make your objectives for each class very clear at the start and throughout your delivery and repeat and summarise frequently.

- Encourage students to interact with Australian English speakers outside of class: studies have shown how beneficial this can be (Yamada, 2003).On your unit outline/Blackboard information provide the name/s

and contact details of another staff member to whom the students can talk if they have a problem communicating with you.

Many students struggle with the use of colloquial language and Australian terms.
• Provide a gloss if you use colloquial language or unusual terms – remember we don't all come with the same background knowledge. • Set up an informal and fun system where throughout the semester international students can compile a list of the 'Australian terms' you use in class or that they will come across in their case studies or readings (e.g., newspaper business pages) – this can be educative for both you and them (and for your other students to develop their awareness). There are many websites that contain lists colloquial expressions and their meanings.

A number of students feel too intimidated to ask questions when they don't understand something.
• Providing a supportive environment is vital. • Make sure your students are aware of the university support personnel who are available to help them. Invite them to your classes so the students can learn about what they offer and can make connections with them. • If possible, set up informal peer tutoring groups (enabling this with tasks that require them to interact with local students or other international students – preferably from a different language background). In this way links may be developed - someone they can talk to, phone, text or email their questions. • However, be cautious about setting up assessment tasks where groups are put together in such a way that local students MUST work with international students and then required to produce a joint assignment. This can also be intimidating for the international students and may lead to resentment from the local students when they placed in a situation of redrafting the product into an acceptable English level. • Set aside time for question and answer sessions in the last part of the class: More confident students are likely to ask questions that a number of students may be puzzling about; it also models the interactive style of teaching/learning in Australia – a style that may be new to some international students. Introduce "quescussions" [http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/tlc/lc_part3c.html#02].

Students are uncomfortable participating in discussions – they feel shy and worry about loss of face (if they make a mistake).
• Be aware that many international students come from an educational background that has not encouraged verbal expression but has focused on the written product and grammatical correctness. • Also be aware that speaking anxiety and fear of subsequent negative evaluation by others have detrimental effects on learners and therefore instructors should make a point of easing tension in the classroom and creating a supportive learning context where students' fears of rejection can be alleviated (see Woodrow & Chapman, 2002a); Aida, (1994) • Provide a supportive environment which may mean that, at least in the initial months, international students simply may be allowed to listen, rather than be expected to talk.

- Work to develop 'an atmosphere of cooperative interactions and consensus—a sense of working together to achieve a common goal' (Rounds, 1987).
- Encourage risk-taking by being supportive and encouraging of students' responses and their attempts to participate in discussions.
- Allocate roles in a discussion group – perhaps those too shy to speak in the first weeks can record the discussion points rather than actually participate in the discussion itself.
- Undertaking discussions in group situations (even at first in pairs) is less intimidating than talking in whole class situations.
- Sometimes grouping international students together for group discussions (especially when they come from a variety of language backgrounds) is a better situation to foster discussion and to enable them to develop confidence.
- Be careful with your use of humour – it may be misinterpreted by some students (however, if done carefully it can encourage a positive atmosphere – it may also provide a useful stepping off point for a discussion about cross cultural differences/Australian culture). Light-hearted moments are preferable to jokes.

Participating, even in groups, can be difficult for international NESB students.

- Provide contextual support for group work. Again information gap or jigsaw tasks (see footnote, page 1) are useful. With key terms/appropriate vocabulary already provided on the task sheets students' 'cognitive load' is lessened. This helps students to not have to struggle with the language and can really focus on making meaning.
- Also clearly indicate to students the purpose of group work – the literature contains many examples where students have negative perceptions about such a teaching approach.
- Encourage students to interact socially – either in university activities or outside activities.

Students feel uncomfortable writing in English.

- Make sure your international students are fully aware of what support is available at your university – it might seem repetitive to remind them, but we found that many students were simply unaware that support was there for them.
- Do set writing tasks! Many courses do not give international students time and opportunities to practice writing in English - many courses use multiple choice formats for assessment, so students do not need to produce sustained writing with many reporting that their English actually regresses during their studies (personal communication Neomy Storch 2009). Very often students don't have to write at length until their final exam, so continual writing tasks. Many students only ever write at length using a computer and are at a disadvantage when writing by hand in an exam. Provide opportunities for writing in tutorials by setting short answer questions.
- If you set writing tasks, provide a clear outline of what you expect. Provide a marking key that indicates the sections required and how many points each part attracts (it helps students provide the appropriate focus for their writing). Provide in class time (e.g., during a tutorial) for students to map/plan and discuss their written assignments.

- If possible provide models of what is appropriate (and what is not). This includes making very clear what plagiarism is and what should be done in its stead (see Appendix 4 of main report).
- Be aware that many of our international students come from cultures where writing conventions differ markedly (see Appendix 4 of main report for a discussion of this issue).
- Set collaborative writing tasks as part of your in-class activities – it helps students both with their content knowledge (discussing key information) as well as focussing their attention on the form of written English (see Storch (2005) for a description of this activity).
- There are a number of writing resources available – list these in your course outlines and on Blackboard[2] or the particular Learning Management System used at your university, for example Sakai, Moodle, etc. John Bitchener's (2010) recent book, although written for Applied Linguistics students, provides wonderful direction for all post-graduate students writing a dissertation or thesis.

Many international NESB students are not using English a great deal in their day-to-day communications.

- Be explicit – tell students that their English will improve if they use it more. English should be used in all its forms – reading (texts, magazines, newspapers), writing (discussion boards, keeping journals, writing home to friends in English), listening (to radio, to TV and movies), speaking (to different audiences) and even electronic forms of English (see main report for a discussion about texting and use of SMS).
- We found that students who have part-time jobs use English more – so show support for them doing this or for engaging in extra-curricular where English is required.
- Be encouraging about their use of English outside university and explain the need to 'have a go' even when uncomfortable. The very successful students whom we interviewed often used the strategy of seeking out new conversational partners (be it in a queue at a supermarket, in a café or on the bus).
- At the same time be explicit about cultural differences in what is appropriate and what is not in Australia (this may be aligned to the topic you are covering in class, most especially if you are in the social science/humanities areas).
- If it is possible within your discipline area, set up tasks that require students to interact in English outside of class. For instance, in a marketing course a lecturer could have them ask three people they come into contact with outside class why they have chosen a certain product (type of beer, model of car, type of takeaway food).
- In smaller classes and tutorials, allow a short-time for a discussion about topics of interest, about what they are doing/did outside class (this will lead to students perceiving the class environment to be friendly, which in turn helps develop their confidence to 'have a go').
- Again use them as the 'expert' – many international students bring a wealth of information to their studies in Australia (e.g., about cultural

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[2] Blackboard is used throughout this document as a generic term throughout this document to represent all learning management systems.

differences) and diverse experiences. That is to say international students can be used as a resource in your teaching. As one of our participants explained "*We are actually pretty interesting as long as we have opportunity to show you western people!* However, be careful not to appear to 'pick on' these students.

- As with writing – many courses are not requiring students to produce oral English (e.g., using multiple choice for assessment). Try and set tasks that require students to interact in and to produce spoken English – this does not mean that they must give a formal talk (although this could be done if relevant), but rather setting up group work tasks that require sharing of information (e.g., see again Footnote 1). An alternative to a formal presentation can be a digital story whereby the student assembles a series of digital photos relating to an assignment/lab/ field trip/case study etc., and tells the class about them. This promotes spontaneous speech and the visuals take the focus off the speaker.
- Be aware of the impact of affective variables on student understanding and ultimate success in English (for example, if they do not believe they will be successful English speakers, they are unlikely to be willing to communicate and which will impact on how well they do academically and in developing their English).

Many international students feel isolated, lonely and homesick, and these feelings impact on their ability to function well at university.

- Explicitly outline to your students that all learners have different needs – many first year students of all backgrounds are unaware that they are 'not the only one'. This is especially the case for international students. As one of our participants suggested "*… educate local students about what international students going through while they are here far from their homeland, friends and their family. They are really desperate to find friends. "*
- Make sure all students are aware of the student support options available to them.
- Make sure students are aware of and encouraged to participate in campus activities where they can mix with English speakers'. (We found a weak but positive correlation with their GPAs when they do this).

Dictionaries should be used in a careful and balanced way.

- Allow, even encourage, students to use dictionaries. At the same time, however, be careful that they do not develop an over-reliance: Encourage risk-taking and a 'have a go' approach through the use of explicit statements to the same effect, and through the establishment of a supportive environment. Set boundaries or timeslots when dictionaries can and cannot be used.
- Make students aware that whilst the use dictionaries may help their vocabulary, their comprehension may not be dramatically increased and their speed of reading will be decreased (Knight, 1994).
- Make students aware that they need a dictionary that gives them the use of a word/phrase in a example sentence – many English words are used in different ways in different contexts. Recommend a Learner's Dictionary (some come with CDs complete with meaning and pronunciation) and provide access to a dictionary of terms for your

discipline area.

Language support and development can come from a number of sources.
- Add a list of language support resources to your unit references e.g., from the learning or academic skills unit in your university, or from numerous online resources provided by universities worldwide. Here are some examples from the universities which participated in our study: http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/ http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/tips/ http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/ http://www.international.mq.edu.au/studentservices/studysupport/online http://www.deakin.edu.au/current-students/study-support/study-skills/handouts/index.php   - Encourage students to consult reliable sources to help with their English production. For instance, we found some students looked back at their old 'grammar books' and found these useful.

Reflecting on and knowing about the rules of English enhances English language development.
- Encourage students to keep a journal of the problems they encounter and achievements they experience when using English – remember awareness is the first step!   - Encourage students to write something every day – no matter how trivial.   - Direct students and encourage them to make use of student support services, and also mentoring programs that are available at many universities so that they can discuss their English development, as well as other personal and content knowledge understandings (or problems).   - Consider setting up "buddy-pairs" within your unit (virtual or real). These will need to be monitored if online. Buddy groups can also meet with you every few weeks to talk about their experiences and any problems.

There is a need for international NESB students to develop cultural awareness and understanding about Australia.
- Incorporate explicit cross cultural comparisons as part of your class activities. For example, the form/function discussion in an architectural course could be integrated into a group task examining the different life styles of various cultures; in a business communication course comparisons can be made about the different way meetings are conducted in different countries; in an education course comparisons can be undertaken about learning styles and what is valued in education in different cultures (e.g., problem solving, rote learning, active learning etc). If direct comparisons are made with Australian culture, it may allow students to enhance their awareness.   - It is important that you do not assume that all your students share the same background knowledge   - Use real life Australian examples – videos, multi-media etc. Make explicit reference to aspects of cultural difference (this can heighten awareness not just of international students – the notion that we all

come to our learning with a different world view is new to many students!)

- Provide a list of appropriate Australian cultural/language resources e.g., Tell students about igoogle – their own home page with automatic links to their choice of news headlines, top stories, entertainment etc.

The literature shows that international students may struggle with culturally different teaching and learning experiences.

- Set up tasks and group situations that encourage students from various backgrounds to interact. As Volet and Ang (1998) show "after a successful experience of culturally mixed group work, students realize that cultural differences may not be as important as having similar goals and a mutual commitment to invest time and energy in the task" (p20).

- Be explicit about what is being done, for what reason and what is expected from them.

- At the same time, be flexible: We all learn in different ways and at different rates. Allow students opportunities to undertake learning in ways that best suit their learning style by setting up learning tasks and assessments that can be approached in different ways. You might raise students' awareness of learning styles by using Felder's questionnaire in an early tutorial [http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html] Be aware however that the idea of students having one particular learning style is much debated in the literature. It is possible that students evoke a range of learning styles depending on the task. But it's still useful for them to know about them.

- Provide models and information about ways of doing things (writing assignments, searching data bases, finding appropriate sources of information).

- Make sure students are aware of any orientation courses offered by student support personnel, libraries, IT support etc.

- Encourage students to make links with what they know and understand – this is what the deep learner does (Biggs, 1987)

- Also encourage students to test out or apply learning to new situations (Kolb, 1975). For instance, ask them to apply new understandings from their course to their workplace, or to consider with what they observe happens outside university (with their friends, on the news etc) with what they learn from their study.

- The literature also suggests that studying in a language in which you lack confidence affects your approach to learning and may lead to the use of rote learning (Watkins, Biggs and Regmi, 1991). Clearly there is a need to set up tasks in which students can work confidently in English (again use 'expert' and 'novice' pair work or information/jigsaw tasks that scaffold student learning).

Students should be encouraged to focus on the 'big picture' to develop their understanding of content.

- Discourage students from making direct translations into the first language as this is a strategy that makes them focus on word level understanding and not a holistic global understanding of texts.

- All students should be made aware that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between languages, which is why translation is a problematic strategy. (We found a small, but significant negative

- correlation between such a strategies and GPAs).
- Encourage both skim reading (to ascertain an overview) and then reflective reading (to develop deeper understanding). Advise students that even native speakers should go over their readings at least twice.
- Encourage students to make links to what they already know (there was a significant, though weak, positive correlation between this strategy and student GPAs in our research). Model how this can be done e.g., show how they can make links using diagrams, charts, tables, lists, concept maps, etc.
- Explicitly encourage students to read widely – getting information from a variety of sources.
- Model how this can be done e.g., show how they can make links using diagrams, charts, tables, lists etc.
- Explicitly encourage students to read widely – getting information from a variety of sources.
- Direct them to relevant journals and if appropriate, weekly newspapers (e.g., *The Financial Review*) along with texts and reference books. List these sources in your course outline and on Blackboard. Remind students throughout your course – telling students in week one does not guarantee that such information will be understood or acted upon.
- Let students know that studying only what they need to pass their course was found to be negatively correlated to success in our study.

Many students are unaware of international student support personnel and the services they provide and/or do not feel comfortable to access these services.

- Again, explicitly indicate that these services are available. If possible list the details in your course outline or on Blackboard.
- Invite student/academic support personnel to your class and let them explain what services are available (students may or may not have heard this at their orientation – but it is worthwhile repeating).
- Actively encourage 'struggling' students to make use of this service by indicating this on their assessments.

Incorporating marks for English production into assessments is helpful for assisting international students to develop their English.

- If at all possible, in designing your marking key for assessment, have a component for English language production. This heightens their awareness about your expectations for their English and may assist their development.

Students give a high level of attention to feedback about English production in assessments.

- Do provide students with written feedback, not just about the content of their work, but also the form it takes.
- Many errors are common, so develop an electronic proforma or use symbols or keys to indicate problematic areas (e.g., tense, punctuation etc).
- Encourage students to seek support.

Following prepared lecture notes is related to student success.

- Have teaching/learning resources readily available to students. For

example, have PowerPoint or lecture note outlines ready on Blackboard in plenty of time for students to download before class.

Students doing assignments as soon as possible is also related to their success.

- Make sure all the details for required assignments are available at the beginning of semester.
- Have all the resources necessary for the students to complete assigned work available as soon as possible.

Attendance is related to success.

- Many students feel they can do well enough by simply reading the material, let them know that research shows this is NOT enough.
- Be explicit – the best advice to almost all students according to the literature and to the staff we interviewed is simply "attend class!"
- Make classes enjoyable and interesting so that students will be inspired to attend. Do this by keeping your material up to date; use multiple sources of materials (multimedia); be interactive; do not fall into the trap of "death by powerpoint"; provide challenges to your students.

Being motivated to learn English assists learners with their development.

- Be explicit about what can be gained from continuing to develop their English (some students believe that once they gain entry to University they have a sufficient level): Describe the importance for their future (e.g., doing their job well/safely; the enjoyment they can get from interacting with others in English; English is fast becoming the lingua Franca in many situations worldwide). Also see p.43-5 of main report for a discussion on motivation and its impact on international students.
- Motivation comes with success – compliment students on their development.

Positive self-efficacy leads to success.

- Help students to believe that they can continue developing their English

Appendix 14: ELG Strategies Checklists

MODULE 1: Staying Motivated about developing your English

Instructions: As you work your way through the ELG modules, use this checklist to note the strategies you would like to try, then start planning how you might begin to use them. It will also be useful to note the strategies you already use, so that you have a better understanding of your learning approach.

✳ **ELG Star Tips** are those strategies that were found by our research to be positively associated with higher academic outcomes.

MODULE 1: STAYING MOTIVATED ABOUT DEVELOPING YOUR ENGLISH	Definitely me	Maybe a little	Not me at all
Reflect on why you really want to study in English. How important is it to you? What motivates you?			
• Future job opportunities.			
• Having fun, social activities, meeting people – e.g., joining clubs and societies, watching movies, understanding humour.			
• Learning about Australia and Australian culture.			
• Learning about or being able access the culture of English speaking countries in general (e.g. literature, movies, music).			
• Not wanting to feel anxious or isolated.			
• Becoming so fluent in English that I no longer have any difficulty using it.			
• English is a universal language (a lingua franca) in today's world.			
Reflect on your beliefs about language learning. What do you believe really helps you?			
• Talking to people.			
• Building a good vocabulary.			
• Reading a lot and reading widely.			
• Watching TV or movies.			
• Practising is really important.			
• Believing in myself and my own ability in English.			
• Knowing about the culture of the country.			

• Not saying anything until I can say it perfectly.			

Try using these strategies to maintain your motivation:	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Set small goals for each day, e.g., learning or using a new word or phrase, talking to one new person, writing a short paragraph in an academic style.			
• Reassure yourself and find the courage to speak in English often, even if you are not confident that you can say things perfectly.			
• Express interest, show you are motivated – and think positively!			
• Set yourself up properly for any task (listening, reading, note-taking, writing, speaking). Know yourself, know what helps, and create the right conditions for learning.			
• Focus your attention: concentrate and have a clear mind.			
• Begin each language activity with a plan: e.g. listen/look for key words or words that you know.			

MODULE 2: Using your English comfortably

MODULE 2: USING YOUR ENGLISH COMFORTABLY	Definitely me	Maybe a little	Not me at all
Reflect on which skills in English you have difficulty with – is it reading, writing, listening or speaking? How much practice do you get with each skill and where do you use them?			

	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Do you usually speak English at home or outside university?			
• Do you have a job where you need to use English?			
• Are you comfortable writing in English?			
• Do you feel comfortable about speaking (especially to native English speakers)?			
• Do you manage to get through your course reading and understand the material?			
• Are you able understand all that is said in lectures?			
• Are you shy or embarrassed when speaking English?			
• Do you have time to practise and develop your English?			

What does our research show?

Active learning strategies that are **positively associated** with academic achievement are:

✴ Using another word that you think means the same thing if you can't think of a particular English word.
✴ Participating in campus activities where you can mix with English speakers.

Remember: *Try to avoid focusing on small learning tasks like word lists, relying heavily on dictionaries, translating back into your first language, or breaking new words into smaller parts you understand – these are too time-consuming at your advanced level of study.*

Try using these strategies to develop confidence using your English:	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• If you can't think of a particular English word, use another that you think means the same thing.			
• Participate in campus activities where you can mix with native English speakers or at least with people who don't speak your first language.			
• Find a part-time job where you will need to use English.			
• Even if you know you are making mistakes in your English, keep speaking. Your listener can probably still understand what you want to say.			
• When reading, circle words you don't understand and continue reading. If you still don't understand the meaning of the word when you have finished, THEN check it in a dictionary.			
• Try to speak as much as you can with your housemates in English – not just about your course work, but also about hobbies, news, books – even politics!			
• Play board games like 'Cranium', which helps you understand the meanings of uncommon words. It helps to think in English as			

well.			

MODULE 3: Studying in English

MODULE 3: STUDYING IN ENGLISH
English is best learnt through active communication and by integrating language learning with academic learning. The strategies introduced in this module will help you to improve your English skills as you use them in your studies and your daily life. They include social, cognitive, and metacognitive learning strategies.

What does our research show?

Students who tended to have **higher academic achievement** reported using these strategies:

∗ **following lectures on a handout** and adding their own notes.
∗ **doing assignments** as soon as possible after receiving them.
∗ **linking new knowledge** to what they already know.

Academic achievement tended to be **lower** for students who reported that they:

⇓ **do not attend** classes and only read the materials or depend on friends to provide notes.
⇓ **only study what is needed** to pass the course.

SOCIAL LEARNING STRATEGIES			
What are social learning strategies?			
Social learning strategies include interaction with other people who may be friends, class groups, or tutors and lecturers. Interacting and exchanging points of view or ideas helps you to learn. With social learning you are activating both your listening and speaking skills to reinforce your learning.			
Below are some social learning strategies used by our students. Which ones do you use? Which ones would you like to try?	**I do this already**	**I'll try this one**	**Might try later**

	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• I discuss academic problems with friends who can understand my point more easily. Homework is really important so I can check if I understand the chapter/lecture or not.			
• I discuss lecture slides that I don't understand with course mates.			
• During a lecture, tutorial or lab class, I usually check my notes with friends to see if I have understood everything.			
• I usually ask friends, whether they are from an English speaking background or not, whenever I have a problem understanding something in my course,			
• Group study is a good idea for improving English and learning another point of view from your friends.			
• I think if friends get together and discuss the chapters that are going to be taught, it helps in understanding the concepts better.			
• Join a Toastmasters club, try to make friends and do group assignments with people from different cultures.			
• Arrange a weekly meeting with friends who come from different countries. Have different topics to discuss every week and a presentation by one or two members about their own cultures as well.			

COGNITIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

What are cognitive learning strategies?
These are the strategies we use to actually learn our content material. So when you do things like make summaries, review, categorise ideas, link knowledge to what you have already learned or to past experience, you are using cognitive learning strategies.

Cognitive learning strategies may involve the *what*, the *how*, the *why* or the *when* of acquiring knowledge.

Below are some cognitive learning strategies used by our students. Which ones do you use? Which ones would you like to try?	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
Look for linkages between what you are learning and your previous knowledge and understandings:			
• I find the relationships and applications to connect with my past study and life experiences.			
Use alternative sources for understanding topics – don't just rely on one textbook:			

• I thoroughly read my textbooks and lecture notes, and where I need to understand some points better, I look up the information in different ways. I try to look at things from different sources, other than only what the lecturers give us.			
• I find other textbooks that are related to the topic or unit, or try to find other books that are helpful which are recommended or listed. Then, I go to the internet to find out more about those topics if I still don't understand them.			
• If I can't understand the theory, I go to the library and look at other books because the theory is the same but the way that the writer presents it is different.			
• I often try to find books related to the subject I am learning so as to have multiple meanings of a topic and then I try to find out the similarities from all of them			
Go to class prepared:			
• Always have something in my head before going to class, so that I can discuss and give opinions as much as I can during classes.			
• Always prepare for class and have at least a basic idea of the topics to be covered.			
Previewing is important to link prior knowledge with the lecture material. This is one of the most effective ways to learn:			
• I preview the lecture materials before my lecture and also review them again after the lectures to ensure I completely understand as much as possible.			
• I find the relationships with my past study and life experiences.			
Note-taking is another good strategy because you will have approached the material in different ways:			
• Take notes in your own words with practical examples so that when you need to review you remember and understand the subject better.			
• I write down everything I need to understand as I can understand things written by me better. I also try to visualize or draw diagrams when reading to help me understand.			
Reviewing **is just as important as** *previewing***:**			

	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Reviewing is just as important as previewing because it strengthens that connection between the old and the new knowledge.			
• The strategy to support my academic performance is to keep on reviewing the any previous materials that are hard to understand.			
• I don't 'memorise' the materials, I try to 'understand' them. Memorising is for people who want to 'pass' instead of 'learn'.			
Some students may not have the English language skills needed to easily read more widely. For them it is important to start with the textbook:			
• I prefer using the textbook rather than reading journals because the textbook has a clear structure (chapters) and the language is easy to read. So I have a basic understanding before I read a journal article.			

METACOGNITIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

What are metacognitive learning strategies?

These are the strategies you use to **organise yourself**, such as:

- Time-management (e.g. meeting assignment deadlines, or knowing a lecturer's office hours).
- Finding the gaps in your knowledge.
- Identifying your weaknesses and working to improve them.
- Evaluating your improvement (e.g. by testing yourself).
- Setting goals.
- Planning activities to stay motivated.
- Constructing a learning journal or port-folio where you keep track of your learning, e.g., 'What did I learn today/this week?'
- Developing an individual learning plan.
- Debriefing yourself after a test or quiz and noting what you did not know.
- Scanning contents and index pages and bookmarking the relevant information to focus on.
- Designing your own test questions.

	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
Below are some metacognitive learning strategies used by our students. Which ones do you use? Which ones would you like to try?			

	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• **Doing the assignments** as soon as possible is a good way to improve my academic performance.			
• **I design a day-to-day timetable** to ensure I allocate my time each day for studying. I also manage my lecture notes and study area well by preparing boxes for each subject and storing past lectures and notes and anything relevant in order in each box.			
• **I set out a plan** to read a newspaper almost every day and I try to ask some teachers or friends what type of TV or radio program was best to develop my English and I stick to that. In my first year I listened to Perspective on the ABC and in the second year the news on ABC TV almost every night.			
Some words of advice A good metacognitive strategy is to have a thorough **understanding** of the cognitive learning strategies that work for you and when, and **plan** your use of them. So: • Think about your preparation strategies for an exam – memorising, outlining, diagramming, self testing. • Identify which of these strategies works best with different types of material (lecture notes, textbooks, lab reports/manuals, etc.) • Then plan your study time, thinking about how to apply each of these cognitive learning strategies. Likewise, think about your **planning strategies for an assignment** (refer to Module 3 for more tips on this).			

More metacognitive strategies for you to try[3]:	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Ask yourself periodically if you are meeting your goals.			
• Try to use strategies that have worked in the past.			
• Pace yourself while learning in order to have enough time.			
• Understand your intellectual strengths and weaknesses.			
• Set specific goals before you begin a task.			
• Slow down when you encounter important information.			
• Make sure you know what kind of information is most important to learn.			
• Ask yourself if you have considered all options when solving a problem.			
• Focus your attention on important information.			

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[3] Strategies cited here were adapted from Schraw, G., & Dennison, S. (1994) Metacognitive Awareness Inventory. In *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 19, 460-475.

• Have a specific purpose for each strategy you use.			
• Make sure you know what your lecturer expects you to learn.			
• Use different learning strategies depending on the situation.			
• Ask yourself if there was an easier way to do things after you finish a task.			
• Periodically review to help you understand important relationships between ideas.			
• Ask yourself questions about the text before you begin.			
• Consider several ways to solve a problem and choose the best one.			
• Summarise what you've learned after you finish.			
• Ask others for help when you don't understand something.			
• Reflect on the strategies you use when you study.			
• Think about the usefulness of strategies while you study.			
• Focus on the meaning and significance of new information.			
• Create your own examples to make information more meaningful.			
• Pause regularly to check your comprehension.			
• Make sure you know when each strategy you use will be most effective.			
• Ask yourself how well you have accomplished your goals once you have finished.			

MODULE 5: Improving your English

MODULE 5: IMPROVING YOUR ENGLISH

What does our research show?

- Many of those detailed and time-consuming strategies for learning English which were useful for you in your initial English language classes may not be useful to you now. In fact, those strategies may take up too much time now that you have a heavy academic workload as well.

- You now need to *learn as you go.*

Recorded below are some of the key strategies suggested by our students, supplemented by some we have drawn from other research.

SPEAKING STRATEGIES	I do this	I'll try this	Might try
Talk to yourself in English:			
• When I am alone and walking, travelling and even bathing, I often use English to talk in my mind. By doing so, I feel comfortable and confident.			
• Talk to yourself in English all the time, either in your mind or just by whispering to yourself in English.			
• Record yourself and play it back to see how you can improve.			
• Read aloud to yourself – a little each day.			
• Even in my thinking process, I try to think and speak to myself in English.			
Repeat what you hear:			
• Sometimes when I watch English movies, I try to repeat what they say in the movie.			
• Memorize the way language is used by watching TV serials and imitating their pronunciation.			
• I watch English movies and whenever I like a sentence, I say that sentence EXACTLY like they said it in the movie over and over again ... I even do the tone even though it is meant to be a tone for little girls... but I try it anyway!!			
• Television really helps because the words are pronounced and used in the right context so you learn to use new words the right way by hearing how to pronounce it and how to use it.			
Have something to talk about:			
• Keep up to date with news and current affairs so that you have a topic of conversation that you can draw on.			
Live with people from other cultures and language backgrounds:			
• Try to live with people who come from different backgrounds because it will force you to speak English.			
• Live with an Australian home-stay family – it will help you to understand Australian culture and the Australian accent.			
Make friends with English-speaking people:			
• Interact with native speakers. Don't be shy or afraid of making mistakes. When you feel comfortable, ask people to correct you.			
• I have several Australian friends, so I use English a lot when I meet them after they finish their work on weekdays or over the weekends.			
• The best way to pick up the expressions I need in everyday life is to mingle with native speakers.			

• Relax when you speak – it actually improves your articulation.			
• Make friends with people who are from other countries who don't speak your first language so that you have to communicate in English.		45	
Get a job in an English speaking work environment:			
• Working part-time in English-speaking surroundings is a big help. I improved my speaking that way and understand Australian English better!!			
• I am somewhat forced to improve my oral communication in English as I work at a footy venue where I have to answer and guide people.			
Talk to your family, your children and your friends in English:			
• I speak in English with my kids, who are currently studying in primary school, to improve my communication skills.			
• I spend time speaking English especially when I'm with my boyfriend who also comes from the same background, and we correct each other's English.			
• Using English words when communicating with family or friends from back home is another thing you can do to improve English.			
Use English in your daily activities:			
• I use English with friends and tutors or lecturers. I also use English in shops or to find my way to reach some destination.			
• I attend a lot of workshops and seminars in my field and learn how people express their ideas on particular topics.			
• Make friends in all classes. It's sometimes easier to practise English with other international students because they are struggling at first as well.			
• Go to museums, parks, plays, bars, church. Do in English what you normally would do in your native language in your home country.			
• Check with your listener to make sure that they understand you. It's quite OK to ask, 'Do you understand what I mean?'			
Join a club or group:			
• I joined a debating club, and went to meetings of societies that organise events which I can actively take part in.			
• Play sport with a club: university sports and clubs are great ways to meet people and interact in English.			
• Join a Toastmasters Club			
• Try to do group assignments with people from different cultures.			

	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Arrange a weekly meeting with friends who come from different countries. Have different topics to discuss every week and perhaps have a presentation by one or two members about their own cultures as well.			
Keep on practising:			
• Keep practising to keep up with the standard of your English, no matter how fluent your English is, because once you become lazy at using English, then you will go backwards.			
• The more you use English the better user you become. You learn writing by writing, speaking by speaking and reading by reading.			
• Seize every chance to practise your English whether on campus or in your job. Practice makes perfect.			
• If a phrase or word is always difficult, write it down and practise it.			
Other helpful tips			
• When you are talking to someone, check that they are following your meaning – ask questions such as 'Do you understand what I mean?'			
• Take the opportunity to have conversations with people you don't know – it is very different talking to those with whom you are familiar.			
• Set aside some 'English only time' – there is nothing wrong with using your own language, but forcing yourself to use English can push you to the next level of your development.			
• Talk on the phone – without the cues from face to face exchanges (e.g. facial expressions and gestures) you will improve your ability to speak carefully (and negotiate with the listener when you are not making yourself understood). Practise saying your name, address and phone number so that you are understood.			
• Engage in real life tasks. For example, give directions to people who ask; when eating out, ask a wait person about a certain dish (ingredients, how it is made); talk to peers/friends about what you did on the weekend; chat to the person serving you at the shop.			
• Form a study group, meet regularly and spend time discussing your course content.			
• Record yourself speaking – play it back and think about how you might improve your speech. Compare how you sound to the recording of an Australian speaking friend.			

LISTENING STRATEGIES	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
Our students watch movies, television, radio and listen to English music:			

• Listen to local radio and even news from your home country in English.			
• I am trying to manage my time to listen to English music, watch news in English, watch TV programs. Start with TV because you can observe the body language too.			
• Watching movies with both English and Chinese subtitles is a good way for me to improve English. I do not look at subtitles when I can understand the film. If I cannot catch it, I will look at the English subtitles. Looking at Chinese subtitles just confirms whether I am right in understanding the meaning.			
• I mostly learn English by listening to songs and watching movies in order to improve my listening and speaking skills. I exposed myself as much as possible by watching TV or movies and listening radio or music.			
• Listen to English songs and sing with the English lyrics.			
• Listen to ABC radio every day while travelling to and from Uni.			
• Watch documentary movies – sometimes it is easier to understand the grammar and learn new vocabulary.			
• I always watch foreign (English speaking) movies, sitcoms and TV series with English subtitles. I believe it's the best way to improve my English.			
• Video-record and re-play until you understand the language.			
Our students attend all their lectures to hear English spoken:			
• I attend all lectures, tutorials and lab classes because they are important and because I hear native English speakers speak English. In turn it helps me to hear how they pronounce certain words.			

What does our research show?

∗ **Following a lecture on a handout and adding your own notes is linked to academic success. So make sure you print off notes/handouts before a lecture if they are made available to you.**

• Relying on friends' notes and reading the material instead of attending the lecture DID NOT correlate positively with academic success.

Some words of advice:

• It's not so important to understand every word that another person is saying. It may be more important for you to understand what they mean in the context. As time goes on, you will know how to use those words or sentences.

• Talking on the phone is difficult but important. Don't hesitate to ask for information to be repeated. Practise by ringing a friend.

Australian accents

New accents are always difficult for language learners to understand. Australian English not only differs from other accents in its pronunciation but also in its idiomatic expressions (also called slang). These are fun to learn and there are many books and websites where you can learn more about Australian slang.

Listening to understand Australian accents and expressions:	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Never hesitate to ask what an expression means, and that includes your lecturers and tutors. Native speakers like to explain slang terms.			
• Keep a note of new expressions in a journal/diary.			
• English is not the same in all English-speaking countries, so international students need to know which words can be used in specific countries, to avoid offending people when they don't mean to.			
• Conversation groups are a great way for a new international student to become familiar with Aussie slang.			
• Don't be too shy to ask people to explain or repeat what they said. Say things such as 'I'm sorry I don't quite understand', 'Could you please repeat that again', 'What do you mean when you say…?'.			
• Culture and language are closely linked, so find out about Australian culture to help your understanding when speaking with others – especially those who are Australian born. It will also help you understand the content of your course – many cultural references are made in lectures.			
Other helpful tips			
• Practise listening 'top down' (listening to get the 'big picture') or 'bottom up' (listening for details) – but not at the same time. Choose the way that is most appropriate for the context. For example, in an informal context listen for the 'gist'. Alternatively, listen to the language that a radio announcer uses (one day focus on pronunciation, another day on words or phrases).			
• Use online dictionaries when you want help with the pronunciation of a word.			

More words of advice about Australian language and culture:

- Listening also means observing body language. Notice how Australian English speakers:
- Keep their 'private space'. That means that there is always some distance between speakers.
- Give feedback to the person speaking by nodding their head a little or by saying things like 'mmm', 'Yes', 'OK' or 'right'.
- Look directly at the face of the person they are speaking to.

Other unique features of Australian English to listen for:

- Australian English speakers are generally shy about formal introductions and may start talking without formally introducing themselves.
- Compared with other English speaking societies, Australian English speakers say 'thank you' a lot.
- They often hedge their requests, that is they are less direct when asking for something, e.g. 'Do you mind if I shut the window?', 'Is it OK if I smoke?', 'Can you reach that glass for me?', etc.

READING STRATEGIES	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
Our students say 'read more to read better':			
• Read local newspapers – even for international happenings and news.			
• Read magazines, simple novels, and newspapers, even the free newspapers and pamphlets at railway stations or supermarkets, food labels, cookbooks, road signs, advertisements – anything you can find in English.			
• I read a lot of fictional and non-fictional works. I have the habit of reading at least a novel or text every week. I also belong to a book club.			
• Try to read as many academic journals as possible.			
• Read course-related newspapers (e.g. the Financial Review or the business pages in the daily newspaper).			
What does our research show? • Students who **read slowly and translate back into their first language do not achieve well academically**. There was a **negative** correlation between the use of this strategy and Grade Point Averages.			
Smart reading tips:			
• Read widely to expand your day-to-day vocabulary.			
• Familiarise yourself with what you are about to read – the structure (chapters, sections), the contents pages, the index, the reference			

section, any differences in type-setting and what they signal, and look at figures and tables.			
• Scan the text first to find out where information can be found.			
• Construct a diagram of your understanding as you read so that you will remember the relationships between ideas in what you read.			
• Read academic texts with a focus. Focused reading means you are looking for particular information and this helps you to concentrate.			
• If your textbooks have questions at the end of each chapter, try finding the information to answer each question – this is focused reading.			
• Pay attention to the headings and sub-headings - these will help you understand what follows.			
• Pay attention to the first sentence in a paragraph, it can give you an idea of what follows.			
• Look for connecting words such as 'for example', 'then', 'in addition', 'similarly', 'therefore', 'firstly', 'secondly', 'finally', 'in conclusion' etc. These will guide you through the text and show you the relationships between sentences.			
• Avoid looking up every word. Try and guess the meaning from the context.			

Critical reading tips Critical reading is not about criticizing. It's about evaluating (positively or negatively) what you read against some criteria, so you need to have some criteria before you start. Here are some criteria for evaluating an academic text – which ones do you use?			
Overview critique			
• When and where was the research done or the paper written (It might be out of date or be very recent)?			
• Who was the paper written for – who is the intended audience?			
• What sort of text is it (research – qualitative or quantitative; theoretical or more abstract; a review – a good resource to keep; polemical (a discussion paper) – contributing to an ongoing controversy or discussion)?			
• Did the author explain his/her aims clearly? Look at the abstract or introduction.			
• Why was the paper written – did the author respond to previous inconclusive research, add to an existing body of research, contribute to an on-going controversy, raise a new problem or			

issue?			
• Did the author review the background adequately? Look at the literature the author has reviewed.		51	
• Did the author show a need for his/her research? Does the paper respond to problems identified in previous literature? What does the author hope to achieve in the paper? What are their aims?			
Was the research/argument strong or robust?			
• What was the methodology (quantitative or qualitative)?			
• Were the research instruments piloted, informed by other research, validated, and included (or not) in an appendix?			
• What sort of sampling was involved – a large-scale population, a selected sample? Was the sample size adequate?			
• What percentage of the target group responded (for a survey or questionnaire)?			
• Are the results statistically significant?			
• Who collected the data and how was it collected? Would there have been any researcher bias?			
What was the final conclusion? (Look at the Discussion)			
• Do these findings agree or disagree with the background literature?			
• Do YOU think the findings are of value? What are your reasons for this?			
• Was the argument/claim/hypothesis made explicit and well supported with examples and/or evidence?			
• What does it contribute to the field of research? How will it contribute to/change practice or opinions?			
• What were the limitations of the research? Was anything left out or not discussed or considered?			
• Does the research have external validity? Can it be replicated elsewhere?			
• How sure are the writers about their research findings? Look at the discussion, and for words like 'suggest', 'probably may', 'could', 'implies', etc.			

WRITING STRATEGIES	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
Our students noted that academic writing was not like other writing and required them to develop a new style.			
• When you are writing for academic purposes, draft an outline for your text. List your main points and use these as your topic sentences for each new paragraph.			
• Get a friend (especially someone who has English as their first language) to read what you have written. Ask them to let you know if there is anything that doesn't make sense or is not expressed in the usual way.			
• Read your own text aloud. You will pick up errors more quickly because you are using your eyes and your voice. If you run out of breath, look at the structure of your sentences – they may be too long.			
• Make charts or lists of useful words and phrases, especially those that you may use often, and those that you find difficult to use appropriately.			
• Keep a record of the feedback you get from your tutors and lecturers when they mark your work – reflect on this feedback and see if there is a common pattern of problems.			
• Take the opportunity to write notes, emails and letters to your friends and acquaintances in English.			
• When you are writing, take advantage of the 'thesaurus' option available on many computer word programs. For instance, write a simple word and see if a better word can replace it (e.g. when using Microsoft word highlight the word you have used and 'right click' synonyms).			
• Use a learner's dictionary to make sure that you use new words correctly. Remember that many English words are only correct in some contexts.			
• Keep a journal – this provides practice and gives you an opportunity to reflect on your language and your experiences.			
• Have grammar resources readily available. There is lots of online help and there are a number of good texts available – keep these on hand when you are writing.			
• When you come across a piece of text that is particularly well written – keep a copy and examine it carefully. Consider those parts of it that contribute to the quality of the text.			
• Many websites have discussion boards. Join one and contribute. Discussion board writing is a particular type of writing, but it does provide some writing practice.			

WRITING EXTRA: TIPS ON HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM[4]	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
• Always include references for direct quotes, for paraphrasing, and for summarizing. You must always give credit where credit is due.			
• Keep track of ALL your sources. Photocopy your source material or store it in a bibliographic program like Endnote, so that you don't have to go back to the library or look for material again.			
• Always quote and reference a **key word** that isn't commonly found in other resources.			
• When you use **three or more successive words** from any source, quote and reference the quote.			
• Never just substitute your words for someone else's words and call it your work. It's the thinking behind the ideas that you need to experience, not the practice at using a thesaurus.			
• Never use the syntax and organization of ideas in an article without referencing it.			
• Never plagiarize yourself. You can refer to papers you have previously written or published. You can even quote yourself. But never copy/paste your previous writing and present it as a new piece of work.			
• Always take accurate notes. Include quotation marks, complete bibliographic references, page numbers, and note when you are paraphrasing or summarizing.			
• Create an annotated bibliography or keep a list of URLs so that you can go back to source material later if needed.			
• Always plan your time. Writing takes time, especially if it involves research. Good note taking takes time. If you procrastinate, then you give yourself less time and make plagiarism appear to be a viable option. It is never an option. Don't procrastinate.			
• Always make writing personally meaningful even if the topic seems mundane. If you think through what makes the topic meaningful, you will want to learn more and come up with your own ideas.			

IMPROVING YOUR VOCABULARY

It is important now to develop vocabulary in the context of your academic learning and your life in Australia. Avoid spending too much time using the time-consuming strategies that you may have used when first learning new words in English.

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[4] All strategies cited here were adapted or cited in full from Wadsworth Cencage Learning Discipline Resources/English/Special Features
http://www.wadsworth.com/english_d/special_features/plagiarism/strategies.html Downloaded 12 Feb 2010

What does our research show?

✳ **Risk-taking strategies** – such as thinking of an English word that you think means the same thing – relate **positively** to academic achievement.

⇓ Micro-strategies or detailed time-consuming activities are **negatively** associated with academic achievement. Some examples of micro-strategies are:
- using the word or phrase in a rhyme or with related words
- writing it down on a list
- remembering when you first saw it
- creating a wall chart of new words/phrases
- working out the meaning of an English work by dividing it into parts that you understand.

Our students provided a lot of strategies on how they remember new words and phrases. Here are some for you to consider, along with some from other research on learning new vocabulary:	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
Actually using a new word or phrase is useful:			
• For me I need to use a particular word or phrase at least three times within a short span of time to remember it.			
• I try to learn new words from daily life, even when I am shopping at Coles. The more often I use and see the word, the easier for me to understand and apply the word in my writing or speaking.			
• Read widely – stories, newspapers, magazines – outside class to increase your English vocabulary.			
• Use the word while having a conversation with a native English speaker.			
• Use any new word in everyday life whenever possible.			
Discipline specific vocabulary, or the terminology that is used in your study area, is especially important:			
• Write a brief definition of key words within texts (and perhaps write your first language equivalent above) so that you can understand how they are used in context.			
• Pay attention to new words and expressions used by your teachers and classmates.			
• Undertake extensive reading of references, journal articles, etc., in your discipline so that you have repeated exposure to specialist vocabulary items.			
• Maintain a glossary of key words and phrases in your discipline.			
Learning Australian expressions is a challenge:			

• Conversation groups are a great way to get familiar with Aussie slang.			
• I reckon the best way to pick up expressions I need in everyday life is to mingle with native speakers.			
• International students should learn about English speakers' backgrounds and unique culture. It takes time to comprehend to see all the complex differences.			
• Understanding your own culture is actually as important as understanding Australian culture when you study English as your second language.			
Linguistic research suggests that we can learn whole phrases just as we learn words:			
• If a word is difficult, try learning it in a phrase.			
• When you learn a phrase, you learn a bit of grammar with it.			
• Learn academic expressions as whole phrases. This helps you remember the correct prepositions, e.g. 'In contrast to…'; 'this is similar to…'; 'as a result of…', etc.			
• To learn a new word – find a context for it – learn it in a sentence that means something to you.			
• As you read, don't list new words, write them in a new context (e.g. a sentence). This also gives you practice at paraphrasing.			
• It is important to review and consolidate new words you have learned. When you read a sentence or a passage and come across a word you have just learned, focus on recalling the meaning of the word to help you understand the context.			
Some students had interesting new ways to remember words:			
• Type new words into the memo/notes section in your mobile phone.			
• Record yourself saying the word and its meaning onto your phone.			
• Use daily reminders or pop-up post-it notes on your computer screen.			

Some final words of advice:

- These are strategies that will work in with your daily activities.

- Be careful not to spend too much time creating special lists, wall charts and so on.

- At this level your time is better focused on mastering your academic reading and writing.

Appendix 15: Independent Evaluation Report

External Evaluator: Lynda Yates, Associate Professor, Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University.

1. Executive summary

This evaluation is largely summative in its focus and provides comment on the deliverables and overall likely impact of the study. Formative evaluations based on project documents and participation in project processes were provided formally in late 2008 and informally to the project team at various times since that time. The principal focus of this evaluation is therefore the final report and final resources for students and staff in the context of a general review of the value of the project.

Overall the project was highly successful.

- The strategies focus of the project is very appropriate to its aims and the university context.

- Project processes and communication were efficiently and appropriately conducted.

- The project is impressive in the scale of the undertaking and the way it has been able to involve team members and students from five universities nationally. However, the involvement of so many institutions entailed working with multiple sets of regulations and management teams which occasionally caused added complications.

- Given the complications of satisfying ethics committees in five different universities and designing an on-line questionnaire of the magnitude used in the study, the delays to the scheduled time line were understandable.

- While the quantitative results were not entirely as expected, the questionnaire yielded rich and appropriate data for the development of the project outcomes.

- The outcomes of the project have the potential to be of enormous benefit to international students studying in Australia and the staff who work with them. They are currently in a very useable form but may also be drawn upon in a variety of innovative ways which are beyond the scope of the current project.

- Workshops planned as part of the dissemination strategy are pending approval of the resource by the ALTC. These are crucial to the potential value of the project.

Recommendations for current project

- Minor amendments to be completed to the resources in line with specific comments sent through to project team.

- The workshops planned as part of the dissemination strategy to be undertaken in all five universities to ensure that the resources are well-publicised.

- The resources to be publicised nationally and available for an extended period on a website readily accessible to international students throughout Australia.

Recommendations for future projects
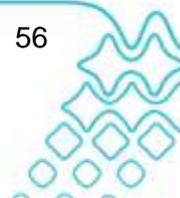
- A follow-up study in which the resources developed in this project are further exploited and elaborated for pedagogical purposes would enhance the sustainability of the outcomes.

- The time and resources allowed for the development of learning and teaching outcomes and the dissemination phases of future projects of this kind be extended.

- ALTC consider favourably projects which address issues both through a combination of project processes and project outcomes/outputs.

- Projects adopting this model should carefully consider the balance between the demands of data collection and the benefits for students.

- Consideration should be given by ALTC to the optimal number of collaborators from different institutions to be involved in the data collection phases of future projects. While the involvement of multiple universities is a distinct advantage at the dissemination phase of a project, it may be less of an advantage in earlier phases.

2. Background of project

The English Language Growth Project (ELG) was designed to investigate the development of English language skills of international students from non-English speaking backgrounds as they progress through their studies in Australia, and any relationship this may have to their academic success. Five Australian universities have been involved: Monash University (Melbourne), Edith Cowan University (Perth), The University of Melbourne, Macquarie University (Sydney) and Deakin University (Melbourne).

The broad aims of the ELG project were:

- to improve learning outcomes for international students through access to resources for greater ongoing language and academic development;

- to support institutions in facilitating intercultural learning through staff workshops and resources; and

- to enhance Australia's position within the international education community

The project was designed to investigate students' learning experiences through an online questionnaire, interviews and discussion board in order to examine how best to encourage the continued English language and academic growth of international students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

In order to do this, a web site (www.elg.edu.au) was developed, on which a data collection survey and discussion board were posted along with some resources and a collection of links useful to international students. The site therefore functioned as both a vehicle for both data collection and a source of assistance to international students. It was available to international students enrolled at participating universities during 2009 and will remain accessible for a two period following completion.

Student responses to the online questionnaire about their strategies for ongoing academic and language development were matched with grade point averages for evidence of correlations with academic success, and qualitative comments on various aspects of strategy use were collected. The discussion board was discontinued when it was found not to be popular with students. The findings of the project were used as the basis for the development of a DVD/ interactive on-line materials for students which include guidelines for academic and learning support staff. Seminars and workshops are also planned at participating universities.
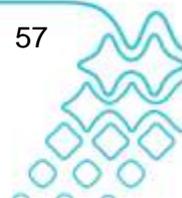
3. Context of the project's operation

International students represent a sizeable proportion of the current student body in many universities and many experience difficulty adjusting to the language and academic demands of work at a university level in English. Since most carry a considerable workload and are interested in language study as a means to an end rather than an end in itself, it can be difficult to encourage such students to undertake extended language courses. Moreover, the skills they need are often best learned as they study. In such a context, a focus on language learning and study strategies combined in association with a focus on self-study or study in small groups with appropriate support is likely to be the most helpful and relevant to contemporary approaches to life-long learning.

4. Purpose and design of the evaluation

4.1 Aims/objectives of the evaluation and this report

The evaluation plan provided for the bulk of the evaluation tasks to be undertaken by the project team as the ELG project developed throughout 2008 and 2009, and the results from these have already been reported and taken into account in the conduct of the project.

I was contracted as external evaluator in October 2008 at a stage when the objectives and outcomes of the project had been clarified and the procedures well-developed. The results of my formative evaluation in year 1 of the project were presented at the first steering committee meeting (24 November 2008), which I attended. These included preliminary comments on survey document and website and were based on an evaluation of the following:

- Survey
- Web site, inlcuding resource materials available
- Hub activity
- Other documentation including publicity brochures
- Informal discussion with members of the Steering Committee and the Research Team
- As the findings from these activities were forwarded with the Year 1 Report (30-11-08), the content will not be covered here.

The object of the current report is therefore to offer a summative evaluation, focusing chiefly on the value of the final deliverables and likely overall impact of the project on the quality of teaching and learning in this area.

4.2 Stakeholders and audience

The key stakeholders and therefore the audience for this report are the following: ALTC; the ELG Steering Committee; senior management, academic teaching staff, and learning and teaching support staff, in participating universities; international student groups and other organizations/units who have lent their support to the ELG project.

4.3 Key questions addressed
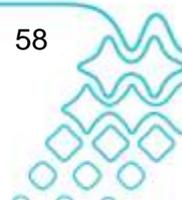
- Was the project design appropriate to the stated aims and objectives?

- Was it conducted efficiently and appropriately?

- To what extent have the intended outcomes been achieved?

- How useful are they?

- What factors helped and hindered in the achievement of the outcomes?

- How can the fruits of the project best be disseminated and their impact sustained?

- What lessons have been learned from this project and how might these be of assistance to other institutions?

4.4 Evaluation procedures and data

Various mechanisms for evaluation and reporting on the ELG project were undertaken by the project team during the course of the project, including formal written reports to ALTC, the Steering Committee, and senior management at participating universities; informal reports at forums and other gatherings; regular 'news' progress reports on the ELG website; journal articles and other publications; and oral briefings to academic staff and international student groups. These activities have been covered in progress reports to ALTC.

As part of the original evaluation plan, it was anticipated that the final evaluation should report on data collected from a number of tasks. These are listed below with comments on their conduct:

Focus groups in Melbourne to give feedback on survey/ website (Dec 08)

- It was not possible to arrange independent focus groups in Monash University, Melbourne, December 2008 as anticipated. Information on student response at various universities was reported to meetings by the research team and included in progress reports.

Focus groups in Sydney to give feedback on survey/ website (Mar 09)

- Only two students were available for interview at Macquarie University in March 2009.

Interviews with Steering Committee and Research Team (2009)

- Informal discussions with members of the Steering Committee and Research Team were held intermittently over the year.

Review of project working documents (2009)

- Project promotional and working documents were sent to me as they were developed and circulated to team members. Other documents were sent as requested.

Feedback from trials/ review of materials (End 09)

- Evaluation of the final interactive resources (CD/ on-line) was undertaken by a team of volunteer international students and experts in higher education learning
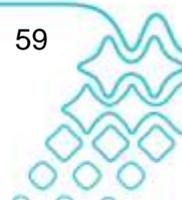
and comments were made on draft chapters of the staff resource by academics. A summary of responses to the evaluation of the resources has been included in the final report (see below).

Interviews/focus groups with staff following PD activities (2) (End 2009)

- These PD activities have not yet been undertaken and so it has not been possible to comment.

Final report and final resource outcomes (End project)

- A thorough final review of these outcomes was conducted early 2010.

5. Results and discussion

### 5.1 Interviews, project instruments and working documents

Although an independent review of student response to the ELG website could not be gathered from focus groups, feedback through members of the research team in the various universities was positive and the high response rate by students suggests that this was an area of interest to them.

Reviews of project documents, communication processes, meetings and discussions with project members suggest that the collaboration between five universities across Australia was at the same time both a strength of the project design and a challenge for the project team. For example, five different sets of ethics committees and privacy regulations had to be negotiated, and the different ways in which grades were calculated needed to be taken into account in conducting the quantitative analysis. While at times there were complications in coordination, the project had a clear structure and clear processes. These were very helpful in facilitating communication and contributed greatly to the overall smooth running of the project.

Detailed comments arising from my review of the survey instrument and website at the end of 2008 were fed back to the project team and amendments made. In my view, the instrument was sound and well constructed. However, the desire to use an instrument that was reliable from a research perspective meant that the resulting survey was very long. Although a substantial number of students completed it, respondent fatigue cannot be discounted as a factor in the results, and a shorter instrument would probably have allowed access to the required information more easily.

As the report indicates, only weak correlations were found from the quantitative data. Given the possibility that differences exist between faculties and universities in the way in which grades are awarded, this is not so surprising. An important point to make here is that success consists of more than GPAs. The qualitative data collected in the questionnaire, however, provided rich insights into strategy use and these proved invaluable in informing the content of the final outcomes. It would have been useful if the project had been able to record more interviews with different students for inclusion in the final resource.

The fact that five universities were involved has allowed dissemination to be planned in multiple locations and this has obvious advantages for how widely the work of the
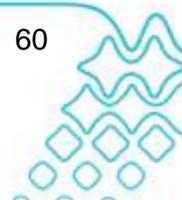
project can be publicised and thus for its potential impact. Since these have not yet been conducted, I cannot comment further.

5.2 Review of final CD/interactive on-line student and staff resources

In this section I provide a brief overall comment on the resources. More detailed specific formative comments on aspects of the resources have been sent to the research team to assist with final proofing. These are appended below as Attachment 1 to this report.

This student resource is of great value to international students and those who work with them. It contains a wealth of relevant information in a well-organised, attractive and accessible format. It has been designed for use as either self-access or a source of information for language and study support staff, providing student accounts, advice and a check list of useful strategies.

I particularly like the uncluttered appearance of the home page and the way in which student video data has been included. These excerpts, together with the large amount of useful advice, have the potential to provide the basis for single and group sessions with students on a wide range of topics in a number of settings, including pre-entry English and academic preparation courses, specific embedded academic support, general academic support provision and self-access.

The staff resource provides useful checklists and guidelines which will be of value to both experienced and less experienced members of staff working with international students. It is accessible and clear in format and offers clear synopses based on the research reviewed and reported in the project final report.

The focus of both resources is the provision of useful information and advice, and they do this very well, but there is also considerable potential for further exploitation and extension to provide educators with session ideas and activities. Thus, for example, teachers might find it very useful to have supplements to each section containing suggestions for classroom and group sessions in which students can engage reflectively with the material in a variety of ways. These could perhaps be further developed in a project designed to follow-up and build upon the current outcomes in the context of a detailed program of dissemination and staff professional development.

5.3 Review of final report

In this section I provide brief overall comments on the report as a final outcome of the project. More detailed specific comments have been sent to the research team to assist with final proofing, and are appended below to this report as Attachment 2.

The final report is clearly laid out and written and has great potential value as a resource for university and language support staff involved in language and study support programs. It and contains a very comprehensive review of the literature in areas relevant to strategy use by international students. This latter makes a very valuable contribution to both scholarship and professional practice in the area.

The results sections report the project findings systematically in ways that contribute usefully to research in the field and yet remains accessible to potential end-users. The fact that the quantitative investigations did not yield results entirely as expected is addressed in the report, and did not impact adversely on the final resource outcomes which were able to draw fruitfully on the qualitative data.
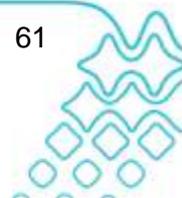
A major challenge is how to ensure that it is read by those to whom it will be the most use.

6. Conclusions and recommendations for future projects

Overall the project was very worthwhile. It was well-designed and efficiently conducted with few hitches that were not quickly addressed. The strategies focus of the project is very appropriate to its aims and the university context.

A strength of the project is the way in which the target group was able to draw benefit from both the processes and the product of the project. That is, they were able to make use of valuable tips, links and advice available on the ELG website during and also after the project itself, and will also benefit from the final outcomes, in the form of the final report and resources which will become available upon completion. Thus the needs of the target group were built in as an integral part of the conduct of the project and also built into the outcomes envisaged. This combination of a focus on both process and a useful product is a valuable model in encouraging educational change and the sustainability of that change.

As far as the results of the research phase of the study are concerned, while the correlations found in the quantitative data were only weak, albeit in an expected direction, this is perhaps not so surprising given the range of respondents, their backgrounds and the contexts and situations in which they were studying. The qualitative data from the questionnaire, however gave ample insight into strategy use, and in combination with the very comprehensive review of the literature, provided a solid basis for the development of the final resource. With hindsight, however, the questionnaire used in this project could have been shortened and the period for the dissemination period lengthened in order to maximize the engagement of the target group.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Recommendation

- ALTC consider favourably projects which address issues both through a combination of project processes and project outcomes/outputs.
- Projects adopting this model should carefully consider the balance between the demands of data collection and the benefits for students.

The project is impressive in the scale of the undertaking and the way it has been able to involve team members and students from five universities nationally. From a learning-and-teaching perspective, it was a strength that the project was able to collect data from, and offer ongoing advice to students around Australia, and also tap into a potentially wide network for the distribution and dissemination of the outcomes. However, this national reach also complicated project processes, at times causing delays during the research phases of the project.

7.2 Recommendation

- The ALTC consider the optimal number of collaborators from different institutions to be involved in the data collection phases of future projects. While the involvement of multiple universities is a distinct advantage at the
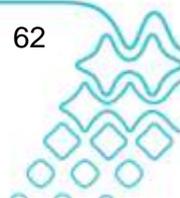
dissemination phase of a project, it may be less of an advantage in earlier phases.

The resource outcomes of the project have the potential to be of enormous benefit to international students studying in Australia and the staff who work with them. As discussed above, they are very relevant to students' needs, informative, and can be drawn on flexibly by a range of users. Although currently in a very useable form they may also be exploited in a variety of innovative ways which are beyond the scope of the current project.

7.3 Recommendation

- Minor amendments should be made to the resource in line with specific comments sent through to project team.

- Future projects designed to build on, exploit and further disseminate the work of this project should be considered.

Workshops planned as part of the dissemination strategy are pending approval of the resource by the ALTC. These are crucial to the potential value of the project.

7.4 Recommendation

- The workshops planned as part of the dissemination strategy be undertaken in all five universities to ensure that the resources are well-publicised.

- The resources be publicised nationally and available for an extended period on a website readily accessible to international students throughout Australia.

- The time and resources allowed for the resource development and dissemination phases of future projects of this kind be extended.

7.5 Recommendation

- While not disagreeing with any of the recommendations made here, it would perhaps reflect the current context more accurately if some mention were made of the constraints under which current universities are working since these interfere with the capacity of staff to undertake some of the activities you mention (for example the fact that many are part-time, junior and have little specific training in teaching strategies at all).