Final Project Report

INVESTIGATING THE EFFICACY OF CULTURALLY SPECIFIC ACADEMIC LITERACY AND ACADEMIC HONESTY RESOURCES FOR CHINESE STUDENTS

January 2010

Paul A Whitelaw, Fiona Henderson, Penny Jose
Victoria University, Melbourne
Li Defeng, Gao Cuiming, Shi Wenjie, Li Qinxi
Central University of Finance and Economics, Beijing

Website: http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/index.cfm
1. Project Personnel

Project Leaders

Fiona Henderson, Lecturer, Learning Support Services, VU. Fiona received a Carrick Citation in 2007. Fiona was a senior team member in the highly successful Academic Literacy Project, a research and deployment project that was funded by a Teaching and Learning Support Grant at VU and which is the pilot project for this application. She was a co-researcher and author of VU’s AVCC grant Improving Language and Learning Support for Offshore Students in 2005. She has led VU’s annual Teaching and Learning conference with Chinese partner institutions in China and is currently undertaking collaborative research projects into the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning with the Chinese partner institutions. Her PhD investigates employability skills with Chinese employers.

Paul A Whitelaw, Senior Lecturer, School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing, VU. Paul co-chaired the University’s Task Force into Student Transition and Attrition in 2002. He chaired a review of the University’s policy on Graduate Capabilities in 2008. Paul has been the senior investigator in several projects worth over $250,000 for the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre. He has published in the areas of the development and deployment of digital supported pedagogies. In 2007 Paul led the highly successful Academic Literacy Project. He received the VC’s Award for Teaching Excellence in 2001.

Project Team Members

Dr Li Defeng, Associate Professor in Finance, Vice Dean of the School of Foreign Studies, CUFE. Dr Li teaches subjects within the course of Personal Finance in VU-CUFE program. He visited VU in Melbourne for three months in 2005, auditing business classes and discussing teaching issues. This enabled him to gain better understanding of cross-cultural course delivery and deeper understanding of the differences in academic literary and academic honesty between Chinese students and foreign students.

Gao Cuiming (Christina), Associate Professor, School of Foreign Studies, CUFE. Christina teaches English to the students of VU-CUFE program. She visited Melbourne for three months in 2005, auditing English classes and sharing viewpoints on cross-cultural English teaching with teaching staff from VU. She has just completed a stint teaching in USA.

Shi Wenjie (Jack), Lecturer, School of Foreign Studies, CUFE. Jack teaches English to the students of VU-CUFE program. Jack visited Melbourne for two weeks in 2007, auditing English classes, and collaborated with Dr. Carolyn Woodley in a research project on Cultural Differences in English Language Teaching between Chinese Students and Foreign Students.

Li Qinxi (Ida), Lecturer, School of Foreign Studies, CUFE. Ida teaches English to the students of VU-CUFE program. Besides teaching English, she is undertaking her PhD in Finance and International Trade.

Project Administration

Penny Jose, Project Officer, School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing at VU. Penny was the Project Manager for the Academic Literacy Project.

Christine Mountford, Project Manager, Office of the Dean, VU College.

Reference Panel

Dr Julie Dixon, Head, Learning Support Services, VU.

Ms Felicity Prentice, Educational Developer, Quality Teaching Unit, Staff College, VU.

Mr John Bentley, Acting Associate Dean International, Faculty of Business and Law, VU.

Dr Jeffrey Carnett, Lecturer, La Trobe University.
2. Acronyms, key terms and definitions

ALTC
Australian Learning & Teaching Council

CUFE
Central University of Finance and Economics, Beijing, China

ELI
English Language Institute (ELI)

VU
Victoria University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

ACADEMIC HONESTY

According to the Victoria University Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism Policy (2008) “academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge and truth are fundamental to the work of the University. Honesty involves a commitment to acknowledging the work and ideas of others that it is built upon”.

ACADEMIC LITERACY

Academic literacy is the ability to read, write, understand, analyse, interpret, create and communicate in a formal scholarly context. It involves being capable of critical/independent thought, being able to work alone and to knowing how to acknowledge the work of others.

PRE-EXISTING MATERIAL

The pre-existing webpages and video created during the pilot project.

NEW RESOURCES

As a result of this project, several new resources were created; “retail” resources for students and “background” resources for teachers and researchers. All of these resources are available on the project website http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/default.cfm.

The retail resources are those resources developed as key outputs of the project, namely the videos and illustrated novel, which are ready to be viewed by students. All colleagues need to do is direct the students to the website, or, to save bandwidth issues, download a specific resource, and play it over their local internet or intranet.

The background resources include all of the materials used and developed in the execution of the project. If colleagues wish, they can download and customise these resources to meet their specific or institutional needs. For example, a colleague may wish to remove the VU specific content of one of the videos and replace that with content specific to their institution.

PILOT PROJECT

An internal project conducted at Victoria University in 2007 wherein the project team developed a suite of multimedia resources to help VU students understand the key principles of academic literacy and academic honesty.
3. Executive Summary

This project was conducted by Victoria University in Melbourne (VU) in partnership with Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing (CUFE) in order to address the issue of academic literacy for Chinese students. Academic literacy and plagiarism policies within most universities tend to be overly textual and punitive; written by academics for academics. Many remedial and support systems for students tend to be overly prescriptive and procedural and don’t appear to do enough to encourage the development of academic literacy and academic honesty, especially for those students from a non English speaking, non western academic background such as Chinese students.

The project was designed to develop a clear understanding of the efficacy and efficiency of messages and media that best convey the key themes of academic literacy and academic honesty to Chinese students.

The project uses and advances existing national and international knowledge particularly regarding teaching and learning of academic literacy and honesty to international students in Australia and the use of multimedia tools to assist understanding and adoption. A literature review investigated different aspects of the international students’ experience and explored ways the topic of academic literacy has been addressed.

The project found that although Chinese students generally think they understand the concepts of academic honesty and plagiarism, they are not an homogeneous group. They have their own individual difficulties applying the concepts in an environment where the expectations to study independently, think critically and reference widely are different from those to which they are accustomed at home. Language difficulties, loneliness, homesickness and cultural differences further compound their problems.

The investigation found that these students need help to deal with issues of transition, acculturation and engagement in their new environment. They want teachers to provide examples, models and culturally specific illustrations; they would like consistency and constant reinforcement from teachers. They would also benefit from the use of Chinese words on screen and/or translation where appropriate, and they would like explicit, technical and practical instruction and feedback.

The project resulted in a range of videos and graphic materials. These materials convey culturally specific messages that are meaningful and relevant to Chinese students. In particular, these messages address the key theoretical concepts dealing with ideas and knowledge, transition and acculturation (especially in a foreign environment), critical thinking, prescriptive activities and creativity, and general academic conduct in an Australian university environment.

The suite of five multimedia resources includes:

1. *The Road to Academic Literacy* (Video) - Key theoretical concepts and interactive examples
2. *Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy* (Video) – Proactive principles
3. *'Behind Closed Doors’ with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment* (Video) – Technical / Practical Instruction / Interactive Feedback
4. *April’s Journey* (Video) – Transition and acculturation
5. *'Battle Royale’ with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD.* (Comic Strip Serial) – Engagement and advertisement.

These materials were evaluated by interviewing students and conducting workshops with our panel of experts. Both students and academic experts responded positively to the resources for use in institutions, internationally and locally. Several recommendations were made regarding the fine tuning of the resources, many of which have been implemented, and their deployment. In terms of deployment and utilization of the resources, at one end of the spectrum they can be used in an extracurricular manner as a set of resources which students can access independently. At the other end of the spectrum, they can be deeply
embedded in classroom activities and even be used as the centrepiece for assessment activities. Our work suggests that teachers would like the resources embedded, whilst students tended to see them as optional, additional resources to be accessed on demand.

The prime focus of the research was to identify the most efficacious and efficient means of communicating the aforementioned important concepts relating to academic literacy and academic honesty to Chinese students.

This prima facie research suggests that these materials are both efficacious and efficient.

Dissemination, deployment and ongoing development of the resources now emerge as key priorities.

Dissemination activities included two workshops, creation of a project website, the development of an online community of practice supported by a listserv and a paper presenting the project methodology and pilot materials at the ILA conference in Hong Kong in June 2009 and the AALL NSW seminar, also in June 2009. An ongoing dissemination program including three journal articles based on the project, its outcomes and outputs is in train.

Deployment of the resources will be undertaken by way of a community of practice with colleagues encouraged to build the resources into their normal, sustainable teaching practices. A proposal to the ALTC to support an ongoing community of practice is in development. This proposal will seek funding to support colleagues who wish to embed these resources in their normal curriculum and pedagogy, especially for first year courses that have a high incidence of Chinese students.

Ongoing development of the resources will include the development of teachers’ resources and similar materials to assist in the embedding of the existing resources into normal, sustainable teaching practice. This ongoing development program will also be the subject of an upcoming ALTC competitive grant application.
4. Project Outcomes and Impacts

4.1. Project Brief
The project was designed to develop a clear understanding of the efficacy and efficiency of messages and media that best convey the key themes of academic literacy and academic honesty to Chinese students.

It was expected that this investigation would provide a clearer appreciation of the critical issue of understanding how best to offer insights and opportunities for Chinese students to explore the Western approach to academic literacy and academic honesty in a manner that is meaningful and relevant to them.

4.2. Context and significance
The ALTC, formerly the Carrick Institute, aims to identify current issues in higher education, develop ways to overcome these issues and advance current learning and teaching practices. One of the ALTC activities is to support innovative approaches to education by offering grant schemes. The ALTC also plays a significant role in the dissemination of the project outcomes to increase the overall performance of the education system in Australia (ALTC, 2008).

The ALTC recognises the importance of successful integration of international students into Australian higher education system. Executive Director, Professor Richard Johnstone, said "A set of good practice principles is vital for Australian universities because international students from non-English speaking backgrounds are an important part of the higher education community". This was a comment on research conducted with the support of ALTC called “Good Practice Principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities” (Australian Universities Quality Agency, 2009).

Furthermore, international students face the challenge of adapting to the principles of studying and assessment criteria in a novel environment; while academic staff must adapt to the changing student cohort. This area has also received attention from ALTC and resulted in the research undertaken by Professor Margaret Jackson and colleagues titled “Assessing Students Unfamiliar with Assessment Practices in Australian Universities” (Jackson, 2006).

The ALTC has also actively supported projects which use multimedia teaching resources and the value of such contemporary materials is well recognised. One example of an ongoing project which aims to address cross-cultural communication issues amongst international students by using multimedia training resources is a project titled “Development and evaluation of resources to enhance skills in higher degree research supervision in an intercultural context” (Homewood, 2007).

Against this background of sectoral concern for the quality of teaching, especially for international students, and interest in the application of modern digital technologies to improve learning efficacy and efficiencies, the project team developed the ideas documented in this report.

4.3. Stakeholders
The key stakeholders for this project were university staff, who provided time to review resources, assist with translation and provide advice about terminology; the reference panel who attended workshops; and teachers and university students who will use the resources and who have been invaluable in giving suggestions and criticisms.

4.4. Background
A key area of concern in higher education is academic literacy, which involves critical thinking, creativity and academic honesty. These issues have been a growing challenge in recent years at Victoria University (VU), which is a multi disciplinary institution with students from a wide variety of backgrounds, including the western suburbs of Melbourne, interstate...
and overseas, especially China and India. In response to these issues the university has adopted several innovative approaches in order to help international students in their studies in Australia. As part of this response, VU undertook a pilot project, which developed a multimedia resource including a web site, video and audio recordings. That project, now known as the “pilot project” received very positive feedback and enquiries from a number of academics, some wanting to use the material in its current form. Other academics enquired about the feasibility of adapting the resources for their own institutions and specific student cohorts. This project, now known as “the project” and funded by the ALTC, has emerged in response to that feedback and is thus seen as a key step in the progression of our work into academic literacy and academic honesty.

Victoria University (VU), in conjunction with Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE) received an ALTC Competitive Grant to conduct the project. The project ran over a period of approximately 15 months, commencing in June 2008. The project team submitted the application and full proposal in March 2008 and initially received advice of provisional approval from the ALTC regarding $80,000 funding. The project team was asked to address Intellectual Property issues and provide clarification regarding plans for the dissemination of the project outcomes, especially with regard to the copyright issues inherent in using multimedia resources drawn from popular culture. The ALTC subsequently approved the application and the formal agreement was signed in May 2008.

The ownership of the intellectual property in the existing VU resource (from the pilot project) was subject to third party interests and could not be assigned to other institutions. Therefore the project team proposed that the new resources (from the project) use appropriate sources of third party material (such as those available under Creative Commons licenses) to reinforce the key messages. The ownership of the intellectual property in these materials was not subject to third party interests. Although the finished tools are VU branded and contain material specifically tailored to the VU student population, they are made available as a resource material to all interested parties as part of the ALTC’s broad charter of dissemination. Other institutions are freely able to adopt and adapt the research and learning outcomes of the project and put them into practice in a manner that suits their individual circumstances.

The dissemination included developing a community of interest, or reference group, which was encouraged to engage with the VU researchers throughout the project; a communication process involving journal publications, distribution of flyers at relevant seminars and workshops; and establishment of a project website.

As required by ALTC a progress report was submitted in February 2009, six months after commencement of the project. This report outlined the objectives which had been achieved and reported that the project was on time. Originally, the project was scheduled to finish in August 2009, but the project team sought a month’s extension to allow time to make adjustments to the multimedia resources as recommended by the reference panel during the pilot testing and evaluation phase.

4.5. Approach and methodology

The project initially involved research to gain knowledge about the most effective messages and media to use to convey the themes of academic literacy and academic honesty. This was used to identify solutions with a view to adapting the pre-existing materials from the pilot project to meet the needs of the target student cohort. This was achieved through focus groups, online feedback and interviews.

The project team then re-drafted the original VU multimedia materials to reflect the lessons learnt from the above activities, completed the various multimedia resources and beta tested the resources with sample groups of academics, Chinese students studying in Australia and Chinese students studying at our partner institutions in China.

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4.6. Research process

The research process included:

1. A literature review encompassing several bodies of enquiry which informed the project. These included academic honesty and plagiarism, constructivist knowledge development, acculturation and assimilation, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model. The review focused particularly in higher education, with literature drawn from Australia and overseas.

2. A web based discussion with Chinese academics on the various terms used to explain “academic literacy” and “plagiarism” in both Chinese and English.

3. Focus groups with an expert panel of academics who have taught both in China and Australia as well as a series of focus groups with first, second and final year Chinese students who have successfully studied both in China and in Australia.

4. Online questionnaires administered to stakeholder groups, including academic staff and students to gather feedback and recommendations based on the pre-existing materials from the pilot project.

5. Interviews with Chinese students at VU to gather detailed information regarding the pre-existing materials from the pilot project.

An extended summary of the process is included in Appendix A of this report.

4.7. Advancement of existing knowledge

The project was informed by several bodies of enquiry:

a) Academic honesty and plagiarism;

b) Constructivist knowledge development;

c) Acculturation and Assimilation; and

d) The Elaboration Likelihood Model.

a) Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism are a source of ongoing problems across all higher education institutions. It is clear that plagiarism occurs in Australian higher education and it appears to be widespread (Devlin 2002; O’Regan 2006). This situation may be exacerbated by cultural differences experienced by international students when studying in Australia. “It is even more difficult for international students, writing in a second language and also, often, from a cultural background of different assumptions about the correct use of sources” (Chanock 2003). It can also be argued that this situation is not unique to Australia (Bennett 2005). In fact, the literature indicates that plagiarism, collusion and cheating are increasing (Carroll 2004).

Academic dishonesty, and one of its common manifestations, plagiarism, is recognised by academics as a chronic and worsening problem (Anon. 2006). At the same time, our experience indicates that many students complain that academic honesty, and especially plagiarism, is an archaic, irrelevant academic convention that does not apply in the “real world”. This view is often reinforced by the way universities inform students about plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Rules, regulations and repercussions are hidden under heavily textual websites (O’Regan 2006). This has the dual effect of alienating students who are not familiar with text only discourse as well as students for whom English is not their first language. Some institutions have focussed on “practical solutions” by offering instruction on paraphrasing and the technical aspects of correctly citing work. However, these approaches seem to miss the key point, particularly when juxtaposed against the principles of higher education; that students need to develop an understanding of underlying theory and principles of academic literacy and academic honesty, rather than
learn simple tasks and processes often without understanding (Emerson, Rees et al. 2005; Valentine 2006).

Whilst there is evidence to suggest that students are not openly dishonest (Yeo 2006) and that they recognise that cheating is wrong (Davis, Grover, Becker, McGregor 1992), they still do not recognise that academic dishonesty is a critical and substantial form of cheating and that there are negative consequences if discovered. However, it may be that, as Keith-Spiegel (1990) found, young people see cheating in everyday life, which reinforces that it must be acceptable to cheat to get ahead (Davis et al. 1992).

In response to this situation, some authors have called for changes to the way students approach the issue of academic dishonesty. “Students need to develop a stronger commitment to the educational process, and possess, or activate, an internalised code of ethics that opposes cheating to deal with the problem of plagiarism more effectively” (Davis et al. 1992). Davis and his colleagues (1992) argued that there is a key role here for academics who should routinely discuss with students why they should not cheat, rather than just telling them “don’t cheat”.

The experience of Davis and his colleagues is that academic staff who follow their recommendation report lower levels of plagiarism than colleagues who do not. Unfortunately, in contrast to this advice, many universities have resorted to a hectoring and stentorian approach to dealing with academic dishonesty. A survey of university based academic dishonesty and plagiarism websites in Australia and around the world has identified a number of common characteristics:

• a citation of the university policy on plagiarism;
• a strong focus on the punitive implications of plagiarism;
• an overly textual style that is clearly written by academics for academics; and
• some “helpful hints” (technical instruction) on how to cite and paraphrase correctly.

What was most notable was an absence of discussion of the underlying principles of academic honesty and academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism.

Unfortunately, the typical approaches of official warnings, guidelines and policies do not appear to be enough to help students understand and develop the necessary skills to avoid plagiarism.

While plagiarism, and its more positive counterpart, academic integrity, are variously presented as being criminal, educational, unequivocal, or complex, universities grapple with ways of dealing with it; ways that become codified in universities’ policies.

(O'Regan 2006, p. 114)

This project has built on the above literature and prior research undertaken by VU in Melbourne and with CUFE in Beijing. Interview responses collected from Chinese lecturers and students for VU’s AVCC report (Dixon and Henderson 2005) indicated that there are ‘difficulties with specific genres of assessment tasks, with understanding lecturers, with unfamiliarity, with a range of academic resources; and, in China, with English as a foreign language environment and constant technological issues that specifically challenge Chinese students’ (p. 20).

With Australia’s ongoing engagement with international educational partners (DEST 2005), the issue of appropriate academic conduct is one which requires approaches which are relevant, creative and sustainable. The project has sought to address these issues through development of a suite of Introducing Academic Literacy resources which engage the students in a manner which is scaffolded, relevant, creative and sustainable. It has sought to create resources which can be incorporated into the curriculum and assessment tasks as early as possible; which communicate the message to students using a positive and educative, rather than punitive approach; and which are flexible, easily modifiable and transferable across disciplines.
b) Constructivist Knowledge Development

The constructivist approach (Biggs 1994) provides a point of differentiation between the reproduction of facts, or fact-like statements, and the demonstration of an understanding of the subject content. This understanding is often found to be wanting when students are called upon to demonstrate a depth of understanding in assignments and exams. Students entering university are also required to adopt a very specific style of academic writing which they may not be skilled in or even of which they are not fully aware (Kaldor and Rochecouste 2002). This writing style is also not modelled in the texts and articles that are prescribed reading for students. For example, many of the articles and texts recommended to students are often written for an audience of academic peers in such forums as academic conferences and journals (Kaldor and Rochecouste 2002).

Furthermore, according to Biggs (2003) students will focus on material evaluated in summative assessment and disregard any and all other “extraneous” material in a unit of study. This view of what is important can lead to the “search for marks” without concomitant understanding, which in turn can lead to progress through a degree without academic development. Embedding academic literacy skills development within curricula and specifically in the assessment tasks presents a way to address this problem.

In order to facilitate the construction of deep understanding and the adoption of appropriate affective outcomes, or values, students need to develop skills in academic practice that are predicated on self reflection and metacognition. These fundamental, but high level, skills cannot be acquired without structured guidance by well supported and resourced teachers. This project has sought to provide technical practical instruction and interactive feedback through the use of a video in which an academic deconstructs a student assignment as an example of how to develop an essay. The video presents a narrative explaining the genesis and development of academic writing as part of an experience that involves the student acquiring both technical skills and a broader awareness of the academic environment in which the student studies, learns and is assessed.

c) Acculturation and Assimilation

As a cross sectoral university, VU, like many other Australian universities, has a diverse student cohort (Caldwell, 2009) who uses multiple entry points to access the various courses on offer. This combination of student diversity and entry point variety presents many challenges to ensure that all students are appropriately introduced to, and adopt the key academic values and principles of, academic literacy and academic honesty. The introduction of academic literacy skills, at the earliest possible point, and with the expectation that such skills will be embedded in the pedagogy, supports successful academic transition. However, given the multiple entry points, it is necessary to develop a raft of resources that can be deployed into various units of study to ensure that all incoming students are exposed to, understand, value and apply these principles and traditions.

There is strong evidence that successful transition and orientation programs lead to improved student acculturation and satisfaction which in turn leads to improved retention, progression and, ultimately timely completion (a number of strategies are cited in Gabb, Milne and Cao, 2006). Conversely, poor, or nonexistent transition and orientation programs can lead to unacceptable levels of student attrition.

According to the literature, transition and adjustment to new environments can be influenced by many factors including: previous experience and expectations, prior level of education and training, dominant cultural origin, language and self esteem, personality, readiness and willingness to change, active involvement and engagement.

From a psychological perspective, one can view a student’s transition in the higher education experience as being heavily influenced by a raft of personal factors such as a student’s personality (Lennings, Burns et al. 1998), self efficacy (Eronen and Nurmi 1999) and cultural background (Barron and Arcodia 2002). An individual can therefore be influenced by an orientation program which introduces the concepts of academic literacy and academic honesty within a framework that appeals to them and relates to their personal experiences and world view.
However, this approach is one based on the need for the students to adopt the principles and practices of the host university, rather than the host university modifying its traditions simply to cope with a particular cohort. This approach is consistent with Borland and Pearce’s (1999) advice to avoid the concept of “otherness” (p. 59) wherein too much focus on accommodating differences can “obscure the heterogeneity of class, gender and other subcultures already present within the ethnic / national culture”. More pointedly, Borland and Pearce state that:

*teaching approaches that focus primarily on cultural difference do not seem particularly useful in assisting lecturing staff to address issues of student performance, whereas an understanding of the need to acculturate all students to academic and disciplinary cultures of the university provides a starting point for making the rules and expectations for tertiary study more transparent for all students, regardless of who they are or what their background is.*

(Borland and Pearce 1999, p. 59)

Similarly, there is an extensive body of research into both the similarities and differences in the Chinese student cohort (Marton, Dall'Alba et al. 1996; Volet and Renshaw 1996; Zhang and Sternberg 2000). This research suggests that whilst Chinese students are individuals, in terms of their personality and learning styles amongst other attributes, just like their western counterparts, they also have a set of common traits, most notably their cultural background and thus their ability to appreciate cultural references.

The project sought to evaluate messages and media which may be specifically contextualised to accommodate the group needs of the Chinese international students. Needs for support during transition, problems of loneliness and homesickness and the need to engage with both university and local community were addressed in the titled *April’s Journey* video. This video depicts the challenges and victories of one young Chinese student as she adapts to life in a new country. It aims to help students understand, though April’s experience, how they must learn, adopt, value and apply VU’s traditions and approaches to academic literacy and academic honesty.

d) The Elaboration Likelihood Model

The goal of this project is to evaluate messages and media that ensure that students pay attention to, receive and adopt the key messages of academic literacy and academic honesty and their attendant practices. One approach to this is the use of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) which has emerged from communications theory (Petty and Cacioppo 2000). The ELM suggests that individuals process messages in one of two ways; high elaboration or low elaboration wherein elaboration is “the extent to which a person carefully thinks about issue-relevant arguments contained in a persuasive communication” (p. 191).

With high elaboration, also known as the central route, messages are carefully scrutinised and evaluated for logic, internal consistency and merit. With low elaboration, also known as the peripheral route, individuals are less motivated to think about the arguments and tend to concentrate on peripheral clues to assess the relevance and credibility of the source, and by implication, the merit and value of the information.

Petty and Cacioppo argue that the high elaboration route is taken when the subject matter is deemed relevant and vital to the recipient. The low elaboration route is employed when the recipient deems the subject matter not entirely relevant and so relies on a “lazy, short hand” of visual and audio cues to assess the merit of the argument (2000, p. 192).

In terms of the ELM, the situation concerning academic literacy and academic honesty is particularly perplexing. One would automatically assume that students should be keenly interested, given the grave consequences involved, in understanding all of the issues related to academic honesty and its negative corollary, academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism. However, the evidence as previously discussed suggests that increasing numbers of students do not heed the message. It may be that despite its importance, students find most
of the advice about academic honesty and especially plagiarism to be so inaccessible that they do not exert the necessary effort to develop a deep and enduring understanding of the fundamental principles and practices involved. At best, they may tactically develop some technical skills in the correct methods of citing work without strategically developing the understanding necessary to value and adopt the underlying principles of academic literacy and academic integrity.

The ELM model suggests that the peripheral route can be used to secure the recipient’s attention in order to get them to engage in the central route (Petty and Cacioppo 2000, p. 194). The project, through the Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy video, sought to address the effectiveness of material, which is novel and represents a discourse that is familiar, meaningful and significant to the Chinese student cohort. Culturally relevant examples are used to encourage students to explore, understand and value the underlying principles of academic literacy and academic integrity. It was argued that, by making academic literacy and academic integrity more accessible via culturally relevant multimedia, the student would move from the peripheral route to the central route and more fulsomely engage in and develop a stronger appreciation of the principles and practices of academic literacy and academic integrity.

4.8. Analysis of success factors

Factors which were critical to the success of the approach included:

- A cohesive, stable team who worked, and continue to work well together.
- Technical skills which are central to the production of multi-media resources.
- The assistance of Chinese colleagues and specialist consultants.
- Developing an interesting angle on the material, and being able to distill dry theoretical concepts into clear, everyday, yet interesting, relevant and meaningful content.
- Using interesting and engaging (even beguiling) people to appear on camera.
- A collegiate and informed media consultant, who did not succumb to a heart attack during the most stressful parts of the resource development.

Factors which impeded the success of the project included issues with translation. For example, the team conducted web-based research amongst eight Chinese consultants, yet found it difficult to arrive at a consensual, satisfactory translation for the term *Academic Literacy*. The language and nuance in the *Battle Royale* comic made it very difficult to translate. It was a very long process and it is likely that some of the meaning was lost along the way.

Cultural sensitivities, such as the use of the image of Chairman Mao as the hero in original versions of the *Battle Royale* graphic novel, also had impact. Although some Chinese people loved it and enjoyed the wry humour, others found it offensive. One professor “considered it as a damage to Chinese students’ feelings and could have a lot of negative influences.” In contrast, another responded: “I guess it’s fair enough for some students to think that way because there are always some students who are more sensitive than others.”

Under current Australian legislation, copyright issues have a negative impact on multimedia materials designed for more than one institution. For example, the existing resources, namely the video and audios created for the pilot project included many elements such as snippets of films, pictures, music and sound effects in which VU does not hold copyright. These elements were essential in giving the video relevance to its target audience. VU was only able to include these elements in the existing resource because they fell within VU’s existing licenses (with CAL, Screenrights etc) or were obtained with the owners’ license (by payment of a licence fee or otherwise). These elements were removed in the development of the new resource materials in order to allow other institutions to adopt, adapt and use the materials without breaching copyright. However, the need to use appropriate sources of third party material (e.g. available under Creative Commons licenses) in the new resource
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hampered the use of popular culture to engage and connect with the audience. It also required the creation of custom materials where currently existing popular culture materials are quicker, cheaper, and more effective.

Budget and general multimedia production issues are always challenging and demanding and constant monitoring is required so that target goals are achieved.

4.9. Analysis of feasibility of implementation

The project team was careful to address all intellectual property issues so that the resources could be implemented in any institution or location. The new resources are original work which are not subject to third party interests. The team sought clarification from ALTC counsel about one ingrained copyright issue, which involved the use of a particular image in the new resource. The ALTC counsel agreed with VU counsel that the use of the image was minor and should qualify under section 41A of the Copyright Act (1968) as fair dealing for the purposes of parody or satire.

The resources are appropriate for use in a variety of institutions or locations, both internationally and locally. As established in the literature review, the issues surrounding academic literacy and academic honesty are applicable for both local and international students and the project team was asked to share the outcomes of the project with a range of institutions and interested parties. The project team’s research established a number of potential applications for the resources. For example:

Possible audiences or uses for April’s Journey (Video) include:

- pre-departure viewing and orientation for international and even regional Australian students to give them an insight into some of the issues involved in relocating to a foreign city away from home;
- any student doing group work would benefit from the insight into an international student’s experience in Australia; and
- tutors and sessional teachers, and other university support staff and family who need to understand some of the challenges confronting students.

The 'Battle Royale' with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD Comic Strip Serial could be used:

- in PowerPoint format as a weekly tip at the start of lectures to reinforce the ongoing and various aspects of Academic Literacy;
- in pdf or printed booklet during orientation to promote the existence of academic issues and the entire Introducing Academic Literacy resource; and
- with English and Chinese versions side by side as a tool for language exercises.

The Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy (Video) could be:

- used during class to raise awareness and to start a student discussion e.g. where there is tension or perceived contradiction about the ideas of creativity, critical thinking and academic honesty;
- loaded into the student learning management system, especially for off-shore students;
- used at the start of the essay writing process and linked to other strategies that underpin academic literacy e.g. researching, referencing and searching; and
- used to show teachers how to teach the concepts.

Possible applications for the technical instruction video 'Behind Closed Doors' with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment include:

- placing it within an institution wide “academic skills unit” and linking to it from various subjects;
• placing it on the subject website when the students need it, to avoid “white noise”; or alternatively leaving it there for the whole semester and directing students towards it when necessary;
• presenting it to students with the criteria for writing a paper; and
• packaging it with a series of resources e.g. paraphrasing and suggested activities or as a teacher’s manual with questions.

Furthermore, as self contained elements within a suite of resources, these various components can be used individually as a one-off classroom based activity, or in contrast, they can, as a package, form the backbone of a longitudinal skills development program.

Ongoing work on the project outputs will further broaden the application of the multimedia material for teaching the principles of academic literacy. Given that April’s Journey addresses common challenges, such as loneliness, homesickness and language barriers, one suggestion was to reduce the amount of local branding so it can be used for international students going to different cities. The same treatment would enhance the transferability of the Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy and 'Behind Closed Doors' with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment videos. On the other hand, the comic strip serial is generic resource without Victoria University branding or images of Melbourne, and is therefore widely applicable in its current form.

At the time of writing, semester 2, 2009, the resources are embedded into a suite of subjects in the Faculty of Business and Law and the English Language Institute (ELI) at Victoria University. They also form part of the “kit” for the offshore academic skills workshop series, occurring November 2009.

5. Dissemination

5.1. Materials

The project produced five multimedia resources which address different challenges which Chinese, and in fact, all international students confront in academic literacy and academic integrity:

5.1.1 The Road to Academic Literacy (Video)

This new video is a re-edited (or revised) version of the existing video from the pilot project. It contains original footage and sound. The material used by VU under licence was removed and the intellectual property in these materials is not subject to third party interests.

The video aims to address key theoretical concepts using interactive examples. Two students step into the world of academia and learn that success at university involves the application of advanced principles such as critical thinking, creativity and academic honesty that they must master across their studies to gain satisfactory employment.

The video is available in three versions:
  • Video (25mins);
  • Interactive Questions (5mins); and
  • Video + Questions (30mins).

5.1.2 Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy (Video)

This video uses proactive principles to connect the theoretical to the everyday as two real life students encounter The Road to Academic Literacy. Their skepticism and indifference mirrors the feelings of the typical undergraduate student such as puzzlement, confusion and a pervading sense of exasperation, desperation and anxiety. This perspective helps establish the relevance and legitimacy of this resource for students.

The three chapters of approximately ten minutes each are best viewed on separate
occasions to avoid overload. These build serial interest and scaffold the development of skills and understanding.

5.1.3 ‘Behind Closed Doors’ with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment (Video)

After outlining an overall academic philosophy in The Road to Academic Literacy, this resource incorporates technical and practical instruction and interactive feedback and is designed to translate theory into practice. It showcases specific tips which improve an assignment before our eyes. The presence of the curious student and his direct questioning of our infamous Grumpy Lecturer and the process of marking work help improve the student's understanding of what exactly is required in his assignment.

The video is 18 minutes in length, but can be viewed in six segments of approximately three minutes each:

- writing clearly;
- using examples;
- quoting;
- paraphrasing;
- referencing; and
- writing logical conclusions.

5.1.4 April’s Journey (Video)

This video addresses the issues of transition and acculturation. In 2008, April travelled from northern China to study at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia. Struggling with homesickness, culture shock, communication issues and a new city, social circle, and study style, April learns more about herself and her peers than she ever expected. The video is in two parts and runs for 12mins. The video has a natural intermission which can be used to generate class discussion and personal reflection.

5.1.5 ‘Battle Royale’ with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD (Comic Strip Serial)

Grumpy Lecturer gives words of wisdom on a wide range of everyday study issues in this 16 episode comic. The setting is an ancient ping pong tournament at the top of the world.

The serial has been designed to engage students with the topic and alert them to the existence of the resources. It can be used in PowerPoint format as a weekly tip at the start of lectures, or in pdf as a weekly handout. However, it can also be produced as a printed booklet during orientation to promote awareness of the existence of academic issues and the entire Introducing Academic Literacy resource.

With English and Chinese versions side by side, the comic also doubles as an engaging tool for language exercises.

5.2. Sharing

In keeping with the ALTC’s agenda of disseminating and encouraging sustained institutional change, we sought to share both the outputs (video materials) and outcomes (understanding of efficacious and efficient ways of teaching Chinese students about academic literacy and academic integrity) of the project with colleagues both here in Australia and overseas.

The project team hosted a project launch/workshop to which we invited all stakeholders and which was advertised within the wider academic community via email and the higher education press. This provided an opportunity to watch the video, take a ‘tour’ of the website, respond to questions and collect further input and feedback.

The external project launch, which was attended by 32 academics from 12 institutions around Australia, was accompanied by ongoing evaluation and regular communication activities with the partner institution and the project reference group. The VU internal launch
was held in Melbourne in December 2009 when two representatives from CUFE were able to attend.

The project team has developed an extensive contact list of over 140 academics from 47 institutions who have registered for website access, workshop attendance and general advertisements. This list was also used to notify stakeholders and interested parties about obtaining final copies of the various resources developed in the project.

The team plans to report the findings of the Project in refereed journals and at appropriate academic and pedagogical conferences such as HERDSA, Pacific Rim First Year Conference, ASCILITE and AIEC amongst others.

The materials are available for download from the project website at: http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/index.cfm

A flyer was also produced for distribution by project stakeholders for personal distribution at workshops and conferences. See Appendix B.

6. Linkages

6.1. Links with other projects

The project advances the existing body of knowledge by building upon an established foundation of research regarding academic literacy, academic integrity, acculturation and transition amongst others. The project team identified academics who had been involved in other ALTC projects which focused on academic literacy, the use of multimedia resources and Chinese students. These people were invited to the project’s workshops to give input into the project. For example, the project used the following past and current ALTC Competitive Grant projects to inform its development:

- A cross-disciplinary approach to language support for first year students in the science disciplines, University of Canberra, 2007
- Addressing the on-going English growth of international students, Monash University, 2007
- Assessing Students Unfamiliar with Assessment Practices in Australian Universities, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, 2005
- Enhancing frameworks for assuring the quality of learning and teaching in university offshore education programmes, The University of Western Australia, 2007
- Making research skill development explicit in coursework, University of Adelaide, 2007
- Strategies and approaches to teaching and learning across cultures, UTS, 2007
- The impact of web-based lecture technologies on current and future practice in learning and teaching, Macquarie University, 2006

The Project Leaders of each of the projects were invited to actively participate in our various activities, including registering for the website, attending workshops, reviewing the materials and participating in the launch of the resources. A complete list of attendees at these activities is attached in Appendix C.

6.2. Interdisciplinary links

Both of the Project Leaders teach into a faculty of business and thus tend to have a strong business and social science perspective. However, during the course of this project we have managed to establish links with colleagues from a variety of disciplines including; economics, linguistics, history, science and engineering as well as librarians and English language and teaching and learning specialists. These colleagues are identified in Appendix C.
7. Evaluation

7.1. Evaluation processes

Feedback was sought through a variety of activities including: an online survey, interviews, focus groups and workshops.

An online survey was used to gather summative feedback about the existing, original video resource from more than 140 students and 30 academics. The survey contained items that dealt with the technical aspects of being online, the suitability of the resources for students and their likely impact on academic literacy and academic integrity. Two open-ended questions sought feedback on other issues and finally on areas for improvement.

Formative feedback in the form of focus groups, conversations, workshops and face-to-face interviews with staff and students was gathered to provide the project team with evaluative information to guide improvements to the existing resource and direction for the new resources. This feedback also led to the identification and subsequent remediation of problematic aspects of some of the resources which ensured that the goals of the project were achieved.

7.2. Evaluation outcomes

7.2.1 Literature Review

The literature review firmly established that plagiarism is an issue that needs to be dealt with in higher education. Australia’s ongoing engagement in international education highlights the need for approaches which are relevant, creative and sustainable. International students are often unfamiliar with English language, western-style assessment tasks and require structured guidance to develop skills. Furthermore they are often struggling with issues of transition and orientation. The research suggests that the message will be taken more seriously if the subject matter is deemed relevant and vital to the recipient. Therefore it is imperative that we seek to communicate to the Chinese student cohort in a manner that is familiar, meaningful and significant. The resources developed in this project seek to encourage these students to explore, understand and value the underlying principles of academic literacy and academic integrity.

7.2.2 Evaluation of existing resource

a) Online surveys

The feedback was positive, with many favourable comments such as “excellent information, characters are believable, information presented in a way that is entertaining, links to outside and internal sources for more information, overall this will be an excellent resource.” The summative feedback from the online survey is reported in Appendix D.

Overwhelmingly respondents felt that the interactions between the good student, naughty student and grumpy lecturer on the video were fun and engaging and added to the overall experience. They felt they had learned a lot from the video and their creative and critical thinking skills and grades would improve. They were inspired to further develop their academic literacy.

Whilst the majority of respondents agreed that the video was the right length, comments from several respondents suggested the video was a little long. Others suggested it would be helpful to be able to view the video in sections, independently, to accommodate time constraints. The team decided to include user controlled navigation tools in the new resource so that users can watch by chapter or smaller sections and review if desired.

Academic staff felt that placing captions of the speaking and monologue in English at the bottom of the screen would enhance the Chinese students’ understanding of the content.
Feedback from one academic staff member was remarkably consistent with the student interviews in that some of the examples used might not be understood, recognised or accessible to certain demographic groups (such as international students, for example). For example, “the reference to *Romeo and Juliet* and to *Star Trek* might be meaningless to e.g. Chinese students. The relevance of lemmings might be missed by Asian students in general (no lemmings there). The section dealing with the Vegemite milkshake although it had me falling off my chair laughing probably won't make sense to most international students as they really do not know what Vegemite is. Or what it is for.”

Feedback such as this was critical in the development of the new resource.

**b) Focus groups**

Students at CUFE, Beijing watched the existing video from the pilot project in June 2008. Their suggestions included that the video could include more Chinese examples and “Maybe you can find one Chinese actor. And, you can speak slower when come to the major parts.” One student made an interesting comment that “If I was a good VU student studying in CUFE, I promise that you really do not want to hear my story. I am not a good student, all I know is how to deal with the exams.” The student comments are attached in Appendix E.

This was followed by a focus group in Beijing in June 2008 with four academic staff around academic honesty issues. Of particular interest was their lack of awareness of the VU academic literacy policy or existence of a similar policy in their institution. They mentioned their use of models. They might show a poor example (from one of the students), and do the same with a good example to analyse why something is good and how it contrasts to something that is poor. They also like to give examples in Chinese, such as how to look for references, websites, books and journals to explain how to find appropriate material. The CUFE staff conversations are summarised in Appendix F.

The project team held a focus group with ten students at VU facilitated by an external consultant in September 2008. The Chinese students did not appear to misunderstand or reject the idea of plagiarism. Interestingly, the students said they would like “more structure and direction, such as examples” possibly such as they were used to at home. The full notes from these focus groups are included in Appendix G.

**7.2.3 Interviews**

In August 2008 the project team invited an academic staff member, who has had experience teaching in China, to participate in an interview to evaluate the original video from the pilot project. She made the point that although a conscientious effort was clearly made to present key ideas in terms accessible to non-native speakers; she was still concerned that the language was too complex in places. The interview notes are attached in Appendix H.

Five face-to-face interviews were also held with VU international students from China to identify problems with the existing video from the pilot project. Like the other feedback about the original video, their suggestions were used to inform the development of the new academic literacy video. Students suggested culturally meaningful examples which could be used to replace the ‘western’ examples. They pointed out words, phrases and concepts which they did not understand. They identified technical, navigational issues and quiz difficulties. They also raised other issues about the topic of plagiarism, such as peer pressure to ‘show’ their work to their friends and techniques they had developed to avoid the appearance of not wanting to help.

A comprehensive summary of these interviews is provided in Appendix I.

**7.2.4 Web-based discussion**

We found that the term *Academic Literacy* is not easily translated into Chinese. A web-based discussion with eight respondents (six native and two non-native Chinese speakers) found there is not one common translation or meaning of the term. One respondent said “Of all of
them, perhaps I like 学术素养 ("academic accomplishment") the best because it implies refinement of academic character (养 means to nourish), and I think it encapsulates more the process of becoming.” However, it was difficult to come to a consensus on the definitions, because it depends to a large extent on the context.

The web-based discussion participants concluded that whilst “not perfect” 学术研究技巧 (academic study skills), was the most accurate translation to use for the purpose of the video.

More detail from the discussion is included in Appendix J.

7.2.5 Project Website

The project website required users to register with some elementary contact details so that the project team could report to the ALTC how many people, and from how many institutions and countries, have visited the site. Registering also provided access to the Project Discussion Board, although this did not attract much interest from registrants.

To date the website has attracted 48 registrants (42 from Australia, five from China and one from Malaysia) from 47 institutions. The project team envisages that this will increase greatly as the team’s 140 contacts are alerted that the final product is ready for use.

7.2.6 Workshop

The initial workshop in July 2008 was used to brainstorm and gather input about the content, management, and methods to maximise the efficacy and sustainability of the resources developed in the project. Discussion emerged around several themes and a number of teaching and learning strategies were discussed.

Poor language skills emerged as one of the main barriers to creativity and critical thinking amongst Chinese students, combined with difficulties of understanding cultural, moral and ethical differences in academic writing.

Cultural issues such as the need to protect face and respect authority, reticence and reluctance to volunteer were raised. It was noted that academics expect these students to undertake assessment tasks which emphasise the very skills they do not have. Teachers can help address these issues by providing context-specific cultural maps and strategies to help the students negotiate the new culture. However, these resources must not evolve into simple prescriptions that must be followed, without question.

There are also different standards amongst academics on what constitutes plagiarism and academics need to be aware of the confusion this creates among students. Given the complexities involved it may be better to be prescriptive initially and encourage more creativity as students’ skill levels increase.

One of the key themes which emerged was that teachers are not dealing with an homogenous group of students. Even within the Chinese students cohorts, there is considerable diversity in background. Therefore there will be no one single solution to the problem and the problem will not be solved with a single resource. Moreover, the issue needs to be reinforced over the student’s entire education; it needs a whole of university and a whole of curriculum approach.

Teaching and learning strategies included the need for discipline-specific tasks, examples and resources. It may be more helpful to create smaller resources which teachers can adapt in different settings rather than one large resource. It can be more effective to deliver face-to-face than just ‘stick it on the web’ and use more guided and structured class activities and assessment tasks. It would be good to create a dynamic, interactive video to show how to take material from different sources and put it into meaningful, independently created writing.
Finally, it was noted that academics could not assume that teachers have the ability to teach academic literacy in class. There is some reluctance in teaching staff regarding innovative teaching methods/processes that are not directly related to their discipline knowledge. Teachers need to address the issue of ensuring the resources are used by both teachers and students and raise awareness of the existence of such resources.

A workshop report is included in Appendix K.

7.2.7 Development of resources

Proper project management systems and controls were used to guide the project. However, the project was stretched in terms of time, money and resources. This was because timelines and budget were overly ambitious and this put undue pressure on those involved. Delays with the production of the resources, partly following feedback from the pilot test and workshops, left little time for comprehensive and effective dissemination and evaluation. None the less, apart from a four week delay in the completion of the resources, the project was completed on time and on budget. A formal acquittal report will be tabled in mid October, 2009.

7.2.8 Pilot test of final “draft” resources

a) Focus groups

Chinese students at CUFE and English Language Institute (ELI) students at VU participated in a series of focus groups in June and July 2009 to discuss the resources developed for this project.

The feedback for the Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy (video) was generally positive, with students appreciating the Flash production, pictures, style of humor and music. They opined that the examples were good and appreciated the combination of Chinese and foreign thinking. They said it was good to know that many students felt the same way about the issues raised in the video.

The problems they identified were mainly about technical aspects such as the picture frame and word size being too small and the font used in Quick Tips being difficult to read. Some students suggested that the video was too long and they would not watch it all at once on their own. They also indicated that the speaking speed was a little too fast and it would be good to use Chinese subtitles or have a script provided.

The students indicated that the April's Journey video would help them overcome the language barrier and understand communication and cultural differences. It may help them understand difficulties integrating in a foreign environment, especially with local people. As well, they realised the importance of working hard and not giving up when they come across problems such as loneliness, homesickness; living and studying alone and cultural problems. The students thought the video gave them the confidence and encouragement to adjust to a new environment and culture. Students recognised the importance of communication, listening and speaking, teamwork and friendship and self-study. They related to the video and thought it reflected a real life situation.

Students thought the 'Battle Royale' with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD comic strip serial was attractive, colourful and eye catching. They were eager to read it and they understood the themes. They were divided over the use of Chairman Mao as the hero, but when pressed felt the use of his image in a comic was disrespectful. At least one person in each class did not like the repeated use of “fool” and they did not understand the term “Yankee”. As a form of media, comics were favoured by 90% of students, but the consensus was that they should be delivered one page at a time.

b) Follow up workshop

A second, follow up workshop was held in July 2009 to seek feedback on the resource materials created for the project from the reference group, teaching and learning experts, the
team involved in the development of the resources and colleagues and team partners from CUFE, Beijing. Participants were asked to comment on key issues raised by the resources and provide feedback on their potential use as well as areas for improvement.

The overall response to the *April's Journey* video has been that it is a very powerful, useful resource and could be adopted in a wide range of situations. Participants commented on the effective use of the student voice and experience; particularly the sentiment that “I have to make mistakes to learn to improve my English”. Improvements that were identified included inserting navigation and breaking the video into clearer topics or a series of videos to emphasise specific topics.

The comic serial strip was originally titled *SuperMao: Battle Royal* and featured Chairman Mao as the hero, or master, teaching the student about academic literacy. Prior to the workshop the project team received advice from academic colleagues in China and also feedback from students in Australia and China about the comic. As a result of this feedback the team decided it was not appropriate to use Chairman Mao as the hero and arranged to create a new hero, possibly the ‘Grumpy lecturer’, based on the lecturer in the *Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy* video.

Subject to dealing with this issue, the general feedback on the use of the comic as one of the raft of tools to convey the message of academic literacy was positive. Participants opined that the idea of a fantasy theme and ‘master’ or ‘superhero’ was good and something to which students could relate. The idea of weekly or at least regular use of selected pages of the series, to reinforce the ongoing and various aspects of academic literacy was considered effective. Like the students, they felt that the use of the word ‘fool’ was inappropriate and they also thought that it would be good to have a Chinese language version offered in parallel with the English language version.

Participants described *Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy* as an interesting and entertaining video. They thought it presented the four principles of academic literacy (application and persistence, critical thinking, creativity and academic honesty) in an engaging and integrated manner and was a suitable “book-end” for the good lead-in into the formal *The Road to Academic Literacy* video. Many participants noted that they would prefer to use each segment alone and it would be good to break the video into sections and indicate the lengths of each section.

Finally, the participants thought the instructional video ‘Behind Closed Doors’ with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment was ‘brilliant’, practical and clearly explained. They felt that it unified, but addressed individually, all the issues which confront students in their assessments. They thought the order of presentation of the topics was logical and flowed well. They noted that students are likely to use this resource and will take time to learn the skills to develop and improve their academic writing.

Overall the feedback from the workshop was positive with participants commenting that it was a most stimulating and interesting day and a breath of fresh air in its approach to academic literacy and academic honesty. Several colleagues, including ESL teachers at another Chinese university, clearly expressed their enthusiasm for using the resources. The major suggestion for improvement which emerged from the day was to break the videos into sections and add navigation and indication of length for the user. This ability to select a particular topic or theme would enhance the flexibility of the resources for both students and teachers.

A workshop report is included in Appendix L.

8. Final Dissemination

Due to the need to modify the resources following the feedback from the focus groups and workshops, there was insufficient time to fully disseminate the project materials and resources before the tabling of this report. Nonetheless, the project has a website and a
mailing list of 140 academics with an expressed interest in the project outcomes and outputs.

A communications strategy has been developed and is being implemented at the same time as the publication of this report. This strategy involves writing personalised emails to the 140 academics on our mailing list. These personalised emails will have the project website address embedded as a hyperlink for easy access. The resources will be available for download from the project website. The strategy also involves professional development for VU and Chinese partner institution teachers at VU's next “Learning Matters”, December 2009.

9. Conclusion

The project produced five media outputs: *The Road to Academic Literacy* (Video), *April’s Journey* (Video), ‘Battle Royale’ with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD (Comic Strip Serial), *Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy* (Video) and ‘Behind Closed Doors’ with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment (Video). These media resources each address different but related aspects of academic literacy, whilst taking into account the particular needs of international, and especially Chinese, students.

The feedback from workshops and interviews with students as well as an online survey was highly positive for each of the resources. The students understood the topics well and were engaged with and encouraged by the material to improve their academic literacy. Colourful, interactive material about academic literacy was found to be more efficacious than plain text resources or labour intensive one-on-one instruction.

The panel of experts also reacted positively to the material and several colleagues have made arrangements to deploy the resources as they become available.

The aim of this project was to develop a suite of multimedia resources to improve the academic literacy and academic integrity of Chinese students and to then test the efficacy of these resources. Whilst testing the efficacy of any learning resource is somewhat problematic, the project team is confident that the feedback from the focus groups, the interviews and the results of the online survey suggest that the resources developed in this project have the potential to improve the academic literacy of Chinese students across the higher education sector.

10. Recommendations

The project team’s experience in undertaking the project, and the lessons learned give rise to a variety of recommendations. These recommendations fall into four key categories:

1. Development. The ongoing development of the resources covers three key areas; technical, breadth and scope. Each will be addressed in turn below.

2. Dissemination. These include additional resources and efforts to more aggressively encourage the participation of teachers and the dissemination of the project resources to them.

3. Deployment. These include the provision of more teacher-centred resources and materials on how to use the resources from this project and how to embed them into normal teaching and assessment activities.

4. Administration. Future projects of this nature clearly require a larger budget and longer timeframe so as to ensure a more fulsome development and evaluation phase.

Ongoing development of the resources is still required, despite the exhaustion of the project funds and the strong acceptance of the resources. There is scope for ongoing development in three key areas:
• Technical. These include fine tuning the existing product by making it more navigable and providing sub titles.

• Breadth. These include adding breadth to the materials to provide more explicit examples, such as how to write an essay from conception from the student’s perspective. This is recommended in contrast to the Behind Closed Doors with Grumpy Lecturer video wherein the student’s existing work is reviewed by the lecturer. We note that the quality of this resource would be greatly enhanced if it was narrated in the first person by a student.

• Scope. These include expanding the scope of the project to address different cohorts of international students who may experience difficulties with academic literacy and academic honesty. We note that the Indian student cohort has emerged as a particularly large and politically sensitive group in recent times. Whilst many Indian students are native English speakers and the Indian education system is heavily influenced by the English education system, there are still some problems with Indian students and academic literacy. In this context, the development of resources to address the needs of Indian students is warranted.

The project team proposes to develop a grant application in the next round of competitive grants to pursue these developmental opportunities.

Dissemination relates to actively promoting (even proselytizing) the benefits of the resources to colleagues throughout the higher education sector in Australia. The project team has generated a database of 140 academics and plans to build a community of practice amongst these and other colleagues around the project resources with a view to collaborating on a range of research projects, conference papers and publications in the scholarly journals; all based on members’ collective experiences of using the resources with their students. The project team also plans to present papers in domestic and international journals and conferences dedicated to teaching and learning, especially those dealing with academic literacy, the first year experience and Chinese students. It may be that this form of dissemination may generate sufficient interest to justify the development of a “national roadshow” wherein members of the team visit institutions around the country to showcase the resources.

Deployment of the resources is also critical for both the project and the ALTC’s overarching goal of “sustainable change” in improving the quality of teaching in Australian universities. It has become apparent that there is considerable diversity in the skill levels and capacity of academics to efficaciously and efficiently adopt, adapt and apply the resources developed in this project. As such, the project team strongly recommends that consideration be given to the development of a suite of “professional development resources” to help teachers engage with, maximise the benefits of, and enjoy using the resources from this project.

To this end the project team proposes firstly to continue deploying the resources within our established network and to continue evaluating the acceptance and efficacy of the resources from both a student and teacher perspective. Furthermore, the team plans to apply for subsequent funding to develop a more engaging and aggressive deployment program with interested colleagues beyond VU and CUFE.

Finally, the project team notes that the project funds have been fully expended and that only the goodwill of the project team members enabled the project to be completed on time and to such a high standard. Future projects of this nature will require more time and money if such high standards in resource development are to be maintained.
APPENDIX A: Project Methodology

1. Literature Review

The project entailed a review of literature focusing on issues affecting international students, academic literacy and academic honesty. The review draws on prior research undertaken by VU in Melbourne and with CUFE. It discusses the need for students to adopt a specific style of academic writing in which they may not be skilled in or even of which they are not fully aware and which is not modelled in texts and articles. Issues of acculturation and assimilation, the differences in the Chinese student cohort and transition and orientation are discussed. Finally it looks at how to motivate students to pay attention to, receive and adopt the key messages of academic literacy and academic honesty and their attendant practices. The literature review has been integrated into the main body of this report. A comprehensive list of references is included in this report.

2. Evaluation of existing resource

   2.1. Online surveys

The project team invited academics from around the world with experience teaching Chinese students in a western environment to assess the existing resource using an online survey (with open ended items). This was followed up with student version for Chinese students studying the units of study in which the project will be deployed, at both VU and CUFE. This enabled the project team to gather feedback for improvement of the existing video and website and to assess its effectiveness in helping students understand the notions and practices of academic literacy and academic honesty.

   2.2. Focus groups

Chinese students at CUFE watched the existing resource in Beijing in June 2008 and provided answers to questions by email. The project team received feedback from students at CUFE regarding the following:

1. If VU and CUFE were making another DVD on academic literacy and more specifically, on academic honesty, and it was only for Chinese students, what suggestions would you give us?
2. From your experience what method do you think is most effective of all for teaching Chinese students how not to plagiarise?

The project team held conversations with four academic staff about academic honesty at CUFE in June 2008. They discussed their approaches to teaching students concepts about academic honesty, their understanding of student perceptions of cheating, and the use of English or Chinese explanations, how they identify plagiarism, penalties for cheating and plagiarism policies.

Roger James (Research and Communications Consultants) and Victoria University staff conducted a focus group with 10 Chinese students at Victoria University Melbourne in September 2008. Students discussed acceptable practices regarding referencing in China and what they thought they needed to learn to think critically and write creatively.

Information from these focus groups and conversations was used to establish a base line of appropriate issues, sensitivities and aspects of culture which are both relevant to academic literacy and academic honesty and meaningful and relevant to Chinese students.

Excerpts of the conversations and summary notes from the focus groups are available on the website at http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/focusgroups.cfm.
2.3. Interviews

Micah Tolman, a China-based English language teacher was interviewed by Fiona Henderson about the existing academic literacy website in Melbourne in August 2008. Finally, Chinese students studying at Victoria University were invited for follow-up interviews in October 2008. The project team held face-to-face interviews with five of these students to identify problems with the existing video. Standardised questions were prepared to maintain consistency of gathered information.

The project team used the interview information to identify particular issues such as words needing clarification or Chinese translation, narration which would need to be altered or expanded upon, examples to be cut and replaced, technical and navigational issues, quiz difficulties and other issues arising.

The clarification list is available at http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/focusgroups.cfm.

3. Web-based discussion

The project team held a web based discussion with Chinese academics on the various terms used to explain “academic literacy” and “plagiarism” in both Chinese and English.

As we know, the definition of Academic literacy varies in the western world. It depends on the context in which it is being used. It further complicates the issue when translating it into Chinese.

The team emailed a number of Chinese academics and our CUFE partners, about the “correct” translation of the term Academic Literacy and to try to determine if there is one word for Academic Literacy in Chinese. The team also asked whether Chinese students understand the expression Academic Literacy and what the expression is saying when you put it into Chinese. The findings from the seven respondents found there is not one common translation or meaning of the term.


4. Project Website

A project website was created to provide project details and link to the pilot project, disseminate project and research findings and relevant external resources and house the downloadable documents for public use (e.g. videos and graphic novel).


5. Workshop

On Friday 29 August the project team held a workshop to gain insight into issues surrounding academic literacy and teaching Chinese students with a view to creating appropriate resource materials for the project. The team invited a reference group of academics who have had experience in these areas. Several academics gave presentations outlining their experience and discussion followed. Several themes emerged, including language, culture, knowledge, the definition of plagiarism and heterogeneity of students and teaching strategies and delivery methods were discussed.


6. Development of resources

The project team developed five multimedia resources in an attempt to address different challenges international students have in academic literacy:

1. The Road to Academic Literacy (Video) - Key theoretical concepts and interactive examples

2. Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy (Video) – Proactive principles
3. 'Behind Closed Doors' with Grumpy Lecturer - Episode #1: Improving Your Assignment (Video) – Technical / Practical Instruction / Interactive Feedback
4. April's Journey (Video) – Transition and acculturation
5. 'Battle Royale' with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD (Comic Strip Serial) – Engagement and advertisement.

These resources are available for download at http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/finalproduct.cfm.

7. Pilot test

7.1. Focus groups

7.1.1. Richard & Kim Encounter Academic Literacy: (Video)
In June 2009, 48 students discussed and answered questions about the Road to Academic Literacy: Kim and Richard (Video) at CUFE, China with facilitators Gao Cui Ming (Christina) and Wang Lu Ying.
This focus group was replicated in July 2009, with 45 (3 classes) ELI students from a range of non-English speaking backgrounds at Victoria University with facilitators Fiona Henderson and Christine Mountford.

7.1.2. April’s Journey (Video)
In June 2009, 48 students discussed and answered questions about April’s Journey (Video) at CUFE, China with facilitators Gao Cui Ming (Christina) and Wang Lu Ying.

7.1.3. 'Battle Royale' with Grumpy Lecturer, PhD (Comic Strip Serial) – Engagement and advertisement
In July 2009, 45 (3 classes) ELI students from a range of non-English speaking backgrounds discussed and answered questions while looking at the graphic novel at Victoria University with facilitators Fiona Henderson and Christine Mountford. The project team also sought advice from several academics in China regarding the graphic novel, in particular the use of Chairman Mao as the hero.
The full notes from these focus groups are available for download at http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/focusgroups.cfm.

7.2. Follow up workshop
The project team held a workshop on Friday 3 July to invite participants to evaluate, comment on and gather feedback about the appropriateness and quality of the resource materials created for the project. A wide range of people participated in the day including:

• the project’s original reference group (composed of past and present ALTC recipients who have investigated issues related to Chinese students and/or plagiarism);

• teaching and learning experts from within Victoria University and around Australia;

• a representative from the ALTC;

• the team involved in the development of the resources; and

• colleagues and team partners from CUFE, Beijing participated in the proceedings via Skype.

The various resources were presented and a series of discussion groups and feedback sessions were held.

8. Dissemination
Throughout the life of the project the research process involved progressive dissemination of findings through the project website and to the stakeholder group, not only to fulfill the responsibility of communicating with the field, but additionally to “test” the results and emerging ideas by seeking stakeholder feedback and opinion. This process contributed to the validation of the results and determining issues such as the cultural sensitivities surrounding the use of e.g. Chairman Mao in the graphic novel.
APPENDIX B: Project flyer

Introducing ACADEMIC LITERACY

Looking for a resource that uses culturally specific examples to convey key Academic Literacy concepts to Chinese students?

Our soon-to-be-released Flash website contains a range of videos and graphic materials that will appeal to almost any audience and clear much of the mystery around these theoretical concepts.

The resources focus on four key themes:
- transition and acculturation
- engagement
- proactive principles
- interactive feedback

So if you want to see how fun and effective education resources can be, register to access our website at:
http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/index.cfm

Engage, entertain, educate!

Paul A Whitelaw
School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing
Phone: 9919 4665
E-mail: paul.whitelaw@vu.edu.au

Fiona Henderson
Learning Support Services
Phone: 9919 4972
E-mail: fiona.henderson@vu.edu.au
## APPENDIX C: Workshop attendees

**FRIDAY 29 AUGUST, 2008, LEVEL 9, ROOM 15, CITY FLINDERS CAMPUS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Title and Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Barker</td>
<td>Griffith University</td>
<td>Director Research Higher Degree Programs, Griffith Business School and Senior Teaching Fellow, The Griffith Institute for Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Brooks</td>
<td>LaTrobe University</td>
<td>Educational Designer Educational Borchardt Library, LaTrobe University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Carr</td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
<td>Auchmuty Library, Library Services, Academic Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Chanock</td>
<td>LaTrobe University</td>
<td>Director, Humanities Academic Skills Unit, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imogen Chen</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Lecturer, Communication, Culture and Language, Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kum Leng Chin</td>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td>Lecturer, Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Dixon</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Head of School, Learning Support Services, Language and Learning Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julienne East</td>
<td>LaTrobe University</td>
<td>Julianne East, Adviser, Language and Academic Skills (ESL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steph Ellis</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>English Language Institute (ELI) Offshore – Manager, English Language &amp; Preparatory Programs, VU College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa de Fazio</td>
<td>Open Universities Australia</td>
<td>APS Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Henderson</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Lecturer, Language and Learning Portfolio, Project Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penny Jose</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raquel Licciardi</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Lecturer, School of Management, Faculty of Business and Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Loves</td>
<td>University of Wollongong</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janetta Masciongo</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Marketing and Information Literacy Librarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody McCormack</td>
<td>Think Media Productions</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gail Mckinlay</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Library Information Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan McWilliams</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Lecturer, School of Management, Faculty of Business and Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Paton</td>
<td>University of Sydney</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Economics and Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Pearce</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Associate Director, Language and Learning Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>University/Institution</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Kylie Redfern</td>
<td>University of Technology Sydney</td>
<td>Director, China Business Courses, Faculty of Business, University of Technology Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Wilson</td>
<td>University of Canberra</td>
<td>Kate Wilson, Director, Academic Skills Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Whitelaw</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing, Faculty of Business and Law, Project Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia Arkoudis</td>
<td>University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Centre for the Study of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Buckell</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Marketing and Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Carnett</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lou Connell</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Librarian, Library Learning Commons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy O'Connor</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Customised Learning Experience, Project Coordinator, Making VU Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Oldham</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Project Coordinator, Making VU Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam Thomas</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Librarian, Library Learning Commons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Woods</td>
<td>Griffith University</td>
<td>GIHE Fellow, Lecturer, Department of Management, Griffith Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christabel Zhang</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Lecturer, Economics, Faculty of Business and Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dianne Robbie</td>
<td>Swinburne University</td>
<td>Academic Development Advisor, Faculty of Design &amp; NICA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Investigating the efficacy of culturally specific academic literacy and academic honesty resources for Chinese students

**FRIDAY JULY 3, 2009, LEVEL 12 CONFERENCE CENTRE, CITY FLINDERS CAMPUS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alan McWilliams</td>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Everaert</td>
<td>Learning Skills Adviser, Hargrave-Andrew Library</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Henry</td>
<td>Swinburne College</td>
<td>Attended for Tatiana Varfolomeeva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Mountford</td>
<td>Project Manager, VU College</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Brooks</td>
<td>Educational Designer, Borchardt Library, Latrobe University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody McCormack</td>
<td>Think Media Productions</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Buckley</td>
<td>Student Advisor, VU College</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Henderson</td>
<td>Language and Learning, VU College</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gill Best</td>
<td>VUC, Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Bauers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Dixon</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning VU College</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kai Jin Chen</td>
<td>International Student Support, Library Services, University of Newcastle</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Wilson</td>
<td>Director, Academic Skills Program, University of Canberra</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Tairi</td>
<td>Swinburne College</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise Wilson</td>
<td>Management, Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marion Gray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Loves</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Wollongong</td>
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<td>Mark Stevenson</td>
<td>Arts, Victoria University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Barker</td>
<td>Professor, The Griffith Institute for Higher Education (GIHE)</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadia McDonagh</td>
<td>The University of Sydney</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Maxwell</td>
<td>Academic Skills Adviser, Australian National University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Whitelaw</td>
<td>Senior lecturer, Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penny Jose</td>
<td>Project officer, Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shonelle Kent</td>
<td>Bus &amp; Law, Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siobhan Lenihan</td>
<td>Head of Programs, ALTC, Australian Learning and Teaching Council</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tania Plant</td>
<td>Project Assistant, VU College</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Cox</td>
<td>Senior Learning and Teaching Consultant Learning Environments, The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trish</td>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Binney</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer in Marketing, Victoria University</td>
<td>Attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Institution</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Daly</td>
<td>Project Coordinator, English Language and Preparatory Programs, Victoria University</td>
<td>Did not attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbi Weaver</td>
<td>Academic Development Adviser, Swinburne Professional Learning [SPL]</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Counsell</td>
<td>University of Tasmania</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoff Millar</td>
<td>Lecturer, Academic Language &amp; Learning (ALL), UNSW@ADFA</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greta Crogan</td>
<td>Swinburne College</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Blackmore</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, School of Engineering</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesley Pereira</td>
<td>Central South University, Railway Campus, P R China</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica Behrend</td>
<td>University of SA</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Janet Taylor PhD</td>
<td>FHERDSA Director, Teaching and Learning, Southern Cross University</td>
<td>Did not attend</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tatiana Varfolomeeva</td>
<td>Swinburne College</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ursula McGowan</td>
<td>Deputy Director, Centre for Learning and Professional Development, The University of Adelaide</td>
<td>Interested but unable to attend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D: Online survey of existing resource

More than 140 people reviewed the original video resources and responded to an online survey as part of the developmental process for this project. Of these 140 people, 110 were students and 30 were practicing academics.

A total of 17 Likert-type statements were presented to the respondents who could answer on a five point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An 18th item asked the respondents whether the resources should be optional or compulsory.

After reversing statement directions so that all items are presented in the positive direction, the lowest scored item was “The video was about the right length” with a score of 3.46. The highest item was “The video was easy to view on my monitor” with a score of 4.01. The more critical items, such as learning about academic literacy (3.92) and not being likely to commit plagiarism because of the video (3.75) were good, but not exceptionally good results. These results are not inconsistent with the focus groups and interviews conducted as part of the project. The results also suggests that whilst the project appears to have mastered the technical aspects, there are still some issues regarding engaging the students and improving their academic literacy.

The results of the 110 students have been contrasted with the 30 academics in the table D.2 on the following page. Items in **bold** are significantly different. The results of this part of the analysis suggests that the academics are generally more enthusiastic about the website than the students. However, they are more negative in terms of only one item, which is perhaps the most important, that relating to not committing plagiarism in future because of this resource.

When asked about making the resource compulsory, academics were overwhelmingly in favour; whilst the students, were of the opinion that it should be optional as noted in Table D.1 below. The distributions are significantly different ($X^2=9.509$, df=2, sig.=0.002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table D.1 Should the Resource be Compulsory?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPTIONAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPULSORY</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Table D.2 Responses to Online Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION ASPECT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td>140</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Video loaded in a reasonable amount of time.</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Video was easy to view on my monitor.</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This Video was about the right length.</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interactions on the Video were fun and engaging.</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interactions on the Video added to the overall experience.</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website was logically organised and easy to navigate.</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The illustrations and layout of the website were appealing.</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website links relevant and engaging.</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website links helped me to understand the content.</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned (my students learn) a lot about academic literacy from the Video.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned (my students could learn) a lot about academic literacy from the website.</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website and Video have inspired me (could inspire my students) to further develop my (their) academic literacy.</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website and Video have helped me (could help my students) improve my (their) critical thinking skills.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website and Video have helped me (could help my students) improve my (their) creative thinking skills.</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am confident that this resource will help me (my students) improve my (their) grades.</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I expect (my students) to use the website and Video in future to refresh my (their) understanding of academic literacy.</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>0.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of the website, I am confident that I (my students) will not commit any act of academic dishonesty either here at VU or in the future.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**APPENDIX E: CUFE student interview notes**

**Email feedback:**  Following conversation about academic honesty in June 2008

**Participants:**  Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE) students & VU Staff Beijing

**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 July 2008  
**To:** Fiona Henderson  
**Subject:** Congratulations, thank you and 3 more questions

Dear Fiona,

If the actors speak English, do not forget to put the translation on the bottom of the screen.

Not all the students have seen the movies involved in the DVD, so choose the appropriate examples is important. BTW, the Romeo And Juliet is a good one.

Encourage student to create by themselves: They can pass the exam even they only know a little--they need not to be plagiarise. Actually, it is nearly impossible to change a nation's habit. Forgive me saying this. The thing is many Chinese are too clever. One of my friends never create any articles since he was in high school, each paper and article "written" by him was come from the internet and he got high marks all the time. Think about this, if you spent 3 month on your paper and your tutor ask you to rewrite it again and again, finnally you got a low score. On the other hand, one guy copied and changed an article within 3 days and got a OK score, how is your feeling? If most students know this thing, will everyone refuse to copy? I respect your work and determination, however it is a very difficult situation you are facing to.

If I was a good VU student studying in CUFE, I promise that you really do not want to hear my story. I am not a good student, all I know is how to deal with the exams.(Trained by China's Education)

Regards,

Chinese student (name withheld)

---

**Sent:** Friday, 25 July 2008  
**To:** Fiona Henderson  
**Subject:** Congratulations, thank you and 3 more questions

Dear Fiona,

I'm very glad to recieve your email again. Here are the answers:

1. I suggest that the DVD can include more Chinese examples and models than Western. Maybe you can find one Chinese actor. And, you can speak slower when come to the major parts.

2. For not being plagiarise, I think there are several methods. First, the students must know why they can't copy from others. Second, they need to practice a lot to improve their skills on writing their own essay. Third, punishment is needed to avoid plagiarise. And finally, teachers can enforce the importance of not being plagiarise.

3. To be a good student, one can arrange his time and have a clear schedual. He should know which is the most important thing and which is the second. Also, being a good student, he should do well on his subject and it's better to know some relative knowledges. The most important thing is what he finally get from university. After graduate, a good student should know how to be a man and how to do things in right way.

best wishes,

Chinese student (name withheld)
APPENDIX F: CUFE staff interview notes

Excerpt: From conversation with academic staff about academic honesty

Participants: Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE) & Victoria University (VU) staff

Date: June 2008

Place: Beijing, China

VU: How do you approach teaching students concepts about academic honesty?

CUFE 1: You should always be honest; for example not cheating in an exam, same with giving references and using bibliographies. So we can check if it’s correct or not and so other students can follow your references if they want to. Tell them what academic honesty is and get them to discuss. In every class, not just VU but CET [College English] as well. Quite important concept if they want to be successful learners after they graduate—to be a citizen in society.

CUFE 2: Get them to read academic articles, look at references at end and follow up. Show it’s very important, show them how to write it and what they should do. Tells them importance and purpose of doing it.

CUFE 3: Not all teachers in China teach academic literacy. As teachers honesty is everything. Not to copy others, you must write out [in own words] not copy. When I mark their papers I distinguish if they copy others or not, if they do, I would not give a pass.

VU: How do you know if they copy others?

CUFE 3: If they copy others their paper will be too good!

VU: Can they resubmit?

CUFE 1: Sometimes yes, if they cheat, they must fail; for example in a final exam. Twenty-five students failed last exam, day before yesterday. Students complained but the ruling stayed. One student didn’t cheat so he passed.

CUFE 2: Particularly in writing we want the students to use own words.

VU: What’s the difference between cheating and memorizing?

CUFE 1: For memorizing we don’t give a high mark—it’s not cheating but...

CUFE 2: but some teachers do.

CUFE 1: There are 2 kinds of exams. Open book: you can copy and then cheating is copying from another student. In a Closed exam, teachers often give lot of questions, exam questions will be from these. Students prepare answers → you have to memorise.

CUFE 3: For example definitions or technical explanation of opinion. For example, what is the reason for RMB to rise? We would expect many different students’ words. These sorts of questions might be about 15% of exam.

VU: Are your explanations in Chinese or English?

CUFE 4: My students are English majors so I try to use English in my explanations. I use lots of models, for example 1st years writing may be shown a paragraph of writing that contains one reference. Second years might be required to use more
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references. If the purpose is to demonstrate research, then we’d ask for references.

CUFE 1: We give good models, analyse why this is good. After they [the students] write, we might show a poor example [from one of the students], and use with whole class. Students don’t mind: they see it as getting teachers’ attention paid to them. We might do the same with a good example. We ask permission of students first but they never refuse.

CUFE 3: Sometimes gives examples in Chinese, such as how to look for references, give websites, books, and journals i.e. to explain how to find appropriate material.

VU: It seems that the students are well informed. Do they obey?

CUFE 3: Students have no sense it’s shameful; they don’t feel guilty. Westerners think they shouldn’t do certain things according to their own laws. Chinese don’t have such self control; for example highway doesn’t have a fence between lanes on highway but in China we have a fence to stop pedestrians crossing anywhere but at zebra crossing. If they think they’ll get away with it, they’ll do it. “If I will not be caught and exposed publicly I’ll do it.” What’s the difference between creativity and shamelessness?

CUFE 1: Most of students are honest, but “naughty”.

VU: Is it that students don’t really believe it’s important?

CUFE 1+4: Young people are “contrary”!

VU: Have you ever been shown the VU Academic Honesty policy?

CUFE 1: Not until now.

VU: Does CUFE have a policy?

CUFE 2: Students sign to say they’ll be honest in exam etc. but they can still do the wrong thing! I am not aware of any CUFE document except rules for final thesis are explained in a document. There are rules for dealing with students who copy in exam. All these things are in the Student Orientation booklet. There is a document for teachers as well.

CUFE 1: VU’s is quite comprehensive. It gives more education about it.

Transcribed and edited by Fiona Henderson, VU
Investigating the efficacy of culturally specific academic literacy and academic honesty resources for Chinese students

APPENDIX G: Academic Literacy Focus Group

Time: 12:00 – 1:00pm, Thursday, 18 September 2008
Place: Room M3:033, Victoria University
Participants: 10 Chinese international students
Facilitators: Roger James, Fiona Henderson, Penny Jose
Method: Discussing and answering questions about academic literacy

Overview notes
The Chinese students who attended the discussion generally feel out of their depth at the level of referencing required and the detailed and formal substantiation of material required in written assignments.

In China paraphrasing a source in a written assignment is apparently accepted, whereas it might be seen as tantamount to plagiarism here.

Also it appears that not providing a formal reference for material quoted or paraphrased is acceptable in China.

However, this is not to imply that they misunderstand or reject the idea of plagiarism. As one participant straightforwardly commented:

*Copying should be punished...*

In relation to properly referencing sources used in written work:

- Writing formal essays and assignments is a much smaller part of a student’s work in undergraduate study in China. However it was commented that formal references are expected in a dissertation.

- English language difficulties contribute to their problems, both in understanding lecturers [teachers who speak in heavy accents or very rapidly or using extensive colloquial language] and in working in the written language. They also comment that they feel there is not enough face to face contact with their teachers, which limits their opportunity to understand what is expected of them by asking their teachers.

- Students in the group said they were not sure how to approach the whole process of finding references and of using and citing them. They seem to want a more structured approach, such as being provided with a full list of references that might be used and detailed instructions on how to use and cite them.

In relation to critical thinking and analytical thinking they also seem to want more structure and direction, such as examples, in the material provided by their teachers. However, at least one of the participants made it clear that critical thinking had been encouraged in his secondary education as well as at university, so teaching such skills is certainly not completely absent. Further, the sorts of problems they have in developing their critical thinking are very probably the same as for many native students.

Another aspect of the problems these students have is that they are uncertain about social protocols in Western society, even in simple matters such as how to address their teachers ['Lecturer?, Sir?].

So what could be done to help?

- While they may gain something from the Academic Literacy website, it does not seem that a lack of understanding of the concept of plagiarism is a central problem. However, since idea of just what constitutes plagiarism may well be something of an impediment, some specific communication in this regard may be worth considering.
The website may deal with this, but possibly the ‘western’ examples are less than ideal.

- It may be possible that simpler, clearer instructions in both spoken and written communications would help them.
- Given their lower levels of experience in ‘western’ referencing, some specific training may be useful, if it is not provided already.
- Perhaps it might be useful to provide notes on social protocols.

In relation to critical thinking and creative writing, as the difficulties identified may be more a common problem rather than a Chinese/cultural difference, there may not be any need for a different approach for this group.

Finally in relation to the website, the participants all agreed that they would look at it and provide feedback.
APPENDIX H: Interview with VU staff

Excerpt: From interview about the existing academic literacy website

Participants: Micah Tolman (China-based English language teacher) & Victoria University (VU) staff

Date: August 2008

Place: Melbourne

VU: How would you describe plagiarism in China?

Micah: I see two types. Involuntary [inadvertent] – when it is a new concept – but this can be taught and hence 'solved' and voluntary [deliberate]. To overcome this students need to be shown that it is not in their best interest to plagiarise. VU’s attitude is sometimes too gentle and sometimes too condescending.

From a language learning perspective, plagiarising is choosing not to participate; it is choosing not to develop language skills. We can appeal to the student’s goals.

VU: What is your overall assessment of our Academic Literacy website?

Micah: It is well-organised, clear, and concise, the website introduces a rich body of information that is certain to be of value to our students.

The abstract concepts are illustrated through a variety of interesting examples, particularly those that took advantage of video and music. Website links are excellent, and sites contain a number of instructive tutorials.

Although a conscientious effort was clearly made to present key ideas in terms accessible to non-native speakers, concern remains that the language may still be too complex in places.

Quizzes were available at the end of some sections, but additional activities that allow students chances to put into practice the concepts introduced and engage with the information presented would make the website more user-friendly and lead to greater student-retention of the information presented.

VU: What are your recommendations for its use in China?

Micah: You may want to consider translating the document into Mandarin Chinese (I might be available to do that at some point).

If the video had Mandarin subtitles that could be turned on or off then students revisiting the site for a second or third time could engage without relying on subtitles.

There should be more activities that place the students in a more active relation to the material e.g. case studies as short role plays that pose ‘ethical’ questions.

I think you need to provide a teacher’s guide for the website that will offer ideas / lesson suggestions so that teachers can take advantage of the website in the classroom.

Transcribed and edited by Fiona Henderson, VU
APPENDIX I: Clarification list

Date: October 2008
Place: Victoria University, Melbourne
Participants: Five Chinese students from S2, 2008 intake
Facilitator: Penny Jose
Method: Discussing and answering questions while watching the video

Clarify with a Chinese word/s onscreen

Introduction
- Grumpy: Change character credit names to Chinese?
- Main Title: Miss Piao’s Academic literacy "学术研究 技能".

Critical Thinking
- Flat earth society: Fools that believe the earth is flat
- Lemmings: sheep? Lemmings in Chinese? Some phrase about fools who follow or about jumping off a cliff if someone else did?
- Did not understand about first draft…why essay was ‘terrible’: Poor/Not very good.

Creativity
- Vegemite: “Salty bitter bread spread” OR “Does Not Mix!!!”

Academic Honesty
- Fabrication, Recycling, Resubmitting, Collusion

Clarify by altering/extending the narration

Introduction
- Academic Literacy is the secret to their success at VU, not just another warning telling them not to copy.
- The Road to Academic Literacy
- Overnight success
- We may need to add a sentence or two about how/why it will help, focus more on immediate gain such as grades and a good job.

Critical Thinking
- Spherical: Round
- Strong evidence - Did not understand ‘Star Trek’ and book reference point:
- Tell them where to find the VU referencing pamphlet
- Tell them not to be afraid of referencing, and that using more books from the VU library to quote or paraphrase to back up your argument will help you get a better mark
- Compelling

Creativity
- “twisting”
- “star-crossed lovers”
- Clarify that it’s not special people that have creativity and discover magical new ideas e.g. Jackie Chan

Academic Honesty
- Fabrication: They don’t understand the phrase “Faking evidence.” Change it to something like “Making up your evidence (quotes, references, books)…”
• Collusion: You must do your own thinking and write your own assignments. You share books and ideas, but you cannot write it together with your friends or allow your friend to copy your assignment. It must be your opinion, your argument, and your words.

• Resubmitting: They don’t understand “rehashing”.

• They don’t understand “passing off other people’s work as your own.”

**Clarify by adjusting the quizzes**

• Make all text answers that print on screen stay there until the student clicks NEXT so they have time to read it.

• Make navigation buttons clearer by explaining in text and pictures at the start. Put these before the fade in (alongside the “You need audio” message) so that they can pause the video at any time and go forward or back to a section on the timeline.

**Critical Thinking**

• Change “snow in Sydney” to a Chinese city/weather example.

**Creativity**

• Change Quentin Tarantino to a Chinese example

• The point of the mixer?: You mix the ideas to create your own argument or opinion, just like Mao did with all the wise ideas he learned from other people. This is your own Academic Creativity…”

• Leftovers: Put a Chinese word or phrase in brackets, or change it to “last night’s dinner” or something.

**Academic Honesty**

• What does ‘the final quote is made up’ mean? “The quote at the end is not real. It is a lie invented by the student.”

• Collusion: He did not understand that because the two essays were ‘similar’ it was not good. “These essays are so similar, the lecturer will believe it cannot be coincidence (Chinese word in brackets). The students must have worked together. They must work alone.”

**Cut and Replace**

Replace many of the western successful people with more famous Asian people/examples:

• Hualuogeng (mathematics researcher) always stick to the task to finish it and he is clever. He always think of many new ideas. He is popular in China n our memory. Could we use him for all 3 sections if he is famous enough? He worked hard. He thought critically and came up with new ideas that must have built on old ideas. He is respected in China because of these skills.

• Wang Xizhi (male) was a Chinese calligrapher, his father was a great calligrapher. Example of hard work, practice, and expertise taking time: When he was very young his father wrote a lot and told him there is a small lake, when he writes he will use the brush and ink. The lake became black from washing the ink from the brush, because he did so much. He worked very hard.

• Our Chairman Mao Si Tung is a good example because he wanted to do greater things in the future. He studied to do it when he was a child, he read many books, got knowledge from others, he liked to communicate with others very useful information, he wanted to build the country [stronger], when he was a man, he lead china to independence.

**Other Issues**

• Need to give them guidance on how to deal with other people asking to copy their assignments. They would be guilty of collusion, so they should offer to explain to their
friend how they answered it, but not let them copy. Besides, it’s not fair that they do all the work and their friend benefit by doing nothing. Lastly, they can just say they haven’t finished their assignment yet.

- Assure them that researching, referencing, and being critical of opinions and creative in mixing their sources will get them better marks.
- Explicitly tell them where certain resources are, like the Referencing pdf/brochure and guidance on how to use the Library to find resources.
- If the narration is in English, it may need to be at the start of second semester. As Ming said, he probably wouldn’t have understood it when he first came here. Probably takes a while to tune into the accent too.
APPENDIX J: Web-based discussion

Is there a word for "Academic Literacy" in Chinese?

Do Chinese students understand the expression "Academic Literacy"? How would you write it in Chinese? When you put the expression into Chinese, what is it saying?

We emailed a number of Chinese academics and our CUFE partners, about the “correct” translation of the phrase "Academic Literacy". As we know, the definition of Academic Literacy varies in the western world. It seems to be equally difficult to find an accurate Chinese definition.

The following are examples of definitions emerged in the discussion:

• 学术素养 refers to “academic competence or accomplishment”, but does not embrace the concept of “standards”.

• 学术素质 comprises the words for "academic" and "inner quality or basic essence", but has nothing to do with academic standards and knowledge.

• 学术认知 translates as “academic” + “knowledge” + “understanding”, but is too broad.

• 学术技能 the literal translation of which would be academic skills/techniques, but does not embrace the true meaning of the English expression.

• 学术修养 refers to a certain proficiency in knowledge which has to be obtained by training, education, and practice, etc. 修养 (Xiu Yang) also implies compliance with professional code of ethics.

• 学术规范 means “academic standards”, which some respondents agreed was a suitable translation.

Respondent 8 thought none of the translations was totally accurate but 学术素养 and 学术素质 would both be acceptable and that they mean more or less the same thing. I agree that 学术认知 is not so good.

So to look more closely at 学术素养 and 学术素质, the first means "academic accomplishment" and the second comprises the words for "academic" and "inner quality or basic essence".

If it was the name of a subject, I had thought of just translating it directly as "academic skills" but I don't think this is really what you're on about -- the term is too narrow and doesn't encompass the aspects of creativity and honesty.

As you can see, academics could argue over the translation of this for 100 years and still not come to an agreement. Of all of them, perhaps I like 学术素养 ("academic accomplishment") the best: it implies refinement of academic character, (养 means to nourish), and I think it encapsulates more the process of becoming, whereas 学术素质 is more about the resultant quality of academic character arrived at (if that makes sense).

Respondent 4 thought academic literacy in the western culture basically includes three parts: academic standards included knowledge, academic competence and academic ethic but "I do not think there is an expression that is exactly the same as academic literacy in Chinese."
The two definitions listed here are not the same thing as academic literacy.

1. 学术素养 The first definition is about competence.

2. 学术素质 The second definition is about talent, character, emotion...very abstract, and has nothing to do with academic standards and knowledge. But both of them have nothing to do with academic ethic which in my understanding is a crucial part of academic literacy.

I will have to use 学术素养 as the translation because it actually contains "ethic" in it but I do not understand why it is not listed as the 3 definition and they should all be included in one definition. A well educated people might relate good 学术素养 to three things: sufficient knowledge, good research approaches well adopted in time, familiar with standards, sharp and sensitive academic mind, fair and republic academic ethic adopted. It is a good expression but obviously not well expressed or fully expressed. I checked the website and found most definitions and explanation of this word does not include ethics.

Well, ethic should be added to the definition of 学术素养 in my opinion.
APPENDIX K: Workshop Friday 29 August 2008

On Friday 29 August we held a workshop to gain insight into issues surrounding academic literacy and teaching Chinese students with a view to creating appropriate resource materials for our project. We invited a reference group of academics composed of past and present ALTC grant recipients who have focused on Chinese students and/or plagiarism and teaching and learning experts. Several academics gave presentations outlining their experience and discussion followed around the following themes.

Language

Poor language skills emerged as one of the main barriers to creativity and critical thinking amongst Chinese students, combined with cultural, moral and ethical differences between the two groups’ approaches to academic writing.

Chinese students are seen as reluctant to volunteer or challenge views. Issues about protecting face and the need to respect authority were raised. Michael Paton gave the examples of the *Let a hundred flowers bloom* campaign and Tiananmen Square to illustrate historical reasons for this reluctance. We need to address the underlying issue that Chinese students may value reticence and the appearance of consensus and may often feel linguistically constrained and culturally uncomfortable with demands that they be more assertive (Chanock *The Right to Reticence*).

Culture

Preliminary results of a survey by Kum Leng Chin indicate that the cultural background of students has some impact on learning, for example, they are less confident to participate in class discussions and would prefer fewer group assignments than local students. Michelle Barker also reported that they find difficulties speaking up, giving presentations in class and participating in group settings. “We expect these students to undertake assessment tasks which emphasise the very skills they do not have” (Kylie Redfern). “We can help address these issues by providing context-specific cultural maps; strategies to help them negotiate the new culture, but not prescriptions to follow without question.” (Michelle Barker).

Knowledge

Kate Chanock found that whilst Chinese people have demonstrated a critical capacity as dissidents or demonstrators, this is not normally transferred to the context of learning (*The Right to Reticence*). Michael Paton suggested that whilst 18-year-old Chinese students may think of knowledge as a fixed commodity, they can learn to critically evaluate and challenge the ideas of others, and that as teachers we need to demonstrate to our students that they too can create new knowledge.

Definition of Plagarism

There are different standards amongst academics on what constitutes plagiarism; we need to be aware of the confusion this creates among students. Whilst plagiarism is represented variously amongst academics as a question of convention, morality and/or ethics (Julianne East), it is important for students to understand what definition of plagiarism is being used, why they should not plagiarise and how it can be avoided. Given the complexities involved it may be better to be prescriptive initially and encourage more creativity as students’ skill levels increase.

Heterogeneity of students

One of the key themes which emerged was that we are not dealing with a homogenous group of students. Therefore there will be no one single solution to our problem and we will not solve the problem with a single resource. Moreover, the issue needs to be reinforced over the student’s entire education; we need a whole of university and a whole of curriculum approach.
Teaching strategies
We need discipline-specific tasks, examples and resources. It may be more helpful to create smaller resources which teachers can adapt in different settings rather than one large resource. It can be more effective to deliver face-to-face than just ‘stick it on the web’ (Mark Love’s Project Pandora in Beijing).

Delivery
We cannot assume that teachers have the ability to teach academic literacy in class. There is reluctance in teaching staff regarding innovative teaching methods/processes that are not directly related to their discipline knowledge. We need to address the issue of ensuring the resources are used by both teachers and students and raise awareness of the existence of such resources. It is important that we try to change the students’ attitude about what is important and also teach them time- and resource-management skills.

Teaching methods
A number of teaching and learning strategies were discussed:

- Modelling
  - create mental maps e.g. what do self-reflection, critical thinking, challenging ideas and creative solutions look like? How will these benefit me and my career?
  - EXCELL Intercultural Skills Program (Daly and Brown 2005) everyone in transition needs a map.
  - use a dynamic, interactive way to show how you take material from different sources and put it into meaningful, independently created writing.

- Structured creativity
  - use more guided and structured class activities and assessment tasks.

- Case studies
  - e.g. an article titled Talent Scouts (Yan 2006), which discusses HR practices in the L’Oreal company, has been used in tutorials in Management Skills in China to teach students the importance of emotional intelligence and the “human touch” in management.

- Role plays
  - e.g. an online role play dealing with issues around plagiarism, titled The Plagiarism e-Sim (Davenport and Baron) is available in the EnRoLE Repository (University of Wollongong).

- Student voice
  - e.g. video and book Write on! An introduction to academic writing and tertiary study (Wilson et al 2002) demonstrates use of the student voice with Chinese student actors.

- Animations
  - e.g. vignettes of culturally sensitive issues are used in Artsmart information literacy tutorials for first year students (The University of Melbourne).

PowerPoint presentations
The PowerPoint presentations from the Academic Literacy Project team and invited presenters are accessible from the website http://tls.vu.edu.au/altc/workshop2008.cfm
APPENDIX L: Workshop Friday 3 July 2009

Introduction

We held a workshop held on Friday 3 July to invite participants to evaluate, comment on and gather feedback about the appropriateness and quality of the resource materials created for the project. Our colleagues were also invited to participate in a more extensive evaluation during second semester 2009.

We invited a wide range of people to participate in the day:

- the Project’s original reference group (composed of past and present Carrick recipients who have investigated issues related to Chinese students and/or plagiarism),
- teaching and learning experts from within Victoria University and around Australia;
- the team involved in the development of the resources; and
- colleagues and team partners from CUFE, Beijing participated in the proceedings via Skype.

The various resources were presented and a series of discussion groups and feedback sessions were held.

Issues and feedback

The resource materials created for the project highlighted four key themes: transition and acculturation, engagement, proactive principles and interactive feedback. Participants were asked to comment on key issues raised by the resources and provide feedback on their potential use and improvement.

1. Transition and acculturation – April’s Journey (Video)

The overall response to the video was that it is a very powerful, useful resource and could be adopted in a wide range of situations.

Key issues which emerged were homesickness, culture shock, loneliness, becoming independent and different expectations e.g. self-directed learning and preparation for class. Participants commented on the effective use of the student voice and experience; particularly the sentiment that “I have to make mistakes to learn to improve my English”. The issue of the barriers, e.g. financial and social, caused by language beyond the classroom was highlighted.

Possible uses for the video include pre-departure viewing and orientation for articulating and regional Australian students. Domestic students and any student doing group work would benefit from the video; as would tutors and sessional teachers, other university support staff and family.

Improvements identified included inserting navigation and breaking the video into clearer topics or a series of videos to emphasise specific topics. It would be beneficial to link the video to other resources such as the VU Building Bridges: Chinese Mentor program video. There is also a suggestion that the video could be less specifically branded and Melbourne focused e.g. the use of footage of trams.

Other comments included the addition of transcription for the hearing impaired and other international students, who may find April’s accent difficult to understand, and the inclusion of, or the ability to add, questions for discussion. Some felt it would be good to alert students to the availability of support for example, for study, reading, writing, counseling and accommodation at their university at the end of the video.

2. Engagement – SuperMao: Battle Royal (Graphic Novel)
Prior to the workshop the project team received advice from colleagues in China and feedback from student focus groups in Australia and China about the graphic novel. As a result of this feedback the team decided it was not appropriate to use Chairman Mao as the hero and arranged to create a new hero, possibly the ‘Grumpy lecturer’, based on the lecturer in the Richard and Kim video.

Subject to dealing with this issue, the general feedback on the use of the comic as one of the raft of tools to convey the message of academic literacy was positive. Participants felt that the idea of a fantasy theme and ‘master’ or ‘superhero’ was good and something to which students could relate. The idea of weekly or at least regular use of selected pages of the series, to reinforce the ongoing and various aspects of Academic Literacy was thought effective.

Participants felt that the use of the word ‘fool’ was inappropriate and that it would assist Chinese students’ understanding if a version were translated into Chinese.

3. **Proactive principles – Richard and Kim (Video)**

Participants described the Richard and Kim video as an interesting and entertaining video which presents the four principals of academic literacy: application and persistence, critical thinking, creativity and academic honesty as a unified set.

Key observations included that the video:

- highlighted the principles with specific, graphic examples of good and bad practice;
- emphasised the need for creativity, for providing good evidence and the value of personal opinion;
- made the link between university and the workplace clear with the examples of graduate skills sought by employers;
- emphasised the need to distinguish one’s work from others and acknowledge the “trail” of resources by correct referencing; and
- highlighted the need to use a number of well organised and effectively presented resources.

Possible uses for the video included that it be:

- used during class to raise awareness and to start a student discussion e.g. where there is tension or perceived contradiction about the ideas of creativity, critical thinking and academic honesty;
- loaded into the student learning management system, especially for off-shore students;
- used at the start of the essay writing process and linked to other strategies that underpin academic literacy e.g. researching, referencing and searching; and
- used to show teachers how to teach the concepts.

Many participants noted that they would prefer to use each segment alone and therefore it would be helpful to break the video into sections and display the length of each section. Post-graduate students could watch the entire video but undergraduates would need it broken into sections and each section unpacked.

One idea was to produce a follow up video about reliable sources. This could highlight how the process parallels a police investigation and the law courts. This might help students see the importance of critical thinking and quality of evidence in their writing.

4. **Technical / Practical Instruction / Interactive Feedback – Alan and Simiao (Video)**
The participants thought the video was “brilliant”, practical and clearly explained. They commented that it unified many of the issues which occur in the real world and addressed each issue individually. The order of presentation i.e. presenting a list references, finding references and then using references flowed well. It was noted that plagiarism was not treated as a separate issue. It showed the importance of administration i.e. keeping track of and citing sources from the beginning, rather than leaving until the end. The point that students will take time to learn the skills to develop and improve was good.

Key improvements noted were that:

- it would be good to add clarification that the student should check course guidelines for referencing and writing styles;
- the video could be improved by being broken into modules and be used e.g. as feedback for specific issues after handing back an assignment;
- a summary or ongoing list of topics would be useful;
- it lacked information on a key component of any writing, namely the Introduction but this could be addressed by breaking it into a series of shorter, more in-depth vignettes; and
- the inter-title, Cite Your Sources, Get Better Grades did not seem to match one of the segments which was mainly about paraphrasing, not referencing.

One participant noted that a potential weakness was that Grumpy (the lecturer) rewrote a significant section of the essay for the student.

Possible uses for the video include:

- placing it within the academic skills unit and linking to it from various subjects;
- placing it on the subject website when the students need it, to avoid “white noise”; or alternatively leaving it there for the whole semester and directing students towards it when necessary;
- presenting it to students with the criteria for writing a paper; and
- packaging it with a series of resources e.g. paraphrasing and suggested activities or as a teacher’s manual with questions.

Conclusion

Overall the feedback from the workshop was positive with participants commenting that it was a most stimulating and interesting day and a breath of fresh air. Several people were looking forward to being able to trial and evaluate the resources including ESL teachers at another Chinese university. The major suggestion for improvement which emerged from the day was to break the videos into sections and add navigation and indication of length for the user. The ability to be able to select a particular topic/theme would enhance the flexibility of the resources for both students and teachers.
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