Swimming not sinking- practical solutions for international students in the mainstream context

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Abstract

Closer examination of the English language learning needs of the ever expanding cohort of full fee paying students in our schools is a matter of ethics. These students cannot be left to 'sink or swim' in the face of the many challenges of a mainstream educational context using English as the language of instruction. Students enrol in Australian schools from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds having a broad range of English proficiency levels as described by the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia (NLLIA) ESL Bandscales (McKay, Hudson & Sapuppo, 1994) now widely used throughout Queensland and other Australian states. The purpose of this paper is to share the practical ways in which teachers at Kelvin Grove State College (Qld) and The Armidale School (NSW) provide for this diversity in their schools.

In 2003 the Teaching Emphases for English Proficiency Levels (TEEPL) project
http://www.kelvingrovesc.eq.edu.au/asp/teepl/teepl_cover.asp
began out of a concern for students finding the mainstream tasks beyond their linguistic capabilities and for teachers struggling to learn how to meet the needs of such students in their subject areas. TEEPL provides a practical solution for teachers working not only with those less proficient students at risk of 'sinking' in the system but also those well on their way and needing only minimal linguistic 'fine tuning.'
The materials are built into the Whole School Literacy Plan at Kelvin Grove State College which means responsibility for supporting students' learning of English lies with all content area teachers regardless of their subject area. For many teachers this means taking responsibility for a part of the syllabus with which previously they were only peripherally concerned. These teachers need considerable support–more than short visits by ESL teachers can provide- in helping their international students navigate the complexities of the mainstream curriculum. In meeting this responsibility, teachers have found in TEEPL, a ready-made 'toolkit' for use in differentiating their planning to better suit the international students in their classes at various Bandscale levels. The database of teaching emphases in TEEPL can be used to rework mainstream unit plans into 'ESL friendly' versions which cater more specifically to the international cohort.

The TEEPL materials have an even wider application in boarding schools where the school's responsibility extends beyond teaching, to total care of the international students. At The Armidale School the materials are being used to inform not only teaching staff, involved more with the 'cognitive and academic' aspects of language as specified in the Bandscales, but also boarding house staff, administrative staff and even peer mentors, whose involvement is more with the language required in 'personal, social and general school contexts'. TEEPL facilitates a smooth transition from the Intensive Language Centre into mainstream classes when Bandscale levels indicate readiness.

This is a practical paper which will be of interest to anyone involved in helping international students meet the linguistic, cultural and academic demands of school curricula.

Key Words

Strategies Planning Diversity Ethics Bandscales

Introduction

As a 7.5 billion dollar business, the International Education Program is currently Australia's fourth largest export. Around 1000 students from 30 countries are currently studying in Queensland schools and over half of these are in Brisbane. Providing educational services to international students generates almost $15 million for Education Queensland directly (in *Education Views,* September 23, 2005). But, as an ethical business, internationalisation in education involves much more than just producing a commodity and moving it in the market place. The presence of increasing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students in

the mainstream has major implications for pedagogy. As such, it behoves every teacher to find ways to fit classroom practice to their international students rather than the reverse. In keeping with the theme of this year's ISANA conference, this paper offers a practical solution to the problems teachers on both sides of the Tasman are facing in differentiating instruction to suit international students in the mainstream context.

Vision

While government rhetoric boasts the high quality of support services in place for international students, in reality, many teachers are struggling to meet the needs of these students. Though a number of teachers hope their international students will 'swim', many in fact expect them to sink. In an attempt to address this issue, the Teaching Emphases for English Proficiency Levels (TEEPL http://www.kelvingrovesc.eq.edu.au/asp/teepl/teepl_cover.asp), make suggestions for classroom organisation, teaching strategies and selection of texts and give background information related to social, cultural and language learning behaviours as applicable in personal, social and general school contexts as well as in academic contexts. TEEPL is designed to equip teachers with the tools needed to support their international students' learning across the content areas.

Methods

Process of Writing

The suggestions in TEEPL are built around the premise that when teachers scaffold ESL students' learning they are essentially drawing upon three main variables: support, responsibility and linguistic complexity couched in a level of cognitive demand, all of which can be adjusted according to learner factors. Mariani, (1997) makes the important point that students who are anxious and frustrated as a result of being forced into an inappropriate learning environment do not learn whereas challenged but well-supported students do. Many new arrival students for example, will benefit by working for an extended period with linguistically simple, highly supported tasks at age appropriate level of cognitive demand that require only a minimal degree of student responsibility for completion. Through this deliberate process of manipulating each of these variables set within an appropriate level of cognitive demand, the teaching emphases were devised according to learner factors.

Writing TEEPL involved a complex and intricate process of brainstorming ideas, referring to key resources and backward and forward mapping between levels and across macroskills to ensure continuity throughout all 3 bands- Junior Primary, Middle & Upper Primary and Secondary. In this way, the suggestions offered in Secondary build on those in Middle & Upper Primary which in turn build on those in Junior Primary and any entry in one macroskill is supported by related teaching emphases in the other macroskills. Students could not, for instance, be expected to write a story retelling at level 4 Writing unless they had been retelling orally at the earlier levels of Speaking. Furthermore, as receptive skills, a version of a teaching emphasis entered in Reading may also be included in Listening and likewise for the productive skills of Writing and Speaking. The teaching emphases in each table come from a combined 25 years of ESL teaching experience. Each teaching emphasis, whether an original idea or that devised by others, has been carefully placed and then modified to ensure suitability to Bandscale level. In this way, teaching emphases have been meticulously graded so that, for instance, dictation at level 2 is on a single, simple, jointly constructed sentence while at level 4 it's on a short familiar paragraph and at level 5 it changes to the more challenging dictogloss where groups pool notes and reconstruct text. Thus, TEEPL has emerged as a comprehensive, cross referenced document characterized by multi-layered interconnections.

An ongoing aspect of the writing process is the incorporation of feedback gleaned from ESL teacher workshops and trials in various contexts.

Today's Situation

The primary teaching emphases comprising Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking levels 1-7 in both Junior and Middle & Upper Primary Bands, have been written but the Secondary materials remain unfinished with Reading and Writing levels 1-8 still to be completed. TEEPL links to the ESL Bandscales (McKay, Hudson & Sapuppo, 1994) which provide descriptions of ESL learner progress at Junior Primary (years 1-3), Middle & Upper Primary (years 4-7) and Secondary (years 8-12) phases of schooling. The Bandscales are used to rate learner proficiency in the 4 macroskills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing on a scale of 1-7 (Primary) and 1-8 (Secondary) with level 1 descriptors corresponding to beginner level and level 7or 8 to advanced level. The emphasis on academic language use increases as the descriptions

move from Junior Primary through to Secondary. The Bandscales differ to the ESL scales used in New South Wales in that they describe 'what's in the learner' developmentally rather than 'what's a reasonable externally imposed standard to work towards'. The aim of TEEPL, then, is to assist this natural process of development ultimately leading to bilingualism with ongoing characteristics which differ from native speakers and often result in higher scores in language abilities than monolinguals. TEEPL does this by providing practical advice on how to help move students in their natural progression between the levels.

TEEPL 'the book' has become TEEPL 'the website' at http://www.kelvingrovesc.eq.edu.au/asp/teepl/teepl_cover.asp In both versions the teaching emphases are presented in a tabular format. In the web version, the second column was deleted to allow more space for the teaching emphases themselves. Projected or target language capabilities for any level on the website are found in the first column of the table for the following level.

Table 1. Table layout in the original word document (TEEPL- the book)

LISTENING- Moving from Level 1 to Level 2   Middle & Upper Primary

1 Current Language Capabilities	2 Target Language Capabilities	Teaching Emphases	Resources at Kelvin Grove

It's intended that using the teaching emphases shown in either the second (website) or third column (book) at the Bandscale level described in the first column will help the student to start demonstrating some of the capabilities of the next Bandscale level (as outlined in the second column in the book or in the first column of the next table on the website). Strategies have been included for each and every capability but the strategies do not always directly correspond to the adjacent descriptors due to the integrated nature of the suggestions. Rigid matching across the columns would cause this interrelatedness to be lost. Although there's no guarantee the student will move to the next Bandscale level through exposure to the listed teaching emphases, many of the strategies have in fact been extensively trialed for the very purposes for which they were included in TEEPL e.g. Reciprocal Teaching is in the MUP Reading Level 5 table for the purpose of improving comprehension and reading levels. Brown and Palincsar (1984) provided the initial research on this teaching technique. They found that students who were taught these strategies and who were involved in the Reciprocal Teaching routine, made significant gains in comprehension in a relatively short time frame. Students who scored around 30 percent on a comprehension assessment scored 70 to 80 percent after just 15-20 days of instruction using Reciprocal Teaching (Brown and Palincsar, 1984). After one year, the students maintained the comprehension growth they had achieved (Oczuks, 2003). In her own research with Reciprocal Teaching, Oczuks (2003), found that students' reading levels rose one half to one full grade level in just 18-20 Reciprocal Teaching lessons two or three times per week. In another study, Cooper et. al. reported dramatic results in reading levels after 76 reciprocal teaching lessons (Cooper, Boschken, McWilliams & Pistochini, 2000).
The materials are not meant to be prescriptive or to constrain in any way the use of professional judgement, forcing teachers to conceive of learning in certain ways. Using the materials involves for many, having to learn new skills needed to design learning opportunities based on students' diagnosed levels of achievement. TEEPL offers a range of practices from which teachers might select, depending on the purposes of any particular language program and the needs of the children in their class.

The introduction answers anticipated and frequently asked questions about the materials. The proficiency rating sheets aid in the Bandscale leveling of international students. In order to rate students' proficiency levels in the 4 macroskills ESL teachers in consultation with class teachers use a variety of assessment practices including planned or informal observation/discussion, collection and analysis of samples, standardized tests or student self-assessment. The ESL plan template is designed to enable the creation of individual plans using the cut and paste tools whilst the search facility (control-F) allows any table to be searched for a particular term e.g., narrative. Feedback is invited via the feedback proforma or less formally through the email addresses of the authors. A professional development (PD) package has been developed and used in both primary and secondary schools and can be adjusted to suit a range of educational contexts.

Relevant Historical Information

- April 2003: began writing TEEPL and incorporating feedback after hours in own time until April 2004. Principals approved 100 hours of non-contact time which was greatly appreciated but which has amounted to less than one tenth of the time invested
- October 2003: TEEPL attracted attention of Curriculum Strategy Branch in Education Queensland's Central Office (CO)
- May 2004: project plan submitted to fund the writing and trialing of TEEPL to include Prep Year as well as Secondary Reading and Writing
- June 2004: Assistant Director General, Curriculum and project sponsor supportive of the submission should funds become available
- September 2004: CO announced that no immediate funding was available to continue the writing and trialing of TEEPL
  : small local trial began with ESL teachers from several districts
- November 2004: CO announced that although the materials were worthy of state-wide application the Bandscales themselves were to be reviewed first before any action was taken on a wider scale. With this in mind, 2 project plans were intended to be submitted by CO personnel in consultation with TEEPL writers before the end of 2004 – the first was to review the Bandscales and the second was to evaluate TEEPL as a way of 'growing it up' in preparation for its potential state-wide application.
- March 2005: funding gained through Refugee Grant monies to extend and develop the existing teaching emphases (JP, MUP, SEC Listening& Speaking) to target more closely the needs of refugee students, particularly those with limited print literacy. This funding is not for the development of Secondary Reading and Writing both of which remain unfinished.

Available Options

When the writers sat down to create TEEPL, there were many high quality professional development packages on the market including Further Literacy Inservice Project (FLIP, 1990), Language in Learning (LIL, 1990), Language for Understanding Across the Curriculum (LUAC, 1997), ESL in the Mainstream (2000) and English Language Development Across the Curriculum (ELDAC, 1989). Nevertheless, there was no single resource available which had the capacity to instantly empower teachers to meet the needs of international students. The plethora of photocopiable materials did little to help, often falling short by never really matching the specific needs of any one particular learning context. TEEPL however, as a toolkit, a database of strategies or even a DIY manual for teachers leads to tailor made rather than ready made solutions. It builds on teachers' prior knowledge. It has no content of its own instead adapting to any content across the curriculum. By its very nature, it has the potential to equip every teacher in every subject area with skills in ESL pedagogy thus making success for these students everyone's responsibility.
TEEPL can be seen to have many unique advantages in that it-
- is cost effective: free
- is linked closely to the Bandscales (McKay, Hudson & Sapuppo, 1994): systems compatible
- places minimal demands on teacher time: saves time now
- is related to language across the curriculum: applies to all subject areas
- is in line with the mainstreaming approach: capacity to tailor activities to context
- is dynamic not static: able to be changed in response to shifting trends or feedback

Results

Queensland

The following examples illustrate the impact of TEEPL across the state of Queensland.

- Creation of individual ESL plans for ESL teachers, for classroom teachers, for teacher aides and even for parents seeking a tangible guide to follow in supporting their child at home. In following the curriculum cycle and meeting accountability requirements, such plans are proving invaluable as they track student progress towards the next Bandscale level at the end of term which then informs the creation of the ensuing ESL plan.

- Creation of complete reporting packages: Bandscale reports are being issued to class teachers/parents along with the corresponding TEEPL tables, modified to suit either by cutting and pasting or highlighting relevant teaching emphases for each of student's levels

-to inform planning for class teachers in moving ESL students to the next Bandscale level
-to provide a framework for discussing student's academic, social, emotional progress with class teacher or parents
-to guide parents on how to support their children's learning at home

- **Continuity of service for Advisory Visiting Teachers (AVT's):** In areas where limited numbers of ESL teachers cover a wide geographical zone, lower needs schools are serviced via term about rotations. The ESL AVT's are going into these schools, assessing Bandscale levels and using TEEPL to brief the teachers on the types of strategies they can use to help move the students forward. In this way, TEEPL is keeping students supported in the absence of regular face-to-face contact with the ESL teacher for the term.

- **Behaviour Management:** Anxiety and frustration due to an expectation for the student to somehow fit the classroom practice rather than the reverse, can result in behaviour problems such as aggression, absenteeism, running home or hiding in a safe place such as the library reading corner. A behaviour management AVT is using TEEPL to address these behaviour problems by advising the classroom teachers on how to match their practice more closely to their learners.

- **Professional Development for classroom teachers:** Many first year teachers are using TEEPL as a form of self directed professional learning. Many experienced classroom teachers comment that the materials are prompting them to use ideas that they either hadn't been using for a while or are new to them and that they value the fact that this resource links strategies to specific areas of need. TEEPL has also informed the following primary inservice programs run by ESL teachers
    - "Early Years Literacy and the ESL Learner" for P-3 teachers at schools with significant numbers of Sudanese new arrivals at either preliterate level or at Bandscale level 1 leading into a trial of the TEEPL materials.
    - "4 Resources Model Reading and the ESL Learner" using a version of the TEEPL tables (available from Kay McNamara or Esther Watt on request) which code each teaching emphasis as CB (code breaker), MM (meaning maker), TU (text user) or TA (text analyst). This session aims to encourage teachers to check that their planning comprises a balance of each of the 4 practices in the 4 Resources Model

- **Professional Development for ESL teachers**
    -Secondary ESL teachers are using TEEPL: Middle & Upper Primary Reading and Writing Levels 1 and 2 to inform their teaching of early literacy skills to students exiting new arrival centres at low Bandscale levels
    -ESL teachers either new to the profession or seeking to extend their current repertoire of strategies are referring to TEEPL for ideas to inform their own lesson planning. Some experienced ESL teachers have commented that the materials are prompting them to use strategies they either haven't tried for some time or are new to them.

- **Materials Development:** TEEPL is informing the writing of the following materials
    - Kit for Junior Primary New Arrivals – using TEEPL Junior Primary Level 1 in all 4 macroskills
    - Beginning English Acquisition & Development Strategies (BEADS) Project– a team of ESL teachers are developing a bank of examples of strategies from TEEPL levels 3 and 4 on universal/inclusive topics. Teachers may need to see examples in order to understand a strategy such as a Three Level Guide or a Structured Overview. The project team has offered to share their examples which can be hyperlinked into the TEEPL document.
    -'The Total News' (TTN) www.ttn.tv has online resources for ESL learners to accompany each episode of the TV program. The education advisor to the Channel 10 program 'The Total News' team is using TEEPL to redesign the structure and content of this ESL section comprising student/teacher resources to accompany each episode. Before consulting TEEPL, only general suggestions which didn't factor in the need for higher levels of scaffolding, were included e.g., discuss the topic with a friend or write the words in sentences then write a paragraph. Changes to some recent support material which come directly from TEEPL include a) 'before', 'during' and 'after' viewing suggestions b) a synopsis and key word list prior to viewing c) access to a script d) a suggestion to tape the program so it can be paused, rewound etc e) use of more specific, targeted ESL strategies which reduce student responsibility for creation of texts such as cloze

- Kelvin Grove State College (KGSC): A Whole School Approach
  Kelvin Grove State College's 1250 strong cohort includes about 100 full fee paying overseas students spread across years 1-12 from a wide range of countries with a majority from China. Whole school approaches work against the tokenism/bandaiding problem associated with 30-60 minutes face-to-face ESL teacher contact per student or class. In emphasizing explicit teaching of language across the curriculum, a whole school approach is the ultimate goal of any ESL service provider.

Figure 1: Implementation of TEEPL for whole school change at Kelvin Grove State College
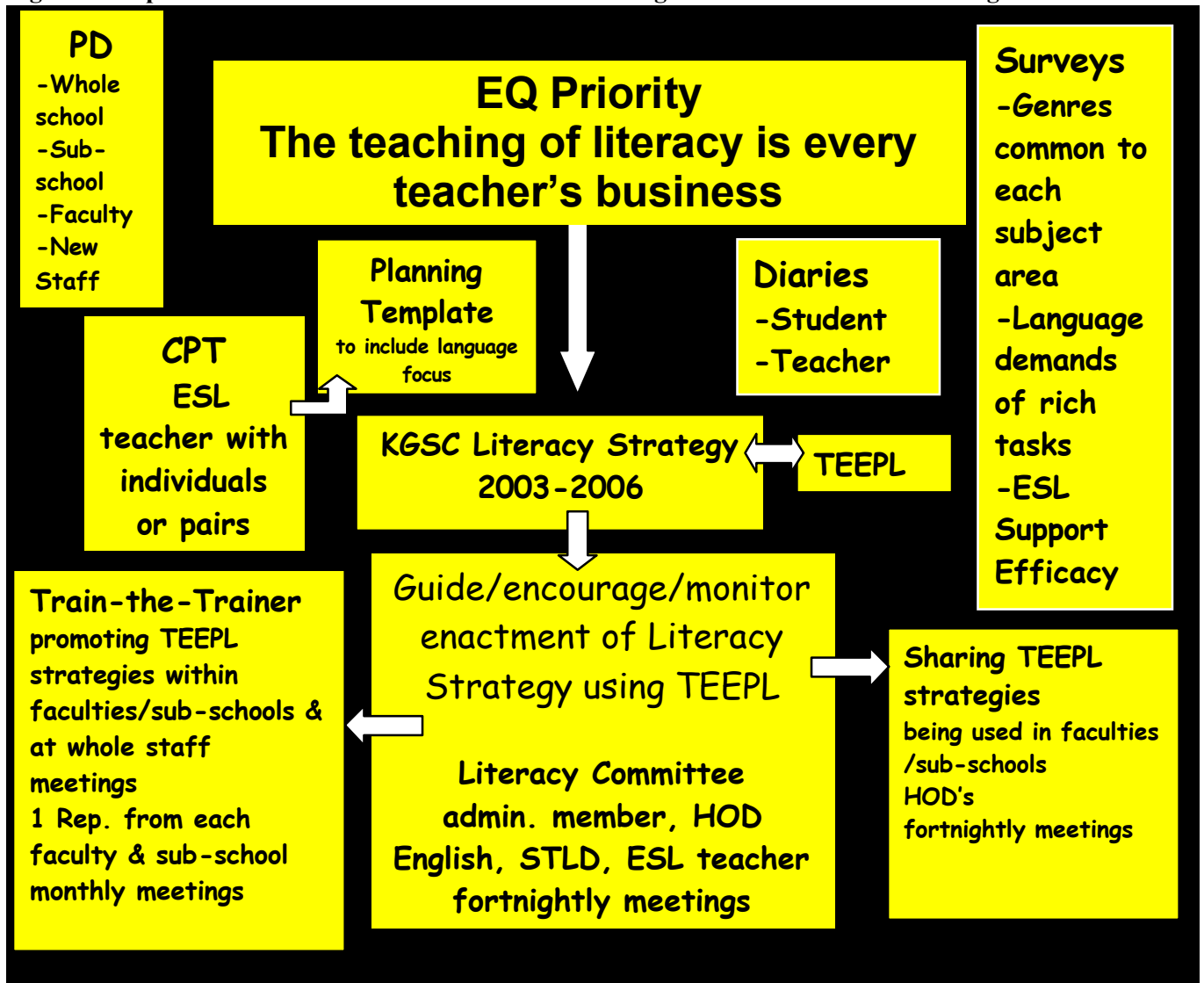
The key to success in a whole school approach to ESL support is a 'systemic push' at every turn of the road- from the top with Education Queensland priorities ('all teachers are teachers of English') and syllabus documents (a language focus in all subjects followed up with a communication criteria in assessment rubrics) down to ground level characterised by strong support from administration (starting with the principal and flowing onto the appointment of a key administration member to help the international student staff e.g., by rallying mainstream staff via email/memos/meetings under the 'admin. banner') and school policies which reflect the aims of a whole school approach. The Kelvin Grove Literacy Strategy was driven by the Departmental vision- 'all teachers are teachers of English' which implies all teachers are also teachers of ESL. Diversity and 'at riskness' impinged on the development of the strategy with ESL students identified in the 'intervention and special needs' component. TEEPL is written into the policy as a key method in achieving the stated goals. In this way, implementing TEEPL is seen as a requirement, dictated from the top and backed by policy thus giving it the 'clout' it needs in order to be taken on board by 'time poor' teachers.

A whole school approach involves dedicated 'seeding and propagating' in raising consciousness and eliciting support. The ESL teacher is a member of the KGSC Literacy Committee which meets once/fortnight to plan for the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. Representatives from each faculty and sub-school (i.e., Junior Primary, Middle School and Senior School) meet with the literacy committee once/month to workshop a strategy from TEEPL (e.g., structured overview) using faculty specific texts. These reps then

help demonstrate the strategy at whole staff PD via monthly year 6-12 staff meetings and Pupil Free Days. They subsequently promote TEEPL strategies within their faculties e.g., by discussing at a staff meeting, how they've used the strategy. One Head of Department (HOD) is expected to share the application of strategies in TEEPL by their faculty for 10 minutes at each fortnightly HOD's meeting. The Head of the English Department and the ESL teacher meet informally with each HOD prior to their presentation to discuss current literacy practices, common genre students need to read or write in their subject area and how these are taught explicitly, the language demands of tasks set, the efficacy of the support mechanisms in place for international students as well as planning models (e.g., ELA model of orientating, enhancing and synthesizing) used by their teachers. A meeting with the maths HOD revealed a prevalence of texts with a compare and contrast top level structure, explicit teaching of technical/sub-technical terms and the use of print versions of 'teacher talk'. The Health and Physical Education Department attaches to task sheets an analysis of the structure and language features of the genre students are expected to write. The Science Department regularly uses concept mapping, explicit teaching of technical and sub-technical terms, glossaries, visuals, outlines of generic structure and language features and experiments which move from language accompanying action to language of reflection. For the English and Trans-Disciplinary Studies teachers, TEEPL is more of a reminder of good strategies. One English teacher has been using specific TEEPL suggestions such as 'structured discussions' from TEEPL Secondary Speaking Level 2 to forge friendships between ESL students and native speakers.

The process of 'seeding and propagating' has highlighted the need for -
- a more deliberate approach by teachers in firstly identifying and then making explicit the language features of texts
- a more comprehensive model of planning which spells out the language focus of each task

In addressing these needs the strategies in TEEPL needed to be 'brought to life' through Cooperative Planning and Teaching (CPT) using a planning template which identifies language demands and Professional Development (PD) underpinned by a belief in the efficacy of co-constructivism.

CPT: The ESL teacher cooperatively plans and teaches units of work which are published in electronic format with hyperlinks to all worksheets for ease of distribution on CD and on the intranet
- TEEPL is inputted into Blank 3 phase units- Orientating, Enhancing and Synthesising posted on the intranet
- TEEPL informs planning meetings with teachers-1.class teacher sends overview to ESL teacher 2. ESL teacher fishes out applicable teaching emphases/resources from TEEPL 3. ESL teacher attends planning meeting armed with list of appropriate teaching emphases from TEEPL and teachers jointly write plan including language demands 4. ESL teacher visits classroom for support and demonstration lessons 5. ESL teacher and class teacher do a unit evaluation as a reviewing/checking mechanism around the plan (What was implemented? What wasn't implemented? Were the strategies effective?) and in writing up a final compilation for sharing
- Literacy reps plan term 1 2006 units using a specially designed planning template developed by the literacy committee which highlights language demands of tasks and articulates how these can be taught using TEEPL

PD: Professional development has taken place and is planned in the following forms
- Lectures and workshops on the bandscales, TEEPL , intercultural communication and various issues raised in staff survey including the nature of second language acquisition
- Short workshops of strategies from TEEPL with literacy reps assisting- 10 mins allocated at each staff meeting and half hour slots on Pupil Free Days
- Short grammar overview to build a common understanding of grammatical concepts using the terminology of traditional grammar but drawing on Systemic Functional Linguistics as well
- Spelling workshops- 20 mins at Middle School staff meeting
- Spelling Strategy of the Week- Middle School staffroom wall and in coffee table book
- Sharing a strategy from TEEPL and locating it on the website- 10 mins at English faculty meetings
- Teacher diary- to include metalanguage- glossary, planning template and TEEPL Strategy of the Week
- Student diary- to address problems identified by teachers in teacher survey informing literacy strategy- generic structure, cohesion, grammar, paragraphing, punctuation, spelling, editing checklist etc
- Sharing of ESL informed units of work published electronically as models of best practice.

The main constraint in a whole school approach is teacher attitudes and perceptions. Some teachers feel they already have an adequate range of strategies and don't need TEEPL. Others view ESL as too specialised a

field and therefore not within either their capabilities or responsibilities. ESL teaching is perceived by these teachers as the domain of the ESL teacher thus creating a divide between specialist and mainstream teachers. What is needed they say is more ESL teacher time to 'fix the problem', not TEEPL. Some object to the idea that ESL students should be seen or treated differently from other class members.

 Rather than seeing it as a time saver, some view TEEPL as an 'extra' imposed on already overloaded teachers. While some teachers appreciate being able to track students progress using the proficiency rating sheets on the website, it may not be feasible to expect many mainstream teachers to come properly to grips with the demands of mapping ESL students on the bandscales, because of their existing work demands. Others complain that queues for slow computers in staffrooms discourage use of the TEEPL website. For others it's simply a case of 'documentation overload'. Furthermore, the teaching emphases are only as effective as the intercultural communication skills (ICC) of the teacher implementing them. In the absence of ICC, counter productive stereotyping and ethnocentrism surface, the deficit view gains voice as one side is systematically privileged over the other and the teaching emphases may in turn, lose their intended meaning. Other constraints arise out of limitations of ESL teacher time- being in the school part time makes it difficult for the ESL teacher to actively involve the mainstream teachers in the issue of considering the special needs ESL students face. Whilst being aware of the pressures teachers face, and suspecting some teachers may even feel threatened by the ESL teacher for reasons already discussed, the seeming lack of interest can still be disappointing. Those teachers who have embraced TEEPL are often the ones with whom the ESL teacher has built a firm relationship. Relationships take time to build and maintain and part-time presence in a school limits opportunities to regularly collaborate in sharing concerns about the needs of the students and how TEEPL can specifically address these needs.

Change is a slow process. TEEPL has been in place at Kelvin Grove State College for 2 years now. Though not conclusive, the data looks promising and it's particularly encouraging that our senior dux 2005 is a member of the Chinese international student cohort who arrived just as TEEPL was implemented school-wide in January 2004.

Victoria

•   Online Materials development: A Victorian ESL consultant and published author is referring to TEEPL in writing materials for students with limited print literacy in the mainstream from Sudan, Somalia and Liberia as part of a project funded by the Victorian Department of Education.

New South Wales

•   The Armidale School: Implementing TEEPL with International students in the private sector
TEEPL has been recently introduced in various ways in the context of a GPS school – a private boy's boarding school, with full fee-paying International students. As few of the boys have previously had any interaction with non-native speakers of English, or with cultures other than the Anglo-Celtic, it has been necessary to work at breaking down the barriers between the dominant culture and the ESL student cultures, using strategies that address the personal, social and general school contexts. It is self-evident that if students are boarding at the school from age twelve and upwards, their experience in these areas is going to impact enormously not only on their academic progress, but on social and emotional development vital to their age. Attempts had been made in the past to address this need by taking International students out to Asian restaurants, each with a local student as a guest. However, interactions were reported as strained, with eye contact avoided, and very little conversation between cultural groups. With the addition of specific oral activities recommended in TEEPL, before and during dinner, this event has shifted to a regular and eagerly awaited event where it is common to see local students piggy-backing international students or visa versa, out of the restaurant.

In order for International students to participate more readily in the Australian educational context, it is necessary to decrease the social distance between teachers and these students. While on the one hand many Asian students' cultures can make it difficult for them to approach teachers, there is also the reciprocal situation, where teaching staff rarely get the opportunity in the course of a school day, to interact with the students in a context that allows for communication on anything other than an academic level – which has inherent limitations given the low Bandscale levels of many of the students. The common activity of conducting interviews and writing biographies, recommended in TEEPL, was tailored to this context, so that students interviewed teachers of their choice, and wrote biographies, later sharing their new knowledge with other students in an informal oral context. This appears to have facilitated easier interactions between these

particular teachers and students, aligning more with the type of teacher-student interaction more common in Australia.

There has been increased student participation in activities previously regarded as inaccessible to international students in the school. For the first time since the school opened its gates to these students, there are those actively involved the school vocal group, in peer tutoring and mentoring, in drama performances with public audiences, and in public speaking, at the school assembly. They are no longer invisible in social, extracurricular, or academic arenas of school life. Having a structured way in which to inform and advise all involved with the student on strategies to promote understanding on an individual and cultural level, including boarding house personnel, work placement personnel, and home-stay hosts as well as classroom teachers, has greatly enhanced the experience of both the international students and those working with them.

International

The following examples illustrate international applications of TEEPL.
   • Curriculum Development: China
TEEPL was a key resource used in writing the offshore curriculum commissioned by Education Queensland International (EQI) for partner schools teaching the Queensland Year 10 curriculum in China.

   • Collaborative Research Study: The Maldives
A Professor at Edith Cowan University, WA is using TEEPL in conducting a pilot focusing on year 5 Devihi speaking students in the Maldives who are not succeeding in an English immersion context. Diagnostic assessment using the Bandscales will lead to whole class application of strategies according to language usage as indicated by Bandscale level as in TEEPL. Diagnostic assessment and teaching to needs is new to these teachers and will be introduced into the teacher education course in a bid to upgrade it to a 4yr B Ed. The project will be published but is just getting off ground currently and as 'things take time in Maldives' no results will be available until December 2006

Recommendations and Conclusion

   • Maintain the initiative as a priority not an add-on. Retain management support and involvement at every level and continue to write TEEPL into policy documents/strategic plans

   • Collect data through trials and standardized tests to prove efficacy and to support funding applications especially to complete the writing of the Secondary materials e.g., by tracking ESL students' progress in those classes using TEEPL systematically. 'Data consciousness' not 'Data Driven' is the catchcry here. Chronologically ordered ESL student plans generated from the TEEPL website have the potential to show where the students were and where they have moved to.

   • Review models of ESL service delivery considering the limitations of a mostly face-to-face model. The advisory part of the ESL teacher role is equally as important but needs time for it to be done properly. TEEPL can facilitate whole school change but if most of ESL teacher time is devoted to face-to-face teaching, when does planning, conducting quality PD, attending CPT sessions (for which many class teachers now receive non-contact time), modelling ICC skills, mentoring teachers, consulting with administration and general 'seeding and propagating' take place? ESL teachers need the flexibility and spaces in their schedules to be able to fit in with mainstream teachers rather than being forced to say no to a meeting or request to demonstrate a strategy from TEEPL. ESL teachers need to be able to fit in with the teacher rather than put them off due to rigid back-to-back timetabling. They need time away from face-to-face support especially in the AVT role. If tokenism is to be truly abolished the ESL teacher needs to consult with schools for whole school change so classroom teachers become less reliant on that half to one hour/week of ESL teacher face-to-face time with the student. If the whole school approach is seen as the ideal then ESL teachers need time to achieve this complex goal.

   • Put in place transition programs run by a case manager for students entering mainstream high schools (without an ESL unit) at below Bandscale level 4 to ensure teaching emphases for levels 1, 2 and 3 are followed thus addressing such students' need for focussed English language training and possibly resettlement, cultural orientation/familiarisation

   • Support for overloaded teachers in taking up the challenge to implement TEEPL e.g., administration to do duty/take supervisions to allow teachers time to reflect on and change their practice. The ESL teacher

has a role as a mentor for these often overloaded teachers in reassuring them that change for the better has in fact occurred by looking at before and after scenarios. When identified, the ESL teacher needs to encourage these teachers to share their insights or risk these gems being lost. When does the ESL teacher do this? Once again it requires flexibility of ESL teacher time rather than rigid face-to-face timetabling

- Respond to state-wide requests for PD for ESL teachers (PD link on site)

Michele Anstey and Geoff Bull, literacy consultants for Education Queensland, in their keynote address at the 2005 Australian Association for the Teaching of English Conference said that the turning point in any form of whole school change is when teachers ask- 'how can I help you get this stuff happening?' At both Kelvin Grove and The Armidale School this turning point has arrived as the teachers become ever mindful of and better equipped to carry out their responsibilities to a student cohort at risk of falling victim to the increasing commodification of education.

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