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Collaboration: The key to integration of language and content in academic literacy interventions

Abstract

This contribution enters into dialogue with studies conducted both at school and university level on the effectiveness of interaction between subject teachers and language teachers to improve learners' subject-specific discourse literacies.

An overview is given of the key findings of a report by the National Center for Literacy Education (2013) in the USA, and main findings are linked to two recent South African studies on collaborative approaches to academic literacy support in higher education.

This is followed by a comparison of the school and university settings under scrutiny, with specific emphasis on the shared success factors. An analysis of two curricula for academic literacy offerings at a university that is in the process of introducing subject-specific academic literacy interventions indicates that the effectiveness of the interventions is not necessarily dependent on team teaching approaches, but on institutionally supported, regular, integrative, mutually consultative planning with all stakeholders involved in an atmosphere informed by study and ongoing review.

Key words: academic literacy, collaboration, discourse literacy, discursive spaces, subject-specific academic literacy, team-teaching.

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1. Background and problem

In a 2012 article Van Dyk and Coetzee-Van Rooy re-evaluate recommendations by the Bullock Report (1975) with regard to the implementation of 'language across the curriculum' in South African higher education. One of their primary aims is to "situate strands of current thinking in a framework that could clarify assumptions and implications potentially accepted uncritically today" (Van Dyk & Coetzee-van Rooy, 2012:7). The section of the Bullock report that was found by these authors to be applicable to South African higher education – chapter 26 – focuses on language and literacy policy development and the establishment of support structures for their development. The ultimate aim of the Van Dyk and Coetzee-Van Rooy article is to

> propose a framework with which insights presented in the Bullock report (1975), and experiences from those who worked towards the implementation of this report in different contexts (Marland, 1977 and Corson, 1975), could be used to guide thinking about the "language and literacy across the curriculum" issue in South African higher education today (Van Dyk & Coetzee-VanRooy, 2012:10).

A pivotal issue addressed in Van Dyk and Coetzee-Van Rooy's article (2012:14) is curriculum approaches to support curriculation for the implementation of language across the curriculum. They quote Marland (1977:11) who distinguishes a 'disseminated approach' and a 'specialised approach' to curriculum. Disseminated approaches move the responsibility for the development of academic, quantitative and information literacies to the mainstream, involving language experts as well as faculty, administrators and other stakeholders (compare also Scott, 2009; Jacobs, 2009; Hibbert, 2011). Among the advantages of such models are the 'discursive spaces' they create for collaboration between language lecturers and subject specialists, and the empowerment of subject-specialists to lexicalise and structure their tacit knowledge of literacy conventions in their specialised discourses.

Among the challenges facing this type of model are that subject-specialists find it difficult to identify, verbalise and teach the "tacit knowledge' they possess about language and literacy in the discourses of their subjects. Specialised approaches derive from earlier English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approaches, and are typically embodied in language modules with a variety of foci – from generic (English for Academic Purposes) to sharply focused on the discourse of a particular profession or discipline. Specialised modules are presented by language specialists housed together in units for language and literacy support.

Advantages of such approaches are their utility in terms of economies of scale – for instance where academic or professional literacy interventions are required by entire faculties housing a range of academic programmes that share a common core, but differ in relation to specific foci, as in faculties of natural and agricultural sciences and faculties of humanities. One of the major drawbacks of specialised approaches is "language lecturers not being in regular contact with their colleagues teaching subject-specific courses" (Van Dyk and Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2012:21).

Although there is value in contrasting disseminated and specialised curriculum models, a juxtaposition may hide possibilities for applying the same principles in both, albeit in different measures. One of the principles I wish to highlight is 'collaboration'. If collaboration is not an all or nothing feature, we might arrive at a view of disseminated approaches sitting on one end of a continuum and generic approaches on the other, with specialised approaches in between.

As a point of departure, while linking to Van Dyk and Coetzee-Van Rooy's novel application of the Bullock report to higher education, I wish to invoke The National Center for Literacy Education's report on the 'National Survey of Collaborative Professional Learning Opportunities' (NCLE, 2013). Although there are major differences between what is institutionalised in school settings and what is conventional or possible in higher education settings, there is much that higher education can learn from this survey about literacy teaching, which may guide us away from the rhetoric of 'autonomous' versus 'collaborative/integrated/disseminated'.

2. The National Center for Literacy Education's (NCLE) 'National Survey of Collaborative Professional Learning Opportunities'

This survey was conducted in October 2012 among a representative national sample of K-12 educators across the USA, taking into account grade levels and subjects taught to answer the research question: "How can we create and sustain the conditions for the kind of professional learning that research tells us has an impact on student achievement?" (NCLE, 2013:4). Eventually the survey was completed with 2,404 respondents, who matched well with the sample frame. The aim of the survey was "to establish a national baseline for the use of effective professional collaboration around literacy learning and to document the most critical needs" (Ibid.).

The survey questionnaires were based on a review of the literature on effective professional learning "and particularly collaborative practices among educators that have been shown to have an impact on student learning" (Ibid.). Five main findings were reported:

1. Literacy is not just the English teacher's job anymore.
2. Working together is working smarter.
3. Schools aren't structured to facilitate educators working together.
4. Many of the building blocks for remodelling literacy learning are in place.
5. Effective collaboration needs systemic support.

1. Literacy is not just the English teacher's job anymore

The survey shows that "the strong majority of US educators understand and embrace that literacy is at the core of every subject area" (NCLE, 2013:8). More than three quarters of the respondents – not only primary school teachers and English teachers, but also teachers specialising in the natural and social sciences at secondary school level (NCLE, 2013:8) – agreed with the statement "Developing students' literacy is one of the most important parts of my job" (50 % strongly agreed and 27% agreed). Thus, literacy teaching becomes part and parcel of teaching and learning across the curriculum.

The educators expressed a clear need to learn more about strategies to meet students' literacy needs. They contended that literacy skills that were once expected of only top performing students were now needed in almost any workplace (NCLE, 2013:10-11). These include the ability to interpret and use a wide variety of information and texts for problem-solving, analysis and collaboration. They also include dispositions such as curiosity, engagement and flexibility, which is in line with one of the core design principles of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), based on extensive research on "the need for college- and career-ready students to be able to use complex texts in multiple contexts" (Common Core State Standards initiative, 2010).

2. Working together is working smarter

The NCLE survey included a question on what made professional learning the most powerful and impactful. Respondents could select up to three from among 14 choices plus an open "other" category. The responses indicated that the educators find professional learning most beneficial when it affords them the opportunity to actively exchange ideas with colleagues and that they learn most from hands-on collaboration (NCLE, 2013:11).

Fullan (2010) identifies "collective capacity" built through planned collaboration as the "hidden resource" that US school systems have neglected to nurture. This finding is supported by a recent report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (Fulton & Britton, 2011, cited in NCLE, 2013:12), which summarises a decade of research by the National Science Foundation on teacher effectiveness as follows:

> We now have compelling evidence that when good teachers team up with their colleagues they are able to create a culture of success in schools, leading to teaching improvements and student learning gains. The clear policy and practice implication is that great teaching is a team sport.

In contrast with the above ideal, a 2009 MetLife Survey of the American teacher finds that US teachers spend an average of 93% of their official workday in isolation from their colleagues, which sets them at a disadvantage when compared to nations that outperform the US on international assessments (MetLife, 2010).

3. But schools aren't structured to facilitate educators working together

Less than a quarter of the classroom teachers in the survey reported that they spend more than two hours per week in structured collaboration with other educators (NCLE, 2013:13). This finding correlates with a finding from the most recent MetLife survey that overall job satisfaction of American teachers was the lowest in 25 years, and that teachers reporting low levels of satisfaction were more likely to work in schools with few opportunities for collaboration (MetLife, 2012). The need for investment in collective capacity building is supported by recent research which suggests that a school's social capital (the connections between educators and the extent to which they exchange and build on each other's knowledge) is just as powerful a predictor of student achievement as human capital (the skills of individual teachers) (NCLE, 2013:14).

4. Many of the building blocks for remodelling literacy learning are in place

According to the NCLE survey, structures of collaboration are emerging, but time devoted to them are limited (NCLE, 2013:15). Two-thirds of US teachers report participating at least monthly in key forms of professional collaboration. A surprising finding is that educators are increasingly participating in forms of online learning on a voluntary basis (NCLE, 2013:16), thereby taking ownership of their own professional learning in a climate where money and time constraints limit opportunities for professional learning. The survey results show almost no difference in participation in online learning between educators with five or fewer years' service than educators with more than 20 (NCLE, 2013:17).

However, these promising efforts seem to be impeded by traditional structures, schedules and resource allocations. New structures will have to be put in place to remodel and support new trends in teaching and learning.

5. Effective collaboration needs systemic support

The NCLE survey demonstrates considerable agreement between the levels of reported collaboration and levels of trust among teachers, administrators and other staff, and that new learning about effective practice is shared. These data are supported by large-scale longitudinal studies that have shown professional trust and channels for disseminating learning about best practices to be powerful contributors to school improvement (NCLE, 2013:21).

An important systemic support mechanism for collaboration proves to be the provision of tools and training that help educators work together more effectively. Survey respondents who reported that "Our faculty learns about effective ways to work together" were considerably more likely to report the frequent use of the following collaborative practices:

- "Making commitments to try things in practice and report back on the results;
- Sharing what is learned with others beyond the team;
- Challenging each other and engaging in hard conversations;
- Analysing the impact of new practices on student learning" (NCLE, 2013:22).

6. Implications for remodelling literacy learning

The NCLE's 'National Survey of Collaborative Professional Learning Opportunities' shows that educators across disciplines and grade-levels realise the need to collaborate in order to meet "students' complex, cross-disciplinary needs" (NCLE, 2013:24). The compilers of the report emphasise the need for schools to move away from compartmentalisation of teachers and content "if they are to tackle the shared task of literacy development", and to challenge traditional structures and resource allocations (Ibid.).

It would be interesting to investigate the extent to which the results from the NCLE survey resonate with practice research in higher education. In the next section I give an overview of two interventions in higher education that demonstrate the success of collaboration between academic literacy lecturers and subject lecturers in empowering learners to master the discourses and the literacies of their focal disciplines, and assist content lecturers to make explicit their knowledge of such discourses. Similarities and differences between the NCLE context and the university contexts are highlighted.

3. Collaborative teaching in higher education

In their book chapter entitled 'Curriculum responsiveness from the margins: A reappraisal of Academic Development in South Africa', Volbrecht and Boughey (2004:67) reiterate that development work is linked to the wider processes of globalisation and the need for high skills (which is also mentioned in the NCLE report), and that the field is now framed "not only by considerations related to equity but also those related to performativity and efficiency". One of the key issues that is believed to facilitate curriculum responsiveness includes collaboration between subject and language specialists.

However, the notion of collaboration in promoting language across the curriculum is not new. Butler (1998), who investigated collaborative language teaching at the then North Gauteng Technikon, asserts that "collaborative teaching is a *strategy* [my emphasis] for the implementation of SL syllabuses" (1998:43). He equates collaborative teaching with team teaching, and quotes Reece and Walker (1997), who define team teaching as a situation where "two or more teachers co-operate in the planning, presentation, assessment and evaluation of a course, but mainly in the presentation" (Ibid.). Butler (1998:44) embraces a specific type of collaboration that arose in the 1990s within the context of Language for Specific Purposes, which he terms the "shared power and decision-making type". This is when language teachers team-teach [content-based]

courses with subject specialists as a collaborative venture where power and decision-making are negotiated" (Butler, 1998:45). He quotes Brinton (1993:9) in saying that this type of approach "focuses mainly on LSP and CBI, since both share a dissatisfaction with the traditional abstraction of language from its natural environment" (Ibid.)

The debate on collaborative teaching resurfaced well into the 21st century, probably as a result of policy changes in higher education. Volbrecht and Boughey (2004:75) declare that tertiary educators (including AD practitioners as conventionally defined) will have to leave their specialist silos "in order to engage in more open knowledge systems regarding the nature of learning." In citing Rowland (2000) and Quinn (2004), Volbrecht and Boughey (2004:75) celebrate the gains of collaborative approaches in commenting that once disciplinary experts and academic development specialists are engaged in collaborative activities such as team teaching they "enjoy the camaraderie and the cross-fertilisation of ideas that happen in these discursive spaces" (Ibid.).

Although the notion of collaborative teaching is not new, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) in South Africa became one of the first tertiary institutions to implement collaborative teaching on an institution-wide scale, and report on a research project that was aimed at documenting the process. At CPUT the Department of Languages and Communication, which was previously the disciplinary home of language lecturers, was decentralised around 2002 as a result of institutional restructuring preceding a merger (Boughey, 2012:134), which resulted in language lecturers being moved to academic departments across a range of faculties (Jacobs, 2007b:36), and in turn compelled language lecturers to embed their teaching of academic literacies in the mainstream curricula of the disciplines. Moreover, they were compelled to collaborate with the subject lecturers in these disciplines instead of offering academic literacy modules alongside the subject modules. Given the much stronger emphasis on research in reconstituted universities of technology, and the growing awareness that language plays an important role in epistemological access, a university-wide research project on the new model for teaching academic and subject-specific literacies was established at CPUT. The project involved nine language and discipline partnerships, which then constituted a transdisciplinary project team. The project team served as an institutional platform for networking across the language-discipline partnerships (Jacobs, 2007b:38). In this way the institutional project team provided a transdisciplinary space for academics to collaboratively negotiate their roles in literacy teaching across the curriculum.

The context at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) is similar, although the changes in academic literacy development provision took place approximately 5 to 7 years after the CPUT intervention, and was triggered by an initiative of the Department of Higher Education in 2007 to institute extended curriculum programmes in support of underprepared students. These changes at policy level necessitated curriculum changes in academic literacy offerings. Similar to CPUT, partnerships were established between academic literacy lecturers and subject lecturers. Marshall, Conana, Maclon, Herbert and Volkwyn (2011) mention partnerships with two departments in the Science Faculty: Life Sciences and Physics. In particular, they report on the collaborative partnership between an academic literacy lecturer and two physics lecturers from the Physics

Department to assist students in extended curriculum programmes. The AL practitioner attended all the lectures, tutorials and practicals, and was perceived by the students as part of the physics teaching team. Although the class was led by the physics lecturer, the AL practitioner was free to interrupt the lecturer, ask clarifying questions, or to elaborate on something that was taken for granted by the lecturer.

These kinds of interruptions served to make explicit for students both content issues and language issues. The AL practitioner also introduced a critical-reflective element in the lectures, by making visible, through discussions, the myth that the 'hard sciences' are value-neutral, apolitical and asocial. Weekly meetings between the AL lecturer and the Physics lecturers were held to plan teaching and learning activities.

The findings from both studies show that an integrated approach can be successful if collaboration with content lecturers is systemic, and allows them to unlock their tacit knowledge regarding the discourses and literacy practices of their disciplines (Jacobs, 2007b:45). Marshall et al. (2011:4) highlight four roles the academic literacy lecturer played during the collaborative engagement with the content lecturers at UWC:

- foregrounding for physics lecturers what they took for granted, for example terminology used in very specific ways in a physics context, symbols, notation, representations not adequately explained to students, and assumptions made in solving problems;
- "lifting" the disciplinary specialists out of their discourses by asking questions that a novice to the discipline would (compare also Jacobs, 2007a:67);
- initiating the introduction of scaffolding in reading texts and writing specific sections of a laboratory report;
- introducing critical reflection on the stereotypical portrayal of science as value-neutral, apolitical and asocial.

Marshall et al. (2011:6-7) agree with Jacobs (2007a) that the following factors determine a collaborative partnership:

- Subject lecturers' implicit theories underpinning their educational principles and practices (Do they, for instance, encourage engagement rather than transmission of content knowledge?)
- The academic literacy discourses that are prevalent in an institution (Is there a general culture of literacy-as-a-social-practice approach in the institution, or is the dominant discourse still that of add-on English courses to "fix" students' errors?)
- The characteristics of integration (How receptive are the subject lecturers to innovative approaches to integration?)

- Lecturers' understanding of integration (Are tasks such as introducing students to concept mapping, paragraph writing, summarising or report writing allocated to the language lecturer in separate slots, or are they framed as subject-specific activities directly related to or scaffolding lectures, tutorials and assessments?)

A possible limitation of the model used in both the above cases is the resource-intensiveness of the collaboration, since a subject lecturer has to be allocated to every course (Marshall et al., 2011:8). Other constraints include the critical factors for successful partnerships between subject and language lecturers, reported by Jacobs (2010:236): compatible personalities, shared life experiences, a common educational vision, comparable levels of commitment, previous collaborative engagement, and comparable disciplinary expertise and disciplinary status. Meeting all these requirements may be even harder in mainstream courses at research intensive universities.

The disadvantage of labour intensiveness may be offset by the longer term gains of collaborative relationships. Marshall et al. (2011:8) report that after a year's input into course planning and design, and constant presence in all classes, the academic literacy practitioner had created an awareness in content lecturers of how to make explicit aspects of thinking and doing, and that the influence of the language lecturer continued to be seen in the design and teaching of the physics course due to the inclusion of learning activities that were explicitly aimed at making the disciplinary discourse more explicit.

4. Comparison between the NCLE context and the CPUT and UWC contexts

A striking similarity between the higher education sites (CPUT and UWC) and the basic and further education sites (NCLE, 2013) discussed in this article is the empirical finding that collaboration between language and subject lecturers, both in class and on transdisciplinary forums, is beneficial to the embedding of textual literacies within the discursive practices of the disciplines. Also, in both instances a critical success factor is institutional support for responding to the challenges of the highly demanding and competitive world of work, and the needs of a diverse student population (NCLE, 2013:10-11; Jacobs, 2007b:45; Marshall et al., 2011:11).

Another similarity is the realisation in both settings of the importance of 'transdisciplinary spaces'. In both contexts institutional structures do not provide the kinds of spaces (in the physical and temporal sense) that enable subject lecturers and language lecturers to "reflect on their approaches to teaching and learning, as well as their understandings of the relationship between academic language and access to disciplinary knowledge" (Jacobs, 2007b:45; NCLE, 2013:13), which means that teachers/lecturers themselves need to take the initiative in creating such spaces.

A possible difference between university and school settings is the greater flexibility at institutions of higher learning, which could accommodate the institutionalisation of team-teaching, and thereby create dedicated spaces for collaboration between academic literacy experts, subject experts and students around objects of mutual interest, such as spoken and written genres in the disciplines. In the majority of school settings this is not feasible, given timetable and resource constraints.

Although it is ideal to have the language and subject lecturer (in a complementary partnership) in class together, it seems that regular discussions between language and contact lecturers can already go a long way towards facilitating epistemological access for students. This assertion is backed up by evidence from interviews with subject lecturers at CPUT during which one respondent commented that "the greatest benefit of the language lecturer is to the content lecturer and not necessarily to the students" (Jacobs, 2007b:45).

Having established that collaboration is one of the core principles determining successful partnerships between academic literacy departments and subject departments, I now turn to a higher education site where academic literacy offerings are in the process of being restructured and reinvented, viz. the University of Pretoria. My primary aim is to show that it is not necessarily the overall approach that may determine the success of an intervention, but the way the 'ingredients' of that intervention have been selected to suit the purpose and the audience.

5. A case in point

At the University of Pretoria a re-envisioning and restructuring of student support, and intensive consultation between top management and other stakeholders, started in 2009. At the time the growing discontent among academic staff and students from different faculties regarding the relevance of what was regarded as largely generic academic literacy offerings, and the (non-) transferability of the skills, came under renewed attention. This led to a decision by the Executive to investigate the effectiveness of the existing academic literacy courses, within the broader framework of Academic Development. After wide consultation and thorough investigation the Executive approved the academic rationale to phase out 'decontextualised modules' in favour of modules that infuse academic literacy principles with subject-field content. A strategy aimed at holistic development and student success, including an implementation plan, was subsequently approved.

This was followed by an intensive two-year process of negotiation between the Executive, the entities (units and departments) responsible for academic literacy and academic development, and faculties across the university. Despite the severe criticisms of generic approaches by faculties, and articulated choices for integrated approaches, the models that were negotiated can hardly be described as "mainstreamed" or "integrated". Each can at most be characterised by plotting it on eight continua that refer to aspects of integration and collaboration, as depicted by Table 1:

Table 1: *Curriculum dimensions and their continua of features with regard to collaboration and integration*

Dimension	Collaboration and integration			
	Most collaborative/ Most integrated	**Intermediate**		**Least collaborative/ Most autonomous**
Ownership	Subject-area entity	Joint ownership		Academic literacy entity
Autonomy	Fully integrated with mainstream	Shared responsibility for curriculum		Fully autonomous language module
Collaboration	Regular collaboration between language and subject-lecturers	Some/sporadic collaboration between language and subject-lecturers		No collaboration between language and subject-lecturers
Teaching staff	Subject-area lecturers	Team teaching		Language lecturers
Content integration	Fully integrated in content module	Theme-based access structure; application of AL construct	Language-based access structure: application to disciplinary content	Pure language module
Curriculum for AL activities	Organic – AL curriculum evolves/is adapted in line with content area needs	Predetermined, but with regular input from faculty		Predetermined
Materials	Prescribed texts for content module	Semi-scientific texts on contentious scientific issues	Academic texts related to content and genres of subject-area	Texts found or generated by language lecturer
Assessment	Assessment by subject-field lecturer	Joint assessment		Assessment by language lecturer

In light of the desiderata for academic literacy interventions set out in this article, an ideal (student-centred and learning centred) curriculum would demonstrate features that cluster on the left-hand side of the table, whereas teacher-centred curricula would demonstrate the features on the right-hand side. The academic literacy intervention for law students at the University of Pretoria is one of our most integrated academic literacy interventions, and thus, as demonstrated in Table 2 below, it is largely plotted on the left-hand side of the table:

Table 2: *Curriculum features of the academic literacy intervention for law students*

Dimension	Collaboration and integration		
	Most collaborative/ Most integrated		**Least collaborative/ Most autonomous**
Ownership	Subject-area entity		
Autonomy		Subject curriculum with AL enhancement	
Collaboration	Regular collaboration between language and subject-lecturers		
Content integration	Fully integrated with content module		
Curriculum for AL activities	Organic – AL curriculum evolves/ is adapted in line with content area needs		
Materials	Prescribed texts for content module		
Assessment		Joint assessment of major tasks involving AL skills	

The intervention for law students comprises the fourth component of a first-year module on jurisprudence, of which the first three components are: Underlying jurisprudential aspects of law; The South African legal system and its historical development; and Sources of South African law and their historical development. The fourth component is presented by language lecturers, who ensure that the classroom materials, skills and competencies of the language component articulate with the content and outcomes of the three law components. Difficult reading texts and longer assessments are shared with the law components in order to provide scaffolding that will assist students in mastering the skills, abilities and dispositions needed to succeed in the law programme. To ensure alignment of the language component with the law components the module coordinator – a lecturer in the Law Faculty – attends the weekly coordination meetings of the language team, while the coordinator of the language component attends the three law lectures.

Since the course has thus far been evaluated very favourably by students and law lecturers alike, it seems that the 'outlier' on the dimension 'Teaching staff' in the right-hand column does not impact adversely on the quality of teaching and learning. It is, however, worth mentioning that although the course co-ordinator of the language component was trained as a linguist, she has been a tutor in the Law Faculty for a number of years, and is therefore to some extent familiar with the content.

Another illustration of the relative success that can be achieved with interventions not satisfying the extreme criteria for collaboration and integration, is the academic literacy module for science students, as plotted in Table 3 below:

Table 3: *Curriculum features of the academic literacy intervention for students of the natural and agricultural sciences*

Dimension	Collaboration and integration		
	Most collaborative/ Most integrated	Intermediate	Least collaborative/ Most autonomous
Ownership			Academic literacy entity
Autonomy		Shared responsibility for curriculum	
Collaboration		Some/sporadic collaboration between language and subject-lecturers	

Dimension	Collaboration and integration		
	Most collaborative/ Most integrated	Intermediate	Least collaborative/ Most autonomous
Teaching staff			Language lecturers
Content integration		Theme-based access structure, with application of AL construct	
Curriculum for AL activities			Predetermined
Materials		Semi-scientific texts on contentious scientific issues	
Assessment			Assessment by language lecturer

Despite the fact that this module leans towards the 'autonomous' and 'least collaborative' extreme of the scales, it was evaluated relatively favourably by the students in a pilot survey. The majority of the respondents felt that their academic literacy had improved and that they could apply what they had learnt to their other subjects. Furthermore, the majority appreciated the choice of semi-scientific texts, and commented that through reading of the texts they had improved their general knowledge of scientific phenomena.

However, the majority were not convinced that their 'scientific literacy' (or subject-specific academic literacy) had improved. This is understandable in light of the text types used and the broad spectrum of BSc students that had to be accommodated in the curriculum (approximately 1800 students).

6. What should we stop doing and what should we start/continue doing?

There is wide consensus in higher education today that "Literacy is not just the English teacher's job anymore" (NCLE finding 1) and that "Working together is working smarter"

(NCLE finding 2). At least some "building blocks for remodeling literacy learning are in place" (NCLE finding 4) at many South African universities. These include, among others, institutional approval and support for credit-bearing (or credit-sharing) academic literacy modules that integrate subject content. With capable leadership language departments or units responsible for academic literacy have the capacity to reinvent themselves for remodelling literacy learning that is responsive to the discipline-specific literacy needs of students, and also assist content staff to articulate their tacit knowledge about the discourses of their subjects.

Unfortunately universities as such "aren't structured to facilitate educators working together" (NCLE finding 3), partially because academic entities remain to be measured by their net income, calculated as the sum of the profit per module. This, in turn, is typically determined by a formula that takes into account the total number of formal curricular teaching hours devoted to a module by staff in an academic entity, the number of students enrolled per module, the class fee income, and the subsidy income – from which the total expenditure is subtracted.

Currently, there are few prospects for increased "systemic support" (NCLE finding 4), and academic literacy staff will have to take the initiative for "integrative, mutually consultative planning of a college or university writing [or academic literacy in the broader sense - AC] curriculum, with all stakeholders regularly involved, in an atmosphere informed by study and ongoing review" (Theiss & Zawacki, 2006:167). On the other hand they have to think realistically about how to convince subject lecturers of the expanded instructional role they need to play in students' literacy development (Snow, 1997:301).

Academic literacy lecturers will have to find ways to scaffold the academic literacy skills of content faculty in order to expand their instructional repertoires; and convince content lecturers that they will see improvement in their students' mastery of course content as well as their own ability to demonstrate such knowledge. This may include the need for some theoretical underpinning in second language acquisition as well as examples of practical applications (Snow, 1997:301-302). Ultimately, the critical characteristics that both content and language lecturers need to demonstrate are a collective commitment to student success and willingness to change.

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