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Valorising student literacies in social work education: pedagogic possibilities through action research

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As higher education has shifted from an elite to an internationalised and massified system, we can no longer assume that students entering Western universities are familiar with the multiple literacy expectations of the university and professional worlds. Students are required to negotiate between different literacy practices, imbued with differential power, in their everyday, disciplinary and professional settings. This paper argues that diverse students' literacies can be valorised and harnessed as assets for learning. The authors re-designed curricula in the Bachelor of Social Work in an Australian university - making elite codes explicit; using students' everyday literacies as a bridge to new knowledge; and introduced the notion of "code-switching" between literacies. The authors found that both disciplinary learning and the acquisition of multiple literacies were enabled, without colonising students into more dominant literacies. We encourage the exploration of such learning spaces in other disciplines, to build socially inclusive pedagogies which resource all students equitably in a massified education system.

Keywords: diversity in higher education; socially inclusive pedagogies; collaborative curriculum development; code-switching; academic literacies.

Introduction

Higher education has shifted from an elite to an internationalised and massified system, creating places for students not traditionally represented in universities, but not necessarily "spaces" that engage their critical understanding of the larger socio-political context that legitimizes or delegitimizes linguistic practices in universities and their future professions (Gale & Tranter 2011; Gale & Mills 2013). It has recently been recognised that students entering Western, English-medium universities are often unfamiliar with the multiple literacy expectations of the university and professional worlds (Murray 2013). The divide between the literacy practices of students entering higher education, and those required for success in academic and professional world contexts, has challenged traditional university pedagogies that were previously prepared

for more elite cohorts. Expectations on Australian academics have increased in this context as they educate more numerous students from diverse starting points, and operate in competitive funding environments dependent on student choice (Hénard and Roseveare 2012; Gale and Parker 2013). Diverse and newer students, often unfamiliar with the literacy and cultural practices of universities, have been problematised as "deficient" in the literacy skills required for academic and professional contexts (Haggis 2006). Still, many curricular interventions privilege university literacy practices over those of the students, which could be seen as assimilationist or "colonising" (Delpit 1988, 1995; Leathwood and O'Connell 2003; Zepke, Leach and Prebble 2006; Armstrong and Cairnduff 2012). This privileging sits uneasily in light of both the social work discipline and critical pedagogy (Freire 1970; Fook and Askeland 2007; Giroux 2011), each of which valorise less dominant and marginalised voices in the interests of social justice (Daddow 2016a).

Research indicates that unreflective curricular and pedagogic practices in universities exclude students unfamiliar with academic and professional literacies, and disadvantage them in their learning (Armstrong and Cairnduff 2012; Devlin 2013; Thomas 2014). This reality has been a focus of Academic Literacies research since the 1990s, but its integration into mainstream pedagogic practices has had limited uptake in Australian universities (Baik and Greig 2009; Murray 2013). This paper proposes new pedagogic approaches originating from a collaboration across the disciplines of Social Work (SW) and Academic Language and Learning (ALL) in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) at an Australian university. Teaching students from diverse educational, cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds, the authors (henceforth we) designed discipline curricula that integrated the making of elite codes explicit; used students' everyday literacies as a bridge to new knowledge; and introduced the notion of

"code switching" between literacies, rather than assimilate them into dominant codes that reproduce systemic inequities (Delpit 1988; Priest 2009). We found that those students less familiar with university and professional literacies were given the space to become aware of their communicative behaviour, develop strategies *and* confidence to successfully participate in their disciplinary learning, without being identified as deficit and singled out for specialised support. This was so for all students, not just non-native or non-traditional; as Thesen and Van Pletzen (2006, 7) maintain - all students are novices when approaching academic discourse in the disciplines. Our findings hold promise for the approach's uptake in other disciplines to support and build socially inclusive pedagogies practices at universities.

The Literature

Literacy as social practice

More contemporary conceptions of literacies as social practices, and Academic Literacies scholarship, have drawn attention to the multiple literacies that tertiary students are required to negotiate (Gee 2012; Kalantzis and Cope 2012). Further complicating this negotiation is the differential power associated with students' diverse literacy inheritances, depending on the social-structural position in which they are situated (Lillis 2003; Ivanič, Edwards, Barton, Martin-Jones, Fowler, Buddug, Mannion, Miller, Satchwell and Smigh 2009). Central to the socio-structural positioning of diverse students in universities is the linguistic and cultural unfamiliarity with the literacy practices of the university and its expectations (Northedge 2005; Ivanič et al. 2009; Devlin 2013). Academic Literacies scholars argue that generic language and academic skills programs do not cater adequately for university students, given that each discipline has its own conventions, values and practices. Nor is mastery of

grammar, spelling, punctuation and syntax sufficient for competence in academic writing (Durkin and Main 2002). An integrated model, in which needed literacy practices and capacities are made explicit as an integral part of the curriculum, builds familiarity with the conventions and literacy practices of the specific knowledge disciplines under study, as well as broader academic capacities that run across disciplines (Gunn, Hearne and Sibthorpe 2011).

Recent claims in the literature highlight the challenges of discipline specific reading, reasoning and writing for both native and non-native speakers, suggesting the value in extending literacies development to include native speakers of English whose literacy traditions are not necessarily in keeping with the expectations of universities and the workplace (Wingate and Tribble 2012; Murray 2013). This gives further weight to embedding academic literacies within the discipline as a developmental process for all students, particularly in the early years in their degree when, according to Perry (1999, 236), they show a preference for precise dualistic tasks, and struggle to accommodate more contingent or relativistic conceptions of knowledge. Practice examples of such integrated approaches however, tend to be spasmodic and more recently emerging (Baik and Greig 2009; Murray 2013; Lillis et al. 2015).

Discipline academics have been acculturated into the discipline over long periods of time and their knowledge is often tacit and unarticulated (Wingate, Andon and Cogo 2011, 71). This acculturation can influence the nature of feedback on student text production, which can unhelpfully focus on surface linguistic features, perpetuate tacit knowledge and reinforce deficit perspectives, rather than seeing students as developmentally moving into, and between, new and complex literacies. Additionally, the subject lecturer teaching (or team-teaching) writing can feel some reluctance, given the perception that attention to writing intrudes on discipline content in a resource-

stretched higher education system with reduced student contact hours and more numerous students (Mitchell and Evison 2006; Murray 2013). The pedagogies articulated in this paper contribute to the emerging practice examples of more integrated and socially inclusive approaches, seeking to extend the repertoire on which other academics can draw.

Criticality in Literacies

Tacit and unfamiliar university literacy practices can be made more accessible by integrating academic literacies into the curriculum, but this does not necessarily address the issue of subjugating diverse students' own cultural and linguistic heritages, nor does it necessarily expand the literacy resources used to bridge to new disciplinary knowledge and literacies. Lea and Street (1998) argue that the socialisation model of acculturating students into the discourses and genres of particular disciplines needs expansion to take account of the growing recognition of "epistemology, authority and contestation over knowledge" (Lea 2008, 231). They and other scholars explored the nature of power and authority in academic writing, with a focus on meaning making, identity, and the power invested in particular literacies and discourses (Lea 1994; Ivanič 1998; Lea 2008). This exploration emphasised the importance of writer identity, constituted in and across a range of institutional, disciplinary and everyday discourse practices. Such emphasis enables a clearer understanding of the power relations in the acquisition of academic writing literacy, and the processes diverse students go through in negotiating the uneven transitions associated with it (Thesen 2001, 133). Their work critiqued the powerful and pervasive deficit discourses on student language use within and outside universities (Lillis and Scott 2007) and recommended a "design frame" to

integrate literacies and discipline learning with this power differential in mind (Lillis 2003, 192; Lea 2008, 235).

Code-switching

Code-switching as a concept has been widely used in the areas of bi- and multi-lingualism as well as sociolinguistics to refer to the phenomenon when a speaker alternates in the use of two or more languages within the same utterance (Gumperz 1964). In this paper, we use the concept in an extended meaning as proposed by Priest (2009) who used code-switching to refer to the teaching and learning of new linguistic and literacy practices, where students are encouraged to resist passively adopting an alternative discourse and recognise the values of their own discourses and the power of discourses they are newly inhabiting. Delpit (1988, 293) maintained that students who embody cultural or other power differentials should not simply be taught to adopt the elite and tacit codes normalised in formal education systems: "they must be encouraged to understand the value of the code they already possess, as well as to understand the power realities." At the same time, they need to gain access to the implicit and often untaught elite codes of academic, disciplinary and professional discourses through explicit teaching and practicable use of those codes. This is central to introducing code-switching as an explicit teaching strategy. Students were taught that different linguistic practices and literacies co-exist and that their ability to acquire and use these codes depends on the extent to which they are aware of the codes' underlying speaking positions and power differentials. Such explicitness in teaching is significant for students' awareness of their inherited literacies as well as their critical understanding of the dominant literacy practices privileged at university and professional discourses. Awareness of code-switching creates practical possibilities to redress the power

differential operating in university literacy practices, which tend to assimilate students into its practices, and exclude students' cultural inheritances and their potential to contribute to new knowledge.

Funds of Knowledge

Gonzalez and Moll (2002, 623) and associates found that students' "Funds of Knowledge" (FoK) - the knowledge and skills that have gained useful meaning over generations in support of family and community well-being - could be utilised to inform curricula and pedagogy to engage and educate marginalised Latino students (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti 2005; Moll 2014). They argued from socio-cultural learning theories, that pedagogy connected to students' lives, their "local histories and community contexts" (Gonzalez and Moll 2002, 623), creates meaningful educative connections and valorises their FoK as legitimate contributions to knowledge and learning processes (Moll and Greenberg 1990). By contrast, when the institutional privileged paradigms in learning environments preclude the meanings and contexts of students' vernacular literacy usages, students sense that their own forms of knowledge are judged as lacking and deficient. In the context of widening participation policies in higher education, Gale and Tranter (2011, 42) identified the importance of curricular and pedagogic perspectives that include "recognitive" justice – the recognition of students' cultural knowledge and identities in curriculum and pedagogy. They found that

> [i]n a context of higher education for the masses, recognitive justice requires a
> deeper understanding of the knowledges, values and understandings that all
> students bring to university. And this necessarily implies creating spaces for them,
> not simply creating more places (Gale and Tranter 2011, 43).

Pedagogies that recognise students' FoK as assets for learning offer possibilities to create spaces for recognitive justice for diverse and newer students in higher education;

signalling curriculum and pedagogy that enable students to value *both* their life-based cultural-historical traditions and conventions, *and* redistribute the privileged academic codes (without valorising these as "superior").

Based on these conceptual resources, the curricular and pedagogic approaches we sought to enact in the BSW are discussed in the following sections with examples, research findings (from student surveys and focus groups; interviews of educators; and the researcher's field journal) and student feedback. We conclude with recommendations for broader application and identify areas for ongoing research.

Background to our Collaboration

The contextual setting for this action research was a Bachelor of Social Work program in a "new" Australian university that serves a larger share of non-traditional students than most Australian universities. The four-year degree is a professionally accredited qualification with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW), and necessitates two long field education placements in third and fourth years. Feedback from more advanced students, other SW staff and placement partners indicates that students in general are challenged by the complex and nuanced communication practices in speaking, reading and writing that the various fields of SW practice require. Healy & Mulholland (2007) have written about practical writing skills for social workers, arguing that these have not been well addressed in social work education, in spite of practitioner requirements to communicate in writing for a range of audiences and purposes. Social Workers are required to engage with clients' sometimes marginalised discourses, as well as the formal spoken and textual practices of academia and the profession, which can present challenges particular to the profession. Effective writing in the social work profession may involve writing well-structured reports, case

notes with accurate and respectful descriptions of a client, or a persuasive law reform submission letter, all in the interest of serving the clients and social work support systems. More recent studies have raised concerns about the impact of widening participation on the teaching and learning of writing skills for social work practice (Horton and Diaz 2011; Nelson and Weatherald; Rai and Lillis 2013).

Based on the conception of literacy previously discussed, we believe that successful writing pedagogies encompass more than the teaching of mechanical or practical writing skills and are more helpfully embedded in discipline teaching with raised critical consciousness to how language works. The traditional disconnect between the teaching of reading and writing for social work practice and the teaching of social work knowledge, values and practice frameworks made us explore ways of making literacies more explicit in the teaching of social work knowledge, values and skills, in ways that legitimised students' own cultural and linguistic heritages (FoK). Falk and Ross (2001) integrated social work writing into the core social work curriculum in the United States and Rai (2004, 2006) in the United Kingdom. Such initiatives in the social work curriculum at Australian universities appear to be few.

We started collaborating in a second year unit in 2012, when team teaching between a social work and academic language and learning (ALL) lecturer was still a new approach at the university. The pedagogic space of the unit was traditional - the lecture was followed by a tutorial. At the beginning of our collaboration, we focused on creating a space to build-in literacies in some but not all of the team taught tutorials, while the additional literacies tutorial and individual support were still "bolted-on" rather than integrated into the discipline (Wingate 2006). In this initial collaboration we were unable to make changes to the curriculum as such. The traditional requirements of the unit, with a heavy focus on reading and essay writing, was at odds with many of the

students' expectations and existing literacy and socio-cultural experiences. Students appeared unresponsive to our efforts and started sharing their frustrations with the assigned readings and required writings at university. For some students the readings were too long, the language was too hard to understand or accessing the required readings on the university's virtual learning environment was cumbersome. Attendance at the additional literacies tutorials and uptake of individual consultations were weak, and appeared to be perceived by students as unnecessary, or for "needy" students, only strengthening a little when the final assessment was due. End of semester student feedback indicated a preference toward more familiar and accessible literacies (e.g. videos) and reluctance to engage with academic texts and writing.

Questions we raised from this early experience echoed those from Academic Literacies literature, which encouraged the adoption of transformative and integrated approaches to academic and professional genres, rather than "solely induction and reproduction", and recommended the expansion of the range of literacies legitimised in the twenty-first century university (Lillis et al. 2015, 5). We wondered how well we were preparing students from diverse backgrounds for SW practice, when acculturating them into mainstream academic literacy practices: How could we encourage students to move between literacy practices, rather than discard their own? Might their "vernacular literacies" serve them well when interacting with clients, many of whom are marginalised themselves? This paper discusses the findings and lessons subsequently learnt from an action research project carried out in collaboration between the SW and ALL lecturer.

The Practitioner Action Research

Action research has contested approaches, but most agree that it is "inquiry that is done by or with insiders in an organisation or community, but never to or on them" (Herr and

Anderson 2005, 3). Action research, in the comprehensive and emancipatory sense

articulated by Carr and Kemmis (1986), is recognised as a form of research that

challenges unjust and undemocratic economic, social and political systems and practices

(Brydon-Miller et al. 2003, 11). Consistent in action research is the principle of

collaboration with others who have a stake in the problem under investigation. Kemmis

(2008, 124) observes:

> If practice/praxis is collectively constructed, then practices must be understood not
> solely from the perspectives of the individuals involved, but also in terms of the
> collective understandings and collective effects of those involved and affected by
> the practice.

Action research provided an opportunity to examine the ideals of the curricular

and pedagogic approaches "in action" in the complex reality of the practice setting

(Kemmis and McTaggart 1988, 7).

Participants and Methods

The curriculum and pedagogies were designed and enacted in two BSW units: a second

year subject, Social Work Theories (SWT), which was taught in the first semester of

2013; and a first year subject, Introduction to Social Work (ISW), taught in the second

semester of 2013. A total of 78 students were enrolled in the unit taught in the first

action research cycle (SWT), and 75 students were enrolled in the unit ISW taught in

the second cycle. The characteristics of the students in both cycles are summarised in

Table 1: [Table 1 near here].

Two thirds of the students in both cohorts came from low or medium SES

backgrounds, without a prior higher education degree or a parent having completed a

university degree. Slightly over half of students were born in Australia whereas the

remainder reported to be born in 23 and 16 different countries respectively. This socio-

economic, cultural, linguistic and educational background of our students was met with a traditionally timetabled teaching space for the two units: Twelve weeks with a weekly lecture and tutorial of multiple groups. The discipline teaching team in the two cycles consisted of three educators (one lecturer/unit coordinator and three tutors). The ALL lecturer, complementing the team, was embedded into curriculum planning, teaching and evaluation. She inhabited the shared space with the students, the discipline lecturer and tutors in all lectures, she team taught tutorials, undertook all unit readings and acted as a "critical friend" for the teaching team to inform further innovation. All educators and students were briefed about the project and consented to participate.

Data were collected via student questionnaires, students' written assignments, focus group interviews, interviews with discipline tutors and the ALL lecturer, the researcher's field journal as well as from conversations with colleagues and classroom dialogues to ensure multiple perspectives were represented from all stakeholders. Data was analysed using interpretive thematic analysis: identifying, analysing and reporting themes within the data (Liamputtong 2013, 249). It involved searching across the data set to find patterns of meaning or experience (Aronson 1994, 1), relating all the data to these patterns, then collating these into themes and sub-themes and building an argument to reflect these.

The Alternative Pedagogies

The focus of this paper is on presenting curricular strategies we used to support students' negotiation of their own and new literacy practices. Students' FoK were drawn on to support this negotiation (through student writing and dialogue) but will only be briefly discussed here as their curricular use has been more fully elaborated in Daddow (2016b).

Inhabiting a Shared Space

Our aims to make elite codes explicit, and make educative use of the literacies students already possess, were underpinned by creating a dialogic space in which students' life-worlds might be expressed, valued and interrogated. In that space, we were always together with the students, in all lectures and the team taught tutorial. There were no separate tutorials for "struggling" students, but all students could meet with the ALL lecturer for individual consultations.

Weekly entries of the researcher's reflective field journal and our weekly discussions revealed that students did not treat us differently although we introduced and explained the ALL role as somehow different from the discipline lecturer. We noticed that topics relating to ALL and discipline content were often asked of both of us, perhaps reflecting the integration of literacy and disciplinary learning. Delineations were made clear when we deferred to each other's expertise. Individual consultations with the ALL lecturer were well utilised by students, perhaps in response to the power sharing and openness evident in the class room. This was a notable shift from our earlier efforts and reflects the literature that attests that literacy and discipline learning are integrally interconnected, and are preferably held together in a shared space (Green 1988).

To get to know our students, we invited them to complete an adapted version of Cuseo's (2011) Student Information Sheet. We learned about their personal backgrounds, abilities, interests, and values. This information combined with the demographic data provided by the university (Table 1), gave us a rich snapshot of strengths and experiences and potential Funds of Knowledge students brought to the units and what was important to them. For example, most of the respondents had work or family commitments, and the large majority listed their greatest achievements in life

so far as having successfully commenced university studies or completed prior studies. Significantly the majority indicated that their positive experiences of education were related to social connections and new learning. This aligns with Perry's finding that "a special realization of community" as well as "reciprocal acts of recognitions and confirmation" (1999, 239) between students and teachers support students in their intellectual and ethical development. In the student questionnaire, most students in both action research cycles expressed how their experience of such dialogue contributed to their learning. This is illustrated in the following four responses to the question on approaches to learning and teaching that the students found noteworthy in the units:

> Hands on, sitting with us and totally explaining concepts. Letting discussions flow and sometimes guide the class...and explained things if needed. …engaging and not intimidating…welcome questions and comments…

> Definitely different from other units in that it is much more interactive and tailored to our needs. We can stop and ask questions.

> Communicating – both ways. We are all teachers – and learners.

> The focus is a lot on us, and pushes us to think of the practicality of being a social worker, as well as what we can offer to the profession and what we need to work on.

A dialogue-centred classroom in Social Work education involves stimulating the perspectives of everyone in the classroom and potentially elicits students' FoK so that educators can then be alert to curricular opportunities these present. Saleebey and Scanlon (2005, 13) write how dialogue invites students' experiences into the classroom:

> …encouraging reflection on how these experiences are consistent and different from formal social work knowledge, … promoting discussions of cultural and class differences and similarities and sharing of experiences of domination and

oppression, and … stimulating a healthy appreciation for ambiguity and disagreement in the classroom.

We managed to progress our attention to creating and inhabiting a shared dialogic space within existing pedagogic spaces - the traditional lecture-tutorial model – although time limits constrained our efforts at times. Interview data from one of the discipline tutors supports this success. One of the tutors acknowledged the space that was given to student discussing their experiences around particular societal or personal experiences:

> Tutor: …in smaller group work …even in the lecture, where they were able to have some discussion about how their personal experience… you also gave us (the tutors) that space … to be able to relate personal experience with the content. I think that was a very important learning experience.

Our success in creating space highlights the importance of acknowledging and including multiple roles in the classroom. "When there are no longer individual sources of energy and knowledge, the dialogue involves everyone as learner and everyone as teacher" (Game and Metcalfe 2009, 46). We believe that engaging in close dialogue with the students, which gave them the space to bring in their FoK and feel valued as both learners and teachers, is necessary to gain their trust while not trying to assume an authoritarian role of the discipline lecturer.

Connecting with Students' Life-worlds

Ivanič et al. (2009, 40) suggest that, if literacies are socio-culturally situated, the boundaries between one context and another are somewhat permeable; and the reading and writing practices in other domains of students' lives – home, work or community – have the potential to be situated in the educational domain, as "border literacies". They argue that everyday literacies may then be mobilised to support student learning. To build a learning community that linked our students' life-world experiences

educationally to new discipline concepts, we drew on resources such as newspaper articles, videos, animations, or songs with social themes. They served as a bridge between students' vernacular literacies and the disciplinary knowledge and literacy practices, to encourage meaning-making. The important shift in our development was to pedagogically use these literacies to scaffold to academic texts and discipline concepts. For example, we identified and used a short video (Three Minute Philosophy) to introduce students to the complex concepts of moral philosophy and ethical theory that impact thinking on human services. In the video, the energetic speaker moves quickly between informal vernacular literacy practices and more formal literacies. The efficacy of the video is augmented by the skilful use of illustrations, animations and sound. Students responded well to these border literacies as scaffolds to new knowledge. This was evident in classroom discussions and expressed in the student questionnaire responses, frequently citing visual aids, videos and space to ask questions as valued learning and teaching approaches in the units.

We established a dialectical relationship between students' life-world literacies and the discipline literacies to further learning. For example, one of our curricular changes in the second cycle of the action research was the inclusion of a reflective writing task in the unit's assessment. This task allowed us to foster the bridge between the students' FoK and disciplinary knowledges, as well as to build and strengthen critical reflection. Students were asked to reflect on how aspects of their life experience and unique social biography would assist or constrain their social work practice. It required students to reflect on their life-worlds and make connections between these reflections and their understanding of the values of social work gained from the unit readings. In the focus group interview, students expressed how pivotal this had been in their learning:

Alice: I am aware that every one of us has something to bring to Social Work…like life experience, volunteer, culture, upbringing and all that. But I think the first assessment, the reflection on the purpose of Social Work that was really…good because it made me sort of think, go deeper about the social biography and all of that. All the things that make that up and how that can influence the…values and the way we go about social work…

Liya: Yeah, I was going to say the same thing; that first assignment when we really... had to stop and think about the way our own background… is going to influence or bias our work was really something I had never thought about before.

Alice: It really helped. That is right.

Liya: And I thought it was a really important thing for us to be aware of.

Alice: I agree.

Liya: It was actually something that I had never thought about before. It was really good. I thought that was the thing I took away the most.

Students were making connections between their personal biographies – including their experiences, perceptions and values - and the perspectives and values underpinning Social Work practice, as these were being learnt. The importance of recognising one's social identities (historical, socio-cultural constructions), positionality (where individuals are positioned socio-structurally and within various identity groups or Discourse communities), and standpoint (epistemological perceptions of reality), to encourage critical consciousness in readiness for social work practice, is well noted in social work education (Pitner and Sakamoto 2005). Recognition of students' positional perspectives leading to partial objectivity ("bias" in Alice's terms) in the above student focus group extract was critically appropriate. However, we noticed in teaching interactions and assessment writings that students' reflections oriented very quickly to a perception of themselves as having "deficits" (triggers, past injuries, failures). Few identified themselves as bringing cultural assets into Social Work education and the profession. We wondered if our orientation toward critical reflection was too much applied to selves, and not enough to socio-structural formations of power inequality,

which might unintentionally obscure students' recognition that they embodied cultural and literacy assets. This possibility was reflected in the researcher's field notes:

> One observation I had during the ISW unit was how students quickly oriented to their deficits in …their reflective assessments, even though their strengths were invited in this task. Some recognised their strengths, but many focused on the negatives… (which were) seen as a 'hindrance' to their Social Work practice…it's perhaps hard to…both value strengths and attend to the potentially problematic areas effectively. Which do we prioritise and at what points during the course? How do we create room for processing and integrating of students' FoK?

The pedagogic room for both the important critically reflective work and the exploration of cultural assets requires time for dialogic teasing out and reflection. It is a struggle to find the necessary time for students (and educators) to attend to the unexamined assumptions and values in students' testimonies about everyday life experience in order to develop critical consciousness, as well as identify students' lived-cultural assets for learning, within the curricular and pedagogic spaces available in tertiary education. We found this balance challenging at times, and it showed up in students' written reflections.

Other types of writing the students grappled with were the traditional genres of summary, report and an academic essay. Students' success in writing in these different genres varied despite clear and explicit teaching. We learnt that these variations had multiple dimensions to them: They were not limited to students' starting "operational literacy" (Green 1988), but included epistemological dimensions, such as students' assumptions and what they value about knowledge. The differences in students' writing suggested that the responsibility they bring to a specific learning activity is different for each student and develops over time.

Moving between literacy practices or code-switching

When discipline themes intersected with ALL, we created exercises that made literacies - and their contexts - more explicit, and introduced critical approaches to text. For example, the differential use of language and its associated power in different contexts started in week one, and was re-visited throughout the unit, gradually encouraging a meta-perspective on language. We used Northedge's table that contrasts "tribal" (everyday), "professional" and "academic" language or discourse as a tool to introduce students to the notion of code-switching (2005, 22). Every day discourse was identified as more informal and potentially inclusive; professional discourse was identified as often grounded in a particular field and supported organisational purposes; academic was recognised as more reasoned and argued, stimulating thinking and analysis. We gave discipline-related examples to illustrate differences in structure, language choice and tone of the discourse, exploring values, assumptions or unspecified agendas in these discourses. The strengths and limitations of each discourse type were also discussed: for example, everyday might not examine underlying values and assumptions contained within it, but might provide points of connections and rapport with clients; professional can be framed to protect the status quo, but can also be useful to attract program funding in applications and relate to peers; academic can be analytic and reasoned with supporting evidence, but also alienating and excluding wider audiences. Students were encouraged to draw on their own experience to give examples of each discourse. This provided a helpful framework to explore the notion of code-switching with students. It cultivated useful metalanguage to use in feedback on students' text production in assessments; we could identify everyday expression in students' writing and encourage them to think about replacing the expression to convey more professional or academic language, to more accurately reflect the context - a practical expression of code-

switching. To our surprise students began to use the metalanguage when listening to each other in class discussions. In small group work around their weekly readings, we could sometimes overhear them say "hey, this is tribal language, use more academic words."

The students' insights into different codes were evidenced in a student focus group interview, with one student comparing her learning in the unit with that of a friend's at another institution. In her friend she had observed that he adopted the new disciplinary social work discourse when talking to her and friends when they were out socialising. To our student, this behaviour appeared "arrogant" and alienating to others. In the interview, she was suggesting that her friend had not had the benefit of a more explicit understanding of language and how it works, and "that he was unable to move in and out" of different discourse practices. Underlying this suggestion was the student's assumption of being able to categorise language and contexts in a straightforward way. While our explicitness about discourse practices was helpful in increasing students' awareness about the power distributed through language, this student's comment demonstrates a preference for precise or categorical knowledge (Perry 1999). Another student started to recognise the fluid boundaries between these codes and made subtle judgements about language in different contexts which was recorded in the researcher's journal:

> One student discussed when she first started working in welfare, people observed that she talked 'like the clients' and naturally. She said some (clients) liked that, but others looked for and felt more secure as her language became more 'professional'. [We discussed] the change in her in this process of growing into the professional discourse, so it can be accessed when it's useful (for example, with some clients, or in professional, cross-disciplinary meetings).

These examples demonstrate different ways of student learning about the differential use of language and how to code-switch or make linguistic judgements depending on the context and purposes.

From these awareness raising activities we moved on to a reading exercise integrating literacy and discipline learning while also reinforcing how different literacies have their own purposes and codes that can be navigated in professional practice. We and the students read different texts on feminism: a tract we picked up from a demonstration; a reflective narrative by novelist Helen Garner; and an academic extract. We divided the tutorial group into smaller groups and prompted students to notice features in the text they had been given (e.g. purpose, audience, likely context, language structures used and why) while they were absorbing disciplinary themes. We asked them to look for words they thought were ideologically loaded. We started with the most obvious one in our opinion, which was the political tract. We soon found that some students could not recognize underlying ideologies in word choices such as "dispossession" or "capitalist elite" nor could they easily decipher emotional language such as "unspeakable misery" or "immeasurable riches". We realized how important it was to allow students time to develop awareness and integrate these new understandings into their existing frames of reference. Raising consciousness about language and moving between literacy practices is complex and perhaps would benefit from ongoing attention and practice beyond two units of study, into other units and practical placements. With our focus on transparency and awareness about language, we were laying foundations for students to have a metalanguage with which to negotiate new and different literacy practices as well as critical awareness within the disciplinary teaching throughout the course. Sometimes these exercises were rushed due to competing

demands of the curriculum that do not privilege dialogue. We learnt to slow down and give them due time, within the pedagogic spaces available.

Making elite codes explicit in assessment design

To support diverse or newer students to become participants in new university literacies, Northedge (2005) recommends a bit of writing often, with regular educator feedback. Early in our teaching, we asked students spontaneously to write a paragraph about their personal response to one of the readings in the tutorial, which we returned the following week with our feedback. This gave us a sense of the students' writing levels and more significantly insight into their backgrounds in some cases. One student wrote that she found the unit's reading difficult, partly because she had only been in Australia for 18 months and was overwhelmed trying to learn as much about the Australian context as she could. This became helpful background for us later when she presented as part of a group presentation and "read" a rather dense piece of text she had written. She became tearful and upset after the presentation, as she felt that the group's low mark, although a pass, was caused by her lack of understanding of the expectations of such an assessment. This was confronting for us, as we suspected that we had made cultural assumptions and not been sufficiently explicit about the task and our expectations, particularly for students from other cultures (Delpit 1995). In the subsequent teaching of the unit, we modelled a presentation to the class before the students undertook theirs, and asked the students to assess our presentation with the assessment criteria provided. We discussed the processes we used in preparing for the presentation and stressed that our readings were informed from our own and therefore different perspectives. This allowed us to encourage students to bring their prior knowledge and experiences (and FoK) to the reading piece and demonstrate how to accommodate new knowledge into existing frames of knowledge and values. The ALL lecturer commented on our

increased attention to repeatedly model and discuss assessment tasks and their requirements in class:

> There was a lot of verbal and spoken interaction. There was less talking at the students, it was more joined; meaning-making going on in both the lectures and then in particular in the tutorials. There was a stronger focus on reading and putting reading into their own words by having those small reading discussions at the start of each tute. And just by observing, I thought that students were really engaging with this, not just they all prepared really well for it, but also the people in the group …learnt a lot in how to give feedback to the presenter. How to ask questions, how to carry on discussions. Yeah, there was a lot of again, meaning-making negotiation just in that little task.

This extract indicates the many levels on which education was taking place in a rich, multi-literacies environment integrated with discipline content, with careful pedagogic attention to connecting with students and participatory tasks in curriculum design. It also illustrates the importance of a clear and smooth relationship between the ALL and discipline lecturer, and the value of working on a curriculum together at the outset, is highlighted in this excerpt. To negotiate roles and ways of working and find room for both disciplines takes time, good will and understanding, integral to the embedding process (Daddow et al. 2013; Macdonald, Schneider, and Kett 2013; Thies et al. 2014; Daddow 2014). The embedding of the ALL educator became more effective with growing experience together. We both found the co-teaching very supportive and constructive as it provided a "critical friend" in the pedagogic space to keep the dual focus of language and discipline and it seemed to contribute to student learning. Reflecting and planning week-by-week together was refreshing and collegial and energised the project, counterbalancing some of the resource constraints as mentioned next.

Constraints to the Pedagogies

There were complexities, and sometimes institutional constraints in enacting the socially inclusive pedagogies, the full detail of which lie beyond the scope of this paper. Assessment design became embroiled in university accountability processes and limitations of the online repository and virtual learning environment, which limited our options. We were constantly frustrated by time-constraints, for both the design and student contact, and felt the pressures of the contemporary academic juggling increased institutional expectations and students' needs. We became very aware that the students themselves needed to contribute the necessary "labour" to integrate such learning and to enable the necessary conceptual expression to take place, as Morrow (1993) suggests when discussing epistemological access. Overall the students negotiated considerable learning (evident in final assessments), most of them seemed engaged (Student Unit Evaluations and Student Evaluations of Teaching were very positive), and the evidence from student questionnaires, focus group interviews and the researcher's field notes presented in this paper indicate that diverse and newer students were making the epistemological leaps necessary for their academic success.

Conclusion

In making the codes of the multiple literacy practices required for success in higher education and professional practice explicit, as well as bridging students' Funds of Knowledge to new learning, pedagogical possibilities emerged that are promising for broader application in higher education. There were significant successes in enabling students' competence and confidence in participating in the multiple literacy practices of university and professional worlds, without assimilating them into elite and dominant cultural practices. The collaborative

curriculum development and team teaching approach, the creation of dialogic spaces as well as explicit attention to literacies, their codes and associated power provided students with critical awareness and a metalanguage with which to move between literacy practices, rather than unquestioningly adopt dominant codes and discard their own. More detailed analysis of progress in student writing and assessments both within units and progress throughout the course and on placement is a focus for ongoing research. This paper illustrated the important shifts in our and the students' development as we learned to pedagogically use students' literacies as a bridge to academic texts and discipline concepts. This was an important step in providing space for diverse and newer students to value their life-based cultural-historical traditions and conventions and access privileged academic codes; ultimately resourcing academics and all students for the linguistic and global realities of higher education.

Table 1: Participants' demographic information at enrolment

Student characteristics	Cycle 1 SWT (n=78) Values given in per cent %	Cycle 2 ISW (n=75) Values given in per cent %
First in family to attend university	74.4	82.7
Low or medium SES[i] of domestic students	62.5	75.5
International students	28.2	12
Born in Australia	51.3	68

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[i] SES = Socio-economic status (PHPI - Person Home Code Indicator). Questions have been raised about the accuracy of indices used to measure SES of higher education students (Devlin 2013, 940). They are generally based on students' postcodes, which have been

geographically ranked according to educational attainment, employment and vocational skills.