

Project: Supporting Students' Academic Discourse Development in Sub-degree Programmes: An Adjunct Language-across-the-curriculum Instructional Model

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Abstract:

The thrust to adopt explicit instructional approaches that support students' academic discourse development while they are being socialised into an academic discipline has been increasingly appealing to the Hong Kong tertiary education sector. Such an instructional orientation is built upon the need to enhance English language learners' awareness of how meaning is constructed and realised through academic discourse in their disciplinary studies, which calls for learners' coherent presentation of meanings beyond the sentence level. To gain more in-depth understanding of the specific linguistic demands of different English-medium sub-degree programmes in Hong Kong, this study examined the learning demands in three sub-degree programmes, namely Higher Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, AD in Tourism Management and AD in Applied Social Sciences (Sociology and Culture) in a community college in Hong Kong. Based on the findings on the language demands of the target academic programmes identified in the first phase of this study through student and teacher interviews and programme/course document analysis, the research team designed and implemented an adjunct language-across-the-curriculum instructional model. Drawn from quantitative and qualitative data from questionnaires, interviews and documentary evidence, the findings supported its effectiveness in aiding students' development of academic discourse prerequisite to academic success in their field of study. The results of this study provided a linguistic account of sub-degree students' language demands in the target academic programmes and carried implications for the pedagogical practices of a bridging language-across-the-curriculum programme which facilitate the establishment of formal channels for teacher collaboration, assignment of teaching-learning-assessment, and provision of diversified mode of Language-Across-the-Curriculum (LAC) programmes. The results also call for future research on

examining the literacy practices in other study programmes for a fuller account of genre and language requirements of the College.

Keywords:

Academic discourse development; Adjunct instructional model; Content and language integrated learning; Genre-based pedagogy; Language across the curriculum; Teacher collaboration