LAC: What is it? Why is it important? How can it be implemented?

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Today’s outline

• Getting to know me, you and the topic
• What is LAC?
• Why is it important?
• How can it be implemented?
Let’s get to know each other more...
“Green card, or red card?”

• Let’s play a game.
(1) What is my Chinese name?

練霓裳

練美兒

Too easy??
(2) What does “ELA” mean?

English Learning Activity

Extended Learning Activity
(3) What does “CLIL” mean?

| Continuity and Longevity In Learning | Content and Language Integrated Learning |

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Well done!

Allow me to get to know more about you.
(4) Raise your card if...

Your school has implemented new MOI arrangements. (e.g. EMI in some or all subjects, 2 EMI classes, ELA activities, etc.)

Your school has continued with the previous MOI arrangements.
(5) Raise your card if...

you think using English as a medium of instruction is beneficial to your students.

you think using English as a medium of instruction is not that beneficial to your students.
(6) Raise your card if...

- you think knowing more about LAC can help you use English to teach.
- you think knowing more about LAC can not help you use English to teach.
(7) Raise your card if...

**Red Box:**
- you think collaboration between language and content subject teachers is important.

**Green Box:**
- you think collaboration between language and content subject teachers is not important.

**Light Blue Box:**
- Thanks for letting me know.
So... What is LAC? (and the new MOI arrangements...)
In June 2009, the Hong Kong Government announced that the arrangements for fine-tuning the medium of instruction (MOI) for secondary schools would be implemented with effect from the 2010/11 school year (Education Bureau Circular No. 9, June 2009).
Background

• Schools will provide students with diversified MOI arrangements, starting with Secondary One (S1) level and progressing each year to a higher form at junior secondary levels.

• The diversified MOI arrangements are exemplified with three general models provided in the policy document: “Enriching our Language Environment—Realizing Our Vision: Fine-tuning of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools” (released by the Hong Kong Education Bureau in April 2010).
Possible MOI arrangements of Schools under the Fine-tuning

- CMI/ EMI for all subjects for all the classes
- CMI/ EMI for all subjects by class/ group
- CMI/ EMI by subject for all the classes/ some classes/ some groups
- CMI for all the subjects with ELA in some subjects
Which arrangement is more popular among schools?

CMI/ EMI by subject for all the classes/ some classes/ some groups

CMI for all the subjects with ELA in some subjects
In reality...

“A HUNDRED FLOWERS BLOSSOMING”
What is Language Across the Curriculum?

• **Language Across the Curriculum (LAC)** is about enhancing both **academic language awareness** and **academic content awareness**.
LAC and you?

Academic Language Awareness

Language Across the Curriculum

Academic Content Awareness

Language-aware Content teachers

Content-aware Language teachers

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Why is LAC important?
Four key conditions for successful language learning

• Exposure
• Use
• Motivation
• Formal instruction

Present
Absent


- Hong Kong was once described as a *Diglossia without bilingualism*.
- Now *Triglossia without trilingualism*?
- The Bottom line is: English is not a necessity to *access all the key social facilities in HK*.
The fine-tuning of MOI initiative

- The initiative can be regarded as an opportunities to enhance the learning of English in Hong Kong if we can make adjustment in our schools to enhance
  - Learners’ Exposure to English
  - Learners’ Opportunities to Use English
  - Learners’ Motivation to learn and use English
Reading for everyday life and reading for school subjects: different kinds, different purposes, different ways

• Everyday English is different from academic English
  – E.g., Everyday text-types are different from academic text-types
    • **Differences**
      – Contexts
      – Text-types
      – Academic functions
      – Sentence patterns & vocabulary
    • **Similarity**
      – Both are important to the language and cognitive development of our students

It is vital to help our students to develop skills and strategies to tackle everyday texts and academic texts progressively across different disciplines.
How can LAC be implemented?
Have you visited this new ramen shop in Hong Kong?

They are different yet the same!

It’s a matter of decision-making and arrangements.
Inverted Pyramid to MOI fine-tuning policy

Decision-making and arrangement at different levels:

1. Balancing Content and Language Objectives
2. Pedagogical Tasks
3. Selection of Subjects
4. Curriculum Design
5. MOI Arrangements
6. Whole School Approach to LAC
In order for you to make better decisions and arrangements, you have to take a short LAC crash course! (or “Why understanding Academic language is important”.)
Activity 1: “Genre Egg” – Language Awareness
A Functional View of Language in Context (Adapted from Rose, 2005)

Top down?

Curriculum context

Academic text-types (genres)

Academic functions

Sentence patterns

Academic vocabulary

Bottom-up?
Learning academic vocabulary

In a teacher’s eyes:
Glossary list
Learning academic vocabulary

In a student’s eyes
Activity 2: Prefix, Suffix and Word Formation

• Look at the following words. Answer the following questions.
Activity 2: Prefix, Suffix and Word Formation

1. The prefix “quad” means _______________.
   four (4)

2. The prefix “tetra” means _______________.
   four (4)

3. The prefix “penta-” means _______________.
   five (5)

4. The prefix “poly-“ means _______________.
   many

5. The prefix “deca-“ means _______________.
   ten (10)

How are these prefixes and suffixes related to students using English to learn?
The Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000): 570 high-utility academic word families

(Source: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/)

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Activity 3: Nouns? Verbs? Nominalization?

Preservatives are additives that help maintain freshness and quality.

They protect food from spoilage caused by mold, bacteria, and yeast; and from flavor and color changes due to exposure to oxygen.

By law, manufacturers must list all amounts on the food product labels. We often find the names of sodium nitrate and sodium benzoate on the labels.

Why would food turn bad? That’s because mold, bacteria and yeast will spoil our food. And also the oxygen in the air will change the flavor and color of our food. It will make our food dark and smelly.
Activity 3: Nouns? Verbs? Nominalization?

Read the following sentences. Recognize any Conversational Style Sentences, and Academic Style Sentences. Then, rewrite these sentences into their counter parts.

Conversational Style Sentences

(1) Mold, yeast and bacterial will spoil our food.
   Food preservatives are added to prevent food spoilage.

(2) Food preservatives are used to maintain the freshness of food.
   We add food preservatives to keep our food fresh.

(3) To be healthy and fit, we should have a balanced diet.
   A balanced diet will enhance health and fitness.

(4) Many modern artists employ computers in their work.
    These machines enable the artist to be more creative.
    The modern artists’ use of computers in their work increases their creativity.

Academic Style Sentences

(1) Mold, yeast and bacterial will spoil our food.
   Food preservatives are added to prevent food spoilage.

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(4) Many modern artists employ computers in their work.
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    The modern artists’ use of computers in their work increases their creativity.
Learning grammar & sentence patterns

Academic texts are highly complex and the information are condensed:

Nominalization

e.g. A) The destruction of rainforests causes a great loss of resources to humanity and science. (from Liberal Studies)

e.g. A) His farsighted acts in accepting the Truce of Villafranca, in stopping Garibaldi from marching on to Rome, and in allying with Bismarck made the unification movement possible. (from History)

VS

c) My name’s Mabel. I have lots of friends. We like reading magazines. (from English)
Explicit Modelling of contrastive analysis of L2 academic language and corresponding L1 academic language

• Step 1: unpacking: X is Y
  – Waste gases released by motor vehicles, power stations and factories (X) are the main sources of air pollution in Hong Kong (Y).
  – 由汽車、發電廠和工廠釋放的廢氣 (X) 是香港空氣污染的主要源頭 (Y)。

• Step 2: unpacking X
  – Waste gases released by motor vehicles, power stations and factories...
  – 由汽車、發電廠和工廠釋放的廢氣...

• Step 3: unpacking Y
  – .... the main sources of air pollution in Hong Kong
  – ....香港空氣污染的主要源頭
Activity 4: Interpreting and describing data

• Read the following information and answer the questions:

• (1) Analyse the data and account for the changes in air quality.

• (2) Can you underline the words that you used to describe the data?
Activity 4: Interpreting and describing data

• reflect
• was worse than that in
• has significantly increased by
• slightly increased by

For example...
Academic functions: Describing data
An example of Academic functions: Comparing
An example of Academic functions:
Exemplifying
Activity 5: Text-types in language and content subjects

Look at the two pages. Identify the text types and the topics.

- Story (narrative)
  - 3 little pigs and the big bad wolf

- Description texts (Info Rpt)
  - Animal homes

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Activity 5: Text-types in language and content subjects

For example...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME:</th>
<th>Integrated Science: Electric current(S3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text-types in language subjects</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text-types in content subjects</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autobiography</td>
<td>Information report (compositional)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pair up with a language / content teacher. Using the graphic organizer below, choose a theme, and think of some possible text-types that you can use to teach the content.
Some common text-types in language and content subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text types commonly found in language subjects</th>
<th>Text types commonly found in content subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Information report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>Laboratory report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News article</td>
<td>Historical recount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>Manuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipe</td>
<td>Explanations on sequence and process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argumentative essay</td>
<td>Explanations on cause and effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement</td>
<td>Argumentative essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mapping your school’s LAC plans

- **Content-rich** language lessons
- **Language-rich** content lessons

EMI classes

ELA classes

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So... how can LAC be implemented?
Possible MOI arrangements of Schools under the Fine-tuning

• CMI/ EMI for all subjects for all the classes
• CMI/ EMI for all subjects by class/ group
• CMI/ EMI by subject for all the classes/ some classes/ some groups
• CMI for all the subjects with Extended Learning Activities in some subjects
Possible LAC models

- (1) **Theme-based units** (e.g., a common theme used in English and other content subjects)
- (2) Teaching **generic academic study skills** (e.g., generic academic vocabulary & language structures, mind-mapping, use of graphic organizers, tabling & graph plotting skills, data description skills)
- (3) Intensive **LAC units**
Possible ELA models

1. As cross-curricular English enrichment activities
2. As an EMI supplement to CMI content teaching
3. As a vocabulary teaching focus related to content lessons
4. As additional individual modules/ themes
5. As certain subject content teaching units
6. As bridging programmes

Others ...

For example: LAC at ‘curriculum-material-support level’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Content subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberal Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*English Teachers offer feedback to these content subject materials*

Subject content teachers prepare teaching/assignment/assessment materials for content subjects

Issues to highlight:
- Easy to arrange, but
- Heavy workload laid on language teachers
For example: LAC at ‘demo-teaching level’

Issues to highlight:
• Language teachers can understand the difficulties of using EMI in content subject classrooms
• Content subject teachers can understand how language teachers teach
• Need adjustment in timetabling; English teachers have difficulties teaching content subjects
For example:
A ‘full LAC course’

Centralized LAC Committee
1. Subject experts and frontline teachers
2. Language and curriculum experts

Issues to highlight:
• A coherent, continuous, sustainable and transferable LAC practice/course
• Cater for professional development
• More time and human resource investment involved
• Need to build leadership, consensus and teamwork
For example: LAC at ‘vocabulary level’

Issues to highlight:
• Easy to arrange (common in bridging programmes)
• Good for teaching syllabication and spelling
• Learning English through glossaries
• Limited impact
For example: LAC at ‘project level’

Identify common themes between English & Content Subjects: e.g. Green Living

Issues to highlight:
- Easy to arrange
- Moderate level of collaboration
“Time to say goodbye and move forward...”
Possible success factors

The students

1. Language ability (both Chinese as well as English)
2. Willingness
3. Motivation

The teachers

1. Attitudes towards EMI
2. Willingness to be language-aware and content-aware
3. Skills in helping students to learn the language of the subjects (e.g., language of science / language of history etc.)
4. Own English proficiency

The schools

1. A language-rich context
2. An encouraging atmosphere
3. Collaboration between different departments / teachers
4. Provide PD and support to teachers

The parents

readiness to have their child learn in the language will benefit their child’s learning best

(adapted from Dr. David Bunton, Seminar, 19 November 2012)
To foster collaborations: Building a common language

Metalanguage (i.e. the language for talking about language)

LAC Awareness

Understanding

To teach or not to teach English, that is the question.
Language Support for Learning Content in English

Students with a variety of language proficiencies
- Learners learning content in their first language
- Proficient ELLs
- ELLs with limited proficiency

Language-aware
Content teachers

Content-aware
Language teachers
Overall LAC Planning framework

Content Subjects & Pedagogy

Academic Language Focus (& support)

Administration

Science
Maths
PSHE

"The Genre Egg"

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Only learning words in a glossary is not necessarily helpful (as words need to be learnt in context)

Sharing content texts between Content & Language Teachers

An inverted pyramid framework

Curriculum Context

Learning in context

patterns

Academic vocabulary

A concluding remark

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Recap: “Genre Egg” – Language Awareness

Top down?  
Curriculum context  
Academic text-types (genres)  
Academic functions  
Sentence patterns  
Academic vocabulary  
Bottom-up?

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Questions that are worth exploring
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