Working with EAL students

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Workshop for CEID Staff

Thursday 8th October, 2015

Ice-breaker: Birth Map

This activity:

- is quick and easy to do
- is a quick way to remind you of learners' names
- helps you to get to know a bit more about your learners
- helps learners to get to know each other
- also helps learners to feel that they are part of the group

Workshop Outline

Review of first workshop / Tutor feedback	9.20am
English language levels & issues	9.40am
Morning tea	10.20am
Using pair and group work with EAL students	10.35am
Where to next?	11.45am

Review of first workshop

Discuss in small groups (5 minutes):

1. What do you remember from the workshop in April?

Main topics were:

- Getting to know your EAL students
- Attendance & punctuality issues
- Cultural differences & Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture
- Classroom communication / Vocabulary

2. Have you done anything differently as a result of anything you heard in the workshop?

Responses to feedback from workshop 1

- **More information needed on all three groups of students from: India, Saudi Arabia, and China**

    - Handouts from *New to New Zealand* – China & India
    - Hofstede site: http://geert-Hofstede.com/countries.html (Click here for info on Saudi Arabia)

- **Best practice teaching strategies for EAL students in general**

    - Dos and Don'ts for teaching English language learners
    - See the PPT from the workshop in April (Classroom Communication)

Reference
Magee, J. (Ed.). (2011). *New to New Zealand: Ethnic communities in Aotearoa: A handbook* (5th ed.). Hamilton, New Zealand: Ethnic New Zealand Trust.

Responses to feedback from workshop 1

- **Teaching strategies that suit particular groups**

  - **Link to ESL Oasis – Strategies for Saudi students**

  - Study in New Zealand Information Guide for Indian Students
  - Link to 'Indian Business students in Australia': Challenges for Indian students

  - Unlearning and Relearning: Chinese Students in a New Zealand First Year Undergraduate Class
  - Link to 'Communication with Chinese International students': Strategies for Chinese students
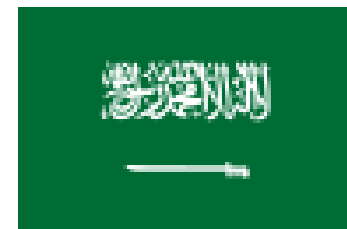
More on teaching & learning in an engineering context...

- [Ako Aotearoa report on teaching & learning in engineering education](#)

- Tertiary Teaching Excellence – [Teaching profile](#) from Dr Roger Nokes, Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Canterbury - a Sustained Excellence Award winner 2006

- Tertiary Teaching Excellence – [Teaching profile](#) from Daniel Brown, School of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Victoria University of Wellington - a Sustained Excellence Award winner 2005

English language issues and levels

Discuss: Why is a high level of competence in the English language important in the engineering industry?

From the IPENZ graduate profile, p. 33:

- Writing effective reports and design documentation

- Giving clear oral instructions and understanding instructions from others

English Language challenges for EALs

In 4 groups of 4 or 5, discuss (5 mins):

- What difficulties or challenges have you noticed that EAL learners have with English language skills?

- Each group will focus on a different aspect of English skills – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

- Come up with two key ideas, and write them on the board in the grid

English language challenges – possible solutions/suggestions

- Rotate the groups so that each group is thinking of solutions for the difficulties/challenges that another group has come up with.

- Write on the board in the grid.

What can you expect your students' level of English to be?

All Wintec mainstream programmes have an English language requirement for students whose first language is not English.

IELTS requirements
- **Programmes levels 5 to 7:**
 IELTS 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in writing, or equivalent

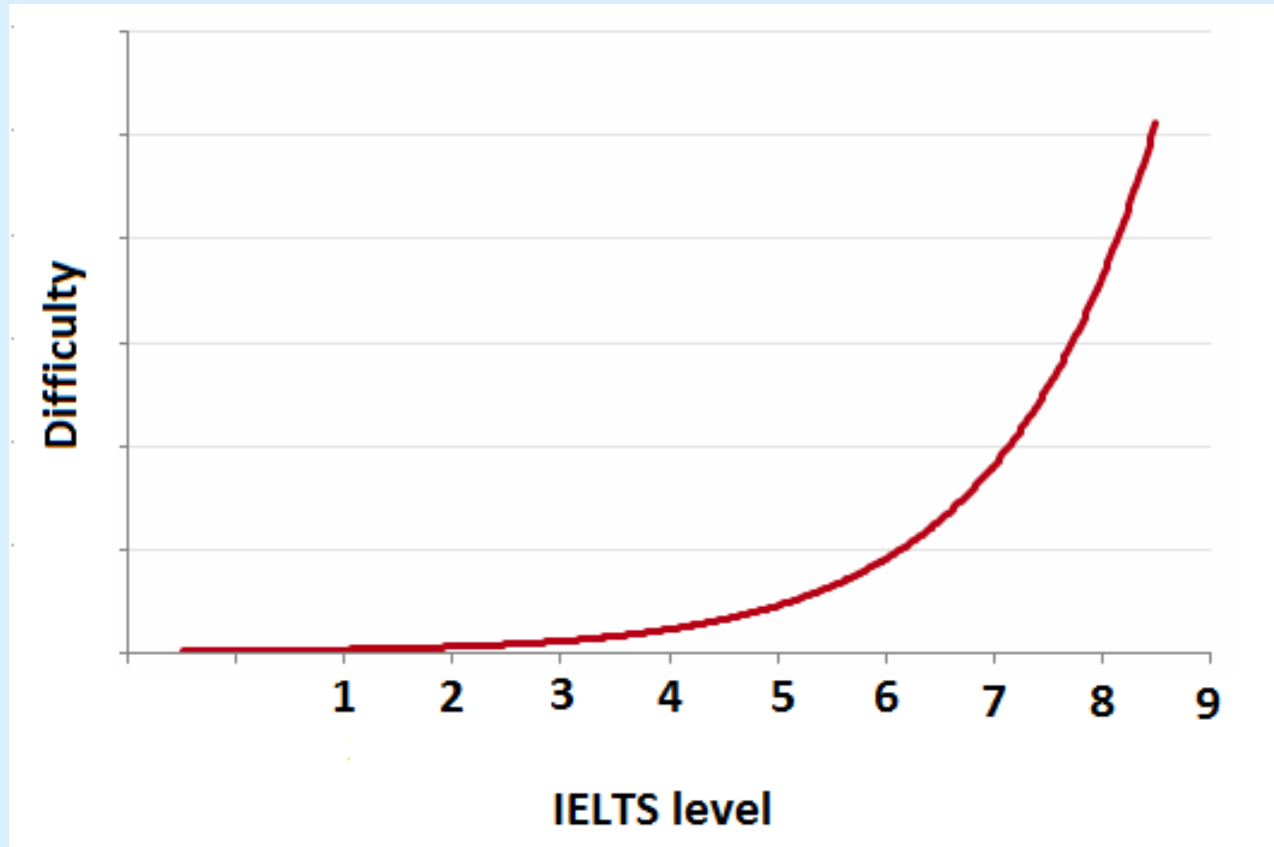
([Wintec web site](#))

What is Band 6?

'Competent user'

"Has generally effective command of the language, despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings."

"Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations."

www.ielts.org

How IELTS difficulty increases by level

English Learning Centre, Christchurch

IELTS Academic Writing Task 1

- You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

- **The chart below shows the number of men and women in further education in Britain in three periods and whether they were studying fulltime or part-time.**

  Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

- Write at least 150 words.
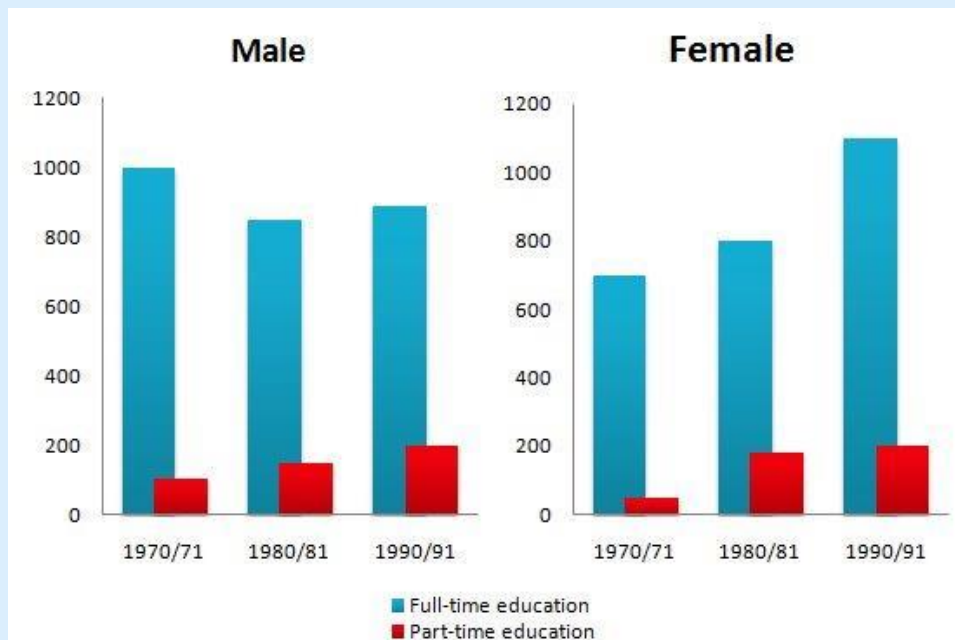
IELTS Band 6 Writing sample

According to this graph, the number of men and women in farther education in Britain shows that following pattern.

In the case of male, the number of male has declined slightly from about 100 thousands in 1970/71 to about 850 thousands in 1990/91. However, this figure rose back to about 850 thousands in 1990/91 from about 820 thousands in 1980/81. The proportion of full-time education has declined during this period. However, the proportion of part-time education has increased dramatically.

On the other hand, in the case of female, the number of both full-time education and part-time education has increased during the period. From about 700 thousands in 1970/71, these figures rose to about 820 thousands in 1980/81, to about 1100 thousands in 1990/91.In terms of full-time education, this figure rose by about 260 to about 900 in 1990/91.

On the other hand, with respect to part-time education, this figure rose dramatically between 1980/81 and 1970/71. However this figure rose slightly between 1980/81 and 1990/91.

(165 words)

IELTS Band 6: Examiner's comments

➤ Work in pairs

➤ Highlight what the student **CAN DO** with one colour, and any **WRITING PROBLEMS** with another colour

"The candidate has made a good attempt to describe the graphs looking at global trends and more detailed figures. There is, however, some information missing and the information is inaccurate in minor areas. The answer flows quite smoothly although connectives are overused or inappropriate, and some of the points do not link up well. The grammatical accuracy is quite good and the language used to describe the trends is well-handled. However, there are problems with expression and the appropriate choice of words and whilst there is good structural control, the complexity and variation in the sentences are limited."

IELTS Band 6: Examiner's comments

"The candidate has made **a good attempt to describe the graphs looking at global trends and more detailed figures.** There is, however, **some information missing** and **the information is inaccurate in minor areas**. The answer **flows quite smoothly** although **connectives are overused or inappropriate**, and **some of the points do not link up well**. The **grammatical accuracy is quite good** and the **language used to describe the trends is well-handled**. However, there are **problems with expression and the appropriate choice of words** and whilst **there is good structural control**, the **complexity and variation in the sentences are limited**."

IELTS-exam.net

Discussion

➢ What is your overall impression of the writing of students who have an IELTS score of 6 ?

➢ What are the implications of this for teachers of these students?

    ➢ Expectations?
    ➢ Communicative?
    ➢ Relevant?
    ➢ Organised?

Ideas for improving English levels

Students could:

- Proof read own work out loud
- Pay for a proof reader (See a policy on proof reading)
- For a start, use MS Word spellcheck (*but be wear)
  - *Having clean water in New Zealand rivers is very impotent.*
  - *Humans develop all through their lives, from infancy to adultery.*
- Maybe try an online spelling and grammar checker, eg Whitesmoke

Teachers could:

- Keep the language in the classroom (eg hand outs, PPTs, readings, assignment instructions) more accessible by using a vocab profiler.

Ideas for improving English levels

- **Students need to keep working on their English language as much as possible i.e. be proactive! Encourage them to:**
  - Read for 30 minutes per day (anything, especially about hobbies / interests)
  - Watch news on TV / computer / English movies / YouTube videos etc
  - Speak English as much as possible
  - BBC 6 minute English podcasts
  - LearningWorks English

  Students can contact: sls.englishonline@wintec.ac.nz

MORNING TEA

Using group work with EAL students

Using group work with EAL students

Do you use group work?
- What are the advantages of group work?
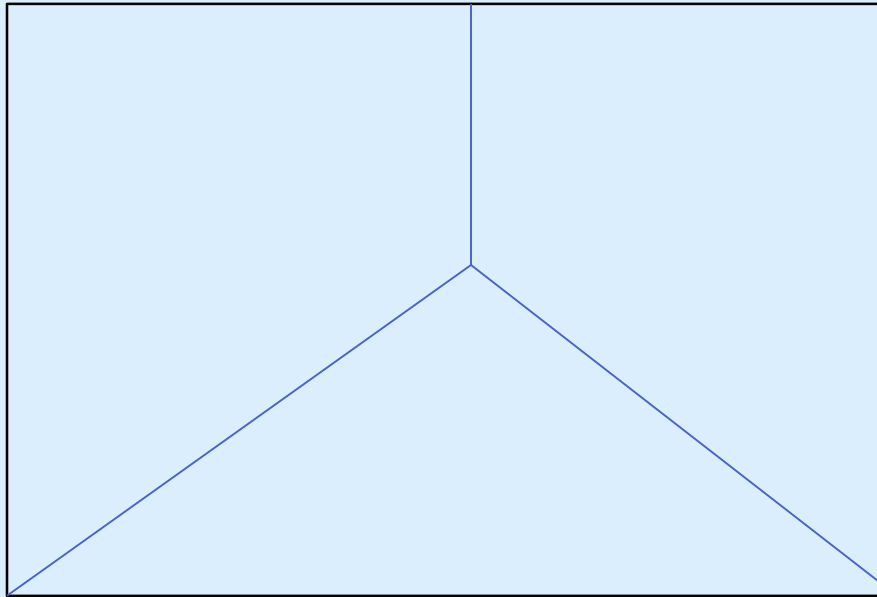- What are the difficulties with group work?

From the IPENZ graduate profile, p. 33:
- Working cooperatively and understanding team dynamics
- Giving clear oral instructions and understanding instructions from others

Re-grouping

- Find two other people to make a rectangle containing a short engineering-related quotation

Ways of grouping students

- Randomly-assigned (e.g. number off, find matching pieces)
- Teacher-assigned
- Self-selected
- Social integration (students privately tell the teacher who they do/don't want to work with)
- Interest (class topics)
- Geographic (students who live near each other)

- **Which of these do you think is the most effective and why?**

Further reading:
- Group work in class: Sustaining Interaction: group work that works
- Assessed group work: Teaching Culturally Diverse groups: Managing assessed group work.

Useful advice for group work

Which of these do you do already? **Which would you like to start doing?**
[See handout]

- Make sure that there is a good reason for doing group work. Some work is better done individually.
- Make sure students are given the purpose for the group work. This is important for cultures which are not used to working in groups in class. This can be related to future work practices, where group meetings and team work will be important.
- Decide how you will place EAL students in groups – Should they be mixed? General wisdom says yes, to use multicultural groups if possible. Again, this can be related to future work practices.
- Set tasks which encourage everyone to contribute – use a 'collaborative' verb e.g. collect, compile, comment, assemble, prepare
- Assign roles in the group so that everyone does something (or ask them to assign people to roles)
- Choose contexts for group tasks that are familiar OR unfamiliar to everyone, so that no one has a cultural advantage or disadvantage
- Set tasks which *require* cultural knowledge from different backgrounds
- For assessed group work: Assess both process and product, both individual and group work
- Ensure that the assessment criteria and marks are clear to all.
- Consider using group contracts for assessed group work.

Group activity

Purposes:

- To use a number of number of group activities which could be useful in your teaching

- To practise giving clear instructions and checking understanding, both very important for EAL students

Group activity - Instructions

1) **In your current groups, number yourselves 1-3, to take the following roles:**

   1) Give the instructions for the task clearly and briefly
      Also write them briefly on the whiteboard, as a visual support
   2) Demonstrate the activity
   3) Ask a couple of questions to check that the class understands what to do, and give out materials for the group activity

2) **Prepare to give instructions for the group activity**

3) **Give the instructions for the activity to the larger group**

Group activities

- Vocabulary matching
- Vocabulary clustering
- Text and diagram information gap
- Working as a team

Checking understanding of instructions:

- Do you stay in in the same groups or form new groups for this activity?

    Stay in the same groups

- What is the first thing you need to do?

    Number yourselves

Why do you number yourselves?

    So that you know what you need to do when you present your activity to the whole group.

Activity: Instructions for teamwork

(4 groups of 2-3 people) x2; Total time – 40 minutes

1. Assign roles in the group (1 min)

   Person 1 – Give instructions for the activity

   Person 2 – Demonstrate the activity

   Person 3 – Instruction checking

2. As a group, **prepare to give instructions** for your activity (9 mins)

3. Present your activity to the other groups

   (5 mins each; x4 groups = 20 mins)

4. Groups listening provide feedback on whether instructions & demo were clear how to improve
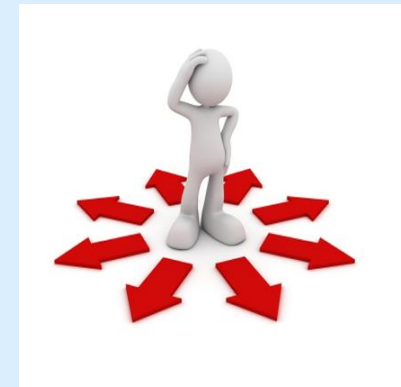
   (2 mins / group = 8 mins)

Whole group discussion about the group activity

- **What was successful?**

- **What would you do differently?**

Where to next?

Options

- Review material from both workshops on the Moodle site: **Working with EAL students**

- Choose a strategy or idea that you would like to try out with your students (record on a sticky note)

- Individual follow-up with one of us

- Another workshop on topic of choice, eg - LearningWorks English & vocab profilers

Finally… Feedback

- Please fill in the questionnaire which will be emailed to you soon!