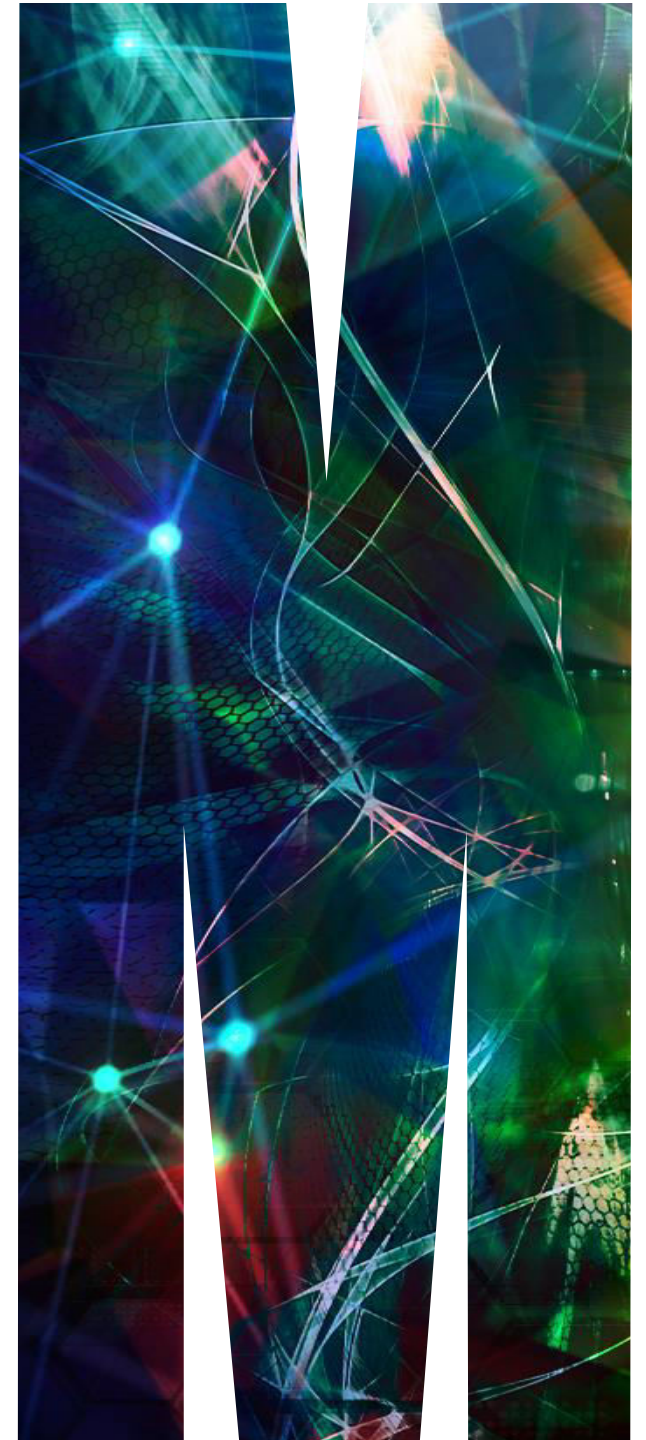# ACADEMIC LITERACIES IN PEER TO PEER LANGUAGE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Students' voices in academic language development

Lucas Moreira dos Anjos Santos

Dr Rosalind McFarlane

OUTLINE

1. Background to the study
2. Academic literacies and language development in peer to peer programs
3. Peer Support and Polish Up Your Grammar: An overview
4. Demographics
5. Students' self-assessment of their academic language development
6. Findings and discussion
7. Conclusion

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

ENGLISH CONNECT – PEER TO PEER LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

- Co-curricular language programs.

- Emphasis on developing language in a cultural context.

- Post-entry English language proficiency context.

- Peer to peer facilitated.

ACADEMIC LITERACIES

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN PEER TO PEER PROGRAMS

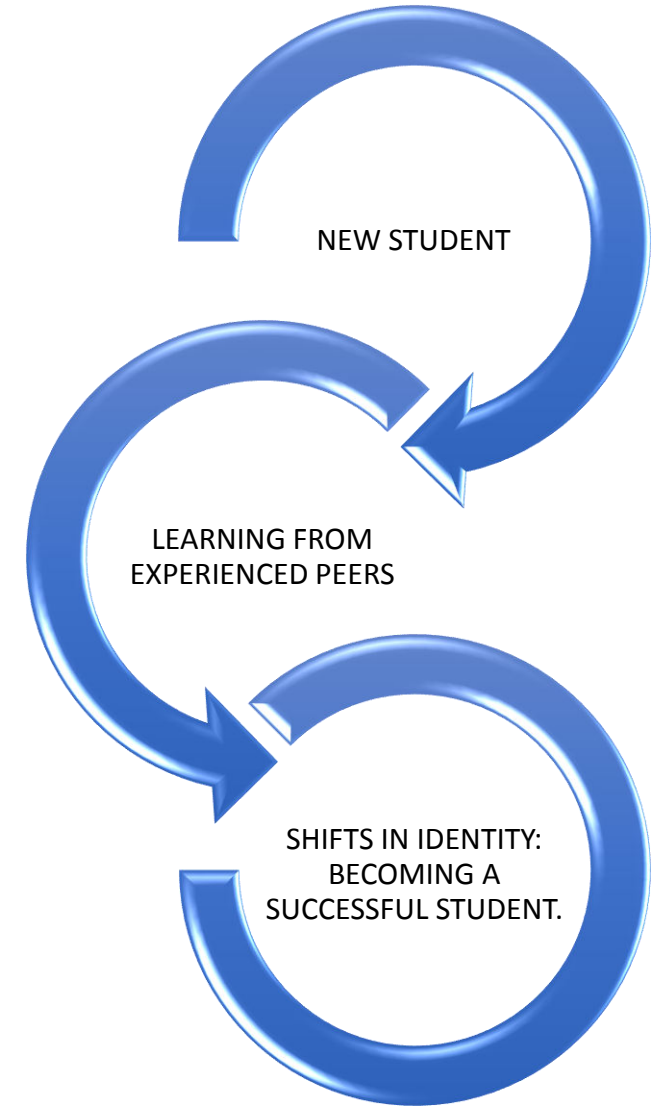1. **Academic literacies**

   Language in context and situated (Gee, 2002).

   Academic language – collaborative learning.

2. Peer to Peer programs

   Shifting identities & student engagement (Sampson & Cohen, 2001; Adam, Skalicky & Brown, 2011)

   Holistic approach

NEW STUDENT

LEARNING FROM
EXPERIENCED PEERS

SHIFTS IN IDENTITY:
BECOMING A
SUCCESSFUL STUDENT.

PEER SUPPORT

One on one academic grammar drop in

- The Peer Support program assists with academic English skills

- 20 minute drop-in consultation

- 300 words per session

- Designed as a learning opportunity

- Free for all Monash students

- Also available online
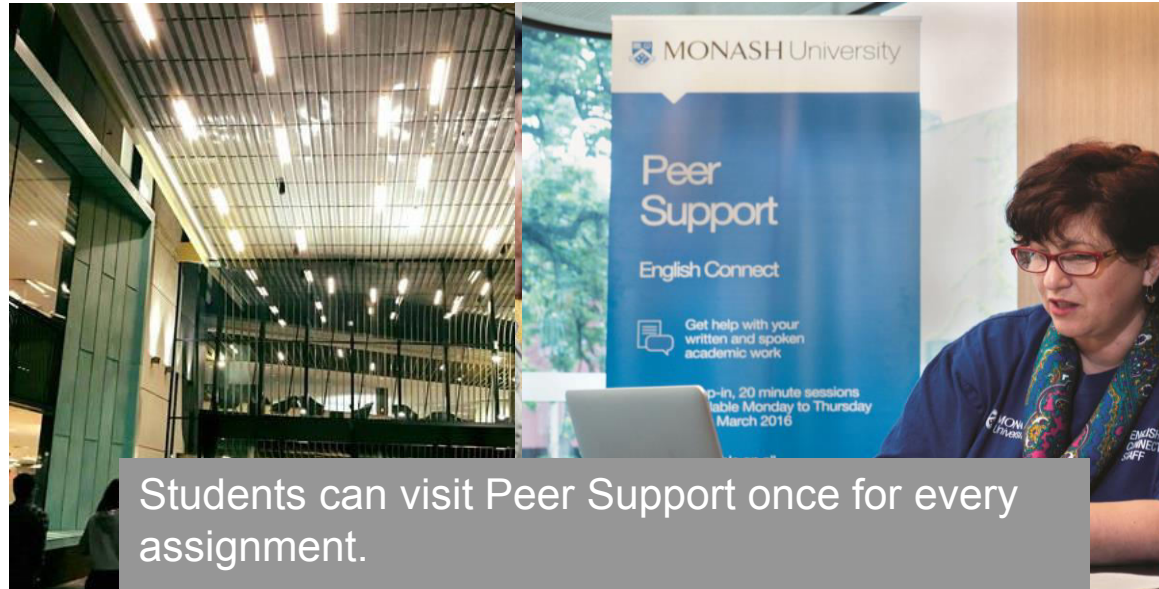
Students can visit Peer Support once for every assignment.

Runs in libraries at Monash campuses next to the Library Research and Learning Point.

https://www.monash.edu/english-connect/academic-writing

POLISH UP YOUR GRAMMAR

2 hour grammar focused workshops

- *Module 1: Nouns & articles in academic writing*

- *Module 2: Verb tenses in academic writing*

- *Module 3: Verb forms in academic writing*

- *Module 4: Sentence structure in academic writing*

- *Module 5: Complex sentence structure I in academic writing*

- *Module 6: Complex sentence structure II in academic writing*

- *Module 7: Transition words & coherence in academic writing*

- *Module 8: Academic vocabulary*

- Focus on relevant linguistic features for academic writing across disciplines.

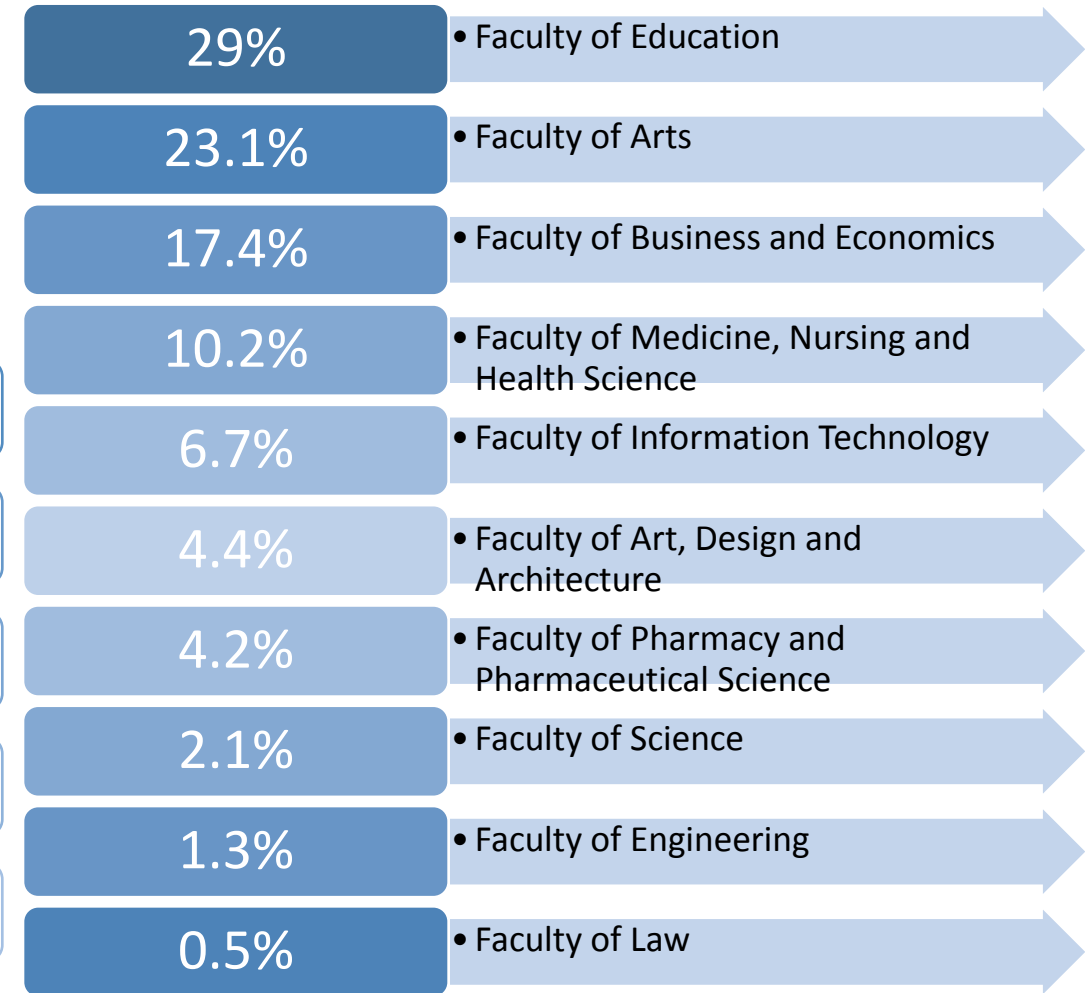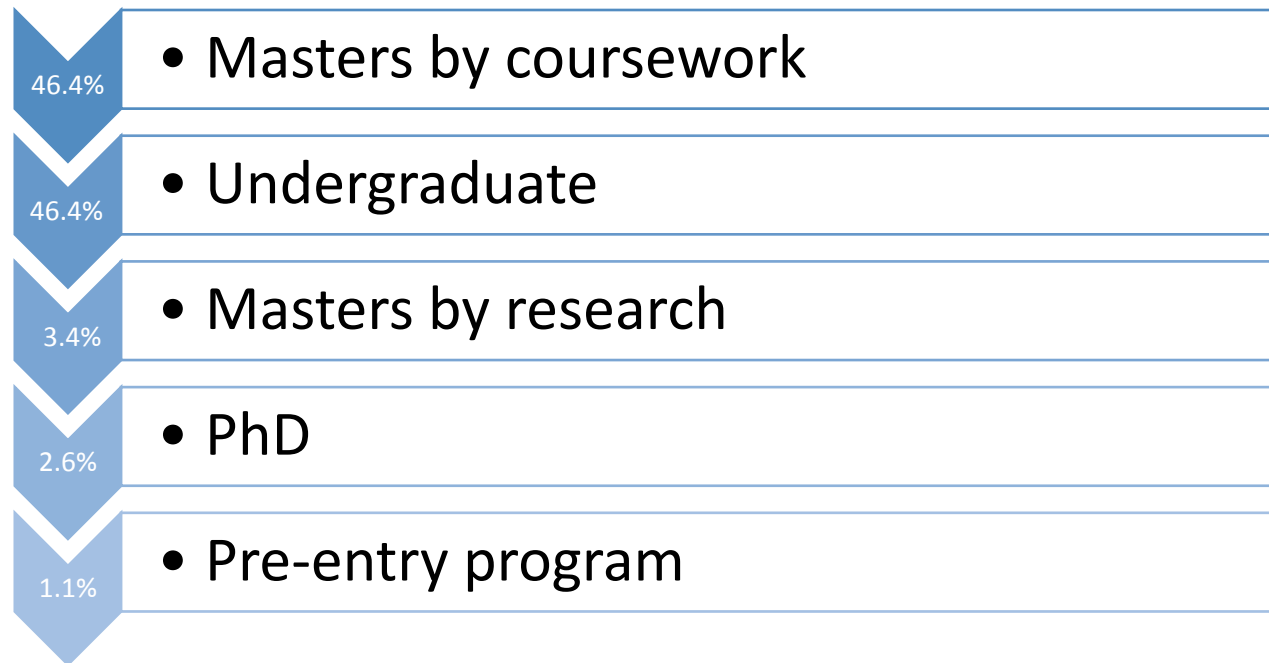- Meaning-making enacted through linguistic choices.
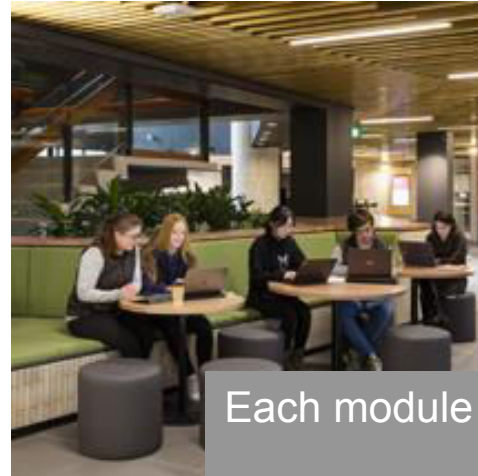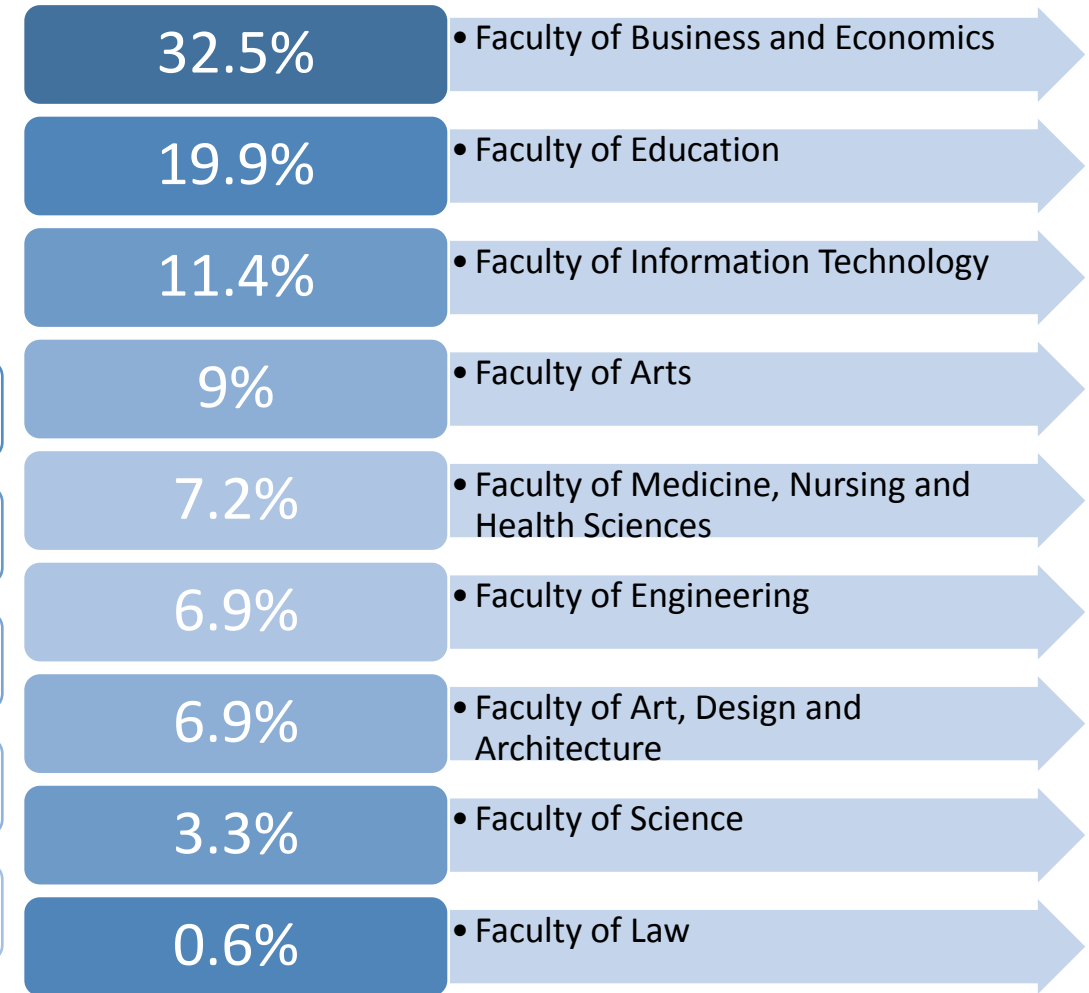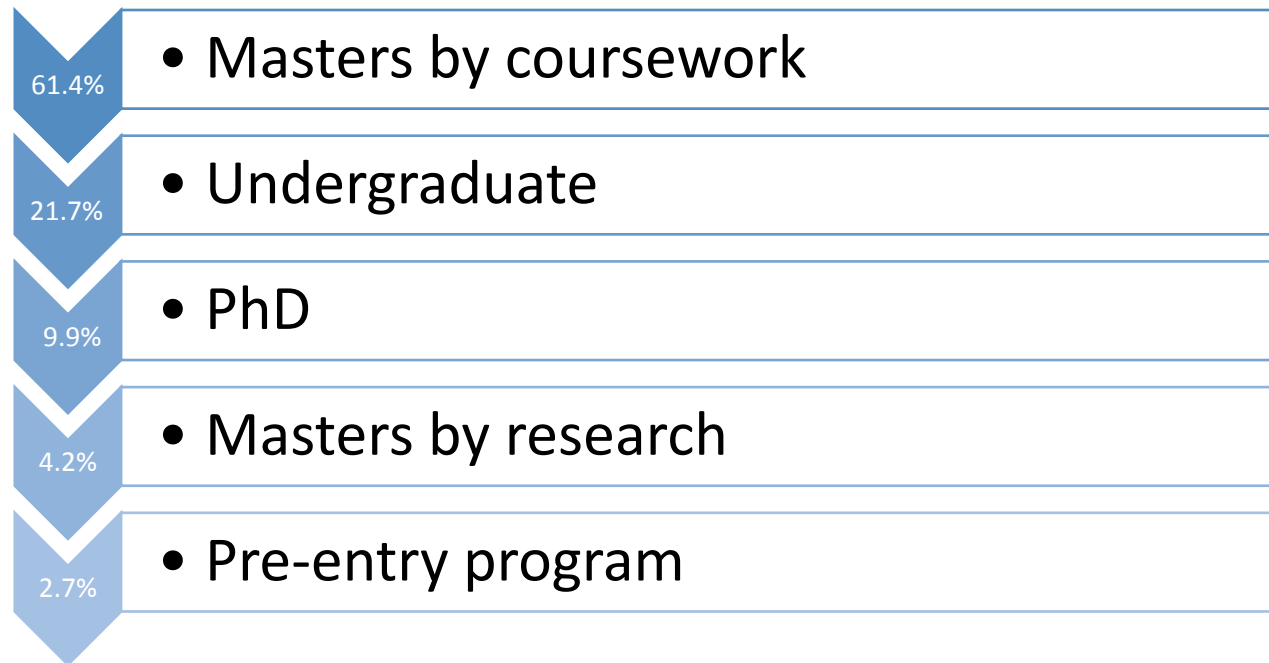

Each module is independent

Modules have been designed and written by facilitators in consultation with the Program Coordinator (Academic English)

Students can attend multiple times if desired

MONASH University

PEER SUPPORT DEMOGRAPHICS

International students
- 697 visits

Domestic students
- 60 visits

46.4%
- Masters by coursework

46.4%
- Undergraduate

3.4%
- Masters by research

2.6%
- PhD

1.1%
- Pre-entry program

29%	• Faculty of Education
23.1%	• Faculty of Arts
17.4%	• Faculty of Business and Economics
10.2%	• Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Science
6.7%	• Faculty of Information Technology
4.4%	• Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture
4.2%	• Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science
2.1%	• Faculty of Science
1.3%	• Faculty of Engineering
0.5%	• Faculty of Law

MONASH University

POLISH UP YOUR GRAMMAR DEMOGRAPHICS

International students
- 305 registrations

Domestic students
- 27 registrations

61.4%
- Masters by coursework

21.7%
- Undergraduate

9.9%
- PhD

4.2%
- Masters by research

2.7%
- Pre-entry program

32.5%
- Faculty of Business and Economics

19.9%
- Faculty of Education

11.4%
- Faculty of Information Technology

9%
- Faculty of Arts

7.2%
- Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

6.9%
- Faculty of Engineering

6.9%
- Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture

3.3%
- Faculty of Science

0.6%
- Faculty of Law

MONASH University
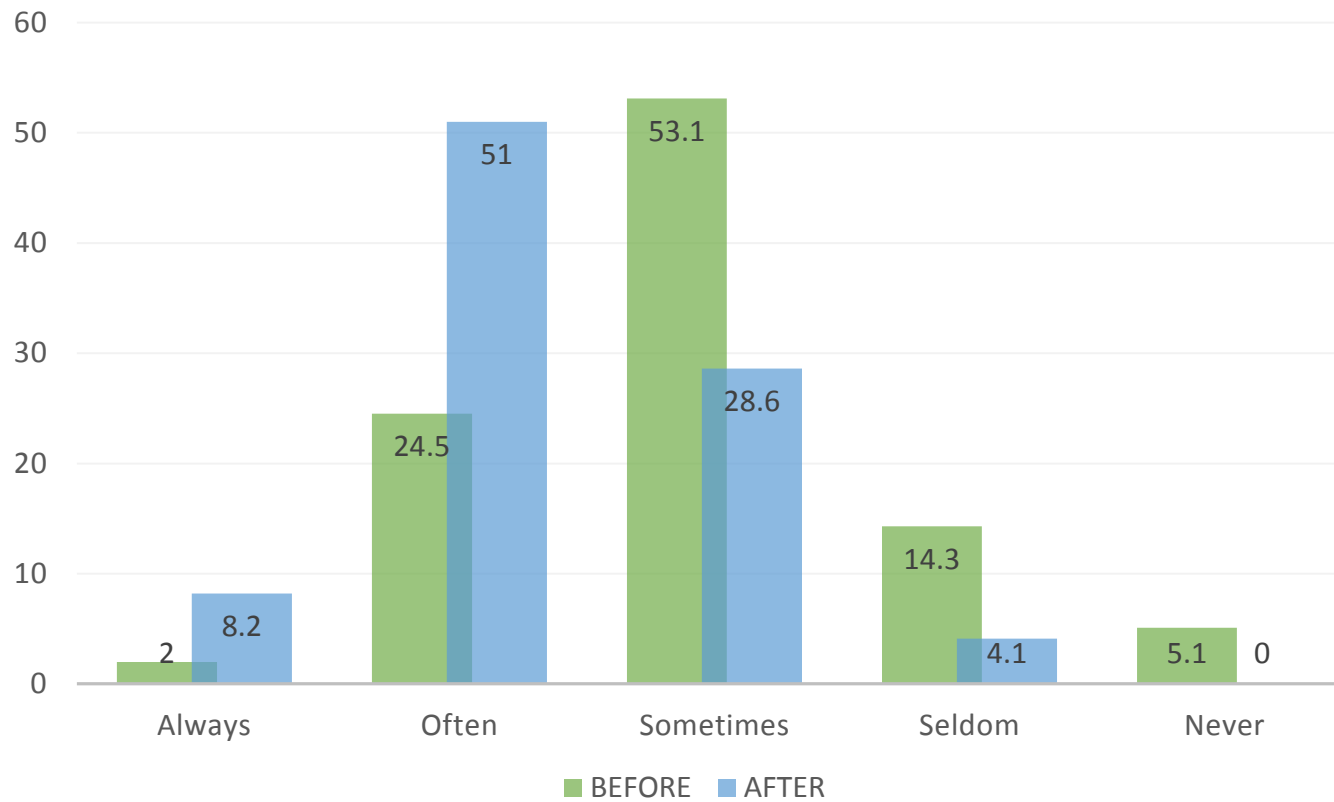
STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT

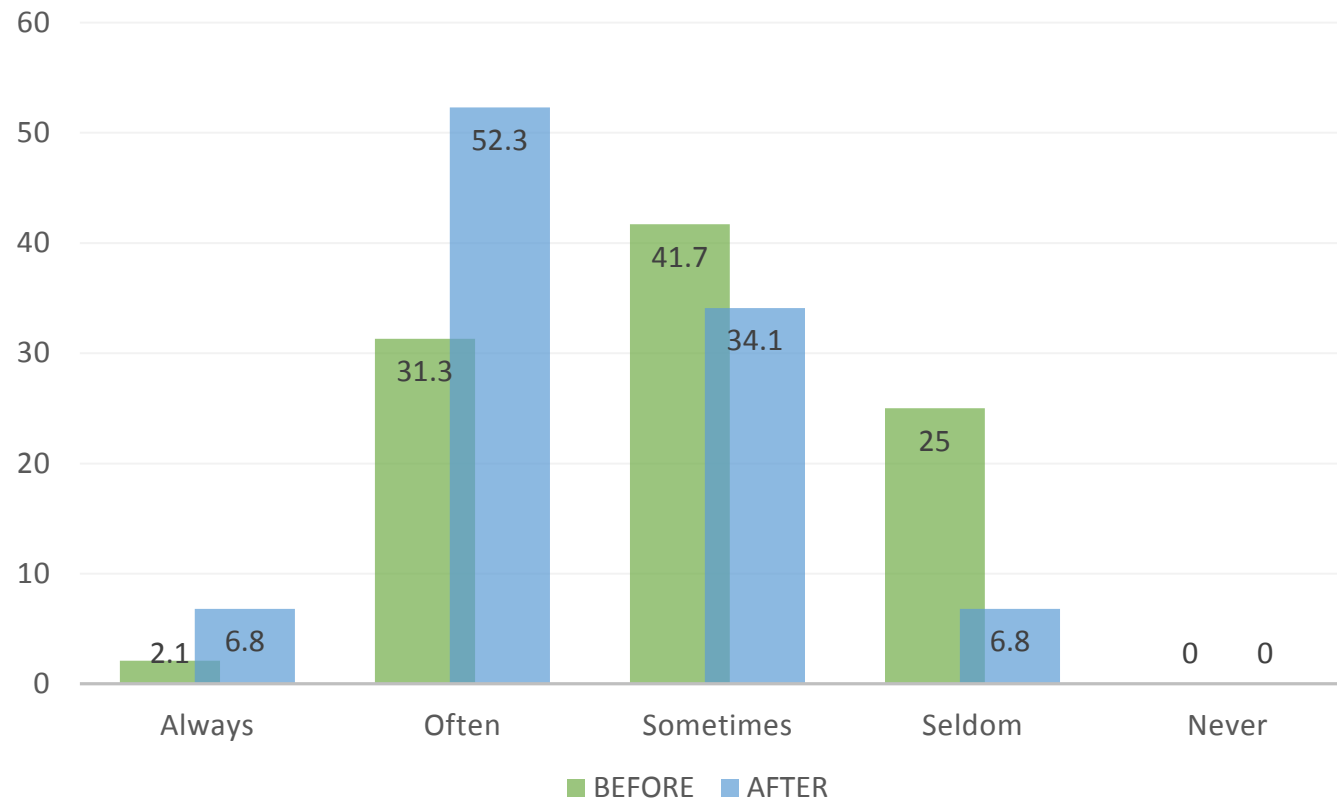SNAPSHOTS OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

I AM CONFIDENT IN USING GRAMMAR EFFECTIVELY FOR ACADEMIC CONTEXTS.

MONASH University

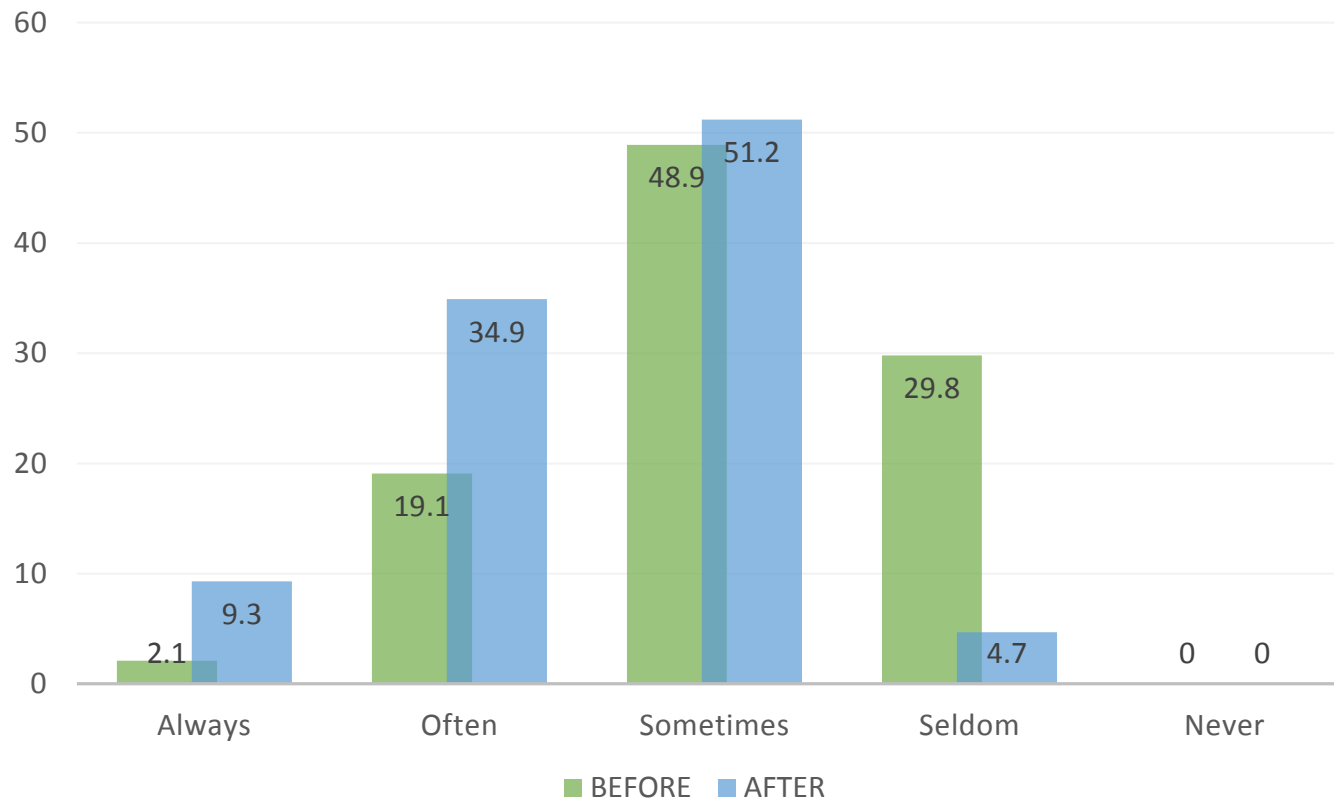# STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT

SNAPSHOTS OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

STUDENTS' QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

"It was good. Helped me learn more about logical thinking in assignments and academic words."

"I think having someone more experienced to proof read my work and point out any grammar error is very useful."

"It was very helpful that the facilitator can point out my grammatical weaknesses and suggest me some useful recourses which helps me academic writing."

"Peer Support enables me to be aware more of grammatical rules, as well as the flow of my writing."

"The drop-in session is very helpful and make me feel I am improving my writing skills."

CONCLUSION

DISCUSSION & MOVING FORWARD

- Providing meaningful interactions in a peer to peer environment demands well-designed training of facilitators.

- Creating a safe environment in which mistakes can be shared and discussed.

- Building students' confidence and shifting students' identities.

- Collaboration with Faculties, and exploring curriculum-embedded opportunities.