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Making histories: developing an oral history of ALL in Australia

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Abstract
How might our present understandings of our professional identities, our struggles, our achievements and our capacities for agency be better understood through the memories and accounts of those who championed our emergence? What might oral accounts of the emergence of our field offer beyond what can be gathered from its existing literature? Indeed, why look at the history of a professional field at all? This session approaches such questions by reporting on oral accounts of the emergence and evolution of ALL in Australia. As we note some of the insights and lived experiences of those engaged in the formative years of ALL, we invite reflection on how these insights and experiences may augment, refine and even challenge our understandings of our field's past and present. We argue that by understanding where we've been and where we came from, to inform where we are, we might be better able to (re)view where we might go. The specific project, "Making histories: Oral accounts of the development of Academic Language and Learning in Australian Higher Education" aims to be a dynamic, adaptive and permanent digital work in progress. It is work that we believe will be enriched by the continued engagement of ALL professionals as both researchers and subjects. It is also work that raises important questions about how we may continue to make sense of our professional identities in the complex and dynamic field of academic language and learning. We invite you to join us in this dialogue about the past, present and future of ALL.

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This session approaches such questions by reporting on oral accounts of the emergence and evolution of ALL in Australia. As we note some of the insights and lived experiences of those engaged in the formative years of ALL, we invite reflection on how these insights and experiences may augment, refine and even challenge our understandings of our field’s past and present. We argue that by understanding where we’ve been and where we came from, to inform where we are, we might be better able to (re) view where we might go.

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