

Questions for CoEDLers

Address by Professor Tony Woodbury (University of Texas at Austin)
CoEDLFest 2020, University of Queensland, 5 February 2020

“I've been on the Advisory Board of the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language (CoEDL) since the project's start five years ago, and I am now its chair. It has been an honour: For me, CoEDL is perhaps the brightest single light on the international stage in the language sciences and allied fields.

I've assembled and organised here some questions that have come up in my time on the Advisory Board. I want to recommend these questions to each person in CoEDL, to think about and hopefully talk or write about from your own point of view. Once I've done so, instead of asking you to answer the questions, I'll ask you to think of some *more* questions to add to these; and Kate Burrige has kindly agreed to write them down.

So I just have three main questions:

1. What has been accomplished/learned (or not)? What are CoEDL's legacies? This is the 'COMPLETED' question, about what has been completed.
2. What do you find most exciting right now? What has sizzle? What irons are in the fire? This is the 'ONGOING' questions, about what's going on right now.
3. And finally: What do you want for the future? This is the 'POTENTIAL' question, asking what potentials there are, so:
 - a. Should there be a second CoEDL, and if so, how same or different?
 - b. Should there be something other than CoEDL2, and if so what?
 - c. How do we preserve CoEDL's legacies?

The three questions are easy to remember with this rubric: COMPLETED – ONGOING – POTENTIAL, kind of like the mixed Aspect/Tense/Mood system common in many languages.

In turn, we can consider the three questions in a range of domains, ranging from narrower to wider; and these we can subdivide into academic domains and domains beyond academia:

- **Academic**
 - Within your CoEDL Program or Thread
 - Your Program or Thread in relationship to other Programs/Threads (and here, you can ask the three questions about the whole woven-Programs-and-Threads model symbolised by the CoEDL logo)
 - Within your academic discipline – how your research, your program, and CoEDL as a whole has affected your discipline (and how it does and can continue to do so)

- Within and across the sciences, humanities, and arts: the effects of CoEDL on their content, but also their infrastructure and practice.
- **Beyond academic**
 - Populations and stakeholders who are the focus of and participants in your research (as individuals or as communities)
 - The field of education
 - The field of government
 - Commerce and technology

I hope that these and other questions, across these and other domains, can help as plans take shape for extending the accomplishments, practices and aspirations of CoEDL beyond its seven-year run time.”

APPENDIX: The questions raised by CoEDLers during the question period (as transcribed by Kate Burrige):

- What is it about CoEDL that has enabled it to accomplish so much?
- What could/should be done differently at the next CoEDL?
- What, from all this incredible work can be given back to the community (the question seemed to be alluding to the seagull metaphor that Mason Scholes talked about; i.e. CoEDLers mustn't be like seagulls — not fly in, squawk a lot and fly out!)
- What are the strengths that have been made, the valuable connections within Australia — are there things that have been missed?
- Can the network be retained even without CoEDL — how do you bring people together if there's no CoEDL2?
- How do we think of CoEDL matching up against rapid changes in lots of things?
- What has the effect been on a new generation of students? And how does what CoEDLers do relate to what is happening in other large centres overseas?