THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

BAL**EAP**

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EAP

Professional Issues Meeting Programme

Saturday 18th March 2017

Paterson's Land, Holyrood Campus
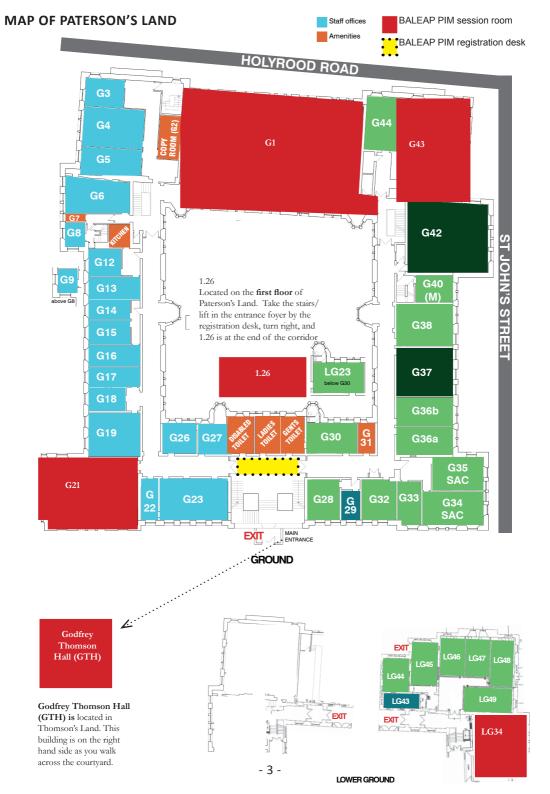
University of Edinburgh

A word of welcome

We would like to welcome you to English Language Education at the University of Edinburgh. We are delighted to be hosting a Professional Issues Meeting for the first time on the theme of the Effectiveness of EAP. Being able to demonstrate the importance of our work to our students, our colleagues in other departments, and the managers of our institutions is especially relevant at this time of considerable change in the UK and in HE. We hope you will feel that the day will be an opportunity to share our research, practice and, more informally, our thoughts about this topic. We also hope that you will be able to take some time to get to know our university and our beautiful city.

Michael Jenkins, Head of Languages, English Language Education.

MAP OF PATERSON'S LAND

Legend:
- Staff offices
- Amenities
- BALEAP PIM session room
- BALEAP PIM registration desk

HOLYROOD ROAD

ST JOHN'S STREET

G3
G4
G5
G6
G7
G8
COPY ROOM (G2)
G1
G44
G43
KITCHEN
G12
G9
above G8
G13
G14
G15
G16
G17
G18
G19
G42
G40 (M)
G38

1.26
Located on the **first floor** of Paterson's Land. Take the stairs/lift in the entrance foyer by the registration desk, turn right, and 1.26 is at the end of the corridor

1.26
LG23
below G30
G37
G36b
G36a

G26
G27
DISABLED TOILET
LADIES TOILET
GENTS TOILET
G30
G31
G21
G22
G23
G28
G29
G32
G33
G35 SAC
G34 SAC

EXIT
MAIN ENTRANCE

GROUND

Godfrey Thomson Hall (GTH)

Godfrey Thomson Hall (GTH) is located in Thomson's Land. This building is on the right hand side as you walk across the courtyard.

EXIT
EXIT

EXIT
LG45
LG46
LG47
LG48
LG44
LG49
LG43
LG34

- 3 -

LOWER GROUND

	Room: G43	Room: 1.26
0900-0930	Registration & Coffee	
0930-0945	Conference Opening & Welcome Room: G1	
0945-1030 Plenary	Opening Plenary: **Tony Lynch** (Professor Emeritus of Student Learning, University of Edinburgh)	
1040-1110 Session 1	**Still effective? An Evaluation of two ESAP Pre-sessional courses: English for Business Masters and English for the LLM** Jill Northcott / David Caulton	**Connectivity, complementarity or just complexity? Evaluating the position of writing development within one university** Alison Thomas / Jenna Mann
1110-1140	Coffee Room: G1	
1140-1210 Session 2	**Going Mainstream: Early Experiences of Embedding (Introducing?) EAP at Faculty Level** Paul Williamson	**Comparison of written work before and after a redesigned Pre-sessional Course** Karen Hurley
1220-1250 Session 3	**Evaluation of a Pre-sessional ESAP course for TESOL and Language Teaching Masters programmes: Perceptions and Performance** Cathy Benson / Meg Maclean / Cathy Holden	**Evaluating the impact of a presessional EAP programme: evidence from a purpose-built learner corpus** Steve Issitt
1250-1400	Lunch Room: G1	
1400-1430 Session 4	**Effectiveness of Peer-assisted Learning in Medical English during Medical Education** Neslihan Onder Ozdemir / Erdem Akbas	**An Investigation of the Nature and Effectiveness of In-sessional Academic English Programmes in British Universities** Saeede Haghi
1440-1510 Session 5	**Reflective writing for academic discussion: students' own perceptions** Brian Morrison	**The response by postgraduate Chinese students to academic discourse instruction on the EAP pre-Masters course at Edinburgh University.** Jill Haldane
1510-1530	Coffee Room: G1	
1530-1615 Plenary	Closing Plenary: **Lesley Gourlay** (Reader in Education and Technology, UCl Institute of Education)	

Room: G21	Room: GTH	Room: LG34
Registration & Coffee		
Conference Opening & Welcome Room: G1		
Opening Plenary: Questions of Evaluation Room: G1		
Evaluating student projects in supporting transitions to postgraduate study Siriol Lewis / Rachel Elmslie	**Evaluating a pre-sessional reading test using stimulated recall interviews** Helen Donaghue / Lyndon Taylor	**The contribution of pre-sessional and in-sessional courses in teaching critical thinking to masters' students** Andrew Drybrough
Coffee Room: G1		
Academic socialisation and bespoke EAP courses: a qualitative study into NNS MA Media and Communication students' self-evaluation of written-work and reaction to tutor feedback Peter Matthews	**Helping students understand lectures; does what we do match their needs?** Jayn Kilbon	**Is group work working? Ex-Pre-sessional student reflections on group work** Laura Pibworth-Dolinski
Investigating Pre-sessional Students' Perceptions and Learning Transfer of EAP Study Skills Sandra Huang/Josephine Kingsford	**Assessing academic oral presentations on EAP and academic courses** **(40 minute workshop, 12.20 – 13.00)** Louise Palmour	
Lunch Room: G1		
Motivation, self-regulation, and EAP possible selves through e-portfolios Flor-de-lis González-Mujico	**Evaluation without judgement? Exploring alternative approaches to EAP lesson observation** David Jay	
Tales of the Unexpected -Tracking the effectiveness of an Undergraduate pre-sessional programme & the student's subsequent experience of their transition and acculturation into university Clare Poulson	**Life in the EAP Lane** Tracie Mackenzie Sarti / Iona Dawson	
Coffee Room: G1		
Closing Plenary: Evaluating EAP: Texts, the Digital and Sociomaterial Practice Room: G1		

Questions of Evaluation

Tony Lynch (University of Edinburgh)

This opening talk is intended to set the context for the day's sessions, by outlining the range of basic options and decisions in EAP evaluation: what, who, how, when/how often, and why. I will illustrate these from my experience of evaluating different aspects (process, product and outcome) of pre- and in-session courses at the University of Edinburgh. My starting point will be perhaps the trickiest evaluation question an EAP teacher can be asked, which was first put to me in 1984. By the time I retired, thirty years later, I had come up with an answer - which is actually another question.

Biodata

Tony Lynch taught EAP at Edinburgh from 1980 to 2014. His research focused mainly on L2 listening comprehension and classroom interaction, and he was awarded a personal chair in 2011.

Evaluating EAP: Texts, the Digital and Sociomaterial Practice

Lesley Gourlay (UCL Institute of Education, London)

This talk will begin by discussing the socially-situated and fundamentally unstable nature of academic writing, drawing on New Literacy Studies to question the notion of a clear and easily identifiable generic set of 'successful' features of student texts. It will go on to examine the complex interplays between print literacies, the digital, the notion of the 'author', information literacies and the emergent student text. Drawing on sociomaterial perspectives (e.g. Fenwick, Edwards & Sawchuck 2011, Gourlay 2015) it will conclude by proposing an ethnographically-oriented approach to evaluation which attends to the enactment of day-to-day textual practices within the disciplinary context, as opposed to a predominant focus on the features of student texts.

References

Fenwick, T., Edwards, R. and Sawchuck, P. 2011. Emerging Approaches to Educational Research: Tracing the Sociomaterial. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Gourlay, L. 2015. Posthuman texts: nonhuman actors, mediators and the digital university. Social Semiotics 25(4), 484-500.

Biodata

Lesley Gourlay is a Reader in Education and Technology at UCL Institute of Education. Her research interests are in textual practices in digital Higher Education, drawing on sociomaterial theoretical perspectives.

Still effective? An Evaluation of two ESAP Pre-sessional courses: English for Business Masters and English for the LLM.

Jill Northcott and David Caulton (University of Edinburgh)

ELLM (English for the LLM) and EBM (English for Business Masters) were originally developed more than a decade ago (see, for example, Northcott 2001 and 2006). Since their inception, many changes have occurred. These have been both external, such as the expansion in pre-sessional provision in UK universities generally, and internal, namely our own English language centre's series of different incarnations in response to the growing pressures of internationalization within this university. Various changes to the materials have been implemented since then but we are now embarking upon a larger evaluation project, with a focus on the contribution of the courses to students' academic progress and success.

This presentation relates to work in progress which involves tracking ELLM and EBM students on their PGT programmes of study. We will focus on the students' evaluation of these two courses at the end of the first semester of study including their perceptions of the value of their pre-sessional experience in addressing the challenges facing them in their postgraduate studies, considering their suggestions for improvements to the pre-sessional programme. Questions will be raised about the feasibility, necessity and desirability of responding to these suggestions with radical changes to the current courses.

References

Northcott, J. 2006. "Law and language or language and law?". In Bartol, D. , Duszak, A., Izdebski, H. and Pierrel, J. Langue, Droit, Société. [Cahiers du DNPS]. Nancy-Université.

Northcott, J. 2001. "Towards an ethnography of the MBA classroom – a consideration of the role of interactive lecturing within the context of one MBA programme." English for Specific Purposes 2: 15 -37.

Biodata

Jill Northcott is Head of ESP at ELE. Her research and publication interests include Legal English and ethnographic exploration of academic learning contexts for teacher development and ESAP course design.   Jill.Northcott@ed.ac.uk

David Caulton is Deputy Section Head of ESP at ELE. His interests include Business English and ESAP course design and materials development in both F2F and online learning. David.Caulton@ed.ac.uk

Connectivity, complementarity or just complexity? Evaluating the position of writing development within one university

Alison Thomas and Jenna Mann (University of Edinburgh)

As EAP teachers we may well collaborate with students, academics, university administrators and departments in other countries, but to what extent do we collaborate with other writing support/development providers within the university? Do we even know where and what other support exists within the institution, what form that support takes, and are we aware of the institutional policy decisions that lie behind these forms of support? Most importantly, how do our students find, access and use the support on offer when they feel they need it?

In this talk, as two 'writing teachers' (an EAP practitioner and an academic developer) from different areas of the university, we come out of our respective 'silos' to present our ongoing mapping exercise exploring the plethora of writing resources available to students across the University of Edinburgh. We ask where writing development sits within our university, and how the complexity of providing viable support may be affecting the student experience. Ultimately, we hope to empower our students to take effective steps towards developing their academic writing at a time and place that is meaningful to them.

We hope that the exploration of some of the alternative writing development provision resonates with our audience, and we are interested to hear about your experiences of reconciling policy and practice.

Biodata

Alison Thomas has taught international students in further and higher education institutes across the world for the past 26 years. She now teaches EAP at the University of Edinburgh, where her main interest is in writing development. She is currently a part-time doctoral student. Alison.Thomas@ed.ac.uk

Dr Jenna Mann began teaching in the School of Biological Sciences, University of Edinburgh whilst completing her PhD in Biology. She is now an Academic Developer for the Institute for Academic Development, working with taught students (UG and PGT) and staff. Jenna.Mann@ed.ac.uk

Evaluating student projects in supporting transitions to postgraduate study

Siriol Lewis and Rachel Elmslie (University of Glasgow)

This presentation describes an innovative project that took place on a University of Glasgow pre-sessional course from April to June 2016. The unassessed project's original objective was to foster student autonomy, develop team skills and time management. A further aim was to initiate engagement with both the University and local communities. Students worked in groups to undertake simple research into an aspect of the University's 10-year campus redevelopment plans. We used flipped classrooms to support background reading and to introduce basic research methods and ethics. Students then constructed questionnaires to interview members of the public, tutors and peers about their views on the University's plans, and obtained further information by interviewing campus development team professionals. They presented their findings in poster presentations. The projects initiated a marked increase in student motivation, identification with course aims, and confidence. Occupying the interviewer role with campus planners and utilising their own research instruments resulted in students demonstrating a greater sense of engagement and identification with the role of postgraduate student researchers. Using Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2009) we evaluate the project from our insider perspective as tutors. We reflect on the emergence in students of an "ideal self", particularly through their shift in self-perception from language learner to a new academic identity as a postgraduate student researcher.

Biodata

Siriol Lewis and Rachel Elmslie teach and design pre-sessional and in-sessional courses in English for Academic Study at the University of Glasgow.

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Evaluating a pre-sessional reading test using stimulated recall interviews

Helen Donaghue and Lyndon Taylor (Sheffield Hallam University)

EAP course providers often write and administer tests to ascertain student learning and success. These tests can inform important decisions such as student progression to a desired course. Given their influence, it is surprising that although EAP course providers invest considerable time in evaluating classroom practice and material, evaluation of tests is often neglected. In this presentation we will argue that EAP tests should be rigorously and comprehensively evaluated if we are to have confidence that the scores

they generate accurately represent students' language abilities. We also suggest that supplementing conventional statistical item analysis with post-test stimulated recall student interviews provides not only a more comprehensive evaluation of the test but also useful insight into students' cognitive processes, language abilities and test taking strategies which in turn can inform teaching.

This presentation will report on a small-scale study in which we asked 20 students to talk us through the process of answering questions in a pre-sessional reading test: a verbal reporting protocol. Our aim was to find out how students did specific test tasks to see if there was alignment between their cognitive processes and those we (the test writers) wanted to elicit/test. This process helped us assess not only the effectiveness of our test items but also our teaching of EAP reading.

The presentation will use empirical data extracts to show how student interviews enabled us to identify test flaws, improve our test, evaluate our teaching and inform changes to teaching practice.

Biodata

Helen Donaghue is a senior lecturer in English language teaching. She teaches on pre-sessional and in-sessional courses at undergraduate and post graduate levels. Her research interests include language testing and L2 reading. h.donaghue@shu.ac.uk

Lyndon Taylor is a senior lecturer in English language teaching. He leads the long pre-sessional course at Sheffield Hallam. His research interests include cognitive perspectives on language testing in addition to corpus linguistics. lyndon.taylor@shu.ac.uk

Session 1 (10.40 – 11.10)   *Room: LG34*

The contribution of pre-sessional and in-sessional courses in teaching critical thinking to masters' students

Andrew Drybrough (University of Edinburgh)

This presentation reports on the effectiveness of pre-sessional and in-sessional EAP courses in nurturing critical thinking skills among a group of East Asian masters' students. It presents the results of an in-depth analysis of interview and focus group transcriptions where participants commented on the effectiveness of pre-sessional and in-sessional courses towards developing their critical thinking and academic writing skills.

The development of critical thinking skills is considered to be an essential feature of higher education throughout the UK (Barnett, 1997) and is embedded in various national qualification frameworks (QCF, 2008; SCQF, 2012), especially at a PGT Masters level and above. With increasing enrolment of post-graduate international students studying at UK universities (Universities UK, 2016), often from undergraduate

educational backgrounds where critical thinking is not stressed and with minimum English language requirements, there is often a need not only to support their linguistic requirements but also nurture them in the development of their critical thinking skills. This session reports back on students' impression of the role of pre-sessional and in-sessional EAP courses in helping them do this.

The role of EAP courses in developing critical thinking was generally perceived to be positive. However, there was possibly an overdependence on the aptitude of individual tutors in this process. The role of EAP courses should also be placed within a wider context of a learning environment that should foreground the responsibility of the subject specialist in the development of students' critical thinking. The washback of assessment criteria and the responsibility of students to engage critically in their subject and the academic environment they find themselves in are also other factors that could affect the development of critical thinking among students.

References

Barnett, R., 1997. Higher Education: A critical business. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Qualification and Credit Framework, 2008. Regulatory Arrangement for the Qualification and Credit Framework [pdf] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371294/2008-08-15-regulatory-arrangements-qcf-august08.pdf> [Accessed 30 November 2016]

Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, 2012. SCQF Level Descriptors [pdf] Available at: < http://scqf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/SCQF-Revised-Level-Descriptors-Aug-2012-FINAL-web-version1.pdf> [Accessed 30 November 2016]

Universities UK, 2016. International Higher Education in Facts and Figures [pdf] Available at: <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/International/Pages/international-facts-and-figures-2016.aspx> [Accessed 30 November 2016]

Biodata

I am studying a PhD on critical thinking and academic writing at the University of Edinburgh. I also have experience teaching ESOL, including pre-sessional and in-sessional EAP courses at university. Andrew.Drybrough@ed.ac.uk

Going Mainstream: Early Experiences of Embedding (Introducing?) EAP at Faculty Level

Paul Williamson (University of Lincoln)

At the beginning of 2016, the University of Lincoln's School of Film and Media advertised for a Lecturer in "Language, Communication, and Academic Skills".

It was an entirely new post, but it became clear quite early on that it was a role that would, for the most part, require a huge degree of self-mapping; who was I teaching? What was I teaching? In what ways could I effect change (if that, indeed, was a part of my role)? How could I measure its effectiveness?

This paper will discuss the ways in which we can potentially quantify effectiveness, for example, through anonymised student feedback or, at an absolutely fundamental level, through improvement in student grades. But is that enough as a barometer of effectiveness? Am I embedding or introducing EAP to the faculty? Having worked for 10 years at institutions in English Language Units, Language Centres, and Centres for English Language where there seemed to be an almost perpetual struggle to get the EAP 'voice' heard at faculty level, would this experience be any different? If not a direct answer to the aforementioned questions, this is an attempt to at least negotiate a response to my experience so far of (to paraphrase Clare Furneaux) EAP going mainstream, the early challenges I have faced, and the initial outcomes that perhaps tentatively point to EAP being an effective and appreciated tool at faculty level.

Biodata

I am a Lecturer in Language, Communication, and Academic Skills at the University of Lincoln, based within the Lincoln School of Film and Media. pwilliamson@lincoln.ac.uk

Comparison of written work before and after a redesigned Pre-sessional Course

Karen Hurley (Kingston University)

In 2014 we made changes to our Pre-sessional Course with the aim of more explicitly building in the need for students to transfer and apply knowledge and skills from classes to project tasks. The rationale for this was largely that though students clearly make progress on our courses, it is less clear how far they transfer these freshly developed skills and language to their main course studies. At the same time we re-addressed our grading criteria.

While we have maintained good quality assurance practices within years, we see the need for a more rigorous direct comparison of work created before and after the

change. We expect the results of this analysis to give us insights into the effectiveness of our course, and the effect of the changes we have made.

Biodata

Pre-sessional Course Director since 2011, EAP Lecturer since 2007, and ELT teacher before that from my mid 30s. k.hurley@kingston.ac.uk

Session 2 (11.40 – 12.10)   *Room: G21*

Academic socialisation and bespoke EAP courses: a qualitative study into NNS MA Media and Communication students' self-evaluation of written-work and reaction to tutor feedback

Peter Matthews (University of Leeds)

This talk reports the findings of a small-scale qualitative study of NNS international students currently enrolled on Master's programmes in the School of Media and Communication at the University of Leeds. Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with six students that had either studied on the summer content-based pre-sessional for Communication and Society or on a bespoke Media and Communication in-sessional programme. In the first interviews students were asked to discuss and evaluate their assignments at or near the point of submission. The follow-up interview investigated the students' reactions to tutor feedback for the same assignments.

The aim of the study is to develop greater understanding of the academic socialisation of the sample. The study also aims to investigate how effectively the in-sessional course and pre-sessional programme have assisted in this process. Guiding questions for this talk are: how do the students' evaluations of their work accord with those of their tutors? How do students react to tutor feedback? Are there any implications for pre-sessional and in-sessional EAP programmes?

Biodata

Peter Matthews has been a Teaching Fellow at the University of Leeds Language Centre for eight years. He is programme leader for both a year-round and a summer pre-sessional programme. p.r.matthews@leeds.ac.uk

Session 2 (11.40-12.10)   *Room: GTH*

Helping students understand lectures; does what we do match their needs?

Jayn Kilbon (University of Leicester)

Academic listening is an under-researched area (Lynch 2011) yet if students cannot understand their academic lectures they may be at a disadvantage throughout their post-graduate studies. Much of the research which has been carried out either focuses

on the cognitive processes used by listeners to process academic texts (e.g. Field 2009) or investigates the effects lecture discourse features have on comprehension (e.g. Crawford Camiciottoli 2004). However, research which only looks at one variable within a lecture cannot 'adequately describe the complex or multidimensional nature of communication in lecture (or human) discourse' (Carkin 2005: 90).

This presentation will report some of the initial findings which have emerged from a longitudinal case study investigating post-graduate L2 students', EAP tutors' and academic lecturers' perceptions of the factors which affect lecture comprehension. The talk will first identify issues which EAP tutors teaching on a summer pre-sessional felt were likely to influence students' understanding of academic lectures, and will outline the main listening and lecture comprehension tasks in the pre-sessional course syllabus. Elements of complexity theory (Cilliers 2002) will then be used to explore the interacting elements which L2 students perceived as affecting their comprehension. Finally, there will be discussion of EAP classroom activities which may help L2 students improve their lecture comprehension.

References

Carkin, S. (2005) English for Academic Purposes. in Hinkel, E., (ed.) Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning,New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. pp. 85 - 98.

Cilliers, P. (2002) Complexity and Postmodernism : Understanding Complex Systems (1), London, US: Routledge.

Crawford Camiciottoli, B. (2004) Interactive discourse structuring in L2 guest lectures: some insights from a comparative corpus-based study. Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 3(1), pp. 39-54.

Field, J. (2009) The cognitive validity of the lecture-based question in the IELTS listening paper. in P. Thompson (Ed.), (ed.) IELTS Research Reports, London: British Council. pp. 17-66.

Lynch, T. (2011) Academic listening in the 21st century: Reviewing a decade of research. Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 10(2), pp. 79-88.

Biodata

Jayn is an EAP tutor in the English Language Teaching Unit at the University of Leicester and is also a doctoral candidate investigating the factors which L2 students, EAP tutors and lecturers think affect academic lecture comprehension. jk300@leicester.ac.uk

Is group work working? Ex-Pre-sessional student reflections on group work

Laura Pibworth-Dolinski (University of Coventry Services Ltd.)

It is expected that our graduates will be "confident citizens who can demonstrate a range of individual, collaborative, and professional skills and attributes" (CU Corporate Strategy 2021). However, "working collaboratively" through assessed group work projects has been identified as a continuing issue for our former pre-sessional students on their academic courses. We wanted to understand more about the challenges our students face in this area and whether our pre-sessional course effectively prepares students for group work, based on student reflections on their experience.

The participants for this small-scale research project are former pre-sessional English students who have successfully progressed on to academic courses in all four faculties at Coventry University. In-depth individual interviews were conducted approximately midway through the first semester of their course to give students the opportunity to settle in to their new courses and complete their first assessments. A qualitative approach has been adopted for data collection to allow us to capture a range of student experiences and reflections, and emerging themes have been identified. Initial data analysis suggests that students have found group work challenging and frustrating at times, issues faced by students include persuading others of their opinion and gaining consensus, as well as issues surrounding time management and working cohesively as a group.

References

Coventry University (2016) Corporate Strategy 2021: Creating Better Futures [online] available from < http://creatingbetterfutures.coventry.ac.uk/> [Last accessed 30 November 2016]

Biodata

Laura Pibworth-Dolinski is a Pre-sessional English Course Leader with Coventry University Services Ltd. Her research interests include technology-enhanced language learning and the EAP student experience.   laura.pibworth@coventry.ac.uk

Evaluation of a Pre-sessional ESAP Course for TESOL and Language Teaching Masters programmes: Perceptions and Performance

Cathy Benson, Cathy Holden, and Meg Maclean (University of Edinburgh)

Our ESAP pre-sessional course, English for Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics has been running for over 20 years, and student numbers have grown exponentially as the programmes into which they feed have expanded. Over years, student satisfaction has been uniformly high according to end-of-course evaluations; however, we are never sure to what extent this perception of the usefulness of the course persists as students experience the rigours of their Masters programmes. Small-scale tracking projects have been carried out over two years using questionnaires and focus groups, and for this year we have expanded the project to include a more detailed self-assessment of improvement during the course, based on students' responses to the initial (rather informal) needs analysis.

Our aim in conducting the research is to ascertain how useful our course is perceived to be by students at various stages of their programme, and to receive their suggestions as to ways in which we could prepare them more effectively. Our aim in reporting it here is to share the process we went through, in case it may be helpful to colleagues evaluating similar programmes.

The presentation will provide an introductory outline of the course, and describe the procedures we followed, including the selection of individual students for more in-depth follow-up. We will report on the findings from questionnaires, and from email and face-to-face interviews, as well as briefly describing quantitative data related to success in students' first assessed assignment. Finally we will admit to what we perceive as the shortcomings of the research, and add some suggestions for future enhancements to our evaluation procedure.

Biodata

Cathy Benson teaches in-sessional and pre-sessional EAP courses at English Language Education, as well as courses in Lecturing in English; she also supervises post-graduate students in the School of Education. Cathy.Benson@ed.ac.uk

Cathy Holden teaches pre- and in-sessional EAP, and is also involved in in-service teacher education. She has published coursebooks for the teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language. Cathy.Holden@ed.ac.uk

Meg Maclean is a Teaching Fellow in Teacher Education with particular interest in pre-service teacher education. She also teaches pre-and in-sessional EAP. Meg.Maclaen@ed.ac.uk

Evaluating the impact of a pre-sessional EAP programme: evidence from a purpose-built learner corpus

Steve Issitt (University of Birmingham)

This paper aims to examine a range of measurable improvements detectable in the written academic English of students on short, intensive English for Academic Purposes programmes at a British university. It achieves this by the compilation of a purpose-built learner corpus of student essays (EAPCORP) produced at the beginning and ends of their programmes of study and the application of an automatic text tagger to the corpus. This paper firstly outlines the multidimensional approach to language analysis listing the large range of linguistic categories presented by Biber (1988) and then describes the adaptation and application of these features in the Multidimensional Analysis Tagger or MAT (Nini, 2014). It then presents the findings of a MAT analysis of EAPCORP together with (uncorrected) examples from the corpus in terms of both individual and dimensional changes together with discussion of possible implications for syllabus design and assessment. There is also consideration of the implications of the research for the status and professionalism of English language teachers and the significance for external validation organisations such as the British Council. The study suggests that all EAP teachers who work in universities should be research informed and keep abreast of recent research in their field, attend and present at conferences and if possible, carry out investigations themselves into the efficacy of their teaching and course programmes.

Biodata

Steve Issitt works at the University of Birmingham where he is a Coordinator of the pre-sessional EAP programme. He has a special interest in second language writing development. S.Issitt@bham.ac.uk

Investigating Pre-sessional Students' Perceptions and Learning Transfer of EAP Study Skills

Sandra Huang (University of Liverpool) and Josephine Kingsford (University of Essex)

Although it is generally understood that the pre-sessional programme provides an English language uplift, the crucial role of reading and writing skills taught on the programme is often overlooked in students' academic achievements in their future academic departments. Therefore, providing students with broadly transferrable reading and writing skills for the more discipline-specific tasks in their receiving departments should be a major element of the pre-sessional programme.

This study examines students' perceptions of task similarity between study skills tasks on an EAP pre-sessional programme and their actual academic assignments. It also evaluates the effectiveness of the newly-designed academic reading-to-write teaching materials which aimed at stimulating EAP learning transfer, in particular, preparing postgraduate students for their departmental academic assignment writing.

Data were gathered from 22 postgraduate students who had previously completed a pre-sessional course of varied lengths, i.e. 25 weeks, 15 weeks and 10 weeks respectively, and were studying MA courses in Business and Management, TESOL, Sociology and Maths related subjects. The students were invited to focus group meetings to share their learning experience on the pre-sessional programme and to inform if any study skills they had learned on the pre-sessional were applicable for their assignment writing. Findings suggest that the student had problems transferring and applying crucial academic skills to all stages of their subject assignment process. The over-riding concern expressed by the students was coping with the amount of required reading and the need to develop effective reading skills.

Biodata

Both Jo and Sandra are experienced EAP practitioners and materials writers who have taught on the pre-sessional and in-sessional programmes and been Course Directors of the two programmes at Essex University.

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Assessing academic oral presentations on EAP and academic courses

Louise Palmour (University of Southampton)

Academic and EAP staff requirements and expectations pertaining to oral assessments of students at UK universities have not been described with the level of specificity that has been achieved with written tasks. One task type which would benefit from further exploration is the academic oral presentation (AOP). Although in AOPs students are required to display multimodal communicative competence, the session's main focus is on language use.

This discussion and task-based workshop explores EAP tutors' and other stakeholders' experiences and practices concerning the assessment of AOPs. The session will use stimuli such as samples of marking criteria, and preliminary data obtained from academic staff commenting on their own practices to provoke discussion among participants. In doing so we will consider the effectiveness of approaches to AOP assessment by reflecting on the following questions:

How do AOP marking criteria on EAP courses and academic courses compare?

How do EAP tutors and academic staff approach the assessment of AOPs?

How is EAP assessment preparing (international) students for AOP assessment in the academic realm?

The resultant discussion will inform the direction of a study which sheds new light on AOP assessment practices on academic courses, and evaluates how these practices are reflected in EAP assessment and instruction at Anglophone institutions.

Biodata

Louise Palmour is currently undertaking an ESRC funded PhD at the University of Southampton to investigate academic oral presentation assessment practices of EAP tutors and academic staff in UK universities.   L.Palmour@soton.ac.uk

Effectiveness of Peer-assisted Learning in Medical English during Medical Education

Neslihan Onder Ozdemir (University of Sheffield) and Erdem Akbas (Erciyes University)

In this interdisciplinary research, we elucidated how medical students' collaborative (rather than competitive) nature is constructed across time and space, with a focus on the effectiveness of peer-assisted learning, through revealing the value and usefulness of their mutual experience, accompanied by successful assignment results in the Medical English course, an elective course in the Medical School, chosen by 248 medical students in 2016. Of these, 82 volunteered to take an active role in Medical English learning: 8 first-year undergraduate medical students acted as medical teachers (Harden and Laidlaw, 2012), under the supervision of an ESP practitioner. These 8 students helped one another to learn, and learned themselves, by teaching the most frequent target medical words in English, with the collocations they recalled which tended to be be used in content courses in medicine (e.g., invasive treatment/ surgery, contaminated blood, parasite virulence). 74 medical students volunteered to report their reflections as feedback and they were given a survey that consisted of twelve closed and eight open-ended questions. In addition to these roles actively taken by 82 medical students, 166 medical students participated in the course given by their classmates through taking notes to share with each other. The findings indicated how collaboration could empower an ESP classroom. It is also notable that such collaborative learning suggested various benefits both for ESP/EAP practitioners and for medical students in developing discipline-specific identities (Davison, 2006). Given that one of the challenges facing ESP/EAP practitioners is specialised words (see Nation, 2001), the findings provided valuable insights into the potential of the learning outcomes to alleviate the problems related to ESP/EAP practitioners' paucity of content knowledge and discipline specific words while teaching medical discourse (Hyland, 2004; Strevens, 1977). The written feedback showed the extent to which peer-assisted learning fostered medical students' motivation and autonomy, and encouraged collaboration in medical education.

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Biodata

Neslihan Onder Ozdemir took her postgraduate degree in ESP in the UK. Her primary research interests and publications are on ESP/EAP, medical education, critical needs analysis, academic writing and testing. nonderozdemir1@sheffield.ac.uk Erdem Akbas holds his PhD from the University of York and has presented his research extensively at various reputable international conferences and published articles in national and international journals and books. erdemakbas@erciyes.edu.tr

Session 4 (14.00 – 14.30)   Room: 1.26

An Investigation of the Nature and Effectiveness of In-sessional Academic English Programmes in British Universities

Saeede Haghi (University of Warwick)

The globalization of education has resulted in the rapid growth of the number of English- and non-English-speaking students with diverse linguistic backgrounds studying in English-medium universities. Such change in higher education then has significantly increased the demand for mechanisms required to address these students' academic language needs (Read, 2008). Since pre-entry English language proficiency tests, for a number of reasons, have been considered to be inadequate sources of providing information regarding the specific academic needs of students (see Fox, 2005), in recent years some universities began to introduce other means of assessing these specific needs. Despite the common practice of post-enrolment assessment in some institutions and the research on the suitability of implementing this approach in others, British universities still seem to utilize pre-entry English language test results as the predominant means of diagnosing the academic language needs of incoming students. The use of such tests has put universities at risk of failing to properly address specific academic needs (McDowell & Merrylees, 1998; Coley, 1999). This research, therefore, investigates the nature and efficacy of the academic English in-sessional provision and mechanisms employed to determine needs for and access to such programmes across British universities. To this end, a mixed methods design has been employed through which different sources of information (i.e. university websites, an online survey and interviews) have been consulted to investigate the nature of such mechanisms and their guiding principles as well as the perceptions of four groups of stakeholders (i.e. students, university lecturers and in-sessional staff (i.e. tutors and managers) on the effectiveness of such in-sessional provision.

Biodata

Saeede is currently pursuing a PhD and is an EAP tutor at the University of Warwick. Her research interests involve EAP programme evaluation, EAP language tests, needs assessment, formative assessment. S.S.Haghi@warwick.ac.uk

Motivation, self-regulation, and EAP possible selves through e-portfolios

Flordelis González-Mujico (University of the Basque Country)

Many EAP students tend to connote English more fundamentally as an indispensable asset or tool for anyone aspiring toward upward and outward mobility (Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2013). Interestingly, Paolo Freire (1921-1997) believed that integration with one's context, as distinguished from adaptation, is a distinctively human activity. Thus, integration results from the capacity to adapt oneself to reality plus the critical capacity to make choices and to transform that reality. When an individual loses the ability to make choices and is subjected to the choices of others, to the extent that their decisions are no longer their own because they result from external prescriptions, they are no longer integrated, but have rather adapted (Freire, 1974:4). However, learner autonomy requires that instruction is flexible enough to enable students to study based on their individual needs (Little, 1995). Moreover, it is important to view self-construction as a personal project, because social integration and the social order require individuals to belong to a given group to decide who they are and where they belong (Oyserman and Markus, 1998). In response e-portfolio online learner development interventions can foster self-regulation, motivation, and greater L2 acquisition gains if designed and sustained through self-efficacy beliefs, future self-guides and reactive autonomy. The combination of these mental operations together with social and affective strategies, such as learner's attitudes towards the target language as an object of learning, allows the learner to hold responsibility for the determination of the objectives, to regulate the procedures of acquisition, and to evaluate what has been acquired to serve their own agendas.

Biodata

Flor-de-lis holds an MA in Applied Linguistics/TESOL, a BA in Modern Languages from Birkbeck College, University of London, and is currently a PhD student at the University of the Basque Country. flordlgonzalez@yahoo.es

Evaluation without judgement? Exploring alternative approaches to EAP lesson observation

David Jay (Anglia Ruskin University)

Significant attention is currently paid to the evaluation of EAP course delivery through feedback from students and lecturers (e.g. Salter-Dvorak, 2016) and the monitoring of student production (e.g. Crosthwaite, 2016). This presentation, however, focuses on lesson observation as an evaluation tool, in the light of an EAP tutor mentoring project within the Language Services Unit at Anglia Ruskin University.

The established format for evaluative lesson observations often measures teacher performance against an existing set of criteria. Many practitioners will be familiar with this from their training in communicative language teaching on courses such as CELTA and DELTA; in EAP contexts, the TEAP competency framework (BALEAP, 2008) provides an invaluable benchmark for tutor performance. The challenge for EAP teaching reviewers and mentors is how to apply these criteria in evaluative observations without imposing an 'outsider's judgement' (Malderez and Bodoczky, 1999: 121), which could potentially have negative effects on the professional development of the observee.

This presentation will first consider the effectiveness of lesson observation as an evaluation tool for EAP course delivery. It will then report on the development of a criterion-based format which could give greater autonomy to observees, whilst still allowing the institution to evaluate their performance.

In the last phase of the presentation, there will be time for questions and further discussion.

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Biodata

I am an EAP tutor on pre- and in-sessional courses at undergraduate, Master's and PhD levels at Anglia Ruskin University. I am also a qualified teacher trainer. david.jay@anglia.ac.uk

Reflective writing for academic discussion: students' own perceptions

Brian Morrison (The University of Glasgow)

A new credit-bearing course for international PG students at the University of Glasgow has been developed for the Adam Smith Business School by the English for Academic Study unit. The principle aim of the course is to develop non-native English speaker students' seminar skills in order to allow those students to more confidently and effectively discuss business-related academic concepts. Experiential learning theory informed the design of this course. Students are supported, and student learning driven, through weekly cycles of out-of-class preparation, in-class discussion, and out-of-class reflective writing. While reflection provides opportunities for correcting 'distortions in … beliefs and errors in problem-solving' (Mezirow, 1990:1), it may have negative consequences when done in isolation, if reflection is overly critical (Dadds, 1993) or myths are allowed to develop (Brookfield, 1995). To counter these potential adverse effects, student-teacher reflective dialogues are used. These offer individualised guidance and facilitate student-led plans for improvement and development.

As part of the course feedback, students were asked to fill in a short questionnaire about their perceptions of reflective writing, how these changed over the initial five weeks of the course, and their perceived progress on the course. This presentation will provide a brief overview of the course structure, an indication of how reflective writing was integral to the course, and how the students evaluated their progress and the usefulness of reflective writing for developing academic discussion.

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Biodata

Brian R. Morrison, co-author of The Autonomy Approach, teaches English for Academic Purposes at the University of Glasgow. His professional interest is in supporting learners with their out-of-class learning. Brian.morrison@glasgow.ac.uk

The response by postgraduate Chinese students to academic discourse instruction on the EAP pre-Masters course at Edinburgh University.

Jill Haldane (University of Edinburgh)

Well-formed writing is essential for academic success (Wolfe, 2011), and cohesion and coherence are characteristic descriptors of academic writing. As well as developing macro-scale logical organisation, academic writers use micro-scale cohesive devices of language form to which readers can cohere. At postgraduate level, complex text requires students to write clearly and coherently (Hyland, 2013). Yet, research indicates that students find coherence and connecting complex ideas difficult to achieve (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Cooley & Lowkowicz, 1995; Lorenz, 1999), while subject lecturers and supervisors find coherence hard to assess (Cotton and Wilson, 2011).

In replication of Basturkmen and van Randow's (2014) research on coherence in postgraduate academic writing in New Zealand, a qualitative study of pre-sessional Chinese students on a postgraduate pathway at Edinburgh University in 2016 has examined two aspects of coherence in academic writing: organisation and argumentation. Organisation in discursive text is signalled with meta-discourse, while concession in argumentation is expressed using rhetoric devices with or without signalling language.

The purpose of the study is to observe, pre- and post-academic discourse instruction, the extent that discourse markers are employed by Chinese postgraduate pre-masters students to guide the reader more or less effectively through a line of reasoning. It appears that writing instruction and focussed attention-raising about academic discourse has played a role in developing awareness of coherence and cohesion in students. However, concurrent with Basturkmen and van Randow (2014), there is shown to be a discrepancy between low-grade and high-grade writers.

Biodata

Jill Haldane (MA, Msc, PGDip Mus. Mngmt) is an EAP tutor and linguist from the University of Edinburgh. Jill´s research interest is discourse analysis, specifically the context of discourse for learning and teaching.

Tales of the Unexpected -Tracking the effectiveness of an Undergraduate pre-sessional programme & the student's subsequent experience of their transition and acculturation into university.

Clare Poulson (University of Leeds)

*A*ccording to Dooey (2010) 'intercultural integration is imperative if students are to engage in university'. This session will explore the outcomes of tracking research, which aimed to discover if taking a pre-sessional course can facilitate the acculturation and transition of international, undergraduate students into UK Higher Education

The University of Leeds Language Centre is one of the few in the UK to offer a dedicated undergraduate pre-sessional course. As part of the end of course student feedback we use the seven core NSS linked questions to evaluate student perceptions of its effectiveness. However, there are limitations to this feedback including: the design of the questionnaire, its timing and the lack of student awareness of the requirements of UK undergraduate study.

Therefore, we undertook our own longitudinal, qualitative tracking research on a sample of students after they had left our pre-sessional, interviewing the students over the subsequent academic year. Findings from our research will be presented, which demonstrate how the pre-sessional course helps to familiarise students with academic culture and study at Leeds University, preparing them for their future degree.

The presentation will also examine how undertaking this tracking study developed into a wider, and potentially more insightful research area, specifically related to the transition and acculturation of international undergraduate students into UK universities. Some of the main findings will be presented, which raise some pertinent questions for our own pre-sessional course, about the experience of international undergraduate students, as well as the wider implications for universities & their internationalisation strategies.

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Session 5 (14.40 – 15.10)   *Room: GTH*

Life in the EAP Lane

Tracie MacKenzie Sarti and Iona Dawson (Franklin University, Switzerland)

This presentation will explore students' perceptions of the effectiveness of in-sessional undergraduate EAP courses in a small private EMI university in Switzerland. We will focus particularly on student views of the value and applicability of the two-level EAP programme to their performance in content courses. We will also address the question of whether student satisfaction varies according to starting level or as they gain progressively more academic experience. In addition, we will briefly consider to what extent student responses may be influenced by their grades in content courses taken concurrently or subsequently to their EAP courses. Where possible, we will reflect on the influence of non-EAP student and faculty comments on student perceptions and feedback.

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