Shifting from an EAP Traditional approach to an Academic Literacies approach:

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Voices:
EAP Professionals in Ireland

Four Meetings
  Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway

40+ professionals from various public and private institutes

Collaborative mind-mapping

Common Patterns: attitudes and feelings

EAP in Ireland Organisation

Collaboration: EAP Professionals
Mind-mapping

40 EAP Professionals: Feelings & Attitudes

'**What** is EAP? '

'No **training** just expected to teach , produce curriculum and assessment. '

'**All students** need academic language and skills development. '

What is EAP ?

"…not only a teaching approach. It is also a branch of applied linguistics consisting of a significant body of research into **effective teaching and assessment** approaches, methods of analysis of the academic language **needs of students**, analysis of the **linguistic and discoursal structures** of academic texts and analysis of the **textual practices** of academics."

Hamp-Lyons, 2001: 126

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English for General Academic Purposes

Background...

' The response of the language teaching profession to these demands has been the development over the past 25 years of a new field in the teaching of English as a Second/ Foreign Language in universities and other academic settings: the field of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). This development has taken a number of different forms and directions, but together these have reshaped the ways that English language teaching and research are conducted in higher education. ' (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002: 1)'

'EAP can be seen as a child of the English for Specific Purposes movement dating back to the 1960s (Wingate & Tribble, 2012: 485)

Background

- "a child of the English for Specific Purposes movement" (Wingate & Tribble, 2012: 485)

- SELMOUS (1972)

- BALEAP (1989)

- EAP in Ireland (2017)

EAP Teaching Approach

- Restricted / Tailored to learners' needs
- Skills v Topic
- Process v Product
- Reading & Writing
- Discrete treatment of skills
- Teacher as materials designer/developer

Language & Skills: Universal

- General Linguistic Competence (Hutchinson & Waters, 1980)

    - Register (e.g. nominalisation)

    - Discourse (e.g. hedging)

    - Genre (e.g. abstract)

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Advantages of an EAP Approach

- Practicality
- Efficacity
- Awareness-raising
- Assessibility
- Accessibility

Critiquing an EAP Approach

Non-native focus — 'EAP is too focused on the needs of non-native speakers of English and has, therefore, failed to make an impact on mainstream writing instruction (Tribble & Wingate, 2012: 481).'

'Static' & 'neutral' — '..we should take care not to present models of genre as static or neutral, as it seems to be the case with many EAP programmes' (Teaching EAP, 2018)

'for' not 'with' subject specialists — '…a tendency to work for rather than with subject specialists, a vulnerability to claims that it ignores students' cultures, and a reluctance to critically engage with the values of institutional goals and practices (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002: 3)

English for Specific Academic Purposes

"It is important for EAP [...] to challenge the widely-held assumption that academic conventions are universal and independent of particular disciplines as this undermines our professional expertise and leads learners to believe that they simply need to master a set of transferable rules."

Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002: 6

"EAP is most successful when it is tailored to meet the needs of the specific circumstances of students"

Hyland, 2016: 19

Questions for traditional EAP...

'Where, for example, is specificity feasible, and what does it consist of in different fields? Precisely what skills and genres can we reliably and usefully regard as transferable across disciplines? How do we satisfy students' demands for personal relevance in classes of students from a range of disciplines? How can research results which emphasise disciplinary specificity be effectively employed in heterogeneous classes?' (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons 2002:6).

Issues of Identity

Hyland & Hamp-Lyons 2002: 2-3

- " a **multi-million dollar enterprise**
- " countries that are trying to lift themselves into **economic prominence**
- " remain major players on the **world economic stage**
- " annual **crop** of students

Hamp-Lyons 2001: 129

- " EAP attracts the **best teachers**

Reference

- Lecturers
- Practitioners

'Academic literacy' has its basis in educational marxism and critical linguistics/ critical education, and so it argues from very different premises than traditional EAP. But despite arising from quite different sociopolitical contexts, proponents of academic literacy and those of EAP share a common desire to provide appropriate and effective education (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002: 5)'.

Academic Literacies

Juncture of theory and application.

Challenges deficit view of language, literacies and students.

Takes into account the nature of student writing in relation to institutional practices, power relations and identities.

Practice privileged above text.

Moves from normative to transformative to allow room for meaning-making, expression and negotiation.

From normative...

Identify and Induct

"The emphasis is on identifying academic conventions—at one or more levels of grammar, discourse or rhetorical structure or genre—and on (or with a view to) exploring how students might be taught to become proficient or "expert" and developing materials on that basis (Lillis et al., 2015)."

Assumed unidirectionality of the teacher-student relation.

Assumed homogeneity of the student population

Assumed stability of disciplines

To transformative...

What is transformative concerned with?

"Locating conventions in relation to specific and contested traditions of knowledge making (Lillis and Scott, 2007)."

"Eliciting the perspectives of writers (whether students or professionals) on the ways in which such conventions impinge on their meaning making (Lillis and Scott, 2007)."

"Exploring alternative ways of meaning making in academia, not least by considering the resources that (student) writers bring to the academy as legitimate tools for meaning making (LIllis and Scott, 2007)."

Open Access Resources

Lillis, Theresa, Kathy Harrington, Mary R. Lea, & Sally Mitchell. (2015). *Working with Academic Literacies: Case Studies Towards Transformative Practice.* Perspectives on Writing. Fort Collins, Colorado: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press. Available at https://wac.colostate.edu/books/lillis/

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THANK YOU!

You can contact *EAP in Ireland* at
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