

Co-construction of knowledge in EAP: Reflections on developing a community of practice around language at the university

BALEAP 2025

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Outline

- **UAL Context**
 - **EAP Space**
- **Expertise**
- **Project: What do we mean when we talk about language?**
 - **Aims**
 - **Talks**
- **Impact**
- **Future**





UAL Context



University of the Arts, London (UAL) Context

**'We're a community of makers, thinkers, pioneers
and storytellers redesigning the future'**

[UAL Homepage]

- 1. London College of Fashion (LCF)**
- 2. London College of Communication (LCC)**
- 3. Central Saint Martins (CSM)**
- 4. Camberwell College of Arts**
- 5. Chelsea College of Arts**
- 6. Wimbledon College of Arts**



Language Provision Across UAL: 'Embedded'

- **Student Services [Library]**
- **Weekly classes with individual courses (Timetabled but non-credit bearing);**
- **Additional stand-alone workshops;**
- **Tutorials**
 - **Helping students to do the things they want/need to do on their courses with and through language**



EAP Space

- ...EAP literature continues to demonstrate that EAP practice and practitioners are still often marginalised, on the fringes and at the 'service' of the University (Bond, 2020; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hyland, 2018).
- In much the same way that other disciplines claim, maintain and defend their own spaces we must also strive to do the same and 'put our heads above the parapet ... [and] take part across our institutions' (Furneaux, 2017, p. 22).

(Fitzpatrick, Costley & Tavakoli, 2022)

Finding Space: Initial Ideas

Academic Literacies study on 'criticality':

'Students may be unaware of literacy practices of institution, discipline, genre, assessment practices'
(Fitzpatrick, 2019)

'How about staff?'

- Language is sometimes viewed as separate from content
- May not have clear understanding of how language works in the disciplines
- Unsure how to work in a multilingual context (e.g. translanguaging/multilingualism)
- Unsure how to talk about (academic) language

'I was uncomfortable with the fact that I knew I couldn't deliver that [information about writing]...it was needed because [students] coming and asking me questions about how to write it...' **[Teacher 2]**



Language Teaching Expertise



Language Teacher Expertise

- ‘An expert is someone who is particularly skilled in a specific area’ (Johnson, 2010, p. 217)
- ‘a process of continuous search for excellence, in which practitioners work at the edge of their competence’ (Tsui, 2011, p, 32)
- ‘the distinctive qualities of successful teachers that distinguish them from novice teachers and from those in neighbouring disciplines’ (Tsui, 2009, p. 422)

Language Teacher Expertise: UAL Context

1. Building disciplinary knowledge (expertise) to teach on different courses:
 - Discussions with colleagues at the Language Centre
 - Discussions with course teams
 - Read research papers from discipline
 - Access to learning spaces (e.g. studios; workshops; labs; lectures)
 - Co-teaching with course teams
 - Researching with course teams
 - Attending programme/course committee meetings
2. What about our own language teaching expertise? How might we disseminate it across the university, i.e. share research and knowledge from our field with course teams and staff?

What does our expertise look like?

- Experienced teachers
- International experience/Multilingual
- Qualified
- Understanding of language learners
- How language works in different contexts across the university
- Different disciplinary language practices
- (Critical) Discourse Analysis
- Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)
- Multilingualism/Translanguaging
- Corpus Studies
- Semiotics
- Sociolinguistics
- English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
- Academic Literacies
- English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
- Genre Studies

2. Disseminating Our Expertise

1. ‘...share and disseminate our good practices and expertise with colleagues across the wider academic context:
 - i. Engaging in observations beyond our peers;
 - ii. Inviting other university colleagues to observe our practices;
 - iii. **Organising presentations across the university where ‘we’ are the ‘experts’ and**
 - iv. **Using this EAP expertise as a way of providing professional development to academic departments.**

(Fitzpatrick, Costley & Tavakoli, 2022)



**Project: What do we mean when we talk
about language?**



Project Aims

1. To make language more visible across the university/within the disciplines
2. To provide colleagues across the university with a better understanding of what language is and does
3. To provide a space for discussions around the roles and functions that language has in academic work/contexts
4. To create opportunities for colleagues to share their work and practices around language
5. To raise profile of the Language Centre and share its expertise
6. To build confidence among colleagues at the Language Centre

Project Steps

1. Summer 2022: Conversations with Language Centre head
2. Invited colleagues (language experts) from other universities
 - [context; audience; topic]
3. Platform: Teams
4. Advertised talks across university
5. Worked with colleague from Digital Learning Team to set up website
6. Recorded sessions and transferred to website (build resources)
7. Contacted more colleagues for talks

What do we do with the recordings?

1. Shift from synchronous (via Teams) to both synchronous/asynchronous (Teams + Website)
2. Host all videos together
3. Place to comment/interact
4. Space to build resources (journals, books, websites from our field)



ual: Home Talks About Search

[Language Talks](#) [Language Talks 2022-23](#)

What do we mean when we talk about language? An introduction

By Damian Fitzpatrick 28th October 2022

Dr Damian Fitzpatrick (UAL)

[Watch The Presentation](#) [Access Slides \(PDF 2MB\)](#) [Join The Discussion](#)

Abstract

This session will introduce some of the topics related to language across the university. We will look briefly at some of the theories, concepts, ideas and discussions about what is meant when we talk about language. The first half of the session will be in the form of a talk, then followed by open discussion. Topics to be discussed include:

What do we mean when we talk about language?



A series of talks and workshops organised by the Language Centre that aims to support deeper understanding of the role of language across the university. Language is sometimes viewed as 'separate' from course content but, in reality, it is 'the essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience becomes knowledge' (Halliday & Martin, 1993, p.94). In other words, studying a particular discipline means learning to understand the linguistic forms and structures that construct and communicate the relevant principles, knowledge and beliefs.

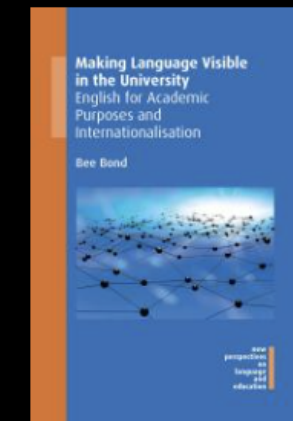
- What does language do? What is the function of language?
- What role does context play in language?
- How does language influence disciplinary practices?
- What do we mean by academic language?
- What role does multilingualism play in the university?

Resources

If you want to find out more about some of the topics from our series of talks, this selection of resources might be of interest.

If you have any questions or comments about any of the resources or if you have any recommendations then please let us know.

- Books
- Journals
- Glossary



Making Language Visible: English for Academic Purposes and Internationalisation

This book 'focuses on the nexus of language, disciplinary content and knowledge communication against the background of the economic, cultural and ideological forces of Higher Education's current push for internationalisation.



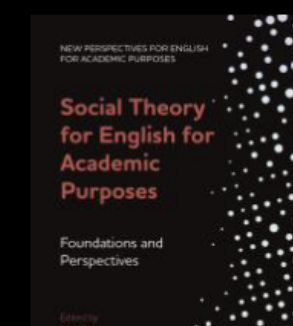
Translanguaging: language, bilingualism and education

'Translanguaging' addresses how it has contributed to our understandings of language,...bilingualism and education



The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies

This handbook is key reading for all those engaged in the study and research of Critical Discourse Analysis within English Language and Linguistics, Communication, Media Studies and related areas.



Social Theory for English for Academic Purposes: Foundations and Perspectives

The book reveals the sociological foundations and commitments that underpin established theories in EAP, such as genre theories, systemic functional linguistics, and



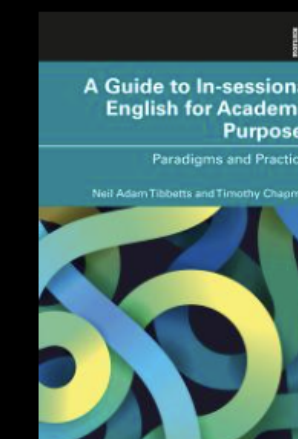
The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication

This book 'provides a comprehensive historical survey of language and intercultural communication studies with a critical assessment of past and present theory, research, and practice, as well as an insight into future directions'



Engaging with Linguistic Diversity : A Study of Educational Inclusion in an Irish Primary School

Engaging with Linguistic Diversity describes an innovative and highly successful approach to inclusive plurilingual education at primary level.



A Guide to In-session English for Academic Purposes Paradigms and Practices

'Covering key topics such as pedagogies, logistical challenges, and the wider university context, this book not only provides a roadmap to the often ill-defined but essential domain of ISEAP but also provokes...'

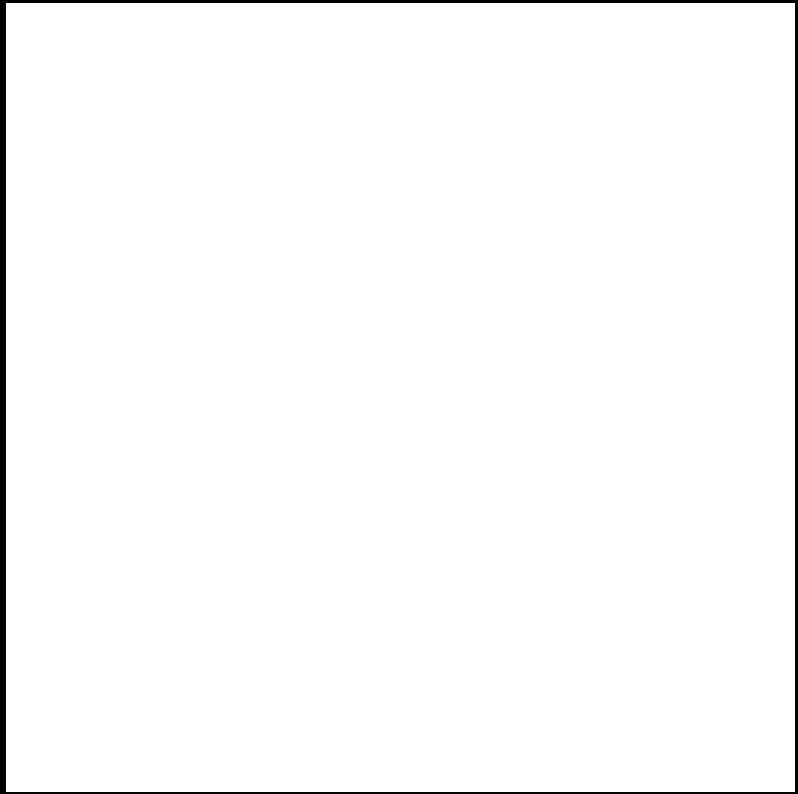


The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis

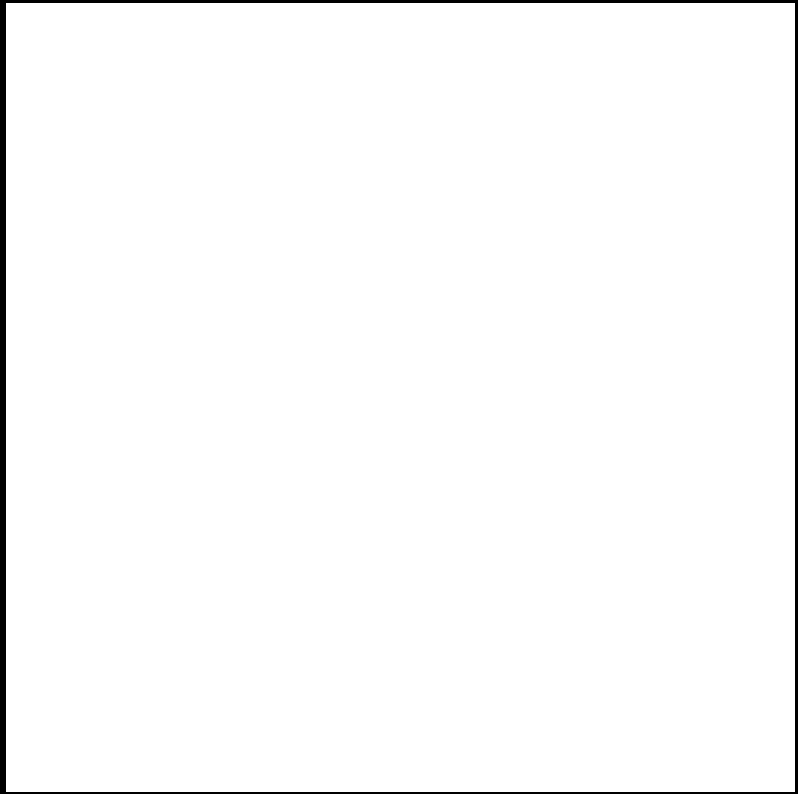
This text covers the major approaches to Discourse Analysis from Critical Discourse Analysis to Multimodal Discourse Analysis and their applications in key educational

Talks: Topics

- Positioning of EAP at university
- Collaboration: EAP/Subject lecturers
- Argument and genre in writing
- What do we mean by academic writing?
- Generative AI and EAP Proofreading
- Translanguaging
- Feedback
- Linguistic identities
- Digital discourses
- Accentism
- Ethnography & language
- Text borrowing (plagiarism)
- Inclusive teaching practices
- Coloniality of language



Impact



Attendance/Engagement

- Online sessions: Friday afternoons
- Numbers have been good: 15-50+ [Generative AI and EAP: 100+]
- Colleagues are requesting/watching the talks online
- Questions and comments on Teams (and informally around the college)

Impact

- **Language Centre**

- Boosts profile of Language Centre and confidence of colleagues (our expertise)

- **Teachers across the university**

- Professional development (appraisals)
- Want to make language more accessible for students (e.g. assignment briefs)
- Discussions around collaborations with language staff
- Colleagues shared experiences of working with language in their own contexts
- Requests for additional courses
- Translanguaging Talk:
 - Ways that students use language(s) ('bend English'; 'different form of poetic involved')
 - Alternative ways of assessment
 - Representation through other languages
 - Colleagues sharing their ideas on how they work with language

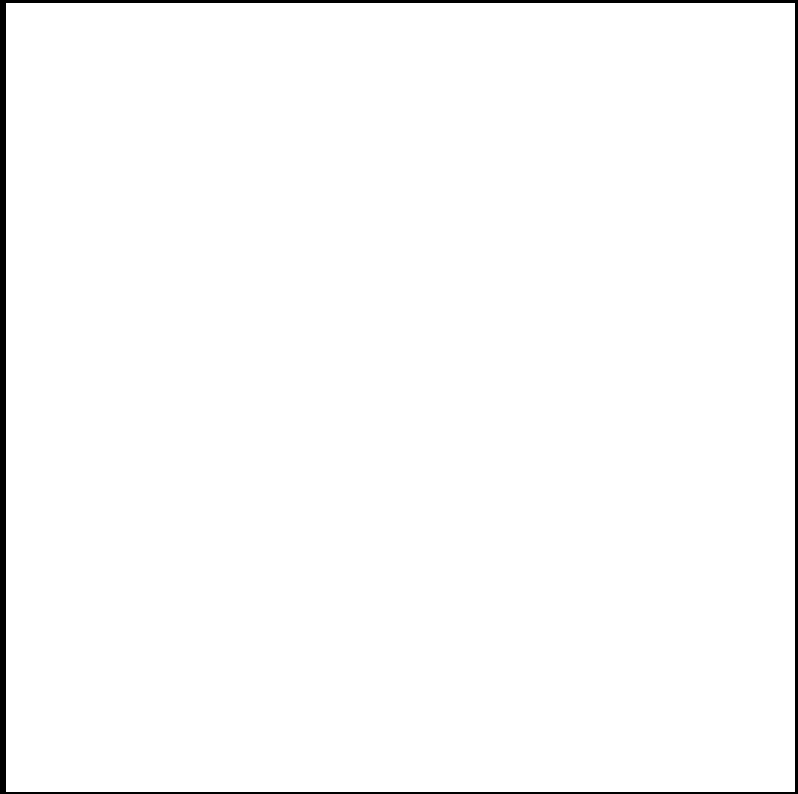
- **Across the university**

- Website: archive and resource for colleagues

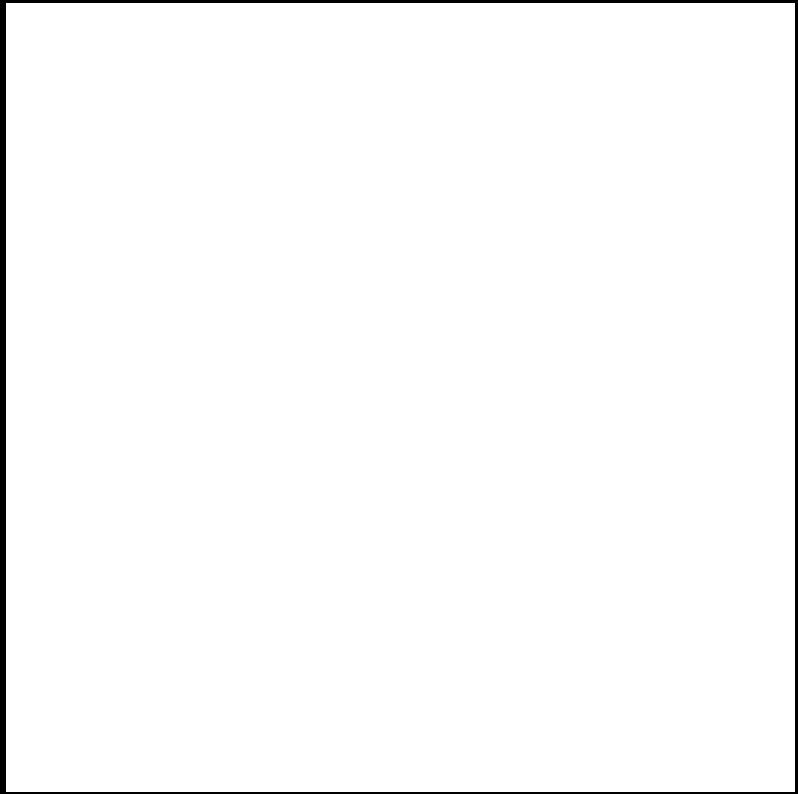
Requested to do talks across university ('Knowledge Building in the Multilingual Classroom')

Challenges

1. No scholarship time
2. Online forum
3. Feedback

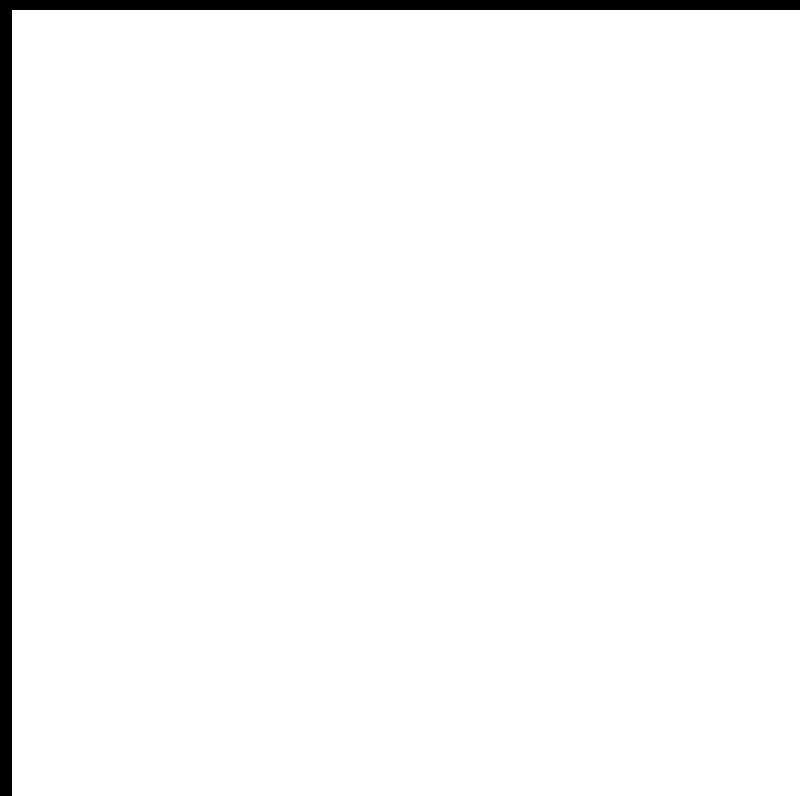


Future



Future

1. More talks
 - [Possibly more sessions from colleagues across the university?]
2. Language workshops for colleagues across the university
3. Other ways to incorporate 'language' across the university ('language' component to PG Cert/MA Education; Centre for Language Research)
4. Exploration and Collaboration:
 - i. Similar projects in other universities?
 - ii. Open project to other universities?
 - iii. Potential speakers?



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Questions?