

Indoctrinate or disrupt?

EAP PRACTITIONER PERCEPTIONS OF AND ENGAGEMENT WITH DECOLONISATION OF THE FIELD

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Outline

Decolonisation and UK HE

Decolonisation and ELT/EAP

The research

Emerging themes

Limitations and possibilities

Questions

Decolonisation in UK Higher Education

"the university is a site of knowledge production and, most crucially, consecration; it has the power to decide which histories, knowledges and intellectual contributions are considered valuable and worthy of further critical attention and dissemination."

(Gebrial, 2018, p. 19)

The West perceives itself to be *"the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of 'civilized' knowledge"* (Smith, 2012, p. 125).

UK HE suggestions for decolonisation

Emic perspectives in materials

Power in the classroom

Dialogic engagement

“every discipline
brings with it colonial
modalities of thinking
that have eluded
adequate scrutiny”

(Gebrial, 2018, p. 26)

Decolonisation in ELT & EAP

Linguistic Imperialism (Phillipson,
1992 and Pennycook, 1998; 1994)

Perpetuating cultural superiority

Unquestioning acceptance of
disciplinary expectations (Benesch,
2001)

Arguably indoctrinating

EFL/EAP suggestions for decolonisation

Method influences curriculum, materials, teaching assessment and typically disseminated from the West (Kumaravadivelu, 2006)

Postmethod approach:

Reflective and exploratory, acknowledges language and culture as a resource, student autonomy (Chan & Henderson, 2018)

Acknowledges home languages and cultures, links prior knowledge to current study (Chamot, 2009)

Grammar of decoloniality:

Focus on intelligibility (Kumaravadivelu, 2006)

EFL/EAP suggestions for decolonisation

Engage with marginalized writers, challenge hierarchies and dominant research practices (Ewing & Reece, 2019; Ewing, 2020)

Indigenizing ELT and EAP (Sterzuk & Hengen, 2018); Walsh-Marr, 2019)

English as a lingua franca and mutual intelligibility (Teale & Vokel de Vries, 2021)

Translanguaging to draw on bilingual knowledges and norms (Xhao et al., 2021)

My research

A critical perspective of an EAP dichotomy

Perceptions of EAP practitioners and EAP students

The research tool- collaboration with the EAP for Social Justice SIG

Data collection ongoing

Emerging themes: learning, teaching, nature of EAP, decolonising practices

Defining decolonisation

"it's not about removing things from the curriculum, but instead adding aspects to it and allowing for a wider range of voices to be heard... And instead looking at knowledge systems that are often excluded from the curriculum- so including other methodologies, and I'm not sure to what extent we're doing that right now. Other epistemologies. Again, I'm not sure to what extent we're doing that right now."

"It's important to recognize the impacts of colonialism, it's important to recognise ongoing coloniality and it's important to affirm together as an institution or together as a discipline, that this is not something we want. This is something that we're going to actively work to address and change."

"Examining the status quo, looking at the power structures and how some of these practices and ideologies have led to unequal power relations."

Defining before disrupting

Need an EAP understanding of decolonisation starting with engagement with the broader literature

"I think one great place to start would be not just for EAP professionals to become aware of issues of decolonization, but for EAP professionals to recognize the body of research and the current evidence-based practice around decolonisation. I think again, it's easy for people to say there's a lot of great literature out there, it doesn't really apply to EAP because we're not content subject or the content is also the mode of delivery."

Unable to disrupt without a clear idea of what and how

Learning

Qualifications omit social justice and decolonisation

CPD generally as self-directed learning

"I've got a lot to learn, but I don't have the time to read all these things."

"It has been my choice to become more familiar with it, and I try to keep abreast of thinking."

"I'd like to have more discussion with EAP practitioners about it. I suppose my engaging with the debates is mainly not been within EAP, it's being outside of it apart from you."

Disrupting learning

Disruption is dependent on EAP teacher knowledge

Interrogate qualifications

Incorporate into formal CPD

'You respect individual learners' expectations and values, encourage participation in higher education, and promote equality of opportunity.'

BALEAP TEAP Handbook.
Senior Fellow requirements for accreditation. *Inclusivity*, V4.

*"Q: Has your
experience of being
Othered influenced
your teaching?"*

*A : How could it
not?"*

Critical reflection

Critical reflection of our own practice by asking ourselves how we can decolonise 'intellectual spaces', overcome hegemonic epistemology and research, and be part of creating a new academic culture (Hall & Tandon, 2017)

Critical reflection of the self and our own lived experiences

Decolonising practices

Wider range of voices

More inclusive themes or social justice themes

Interrogate and move from Eurocentrism and Anglocentrism

Student choice

"I make sure that I'm picking a range of scholars from different areas of the world of different genders from different educational backgrounds as well."

"actually actively look for somebody who is more representative of the world that these students are actually functioning in or will be functioning in."

Decolonising practices

Acknowledge prior learning

Teaching academic conventions

The language of instruction

"I try to get you to draw on prior learning so that I'm trying to acknowledge the fact that the learning they have done is valuable."

"I teach my students how to site names from different areas. I teach my students how to cite names from, you know, mainland China or Japan, how to cite names with two surnames from a Spanish speaking context."

Decolonising practices

Utilising full linguistic repertoire

Acknowledging varieties of English

Silence in the classroom

"And now I would never insist that they used English when they having discussions in my class ...accepting you will use whatever language you have at your disposal to achieve a goal, which is to understand something."

"being aware how important it is for students to understand that varieties exist and that varieties of English are good and OK and that you know that that there is no sort of 1 type of English that beats the rest, you know."

The nature of EAP provision

"So on [course], we're with students for two semesters and we have more room and scope to bring in the students' knowledge."

"They've come to this session to learn how to do this thing, which is going to help them in their assignment... the way we approach it, it is very much focused on how to pass your assessment."

"But it's yeah, very transactional and you know, don't- they don't necessarily want to challenge what they've been asked to do because they know they have to do it and they know they want to pass."

**Longer year-
round courses**

**Shorter discipline
embedded**

Next step, disrupt

Work in collaboration with the disciplines, identify Schools who are already decolonising

Join discussions at higher levels of university

Changing deficit perception, we can do the same with decolonisation

Limitations ...

EAP training

Lack of examples of EAP materials

Tension between pragmatic needs and a critical EAP

Reliance on the disciplines

Standardised genres

Nature of EAP provision

Precarity and opportunities for research

Recruitment and a lack of diversity

"And also another key point is, is actually our own university, our own department. How diverse are we?"

... and possibilities

Potential reach

Nature of provision

Multiple worldviews and epistemologies in the classroom

Space to empower students to question norms, values, expectations

A strong EAP community of practice

Indoctrinate or disrupt?

EAP is inherently colonial

We are doing students a disservice if we do not prepare them for their degree study

Possibly can't fully decolonise, but we can identify pockets where change can happen

"There's always going to be some kind of colonial history connected to it because English has that power."

"there's a balance to strike."

Questions

Is it possible to decolonise EAP?

Whose responsibility is it?

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