

## Please cite as:

Shrestha, Prithvi (2015). Introduction: *Local innovations and global perspectives in EAP and ESP*. In Prithvi N. Shrestha, (ed.) *Current Developments in English for Academic and Specific Purposes: Local innovations and global perspectives* (pp. 6-8). Reading: Garnet Education.

## Introduction: *Local innovations and global perspectives in EAP and ESP*

Innovation (i.e., a new beneficial idea or practice) in English language teaching (ELT) has been a constant subject of academic discussion over the last few decades. This topic continues to be a concern to all English language practitioners because, as teachers, we are constantly encouraging new challenges in our teaching context and as a result we find new ways of addressing and resolving them. Innovation in the context of ELT is, however, still under-researched (Waters, 2014) although this area of research is emerging in the fields of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (e.g., see Hyland & Wong, 2013). Despite both EAP and ESP tending to be innovative, pioneering practices are often limited to individual teachers or institutions. Therefore, there is a need for more research in this area of EAP and ESP. Such innovative practices can benefit other EAP and ESP practitioners globally. In this context, this edited volume, the fourth book from the IATEFL ESP SIG, aims to contribute by bringing together EAP and ESP practitioners from around the world to share their innovations and research on their novel practices.

Innovations in EAP and ESP are generally initiated locally to meet certain needs. Innovative practices, due to their nature being small-scale and local, may not flourish if there is no institutional support or there is resistance to change (Waters, 2009). Even if the innovation is national or large-scale, implementing it may still be challenging (Hu & McGrath, 2011). Despite these barriers, if local innovative practices in EAP and ESP are shared with other practitioners, EAP and ESP learners from around the world may benefit from these innovative practices given the increasing demand of English language skills globally for various purposes. As you will see, this volume aims to showcase local innovations from a global perspective in each of the 12 chapters.

In Chapter 1, Cope reports on an Australian study that examined, despite sharing the same dominant English language and culture, how cultural differences can affect the presentation of similar content in three countries (Australia, the UK and the USA). She employs a critical discourse analysis approach to analyse the language used, and a pedagogical approach (with practical techniques) to raise learners' awareness about cultural differences in language use is presented. Such a pedagogical approach can be applied to other ESP or EAP settings.

Chapter 2 (Knight and Candlin) concerns the teaching of business leadership skills following a nexus of practice approach in Japan. Based on the findings of the evaluation of an ESP programme for undergraduate business students, the authors argue that a nexus of practice approach allows an ESP practitioner to be more dynamic, reflective and responsive to the ever-changing needs of students as the programme is continually refined and involves real tasks through projects and online forum discussions.

Lawrence in Chapter 3 addresses challenges she faced in an in-session EAP programme in a UK university. She presents an alternative approach to the existing in-session EAP provision with a cohort of mechanical engineering students. This approach is more inclusive because it does not separate students on the basis of whether they speak English as their first or additional language. The chapter shows that a more inclusive EAP provision needs effective collaboration with subject lecturers, offering the EAP provision to all students and making assessment count towards the subject programme. For this to happen, institutional support is crucial.

Call centre ESP is the focus of Chapter 4. Lockwood reports on an innovative approach used to develop an ESP curriculum and assessment for the call centre industry in Manila (the Philippines). She describes how she formed an effective collaboration with the industry and developed innovative assessment tools to assess the impact of the ESP curriculum on the business. The chapter also highlights potential challenges in working closely with industries.

Chapter 5 (Mansur and Shrestha) is concerned with challenges faced when trying to implement ESP innovations in a Pakistani university. In particular, this chapter explores how the programme was perceived by three key ESP stakeholders: MBA students, ESP teachers and administrators. The third stakeholder is powerful but their view is seldom present in the EAP or ESP literature. The chapter shows how any conflict with this stakeholder group can adversely affect any ESP curricular innovation.

In a Spanish context, Martín (Chapter 6) reports findings from a study that looked at English medium instruction (EMI) in higher education. She argues that subject lecturers learning to teach their subjects in English need to be seen as a new type of EAP or ESP learners. Martín proposes that their skills and knowledge can be enhanced if the focus of their professional development is on the functional language required for EMI rather than on qualifications.

Matheson and Basturkmen report on a study of EAP writing in a New Zealand university in Chapter 7. They demonstrate how a generic EAP course can cater for disciplinary-specific writing needs of arts and humanities students by drawing on a range of sources including students' written texts. The genre-focused approach followed in this EAP course can easily be applied to other genre-based disciplinary writing courses.

Reporting on a project that examined the use of mobile technologies in EAP, Shrestha, Fayram and Demouy (Chapter 8) explain how EAP learners' oral skills can be supported and assessed in an open and distance learning context. They

describe how mobile technologies can be leveraged to enhance students' listening and speaking skills in EAP when there is no face-to-face contact.

In Chapter 9, Tsuda and Furneaux focus on an ESP course for dieticians in Japan. Given the increasing role of English language in the country, the authors argue that there is a dire need to develop appropriate ESP curricula and materials for Japanese dieticians. A number of recommendations are made and they may be applicable to other contexts too.

Tully takes us to a novel area of ESP in Chapter 10: English language for trade union education in Sierra Leone. The author reports on how European ESP programmes for trade unionists' employability skills were adapted for Sierra Leone. She highlights the importance of working closely with various stakeholders for the success of the ESP programme in the country.

In Chapter 11, Velliari, Willis and Breen present a study from Australia which investigated higher education pathway programmes and EAP and ESP for rapidly growing international students. In their study, they draw on reflections of academic staff in their institution. The authors make a number of recommendations for increasing chances of international students' success through pathway programmes in Australia.

The final Chapter (Zhou, Butler and Wei) is concerned with how we can further develop our understanding of Asian (in this case, Chinese and Thai) graduate students' academic writing trajectory by tracing their cultural roots and their effects on their academic writing. The authors argue that it is essential for academic writing tutors to be aware of Asian students' cultural and educational backgrounds to support with their writing development.

All in all, these 12 chapters demonstrate innovative local practices in EAP and ESP in different parts of the world and how they may be applied to other contexts. I believe that you will find this edited volume valuable in enriching your EAP and/ or ESP repertoire. The volume provides an array of research methods and innovative pedagogical ideas in both the fields.

This introduction would be incomplete without acknowledging the valuable contributions made by a number of people. First of all, I would like to thank all the contributing authors for trusting me with this edited volume and responding to all my requests in a timely manner. I am grateful to Professor Caroline Coffin who agreed to write a Foreword to this volume. I am also indebted to these colleagues who kindly helped me with the review and selection of the initial proposals: Dr Inma Alvarez, Andy Gillett, Dr Kristina Hultgren, Dr Maria Leedham, Dr Ghanshyam Sharma and Dr Jackie Tuck.

Finally, the IATEFL ESP SIG is thankful to Garnet Education for enabling the publication of this fourth volume. I am personally grateful to Matthew George and Mike Hinks for their patience and support throughout the writing process.

## References

- Hu, Zhiwen, & McGrath, Ian. (2011). Innovation in higher education in China: are teachers ready to integrate ICT in English language teaching? *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 20(1), 41-59. doi: 10.1080/1475939X.2011.554014
- Hyland, Ken, & Wong, Lillian L. C. (Eds.). (2013). *Innovation and Change in English Language Education*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Waters, Alan. (2009). Managing innovation in English language education. *Language Teaching*, 42(04), 421-458. doi: doi:10.1017/S026144480999005X
- Waters, Alan. (2014). Managing innovation in English language education: A research agenda. *Language Teaching*, 47(01), 92-110.

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT