

BALEAP Bulletin

Andy Gillett, Chair of the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes

One of the key roles of BALEAP is supporting professional development for EAP teachers and promoting and disseminating EAP associated research. This is done through our one-day Professional Issues Meetings (PIMs) and our biennial conferences.

PIMS

PIMs are one-day meetings held about three times a year in different universities around the country. There is a specific theme for each meeting and reports of the meetings are published on the BALEAP web-site after each PIM. The PIMs coordinator is Andy Seymour from Reading.

Andy has been Director of the In-sessional English Support Programme (IESP), providing academic support to all international students at the University of Reading, since 1995. He has many years experience of ELT and the management of education projects in the Middle East and North Africa. He has carried out consultancies in the Middle East and North Africa, given presentations in many countries and represented the University of Reading at education exhibitions in the Middle East, North Africa and Latin America. He was IATEFL ESP SIG Coordinator for 4 years and is now BALEAP PIMs Coordinator.

The most recent BALEAP PIM was held in February at Oxford Brookes University on the topic of Blended Learning and was well attended with 75 participants. There were twelve papers and two workshops on a range of topics including the use of Word in teaching, the use of threaded discussion for reflective journal writing and the impact of more recent technology such as electronic whiteboards and wireless classrooms. The organiser was Paul Wickens of Oxford Brookes University.

The aim of the day was to focus on the way in which it is possible to integrate existing best pedagogic practice in the classroom with e-learning. It was an attempt to explore the opportunities of e-learning whilst avoiding the pitfalls of an evangelical tone as well as raising questions about the possible limitations or pedagogic 'blind alleys' which the rush to technological progress can result in. One interesting theme that emerged from the talks was the way in which there seems to be a welcome move towards using the technology to enable collaborative learning both inside the classroom and as an extension.

The papers on the use of electronic whiteboards and classrooms with wireless laptops both showed that such technology could, in many ways, be used to encourage collaborative learning. The use of virtual learning environments also seems to be maturing as EAP lecturers get to grips with them. Finally, in the discussion at the end it was clear that there is a growing recognition that EAP tutors need to engage with blended learning both as a requirement for their students future study at UK universities and as a pedagogic opportunity for the teaching of EAP itself.

The next PIM will have the title: Phraseology & Metaphor in EAP. It will be held at the University of Birmingham on Saturday 19 June 2004. It is intended to have presentations of research, course descriptions, and course materials relating to the use of English phraseology and metaphor in academic settings. Topics will include:

- descriptions, from spoken or written perspectives, of English phraseology in discipline-specific or general academic settings, eg lexical phrases, grammar patterns, multi-word items, formulaic sequences, collocations
- descriptions, from spoken or written perspectives, of the metaphoric and/or metonymic content of discipline-specific or general academic discourse, eg metaphors of evaluation, metaphoric frameworks of academic discourse, the role of metaphor in grammar, strategic use of metaphor and metonymy in spoken interaction
- descriptions and evaluations of pedagogic applications to EAP using insights from the above.

The organisers are David Oakey and Jeannette Littlemore from the University of Birmingham

Conference

The BALEAP conference 2005 will take place at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh from Friday 15th April to Sunday 17th April. The conference is being organised jointly with SATEFL (the Scottish Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) and the theme is 'New Approaches to Materials Development for Language Learning'.

It is hoped to attract materials developers in General English and Teacher training as well as EAP to encourage a dialogue among these groups. We welcome research-based and classroom-based presentations and posters. It is likely that days will be themed to allow participants to attend individual days.

On-campus accommodation can be arranged for participants and Heriot-Watt is close to Edinburgh Airport which now has regular flights to many destinations in the UK and the rest of Europe. There will be a programme of social events including a Scottish ceilidh.

For more information about PIMs or the conference see: www.baleap.org.uk

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