Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes

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1 Issues in EAP: A preliminary perspective

John Flowerdew and Matthew Peacock

The need for English

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – the teaching of English with the specific aim of helping learners to study, conduct research or teach in that language – is an international activity of tremendous scope. It is carried out in four main geographical domains, each of which exhibits particular characteristics and purposes. It is carried out, first, in the major English-speaking countries (the US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand), where large numbers of overseas students whose first language is not English come to study. It is conducted, second, in the former colonial territories of Britain (and less importantly the United States) where English is a second language and is used as the medium of instruction at university level. It is conducted, third, in countries which have no historic links with English, but which need to access the research literature in that language (the countries of Western Europe, Japan, China, Latin America, Francophone Africa and others). And finally, EAP is now increasingly being offered in the countries of the former Soviet-bloc, as they seek to distance themselves from the influence of Russia and its language and position themselves as participants in the increasingly global economy and academic community.

To give some indication of the demand for EAP, if we take the first of the four areas mentioned – the countries where English is a first language – in 1996–7, 457,984 foreign students were studying in the US (Davis, 1997) and 198,064 in the UK (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 1997). While these numbers are already very considerable, they are likely to comprise only a minority of the likely target EAP population. To start with, the figures for the US

1 Some of these countries (e.g. Germany) are now indeed offering academic programmes of their own through the medium of English.
do not include the large number of ESL students – usually the children of immigrants – who have American citizenship. But more importantly, far more students are likely to require EAP in many of the post-colonial countries (e.g. Nigeria, India or Hong Kong), where there are many English-medium universities, and the countries in which English has no official status (e.g. many Latin American countries), where many students are required to take English, often EAP. Unfortunately, figures are not available for these countries.

One might imagine that the dominance of English as an international language is due to the fact that it is the language which has the greatest number of native speakers (NSs). However, this is not the case. According to *The World Almanac and Book of Facts* (1998), English is only the fourth language in the world in terms of the numbers who speak it as their first language; it is surpassed by Mandarin, Hindi and Spanish respectively (Table 1). However, English is by far the most popular language to learn as a second or foreign language.

Why is it, then, that so many non-native speakers (NNSs) want to learn English in preference to the world’s other major languages? One important reason is undoubtedly to do with economic strength. As Graddol (1997) points out, in order to conduct trade one is likely to be more successful if one speaks the language of the customer. In terms of economic strength, the countries where English is the first language are by far the richest (Table 2). The economic power of these countries (most notably the United States) and the accompanying trend in using English for international business are strong reasons for NNSs to want to learn English. If one compares Table 1 with Table 2, it is notable that while the English language is only fourth in terms of the number of NSs (Table 1), English-speaking countries come out well above all other countries in terms of economic strength (Table 2). Chinese drops from first to seventh, Hindi drops down from second to twelfth, and Spanish declines from third to fifth.

### Table 1. Native speakers of the world’s major languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: ‘The World Almanac and Book of Facts’ [1998])
NNSs, of course, are not only attracted to learn the language of the English-speaking countries\(^2\) because they want to sell their products there. They also want to gain access to their technology and expertise. This is another reason for the large numbers of overseas students studying in the English-speaking countries and the even greater numbers studying through the medium of English in their home countries, where it is a second language. The international language of research and academic publication is English and anyone who wishes to have ready access to this material needs to know the language.

**The development of EAP as a discipline**

If the economic and demographic factors just referred to provide a reason for the large numbers of NNSs learning and studying through the medium of English, they do not explain the development of EAP as a discipline. For this we need to turn to developments in linguistics, or more specifically applied linguistics, developments which took place primarily in Great Britain.

At the same time as English was beginning to establish itself as a World language in the newly independent countries of Africa and Asia, following pioneering work by Firth, British linguists (most notably Halliday) began to view language and language teaching in a new way. In contrast to theoretical linguists who traditionally saw

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\(^2\) This basically means the United States, which is far wealthier than any of the other English-speaking countries.

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**Table 2. The world’s major languages and the economic strength of the countries where it is the first language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>$\text{billion}</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>1,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>1,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hindi/Urdu – 12th)

(Source: Graddol [1997])
language as an abstract system, these applied linguists started to consider it as a resource for communication, a resource which varied in its application according to the context or situation in which it was produced. The ramification for language teaching of this perspective was that learners who mastered a language as an abstract system, as was the case with those who learned using the audio-lingual approach, which was prevalent in language teaching (especially in North America) during the 1960s, would not be prepared to communicate in the specific situations they were likely to find themselves when they wanted to use the language. What was needed was an approach to language teaching which was based on descriptions of the language as it was used in the specific target situations. The rationale for such an approach was set out in a seminal publication by Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964), *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*. In this book Halliday et al. presented the concept of register analysis, the description of language varieties used in particular disciplines or occupations, based on statistical differences in lexis and syntax. As we shall see below, this book was very influential in encouraging theoretical work in language description and in its application to the production of EAP teaching materials.

### Classifying EAP and its branches

EAP is normally considered to be one of two branches of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), the other being EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Each of these major branches is then sub-divided according to the disciplines or occupations with which it is concerned. Thus, EAP may be separated into English for Biology, English for Mathematics, English for Economics, etc. and EOP branches out into English for Pilots, English for Doctors, English for Bank employees, etc. (Figure 1).

The distinction between the two major branches of ESP is not clear-cut, however. A lot of work conducted in the academy is in fact preparation for the professional occupations students are likely to go into when they graduate and might therefore be classified as EOP. If we take the example of English for Business in the university, aspects of the course designed to assist learners in their studies would clearly be EAP, but university business courses, like other vocationally-oriented courses, usually seek to prepare their students for business careers. English support for the more vocationally-oriented aspects of the Business course could perhaps be described as EOP as much as EAP. An English course designed to help students read economics
textbooks would clearly be EAP, but a course designed to teach learners how to participate in business meetings or take phone calls definitely has an EOP dimension to it. Perhaps we should sub-divide EAP into EAP designed to help students with their studies and EAP directed towards professional preparation. Both would be EAP by virtue of the fact that they take place in the academy, but they would be distinct in terms of the goal they were directed towards. This classification is represented in Figure 2, where the examples of ‘pure’ EAP areas are designated as subjects (accountancy, engineering, pharmacy, etc.) and the vocationally oriented dimensions by the target occupations (accountants, engineers, pharmacists).

However one may want to divide up the ESP/EAP cake, as A. Johns and Dudley-Evans (1991: 306) have noted, ‘For most of its history, ESP has been dominated by English for Academic Purposes . . . [and it] continues to dominate internationally.’ Elsewhere, Dudley-Evans (1998), co-editor of English for Specific Purposes, has described that journal as being ‘dominated by EAP’ (as opposed to EOP). This domination, at least in terms of research, is understandable, if only because EAP practitioners work in academic institutions, where research and intellectual enquiry are encouraged, while workers in EOP are more often located in the workplace, where professional endeavour is directed more towards the bottom line.
Characteristics and claims of ESP/EAP

In a frequently quoted article, Strevens (1988a) proposed four absolute characteristics of ESP/EAP. According to Strevens, ESP/EAP consists of English language teaching which is:

- designed to meet specified needs of the learner
- related in content (i.e. in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities
- centred on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics etc., and analysis of this discourse
- in contrast with ‘General English’

Strevens also listed two variable characteristics of ESP:

ESP may be, but is not necessarily:

- restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only)
- not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology

Furthermore he suggested that the rationale for ESP is based upon four claims:

- being focused on the learner’s need, it wastes no time
- it is relevant to the learner
- it is successful in imparting learning
- it is more cost effective than ‘General English’

A further set of factors not mentioned by Strevens, but which we would add are:

- authentic texts
- communicative task-based approach
- custom-made materials
- adult learners
- purposeful courses

Key issues in EAP

In the remainder of this chapter we will outline and discuss in more detail some of the features of EAP already mentioned, along with some others which we consider to be the key issues in EAP over the last 35 years or so. We will not discuss needs analysis or teaching methodology here, as, although key issues, these topics are better dealt with in Part II, *The EAP Curriculum*. 
Language description

One of Strevens’s premises about ESP/EAP was that pedagogy is focused upon the specific language appropriate to the target disciplines, occupations and activities. Pride of place in EAP research must go to descriptions of such target language. Such language description, many would claim, is the primary intellectual focus of the discipline. Indeed, while we have defined EAP as a pedagogic enterprise, there is also another definition in which it is conceived of as a type of language, or collection of types of language. Following this definition, the study of EAP thus becomes the descriptions of these special types of language.

A number of phases in language description work in EAP can be identified. The first of these, register analysis, has already been referred to above. An early example of register analysis is a paper by Barber (1962), ‘Some measurable characteristics of modern scientific prose’. Swales (1988a: 1) begins his source book and commentary on the development of English for Specific Purposes, Episodes in ESP, with this paper, describing it as ‘a clear demonstration that the descriptive techniques of Modern Linguistics, as most influentially represented in The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching by Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (Longman, 1964), could be successfully applied to the language of science and technology’. Overtly pedagogic in its intention, the paper clearly shows the distinctive use of lexis and syntax in scientific textbooks. As Swales points out (p. 1), at a time when language syllabuses typically covered all of the English tenses as parts of a system, the paper was particularly influential in its demonstration that the progressive verb forms are very rarely used in scientific writing. The implication of this for EST courses was clear; if progressive verb forms are rarely used, then there is no need to devote much, if any, time to them on courses on scientific writing.

A criticism of register analysis is that it is purely descriptive and not explanatory, i.e., it tells us the relative frequency of linguistic forms, but not the special functions these forms have in the specific register and what purpose their marked presence or absence may serve (Bhatia, 1993: 6). Starting in the 1980s, however, such considerations did begin to be addressed. Labelled ‘contextual analysis’, by Celce-Murcia (1980) and ‘narrow and deep study’ by Swales (1990: 3), perhaps the best known example of this approach is

3 As a demonstration of the dominance of EAP in ESP, all of the 15 papers Swales presents deal with the former; none relate to EOP.
Tarone et al.’s (1981) examination of the use of the passive in astrophysics articles. In this study, which focuses on just two articles, frequency data is presented, but it is used to support the more important generalisations (for Tarone et al.) concerning the rhetorical, or communicative, purposes of the use of the passive in the selected genre, not just as an end in itself, as was the case for Barber (1962). Furthermore, where Barber’s data made no distinctions between the different genres of scientific writing, nor the different disciplines, Tarone et al.’s frequency data apply to a very specific context. Their data concerns one journal, one discipline, and one subject matter within that discipline (the two articles are on the same topic); not only that, but levels of frequency are distinguished across the various sections of the articles.

Prior to contextual analysis, another meaning-focused approach – termed ‘pragmatic analysis’ by Tarone et al. (1981) had developed. Instead of starting with a given linguistic form and seeking out its specific uses, pragmatic analysis starts with a particular rhetorical function – defining, describing, classifying, etc. – and investigates the linguistic forms through which the particular function is realised. The work of Selinker and his colleagues at the University of Washington (synthesised in Trimble, 1985) is typical of this approach. A limitation here, however, is that this work failed to differentiate the specific situations in which a given function was used. Thus, there was no distinction in Selinker’s work between, say, defining or classifying in textbooks, popularisations, and training manuals. All such material is lumped together as ‘scientific’ English. As subsequent work was to demonstrate, language may vary across these different types of text.

In recent years, both rhetorical and pragmatic analysis have become much more sophisticated, facilitated by the use of computers. Large corpora of text can now be used to search for specific forms or functions, making reliable quantitative analysis much more feasible and allowing a concentration on specific text types (see, e.g., Swales et al. [1998] on the use of the imperative in research articles as an example of the former, and Hyland [1997] on hedging, of the latter).

In the early 1990s, researchers such as Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) developed a more focused methodology, which they referred to as genre analysis, as an alternative approach to satisfy the need for text-specificity. A genre is a particular type of communicative event which has a particular communicative purpose recognised by its users, or discourse community. By targeting specific genres as the

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4 The data was from both journal articles and textbooks.
object of linguistic analysis, one ensures that the description is valid for the specific situation and participants (especially where members of the discourse community are consulted as part of the analysis). Genre analysis has become a veritable industry in EAP research since the pioneering work of Swales and Bhatia. Studies have focused primarily on the research article and the various sections thereof (most notably introductions, but also abstracts and discussion sections [Nwogu, 1997]; introductory textbooks [Love, 1991]; graduate seminars [Weissberg, 1993]; conference presentations [Shalom, 1993]; lectures [Young, 1994; Thompson, 1994] and school genres [e.g. Martin, 1993]).

Genre analysis has more recently been further broadened. Some researchers are now no longer content to use representatives of the discourse community as specialist informants to confirm the linguistic interpretation, which is the primary focus of the study. Members of the discourse community (along with their physical situation) now become a primary focus of the analysis, equal to, if not more important than the actual text. Analysis thus becomes more ethnographic (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995) and genre is conceived of as a dynamic phenomenon, subject to change and adaptation by the participants, in contrast to the somewhat static original text-bound conceptualisation.

The relevance of all this activity in discourse analysis is that the descriptions produced may be applied to pedagogy. In the best examples of this work, discourse analysts not only provide linguistic descriptions, but also show how their findings could be applied to pedagogy.

**Narrow vs. wide-angle perspectives**

A question that often arises in the design of EAP courses concerns the level of specificity that should be adopted. Some argue that at the lower levels of general English competence, learners are not ready for discipline-specific language and learning tasks, while others argue that the most cost-effective teaching is that which focuses on the immediate specific needs confronting learners in their disciplines.

The issue is related to what Bloor and Bloor (1986) refer to as the *common core hypothesis* in applied linguistics. According to proponents of this hypothesis, there is a common core of grammatical and lexical items that predominates in any linguistic register. Thus, whatever type of text one analyses, a common set of linguistic structures and vocabulary items will run through it. When applied to language teaching, it follows, according to this position, that before
embarking on any specific purpose course, learners may master the basic set of linguistic items which make up the common core.

There are a number of problems with the common core hypothesis, however. It is possible to specify a set of items to make up a common core because grammatical forms make up a finite set. This is to ignore the question of meaning, however. Any form has many possible meanings, according to the context in which it appears. The common core is a formal system, divorced from meaning and use. Because meaning is determined by context, if meaning is to be incorporated into the common core hypothesis, it is not possible to escape from the notion of specific varieties. Mastery of any language system, whether or not it is claimed to be a part of the common core, must take place within the context of a specific variety or varieties (Bloor and Bloor, 1986).

Turning this argument on its head, proponents of narrow angle EAP can argue that, because the common core is to be found in any variety, then it is possible to learn the common core at the same time as learning the specific variety. Such an approach is more cost effective, it can be argued, as mastery of the specific language of the target discipline can begin at any level of overall competence.

In its application to pedagogy, another problem with the common core hypothesis is that it assumes an incremental model of language acquisition. It assumes that learners can first master the common core and then go on to the variety-specific features. If there is one important finding of research in second language acquisition, it is that learning is not incremental. Learners tend to acquire features of the language system when they are ready, not necessarily in the order they are presented to them by their teachers and course books. If, after eight years of secondary school English, a university student has still not mastered third person subject verb agreement or the article system – both common errors in language users who are in other ways highly proficient in the language – then EAP curriculum planners are justified in moving on to more discipline-specific features, it can be argued.

Finally, with its focus on language items, a common core approach neglects language skills. An EAP discipline is defined as much by the activities performed within it as by its typical language forms and meanings. EAP needs to prepare learners to read textbooks, listen to lectures, write essays, and do library research, among a range of other skills. Curriculum planners cannot wait until mastery of the common core is complete before focusing on these discipline-specific activities. It is far better to do remedial work on common core items – which will regularly be encountered
in any variety – at the same time as developing the discipline-specific skills.

Some EAP practitioners have argued for wide-angle EAP/ESP on general pedagogic grounds. Widdowson (1983) has claimed that narrow-angle ESP is a type of ‘training’, as opposed to ‘education’. If ESP is to play a role as part of the broader educational process, then broader competencies will be developed in courses with broader aims, courses which focus on ‘purposeful activity’ rather than specific language. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue for a broad-angle approach on similar grounds, claiming that competence in the skills required in the target situation is more important than the specific language of those situations. Ultimately, however, these positions fall back on the common core hypothesis in assuming that a basic set of language items exists, which learners already know and which they can use in the development of the target skills. Those who reject the common core hypothesis, however, argue that the specific language associated with the specific skills might just as well be the target of learning than a register which must be artificially created to employ only those items of language which purportedly belong to the common core.

Collaboration with subject specialists

A distinctive feature of EAP work is the increasing collaboration which takes place with subject specialists. The earliest account of systematic subject/language teacher collaboration in EAP is described by T. Johns and Dudley-Evans (1980), who claim that problems encountered by overseas students in the UK are rarely concerned with ‘knowledge of the language’, or ‘knowledge of the subject’ alone, but that these two factors are ‘inextricably intertwined’ (p. 8). Johns and Dudley-Evans believe that the language teacher needs to be able to grasp the conceptual structure of the subject his students are studying if he is to understand fully how language is used to represent that structure; to know how the range of different subjects are taught during the course; and to observe where and how difficulties arise in order that he can attempt to help both student and subject teacher to overcome them. (Johns and Dudley-Evans, 1980: 8)

Johns and Dudley-Evans’s team-teaching experiment was conducted with small classes of postgraduate students. A larger scale application of a similar approach for beginning university students is described by Flowerdew (1993a) at Sultan Qaboos University,
Oman. In the course described by Flowerdew, the foundation year science course and the science support English course were team-taught by paired science and language teachers. The focus was primarily on the lectures, but also on the assigned reading that accompanied the lectures. The English teachers observed the science lectures and video recordings were made for exploitation in the English class. English and science staff also collaborated in the writing and editing of materials to be used in both the science and English classes.

Barron lists two other methods for working with subject specialists besides collaborative or team-teaching. The first of these is the subjects-specialist informant method, where the subject specialist provides insights into the content and organisation of texts and the processes of the subject. The second is the consultative method, where the subject specialist is brought in to participate at specific stages in a course. He/she may suggest topics for projects, give lectures, assist in the assessment of students' work, and run discussions, among a whole range of activities.

Taking content and language teacher collaboration a stage further is A. Johns (1997a), who calls for EAP literacy specialists to act as 'mediators' among students, faculty and administrators. Johns sees the role of the EAP literacy teacher as one who encourages students and subject specialists to collaboratively examine the interactions of 'texts, roles and contexts'. The literacy teacher needs to educate not only students but also content teachers as to the nature of academic literacy, so that they are able to appreciate the assumptions within their own disciplines regarding literacy, on the one hand, and the goals and intricacies of language programmes designed to initiate learners into these disciplines, on the other.

**Ethnography and culture**

Although both research and curriculum work in ESP have been much concerned with language and discourse, at the same time there has been a continuing, though less systematically documented, preoccupation on the part of some with more ethnographic approaches to both research and pedagogy. Indeed, the development of EAP linguistic research, as described above, already demonstrates a move away from a focus on language in isolation towards a consideration of discourse in context.

The rationale for more ethnographic approaches as far as pedagogy is concerned, lies in the potential mismatch between the academic culture of the EAP provider and the background culture of
the learner. Such mismatches may occur both where curricula with an ‘Anglo’ bias are employed in non-Anglo settings and where overseas NNSs study in Anglo countries. The approach is predicated on the idea of getting away from what Coleman (1996) calls an autonomous approach to the classroom, which assumes that classroom phenomena everywhere are and should be much the same, in favour of an ideological position, which is culturally embedded and recognises social processes as influencing classroom activity.

In line with the ideological view, grounded in an ethnographic investigation of a large scale, internationally-funded EAP project in Egypt, Holliday (1994) argues strongly against the imposition of alien pedagogic models in such non-Anglo EAP settings, in favour of greater sensitivity to the social context. Barron (1992) also argues for local input to EAP curricula, in his case the traditional local culture and technology in Papua New Guinea.

As an outcome of an ethnographic study of an English-medium university in Hong Kong, Flowerdew and Miller (1995) offered a grounded model of culture in lectures where expatriate NSs of English lecture to Cantonese L1 students. Flowerdew and Miller posited four dimensions of culture where cross-cultural communication breakdown is likely to occur: ethnic culture, local culture, academic culture and disciplinary culture. Ethnic culture is concerned with the socio-psychological make-up of students and overseas lecturers, which may differ due to their contrasting ethnic background; local culture is concerned with aspects of the local setting with which students are familiar, but with which lecturers may not be. Academic culture refers to values, roles, assumptions, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, etc., which may differ across cultures; disciplinary culture refers to the theories, concepts, norms and terms of a particular discipline with which lecturers are familiar and students, as apprentices, by definition, are not.

Turning now to English L1 contexts, ethnographic research has again revealed cross-cultural difficulties. An early study was that of Dudley-Evans and Swales (1980) who highlighted problems likely to be encountered by Arab students in British universities. Cortazzi and Jin (1994) have described the contrasting expectations of Chinese research students and their British supervisors. Benson’s (1988) ethnographic study of an Arab student in the United States, while not written from a cross-cultural perspective, provided a number of insights as far as preparation for lecture listening is concerned. Benson discovered, for example, that whereas in his EAP listening classes his Arab student had been listening to ‘comprehend’, to get some facts, in his content lectures he was listening to ‘learn’, to get
the facts, but also to understand the attitudes that underlay their selection and presentation (p. 441). Benson also discovered that in lectures, listening is only one of a range of skills employed. The other macro-skills of reading, writing and speaking are also required, along with note-taking.

A common cultural problem in both L1 and L2 contexts is attitudes towards plagiarism. A number of articles have considered contrasting cultural views on this issue (Cortazzi, 1990; Scollon, 1996; Pennycook, 1996a). These articles highlight how different academic cultures can view the ‘borrowing’ of others’ words in different lights.

Critical perspectives

In a 1997 article John Swales, the doyen of EAP, confessed to a certain self-deception in his 30-year involvement with the enterprise. He admitted to having accepted the view during the 1970s that, in his words, ‘what Third World countries needed was a rapid acceleration in their resources of human capital, which could be achieved by hurried transmission of Western technical and scientific know-how delivered through the medium of English and supported by appropriate EAP programmes’ (p. 377). Swales had viewed his experience working overseas in scientific English as, in his words again, ‘a culturally and politically neutral enterprise’. Having read the work of authors such as Phillipson (1992) and Pennycook (1994a), however, which highlights certain ‘neo-colonialist’ aspects of English – for example, how it is ‘marketed’ as a global ‘commodity’, its association with the maintenance of socio-political structures that rely on a linguistic ‘overclass’ proficient in English, and the link between the teaching of technical language and the manufacture and export of technical equipment – Swales is now sensitive to some of the more contentious ideological implications of English as a world language and EAP as an important part of that phenomenon.

In his reassessment, Swales has coincided with a more critical turn in EAP on a number of fronts (e.g. Santos, 1992; Benesch, 1993; Pennycook, 1994b, 1997a). Various practitioners have criticised EAP for avoiding important ideological issues and being too ready to accommodate to the status quo at the expense of their second language students (e.g. Santos, 1992; Benesch, 1993). Santos (1992), for example, critiqued Horowitz for arguing against process writing in favour of a needs-based approach which emphasised realistic simulations and writing essay exams under time pressure. Similarly Benesch (1993) was critical of Reid (1989) and her emphasis on
students ‘[understanding] what the professor wants’ and ‘feel[ing] secure about being able to fulfil those expectations.’ (p. 233). ‘Reality and authenticity [for EAP practitioners such as Reid],’ Benesch (1993) argues, ‘are located in current academic institutions, departments, lectures, discourse, genres, texts, and tasks. These academic structures are given in the EAP literature, not areas of debate or resistance.’ Instead of this accommodationist stance, EAP should be ready to argue that the academy bears a responsibility to adapt itself to the cultures, world views and languages of second and foreign language students, Benesch argues. In being too ready to accommodate traditional academic practices, EAP limits the participation of NNS students in the academic culture. ‘The politics of pragmatism leads to a neglect of more inclusive and democratic practices, such as negotiating the curriculum and collaborative learning because these are rarely practiced in non-ESL classes’ (Benesch, 1993). An example of the more critical approach argued for by Benesch is the needs analysis she conducted at her university (Benesch, 1996), which resulted in the EAP teacher running classes which aimed at modifying the target situation. In another study, Benesch (in press) has developed a framework for EAP learners’ rights.

Taking the critique of the pragmatic approach to EAP a stage further, Pennycook (1997a) argues that EAP has a responsibility to develop students’ linguistic and critical awareness in the broadest possible context, well beyond the needs of the specific target disciplines. ‘A curricular focus on providing students only with academic-linguistic skills for dealing with academic work in other disciplines’, Pennycook claims, ‘misses a crucial opportunity to help students to develop forms of linguistic, social and cultural criticism that would be of much greater benefit to them for understanding and questioning how language works both within and outside educational institutions’ (p. 263).

Given the radical, potentially confrontational, nature of these critical positions, they have, unsurprisingly, been subject to dispute. Allison (1996), for example, has argued that it is misleading to represent pragmatism – which he glosses as ‘reinforcing conformity in thought and expression under the guise of pragmatic concerns’ – as a uniform ideology underlying all EAP. He cites a range of examples of collaborations between EAP practitioners and mainstream faculty that highlight, in his words, ‘EAP decisions and practices [which] take account of and change wider realities of power’.

There are a number of other important critical issues which have a bearing on EAP. One of these is what have come to be called World
Issues in EAP: A preliminary perspective

In many post-colonial countries indigenous varieties of English have developed which have phonological, grammatical, lexical, and discoursal features which diverge from British and American standards. The question arises as to what is the appropriate model for EAP in these countries, the local variety or the international standards (Kachru, 1988)? The indigenous variety will perhaps have greater currency locally, but the international standard will be more useful in accessing the international literature, study overseas, interacting with other academics internationally and publishing their research results in international journals.

Variation in World Englishes has given rise to calls in some quarters for greater tolerance of different rhetorical styles in international publication. Tickoo (1994: 34) has written on this issue as follows: 'Academics share disciplinary cultures. But before they gain entrance into such cultures, they are, in every case, members of ethic cultures which influence the way they use language for a purpose.' Mauranen (1993a, 1993b) has argued that international journals should show greater tolerance of different rhetorical styles. Similarly, Yakhontova (1995), writing from a Ukrainian perspective, has argued that Ukrainian scholars want to publish their research internationally in English, but that they want to retain their own distinctive Ukrainian voice. Perhaps such tolerance should also be extended at the instructional level. University faculty should be taught to accept different rhetorical styles in the writing of their NNS students.

Another critical issue in EAP is the dominance of NSs in setting the agenda in the discipline (Tickoo, 1994). Many early EAP projects in NNS settings were set up by expatriates and although most EAP teaching is now done by NNSs and more NNSs are now publishing research in specialist journals (itself, perhaps, evidence of the success of EAP), Anglo practitioners and researchers still predominate in the EAP literature. The situation is one in which most of the EAP literature is written by NSs, but most of the EAP teaching is done by NNSs.

Finally, the EAP issue with perhaps the most significance outside the field itself, concerns the important part played by EAP in the increasing global hegemony of English (Crystal, 1997). English as an international language brings with it great benefits, but it is not without its costs (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994a). On the academic front one important effect of the tendency towards international scholarly publication in English is that academic genres are dying out in some languages. Mauranen (1993b) has noted, for example, that the research article in Finnish has just about
disappeared. As well as impoverishing national cultures, such a loss may have international ramifications: ‘Insofar as rhetorical practices embody cultural thought patterns, we should encourage the maintenance of variety and diversity in academic rhetorical practices – excessive standardisation may counteract innovation and creative thought by forcing them into standard forms’ (Mauranen, 1993b: 172).

Conclusion
This chapter has reviewed some of the key issues in EAP. It has been fairly selective in its choice of issues and fairly cursory in its treatment of these issues. Space has precluded a more detailed treatment. Nevertheless, we hope the chapter will have prepared the ground for a reading of the more in-depth and specific treatments of some of these and related issues in the chapters which make up the main body of this collection.