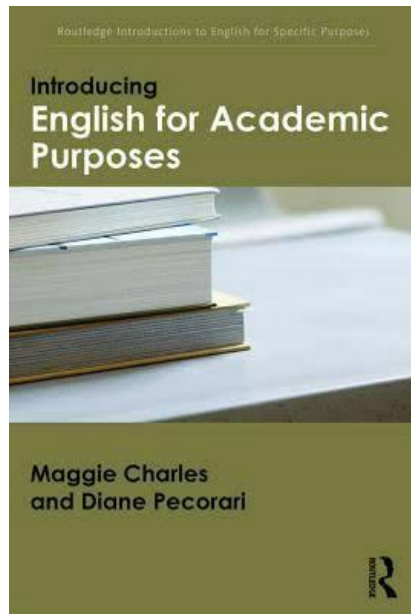


BOOK REVIEW



DIVING INTO THE WORLD OF EAP

Maggie Charles and Diane Pecorari. INTRODUCING ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES (2016), London/New York: Routledge. 205 pp., ISBN-978-1-138-80515-6 (PBK).

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In recent decades, EAP provision in English-speaking countries has been increasing. Here EAP teaching is usually organized in the form of pre-sessional or year-round EAP courses for international students to assist their integration into the academic setting and facilitate successful completion of their studies. In these countries, the need for assistance in academic writing has been recognized by domestic students as well (Swales & Feak, 2012). In addition to the countries of the “inner and outer circles”, where English is spoken as the first or second language, the teaching and learning of EAP has gained academic prominence in the countries of the “expanding circle”, where English is present as a foreign language (Kachru, 1985). Here courses with English as the medium of instruction are offered in numerous contexts, and are attended by international and local students alike. As a result, together with increasing EAP provision, the need for EAP teachers with relevant qualifications and experience is also growing (Jordan, 1997). It is experienced, novice, and future EAP teachers, both native and non-native speakers of English coming from a variety of institutional contexts, that constitute the target group of readers *Introducing English for Academic Purposes* is intended for.

At the macro-level, the book is divided into the introduction, three main sections, and a conclusion, accompanied by the glossary, references, and index. Each main section highlights some of the most important issues that concern the EAP teaching and research community, and is further subdivided into several chapters. Section I explores the vast variety of contexts in which EAP instruction may take place, and sets the foundations for the following two sections. This section consists of three chapters. The first chapter examines the relationship between EAP and other English language teaching areas, presents the various activities, issues and concepts that the EAP teacher engages with, and introduces what academic English actually is. The second chapter enables the readers to understand the position of their local teaching situations within global EAP provision. The section concludes with the third chapter that presents the institutional roles of actors other than teachers and the influence of their decision-making on the teaching situation.

Section II focuses on the process of planning and preparing an EAP course. It opens with the fourth chapter in which the reader will find information on corpus-based, genre-based, and social context-based approaches that inform EAP research and teaching. Chapter five focuses on the process of needs analysis, learning objectives, suitable and relevant content of an EAP course, and the principle of constructive alignment or relationship between learning objectives, course content, and assessment. This section closes with the sixth chapter that will help the reader make informed decisions on the use of commercially available and self-produced teaching and learning materials.

Different aspects of EAP provision are addressed in the third and final main section. The seventh chapter examines variation in academic discourse and focuses on those EAP issues that students might find most problematic. How to distinguish various types of vocabulary items, make sound decisions on which vocabulary the students need, and use a variety of successful approaches to enhance vocabulary learning and acquisition are presented in chapter eight. After this, chapter nine focuses on the characteristics of key academic expert genres, their different uses in various disciplines, and their use for teaching purposes as receptive reading activities. Moving from genres that students are expected to receptively understand to genres that students are required to produce, chapter ten helps EAP teachers to be(come) familiar with some key learner genres, decide which are appropriate for their teaching situations, and which teaching options are available. Chapter eleven discusses the structure of lectures, difficulties that students might experience when listening and taking notes, good presentations, and encouraging students to take active roles in academic discussions and seminars. The twelfth and final chapter of the book introduces some frequently used assessment forms, examines the factors that enhance the effect of corrective feedback, and addresses plagiarism.

At the micro-level, all chapters follow the same structure. First, there is a brief introduction to the main topic of the chapter, a reference to the previous

chapter(s), a definition of the learning objectives that each chapter pursues, and a description of the learning outcomes. The initial reflection stimulates the readers to consider their own teaching situations and rely on their previous knowledge regarding specific EAP features. There is also a concluding reflection that encourages a consideration of what has been learnt and how the new insights might be applied. Critically-oriented content introduces various theory- and research-based perspectives, and uses systematically recurring tasks to encourage reflection on a local group or course, looking for more information on the Internet or in academic journals, or collecting relevant information, writing a mini report, and presenting the results to classmates (if possible). Profiles of practice bring descriptions of EAP teachers' contexts and perspectives that are relevant to the discussion of the chapter, and guide readers to make connections between the presented theory and practical EAP contexts. Finally, each chapter ends with an annotated further reading and resources section containing useful resources and tools.

This book undoubtedly has a number of strengths. The first and most important one is its learner-centeredness understood both as centeredness on the needs of present or future EAP students and centeredness on the reader as learner. A recurrent focus is awareness of and focus on EAP learner needs that are at the core of the three main EAP activities: teaching, materials design, and research. An illustrative example of EAP learner-centeredness can be found in chapter seven where focus is placed on those carefully selected discursal features that EAP students may have problems with and not just any features. The readers are sensitized to the paramount importance of learner needs in the process of planning, delivery, and evaluation of an EAP course as well as assessment.

Overall, the approach undertaken by the authors is dialogic. Throughout the book the readers are stimulated to draw on their existing knowledge and reflect on their local teaching situations. Through the presentation of different approaches and viewpoints, and frequent tasks the readers are made aware of the possible choices but then encouraged to make informed personal decisions. The presentation of opinions and descriptions stemming from the practices of EAP teachers helps the readers to consider differences and similarities with their situations, and think of new ideas that may be incorporated into their teaching contexts. Therefore, the informed reflection on the content of the book and consideration of local teaching contexts enhance the transference of knowledge to new situations.

Another strength of this book is its reader friendliness that derives from the clear and analytic structure of the text, and its coherence and cohesion. As stated by the authors in the introduction, the sections and chapters do not have to be read in the order in which they are presented (though it is recommended if the reader is an applied linguistics student, novice teacher, or junior researcher). The coherent text structure shared by all chapters smoothly guides the readers through the brief introductions, initial reflections, and theoretical input. The frequent tasks

encourage further research, reading, collecting information or using external resources (e.g. language corpora) while the concluding reflections establish a link between old and new knowledge. If this book is used as part of an applied linguistics course, it can stimulate collaborative learning and co-construction of knowledge through the use of tasks that suggest preparing mini reports or group discussions. Where theoretical presentations are more complex, they are accompanied by summaries in the form of tables that help the readers to maintain an overview of the content. The fact that the further reading and resources section at the end of each chapter is annotated facilitates the decision about which resources will be most useful.

Despite the indisputable quality of this book, there are some minor points that might be considered as opportunities for improvement. Clearly, a book that is designed to introduce a topic to its readers is not expected to provide elaborated stances on issues that have been dedicated books to on their own. However, two rather determined statements would call for some more elaboration. The first concerns the differences between EGAP and ESAP. Here only one argument is proposed as a drawback of ESAP (p. 34), namely the perception of many EAP teachers that they are expected to demonstrate specific disciplinary knowledge they might not possess. Given the other benefits of ESAP compared to EGAP, forms of collaboration between ESAP teachers and disciplinary experts could be suggested (see, for instance, Jordan, 1997). Secondly, the discussion of response and feedback concludes with the statement that “teachers are well advised not to assume that resources that go to feedback are well spent” (p. 179). In this section the beneficial effects of (sharply targeted) feedback are indeed presented. Hopefully, however, no teacher would be induced into assuming that feedback might not be an essential part of the teaching process (see, for instance, Dostal, 2016).

A dilemma that all contemporary book authors should consider and find an answer to is how to make sure that the Internet links included at the time of writing of the book will still be active at the time of reading it. Even though it is possible to find the relevant webpages through Internet browsers if the correct keywords are applied, broken links can be a cause of frustration (e.g. p. 40, Task 3, point 1). Finally, a point to consider in relation to spoken genres and lecture structure is that in “expanding circle” countries in particular, lectures in English are frequently delivered by disciplinary experts that are not highly proficient users of English, which can significantly affect the way in which their spoken texts are structured and delivered (see, for instance, Tzoannopoulou, 2013).

In conclusion, *Introducing English for Academic Purposes* is an essential reading resource for students of applied linguistics, and novice as well as experienced teachers of EAP. Because of the combination of theoretical insights with practical applications of new knowledge, less experienced teachers will gain a basic insight into the rich world of EAP and an awareness of the variety of possibilities to explore. Experienced EAP teachers, on the other hand, might

frequently be teaching in isolation (Jordan, 1997) and thus the book will first offer them alternatives that they might not yet be aware of. In addition, those experienced teachers that do not yet have a systematic overview of the field of EAP will be able to put all the missing puzzle pieces into the right places or use the ideas from the book as a springboard for further research or a new perspective on their teaching situations. This means that there is no doubt that anybody involved in EAP will warmly welcome this book.

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Reviewed by **VIOLETA JURKOVIČ**
 Faculty of Maritime Studies and Transport
 University of Ljubljana
 Slovenia
 violeta.jurkovic@fpp.uni-lj.si

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