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*Enacting the Curriculum in English for Academic Purposes:  
A Legitimation Code Theory Analysis*

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
the degree of Doctor of Education

May 2018

School of Education  
Durham University, UK



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## ABSTRACT

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This doctoral research project sought to better understand and articulate how English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is locally enacted. The context selected was a university summer pre-session programme for international students. At the time of data collection, I was the course director and the questions shaping the research emerged over a number of years in this role, primarily through the observation of teaching staff. Taking a case study approach and informed by a social realist lens (Bernstein, 1990; 2000; Maton, 2014), the research asked:

*How is EAP locally enacted?*

*What are the organising principles underpinning this enactment?*

Drawing on Bernstein's notion of *recontextualisation* and theorising of the *epistemic pedagogic device* (Maton, 2014, after Bernstein, 1990), the study explored the 'double enactment' of EAP: firstly, from the values and beliefs shaping the pre-session ethos into curriculum, and then from pedagogic materials into classroom practices. Data collection and analysis combined interviews with the course designers, examination of curriculum materials, and exploration of videos of teaching.

The analytical framework drew on two dimensions of Maton's *Legitimation Code Theory*, or 'LCT' (Maton, 2014), a development of Bernstein's code theory (Bernstein, 1977; 1990; 2000). These two dimensions were Specialisation and Semantics (Maton, 2014). Specialisation's component concepts of *epistemic relations* (relations between knowledge and its object of study) and *social relations* (relations between knowledge and knowers) were used to explore the macro-orientation and goals of the pre-session programme. The Semantics concept of *semantic gravity* (the relative context

dependency of meaning) was then enacted to analyse the structuring principles of materials design and classroom recontextualisation.

LCT Specialisation analysis revealed a programme characterised by a stronger orientation to *knowledge practices* than to *knower practices* - i.e. an emphasis on understanding particular concepts and developing particular analytical skills, what Maton calls a *trained gaze* (Maton, 2014). Some curriculum-internal variation was also observed, however, enabling a nuanced view into practices. This orientation was found to shape programme thinking and design in important ways, informing both materials development and expectations of teaching.

LCT Semantics analysis revealed a local curriculum characterised by a relatively wide *semantic range*. Learning outcomes are geared towards both explicit understanding of core course concepts and scaffolded, spiralling opportunities for students to ground these concepts in academic writing and speaking practice. Movements across curriculum threads between concepts and practice create shifts in the context-dependency of curricular knowledge. These *semantic gravity waves* (Maton, 2013; Macnaught, Maton, Martin & Matruglio, 2013) over curriculum time may enable students to transfer some pre-sessional learning to texts, tasks and assessments not met on the course.

LCT Semantics analysis of the principles structuring lesson design and classroom practice suggest there may be underlying patterns, or what might be considered 'signature profiles'. Illustrations of practice are analysed and interpreted as exhibiting shifts in semantic gravity. These shifts are theorised as perhaps enhancing, but also sometimes hindering, effective enactment of the espoused curriculum.

LCT tools enacted for this research study enable making visible how local course values are reflected and refracted throughout an EAP programme, from the macro-design of curriculum, through individual lessons on the page to their material enactment in the classroom as pedagogic practice. The findings and the conceptual toolkit itself have implications and applications for EAP programme development, teacher education and wider sector understandings of the situated realisation of university-based curriculum and pedagogy.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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My journey to submission has been a long one. It has been hugely challenging and hugely rewarding. I would not have made it to the end were it not for many wonderful people along the way. I wish to thank them here.

Thank you to my various supervisors over the years, including Prof. Kate Wall and Prof. Ray Land. Special thanks to Dr. Nicola Reimann and Dr. Julie Rattray. While I constantly under-produced, you provided final-year encouragement when I needed it most - and made me believe it was possible.

Thank you to my EAP professional colleagues at Durham and beyond. It is through conversations and creations with you that I have most developed in my understandings of EAP programme management, design and practitioner development. At Durham special thanks go to Louise Greener. Without you there would probably have been no programme to research and little motivation or appetite to do so. Wider in the field, special thanks goes to Julie King, Melinda Whong and Alex Ding. You have been mentors for me. I owe important facets of my academic and professional understandings to you.

Thank you to the amazing colleagues and friends in the LCT community who have provided endless inspiration and encouragement over the last few years. Sherran Clarence and Gina Roach, you afforded me copious amounts of your time and brainpower. My work is sharper and more focused as a result. Eszter Szenes and Anna-Vera Sisgaard, your practice-focused insights helped refine my own. Jodie Martin, your tweets from afar, with healthy doses of CAPSLOCK encouragement, kept me going during some of the darker moments. You all believed in my work whenever my own confidence waned.

Without the warmth and generosity of the LCT community, I could not have produced this thesis. The LCT web hub, providing many PhD theses and research articles, has been foundational to my training and doctoral development. I have had the privilege of seeing the conceptual tools enacted in so many creative and thought-provoking ways. I could never have imagined five years ago that I would attend conference talks about ballet education (with live demos), improvisational jazz, the undergraduate nursing curriculum and disaster relief work in Japan...and learn so much for my own thinking and research work. LCT enables colleagues working in vastly different disciplines and on divergent problems to speak with a shared language. Such opportunities continue to hone and refine my own *gaze* with each new object of study.

Thank you to Prof Karl Maton. Your intellectual generosity is an inspiration. I have gained so much from our conversations. From first encounters in Nottingham, to Shanghai, Cape Town and Sydney, you always made time for my questions and confusion. Your emailed words of encouragement and support kept me going. Your critiques and challenges kept me on my toes. You have created a community in which I have found a place - and a new career trajectory.

Thanks also to the creative brilliance of Aphex Twin, Autechre, Boards of Canada and Plaid. It was while wandering, often lost, through your electronic soundscapes that most of the writing here took shape.

Final thanks to Ritsuko and Leia. Coming home to you in the evenings and waking up to you in the mornings reminded me each day that there was more to life than a thesis. You were - and are - my balance.

Thank you all.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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- ANT – Actor Network Theory
- CBI – Content-Based Instruction
- CLIL – Content and Language-Integrated Learning
- CLT – Communicative Language Teaching
- EAP – English for Academic Purposes
- EFL – English as a Foreign Language
- ELT – English Language Teaching
- EGAP – English for Specific Academic Purposes
- EPD – Epistemic Pedagogic Device
- ESAP – English for General Academic Purposes
- ELT – English Language Teaching
- ER – Epistemic Relations
- LoD – Language of Description
- LCT – Legitimation Code Theory
- ORF – Official Recontextualising Field
- PCK – Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- PRF – Pedagogic Recontextualising Field
- SFL – Systemic Functional Linguistics
- SG – Semantic Gravity
- SR – Social Relations
- TEF – Teaching Excellence Framework
- TESOL – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages



# CHAPTER ONE

---

## CLIMATE, CONTEXT AND EMERGING QUESTIONS

---

### **1.1. Educational Setting & Introduction**

In the wider higher education climate today, 'internationalisation' has become a key component of most UK university strategies. The forces of globalisation and increased student mobility have given rise to huge increases in the number of students studying outside their home countries, rising threefold since 1990 to over 4 million in 2013 (OECD, 2015, p. 352). It is universities in English-speaking countries that have received most of these students with, for instance, international students making up 35% of the UK master's level student population (OECD, 2015, p. 355). Changes to university funding systems, in particular given the gradual withdrawal of governmental support, have led many institutions to rely increasingly on international student numbers and fees (Turner 2004, p. 96).

While there are clear benefits to having a more diverse student body, for instance with regard to notions of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997; Deardoff, 2006), there is a growing body of research that points to the significant challenges experienced by international students studying overseas, including questions of acculturation and identity (e.g. Burnapp, 2006), differences in academic culture (e.g. Carroll & Ryan, 2005; Kiley, 2003) and language proficiency (e.g. Li et al, 2010). The significant financial outlay required of these international students brings institutional responsibility in this regard, particularly with respect to student satisfaction and success. This is all the more pertinent in today's marketised higher education. In this climate, the

reputational risks of international students struggling or failing in their academic experience brings scrutiny onto not just the academic background and English language level of students pre-entry, but also onto the quality of teaching and learning provision once they arrive.

Preparatory pre-sessional programmes in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) have become a common means of providing an academic language and literacy induction that international students may choose or, more often, are required to undertake, prior to joining their destination departments. These university-embedded courses typically run over the summer months, prior to commencement of an English-medium degree programme, and aim to facilitate and scaffold "...the study of English for the purpose of participating in higher education. This study [is] centred on the texts (spoken and written) that occur in academic contexts and will include the discourses and practices that surround and give rise to such texts" (Bruce, 2011, p. 6). This broadly reflects the kind of provision offered by the centre and programme in the research site chosen for my study.

In the research literature, the view of student needs on such EAP programmes is converging on a perspective that moves beyond the purely linguistic, to take account of the disciplinary values and practices of destination academic departments (Bruce, 2011; Hyland, 2004; Wingate, 2015). This position can be characterised broadly as espousing an *English for Specific Purposes* (ESAP) approach, and is often contrasted with *English for General Academic Purposes* (EGAP) (Jordan, 1997). The latter tends to represent a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, and might involve teaching mostly generic study skills (e.g. notetaking; listening to lectures; giving presentations).

[1]  
[SEP]

In the research literature, the debate over the relative merits of each approach has played out over several decades (e.g. Hutchison and Waters, 1987; Hyland, 2002; Hyland, 2009; Spack, 1988; Wingate, 2015). A more university and disciplinary practice-invested perspective is therefore not new:

Understanding the nature of literacy involves knowing how knowledge is represented in different disciplines and contexts, being familiar with the strategies needed for understanding and organizing texts, knowing the social contexts in which texts are produced and read, being acquainted with the community and culture that produce and value certain texts and types of text, and knowing how previous experiences of literacy shape perceptions and expectations as to the nature of written discourse.

(Long & Richards, 1996, as cited in Johns, 1996, p. ix)



Such a contextually situated view of language and texts tends not to filter down into mainstream EAP textbook design<sup>1</sup>, however (Harwood, 2005; Tribble, 2009), so many EAP units, including the one where the research took place, write their own programme materials. This enables pre-sessional curriculums to be developed in line with, for instance, local understandings of departmental expectations, assessments and target text types. The quality of relationships with academic departments and the level of engagement with EAP staff will shape the likely success of such collaborations.

There are significant differences with respect to the local enactments of EAP, however. Institutional missions create different affordances for education, for student recruitment and for curriculum (Hadley, 2015). These affordances are likely also to be refracted into EAP units, impacting upon, for instance, the curriculum choices that are made, the kinds of teachers who are attracted to work on summer pre-sessional programmes, and upon the classroom practice that results. As an external examiner of UK summer pre-sessional programmes since 2009, I have seen first hand the extent to which curricular and classroom practices can vary across the country. Programmes can range from strict adherence to a single mainstream EAP textbook, such as Oxford EAP (e.g. De Chazal & McCarter, 2012), through coursebooks supplemented with other published pedagogical materials, to courses that have been designed wholly in-house by EAP professionals, sometimes in collaboration with receiving departments.

There are, as yet, few established academic or professional routes into EAP teaching in the UK. Teachers tend to enter the field after a number of years in more general English teaching contexts, bringing with them their 'EFL<sup>2</sup> inheritance', a rich set of practices and assumptions, both explicit and tacit, about what learners need and what constitutes appropriate classroom pedagogy. They may or may not hold a diploma level qualification in English language teaching (e.g. The Cambridge DELTA), and they may or may not hold a postgraduate degree (e.g. MA Applied Linguistics). There are still only a handful of dedicated postgraduate qualifications in teaching EAP (Ding & Campion, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> This may be in part due to publisher understandings of 'what sells', given global markets for English language coursebooks.

<sup>2</sup> English as a Foreign Language

Teachers thus come into EAP from fairly diverse backgrounds and enter work in a range of contexts with a variety of published and/or homegrown materials, in institutional climates that may afford differing levels of support and opportunities for development of classroom expertise. Practitioners recruited into local programmes for the summer may well not work in university environments during the year. While our returnee level is relatively high (50%+), the teacher base shifts and changes significantly from year to year. This means there is never really a stable cohort to work with long-term on developing, for example, a shared vision of EAP curriculum and pedagogy.

Teachers hired to work on the pre-sessional programmes join us to operationalise a course that has been developed in-house over a number of years and which has achieved institutional recognition and approval<sup>3</sup>. They do so in a context that usually does not afford them the luxury of time for training and longer term induction into the ways of thinking and practising of the EAP unit, as is common across the country: the EAP sector in the UK generally relies on sessional teachers being able to arrive, pick up a course and deliver it.

In summary, therefore, despite the broad convergence in theoretical views in the literature briefly referred to above, the professional practice of EAP on the ground is characterised by diversity: diversity in institutional context and affordances; diversity in materials selection and/or curricular design; diversity in professional expertise and backgrounds; and diversity in classroom delivery. It was in this context of fluid, shifting practices in what is still an emerging field that the professional questions emerged, developing over time in dialogue with the conceptual and empirical literature, to become the study presented here. And it was the search for a deeper and more principled understanding of the local enactments of EAP that became the impetus for the research at the heart of this thesis.

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<sup>3</sup> Pre-Sessional exit grades are accepted by the university in lieu of an external examination, such as IELTS, for example.

## 1.2. The Research Problem

Touring classrooms during ‘buzz observations’ in my role as programme director, where I would spend 20 minutes with a class before moving to several others in the same way, I became aware of sometimes considerable differences in the ways our course materials were being delivered across teachers. Through professional conversations and engagement with research literature, I began to see that teachers were in no sense ‘implementing’ the lessons we had created, but were rather, in a sense, ‘assembling them anew’ each time (after Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 53). The pre-sessional management team had developed the curriculum; however, in bringing materials alive at point of need, our teachers were changing things, and often not intentionally.

Something was going on in the translational space between the *espoused* curriculum and the *enacted* curriculum. Between page and pedagogy there were interpretations, shifts, losses, gains, misunderstandings and, often, great creativity. I began quickly to develop a sense that this variation in enactment was related to the conscious shifts we had been making towards a university-invested sense of EAP practice and the move towards a more content-driven syllabus. Though I was unable clearly to articulate the problem at the time, *the what* of the materials appeared to be affecting *the how* of enactment - or at least course designer and managers' sense of the how.

Professional questions emerged from seeing this *discursive gap* (Bernstein 2000, p. 209; Maton 2014, pp. 16–17) between design and delivery. Some were negatively framed questions like ‘why is this teacher not seeing the underlying goals of this session?’, and ‘why are the learning outcomes here not being connected to the future values and practices of students’ academic departments?’. Others, such as ‘how can I enable other staff to be as effective as *this* teacher?’, came from the privilege of watching many talented practitioners in action. While trying hard not to jump to overly normative views of what *should* be, this early process of questioning led me to see more clearly that there was, however, a locally evolved set of values and assumptions that was guiding our practice. These values were, sometimes tacitly and sometimes explicitly, informing not just course design but also the kinds of messages given at teacher inductions, during staff meetings and emerging from observations of classroom practice. I wanted to better understand how these elements were coming together in

curriculum and in the classroom to create the local configurations of practice and the diversity I saw in our summer EAP classrooms.

### **1.3. Research Aims and Strategy**

#### **1.3.1. Research Questions**

To address both the limitations of research to date and the questions that emerged in my professional practice, the study aimed to explore the situated enactment of the EAP pre-session programme, with a view to understanding how course values shape design, and how these in turn shape what summer pre-session teachers do with materials. Informed by the theoretical and empirical literature, particularly from the sociology of education, the research project was thus conceived as a case study of the *recontextualisation*<sup>4</sup> of EAP: from conceptualisation through curriculum to classroom. The primary questions guiding my study were:

*How is EAP locally enacted?*

*What are the organising principles underpinning this enactment?*

These questions could be re-expressed in more granular terms of the 'recontextualisation journey' travelled in this thesis: How do programme designers conceive the course? How is this vision then realised in pedagogical materials, and do the principles reflect the practice? How do practitioners lift lessons off the page with students at point of need, and what is the relationship between these pedagogical practices and what appears on the pages of the coursebook? Finally, looking beyond the thesis, how might teacher development, management messages and materials writing be informed and enhanced through a better understanding of these practices?

A more *relational* study of curricular and pedagogic enactment led to a number of other questions<sup>5</sup>. Are there underlying patterns in the way lessons are enacted? What are the shifts and changes that take place as teachers bring pedagogical materials alive? What does variation in enactment look like? How can we understand this variation?

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<sup>4</sup> This concept is discussed and exemplified in chapter 2, and forms a key component of the theoretical framework underpinning the empirical work in this thesis (see chapter 3).

<sup>5</sup> These further areas for consideration emerged in relation to the primary research questions, and during the course of engagement with theory and data. They do not represent further 'research questions' to address in any formal sense. Each question *is* touched upon eventually in what follows, however. Some answers emerge tentatively from the empirical chapters. Others are returned to in the final chapter, where I point to possibilities for future practice.

When does 'creativity' or 'teacher agency' in this relational space risk negatively impacting student learning? How might we evolve ways during staff induction and curriculum meetings of 'aligning' teacher practice in the interests of consistency of student experience, without being overly prescriptive about what should happen in the classroom? How do we negotiate academic autonomy in a standardised curriculum, yet also scaffold those who may need support in enacting this curriculum? And how might we learn from those who innovate and push our materials in refined or new directions? In short, what are the 'rules of the game' underpinning pre-sessional programme enactment, and how can insights gained from understanding EAP materials structuring and enactment be made visible to teachers, to coordinators and to materials writers in ways that can feed productively back into professional practice?

### **1.3.2. Research Approach**

The site of the study was a university in the north of the UK, where Pre-Sessional EAP curriculum and strategy have developed over the past decade through continued dialogue with teaching staff and students, through external conversations at conferences, and through ongoing professional engagement with the research literature.

A particular focus of the research was on the local, curricular and pedagogic enactment of EAP, and so this naturally lent itself to a qualitative approach (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 20; Creswell, 2012, p. 204ff). In order to enable a relational exploration of EAP classroom practice, an embedded case study approach was chosen (Yin, 2009, p. 46). In dialogue with the theoretical and research literature (chapter 3), it became clear that exploring teachers' *pedagogising* of materials (Bernstein, 2000; Singh, 2002) would also require understanding the structuring principles of the materials themselves. The study extended 'upstream' from classroom pedagogy to coursebook page, and to the staff- and student-facing messages about guiding course principles and intended learning outcomes. The research thus became a slightly wider endeavour to make visible the local 'rules of the game' and how these shape the realisation of EAP in one particular professional context.

The empirical investigation thus consisted of three phases, exploring in turn (1) the values and messages surrounding the pre-sessional curriculum, (2) the structuring principles underpinning materials design, and (3) the pedagogic realisation by teachers of the materials in the classroom. EAP staff all worked with the same study materials, and so this allowed comparisons of classroom enactment. Several iterations of video data were collected from 3-4 classrooms simultaneously, enabling empirical exploration across lessons and across teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select 4 teachers from a total cohort of 10. Teachers were chosen primarily on the basis of experience, and then willingness and availability. It is worth acknowledging here that a different selection of teachers might have led to a quite different set of findings. However, the intention for this particular research project was not to explore the full diversity of classroom practices represented across the pre-sessional staff. Rather I sought an *illustrative* view into expert pedagogic enactment and an understanding of the principles structuring these practices, to serve as the basis for future investigation of, for instance, less experienced professionals.

In terms of conceptual framework, the study incorporated 3 theories. Firstly, *critical realism* provided the underpinning ontological commitments and orientation to 'knowledge' as *real* but subject to change over time. Maton's theorising of the *epistemic pedagogic device* (Maton, 2014), which develops and extends Bernstein's *pedagogic device* (Bernstein, 1990), was then used to conceptualise EAP as three interrelated but analytically separable fields: research, curriculum and pedagogy. Finally, and most centrally, the research incorporated *Specialisation* and *Semantics*, two dimensions of Maton's Legitimation Code Theory (Maton, 2014; Maton, Hood & Shay, 2016), in order to analyse the organising principles of teachers' selection, sequencing and pacing of curricular content. Together, these theories enabled a relational exploration of EAP curriculum and pedagogy and a theorisation of practitioner enactment in ways that rise beyond the particular cases examined. The goal was to generate insights that would be of wider significance to research and professional practice in EAP, and in higher education more broadly.

### **1.3.3. Use of Terms: 'Curriculum', 'Syllabus' and 'Knowledge'**

#### **1.3.3.1. 'Curriculum' & 'Syllabus'**

The term *curriculum* and what it denotes is open to differential understandings. A clear choice of definition is therefore important early on in this work. In simple terms, there is, for instance, a US-UK distinction in usage. Where in US writings 'curriculum' is taken to denote *what is to be taught*, UK writers have tended to use the term *syllabus*. This is particularly evident in the ELT literature (Nunan, 1988; Richards, 2013; White, 1998).

For the purposes of this thesis, and following UK traditions, I will maintain the use of 'syllabus' to signify the product orientations – i.e. to denote the curriculum-as-designed on paper. The syllabus is thus the narrow 'what' of the course. Following process orientations discussed in the next chapter, and in line with Barnett and Coate (2004), I will understand the term curriculum to subsume the syllabus, and to include also the wider goals of the programme, its assessment objectives, and the overarching ethos and values within which the programme is conceived and realised. This distinction thereby retains both UK usage and a wider sense of 'curriculum' than is common in US writing traditions. Beyond the literature review, it is the term 'curriculum' that I use most, given the research focus on the enactment of wider course objectives.

#### **1.3.3.2. 'Knowledge'**

The concept of 'knowledge' is central to this thesis. As will be discussed in chapters 2 and 3, this term as used in education and research often conflates two different phenomena: a body of 'knowledge' as external to the human mind, and the 'knowledge' that an individual has about the world. Maton (2014), and others working in the social realist tradition, make an analytic distinction between the two, characterising the latter instead as 'knowing' (belief; understanding). Thus, for instance, the educationalist Lee Shulman has written about the specialised *pedagogical content knowledge* of teachers (Shulman 1986; 1987). Maton, however, might analytically separate this concept into a codified body of *knowledge* that could be articulated explicitly and taught to others, as opposed to the embodied dispositions and tacit understandings that characterise expert classroom practice. Maton might therefore recast Shulman's work in terms of pedagogical content *knowledge* and pedagogical content *knowing*. As detailed in

chapter 3, this distinction avoids the conflation of ontology with epistemology - i.e. knowledge (as *real*) as distinct from how that knowledge can be known.

A further conceptual distinction is made in this thesis to enable exploring how the nature of knowledge (in the *realist* sense) may shift and change as it moves across contexts. Disciplinary knowledge generated in the university, for instance, is 'de-located' and 're-located' (Bernstein, 2000, p. 173) as it is transformed into curriculum in educational contexts. It may then be further transformed as it is *recontextualised* in the classroom for the purposes of teaching, learning and assessment. These changes may re-structure in potentially significant ways what this knowledge then becomes.

Throughout this thesis I discuss knowledge practices in each of these three contexts. Thus, when I talk of 'academic knowledge' or 'disciplinary knowledge', I am referring to knowledge generated in Bernstein's *field of production* (university research). When I talk of 'curricular knowledge' or 'course concepts', I am referring to knowledge practices as realised in the *field of recontextualisation* (curriculum documents; coursebooks; individual lesson materials). Finally, I also discuss 'pedagogic knowledge'. This signals what results in the *field of reproduction* (the classroom; assessment) from the realising of curricular knowledge as classroom practices - e.g. discussions of textual content; grammatical explanations; diagrams; and analogies. I discuss these three fields of practice, their place in Bernstein's model of *the pedagogic device* (Bernstein, 1990; 2000), and Maton's (2014) extension of this model more fully in chapter 3.

In English for Academic Purposes (EAP), a debate continues around questions of *specificity* of provision<sup>6</sup>. In terms of the distinctions introduced above, this can involve arguments around curricular and/or pedagogic knowledge practices. The debate focuses primarily on the relative merits of an *English for General Academic Purposes* (EGAP) approach, where all students receive the same instruction regardless of target academic department, and an *English for Specific Academic Purposes* (ESAP) approach, where provision is tailored in terms of students' destination disciplines (cf. Hyland, 2006). In non-technicalised terms, a distinction might therefore be made between 'generic academic knowledge' in EGAP and 'specific academic knowledge' in ESAP. However, this risks conflating both knowledge with knowing, and knowledge

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<sup>6</sup> I touch upon this briefly above (section 1.1) and periodically throughout the thesis.



practices across different contexts (university research; curriculum; classroom). I express this conflation further below in terms of a certain 'knowledge blindness' that appears to exist in EAP (after Maton, 2014).

The analytic distinctions summarised briefly in this section offer a more nuanced view into educational practices in EAP. As will be illustrated in chapter 5, this enables cutting through the overly simplistic binaries of EGAP and ESAP. These distinctions became important in my research context as I explored the data. Certain curriculum threads examined in the pre-session coursebooks, for instance, draw on discipline-*specific* texts to raise more 'general' awareness of text structure, argumentation and language choices. Thus disciplinary knowledge from the field of production (textual content) gets recontextualised as mediating content in an EAP lesson, in order to exemplify higher-order concepts (e.g. 'thesis'; 'argumentation'; 'criticality'). This emerges through the identification of a core 'conceptual curriculum' that runs throughout the programme. While specific to a particular discipline, texts chosen may or may not reflect the particular discipline of all students in the class. Curricular content and curricular goals may therefore *differ* with respect to their 'discipline specificity'. These nuances are not visible in the current research literature - a point to which I return later in the thesis.

To summarise, the term 'knowledge' in my research is thus used in an explicitly technicalised sense. This draws on social realist conceptions of knowledge as ontologically real, and recognises different *knowledge structures* (Bernstein, 2000; Maton, 2014) in different contexts of creation and enactment. Where there is possible ambiguity as to which field of practice is being referred to (research, curriculum or classroom), I make this clear with a gloss or footnote.

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The research here represents one case study view into the recontextualisation of EAP, and the structuring effects this has for curriculum and pedagogy. The aim is to provide an account of, for instance, how curricular knowledge moves across text time and through class time - and perhaps also in ways that can inform the enhancement of practice. The shape of enacted practices here may turn out not to be typical of enactments elsewhere. However, the hope is that surfacing the principles structuring

practices in *this* research context might inform similar such work in other contexts. The study also illustrates an approach and the use of a theoretical toolkit that may prove valuable for practitioners and researchers on other EAP programmes.

The high-stakes nature of much EAP, serving increasingly to provide entry to university courses of study, means the quality of course provision, materials design and the professional expertise of teachers is of paramount importance. Effectiveness of learning on EAP programmes matters more than ever, and this means that what teachers do in the classroom with students has also taken on far greater significance across the EAP sector and higher education. The study therefore also aims to develop explanatory accounts that can serve as the basis for development and change in EAP, via greater understanding of curricular and pedagogical practices. This may have wider significance for programme design, staff induction and teacher education, and may enable the investigation and enhancement of local practices elsewhere.

In the emerging climate of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), there is likely to be ever more scrutiny of notions of teaching quality as seen through, for instance, measures of student satisfaction. By seeking to make visible the relationships between curricular and pedagogical knowledge and the shifts that can occur between the two, a further goal of this study is therefore to offer potential insights and applications to the enhancement of educational practices more widely in the university.

## **1.5. Overview of the Thesis**

The storyline of the thesis proceeds as follows. In the next chapter, I provide a review of relevant literature. This serves to locate my study within currently available educational thinking and empirical work into curriculum enactment. In chapter 3 I build the conceptual and analytical framework that provides the basis for the three empirical chapters that follow. This draws principally on Maton's Legitimation Code Theory (LCT), a social realist framework that subsumes and extends the work of Basil Bernstein and Pierre Bourdieu (Maton, 2014). I also outline the research methodology in this chapter, including the selection of teacher participants and the analytical process. Chapters 4–6 represent the empirical heart of the thesis. I first explore the values and espoused practices shaping the conceptualisation of the EAP pre-session programme selected

for this study (chapter 4). This informs chapter 5, which focuses on the structuring principles of the EAP curriculum. Chapter 6 then explores lesson design and pedagogical enactment of lessons in the classroom.

In the final chapter I draw together learning and insights from the empirical diving work, to offer insights and implications for the EAP sector and for wider higher education practice and research. These include practical enactments of LCT tools that can feed iteratively back into curriculum and teacher development. I summarise briefly examples of how these tools have already been used in work with students and teachers, before then pointing to the future possibilities for EAP research, EAP practice and EAP practitioner development.

## CHAPTER TWO

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### GETTING THE LAY OF THE LAND: CURRICULUM ENACTMENT IN HE

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My primary research question is situated in the space where pedagogic materials meet classroom practice. It was here, therefore, that I focused my search in the literature for work that had been done in this area and for conceptual tools that might inform and hone my thinking and the research design. The review situates the study with respect to the research literature in three stages: conceptions of curriculum, empirical studies of curriculum and studies of enactment. I summarise these in turn below.

#### **2.1. Conceptualising the Curriculum**

There is a considerable body of work in the educational literature on curriculum. The field of English Language Teaching also offers rich and diverse orientations (Long & Crookes, 1992, p. 10). I therefore begin with a brief overview of different conceptualisations of curriculum, drawing on the distinctions made by Richards (2013) between *forward*, *central* and *backward* design. This provides a useful lens through which to see different perspectives on the purpose and practice of education, and through which to make sense of some of the diversity.

In *forward design* the content of a programme of study is established prior to any considerations of design or delivery. There is a linear relationship between planning, classroom processes and learner outputs. Early methods and approaches in English Language Teaching, such as audiolingualism and Communicative Language Teaching

(CLT) are examples of forward design, where theories of language and learning drove syllabus design. *Central design* reflects process orientations to design and is broadly consonant with, for instance, the work of curriculum theorists such as Bruner (1966) and Stenhouse (1975). It is concerned with learning processes over pre-specified objectives and thus focuses on methodological considerations, seeing a dynamic, non-linear relationship between planning, classroom enactment and evaluation. Finally, *backward design* reflects the ends-means approach associated with Tyler (1949), and begins with specifications of objectives for learners as the basis for selection of content. Classroom methods are then chosen so as best to attain the objectives identified.

In the field of EAP, conceptual views of curriculum tend to be inherited from the wider field of English Language Teaching. Bruce (2011), for instance, in his teacher-facing *Theory and Concepts of English for Academic Purposes*, bases a chapter on 'developing an EAP syllabus' around widely discussed theoretical binaries, such as declarative vs. procedural knowledge, atomistic vs. holistic objectives, top-down vs. bottom-up processing of knowledge, and synthetic vs. analytic syllabus types (Bruce, 2011, p. 53–59). These constructs are informed and derive, e.g. in the case of syllabus types (after Wilkins, 1976), from differing linguistic theories informing second language acquisition. The bottom-up, grammar driven (structuralist) assumptions of synthetic syllabuses have largely given way to more top-down, holistic views of learning (and therefore course design) with, for example Hyland (2006, pp. 83–86) noting task-based and text-based approaches as likely instantiations of analytic syllabus types in EAP.

The historical trajectory of theorising the syllabus more widely in English language teaching can therefore be seen as offering EAP theory and practice a number of perspectives for design. These can be summarised broadly as moving from forward- or backward-design type, product-based orientations in grammatical and functional syllabuses (cf. Nunan, 1988), through central-design type process orientations, incorporating elements of negotiating design with the learners (e.g. Breen, 1984; Clarke, 1991), to discourse-level conceptualisations that take texts-as-social-practice as the underpinning principle for design (e.g. Feez, 1998; Mickan, 2013).

Contemporary theorising and practice in EAP can be seen as hybrid configurations of several of these perspectives (e.g. Flowerdew, 2005), with a particular focus on genre

theory informed, text-based approaches (Swales, 1990). Rising interest in Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and Content-and-Language-Integrated Learning (CLIL) can also be seen as interacting with concerns around the role and place of academic content in EAP course design (e.g. Garner & Borg, 2005; Shih, 1986).

In a phenomenographic study of 25 Australian university lecturers' conceptions of the term 'curriculum', Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) also found a broad product / process distinction similar to distinctions made above, with product orientations capturing views that focus on the selection and sequencing of course content, and process orientations incorporating the student as an active agent in curriculum-making. Drawing on Habermas's theory of *knowledge-constitutive interests* (1972) as an organising framework, they also noted an *emancipatory* dimension to some of their participants' responses, including notions of challenging established understandings, transforming students' worldviews and the mutual change of teachers and learners as central to conceptualisations of curriculum (Fraser & Bosanquet, 2006, pp. 281–282).

This transformative dimension can also be seen emerging in the EAP literature, primarily through the work of Sarah Benesch (1996; 2001; 2009), who has critiqued what she sees as the accommodationist nature of mainstream EAP and thus the maintenance of existing power relations in the academy. Benesch calls for a *critical EAP*, advocating curricula and classroom practices that encourage students to question and critique the status quo (Benesch, 2001; Morgan, 2009). While there are case study examples of programmes incorporating a critical EAP element (e.g. Flowerdew, 2005), Benesch's work has also been criticised for a lack of reflexive recognition of its own (Freirean, liberationist) ideology (Macallister, 2016).

## **2.2. Researching the Curriculum**

Historically, the curriculum in higher education has remained rather under-considered and under-researched (Barnett, 2000; le Grange 2006). Nevertheless, important conceptual developments, such as Bigg's (1999) seminal work on constructive alignment and Meyer and Land's theorizing of threshold concepts in the disciplines (e.g. Meyer & Land, 2003; 2005; Land, Cousin, Meyer & Davies, 2005) have provided new ways of thinking about selection and sequencing in higher education curriculums.

Other contributions in a higher education context include, for instance, arguments for design that brings teaching and research closer together, by incorporating aspects of the latter into course design (Jenkins, 2003). Strategies emerging out of case study research at several UK universities, including Oxford Brookes and UCL, include developing students' understanding of research and developing students' ability to conduct research (Jenkins, 2003, p. 62). There is thus a growing body of work providing insights both *for* and *from* curricular and pedagogical practice.

While occurring primarily in university contexts, EAP curriculum research and practice appears largely uninfluenced by work of the kind exemplified above. Instead, the contemporary landscape is informed primarily by three core areas of work: corpus analysis of linguistic patterns in spoken and written discourse (e.g. Biber, 2006; Hyland, 2004); genre analysis of longer stretches of text (for a recent overview, see Flowerdew, 2015); and more ethnographically oriented work into questions of academic social context and, e.g., students' sociohistories, personal literacies and the potential impact of this for design of provision (Wingate, 2015).

Curriculum-relevant issues that have been explored in the EAP (and related) literature have centred around questions, such as:

- What is the nature of academic discourse across the disciplines in higher education? What is the nature of research writing (e.g. Feak & Swales, 2009; Hood, 2010; Swales, 1990; 2004)? What is the nature of student writing (e.g. Nesi & Gardner, 2012)?
- How discipline-specific should an EAP curriculum be? How far should we teach English for general academic purposes (EGAP) and how far should we aim for a *specific* academic purposes provision (ESAP) (e.g. Hutchinson & Waters 1987; Hyland, 2009; Wingate, 2015)?
- What is the place of academic content in the EAP syllabus? Are EAP professionals teachers only of language, or is engagement with disciplinary content also important for student motivation and learning (e.g. Garner & Borg, 2005; Fortanet-Gomez & Raisanen, 2008)?

- How far do EAP textbooks reflect the academic discourse students need in their departments? Should we (therefore) be using textbooks and how far should we be designing our own in-house materials (e.g. Harwood, 2005; Tribble, 2009)?
- How far should these teaching materials be *authentic* (e.g. undoctored extracts of journal papers, textbooks and/or student writing), *simplified* - to make them more accessible or linguistically less dense, or *constructed* - i.e. written to contain features for teaching focuses (e.g. Bocanegra-Valle 2010; Hyland, 2006, pp. 97–98; Kuo, 1993; Swales, 2009)?

This work can help scholarship-invested practitioners think about specification of curriculum content (language; texts; tasks) but draws implications only for a notional or envisaged curriculum. While these are clearly important insights that can inform practice, what is lacking in these studies is exploration of theoretical principles and empirical findings as enacted in design and in delivery.

In their seminal collection *Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes*, Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) dedicated a full section to the EAP curriculum. Chapters focused largely on implications for design arising from insights into what students need: e.g. specialised vocabulary (Coxhead & Nation, 2001), language learning strategies (Peacock, 2001), developing spoken pragmatic and conversational skills (Robinson, Strong, Whittle & Nobe, 2001), prediction work for lecture understanding (Tauroza, 2001) and promoting learner autonomy (Lynch, 2001). There are very few studies reporting on insights emerging *from* practice, however. One exception is a chapter on a ten-year case of curriculum change at a US university (Stoller, 2001). Beyond preliminary discussion of student needs and questions of content integration, the chapter focuses on the design innovations that resulted over the years from student and staff feedback on the course. These include weaving in conceptual threads around which to base content and language work (e.g. ‘responsibility’), the incorporation of graphic organisers as a tool to scaffold complex reading, and the introduction of multi-skill portfolios (Stoller, 2001, pp. 221–223).

Watson Todd (2006), also reporting on curriculum change as a result of feedback, reports on the relationship between top-down design and bottom-up ownership of



change - what he called *immanent change* - in an EAP syllabus at a Thai university. He reports on the move towards a task-based syllabus and the weakening of the originally proposed innovation, based on staff feedback. Similarly, Yürekli (2012) reports on EAP curriculum renewal for computer science students in Turkey, focusing primarily on the large-scale analysis of learner needs through questionnaires and interviews, and the impacts this had on design. Consonant with contemporary perspectives on academic literacy, Yürekli argues through her findings for an approach to EAP that is content invested and connected to students' subject areas.

Such studies provide useful insights into the local practice of EAP across contexts, the constraints operating and the attempts to implement a more principled and needs-based approach to curriculum design. However, while enabling a view into the value of a dialogue between design and staff and student engagement with a course, these generalised summaries of change provide no insights into the enactment of the materials themselves. There is, therefore, little understanding of how (and how far) EAP curriculums may differ, or what the organising principles are at a more granular level - e.g. with respect to task and lesson sequencing. Such work would be useful, in order to better understand what the principles are that guide local curriculum-making and implementation, so as to inform professional decision-making, teacher development and curriculum renewal.

There is also little sense of how teachers made curricular innovations work in the service of student learning at point of need. While classroom practice is not the envisaged focus of such studies, the examples here are representative of most published studies focusing on the EAP curriculum: insights into what EAP practitioners actually do in and/or with design are largely absent. This black-boxes what actually happens as principles become practice in curriculum and classroom, and so implicitly casts as unproblematic the ways in which, for instance, design itself may impact upon pedagogy – an area of interest emerging from my professional work.

### **2.3. Using Research to Develop the Curriculum**

A prominent pattern seen in the EAP research literature is a dominance of discourse-analytic studies of academic contexts, the findings of which provide implications for, rather than insights emerging *from*, educational practice. A recent case in point is the already seminal *Genres Across the Disciplines* (Nesi & Gardner, 2012), which

combines corpus analysis of student writing across academic levels, analysis of assessment documentation, and insights from qualitative interviews with university staff and students to develop 13 genre classifications of university student writing. This work provides the first comprehensive research-based classification of student (rather than researcher) writing for EAP professionals in higher education. Such work provides a valuable base of knowledge from which materials and courses might be developed.

Far less prevalent are published accounts of what actually happens as such research knowledge is recontextualised in the creation of pedagogic materials, or as realised in classroom practice with students. The tendency has been to acknowledge the *potential* for educational enactment, rather than to make public and accessible what such enactment work actually involves. While rarely acknowledged, there are isolated voices that have noted this oversight in passing:

Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, for example, offer their analysis of cyclical move patterns in scientific master's dissertations as a "teaching/learning resource" (p. 120) for ESP classrooms *but do not describe how to convert this model into materials and tasks*, saying only, "We regard it as self-evident that the description and classification of genres and subgenres will be of value to teachers and learners" (p. 119).

(Hyon, 1996, p. 702. Emphasis added.)

A small body of work does exist, however, one that seeks to make visible how EAP materials and courses can emerge from a research-informed process such as the one described by Nesi and Gardner (2012). Notable examples appear in two edited collections by Harwood (2010; 2014) and in Harwood's own research (e.g. Harwood, 2006; 2010; Harwood & Hadley, 2004).

The work can be seen as falling into three broad categories. First are reports on contextualised and needs-driven interventions. These tend to draw on corpus-based research to inform the development of a tailored intervention for a given course or group of students (e.g. Feak & Swales, 2010; Stoller & Robinson, 2014). Second are accounts of classroom practices that have been informed by a politico-theoretic stance, rather than by linguistic insights. Benesch's (2010) study, for example, is a reaction to the local presence of military recruiters on campus. Informed by critical theory notions of situatedness, dialogue, praxis, hope and reflexivity (2010, p. 109), she chose two relevant texts and engaged students (some of whom had been approached by the recruiters) in searching discussion and writing tasks. The focus and discussion here is

not on curricular or pedagogic design per se, however, but rather on the responses of the students, the development of critical consciousness and understanding of the exercise of power.

The third type of work involves corpus and/or ethnographic research that generates patterned insights into discourse norms, which is then turned into pedagogic tasks and sometimes notes on classroom implementation (e.g. Harwood, 2006; 2010). There is also one study that combines approaches: Harwood and Hadley (2004) draw on both ideologically-driven arguments about the role of EAP in higher education (e.g. Allison, 1996; Benesch, 2001; Pennycook, 1997) and corpus research, to propose a *critical pragmatic* approach for EAP. They thereby offer an evidence-informed middle ground between liberationist and accommodationist stances on sector practice.

To illustrate enactment-oriented studies in greater detail, Feak and Swales (2010), for instance, report on their experience of developing and delivering a tailored research writing course for postdoctoral fellows and staff in perinatology. The case study provides explicit discussion of the underlying theoretical principles that guided materials design - a relatively rare phenomenon in the literature. Notably, the researchers were also the materials producers and teachers of the course. This does not represent the norm in EAP practice, however: researchers, materials writers and practitioners tend all to be different people, operating in different and not necessarily connected fields of practice (cf. section 3.2.5, below).

Feak and Swales adopted a highly focused ESAP approach, based on insights mined from a 450, 000 word corpus built from published research articles in perinatology across 7 journals. The corpus research became a five-session course. Brief details of each session are provided, with examples of tasks. Sessions looked at, e.g., the macro-sections of research articles, rhetorical patterns, language choices and training in using the specialised corpus to explore lexical patterns. Most of the chapter focuses on the corpus-informed nature of task design, but there are also brief comments on the pedagogical approach (a cycle of text analysis, student awareness raising of textual features, and writing practice - p. 281) and on classroom enactment<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> E.g. "The first of these tasks was done quickly and efficiently, at least by the majority of the group who had a good command of English (including a number of native speakers [...]) We did the second activity orally round the class, with much successful ad-libbing by the perinatologists)" (Feak & Swales, 2010, p. 294)

Unusually for published work in EAP, Feak & Swales observe explicitly that "[t]hese investigative forays then had to be converted into workshop texts and tasks..." (2010, p. 284). They offer brief but clear statements of value and intent that underpinned this design work:

Our first series of activities was primarily designed to persuade participants to view texts as discursual products rather than sources of medical content. Secondly, we wanted their linguistic attention to range from broad research article features to small specific points. Further, we wanted to encourage an approach that stressed a descriptive 'let's look and see' attitude as opposed to one relying on prescriptive rubrics from EFL textbooks or teachers.

(Feak & Swales, 2010, p. 284)

The report thus provides an insightfully detailed view into how a principled research process can lead to materials and task development, and into what these tasks actually look like.

In a similar vein, Stoller and Robinson (2014) describe the iterative process of design, delivery, feedback and change that led to the creation of *Write Like a Chemist*, a 600-page interactive textbook intended for university-level chemistry students (Robinson, Stoller, Costanza-Robinson & Jones, 2008). The six-year project brought together a disciplinary expert in chemistry with an academic writing specialist, and the authors offer a detailed account of the full process, from guiding first principles, through corpus building, text analysis and task design, to evaluation and improvement of earlier materials (Stoller and Robinson, 2014). Their genre-based approach resembles the Feak and Swales (2010) case study above, and indeed was explicitly informed by a Swalesian view of genre (Stoller and Robinson, 2014, p. 279).

The study offers examples of textbook activities, including tasks on corpus-derived features of chemistry discourse (e.g. commonly seen nominalisations in chemistry writing - p. 286) and an illustration of a text move structure in a chemistry research proposal (p. 288–289). An appendix also provides an instance of a move structure diagram that was abandoned after feedback from students. The chapter moves then briefly to describe the publication process itself, including, e.g., finding the publisher and securing copyright permissions.

By final way of illustration, Harwood (2010) describes research into citation practices in contrasting academic disciplines. Unlike most other such studies, Harwood adopted a

more ethnographic approach, interviewing academics in computer science and sociology about their own citation practices, without imposing corpus-derived categories (2010, pp. 303–304). The eleven citation functions identified through "the discourse-based interview approach (Odell et al. 1983)" (2010, p. 304) were then used to develop pedagogic tasks.

The design approach, after Harwood and Hadley (2004), was termed *critical pragmatic* (Harwood, 2010, p. 308). This approach aims to develop both students' *pragmatic* insights into dominant academic discourse norms (through illustrations of the research-identified patterns) and their *critical* assessment of personal relevance and appropriacy, given personal disciplinary contexts and emerging writer voices (2010, p. 308–309). Several interesting examples of task types are discussed briefly, including an exercise where students match citation functions to definitions of these functions (p. 310) and then matching citation functions to academic staff comments taken from Harwood's interview data (p. 311). Notional classroom enactment is also touched upon:

I suggest all 11 citation functions could be introduced initially, and teachers could then focus on the most common functions found in my study [...] EAP practitioners teaching students in this field could decide to omit this function from an adapted version of this task. Alternatively, those practitioners who teach classes of social science / humanities students may decide it is appropriate to analyse engaging citations in greater depth.

(Harwood, 2010, p. 310).

These reports thus illustrate how theoretical considerations can be combined with practical insights and bottom-up needs analysis to create pedagogic tasks. More such studies would undoubtedly be of great benefit to EAP practitioners, and more EAP practitioners could be contributing to this kind of research-informed practice. Indeed, Harwood himself has recently argued that practitioners could be adding to the knowledge base of EAP via local, ethnographic research into the target texts and linguistic expectations of students' departments (Harwood, 2017). This work, he argues, would serve both to meet the local needs of learners and, if disseminated, could contribute to wider understandings of disciplinary discourses (2017, p. 3).

However, what is overlooked in the studies exemplified above is the possibility that the 'curricularising' and 'pedagogising' of research knowledge (Maton, 2014, p. 51) may actually have structural consequences for what this knowledge becomes. Empirically

informed studies into the *recontextualisation* of knowledge into curriculum and classroom (after Bernstein, 1990; 2000) suggest that, for instance, the affordances for teaching and learning practices may be affected by the design decisions themselves. These are exemplified and discussed further below, in the next section of this chapter.

## 2.4. Pedagogising the Curriculum

If enactment in classrooms is the core of curriculum then we need to understand how classrooms work as loci of learning – or, more to the point, why they don't work. Are they transitional spaces in which to implement an externally created curriculum or are they curricular spaces in their own right?

(Graves, 2008, p. 166)

A key emerging observation from my own professional practice – and a core impetus for the explorations that became this thesis – was that our EAP teachers were not 'implementing' the course they had been given to teach. Rather, teachers were *recreating* it in ways that were sometimes subtly, sometimes significantly, different to what might have been intended by the materials writers. As has reportedly been the tendency in debates around curriculum and policy (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 56), I initially took these differences to represent a *problem* to resolve. Through my engagement with the conceptual and research literature, however, it became clear that this overly normative mindset reflected rather "...a fantasy of *implementing* the prescribed curriculum in its enactments in a linear sense" (Edwards, 2011, p. 39, emphasis in the original). I learned to see instead that the pre-session programme could be understood as being "...bounded by a context which (mis)shapes it in unexpected ways (Edwards *et al.*, 2009)" (Edwards, 2011, p. 39). I review this work below with, given the questions that motivate this thesis, a particular focus on *pedagogising the curriculum* (Bernstein, 2000; Singh, 2002).

### 2.4.1. Transforming the Subject Matter

One important source of insights into "transforming the subject matter" (Deng, 2007) can be found in the work developing out of Lee Shulman's notion of *pedagogical content knowledge*, or PCK (Shulman, 1986; 1987). Emerging out of a drive to raise the status and understanding of the situated expertise of teachers, PCK refers to the

subject-specific knowledge<sup>8</sup> that a teacher develops over time through experience (Munby & Russell, 1994), enabling her to transform disciplinary content and concepts for students in ways that promote understanding and learning. In its original conception (Shulman, 1986), PCK was distinguished from *content knowledge* (knowledge of the subject matter) and *curricular knowledge* (knowledge curriculum, associated materials and possible alternatives for selection in teaching) as a specialised and situated form of expertise particular to teachers and distinctive to the subject matter being taught. It was taken to include, e.g., the metaphors and analogies a teacher employs to make conceptual content accessible to learners, and knowledge of what makes particular areas of the curriculum problematic or challenging for students (Shulman, 1987, p. 9).

Often representing *tacit* teacher knowledge, formed through practices and experience at the classroom chalkface, a key contribution of Shulman's work and those that have expanded and refined it has been to make explicit this area of teacher knowledge. PCK is understood as representing not a separate form of teacher knowledge, but rather as a creative and interacting amalgam of elements (Shulman, 1987, p. 8; Abell, 2008, pp.1407–1408) and much space in the literature has been devoted to characterising, expanding and refining the components of this amalgam. Shulman himself added, for instance, *general pedagogical knowledge*, *knowledge of learners and their characteristics*, and *knowledge of educational contexts* (Shulman, 1987). Others have interpreted the concept slightly differently, however (e.g. Gess-Newsome & Lederman, 1999; Loughran, Mulhall & Berry, 2004), and this has led both to inconsistencies in understanding of PCK (Loughran et al., 2004) and to 'pleas' for agreement over the model (e.g. Abell, 2007).

Important for my study is the inherent assumption that pedagogical content knowledge involves *transformation* of disciplinary content for teaching and learning:

Comprehended ideas must be transformed in some manner if they are to be taught. To reason one's way through an act of teaching is to think one's way from the subject matter as understood by the teacher into the minds and motivations of learners.

(Shulman, 1987, p. 16)

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<sup>8</sup> The use of the term 'knowledge' here corresponds to the way in which it is used by Shulman and others drawing on his work. In terms of the distinction made in this thesis between a realist conception of knowledge and its cognitive or embodied representation ('knowing'), however, the use here corresponds perhaps more closely to the latter. As mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, there is a conflation of these two senses in much writing about 'knowledge'. See chapter 3 for a detailed account of the realist perspective adopted in this thesis.

Transformation is one aspect of what Shulman called 'pedagogical reasoning and action' and comprises *preparation* and critical interpretation of materials, decisions on *representation* of content (e.g. via examples and analogies), *selection* of teacher methods and models, and *adaptation* appropriate to the particular students in the classroom (Shulman, 1987, p. 15–16). Very little of the extant literature on PCK has focused on this relationship between teacher practice and PCK, however, or on the possible effects of teacher decisions for student learning (Abell, 2008, p. 1412).

The focus on the *teacher's* transformation of the subject matter also overlooks the transformations of subject knowledge that take place further 'upstream' in the creation of pedagogical materials, particularly in contexts where textbooks or in-house study materials are being used, and where teachers are not the creators of their own curriculum. This is the case on the pre-sessional programmes in the site of the research presented in this thesis. By conceptualising the transformation of subject matter as only a pedagogical endeavour undertaken by individual teachers, Shulman collapses *two* sites of change into one. This shortcoming is recognised by Deng (2007), who brings together Bruner's notion of 'conversion', Schwab's 'translation' and Dewey's 'psychologising the subject matter', to argue that transformation needs to be seen both as a pedagogical and as a curricular task (Deng, 2007, p. 289). The form taken by knowledge in a school (or university) curriculum can therefore be seen as closely related, but not necessarily equivalent, to the disciplinary knowledge translated and transformed to create it.

This articulation of a 'double translation' is given greater theoretical nuance and empirical weight through the work of Basil Bernstein and his theorising of the selection and organisation of knowledge within a society, and how this moves across fields of practice to become the knowledge that is taught and assessed in school classrooms. Building cumulatively over three decades of research and theorising successively from the school classroom, through curriculum to the site of knowledge production in the university, Bernstein modelled the underlying principles that he saw as collectively sustaining and reproducing inequities in education as the *pedagogic device* (Bernstein, 1990). Core to the model is the notion of *recontextualisation*:



...the process of the selection and organisation of knowledge within curricula...the structuring of transmission systems, of forms of knowledge, and of power and control relations concerning knowledge...the selection of what is to be transmitted to learners and of how it is to be transmitted to them.

(Stavrou, 2011, p. 142)

Bernstein distinguished three 'sites of struggle' (Bernstein, 1990, p. 206): *the field of production* (universities), where new knowledge is created; *the field of recontextualisation* (curriculum), where knowledge is selected and organised for educational purposes; and *the field of reproduction* (learning, teaching and assessment in classrooms). *Recontextualisation principles* mediate the distribution of educational resources, "...remov[ing] (de-locat[ing]) a discourse from its substantive practice and context and relocat[ing] that discourse according to its principles of selective reordering and focusing" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 173). As was also recognised by Deng (2007), cited above, text transformations therefore occur twice, once as the "[p]rivileged and privileging pedagogic texts created in the field of recontextualisation, such as curricular schemes and textbooks [...]", and once "...as they appropriated [*sic*] by teachers and converted into modes of common or shared classroom knowledge in interactions with students" (Singh, 2002, p. 577).

While Bernstein himself provided few empirical cases to illustrate or substantiate his theorising and model-building, a significant body of work has emerged which does. Dempster and Hugo (2006), for instance, investigated a new senior school biology syllabus in South Africa. In attempts to recontextualise content from both creationist and evolutionary perspectives, however, designers confused the conceptual sequencing needed for pupils to grasp evolution as a scientific theory, omitting key elements relating to biodiversity (as cited in Muller, 2009, p. 216). Political sensitivities had upset the conceptual coherence of a body of theoretical knowledge, creating potential issues for the intended learning outcomes for students.

Similarly, Brady (2014) reports on the "epistemic chaos" that resulted from the recontextualisation of disciplinary curricular knowledge in a UK undergraduate business school programme. A managerial strategy narrowly refocused course design around distinguishing the business school in competitive student markets and orienting to the vocational business world. Curricular knowledge became "...recontextualised as commodities or 'products' for the purpose of income generation" (Brady, 2014, p. 8).

Programmes that developed out of the strategy appeared wide and varied, but these comprised mainly the same core of generic modules. Crucially, “[a]s modules were assembled and reassembled as discrete ‘packages of knowledge’, the principle of progression appears to [have] be[en] lost” (Brady, 2014, p. 11). Each module on its own was designed to have practical relevance to the professional business world, but the conceptual and pedagogical relations *between* modules was obscured or lost. The capacity, therefore, for students to develop what Young called *powerful knowledge* (Young, 2013), i.e. conceptual understandings that transcend everyday experience, was reduced to lower-order, performative vocational skills (Brady, 2014, pp.17–18). This resulted in a disjointed and disconnected programme:

The eclipse of intrinsic values by the privileging of practical experience or ‘know-how’ over theoretical knowledge may have transferred ‘epistemic chaos’ to the student learning experience [...]

(Brady, 2014, p. 19)

McLean, Abbas and Ashwin (2013; 2017) also explore access to, and engagement with, powerful knowledge in a compelling study of recontextualisation practices. Framed within a critical examination of ‘quality’ in higher education and theorised in terms of Bernstein’s pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1990), the researchers examined how knowledge-as-research (Ashwin, 2009) was conceived and recontextualised in four undergraduate sociology-based programmes in the UK. The selected institutions differed significantly with respect to, e.g., perceived status, financial resources, staff qualifications and student demographic, and they were given pseudonyms accordingly: Community, Diversity, Prestige and Selective (McLean et al., 2017).

The hierarchical relations assumed in the pedagogic device between the ‘rules’ (or principles) shaping the distribution, recontextualisation and evaluation of knowledge would predict that it was only at the higher-status, more research intensive universities that higher-order, powerful knowledge (Young, 2008) was being distributed (McLean et al., 2013, pp. 269–270). However, this turned out not to be the case. “[T]he recontextualising rules did not play out according to the status of the university” (McLean et al., 2017, p. 113). There were distinct differences in emphases in the way disciplinary knowledge was recontextualised into curriculum, the choices afforded students, and the messages transmitted about the purpose of sociology. However,

what emerged was a greater sense of similarity than difference in the forms of education students were engaging in, and in the graduate identities they were developing through this apprenticeship:

[T]he 'what' of the curriculum was being used to cultivate the 'who': the regulative discourse<sup>9</sup> in all departments was aspirational, strongly classifying students as individuals, workers, and citizens who had the power and freedom to make transformations.

(McLean et al. 2017, p. 113)

Thus, despite very different conditions underpinning who transmitted what to whom, the study suggests that "...undergraduate curriculum can disrupt social hierarchies by communicating messages to students about who they are and what they can become" (McLean et al., 2017, p. 88). Recontextualisation practices can serve potentially to equalise access to powerful knowledge in education. This is a hugely encouraging message given the climate of an increasingly marketised higher education and thus perceptions of HE as a private rather than public good. It is also a deeply hopeful message about the significant effect a university education can have on addressing and potentially overcoming social inequalities (McLean et al., 2013; 2017).

Wider contextual influences may additionally play an important role in shaping recontextualisation practices. Bertram's (2016) study of the history curriculum in Canada (British Columbia), Kenya, Singapore and South Africa, for example, reveals how the selection and sequencing of history knowledge for the secondary school curriculum was mediated by national histories and interests. Bertram found that the Kenyan curriculum, unlike the other three contexts, focused primarily around Kenyan and African history, covering for instance African colonisation but not that in other parts of the world (Bertram, 2016, p. 41). In terms of sequencing of content, two organising principles were also noted. The first, as might be expected in the study of history, was the chronology of events. This was found across all four national contexts. The second principle was the use of 'universal concepts', such as imperialism, eugenics and nationalisms (Bertram, 2016, pp. 41–44). The organisation of conceptual content differed across contexts, however, with for instance only Singapore evidencing the cumulative building of procedural knowledge at (upper) secondary level (Bertram, 2016,

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<sup>9</sup> i.e. the explicit or implicit messages transmitted about appropriate dispositions and the 'moral order' of the discipline (Bernstein, 2000). See also section 3.2.5 for brief discussion of *instructional* and *regulative discourse*.

p. 46). The Kenyan curriculum, by contrast, was found to engage only minimally with history as disciplinary knowledge, construing school history largely as ‘memory history’ (Bertram, 2016, p. 45). Quoting the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Bertram suggests that this focus served to “promote a sense of nationalism, patriotism and national unity” (Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education, 2002, p. 4, as cited in Bertram, 2016, p. 45).

#### **2.4.2. The Structuring Effects of Knowledge Practices**

One underlying influence on the variation observed in the recontextualisation of disciplinary knowledge into the school curriculum, noted in passing by Bertram, is that

There is no universal canon of history knowledge that must be learned in order to be inducted into the discipline, which is the case for school mathematics and the natural sciences.

(Bertram, 2016, p. 46)

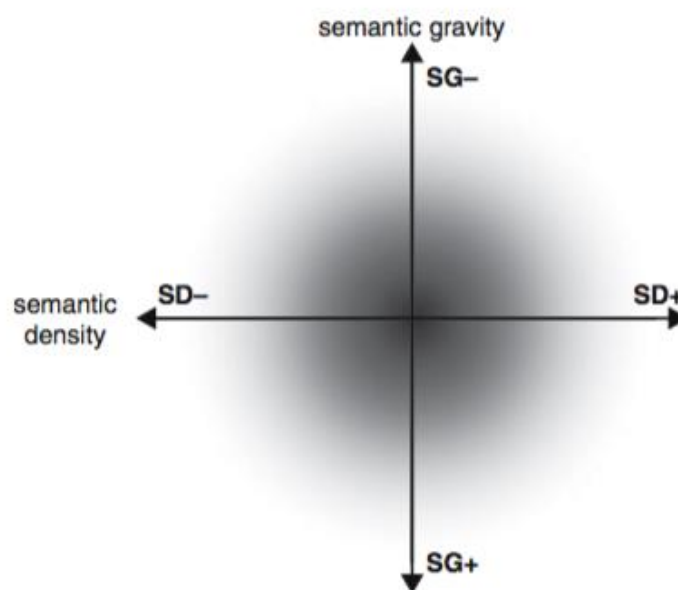
The insight that the inherent nature of a discipline itself may create differing affordances for the shaping of curriculums – and, by extension, pedagogies – shifts and widens the view on recontextualisation to include, not just the selection, sequencing and pacing of disciplinary content into curriculum or what practitioners do to enact materials in teaching, but also to the structuring of the disciplinary knowledge base itself, and the effects this may have back on practice. As Muller has argued,

...while curriculum formats are arbitrary in the sense that designers can indeed impose patterns of their choosing, these patterns can be judged to be more or less compatible with disciplinary structure. Disciplinary form thus does impose constraints on appropriate curricular form.

(Muller, 2009, p. 216)

Interactions between disciplinary structure and recontextualisation practices in education have been researched within a relatively new theoretical framework, *Legitimation Code Theory* – or *LCT* (Maton, 2014). Described as “a multidimensional toolkit for educational research” (Maton, 2014, p. 17), LCT subsumes and builds on the work of Basil Bernstein and others, most notably Pierre Bourdieu, to develop ‘dimensions’ and component concepts for empirical research that extend and nuance the inherited theoretical frameworks. I flesh out the details of this development in the next chapter, restricting discussion here to a brief overview of theoretical constructs and illustrations of pertinent research studies.

One of the component dimensions of LCT is Semantics. This comprises the two interacting concepts of *semantic gravity*, the relative context dependency of meanings, and *semantic density*, the relative complexity of meanings (Maton, 2014). The first of these, semantic gravity, forms a core component of the analytic framework developed for the empirical work in this thesis (cf. chapter 3). Both concepts are conceived in terms of continuums of *relative strengths*. Thus, semantic gravity describes a continuum of context dependency, from meanings tied relatively closely to a contextual base: SG+ (e.g. the topics of everyday conversation), to meanings abstracted from and unconnected to a particular context: SG- (e.g. the abstract concepts of theoretical mathematics). Semantic density represents a continuum of complexity from, e.g., concepts, images or symbols which condense relatively few meanings: SD- (e.g. the drawings of young children), to those which condense a greater range or degree of meanings: SD+ (e.g. the paintings of Dali). These can be combined to create a *semantic plane*, enabling the analysis and plotting of knowledge practices across a theoretically infinite range of strengths.



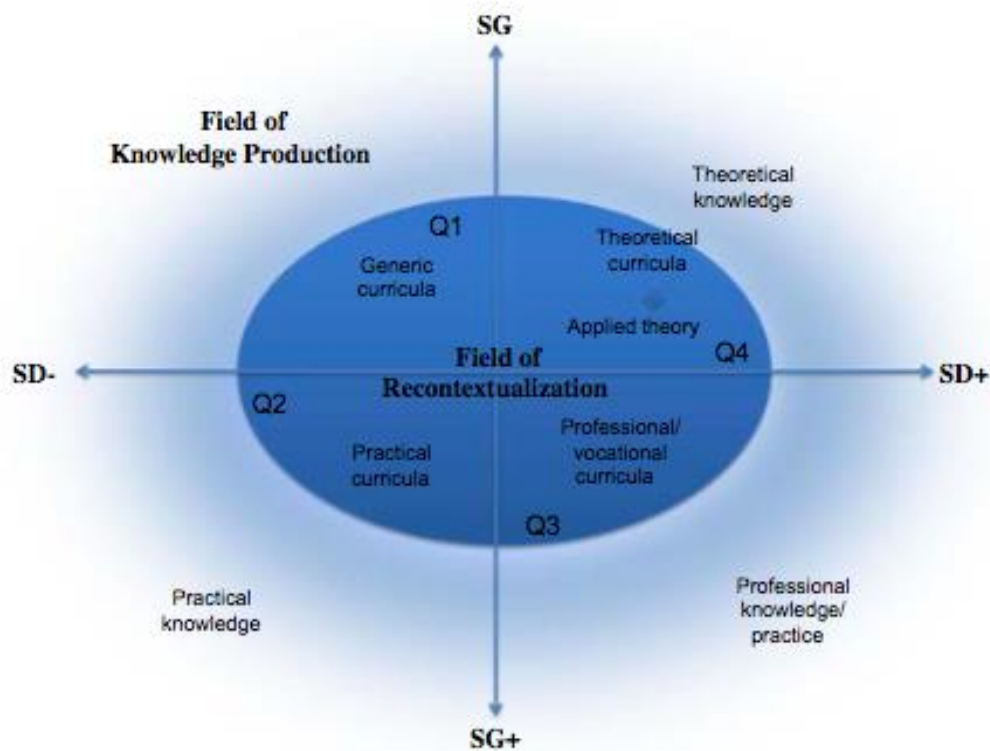
**Figure 2.1: The semantic plane (Maton, 2014, p. 131)**

Shay (2012) enacts and adapts the semantic plane to conceptualise the way that higher education curriculum is recontextualised and structured, given the nature of disciplines and how they build knowledge. She identifies three broad categories of

knowledge that may be drawn on in the development of curriculum, corresponding to quadrants on the semantic plane. The first is *practical knowledge* and its possible recontextualisation as *practical curricula* (Q2 on the diagram below). Shay illustrates this with a case study example of a third-year course on a diploma in journalism, where the principles and concepts driving the curriculum were drawn from practice (e.g. interviewing technique) rather than from theory (Shay, 2012, p. 11). In Maton's terms, this form of knowledge has relatively high semantic gravity, but relatively low semantic density: SG+, SD–.

Practical knowledge is contrasted with *theoretical knowledge*, which may be recontextualised into *theoretical curricula* (Q4 on the diagram). Shay exemplifies this with reference to a course in differential calculus on an undergraduate mechatronics degree, where study content was overwhelmingly theoretical and the organising logic of the curriculum that of the discipline, rather than that of a practice context (Shay, 2012, p. 12). In LCT Semantics terms, this form of knowledge is characterised by relatively low semantic gravity and relatively high semantic density: (SG–, SD+).

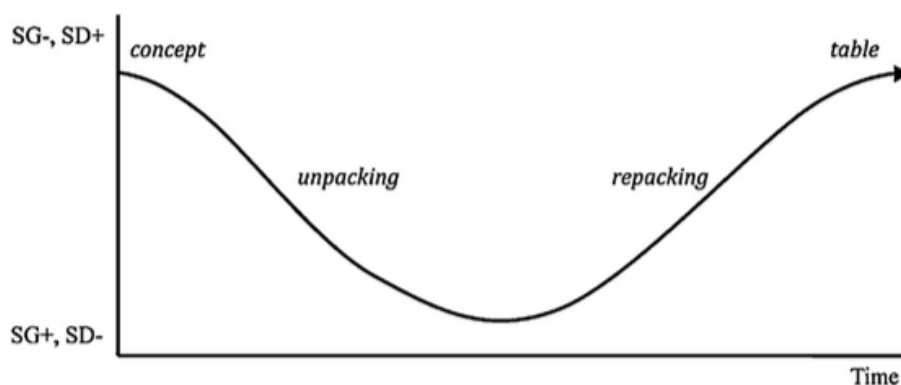
Finally, Shay identifies *professional knowledge or practice* and its possible recontextualisation as *professional or vocational curricula* (Q3 on the diagram). Courses of this kind are structured according to demands of practice, but are informed by theory. Shay provides the examples of a media studies course on the diploma in journalism, where students engage with theoretical frameworks through which to view media in order to understand real-world media practices, and a final-year project on the mechatronics degree, where students must draw on a range of theoretical knowledge to solve a design problem (Shay, 2012, pp.13–14). Such knowledge exhibits, in LCT Semantics terms, both relatively strong semantic gravity and relatively strong semantic density (SG+, SD+). Shay notes that there were no instances of 'generic knowledge / curricula' found in her study (Q1 in the diagram below), where both semantic gravity and semantic density were weak (SG–, SD–). She notes, however, that this remained a theoretical possibility (Shay, 2012, p. 14).



**Figure 2.2: University curriculums as semantic codes (Shay, 2012, p. 10)**

The Shay study illustrates the potential usefulness of LCT and the dimension of Semantics for analysing and distinguishing between knowledge and knowledge practices in different fields of study. There is a growing number of empirical studies using Semantics for the empirical investigation of both curricular and pedagogical practices. In an example of recontextualisation practices in the high-school classroom, for instance, Maton (2013) analyses the practices of a year-eleven biology and history teacher. Both teachers exhibited in their teaching what Maton calls ‘semantic waves’: unpacking disciplinary content into simpler examples and language, and then summary repacking of simpler explanations back into the disciplinary concepts and technical terms that pupils need to master (Maton, 2013, pp.14–17). The semantic wave depicting this process for the biology teacher is represented heuristically as reproduced below<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> ‘Table’ in this diagram refers to the summary table that the teacher uses to fill in key terminology and explanations discussed with pupils (Maton, 2013, p. 15)



**Figure 2.3: Heuristic semantic wave (Maton, 2013, p. 15)**

Maton concludes his analysis with the conjecture that “...semantic waves represent a key to cumulative development in education by enabling the recontextualization of knowledge through time and space” (Maton, 2013, p. 20). He provides illustrations earlier in the paper of other teachers analysed, whose practice exemplified alternative profiles. Some teachers exhibited what Maton calls ‘downward escalators’, where conceptual content is unpacked but then not repacked into the technicalised terms of the pedagogical discourse (Maton, 2013, pp.13–14). Maton argues that this practice risks separating and segmenting curricular knowledge into discrete and unconnected items, rather than facilitating the integration and cumulative building of learning. In a teacher training intervention linked to the same research project<sup>11</sup>, the notion of the semantic wave was then used explicitly as a pedagogical tool to train some of these teachers (Macnaught et al., 2013).

Similar phenomena have been researched and observed in a higher education context. Clarence (2014), for instance, found that the recontextualisation practices of a law lecturer she studied enacted at times both semantic waves and downward escalators (Clarence, 2014, p. 109–114). In a teaching sequence on legal subjectivity, for example, the lecturer presented a series of four concepts associated with legal rights (e.g. ‘corporeal right’; ‘immaterial property right’), explaining and exemplifying each, but without making connection between them or to the overarching topic of discussion (Clarence, 2014, p. 113). Clarence, like Maton, suggests that these concepts may, as a

<sup>11</sup> ‘Disciplinary, Knowledge and Schooling’ project (DISKS) – a major research collaboration using LCT and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) together to explore secondary school teaching practices in Australia.



result, be "...learnt as lists or segmented rather than understood as part of a conceptual whole" (Clarence, 2014, p. 112).

In summary, therefore, recontextualisation practices of different kinds may serve both to enhance and sometimes to impede learning opportunities. Example studies cited discussed above have focused both on what happens in the pedagogisation of curricular knowledge, and on the translation of subject content into curriculum. The insight to underline, however, is a general one: while recontextualisation may be inevitable (Edwards, 2011), its effects are not. Shifts and changes that occur in the selection and sequencing of content for materials design, and in the enactment of these materials in the classroom may create affordances of differing kinds. These may or may not be beneficial for student learning. Most importantly, perhaps, and as highlighted by the teacher training intervention cited above (Macnaught et al., 2013), recontextualisation practices can potentially be developed, changed and improved.

#### **2.4.3. Recontextualisation in EAP and ELT: Teacher Mediation and Adaptation**

Empirical studies of EAP pedagogical practice at the chalkface appear generally to be under-represented in the literature, as are practitioner voices as authors of research (Ding & Bruce, 2017). Exceptions can be found in occasional case studies into, for instance, the transition from novice to expert (e.g. Martin, 2014; Campion, 2016), exploration of critical pedagogies for learner empowerment (e.g. Benesch, 1996; Chun, 2015; Morgan, 2009), and collaborations between EAP professionals and subject specialists, e.g. through team-teaching (Dudley-Evans, 2001). There are also examples of insights into academic writing instruction that emerge from classroom-based research, such as Wette's (2014) investigation of seven EAP teachers' instructional strategies. This study revealed the use of models and modelling as a pattern among practitioners, blending textual, cognitive and interactional elements in the service of student learning.

In one of the few papers in the fifteen year history of the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* to be devoted to EAP pedagogy, Watson Todd (2003) focused on six 'approaches' that he argued underpin EAP classroom practice. These included inductive learning; promotion of learner autonomy through, for instance, a focus on self-access; and the use of authentic materials and tasks (2003, p. 151). Watson Todd

suggested that these approaches derived from the specific learning needs of students in EAP, thereby influencing content and the goals of teaching, enabling for instance a participatory form of learning to encourage "...an understanding of (as opposed to knowledge about) the conventions and values of academic communities" (Watson Todd, 2003, p. 153).

These 'approaches' are not specific to EAP, however, and Watson Todd offers only 'team teaching' with subject specialists as being particular to EAP. More importantly, while the paper is ostensibly "based on reported practice" (Watson Todd, 2003, p. 152), this practice is not the focus of empirical investigation. Watson Todd also conflates principles underpinning lesson design with principles underpinning classroom enactment. There are clearly overlaps, such as in notions of a 'process' approach but, as highlighted in the studies of recontextualisation briefly reviewed above, the two are analytically separable and may well be undertaken by different people (materials writers and teachers). Making these distinctions more carefully for the purposes of research would seem crucial, yet appears to have been largely overlooked.

With respect to studies of what teachers actually do with EAP materials, research is scant. There is occasional coverage in teacher-facing manuals, such as Alexander, Argent and Spencer's (2008) brief discussion of how teachers may adapt materials given, for instance, levels of teacher experience, confidence or conflicting beliefs about language and learning (Alexander et al, 2008, pp. 98–100). However, there is only very general analysis of what this may mean in practice (e.g. substitution of a 'hard' text with an easier one), and the observations do not emerge from empirical work.

In terms of insights from research, there appear only to be a very small number of isolated case studies. Menkabu and Harwood (2014) report on a study of textbook use on a course in English for medical students at a university in Saudi Arabia. Using McDonough and Shaw's (2003) distinctions between *adding*, *deleting*, *modifying* and *reordering* pedagogical materials, the research explored seven female teachers' adaptations of prescribed textbook materials, using observations of teaching and follow-up interviews. Given the requirement to teach the entire book and the textbook content-linked nature of exams for students, adherence to the prescribed materials was

found to be high. Nevertheless some adaptation in the interests of perceived learner needs was observed (Menkabu & Harwood, 2014, p. 161).

Most commonly, teachers *added* language-related input and tasks. While identified through the observations, *deleting*, *reordering* and *modifying* were rare, though participants claimed to do lots of modifying (Menkabu & Harwood, 2014, p. 164). Reasons for adaptation (or not) emerged in the interviews and related to, for example, availability of facilities, students' linguistic ability, and the constraints of time and an exam-driven system. Of particular note was a link between teachers' subject-specific knowledge and adaptation. Most teachers spoke of difficulties with their own content knowledge, with only two of the seven teachers having some familiarity with relevant disciplinary knowledge. It was these two who "...evaluated the textbook more critically and displayed more autonomy and flexibility in teaching, as seen through their adaptations" (Menkabu & Harwood, 2014, p. 165).

This relationship between teacher expertise and extent of adaptation is also seen in an unpublished doctoral case study, focusing in particular on two teachers' use of an English for Fisheries Technology textbook in the Philippines (Hutchinson, 1996). 'Nancy', an inexperienced language teacher, stuck closely to the textbook, not supplementing or reordering, choosing also those modules whose content she felt was simple enough for her to cope with (Hutchinson, 1996, p. 192). In contrast, 'Marcia', a far more experienced teacher with both a relevant master's degree and knowledge of fisheries technology, exhibited much greater flexibility and adapted the textbook materials to meet perceived learner needs (Hutchinson, 1996).

The apparent correlation between experience and adaptive mediation of teaching materials does not always hold, however, with for instance Shaver (2010) finding no such predictive relationship in an analogous study of ten English language teachers' use of the textbook. Though this study was not conducted in an EAP context, Shaver provides a useful categorisation of the teachers he studied, distinguishing between *curriculum-makers*, *curriculum-developers* and *curriculum-transmitters* (Shaver, 2010, p. 177). Curriculum-makers, of which there were five, tended to make their own materials, relying only rarely on the textbook. Curriculum-developers (three of the ten participants) created materials but, unlike the curriculum-makers, also regularly

adapted the textbook to meet learner needs. The two curriculum-transmitters, like Nancy in Hutchinson's (1996) research, adhered closely to the prescribed materials, rarely even reordering or omitting tasks (Shawer, 2010, p. 181).

Outside the EAP context, curriculum-developers are also seen in Wette (2011), another study demonstrating the importance of obtaining grounded perspectives on teaching, and of distinguishing the etic and the emic. Investigating the practices of seven English language teachers, Wette illustrates how the theoretical divisions between 'product' and 'process' orientations to curriculum became blurred in practice. In both the high- and (in particular) medium-constraint contexts studied, where staff were largely obliged to follow prescribed syllabuses with pre-developed materials, teachers exhibited a sensitivity and responsiveness to the dynamic and emerging needs of their learners, making adaptations and negotiating with students during the course:

To achieve maximum coherence between various curriculum components while at the same time meeting learners' requirements, teachers added to, substituted, postponed, advanced, deleted, extended, or curtailed planned items of content, and when necessary slowed or increased the pace of instruction.

(Wette 2011, p. 142)

Wette summarises the approach of the four teachers working in the medium-constraint environments as enacting a "syllabus as plan: process approach" (Wette, 2011, p. 140): teachers were active mediators of the lessons as presented on the page. Similarly, Fraser and Bosanquet (2006), in their phenomenological study of understandings of the term 'curriculum' in higher education (cited above), also see a *practical interest* (after Habermas, 1972) emerging in their study, with some academics recognising the role that the teacher plays as an active agent in the construal and enactment of the curriculum. Teachers act as a consequence of reflection, "...using their judgment in interpreting the curriculum for their students and making meaning of the unit or programme of study and discipline..." (Fraser & Bosanquet, 2006, p. 280).

It is important to note, however, that studies such as Wette (2011) and Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) reveal *reported* perspectives and do not capture what teachers actually do in the classroom. While instructive in highlighting the potential differences between curriculum-as-blueprint and curriculum-as-action, Wette considers mostly

reported planning decisions made on the basis of perceived learner needs. As Borg notes through his research into teacher thinking (e.g. Borg, 2003; 2006), practitioners do not necessarily do what they say they do, and sometimes espouse beliefs not borne out in their practice. Such work reveals the importance of triangulation in classroom-based research. As seen in the studies of textbook use (e.g. Menkabu & Harwood, 2014), therefore, teachers' reflections and interpretations of their practice are important to capture, but so too are the teaching practices themselves and how these relate to pedagogical materials.

It is also worth noting that, while the research here highlights the role that teacher decision-making, autonomy and agency may play in observed classroom practices, certain research traditions have sought to *deemphasise* human agency in explorations of curriculum-making. Actor Network Theory (ANT), for example, adopts a sociomaterial perspective, affording 'agency' also to the non-human world. ANT theorists and researchers thus examine what they see as black-boxed and insufficiently problematised notions, such as 'curriculum' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 56ff) as *assemblages* of people and artefacts (e.g. syllabus documents; classroom arrangements; technology) into stable networks that enact the social world (Latour, 2005). This perspective shifts the locus of research from seeking external *factors* that can explain differences in 'implementation' to exploring the *actors* involved in curriculum-making (Fountain, 1999), "...without privileging human intention and agency" (Edwards, 2011, p. 39).

Whilst adopting a critical realist (rather than ANT's network-based) ontology, research within Bernsteinian and Matonian (LCT) frameworks discussed above also place greater emphasis, in a sense, on the 'non-human': knowledge. Knowledge is seen as "...*emergent from but irreducible to* the practices and contexts of its production and recontextualisation, teaching and learning" (Maton & Moore, 2010, p. 5, emphasis in original). Social realist research ascribes no 'agency' to knowledge per se, but does conceive of it as *ontologically real*, in the sense that its effects on actors and practices can be observed and measured (Bhaskar, 2008/1975; Maton, 2014). This point and a more detailed account of critical and social realism are taken up in chapter 3, where I set out the theoretical and analytic frameworks for my research study.

Taken together, the research reported in this section demonstrates that differences in materials use may be attributable to teacher knowledge, training and beliefs; to learner level and interests; and to aspects of the classroom and/or institutional context (Hutchinson, 1996; Menkabu & Harwood, 2014; Wette, 2011). The nature of this relationship may also be complex, with for example the affordances of the local context not necessarily leading to greater or lesser teacher adaptation of materials (Shawer, 2010). Studies reviewed in earlier sections (e.g. Brady, 2014; Bertram, 2016) also highlight that one area overlooked in EAP and ELT research is the possible *shifts* in knowledge that may result from the changes that teachers make. Theoretical and empirical insights emerging from the social realist research thus suggest the importance of exploring the selections, structuring and sequencing of knowledge itself in curriculum and classroom practices. These perspectives were instrumental in expanding and deepening my understanding of educational practices in my local context, and were foundational to shaping and reshaping the research questions and approach adopted in this thesis.

#### **2.4.4. Comparative Studies of Enactment**

The differences I observed between teachers' enactments of the same EAP materials in neighbouring pre-sessional classrooms suggested the value of a comparative study of curriculum delivery: two or more versions of the same materials taught by different teachers. This would enable moving beyond individual teachers' beliefs about pedagogy, allowing analysis and theorising of *forms* of enactment that may be more or less effective for student learning. There appear to be no such studies in EAP research, however. Alexander (2012) compared two teachers' beliefs about teaching EAP at lower levels as they piloted the same coursebook. However, the research focuses only on perceptions of appropriate classroom approach and provides no direct insights into the differential ways in which the materials were lifted off the page.

One field where examples of comparative work into classroom enactment do exist is in mathematics education. Choppin (2009), for instance, investigated three experienced US middle school maths teachers' adaptations of the same curricular materials over several successive enactments. The particular research focus was on professional learning and the development of what Choppin terms curriculum-context knowledge (CCK), "...the knowledge of how a particular set of curriculum materials functions to

engage students in a particular context” (Choppin, 2009, p. 288). Videoed observations of teaching, video-stimulated interviews, and semi-structured interviews revealed adaptations by all teachers across 3-4 enactments. Teacher learning, defined as a teacher connecting evaluation of a prior enactment with a rationale for subsequent adaptations (Choppin, 2009, p. 296) varied, however, with respect to whether and how far practitioners changed their practice to better achieve original goals, to increase opportunities for student understanding, and/or in relation to teachers’ own understanding of mathematical concepts. Two of the three teachers, for example, made early but ineffectual adaptations as a result of not attending sufficiently to how students had engaged with the original materials. This contrasted with the third teacher, who made few changes during the first two years / enactments while observing students’ engagement, thereby enabling later, more effective adaptations (Choppin, 2009, p. 314).

There are two summary insights of note in this study. Firstly, teachers all reported the challenges associated with first-time implementation: “only by teaching a unit could they truly come to understand it” (Choppin, 2009, p. 315). Teachers needed to work through difficulties of enacting particular tasks and task sequences in order to build personal understanding and learning. Secondly, Choppin suggests that the local context was an influence on how teachers used materials. Two of the three teachers, working in the same district, were able to enact materials both without needing to ‘teach to the test’ and were more informed about adaptations enacted by others, as a result of more training opportunities than the third teacher (Choppin, 2009, pp.314–5). It is therefore clearly important to view and interpret materials enactment in situated perspective, mindful of the affordances beyond the page and immediate classroom environment.

The empirical insights emerging more widely from research in maths classrooms demonstrate, perhaps unsurprisingly, that different teachers present mathematical concepts to their students in different ways (e.g. Manouchehri & Goodman, 2000; Tirosh, Even, & Robinson, 1998). This remains the case even when the pedagogical materials are the same. As part of ‘Same Teacher – Different Classes’, a research programme exploring interactions between teachers, curriculum and classrooms in high school mathematics classes, for example, Even (2008) found that two teachers

differed in their teaching of probability, both with respect to each other and within their own classes at different levels. 'Betty', for example, was more didactic with lower-level students, attending to her understanding of their needs by providing more input and explanation. 'Gloria', by contrast, was more interactive, listening to students and probing understanding (Even, 2008, p. 59). Importantly here, and citing empirical work by Boaler (1997), Even argues that understanding these differences in enactment are important, because they result in *different forms of learning* – in this case mechanistic answer-finding vs. ideas-oriented understanding (Even 2008, p. 63). This research conclusion reflects my own professional sense that the recontextualisation practices of pre-sessional EAP teachers were also resulting in different affordances for student learning. It also suggests that empirical views into such differences would be useful in EAP. There appears to be little such work at present.

As has been touched upon in this and earlier sections, what remains largely unexplored in EAP research are the *effects* of the translational work that turns research insights into pedagogic materials, and in the classroom enactment of these materials. Section 2.3 illustrated how theory and corpus research have been used to inform instructional design. However, notions of recontextualisation and knowledge structures, subsequently discussed above, suggest that these design and redesign decisions are not without consequences for the knowledge itself. Research into EAP practice does not appear yet to recognise, acknowledge or explore such phenomena.

#### **2.4.5. Accounting for the Gap: 'Knowledge-Blindness' in EAP**

The work of Bernstein and Maton, reviewed above, gives shape to the apparent blindspot articulated in the discussion above. The research field of EAP has engaged extensively with language, with text, with ideology and with the values and practices of academic departments; yet it has not engaged directly with *knowledge* and with the different *forms* that this may take across contexts and practices, or how these may shift and change over time. Maton has suggested that this phenomenon is widespread in educational research and calls it "knowledge-blindness" (Maton 2014, p. 3ff). Other researchers in the sociology of education have argued powerfully for the detrimental effects this knowledge-blindness may be having on, for instance, mainstream education (e.g. Young, 2008) and on vocational education (e.g. Wheelahan, 2011), calling for research that "...brings knowledge itself back into the debate about



curriculum without denying its fundamentally social and historical basis” (Moore & Young, 2001, p. 446). The studies of curriculum and pedagogical practices cited above suggest that EAP may also benefit from research into knowledge and knowledge practices, as analytically distinct from ‘knowers’ (the actors in a field of practice) and ‘knowing’ (understanding; belief) (Maton, 2014).

There appears to be a conflation in EAP between the three fields of research, curriculum and pedagogy, theorised as analytically distinct in Bernstein’s pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1990). This can be seen, for instance, in a field-defining article in the inaugural edition of the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, where Ken Hyland and Liz Hamp-Lyons collapse together the fields of production and reproduction:

English for Academic Purposes refers to language *research* and *instruction* that focuses on the specific communicative needs and practices of particular groups in academic contexts.

(Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 2. Emphasis added.)

Almost identical definitions persist now, well over a decade later:

The term English for academic purposes (EAP) covers language research and instruction that focuses on the communicative needs of individuals working in academic contexts.

(Hyland & Shaw, 2016, p. 1)

Notions of recontextualisation are not visible in EAP research and thus, e.g., insights from genre analysis and corpus mining come top-down from the field of production as suggestions for teaching, but with little problematising and therefore no investigation of what happens to this knowledge as it is reshaped through materials design and into pedagogy. The empirical studies reviewed in this chapter reveal, however, the potential value and importance of recognising and researching these areas as related but distinct areas of inquiry with their own internal logics and structuring principles.

Back in 2003, Watson Todd lamented the over-focus on *the what* of EAP practice (in the terms of this thesis: specifications for teaching as prior to design or delivery), rather than the *how*. Reflecting a core premise of my own study, he argued that “...in teaching EAP we need to consider the process of reaching the goal at least as much

as the content that needs to be covered.” (2003, p. 149), suggesting also that “...understanding more about how EAP is taught and learnt would provide useful directions for EAP teacher training” (Watson Todd 2003, p. 149). This would appear self-evident, yet there is very little to suggest that the field has moved very far forwards in this respect.

## 2.5. Summary

Viewed through a social realist lens, there appears currently to be no work in EAP that explores the structuring principles that *result* from educational enactment. There is little understanding of how EAP curriculum is *transformed* in the process of ‘pedagogising knowledge’ (Bernstein, 2000, p. 25; Singh, 2002) - in the selection, sequencing and pacing of content for particular EAP teaching contexts. Given current debates around ‘general’ vs. ‘specific’ EAP provision, the variability in teacher knowledge and routes into the profession, the purposes and goals of the EAP curriculum, and the implications of theory and linguistic research for pedagogy, a study of recontextualisation practices in EAP would provide a potentially valuable contribution to the research base. The present study sets out to explore this gap.

The value of analytically distinguishing knowledge itself as an object of study has been demonstrated in this chapter by example studies from a diverse range of contexts. Yet despite arguments in the EAP literature for the importance of understanding the knowledge practices of the university (Bruce, 2011; Hyland, 2004), there appears to be no analogous work analysing knowledge itself as distinct from *knowing* (understanding), or which examines the effects of recontextualisation for EAP curriculum and pedagogy. Bruce (2011) writes that EAP courses need to focus on:

...a range of types of *knowledge*, including social, cognitive and linguistic knowledge, acknowledging that within each of these areas there will be considerable variation across particular subject disciplines

(Bruce, 2011, p. 6–7. Emphasis in the original)

However, despite such orientations towards knowledge practices and epistemologies in the disciplines, EAP appears to lack the tools to see and analyse the forms that these knowledge practices may take across different fields of practice. This review of the research literature therefore reveals a clear need for the current study.

## **2.6. Reiteration of the Research Questions**

To recap briefly, my research asks:

*How is EAP locally enacted?*

*What are the organising principles underpinning this enactment?*

The empirical work explored in this chapter also gives greater shape to the secondary questions that emerged to guide my research process. These were, primarily: How do programme designers conceive the course? How is this reflected in pedagogical materials? And how do practitioners lift lessons off the page at point of need in the service of student learning?

I move now to a discussion of the theoretical and analytic frameworks selected to address these questions.

# CHAPTER THREE

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## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & RESEARCH DESIGN

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### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter 2 explored the research landscape and concluded that curriculum and pedagogical practices remain under-examined in EAP. In particular, the apparent overlooking of knowledge itself as an object of inquiry was shown to obscure potentially important differences in the shaping and reshaping of knowledge as it moves across fields of practice, such as from theory into curriculum, and from curriculum into pedagogy. A need was identified, therefore, for a study that investigates the enactment of knowledge practices in EAP course design and in the EAP classroom. This chapter sets out the conceptual framework and research design that were employed to address this need.

The aim of this study was to make visible the recontextualisation practices on a pre-sessional programme, so as to better understand the principles guiding the local enactment of EAP. This required an approach that could move beyond the descriptive and beyond 'surface appearances' towards underlying features of the context and of the pedagogical practices in focus. Given explorations and discoveries in reviewing the literature, social realism was chosen as a framework within which to work and, in particular, the conceptual toolkit offered by Legitimation Code Theory (Maton, 2014).

This chapter introduces Legitimation Code Theory by way of the intellectual origins on which it builds. Section 3.2 sets out this conceptual heritage and the framework within which my research study was conceived and carried out. Subsequent sections then provide an account of the empirical work itself. Section 3.3 sets out the research approach, with details of the data collection presented in Section 3.4. I consider issues of positionality and ethics in Section 3.5, including the challenges of being an insider researcher. I then detail the data analysis process in Section 3.6, outlining also how *languages of description* (Bernstein, 2000; Maton, 2014) were developed for LCT Specialisation and Semantics concepts, and for Bernstein's concept of Framing. These served as 'translation devices' (Maton & Chen, 2016) for moving between the data and theory<sup>12</sup>. Finally, in Section 3.7, I summarise the ways in which quality and rigour were maintained throughout the research process.

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<sup>12</sup> Given the iterative process of development, a translation device only really emerges fully formed at the end of an empirical study. However, following practice in other doctoral theses enacting LCT for research, I present my own translation devices not as 'findings' but rather as tools developed for (and from) data exploration and analysis (see section 3.6).

## 3.2. Conceptual Framework

### 3.2.1. Summary Overview

In this section I introduce the theoretical ‘lenses’ that guided the research. Roy Bhaskar’s critical realism provides the philosophical ‘underlabourer’ for the thesis. Critical realism offers an ontology consonant with Basil Bernstein’s theorising, on which I draw to conceptualise the research problem and design. It also provides the meta-theoretical underpinnings for Legitimation Code Theory (LCT), the central theoretical framework used for the analytical work in my study.

I then provide an overview of LCT itself, the explanatory framework that sits at the heart of this thesis. LCT, as developed by Karl Maton (2014), builds primarily on the work of Bernstein, incorporating also ideas from Bourdieu (among others). I begin with a summary overview of the framework’s intellectual core. Subsequent sections then focus on the concepts central to this thesis. Where relevant, I show how these incorporate and build on their Bernsteinian or Bourdieusian origins.

Alternative theoretical lenses might have been plausible for my study, but a long search and extensive engagement with a number of alternative means of conceptualizing the research problem led me to the conclusion that LCT and the dimension of Semantics provided a clear means of addressing and answering my research questions. Earlier in the research process I began working with other theories but ended up abandoning them as unfruitful lenses and tools for addressing my particular research questions. Actor Network Theory (Latour, 2004), discussed briefly in the literature review, was one such theory. While ANT provided new and refined ways to think, it was not clear how the concepts could be operationalized in my study and through my data in ways that would enable me to answer my questions. ANT has, in Muller’s terms, weak *grammaticality* (Muller, 2007): the concepts, while useful to think with (after Maton, 2014, p.107), sit at a level of abstraction that make them hard to engage with the empirical. The concepts are more suggestive than explanatory (after Muller, 2007, p.65).

My early thinking and framing of the research problem were also guided by the theory of threshold concepts (Land & Meyer, 2005). Working for a while through this lens,

however, it became clear that the end point of my research would become a descriptive account of threshold concepts in EAP, which, while useful, would remain rather locked within the local research context. The fluid nature of EAP and its enactment in different professional contexts of practice is quite different to the more stable disciplines that form the heart of empirical work in threshold concepts. While a threshold concepts oriented study in EAP may have provided suggestive insights for other contexts, the theory would not have enabled me to answer questions like “what *form* do these concepts take?”; “in what ways do they *differ* from each other?”; “how do these concepts *shift* and *change* as they are recontextualised from the written curriculum into the classroom?”; or “what might *alternatives* look like?”. The theory would not have enabled me to address my evolving research questions and thus it was also abandoned for the purposes of my particular study.

LCT enabled a clear means for the operationalization of theoretical concepts into empirical objects of study, in ways that also allow the empirical data itself to speak back to the theory. Most fruitfully, the choice of LCT enabled me to research educational knowledge practices themselves, and to explore curriculum documentation and pedagogic practice with the same concepts. This enabled the cumulative progression and integration of insights seen here in the organisation of empirical chapters: from course values and concepts (chapter 4) through curriculum (chapter 5) to classroom (chapter 6).

### **3.2.2. Critical Realism and Depth Ontology**

Critical realism is a philosophy of science, developed since the 1970s by Roy Bhaskar (e.g. Bhaskar, 1993; 2008/1975). This body of meta-theoretical work has been developed into theories of social structure and agency by, for example, Margaret Archer (Archer, 1995; 2010) and is gaining currency both in theory, e.g. in Barnett’s recent musings on the university (Barnett, 2013; 2015), and in practice, as an applied framework for empirical research (e.g. Edwards, O’Mahoney & Vincent, 2014). A critical realist perspective also informs the ontological underpinnings of Legitimation Code Theory, and is broadly consonant with Bernstein’s (social) realist sociology of education, on which LCT builds.

O’Mahoney and Vincent (2014) provide a useful summary of critical realism’s core position:

Critical realism holds that an (objective) world exists independently of people's perceptions, language or imagination. It also recognises that part of that world consists of subjective interpretations which influence the ways in which it is perceived and experienced. This double recognition is important and relatively novel in social science research.

(O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014, pp. 2–3)

Critical realism thus forges a middle ground that has been rather obscured (or rather, perhaps, *denied*) by the polarised extremes of objectivism and subjectivism in research.

Maton elaborates on the position with respect to social realism:

Against positivism, knowledge is understood as inescapably social and historical but, against constructivism, knowledge is not reduced to social power alone, as some knowledge claims have greater explanatory power than others. Social realism is thus concerned neither with essentialist definitions of 'knowledge', 'truth' or 'belief', nor with proclaiming all definitions equal. Rather, it highlights the need to explore how knowledges come to be defined in particular social and historical contexts, their forms, and their effects.

(Maton, 2014, p. 11)

Research approaches such as social realism, which draws on critical realism as an 'underlabourer' (Bhaskar, 2008/1975), thus avoid the *epistemic fallacy* (Bhaskar 1993, p. 397) of collapsing together ontology and epistemology<sup>13</sup>. Knowledge in critical realism is seen as having emergent properties of its own whose effects can be observed and measured, properties that cannot be reduced to the human minds that produced it. However, as a product of *human* endeavour, this knowledge is understood also to be fallible, historically and contextually contingent, and thus potentially subject to improvement. Through developments in astronomy and physics, for example, we now know that lunar eclipses are due to particular positional relations of the Earth, moon and sun, and not to being swallowed by a black boar (after O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014, p. 5–6). Yet the practices and behaviours of the ancient Egyptians will have been partly shaped by the latter view, an effect of belief in the god Set(h). Construing knowledge thus as *both* real *and* subject to change over time provides a potentially valuable and insightful means of exploring knowledge practices in research.

These two positions, ontological realism and epistemological relativism, represent two of three theoretical *commitments* made in critical realism. The third commitment,

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<sup>13</sup> Such a conflation is seen both in positivism and constructivism, albeit in opposite directions: Positivism reduces all 'knowing' to universal, ahistoric and unchanging knowledge of the world. Constructivism reduces all knowledge to historically contingent and individually relative knowing.



*judgmental rationality*, holds that actors are able to use evidence and judgment to decide between differing claims to truth. Not all perspectives are valid and not all knowledge is created equal. While knowledge may be subject to contestation and revision over time, judgmental rationalism maintains that there *are* bases for making judgements about the relative validity of claims (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson & Norrie, 1998). Taking my example above, the evidence provided through observation and mathematical calculation can be used to demonstrate that the astronomical account of lunar eclipses is a better account of reality than that of the Ancient Egyptians.

A second core tenet of critical realism is its *layered* account of the world. Bhaskar (2008/1975) distinguished three levels in his 'depth ontology': the *empirical* (the world as perceived and experienced by human actors), the *actual* (the events occurring in the world that may or may not be experienced), and the *real* (the underlying structures and mechanisms that give rise to the actual). Elaborating on an example given by Barnett in *Imagining the University* (Barnett, 2013), the activities and events of a particular university are experienced in various ways at the level of the empirical by different students and staff across the campus. In the realm of the actual at this same university are the mission statements, values, policies and procedures that are *ideationally real* (O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014, p. 7) but that may or may not be encountered or experienced by everyone. Beneath what occurs and is experienced, however, are the *real* mechanisms and forces of, among others, globalisation, neoliberalism, and the global economy (Barnett, 2013, p. 63). These mechanisms may or may not be actualised in particular contexts and may be seen to influence actors and events in different ways at different times. As Sayer notes, therefore:

[P]owers may exist unexercised, and hence what has happened or been known to have happened does not exhaust what could happen or has happened

(Sayer, 2000, p. 12)

This highlights the way that critical realism enables theorising beyond what is to what could be or could have been, thereby introducing transformative potential and insights into the basis for possible change. A particular attraction of the realist assumptions underpinning the framework selected for my study, therefore, was the implication that concepts and theorising emerging from the research might then speak back to practice, informing it, improving it and then re-informing future development of the work presented here. Maton offers the example of 'creativity' in an analogous illustration of

this relationship between concepts and practice, or between *knowing* and *knowledge*. Creativity involves "...give and take' between the creator and the evolving object of creation; the products of our minds 'react back' on our thoughts, ideas, aims and dispositions" (Maton, 2014, p. 12). The theorising that emerged from this study thus took on greater personal significance, through the understanding that it had *real* properties that might impact back on practices beyond the confines of the thesis.

Bhaskar's depth ontology provided a useful lens through which I was able to view my research study. The local messages and values around the EAP pre-sessional programme, for instance as expressed in teacher induction, can be seen as operating at the level of the real. These values may or may not be actualised in curriculum or in teaching practices. The pre-sessional teaching materials themselves can therefore be seen as existing in the realm of the actual, as *potential* tasks and content that, depending on what teachers do in the classroom, may or may not be encountered and studied by students at the level of the empirical. Similarly, an individual teacher's tacit beliefs about pedagogy (the real) may become classroom discourse or a supplementary task (the actual). These will, in turn, be experienced by those students in the class (but not those in another class) who are paying attention and engaging with the lesson (the empirical).

In a sense, therefore, the staging of the empirical chapters and analysis that follow in this thesis can be seen broadly to correspond to each of Bhaskar's three layers. Chapter 4 examines the (ideationally real) values underpinning the pre-sessional programme. These may or may not be actualised for teachers and students. Chapters 5 and 6 explore the structuring principles of (the actual) curriculum and pedagogic materials. These provide 'pedagogic potential', but may be selectively recontextualised in practice. Chapter 6 also explores ways in which these materials are enacted by teachers in the (empirical) classroom. Understanding what appears on 'the surface' as EAP classroom practice is therefore conceived as also requiring understanding of deeper levels.

### **3.2.3. Introducing Legitimation Code Theory**

Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) is a "multidimensional toolkit" (Maton, 2014, p. 17) for educational research and practice. Intellectually located in the sociology of education, LCT construes society as comprising relatively autonomous fields of practice, within

which actors cooperate and compete for status, resources and legitimacy. These competing claims, or *languages of legitimation* (Maton, 2014, p. 23ff), may be explicit or tacit. Dispositions, practices and social fields are further theorised as being shaped and enacted in relation to underlying organising principles, or *legitimation codes*. Control of these legitimation codes affords power and status, and thus there may be multiple (perhaps conflicting) codes at play within a given field, as different actors and practices jostle for symbolic and/or social position and status. The ultimate project of LCT is the description of the overarching *legitimation device*, the principles giving rise to these languages of legitimation. "To analyse legitimation codes is thus to explore what is possible for whom, when, where and how, and who is able to define these possibilities, when, where and how" (Maton, 2014, p. 18).

There are currently five dimensions of LCT. Each affords a different lens and toolkit for exploring social practices. Each enables making visible different organising principles, and thus may be used separately or in combination. The most developed dimensions are Specialisation and Semantics. These are the two lenses enacted for my study, and are discussed in greater detail below. A third dimension, Autonomy, is currently receiving a lot of attention and is being enacted to explore, e.g., how teachers select and repurpose different forms of content in school classrooms (Maton & Howard, 2018). The two additional dimensions are Temporality and Density. Each of the five dimensions comprises component concepts that, in combination, enable analysing different practices as kinds of *legitimation code* (e.g. *specialisation*<sup>14</sup> codes; *semantic codes*; *autonomy codes*). These are summarised below as figure 3.1 together with their principal modalities, given in their condensed notational form.

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Constituent relations</b>	<b>Principal modalities</b>
Specialisation	epistemic relations, social relations	ER+/-, SR+/-
Semantics	semantic gravity, semantic density	SG+/-, SD+/-
Autonomy	positional autonomy, relational autonomy	PA+/-, RA+/-
Temporality	temporal position, temporal orientation	TP+/-, TO+/-
Density	material density, moral density	MaD+/-, MoD+/-

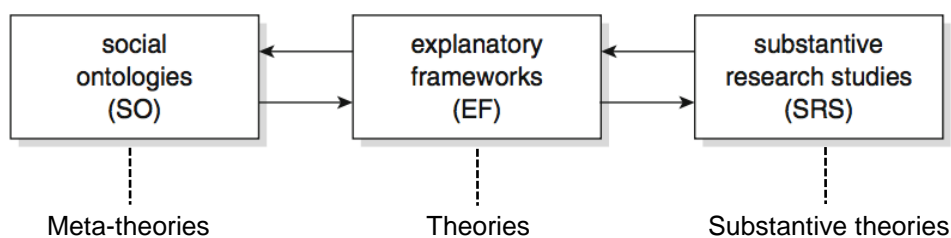
**Figure 3.1: The *legitimation codes* in LCT (Maton et al., 2016, p. 240)**

<sup>14</sup> Following convention, the names of LCT dimensions are capitalised; the names of component modalities and codes are not (cf. Maton et al., 2016, e.g., p. 243 - for Specialisation).

LCT builds primarily on Bernstein's *code theory* (Bernstein, 1977; 1990; 2000. See also section 3.2.4 below), finessing, integrating and extending concepts to address immanent questions remaining in Bernstein's oeuvre. LCT is thus not an alternative to Bernstein, but rather a cumulative development of it (Maton, 2014; Maton et al., 2016). Adopting a similar 'excavation' mode of theorising, digging down deeper into concepts to ask 'what are the underlying structuring principles here?', LCT thus continues in the spirit of Bernstein as an explicit work-in-progress (Bernstein, 2000; Maton, 2014, pp. 215–216). Like Bernstein, Maton's interests are not in 'armchair theorising', but in improving education, epistemic access and social justice. This focus on conceptual tools that hold the potential for educational change and development was a major impetus for making LCT the theoretical heart of my doctoral research.

Bernstein's work gave birth to a collective body of work in the sociology of education that has come to be known as *social realism* (Maton & Moore, 2010; Moore, 2010). The literature is rich, with focuses on, for instance, curriculum (e.g. Young, 2008), vocational education (e.g. Wheelahan, 2010) and critical pedagogy in HE (e.g. McLean, 2006). For social realists, knowledge is both *ontologically real* and *epistemologically relative* (Maton, 2014, p. 10ff). As noted in the previous section, this avoids the 'epistemic fallacy' of collapsing ontology with epistemology (Bhaskar, 1993, p. 397). Unlike constructivist theorising, therefore, knowledge is analytically distinguished from the knowers who produce it. Unlike positivist theorising, knowledge is understood to be a product of its time and of its context, and thus historically contingent.

Legitimation Code Theory is underpinned by similar social realist assumptions. Maton describes the *form* of theory that LCT represents as an *explanatory framework*, distinguishing this from meta-theories ('social ontologies') and theories emerging from substantive research studies. Drawing on Archer (1995), Maton represents the relationship between these as below:



**Figure 3.2: Meta-theories, theories & substantive theories (Maton et al., 2016, p. 16)**

LCT is conceived, therefore, as "...a conceptual toolkit and analytic methodology rather than a paradigm or '-ism'" (Maton et al., 2016, p.7). LCT concepts sit at a level of abstraction that is removed from the empirical, but the tools are fundamentally designed to engage with substantive contexts of research and practice. The arrows in the diagram above also signal the dialogic nature of the theory, and the understanding that LCT itself is constantly subject to revision and improvement as a result of engaging both with meta-theories and with substantive objects of empirical inquiry (Maton et al., 2016, p. 16). Maton attests to the ways in which new research problems and new data sets can – and have – led to modifying of LCT concepts (e.g. Maton et al., 2016, p. 205ff). These developments are also emerging as a result of interdisciplinary dialogues with other theories, in particular Systemic Functional Linguistics (Martin, 2011; Maton & Doran, 2017c; Maton, Martin & Matruglio, 2016).

Analytically distinguishing knowledge itself and theorising its internal structuring principles and how these vary across different social fields of practice, Bernstein made an important distinction between social power, what he called *relations to* knowledge, and epistemic power, or *relations within* knowledge (Bernstein, 1990; Maton, 2014):

[K]nowledge is not merely a reflection of power relations but also comprises more or less epistemological powerful claims to truth. Social power and knowledge are intertwined but irreducible to one another; knowledge comprises both sociological and epistemological forms of power.

(Maton 2010, p. 37)

While the social forms of power have been a concern within English for Academic Purposes (EAP) research, for instance in the work of Sarah Benesch (e.g. Benesch, 2001), notions of epistemic power are almost entirely absent. Recognising that there is not only "knowledge of the powerful" but also "powerful knowledge" (Young, 2013) is potentially important to EAP. It helps to make visible the ways in which, for instance, conceptual orientations to academic practice and understandings of language may empower international students, affording them *epistemic access* to curricular and assessment knowledge as a basis for *social access* to the university (after Wheelahan, 2010). I acknowledge here the value and importance of political and critical perspectives on the practice of EAP, the value of connecting the micro-practices of the EAP practitioner to wider political and economic forces (Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hadley, 2015), and the insights that can be gained through critical-theoretic perspectives on

higher education (e.g. McLean, 2006). In order to address my research questions, however, this study focused primarily on *relations within* EAP curricular knowledge practices ('epistemic power'), rather than on social *relations to* this curricular knowledge ('social power') (Bernstein, 1990; Maton, 2014). LCT Specialisation and Semantics provided the means to operationalise the notion of 'EAP curricular knowledge' for the empirical work presented here.

Bernstein made knowledge visible as a distinct object of inquiry in educational research, developing a theory of knowledge and knowledge structures (Bernstein, 2000), but did not offer a complementary theory of *knower* structures or development (Maton & Muller, 2007). Maton showed that the latter is also needed in order to account for alternative interpretations of Bernstein's theorising. LCT thus incorporates perspectives from Bourdieu's field theory (e.g. Bourdieu, 1985; 1986; 2005) to theorise also *knower* practices and how these interact with knowledge practices within and across contexts, and over time.

Bourdieu provided a particular conceptualisation of *field*, one that resonates with Bernstein and continues to echo through Legitimation Code Theory:

A field of forces within which the agents occupy positions that statistically determine the positions they will take with respect to the field, these position-takings being aimed either at conserving or transforming the structure of relations of forces that is constitutive of the field

(Bourdieu, 2005, p. 29)

Fields for Bourdieu, like for Bernstein and Maton, are arenas of struggle.

Understanding social practices for Bourdieu means understanding interactions between social fields, the status of actors within that field and what actors bring to the field. Power relations structure fields and the relative status of individuals derives from the embodied dispositions they develop through experience: their *habitus*, and the resources available to them, whether social, economic or cultural: *their capital*. In an educational context, for instance:

The academic market value of each individual's linguistic capital is a function of the distance between the type of symbolic mastery demanded by the School and the practical mastery he owes to his [sic] initial [...] upbringing"

(Bourdieu & Passeron, 1971, p. 116).

Bernstein's early work was devoted to understanding how this gap might be traversed through more equitable educational practices (e.g. Bernstein, 1977). In terms of my own research focus, there are also resonances in EAP contexts here, as international students may bring with them to the UK quite different *habitus*s. These may include embodied and often tacit understandings about what it means to be a student, and what forms of practice have status and value. Understandings and assumptions about the nature of academic writing, for instance, may differ considerably (Hyland, 2006, p. 43). Analogously, EAP teaching practitioners moving from summer pre-sessional to summer pre-sessional may be shifting in and out of different social fields (institutional contexts) in which the 'rules of the game' may change without warning. Their relative position, success and status may be affected by the nature of these 'rules' and the cultural and symbolic capital they are able to bring to their practices.

Bourdieu's concepts of *field*, *habitus*, *capital* and *practice* are conceptually distinguishable but inherently relational. They are also dynamic and subject to change over time. LCT weaves this relational perspective on knowers into its conceptual apparatus, theorising both *epistemic relations* to knowledge and *social relations* to knowledge. These concepts form the core of Specialisation, introduced in Section 3.2.6.

#### **3.2.4. Boundaries & Control in Educational Practice**

Central to Bernstein's work is the notion of *code*, and it is this concept that sits both theoretically and literally at the centre of Legitimation *Code* Theory. Bernstein technicalises the term to represent, not unlike Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, an orientation to meaning (Maton & Muller, 2007, p. 16). In Bernstein's own words:

A code is a regulative principle, tacitly acquired, which selects and integrates:

- (a) relevant meanings
- (b) forms of their realisation
- (c) evoking contexts

(Bernstein, 1990, p. 11)

Bernstein operationalised code as comprising two component principles, *Classification* and *Framing*<sup>15</sup>. These principles were used to analyse the structures underpinning the three *messaging systems* in education: curriculum, pedagogy and assessment (Bernstein, 1977; 1990; 2000). Classification refers to the relative strength of boundaries between categories (e.g. university disciplines; professional roles; artistic movements) or contexts (e.g. home and school; lectures and seminars; different universities). Where there is relatively strong insulation between categories or contexts, Classification is strong (+C<sup>16</sup>). Where practices are less strongly bounded from each other, Classification is weak (–C). For example, a particular university may see its English language unit only as a means to improve the generic language skills of international students, and not in terms of disciplinary writing development for all students. The unit may therefore be strongly bounded from academic departments, with no collaboration or co-development of curriculum. Its curriculum, staff development and institutional identity may therefore be strongly Classified (+C) with respect to other departments. A change in university policy or a new and dynamic leadership team, however, may enable the beginnings of cross-departmental cooperation and reduced insulation. The boundaries between contexts become more porous and thus classification is weaker (–C). Classification can thus be understood as a principle of *power* (Bernstein, 2000).

Framing relates to the relative strength of *control* within categories or contexts. A particular disciplinary lecturer, for example, may expect students to remain silent in her lectures, such that she controls selection, sequencing and pacing of lecture content: Framing is strong (+F). Conversely, however, the same academic may enable students to set the agenda and to choose focuses for discussion in her follow-up seminars: Framing is weaker (–F). The principle of Framing is thus particularly useful for characterising pedagogical practices, as it enables describing who controls what in the classroom. This control may also be understood as coming from *within*, e.g. via teacher decisions about task pacing, but also from *without*, e.g. via departmental decisions on what must be taught by when. Bernstein characterises this as the difference between *internal Framing* (F<sup>i</sup>) and *external Framing* (F<sup>e</sup>) (Bernstein, 2000).

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<sup>15</sup> In order to highlight clearly the technicalised rather than everyday sense of these terms, I will adopt the convention of capitalising all forms throughout the thesis (e.g. *Classified*; *Framed*).

<sup>16</sup> I will maintain Bernstein's notational convention of placing the '+/–' first (e.g. –C; +F). This contrasts with the LCT convention of denoting relative strengths after the principles (see below).



Combining strengths of Classification with strengths of Framing gives rise to four code modalities (+C, +F; +C, -F; -C, +F; -C, -F). Two of these in particular have become common currency in educational research inspired by Bernstein. Where both Classification and Framing are strong (+C, +F), there is what Bernstein dubbed a *visible pedagogy*. Transmission-based educational practices, such as can be found in Chinese state school contexts (Cortazzi & Jin, 2001), may be examples. Visible pedagogy practices make explicit the rules for staff and student behaviour ('hierarchy'); the ordering and pace of teaching and learning ('sequencing rules'); and the criteria by which students will be evaluated ('criteria') (Bernstein, 1977, pp. 116–145). Where there is weak Classification and Framing (-C, -F), there is an *invisible pedagogy*. Here, the 'rules of the game' are far less explicit. Progressivist models of education and constructivist approaches to teaching, where the teacher is a 'facilitator of learning' may be examples (Maton, 2014, p. 54). Learners' 'natural talents' and internal dispositions are valued as the basis of legitimacy and it is the students, rather than the teacher, who may be expected to find their own routes through curricular content.

Perceiving and understanding what is expected in a particular educational context does not necessarily entail the ability to enact the valorised practices, however. In this respect, Bernstein also made a useful distinction between *recognition rules* and *realisation rules* (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 16–22). Recognition rules relate to Classification and the ability "...to recognise the specialty of the context..." (Bernstein, 2000, p. 17). In my research setting, this could be seen as relevant to both students on the pre-session programme and to staff hired in to teach. Realisation rules refer to the ability to "...speak the expected legitimate text" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 17). In Bernstein's terms a text is *anything which attracts evaluation* (Bernstein, 2000, p. 18). Thus, for EAP classroom and international students, this might represent the ability to change the formality of their speaking in academic seminars, or to compose an abstract as distinct from a methodological narrative. For EAP practitioners, this might include the ability to analyse texts with students in ways that enable learners to understand the underlying macro-structure. Realisation is thus related to Framing, as different strengths of control will interact with how learners (or teachers) put together meanings in attempts to enact the valued practices. Making these conceptual distinctions became important during

data analysis and reporting, and thus feature within the theoretical framework for my research.

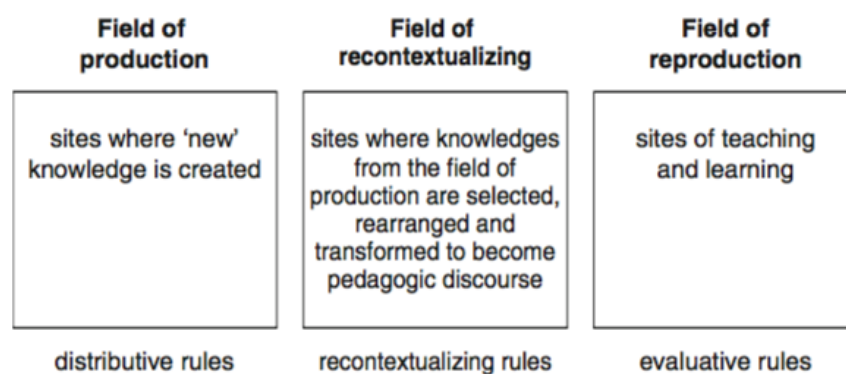
The dimensions of LCT subsume and incorporate the concepts of Classification and Framing into their legitimation codes (e.g. Maton, 2014, pp. 54–55). For the English for Academic Purposes context and my research study, however, Framing in particular emerged as an important concept to maintain as a distinct analytical tool. This enabled seeing and describing practices that complemented and enhanced analyses with LCT concepts. I set out how the principle of Framing was enacted in my study in Section 3.6.

### **3.2.5. Conceptualising Fields in EAP: The Epistemic Pedagogic Device**

Moving educationally 'upstream' from the principles structuring classroom practices, curricular practices and, finally, the knowledge practices of the university, Bernstein developed a theoretical model connecting the micro-level of learner consciousness to the macro-level of society and governmental regulation of education. This model was condensed as *the pedagogic device* (Bernstein, 1990; 2000). The pedagogic device comprises three hierarchically related fields of practice and 'rules' (or principles) that regulate relations between these fields. Educational message systems (curriculum, pedagogy and assessment) in the model are problematised as neutral carriers of content and are thus recognised as inherently ideological (Bernstein, 2000, p. 27).

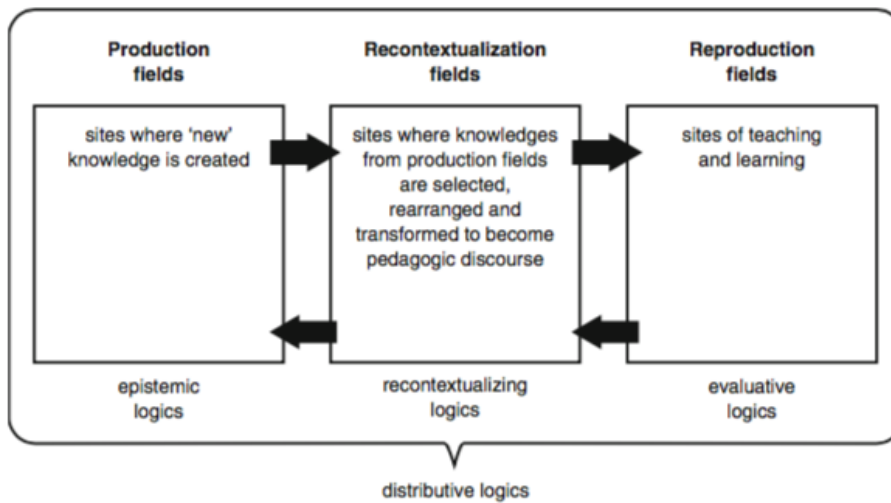
The three fields in the pedagogic device are the *field of production*, where new knowledge is produced (e.g. university research departments); the *field of recontextualisation*, where this knowledge is selectively reshaped to become *pedagogic discourse* in curricular materials; and the *field of reproduction*, where these curricular materials are again selectively reshaped to become teaching, learning and assessment practices in the classroom. Fundamental to the model is the notion of *discursive gaps* between each field (Bernstein, 2000, p. 209; Maton 2014, pp. 16–17). It is in these gaps that ideology may play a role. Knowledge is thus not 'transferred' but rather *recontextualised* as it moves between fields. The process of pedagogising knowledge (Bernstein, 2000, p. 25; Singh, 2002) is thus theorised as a process of de-locating, re-locating and reconfiguring knowledge from the field of production. Empirical examples of recontextualisation and its effects were discussed in the previous chapter.

In the pedagogic device, *distributive rules* in the field of production govern access to, and regulation of, knowledge in the field of production, thereby controlling who gets to create and distribute new knowledge. *Recontextualising rules* in the field of recontextualisation govern how new knowledge becomes reconfigured as *pedagogic discourse*, understood as comprising both educational content (*instructional discourse*) and rules of appropriate conduct and character (*regulative discourse*). Pedagogic discourse is thus itself a principle, or "...set of rules for embedding and relating [these] two discourses" (Singh, 2002, p. 576). Finally, *evaluative rules* in the field of production govern how pedagogic discourse becomes pedagogic practice between teachers and learners. The model of the pedagogic device is summarised below as figure 3.3.



**Figure 3.3: Summary representation of the *pedagogic device* (Maton, 2014, p. 48)**

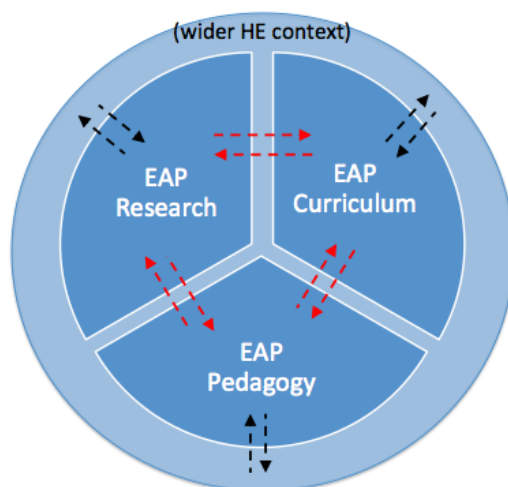
In Legitimation Code Theory, Maton reconceptualises the pedagogic device, developing the 'inherited model' in three ways (Maton, 2014, pp. 49–53). Firstly, Maton dissolves the inherently hierarchical relationship between fields, recognising that knowledge may actually flow 'upstream' as well as 'downstream'. New understandings generated in the classroom may, for instance, be *curricularised* as future teaching materials. Secondly, Maton replaces the term 'rule' with 'logics' to avoid deterministic misunderstandings of the original. Finally, distributive rules (recast as *distributive logics*) are seen as operating across all three fields of practice, recognising that there may be principles structuring the access to, and regulation of, not just new knowledge, but also curricular and pedagogic knowledge. The term 'epistemic logics' is used instead to describe governing principles specific to the field of production (Maton, 2014, p. 51). Maton's *epistemic pedagogic device* (EPD) is depicted heuristically below.



**Figure 3.4: The *Epistemic Pedagogic Device* in LCT (Maton, 2014, p. 51)**

The epistemic pedagogic device provides the theoretical basis for conceptualising EAP in my research study. As discussed in chapter 2, notions of recontextualisation are largely absent from the EAP research literature. Bernstein's three fields are routinely collapsed or conflated. This obscures the ways in which knowledge may be reinterpreted and reshaped as it moves, e.g., from journal paper to textbook to pre-sessional classroom. In this thesis, therefore, I conceptualise EAP not as a single field of practice, but rather as three: the field of EAP research, the field of EAP curriculum and the field of EAP pedagogy. Boundaries between these fields may be more or less strongly bounded (+/-C), giving rise to practices that may be more strongly or more weakly insulated from each other. EAP materials developers who also teach enact weaker relations between the fields of curriculum and pedagogy, increasing the likelihood that one may inform the other. EAP teachers who conduct action research in their classrooms and write this up as journal article enact the 'scholarising' of pedagogic practice. Conversely, EAP curriculum and classroom teaching may be relatively strongly bounded from EAP research, e.g. in settings where teachers and managers are discouraged from engaging in scholarship. These different practices, arising from different logics underpinning local institutional contexts will give rise to quite different enactments of 'EAP' in different departments, courses and classrooms. My study sought to understand the principles structuring the realisation of the summer pre-sessional programme in my chosen research setting, and thus this theorising of

EAP sits at the conceptual heart of the thesis. This will be condensed in simple form, as given here in figure 3.5.



**Figure 3.5: EAP construed as three analytically distinct fields of practice**

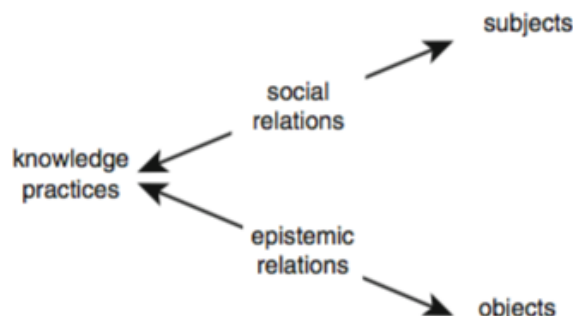
Given my focus on EAP curriculum enactment, the research is located primarily with respect to the fields of recontextualisation (EAP curriculum) and reproduction (EAP pedagogy). However, the field of production (EAP research) also emerged as influential in my interviews with the course designers.

### **3.2.6. Seeing Knowledge and Knowing in EAP: LCT Specialisation**

LCT builds on Bernstein's theorising of knowledge in educational practices, extending the conceptual toolkit to include seeing *knowers* and *ways of knowing*. These are brought together in the LCT dimension of Specialisation (Maton, 2000; 2007; 2014). Bernstein's educational knowledge codes, expressed as modalities of Classification and Framing, are subsumed and extended in Specialisation as *specialisation codes*. This development enables theorising both relations to knowledge practices and relations to knower practices.

Maton argues that knowledge claims are always made both 'about something' and 'by somebody'. "There are always knowledges and there are always knowers" (Maton, 2014, p. 96). This sets up two relations. *Epistemic relations* represent the relations between a knowledge claim and the part of the world (real or symbolic) it describes. *Social relations* refer to the relations between a knowledge claim and actors in the field

of practice. These relations thus make visible both the *objects* and the *subjects* of knowledge claims:



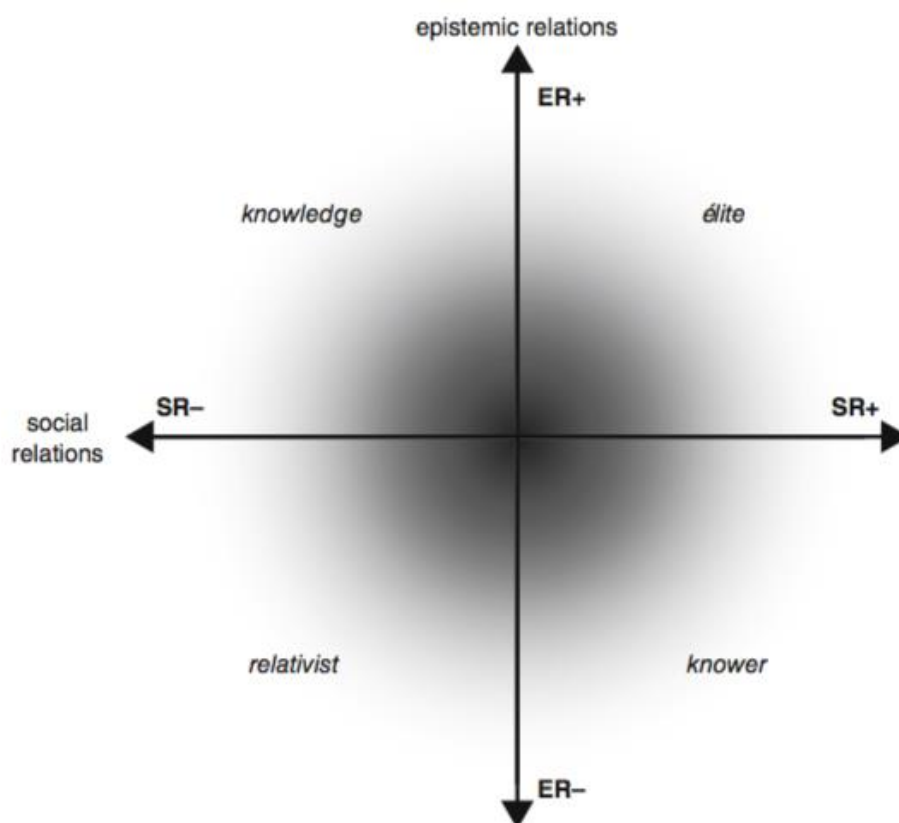
**Figure 3.6: Epistemic & social relations to knowledge practices (Maton, 2000, p. 174)**

Specialisation theorises the way in which, for instance, intellectual fields, curriculums or pedagogies are *specialised* with respect to valourised knowledge and/or knower practices (Maton, 2007). It was thus a useful dimension to enable addressing my research questions. The component concepts of *epistemic relations* to knowledge (ER) and *social relations* to knowledge (SR) are conceived as continuums of strengths, from stronger (+) to weaker (-). In combination (ER+/-, SR+/-), these give rise to four principal modalities, or *legitimation codes of specialisation*, summarised below.

Specialisation Code	Component relations & relative strengths	Basis of legitimacy and/or achievement comprises:
<i>Knowledge code</i>	ER+, SR-	An emphasis on specialised knowledge or procedures. Dispositions or attributes of actors are downplayed.
<i>Knower code</i>	ER-, SR+	An emphasis on the dispositions or attributes of actors. Specialised knowledge or skills are deemphasised.
<i>Elite code</i>	ER+, SR+	An emphasis on <i>both</i> specialised knowledge or procedures <i>and</i> the dispositions or attributes of actors.
<i>Relativist code</i>	ER-, SR-	<i>Neither</i> an emphasis on specialised knowledge or procedures <i>nor</i> an emphasis on the dispositions or attributes of actors.

**Table 3.1: Legitimation codes of specialisation (based on Maton, 2007; 2014)**

Plotting epistemic and social relations as axes on a Cartesian plane gives the *specialisation plane*, representing a theoretically infinite space of strengths (see figure 3.7 overleaf). This serves as the basis for exploration of how practices are specialised within and across fields, and how they may change and shift over time.



**Figure 3.7: The specialisation plane (Maton, 2014, p. 30)**

LCT Specialisation has been extensively enacted in research, in both qualitative and quantitative studies (Maton, 2014; Maton et al., 2016), and in a diverse range of contexts. This has included exploring the challenges faced by Chinese students studying overseas in online learning contexts (Chen, 2010); the shifts that take place when disciplinary subject lecturers teach interdisciplinary subjects (Millar, 2011); the challenges faced by pupils studying music in the transition between primary school and secondary school (Lamont & Maton, 2008; 2010); and the design of e-learning environments for museum visitors (Carvalho, Dong & Maton, 2009; 2016).

In my study, Specialisation was enacted to explore the Basis of legitimacy of curricular practices on the pre-sessional EAP programme. Epistemic relations (ER) were enacted as the degree of emphasis (ER+/-) on specific and explicit knowledge, procedures or techniques as the basis for valourised curricular and classroom practices. The focus here was on explicit knowledge for understanding academic language and textual practices on the course. Social relations (SR) were enacted as the degree of emphasis (SR+/-) on students' personal opinions, beliefs and/or dispositions as the basis for valourised curricular practices. Here the focus was on practices drawing, for instance, on students' own experience rather than on academic knowledge.

Only variants of *knowledge code* (ER+, SR-) and *knower code* (ER-, SR+) practices were observed in the curricular and pedagogic practices examined for this study. Analysis and discussion in chapters 4 and 5 are thus focused around practices occurring in the top left and bottom right quadrants of the specialisation plane. It is, of course, possible that there were isolated practices characterised by an *élite code* (ER+, SR+) or *relativist code* (ER-, SR-) not observed or analysed. However, these remain theoretical possibilities and do not form areas for further focus in this thesis.

The process by which my enactment of Specialisation concepts emerged is summarised further below in Section 3.6, together with the translation device that was developed to interrogate the data. This enactment enabled exploring and describing the principles underpinning the pre-sessional curriculum, both as espoused (chapter 4) and as designed (chapter 5). It also enabled teasing out some internal differences and variation *within* EAP curriculum threads and over course time.

Importantly, theorising in this way enabled making a conceptual distinction between the *Focus* of practices (their content) and the *Basis* of those practices (their organising principles) (Maton, 2014, p. 31). For instance, an extract from a disciplinary journal selected for EAP class work may exhibit relatively strong epistemic relations to knowledge in its content. Its *Focus* might therefore be characterised as ER+ (or in my study, the relatively stronger ER++). However, if students were asked to discuss only what their personal views of the text are and their experience of reading similar things, the *Basis* of the classroom practice drawing on this text would exhibit weaker epistemic relations, and relatively stronger social relations (ER-, SR+(+)). This distinction is



crucial in this study, as I focus less on the content of the curriculum and more on the principles structuring its curricular and pedagogical enactment. I draw on the notions of Focus and Basis both for Specialisation-based analysis, and for the second dimension enacted for this study: Semantics.

### 3.2.7. Exploring how Meanings are Made: LCT Semantics

LCT Specialisation enabled interrogating the principles structuring valorised practices on the EAP pre-sessional programme. However, my study also sought to understand the form taken by the meaning-making practices that *realise* these practices. While Specialisation makes visible the organising principles of programme goals, it does not enable theorising the *means* by which curricular or pedagogical practices are enacted. A second dimension of LCT was therefore needed: LCT Semantics.

Semantics offers concepts to explore the structuring of meanings in educational practices (Maton, 2009; 2013; 2014). The dimension developed out of Bernstein's theorising of *vertical* and *horizontal discourses* and *hierarchical* and *horizontal knowledge structures* (Bernstein, 2000). Drawing on Durkheim, Bernstein differentiates:

...at least two basic classes of knowledge; one class of knowledge that is *esoteric* and one that is *mundane*. There is the *knowledge of the other* and there is *the otherness of knowledge*. There is the knowledge of how it is (the knowledge of the possible), as against the possibility of the impossible.

(Bernstein, 2000, p. 29)

'Mundane knowledge' is characterised as *horizontal discourse*. This is commonsense, everyday knowledge, generated within and bound by its context of production (Maton, 2009, pp. 44–45; 2014, p. 108). It "...entails a set of strategies which are local, segmentally organised, context specific and dependent" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 157). Examples might include learning to ride a bike and learning to fix a puncture: The practices are segmented and unconnected to each other in the sense that knowledge of one does not facilitate knowledge of the other. By contrast, *esoteric knowledge* is characterised as *vertical discourse*, knowledge that is less dependent on its context and that is codified and related to other knowledge hierarchically (Maton, 2014, p. 108). This "... 'takes the form of a coherent, explicit, and systematically principled structure"

(Bernstein, 2000, p. 157). Disciplinary scholarship outputs generated in the university are illustrative of this specialised, decontextualised and internally coherent form of knowledge.

Within vertical discourse Bernstein further differentiated between *hierarchical knowledge structures* and *horizontal knowledge structures* (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 160–163). The knowledge practices of the sciences are examples of hierarchical knowledge structures: hierarchically ordered bodies of knowledge that seek to integrate and account for ever-more phenomena with fewer principles or propositions (Bernstein, 2000, p. 160). The Humanities are typical of horizontal knowledge structures, creating specialised but often mutually bounded and segmented 'languages' for the creation and interpretation of research texts (Bernstein, 2000, p. 160). These two concepts provide a valuable starting point for theorising the principles underpinning different ways in which knowledge is generated, developed over time and legitimised in the field of production. What they are unable to do, however, is to characterise the *form* taken by hierarchical or horizontal knowledge practices.

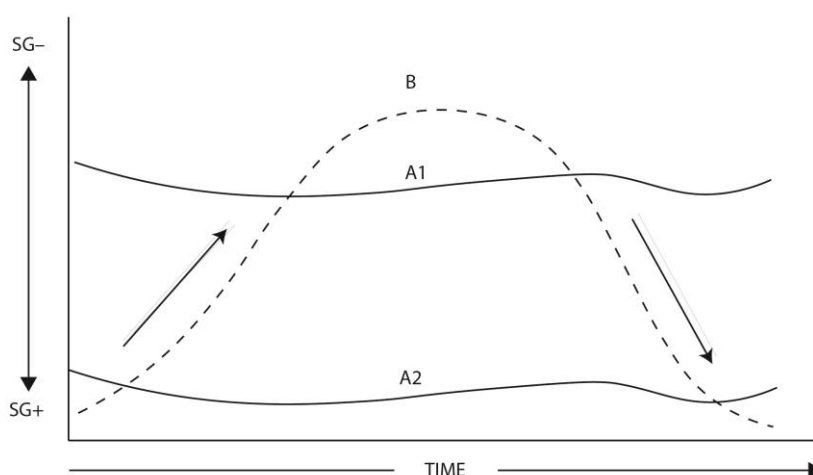
LCT Semantics extends Bernstein's theorising to conceptualise *how* it is that knowledge builds in different fields of practice and over time. This develops the available toolkit to enable making visible variation and change *within* knowledge practices. Semantics comprises the component concepts of *semantic gravity* and *semantic density* (Maton, 2014). These were first introduced and exemplified in the literature review. For the purposes of my particular research context and data, however, only the concept of semantic gravity was required to enable addressing my research questions. I therefore discuss only this concept here.

Semantic gravity refers to the relative contextual dependency of meanings. Where practices depend on their social or symbolic context for their meanings, they are said to exhibit relatively stronger semantic gravity (SG+). Where practices are less tied to material base to derive their meanings, they are said to have relatively weaker semantic gravity (SG–). The expression 'the international student's essay', for example, has greater semantic gravity than the more generalised 'international student writing'. Semantic gravity can also be strengthened (↑) or weakened (↓). In the EAP practice, for instance, students may learn how to raise the register of their academic writing and speaking practices through nominalisation. Nominalisation acts on expressions to

weaken their semantic gravity (SG↓), such as in the change from 'Bernstein developed his ideas over time' to 'Bernstein's development of ideas over time'.

As with Specialisation concepts, semantic gravity is construed as a continuum of strengths with theoretically infinite capacity for gradation and variation (Maton, 2014, p. 110). The concept thus dissolves the dichotomous thinking inherent in Bernstein's distinctions between both vertical / horizontal discourses and hierarchical / horizontal knowledge structures. Semantic gravity reconceptualises Bernstein's typologies as *topologies*, enabling more nuanced theorising and greater explanatory power (Maton, 2009). It can be used across fields to explore meaning-making practices in knowledge production, curriculum structuring, and practices in teaching and learning (Maton, 2014, pp. 110–111).

The semantic gravity of practices can be profiled 'vertically', from most context-dependent meanings to most context-independent meanings, to describe their *semantic range*. Shifts in semantic gravity can also be profiled 'horizontally' over real or symbolic time (e.g. 'course time'; 'text time'), such as in the analysis of pedagogical materials or classroom practices. Figure 3.8 below illustrates three heuristic profiles. Profile A1 represents meaning-making practices that remain relatively context-independent over time (e.g. a theoretical lecture): a *high semantic gravity flatline*.



**Figure 3.8: Heuristic semantic gravity waves (adapted from Maton, 2014, p. 143)**

Profile A2 depicts meaning-making practices that instead remain locked in their social or symbolic context (e.g. an anecdote about a recent event): a *low semantic gravity flatline*. Finally, profile B depicts shifts in the context dependency of meaning-making over time (e.g. an essay that weaves together theory and practice): a semantic gravity wave. Maton and others have argued that these shifts between stronger and weaker semantic gravity may be crucial to cumulative knowledge building and success in education (Maton, 2013; 2014; Macnaught et al., 2013; Wolff & Lockett, 2013). I return to this point later in the thesis.

Semantic gravity has been enacted in research and in professional practice to elucidate knowledge-building practices in education (Maton, 2014; Maton et al., 2016). Focuses include pupil practice in secondary school English (Maton, 2014); the undergraduate curriculum in design studies (Shay & Steyn, 2016); achievement in physics assessments (Georgiou, 2016); academic reflective writing in anthropology (Kirk, 2017c); and higher education teaching practices in law and politics (Clarence, 2016).

In my research, semantic gravity was enacted as the relative context dependency of EAP curricular knowledge in the pre-sessional curriculum. More conceptual meaning-making in the course materials and in teaching was characterised as displaying weaker semantic gravity (SG--(--)); meaning-making more dependent on the local university context was characterised as involving stronger semantic gravity (SG++(+)). As with Specialisation concepts, an analytical distinction was also made between the *Focus* and *Basis* of practices (Maton, 2014, p. 31) in order to narrow and sharpen my enactment of semantic gravity. Thus, my focus of inquiry was not on the relative context-dependency of content in the academic texts that students and teachers engaged with (the *Focus* of practices). Rather, I examined meaning-making practices associated with the underpinning EAP curriculum itself (the *Basis* of those practices). This included, for instance, learning about argumentation in writing, text structure and register shifts in academic language use.

The process through which this enactment emerged, together with the translation device developed, appear below in Section 3.6.

### **3.2.8. Summary of the Theoretical Toolkit**

In summary, my empirical project drew on four sets of concepts to build the conceptual framework and analytical toolkit. These were Bernstein's concept of Framing, Bernstein's pedagogic device, extended as the epistemic pedagogic device (Maton, 2014) and the Legitimation Code Theory dimensions of Specialisation and Semantics. This framework was used to conceptualise EAP as three distinct but interacting fields of practice, and to explore the enactment of pre-sessional course practices in two of these fields: EAP curriculum and pedagogy. Given their social realist foundations, the combination of concepts enabled moving beyond the strictly observable, theorising from data in ways that moved beyond surface descriptions of curricular and pedagogical practices, to identify underlying organising principles.

The analytical toolkit is underpinned by Bhaskar's critical realist ontology (Bhaskar, 2008/1975). This offers a layered account of the world and of knowledge practices, distinguishing *the real* (underlying generative mechanisms), *the actual* (events occurring in the observable world), and *the empirical* (those events *experienced* by actors in the world). Critical realism holds that while mechanisms cannot be observed, their operation can be (Ackroyd & Karlsson, 2014, p. 24). In realist approaches to research, therefore, social practices are investigated in order to develop an explanatory account of the principles generating what is observed. These underlying mechanisms may or may not be actualised and may be actualised in different ways in different contexts (Sayer, 2000). This enables theorising from practice beyond the purely descriptive towards making visible what *might have been* and what *might be*, thereby offering the possibility of development and change.

This transformative dimension, core also to the research aims of Bernstein and Maton, thus provided a good fit for my research study, given my interests in developing insights that could be used to generate alternatives beyond what was observed, and to improve curricular and pedagogical practices in EAP.

### **3.3. Research Approach**

To recap briefly, my doctoral study was guided by the research questions:

*How is EAP locally enacted?*

*What are the organising principles underpinning this enactment?*

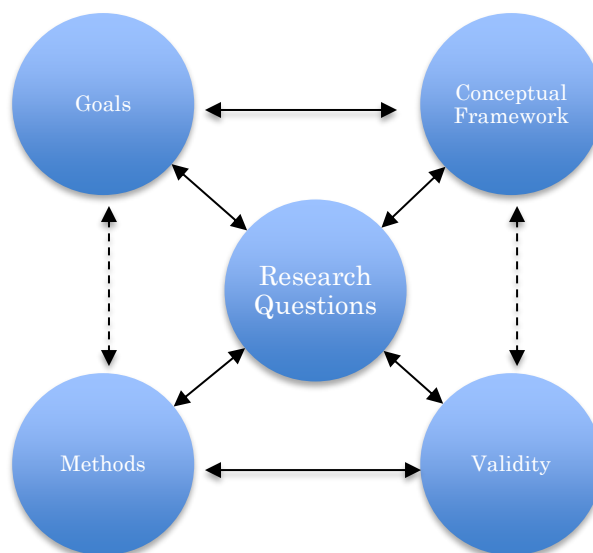
In the remainder of this chapter, I introduce the research approach, methods and analytic framework that were developed to address these questions. I begin in this section with discussion of the research design, describing the case study approach taken. In section 3.4 I then set out the processes of data collection, including an account of the selection of research participants and sources of data. I reflect briefly on my status as both researcher and director of the EAP pre-sessional programmes in section 3.5, and consider how the design decisions I took helped to ensure an ethical approach to the research. Section 3.6 then details the data analysis procedures. It is in this section that I also present the languages of description (LoDs) (Berstein, 2000), or translation devices (Maton, 2014; Maton & Chen, 2016) developed in close dialogue with the data. The LoDs both informed and were informed by the data analysis process. Finally, in section 3.7, I summarise the steps I took during the conception, collection and exploration of data to ensure quality and rigour in the research.

### **3.3.1. Interactive Conception**

In order to enable an ongoing and reflexive relationship between the evolving nature of the research questions and the methods most suited to the study, the research design was conceptualised in terms of Maxwell's (2005) interactive model (Maxwell, 2012, pp. 77–80). Given the exploratory nature of my research questions and the way these emerged from the complexities of professional practice, I knew that it would take time to give shape to the research problem and hone my questions. I found it productive to think in iterative terms about the relationships between practice on the ground, emerging research questions, theoretical lenses through which to understand these, and the research design that might best provide possible answers to these questions. In practice also, there was dialogue between different facets of the research process throughout the project. Maxwell's interactive model, reproduced below as figure 3.9, thus provided an appropriate conceptualisation of these relationships.

Following Maxwell, I maintained a tight dialogue between the 'upper triangle' of the model (Maxwell, 2012, p. 80), i.e. between my research questions, the goals of the research and my conceptual framework. For instance, the goals of my study shifted during the research process, from a narrow focus on the EAP classroom to a wider view of EAP curriculum enactment. It was therefore necessary to hone and refine my

research questions. It also became necessary to add an extra tool into the conceptual framework, LCT Specialisation, to enable addressing these expanded questions.



**Figure 3.9: Interactive conception of the research process (Maxwell, 2012, p. 78)**

Maxwell also stresses the importance of maintaining "a closely integrated unit" (Maxwell, 2012, p. 80) of the 'lower triangle' in the model - i.e. between the research questions, the methods of inquiry chosen, and research validity. In my research process this involved ongoing reflection on the emerging research design, ensuring that the methods selected enabled addressing my research questions. Thus, for instance, the expansion of my research to investigate also the values shaping course design required me to interview the course designers, in addition to examining programme materials. Validity of interpretations and considering potential threats to this validity were also key to this process. For example, in order to reduce possible power relations between myself, as course director, and the materials writers, I conducted two interviews with both the designers together. This dialogic format additionally enabled a conversation between the participants, enabling richer and more reliable insights to emerge.

### **3.3.2. Qualitative Research**

Given the exploratory nature of my questions, a qualitative research approach was the most appropriate choice for my study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Unlike for a

quantitative approach, I was not seeking to prove or disprove a particular hypothesis, to design a test-intervention-test type experiment, or to 'control variables'. Instead, I was seeking greater understanding of questions and problems emerging out of my professional practice. As mentioned above, considerable time was spent during the early stages of my research simply working to give shape to the research questions themselves, to find a language with which to articulate what I was seeing in local EAP classrooms and, through this process, to develop an understanding of the kinds of tools that would enable me to address the professional/research questions. Given this dynamic process, the complexity of classroom contexts and the emerging need to explore relations between the *potential curriculum* and the *enacted curriculum*, a qualitative design was therefore most suitable. Features of the research thus included gathering data from multiple sources (Robson & McCartan, 2016), including participants' voices and perspectives (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005), exploring teaching practice in natural rather than experimental settings (Maxwell, 2005), and acknowledging my own reflexivity and role in the interpretation of findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Holliday, 2016).

### **3.3.3. Case Study Approach**

A case study design was chosen as the research approach for my study. Such an approach "...involves investigating one or a small number of social entities or situations about which data are collected using multiple sources of data and developing a holistic description through an iterative research process" (Easton, 2010, p. 119)". Understood in terms of investigating a single instance of a bounded system, such as a class, course or community (after Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253), a case study design was therefore appropriate for investigating the pre-sessional programme. Case study is also not a 'method' per se, but rather a research 'stance' or strategy (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p. 150) and can therefore be associated with different epistemologies (Easton, 2010, p. 119). It is also a well-suited research companion for critical realism, given its focus on exploring "why things are as they are" and on tracing patterns and links within contextualised phenomena over time (Easton, 2010, p. 119).

Given that one component of the research involved exploring EAP teachers' enactment of curricular materials, my study was conceived partially in terms of 'cases within a case', or what Yin called an *embedded case study* (Yin, 2009, p. 46). Looking at



teacher practice across different materials and classes, as well as across different practitioners enabled *thick description* (Geertz, 1993; Denzin, 1994, p. 505; Holliday, 2016, pp. 83–84) and thus validity in the interpretation of my observations. As discussed in the literature review and earlier in this chapter, the blurring of fields in EAP has led to the obscuring of curricular and pedagogical practices in research. Isolated case studies have provided insights into, for instance, local exploration of curricular change, but tend not to move beyond narrow description and do not offer theorised interpretations that rise above the particularities of the research context. Rather than only to gain ‘intrinsic’ understanding (Stake, 1995) of the particular practices on the pre-sessional programme, therefore, my goal was to derive insights into curriculum enactment more broadly to enable theoretical and pedagogical application beyond the local bounds of the research site. Thus, my research can be defined as an ‘interpretive’ (Merriam, 1988) and ‘instrumental’ case study (Stake, 1995).

Given this stated goal, it is worth noting that the case study approach has been criticised for having limited generalisability or applicability beyond the bounds of a given study (Flyvberg, 2006; Thomas, 2011). This is due to the typically narrow and bounded nature of the phenomena under investigation. These critiques tend to emerge from very different research traditions, such as positivist approaches (e.g. Campbell & Stanley, 1966), however, that make quite different assumptions about the nature and goals of research inquiry (Thomas, 2011). Thomas argues, conversely, for the value of ‘exemplary knowledge’ in case study research – i.e. insights that are *not* generalised in ways that render them context-free, but rather the value of lived, grounded experience of “...a particular representation given in context and understood in that context” (Thomas, 2011, p. 31). It is therefore important to see critiques of case study research in light of the ontological and epistemological stance assumed.

In my own study, I aimed *both* to understand the local enactment of EAP through the pre-sessional materials and their classroom realisation, *and* to develop theorisations that had the explanatory power to cross contexts. In terms of notions of generalisability, therefore, I was not seeking ‘statistical generalisability’, as in quantitative scientific research, but rather ‘analytical’ or ‘theoretical’ generalisation (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p. 154). This was enabled through the critical realist framing of the research, the use of concepts from Legitimation Code Theory (Maton, 2014), through an iterative process of moving between the data and the theoretical concepts and, through this

process, the development of an 'external language of description' (LoD). The LoD (Bernstein, 2000) provides a transparent 'translation device' between the raw data collected in the research site and its theorisation towards the Semantics concepts from Legitimation Code Theory (Maton, 2014; Chen & Maton, 2016). I summarise this process further below.

### **3.4. Data Collection**

#### **3.4.1. Research Setting & Background**

The research setting was a research-intensive university in the north of England. The particular site for the empirical study was a twelve-week summer EAP Pre-Sessional programme. This programme, together with the eight- and four-week pre-sessionals, is conceived, written and managed by staff at the university's English Language Centre. The twelve-week EAP programme runs from early July to late September each year and attracts between 150 and 170 international students. Each class comprises 12-16 students and has a dedicated teacher, though students also see a second teacher most days. Given the much greater numbers of students applying to the summer pre-sessionals compared to year-round courses, the majority of teaching staff are recruited externally for the summer only. The EAP unit hires between 40 and 50 teachers each summer, with around 12-14 working on the longest programme, the context for my study.

Pilot data collection was conducted during summer 2014. This comprised videoing 9 teachers across 3-4 classes over 4 weeks. This enabled early experience of working with video data and dialogue between the data and possible theoretical frameworks. Out of this emerged insights, in particular, about the logistics of fieldwork and navigating data collection across multiple classrooms; managing large volumes of data; and mitigating video and audio quality. A second round of data was collected in summer 2016. The design was honed to include videoing of a greater range of classes that were linked more closely to core curriculum threads. Shifts in the research focus and questions also led me to focus on experienced EAP teachers. The number of participants was reduced from 9 to 4, to make the volume of data manageable, but the number of classes videoed was increased from 4 to 7 to increase breadth of coverage for each participant. Each capture point involved simultaneously recording 3-4 teachers.

### 3.4.2. Research Phases & Research Participants

Influenced and informed both by Bhaskar's depth ontology (2008/1975) and LCT's epistemic pedagogic device (EPD) (Maton, 2014), the research process proceeded in three broad phases, with three forms of data collected: printed pedagogic materials, including teacher notes and staff induction materials; video recordings of classroom teaching; and interviews with both pre-sessional management staff and teachers. The direction that the research journey took resulted eventually in the teacher interview data not being analysed, however. A summary overview of the data collected, analysed and discussed appears at the end of this thesis as appendix 1.

The three research phases are summarised diagrammatically below as figure 3.10.

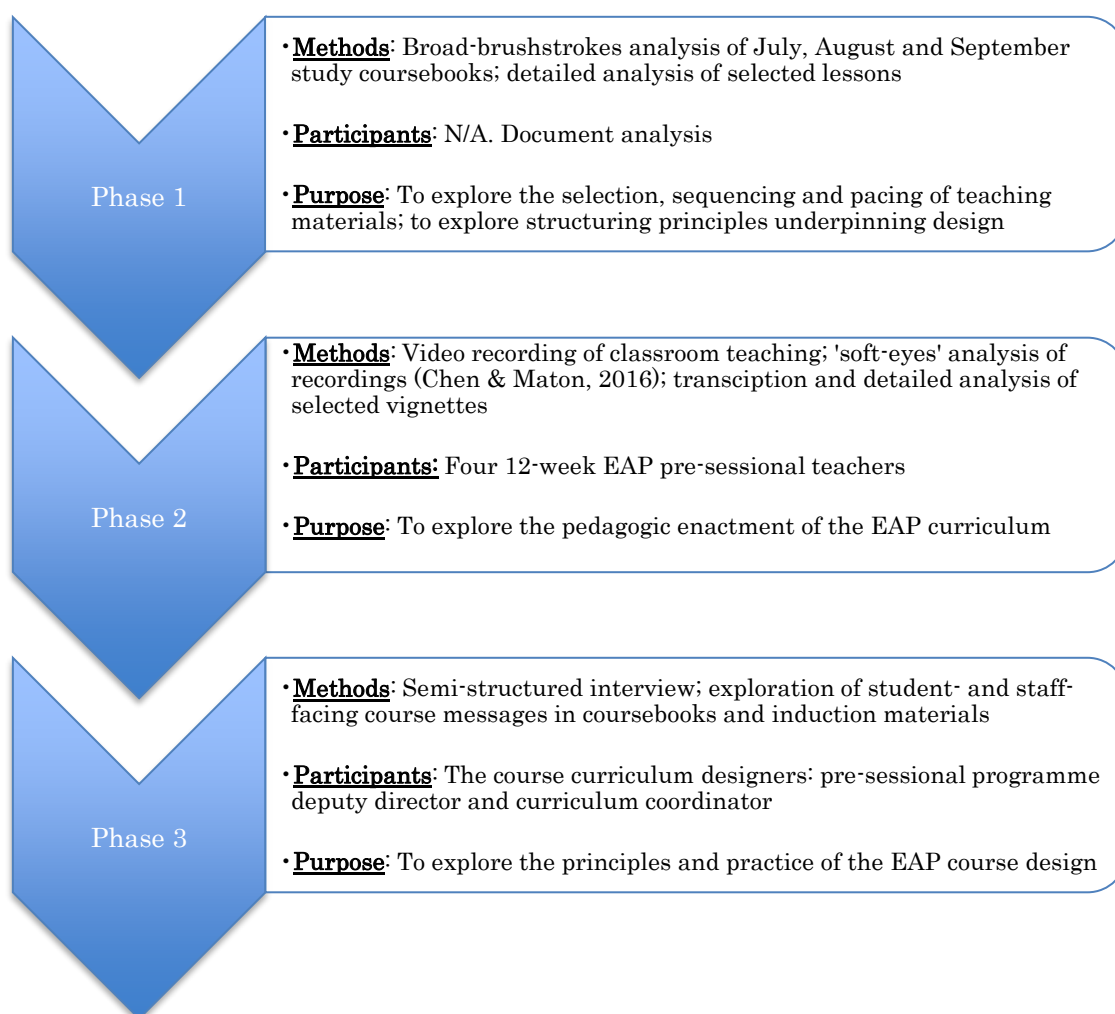


Figure 3.10: Research phases

While conceptually presented as linear and sequential phases, aspects of the above processes occurred in parallel. Exploration and analysis of course materials, for example, continued throughout the broad three phases. Interviews with the course designers in phase 3 generated insights and raised questions that I was then able to take back into documentary and video analysis. The diagram above is thus heuristic, reflecting the research process as it evolved. It does not, however, reflect the organisation of the empirical chapters that follow. The 'logic of discovery' led to interviews with the designers as a final stage of data collection. The 'logic of demonstration' in my thesis, however, required starting from this macro-perspective on the pre-sessional course, before moving to exploration of curriculum and classroom.

#### **3.4.2.1 Phase One: Materials Analysis**

To provide more detail on the process depicted in figure 3.10, phase one involved examining the study materials provided for pre-sessional students. The materials are the same as those given to teachers. The twelve-week EAP programme comprises three coursebooks, one for each month of the course. Each book was approximately 200 pages in length. In the August leg of the course, an additional disciplinary reading pack is provided. Two of these, the packs for Law students and for students of TESOL<sup>17</sup> and Applied Linguistics were also examined. I was interested in understanding principles underpinning macro-organisation of the curriculum, and so initial documentary analysis focused on contents pages, messages about assessment and the 'curriculum threads' evident in each book. Addressing my research questions also required focusing on the micro-organisation of lesson design, and thus analysis also focused on individual lessons across the course. Selection of lessons for closer analysis was informed by emerging understanding of the lessons' positions and functions in wider threads (e.g. as given in lesson aims) and by the theoretical framework. For example, working with the Specialisation concept of social relations led to me noticing one lesson in July that, unusually in the course, begins with a personalised discussion task. The lesson also contains relatively conceptual analysis tasks and discussion and this led to subsequent analysis through the lens of semantic gravity. This lesson thus became a focus for deeper analysis and appears in chapter 5.

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<sup>17</sup> Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Collection, selection and first-stage analysis of the course materials informed phase two of the research process: videoing the classroom practices of teachers.

### **3.4.2.2 Phase Two: Videoing Classroom Teaching**

Understanding the enactment of EAP in the research context required analysing not just the curricular materials, but also how these were realised as classroom practice. My experience during observations of teaching over a number of years had led to realising that practitioners enacted lessons in varying ways, sometimes reshaping what was on the page. Informed also by deeper understandings of these practices in terms of the concept of recontextualisation (Bernstein, 1990; Stavrou, 2011), I set out to collect classroom data.

Participation in the research was invited from among the twelve-week Pre-Sessional teachers. A purposive sample (Cohen et al., 2007, pp. 114–115) of four teachers was selected from volunteers, based particularly on professional English language teaching experience and having taught on the pre-sessional programme before. This focus was chosen firstly as a means to explore the enactment practices of teachers who had experience of the whole course and thus who had experience of working through all materials, assessment processes and working with students in the local context. The decision was also taken for ethical reasons (cf. Section 3.5.2) and in the interests of the quality and validity of the data (cf. Section 3.7).

The teacher-participants comprised three male teachers and one female teacher. All teachers had extensive English language teaching (ELT) experience, both in the UK and abroad. All also held postgraduate university degrees and diploma-level ELT qualifications. All teachers had extensive experience of teaching EAP in higher education contexts, and had taught this particular programme before - in some cases multiple times. One of the participants, Phil<sup>18</sup>, was also one of the course designers. He had requested to return to a partial teaching role during my summer of data collection, in order to experience 'at the chalkface' the materials that he was involved in writing and shaping. Phil's participation in the research thus enabled twin research perspectives: a view into his values and practices as designer, and a view into his

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<sup>18</sup> A pseudonym. All research participants have been similarly anonymised.

pedagogical practices. A summary of participants appears in Table 3.2 below. For the protection of anonymity, details remain imprecise: in particular, years of teaching experience. Level of experience or expertise was not a focus of the research per se. The precise length of experience is thus not important to the analysis or interpretations.

Teacher	Gender	ELT Experience (years)	EAP Experience
Heath	M	5+	5+
Marco	M	5+	5+
Phil	M	5+	5+
Selene	F	5+	5+

**Table 3.2: Summary profile of teacher-participants in the research**

A very busy schedule, both for teachers and for me as course director, placed logistical constraints on the videoing of classes. Guided by insights from phase one but also by, e.g., limits on teacher time and the realities of staff absence, changes to the programme and unforeseen course emergencies, the four teachers were videoed once a week over a five week period, from the end of July to the end of August. In this way, seven lessons from the coursebooks were recorded. Videoing would, ideally, also have extended into September to enable a full spread of classes across the curriculum. This was not possible, however, given the busyness and high-stakes nature of this final month. Given occasional absence and schedule changes, a total of twenty-three (rather than twenty-eight) lessons were recorded.

Video cameras were set up at the back of each of the participants' classrooms before classes started. This placement was not always ideal for the purposes of observing everything that happened in the classroom; however, it enabled less intrusive filming and thus a more ethical and reliable design (cf. Section 3.5.2 and 3.7). Recording occurred simultaneously across three to four classrooms. This was to enable analysing the same lesson as taught by different teachers. Video cameras were plugged into wall sockets to avoid potential loss of power through only battery use. Back-up audio was obtained with portable dictaphones placed on the desk at the front of each classroom. This ensured the teacher's voice would be reliably captured. Finally, participants nominated a 'photographer' in their class. This volunteer student took photos of work recorded on whiteboards and also, where classrooms were equipped, use of the

visualiser and interactive whiteboards. This design decision emerged from the pilot phase in 2014, where it became evident that screens and boards could not be read in video recordings.

### **3.4.2.3 Phase Three: Designer Interviews**

Emerging insights and understandings from earlier phases in the research process led to me realising that wider analysis of course ethos, values and espoused design were needed. Teachers enacted materials in ways that went beyond what was on the page, and thus the scope of my inquiry expanded to the wider curriculum and surrounding course messages. Two interviews were conducted on consecutive days, mid-way through the 2016 programme. The two course designers, Rebecca and Phil, were interviewed together, enabling a dialogic, conversational approach. Rebecca, like Phil, has worked in the EAP unit for a number of years and has a long experience of teaching, curriculum design and management on the programme. A semi-structured approach was adopted, with question prompts, but follow-up questions emerging from responses. This enabled flexibility in the interview and for theory-informed focusing in on particular responses. The designers were informed by email in advance of the principal themes for the interview, and were encouraged to begin considering their thoughts on these areas before we met. This helped to ensure a richer conversation.

Interview questions were informed both by my research questions and by the theoretical framework. I developed an interview schedule to help steer and guide my thinking during the interview, but details were only explicitly asked for if they did not naturally emerge from the conversation. Insights from the interviews were drawn on to elucidate and complement other data sources, primarily the course documentation and pedagogical materials. The full interview schedule for both interviews appears at the end of this thesis as Appendix 2, together with an indication of the theoretical lenses that informed them.

## **3.5. Positionality & Ethics**

### **3.5.1. Being an Insider Researcher**

At the time of data collection, I was director of the summer pre-session programmes at the institution in which I was also a doctoral student. This position brought benefits to

the research process, but also challenges that were essential to bear in mind during the conception and design of the empirical study, as well as during data collection and reporting. It was important to develop a research approach that was ethical (cf. Section 3.5.2), and an approach that ensured rigour and trustworthiness of interpretations and conclusions (cf. Section 3.7) However, it was also important to me that I represented the pre-sessional course in ways that were honest, sensitive to colleagues and mindful of the community of which I am part.

Drawing on insights and advice in the literature (Drake & Heath, 2011; Holliday, 2016; Trowler, 2014), I adopted a number of reflexive strategies in order to remain mindful of my position, insider knowledge and the effects this might have on the research process. For example, I tried always to adopt a 'native-as-stranger' perspective (Minichiello, Aroni & Hays, 2008). This was easier when examining course materials, as I no longer have any role in curriculum design and so was often examining lessons I had never considered in detail before. In the interviews, I designed the questions to ensure I did not jump to my own assumptions about, e.g., selection and sequencing decisions in the course. Question 5 for instance, ("what are your goals for students...?" - see , 2) ensured I did not graft my own beliefs about overall programme goals onto interpretation of data. Question 7 ("what do you look for in a teacher...what qualities do you value?" - see Appendix 2) ensured I obtained alternative perspectives to my own on teacher classroom practices.

I presented myself as research student and colleague, not as 'course director'. This enabled me to adopt a very different and more humble mindset, seeking explicitly to learn from colleagues not, for instance, to 'evaluate' their work and their beliefs. Working with experienced designers and teachers also facilitated a mindful approach. Given their familiarity with me, participants were comfortable with asking questions, asking for clarification and probing into reasons for my research. This afforded opportunities to re-articulate and thus re-clarify my own purposes and approach. This was invaluable throughout the research process for maintaining a reflexive outlook.

In view of my conceptual framework, it is worth highlighting that critical realism assumes that complete detachment is impossible. A committed position is appropriate for realists, seeking as they do to learn about the world in order to change it (Ackroyd &



Karlsson, 2014, p. 27). My position as insider-researcher afforded me the opportunity to research EAP practice in my local context. The intention was not to 'evaluate', but the intention was, at least partly, to develop understandings from my inquiry that might feed back into professional practice and enhance it.

### **3.5.2. Ethical Considerations**

Official ethical clearance was obtained via the research ethics committee process in the university's School of Education. Written consent was also obtained from the teacher-participants and all students in their classes. Student and teacher consent forms, together with associated participant information sheets, appear at the end of this thesis as Appendix 3 and 4 respectively. Mindful of the potential power and status that came with my position as course director, I presented myself in person to each class as 'a student, just like you'. I briefly explained my research and its purpose, but also included mention of my struggles, mistakes and anxieties. This was in an attempt to ensure students did not feel coerced into any decision to participate. I made clear that all participants and data would be anonymised and video data stored securely on password-protected hard disks available only to me. All students had opportunities to ask me and their teachers questions. All students agreed to participate.

Similar conversations took place with teachers. Selected volunteer participants each had day-to-day contact with me through my other roles on the programme, and thus there were frequent opportunities to discuss the ongoing research and for teachers to become familiar with the purposes and evolving trajectory of the project. Anonymity of the teachers was preserved by adopting pseudonyms for each participant. Photo stills taken from the video data and photos taken by student volunteers were digitally altered with photo editing software to blur out faces and any other features that might identify individuals or the institution (e.g. signs on the wall in the background of images).

Given my research questions and the qualitative approach, there was little benefit in obtaining a random sample of teacher-participants for my study. A purposive sampling strategy was therefore adopted in the interests of research validity and ethics. The participants were required to be filmed at least once a week and this may well have proved overly stressful for teachers new to the programme. In particular, the content-led and conceptually demanding nature of the programme often requires significant preparation time and can prove pedagogically challenging for teachers less familiar

with the curriculum and underpinning expectations. This is regularly attested by fledgling staff and was mentioned by one of my 2014 participants who had been entirely new both to the particular context and to EAP teaching. Selecting more seasoned practitioners thereby reduced the likelihood that the presence of the video camera would impact negatively on teacher workload, anxiety or classroom performance.

Perhaps more importantly, this strategy also reduced the likelihood that the data collection process might affect student learning. Given that the case study investigated "a unique example of real people in real situations" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253), it was crucial to design the approach in ways that minimised the possibility of negative impacts. Involving less experienced staff in the research risked such an impact, given the potential extra pressure participation would require and, in particular, the regular filming of teaching, which may have proved stressful and potentially impacted on the quality of teaching, classroom interactions and overall student learning experience.

While I have not named the institution or participants, it is clear that my particular study and my position make it impossible to anonymise things entirely. This is particularly the case for the course designers I interviewed. This was a source of regular reflection, and I made this potential concern explicit to both Rebecca and Phil from the outset. They understood that the nature of my research and my position within it meant anonymity could not be guaranteed. Both expressed being comfortable with these risks and confirmed that they were happy for me to continue with the project as planned and with reporting and discussing their contributions. Rebecca and Phil were given the opportunity to read relative sections of the thesis and the areas where they were quoted. They confirmed they were happy with how things were presented, interpreted and discussed. The measures I took to remain open, discuss my concerns and obtain regular consent via reading of drafts ensured that an ethical approach was maintained.

### **3.6. Data Analysis**

#### **3.6.1. Developing a 'Translation Device'**

LCT concepts enacted for empirical research take their particular form and interpretation through a dialogue with the data in a particular research site. In order to make this 'translation' process transparent and accessible to readers and to other

researchers wishing to scrutinize, replicate or build on a given study, an “interpretive interface” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 135) or ‘analytic reading device’ is therefore needed. Bernstein called this interface an *external language of description* (LoD) and distinguished it from an *internal language of description*, or the concepts internal to a theory and how they relate to each other (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 131–141). Thus the external language of description, or ‘L2’, is a tool that enables translating between the theoretical framework guiding the research (the internal language of description, or ‘L1’) and the specific data in a given research context. In Bernstein’s own terms, a language of description is:

...a ‘translation device’ that “constructs what is to count as an empirical referent, how such referents relate to each other to produce a specific text, and translates these referential relations into theoretical objects or potential theoretical objects.

(Bernstein, 2000, p. 133).

Building on and extending Bernstein’s original conception of an external language of description (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 131–141), Maton counts an LoD as *one* form of ‘translation device’, adding also *external languages of enactment* and *mediating languages* as other forms (Maton et al, 2016, p. 243). External languages of description translate between theory and research data; external languages of enactment relate concepts to practice; and mediating languages “...translat[e] between theory and all empirical forms of a phenomenon (Maton et al, 2016, p. 243). An example of a mediating language, or what Maton has called an ‘L1.5’, has been developed recently for exploring complexity in knowledge practices in ‘English discourse’ (Maton & Doran, 2016a; 2016b). In this thesis I use the terms ‘(external) language of description’ and ‘translation device’ interchangeably.

A number of LoDs have been developed for empirical research using LCT. Maton illustrates one such translation device developed to analyse a postgraduate writing task, where students were required to analyse two case studies of instructional design projects (Maton, 2014, pp. 111–116. See Table 3.3, overleaf). Read from right to left, the LoD enables seeing how raw examples from the data (excerpts of the student writing) were categorized and then theorised in terms of the LCT concept of semantic gravity. Read from left to right, the translation device shows how the theory was enacted for a *particular* research project.

Serving therefore as an explicit interface between the L1 and the L2 in an empirical study, LoDs such as this one realise Bernstein’s call for “...the reliability of this translation/transformation process” and the requirement for unambiguousness and explicitness (Bernstein, 2000, p. 138) in qualitative inquiry.

The language of description thus offers the possibility of interrogating interpretations and conclusions on the study's own terms. It also enables future research to be conducted, including by others, using the same enactment of concepts.

Semantic gravity	Coding of responses	Form taken by student responses	Example quote from student answers
weaker ↑ ↓ stronger	Abstraction	Presents a general principle or procedure that moves beyond the cases to address wider or future practice.	Legal and intellectual property issues are a major consideration when developing a product.
	Generalization	Presents a general observation or draws a generalizing conclusion about issues and events <i>in</i> the case.	Precious time would be wasted and deadlines not met when members did not have a full concept of the project.
	Judgement	Goes beyond re-presenting or interpreting information to offer a value judgement or claim.	While each metaphor provides a realistic learning environment ..., I felt that the <i>Nardoo</i> metaphor assists with navigation, while the <i>StageStruck</i> metaphor was a barrier to effective navigation.
	Interpretation	Seeks to explain a statement by interpreting information from the case or adding new information. May include use of other literature or personal experience.	While not alluded to in the interviews, this may have caused problems for the team, as there would have been a new software to work with, and transferral of information from <i>Hypercard</i> to <i>MediaPlant</i> .
	Summarizing description	Descriptive response that summarizes or synthesizes information presented in the case, including re-wording and re-structuring of a number of events into one statement. Does not present new information from beyond the case.	This involved creating the overall structure and content of the project, with design briefs and statements being forwarded to the client, with the final design statement being signed off by the client, giving a stable starting position for the project.
	Reproductive description	Reproduces information directly from the case with no elaboration (i.e. quotations).	The NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC) approached the Interactive Multimedia Learning Laboratory (IMMLL) at the University of Wollongong to develop an educational multimedia package.

**Table 3.3: A translation device for semantic gravity (Maton, 2014, p. 113)**

An induction process, as is used in grounded theory studies (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), was deemed not to be appropriate for my study. My goal was not to generate new theory, as grounded theory sets out to do (Strauss, 1987). Rather, my aim was to better understand and, ideally, to improve curricular and pedagogic practice. Unlike grounded theory, the LoD development process involves engagement with theory during the analysis process itself. It is therefore more theory- and researcher-driven (Maxwell, 2012, p. 113), though as discussed above, this is not to say that it is theory *led*, or that theory is ‘imposed’ upon the data (see Maton & Chen, 2016).

The importance of developing a translation device that unambiguously translates between the data and the theory became evident to me during iterations of analysis work. I realised in working with course designer interviews, for instance, that I had begun to work intuitively with slightly different enactments of semantic gravity, thereby stretching the concept and making it do far too much work. I was examining the semantic range of espoused thinking about the pre-sessional programme, in addition to the semantic range of espoused curriculum practices. While both make legitimate objects of inquiry, the process of working towards a written language of description with example instances from the data helped me to see through to this conflation of interests. This reminded me of the flexibility of LCT concepts but also, crucially, the importance of locking them down explicitly for a given object of research inquiry.

### **3.6.2. Immersion in the Data & Early Theorising**

#### **Analysis of Pedagogic Materials**

In order to ascertain the form taken by Framing and by LCT concepts within the curricular and pedagogical practices of the pre-sessional programme, the first step was to immerse myself in the data. Maton warns against jumping to theory too quickly (Maton & Chen, 2016, pp. 38–39), in order to allow the data to speak for itself, and to ensure the qualitative richness of the data is not “smothered by concepts” (Maton & Chen, 2016, p. 39). First-stage analysis therefore involved simple description and labelling of the data on its own terms. In the case of study materials, this involved reading through lessons as presented on the page and identifying, for example, that lessons contained text that served as *instructions*, text that served as *input* and text

that served as *explanation*. It became clear quickly that there were different types of *input*, and this led to preliminary categorising into, e.g., *input (academic culture)*, *input (pedagogic text)* and *input (student text)*. Similarly, different learner *tasks* emerged, such as *task (write / fill blanks)*, *task (discuss)* and *task (read and discuss)*. Maxwell (2005; 2012) refers to these emergent labels as *substantive categories*, generated inductively through a process of ‘open coding’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Maxwell proposes two additional phases in the process of qualitative coding of research data. These involve creating *organisational categories* and *theoretical categories*. *Organisational categories* function as “abstract ‘bins’ for sorting the data” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 112). These categories are often established before data collection and thus provide little insight into what is actually happening in the data, but provide useful headings within which to work. In her LCT Specialisation-based study of Chinese international students’ experience of online learning in an Australian university, Chen (2010) used Berry’s acculturation framework (e.g. Berry, 2005), to organise her interview data into ‘culture A’ (Chinese education), ‘culture B’ (Australian education’ and ‘contact’ (where culture A and B meet) (Chen, 2010, pp. 74–76). In my own process, I was influenced by my background in EAP and thus saw distinctions in the data such as ‘work on language’ and ‘work on content’. I found myself drawing on Halliday’s well-cited distinctions between ‘learning language’, ‘learning *about* language’ and ‘learning *through* language’ (Halliday, 1993). Originally used in state school literacy learning contexts, these three categories also capture the three areas of activity in an EAP classroom: opportunities for practice (learning language), metalinguistic work on vocabulary, grammar and text structure (learning *about* language and academic/disciplinary content-focused work (learning *through* language). These ‘abstract bins’ therefore provided the organisational categories that I brought to the data, enabling early sorting of the *substantive categories* generated through the initial descriptions and labels exemplified above.

Finally, *theoretical categories* code the data into a more abstract and conceptual form (Maxwell, 2012, p. 113). These categories may be developed inductively from the data itself, as in grounded theory (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), or derived from an existing theory – as in my study.

## Analysis of Video Data

A similar process of description and preliminary categorisation was followed for investigating and analysing videos of pre-sessional EAP teaching. Informed and partly guided by my “extended apprenticeship” in conceptual and empirical readings in LCT, I was able to bring a “refined gaze” to the data (Maton & Chen, 2016, p. 37). Rather than transcribe and code *all* videoed lessons, therefore, I watched and re-watched the videos, looking for shifts in knowledge practices (SG↓ / SG↑). This included where a teacher was simplifying the knowledge, e.g. through defining a concept or providing explanation for a student, or ‘wrapping up’ content through a verbal summary of the learning in a given section or at the end of a class. This process is informed by Maton’s own research approach and by a number of other LCT studies adopting the same method (e.g. Clarence, 2014). It enabled identifying potentially insightful vignettes, which could then be transcribed, coded and analysed more closely through the categorisation processes outlined above.

Following Maton (2014), it was the identification of shifts in knowledge practices that enabled dividing video transcript data into heuristic units of analysis. There are studies using LCT and exploring classroom discourse that employ linguistic frameworks to identify units of analysis. McPherson (2014), for example, combines LCT with (Sydney School<sup>19</sup>) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in an interdisciplinary study of professional accounting practices in university classroom discourse. She uses the concept of ‘periodicity’ (Martin & Rose, 2007) and, in particular, the information structure notions of ‘theme’ and ‘new’ to identify analytical units at the level of the clause (McPherson, 2014, pp. 90–91). However, the focus of my research study was not the precise linguistic realisation of teacher discourse, but rather on the principles underpinning the recontextualisation of curricular knowledge as pedagogic practice, and the possible impacts for student learning. I was therefore interested in identifying and exploring broad shifts in knowledge over text time and class time, rather than in micro-analysis at the clause level. Given also that, e.g., the context dependency of meanings as enacted across pedagogical materials and as recontextualised by teachers may not correspond to linguistic units, I therefore chose not to attempt a

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<sup>19</sup> Systemic Functional Linguistics has been developed in several different directions since its earliest articulations by Michael Halliday. In particular, Jim Martin and colleagues have developed the theory at the level of discourse semantics. Their work, given its origins at the University of Sydney, has become known as Sydney School SFL (see, e.g. Martin, 2000).

clause-by-clause analysis of my video data, instead coding heuristically by identifying broad shifts in knowledge practices, operationalised with semantic gravity as the relative context dependency of meanings.

## Analysis of Interviews

Interviews with the course designers were transcribed in full and coded using NVivo for Mac, version 11 (QSR International, 2017). First-stage coding generated seventy-eight descriptive labels. At this stage I did not really know what I was looking for, but extended immersion in the transcripts, together with multiple listenings of the interview enabled grouping these items into twenty-six categories. These included *course components*, *course goals* and *influences on course goals*. Influenced by my shuttling back and forth to theoretical reading and honing of the conceptual framework, I realised much of the data could be categorised in terms of notions of *selection*, *sequencing* and *pacing* (Bernstein, 2000). A screenshot exemplifying a stage in this process is given below as figure 3.11. This was a breakthrough moment and enabled me to begin connecting and integrating interview insights with understandings coming out of the other data sources, particularly the curricular materials.

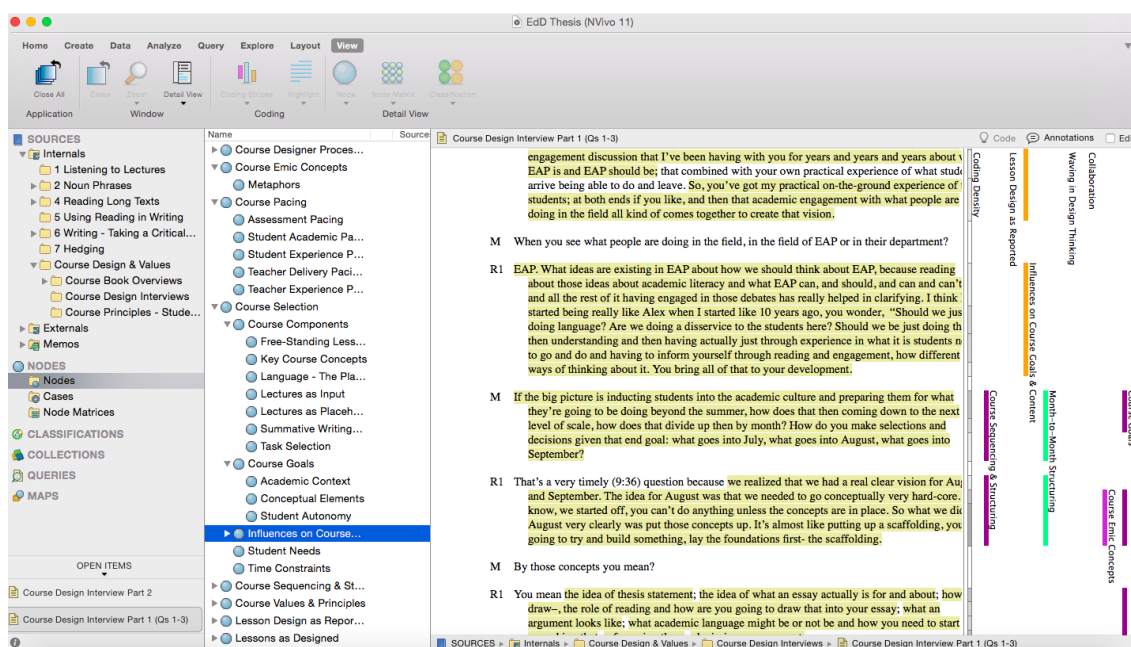


Figure 3.11: Categorising interview data with NVivo 11 (QSR International, 2017)



NVivo coding stopped at this point. My research focus was focused on enactment practices and not on generating theoretical insights from the interview data per se. I thus refocused my attention on analysis of lessons and teaching, but returned regularly to the coded interview data to find comments and insights that might help further elucidate findings and add weight to interpretations.

### **3.6.3. The Translation Device for Framing**

Pre-sessional curriculum and assessments are pre-designed and thus exert an influence from without on teacher freedom and decision-making (cf. chapter 4). For this reason, Framing for curriculum and assessment were both enacted in terms of *external Framing* ( $F^e$ ); framing of pedagogy was seen in terms of *internal Framing* ( $F^i$ ) (Bernstein, 2000). The language of description (overleaf) is organised to represent this distinction.

The theorised distinction between external and internal forms of Framing proved highly productive during data analysis. It helped, for instance, make visible the control on teacher enactment practices exerted beyond the pages of individual lessons. Interpreting assessment timelines, marking deadlines and the tight curriculum threads as exhibiting relatively strong external Framing ( $+F^e$ ), for instance, enabled greater clarity in seeing how and why it is that many classroom practices were aligned across pre-sessional teachers.

The concept of Framing thus enabled some extra nuance in the interpretation of the broad structuring and enactment of course materials. Given that most of the analytical 'heavy lifting' is done with LCT Specialisation and Semantics concepts, however, I decided, in dialogue with the data, that it was not necessary to develop a fine grained translation device. Thus, I did not attempt to enact Bernstein's notions of *selection*, *sequencing* and *pacing* separately for each of curriculum assessment and pedagogy.

The broad brushstrokes LoD for Framing is presented below.

	<b>F<sup>e</sup></b>	<b>Selection, sequencing and/or pacing of curriculum content and tasks is...</b>	<b>Examples from the data</b>
Curriculum	+F	...largely fixed, and determined by the course design/ers	prescribed coursebooks; all materials provided
	-F	...flexible, and teachers are able to make their own decisions	flexible 'teacher option' sessions

	<b>F<sup>e</sup></b>	<b>Selection, sequencing and/or pacing of assessment content and tasks is...</b>	<b>Examples from the data</b>
Assessment	+F	...largely fixed, and determined by the course design/ers	prescribed assessments; all July tasks are narrowly prescribed
	-F	...flexible, and students are able to make their own decisions	September 'extended essay' requires students to find their own readings

	<b>F<sup>i</sup></b>	<b>Selection, sequencing and/or pacing of classroom content and tasks is...</b>	<b>Examples from the data</b>
Pedagogy	+F	...determined mainly by the teachers	Teacher-controlled sequences by Selene
	-F	...flexible, and students are able to make decisions that influence teacher practices	Flexible conversations between students and Phil

**Table 3.4: Translation device developed for *Framing***

#### **3.6.4. The Translation Device for LCT Specialisation**

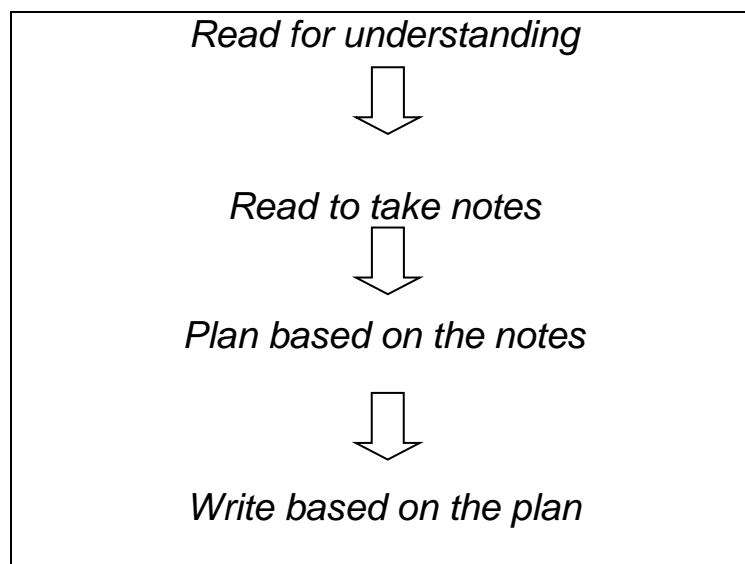
LCT Specialisation concepts underpin analysis in chapters 4 and 5. They were not initially drawn on for my research study, however. The need for the concepts of *epistemic relations* and *social relations* emerged through grappling with the data. I had actually drafted chapter 4 only with LCT Semantics, but I began to realise that things were not working. I had been trying to analyse course values and interviews in terms of semantic gravity and realised I was stretching the enactment too far. I was using the wrong tool. This led me to experiment with the Specialisation dimension of LCT, enabling a refined way of seeing the data. Understandings and interpretations that had not been visible before quickly began to emerge. It became clear that I needed two sets of LCT concepts to enable addressing my research questions.

In examining the components and details of pre-sessional lessons on the page, I tried to avoid being led too much by my EAP background, instead trying to label components bottom up through what I saw on the page. This led, for instance, to making a three-way distinction between 'texts', 'tasks' and 'talk' (or input). These labels provided a description of *form*, and I then considered how these *functioned* similarly or differently - e.g. text as content (academic input); text as mediator of a curriculum concept; and text as example. This in turn led to seeing patterns across task types that informed the enactment of Specialisation concepts.

Observing, for example, the prevalence of notetaking frames and text structure frames, common features in the course for analysing texts, led towards the characterisation of stronger epistemic relations as an emphasis on particular textual or language practices, procedures or techniques taught and practised on the EAP programme. Examples and discussion appear in chapters 4 and 5. To provide a brief illustration here, however, figure 3.12 shows an extract from an August lesson on avoiding plagiarism. This explicit frame for advised student practice was analysed as exhibiting relatively stronger epistemic relations to (curricular) knowledge:

*If you follow this process it becomes almost impossible for you to plagiarise.*

*Your writing process will look something like this:*



**Figure 3.12: Example of relatively strong epistemic relations (August, pp. 153–154)**

The translation device developed for Specialisation concepts is given overleaf. It is worth noting that instances of the weakest values for epistemic relations (ER – –) and social relations (SR – –) were not observed in the data collected and analysed. They did occur informally, however, and were noted in my everyday practice as course director. The LoD thus remains fully data driven in the broader sense of these professional observations. While perhaps slightly unorthodox compared to other studies enacting Specialisation concepts for research, therefore, my LoD reads 'not observed in the data analysed' for these weakest values of the component concepts.

This provides a translation device that theorises the full range of practices on the programme. It also enables maintaining the binary branching methodology for enacting LCT concepts employed most recently by Maton (e.g. Maton & Doran, 2017a; 2017b). This retains symmetry in the enactment of concepts, and facilitates use of the specialisation plane for analysis and representation of data (cf. section 5.3).

Epistemic Relations (ER)			Social Relations (SR)		
	Content in the curriculum materials or in teacher discourse:	Examples from the data:		Content in the curriculum materials or in teacher discourse:	Examples from the data:
ER++	<i>Emphasises particular textual or language practices, procedures or techniques explicitly tied to academic disciplines as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	Lesson on writing about cases in Law supplementary pack, p.88–94	SR++	<i>Emphasises individual students' opinions, attributes or dispositions as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	Discussion task asking students' personal view on native vs. non-native English teachers, July coursebook, p.57
ER+	<i>Emphasises particular textual or language practices, procedures or techniques not explicitly tied to academic disciplines as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	Notetaking frame, August coursebook, p.216	SR+	<i>Emphasises generic student opinions, attributes or dispositions as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	'You will need to make decisions – independently and with classmates – about how best to make effective use of [self-study] time.' (July, p.32)
ER–	<i>De-emphasises particular textual or language practices, procedures or techniques as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	Optional self-study tasks, August coursebook, p.38	SR–	<i>De-emphasises student opinions, attributes or dispositions as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	'This is also an opportunity for students to realise that although a thesis is their 'opinion', it is an opinion that emerges from and through the literature.' (July teacher notes, p.3)
ER– –	<i>Rejects particular textual or language practices, procedures or techniques as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	(not observed in the data analysed)	SR– –	<i>Rejects student opinions, attributes or dispositions as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge</i>	(not observed in the data analysed)

**Table 3.5: Translation device developed for LCT Specialisation concepts**

### 3.6.5. The Translation Device for Semantic Gravity

For my investigation of the structuring principles underpinning pre-sessional pedagogical materials and EAP teacher enactment of these in practice, semantic gravity was enacted as the relative context dependency of meanings in the EAP curriculum - whether in the pages of the coursebooks or in the pedagogic practice of the teacher, and whether written or spoken. As discussed earlier, this involved making distinctions between the *Focus* (content) and *Basis* (underlying practice). For example, in his enactment of the August lesson *Reading Long Texts*, Marco asks "What kind of articles do you think they publish [in Transnational Dispute Settlement]?". One student responds with "disputes between countries". If the content of the response were being analysed and coded, this would constitute a generalisation and would thus have been coded as SG-. However, in terms of the pedagogic discourse, this response functions as a form of student practice, and was thus coded as SG++.

Curricular meanings that become more abstract and no longer situated with respect to a real-world contextual base, such as generalised reference to 'academic writing' or 'giving presentations', are characterised as weaker in semantic gravity (SG-). Even weaker semantic gravity (SG-- ) is seen where there is greater abstraction. This is manifested in certain course concepts that appear to form an important core of the pre-sessional programme, such as notions of 'genre' and 'criticality'. While students may well meet content in the academic texts they read that is more abstract again, the enactment of semantic gravity for this study was not for textual content. Core pre-sessional EAP concepts like 'criticality', therefore, represent the weakest values of SG observed in the data for this particular research project.

Details of the enactment process for semantic gravity are provided via a detailed analysis of a lesson in chapter 6 (cf. Sections 6.2 and 6.3). The language of description appears overleaf.

<b>Semantic Gravity (SG)</b>		
	<b>Practices in the curriculum materials or in teacher discourse exhibit an emphasis on:</b>	<b>Examples from the data:</b>
SG--	Abstract concepts, such as EAP curricular concepts, metalinguistic discussion, or understanding of aspects of language and text structure.	'Consider the title of your managed essay. What does it mean to take a critical position in this essay? What type of approach to essay writing will you use?' (August coursebook, p.163)
SG-	Generic comments or generalisations over EAP curriculum practices, e.g. in relation to textual or linguistic practices, language skills or study habits.	'How is an academic presentation different from other kinds of presentation (for example, a business presentation, a job interview presentation or a language learning presentation)?' (July coursebook, p.190)
SG+	EAP or university practices that are localised in time and/or space.	'How will your course be assessed? When is your first assessment? What kind of assessment is it? Is a Student Handbook for your department available online?' (September coursebook, p.41-42)
SG++	Experience of and/or practice in EAP curriculum target discourse.	'Underline all the aspects of the paragraph you think are inappropriate. Rewrite the paragraph so that it demonstrates a more academic style' (July coursebook, p.43)

**Table 3.6: Translation device developed for semantic gravity**

### 3.7. Quality and Rigour of Research

Informed by the literature (e.g. Creswell, 2007; Drake & Heath, 2011; Holliday, 2016; Maxwell, 2005) a number of strategies were employed to ensure the rigour and trustworthiness of the data collected and my interpretations of it:

- Course designer interviews were held with the two designers together. This enabled both a reduction in the power dynamic, but also a richer, more dialogic form of interview. Designers often talked to each other, as well as to me. There were moments of realisation and learning between the interviewees that may not have occurred without this set-up. For example, in discussing interim course goals with Rebecca, Phil muses "I've never thought about things in those terms...";
- Experienced teachers were selected as research participants. This helped to mitigate possible threats to the quality and validity of data, such as might occur among newer teachers - e.g. 'performing for the camera', getting nervous, or feeling that, on camera, teachers need to 'do it by the book';
- I decided not to sit in on videoed classes, given both the logistical complexity (cameras recorded 3-4 classes simultaneously) and my role as course director. This active decision was intended to enable students and teachers more easily to forget that the camera was there and to continue with natural class practices. I did not wish to add to the pressure of the filming;
- I obtained peer review of LCT enactment and interpretation of data via two colleagues overseas. These colleagues are experts both in EAP / academic literacies and LCT. Both also hold doctoral degrees that enact LCT concepts for their research. Multiple written and skype-based exchanges were held over a two-year period, enabling sense-checking of my analyses and interpretations;
- Enactment and interpretations were also subjected to external scrutiny via presenting at conferences in the UK and overseas, for experts in both EAP (Kirk, 2017a) and LCT (Kirk, 2017b; 2017d). This included a workshop using EAP pedagogic materials and drawing on the evolving translation device developed during the course of my research.



Additionally, moving from empirical data to LCT-theoretic concepts, rather than to only emically derived interpretations and constructs, facilitated a measure of distance. Immersion in the data inevitably involved a measure of personal interpretation. However, the process of developing translation devices for LCT concepts, discussed above, created a transparent means of enabling research participants and other readers to see the particular way in which theory was enacted for my research study.

Finally, as a cultural insider I was familiar with the institution, the local EAP context, and with the wider professional sector. This enabled a shared language and minimised chances of misunderstandings, for instance when the course designers talked about EAP curricular concepts or made mention of methodological notions from wider ELT practice (e.g. 'activating schemata', Rebecca, course designer interview 1, 27:09). While endeavouring always to maintain the reflexive distance and 'stranger mindset' discussed in Sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2, this shared language helped to ensure interpretations would be valid, defensible and EAP-informed.

### **3.8. Chapter Summary**

This chapter has set out in detail the theoretical framework underpinning the empirical work in this thesis. It has also described the research approach adopted and the particular methods employed to address my research questions. Discussion of analysis processes included introducing the translation devices developed in the extensive dialogue between data and theory. Concerns of positionality, ethics, quality of research data and robustness of interpretations were also addressed. All these facets of the research process interacted and developed in relation to each other over the course of the doctoral project. This interactive conception of research (Maxwell, 2012) enabled a dynamic design that evolved over time to ensure my research questions were addressed in ways that would generate rich and defensible insights.

I now turn towards the data itself. The following three chapters examine in turn the values and messages that frame the pre-sessional programme, the structuring of curriculum, and the principles that shape lesson design and pedagogical enactment. The narrative thus traces the recontextualisation journey from understandings of 'EAP' through to the classroom realisation of those understandings in a particular local educational context.



## CHAPTER FOUR

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### CONSTRUING A COURSE, CRAFTING A COSMOLOGY

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#### **4.1. Summary Overview**

Watching pre-sessional teachers bring lessons to life during early video data analysis, it became clear that understanding the organising principles of classroom enactment would require me to step back from the micro-sequences of pedagogic practice. I saw teachers orienting outwards, towards concepts, practices and messages not contained within narrower confines of individual lessons. I needed therefore to look beyond the EAP chalkface, towards the macro-structure of the programme and to the surrounding messages about what the course seeks to achieve. This chapter and the next set out the findings from this wider exploration, beginning here with an examination of the bigger-picture outcomes, values and expectations that underpin the conceptualisation of the pre-sessional programme. Drawing on interviews with the course designers, student-facing messages about the programme ethos, and staff induction materials, I use concepts from LCT Specialisation to suggest tentative *organising principles* that may be shaping and guiding course practices. I then draw heuristically on Maton's notion of 'cosmology' (Maton, 2014) to summarise the way in which values and beliefs may shape and constrain what happens on the pre-sessional programme.

This chapter provides the empirical backdrop for exploring, in subsequent chapters, how the overarching values and considerations are manifested in curriculum (chapter 5), lesson design (chapter 6), and how teachers then recontextualise lessons and

curriculum threads in the classroom in the service of these overarching goals and expectations (chapter 6). I reserve discussion of course designer interview comments relating specifically to the design of curriculum and views of valued classroom practice until these later chapters. The current chapter therefore provides a first view into the overarching values and beliefs that exert a *real* (Bhaskar, 2008/1975) influence on materials and methodology. Subsequent discussions nuance this perspective, adding layers of analysis and interpretation to refine what is introduced here.

As an insider-researcher, what follows here is inevitably bound up with my own professional practice, my previous status as pre-sessional course director, and thus my own impacts on the shaping and trajectory of the summer EAP programmes. I weave in this insider narrative into analysis of course documentation and designer interviews, pausing here and there within the discussion also, to develop an extra, reflexive layer to interpretations.

## **4.2. Construing a Course: Espoused Practices & Principles**

### **4.2.1. An Overview of Provision**

The pre-sessional programme studied for the purposes of this research is a content-driven programme in academic literacy and language development. It developed to provide an academic induction and entry route for international students holding conditional offers from departments at the university. Given the nature of student recruitment locally, it is designed primarily for taught postgraduate students, but also attracts both undergraduate and doctoral students. In the summer of 2016, when the data underpinning this thesis was collected, there were around 580 students studying across the three summer EAP programmes. A third of these were on the 12-week programme, the focus of my research.

For the university, it is the shortfall in students' language skills that determines the decision to offer a pre-sessional programme route as an alternative to re-sitting the IELTS exam. However, for those teaching and working on the programme, the purpose and remit is wider:

In addition to focused work on language skills, Pre-Sessional students engage in library-based research in their own specialist area and, through this process, develop an awareness of academic culture and conventions at British universities. By the end of the programme students are linguistically and culturally better prepared for the demands of higher-level study in the UK.

(Pre-Sessional programme website)

The widening of the scope of the programme to include “library-based research” and “awareness of academic culture” seeks to distance public messages about the programme from the kind of general English courses students may be used to, and to frame what the pre-sessional aims to achieve explicitly in the terms of the university. It is perhaps no accident, therefore, that the example list given on the course website of skills developed is sequenced as it is:

- Awareness of UK [...] university academic culture, expectations and conventions
- The academic thinking process & argument development
- Research and study skills
- Formal, academic English style & structure
- Writing extended essays in your own academic subject area
- Listening to lectures & note-taking
- Presentation skills and seminar participation

(Pre-Sessional programme website)

Language and skills work, often representing the mainstay of the EAP curriculum in published textbooks (e.g. De Chazal & McCarter, 2012; Hewings & McCarthy, 2012) are listed below mention of university-oriented expectations and conventions, academic thinking and argument development. Given this wider purpose to socialise students into the academic practices and processes of the university, the programme increasingly attracts international students who hold unconditional offers and who thus do not technically need the programme. Around 5-10% of the one-month programme participants are unconditional offer holders, with overall IELTS scores of 6.5 or higher and writing / speaking scores of 6.0 or more. This side of course provision is also explicitly promoted and marketed on the website, illustrated via areas of practice not covered by IELTS examination preparation courses, “...precisely the kind of skills [...] need[ed] to cope and to be successful on [a] degree programme”:

- Effective reading & navigation of academic articles and other text types
- [...] moving from notes to writing

- Summarising arguments from several sources and *synthesising* these in order to express an academic position
- Learning to avoid plagiarism through effective notetaking strategies, drafting and re-drafting of writing, and through academic acknowledgement (citation and referencing)
- [...]
- Using the online library catalogues, databases and e-journals

(Pre-Sessional programme website)

Beginning mainly in the second month of the three-month programme, there is also a disciplinary element to programme content and summative assessments. There are currently six 'disciplinary threads': Business Finance, Business Management, Law, MBA, TESOL /Applied Linguistics / Education, and STEM. Students not falling into one of these disciplinary areas follow a general social sciences oriented thread. Each disciplinary strand includes specific lectures, readings suggested and agreed with destination departments, and assignment questions also provided by departmental academics. Closer analysis of one of these August threads, the 'managed essay', forms the basis of the analysis and discussion in the next chapter, with pedagogical enactments of these lessons then being explored in chapter 6.

#### 4.2.2. Pre-Sessional Programme Goals

The contemporary view of the programme is thus one that construes language work as bound up with and emerging from academic work. Over the course of two interviews, held on consecutive days, I asked both the course designers about their goals for the programme and for students. In the first interview, Phil reflected:

Although I don't have a ready, easy answer that's going trip right off the end of the tip of my tongue, I would immediately think in terms of simply preparing students for what they're going to encounter at the end of the course when they arrive in the various academic departments they're going towards. That as a starting point.

(Course designer interview 1, 5:34–5:57)

The following day, when I asked the course designers, "what are your goals for students? What would you want them to be able to know or do by the end of the course?"<sup>20</sup>, Phil responded in similar terms, with a focus on student writing practice:

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<sup>20</sup> Course designer interview 2, 6:02

First answer, I would want students to come out of the course able to produce an essay or appropriate piece of writing for the course that they're going to which would be taken seriously by the supervisors and wouldn't just be laughed out of court because it was fundamentally problematic in some way.

(Course designer interview 2, 6:20–6:43)

This framing of learner outcomes in terms of both academic work ("...an essay or appropriate piece of writing...") and the university context ("...for the course that they're going to...taken seriously by the supervisors...") reinforces some of the messages available on the pre-sessional website. Rebecca continues:

[Our goals for students are] maybe not perfect [academic writing], maybe not adhering to every detail of their disciplinary contexts, but broadly heading in the right direction. I think **I would want students to have understood the academic process. What is the academic endeavour and how do you engage with it?** Now, whether they can engage with that to the level that we might want them to or that they themselves might want to, probably not by the end of a pre-sessional course, but they're aware of what it is, because I think they arrive on the course not knowing what it is. **What is it to do academic study, to think like a student, to think like a postgraduate student?** So, I hope that by the end of pre-sessional, they're on that path, that they have the tools. They have the frameworks. They have the concepts that allow them to go on to explore that.

(Course designer interview 2, 6:43–7:25)

Again, the focus here on "disciplinary contexts", "...under[standing] the academic process" and "...what [it is] to do academic study, to think like a [...] postgraduate student" reveals a clear sense of the designers seeing programme goals particularly in terms of apprenticeship into university practices. This is further apparent in the designer's sense that students "...arrive on the course not knowing what [the academic endeavour] is". It is also noteworthy that Rebecca talks about her aspirations for students in terms of "tools", "frameworks" and "concepts". I return to these focuses and a preliminary analysis of their potential significance shortly.

Pre-sessional programme values and expectations are also made available to students. There is, for example, a set of student-facing statements on the purpose and design of the course that appear in the opening pages of each of the three monthly study packs. These were principles that I played a role in putting together, and were drafted in preparation for external assessment and reaccreditation of the pre-sessional

programmes<sup>21</sup>. The opening three statements echo the aspirations of the materials writers above:

Your primary reason for coming to [this university] is to join an academic department to deepen your knowledge and skills in a particular field. **We see you**, therefore, not just as language students but also **as junior scholars**.

**Your academic work starts now.**

We aim to **challenge you academically**, as well as linguistically. You will engage with complex areas of debate. You will also work within your academic subject area, on themes provided by your department.

We aim to **demystify** what it means to study at a UK university, developing understanding of the academic culture, expectations and conventions [...]

(July 2016 study book, p. 11. Emphasis in the original)

Other statements speak to the value of engaging in grounded practice of the kind students are likely to encounter beyond the pre-sessional on their degree programmes, with a distinct emphasis also on how these relate to 'the academic endeavour':

We believe in the value of **attending live lectures**. These serve three main purposes:

- To provide academic content knowledge
- To create opportunities for listening practice and note-taking
- To help you reflect on strategies you may need to develop to cope with this kind of input during your future study [...]

[...]

We believe in doing **lots of reading**. Reading is central to knowledge building in academic study. Out of deep and wide reading comes:

- Evidence-based knowledge of a subject area
- New 'thinking tools' (such as new concepts, theories or methods)
- Awareness of multiple perspectives on the same issue.
- ...And thus the development of **critical analytical skills** (e.g. comparing and weighing evidence; problematising assumptions)
- Awareness of writer purpose and text structure
- Awareness of language choices and how they work to make meaning

(July 2016 study book, p. 11. Emphasis in the original)

Evident here also is a focus on textual and lexicogrammatical work ('...text structure'; '...language choices and how they work to make meaning') and, as might be expected

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<sup>21</sup> I expand on the details of this reaccreditation visit below. See section 4.3.2.



on a course in English for Academic Purposes, this is echoed elsewhere in other statements:

We believe in working with **long texts**, to help you see how (e.g.) journal articles, student essays and research reports are structured

[...]

We believe in developing **your academic English**, so language work (e.g. grammar) will often come after you have written something, given a presentation or participated in a seminar

(July 2016 study book, p. 11. Emphasis in the original)

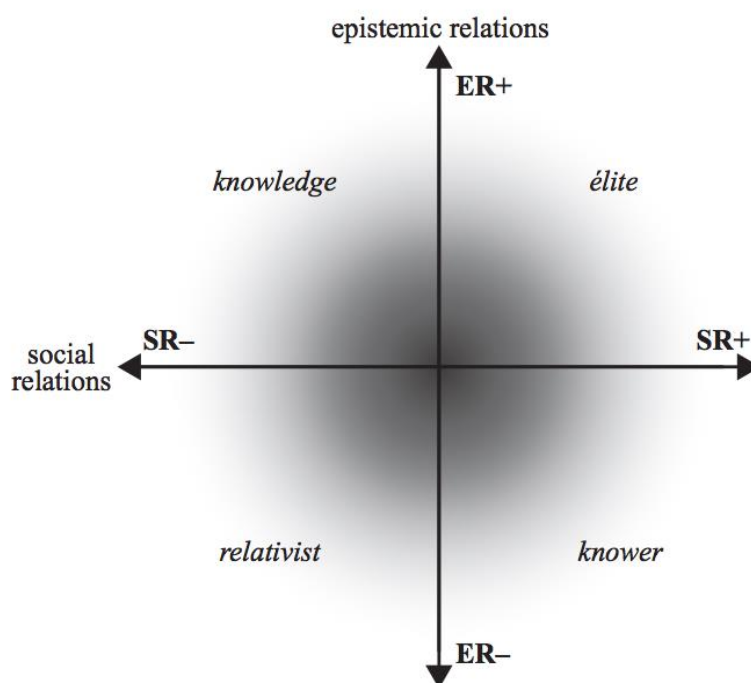
There is an emerging pattern here. Looking across the messages available on the pre-sessional website, the course designers' reflections on goals and the student-facing course principles, the stated orientations and outcomes can be summarised in terms of two forms of practice. On the one hand, the programme espouses developing students' knowledge and control over particular areas of academic practice (e.g. development of strategies for coping with lecture input; new 'thinking tools'; awareness of text structure; and understanding of personal language needs). On the other hand, the course messages also advocate an experiential approach, with students' development "...not just as language students but also **as junior scholars**" couched in terms of socialisation into particular academic social practices. The student-facing principles additionally suggest that these two forms of practice are interlinked, with one emerging in relation to the other - e.g. "Out of deep and wide reading comes...[a]wareness of language choices and how they work to make meaning".

Seeing these patterns enables moving towards a provisional theorising of the data in terms of one the principal analytical lens introduced in chapter 3: *LCT Specialisation*.

#### **4.2.3. The Espoused Pre-Sessional: *Training a Gaze***

To recap briefly, the Specialisation dimension of LCT provides conceptual tools to describe and analyse the valuing of certain actors and/or practices over others in a given field. Claims to legitimacy are always made *about something* and *by somebody*, and LCT captures this insight in the adage that, "...there are always knowledges and always knowers – social fields are *knowledge–knower* structures" (Maton, 2014, p. 96).

Research, curricular or pedagogical practices can all be conceived *both* in terms of what constitute legitimate objects of study, *and* in terms of who gets to make valid claims about these practices. Specialisation theorises this in terms of relative strengths of *epistemic relations* to knowledge (ER) and of *social relations* to knowers (SR) (Maton, 2007; 2010; 2014). Strengths are conceived in terms of a continuum from stronger (+) to weaker (–), and can vary independently and over time. Plotted like compass points on a Cartesian plane, these different interacting strengths of epistemic and social relations give rise to four principal modalities or *specialisation codes*. This can be represented visually as the *specialisation plane*:



**Figure 4.1: The specialisation plane (Maton, 2010; 2014)**

Enacted for empirical research, the tools enable making visible what constitutes legitimate knowledge and/or legitimate ways of knowing for a given object of study. The form of analysis enables an explanatory account of what *specialises* a given field of practice, and therefore what constitutes the Basis of achievement within that field.

Returning to the summary assessment above of the patterns emerging from the course messages, the espoused programme can be seen as orienting more towards

knowledge than knowers. This is evidenced both in statements about course content (e.g. "*You will engage with complex areas of debate. You will also work within your academic subject area, on themes provided by your department.*"), and in terms of suggested course processes (e.g. "*Pre-Sessional students engage in library-based research in their own specialist area and, through this process, develop an awareness of academic culture and conventions at British universities*"). It is important here, however, to reiterate the distinction Maton makes between the *Focus* of practices and their *Basis* (Maton, 2014, p. 31). Lessons on the pre-sessional may engage with academic knowledge as content (their *Focus*), but this does not necessarily mean that the underlying principles shaping curriculum and classroom practices (their *Basis*) orient principally to knowledge practices. It may transpire empirically, therefore, that what is assessed and valourised as legitimate in student and/or teacher practice relates more to particular aptitudes, attitudes or dispositions of the actors (Maton, 2014, p. 92). To summarise, preliminary analysis needs to recognise that *Focus* may not match *Basis*.

Specialisation concepts (ER; SR) can be used to analyse both *Focus* and *Basis* but it is the latter with which LCT is most concerned, as an analysis of *Basis* enables making visible the generative principles that shape practices (Maton, 2014, p. 31). Without analysing the organising principles of materials design and pedagogic practice, however, it is impossible at this stage to make confident claims that the programme is underpinned by a *knowledge code* (ER+, SR–), though there are some indications that this may be the case. Course outcomes and processes, for instance, are framed more in terms of conscious knowledge and defined procedures (ER+) than development of personal attributes or dispositions (SR+). To take a case in point, the student-facing statements of course design talk of developing "...critical analytical skills (e.g. comparing and weighing evidence; problematising assumptions)", rather than of developing the disposition of 'critical thinking' (July 2016 study book, p. 11).

Maton further theorises knower structures in terms of different ways of knowing. He calls these *gazes* (Maton, 2010; 2014). Knower code practices (ER–, SR+), where the attributes of actors are valourised over defined objects of study or ways of practising, can be characterised by one of three gazes (Maton, 2010): a *born gaze* ('natural talent' - e.g. Mozart), a *social gaze* (e.g. 'I know because I'm Scottish') or a *cultivated gaze*

(inculcation into valued ways of knowing through prolonged exposure - e.g. developing a 'critical ear' for classical music). These represent, in turn, a relative weakening of the social relation (SR+) along a continuum of strengths, with the weakest strength characterised as a fourth, *trained gaze*, where the Basis of achievement is not tied to particular personal attributes or dispositions (SR-).



**Figure 4.2: Knower gazes on the SR continuum (adapted from Maton, 2010, p. 166)**

The initial analysis of course documentation above reveals an emphasis on experiential modes of study on the pre-sessional programme. This espousal of apprenticeship type engagement in, e.g., reading of disciplinary texts and participation in academic seminars, could be interpreted at first glance as valourising a *cultivated gaze* and thus suggesting a course characterised by a *knower code* (ER-, SR+). However, the framing of these practices tends to be with reference to knowledge-oriented purposes or outcomes. For example, the student-facing statements talk of "...the value of attending live lectures..." as serving to "provide academic content knowledge" and as helping students "...reflect on strategies [they] may need to develop to cope with this kind of input during [...] future study at [the university]". There is also a stated valuing of "...working with **long texts**, to help [...] see how (e.g.) journal articles, student essays and research reports are structured" (July coursebook 2016, p. 11). This hints at a course that values apprenticeship as *the means* to developing 'mindful abstraction' (Salomon & Perkins, 1989): conscious awareness and understanding of defined knowledge and skills. If borne out by subsequent analysis of course materials, this would constitute instead a *trained gaze* (SR-), suggesting (as above) a course characterised by a knowledge code (ER+, SR-).

Further indications of espousing the value of a *trained gaze* come from other documents available to students and teachers. In addition to stated course design principles there are, for instance, 2-3 pages highlighting for students practices that will benefit them in the development of autonomy. Advice relates, e.g., to independent

study, 'taking responsibility for your learning' and how to make best use of tutorial time. The document begins in the following way:

### **Autonomy Development**

Study and research at [this university] requires high levels of **autonomy**. Autonomy does not mean only 'working on your own'; it means having the confidence and awareness to make sensible decisions about action that you need to take. This may include:

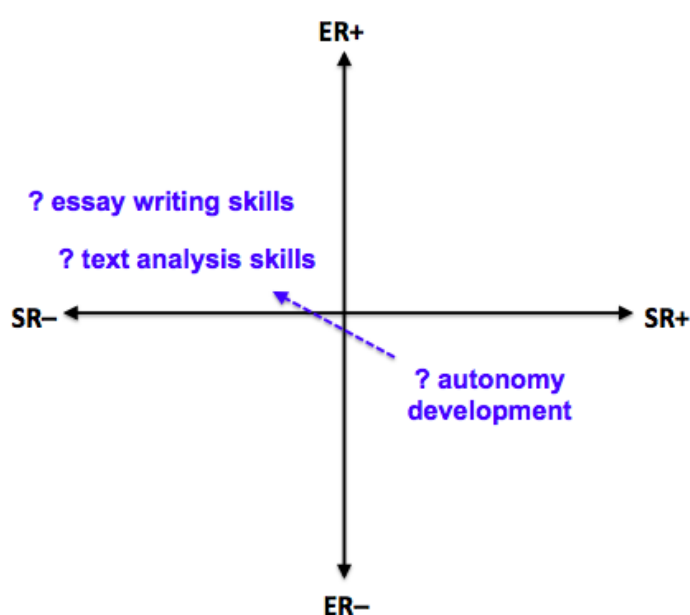
- Deciding what to read from a module reading list
- Deciding which assignment to begin drafting first
- Deciding which resources might help progress your thinking and your academic work:
  - Wider reading (e.g. through database searches)
  - Academic staff (e.g. consultations; tutorials; supervision meetings)
  - Your student peers (e.g. pre-lecture chats; informal reading groups)
  - Web resources (e.g. open access journals; video lectures; academic blogs)
  - Conference attendance
  - Etc
- Deciding which resources might help progress your writing and language:
  - Online study tools (e.g. Google Scholar; online dictionaries)
  - Building a personal database of disciplinary texts / useful language to consult and learn from
  - Attending English Language Centre writing consultations (during term time)
  - Etc
- Deciding how to plan your time:
  - How long will you read for an assignment before beginning to write?
  - How long will it take you to draft the assignment?
  - How will you manage multiple assignment deadlines?
  - How will you make sure there is time to relax, eat and sleep well and spend quality time *not studying*?

(July coursebook 2016, p. 32)

The repetition throughout of 'deciding how to...' provides another indication of an implicit valuing of conscious awareness and control over academic practices. In this case, the focus is rather more on explicit development of metacognitive strategies than disciplinary content knowledge or understanding of text structure; however, the emphasis on conscious development of strategies is suggestive of an underpinning orientation to epistemic relations (ER+) and an implicit downplaying of social relations (SR-). It remains an empirical question, however, as to whether there is active *training* in any of these areas. It is not clear from the document how far this is the case. If there is little or no training, this particular area of valued practice may be left to the students

to develop (or not), perhaps only via engagement in the practices exemplified above. This would constitute a *cultivated gaze* for autonomy development (ER-, SR+).

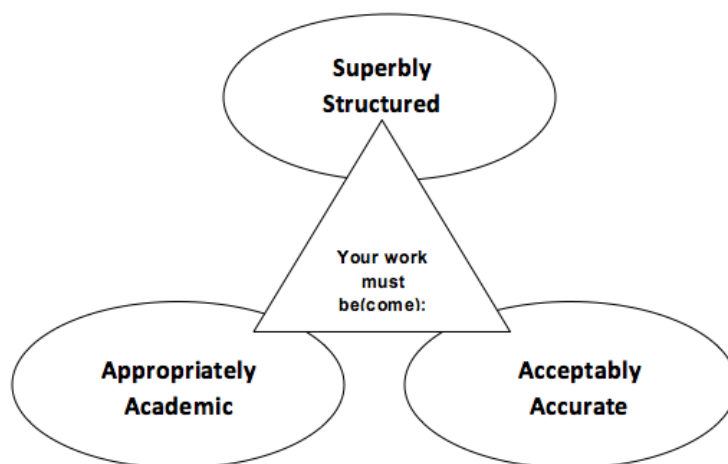
While this analysis and assessment is necessarily tentative and provisional, interrogation of available non-pedagogical documents for this particular pre-sessional programme suggests there may actually be some internal variation with respect to different areas of the espoused curriculum. This possible variation can be heuristically represented on the Specialisation Plane as below.



**Figure 4.3: Possible code variation in the espoused pre-sessional curriculum**

The variation may be significant, as different underpinning bases of legitimacy are likely to impact decisions for curriculum design. Seeing such differences is important for making visible the ways in which values may shape materials writing. Equally, this variation has implications for what may constitute more or less appropriate pedagogical practice. Where there is variation in what is valued - and therefore what may be explicitly or implicitly assessed - teachers may need to adapt their classroom practices accordingly if their methodology is to match the organising principles of course curriculum threads.

By final way of illustration and brief discussion of pre-sessional course values, there is a diagram appearing early in the pre-sessional coursebooks that summarises three major goals for students' writing and speaking by the end of the programme:



**Figure 4.4: Pre-sessional goals diagram (July 2016 coursebook, p. 13)**

This graphic is followed by three text boxes that elaborate on each of the value statements. These appear below as they do in the coursebooks, with the addition of underlining to highlight ostensible focuses on stronger epistemic relations (ER+):

***Superbly Structured***

In academic writing it is the structure and organisation of ideas that largely decides the success or failure of a piece of work. Understanding how to present your ideas logically and appropriately, so that you have clear progression, criticality, and strong argumentation, is a fundamental academic skill.

A well-structured, tightly argued essay with some sentence-level errors will still be easy to follow and can still receive a high mark. A poorly structured essay that lacks criticality and argumentation, even if it has perfect grammar, will not receive a good mark.

***Appropriately Academic***

Learning to write academically means learning to write in an appropriate academic 'style'. This includes formal items and combinations of vocabulary, use of common academic writing structures, and the ability to present your work and reference your reading in approved departmental style.

What is 'appropriate', however, can *vary* across academic fields so part of learning to write academic English is learning what is required in your subject area.

### ***Acceptably Accurate***

You have probably been learning English for more than 10 years and will have done lots of grammar training. With only 1, 2 or 3 months on Pre-Sessional, there is, realistically speaking, a limit to how much lasting difference can be made to your sentence-level accuracy.

You will, however, become more aware of your weaknesses and you *will* make significant progress if you put in the effort. Remember, though, that a simple, accurate sentence is often better than a complicated, inaccurate one. The most important thing about your writing is that it is clear.

Remember also that when you are on your degree programmes, if you have *superb structure* in your writing, a proofreader can help tidy up your grammatical errors. This is acceptable and common among international (and home) students.

(July 2016 coursebook, pp. 13–14)

Of additional note here is the clear valourising of macro-orientations to writing over concerns of sentence-level accuracy. This is demonstrated in 'superb structure' sitting at the top of triangle in the diagram, by the sequencing of textboxes and by explicit comments in the texts themselves - for example, "[A] well-structured, tightly argued essay with some sentence-level errors will still be easy to follow and can still receive a high mark." Statements relating to sentence-level grammar work appear implicitly to reflect what is known of adult second language acquisition. E.g.:

With only 1, 2 or 3 months on Pre-Sessional, there is, realistically speaking, a limit to how much lasting difference can be made to your sentence-level accuracy

While seemingly grounded in practicalities and notions of 'learnability', it is worth noting in passing that this framing is not *inevitable*. The priorities could conceivably be otherwise, and justified differently - for instance in terms of the *importance* of accuracy in academic expression. I return to this point below, expanding to construe the combined course messages and value statements as a *constellation* of meanings that shapes the local *EAP cosmology* (*sensu* Maton, 2014; Martin, Maton & Matruglio, 2010) and thereby also shaping what is valued as legitimate curricular and pedagogic practice.



#### 4.2.4. Refractions for Recruits

The previous section examined and analysed 'extra-curricular' documents available to students relating to course content, objectives and espoused modes of engagement. Beyond what students have access to, however, there is also a network of practices, documents and interactions specifically for staff teaching on the pre-sessionals. These comprise, primarily: a three-day induction programme, a teacher handbook, teacher-facing notes on the course materials, and weekly staff curriculum meetings. Much of this has developed in relation to the nature of the summer programmes, and the need to hire in large numbers of staff who do not normally work in this context. In-house, 'seasoned' and new staff are all kept together, however, and even long-term returnees are expected to participate fully in the pre-programme induction each year.

This practitioner-facing provision offers the opportunity to explore and analyse the values and practices espoused on the pre-sessional programme from an additional angle. Given that teacher curriculum notes and the weekly staff meetings relate specifically to the classroom enactment of course materials (the focus for chapter 6), I restrict discussion here to the messages relating to teacher recruitment, induction and the staff handbook. Comments and reflections from the interviews with the designers provide supplementary perspectives and insights, particularly with respect to the hiring of EAP teaching staff - the first focus for what now follows.

When I asked what specialist or EAP-specific knowledge they look for in applicants at interview, Rebecca and Phil reflected on the kind of teachers they valued:

Rebecca: [...] I suppose we sometimes say we would like the pliable newbie.

Phil: Yes. There can be too much specialist knowledge.

Rebecca: There can be too much specialist knowledge, because if you've got a certain way you want people to do and think about things, somebody who's got limited EAP experience but is really bright, you know, got postgraduate qualification, got a DELTA, really wants to get in to it, and is really sharp and really bright and willing to engage, they're often a better bet than someone with 20 years experience who has maybe their own strong vision of how EAP should be. Sometimes you get people like Jacinda who's really experienced, done all sorts of things, but is of that type, the approach that she brings to EAP is just 'I'll learn from everything and I'll merge my way with your way and this is really exciting'. That sort of person is also quite the find but they're more rare.

Phil: Yeah.

(Course designer interview 2, 18:33–19:21)

It is perhaps significant to note how Rebecca frames her response here in terms of "...if you've got a certain way you want people to do and think about things..." This points to a local value system with which Rebecca looks for teachers to align. While both Phil and Rebecca agree that "there can be too much specialist knowledge", their follow-up comments viewed, through the lens of LCT, would appear to relate more to *cultivated experience* than to specialist knowledge per se. Rebecca's stated preference for the "pliable newbie" over "someone with 20 years experience who has maybe their own strong vision of how EAP should be" suggests a devaluing of an overly cultivated gaze, in favour of a teacher who perhaps embodies a coding orientation less deeply steeped in EAP. Or to put it in terms more in keeping with the interests of the current study, the designer-managers actively seek teachers who are most likely to align with the local vision of EAP: a *code match* (Maton, 2014, p. 77).

Rebecca's mention of Jacinda, a teacher who has worked on the programme several times, "... who's really experienced, done all sorts of things...", nuances the perspective taken. It is not that the recruiters are seeking only well-qualified-but-lesser-experienced EAP practitioners who "...are willing to engage". Rather, Rebecca and Phil are looking for *code alignment*<sup>22</sup>. The approach Jacinda takes to EAP is captured as "...I'll learn from everything and I'll merge my way with your way and this is really exciting!..." What appears to be one goal of recruitment, therefore, is less an interest only in the "pliable newbie" and more a desire to reduce *code clashes* (Maton, 2014, p. 77).

The designers' musings echo my own experience, both in my own institution and more widely as an external examiner and assessor of EAP programmes across the UK, that there is no widely agreed understanding of what 'EAP' actually encompasses on the ground. While field-of-production discussions suggest something of an emerging consensus, as summarised briefly in chapter 1, there is far less agreement in the fields of recontextualisation and reproduction. Given the complexities of local contexts, institutional cultures and the resultant affordances for teaching and learning, this is perhaps unsurprising. However, the diversity of thinking, design and provision is almost certainly heightened on pre-sessional courses by, for instance, the lack of recognised routes into the EAP profession (Ding & Campion, 2016) and thus a body of practitioners embodying also a diversity of coding orientations. It is recognition of this

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<sup>22</sup> Technically, LCT might describe this as involving teachers who are able to *code shift* in order to achieve a *code match* with the local curriculum and valued practices (Maton, 2014, p. 77 ff)

diversity, whether explicit or implicit, that perhaps leads to seeking practitioner-knowers of a particular kind.

Course managers in this context are looking for teachers who already reflect, or who will quickly adapt to, in-house ways of thinking and practising. In principle, this increases the likelihood of classroom practices that will enact the course materials in ways that broadly align with local values. This view is substantiated when the designers talk about the weekly pre-sessional staff meetings. These run throughout the summer programmes and tend to focus on discussing upcoming lessons and assessments. The course designers reflect on these meetings as being important spaces for establishing teacher 'buy-in' to what the programme seeks to achieve. The meetings thus serve as ongoing opportunities to make course values and beliefs visible to hired staff, in a bid to 'take the collective temperature' of the course, both in emotional and academic terms:

Phil: I think buy-in is really important, isn't it?

Rebecca: Yeah

Phil: It's quite central to how the whole course manages to function, if the teacher is not buying in, they're probably not buying it on an emotional level, but also intellectually, they're not buying it to the things that we're saying, if the teacher's not buying in to the things that we're saying, then they and the materials are going to be in conflict with each other in the classroom, and that's going to go down all sorts of bad roads.

Rebecca: It will cause all sorts of bad roads, yeah, it's very, very negative, yeah. And you can take the temperature of whether that's happening in the meeting, your meeting barometer. So, this week we're very comfortable and very happy and comfortable with the buy-in from the teachers. And of course, we always know that even with strong buy-in, there's always subversion and there's always a little bit of "yes, of course I'm doing that, Rebecca, uh-huh". Fine. And to a certain extent, there's a certain amount of that we expect and we understand, of course, but it's when that becomes, like you said, when it starts to jar and becomes negative and starts to undermine us, the programme and the course.

(Course designer interview 2, 34:49–35:57)

It was my own emerging sense that teachers and materials were sometimes "...in conflict with each other in the classroom..." that partly gave rise to my research and to this thesis. Rebecca's reference to materials enactment, and to possible 'subversion' of these in the context of practitioner buy-in to the course ethos, echoes also my data-

driven realisation that understanding classroom meaning-making practices required a clearer understanding and articulation of this ethos. The question of how practitioners lift a lesson off the page and how far this happens in ways that resonate with programme values became a professional conversation among management colleagues during and between summer pre-sessionals. Chapter 6, in particular, uses LCT Semantics concepts to make visible the organising principles of these 'translation' practices from page to pedagogy.

I pressed the designers for a little more detail on what they looked for in summer pre-sessional recruits. When I asked, "can you boil it down to a set of qualities though? A flexibility of sorts...", Phil and Rebecca expanded:

- Phil: A flexibility of sorts, I think also my in experience of interviewing, looking out for people who already have a perspective of what EAP is about which is similar to our own, or at least give hints of that in an interview.
- Rebecca: Definitely. They're coming from a very processy perspective, right? They understand academic acculturation aspect of it, that they're not immediately talking to you about articles or noun phrases, which are valid points, but sometimes you get these people very micro, and every time you have a task, they'll revert, revert, revert.
- Phil: Yeah
- Researcher: So, what would you prefer to be hearing about? What do you like to hear about if it's not articles?
- Rebecca: I like when people start talking about this notion of trying to transition or induction or you're going to take them on a journey, you have to help them transform how they think. All that kind of thing, I find, oh, yeah.
- Phil: When people talk about the writing culture of the University or the academic culture, that's the sort of thing that always...
- Rebecca: Makes our socks roll up and down.

(Course designer interview 2, 19:29–20:37)

These thoughts resonate somewhat with the orientation of the student-facing messages on the pre-sessional programme website and in the student coursebooks, discussed earlier in this chapter. The designer-interviewers seek staff who can see beyond micro-aspects of language, *i.e.* "...not immediately talking [...] about articles or noun phrases...", to the wider 'academic endeavour' and to the broader goals of socialising international students into the university. Rebecca and Phil value what I have characterised elsewhere as *know-why*: "...understand[ing] academic

acculturation..."; "... the writing culture of the University or the academic culture ...". This suggests valuing a *trained gaze* in the teachers in a way that aligns with earlier, tentative analysis of the espoused course curriculum. While the Focus of other examples that Rebecca gives appears to relate to student apprenticeship into the university context ("... this notion of trying to transition or induction [...] you have to help them transform how they think...."), the underlying Basis here appears to orient towards explicit teacher awareness of higher-order conceptions of international student needs. Interviewee recognition of the valued practices in this context does not, of course, guarantee that they can actually realise these understandings as pedagogic practice. However, there is a sense here that interviewers are looking for *knowledge*-facing interview responses (Focus) as a means of assessing teachers' coding orientations (Basis). This can be seen also in the interview questions and tasks. One question used in the hiring of teachers asks, for example:

How do you feel the academic literacy needs of students going to (e.g.) Engineering differ from or resemble those in Business Studies? How can we cater for these needs on an EAP course?

An analysis task later in the interview asks teacher-applicants to analyse a sample of postgraduate student disciplinary writing, sent in advance of the interview:

If you could choose only 2 areas to provide feedback on, what would they be – and why? What would you have the student do to improve on ONE of these areas?

While evidence from the interview data is limited, there appears nevertheless to be something of a parallel between espoused course processes and valued qualities in practitioners: explicit understanding of academic procedures and techniques, developed through experience. As an insider-researcher, seeing these values articulated by colleagues and refracted through the lens of LCT Specialisation concepts provides a language to articulate for myself my own values and coding orientation. It provides ways of beginning to separate *knowledge* of our practices from our *knowing*: abstracting from our collective and tacit values towards ways of describing the principles shaping pre-sessional programme conceptualisation and enactment.

The sense that the pre-session course is underpinned primarily by a knowledge code, and that there is an underlying coherence across messages and materials, is lent more weight through examining some of the provision and documents available to teachers at induction. The 2016 three-day face-to-face staff induction for 12-week teachers moved broadly from a consideration of big-picture concepts and curriculum structuring on day 1, through assessment and feedback on day 2, to classroom practice and finer details (e.g. student lists; logistics; classroom allocations) on day 3. On the first day, the induction led with a session called 'the what and the why: practice & principles on pre-sessional'. This ran in two halves, the first called 'part 1 – the shape of our thinking' and the second 'part 2 – the shape of our curriculum'. I led part 1 in my role then as programme director, with colleagues then running part 2 and the rest of induction week.

Part 1 engaged teachers with notions of 'graduate attributes' and had them decide which attributes were developed via the pre-session programme. Teachers looked through the July coursebook as a basis for their responses and staff were led to consider how the following were important to how the pre-sessional was seen in this context: 'knowledge', 'criticality', 'autonomy', 'community' and 'identity'. The session touched briefly upon why micro-level work on language would largely be dealt with *emergently*, coming out of student performance, an idea also seen in the student-facing course principles document. Finally, the local view of EAP was summarised by reversing the 'EAP' acronym, repurposing it to stand for 'Participating in Academic practices through English'. I had conceived the session explicitly to have teachers seek some of 'the why' of the local programme and to engage them with higher-order considerations that might serve to guide their own thinking and practice. The follow-up session, led by colleagues, then took a more grounded look at the taught programme, at the curriculum threads and at particular lessons.

Taking a step back as participant in this induction and re-viewing events from my researcher perspective and through the theoretical lens of LCT Specialisation, it became evident that we were looking to *train a gaze* in our incoming teachers. Starting explicitly with conceptual orientations to EAP practice and to our curriculum, we were looking to make visible and explicit some of our own thinking, as a way of shaping our new (and returning) teachers' gaze. It was insightful for me as both researcher and practitioner to see this pattern refracted elsewhere in course documents. In the staff

handbook, for example, there is a section called 'Principles for Practice on the [...] Pre-Sessional'. This focuses on classroom practice but can also be interpreted in terms of the values it espouses. The five principles given are given in full below.

### **Principles for Practice on [...] Pre-Sessional**

#### **1. Teach the students, not the materials**

Teaching is much more than 'delivery' of materials. It's what you do to **lift content off the page and make learning happen** that matters most. The materials we provide you with represent the syllabus you need to teach; however, there is flexibility with regard to (e.g.) task choice and ordering. While adhering closely to the overall conceptual, skill and/or linguistic focuses of syllabus threads, do use your expertise and discretion to adapt tasks as you deem appropriate.

If you are thinking of supplementing course materials, please run this by us first. Agree any adaptations with your partner teacher, to ensure consistency of input. Please also consider sharing ideas with other staff. You can contribute to us all improving lessons and overall provision.

#### **2. Teach the *why*. Be able to answer the questions, “why are we doing this?” and “how does this fit in?” If you're not sure yourself, please ask.**

Whenever possible, link each lesson and/or task sequence to the overall syllabus and to **students' future academic practice** in [receiving] departments. Given cultural backgrounds, previous experience of EFL/EAP learning and the intensity of the course, students may sometimes not make their own links between classes or see the underlying goals behind a particular session. Aim to do this explicitly yourself, as often as possible. **Pull everything back to the big picture – in every class.**

#### **3. Teaching is not learning.**

'Transmission' teaching has its place in EAP. Teacher-led input on expectations of seminar performance, for instance, or what supervisors expect from students in a tutorial can be deeply insightful in terms of addressing student needs and providing glimpses into the academic journey ahead.

Be careful, however, to **distinguish between 'useful' and 'useless' teacher talk**. Students need quickly to engage actively with ideas, texts and language. They need to be *doing things* with texts and language as quickly as possible. They need to make sense of curriculum content for themselves, and engage in ways that help them develop some personal ownership over the concepts and tools.

#### **4. Don't be learner centred; be *learning* centred.**

'Learner centredness' is often associated with a “contextualise...set up...get out of the way” approach to teaching. You will be doing this from time to time, but

more often than not, **you may need to be more of a 'meddler in the middle'**<sup>23</sup> (a mediator) than a mere 'guide on the side' ('facilitator'). Get inside learners' confusion. Don't only be evaluative ('good', 'well done'; 'ok, yes'); be discursive. Engage in 'Socratic dialogue' that stretches students' English to match their intellect. Encourage students into content-led discussion and become genuine discussion partners.

5. **Remember, you are often not the only expert in the room.**

Ask questions and be open to possibilities for your own learning when your students' knowledge of a field outstrips yours.

(2016 Pre-Sessional staff handbook, p. 26)

The first principle here strongly frames curriculum content ("The materials we provide you with represent the syllabus you need to teach"; "If you are thinking of supplementing course materials, please run this by us first "), but frames teacher decision-making in the classroom slightly more weakly ("...there is flexibility with regard to (e.g.) task choice and ordering..."; "...do use your expertise and discretion to adapt tasks as you deem appropriate"). Generally here there is a fairly strong sense that teachers are expected to be broadly aligned in their enactment of materials. This is expanded in some of the statements that follow, which outline valued ways of practising in the classroom.

Teachers are encouraged, for instance, to "... link each lesson and/or task sequence to the overall syllabus and to students' future academic practice in [receiving] departments" (statement 2). They are asked to "... engage [students] in ways that help them develop some personal ownership over the concepts and tools" by getting students "...*doing things* with texts and language as quickly as possible" (statement 3). Teachers are further encouraged to "[g]et inside learners' confusion" to "be discursive" and to "[e]ncourage students into content-led discussion and become genuine discussion partners" (statement 4). Finally, staff are asked to recognise that their students may know more about certain areas than they do and that teachers are therefore, "...not the only expert in the room" (statement 5).

These principles speak to a number of facets of the discussion in this chapter so far. There are echoes, for instance, of the importance of engaging with the university context and disciplinary practices. There is an apparent prioritising of teachers focusing

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<sup>23</sup> An expression and concept inspired by McWilliam (2008)



on content, and also of recognising the need for student 'apprenticeship' via *doing* (not just listening to the teacher). The suggestion of students also as 'experts' resonates with the message in the coursebook that students are "...not just [...] language students but also [...] *junior scholars*". Collectively, these statements reiterate messages elsewhere and provide guidance for incoming staff on valourised pedagogical practices for the local context. In LCT terms, they can also be interpreted as seeking to minimise *code clashes* in the classroom (e.g. "If you are thinking of supplementing course materials, please run this by us first "). The espousing of practices that facilitate student control over learning ("...engage in ways that help them develop some personal ownership over the concepts and tools") also points to an underlying *knowledge code*.

#### **4.2.5. Interim Summary**

Analysis, comparison and synthesis across a number of different sources reveal a clear pattern in relation to the messages provided to students and staff about valued content, practices and procedures on the summer pre-session programme. This can be summarised as suggesting elements of an underlying *trained gaze* - i.e. apprenticeship into a defined set of procedures and ways of practising. Both suggest a downplaying of the social relation (SR-) and thus, in principle, an *inclusive* curriculum that offers knowledge and skills for all and that is not for particular kinds of knower.

What is unclear, however, is the relative *strength* of the knowledge code as enacted in materials selection and pedagogical tasks, and then how far this code is matched or shifted by teachers in 'redesign' (Kress, 2010), as they make tasks material at point of need in the classroom. There is also some indicative evidence of possible *variation* in the approach taken to different strands of the espoused curriculum.

Rebecca and Phil's sentiments echo my own sense that particular and localised ways of thinking about EAP have evolved in the setting under focus. It is elucidating the nature of this local enactment and articulating the principles underpinning what is seen as legitimate and valued by key actors in the context that drove the research presented in this thesis. Seeing these patterns is important as a basis for interpreting curricular and pedagogic practices on the pre-session programme, the focuses for chapters 5 and 6.

### 4.3. Boundary-Crossing Practices, Shaping the Designer Gaze

#### 4.3.1. The Influence of Practice and Context

During our two interviews together, the course designers returned several times to understandings of the local context, the nature of students entering the pre-sessional programme, and to issues of practicality and a sense of what is achievable in twelve weeks. These comments resonate somewhat with notions of learnability in the course writing goals discussed briefly above (e.g. under the banner 'acceptably accurate' - see Section 4.2.3). When asked about the overarching programme goals, for instance, Rebecca suggested that:

It's like a triage, isn't it? We look at, we know where they're going to go, we know what they're going to have to do, more or less, we know more or less how they're going to come to us. It's working out what can we reasonably do in the time that we have that will make a difference to those students and I think a lot of our decisions come down to that. There are lots of things we'd like to do, lots of things we could do but you have to think what's going to work, what's going to be effective in this very short space of time and then I think our macro-picture comes from those kinds of decisions, right, about what we think we can reasonably achieve.

(Course designer interview 1, 5:58–6:24)

There appears, therefore, to be a reflexive dialogue between higher-level concerns of the academic experience and the academic process and a more contextually informed sense of time, the students and what can reasonably be achieved given local constraints. This reflexivity that both Rebecca and Phil seem to bring to their conceptualisation of the programme, curriculum design and student needs comes from a number of different places. One is their own experience of teaching:

Rebecca: One place is awareness of what students are going to, often from doing from one-to-one consultations actually. That's been a huge influence. I don't think I realised how much until I sat down and really thought about it.

(Course designer interview 1, 6:28–6:41)

Rebecca reflects that working with university students individually on their writing has given her insights into what really happens in academic departments and therefore what pre-sessional students might need. Phil responds from a practice-oriented, but different perspective:

Phil: Yes, I've never quite had a role within the department where I've done as many one-to-one consultations over as long a period as you have. For me, my sort of approach to what we're doing with the whole course comes partly from my experience with teaching on other programmes before I arrived here **and the contrast...**

(Course designer interview 1, 6:48–7:08. Emphasis added)

Phil also appears to have been influenced by previous practice, but rather in the sense of it *not* being what he met on the pre-sessional. On coming to his current context a number of years ago, Phil found a view of EAP practice that aligned with his own but which he had perhaps not experienced previously. He continued:

...And particularly, there was a moment in my first induction, the first year that I came in as a teacher when Mac was doing the induction- I can't quite remember what he said but it was something along the lines of, some point that what we're about here is inducting students into British academic culture rather than trying to rebuild their language and their grammar from zero, from the ground up. That made a great deal of sense to me at the time, that was a sort of a great relief to find that attitude being taken and that's always been in the back of my mind as sort of a central intention of what the course is about.

(Course designer interview 1, 7:08–7:50)

The designers' own practitioner-based engagement appears, therefore, to have impacted on their thinking, with further contextually oriented influence coming from the nature of the international student cohort itself. Phil and Rebecca talk about this influence most as it relates to programme design, and I elaborate on this point more in the next chapter. What emerged of interest to the current discussion, however, was a glimpse of course values and thinking themselves as possibly linked to the kind of learners entering the summer programmes. Knowing that Chinese students at master's degree level constitute 70-80% of the twelve-week programme numbers, I asked the designers how far they felt this impacted explicitly on design and approach. In a short exchange of note, the designers pick up once again on the conceptual orientation to how they think about the programme and student needs:

Phil: Yeah, I have in mind that we're designing a course for people who have not gone through, not just the British, but the Western or European school education system, and have not therefore learned to think in the way that that system trains you to think. I sometimes think of what we're trying to do as packing 10 years of school in Europe or the West in to a couple of months of intense study.

Researcher: So, what for you are examples of things that are on the programme that you would be doing for Chinese students, for example, that you wouldn't for...

Rebecca: I think you just start further back in the process, right? So, it's useful for everyone to think about notetaking but the whole concept of why you would note-take and what it's for and what the relationship is between your notes and your writing is fundamental, and most British students, or students from a Western educational context have some experience of that, they've done something like that, they understand that, and often for Chinese students, it's completely new, this is brand new information. So, it's the difference between the sort of... And often maybe students haven't done it quite the way you do it before, they've not done it exactly the same way, but they've done something that maybe looks similar, whereas I think often with Chinese students, we're dealing with utter newness. That's one of the things; it's having to go further back to those principles.

(Course designer interview 2, 0:37–1:58)

The designers appear to be influenced overtly by a sense of student *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1991) - of the different embodied understandings that students bring to the pre-session programme. In terms of Specialisation concepts, Rebecca and Phil have gleaned through their own experience on the programme that Chinese students bring with them a *cultivated gaze* developed through a lifetime of socialisation in a very different education system. In seeking to address this, the programme itself has been shaped to develop the awareness and skills the designers see as lacking. Rebecca's emphasis on the perceived importance of "... the whole concept of why you would note-take and what it's for and what the relationship is between your notes and your writing..." reflects the view also seen elsewhere that explicit *know-why* (ER+) is valued over simply experiencing (in this case) notetaking practice. This suggests once more a *knowledge code* orientation to the espoused curriculum (ER+, SR-).

These comments from Rebecca and Phil provide an illustration of the usefulness of Specialisation concepts for seeing nuanced distinctions between course content and the underlying principles that may be shaping design. The clear effect of a particular student demographic on the selection of certain concepts, skills and tasks for the pre-session programme might be taken as suggesting a *knower* orientation to design - and thus a potentially conflicting analysis of the course being shaped instead by a *knower code* (ER-, SR+). However, these influences occur at the level of Focus (course content), rather than Basis (organising principles). This can be seen also when

Phil expands on his reflections above, suggesting how the programme might have been different:

Phil: [...] if we were writing a course for more Western or European educated students, I think we'd probably do a lot less on [going back to first principles] and probably a lot more on fine details, wouldn't we?

(Course design interview 2, 2:21–2:32)

Student knowers may shape selection, sequencing and perhaps even pacing decisions in design (Focus), but the underlying Basis that shapes what is seen as legitimate curriculum content and practices appears to orient rather more towards *knowledge*, to defined conceptual awareness and to explicit training in skills such as notetaking.

In brief summary, and taking a step back from student development to consider the above discussion from the perspective also of the course designers' development, it is clear that Rebecca and Phil's own *gaze* has been shaped 'bottom-up' by extensive professional experience, both as practising teachers and with cohorts of summer pre-sessional students in their roles as programme designers and managers. This particular experience in a particular setting has clearly shaped their thinking about the programme and thus their design decisions. It is entirely feasible, for instance, that the prevalence of Chinese students on the programme and thus the perceived need to "... start further back in the process..." may be partly responsible for the espoused focus on knowledge of 'the academic process' and an emphasis on macro- over micro-aspects of academic writing. Designers' own embodied *coding orientations* (Bernstein, 1971; 2000) have impacted the local manifestation of EAP.

#### **4.3.2. External Influences on Values and Thinking**

The way the designers conceive of the course has thus very much emerged out of the local context. As suggested by the earlier discussion of academic concepts and content, however, local practicalities and contextual particularities are not the only influence on thinking. Rebecca, in particular, talks of the impact of wider professional and academic engagement with the research field of EAP:

What ideas are existing in EAP about how we should think about EAP, because reading about those ideas, about academic literacy and what EAP can, and should, and can and can't do and all the rest of it, having engaged in those debates has really

helped in clarifying. I think I started being really like Phil when I started like 10 years ago, you wonder, "Should we just be doing language? Are we doing a disservice to the students here? Should we be just doing that?", then understanding and then having actually just through experience in what it is students need to go and do, and having to inform yourself through reading and engagement, how different ways of thinking about it. You bring all of that to your development.

(Course designer interview 1, 8:36–9:11)

This has also been my own experience: that theoretical and research-informed understandings can help enrich the view of "...what it is students need to go and do..." As a management team we have tended to welcome opportunities to take our work externally, in order to subject it to scrutiny. We have learned much from discussing work with peers at other institutions, meeting new ideas in the professional field, and encountering research findings and theoretical insights through EAP colleagues and directly via journals and other academic publications. Important influences on thinking have included, in particular, Swalesian genre theory (Swales, 1990) and, more recently, Academic Literacies (e.g. Lea & Street, 1998; Lillis, 2001) and Sydney School Systemic Functional Linguistics (e.g. Martin & Rose, 2003). Most recently, and as a result of my doctoral research and reading, Legitimation Code Theory (e.g. Maton, 2014) has itself also begun to exert an influence on thinking and design. I return to this influence at the end of the thesis, when I discuss implications for, and originally unintended offshoots from, the primary research work presented and discussed here.

Engagement with the EAP sector is partly formalised through a four-yearly (re-) accreditation inspection visit by BALEAP<sup>24</sup>, the UK-based professional organisation run for and by EAP practitioners and researchers. This inspection visit<sup>25</sup> always provides a valuable opportunity to pause for reflection and to revisit notions of quality in EAP course provision and international student support, and certain developments and updates to programme provision and documentation sometimes evolve out of preparing for reaccreditation. Assessment criterion 5.3.1 of the accreditation scheme, for example, requires that "[t]he Course will be designed according to clearly articulated principles of language learning and the development of academic literacy in relation to the needs of students in English-medium academic contexts" (BALEAP, 2016, p. 17). It

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<sup>24</sup> Originally standing for *British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes*, BALEAP is now an acronym that remains unexpanded, with instead the qualifying strapline 'the global forum for EAP professionals'. See, for instance, [baleap.org](http://baleap.org)

<sup>25</sup> Details of BALEAP's Accreditation Scheme (BAS) are available at: [baleap.org/accreditation](http://baleap.org/accreditation)

was in response to this requirement that an attempt was made for the very first time to articulate a set of course design principles for students, not just staff. The twelve statements, exemplified above (cf. section 4.2.2), went through several collaborative phases of redrafting to create the version that appeared in the 2016 study books.

The student (and thus also staff-) facing principles are extended into another section of the study book focusing on student autonomy, also discussed above (cf. section 4.2.3). This section of the coursebook, new for 2016, was also written in preparation for the BALEAP inspection visit in response to, for example, criterion 5.3.4, which states that "[t]he development of student autonomy and critical engagement with academic texts and practices will be integrated and made explicit throughout the syllabus components" (BALEAP, 2016, p. 17), and also criterion 5.4.7, requiring that:

[s]tudents will have access to facilities for independent learning with a range of appropriate, related multi-media materials organised in a user-friendly way. Advice will be available on the use of these resources with the aim of encouraging independent learning.

(BALEAP, 2016, p. 19)

These sections of the student coursebook would almost certainly not even exist, were it not for the accreditation visit, and thus provide good examples of external forces that encourage collective reflection on existing practice, which then in turn give rise to new expressions of what the programme seeks to achieve. Pre-sessional course thinking and the values that shape practice, therefore, can be seen to be influenced from outside the local context, from both the professional sector and from the field of EAP research.

Together with bottom-up feedback from teaching staff, these various influences and understandings feed iteratively into processes of review and revision, illustrated elsewhere in programme artefacts examined for this research. One example is a presentation that was given by Rebecca as part of the twelve-week programme staff induction, called 'You Said, We Did'. This consisted of a summary of changes made in preparation for the 2016 programme, in response both to designers' and teachers' feedback on what had been successful and what had been problematic the previous year. Examples of key slides appear below.

## Key student and teacher feedback for 2015... Good things...

- Mapping/positioning of assessments and marking time
- Removal of final reports
- Clear distinction between formative and summative work
- Core concepts in the curriculum
- Progression in the curriculum
- Discipline-specific focus in August and September
- Quality of the student work
- Waves!

## Issues...

- July curriculum: over complex
- Marking criteria: difficult to navigate
- Final presentation topic: shallow
- Reading skills and work on summarising and paraphrasing: more explicit input (although lots of opportunity to practice)
- Final timed writing topic: more relevant to students
- General edit and polish required

## Key changes for 2016...

- New July curriculum that pulls forward key academic concepts from August and introduces a complex reading to writing task
- New marking criteria (after extensive review and piloting): shorter, sharper and easier to use
- A new, more demanding final presentation topic
- More explicit work on reading to writing throughout the curriculum
- A new, more relevant final timed writing
- More explicit grammar work (Caplan)
- General edit and polish

Figure 4.5: 'You said, we did'. EAP staff induction presentation, June 2016



In keeping with the discussion here so far, the updates cluster around focuses on academically-oriented work ('discipline-specific focus...'; 'a new, more demanding final presentation topic'), the conceptual ('new July curriculum that pulls forward key academic concepts...') and the practical ('...marking time'; 'new marking criteria...:shorter, sharper and easier to use'). Programme development is informed both 'from above' by more conceptual considerations of provision, and 'from below' by practicalities, particularly as experienced by the teachers themselves. The evident additional focus on assessment-related concerns is one that I pick up in the next chapter, where more detailed exploration of course materials reveals the way in which assessment tasks and threads shape the selection, sequencing and pacing of curriculum elements.

The slides for this talk suggest that significant thinking, discussion, experimentation and revision go into the materials each year. As then-programme director, I was only peripherally aware of this activity and was not actively part of the feedback or revision process, so in my roles both as practitioner-researcher and practitioner-manager, it was instructive to catch a glimpse of this development-in-action. Pre-Sessional course thinking continues to evolve and there is little sense that the designers have 'finished' with the programme or that they believe they have reached the end of their design thinking.

A parallel can perhaps be drawn at this point between the course designers' programme development practices and the way in which they conceive of the students' experience on the pre-sessional programme. In a sense, the course designers appear also to see pre-sessional students as a 'work in progress'. The programme itself is conceived as only one step in students' academic journey, and as an integral part of becoming a postgraduate student at the university. As already quoted above, Rebecca "...hope[s] that by the end of pre-sessional, they're on that path, that they have the tools, they have the frameworks, they have the concepts that allow them to go on to explore that." In articulating what students should be able to do by the end of the summer programme, Rebecca reflects further that:

Rebecca: [...] we can't give students everything they need, we can't produce, manufacture fully prepared students who hit the ground sprinting, but a light jog, a brisk walk, you know, not from a standing start.

(Course designer interview 2, 7:46–7:57)

There are indications of similar messages in what students and teachers receive, with aspirations for student outcomes stated also in terms of transferable skills and strategies. In the 'why you do what you do' document that appears early in students' coursebooks, for example, is the statement:

We cannot prepare you for *everything* your department may require of you. We therefore believe in developing:

- The ability to analyse particular text structures...so that you can analyse *any* text structure
- *Strategies* for dealing with academic content (knowledge gained from written texts, through lectures or through peer discussion)

(July 2016 coursebook, p. 12)

Similarly, in the set of notes and advice for students on *Autonomy Development*, mentioned above, course participants are told that:

In July you will analyse models of student essays and texts of other kinds, in order to learn about their structure. These are analytical skills that will become very useful to you after the Pre-Sessional programme, where you will probably meet unfamiliar text-types in your reading and writing. Applying the text analysis skills you develop on Pre-Sessional can help you learn from new texts in your department.

(July 2016 coursebook, p. 33)

There is a message running through at least some of the programme documentation, therefore, that the course aspires to prepare students also for 'the unknown' and not just for a narrow set of defined skills. In terms of the LCT Specialisation concepts threaded through the discussion so far, this recognition of limits on what can be achieved in twelve weeks and instead an espousing of transferable analytical skills points to weaker social relations and stronger epistemic relations as the Basis of achievement on the programme. I expand on this discussion in chapter 5, where I analyse curriculum threads across the twelve-week pre-sessional programme, in conjunction with insights from the course designer interviews, to explore how far this apparent organising principle is enacted and realised through the materials.

#### **4.3.3. Synthesis: A Recontextualising Designer Gaze**

Analysis suggests an iterative dialogue between the constraints of the local context and wider academic understandings of EAP. In expanding on her sense that doing

writing consultations with students has informed understandings of what pre-sessional participants need, Rebecca summarises:

Rebecca: [...] my answer about one-to-ones is kind of the micro-answer if you like, but that exists within all of the thinking that's been done, both at an academic level through reading and engagement, discussion that I've been having with you for years and years and years about what EAP is and EAP should be. That combined with your own practical experience of what students then arrive being able to do and leave, so, you've got my practical on-the-ground experience of the students at both ends if you like, and then that academic engagement with what people are doing in the field all kind of comes together to create that vision.

(Course designer interview 1, 7:58–8:32)

Pre-Sessional thinking, course planning and development in this research setting can be characterised as emerging from an ongoing and reflexive interaction between insights from the research literature, experiments in materials, conversations about the realisation of these ideas in the classroom and, thereby, an evolving sense of what might constitute an effective course.

In the previous chapter, I set out a broad conceptualisation of English for Academic Purposes as comprising three fields rather than one. This drew on Bernstein's theorising of the *pedagogic device* (Bernstein, 1990) and its extension by Maton (2014) in the *epistemic pedagogic device* (EPD). In setting out this representation of EAP, I questioned the nature of the boundaries between the component fields of research, curriculum and pedagogy/assessment, suggesting that different realisations of EAP on the ground may involve more or less porous boundaries - and therefore greater or lesser interaction between the practices in those fields. In the EAP literature there are occasional accounts of field-crossing individuals who conduct research, design materials and then go on to teach those materials themselves (e.g. Feak & Swales, 2010; Stoller & Robinson, 2014 - cf. section 2.3). Hyland and Shaw (2016) have also suggested recently that theory-informed practice, what they call *groundedness*, is a core principle distinguishing EAP from other forms of English language teaching (2016, p. 3). And Harwood has argued that EAP practitioners are better placed than professional researchers or materials writers to engage in local, ethnographic inquiry, in order to determine the nature of disciplinary writing and language practices in their students' departments (Harwood, 2017). In practice, however, it remains an empirical question as to how far this is actually the case. It is not at all clear that groundedness is

a feature of the average EAP teacher's practice, or that teachers who create local, research-derived materials are common. It is also not clear how far, for instance, practices in the classroom have any influence back on the shaping of curriculum, particularly if different actors are involved in the design versus the delivery of programme materials - as is often the case.

Viewed through this prism, the pre-session programme in the present study can be conceptualised as being relatively weakly insulated, with influences from both the field of production (research) and the field of reproduction (pedagogy and assessment) crossing lines to inform decision-making in the field of recontextualisation (curriculum). The weakening of boundaries between fields of practice can be further seen in Phil's decision, taken for the first time on the 2016 pre-session programme, to return to the classroom as a teacher during the summer. As noted in the previous chapter, Phil decided he would like to experience some of the materials in action that he had himself updated or created, and arrangements were made to reduce his management role over the summer, to enable him to take on a 50% teaching load. While there was no evidence from interview conversations of this having immediately had any influence on broader conceptions of provision, the decision can be seen nevertheless as a weakening of boundaries between curriculum and teaching practices, given Phil's roles on the pre-session programmes.

Design thinking evolves through constant dialogue between fields of practice, enabled for instance by the fact that course designers and managers were all themselves practising teachers on the pre-session programme and continue to engage as EAP practitioners outside the summer months. Unlike in the mainstream school contexts in which Bernstein developed his model of the pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1990), key actors on the pre-session programme regularly cross the boundaries between fields, being at times *producers* of new knowledge, 'recontextualisers' in materials writing, and 'reproducers' in the EAP classroom. As noted in chapter 3, this phenomenon is perhaps common in the university context, and provides some explanation for the particular, reflexive and dialogic nature of stated programme values and practices.

From a sociological perspective, the values, beliefs and decision-making that the course designers bring to course thinking and to design have been coloured and

shaped by the particular social practices in which they have engaged. These practices are embodied in a *recontextualising gaze*, which, shaped by engagement in particular contexts and with particular knowledges, in turn shapes what the pre-sessional programme becomes. Given the autonomy that the designers have in how they build and deliver the programme, this is not insignificant. It affords them considerable power in bringing their gaze to bear on what the course becomes, how it is talked about, and therefore the measures of achievement used to determine and maintain legitimacy.

Relatively weak insulation of the programme means that there is external scrutiny, however, in the shape of BALEAP inspection visits; i.e. from what might be seen as the *official recontextualising field* (ORF) (Bernstein, 1990; 2000). There is also internal scrutiny from the *pedagogic recontextualising field* (PRF) (Bernstein, 1990; 2000), via feedback from teachers and from receiving departments. Designers thus do not have *complete* autonomy. Nevertheless, making visible *the languages of legitimation*, the principles shaping practices, can help reveal and characterise the nature of local measures of achievement. This enables opening up particular practices to the possibility of theory-informed scrutiny and potentially, therefore, also to improvement and change.

Looking briefly to the wider EAP sector, this is important, as the recontextualising gaze operating in other institutional contexts may differ considerably. There may be programmes running at other universities where managers may not have been teachers, where designers may not be scholarship-active, and/or where EAP unit staff may not have strong working relations with receiving academic departments. The pre-sessional course explored in this study is conceived, designed and written in-house. Time is allocated for the constant reviewing and revising of these materials. This is not necessarily the case elsewhere. To consider a very different scenario, a published textbook-led programme, for instance, would constitute a potentially very different condensing of values and assumptions about what EAP students need; it would not have been shaped by the professional gaze of those working within the particular affordances of the given local context.

Knowers shape knowledge and are, in turn, shaped by the knowledges, actors and contexts within which they practise (Maton, 2014). It is important to recognise and

interrogate the recontextualising gaze that results. In the present research study, it can be seen as guiding and shaping teacher recruitment, induction, course message creation, conceiving of curriculum content selection, and potentially decisions about task design and sequencing. The analysis and discussion in this chapter demonstrates that it can be instructive and informative to gain a view into the localised perspectives of engaged actors since, as has been argued here, the particular shapes the possible.

The research literature offers examples of principled design and enactment, but these tend to represent insights into the work of researchers who may also teach EAP, rather than insights into the contextualised practices of EAP practitioners who may not be research active. The grounded, bottom-up perspective here reveals the complexity of interacting influences in the shaping and configuration of local practices. As discussed in chapter 2, very little EAP-oriented research appears to recognise that knowledge is *selectively recontextualised* and *restructured* as it moves across fields and actors. There are studies that report on how theory becomes practice (e.g. Benesch, 2010; Harwood & Hadley, 2004) and on how curriculum might become pedagogy (e.g. Harwood, 2010; Stoller & Robinson, 2014). However, these studies do not reflect on, e.g., the possible shaping effects of design decisions on the thinking and practices of other actors. This is perhaps at least partly because these researchers are also the materials creators and the teachers. The insights revealed in this chapter, in particular via the interviews with the curriculum designers, make more visible the fact that important features of the local context, including institutional freedoms, the nature of the student participants, the nature of the teaching staff body, and the social practices of those involved in curriculum decisions all interact to create the particular configuration of affordances within which a programme is conceived and made material. And these affordances may further work to shape the recontextualising gaze of key actors on the programme, leading to the shaping of values and beliefs that then exert an influence on what are understood to be legitimate practices. In the current study, this includes curriculum choices (selection, sequencing and pacing) and what the appropriate pedagogies are taken to be, such that espoused course outcomes are realised in ways that align with the underlying language of legitimation.

#### 4.3.4. The Value of LCT Specialisation

EAP as a field of research has reached a stage of relative maturity (Hamp-Lyons, 2011; Hyland, 2012). The complexity and diversity of local configurations of EAP practice in educational settings, however, means that local realisations of curriculum and pedagogy remain highly variable. Local affordances, in particular, result in a flexible and changing relationship between EAP curriculum, pedagogy and the target discipline. Local enactments of teaching materials will be informed by the values and beliefs, whether explicit or tacit, that frame the programme. Local enactments of pedagogy will depend at least partly on what teachers are able to bring to the materials.

The usefulness of an LCT Specialisation lens in this chapter has been to enable an early characterisation of the value system operating in the pre-sessional programme. Understanding the specialisation code - the relative strengths of the programme's underpinning relations to *knowers* and relations to *knowledge* - is important. It provides an indication of what constitutes the Basis of legitimacy in the curriculum, and therefore provides theorised ways of understanding course goals. It also provides a view into why a particular programme may have developed in the way that it has. Understanding and describing the principles that may be shaping the course 'destination', particularly in terms of desired student outcomes, provides a foundation from which to explore in a more nuanced way how (far) the curriculum traces a pathway towards this destination. It also then enables examination of how (far) pedagogical practices align with the local 'code' in ways that move students towards valued outcomes.

The discussion and insights in this chapter therefore set the scene for what follows, revealing indicative orientations to knowledge practices that enable 'better questions' to be asked of curricular and classroom practices. Unlike other academic fields, EAP curriculum, pedagogy and assessment do not prepare students for the 'parent discipline', but rather for disciplines that might be quite diverse and different in character from each other. These relationships are clearly complex and LCT Specialisation provides tools to describe and theorise the nature of the *discursive gaps*. Are there, for instance, *differences* in the strengths of epistemic and/or social relations in the different disciplinary strands on the pre-sessional programme? Is there variation *within* the course, therefore, such that the tentative analysis of a *knowledge code* in this chapter needs nuancing? Might there be varying *strengths* of epistemic relations?

If so, this has implications for classroom practices and for teachers' enactments of materials for particular groups of students. These are the kinds of questions that become visible through the lens of Specialisation, and to which the next two chapters turn.

#### **4.4. EAP as Local Cosmology: Framing the Space of Possibles**

Taking a step back and viewed as a whole, available course messages can be conceptualised as working together to construct a value system informing, at least as espoused, the design, delivery and experience of the pre-sessional programme. This value system is threaded throughout the programme and is reiterated via, for example, the weekly staff meetings. Primary messages discussed above include, for instance, that content and experience on the course is academic, challenging and grounded in university practices, and that language-focused work is important but secondary and often comes out of student performance.

Such a construal of the pre-sessional programme is not inevitable, however, and could conceivably be framed in other terms. Indeed a historical perspective, looking back towards 2008 and before, would reveal a programme oriented far less towards content-integrated work and far more towards discrete skills work. Course thinking, beliefs and therefore espoused design and enactment have been shaped over the years by the changing nature of the practices engaged in by the core course staff. As glimpsed through the interview data and other artefacts above, this has included, for instance, engagement with and in research, communication and collaboration with university departments, and external scrutiny of practice via accreditation inspection visits. Espoused content, processes and valued practices among students and teachers may perhaps, therefore, be justified and justifiable in terms of, e.g., engagement with published work on text analysis and disciplinary differences, leading to what might be considered 'research-informed' decisions. However, the *particular* configuration of values and design decisions is not an inevitable one.

The messages discussed in this chapter can be grouped around broad themes relating to, for instance, the nature of the work on the pre-sessional course, how students are perceived and expected practices of teachers. These *clusters* (Maton, 2014, p. 149ff) of espoused practices and procedures frame and shape how course participants may



be expected to think and act. For example, the staff-facing 'principles for practice' section of the teacher handbook focuses more on teachers engaging students in content-oriented discussion than it does on language-related concerns (e.g. "Get inside learners' confusion [...] Engage in 'Socratic dialogue' [...] Encourage students into content-led discussion and become genuine discussion partners"). While mention of language work is not absent (e.g. "Students need quickly to engage actively with ideas, texts and language. They need to be *doing things* with texts and language as quickly as possible."), there is nevertheless a distinct bias towards the primacy of content engagement, thereby constructing an implicit hierarchy of sorts in relation to classroom priorities and forms of pedagogical interaction. This is significant, as teachers who, for instance, choose to focus more on correction of student errors during a class discussion may not be seen as acting in appropriate ways in this context. This may impact on observation feedback, on teacher evaluation and also, potentially, on the extent to which teachers are perceived to be facilitating learning that meets course outcomes.

'Zooming out' to a wider-angled view, these *clusters* can be construed as working together to form a loose *constellation* of meanings (Maton, 2014, p. 149ff). This constellation can be seen as framing course provision in all its forms - from curriculum content and progression, to expected teacher practice and aspirations for students. Analysis in this chapter shows that there are a number of 'public' expressions of valued practices on this particular pre-session programme (e.g. in both the coursebooks and in the staff handbook); thus students and teachers may, in principle, have relatively transparent access to elements of the course constellation. This may not necessarily be the case elsewhere. The broader point to underline, therefore, is that constellations evolve locally, may well differ considerably from context to context, and may serve as an important basis for what is seen as legitimate practice in a given context.

As described in the previous chapter, Maton differentiates usefully between the *epistemological* and the *axiological* (Maton et al., 2010; 2014). Epistemological meanings orient more to *knowledge* (e.g. concepts; defined empirical referents). Axiological meanings orient more to "... affective, aesthetic, ethical, political and moral stances" (Maton, 2014, p. 130). Maton argues, for instance, that claims around the effectiveness of 'student-centred' learning are based more in axiology than

epistemology, with scant *empirical research-based evidence* for the claim (Maton, 2014, p. 155ff). Many of the espoused values seen in this chapter are epistemological in Focus and intent, but are separated from any evidential base and are not unambiguously tied to empirical referents or to each other. Inevitable *discursive gaps* (Bernstein, 2000) between espoused curricular and pedagogical practices and their *field-of-production* origins, therefore, create spaces for ideology to play - and thus for axiology. Clustering and constellating of particular meanings construct local understandings of 'EAP', reflecting and refracting the value system of those who design and manage the pre-sessional programme. As argued earlier, it is possible to conceive of programmes where academic language development, for instance, is prioritised over engagement with complex content. Indeed, a glance at even recently produced EAP textbooks, such as the *Cambridge Academic English* series (Hewings & McCarthy, 2012; Hewings et al., 2012; Thaine & McCarthy, 2012), demonstrate a distinctly stronger focus on language, using corpus-based research to determine high-frequency academic vocabulary and structures as the basis for design.

Practices and contexts shape designer gazes. Gazes shape curriculums. Course artefacts and high-status actors embody constellations of meanings, combining epistemological and axiological meaning in complex ways to shape what is likely to be valued and legitimated. A local 'cosmology of EAP' (after Maton, 2014) is created, a complex configuration of values and practices that can be interpreted as "constrain[ing] the space of possibles" (Bourdieu, 1991), placing limits and boundaries around ways of thinking and practising. Making this system of values explicit is likely to be crucial to successful participation in the programme, both for students and for staff. Teachers moving from summer EAP programme to summer EAP programme in search of the next contract may well be contending with 'a different view of the stars' as they travel, joining courses that may see different constellations, perhaps also as part of a cosmology that conflicts with previous experience. Teachers need not only to be able to recognise the local *code*, but also to realise it in pedagogical practice. Teachers may also, of course, choose to recognise but then to shift, subvert or even reject this value system. Code recognition does not guarantee code alignment.

#### 4.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter has adopted the 'particularised' perspective enshrined in the research focus of the thesis, to explore and make visible important aspects of the local manifestation of EAP on a pre-sessional programme. The pre-sessional programme chosen as the focus for this research can be characterised as one that has emerged in a dialogue between concepts, practice, research and external engagement. Viewing course messages and espoused practices through the lens of LCT Specialisation (Maton, 2014) has enabled seeing patterns and principles that were not visible before. For example, the theoretical distinction between the Focus and Basis of practices has enabled characterising a local Focus that orients relatively strongly to *knowledge*, e.g. through inclusion of disciplinary content. The underlying Basis of legitimacy, however, may vary across different areas of the curriculum with respect to the strength of *epistemic relations*.

Given that this exploration so far has stopped short of examining the EAP curriculum as *actualised*, assessments have necessarily remained indicative and tentative. Provisionally, however, the student- and staff-facing messages surrounding the pre-sessional course suggest a relatively stronger orientation to epistemic relations than to social relations. In other words, what matters, both as a student and as teacher, is less 'who you are' and the embodied experience you bring, and more the realisation of defined ways of thinking and practising. This *organising principle* matters for understanding and interpreting curriculum and classroom practices. From the broader, realist perspective within which this study is situated (e.g. Bhaskar, 2008/1975), all local concepts and practices are, like knowledge itself, fallible, contestable and subject to potential revision over time: the local EAP cosmology is not 'the truth'. However, these values and principles are nevertheless *real*, in the sense that their empirical effects can be seen in how course practices are thought about, talked about, and realised in programme documentation. These values and principles are also *real* in that they constrain and shape measures of achievement among students and staff, and may thus be expected to play out in enacted curriculum and classroom practices.

Further questions therefore emerge. How (far) does the curriculum realise the values, goals and claims suggested by the analysis and discussion above? Is the espoused orientation towards knowledge practices and to defined academic processes and

procedures borne out in how the programme actually manifests materially? What is the relationship between more conceptual orientations, such as Rebecca's talk of 'tools' and 'frameworks', and more grounded, apprenticeship-type practices espoused in the student-facing principles? Are these separate concerns or are they related in some way - and if they are related, how do the selection, sequencing and pacing decisions in the materials design realise these connections?

It is to addressing such questions that I now turn in chapters 5 and 6, beginning first with a closer examination of the structuring of the course curriculum.

# CHAPTER FIVE

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## THREADS, TEXTS & TASKS: SPECIALISING AN EAP CURRICULUM

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### 5.1. Introduction

EAP as localised and as discussed in the previous chapter can be understood very much as resonating with Maton's framing of social practices in Legitimation Code Theory: as a relatively autonomous field, with actors in the field vying for status and control over the dominant and valourised measures of achievement.

[A]ctors' practices [...] represent competing claims to legitimacy, whether explicit or tacit (such as routinized ways of working) – they are *languages of legitimation* [...]. These strategies to shape the 'rules of the game' are themselves shaped by relations between actors' dispositions (which are in turn shaped by previous and ongoing experiences in fields) and the current structure of the field.

(Maton, 2014, p. 17)

A particular set of valourised design principles was seen espoused in student and staff-facing documentation. The issues that this chapter addresses, therefore, are the extent to which these advocated principles are actualised and the form taken by these curricular practices. The analysis and discussion does not attempt comprehensive coverage of all twelve weeks of the pre-sessional programme, choosing instead to narrow the scope to key, high-stakes elements. This enables focused but substantive exploration and illustration of key mechanisms at work.

The chapter examines the macro-picture of the pre-sessional programme, looking in turn at the major assessments in July, August and September, together with glimpses into the curricular threads designed to scaffold students towards these tasks. This provision is then theorised in terms of one of the two conceptual lenses that sit at the heart of this study's analytical framework: Specialisation, one dimension of Legitimation Code Theory. This theorising enables making visible the underlying principles structuring the local programme enactment. In particular, the analytical toolkit reveals the way in which curricular practice become *differently specialised* for different students.

A fair degree of contextualising detail is provided, including examples of course components and related insights from the materials designers. This enables a grounded view of what is actually happening in the pages of the coursebook, such that the move to theorisation can be seen to emerge clearly from the data. Some of these details will be revisited in the next chapter and reinterpreted in terms of LCT Semantics. This second conceptual dimension enables exploring how meaning-making happens at a more granular level, and how it is that curricular knowledge unfolds first over logogenetic time ('text time') and then over class time. This will complete the analytical 'zoom', making visible how aspects of the course cosmology are realised at the level of individual lessons, task sequences and class activities.

## **5.2. Curriculum Overview**

In this section, I take a wide-angled view of the pre-sessional EAP programme investigated for this research study. I look at the big-picture course narrative and draw on interviewer comments to enable further, backstage insights. I then provide a glimpse into the historical origin of one or two core ideas shaping some of what happens on the current programme, tracing a brief, reflexive narrative of my own influence on the evolution of ideas. This section serves, therefore, as a contextualising overview for the more detailed analysis and discussion that follows.

### **5.2.1. Course Trajectory - The Big Picture**

The twelve-week pre-sessional programme, the longest of the three summer EAP programmes at this university, consists of three study books: one for each month. These are written in-house and have evolved over a number of years in dialogue with

centre staff, teachers, student feedback, and via external scrutiny by BALEAP Accreditation Scheme assessors. The opening pages of each coursebook make a significant amount of signposting information available to students and to teachers. This includes the student-facing principles of design, analysed and discussed briefly in the previous chapter. In the July book, there is a curriculum overview page for each of the three months of the programme. While the study materials for August and September are not part of the July book itself, students and staff are able to see the kinds of lesson and assessment tasks that comprise the rest of the pre-session programme. This is a relatively recent development and emerged in particular from student and teacher requests to see what was coming up later in the course<sup>26</sup>. The introductory pages also contain a fairly detailed overview of the key summative writing and speaking assessments for the course, how these are graded and how end-of-course pass/fail decisions will be made. Marking criteria are also made available.

Looking through these opening sections of the study books and across the programme, it becomes clear that the major assessment tasks drive most of what happens elsewhere in the course. There are three exit assessments in September: a 3000-word academic source-based 'extended essay', researched and drafted over six weeks; a 'timed essay', written under exam conditions; and a spoken presentation linked to the theme of the extended essay. Performance on these exit assessments largely determines whether or not students will progress to their chosen academic department. 'Practice-run' opportunities for these three tasks become the formative and summative assessment tasks for the earlier months of the programme with, in particular, a 'mini-managed essay' representing the core task for July, and a 'managed essay' task for August. Links between these tasks and the taught curriculum are made explicit to students and teachers via dedicated assessment thread pages, which strip out other lessons and highlight just those classes, tasks and deadlines leading specifically to the assessment. These are illustrated and explored in greater detail in section 5.3 below.

Readings, tasks and assessments are directed mainly towards taught master's students (Phil, course designer interview 2, 2:47-2:52), as this group constitute over

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<sup>26</sup> There is a passing connection here to chapter 6, i.e. to discussion of classroom enactment of the curriculum. Teachers' requests to see a full overview of the summer programme came partly from a stated need to know how to respond in class to problems and questions. Teachers wanted the awareness, for instance, to be able to say to students, "don't worry about that for now; we will study that later."

90% of student numbers. Master's level work provides a curricular baseline of sorts. Simplifications are then made for undergraduates, such as reducing reading and writing requirements. Adaptations are also made for doctoral students, such as encouraging them to make contact with their supervisors during the extended essay writing process (Rebecca, course designer interview 2, 2:58–4:13).

The submission points for these key assessments appear to be one of two core considerations driving the sequencing of materials in the coursebooks. The other is the 'academic process', mentioned by the course designers in our interviews and discussed briefly in chapter 4. Curriculum threads are generally sequenced to provide opportunities first for input via reading and/or a live lecture, followed by a seminar in which these issues are discussed, challenged and debated. Students are then furnished with opportunities to write about the areas under focus. The culmination of each thread is thus a writing task, mirroring the kind of process and sequencing that most students will encounter in their academic departments.

This approach appears to resonate somewhat with Ursula Wingate's (2006) argument that "...learning how to study effectively at university cannot be separated from subject content and the process of learning" (Wingate, 2006, p.457). Wingate's convincingly argued paper focuses particularly on why writing development professionals should be "[d]oing away with 'study skills'", critiquing the teaching of generic skills such as 'essay writing' and 'notetaking' separately from disciplinary development. The pre-session programme examined for my research appears to be something of a hybrid with respect to this position. It is not *embedded* alongside academic departmental work in the way that Wingate calls for, given that the programme takes place outside term time and prior to commencement of students' degree programmes. It does, however, centre around academic content and tasks recommended by receiving departments.

The orientation to university practices in course structuring enacts some of the statements of espoused purpose and design seen earlier, and there are further echoes in the interview data. During the first conversation I had with Rebecca and Phil, I asked them what guided the ordering of lessons and tasks in the pre-session course. Their response underlined the interaction between academic process and assessment tasks:

Researcher:      So how do you make sequencing decisions?



Rebecca: Well, sequencing, I think there's a whole bunch of stuff you need to think about. First of all, you think about what order do students need to receive information and how much space do they need to process that information. So you've got the number of sessions that they're going to do [...] so you're going to take them through the academic cycle, so that gives you your number, a set number of sessions. They may expand or contract, depending of the nature of the tasks you put into that cycle: your reading, your seminar, your writing task, your feedback. So, you know what you're going to include and you know all the things you want them to do [...]. So like the first thing is to decide what tasks are you going to use in that cycle, because not every cycle's the same: some of them bigger, some of them smaller. And then you think, right, the order of those tasks, and then you look at your curriculum and you start thinking how much space do I need between them to make sure, when does it needed to finish, when do they need to submit, what does that mean for assessment. You need to start considering that.

Researcher: So what guides spacing?

Rebecca: Well, the submission points, you decided what point am I going to ask students to submit this and you have to work out when they're going to have the feedback by [...] and then okay, they're going to have to have their seminar session, so at what point are you going to set those readings and what do they need to have done with those readings before the seminar? So you need to start thinking through for each session they're going to have, what do they need to have done before that session and is there enough time then to do it? [...] and then you need to think what other input to have before they can do this task [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 16:26–18:10)

Rebecca's reflections here point additionally to questions of pacing - to how consideration of workload and participants' experience of the course also mediates design decisions. She comments in relation to teaching staff, for example, that:

Rebecca: [...] you've got to work out, make sure the teachers are going to have enough time in order to do their double marking so you need to think about that [...] And then you need to think which teacher's going to handle it. Is this something that can go across sessions, or is this something you want the nine-o'clock teacher to do, so then you need to start putting it in [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 17:29–18:06)

Phil picks up on similar considerations with respect to students:

Phil: As well as all of that isn't there also a certain element of following what the students' experience of the course is going to be like day-by-day, week-by-week, thinking for example, "Are they going to be overloaded with work on this weekend? Are they going to be left the next weekend with no reading to do?"

- Researcher: So the decision is very much on practicalities of what students are able to do at each point and then what teachers are able to do at each point.
- Rebecca: Making sure that everyone has their work evenly spread that people know have enough time to do what they need to do and also that the flow makes sense and also that we're not overburdening - speaking on one week and not having an entire week of speaking. We try and look at that as well and we start evening things out.
- Phil: I'm remembering quite a lot of conversations we've had which have sort of been saying "oh yeah, but teachers are going to hate that. Can we live with how much teachers are just going to hate that? Yes I prefer that but *that*, students aren't going to like that." There's a kind of balancing of people's interest and keeping people happy.
- Rebecca: That's true actually yes I forget that we do use that language all the time. Teachers will hate that, students will hate that because sometimes you're aware that you're sacrificing one or the other; teachers are going to hate that, that's a crunch on marking, they're going to have turn that round fast, but if we don't do that—
- Researcher: Hate it with regards to how close something is?
- Rebecca: How quickly they need to do it, yes, how close it is, but you know sometimes it's a value decision, like who do you want to annoy least.

(Course designer interview 1, 18:58–20:01)

These backstage glimpses into designers' thinking suggest that, while curriculum selection and sequencing are guided primarily by *knowledge*-oriented considerations (readings; assessments; the 'academic cycle'), pacing considerations in particular are shaped rather more by *knower*-related concerns. Spacing between sessions, assessment submission points and hand-in dates are not determined 'epistemically', i.e. with respect to characteristics internal to the EAP curriculum or to target disciplines, but rather by a locally-gleaned, practical sense of the experience and wellbeing of individual learners and staff members working on the course.

Lessons on the overview page of each of the three books are often given 'language skills' labels, such as 'Listening: Lectures in the University Context' and 'Speaking: Pronunciation for Presentations' (July 2016 coursebook, p. 2). However, the programme is clearly not conceived or structured around a skills-oriented view in the way that, for example, many EAP textbooks are (e.g. Cox & Hill, 2011; de Chazal & Rogers, 2013). The four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) are not given equal weight. Writing dominates the course, with a particular emphasis on the essay

genre. Seminar and presentation speaking focuses tend to derive from writing assessments. The August programme contains 15 sessions focused on writing and 9 on speaking but, for instance, only 3 on listening. A similar pattern is seen in the other study books.

Sessions ostensibly centred on 'listening' or 'reading' often function less as skills practice and more as essential writing-linked opportunities for students to engage with academic content. Three of the 4 listening sessions in July, for example, are live lectures delivering content that then feeds into student seminars and writing. Unlike many pre-sessional programmes elsewhere, listening and reading skills are not actively tested in this context. As an insider-researcher, I am aware that this facet of course design has raised eyebrows among some sessionally-hired teachers and externally among colleagues elsewhere. While deriving from perceptions of student need and what is most 'learnable' in 12 weeks (cf. chapter 4), these design choices represent another instantiation of the local course cosmology (*sensu* Maton, 2014).

Together with those lessons that explicitly feed the assessment tasks, there are a number of other classes that complete the timetable for each month. These appear to stand alone and are not formally linked to assessments or curriculum threads. Such lessons tend to focus on *learning about language* (Halliday, 1993): metalinguistic work on aspects of text structure and/or sentence-level grammar. Illustrative sessions in July involve focuses on writing definitions, grammatical linkers and noun phrases. The perceived relative importance of these areas can be gleaned from the fact that one or two areas repeat across the programme. 'Paragraph structure 1' in July is followed by 'paragraph structure 2' in August. The notion of *hedging* the strength of claims in academic writing is introduced in August, and then recycled and extended with reference to writing with data in September. Other areas, such as the linkers and definitions sessions above, are not explicitly repeated.

I asked about the relationship of such lessons to the main curriculum threads in my first interview with Rebecca and Phil. Her response focused on the role of live lectures and I pick up on this in the next section. However, she ended her answer with the summary comment:

Rebecca: We're very not very keen on the whole random thing sitting there

uselessly in the curriculum that we don't do it, I would go so far as to say.

Phil: Yes, I can't think of a place offhand where we do do it, and it would be uncomfortable to be doing it.

(Course designer interview 1, 20:53–21:06)

There is ostensibly, therefore, a 'place for everything' but, from what I was able to see, this is not made explicit in the pages of the coursebook. As an insider-researcher, I recall such lessons sometimes being linked to others verbally during weekly staff meetings. There was no evidence of this in the data I analysed for the purposes of this research, however. Whether explicitly mentioned at teacher curriculum meetings or not, the lack of structurally enacted connections to or from these sessions means that any threading of this learning through other classes would rely on teachers bringing in this work 'live' at point of need. Such considerations point to the focus of chapter 6, the recontextualisation of the curriculum into pedagogic practice.

### **5.2.2. Reflexive Sidenote - A Catalyst for Change**

As course director of the pre-sessional programme at the time of this research and for a decade before, I am aware that I have, myself, influenced aspects of programme provision and perhaps also how staff think about what we do. My role for a number of years tended to be a strategic one, liaising with key areas of the university, such as the international office and the student immigration service. However, having evolved my own understandings of EAP partly through being a teaching practitioner, I have always maintained a keen interest in classroom pedagogies, curriculum thinking and the shape of what we do. As I have indicated elsewhere, it was through professional practice that the questions driving my doctoral research emerged.

While I could not have foreseen how programme design and thinking would develop, I can trace the beginnings of certain core 'axioms' now present in collective course thinking to somewhere in 2008. I was in my third year as director of the summer pre-sessionals and distinctly remember having niggling concerns about the provision as it was then. I felt in particular that what we had was not a 'course' but rather a collection of lessons. Each session stood alone, was formally unconnected to any other, and introduced a new 'carrier topic' each time for the lexicogrammatical focus of the class. I asked Rebecca, already then the chief materials writer, to strip out the constant change

of topics in favour of content themes that would cross 1-2 weeks of class time. My rationale was that this would save 'contextualisation time' in class and enable teachers to get more quickly into teaching core aspects of the EAP curriculum, such as nominalisation or paragraph structure. I played little or no part in what then emerged and evolved, but this decision became a catalyst for other developments. These were not mentioned by Rebecca or Phil in the interviews but are worth noting briefly, as they exert something of an influence on what is now seen in the pages of the coursebooks.

One unintended effect of creating content themes was the later realisation that student development of 'critical thinking' is *slow-burn* and requires cumulative engagement with content. Seminar discussions had previously remained superficial and trivial; content themes brought new depth to student contributions. Relatedly, we had never required students to read in preparation for seminars: students generated relevant content in groups during the class itself, before then debating an issue. Eliciting ideas from students that then serve as the basis for language work is a common practice in 'learner-centred' Communicative Language Teaching (e.g. Harmer, 2015; Meddings & Thornbury, 2009; Scrivener, 2011). This was a practice that the programme had almost certainly inherited given the professional 'upbringings' of the staff involved. Developing content streams brought in more reading for students, and within a year or two we saw the (at the time) surprising effect this had on the quality of performance. Students were not only stretching their linguistic skills but also stretching their minds, engaging with new ideas they had perhaps not even met through their first languages.

I remember sitting observing Phil, then a teacher new to the programme, not long after the changes were made. His students were engaging in a reading-based discussion about the Irish financial crisis of 2008-2011. It was a landmark moment for me in my understanding of the difference between what students had previously been doing and what the changes now enabled. The students quickly lost me. I could no longer follow the discussion. Their financial awareness and knowledge of the crisis far outstripped mine. I remember feeling like I was sitting in on a 'real' academic seminar - and feeling that this was how it *should* be. Such was the contrast that, over time, Rebecca (and later, Phil) turned this into a principle of sorts, which I heard them articulate to teachers during induction: students never speak or write without reading. This principle can now be seen enacted throughout the programme. Seminar speaking classes, spoken

presentations, timed writing and longer, edited writing assessments are all informed by, and emerge through, students engaging with academic texts.

Looking back, armed now with new thinking tools and a new conceptual language, my request to strip out the lesson-to-lesson shifts in topic was probably instrumental in setting a course away from a *knower orientation* to curriculum content and instead towards a *knowledge orientation* (Maton, 2014). This is one example of how the conversations and analysis afforded by my doctoral research have enabled me to begin understanding and articulating the principles shaping this EAP programme.

### **5.3. Course Specialisation: Assessments and Curriculum Threads**

As briefly outlined above, key assessment tasks for each month are the principal drivers for the curriculum threads, and the final assessments shape the nature of earlier formative tasks. In Biggs's (2003) terms, therefore, there is a fairly strong sense of constructive alignment in the macro-design. This section fleshes out some of the detail in relation to this design, taking in turn each of the major writing assessments as a basis for then understanding the lessons which scaffold students towards these tasks.

The chain of three major writing assessments summarised above, culminating in the extended essay in September, represents the core around which most of the taught curriculum orients. Given this internal logic and shape to the course, this is where I chose to focus the 'zoom' to curriculum structuring and the next stage of my research. It is not possible (and probably not desirable) to scrutinise every corner of the programme in the space of a single thesis. I have therefore drawn on these higher-stakes threads as a principled foundation for analysis and discussion. In this section I move towards theorising the *actualised curriculum* (after Bhaskar, 2008/1975) in terms of the LCT concepts of *epistemic* and *social relations* to curricular knowledge. This analysis seeks to give shape to the question of the *form* taken by the pre-sessional course in this context. This will enable revisiting tentative conclusions drawn in chapter 4 relating to the curriculum's relationship to knowledge and to knowers.

### 5.3.1. July: The 'Mini-Managed Essay'

An overview of the first four weeks of the twelve-week programme appear in full as figure 5.1 below. As summarised above, this first month comprises lessons of different kinds, all leading towards formative (but graded) speaking and writing assessments.

Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 1</b>				
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Induction and Registration</b>			
Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Writing:</b> Thinking about 'Academic' Writing	<b>Reading:</b> Note-taking		Set timed writing readings to prepare for seminar
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Writing:</b> Research Question & Thesis Statement	<b>Lecture:</b> Research Ethics (Mini Managed Topic)		
Thur 7 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Self-Study / One to One 'Settling in' Tutorials</b>			
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Writing:</b> Argumentation	<b>Grammar:</b> Linkers	<b>College Registration Activities</b>	Set mini managed essay to read for Monday 11th
<b>Week 2</b>				
Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Writing:</b> Introduction to the Mini Managed Essay			Set mini managed essay task and readings Set mini managed seminar questions
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Writing:</b> Exploring Paragraph Structure 1	<b>Writing:</b> Introductions and Conclusions	<b>Lecture:</b> Timed Essay	
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Seminar:</b> Mini Managed Essay (Research Ethics)	<b>Grammar:</b> Definitions	<b>Writing:</b> Effective Timed Essays (A)	
Thur 14 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Self-Study</b>			
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Reading:</b> Review Research Ethics Readings (Mini Managed Topic)	<b>Seminar Skills and Seminar Speaking:</b> Timed Essay (Uber Economy)	<b>Writing:</b> Effective Timed Essays (B)	
<b>Week 3</b>				
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Timed Essay</b>	<b>Speaking:</b> Introduction to the Presentation	<b>Writing:</b> Mini Managed (B)	Set formative presentation
Tues 19 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Listening:</b> Lectures in the University Context	<b>Lecture:</b> Moon Landing	<b>Writing:</b> Mini Managed (A)	
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Grammar:</b> Noun Phrases	<b>Speaking:</b> Pronunciation for Presentations 1	<b>Speaking:</b> Presentation Rehearsal (B)	
Thur 21 <sup>st</sup> July	<b>Self-Study</b>			
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	<b>One to one Feedback Tutorials on Timed Essay / Presentation Preparation</b>		<b>Speaking:</b> Presentation Rehearsal (A)	
<b>Week 4</b>				
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Presentations</b>			
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Presentations</b>			
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Speaking:</b> Moon Landing Debate		<b>Grammar:</b> Workshop (A)	Submit mini managed section
Thur 28 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>Self-Study</b>			
Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>One to one Presentation Feedback session</b>		<b>Grammar:</b> Workshop (B)	

Figure 5.1: Overview page of the July programme. July coursebook, p. 2

The final week, for instance, is devoted largely to assessment, with three of five mornings devoted to presentations and feedback on this assignment. A glance at the

middle two weeks also shows evidence of threads that will not be focused upon here, such as the timed essay task in week 3. Two clear examples of feeder sessions in week 2 are 'Lecture: Timed Essay' on the Tuesday and 'Writing: Effective Timed Essays' on Wednesday or Friday<sup>27</sup>.

The core assessment task for July is the 'mini-managed essay'. This assignment requires students to draw on the content from a number of readings in order to write the missing section of an otherwise complete student essay. The question that the essay addresses asks, "who do research ethics protect?" and students must write a 500-600 word section that fits into the existing composition. This task was introduced for the first time in the 2016 summer programme and emerged from a long process of discussion and problem solving. I had not been aware of the details in my role as course director, but the curriculum designers talked about it at some length in our interviews together:

Rebecca: [...W]e realised what we did in July was essentially placeholdering and July became increasingly complicated and intricate because we were trying to think of creative ways of not introducing the August content because we were trying to keep [the 12 and 8 week programmes] in lockstep. We didn't want to complicate the logistics and I think we had the epiphany this year that we didn't have to do that and actually all we were doing was creating pain for ourselves by doing that so we disentangled [the two programmes] [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 11:34–11:59)

Decoupling the programmes enabled bringing forwards some of the 'thinking tools' and 'concepts' mentioned in the course documentation and interview extracts in chapter 4. These 'core concepts' emerge as central to the architecture and ethos of the entire programme and inform much of what happens on the course. I return to them in chapter 6, to examine how they shape the semantic structure (*sensu* Maton, 2014) of the curriculum. Rebecca and Phil both mentioned the core course concepts in leading up to an account of how the mini-managed essay task had come about. These emerged when I asked how the designers made selection decisions for each month of the course:

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<sup>27</sup> The labels 'A' and 'B' seen in certain classes across the course timetables refer to sessions that are taken by half of the student groups on one day and half on another day. This is a logistical feature to free up half the students for other activities.



- Rebecca: That's a very timely question because we realized that we had a real clear vision for August and September. The idea for August was that we needed to go conceptually very hardcore, you know that we started off, you can't do anything unless the concepts are in place. So what we did in August very clearly was put those concepts– It's almost like putting up the scaffolding, you're going to try and build something, lay the foundations, put up the scaffolding, that's what we were trying to do in–
- Researcher: By those concepts you mean?
- Rebecca: You mean [*sic*] the idea of a thesis statement, the idea of what an essay actually is for and about, how to draw– the role of reading and how are you going to draw that into your essay, what an argument looks like, what academic language might be or not be and how you need to start unpacking that, referencing and plagiarism, concept–
- Phil: It struck me over the past year of doing materials review that we have a particularly conceptual language. We have a particular set of concepts that we rely on very heavily like thesis statement, like topic-question-position, like the I-shaped paragraph and so on and yes, the idea as I understood it, August was always to establish that foundation of those concepts, present those, teach those and use that as a basis on which to set students off doing their longer, more extended, more autonomous bits of work and September was always really devoted more to that, wasn't it?
- Rebecca: Absolutely [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 9:36–11:00)

This "particular set of concepts" was stretched forwards from August into the July curriculum for the first time, such that twelve-week students, who arrive with a lower level of English than students on the shorter programmes, would receive a longer, more scaffolded introduction to key ideas on the programme. The new end-of-month writing assessment for July grew out of this process:

- Rebecca: [...S]o in August we had the managed-essay and that serves quite a few functions but one of them is a gentle introduction into writing with sources, and using all our concepts and then the extended [essay] is taking that for a slightly longer, sweatier run if you like. Whereas in July we needed to come up with something that was going to help build toward those two tasks but not pre-empt them and not undermine those tasks, so that's how we came up with the mini-managed [essay].

(Course designer interview 1, 12:52–13:16)

The mini-managed essay thus functions as the first of three major opportunities during the twelve-week programme for students to engage in discursive essay writing. The

lessons presented in the book as formally leading to this assignment are set out below, on the curriculum thread page made available to students and teachers in the early pages of the July book.

Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 1</b>				
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> July				
Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> July				
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> July		Lecture: Research Ethics (Mini Managed Topic)		
Thur 7 <sup>th</sup> July				
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup> July				Set mini managed essay to read for Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>Week 2</b>				
Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> July	Writing: Introduction to the Mini Managed Essay			Set mini managed essay task and readings Set mini managed seminar questions
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> July				
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> July	Seminar: Mini Managed Essay (Research Ethics)			
Thur 14 <sup>th</sup> July				
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> July	Reading: Review Research Ethics Readings (Mini Managed Topic)			
<b>Week 3</b>				
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> July			Writing: Mini Managed (B)	
Tues 20 <sup>th</sup> July	:		Writing: Mini Managed (A)	
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> July				
Thur 22 <sup>nd</sup> July				
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup> July				
<b>Week 4</b>				
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> July				
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup> July				
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> July				Submit mini managed section
Thur 28 <sup>th</sup> July				
Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> July				

Figure 5.2: The ‘mini-managed essay’ curriculum thread, July coursebook, p. 6

The sequence, as set out above, consists of five timetabled sessions. A live lecture provides an opening orientation to the theme for the thread, research ethics, outlining

key concepts and the relationship between ethics and writing in academic contexts. A full morning is then devoted to introducing the mini-managed writing task, analysing the student essay for which students must write a section, and initial understanding of the texts from which relevant content must be drawn. Students are next set detailed reading of these texts for homework and are given advance access to discussion questions that form the basis of a follow-up seminar class. This seminar is intended to be content-focused, such that students discuss issues emerging from both the lecture and the assigned readings. One further session is then dedicated to each of understanding the assigned texts and preparing for the assessed task, before students submit the essay section on Wednesday of week 4. The fixed timeline requires that teachers mark students' writing over the subsequent weekend and then provide one-to-one feedback during a dedicated morning in the first week of the following month<sup>28</sup>. This pacing and spacing pattern can be seen throughout the three months of the course and for all assessment tasks, including timed essay and presentation threads. In principle, students would draw on the learning from this feedback for subsequent spoken and/or written production tasks.

Of the three major writing-from-sources assessments on the pre-sessional, this first, mini-managed essay is the most closely controlled or, in Bernstein's terms, the most strongly *Framed* (Bernstein, 2000). The assignment is fixed and narrowly prescribed. All learners complete exactly the same task. The model essay is already largely written; students need only to produce one section. Complexity of content is managed through tight controlling of what students need to read and understand in order to complete the assessment. Students conduct no independent research and consult only the texts provided. They must integrate content from these sources but citation and referencing are not explicitly taught or assessed at this point in the course. The submission date is given on the overview page and is non-negotiable.

Selection, sequencing and pacing of curricular content exhibit equally strong framing (+F). The core lesson in the thread is around forty pages long and includes the exemplar essay, the three source texts, all analysis tasks, notetaking frames and key messages on task expectations. Prescribed dates for teachers to set readings and seminar preparation tasks are given explicitly in the right-most 'comments/notes' column of the overview page (see figure 5.2). At lesson level there is some weakening

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<sup>28</sup> This can be seen on the August curriculum overview page, presented in the next section

of the framing (+F↓), as no new materials are provided for the final two sessions. Teachers thus make their own decisions on, for instance, how to review the research ethics readings, based on perception of student need. Drawing on Bernstein's useful distinction between *internal* and *external* values of framing (F<sup>i/e</sup>), however, it can be seen that relatively tight constraints on both the assessment requirements and curriculum structuring exert external control (+F<sup>e</sup>) on legitimate classroom practices. Teacher decision-making in planning these lessons is thereby bounded and constrained from without, and classes thus remain relatively strongly framed (+F<sup>i</sup>). Some internal variation in selection (task focus/choice), sequencing (task ordering) and pacing (time allocated per task) is enabled and likely, however, given that teachers are expected to address the particular conceptual and linguistic needs of their students. Layering in slightly greater conceptual delicacy, this can be reinterpreted as representing relatively weaker Framing with respect to lesson Focus (+F<sup>i.f</sup>), e.g. choosing which vocabulary items from the texts to review, but relatively stronger framing in relation to lesson Basis (+F<sup>e.b</sup>) - i.e. preparing students for the assessment.

The strong Framing around the July assessment and the related lesson sequence functions to ensure all students are introduced at the same time to key concepts, training in textual analysis and metalinguistic *knowledge about language* (KAL) (after Halliday, 1993; Rose & Martin, 2012). The non-negotiable nature of component texts and early tasks keeps learners and teachers "in lockstep" at curriculum level. In terms of the enactment of Specialisation concepts for my study, this Framing can be seen to help maintain stronger epistemic relations to curricular knowledge. On the pre-sessional EAP programme in July, this manifests as relatively rapid training in particular ways of approaching textual content, structure and linguistic features.

Students are not left to fend for themselves or to guess at what is valued as they grapple with academic task requirements. Learners are not furnished only with a task rubric and assessment criteria, for instance, thereby facilitating only *recognition* (Bernstein, 2000). They are engaged collaboratively and individually in textual analysis intended to enable explicit access to concepts, expectations and a model of output. This serves in principle to scaffold students from recognition towards *realisation* (Bernstein, 2000) in their own academic reading and writing practices. In the lesson introducing students to the mini-managed essay assessment, for example, students analyse the feeder academic readings to extract text purpose, evidence in support of

writer arguments and linguistic features that they might be able to draw on for their own writing. Students do this with the help of a notetaking frame (see below). This technique / task is common throughout the pre-sessional programme and can be seen to teach a particular way of working with long texts.

**Mini Managed Essay: Reading Overview**  
*The tables below ask you to summarise your reading and think about what you can use during the writing process*

Reading	Main purpose of the reading	Useful definitions, evidence, examples	Useful language related to the topic	Useful language for general academic writing

**Figure 5.3: Notetaking frame for textual deconstruction. July coursebook, p. 95**

Individual student opinions and dispositions thus tend to be de-emphasised, in favour of specific deconstruction tasks and standardised procedures for accessing key content and structural features. Social relations to knowledge are thus relatively weak (SR-) and epistemic relations are relatively strong (ER+). This core lesson and the wider curriculum thread of which it is part can therefore be characterised broadly as enacting an underlying knowledge code (ER+, SR-). The carrier theme for the thread, research ethics (the Focus), is relatively challenging and of broad relevance to all students, particularly the postgraduate majority. The task and component practices are not specifically oriented towards named target disciplines, however, and so the strength of the knowledge code is relatively weak.

The mini-managed essay can therefore be located heuristically on the specialisation plane as depicted in figure 5.4:

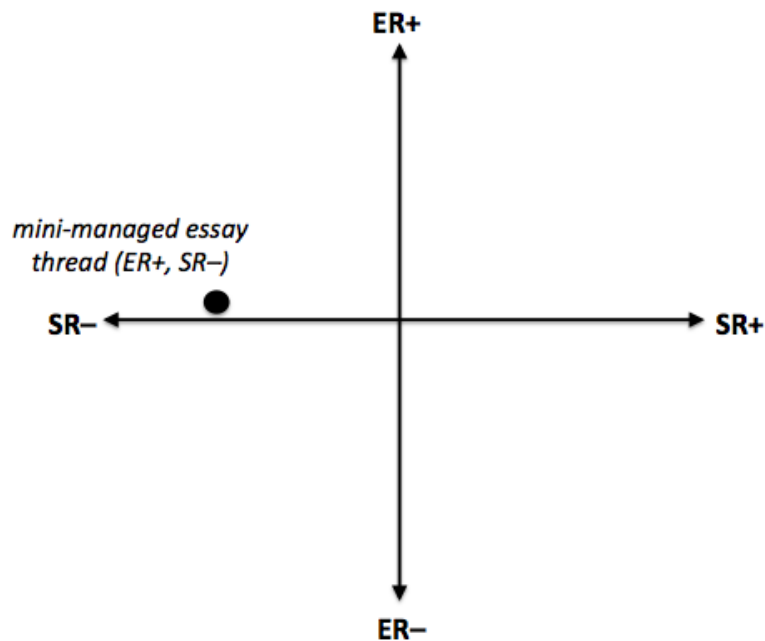


Figure 5.4: The mini-managed essay on the specialisation plane

So far, the discussion of the mini-managed essay thread has focused on the five lessons explicitly separated out in the programme overview. A brief look at the introductory lesson in week 2, however, reveals that one of the stated lesson aims is 'to review core principles of essay writing' (July coursebook, p. 84). The lesson begins with a review of the live lecture and then moves to a *review* of the concepts 'topic', 'question' and 'position'. Students explore the exemplar student essay to locate and discuss these features. A wider analysis shows that this lesson is actually the third time students have met this set of concepts, each time through different texts.

### Monday

#### Writing Introduction to the Mini-Managed Essay

<p><b>Lesson Aims:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review the lecture</li> <li>• To introduce the mini-managed essay section task</li> <li>• To review core principles of essay writing</li> <li>• To review the mini- managed essay and ensure students understand the content</li> <li>• To introduce the readings required for the essay section</li> </ul>
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Figure 5.5: Lesson aims, mini-managed essay session. July coursebook, p. 84

The first time occurs in the opening lesson of the course: *Writing: Thinking about 'Academic Writing'*. In this session, students compare 'inappropriate' and 'appropriate'

models of student essay writing to explore, among other areas, the notions of topic, question and position. Students then meet these concepts again the next day, in a class called *Writing: Research Question & Thesis Statement* (see the overview of July week 1, below). A different model essay is used to analyse and discuss the idea of having a stance in academic writing, and signposting this early with a 'thesis statement'.

Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 1</b>				
<b>Mon 4<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Induction and Registration</b>			
<b>Tues 5<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Writing:</b> Thinking about 'Academic' Writing	<b>Reading:</b> Note-taking		Set timed writing readings to prepare for seminar
<b>Wed 6<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Writing:</b> Research Question & Thesis Statement	<b>Lecture:</b> Research Ethics (Mini Managed Topic)		
<b>Thur 7<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Self-Study / One to One 'Settling in' Tutorials</b>			
<b>Fri 8<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Writing:</b> Argumentation	<b>Grammar:</b> Linkers	<b>College Registration Activities</b>	Set mini managed essay to read for Monday 11th

Figure 5.6: Week 1, July. July coursebook, p. 2

This makes it clear that there are sessions in the early part of the July programme that are not explicitly linked to each other or to the mini-managed essay thread, but which nevertheless play an important function with respect to this core assessment. Phil mentioned such lessons in our first interview:

Phil: Yes. It seems to me at least, there are a certain set of free-standing lessons which are not part of the particular thread but which are lessons which deliver our key concepts for the first time and a) balancing the needs for students to get those key concepts in order to be able to write effectively with, b) pressures of time and practicalities and the need to get students working on their projects can be a quite tricky one [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 21:12–21:45)

Rebecca provided some clarifying detail when talking earlier about the considerations that guide the pacing and spacing of lessons in a curriculum thread:

Rebecca: [...] So with the mini-managed, in order for them to do the mini-managed task they need to have had 'research question' and position; they needed one of them to have had linkers, paragraphs, introductions and conclusions. All of those things we wanted them to have before they wrote the task. We wanted them before they did this, the introduction [to the mini-managed assessment]. They have to have had research question, thesis statement before they did this lesson. There's no way they could do this lesson before that [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 18:10–18:39)

These insights highlight the centrality of particular 'objects of instruction' in the July leg of the pre-session programme: a defined set of concepts, skills and procedures that the course seeks to develop. This further underlines, therefore, the relatively stronger epistemic relations to knowledge (ER+). While the overview documentation does not make it clear, the stand-alone nature of these sessions perhaps marks them out as relevant, not just to the mini-managed essay task, but to the programme as a whole. This certainly becomes apparent later in the course, as key learning is returned to and rehearsed for the *managed* essay in August and the *extended* essay in September. Such areas include the structuring of essay introductions, conclusions and paragraph structure, and can be seen introduced in week 2 of July.

Week 2				
Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> July	Writing: Introduction to the Mini Managed Essay			Set mini managed essay... task and readings Set mini managed seminar questions
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Writing: Exploring Paragraph Structure 1	Writing: Introductions and Conclusions	Lecture: Timed Essay	
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> July	Seminar: Mini Managed Essay (Research Ethics)	Grammar: Definitions	Writing: Effective Timed Essays (A)	
Thur 14 <sup>th</sup> July	Self-Study			
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> July	Reading: Review Research Ethics Readings (Mini Managed Topic)	Seminar Skills and Seminar Speaking: Timed Essay (Uber Economy)	Writing: Effective Timed Essays (B)	

Figure 5.7: Week 2, July. July coursebook, p. 2

To summarise this section, analysis of one curriculum thread in the July programme provides evidence to support the suggestion, made more tentatively in chapter 4, that core aspects of the programme are underpinned by a knowledge code. Core content is drawn not from students' own personal lives or experience, but rather from academic texts. Students' own pace of learning and any previous study habits are, at least in the formal curriculum, downplayed in favour of standardised analysis techniques and fairly strictly regulated spacing of core teaching and related work deadlines. In other words, social relations are de-emphasised (SR-) and epistemic relations are emphasised (ER+). The enactment of this organising principle is enabled, at least partly, by strong framing in the selection, sequencing and pacing of curricular knowledge.

The discussion now moves to a briefer consideration of core assessment tasks and threads in the August and September coursebooks, before then bringing analyses of the three months together into an interim summary picture of pre-session course organising principles.



### 5.3.2. August: The 'Managed Essay'

The second month and second book of the twelve-week summer pre-session programme is organised in ways that very much resemble the July book:

Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 5</b>				
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> August	Writing: The Extended Essay	Reading: Strategies for Academic Reading	Library inductions	Set Extended Essay Set Timed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions
Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Lecture: Taking Responsibility for your Learning	Reading: Becoming a Lexicographer	Live Lecture: Managed Essay Topic	Set Managed Essay
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> August	One to One Mini Managed Essay Feedback Tutorials		Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay) (B)/ Library inductions	Set Managed Essay Reading (B)
Thur 4 <sup>th</sup> August	Self-Study/ Library inductions			
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> August	Communication: Emailing in the University Context	Grammar: Workshop	Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay) (A)/ Library inductions	Set Managed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions (A)
<b>Week 6</b>				
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> August	Teacher Option	Communication: Spoken Interaction in the University Context	Library inductions	
Tues 9 <sup>th</sup> August	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay(1)	Writing: Exemplification	Library inductions	
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> August	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay(2)	Seminar skills and Seminar Speaking: Timed Essay	Writing: Using Key Sentences to Guide the Reader (A)/ Library inductions	
Thur 11 <sup>th</sup> August	Self-Study/ Library inductions			
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> August	Timed Essay: Various Topics	Writing: Referencing in Academic Writing	Writing: Using Key Sentences to Guide the Reader (B)/ Library inductions	
<b>Week 7</b>				
Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> August	Seminar Skills and Seminar Speaking(2): Managed Essay	Writing: Summarising and Referencing Pt 1 avoiding plagiarism	Grammar: Workshop (B)	
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> August	Writing: Taking a Critical Position (Managed Essay)	Writing: Summarising and Referencing Pt 2 avoiding plagiarism	Grammar: Workshop (A)	
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> August	Writing: Exploring Paragraph Structure (2)	Writing: Planning the Extended Essay and Preparing for the Poster Conference	Speaking: Pronunciation for Presentations 2 (B)	Set Formative Presentation
Thur 18 <sup>th</sup> August	Self-Study			
Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> August	One to One Timed Essay Review Tutorials		Speaking: Pronunciation for Presentations 2 (A)	
<b>Week 8</b>				
Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Listening skills and Live Lecture: Metaphor in Academic Writing	Grammar: Hedging in Academic Writing		Submit managed essay
Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> August	Speaking: Pronunciation Workshop	Speaking: Presentation Skills		
Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> August	Self-Study			
Thu 25 <sup>th</sup> August	Presentations			
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> August	Presentations		Poster Conference	

Figure 5.8: August programme overview. August coursebook, p. 2

Lessons focusing on the core concepts and skills introduced in the first month are woven together into analogous curriculum threads. These lead towards three formative-but-graded assessment opportunities: a spoken presentation, a short essay written under timed conditions, and a longer 'managed essay'. The wider programme's capstone project, the extended essay, also begins in August. The spoken presentation assessment and 'poster conference' in week 8 (see figure 5.8 above) are closely connected to the extended essay. I discuss these separately in the next section.

There is a greater focus on academic reading in August. Sessions tend to emphasise strategy development. Examples are three classes in week 1: *Reading: Strategies for Academic Reading*, *Reading: Becoming a Lexicographer*, and *Reading: Long Texts*. This strategy work is designed to prepare students for coping with the larger volume of reading expected of students for the August and September assessments. Stand-alone lessons bring in new functional focuses for students' writing development. Where students met *linkers* and *definitions* in July, they meet *exemplification* (week 1) and *hedging* (week 4) in August. The concepts and conventions of referencing, citation and plagiarism are also introduced for the first time. Plagiarism becomes a focal theme, with avoidance strategies linked to work in notetaking, paraphrasing and summarising. This introduces notions of intellectual property, acknowledging academic sources and the ethics of working with other people's knowledge<sup>29</sup>. These areas may be unfamiliar and conceptually challenging for some of the students coming onto the programme, given education cultural backgrounds and cross-cultural differences in relations to academic knowledge (cf. Pecorari, 2010; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). These focuses are highlighted above (figure 5.8), in the full overview page for the month.

The stand-alone lessons in August, as seen in July, tend not to be formally connected to the managed essay (or other) thread. No explicit reference to other lessons or to the assignments is made in the materials for exemplification or hedging, for example. In one or two other sessions, more explicit links are made. In *Writing: Exploring Paragraph Structure (2)*, for instance, students learn about four common theme-rheme patterns in paragraphs. In optional follow-up tasks, they are encouraged firstly to revisit and re-analyse an exemplar essay they studied earlier in the book, and then to reconsider pieces of writing they have completed in light of the new learning (August

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<sup>29</sup> i.e. research knowledge from the field of production

book, p. 178). Such links to other writing are not a general pattern, however, and thus recycling of these areas would rely on teachers to make 'live' connections during other classes and/or during feedback on student performance. A similar feature was noted in the July materials. This may be an important facet of what teachers are expected to bring to their pedagogical practice and is likely to be important to student development of these more micro-level writing functions during the drafting and re-drafting of writing.

External Framing in the selection, sequencing and pacing of component lessons remains as strong as in July. Some reduction in Framing can be seen in wider curriculum, such as in the inclusion of one or two sessions for which the content is undecided and left to teachers' discretion. These are the *Grammar: Workshop* sessions in weeks 1 and 3, and the *Teacher Option* class that begins week 2. Generally speaking, however, Framing is relatively strong. Task and submission deadlines are provided once again on the overview page for the month, and are non-negotiable. As suggested for enactment of the July materials, this relatively strong external framing (+F<sup>e</sup>) can be construed as exerting a shaping force on classroom realisation of teaching materials, i.e. on internal Framing (+F<sup>i</sup>). This ensures that core content, tasks and learning are covered in ways that enable both students and teachers to meet enforced deadlines.

As mentioned briefly in 5.2.1 above, where I provide a brief overview of the whole pre-session programme, the principal writing task for submission in August is the *managed essay*. As in the July book, students and teachers can see this assessment thread (and others) separated out in the opening pages of the second study book. A similar structural pattern to the mini-managed essay thread can be seen in the selection and sequencing of lessons. The managed essay thread begins with a live lecture and proceeds to sessions focusing on scaffolding students through the content and structuring of assigned readings. This work then feeds into a content-driven seminar discussion and a dedicated session on the notion of taking a critical position with respect to an essay question. Students submit their final managed essay at the beginning of the final week of August.

The thread appears below as figure 5.9.

Week 5				
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> August				
Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> August			Live Lecture: Managed Essay Topic	Set Managed Essay
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> August			Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay) ( B)	Set Managed Essay Reading (B)
Thur 4 <sup>th</sup> August				
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> August			Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay) (A)	Set Managed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions (A)
Week 6				
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> August				
Tues 9 <sup>th</sup> August	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay			
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> August	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay			
Thur 11 <sup>th</sup> August				
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> August				
Week 7				
Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> August	Seminar skills and Seminar Speaking: Managed Essay			
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> August	Writing: Taking a Critical Position (Managed Essay )			
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> August				
Thur 18 <sup>th</sup> August				
Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> August				
Week 8				
Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup> August				Submit managed essay
Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> August				
Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> August				
Thu 25 <sup>th</sup> August				
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> August				

**Figure 5.9: The 'managed essay' curriculum thread. August coursebook, p. 5**

One principal difference and development in this August thread is the introduction of academic discipline-oriented streams<sup>30</sup>. Students do not all attend the same opening lectures, do not read the same texts and do not complete the same assessment. Instead, there are seven subject streams. These are Business Finance; Business Marketing and Human Resource Management; MBA; Law; Science; a broader Social

<sup>30</sup> As will become clear in what follows, these streams are not intended to teach disciplinary knowledge per se. Disciplinary texts serve instead as mediators of core teaching concepts that form the basis of the pre-sessional curriculum.

Sciences, Humanities, TESOL and Translation stream; and a distinct undergraduate grouping. Choice of subject streams has developed in line with the numbers of students representing each discipline. Applicants to business-focused degrees, for instance, comprise around two thirds of the entire programme cohort. Science students are the least represented and the relevant curriculum thread is perhaps also the least developed. All students additionally receive tailored library inductions on the first day of the August programme (cf. figure 5.8). These are divided both by disciplinary grouping and by academic level, such that undergraduates, master's and doctoral students receive different inductions (Rebecca, course designer interview 2, 3:58–4:12).

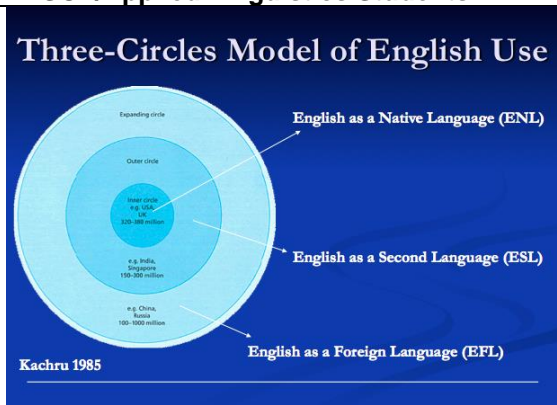
Students have already been grouped according to these streams since the beginning of the programme, so no change of class or learner groupings is required. Each student receives a dedicated hard-copy pack of academic texts for the stream they have been assigned to, in addition to the core study book. This greatly increases the volume of reading expected compared to the mini-managed essay assessment, with some reading packs being in the region of fifty to sixty pages long. Each disciplinary book has four or five texts and students must draw on these chapters and articles to address a discursive essay question. The question is fixed and all students in a stream must answer this same question. To provide an illustration of how the curriculum becomes differently specialised at this point in the course trajectory, I focus more narrowly now on the path taken by two of the disciplinary groups: Law students and TESOL/Applied Linguistics students.

Both groups represent significant minorities on the pre-sessional, with a total of around 60 Law students and 50 TESOL/Applied Linguistics studying across the three programmes during the summer of data collection. Law has been chosen because the stream begins to diverge in ways that other streams do not, and is 'pure' in the sense that only applicants to LLM programmes are in the class together. The TESOL/Applied Linguistics group has been chosen as a contrast. These students are not currently separated, being classed together with students of Education, Translation and possibly other Humanities and Social Science subject areas, depending on the cohort.

A side-by-side comparison of the managed essay input, reading sources and task requirements quickly demonstrates both the shift from the July curriculum and the

differences between the two streams. Law students must engage with a legal issue, Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), and the complexities of trying to solve it. TESOL/Applied Linguistics students must draw on their own educational experiences in considering the growth of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Introductory lectures both provide an overview of the respective issues, concepts and research that are dealt with in more detail in the readings. The assigned texts and the essay question are agreed with receiving departments.

Managed Essay Question	
Law Students	TESOL/Applied Linguistics Students
<i>How can the problems created by Investor-State Dispute Settlement system be solved?</i>	<i>Reflecting on your experiences as either a learner or teacher, how far has the emergence of English as a Lingua Franca has been a beneficial phenomenon for both native and non-native English speakers?</i>

Example Slides from the Opening Lecture	
Law Students	TESOL/Applied Linguistics Students
<p><b>Case</b></p> <p><i>Pac Rim Cayman LLC v. Republic of El Salvador, ICSID Case No. ARB/09/12</i></p>	 <p>The diagram illustrates the Three-Circles Model of English Use, attributed to Kachru (1985). It consists of three concentric circles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Inner circle:</b> English as a Native Language (ENL). Includes the USA (300 million) and UK (60 million).</li> <li><b>Outer circle:</b> English as a Second Language (ESL). Includes India (1 billion) and Singapore (4 million).</li> <li><b>Expanding circle:</b> English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Includes China (1 billion) and Russia (140 million).</li> </ul>
<p><b>International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arbitration between companies and sovereign states</li> <li>• 3 arbitrators</li> <li>• 1 chosen by each party; 1 agreed on by both parties</li> </ul>	<p><b>ELT - Linguistic Imperialism?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 1992: Publication of Robert Phillipson's <i>Linguistic Imperialism</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ELT = masked <i>neo-colonialism</i> through language policies</li> <li>■ Serves political, cultural &amp; economic interests of principal colonial powers</li> <li>■ Often impedes literacy development in mother tongue languages</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>The issue:</b></p> <p>Can a foreign investor force a government to change its laws to please the investor or should the investor comply with the laws it finds in the country?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>‘English as a Lingua Franca’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Research Perspective: <i>The ELF Core</i> (Jenkins 2000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Revised view of <i>error</i> from a non-Core/NS perspective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ L1 transfer → affecting LFC core features: ‘Error’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ (since likely to lead to communication breakdown)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ L1 transfer → affecting non-LFC features: ‘NNS Regional Variation’; ‘NNS Accent’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ (since unlikely to lead to communication breakdown)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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Set Reading List	
Law Students	TESOL/Applied Linguistics Students
<p><b>Text 1:</b> Provost, C., and Kennard, M. (2015) ‘The Obscure Legal System That Lets Corporations Sue Countries’, <i>The Guardian</i>, 10 June [Online]. Available at: <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/10/obscure-legal-system-lets-corporations-sue-states-ttip-icsid">https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/10/obscure-legal-system-lets-corporations-sue-states-ttip-icsid</a>.</p> <p><b>Text 2:</b> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2013) ‘Reform of Investor-State Dispute Settlement: In Search of a Roadmap’, <i>IIA Issues Note 2</i> [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webd/iaepcb2013d4_en.pdf">http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webd/iaepcb2013d4_en.pdf</a>.</p> <p><b>Text 3:</b> Garcia, L.G. (2014) ‘Making impossible investor-state reform possible’, <i>Transnational Dispute Management</i> 11 (1) [Online]. Available at: <a href="http://www.matrixlaw.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/27_11_2014_11_3_5_40_Making-impossible-investor-state-reform.pdf">http://www.matrixlaw.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/27_11_2014_11_3_5_40_Making-impossible-investor-state-reform.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Text 4:</b> Constain, S (2014) ‘ISDS Growing Pains and Responsible Adulthood’, <i>Transnational Dispute Management</i> 11 (1) [Online]. Available at: <a href="https://www.transnational-dispute-management.com/article.asp?key=2030">https://www.transnational-dispute-management.com/article.asp?key=2030</a></p>	<p><b>Text 1:</b> Modiano, M., (2001) ‘Linguistic imperialism, cultural integrity, and EIL.’ <i>ELT Journal</i> 55:4, 339-346</p> <p><b>Text 2:</b> Yoo, I. W., (2014) ‘Nonnative Teachers in the Expanding Circle and the Ownership of English.’ <i>Applied Linguistics</i> 35:1, 82-86</p> <p><b>Text 3:</b> Jenkins, J., (2014) ‘The Spread of English as a Lingua Franca’. In <i>English as a Lingua Franca in the International University</i>. Oxford: Routledge. 22-42</p> <p><b>Text 4:</b> Montgomery, S. L., (2009) ‘English and Science: realities and issues for translation in the age of an expanding <i>lingua franca</i>’. <i>The Journal of Specialised Translation</i> 11, 6-16</p> <p><b>Text 5:</b> Willans, F., (2011) ‘Classroom code-switching in a Vanuatu secondary school: conflict between policy and practice’. <i>International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism</i> 14:1, 23-38</p> <p><b>Text 6:</b> Jenkins, J., (2003) <i>World Englishes</i>. Oxford: Routledge</p>

Expected Genre of Writing	
Law Students	TESOL/Applied Linguistics Students
Discursive, thesis-driven essay	Discursive, thesis-driven essay

**Table 5.1: Managed essay thread for Law vs. TESOL/Applied Linguistics students**

TESOL/Applied Linguistics students are provided with more texts than the Law students perhaps because their disciplinary grouping is actually much broader and the essay task differs for applicants to other degree programmes. This is likely to require some variation in the focus of reading. Any Translation students in the class, for instance, are asked to answer a slightly different question:

*To what extent has the emergence of English as a Lingua Franca diminished the need for translation?*

One of the six assigned texts, Montgomery (2009), speaks directly to concerns of translation, with Willans (2011) also dealing with code-switching. All other students are asked to write on the closely related, but more generic:

*How far has the emergence of English as a Lingua Franca been a beneficial phenomenon for both native and non-native English speakers?*

The authors and journals represented in the reading list suggest that TESOL/Applied Linguistics students are the principal audience of the selections made, however, with the other four texts all coming from applied linguistics sources.

Unique among the disciplinary streams, Law students receive a tailored version of the programme overview for both August and September, highlighting where bespoke sessions have been written in (cf. figure 5.10, below). These materials introduce Law students, e.g., to writing with cases, analysing and composing problem-solution text structures, and how to acknowledge legal sources using the Oscola referencing system. While some of this input primarily targets the extended essay (see next section), the placement and timing means this teaching and learning can also be drawn on for the managed essay.



Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 1</b>				
Mon 1 Aug	Induction and Registration			
Tues 2 Aug	Writing: Thinking about 'Academic' Writing	Listening to lectures	Listening skills and Live Lecture: Managed Essay Topic	Set Managed Essay Set Timed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions
Wed 3 Aug	Writing: The Extended Essay: thesis driven	Reading: Note-Taking		Set Extended Essay
Thurs 4 Aug	Self-Study / One to one 'Settling in tutorials' / Library inductions			
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Writing: Research Question and Thesis Statement	Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay)		Set Managed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions
<b>Week 2</b>				
Mon 8 Aug	Writing: Writing Critically: Argumentation	Writing: Exploring Paragraph Structure (1)	Writing: The Extended Essay: problem-solution	
Tues 9 Aug	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay (1)	Writing: Cases	Writing: Introductions and Conclusions (additional materials)	
Wed 10 Aug	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay (2)	Seminar skills and Seminar Speaking 1: Timed Essay	Writing: Using Key Sentences to Guide the Reader (A)	
Thurs 11 Aug	Self-study / (Library inductions)			
Fri 12 Aug	Timed Essay: Various Topics	Writing: Referencing in Academic Writing (additional materials)	Writing: Using Key Sentences to Guide the Reader (B)	
<b>Week 3</b>				
Mon 15 Aug	Seminar Skills and Seminar Speaking 2: Managed Essay	Writing: Summarizing and Referencing Pt 1	Grammar: Noun Phrases	
Tues 16 Aug	Writing: Taking a Critical Position: Planning the Managed Essay (additional materials)	Writing: Summarizing and Referencing Pt 2	2pm: <del>Oscola</del> Referencing	
Wed 17 Aug	Writing: Exploring Paragraph Structure (2)	Writing: Planning the Extended Essay and Preparing for the Poster Conference	Speaking: Introduction to the Presentation Skills (B)	Set Formative Presentation
Thurs 18 Aug	Self-study			
Friday 19 Aug	One to One Timed Essay Feedback Tutorials		Speaking: Presentation Skills (A)	
<b>Week 4</b>				
Mon 22 Aug	Listening skills and Live Lecture (including submission of managed essay)	Grammar: Hedging in Academic Writing		Submit managed essay
Tues 23 Aug	Speaking: Pronunciation for Presentations	Speaking: Presentation Workshop		
Wed 24 Aug	Self-study			
Thurs 25 Aug	Presentations			
Friday 26 Aug	Presentations		Poster conference	

Figure 5.10: Bespoke August materials for Law students. Law supplementary, p. 3

Both streams thus move the curriculum further towards the target discipline, but in different ways. The LCT Specialisation concepts of epistemic relations (ER) and social relations (SR) and the further distinction between course Focus and course Basis enable articulating these differences and representing them visually. To recall briefly the enactment of the concepts for this study (cf. chapter 3), epistemic relations to knowledge are characterised in the data as the relative emphasis on practices,

procedures or techniques relating to knowledge about language (KAL) as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge. Social relations to knowledge are characterised by the relative emphasis on student opinions, attributes or dispositions as constituting legitimate EAP course knowledge. The relative strengths of ER and SR can vary independently.

In terms of course Focus, i.e. curricular content, there is a strengthening of epistemic relations for both Law and TESOL/Applied Linguistics. Both managed essay threads select level-appropriate, discipline-specific content. The relative strength of social relations remains weak for Law, with a focus on legal concepts, cases and frameworks over students' own beliefs and opinions. The relative strength of social relations for TESOL/Applied Linguistics is slightly stronger, however, as students' own personal experience as language learners and/or teachers is legitimated in the assessment question as a valourised form of knowledge to draw on in addition to published research. This feature reflects the kind of assignment question TESOL/Applied Linguistics students are likely to meet on certain of their destination degree modules. This differentiation can be depicted heuristically on the specialisation plane as shown in figure 5.11.

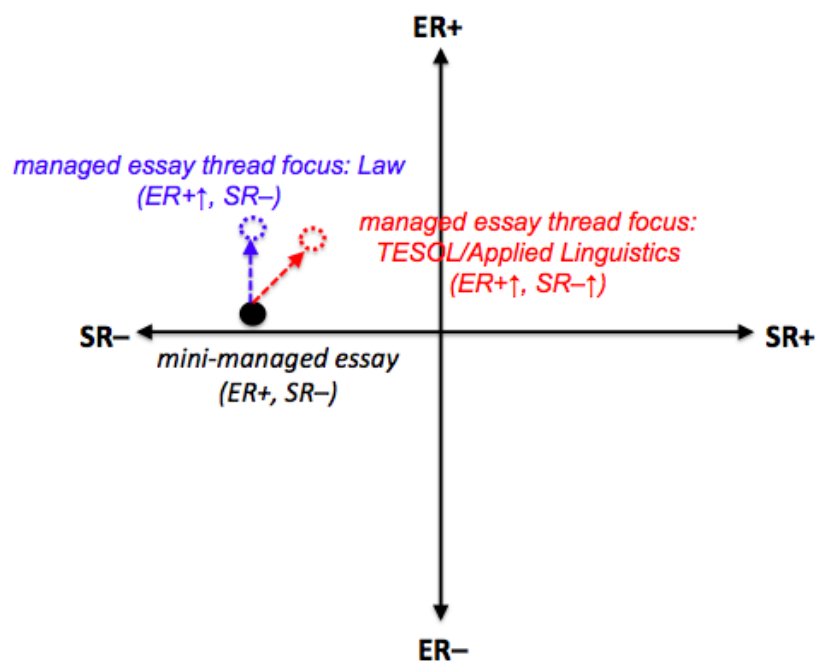
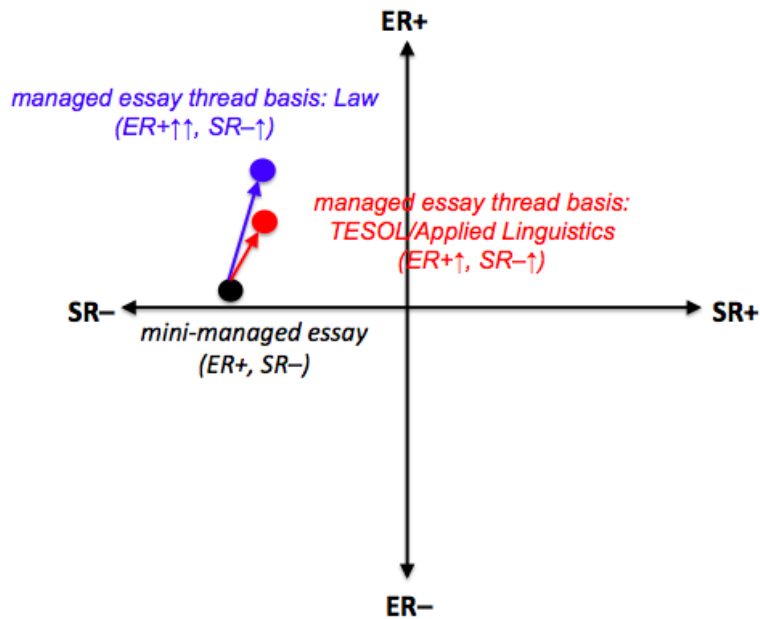


Figure 5.11: Differential Focus for the managed essay in two disciplinary streams

In terms of underlying course Basis, i.e. knowledge about language developed through the curricular content, there is a slight strengthening of epistemic relations for the TESOL/Applied Linguistics stream with respect to July, as students are required to produce a 1000-word essay in a field-relevant area, instead of a single section in an area outside applied linguistics. While considerably shorter than the 3000-word assignments on the destination degree programmes, the task remains quasi-authentic, albeit simplified. However, there are no explicit materials that teach specific aspects of disciplinary discourse. Any such work that students engage in would be the result of teacher recontextualisation practices. In contrast, course Basis for the Law curriculum exhibits relatively stronger epistemic relations, with bespoke input and practice work in specific aspects of the disciplinary discourse of Law, as described and illustrated above. It is perhaps also worth highlighting that, in the institutional context chosen for this study, the discursive essay is a common assessment type for taught master's students of Law. This contrasts somewhat with discussions of Law text types in the discourse analysis literature and underlines the need to distinguish field-of-production knowledge claims from the local realisations of disciplinary discourses in degree modules and curriculums.

The managed essay thread for both streams can also be seen to strengthen slightly the social relations as the underlying Basis of legitimation, as the discursive essay task requires students to take a personal position in relation to the question posed and the literature with which they must engage. While remaining relatively weak, given that both Law and TESOL/Applied Linguistics essays must draw primarily on disciplinary sources and that student opinions must emerge from this research, there is nevertheless a relative strengthening with respect to the task and curriculum thread for July.

This can be summarised diagrammatically on the specialisation plane as below.



**Figure 5.12: Differential *Basis* for the managed essay in two disciplinary streams**

Specialisation of the pre-session curriculum can thus be seen to shift between the first and second months of the programme. While the illustrative comparison above takes only two of the seven disciplinary groupings represented on the course, the example highlights the way in which some internal variation opens up between streams. The reasons for this divergence relate less to the inherent nature of the curricular knowledge itself, and more to local affordances of the context. In particular, a good working relationship with the School of Law and the enthusiasm for a Law-specific strand has resulted in relatively more tailoring of materials and tasks than for other streams. Analysis of the other disciplinary managed essay threads would reveal movements across the specialisation plane more akin to the TESOL/Applied Linguistics stream than Law, both for the analysis of Focus and Basis. Generally speaking, this can be summarised as meaning that the course content becomes more discipline-specific, but the underlying curricular objects of instruction (text types; grammatical structures; vocabulary work) do not. The Law thread constitutes the greatest strength of epistemic relations as the Basis of curricular legitimacy that is seen in August.

As a final point for this section, and by way of slight contrast, not all selection decisions in August are necessarily tied to epistemic concerns, i.e. to knowledge-oriented

considerations of students' academic levels, textual needs, assessment types or 'the academic cycle'. This is not immediately evident from a surface analysis of programme materials; however, backstage insights from Rebecca and Phil revealed, for instance, that decisions about the choice and placement of live lectures are sometimes taken with staff workload in mind. Rebecca mentioned this when I asked about the relationship between the curriculum threads and other, seemingly stand-alone lessons in the programme:

Rebecca: I think that for example the lectures are often used as placeholders. The lectures have two functions. One, to contribute to a writing task, mini-managed [essay], timed [essay]. They have got function— The other things lectures do which is sometimes throw a lecture in that's related to nothing because we need it as a marking space for teachers - and we like to do lectures [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 20:30–20:48)

Two examples are the lecture on 'taking responsibility for learning' in week 1 of August and the lecture on 'metaphor in academic writing' in week 4 (cf. figure 5.8). A similar design feature was noted in section 5.2.1 in relation to the pacing and spacing of tasks, submission points and deadlines for return of work. While a *knowledge code* can be seen to underpin course ethos and materials development (ER+, SR–), there are nevertheless small-but-important facets of programme design, therefore, that can be interpreted as exhibiting a slight strengthening of social relations (SD↑). In this case, as in the earlier illustration, the principle orients more towards teacher-knowers than student-knowers.

### 5.3.3. August / September: The 'Extended Essay'

The 'final twist' in the curricular spiral is the extended essay. The mini-managed essay and managed essay have been practice opportunities for this assignment. The extended essay grade, together with a final timed writing and final presentation grade provide the exit profile for all pre-sessional students. These grades form the basis of decisions about whether or not students will progress to their chosen destination departments. It is, therefore, the highest-stakes assessment on the programme.

The extended essay thread begins in parallel with the managed essay in August, but work stretches until the end of the September programme. Closer integration of the speaking and writing elements of the course is seen in this thread, as students' August

programme culminates in a 'poster conference', during which students present a visual, work-in-progress outline of their September extended essays. Students and staff mingle in multiple classrooms, engaging with students' ideas, reading-based learning and current positions on the essay question they have chosen. The 'conference' thus serves three purposes. It provides an opportunity for presentation practice, a forum for sharing and discussion of early essay thinking, and a chance to experience a quasi-authentic academic event. The August overview for the extended essay thread highlights this event and the key preparatory classes:

Week 5				
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> August	Writing: The Extended Essay			Set Extended Essay
Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> August				
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> August				
Thur 4 <sup>th</sup> August				
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> August				
Week 6				
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> August				
Tues 9 <sup>th</sup> August				
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> August				
Thur 11 <sup>th</sup> August				
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> August				
Week 7				
Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> August				
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> August				
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> August		Writing: Planning the Extended Essay and Preparing for the Poster Conference	Speaking: Pronunciation for Presentations 2 (B)	
Thur 18 <sup>th</sup> August				
Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> August			Speaking: Pronunciation for Presentations 2 (A)	
Week 8				
Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup> August				
Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> August	Speaking: Pronunciation Workshop	Speaking: Presentation Skills		
Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> August				
Thu 25 <sup>th</sup> August	Presentations			
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> August	Presentations		Poster conference	

Figure 5.13: Extended essay / posters / presentation thread. August, p. 7

Instead, there is something of a change in pace in September, with a greater emphasis on creating time to work on students' evolving extended essays. This can be seen in figure 5.14, in the spaces opened up for autonomous self-study and for teacher-student feedback opportunities.

Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 1</b>				
Mon 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>			
Tues 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>One to One Feedback Tutorials (managed essays, posters)</b>		<b>Whole class feedback: Presentation Skills</b>	
Wed 31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Writing: Different ways of thinking</b>	<b>Writing: Writing About Empirical Research</b>		<b>Set plagiarism readings</b>
Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Reading: Unwrapping a Model Essay/managed essay feedback</b>	<b>Writing: Literature Review</b>		
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Lecture: Plagiarism</b>	<b>Writing: Literature Review</b>		<b>Submit extended essay first drafts</b>
<b>Week 2</b>				
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Writing: Problem-solution/Case Studies/Reflective writing</b>	<b>Seminar: Plagiarism</b>		
Tues 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Timed Writing: Plagiarism</b>	<b>Speaking: Setting up the final presentation</b>		
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Self-study</b>			
Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Writing: Problem-Solution/ Case Studies/Reflective writing</b>	<b>One to one Tutorials: Return First Drafts</b>		<b>Return first drafts</b>
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Speaking: Presentation skills</b>	<b>Writing: Results and Hedging with Data</b>		
<b>Week 3</b>				
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>One to one Extended Essay Feedback appointments (live)</b>			
Tues 13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>One to One Feedback on Timed Writing</b>			
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Self-study day (EAP 1 and 2)</b>			
Thurs 15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Lecture: Final timed writing topic</b>	<b>Speaking: Presentation Skills</b>		<b>Submit final extended essay Set final timed writing readings</b>
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Seminar: Timed Writing</b>			
<b>Week 4</b>				
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Summative Presentation</b>			
Tues 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Summative Presentation</b>			
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Summative timed Writing</b>			
Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Formal Debate</b>			
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Closing Ceremony</b>			

Figure 5.14: Extended essay drafting/feedback spaces. September, p. 1

Studied in parallel, there are a number of other sessions in the August book that develop procedures, skills and understandings also pertinent to tackling the extended essay. These were exemplified and discussed briefly in the previous section (cf. figure 5.8), and include areas such as dealing with long texts, avoiding plagiarism, citation and referencing, taking a critical position in writing and options for paragraph structuring. Very few such sessions exist in the September coursebook, with only the area of *hedging* recycled explicitly in the materials, and extended to focus on writing about empirical research results and data at the end of week 10.

Assessment task Framing remains relatively strong, in the sense that all students are assigned an essay question to address. There is much greater variation than in August, however, with questions tailored to individual programmes of study, not just to broad disciplinary groupings. For example, where all Humanities students wrote an essay in August on World Englishes, in September there are prepared questions for a range of subject areas. These are given in the August supplementary reading book and include:

*MA Christian Theology*

*MA Greece, Rome and the Near East*

*MA Modern History (19<sup>th</sup> century to contemporary history)*

*MA Philosophy*

As for the managed essay, these questions have been agreed with receiving departments. Increasing the task demands, however, students are provided with a starter reading list but are expected to supplement this with wider, independent research using the library and/or online journals and databases. Work is done between summers to update these questions periodically with disciplinary staff and to develop questions for lesser represented programmes and departments. Not all subject areas are represented, however, with notes under certain programme headings stating:

*If you are a Taught or Research Postgraduate in this department, please ask your teacher to arrange an appointment with a member of the Summer Pre-Sessional Management Team.*

(Social Science, Humanities, Modern Languages & TESOL Reading Pack, e.g. p. 24)



Examples include postgraduate programmes in English Studies (e.g. MA Creative Writing; *MA Romantic and Victorian Literary Studies*) and *MA Music*. Students of these programmes are rare and pre-sessional staff work 'live' with departments over the summer to agree an essay focus. The only exceptions to these arrangements are undergraduate students, who instead complete a second managed essay, and PhD students, who are encouraged to develop their own extended essay questions.

Focusing down again on the two streams discussed in the previous section, TESOL/Applied Linguistics students are given the extended essay title:

*How far is the use of authentic materials beneficial to the EFL learner?*

(Humanities, Social Sciences, Modern Languages & TESOL supplementary, p. 20)

Compared to August's focus on World Englishes, this question brings the focus of academic attention closer to the relations between theory and teaching practice and thus, perhaps, to something of the essence of TESOL and Applied Linguistics as disciplinary areas. No differentiation is made for these different groups, however. Students applying to the MA TESOL programme have no teaching experience, whereas those applying to MA Applied Linguistics must have at least two years' professional experience. Both starter reading lists and task requirements are the same.

By way of slight contrast, Law students are further streamed by specific degree programme, and must address one of four extended essay questions accordingly:

E.g.

Corporate Law

*In what circumstances should shareholders be held liable for the debts of their companies?*

European Trade and Commercial Law

*Critically assess the legal status of electronic agents and the legal issues arising from contracting through electronic agents*

International Law and Governance

*What role can, and should, the International Criminal Court play in responding to serious human rights violations amounting to international crimes?*

(Law supplementary, p. 113–115)

Course Focus for TESOL/Applied Linguistics students can therefore be seen to maintain relatively strong epistemic relations (ER+) as the Basis of curricular legitimacy. The Law stream demonstrates further strengthening (ER↑), however, and is comparatively stronger (ER++) than the TESOL/Applied Linguistics stream. In terms of course Basis, i.e. underlying organising principles, some further strengthening of ER can also be seen via the extended essay thread and the September curriculum. The Law materials focus more particularly on problem-solution structure essays and introduce textual analysis work and structural features that enable students to organise their extended essays in this way, if appropriate. They are the only grouping offered explicit alternatives in the structuring of the final assignment.

Time	9:00 – 11:00	11:30-13:00	14:30-16:00	Comments /Notes
<b>Week 1</b>				
Mon 1 Aug	Induction and Registration			
Tues 2 Aug	Writing: Thinking about 'Academic' Writing	Listening to lectures	Listening skills and Live Lecture: Managed Essay Topic	Set Managed Essay Set Timed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions
Wed 3 Aug	Writing: The Extended Essay: thesis driven	Reading: Note-Taking		Set Extended Essay
Thurs 4 Aug	Self-Study / One-to-one / Getting in tutorials' / Library inductions			
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Writing: Research Question and Thesis Statement	Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay)		Set Managed Essay Reading and Seminar Questions
<b>Week 2</b>				
Mon 8 Aug	Writing: Writing Critically: Argumentation	Writing: Exploring Paragraph Structure (1)	Writing: The Extended Essay: problem-solution	
Tues 9 Aug	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay (1)	Writing: Cases	Writing: Introductions and Conclusions (additional materials)	
Wed 10 Aug	Using Reading in Writing: Managed Essay (2)	Seminar skills and Seminar Speaking 1: Timed Essay	Writing: Using Key Sentences to Guide the Reader (A)	
Thurs 11 Aug	Self-study / (Library inductions)			
Fri 12 Aug	Timed Essay: Various Topics	Writing: Referencing in Academic Writing (additional materials)	Writing: Using Key Sentences to Guide the Reader (B)	

Figure 5.15: Alternatives for the extended essay. Law supplementary, p. 4

Law students are introduced to the *SPSE*<sup>31</sup> text structure (Swales & Feak, 2012) and work with accessible examples of problem-solution texts to examine how the structure manifests in texts. An example text frame appears below as figure 5.16. Texts and related exercises concern, for instance, the problem of binge drinking (Law supplementary, p. 57–58) and the problems faced by staff at a notional overseas UK university campus (Law supplementary, p. 65). Students practice generating and

<sup>31</sup> Situation-Problem-Solution-Evaluation

evaluating possible solutions to the given problem. This work provides, in principle, the understandings for students to then consider this textual organisation when addressing their extended essay question.

The Problem Solution Frame	
Situation	State briefly the nature of the problem you are going to discuss and how it is currently important in your field of study.
Review of existing viewpoints	Summarise some of the other opinions that are held about this problem. E.g. <u>Grimble</u> (1999) was of the opinion that... Jones stated that/looked at how etc.
Essay plan/ Signposting	Say what you are going to do in your essay- e.g:  First, I will examine the nature of the problem in greater detail. Then, I will discuss two different solutions that have been proposed and examine the validity of each. <b>Finally, I will propose a compromise.</b>  Your overall solution is the equivalent to your <b>thesis statement.</b>
Problem	Explore the nature of the problem.
Solution	Look at a possible solution.
Evaluation	Say whether the solution is good or bad.
Recycle Problem and Solution*(if necessary)	State another solution and evaluate.
Conclusions	Put forward the strongest solution or a new one of your own with reasons for your choice.



\*Note

Figure 5.16: Problem-Solution text frame. Law supplementary, p. 53

It is perhaps worth noting that published work on academic legal discourse tends not to highlight problem-solution structures as a dominant textual structure (e.g. Tessuto, 2012). Some work has also highlighted, for instance, the IRAC<sup>32</sup> move sequence as important in legal writing (e.g. Candlin, Bhatia & Jensen, 2002). This work and these structures may or may not be known to the pre-sessional management team.

Academic staff collaborating with EAP staff may or may not be consciously / tacitly aware of such generic features. In the local context of this research, however, Law staff are strongly supportive of the kinds of writing developed by pre-sessional Law students. On the strength of student and staff feedback, for instance, a 2012 internal review of the Law School recommended that *a//* LLM students be encouraged to take a pre-sessional programme. This insight underlines the usefulness of distinguishing the fields of production (research), recontextualisation (curriculum) and reproduction (teaching, learning and assessment) (Bernstein, 1990; 2000), and the importance of recognising that local enactments of practice do not necessarily conform to possible assumed 'norms', e.g. based on corpus studies of a particular field or genre.

TESOL/Applied Linguistics students are introduced to reflective writing. This is not formally connected to their extended essay work, but rather to the timed essay tasks they do in September. Students meet exemplar extracts of academic reflective essays including sections written by MA TESOL students, and examine the ways in which personal anecdote and reflection are brought together with formal reading and referencing. They are taught specific analytical techniques to help distinguish between the different forms of content that need to be woven together to produce the valued text (cf. lesson extract, figure 5.17).

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<sup>32</sup> Issue-Rule-Application-Conclusion

**Summary Note**  
*There are different kinds of content/knowledge woven together in this extract. Some is concrete and personal. Some is more general. Some is fairly conceptual / theoretical. These different 'levels' might be represented on a continuum:*

Relates to more abstract or theoretical content – less connected to a particular context

Relates to more generalised content/comments about a situation, argument, etc.

Relates to more concrete experience



*You have seen this before in a previous session. What makes academic reflective writing different from most of the writing you have met on Pre-Sessional so far is the need to base the assignment in personal experience. Your starting point for assignment sections will, therefore, usually be towards the bottom-end of this scale.*

**Figure 5.17: 'Academic reflective writing' extract. Stand-alone lesson handout, p. 6**

While the managed essay on World Englishes in August was ostensibly reflective (Focus), therefore, it is only in September that students meet exemplars and explicit knowledge that provides the *recognition rules* and *realisation rules* (Bernstein, 2000) for the understanding and production of this text type (Basis). It is perhaps also worth noting in passing that this session, one of the only lessons remaining in the programme that I wrote, was actually informed by Legitimation Code Theory and a pedagogical enactment of the concept of Semantic Gravity (Maton, 2014). The original work leading to such materials development emerged in parallel with my doctoral work and is reported in Kirk (2017c). Semantic Gravity is enacted differently for the current research study and is one of the focuses of the next chapter.

Thus, while a strong emphasis remains on thesis-driven discursive essay writing, some bespoke and differentiating of writing types is introduced for certain disciplinary groups. One further example is tailored work on case studies for students heading onto certain Business-based degree programmes, such as Human Resource Management.

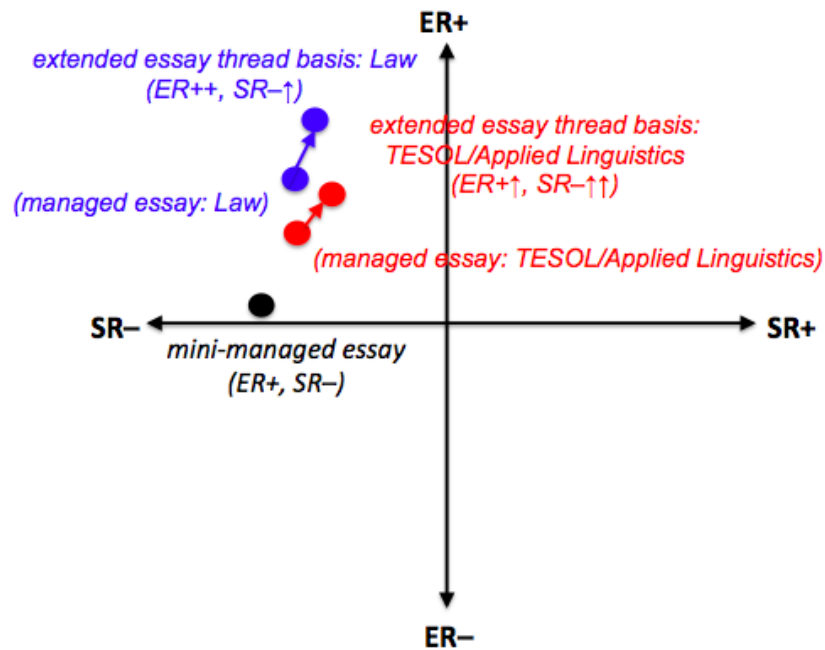
This divergence in programme materials can be seen in one or two spaces in the main programme overview:

Week 2					
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup>		Writing: Problem-solution/Case Studies/Reflective writing	Seminar: Plagiarism		
Tues 6 <sup>th</sup>		Timed Writing: Plagiarism	Speaking: Setting up the final presentation		
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>		Self-study			
Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup>		Writing: Problem-Solution/ Case Studies/Reflective writing	One to one Tutorials: Return First Drafts		Return first drafts
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup>		Speaking: Presentation skills	Writing: Results and Hedging with Data		

**Figure 5.18: Work in new genres of writing. September coursebook, p. 1**

Problem-solution essays for Law students and reflective writing for TESOL/Applied Linguistics students will be prevalent on their destination degrees. Explicit analysis and writing work on these areas during the final month of the pre-sessional can therefore be seen as a further nudging of the curriculum towards the particular textual and linguistic requirements of students' chosen subject areas. The progression is, strictly speaking, not a linear one, as managed essay and extended essay work is undertaken in parallel during August. However, work that opens up student awareness of textual structures other than the discursive essay *is* a feature more characteristic of the final month, and this is something that the course designers touched upon in our interviews.

The broad and differential shift that takes place in the organising principles underpinning the curriculum for Law and TESOL/Applied Linguistics can now be summarised on the specialisation plane (cf. figure 5.19, below). As with earlier analyses, placement on the plane is not 'photo-real' and should not be taken as a quantitative analysis (Millar, 2014, p. 71). The heuristic analysis does not seek to be 'precise', but rather to make visible a degree of nuance and variation in the structuring of an EAP programme in ways that were not possible before.



**Figure 5.19: Increasing curricular specialisation in the extended essay thread**

The analysis helps to make visible the ways in which assessment tasks and associated curriculum threads can be seen gradually to approach knowledge practices in destination departments that are similarly specialised. That is, the specialisation code of the pre-sessional curriculum - at least for some students - begins to approach that of target disciplines.

In section 5.3.2, during discussion of the managed essay thread, it was noted that the curriculum for TESOL/Applied Linguistics students tends not to engage explicitly with ways of analysing or learning the lexicogrammar of students' target disciplines. This is also generally the case for students in other streams. Occasional tasks and notetaking frames encourage students to think about this area, but without guidance or input. One example is a frame that appears at the end of the August coursebook:

It might be useful for me to learn how to use these words and phrases...		
Type of word or phrase:	Word or phrase:	Meaning:
1. Words / phrases showing the relationships between ideas:		
2. Content words / phrases that might be useful in many different academic disciplines:		
3. Content words / phrases often used in my academic discipline or topic:		
4. Words / phrases that I still can't understand, even after checking my dictionary / searching online:		

**Figure 5.20: Language learning notetaking frame. August coursebook, p. 216**

This feature for TESOL/Applied Linguistics students was contrasted with the Law stream, as the Law supplementary book does contain some discipline-specific input. This includes common Latin terms used in legal discourse (Law supplementary, p. 40–41) and work that explores the appropriacy of hedging language in legal writing (Law supplementary, p. 94–95). Nowhere else across the three coursebooks, however, is there any work for any of the subject areas that examines, for instance, how any of the stand-alone areas of lexicogrammar (e.g. linkers; noun phrases; paragraph structure) pattern within a given disciplinary genre. This is an observation rather than a criticism, but in the context of this research study it is worth highlighting. The course could



conceivably have been different and it is, of course, possible that this becomes an area for future developments. Pre-sessionals elsewhere in the UK may well explore specifics of disciplinary discourse in ways that this programme currently does not. As discussed and exemplified earlier in this thesis, the course under investigation favours instead a focus on macro-structure in writing, and on teaching analytical procedures and strategies for approaching *any* text.

Having worked on the programme for a number of years and having encountered different ways of thinking about, analysing and teaching language, I think it is likely that this facet of the local cosmology and particular way of working with texts has emerged in orientation to Swalesian genre theory (Swales, 1990). This approach to exploring and describing text patterns, common in EAP (Flowerdew, 2015; Shaw, 2016), embeds no inherent theory of language. Instead, the process relies on corpus analysis of linguistic features to establish correlational patterns between textual move structures and commonly occurring vocabulary and grammar within given text types. As has been noted in the literature (e.g. Hyland, 2003, p. 26), this enables 'genres' to be taught almost as textual templates, or as 'recipes' (Freedman & Medway, 1994, p. 46), and as separate from the language features they 'contain'. The pre-sessional programme under the spotlight here appears to have enacted something of a similar approach. This is not inevitable, however, as 'Sydney School' Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), for instance, provides one alternative, with a functional and multi-stratal model of genre that enables a *constitutive* rather than correlational view of the relationship between language and emerging textual structure (e.g. Martin & Rose, 2003; 2008). Student-facing pedagogical materials for EAP contexts are beginning to emerge using an SFL-based model of language (e.g. Caplan, 2012).

The reason for making this observation here is that it enables introducing an extra level of delicacy to the summary sketch of course specialisation in figure 5.19. Technically speaking, the analysis provided above speaks more to text-level specificity more than to micro-level work on language. The latter would rely on teachers highlighting disciplinary uses of language live in class and/or during tutorial work with students. Remaining theoretically agnostic and drawing instead on the emic distinctions apparent in the data, a simple three-way distinction can be made between work on text structure, sentence-level grammar and vocabulary. A more granular representation of the

extended essay thread for Law (figure 5.21) and TESOL/Applied Linguistics (figure 5.22) might therefore be given as below.

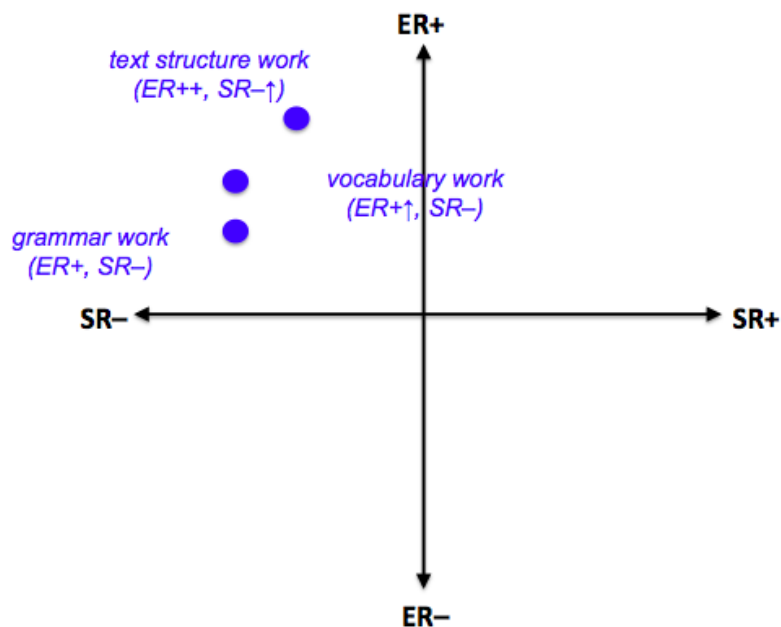


Figure 5.21: Differential specialisation in the Law curriculum

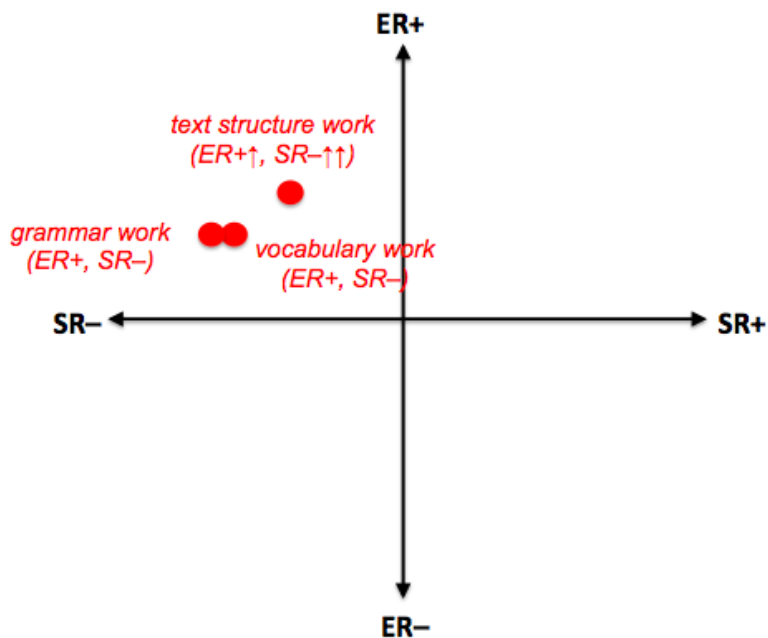


Figure 5.22: Differential specialisation in the TESOL/Applied Linguistics curriculum

While necessarily a broad-brushstrokes representation, the enactment of Specialisation concepts for this study enables heuristic analysis that begins to tease apart and nuance curricular practices in ways that move beyond simple binaries. This might provide, for instance, a basis for phylogenetic comparison of different iterations of an EAP course over time. It might also provide a means of comparing between institutional programmes, enabling an accessible and visual depiction of similarities and differences in local instantiations of EAP curricular focuses and approaches.

#### **5.3.4. Counterpoint: Autonomy Development, Avoiding Plagiarism**

Analysis and discussion in this chapter has revealed curricular practices that, while increasingly differentiated over course time, are all concentrated within the upper-left quadrant of the specialisation plane. That is, practices have been shown to exhibit an underlying knowledge code (ER+, SR–). This confirms the tentative conclusions drawn in chapter 4, where I discussed the value statements of purpose and intent that frame the programme. This earlier discussion also briefly examined documentation relating to the development of *autonomy skills* (cf. section 4.2.3) and questioned how far the approach taken in the pre-sessional course would be characterised similarly, by explicit knowledge-building work and specific techniques/procedures. It was noted that absence of such explicit work with instead, for example, a reliance on more tacit and experiential development would constitute relatively weaker epistemic relations and stronger social relations (ER–, SR+). I conclude the curricular analysis for this chapter by returning briefly to this question. This provides a brief point of comparison and an underlining of how the analytical toolkit makes visible the differential specialisation at work within different facets of the pre-sessional programme.

To recall briefly the documentation discussed in chapter 4, the section on autonomy development in the early pages of each coursebook begins:

Study and research at [this university] requires high levels of **autonomy**. Autonomy does not mean only 'working on your own'; it means having the confidence and awareness to make sensible decisions about action that you need to take [...]

(July coursebook 2016, p. 32)

A series of notes then highlights for students the kinds of areas they may need to consider. Areas touched upon include making informed decisions about best use of time, selection of resources, and making sensible choices about managing workload and competing priorities (July coursebook 2016, p. 32). These focuses can be seen as broadly aligning what Rebecca Oxford has called *indirect strategies*, i.e. student practices that support, rather than directly involve, language learning<sup>33</sup> (Oxford, 1990). Oxford further divides indirect strategies into *metacognitive*, *social* and *affective strategies*, and the notes for pre-sessional students appear to speak to aspects of the first two. This includes arranging, planning and evaluating personal learning (metacognitive) and cooperating with others (social). Affective strategies involve, e.g., behaviours that lower anxiety and self-motivate learners (Oxford, 1990), but these areas are not mentioned in the pre-sessional documentation.

In the July coursebook, beyond these opening pages, no more explicit mention is made of learner autonomy. No lessons or tasks within sessions deal overtly with discussion, practice or techniques/thinking tools in any of the areas outlined in the 'Autonomy Development' section. The area thus remains otherwise tacit. The programme requires students to engage in practices that are demonstrative of autonomy, such as the various stages of the essay drafting process; however, associated curricular knowledge is absent and any developmental progression appears to be assumed, rather than featuring as an explicit object of discussion and instruction.

By way of contrast, the August book contains a number of pages that suggest week-by-week self-study options for students in areas broadly relating to metacognitive development, but also including *direct strategy* work, such as tasks that build awareness of word formation (August coursebook, p. 36–43). These point learners beyond the coursebook, principally to online resources available on the institutional VLE. An example appears below as figure 5.23. Importantly, however, these options are not embedded within the EAP curriculum and are not formally connected to any of the main assessment threads. Autonomy development work is, therefore, itself an autonomous pursuit. It relies on students consulting these pages and engaging in self-study, and/or would require teachers to incorporate suggested areas into their practice.

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<sup>33</sup> 'Direct strategies' include practices such as intelligent guessing of meanings in context and compensation strategies (e.g. circumlocution), for managing personal gaps in language knowledge (Oxford, 1990)

## Further / Self-study for Week 6

Use the EAP toolkit on the VLE for self-study tasks this week. The following exercises are particularly useful at this stage in the course. Select 2-3 for self-study now. If you are not sure, talk with your teacher about which areas they would recommend.

### Section 1: Learning to study

- a. *Dictionary skills*
- b. *Identifying the study skills you need (Key vocabulary about studying)*
- c. *The best conditions for learning (Study skills)*
- d. *Recognising good study skills*
- e. *Learning logs and reflective journals*
- f. *Working with other people (Related to seminars)*

### Section 2: Academic communication skills

- a. *Communicating online*
- b. *Contrasting spoken and written language (NB These are "guidelines" and not "rules")*
- c. *Speaking without hesitating*

### Section 3: Vocabulary for academic purposes

- a. *Introduction to vocabulary learning*
- b. *Building your vocabulary*
- c. *Language for classifying*
- d. *Forming words with prefixes and suffixes*
- e. *Business vocabulary in wider use*
- f. *Homonyms, homophones and homographs*

### Section 5: Academic listening and notetaking

- a. *How to take good notes while listening*
- b. *Prediction skills for listening*
- c. *Using clues to understand lectures and presentations*
- d. *Listening for signposting language*
- e. *Recording data*

### Section 6: Academic reading and critical thinking

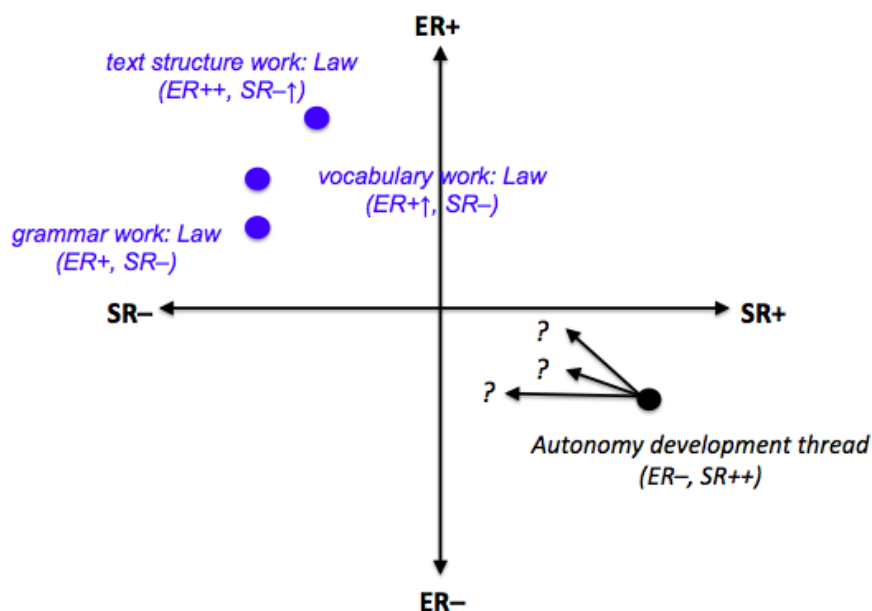
- a. *Introduction to reading skills*
- b. *Reading online and printed texts*
- c. *Prediction strategies for reading*
- d. *Speed reading and scanning practice*
- e. *Good practice in note-taking to avoid plagiarism*
- f. *Reading to identify main points*
- g. *Identifying text types*
- h. *Scanning for specific information*

**Figure 5.23: Suggestions for self-study. August coursebook, p. 38**

Unlike the core curriculum discussed above, therefore, there is only very weak external Framing created in relation to autonomy development. Neither students or staff are required to use or engage with concepts, content or exercises suggested. Enactment

of core curriculum concepts and assessment-linked content and practice does not require drawing on any of this extra material. This means practice is likely to vary in potentially significant ways from individual to individual, and from class to class. The September book contains no similar pages and so would rely on course participants returning to advice and signposts in the August book, and/or to (continue) access(ing) the material available online.

This affords teachers a degree of freedom and autonomy and provides options for keen and able students who may need an extra challenge. This is perhaps as it should be. For the purposes of analysis, however, it signals differential valourising of particular curricular knowledge and skills and thus a different organising principle present in the course. Autonomy has not been selected as a content area (course Focus), nor does the course highlight particular knowledge, procedures or techniques for autonomy development. Epistemic relations to curricular knowledge are therefore much weaker than, for instance, academic writing development (ER-). Individual choice, learning style and pace are instead valourised, resulting in relatively much stronger social relations to curricular knowledge (SR++). The autonomy thread in the pre-sessional curriculum can therefore be characterised as exhibiting a knower code (Maton, 2014).



**Figure 5.24: The autonomy curriculum thread, representing a knower code**

The contrast between the different organising principles guiding curricular practices is illustrated in figure 5.24 (above) with reference to the extended essay thread for Law. Given that teacher and student choices may strengthen the epistemic relations and/or weaken the social relations, recontextualisation practices in and outside the classroom may lead to variant strengths of specialisation across classes. This is signalled in figure 5.24 by the arrows leading to question marks.

There is no criticism implied by this analysis. It simply provides a further illustration of the way in which course values and priorities have been enacted differentially in curricular practices. It adds to an understanding of the local course cosmology, since it is relatively straightforward to imagine how things might be different. In an alternative version of the programme, autonomy might be taken as a content area. Students might read about theories of autonomy and research on strategies that have been shown to work, and might be required to engage in particular practices, reflect on these and write formative or summative summaries of insights gained and lessons learned.

Interestingly this is essentially the approach taken for another thread on the pre-session programme: understanding and avoidance of plagiarism. It was seen above that use of sources, citation, referencing and plagiarism are first introduced into the programme in August. In September, however, plagiarism becomes a content and assessment thread for the purposes of one of the two timed essays that students must do in the final month. In the first week of September, students attend a lecture on plagiarism. This defines the concept, presents comparative examples, and begins to explore cross-cultural norms and values in academic practice. Students are then set a number of academic readings, dealing for instance with questions of cross-cultural norms in academic writing, issues of intellectual property, the complexities of intertextual notions of emulation vs. 'copying', and research on underlying reasons for plagiarism. A content-focused seminar takes place the following week, during which students discuss issues in the readings and refine their understandings of the concept. Explicit materials in the book speak directly to this thread: questions designed to help students prepare for the seminar (figure 5.25, below) are one example. The same week students then write a short, 500-700 word essay under exam conditions. This assignment, if higher scoring than the second timed essay, becomes one of the grades forming students' final portfolio of work.

## Seminar Speaking: Plagiarism

### Lesson aims:

- To practise seminar speaking, in preparation for assessed seminars.
- To get feedback on strengths and weaknesses in seminar skills.

Please think about and make notes on the following questions in advance of your seminar.

1. What is 'plagiarism'?
2. According to the readings and your understanding of the issues, why do students plagiarise?
3. Why do western academics and some writers think International students are more likely to plagiarise? Do you agree with this point of view?
4. Is the attitude toward plagiarism in the UK substantially different to the attitude in your own country? Are you surprised by the attitude in the UK?
5. Do you think deliberate and accidental plagiarism should be regarded as equal crimes? Why/Why not?
6. Do you think the Internet makes studying easier or harder? Has the Internet changed the way you study?

**Figure 5.25: Preparation for a seminar on plagiarism. September coursebook, p. 69**

The close relationship between the avoidance of plagiarism and successful performance in written assessments is fairly evident. It is perhaps easy to see why it is that plagiarism has become a focus on the pre-session programme in a way that autonomy has not. Nevertheless, the contrast is insightful and illustrative of the local selection, sequencing and pacing process in course design. The *process* of working autonomously and developing autonomy skills and the *process* of avoiding plagiarism



is important to the academic socialisation that the pre-sessional seeks to achieve with students. However, it is only with plagiarism that the design decision has been taken to transform this into an academic content stream, and to focus explicitly on practice and procedures that train awareness and 'good study habits'. These include core lessons (particularly in August) dealing with careful notetaking, tracking of sources and acknowledgement of sources during writing (cf. section 5.33, figure 5.8).

The plagiarism thread, unlike the autonomy thread, thus exhibits features more characteristic of a knowledge code (ER+, SR-). Content and training offer more clearly defined and knowable procedures for gaining and demonstrating knowing. In the autonomy thread, there are less obvious paths to being a knower 'of the right kind' and thus more space for individual expression and prior knowledge (or, rather, prior understandings). As noted above, things could conceivably have been otherwise - and could of course change in the future.

#### **5.4. Summary Synthesis: Course Specialisation**

Analysis and findings in this chapter have begun to enable addressing aspects of the overarching research questions guiding this research. To recap, those questions are:

*How is EAP locally enacted?*

*What are the organising principles underpinning this enactment?*

The analytical distinction between course Focus and course Basis (cf. Maton, 2014, p. 31) enabled seeing that textual content is not the course curriculum. Rather, content *mediates* the curriculum, providing carrier content for the principal objects of instruction. Course Focus is academic knowledge invested. That is, disciplinary knowledge (e.g. as codified in a journal paper) is recontextualised as curricular knowledge: as instances of writing that exemplify target teaching concepts. The curriculum engages students in non-trivial areas such as 'the über economy', research ethics, plagiarism and microfinance. Spiralling enactment over the three months engages students with progressively more challenging content, tasks and forms of practice, e.g. with respect to volume of academic reading and what students must do with these texts. Course Focus was seen generally to increase in disciplinary specificity (ER+↑) over time. Course Basis, conceived in terms of EAP curriculum concepts enacting the

specialisation code, was also seen to shift, and in different ways for different class streams. The Law thread illustrated one instance of EAP practices that continue to approach those of the destination department through August into September. In macro-terms, the pre-session programme studied for this research was characterised as exhibiting an underlying knowledge code (ER+, SR-). Curricular focuses centre around explicit training in textual analysis, text structure and academic practices (e.g. notetaking techniques). What is valued most is thus less who the students are and more the successful learning and application of particular ways of thinking and acting. The course is conceived and designed to teach students particular ways of interacting with texts, particular techniques in writing. This affords in principle, e.g., the demonstration of 'criticality' via defined practices, such as through the weaving together of evidence to marshal an argument. This stands in contrast to a conceivable alternative: that of enacting 'critical thinking' as a more loosely defined *disposition*, and designing a course that seeks to cultivate more tacit development through exposure and experience over time. It contrasts also with, for instance, critical discussions of an Academic Literacies approach, which tends instead to focus less on text-based approaches and more on developing social relations to knowledge and to 'developing a feel' for disciplinary writing and voice (e.g. Lockett, 2016; Wingate & Tribble, 2012).

Consonant with the seminal genre mapping working of Nesi & Gardner (2012), the essay was seen to be the most prevalent genre taught and practised on the course. This reflects the dominant assignment type in receiving departments in this particular institutional context. While not a focus for analysis or discussion in this chapter, it is worth noting that even science departments have requested that their students write discursive essays on this programme. Academic staff in Mathematics, Engineering and Chemistry, for instance, provide essay questions and starter reader lists in the same way as staff from more prototypically 'essayist' disciplines, such as Business and Education. Such differences between what research literature might suggest EAP students need given their target disciplines (e.g. Hyland, 2004) and what is desired and valued in institutional enactments of practice point to the potential importance of localised and emic understandings of EAP.

The relative strengths of epistemic and social relations to curricular knowledge were seen not to remain constant across the three months of the pre-sessional.

Strengthening of the epistemic relation (ER↑), in particular, can be seen for certain disciplinary threads. Curricular and assessment threads for Law and TESOL/Applied Linguistics were taken as micro cases to exemplify these shifts over course time. The pre-sessional course is, furthermore, not singularly specialised. Important internal variation can be seen, for instance in differential valourising of autonomy development. Brief analysis and discussion revealed an underpinning knower code for this area of the programme (ER–, SR+). Student choice, pace and personal paths to (optional) development work are valued over designated ways of practising. In other words, social relations to curricular knowledge are emphasised over epistemic relations. This conflicts slightly with the highlighting and espoused importance of this area of student development seen in the opening pages of each coursebook.

These findings provide insights into the *form* of EAP enacted in the research context. This begins to nuance the sometimes dichotomous nature of distinctions made in the professional and research literature between *English for General Academic Purposes* (EGAP) and *English for Specific Academic Purposes* (ESAP) (e.g. Jordan, 1997; Hyland, 2002; Hyland, 2016). Analysis demonstrated that the local realisation of EAP in this research context is not easily characterisable as *either* EGAP *or* ESAP. The programme moves between strengths of specificity over time, and in different ways for different subject specialisms. Enactment of LCT Specialisation thus enables moving from typological thinking to *topological* thinking (Maton, 2014, p. 67). An LCT lens also supplements a purely linguistic analysis of specificity, by analytically distinguishing knowledge and knowers (Maton, 2014), and thus enabling an articulation of the form taken by curricular knowledge itself.

The relatively strong Framing of selection, sequencing and pacing of the EAP writing curriculum creates a tight programme. Assessment is strongly linked to curriculum threads, and it was argued that this created strong external Framing that was likely to exert a shaping force on individual lesson enactment. Tight pacing of task setting and assignment submission was interpreted as potentially 'locking' teachers into realising practices that enables successful achievement of the assessment tasks. In terms of notions of a 'course cosmology' (after Maton, 2014), introduced in chapter 4, such Framing also places fairly strong boundaries around what is construed as legitimate curricular and pedagogical practice in this context. With respect to the espoused

programme, curriculum structuring itself can thus be seen to enact the values enshrined in the 'Principles of Course Design' document (cf. section 4.2.2).

One of Basil Bernstein's key contributions to the sociology of education was to highlight that curriculum and pedagogy are not neutral relays for the transmission of academic knowledge (Bernstein, 1990; Maton, 2014; Singh, 2002). By analytically distinguishing knowledge from how that knowledge can be taught and known, Bernstein showed that recontextualisation decisions structure content in particular ways. This exerts, in turn, structuring effects on the forms of learning made possible and on the 'specialisation of consciousness' (Bernstein, 2000; Christie, 2005). The organising principles made visible in the pre-sessional programme can thus be interpreted as shaping pedagogical potential and as exerting an influence on classroom enactment. That is unless teachers are willing to subvert the code, or do not have the professional expertise to both recognise and realise what is being asked of them.

It is to a focus on recontextualisation practices into lesson design and delivery that I turn next. As in the transition from chapter 4 to 5, analysis and results here invite new questions for interrogating these specifics of lesson enactment and what teachers do with the pedagogic materials. For example, how does the structuring of mediating content and task sequences realise the specialisation code evident in the course macro-structure? What forms of teacher practice serve to enact the relatively strong epistemic relations to curricular knowledge? Do teachers make pedagogical decisions that perhaps realise a *shift* in the structuring principles evident on the page? And what effect, if any, might such recontextualisation practices have for student learning?

## CHAPTER SIX

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### OF PAGE & PEDAGOGY: ENACTING AN EAP CURRICULUM

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#### 6.1. Introduction

Analysis in the previous chapter provided insights into the question of what *forms* of curriculum are enabled by the selection, sequencing and pacing of texts and tasks. LCT Specialisation allowed seeing an orientation to knowledge and to particular knowledge practices, but not the *structuring* of those practices as enacted *logogenetically* over curriculum time. Specialisation enabled making visible the organising principles shaping the valued goals of the curriculum and the assessments. However, another lens is needed to enable seeing the form taken by the meaning-making practices that serve to realise course objectives. This chapter introduces a second dimension of Legitimation Code Theory, Semantics, to provide this lens.

One of Bernstein's key contributions was to problematise the idea that educational knowledge is simply 'transmitted' via curriculum and via pedagogy. Knowledge is selectively recontextualised as it passes from one field of practice to another, and may thereby be reshaped and reconfigured in potentially significant ways (Singh, 2002). LCT Semantics subsumes and extends Bernstein's work on knowledge structures (Maton, 2014) to enable exploring the form(s) that result from such recontextualisation, and how these unfold over curricular or class time (cf. chapter 3). This chapter draws particularly on the concept of *semantic gravity* to analyse the organising principles underpinning lesson design and teaching practices on the pre-sessional programme.

Section 6.2 provides a summary recap of semantic gravity as enacted for this study. I explore and illustrate the range of curricular meanings seen on the pre-sessional, thereby also describing the *semantic range* of the course. Semantic gravity was enacted to embrace both analysis of lessons on the page and as realised through classroom practice. This section thus lays the foundations for subsequent analysis and discussion.

Section 6.3 examines the structuring of lessons as they are presented in the pre-sessional coursebooks. This enables a view into the principles underpinning materials design at the more micro-level, and thus the structuring of *pedagogic potential*, as conceived and enacted by the course designers. Section 6.4 then looks briefly at the mechanisms in the wider *coursenetwork* (after Fenwick & Edwards, 2010) that function to inform and shape how this pedagogic potential manifests in the classroom. Finally, section 6.5 provides illustrative analysis of teacher recontextualisation practices at the chalkface, highlighting examples of what appear to be 'signature practices' among practitioners. The chapter thus enables making visible further generative principles structuring the local enactment of EAP in this context.

## **6.2. Semantic Gravity, Range and Transfer of Learning**

The Legitimation Code Theory concept of semantic gravity enables conceptualising, describing and analysing the relative context dependency of knowledge practices (Maton, 2014, pp. 106–124). For my study, this provided a means for exploring the structuring principles of meaning-making in the pre-sessional curriculum. The enactment of the concept for my research was described in some detail in chapter 3. Discussion included an account of how an *external language of description* (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 131–141) was developed. This 'translation device' (Maton, 2014, p. 113) enabled a consistent and transparent means of moving between theory and data.

To review the LCT concept briefly, practices that depend on their context for their meaning are said to exhibit stronger semantic gravity (SG+). Weaker semantic gravity (SG–) is characterised by practices that depend less on their "...social or symbolic context of acquisition or use" (Maton, 2014, p. 110). Semantic gravity is construed as a *continuum* of relative strengths, enabling nuanced, non-binary analysis of variation,

both within practices and over time. Analysis of pre-sessional lessons on the page, and also as realised by teachers in pedagogy, led to division of the SG continuum into four heuristic strengths (SG++; SG+; SG– and SG—). Extensive dialogue between the theory and the data, shuttling back and forth between analyses of curriculum, classroom and concepts, enabled refining the evolving translation device. A point was eventually reached where all the data analysed could be described in terms of semantic gravity as enacted for this research.

Reflecting discussions of both the espoused curriculum in chapter 4 and the enacted course threads in chapter 5, a 'conceptual curriculum' was observed at the micro-level of lessons and task sequences. Rebecca and Phil referred to these 'core concepts' a number of times during our interviews, and at one point I asked for details:

- Rebecca: The idea for August was that we needed to go conceptually very hard-core. You know, we started off–, you can't do anything unless the concepts are in place. So what we did in August very clearly was put those concepts up. It's almost like putting up a scaffolding, you're going to try and build something, lay the foundations first- the scaffolding.
- Researcher: By those concepts you mean?
- Rebecca: You mean [sic] the idea of thesis statement; the idea of what an essay actually is for and about; how to draw–, the role of reading and how are you going to draw that into your essay; what an argument looks like; what academic language might be or not be and how you need to start unpacking that, referencing them; plagiarism as a concept.
- Phil: It struck me over the past year of doing materials review that we have a particularly conceptual language. We have a particular set of concepts that we rely on very heavily like thesis statement, like topic question position, like the I-shaped paragraph and so on and yes, the idea as I understood it, August was always to establish that foundation of those concepts, present those, teach those and use that as a basis on which to set students off doing their longer, more extended, more autonomous bits of work and September was really devoted more to that, isn't it?

(Course designer interview 1, 9:44–10:59)

As discussed in the previous chapter, the designers went on to talk about how they then stretched the August curriculum back into July, introducing core concepts earlier and bringing in the new, mini-managed essay assignment. A clear sense emerges from the exchange above that explicit understanding of 'concepts' was central to the designers' goals for learners. It is pertinent, for example, that Rebecca suggests "...you can't do anything unless the concepts are in place" and that she sees these course

concepts acting as "foundations" or "scaffolding". Materials are designed around the idea that student development in academic speaking and writing builds, at least partly, in relation to awareness of higher-order abstractions, such as research ethics, argumentation and writer voice.

Greater levels of abstraction were observed in certain readings assigned to students, particularly in August's managed essay project and in September's extended essay. However, the LCT concept of semantic gravity was enacted in this study for 'the EAP curriculum', rather than for the content of the academic texts and model essays used to mediate that curriculum. The weakest value of semantic gravity, SG— ('SG double-minus') was therefore assigned to areas of lesson materials and teaching practices dealing with the higher-order concepts exemplified above. In the August lesson *Writing: Taking a Critical Position (Managed Essay)*, for example, students are asked to discuss questions such as:

To what extent is this a piece of **critical writing**?

Consider the title of your managed essay. What does it mean to **take a critical position** in this essay? What **type of approach to essay writing** will you use?

Based on the reading you have done what are the **possible positions** you could take in your essay?

(August coursebook, pp. 159–163. Emphasis added)

Such tasks are common throughout the three months of the programme, and further illustrations are given in the section below. The prevalence of this conceptual level in course documentation, designer thinking, and materials enactment suggests that this is something of a 'signature feature' in the pre-sessional programme studied for this research. It is also one more indication of the knowledge code orientation (ER+, SR–) of the course, i.e. the focus on explicit (EAP curricular) knowledge and control over that knowledge, rather than socialisation into more tacit understandings only through practice. This view is reinforced by another short exchange between the course designers, as they reflect discursively together on the cumulative progression in the pre-sessional over the three months of the programme:

Rebecca: By the end of July, **I want them to be conceptually aware and process aware, so, they've been introduced to key concepts and**



**processes, and be starting to have a go at producing them**, but still have quite a lot of confusion, still have the production, maybe be a bit rough. Do you know what I mean? By the end of August, I want them to be able to be producing reasonably fluently. They've done their managed essay. And by September, I would like them to be producing fluently what we teach them, the limits of what we teach them, **but starting to question it, starting to pull it apart**. That would be my—how I think about it. I would like them—

Phil: I like that, yeah.

Rebecca: **Conceptually aware**, producing reasonably, producing pretty well in our own narrow pre-sessional terms, **but starting to ask questions about that**.

Phil: **I like the idea that by the end of September they might be able to reach a sort of reflexive meta-level of being able to turn the tools we've given them back against us**.

[...]

(Course designer interview 2, 8:23–9:17. Emphasis added.)

This signature feature, pushing classroom discussion up into more abstract discussion of academic practices, may be relatively unfamiliar for international students whose English language learning to date has focused on sentence-level grammar and IELTS test-taking. Indeed, anecdotally, this kind of comment and feedback is often heard from course participants. I return to the potential effects for learning of SG— – forms of content shortly.

Where EAP core concepts provide the weakest observed strengths of semantic gravity, it is the grounded opportunities for student practice and engagement with these concepts that provide the strongest. At this other pole of enacted values for this research study, SG++ ('SG double-plus') practices are characterised by meaning-making that is situated in the here-and-now of the classroom. These comprise, primarily, spoken and written student tasks, either as suggested on the page or as realised by teachers in pedagogy. SG++ practices are also seen when, for instance, a teacher refers to texts or tasks in the students' coursebooks:

Okay, and if we stay with the fourth [text in your supplementary Law reading pack] [...] what's the name of the journal?

(Marco, *Reading Long Texts*, 49:16–49:27)

Tasks and student opportunities for practice are threaded throughout the pre-sessional materials, forming a core around which associated input and texts tend to orient. Some of these will be illustrated in the next section. The importance of what students *do* in classes emerged in the interviews with the course designers. In describing the process of writing a key lesson in July's mini-managed essay thread, for instance, Rebecca recounted that:

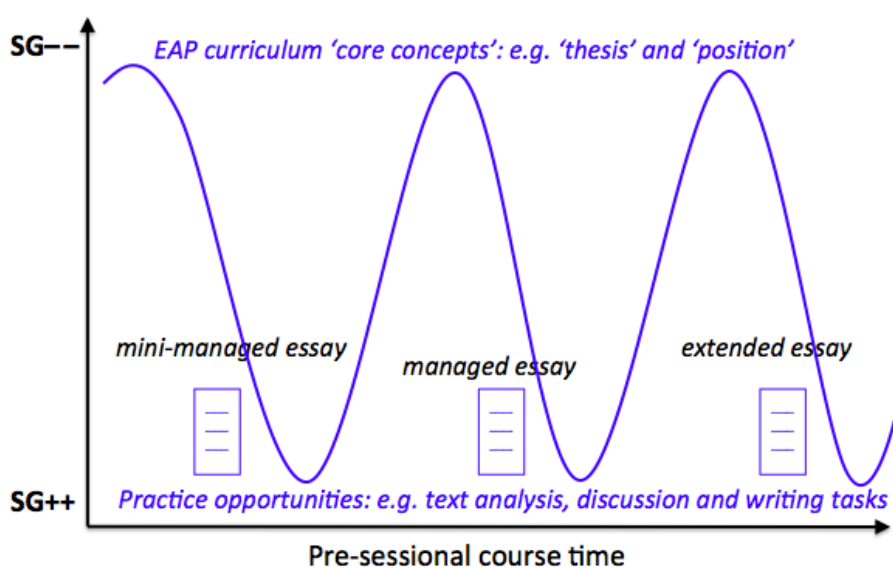
Basically I just had to take [the lesson] and do what we always do which is to think about what do we want students to think, **what do we want students to do in the lesson and then what do we want students to apply this to**. So essentially that lesson you think through what's its purpose in the curriculum, **what do we need students to be able to do at the end of this lesson** and then that dictates what you do [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 26:22–26:40)

The greatest strength of semantic gravity in this study thus captures the practices where students are provided with opportunities to engage actively with EAP curriculum concepts and teaching focuses, such as through in-class reading and writing tasks. In the analyses that appear later in this chapter, this provides a means for distinguishing task-based sequences where students are 'learning to' from stretches of classroom practice where students may instead be 'learning about'. Starting from SG++ territory as an orienting point, therefore, and as discussed in chapter 3, the enactment of semantic gravity in this study can be captured by the idea of metaphorical 'distance' from contextualised practice of target concepts in the EAP curriculum. To weaken semantic gravity is thus to decontextualise these concepts from their enactment in spoken or written practice.

Bringing the strongest and weakest values of SG together enables theorising how cumulative learning may be enabled over time on the pre-sessional. The relatively weak semantic gravity of the more abstract 'learning objects' on the pre-sessional mean that these concepts are not bound by particular social or symbolic (i.e. linguistic / textual) contexts. The concepts thus have the potential to *cross* contexts. The spiral curriculum structure observed in the previous chapter can be interpreted as offering a series of new contexts for the grounding and enacting of the conceptual curriculum in cumulative opportunities to write. This was seen to start with July's mini-managed essay thread and culminate in September's extended essay project, but also includes other interim tasks and formative assessments not formally analysed in this thesis.

Maton and others have suggested that it is the relative shifts 'up' and 'down' in the context dependency of curricular knowledge practices that may be needed for transfer of learning to occur (Clarence, 2014; Maton, 2014; Macnaught et al., 2013; and after Salomon & Perkins, 1989). The progression across course threads seen in chapter 5 can be thus be further theorised through the lens of semantic gravity. This can be heuristically profiled over course time as a *semantic gravity wave* (Maton, 2014; Macnaught et al., 2013)), providing a visual representation of another structuring principle underpinning the local enactment of EAP on this pre-sessional programme:



**Figure 6.1: Heuristic shifts in semantic gravity over EAP course time**

Core EAP concepts are introduced through lessons in the principal curriculum threads, but also in certain key surrounding lessons. As will be illustrated shortly, entry points into lessons tend to start high (SG-- ) and this is captured heuristically for the whole course in the diagram above. Each major assessment at the end of each month can be theorised as serving two functions. Firstly, essay tasks serve to strengthen semantic gravity (SG↑), grounding 'the abstract' via concrete opportunities to enact concepts and principles in writing. Secondly, each assessment comprises a different question, different source texts and increasing levels of challenge. This requires *differently* grounding the concepts for each essay. Tasks across the programme thus are not simply repetitions. The cumulative variation can be seen to enable, in principle, both a

richer understanding of the core concepts and increasing ability to demonstrate those concepts in practice. In LCT Semantics terms, this occurs via the weakening of semantic gravity (SG↓), e.g. through feedback on assessments, recycling of concepts and connections to new concepts, and then through subsequent re-strengthening of semantic gravity (SG↑) in new contexts of practice. These waves of practice may enable forms of understanding that, by virtue of not being tied to a single context of application, are relatively flexible and thus potentially transferable to analogous tasks beyond the pre-sessional programme.

By depicting movements in semantic gravity over course time, however, figure 6.1 obscures the 'micro-waves' that are likely to occur at the level of individual lessons and classes as enacted between teachers and students. Sections 6.3 and 6.4 below provide some *zoomed-in* illustrations of profiling at this more granular level. The macro-profile above nevertheless offers a visual representation of how the three major assessment threads and tasks may work *together* to produce the forms of learning espoused in the early pages of the pre-sessional coursebooks (cf. chapter 4).

The *contextual* (SG++) and *conceptual* (SG--) forms of meaning-making discussed so far provide the two 'poles' of semantic gravity as enacted in this research. Other forms were observed between these two strengths during data analysis, however, leading eventually to the four-level translation device described in chapter 3 (and reproduced at the end of this section). Generalisations over (e.g.) academic practices, curricular tasks and student expectations were interpreted as being unbound to particular contexts, and thus as exhibiting relatively weak semantic gravity. Instances from the pages of the pre-sessional include student discussion questions such as:

How is an academic presentation different from other kinds of presentation (for example, a business presentation, a job interview presentation or a language learning presentation)?

('Speaking: Introduction to the Presentation'. July coursebook, p. 190)

In September, a lesson entitled *Beliefs about Academic Writing* begins with the task:

**Which of these statements do you agree with? Discuss them in groups.**

1. Academic sentences need to be long. Short sentences are bad.
2. Academic sentences need to be grammatically complex. Sentences with simple grammar are bad.
3. You should never use the word 'I' in academic writing.
4. The passive voice ("the essay was written by the student") is suitable for academic writing. The active voice ("the student wrote the essay") is not. Always use the passive voice.
5. You should use linking words and phrases ("however", "as a result", etc.) as often as possible. Ideally, you should use at least one of these phrases in every sentence.
6. You should never repeat the same word twice in an essay, because this makes your writing style boring and repetitive.

(*'Beliefs about Academic Writing'*. September coursebook, p. 54)

Such content was analysed as representing a form of meaning-making less 'abstract' than the curriculum concepts examined above (SG--), however, and was therefore coded as SG-. As exemplified later, the added division within relatively context-unbound curricular meanings (SG- / SG--) allowed seeing the relative *semantic range* of different lessons. This enabled making visible, for instance, the fact that not all lessons-as-designed 'reach as high' as others.

Looking finally at the stronger end of the semantic gravity continuum, a different form of context-dependent meaning-making was seen to the opportunities for practice (SG++) described above. This was characterised by curricular or teacher reference to what might be described as 'the academic everyday', i.e. the grounded particulars of university life. Given that such meanings are dependent on a defined social context but are not of the here-and-now, these were coded with the relatively weaker strength of SG+ (cf. chapter 3 for details of this process). One example occurs in an optional self-study session in the September coursebook. Students are encouraged to find out more about the particulars of the future academic department<sup>34</sup>:

Once you've submitted your first draft, in addition to reading for the next timed writing, you also might like to focus on finding out about your future course in your department.

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<sup>34</sup> In the actual lesson on the page, there is space after each of the questions listed, such that students can fill in details for each area.

Try to answer the following questions about your course. Use your department's website to find the information.

1. What is the full name of your department?
2. Where is the main office of your department?
3. What is the full name of your course?
4. How will your course be assessed?
5. When is your first assessment? What kind of assessment is it?
6. Is a Student Handbook for your department available online?

(‘Self-Study: Learning Future (1)’. September coursebook, pp. 41–42)

Such instances in the pages of the pre-sessional materials are rare, however. Similar written content tends instead to offer more generalised forms of the kind presented above and coded as SG–. Instances as they relate to the ‘everyday’ of students’ future departments are more prevalent in teachers’ classroom recontextualisation. During Phil’s realisation of the lesson on noun phrases in the final week of July, for example, he explains to his class that:

In many academic departments in the university, let’s say the deadline is 9 o’clock on Wednesday, if you hand it in at 5 past 9, you can only score a maximum of 50%. That’s quite normal in the university. However, you guys are all going to the business school and it is even tougher. In the business school, if you hand in your assignment 1 minute after the deadline, you will fail. It doesn’t matter if there was a problem with the printer, if there’s a problem with the computer, it doesn’t matter about any problems; they will fail you if it’s one minute after 9 o’clock. And because the business school says that, we need to be very tough about deadlines as well. When it comes to Wednesday, please be here at 5 minutes to 9 with your essay ready in your hands [...]

(Phil, *Grammar: Noun Phrases*, 21:28–22.26)

This form of input, which may also become a short discussion with the class, provides important local insights for students, and can be seen as facet of the enacted EAP curriculum itself. While usually extralinguistic in nature, this form of discussion can serve to connect work in the immediate pre-sessional context to students’ future lives and practices in their academic departments. Phil makes an explicit link between present and future contexts in the example above, explaining that rules and expectations for assignment hand-ins on the pre-sessional derive from those of the university.

This emerged as an interesting feature and pattern across all teachers studied for my research, and I return to this in section 6.4.3. For now, I note simply that it was the relational analysis across both page and pedagogy that enabled this strength of semantic gravity to emerge as worthy of a distinct 'level' of its own. I could easily have missed it or overlooked its significance had I only profiled the lessons as they appear in the coursebook. The analysis reveals that the localised EAP curriculum can be seen to extend down below Bernstein's vertical discourse, into the realm of the academic everyday<sup>35</sup>. This tends not be visible in field-of-production work in EAP. As summarised in the review of the research landscape in chapter 2, focuses are predominantly linguistic (textual and corpus-based). Bottom-up analysis of what actually happens in a localised programme of EAP study demonstrates that other forms of curricular knowledge may also be recontextualised for student learning during individual teachers' creative enactment of programme materials.

In summary, extensive analysis across pedagogical materials and videos of teachers lifting these materials off the page at point of need enabled enacting the concept of semantic gravity for this research. The discussion above exemplifies the translation device set out in chapter 3, but also provides an account of its development. While it is entirely possible that I have missed course practices that might take a form not described here, the enactment of SG explored in this section enabled a nuanced account of all data that I examined. Semantic gravity analysis allowed avoiding a simplistic, binary reading of curriculum meaning-making as *either* 'abstract' *or* 'concrete' / 'conceptual' *or* 'contextual', revealing instead a *range* of enacted practices. This enables making visible areas of the EAP curriculum that are rarely touched upon in the literature, such as grounded insights into the local practices of the institution.

Taking a step back and construing the strengths of SG described as a continuum (Maton, 2014, p. 110), the analysis makes visible the *semantic range* of this EAP programme. This allows profiling, in heuristic terms, the 'whatness' of the course. The full external language of description that emerged, introduced first in chapter 3, is repeated below for convenience as figure 6.2, providing also a summary condensing of the discussion in this section.

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<sup>35</sup> I use this term consciously, rather than Bernstein's *horizontal discourse* (Bernstein, 2000). The two may or may not overlap. LCT Semantics dissolves the dichotomy, turning a typological distinction into a topological continuum.

<b>Semantic Gravity (SG)</b>		
	<b>Practices in the curriculum materials or in teacher discourse exhibit an emphasis on:</b>	<b>Examples from the data:</b>
SG--	Abstract concepts, such as metalinguistic discussion or understanding of aspects of language and text structure.	'Consider the title of your managed essay. What does it mean to take a critical position in this essay? What type of approach to essay writing will you use?' (August coursebook, p. 163)
SG-	Generic comments or generalisations over EAP curriculum practices.	'How is an academic presentation different from other kinds of presentation (for example, a business presentation, a job interview presentation or a language learning presentation)?' (July coursebook, p. 190)
SG+	EAP or university practices that are localised in social or symbolic time / space.	'How will your course be assessed? When is your first assessment? What kind of assessment is it? Is a Student Handbook for your department available online?' (September coursebook, pp. 41–42)
SG++	Experience of and/or practice in EAP curriculum target discourse.	'Underline all the aspects of the paragraph you think are inappropriate. Rewrite the paragraph so that it demonstrates a more academic style' (July coursebook, p. 43)

**Figure 6.2: The enactment of semantic gravity for this study**

Using this translation device and the related concepts of semantic range, strengthening and weakening of semantic gravity, and the semantic gravity wave, I move next to illustrative exploration of the principles structuring lesson-level materials design.

### **6.3. Exploring Lesson *Design*: Practices on the Page**

#### **6.3.1. Illustrative Analysis: 'Thinking about Academic Writing'**

Analysis at lesson level was informed by the earlier stages of research and by comments and insights from the course designers. Three broad categories of lessons were identified to inform closer exploration. These were 1) the lessons in the main curriculum threads; 2) other 'core concepts' lessons referred to by Rebecca / Phil; and 3) the stand-alone lessons not explicitly tied to course threads. Some clear patterns and contrasts emerged from this closer analysis.



I begin the illustrative discussion here by profiling a key lesson in the twelve-week pre-session, *Thinking about Academic Writing* (July coursebook, pp. 39–48). This is the opening lesson in July and was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, it introduces themes and task types that run through the whole course. Secondly, this lesson also appears early in both the eight-week and four-week programmes. It can therefore be seen as an important 'tool' in the overall pre-session curricular repertoire. The two-stage analysis of lesson components is presented below as Table 6.1. Reading from left to right, the figure shows the lesson material itself, a summary conceptualising of each stage, and a theorising of each stage as strengths of semantic gravity<sup>36</sup>.

Looking to the lesson text (Table 6.1, below, left-hand column), the aims that preface the materials provide a sense of what the designers perceive to be the principal outcomes for the session. These orient students to the main focuses, but may also serve to guide teacher planning in relation to selection, sequencing and pacing decisions. The aims suggest the lesson will focus on general insights into academic writing style (SG–) and also provide opportunities for practice (SG++). This is indeed borne out by what follows. For example, material rarely moves up into more abstract, SG double-minus territory.

Lesson Text <sup>37</sup>	Conceptualisation	Theorisation: Semantic Gravity
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <p><b>Writing: Thinking about 'Academic' Writing</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>Lesson aims:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To become aware of the key features of good British academic writing style.</li> <li>• To learn to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate styles for academic writing.</li> <li>• To practise writing in an academic style.</li> </ul> </div> <p>(continued overleaf...)</p>	<p>Aims: generalisations over norms of 'writing style'</p> <p>Suggests also focus on practice</p>	<p>(SG–)</p> <p>(SG++)</p>

<sup>36</sup> A discussion of this theorisation process was given in chapter 3

<sup>37</sup> The boxes into which students take notes, e.g. in tasks 2-4, have been shrunk in the interest of saving space here. The notes box for task 5 has been deleted for the same reason. The exemplar texts, 'essay A' and 'essay B' appear at the end of the lesson with a page devoted to each. Only the opening paragraph of the each is included here.

Lesson Text (cont.)	Conceptualisation	Theorisation: Semantic Gravity															
<p>1. Think about your English language learning experience. Have you been taught by native or non-native speakers? Do you think one is better than the other?</p> <p>2. Consider essay A and answer the questions in the table below.</p> <p>3. Consider essay B and answer the questions in the table below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="236 573 927 887"> <thead> <tr> <th>Question</th> <th>Essay A</th> <th>Essay B</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>What is the essay question?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>What is the writer's overall opinion or answer to the essay question? Where can you find this?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>How does the writer support their overall position? What types of evidence or examples do they give?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>What did the writer read / listen to in order to write the essay?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Question	Essay A	Essay B	What is the essay question?			What is the writer's overall opinion or answer to the essay question? Where can you find this?			How does the writer support their overall position? What types of evidence or examples do they give?			What did the writer read / listen to in order to write the essay?			<p>Discussion task</p> <p>Analysis tasks:</p> <p>Simple identification</p> <p>Summarising identification</p> <p>Summarising identification</p> <p>Simpler identification</p>	<p>SG++</p> <p>SG+</p> <p>SG-</p> <p>SG-</p> <p>SG+</p>
Question	Essay A	Essay B															
What is the essay question?																	
What is the writer's overall opinion or answer to the essay question? Where can you find this?																	
How does the writer support their overall position? What types of evidence or examples do they give?																	
What did the writer read / listen to in order to write the essay?																	
<p>4. Now think about the use of language in both essays.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="236 958 927 1301"> <thead> <tr> <th>Question</th> <th>Essay A</th> <th>Essay B</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>How and when does the writer give their opinion (think about specific language/phrases)?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>How does the writer indicate <i>where</i> information / evidence / examples are from?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>How does the writer make sure ideas are easy to follow? Think about <i>language</i> and about <i>organisation</i>.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>How 'formal' is the use of vocabulary? Give specific examples.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Question	Essay A	Essay B	How and when does the writer give their opinion (think about specific language/phrases)?			How does the writer indicate <i>where</i> information / evidence / examples are from?			How does the writer make sure ideas are easy to follow? Think about <i>language</i> and about <i>organisation</i> .			How 'formal' is the use of vocabulary? Give specific examples.			<p>Focusing on language choices...</p> <p>Summarising identification + egs</p> <p>Summarising identification</p> <p>More abstract. Summarising identification</p> <p>Generalising summary + egs</p>	<p>SG-(↑)</p> <p>SG-</p> <p>SG-(-)</p> <p>SG-(↑)</p>
Question	Essay A	Essay B															
How and when does the writer give their opinion (think about specific language/phrases)?																	
How does the writer indicate <i>where</i> information / evidence / examples are from?																	
How does the writer make sure ideas are easy to follow? Think about <i>language</i> and about <i>organisation</i> .																	
How 'formal' is the use of vocabulary? Give specific examples.																	
<p>5. Which essay represents 'real' academic writing? Based on the tables above what do you understand as the key differences between writing for an English language exam (for example IELTS) and writing for an academic department at Durham University? Think about the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation/structure</li> <li>• Use of source materials/research</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Punctuation</li> </ul>	<p>Summary generalisation over identified features of exemplar essays</p>	<p>SG-</p>															
<p>6. Read the following short paragraph. What do you think about the style of the paragraph?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underline all the aspects of the paragraph you think are inappropriate.</li> <li>• Re-write the paragraph so that it demonstrates a more academic style.</li> </ul> <p><i>Another problem with native speaker teachers is that their teaching methods are sometimes really weird for international students. I had a native-speaker teacher who always wanted us to work in pairs or discuss stuff in groups- totally different to what I'd done at school and although it was quite good fun it did make me really uncomfortable at first. My teacher always wanted us to correct ourselves- giving the answer wasn't really her style. At first this was pretty odd and I was a bit confused but I can see that she really wanted us to learn for ourselves and it wasn't that she didn't know the answer!</i></p> <p>(continued overleaf...)</p>	<p>Application of learning task...</p> <p>Identification</p> <p>Written production task</p>	<p>SG++</p> <p>SG++</p>															

Lesson Text (cont.)	Conceptualisation	Theorisation: Semantic Gravity
<p><b>Essay A: Does English need to be taught by Native Speakers?</b></p> <p>As everyone knows, English has become the language of the world and who can best teach English is a hot topic. Although some people say that English is best taught by native speakers it's clear that the coin has two sides and that sometimes non-native speakers are better teachers.</p> <p>[...]</p>	<p>Exemplar essay 1:</p> <p>Mediator of analytical work and conceptual areas for discussion</p>	<p>Facilitates student experience and analysis of texts:</p> <p>SG++</p>
<p><b>Essay B: Does English need to be taught by Native Speakers?</b></p> <p>Although the majority of English teachers around the world are non-native speakers (NNSs), research shows that they are widely discriminated against as a result of a bias towards native speakers (NSs) as the ideal English teachers (Selvi, 2010). Historically, native speaker teachers (NSTs) may have been preferred due to their accent (Braine, 1999), but</p> <p>[...]</p>	<p>Exemplar essay 2:</p> <p>Mediator of analytical work and conceptual areas for discussion</p>	<p>Facilitates student experience and analysis of texts:</p> <p>SG++</p>

**Table 6.1: Illustrative semantic gravity analysis of a key pre-sessional lesson**

The lesson begins with a peer discussion task (SG++). Students are asked to consider and evaluate their own experience of being taught English by native and/or non-native speakers. This is one of the rare instances in the pre-sessional coursebooks of tasks that ask students to draw on their own personal experience and beliefs. Seen also in terms LCT Specialisation concepts (cf. chapter 4; chapter 5), therefore, this opening task exhibits relatively strong social relations to knowledge (SR++). The exemplar essays that form the basis for the rest of the lesson focus on the question of how far English should be taught by native speakers. The opening task can thus be seen as facilitating student entry into this content area. It enables students to start from the familiar realm of personal experience, before connecting this to the related but more challenging content of the essays. In English language teaching methodology, drawing on constructivist models of learning, this is often referred to as 'activating schemata' (e.g. Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983. After Bartlett, 1932; Ausubel, 1968)

The rest of the lesson then proceeds through a number of analysis and discussion tasks. These orient around two example essays, which appear at the end of the lesson. The first, 'essay A', is written to look like an IELTS examination style essay (short and

personal anecdote-based). The second, 'essay B', incorporates the kinds of features that will be expected of students over the subsequent weeks of the programme: conceptual content, source-based examples, synthesising comments from across academic readings, in-text citations and a reference list. Tasks 2 and 3 engage students in comparative analysis of the essay content. These also introduce, without metalanguage or formal comment, the central pre-sessional themes of *taking a position* and *drawing on evidence* in support of this position. The former is framed, for instance, in terms of "the writer's overall opinion or answer to the question" (SG-). Task 4 then requires students to focus on the general linguistic features of each text (SG-). Once again, the language of the tasks is given in non-technical terms (SG-), e.g. "how 'formal' is the use of vocabulary". The analogous but more abstract and technicalised notions of 'register', 'cohesion' and 'information structure' come later in the course.

Task 5 asks for articulation of generalised understandings (SG-) of what students have gleaned from tasks 2-4, and can be seen as functioning to provide the summary awareness for task 6. The sixth and final exercise has students evaluate the style of a short written passage and then to re-write it in a more academic style. This can be interpreted as an opportunity to apply the learning that has arisen from the comparative analysis and discussion of essays A and B. In broad terms, therefore, the lesson moves from *recognition* (distinguishing between 'more academic' and 'less academic' features) to *realisation* (the final written task). Within this movement towards student production, a further progression can be seen from *passive realisation* (e.g. identification and underling of "inappropriate" features) to *active realisation* in the re-writing task (Morais & Neves, 2001). This sequencing principle is common throughout lessons in the pre-sessional programme.

Returning once more to LCT Specialisation concepts, the final exercise also provides a good example of the course tendency to exhibit relatively stronger epistemic relations to knowledge. Part of the task wording asks, "What do you think about the style of the paragraph?" Unlike the opening task, however, the intention is that student opinions derive from the agreed knowledge base that emerges over the course of the lesson. This in turn is established in relation to textual evidence and, presumably, to the symbolic sanctioning of student analysis by the teacher. In task 1, students must draw on personal experience and belief (SG++); in task 6, students must draw on analytical

awareness, linguistic features and the shared knowledge established over the previous exercises (ER+). Indeed, all tasks except the first orient towards the 'evidence' of the text and away from the lived experience of learners. This provides an illustration of how the knowledge code suggested in the espoused values of chapter 4, and confirmed in the curriculum threads of chapter 5, is enacted through design decisions at the micro-level of the pedagogical task.

This is a pattern across the programme. Almost without exception, students are asked to provide their opinions based on readings and evidence. This remains a theme both for tasks and for textual input in the course materials. For example, in the lesson *Seminar Skills & Timed Essay 1* (August coursebook, pp. 119–122), one of the key questions the materials indicate students must be able to answer at the end of every discussion seminar is, "What is my own view on the topic and what evidence convinces me?" (p. 122). In a later lesson on avoiding plagiarism through summarising and referencing (August coursebook, pp. 153–158), learners are told:

As an academic writer you need to be able to use other people's ideas to inform your own work and support your position. How can you use other people's ideas but make sure the work is your own?

You use the reading to determine your main argument and then use examples and evidence from the reading to support your main position. Reading is central to the writing process.

(August coursebook, p. 153. Emphasis in the original.)

These extracts provide further illustrations at a micro-level of the ER+ nature of much of the course. Such input can be seen as contributing to the intended acculturation and socialisation into academic ways of thinking and practising. The two examples above provide only recognition and not the means to realise these values, but as has been discussed here and in earlier chapters, multiple opportunities for explicit practice of enacting these values in writing are provided throughout the programme.

More often than not, and in contrast to the personalised discussion of native and non-native English teachers above, the need to 'activate schemata' is largely bypassed (or at least greatly mitigated), by recycling texts throughout the course as mediators for

analysis and key curriculum concepts. The August lesson *Using Reading in Writing: The Managed Essay (2)*, for example, opens with:

Drawing on academic texts in your own work is central to almost all types of academic writing. During the Pre-session course the managed essay is the first time you can put this into practice. This lesson is designed to help you think about the strategies you might use to do this successfully.

Read the extract from Selvi (2010). **This text was used in the essay on native-speaker teachers you read earlier in the course.** Make brief notes.

(August coursebook, p. 113. Emphasis added.)

There are schema-activating type tasks elsewhere, which provide some discussion of a new topic prior to engaging with academic texts on the area. However, these tend to be drawn from texts or academic work already done, rather than from students' own experience. For instance, the lesson introducing the mini-managed essay in July (July coursebook, pp. 84–125) has students discuss what research ethics are prior to reading and analysing a text on the subject. However, the discussion draws on notes that students took in a preparatory lecture. Unlike the knower code task (ER–, SR++) that opens *Thinking about Academic Writing* above, therefore, this exhibits more of an underpinning knowledge code (ER+, SR–). Input, texts and tasks enacting this latter organising principle dominate the local enactment of EAP curricular practices in this pre-session course.

### **6.3.2. Profiles & Patterns: Meaning-Making over Text Time**

Analysis of the task-to-task progression in *Thinking about Academic Writing* can be profiled dynamically over lesson time. This enables tracing a semantic gravity wave to heuristically depict the way meaning-making shifts across the material. Focusing in (after 'warm-up' task 1) on tasks 2 and 3, for example, the movement in meaning-making over text time could be represented as in figure 6.3:

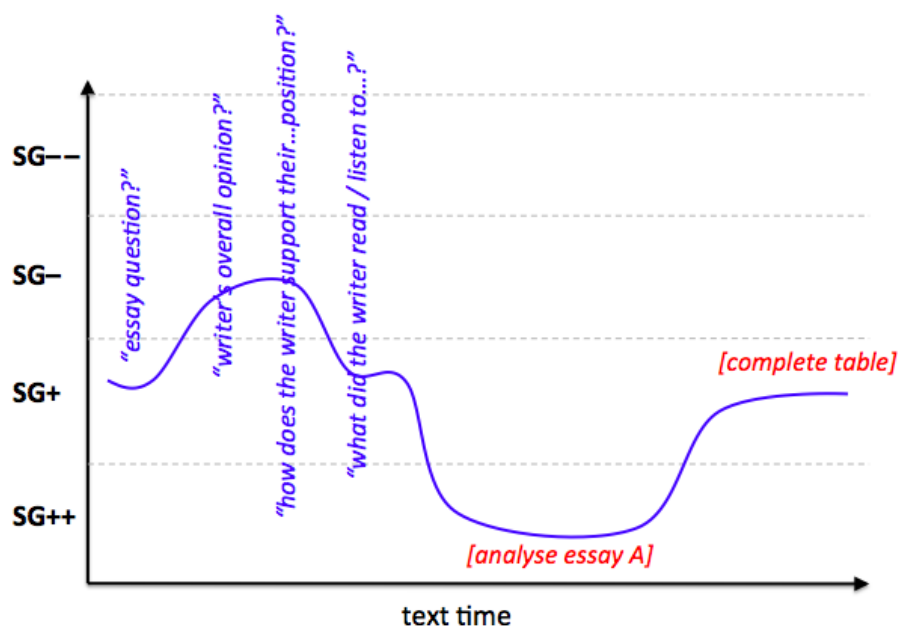


Figure 6.3: SG profile of *Thinking about Academic Writing, task 2 (profile 1)*

Put into words, figure 6.3 depicts the shift in semantic gravity from relatively weaker in the questions (SG+; SG–; SG–; SG+) to relatively stronger, through exploration of the exemplar texts (SG++). Semantic gravity is then weakened again (SG++↓), with the blank boxes in the table requiring selection of specific examples and summary answers to the questions set (SG+). This analysis assumes consideration of all four questions in the table first, before going in search of the answers in 'essay A'. This cycle would then repeat for task 3 and 'essay B'. Strictly speaking, the wording of the question asks students to "consider essay A and [then to] answer the questions in the table below". This would require instead a low entry point for the task sequence (SG++), with students first reading the exemplar texts. However, the placement of the essays at the end of the lesson suggests the designed intention is to engage first with the questions that appear in the table directly below the wording of tasks 2 and 3.

Immediately this demonstrates that there are alternative readings of the structuring principles underpinning this lesson. The layout of the table on the page invites two further alternatives. The first involves working 'horizontally', taking one question and answering it for both essay A and B. This is perhaps pedagogically less likely and may prove rather counter-intuitive for students. However, it exists as one immanent structure in the lesson as designed, and would result in a profile more like figure 6.4:

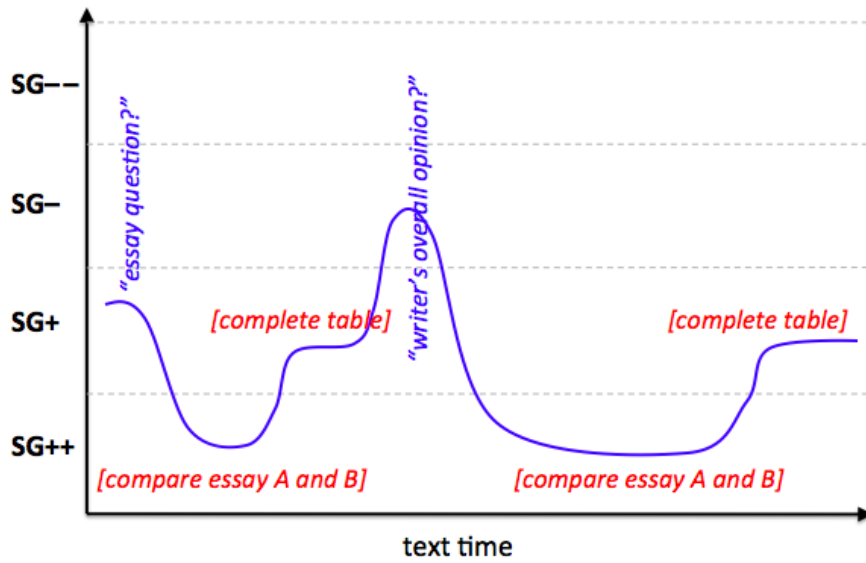


Figure 6.4: SG profile of *Thinking about Academic Writing*, task 2/3 (profile 2)

A third immanent structure involves working 'vertically' within one essay, but to alternate between question and text, pausing between question and analysis to complete each box in the table. This structure would then repeat for task 3 and 'essay B'. Profiling the first of these would give the semantic gravity wave in figure 6.5:

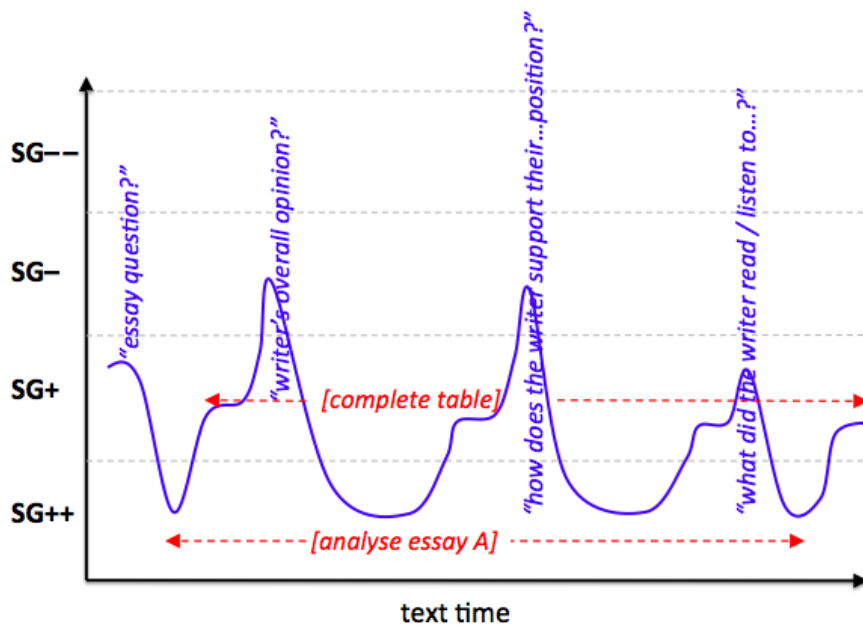


Figure 6.5: SG profile of *Thinking about Academic Writing*, task 2 (profile 3)



With my EAP practitioner hat on, this is the reading of the materials that jumped out first when considering this lesson. If I were teaching the session, it is this configuration that would most likely guide my planning: The tasks are not explicitly comparative and the cognitive demands of the questions suggest working back and forth from question to text would be most feasible. With my researcher hat on, however, this reminds me of the challenges of data representation. It highlights that structural analysis of lessons on the page is not entirely separable from enactment. Some interpretation is thus inevitably involved. The semiotic decisions made by the materials designers to set out texts, tasks and spaces for writing in particular ways mean the materials offer several routes as inherent pedagogic potential.

While perhaps rather demanding for students from the perspective of classroom enactment, the first interpretation (figure 6.3) is closest to what is represented on the page. For the purposes of profiling tasks 2 and 3 within the overall structuring of the lesson, therefore, I will select this first option. In contrast, the wording of task 4 ("now think about the use of language in both essays") suggests more explicitly that a comparison between exemplar texts is intended. For this reason task 4 has been profiled as in figure 6.4, with the two essays being compared for each of the four questions in the table. Task 5 requires summarising learning and implies a discussion of some kind. If there is a task here, however, there is no overt requirement to consult the texts again. The semantic gravity therefore remains relatively weak. Finally, the application-of-learning task strengthens semantic gravity once more, grounding students' learning via the analysis (recognition) and rewrite (realisation) exercises. One plausible structuring of the full lesson can therefore be represented as the semantic gravity profile given below in figure 6.6.

No timings are given in the lesson materials; pacing is thus relatively weakly Framed. In attempting to depict the lesson horizontally over text time, however, the profile diagram above also suggests implicitly, for instance, notional time considering a question vs. notional time spent analysing a text. Decisions over relative 'task weight' (Kirk, 2014) are intended to be suggestive only, and derive from my own practitioner-oriented judgment. This is one area where significant variation may be evident in classroom enactment, as has often been my experience when observing teachers.

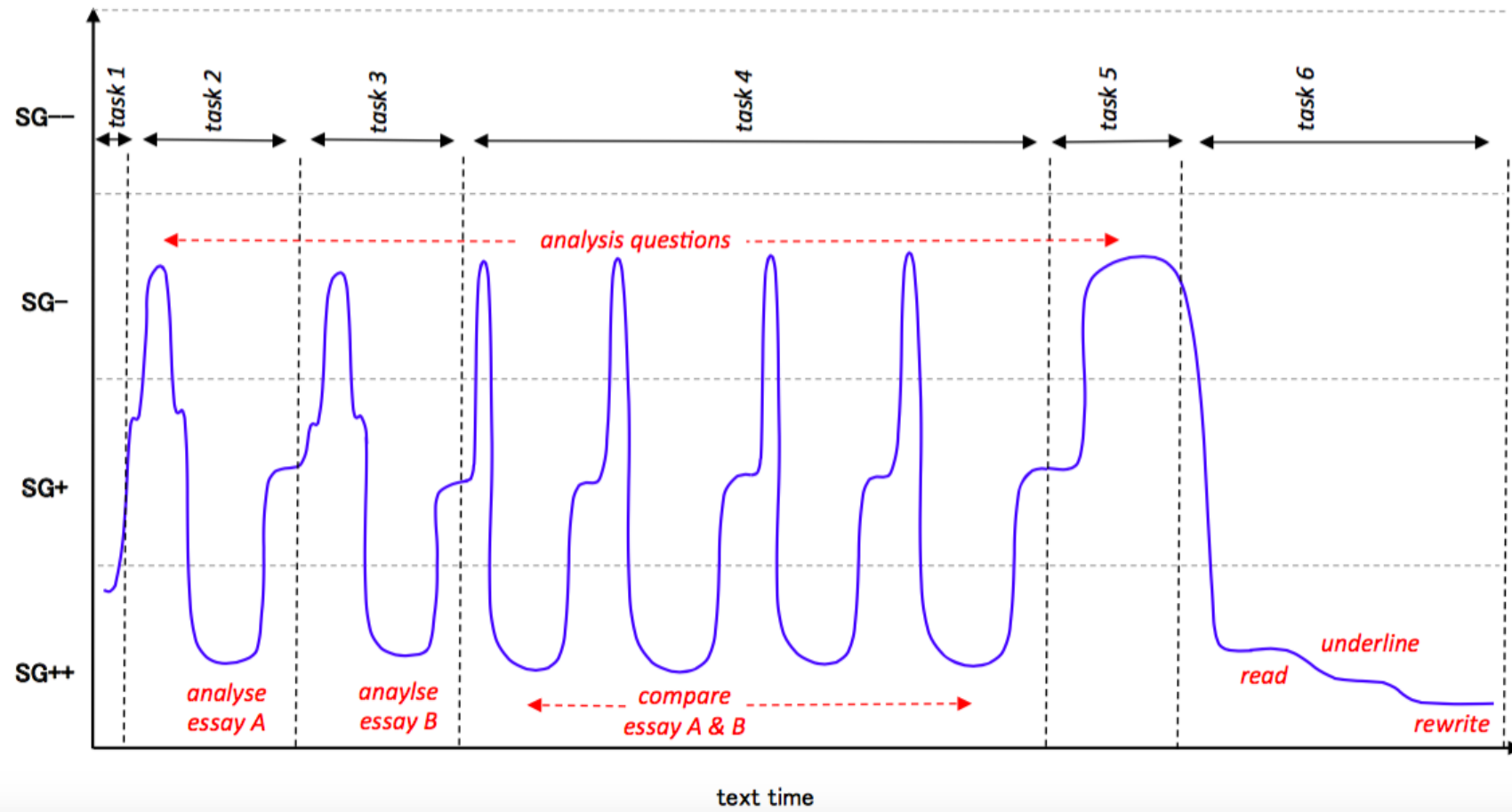


Figure 6.6: Semantic gravity profile for the lesson *Thinking About Academic Writing*

Notwithstanding questions of relative task weight, the analysis makes visible a clear pattern in task-to-task design within this lesson. The micro-sequences tend to proceed from 1) analytical question through 2) textual exploration to 3) (written) response. Tasks start relatively 'high' (SG–), wave down into contextualised analysis of target-like texts (SG++), before waving back up either to identifying tasks (SG+) or to more generalising discussion (SG–). This can be seen in the waves traced and repeated in each of the three semantic gravity profile diagrams.

Interestingly, there are echoes of the organising principles and the profile in figure 6.6 above in the way that Rebecca narrates a lesson in July that introduces the mini-managed essay task for the first time:

Rebecca: [...] now the big thing that they're doing in this lesson, there's lots in this lesson but the main- the beating heart if you like, of this lesson is **deconstructing the actual mini-managed essay**. So [...] the students would have read this whole essay in advance, they've had the lecture and then **what they're doing in this lesson is going through and deconstructing it with our core concepts**. So we've got topic-question-position, we've got identifying a section, working out how the section position relates to that overall position. **So, what this is, is really a "concept-a-thon", so they're applying all of the concepts that they learnt in the previous week to this model with the goal of they're going to have to contribute to this model**. So it's got a double function. One, its massive conceptual recycle and two, it's a getting hold of all of the content and all of the ideas that have actually been introduced to them in the lecture [...]

(Course designer interview 1, 27:27–28:15. Emphasis added.)

While both designers said they were not guided by conscious theoretical principles when writing lessons, there is nevertheless a sense here of explicit decision-making that orients around 'starting high' with weaker semantic gravity, 'waving down' into working with texts and then applying the learning that emerges to a new task.

This semantic structuring, both at the micro-level of the task sequence and at the greater scale of the overall lesson, can be seen enacted across the programme. It is highly prevalent in the materials and is not restricted to lessons that focus on essay writing, occurring in curriculum thread materials as well as in stand-alone sessions. A lesson early in July on notetaking, for instance, has as its lesson aims:

**Lesson aims:**

- To think about the function and importance of note-taking in the essay-writing process
- To see how you might improve your methods of note-taking
- To learn some useful abbreviations and pick up some tips to help with note-taking

**Figure 6.7: Lesson aims for *Reading: Note-Taking* (July coursebook, p. 49)**

The first aim, "to think about the function and importance of note-taking on the essay-writing process", is relatively conceptual and thus relatively weak in semantic gravity (SG–). The lesson itself reflects this, by starting relatively high, with the three discussion questions "why do you take notes?"; "how important is note-taking in academic life?"; and "when you take notes, what method do you normally use?". The materials then 'wave down': Students are asked to read and take notes from one of the readings on research ethics for the mini-managed essay "...in [their] usual style" (p. 49). The following task involves comparing the notes made with those of the teacher, noting differences. Students are asked to reflect on any changes they might make to their own style. The cycle then repeats, with a second text and second round of notetaking. The lesson ends with another comparison and reflection task. These shifts in meaning-making practices over text time can be similarly depicted as a semantic gravity profile:

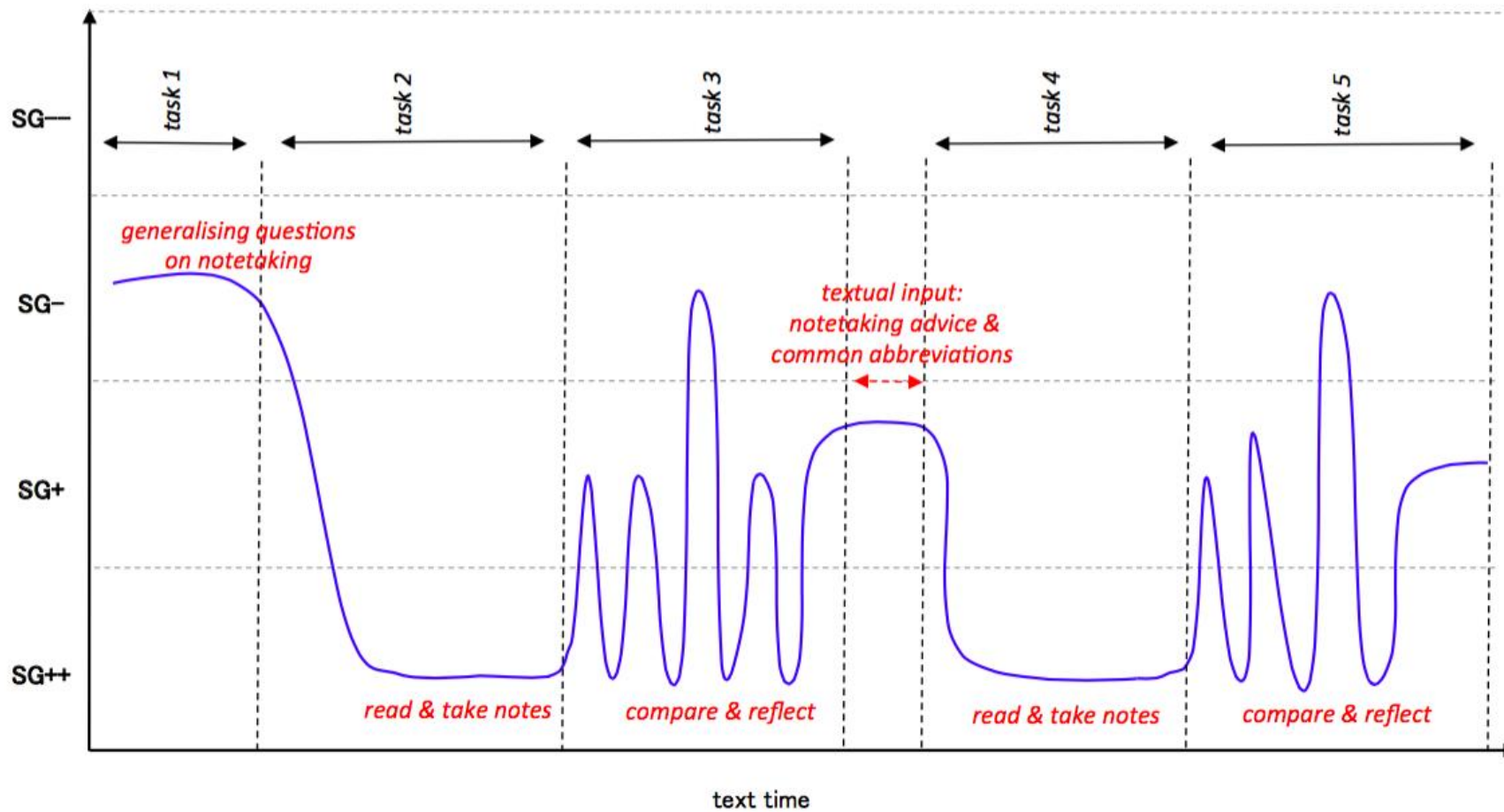


Figure 6.8: SG profile for *Reading: Note-Taking* (July coursebook, pp. 49–51)

Once more this profile highlights the slight blurring of boundaries between curriculum and classroom in attempting to commit structural analysis to the page. In representing task 3 and 5, where students compare their notes with those of their teacher or of classmates, Figure 6.8 depicts the wave up and down from students' own written notes to notional comparison and articulation of this comparison. These shifts in semantic gravity are given heuristically as sometimes relatively stronger (SG+), such as a specific difference is simply identified, and sometimes relatively weaker (SG-), such as expression of a generalised difference in style.

The input that appears between tasks 3 and 4 offers specific advice such as "read the text and make sure you understand the meaning before you write a word" (p. 50, emphasis in the original) and then a list of abbreviations to use, such as *e.g.*, *i.e.*, *max.* and *N.B.* (p. 51). However, unlike most of the essay structure-focused lessons, most of this session appears geared towards students experimenting, reflecting, and developing a personal approach. Indeed the lesson text closes with a final bolded comment underlining that "note-taking is a fundamental academic skill. The Pre-Sessional course is an opportunity to develop your own style..." (p. 51). There is thus some comparatively rare strengthening of social relations to knowledge here (SR↑), with a legitimisation of learners developing their own approach.

While quite different in content and focus, the two lessons *Thinking about Academic Writing* and *Reading: Note-Taking* exhibit similar organising principles. This is made visible with the semantic gravity profiles in Figures 6.6 and 6.8. These principles can also be seen operating in other July lessons, such as *Speaking: Introduction to the Presentation* (pp. 190–196) and *Listening: Lectures in the University Context* (pp. 197–215). In August the pattern can be seen, e.g., in *Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay)* (pp. 75–81) and *Seminar Skills & Seminar Speaking 2: The Managed Essay* (pp. 150–152). The profile can be summarised as follows. Lessons tend to have a relatively high semantic entry point, beginning with relatively conceptual discussion, questions and/or input. As mentioned above, low semantic-entry-point tasks are rare, particularly those drawing on students' personal experience. Lesson openings thus tend to exhibit weaker semantic gravity. Tasks then function to quickly strengthen semantic gravity, usually by requiring students to work with texts, e.g. to identify principles or structures in the writing. These texts are predominantly written, but can

also be spoken. In *Speaking: Introduction to the Presentation* (July coursebook, pp. 190–196), for example, tasks 2 and 4 involve watching videos of two student presentations and using these to reflect on and discuss features of academic presentation speaking. The August lesson *Seminar Skills & Timed Essay 1: Timed Essay* (pp. 119–122) is similar, but this time tasks 2-4 involve engaging with a video of a discussion seminar. Subsequent tasks across lessons also then tend to wave up and down from the mediating text (whether spoken or written), alternating between grounded engagement with content and concepts, and an emerging production task of some kind. This may require completing a table, taking notes, discussion with classmates, or crafting a short piece of writing live in class.

Textual content across lessons is non-trivial and tends to comprise authentic or semi-authentic extracts from student essays or academic articles. These appear to be selected / designed to be challenging but accessible to everyone and not specific to particular disciplines. In terms of Specialisation concepts, therefore, texts tend to exhibit relatively strong epistemic relations to curricular knowledge (ER+, SR–) but display weaker epistemic relations relative to the more disciplinary texts of the managed essay or extended essay readings (ER++, SR–). Tasks also tend towards stronger epistemic relations, in the sense that student views and opinions need to be evidence based and to build on these or associated texts. While there are exceptions, as exemplified above, social relations to curricular knowledge are thus generally weak and usually devalued for most lessons. There is also a pattern in how these tasks are organised. A common observed sequence is to proceed from *recognition* (e.g. understanding the distinguishing features of a literature review) through *passive realisation* (e.g. underlining signposting language in an essay introduction) to *active realisation* (e.g. composing a short paragraph that demonstrates lesson-linked learning)<sup>38</sup>.

Bringing all of these elements together enables describing something of a signature profile for lesson design on the pre-session programme. A first-level conceptualisation of this representative profile appears below as Figure 6.9:

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<sup>38</sup> The precise nature of task complexity and how it interacts with textual complexity, curriculum concepts and the wider course threads is an area that raises interesting questions. These are beyond the scope of this thesis, but I return to these challenges in the final chapter.

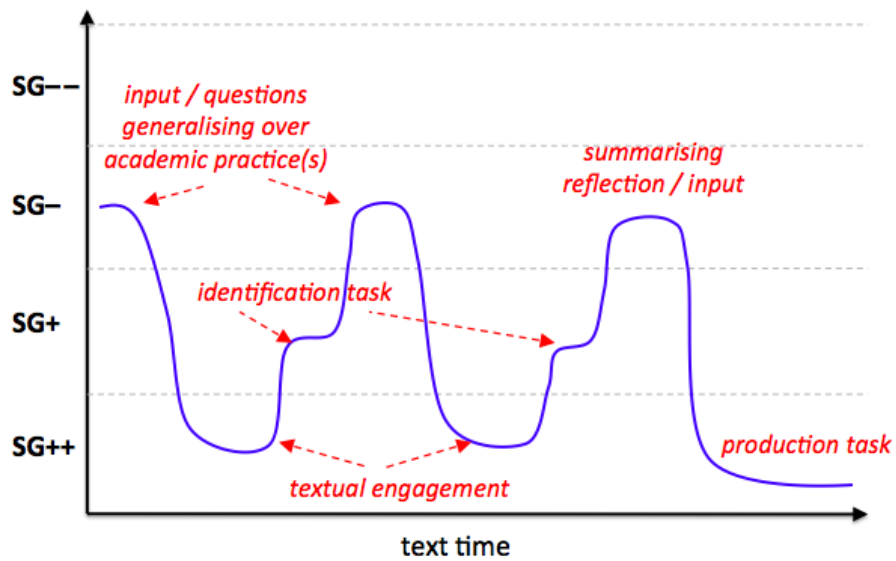


Figure 6.9: A signature profile for pre-sessional lesson design (theorisation 1)

Removing the particulars of the labelling above and condensing in the additional theorising from LCT Specialisation and Bernstein enables the more schematic and summary representation<sup>39</sup> in Figure 6.10:

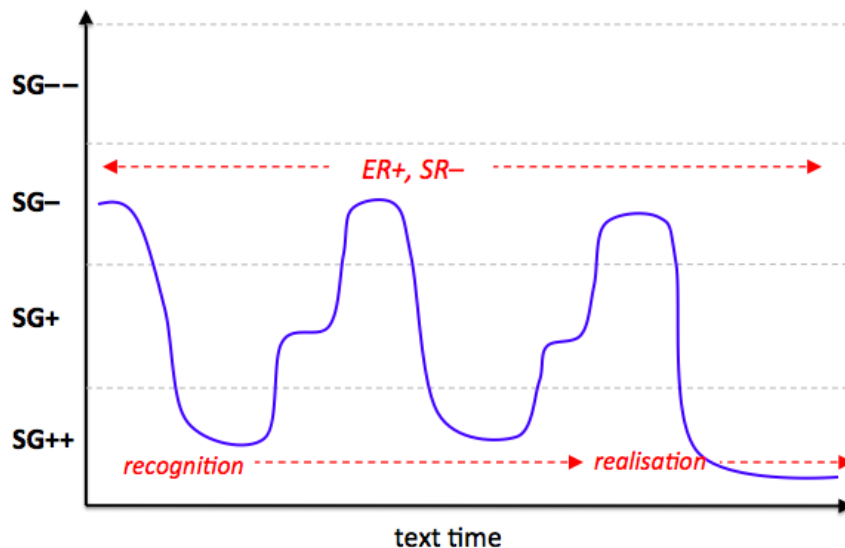
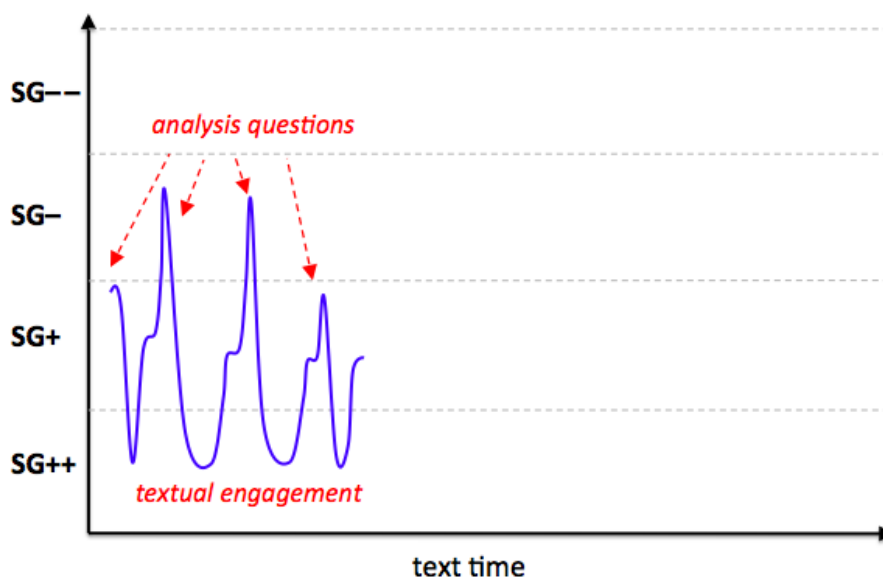


Figure 6.10: A signature profile for pre-sessional lesson design (theorisation 2)

<sup>39</sup> These profiles are summary representations and thus gloss over, for example, the number of 'wave cycles' within a lesson. There is never only a single cycle, however, and this has been captured heuristically by depicting two cycles. As seen earlier, a lesson may have more.



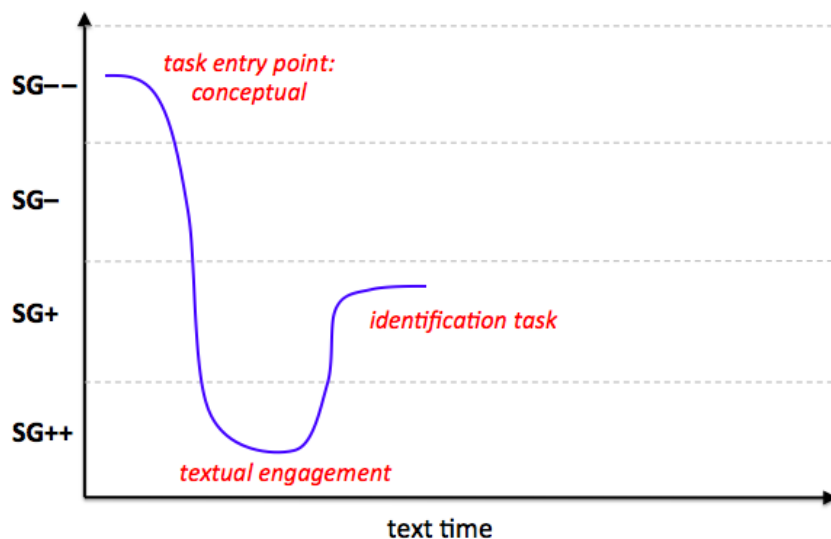
Some variation can also be seen within this profile across pre-sessional materials. This occurs both in 'horizontal view' (i.e. in relation to pacing) and in 'vertical view' (i.e. with respect to semantic range). In horizontal perspective and as already exemplified above, task sequences may involve longer or shorter engagement with texts, depending on goals and requirements. In *Using Reading in Writing: the Managed Essay (2)* (August, pp. 113–118), for example, the materials open with a notetaking task, requiring sustained engagement with a 300-400 word text. In contrast, the September session *Reading: Unwrapping a Model Essay* (pp. 17–27) requires shuttling back and forth between analysis questions and an authentic student essay of about 2,500 words. Wave 'period' and 'frequency' may therefore vary. Figure 6.10 above is more illustrative of the first case. The second can be seen as a sequence within both the lessons profiled in detail above and can be isolated and represented heuristically as:



**Figure 6.11: SG profile illustrating greater wave 'frequency' / shorter wave 'period'**

In vertical perspective, a number of the task sequences connected to the core assessment threads exhibit higher semantic entry points. The August lesson *Research Question and Thesis Statement* (pp. 52–62), for example, begins with the relatively more conceptual questions, "what is a research question?" and "what is the difference between a topic and a research question?" (SG--), before then having students identify particulars in exemplar texts. The September lesson *Writing: Literature Review (1)* (pp. 31–37) opens with a question on the purpose of a literature review (SG--),

before a task to identify overall and section purposes within an example literature review. Such sequences display an analogous wave contour to the one seen repeated in the canonical signature profile sketches (Figures 6.9 and 6.10), but the semantic range is greater:



**Figure 6.12: SG profile illustrating greater semantic range in some task sequences**

Finally, as was observed in the analysis and discussion of the *Reading: Note-Taking* lesson, it is not the case that all lessons end with written production tasks. In other words, not all materials have low semantic exit points. Some sessions close instead by decreasing semantic gravity (SG++↓ / SG+↓), waving up to a summary reflection task and/or input (SG-). Occasionally, exit points can be fairly conceptual. The lesson *Writing: Results and Hedging with Data* (September, pp. 75–78), for instance, closes with the discussion question, "why is [distancing yourself from the certainty of a claim] an important feature of British academic culture?" (SG- -).

With some minor variation, therefore, a broad signature profile can be observed at lesson level. However, it is at the more granular scale of the task sequence that the most prevalent and 'stable' signature structure emerges. Running as a leitmotif through all the semantic gravity analyses in this chapter is a characteristic progression from input and/or question, through analysis of a written or spoken text, to verbal/written response. This is seen most clearly in Figure 6.12 above. With slightly less semantic

range, it can also be seen serially repeated in the earlier profile sketches. On seeing this distinctive micro-profile across the EAP programme materials I found myself likening it to a 'pearl dive'. This seemed like an apt metaphor to capture both the wave contour and the essence of the sequence: Like a diver with a knife, the student must dive down into a text, armed with a conceptual tool or question. They must search with purpose and with focus, bringing their discoveries back to the surface to share.



**Figure 6.13: Signature semantic gravity profile reimagined as textual 'pearl diving'<sup>40</sup>.**

This sequence, repeated within and across lessons, bears a fractal resemblance to the semantic gravity profile in section 6.2, sketched heuristically to represent the structuring and sequencing of the major curriculum threads over course time. This may be significant in realising the stated goals of the programme. As suggested earlier, these regular movements up and down in the context-dependency of curricular meaning-making may be important to transfer of learning (e.g. Maton, 2014; Macnaught et al., 2013). The shifts can be interpreted as the means by which the *trained gaze* espoused in the early pages of the pre-sessional coursebooks is potentially realised. In earlier chapters, the wider curriculum was seen as characterised

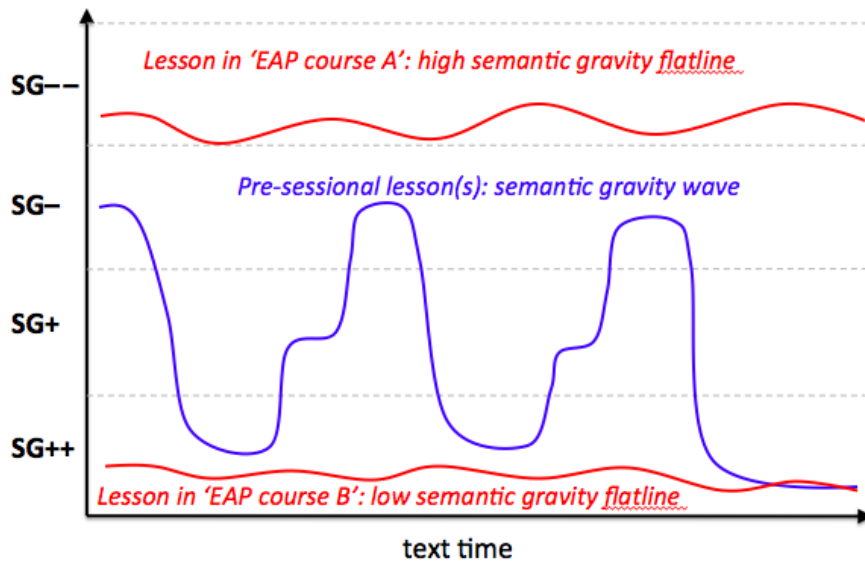
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<sup>40</sup> eI\_roboto (ndg) 'Pearl Diving in UAE'.  
<https://sketchfab.com/models/ba5c0298394142379bf9f4d6b4e5719c>. Image used with permission. Last accessed 14.05.2018.

generally by a knowledge code (ER+, SR-). This was identified in both principle (chapter 4) and practice (chapter 5). Goals for student learning were thus understood in terms of what might be termed 'mindful practice' (after Salomon & Perkins, 1989), i.e. the interacting abilities to produce desired forms of academic practice and to articulate the knowledge that underpins this practice. The lesson-level curricular practices examined above may well be functioning to enact this knowledge code via the regular shifts observed between conceptual engagement with core EAP curriculum concepts and more contextualised engagement with texts and practice opportunities.

This argument can be lent some weight by considering briefly what the pre-sessional materials do *not* do. Legitimation Code Theory dimensions and concepts offer a means for moving beyond surface-level descriptions of empirical practices, towards theorising the deeper organising principles of these practices (Maton, 2014; Maton et al., 2016). This enables describing the generative mechanisms underpinning *what is*, but also provides ways of imaging what *might have been* - or what *might be* in the future. An alternative 'EAP course A' could be imagined, for instance, in which course materials do not exhibit the shifts in semantic gravity seen in current research study. The programme might comprise instead a series of lectures about the values and practices of UK higher education, the principles of 'good academic writing' and the expectations of academic participation in the university context. This would be a largely conceptual curriculum, with little or no opportunity to practice what is being preached. In LCT Semantics terms, the course would exhibit a relatively high semantic gravity flatline (SG-(−)).

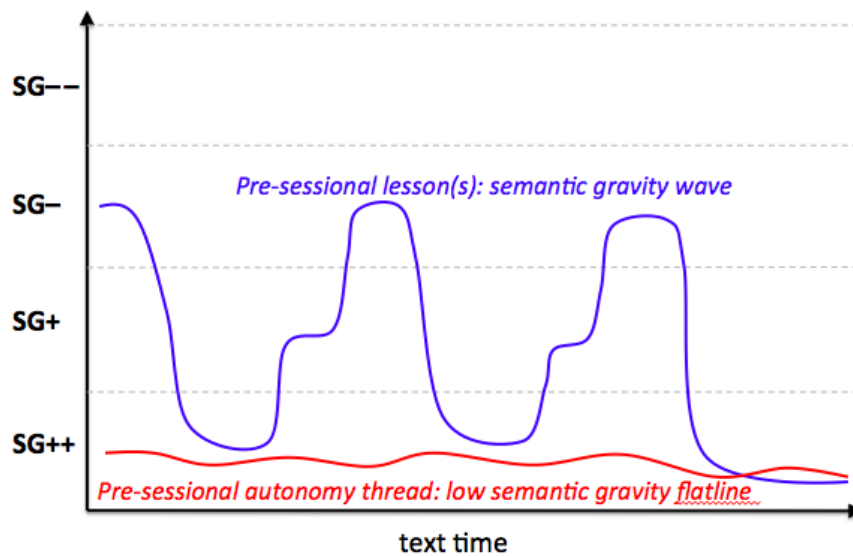
A differently imagined 'EAP course B' might involve only opportunities for practice. The course would comprise a series of seminars, writing assignments and presentations, but offer no input on textual analysis techniques, principles of discourse organisation, or discussion of local values and expectations. In contrast, therefore, this curriculum would be characterised by a low semantic gravity flatline (SG++). Figure 6.14 below superimposes a notional lesson in each of these two imagined alternative courses over the signature lesson profile above (Figure 6.9 / 6.10). This provides a visual representation that underlines how it may be that the espoused values and programme goals are materially enacted in the pre-sessional curriculum explored here:



**Figure 6.14: SG lesson profiles for the pre-sessional vs. two imagined EAP courses**

*EAP course A* would develop theoretical understandings, but would risk students not being able to enact any of these principles in their own practice. *EAP course B* would offer lots of practice opportunities, but may well result in students developing plenty of *know-what* and perhaps a measure of *know-how* (e.g. through trial and error, based on evaluative grades), but little if any *know-why*. These are oversimplifications, of course, but the notional extremes highlight how the principles structuring the core threads of the pre-sessional may work to develop something more akin to 'principled practice'.

As was seen in chapter 5, however, this is not universally the case. The autonomy thread was characterised in terms of a knower code (ER-, SR+), with very little conceptual discussion or explicit, mindful enactment of principles, procedures or techniques offered in the main programme. Revisiting this thread through the lens of semantic gravity suggests this area of the pre-sessional may exhibit something closer to the low-level flatline of lessons in *EAP course B*:



**Figure 6.15: Autonomy thread snapshot, construed as a semantic gravity wave**

Theorisation drawing on both the Specialisation and Semantics dimensions of LCT thus offers a potentially valuable means of making visible how principles become practice in the local enactment of a curriculum.

### 6.3.3. Interim Summary: Principles of the Page

In summary, there is overwhelmingly greater underlying similarity than difference in the principles structuring lesson design on the pre-sessional programme studied for this research. In a sense this is not entirely surprising given that there are two principal materials writers and that they work closely together on selection, sequencing and pacing decisions. Nevertheless, semantic gravity analysis enables moving beyond surface-level descriptions and differences towards elucidating deeper organising principles. These appear to form something of the 'DNA' of course design at the micro-level, and may thus serve tacitly as generative principles in the design of new pedagogical materials.

There is no claim that this is the only profile underpinning lesson design on the pre-sessional course. Indeed, albeit only in exceptional cases, a quite different profile was observed. One July lesson I examined, *Using Linkers in Academic Writing* (pp. 75–82), comprised mostly a series of practice tasks that do not explicitly involve any weakening

of semantic gravity. Without teaching practices that recontextualise these exercises, waving up to discussion of grammatical principles and nuances of meaning, these tasks as they appear exhibit a relatively low-level flatline. This risks involving students in practice, but not in learning that builds cumulatively on previous understandings.

It is also entirely possible that there are lessons and/or task sequences exhibiting radically different profiles that I missed. There are approximately ninety lessons for which materials exist across the three coursebooks. I explored around a quarter of these. The intention was not to exhaustively capture every micro-movement of the programme. Rather, the research sought to make visible and exemplify structuring principles. These might then serve as the basis for further exploration, both within this EAP programme and elsewhere.

I move next to a brief consideration of ways in which expectations for classroom enactment of materials are shaped by course designers and managers. This provides a 'bridge' of sorts between considerations of 'page' and of 'pedagogy'.

#### **6.4. Shaping Classroom Enactment**

It was seen in chapter 5 that curriculum sequencing and, in particular, pacing may well function to shape the way teachers enact the course in their classroom practice. This was seen, for example, in the close relationship between assessments and the curriculum, and in tightly paced dates for setting readings/tasks and assessment submission points. In the previous section of the current chapter, analysis revealed materials design that also implicitly shapes practice, for instance through texts that have been pre-selected and integrated for analysis and discussion, numbered and sequenced tasks, and intervening textual 'talk'. This talk tends mostly to function as introductory or follow-up input, but also includes examples of what might be considered 'behavioural management' for teachers. Two instances occur in the July coursebook:

Your teacher will allocate you two or three questions from the list of seven. Working with a partner or in a small group, decide briefly how you would approach answering these questions. Compare your views as a class.

(July coursebook, p. 55)

Your teacher will use the visualiser to show how the ideas are connected in this paragraph.

(July coursebook, p. 76)

This is not a particularly common feature within the student-facing materials. However, there are also other mechanisms that function in parallel to inform how teachers approach and realise the curriculum. One already considered is the lesson aims box that tops the first page of every session. Two additional 'backstage' mechanisms are written 'teacher notes' for each month of the programme and weekly staff curriculum meetings.

Teacher notes do not 'dictate' how lessons should be enacted, but do provide information, insights and advice that are designed to shape teacher awareness and pedagogical practice. Not all lessons have notes, but examples in July include:

The lesson introduces [Topic-Question-Position] for the first time and tacitly the concept of the thesis statement. This is dealt with in some detail in later sessions but it's useful to draw attention to the concept in this session.

This lesson introduces 'Essay B' which is used as a model throughout the course so it is useful to spend some time reviewing the content. **Remember to set the essay to read in advance of the lesson-** makes things go more smoothly. The lesson is based on authentic texts and was written specifically for the course as a model.

(July teacher notes, p. 1. Emphasis in the original)

This is also an opportunity for students to realise that although a thesis is their 'opinion', it is an opinion that **emerges from and through the literature**. Again, this is a key principle of EAP and critical thinking and something we will continually revisit.

(July teacher notes, p. 3. Emphasis in the original)

The purpose of this seminar is to give the students a chance to grapple with the reading and the core language/concepts related to research questions.

You can make space for language input [...] and reflection but the core purpose is to help students understand the reading

(July teacher notes, p. 6)



In keeping with discussions in earlier chapters, these comments can be seen to focus on 'the why' of the materials and on more conceptual orientations to their enactment. There are also clear attempts here to connect up lessons elements to the wider curriculum ethos and goals.

Weekly staff meetings play an important role in the pre-session programme. They function both to scaffold and shape lesson planning and to maintain the collective pace, but also at a more emotional level:

- Rebecca: [...] I think [the teachers' meetings] are lovely spaces as well. Everybody gets together, they see us, we see them, we talk, we joke, we laugh, and I actually think that's really important.
- Phil: Yeah absolutely.
- Rebecca: That element– the teachers need to know they're actually valued very highly, that camaraderie, we're all in this together, 'Goodness me, don't we work hard', kind of–

(Course designer interview 1, 31:33–10:59)

These emotional and social connections are important also for establishing 'teacher buy-in' to what the designers envisage for the programme and for materials enactment:

- Phil: I think buy-in is really important, isn't it?
- Rebecca: Yeah.
- Phil: It's quite central to how the whole course manages to function. If the teacher is not buying in, they're probably not buying it on an emotional level but also intellectually not buying in to the things that we're saying. If the teachers are not buying in to the things that we're saying then they and the materials are going to be in conflict with each other in the classroom, and that's going to go down all sorts of bad roads

(Course designer interview 2, 34:49–35:14)

The designer-managers recognise, however, that teachers exercise autonomy and personal decision-making in ways that may not always align with espoused design:

Rebecca: [...] And of course, we always know that even with strong buy in, there's always subversion and there's always a little bit of "yes, of course I'm doing that, Rebecca, uh-huh". Fine. And to a certain extent, there's a certain amount of that we expect and understand [...]

(Course designer interview 2, 35:30–35:43)

Phil and Rebecca talk explicitly in terms of writing the materials with the fact that other people will be teaching them in mind. Interestingly, they revealed that certain design decisions were more (teacher-) knower-informed than knowledge-oriented. Rebecca explained, for instance, that the suite of disciplinary lectures that open the managed essay thread in August were originally conceived, not with student learning in mind, but rather for those staff who may be unfamiliar and uncomfortable teaching EAP through challenging academic content:

Rebecca: [...]ur impetus for putting that lecture in was to support teachers, because having had experience of [...] having teachers totally freak out because they couldn't deal with medical patents, or whatever content we decided we were going to use—, because accessing it through reading is really intimidating if you don't know anything about it [...] And so, we wrote those early lectures deliberately, as kind of "fear not teachers, we are here, don't panic". Obviously, those lectures have developed and they're very useful for students too, and they're part of the academic cycle and process, but that actually wasn't the initial motivation for those at all.

(Course designer interview 2, 27:59–28:38)

Having students work with cognitively challenging readings and concepts is quite deliberate. As Rebecca puts it, "[...] you can't produce lovely, complex academic writing if you're not thinking complex academic thoughts." Text selection and materials design function explicitly "...to deep end [learners] in content a little bit, to have them have to sort that out with the tools that [the course is] giving them" (course designer interview 2, 12:29–12:52). The complexity of this content is also mitigated for both students and staff, however, e.g. by recycling exemplar texts across the programme. Too much time unwrapping textual content may mean less time accessing and working with the core EAP curricular concepts, and thus the designers aim to strike a balance between

challenge and the pragmatics of working through the course materials in classroom enactment.

It is to illustrative exploration of pre-sessional materials being 'redesigned' by teachers through pedagogical practice that I now turn.

### **6.5. Exploring Lesson *Redesign*: Practices in Pedagogy**

This section has two main purposes. The first is to illustrate curriculum enactment through classroom practice. The second is to illustrate the potential usefulness of LCT Semantics for doing this. The section focuses on themed examples of what emerged during video analysis as recontextualisation practices worthy of note.

The teacher-participants in my study were introduced in chapter 3. To recap briefly, I explored the practices of four experienced EAP teachers over seven classes. These classes were non-consecutive and most took place in August, the second month of the pre-sessional course. By request in 2016, Phil returned to classroom teaching for 50% of his summer role and thus he was included as one of my participants. There is no intention to privilege his enactment as representing a 'benchmark' of quality or effectiveness; however, Phil provides a useful point of orientation for the discussion in this section, given his twin roles as designer and teacher.

Differences in lesson 'redesign' at the chalkface are inevitable. Teachers bring different sociohistories to the pre-sessional programme, different experience, values, beliefs and expertise. The principles structuring curriculum can shape but not 'dictate' how materials are interpreted and lifted off the page. It would therefore be rather trivial simply to 'reveal' that teachers do not follow lessons to the letter. What was surprising in the analysis, however, was the extent to which this was the case. Practitioners rework tasks and sequences in a variety of creative ways. This is perhaps a function of choosing to work with more expert EAP staff. I know from my own professional experience that teachers less familiar with our programme do sometimes teach 'by the book'. This is also perhaps unsurprising. With expertise comes the flexibility to mould and adapt, and empirical examples of this were seen in the literature review.

It was noted in Section 6.3.2 that, while there are broad patterns that can be observed at lesson level, it is at the more granular scale that signature features are most identifiable. In this section analysis will similarly focus on micro-sequences in pedagogy, in the interests of highlighting pertinent features of teacher enactment practices. The brief illustrations that now follow are themed in ways that emerged from the data. The four practices chosen do not exhaust what was observed during analysis, but provide examples of pivotal moments, stand-out features and possible 'signature practices' among the teacher-participants. These emerged as potentially significant in accounting for how espoused values and practices, enacted in the pages of the coursebooks, become realised through classroom recontextualisation.

#### **6.5.1. Entering Low, Practice before Principles**

A stand-out signature feature of Phil's pedagogy is his tendency to 'enter low': Phil begins all five lessons in my data set with practices that initially exhibit strong semantic gravity. These take the shape of student-centred tasks and take one of two forms. The first comprise grounded activities that serve as revision and/or as a bridge to the lesson that follows. The second involve a reworking of a task in the coursebook. The other three teacher-participants tend to start higher, often with verbal summaries of lesson aims or more conceptual discussions with students (cf. Section 6.5.3 below). Phil is the only practitioner who opens the main academic work of the session by engaging students almost immediately in a practice task of some kind.

In the July session *Grammar: Noun Phrases*, for instance, the lesson on the page begins relatively high, with the metalinguistic question "how many noun phrases are there in this sentence?" The task then follows the characteristic *pearl dive* seen earlier in this chapter, with a number of sentences for students to analyse. The lesson then waves high again, moving onto the next concept, *head nouns*:

How many noun phrases are there in this sentence?

*English is a global language.*

A noun phrase may be a single noun ("*English*") or a noun plus one or more 'modifiers' ("*global language*").

Underline the noun phrases in the following sentences.

1. *English is the international language of our day.*
2. *The best teachers are non-native teachers.*
3. *The core defining aim of EFL is to emulate the native speaker.*
4. *Phillipson (1992) refers to the current valuing of native speakers as 'the native speaker fallacy'.*
5. *The notion of the native-speaker teacher is intensely problematic.*

#### Head Nouns

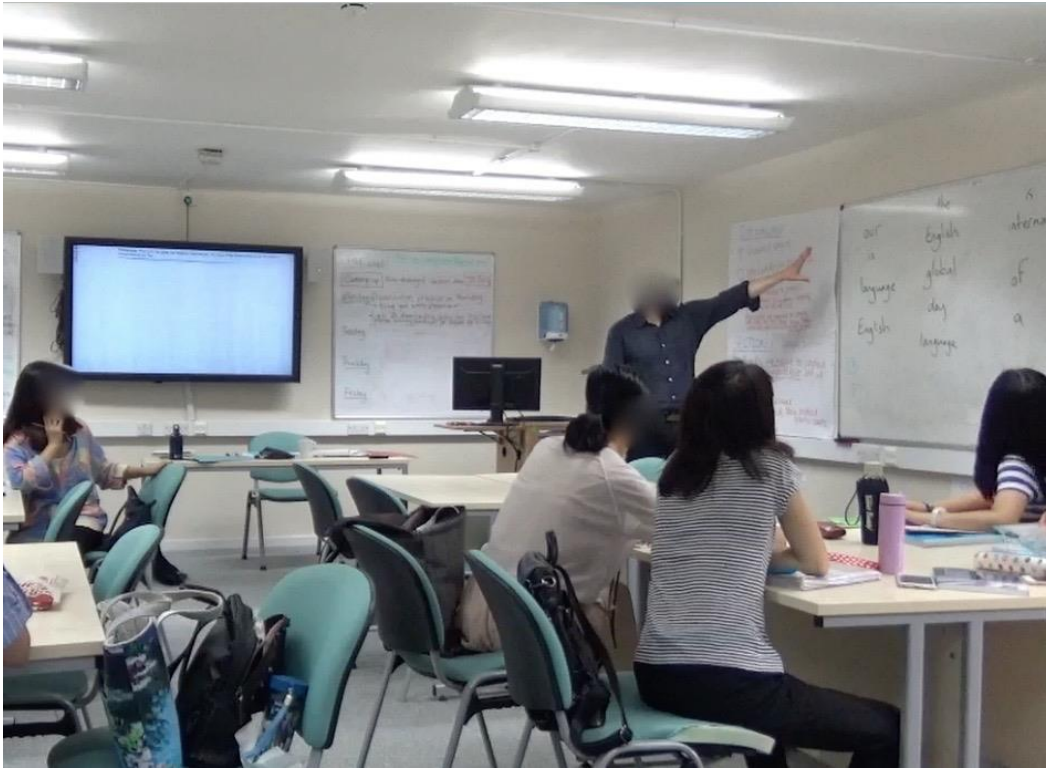
In order to understand a noun phrase, it is important to identify the 'head' noun. The head noun is the 'main' noun in the noun phrase, and all the other parts of the noun phrase give information about the head noun.

Identifying head nouns is especially important for reading purposes.

*English is clearly the most significant language for contemporary international trade and commerce.*

**Figure 6.16: Opening task, *Grammar: Noun Phrases* (July, p. 215)**

Recontextualising this material in the classroom, Phil begins without the book. This is also a characteristic feature of his practice. He has pre-written thirteen words onto one of the whiteboards (see Figure 6.17 below). Students are asked to work together to make two sentences using all and only the words on the board. While it is not made explicit, these sentences are two of the five sentences from the opening task above. Students collaborate in small groups to rearrange the words and then the 'team captain' writes their versions onto the same whiteboard. Phil then mediates a discussion of student decisions. The sequence lasts about ten minutes, after which time Phil refers students to the coursebook.

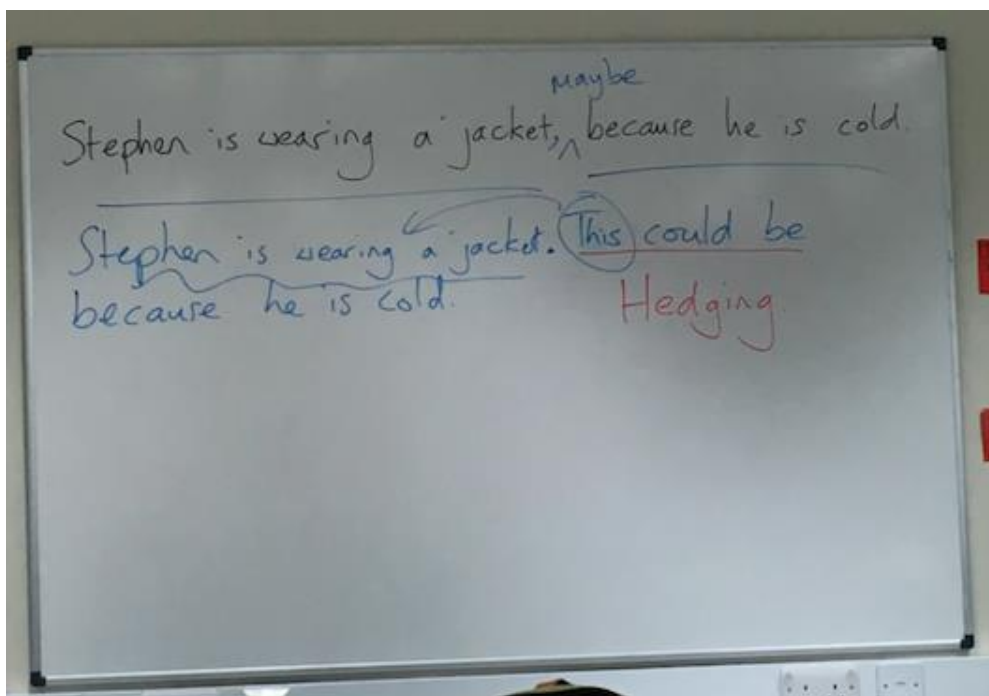


**Figure 6.17: Recontextualisation of lesson entry, strengthening semantic gravity**

Rather than begin from the concept or from higher-level metalanguage, as the lesson on the page does, Phil instead has students work with concrete examples first, manipulating words to create sentences. These contain the grammar that will become the focus of the lesson. In broad terms of LCT semantic gravity, therefore, his classroom recontextualisation involves starting low (SG++) and then weakening semantic gravity (SG↓), waving up later to concepts and metalanguage.

Phil takes a very similar approach in the August lesson, *Grammar: Hedging in Academic Writing*. In this case, he draws on a student in the room and creates the simple sentence, "Stephen is wearing a jacket because he is cold". Responding to Phil's first question of this sentence, "Is it true?" Students recognise that the example may not necessarily be 'true', and thus Phil notes, "We've got a problem with this sentence. How can we fix it?" In this mediated back-and-forth, he moves the discussion towards the concept of 'hedging' and the need sometimes to hedge claims made in academic writing. Students agree on a simple hedge for the example: "Stephen is

wearing a jacket. This could be because he is cold." Phil's approach here, as above, could thus be characterised as inductive rather than deductive, leading students from practice to concept, rather than vice versa. This is a pattern in his practice.



**Figure 6.18: Recontextualisation of lesson entry, inductive building to a concept**

The first task in the equivalent hedging lesson on the page is actually not dissimilar. However the example sentences draw on familiar but more conceptually dense content, and focus instead on the difference in meaning implied by the choice of reporting verb. This opening task is also topped and tailed by content displaying much weaker semantic gravity, creating quite a different semantic structure:

## Grammar: Hedging in Academic Writing

### Lesson aims

- To become aware of hedging, and the reasons for hedging in academic writing
- To consider situations in which it is appropriate to make cautious or strong claims in academic writing
- To learn language and techniques for softening or strengthening claims

1. What is the difference in meaning between the following? Does it matter?

Smith (2009) **argues** that microfinance is effective in alleviating poverty in developing countries.

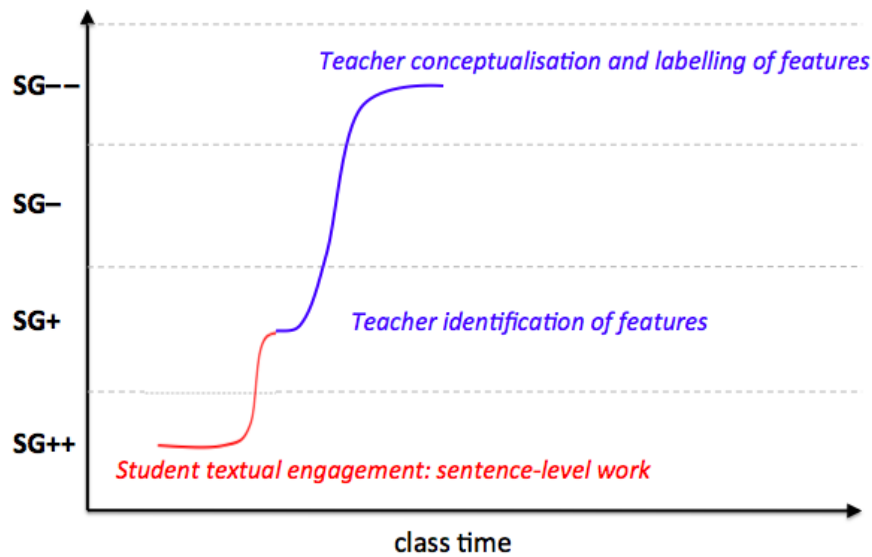
Smith (2009) **proves** that microfinance is effective in alleviating poverty in developing countries.

In academic writing you are often offering a position or an interpretation of a particular issue rather than 'telling the truth'. It is important to indicate this in your writing. The reporting verbs you use are one way of showing your relationship, as the writer, to the ideas you have read.

Figure 6.19: Lesson opening on the page, *Grammar: Hedging...* (August, p. 193)

This is the kind of language that students need to become comfortable with unpacking in reading and creating in their own writing, but Phil has decided that this is perhaps a challenging way into the concept of hedging in academic writing. He 'flips' the semantic gravity profile of the lesson on the page, inverting the pearl dive profile seen in earlier analysis of pre-sessional lessons. Phil's signature lesson entry profile could therefore be represented heuristically as given in figure 6.20:





**Figure 6.20: Heuristic SG profile for Phil's signature lesson-entry practices**

Unlike the lesson on the page, the lesson in the classroom unfolds in the co-constructed discourse between teacher, students and text(s). The diagram above traces this heuristic movement of meaning-making practices as they unfolds between participants with different colours: red for student practices, and blue for teacher practices. This representation offers visually accessible insights into the way in which different forms of meaning-making are created by the teacher in the pedagogical decisions made over class time. I continue with this convention below. The diagram is a summary representation for the purposes of depicting a broad signature pedagogical practice and glosses over, for instance, the micro-movements of mediated discussion back-and-forth between Phil and his students in the examples above. I return to further exploration of such exchanges in the next section.

It is interesting and insightful that Phil, as one of the materials writers, chooses to recontextualise what is on the page. He makes the lesson his own, switches in alternative language examples, draws on student language, but always in the service of the stated lesson aims. There is a strong sense that Phil has internalised what each lesson seeks to achieve, and that he is making conscious choices to enact these goals slightly differently to how things appear on the page. There is no subversion; there is simply creative recontextualisation. This is perhaps a hallmark of the expert practitioner.

### 6.5.2. Text-Mediated Teaching

Phil's signature low-entry lesson openers also exemplify a second feature that emerged from video data analysis as worthy of note: text-mediated teaching. In particular, and as seen briefly above, this manifests as text-mediated teaching of core EAP concepts that form the backbone of the curriculum/assessment threads explored in chapter 5. This pedagogical practice is seen across all four teacher-participants.

Selena, for instance, uses the interactive whiteboard in her classroom as a primary pedagogical resource. Using this medium, she projects a soft copy of the day's lesson and works live with students on the sentences and larger texts for analysis. In the noun phrase lesson also explored briefly above with Phil, Selena projects the opening task and mediates a metalinguistic labelling of the grammatical elements of the five sentences seen in Figure 6.16:

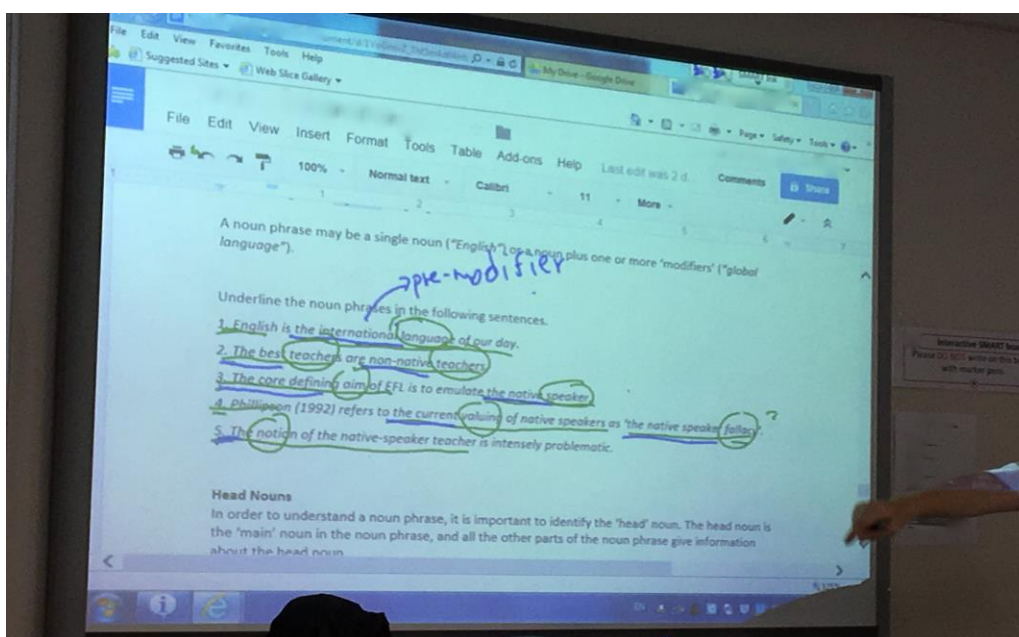
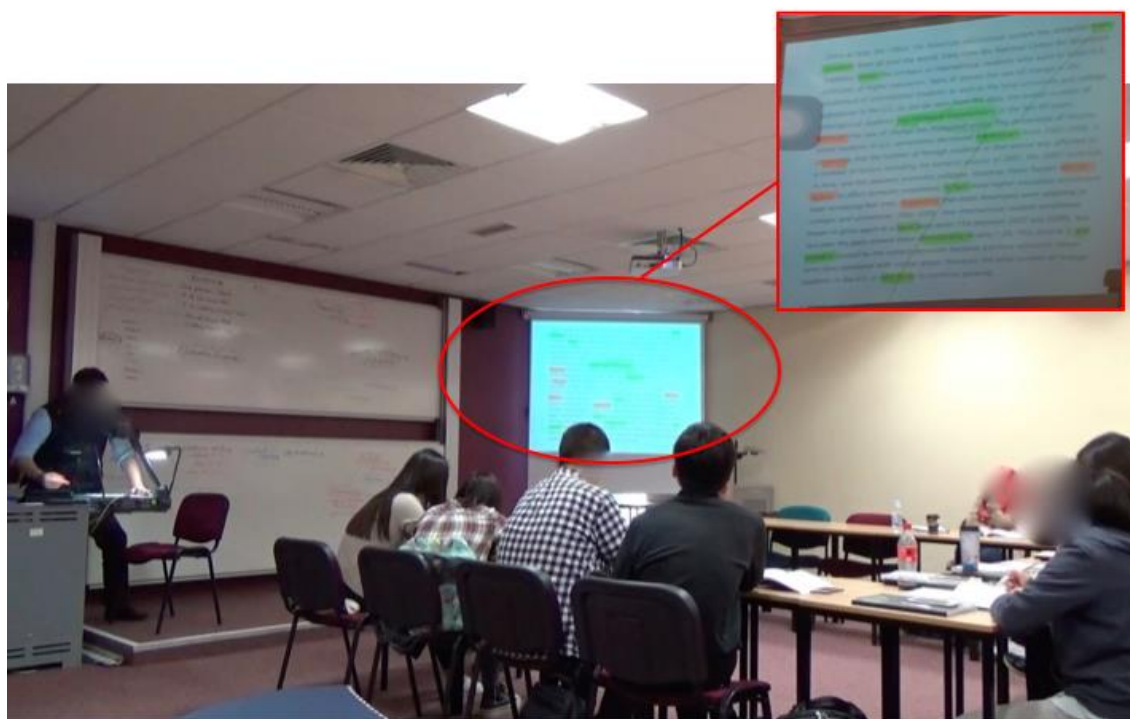


Figure 6.21: Selena's text-mediated teaching using the interactive whiteboard

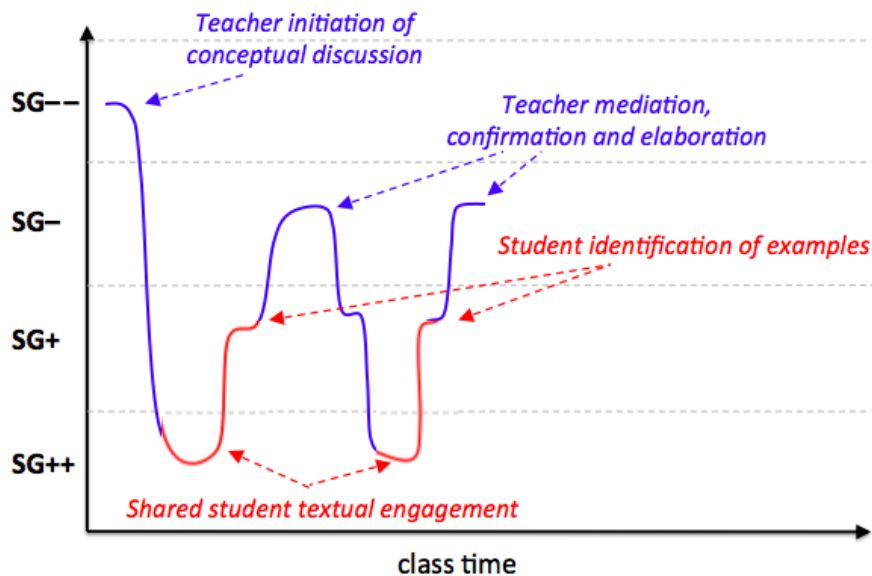
Heath does not have an interactive whiteboard in his classroom, but draws on the visualiser instead to project the coursebook and to work collaboratively with students to annotate linguistic features. In his enactment of the August lesson on hedging, for instance, he extends the material given in the lesson on the page by additionally

projecting a page from students' disciplinary managed essay reading packs. The lesson moves from softening claims in writing through hedging, to strengthening statements with *boosting* language, and Heath annotates the text for examples (in green), noting also examples of hedging (in orange). He elicits and elaborates on examples such as "increased exponentially" and "decreased dramatically".



**Figure 6.22: Heath's text-mediated teaching of hedging and boosting**

As seen in earlier analysis in this chapter, lessons tend to be structured so as to scaffold learners from *recognition* of target curricular concepts towards *realisation* of those phenomena in their own academic practise. Text-mediated teaching by the EAP staff can be seen here as functioning to enact (and perhaps enhance) the former. In both Selena and Heath's task sequences, the discussion remains fairly conceptual; however, the exemplar-mediated nature of their practice enables a grounding of the concepts. Like the repeating signature pearl dive seen across lessons on the page, this pedagogical practice can be seen to enact similar semantic gravity waves in classroom discourse. A summary representation of this profile is given below:



**Figure 6.23: Semantic gravity profile for text-mediated teaching practices**

This display-and-discuss technique can be seen, therefore, as the enacted equivalent of the signature page-based profile summarised above as Figure 6.9. In some cases it appears to enable establishing key concepts and shared understandings both rapidly and effectively. This is seen particularly in Phil's inductive approach.

In a *Grammar Workshop* class in July, for instance, Phil focuses on grammatical linkers. As seen above, he begins at the whiteboard with a simple example, this time elicited from a student. He then moves rapidly towards grammatically labelling areas of the sentence, eliciting terms from the students. The sequence takes less than two minutes. The opening excerpt from this dialogue is given below:

- Phil: Give me a sentence using 'but'
- Student: 'He's handsome but I don't like him' [classmates laugh]
- Phil: [Writes sentence onto the whiteboard] Not an academic sentence, of course, but a grammatical sentence. When we use 'but' we need two parts to the sentence. We need something here [underlines] 'but' something here [underlines]. What do we call this?
- Student: Sentence

Phil: Not a sentence

Student: Clause

Phil: A clause. [draws box around the clause]. 'Clause' is an important grammar word [writes separately to the right]. 'Clause' means subject plus verb plus other stuff, sometimes. In this example, 'he is handsome', what's the subject?

Student: 'He'

Phil: 'He'. Verb?

Student: 'Is'

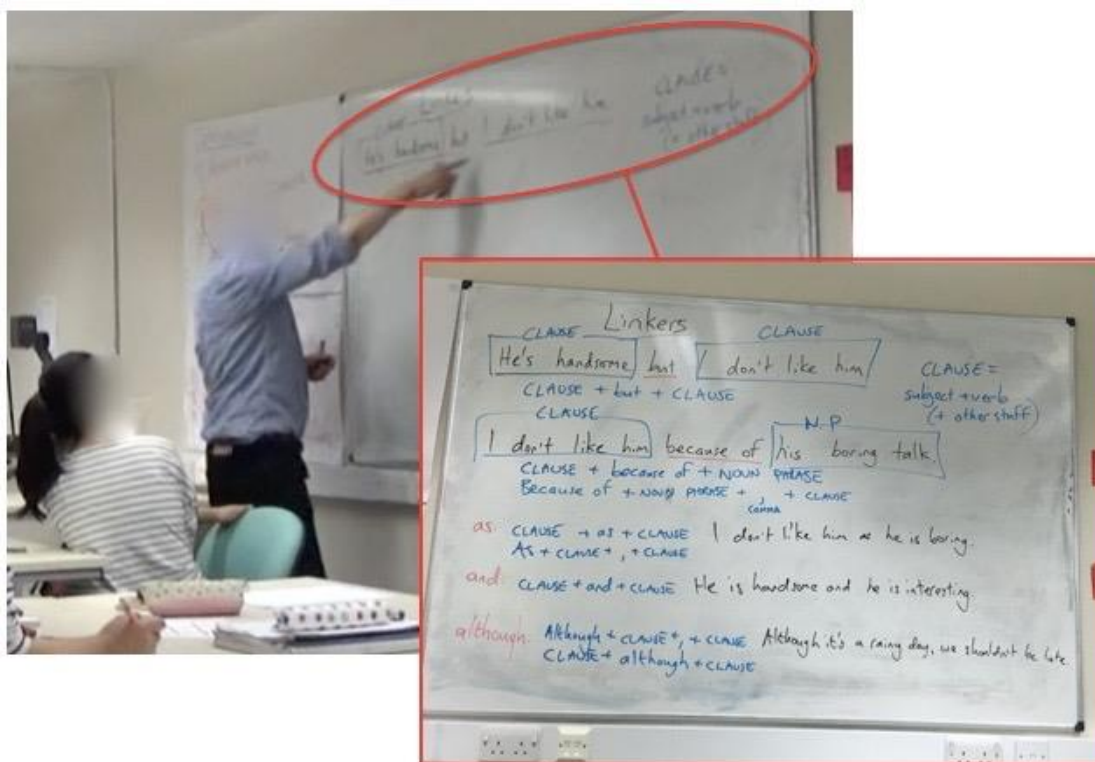
Phil: 'Is'. Other stuff?

Student: 'Handsome'

Phil: 'Handsome'. Exactly. We've got a clause there. And in the other clause?  
[...]

(Phil, *Grammar Workshop*, July. 33:40–35:04)

In this way, Phil avoids two potentially problematic practices. The first is presuming that students don't know the concepts and 'teaching' them, when this might not be needed. The second is assuming learners already know the concepts and pressing ahead with work that builds on these, risking leaving some students behind. The class then moves rapidly into more complex examples and opens out into using a number of other linking devices, but this opening sequence establishes the foundational metalanguage. A video still from this sequence is given overleaf as Figure 6.24.

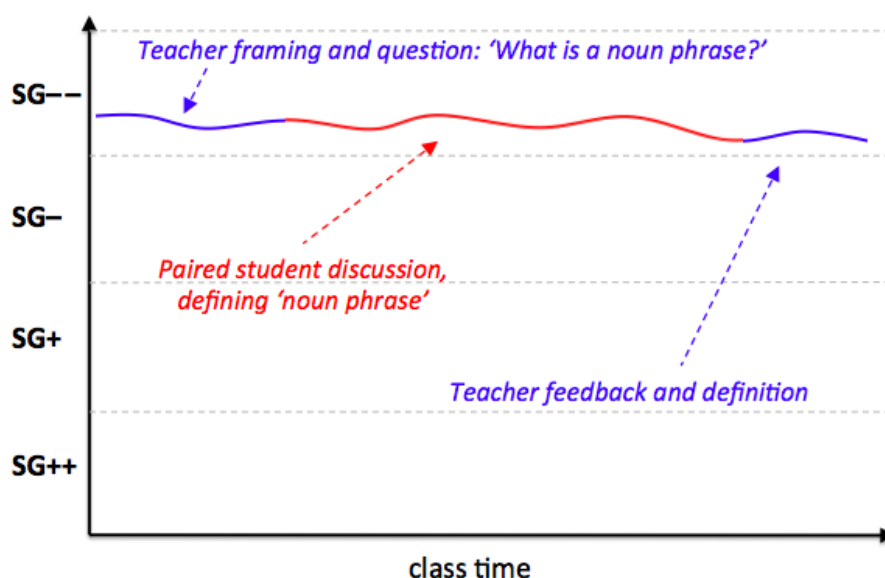


**Figure 6.24: Phil's text-mediated eliciting of concepts. *Grammar Workshop*, 35:20**

It is the text- and board-mediated discussion that makes possible the rapid shifts up and down between contextualised analysis/practice and conceptualised analysis/discussion. In terms of semantic gravity, this avoids the high-level flatline of a verbal-only discussion of concepts, but also the low-level flatline of practice-only tasks. The sentences themselves in this case are relatively trivial in their focus, and Phil notes this in passing ("...not an academic sentence, of course..."); however, the semantic shifts enacted through Phil's pedagogical practice are not. Like the analogous practices seen in Selena and Heath's sequences, these may be core to realising the espoused goals of the pre-session programme: both the grounded ability to understand and produce target discourse, and the higher-order conceptual understandings of what underpins this discourse.

It is worth highlighting that this practice is not universal, however, and variation is seen within teacher practice. Selena, for instance, begins her enactment of the noun phrase session with a ten-minute verbal discussion of noun phrases. She asks students to

define noun phrases to each other, before this becomes a brief all-class discussion. Selena then moves into the coursebook mediated tasks seen in snapshot above in Figure 6.21. With no concrete examples or textual orientation, this initial conversation represents an example of a relatively high-level semantic gravity flatline:



**Figure 6.25: Verbal, metalinguistic discussion – a high semantic gravity flatline**

The sequence is relatively short in the context of a two-hour class, but the LCT analysis makes visible the potential pitfalls of such practices, were they to continue for much longer. While ostensibly 'student-centred', the discussion 'floats' in the realm of fairly weak semantic gravity. Students are only 'talking about'. Nothing is concretised in writing, students have no material record of any 'learning' taking place and, while students may 'learn about' via Selena's feedback and input, this is not the same as 'learning to'. This conceptual flatline is actually something of a signature feature of both Selena and Heath's pedagogy. However, such discussions do eventually become grounded in texts and tasks, moving co-constructed practices from flatlines to waves, and thus there would appear to be little risk of non-target forms of learning.

The semantic gravity analysis enables a visual representation of how 'student talking time' can constitute forms of practice that may or may not correspond to envisaged / intended curriculum-, lesson- and/or task-appropriate teaching and learning outcomes.

It also provides a means of seeing the ways in which *different forms of learning* may be enacted by the different classroom interaction and mediation decisions made by classroom teachers. Such insights evoke the work of, e.g., Even (2008) and the 'Same Teacher – Different Classes' project, discussed in chapter 2. The analysis also extends Maton's arguments on the importance of enacting semantic waves for cumulative knowledge building (e.g. Macnaught et al., 2013; Maton, 2014), as it provides a view into not just what teachers do to make meaning but also how *co-constructed* discourse may enact different forms of student learning.

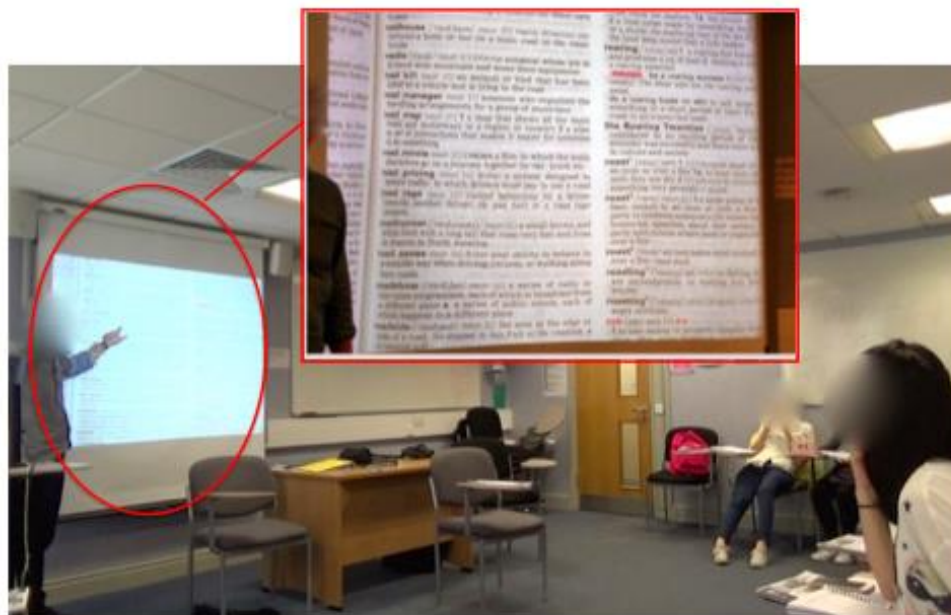
### **6.5.3. Modelling Practices, Training a Gaze**

Emerging as a pattern across teacher-participants is a form of pedagogy that cuts through a simplistic, polarised binary distinction between 'student-centred' and 'teacher-centred' methodology. The teacher mediates and thus often frames and controls the overall pace and trajectory of a class. However, task sequences tend to be *learning-centred*, in the sense that students are usually involved actively in textual analysis, mediated discussion and scaffolded production. There are echoes here of Vygotskian type models of expert-apprentice educational relationships (e.g. Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). I was also reminded during video analysis of work that builds on Vygotsky, such as cognitive apprenticeship (e.g. Collins, Seely Brown & Holum, 1991) and genre pedagogy (e.g. Rose & Martin, 2012). Teachers enact neither the role of 'sage on the stage', nor of 'guide on the side', but rather something more akin to what McWilliam has dubbed a 'meddler in the middle' (2008). Drawing on the tasks and materials in the coursebooks, teachers tend flexibly to enact the curriculum *through* the evolving understandings of their students.

This text-mediated 'meddling' facilitates another pedagogical technique seen in my data: modelling of target practices. This was particularly evident in Phil and Marco's practice. In the instances of modelling that I observed in their classes, there were two functions that this appeared to play. The first could be described as modelling of academic practices. The second involved modelling a task that students would be completing autonomously, either in or outside class. As exemplified below, these two functions also blurred, with examples of modelling that served both functions.



To illustrate academic practice modelling, Marco often worked with dictionaries in his class. Students all had personal advanced English dictionaries, both in hard and soft copy, and Marco drew on these to instil a habit of looking up the usage of (in particular) semi-technical vocabulary that emerged from readings, coursebook texts and/or class discussion. In one videoed session, the August lesson *Reading: Long Texts (Managed Essay)*, the item 'roadmap' emerged as a talking point from one of the reading texts assigned to students. Rather than define this himself, Marco went to the dictionary, projected it on the visualiser and led an exploration of the literal and metaphorical senses of the term, eliciting from students how the word was functioning in the context of the target text. This is a relatively frequent feature of Marco's sessions and can be seen as modelling a practice that Marco wishes his students to emulate outside class.

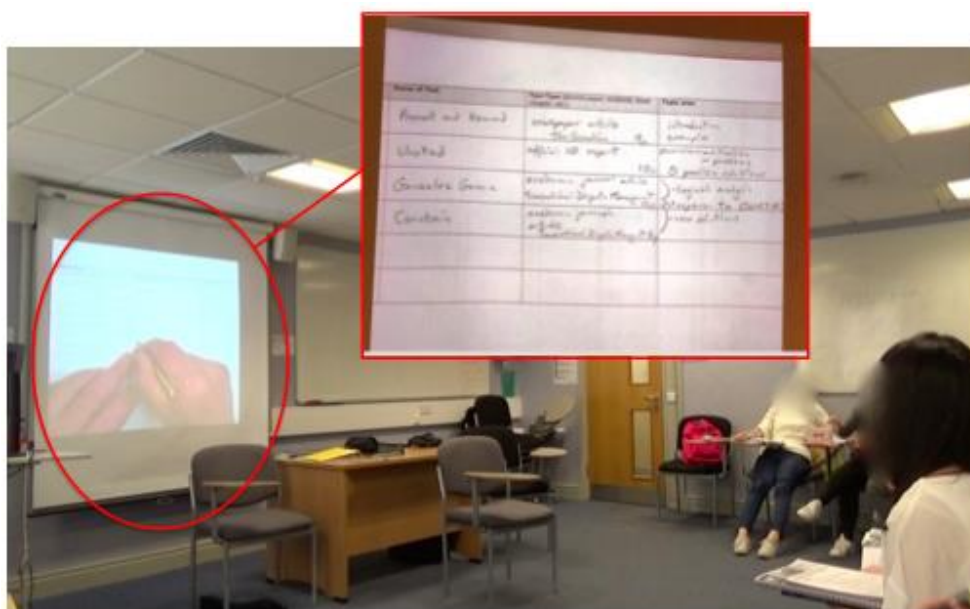


**Figure 6.26: Marco, modelling dictionary use for checking lexical usage**

Earlier in the same class, Marco also exemplifies modelling of task expectations. The lesson asks students to work rapidly through the texts in their managed essay reading packs, extracting key early information that will help guide how they approach reading and notetaking. This includes, for instance, deciding on the order in which to read the texts, based on whether they provide an overview, simplified summaries or more detailed, technical content. Marco projects the relevant table in the coursebook on the visualiser and mediates a discussion of the information needed to complete the table,

filling out the boxes with information provided by learners. The students can be seen completing or annotating their own books during this exchange.

Marco pauses between texts, elaborating here and there on aspects of the information students provide, but ultimately the modelling serves to ensure that all students end up with the same information in their books. These are not simply 'the correct answers' and the end point of a task, but rather just a stepping-stone to extended and detailed reading of complex texts. The modelled process facilitates all students engaging in analogous thinking processes, and collectively considering aspects of the textual and metatextual details that may serve to guide more effective reading.

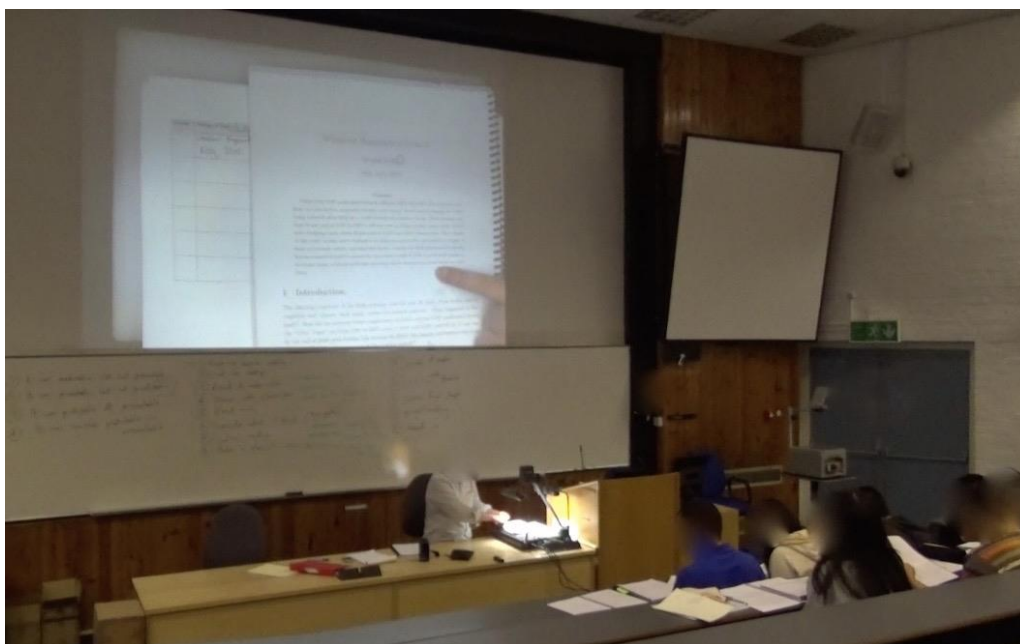


**Figure 6.27: Marco, modelling task expectations and completion**

Phil does something very similar in his teaching practice. Instead of mediating the whole task, however, he tends instead to model once and then have students complete analogous steps/tasks autonomously. This is seen a couple of times in the video data. In the same *Reading: Long Texts* class, Phil displays not just the table seen in Figure 6.27 but also the first article in students' reading packs. He visually and verbally navigates areas of the text, highlighting pertinent features. This includes, for example, how the article abstract functions. Having completed the table for one text with

students, he then asks them to "please do the same" for the other five readings (cf. Figure 6.28 below).

The modelling thus serves twin functions. It enables students to witness and partly experience what they must then do themselves, but it also functions to model an analytical gaze. By modelling not just the table completion but also text navigation practices, Phil is offering an experiential view into academic reading strategies. This perhaps enables something like an analogue of *passive realisation* (Morais & Neves, 2001), seen in task design earlier in this chapter: Students are led through the experience of asking particular questions of an academic article and of consulting particular areas of the text during analysis, before the *active realisation* of doing this for themselves. This practice is repeated for another task sequence later in the class.

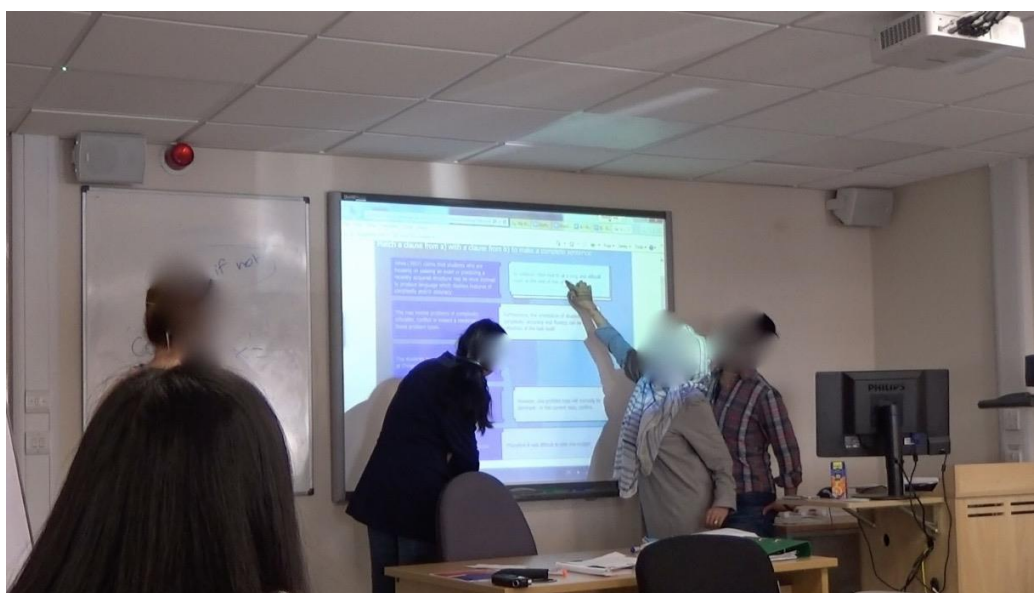


**Figure 6.28: Phil, modelling an analytical gaze**

In terms of LCT Specialisation, both Marco and Phil's modelling strategies can be interpreted as working to enact a *trained gaze* (ER+, SR–), i.e. particular practices and procedures for approaching academic texts. Here and in other instances, Phil socialises students into critical and analytical forms of reading and thinking. Given students' quite different educational culture backgrounds, this may be important in

(re)orienting learners towards valued practices in the local context. It may function to begin shifting students' coding orientations.

Modelling, and in particular text-mediated modelling, appears to be a signature practice across all my teacher-participants. It is important to note in passing that this is, by no means, the only form of engagement, however. Teachers regularly draw on what might be considered their 'CLT<sup>41</sup> heritage' to enable student-led tasks and student-generated content. This might include independent work, paired analysis of language/texts or group discussion (e.g. Figure 6.29). Summaries of learner decisions, content or language are often recorded onto the whiteboard, to serve as the basis for subsequent class consideration and scrutiny (e.g. Figure 6.30). The focus, relevance and appropriacy of this content appear often to be shaped in important ways by teacher modelling practices of the kind exemplified above.



**Figure 6.29: Group analysis of language/cohesion. Selena, *Grammar Workshop*.**

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<sup>41</sup> Communicative Language Teaching



**Figure 6.30: Recording of student-generated content. Phil, *Reading: Long Texts*.**

#### **6.5.4. Connecting out to the Wider Curriculum – and Beyond**

I had originally set out to 'compare' lessons on the page with their enactment in the classroom. Video analysis revealed, however, that this was often very hard to achieve in practice. I had implicitly assumed that teachers start with what is on the page and orient decision-making to this. This was only partly the case. Teachers did often enact task sequences as they appear on the page at a micro-level. Illustrations of such micro-practices are given above. Teachers often started in very different places to the lesson on the page, however, and blended together aspects of different sessions. In particular, a feature of all teacher-participants studied for my research was extensive engagement with the core assessment tasks and wider curriculum threads. This had sometimes significant effects on lesson pacing. The August session *Reading: Long Texts*, for example, opens with questions about the purpose of reading on a degree programme and the kinds of text students might expect to read. Phil, however, spent the first forty-eight minutes of the two-hour session having students agree on the stages they might go through in the preparation of essay writing. This included an emphasis on the importance of reading and notetaking, but the lesson as it appears on the page only entered the discourse halfway through the class.

The lesson functions within the wider managed essay thread, and thus Phil had clearly made the decision to focus first on the process underpinning this task, in order to contextualise the work on reading strategies and why they matter. This form of recontextualisation was prevalent among all the teachers. It highlights the autonomy that practitioners do have and exercise, but also the way that expert teachers are able to see through to the underlying curriculum and how each lesson functions with this. All teacher-participants are experienced and had taught the programme at least once before. It became clear that these teachers tended not simply to 'teach the lesson', but rather to draw on the materials as flexible tools with which to enact the wider goals of the syllabus.

The connections that teachers made out from individual lessons also reached beyond the pre-sessional curriculum, to students' departments and future practices. This was something of a signature practice in Marco's teaching. In his realisation of the *Reading: Long Texts* lesson, for instance, Marco reminds students of a class earlier in the day linked to September's extended essay. He connects the problem-solution structure seen in one of the managed essay reading pack articles to the importance of the same structure in the extended essay and to writing in the Law School. Marco often also refers out to the Law School, and to practices and expectations there:

Marco: Last year the students in my class finished the pre-sessional course, they had about a week's holiday and then at the beginning of October they had to start in the Law department. And on the first day in the Law School they had various talks, kind of induction to the Law department and one of the lecturers in the Law department told all the new students 'You've got to do lots of reading. Expect to do six hours a day reading. All through the year'

Students: [gasps]

Student: Oh my god. Six hours—

Marco: Yeah. And they were all shocked [...]

So, reading is kind of important.

[...]

(Marco, *Reading: Long Texts*. 13:04–13:56)

Such anecdotes and insights enact semantic downshifts, moving the discussion into SG+ territory. There is also something of a shift from the *symbolic* base of the texts and

language work at the heart of the pre-sessional to the *social* base of 'the academic everyday' mentioned first in Section 6.2. This is an interesting phenomenon. 'Know-what' and 'know-how' are focuses, not just for textual analysis and linguistic understanding, but also for more grounded concerns of students' future practices. It also enables insights into procedures and expectations on the pre-sessional course itself. Submission deadlines are taken seriously, for instance, because they are taken seriously in the receiving academic departments. This is mentioned both by Phil (cf. Section 6.2) and Marco in my data. The everyday lived experience of the programme, together with SG+ conversations connecting the here-and-now to the there-and-soon, provide another important source of academic socialisation for students - and one that remains explicit rather than tacit.

These are not trivial or epiphenomenal concerns. In view of the different embodied coding orientations that students bring with them to the UK, the shift into a different academic culture means there may be a hidden curriculum of values, practices and expectations not immediately accessible to learners. Students who do not understand the local expectations of, for example, academic reading, seminar performance or lecture participation are likely to orient differently to knowledge practices in a context with new codes. This may have negative consequences for student perceptions, performance and emotional wellbeing (e.g. Chen, 2010). It is a common element among my teacher-participants and would appear to enrich students' understanding of what they are doing and why; yet it is largely absent from the EAP research literature on curriculum or pedagogy<sup>42</sup>.

Theoretically, the extent to which teachers are able to make such connections for students will be influenced by their own *habitus* – i.e. the extent to which they actually understand the contexts students are heading towards. The idiosyncrasy of the EAP profession is that this may not necessarily be the case, depending on teachers' routes into EAP, the nature of their employment and the extent to which there are relationships between the EAP unit and departments (Ding & Campion, 2016; Ding & Bruce, 2017). All of my participants are relatively experienced and aware of the local context. Other teachers we hire may well not be and will therefore be limited in the

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<sup>42</sup> One example of a rare exception appears in Bruce's brief discussion of what he terms 'metalearning' elements, such as assessment procedures and marking criteria (Bruce, 2011).

extent to which they can enact similar practices. This points, perhaps, to the potential value of integrating this form of knowledge a little more into the written curriculum.

## **6.6. Chapter Summary: Profiling the Enacted Curriculum**

This chapter has demonstrated the usefulness of the Semantics dimension of Legitimation Code Theory for extending the understandings of local curriculum enactment developed in chapters 4 and 5. In particular, the component concept of semantic gravity was enacted to explore the means by which the espoused values and practices are realised on the page and in pedagogy. Broadly speaking, the experienced teacher-participants in this study were seen to lift lessons off the page in ways that appeared generally to align with the knowledge code (ER+, SR-) principle underpinning course design. The analysis also provided ways of making visible the *form(s)* of learning enabled by the selection, sequencing and pacing of texts and tasks, and the *different* forms of learning enabled by different design or 'redesign' practices.

One feature of note was the choice of an exemplar student essay and (quasi-) academic articles as focuses for analysis. Students thus encounter and work to deconstruct examples both of text types they will need to read, and of a text type that they will need to write. This is a characteristic throughout the programme. Students meet examples of spoken and written texts before they are required to produce them themselves. It is an illustration of the 'demystification' practices mentioned in the student-facing design principles (cf. chapter 4). In Bernstein's terms, this works to provide a progression from recognition to realisation of the valourised academic practices in this context (Bernstein, 2000).

Bringing semantic gravity profiling together with Specialisation concepts enables representing both shifts in the context dependency of meaning-making over lesson time and the nature of these shifts: Waves 'down' to meanings more embedded in particular social contexts may orient either to social relations or to epistemic relations. The nature of the wave may be different in different lessons and in teacher enactment. Profiling enables making this explicit, as a potential basis for discussion, critical scrutiny, development and change.



Curricular knowledge on the pre-sessional was seen to exhibit a fairly wide semantic range, with content and tasks ranging from the abstract and conceptual to local insights into departmental practices and procedures. Viewed dynamically over time, a fractally repeating pattern was seen at the levels of curriculum thread, lesson and task sequence. This took the form of a semantic gravity wave; that is, regular shifts between conceptual understandings and grounded opportunities to enact these concepts in academic speaking and writing tasks. It was suggested that these shifts may be important to transfer of EAP pre-sessional learning to new contexts of practice.

In pedagogical practice, teachers hired onto the pre-sessional must, in principle, operate within the course cosmology (cf. chapter 4). This sets boundaries and limits on what are seen as legitimate practices in this context. Course values and expectations are made explicit through forums such as written teacher notes and staff meetings, but EAP teachers need then to be able to realise the valued practices in their own pedagogy. Illustrations were provided in this chapter of 'signature' ways in which the research participants appear to achieve this. One central practice involved text-mediated teaching. This served to enact course outcome-aligned semantic gravity waves through the co-constructed classroom discourse.

Some variation was seen in the profile of these waves, including potentially problematic 'flatlining' practices that may undermine realisation of the espoused curriculum. Generally, pedagogical recontextualisation was interpreted as working to cultivate a *trained gaze*: that is a form of academic apprenticeship, characterised by decontextualising movements away from 'just practice' towards more mindful abstraction – or vice versa. Recognising the locally valued practices, choosing to align with them, and then have the requisite professional skills to enact them in classroom pedagogy may be crucial to what constitutes 'successful' or 'appropriate' teaching among EAP teachers hired onto the pre-sessional programme.

Experienced teachers, who have lived the whole programme before, seem to have a mental (or, perhaps, *embodied*) map of the course and thus of perceived student need at different points along that journey. Teachers were found to connect out to the wider curriculum and assessments, thus orienting task-to-task practice also to the thread and course level. It is a sense of contextualised student need in relation to the curriculum

and defined learning outcomes that teachers appear to base their planning on. Participants were seen to be using the materials as flexible mediators of the curriculum, not as a step-by-step assembly manual.

The analysis, discussion and illustrations in this chapter complete the research journey from conceptualisation, through curriculum to the classroom. This has enabled seeing a little more deeply into the nature of the local construction of EAP in this context.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

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### CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

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#### **7.1. Introduction: Recalling the Journey Travelled**

This research study set out to explore the underlying principles structuring the local enactment of an EAP pre-sessional programme. The study grew out of workplace practice and a professional need to understand and articulate the form of EAP that had evolved in this context. As a growing, but unstable and contested field of educational practice, EAP manifests itself in quite different ways in different institutional settings. This pointed to the need for, and potential value of, a localised study of programme enactment. As was discussed in the early pages of this thesis, the EAP research field has largely overlooked the discursive gaps and translational spaces between knowledge production and its double recontextualisation into curriculum and classroom. My research thus sought to address this gap. The aim was to make visible the principles that shape EAP course creation and enactment in ways that could feed back into professional practice and curricular development. The internationalisation of higher education puts EAP programmes front-stage in the induction and preparation of international students for the demands of a university education through the medium of English. A deeper understanding of the local instantiation of EAP is therefore important for the critical interrogation and ongoing enhancement of such provision.

Framing the research within a social realist perspective enabled making an analytical distinction between *knowing* (understanding; cognition) and *knowledge*. The research focused mainly on the latter, exploring the curricular knowledge practices espoused

and enacted in EAP pre-sessional materials as distinct from, for instance, measures of learning gain or perceptions of course value. The empirical work drew on analytical tools from Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) and from Bernstein's sociology of education - on which LCT builds. Concepts from the LCT dimensions of Specialisation and Semantics were enacted for the study through extensive dialogue with the data. The *translation devices* developed from this process enabled description of, and differentiation between, different forms of curricular and pedagogic practice observed on the pre-sessional. Taking a qualitative case study approach, the empirical exploration itself comprised interviews with course designers, examination of programme documentation, analysis of course materials, and investigation of the videoed classroom practice of four pre-sessional teachers.

Bhaskar's (2008/1975) *depth ontology* was introduced to make explicit the ontological commitments underpinning LCT (cf. chapter 3). In particular, this involved an account of the realist conception of knowledge adopted in my research. As glimpsed and made briefly explicit throughout the thesis, Bhaskar's distinguishing of the *real*, *the actual* and *the empirical* served also as highly productive lenses for conceptualising and staging the research project itself: from concepts (the real) to curriculum (the actual) to pedagogy (the empirical). The evolution and trajectory of the empirical work became clearer to conceptualise and operationalise in part thanks to Bhaskar's layered account of the world. I saw that teaching practices were the *empirical* manifesting of curriculum, but that certain concepts, tasks or content present in the pages of the *actual* curriculum did not necessarily get mobilised in pedagogy. This helped to reinforce my understandings of *recontextualisation*, and the fact that curricular content enacted through materials design does not necessarily entail enactment of that content in classroom practice.

Interpreting course practices through a Bhaskarian lens enabled seeing certain conceptual orientations that were often not explicitly given in programme materials but which appeared nevertheless to be *real*, in the sense of exerting an observable influence on practice. Teachers are encouraged, for example, to 'teach the why' (cf. 'Principles for Practice on [...] Pre-Sessional, section 4.2.4) and this appears to manifest materially in the recontextualising practices of Phil and Marco (cf. section 6.5.4), as they connect curriculum learning to students' future departments. The layer

of the *real*, in combination with concepts from LCT, also led to the theorising of the local *cosmology of EAP* (after Maton, 2014), discussed in section 4.4. This was fairly foundational to what became a key aspect of the overarching narrative for the thesis: that there are values and principles held by the course designers that largely define *the space of possibles* (Bourdieu, 1993) on the programme. These principles shape and bound what constitutes legitimate practices among staff and students on the pre-sessional. While *real*, these principles are always subject to scrutiny, challenge and thus change over time. The local cosmology will evolve with new understandings, interactions and developments. Equally, given the complex and diverse nature of institutional contexts, different configurations of values and practices will give rise to different, and perhaps conflicting, cosmologies of EAP. Theorising the local realisation of EAP in this way has greatly enhanced my understanding of the professional sector and its rich diversity of practices.

The rest of this chapter focuses on the core contributions made by this study. I suggest also ways in which the understandings that have emerged might usefully feed back into professional practice. After considering the limitations of the research conducted, I look towards the future, to possible projects, applications, next steps and sequels. One or two such projects might address problems that remained unsolved in my study. These areas did not make it into the 'final cut' of the thesis and I summarise them here. I then make brief mention of unplanned but hugely productive 'by-products' that emerged in parallel with my research. These involve enactments of LCT concepts into educational practice during the course of the thesis, and point to the value of the toolkit for classroom teaching and practitioner development. I end by reconnecting to the wider HE context, pointing briefly but hopefully to the more active roles that EAP practitioners might play in the enhancement of university educational practices.

## 7.2. Summary of Contributions to Knowledge

The main contribution of this thesis has been to make visible the principles structuring the local realisation of an EAP programme. With only a handful of exceptions (e.g. Feak & Swales, 2010; Harwood, 2010; Stoller & Robinson, 2014), research to date has tended to overlook what happens 'downstream' from disciplinary language and text-analytic research. The local expression of EAP in curriculums and classrooms has, as a result, rarely been a focus of interest. Conceptualisations of EAP currently available in the research literature have largely obscured what happens to knowledge as it is *de-located*, *re-located* and *recontextualised* (Bernstein, 1990) across fields of practice. The research presented here begins to address this blindspot, offering insights into enacted recontextualisation practices on a university pre-sessional programme, and tools to make visible the nature and form(s) of these practices.

Drawing on the model of the *epistemic pedagogic device* (Maton, 2014), the conceptualisation of EAP into distinct but interacting fields of research, curriculum and pedagogy provides a contribution to the theorising of sector activity. It has enabled viewing nuances and distinctions in the practice of 'EAP' that are essentially absent in the literature. The boundaries between these three fields will *vary* given the nature of the actors and affordances of the local institutional context. This thesis has shown how these relations manifest in one instance of the local conceptualisation and enactment of English for Academic Purposes. The concept of recontextualisation is fundamental to understanding practices within and between fields of practice. My study provides insights that elucidate the nature of recontextualisation practices in EAP.

The research has revealed a tight relationship between programme ethos and the design and enactment of a curriculum that realises these values in practice. Analysis with the LCT dimensions of Specialisation and Semantics demonstrated not just *that* this was the case, but also enabled articulating the principles structuring what makes this possible. There is a match between the knowledge code observed (ER+, SR-) and what the course seeks to achieve. The course espouses and enacts a set of explicit ways of thinking and practising that enable, in principle, both student *recognition* and *realisation* of valued practices. In this respect, the course offers a curricular analogue of Bernstein's *visible pedagogy* (+C, +F). This is not consistently the case, however, and Specialisation analysis enabled seeing different organising principles at work in the

core curriculum vs. espoused work on autonomy development. The latter was shown to be characterised by a *knower code* (ER–, SR+). The research has thus enabled making visible internal variation in the principles underpinning design.

The pre-sessional curriculum was shown not to be uniformly discipline specific (ER++). In terms of the EGAP/ESAP<sup>43</sup> dichotomy, touched upon several times during the thesis (cf. chapters 1, 2 and 4), analysis demonstrated that the local picture is more complex. The progression from a generic assessment task and curriculum elements in July, through a more tailored thread in August, to greater specificity in September reveals a programme that does not neatly fit into either a 'general EAP' (EGAP) or a 'specific EAP' (ESAP) box. This is perhaps because it seeks to build transferable skills. While Focus (curricular content) is sometimes ER++, Basis (structuring principles) may not be. From a simplistic ESAP perspective, this could be seen as short-changing the students. However, the wave in and out of challenging, often disciplinary-relevant content may be serving a slightly different goal, one that cuts a line between 'generic' and 'specific'. This was seen to comprise key 'curricular concepts' that rise above the particulars of texts and language, but which are identified and practised through them.

Further variation was also seen between course threads later in the programme that are more discipline-specific. Specialisation analysis made these nuances visible. Analysis served also to highlight ways in which, even within ESAP orientations to practice, there may be potentially important differences. Theorising curricular practices by means of the specialisation plane (Maton, 2014) thus enabled moving from a typological to *topological* perspective on specificity. The analytical approach and diagrammatic representation may offer a means to articulate and compare how notions of specificity are enacted within and across EAP programmes in other contexts.

The findings begin to reveal the complexity of grounded attempts to enact and realise an EAP programme that is informed by a set of coherent principles. It also offers a language with which to describe and see this variation in ways that move beyond binaries and pigeonholing, towards something more nuanced. In terms of the ESAP/EGAP debate therefore, an LCT analysis enables articulating what *form* of EAP is being enacted, and thus a more nuanced conceptualising of what is happening in

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<sup>43</sup> English for General Academic Purposes / English for Specific Academic Purposes

local practice. The curriculum is not conceived in terms of 'one size fits all' - a generic set of study skills taught in a vacuum and devoid of particular disciplinary content. However, it is also not a subject-specific programme in preparation for particular departments or programmes. Rather, in a sense, it draws on aspects of the latter in order to develop aspects of the former: engagement in academic content, in order to develop analytical skills and awareness. This is achieved, in the case of the major assessment tasks, through three spiralling cycles of: understanding-enactment-feedback- (repeat). Crucially, this occurs via new, challenging content, which builds in complexity, in requirements of autonomy, but also in relevance to the students.

The structuring principles of lesson design and of classroom teaching were shown to enact practices that also broadly aligned with course values and materials-as-designed. Analysis with LCT semantic gravity enabled making visible the patterns and 'signature principles' underpinning these practices. In particular, a characteristic semantic gravity profile, dubbed 'the pearl dive' was shown to reoccur across the programme. Signature practices among teacher-participants were also made visible, enabling an explanatory account of the means by which the *knowledge code* orientation of the course is enacted at the chalkface. These underlying principles, theorised in terms of semantic gravity, offer a means of characterising potentially important aspects of EAP pedagogy. This includes, for instance, the suggestion that different enactment decisions for the same curricular material may lead to different forms of learning (cf. chapter 6).

In summary, the research has provided a means of characterising and theorising the local enactment of EAP, from conceptualisation to classroom. It thus contributes to the research knowledge base of EAP, but also holds potential for professional practice. I return to this point below after first considering the limitations of my study.

### **7.3. Limitations of this Research Study**

While theorising in this research sought to rise above the particularities of my context, this nevertheless represents only one view into EAP course enactment. It is not possible to generalise to the curricular structures and pedagogical practices on other pre-sessional programmes. The underlying generative mechanisms made visible through LCT concepts and analysis provided insights for this context, and may offer



insights for other programmes and research. However, similar analysis across other similar data sets is needed to enable a broader and more reliable understanding of EAP recontextualisation practices.

Logistical limitations on the research meant few lessons from July, and no classes from September, were recorded or analysed. Future projects might usefully examine the full range of curriculum enactment. This would enable greater understanding of, for instance, the extent to which pedagogical practices shift with the curriculum. This was not a question my study enabled me to address. It would be interesting to know whether, e.g., teacher practice becomes more disciplinary (ER+↑) from July to September.

I only worked with four teachers, all of them experienced. This provided insights into expert enactment; however, it did not illuminate the full range of pedagogical practices on the programme. Mindful of the ethical implications of researching and filming, e.g., staff new to the pre-sessional, it would be valuable to analyse the recontextualisation practices of a much wider range of teachers from contrasting sociohistoric backgrounds. This would enable a deeper view into the variation that exists in enactment practices, and thus greater understanding of how different practitioners might be inducted and supported. Given the varying routes into the EAP profession and the diversity of local institutional contexts and affordances (cf. chapter 1), this would be valuable work to undertake. More research is needed to better understand the nature of differences in practices among EAP practitioners, and the relationships between forms of experience and teacher expertise.

Pressures of time and word count precluded more detailed illustration and discussion of teacher recontextualisation practices. Far more classroom data was collected and analysed than is discussed in the pages of this thesis (cf. Appendix 1 for a summary). A different thesis, focusing more narrowly on EAP classroom practices, might have examined the principles structuring individual teacher pedagogies in greater detail. It might also have afforded greater space to comparing teacher practices and to exploring in greater depth, e.g., the potential effects for student learning of differing enactment decisions. I have provided some glimpses into such principles and practices

here. The more detailed work needed will, I hope, become further research and writing projects in the not-too-distant future.

Finally, my research focus on *knowledge* practices largely ignored questions of power and privilege. Recent work in the EAP literature (e.g. Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hadley, 2015) has made me more acutely aware of more global, political and critical dimensions in EAP and the way that the micro-worlds of local courses and classrooms are bound up with macro-forces at greater scales. However, addressing my research questions required a narrow focus, and this necessarily led to obscuring certain other areas of consideration. Bernstein highlighted these relationships in his work (Bernstein, 1990; 2000), as does Maton (2014; Maton et al., 2016). More such research is needed in EAP to connect 'relations to' and 'relations within' institutional, curricular and pedagogical practices.

#### **7.4. Directions for Future Research**

Analysis of programme threads and component classes suggested that engagement with particular content and tasks was serving to develop more sophisticated student understandings over time. I was unable to unravel or adequately articulate the nature and form(s) of this 'development' during the course of the thesis research. Solving this problem was not crucial to addressing the particular research questions I was asking, but the issues that emerged warrant further investigation. It was clear at lesson level, for instance, that curricular and pedagogic tasks varied in complexity. Texts selected to mediate the teaching of EAP concepts also appeared to vary and interact with task complexity. This is likely to shape the nature of pedagogic interaction and student learning in potentially significant ways.

Further work is needed to understand and elucidate these phenomena. The LCT concept of *semantic density* (Maton, 2014, pp. 125–147), which was introduced briefly in section 2.4.2 but which did not form part of my research framework, is likely to prove fruitful in this respect. Semantic density theorises the degree to which meanings are condensed within sociocultural practices, such as symbols, phrases, gestures or images (Maton, 2014, p. 129). Deeper insights into the nature of meaning-making practices in EAP curriculum and classroom can no doubt be gleaned by developing

analyses that enact semantic density in addition to semantic gravity, thereby employing the full LCT Semantics toolkit for EAP research.

Emerging also in the data and analysis for my study was a sense that the choices that teachers made to make curricular meanings *material* in different ways were also significant. These differential practices were perhaps impacting on strengths of semantic gravity. The decision, for example, to condense insights about textual organisation or noun phrase structure into a visual diagram on the board probably has structuring effects on the curricular knowledge itself. In a ten-minute sequence in Phil's teaching of the *Critical Position* lesson, for example, he mobilises various *semiotic resources* (Kress, 2010) to make meanings. In terms of Kress's model of multimodality (Kress, 2010), Phil draws on different *modes* (the verbal; writing on the whiteboard; colour and highlighting text in the study book projected via a visualiser) to configure messages in particular ways.

This is probably not a trivial phenomenon. Different configurations of semiotic resources are not equivalent, and each decision may afford different kinds of meaning-making. Other teachers engaged students in similar tasks, but made them material in different ways, for instance via only verbal discussion. A small but growing body of work exists that takes a multimodal view on EAP classroom discourse (e.g. Crawford Camiciottoli & Querol-Julián, 2016; Forey & Feng, 2016; Macnaught, 2018); O'Halloran, Tan & Smith, 2016). Studies are also beginning to explore multimodal practices from both sociological and linguistic perspectives, using LCT together with Systemic Functional Linguistics (e.g. Doran, 2017; Hood, 2017; Martin, 2012). Understanding the structuring effects of multimodal practices for curriculum, pedagogic practice and student learning in EAP represents a fascinating area for future interdisciplinary work enacting LCT for research.

### **7.5. Directions for Professional Practice**

Making visible the principles underpinning a pre-sessional programme can enable more nuanced conversations about purpose and development. The visual nature of the semantic gravity wave, in particular, offers a concrete and accessible means of representing and interrogating design and teaching practices. Signature profiles in lessons can be made available to EAP teachers during programme induction - not in

order to declare 'do it like this', but rather as a basis for deeper understandings of what design decisions seek to achieve. Local values and expectations of particular forms of recontextualisation practice can be made more explicit to teachers new to the profession or to a given EAP programme. This may well render such practices more visibly available to staff for professional training and development.

The signature profiles of expert practitioners whose students are successful can also be made visible in similar ways: not as *prescription* but rather as *possibility*. Just as there is *powerful knowledge* (Bernstein, 2000; Young, 2013), there may also be *powerful pedagogies*. Semantic gravity waves may be crucial to such practices (Maton, 2014; Macnaught et al, 2013). Making the Basis of successful teaching practices visible holds great potential for practitioner development. I have begun experimenting with using semantic gravity waves in my own professional practice, for instance in feeding back to teachers on classroom observations (Kirk, 2017b). Early indications suggest this may enable making concrete and visible ways in which teachers may adapt their practices to enable more cumulative learning in the classroom.

Semantic gravity has also, through the accessible metaphors of (e.g.) 'waving up' (SG↓) and 'waving down' (SG↑), provided valuable means in my local context of thinking about, discussing and structuring academic modules, lessons and pedagogical tasks (Kirk, 2017d). Seeing the broad shifts in context dependency of meaning across a course enabled a colleague and I to reconceive and restructure an MA module in Teaching English for Academic Purposes. There is already some anecdotal but positive evidence, therefore, of the productive ways in which the theoretical tools employed in my research can be enacted for practice in EAP.

Description of one programme can also serve as the basis for critical discussion of others. Making visible the findings in this study, using tools of representation such as the specialisation plane (Maton, 2014), offer possibilities for other EAP professionals and units to examine their own courses and practices. Perhaps even without detailed research analysis, heuristic distinctions between notions of 'a focus on knowledge' and 'a focus on knowers' offer a language for talking in new ways about EAP practices. Distinctions between curriculum / lesson Focus (content) and Basis (structuring principles) may also prove productive in highlighting for teachers important differences

between content and task selection, and the purposes to which these are put. Semantic gravity waves and notions of signature profiles offer the wider EAP profession tools to examine, describe and, potentially, to change their own practice.

Research involving LCT concepts enacted specifically for EAP practice is in its infancy. This thesis, and the projects that began to emerge in parallel, suggest that there is much potential for productive development. Such work represents just the beginning of possibilities for educational projects that enact LCT concepts for EAP.

The forms of analysis employed here, and the insights they enable, may also serve to enrich wider university understandings of EAP specialist practices. The research presented in this thesis reveals considerable levels of expertise among EAP staff. Practitioners demonstrate forms of practice that enable intended teaching outcomes to be realised through highly principled instructional design and pedagogic activity. LCT based analyses of EAP expertise may enable highlighting in valuable ways how the sector might contribute more broadly to the active enhancement of HE educational practices. EAP professionals learn so much from exploring the values, texts and language of the disciplines. Perhaps the university will begin to recognise more explicitly how its disciplinary experts might also learn from EAP professionals. The tools that LCT offers the EAP researcher and practitioner to explore disciplinary knowledge itself, and to critique and develop the practices that recontextualise this knowledge for HE curriculums and pedagogies, makes me more hopeful than ever that this will soon more widely and more visibly become the case.

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## APPENDICES

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# APPENDIX 1

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## SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTED & ANALYSED

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Data Collected	Data Analysed	Data Discussed
<i>Documentary artefacts:</i>		
Staff induction materials (PPTs)	✓	✓
Staff handbook	✓	✓
<b>July</b>		
July teacher notes	✓	✓
July coursebook:		
Course principles	✓	✓
Notes on student autonomy	✓	✓
Overview + curriculum threads	✓	✓
Assessment notes	✓	✓
Individual lessons (x4)	✓	✓ (x2)
<b>August</b>		
August teacher notes	✓	x
August coursebook:		
Overview + curriculum threads	✓	✓
Assessment notes	✓	✓
Individual lessons (x4)	✓	✓ (x4)
<b>September</b>		
September teacher notes	✓	x
September coursebook:		
Overview + curriculum threads	✓	✓
Assessment notes	✓	✓
Individual lessons (x4)	✓	✓ (x3)

(continued overleaf)

Data Collected (cont.)	Data Analysed	Data Discussed
<i>Classroom video</i> <sup>44</sup> :		
<i>July classes:</i>		
'Lecture listening' x3 teachers <sup>45</sup>	✓	x
'Noun phrases' x4 teachers	✓	✓ (x2)
'Grammar workshop' x4 teachers	✓	✓ (x2)
<i>August classes:</i>		
'Reading long texts' x4 teachers	✓	✓ (x2)
'Using reading in writing' x3 teachers <sup>46</sup>	✓	x
'Taking a critical position' x4 teachers	✓	x
'Hedging' x4 teachers	✓	✓ (x2)
<i>Classroom photos:</i>		
Student photos of teachers' (interactive) whiteboards <sup>47</sup>	✓	x
<i>Interviews:</i>		
Course designers: 2x 30 mins (Aug, consecutive days)	✓	✓
Teachers: 20-30 mins x26 (i.e. after each of the above lessons)	x	x

<sup>44</sup> All lessons were either 90 minutes or 2 hours long. Lessons videos simultaneously for all research participants present and teaching

<sup>45</sup> Phil absent / did not teach this class

<sup>46</sup> Marco absent / did not teach this class

<sup>47</sup> sporadically and differentially taken / made available

## APPENDIX 2

### INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS (COURSE DESIGNERS)

INTERVIEW 1		
	Question / Prompt	Purpose   Theoretical Influence
Intro	<p><i>I'd like to talk about several areas of your practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>You both and your roles</i></li> <li>• <i>The curriculum and the design process</i></li> <li>• <i>The students</i></li> <li>• <i>The teachers</i></li> </ul>	
<b>YOU AND YOUR ROLES</b>		
1	<p><i>"Now of course we work together...but for the record..."</i></p> <p>Tell me about your roles in the department...</p>	
2	<p>...And what is your particular role with respect to the summer pre-sessional curriculum?</p> <p>What does that involve?</p>	
<b>CURRICULUM &amp; DESIGN PROCESS</b>		
3.i	<p>So, first, tell me about how you see the big picture for the pre-sessional curriculum:</p> <p>What do you seek to achieve at a programme level?            What, for you, are the main goals?            Why?</p> <p>&gt; Where do these goals come from?            What are the influences on your thinking &amp; decisions?</p>	<p>Design Principles            Enacted Design</p> <p>Specialisation:            Epistemic relations            Social relations</p>

3.ii	<p>...And then how does that divide up by month?</p> <p>What goes into each month - and how do you make those selections / decisions?</p>	<p>Design Principles Enacted Design</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p>
3.iii	<p>So if we can talk more about the threads...</p> <p>Take me through the threads in:</p> <p>July August September</p> <p>&gt; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where do these choices come from?</li><li>• How do you decide what lessons are needed?</li></ul></p> <p>&gt; Why this particular order / staging?</p> <p>&gt; And how do you think about 'pacing' - how far apart / how close to space the lessons and how much to fit into each lesson of the thread?</p>	<p>Design Principles Enacted Design</p> <p>Framing: Selection Sequencing Pacing</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p>
3.iv	<p>Looking at the overviews, not all the lessons are explicitly tied to a thread...</p> <p>...So what do the other lessons do?</p> <p>&gt; How are they related (or not) to the threads?</p>	<p>Design Principles Enacted Design</p> <p>Framing: Selection Sequencing Pacing</p>
3.v	<p>OK, so at the lesson level, what is your design process?</p> <p>Tell me about how you plan and write a lesson.</p> <p>&gt; Phil / Rebecca, do you do this any differently?</p> <p>...And, again:</p> <p>&gt; Where do your choice of texts and tasks come from?</p> <p>&gt; How do you decide on the order of tasks?</p> <p>&gt; How do you decide how much to put in one lesson?</p>	<p>Design Principles Enacted Design</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p> <p>Framing: Selection Sequencing Pacing</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p>

INTERVIEW 2		
	Question / Prompt	Purpose   Theoretical Influence
<b>STUDENTS</b>		
4	<p>So let's move on briefly to consider the students...</p> <p>Predominantly Chinese...Predominantly masters postgraduate.</p> <p>Does that impact explicitly on design, and if so how?</p>	<p>Knowledge Knowers</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p>
>	<p>Do you explicitly cater to other students - other nationalities or academic levels (UG / PhD)</p>	
5	<p>We talked already about your goals for the curriculum...</p> <p>...but if I could ask a slightly different question here, what are your goals for the students?</p> <p>What do you want them to know and to be able to do by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The end of the course?</li> <li>• The end of July...August?</li> </ul>	<p>Learning Enacted Learning</p> <p>Knowledge Knowers</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p>
6	<p>Some of the material is fairly conceptual and, for students and maybe even teachers, might sometimes seem quite complex or dense...</p> <p>So for example in the first week of July there are lessons that focus on 'research questions', 'thesis statements' and 'research ethics' [conceptually challenging, and then today, Ss are talking about the 'Uber Economy'</p>	<p>Semantic gravity</p> <p>Framing</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p>
>	<p>Given that students may be new to PG study and they're working in a second language, how do you make these things accessible to students through your design of threads / lessons?</p>	
<b>TEACHERS</b>		
7	<p>So, moving on finally to talk about the teachers on the programme...</p> <p>You're also involved in the selection...and in the observation...of teachers, of course...</p>	<p>Knowledge Knowers</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p>
>	<p>What do you look for in a teacher for the pre-sessional programme? What qualities do you value?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any specialist knowledge?</li> <li>• Any (other) EAP-specific knowledge/behaviours?</li> </ul>	<p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p>

<p>8</p> <p>&gt;</p> <p>&gt;</p>	<p>...And then what does this look like in the classroom?</p> <p>What classroom behaviours do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like to see</li> </ul> <p>What EAP-specific knowledge or behaviours would you like to see?</p>	<p>Pedagogy Enacted Pedagogy</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p> <p>Framing</p>
<p>9</p> <p>&gt;</p>	<p>Going back to thinking about materials design...</p> <p>How far do you explicitly take teachers into consideration when designing lessons or threads?</p> <p>Can you give me any examples from the July book?</p> <p>How does this affect how you think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What to include?</li> <li>• How to sequence and stage things?</li> <li>• How much to put in a lesson?</li> </ul>	<p>Enacted Design Pedagogy</p> <p>Framing: Selection Sequencing Pacing</p>
<p>10</p> <p>&gt;</p>	<p>We talked just before about what you do to make complex content accessible to students...</p> <p>Given the number of teachers being hired in to work on the programme...</p> <p>Is there anything you do explicitly during the design process to scaffold teachers' understandings?</p>	<p>Enacted Design Pedagogy</p> <p>Semantic gravity</p>
<p>11</p> <p>&gt;</p> <p>&gt;</p>	<p>OK, penultimate question...</p> <p>You create separate written curriculum notes for teachers...</p> <p>How do they function?</p> <p>What is the relationship between these and what is already in the book?</p>	<p>Enacted Design Pedagogy Enacted Pedagogy</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>So, finally...</p> <p>You also run weekly staff meetings where the focus is largely on teaching and the materials</p> <p>Why do you see the need for this?</p> <p>How do these meetings function differently from what's already in the study book and the curriculum notes?</p>	<p>Enacted Design Pedagogy Enacted Pedagogy</p> <p>Specialisation: Epistemic relations Social relations</p>



## APPENDIX 3

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### STUDENT CONSENT FORM & INFORMATION SHEET

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**Student-Participant Consent Form**

*Please cross out as necessary*

I have read the Participant Information Sheet	YES / NO
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the study	YES / NO
I have received enough information about the study	YES / NO
Please confirm who you spoke to about the study:	
	Steve Kirk (researcher) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Class Teacher <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other: _____
I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study - at any time - without having to give a reason for withdrawing, and - without affecting my position in the university	YES / NO
I agree to participate in the study	YES / NO

**Signed** ..... **Date** .....

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS).....

## **Research Information Sheet for Student Participants**

### ***Project Summary:***

I am researching what EAP teachers do with Pre-Sessional course materials. Each teacher brings their own personal experience and expertise to the classroom with them. This affects the way they interpret our course materials and how they make planning and teaching decisions. I am interested in these interpretations and in the relationship between teachers, curriculum and classroom. I am hoping that the research will help us:

- improve our course materials
- develop more effective ways of supporting future teachers on the programme
- develop tools and materials for EAP teacher education

### ***Research Approach:***

In order to gain insights into this area, I would like to follow a number of staff through their teaching of summer Pre-Sessional materials. I would like this to include your teacher. I would like to:

- Video recording 6-8 of your classes between now and the end of the Pre-Sessional programme. My interest is mainly in what your teacher does, but sometimes this may also include interactions with students. There will normally be 1 capture point per week. I will not be present during the classes;
- Discussing your teacher's thoughts on each class soon after s/he has taught it
- Nominating 1-2 students to take photos of board work, posters or similar lesson-linked 'artefacts' produced during the class. The student(s) would email me these images after each class

### ***Confidentiality and Anonymity:***

A video camera will be placed at the back of the classroom and will focus mainly on the teacher, not on the students. Sections of the videoed classes will be transcribed and anonymised. All personal references will be removed and you will not be identified in the study. All recordings and transcriptions will be held on a private, password-protected hard drive, backed up once on a separate drive. No one but me, the researcher, will have access to these. All recordings and transcriptions will remain confidential. Only I will have access to the unanonymised data. You can also view these transcriptions and can have access to the completed thesis, should you wish.

I would like to continue working on this area beyond the thesis for the purposes of teacher education and possible publication, and so would like to keep the recordings, transcriptions and any class-relevant images of boards, walls, lesson plans or similar. Any use of video recordings would involve a focus on the teacher, not on the students and students will be digitally anonymised, such that individuals cannot be identified.

### ***Your Consent to Participate:***

My position as both course director and researcher should not affect your decision to be part of the study. You should not feel obliged to say yes. There is no personal advantage or disadvantage to you in agreeing or disagreeing to taking part. You are also free to change your mind and to withdraw your consent at any time, without needing to give a reason.

I very much hope that you will agree to be part of my Ed.D research, so please feel free to ask me at any time via email and/or in person about any aspects of the research.

Many thanks.

Steve Kirk



## APPENDIX 4

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### TEACHER CONSENT FORM & INFORMATION SHEET

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**Teacher-Participant Consent Form**

*Please cross out as necessary*

I have read the Participant Information Sheet	YES / NO
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the study	YES / NO
I have received enough information about the study	YES / NO
Please confirm who you spoke to about the study:	Steve Kirk (researcher) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other: _____
I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study - at any time - without having to give a reason for withdrawing, and - without affecting my position in the university	YES / NO
I consent to participate in the study	YES / NO

**Signed** ..... **Date** .....

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS) .....

**Consent to use video images in work beyond the thesis**

I would like to be able to draw on video footage collected during Ed.D thesis research for possible conference talks and/or EAP teacher development work. This may involve using video stills and/or short video sequences of teaching.

To this end, please also read the statements below and delete as appropriate.

*I understand that:*

The researcher will never use video footage without first making explicit to me in writing how the footage will be used.	YES / NO
I will be provided with access to surrounding (e.g. Powerpoint or other) text / images, such that the full context of intended use is clear	YES / NO
I can ask for further information at any time and until I have received satisfactory detail and / or clarification	YES / NO
I will never be named in talks, unless I ask in writing that I <i>am</i> named	YES / NO
I can withhold my consent to video footage being used on any occasion, and without explanation. In such cases, the footage will not be used.	YES / NO
I can request at any time after submission of the thesis that video footage involving me be destroyed. This request will be carried out within seven days of receipt of the request, and without question.	YES / NO

*Please now delete as appropriate:*

I agree that, in strict accordance with the decisions I have made above, short video sequences of my teaching practice can be used in conference talks and/or teacher development activity	YES / NO
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**Signed** .....

**Date** .....

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS) .....

## **Research Information Sheet for Teacher Participants**

### ***Project Summary:***

I am researching what EAP teachers do with Pre-Sessional course materials. Each teacher brings a personal blend of beliefs, experience and expertise to the classroom with them, and this affects the way they interpret our course materials and how they make planning and teaching decisions. I am interested in these interpretations and in the relationship between teachers, curriculum and classroom. I am hoping that the research will prove fruitful for insights into curriculum support, materials design and staff induction, as well as for professional development and EAP teacher education.

### ***Research Approach:***

In order to gain insights into this area, I would like to follow a number of staff through their teaching of summer Pre-Sessional materials. If you are happy to be one of these teachers, this would involve the following:

- Video recording 6-8 of your classes between now and the end of the Pre-Sessional programme. There will normally be 1 capture point per week. I will not be present during the classes;
- Briefly discussing your thoughts on each class soon after you have taught it – ideally the same day, where feasible. These would be audio recorded and should each take around 20 minutes;
- Sharing any preparatory notes or plans you make for each class;
- Nominating 1-2 students to take photos of board work, posters or similar lesson-linked 'artefacts' produced during the class. The student(s) would email me these images after each class

### ***Confidentiality and Anonymity:***

A video camera will be placed at the back of the classroom and will focus mainly on what you do as the teacher. Interviews and sections of classroom teaching will be transcribed and anonymised. All personal references will be removed and you will not be identified in the study. All recordings and transcriptions will be held on a private, password-protected hard drive, backed up once on a separate drive. No one but me, the researcher, will have access to these. All recordings and transcriptions will remain confidential. Only I will have access to the unanonymised data. You can also view these transcriptions and can have access to the completed thesis, should you wish.

I would like to continue working on this area beyond the thesis for the purposes of teacher education and possible publication, and so would like to keep the recordings, transcriptions and any class-relevant images of boards, walls, lesson plans or similar for possible inclusion (please see the separate consent form). If you would prefer, however, recordings can be destroyed on request, after completion and submission of the thesis.

### ***Your Consent to Participate:***

I am very aware of my position as both course director and researcher. This should in no way affect your decision to be part of the study and you should certainly not feel obliged. There is no personal advantage or disadvantage to you in agreeing or disagreeing to taking part. You are also free to change your mind and to withdraw your consent at any time, without needing to justify yourself.

I very much hope that you will agree to be part of my Ed.D research, so please feel free to ask me at any time via email and/or in person about any aspects of the research.

Many thanks.

Steve



