

# What is EAP? — From Multiple Literacies to a Humanistic Paradigm Shift\*

Yulong Li

Department of Linguistics and Modern Foreign Language Studies, The Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, China

**Abstract**—EAP researchers have proffered definitions of EAP; however, some of these are contradictory. Therefore, effectively defining the scope, aims, and pedagogy of EAP can prove problematic. This essay will extract the shared aspects from popular EAP approaches and then place them into the broader context of EAP development, language teaching and literacy history, and the changing history of the educational landscape. This will make it possible to thematise current EAP theories critically, to further defined the nature of EAP as a combination of multiple literacies, including academic literacy, disciplinary cultural literacy, critical literacy, and digital literacy. Without opportunities to experience the research process directly, the multiple literacies of EAP remain in the domain of classroom knowledge, failing to include preparation for the realities students will encounter when doing research. However, if EAP students, future academics, are well equipped with techniques for doing research and writing papers, but perform research to benefit themselves only, who will speak out for the needs of society? Therefore, in a Neo-liberalism influenced higher education society, EAP should not only be viewed as a utility but should stress the humanistic goals of academic research and the moral responsibilities of those who become academics. Current study suggests a theoretical and pedagogical shift bending towards humanistic EAP.

**Index Terms**—EAP, English for academic purposes, multiple literacies, humanistic paradigm shift

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since its development as a variant of ESP, EAP has been influenced by the language theories of general language teaching and literacy movements. However, its concepts and approaches can, at times, appear too diverse for learners and practitioners to identify. This literature review aims to extract shared features of popular EAP approaches to then locate them into the broader context of EAP development, language teaching and literacy history, and the changing history of the educational landscape. It will also critically thematise current EAP theories and aims, in order to examine the nature of EAP's multiple literacies further, which include academic literacy, disciplinary cultural literacy, critical literacy and digital literacy.

## II. PROFFERED DEFINITIONS OF EAP

Theories in the field of EAP are chaotic, not only because there are (1) quarrels over defining EAP, (2) battles between schools, (3) mixed use of jargon, and (4) debate over instructions, but also because a wide range of concepts have been associated with EAP. In addition to ELT theories, it has, since its creation, been influenced by diverse theories, including: “linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, communicative language teaching, writing across the curriculum, learning theories” (Benesch, 2008, p.4), register analysis, genre analysis, systematic functional linguistics, writing in discipline (WID), American second-language composition, critical theory, and new literacies (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001; Chazal, 2014).

In terms of the problems encountered when defining EAP, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.34) define EAP as “any English teaching that relates to a study purpose”. Meanwhile, Gillett (2004, p.11) describes EAP as “the language and associated skills that students need to undertake study in higher education through the medium of English”. It has also been defined as having “the aim of assisting learners’ study or research in that language” (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001, p.8). Considering all these definitions inadequate, Hyland (2006, p.2) characterised EAP as a “specialised English language teaching grounded in the social, cognitive and linguistics demands of academic target situations, providing focused instruction informed by an understanding of texts and constraints of academic contexts.” However, this interpretation fails to satisfy Gunning (2009, p.16), who argues “all tertiary English education should fall under the rubric of ESP/EAP”. Sometime later, Hadley (2015, p.23) described EAP as “tertiary level English instructional training that enables learners to improve their language proficiency within higher educational institutions, irrespective of the

---

\* The sections regarding definitions of EAP and the multiple literacies is an adaptation from the same author's publication with a title *English for Academic Purposes A New Perspective from Multiple Literacies* in *World Journal of English Language (WJEL)*, Vol. 6, No. 2; 2016, doi:10.5430/wjel.v6n2p10. WJEL is an open access journal under the license of CC BY 4.0. The copy right of the publication is retained by the author. The author retains the right to republication, reuse, and distribution after the first publication.

country within which that instruction takes place". The literature review portion of this study aims to reorganise the definitions of EAP listed, whilst also recognising that they are not exhaustive, as EAP researchers rarely agree.

In terms of the arguments that have arisen between schools, some EAP concepts completely contradict others. For example, Benesch (2008, p.60) signposted critical EAP as the protection of the "interests of greater equity and democratic participation (of students) in and out of educational institutions", arguing that without criticality the EAP teachers practiced would be diminished: "EAP is at the point in history where it is ready to consider its ethics... Are they (EAP teachers) to be trainers, carrying out target aims uncritically, or educators... imaging students a more just world?" (Benesch, 2008, p.130). However, this view was later challenged by Deane and O'Neil (2011, p.32), who suggest that, "WID, from this perspective (of critical EAP), be critiqued as being naïve, or even as complicit in disciplinary power and dominance and in silencing alternative voices and ways of doing... but we argue that they may be misplaced."

Arising from the mixed use of jargon associated with EAP, is the term academic literacies. The terminologies 'EAP' and 'academic literacies' have been used interchangeably, and sometimes to refer to different concepts, as a result of the plethora of contributions from researchers with different backgrounds and standpoints, as evidenced in the following examples. (1) In New Zealand and Australia, McWilliams and Allan (2014) use the term 'embedding academic literacies', rather than EAP, to refer to approached towards training students in academic English; (2) Wingate and Tribble (2012) and Lillis and Scott (2007) separate EAP and academic literacies, using the former in reference to text and the latter when describing practice; (3) Lea and Street (1998) consider academic literacies rather than EAP the broadest concept, claiming it brings together all other elements of academic English; (4) Hyland (2006) opines that EAP is an overall concept, and that academic literacies form only one approach. Academic literacies have been referred to as a plural form of literacy, encapsulating disciplinary socialisation and study skills (Hyland, 2006), an approach that has come under attack not only for its impracticality (Lillis, 2010) but also for its focus on ideology (Deane and O'Neil, 2011), which arises from its critical pedagogy orientation. However, it is argued that these commentators have forgotten the very nature of Lea and Street's (1999, 2000) academic literacies, which refer to any system comprising more than mere critical pedagogy approaches.

On the topic of the debate arising as a component of EAP instruction, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) define EAP as essential to teach the four macro skills of speaking, listening, interacting, and literacy (namely reading and writing), with the addition of micro skills taught within each macro skill (e.g. being able to use discourse markers when writing), and EGAP (e.g. generic skills transferrable through disciplines). This thereby imports the concept of ESAP (the teaching of language related to a specific disciplinary discourse) (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998). Lea and Street (1999, 2000) introduced the notion of the significance of the critical approach and disciplinary cultural socialisation of EAP, in addition to EAP's focus on skills. Deane and O'Neill (2011), as proponents of WID (Writing in Discipline), confirm that the language related to disciplines is an appropriate skill of academic writing, similar to the view of ESAP held by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998). However, they dispute the affordance of generic skills and academic literacies. Bearing in mind the conflicts inherent in approaches to EAP instruction, Wingate (2015) suggested an integrated model of EAP, one that would absorb all the advantages derived from previous approaches. However, with the development of ICT, Wingate's integrated model appears to neglect the affordances and new meanings created by new digital ICT, which Chun (2015) further argues should be included in EAP.

### III. REDEFINITION OF EAP AS MULTIPLE LITERACIES

In the absence of efforts to integrate EAP concepts and approaches, it can be difficult for learners and practitioners to decide upon what course of action to follow, particularly when the inexperienced face a 'jungle of jargon'. This section therefore extracts the common features of popular EAP approaches, before placing them into the broader contexts of EAP development, language teaching and literacy history, and the changing history of the educational landscape. Stern (1983, p.76) states that, "Knowing the historical context is helpful to an understanding of language teaching theories". This study thus aims to organise schools and strands in EAP. The following four subsections are listed under the educational trends of traditionalism, progressivism, criticalism, and digitalism, aiming to demonstrate the landscape of EAP as combining multiple literacies.

#### A. *Under Traditionalism: Language as a System and EAP as Academic Literacy*

From Ranciere's perspective, modern education underwent three theoretical stages: traditionalism, progressivism, and criticalism (cited in Biesta & Bingham, 2010). Traditionalism viewed education as the dissemination of the necessary common sense and knowledge required for people to live in society. However, this knowledge is generally regarded as authoritative and objective and not usually associated directly with learners' experiences (Biesta & Bingham, 2010). In such circumstances, from the early 20th century onwards, language was defined as and believed to be a system of structures, firstly as stated by Saussure (Stern, 1983) and later as defined by Chomsky (Kumaravadivelu, 2009), both of whom argued that "a language is a highly integrated system" (Langacker, 1972, p.18) with mutually connected and supportive structural components (Stern, 1983). By following such a systematic structure, people could "combine phonemes to form words, words to form phrases, phrases to form sentences, and sentences to form spoken or written texts" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.5). From this perspective, learning a language was viewed as mastering

autonomous and objective knowledge, or codes containing meaning, as produced by writers or speakers (Stern, 1983; Hyland, 2002). Kumaravadivelu (2006) thereby categorises this spectrum of language as a system.

Such a model suggests beliefs with considerable similarity between language use across disciplines (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987), and advocates English language skills as generic and transferable (Hyland, 2006) in EAP. For example, register analysis involves teaching sentence grammar through subjects (Halliday, McIntosh, and Strevens, 1964); rhetoric analysis analyses how sentences are connected into paragraphs to provide meaning (Allen and Widdowson, 1974). While the broader view of EAP purports that similar academic English strategies could usefully be taught across disciplines (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001); EGAP emphasises the need to learn general English before moving on to learn English for specific purposes (Dudley-Evan and St John, 1998), as does generic skills EAP or skill-based EAP (Lea and Street, 2000; Hyland, 2006). The enhancement of such approaches has been accompanied by an increase in the number of non-traditional and international students studying at universities in the UK and in the US (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001; Hyland, 2006). These students reportedly encounter difficulties with both the English language and the academic context, which is unfamiliar to them, thus requiring an EAP programme that delivers a range of academic skills in addition to linguistic systems.

Therefore, in general, in the context of EAP, under the guise of traditionalism, students not only learn English as a code and set of systems, but also practice generic academic skills likely to be required in order to complete assignments and dissertations at university. This description reflects Henderson and Hirst's (2007, p.26) traditional and neutral definition of academic literacy: "Academic literacy is just a set of skills that students must master in order to perform successfully as 'scholar'... its norms and conventions are considered unitary and monolithic".

#### *B. Under Progressivism: Language as Discourse and EAP as Disciplinary Cultural Literacy*

The second wave of the education model was defined by Ranciere and is cited by Biesta and Bingham (2010, p.110) as progressivism; an approach concerning the relationship between learners' private experiences and those of wider society: "the progressive orientation shares the desire to create a common body of knowledge that will enable the communication of citizens in the public sphere". Regarding acceptance of knowledge as the mode of communication between particular people in specific contexts has changed how people perceive language.

Contrary to the Chomskyan systematic structure of language, Halliday (1973) argued that language is not a fixed and autonomous code, but rather has optional meanings subject to the interlocutors present in specified contexts. The process of communication is not a process of communicating meaning-containing codes but rather the interaction of locution (literal meaning of language), illocution (connotation of language), and perlocution (anticipated results of language use in context) (Austin, 1962). Therefore, language in context not only concerns grammatical competence, but also, most importantly, sociolinguistic competence (Hymes, 1972).

A large body of evidence has identified components of textual difference between the genres in a number of different disciplines (Bracken and Oughton, 2006; Hyland, 2008, 2009). Different disciplines have also developed their own professional discourse, making it challenging for those working outside the discipline to understand (Hyland, 2006). Wingate (2015) indicates that the use of English by members of different disciplines is designed for the purposes of intra-disciplinary communication. The phenomenon of specialised knowledge for special institutions expresses Foucault's idea of discipline as discourse (1979). Kumaravadivelu (2006) categorises this spectrum of language as discourse.

As with EAP, in order to be proficient in the discourse, being able to communicate with peers requires genuine immersion and interaction (Wingate, 2015). In other words, it is necessary to become a participant member (Norton, 2003). Moreover, proficiency in disciplinary discourse not only concerns whether new members are clear about the English language's use of expert members, but also involves "an understanding of the disciplines' epistemology", "an understanding of the sociocultural context", and "a command of the conventions and norms that regulate these interactions" (Wingate, 2015, p.13).

In practice, Hyland (2006) encourages the attainment of discourse membership by learning about specificity in relation to the targeting of individual disciplines in EAP. A representative of this school of thought is disciplinary socialisation, which encourages students to adopt roles as novice members of the discourse community, members who are guided, modelled, and educated by more mature members (Lea and Street, 2000; Hyland, 2006). In addition to disciplinary socialisation, researchers also described writing in disciplines (WID) (Deane and O'Neil, 2011); genre analysis (Swale, 1990; Thompson & Diani, 2015); English for specific academic purposes (ESAP) (Dudley-Evan and St John, 1998); and the relatively narrow scope of EAP (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001). However, Benesch (2008) has criticised such approaches for assuming an academic hierarchy of mature members with authority over the novice.

Many scholars also advocate methods requiring that membership be attained via pedagogic discourse and participation in EAP instruction. For instance, many EAP scholars insist on the authenticity of their disciplinary discourse; some having begun to use authentic research articles to teach EAP in a number of different disciplines, and others suggesting that subject teachers should join forces with language teachers to deliver specificity to the EAP class (Dudley-Evans, 2001; Deane and O'Neill, 2011; Wingate, 2015). However, this refers to discourse participation in pedagogical discourse (Woodward-Kron, 2002), and the potential results in terms of students' written work might differ from their writing in genuine mature discourse (Freedman and Adam, 1996). As Widdowson (1998, p.707-712) stated: "The classroom context serves a learning community, and the purpose of any discourse enacted therein is a pedagogic

one. So whatever pragmatic activity goes on has to lead to the internalisation of the language as a semantic resource.”

These criticisms have led other schools of EAP to emerge, with regard to membership in a mature discourse (Woodward-Kron, 2002). According to Wingate (2015, p.15), students’ understanding of the epistemology of the discipline should take place through “interaction between experts and novice in the relevant social situation”. Recognising its usefulness, Benesch (2008, p.60) organised an EAP course for those studying anthropology, to help them become involved with and “organise themselves to create a more conducive environment for engaged learning”. Similarly, Breen and Littlejohn (2000), Canagarajah (2002), and Purser (2011) all suggested increasing students’ participation in learning by relating course content to their disciplines in a number of different ways, albeit with a concrete pedagogy.

A disciplinary discourse, from the perspective of Giroux and McLaren (1994), could be a subculture group, as the members of the discourse might share similar norms and forms of behaviour valued by the discourse (Hyland 2009, 2012). Moll and Arnot-Hopffer (2005, p.33) stated “Culture provided particular rules for behaviours”. Thus, members of the same culture are expected to share genre, register, and language. Due to his sociological background, Hyland (2012) later added that the identity of a person is not something that proceeds from him/herself, but is instead formulated in confirmation by others, and whether a person is established as a member of a disciplinary discourse community depends on whether he/she is recognised by other members of that community. One aspect of recognition proceeds from understanding of whether the person shares a genre and language register with others.

Hyland’s (2012) description of disciplinary identity is influenced by cultural literacy theory, in which identity is seen as a by-product of culture: “the development of identity is a result of interactions in social settings... how one engages with cultural symbols and tools, such as texts, how one interacts with others ... (lead to) who one becomes” (Clark and Flores, 2007, p.10). Therefore, learners need to obtain knowledge about the culture of the disciplinary discourse community to which they belong or are preparing to enter; in other words, they must acquire disciplinary cultural literacy. However, as Giroux and McLaren (1994) have claimed such perspectives on culture are stereotypical and static, as all members of a culture differ, and people in different subcultural groups are likely to have overlapping memberships.

### *C. Under Criticalism: Language as Ideology and EAP as Critical Literacy*

The third wave of the educational paradigm shift is criticalism, which derived from modernism and post-modernism (Biesta & Bingham, 2010). It exists as a critical reflection on previous traditionalism and progressivism, revealing both as creating some degree of inequality in education. Education creates hierarchies of knowledge (traditionalism) and for people (progressivism). The previous two educational models are, according to Ranciere, making “truth ... to be found in the ideological and structural inequality that privilege some people and oppress others” (Biesta & Bingham, 2010, p.111). They further assert that the guiding principle of criticalism in education is the aim of unveiling the ideological obfuscation before students obtain a truth.

Simultaneous with criticalism, a critical revolution has begun in the field of language education, described as postmethod in relation to ELT (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; 2006), critical literacy (Wray, 2007), and critical discourse analysis (Hammersley, 1997). These movements, which are based on criticalism, examine language as ideology (Kumaravadivelu, 2009). Thompson (1990, p.56) describes ideology as a means to “study the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination”. Literally speaking, language ideology aims to examine dominance and inequality in and/or produced by language. Similarly, according to Kroskrity (2000, p.8-18), learning a language as ideology requires students to have “the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interests of a specific social or cultural group... (to have) varying degrees of awareness of local language ideologies.”

In the domain of EAP, Lea and Street (2000) observe the dangers inherent in treating and teaching disciplinary discourse as static, and those that arise when viewing students as passive learners to be socialised (Woodward-Kron, 2002). Similarly, Ivanic (1997) uses a large body of evidence to show how learners’ heritage, identity, and context can be neglected and become voiceless in the face of learning a new target discourse, and how students’ heritage, identity, and personal contexts are reciprocated in their EAP learning. Furthermore, a critical component in academic literacies (Lea and Street, 2000; Wingate and Tribble, 2012), and critical EAP (Benesch, 2008) is the intent to compensate for the limitations of the previous EAP stages and to uncover the “mystifying epistemology and practices of disciplines, which may not be clear to students” (Deane and O’Neil, 2011, p.32). This can involve helping students to gain a critical understanding of their discipline (Hyland, 2006), and giving them the skills to question the academic status quo (Cherryholmes, 1998; Benesch, 2006, 2008). Because the practices and values of EAP are not innate, but are instead formed in response to sociocultural and historical factors, the tradition of a disciplinary discourse should not be deemed sacred, but should rather be subject to challenge, regardless of whether it is part of a coercive following free from disputes (Benesch, 2008).

Critical approaches in EAP are framed by Morgan and Ramanathan (2005) as critical literacy. However, Wray’s (2007) definition of critical literacy makes this description more understandable. Wray (2007, p.2) argued: (1) critical literacy encourages students to investigate and question the “relationships between language and social practices that advantage some social groups over others”; (2) it admits that texts in whatever form are inseparable from “the cultural and social practices in which and by which they are constructed... the way we use language ... is never neutral or value-free”; (3) critical literacy encourages students to be more willing to analyse and evaluate phenomena; and (4) it

helps students become more attuned to social justice.

The critical approach in EAP interrogates the established hierarchy, which prioritises experience and demeans newcomers (Lea and Streat, 2000). This is well reflected by Wray's (2007) first point; i.e. that the critical approach confirms EAP has arisen as a product of history and social economic development (Benesch, 2008). The second point, which urges students not to act as passive recipients of knowledge, but instead to connect with broader social realities (Chun, 2015), also addresses the third point; which describes the benefits of critical literacy to students and society as described by Wray (2007). As outlined by Benesch (2008, p.130): "EAP is at the point in history where it is ready to consider its ethics... Are they (EAP teachers) to be trainers, carrying out target aims uncritically, or educators... imaging students a more just world?" Therefore, EAP programmes should also endeavour to teach critical literacy.

However, criticism has been criticised for a lack of pedagogy (Wingate and Tribble, 2012), it is arguably misguidedly spreading ideology (Deane and O'Neill, 2011) and twisting the true meaning of academic literacy, as students learn by participating in discourse activities (Wingate, 2015), yet it seeks to deconstruct the discourse they have yet to enter or become established within (Haq, 2007). The conceptualisation of EAP in terms of language as ideology emphasises its function in raising students' awareness of the formation of and fitting into disciplinary discourse (Norton and Toohey, 2004; Hyland, 2012). In particular, Chun (2015) notes its affordance in linking discourse and learning with a broader context and the wider world, stressing the necessity of criticism to protect students' rights to information.

In the broader macro context, as English becomes the lingua-franca of the world (Graddol, 1997; Hyland, 2006), scholars in countries with no historical relationship to English are now commonly expected to publish in English to guarantee promotion (Hamp-Lyons, 2011). English is thereby implicitly taking over the cultural identity of its non-inner circle users, as learning English ideologically maintains learners' criticality as local-global citizens (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; 2012).

#### *D. Under Digitalism: New Meanings of Language and EAP as Digital Literacy*

Along with the popularity of ICT and mobile devices, the Internet and mobile digitalism have become ubiquitous, rendering learning portable, affordable, accessible, situated, immediate, connected, individualised, and personalised (Melhuish and Falloon, 2010). Language and language teaching have also been influenced by this. Walker (2014, p.581) states that "digital technologies are becoming part of the way that people communicate and part of the context in which language is used", resulting in a "decline in more linear approaches to reading or more reflective approaches to writing" (Dudeney, Hocky, and Pegrum, 2013, p.14).

Aside from the practical changes, meaning making in language has also been transformed by the ubiquity of digital data: (1) people now have to manage and understand language printed using electronic materials; (2) they are exposed to more written language because of the increasing volume of material available online; and (3) they can also contribute themselves to sites such as blogs and Wikipedia (Walker, 2014). Conversely, the form of language has also changed, due to the existence and structure of presentation skills, such as Powerpoint and Prezi, which require language consistent with the format of software (Walker, 2014).

In reference to the growing abundance of digital resources, Cope and Kalantzis (2009, p.175) suggested redesigning EAP pedagogies to nurture learners as "fully makers and remakers of signs and transformers of meaning" of the "multimodal discourses in textbooks, websites and classrooms" (Chun, 2015, p.29). As early as 2002, Hyland and Hamp-Lyon (2002, p.8) argued that the domain of EAP includes not only the skills for textual production, but also the ability to produce visual materials, stating: "the ability to produce and understand text-visual interrelations is now an essential component of an academic literacy, and the EAP research is to understand and detail these meanings". For example, students not only have to learn to produce the oral academic language required in the form of Powerpoint or Prezi, but also to submit assignments or ideas in the form of either an online discussion forum or e-portfolio (Walker, 2014), and using multi-media tools such as YouTube videos (Jewitt and Kress, 2010). Moreover, the widespread availability of digitalised materials and digital resources requires that EAP teachers should assist their students on how to select, manage, and understand those resources; for example this includes determining how to add links or footnotes to e-materials, how to search for materials from digital databases, and how to quote and reference e-materials (Walker, 2014). Hyland and Hamp-Lyon also failed to mention the dangers of online plagiarism, the possibility of purchasing assignments and collusion (Walker, 2014). It is critical, therefore, that EAP teachers teach students about how to use software like Turnitin and further emphasise the importance of maintaining their academic integrity in a digital world (Walker, 2014).

The aim of introducing new components to EAP pedagogy is, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) argue, to keeping abreast of methods for communicating meaning and knowledge. Indeed, Chun (2015) opines that it is essential to provide students the skills to keep well informed about the ongoing changes in academic language formation. Either way, it is necessary to level up the nature of literacy, because according to Dudeney, Hocky, and Pegrum (2013, p.16), literacy is partially "grounded in language" and partially "connected with the communication of meaning." To be specific, this involves levelling up digital literacy, which is defined by White (2015, p.24) as literacy involving "all aspects of developing the knowledge, skills, competencies, confidence ... capabilities ... to make use of digital technologies in a productive, creative, critical, safe, and ethical way". These features of digital literacy are consistent with what EAP policy makers suggest should be taught under the auspices of digitalism.

However, some EAP teachers are themselves lacking in the ability to use the available technology proficiently. Thus, they are obliged to learn how to (1) prepare students to study in ubiquitous technology environments, and (2) enhance their teaching using the Internet and associated technology (Walker, 2014). Some researchers dispute the supposed significance of the role of the Internet in changing the landscape of learning. For example, Bowen (2012) claims the Internet and new technology have simply added new tools for learning that are no different from those offered by paper and pens. However, it is apparent that today, generally speaking, EAP involves teaching a variety of literacies; e.g. academic literacy, disciplinary cultural literacy, critical literacy and digital literacy. Understanding EAP as communicating multiple literacies reduces the demand on readers' cognitive processing of the meaning of EAP overall, by classifying it according to its separate components.

#### IV. CALLING FOR A HUMANISTIC PARADIGM SHIFT IN EAP

EAP has long been viewed as a rehearsal tool for novice researchers, before their entrance proper into the arena of academic discourse. However, regardless of the fact that its focus is on knowledge (whether academic, disciplinary cultural, critical or digital literacy), the crucial aspects of how to 'do' research have been largely untouched; i.e. how to interact with research participants, how to conduct experiments, how to locate flaws within complex phenomena, how to filter arguments from different layers of bias, how to evaluate the opportunities and limitations embodied in one's own research, and how to make ethical decisions.

In other words, contemporary EAP theories fail to include preparation for the realities students will encounter when doing research. Thus, without opportunities to experience the research process directly, the multiple literacies of EAP remain in the domain of classroom knowledge. Even though scholars like Hyland (2006), and Lea and Street (2000) have recommended disciplinary socialisation be taught within EAP, from their description, their aim appears to have been merely to encourage students to interact with the discipline through reading and writing materials. However, academic research contains more than simply writing up research, considerable additional work is necessitate both before and after this step.

Being responsible academics and changing society to benefit humanity appears to describe an unspoken goal of teaching EAP. Although this might not appear to relate to current trends described in reference to EAP literacies, in the context of China for example, it could be considered risky to teach students multiple literacies without emphasising the ethical and moral components associated with humanity. Indeed, accusations of a lack of academic ethics have previously been targeted at the academic community in China (Douglass, 2012; Beach, 2013). Historic examples from China of academic misconduct are diverse, ranging from copyright offences, to plagiarism, commissioning ghost writers, buying other people's products, faking transcripts, and faking degrees (Beach, 2013).

The problems above are exacerbated by competition. China has one of the largest populations in the world, and is home to more than 2000 tertiary institutions, with estimates suggesting that by 2020 there will be 195 million graduates surging towards the job market (Bradsher, 2013). Thus, the job market is fiercely competitive, and jobseekers with undergraduate degrees, and even postgraduate degrees are not rare. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, China's government enlarged their university enrolment rate by 470% (Jacques, 2009), leading some to doubt the quality of higher education output. These factors contribute to students having utilitarian attitudes towards education and learning (Beach, 2013). This leads to the question: If EAP students, future academics, are well equipped with techniques for doing research and writing papers, but perform research to benefit themselves only, who will speak out for the needs of society? Therefore, EAP as a tool to hone academic research is potentially beneficial to all humanity.

On a more philosophical basis, the aforementioned academic misconduct and enlarged students enrollment is a by-product of the dissemination of neoliberalism throughout higher education. Neoliberalism, sometimes termed social Darwinism, conveys the view of "see(ing) competition as the defining characteristic of human relations. It redefines citizens as consumers, whose democratic choices are best exercised by buying and selling, a process that rewards merits and punishes inefficiency" (Monbiot, 2016, n.p.). Higher education is inevitably influenced by neoliberalism (Steger and Roy, 2010), seeking to offer vocational training for students, by equipping them with cookie-cutter knowledge, so they can perform in different posts after graduation. This phenomenon is particularly apparent among low ranking universities, who use students' hopes that a degree will assist their job hunting as bait to attract student enrolments (Hadley, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to consider that teaching students practical EAP as multiple literacies will help students with their job hunting, and that this is perhaps the logic of the most EAP theories producers.

In humanism, knowledge resulting from the human experience multiplies sensitivity, the latter meaning the reflection and realisation of experience (Harari, 2016). Human experience counts as the foundation of learning: "learning is facilitated when the learner participates in the learning process responsibly. When the learner choose their goals, discovers learning resources, formulates problems, decides on a course of action, and lives with the consequences of each of these choices, then significant learning occurs" (Rogers, 1969, p.157-164, cited in Gould, 2012, p.83). Thus, humanistic philosopher Carl Rogers (1995) pointed out that universities pay too much attention to rational knowledge delivered by professors or other disciplinary experts, often ignoring the significance of students' authentic experience and reflections upon learning. Without such processes, in Rogers et al' words (1989), the self-actualisation of students' potentiality cannot be guaranteed. An important characteristic of researchers being self-actualised is an active concern for the "welfare of humanity" (Maslow, 1967, cited in Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2009, p.487). Just as those who use their

academic knowledge to produce fake essays and those who used their academic writing skills to get paid as “ghost-writers, or those who engage on other academic misconduct are not actualising themselves as true researchers and are not concerned with the welfare of humanity.

However, to date, almost all EAP pedagogy, even that stressing disciplinary socialisation, remains a classroom based method involving reading and learning from selected materials, even though the classroom environment and materials are simulating they do not guarantee the same learning effect as authentic contexts (Freedman & Adam, 1996). Furthermore, reading literature and writing up research papers is just one component of the academic research process; researchers need to either experiment, enter the field, or conduct interviews to address real world problems. Isolating students into classrooms would lead to learning without participation in students’ experiences; in other words, the curriculum lacks humanity (Rogers, 1995). Echoing with calls from Grasso and Martinelli (2010), King, Miller, and Klawe (2010) report that today’s professional education should not only incorporate subject knowledge, but also affordances for wider society; thus, EAP as initial training for future researchers should extend beyond the classroom and paper work.

From a linguistic perspective, Widdowson (1998) suggested students learn English through experience. English language studied in the classroom, no matter how similar to real world contexts, it is not as authentic as that acquired naturally, because the classroom environment is not localised. Classroom English teaching emphasises the semantic meaning over the pragmatic meaning of language; however, in localised or authentic contexts, people just “pay only as much attention to the language as it is necessary to make this connection and no more...for it is only when listeners connect language up to contextual conditions of one kind or another that they can do things with it” (Widdowson, 1998, p.707-709). Similarly, if students are able to learn EAP while conducting their own academic research, the research contexts and processes could then afford greater support for their writing, rendering it more purposeful.

Widdowson’s (1998) opinions regarding learning English through experience echo ideas put forward by Carl Rogers (1967), the humanistic philosopher. EAP’s aim has always been to prepare students for a future as academics; however, from the perspective of humanistic education, former EAP experts have failed to address the importance of students’ context related experience (Rogers, 1967). In the example of China, where many students are demotivated to learn, and when academic misconduct in China is severe, EAP should not only be viewed as a utility but should stress the humanistic goals of academic research and the moral responsibilities of those who become academics.

## V. CONCLUSION

EAP has become popularised by the acceptance of English as the global language of academia, the workplace, and higher education. Historically, EAP has, since its creation, been influenced by language theories drawn from both general language teaching and literacy movements. However, its concepts and approaches at times appear to be too diverse for learners and practitioners to identify readily which course of action to follow, particularly those who are inexperienced. This essay therefore reorganized EAP as a combination of multiple literacies, including academic literacy, disciplinary cultural literacy, critical literacy, and digital literacy. Furthermore, contemporary EAP theories including the EAP as multiple literacies fail to include preparation for the realities students will encounter when doing research. Thus, without opportunities to experience the research process directly, the multiple literacies of EAP remain in the domain of classroom knowledge. EAP as initial training for future researchers should extend beyond the classroom and paper work, and it should be concerned with the welfare of human. Therefore, this essay suggests a humanistic paradigm shift in EAP theories and pedagogies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank Dr Lixun Wang, from The Education University of Hong Kong, for his suggestions.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Allen, J. P., & Widdowson, H. G. (1974). Teaching the communicative use of English. *IRAL-International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 12(1-4), 1-22.
- [2] Austin, J. L. (1962). How to do things with word. London: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Beach, J. M. (2013). Academic Capitalism in China: Higher Education or Fraud? Austin, Texas: West by Southwest Press.
- [4] Benesch, S. (2008). Critical English for academic purposes: Theory, politics, and practice. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- [5] Bingham, C., & Biesta, G. (2010). Jacques Rancière: Education, truth, emancipation. London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- [6] Bowen, J. A. (2012). Teaching naked: How moving technology out of your college classroom will improve student learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- [7] Bracken, L. J., & Oughton, E. A. (2006). ‘What do you mean?’ The importance of language in developing interdisciplinary research. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 31(3), 371-382.
- [8] Bradsher, K. (2013, January 16). Next made-in-China boom: College graduates. The New York Times. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/17/business/chinas-ambitious-goal-for-boom-in-collegegraduates.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/17/business/chinas-ambitious-goal-for-boom-in-collegegraduates.html?_r=0) (access 12/25/2016).

- [9] Breen, M. P., & Littlejohn, A. (2000). *Classroom decision making: Negotiation and process syllabuses in practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [10] Canagarajah S. (2002). Multilingual writers and the academic community: Towards a critical relationship. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 1(1), 29-44.
- [11] Chazal, E. (2014). *English for academic purposes*. UK: Oxford Press.
- [12] Cherryholmes, C. (1998). *Power and criticism: Post-structural investigations in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- [13] Chun, C. W. (2015). *Power and meaning making in an EAP classroom: Engaging with the everyday*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- [14] Clark, E. R., & Flores, B. B. (2007). Cultural literacy: Negotiating language, culture, and thought. *Voices from the Middle*, 15(2), 8-14.
- [15] Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2009). "Multiliteracies": New literacies, new learning. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 4(3), 164-195.
- [16] Deane, M. & O'Neill, P. (2011). Writing in the disciplines: Beyond remediality. In M. Deane, & P. O'Neill (Eds.), *Writing in the Discipline* (pp. 28-36). London: Palgrave.
- [17] Dudley-Evans, T. (2001). English for Specific Purposes. In R. Carter, & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. (131-137). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [18] Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M.-J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [19] Dudeney, G., Hockly, N., & Pegrum, M. (2013). *Digital literacies*. New York: Pearson Education.
- [20] Douglass, J. A. (2012). China Futurisms: Research Universities as Leader or Followers? *Social Research*, 79(3), 639-668.
- [21] Flowerdew, J., & Peacock, M. (2001). Issues in EAP: A preliminary perspective. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes* (pp. 8-24). Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [22] Foucault, M. (1979). Authorship: What is an author? *Screen*, 20(1), 13-34.
- [23] Freedman, A., & Adam, C. (1996). Learning to write professionally "Situated Learning" and the transition from university to professional discourse. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 10(4), 395-427.
- [24] Gillett, A. J. (2004). The ABC of ELT "EAP". *IATEFL*, 178, (11), 11-11.
- [25] Giroux, H., & McLaren, P. (Eds.). (1994). *Between borders: Pedagogy and the politics of cultural studies*. New York and London: Routledge.
- [26] Gould, J. (2012) *Learning Theory and Classroom Practice in the Lifelong Learning Sector*. London: Sage.
- [27] Graddol, D. (1997). *The future of English? A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21st century*. London: British Council.
- [28] Grasso, D. & Martinelli, D. (2010). Holistic Engineering. In D. Grasso & M. B. Burkins (Eds.), *Holistic Engineering Education: Beyond Technology* (pp. 36-42). New York: Springer.
- [29] Gunning, J. (2009). An immodest proposal for tertiary-level EFL: An interview with Mike Guest. *The Language Teacher*, 33(9), 15-17.
- [30] Hadley, G. (2015). *English for academic purposes in Neoliberal Universities: A critical grounded theory*. London and New York: Springer.
- [31] Halliday, M. A. K. (1973). *Explorations in the functions of language*. North-Holland: Elsevier.
- [32] Halliday, M. A. K., & McIntosh, A. Stevens. (1964). *The linguistic sciences and language teaching*. New York: Longman.
- [33] Hamp-Lyons, L. (2011). English for academic purposes: 2011 and beyond. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10(2011), 2-4.
- [34] Haque, E. (2007). Critical pedagogy in English for academic purposes and the possibility for 'tactics' of resistance. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 15(1), 83-106.
- [35] Harari, Y. N. (2016). *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*. London: Harvill Secker.
- [36] Henderson, R., & Hirst, E. (2007). Reframing academic literacy: Re-examining a short-course for "disadvantaged" tertiary students. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 6(2), 25-38.
- [37] Hutchison, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [38] Hyland, K. (2006). *English for academic purposes: An advanced resource book*. London: Routledge.
- [39] Hyland K. (2008). As can be seen: Lexical bundles and disciplinary variation. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27(1), 4-21.
- [40] Hyland, K. (2009). *Academic discourse*. London: Continuum.
- [41] Hyland, K. (2012). *Disciplinary Identities: Individuality and Community in Academic Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge Applied Linguistics.
- [42] Hyland, K., & Hamp-Lyons, L. (2002). EAP: Issues and directions. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 1(1), 1-12.
- [43] Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics. Selected readings* (pp. 269-293). Penguin.
- [44] Ivanic, R. (1998). *Writing and identity: The discursive construction of identity in academic writing*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- [45] Jacques, M. (2009). *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order*. London: Penguin.
- [46] Jewitt, C., & Kress, G. (2010). Multimodality, literacy and school English. In D. Wyse, R. Andrews & J. Hoffman (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of English, language and literacy teaching* (pp. 342-353). Routledge: London and New York.
- [47] King, C. J., Miller, R. K., and Klawe, M. (2010). Forwards. In D. Grasso & M. B. Burkins (Eds.). *Holistic Engineering Education: Beyond Technology* (pp. 5-9). New York: Springer.
- [48] Kroskrity, P. V. (2000). Language ideologies in the expression and representation of Arizona Tewa ethnic identity (pp.329-360). In P.V. Kroskrity (ed.), *Regimes of language: Ideologies, politics, and identities*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.
- [49] Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). A postmethod perspective on English language teaching. *World Englishes*, 22(4), 539-550.
- [50] Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. London: Routledge.



- [51] Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language teacher education for a global society: A modular model for knowing, analyzing, recognizing, doing, and seeing*. London: Routledge.
- [52] Langacker, R. W. (1972). *Fundamentals of linguistic analysis*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- [53] Lea, M. & Street, B.V. (1998). Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23, 157-172.
- [54] Lea, M., & Street, B. V. (1999). Writing as academic literacies: Understanding textual practices in higher education. In C. N. Candlin & K. Hyland (Eds.), *Writing: Texts, processes and practices* (pp. 62-82). Harlow: Pearson.
- [55] Lea, M., & Street, B. V. (2000). Student writing and staff feedback in higher education. In M. Lea & B. Stierer (Eds.), *Student writing in higher education: New contexts* (pp. 32-46). Buckingham: Society for Research in Higher Education and Open University Press.
- [56] Lillis, T.M. (2003). Student Writing as 'Academic Literacies': Drawing on Bakhtin to Move from Critique to Design. *Language and Education*, 17 (3), 192-207.
- [57] Lillis, T.M., & Scott, M. (2007). Defining academic literacies research: Issues of epistemology, ideology and strategy. *Journal of Applied Linguistics* 4(1), 5-32.
- [58] Maslow, A. H. (1967). A theory of metamotivation. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 7, 93-127.
- [59] Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a Psychology of Being*. New York: D. Van Nostrand Company.
- [60] McWilliams, R. & Allan, Q. (2014). Embedding academic literacy skills: Towards a best practice model, *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, 11(3), 1-20.
- [61] Melhuish, K., & Falloon, G. (2010). Looking to the future: M-learning with the iPad. *Computers in New Zealand Schools: Learning, Leading, Technology*, 22(3), 1-16.
- [62] Moll, L. C., & Arnot-Hopffer, E. (2005). Sociocultural competence in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 56(3), 242-247.
- [63] Monbiot, G. (2016, April 15). Neoliberalism - the ideology at the root of all our problems. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot> (access 12/25/2016).
- [64] Morgan, B., & Ramanathan, V. (2005). Critical literacies and language education: Global and local perspectives. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 151-169.
- [65] Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Fredrickson, B. L., & Loftus, G. (2009). *Atkinson and Hilgard's Introduction to Psychology* (15<sup>th</sup> ed.). MA, USA: Cengage Learning.
- [66] Norton, B. (2003). The motivating power of comic books: Insights from Archie comic readers. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(2), 140-147.
- [67] Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2004). Critical pedagogies and language learning: An introduction. In B. Norton & K. Toohey (Eds.), *Critical pedagogies and language learning* (pp. 1-17). Cambridge University Press.
- [68] Purser, E. (2011). Developing academic literacy in context: Trends in Australia. In M. Deane & P. O'Neil (Eds.), *Writing in the disciplines* (pp. 30-43). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [69] Rogers, C. R. (1967). *Person to person: The problem of being human: A new trend in psychology*. Colorado: Real People Press.
- [70] Rogers, C. R., & Freiberg, H. J. (1969). *Freedom to Learn*. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill.
- [71] Rogers, C. R., Kirschenbaum, H., & Henderson, V. L. (1989). *The Carl Rogers Reader*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- [72] Rogers, C.R., (1995). *A Way of Being*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- [73] Steger, M. B., & Roy, R. K. (2010). *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Vol. 222). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [74] Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching: Historical and interdisciplinary perspectives on applied linguistic research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [75] Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [76] Thompson, J. B. (1990). *Ideology and modern culture: Critical theory in the era of mass communication*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- [77] Walker, A. (2014). Technologies. In E. de Chazal (Ed.), *Oxford handbooks for language teachers: English for academic purposes* (pp. 581-620). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [78] White, J. (2015). *Digital literacy skills for FE teachers*. Sage: London.
- [79] Widdowson, H. G. (1998). Context, community, and authentic language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 705-716.
- [80] Wingate, U. (2015). Academic literacy and student diversity: The case for inclusive practice. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- [81] Wingate, U., & Tribble, C. (2012). The best of both worlds? Towards an English for academic purposes/academic literacies writing pedagogy. *Studies in Higher Education*, 37(4), 481-495.
- [82] Woodward-Kron, R. (2002). Academic discourses and their discourses of learning: Participants, texts and social practices. In C.N. Candlin, (Ed.), *Research and practice in professional discourse* (pp. 499-548). Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
- [83] Wray, D. (2007). Developing critical literacy. In D. Loertscher, & M. Mardis (Eds.), *Into the center of the curriculum* (pp. 200-209). San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Press.



**Yulong Li** holds a PhD in linguistics from The Education University of Hong Kong. He also holds an MA in Educational Studies (Distinction) from The University of Warwick, UK, and a PG diploma in TESOL from The University of Edinburgh, UK. He has many international publications (including referred journals and a monograph), of which some are indexed in SCOPUS. He also serves as a reviewer for some academic units (including journal and conference). He started his career as a language teacher since 2006. His research interests include EAP, TESOL, educational studies, and ethnography.