

‘What do we mean when we talk about language?’ Opening up Language Across the University

[BAAL 2023]

Dr Damian Fitzpatrick

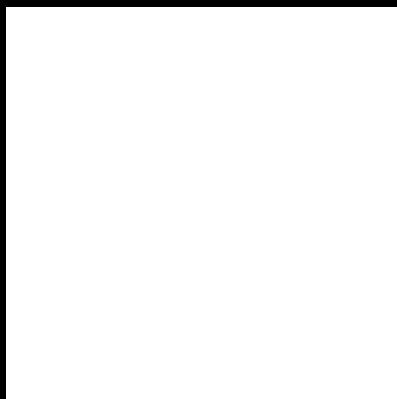
Outline

- **UAL Context**
- **Expertise**
- **Project: What do we mean when we talk about language?**
- **Aims**
- **Talks**
- **Impact**
- **Future**





UAL Context



- Central Saint Martins
- London College of Communication
- Chelsea College of Art
- Camberwell College of Art
- Wimbledon College of Art
- London College of Fashion
 - Design
 - Business
 - Science

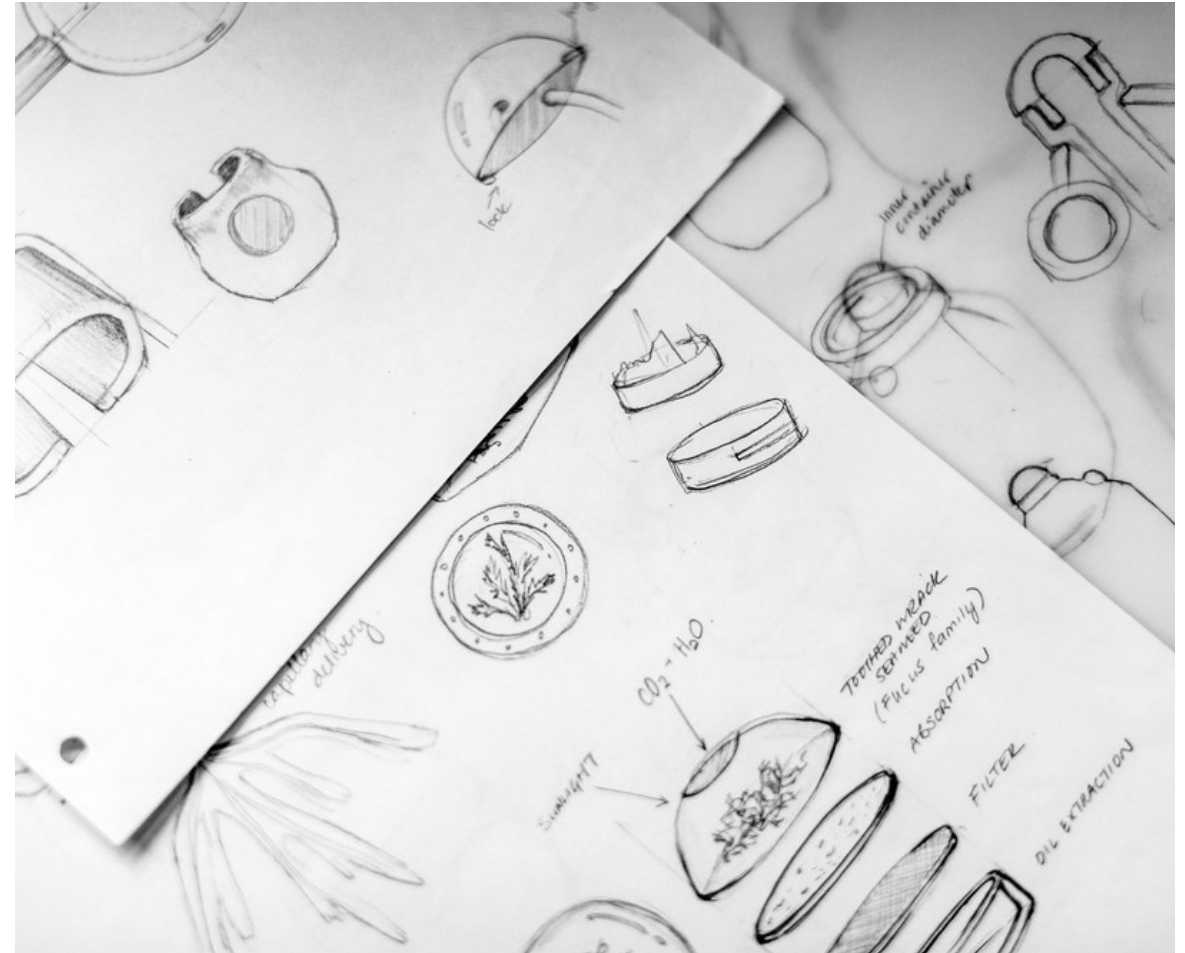


@Ideal Insight

Language Development

Student Services [Library and Academic Support]

- Language Tutorials
- Academic English Skills courses
- Tailored Workshops
- Weekly Language Classes
 - Timetabled but non-credit bearing
 - 'Embedded'
 - Co-ordination with course teams
 - Language of the discipline
 - Help students to do their subject



@Alys Tomlinson



Project: Initial Ideas



Language Visibility

Academic Literacies study on ‘criticality’

‘Students may be unaware of literacy practices of institution, discipline, genre, assessment practices’ (Fitzpatrick, 2019)

Staff?

- Language is often viewed as separate from content
- Unsure how to talk about (academic) language
- May not have clear understanding of how language works in the disciplines
- Unsure how to work in a multilingual context (e.g. translanguaging/multilingualism)

How to work with staff?

Teacher Expertise

Teacher Expertise: ‘the distinctive qualities of successful teachers that distinguish them from novice teachers and from those in neighbouring disciplines’ (Tsui, 2009, p. 422)

1. Building disciplinary knowledge (expertise) to teach on different courses
 - Discussions with colleagues at the Language Centre
 - Discussions with course teams
 - Read research papers from discipline
 - Access to learning spaces (e.g. studios)
 - Co-teaching with course teams
 - Researching with course teams

2. Disseminate our own expertise across the university, i.e. share research and knowledge from our field with course teams and staff

What does our expertise look like?

We draw on theories/concepts from language, language learning, language teaching and from fields within Applied Linguistics and Education:

- Experienced teachers
- International experience/Multilingual
- Qualified
- Understanding of language learners
- How language works in different contexts across the university
 - Different disciplinary language practices
- (Critical) Discourse Analysis
- Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)
- Multilingualism/Translanguaging
- Corpus Studies
- Semiotics
- Sociolinguistics
- English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
- Academic Literacies
- English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
- Genre Studies

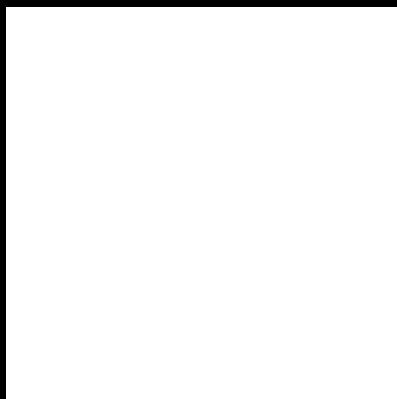
2. Disseminating Our Expertise

- '[EAP] practitioners are still often marginalised, on the fringes and at the 'service' of the University (Bond, 2020; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hyland, 2018).'
- 'In much the same way that other disciplines claim, maintain and defend their own spaces we must also strive to do the same ...'put our heads above the parapet ... [and] take part across our institutions' (Furneaux, 2017, p. 22).
- '...share and disseminate our good practices and expertise with colleagues across the wider academic context:
 - Engaging in observations beyond our peers;
 - Inviting other university colleagues to observe our practices;
 - **Organising presentations across the university where 'we' are the 'experts' and**
 - **Using this EAP expertise as a way of providing professional development to academic departments.**

(Fitzpatrick, Costley & Tavakoli, 2022)



**Project: What do we mean when we
talk about language?**



Project Aims

- To make language more visible across the university/within the disciplines
- To provide colleagues across the university with a better understanding of what language is and does.
- To provide a space for discussions around the roles and functions that language has in academic work
- To create opportunities for colleagues to share their work and practices around language
- To raise profile of the Language Centre
- To build confidence among colleagues at the Language Centre

Talks

- Dr Victoria Odeniyi (UAL) The coloniality of language and pedagogy
- Dr Lena Grannell (UCL) Feedback: A Cross-disciplinary Investigation
- Professor Bojana Petric (Birkbeck, University of London) Textual borrowing and its discontents
- Dr Tracey Costley (University of Essex) What is translanguaging and how can it help us and our students?
- Professor Constant Leung (King's College London) Academic Writing: Situated Enactment of Argument, Genre and Knowledge Structure
- Dr Ursula Wingate (Kings College London) Collaboration with subject lecturers: EAP practitioners' double role in student support and teacher education
- Dr Damian Fitzpatrick (UAL) What do we mean when we talk about language? An introduction

[Attendance: 35-50+ each session (plus online post-talks)]

What do we mean when we talk about language?

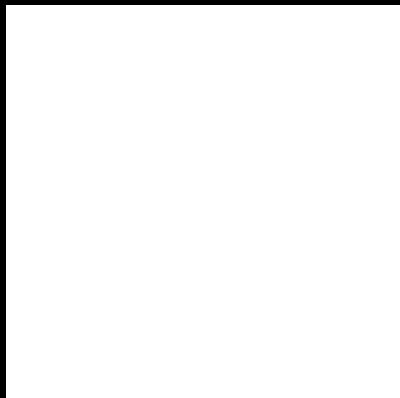


A series of talks and workshops organised by the Language Centre that aims to support deeper understanding of the role of language across the university. Language is sometimes viewed as 'separate' from course content but, in reality, it is 'the essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience becomes knowledge' (Halliday & Martin, 1993, p.94). In other words, studying a particular discipline means learning to understand the linguistic forms and structures that construct and communicate the relevant principles, knowledge and beliefs.

- What does language do? What is the function of language?
- What role does context play in language?
- How does language influence disciplinary practices?
- What do we mean by academic language?
- What role does multilingualism play in the university?



Impact



Impact

Language Centre

- Boosts profile of Language Centre and confidence of colleagues

Subject Teachers

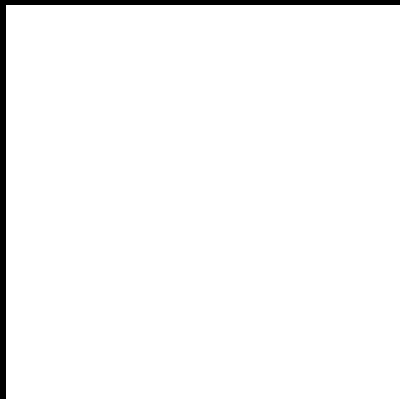
- Professional development
- Want to make language more accessible for students (e.g. assignment briefs)
- Discussions around collaborations with language staff
- Translanguaging Talk
- Ways that students use language(s) ('bend English'; 'different form of poetic involved')
- Alternative ways of assessment
- Representation through other languages
- Colleagues sharing their ideas on how they work with language

Across the university

- Website: archive and resource for colleagues
- Requested to do talks across university ('Knowledge Building in the Multilingual Classroom')
- University journal (special edition on 'Language')



Future



Upcoming Talks

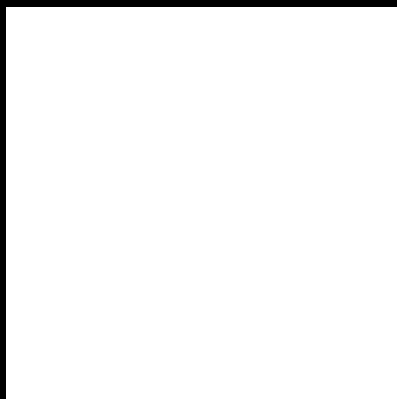
- Professor Nigel Harwood (University of Sheffield) Lecturer, Language Tutor, and Student Perspectives on the Ethics of the Proofreading of Student Writing
- Professor Bee Bond (University of Leeds) The positioning and purpose of EAP across the university curriculum: highlighting language in curriculum policies
- Professor Christine Feak (University of Michigan)
- Colleagues from across the university

Future

- Language workshops for colleagues across the university
- Possible 'language' component to PG Cert/MA Education
- Collaborative research with course teams (e.g. Language of dissertations)
- Centre for Language Research
- 'Open scholarship' (i.e. open project to other universities?)



References



References

- Bond, B. (2020). *Making language visible in the university: English for academic purposes and internationalisation* (Vol. 82). Multilingual Matters.
- Ding, A., & Bruce, I. (2017). The English for academic purposes practitioner. *Operating on the edge of academia*.
- Fitzpatrick, D. (2019). Making visible the Invisible: Criticality in Student Academic Writing.
In: Criticality Symposium, 18 December 2019, University of Leeds.
- Fitzpatrick, D., Costley, T., & Tavakoli, P. (2022). Exploring EAP teachers' expertise: Reflections on practice, pedagogy and professional development. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 59, 101-140.
- Furneaux, C. (2017). *Opening plenary: state of the union: what union*. In: Gillway, M. (ed.) Proceedings of the 2017 BALEAP Conference.
- Hyland, K. (2018). Sympathy for the devil? A defence of EAP. *Language Teaching*, 51(3), 383-399.
- Tomlinson, A. (2016). *Sketches by Fiona Fung, Case Study*. Available at:
<https://images.arts.ac.uk/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=46779&index=0&total=1&view=viewSearchItem>
(Accessed: 26 April 2023).
- Tsui, A. B. M. (2009). Distinctive qualities of expert teachers. *Teacher and Teaching: Theory and Practice*.
15, 4: pp. 421-439 <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/about-brookes/events/questioning-the-givens-of-academic-writing-across-the-disciplines--a-theoretical-and-pedagogical-approach--take-ii/>

ual ■ language
■ centre

Questions?