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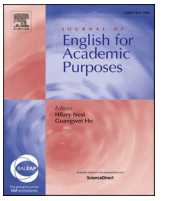

Editorial

Lecture discourse and lecturer training

The internationalization of higher education has gone hand in hand with a worldwide increase in English Medium Instruction (EMI) - the use of English as a language of instruction in countries where it is not an official language – as well as online lectures. This has led to lecturing contexts which are linguistically, communicatively, educationally and culturally complex. The challenges this creates for lecturers and students alike would benefit from a greater understanding of lecture discourse on the whole and EMI lecture discourse in particular as well as from insights into how we can support lecture delivery and comprehension.

This special issue therefore brings together research on lecture discourse and lecturer training that contributes to the design and delivery of EAP lecture listening courses and (EMI) lecturer training. The papers cover spoken lecture discourse (Dang; Nesi & Alsop), multimodality (Morell et al.; Querol-Julián), lecture listening teaching (Crawford Camiciottoli) and lecturer training initiatives (Aish & Tomlinson; Deroey).

Drawing on lectures from three corpora including one with an EMI component, Hilary Nesi and Siân Alsop identify the purposes and linguistic features of a specific type of story scenario in which lecturers describe a fantastic hypothetical situation. Their analysis reveals such scenarios to be more prevalent in the US MICASE lectures than in the BASE lectures from Britain, or the ELC (engineering) lectures from Britain, New Zealand and Malaysia. They are most commonly used to explain very abstract concepts and seem a technique to familiarize learners with technical terms and concepts. Arguing that such stories promote engagement with difficult concepts and do not require high level language skills, Nesi and Alsop advocate their use, even by EMI and novice lecturers.

To better understand the lexical challenges of lectures and ways to facilitate lecture comprehension, Thi Ngoc Yen Dang compares vocabulary use in three different lecture contexts: EMI courses, non-EMI courses, and open access EMI courses. She discovers that non-EMI courses are more lexically demanding than EMI ones. The coverage of Dang et al.'s (2017) Academic Spoken Word List (ASWL) is analysed to establish whether and how it can be used as a shortcut to improve lecture comprehension in these contexts. Dang concludes that the ASWL would indeed be useful and recommends work with different levels of the list depending on the three course contexts.

Also addressing lecture comprehension is the paper by Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli, which shows how freely available OpenCourseWare lecture videos can provide authentic texts and tasks for lecture comprehension practice. Based on research into these lectures, she presents a lesson plan and activities that focus on multimodal listening skills (in particular gesturing) and challenging linguistic features for L2 listeners (e.g., idioms, humour, figurative language, phrasal verbs, markers of stance, culture-specific references, and specialized terminology). She concludes by advocating multimodal listening skills training as a way to develop learners' multimodal literacy.

Continuing the theme of multimodality, Teresa Morell, Vicent Beltrán-Palanques and Natalia Norte describe how EMI lecturers on a professional development programme use semiotic and interpersonal resources to engage students during pair work. Their analysis of micro-teaching sessions from this training reveals the moves and pedagogical functions of 'engagement episodes' as well as the multimodal construction thereof through verbal and non-verbal communicative modes (spoken, written, non-verbal materials, space, and posture). This analysis leads them to argue for the development of multimodal interactive competence, especially in EMI lecturer training, as this may stimulate students' activity, thus promoting active learning, language usage and critical thinking.

Engagement is also the focus of Mercedes Querol-Julián's contribution. Adopting a multimodal (inter)action approach, she examines how an EMI lecturer engages international students in an online lesson. This sheds light on the nature of interaction in this environment, viz. frequent discourse functions, the multimodal density and diversity of interaction stages and the importance of lecturer waiting time. The paper concludes with elements that could be included in training programmes for online EMI teaching, such as raising awareness of multimodal interaction resources, presenting discourse strategies for different interaction stages and managing students' silence.

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In their paper describing an L1 lecturer support initiative, Fiona Aish and Jo Tomlinson illustrate how EAP practitioners can support internationalization in higher education. Specifically, they report on a project where EAP specialists use lecture observation and feedback to raise the lecturer's awareness of sources of comprehension issues in the multilingual and multicultural international classroom. Their project explores 'native' and 'non-native' speaker linguistic competence in an English as an Academic Lingua Franca context. It illustrates how lecturers' language can be adapted to an international audience and how EAP and ELT teaching techniques can facilitate comprehension. They detail the stages of the project, which they found simple and easy to set up.

Finally, Katrien Deroey surveys EMI lecturer training worldwide in order to help practitioners with the design and delivery of such training. She summarizes the content, delivery, challenges and recommendations of published lecturer training initiatives in 18 countries. The main components are found to be language, pedagogy, communication and EMI awareness. Delivery happens mainly face to face in groups. Microteaching with reflection, feedback and observation is widely used and highly rated. Recommendations include framing the training as part of a broader continuous professional development programme which goes beyond language work and which is adapted to local, institutional and personal needs. Additionally, a basic EMI lecturer training framework is proposed.

The call for this special issue was launched during the Covid-19 crisis, when most of us faced exceptionally challenging work conditions. I am therefore especially grateful to the authors and reviewers for the effort and time they invested in these papers. I would also like to thank JEAP editor Hilary Nesi for her sustained support and the JEAP team, especially Dipudass Dasan.

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