

Graduate Program in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics
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Paper Title:
***Fostering Conceptual Roles for Change:
Identity Options for EAP/ESL Teacher Preparation***

Abstract

In my presentation, I will explore the often difficult transfer of theory to practice in respect to the conceptual role of transformative practitioner through a pre-service “social issues project” for future English for Academic Purposes and English as Second/Foreign Language teachers. I will look at the problematic issue of subject-area knowledge and how it promotes the role of technician for EAP instructors in the academy. Drawing on Sarah Benesch’s (2001, 1998) conceptualization of Needs and Rights analyses, I propose a more critical engagement for teachers in respect to academic content, one that draws on the diversity and multilingual resources intrinsic to EAP settings. In the next section of my talk, I will discuss a number of ideological and methodological challenges that arise in fostering this more critical or transformative role in EAP—i.e. an “agent of change”. How these challenges are addressed in syllabus design are detailed in the final sections of my talk through a discussion and description of a pre-service group assignment, the “social issues project”, in which students conceptualize and design a blueprint for transformative action in various forms such as an advocacy letter, workshop, curricular materials, etc. Reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of several selected projects and the assignment, in general, conclude my discussion.