

The University of Edinburgh
The Moray House School of Education
School Postgraduate Studies Committee

[November 19th 2014]

Change to the Final Assignment for Corpus Linguistics and Language Teaching

Brief description of the paper

This paper seeks to make a minor change to the final assignment for new course 'Corpus Linguistics and Language Teaching which will run for the first time in January 2015. Rather than requiring the students to carry out a lesson plan based on findings from their research, the proposed change allows more flexibility by allowing the students to decide on how they would like to apply their findings. The change has been informed by recent comments from the External Examiner about the over-reliance on lesson plans as a means of applying theory to practice.

Action requested

Approval is sought for whether this change can be made to the final assignment.

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No

Risk assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

Equality and diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? No

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Any other relevant information

N/A

Originator of the paper

Dr Bróna Murphy and Dr Seongsok Choi (Course organisers); October 16th 2014.

Course: *Corpus Linguistics and Language Teaching* (which will run for the first time in January 2015) is an option course on the MSc TESOL. Course organizers are Dr Bróna Murphy & Dr Seongsook Choi.

Amendment: We would like to make a minor amendment to Part 2 of the final assignment:

Explanation: In the original final assignment outline (see below), students are required to use insights from research (carried out in Part 1 of the assignment) to create a lesson plan (Part 2 of the assignment).

The proposed change is that rather than having the students create a lesson plan, we would like to open up this part of the assignment so that students have the opportunity to apply their findings from Part 1 in whichever way they see fit e.g. they can update a course-book unit, improve existing materials by integrating insights from their investigations, develop their own materials etc depending on the teaching/learning context they are working with (which will, obviously, be different for each student). The proposed amendment does not change the assignment as the students will still be applying theory to practice, but will be doing it in a way which is chosen by them and best fits their teaching/learning context. I have attached below the original Final Assignment (Part 2) as well as the proposed updated Final Assignment (Part 2, which contains the minor amendment).

Rationale: The reason for the proposed amendment to Part 2 of the final assignment is directly informed by recent comments by the MSc TESOL External Examiner who suggested we look for other ways, besides lesson plans, to directly apply theory to practice in our assignments. To avoid these same comments being repeated next year, we wish to make the proposed minor change to Part 2 before this new course starts in January.

Signed: Dr Bróna Murphy & Dr Seongsook Choi

Date: October 16th 2014

Original Final Assignment

Your 4000-word assignment will consist of *two* parts:

In part 1 of your assignment, you are required to introduce, present and discuss findings obtained from a corpus-based investigation you have carried out. Your investigation make seek to deal with a language teaching problem you are familiar with, it may seek to raise awareness of language use at a pragmatic level, or it may take a more sociolinguistic approach to focusing on language and how it is used in society. You are free to choose a topic that is of relevance to you and your teaching context. It may relate to, at least, one or more of the following areas: speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary, sociolinguistics, pragmatics (2000 words).

You *must* make clear, in this part of your assignment, your rationale for choosing this particular investigation as well as which corpus, or corpora you intend to use and why, and clearly state what the investigation is and what your findings have revealed, as well as highlight its potential impact on your teaching and learning context.

In part 2 of your assignment, using your findings, or based on insights from your findings, you must discuss a **corpus-based lesson plan**, which you have prepared. You must include the lesson in your appendices.

In this part of the assignment, you must make clear the cohort of students (age, context, level, background etc) the lesson plan is aimed at, you must also discuss and evaluate the tasks and activities, in detail, as well as the choices you have made, in relation to your teaching and learning context, and provide a discussion which draws on relevant literature to support your discussion (2000 words).

As part 1 and part 2 are connected, you will be assessed on the overall assignment.

Word count: 4000 words, excluding data and appendices

Updated Final Assignment

Your 4000-word assignment will consist of *two* parts:

In part 1 of your assignment, you are required to introduce, present and discuss findings obtained from a corpus-based investigation you have carried out. Your investigation make seek to deal with a language teaching/learning problem you are familiar with, it may seek to raise awareness of language use at a pragmatic level, or it may take a more sociolinguistic approach to focusing on language and how it is used in society. You are *free to choose* a topic that is of relevance to you and your teaching context. It *must* relate to, at least, one or more of the following areas: speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary, sociolinguistics, pragmatics (2000 words).

You *must* make clear, in this part of your assignment, your rationale for choosing this particular investigation as well as which corpus, or corpora you intend to use and why, and clearly state what the investigation is and what your findings have revealed, as well as highlight its potential impact on your teaching and learning context.

In part 2 of your assignment, using your findings, or based on insights from your findings, you must demonstrate and provide a balanced discussion of how your findings might be **applied** to and used in a specific teaching and learning context. You may, for instance, consider using your findings to adapt a textbook or improve a series of tasks in a textbook, or develop your own materials for a specific problem area which is relevant to your own teaching/learning context.

You are free to decide how you would like to apply your findings in your own specific context.

Remember that you *must* ground your discussion in relevant literature.

You must also include the materials you adapt, create or develop in your appendices.

Please ensure that you make clear who the students are (e.g. age, context, language proficiency level, background etc) who might work with the tasks/materials you are developing/amending or creating. (2000 words).

Parts 1 and 2: As part 1 and part 2 are connected, you will be assessed on the overall assignment. **Total word count:** 4000 words, excluding data and appendices