Report from School Postgraduate Studies Committee

Brief description of the paper

This paper comprises the following:


2. Proposal for change in the regulations for MEd in Educational Leadership and Management to enable assessment on a pass/fail basis.

Action requested

The Board of Studies is requested to approve the proposals and forward to College for further approval if required.

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

No

Originator of the paper

Lesley Rowand
Secretary, School Postgraduate Studies Committee
1. Course Proposals for 3 new courses within MSc TESOL

At the meeting of the School Postgraduate Studies Committee on 10 January 2012, the attached 3 course proposals were approved for inclusion within the MSc TESOL. They will also be available as options to students on the other two programmes in the postgraduate language suite.
New Course Proposal
Investigating Individual Learner Differences
Dr Mairin Hennebry

Rationale:

In order to develop effective pedagogical techniques and methods, language teachers, indeed teachers of any subject, need an awareness and understanding of the individual differences that characterise their learners. Considerable research has been conducted into the area of individual differences in language learning and in fact differences such as foreign language aptitude and motivation have been found to be the most consistent predictors of second language learning success. Thus language teachers would benefit from an understanding of learner differences both from the point of view of offering equal access to education by understanding effective strategies that can address problems of low levels of academic achievement, and as a means of enabling language learners to achieve their full potential.

Overview

This course is appropriate for practising teachers and new teachers who are interested in language learning and teaching issues. The course examines a range of psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic differences found among learners considering them in the context of the second language classroom and the implication of these differences implications for language teaching pedagogy. In particular this course enables students to explore what theory and research tell us about the relationship between language learning and language aptitude, language attitudes and motivation, age, gender and language learning strategies and considers how these individual variables interact with the language learning process. The course links closely to Language and the Learner offering an opportunity to consider the relationship and implication of central theories and concepts in Language Learning to the individual learner. The course offers the opportunity to consider learners as individuals and to discuss and develop pedagogical approaches that take into account learner commonalities and differences and to situate the individual differences in the wider context of general language teaching and learning theories. After an overview of the field, each session considers a different aspect of individual learner differences examining the theory and research and drawing out the practical implications for teaching practice.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical understanding of the theories underpinning the outlined individual learner differences
• Apply broad theories of language learning to the specific field of individual learner differences
• Explore the relationship between individual differences and language learning outcomes
• Understand how individual differences can help or hinder learning outcomes
• Analyse research studies that pertain to each of the key areas outlined above
• Evaluate research methodology used for the investigation of individual differences and develop their own research proposals for investigating this area
• Critically analyse their own teaching context and draw implications from research in individual differences to this specific context
• Develop language teaching strategies and techniques to practically address individual learner differences

Course content:

1. An overview of individual differences theory and research
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Aptitude
5. Attitudes and motivation
6. Anxiety
7. Language learning strategies
8. Investigating individual differences as a practitioner in the classroom

Assessment:

4,000 words

Provide a brief overview of research into one particular aspect of individual learner differences examined on the course. Then select two relevant studies to critically consider in more detail. What are the implications of the studies you have chosen for teaching practice? How do they specifically relate to your own professional context? In light of your discussion so far design a 1 hour lesson plan that demonstrates your application of the research in this particular learner difference area to your teaching practice.

OR

Provide an overview of research into one particular aspect of individual learner differences examined on the course. Identifying a gap in the research, design a research study you could carry out in your language teaching classroom to investigate a specific aspect of your chosen individual difference. Explain how the study might inform and impact on your professional practice.
Level: Postgraduate (level 11)

Number of credits: 20

Mode of delivery: 8 x 1hr lecture; 8 x 2hr workshop

Reading list:

Core text:


Supplementary reading:


*Language Learning Journal* 14, pp.40-49
New Course Proposal
Language Awareness for Second Language Teachers
Kenneth Fordyce

Aims and Outcomes
The main aims of this course are to develop students’ awareness of aspects of language that are most relevant to second language instruction, and to enable students to critically evaluate the presentation and coverage of language in pedagogical descriptions, textbooks, and forms of language assessment.

By the end of this course, students will demonstrate an ability to:
• apply an up-to-date knowledge of findings from research on language description which are relevant to second language instruction;
• use a meta-language of linguistic terms to describe language with precision;
• analyse and evaluate the interaction between micro and macro aspects of language;
• critically appraise the degree to which pedagogical descriptions, textbooks, and forms of language assessment, cover a full range of language elements.
• evaluate the linguistic needs of learners in different language learning contexts.

Course Delivery

This course will be taught through lectures (8 hours) and workshops (16 hours):

The Lectures will inform the students about:
• up-to-date information on research on language description which is relevant to second language instruction (e.g., in weeks 3 and 4 the findings of corpus research on formulaic language and spoken grammar will be relayed to the students);
• the different ways in which elements of language are presented to L2 learners (e.g., the way in which many ‘spoken dialogues’ are stripped of all pragmatic and discourse elements in some learning contexts but not in others);
• metalinguistic terms which will enable them to describe elements of language with precision.

In the Workshops the learners will:
• review their understanding of key points from the lectures.
• analyze and discuss the degree to which language elements are included in pedagogical descriptions, textbooks and forms of language assessment. In order to achieve this, the learners will be given a portfolio of teaching-related materials from various contexts (e.g., Asian/European; ESL/EFL; Advanced/Intermediate/Elementary). This portfolio will be used as a basis for analysis throughout the workshops;
• suggest ways in which materials could be adapted and/or updated in order to increase their relevance to learners’ needs.
## Course Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
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</table>
| 1    | **Course Overview + The Language Continuum**  
The focus will be on the range of elements which constitute language from micro elements (e.g., phonemes and lexemes) to macro elements (e.g., discourse-level phenomena and the interaction between language and culture). |
| 2    | **Grammar: Form, Meaning and Use**  
The focus will be on the importance of language instruction covering all aspects of grammatical elements: form (syntax); meaning (semantics) and function (pragmatics and discourse). |
| 3    | **Lexis: From Lexemes to Formulaic Language**  
The focus will be on developing students’ awareness of the role of formulaic language in learners’ vocabularies. Focus will also be given to the view that lexis and grammar form a continuum as opposed to clearly defined categories of language. Findings from corpus analysis and research on construction grammar will be presented to students. |
| 4    | **Grammar and Lexis: Written Language vs. Spoken Language**  
The focus will be on developing students’ awareness of the differences between spoken and written grammar and vocabulary which have mainly been discovered through analysis of large corpora over the past few decades. |
| 5    | **Pronunciation: Segmentals and Supra-segmentals**  
The focus will be on developing students’ awareness of the importance of covering both segmentals and supra-segmentals in second language instruction. Particular focus will be given to the role of understanding supra-segmentals (elision, linking, assimilation, etc.) in developing effective listening skills. |
| 6    | **Pragmatics: Pragmatic Competence vs. Grammatical Competence**  
The focus will be on developing students’ awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence in effective communication. The issue of whether pragmatic competence can be taught will be covered as well as research which has compared the relative importance of pragmatic and grammatical competence in successful communication. |
| 7    | **Discourse: Spoken and Written Discourse**  
The focus will be on developing students’ awareness of features of language at the discourse level. Focus will be given to both spoken discourse (IRF sequences; overlapping; interrupting, etc.) and written discourse (cohesion, coherence and contrastive rhetoric, etc.). |
| 8    | **Language and Culture: World Englishes; English as a Lingua Franca**  
The focus will be on the issues of: what version(s) of English should be taught to learners?; the development of world Englishes (e.g., Singlish); and intercultural communication. |

### Assessment

**4,000 word assignment**  
(a) Students will be given a choice of textbook units (these will cover a variety of possible learning contexts so that students can choose one relevant to their own future teaching context). They will choose one unit and provide a detailed critical analysis of its coverage of three of the areas of language focused on during the course.
(b) Students will suggest and design three substantial changes to their chosen textbook unit. They will be expected to provide a detailed explanation and rationale for these changes. Students will be expected to relate their recommendations to a critical reading of theory and research on language.

Proposed Core Text:

*English Language: Description, Variation and Context*
Edited by Jonathan Culpeper, Francis Katamba, Paul Kerswill, Ruth Wodak and Tony McEnery
Palgrave Macmillan, 2009

Recommended Readings:


Rationale for a language-focused course:

- It is apparent that many MSc TESOL students lack knowledge of: (1) recent research-based developments in descriptions of the English language; (2) metalinguistic terms which enable them to describe language with precision.

- Analysis of other TESOL programmes (see Table 1 below) suggests that a language-oriented course is a fairly standard component of other Master’s courses in TESOL in the UK. Moreover, in many cases this course is a core or compulsory course. It is apparent that the non-existence of this kind of course is a clear gap in the Edinburgh MSc TESOL programme.

- Students need to evaluate real TESOL materials (pedagogical descriptions, textbooks, tests, etc.) in order to look at how different elements of language are (or are not) presented, taught and assessed, and they need to adapt their textbooks and design new activities. In this way elements of Evaluation and Design of Materials can be incorporated into this course; as a result, this option course, which by itself may be not be substantial enough for a full 20-credit course, could be removed from the list of option courses in order to make space for a new option.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Core/Compulsory</th>
<th>Option</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>MSc TESOL</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aston</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>Analysing Written &amp; Spoken Discourse; Investigating Lexis &amp; Grammar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>Description of the English Language*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>MA TESL/TEFL</td>
<td>Introduction to Language</td>
<td>Discourse for Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>MSc TESOL</td>
<td>Analysing Language for TESOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>MEd TESOL</td>
<td>Language Awareness for TESOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>IoE</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>Describing and Analysing Language</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedagogical Grammar; Teaching Spoken Discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>Investigating Language for TESOL</td>
<td>Learning and Teaching Vocabulary; Grammar, Learning and Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>Introduction to Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>Lexis and Vocabulary Teaching; Reading and Written Discourse; Functional Grammar for Language Analysis and Teaching; Spoken Discourse and the Teaching of Listening and Speaking Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Explorations in Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>Applied Linguistics for TESOL</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching; Grammar and the Language Classroom; Teaching and Learning Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>MA ELT</td>
<td>Lexis &amp; Grammar; Spoken English; Text &amp; Discourse Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>MA TESOL</td>
<td>English Linguistics</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching; Learning and Teaching Grammar in a Second Language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*I have put courses in bold which appear to give a more global coverage of aspects of language/the English language.*
New Course Proposal

Language and Culture Pedagogy

Dr. Maria Dasli

Initial Information

Level : SCQF level 11 (postgraduate)

Delivery : face-to-face (lectures: 8 hours; workshops: 16 hours)

Credits : 20

Rationale

This course is framed by developments in the area of intercultural language education which has recently seen a major shift away from the model of communicative language teaching with its emphasis on bridging information gaps or transferring messages between idealised native speakers and foreign language users to a valorisation of the notion of intercultural communicative competence. While this is now a major goal of foreign language education in the European context but also in Australia and the USA, a growing body of literature (e.g. Badger & MacDonald, 2007; Young et al., 2009) shows that intercultural communicative competence is not approached in the classroom in a principled, active and engaged manner and that this lack of engagement may have a detrimental effect on learning. This is seen to occur because a great deal of second language teacher education programmes frame culture purely in terms of materials and social practices – foods, fairs, folklore, facts – or find it difficult to teach culture in the same principled way they teach, for example, descriptions of the English and other languages. Building on existing strengths and developments for language teaching in Moray House, this course addresses many of the issues raised as problematic for language teachers and learners and suggests a way forward.
Overview

This course aims to enable participants to develop a critical understanding of language and culture pedagogy and locate this within a range of educational contexts that are likely to sustain intercultural dialogue in the increasingly globalised world in which we now live. In so doing, it discusses specific theories of culture and intercultural communication, functional classroom methodologies, and political approaches to the study of language and culture that are dedicated to establishing the connections between intercultural citizenship education and conflict resolution. In keeping with this approach, the participants will be encouraged to develop a rigorous ethical stance towards pedagogic practice and examine their role as reflective practitioners who mediate between the language classroom and international civil society. As part of the strategy to enable participants to become competent reflective practitioners, course tutors will provide examples of good practice referring to such issues as cultural distance and proximity, cross-cultural understanding, and intercultural communicative competence.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course participants will have demonstrated the ability to:

- Evaluate a range of competing theories defining the notions of culture and intercultural communication;
- Explain the purposes of language education for intercultural citizenship in the work of the Council of Europe Language Policy Division;
- Analyse the concept of intercultural dialogue and its relation to conflict resolution in civil society communication;
- Compare a variety of pedagogic methods and approaches that are likely to facilitate the development of intercultural communicative competence;
- Demonstrate appropriate judgement in the planning and execution of intercultural learning and teaching provision;
- Evaluate criteria presently used to assess the role of the teacher as reflective practitioner in intercultural contexts.
Indicative Content

Block 1 (weeks 1-2): Theoretical Groundings

This first block discusses the theoretical commitments and philosophical assumptions that guide the approach to the study of language and culture. It addresses what is meant by the notions of culture and intercultural communication by reference to competing arguments with which theorists have engaged in order to contribute to a more widening debate of intercultural theory and research. Students will consider the kinds of questions that arise from these debates and the implications they may have for pedagogic practice.

Block 2 (weeks 3-5): Classroom Methodologies

This second block addresses the practices and principles that need to be considered when designing functional classroom methodologies for the study of language and culture. It focuses on the notion of intercultural (communicative) competence and the ways in which it can be developed both in the language classroom and beyond. By looking at examples of pedagogic practice (e.g. critical incident scenarios, drama, ethnography), students will debate the extent to which they can enable language subjects to live harmoniously in negotiable discourse worlds.

Block 3 (weeks 6-7): Intercultural Citizenship

This third block focuses on the purposes of language education for intercultural citizenship through discussion of the notion of critical internationalism. In so doing, it discusses the importance of identifying with people beyond national borders and considers pedagogic practices in the light of this approach. By focusing on the work undertaken by the Council of Europe Language Policy Division, students will consider how teachers can enable learners to engage with the increasingly globalised world in which they participate.

Block 4 (weeks 8-9): Conflict Resolution

This fourth block addresses the role which language and culture pedagogy can play in the context of conflict resolution. It addresses what is meant by intercultural dialogue and explores ways in which English or other so-called ‘privileged’ languages can enable counter-hegemonic movements to organise their struggles against dominant ideologies. By looking at case studies located in areas affected by conflict (e.g. the Peace Keeping English), students will consider how teachers can help cultures of silence to realise their needs.
Assessment

Students are required to undertake one assignment (4,000 words). This assignment is summative and will be assessed in line with University criteria for study at Master’s level.

Demonstrate the ability to design and evaluate a 2-hour lesson using the theoretical principles and practical approaches to the development of intercultural communicative competence for a group of learners of your choice.

To achieve this you need to:

- Design a 2-hour lesson and provide the materials with which your learners will engage in an appendix. This should be a coherent lesson and as such the materials should follow a natural order.

- Provide a rationale which critically evaluates the lesson. Here, you need to demonstrate an understanding of the issues raised by this course and discuss the ways in which the content reflects your understanding of the notion of reflective practice.

Core Texts


Additional Readings


2. Proposal for change in the regulations for MEd in Educational Leadership and Management to enable assessment on a pass/fail basis.

Attached is the proposal paper for this change.

Extract from the draft minute of the meeting of the School Postgraduate Studies Committee held on 10 January 2012:

8.1 Assessment of Dissertation Stage of MEd in Education Leadership and Management

For the first time students on this programme had proceeded to the dissertation stage. The validated programme documentation had not addressed how the dissertation would be assessed. As the programme was marked on a pass/fail basis at Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma stages, there had been an assumption that the dissertation would also be assessed in this way. However, this was not consistent with the University’s assessment regulations and therefore this paper sought approval for this departure from the regulations. SPGSC agreed to support the request but noted that dissertation markers should mark in line with University regulations (in other words be asked to award a mark for each dissertation) until approval had been received from the Senatus Postgraduate Studies Committee. It was hoped that approval would be received prior to the next Board of Examiners meeting which would be held in October 2012. [Action: Proposal approved for forwarding to the Board of Studies]
Assessment of the Dissertation Stage of the MEd in Educational Leadership and Management

Brief description of the paper

This paper requests a change to enable the dissertation stage of the MEd in Educational Leadership and Management to be assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Action requested

For approval

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

If no, please indicate why the paper must be withheld, and for how long (eg until decision is publicly announced):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Its disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research</th>
<th>Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Its disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation</td>
<td>Its disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act</td>
<td>Other (please give further details)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any other relevant information

No

Originator of the paper

Deirdre Torrance
Director of the Masters in Educational Leadership and Management
Proposal to amend dissertation assessment

The Director of the Masters in Educational Leadership and Management, in consultation with the Director of Postgraduate Studies, proposes the following, with effect from February 2012.

The dissertation (60 credits) will be assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Explanation

At present the formal paperwork for the dissertation stage of the Masters in Educational Leadership and Management makes no mention of the basis on which the dissertation will be assessed. There was an assumption that the dissertation would be assessed on a pass/fail basis. Indeed, the Dissertation Guide articulates that assumption. However, such detail was omitted from the paper approved by SPGSC on 7th December 2006.

The purpose of this proposed change is:

1. To clarify the basis on which the dissertation will be assessed.
2. To provide assessment feedback which articulates with the assessment regulations of the Diploma stage. The dissertation stage follows successful completion of the Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management which leads to the dual professional award of the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH). As such, all previous coursework is marked on a pass/fail basis. Due to that, the overall Masters cannot be awarded a grade. There seems little benefit from grading the dissertation apart from providing the opportunity to note where a dissertation has been awarded a distinction.
3. To follow a consistent course of action. When the students 'signed up' for the dissertation, they understood that it would be marked on a pass/fail basis. The first students are due to submit their dissertations in the New Year.

Deirdre Torrance
Director of the Masters in Educational Leadership and Management